A Time for Dragons: Fire

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Summary

Realising that his son needed to know the truth before making a life changing decision. Ned tells Jon the truth about his parentage. He sends Jon across the narrow sea hoping he meets his true family. In the process Ned sets him off on along a much more dangerous path, starting a sequence of events he is powerless to control.

Meanwhile across the narrow sea, after years laying dormant, the Dragons are starting to stir. Plans are made, armies are brought, and the Dragons begin to wake from their slumber

An AU that begins shortly before book 1
The Lord of Winterfell

The lord of Winterfell was troubled. He sat in his solar reading over the letters he had just received, his fingers absently tracing over the words. He had been expecting a letter from Lord Manderly, but he expected a raven. Much to his surprise, Lord Manderly had sent his second son, Wendel, to deliver the letter. At first, he thought this was a trivial task for the son of the Lord, possibly a punishment of sorts. When he read the letter, he understood, he had sent his son because there were two letters, the second contained dangerous information.

As Lord of Winterfell and Warden of the North, by rights he should report the information in this letter to the King. However, Ned remembered his hatred for the Targaryen’s. He had heard that the King had offered a lordship to the man who killed the remaining Targaryen’s, he offered Harrenhall if they were brought to him alive. He shuddered to think what would have happened if Robert got his hands on the girl, she would be around Jon’s age. He quickly pushed those thoughts aside, Robert was many things, but he was not a monster.

Promise me Ned

The knock on the door drew him out of his thoughts. He told the person to enter, it was his wife and she looked angry.

“My lady, how can I help you” he greeted her with a smile

“I will not have him here any longer. He is nearly a man grown. I have tolerated him in my household for 18 years, but enough is enough Ned, he needs to leave,”

Ned looked at his wife, his face gave nothing away.

“Where would you have me send him my lady?” Ned asked, his voice even. They had this conversation many times before and Ned usually shut it down before it started but this time, he decided to humour his wife.

“Send him to the Night’s watch, Ned. He can be with his uncle,”

“No, he is my blood. I will not command him to go and live with criminals” Ned responded, his voice calm but the anger evident in his eyes.

“Then what are your plans for him? You know as well as I that he cannot stay here forever” Catelyn responded, her voice starting to rise.

“No lord will marry their daughter to a bastard with no lands or titles. I will not have him here with our children, he will corrupt them, you already see how wild Arya is, thankfully Sansa knows better. I can only hope Bran and,”

“Enough! I have told you before and I will tell you again. He is my son. I will not send him away
unless he asks to leave,"

Ned stood from behind the desk in his solar.

“What I plan for Jon, is between him and I. I am your lord husband, this is the last you will speak of
this matter and don’t you dare to accuse him as corrupting our children. They are family and I would
have thought Lord Tully would teach his children their family words,“

He looked at her firmly, ending the conversation.

“Of course, my Lord” Catelyn rose and stiffly bowed to her husband and left the solar.

Ned glared at her as she left, his eyes burning a hole through the door. He sat back down with a sigh
and took a long drink of his ale, finishing his goblet. He sat it back on the table and knocked over
some of the papers that were stacking up on his desk. He let out a loud sigh and ran his hands
through his hair. How long could he really put off telling Jon the truth? He had stopped asking about
his mother years ago, clearly put off by the short responses he always got. He had a right to know, he
owed Lyanna that, he owed Jon that, he was a man grown. He deserved to know.

Without knowing it, his fingers had once again picked up the second letter, he read it again one last
time and then threw it into the fire. The flames quickly engulfed the paper and turned it into ash.

The Bastard of Winterfell

“Not bad for a bastard,” taunted Theon. As he blocked a strike from Jon and countered with one of
his own. Jon saw it coming and easily pivoted his torso to avoid the strike. He countered with one of
his own which Theon just managed to block. Theon feigned a strike to Jon’s left and then went to his
right. Jon saw it coming and easily blocked it. Out of the corner of his eye he spotted two girls
walking across the yard,

“Theon look, it’s Jeyne,” and Theon immediately looked towards where Jon was pointing. Jon took
this moment of distraction and quickly swept Theon’s legs out from under him

“You yield” he said, as he held his training sword under his throat

“I yield” said Theon reluctantly. “I shouldn’t be surprised to that a bastard has to result in tricks and
decception to win,“

“You should talk less and focus more, ward” Jon said with a cocky smile. “Maybe one day you’ll be
able to beat me,“

Jon loved his time training with the sword, he knew he was better than both Robb and Theon and he
was proud of it. The bastard of Winterfell didn’t have a lot to be proud of. Robb one day would be
lord of Winterfell, married to a beautiful lady and he would father plenty of children on her. Jon
knew he would not have any of that. He knew he was lucky Lady Catelyn hadn’t thrown him out
yet.

As he grew older, he began to realise that his presence was a burden on his father and lady Catelyn’s
marriage. After his seventeenth birthday he had thought more and more about where he would go
when he had to leave Winterfell. He thought of his uncle Benjen and of the Night’s watch, maybe
that was the place for him. A place where it didn’t matter what his surname was, or who his parents
were. A place where he could become his own man, free of the shackles of being a bastard.
“Nicely done today Jon” said Ser Rodrick, the castle’s master of arms. “Although you shouldn’t result to tricks to defeat your opponent. It’s not honourable,”

Jon rolled his eyes, he had never been in a real fight, but he knew that it didn’t matter how you won, all that mattered was winning. Honour means shit all if the other person kills you first. Still he gave a polite nod and accepted Ser Rodrick’s words. He took off his pads and took a long drink of cold water. As he drank he his eyes wandered around the courtyard. He spotted Sansa and her friend Jeyne Poole entering the glasshouses probably to look at flowers, stable boys tending to the horses and then he saw Bran running into the yard, wanting to practice his archery.

Bran was still young, and he couldn’t pick up and use full sized bow yet, so he used a little child’s bow. He watched as Bran picked up the bow, draw and miss, the arrow sailed to the left of the target and hit a barrel. Jon walked over and noticed Robb was giving him some help

“Relax Bran, if you keep stiffening up you’ll never hit the target.” Robb advised him

“Keep practising Bran, Mother is watching”

Jon chanced a glance up towards the balcony that overlooked the training yard. Lady Catelyn was looking at her children, those blue eyes were warm and full of life and love

Bran took a deep calming breath and got ready, he aimed, drew his arrow. Just as he was about to shoot, another arrow pierced the centre of the target. Everybody turned to see Arya with a bow in her hands smirking. She gave a mock courtesy and then Bran dropped his bow to chase after her, much to the amusement of everyone watching. Jon laughed loudest as Arya vaulted over barrels to escape her little brother.

He looked up and his eyes met Lady Catelyn’s, her piercing blue eyes met his grey ones. All the life and happiness drained away from her eyes and was replaced by coldness and hate, he quickly looked away. He had seen that look many times over the past seventeen years. It was not his fault he was born a bastard. Once again, his mind wondered as he thought of his mother, Who was she? What did she look like? Would she be proud of me?

He decided to head back to his room and get out of the way of Lady Catelyn before she found something to be angry at him about. He walked silently through the castle and back to his room, he was greeted by Arya.

“Why are you here?”

“I’m hiding from Bran,”

“Why in my room?”

"Everyone knows you always lock your room, but he doesn’t know that I can still get in,”

“Right, remind me to change the locks,” he said with a small smile. He sat down on the bed next to his little sister and Ghost sat on the bed next to him.

“Have you named him yet?” Arya asked

“I’ve named him ghost,” Jon replied. “Have you named yours?”

“Nymeria” Arya replied proudly “It’s much better than Shaggydog or lady”

“Leave Rickon alone, he’s only young” he said, giving her a playful shove.
“Well, Shaggydog is a stupid name, he’s not a dog, he’s a direwolf.”

Jon chuckled at his sister’s joke and he ran his hands through her hair affectionately. Suddenly Nymeria sprung out of her arms and started to run around the room.

“Nymeria! No! Come back!” Arya pleaded as the wolf bounded out the open door. “It took me forever to catch her last time” she complained as she ran off after her wolf.

Jon laughed as he stroked Ghost’s fur and scratched him behind his ears

“You don’t cause me trouble do you boy?”

Those ruby red eyes stared back at him unblinking and Ghost licked his face in response. It had been over a month since they had found the wolves. Greywind and Nymeria were the largest and now had to be kept in the kennels as they scared the horses. Ghost himself was about the size of a small dog. He heard footsteps coming from the hallway and he wondered if Arya had returned with Nymeria.

“Where is Arya?” Jon looked up to see Lady Catelyn in the doorway to his room.

“She just left to chase after Nymeria” said Jon quietly, quickly averting his eyes

“Speak up boy, I will not ask you again” Catelyn glared at him

“I said she went to chase after her wolf, Lady Stark”, and with that, she left.

Jon sighed with frustration. He thought of the wall and of his uncle Benjen. “I am seventeen. I cannot hide behind my father forever. It is time to become a man” he resolved. He looked at Ghost who seemingly gave him another lick of encouragement. Jon stood and went to go and find his father

The Lord of Winterfell

“Come in,” he called after he heard the knock on the door to his solar. “Jon, what can I do for you?”

“Father, I know me being here makes things difficult between you and lady Catelyn”

“Jon please it’s”

“Father please, let me finish” Jon interrupted. “I know she doesn’t like me much, or at all. I know that I cannot stay here forever,”

Ned started to feel his heartbeat slow, he knew where this conversation was heading

“Father, I want to join the Night’s watch. You said before I was too young. Now I am seventeen, I want to go, I want to join, please father. I’d like your blessing before I leave” Jon pleaded

Ned’s blood ran cold. He stared at Jon, his mind flashing back through the past seventeen years. Ever since he took the boy from his mother’s arms, her last words promise me Ned

“Father?” Jon’s words snapped him out of his trance.
Ned looked at him, his eyes unblinking. He knew it was time. He had to know before he made this decision, he owed him that.

“Jon, I will allow you to leave-”

“Thank you, father,”

“but before you go, it is time I tell you. It’s time I tell you the truth. Please, come with me to the crypts”

Jon nodded and stood up. Ned took a drink of ale before standing up to lead him through the castle. They walked through the castle and out into the courtyard. The sun had begun to set and the air was frigid. They both knew that the night was going to be colder than normal. Ned pulled his cloak tighter around him as the wind threatened to cut through to his bone. The entrance to the crypts loomed up ahead. Jon paused at the entrance, he looked cautiously back at him.

“Follow me” Ned said, he took a torch and pushed the Ironwood door open. They started their descent into the darkness below.

Jon looked uncomfortable in the crypts and Ned understood why. He felt like he didn’t belong here. This was a place for people with the name Stark, not Snow. He took a deep calming breath and tugged his cloak tighter around him. It was even colder in the crypts than it was outside.

Finally, they stopped before a statue

“Do you know who this is?” Ned asked him. His breath had started to condense in front of him, it was that cold in the crypts.

“Aunt Lyanna” Jon replied after a moment, “Your sister”

“That’s right, and what do you know about her?”

“She was kidnapped and raped by Rhaegar Targaryen” Jon paused “This started the rebellion, why are you asking me this father?”

“Kidnapped and raped,” Ned said softly, “That is the story the realm knows, but it is not the truth… The truth is, they loved each other, and she left willingly, there was no rape, there was no kidnapping, just love”

Jon frowned in confusion.

“Then why were we taught this father? Why didn’t you tell people the rebellion was based on a lie”

“Sometimes the truth causes more harm than good. The mad King did not deserve to rule, he was an evil man. What good would have happened if I told Robert this after the war was over? That his betrothed loved another man? The Targaryen’s were gone and the realm had bled enough…No. I couldn’t tell people the truth. I don’t know how Robert would have handled it…lives were at stake”

“but father, why are you telling this to me? Why give me this history lesson now? This has nothing to do with the Night’s watch” Jon pointed out impatiently

“I found her after the war was over,” Ned continued as if he never heard him. “In a tower in the red mountains of Dorne. Outside the tower stood three members of the Kingsguard. Ser Arthur Dayne, Ser Oswell Whent and Ser Gerold Hightower. I demanded to see Lyanna, they wouldn’t let me see
her. They drew their swords and we drew ours. It was seven against three but gods were they good. Out of our seven, only two survived. Howland Reed and I…” Ned’s voice had dropped to a whisper, his eyes closed as he recalled the horrific tale. *The sword of the morning had cut down two of my men with ease*

“I entered the tower and I found her there. Lying in a bed of blood. I ran to her and grasped her hand. She was dying, I knew it and she knew it. I could do nothing but hold her hand as my only sister died in front of me;”

A tear slowly fell down his face and he felt his chest tighten

“She pulled me closer. She said that Robert would kill him if he knew… she made me promise to protect him. Her son,”

Ned’s eyes suddenly opened, and he looked at Jon. His grey eyes stared into Jon’s. Jon stared back his brow furrowed in confusion. Then suddenly his eyes widened in realisation

“She pulled me closer. She said that Robert would kill him if he knew… she made me promise to protect him. Her son,”

“I’m not your son?” Jon asked quietly. He already knew the answer. He just wanted to hear the words spoken aloud

“No you’re not. I’m sorry for keeping this from you but I had to. She made me promise. I heard what Robert did to the other royal children. I couldn’t take that chance with you. I claimed you as my own to protect you. She named you Aegon, but I couldn’t have that, so I named you Jon, after Jon Arryn,”

Jon stared at the statue, unblinking. He looked so tense, Ned was afraid that if he touched him he would shatter into a thousand pieces. Instead he moved towards Lyanna’s statue. He moved the base and it opened and inside he pulled out a small parcel.

“After she died, I looked through the tower for anything that belonged to her. I collected anything that I could find that belonged to them so that you could have it one day, something to remember your parents by. Everything I found is in this parcel Jon, I’m sorry” Ned said quietly.

“I understand if you want to be alone…I had to tell you…I had to tell you…before you joined the watch”

“All this time, my mother was down here?” Jon asked, his voice barely above a whisper “Why didn’t you tell me sooner, why wait until now?”

“I had to tell you the truth before you made this decision, I thought…I owed you as much,” his father said quietly. “The Night’s watch is no place for you, I’ve seen it, it’s full of criminals. She would never forgive me if I had let you go there. You deserve better Jon,”

When Jon said nothing to him in return, he realised that he wanted to be alone. He left Jon to his thoughts in the crypts.

_Promise me Ned_ “I told him Lya, he knows who you are” he said softly as he left

**The Hidden Prince**

Jon stood there for hours, every muscle in his body taught with the task of holding himself together. He stared at the statue, looking at his mother’s face. The initial shock was slowly starting to be replaced by anger. The man he thought was his father had lied to him his entire life. It was only when he was going to exile himself to join the night’s watch had he had the courage to tell him the
truth. Then there was Rhaegar, how many thousands of people had died because of what he did? Of what his parents did? How many people lost their lives because of his parent’s foolishness? He had a wife and children and he abandoned them both. Why would he do that? How many people would still be alive if he hadn’t been born?

When he finally exited the crypts, and reached the surface it was the middle of the night. The moon was full and shone brightly. He looked around the quiet courtyard. He saw guards in their watchtowers huddled into their cloaks to keep warm. He stuck to the shadows, moving through the castle like a ghost.

He entered his cold room and lit a fire to try and warm up. Once the fire was started he collapsed onto his bed and rubbed his eyes

“My whole life was a lie” he said to Ghost quietly “He would never have told me. If I hadn’t decided to leave, he would have kept this from me my entire life”.

Ghost stared back at him as if in understanding Jon lay on his side and stared into the flames. He watched as the flames danced together, red’s mixed with yellow’s and oranges, It was mesmerising. He stared into the fire until all the colours merged together, and he drifted off to sleep.

_That night he dreamed of Dragons. He dreamt that he was flying high in the skies above Winterfell, he saw Robb, Bran and Arya staring up in the sky towards him. “Look at me, look I am no bastard” he yelled as he brought his dragon flew lower over the castle. They looked up at him in amazement, Jon could see the wonder in their eyes. Then he watched as their eyes turned wide in horror, as they were consumed by Dragonflame._

Jon awoke with a start, his chest heaving and dripping with sweat. The first rays of sunlight had started to creep through the window. He looked into the fireplace, the fire had long since gone out. “It was just a dream” he said to himself. Ghost looked up at him as he said the words, Jon could have sworn his wolf was mocking him.

“Come boy, let’s head to the kitchens. I didn’t eat last night and neither did you” he said. He got up and realised he hadn’t undressed last night, he found his shoes and quickly left his room and made his way through the castle.

As he neared the kitchens, the smell of frying food caused his stomach to rumble noisily. Fortunately, this meant the castle servants were already awake, and Jon had no problem securing food for himself and Ghost. He sat outside opposite the stables as he ate his bacon, his mind going over the events of last night. _Rhaegar and Lyanna are my parents_. The thought made him shudder, he had never met these people and he knew nothing about them

By the time he had finished eating, more people had awoken, and the castle became busier. He quickly headed back to his room, he didn’t want to speak to anyone today.

Jon realised he couldn’t stay here. Everything about the room and the castle was a reminder of the lies he had been told his entire life. He thought of Lady Catelyn and how she had treated him, the thought filled him with rage. She had no right to treat him like that, it’s only because Lord Stark didn’t tell the truth that she treated him this way. He started to pack some belongings. He didn’t take much, he didn’t want to be slowed down. Halfway through he heard a knock on the door and he froze. He didn’t want to answer, and he hoped the person would think he was not here and walk away.

Unfortunately, he had no such luck. The door opened, and he turned to face his father, no his uncle, no _Lord Stark_. He turned away sharply and tried to hide his bag behind his body.
“Jon, I am sorry. I know you are angry that I didn’t tell you sooner and I am so sorry. I couldn’t let you join the Night’s watch. It is a place for criminals and you had no place there. Lya’s son deserved better,"

“So, you did it for her, not for me,” Jon snapped. It felt good to release some of his anger, but to twinge of sadness in his uncle’s face caused him to relent slightly.

“Jon, I am sorry. I understand if you don’t want to be here, but please don’t join the Night’s watch. I truly believe you deserve better,”

“Then what would you have me do, where can I go, we both know I can’t stay. Especially after what you told me,”

Ned sighed.

“I have a plan. Lord Manderly’s son is here, I plan to send you to Essos. They won’t care of your birth or of your surname. You can travel and see the free cities and so much more of the world. “You could be a guard for a merchant, or become a sellsword and travel from place to place. You know the Night’s watch vows Jon, don’t give up your chance of living your own life,” he pleaded

Jon stood silently and watched. His mind racing with the possibilities. He had never considered a life beyond the narrow sea. He recalled Maester Luwin’s lessons, he could travel to Volantis, Lys or Braavos. The thought caused some of his anger to be replaced with excitement.

“Lord Manderly’s son is returning to White Harbour today, from there, he can take you to Essos. I will make sure of it,”

Jon nodded his head slowly. A smile slowly coming to his face and some of his anger had started to fade.

The Princess of Dragonstone

Daenerys hated her birthday. She never enjoyed the day as Viserys always took it upon himself to remind her how much better the day would have been if they were back home in Westeros. He blamed her for this, saying that if she had been born earlier, Rhaegar would have married her and not ran off with the Stark slut. She pushed those dark thoughts to the side and opened the doors to her room to allow the slaves to enter.

She let them past as they entered her room and laid out a dress. No doubt it was yet another gift from Illyrio.

“This dress was picked out by the magister for you” the slaves said to Dany. “he believes it will bring out the colour in your eyes,”

With their help, Daenerys pulled on the dress. They were right, the dress was beautiful. She ran her fingers over the fabric and it felt like water slipping through her fingers. The door to her room suddenly burst open and Viserys strode in loudly.

“Out” he ordered to the slave girls, who quickly scurried to the exit not meeting his eyes.

He walked around his sister, eyeing her like she was a piece of meet.

“You look nice sweet sister” he said with a sneer “Come, your birthday feast awaits” He offered his arm to Daenerys and she reluctantly took it.
He led her through the manse and out to the gardens where a feast had been laid out to celebrate her 18th birthday. She was spotted by their host, Illyrio who smiled and walked over.

“Happy birthday princess” he said with a smile. “You look as beautiful as always”

Daenerys smiled politely but Viserys started to grip her arm tighter in anger. It may have been her birthday, but she knew Viserys did not like to be upstaged.

“Unfortunately, princess, Lord Naerys will not be joining us today. He had to leave to attend to urgent business in the harbour, he offers his apologies” said Illyrio. Daenerys smile faltered and she was afraid to look at Viserys. Viserys always found a way to be crueler when he wasn’t here.

“But let us continue with the festivities!” he shouted, and he motioned for the slaves to start moving serving their food. She took a seat at the table with Illyrio to her left and Viserys to her right. She stayed quiet during the meal, preferring to focus on the roasted boar that was in front of her than engage in conversation with her brother.

Thankfully, the meal passed without incidence. Viserys had started to drink and soon she could hear the alcohol begin to slur his words. She noticed that he had started to leer at some of the servants as they brought him more wine, his hands beginning to wander inappropriately all over their bodies. The sight made Daenerys’s skin crawl.

Soon it was time for the gifts. Viserys had gifted her a blue silk dress, she was sure it was stolen from Illyrio but she nodded her head politely all the same. The sooner the ceremony was over the sooner she could leave. Lord Naerys had gifted her a book about Aegon’s conquest. This made her happy, she loved to read and to lose herself in the pages. To be like the princesses in the stories, living in a castle with a kind husband. She had this dream many times, he was a handsome man with dark curly hair but she could never see his face, it was always a mystery. Instead she lived a life on the run, moving from place to place, running from the usurpers hired knives.

She was about to take her leave of the ceremony when she noticed the slaves carrying a wooden chest towards her table. She put the book down and looked towards Illyrio in confusion. The magister saw the look on her face and smiled

“Now princess, my gift for you” he said to her as the box was placed on the table before her. Daenerys opened the box and her eyes widened in amazement.

“Behold princess, three dragon eggs” the magister said proudly. Daenerys stared at the eggs in amazement. One egg was a deep green, with brown flecks. Another egg was pale cream, streaked with gold. The final egg was as dark as the night, with red swirls. Daenerys was speechless.

“Thank you magister, you are far too kind” she finally managed. This time the smile she gave him was genuine and she hoped he understood her gratitude.

“How dare you!” screeched Viserys. “These eggs should have been given to me! I would sell them and buy myself an army. Instead you gift these eggs to this girl who is too stupid to understand their value!” Viserys had stood up, knocking his chair to the floor in the process.

He looked at her, his purple eyes reduced to slits. “Give them here sister. Now,” he demanded. When she didn’t move, he slapped her.

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“Now my prince, Lord Naerys will not be happy if he knows you have taken your sisters gift,” warned Illyrio cautiously. Viserys looked at him, seething with rage but he understood the magister’s words. He released his grasp on Daenerys and stormed away.
Daenerys looked thankfully at the magister and then at her eggs. She quickly gathered up her gifts and hurried back to her room making sure to lock the door behind her. She took out her eggs placed them at the foot of her bed. Then she got the book and began to read. It was the happiest birthday in Daenerys’s life.

The Lord of Winterfell

“I guess this is goodbye,” Jon said evenly as he offered his hand. Ned could tell that beneath the calm exterior, Jon was still angry and upset.

Ned looked at the outstretched hand and instead pulled Jon into an embrace, one that was not returned

“I have written letters, so they have something to remember me by,” Jon handed over a small stack of letters and then got onto his horse, he called for Ghost and his wolf obediently ran to his side

“Jon remember, as long as I am Lord of Winterfell, you are always welcome here,”

“Thank you, Lord Stark,” he said stiffly

Jon nodded his head. “Ready to go?” he heard Wendel Manderly call as he climbed onto his horse.

Jon gave a quick curt nod and together, they rode out of Winterfell.

Ned watched them ride away with a strange feeling building inside him. He had finally told Jon the truth, and his conscience should have been clear. Yet his mind flashed back to that second letter, and the guilt started to return.

He knew where he was sending Jon and he hoped that he hadn’t made a grave mistake.
The magisters daughter is a merchant ship that frequently travels from Pentos to White Harbour, it’s black and blue sails were adorned with the picture of a young maiden smiling. The captain was a short Braavosi and was one of the few members of the crew who spoke the common tongue. Due to his frequent time on the sea travelling to white Harbour, he had become good friends with Lord Manderly and he was more than willingly to let Jon and Wendel travel on his ship. Jon’s cabin was small, a little smaller than his room in Winterfell but it didn’t bother him since it was only temporary.

Wendel Manderly was a large man, and an anointed knight. He spoke in a low booming voice and he drank more than Jon thought was physically possible. During their voyage he made it his mission to test Jon’s combat skills. Every morning they sparred on the deck and despite his size, he moved with an almost impossible speed. Jon thought himself to be a good swordsman, he had spent years training with Robb and Theon under the watchful eye of Ser Rodrick the master at arms but Wendel did not fight like a Westerosi. He used the weapons and techniques found in Essos which threw Jon off guard. Dothraki Arakhs, shortswords and spears, all were new weapons that Jon had to learn how to fight against.

After the first week on the ship, Jon could hold his own against him with a sword and by the end of the second he had managed to go an entire session without being knocked to the floor. He learned and adapted quickly and realised that this would be good practice for his future. When he wasn’t practicing, he spent most of his time wandering the deck or in his room, lost in his thoughts.

He tried to remember all the stories of his mother but he could hardly remember hearing any. His father, no Lord Stark had scarcely mentioned his sister. Any time someone mentioned him, his eyes would close, and the topic was quickly changed. At the thought of Lord Stark Jon started to feel some of his anger returning, for seventeen years he kept this secret from him. He let his wife hate him because he couldn’t trust her with the truth. It wasn’t fair

His anger then turned to Rhaegar, he couldn’t even picture his face. With his mother he had a stone statue, with his father he had nothing. His mind tried to come up with an image of the mysterious silver prince but all he could see was a blur. Rhaegar’s actions had started a rebellion, thousands of people had died because of them. His uncle, his grandfather all died because of Rhaegar. He abandoned his wife and children, he was the crown prince, he should have known better.
Then he thought of his siblings, no cousins. Robb and Arya would treat him the same, they had always accepted him. Sansa had never liked him, she took after Lady Catelyn in that aspect. If he saw them again what would he tell them? Would he tell them? *Will I ever see them again?* He hadn’t thought that far ahead truthfully. Maybe if he works hard and saved his coin he could make a trip back, at least once. He regretted leaving the way he did, they deserved better from him.

Jon was disturbed from his thoughts by a knock on his door. He sat up to see that Wendel had entered.

“The captain tells me we should dock in Pentos tomorrow,” Wendel said as entered Jon’s room.

“Good,” Jon replied. At first, Jon had disliked his time on the ship, he struggled to understand how people could spend most of their lives sailing, but after a while he began to appreciate it. The rocking of the sea was calming and helped him sleep at night.

“Fancy another spar today?” Wendel asked with a sly grin. Jon groaned in frustration.

“Aye don’t worry Jon, you’re better than you think. You’re a fast learner and perhaps one day, you’ll actually be able to knock me to the floor,”

Jon smiled at the jest, “Perhaps today is that day,”

“Well we’re never going to find out if you sit in your room sulking all day like a love-struck maid,”

“I’ll come up in a few minutes Wendel,” Jon said as Wendel left the room. Jon reached under his bed and pulled out the parcel. It was still unopened. Jon had debated whether he should open it many times over the past few days.

His fingers toyed with the edges of the parcel when he heard another knock on his door, it was Wendel again.

“Hurry up Jon,” he said. Jon quickly put the package away and left his cabin. The package would have to wait for another day.
The day was shaping up to be another hot one. Donequor Naerys looked out into the harbour as he watched the ships come into port. From the balcony he could see workers unloading their ships. The port of Pentos was always busy, everything from silks to spices could be found in the port. He watched as merchants found their ships and collected their goods. Crates were moved onto carts and attached to horses and the red priests had started to sing on their way to the temple. He drank a cup of lemon tea as he waited.

“Morning,” he heard a happy voice, it was Caspiro casually sauntering into the room with his hands in his pockets and his black hair slicked back. Caspiro was a small, stocky man who was his partner. They had met in the alleyways of Volantis, both searching for the same hidden treasures. At first, they had been opponents, but gradually as time passed they realised that they worked better together. Caspiro would steal the valuables and then Donequor would return them for a fee, as their reputation grew and grew and they decided to branch out into other enterprises. Preferring to spend all their time going after high value items, it’s how they ended up in the manse of Magister Nevio, waiting to complete their deal.

“You’re late,” he replied, unhappy.

“I would have thought you would have slept longer, we have been travelling for two weeks,” Caspiro objected, “What’s your hurry? Eager to see your precious little princess?”

He turned and stared at him and Caspiro raised his hand in apology. Truthfully, he had been eager to return to the princess, he hated leaving her alone when he had to go away.

“Enough talk, I see you have the chest, let’s take it to the magister and get paid. I’m sure you’d rather spend your time with someone other than me for a change,“

Caspiro nodded and together they walked through the manse. They entered a beautiful garden with a fountain in the middle where they found the magister breaking his fast.
“Hello my friends!” he spoke loudly, his voice carrying across the garden. “I hope my servants made sure everything was to your comfort?”, the evil glint in the magisters eye disgusted Naerys.

“Everything was fine,” he replied, his voice even. “We have brought what you asked,” and he motioned to the chest.

“Very well,” he nodded and Caspiro opened the chest. Inside, was a collection of gemstones and a beautiful chestplate. The metal shimmered in the light and the Magister was pleased. He wiped the grease off his chubby fingers and picked up the items to inspect them, checking for any defects.

“Very good, my friends in Westeros will pay a lot of coin for armour as good as this. The armourer’s in Qohor are well renown,” he said impressed. “How did you persuade them to part with this fine work?”

“We traded for it,” Caspiro gave a tight smile

“No matter, it will be on a ship to Westeros soon enough,” the magister motioned to one of his servants and they brought him a smaller box. He reached inside and brought out 5 medium sized pouches, filled with gold.

“Once again, it was a pleasure doing business with you Naerys, feel free to spend some more time around the manse;”

He offered his hand, “I look forward to working with you again in the future, Magister Nevio”

They shook hands and Naerys grimaced slightly. His body had still not recovered from that chest injury years ago.

Once they had left the garden, he handed over two bags of coin to Caspiro. “Make sure the men are paid equally. Don’t spend it all at once this time”

Caspiro smirked “So what do you plan to do with your coin this time?”

*Buy more sellswords and sellsails of course.*
“Maybe, I’ll work towards finding that wife you so frequently ask me about,”

“A wife? You’ll have to smile more if you hope of finding yourself a wife,” he replied with a laugh. “Until next time my friend,”

“Until next time,” Naerys left the manse and started the walk towards the harbour. He hoped to find some information from the sailors or deckhands. Information of Westeros, or which sellsword companies were available. It had been weeks since he had an update from Westeros, the King was still fat and the realm was at peace, soon that will change. The red priests have told me that my time will soon come

He walked aimlessly through the harbour with no route in mind. It was midday and the Pentoshi heat was starting to become unbearable. He unbuttoned the top of his shirt and stopped at a stall to buy himself a drink. He leaned against a wall in the shade of an archway and he watched the people carry out their business. A flash of white flew across his vision. It was a white dog, a beautiful animal in truth. The dog seemed to notice him staring and then stopped in front of him. As he got a closer look at the dog he realised he was mistaken at first, this animal was much bigger than a dog, and the eyes.

No dog had bright red eyes.

Naerys stared into those red eyes transfixed. Suddenly the animal sprinted away, he followed it and he saw the animals master. The sight of the boy made his heart stop. It was impossible. He must have been mistaken. The animal, the boy, it made sense, but it was impossible. They shouldn’t be here

He put his drink down and made to follow. He had to find out who this boy was.

The Lost Prince

Pentos was hot and Jon wasn’t used to it.

“Wendel, where are we going?” Jon asked for the millionth time as they walked seemingly aimlessly around the harbour
“Oh, I know a few places where we can stay. Father sends me here often enough,” Wendel didn’t seem bothered by Jon’s discomfort, or in any particular hurry to reach their destination.

“Any chance we can go somewhere cooler?”

“You could wear less layers, we aren’t in the north anymore,” Wendell replied with a wry smile. “We’re in Pentos Jon, you’ve never been here before, relax and look at the sights. If we’re lucky we can even see a mummer’s trope perform, it’s usually somewhere around these parts,”

He continued walking happily and started to whistle a tune

“If you don’t want to see any mummers, that lady over there seems to be eyeing you keenly, perhaps she can help you relax,” Wendel said with a grin. Jon blushed heavily and avoided the seductive looks of the woman with shoulder length silver hair.

Wendel laughed loudly at his embarrassment

“What’s the matter boy? You’ll be here for a while, I’m sure you’ll bed your share of women. Why not get an early start? She looks like she’s from Lys, you should consider yourself especially lucky,”

Realising that he didn’t want to indulge in this conversation, Jon started to observe the people around him, it was something he would have to get used to. On the ship, Wendel had given him a brief overview of the type of people to expect in the free cities. He spotted Tyroshi’s with their colourful hair, of Lyseni with their silver hair and their lilac eyes and Norvoshi with their spectacular tapestries. He also noticed the abundance of slaves in the city.

“Wendel, I thought slavery was banned in Pentos?” Jon asked, recalling his lessons with Maester Luwin.

“Yes, slavery is banned, and technically, no one here is a slave. The law says that they are freedmen. However, they are indebted to their masters, so they are not truly free to leave and live their own lives,” Wendell replied grimly.

Jon shook his head in disgust, slavery was rightfully banned in Westeros and he could not believe
people still practiced it here.

“Essos is not Westeros Jon this is something you’ll have to get used to,” he sighed, “Here we are, I know this man,” Jon walked a few paces behind him as Wendel walked up to the man from Volantis. As they spoke, Jon again started to observe his surroundings. If he was to work as a household guard, he would have to get used to this.

“Jon, call your wolf, best to keep him by your side where you can see him,” Wendel told him as he tossed over an apple.

Jon bit into the apple and the juices flooded into his mouth. He listened into the conversation that Wendel was having. Apparently the Dothraki were at war with each other. The company of the cat and the Bright Banners were engaged in a war outside of Braavos and the golden company had broken their contract with Myr, leaving the city exposed.

Jon briefly recalled the name of the Golden Company, they fought for the Blackfyres during their rebellions. Wendel looked shocked that they had broken contract, he would have to ask why later.

Jon felt that he was being watched. He noticed the man across the market square behind a stall. “Ghost to me,” Jon commanded. The direwolf quickly came to his side. Jon ruffled his hand through his fur. When he looked up again, the man was gone.

“Stay close Ghost,” Jon said. Wendell paid the merchant and they continued their travels.

“Ok, we’ll head towards some of the richer merchants in town to see if they’re looking for a guard. They’ll want a demonstration so please remember everything you’ve learned, my reputation is at stake,”

“Wendel, I think we’re being followed,”

“What makes you say that?” he asked cautiously.

“There was a man, I didn’t get a good look at him, but he had purple eyes and dark hair,”
“Hmm, He was probably curious about your wolf. He’s an unusual creature and bound to attract attention,” Jon still looked uncertain, “but I’ll keep an eye out,”

“Why is it such a surprise that the golden company broke their contract? They’re sellswords, they have no loyalty,”

Wendel gave a snort of laughter. “It seems your castle lessons were incorrect. The Golden Company are one of the most prestigious sellsword companies in Essos. Their motto is ‘Our word is as good as gold’ and they haven’t broken a contract to date,”

They turned another corner. This street seemed to contain taverns and inns.

“Why have they broken their contract now?”

“How should I know? Their commanders didn’t exactly send me a raven,”

They walked on in silence. They had reached a quieter part of the city. There were less traders here and Jon was starting to feel uneasy. He turned his head to look behind him and he saw the man again. Jon slowed down slightly, and then tapped Wendell on the elbow, getting him to turn around.

“Wendel, can you help me tie my boot?” Jon asked slowly, his eyes focused onto Wendell, hoping he understood that there was more behind this strange request. Wendel nodded and slowly bent down, looking back in the direction they came. He jumped slightly, then slowly stood back up.

“I see him Jon, let’s get out of here,” Wendell moved quickly now. Jon had to jog to keep pace with his longer strides. He weaved his way through the streets and alleyways until he suddenly stopped. They had reached a dead end.

They turned around looking for another way, but the man stood there blocking their path.

“Look, I don’t want any trouble,” The man said as he held up his hands, “I just have a few questions,”
“Bugger your questions. I know your type, you’re a thief,” Wendel pushed in front of Jon, his hand reaching for the pommel of his sword. Jon slowly reached down for his. Ghost curiously, remained calm.

“I am no thief. I just want to talk. That’s a peculiar animal isn’t it?” he asked Jon. “At first, I thought it was a dog, but it’s too big and no dog has eyes of that colour,”

“Oh, so you’re a poacher as well? You’re probably looking to kill us and sell his fur,” Wendel continued to advance. The man had dropped his hands and he slowly moved towards his own weapon. The two men were almost within striking distance. Jon had drawn his sword as well. Ghost however was not interested in the confrontation that was taking place.

“Enough talk, either let us pass or I will force my way,” Wendel was within striking range and Jon felt time slow down. He saw a flash of silver and then he saw Wendel collapse, clutching a knife that had been thrown into his stomach

Jon watched frozen as blood started to pour out of him. The man himself had not moved, and he quickly turned to face the entrance of the alley.

“Caspiro! What are you doing?” he yelled.

“Saving you,” and he drew for his second knife

“No! Don’t hurt him anymore. We can still save him,”

“Boy, grab that piece of wood behind him, we can use it as a stretcher, I have a friend who can help him,”

Jon stood still, his hand still on his sword

“Why?” He asked, “Why should I trust you, how do I know you and your friend won’t kill me next?”

“I am trying to save your friend. You’re not from here and you don’t look like you would last long
here without him. We will carry the stretcher and you still have your sword and your wolf, we couldn’t hurt you,”

Jon didn’t trust the men, but he knew they were right. Jon’s chances of survival in Essos would decrease dramatically if Wendel died.

They hauled Wendel onto their makeshift stretcher and carried him back through the streets. Wendel was moaning and writhing in pain

“Boy, keep pressure on the wound to try and stop the bleeding,” the man told him.

They travelled quickly through the streets until they reached a big beautiful mansion. The guards at the gates clearly recognised the man and let them inside.

“Illyrio! Fetch me Illyrio!” the man shouted as they reached the courtyard “Fetch me a damn healer aswell!”

Jon watched as the servants, no slaves, carried out the orders. A short while later, they took the stretcher and headed inside. Wendel had stopped moaning and Jon feared the worst. The man turned and angrily spoke to his companion, cursing him for his actions. Caspiro looked confused and left angrily.

Then they were alone in the courtyard, Jon and this mystery man. The man turned to face him, purple eyes locked onto grey. It was Jon who spoke first.

“Right, so who the fuck are you?”

The Princess of Dragonstone

Daenerys was in the gardens of Illyrio’s mansion. She sat on a bench eating some lemon cakes, in the distance she could faintly hear the red priests singing their songs. She hadn’t seen Viserys in the days following her birthday, unfortunately, she guessed that this meant that he had been taking his anger out on the servants here. The thought made Daenerys sick to her stomach but there was nothing she could do to help them. Sometimes she wished she could be like the Targaryen Queens of old with their dragons, then she would put a stop to slavery but she was not. She was an exiled
Targaryen princess with nothing but three petrified dragon eggs.

“Hello sweet sister,” she heard Viserys and her good mood immediately turned sour. She closed her book and turned to face him. “I haven’t you seen you in a few days,”

Daenerys didn’t respond. She didn’t want to say anything that could set him up.

“Stand up sister, let me look at the beautiful woman that you have become,” He gripped her by the shoulders and roughly pulled her up. Daenerys winced in pain.

“You should eat more, sister. Your future husband will want a woman, not a little girl,”

The thought caused Daenerys to shudder. Viserys had been threatening to force her into a marriage for years.

“I don’t know why you look so upset sister. Everyone else is contributing to our plan. I have a betrothal. Naerys is buying armies. What are you doing sweet sister?” He asked. Daenerys could see the anger building behind his eyes.

“It’s only fair that you should help in some way. Since we are family,”

“What do you want?” Daenerys finally spoke.

“What is mine. Those eggs should be mine by rights. We could buy half the sellsword companies in Essos if we had them. Instead you do nothing with them. You just sit and look at them. Why sweet sister, why?” he asked and he started to pinch and pull her skin. Daenerys whimpered in pain.

“I’ll tell you why, it’s because you are a stupid little girl and you would do better to give them to me because I know what to do with them,”

“No,” Daenerys said quietly. She would not give up her eggs. They were precious. She had felt a connection with the petrified eggs, a connection she could not describe. The rationale voice knew that the eggs were never going to hatch, but she couldn’t help but hope.
Viserys quickly drew back his hand as if to slap her but he heard a low growl and stopped. She turned her head towards the noise and saw a white dog with ruby red eyes, its teeth bared menacingly. Viserys let go of his sister and reached towards his sword, only to find that he did not have it. He started to back away from the wolf, throwing his sister one more scathing look.

“We will continue this conversation later sweet sister,” he called as he left. Daenerys watched him leave and then turned to look for the dog, only to find that he had left as silently as he arrived. Deciding not to chance her luck further, she picked up her things and ran through the manse to her room.

She entered her room, bolted the door and slid to the floor. Her heart beating quickly, she was afraid of Viserys and what he would do to her in his angry moods. She was afraid that sooner or later, he would act on some of those angry thoughts. Once he had threatened to sell her to a Dothraki horse lord and she shuddered at the thought. She crossed the room and opened the chest containing the dragon eggs. She picked out the black egg and slowly started to caress it. The motion helped to calm her down. She traced the patterns in the egg and for a moment, she thought she felt movement. Before she could dwell on the thought more, she heard a knock on the door.

At first she thought it was Viserys and she immediately tensed, but the knock was soft, it was a servant. Still, she hid away her eggs and cautiously opened the door.

“Princess, Lord Naerys requests your presence in his solar,” the servant said with a bow. Daenerys nodded in thanks. Her heart skipped a beat, he was back and she was happy. Viserys would leave her alone. She skipped through the halls, all the way to his solar. She opened the door and was greeted by a peculiar sight.

Lord Naerys was sat behind the desk. Across the floor lay the large dog with ruby red eyes and across from him, sat a boy, no, a young man, who looked like he had seen a ghost.
The Lord of Winterfell sat in the Godswood with his back to the heart tree, he was cleaning his greatsword, Ice. The godswood was always warmer than the surrounding area and today was no exception. He studied his reflection in the pool of water opposite him, his hair was longer and he could see a few strands of grey starting to appear around the edges. As he looked closer, he could see the tightness around his eyes and wrinkles forming. He sat back with a sigh, he was getting older, this was to be expected.

He had to organise betrothals, Robb was seventeen now and it was time for him to be wed. Lord Manderly had offered either of his granddaughters as a potential match but Ned was unsure. House Manderly may have been a northern house, but they did not practice all the northern ways. They had knights and perhaps most importantly, they followed the faith of the seven. His own bannermen had quietly protested when he married Catelyn, they said she was too southern for the Lord of Winterfell. Lord Karstark had a daughter he remembered, Alys Karstark, she would be a suitable match, she’s a northern girl who is well educated in their ways and practices.

Sansa had dreams of going south and marrying a noble lord. She dreamed of living in a beautiful southern castle that held Tourneys and hosted singers. He wondered which southern houses would have a son of age to marry. The crown prince was of similar age he recalled, although he probably had offers from across the realm. Then they were Tyrells, he knew they had a few sons but he did not know their age, he would have to ask Maester Luwin.

He picked up the whetstone and went back to cleaning and sharpening his sword. He enjoyed these moments, it was calm and quiet and he was free from the troubles of being a lord.

“My Lord, Benjen Stark is here,” he turned his head and saw a guardsman. Ned gave him a nod and got up with a sigh, he sheathed the sword and made his way out of the Godswood. He headed towards the yard, he was greeted by a sight that warmed his heart. Benjen stood clad all in black, being embraced by all his children, no doubt Arya and Bran were begging to hear stories of his ranging’s beyond the wall. He walked forward, and he could start to here details of their conversation

“Uncle Benjen, is it true that there are mammoths and giants beyond the wall?”

“Don’t be *stupid* Bran, giants and mammoths are made up. You need to stop listening to old nans stories,” Arya snapped at him
“I am not stupid, you should listen to Old Nan more, all good stories have some truth in them,”

“Benjen!” he shouted stepping in before they continued to bicker. His brother turned his head towards him and greeted him with a warm smile of his own.

“Brother!” he returned and walked over and embraced him. “It’s been too long. They’re so big now, the littlest one was only a babe when I came here last,”

“Aye it has, they’re becoming a handful. I presume you’ve been busy at the wall?”

“Yes, I led a ranging beyond the wall, I came here as soon as I got back and saw your message,” his face turned serious then.

“Let’s head to my solar, there is much to discuss,” Benjen nodded and they walked briskly through the castle to his solar. Thankfully his steward and lit his fire and the room was pleasantly warm. He shook off his fur cloak and poured out some ale to drink, he offered a cup to Benjen who took it gratefully.

“Are you hungry? I could send for food if you are,”

“No no, I’ll be fine, I’ll eat with the kids later,” he responded as he sat down opposite him. Taking a long drink. “This is good, better than the piss we have at the wall,” he took another sip before setting the cup down on the table.

“You’ve never petitioned Lord Commander Mormont for leave so I could return to Winterfell, this must be serious,”

Ned took a moment before responding,

“He knows. Jon knows about Lyanna and Rhaegar,”

Benjen took another sip of his drink and nodded slowly.
“How did he take it?”

“Not well. I told him after he came to me begging to join you at the wall. I think he’s angry that I kept it from him for so long.”

“You did,”

“There was no good time to tell him Ben, it would have torn him apart,”

“It was going to tear him apart anyway. You don’t want him to join the watch do you,”

“No. I’ve seen it, not all the men are like you. Lyanna’s son has no place there. You knew her better than most, she would not have wanted this,”

“Aye you’re right. The wall is no place for him, where is he now, I’ll speak to him,” he stood and began to walk to the door.

“You can’t,” Ned gave a loud sigh and sat back in his chair. Benjen gave him a confused look

“Why can’t I speak to my nephew?”

“He’s not here. I sent him to Pentos,” he chanced a glance at Benjen and he was greeted with a disbelieving stare

“You did what? What on earth would possess you to send the boy to Pentos?” he crossed over to stand on the opposite side of the desk

“I wanted a better life than him that at the wall. I couldn’t give that to him here, but in Essos he could have a fresh start,”

“A fresh start in Essos? A fresh start doing what? What does he know about Essos?”
“He could be a household guard, or work for a sellsword…”

Benjen gave a cruel laugh

“I can’t believe you. You said you want a better life for him so you send him to Essos. So he can be butchered by sellswords or the dothraki? Can he even speak any of their languages? Tell me brother, would Lyanna be happy with what you’ve done?” Benjen angrily paced around the room.

Ned sighed in frustration. What he did was incredibly risky, but he had to take the chance

“Ben, the Targaryen children are in Pentos,” and Benjen stopped his pacing and looked at him in shock. If the situation wasn’t so serious, he would have laughed at the expression on his brother’s face, eyes wide, mouth open in shock. He closed his mouth and started to shake his head

“How do you know,” he said quietly.

“I received a note, it came from a merchant who travelled to White Harbour, Lord Manderly heard the news and passed the information on to me, he said it was up to his liege lord to report this information to the king,”

“Did you?” Ned raised an eyebrow in surprise, “report it to the King?”

“No,” he replied quietly and Benjen let out a sigh of relief.

“So that’s why you did it. You send him to Essos in the hope that he runs into his long-lost aunt and uncle who don’t even know he exists and then what? You’ve looked at him everyday for the last seventeen years Ned, he looks like a Stark through and through. Do you expect them to accept him with open arms? Do you expect him to join their life on the run from that pig’s assassins?”

Ned kept quiet, he would let Benjen say his piece
“You should have gone with him at least,”

Ned took a deep drink of ale. If only Benjen knew how close he was to following after the boy. “Aye I should have, but he wanted his space. Going with him would have angered him further,”

“So you sent him alone?”

“No, he went with Wendel Manderly. He frequently travels to Pentos, Braavos, those places. I met the man himself, he handles himself well, he knows his way about with a sword. He speaks their language and Lord Manderly trusts him. He will make sure Jon is safe,”

Benjen rubbed his temples and finished his drink. “For what it’s worth, I think you’re going to regret this. I think you do regret this, but there is nothing we can do now. All we can do is hope Jon is safe,” he stood up and left the solar, letting the door swing shut after him

Ned sat back in his chair and drained his cup of ale, of course he regretted sending the boy to Essos. He had half a mind to travel after him and bring him home. He reached into his draw and pulled out a map of Essos and the free cities, Pentos was not too far he realised. Perhaps only a few weeks travel and he would be there. Then he would have to hope that he was still in Pentos when he arrived

He was interrupted by a knock on his door. “Enter,” he said calmly as he calmly slid away the papers he was holding. It was his wife, their relationship had soured since Jon left, a part of himself blamed her for bullying him into letting Jon leave. Nevertheless, he needed her now.

“My lady,” he greeted with a smile, “I was just about to come and find you, I have urgent business that would require me to leave Winterfell for a few weeks. I will need you to stay here and help Robb rule in my stead,”

Ned was puzzled to see the concerned look on his wife’s face. Perhaps the damage to their relationship was deeper than he had thought, he would have to work to fix that.

“My lady?” he asked when she did not respond

“Ned my love, It’s Jon Arryn, he died,” she said quietly and handed over a scroll “A raven arrived
from Kingslanding. The King rides north with his court, he intends to name you hand of the King.”

*Hand of the bloody King?*

“I don’t want it, I didn’t want it then and I don’t want it now,” he said firmly.

“You know as well that you cannot refuse the King in this, he is bringing his court. Think of the children, think of Sansa, he may offer a betrothal to the crown prince. Think of it, our grandson will be King,”

Ned sighed in frustration. *A grandson? I don’t even know where Jon is and she wants me to think of a Grandson.*

“Very well my lady, prepare the castle for the arrival of the King and his court. Send the boys out to the wolfswood to hunt. Make sure we are stocked up on wine as well, it would not do to run out with the King here,”

She nodded and left the room. Ned went and filled his cup with more ale, and drained the entire cup in one. Instead of heading to Pentos to bring Jon home, he would be heading to the cesspit known as Kingslanding.

*The Lost Prince*

They walked in silence through the hallways. Jon was wary of the man, he was trying to save Wendel but had he not followed them, Wendel would not have gotten hurt in the first place. Perhaps most infuriatingly of all, Ghost had not shared his unease about this man, even running off on his own to explore the manse. The man pushed open an oak door and they entered what Jon assumed to be the solar. The man walked to the other side of the desk and sat down and motioned for Jon to do the same.
“So you are probably wondering why I followed you today?” he asked. Jon didn’t reply, he would only speak when he had to

“It started with your dog, or should I say wolf. I saw him in the harbour today and the colour of his eyes threw me off guard. Then he ran back to you and I saw your face, I haven’t seen a face like yours in years,”

Jon remained silent

“I immediately knew you weren’t from here. You dress like a man from Westeros, like a northerner,” he said. Jon was trying to build a profile of this man. Whilst he was talking Jon was observing. Earlier, the man spoke with a false accent, now his true voice was coming through. Jon couldn’t place the accent, but he guessed that he was from Westeros, probably from the south.

“Then I looked again at the wolf and the bond you two shared. I have never seen a man control a wolf as well as you, but then again, you are a northerner, and wolves are more common in the north,” Jon was beginning to feel uncomfortable. The man clearly knew a lot about him and he didn’t know anything about him.

“Then I saw your face again and my heart stopped. You have her face,”

“Her face?” Jon asked curiosity starting to get the better of him.

“Yes her face. It all started to make sense to me, but I couldn’t believe it. The direwolf, the face, your clothes. You are a Stark aren’t you?”

Jon was dumbfounded, and his face showed it. He quickly tried to find a neutral face and he silently cursed himself for showing his surprise. The man noticed Jon’s face and grew excited, he had realised that his suspicions were correct.

“So tell me, what is a Stark of Winterfell, doing all the way in Pentos? Surely Lord Stark would not send one of his children so far from home with only one man for company?”

Jon’s anger returned after he heard that last part. He was once again reminded of the lies he was told.
“No, I am many things but I am not Lord Starks son,” Jon said angrily. He expected the man to be discouraged by this but instead his eyes opened in shock and then they were suddenly filled with tears

“No, I am many things but I am not Lord Starks son,” Jon said angrily. He expected the man to be discouraged by this but instead his eyes opened in shock and then they were suddenly filled with tears

“By gods…. You’re Lyanna’s son aren’t you?” he asked quietly, his voice trembling "Of course...your age...you would be the right age...."

Jon’s anger disappeared and was quickly replaced by fear. How could this man know his mother had a son?

“Enough with these games. Who are you?” Jon asked uneasily

“I can’t….you won’t believe me,” he said quietly.

“Tell me!” Jon shouted angrily

“Jon, I am your father. I am Rhaegar Targaryen,”

The words hung heavily in the air between. He stared at the lips that uttered the words and waited for them to curve upwards into a smile, to confirm that this was some sort of a joke.

He looked at the man incredulously. A month ago, he had thought Ned Stark was his father. He found out that it was all a lie and then Rhaegar Targaryen, the last dragon, who died years ago was his father. Now he stood, halfway across the world to find this man claiming to be his father. It was impossible

“Lies,” he said quietly. “ Fucking Lies!” he shouted angrily. Jon was fed up now. He had enough, he would find Wendel and when he was healed, if he was healed. They would leave this city for good. He stood up and headed for the door, only to find his path blocked by Ghost

“Move Ghost. Move you stupid wolf we need to leave"

“Jon please stay, I know this is hard for you, but I can prove it,” Jon sat reluctantly, imprisoned by his own direwolf. He opened the door and spoke to a servant quickly. He then crossed to a cupboard
and pulled out a sword.

“This is Blackfyre, our ancestral sword,” he said.

Jon looked at the sword. Valyrian steel he knew immediately, it made his own sword look dull and blunt in comparison.

“You’re a thief, this doesn’t prove anything. This sword was lost years ago. You could have stolen it. You did steal it,” Jon said, dismissing the sword. “Most importantly, Rhaegar Targaryen died on the trident. Robert Baratheon crushed his chest in with his Warhammer and his body fell into the river. Everybody saw the rubies in his armour fly into the air and into the river,” he finished emphatically. He folded his arms across his chest, demanding the man to answer this impossible hurdle.

“Yes, I lost to Robert on the trident,” he said. “Yes, he hit me with his damn Warhammer but that is not the proper story. There are two parts to Roberts Warhammer. The spiked head, and the flat surface on the other side. Everyone assumes that Robert drove the spike into my chest, but it was actually the flat part of his hammer. Had he hit me with the spike, I would have died, it would have pierced my armour and went through my chest, instead he hit me with the flat part. It was still extremely painful, and strong enough to knock me off my feet and into the river, yet the blow itself was not fatal,” The man began to unbutton his shirt as he stood. When he finished he turned to face Jon, his face wide open with horror.

His chest had a massive dent in it and some of his ribs had looked like they healed and set in the wrong position. The broken ribs looked like a set of jagged teeth trying to poke through from beneath his skin. Jon’s mouth fell opened in shock and he was unable to close it

“Impossible, you fell into a river with plate armour on, you should have drowned,” he said shaking his head “Rhaegar had to drown, I don’t know who you are, but you’re not him,”

“Do you believe in prophecy? Or fate?” Jon shook his head. He was a man of the North, he did not have time for that bullshit

“Well I do, it seems the Gods were not finished with me, it seems I still have a role to play. It seems that is why they spared me” Jon looked at him and he had a far away look in his eyes.

“Your hair, Rhaegar had silver hair, he’s a Targaryen,” he said quietly. Of all the things, Jon knew
this was the easiest to explain, but he had to cling to hope. This couldn't be true. The man smirked slightly,

“I dyed by hair, in my line of work the less attention I attract the better,” he paused “Jon why don’t you want to believe me? do you not want to know your father? I can tell you so much,” his voice was soft and inviting

Jon paused. Why was he so reluctant to believe him? For the past few weeks he had been searching for an image of Rhaegar, trying to put a face to the name. Wanting to know why he did what he did, wanting to let his anger out on him for causing a war that killed thousands of people. Now here is a man claiming to be his father and he wouldn’t believe him. Why? Was it his anger? Was it fear?

Suddenly the door opened and in burst a young woman. Whilst her eyes surveyed the room, Jon looked at her. She was beautiful he thought, long silver hair, gorgeous violet eyes and a beautiful smile that lit up the room. Jon had no doubt who she was, Daenerys Targaryen. Her eyes met his and he quickly looked away, embarrassed. Jon was fighting the truth again, this simply could not be true

“Brother, you’re back,” she breathlessly

It’s fucking true

Chapter End Notes

This chapter had the potential to run on a lot longer, so I had to find a place to stop it. I have the next part already written. I'll probably put it up either the 6th or the 7th

As always, let me know what you think, it's my first time writing something and constructive criticism is welcome

Thanks

Sleepy
Chapter Summary

"I used to start fires in the bowels of Casterly Rock and stare at the flames for hours, pretending they were dragonfire. Sometimes I'd imagine my father burning" - Tyrion II

AGOT

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

The Princess of Dragonstone

“You're back,” she said again. Daenerys remembered that she did not know this person, she made a mistake calling him her brother, their secret could be exposed and then they would have to leave.

“I am, please take a seat. This is someone I want you to meet, someone I never thought I'd meet in my life,”

“Oh,” she said sitting down cautiously and glancing at him. “Who is he?”

“Jon,” he began “My mother named me Aegon, but I prefer Jon,” he paused, "My name is Jon," he said firmly

Rhaegar frowned and then smiled proudly

“I didn't choose your name, your mother did, but I'm happy she chose Aegon, what better name for a King. Daenerys, this is my son, my son with Lyanna. I thought he had died when I heard Lyanna had died, but he’s here. Thanks to R’hllor I have found my son again,” Rhaegar finished with a smile.

“Oh” was all she could say again, “So you are my nephew?” she asked and Rhaegar nodded. “It’s nice to meet you Prince Jon,” she said with a small smile. He took her hand in his and his grip was firm but gentle. Jon removed his hand and turned to Rhaegar.
“I don’t want to be a King and I still have more questions for you. Even if the hammer didn’t kill you, you still should not have survived. You should have drowned and if you survived that, you would have been too weak to fend for yourself,” Jon repeated growing frustrated

“Of course,” Rhaegar sighed. “After Robert hit me and I fell into the river, I blacked out. When I awoke, I was washed up somewhere downstream. A strange man found me, I later found out that he was a red priest, he muttered spells, fed me vile potions and chanted into his fires and slowly the pain stopped, and I lived”

“A red priest? Not even a healer? How could he have saved you?”

“He said the Lord of Light guided him. He only said the words, it was the power of the Lord that did the work,”

“Did he know who you were?”

“Maybe he did. I remember waking up in his tent and the first thing I asked was ‘why? Why save me?’ and he said that ‘he saw glory for me in the flames and he knew that the Lord wanted him to save me,’”

She noticed Rhaegar had started to stare off into the distance again, as he always does when he talks about gods and prophecies. She lightly tapped on the desk to get him to focus again

“He cut my hair and told everyone that I was a Lyseni sailor who fought in the war. He smuggled me out of Westeros and took me to Volantis where I continued my recovery at the red temple. I spent several months there, slowly recovering. Soon, I was strong enough to travel on my own. I heard that Viserys and Daenerys had travelled to Essos and it became my mission to find them, it took me years. To support myself I worked as a trader…or a thief, whatever you want to call it. The gold I earned was used to pay for passage on ships, food, places to stay, eventually I had earned enough to stop trading for gold, so I began to trade for information,”

“Information?” Jon asked

“Yes, I wanted to know where they were, or where they were going. Of course, this was difficult, you never knew who to trust. I didn’t know whether people had lied, or whether I had arrived at their safeplace too late. Eventually I found them here around half a year or so ago, this is where we have stayed since, Viserys was stunned to see me. He was always…unusual as a boy but he was never
like this, I fear the stress of living in exile has taken its toll on him...he's different now..."

Dany knew what he wanted to say. Viserys was a bully. After the death of Williem Darry, they were forced to leave his home, the house with the red door and the lemon trees. They had spent the next few years travelling from place to place never staying long because he feared the usurpers' assassins were close behind. Those years running, and hiding had taken their toll on him and he had slowly turned bitter and cruel. When Rhaegar had arrived, Viserys seemed happy to have the brother back that he had idolized. For a time, Dany thought that the kind brother she had once known had returned, but she was quickly proven wrong. As soon as Rhaegar left to go conduct his business, the cruel, evil Viserys returned. Dany realized that he had become obsessed with the idea of becoming King and Rhaegar's arrival meant that dream would never come to pass.

Jon nodded. "The person who owns this place, does he know who you are?" Jon asked cautiously.

"Yes, Magister Illyrio knows who I am,"

"and you trust him?"

Rhaegar paused before answering. Dany had noticed that since his arrival a few months ago, Illyrio had seemed different. He was still generous with his gifts, but he had seemed distant whenever Rhaegar was around.

"Not particularly," he said after considering the question "but I don't have a lot of choices. I do not have enough gold to buy a place of my own, and I don't have enough friends to ensure our protection. For now we stay here, where we are safe," Jon nodded slowly.

"That means you as well Jon, if you want to stay here with me, with us, you can," he offered. Jon looked hesitant and didn't respond.

"At least stay the night," Rhaegar said pleadingly after noticing Jon's hesitation, "Your friend is hurt and we have warm food and a bed for you,"

"Some food and rest would be nice," he conceded.

"Dany, please take Jon to a room, the one opposite yours would be ideal," Daenerys stood and headed for the door.
“Oh, and make sure Viserys doesn’t see him. I’d rather save that conversation for another time.”

She guided him through the manse in an awkward silence. *Should I say something to him? What do I say? He probably doesn’t want to talk to me anyway*

“Um this is your room,” she said quietly “and this is mine” she gestured to the room opposite

“of course, you probably already guessed that because that’s what Rhaegar said,” Daenerys continued awkwardly fumbling over her words. She twisted her mother’s ring nervously

He nodded his thanks and turned to enter his room, his hand was on the handle before he turned back and cautiously asked

“Would you like to eat with me Princess Daenerys?” he asked

“I would like that Prince Jon,” she said, a small smile beginning to form on her face. She made eye contact with one of the servants and requested that food be sent to his room.

“What’s his name?” she asked. Jon’s eyebrows were raised in surprise, he didn’t understand the question. She gestured towards the wolf who had started to explore the room.

“Oh, his name is Ghost,” he said with a smile. He has a nice smile she thought to herself. “He’s a direwolf, the sigil of house Stark. Ghost to me,” he commanded, and the wolf dutifully trotted over. “Ghost this is Princess Daenerys, she is my, urm, Aunt,“

She looked into the ruby red eyes and held her hand out cautiously. The wolf sniffed her hand and then slowly gave it a lick. A warm smile broke out on her face and she slowly ran her hand through his fur

“Wow, he doesn’t usually let other people touch him,” Jon said amazed.

“Well I must be very lucky, he’s lovely,” she said playfully. “He came to me earlier, he’s very
sneaky, is that why you call him Ghost?"

“Something like that,” he said smiling. They heard a knock on the door, the servants had arrived with their meal. They had brought ribs roasted in a crust of garlic and herbs. They took seats on the balcony and ate together. As they ate she pointed out some of the key buildings in the city. She pointed out the temple and they looked and saw the night fires that had been lit by the red priests.

“What’s Winterfell like? I’ve never seen a castle,” she asked in a quiet moment

“Winterfell is an old castle, thousands of years old, some say it was built by the legendary Brandon the Builder with giants to help him,”

“Oh I know him!” she started excitedly “he built the wall and he built Storms end,”

“Huh, I only thought he built Winterfell,” he looked confused “Who told you this?”

“I read it in one of my books, I like to read, but my books didn’t say anything about Giants, are there any Giants in the north?”

He chuckled

“Maybe, Old nan used to tell us stories of Giants and mammoths that live beyond the wall and no,” she had opened her mouth to ask another question “I have not been beyond the wall,”

“Now back to Winterfell, like I said, Winterfell is an old castle. It is built around a natural godswood and over natural hot springs, so we always get hot water for our baths. We have a glasshouse that is used to grow fruit, vegetables and flowers, Sansa loved spending time in the glasshouses. The courtyards were where we trained. Bran and Arya would always have silly little competitions, she was better than him at archery and swordsmanship and it always annoyed him, so he would come up with silly competitions to try and prove that he was better. The castle is protected by two massive stone walls with a moat in-between them, there are more than thirty guard towers on the inner walls. When I was younger, I used to race my brother around the inner walls, we used to head in opposite directions to see who would get back first,”

She noticed that he started to stare off into the distance as he told her the story, he had a wistful look on his face. She realised that she was a little jealous of him, he had grown up in a castle surrounded
by brothers and sisters who loved him, he had a home and a family. The only home she had known was the house with the red door and the lemon tree by her window. She closed her eyes to try and remember it but she had been too young to remember anything else. She wished she could find that house again, her life had been so much simpler then, she was just a little girl with no knowledge of who she was or why she would be constantly looking over her shoulder for the rest of her life.

She noticed that he had gone quiet and had started to fall asleep

“You must be tired, please don’t let me keep you up,” she said standing.

“Aye, it’s been a long day. It’s a lot to think about, I should probably sleep,” Jon said yawning

“Will I see you tomorrow?” she asked cautiously

“Of course, princess,” he said with a wide smile. Dany was certain, she liked it when he smiled.

She gave him a smile in return as she left towards her room. She took one glance back and she noticed him looking at her, he quickly averted his eyes and made to get ready for bed.

Daenerys entered her room and smiled happily. Jon seemed nice, she hoped that they would become friends, she would love a friend

She crossed the room and unpacked her dragon eggs. She liked to hold them before bed. Feeling every single detail on the eggs, It helped to calm her mind. Tonight, she took out the black egg and locked the others away. She fell asleep clutching the egg to her stomach and fell into a peaceful sleep.

She dreamt that she was flying high above the ground. She flew over land and sea and land again. She saw a castle on an island and she felt compelled to land. She glanced up at the castle and strangely it felt familiar. The doors to the castle were flanked by two giant stone dragons. She raised her hand to knock but heard a growl behind her. She saw her dragon, it was black and red and was moving towards her menacingly, tendrils of smoke coming out the sides of it’s mouth. Its mouth opened and she saw molten fire churning down it’s throat. She watched as the fire grew bigger and bigger until it spilled out of the dragon’s mouth and all over her. Dany screamed loudly

Dany awoke with a start, breathing heavily “Fire cannot kill a dragon,” she said to herself as she
looked at her egg, surprisingly it felt warm under her fingers. She heard a soft scratching at her door and she went to open it. “Ghost,” she said with a small smile. The wolf pushed his way into her room and lay down on the bed.

“Oh, you think you can just jump into my bed?” she said with her hands on her hips. Ghost raised his head to look at her before laying back down.

“Fine you win,” and she slowly climbed in next to him and gently stroked his fur. It felt soft under her fingers and it helped her fall back to sleep

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**The Lost Prince**

Jon awoke and he felt like he was floating. The soft, thin sheets that covered his bed were much different from the thicker furs he was used to. The bed was huge and surprisingly, Jon slept comfortably, perhaps this was because of how tired he had been. He hadn’t slept well since the night in Winterfell where he learned the truth.

He thought of Winterfell and he thought of his family there. What would they say if they could see him now? Not only was he in Essos, he had found his family. Rhaegar was alive and he was with them. He had so many questions for him, yesterday he had been too stunned to ask them all. His mind recalled the events of the day before and he bolted up with a start. Wendel.

He hadn’t even thought of his injured friend. He didn’t know if he was dead or alive or if he had healed, he had been too consumed with himself.

He quickly got dressed and exited the room. He turned left and headed down the corridor before he realised he had no idea where to go. He didn’t know the manse, and the servants didn’t know him. His eyes settled on the door to Daenerys’s room.

*Is she awake? Is it selfish of me to wake her up?*

Jon decided to knock anyway. *It’s for Wendel*
He knocked and to his surprise the door was unlocked.

He entered and was surprised at what he saw. Daenerys lay on her stomach with her arm covering Ghost.

Jon was unsure on how to proceed, he wanted to wake her but he didn’t want to disturb the peaceful sight in front of him. Unfortunately for him, Ghost decided to move and she woke up. As she moved the sheets slipped down of her body exposing her, she wore a sheer nightgown that left little to his imagination.

“Jon?” she asked as she rubbed her eyes and stretched, exposing more of her. The sound of her voice quickly broke him from his daze

“Um I wasn’t staring, I just came here because I needed your help and um why is Ghost here?” he stammered as he started to turn red. He quickly turned away and quickly readjusted his pants.

“Well, I don’t know why Ghost is here, he is your direwolf after all. I thought you sent him,” she said in a tired voice.

“and why would I send him?” he asked turning back to face her “and please put some clothes on!” he turned away again in embarrassment

“I am wearing clothes, this is called a nightgown, do they not have them in Westeros?”

Jon had never seen a woman in her nightgown, so he couldn’t say for certain. He started to feel embarrassed again.

“Please just put on some proper clothes,”

She laughed and got out of bed to get dressed, he heard drawers opening and closing as she walked around her room. “Well, if you didn’t send him I guess he came by himself. I had a dream and when I woke up, he was scratching at my door,”

Ghost padded back over to him slowly, he gently scratched him behind his ears
“What did you need help with?” she asked when she was finally dressed

“Yesterday, when I came here, I came with my friend, Wendel. He was hurt pretty badly, and I haven’t seen him since. Rhaegar sent healers for him but I don’t know where he is, I need to check on him,”

Daenerys nodded slowly. “I think I know where he is, he would probably be on the other side of the manse, far from the living quarters. I’ll take you there now,”

Jon nodded and together they walked through the manse. Jon had conceded and had started to wear less layers, but despite that, he could still feel the heat beginning to affect him. He wiped the sweat off his brow and continued to follow her. They arrived outside a door guarded by a servant who quickly moved aside when he saw the princess approach.

They entered the room and Jon’s heart sunk. Wendel lay on the bed unmoving, his skin pale and sickly.

“Wendel?” he asked but he didn’t hear him. Jon moved his eyes lower and looked at his stomach. It was caked in dried blood and the white linen bandages had soaked through. He looked to the floor and saw that it was covered with other discarded bandages

“It’s terrible what happened to him,” they both turned and at the door stood a man who Jon guessed was the owner of the home. “A man like him had so much of his life left to live. Did you know him well? Did he have a wife? Any children?”

Jon was ashamed to realise that he did not know, “Not as well as I should have. We had only been travelling together for a short while,”

“It’s a shame, my healers tried everything they could, but the knife had cut too deep. All they could do was try and reduce the pain for him. It seemed he passed during the night,” Jon remembered their times sparring together on the ship, Wendel was as strong as any man he had seen.

“Aye, he was a strong man, he wouldn’t have gone out without a fight,” Jon sighed.
“Come, there is nothing more we can do for him now, I will have my servants prepare the body and he will be burned in a few days,”

“Burned? We bury our dead in the north,” Jon said firmly.

“I respect your traditions but in this city, we burn our dead. I would offer to send the body back to Westeros, but the journey is long and the body would not last,”

Jon knew he was right and accepted his reasoning

“Very well, thanks for your help,”

“Of course, we haven’t been introduced. My name is Illyrio Mopatis, and this is my home,” he offered Jon his hand. Jon took it and shook it cautiously, his hand was soft, smooth and smelled of fruits. “Thank you Illyrio, you are most kind. My name is Jon. Jon Snow,”

“Come Jon snow, I see you have met the princess. Come let’s break our fast,” he said with a smile and he walked through the door.

Jon walked behind him, side by side with Daenerys with Ghost further behind. He led them into a garden with a statue of a boy holding a sword ready to duel. It was made of painted marble, so Jon could see that the boy had blond hair and dark blue almost purple eyes. Was this his son?

Illyrio sat at a table and motioned for some servants to bring their food. Jon sat opposite Illyrio and Daenerys sat next to Jon on the bench.

They broke their fast with a meal of freshly cooked bread with raisins in it along with a plate of bacon and fresh fruit. He pit into a peach and he was amazed by it’s sweetness. He put some bacon on a plate and set it on the floor for ghost and his wolf happily accepted. Illyrio spoke to Jon about the beautiful city of Pentos, he spoke of the city’s history and about how he became one of the richest men in the city.

"Is that a statue of your son?" Jon asked. Illyrio opened his mouth to answer but he was interrupted
“Illyrio!” He felt Daenerys tense next to him. She looked uncomfortable, he instinctively reached out to touch her hand to reassure her and she gripped his hand tightly. The source of the voice quickly walked into the garden, Jon watched him as he entered. At first he thought that it was Rhaegar but as the man got closer, he could see the differences. He was skinnier, shorter and his nose was longer and narrower. *Viserys*

“There you are Illyrio, and you sweet sister,” he said with a smile that never reached his eyes.

“and who are you?” he asked with a sneer

“My name is Jon Snow,” Jon replied his voice level

“Snow. A bastard. A *northern* bastard. Stay away from him sweet sister, those northmen are a bunch of savages,” he warned

Jon rolled his eyes. This was something he didn’t want to deal with. He stood to leave and to his surprise Daenerys stood with him. Viserys looked shocked and then walked closer to the pair.

“Where do you think you’re going sister?” he demanded “We did not finish our conversation,”

He quickly reached out and pulled Daenerys by her hair. Jon stepped in and shoved him in his chest, Viserys was weak so the force knocked him to the dirt

“You dare touch me bastard!” he shrieked. He stood up quickly and drew for his sword and slowly walked towards him. Jon cursed himself for leaving his sword in his room. He eyed Viserys warily, he didn’t come all the way to Essos to get killed by *Viserys fucking Targaryen*. Ghost chose this moment to appear from under the table and he snarled at Viserys. Viserys immediately stopped his advance and looked fearful.

“A savage beast for a northern savage. It’s no surprise,” Ghost bared his teeth and growled

“Viserys! Jon! Enough!” they both turned to see Rhaegar striding towards them. “Viserys why do you have your sword drawn?” he demanded
“The northern bastard dared to lay his hands on me. In Westeros, it is a crime to touch the prince without his permission. He should lose his hand!” he hissed

Rhaegar sighed. Jon had begun to understand why Rhaegar was keen to avoid this conversation last night. “Come with me, all of you, we have much to discuss,” Viserys looked perplexed at the turn of events. He gave Jon a final look of disgust before marching off after Rhaegar. Jon turned to Daenerys

“Are you okay?” he asked. She nodded. “Does he always treat you like that?”

She gave a small slight nod of her head. “Why would he do that, you’re his sister, ”

“He blames me for being born too late. He told me that if I had been born earlier, Rhaegar wouldn’t have fallen in love with your mother. We would have been wed brother to sister, like our parents,”

Jon was disgusted. He would never treat Sansa like this despite all their differences, “That’s not your fault, that’s not fair,” he protested

“I know that, but Rhaegar is waiting for us, we can talk more later,”

She slipped her hand in his and led him towards the solar.

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**The Princess of Dragonstone**

Daenerys was nervous. She knew Viserys would not like the news that he was about to receive. She clutched Jon’s hand even tighter and he grimaced slightly

“Sorry” she whispered and relaxed her grip. “Thank you by the way, ”

“What for?” he asked confused
“For standing up for me, you didn’t have to do that,”

“You’re my family. I would never let someone hurt my family,” he said, and Dany gave him a smile. He blushed slightly and turned ahead. They had arrived outside the solar, Jon quickly pushed open the door and they headed inside.

Dany noticed Rhaegar giving them a funny look. She realised they were still holding hands, quickly she let go of Jon and started to fiddle with her fingers, she immediately missed his touch.

Viserys stood leaning up against the wall, leaving the seats in front of the desk free. She took the seat on the right, Jon the seat on the left. Rhaegar sat opposite them and paused as if unsure on how to start this conversation.

“Viserys, this is my son, Jon,”

Viserys laughed cruelly “Is this a joke? Your son is dead. He died in Kingslanding,“

“He is not my son by Elia, he is my son with Lyanna, I only met him yesterday,”

Viserys’s face turned red with anger

“Lyanna Stark? Your stupid affair is the reason the war started, she is the reason we can’t go home. Your affair is the reason we live in exile like peasants!” Viserys shrieked as he walked towards Rhaegar.

Dany noticed Jon too had started to look angry, his grey eyes staring into Viserys. She placed her hand on his forearm and he looked at her, she looked into his grey eyes and she watched as his anger slowly receded.

Rhaegar had stood up from behind his desk and started to close the distance to Viserys.

“Guard your tongue Viserys, you are in no position to judge my actions,” he said his voice low and dangerous.
“Oh I am in no position?” Viserys asked mocking him, “Oh I am in the perfect position to judge you brother,” he spat. “You ran off with the Northern slut, you fathered this bastard on her and you started this rebellion brother, it’s all your fault,” he finished with a sneer

Daenerys was shocked, she had never heard Viserys speak to someone else this way. He usually reserved his outbursts only for her

“I hope you’re happy, now you’re reunited with your slut’s child. I hope seeing your bastard makes it all seem worth it,”

Rhaegar paused and then punched him square in the jaw, knocking him across the room

“Enough!” he bellowed, “Lyanna Stark was no whore, I loved her and she loved me, Jon is no bastard. His name is Aegon Targaryen, he is my trueborn son and he is my heir. Not you, him,” Viserys eyes opened in shock at these words, “That’s right, he is my heir, not you. Now for the love of the mother who gave birth to us both, get out of my sight before you say something else and I have to hit you again!”

Viserys quickly pulled himself to his feet and scrambled out of the room. Rhaegar stared at the door after he had left and then slowly sat down. He ran his hands through his hair and let out a long drawn out sigh.

“He’s right,” Jon said quietly and Dany turned to look at him

“About what?” Rhaegar asked, lifting his head up and meeting his eyes.

“The war started because of you and my mother. Thousands of people died because you loved each other and had me,”

“Jon please, don’t blame yourself for this. I loved your mother, and I love you, you are my son,”

“No don’t call me that,” Jon stood up abruptly, his chair scraping across the floor.
“We may share the same blood, but you don’t know me and I don’t know you, you are not my father,” he said quietly and then left the room.

Dany watched as he left, she wanted to go after him but then she saw Rhaegar slump back in his chair defeated. He held his head in his hands. Dany realised that Jon had Ghost, she needed to be here for her brother.

“Brother I’m sorry, he didn’t mean it,” she began

“No, he’s right, I haven’t earned the right to call him my son. All these years, I should have done something, I should have looked for him, I should have done more, what kind of father am I if I couldn’t find my own son?” Dany stared at him silently searching for an answer

“You were busy trying to find us,” she said, “It took years to find us in Essos, you wouldn’t have been able to find him in Westeros, don’t be hard on yourself,”

“He was in Winterfell this whole time. Winterfell Dany. Over seventeen years and my own son did not know who I was. I could have gone to him, I could have found him,”

“and then what brother? What would have been your plan? Tell him the truth? He didn’t even know you were alive, he would not have believed a dead man was his father,” she said. Daenerys didn’t know where this confidence came from, but she knew she needed to continue

“Even if he believed you, what could you have done? Snuck him out of Winterfell in the dead of night? Took him with you across Essos in the hopes of finding us? You would have put him in more danger!” without realising it, she had stood up and started to yell

Rhaegar looked at her stunned. She took a few moments to calm herself and sat back down

“I’m sorry for shouting but you mustn’t be too hard on yourself. Jon is here now and for that we can only be thankful. Yesterday I gained a nephew, a friend, I don’t want to lose him today,”

“What should I do sister? I can’t have my son hating me,” he said softly.
“You should be honest with him, I think he would appreciate that,” Dany said firmly. “Tell him everything about you and his mother, tell him your plans. If you want him to accept you, you can’t have any secrets. He has dealt with enough secrets for his life,”

“Of course,” Rhaegar stood up from behind his desk

“No, not yet. Let me talk to him first,” Dany stood and cut him off. Viserys would be of no help and she was sure Jon did not want to speak to her brother right now. She was the only person that he might want to speak to.

Rhaegar gave her that same funny look and then went to pour himself a drink. Daenerys left the solar and began to search the house for Jon

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**The Lost Prince**

Jon ran quickly through the manse, through corridor after corridor, up then down stairs until he found his room. He entered and shut the door behind him, he crossed to his bed and collapsed onto it.

He ran his hands through his hair. Viserys was right, thousands of people died because his parents loved each other. His grandfather burned his other grandfather alive because of his parents and their actions. Jon felt ashamed. Ghost moved silently around the room and climbed onto his bed. Jon opened his eyes and Ghost had the parcel in his mouth, he dropped the parcel into his lap and lay next to him.

He finally opened the parcel and emptied the contents onto his bed. Inside was a small silver harp with silver strings and a necklace made from weirwood. Things to remember his parents by he had said. He realised that this was his fathers harp, and he had made her a necklace. He truly loved her. Jon’s fingers absentmindedly played with the harp

“You can play the harp?” he heard a voice ask. He was so distracted he hadn’t noticed Daenerys enter his room.

“No, I can’t, it’s not mine, it’s um” he faltered

“Oh,”
“Lord Stark said he found these things in the tower where I was born. They belonged to my parents…”

“Do you mind if I sit?” Jon nodded and she sat on the bed opposite him

“How are you Jon, truly?” she asked.

“I’m fine, I’ll be fine thank you,” he lied. Jon was desperate to avoid eye contact. His eyes moved everywhere around the room before finally settling on the chair over her shoulder.

“Jon,” she sighed, and she touched his cheek, seemingly causing a bolt of energy to flow through him. This startled him and caused his eyes to finally meet hers, violet eyes stared into grey and his resolve broke. Everything he had been holding in since that night in the crypts finally came to the surface again.

“No I’m not fine,” he croaked. “A month ago, I was Ned Stark’s bastard, I only wanted to know who my mother was. Whether she was highborn or lowborn, whether she was dead or alive, whether she would be proud of me. I find out who she is and everything changes. I’m not even his son, everything was all a lie,” Jon held his head in his hands, “My real parents had loved each other so much that they forgot all their commitments and their duty and thousands died for it.” he sobbed.

Daenerys paused and then quickly pulled him into an embrace. He rested his head on her shoulder and she ran her hands through his hair comforting him.

“Jon you shouldn’t blame yourself for these things,” she whispered into his ear, “You can’t change those things, the past is already written, the ink is dry. We can only hope to change the future, we can leave the world a better place than how we found it,“

They stayed like that for a few minutes until Dany pulled apart.

“Jon, I know this is hard for you and this is a terrible way for you to find out the truth, but please don’t turn your back on Rhaegar. For all his faults, for all he did, he is still your father. I never had a chance to know my parents, and from the stories my brother told me. They didn’t love each other,”
Daenerys paused and shuddered.

“Jon, you don’t have to love him, but you at least have the opportunity to get to know him. If you want to judge him that’s fine, but get to know him first,”

He slowly nodded.

“I will talk to him soon, but I need some time. Thank you, Daenerys,”

“Please, you can call me Dany, my friends call me Dany” She said with a small nervous smile, Jon smiled back warmly.

She told him stories about what it was like for her growing up in Essos. A small part of him was jealous of all the places she had seen, Volantis, Braavos, Lys, he had only seen Winterfell and a few other castles in the north. Then he realised that the only reason she got to see these places was because she was living in exile, running from assassins.

“What was growing up in Winterfell like?” she asked

“What do you mean?”

“What were the people like, tell me more about your brothers and sisters,”

Jon looked at her and then off into the distance, he took a moment before responding.

“Growing up in Winterfell was tough at times. I grew up with 5 siblings, or half siblings as Lady Catelyn always pointed out to me. Robb, Sansa, Arya, Bran and Rickon, I got along with Robb, Bran and Arya. Rickon was only little when I left. They didn’t care if I was only their half sibling. Sansa was more difficult. She aspired to be like her mother, to be a perfect lady. Sansa and I never got along much. She was always quick to remind the little ones that I was only their half brother,” Jon finished bitterly. “If it were up to Lady Catelyn, I would have been sent away years ago. Off to some lord to be their squire. She couldn’t stand the sight of me. She hated me because I was a reminder of her husband’s unfaithfulness.”
“You and I are similar in that regard,” she said quietly, “for we both grew up without a mother,” and he nodded slowly.

Jon quickly realised how easy it was to talk to Dany, and how similar they were. Their conversation flowed naturally and he told her anything and everything. He told her embarrassing stories, or adventures he went on with Robb or Arya, at some point they both ended up lying on the bed, staring up at the ceiling as they talked. After a quiet few moments when he thought that she was thinking of a story to tell him, he noticed that she had actually fallen asleep.

“Get up Dany,” Jon said, gently poking her in the ribs “You can’t sleep in my bed,”

“Why not?” she mumbled in a tired voice

“Because people will talk,”

“Which people? the servants won’t talk,” she mumbled into the pillow, she then curled up on the bed and pretended to sleep

“Fine I’ll carry you,” he said as he picked her up with ease and threw her over his shoulder. This made her giddy with laughter and Jon ran into her room. Before putting her down he decided to spin round in a circle, making them both dizzy.

“Jon put me down!” she said laughing

“As you wish Dany,” and he threw her onto her bed. Jon was also dizzy and landed next to her. It took them a few moments to catch their breath and they both started to feel tired again. He propped himself up onto one elbow and rolled onto his side. Her hair was dishevelled after he had thrown her on the bed and she slowly brushed away few strands that were covering her eyes. Her violet eyes shone brightly like amethysts and her lips were slightly parted as she caught her breath.

“Now what was the point in that?” she asked softly and playfully, “now instead of me being tired in your bed, you’re tired in my bed,”

Jon chuckled and sat up, reluctantly looking away from her “Unlike you, I am actually planning on sleeping in my own bed,” he said as he stood up.
“Goodnight Dany,” he said with a smile, Jon retired to his room exhausted. As he lay down to sleep his mind recalled the day’s events. He remembered walking into Daenerys’s room in the morning, the way the sheets slid off her body, No she was his Aunt. Besides, she called him her friend, that’s all they were, friends.

Frustrated, he rolled over and waited for sleep to take him

*Jon dreamt of a castle overlooking the sea. He had never been to this castle but if felt familiar. He walked slowly through the halls and noticed the castle was empty. He passed through hallway after hallway and went down stair after stair until he arrived at a wooden door. He pushed open the door and he entered onto a balcony overlooking the great hall of the castle. The hall was filled with soldiers. To his left, he saw an ugly throne. It was gruesome in size and shape and blackened by dragonflame. Sat upon a throne was a large man with black hair and bright blue eyes. He was sitting uncomfortably on the throne and his crown looked awkward on his head. Another man walked forward clad in red and gold armour. He knelt before the throne and laid out two small bundles wrapped in a red cloak. From his position Jon could not see what was in the bundles but the faces of the crowd looked shocked. Jon looked into the Kings bright blue eyes and he saw no hint of sadness, only hate. The man’s bright blue eyes locked onto Jon and Jon ran from the room.*

He awoke with a start and sat up. Ghost looked up at him and in the darkness his eyes shone brightly. *It was just a dream* but in his heart, he knew that it meant something more.

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**The Lion under the Rock**

Tyrion signed the last document and sat back and released a loud sigh. He was tired, but happy. It was another successful day for him at Casterly Rock. Under his watchful eyes, trade had increased to and from Casterly Rock by a substantial amount. The harbour at Lannisport now received three times as many ships from the free cities, ships from Braavos, Volantis, Pentos and beyond all came to Lannisport to trade. As a result of this, house Lannister was doing quite well. They were the richest house in the entire realm and they were not afraid to show it, the tournament in Kingslanding? Backed by Lannister gold of course. Tyrion was proud of himself, he knew his father had given him this job to demean him, but he had risen to the task and exceeded expectations.
He got off his chair and walked and around the room stretching his tired legs. He took a drink of Arbor Gold before setting off through the castle to find his father, nothing like a bit of courage before this conversation. The castle was quiet, and he had no trouble finding his father in his solar. He knocked twice and paused before he heard a gruff voice telling him to enter and he did. His father sat behind his desk writing away and he didn’t even lift his eyes up to see who had entered his solar.

Tyrion slowly walked forward before taking a seat across from him.

“Father,”

“Tyrion,” he said without pausing from his work. Tyrion decided to wait before answering, to see how long his father would tolerate his presence.

“What do you want?” he asked, he still hadn’t look at Tyrion.

“I would like to speak with you,”

“We are speaking now,” Tyrion didn’t respond, content to wait. After a moment Tywin put down the paper and sat back in his chair.

“Fine, you have my attention,”

“As you know, ever since you put me in charge of trade, things have been going very well. Our incomes have tripled, we are by far the richest house in the realm, and even people as far away as the free cities of Essos have come to know the wealth and power of house Lannister,”

“Yes you have done well. Although I would have expected nothing less from you, you are a Lannister of course,” Tyrion ignored the attempt to diminish his accomplishments. “I presume you want a reward for merely doing your job?”

Tyrion gave a small nod. “Very well, we will discuss your reward at a later date. Now get out,”

Tywin leaned forward and went back to work dismissing him. Tyrion stood and started to take a step towards the door. Later, he would realise that he probably should have taken a second step, followed...
by a third and left the room. Instead he turned, took a deep breath and said to his father.

“I want what is mine by rights. I want Casterly Rock,”

Tywin stopped writing and looked at him intensely, his mouth grew hard.

“You mean to steal your brother’s birth, right?” his voice dangerously quiet, Tyrion had to take a few steps forward to hear him

“No, not steal. You know as well as I know that knights of the Kingsguard are forbidden to marry, father children and hold lands, ever since Jaime put on that white cloak he gave up his claim to Casterly Rock but you have never acknowledged it. It is time now, I want you to stand up and announce me as your son and heir for all the realm to see,”

Tywin’s eyes were a pale green and they shone mercilessly

“Casterly Rock?” he asked in a flat cold dead voice. “Never,”

The word hung in the air between them, poisoning the atmosphere. Deep down Tyrion knew this would be his answer, he didn’t know why he even asked. It’s been over fifteen years since Jaime joined the Kingsguard and he’s never asked, he’s always known his father would say no. Always.

Summoning up the last of his courage he asked one final question, a question he knew he would surely regret.

“Why?”

His father paused, staring at him dangerously

“You ask me why? You dare to ask me why? You who killed his mother on his way into the world? You are a disobedient, disfigured, spiteful little creature full of envy and lust. Since I can not prove you are not mine, the laws of gods and men have given you the right to wear my colours and my sigil. But neither Gods nor men shall ever compel me to allow you to make Casterly Rock your whorehouse,“
“My whorehouse?”

“Do not lie to me, you can bribe as many servants as you want, I am still Lord of this household and they will all answer to me. You are done with whores. You already married the one and the next whore I find you with, I will hang,”

Tywin stood to tower over his son. Tyrion did not doubt his words, he still remembered what he did to her, he still remembered her screams…

“Go back to your rooms Tyrion we depart for the capital tomorrow. I suggest you use this time to think long and hard about what it is you want, you will never bring up your right to Casterly Rock again, You will never have Casterly Rock as long as I draw breath now go,”

The words stung. Tyrion quickly left his solar and made his way back to his rooms. He went to his flagon of wine and poured himself drink after drink. He drunk to drown out the pain of his father’s rejection and he drunk to drown out the painful memory of what happened her.

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for the kind comments on the last chapter. Hopefully this chapter provides more answers. If they don't I'll try answer any questions in the comments without revealing too much...some of you were wondering about a certain horselord...check the character tags...I've tried to keep them as accurate as possible for this stage of the story.

In case anyone was wondering, there won't be any White Walkers in this fic, I might do it in a sequel type story, but definitely not in this story. I don't find the WW to be particularly interesting to write about.

Next chapter should be up sometime this weekend, so either Saturday or Sunday. Let me know what you think of this one

Thanks
Sleepy

Also, send me dragon names. I'm writing chapter 12 and I still don't have names I like....for reasons...they have to have different names in the story
Daenerys was flying. She flew until she reached a port city. Gradually her dragon took her lower and lower until she could make out the faces of people walking the streets below. She saw the faces of the slaves in the city, with chains around their ankles and their wrists. They had different kinds of tattoos upon their bodies. Upon seeing the shadow of her dragon, many slaves turned up to look at her. Dany saw the sadness in their eyes, then the sadness turned to anger. The slaves started to take up arms against their masters but they were outnumbered. Dany wanted to reach out to help them but her Dragon wouldn’t listen. Instead the dragon flew east until she saw a series of black walled palaces. Her dragon roared and released a stream of burning hot flame onto the walls and Dany felt victorious. She turned back to the city to see that all the masters had fallen. The slaves were free. She landed her dragon in an open clearing in the city, she dismounted and the freed slaves all rushed forward to greet her. She smiled happily at what she had done, she felt victorious and her dragon roared it's approval.

Daenerys woke up and reached out to clasp her dragon egg. As she ran her fingers over the scales of the egg, she noticed that her dragon dreams came most vividly when she slept with the black and red egg. Daenerys decided to tell Jon about her dreams, he was a Targaryen after all.

She realised that he hadn’t come to her door this morning, asking if she wanted to have breakfast with him. He had done this everyday for the past two weeks and she always accepted. This concerned her and so she rolled out of bed and got dressed. She decided to wear the dress she wore for her birthday. She headed across the hall and knocked on his door, she waited a few moments and then knocked again. Still no answer. Cautiously, she pushed open the door and found he wasn’t there. Instead she found Ghost lying in the middle of the bed, the wolf looked up at her as she
entered and then slowly trotted over to her.

“Good morning Ghost,” she purred as she stroked his fur. “I don’t suppose you know where Jon is?” she asked rhetorically. To her surprise, Ghost pushed past her and headed to the door and turned around as if beckoning for her to follow.

_This wolf is smarter than I thought._ She followed Ghost through the manse until they arrived at a balcony overlooking a courtyard. As she got closer she heard a peculiar sound, she looked over the balcony and she saw Jon, practicing on a training dummy made from straw.

He moved gracefully, every strike hit the same part of the dummy until he finished with a strike to the head. His shirt lay discarded on the floor as he practiced, and she could see every muscle in his body move as he attacked the dummy. She saw the muscles in his back and shoulders contract and then relax as he struck the target. She felt something stir deep within her as she watched him practice.

Realising that she couldn’t stand here and watch him forever, she decided to make her way down.

“Very impressive,” she called out to him.

Jon looked startled and turned around looking for her. He rubbed the back of his neck and gave her a sheepish grin. He quickly put his shirt on, much to her disappointment.

“Thank you. Although I don’t think my opponents will be made out of straw,”

“No, although I’m sure you’ll be fine. You’re the best swordsman I know,” she said confidently.

“Thanks,” he returned with a smile which quickly turned into a frown. “Wait, how many swordsmen do you know?” he asked suspiciously.

“Um, just you but you’re still the best!” she laughed at the face he pulled. Jon rolled his eyes and started to put the dummy away.

“Do you do this every morning?” she asked.
“Yes, I have to practice everyday to live up to the lofty standards as the best swordsman you know,” he said dryly causing her to laugh again.

Daenerys was happy. Rhaegar had left over a week ago and Viserys had scarcely been seen. She noticed him at a few meals but apart from that it was as if he never lived here. She was grateful for this, but part of her knew this short respite would not last forever. He was bound to show up again to continue to torment her.

“Would you like to get breakfast with me Prince Aegon?” she teased

“I hate it when you call me that,” he said grumpily, and she laughed at the face he made “but It would be my honour Princess Daenerys,” he said with a mock bow and offered his arm. Together they walked from the courtyard to the garden where they had their breakfast every morning. Today they ate boiled eggs with fried bread and a ham steak and a bowl of fresh peaches.

“Jon could you teach me how to fight?” she asked “Not like with a sword, just a little bit so I can defend myself,” she added quickly

“Why do you want to learn how to fight?”

“It’s just that I can’t really defend myself and you see how Viserys is, he hates me, he hurts me. When Rhaegar is here he’s nice, but when he’s gone he’s cruel,”

Jon nodded slowly “But when he’s gone, I’ll be here. I’ll always be there if you need me,”

Her heart fluttered. “I know that, but I am the blood of the dragon. I cannot be a dragon if I can’t defend myself,” she said firmly.

When Rhaegar had arrived, she was so happy to have a kind older brother, she felt alive again, as happy as she had been since they left the house with the red door. Then Rhaegar left for business and Viserys became cruel again and the scared little girl returned. When Jon arrived, she felt that same happiness return and this time, she was determined to not let that scared little girl come back. She would be a dragon.
“Very well, I’ll teach you, but you have to promise to do everything I say,”

“I promise,” she said immediately

“And you have to promise to listen and not question my instructions,” she nodded quickly

“Right, have you ever trained before?” she shook her head “Ok, we need to start with your stance and your footwork,”

“My stance? Don’t I have to learn how to hold the sword first?”

“Didn’t I say you had to promise not to question my instructions?”

“Yes, but you know I like to ask questions!” she protested, and he gave a forgiving smile

“Fine, I’ll show you why we need to work on your stance. I want you to take up a sword fighting stance,” she paused, she realised that she didn’t know any stances. She tried to remember what Jon did this morning and tried to copy him.

“The reason your stance is important is because if your stance is poor or your footwork is wrong, all the arm strength in the world won’t save you,” and with that he knocked her off balance but caught her before she hit the floor. He gently pulled her back to her feet and showed her the proper stance.

They worked together for hours, back and forth. Eventually he gave her a sword, but this was only to help her get used to weight and feel. After a few hours her arms were exhausted, practice was exhausting. She sat down on the bench and rubbed her arms

“My arms hurt,” she complained, and he gave a small laugh

“Aye, I expected they would, you’ll get used to it. Although perhaps it would be better if we got you a smaller weapon. Here, turn around and I’ll give you a massage,”

She turned her body and felt him slide in behind her. His hands immediately went to work on the
muscles in her shoulders and arms and Dany practically melted into his body

“Where did you learn to do this,” she said in between short breaths “This feels amazing,”

“When I first started to train, my muscles would feel sore afterwards. Robb would get massages, but Lady Catelyn would never allow me to have any. I saw how the servants did it, and now I’m trying to copy them,”

“Well you’re doing an amazing Job,” she purred as his fingers worked. She closed her eyes and let his fingers work their way through the muscles in her shoulder and arms. His hands were firm and rough from his years of sword fighting but his touch still felt kind and gentle.

“Dany, don’t you fall asleep on me,” he said as he pushed her off him. She slowly turned around and looked at him. Her eyes drifted downwards and followed the shape of his nose noticing how his nostrils flared after each breath. Then her eyes found his lips. She wondered what his lips would feel like pressed against hers, the thought made her stomach flutter. She looked up to find his eyes were also wandering. When they met hers he looked away quickly.

Would it be wrong if she kissed him? Their family had married brother to sister for generations and no one batted an eye, although they had dragons, and no one could argue with a dragon. For a long time she had assumed that when she grew older she would have married Viserys, to keep the bloodline pure as he said. She dismissed those thoughts, she can’t scare him away.

“Tell me more about Arya, I’ve wondered what it was like to have a sister,” she asked to try and ease the tension. She watched as his eyes lit up with happiness

“Arya….Arya is a handful,” he said with a smile that warmed Dany’s heart. “She would much rather learn how to fight than sit and do her needlework. She loved hearing stories about the Targaryens of old. We used to re-enact some of the famous moments. I’m sure the two of you would get along fine,”

“I’d like to meet her someday, she seems lovely,”

“Aye, she is,” Jon smiled wistfully

“You miss them don’t you?” she could tell. The thought made Dany sad, he wanted to be home with his siblings.
“Aye, I didn’t even say goodbye when I left, I was so angry. I didn’t want to see anyone. All I did was write a few letters. They must hate me for running off,” he put his head into his hands.

“Do you regret leaving?” she asked dreading the answer.

Jon looked her in the eyes and shook his head and said “Never,”

Daenerys couldn’t help herself, her eyes drifted down to his lips and the flutter returned. She looked back at Jon and his eyes had a burning intensity to them. Her mouth opened involuntarily, and she started to lean forward, closing her eyes.

“Sweet Sister!” and the moment was ruined. Dany looked up to see Viserys and she realised that her two weeks of respite were over, “What are you doing with this bastard. You are the blood of the dragon, you shouldn’t taint yourself by mingling with his likes. You don’t want to taint yourself with his northern blood,”

Daenerys flared up.

“Dear brother, you do not get to choose who I spend time with. I spend time with who I choose, and I choose Jon,” she said fiercely.

Viserys looked shocked at her outburst. “You forget yourself sister. You forget who you are, where we come from. You forget who he is and who raised him. He can’t be trusted,” he hissed. Jon stood up and began to walk towards Viserys.

“I can trust him, I have only known him a few weeks and I trust him more than you, the brother I have known for my entire life. What does that say about you Viserys?” she put herself in-between Jon and Viserys.

Viserys grabbed her by her hair and began to pull, Daenerys cried out in pain and slapped him, causing him to lose his grip. Suddenly it was Viserys on the floor with Ghost on top of his chest pinning him down. Daenerys looked into his eyes and for the first time she saw fear.

“Get your beast off me!” he cried.
“Ghost to me,” Jon commanded and the direwolf slowly got off Viserys and returned to his master.

“Don’t you ever touch me again brother,”

Viserys got up slowly and dusted himself off

“Rhaegar is back. He wants us all to meet him in his solar,” he said as he sulked away.

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**The Lost Prince**

Jon found himself in the familiar position sitting in front of the desk in Rhaegar’s solar. Dany and Viserys took their usual spots in the chair and by the wall.

Rhaegar cleared the desk and rolled out a map, the map covered everything from Slavers bay, all the way to the wall.

“Jon, it is time you learn of our plans,” Rhaegar began and Jon grew uneasy. “17 years ago, I was the cause of my family’s downfall. The Targaryen dynasty fell at my hands and I will be the one to restore it,”

“I have spent the last 5 years trading, earning gold to buy sellswords and sellsails. Viserys will marry Arianne Martell, giving us the support of the Dornish. I have 5,000 sellswords sworn to me and we will head to Astapor to purchase some unsullied,”

“How many?” Viserys asked? His eyes lit up at the sound of war.

“2,000, maybe 3,000,” Rhaegar replied.

“Good, we will take back what is ours. The usurper’s dogs will be crushed by the power of the dragon!” Viserys yelled. “Baratheon, Lannister, *Stark,*” he sneered at Jon. Jon gripped the chair
tightly. How could he take up arms against Robb, Bran or Rickon? He thought back to his dream. Is this what it meant? Was he the dragon coming to burn down Winterfell? The thought made him sick to his stomach. He vaguely noticed Dany tracing his knuckles with her fingers

“No, I have wronged the Starks enough for one lifetime. We will not harm them. We will not attack the North,” Rhaegar addressed the last words to Jon, answering his unspoken question

“Why?” Jon asked. Rhaegar looked confused. “Why start this war again, you have the coin and the means for a comfortable life here, then why cause more suffering? Is the Iron throne worth more than the lives of innocents?”

“Jon, do you know what happened to my other 2 children?” Jon shook his head.

“Of course you don’t, I’m sure the children of Westeros are taught everything about my apparent crimes and nothing of the King’s,” Rhaegar said bitterly. Jon started to feel uneasy again.

“After the battle of the trident the crown’s army was scattered. The rebel forces were recovering and preparing for their final march on Kings Landing. Tywin Lannister, my father’s old friend a former Hand, got there first. Throughout the war, Lord Tywin hid underneath Casterly Rock. He didn’t pick a side, he was waiting to pick the winning side. Once he arrived at the gates of the city, he begged my father to open the gates for his old friend. He said he had come to save him,”

Jon noticed Daenerys was sitting very still, she clearly hadn’t heard this story either.

“My father listened to him, it was the last decision he made. Tywin Lannister betrayed him and sacked the city. His dogs made their way to the red keep where they found my family. I told Jaime Lannister to protect my family and he failed me, he betrayed me,”

“Do you know what they did Jon? Do you know what the great Tywin Lannister and his men did to my wife and children?”

Jon shook his head, not trusting himself to speak

“My wife Elia, was raped and killed. My son Aegon, had his head smashed against a wall. My daughter Rhaenys was stabbed to death. She was just a little girl, not even 5 years old. Aegon was just a babe and they were MURDERED!” Rhaegar yelled.
Jon thought back to his dream and he realised what he had saw, the pieces were starting to come together.

“Do you want to know what King Robert did? King Robert Baratheon, King of the Andals, the Rhoynar and the First men, Lord of the seven kingdoms and protector of the realm, do you know what he did Jon?”

“Tywin Lannister presented the bodies to him, and he smiled at the corpses and called them “Dragonspawn”. He was happy about it Jon!”

Jon felt Dany hand gripping his and he turned to her, she looked as white as a ghost.

“You wanted to know why Jon? This is why I must fight. The King of Westeros condoned the murder of an innocent woman and her children,”

Jon nodded in understanding. He thought of Lord Stark. Surely, he didn’t know, if he did how could he be friends with this man?

“I will take you all with me, we will sail to Volantis and then to Astapor. We will leave within 2 days. Illyrio has provided us with a ship and crew,”

Viserys hurried out of the room quickly. Dany looked at him very curiously as he left.

“Brother, you said that Viserys would marry Arianne and that would give us the support of Dorne, but why would the Dornish support us. Viserys will never be King. You will be, and Jon is your heir before him,” Dany pointed out. Jon realised she was right and felt uncomfortable, he realised that he was about to ruin the plan.

“I don’t want the throne. I don’t want to be King,” Jon said quickly. Rhaegar gave him a small smile.

“It’s often those who don’t seek out power that are best suited to wield it,” he said wisely.
“But Daenerys is right. The succession is a problem. A large one at that. Jon is a problem as am I,” Daenerys looked confused, but Jon understood.

“Why is it a problem?” she asked

“He’s supposed to be dead,” Jon said quietly and Rhaegar nodded his head in agreement

“Yes, the agreement that Dorne signed was to make Viserys King and Arianne Queen. Now, they did not anticipate me being alive and having a son of my own which pushes Viserys down to 3rd place in the line of succession,” Rhaegar sighed, “Thankfully, Jon does not look like a Targaryen, so perhaps we can hide the fact that you’re my son. As for me…..I’ll figure something out. Dorne loved Elia, I hope their desire for vengeance and justice is enough to overcome their dislike for me,”

“You’ll figure something out?” Jon asked in disbelief. “We need allies in Westeros and if we can’t have the support of Dorne, what chance do we have of convincing any other house?”

“We?” Rhaegar asked, he clearly hadn’t expected this response from Jon.

“She is my family, I won’t turn my back on her,” he said as he held onto Dany’s hand

“Well, I could abdicate the throne and give it to Viserys…”

“No!” Dany shouted, “You say you want justice? But by giving the throne to Viserys you’re going to be giving the people of Westeros, another cruel and petty king, who would probably be worse than the one they have at the moment”


They all sat in silence as they pondered this problem. Eventually it was Jon who broke the silence

“This war will not be over quickly, circumstances can change. I suppose you’re right, we’ll figure something out when the time comes. We don’t have a lot of good options at the moment.”. Rhaegar gave a grunt in agreement and rubbed his temple.
“We’ll go pack our things,” Jon said and he offered his hand to Dany. They left the solar together, hand in hand.

The Silent Shadow

The wolf padded through the manse, the marble floor feeling cold under his feet. He pushed through the door of his master’s room and silently crossed the room, he stopped near the bed to see him asleep, his ruby eyes gazing at his face. He watched as his chest rose and fell faintly, he could hear him muttering a name as he slept. Satisfied that his master was safe and asleep, he crossed the room over to the balcony. It was the hour of the wolf, and Ghost could faintly see the dawn beginning to approach. Ghost turned and jumped onto the roof of the manse. The wolf quickly worked his way across the roof following a familiar pathway before jumping down onto another balcony and entered the accompanying room. The sheets were thrown haphazardly across the room in the occupant’s haste to leave.

The wolf closed its eyes and focused on his other senses, trying to find the scent of the person he was looking for. Once he acquired the scent he bounded back onto the roof and sped across the rooftop, which took him to a place he had not seen before. Ghost tentatively jumped down from the roof and onto a stack of boxes overlooking a gate, this was the kitchen and the gate was where deliveries of food were dropped off. Due to his curiosity and his animal instincts, the wolf decided to lay down on top of the stack of boxes to observe.

Bright streaks of orange and yellow had begun to replace the midnight blues when he heard the sound of activity coming from below. The door to the kitchen opened and then a hooded person crossed to the gate. Ghost slowly lifted himself off the front of his paws and onto his legs, so he could look better. He smelt the person and he remained calm. He watched as the hooded person spoke to another person across the gate. He watched as the hooded person handed over a small pouch before making his way back inside. Ghost quickly jumped onto another elevated spot, wanting to get a better look at the man. He looked down and saw the man behind the gate, he had green hair and a blue beard, he had two short swords strapped to him and he had a long ugly scar twisting down the side of his face.

Ghost felt Jon awake with a start, his master was troubled, did he see what he saw? Ghost knew that Jon was capable of seeing what he did, but Jon did not know how to control his powers. Ghost knew that during his slumber, Jon could subconsciously do this. But had Jon seen what he saw? Ghost hoped so, if not he would have to be extremely vigilant around him from now on. Him and Daenerys.
Kings Landing was even worse than he had remembered it. After the sack, Ned had taken a brief tour of the city before heading to the tower of Joy, he had seen fires raging, buildings collapsing and people wounded or crying in the streets. Years later he had returned, the fires had been put out, the buildings repaired but the city was still appeared to be in a bad state.

The mood in the travelling party wasn’t much better either. The trip had started off badly as Bran had still not woken from his fall from the top of the tower. The maester says that if he lived, he would not have the use of his legs again, if he lived. Then Arya and Joffrey had gotten into an argument, some silliness that children get up to. It had managed to escalate into a situation when her direwolf attacked the crown prince. The Queen had demanded that the wolves should die. He never found Arya’s wolf, so Sansa’s wolf was put to death to satisfy her desire for blood. The thought left a bitter taste in his mouth. He was even more upset that his daughter had lied for her betrothed, he thought he had raised her better than that. Then there was the horrible business with the butcher’s boy, Mycah, and that only added to bitter taste in his mouth, he could not believe that Robert would allow the murder of a child to sate his wife’s cruel desire for vengeance. His mind thought back to Aegon and Rhaenys, the King had allowed the Lannisters to go unpunished for those crimes too. It should be no surprise that the Lannisters had grown even bolder since that day.

He had taken a quick survey of the King’s court when he had arrived, and it was filled with Lannisters. Pages, squires and handmaidens, all Lannisters, it was no wonder the King looked so worn out. Still, he was now his hand and he had to help him run the realm. He had barely set foot in his room in the Tower of the hand before he was being summoned to his first small council meeting. He groaned internally, he was going to have to meet these vipers eventually, might as well be sooner rather than later.

He splashed some water on his face to refresh himself and headed to meet the small council. The Red Keep had changed since he was last here, all the tapestries of past Targaryen kings had been taken down and the skulls of dead dragons were removed. However, Robert couldn’t get rid of all the traces of the Targaryen dynasty. The three-headed dragon was engraved into the stone walls. Some were hid behind tapestries but not all. He arrived outside the small council chamber and made his way inside, he was grateful to see that all the members of the small council appeared to be here, good, he wanted this meeting to be over as soon as possible.

“Lord Stark, it’s a pleasure of you to join us,” he was greeted by Ser Barristan. He shook his hand firmly, he had met Ser Barristan on the trident, he was a good man that could be trusted.
“Where is the King?” Ned asked quickly. A short man with a pointed beard laughed at this comment

“The King at a small council meeting? My Lord hand, the King hasn’t attended a small council meeting in years. He has much more, ah, important things to do,”

Likely drinking and whoring Ned thought grimly. “My thanks, lord..?”

“Lord Baelish, Master of coin,” and he offered his hand. Ned shook it and got a good look at the man. He looked to be in his early thirties with grey green eyes. The man smiled at him, but the smile failed to reach his eyes. He had never met him before, but he looked like the man he imagined him to be.

“I trust your wife has told you that we grew up together,”

“Aye, she did, I also hear you knew my brother Brandon, Lord Baelish?” and he saw those grey green eyes narrow slightly. Good, he’s uncomfortable already, I will not tolerate these southern games.

“A little too well my lord, I still carry the scars,”

“Perhaps you chose the wrong man,”

“I did not choose the man, I chose the woman, Catelyn Tully a woman who we both can agree, is worth fighting for,” Ned felt a pang of jealousy hit him. He would have to be wary of this man. Before he could continue this verbal spar, the next man stepped forward,

“Lord Varys, my Lord Hand.” So this was Lord Varys, The spider, the master of whispers. He had heard many stories about the man. He studied his appearance carefully, Varys wore rich silk robes, his hands and face were powdered and he wore a sweet smelling perfume. When they shook hands, he was surprised at how soft they were, he had the hands of a woman Ned thought to himself, Lord Varys gave a small bow before continuing “We heard of your troubles on the Kingsroad, we are all praying for prince Joffrey’s speedy recovery,”

Ned felt a shot of anger inside of him,
“It’s a pity you don’t pray for the butcher’s boy,” and he walked onto the next man.

“Grand Maester Pycelle, you look well,” The man looked as old and sickly as ever. The man had served as Grand Maester for over forty years, he wondered how many Kings he had served during his time, three, maybe four? He was a man of the citadel, he has no allegiance to any house. Even still, Ned wondered how he had managed to keep his position for so long. Could he trust this man?

“Lord Stark, it has been too long. The last time we had met you were just a young lad,”

“Aye, and you served another King,”

“Ah, Lord Stannis, it’s been a while,” he greeted the man warmly. He offered Stannis his hand, which he shook firmly and for no longer than was necessary. He wondered why Robert hadn’t named his own brother hand “The last time I saw you was at Pyke, I hear you are married, how is the wife, any children?”

“Yes, I’ve been fine. My wife is fine, my daughter is fine,” he responded curtly “Renly will not be here, he is welcoming the Tyrell party to the city. Now shall we begin,” and he gestured to the table, apparently just as eager as Ned to get this meeting over with. They all sat down and Stannis pulled a piece of parchment from inside his robes.

“This is for you Lord Hand,” he passed the parchment to Ned.

“The King wants to host a tourney celebrating the appointment of his new hand. There will be five days of feasting. An archery competition, a melee, a singing competition and of course, the joust,” Lord Varys read out, somehow he knew the contents of the paper despite it being sealed. He would have to take care around this man, that was certain.

“For the winning archer, twenty thousand golden dragons, for the winner of the melee, thirty thousand golden dragons and for the winner of the joust, fifty thousand golden dragons,” he concluded.

“Can the crown afford that,” Stannis asked,

“We would have to borrow from more from the Lannisters of course, we already owe them three million gold dragons, what’s an extra hundred thousand anyway?” Lord Baelish responded with a
“When I left Kings Landing at the end of the rebellion, the royal treasury was overflowing with gold, now the crown is in a debt of three million gold dragons to the Lannisters?” Ned asked in disbelief.

“No my Lord Hand, the crown owes the Lannisters three million, the total debt is around six million gold dragons,“

“You’re the master of coin, how could you let this happen?” Ned asked frustrated.

“I’m the master of coin, my job is to find gold, the King and the Hand spend it,”

“I refuse to believe Jon Arryn would let Robert sink the crown into debt,”

“Jon Arryn gave the King good advice and counselled against his expenses at every turn, unfortunately he is the King and his word is law,” said Pycelle.

Damn you Robert

“No, I will not allow it, this tourney will not go ahead,” he slammed his fist down on the table and made sure to make eye contact with every single member. His eyes settled on Littlefinger, the man gave a devious smile and said

“My Lord Hand, you have much to learn,“

The Princess of Dragonstone

It was their final day in the manse, they spent the morning enjoying themselves. They had breakfast together and they practised her fighting technique all morning. Dany thought she was getting better. She quickly realised she wasn’t going to be great or another Visenya, but she felt that with enough time and practice, she would be capable of defending herself. They both agreed that she would be
better suited using smaller weapons like knives or daggers rather than a longsword. She also realised that this also meant that the muscles in her arms and shoulders would not get sore as were after her first lesson, but she made sure that she received her massages after the sessions. She saw no reason to deny herself that luxury. Once it was mid afternoon, they realised that they would have to go back to their rooms and make sure everything was ready for their departure. 

They walked back to their rooms together, Dany quickly pulled Jon inside of her room.

“Jon, do you know what dragon dreams are?” she asked

“Dragon dreams?” he looked confused, “I’m not sure, what are they? Do you have them?”

“Yes I do, they usually wake me up at night. Sometimes I can’t go back to sleep until Ghost comes,” she smiled at Ghost and he nudged his head into her stomach. She stroked his fur affectionately and then continued

“Dragon dreams are different, for me they have a strange quality to them. It’s like they’re more focused. Sometimes I’m on a dragon, or sometimes I’m somewhere I’ve never been before. Either way, it feels like I always know what to do, everything feels familiar to me,” Jon nodded slowly. Dany was encouraged, maybe she wasn’t alone in this.

“I get them too, I think,” he said slowly. “I have similar dreams. The night I found out the truth, I dreamed I was on a dragon flying over Winterfell,”

“I had a similar dream. I was flying over a castle on an island, but I didn’t know the castle,”

“Do you remember when Rhaegar told us about what happened to his family? I dreamed it. I saw the King in his throne room and I saw the bodies being presented to him,” he said quietly.

“Do you think the dreams are true? Is that why we have them? Are they made to guide us? Daenys the dreamer had prophetic dreams, she was the one who told our ancestors to leave Valyria and settle on Dragonstone” she said excitedly, hope building inside of her

“I don’t know Dany, in our dreams we’re flying dragons…and there are no more dragons,” he said flatly
“Come look,” she said, grabbing his hand and pulling him across the room. She reached down and searched for her case of dragon eggs.

“Do you have a dragon under your bed?”

“No I don’t but if you help me lift this I have something to show you,” she said with frustration. Jon quickly bent down to help her pick up the case and he placed it on her table. Dany opened the case and watched with a smirk as Jon’s eye’s widened in wonder.

“Are these….”

“Real dragon eggs, Jon,” she said proudly

“They’re beautiful,” he said quietly, “Can I hold one?” She nodded and he immediately went for the green egg. She watched as he performed his own examination of the egg

“Wow, where did you get these?” he asked in disbelief

“I got them for my birthday weeks ago,” she said excitedly. “Do you think they’re going to hatch, is that why we have these dreams?” she asked hopefully

“I don’t…I don’t know. Dany they’re eggs. They haven’t hatched in hundreds of years, don’t you think that if somebody knew how to hatch them they would have already?” he asked sceptically.

Dany turned away from him, she wouldn’t believe him. Her dreams were too vivid. *Fire cannot kill a dragon* she remembered.

Her eyes travelled over her desk. She had set aside a few of her belongings that were most important to her. This way she was sure she would not forget them. Everything was there except the ring. Her mother’s ring. It was gone.

Dany started to panic, she moved things out of the way and onto the floor in her desperation to find it.
“Dany, what are you looking for?” she heard Jon ask

“My mother’s ring, it’s gone. I left it here this morning after my bath and now it’s gone” she sobbed. “It’s all I have left of her, I never got to meet her but she gave it to me. Viserys never sold it, he always wanted me to have it. To remind us of her,” she continued to sob.

“No it’s not, we will find it,” he said confidently. They spent the next hour covering every single part of the room, but they couldn’t find it. Dany couldn’t stop the tears flowing.

“Sshhh don’t cry,” Jon said as he pulled her into his embrace. He whispered soothing words into her ear and held her tightly. They stayed that way until Rhaegar found them.

“What happened?” he asked.

“We can’t find her mother’s ring,” Jon said quietly. Rhaegar sighed.

“Come Dany, I will speak to Illyrio. The servants will search the manse, when we return they will have found it. There’s nothing more we can do here today, we still need to leave,”

Dany didn’t leave Jon’s embrace, instead she wrapped her arms around him tighter.

“Dany, he’s right, we will find your ring. When we come back,” Jon said pulling apart slightly. He gave her a kiss to the top of her head and extracted himself from her arms. Dany blinked away her tears and got the rest of her belongings. She didn’t have much, only one trunk of clothes and her dragon eggs. The servants carried them with her to the courtyard where a carriage was waiting for them.

Viserys was looking at her weirdly and she looked away, she did not want to deal with him right now. He would probably curse her for losing the ring.

Rhaegar came down accompanied by Illyrio and a strange man. The man was middle aged and balding.
“Princess Daenerys, this is Ser Jorah Mormont, he wishes to serve as a personal guard alongside Donequor and Jon,"

She felt Jon tense next to her.

“Mormont? From the bear island?” he asked suspiciously

“Aye, that’s the place,”

“I heard Lord Stark wanted to execute you for selling slaves,”

“He did,”

“Is that why you wish to serve the Targaryen’s? For revenge?”

“My reasons are mine alone,” Jorah said stiffly

“Not if you wish to travel with us,” Jon retorted

“He is here to protect the princess. The Targaryen’s have many enemies, the more protection the better,” Rhaegar said and he gave Jon an angry look.

“I have ghost. We don’t need any more protection,” Jon said unhappily

“Enough, we don’t have time to argue. We’re late enough as it is,” Rhaegar said finishing the conversation.

Ser Jorah sunk to one knee in front of her and swore himself into her service. She reluctantly accepted. Jorah would have knowledge of Westeros, recent knowledge. That would be useful in the war to come. She took one last look up at Illyrio’s manse, she had found her family here, for that she would always be thankful to Illyrio Mopatis.
Chapter End Notes

Send me dragon names. I'll create a strawpoll and then next chapter you guys can vote for the most popular. The most popular name will be the Drogon substitute, 2nd the Rhaegal sub, 3rd the Viserion sub.

If all goes well, next chapter should be out on Tuesday 12th. Jon and Dany are on a boat headed off on the next stage of their adventure.

Let me know what you think of this chapter

Thanks

Sleepy
The Storm

Chapter Summary

"I am the storm, my lord. The first storm, and the last" - The Reaver AFFC

Chapter Notes

Jon and Dany are on a boat and this is the longest chapter so far...

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The Lost Prince

Jon paced back and forth in his cabin. He knew that he needed to do this but he was incredibly nervous. Ghost lay at the foot of his bed, not caring of Jon’s troubles. Jon made up his mind and left his cabin. As he walked through the ship he heard a clap of thunder in the distance. He noticed Viserys in the hallway, talking to a member of the crew. The man had green hair and ugly twisting scar down on side of his face, he was one of the new members of crew that had come aboard in Volantis. Jon looked at him curiously, he looked familiar, but he could not place him. They saw Jon walking towards them and quickly finished their conversation. The sailor quickly walked away in the opposite direction, leaving Jon alone with Viserys.

“What were you two talking about?”

“None of your business bastard,” Viserys answered and he pushed his way past him. Jon had half a mind to follow him, but he had another cabin to visit that night. He continued to walk slowly through the boat until he reached the cabin he was looking for. He knocked three times and waited. The door opened, and his nervousness took over again. He shook his head and said,

“Rhaegar, I think its time we had a much overdue conversation.,”

Silently, Rhaegar pushed open the door and let him enter. Jon paced around the room nervously ringing his hands.

“Tell me about my mother, please,” he asked. Rhaegar pointed to his bed and gestured for Jon to
take a seat.

“I met your mother at the great tourney of Harrenhall. It was the biggest tourney of our lifetime. All the houses and lords of any importance in Westeros came to attend and take part in it. This tourney also garnered attention for the fact, that my father who hadn’t left the Red Keep in years since the Defiance at Duskendale incident, decided to attend as well. We were there for ten days, the competition lasted seven days. There were contests of archery, melee, singing, jousting and even a horse racing competition,” he smiled at the memory.

“Did Lord Stark ever tell you the story of the Knight of the Laughing tree?” he asked and Jon shook his head

“No?” Rhaegar looked very surprised, “Well, this is where we will start. It’s very important. During the joust, a mystery knight entered the list, this wasn’t uncommon, often these tourneys are filled with unknown knights looking to make a name for themselves. This knight, wore mismatched armour and had a shield which had a white weirwood tree with a laughing red face painted on it. The knight challenged three knights and unhorsed all of them. Winning custody over their horses and armour. As ransom for their horses and armour, the mystery knight demanded that the knights teach their squires to behave honourably,” Rhaegar got up to pour himself a drink before sitting back down

“The knights and their squires were shamed by the mystery knight’s demand. My father due to his paranoid nature saw the mystery knight’s actions as acts of treason and defiance, he demanded to know the identity of the mystery knight. The old fool thought the knight was mocking him,” Rhaegar spat bitterly, “He commanded the knight to take off his helm and reveal his identity but the mystery knight just turned his horse around and swiftly rode off the field. My father’s anger soared at this blatant act of disobedience and he demanded the mystery knight’s head. He then commanded me to find the knight and bring his head back. I complied and left in pursuit of the mystery knight. I found his trail and followed. Soon, I found the knight’s horse in a clearing along with discarded pieces of the knight’s armour. I continued along the path and saw the knight struggling to remove his helm and remaining pieces of armour. As I was about to step out and announce my presence, the helm came off and I was stunned. The knight was your mother, Lyanna Stark,” he said with a smile

“What? Why would she be dressed as a mystery knight?” Jon asked in disbelief

“Howland Reed, Lord of Greywater Watch who was a Stark bannerman, had been attacked by those squires when he arrived to attend the tourney because of his appearance, your mother heard his cries for help and saved him by beating away the attackers with only a tourney sword. When she saw those squires later that night at the feast, she knew which knights they served and she knew who to challenge in the lists,”

“But why would she challenge them, she was a Stark, her word alone would have been enough,”
Rhaegar laughed

“Your mother was free spirited and not one to abide the rules of society. She was a great rider and realised that by beating the knights the squires in front of the entire realm, she would teach them a lesson. Actions speak louder than words after all. She was a fantastic rider, almost part horse herself,” he said with a smile and Jon was reminded of Arya.

“Are you any good at jousting, Jon?”

“I’ve never tried it, we don’t usually have tourneys in the North and Robb has always been better with a lance,”

“Oh,” Rhaegar said

“I’m a better swordsman than Robb though, I’m the best among all of us at Winterfell,” he added quickly. For some reason, he wanted Rhaegar to be proud of him

“I wasn’t upset Jon, I’m proud of you and I know Lya would be too,”

Jon had a small smile, “You haven’t finished your story,”

“Ah, of course, where was I?” he paused for a moment before continuing. “Right, I appeared before her and demanded to know the reason behind her actions, she explained and I agreed with her views. I, then asked her for her shield to give to my father as proof that the knight had vanished and promised that I would keep her secret for life. We continued to meet over the course of tourney in secret to speak over various topics.”

“We spoke about our families, our homes etc., one of the most interesting parts of our discussions was her comment on how all the maidens and even some of the married women at the tourney were fawning over me, trying to gain my attention and that they were not even deterred by the presence of my wife. I, simply laughed and agreed with her by saying it was one of the perks/drawbacks of being royalty. I even made a jape of how it was the magic of my dragon lord blood that drew women to me. She just smirked and said that the Starks too have magical lineage in the blood by talking about tales of greenseers and wargs. She said that at times she felt like a warg because of how easily she was able to control and ride her horse.”

“Wait, ‘Wargs’, I’ve heard about them in Old Nan’s stories.” Jon said. Rhaegar, then proceeded to explain the myth of wargs or skinchangers and their power of entering the minds of animals and
birds to control them, based upon what he had learned from Lyanna and his own reading in various books. He explained that the first men learned this ability from the Children of the forest according to Lyanna’s stories.

“The Children of the forest, they’re not real. They’re just another myth like the white walkers, giants etc..., they’re not real.” Jon replied, not being able to wrap his mind around all this talk of magic.

“Perhaps, they did not learn the ability from the children, but I think it existed. If Targaryens are able to ride dragons and have dragon dreams, why can’t Starks have the ability to warg or skinchange?” Rhaegar answered.

“Dragon dreams, Dany has dragon dreams. I have them as well,” Jon added.

“Oh,” Rhaegar looked very surprised. “I have never had them. I’m not sure Viserys has had them either, I guess it would just be you and Daenerys. When did you start to have them?”

“I had my first one the night I was told the truth. I dreamt I was on a dragon flying over Winterfell. I also dreamt of Robert Baratheon being presented with the bodies of your children,” he said quietly, not wanting to upset him

“That is very interesting. Perhaps your dreams are prophetic. Our ancestors had prophetic dreams, this is how they knew to leave Valyria and head to Dragonstone,”

Jon nodded and sat quietly

Jon then started to think back on his dreams. He was starting to consider the possibility that he may have warged into Ghost and then he thought about the familiar looking sailor from earlier but he lost his train of thought as Rhaegar continued his story.

“She was unlike any woman I had ever met. She did not care for my princely status and was refreshingly honest in her opinions. Before I knew it, I had fallen in love with her. She was brave, strong and willing to stand up for those who couldn’t fight for themselves. At the feast I played a song for her on my harp, I heard it made her cry,” he smiled happily at the memory. Later, I found her after the feast and professed my feelings, she smiled at first but then her expression changed and she told me that she would not be my mistress or secret lover. She and my wife deserved better. I tried to explain that my love was true and not just mere lust or infatuation but she had left before I could finish my explanation. “I decided to not only prove my love to her but also to proclaim it in front of the entire realm. I proceeded to win the joust, after defeating four knights of the kingsguard in the following days,”

“I’m sure they tried very hard to beat the crown prince,” Jon said with a laugh
“They did actually. I broke my lance three times during the final joust,” Rhaegar replied laughing in return. “Anyway, as champion, I could name anyone the Queen of love and beauty and I named Lyanna. I placed a crown of blue winter roses in her lap,” Jon noticed that his smile turned into a grimace. “I probably should not have done that as my wife was in the crowd and everyone expected me to crown her. Also, Lyanna was betrothed to my cousin Robert at the time. To say that there were a few unhappy faces would be an understatement,”

“Robert Baratheon is your cousin?”

Yes, he had a Targaryen grandmother or something, it’s not that important,”

“Why did you do it then?” Jon asked

“Do what?”

“Why did you crown her when you knew it wasn’t proper?”

Rhaegar let out a loud drawn out sigh

“A wise man once told me that love is the bane of honour and the death of duty. We are only human and the gods have fashioned us for love. That is our greatest glory and our greatest tragedy. My marriage with Elia was a political one, as I didn’t have a sister to wed at the time and the Martells were a good match considering their princely status and they possessed targaryen blood in their lineage. Whilst Elia and I got along fine, neither of us would say that there was any great love between us. I chose love over duty when I crowned Lyanna. I regret that my actions caused the downfall of my house, I regret that thousands of people died because we ran off together, but I do not regret loving her, I do not regret the fact that because of that love, you are here now. Jon, I know you may not think very highly of me, but I do love you, and I always will,”

Jon’s eyes teared up and he felt his heart swell so much he was sure it would burst.

“What happened next?” he croaked

“Well Jon, tourneys are like holidays, and after a holiday, you have to go back home. Back to your
normal life. I returned to Dragonstone and she returned to the north, unsure of whether we would see the other again. I wrote to her trying to apologize for the scandal that my actions caused and also to assure her my intentions were honourable and my feelings were genuine. When I received no reply, I accepted it as her refusal and decided to put this entire matter behind me for the sake of her reputation. Fate on the other hand, had other ideas. “I heard rumours from Kings Landing that my father had learned that she was the ‘Knight of the Laughing Tree’ and that he was sending men to arrest her when she arrived in the Riverlands for her brother’s wedding. I couldn’t let that happen, so I rode hard for the Riverlands with my kingsguard knights and friends, Ser Arthur Dayne and Ser Oswell Whent. I met with her in secret while she was riding out in the fields near Riverrun as I did not want to add fuel to the fires surrounding my actions at Harrenhall and I told her of the danger that was headed her way. She believed me and told me that her father had hid my letters from her and when she discovered this, she asked him to end her betrothal as she did not care for Robert and his lecherous nature. She too had feelings for me. Her father not only refused her pleas but scolded her by saying that I was taking advantage of her feelings. Robert was a good match that would strengthen their house while with me the best she could hope for was to end up as a Royal Mistress shunned by the realm. She even appealed to her brothers though she did not tell them about me at the time, but, it did no good. Brandon laughed off her concerns about Robert as a maiden’s pre-wedding fears while Ned made excuses for Robert because he considered Robert, a brother and thought that he would change his ways after their marriage. Her brother Benjen was the only one who understood her and he later helped her escape from Riverrun with me after she explained the situation to him. We then, rode back towards Harrenhall and we spoke about our feelings during the journey. She told me that she did not care about titles and her image, all she wanted from me was my love and loyalty. Her declaration strengthened my resolve. I annulled my marriage with Elia and then I asked her to marry me and she said yes. We had a wedding in front of the old gods on the Isle of faces in the middle of the Gods eye, with my Kingsguard as witnesses.” Rhaegar smiled from cheek to cheek at this memory.

“I was so happy that day, we rode all the way south. I took her to Summerhall and we layed together under the broken ceiling staring out at the stars. I would sing her songs on my harp and then under the stars we would make-“

“Too much information,” he said quickly, his ears turning slightly red. Rhaegar smiled at his embarrassment.

“We stayed at Summerhall for a while before I took her to the Tower of Joy, in Dorne,”

“That’s where I was born,”

“Yes, Jon it was”

“While we were there caught up in our love story and future plans, we were unaware of what was transpiring in the rest of Westeros. We knew Lyanna’s disappearance would cause problems so
Lyanna sent a letter to her father explaining her decision to leave with me but apparently that letter either did not reach Lord Rickard or he chose to conceal it as a means to save face. I don’t know what exactly happened. But then soon after, the Lord Commander of my father’s Kingsguard Ser Gerold Hightower found me in Dorne and informed us of all that had happened after our disappearance.

“I, then returned to the capital to rally the Royal army against the rebels and left your pregnant mother with the kingsguard for her protection. I tried to contact Lord Eddard repeatedly to explain the truth of what had happened. I even attempted to organise a parley the night before Battle of the Trident would happen but he refused. Lord Stark was too angry and Robert was too bloodthirsty. They saw my attempts at communication as fear and weakness since they were high on their success in earlier battles.”

Jon was appalled, he had always thought Lord Stark was a reasonable man, always willing to hear both sides of the argument before making a decision, but evidently he was wrong. He sat in silence for a few moments, processing this new information before he remembered something. “Wait, I’ll be back” and he bolted out of the room to the surprise of Rhaegar. He returned a few minutes later with the package.

“Here, this is yours,” he handed Rhaegar his harp. Rhaegar took it and ran his fingers over the edges.

“I used this and played to your mother every night as we travelled. It helped her sleep, especially when she was pregnant with you. Where did you get this?”

“He gave it to me when he told me the truth. He collected everything in the tower to give to me one day. He also gave me this,” Jon took off the necklace that was hidden under his clothes.

“I made this for your mother, it’s from a weirwood tree at the Isle of faces,” he said as he looked at the necklace.

“Here, you should keep them,” he handed the items back “Can you play the harp? Or sing?”

“No, I never really had the chance to learn. Bastards aren’t meant to be educated in the higher arts. I considered myself fortunate as Lord Stark had made sure that I received the same education as his trueborn sons. Besides, Northerners value swords and arms more than music.”

“No, I suppose that’s true…you should learn, It might help you impress a pretty lady one day, it
worked for me,” Jon blushed and Rhaegar gave him a knowing smile.

“She cares for you, I’ve seen the way she looks at you, and the way you look at her,” he spoke softly.

“She’s my aunt,” Jon said flatly

“She is, but this is one of the benefits of being born in our house,”

“I wasn’t raised a Targaryen. It’s weird for me,”

“Even if you are not comfortable with idea of being a Targaryen, Jon, you should also remember that in Westeros and even the North, marriages between cousins, uncles and nieces isn’t unheard of, thus an aunt-nephew relationship is not a great stretch,”

Jon paused and considered this, could this be true? He had never paid attention in these parts of his lessons.

“Ok, if you had met her, and you weren’t aware of who your parents were and your relation to her, what would you do?”

Jon pondered this scenario, would he care for her in this way if he was still Jon Snow? He thought of the way she smiled when he told her stories of home, the way she laughed when he told her the trouble he and Arya used to get up to, the way her platinum hair shone in the sunlight and he thought of those beautiful violet eyes. Yes I would

He looked up at Rhaegar and saw him smiling

“Jon, the rebellion is not your fault, it is mine alone. My father was an evil man and I should have done more to stop him. My love for your mother was the spark that started the rebellion, but the wood had already been piling up, even if I did not set off the rebellion, sooner or later one would have occurred. In fact, I was the one who had organized the tourney using Lord Whent as my cover, as I had intended to call a council of the lords with the goal of deposing my father, it would have been what’s best for the realm,”
“Why didn’t you?”

“Politics and Bad luck or good luck depending on your point of view. My father’s presence at the tourney foiled any plan to gather a council. His paranoia caused numerous problems but in this case, it served his interests unknowingly. Also, during my conversations with your mother, I learned of the alliances that were being crafted thru marriages by the Lords of the North, Riverlands, Vale and Stormlands. The realm had been growing restless during my father’s reign on account of his madness and ambitious lords saw this as an opportunity to gain more power. Robert Baratheon represented not just a chance to get rid of the mad king but also the opportunity to gain more power. He was the ideal candidate to become king.”

“How would they have installed Robert Baratheon? I thought only those with Targaryen blood could inherit the throne?”

“Well Jon, you remember I said that Robert was my cousin due to his grandmother being a targaryen.” Jon nods. “He was also the closest kinsman to House Targaryen at the time. If the targaryen line were to go extinct, then by law, Robert had the strongest claim to the throne. Also, they stood more to gain by Robert becoming King than they would with me on the throne. Your Stark grandfather, Lord Rickard was a very ambitious man. He arranged the marriage of his daughter to Robert so that she would become his queen when he gained the throne, their children would be rulers who had both Stark and Baratheon blood. His son, Brandon would marry Catelyn Tully, this would give the North the support of the Riverlands while Hoster’s grandchildren would become the Lords of the North. Hoster’s second daughter Lysa could be used to secure an alliance with the Westerlands through a marriage with Jamie Lannister. Lord Rickard had his second son Eddard fostered with Lord Jon Arryn where he could befriend Robert Baratheon, thus Jon Arryn would become a foster father to them and would likely become Robert’s Hand of the King when Robert gained the throne.”

“Do you see all the connections and alliances being formed within these kingdoms and none of them included House Targaryen?”

Jon sat in silence for a few moments, taking it all in. All his life, he had lived believing that the Starks were good, honourable people, but what if he was wrong? His grandfather had been content to marry his only daughter off like chattel to increase his power. Lord Stark had ignored his sister’s pleas because he was blinded by his love for his friend. He looked towards Rhaegar who was watching him carefully.

“Yes, I’m starting to see clearly for the first time in my life. Thank you father,”

The Hand of the King
The Tournament was a grand and lavish affair, the capital was packed, every inn, tavern and brothel was filled to capacity. Nearly all the houses in the realm were here at the invitation of the King, the Tyrells, Hightowers, Tullys, etc., and many more. There were even some houses he had never heard of in his life. Before long, all of them seemed to have sent someone to the capital for this tourney. There were however some notable exceptions, Lysa Arryn had forbidden all knights of the Vale from participating and House Martell had, perhaps unsurprisingly, declined to attend. This was no surprise to him, after the atrocious crimes committed to Princess Elia and her children, Dorne had become distant, and was part of the seven kingdoms in name only. He was not surprised that they did not want to break bread with the Lannisters and the Baratheon’s. Lysa Arryn’s absence was perhaps more worrying, he had learned that she had fled the capital after her husband’s death. Combined with the cryptic letter she had sent to Cat, he was even more eager to start his private investigation into Jon Arryn’s death. Still, with the absence of Dorne and the Vale, there were slightly less people here to indulge in this nonsense.

“Cheer up Lord Stark,” he turned towards Jory, “They say that this is the finest Tournament Kings Landing has ever hosted. They say that people from all over the realm have come to see the Hand’s tourney,”

“Do they also say that this is the last thing I would have wanted?” he asked bitterly. The tourney was expensive and troublesome enough as it was, and the salt in the wound was calling it “the Hand’s tourney”. Did Robert think this would honour him? Please him? Ned was once again struck by how much his old friend had changed over the years, he is no longer the man he once knew.

They continued their walk to the Tourney grounds in silence. Ahead, he saw Sansa and her friend Jeyne, gossiping and pointing out various things as they passed. He was happy that Sansa was enjoying herself. They had not been in Kings Landing for long, but every time he saw her she had a radiant smile on her face. Still he was concerned, he had noticed Queen Cersei taking a keen interest in the girl, inviting her to breakfasts and walks through the castle gardens. Then, there was Prince Joffrey, he had not seen much of the boy but from the small amount he had seen, he realized that he was nothing like Robert as a child. Hells, he wondered if Robert had even raised the child, Joffrey stuck to his mother like a baby duck. Still, the boy was young, he could still grow to be a good husband for his daughter. Arya was being marshalled by Septa Mordane, no doubt the Septa was lecturing her to stay close by and not to run off and get into her usual mischief.

They were nearing the Tourney grounds and the sound of the crowd was starting to get louder. Grandstands had been erected and surrounded the jousting area. This was the final day of the joust and then thankfully, this nonsense would be over and he could get some real work done. He entered the back of the royal grandstand and made his way to the top. As Hand of the King, he had a seat to the right of the King, who looked thoroughly hungover. He and Ser Barristan had to persuade him not to participate in the melee, where he had gotten that idea was beyond him, the melee was no place for the King. He walked up the stands and took his place next to the King
“Your grace,” he greeted and he gave a small bow.

“Ned, what did I say about your blasted formalities,” he croaked, he was definitely hungover. Sansa sat in front of him next to Septa Mordane and Arya, they weren’t bickering which was good to see. To the left of the King sat the Queen, wearing a green dress to match her green eyes. To her left, sat the great Tywin Lannister, his face impassive. He looked down towards the jousting area to find that they were lazily setting up for the first set of lists. Slowly the King rose to his feet.

“I’ve been sitting here for days! Start the damn joust before I piss myself!” he shouted and then he slowly sat down again, grasping his horn of ale. He looks bloody miserable, Ned thought.

The crowd loudly cheered as the joust was about to begin. Up first, was Ser Jaime Lannister, his opponent seemed to be a hedge knight with an unknown emblem on his shield. The joust started and it was quickly over, the hedge knight no match for the Kingslayer. Ned leaned forward slightly and noticed the proud smirks on the faces of Lord Tywin and the Queen. The joust continued for much of the afternoon. The knights of the Kingsguard rode well and easily progressed onto the latter stages of the competition. There were however, a few surprises. The young Tyrell boy, Ser Loras, had defeated both Ser Balon Swann and Ser Meryn Trant, two knights of the Kingsguard. Gregor Clegane defeated another knight of the Kingsguard before brutally killing Ser Hugh. Deaths were rare but not unheard-of occurrence in the joust and no further action was taken. He was unhorsed by Ser Loras, the young lad was smart, he knew his horse was in heat and he used that to beat the Mountain. The mountain was not impressed by this trick and it was only thanks to the intervention of Gregor’s brother Sandor Clegane that the lad was saved. The lad may have been smart, but the Mountain would have demolished him with ease.

The final joust was about to begin and then this tourney nonsense could be put behind them. Ser Barristan was up against Ser Jaime and as he leaned forward, he could see Tywin and Cersei watching intently. He watched as Ser Barristan was handed his lance and shield whilst on the other side of the field Ser Jaime sat astride his horse, ready and waiting, the golden Lion on his shield shining brightly in the afternoon light. In unison, they both rode forward and the final joust began. The first ride ended with both knights breaking their lances on the others shield. They went back and forth, breaking lances and shields for over ten tilts. The joust was finally ended when Jaime unhorsed Barristan and the crowd erupted cheering. Ned stood to give his polite round of applause and stole a glance and saw the very smug expressions of Tywin and Cersei. He rode forward and stopped before the King.

“Congratulations to the Kingslayer!” Robert shouted, and Ned saw Tywin’s smile tighten slightly.

“Herald! See he gets his reward, fifty thousand golden dragons!” The King staggered to his feet, clearly drunk. Ser Jaime stepped onto the podium to accept his reward and the plaudits, Tywin was beaming with pride at his golden lion. Suddenly, a small stunted figure stepped onto the podium, and he saw Lord Tywin’s smile turn into a fierce scowl. It was the dwarf, Tyrion Lannister and he was
clearly well into his cups. He waddled onto the stage and stood beside his older brother. He walked towards the edge of the podium as if to address the crowd, but he was unsteady, rocking back and forth he opened his mouth to speak, but instead a hurl of vomit flew out of his mouth and onto the onlooking crowd. The dwarf’s hands went to his knees as he doubled over. A Lannister guard quickly came over to try and drag him off the podium, instead he pushed off the guard and stumbled off the stage, landing face first in his own vomit. Ned looked towards Tywin to see that his once proud face was now seething with rage.

King Robert’s drunken booming laugh echoed out across the Tourney Grounds, as Tywin Lannister angrily stalked away.

The Silent Shadow

The wolf raised his head from the floor and looked around his master’s room. It was empty. He slowly got up and made his way out of the cabin, he lifted his nose high into the air and sniffed. His master was to his right, but the wolf went to his left.

He moved silently through the ship, sticking to the shadows. The wolf crossed the deck and jumped onto a stack of crates. The wolf slowly crawled forward until he could see over the edge of the boxes.

Below him, two men stood huddled closely together, having an intense conversation. The winds from the storm had blown the hood off the head of one man, exposing his long silver hair to the world. The other man did not have this problem, his green hair was cut short and was unaffected. Silently, the wolf got up and moved closer to the men, the wolf wanted to hear details of the conversation. His master was asleep, his master needed to hear this.

“….tonight. We do it tonight,”

“It is not wise, the storm is here, it would be best to wait for better conditions,”

“No, you stupid man. These conditions are perfect. Do it now and I will say they were lost at sea. They are in the same cabin. Gather your men and go now. I have business to take care off,”

The silver haired man turned on his heel and walked away quickly. The green haired man huffed in frustration and walked away. The wolf knew he needed to act now. Quickly. Silently, he hurried
through the ship, searching for his master.

The wolf heard a loud clap of thunder and hurried below deck.

The Hidden King

Rhaegar was bursting with happiness. Jon finally seemed to have forgiven him and he was finally able to bond with his son, his lost son. As they spoke, he could see the traits that he got from his mother. Judging from the stories he told him about growing up in Winterfell, he could tell that he had inherited some of the rebellious traits of his mother. Jon told him about a boy named Hodor who appeared to be simple minded, he told him about how some of the cruel stable boys would make fun of him, he was happy that Jon always defended him when he could, he was like his mother in that regard.

As Jon slept he again noticed how much he looked like his mother. He had her eyes and her lips, but not the nose. His nose was Targaryen, virtually the same as Daenerys. He also seemed to have inherited his own melancholic nature, he frequently saw him walking around on the deck of the ships with his wolf as his companion. ‘Brooding’ was what it was called in the north, he remembered. That all changed when Daenerys was around he noticed, it was like he transformed into a different person. He was happy and full of life, just like his mother was. A part of him wondered what it would have been like if he had won at the trident. Maybe he would have gotten back to the Tower in time and Lyanna would have lived. Jon would have grown up alongside his older brother and sister, alongside Daenerys and Viserys, he would have had a family, his true family.

He told him stories of what it was like growing up at Winterfell and he felt conflicted. On one hand, he was immensely grateful to Lord Stark for taking his son in and being a father to him when he could not, but on the other hand, he was horrified by Lady Catelyn’s treatment. Calling him a bastard was bad enough, Jon was a prince, a Targaryen prince with the blood of old Valyria in his veins, he did not deserve to be treated as a bastard born of a drunken night encounter. Still he could stomach this, he understood that it was necessary for his protection.

What he could not understand, was Lady Catelyn’s treatment of him. Jon had been reluctant to talk about her, and Rhaegar quickly realized it was because he had no good stories to tell. The woman barely treated him as if he was human, he was given smaller portions to eat and he had to pretend to lose to Robb in order to not upset her. On top of that, it appeared that she had instructed the servants to take part in this poor treatment of Jon. Rhaegar was angry at this, was Lady Catelyn so cruel that she could not find it within her to love a motherless child? He realized that she was Hoster Tully’s
daughter, Hoster Tully was an ambitious man, no doubt, he had schemed to use his children for political marriages to increase his influence in the realm and to protect his borders. Perhaps that attitude had rubbed off on his daughter.

This didn’t sit right with Rhaegar however, from the way Jon spoke about the marriage between Lord Stark and Lady Catelyn, it appeared that Lady Catelyn was a loving woman, they had five children together and they even shared the same chambers, something that he did not do with Elia. So if she was capable of love, why was it that she treated Jon so poorly? Was it possible that Ned Stark had not told her the truth about his parentage? Surely not. If they loved each other, which he believed was the case, he would trust his wife with the secret. He kept no secrets from Lyanna. No, the fault must lie with Lady Catelyn, Ned would have told his wife the truth.

Still, it was not all bleak in Winterfell for Jon it seemed. He got along well with the boys, Robb and Bran. Apparently, there was an older Greyjoy boy who as a ward. Rhaegar laughed at that, he knew a hostage when he saw one. Rhaegar also noticed the way his eyes lit up when he spoke about Arya, the little girl appeared to be his favourite. He listened eagerly as Jon told him stories about all the mischief they’d get up to. She loved the Targaryen’s and they used to re-enact stories of Targaryen’s of old. He heard a knock on the door. It was the captain. One of Illyrio’s men.

“The storm is getting worse, we may have to head for calmer waters, or back to Volantis,”

Rhaegar gave a sigh of frustration.

“Very well, just make sure we get there safely,” he said and the captain left. A few days after they left Volantis, they had noticed a storm on the horizon. Initially the captain had been unfazed and had adamantly maintained they would not be affected, but lately the storm had crept closer. Even now he could hear the sound of the rain thundering down on the deck of the ship.

He turned back towards the bed and saw that Jon had woken up. His son looked confused as he sat up.

“Are you okay Jon?”

“Yes, I just had a strange dream, that’s all,”

They heard a soft scratching at the door, Jon got up to open it and Ghost bounded in, almost knocking him to the floor in the process.
“Is he always this happy to see you?”

“Not usually,” he said as he pushed his wolf away. The wolf growled in frustration and then sat facing the door.

“Interesting wolf. How much do you think he’ll grow to?”

“I don’t know, direwolves haven’t been seen south of the wall in centuries, he’ll grow as much as I feed him I suppose,”

“How old is he? Where did you find him?”

“He’s a few months old. We found him on the way back from an execution,”

“An execution?”

“Yes, there was a deserter from the Night’s watch and we travelled out to watch the execution. He said It was an important lesson for us to learn, ‘the man who passes the sentence should swing the sword’ he said,”

Rhaegar nodded his head, this sounded like a very Northern thing to do, they had their own traditions and customs up there. In the south they just used a headsman. In the distance he heard another loud clap of thunder. It was getting closer, the storm was definitely getting closer.

“As we travelled back from the execution we found a dead direwolf by the side of the road, off in the bushes somewhere, Bran and I found her puppies. Theon wanted to kill them, saying they wouldn’t survive without their mother but I noticed there were five of them, one for each of the Stark children, it was a sign from the Old Gods,”

“So how did you get yours?” he asked quickly

“You are just like Dany, she never lets me finish my stories, she always has a million questions”, he
said with a laugh

"Oh it's Dany?" Rhaegar teased and Jon started to go red

“Well, as we were about to ride away, I found him, he was further away than the rest of his litter mates, he was an albino, an outsider, just like me,” he finished quietly. Rhaegar felt sad, his own son did not feel welcome in the place he called home. Suddenly Ghost stood up, his hackles raised and he stared at the door intensely.

“What’s the matter with him?” he asked quickly

“I don’t know, Ghost, come here, now Ghost,” he said firmly but the wolf did not move. Instead he remained silent and all he could hear was the thundering of the rain. Instinctively, his hand reached towards Blackfyre, silently pulling it towards him. They both stared at the door, slowly but surely, they watched as the handle turned. As the door knob moved slowly downwards, Rhaegar moved Blackfyre out of its scabbard, he saw Jon also draw his sword. He silently motioned for him to take a position behind the door, so whoever entered did not see him.

The door knob stopped moving and the door opened with a loud echoing click. All the person on the other side had to do was push, and they would be in the room. Rhaegar had crossed to stand opposite the door, his sword up and ready. The seconds seemed to stretch into minutes as he waited. And he waited. And he waited.

Then, the door was kicked open and three men entered, brandishing swords and axes. Rhaegar scanned them for a second, the man at the front looked up at him, his eyes wide open with shock. He had not expected them to be ready for him. He opened his mouth to shout something to his comrades but the words never came out. Blackfyre was buried in his skull.

Rhaegar yanked it out and turned to his left to see that Ghost had knocked one man across the room and pinned him down, he saw that Jon had stepped out from behind the door and was duelling the third man. Rhaegar roughly yanked his sword out of the man’s head and kicked him to the floor, by the time he fell, Jon had killed the man he had been duelling.

Rhaegar looked at the men on the floor, they were the sailors on the ship. The man who he had killed had green hair. On his finger, he noticed a ring. It looked familiar and he bent down to take a closer look.
"I know that man, the one with the green hair. I saw him earlier and I dreamt of him, many times. First back in Pentos and then just now. I saw him talking to Viserys," Jon said quickly.

As Jon spoke, Rhaegar had finally taken the ring off the sellsword’s finger. It was his mother’s ring. The one given to Daenerys. Then, it all clicked into place, he and Jon realized that Viserys was behind this attack and he had used Dany’s ring as payment for the sellswords.

He noticed that Jon’s eyes closed as he tried to recall what he had seen in his dream. When Jon finished talking, Rhaegar had a thought that made his blood run cold.

"Jon, they're going to go after Daenerys," and when he said her name, his eyes flew opened and he saw a burning fire grow behind them. He quickly shoved his way past and entered the hallway.

In the hallway there was another man, unarmed. Jon quickly cut his way through him before pushing his way onto the deck. When they reached the deck they were nearly blinded by the rain, it was so heavy and cold that it cut through him like daggers. He brushed his hair out of his eyes and realised that his dye was washing out. He saw a flash of lightening in the distance and then another clap of thunder, nearly deafening him. The storm was well and truly upon them.

He quickly scanned the deck to try and find Jon but he realised he could barely see a few feet in front of him. He turned and looked for Daenerys’s cabin. That’s where Jon would be headed. He took a few steps forward before he heard a loud grunting noise. Instinctively, he ducked and raised his sword to parry the blow. He then rolled and sliced the man through his stomach, he looked down to see the blood quickly mixing with the rainwater.

He walked forward and ducked behind cover, as a wave rose over the side of the boat and onto the deck. He grasped unto the rigging tightly as the saltwater rushed over him, soaking him to the bone. He quickly made his way over to the hallways leading to Daenerys cabin and popped below deck, where it was mercifully dry. He pushed his hair out of his eyes and then his eyes opened wide in horror. To get to Daenerys cabin, they had to pass through the mess hall. To get through the mess hall, they would have to get through the five men standing in their way. He watched horrified as Jon and Ghost ran towards the men, completely unfazed.

Jon moved with impossible speed and power. The first man in his path stepped forward and swung down with in a savage arc. Jon quickly shifted to his left and picked up a stool in his left hand to block the strike. With his right he drove his sword through his assailant’s throat. The remaining four men took opposite routes around the table. Jon moved to the right and Ghost moved to protect his back. Jon quickly cut down the first man around the table before picking up and using the dead body as a shield to block the second man’s attack. Rhaegar watched transfixed as his son then barrelled
into the second man, knocking him across the room.

‘What incredible strength and speed’ he thought, it must be Lyanna’s wolfsblood within him.

He heard a grunt and realized he had been standing still like a fool, people had gone around the other side of the table and they were now moving towards him. His attackers were smarter, attacking from opposite sides. One man moved behind him whilst the other moved in front of him. Rhaegar threw a feint baiting the man in front of him into overextending, now that he was out of position, it was easy for him to spin behind him and drive his sword through his back.

“Duck!” he heard a deep animalistic voice command. Rhaegar didn’t know who it was but he was completely compelled to obey. He ducked and he saw Ghost fly over him and land on the final man. Ripping his throat out in the process.

He looked back for the sound of the voice and realized it had to be Jon. He looked at his son and saw that his hair was loose, and he had blood on his face and his hands and his sword was dripping with blood. His eyes were flicking quickly from left to right, he looked feral.

He quickly crossed the room and entered the accompanying hallway, Rhaegar quickly followed him, his feet slipping on the floor. Jon was sprinting ahead and reached Daenerys’s cabin first.

“No!” he yelled and Rhaegar feared the worst. He entered the room behind him and found that it was empty.

“No!” he yelled again. He paced the room like a wild animal, looking under the bed, in the wardrobe, under the table, throwing things out of the way in his quest to find her.

“Jon! Jon calm down! She’s still on this ship! She has to be, there’s no where else for her to go!” he shouted. Jon spun around and looked at him. He really looked feral.

“Ghost. Ghost find her,” he commanded his wolf. Ghost quickly sniffed the air and then bounced out the room. Jon shoved Rhaegar out of the way as he went to follow him. They went back the way they came, across the destroyed mess hall and back above the deck. Rhaegar stuck close to Jon, if he lost him now he would not find him again through the rain. The ship rocked, swayed and it was even starting to creak. He looked up at the mast and saw it teetering wildly.
He watched as Jon ran straight through a wave that had landed on the ship, not caring about the water. They ran towards the back of the boats where the lifeboats were. Suddenly, he heard a cry

“Jon!” it was Daenerys,

“Dany!” he roared and he heard Ghost howl as well.

“Jon!” she screamed and Rhaegar finally saw her. Viserys had a knife to her throat as he bundled her into a small row boat. No, she had to stay here, she would die if she went on that little boat in this storm.

Just as he was about to take a step forward a bolt of lightning hit the ship right in front of him. Rhaegar instinctively flung himself backwards. He watched horrified as a fire broke out on the deck of the ship, the blue sails of the ship were quickly consumed by the flames. He stood up and watched as the flames spread, causing crates to catch fire. He heard Dany scream Jon’s name again. He quickly looked from left to right, trying to find away through the flames to his family on the other side.

He realised that he needed to jump over the flames to reach the other side. He quickly climbed up a stack of crates and looked out over the fire. He pushed his wet hair out of his eyes, he crouched and then jumped. Only his feet slipped in the rain and his jump was nowhere near as far as it needed to be. His eyes opened in horror as he saw the blackness rushing up to greet him.

Chapter End Notes

Thanks to GOT88 for the help with this chapter and the chapters to come.

http://www.strawpoll.me/14602046/r Strawpoll for the Dragon names. The most popular will be 'Drogon' second most will be 'Rhaegal' etc

Next chapter will be out Friday 15th or Saturday 16th

Comments are always welcome

Thanks,
Sleepy
Chapter Summary

Rhaegar loses his faith whilst Jon and Dany make a series of discoveries

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

The Lost Prince

Jon drifted aimlessly across the ocean on his piece of driftwood. The storm had stopped a few hours ago and he had no idea where he was. Ghost lay across from him and he seemed to share in his misery. Jon was thirsty, the heat from the sun was blistering but he knew he could not drink the sea water. Or maybe he should, if he was going to die anyway, why not speed up the process. He was also hungry, terribly hungry. A few hours ago he had looked through the wood available to see if he could fashion some sort of fishing hook but he didn’t have the materials. Besides, he didn’t know how to fish, he didn’t learn how to do that at Winterfell.

‘Winterfell’

How was it only a few months ago that he was in Winterfell, sparring in the yard with Theon and Robb. He remembered the day that everything changed. Since that day, he had travelled across the narrow sea and found his true family. Now, he was drifting on a piece of wood in the middle of the ocean with no hope of survival. No one would know if he died out here, there would be no grave, no burial, his body would never be found. His family back at Winterfell would miss him, he hoped. Robb, Bran and Arya definitely would. As for Sansa and Lady Catelyn, he was sure they didn’t miss him when he left, he was sure they wouldn’t miss him now that he was about to die.

Then, there was Lord Stark, would he miss him? Would he mourn his death? A few months ago, Jon would have said yes, without any hesitation. Now, he was unsure. He had learned so many things about him that he was unsure whether he truly knew Ned Stark at all. Was he truly a good, honourable man, or was it all just a façade he put on in front of the realm?

Jon thought of his family, his real family that had been taken from him before he was even born. He thought of his true father, Rhaegar. He had told him so much, more than Lord Stark ever did. He told him all about his mother, and how loving and brave she was, but Rhaegar was probably dead now. Lost somewhere at sea just like Daenerys. Just thinking about her caused a stab of pain to go through his heart.
Daenerys with her silver gold hair. Her lovely violet eyes and her beautiful smile. He remembered her laugh, her lovely laugh that bounced off the walls and warmed his heart. He remembered holding her as he massaged her. He knew that she didn’t need them but he still gave them to her after every session. Jon remembered holding her in his arms in Illyrio’s manse and comforting her that day. He gave a sigh of frustration rolled onto his back, he lifted one hand up to stop the sunlight from hitting his eyes.

He would never see her again. That was for certain. She was dead. The ship had been badly damaged in the storm and had probably sank into the ocean, there was no way she would have survived. He had only hoped that it had been quick for her. He did not want her to suffer, she had suffered enough for one lifetime. From the day, she was born, she had lived in fear of Robert’s assassins. Not once, had she been able to lay her head down to sleep at night without wondering if the assassins would come in through her window and end her life. It wasn’t fair, she deserved better. If he ever saw her again, he would give her a better life. He would give her a castle, and jewels, and lands, whatever she wanted he would give her. He made this promise to himself.

Then, a small mocking voice inside his head that reminded him that she was dead and he squeezed his eyes shut to try and block out the painful thoughts.

 Ghost gave a small whine, but Jon didn’t even bother to lift his head up to look at his wolf. He would only think of her in his last few hours. He wondered what it would have been like to kiss her, to feel her lips pressed up against his. They would be soft he decided, she would have soft lips. Her hair would be soft as he ran it through his fingers.

He remembered the last time he saw her. Viserys had a knife to her throat as he bundled her into that little boat. Viserys had betrayed them. Illyrio had betrayed them. He must have made some sort of a deal with Illyrio, he and Rhaegar were ahead of him in the line of succession, he wanted us out of the way. Daenerys would have been a powerful tool to make alliances, so Viserys had made sure that she was safe. The thought made him clench his fists in anger and beat them against the piece of wood he was floating on. He barely remembered the fight on the ship, his movements were instinctual, all he remembered was that he had to get to her. He had to save her. No matter what.

 Ghost whined again, and Jon slowly sat up. Ghost was looking off across the ocean into the distance, it looked like they were drifting into some mist. The sea started to become choppier and Jon quickly decided to roll onto his stomach to better grip the edges of the driftwood. Strangely enough, he felt as if the mist was calling to him. Jon realized he didn’t have a choice, he was not strong enough to battle the current of the ocean. His will to fight had vanished, now that Daenerys was gone.

So, he held onto his driftwood and let the sea carry him into the mist. The mist was thick and he could only see a few inches in front of his face. It also smelled disgusting, like rotten eggs. The
further he travelled into this mist, the stronger the smell became. He would have vomited if he had anything left in his stomach. The sea became even more choppy as he went further into the mist, salt water splashed into his face and some even went into his nose and mouth, causing him to gasp desperately for air. This was a mistake because as soon as he opened his mouth the mist rolled in and he coughed heavily. As they travelled further and further into the mist, he became certain, that something was calling to him. He could feel it in his bones.

Jon felt dizzy, the sea was rough and he had inhaled so much of the mist that he was struggling to think properly. Suddenly, the sea calmed and Jon was spat out on the other side onto a sandy beach. Jon staggered to his feet and walked up the beach, heading for a tree that would provide him with shade. When he reached the tree he slumped against it and looked down onto the beach. He looked up at the sky and saw that it was streaked red and orange, Jon found this odd. On the other side of the mist the sky had been a clear blue colour. He looked around for Ghost and found his wolf was nowhere to be found.

Had he washed up on the island with him? He could only hope so. Suddenly he heard a screech from behind the tree. He rose to his feet and looked for a weapon, his eyes settled on a rock not too far from him. It wasn’t much but it was better than nothing. He turned to the direction of the noise and slowly walked forward, his muscles tense and ready. He heard a rustling noise and then Ghost appeared through the trees, clutching a strange animal between his jaws. Ghost dropped the animal in front of him and then sat back looking up at him with his ruby red eyes.

Jon crouched down and looked at the animal, it must’ve been a bird, but it was unlike any bird he had ever seen. It was about the size of a chicken, but it’s legs were much larger. It had a long narrow blue beak and its feathers were an odd mix of green and purple. Jon looked at the birds claws and saw that they were also impossibly long.

“Do you want me to eat this?” Ghostcocked his head to the side almost to say ‘I’m not going to let you starve’

Jon quickly sat down and went to work. After he plucked all the feathers he saw that in truth it was slightly larger than a chicken. He quickly gathered some wood and started a fire. He prepared the bird and quickly put it over the fire to cook. He sat there with one hand on his stomach impatiently waiting for it to cook. Ghost left and then came back with a bird of his own, his wolf sat next to him and devoured his kill, testing Jon’s patience further.

Once, he was satisfied that the bird was cooked, he quickly ripped off the leg and bit into it. Immediately juices flooded his mouth and Jon gave a moan in satisfaction. The meat was a little tough to chew, but he could not afford to be picky. He quickly finished the leg and then moved onto the other, soon the whole bird was nothing but a stack of bones. Jon lay back against the tree and licked the grease from his fingers. He debated whether he should have saved some of the bird for later, but he decided that Ghost found this bird easy enough, that means there would be plenty more.
Now that his hunger was sated, his thirst returned to him, and his curiosity. He did not know where he was, but he hoped that there were other people around here to tell him. On the other side of the treeline, he saw a short patch of waist high grass, and beyond that was more beach. Jon decided to walk all the way to his right, soon enough the grass ended and he reached the beach again. Then he walked all the way to his left and found the same thing.

He was on a small island, he concluded.

He looked across the horizon and saw a much bigger rocky outcrop ahead of him. As he looked towards the rocks he saw smoke rising and swirling around them. He felt that same feeling again, like the rocks were calling to him. Jon scrounged up a small piece of wood to use as a paddle and ran back to the beach to find his piece of driftwood. Ghost jumped on the piece of driftwood and Jon got on after him, he pushed the wood into the water and then started to paddle towards the rocky outcrop, as he paddled the strange feeling he had felt earlier grew stronger as he approached this new isle. The water bubbled and spat at him, the driftwood started to break apart so he decided to walk the rest of the way as he was near the shore holding Ghost in his arms. The water appeared scalding hot, yet he was unaffected by it.

Once he reached the island, he quickly made his way to the top of the rocky outcrop following a sturdy footpath that had been built. Strangely enough, his thirst had disappeared, the only thing he felt was a strange sensation that was consuming his body. He felt spellbound to reach the top.

On and on he climbed, unafraid of the height that he was at. The rock felt hot underneath his fingers. Once he reached the top he quickly looked over to the other side. He nearly fell to his knees in shock. He now realized where he was, but he could not believe it. Ghost gave out a loud howl which echoed across the land.

He should not be here. He could not be here. This place did not exist. Then the strange feeling returned inside of him with an answer.

‘You should be here Aegon’

The Hidden King

Rhaegar awoke and he felt the sharp blinding pain coming from his head. He quickly reached up and touched his head and found it was bandaged lightly. He gently massaged his temples as he looked around the room. He was in a different cabin, a cabin he was not used to. He turned to his left and
saw Blackfyre propped up against his nightstand. His mind started to regain its focus and he was able to recall his last memories. He had attempted to jump across the fire, but then he had slipped and had hit something as he fell and that was all that he could remember.

Jon and Dany.

He quickly remembered and jolted out of bed. He grabbed Blackfyre and he moved on unsteady legs to the door. Once, he entered the hallway, he looked left then right before heading towards the deck of the ship. The first thing he noticed was the sails. This ship has yellow sails with a green mermaid painted onto it. He surveyed the crew, looking for any Tyroshi but he found none. Instead, they were a mix of Summer Islanders and Lyseni. Finally, he turned his head the other way and saw Ser Jorah approaching him.

“I did not know that you were awake,” he said quickly. Rhaegar looked at him with his mouth open, he had so many questions.

“Jon. Princess Daenerys?” he quickly asked “Where are they? Are they aboard this ship?”

Jorah quickly shook his head and his heart sunk to the bottom of the ocean.

“When I arrived on deck, I saw that a fire had broken out and you were lying unconscious on the floor, the fire was spreading but I managed to grab you and reach a life boat. Then, the ship started to sink as I lowered the boat into the sea and I got knocked out. When I woke up, you were still unconscious but alive and we were just drifting on the sea, completely at the mercy of the ocean. Then, I spotted this ship on the horizon and I managed to gain the crews attention. The captain of this ship is a tight lipped Braavosi but he agreed to take us aboard and back to Volantis after I explained the situation to him. We checked for survivors, but we could not find any, I am sorry,” Jorah explained.

“Why weren’t you protecting either the prince or the princess? How did you let them out of your sight?” he said angrily.

“The princess preferred to be guarded by Jon and I was with Viserys since you had the evening off. Prince Viserys sent me away to fetch wine for him and when I returned, he was gone. I waited outside his cabin for a few moments before I heard noise from above the deck, that’s when I ran up and saw the entire scene,” Jorah said defensively.
Rhaegar grunted and let his anger pass. It was not Ser Jorah’s fault, the fault was his and his alone. He felt his grief returning. It was building deep inside of him, trying to eat away at him, destroying every fibre of his being.

“Leave me,” he said darkly.

When Jorah was gone, he stood by the railing of the ship and looked out onto the sea. He had his family, the only Targaryens left in the world, he had them all in his grasp. He could have taken them anywhere, sailed far away and kept them all safe, even Viserys. Instead, he had let his ambition and vengeance consume him. His desire for the throne had robbed him of his family and now he had no one. Jon, Daenerys and Viserys were all lost at sea. Probably dead. Definitely dead. All because of him.

He thought of Daenerys, sweet Dany. She didn’t deserve this. He had scarcely gotten to know her at all. A few days, here and there, whilst he was at home before heading back out again. He thought he knew her, but the Dany that he saw these last few weeks with Jon was the real Dany, and he was ashamed to say he never found the time to get to know her properly. He should have spent more time with her, he should have protected her as an older brother should but he had failed.

He failed Jon as well. His son, the son he thought to be dead along with his mother. He had him, and then he lost him. Jon had shut him out for weeks and they had only just started to connect, to break down the walls that had been built between them. He had failed to protect Jon, just like how he had failed to protect Aegon and Rhaenys, or Elia. Just like how he failed to stop his father, to stop the rebellion, so many failures.

The worst part about it is that the gods seemed to have given him a second chance, only to fail again.

He sighed and gave up. He could not go on. He had lost it all, his throne, his wives, his children, his family. All gone because of his actions, their deaths were on his hands.

When he was younger, he thought of himself to be a prophesied warrior, a saviour. He had read it in his scrolls, he discussed it with his great uncle Aemon. Then, he had realized that he was wrong, it was not him, it was his son with Elia, but he was dead. What if he had been wrong about it all, what if the gods were playing some cruel joke on him, what if his entire belief in prophecy and fate was for nothing.

His hand reached for Blackfyre and he pulled it out of its scabbard. He looked at the blade and how
the light bounced off the metal. When he found it, he took it as a sign from the gods that he would use it to restore House Targaryen, but he was wrong. He was not the saviour of House Targaryen, he was the destroyer. He looked at the sword and briefly saw his reflection.

Aegon the Conqueror wielded this sword and used it to conquer the seven kingdoms. Daemon Blackfyre had used it to incite the Blackfyre rebellions.

This sword had brought nothing but destruction and had caused nothing but suffering. Rhaegar knew that he was done fighting, he had fought enough for one lifetime, and he had lost every single time.

He took one last look at the fabled sword, and then threw it far into the ocean.

It was another week’s travel until the ship docked in Volantis. When they got off the boat, Ser Jorah looked at him, unsure of what to say next. He hated Jorah for letting Viserys out of his sight that night. A part of him knew that he was being unreasonable, but he was too filled with grief to care. He needed to feel hate, he needed to feel something. With the death of Jon and Dany he had lost his fight, he had lost his faith.

He walked away from Jorah and started to wander aimlessly through the streets. He looked at the people as they went about their daily business. He saw the slaves and he saw their masters, all continuing with their day, none of them knowing the burden he was carrying.

He walked and he walked until he reached the Temple of the Lord of Light.

The Temple was situated on a torch lit plaza. The mix of red, yellow and orange hues that adorned the temple walls, all mixed together to give off the illusion that the building was aflame, as if someone had managed to turn the stone into fire. It loomed tall in the skyline, Rhaegar knew that it was at least twice the size of the Great Sept of Baelor. He brushed his hair out of his eyes and then quickly started to walk towards the temple.

He craned his neck and tried to spot the top of the towers, but the tops were lost in the clouds. The
towers looked like slender flames dancing as they reached for the sky. Huge fires burned beside the stone steps leading to the entrance to the temple.

He looked up at the acolytes clad in orange and yellow robes, they stood on the terrace overlooking the plaza. Beyond the temple, he could see the black walled palaces where the Old Blood of Volantis lived.

He walked up the steps and entered the temple. He walked through the antechamber and entered the main sanctuary, red stone pillars stretched upwards and held torches to provide the room with light. The sanctuary floor was made from shiny fused black stone that reflected the torchlight back onto the white stone walls. At the far end of the sanctuary sat a huge thirty foot wide brazier that housed the eternal fire, this fire was sacred and had been remained constantly lit.

He spotted the High Priest standing near the fire. He wore red robes with yellow and orange accents, showcasing his position. He started to walk across the sanctuary towards him but his path was quickly blocked by an acolyte who pointed to his feet and shook his head. Rhaegar realized that he still had his shoes on. After taking them off and washing his feet, he crossed the sanctuary and walked towards the High Priest. Before he could announce himself, the High Priest spoke.

“I have been expecting you,” the High Priest said as he turned around to face him. The High Priest was a tall thin man with a loud clear voice. “You have come because you have lost your way, you have lost sight of the Lord,” the High Priest continued.

He nodded slowly.

“Where is Moqorro?” he had developed a friendship with Moqorro, he was the man who had saved him and brought him to this temple all those years ago.

“He is away, it was time for him to leave the temple and to do the Lord’s work elsewhere,” the High Priest answered.

He nodded slowly.

“Come, we have much to discuss. I have had visions that may concern you. They concern the fate of the entire world and events that you have put in motion” and the High Priest walked away from the eternal fire and into another smaller chamber. He followed him, but before he entered the chamber, he took one last look at the flames. He watched as the flames danced together and he became
mesmerised. It almost felt like the flames were beginning to consume him.

He reluctantly tore his eyes away from the flames and headed inside, curious to hear what the priest had to say.

The Princess of Dragonstone

She awoke suddenly, she quickly looked around to see that they had arrived on a strange island. She saw that her hands were tied and that Viserys was unconscious across from her. She spotted his knife on the floor between them. She used her feet to move the knife towards her and then she picked it up and started to cut at the ropes. As she worked away, she tried to remember the events of the night before.

She usually spent her evenings with Jon, playing games or practicing her fighting skills but that night Jon had gone to see Rhaegar. She had been sitting in her cabin reading a book when Viserys entered. At first, he had been suspiciously nice to her. Then, she heard loud shouting outside and she asked him what was going on, when he evaded her questions, she tried to push past him to go and see for herself. This was when he pulled the knife on her and dragged her onto the deck.

As he forced her into the small boat she had screamed for help, she screamed for Jon and he had answered. She saw him running towards her and hope filled her heart. He was going to save her, she knew it. Then, the lightning struck the ship and the fire broke out. She didn’t see him after that. She thought he was dead, he was probably dead.

Her poor sweet Jon, dead. The thought filled her with sadness. She remembered his gentle, nervous smile. His curly dark hair. She remembered his hands and his fingers as they massaged her shoulders and her arms. Dany remembered the feelings of his arms as they wrapped around her that day in Illyrio’s manse. She remembered for the first time feeling safe and protected. Before long, she could feel tears starting to fall down her face. With one final cut her ropes were finally lose and she turned to see where they were.

When she peered beyond the treeline of the beach, her mouth opened in shock.

She saw was a smouldering ruin of an abandoned city. The buildings were built using a material she had never seen before and the architecture itself was other worldly. She must have died as there was no place in this world that was like this.
Then, she realized that this was Valyria, the homeland of her ancestors. She had heard tales of the awe-inspiring city it had been, before the doom and she admitted that it was still an impressive place despite the destruction caused by the doom.

She reached into the boat and grabbed the bag in which Viserys had put her dragon eggs as he had taken her from the cabin when he abducted her, she was determined to not let them out of her sight again. She took a few steps forward before she heard a loud thud and a voice calling after her. She turned and saw Viserys had woken up and had started to walk towards her.

“Where are you going!” Viserys shrieked “Come back here! Your King demands it!”

“No, I will not,”

“It is not safe out there. You do not know what is out there. We could die!” he said in a panicked voice.

“If we stay in that boat we will die anyway brother, I see no reason to not to spend my last few days exploring this place,”

“Dany, it’s not safe!”

Suddenly, she heard a faint noise in the distance, it sounded familiar, like a howl. Suddenly, hopefully, she realized what it was.

“Ghost!” she screamed “Jon!”

She waited with baited breath. No answer. She sunk to her knees defeated with tears falling from her eyes, she hated herself for getting her hopes up. She heard Viserys laugh at her, but she did not have the strength in her to do anything about him.

“Your bastard is dead and so is his wolf. They cannot save you. I cannot believe you, you are the blood of the dragon yet you’re on your knees pining over a northern bastard. You are so weak that
you are imagining him, you are no true dragon,”

Suddenly, she heard another howl and her head bolted up towards the direction of the sound. She stood up and began to run towards the noise. She did not care about anything else in that moment, she just had to find Jon. She heard Viserys call and scream after her, but she did not stop. She would not stop. She kept yelling Jon’s name, but all she heard was the same howl in response.

She ran, and she ran until she felt a sharp pain in her side and she doubled over to try and catch her breath.

“Jon!” she screamed but there was no answer. She waited and waited but she did not hear the howl again. Without the howl to guide her, she had no idea which direction she needed to run in. She slumped to the floor. She pulled her knees tight and ducked her head, hoping and praying to gods she didn’t believe in.

“Dany!” and she quickly raised her head and looked towards the noise. He sounded close.

“Jon!” she yelled as she stood up. With a grunt and a pant, she picked up her bag and started to run again. She heard him call her name and this gave her the strength to keep running. She turned a corner and then another corner. Finally, she saw him standing a few meters in front of her.

His hair was wild and loose, and his clothes were torn but it was Jon. It was still Jon. She dropped her bag and jumped into his arms, wrapping her legs around his waist and grabbing hold of his neck

“I thought you were dead,” she sobbed into his neck.

“I thought you were dead,” he replied as he pulled her closely towards him and deeper into his embrace. Her heart was overjoyed to have found him again. She slowly pulled back and looked at his face. He had a few cuts on his face, including one just above his eye. Her eyes moved down at his nose. She watched as his nostrils flared after each heavy breath he took. Then her eyes found his lips, his mouth was slightly open as he tried to catch his breath. They were curved upwards slightly as if asking her a question. Her eyes then flicked back up to his eyes. Those wonderful grey eyes were dilated and she could see him looking at her intensely, she wondered if he had been doing the same thing she was.

Their eyes met. Violet stared into grey and then she leaned forward and kissed him. His lips were soft and full. One hand reached up to and she ran her fingers through his soft hair, gently pulling at
his locks. This kiss was everything she realised, he was everything to her. All she had left. She did not know how long she kissed him for, but she knew that she was not the one who broke away first. He pulled back and gently set her down on her feet. She must’ve looked upset because he gave her another quick kiss and held her close.

“Dany, what happened? Where is Viserys?”

“Viserys came to my cabin that night. I think he tried to keep me there while his men went after you. I heard Ghost howl and I ran towards the noise, I don’t know where he is now, maybe he followed me,” she said quietly.

“He betrayed us, he stole your mother’s ring and used it to pay the sellswords,” Jon told her, anger filling his voice.

She was stunned. Viserys had promised to never sell that ring, ever. It was the last thing they had of their mother and yet he had sold it to fund his vengeance and ambition.

“It was with Rhaegar,” Jon said quietly.

“Where is he?” she asked quietly.

“He’s not with me, he’s probably dead. The ship was damaged badly in the fire. I don’t know what happened to him after the fire broke out,” Jon answered sadly.

She nodded and held onto him tightly.

“I finally forgave him, I finally spoke to him just like you said and now he’s gone. He told me so much about my mother, about the war and now he’s gone,” Jon’s voice was pained.

She pushed her head into his chest and felt him rest his chin on the top of her head. She knew he was mourning the loss of his father. The gods were cruel she realized, how could they reunite a son with his father only to tear them apart so soon.

After a few moments, she felt Jon pull apart and begin to look around them. They both looked
around their surroundings and she was once again struck by the otherworldly nature of the place. The city felt unnatural yet strangely like home.

“Dany, this place, I feel like it’s calling to me,” Jon said.

“I feel it too, Jon,” she said quietly.

“We’re in Valyria aren’t we?” and she nodded her head slowly.

He stood up and offered her his hand. They walked hand in hand along the dragon roads in the abandoned city. In the distance, she could see the tops of the volcanoes smouldering and emitting smoke into the atmosphere. She looked in awe at the buildings she saw. Sorcery must have been used to build this city, there was no other explanation as to how the stone was shaped as accurately as it was. She reached out to touch a piece of the stone and she was amazed at its strength. It had been crafted hundreds of years ago, but it was still as firm as ever. The magic of Valyria must have been formidable to behold, she realized. It was a shame that the secrets of Valyria had been lost, they had been centuries ahead of the rest of the world.

The mist that had surrounded the beach where she had arrived had slowly disappeared the further they travelled inland, allowing them to see the city in all its glory. She saw towers that twisted and stretched up towards the moon. She saw pools and streams of lava flowing alongside the dragon road, into and out of destroyed buildings. The lava was still blisteringly hot and she heard it bubble and sputter as she walked past. They saw lakes that contained water that looked orange, then yellow in the light.

At the end of the dragon road stood a massive temple, the temple courtyard itself was larger than Illyrio’s entire Manse. Unlike every other building, this temple had been completely untouched by the disaster that destroyed the rest of this place. They walked towards the entrance and they were blown away by its size.

“This temple, it’s the biggest building I have ever seen, it makes Winterfell seem tiny in comparison,” Jon said.

She craned her neck backwards to try and find the top but it was covered by the clouds. Flanking the shiny purple steps were two huge sculptures of sphinxes, they were impossibly detailed and could only have been made using sorcery. Their eyes were made out of green gemstones larger than her. Above the temple was a marble sign, with Valyrian runes carved into it. She looked to her left and saw an endless line of stone columns towering upwards to support the roof of this temple. Silently, they both stepped forward and moved towards the steps that led upwards to the temple.
When they reached the top of the huge staircase, Jon turned and realized that Ghost did not follow them up the stairs.

“Ghost, to me,” but the wolf did not move. Jon called again, and again and yet, the wolf did not move. Jon looked frustrated and unsettled.

“He won’t enter this temple, he doesn’t like it,” he said to her “Perhaps we shouldn’t enter either,”

“He’s a direwolf of the North, Jon, of course he feels uncomfortable here. This is a Valyrian temple, where they worshipped their gods, this is not his place. It is our place, we are Valyrian, these are our gods too,”

He nodded. “Ghost stay here, we will return,” and he turned to look at the huge brass doors that formed the entrance to the temple. Dragons with red rubies for eyes had been engraved into the doors. They walked forward and pushed open the heavy doors.

Once they were inside the door closed with a thud. The inside of the temple itself was well lit. The floor was made up of black stone that felt smooth beneath her feet. The stone felt like glass but different. Jon said that it was obsidian or dragon glass that he read about in a book. There were pillars that ran parallel down the middle of the sanctuary, each pillar had lanterns on it, providing light. Daenerys wasn’t sure how they were still burning, more magic she guessed. Alongside the walls of the temple sanctuary were giant statues of dragons. These must have been their gods, she realized.

“Dany feel this, it’s strong but so light, is this Dragon bone?” Jon asked.

She looked at the black rod in his hands and felt it. She quickly nodded her head.

“As they walked, they could hear their footsteps echo eerily in the large sanctuary. They walked towards the first statue, which had been surrounded by candles that were burning brightly. It was a green dragon with yellow gemstones for eyes. She reached out a finger to touch the teeth of the
dragon and she immediately drew blood. The teeth was made from Valyrian steel, she quickly realized. They walked from statue to statue. Jon could not read the runes below each statue so she did her best to translate. They found the God of War, the God of Love and many more. They had reached the bottom of the sanctuary and had reached the final statue.

This statue was of two dragons dancing, nose to tail, one black with white eyes the other white with black eyes. They walked all the way around the statue and found that wherever they walked, the eyes would follow. She read the runes below the statue.

“These are the Gods of Knowledge - Hecaterus and Metheus. Behind them you will find the pool of knowledge, the pure of mind will be able to drink from this pool and receive the blessing of the gods while those that are corrupt will be consumed by it,” she read aloud.

She looked at Jon and saw that he was watching the pool of strange liquid warily. “Does it say anything else?”

“It also says something about a sacred library,” she quickly looked up and saw a small antechamber. “I think the library is down there, let’s go take a look,”

They walked to the door of the library and saw that the door had no handles. Only handprints and markings around them. Jon walked up the doors and tried to push them open, but the doors did not move. He tried multiple angles, but the door still did not open.

“How do we enter? Do we put our hands in those spaces?” he tried it, putting both hands in the spaces but the doors still did not budge. Dany looked around at the markings and suddenly she understood.

“We must use our blood,” she said quietly

“What?” he said immediately

“The door has no handles, no way to enter. It’s a magical door and all Valyrian magic is rooted in blood or fire. We have no fire, so we should try blood,” and she reached for Viserys’s knife and quickly cut her palm. She passed the knife to Jon who did the same.

Together, they pushed their hands into the handprints and waited. Suddenly, the markings changed
colour, turning blue, green, red hot and then finally white hot. Then silently the doors opened. She looked down at her hand and saw that the blood was gone and the wound had been closed, not even leaving a scar.

The library was dimly lit and there were only a handful of books inside.

“These books must have sacred rituals and secrets in them. That is why it is guarded by blood magic,” she said quickly.

She reached for the first book she could find and flicked through the pages. The pages were yellow and brittle and she carefully flicked through them. She saw plenty of diagrams, some detailing humans, some detailing dragons. These were instructions, she realized, instructions on how to work their magic.

“Jon look!” she shouted, “Valyrian steel, this is how you forge Valyrian steel,” he quickly ran over to look at the pages.

“What do we need to do?”

“It says we need dragon glass, a sacrifice and we need to say this complicated spell. It looks like blood magic” she said disappointing. She turned a few more pages and she saw a diagram of a dragon egg.

“Jon, this is how you hatch dragon eggs. It says you need heat, blood and a human sacrifice. The human sacrifice is necessary to give birth to the dragons and the blood must come from a slave, never the master. It says that the dragon and master must not share blood, otherwise the master’s soul will be consumed from within”

“Human sacrifice! We can’t do that, its despicable and vile, there has to be another way,” he said horrified. Dany agreed with him and in the spur of the moment, pulled the page out of the book and destroyed it.

She continued to read through the books. She read about the mines that had been found across the lands. She made a note of which mines contained precious ores and which contained gemstones. She read about all the animals and creatures that had lived once in this strange land, Sphinxes, Phoenixes even Unicorns had roamed Valyria hundreds of years ago.
She continued to read the books until suddenly she heard a scream. She looked towards Jon and found him writhing on the floor in pain, she looked at his hands and saw that were starting to become swollen and deformed.

“Jon, what happened!” she shouted but he did not answer. He just continued to roll around howling in pain. She watched horrified as he rolled around. She was afraid that he would die if she could not help him, but she was powerless. She saw blood on a blue gemstone and quickly ran back to her book, looking for the picture, and underneath the picture, she saw spells. She screamed and shouted all the spells on the page, praying one of them would save him. She screamed, and she screamed until suddenly she felt a hand clamp around her mouth and a cold knife at her throat.

“Hush, now little princess, I’m sure I could find better uses for your pretty little mouth,” and she was spun around to look up at her captor. The man was pale, but handsome with dark hair and a dark beard. His right eye was bright blue but his other was covered with a patch. She looked at his lips and found they too were stained blue and curved upwards into a smile.

“I already found your brother and he told me that you were here, you would make a fine salt wife for me,” he said with an evil smile.

Jon screamed again and this distracted her captor. He shoved her to the floor and then walked over to him.

“What’s wrong with him?” he asked as he bent to pick up the book that was lying in front of him.

“Oh, you sweet little girl, you unlocked the secret library didn’t you?” he said with a wide smile “My warlocks tried and failed to get that door to open but you have opened it for me, perhaps I should marry you instead, because you have given me a priceless gift.”

He then spoke to some men who went into the library to pack up all the books. Jon screamed again.

“He, on the other hand, is useless,” he said with disgust.

With a grunt, her captor picked Jon up and threw him into the pool of knowledge. She watched horrified as Jon’s body slowly sunk into the pool. The liquid bubbled and spluttered, and then it
slowly turned black as Jon sank below the surface.

Chapter End Notes

Yes, I know what the tags say, no Dany will not get raped. Relax. Put the pitchforks down. Jon has been giving her lessons and she is smart. She'll figure it out

Thanks to the people who voted on the Dragon names in the previous chapter.

It's Christmas time and I'll be heading away for a few weeks. This means that updates will slow down unfortunately. I hate leaving it at this point, I'd much rather leave you with chapter 7, but that's just the way life goes.

I will TRY and upload chapter 7 whilst I'm away. It's finished and ready. I can't promise what day I'll upload it, but I will try. Updates should resume as normal in the new year. Chapter 7 is "The Doom"

Once again thanks to GOT88 for the help.

Have a good Christmas
Thanks for reading

Sleepy
The Captured Princess

Daenerys was marched through the streets of Valyria with her hands bound tightly in front of her, she looked up at the sky and saw that nightfall was nearly upon them. Streaks of purple were mixing with orange as the sun crept lower and lower on the horizon. Her captor walked in front of her and his strange group of men walked behind her. They walked in a tense silence. She was curious about her captor, no man had ever sailed into the doom of Valyria and lived to tell the tale. Yet, here he was, walking freely and casually. He had his hands in his pockets and was whistling a cheerful tune. He was clearly a pirate of some sort, but what kind of pirate would be crazy enough to sail into the doom of Valyria. He turned towards her and flashed her a charming smile.

“I am sure you have many questions for me. I am Captain Euron Greyjoy, Son of Quellon Greyjoy, brother to Balon, Victarion and Aeron. My family are the rulers of the Iron Isles. You’ve probably heard of me as the man who destroyed the Lannister fleet whilst it lay at anchor, my brother Victarion was the one who led the Iron fleet, but it was I who came up with the plan. Victarion has always been a follower, never a leader. His incompetence was proven when he lost to Stannis Baratheon in a naval battle near Fair Isle,”

“An Ironborn commander was defeated by a greenlander at sea, it was the height of shame for my House and my people” he continued and he spat on the floor in disgust.

“After the Greyjoy Rebellion failed, I was banished by my brother, Balon,” he said darkly, “Since then, I have travelled across the world collecting riches & power. My ship, the Silence has travelled as far as Asshai and Qarth. My ship is feared in ports all around the world, from as far as Ibben all the way to Asshai,”

“I don’t believe you,” she said quietly. He looked at her in surprise before laughing.
“So, the beautiful princess finally speaks? I thought you had screamed yourself hoarse,” he said with a smirk. “If you don’t believe me, you can speak to the warlocks among my crew to verify my claims. I would ask you to speak with my crew as well but I’m afraid they can’t give you any answers as I had their tongues removed. It’s something I do, that’s why my ship is called ‘the Silence’”, he said with an evil grin.

“But, you’ll have to speak with the warlocks quickly as I’m almost ready to add them to my silent crew. You see, they have been failing me as of late. I asked them to perform one simple task for me, just one simple task. They had to hatch a dragon egg for me. I had one you see, but the warlocks could not hatch it despite the fact that they are the greatest & most skilled warlocks gathered from across the world. I hate to say it, but I threw the egg into the ocean in my frustration. As for the head warlock, he was not so lucky,” and he smiled wickedly at her as he said this.

“Luckily, now I’ve found three more dragon eggs and I have you to thank for that as well,” Daenerys cursed herself. She had handed this man three of the most valuable things in the world, through her carelessness.

“I heard your brother’s screaming. The fool was standing in the middle of the road waiting for you to return. I quickly took him captive and brought him to my ship. It didn’t take long for me to get him to spill his secrets, he screamed nearly as loudly as you did. I had half a mind to cut his tongue out and put him to work on my ship but I did not want to upset you,” he paused for a second making eye contact with her.

“I find that it is much more enjoyable when the woman is willing,” he said in a husky voice.

Daenerys shuddered, as she felt her skin crawl.

“My warlocks tell me that the place where I found you was a temple of the gods. When Valyria was consumed by the doom, nearly all the palaces, towns and houses were completely destroyed but somehow, that temple has managed to stay intact. When I first came across it, I was astounded, how could this one building have survived when everything else around it had been reduced to ash and rubble that still smoulders to this day? I entered the temple with my crew ns spent days with my warlocks learning about each of your gods. Your people were incredible, some of the things that I have learned would blow the minds of Westerosi maesters away,” as he spoke she realized that he was completely in awe of this place.

“There was one that intrigued me more than the rest, the God of knowledge. They are depicted as two dragons who together form one god. I learned about their pool of knowledge which threatened to consume those that were unworthy, and of course, the secret door to their hidden library. I spent
weeks trying to open that door. My warlocks tried every spell they knew but it would not open. Eventually, one of them was smart enough to realize that the door was sealed with blood magic, thus only the blood of Valyrians would be able to unlock it. I cursed my luck & was about to leave but then I ran into your brother, who told me that you were here too. We spent hours searching for you, I was starting to wonder if you had fallen into one of the lava pits but then I heard your screams & fortune smiled upon me. Think about, what were the chances that I would run into the last Targaryens, just when I needed their blood! The gods are smiling upon me.” he said, holding his arms up as if in thanks.

As he continued his story, she kept looking around for any method to escape but she realized she would not get far, her hands were tied, and she was flanked by his men. She also concluded that he seemed depraved enough to enjoy the chase if she did manage to get away.

“You opened the door to the secret library, containing the deepest darkest secrets and magic of the Valyrian freehold. Perhaps, one of these books even contains the secrets of forging Valyrian steel, or how to hatch your dragon eggs,” he said with a malicious smile. She bit the inside of her mouth to stop herself from smiling, she had ripped that page out of the book. That secret would be lost forever. The blood of a slave and then a human sacrifice, she remembered.

As they continued to walk, she noticed the mist was growing thick again, she realized that they must be close to his ship. She was proven right as they turned a corner and his ship loomed up ahead of them. The ship had a dark red hull with black sails. The figurehead was a naked woman. The ship looked ominous in the water, Daenerys couldn’t shake the feeling that if she got on this boat, she would never get off.

Euron seemed to sense her unease, he then grabbed her around the waist and lifted her the rest of the way onto the ship. Once she was on the ship, she heard someone moaning below deck, she turned towards Euron who was smiling wickedly.

“Come, let us go see him,”

He led her below deck into a dark damp room where she found her brother naked and chained. The chains holding his arms were high on the wall and as a result his arms were strained. He couldn’t even lift his head and she heard him faintly muttering. She quickly crossed over to him and noticed the bruises, burns and cuts all over his body, she looked at the floor and noticed that it was wet, he must have pissed himself in fear. Euron had cut off his nipples and had even burned parts of his skin. She was horrified, she had only left Viserys a few hours ago but in that time Euron had found him and completely broken him. She gently put her hands on his face and lifted his head up so he could look at her,

“Brother, Viserys, it’s me, can you hear me?”
Viserys did not seem to know she was here. All he did was mutter strange words, she looked at his lips and found that they were tainted blue.

“What did you do to him?” she asked angrily as she turned to face Euron. “What is he saying?”

“Oh, he is hallucinating,” Euron replied in a bored voice as he checked his nails for dirt “They all do after their first taste of shade of the evening,”

She turned to look at her brother. His eyes were closed and he continued to mutter. She leaned in closer to hear the words. He kept saying ‘Euron is my God’ and ‘I only live because he allows me to’ She leaned back and stared at him in horror, he kept repeating those words. She let his head drop and she heard the chains creak and groan. On the floor, she noticed an old knife. Its blade was covered in dry blood and she nearly missed it in the darkness. Before she could move towards it, Euron crossed over to her and yanked her up by the elbow.

“Come my sweet princess, it is time that I take you to bed,” and he flashed her an evil smile

Daenerys kicked, screamed and bit as he picked her up carried her to his cabin. He threw her inside and locked the door, he leaned against it and folded his arms.

“This would be better for both of us if you didn’t fight,”

Daenerys stood across from him on the opposite side of the room with her arms folded tightly. She desperately searched for a weapon and her eyes spotted a knife on his bedside table and picked it up and held it the way Jon told her to.

“Go on, take the knife. Try and kill me,” he said in a mocking voice. “Here, I’ll even make it easy for you,” and he threw his own weapons across the floor towards her and knelt with his arms outstretched. The knife trembled in her hand and he started to laugh,

“I know you, you’re not a killer, you’re just a pretty little princess, good for warming my bed at night on these long ocean voyages. One day, I will thank my brother for banishing me, otherwise I would never have had the chance to fuck the last Targaryen,” and with that he stood up and started to walk slowly towards her.
“Stop,” she said quietly. He did not stop, he continued his slow walk forwards. *I am Daenerys Stormborn, Princess of Dragonstone, blood and seed of Aegon the Conqueror. I will not be raped by this peasant. I. Will. Not.*

“Stop,” she commanded. She had been struck with an idea.

“Oh, a feisty little princess, I like that,”

“Be quiet. I have read the books that you have taken. One of the pages is missing, a page that will be of great interest to you. If you touch me, I will never tell you what is on that page,”

Euron rolled his eyes. “The only thing that you could possibly offer me, is your pretty little cunt,” and he started to walk towards her again, unbuttoning his shirt as he moved.

“I told you to stop,” she said fiercely. “If you do not touch me, I will hatch those dragon eggs for you,” at this he stopped and looked at her curiously.

“I don’t believe you,” he said eyeing her suspiciously.

“Go and ask your warlocks, I can show you the book from which I pulled out the page. What do you have to lose? If I am wrong, then you can come back and rape me, but if I am right, you gain three dragons,”

He slowly nodded and gestured for her to leave the cabin. Before she reached the door, he put a hand around her throat and whispered into her ear,

“This better not be a trick,”

She had to once again bite the inside of her mouth to keep herself from smiling.

**The Hand of the King**

The Lord of Winterfell missed his home. He missed his wife, he missed Robb, Bran and Rickon and
he missed Jon. He had been in Kings Landing for several weeks now, and he was still not comfortable in this city. He missed the peace and quiet of the godswood, there was no heart tree in the capital and it felt as if his gods had no power here.

He had received a few ravens from Catelyn, she informed him that all was well in the north. Robb was ruling well in his stead, he had settled a few minor disputes between the Lords, nothing too difficult. He had also sent a small amount of supplies north to help the Night’s watch which had requested aid from the Starks.

In the weeks following the end of Hand’s Tourney, the capital had gradually calmed down. The lords and knights had slowly started to leave to return to their homes and he was finally able to walk around the Red Keep without being spotted and pulled over to chat every other minute. Of all the great lords, only Lord Tywin remained in the capital. Ned acknowledged that as long as his daughter was Queen and the crown was heavily indebted to House Lannister, Lord Tywin would always be welcome in the capital.

Now, that the capital was quieter, he could begin his investigation into the death of Jon Arryn, and the best place to start was with the Grand Maester. He walked through the castle towards his chambers. Along the way, he passed Lord Baelish in the halls who was smiling even more smugly than usual.

“Lord Stark,” Baelish said with his cocksure smile.

“Lord Baelish, I trust that you are well,” he replied

“I am my lord, thank you for asking.” The tourney had brought a lot of coin into the capital and the crowns coffers. He had probably made a substantial profit from his brothels. Ned had no desire to get drawn into another verbal spar with him,

“If you don’t mind, I have business to attend to, the Hand of the King is a busy position,” and with that he continued to walk towards Pyelle’s chambers. Once he was outside, he knocked twice and entered.

“Ah Lord Hand,” the old man stammered. Pyelle quickly crossed the room towards him “Please take a seat. How can I help you my Lord?”

“I would like you to tell me everything that you can about the death of Jon Arryn,”
“Of course, my Lord,” Pyelle poured himself a cup of wine and slowly sat down opposite Ned. “Jon Arryn died from a stomach illness it seems,”

“A stomach illness?” he asked in disbelief. Jon Arryn was old, but compared to other men of his age, he was particularly robust.

“Yes, my Lord, a stomach illness. I must confess it was most unusual. Jon Arryn was very rarely ill during his time in Kings Landing. One night he was fine, moving like a man half of his age and then the next morning he was bed ridden, unable to leave because of the pain he experienced.”

Ned was troubled, “Are you sure that it was a stomach illness, perhaps I should speak to the maester who treated him,”

“Maester Colemon, Jon Arryn’s personal maester saw to him at first, but I was there for him in the end. The Hand of the King deserved the best possible treatment you see,” Pyelle replied.

Ned sat quietly as he processed this information. Suddenly, he was struck with a thought,

“Grand maester, have you considered the possibility that he was poisoned. That would explain his sudden illness and his quick death,”

The Grand Maester pondered this for a few moments before shaking his head.

“No, I examined the body after he died, the body showed no signs of poison,” Ned stayed quiet, unconvinced. Over the years he had learned that sometimes, silence brought more answers than questions and he was proven right yet again.

“Come Lord Hand, I will show you all the common poisons,” he stood and led him into a room. Judging from the smell this would be where the Grand Maester worked.

“This is where I keep my poisons. I have samples of all the known poisons in the world stored here,” he reached up and pulled a bottle from the shelf. “This is essence of Nightshade, my lord. One drop will calm your nerves, three drops will put you in a deep sleep. Ten drops, even diluted in a cup of wine, is fatal. This leaves a trace so obvious that even a maester in training would be able to spot it,”
He put the bottle away and pulled down another one. “This is powdered Greycap. It is made from plants and toadstools, it is slow to act but leaves a trace,” and he put that bottle away.

“This is the Strangler, a rare and extremely deadly poison. Perhaps, one of the fastest acting poisons known to man,”

“So could this have been used to kill Jon Arryn?” Ned asked quickly.

“No. Whilst the Strangler is extremely quick and virtually impossible to treat, it is painfully obvious. The poison works by causing the victims throat swell and close shut, this causes them to suffocate. Blood also leaks out of the eyes, nose and mouth. If someone discreetly poisoned Jon Arryn, I can assure you, that it was not with the strangler,” he finished with a flourish.

He then proceeded to list all the other common and rare poisons that he had in his inventory, Blindeye, Basilisk venom, Demon’s dance, Manticore venom, Wolfsbane, the list went on.

“These are all the known poisons?” he asked as Pycelle finished his list. The Grand Maester nodded in confirmation.

“Thank you Grand Maester, you have been most helpful,” he said as he turned to leave.

“Oh my mistake, Lord Hand, there is one more that I forgot to show you,” Ned turned to look at him and saw that he had pulled a keychain from beneath his clothes and had crossed over to a locked cupboard. He opened the cupboard and pulled out a tiny vial.

“This is a poison known as the Tears of Lys, an extremely rare and very expensive poison, which is why it is kept under lock and key at all times. Only, I have the key to this cupboard,” Pycelle spoke in a serious and cautious voice.

“Tell me about the poison,” he asked curiously.

“Tears of Lys is a quick, odourless and it affects the bowels of the victim,” Pycelle answered.
“So, it would appear as a stomach bug?” Ned asked suspiciously.

“Yes, I suppose the symptoms would be similar,” Pycelle said after a pause.

“Did you not consider this as a possibility? Did you not tell the King?” he asked in disbelief

“No, no, no,” the old man stammered quickly, “Tears of Lys is an extremely rare and expensive poison. It would be nearly impossible for someone to obtain it, let alone to slip it to Jon Arryn. The former Hand was attended to by his trusted servants only & they had been in his service for years.”

Ned nodded slowly and thanked him for this information. He walked back through the Red Keep towards his chamber in the Tower of the Hand. He was nearly certain that Jon Arryn had been poisoned, he had been struck down too suddenly to convince him of anything else. The bigger question is who would want to poison him and why and how they managed to do it.

As he neared the Tower of the Hand, he saw Lord Varys standing, seemingly in wait for him.


“Lord Varys,” he said tiredly “To what do I owe this pleasure,”

“I would like to speak to you,” Varys answered with a smile and then nodded towards the entrance of the tower, “Perhaps, somewhere more private would be best,”

Ned nodded and led him into the tower. They entered the solar, he offered wine to his guest but the Spider declined. Ned then poured himself a cup of wine and sat behind the desk. He gestured for Varys to speak,

“My little birds have been singing a curious tune, one that I am sure you would like to hear,” Varys said sweetly

Ned had a bored look on his face. He had no desire to play these games.
“They involve the former Hand of the King,” and when he said that, Ned felt a curious look begin to form on his face. Varys must have noticed because he continued eagerly,

“My little birds are saying that he was poisoned,” and Ned felt vindicated.

“By who? Was it tears of Lys?” he asked quickly and Varys smiled.

“I believe so. The poison itself is clear and as sweet as water. I begged Lord Arryn to use a taster, in this very room I begged him, but he would not hear of it. He said only a lesser man would use a food taster,” Varys explained in sickly sweet voice.

“Do you know who it was? Do you know who poisoned him?” Ned asked impatiently.

Varys shook his head “I am afraid not my Lord, but I could investigate the matter if you would like,” the spider offered.

“No,” Ned said firmly, “We will work together,” and Lord Varys smiled when he said this. Ned did not trust him but at the moment their interests were aligned. But he would need to keep an eye on him, just in case Varys was luring him into a trap.

The Dragon Reborn

Jon walked through the secret library looking at the books that were on display. The books were old and their pages were brittle, Jon couldn’t even read Valyrian, so he just left them alone for Dany to read. She would call him over if she found anything interesting. He looked around the room and he was again amazed by the architecture. The room had four pillars made of black dragonstone in each corner. Jon walked over to one of them and decided to take a closer look. As he got closer, he realized that the pillar was not black, it was made of a strange material that seemed to absorb the light and distort it. Jon was sure that in complete darkness, the pillars would take on a different colour.

He walked around the room, along its walls were tables with various rocks and gemstones sitting on them. They must have been exhibits that were meant to go along with the books on the table, he supposed, and so he decided to take a closer look. The first rock he saw was red and shiny. He immediately thought that it was a ruby of sorts. He picked it up and held it in the light, as he moved it around he noticed that the rock was no longer red and shiny, it had become yellow and translucent. He moved it back and forth and was amazed at the transformation.
“Dany, do any of those books mention rocks changing colour?” he asked curiously. She looked up at him and then at the rock. She quickly flicked back a few pages through the book and read out a passage to him. Apparently the Valyrians used this rock in their potions to help them change their appearances. Some rocks were said to be able to help awaken and focus the magic that flowed through Valyrian blood.

“I didn’t know that was possible, people changing their appearances and magical powers,” he said quietly. But then remembered the stories of wargs and greenseers, he concluded that it was possible that the Valyrians had magical abilities of their own.

“Neither did I, it must have been a rare skill, Viserys never mentioned it to me,”

She then went back to her book and he continued to look at the rocks. He picked them up and moved them around to see if they did anything special. Most didn’t, Dany said that they were all used for complicated potions or rituals. The last gemstone on display was a beautiful sky-blue rock. Was it a sapphire? Jon was not sure, he had heard about them in his lessons, but he had never seen one in his life. What he did know, was that this was a beautiful gemstone, he wondered if there were any left like this in the world. If there were he would get some for Dany, perhaps in a necklace, or a ring.

He put his hands on the gemstone to lift it to show to her but as he touched it he cut himself on the edge of the rock. As his blood poured onto the blue gemstone he felt a sharp pain from where he cut his hand. The pain was white hot and it travelled quickly down his arm, into his shoulder and around his body. All he could do was sink to the floor and scream in pain.

The pain consumed his body, blocking his thoughts and eating away at his mind. The pain had robbed him of his senses and he felt adrift inside his own body.

He felt as if he had been picked up, and then a feeling of weightlessness took over. Gradually, the pain began to recede and he slowly opened his eyes, blinking away the tears that had formed from squeezing them so tightly shut.

He looked around and saw that he was floating above what could only be Valyria, except all the mist was gone and the land was in one piece. This must have been what it looked like before the doom, he thought. Suddenly, he was standing inside a foreign room. In this room, there was a man with valyrian features seated behind a desk and he appeared to be working. The door to the room opened and a young girl with similar features ran in.
“Daenys, what is it?” the man asked

“Father, I had a dream, a dragon dream, we need to leave, I saw destruction come to these lands. We need to leave,” she said in a panicked tone.

Her father looked at the little girl, a look of worry clouding his features and slowly nodded,

“Very well, we will take our family, our dragons and possessions and we will head for Dragonstone,” and then the room vanished. He was floating through a mist until he saw the dragon. It was the same green dragon that had been in his dreams before. It was waiting for him, he realized, he quickly moved towards the dragon and climbed on its back.

The dragon flew high into the sky. Higher and higher into the clouds, soon they were above the clouds and yet they still climbed higher. The sun became brighter and brighter until the light was blinding and then his mind was flooded with visions.

He saw an old man with Stark features. The man was piling blocks of ice one on top of the other. Higher and higher the ice was stacked until it was hundreds of feet tall. The man used giants and mammoths to help him complete this construction. His control over them seemed otherworldly & Jon realized that this man was a warg.

He saw an old King of winter leading his forces. He marched his armies to the coast, where he defeated invaders, executing them and placed their heads along the bows of his ships. It was Theon Stark, the Hungry Wolf.

He saw a Valyrian woman placing a crown of rubies on a man’s head & proclaiming him King of Westeros. It was Aegon the Conqueror & his sister wife Queen Visenya and this was the start of his conquest.

He flew high over the Godseye. He watched as Aegon the Conqueror burned a black walled castle. He watched as the stone turned orange, red then white hot as the dragonfire consumed it, killing everyone inside the castle.

Then his dragon took off again and he was flying again. Now, he was at the trident. Where he watched as a Stark king walked forward and knelt before Aegon. Jon closed his eyes and when he opened them, the man was kneeling before him, the Stark king began to look up towards him, but before he could see the details of his face the vision changed again.
Jon watched as a big broad chested man fought several men, he was impossibly strong. He followed the man as he began to execute those that had peacefully surrender to him, including women and children. He followed the man into the throne room of the red keep where Jon watched as he died upon the Iron throne. It was Maegor the Cruel, his dragon gave a sound of disgust.

He turned towards the Gods eye, where he saw two dragons having a mid-air battle. The sun was setting and the sky was streaked with dragonflame. He watched horrified as one dragon bit into the neck of the other and both started to fall towards the ground. One rider jumped across to the other’s dragon and drove his sword into the eye of the other rider. The riders along with the dragons crashed into the lake, sending up a plume of water hundreds of feet into the air. This was the famed battle during the Dance of Dragons.

He returned to the throne room and he watched as a fat Targaryen King knighted his son. Presenting him with a Valyrian Steel blade. It was Blackfyre, and this was Aegon the Unworthy. His dragon quickly turned away in disappointment.

The vision changed again and this time he was flying above a ruined castle. He flew lower through the destroyed roof and saw a man and a woman laying with each other. The man had silver hair and was playing a harp for the woman’s enjoyment. It was his mother and father he knew and a wave of happiness rushed though him.

He was back in the throne room of the red keep. He saw a man on the throne with long silver hair and even longer nails. The man kept cutting himself on the throne. He watched as the King burned a man alive inside his armour, laughing wickedly as he did so. This was his grandfather, the Mad King. His dragon roared its disproval.

His dragon took him north again, back to the trident. He watched a man clad in black armour duelled another man wearing a helm with antlers using a Warhammer. He watched as his father duelled the usurper. He tried to urge his dragon forward to help his father but he was powerless, all he could do was watch. He felt his rage building inside of him. The usurper was strong, he realized. He watched as the usurper struck down his father causing his father’s body to fall into the river. His dragon roared in anger.

The vision changed once again, he saw his grandfather commanding men in alchemist’s robes to burn the city. He saw a handsome knight with golden hair dressed in white armour slay the alchemists & then drive his sword through his grandfather’s back. His dragon observed silently, nodding in understanding.

His dragon took him higher and this time he was flying over a desert landscape with a solitary
tower, in the background he spotted red mountains. He watched as seven men moved towards the tower with their swords drawn, they were greeted by three knights clad in white armour. He watched as they battled. The three men were clearly more skilful than the seven. He studied their techniques and he knew they were ingrained in his mind. This was the Tower of Joy, he realized. He watched the fabled Sword of the Morning disarm Lord Stark only to be stabbed from behind by a wounded crannogman.

He looked east across the narrow sea and he saw a platinum haired boy and a little platinum haired girl. He watched horrified as the boy dragged the girl by her hair and pinched and pulled at her skin.

He watched as Lord Stark dragged the direwolf outside into the darkness and then cut its throat. Jon felt angry and his dragon roared its disapproval at this act.

In his anger he turned his dragon north. He flew over Winterfell and looked down onto the castle courtyard. He saw Robb Stark on the executioners block, waiting for the axe to fall. He saw Sansa in a white wedding dress, being dragged into the Godswood to be wed. His dragon roared in anger and he saw them all look up towards the skies in his direction.

He flew further north beyond the wall. He flew further and further north, until he saw blue eyed corpses slowly rising from graves, he flew further over the corpses until he saw the heart of winter and then he quickly looked away

The visions started to come faster and faster then,

He saw a little boy with dark hair running and as the boy got closer, he saw his purple eyes. He watched as the boy chased a little girl with silver hair, he watched as they ran towards their mother, a woman he knew well. He saw Robb sitting at the high table where the Lord of Winterfell should sit. He saw Arya, practicing her sword fighting. He saw Lord Stark sitting in a strange solar, working with a bald headed man that could not be trusted. He was on the trident again, with the usurper below him and his dragon.

Finally he saw Daenerys. She was in a room with a strange man walking towards her. He immediately knew that she was in danger again. He felt his anger return and this time his dragon could not control it

He awoke with a start. He grabbed the edges of the pool and pulled himself out. As he climbed out, he watched as the strange liquid drained off his body, he was completely unharmed by the liquid it seemed. He looked down at his hands and they were untouched. He seemed to be physically fine,
but his mind was different.

His head was bursting with all the information he had just received. He felt as if the information was sinking through every pore in his body, entering every tissue and every cell. He had seen his ancestors, Stark and Targaryen, both had been as ruthless and as bloodthirsty as the other, he concluded. There was more to this information he knew, but at the moment he did not know how much it had affected him.

He thought back to that vision of Daenerys and the strange man and he knew that she needed him. He could not save her when Viserys took her, but he was determined to save her now. She would not slip from his grasp again, she would not be harmed. He ran to the statue for the god of war and ripped the sword fixed at the base of the statue with ease. He was amazed by his own strength. It was a Valyrian steel longsword with a dragonbone handle, he knew that it would do the job he required. He exited the temple and thundered down the stairs. He turned left and ran, he instinctively knew that this was the right direction. As he ran, he noticed the weather had started to change. The winds were moving with him, it seemed. He ran on and on without feeling the need to stop. It felt like he was gliding along the path. Ghost appeared running behind him from among the ruins, he had sensed that Jon needed him.

He navigated the streets with ease, it was as if he had lived here his entire life. He quickly realized they were heading towards the beach, he saw the sails of a ship and began to slow down. He knew that this is where she was. He crouched behind a broken wall and observed the ship. He saw several men moving about the deck on the ship, they were dragging something or someone from below deck onto the shore.

Jon saw the long silver hair and he nearly burst out from behind his cover. But then he realized that it was Viserys and he remained where he was. As Viserys was dragged forward, Jon noticed that whoever had captured him had tortured him badly. His neck was sagging, and his body was battered and bruised, he was clearly unconscious. He realized that this man likely had Daenerys as well. He wanted to jump out from behind the wall but a voice inside his head kept telling him to watch and to observe.

He watched as the men tied Viserys up and placed wood around him. Then another group of men in brightly coloured robes appeared, they reached into a bag and put three objects on the floor surrounding him. He recognized the objects as Dany’s dragon eggs. He watched, as she walked forward onto the deck and then off the ship and he saw her captor follow closely behind. Was she going to hatch the eggs for him? It certainly looked like it. Jon knew that he needed to get to her now before she did this. She must have been waiting for him to arrive, she must have been hoping that he would save her.

However, the voice kept telling Jon to wait. He looked around for Ghost and he saw that his wolf had silently moved elsewhere, perhaps to take up a better position. Several more of the captor’s crew
stood on the deck of the ship, looking down at the scene in front of them. He watched as they walked forward towards Viserys. She spoke to the strange man. The conversation was tense, she was evidently trying very hard to convince him of something. It seemed that she was successful because the man pulled out a knife and offered it to her. He held it there, challenging her to take it.

Before she could move, he laughed and withdrew the knife. He quickly twisted it around and used it to cut his own hand. He then took the knife and smeared his blood all over the dragon eggs.

Jon suddenly understood her plan. It was brilliant, he admitted. She did not need him at all, she would have been fine on her own.

Suddenly, the man turned and struck her, and this is when Jon moved forward.

He vaulted over the broken wall and ran the final few metres towards them. Daenerys opened her mouth in shock and her captor spun around to face him. The man looked horrified.

Before Jon could reach them, three of his men had stepped in front of him, wielding axes. They stepped forward to meet him, he sensed Ghost somewhere to his left and so he moved to attack the man on the right, leaving the man in the middle for last. Jon reached the man on the right, blocked his upward swing and rolled in the same motion slicing open his stomach. Jon had never practiced this move before, and for a moment, he wondered where he had learned it.

He did not think on it for too long as felt the man in the middle appear behind him. Jon moved quickly and automatically as he twisted his entire body out of the way of the man’s downward strike. Then, he heard a thud and knew that Ghost had killed him.

He looked towards Daenerys and saw that she had somehow managed to wrestle a knife away from one of the men and she was now fighting them. He felt a rush of pride as she used one of the moves he had taught her. She didn’t see the man sneak up behind her. He quickly rushed over to her to help her.

“Dany!” he roared and she quickly turned around and dodged the strike. He quickly drove his sword into the back of the man’s head. He quickly cut through the other men that she was fighting, killing two men in a matter of seconds. He looked around and found that her captor was nowhere to be seen.

“Where did he go?” he asked as he quickly spun around.
“He went back to the ship,” Dany said but when she looked at him, she had a questioning and wary look on her face. Jon did not have time to dwell on it, together they quickly ran up onto the deck of the ship. They saw the man standing in front of a group of warlocks and crew members. He looked at the man, he had a patch covering one eye and he wore what Jon could only guess was a full set of Valyrian steel armour.

There were about five men in total, not including the leader.

“Who are you?” he asked

“Jon Snow,” he said and he heard Daenerys gasp next to him. He didn’t have time to wonder why,

“Euron Greyjoy, the Crow’s Eye,” and he gave a mock bow.

“Theon’s uncle,” Jon had heard grim stories about Euron Greyjoy. He quickly looked at Dany to check if she was unharmed, when his eyes met hers, she quickly looked away fearfully.

Jon raised his sword and stepped protectively in front of her.

Euron raised one eyebrow in surprise before laughing.

“You are outnumbered, you cannot win,” Jon watched as more men poured out from the depths of the ship, now there were at least thirty of them, forming a circle around them

“I’ll offer you a choice, hand the girl back to me, and I will let you live, you can work on the oars, perhaps I will let you clean our sheets when we are finished. Or if you wish, you could fight, die and then I take the girl,”

Jon’s fingers flexed as he gripped the sword tighter and he crouched into a fighting stance.

Euron smirked before saying “Go,” and the men slowly moved forward to attack. Jon tried to feel for Ghost but he could not find him, he could feel Dany behind him and he realized that he would need
to manoeuvre them in a direction that would enable her to escape.

He closed his eyes and muttered a strange prayer under his breath. The words were written at the base of one of the statues in the temple. When in Valyria, why not pray to the Valyrian gods? After he said the prayer, he felt a gust of air quickly whip across the deck of the ship and an earth shattering roar emanating from around him. Then, he heard a sharp intake of breath and the sound of the deck creaking.

He opened his eyes and stepped forward. To his surprise, everyone had sunk to their knees in front of him. He searched for the source of the roar but there was nothing around. Euron screamed at his men to fight, but only a few moved. One man charged towards Jon with his axe but Jon quickly blocked him. Jon was surprised by his own strength because the block shattered the steel axe head into pieces. Now armed only with the wooden handle, the man opened his mouth to scream but no sound came, Jon looked down his throat and he understood why, these men had no tongues.

The man staggered back towards the other members of the crew and he too fell to his knees in front of them. Euron gave out a grunt of frustration and stepped forward, brandishing his own Valyrian steel blade.

“I’ll show you what a real god looks like!” he shouted as he lunged forward. Jon quickly took a step back to avoid his strike. Unfazed, Euron launched another strike, this time Jon was forced to bring up his own sword to meet it. The clash of Valyrian steel on Valyrian steel was something he had never heard before, it was loud a clear ringing sound that echoed for a long time after the strike. Jon quickly pulled his sword away and made sure that Dany was still behind him.

They went back and forth, Jon knew that he could easily beat him, but he did not want to take a risk and leave Dany exposed, he had to use his own body to shield her. He also realized that any strike to Euron’s body would be useless due to the armour, he had to aim for his exposed areas.

Suddenly, an idea came to him and he remembered that he had seen the Kingsguard use this move in one of his visions. He aimed a feint at Euron’s head, causing him to raise his hands up to block it, then Jon quickly lowered his blade and cut him on his exposed hand, causing him to howl in pain. Jon knew the cut wasn’t deep, but it was enough to distract him for a few seconds.

Sensing this was his opportunity. Jon quickly brought his sword around to aim for the bulging vein in his neck. As he brought his sword down he heard a loud scream.

“Dany!” Jon instinctively turned towards the noise. It was Viserys, he had regained consciousness and was struggling to free himself from the ropes that had bound him.
Jon heard the faint whistling of a sword cutting through air and with impossible speed he barely lifted his sword to block Euron’s strike. As Jon had been off balance, the strike knocked him to his knees. He knew that Euron would be looking to finish him off but suddenly, Euron dropped to the floor in front of him, clutching a knife that had been driven into his neck. He looked up to see Dany standing over him

“I am the killing type,” she said to Euron as he fell to his knees desperately clutching the knife in his neck. She looked at Jon before quickly walking away. Jon quickly looked around and understood that with Euron out of the way, the rest of his men would not fight them. Many in fact, had remained on their knees. He guessed that something had happened to Dany and he was determined to find out what it was

“Dany,” he called, “What happened? Are you all right?” he ran to catch up with her and pulled her around by her waist. He noticed that she still did not look at him.

“I’m fine Jon,” she said quietly. He knew she was lying to him. He feared the worst.

“Dany, please, you can tell me anything. Did he hurt you?” he asked softly, hoping, praying that she would say no.

“It’s not me, Jon, he did nothing to me, it’s you Jon,” and with that she finally looked at him. Jon was deeply disturbed by the look she had on her face. It was like she did not know who he was.

“Is it my face? Did I get cut? Am I bleeding?” he didn’t remember much when he was fighting, so he thought that he had been cut and she was worried. He quickly ran his hands over his face and found nothing unusual. Perhaps his hair was different.

“Jon, it is your face but…” and she couldn’t finish her sentence. Instead she grabbed him by the hand and led him down to the water. She gently pulled him down to his knees

“Here, look into the water. Look at your face,”

Jon did as she said and he was shocked by what he saw.
His hair was now straight and platinum blond and his eyes had turned purple. What happened to him? He kept staring into the water trying to wrap his mind around his changed appearance. He needed to find out what exactly happened to him inside that pool.

Chapter End Notes

Thanks to GOT88 for the help provided with this story

The Next Chapter is "The blood of Valyria" you'll like that one. It'll be up sometime after new year, most likely the 1st or 2nd of Jan. So this is my early Christmas present to you all

This chapter was pretty fun to write, some of the visions are clues to how this story will end, but not all of them. Some of them might be there to mislead you...

As always let me know what you think of this chapter.

Have a good Christmas
Sleepy
The Dragon Reborn

He stared at his reflection in the water, utterly transfixed by the sight. As he stared, he could see that it was still his face, it was just his hair and eyes that had changed colour. Of course, that meant that he was not completely unrecognizable but it was a small comfort. Jon knew that something in the pool did this to him, he knew that it was some sort of magic and perhaps they could reverse the changes.

“Jon?” he heard a voice quietly call out to him. He looked over at Daenerys and saw that she was very concerned “Are you all right?” she asked tentatively.

He nodded. “Yes,” he replied his voice was hoarse “Yes, I’m fine,” he repeated.

“What happened to you? When I last saw you, Euron had thrown you into the pool, it turned black and swallowed you up. I thought I would never see you again,” she croaked.

“I touched one of the rocks or gemstones and cut my hand on it. As my blood spilled onto it I felt a searing pain course through my body. I don’t remember much after that, all I remember was the pain. Then suddenly, I felt weightless & the pain stopped,” he explained to Dany.
“That must have been when he threw you into the pool,” she said interrupting him, “Sorry, I’ll let you finish,” she said with an apologetic smile.

“Right, so as I was in the pool, I had visions. I saw so many things. I saw Daenys the Dreamer, I saw Aegon the Conqueror, I saw the Targaryen & Stark Kings of old, great historic battles & moments, my father, your father, I saw so many things that I can’t list them all for you at the moment, perhaps we can discuss it later at length?” he asked and she quickly nodded her head.

“My final vision, was a vision of you. I saw that you were in danger and I knew I had to save you, so I pulled myself out of the pool and ran towards you,”

“How did you know where to find me?”

“I just knew, it was like I could sense you” he said with an uncommitted shrug of his shoulders. “When I saw the ship, I crouched behind that wall to observe the situation and I guessed what you were planning to do, it was brilliant. You didn’t need me to save you after all,"

“I wouldn’t say that, you were quite helpful,” she said with a smile and he instinctively looked at her face, her beautiful face, her lips were calling him again. He had decided to not mention the vision of the little boy and girl, not yet. He did not want to presume things.

“Jon, when you were about to fight Euron, you recited a strange prayer, do you know what you said?”

“No, I read the words at the base of a statue in the temple, something in my gut told me that it was the right thing to say before a battle, so I said it,” he looked at her and saw she had the same unsettled look on her face. “After I recited the prayer, I felt a strange gust of wind and then I heard everyone gasp, what exactly happened?”

She started to fiddle with her hands. “I don’t know how to say this, but as the wind blew, a dragon appeared behind you. It was green with copper tinted scales. It was transparent almost like a ghost. Everyone saw it,”

Jon was stunned. How did he summon a dragon spirit?

“Maybe, when you fell into the pool, you gained the magical knowledge stored within it. It was the
pool of knowledge after all. Remember it said that the worthy would be blessed with its power. It could also explain the change in your appearance," she said answering his unspoken question. When she mentioned his face he looked back into the water again, hoping that the effects would be wearing off. He knew that he was only humouring himself.

As he looked away from the water and back to her, he saw that she was watching him nervously.

“You’re still the same Jon, and that’s all that matters, it’s all that matters to me,” she said softly and this time Jon leaned in to kiss her. The heat from her lips passed into his body and warmed him all the way to his heart. As long as she was still with him, it would be all be ok he realised. She wrapped her arms around his neck and he put his hands on her waist and pulled her into his lap.

“Dany!” she broke apart as she heard Viserys yell again, they had forgotten him. He quickly looked up at her and saw that her eyes were dilated and her lips were parted.

“We will finish this later,” she said and she gave him another quick kiss. They rose to their feet and walked over to Viserys. He was struggling to free himself from the ropes that held him in place, the friction caused the ropes to cut into his skin causing him to bleed even more. He kept calling for his sister, begging, pleading.

“What did they do to him?”

“Euron captured him after I left him. He tortured him and gave him something called shade of the evening to drink. We should untie him,” and she moved forward to help her brother.

Jon’s mind immediately flashed back to Maegor the Cruel, Aegon the Unworthy and then the Mad King. He remembered the vision of Viserys being cruel to her. He remembered the feeling of disapproval being exhumed by his dragon as he watched those visions play out. He suddenly understood that the visions were lessons for him.

Dany untied Viserys and he slumped forward on his knees, thanking her and kissing her feet, tears flowing down his face. Dany quickly shook him off her but he continued to crawl after her. Jon turned back towards the ship to find the warlocks. They were all still standing on the deck of the ship along with the crew, he motioned for one of the warlocks to come to him.

“Can he be saved?” he asked the warlock who quickly shook his head in response.
"No, Shade of the evening is used to give the drinker the ability to see prophetic visions. The drinker needs to be in a calm & focussed state of mind to be able to discern the meaning of the visions & the shade should only be used in a moderate dosage. If the drinker is not completely relaxed & focussed at the task or if the dosage is too great, then it can turn him into a simpleton. Euron had been impatient as he did not manage to learn much from his own experience of using the shade & he knew the dangers of overdose. When he captured Viserys, he decided to test a higher dosage on him to gain some insight as he did not care of what would happen to him. I’m afraid the physical torture coupled with the effects of the shade, have driven him insane."

When Viserys heard Euron’s name he immediately began to howl and scream again, he quickly crawled forward and grabbed Daenerys around the ankles, begging her to save him and to protect him. She grabbed a hold of him and quickly tried to calm him down.

"Bring Euron’s body and toss it onto the pile of wood. He will be burned. I also want you to ready the books that you stole from the library, I wish to read them later," The warlock nodded and quickly scurried away to complete this task.

Jon watched as Euron’s body was thrown onto the pile of wood and the fire was started. They had stripped him off his armour and it only took a few moments for his body to become aflame. He stood next to Daenerys as this occurred, Viserys was still on the floor whimpering.

"Relax dear brother, Euron is burning, he will not hurt you any longer," she said to Viserys.

Viserys heard Euron’s name and was launched into a frenzied panic again. Daenerys tried to calm him down but he would not listen. Viserys rose to his feet whipping his head back and forth and then he stared at the fire and Euron’s body, this seemed to calm him. He watched as Euron’s body burned slowly and then he suddenly ran forward into the fire.

"Viserys, No!" Dany screamed as they heard a loud crack. She started to run behind him but Jon reached out his hand and grabbed her to stop her from following Viserys into the fire.

"No, Dany you will get burned," She quickly turned to face him.

"No Jon. I will not burn. We are the blood of Old Valyria, the blood and seed of Aegon the Conqueror, this is our home. I am Daenerys Targaryen, you are Aegon Targaryen and we are the blood of the dragons. Don’t you see! The flames will never hurt us because THE FLAMES ARE OURS!" she shrieked and then she grabbed him by the neck and kissed him fiercely. She broke away and then quickly strode into the flames.
Jon was rooted to the spot on account of Daenerys’s fierce and confident declaration. As she stepped into the flames he heard a second crack. He heard Viserys scream and yell but he heard nothing from Daenerys.

Slowly, he walked forward in an almost trance, his feet carrying him forward without him even noticing it. Surprisingly, he felt completely calm. He continued to walk forward until all he could see was the flames dancing in front of him. Calling to him. He remembered Daenerys words. She was right. They were the blood of Old Valyria. They were fire and the flames belonged to them.

As he stepped into the flames he heard third crack as loud and as sharp as the world breaking.

The flames encompassed his vision. He could not see Daenerys or anything else except for the flames. He could feel a massive surge of power around him, it felt as if the world was shifting. When the fires died down, he saw that he was naked, his clothes had been completely burnt, he was covered in sooth & ash but he was unharmed, not even a blister on his skin. He turned around & saw Daenerys in a similar state with 3 baby dragons crawling around her body. One was black with red scales, it was the largest among the trio and had climbed on top of her shoulder while a smaller white dragon with gold scales was nestled in her arms. The third dragon looked like the one in his dreams with green colouring & copper scales. It crawled towards him & curled up around his ankle. He then looked towards Dany & couldn’t help but stare at her naked form.

“Jon,” she said with a small smile, “You’re staring,”

He quickly shook his head and looked the other way. He turned around to look at the ship, he saw that the entire crew were staring at them in awe. He remembered that they were both naked & he quickly ordered for clothes to be fetched for them. He then proceeded to stand in front of Dany to cover her & led her onto the ship, shielding her as they walked. They entered the cabin and sat down on the bed while the dragons began crawling about the room. They were facing one another.

“How did you know that would work?” he asked her

“I had a dream once, around the same time that I met you, I was surrounded by fire but I did not burn & then I heard a voice repeatedly saying that ‘fire cannot kill a dragon’. Why did you follow me? I didn’t tell you to do that,”

“The conviction & confidence in your voice convinced me to follow you. Also, as soon as you disappeared in the flames, I felt being drawn towards them too. It was the same feeling that drew me
to this island. I knew that I had to do this.”

“How didn’t Viserys survive? He was a Targaryen, he had the same blood as us,” she asked quietly.

“In my visions, I saw the evil & unworthy Targaryen Kings. Maegor the Cruel, Aegon the Unworthy, the Mad King. After witnessing each vision of these kings, my dream dragon roared in contempt. It was teaching me a lesson Dany, those kings abused their power and unleashed pain & suffering upon the realm. We have to be different from them, it is our duty to rid the world of false dragons who would spread destruction and to build a better world. The dragons are a gift from the gods to realize the dream of a better world.”

“Aegon the Conqueror brought fire and blood to Westeros, but he also brought unity to the continent. He put an end to the constant wars between the various old kings & laid the foundation for a peaceful and united realm. There is a need for destruction before you can create something new.”

“Jon, your face,” he looked at her quickly. Surely. his face couldn’t change anymore. “Your hair and your eyes, they’ve gone back to normal,”

Jon’s hands quickly flew to his face. He pulled a lock of hair and saw that it was raven black.

“How?” he asked. There was a knock at their door before she could answer. One of the warlocks had returned with clothes and the books.

“Here, are the clothes you asked for and the books we took from the library,” he said as he entered the room.

“All of them?” Daenerys asked. The man meekly nodded. The black dragon hissed at him. “Yes, these are all the books, your grace,”

“Good, now leave us and wait for any further instructions. Do you have any food?” he nodded quickly. “Good, have meals prepared for us, it feels like I haven’t eaten in days,” she said and she dismissed him with a wave of her hands. Jon raised his eyebrow in surprise.

“Ordering people around already are you, your grace?” He teased. She just rolled her eyes and got up to look through the books.
“The King was too busy staring at the Queen, so someone had to take charge,” she pulled a book from the pile and sat back on the bed. She quickly flicked through the pages until she found what she was looking for.

“Here we are,” she said as she found the page “I read earlier that there were potions that enabled Valyrians to change their appearance. However, in certain cases the potions also unlocked the dormant magic & power within one’s blood & granted them incredible abilities.”

“Perhaps, the pool contained some leftover remnant of that potion & it awakened my dormant magic. During my fight, I felt faster and stronger than I ever did before. Does it mention anything about how to access and control this power?” he asked

“Maybe, it also says that the powers were tied into the emotional state of the individual. So feelings like rage or fear could cause their powers to activate,”

Jon slowly nodded his head. He had been so consumed with rage when Daenerys was threatened, and when he was fighting with the Ironborn.

“That makes sense, maybe when I was in the pool, something within the liquid seeped into my body and gave me these powers, what else does it say on this matter?”

“Not much really, it’s such a rare occurrence that people haven’t written a lot about it. I have an idea though, think about things that make you angry or afraid, and let’s see if your appearance changes. Try it,”

Jon closed his eyes. He thought about his visions of Viserys hurting Daenerys, or Daenerys with Euron. He slowly felt his anger build. He opened his eyes and looked at Daenerys who looked surprised.

“See it worked, you’ve changed again,” she said bouncing on the bed with excitement. She was still naked

“This is incredible. If I can learn to control this power, it will be an incredibly valuable skill,”
“We have plenty of time to practice, we have a long boat ride ahead of us,” she said with a wicked smile. Jon started to lean forward but she put her finger to his lips.

“No, we have some stops to make first,” he decided to pout at her which caused her to laugh.

“What stops? We have a ship, we have dragons, we should just leave now,” he asked in annoyed tone.

“Plenty of stops. Think of it, like a shopping trip” she said excitedly. She went to her books and again flicked through the pages.

“How do you know what to look for, you couldn’t have to read them all,”

“I am a fast reader and I have excellent memory, Jon,” she replied “Here, this book tells us everything we need to know about dragons. All about how they grow, what to feed them. It says that there is even a special pool here in Valyria & If you bathe them in that pool, they will not only grow faster but also become more powerful than average dragons.” she said as she pointed to a spot on the map, “It’s along the eastern coast. Before that, there are several mines and armouries that we should stop at along the way,”

“Why?”

“Jon, we’re in Valyria. The treasures here are worth a fortune. We could buy armies with what we find here. With our armies and our dragons, we could change the entire world.”

Jon nodded slowly “Ok, I’ll tell the crew. We’ll set a course,”

He quickly dressed himself in the clothes which the warlock had brought them, then he took the book and map and quickly went to speak with Euron’s crew to set a course. Well, he tried to speak but they were mutes. so it was mostly him pointing at the map, and them nodding or shaking their heads. Eventually, he got the message across and they set sail.

Euron’s crew were skilled sailors, he quickly realized. They navigated the smoking sea with ease and got them to the areas they required. Jon noted that the location marked as the armoury, was in fact an old destroyed palace. He surmised that whoever had owned this place must have been very rich and probably been among the most powerful families in Valyria. The palace itself had been badly
destroyed in the doom, lava flowed freely down the staircases and the marble walls had crumbled. They had to be careful where they stepped, as several times the stone had crumbled beneath their feet. There were two purple sphinxes flanking the entrance to the palace, one was missing a head, the other a leg. Jon could tell that their used to be jewels in the eyes of the Sphinx but they had been lost over time.

As the roof had been largely destroyed, Jon and Dany were able to walk around freely, collecting valuables along the way. They found Valyrian steel daggers and bows made from dragonbone.

“Whoever lived here must have been unbelievably rich,” she said as they found yet another piece of Dragonbone. “I know Illyrio trades in dragonbone, this stuff is incredibly valuable and they have it in abundance,”

“Not as valuable as the armour,” Jon said as they found yet another piece. “No armourer in the world will be able to craft armour half as good as this,”

The warlocks had stripped Euron of his armour before they killed him, and they had found eventually found enough scattered pieces to finish another completed set. Jon had tried on Euron’s armour and found that it fit well. He was also amazed by how little it seemed to weigh, he tried a few moves and he found that he was able to move freely, it was as if he was not wearing anything at all.

“I think Euron’s suit of armour will fit me well, maybe I have a little growing to do for it to be a perfect fit. Hopefully, these pieces can be used to create a set that will fit you. I think you’ll look good clad in armour,”

“Have you been imagining me clad in armour?” she teased. Noticing his serious face she quickly continued “I don’t need armour, I’ll be on a dragon,” Jon had noticed the black and red dragon that had been following her around closely. It was perched protectively on her shoulder and hissed at him.

“See, he’ll protect me, I’ll name him Anogar,” she said and her dragon roared in approval. Jon watched as the other two dragons followed behind them, he kept looking at the green dragon. He knew it was the same dragon from his visions. He closed his eyes and focused and when he opened them, his dragon had climbed upon a broken pillar and jumped onto his shoulder.

“Vedros,” he said and he was greeted with a roar.
“What should we name the third dragon?” he asked

“Caraxes,” she said immediately. They watched as the dragons clawed and scraped at each other on the floor, they seemed to be playing some sort of game with each other.

“Come Dany, let’s keep moving, we still need to head to that pool,” he offered her his hand and they continued to look through the palace. They found more swords, weapons and jewels. Then, they left and continued to the pool that she had found on the map.

The location marked on the map described a hidden volcanic pool and to get to this pool, they would have to pass through a cave mouth whose entrance was located by the sea. When they reached this location, they found that the entrance to the cave had been completely obstructed by lava. He looked up to see that the lava was flowing all the way from the top of the cliff and down into the water. They decided to head back to the boat. As they were walking back, the dragons all suddenly screeched & took off in a different direction and then after a moment, Ghost followed.

“I guess they want us to follow,” Jon said. They followed the mythical beasts and realized that they had found another way to the pool. When they arrived, they saw the dragons splashing about in the pool, screeching and roaring as they did.

“Do you think, that this water will actually make them grow faster and stronger?” he asked

“I don’t see why not, everything else mentioned in the book turned out to be true,” she said with a shrug “Besides, they look like they’re having fun,”

"Why do you think they had a special pool like this hidden away?” Jon asked after a while

“I’m not sure, but if I were to guess, this pool was only known by the most powerful dragonlord families. If they had bigger dragons than everyone else, then they would be able to increase their power and influence. That could be why they kept the location of this pool in the special library.”

Eventually, they left the pool behind and headed back to the ship. Once they boarded, they both stood on the deck of the ship and looked out at Valyria before it was swallowed up by the mist. In the background, he could see the sun was setting behind the rocky islands.

“We have been so fortunate to see this place, no other man alive has been here, no one has been here for hundreds of years,” Jon said to her.
“Will we ever comeback?” Dany asked hopefully.

“Maybe, it feels like we have so much left to explore. Maybe when the dragons are big enough to ride, we can comeback whenever we feel like it,”

“So, where do we go next Jon?” she asked as she turned to face him

“The closest city from here is Astapor, so what do you say, my Queen?” he asked as turned to face her

She smiled warmly at him and stepped closer to him.

“Astapor sounds perfect, my King,”

The She Wolf of Winterfell

Arya Stark was frustrated. Kings Landing was not what she expected or hoped for. The King was a disappointment, she had heard stories about how the great Robert Baratheon had fought and won three battles in the same day, or how he had crushed the Greyjoy rebellion or how he had beat Rhaegar Targaryen at the Ruby ford with his Warhammer. On her way south, she had even looked in the Ruby ford for the rubies from Rhaegar’s armour but she couldn’t find any.

Instead of a Warrior King, she found a fat man. She didn’t see him much, it was only occasionally at meals. When she did see him, he was always either drunk, or telling loud bad jokes. According to her father, the King was busy during the day which could explain why she never saw him. Her father was also busy, he said that being Hand of the King meant that he would have to spend a lot of his time helping to run the realm. He had to listen to petitions and resolve disputes.

Sansa was completely infatuated with that idiot Joffrey. Arya would never forgive him, because of him Mycah had died and she had to chase away Nymeria. Worse still, her own sister had lied for him. She didn’t even know him but she lied for him.

She also missed Jon. He hadn’t said goodbye to her but still she missed him nevertheless. Her father
hadn’t explained to her why he left, but he had told her that Jon was heading to Essos. She wondered where he was, was he in Pentos or Myr? Volantis or Braavos? She wished that she could have gone with him to see all these great places. He must miss her because she missed him dearly. When she was older, she too would travel the free cities and find him.

However, things in Kings Landing weren’t all bad for her. Her father had found her a sword instructor, Syrio Forel, the first sword of Braavos. He was teaching her water dancing which was a Braavosi style of swordplay. The lessons were hard, she admitted, she often came back covered in cuts and bruises, but she loved them. She knew that every lesson, every bruise, it all made her stronger and better.

Unfortunately, that day she could not have her water dancing lessons. She was stuck inside having tea and lemon cakes with Sansa and their Aunt Lysa. Well, she and Sansa had drunk tea, Aunt Lysa quickly switched to wine. Arya didn’t want to miss a day of lessons but her father had insisted that she spend time with her aunt. Arya had never met her before, she had been born in the North and Aunt Lysa had never come to visit them, she said it would be too cold for her.

Despite being her mother’s sister, Arya could barely see the resemblance. Aunt Lysa was younger, but she looked at least ten years older. To hide this, she wore a lot of powder on her face. She shared the same auburn hair as her mother and Sansa, but her hair was very thick and fell to her waist.

She had a son, Robin who was of similar age to her, only a few years younger. When she found out about this, she thought that they would be friends, maybe he would like sword fighting as much as she did but she was proven wrong. Robin was very sickly and was never far from his mothers skirts. Even now as they sat around the table, he was perched on her lap resting his head on her breast like a new born babe. Sansa and Aunt Lysa were chatting.

She realized that she had been day dreaming again and regretfully tuned back into the conversation. She picked up a lemon cake and bit into it, savouring the sweet taste.

“Aunt Lysa, do you like this dress?” Sansa asked as she stood up and twirled “I made it myself.”

“Very nice, my dear, you are very talented with a needle. Soon, all the southern women will be copying the style of the beautiful Sansa Stark. What about you Arya? Is your needlework any good?” Aunt Lysa asked.

Arya thought about Needle, the sword that Jon had made for her before he left, she was getting better with it.
“My needlework is getting better but I haven’t made anything since I arrived in Kings Landing.”

“If you have not been making anything, then what have you been doing with your time?”

“Dancing,” and she smiled sweetly.

“How is the prince?” she asked Sansa. Sansa practically fell out of her chair in her eagerness to talk about Joffrey, she talked about how gallant and how brave he was. On and on, she gushed about him. Arya nearly vomited in disgust.

“My dear, you are a very lucky girl. When I was a little girl, I wanted to marry a brave knight, he would be tall and have long flowing dark hair. As I got older around your age, I wanted to marry the man of my dreams. You my dear are very lucky, you get to marry the crown prince!” Lysa told Sansa.

Arya took another bite of her lemon cake. She wanted to leave. Aunt Lysa and Sansa got along fine, they wouldn’t miss her if she left.

“Arya, are you promised to anyone?” Lysa inquired.

“No, Father said he would try and find a match for her in the south. She needs to work on being a lady though, she has dancing lessons but she’s terrible at it, she always comes back with bruises,” Sansa answered barely concealing a smile.

“I am not terrible, you’re just too stupid to understand,” Arya said defensively.

“Now, now, children, don’t fight,” Lysa interrupted. “You both remind me of my childhood with your mother as we were growing up in Riverrun”

“What was that like? Mother doesn’t talk about it much,” Sansa asked.

“Riverrun was lovely. It was just the three of us,” she smiled happily.
“You, mother and Uncle Edmure?” Sansa asked

“No, no, not Edmure, Petyr,” Lysa answered.

“Petyr, who is he? Mother never mentioned him,” Arya asked.

“Really? Your mother never mentioned Petyr Baelish? Well, the three of us were best friends growing up. Once, Cat and I managed to convince him to eat mud pies, he was sick for a week!” she laughed loudly, waking up Robin.

“We would play in the gardens, we would dance,” she paused and then leaned in closer to Sansa “We would even practicing kissing with him,” she said in a loud whisper.

Sansa looked horrified “But Aunt Lysa, that isn’t proper! Septa Mordane says you should not do those things unless you are wed. She said that such behaviour is for lowborn women.”

“Nonsense, my dear, I am sure your charming prince would love to have one of your kisses,” she said as she took a sip of her wine.

“Growing up in Riverrun was perfect. Until the Starks got involved,” she said darkly. Arya sat up and decided to pay closer attention.

“What did the Starks do Aunt Lysa?” Arya asked quickly.

“It all started with your mother’s betrothal. Did you know your mother was not supposed to marry your father?”

They both shook their heads.

“Well, she was supposed to marry your father’s elder brother Brandon. He was kind and sweet to her, but Petyr saw through him, he realized that Brandon was no good. Petyr’s always been good at reading people you see, that’s why he’s so successful today,” she said proudly which Arya found
“He challenged Brandon to a duel for Catelyn’s hand in marriage. They fought and Brandon butchered him like the animal he was,” she spat “You should have seen the wound girls, it was horrible, but I saved him, I nursed him back to health. I was always there for him, Cat wasn’t, she took Brandon’s side, she didn’t deserve Petyr,”

Arya was very curious. She would have to ask her father about this, Brandon was his brother. She noticed that Lysa took another drink of her wine.

“Thankfully, Brandon got what he deserved in Kings Landing,” she said. Suddenly the door opened and a thin short man walked in. She looked at his grey green eyes which were flicking back and forth surveying the scene in front of him.

“Uncle Petyr!” Robin exclaimed happily. He was practically trying to jump out of Aunt Lysa’s lap and into his arms. The strange man, Petyr, kissed Robin’s forehead and began to soothe him.

Arya found it a bit strange that Robin seemed more comfortable with this stranger than his own mother.

“Ladies, what are we talking about?” he asked after Robin had calmed down.

“Petyr, my dear, I was just telling the children everything about our time growing up together in Riverrun!” she said happily.

“I hope you haven’t told them everything. Somethings are best kept a secret, I find,” and he smiled at Arya as he said this. Arya noticed that his smile never reached his eyes.

“Why not, Petyr? Why should we hide? Do you not care for me? These girls won’t tell anyone, did you not mean it? Is that why you want to keep it secret?” she babbled quickly.

“No, no Lysa,” he said quickly as he crossed over to her.

“Then what is it? I did everything for you? Even the tears. I gave him the tears just like you asked. I
did everything you asked, you can’t do this to me,” she shrieked. Arya noticed that she had started to cry as she spoke.

“Come now Lysa, calm down. Have you been drinking Arbor Gold? You have, haven’t you,” he quickly picked up her cup and moved it away from her. “You should not drink so much, it’s not good for you. You should head to bed and sleep it off, I will see you later,” he smiled at her.

When he said that, Arya noticed the way her eyes lit up happily and she quickly nodded her head. She took her son and walked out of the room, leaving them alone with Petyr.

“You must forgive her, Arbor Gold tends to get to her head rather quickly,” he gave them that same false smile that he had practiced so well.

“Of Course, Lord Baelish,” Sansa said quickly.

“Just to be sure, I think that we should not tell anyone of today’s conversation. We wouldn’t want embarrassing stories of your aunt to spread around the court,” Sansa quickly nodded. He turned to Arya.

“What do you say little girl, it will be our little secret, just the three of us,”

Arya then gave him a sweet smile “Of course, our little secret.”

The Spider

Lord Varys was a careful man. He had spent decades planning and scheming, sprinkling a few truths here and a few lies there. Carefully working to achieve his goals, he could see the finish line up ahead but he had to be careful, so very careful. The closer he got to the end, the more dangerous the game became. The stakes were now at their highest, and he would not lose, not this close to the end.

He had realized that over the last few months, more and more things were happening & not all of these acts had not been orchestrated by him. The pieces were moving too fast and he was not able to control them.
Across the sea, events had unfolded in a much different way than he had planned, too many unexpected arrivals for one. Still, the situation was still salvageable, no one would miss a dead man.

The events on this side of the sea had been occurring in a much more predictable manner.

The wolf had arrived in Kings Landing and Lord Varys had been pleased with what he saw. The Wolf was honourable and good natured, the wolf thought himself to be above the politics and the games played in the south. This was good, as it meant that the wolf could be controlled, steered in the direction that he wanted. He had already started to get the wolf to dance to his tune although he didn’t know it.

The stag was not an immediate concern of his. When faced with a choice between the Wolf and the Lion, the Stag would tear himself apart, creating a vacuum of power in his wake. That would leave only the Lion. After the incident at the joust, the animosity between the Lions had been clear to see. Lord Varys had been paying particular attention to the movements of the Lions. He knew the depths of their cruelty and this cruelty would help him achieve his goals.

He walked through the dark secret passageways in the Red Keep. King Maegor had built them in order to provide him with a quick escape route should his enemies ever surround him. When Varys first arrived in the city, he had made it his mission to learn every secret passage and every secret tunnel within the Red Keep, which ones had collapsed, which ones contained traps. Now, he knew them like the back of his hand. He knew which passages led to the King’s chambers, which led to the dungeons, some even took him all the way out of the city. One particular passage led all the way out of the red keep to the cliffs overlooking the sea. Narrow handholds, impossible to see from the ground, had been cut into the rock, it allowed a person to climb down to a trail besides the Blackwater.

Varys took a different secret passageway this day. He turned left, then right then left again until he stopped at a particular part of the wall. He stopped and he waited and he listened. Eventually he heard the voices on the other side. The lions had come out to play.

“Father, you sent for me,”

“Hours ago, you are late, you know I do not like to be kept waiting,”

“Of course, my apologies father,”.
“Save your apologies, we have business to discuss,”

“Will Jamie not be joining us?"

“You know Jaime, he would much rather put on his silly white cloak and prance around guarding that fat fool. In time, I will remind Jaime of his duty as a Lannister. Not to mention, he is blinded by his love for that deformity he calls a brother, he will be of no use today,”

“I thought that we were here to discuss that drunk dwarf,”

“We are. What he did at the tourney is irredeemable. He embarrassed our house in front of the entire realm. He embarrassed me.”

“What do you propose we do father?”

“When he was born, I had half a mind to take him out to the ocean and let the waves carry him away. I should have done it, it would have saved me the trouble of doing it now,”

“Do you mean to?”

“Yes. Do you not agree?”

“I agree,”

“Good, because this plan would have occurred whether you agreed or not,”

“If you did not want my consent, then why am I here?”

“This needs to look like an accident and to achieve this goal I will need information. When does he eat, where he sleeps, where he spends his time, who he spends his time with etc. I need to know everything. I trust that you have spies within the Red Keep & city?”
“I do,"

“Good. Tell them to follow him. I want to know every detail of his routine. I am expecting the best from you,”

“Anything else, father?”

“No. Now go,”

“I won’t let you down Father,”

“One more thing, do not tell Jaime,”

“Do you think I am stupid enough to tell Jaime?”

Silence.

“You underestimate me father, I am smarter than you think.”

“I know that you are smart, but you are not as smart as you think you are.”

Silence. Varys heard the faint click of a door opening and then he heard it close with a thud. He usually entrusted his little birds with this sort of work, but now he was happy he had done this himself. This information was useful, but only in the right hands. Give it to the wrong person and it would do nothing, no, he had to find the right person.

He then returned to his chambers and prepared to hire some commoners who would play the part of Cersei’s spies. These men would then cross paths with Jamie Lannister at a tavern which Robert often visited to indulge his many vices. Jamie would then overhear a conversation about Tyrion’s routine from these men.

Jamie’s suspicion would be piqued. He would corner the men, then either with a bribe or fear, Jamie would learn of the interest that his father & sister were taking in Tyrion. Jamie Lannister was strong
at arms but average at games of intrigue. Nonetheless, even he would be able to sense the threat to his brother’s life. This would lead to a confrontation among the lions & help Varys’s plan move along.

Oh yes, Varys was certain his plan would work perfectly.

The Mother of Dragons

Daenerys sat in her cabin waiting. Jon had gone up onto the deck to look at the dragons after they ate. They had all the valuable items stored away below decks, they would be very useful in their upcoming ventures. Either as incentives or to serve as payment. In total, they had found seven Valyrian steel swords, countless daggers, and three dragon bone bows. The warlocks had said that the bows themselves were incredibly valuable, even better than the bows wielded by summer islanders.

She knew that the next stage of their journey would be difficult. They would have to keep their treasure a secret, plenty of people would flock to them for their dragons alone and they barely had enough men to guard the dragons as it was. With the treasure, they had collected they would be able to purchase the Unsullied in Astapor, that would be relatively easy. After that, it would be more difficult, they would have to plan their moves carefully.

She was interrupted from her thoughts, when she heard the door open and close. Jon had returned. She looked up at him and she saw that he was looking at her intensely, as if he was drinking in every ounce of her body. She felt desirable, wanted. He quickly crossed over to her and kissed her.

His lips felt hot, sweet and soft and the kiss was all too short, as he pulled away she found herself leaning forward trying to find him again. He broke away abruptly and headed back to the door.

“Jon, where are you going?” she asked desperately, worried she’d done something wrong.

“To lock the door,” and then she understood, relaxing a little. He was ensuring there would be no interruptions. She moved to the middle of the bed and onto her knees so that she was eye level with him. The bed felt soft beneath her. His eyes were burning with desire as he slowly walked closer.

“Would you like me to take this dress off, Your Grace?” she asked in a sultry voice. He then climbed onto the bed and knelt opposite her, before slowly putting his hands around her waist and gently pulling her towards him. She quickly captured his lips and they kissed passionately, she opened her
mouth and she felt his tongue brush softly against hers, exploring her taste.

He broke away from the kiss and quickly tried to remove her dress, fumbling for a moment before pulling it up over her head. She unbuttoned his shirt, taking time to run her fingers all over his body as she did so. He kicked off his trousers and then he gently pushed her back onto the soft fur bedding.

He started to kiss her softly on her neck and then slowly moved down her body, sending shivers down her spine. He gently kissed and nibbled her breasts before moving down her stomach. She watched him kneel up between her knees. His mouth was opened slightly, and his grey eyes were burning with desire as he looked at her. He gently touched her feeling her wetness as he slowly moved his finger around. Then he slowly slid one finger into her causing her to shudder and close her eyes. She felt his other hand move to her breasts and they gently pinched and pulled at her nipples causing her to moan and whimper as she felt them pucker into tight little pebbles. He was gentle and patient and she gradually found herself spreading her legs and she was rewarded with a second finger. She moaned and squirmed for a few moments before she felt him remove his fingers. She opened her eyes and looked at him, he was looking up at her hesitantly, almost asking if he could continue. She nodded her head and watched as he ducked his head.

She felt his warm breath on her, as he gently started to kiss her, she relaxed further into the bed when she felt it. He paused for a moment and looked up at her, before slowly, tentatively, licking her. The feeling of his tongue on her slit caused her to close her eyes and arch her back up off the soft furs. She felt him stop and she quickly opened her eyes to look at him, he was waiting for her, making sure that she was ok. She quickly nodded, and he licked her again and gently kissed her. Even touch causing a pleasurable feeling to grow from inside her belly and out into her hips.

She realised that she was being selfish then and gently pulled at his hair, causing him to look up at her again.

“Together…our first time,” she said breathlessly, and he understood. He slowly moved up her body and kissed her softly. She felt him manoeuvre his cock near her entrance. He moved slowly, almost uncertain and perhaps teasingly. After a few moments of tender kissing, she felt him gently ease his cock into her. The feeling of fullness was unusual. As he slowly started to pump, she pushed her tongue into his mouth.

Her hands moved up and down his body, unsure of what part she wanted to hold onto. His chest, his firm biceps, his shoulders, his neck or his hair. She decided on his hair and ran her fingers through it before settling on the back of his head, trying to get him closer to her than they were already were.

Eventually, she felt his thrusts speed up and his breathing got heavier. As he moved faster she could feel that pressure and intensity in her stomach return. She felt his cock jerk and spasm as her own
walls clenched and she scraped her fingers down his back as the feeling crashed over her like a tidal wave crashing onto a beach.

After a few moments, he gently rolled off her and lay on the bed next to her trying to catch his breath. She immediately missed feeling him, so she rolled over and cuddled into his side and Jon pulled her in even closer. His chest was sticky with sweat and she closed her eyes and listened to his heart beat return to normal.

“Jon…that thing with your tongue, who taught you how to do that?” she murmured

“No one, I just had an idea,” he said softly

“Just an idea?” she laughed softly

“I’ve had a lot of time to think and I have many more ideas of things I want to do with you,” he said huskily

“Not now, though,” she said gently. She was a little sore. “But soon, we have a long journey ahead of us,” she said as she leaned up to kiss him softly. She then closed her eyes as she lay on his chest. She realised how perfect this moment was. She lay in bed with the last of her race, with three dragons of their own, sailing away from the ruins of Valyria on the smoking sea. Ready to conquer the world.

Chapter End Notes

Well it's christmas and I didn't feel like making you guys wait much longer for the next chapter. So here is a present to you all.

Again, thanks to Sparkles for the help with the Dany POV...let's just say my initial version was different. This one is definently better...


Thanks to GOT88 who helps with the plot.

Next chapter will be out next week sometime. Possibly tuesday, but most likely
Wednesday. It's called "The Hand of the King" and things back in KL start to get interesting. In the meantime, I have a modern AU that I'm working on that I might get out. Depends if I can work out a plot I'm happy with.

Thanks for reading, let me know what you think of this one and Merry Christmas to you all

Sleepy
The Hand of the King

Chapter Summary

Ned continues his investigation and Tyrion sees a different side of his family

Chapter Notes

I'll probably come back and make some minor edits to this chapter, nothing to the plot. Mostly presentation stuff, so paragraph spacing etc

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The Hand of The King

It was early morning in Kings Landing and Ned Stark had risen early. His mind was consumed with the goal of trying to solve the mystery that was in front of him. He was nearly certain that Jon Arryn had been poisoned, yet he could not figure out why, or most importantly who did it. He realized that if he could figure out the answer to one question, the answer to the other would not be far behind

As Hand of the King, Jon Arryn would have had plenty of enemies, lords who wanted his position or lords who had been disadvantaged by reforms he had put in place, but how many of those lords would resort to murder and most importantly how many would use poison as the weapon. Ned knew the list of names would be few. Poison was known as a woman's weapon of choice. However, Ned realized that no man would be brave or foolish enough to kill the Hand of the King with his own hand, so he quickly dismissed this thought.

As he sat in his bed, Ned’s mind went over all the information that he had gathered with the help of Lord Varys. They had prepared a list of people who would have had a grievance with Jon Arryn, that list, itself was short, Jon Arryn was a well-liked man. From that list of names, they had tried to work out who would have been able to acquire Tears of Lys and put it into his food. That pretty much reduced the list to no names at all.

As Pycelle had repeatedly pointed out to him earlier, Tears of Lys was extremely rare which meant that whoever had obtained it, must have been extremely wealthy. On top of that, he had spoken to stewards in the Red Keep and they had said that Jon Arryn’s household had remained the same for years. There were no new cooks, servants or maids that could have been hired and instructed to poison him. The whole thing did not make any sense to him.

With a frustrated growl, he tossed the sheets off him and padded across the cold floor and out onto the balcony. From his room at the top of the Tower of the Hand, he could see the entire city. He could see smoke slowly rising from the chimneys of houses in Flea Bottom. Perhaps he would go out and see them today, he found it comforting to get away from the lords in the Red Keep. He could see merchant ships slowly making their way down the mouth of the blackwater rush. Carrying goods and cargo from all around the world. Ships from Lannisport, Braavos, Myr even Pentos would come into the harbour looking to trade.
At the thought of Pentos, Ned’s thoughts turned to Jon. Jon had sent him one letter since he had arrived in Essos. It had come along with an urn containing Ser Wendel Manderley’s ashes. Jon’s letter explained that he and Ser Wendel were attacked by a group of thieves in Pentos and that Ser Wendel had suffered a fatal wound during the fight. Jon insisted that he was fine, and that he had found work acting as a guard for a magister in Pentos. Jon said that his employer was decent and kind and that he was happy there. Ned found this to be a small comfort during these troubling times. Once, he solved the mystery behind Jon Arryn’s death, Ned had half a mind to travel to Pentos and find Jon.

Unfortunately, he quickly realized that Robert would not be able to run the realm if he left, he would be confined here for a long time. Perhaps he should leave anyway, and take Arya with him. She had been very sad at Jon’s abrupt departure, and Ned felt guilty. He had caused his daughter to feel this pain, if he hadn’t have told Jon, he would still have been in Winterfell and Arya would still be able to send him letters.

Sansa seemed to be loving the southern life, she spent her afternoons walking through the gardens and talking to the other noble women of the court. She had started to adopt and wear the southern styles of dress and she even put these new styles into her needlework.

Arya, on the other hand had not made any attempts to integrate herself into the southern lifestyle. She spent all of her time with Syrio Forel doing whatever nonsense he instructed her to do as part of her training. Whether it was balancing on one leg, or chasing cats all around the castle, she would do it. No matter how painful it seemed.

He looked up at the sky and saw that the red comet had still left its mark on the sky. He remembered the day he first saw it, he had never seen anything like it. He had never seen a comet shine so bright, or have that terrible colour. It was red, the colour of fire and blood. Ned tilted his head to the left slightly and thought it looked like a red sword, fresh from the forge. Then, he straightened his head and the resemblance was gone.

It had burned in the sky for days and the common folk had even started to call it Joffrey’s comet, for it appeared in the sky on the night of his name day. They said that it was a sign of his strength, that he would be a just and noble King. Ned had scoffed at that, when Joffrey ascended the throne, he would have to do his best to control him and his cruel impulses. He would need to send the boy’s mother away if he was to do that, Queen Cersei spoiled her son and made excuses for his behaviour. Yes, she would have to be kept away, for him to have any chance at reigning Joffrey’s nature.

He had also heard the servants calling the comet, ‘the Dragon’s Tail’, the thought caused him to think of the last dragon.

Rhaegar Targaryen was an intriguing and complicated man. He seemed to have loved Ned’s sister but his actions were reckless. He should have sent a raven to Winterfell informing them of her whereabouts and his intentions regarding her, instead he stuck to the shadows and let the realm fall into rebellion. As for his father, Ned had no doubts about the character of the Mad King. That man had brutally murdered his father and brother under the guise of a fair trial, he deserved to die.

Ned decided, it was good that the Targaryen reign had ended, the last two dragons had not been good men. Their actions had caused the deaths of thousands. But then, he thought of the three year old Rhaenys and baby Aegon, Daenerys and Viserys, they were innocent. Not all of the Targaryens, were bad. There was also Jon, he was good.

He took one last look at the comet before heading back inside. The comet meant nothing, it was just a comet.
He had more pressing concerns at the moment. His steward knocked on his door and brought him his breakfast. Good, he was starving. He broke his fast on sausages and warm bread with cheese, washed down with a cup of milk. After he had eaten, he moved to his desk and sat down to begin his work. He could not spend all of his time investigating Jon Arryn’s death, he had actual work to do too. This morning he had to meet with several envoys from the free cities, no doubt trying to sell the crown something or the other. He heard a knock on the door, his steward had returned to let him know that his guests were waiting for him.

The meetings passed without much of note occurring. After the meetings, he was scheduled to have lunch with Lysa Arryn. Surprisingly, she had returned to the capital and had asked to have lunch with him. Ned was looking forward to this. She would have good knowledge of Jon Arryn and she would know if there had been anything unusual occurring during his final days. She had spent some time with the girls a few days ago which he had been happy for. Sansa had only met her when she was young, and Arya had never met her at all. Spending time with family was important, it was even part of House Tullys words. ‘Family, duty, honour’, he remembered.

He had agreed to have lunch with her in one of the gardens overlooking the Blackwater. When he found her, he was surprised to see her son sitting in her lap. The boy must have been older than Rickon, and yet he sat there sucking his thumb.

“Lady Arryn, it’s been a long time,” he said with a smile.

“Ned, how have you been? I am so happy to see you! I have not seen you in too long, please, call me Lysa,” she said with a smile that faltered slightly.

“I have been well, I am sorry for your loss,” he said sincerely.

“Thank you, my Lord, although I need to share something with you on that matter, but first, how is Cat? I have not seen her in years, you should tell her to come visit me,”

“Cat is fine, she is rather busy at the moment, I’m afraid. Robb is ruling Winterfell and the North in my stead, our son, Brandon had suffered a fall, a few months ago and little Rickon is still very young. She needs to be with them at the moment” he said solemnly. Bran had awoken, but he had lost the use of his legs permanently.

“How is your son? Have the maesters found a cure?” he asked. He had heard that the boy had been suffering from a disease that made him prone to fits and seizures.

“No, they have not, Maester Colemon bleeds him and gives him painkillers but it is of no use,” she said as she stroked the boys brown hair. “That maester is useless, he couldn’t save my husband either,”

“Maester Colemon tried to treat Jon Arryn? I thought, it was the Grand Maester,”

“The Grand Maester sent him away to treat Jon, himself,”

“Is he here? I would like to speak with him if that is the case,”

“Yes, he is here, but we will speak more about Colemon later, I can see that our food has arrived,”

A few servants had arrived with their meal and they sat down to eat. They ate roast chicken with greens and Lysa had Arbor Gold bought for them to drink. After they had finished eating, Ned sat silently and waited for her to speak, she had requested to have lunch. She must have had a reason to seek him out. He waited patiently as she spoke softly to the boy and stroked his hair, evidently trying to put him to sleep.
“As you know, after my husband died, I quickly left the city. I feared that it was not safe for me or my sweet Robin here,” she said as she continued to stroke the boy’s hair. “I fear that my husband was murdered, and that I would be next,” and she took a quick drink of wine.

“Lysa, this a very serious allegation, who would have wanted your husband dead? I knew Jon, he was a good man.”

She slowly leaned across the table “It was the Lannisters,” she whispered.

Ned raised his eyebrows in surprise, he had not expected this.

“The Lannisters? Why would they want to kill him?”

“I don’t know, Petyr thinks it was a plot from the Queen and Lord Tywin. Before Jon died, Lord Tywin had offered to have my baby boy fostered all the way in Casterly Rock, but thankfully my husband declined. Petyr thinks that the Lannisters took the refusal as a sign of disrespect and killed him for it,”

“Petyr? Do you mean Lord Baelish?”

“Yes, of course, I call him Petyr though, he likes that,” she said with a smile. Ned was intrigued, he had not heard this information before. Fostering young boys with other lords was a common enough occurrence. This was how he had met Robert, they had been fostered together under Jon Arryn in the Vale. His brother, Brandon, had been fostered in Barrowtown with Lord Dustin. The concept of fostering was not unusual.

As he thought about it more, he was not surprised that Jon had declined the request, his son was young and sickly. He was not ready to be sent so far away from home. He thought of Rhaenys and baby Aegon, he would not have sent Bran or Rickon to be fostered by Lord Tywin. Who knows what horrible things they would have learned from the cold hearted lion.

“Petyr is very smart, you see,” she continued happily. Evidently forgetting that they were talking about her husband’s death. “He’s able to read people, see what they want even when they don’t tell you,” she continued.

Ned realized that he needed to get her to focus again on the issue.

“Lady Arryn, Lysa, tell me about Maester Colemon, you said that we would speak more about him,”

She took another sip of wine. “Yes, Maester Colemon was Jon’s personal maester. He has been part of our household for years. He was treating Jon when he got sick and Petyr had heard that he was successful, Petyr is smart like that you see, I told you, he can read people and find out their secrets,”

“Lysa, Maester Colemon please,” he said, beginning to grow impatient. She was constantly distracted whenever Baelish was mentioned.

“Yes, Maester Colemon was treating him, succeeding even before Grand Maester Pycelle sent him away. Do you know why Ned? Pycelle works for the Lannisters, Petyr told me. Pycelle was here in the capital when Lord Tywin was Hand of the King, that’s when their relationship had started. It was Pycelle who told the Mad King to open the gates for Lord Tywin to sack the city,” she said quickly. Ned was intrigued, this information seemed promising.

“Petyr found all of this information and then told me, you should work with him, he knows a lot, together you could bring the Lannisters to justice,” she said confidently. Ned’s mood soured. Back to Baelish again.
“Thank you for the information, but I would prefer to investigate this matter in a more discrete manner,” He did not trust Baelish. Not one bit.

“Why? Petyr can be trusted, I have trusted him my entire life! Ever since we were children!” she said defensively. “He has always been there for me and I for him. I was there for him after your brother butchered him. I was there for him when my father wanted to send him away, I was always there for Petyr,” Lysa spoke passionately.

“My Lady, I am not questioning Lord Baelish’s worth or trustworthiness, I am just saying that I prefer to conduct this investigation in a different manner,” he said ignoring the line about his brother.

“Fine, but you will not find anything without Petyr’s help. Petyr found out all about Pycelle and the Lannisters, whilst you have found nothing!” she shrieked, and she got up and left the gardens, clutching her son to her chest as she left.

Ned was left even more confused than when he woke up. Lysa had presented him with a lot of new information, but he was not sure if he trusted her or the authenticity of the information. Her insistence to trust Baelish and the way she sung his praises was most concerning to him. He would save this information for later and investigate it if his other leads led nowhere.

He stood up and walked back to the Red Keep. It may be worth seeing Pycelle again, to see if what she had said about Colemon was true. Pycelle being a Lannister pawn also made a certain degree of sense, Ned had wondered how the bumbling old man had managed to keep his position for so long and being a Lannister crone would explain it.

Most interesting of all was Lord Baelish’s involvement in this. If Lysa was right and he could be trusted, then investigating the Lannisters with his help would be the best way to go about, but trusting Baelish was a big step. Ned wasn’t sure that the man had ever forgiven the Starks for what had happened between him and Brandon all those years ago, he had made that much clear in their first meeting.

Lord Varys had also told him of the rumours that Lysa and Baelish had been more than familiar with each other. Much closer than one would expect, even for old friends. He had questioned the servants themselves and they all said the same thing. Perhaps they had a secret relationship, perhaps Baelish was the one who put her up to this.

Ned continued to ponder this as he walked through the castle. He was nearly at the Tower of the Hand when he spotted a familiar face,

“Ser Brynden! It has been too long;” he said with a smile and he shook his hand. Ser Brynden Tully was Cat’s uncle, she had told him many stories about him from her childhood. His face was weathered and his auburn hair had turned grey since the last time he had seen him, but he was still clearly the same man.

“Lord Stark!” he boomed “I have not seen you in years, how is Cat? How are the children?”

“Cat is fine, she is in Winterfell with the boys, the girls are here with me though, would you like to meet them. If you’re free this afternoon I can send them to you,”

“No no, don’t worry your girls. I’ll pop in and see them soon. I just got in, I’ve been riding for days. Have you seen Lysa?”

“Yes, I just had lunch with her, why is something the matter?”

“I need to see her. She has been acting very erratically ever since Jon Arryn’s death. First, she fled
the capital, then she came back. I’ve heard stories that she’s been drinking heavily. Hoster told me to go and find her before she brings further dishonour onto our house with her irrational behaviour,” he said darkly “Do you know where I could find her?”

“I believe she went to her apartments, they’re located in the eastern part of the castle,”

“Thank you Ned,” he said and he turned and walked away down the hallway. Suddenly Ned was struck with an idea.

“Ser Brynden, please wait, if you don’t mind I have a few questions about Lysa,” he said quickly. Brynden stopped and looked both ways down the hallway to check that their conversation would not be overheard before nodding, telling him to proceed.

“I was wondering if you could tell me anything about Lysa and Lord Baelish. I understand they grew up together?” He looked at Ned with a confused expression on his face before answering.

“Yes, they grew up together. Cat, Lysa and Baelish. Baelish’s father and Hoster became friends during the war of the Nine-penny Kings, and so Petyr was fostered at Riverrun as a favour. They were all good friends growing up, they kept running to me with their troubles and their worries,”

“Did you notice anything between Lysa and Baelish?” He asked cautiously. He did not want the blackfish to suspect anything.

“Lysa, perhaps followed him closely but there was nothing untoward going on. You see, Baelish was thin and sickly as a boy, so perhaps that’s why she followed him, to make sure he was well,”

‘Thin and sickly, just like her son’. Interesting.

“Why do you ask Ned?”

“I have been hearing rumours around here that Lysa and Baelish had been involved in a secret relationship,”

“Lies,” he said immediately as he shook his head. “Lies born out of something that happened years ago,”

“What happened?” Ned asked quickly. Brynden stared at him, his bright blue eyes pierced into him but Ned held his gaze. He grabbed Ned and pulled him closer so that he was whispering into his ear,

“After that horrible business with your brother and Baelish, I heard rumours that Lysa had given her maidenhead to Baelish while was caring for him,” he said quickly. “Hoster later confirmed to me that the rumours were in fact true and that he had given Lysa moon tea as she had gotten with child from that encounter. Once Baelish had recovered from his injuries, he was sent away from Riverrun. Hoster kept it a secret for as long as possible, he did not want anybody to know of her soiled state, but he did inform Jon Arryn of Lysa’s condition before their marriage and Jon Arryn accepted Lysa though Baelish’s name was kept out of it.” Brynden confided to him.

Ned nodded his thanks and allowed him to continue on with his business. He walked back to his chamber in the Tower of the Hand and walked out onto the balcony, he could still see the comet in the sky. He pondered over all that he had learned today, the information about the Lannisters was intriguing but most worryingly of all was Baelish’s involvement. He resolved that he would have to investigate it further.
Tyrion Lannister was in a cheerful mood.

Ever since his drunken display at the tourney, his father and his sister had steered well clear of him. He occasionally saw them for breakfast but since he was such a late riser, he would only see them as they were getting up to leave. If he had known that it would have been this simple to get them to leave him alone, he would have done it years ago.

He strolled through the Red Keep whistling happily to himself. He pushed through the doors to find his sister, Tommen and Myrcella sitting down finishing their breakfast.

When the children saw him, he saw their smiles widen and their eyes lit up with happiness.

“Good morning uncle Tyrion,” they said happily.

“Good morning sweet children, what are you having for breakfast?”

“I’m having Bacon with eggs and Myrcella is having porridge,” Tommen said quickly “Would you like some uncle Tyrion?”

“Yes please, although I’ll fetch my own plate,” he replied. He walked across the room to serve himself and he could almost feel his sisters gaze trying to burn holes into his back. He quickly turned around to see her staring at him as he expected. He gave her a small smirk and she quickly turned away. He filled his plate and then moved to sit opposite her.

“Good morning, sweet sister,” he said as he sat down. “Where is the lovely crown prince this morning? Is he out with the common folk? Showing them how good and kind of a King he will be as they seemed to claim?” he snickered. He was rewarded with another deadly stare.

“Mother said that you were going to go North to see the wall, is that true uncle Tyrion?” Myrcella asked.

“Yes, they say it’s quite a sight to behold. Then I intend to piss off the edge from the top of the wall,” he said with a wink towards Tommen, causing the children to laugh.

Cersei stood abruptly. “My children do not need to hear your filth, Tommen, Myrcella, come,”

“Mother, I’m not finished with my bacon!” Tommen whined. Cersei gave him a quick glare and he too stood up to leave. As she reached the door she turned back to look at him. She gave him a weird almost smug smile before leaving. Tyrion didn’t dwell on it, his sister’s games were easy enough to play.

His thoughts instead turned to Tommen and Myrcella. They were both sweet children and completely unlike their brother. Joffrey was cruel, impatient and horribly spoiled. Tyrion did not envy Ned Stark, someday having to serve as Hand to that idiot would be like trying to tame a dragon.

Tyrion continued to eat his breakfast as he planned out his day. He would head to the library and continue his reading on comets. He had been very intrigued when he saw the comet in the sky, it had attracted a strange crowd of people. All sorts of queer preachers, prophets and priests had appeared in the capital. Tyrion had even gone out in the city, to hear the various preaching’s and theories. They claimed that it was a sign from the gods, indicating that the rotten summer had come to an end. They called it Harbinger and told all the people to cleanse themselves. To stop their drinking and whoring. Tyrion simply scoffed at this, drinking and whoring had not done a thing to him.
The door opened and he was surprised to see Lord Varys enter. He wasn’t sure if he considered the spider a friend, but Tyrion enjoyed testing his wits against him.

“Lord Varys, would you like to join me for breakfast?”

“No, thank you my Lord,” he said as he sat opposite him. He put his arms in his lap and sat patiently. Tyrion eyed him as he took a bite of bacon.

“So what can I do for you? I am sure you are not here to watch me eat,” he said evenly. He was wary of Varys, no doubt that he was looking to further his agenda in some way or the other, whatever the agenda was.

“I am not here for me, I am here for you, I am going to do you a favour, there’s something that you need to know.” He said in a grave voice.

“A favour? I do not recall asking you for any favours, and what exactly is the so called vital information?”

He smiled then. “Once you see what I want to show you, you will be grateful to me,” he said as he stood up. Tyrion watched him carefully, sighed and stood up. Why not play the Spider’s game for once, it would be interesting if nothing else. He took one more bite of his bacon and followed him.

Varys led him through the Red Keep, Tyrion initially thought that he was taking him to the barracks, but then he led him down a dark staircase and then stopped abruptly. He looked both ways before stepping behind a statue, Tyrion curiously followed him into the darkness. Once, he was behind the statue he quickly realized that this was one of the Red Keep’s secret passageways. Varys brandished a lantern and then led him quickly through the passageway. Tyrion quickly became lost, they took so many turns that it was impossible to keep track of this place, he realized that if he ever decided to come back here he would end up lost. As they walked, he could faintly hear the noises of the castle. He heard people talking, a woman moaning and the sound of metal being worked.

Varys led him through the tunnels until he suddenly stopped. Pointed at a particular part of the wall and motioned for him to be silent. Tyrion stood patiently and waited. The passageway was a little damp and he started to feel cold. Suddenly, he heard voices on the other side of the wall, he pressed his ear closer to listen.

“So, What did you find?” it was his father’s voice.

“My spies have worked hard. His usual drinking partners are a few Lannister guardsmen,” this voice was undoubtedly Cersei.

“Which ones?”

“Martyn, Lewys Piper and one they call Peck,”

“Good, those Guardsmen have served me long before him. They will obey my commands. What else did you find?”

“He spends most of his evenings in the taverns or whorehouses, his preferred establishment is Chataya’s, on the street of silk,”

“Disgusting, but at least he is a creature of habit. We can exploit that,”

“When do you mean to have it done?”
“As soon as possible. I will speak to the guards today,”

Suddenly Tyrion heard the door loudly open and he heard a person enter.

“I’ll cut to the chase, what are you two planning?,” it was his brother. It was Jaime.

“What?” his father replied, his voice taking on that cold hard tone.

“What are you planning to do to Tyrion?” Jamie said, anger filling his voice.

Tyrion waited with bated breath, he could almost feel the tension on the other side of the wall.

“You told him didn’t you,” his father said after a long pause.

“Father no I didn’t, I swear it, Jaime tell him,” Cersei hastily replied.

“She did not tell me, no one tells me anything!” Jaime shouted angrily.

“Be quiet and sit down, I will tell you what you want to know,” his father ordered. Tyrion knew that tone of voice, you obeyed that tone of voice.

“Tyrion has brought embarrassment and dishonour to our house, for far too long. From the very day he was born, till right now and he will continue to so for as long as he lives,”

“This is about the Tourney, isn’t it?”

“You know full well what this is about,”

“Father he,”

“No. Do not try and defend him. What he did was inexcusable. He ruined your moment and then he embarrassed us all. I will not have it,”

“What do you plan to do to him?” he asked. Voicing Tyrion’s question.

“Tyrion likes to drink and whore. I have told him to stop countless times, yet he did not listen to me. Soon Tyrion will have an accident because of his love for drinking,” Tywin replied in a calm voice.

“You can’t. He is your son, you can’t do this to him, not after Tysha, he’s suffered enough,”

“You dare speak that whore’s name in my presence?”

“Oh stop that. You and I both know she was no whore and what you did to her was despicable. You just couldn’t stand the thought of having a crofter’s daughter bear the title of Lady Lannister.”

Tysha was real? Did she really love him? Tyrion felt dizzy and he put his hand against the cold wall to steady himself.

“Watch your tone,” Tywin said. His voice was dangerously quiet again.

“No, I will not watch my tone,” Jaime continued angrily. “I will not stand by whilst you plot to harm my brother again. I’m his big brother I am supposed to look out for him. I will look out for him, I will not allow this to happen,”

“You will do no such thing,” Tywin thundered.

“How do you plan to stop me?” Jaime countered.
“I will have you sent to the Night’s watch, where you will live out the rest of your days at the wall,”

Tyrion gasped, he was bluffing. Tywin loved Jaime, Jaime was his golden son. Jaime had to know that he was bluffing, surely he’s smart enough to realize that.

“You can’t send me to the Night’s watch, I am a knight of the Kingsguard. My vows are until death,” his voice was uncertain

“I will tell the King to release you of your vows. Lord Stark would agree to it, you have told me how much he hates you. Lord Stark wanted you to take the black all those years ago, looks like his wish might just come true.”

“The King won’t listen to you, the King listens to no man. He’s the King,” Jaime said quickly.

“Do you know how much money the crown owes me? Of course, you don’t. How difficult do you think it would be to convince the small council that I would void that debt in return for this one small favour?”

Silence. Tyrion waited, Jaime had to call his bluff. He had to for his sake.

“I will never forgive you for this. Either of you,” he said dejectedly. Tyrion slumped against the wall defeated. He felt Varys pull at his elbow leading him away. Tyrion walked automatically, not knowing where his feet were taking him. On a few occasions, he had even bumped into the wall.

His father was planning to kill him and his sister was part of the plot. This explained why she gave him that smile. He was her brother yet she would happily help to murder him. It wasn’t too surprising, Cersei had always made her hatred for him clear for everyone to see. Even his brother Jaime, the only person in their family aside from Tommen and Myrcella who showed any love or care for Tyrion decided to let him die to save himself. Jaime’s betrayal is what caused him the most pain.

Then, he thought about Tysha and he started to feel tears forming. His poor sweet Tysha, he remembered her dark hair and her blue eyes. He remembered when they found her, being surrounded by a group of men on the side of the road. Jaime chased the men away whilst he had cared for her. He fell in love with her that day, he couldn’t help himself. She was half starved, unwashed but he could not help but love her.

He remembered their wedding, it was in a field with only pigs for witnesses. They even ate the pigs later. It was just the two of them, sat by the fire, she fed him strips of pork with her hands, and he greedily sucked her fingers clean after. He remembered laughing and smiling and falling into bed with her that night. He remembered all the nights that followed, those were the happiest two weeks of his life.

Then, his father found out and he had sent his guards to bring them back from their cottage to Casterly Rock. Jaime had told him that Tysha was a whore, that he had bought for Tyrion, to turn him into a man. To prove this point, Tywin had her raped by the entire barracks, each man paid her a silver piece when they were finished. To make it worse, he had commanded that he go last, and pay her a golden coin, because Lannisters were worth more.

Tyrion was angry. Exceptionally angry, he wanted to march to his father’s room and confront him. It seems Varys had sensed this because he stopped in the passageway and turned to face him.

“I am sorry you had to hear that my friend, but you should consider your next move wisely. If you go now to try and kill your father, you would have no hope for escape, you would find yourself on
the executioner’s block the day after. You should be patient, wait for a better opportunity,”

“A better opportunity? When am I going to find a better opportunity, I loved her! And my father,” Tyrion couldn’t finish the sentence, he was too angry. Instead, he slammed his fist into the wall.

“Yes, a better opportunity. I have friends across the narrow sea. Powerful friends with a plan to make a better Westeros, you could be a part of it,”

“Fuck Westeros. I don’t care about Westeros, I want him dead, all of them dead,” he said angrily.

“Yes I know, but you cannot kill them all. You are one man against three,” Tyrion conceded his point. He could probably kill one of them, but there would be no way to get all three. If he killed his father first, his sister would ensure he had a slow painful death, and if he killed the Queen then he would get the same fate.

“You need a plan, a better plan. My friends across the sea will help you get your vengeance.” Varys said quickly, apparently able to read his thoughts. Tyrion looked up at him, he looked into the Spider’s eyes. He had planned this, he realized and he was using him to serve his own agenda.

Tyrion nodded slowly. He did not trust that Varys would not screw him over, but he admitted that Varys and his “Friends” were his best chance for revenge.

“Good, we need to get you out of the capital. Tonight,” he said quietly and that is what they did.

Later that evening, Tyrion had gone out drinking with his usual partners. Martyn, Lewys Piper and Peck. Tyrion watched them carefully as they drank. He had switched his ale for water when they weren’t looking, he needed to be sober tonight. When he heard the bells ring he knew that it was time. He slowly stood up and excused himself, telling his friends that he needed to make water. He waddled outside and onto the streets. He walked slowly, allowing his pursuers plenty of time to catch up to him and follow him. He navigated the streets until he was on the battlements overlooking the Blackwater.

He stopped to lean over the side, pretending to enjoy the view. Then, using a tumbling trick he had learned when he was younger, he pushed himself over the side and into a hidden alcove that could not be seen from above. He quickly felt arms pull him back from the edge and he knew that Varys had not betrayed him. He waited with bated breath as he heard his pursuers talking to each other. They thought that he had fallen into the bay. Good. Now they would head to the bottom of the battlements where they would find the mangled remains of a dwarf’s body. Thus, Tyrion Lannister would be officially dead in the eyes of his family and Westeros.

Varys pulled him deeper into the alcove and into another hidden passageway, he quickly led him through the tunnels which seemed to head further and further downwards. The tunnel spat them out in the back of a tavern, near the harbour. Varys pulled him aside and then pointed to the box he was supposed to climb into. Tyrion sighed with frustration, he was small, but this was still going to be a tight fit.

He climbed into the box and Varys bolted the lid. He was then picked up and carried onto the ship, that would take him to wherever Varys’s planned.

Tyrion closed his eyes and prayed that Varys was not going to screw him over.

The Hand of the King
It was late in the afternoon and Ned Stark was back in his solar. The red comet was still in the sky, the smallfolk and servants were still debating about what it meant. Most had agreed that it was some sort of omen from the gods, but then argued about whether it was good or bad. Some argued that it was a sign of good fortune and that the long summer would continue and that they would have a good harvest. Others argued that the comet was a sign of the opposite. They said that this comet had come to slay the season and bring on the autumn. Ned had more pressing concerns at the moment than trying to decipher the meaning behind the comet’s appearance.

He had spent the better part of the last few days trying to investigate the relationship between Lord Baelish and Lysa Arryn. He tried to be as discreet as possible, not even using Varys and his so called little birds. He had carefully found the servants who had served in Jon Arryn’s household to answer his questions and then paid them well enough to keep silent on the matter.

He had learned that Jon and Lysa did not share the same bed chambers. Jon often slept alone in the Tower of the Hand, whilst Lysa slept elsewhere in the castle. The servants had said that she usually slept with her son, but there were nights when she would to leave to wander the castle for hours because she had night terrors and needed to clear her mind.

He also paid close attention to the boy, Robin Arryn. If Baelish and Lysa were involved in a secret relationship, then perhaps Robin was the product of their affair. He could faintly see a resemblance between the boy and Baelish. The Blackfish had mentioned that Baelish had been sickly as a child, so perhaps he had inherited this affliction from his father.

Ser Brynden also mentioned that Baelish had taken Lysa’s maidenhead and that Hoster Tully had given her moon tea to abort the pregnancy and this was not hard to believe. The Lord of Riverrun was an ambitious man and to have his daughter marry a man of Baelish’s birth and status at the time would not have sat well with Lord Hoster. Lysa was the daughter of a great lord, she was meant to marry the son of another great lord. Not a minor lord like Petyr Baelish.

Acting on a whim, he summoned Jory Cassel, the captain of his household guard.

“Jory, find the girls and have them wait for me in here, do not let them leave until I return,” he told him. Jory was a good man, he’d see that his instructions were carried out. Whilst his daughters were being summoned, he quickly left his solar and headed towards the Grand Maester’s chambers in the castle. This was a risky move, Pycelle could not and should not be trusted, but he had to know. He had to know for certain.

He knocked twice on the door and then pushed it open. The Grand Maester was quickly getting out of bed, it looked like he had company.

“My Lord, it is late, I was not expecting any visitors,” he stammered.

“Grand Maester, sorry to call upon you at this late hour but I have a few questions that I need answered as soon as possible,”

“Of course Lord Stark, it is my duty to serve the realm, if the hand needs help, I am compelled to answer,”

Ned took a deep breath before continuing.

“What can you tell me about Lysa Arryn’s fertility?”

“Lysa Arryn’s fertility? Why do you want to know?”

Ned stood silent and waited.
“My apologies, Lord Hand. I am not sure how much help I will be. Lady Lysa had many troubles birthing children. She had many stillborn children, I think it was three boys and two girls. She suffered miscarriages as well, both here and in the Vale, to my knowledge. I believed that she was having trouble conceiving. I considered approaching Jon Arryn with the offer to examine her but then she gave birth to her boy and I let the matter drop.”

Ned nodded slowly. The pieces were starting to come together.

“Anything else, Grand Maester?” and Pycelle shook his head. “Thank you for your help then,”

He left the maesters chambers and headed back to his own.

As he walked he remembered that Jon Arryn too had trouble conceiving children, his first wife had died in childbirth producing a stillborn daughter. His second wife had died of a winter chill with no children. Perhaps Jon was the problem all along. If what the Blackfish said was true, then Baelish had no trouble getting Lysa with child. As he walked, he became more and more convinced that Robin Arryn was actually Baelish’s son, but that didn’t help him.

He reached his chamber and he heard noises inside. The girls were inside, and they were bickering. He quickly walked into the room and found them sitting in front of his desk, arguing over some nonsense.

“Enough! Girls, you need to stop this childish arguing that I always seem to find you doing, you are sisters, you need to look out for each other,” he said firmly and they both nodded “Now, what can you tell me about your time with your Aunt Lysa the other day?”

“Why father?” Sansa asked

“I was going to send a raven to your mother and I wanted to let her know how her sister was, you know since they haven’t seen each other in years,” he replied. He hated misleading his children, but he needed to be discrete.

“Our time with Aunt Lysa was wonderful,” Sansa said immediately “She is lovely, and she is really funny,”

“What about you Arya, do you like her?”

“She was ok I guess, a little weird,” and Ned had to stifle his laugh

“What did you all talk about?”

“We talked about my needlework, she said she loved it,” Sansa said immediately, “Then she asked Arya about her needlework and her dancing,”

“Really,” he said with surprise “What did you tell her?”

“I told her that my needlework is getting better and so is my dancing,” she said proudly causing him to smile.

“What else did you all talk about?” he asked after a pause

“She talked about her childhood, she said she how lucky I was to be marrying the prince, she said that when she was younger she wanted to marry the man of her dreams,” Sansa said happily

“She also talked about growing up with mother and Petyr,” Arya added, pulling an ugly face when
she said the name. “She couldn’t stop talking about him, about their mud cakes, they used to dance and sing together,”

Ned nodded slowly. This wasn’t news to him, the blackfish had virtually told him as much.

“Oh and they even kissed,” Arya added

“Arya! We weren’t supposed to tell anyone, Lord Baelish told us to keep it a secret,” Sansa hissed.

“He’s our father, we’re family. We don’t keep secrets from family,” Arya said fiercely, Ned felt a pang of guilt flood through him.

“What else did Aunt Lysa say?” he asked quickly.

“When Baelish came she started babbling like an idiot. She said that she did everything he said, that she didn’t want to keep it a secret anymore, she said she gave him the tears, she said he couldn’t do this to her,” Arya said

Ned froze. She gave him the tears. It all made sense now. Lysa poisoned Jon because Baelish told her too. Perhaps Jon realized that his son was not his, and was about to confront Baelish, so Baelish killed him to keep his secret. It explains why the servants appeared to be clean, his wife poisoned him, thus there was no need for new servants. No one would suspect the wife or Baelish. In fact, Jon Arryn had even brought Baelish to court, no one would suspect the pair of them. Baelish must have heard that he was investigating Jon’s death. That’s why he told Lysa to recommend him to Ned, he wanted to know everything that Ned had discovered, so that he could cover his tracks.

He didn’t even notice that the girls were still speaking.

“Thank you girls, you have been very helpful, now wait outside and send Jory in,” he said interrupting their conversation.

They quickly left and Jory entered.

“Jory, who are your two best and most trusted men?”

“Harwin and Alyn,” he said immediately.

“Good, have them stand guard over the girls doors, gather the rest of your men and meet me in the courtyard,” he said firmly. He was sure Baelish would not try to hurt his children, but he could never be too safe. He stood up and crossed over the room and strapped his sword to his waist. He took one last look out at the sky. Night had fallen and yet the comet still continued to leave its mark. He turned his head to one side, perhaps they were right, perhaps it was a red sword. A sword with blood on it perhaps. His fingers flexed on the pommel of his sword, he hoped that it wasn’t an omen that blood will be spilled. If Baelish was smart he would surrender peacefully.

He left the Tower and headed to the courtyard. Jory had gathered 20 men, which was more than enough. He marched them through the castle until he reached Littlefinger’s chambers. He knocked twice and then entered.

It was empty. Clothes were thrown all over the room, the shelves and drawers were half open. It appeared Baelish had left in haste.

Ned’s blood ran cold as ice. How had he known that Ned was coming for him tonight? Ned had been so careful in his investigation.
He turned back to his men. He ordered half of them to head down to the docks immediately and to find out if anyone matching Baelish’s description had boarded a ship. He took the remaining men and headed for Lysa’s room. When he arrived, he found that it was in a similar state as Baelish’s chambers. She had evidently been in a hurry to leave as well. Ned slammed his fist into the wall with frustration. Cutting his knuckles on the stone. He sighed loudly and cursed before he decided to head back to the Tower of the Hand.

Before he reached the Tower, Ned decided to check on the girls. When he entered the corridor outside the girls rooms, he saw Alyn dead on the floor with Harwin clutching a wound in his side. There were three dead men lying about the corridor and there was blood everywhere. Sansa and Arya were standing near Harwin, helping tend to his wound.

“What happened?” He demanded to know as soon as he ran over

“We were in our chambers when we heard loud shouting outside. It quickly turned into a fight. Alyn and Harwin fought them off,” Arya said quickly and Harwin only nodded. He was clearly very hurt. He ordered a few men to take Harwin to a maester. He decided to take the girls with him back to the tower of the hand.

Ned was furious and he guessed that Baelish was behind the attempt. He probably intended to use the girls as hostages to bargain for his life.

Ned was simmering in anger as he waited for Jory and his men to return. He hoped that they would return with Baelish so that he could punish him with his own hands. But, later he admitted to himself that Littlefinger was likely long gone by now. However if they knew where he went then maybe they could pursue him.

Ned looked at the comet’s trail, as he waited. It was the hour of the bat when Jory returned with his men. He greeted them on his balcony.

“Did you find anything?” he asked immediately.

“Yes, a man matching the description you gave us boarded a ship headed to Gulltown. Also, there was a woman and young child with him.” Jory answered.

“Thank you,” he said frustrated.

“He attempted to kidnap the girls Jory,” he said angrily “Thankfully he was unsuccessful but Alyn died protecting them. I will need you to make sure his body is sent back North to his family. Harwin was injured so I need you to ensure he gets the proper treatment. I will also need you to double the men guarding the doors outside the girls chambers,”

Jory quickly nodded before heading out to complete these tasks.
He would have to send the girls back to the North, at least until this had been dealt with. Sansa would hate it, but it is necessary, Robert will see reason. His mind then went back to Gulltown.

Gulltown meant the Vale and the Vale meant the Eyrie.

That fortress was damn near impregnable, he remembered. He had been there in his youth, getting through the bloody gate was hard enough, then the slow arduous march to the top would decimate nearly any army. The castle itself was not that big, it could hold at best five hundred or so men. It’s just that getting to those five hundred men, would probably cost five thousand.

He ran his hands through his hair and pulled at it. The Eyrie had never been conquered, he remembered. At least, not by any conventional army. Visenya Targaryen had conquered it using her dragon, but as he looked up the comet, he bitterly remembered that the Dragons were gone.
He gave out a loud drawn out sigh. In times like this, a dragon would have been really helpful.

Chapter End Notes

No Jon/Dany this chapter. It's unfortunate but this is an AU and they aren't really doing anything that different to canon. They're just heading to Astapor and having lots of sex...I don't want to bore you all by repeating canon so I decided to leave them out and pick up with them slightly later where I can start doing some different stuff with them.

Chapter 10 doesn't currently have a name because I'm rubbish at naming my chapters. It should be out Wednesday and it's heavy on Jon/Dany. I think like over half the chapter. Updates should start picking up again to twice a week.

Thanks to GOT88 for helping with this story

As always let me know what you think of this chapter. Comments are always appreciated and thanks for reading

Sleepy
The Spider

Varys was pleased with himself. He had successfully used the squabbling between the Lions to further his interests. Tyrion was a smart man and it was only due to his stature that most people ignored his true worth. Still, this would be Westeros’s loss and his gain. Tyrion possessed valuable knowledge about Westeros, its political state and he would add some legitimacy to their cause. Better yet, thanks to his friend Lord Baelish, a civil war was about to break out. Lord Stark had figured out that Baelish was behind the death of Jon Arryn and soon the King would know too. Baelish had been informed of this and then he had promptly fled to the Vale with Lysa Arryn. He had heard that the Eyrie was a difficult castle to conquer but Robert Baratheon would turn over every stone in order to get justice for Jon Arryn. Littlefinger would die, he was sure of it.

It was the early morning of the dawn but Varys did not let that deter him, he had a meeting to attend. He left the Red Keep through another one of the secret passageways, which led to a brothel. This was one of the more upscale brothels and this room was the most expensive. It was usually empty at this time and this morning proved no different. He exited and headed out onto the cobbled streets, navigating the empty streets quickly. He headed for the tavern where the meeting would take place.

The tavern was quiet, frequented only by sailors from Essos who usually only spent a short amount of time in King’s Landing. He pushed open the door of the tavern and spotted his friend sitting at an old wooden table. It was early in the morning and the cook was busy bustling around starting to prepare breakfast, which would most likely be a bowl of brown mush.

“Good morning my friend,” he said quickly as he sat down opposite him “I trust that our cargo has safely boarded the ship?”

“Yes, although why we would want half a man is beyond me. He could be a spy,”

“Doubtful, the man hates his family and he has good reason to. He recently overheard of their plot to kill him,”

“Kinslaying, a disgusting business,” his friend muttered darkly as he sipped his drink.

“Yes, but their loss is our gain. He is smart, when he’s sober. We need smart people on our side especially now that we have lost the girl. What happened?”
“The boy acted as expected. He jumped at the chance to have his path to the throne cleared. Our men would have conducted the attack, they would have come back to Pentos and we would have sold her off to Drogo as planned but now…”

“They’re dead,” Varys finished. It was a massive blow. Their plan was to have Daenerys invade with Drogo and to distract the realm, paving the way for their chosen challenger to enter and emerge victorious. Now that plan was destroyed, and they needed a new one.

“So old friend, what do you propose we do, we have been working on this for too long to give up now. I have put so much into this, we have put so much into this. I promised her, I promised I would do this for her,” he whispered. They paused for a moment, the innkeeper had walked over and offered them breakfast. To avoid suspicion, Varys ordered something small, he had no intention of eating it but he had to be cautious.

“We wait. We wait and be patient. We have planned and waited for over 20 years, what is a few more months?” Varys asked “Soon there will be war. The Lion, the Wolf and the Stag will be participating to destroy the Mockingbird. All will lose men. We wait for them to bleed and weaken themselves before we strike. Then, a few of my little birds will inform Lord Stark about the other investigation conducted by the previous Hand before his death, and soon the Lion, the Wolf and the Stag will be at each other’s throats. Then we strike,”

His friend eyed him carefully.

“We will need allies, even if this civil war is as devastating as you hope, we will need more allies. The Golden Company alone will not be enough,”

Varys nodded slowly. “The Dornish may rally behind him, they have plenty of reasons to want to overthrow the current regime, but we must be careful in how much we tell them.”

“I agree, task your little birds with gathering information in Dorne, we need to be prepared,” He stood up then,

“I should get back to my ship, I kept our new friend in that box all night, he is probably rather miserable by now,”

Varys gave a chuckle as he stood.

“I will see you soon my friend, we will be successful, I know it,” they shook hands firmly and they left the tavern.

Varys looked both ways down the street before turning and heading back towards the Red Keep, he made sure to take a different path, just to ensure he would not be spotted. He was not especially worried, Cersei’s spies reported to him and with Baelish gone there was no real need to worry. Still, old habits die hard.

The Hand of the King
Ned Stark did not sleep well that night, he had tossed and turned and had only managed a few short moments of sleep. He had allowed Baelish to slip through his fingers and worse still, the man had made an attempt on his daughters. Perhaps, he had tried to take them in order to use them as hostages, whatever he had planned, he was thankful that he had the foresight to assign men to watch their doors, he would have never been able to forgive himself if he had lost his children.

Today would be another long day, he knew immediately. He would have to call a small council meeting and let them all know about Baelish. Robert would have to be there, Jon Arryn was like a father to him. Robert would see red and it would be like the Greyjoy rebellion but worse, much worse. Balon Greyjoy may have been foolish enough to incite a rebellion, but there was no personal animosity between them. As a result of that, Robert showed mercy to Balon by allowing Ned to take his last son to Winterfell as a hostage.

Baelish would not be afforded that luxury. He had no children to use as hostages to ensure his good behaviour, he would die and Ned was not going to miss him.

He rolled out of bed onto the cold floor. He crossed to his wardrobe and began to slowly dress himself. As he dressed, he focused on the other tasks that he would have to perform now that war was upon them. He would need to send a raven to Winterfell, informing Catelyn and Robb of the latest developments. Catelyn would want the girls back in Winterfell and he would happily send them. Sansa would likely hate him for it, and perhaps Arya would as well, but it was for their own safety. They would have to accept it. Ned was not sure how Cat would handle the news of her sister’s adultery, he would have to ask his son. Robb would have to ride to war with him. He was old enough and he could hardly deny him, otherwise it would make him look weak in front of the bannermen, he would have to lead one day.

He could scarcely believe it, his own son would soon be leading men in battle. The thought filled him with pride. Ned could only hope that he led from afar. Certain men like Robert preferred to lead amongst their men, but those men also tended to find themselves dead on the battlefield. The Greyjoy boy would likely come as well, he would hardly stay away from a fight. Jon should have been there with them he realised, they had been very close growing up. Instead Jon was in Essos, fighting for some no name magister to protect his riches. Instead, he should have been here, helping to fight for justice. He should never have told him.

No, he was right to tell him but was wrong in allowing him to leave. He allowed him to leave, believing in some foolish fantasy where he would meet his family and live happily ever after, it was foolish and Ned should have known better. He should have done better.

He was interrupted from his thoughts by a knock on his door, it must have been his steward, although it was still rather early. He opened the door and was surprised to see Lancel Lannister, the King’s squire. He looked tired, like he had been dragged out of his bed early. He raised his eye inquisitively and waited for the boy to speak.

“Lord Hand, the King has called an urgent small council meeting,” he said meekly.

“The King? At this time?” he said in disbelief and the boy quickly nodded his head and left.
What possible urgent news could they have found overnight that would require a small council meeting first thing in the morning? Surely it was not about Baelish, he had only discovered the truth late last night. He quickly donned his tunic, fixed the pin to his chest and then left for the small council chambers.

When he arrived, he was surprised to see that he was the last one there. Renly looked barely awake, Stannis was grim faced and tight lipped as usual, Barristan looked impassive, Varys had the same smug look on his face and Pycelle had huddled his robes so tightly around himself he could barely see his face. He looked towards Baelish’s seat which was empty, then he looked to the King who was grinning from ear to ear with glee.

“They’re dead, Ned,” he said happily.

“Who is dead?” he replied stupidly.

“The dragonspawn are dead,” his eyes were flicking back and forth, barely able to contain his excitement.

“The Targaryen children?” he asked and Robert quickly nodded “How?”

Dead at sea. My informant tells me that they were sailing from Volantis to Astapor to purchase Unsullied when they came upon a terrible storm. Many on the ship perished, only a few managed to survive. The Targaryen children were not amongst them,” Varys offered.

“How did your informant manage to get close to the Targaryen children?” He asked, hoping Varys was wrong.

“He was one of three sellswords hired by a magister to guard them. Alongside an Essosi man, and a northern lad with a strange animal companion. He said it was some sort of wolf,” Ned’s blood ran cold, surely this could not have been Jon. Surely, he was working for some other magister. He had known the Targaryen children were in Pentos and in the back of his mind, realistically he had thought that he would find them, watch them from afar. He had not expected this, he had not expected him to get this close to them, this quickly.

“Who is your source, can he be trusted?” Ned replied cautiously. It would not do to spoil Robert’s mood.
“Ser Jorah Mormont, I believe you know him,”

“Aye, he’s a craven. He sold slaves on these lands and then he fled the King’s justice, how do we not know he is not making up these words for a royal pardon?” Ned was asking Varys these questions, but he knew that he was also talking to himself. Jon could not die, not like this. It was the Targaryen’s again, Rhaegar had taken his sister, now they had taken her son as well.

“My Lord, there have been several reports from the east detailing this storm. I have no doubts about its legitimacy,” Varys responded.

“Ned who cares! They’re dead! The biggest threat to my crown is gone,” he laughed. “Drowned at sea, how fitting. The last dragons defeated by a simple summer storm,” he reached for his cup of wine and took a long gulp, “Those idiots and priests keep talking about how their comets are a sign from the gods. They were wrong, the comet is a sign that the dragons are GONE!” he shouted happily “This calls for a celebration, we need to throw a tourney!” the King proclaimed.

“Your grace, we cannot afford it,” Stannis said quickly.

“Nonsense, summon Littlefinger. He’s always been able to conjure gold out of thin air, I’m sure he can do it again,” he said as he took another drink. Ned looked around the table, Renly still looked half asleep, Stannis looked completely unfazed by the absence of Littlefinger and Varys had a sickly sweet smile on his face. The spider knew, he quickly realised. Ned turned towards the King, took a calming breath before speaking,

“Your grace, Lord Baelish has fled the capital,”

“Why?” he asked as he peered at him over the top of his cup.

“I was going to arrest him for the murder of Jon Arryn,” he said and the room fell silent. He stared at Robert and he could almost see the gears working in his head as he comprehended the words.

“He murdered Jon Arryn?” he asked quietly as he set the cup down with such delicacy Ned could have sworn it was about to explode.
“Yes, I went to his chambers last night to arrest him but he must have been informed that I was coming for him. When we arrived at his chambers, we found that the place was a mess, for he had packed in a hurry. He also took Lysa Arryn with him, we believe they are headed for the Vale,”

“He murdered Jon and you’re coming to me with this NOW!” he yelled. He picked up his cup and threw it all the way across the room and into the wall. The cup shattered into tiny little pieces. “You should have come to me last night! I would have had the entire city watch looking for him! The Red Keep would have been sealed, we would have found the rat! I would have found the bastard myself if I had to!”

“As soon as I realised that it was him, I went to arrest him. He already knew I was coming for him, he was already gone,”

“How? How could he have known? He must still be here,” he seethed.

“Your grace, Lord Baelish had an impressive network of spies. Perhaps during his investigation, one of his spies saw Lord Stark and informed Baelish,” Varys said sweetly. Ned narrowed his eyes at him, trying to read between the lines.

“Where is he now? The Vale?”

Ned nodded. “I sent my men to the harbour, they said a man matching his description was headed to Gulltown,”

“Ned, send a raven to your son, raise your banners. Renly you go back to Storms End, Stannis you take the royal fleet and blockade Gulltown. Baelish is a fool, he should have fled across the narrow sea,”

“Your grace, the Eyrie is an impregnable castle, we would lose thousands trying to take it,” Renly said immediately.

Robert turned to him. “I don’t care how many men we lose. Jon Arryn was like a father to me. I will get justice for him,”

“But brother,”
“Enough! Call your fucking banners,” Robert yelled as he slammed his fist into the table. Staring daggers at Renly. Renly looked up at his older brother and then obediently nodded his head.

“Before we rush out to war, Lord Stark could you explain how you concluded that Baelish was responsible for the murder?” Stannis asked. Ned was not surprised. Stannis was a just man.

“Jon Arryn was a healthy man and the Grand Maester can attest to it. He rarely became ill until he was suddenly struck down by a stomach affliction from which he never recovered. That stomach affliction was a poison, tears of Lys to be exact,”

“A very rare poison that is very difficult to obtain,” Pycelle objected.

“Yet Jon’s symptoms were the same as those you would expect if a person had been subjected to tears of Lys, isn’t that so?” and Pycelle nodded reluctantly.

“Why would Baelish want to poison Jon Arryn?” Renly asked quickly,

“I believe Baelish was having a secret affair with his wife, Lysa. I also believe that the boy Robin Arryn, comes from Baelish’s seed. Not Jon’s,” Ned told the council.

“That is quite the allegation, Lord Stark,” Varys said,

“It is but there is evidence. Baelish and Lysa grew up together in Riverrun. Baelish even took her maidenhead, something that Jon was aware of before marriage. Hoster gave her moon tea to avoid a pregnancy which is something Ser Brynden Tully can attest the facts. He told me this a few days ago,” he looked at the council before continuing, “Lysa put the poison in his food, she came back to the capital a few days ago because Baelish instructed her to. She tried to persuade me to work with Baelish, no doubt to help him cover his tracks. My Lords, if they were not working together, why would he flee to Gulltown and the Vale? Surely he would have fled to Essos where our armies cannot reach him?”

“Lord Stark raises good points. I believe he is correct, and the timing of Lord Baelish’s flight is suspicious,” Ser Barristan said. “I agree, we need to find Baelish and bring him here for a trial”

“A trial?” Robert scoffed. “Fuck a trial. He will die,”

“The Riverlands could be an issue, we would have to march our troops through it to reach the highroad,” Stannis said quickly.
“The Riverlands won’t dare rise up to stop us. They’re completely surrounded. Robb Stark bringing his army down from the North, we will ride up from the south, the Vale is in the east and Tywin Lannister will come from the west,” Robert said angrily.

Ned groaned in frustration. He did not want to have to deal with Tywin Lannister but he could hardly argue against this without sounding petty.

“Still, Hoster will want information on our intentions. This is his daughter and we are accusing her of adultery and conspiracy to murder, he will not be happy, it dishonours his house,” Ned pointed out.

“Perhaps, we should tell him that Baelish kidnapped her, that way he would join our cause,” Varys offered.

“That would be a lie, Lord Varys and I refuse to operate that way,” Ned said firmly. He hated lies, especially after Jon. His lies had forced Jon away, all the way to Pentos where he had met his family and his family had gotten him killed.

“Damn you and your honour Ned, this is for Jon Arryn, he was a father to us!” Robert said angrily.

“We should tell him the truth, if we lie and he finds out later it will cause more problems,” Ned said evenly. Robert stared at him angrily.

“Fine, if you want to tell him the truth, fine. You can tell him yourself and if he raises his banners against us, you will be leading the army to face him,” he took another drink of his wine.

“Stannis, I want you to leave today for Dragonstone. The sooner we set up that blockade the better. I do not want a single ship entering Gulltown,”

“You intend to starve them out?” Renly asked.

“Yes. How long will the people stand behind their lord if he cannot feed them? If the people are against them, then they’ll be more likely to help us,” Robert replied quickly. “I grew up in the Vale, that fortress is damn impregnable, we will need every man that can help us. I’m sure the common folk will aid us when they learn the truth,”

“The common folk can’t help us,” Renly said shaking his head.

“Do you remember the battle of the Bells?” Ned asked with a small smile.
Renly shook his head but Robert laughed “Of course I do, Ned, Renly wouldn’t remember he was only a young lad. After Randyll Tarly defeated me at Ashford I went North, to join up with this fool,” he said pointing at him. “I had my wounds treated in the Stoney Sept and that is where Connington found me. His host descended onto the city and they searched for me everywhere, even in the sewers. They never found me, the common folk hid me, moved me from place to place and he never found me. I even stayed in a brothel, gods that was a fun night,” he smiled wistfully at the memory.

“The point is that the common folk are very important. If they’re not on your side, it’s much more difficult to win,” he told Renly. “Now if you’re finished with your stupid questions, go send a raven to Storms End and rally the lords. Then bring them back here so we can march,”

Renly stood and then left the small council chamber. “That goes for the rest of you all. Where is my squire?” He looked around for the Lannister boy. “God damn it that boy is useless, someone find him and tell him to fetch Tywin Lannister, I will need to speak to him as well,”

Ned watched as the room slowly emptied, each lord going out to pass on the message that they were readying for war. He lingered until last, he wanted to speak to Robert in private. When they were alone, he finally spoke,

“Robert, he sent men to attack my girls. I think he wanted to capture them and use them as hostages. One of my men died protecting them, another was seriously injured. While we’re at war, I want them to go back North to be with their mother. The capital will be empty and I would worry for them if I’m not there to protect them,”

Robert nodded slowly. “Very well, send them North, Ned. I understand how important your family is to you,”

Ned nodded his thanks and left the room. His mind was buzzing with all the information. They were heading out to war as expected, but that had only been a distraction, suppressing the information about Jon’s death.

It was his own fault, he realised. If he had never told Jon the truth he would still be here, he would not have been so drawn to find his family. He would have only had the knowledge that he had grown up with, that the Targaryens raped his aunt and killed his uncle and grandfather. He would have stayed clear of them then. Instead, he had told Jon the truth and he had been drawn towards them like a moth to a flame.

No, it was not his fault, that the Targaryens were a naturally destructive family. They were dragonlords and dragons planted no trees. They had nearly wiped out their own house at Summerhall and the rebellion sealed their fate. Jon’s death was on their hands, not his. Lyanna’s death was on their hands he told himself. He had to hold onto this, it could not have been his fault. He made a promise to her, to protect him and he had fulfilled that promise to the best of his abilities. No it was not his fault, it was the Targaryens, he repeated to himself firmly.
Without really noticing it, he had arrived back in his chamber in the Tower of the Hand. He instinctively looked out of the window and into the sky. The comet's trail was fading. Almost gone. Just like the Targaryens were gone, he reminded himself.

He sent for his steward and told them to bring his girls to him. He would have to tell them the truth now. As he waited for them to arrive, he sat behind his desk and poured himself some wine. His fingers idly played with the rim of the cup whilst he waited. The door opened and his girls entered, flanked by the men that had been assigned to guard them day and night. He motioned for them to take seats in the chairs opposite him.

“Father, what’s going on, why did those men try to attack us last night?” Arya asked immediately,

“I believe those men had been sent to capture you,” Ned answered.

“Why would anyone want to abduct us?” Sansa asked,

“It doesn’t matter why, it is a long story. What matters is that right now, I will be sending you back to Winterfell. You will sail to White Harbour and then ride back to Winterfell until this is all over,” and he braced himself for the inevitable barrage of questions.

“But father I can’t leave! What about Joffrey? I’m supposed to marry him. I’m going to have his babies! What if he forgets about me? You can’t let that happen! He will protect me! I know he will please father let me stay?” Sansa pleaded.

“Shut up about your stupid Joffrey. Until what is over father?” Arya asked.

“War. War is about to be upon us. I will have to leave the capital to lead the Northern forces. There has already been one attack on you girls, you will return to the North,”

“But father what about Joffrey?” Sansa asked desperately.

“When this is all over, we will return to the south,” he said in a tired voice. If he could have it his way, after this war was over, he would stay in the North. He had achieved what he set out to achieve, he had successfully investigated the murder of Jon Arryn and he had enough of these southern games for one lifetime. His place was in the north.

He looked up at Sansa and saw that she was very upset, she opened her mouth to speak,

“No more Sansa, my word is final,” He was tired of this argument.

“Father, what about my water dancing lessons with Syrio Forel? I can’t leave them now, I’m getting so much better,”

“Syrio can come with us if he wishes,” he replied with a shrug of his shoulders. Truthfully, he didn’t care what Syrio did. There were plenty of capable teachers in the north.

“That’s not fair! Why does she get to keep her lessons but I can’t stay with Joffrey!” Sansa shrieked.
“Sansa enough! It is only a temporary separation. Your mother and I had to deal with many such separations. It is a part of life, it is not the end of the world!” he shouted. He looked up to see that Sansa had tears in her eyes and he realised that he had gone too far.

“I’m sorry for shouting girls, truly I am, please forgive me,” he said quietly. He looked up at Arya and he realised that he had to tell her.

“There is something else I need to tell you girls, something about Jon,” he said quietly and he ran his hair through.

“Father what happened is he ok? Did he send a letter? Can I see it?” Arya asked quickly. Ned could feel the tears forming and he had to fight to keep his voice level.

“Arya, Jon is dead,” and he watched with a heavy heart as his daughter’s eyes slowly filled with tears.

The Mother of Dragons

Ok, repeat after me “zaldrīzo ānogar,” she said in a loud clear voice.

“zaldrīzo ānogar,” he replied in his gruff northern accent which made her laugh.

“What’s so funny?”

“It’s your accent, you make the words sound all funny,” she laughed. He started to pout which she found adorable, she leaned in and kissed him softly. Her fingers traced circles on his chest and he pulled her closer to deepen the kiss but she broke apart.

“Careful now, don’t start what you can’t finish,” she teased.

“I can go again right now, if I wanted to” he protested, and she gave him a questioning look and lifted the thin covers to look at his flaccid cock. “Ok, maybe not right now, but soon,” and they both laughed as she gently pushed him away.

“You wore me out,” he protested “You kept me up all night again,”

“No, you kept me up all night,” and she pulled him in for a kiss, running her fingers through his soft curly hair. He ended the kiss and slowly pulled apart. She stared at his face, those grey eyes, happy
and full of life. His lips curved upwards in a smile and she felt warm inside. She was so happy that Jon was in her life, she wasn’t sure she could do this on her own, she needed his strength and his council.

They laid in bed after another night of lovemaking. She must have dozed off briefly in the soft fur bed because she was awoken when she felt Jon licking her with his tongue. Over the past month or so, she had started to learn the intricacies of her lover’s body and his talents. He was a quick learner and they had plenty of time to practice. His hands had started to drift lower and lower and she quickly stopped him, pulling his hand up to cup her face.

“No no no no no, not until you finish your lesson,” she said firmly which drew another pout and she gave him another quick kiss.

“You have to say it slower ok? Pay attention to which sounds I emphasise, zalдріzo ānогар,” and she made sure to break down each word as much as she could to help him.

“zalдріzo ānогар” he said in a slightly slower voice.

“See, that was better,” she said even though it wasn’t. “Do you know what it means?”

“It means, blood of the dragon,” he said quickly. He had the ability to understand Valyrian, but his pronunciation was terrible, which is why she was trying to teach him.

“Who told you what it means?” he asked.

“It was one of the first phrases in high Valyrian that I learned. Viserys made sure that I knew it. He made sure I knew who I was,” the memory of her brother made her shudder. If she closed her eyes she still remembered seeing him in chains, she remembered the smells of the room. She buried her face into his chest to try and block out the memory.

“Don’t worry about him, he can’t hurt us anymore,” he said softly as he stroked her hair. His touch helped her to relax,

“I know, but for so long, he was the only family I had. He didn’t deserve to die like that,” she said quietly. He gently pulled apart and cupped her chin so that she was looking at him.

“I know, we’re still family and I will never leave you. I will never let another person hurt you, I promise,“

She snuggled safely in his arms, she felt loved and safe, a feeling she had not felt before. She closed her eyes and just listened to his soft gentle breathing.
After they had sailed from Valyria, they arrived in Astapor and had acquired the Unsullied. They were prepared to negotiate in good faith and pay for the Unsullied, but the master, Kraznys had called her a Valyrian slut one too many times. She had offered him Anogar, the biggest dragon and then they betrayed him. They had sacked the city and then proceeded onto Yunkai, and were currently camped outside the city walls. Today, they would meet with the sellsword companies who had been hired to defend Yunkai.

She pulled away slightly and looked at Jon’s face. He had his eyes closed and it looked like he was concentrating on something. She watched closely as slowly, his hair turned from raven to silver.

“You’re getting much better at that, you’re not angry when you do it now,” she said quietly and his eyes flew open and he smiled softly.

“Thank you, I like to practice. Soon I’ll be able to master it,” he said “What do you prefer?”

“What do you mean?” she asked puzzled.

“Do you prefer my Stark features or my Targaryen features?”

She studied his face closely. She studied the shape of his eyebrows which had become platinum blonde just like hers. The shape of his nostrils as they moved with each breath he took, and the curve of his lips as he was waiting for her answer.

“Truthfully, I don’t think there is that much difference. It’s only your eyes and your hair that are different. You’re still the same Jon, that’s all that matters to me,” he opened his mouth to protest but she quickly pushed her finger to his lips.

“When it is just the two of us, when we’re alone in this bed, I prefer Jon, you’re my Jon and I’m your Dany. I like it when you look like a Stark here, but when we’re out there, when we have to be King and Queen, I think it would be better if you looked like a Targaryen. It makes it clear that we are together, and that we are a force,”

He nodded slowly.

“I haven’t mastered it yet, sometimes it changes back without me noticing on its own,”

“In time, you’ll master it Jon, you’ve made so much progress already,”

“We have some more time before we need to get up,” he said as he slowly traced his finger down her chest, right in between her breasts.

“If you say it properly, then maybe we can play, but only if you say it properly,” she teased as she dragged his hand up again.
“zaldrīzo ānogar,” she said slowly,

“zaldrīzo ānogar,” he tried again, scrunching up his face as he concentrated. He was getting slowly better, but then Dany had a wicked idea.

She kissed him softly and then rolled him over onto his back. She slid down his body placing wet kisses along his stomach and then she captured his soft cock between her lips. She had learned that he liked this and she even had a few ideas of things she wanted to try with her tongue. She looked up at him and saw his eyes were dark and focused completely on her. She gave him a quick wink before going to work. As she licked and sucked, she felt him harden quickly. Once, she was satisfied that he was ready she slowly got up and slid his length inside her completely and she gave a soft moan. She closed her eyes and took a few moments to adjust to the feeling of being filled. When she opened her eyes, she saw that he was looking at her intensely. His eyes were dark bottomless pits

“Jon,” she said softly. “You have to say it slowly. Like this,”

“zaldrīzo” she said as she slowly lifted herself up so only the tip of his cock was still in her.

“ānogar” and she slowly lowered herself until his cock was fully inside of her again. She repeated this slow tease a few times before he reached out and roughly grabbed her by the hips, trying to force her down to increase the pace.

“No,” she said firmly. “Do not presume to touch me. Say it properly,” She saw something flash in his eyes then, was it fear? Anger? Lust? She didn't spend long thinking on it because she grabbed his hands and leaned forward to pin them behind his head. As she leaned forward to do this, he leaned upwards and lightly grabbed her nipple in his mouth, sucking it and biting it gently, causing her to whimper slightly.

She quickly sat back and glared at him. He had a cheeky grin on his face, he knew the effect he had on her. She pinched his nipple and then resumed her slow pace on his cock, this time raking her fingers and nails down his chest, marking him. She was satisfied when she saw his eyes close and he started to bite his lip as he fought hard not to touch her.

“Gods woman, are you trying to kill me?” he murmured.

“Say it properly,” she repeated as she repeated her slow movements up and down his cock. She even started to roll her hips from side to side, though she was doing this for her own pleasure. She loved the feeling of his cock moving around inside her and she slowly felt that familiar warm feeling spread from low within her stomach. She closed her eyes and tried to block out that feeling, she wanted to continue her torture for just a little while longer. Without noticing it, her fingers had found his nipples. Her hands moved automatically and as she slowly traced them. Then, when he said the word
wrong again she pinched his nipples, causing him to buck his hips involuntarily, filling her with his cock again. She let out a loud moan of pleasure and she realised she couldn’t wait much longer.

“Say it properly,” she half begged half moaned.

Finally, he said it right, or maybe he didn't but she didn't care anymore. She slammed down with all her weight and rode him like a mad woman, desperately chasing that elusive pleasure. She pushed her hands onto his chest as he grabbed her ass, holding onto it as she rode him. She felt that warm feeling spreading from inside her stomach and out around her body, completely taking over her senses. She closed her eyes as this happened and for the briefest of moments she wondered if he was inside of her or if she was inside of him.

After the wave of pleasure washed over her, she gently lay down on his sweaty chest as she felt him slow down. He knew her body so well at this point that he did this automatically.

“You are an evil, evil woman,” he said softly. She knew he was joking but the words still stung a little. She had heard stories of her father from Rhaegar. He was not a good man, she did not want to be evil like him.

“Teaching you gets boring sometimes I have to make it interesting for me,” she said lightly as she listened to his heart pound inside his chest. She felt something hard and wet against her thighs and she realised that he hadn't finished. She slowly moved down his body until she was between his legs. She gave one long slow lick before she took his cock in her mouth. She reached for his hand and guided it to her head. She let him control the pace, she had teased him enough for one day.

He slowly ran his fingers through her dishevelled hair and let out a content sigh of pleasure. She relaxed her jaw and allowed him to take his time. With each bob, she took more of his cock into her mouth. Soon, she felt the hand on her head move faster and she knew he was close. Dany usually had him spill inside her, but she had always wanted to taste him. She felt his hips and his cock jerk as his body tensed and then she felt him release into her mouth. She looked into his eyes and then she swallowed it all. She scooted up then bed and propped herself up on one elbow and traced a bead of sweat with her finger.

“Would an evil woman have done that?” She asked innocently as he caught his breath. She smiled as he slowly opened his eyes and looked at her.

“If you're an evil woman then I must be an evil man because I can't get enough of you,” he said breathlessly as he pulled her in for a long, deep kiss.

After they had finally left their bed that morning, their breakfast was brought to them in their tent by Missandei, a freed slave who was quickly becoming a friend as well as her handmaiden. They frequently spent their evenings together, she would teach her some languages, mostly Ghiscari and
some Dothraki. Daenerys had heard stories about the horse lords, she knew that they frequently captured slaves and sold them to the slavers in Slaver's Bay. She would destroy the Dothraki if they ever gave her a chance. Dany enjoyed getting to know the girl, it was good to have another girl of her age around. Jon was amazing, but there were certain things that he just couldn’t understand.

The climate was hot and she decided to wear a more open style of dress that was popular in this part of Essos. This pale blue dress had two thin straps along her shoulders. Apart from that, it left a large part of her back and sides were exposed. She didn’t mind, the sun was hot and it would be good to feel the cool breeze on her skin.

Jon was out meeting with some of the freedmen. A few of the freedmen had good knowledge of Essos and Slaver's Bay in particular and Jon spent a lot of time learning everything he could from them. She then went outside to check on the dragons, their growth was truly incredible. It had only been a month or so but they were already around the size of a large horse, that special pool was clearly very effective. Daenerys felt rather bittersweet about this. While their quick growth was a boon for their cause, as soon they would be big enough to ride and they could take back Westeros. On the other hand, she had missed the time after they were born, when they would feed the dragons pieces of blackened meat by hand, when they would crawl around their ankles and sit on their shoulders. It was like being a mother she realised, it was a feeling she enjoyed.

Would Jon want kids? She had never really asked and perhaps it was even too late to avoid. She knew there ways to avoid this happening, but she had been too preoccupied at the time to think of them. Almost instinctively, she ran her hand over her stomach, perhaps there was a little life growing inside of her as she stood there.

As if on cue, she heard a loud roar overhead. Anogar was flying overhead, just checking in before he flew off somewhere to hunt most likely. Anogar was definitely the leader of the trio, he had been the first to leave and hunt and he was also the boldest. Jon’s dragon was of a similar size, but Vedros did not often impose her will. Vedros was usually content to stand back and only step in when necessary, much like Jon, she realised. She sadly watched as he flew further away, she then turned and headed back to their tent. The sellsword captains would arrive soon.

At the last moment, she had an idea. She entered the tent and told everyone that the meeting place would now change. They would not meet the captains inside their tent, it was a place for her and Jon only. Instead they would meet outside, on a mountain overlooking her camp. Ghost appeared silently from behind a tent and walked alongside her. She reached the cliff and sat on a rock to wait. As she waited, she gently stroked his fur. Jon arrived soon after, looking very Stark. He brought with him a wagon of their riches to use as incentive for the sellswords.

Sellswords were loyal to only two things: gold and winning. Jon had suggested offering them some of their gold to get them to change sides and fight for them. They could sack Yunkai using their Unsullied, but neither of them had been willing to risk losing so many troops so soon after acquiring
From this new meeting place, she could look at the city of Yunkai. Where Astapor had been built with red brick, Yunkai had been built out of yellow. The walls and guard towers had not been maintained well and they were crumbling. High above the city walls loomed the great pyramids where the masters lived, the pyramids were slightly bigger than those in Astapor, and like everything else in the city, they too were made from the same yellow brick. She knew that the city trained and sold bed slaves. She remembered being alone in Euron’s cabin, it was not a feeling she wanted to experience again. She vowed that no woman should ever have to feel that way. She would have this city and free its slaves.

Soon, the first sellsword company arrived, the Second Sons, led by a man known as Mero. He was a tall ugly man with pale green eyes and a red bushy beard. He was a brutish man and Daenerys did not like him. They spent several minutes trading insults with him before Jon decided to send him away, with a wagon of their wine to drink as a token of their good faith. When he was gone she angrily turned to him,

“That man insulted me;”

“I gathered,” he said quickly.

“And yet you give him some of our finest wine as a token of good faith? Why would you do that?”

“I spoke to some of the men around the camp. There’s a freedman, named Qavo who is pretty informed in these matters. He said that Mero is known as the Titan’s Bastard. He is not liked by his men as he has made it difficult for the Second Sons to acquire work. He stays in power due to support from key commanders in the company,”

“How does that help us now?” she asked frustrated.

“He will take our wine, perhaps he will share it with his supporters as well. I plan to lead a small group of men through his camp at night and kill him and his followers silently while they are drunk and passed out from the wine, they will not be able to offer much resistance. Then perhaps tomorrow, they will select a new leader who would be more receptive to our offer,”

She nodded slowly. It was a good plan, devious in fact but she quickly spotted a flaw.

“You will not go, you would stand out too much. It is too dangerous,” she said firmly.

“I have to lead the men, it is my plan after all,” he said quickly.

“No, you will not. You don’t even speak their language, you would slow them down,” she said as she crossed over to stand in front of him. Without noticing it, she had brought one hand down to cover her stomach protectively. She quickly dropped it, there was nothing there to protect.

Jon looked at her before nodding his head slowly, agreeing with her on this one. As they were having their discussion, they had not noticed the second company arrive, ‘The Stormcrows’. They
were led by a blue bearded Tyroshi which was odd as she had learned that this company was led by three captains. Daenerys immediately tensed, after her experience on the boat, she had developed a small distrust towards Tyroshis. The man walked cockily towards them, as if he was greeting old friends. In his left hand, he clutched a large bag that was dripping slightly, Dany couldn’t help but be curious of its contents. She observed his clothes, they were also brightly coloured, he looked like a bit of a fool, she thought to herself.

When he arrived he dropped to his knees in front of her and looked up at her. His eyes were gleaming and she could see the sweat shining on his forehead.

“Queen Daenerys Targaryen,” he began his voice soft and tempting “I have heard tales of your beauty, but I can say that they were not accurate. You are much more beautiful in person,”

“Rise,” she said quickly. She did not know this man’s name and yet he was on his knees already.

“I am Captain Daario Naharis of the Stormcrows,“

“I thought that the Stormcrows had three leaders?” Jon asked quickly but Daario ignored him.

“I have come to enter your service, the Stormcrows and myself,” he added after a pause, his lips curving upwards into a tempting smile. Daenerys took a step backwards away from him.

“Rise, Captain Naharis,” she repeated and he slowly stood. He towered over her, and he was likely taller than Jon too, she realised. She glanced back at him and she noticed that his hair was slowly changing. The platinum was starting to come in at his roots. Was he jealous? She felt a rush of love rush through her, no one had ever been jealous for her before.

“As I asked earlier, I was told that the Stormcrows have three captains,” Jon stepped forward and gestured around. “Where are the others?”

“I heard you the first time, but I only answer to the Queen, not some greenboy who couldn’t tell the difference between his own elbow and a woman’s breast,” he said with a smirk. The smirk quickly vanished and Dany realised that Jon must have finished his transformation, she glanced back and saw that she was correct.

She quickly turned towards the cliff when she heard a roar. Vedros had appeared and was slowly rising up above their meeting, Smoke tendrils escaping the corner of her mouth. Daario turned around at the noise and she laughed at the horrified expression on his face. She quickly stopped laughing as she saw Vedros’s mouth open, and she saw the molten flame building deep down her throat.

“The Queen also has a King. Me,” Jon stepped forward and roughly spun Daario around to face him. “I am King Aegon Targaryen, and you answer to me, if you ever forget this fact, Vedros will
quickly make sure it is the last thing you ever forget,” and with that, Vedros released a quick blast of orange and yellow flame at Daario’s feet causing the bottoms of his clothes to become aflame. She watched amused as he quickly worked to extinguish his clothes before quickly scrambling to his feet.

Daenerys was impressed at Jon’s control over his dragon. He seemed to have a connection with Vedros in his mind. She realised that this meeting was almost at its end.

“Captain Naharis, what is in the bag?” she asked before he left.

At the sound of his name, he quickly turned around to face her. For a moment, his cocksure grin returned but then his eyes flicked over her shoulder towards Jon and his smile faded. He emptied the bag onto the floor and Daenerys saw two heads roll out

“These are the other two leaders of the Stormcrows, I killed them to prove that I am serious about joining you,”

Jon scoffed.

“These could be any two men. How do we know that you aren’t going to betray us, you hardly look like the trustworthy type,” he asked.

Daario gave a non-committed shrug of his shoulders. Whatever he had come to this meeting expecting, he had clearly not received it.

“Don’t believe me, that’s fine, but those are my former captains. The Stormcrows are yours, your grace, if you would have them,” and he looked desperately into her eyes as he said the last part.

Daenerys slowly nodded, an idea forming in her mind.

“I will,” and his eyes lit up happily and she heard Jon give a sharp intake of breath. She quickly reached behind and grabbed his hand to pull him alongside her.

“Meet us here back at sundown, we will have instructions for you. Bring ten of your best men,” she said firmly. He opened his mouth to speak, but Daenerys had heard enough of him.

“Go,” she commanded, and she could have sworn that he skipped away in happiness. When he left, she turned to face Jon who looked angry. Very angry

“What was that about,” he asked immediately “I was not happy with the way he looked at you, it was as if he was imagining you naked, he can’t do that, that’s unacceptable,”

Deciding to tease him a little she smiled playfully.
“Why is it unacceptable, your grace?” she purred.

“Because you are mine,” he said in a low voice and she felt that feeling return. “No one else gets to look at you like that, I should have ripped out his eyes,” he continued

“Is my King jealous?” she asked softly and she got a growl in response. “My King has nothing to be worried about. I am his, just like he is mine,” she looked up into his eyes as she said this, making sure that he understood how serious she was. She stared into his purple eyes and she watched as they slowly turned back to grey.

“Then why did you have him join with us?”

“It was your idea, he will lead the men into the Second Sons camp. This way, we lose none of our own men, and it serves as a test of his loyalty,”

Jon opened his mouth to speak. “I know, I came up with the plan on the spot, I didn’t mean for it to come across that way. I’m sorry,” she said softly. He grabbed her and pulled her into his arms. Daenerys buried her head into his chest, he smelt of sweat and of dirt but it didn’t matter to her. He still smelt like Jon, and it still smelled like home.

“Do we have to meet the last sellsword company?” she asked softly. The last company was a group known as the Windblown, a group that had around two thousand men, but Dany didn’t want to meet him. She had suffered enough confrontation for one day.

“We should at least meet with him, who knows what he has to say. We have nothing to lose,” Jon pointed out and she regretfully conceded. She put her Queenly mask on and stood beside him as they were waited.

After a few moments, the leader of the Windblown arrived, Jon had told her that he went by the name of the Tattered Prince. His company had a feared reputation and he treated deserters harshly. If a deserter was caught, he would frequently chop off a foot, so that they would never run again. The unlucky ones were tortured, badly. He had fought wars all across the disputed lands and left a trail of horror in his wake, butchered and mutilated bodies and burnt villages. Some men said that he was a disgraced exile knight, other men said that he was a former merchant prince of Pentos. Others said that he had come straight from the deepest hell to cause destruction.

They watched as the old man appeared on his old grey warhorse. He sat up straight and tall in his saddle and his face was scarred and worn down by the weather. His grey hair was long and ran down his shoulders. His clothes looked like they were expensive once, but they had not been washed in years. He rode up towards them and slowly dismounted. Caraxes appeared overhead and roared loudly but the man was unfazed, he continued his slow precise walk forward. She could hear his boots crunch the dirt as he walked, the sound was loud and almost seemed to echo. Jon slowly took a half step forward and across, partially shielding her from him but Daenerys moved forward on her own, they would face this man together, she vowed to herself. The man stopped a few paces in front of them and watched them both. He raised one eyebrow in surprise and she turned to realise that Jon had turned his hair platinum once again and his hand was almost lazily brushing along the pommel of
his Valyrian steel sword.

“Queen Daenerys and?”

“King Aegon Targaryen,” Jon said immediately.

The man raised his eyebrow in surprise but chose not to comment on this.

“King Aegon and Queen Daenerys. I am the man known as the Tattered Prince,” he spoke in a loud clear voice. His men would have no trouble hearing his commands on the battlefield, she concluded.

“I have come to offer my Windblown into your service. All two thousand of my men will fight for you and your cause;”

“What do you want in return?” Jon asked.

The man observed him. Looking him up and down, measuring him up like a piece of meat, he did the same to her. It was as if he was judging them, whether or not they were able to give him what he wants. Daenerys felt uneasy. From above she heard Anogar roar, Vedros and Caraxes joined in too, all the dragons seemed to sense her unease around this man, even Ghost had started to bare his teeth at this man. He was completely undeterred by the display and continued his observation. After a few short moments, satisfied with what he saw, he smiled maliciously.

“Pentos,” he whispered and Daenerys immediately felt her unease return.

“A whole city? That's far too much,” Jon said immediately, but Daenerys mind was on other things. Illyrio was in Pentos and he had always been kind to her. Until he betrayed them by giving those sellswords to Viserys. Because of him, she had lost her brother and she had nearly lost Jon. The person that mattered most to her in the world.

“It is not too much to ask for. You have dragons, the city is poorly defended and will surrender to you easily. All I ask is that you put me in charge and I will rule it in your names;”

“And what will you do with it?” Jon asked but the man just cocked his head, smiled and gave a shrug of his shoulders. Jon turned towards her and waited for her decision, he knew that this decision meant more to her. He had a concerned look on his face.

Could she give an entire city to this man? So, he could turn it into his playground. She had heard stories about this man, the city would not be in good hands. Illyrio had wronged her but the other citizens had not done anything to her, her hand went to her stomach, she did not like this feeling. She
thought back to what Jon said to her, was she evil for even considering this? Giving an entire city to a stranger just to punish one man? Above she heard Anogar give an angry roar. The dragon in her agreed, Illyrio should be punished. She made up her mind.

“No,” Jon said firmly and she saw a brief flash of anger in his eyes. “You will have to ask for something else,”

“Very well, but my price will not change. I will not fight against you now but we will meet again. My forces will be leaving the bay for now,” he said as he got into horse and slowly rode away. The dragons hissed and screeched at him as he left. When he was gone, Dany quickly headed back to their tent. She pushed the flap open then lay down on the bed. She ran her fingers through the soft fur and tried to calm herself.

“Are you ok?” She heard Jon ask as soon as he entered the tent. “You look pale,” and he sat down on the bed beside her. She looked up at his face and gave a weak smile.

“I’m fine. It must have been something I ate,” she said and she decided to sit up. “Hold me please?”

He silently agreed and slid behind her and she leaned back into his arms and closed her eyes. It was only mid-afternoon but she felt ready to retire for the day, content to just stay in his arms. His body was warm and she could feel her eyelids beginning to feel heavy

She must have fallen asleep because when she next opened her eyes she was lying on the bed and Jon was gone. She quickly pushed up on the bed and looked around for him but he was nowhere to be seen, only Ghost was in the tent with her. As she sat up Ghost woke up and stared at her, she had forgotten how intense those ruby red eyes were. Ghost slowly walked forward and pushed his nose into her hand and she gently stroked his fur.

“You know something don't you,” she said softly “you always know,”

She didn't get to find out what Ghost knew because Jon pushed open the flap to the tent. He looked surprised to see her awake.

“Where did you go?” She asked immediately.

“It's nearly nightfall. I gave Daario the instructions. The attack will begin soon. We have a good plan but I won't bore you with the specifics.”

She nodded slowly.

“Jon,” she said nervously “I wanted to give him Pentos, to punish Illyrio for betraying us, does that make me evil or mad? Like my father?” She remembered what Jon had told her about his visions. She did not want to be remembered as an evil Queen, she wanted to do good in the world.
“No, you're not evil or mad. Far from it,” he quickly crossed over to her and sat next to her, “It is normal to want revenge after what Illyrio did to us but you did not give him what he wanted. You showed restraint, if you were truly mad you would not have done so,” he said firmly.

“Remember what I said Dany, sometimes we will have to cause destruction to do long term good. Just like Aegon the Conqueror. Remember that.” He grasped her hand firmly and she stared into his grey eyes. “Look at what we're doing here. We're sacking cities but we're doing it to free slaves, thousands if not millions of lives will be better in the long term because of this,”

She felt reassured and she was once again thankful that she had Jon. She felt him tuck a strand of hair behind her ear that had gone loose from her braid. He looked concerned and she realised that she didn't reply to him.

“Thank you Jon, for the reassurance,” and he smiled softly.

She slowly leaned and kissed him. When her lips touched his she felt the love wash over her. The feeling cascaded all over her like a wave, spreading all around her body. It pushed all the thoughts of revenge, madness or Pentos out of her mind. Somewhere in the background, a battle was likely raging not far from their camp but Daenerys didn't care. In that moment it was just her and Jon. After they made slow gentle love, she laid there in his arms and listened to his soft slow breathing. Jon was tracing fingers over her stomach. As she watched his fingers she could have sworn her stomach had a slight swell. She quickly dismissed it. She was just imagining things.

Chapter End Notes

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeT08SkDKcO1Td2CPL9hLRHZzX61jZNus1ZlhonC go vote for your favourite stories and stuff

As always thanks to GOT88 for the help provided with this story.

This is the longest chapter so far, just over 10k words. 11 is slightly longer and 12 is huge. The Next chapter will be out in 3 days...so Saturday 6th. It's called "The Dragon has three heads"

Some of you guys said you wouldn't mind more sex...so yeah...

Let me know what you think about this chapter. Comments are always appreciated.

Thanks for reading

Sleepy
The Conquest continues

Tyrion learns more about Varys and his plans.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

The Dragon Reborn

His plan had worked perfectly. The commanders of the Second Sons were too drunk and with the addition of Daario and the Stormcrows they were easily able to root out the Titan’s Bastard and his supporters. The next morning they had elected a new leader, an ex-Westerosi by the name of Brown Ben Plumm. He quickly came over to their side and this left Yunkai completely defenseless.

When confronted with this fact, the Wise Masters released all the slaves in their city. They had also agreed to stop the training of any future slaves and to start trading goods instead of slaves. To show that they weren't merciless conquerors they had decided to leave the city untouched. Both, he and Dany were aware that this could come back to bite them, but it was a chance they were willing to take. They knew that in order to build a better world, they could not rule solely through fear. They needed people to trust them.

After Yunkai, they started the long march to Meereen. He was sure that with a disciplined army, this march could have been completed in a few weeks at the most, but as their host included women, children and poorly trained freedmen, they had to take a slower pace. They had finally reached Meereen, but the journey had taken a month.

To make matters worse, the Great Masters of Meereen had known that they were coming. They harvested what they could from the fields and burned what they couldn't take. This meant that it was difficult to find food for their Unsullied, let alone their freedmen or even their horses. They were relying on the rations that they took from Astapor, which were running dangerously low. Jon estimated that they only had a week or so left before they would run out.

They had also poisoned all the wells which frustrated him even further. It was very hot, and a clean supply of water was essential to survival.

Then, there were the signposts that had marked each mile to Meereen. The masters had nailed a young child onto each post. Their entrails were hanging out and they were all pointing towards Meereen. This upset Dany greatly, Daario had offered to take them all down for her but she declined. She had that fierce determined look on her face and he knew this was fuelling her desire to take this city. He didn't mind, he felt the same way. Children were innocent of the crimes of their fathers and they should not be casualties of war.
He took a long sweeping look at Meereen. Astapor had been built with red brick, Yunkai had been built with yellow bricks but Meereen was built with multi colored bricks. He saw greens, blues, oranges and purples all mixed together to give this weird blend of colors. He found that the mix of colors had made the city look quite ugly. The city walls were well maintained and tall. Guard towers were frequent and covered the entire wall. One thing was for certain, this city would not be taken easily, many men would be lost if they tried to take this city by force. Towering above the city were the great pyramids and on top of the biggest pyramid was the harpy. A truly ugly thing, he thought to himself.

He looked up and saw the dragons circling overhead. Vedros called out to him and he answered back in his mind. The dragons were still growing quickly despite the lack of food. They must be flying far to hunt, he guessed.

Vedros flew lower and closer to him before landing in front of him. She gave a low growl towards Ghost before turning to face Jon. Jon laughed at this, he would never have thought he would ever see a dragon and a direwolf in the same place yet here he was. Jon remembered that when Vedros had been much smaller, Ghost used to carry the dragon around on his back, but as Vedros grew, they had quickly stopped. Since then, they've still maintained a close relationship and Jon felt like he had good control over both animals.

"Dracarys" he whispered and Vedros released her signature yellow green flame. He was amazed at this change, her flame had now lost it’s orange color in favor of more green. Perhaps as she grew older her flame would become completely green.

Previously, the dragons had all breathed the same color flame, but now they were all slightly different. Anogar’s flame was a mix of red and orange with black streaks. Vedros had produced a flame that was a mix of orange and yellow with green streaks and Caraxes produced a pale gold flame.

He lightly stroked her warm scales before she took off again with a flap of her wings and a loud screech. He watched her fly for a few moments before turning back around and making his way back to their tent. As he turned, he encountered Daario and his good mood immediately soured. The sellsword was cocky and thought that he was a lot better than him. He also leered at Daenerys when he thought no one was looking and this angered Jon every time.

"Your grace," he said with the least amount of respect possible “we are ready to start our meeting and the Queen sent me to inform you,” he frowned as he finished talking.

Jon laughed at this. Sending Daario to fetch him was one way to try knock down the sellsword’s ego.

“Very well, lead the way Captain Naharis. I don't want to keep my Queen waiting,” and Daario gave him another scowl. Ghost shot off in his own direction to do whatever he does when he wasn’t with Jon.

They started to walk towards the tent and Jon took this time to quickly observe the man. He knew he could easily defeat him in a fight if it came to it, but Jon had a feeling Daario was smarter than that. If he truly desired Dany, attacking Jon would not get him there. Still, he had to be cautious around him. He was a sellsword and he did not trust him. A man who fought only for coin would only be loyal to his purse.
“Is it true?” Daario asked and Jon gave him a confused look.

“Is it true that you both sailed the smoking sea of Valyria?”

Jon smirked.

“We didn’t just sail it. We walked the lands. We visited temples and palaces. It is where we are from, it is our home,” He pulled out his Valyrian steel sword and waved it in front of him, making sure the sunlight hit the metal at every possible angle. He had thought of naming it ‘Darkfyre’ as a way of paying tribute to the original two Valyrian Steel swords that had been wielded by his ancestors.

Daario looked like he wanted to question him further but they had reached their destination.

They pushed open the flap to their pavilion and Jon saw that a pair of chairs had been set up side by side for them. He smiled and realised that this must have been Missandei’s doing. He looked towards her and nodded towards the chairs and he was given a small smile in return, confirming his thoughts.

He looked around the other occupants of the room. He saw Grey Worm, the elected leader of the Unsullied, Brown Ben Plumm, Daario, a few leaders of the freedmen that had been elected but no Dany.

“Where is she?” He asked the room. He turned towards Missandei, they were good friends and she would know where her friend was.

“She stepped out briefly for some air, shortly before you arrived your grace,” she said “she should be back soon,”

As if on cue, Dany pushed open the flap and entered the pavillion. Jon spun around to face her and was surprised to see Ghost with her. He must have gone to find her. Jon felt reassured that Ghost seemed to be protecting her. Her hair was in an elaborate braid and she wore a white dress that completely covered her breasts, but left her arms and shoulders exposed.

“Are you still feeling ill?” he asked. He had noticed that she had recently started to feel ill in the mornings. Jon put this down to the food, perhaps she was not reacting well to the rations they were eating.

Before answering, she gave a quick fleeting glance towards Missandei. “No Jon I’m fine, but thank you for your concern,” she walked past him and took her seat. She took off her sandals and ran her feet through the thick Myrish carpet. Ghost decided to lay down by her feet.

He watched as she pushed herself up tall and Jon realised that regardless of how she felt, she was in her Queen mode. She arched her eyebrow at him, gave him a look and he quickly moved to take the seat next to her.

“Shall we begin?” she asked, starting this war council.

“Your Graces, I think it is important that you know as much as possible about this city,” Qavo began
slowly and softly. Qavo was an old man, possibly as old as Lord Stark. His hair was cut very short and his brown eyes had grown dull after years of slavery. He had served as a tutor to the masters' children and as a result, he was very knowledgeable on matters concerning Slaver's Bay and Jon quickly grew to respect him.

“Very well. Continue,” she answered.

“Meereen is the largest of the slaver cities. Larger than Astapor and Yunkai combined. The city has multiple fighting pits, where men and sometimes animals fight to the death for the entertainment of the masters,”

“A barbaric practice,” Jon muttered. He realised that he had spoken louder than he had thought and so he quickly motioned for him to continue.

“The nobility of Meereen live in the great pyramids. The larger the pyramid, the more noble the family. They have numerous granary stores in the city. It is even said that they are able to grow lemon trees on the tops of the pyramid,”

“Lemon trees,” Dany said softly.

“The walls of the city are taller and thicker than the other cities. They have numerous watch towers. Upon the walls sit Bronze Harpy heads which I believe are capable of squirting hot oil onto attackers,”

“In short, the city is damn near impenetrable,” Daario interrupted and for once Jon agreed with him.

“So, what do you propose we do? A siege?” Dany asked.

“Wouldn't work,” Jon replied quickly. “For starters, we have no wood to make siege weapons. So no rams or trebuchets,”

“What about Euron’s ship?” she inquired.

Jon had nearly forgotten about that ship. It was sailing alongside them on the coast as they had no real need for it.

“It could work, but we would still need more wood. Most importantly, we don't have enough food to stage a siege of Meereen. We’d run out of food months before them,”

“Too many mouths to feed. You should cut them loose, let them fend for themselves,” Daario said darkly. “Don't look at me like that, you are dragons. Dragons don't plant trees and feed people. Dragons sack cities and,”

“Enough, Captain Naharis. We will not abandon our people,” Dany said firmly. “The next time we want your input, we will ask for it,”

“You are also wrong. Aegon the Conqueror sacked cities but he also built a better Westeros when he was finished. We will do the same,” Jon finished. Daario took a step back then and decided to sulk in the shadows.

“We could take the dragons,” she said as she turned to face him. “They are big enough to ride,”

“ Barely,” Jon relied. “I am not confident about riding them into battle just yet. We still need to get
used to flying on them and we don't have time for that now,” she sat back in her chair. Jon could tell she wasn't happy but she had accepted his reasoning.

“Your grace, this one will lead the Unsullied in the name of King Aegon and Queen Daenerys. We will attack the gates and scale the walls.” Grey worm said as he stepped forward.

“No. That is a suicide mission. I will not waste your lives,” Jon said firmly.

“We did not free you from the masters to die needlessly,” Daenerys continued.

Faintly, Jon could hear a buzzing noise. Ghost also perked up from the carpet that he was lying on.

“Jon, do you hear that?” Dany asked and he quickly nodded.

Brown Ben Plumm led them out of the pavilion and towards the source of the noise. They reached a rocky outcrop that overlooked the barren land leading up towards the walls of Meereen.

Jon watched as a brightly dressed man rode out on his horse and waved to the cheering crowd. He rode up and down the stretch several times before stopping, dismounting and turned to face them.

“Who is he? What does he want?” Jon asked Qavo.

“He is their champion,” Qavo began but he was interrupted because the man had started to urinate in their direction, causing the crowd to cheer even louder.

“A champion?” Jon asked as his hand went to his sword. “So, if I defeat him do we get the city?”

“No, it is more of a show. A game to entertain the crowd,”

“These people need to find a method of entertainment that does not involve violence,” Dany muttered. “Jon, do not even think it. You will not go,” she told him as she grabbed him by the arm so he was facing her.

Jon gave a huff of frustration but he realised that this was an argument he would not win.

“We still need a champion. We can't stand here like this and let the crowd enjoy this. It makes us look weak,” he pointed out. Clearly, Vedros was thinking the same thing because she flew overhead and gave a loud screech which caused some of the cheers to die down.

“I’ll do it,” he turned and saw that Daario had stepped forward and started his descent down the hill towards the Meereenese champion. As he approached, the Meereenese people on the city walls started to cheer loudly, clearly excited that they were getting some action.

Daario reached the flat land in front of the city walls and stood in wait of the champion who lined up across from him. Jon watched carefully, this would be a good time to assess his fighting abilities.

The champion waved his arms high in the air and soaked up the applause of the crowd before he slowly pushed his horse into a trot. The trot turned into a gallop and then he charged at Daario, lowering his lance as he did so.

Jon watched as the Tyroshi sellsword stayed rooted on his spot.
“What is he doing, he will run right through him,” he heard Dany whisper in his ear and she was right. Then at the last moment, he twisted his feet and hips and then stepped out of the way. The man was quick, but not as quick as Jon.

“He is giving the people a show,” he told her.

The crowd booed at this cowardly display and Jon gave a small smirk. He turned to his left and saw that their freedmen and women had started to observe the display occurring below them.

The champion had finally turned his horse around for another pass at Daario. This time he drew for his arak. He held the blade limply by his side as he waited for the champion to get closer. The champion was smart, and at the last moment he twisted his lance, anticipating Daario to side step out of the way again.

Unfortunately for him, Daario had decided to duck this time as the champion galloped past, his arakh cut along the side of his horse. Cutting it from the bottom of its throat and all along its side. The screech that the horse gave out as it died made his toes curl and the champion was thrown off his falling horse.

The champion quickly rose to his feet and drew his weapon but Daario was on him in a flash. The sound of steel colliding with steel quickly filled the air as the blades blurred together. The fight continued for a few moments before Daario brought his weapon down in a quick slice. The champion fell to his knees, clutching the side of his face as blood poured out of the side. He appeared to be begging for mercy, but he did not beg for long before Daario slit his throat.

His body hit the floor with a loud thud that echoed in the silence. The Meereenese people clearly could not believe that their chosen champion had lost. The silence was short lived because Anogar chose this moment to fly overhead and release a loud roar and a small burst of flame. He was soon joined by his siblings who were also jubilant in this small victory. Soon, the freedmen joined in and started to cheer loudly, mocking the Meereenese people.

He felt Daenerys grip his hand and then she led them back to their tent. They took their seats again and resumed their war council. Daario staggered into the tent last and he looked a little disappointed, he probably had been expecting to be cheered for his victory. He looked back and forth between Jon and Daenerys, clearly waiting. Eventually Jon spoke up

“Nicely done Daario, but we will not be celebrating. We still have to take the city and we still have no good plan on how to do that,”

“I agree, until we take the city, this victory is meaningless,” Dany continued.

“We could use the sewers,” Brown Ben Plumm said after a pause.

“The city sewers?” Jon asked after a pause he looked at Qavo and hoped he had knowledge of this.

“To my knowledge, the sewers of Meereen empty out into the river and this is why people are told not to drink from it,” he said after a moment.

“Very true. Great brick sewers that lead all the way out into the river. I know them well. It's how I escaped,” Brown Ben added.

“Is that why they call you Brown Ben?” Daario jokes
“They can call me whatever they like,” he responded stiffly.

“Escaped? Surely the sewers would have been barred to stop the slaves from escaping?” Daenerys asked ignoring their foolish discussion.

“They are, but a few of them have rusted away. I went down one sewer in the dead of night. It was dark, you are wading in shit and piss that comes up to your waste. It smelled horrible and there are vermin in there that are bigger than me, but I escaped. If you want to enter the city, this might be your way,”

“Would you lead the forces?” Jon asked quickly and Brown Ben scoffed loudly.

“Not a chance. I still remember the stink of that place. I would not go back up there for all the gold in the world. The most I will do is show you the entrance,”

Jon paused and considered this, if what he said was true, then this would be a great way to sneak into the city. He wouldn’t even bother suggesting that he go, Dany wouldn’t have it. More importantly, he needed to spend time with her, she had been feeling ill recently and he needed to make sure that she was ok.

“We will need a distraction,” Jon said. “Perhaps we should use Euron’s ship and ram it into the other side of the city walls. We could send a small part of our army there as well. This will distract them and lead them away from the sewers which I presume will be on the river side of the city? ”

Qavo and Brown Ben quickly nodded. “Good, Ben I want ten of your best men. Daario, I want the same from you. Daario and Grey Worm will lead the men up through the sewers. From there, I want you to head to the fighting pits and free the slaves there. That should give you enough men to start a riot inside the city and then you will open the gates for us,”

This was a risky plan but it was necessary. Jon knew that the city would be sacked brutally but unless the Great Masters of Meereen decided to open their gates, then they had no other choice. With the instructions for the battle set, he sent them all away to prepare for the assault which would begin at night.

When they were alone, he turned to Daenerys and led her to their bed.

“How are you feeling? Have you been to a healer?” he asked as he touched her face. She smiled warmly.

“I am fine Jon, but thanks for your concern,” she said softly. “It’s nothing to worry about,” and she gave him a warm smile that helped to ease his concern. He leaned forward and pressed a gentle kiss to her forehead before leaning back.

“Jon,” she began tentatively, as if she was waiting to tell him something “Could you give me a massage, like you used to?” and he smiled at this request.

“Of course, I’ll get some of the oils,” and he quickly crossed over to a chest that contained the oils that he knew Missandei used to massage her. When he turned around he saw that she had just finished stripping off her clothes, she was on her knees on the bed and Jon couldn’t help but stare at her naked body. As his eyes reached hers she gave him an innocent smile.

“I don’t want to get oil on my dress,” she said sweetly. “I think you should take your clothes off, we don’t want to ruin them,” and he smiled despite himself. He had learned that she was quite the
demanding lover and lately, she had been more demanding and adventurous than usual. Sometimes she didn’t even take off her clothes, she would just hike up her dress and demanded that he fuck her then and there. He wondered what had brought on this change.

He quickly stripped and settled in behind her with the massage oils to his right hand side. He dipped his fingers in the oil and then started to go to work. He started from the top of her shoulders and then gently worked his way down her body, planting soft kisses on her neck every now and again. He rubbed softly in all the right spots, causing her to release little sighs of pleasure. She held her hands around her belly as he worked. He gently massaged her breasts, feeling their weight in his hands. He thought that they were bigger but he wasn’t sure. As he worked, he felt her relax more and more into his body and soon he realised that she was starting to fall asleep.

He smiled to himself and planted a kiss on her neck. “Sleep well my Queen,” he whispered softly. He debated getting up but he could not bring himself to move this beautiful woman out of his arms. He let out a content sigh and closed his eyes. The men had their instructions. They would come get them when the battle was over.

The Imp of Casterly Rock

Tyrion was floating. He was floating high in the sky above Lannisport. He floated over the streets he used to play in when he was a child. He spotted the alleyways he used to duck into whenever he needed to hide after getting into mischief. He smiled at the memory. Then, he flew out over the sunset sea. The water was a beautiful teal color and the sea breeze felt cool on his skin. As he floated over the water, he could see his reflection. His hair was neat and he was wearing his best clothes. He continued to float until he reached a cottage by the sea. This cottage immediately felt familiar to him.

He floated until he touched down on the soft grass leading up to the cottage. He gently dusted himself off and then he walked along the stone path leading to the front door of the college. He looked up and saw smoke coming out from the chimney. To his right, he saw a small pen filled with pigs. He smiled to himself and then slowly pushed open the wooden door. The inside of cottage was simply furnished. There was a small fireplace and a wooden table with only enough space for two people.

He smiled to himself at the memory. This was the cottage he had lived with his beloved Tysha after their wedding. He heard noises from the bedroom, she was probably in there, he realised. He walked towards the bedroom door and pushed the door open.

He was horrified by what he saw.

On the bed was his beautiful wife Tysha. She was naked with tears streaming down her face. Behind her, was his father, naked as his nameday.

Tyrion felt his blood boil with anger. On the floor, he saw a silver dagger. He picked it up and ran at his father who had stumbled off the bed in surprise when he saw Tyrion. With surprising strength, Tyrion knocked him to the floor and straddled him.

He plunged the dagger into his father's face repeatedly and each stab caused blood to splash onto his face. He counted the stabs and each one caused him to smile wickedly in pleasure. You took my wife
from me you evil bastard. As he stabbed at his father’s face it became a ruin.

Suddenly, Tyrion noticed that he was no longer stabbing his father’s face, he was stabbing Jaime’s. He sat back with horror, conflicted emotions pouring through him.

“You should never have done it!” he screamed at Jaime. Anger pouring through him again.

“I had no choice, father made me,” Jaime cried and then Tyrion stabbed him. Laughing wildly as he struck each blow. It was only when he was finished that he realised his anger was gone and he was weeping uncontrollably.

Tyrion then awoke with a start. His fingers scratching at the soft sheets underneath him. He opened his eyes and blinked repeatedly, trying to remove the tears from his eyes. When he could see clearly, he slowly rolled over and then sat up in the bed. He ran his fingers through the sheets, before gripping tightly as he tried to shake the memory of his dream from his mind. Realising that this was pointless, he decided to get up and to explore his new surroundings. He was also very hungry. He hadn’t eaten much on the voyage on account of being in that box.

He swung his legs off the bed and then slid onto the floor. The floor was surprisingly cold beneath his feet and his legs nearly collapsed underneath him. He cursed to himself, and then he cursed Varys. He had been stuck in that box for weeks on end, it was no wonder his legs seemed to be weak now.

So, he stood by the side of the bed, swinging his legs back and forth, stretching them and giving soft grunts of pain as the muscles in them cried after not being used for so long. As he stretched, he looked around at his new surroundings. The room was large, perhaps more spacious than some of better rooms in the Red Keep or Casterly Rock. The bed was huge, big enough for several people. The floor was tiled and painted, which would have been expensive. On the other side of the room was a balcony and he could hear the sounds of a city in the background. From the sounds of the voices, he quickly ruled out Westeros. He was in one of the free cities. Being in that box meant that he had lost track of time, but if he were to guess, he would guess either Pentos or Lys. Perhaps even Tyrosh. He thought that it was unlikely he was in Braavos, it felt much too hot for Braavos and the journey surely would have been longer.

Once, he was satisfied that his legs were once again his own and that they would obey his commands, he set off in the opposite direction towards the door. Before he pushed open the door, he stopped to think this through. The owner of this house was Varys’s friend. What that meant he did not know, Lord Varys did not strike him as the type of man to keep friends, he would have his pawns, but not friends. Tyrion knew Varys was using him, although he had no idea what he was being used for.

This meant that Tyrion would have to be cautious. Whoever this man was, he was keeping him here and alive because Varys had told him too. He would have to work out the relationship between the two and then he would work from there. Perhaps, he would play nice and go along with Varys’s plan. He had offered him a chance at revenge over his family and Tyrion had wanted that unquestionably. Despite his dream, he was sure that he wanted nothing more than to see his father die.
He took a deep breath and pushed open the polished wooden door. The handle was made out of solid gold and the metal felt cool in his hand. The door moved easily and Tyrion headed out into the empty hallway beyond it. He looked left and right, trying to decide on a direction to take. He faintly heard voices from his left so that was the direction he went. As he walked, his stomach rumbled loudly and he instinctively rubbed it. The walls were adorned with expensive and lavish tapestries. He saw dragons, shadow cats, giants and bears.

He reached the end of the corridor and took a right hand turn, again following the sound of voices. He made a conscious effort to move as silently as possible. Perhaps, he would be able to spy on the owner of the house. He took care to stick to the shadows as he hugged the wall tightly. The sound of voices grew louder and louder. Tyrion could understand Valyrian, he had spent several years studying the ancient language of the dragonlords. However, the people were speaking too quickly and their accents were too thick. However, he was able to pick out a few words. He heard the word dragon several times but he wasn’t able to hear the rest of the sentence.

As he moved to the end of the corridor, he nearly bumped into a maid. She gave out a loud startled yell and the tray she was carrying fell to the floor. The plates shattered loudly and the maid looked up at him fearfully. Tyrion was struck by her face. She had long dark hair and a slender face. Was she Tysha? He felt hopeful.

Then, he looked closely. No, Tysha had lovely blue eyes, this girl had brown eyes. Brown eyes that were looking at him fearfully. He quickly pushed a finger to his lips to try and silence the girl but it was too late. He heard light footsteps rapidly approaching and he realised that his attempt at spying had come to an end.

A fat man pounded round the corner quickly. He was very fat. Tyrion wondered if his robe could serve as a tent such was his size. He had fat cheeks and pigs eyes. He wore a very heavy perfume, likely to cover the stench of his own sweat. He had an oiled forked yellow beard and each fat finger was adorned with rings. He saw a jade, emerald, diamond, gold, ruby and even sapphire rings on his fingers. Tyrion looked at his size, and at his wealth and quickly deduced that this man was the owner of the house.

The man looked at him and smiled, giving Tyrion a view of his crooked yellow teeth.

“Ah, my friend is awake!” he said with a wide smile. Tyrion gave a small reluctant smile in return.

“I am Illyrio Mopatis, one of the richest magisters of this city and welcome to my home!” he said as he gestured around him. He then looked at him patiently, as if waiting for him to introduce himself. Tyrion just smiled at him, the magister knew full well who he was.

“You are Tyrion Lannister, son of Tywin no?”

“I am his son, although he is loath to admit it,” he muttered darkly. His mind flashing back to images of Tysha and of his dream.

“Come, you must be very hungry after your journey. Let us eat,” and then he led him away through the manse. He led him down to a garden with a statue in the middle. The statue was of a young boy standing in the water of a marble pool. It was painted, and his blond hair was almost white and it ran down to the boys shoulders. The statue was lithe and handsome.

Tyrion’s attention was drawn away from the statue when he saw the feast that had been laid out for them at the table. He saw exotic meats that had been well cooked and were practically dripping in
spices. He saw plenty of fruits, apples, peaches and dates. He saw cheeses and breads. It was some of the richest food he had seen in weeks and he could not stop a small amount of drool from forming at his mouth.

Illyrio was watching him carefully and gestured for him to take a seat which he quickly did. He was about to rip off a leg of chicken before he paused. This man was Varys’s friend and he was not entirely sure if he could trust him. He ignored another loud rumble of his stomach and watched the magister warily. He would only eat from plates that he touched. The magister saw this and gave a loud laugh that seemed to come from deep within his belly.

“You don’t trust me?” he said as he continued to laugh. “You are a friend of Varys, therefore you a friend of mine. If you trust Varys, then you can trust me,” he said with a smile.

Tyrion was unsure of this. Any friend of Varys’s should immediately be treated with caution. He would only trust this man as far as he could throw him. Judging by his size, that wouldn’t be very far.

Illyrio’s smile turned into a frown at Tyrion’s continued lack of trust.

“My friend, if we wanted you dead. We would have thrown you overboard into the sea. You are here because Varys says we need you,” and then he gestured to a plate in front of Tyrion. Tyrion could see his reasoning, and he also saw the threat behind his words. This man would have no problem killing him if he did not prove useful.

Eventually his stomach won out. He pulled the plate towards him and then ripped off a leg of chicken. He bit into it greedily and his mouth was immediately flooded with a sweet juice. He gave a loud moan of satisfaction before taking another bite. He quickly finished the chicken leg and then moved onto the next dish. Tyrion ate greedily but he didn’t care. He had spent weeks on that boat and he had missed a lot of meals.

When he had eaten his fill, he sat back and sipped at a cup of sweet wine, it was unlike anything he had ever tasted before and he guessed that it was a native Essosi mix. He licked the grease from his fingers and he observed his surroundings. The sun was lower in the sky and it was late afternoon, despite that, it was still very hot. He looked at the magister and he saw him dabbing at his forehead repeatedly, wiping away the sweat.

“So, I presume that I am in Pentos?”

Illyrio cocked his head to the side and gave him a small smile. “Yes,” and then he was quiet again. He was waiting, perhaps eagerly. Tyrion quickly realised that he needed to get this man to talk.

“Varys is from Lys, not Pentos, so how did you become friends?” and Illyrio gave a small chuckle

“We met in Pentos but we are not from here. You are correct. He is from Lys but I am from Braavos. We met when we both young, and very poor. We met in this very city. He had been chased out of Myr and I was a poor sellsword with nothing to my name. We made a pact and we started to work together,” he began and then he reached for a drink of his wine. Tyrion was intrigued, he had not heard this part of Varys’s life before.

“Varys was chased out of Myr for being a thief, but he did not let that deter him. We formed a partnership. He would steal items from lesser thieves in the city, and then I would return the items for
a small fee. It started small, but soon everyone in this city knew to turn to me to get their valuables returned. Eventually I grew rich enough to start associating with the rich upper class and we were able to put that venture behind us,"

“Varys is smart and he quickly realised the value of information. I assume you have heard stories of his little birds?” and Tyrion quickly nodded.

“He started his first spy network in this very city. Using them to collect the ledgers, charts and letters from the rich. This information was very useful and it helped me to elevate myself even further in the city. Eventually, his talents became so infamous that he was soon recruited by the last Targaryen King to become his spymaster, and I believe you know the rest of the story,” and Tyrion nodded. He now understood the bond these two shared. They were two young boys who had grown rich together, but this did not help him understand why they needed him now.

“Enough about me, tell me about yourself,” he said. Tyrion eyed him carefully, Varys had likely told him everything he knew about him.

“Although I am a small man, I have quite the long story. We do not have time to hear it all,” and Illyrio gave a loud laugh.

“Very well, tell me the most recent events. What happened between you and your family?” he asked as he leaned in ever so slightly. Tyrion took a deep breath and contemplated how much to tell him.

“My family plotted to kill me,” he settled on.

“Oh,” Illyrio said, poorly feigning his surprise. “Why would they do that?”

“Plenty of reasons. My father despises me, probably because I am a dwarf, although he is smart enough to hide it. My sister has always hated me and does not even bother to hide it. She blames me for killing my mother when I was born. A hideous crime although I can scarcely claim to have intentionally done it,”

“Oh, what about your brother, the Kingslayer?” Tyrion flinched at Jaime’s name and he recalled his dream. Did Jaime hate him? Did he hate Jaime?

“Jaime is a sheep. Perhaps he does not hate me, but I am fairly certain that he does not love me either,” he said thinking of Tysha. Jaime had kept that secret from him his entire life and he would never have told him. He hated him for that, for not sticking up for him. He hated him for letting him believe his beloved Tysha was nothing but a whore. He clenched his fist in anger and tried to take deep calming breaths.

He looked up at Illyrio and he saw that the fat man was watching him carefully.

“What else did they do to you?” he finally asked. Tyrion cursed himself, he had let his anger show.

“They took away the woman I loved,” he said angrily as he repeatedly clenched and then unclenched his fist. Illyrio looked at him with a sad look on his face

“I am sorry,” he said sincerely. Tyrion was surprised by this. He watched as the man reached into his robes and pulled out a locket.
“I too have lost a love,” he said sadly as he opened the locket to show him. Inside there was the portrait of a beautiful woman. She had pale big blue eyes and pale golden hair that was streaked with silver. “Serra,” he whispered sadly.

Tyrion looked at the portrait and then back at the statue of the boy playing in the pool.

“She was my second wife. I met her in a pillow house in Lys. I brought her home with me, then I eventually married her,” The magister had closed his eyes as he recalled his sad tale. Tyrion stole another glance at the portrait and then back at the statue. “She died of the grey plague that had spread throughout the city. It came from a merchant ship and we killed every sailor that tried to enter but the plague still spread. It must have been the rats,”

Tyrion nodded slowly. “That statue, is it?” he began but then his eyes flew open and he snapped the locket shut.

“No no, that is a statue of me, I have no children,” he said quickly. “That statue is of me, of when I was a young boy. It was carved when I was only 16 by Pytho Malanon,” Tyrion nodded slowly looking at the statue.

It did bear a certain resemblance to Illyrio, and it was definitely possible that this was him when he was younger. However the statue was in very good condition and Illyrio had told him earlier that he had been poor when he was young. So where did he get the money to have a statue carved of him? Where did he store it?

Perhaps he had the statue recently made and he simply misspoke. Still, Tyrion couldn’t shake the curious feeling he had that there was more to this statue.

As if Illyrio could sense his disbelief, he loudly cleared his throat.

“Come my friend, as much as I would love to stay and chat. You must be going,”

“Going? I only got here today,” Tyrion said quickly.

“Yes, but we do not have time to waste. Our friends are waiting for you to move onto the next stage of their journey.”

Tyrion was confused. He still had not been informed of what exactly Varys was planning.

“When you awoke, I sent for a carriage to be prepared. The carriage will take you to the outskirts of the city where you will meet Griff and his son. They are heading to meet some people that share the same goals as you,”

“What goals are they?” Tyrion asked suspiciously

“Revenge against the Lannisters,” he whispered and Tyrion couldn’t help but give a small smile. He was also very curious, who were these people and what enemies did his family have in Essos?

“I also need you to deliver a chest or two for the son. One chest contains gold, the other contains an item that I procured years ago. Tell him that it is a gift for him and that I am sorry I will not be able to attend his wedding,” he said and once again Tyrion was struck by how sincere he sounded. He clearly had a special affection to the boy.

Tyrion nodded quickly and allowed himself to be led away and into the carriage. The carriage took
him outside the city and continued onwards all evening until they reached a camp at nightfall. The man in charge was clearly Griff, a tall man with blue hair.

“So, you’re the reason we’ve spent the past few days camped outside this city?” he asked in a gruff voice as he looked him up and down. Tyrion quickly noticed that he spoke with an accent that was not his own.

“I am indeed, although you could at least try and hide your disappointment,”

The man gave a low grunt. “Very well, they claim that you are smart and useful. Although, I am not sure of what use the son of Tywin Lannister will be to our cause,”

Tyrion smiled sweetly. This man was definitely an exiled Westerosi, although he was not sure of his identity. He would work that out in time.

“I am not sure what use I will be either, considering I don’t even know what our joint cause is,” he said raising a questioning eyebrow.

“If you don’t know why you are here, then how do you know we share the same cause?”

“Oh, I am sure we all want the same things,” Tyrion said quickly and Griff raised a questioning eyebrow. “Oh, don’t play dumb Griff. We are all here for revenge. It does not take a man of my intelligence to know that,”

Griff was about to reply but the boy stepped forward.

“Just let him in, we will learn more about him on our journey,” he said. After a pause, Griff nodded and then let him past.

Tyrion took a good look at the boy. He was a lithe and a handsome youth. He had a lanky build and a shock of blue hair.

He smiled to himself as he walked past and into their camp. There was a mystery here and it was a mystery that he would figure out.

The Dragon Reborn

The plan to use the sewers had worked flawlessly. Grey worm, Daario and their men were able to crawl through the sewers and get in behind the city’s defenses. Then, whilst the Meereenese forces were distracted by Euron’s ship being driven onto land and into a wall by the River, Grey worm opened the gates for the rest of the Unsullied to enter the city. By dawn, all the city’s forces had surrendered and had opened up the remaining gates to them.

Jon watched as thousands upon thousands of slaves flooded out the gates of Meereen towards them. Daenerys was wearing a long white dress that matched her silver hair. The dress showed little cleavage, but it had several cuts in the side. She wore sandals that pushed her closer to his height and to finish her outfit. She had a red and black Tokar to reflect the colors of their house.
The slaver cities were once their own independent Ghiscari empire, but Valyria had conquered it some 5000 years ago. Many of their old customs, and even their language had died out since then. Old Ghiscari died out and was replaced by the High Valyrian spoken by their new Valyrian masters.

Ever since the freehold died out, the high Valyrian spoken was mutated into a bastard form known as low Valyrian and this is what the people of Meereen spoke. Jon could understand this language, and as he walked hand in hand with Daenerys up the city walls, he could hear what they were saying.

“Mhysa!” and “Kepah!”

Was shouted repeatedly towards them. When he first heard it, he instinctively reached towards his sword, wary of any danger that might approach.

“Jon relax,” Dany said to him as she grabbed his arm. “They're not going to hurt us. I think they're cheering for us,”

“They are, your Graces,” Missandei confirmed with a smile. “They are cheering because you have freed them from their masters. They are cheering for King Aegon and Queen Daenerys,”

As the understanding washed over him, he allowed a nervous smile to creep up onto his face and he even waved back at some of the people. They saw this and cheered even louder. Dany grabbed his other hand and held it high in hers and the crowd erupted at this sight. He looked towards her and saw that she was smiling happily greeting the people. Jon allowed himself to relax and he quickly started to smile from ear to ear, it felt good to do right in the world. They may have sacked cities, but it was worth it. Seeing the people they had saved made it all worth it.

He looked upwards to see all three dragons soaring above in unison. They flew up and landed on the tallest pyramid in the city, the one with the great bronze Harpy on it.

“They want us to go to that Pyramid,” Dany told him and he nodded.

They continued their slow procession through the brick streets of Meereen. Jon noticed that as expected, the city had been sacked brutally. Plenty of the shops had been damaged and the he could see faint streaks of blood on the brick streets. The small slave revolt that he had told them to start had quickly spread and there had been plenty of looting and killing as the slaves chased their freedom. He felt a pang of guilt course through him at this, this had been his plan. As if she could read his mind, Daenerys looked at him and gave him a quick kiss on the cheek and a reassuring squeeze of his hand.

Their procession continued until they reached the central plaza, where the Great Pyramid was located. Jon looked up at it and estimated that it was at least 800 foot tall. He looked down at the base and saw that the giant brass doors had been opened for them.

Once they stepped inside, Jon immediately noticed how thick the walls were. They must have been thicker than the walls surrounding Winterfell. They were greeted by a former slave woman. She was old, with grey hair.

“Welcome to the Great pyramid of Meereen, your graces,” she said. She could speak low Valyrian, but with a very strong accent.

“The great pyramid has 33 levels as 33 is a sacred number in our culture. The most spacious apartments are on the top floor above the audience chamber. Would you like me to escort you?”
He looked towards Daenerys and she nodded. As they walked up the many stairs in the pyramid, Jon paid attention to the layout. The bottom floor was where the stables and storerooms were. The stables were huge, able to hold hundreds of horses and even elephants they were told. Around the 16th or 17th levels there were massive windowless chambers.

Below their apartment on the 32nd floor was an audience chamber. It was a chilly room with a brightly painted tiled ceiling. The ceiling was so tall that the room even had an echo. There were purple marble pillars along each wall with tall candles burning providing the room with light. In the center of the room there was a white marble staircase leading up to the throne. The throne itself was a bronze harpy.

“Get rid of it,” He said as soon as he saw it. “Take it outside and the dragons will melt it down. The bronze can be reused. I will not have the harpy in our throne room,” Jon stood and watched as a few unsullied moved to carry out his instructions.

“Your grace, what will you replace it with?” Missandei asked.

“Send for a long wooden bench. One long enough for the pair of us to sit on,” Dany answered. Jon heard a small cough and turned to the source of the noise.

“Your grace. A wooden bench is not worthy of a King or Queen,” a man quickly said.

"If the Queen deems a wooden bench worthy, it is worthy,” Jon answered firmly, ending the discussion.

He walked into a side room and found a door that led to a terrace. There were several trees and flowers growing here. He took a quick look around before heading back inside and up to the final floor.

He pushed open the doors to the private apartments and he was amazed by what he saw. Firstly, it was huge. Jon guessed that this room was twice as big as the Lords chambers in Winterfell. The floor was tiled and there were several white pillars around the room that led up the ceiling. In the center of the room was a huge four poster bed with white curtains tied around it. The wood seemed to be a polished dark brown oak. He walked over to it and ran his hands along the soft sheets. Surrounding the bed was a soft Myrish carpet.

“Impressive bed. It seems comfortable, much more comfortable than the bed in our tent,” Dany said to him. He turned to her and saw that she was coming from another hallway.

“Aye. It’s bigger as well. Much better for sleeping,” he said with a wry smile. “What is down there?” He asked, gesturing to the direction she just came from.

“Oh, just a few smaller bed chambers. One will go to Missandei. She is my handmaiden, she should be close by,”

Jon nodded and then stepped outside with her onto their private terrace garden. This garden was much bigger than the garden on the lower floor, it had more trees and flowers and even a little pool.

“They even have lemon trees!” Dany exclaimed happily as she walked over to one.

He heard a screech and then he turned to look up. He saw the dragons were flying above. Anogar
was perched on the harpy itself.

“The dragon conquered the harpy,” he said to her.

“Again. Just like our ancestors did,” she replied with a smile.

They walked around the terrace and looked at the view. From their height, they could see the entire city and beyond. They could see the river and the sea of Slavers Bay. There were plenty of ships in the harbour. Whenever they decided to leave, then they would have ships ready to take them.

“I don't like the name Slavers Bay,” she said. “It doesn't fit. There are no more slavers or slaves. So why should it be called Slaver's Bay?”

“That's a good point,” he said nodding his head “What should we name it instead?”

She thought for a few minutes. Suddenly, he heard a loud flutter of wings and saw the dragons all take off towards the bay.

“The Bay of Dragons,” she said confidently. “Conquerors have the right to rename the cities they conquered. We will rename it the Bay of Dragons. That will be the first act as rulers,”

“The Bay of Dragons does have a very nice ring to it,” he replied. “We do have a lot of work to do as well. It is one thing to conquer but ruling is quite different, the city is in a bad state after the sack. We need to speak to the people, find out their needs and concerns. Only then can we improve their lives,”

Daenerys turned to him and nodded. “That sounds wise,” she started to wring her hands. Jon looked at her, she looked nervous.

“I would like to start immediately,” Jon said. “If you don't want to, you don't have to be with me today. Stay here and rest, I know you have been feeling unwell lately. It must have been the rations we were eating on our march,” he reached for her hand and ran his fingers gently over her knuckles, trying to comfort her.

“I have been unwell but it's not because of the food, Jon. It’s something else,” she said quietly. Jon was about to question her further but they were interrupted by a knock on the terrace doors. They turned to see Missandei and Qavo standing in front of them.

“Apologies for interrupting your graces, but there is news from Westeros. News Jon, sorry, King Aegon will be interested in,” Missandei said.

He took a quick look towards Dany and she nodded quickly “Very well,” Jon said.

“Lord Eddard Stark of Winterfell has been appointed as the new hand to King Robert Baratheon after the sudden death of Lord Jon Arryn. Lord Stark and both his daughters have travelled to the capital. His daughter Lady Sansa will also wed the Crown Prince Joffrey. His son Brandon was supposed to go with them but he had a fall in Winterfell and is currently bedridden. The maesters say that he has lost the use of his legs.”

“We have even heard a tale of how Lord Stark killed Lady Sansa’s direwolf as recompense for an injury that Crown Prince Joffrey suffered due to Lady Arya’s direwolf. But her direwolf managed to
escape into the woods and so the Queen demanded that the other wolf be killed as punishment” she said in a loud clear voice.

Jon just stared at her, into her dark eyes. His gaze must have been intense because she started to cower away in fear. He was woken from his trance when he heard Ghost release a long loud and sad howl. He felt a sudden wind pass by and he shuddered in the cold.

He turned away from her and looked out at the ocean. Faintly, he heard Dany say something, probably sending them away.

All thoughts and emotions ran through Jon at that moment. Confusion, anger, guilt, hatred. His mind was consumed with thoughts of Lord Stark. The man he used to call father.

“Jon, how do you feel?” she asked softly.

“I’m fine,” he lied. He didn't want to face her so he turned and walked away but she quickly walked up to him.

“Do not lie to me, I know you. Just tell me how you feel,”

Jon opened and closed his mouth repeatedly. At a loss of what to say.

“How could he do this?” he finally said. “How could he work with the usurper? He is a child killer. Robert Baratheon condoned the murder of my half brother and sister and now Lord Stark is working with him. Helping to keep his illegitimate crown,”

“I thought I knew him. I really did. I thought he was a good and honorable man. It was all a lie,”

“Jon, don't say that,” she began but he cut her off.

“Yes, it was Dany. How could he be a good man? My mother came to him with her concerns and fears about marrying Robert but he did nothing to help her. He could have convinced his father to stop the betrothal but he didn't even try. He didn't even try to help his sister, he was content to see her sold like livestock to his best friend. What kind of man is that? My father asked to meet with him before the battle of the Trident to explain the situation but he refused. He didn't even want to hear both sides of the story. He killed a direwolf, a rare and sacred animal of the north to please the Lannisters and it wasn’t even the same animal that had attacked the prince. He remained friends with Robert after what happened to Aegon and Rhaenys. What kind of man is he?”

“Jon,” she began but again he cut her off. Unable to stop himself

“He lied to me my entire life. Not once did he tell me about my mother. Who she was, if she was dead or alive. He let me live with all kinds of horrible rumors and lies. I thought she was a tavern whore and that he couldn't even remember her face and name. He kept the truth from me my entire life. He let his wife treat me like shit because he wanted to keep his lie. How could he do that?”

“Jon, he lied to protect you. You know that. All my life I have been running from assassins and hired
knives. Ever since I was a little girl all I have known is a life on the run,” she said quickly, her hands going to her stomach.

“Exactly. And now he is Hand to the King who condoned these attacks on innocent children. A king who allows the murder of children and sends assassins after a girl innocent of the crimes of her father or her family. That is the type of man he calls friend. That says a lot about his character,” Jon spat angrily.

“Jon, let me finish. He lied to protect you from the same things I had to deal with. You are his sister’s only son. The usurper would have killed you. Especially, if he learned that your mother loved your father and not him. He did it to protect you. He lied out of love;”

“Love? Most likely guilt. He probably realised that if he had listened to his sister and tried to end the betrothal then the entire rebellion would not have happened. Guilt not love is what I say;”

“Jon, he is a good man. He has made mistakes but do not doubt that he loves you. Think about the risk he took upon himself to protect you;”

Jon thought about it and then answered,

“Yes, he protected me and raised me with his own children. But what about the things that he took from me? He denied me my name, my birthright and my crown. He didn’t even let me decide if I wanted it or not. For years, I endured the scorn and the ridicule of his wife and others at Winterfell but he never once spoke out to ease my suffering. People used to taunt me about my mother, saying that she was some lowborn whore and other vile lies. When I asked him about her, he refused to answer me and he acted like he was ashamed of my mother. I thought that the lies must have been true. Now, I know he was ashamed of his own lies”

“You talk about him sacrificing his honor for me, but what hardship did he truly endure? None of his bannermen ever disrespected him or refused to obey him. Even his wife who he supposedly dishonoured, is kind and loving towards him. I was the one who endured the insults, shame and humiliation. People looked at me like I was the one who forced him to have a bastard. He was the good and kind lord who did more than was expected for his bastard and I was the spawn of lust feeding of my father’s kindness”

“For years, people in Westeros have spread lies about both my parents. My father was seen as either a mad rapist or a foolish prince driven by lust while my mother, the fierce she-wolf of Winterfell is painted as a helpless damsel or a scheming woman who seduced a prince and plunged the realm into war. Lord Stark always taught me about the value of honor, truth and justice but his actions say the opposite.”

“I felt so guilty for the way I left. I didn't even say goodbye. Then, I met my true father and I learned the truth and I was so shocked. I had this picture of Lord Stark in my mind and everything I learned just shattered it into a million pieces. I wanted to see him, to try and see if I could put the pieces back together but now I won't. I had hoped that we would not have to meet on the battlefield. I do not want to fight against Robb but now it seems we have no choice;”

“Jon you don't know that. He might not choose to fight you,” she said trying to ease his thoughts.
“Dany, he's Hand of the King. Sansa will marry the Crown Prince. His grandson will be King one day. He will fight us. He has committed himself to Robert Baratheon. He is not a good man, and neither is Lord Stark if he chooses to join his house with the Baratheons and Lannisters,”

Dany looked at him sadly for a few moments before she spoke again.

“Jon, you are a clever man. You are smart enough to figure out a plan to avoid fighting him. Perhaps if we attack from the south and offer favorable terms, he will stay in the North?”

“Perhaps,” he said with a sigh. “I really don't want to fight him,” suddenly he remembered his dream. His dream of him flying over Winterfell on his dragon. “I don't want to fight against Robb, Bran or anyone from Winterfell. Regardless of how I feel about Lord Stark. I don't want to fight them,” he said sadly.

Again, she was silent for a few more moments. She leaned against the railing of the terrace and put her other hand on her stomach.

“Jon, I can't begin to understand what you're feeling right now but Lord Stark is a good man. He loved you and I don't think you should forget that,”

“Dany, you don't know him,” he said in a tired voice as he ran his hands through his hair. He pulled out a lock, it was raven black.

“You are right I don't know him but I know you. You are my brother’s seed but he was the man that shaped you into who you are today. He raised a good man,” He looked up at her. She had stood up straight now and was looking at him intensely and Jon could not drop her gaze.

“The man that I am here with right now. The man that I will conquer the world with. The man that I love and the father of my child,”

He stood up straight in shock. Their child? Surely not. All thoughts of Lord Stark were pushed from his mind as he imagined him holding a small child with pale hair and purple eyes. A child with her lovely porcelain skin. She started to look nervous and he realised that he hadn't answered.

“Our child?” He asked quietly and she nodded nervously. He immediately remembered his vision in the pool. He started to smile and he quickly pulled her into his arms and picked her up. He started to spin around in happiness.

“Jon, stop you're going to make me dizzy,” she laughed and he didn’t stop spinning her. “Think about the baby!” and only then did he stop. He finally put her down but held her close.

“I love you,” he said before he kissed her, she threw her arms around his neck and he lifted her up by her ass. He began to carry her inside but she broke away stopping him.
“Why did you take so long to answer? It made me think you didn't want to have a baby with me,”
she said once he put her down.

“I was a little shocked that's all. I never thought I would have a child of my own. I was a bastard,
and I refused to bring another bastard into this world to live the life I had to live. Children were for
trueborns, for Robb, Sansa and the others. Not for me,” he said sadly. “I actually had a vision about
this, back in Valyria,”

“A vision of our children? You didn't tell me,” she quickly said.

“I had other visions and then we hadn't really spoken about children so I didn't mention it,”

“You didn't mention a vision about our children? Jon, this is important. Did we have boys or girls?
What color was their hair? Their eyes? Tell me please,” she said excitedly, practically bouncing on
her feet.

He opened his mouth to begin to answer.

“No no no don't tell me, I want to be surprised,” she said giggling

“What would you like our first child to be? A boy or a girl?” He asked

“Our first child?” She paused and thought “A girl with your hair and your eyes,” she said firmly.

“My boring dark hair and eyes?” he groaned “The world needs more children with your lovely
silver hair and striking purple eyes,” he said passionately. She was about to answer him but he
quickly kissed her.

“How long have you known?” he asked,

“A few days ago. Well, I was unsure for a few weeks but it was only confirmed a few days ago. I
was sick one morning and Missandei came to me. I thought it was something I ate but then she asked
about us and if I was taking any moon tea and then we both realised what it could be. Then, my
moon blood didn't arrive and it was confirmed,”

He nodded his head.

“I'm surprised you didn't notice, you're usually quick to notice things,” she teased.

“Well I have noticed your breasts have gotten bigger but I thought I was imagining things,” he said
to her which caused her to smile. He reached out a hand to touch one but she playfully slapped him
away.

“How long until the baby is here?”

“I don't know, six maybe seven months. The earliest we could have conceived would be the night
we left Valyria. Which was nearly two months ago,”

Jon smiled at the memory of that night, it was the happiest night of his life. “Our child will be the first
child conceived on the smoking sea of Valyria. The child of dragon riders and wargs. The singers
will be able to write plenty of songs,”

She laughed before continuing “What should we do then? I think we should stay here in Meereen
until the baby arrives. Then we plan our next move. It would give the dragons time to grow even
more,” she said

Jon thought about it. She raised a good point but then he remembered what had started this conversation

“No. Robert Baratheon is still King and the longer we stay here the easier it is for him send his assassins to attack us,”

“Jon, he would be a fool to attack us here. He will hear of our dragons and our armies and he will stay clear,”

“I don't think so. I think he will hear of our dragons and that will cause him to increase his efforts to kill us. He will want to kill us before our dragons grow big enough to threaten his crown,” he said quickly

“Also, I don't want my child to be raised like you, constantly running from his assassins. I will not have it. I will do whatever it takes to make sure my child is safe and that you are safe. We need to defeat the usurper as soon as possible,” he paused before continuing.

“When I was drifting on the ocean. I made a promise that I would give you the life that you deserve. You, Daenerys Targaryen, will live in the world’s most beautiful castle and you will not want for anything. I will do that for you and our child. No matter what it takes, No matter who stands in our way,” he said firmly. “I swear it.”

She nodded slowly and he could hear her take slightly deeper breaths.

“Even Lord Stark?” she asked tentatively.

He closed his eyes as he remembered the vision of the little boy with dark hair and the purple eyes and the little girl with silver hair. He remembered their smiles as they played and chased each other. He would do anything for those children and for Daenerys. He would do anything to keep them safe, to give them a life that princes and princesses deserved.

He opened his eyes and looked at Daenerys, she was looking at him nervously. She reached one hand out to touch his face, he felt her fingers trace his jaw and along the stubble that had started to grow. He slowly reached out to grab her hand,

“Even Lord Stark,” and he heard Vedros roar loudly in approval.

Chapter End Notes
As always thanks to GOT88 for the help provided with this story

Chapter 12 is called "Dragonriders" It's the longest so far...probably the longest I'll write and perhaps it's one of my better chapters. It goes completely off canon and you should enjoy it. It should be out on Tuesday 9th.

As always, let me know what you think about this chapter. Comments are always appreciated. Thanks for reading

Sleepy
Dragonriders

Chapter Summary

Jon and Daenerys become the first dragonriders in over a century and a half.

Ned gets some news from across the sea

Tyrion discovers more about the secret conspiracy.

Chapter Notes

For reference, at the end of season 5/ADWD, Drogon's wingspan is said to be 20 foot wide when he rescues Dany from the fighting pit....

Regarding the whole marriage thing. Jon and Dany are clearly together and they will get married at some point. Do they need to get married to call each other King and Queen? I don't really think so. Similarly, Jon has an issue with fathering a bastard, but I think issue comes from his own experiences growing up. He grew up a snow, without a mother and was treated poorly accordingly. Their child won't really have any of those issues. Their child will be a prince or princess, and they will have parents who love each other and the child could be legitamised if anyone kicks up a fuss. Not that they will, you don't argue with dragons.

This isn't me saying they won't get married...it's more me explaining my reasoning about why they're both not panicking about it.

Rhaegar will show up again....eventually... I haven't forgotten him

In the meantime 15k words here...buckle up and enjoy

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The Mother of Dragons

She dreamed a familiar dream again that night. A dream that she had long ago. Before it would come infrequently, perhaps once or twice a month. Now, it was at least once a week. She dreamt of the same black walled palaces again. She dreamt that she was flying high above the palace on her dragon, before diving down and setting the palace aflame. Her dragon breathed flames so dark that it appeared as black as night. Each time she dived down to set the castle a flame, her dragon would roar in excitement and approval. She knew that this was a dragon dream but she wasn't sure what exactly it meant.

She slowly opened her eyes and looked around their dark room. It was still before dawn, she quickly
realised. Jon usually awoke before her, well he did until she started getting up earlier due to her morning sickness. She felt his hand lying on top of her stomach, protectively guarding the little life growing inside it.

Her stomach had started to swell slightly but her daily attire was still able to hide their secret. They hadn’t told anyone, save for Missandei and a few of the other women who had confirmed it for her. They wanted to keep it a secret for as long as possible. This child was for them alone.

She realised that sleep was not going to return and so she slowly extracted herself from Jon’s strong arms and rolled out of bed. As soon as her feet hit the hard cold tiles, Ghost looked up towards her with his ruby red eyes. The wolf was huge now, even larger than some of the horses in the stables. She wondered if when he stood up, if he would be bigger than her.

She slowly pushed her feet into her soft slippers and made a shushing gesture to Ghost. The wolf seemed to understand her because he rest his head down again. Daenerys, then got off the bed and stepped through the doors and out onto their terrace.

Daenerys looked out over the newly renamed ‘Bay of Dragons’. They had been in Meereen for several weeks but this was the first sunrise she had gotten up to see. The sky color was a mix of dark blue and purple and she could faintly see streaks of orange fighting to break through the horizon. A cold breeze passed by and she shuddered, pulling her soft silk robe tightly around her. She moved away from the balcony and sat on the edge of the pool. She put her feet in the cool water and relaxed as she felt the small little fish nibble at her toes.

Their rule in Meereen had not gotten off to the best start. In retaliation for the 163 children who had been killed and nailed to those signposts, she had 163 greatmasters executed in the same manner. Daario had argued for more but Jon stopped him. Jon had also made orders for the children to be taken down and to be given proper burials. The city was recovering well after the sack. The Unsullied patrolled the streets regularly and the city was able to return to some form of normalcy. They had plans to build two new schools for the children. It wasn’t much, but it was a start.

She rubbed a hand over her small bump and pushed thoughts of Meereen and her dragon dream out of her mind. She closed her eyes and she made a prayer for a little girl. She would love any child that they had, but she would love a girl. A little girl with Jon’s dark hair and grey eyes. She would play with her and sing with her, doing all the things that little princesses in the stories would do with their mothers.

Daenerys heard a loud flutter of wings and she opened her eyes to see Anogar flying lazily in front of her. He was big now, more than big enough to ride. They had brought back several books from Valyria that taught them about their dragons. The Valyrian freehold had ruled for over 5,000 years and in that time, they had learned nearly everything to know about dragons. The books contained detailed diagrams on their anatomy. The Valyrian freehold had many enemies and over time they had learned the weaknesses of their dragons. Grown dragons were vulnerable only in their eyes, and to certain poisons. The scales of grown dragon were hard as steel plates which meant that normal weapons such as spears and arrows could not inflict much damage upon them. Over time, the Valyrians discovered the antidotes to the poisons which could harm their dragons and had detailed instructions on how to make them committed to these books. So, the only vulnerability left was their eyes. Daenerys took note of this and she would make sure to tell Jon. Whenever they went into battle, they would have to target archers first. Perhaps, they could even design some kind of helm to protect the eyes of their dragons.

Daenerys usually spent time each day trying to talk to Anogar with her mind. Their connection was growing stronger by the day. Daenerys wasn’t certain, but she thought that Anogar could feel and
understand her emotions. When anger coursed through her body on seeing those children nailed to the signposts, Anogar seemed to share the feeling. Dany looked up at Anogar who was continuing his languid flight around the top of the Pyramid. She was tempted to call him closer but she knew he wouldn’t come. A dragon was not a slave and he would do as he pleased.

As if to prove her point, he gave her a snort, pushed some smoke out of his mouth and took off towards the bay. She watched him for a short time before he seemingly disappeared from sight. The early morning light was not bright enough to make him visible.

Suddenly, she saw a flash of orange and red flames erupt over the bay. She watched as he continued to release several short blasts of flame over the water, creating a pretty mix of colors. She was impressed by Anogar and the fact that as he grew bigger, his flame had started to change color. His flame was starting to become a very dark red and she realised that as he continued to grow, it would become black.

She chuckled to herself slightly as she heard him fly back towards her and this time, he landed on the bronze harpy above her. He was so heavy that he caused the ground to shake and the bronze harpy gave out a groan of pain in her mind. She got out of the pool and slowly walked towards him, watching him carefully as she did. His scales were midnight black but his horns and spinal plates were streaked with red. His teeth and his claws were black but his eyes were like smoldering red pits of lava. He lazily stretched his wings as she approached him, she guessed that they were at least thirty foot wide. Brown Ben Plumm had called him ‘Balerion the Black Dread’ come again and she was inclined to agree with him.

That special water had worked wonders, she realised. Anogar was only a few weeks old, perhaps just over two months and yet he was big enough to ride. Balerion took decades to reach his fearsome size. She shuddered to think what size Anogar would reach within a year, let alone a hundred.

He slowly stretched his long neck downwards and allowed her to rub his warm snout. This continued for a few moments before she quickly realised what he was doing.

“You sense the little dragon baby, don’t you?” she whispered as she lovingly stroked his snout. “A little dragon wolf baby, perhaps a rider for your brother Caraxes,”

Anogar released a small puff of smoke before seemingly losing interest and taking off again, the sounds of his wings sounded like a loud clap of thunder. She turned and watched as he flew high away, probably off to hunt somewhere.

“Amazing sight to see,” she heard a familiar voice say to her. She looked to the door and saw Jon leaning against it, his chest bare for her to see. He had gotten much stronger since she met him and even more so after he fell into that pool. As she looked at him, she could see the definition in his arms and shoulders. His skin had even gotten a slight tan.

“Good morning my love,” she purred as she crossed over to kiss him. The merest brush of his lips against hers caused a wave of happiness to flood through her.

“Are you alright?” he asked after their kiss. “I was surprised to see the bed empty, usually I wake up before you,”

“I’m fine. I had a dream that’s all,”

“The same dream?”

“The very same,” she said quietly as he gently held her in his embrace.
“Come, let’s head back inside, it’s still early,” and together they walked back inside and got into bed. He poured them both a cup of water which she took gladly. She took a few sips before resting it on her nightstand and settling in bed with him. She rested her head on his chest, curled into his side and breathed in his scent. She felt him slowly move his free hand and rest it on her stomach. She closed her eyes and listened to his gentle heartbeat. She loved these moments, when it was just the two of them, free from their crowns and the needs of the people they were leading. These moments were rare, usually happening only in the mornings after they woke up or as they were settling down to go to sleep at nights.

“We need to think of names,” he said after a few moments

“Names?” she said with a chuckle. “We have plenty of time still. They said another six or seven months,”

“I know we have plenty of time, but we will need that time for when we inevitably argue over what we should name him,”

“Him? So you think it’ll be a boy?” she asked playfully as she began to lazily trace her fingers along his chest.

“Yes, he’ll be a boy and his name will be Aemon,” he replied confidently.

“Aemon? I don’t like it,” she said after a pause. “I much prefer Daemon,”

“Daemon,” Jon scoffed at that like she knew he would. “Daeron,” he said firmly. Just as she knew he would. She loved that she knew him well enough to be able to predict him.

“How about, Rhaella, after my mother,” she said softly.

“If she has your hair, then yes. If she has dark hair then it should be Lyanna after mine, how does that sound my love,” he asked in a soft sweet voice. She turned to look up at him. She slowly reached out a hand to brush a lock of hair out of the way so she could see his lovely face.

“It sounds perfect my love,” she whispered as she gently kissed him. His lips were soft and sweet and she naturally found herself opening her mouth and allowing his tongue to enter. She battled his tongue for a moment, before she slowly moved over and straddled him. She needed him in her. She needed to feel his length stretching her and to feel his seed coating her womb. She reluctantly tore her lips from his and slowly shrugged off her silk robe.

She heard him breathe in sharply as he saw her naked form. She smiled slightly to herself and he moved one hand to finger her soaked cunt. Dany took her hand and reached behind her to find his already hard cock. She stroked it a few times and she used her fingers to tease the head causing him to release a low hoarse moan. Then she lifted her hips, sheathing him inside of her. She gave out a loud involuntary gasp of pleasure as she slowly adjusted to this familiar feeling.

She looked down at Jon and saw that he was looking at her, patiently waiting for her. He did not want to be too rough and harm the baby, so he would let her control the pace. She smiled lovingly at him before slowly starting to move up and down, resting her hands on his chest for support. She closed her eyes and let the feeling wash over her.

She gave another loud moan of pleasure when she felt his finger starting to play with her nub. She
felt his fingers go round and round in a circle and it pushed her closer to her release. She moved one hand from his chest and moved it to his head, she ran her fingers through his soft hair before cupping the back of his head and bringing it up to her breast. As soon as his tongue made contact with her hard nipple she gave let out a small whimper and sank lower onto his cock, causing him to moan into her breast. She felt his hands gripping her hips tightly. Perhaps he would mark her skin

Dany couldn’t stop the moans from escaping her throat as she moved closer and closer to her release, each movement bringing her closer and closer to that elusive pleasure that would wash over her entire body. Jon dropped one breast and quickly moved to the other, gently nibbling and kissing her nipple. She wanted more, she needed more. “Jon,” she moaned softly, hoping that he understood her

He knew her body well because he knew what she wanted. He began to thrust upwards, giving her more and more. She slammed her hips down and she screamed out his name as she finally reached her pleasure. Wave after wave of hot pleasure coursed through her body, drowning her senses. She saw stars dancing on the back of her eyelids.

She heard him grunt and she forced her eyes open to look at him. His face was scrunched and he was biting his lip before he let out a long moan. She felt his cock twitch and jerk and spurt after spurt of his seed shot up deep into her womb. She lazily leaned down and kissed him softly, before rolling off him.

Dany placed her head in a familiar position, on his sweaty, sticky chest and listening to his racing heart beat slowly return to normal. She could feel his seed slowly starting to leak out onto her thighs but she didn’t mind. She looked outside and saw that the sun had finally come up.

“We shouldn’t do this in the morning, it makes me sleepy,” she said softly which made him laugh.

“You started it, as always,” he whispered into her hair. She closed her eyes and just listened to his soft gentle breathing. “Daenerys, don’t go to sleep on me again, we have to listen to petitions this morning,”

Instead of answering she just pulled the covers up and snuggled deeper into Jon. He laughed at this and gently rubbed her small bump. “Daenerys,” he said in a warning tone but again she didn’t move. Hoping he would lose interest.

She felt him get out of bed and throw the covers off her and she was forced to open his eyes. He stood naked at the foot of their bed and he was staring at her expectantly.

“Come on, get up. Let’s bathe and then we can break our fast. The sooner we hear these petitions, the sooner we can do something fun,” he said with a wink

“Let’s ride the dragons today,” she said quickly as she sat up in bed. He looked surprised but then he slowly nodded.

“Why not, they’re big enough and truthfully I’ve been dying to ride Vedros, I can almost feel her begging me,” he said with a wide smile. She leapt out of bed and started to walk outside, now eager to begin the day. She headed for the pool and quickly stepped into the water. The cool water felt refreshing on her sweaty skin. Jon got into the water with her and she heard him give out a loud sigh of content.

“Where should we fly to?” she asked excitedly.

“Wherever we feel like, although we shouldn’t go too far. Not on our first flight,” and she nodded in
agreement. After they were clean, they dried themselves off and had breakfast outside on the terrace. They ate from a bowl of fresh fruits. They had peaches, apples and plums. Daenerys really loved the peaches, they were sweet and each bite filled her mouth with juice that would spill out the side and onto her chin. She ate greedily and when Jon asked if she was ok, she simply told him that she was now eating for two.

After they ate, they went back inside to dress. Missandei had selected a beautiful essosi dress for her. This one was dark red and had no straps. She braided her hair into her usual elaborate braid and then fixed it all in place with a pin which had a three headed dragon for the head. They had decided to not wear crowns, preferring to have their crowning closer to Westeros and in a proper ceremony. Jon was dressed in a matching outfit. She gave him a quick kiss before they left their apartments together and headed for the audience chamber located on the floor below them.

They spent the entire morning listening to the petitions from the common folk. They were both beginning to pick up the language, but they still needed Missandei to translate. After a while, they decided to end the session and take their lunch back in their private apartments. As they left the audience chamber, they saw that Qavo and Daario were waiting for them.

“Your graces,” Qavo greeted with a warm smile as he bowed before both of them.

“Your grace,” Daario said stiffly. He didn’t bow and his eyes were locked on her. They had discussed Daario at length. She had been eager to get rid of him once they took Meereen but Jon pointed out that they still needed his men. Their forces were made up of 10,000 Unsullied, 2,000 Stormcrows and 2,000 Second Sons. Aegon the Conqueror took Westeros with less men, but Westeros was not united and waiting for him. He also had two other dragon riders with him, whilst Caraxes remained riderless.

“What is it?” Jon asked tiredly. “We are about to have our lunch,”

“Your graces, we have heard disturbing reports coming from the north,” Qavo began in a grave voice. “A large Dothraki khalasaar has gathered and they seemed to be heading south towards us in Meereen,”

“Why would they do that?” she asked.

“Centuries ago, the Dothraki, like nearly everyone in Essos, bent to the power of the Dragonlords. Perhaps this Khal, who they are calling the ‘Khal of Khals’, has decided to strike preemptively at you, before your dragons grow big enough to be used against them,”

“That Khal is a fool,” Daario said quickly. “Those Dragons are ferocious beasts already, if I were him I’d head in the opposite direction, and fast,”

“Who is this Khal and why do they call him the ‘Khal of Khals’?” Jon asked.

“Drogo,” Qavo replied calmly. “He is called the ‘Khal of Khals’ because he has never lost a battle. He also has one of the largest Khalasaar to ever exist in history.”

“How many?” Jon asked.

“At least 50,000, and that’s only the fighting force. The total Khalasaar could be over 100,000.”

Daenerys shuddered. She remembered many years ago how Viserys had threatened to sell her to a Dothraki Khal for an army in one of his darker, drunken moods. Thankfully that plan never
materialized. She had also read about the Dothraki. They were skilled warriors, but a savage bunch of people. They frequently attacked villages and settlements. They raped the women and sold the men they captured into slavery and that thought filled her with rage.

“Where are they now?” she asked

“Somewhere around Vaes Dothrak we have heard, it will take several weeks, perhaps months of travel for them to reach Meereen. That is of course, if they do decide to head to Meereen,“

Several weeks, but only by horse she realised. Suddenly, she had an idea.

“Jon, why don’t we fly out to meet them,” she said as she turned towards him. “We fly out and then we take his Khalasaar for our own. The Dothraki are considered as one of the greatest cavalry forces in the world, they would be a valuable addition to our armies.”

“How will we do that?” he asked with a disbelieving look on his face. “I hardly think they will just swear allegiance to us even if we fly out on the back of dragons to meet them. At best, the khalassar will break up into smaller groups after we defeat them. From what I know about the Dothraki, they only follow one of their own.”

“The Dothraki respect strength above all, if you beat Drogo in combat, which you will,” she heard Daario scoff, “Then they will follow you,” Jon pondered this for a few moments before answering. “Perhaps it could work, but why don’t we just use our dragons. The Dothraki feared the dragons before, they could be intimidated into service.”

“My King, if you would excuse my interruption,” Qavo began. “The Queen is right, you need to defeat the Khal to take his Khalasaar. Once the Khal is defeated, then the rest should follow you. However, you will also need to defeat his bloodriders, who are sworn to avenge him,”

“This sounds bloody crazy,” he muttered but she could tell that he was considering it. “I don’t even speak Dothraki, how will I communicate with them?”

“I do, I’ve been having lessons with Missandei and she says I have a good grasp of the language,” she said confidently. Jon furrowed his brow in concentration before letting out a sigh

“Fine, we’ll go. Qavo you will be in charge until we return. We should be gone for only a few weeks,” the man nodded and bowed before walking away. Daenerys was happy with this appointment, the man was wise and would rule the city well in their absence.

“Daario, what do you know of the Dothraki?” Jon asked.

“Bunch of savages that I usually stay clear off,” he muttered darkly. “The ones with the bells in their hair are the more experienced ones. I guess they’ll be protecting their Khal. Apart from that I got nothing,” he finished with a shrug. Jon nodded before dismissing him

“We will need food, probably enough food for a few days travel,” he said.

“I’m sure we can find something to eat out there, the dragons do just fine,” she replied.

“Perhaps, but you’re also carrying our child. You need to eat properly, I don’t want to risk anything,” he replied calmly. Dany nodded, he was right of course. She rubbed her hand slowly over her belly and he gave her a warm smile.

They quickly prepared themselves for their excursion. They took plenty of food and water and Jon
also wore his armour. Daenerys didn’t wear any armour as she promised Jon that she would not step off her dragon, no matter what happened to him. Still, he had insisted that she take a small Valyrian steel dagger with her. Missandei had replaced her elaborate braid in favour for a simpler one. One that she could tuck inside of her clothes as they flew.

She walked out of her dressing area and headed out to the terrace where she saw Jon waiting for her. He was clad from the neck down in Valyrian steel armor. The armor shimmered and smoked in the sunlight, sometimes it was black, other times it was dark blood red. In the center of his breastplate, the sigil of their house had been engraved. Each dragon had different gemstone for its eyes and claws. One had blood red rubies, another had sky blue sapphires and the final had deep green emeralds. On his side was the Valyrian steel sword that he had named ‘Darkfyre’, safely tucked away in its sheath. She could see the newly crafted dragon pommel sticking out. Finally, she looked up to his face, he had turned his hair silver and his eyes purple and his silver hair was blowing lightly in the wind.

Dany involuntarily licked her lips as she looked at the man she loved. She felt a twinge in her loins and she wondered how quickly she could take his armor off for a quick fuck. She quickly pushed that thought from her mind and settled for a kiss, a long kiss. His lips were hot and she had to fight hard to pull herself away from him.

“Are you ready,” he asked breathlessly and she nodded. She had been waiting weeks for this moment and she was excited, and a little nervous.

They both then walked away to opposite ends of their balcony, to give the dragons as much room as they could to land. She closed her eyes and silently called for Anogar. She heard several loud claps like thunder and then she opened her eyes. Anogar was in front of her, ready and waiting, trails of smoke escaping from the corners of his mouth. He somewhat awkwardly landed half on the roof of the pyramid and settled himself, ready for her to climb on. She took a deep breath, trying to calm her nerves

‘I am the last daughter of Valyria. I am Daenerys Targaryen. Seed of Aegon the Conqueror and my words are Fire and Blood’

And then she climbed onto her dragon. His scales felt molten hot underneath her fingers but she did not fear the heat.

Climbing onto Anogar felt natural to her, like she had done it thousands of times before. She got into position and looked towards Jon, who was waiting for her. She gave a smile then she heard Anogar snort loudly and puff out smoke. Then with a loud screech he fell off the pyramid.

They fell for a few heart stopping moments before he lazily flapped his wings once and then they were flying.

The feeling was indescribable and she couldn't help but laugh with excitement. She could see out over the entire city and beyond. Anogar and Vedros took them out over the bay for a while. Going up and down and even playing with each other. She was grateful for this time as it allowed her to get
used to the motion of riding a dragon. Anogar gave a long left hand turn and she could see her reflection in the teal blue of the ocean looking back at her.

“Dracarys” she whispered and he released a large torrent of dark flame over the water.

She could faintly hear Jon’s laughter on the wind. Once, she was satisfied that she had some form of control over Anogar, she turned him North. North would take them out past Meereen. North would take them to Khal Drogo

She laughed to herself. Khal Drogo would not know what hit him.

**The Imp of Casterly Rock**

Tyrion had spent the last few weeks travelling east with their party. They spent the majority of the day on horseback, sweating in the hot Essosi sun along the old Valyrian roads. Tyrion was amazed at these roads, the freehold had been destroyed hundreds of years ago and yet there roads were still intact. They were much better than the old dirt paths that passed for roads in Westeros. After a while, Tyrion realised that they were heading towards Norvos, one of the nine free cities. It was famous for its tapestries and according to Griff, they should be arriving today.

During the weeks spent travelling he had spoken to all the members of their travelling party. There was Griff and his son. He had begun to form a profile of the man. He was definitely ex Westerosi, possibly a southerner of some sort. He had most likely headed east after the rebellion to join a sellsword company. His relationship to his son was a strange one. Judging from the boy’s age, Tyrion concluded that the boy would likely have been born after the rebellion, which meant that Griff not only got some woman pregnant, but he had actually stayed and taken the child so that he could raise him.

This was very unusual considering he was a sellsword. He had nothing to give the boy, no home, no money and the battlefield was hardly the place to raise a child. For some reason, Griff was transporting his son all the way across Essos. He turned around in his saddle to look at the rest of the party. He saw Septa Lemore and Haldon, or Halfmaester Haldon as their party called him since the man had not finished his training at the Citadel. When they weren’t riding, the boy would always seem to be speaking to either one of them. When they were riding, the boy would be talking to his friend, Duck as he called him. Duck was his favorite riding companion, and the two would often race off together, much to the annoyance of the boy’s father. Apparently, Duck had trained the boy at arms as well.

Tyrion chuckled to himself. It all came back to the boy it seemed. He was clearly the secret to whatever Varys has been planning.

He was interrupted from his thoughts because their procession had stopped. They had reached the city of Norvos. During his evenings, he had spent time reading about the free city of Norvos but what he read still had not prepared him for what he saw.

Norvos sat amongst the hills of Norvos, and on the eastern bank of the river Noyne. Surrounding the city were leagues upon leagues of limestone hills which were covered in forests. Tyrion had read that
there were oak, birch, pine and beech trees all surrounding the city. The city was below them and it seemed to be in two parts.

He saw the high city, where the nobility of Norvos lived. This city was on the highest hill in the region and it would have been visible from very far away. The city itself was ringed by mighty stone walls. Connecting the high city to the low city was a huge stone staircase, known as the sinner’s steps. The low city sat on the muddy banks of the river and this is where Griff started to lead them.

He led them down the hill and over a bridge that crossed over the muddy water of the rushing river and then into the low city. Griff stopped a passer-by and spoke. He seemed to be asking for directions. Once, he had received the directions he led them through the city quickly. Tyrion noticed the various brothels and beer halls that they passed along the riverfront.

He led them through the city until he reached the stone steps. Tyrion took a deep breath as he stared up to the top, he estimated it must have been at least 300 ft tall. Griff stopped the party and dismounted.

“Come, we have to continue the rest of the way on foot,” he said as he started the long ascent up the stairs. Tyrion groaned with frustration, stairs had never agreed with him on the best of days. He had half a mind to stay at the bottom and wait for their return but his natural curiosity got the better of him and he started the ascent to the top.

When he reached the top, he was out of breath, his legs were tired and he was desperate for a drink such was the heat. Still, he dutifully followed their group as they walked through the high city. They walked for a few minutes until they reached a big stone house. Griff walked up the steps and knocked twice on the huge wooden doors. He waited for a few moments until the doors swung open and they were allowed to enter.

Once he was inside, Tyrion was amazed by the interior of this house. The floor was tiled and painted and the walls were made out of a polished dark oak. Across many of the walls hung various tapestries. They walked through the vast house until they reached another set of doors where it seemed the meeting would be taking place. He began to enter but Griff held out his arm to bar him from entering.

“Sorry, I don’t trust you enough to be in this meeting,” he said “Wait here,” and then he closed the door behind him.

Tyrion scowled at the closed door for a few moments before turning around and heading back. He walked around the house sulking before he decided that he didn’t care what Griff said, he would listen in on this meeting. He spotted some stairs and decided to climb them. Once he reached the top, he looked around and then headed into all the rooms, hoping one of them had a balcony. He was lucky and the third door he tried opened into a bedroom that led onto a balcony. In the bedroom, there was a double bed with a large spear propped up next to it. Tyrion didn’t think much on it as he quickly crossed onto the balcony.

Once he was on the balcony, he stood on the railing and then slowly lowered himself onto the lower roof. He used one hand to balance himself as he carefully walked along the stone roof. The wind was strong at this height on the hill and several times he had to force his fingers into tiny nooks and crevices in the wall to desperately hold on.

Eventually, he made his way back around the house until he could hear the voices from the meeting. He kept low and moved on his hands on knees to try and keep as quiet as possible. He managed to get close enough so that he could hear their conversation.
“The girl and the boy are alive somewhere in Slaver's Bay last time I heard,” Griff said. “I heard they put Astapor to the torch,”

“Impressive. How did they manage that, they have no army,” he heard a strange voice say. Tyrion had not heard this accent before, but the man spoke the common tongue flawlessly.

“Dragons,” Griff replied grimly and there was a loud audible gasp. Tyrion nearly fell off the roof in shock. They must be talking about the Targaryen children, Viserys and Daenerys. If they had dragons, they immediately became a major player in the game and a true force to be reckoned with.

“So, my future husband will be a dragonrider,” he heard a sultry voice comment.

“Aren’t you a lucky girl,” the foreign voice said again. “Still, we need a plan. They are all the way in Slaver's Bay. We need them in Westeros,”

“We will sail south for Volantis. They will eventually turn back west after they have finished sacking Slaver’s Bay. Sailing is much safer than taking the demon road. If they sail, they will have to stop in Volantis for fresh water at least. So, we will wait for them there and bring them to Westeros,”

“Good, now the other plan,” the foreign voice began but he was interrupted by Griff.

“Boy, head inside. This is not for you,” he said, clearly dismissing his son. He waited for a few moments until the boy left and Tyrion edged closer. This was clearly important.

“Whilst we head for Volantis, you need to strike first and create a distraction so we can invade,” Griff said quickly.

“We have a plan, a plan that my brother and I have constructed carefully for years. We will have our revenge,” the foreign voice said and Tyrion could begin to place his accent. It was definitely southern.

“They killed my sister and her daughter. Brutally murdered them. They were only children, innocent of any crimes, yet the Lannisters gave them gruesome deaths. We will never forget that,” the voice said and Tyrion put it together. The spear, the accent. He was a Dornishman, probably a Martell. They had plenty of reason to hate his family.

“The Lannisters will know what it feels like to lose children to war. The royal children will die,”

“A bold & brutal plan,” Griff muttered. Tyrion had to hold on tightly to the roof in shock. They were plotting to kill Myrcella and Tommen. They were children, completely innocent. How could Griff do this? Who exactly was he working with?

“Necessary. Everyone in Dorne has heard the stories of what happened to my sister. The King allowed Lord Tywin to parade the bodies around like meat. He allowed the monster Clegane to go unpunished. What we are doing is getting even. Nothing more,”

“I have no love for the usurper but this is ruthless. Perhaps if I had been this ruthless I would have killed him years ago, it is my greatest regret,”

“Do not worry. Soon, we will be able to avenge those we lost in the rebellion all those years ago. Dorne will have its revenge,” the foreign voice said again. Tyrion was certain that the man could only be Oberyn Martell. Doran was too ill to travel.

“The boy is handsome. Perhaps I should be marrying him instead,” the sultry voice said again. Back to the boy again it seemed
“No,” Griff said firmly “We have already agreed on this. Dorne will fill the majority of the council and its influence in court will increase accordingly.”

“He is right Ari. This agreement has been made years ago. We keep our word,”

Arianne Martell. The pieces were starting to fit together. So, she is supposed to marry Viserys which would give the Targaryens the support of Dorne, a very valuable ally and one with plenty of reasons to hate the current regime.

But why would she now want to marry the boy? He was a sellsword’s son with no lands or titles. Perhaps, he was Illyrio’s son. That would certainly explain the resemblance in the statue and why Illyrio is so concerned about the boy.

But even then why would Arianne want to marry him? Viserys would be King and would offer her far more.

Tyrion was confused. He was beginning to put the pieces of this mystery together but he could not work out the final part.

He knew that the boy was the secret to this mystery but he couldn't quite figure out what was so special about him.

“Now that we have the business out of the way. How about we have some fun,” Oberyn said in a husky voice.

“No thank you, we have to get going. Volantis is far and we need to be ready. We nearly lost them before, we can't lose them again,” Griff said.

Tyrion quickly realised that this was his time to leave. He quickly got up and made the return journey. The boy was the key to whatever Varys had planned.

All he had to do was figure it out.

The Hand of the King

The Lord of Winterfell sat in his tent. The past few weeks had been a whirlwind of activity. That very same day he had sent the girls back North aboard the Mermaid’s daughter. It was a merchant ship to White Harbor and he had sent 20 men to escort them along this journey with instructions for more men to join them in White Harbor. Once they were in the North, they should be safe but he could not be too careful. He had received a raven from White Harbor confirming their arrival and he reckoned they should soon be back at Winterfell where they would be safe.

Whilst his girls were heading North, the rest of the capital mobilized for war. A raven had been sent to the Eyrie instructing Littlefinger to return to court peacefully. Undoubtedly, it was merely a gesture. No one expected him to be that foolish.

Renly had ridden south to Storm’s End to rally the storm lords. Ned knew from experience that the
Storm Lords had strong martial traditions, even if there numbers were fewer than other Kingdoms, they were still more than capable. Renly had managed to rally 12,000 men in just two weeks. He would have been able to rally more, but Robert had insisted that he only had two weeks before he had to return to the capital. He did not want to delay their hunt for Littlefinger.

Whilst Renly had been out riding to the Stormlands, things in King’s Landing had been just as busy. He had sent a letter to Robb telling him to rally the Northern Lords and to ride south to meet him at the Crossroads inn. The North was vast and rallying all those Lords and marching south in such a short space of time would have been a difficult feat. Robb would be lucky to rally 15,000 at such short notice. Ned estimated that this would be around a third of their total fighting strength. Still, every man counted and they would all be necessary to bring Littlefinger to justice.

The Crownlands were also able to send men to support their cause. They had been able to raise 10,000 men, mostly from the Lords of Duskendale, Rosby and Stokeworth. Stannis Baratheon had also sent 1,000 men from Dragonstone, with only around 100 mounted knights. The majority of his men stayed with the royal fleet, which had quickly moved to blockade Gulltown. Their plan was to blockade the entire bay of crabs. No ship would be allowed to enter or leave until Littlefinger was gone. Of course this meant that ships would not be able to get to Maidenpool which sat along the southern bank of the bay of crabs, but there was nothing they could do about that. By now, Stannis should have established the blockade. The bay of crabs was only around a week from Dragonstone where the majority of the royal fleet had been docked.

The remainder of their forces were composed of men from the Westerlands. Tywin Lannister had instructed his brother Kevan with rallying troops at Lannisport. Lord Tywin and Ser Jaime had left to meet up with the Lannister forces which were somewhere on the river road between Riverrun and the crossroads inn. They had left a few days past and Ned reckoned that they should return soon.

The royal forces were currently camped in the lands surrounding the Crossroads inn, just a little bit north of the trident. The journey north had been tough for Ned. A few days past, they had passed Castle Darry and this is where that nasty business concerning Arya, Joffrey and the butcher’s boy had occurred. The thought still left a bitter taste in his mouth. He had also killed Sansa’s direwolf Lady, that same day and truthfully, he had wondered if the gods would ever forgive him for that act.

Worse still, a few days prior to that they had passed just to the east of Harrenhal. Even from the distant Kingsroad the ruined castle still loomed tall in the skyline. They had spent the night in the cursed castle and Ned could not shake the nightmares and bad memories associated with the place. He remembered the day of the tourney as if was just yesterday. He remembered when Rhaegar placed those blue winter roses in Lyanna’s lap.

_Damn you Rhaegar_ he thought to himself. He already had a wife, why did he need his sister? He was the Crown Prince, he should have known better. He should have done better. Ned remembered all that he could about the man who was Rhaegar Targaryen. He had only seen him at the tourney other than that, all he knew about him was from stories.

From the stories that he had heard, Rhaegar had seemed like a quiet good natured man and what he had seen at the tourney had matched those stories. Nothing about him or his demeanor would have suggested that he would just run off and abandon his duties to his wife and to his realm. Perhaps, he had just been blinded by love.

A love for his sister that he had shared. A love that had torn the realm apart and left thousands dead and caused a three hundred year old dynasty to crumble into nothing but dust. A love that had borne fruit, Jon. The same Jon that had he had taken in when he was just a babe. The little boy that he had raised as if he was his own. He had watched that little boy grow alongside Robb. He had grown
from a boy into a man right before his eyes. A strong young man who protected the weak and looked out for those who could not defend themselves. A young man that Lyanna would have been proud off.

A young man that he had sent to die.

No, he reminded himself firmly. It was not his fault. It was the Targaryen’s who had caused Jon’s death. They had been going to Astapor to purchase Unsullied, soldiers for an army that they must have been planning to use to invade. Their invasion would be violent and bloody, and more suffering and destruction would come to the realm.

No, it was not his fault.

The Targaryens may have been great once, but they had grown rotten in their last few years. They were a disease, a disease the world was thankfully rid of. He only wished that Jon had not perished along with them. He did not deserve that. He deserved to grow old in the North, he would have been Robb’s bannerman, leading forces and holding a keep for him. Instead he had died out at sea, his body never to be found.

He gave a sigh in frustration and stood up in his tent. He decided to head outside and to get some fresh air. As Hand of the King, his tent was one of the bigger ones in the camp. The King himself had decided to take up a room inside the inn itself. Ned didn’t mind this, after being in the capital for so long, being back in the outdoors reminded him of home.

He sent for his horse and then he rode through the lines upon lines of neatly organized tents until he reached the edge of the camp. Smoke from fires billowed into the grey afternoon sky. He turned his head towards the North, where Robb should be bringing the Northern host from in just any day. A few of his out riders had been spotted a few leagues from here and Ned knew it would only be a matter of time before he was reunited with his son again. This brought a small smile to his face. He had missed his eldest child and he had wondered how he would be handling ruling in his absence.

He also needed to speak with him, he had been putting off the idea of arranging a betrothal for a long time but the reality of war reminded him that he needed to make this issue a priority. Robb was heir to the North, and an heir needed a wife and heirs of his own. He thought back to the list of matches in his mind. He was still leaning towards a match with one of his vassals, joining his house with either the Karstarks or the Manderleys. On the ride North, he had been entertaining the possibility of a match with Margaery Tyrell, but he did not see many benefits of that union. The reach would be a powerful ally, they had a large population and plenty of food to spare for harsh winters, but the distance was a major concern. It would take weeks, if not months to travel between the two regions which would make sending aid very difficult.

As if on cue, he saw a pair of banners approaching over the northern horizon. His chest swelled with pride as he saw his sigil blowing proudly in the wind. He sat up straighter in his saddle as he waited for his son to approach. To Robb’s side was his direwolf. The animal was huge, almost as big as Robb’s horse. Ned felt a pang of guilt hit him as he remembered Sansa and her wolf.

As Robb got closer, he could begin to pick out features on his face. He had allowed his hair to grow longer and he had even started to grow a beard. His boy was well and truly a man he realised.

“Robb, my son. You look well,” he greeted with a warm smile.
“As do you father. How is the capital? We heard about what happened to the girls. They have arrived safely back in Winterfell. Mother sent a raven to the twins and then a rider rode out to meet us to deliver the message,”

Ned felt a rush of relief pass through him at this. His girls were safe.

“The capital is fine, but I have missed the North, truly. I long to go back,” he replied truthfully
“How many men did you bring?”

“15,000 I could have waited for more but you stressed that this was urgent and there was no time to waste. We had a long march and this was the best I could do,” he said with an apologetic smile.

“Do not worry about it, 15,000 is plenty enough,” he replied “How did your mother take the news?”

In his raven he had also briefly mentioned that Baelish had a secret affair with Lysa and that Robin was likely a bastard.

“She was shocked. She had always maintained that the games they had been played when they were younger had been innocent. She had been completely unaware that there were deeper feelings between them,” he said after a pause. Ned nodded quickly, there was one more thing he had to tell him.

“Robb, I have some news to tell you. News about Jon,”

They were interrupted from their conversation by the sound of a loud trumpet blowing, but it did not come from the north, it came from the west. Lord Tywin must have returned, he thought grimly.

He was quickly proven right as he saw the banners of House Lannister blowing in the wind as they approached from the west. Someone must have sent for the King and the Prince because they quickly arrived next to Ned with their own royal banners fluttering proudly in the wind. Ned was a little surprised that the King had brought his son. The boy was not young, but he had been sure that his mother would have protested this decision. Still, the boy was here now and perhaps a few months away from his mother would cause him to mature into a decent young man.

Lord Tywin was now nearly upon them and he had ordered his Lion banners to be dipped out of his respect to his King. He sat astride a massive midnight black warhorse, his red and golden armor was glistening in the sunlight. To his left rode his eldest, Ser Jaime, who was wearing the pristine white armor of the Kingsguard. Ser Jaime had broken his vows and killed his King, he did not deserve to wear a white cloak.

“Your grace,” he greeted Robert,

“Lord Tywin. Tell me, how many have you brought?” Robert asked immediately,

“20,000 men,” he said with a small proud smile. Ned was stunned at how he had managed to raise such a large host so quickly. “Nearly half of those are mounted knights,” he added smugly.

The King nodded in acceptance and Lord Tywin turned towards Ned

“How many men did your son rally?” he asked

“15,000” Robb replied confidently.

“Only 15,000? How many are mounted? I assume less than a third?” he asked with a sneer and he saw Robb grip his reigns tightly.
“Mounted knights may not be so helpful here Lord Tywin,” Ned said quickly. “We are attacking the Vale and the Eyrie. There will not be a lot of room for your mounted forces to maneuver,”

“Ned is right,” Robert quickly added. “The high road travels through the Mountain of the Moon, you need to be sure footed going up there. There will hardly be space for a cavalry charge,”

Ned smiled when he saw Tywin purse his lips tightly.

“Did the River Lords give you any trouble during your march?” Robert asked after a pause.

“No, Kevan reported no trouble. They were not helpful, but they provided no resistance,”

The King nodded and fell silent. Ned could tell he was controlling his temper at this moment. They had told Hoster Tully of their intentions. They had not expected him to join them, but at the very least they had expected some sort of response.

Ned knew that they had likely made an enemy of Hoster Tully. The reputation of his family was one of the most important things to him and they had embarrassed not only his daughter, but their house in front of the entire realm. Ned remembered the way that Hoster had insisted that Jon marry Lysa to secure his support for the rebellion. Hoster was an ambitious man, and he would not let this slight pass.

“Perhaps, we should pay him a visit when we return,” Ned said after a few moments. Robert only grunted, perhaps in agreement. Ned took a good look at the King then. He had lost a bit of weight since leaving the capital. Perhaps his rage had fuelled him to get back into shape.

They heard the sound of hooves and everyone turned to see a rider approaching.

“I have an urgent message for the King. A raven was sent from King's Landing to the rookery at Castle Darry,” he said as he approached. Ned took a good look at the man, he was a man grown and he was old enough to be fighting.

He got off his horse and then passed the sealed scroll to the King who roughly snatched the piece of paper out of his hand. He quickly broke the seal and then began to read.

As he read, Ned could see his face grow red and a vein started to bulge in his forehead, as he read he grey angrier and angrier. When he finished reading, he angrily crumpled the paper and looked to throw it away. However at the last second, he turned towards Ned and angrily thrust it into his hands

“Read,” was all he said. As Ned read, he grew angrier and angrier.

“Are we allowed to know what it says?” Lord Tywin asked in his dull voice. Ned looked at the King who gave him a quick brief nod of his head.

“It says the Targaryen children are still alive and that they are currently in a place called Slavery’s Bay. It says they have brutally sacked the city of Astapor. Murdering the entire ruling class and then burning the entire city down to its foundation stones,”

“They sacked and burned an entire city? With what army?” Tywin asked. Ned swallowed nervously before continuing,

“The raven said nothing about an army, they said they did it with dragons,”

The silence that followed was thick and heavy in the air, weighing heavily on each man. Ned looked at each man in turn and they all had varying looks of shock and disbelief on his face. Jaime
Lannister was running his fingers through his hair nervously. Robb was gripping the reins of his horse tightly. Ser Barristan was looking pale. No one it seemed, knew what to say. Surprisingly, it was Joffrey who spoke up first.

“Dr-dr-dragons?” he said with a nervous tremble in his voice and Ned nodded, not trusting his voice as he fought to control his anger. Then, the silence continued until he spoke again

“What are we all standing here for? Don’t you think we should do something?” he asked nervously as panic started to creep into his voice.

“We are doing something,” Robert replied, barely able to keep the anger out of his voice. Ned was unsure of what he was the most angry about. The fact that the Targaryens were alive, or the fact that they had apparently acquired dragons.

“We’re chasing some worthless man into an impenetrable fortress. It’s a fool’s errand, mother said so. We should go home and organize our defenses against the dragons,” Joffrey replied quickly.

“Enough of your blasted mother! Your mother knows nothing about war. Nothing!” Robert bellowed, finally snapping. “You are the Crown Prince, not some maiden who needs to hide behind his mother’s skirts. Start thinking on your own instead of letting some woman think for you!” Ned stole a glance at Tywin who looked angrier at this outburst than the news of the dragons.

“Still your grace, my nephew has a point. The dragons are a concern,” Jaime Lannister quickly pointed out.

“Thank you Uncle Jaime,” Joffrey said as he offered him a weak smile.

“The dragons are thousands of miles away in this Slaver’s Bay, it will take months for them to reach us,” Robert said loudly and angrily. Ned was not surprised by this. He had Littlefinger in his sights and he was not about to let him go. This was personal to him.

“Dragons have not won a war in over a hundred years. Armies win them all the time. It will be years until the dragons grow until they reached a size where they would be considered a threat,” Tywin pointed out. His voice hard and determined. Ned felt slightly reassured at these words. “That is if, of course, if they are real. Which I very much doubt,”

“But still,” Joffrey whined before he was interrupted by his father,

“Enough boy. The dragons are not real. This information is wrong. Right now we have around 60,000 men. That is easily double whatever Baelish has in the Vale. We will kill that bastard. Do not worry about the dragons because they are not real!” he shouted. “Go get your men in order, we start our march at first light. I want any stragglers whipped. Baelish will not escape,”

With that dismal, Ned quickly rode away back to his tent. He sent out his steward to ready the men and only then did he let his anger consume him.

Not only had the Targaryens survived but Jon had died. He had likely died protecting these monsters as they went about collecting their army to bring more pain and suffering to the realm. Damn them. Damn to hell.

He lay down on his bed and ran his hands through his hair. These dragons were not real. Dragons had not been seen for over a hundred years, they were gone. Dead like the Targaryens.
And If they were real?

Ned thought long and hard on this. He remembered the stories he heard about what happened to his father and his brother. The mad king had burned his father alive in his armor whilst Brandon had strangled himself to death trying to save him.

He remembered Lyanna’s face, and then Jon’s face. Lyanna had died because of her love for Rhaegar. Her death was on his hands, if he had done his duty, she still would have been here. He still would have had a sister. Jon had gone to Essos where he had met them, he was sure of that. Then somewhere in Essos, Jon had died whilst the Targaryens had survived. He had died for their cause. His death was on their hands.

All the pain and suffering that had been caused by that family in recent memory played through his mind. Ned felt his resolve strengthen. He would not allow the Targaryens to return to Westeros to harm any more of his family.

He would kill them all himself if he had to.

The Dragon Reborn

Jon loved flying. He quickly realised that. He felt like a true Valyrian dragonlord, flying high above the land, high above the people, like a true King. They had been flying for the majority of the day and they seemed to be making good progress. They were now in the Dothraki sea, and the grasslands extended for miles.

He realised that tracking Drogo in these lands could take weeks. Vedros gave a loud screech as they flew, as if she was reassuring him that she would find him. The decision to strike first had produced the side benefit of them gaining more time & experience flying with their dragons. He noted that the longer he spent flying on Vedros, the stronger his bond with her got. It was almost like warging into Ghost.

Almost. Whilst when he slipped into Ghost it felt like slipping into a second skin. His connection with Vedros was different. It was almost like a battle. Daenerys had told him that a dragon was not a slave and he quickly realised the truth behind that statement. He could only ask her things, if she listened remained to be seen. Anogar gave a loud roar and then he dove straight down through the clouds and Vedros gave an answering screech and followed her brother.

She flew straight down, almost in a nosedive, her wings tucked in to speed up their descent. Jon could see the ground rushing up to approach them, he could almost see the jagged rocks along the ground. Then with a lazy flap of her wings, she quickly stopped their descent and flew low over the ground. He turned to find Daenerys and saw that she was laughing happily, she must have said some words of encouragement because Anogar gave a loud roar which echoed across the land.

Then, they flew lazily towards a rocky outcrop on top of a small hill. Anogar landed first and Vedros followed him, landing gracefully. He looked up and saw Caraxes flying low above, as if he was waiting for further instructions. Vedros gave an impatient huff and Jon realised that she wanted him
to get off. He carefully climbed off and as soon as his feet hit the ground she was off again with a loud clap of her wings. He turned towards Dany and saw that she was doing the same. Once she was on the ground, Anogar too took off and seemingly led them away.

“Where do you think they’re going?” he asked

“Probably to hunt, we have been flying for a while. They’ll be back when they’re ready,” she replied quickly “How did you find it?”

“Exhilarating, refreshing. We’re going to have to go flying everyday because I can’t get enough of this feeling,” he gushed

“I agree, it’s quite the feeling. How was your connection with Vedros? Anogar seems to understand that we are looking for someone and that we need to go roughly in this direction to find him,”

“Aye, it’s the same with Vedros. I can talk to her in my mind. I tried telling her left and right but she either didn’t hear me, or she didn’t listen. Dragons are smart, perhaps she just knew better,”

“Oh, did you try speaking in Valyrian?”

“Yes,”

“Oh, must be your northern accent. You should practice more,” she said with a cheeky smile. He laughed at her joke before pulling her in for a quick kiss.

“Come, let’s eat,” he said and he led her over to the edge of the outcrop. He reached into the pack that he had brought with him and started to divide up the food. He took his dagger and cut the bread into several smaller pieces. Then he started on the meat, they had brought some cooked boar with them. He cut it into several smaller pieces and then placed it on the bread. Then he pulled out two skins of water for them.

“It’s not much but I think it’ll do for tonight,” he said once he was finished. She smiled warmly at him

“It’s perfect Jon, thank you,” They ate on top of the pile of rocks, looking out over the grasslands that made up the Dothraki sea. The sun was setting and it bathed the land in a beautiful, soft orange glow.

“This is beautiful,” she said quietly. They were leaned up against a rock and she was resting her head on his shoulder.

“Aye it is,” as the sun set, it started to grow colder and suddenly he wished he had brought a tent with them. The night would be very cold. A freezing wind cut across them and he felt her shiver.

“Come, let’s head down lower, perhaps the wind will not be as cold down there,” he said quickly. He used the fading light of the sunset to guide them down. He quickly looked around for a cave to shield them from the wind but he found nothing. This frustrated him and he was about to suggest heading back to the rocks on the hilltop. He would have to use his strength to move some of the rocks around to form sort of shield from the wind. It wouldn’t be much, but it was better than nothing.

He heard a loud screech and he looked up to see that the dragons had returned from their hunt. The flapping of their wings was deafening. Anogar and Vedros were difficult to see in the fading light. Caraxes was the easiest to see, the weak light still made his cream and gold scales visible.
They landed around them and he nearly fell over due to their combined weight hitting the ground at the same time. He watched as they circled them in a protective ring.

“They’re protecting us from the wind,” she said to him quickly. He was amazed, he knew that dragons were very smart, but it was still surreal seeing them in action. They gradually moved closer, tightening the ring until they could no longer feel the wind around them. He also realised that their scales and internal heat would protect them from the cold.

“Come on Dany, their heat will keep us warm during the night,” and then they walked towards Caraxes. The cream and gold dragon watched them carefully as they approached. They gently stroked his scales. They were hard, but not as rock hard as Anogar and Vedros. They would not be comfortable, but they would survive the night. She helped strip him off his armour and then they took their seats on the grass, leaning up against Caraxes side. As expected, he was warm and they would not freeze that night.

“He needs a rider,” she said quietly and he gave a sound of agreement. “We can only control our mounts. We have to hope that Caraxes will follow us.”

“Our child will be a dragonrider,” he said confidently.

“Perhaps, but not all Targaryens were able to ride dragons. It’s a special relationship, we can’t say for certain,” she said sadly. He ran his hands over her belly, feeling the small bump

“Our child will have parents that are dragon riders and wargs, if any child can ride a dragon, it will be ours,” he said after a moment. She didn’t reply. Instead she just turned her body to face him slightly. She gave him a quick kiss before settling down against him to sleep. He listened to her breathing gradually slow and before long, he could hear her snore softly. It took him a bit longer to fall asleep, as it usually did. He saw Vedros lazily open one of her eyes. Her eyes were copper bronze and shone brightly with heat. He looked into her eyes and felt reassured. No one would trouble them tonight. He let out a relaxed sigh and then closed his eyes, waiting for sleep to take him.

When he woke the next morning, he still felt Daenerys pressed up against him. The sun was up and high in the sky and judging by its position he could tell that they had slept longer than usual. He gently shook Daenerys awake and she woke quickly. They stood up and stretched before setting out their breakfast. It was more of the same but they wolfed it down quickly, both eager to begin the day. Whilst they ate, the dragons got up and started to stretch.

He watched Vedros. Her scales were green and they gleamed like jade in the sunlight. Her claws and teeth were midnight black. She gave a small huff and showed him her teeth. Row upon row of razor sharp black teeth lined her mouth, he could see some blackened and broken bones in between some of her teeth. She gave a low growl and then he could see some of her molten green flame building deep down her throat.

“Good morning girl,” he said softly as he approached her. “Will we find Drogo today?” and she gave a loud snort, as if catching Drogo was nothing more than child’s play.

With Dany’s help, he donned his armor and then they were ready to go again. She dipped her wing and allowed him to climb onto her back. Once he was seated, he looked to Dany and gave her a quick thumbs up and then they were off.
Whilst Anogar preferred to take long slow gentle spirals to gain height. Vedros took quicker tighter spirals. Quickly flapping her wings as she rushed to gain height. Higher and higher they climbed until they were just beneath the clouds. She waited for Anogar to catch up and then they took off, flying in a northeasterly direction. He ducked his head to shield his face from the wind and settled in for the flight.

They flew for hours, passing over mostly grassland. Occasionally, he could see a small village or two, but they were far too high for him to see if they were occupied. They approached a valley when suddenly they made a sharp left hand turn. He held on tight and looked over his left edge and then he saw what Vedros wanted him to see.

A group of Dothraki outriders, they were scouts sent ahead of the main host to alert them of any danger.

Anogar also spotted the outriders but he continued his downward descent, tucking his wings in to gain speed. The horses of the riders seemed to sense his presence because they got startled and started to gallop away but they were not quick enough. Jon watched as the black dragon released a quick blast of flame, effortlessly removing the outriders from this world. Jon understood why she did this, now the scouts would not be able to return to the main host and warn them of their presence. He also realised that this meant that they were close to the main host.

His thoughts were confirmed because this time, the dragons took them higher and this time through the clouds. Jon closed his eyes as they passed through and then opened them when they reached the other side.

He was amazed at what he saw. From this side, the clouds looked like a soft, fluffy carpet. Soft enough to sleep on. He turned towards Dany and saw that she was adjusting in her seat, clearing getting comfortable and ready for battle. He quickly did the same. His sword was safely in place at his side. The wind had quietened down and all he could hear was the rhythmic thumping of the Dragons wings. He looked towards Daenerys and gave her a quick thumbs up which she returned. He felt his heartbeat quicken in preparation for battle. He took a deep calming breath and then Vedros dove again.

The wind whipped and bit at his face and he could hear it whistling loudly in his ears. He squinted his eyes but kept them open slightly. He needed to be ready to locate the enemy.

Suddenly, they burst through the clouds and he could see the main Dothraki host below them, trapped in between the steep walls of the valley. All three dragons gave out their loudest roars, announcing their presence.

Jon could see their frenzied panic as some raised their hands to point at them. Some scrambled for their bows whilst others went for their horses. A group of around ten or so were directly below him. As he got closer he could see the look of horror on their copper tanned faces.

“Dracarys!”

And then they were engulfed in Vedros’s beautiful yellow green flame. The heat from the flame was
so intense that he quickly had to duck his head behind her body in order to shield himself from it. Their screams ended quickly as they burned and then Vedros quickly flew upwards again, gaining height for another attack. He turned and saw Caraxes complete a similar pass, engulfing his victims in a brilliant golden flame.

He looked towards Daenerys and Anogar, who had flown further down the valley. He watched as Anogar released a torrent of flame so dark red that he could have sworn it was black in color. He quickly realised what she was doing. She was sealing the valley off, so that no one could escape. They wanted to take as many of the Dothraki as possible.

Vedros reached the top of her ascent and then she quickly dove again, aiming for a group of archers. Jon had heard stories about the Dothraki archers and he knew their accuracy was great, even on horseback. She was smart to head for this danger. He heard the whistle of arrows as some flew harmlessly past them. Through their connection, Jon could feel others bounce of the underside of her hardened and scaled belly. The archers threw their now useless bows to the ground and started to run, they didn’t get far before her flame caught up with them.

As they flew up she gave a loud screech of happiness and he could tell that she was reveling in the chaos that they were causing. Jon could tell that she wanted to do nothing more than dive back in for another pass at the horse lords but he had to fight hard to reign her in. He needed to find the Khal. They had come here to kill the Khal and to take his horde, after all they needed the numbers of the host to add to their own forces & burning most of them would be detrimental to that goal.

He used their mental bond and she reluctantly kept at a level height, safe out of the range of the arrows. He watched as Anogar and Daenerys performed a tight spiralling dive that ended up with them roasting a small group of mounted archers. Caraxes was using his golden flame to seal the other end of the valley. He watched as large plumes of smoke trailed up into the blue sky as the grasslands were set ablaze.

They flew above the battle for a few moments like hunters stalking their prey. Jon could feel her give a low rumble of happiness. He craned his neck from left to right, trying to peer over her body and through the smoke to find the Khal. Vedros banked gently to the right and Jon looked in that direction.

Then, he found the man he was looking for, the Khal was sat astride a huge black stallion overlooking the carnage below him. He seemed to be unfazed by it as he was barking out instructions to his men, whipping them into shape. His braid was blowing in the wind. Jon was amazed by its length, he must have never cut his hair.

Vedros gave a loud deafening roar of anger, answered by those of her siblings and then she took off towards the Khal. She flew low along the ground gave another ear splitting screech. Several of the Khal’s bloodriders were fighting hard to control their horses, they were holding the line in face of the dragon. Brave, but foolish.

Vedros suddenly changed direction and Jon had to hold on tightly. The khal had organised a group of mounted archers who were charging towards their right hand side. Vedros turned towards them and emitted another loud intimidating roar. Several riders fell off their horses who had pulled up fearfully after hearing the dragon’s roar. Some men rose to their feet and ran, others drew for their bows and desperately tried to release their arrows. The horses were now scattering, fearful of the magical beast that was about to be upon them.

Vedros released her beautiful flame once again and the remaining archers were quickly burned to dust, the smell of burning flesh and grass wafted up into his nose. Jon then told her to turn back
towards the Khal, he was determined to end this battle before this entire field was burned. He spotted the Khal riding, yelling more instructions loudly. His blood riders were still forming a protective ring around him, several were yelling and pointing towards him, completely focused on him and Vedros.

Suddenly, Anogar was upon them from above. Releasing a torrent of his dark flame, Jon watched as this surprise attack scattered the Khal from his bloodriders and Jon knew it was his time to strike. Vedros took off with a hurry, flapping her wings quickly to close the distance towards the Khal. She landed close to him, in between him and half of his bloodriders. She turned to her right and released a torrent of flame, deterring anyone from approaching. Jon slid off her left side, drawing Darkfyre from his scabbard.

The metal had a dark red, smokey gleam to it. He had spent many evenings polishing it with oil to give it this glow. It was double edged and razor sharp. He tightened his hands around the handle of the sword. It was a bastard sword, slightly longer than a normal long sword and able to be wielded with two hands as well as one. The dragonbone handle was strong and sturdy and he flexed his fingers happily.

He looked around for the Khal, he saw him slightly ahead of him on a small incline. Jon began to charge towards him. Out of the corner of his eye he saw a dothraki warrior approach him, his braid jingling lightly in the wind. He must have abandoned his horse, which would have wisely fled from the dragon.

Jon turned towards him and then quickly brought his sword up to meet his steel arakh. Jon was much, much stronger than this man and the force Jon’s parry caused the man’s blade to fly out of his hand. The dothraki man looked at him in shock as Jon continued his movement, bringing the sword down and slamming it into the shoulder.

The Valyrian steel quickly cut through his clothes and the soft muscle of his shoulder. Jon continued to drive his sword down until he felt it connect with the bone. The man gave a loud scream of pain. Jon roughly yanked his sword out of the man and then watched as he crumpled to the floor. Blood pouring out his ruined shoulder. Jon looked at the mangled and ruined bone and left him there, he was no longer a threat.

He continued his ascent towards the Khal and saw his next two opponents quickly approach. They were at least half a foot taller than him and one was wielding two arakhs. They had the advantage of size and reach, but they were not prepared for his speed.

He quickly stepped between them, using his superior footwork and speed to dodge their strikes. He didn’t throw a strike, instead he was defensive, waiting for them to make a mistake.

He did not have to wait long as the shorter man threw a wild undisciplined strike towards his head which Jon easily ducked. As he ducked, he moved under his arms and behind the man who was now off balance. Jon pushed the man and he fell forward into the soft mud, getting himself tangled in the feet of his larger friend.

The larger man quickly looked down to shout at his friend for getting in his way. His shouts quickly turned into a blood curdling scream as Jon drove his sword up into his stomach. He continued to drive it upwards, connecting with all his organs and then he yanked the sword out, causing all his organs and entrails to spill out of him and onto his friend on the floor. Jon could feel his warm wet slippery blood coating his fingers.

The man sunk to his knees, desperately trying to hold his organs in but his hands could not stop the blood flowing uncontrollably out of his stomach. The man on the floor quickly rolled out of the pooling blood and tried to move to his feet. Jon didn’t give him the chance because he drove his
sword into the ligaments and bone in the back of his knee before withdrawing it and driving it through his back and out through his chest.

Jon withdrew his sword with a grunt and then walked up the hill towards the Khal. His sword was dripping with blood and he held it firmly in his right hand, his fingers flexing around the handle. He heard men approach him but they were quickly destroyed by Vedros. He watched as she knocked three away with a quick flick of her tail before trapping the last between her jaws. The man screamed as he was impaled upon the rows of her razor sharp teeth. Vedros spat his blackened and ruined bones out of her mouth with a disgusted snort. Jon smiled to himself, his dragon was working with him instinctively, as they practiced and learned more about each other, they would become a formidable partnership.

He looked up at the Khal. The Khal stood tall. He was easily a head taller than Jon and his arms were thicker than Jon’s thighs, his skin was copper and shined with sweat. Jon could see faint scars along his arm and across his painted chest. His braid went all the way down his back and it had several small silver bells in it.

“Andal,” he said in a low deep voice.

“Drogo,” Jon replied and the man gave another grunt. He slow drew his blade and got into a fighting stance. Jon did the same and once his feet were set, Drogo moved with a speed impossible for a man of his size. Jon immediately conceded ground and moved onto his back foot. Parrying and blocking and quickly trying to work out how to defeat this man. The sound of steel on steel quickly filled the air and Jon could feel the blood rushing to his ears.

Jon saw an opening and quickly moved to take it. However at the last moment, he realised that it was a feint designed to bait him. Jon moved and raised his left arm to block the strike with an impossible speed. The sound of steel on Valyrian steel rang loudly across the battlefield. The force of the attack ran up his arm and then out around his body. He felt his feet slipping in the mud but he held firm. He thanked the gods for Euron’s armour, had this been regular steel, Drogo would have sliced right through his arm.

The Khal however was stunned. His eyes flicked between his arakh and Jon several times before he roughly withdrew his blade. He took a few steps backwards and Jon could see the fear and bewilderment in his brown eyes. Jon smiled to himself. The Khal had hit him with his best strike and he had blocked it.

Now, it was Jon’s turn to go onto the front foot. He started to move forwards, throwing strike after strike. Some meant to distract, others meant to kill. He was trying to tire the Khal, who he knew would not be able to keep up with his speed and strength.

He was quickly proven right and he saw Drogo’s guard beginning to get lower and weaker. Before, the Khal would parry each of Jon’s strikes with ferocity but now he was only deflecting. He could tell Drogo’s arms were tired from blocking his powerful attacks and his blade was chipped and weak. More and more of his strikes were getting through and he could see blood starting to pour from the cuts in his chest.

He grunted loudly and threw one last desperate strike which Jon blocked emphatically. His block was so powerful that he broke the arakh in two pieces which landed in the grass with a soft, pathetic thud. Now empty handed, the Khal looked at him, for a moment he looked defeated, but then that look was replaced with fury and anger.
With his last reserves of strength, the Khal charged at Jon like a bull. Jon was not having this and he quickly stepped backwards and sideways, out of his reach. As the Khal stumbled past Jon left his sword dangling in place, he then pulled it upwards. Cutting him along his side and up to below his armpit. Drogo fell to his knees and moved his hands to the wound.

Jon had enough. He rose his sword to strike the killing blow but then he remembered something Lord Stark had told him years ago. *If you are going to kill a man, look him in the eye and hear his last words.*

So, he walked in front of Drogo and used the tip of his sword to tilt his chin upwards. His blade was so sharp that even this light touch caused a fresh stream of blood to start flowing. He stared into his dark brown eyes. He was breathing heavily as his life slipped away from him and onto his muddy fingers. His eyes began to close but Jon could see his lips moving, muttering his last words. His body was streaked with blood and mud and his breeches were torn.

He was finished. Jon removed his sword which caused his head to drop. He stared at the man that used to be called the ‘Khal of Khals’ and then he cut his head clean off in one swing. He fell to the floor with a loud thud. Vedros gave off a loud roar that was returned by the other dragons. He picked up Drogo’s head by the back of his braid and then held it aloft. Vedros moved up next to him and he quickly climbed onto her back, holding Drogo’s head high for all to see. He felt Anogar and Daenerys land next to him.

He looked out onto the carnage that had ravaged the valley. Long plumes of smoke trailed up into the sky. He could see horses scattered and running wildly from the Dragonflame and the grasslands were burning wildly. From their vantage point they could see the rest of the Dothraki horde. Vedros gave a loud roar and everyone turned towards the source of the noise. As he held Drogo’s head higher, he could see the understanding dawn on their faces.

Their Khal had been defeated and now they had a new Khal. Several of the men laid down their weapons and then he heard Daenerys scream in Dothraki to the people. He heard her say Aegon and Daenerys a few times but the rest was mostly nonsense to him.

It seemed she got the message across because one by one, the remaining Dothraki bowed before them. Jon looked towards Daenerys and she gave him a nod. He slowly got off Vedros and she got off Anogar.

“You did it. You killed Drogo” she said as she crossed over to him. Jon was still too fueled by adrenaline to answer. Instead, he pulled her in for a deep kiss. Her lips were burning hot as he greedily kissed her.

“We did it,” he said after he broke apart. He looked out over their new Khalasaar. They would have to lead them back to Meereen which would take a few weeks. He did not fear that the Dothraki would disobey him, they had all witnessed the powers of the dragons here today. No one would dare risk a fight against the dragons again he was sure of that.

Still, he wanted to travel with them, he needed them to see that they weren’t just bloodless
conquerors. Daenerys shouted a few more words and then he watched as a group of men walked up to them. His sword was still dripping with Drogo’s blood and he was ready to fight in case these men tried anything.

Instead, they stopped several feet in front of her. She spoke to them for a moment before she looked towards him and motioned for him to come over to her. When he arrived, she spoke to the men again and this time they dropped to their knees and placed their arakhs on the ground in front of them.

“Jon, these three will be our blood riders. Repeat these words after me to ask for their oaths. They are bound to obey us, and they will ensure that our commands are carried out throughout the horde,”

He nodded and then listened to the words. He repeated them, taking care to get the pronunciation right. When he was finished, they all rose to their feet. Daenerys gave them yet more instructions before they bowed and headed back towards the rest of the horde.

“What did you tell them?” he asked when they were gone.

“I told them our names and that we were their new Khal and Khaleesi. I told them that they are to head south to Meereen. They are not allowed to loot or to rape. Any man that does so will be burned alive,”

“Good,” and he smiled warmly at her. “I saw you flying, you looked great, like you had been doing it for years. Sealing one end of the valley to stop them from escaping was a great idea,”

“Thank you,” she said with a smile. “Jon we need to get back on our dragons. We are their Khal and Khaleesi, they need to see us riding. It shows our strength,”

He nodded and then climbed back onto Vedros. They took off again and flew low over the Dothraki. They had started to ride towards Meereen, taking whatever belongings they could find that had not been burned.

Anogar gave out a loud roar which was returned by Vedros and Caraxes. They were reminding the Dothraki of their dominance and of their power.

Today, the Dothraki had learned that the dragons ruled and soon, so will the rest of the world.

Chapter End Notes

Thanks to GOT88 for the help provided with this story.

If you liked this Dragon battle, HouseBlackfyre does an excellent job in his fic http://archiveofourown.org/works/12819756/chapters/29266953

Special chapter right here, I don't usually give you 4 POV's but here you go. I think this is the longest chapter I'll give you guys. In the future, if I write a chapter any longer than this (which is looking likely) would you prefer if I split it? Into two 8-9k parts?
Sometimes I won't be able to, but I'm curious about what format you'd prefer

Chapter 13 will be out either Friday/Saturday/Sunday. My writing pace has slowed down a bit, turns out writing this many words every 3 days is not sustainable. So I'll only upload 13 when I have 15 finished and 16 started, I'm trying to stay 3 chapters ahead.

13 - The Dragon Prince
14- The Dragon's Mercy

As always, let me know what you think about this chapter. Comments are always appreciated. Thanks for reading

Sleepy
The Silver Prince

Chapter Summary

Jon and Dany learn about an enemy to the west

Tyrion continues his journey

Ned learns more about the Vale

Chapter Notes

A lot of you said that you preferred longer chapters instead of two shorter ones, so that's what I'll do.

Rhaegar will show up eventually...don't worry

Thank you all for the love and kind comments shown on the last chapter. I really did not expect it to be as liked as much as it was...I got like double the comments these chapters usually do so thank you again.

I appreciate each and everyone of you who reads and takes time to comment on this story...thank you

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The Imp of Casterly Rock

After they had left the house in Norvos, they had gotten on a boat that they had hired to take them down the Noyne river. The Noyne river would then join up with the Rhoyne river which would take them south, all the way to Volantis. A galley from Norvos escorted them until they reached the Rhoyne, but after that, it was just them alone on their little boat.

Their boat, was an ugly old ramshackled single mast pole boat with a single sail called the shy maid. It was a small boat that had been painted a disgusting mix of brown and grey. According to the ship’s captain, a man named Yandry, this ship was perfect for sailing through the narrow waters of the river’s vassal streams.

Worse still, he didn’t even have a cabin on the ship. The ship only had four cabins. Haldon had taken the largest to store all his books, scrolls, herbs and potions. Septa Lemore took another one. Griff and his son slept together in the third cabin while Yandry and his wife Ysilla took up the final cabin. He believed that Duck slept somewhere else on the ship, possibly in the belly. He offered to share with Septa Lemore, but for some reason no one thought that would be a good idea. This meant that Tyrion had to make do with whatever spare space he could find. He slept on the roof of a cabin, using an old piece of frayed rope as a pillow. Tyrion didn’t mind, the nights were pleasantly warm
and once he got over the constant buzzing of the insects that lived along the river, he was usually able to sleep peacefully.

A few days prior, they had passed the abandoned and ruined city of Ny Sar. It was where the Noyne met up with the Royne, it was the confluence of the two rivers. Tyrion had read about this place in a book by Maester Yandel. Princess Nymeria was afraid of the expanding Valyrian freehold. She was afraid that the dragonlords would come for her and her people and enslave them just like they had done to the people further up the river. She allegedly filled all her people in 10,000 ships and fled south, down the Rhoyne and into the summer sea. The princess would then eventually land in Dorne, she would marry into House Martell and the rest is history.

The city itself was a ruin. Most of the old buildings had long since been destroyed by the elements and this was the case for the palace itself. From the ruins, Tyrion surmised that the palace itself would have been huge, perhaps bigger than the Red Keep. Now, all that was left were crumbling green and pink marble walls. The collapsed domes and spires loomed tall and high in the skyline. The old elevated stone walkways that connected parts of the city had largely collapsed into the river. He managed to get a closer look at some of the rocks. He could see that some were blackened and still carried soot from dragonflame.

The highlight of that day was the turtles that they saw. Huge bonesnapper turtles just lying lazily in the sun. Their shells were a dark green and the elaborate patterns were a luminous yellow. Yandry had gotten especially excited when they saw a gigantic turtle with brown horns sticking out of its dark green shell. The turtle was so big that it had nearly caused the boat to capsize as it rose out of the water. Yandry claimed it was some sort of river god. Tyrion didn’t really believe him or care for the gods, but at least it was something interesting.

This happened nearly a week ago.

Since then, they have been on the river, drifting along slowly and aimlessly. They had heard one final report as they left Norvos. The Targaryens and their dragons were heading towards Meereen. There were even rumours that they had sailed the smoking sea of Valyria. They had styled themselves as King Aegon and Queen Daenerys, which caused him to laugh. Viserys had decided to call himself Aegon, perhaps he had inherited his father's madness. Maybe sailing the smoking sea had addled his brain. Then again, Tyrion realised that he was no in position to judge, they had dragons and as the people of the Rhoyne learned, you don’t argue with dragons.

Apart from that last piece of information there was nothing. No contact with the outside world. It was just them drifting along the Rhoyne in that little boat. What made matters worse was the plot he had overheard. Joffrey was a vicious idiot, the world would be better off without him but Tommen and Myrcella were innocent children. They were good children, they did not deserve to die for their family’s mistakes. The thought of them being murdered made him sick to his stomach. He had thought about voicing his protest against this plan but then he quickly remembered that he couldn’t do that.

He was not supposed to have heard the conversation in the first place and if these people even had the slightest suspicion that he would try to interfere with their plan, they would simply kill him. Right now, all he could do is wait and bide his time. Hopefully, an opportunity to save the children would present itself. If no other path presented itself, he would send an anonymous message to Cersei. Perhaps, that was his best option.
He tried to distract himself from these worries by reading. Halfmaester Haldon’s room had plenty of books. He was currently on the deck of the ship flicking through the latest book he had decided to read. This book was all about the Rhoynish wars with Valyria and he was nearing its final pages. The book told him about how the Rhoynish had called upon their water wizards to defend them from the might of Valyria. The book also told him of how their final commander, Prince Garin had led a force of 250,000 against the might of Valyria, he and his water wizards had even managed to kill three dragons. He led this host to Volantis, the first daughter of Valyria. Rather than face him in the field, the Volantenes hid behind their famous Black Walls and appealed to the Valyrian freehold for help. Unfortunately for Prince Garin, the freehold responded by sending 300 more dragons and he and his forces stood no chance. The cities of Sar Mell and Chroyane were destroyed.

It was an interesting tale, but it had only entertained him for a few days. If there was one thing it taught him, it was that you don’t fight against dragons. This brought Tyrion back to the mystery that had he had been wrestling with for the past few weeks. What plans did Varys and his friends have with the Targaryen children?

He had learned that Viserys is going to be marrying Arianne Martell. This made plenty of sense. By marrying princess Elia to Rhaegar, Dorne and the Martell’s would have ensured that the future King of Westeros would have Dornish blood in their veins. When the rebellion ended and the Targaryens were deposed, Dorne got pushed to the side. Instead, the Baratheons and Lannisters joined their houses and formed the new royal family. Marrying Viserys to Arianne would be another attempt to introduce Dornish blood in the royal line.

What he still did not understand, was why Princess Arianne had expressed interest in marrying the boy since he was merely the son of a sellsword. It still didn’t make sense to him. On top of that, who was the boy supposed to marry? Illyrio had said that he was sorry that he would not be at his wedding, but who would want to marry a sellsword’s son? Or Illyrio’s son in disguise? The more Tyrion thought about it, the more he believed that the boy was actually Illyrio’s, but that still didn’t make sense. If Illyrio had a son, why not claim him as his own? He would be able to provide him with a better life than Griff, that was for certain. No, he had to be Griff’s son.

There was something about that boy and Tyrion was determined to figure it out.

He closed the book and got up with a sigh. The sun was directly overhead and its heat was bearing down on him. He stretched his legs and looked out over the side of the ship into the murky waters of the Rhoyn. The river was getting wider and they had been able to catch fish from it.

Tyrion decided to head below deck to seek out the Halfmaester. It didn’t take Tyrion long to realise that he needed to be wary of the man. He was a smart man, but not as smart as he thought he was. Tyrion quickly walked through the corridors and knocked on the man’s door before quickly entering.

He entered and saw that he was sitting behind his desk with Young Griff on the other side. Tyrion smirked to himself, he had caught them in the middle of a lesson. They both immediately looked up at him when he entered.

“Am I interrupting?” Tyrion asked as he cocked his head to the side innocently which caused the Halfmaester to scowl

“What do you think?” he asked in an irritated voice. Tyrion looked at the boy who looked thankful for his appearance. Tyrion slowly moved across the room towards their desk,

“I think that I am interrupting a history lesson. Although why you’re teaching the boy about the
history of Westeros, I do not know,” he said as he finally reached the desk. “Ah, the war of the Ninepenny Kings. An interesting topic,” he remarked casually, watching Haldon as he spoke. The man had black hair tied back in a knot behind his head and he had a chiseled jaw. His grey eyes stared at him and Tyrion did his best to hide a smirk.

“A very interesting topic,” Haldon said through gritted teeth. “And not a topic that should concern you,”

“Actually it does concern me,” Tyrion said brightly. “Did you know that it was during this war that my father and the Mad King became friends?”

“King Aerys, second of his name. The man, despite his flaws, was still a King, you should address him as such,” Haldon said quickly and to Tyrion’s surprise the boy quickly nodded in agreement.

“My apologies. The war of the Ninepenny kings is where my father, Lord Tywin of Casterly Rock, met King Aerys, Second of his name, King of the Andals, the first men and all his other titles though at the time he was the Crown Prince,” he said with a mock bow which only incensed Haldon further.

“Tell me Young Griff, what do you know about the Blackfyre rebellions?” he asked. He wanted to see what the boy knew, perhaps he was smart. Perhaps, that was his big secret.

“The seed for the Blackfyre rebellions was planted when King Aegon IV or the Unworthy as he is remembered as, legitimized all his bastards on his deathbed. House Blackfyre was founded by Daemon Blackfyre, one of his Great bastards. In 196 AC, Daemon rose against his half-brother King Daeron II in rebellion laying claim to the throne and that war came to be known as the 1st Blackfyre rebellion. There would be four more Blackfyre rebellions in the coming years until the final rebellion known as the War of the Ninepenny Kings put an end to entire Blackfyre line with the death Maelys Blackfyre, the last Blackfyre descendant at the hands of Ser Barristan Selmy,” he recited flawlessly.

“Impressive,” Tyrion said. Although this wasn’t anything special any child with a slight inclination to learn would be able to recite this knowledge. What was more interesting was the fact that he was being thought this. What business did a sellsword’s son have learning the history of Westeros?

“The male line of House Blackfyre has died out. It is certainly possible that the female branch still exists,” Haldon reminded him. “But very good nevertheless. You may go,” he said dismissing the boy.

Tyrion watched as he quickly left the room, he was probably off to find Duck to practice his sword fighting. He turned to the Halfmaester and gave him another false smile.

“What do you want dwarf?”

“I came to return your book.” Tyrion said holding up the old heavy tome. Haldon quickly crossed over to him and took the book from him and moved to place it back on the shelf. Tyrion took the time to slowly look and see what book he wanted to take out next.

He spotted the *history and lineages of the Great Houses of Westeros* and *the Castles and Towns that make up the Seven kingdoms* and plenty of others. One thing that he did notice, was that nearly every book on the shelf told something different about Westeros. Tyrion found this odd, but he was interrupted by Haldon loudly clearing his throat.

Tyrion turned to face him and saw that he was scowling again. He then looked past the Halfmaester and saw a Cyvasse board sitting on the table. Then Tyrion was struck with an idea.

“Would you like to play a game of Cyvasse?” Tyrion asked innocently and this caught Haldon off
“Cyvasse?” he asked “I would beat you with ease;” he finished cocky and Tyrion bit the inside of his mouth to hide his smile.

“I only need half my wits to beat you, but since you are so confident, how about a wager?” Tyrion asked

“How much?”

“Oh, I have no coin but we will play for something more interesting,” he said as he took a seat at the table.

“What then?”

“Secrets,” and Tyrion gave a wicked smile.

“No. Griff would have my tongue out if he found out,” he said quickly,

“Oh, afraid are you? I would be if I were you,” Tyrion replied cockily which caused Haldon to scowl. Just like he knew it would.

“The day you defeat me is the day that turtles crawl out of my arse. You have your wager little man,” he said as he angrily moved his pieces into position. Tyrion gave out a small quiet chuckle. This would certainly be fun.

They played for over three hours before Tyrion left the Halfmaester’s room happily. He was whistling a tune as he moved back above the deck. The Halfmaester hadn’t told him everything he wanted to know, but he had told him enough. The pieces were starting to come together in Tyrion’s mind.

It was mid-afternoon and the sun was not nearly as hot but Tyrion felt as if something was off. He turned and saw Griff, Duck and the boy standing together at the prow of the boat, talking quickly to Yandry and pointing at something. Tyrion quickly walked towards them and saw what they were pointing at. Coming towards them on the river was another boat, a much bigger boat.

“Griff, what is going on?” he asked as soon as he arrived.

“That other ship coming towards us. Best case scenario, it just passes us by. It could be another boat out of Volantis that is coming North. Yandry says they usually stop off in the Dagger lake and then load their cargo onto smaller boats to head up the narrower shallow waters. They contain goods that are traded to Qohor or Norvos,”

“What’s the worst case scenario?” Tyrion asked immediately.

“Pirates,” he replied grimly. Tyrion tensed. “Son, I want you to go below deck. Duck take him to where you sleep in the belly of the ship. Then come back up here with my sword as well,”

“I can fight, I’ve been training plenty with Duck!” he protested immediately.

“No, go below deck,” Griff said firmly.
“But father, what is the point of practicing if I don’t get to test my skills?” he pleaded. Griff turned and glared at him, trying to convey a message with his eyes and not his lips. Tyrion watched this exchange closely. It confirmed what he thought earlier. The boy was everything to Griff and his company.

“You know why you can’t fight. Now, go below deck. I will hear no more of this,” and then he turned back to stare at the oncoming vessel. The boy looked like he was about to argue some more, but he quickly decided against it and stormed below deck. Duck reluctantly followed him.

“Why can’t he fight Griff? Is it an injury that he sustained during his childhood?” Tyrion asked innocently.

“No. I promised his mother he would not get hurt. He is not ready to fight,” he replied through gritted teeth.

“Ah, his mother. Fascinating woman. I take it he doesn’t know her?”

“No, she died when he was only a babe,”

“Where was she from? Lys?”

“No. Tyrosh. We color our hair blue in honor of her,”

“I thought she was from Lys. I overheard him asking you about a woman with silver hair from his youth, he asked if that was his mother,” Tyrion said lightly and Griff gave him a confused look. He had not expected this question

“His wet nurse had silver hair, I believe” he said quietly.

“You believe? I thought you were his father? Surely you would know who his wet nurse was?” he said quickly, pouncing on Griff’s mistake. Griff gave him a dark look.

“Careful dwarf. I would have no regrets about pushing you into this water and leaving you to drown,”

Tyrion held his hands up in apology and backed off. Duck quickly returned and handed Griff his sword and together, they waited.

The ship was nearly upon them now and Yandry was steering them to the left and out of the way. The ship had two black and purple striped sails and Tyrion could see the faces on the crew as it passed them by. A few even waved at their little boat and Tyrion waved back in return, much to the annoyance of Griff.

He watched as the ship sailed by and continued its way upstream. Once it was far enough away, he heard Griff give a loud audible sigh of relief.

“I need a drink,” he said as he walked below deck and Tyrion followed him. They entered the one communal space where they ate, the small and cramped mess hall. There was one table here that seated four. Several candles were on the table and on the walls and they provided the room with light. He saw Septa Lemore sitting at the table drinking a steaming cup of tea. Tyrion smiled sweetly at her and she gave him a reluctant one in return.

A few moments later, Young Griff entered followed by Duck. He looked angry and ready to resume his argument with his father. Tyrion quickly ducked into the shadows, he wanted to see what they would say if they forgot he was there.
“You should have let me fight, I am not a child,” the boy said fiercely. The candles caused the light to flicker and dance on his face, causing his blue eyes to appear almost purple.

“No,” Griff replied equally as firmly.

“Why not? Why bother to train me if I’m not going to fight?”

“You will fight, but not here. It is not worth it,” Griff said as he knocked back his drink.

“Why is it not worth it?”

“Because you are everything,” Tyrion said as he stepped forward from the shadows.

Both Griff and his son turned to him in shock. Both looked as surprised as the other. Tyrion wondered who would speak first. It was the boy.

“What do you mean I am everything?” he asked nervously,

“I knew from the very start that there was something different about you. For years, I knew that Varys had his own agenda, and he sent me to you to further his plan. But I did not know what his plan was. He claimed that he was serving the realm, but I could never figure out his meaning. Then I met you,” he began slowly. His excitement was bubbling below the surface.

“As soon as I met you I knew there was something different about you. You were different,” “I’m,” the boy began but Tyrion quickly cut him off

“You’re what? You’re not special?” Tyrion gave a snort of laughter. “You are taught the histories of Westeros by a master who was not smart enough to complete his training, You are taught the Faith of the seven by a Septa from Westeros. Why would a sellsword’s son need to know the history of Westeros? Why would he need to know the ways of the faith? The faith isn’t followed in Essos, so why do you need to learn it?” he looked at both Griff and Young Griff and both were watching him warily.

“Perhaps, you are not who you say you are?” Tyrion said excitedly. His eyes quickly looked at Griff, who had a grave look on his face.

“I’m his son,” he said quickly and Tyrion laughed again.

“You are not his son. You are everything. You are his entire plot, this entire conspiracy. It all rests on you,” he said as he crossed over to the boy. He could see him start to breathe quickly. He was nervous.

“What do you mean I am everything?. You have no idea what you are talking about,” he said nervously trying to dismiss him.

“Today your so called Father nearly gave it all away. He said he could push me in the river and not think twice. He told Duck to come back with weapons in case they were pirates but he told you to hide below deck in the belly of the ship. He was insistent that you will not fight. He couldn’t lose you. Lose Duck or the Septa, or myself even and you would grieve for a few days, but you would move on. No doubt, Illyrio would send replacements for us, but lose you and all those years of planning by the Eunuch and the Cheesemonger would be for nothing...isn’t that so Griff?” and Tyrion looked at Griff who stared back at him stony faced.

“He knows who I am,” the boy said quietly.
“You? You are the son of Griff the sellsword! Or maybe you’re someone else. Here, let me take a
closer look,” and he quickly stood up on a chair and held a lantern to his face.

“The blue of your hair makes your eyes seem blue, not purple. The story of your mother being a
dead woman from Tyrosh was so touching that it almost made me cry. Almost. Then I took one look
at the septa and then it all made sense. I finally understood why you would need a maester and a
septa to teach you the ways of Westeros. I knew that they were training you, and now I know why,”
he slowly pulled the lantern away from his face.

“I do say, you have remarkable features for a dead boy,”

“I am not dead,” he said firmly.

“I beg to differ. My father wrapped you in one of our crimson cloak and lay your body before King
Robert. Those brave enough to look say half your skull was gone,”

“Your father,” he began,

“Is a cunt, forgive me your grace, but I do know that I was born Tyrion of House Lannister, trueborn
son of Tywin and Joanna. My father would say that I am spiteful, evil and that I am a liar…that is all
true, but then again, we are in a company of liars aren’t we? Take your father, Griff over here,”
Tyrion gave a snort of laughter “It’s a good thing Varys is part of your plans because Griff did not
fool me for a second. The only question was who were you really were. But now it makes sense.
Who better to raise Prince Rhaegar’s son that his dear friend, Jon Connington?”

“Very smart Tyrion. I was waiting to see if you would provide anything to our team other than shitty
jokes and sarcastic comments,”

“I can still provide plenty of those,” Tyrion replied smugly. The boy looked nervous. “Your grace,
would you like to join me for some fresh air?” and the boy looked towards Connington who merely
gave him a shrug of the shoulders. He quickly nodded at Tyrion who led them above deck.

“Did you know my true father?” he asked nervously as they leaned over the side of the boat.

“Rhaegar? No. I was only a young boy when Robert killed him. Connington would know him
better,”

“They were squires together back in Kings Landing. That’s how they met each other,” he said as he
pushed a lock of his blue hair out of his eyes. Tyrion got a good luck at his face, he certainly had the
classic Valyrian features.

“He’s a true friend. He must be to remain loyal to the grandson of a King who took all of his lands
and sent him into exile. It’s a pity he did that, otherwise he might have been on hand in Kings
Landing to stop his Prince Rhaegar’s precious little son from having his royal brains smashed against
a wall,”

“That was not me. That was just some boy from Flea Bottom that Lord Varys found. He bought the
boy for a few pieces of gold and handed him over to my lady mother and then carried me away,” he
said quickly

“Why would any mother hand away their new born child?”

“My mother knew we were going to lose the war, so she entrusted me to Lord Varys to keep me
safe,” he said confidently. Tyrion rolled his eyes, it was clearly a rehearsed answer.
“Good answer. Then when that little boy was dead, Varys smuggled you across the narrow sea to his fat friend the Cheesemonger. He hid you away until he found himself an exile lord willing to call himself your father. It’s a wonderful story, a story that the singers will sing all the way from the wall to Dorne once you take the Iron Throne, that is of course assuming that Daenerys takes you as her consort,” he said tentatively. Seeing if he would rise to the bait.

“She will, she must,” and Tyrion laughed.

“Must? My prince, I know Daenerys Targaryen no better than you, but she does not strike me as the woman who must do anything. If the tales are to be believed, she has sailed the smoking sea of Valyria, she commands dragons. Why must she marry you?” he looked at him and saw the uncertainty spread on his face. Tyrion continued onwards,

“They say that she and her brother have sacked cities. She may not be as willing to jump into bed with you as you think,”

“She will be willing,” he said nervously. He looked shocked, he had never considered the possibility that Daenerys would refuse him.

“They call themselves King Aegon and Queen Daenerys, it seems she already has a lover. Why would she need you?” Tyrion continued his needling.

“I can give her the Golden Company. 20,000 of the best fighters in Essos,” he said confidently. Tyrion was surprised by this information. The Golden Company had fought for the Blackfyres against the Targaryens. How Illyrio and Varys had managed to pull this off would be quite the tale.

“An army of sellswords. Impressive, but how can you ensure their loyalty? She has dragons and you...do not,”

“We paid for them. They will be loyal” and Tyrion gave a snort of laughter.

“My sweet prince. A loyal sellsword is as rare as a virgin whore,” and the boy scrunched up his face at the reference.

“I still have a better claim than Viserys,” he said unconvincingly and Tyrion gave out a loud laugh that came from deep within his belly

“A better claim?” he giggled. “A claim on a piece of paper? Do you think your claim will protect you from a dragon?” he continued to laugh at the boy. That was until the boy struck him hard across the face and knocked him to the floor.

“Do not laugh at your King. I am Aegon Targaryen. Sixth of my name. I will marry Daenerys and I will take back our family’s throne. You know nothing. Lord Connington assures me as such and I trust him as if he was my own father,”

Tyrion rolled over and tasted blood in his mouth. Perhaps the boy had knocked out a tooth. Tyrion smiled to himself, it was just as easy as provoking Joffrey. He looked up at him and his eyes were so dark blue they almost looked purple and his fist was clenched, ready to strike him again. Perhaps he was not Illyrio’s bastard. Perhaps he had a bit of the Targaryen madness in him after all.

“Trust no one, my sweet prince. Not your chainless maester or your septa and much less your false father,” he whispered. “They will bring you nothing but disappointment. If you want the throne, you have to do it yourself. Make your own plans and do not listen to the words of others,”

“I trust Jon with my life,” he said fiercely
“But does he trust you? Does he tell you everything? Does he let you add your opinion to the plans? You’re his King yet he makes all the decisions and you follow like a loyal squire.” Tyrion dangled the words in front of him. He knew the boy had been sent away from the meeting.

The boy’s anger slowly faded and he looked at him nervously before quickly walking away and heading back below deck. Before he disappeared out of sight he turned to look at Tyrion.

“She will marry me,” he said firmly, perhaps to reassure himself. Tyrion had to fight hard not to laugh at the state he had gotten the boy into.

When we get to Volantis we will see what our sweet Queen has planned for you.

The Hand of the King

Ned Stark woke up early in his small tent. The royal forces had spent several weeks travelling along the High Road and into the Vale of Arryn. They were heading along the High Road towards the Giant’s lance which was the largest mountain in the Vale. It was located in the northern range and its peak was so high that it was lost in the clouds. This was where the Eyrie was located.

Ned had noticed that as they travelled, the soft mud of the Riverlands had slowly been replaced by the small pebbles that made up the High Road. The road was wide enough in some places for two men to ride on their horses side by side, in other places you had to get off and lead your horse along by hand. This meant that the progress was slow, and this frustrated Robert to the ends of the earth.

Still, being back in the Vale held good memories for him and he spent plenty of those days travelling, talking to either Robert or his son. He particularly enjoyed talking to Robert and reminiscing about their time together in the Vale, it had seemed like the man he knew growing up was still there after all. When they were younger, they had spent many months together, riding through the vast valleys and forests that made up the Vale. It was a simpler time for him. He was the second son with no real obligations. He was to grow up and be a bannerman to Brandon and help him control the North. Perhaps, he and Benjen would have taken trips to Storms End to visit Lyanna.

Lyanna.

Would she have been happy with Robert Baratheon? Ned had his doubts, in fact he had always had his doubts. She had come to him with her concerns but he had stoutly defended Robert. He had insisted that Robert would change for her but she never believed him. She even knew that he had a bastard in the Vale. Perhaps they would see her. Perhaps they had already seen her and Robert had not noticed.

All this thinking of bastards and of Lyanna naturally got him thinking about Jon. His thoughts followed the same pattern as they usually did. It was the Targaryens that had caused his death, not him. Ned also realised that he had not told Robb. They had been interrupted that day and ever since then he had not gotten around to telling him. He realised that this was the same thing he did with Jon and he quickly decided to get up to go tell him.

He quickly dressed in his usual riding leathers and stark tunic and then he left his tent. As they travelled further into the Vale and further up the mountain, the wind became colder and colder. This cold wind was the first thing he felt as he stepped foot outside of his tent. A cold gust whipped across
his face and cut through his clothes and to his bone. He shivered and then headed back inside for a cloak.

Once he returned outside in warmer clothing, he found Lancel Lannister waiting for him. The boy was bleary eyed and he groaned in frustration. The boy opened his mouth to speak but Ned cut him off,

“The King wants to meet with me, I surmise,” he said and he allowed Lancel to lead him through the camp until they reached the King’s tent. Ned could have found it on his own on account of the huge banner of the royal stag blowing proudly in the wind but he decided to let Lancel feel useful for once.

He entered the tent and found the King pacing back and forth looking restless. Ser Barristan was clearly on guard duty this morning. He didn’t look especially tired, perhaps his shift had only just started.

“Your grace,” he said announcing his presence. Robert stopped his pacing and looked at him. Whilst he had lost some of his weight, his beard had grown long and wild.

“Ned, good, you’re here. I’ve had a change of plan,” and Ned knew this wasn’t going to be good news.

“Why are we changing the plan?” he asked tentatively. He had a suspicion that whatever new plan Robert had would not be a good one and he did not want to sound immediately opposed to the idea.

“Progress is slow Ned,” he began. Ned could hardly deny him. Despite leaving nearly all the cavalry behind, the Highroad was simply not meant for such a large host to travel along quickly. It was much to narrow and it was difficult to pass instructions along the long line of men.

“We should ditch the main host and take a smaller force. 50 men and head quickly up to the Bloody Gate,” he said quickly. Barristan had a concerned look on his face and Ned shared it.

“Robert, this is madness. You only want to take 50 men?” he said in disbelief and Robert gave a quick nod.

“Robert,” Ned began but he was cut off.

“Fine, we will take 100, is that better?” Robert said impatiently. Ned knew that it was no better. Instead, he changed his approach.

“Time is on our side. Stannis is blockading the bay of crabs and Gulltown. Baelish is trapped in the Vale and the only way out is down the road that we are coming up. The longer we take, the less food the people will have left and they will be more likely to support us,”

“I agree with the Hand your grace, patience is the wisest course of action,” Barristan chimed in much to the annoyance of Robert.

“Fine, you win. We will march with the army,” he grumbled and Ned breathed a sigh of relief. The first crisis of the day had been averted.
“Ned, what do you think is happening to the letters we send?” he asked before he left. Ned immediately knew what he was talking about. They had sent numerous letters to the Eyrie and to other houses in the Vale. They had received favourable responses from notable houses such as Royce, Egen and Corbray but several houses had still not responded to their letters.

“I suspect that Baelish has influenced some of the Lords with his lies. Perhaps, the younger lords who are looking to increase their influence in the Vale have sided with him,” Ned told his King. Robert gave a grunt of frustration. They had hoped that the Lords of the Vale would turn over Baelish for killing their liege, but it seemed that now that wasn’t going to be the case.

“We should reach the Bloody gate today. Whichever Knight is there will be able to provide us with good information about what is actually happening up in the Eyrie,” Ned said finally. Robert nodded and Ned took this as his cue to leave.

When he left his tent he saw that the sun was up and had finally managed to break through the clouds. He decided to look for Robb, it was time they had an overdue conversation. Several overdue conversations.

He made his way through the camp until he found Robb’s tent. Or more accurately, Robb’s direwolf found him and then led him to Robb’s tent. It was almost as if the wolf was looking for him. He wasn’t too surprised at this, direwolves were said to be smart creatures. If anything, this encounter made him feel guilty over killing Lady again. Robb’s wolf was huge now and easily bigger than most of the horses present.

He entered his tent to find him breaking his fast with the Umbers. Jon “Greatjon” Umber was a huge man, with a huge greatsword to boot. His son Jon “Smalljon” Umber was just as tall as him. They were both huge men, and true northerners.

“Greatjon, Smalljon,” he said in greeting. They were all eating pieces of bacon and bread. They both nodded in greeting before taking a drink.

“Robb, finish your meal and saddle up. You’re riding with me at the front of the march today” he said and then he left the tent to find some breakfast of his own.

After he had broken his fast and a few pieces of burnt bacon and some eggs. He saddled his horse and waited for Robb. He didn’t have to wait long until Robb arrived and soon they were marching further east towards the bloody gate.

“So father, what did you want to talk to me about?” Robb asked once they were on their way.

Ned paused before continuing. He decided to start with the better news.

“Robb, we need to start thinking about matches for yourself,” he began and Robb nodded. “I was thinking of a Northern lass, either Alys Karstark of Manderly’s Granddaughters, Wylla or Wynafryd,”

“I have met Alys, I danced with her at a feast once, she seemed like a nice girl. I have not met either of the Manderly girls,” he said after a moment. “Why not a southern girl?”

“Are the northern girls not to your liking?” he asked cheekily and Robb blushed,

“No, it’s not that,” he said quickly and Ned laughed at his embarrassment. “It’s just mother was from the south and I thought that perhaps I might also marry a southern girl, you just caught me off guard
“That is true, I did marry a southern girl. Although truthfully, I was never supposed to marry your mother,” he said after he finished laughing.

“What happened?”

“She was supposed to marry my older brother, your uncle Brandon but he died before the rebellion,” he said sadly. “He died and I had to step in his place. I had never met your mother until the day we married believe it or not.”

“Really?”

“Yes. Marriages aren’t about just about love in our world. I grew to love your mother, but not all marriages are like that. Most are used as tools to form alliances between houses,” he said wisely.

“And you want to secure an alliance with a northern house?”

“Not so much form an alliance as much as I want to ensure the Northern Lords don’t give you the same trouble they gave me. When I married your mother, I made several changes to Winterfell. I even built a Sept for her,” and Ned smiled wistfully at the memory.

“The northern Lords weren’t too happy initially. They claimed that she was too southern for the North and she didn’t even follow the old gods,” Ned informed him. Robb nodded slowly.

“The Manderleys follow the faith of the seven, don’t they?” he asked and Ned nodded.

“Alys Karstark is really pretty if I remember correctly,” and Ned nodded again, glad his son was able to read between the lines. They rode in silence for a few moments and Ned took in the scenery. They were currently heading through the hills towards the Bloody Gate, the first of the Eyrie’s defenses. Then they would head to the gates of moon and then up the narrow goat trail that led to the Eyrie itself. This part of the journey would be the most dangerous. The path was narrow and they would be exposed to the castle’s defenders.

Ned sighed in frustration. They needed the people of the Eyrie to help them.

“Father, if you don’t mind me asking. What brought this conversation on?” Robb asked, breaking him from his thoughts.

“You will be Lord of Winterfell one day and we are currently heading off to war. Bran is hurt and Rickon is still very young. Winterfell needs heirs. It is something that I have been neglecting,” he said honestly and Robb nodded. Ned gripped the reins of his horse and took a deep breath. It was time to tell him about Jon.

“There is also something else I need to tell you, something about Jon,”

Robb immediately looked across at him. Concern etched on his face.

“Is he okay? Have you heard from him?”

“No Jon, he’s not okay. He’s dead,” he said sadly and the color drained from Robb’s face.

“How do you know?” he asked once he collected himself.

“There was a report delivered to the small council several weeks ago. The report said that the Targaryen children had perished at sea, along with several of their personal guards. One guard was
described as a northern lad with a large white dog as a companion,” he said slowly and Robb nodded again sadly.

“Does Arya know?” he asked after a moment

“Aye, I told her in Kings landing before I sent them back North,”

“She didn’t take it well, did she?”

“No she did not,” he said sadly. Ned still remembered that day. She had cried for hours and he couldn’t even comfort her on the way back. He hadn’t even seen her since. It wasn’t his fault, the Targaryens were to blame.

“Jon didn’t deserve to die like that,” was all he said and Ned didn’t have an answer for him.

They rode together in silence for a while until Ned could see the bloody gate up ahead.

“Robb, I need to be with the King now. That’s the bloody gate and we need to know what type of resistance the Lords of the Vale will offer,” Robb nodded and then he left to get to the front of the column. Navigating past the line of men was difficult but he eventually managed to the front.

The bloody gate itself had two watchtowers built into the stone of the mountain with a long battlement made of grey stone stretching between them. The battlement arches above the road and there was a huge wooden gate beneath the archway. If they needed to, Ned believed they could take the bloody gate by force. It would cost a lot of men, but it would not be impossible.

This would all depend on who the Knight of the gate was, and whether he was one of the men that Littlefinger had put in charge.

They slowly approached the gate and then they saw the knight. He was clad completely in his armor and he stood over the center of the archway.

“Who would pass the bloody gate?” he boomed and his voice carried down the Highroad.

“King Robert Baratheon. First of his name.” Robert answered in an equally as loud voice. “Now open the gate in the name of your King,”

They all waited with baited breath. Robert gripped the reigns of his horse tightly. They needed this man to let them through.

“I am under instructions from Lady Arryn not to do that,” the Knight replied. Robert swore in frustration.

“Open the bloody gate before I come up there and smash your head in!” he shouted. Ned knew that this would get them nowhere. Instead, he tried a different approach.

“Knight of the gate!” he called. “I am Lord Eddard Stark of Winterfell, Hand to King Robert Baratheon. What is your name Knight?”

“I am Ser Lyn Grafton of Gulltown,” the knight shouted and this time Ned swore. When Jon Arryn had called his banners at the start of the rebellion, House Grafton had stayed loyal to the Mad King. This was a big blow because they needed Gulltown in order for Robert to be able to safely sail back
to the Stormlands to rally his troops. Jon Arryn and Robert had come down from the Eyrie and they had taken Gulltown. Robert had even killed the old lord of House Grafton, Marq.

It was no surprise that Littlefinger had chosen this specific knight to guard the bloody gate.

“Ser Lyn, we have come to arrest Lord Petyr Baelish for the murder of your former liege lord, Jon Arryn. I ask you to let us pass so we can seek justice,” Ned tried. They waited to see what he would say.

“Lady Lysa has told us all that this is a lie designed to cover up the truth. Lord Baelish is not in the Eyrie and Jon Arryn’s was murdered by the Lannisters. I will not open the bloody gate for you,” and then the Knight turned and headed back to his watchtower. Robert cursed loudly.

Ned was disappointed but not surprised. This man and his family had no love for either Jon Arryn or Robert. Littlefinger probably could not believe his luck when he found him.

Robert turned away and then began to ride back towards the rest of their troops. He was probably going to call a war council and figure out a strategy to take the Bloody Gate by force. Suddenly, they heard the gate open and a lone rider quickly rode through. He had his hood down so no one could see his face as he approached. Ser Barristan and Ser Jaime quickly drew their swords in case this man was a potential threat to the King.

As the man approached he slowly drew down his hood and Ned’s face turned into a smile.

“Lord Royce,” he greeted. “I hope you come bearing good news,”

“I have news. Not all of it is good. A raven came for his grace. If you would like to start with that,” and he reached beneath his cloak and pulled out a sealed scroll. Probably another from the capital. Robert took the scroll and quickly opened it. Ned quickly realised that this was not good news. Robert quickly folded the paper and tucked it away.

“More news about the bloody dragonspawn. It says that King Aegon and Queen Daenerys are moving towards Meereen, wherever that is,” he said

“King Aegon? Aegon is dead,” Barristan said quietly.

“It must be Viserys. The fool must have inherited his father’s madness,” Tywin said quickly and Robert vigorously nodded in agreement.

“It even says here they claim to have sailed the smoking sea of Valyria. Lies all of it. Now, we will deal with this later,” he said in a tone that finished the conversation.

Ned thought on the information for a moment before conceding that Robert was most likely correct. Viserys must be claiming to be an Aegon, possibly styling himself after the original Aegon who was the Conqueror. It could not be Jon, the reports described two Targaryens with traditional Valyrian features. There was no mention of his white direwolf. Ned thought back to the original report from Lord Varys, he had secretly done his own research. There was indeed a heavy storm in the area at that time, many sailors had confirmed this. As much as he had wanted to, he could not doubt the validity of Varys’s initial report. If Varys was wrong, at least one report would have mentioned their protector who had a white direwolf.

“Lord Royce. I have not seen you in years. Not since you helped me with my crown,” Robert greeted with a smile. He had always been good at making friends on the battlefield. “Tell me, what goes on in the Eyrie?”
“Nothing good I am afraid your grace,” he said grimly. “Lord Baelish is in the castle but he does not show his face. Instead, he has Lysa come out to issue orders and spew his nonsense. That is why several of the Lords, including this idiot at the gate, are siding with him,”

“Which houses does he have on his side?” Ned asked quickly.

“A few of the minor houses such as Grafton. House Corbray appears to be undecided. Lyonel Corbray was good friends with Jon and he wants nothing to do with Littlefinger. His brother Lyn says the same but I don’t trust him. Lyn is a dangerous man, one of the best knights in the Vale. I would not be alone in a room with that man,”

Robert gave a snort. “Which houses are loyal to me?” he asked.

“House Royce and House Egen are the largest. Several of the older Lords who had known Jon the longest are loyal to the crown. It is only some of the younger lords who have sided with Baelish,”

Robert gave a curt nod.

“What about the gate? Can you get us through that?” Ned asked as he gestured towards the now shut bloody gate. Yohn Royce gave a sly smile.

“I thought you would never ask. I realised that the knight of the gate would never let you through. So I decided to take matters into my own hands. I rode down ahead and alone, so that the Knight and his men would focus on me. My son, Andar, should be leading a small force down through the mountains now. The bloody gate is a formidable fortress, but only really from this side. It was not designed to stop people from going down the mountain, it was designed to stop people from going up,”

Ned nodded, he felt hopeful. “Perhaps we should organize a distraction of our own? Would that help?” and Yohn Royce quickly nodded,

“You don’t need to do much, just create enough noise and make it seem like you’re actually trying to do something,”

Ned nodded and quickly got into action. He ordered around fifty or so men to begin cutting down nearby trees. They did this quickly and they quickly formed 10 rams. He then ordered all the men to line up in preparation to charge at the bloody gate. To complete the distraction, he ordered the archers to get into position and he called for a loud war drum to be played.

When everything was in set. Ned gave a signal and the war drum began to play. The loud monotonous beat echoed loudly throughout the hills and the valleys in the Vale and soon the Knight and the other defenders of the bloody gate scrambled to the archway to see what was all the noise was about. When they saw the line of men with rams, they all shouted instructions at each other and this was when Andar Royce and his forces struck.

They were quick and effective and within a matter of minutes, the bloody gate had fallen. Ned and Robert rode through the gate and looked at the road beyond them. Soon the Highroad would take them to the base of the Giant’s lance.

At the foot of the mountain was the Gates of Moon, a castle held by House Royce. Marching to the Gates of Moon would only take them a week or so.

Then, the most challenging part of their journey would start. From there, they would need to travel up the narrow goat trail that led to the Eyrie. They even had three way castles along that path called Stone, Snow and Sky. The terrain around these castles was treacherous, and it would be even more
so if they were under attack from defenders of the Eyrie itself.

Worse still, there was no other path up to the Eyrie available to them. The mountain clansmen knew these mountains better than anyone, but they had no allegiance to any lord or the crown.

Ned gave a sigh of frustration. They had achieved a small victory today, but bringing Littlefinger to justice was still going to be very difficult.

The Dragon Reborn

Jon and Daenerys had spent the last few weeks travelling back towards Meereen with the Dothraki that they had won in battle. Although his arm and shoulder were still a little sore from the force of Drogo’s attack, he was mostly all right. With the help of Daenerys and their bloodriders, he was now slowly beginning to pick up the language. He had slowly grown more comfortable with the Dothraki customs. The first few days he would mostly fly over the horde on Vedros but after a while Daenerys had persuaded him to ride on a horse amongst the people. To show that they were not just dragonlords and that they were capable of respecting and understanding the Dothraki customs.

Daenerys had been quick to make friends and gain popularity amongst the Dothraki. She spent some evenings playing games with the little children in camp and talking to the Dothraki people. They always greeted her with a warm smile and they seemed to be comfortable enough to approach her. It was something that he had noticed in Meereen and he had it confirmed again here, Daenerys was loved by the common people.

She would be a great Queen for Westeros.

Jon had thought about marrying her and he desperately wanted to, but he was a man of the north and he followed the old gods. He did not want to get married in front of gods that weren’t his. It wouldn’t be right. The books from Valyria spoke of ancient Valyrian customs in which dragonlords performed a public ceremony to recognize a child born out of wedlock as their legitimate heir in some cases.

He could do the same ceremony here in Essos for their child, since the child would be born before they reached Westeros. Dany did not follow any gods and he was sure that she would consent to the ceremony and agree to be married before the Old Gods in Westeros.

Yes, this is would be the best course to follow.

Daenerys had also taken on three handmaidens. Irri, Jhiqui and Doreah. Irri and Jhiqui were Dothraki women, and Doreah was from Lys. Jon had not been surprised that she had chosen these girls for they were all of similar age to her. She frequently spent her days riding with these three girls and they usually accompanied her during her evening walks.

Jon’s days were usually spent riding at the head of the Khalasaar. As the new Khal, he had to lead the way for them all to follow. He usually rode with their bloodriders. Jhoqo was young, thin and quick to laugh. He was the quickest to learn the common tongue so Jon spoke to him often. He had a long black whip that he kept close by his side. He had been the first of the three bloodriders to kneel in the scorched earth and join them.

Aggo was another of their bloodriders. He was of an average height and build and truthfully Jon
didn’t see what was special about him. That was until he saw him hit an incredible shot from a bow whilst his horse was galloping at full speed. He had hit the lion directly between the eyes before the animal was even aware of the danger. They had collected several dragonbone bows from Valyria and Jon was sure that that his bloodriders would put them to great use.

Rakharo was the biggest of the three. He was about a head taller than Jon and he was well built. He did not speak a word of the common tongue so they usually had to converse in Jon’s limited Dothraki.

Despite the language barrier, they were more than capable of communicating through battle. Jon may have defeated Drogo, but he was not foolish enough to think that he was unbeatable. Drogo had nearly landed a serious blow and he would have to keep up his training to make sure that it never happened again. As a result, Rakharo had turned into his usual sparring partner. They would work tirelessly in the evenings and Jon would often retire to their tent tired and sweaty.

This meant that he had not been able to make love to Daenerys ever since they started their slow march back to Meereen. Whilst he was not nearly as demanding and needy as she was, he still missed her flesh. Just thinking about the feel of her soft smooth skin under his fingers was enough to cause his breeches to tighten slightly. To make matters worse. The Dothraki people mated like animals in the open for everyone to see, they believed in doing everything in the open under the sky and the stars. He had half a mind to wake up the middle of the night and take her out in the open right under the stars.

He gave a grunt of frustration and focused on the riding. He knew that they were only a few days ride from Meereen now, and soon he would have his Queen in their chambers all to himself.

He turned in his saddle to look for her. She was not too far, talking to Doreah. He didn’t really pay attention to whatever they were talking about. Daenerys rode a white horse which she had affectionately named ‘Silver’. She was also starting to show now, certainly more obviously than before. Her handmaidens had helped to adjust some of the Dothraki clothes so that they would fit her.

After the battle, the first thing that he had done was to insist that some of the Dothraki woman check on her and the baby. They said that the baby was fine and that she was around 4 months along. The Dothraki woman rode horses all the way up until their childbirth and they had repeatedly reassured him that their baby would not be hurt by any bedroom activities.

Daenerys looked forward and saw him looking at her. He waved and she waved back. Doreah leaned over to her and whispered something in her ear which caused her to giggle behind her hand. She then whispered something back before quickly riding up alongside him. Flashing that devious grin that caused his breeches to tighten again.

“Jon,” she said in a playful voice. “How are you this morning?” and she reached out to rub his arm.

“I’m fine Dany,” he replied. “What were you two whispering about?”

“Nothing,” she lied as she looked over her shoulder back towards Doreah. He saw her wink at the girl before turning back to face him. Smiling that smile again.

“It’s not nothing, tell me what you talk about,”

“Jon it’s nothing ,” she said in a light tone that did little to cure his curiosity. He raised an eyebrow in question at her and she gave a loud drawn out sigh.
“Well, Doreah is from Lys as you know, a city famous for their pillow houses,” she said lightly.
“Whilst I despise the practice of slavery, I do not despise the people who have been victims of it. So. I talk to Doreah about her past and her childhood,“

“Oh,” was all Jon could say and she smirked at him. She rode closer to him, so close that they were almost touching

“That is not all we talk about though,” she said innocently as she reached out to touch him. This time her fingers rubbed against the inside of his upper leg. Jon gently tried to brush her hand away.

“She worked in a pillow house for a time. We talk about it, and we also talk about what goes on in our bedroom,” and her hand had started to slowly move upwards and Jon didn’t stop her.

“She told me about the things that I can do to make you happier,” she said seductively into his ear.“There are certain things I can do with my tongue that I haven’t tried. Certain things we can do with our bodies that we haven’t tried,” and her hand had reached his groin. Jon moved his hand to try and ease the tightness in his breeches.

“We can’t, the baby,” he said weakly, not looking at her. She gently cupped his chin and turned him to face her.

“We can, the baby will be fine. The Dothraki woman say so,” she leaned across and softly pressed her warm lips against his for a brief moment. It was all it took and Jon’s resolve broke. He leaned into her and captured her lips between his. He reached out and cupped her breast with one hand whilst holding onto the reins of his horse with the other.

“Does the Khal finally want to take his Khaleesi?” she asked in a sultry voice and Jon scowled. She was not a Khaleesi of the Dothraki Sea, she was a Queen. His Queen and the future Queen of Westeros. She leaned in to kiss him but this time Jon leaned away. He pushed his finger to her lips and told her to wait.

“Rakharo, Aggo, Jhoqo,” he shouted and their bloodriders quickly appeared. “We are only a few days from Meereen. Meet us there outside the city. We will take the dragons,” he quickly said in the common tongue and then again in his limited Dothraki. Daenerys looked at him with a confused face before she quickly understood. Anogar gave a screech as he landed loudly next to her. She carefully got off her horse and onto his back.

He closed his eyes and called out for Vedros. She landed much more gracefully than her brother and Jon quickly scrambled onto her back. He was barely set in place before she took off and headed off back towards Meereen.

The dragons seemed to be playing their own little game as they were racing back towards Meereen. Anogar flew high and he cast a huge shadow along the ground. Jon and Vedros flew much lower and as a result it seemed like they were going faster. It seemed like they were only flying for a short while before the Great Pyramid of Meereen became visible on the horizon.

He urged Vedros on and she gave a loud roar and picked up speed. Within minutes, they landed on top of their Pyramid. Dany and Anogar landed first and Jon watched as the Bronze Harpy swayed back and forth. He saw her quickly get off and hurry inside, kicking off her sandals as she went. Once Anogar was gone, there was space for Vedros to land. Jon also scurried off her back and headed inside, walking around the pieces of discarded clothing that she had thrown on the floor in her haste.

When he entered their room, he saw her naked on her back in the middle of the bed. One hand was
slowly massaging her breast, playing with her nipple as she waited for him. Even from this distance, he could see the wetness that was coating the inside of her thighs.

Jon resisted the urge to immediately jump into bed. Instead, he went to the door that led to the corridor outside. He opened it and found Daario and two members of the Unsullied guarding their door.

“No one enters. No disturbances,” he said quickly and the unsullied nodded in understanding. Daario however, gave him a surprised look, before it was quickly replaced by a scowl before he too stiffly nodded.

“Daario. I may have decided to keep you around, but the Queen wants you gone. If you don’t start treating me with respect, you will be having a conversation with Vedros, or with Ghost” he warned.

The sellsword looked him up and down for a few moments and Jon held his gaze. He saw Daario look behind him and Jon felt something push past him, he looked down to see Ghost had arrived and he was baring his teeth at Daario. Ghost slowly moved forward and then stood up on his hind legs, he was easily as tall as Daario. To complete the effect, Vedros gave a loud screech.

“In fact, Daario, you will no longer guard our chambers. That job will now solely belong to the Unsullied. Go,” he said, dismissing the sulking sellsword.

He then went back into their chamber and quickly got out of his armor and clothes. Once he was naked, he knelt on the bed in between her knees. Her head was on a pillow and her silver hair was splayed out.

“Your skin is practically glowing,” he whispered and she blushed slightly,

“I know, it’s the baby. The baby we made together,” she said softly as she ran a hand over the bump in her belly. He reached out and gently pressed his hand on hers and together they ran their hands over her stomach. Suddenly she stopped,

“Did you feel that?” she said happily and she pushed herself up using her elbows. Jon shook his head. “I felt the baby, right here,” and she moved her hand to a different spot. Jon quickly followed her but he didn’t feel anything.

“Don’t worry little princess, mommy knows you’re there,” she said lovingly as she rubbed her stomach. Jon smiled to himself. The amazing woman loved him and would have his child. He could not be happier.

He leaned forward and placed gentle kisses on her stomach. He moved lower and lower before she roughly grabbed him by the hair and pulled his head up. Her lovely lilac eyes were dilated as she stared at him

“No. You’ve kept me waiting for days. I’m ready for my King,” she said in a sultry voice. Jon slowly moved forward and pushed her knees apart. He grabbed his cock with one hand whilst he used the other to gently open her legs. He decided to tease her and he rubbed his cock along her wet folds

“You are soaked,” he said softly and all she could do was murmur.

“Jon please,” she said softly. Her eyes were closed and she was squirming on the bed, desperately moving her hips to try and find his cock. Jon smiled to himself, she was a demanding lover.
Daenerys did not usually say please

“Please what?” he asked innocently as he continued to rub his cock up and down her slit coating himself in her wetness. She opened her eyes and looked at him pleadingly

“Please fuck me,” she said desperately and he watched as her eyes rolled back as he filled her with his cock. She moaned loudly and reached out to grab onto his arms, raking her fingers down his biceps. He continued to thrust into her, cherishing her warmth and wetness.

He continued to thrust and he bent his head to bite and play with her nipples. Her breasts were much bigger now and he heard her whimper and squirm beneath him.

“Jon, oh gods Jon,” she loudly moaned as she started to move her hips to meet him. Her hands went up to play with her nipples and her eyes fluttered closed. Jon knew that she was close, she had been weeks without any sort of release.

“Your grace,” he heard a voice say. It was Missandei.

He immediately scowled as he looked towards her. How did she get in? Then, he remembered that she had her own chambers attached to theirs.

“What is it?” he growled as he quickly rolled off Dany and tried to cover them with the sheets.

“There is a man here to see you,” Missandei said quickly. So what if a man had come to meet with them, he could wait.

“Tell him to wait,” he said quickly as he awkwardly shifted the sheets, he had just managed to cover his lower body with the soft sheets. He heard Dany laugh softly next to him, clearly not as embarrassed as he was.

“He said it was urgent,” Jon didn’t care. Who could it possibly be that could interrupt a King and a Queen?

“He said his name is Donequor Naerys,” and then he opened his eyes and turned his head to look at her in shock.

It couldn’t be true

But he had to be sure.

Without thinking about it, he got off the bed and quickly crossed over to the room towards the door.

“Jon!” Dany called out as his hand reached the handle. He turned to look at her. Her beautiful silver hair was disheveled and she was breathing heavily. She gestured to him and he realised that he was about to run out into the Great Pyramid completely naked.

“Go find him and bring him to the audience chamber,” he told Missandei and the scribe dutifully went off to carry out the task. He quickly dressed in some loose clothing and then he strapped Darkfyre to his side. Dany had quickly pulled on a loose fitting dress and she was attempting to quickly brush out her hair. After a few moments, she gave up and then they both headed out of their
They practically ran down the stairs and they entered the audience chamber through their secret back entrance behind their throne. He felt her slip her hand in his and together they walked forward onto the throne and looked down into their audience chamber and there he was.

His face was slightly tanned from the hot sun and he had tied his silver hair up in a bun behind his head but he was still clearly his father. Jon felt a rush of happiness flood through his body as he rushed across the room and hugged his father.

He felt his father’s strong arms wrap around him and then he felt Daenerys join their embrace. He couldn’t have been happier in that moment.

His family was whole again.

After what felt like an eternity, Rhaegar released them both from his embrace and held them at arm's length. He was beaming.

“I am so happy to see you, to see both of you,” he said warmly and Jon smiled from ear to ear.

“What happened to you? How did you know we were here?” Jon asked and Rhaegar opened his mouth to speak.

“Not here, come eat with us on the terrace,” Dany quickly said. She looked at Missandei and instructed her to have food sent to their private terrace upstairs.

“Wait, let me introduce you to someone,” Rhaegar said as he stepped back. “This is Archmaester Marwyn, I met him in Volantis and he is an old friend of mine,” he said as he gestured towards the other man in their audience chamber.

Marwyn was a short man with a thick chest and a large ale belly. Jon could see that his nose had been broken numerous times and he had white hair growing out of his nose and ears. Jon studied the man curiously. He also carried a ring rod and mask. From the way the metal reflected the light, Jon knew that it was Valyrian steel.

“It is a pleasure to meet you both, your graces,” he said with a smile as he bowed.

“Archmaester Marwyn is an old friend. We exchanged numerous letters over the years discussing various topics, but the one we loved the most was magic,” Rhaegar said.

“My ring rod and mask are made out of Valyrian steel, signifying my knowledge of the higher mysteries as they call it. It is a rare link to forge, many maesters don’t forge this link,” he said.

“Why not?” Daenerys asked.

“The maesters of the citadel don’t believe in magic. They believed that the Valyrian freehold is the last ember of magic in the world. The studying of magic is all but forbidden in the citadel, and maester’s like myself who study it are often overruled and shunned,” he said. “But I did not let their stupid opinions deter me. I have spent the last 10 years travelling the world studying magic. I have travelled as far as Asshai where I studied magic with their shadowbinders. I have been to Qarth where I met and spoke to the warlocks in the House of the Undying,” he said confidently.

Jon looked at the man. He seemed knowledgeable and if his father trusted him then he would give him a chance.
“So why are you here with him?” Jon asked but before he could answer Rhaegar stopped him,

“It’s a long conversation Jon, perhaps we could eat first?” Jon nodded and then he led them upstairs through their private apartments and then out onto their terrace garden.

A meal had quickly been set out for them. Jon spotted pork and boar, he felt his mouth salivate. It was better than the horsemeat that the Dothraki loved to eat. Before they sat down to eat they heard a loud flutter of wings and Caraxes slowly rose up and flew over the pyramid. His gold and cream scales shone brightly in the sunlight. His eyes were two pools of molten gold and they were focused solely on Rhaegar.

“Brother, meet Caraxes,” Dany said happily. Rhaegar and Marwyn were both rooted to the spot, amazed by what they saw. The dragons had grown even bigger than they were when they left Meereen and they were a truly a sight to behold.

Rhaegar took a few cautious steps forward and held out his hand. To Jon’s surprise, Caraxes actually let him touch his snout. Caraxes gave a snort and quickly flew away, causing Rhaegar to look upset. Jon smiled and Dany laughed.

“It’s not that easy brother,” she said in between bouts of laughter. “Caraxes is the gentlest of the three dragons but he’s not going to let you ride him that easily,”

“Ride him?”

“Yes, you are a Targaryen, it is in our blood. Caraxes needs a rider,” she said immediately. Surprisingly, Rhaegar did not seem overjoyed by that.

“Let’s eat,” and they all sat around the table and ate. They feasted on the collection of meats and fruits that had been prepared for them. Jon finished eating first and he lay back in his chair content. The rest of his companions soon finished and then the conversation began,

“So, where should we start?” Rhaegar asked.

“You go first,” Jon said immediately.

“Well, after that night on the boat. I woke up a few days later on another ship. The rest of our ship was destroyed and Ser Jorah and I had apparently been picked up by another ship. He told me that there were no survivors from our original ship and I was distraught. That ship took us back to Volantis and I stayed at the Red Temple for a while. Then a few weeks ago, I heard stories of dragons in Slaver's bay and stories of your conquest. I had to see it to believe it. So, I quickly found the next ship I could that was heading towards Meereen and now here I am,”

“What did you do in the temple?” Jon asked

“I spent every day there for weeks. I was not officially an acolyte, so I worked in order to earn my stay. I spoke with the High Priest, a man named Benerro. He knew who I was and he helped me to recover after I thought I had lost you both forever. He helped me to see things in the flames. I saw a glimpse of you two, you were outside a red bricked city. I saw other things, but I did not understand them. He said that in time I would get better,”

Jon was intrigued by this, it seemed everyone in their family was receiving visions of some form.

“What about you, Marwyn?” Daenerys asked after a moment.

“I was sitting in the room of an inn in Volantis reading through a book I had brought with me from
Asshai. Suddenly, my glass candle started to burn and I knew that magic had finally returned to the world,”

“What is a glass candle?” Jon asked.

“Glass candles are made from obsidian and they originally came from Valyria,”

“Jon, I think we saw some in the temple,” Dany said quickly.

“What temple?” Rhaegar asked

“We will explain later, continue Marwyn,” Jon said

“It is said that sorcerers can use the glass candles to see across deserts and mountains. To see high in the sky or deep below the sea. The glass candles are said to be able to give men visions and dreams and it allows people to communicate even though they are halfway across the world from each other,“

“Do you really believe it could give people dreams?” Jon asked curiously.

“Yes,” he replied confidently. “I have even been able to see my room in the citadel with my glass candle. Forgive me your grace, but you two seem to have brought dragons back into the world, why should the glass candles not be able to give people dreams?” and Jon nodded his head conceding his point.

The topic of dreams reminded him of the vivid dreams he had been repeatedly having. He kept dreaming of Aegon the Conqueror and the burning of Harrenhall. It reminded Jon of his dragon dreams and his visions in the pool, yet he still could not figure out why he had these vivid dreams.

“That’s enough about us. Tell us about yourselves, I’m sure it’s a more interesting tale,” Rhaegar said as he leaned forward eagerly

Jon took a deep breath and reached out to hold Daenerys hand and together they told them their story. They took turns and Jon couldn’t help but laugh at the shocked expressions on both of their faces. When they finished, they both sat there with their mouths gaping open

“You went to Valyria...and you lived?” Marwyn whispered.

“We heard rumors but we were not sure,” Rhaegar said also in disbelief. “You can change your appearance?”

Jon looked at him and closed his eyes. He had mastered the ability and within a few moments he had changed his hair and his eyes.

“Incredible. Absolutely incredible,” Marwyn muttered. “Can I take a look at the books you brought back? I am sure they contain a wealth of knowledge;”

“Wait here, I will show you what we have brought,” and Jon quickly went inside to their chambers. He returned with a huge chest containing just some of the riches they took from Valyria. He opened the chest and they both stared at the contents transfixed. He looked at Dany and saw that she had a proud smirk on her face. He then went back inside and brought out a few books for Marwyn to look at.

“As you can see, we have plenty of Valyrian steel. Swords, daggers, cups and plates. We even have a few arrowheads that must have fallen to the bottom of the chest. The books contain lost information
from Valyria. It details their gods, their festivals and traditions. There is a lot of information about dragons. Some books even contain lost secrets such as how to forge Valyrian Steel.” Marwyn eagerly opened the first book and Jon watched as Rhaegar pulled out a longsword and held it up to inspect it in the light.

“What happened to Blackfyre? I noticed you don’t have it,” Jon asked.

“I threw it into the ocean,” he said after a moment. “I was so consumed with grief. I thought that you two were dead and it was all my fault. I had decided to take you to Astapor to purchase the Unsullied. I wanted to restore our house and I nearly caused its destruction for the second time, and this time it would have been permanent. I didn’t want to be a fighter anymore. I was going to live out my life at the temple,”

Jon nodded slowly.

“We still need you brother, Caraxes needs a rider,” Dany said and Rhaegar just shrugged.

“I will fight, if my King and Queen asks me to,” he said and Jon looked at him in shock.

“You will be King, you’re my father, the eldest member and head of our house;” Jon said immediately but Rhaegar just shook his head.

“No, I am not meant to be King, I know that now. When I was in the temple, I saw visions in the flames. I saw both of you, both of you are the leaders that this world needs. You two have brought back the magic of dragons into the world, you have sailed the smoking sea of Valyria. Don’t you see how special you both are? I would be a fool if I tried to be King over you,”

He reached into the chest and pulled out two beautiful Valyrian steel crowns. They both were adorned with precious gemstones. Rubies, sapphires, emeralds and diamond all sparkled brightly in the sunlight as Rhaegar lifted the crowns to inspect them. In between each gemstone there was an engraved image of a dragon in a different stage of flight. The patterns were so intricately designed that they all knew it could have only been forged using magic.

“Why are you keeping these beautiful crowns locked away?” he asked.

“We wanted to save our coronation for somewhere closer to Westeros, perhaps Dragonstone,” Jon muttered and Rhaegar nodded in understanding.

“There is something else we need to tell you,” he said after a moment. “Volantis is one of the first colonies of Valyria, it is often referred to as the first daughter. The Old Blood of Volantis are the nobility and to this very day they are able to trace their lineage all the way back to the Valyrian freehold. They live in heart of Old Volantis, it’s like a city inside a city. Ancient palaces, temples, towers, courtyards, bridges and cellars, all contained within the great oval that are their black walls. It was raised by the freehold and the fused black dragonstone walls stand tall, nearly 200 foot high. It is said that this black dragonstone is harder than steel or diamond and it serves as a testament to strength and power of Valyria. As it was a colony, it practiced many of the same things as Valyria, including slavery,”

Jon nodded his head, he had a feeling that this wasn’t going to be good news

“Recently in Volantis, the elections for the new triarchs of the city are taking place. Now three triarchs get elected and they belong to one of two political parties. The Tigers or the Elephants. Now I won’t bore you with the specifics, but no matter which party wins the election, they will likely declare war on you both,”
“Why?” Dany asked immediately.

“The Valyrian freehold heavily practiced slavery and as a result, the nobility of Volantis depend on it to stay wealthy. You have smashed the slave trade in Slaver’s Bay which is the largest provider of slaves in the world. You are a threat to their lifestyle, money and wealth. Tales of your deeds have spread throughout the city like wildfire. Everywhere you go, be it inns or brothels, everyone is whispering about King Aegon and Queen Daenerys and how they have freed slaves in the East. The Triarchs don’t like that, they want to eliminate you all before you can bring your dragons and armies west to Volantis and start a slave revolt,”

“A slave revolt? Don’t they have soldiers and guards to stop this?” Jon asked.

“Yes they do, but in Volantis, the slaves outnumber the freedmen by 5 to 1,” and Jon quickly understood. The city was poised for a slave revolt and their presence would surely ignite it.

“How long do we have until they finish their election?” Dany asked with her hand over her stomach.

“Not enough time, I’m afraid. When we left, there were ships already in the harbor being readied to transport their slave soldiers. There are talks that they have even hired the Golden Company,” Rhaegar said and he looked at her with a confused look. Then his eyes opened wide in understanding.

“I can’t believe I didn’t notice earlier, you’re practically glowing,” he said with a smile. “How far along are you?”

“They say around four months or so,” she said with a soft smile.

“I’m so happy for both of you,”

“If you don’t want to fight you anymore, then you could stay here and help care for Dany and the baby,” Jon said quickly.

“No thank you, I’ll take my chances with a sword again,” his father replied with a sparkle in his eye.

“I am not that far long and I’m perfectly well enough to join you both in the fight.” Dany added making it clear that she would not stay behind during the battle.

“Right, we need a plan,” Jon said and he turned serious again.

“I think the best course of action would be to stay here and wait for them to come to you, you have the Meereenese defenses and your dragons would be even bigger by then,” Rhaegar said immediately. He was right of course.

“I disagree. Whilst it may be safer for us to wait here for the Volantene fleet to arrive, the longer we wait, the longer those slaves are oppressed. I will not have that,” Daenerys said fiercely. Jon took one look at her and knew that she would not back down on this.

“I agree with my Queen. We need to free the slaves in Volantis. They may be raising a fleet against us, but there is no guarantee when they will set sail. It could be in a month, it could be in a year. We can’t afford to wait,” he spoke firmly. “We have 80,000 Dothraki riders which should arrive outside our gates any day now. We have 10,000 Unsullied and around 8,000 in sellswords and freedmen,”

“And three dragons,” Daenerys added.

“The fleets of the slaver cities that are in the harbor should be enough to transport our troops. It will
take us a while to get everything ready, it will be a long voyage and we have a lot to do before we leave,” Jon said in a commanding voice.

“We will not be returning to the bay afterwards,” Daenerys said and Jon nodded in agreement. “We will leave a council in place to rule over the bay in our name. Qavo will be our representative to oversee the transitioning government. We will also leave a portion of the freed slaves who have been trained as soldiers by the Unsullied to help maintain order.”

“I agree, every freedman or woman in this city will be able to vote. We will call it the council of 7. Each council member will serve for two years before the people hold new elections. In order for any law to be passed, there needs to be a majority vote from the council. In case, there is any major dispute or problem, the council can send word to us and we will resolve the situation.”

“The Bay of Dragons will be first part of the new Targaryen Empire where the leaders chosen by the people will rule the land in the name of House Targaryen.” Dany chimed in.

Jon nodded in agreement. “Right, excuse me. The sooner we get everything in order, the sooner we can leave.” Jon said as he stood up and left the terrace.

The next few weeks were a whirlwind of activity. After they had banned the training of slaves, Jon and Dany realised that they needed to find a replacement source of income for the city. Qavo informed them that the hills surrounding the east of Meereen were filled with copper mines. They decided to reopen the mines. Copper was still a valuable material in some parts of the world and Meereen had an abundance they could export. They also increased the amount of agriculture in the region, so people could work in the fields planting olive trees or wheat. Neither of them were pretending that this would solve all of Meereen’s problems, but it was a start. It was better than nothing.

Whilst Dany was largely overseeing the political changes, Jon had been focusing on the military side of things. They turned the slave ships into passenger ships and had Targaryen sails painted and added to each ship. Convincing the Dothraki to cross the poisoned water was difficult, but Vedros proved to be persuasive enough in the end. They had debated about leaving a small portion of their forces behind to guard the city but they decided against it. The Unsullied were their most disciplined infantry force and they did not trust the sellswords to keep order in the city. Brown Ben Plum and Daario had both shown dubious loyalty in the past. Instead, they had decided to leave the freed slaves who had been training with the Unsullied since the start of their campaign in Slaver’s Bay to serve as the forces to maintain order in the bay under Qavo’s leadership. It made sense they were not Unsullied but at least understood and possessed the basic skills of warfare and military functions.

Jon had noticed a change in Daario’s behaviour, ever since he had threatened him with Ghost and Vedros, he had been more respectful towards him. That was good. Whilst he had no issue with killing him, replacing him would be a hassle.

It was their final day in Meereen and they were in their private apartments for the final time. All their chests and possessions had been loaded onto a ship and they were just taking one last walk around the place.

“There is one thing we need to do before we leave, my King,” she said to him as they stood out on their terrace. Looking out over the Bay of Dragons.

“What is it, my Queen?” She didn’t answer, she only pointed behind him at the bronze harpy that still stood on top of the pyramid. Jon looked at it and waited and then he saw Anogar descend from above and sink his claws into the harpy. Anogar flapped his wings and roared and he ripped the harpy out from the top of the Pyramid. He took it out over the bay of dragons before dropping it into
the blue water.

He looked at her and smiled.

“Now, onto Volantis my Queen?” he said as he offered her his arm.

“Volantis it is, my King,” and together they walked out of the great pyramid and headed off towards Volantis.

Chapter End Notes

Thanks to GOT88 for the help provided with this story

Chapter 14 is the Dragon's Mercy and it should be out Monday 15th.

As always, let me know what you think of this chapter. Comments are always appreciated. Thanks for reading

Sleepy
Chapter Summary

Three fires must you light... one for life and one for death and one to love... - Daenerys IV - ACOK

Chapter Notes

Thanks to GOT88 for the help provided with this story

Thanks for all the comments on the last chapter, I read them all, especially the longer ones

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The Hand of the King

The march from the Bloody Gate to the Gates of the Moon was a relatively quick one, only taking a week. The Gates of the Moon was a castle that was held by Nestor Royce, a cadet branch of the main House Royce. Nestor Royce was a huge man with a barrel for a chest. He was bald and has a thin greying beard. Whilst Jon Arryn had been away in Kings Landing serving as Hand, Nestor Royce served as the high steward of the Vale in his absence.

The Gates of the Moon is a strong castle with very thick walls. The thickness was necessary to keep out the cold winter winds and keep the castle’s inhabitants warm. During the colder months of winter, the Eyrie was often abandoned and the people spent their winter within this castle. Also, the winter winds, snow and ice make it difficult to transport food and supplies up the mountain and into the Eyrie.

The castle itself had a very deep moat, a large yard for training and large square towers. Ned Stark was standing on one of these square towers looking up at the Eyrie, all the way near the top of that mountain. Even from this distance he could barely see the castle. He remembered those years he had spent in the Eyrie. The Gates of the Moon looked like a child’s toy from that height.

His eyes followed the path from the Eyrie downwards and he could make out the three way-castles they would need to take along their way to the Eyrie. First ‘Stone’, followed by ‘Snow’ and then finally ‘Sky’. He looked over to the right-hand side at the dense forest next to the Gates of the Moon. Ned knew that there were plenty of spruce and pine trees in that forest which was good. Robert had given the order a few days ago to start chopping them down to make siege weapons, mostly rams and ladders. It was a good idea, but no one had a clue how they would transport them up the slow winding path to the castle itself.

They had spent the last few days debating on how to take the castle. Ned had suggested that they send a personal messenger up to the Eyrie to deliver their terms and offer Baelish a final chance to
surrender under a peace banner. Ned knew that it was unlikely to bear fruit, but it was better than the alternative. He saw the messenger slowly returning down along the mountain trail. He tugged his cloak tightly around himself and headed inside.

It was not all bad, being in a castle again certainly had its benefits. For example, it was much warmer than camping outside on the cold and windy mountain road. They had hot food that they ate in a hall and as Hand of the King, he was afforded the luxury of a warm baths in the evenings.

He walked through the hallways until he reached the room that had been taken over by Robert’s council. Surprisingly, he was the first person there. He poured himself some ale and sat down and waited. Over the next few minutes, the room slowly filled up. Lord Tywin, Ser Jaime, Ser Barristan, Lord Renly, Prince Joffrey, Ser Arys Oakheart, Ser Mandon Moore, Lord Yohn Royce, Lord Nestor Royce and even Robb joined the war council. Several men had to stand as they quickly ran out of chairs. Robert entered last and sat in the chair at the head of the table.

They waited for a few more moments before their messenger returned. They had sent Ser Albar Royce, Nestor’s son.

“Well, will they surrender the castle?” Robert asked immediately.

“No my King, they will not,” he said and Robert swore loudly with frustration. Ned looked around and everyone had the same grim expression on their faces. They would have to attack the castle and take it by force.

“Right. I want 120 men. Ned, 20 of your best men and the same from both you two,” he said pointing at Lord Renly and Lord Tywin. “The remaining 60 will be made up of my Kingsguard and Valemen. They know the land better than anyone,”

“Father, shouldn’t we take more?” Prince Joffrey asked. He was seated to Ned’s right.

“There is no point in taking anymore. The mountain trail is narrow enough as it is,” Robert answered.

“What’s the state of the path, Ser Albar?” Ned asked,

“The path is fine. Some of the stone steps have cracked in places but I saw no signs of sabotage along the path itself,” and Ned nodded. That was one small comfort.

“What about the castle’s defenses? How many men?” Lord Tywin inquired.

“The Eyrie is a small castle, my Lord. It can only hold 500 at the best of times. Baelish does not have the full support of the Vale so he has not been able to fill the castle. I estimate he has around 100 men loyal to him at best. The rest of the castle are servants, maids and cooks,” Albar replied quickly

“What is the mood like in the castle?” Ned asked

“It is tense my Lord. I have been to the Eyrie many times over the years. Many of the servants who help run the castle do not like Lady Lysa, they respected her because she was married to Lord Arryn, but not many were fond of her. That feeling has gotten worse ever since Lord Baelish arrived with her,”

“Did you see the rat?” Robert asked,

“I believe so, your grace. I saw a short, slender man overlooking our meeting in the gallery above
the hall. He was in the shadows. He had a thin beard on his chin as well.

“That sounds like our rat,” Robert said as he took a sip of his drink. This was also good news. Baelish was trapped in the Eyrie.

“Why don’t we starve him out, your grace? Surely without food they would soon turn on Baelish and hand him over to us?” Renly asked and Robert gave him a dark look.

“We don’t have time,” was all he said through gritted teeth and Ned understood what he was implying. The Targaryens and their alleged dragons were somewhere in Essos and they could not afford to be stuck halfway up a mountain if and when they decided to invade. Time was not on their side.

“The Eyrie also has large granaries your grace, and I believe that they are nearly full,” Nestor added. “They should have enough food to last them until winter, whenever winter comes,”

They all sat in silence for a few moments.

“I’ve had enough sitting around. I will have Baelish’s head. Ned, Tywin, Renly, go and ready your men. Barristan, Jaime and Arys you will be with me. Joffrey so will you. Lord Royce, prepare your best men. We will leave at sunrise. We will need all the time we have to climb up that mountain. Go,” he said as he dismissed them all.

Ned spent the rest of the day carefully choosing his men. He took both Umber’s son and Robb with him. He knew that this mission was dangerous, but he could hardly leave Robb at the bottom of the mountain. That would make him look weak and send the wrong message to the lords that he would one day have to lead. Ned did not want to undermine his own son. After the men had been organized, he spent the latter parts of the afternoon walking along the ramparts of the castle, staring up at the Eyrie. He would usually spend this time in the solitude of the Godswood seeking out his gods but this castle did not have one.

It was just before sunset when he heard a scuffle in the yard below. He quickly ran down to see what was happening. When he arrived he saw that several Vale guardsmen were roughly holding onto a man.

“What is the meaning of this?” Ned asked as he arrived. He turned and saw that Robert and Ser Jaime had also heard the noise and had joined him in the yard.

“We caught this man trying to sneak into the castle, we demanded to know what his intentions were and he said he wanted to see the King,”

“See me about what?” Robert asked.

“You want to kill that fucker in the castle right?” the man said before he was punched in the stomach for his language. Robert quickly ordered the guards to stand down.

“Yes I do, why?”

“I have a plan and I can help you,” the man said. Ned looked at him curiously. The man was slim and had a lean face. He wore simple clothes and didn’t look like a man from the Vale.

“What’s your plan?”

“I’m owed a favour or two by one of the mountain clans. I traded them some good steel a few weeks back and we have somewhat of a business relationship. The mountain clans don’t have to
follow that path up the mountain, they know their own ways,"

Robert nodded and Ned was definitely interested.

“If you have the mountain clans on your side, they can distract the guards in the castle to make your ascent easier,”

“How do we know that this isn’t some trick?” Jaime asked,

“Look at me, I’m a sellsword,” the man said as he held his arms out. “The King can pay me a lot more than whoever is up there, that’s for sure,” he finished with a smile. Robert grunted and quickly tossed a pouch filled with gold at the man.

“Consider that a down payment,” he said as the pouch hit the floor. “If your plan works, then I’ll do you one better,”

“How?” the man asked suspiciously “your grace,” he added as he received a dirty look from one of the Valemen

“You’re a sellsword. So you like two things. Gold and Whores. If your plan works and we get Baelish. I’ll give you one of his whorehouses in Kings Landing,” and the man’s eyes lit up with glee. Ned rolled his eyes and smiled to himself. Robert still knew how to make friends.

“How?,” he said dismissing him.

“What’s your name?” Ned called as he stood up to leave.

“Bronn,” and then he left to go and collect his men.

The next morning Ned Stark awoke before the dawn. He quickly donned his armor and strapped his sword to his waist. He would not take Ice with him, it was far too cumbersome to use in battle, and especially in this terrain. Once he was ready, he went out to the hall to find some breakfast. He sat next Smalljon Umber who seemed to be eating a whole pig’s worth of bacon on his own. Ned saw the size of his plate and just laughed. He broke his fast on eggs, some bread and a cup of milk. After he ate, he went outside and waited in the yard, several of the men were fixing their armor or cleaning their swords, many were joking with each other and the mood was light and friendly. Ned scowled and looked at the men. They were all young, they were knights of summer. They did not know true battle, they only knew the glorious songs of brave knights. Taking the Eyrie would not be like the songs, it would be hard and difficult. He only hoped that these men were up to the task. The sun had only just risen and was barely peeking over the horizon when a loud horn was blown.

Robert was true to his word. It was sunrise and he was marching.

Amazingly, he had managed to lose enough weight to actually fit into his armor. It was not the same glamorous armor that he had worn that fateful day on the Trident, but it was armor nevertheless. Most surprisingly of all was the weapon he had on his side.

It was a giant spiked war hammer. The same war hammer that he had used to crush Rhaegar Targaryen’s chest through his armor.
He walked to the front of their small force with a determined look on his face and as he passed the mood grew serious. He did not need to say a word. His mere presence was enough.

"Robb, be careful out there today. Remember your training and you will be fine," he said to him. Robb just gave him a curt nod and continued to stroke the grey fur of his direwolf. The wolf gave a low guttural growl in response.

Ned stayed with the Northmen at the front of the line. The trail was at its widest here and they could walk four abreast. They did not take any horses, the path was too steep and narrow at the top. Robert was near the front of the line. In front of him, there was a small guard of Valemen and surrounding him were his Kingsguard. Ser Barristan and Ser Arys were assigned to him. Joffrey had Ser Jaime and Ser Mandon Moore.

The path to the first waycastle, ‘Stone’, was surrounded by thick forests. Ned was not too worried about any ambush, they were all heavily armored and the mountain clans were working with them. The march towards ‘Stone’ was quick as the ground was not very steep. Ned knew that from the Gates of the Moon it only took half a day to reach the Eyrie, but when you were trying to attack the castle, it would take much longer. As ‘Stone’ was still relatively close to the foot of the mountain, they were able to carry their siege weapons with them.

Ned saw the line slow to a stop as they approached the massive ironbound gates of ‘Stone’ looming ahead of them. Robert barked an order and the men with the rams got into position. Ned drew his sword from its sheath and tensed his muscles. The way castles were not heavily manned but they could not be too careful. Their line slowly walked up the gates of ‘Stone’. Ned thought the castle was undefended when suddenly he heard panicked shouting coming from inside the castle.

“Charge the gates!” Robert shouted loudly.

Ned was forced to shift into a run as their line charged towards the iron gates. He heard two loud bangs and then he watched as the castle gates buckled and cracked and finally collapse after being hit by their rams.

He saw Robert and his Kingsguard charge through the ruined gate and Ned soon followed. Once he entered the courtyard he immediately heard a loud shout to his right. He instinctively turned and raised his sword defensively. Fortunately, Greywind had reacted even faster than he did and the wolf had jumped and knocked his would be assailant to the floor. Robb quickly followed behind his wolf and drove his sword through a gap in the knight’s armor killing the man. Ned didn’t have time to dwell on it as he quickly advanced into the courtyard. He saw several men on the ramparts of the castle scrambling with what could only be boiling oil to throw over the side.

“Umbers! Robb! With me!” he commanded as he ran towards the stone steps that would take them up to the ramparts. Greywind quickly overtook him and bounded up the stairs, taking three steps at a time.

He reached the ramparts to see that Greywind had already taken down the first man. Ned quickly sprinted over his body and started to duel with the second man on the ramparts. It had been years since he had been in a fight and it was only pure instincts and muscle memory that kept him alive.

Ned gripped the handle of his sword tightly as he blocked and parried, waiting for an opening. His opponent raised his sword high to try and slice off Ned’s head and he quickly raised his own sword to block it. The sound of steel on steel filled the air. He heard a noise to his left and Robb quickly drove his sword through his opponent. The man fell to the floor like a log as blood poured out of the wound Robb made in his neck.
“Thanks son,” Ned said breathlessly and Robb only nodded. They worked together along with the Umbers to clear the ramparts. Ned was right, they had boiling oil ready to throw over the side. They must have been caught unaware by their early morning march.

He looked out over the courtyard to see that the battle was nearly over. He saw Prince Joffrey fighting alongside Ser Jaime. Well, Jaime was doing most of the fighting, the Prince was still far too slow. Robert was in the middle of the courtyard removing his war hammer from a man’s chest. He looked around and saw that the rest of the castle had fallen relatively quickly. He walked back down to the courtyard and over to Robert.

“How many did we lose?”

“Only a handful it seems. They weren’t ready for us,” Robert said as he wiped the blood off his war hammer. “We should continue quickly. The other way castles are smaller and they might not be ready for us either,” and Ned nodded quickly in agreement.

The march to ‘Snow’ took longer as the path leading to it was steeper. They quickly left the forest behind and soon they were climbing high above the valley. Truthfully, ‘Snow’ was not much of a castle. It only had a single lightly fortified tower, and a timber keep. Perhaps most importantly of all, it was completely empty. There was not a single soldier in sight.

“How are they?” Robert demanded as he angrily stomped around the keep.

“Up there,” Ned grimly replied, pointing towards the Eyrie. The castle was slightly larger now, and he could begin to see the different spires and towers. They continued their march towards ‘Sky’. This was the most dangerous part of the journey. The stone steps were cracked and broken from the constant freezing and cold winds and the path was at its narrowest. From this height, you couldn’t even see the valley floor.

As they climbed, he could feel the cold winds blowing across his face. Robb was behind him with Smalljon Umber in front of him. They had been marching for around an hour and he could see the small way-castle of ‘Sky’ slowly getting bigger. Suddenly, he heard a shout and his worst fears were confirmed.

“Boulders! Get down!” and Ned immediately slammed himself so hard into the ground he would be picking out pieces of stone from his chin for weeks. ‘Sky’ had numerous ramps that allowed the castle’s defenders to launch boulders and stones down. Ned felt several fly past him and roll harmlessly off the side of the path and into the valley. The barrage of boulders continued for a few minutes before it stopped.

“They must have run out!” Ned shouted after the barrage of boulders had stopped. He slowly pushed himself to his feet and dusted himself off. He took a few steps before he heard a loud yell behind him. It was Robb.

He immediately turned and saw his son losing his footing. His heart was in his mouth as he saw Robb teeter back and forth over the edge. He instinctively threw out his arm and grabbed him, saving him.

“Thanks father,” he said breathlessly. Ned only nodded. He took one look over the side of the mountain at the valley floor and thanked the gods that he saved him. They took extra care on their way up to ‘Sky’ but as he suspected, they were out of boulders. ‘Sky’ itself was no more than a pile of bricks and mortar set into the side of the mountain. When they reached it, they found it empty. Clearly, whoever had launched those boulders had gone up to the Eyrie.
He looked up at the castle again. He could see the seven slim towers that made up this castle clearly now. Then, he spied the thin path that would carry them up towards it. Hopefully, Baelish didn’t have any more boulders or archers up in the castle.

“This is the last stage!” Robert shouted rallying the men who looked shaken up from the boulder attack “We’re nearly there! One more push!” several men gave encouraging nods and rose to their feet. Then, they started their final ascent to the Eyrie.

Ned clutched a wooden shield over his head and braced himself for any archers. They climbed for what felt like hours along the narrow stony path. Ned was very nervous, Baelish had to have archers, it was one of the easiest ways to defend the Eyrie. Then, he remembered Bronn and the mountain clans. They must have distracted the Eyrie’s defenders. Once, he reached the summit he threw his shield to the side and breathed a loud sigh of relief. He heard shouting coming from the far side of the castle. He looked towards Robert and saw that the King had already started to make his way towards the main gate that would lead them to the castle courtyard.

Of all the castles belonging to the great houses of Westeros, the Eyrie was by far the smallest, so they were able to quickly make their way to the main gate which was not heavily fortified as there was no real need for it to be. Attackers never usually made it this far. They were able to quickly force open the gate and poured into the courtyard. Their men started to spread out to search the castle, small forces would head to the sky cells, and out to the seven towers of the castle.

Ned, Robert and Robb headed for the Crescent chamber, which would lead them to the High Hall. As they approached, they heard a woman screaming loudly. It must be Lysa. They all started to run towards the noise and then they burst through the doors of the High Hall.

They saw Lysa on her knees screaming at Baelish and grabbing him by the hand. Baelish was clutching the boy tightly to his chest. When she heard the doors open, she turned to look at them and Ned could see the fear in her eyes.

“They’re here Petyr!” she shrieked. “Open the Door!”

Ned was confused. What door?

Then, he heard a loud creaking noise followed by the loud sound of the wind below them. She opened the damn moon door. Ned stood there rooted to the spot as she saw Lysa look at Baelish. She pulled Robin from his arms and then she ran and threw herself and Robin out of the moon door.

Time seemed to move extremely slowly in those next few seconds.

Ned looked at Baelish who was staring at the hole into which Lysa and Robin had vanished. Ned then looked at Robert who had the same horrified look on his face. Then, he slowly turned back towards Baelish who had started to move. Ned realised that he was heading towards the moon door.

“No!” he shouted as he started to run towards him. His feet were slipping on the stone floor. He knew that he would not be able to reach Baelish in time. He watched as Baelish approached the edge of the moon door and he saw a streak of grey fly at him. Suddenly, Baelish had been knocked back away from the edge and Greywind sat on top of his chest pinning him to the floor.

Robb quickly sprinted over and held his sword under Baelish’s throat.

“Close the bloody door!” Robert shouted and the door was then quickly closed and the sound of roaring wind disappeared. Robert walked over and roughly pulled Baelish up by the neck of his clothes. Robert was so much taller than him, that Baelish’s feet were at least 3 feet off the ground.
Ned stared at the former master of coin and the fear in his eyes was clear for all to see.

“T’m going to fucking kill you,” Robert said angrily to him as he roughly threw him to the ground.

“Your grace, a trial at least. You are still a King, you have to act honourably,” Ser Barristan pointed out quickly.

“Fine, but I will be the judge,” he said angrily as he stepped away from Baelish. “Ned, do it,”

“Lord Petyr Baelish, we charge you with the murder of Lord Jon Arryn, the former Hand of King Robert Baratheon, Lord of the Eyrie and the Warden of the East, how do you plead?” Ned asked in a loud clear voice.

Baelish lay flat on his back. Ned stood over him and looked down into his green grey eyes which were flicking back and forth in fear.

“We also charge you with conspiracy to kidnap my daughters and to use them as hostages. How do you plead?”

He opened his mouth to speak but Robert interrupted him,

“Do not think of lying, if you lie to me I will crush you bone by bone!”

Baelish opened and closed his mouth repeatedly but no words came out.

“Answer him!” Robert shouted, his voice echoed loudly in the High Hall. Baelish was gulping down air rapidly and his chest was heaving.

“Guilty your grace,” he whispered quietly,

“Louder!” Robert shouted,

“Guilty your grace!”

“Then I, King Robert Baratheon, first of my name, King of the Andals, Rhoynar and the First men, Lord of the seven Kingdoms and Protector of the realm sentence you to die!” he shouted and Ned could see the spit from his words fly and land on Baelish’s face.

“Take him outside! I will take his head myself,” Robert ordered and then several men roughly picked him up and dragged the screaming crying mess of a man into the castle courtyard. They found a block and tied his arms and his legs but still Baelish continued to squirm.

“Do not move!” Robert ordered “I do not care if this gets messy. Your head will be mine,”

Baelish finally stop moving and Ned could hear him quickly saying his last words. Robert took a sword and removed it from its sheath. He raised it high in the air and then brought it down so quickly that the sword itself became a silver blur.

Robert took off Baelish’s head with one, clean swing.

And as his head fell onto the floor. Ned Stark knew that justice for Jon Arryn had finally been served.
After their encounter with the merchant ship, they continued downstream. They had passed through Chroyane, another ruined city on the Rhoyne. It had been destroyed during the second spice war against the Valyrians. Yandry had said that the defeated Prince Garin had cursed the city and the thick fog was the manifestation of this curse. Tyrion didn’t really believe him, the curse was no more than greyscale. Still, it had been an entertaining tale that helped to pass the time. Despite his disbelief in the curse, he shared the unease that had settled on the ship as they passed through the thick fog. He knew that people afflicted with greyscale had often been sent to Chroyane to live out their days. Connington had told him about the bridge of dream which was frequently inhabited by Stone men. Passing under the bridge was nerve wracking, but they had managed to sail through unscathed.

After passing through Chroyane, they followed the river further south for another week until they reached Selhorys. Selhorys was a walled town that sat on the confluence of the river Selhoru and the Rhoyne. As it sat on the eastern bank of the river, it was more vulnerable to attack from the Dothraki. Fortunately, Connington had allowed them to spend a day in the city and to get off the boat. Tyrion had spent the day walking the cobbled streets. The city had sandstone walls protecting shops, stalls and storehouses along the waterfront. The markets sold timber taken from the forests of Qohor and the hills of Norvos. The main square contained a stone Red Temple and a large ornate statue of one of the former triarchs of Volantis.

The Red Temple was relatively small, but that did not deter the red priest. During the evening, the red priest would stand up on an overturned cart and preach. He would talk about their great saviours, King Aegon and Queen Daenerys Targaryen who had freed slaves in the east and were now coming to save them. He said Aegon and Daenerys were coming to destroy the Old Blood who had enslaved them. This surprised Tyrion.

Despite being a modestly sized town, it was not independent. Tyrion had learned that the town had been under the authority of Volantis for centuries and this was the reason the town was filled with slave soldiers from Volantis. Tyrion had expected the slave soldiers to order the priest to be quiet as he was talking about their masters in a negative light. Yet, many of the soldiers stood and hung onto every word as if the words themselves would free them.

The soldiers were not the only one who listened to the priest in the evening, he saw prostitutes sneaking out of brothels to listen to the priest speak. It was only when the masters came out of their homes and businesses that caused the slaves to finally disperse. Still, there was definitely a change in their mood. Before the slaves were hunched back and walked defeated but after the sermon of the priest, they all stood up and walked a little straighter. It was not an obvious change, many of the older slaves still had that resigned look on their faces, but as he looked at the faces of some of the younger ones, he could almost see something behind their eyes.

After their day in Selhorys, they continued along the Rhoyne until they reached the next town, Valysar. It was called a town, but Tyrion was sure that there was no such town in Westeros, as it would have been considered a city. Like Selhorys, the city was under the control of Volantis. They didn’t stop in this city, Connington had been eager to get to Volantis.

After Valysar, they had reached Volon Therys. Like the Selhorys and Valysar, this city was also a Volantene colony. The Golden Company was camped several miles outside the city. They had been hired by Volantis to defend the city from Aegon and Daenerys should they arrive. They had just arrived outside the camp and Tyrion was with Connington and the young prince, heading to meet the captains of the Golden Company. Connington and Aegon had removed the dye from their hair.
Connington hair was starting to turn grey, but it was still red at its roots.

As they walked along the muddy ground through the neatly organized camp of the Golden Company, Tyrion recounted all he had learned about the sellsword company. They had been founded by another of King Aegon IV’s bastards, Aegor Rivers, known as Bittersteel. He had fled to Essos after the first failed Blackfyre rebellion along with Daemon Blackfyre’s sons. He had founded the sellsword company in 212 AC with the aim to one day seat a Blackfyre on the iron throne. Whilst most sellswords were notoriously unreliable, loyal only to gold, the Golden Company was well respected. Even in Westeros, they were famous for their discipline and loyalty.

However, something still did not sit right with Tyrion, he felt like he was missing some vital piece of the puzzle. The Golden Company was hired by Volantis to protect the city, but no one had explained why the city would need protecting.

He quickly saw the commander's tent looming ahead of them. Connington pushed open the flap of the tent and they all headed inside.

Inside the tent, the commander-general of the Golden Company along with several of his generals sat around a table with a large map on it. Tyrion stood on his tiptoes and saw that it was a map of Essos, mostly centered on the disputed lands. He could see several markers on the table. He saw two elephant markers denoting the Golden Company to the east of Volantis and then over the water, were dragon markers.

“Harry Strickland?” Connington said immediately and he seemed surprised.

“Who are you?” the commander-general asked.

Tyrion took a good look at the man, he had a large round head and thin grey hair.

“Jon Connington, or as Illyrio has told you, Griff,” Connington answered. “Last time I checked, Myles Toyne was the commander-general. What happened to him?”

“He died during our last war and I was chosen as the new leader. That’s his skull over there,” he said pointing. Tyrion looked at where he was pointing and saw a skull that had been dipped completely in gold.

“Paymaster to commander-general, that’s quite the promotion. Congratulations,” Connington told him as he reached out to shake the man’s hand.

“I thought you were dead. Everyone was told that you had drank yourself to death years ago,”

“I had to fake my own death, it was part of the plan,” Connington said with a dismissive wave of his hand.

“Ah, this illustrious plan. The plan that I have been told little and less about, please Jon, tell me what is the next stage of our plan?”

“We wait for them to arrive. You have been hired to protect the city correct?” and Harry nodded.

“You will help Daenerys take it instead,” the prince said confidently. Harry looked at him in surprise.

“Who are you?”

“This is King Aegon Targaryen, Sixth of his name. Son of Rhaegar Targaryen, the Prince of
“I thought that you had died during the rebellion,”

“That was not me. I was smuggled out of the city for my own protection,” he said confidently. Tyrion was quietly impressed by the boy’s new found confidence, he seemed to have taken his words to heart and was stepping up into his role as a King. Perhaps, he would be able to win his Queen after all.

“We will wait in the city for her arrival. When she does, we will return here and then we will march to support her,” he instructed. Harry nodded briefly.

“Why should my men follow you? You are a Targaryen, I hope you know my company’s history,” Harry said

“I will take you home,” Aegon simply replied and Harry looked him up and down, sizing him up before he nodded slowly.

“Very well your grace, when will she be arriving?”

“There was a report from Meereen saying that they were getting ready to depart. They were preparing ships to transport their Unsullied and Dothraki to Volantis. They should be here soon so be ready,”

“You want us to fight alongside the Dothraki?” one of the generals said disbelievingly. Tyrion looked at the man, he had thin grey hair and his face was leathered.

“If you want to take back your lands in Westeros, then yes you will,” Aegon said immediately and he fixed the man with a glare so intense that he quickly apologised.

“I will see that the Golden Company is ready, your grace,” Harry said.

Then, Aegon turned and left the tent, ending the meeting. Tyrion followed them through the camp, looking at the men as he passed. To his surprise, many looked to be from Westeros. They did not have the same tanned skin that those from Essos did. He realised that the boy was smart to realise this and to capitalise on it. Many of these men had likely been loyal to the Targaryens and fled Westeros after Robert’s rebellion. The prospect of going home would be enough to get many of them to join the Targaryens.

After meeting with Harry, they returned to their little group. They then crossed over the Rhoyne to the ruined city of Sar Mel. They quickly passed through the abandoned city and headed along the Valyrian road into Volantis where they would stay until the Targaryen children arrived.

They had been in Volantis for several days stuck in their rooms at an inn waiting and Tyrion was frustrated. He had spent nearly every second staring out of his window, he could only see the street they were on and barely out into the harbor. He wanted to go out to explore the city but Connington had forbidden him from going out. In his boredom, his thoughts frequently went back to what he had overhead in Norvos. The plot to kill Tommen and Myrcella had upset him greatly. He had no love for Joffrey but Tommen and Myrcella were good sweet children. So good that he was amazed that Cersei was their mother.

Most frustratingly of all, there was nothing he could do about it. He was here stuck with the young
prince. They were waiting for Daenerys and her brother to join them so they could all go back to Westeros. Perhaps if he spoke to Daenerys privately, she would agree to put a stop to this. His hopes weren’t too high, they might see it as revenge for what happened to Rhaenys. Still, he would have to try at the least.

He pushed himself off his hard bed and headed over to Connington’s room. He knocked twice on the door before entering.

“Connington,” he said in greeting.

“Lannister,” he replied. He was sat staring out of the window, looking bored and perhaps a little nervous.

“I would like to explore the city,”

“We have been over this. We will all stay here and await their arrival. We need to be ready to get the Golden Company, this plan needs to work perfectly,”

“Was this plan your doing, or the boy’s?” Tyrion asked curiously,

“It was all his idea. He seems determined to impress Queen Daenerys,” Connington replied with a sigh and Tyrion tried to hide his smile

“You don’t like the plan?” Tyrion asked and Connington only grunted.

“Which part isn’t to your liking? The plan itself or the fact that he is now making his own plans and doing things for himself?” Connington turned and gave him a dark look.

“If I let you go, will you leave me alone?” and Tyrion nodded quickly.

“Fine, go. Don’t get yourself killed,” he said dismissing him. “Take Haldon with you, he said he wanted to see parts of the city. Something about his books,”

Tyrion bounced down the hallway and knocked on the Halfmaesters door. He quickly explained the situation to him and then they left the inn and headed out into the city of Volantis.

Volantis is the most southern of the nine free cities. It is the oldest and proudest of them all. It lies on one of the four mouths of the river Rhoyne and it is where the river meets the sunset sea. It was a port city and its harbor was deep and capable of holding hundreds of ships. Although the port was mostly empty as most of the ships had gone upstream to Volon Therys to ferry the Golden Company south in anticipation of Daenerys’s arrival.

It was early in the morning when they left the inn. As they stepped outside the first thing Tyrion noticed was the heat. It was unbearably hot and because it was a port city, it was very humid. Their inn was near the waterfront but even the sea breeze was swelteringly hot. As they walked, Tyrion noticed the heat shimmering off the streets giving the city a hazy almost dreamlike quality to it. They had only been walking for a few minutes before they both needed to rest in the shade. Tyrion found that this sullen wet heat was sapping his strength. As they rested, Tyrion was struck by the smell of the city.

The city stunk.

Tyrion lifted his nose and sniffed, trying to decipher the smell. It was rich. He smelt the sea, flowers, salt, something earthy and what could only be elephant shit. Tyrion guessed that it was elephant shit because for some reason this city was obsessed with elephants. He saw them walking the streets,
carrying people on their backs, pulling carts from the harbor into the city.

He also observed the people and everywhere he looked he seemed to see slaves. He realised that Volantis is the closest free city to Slaver’s Bay and this would explain the abundance of slaves. What he did not understand was the tattoos on their faces and bodies.

“Haldon, what do the Tattoos mean?” he said once they resumed walking.

“The tattoos denote what type of slave they are. Green tiger stripes are for slave soldiers. A horsehead for slaves who work in the stables. Flames across their cheeks are for members of the Fiery Hand, a cog on their cheek are for those who work on a ship and a single tear under their eye is for prostitutes. There are others, but I do not know them,” he said and Tyrion nodded.

As he walked, he looked at the slaves, observing the different tattoos that he saw. The slaves had tattoos of skulls, jugs and leopard spots. He also looked at the slaves themselves. If some of the slaves in Selhorys had seemed slightly insubordinate, the slaves in Volantis were all but in open rebellion. Each and every slave he looked at had barely concealed anger and rage written all over their faces. Their fists were clenched tightly by their sides. They completed their tasks with an unnatural amount of aggression to try and disperse some of their anger. On nearly every street that they travelled they saw at least one master berating a slave, but surprisingly the slaves did not seem to be discouraged. The beatings only added to their defiance. He noticed that they all kept looking up at the sky, almost as if they were expecting a gift from the gods.

Tyrion felt an uneasy feeling spreading throughout his stomach. The heat made him feel like he was in a pot cooking on a fire. The anger of the slaves made him feel like that pot was dangerously close to bubbling over.

“Tyrion, where are you going?” Haldon asked as they continued to walk. They had just approached the Long Bridge. Tyrion had read about this bridge in a book during their voyage. It had been constructed by Triarch Vhalaso and it stretched over the Rhoyne, connecting the eastern and western parts of the city. It was made of fused stone and supported by massive pillars that went deep into the water.

“We should stay on this side of the city,” he said.

“Why?” Tyrion asked calmly.

“Our inn is on this side of the city, if the Targaryens arrive we need to be close to head back with Connington,” he said unconvincingly. Tyrion smiled to himself.

“But the Eastern half has the famous black wall and the Temple of the Lord of Light. I have heard that they are among the wonders of the world, why not take the chance to see them? If needs be, we could run back,” he said calmly. Haldon scowled and followed him. Tyrion laughed to himself, he knew Haldon was just as eager as he was to explore this side of the city.

As they crossed the bridge he could immediately tell the difference. The streets were now cobbled and the architecture of the buildings was different. The buildings were built in a different style, much more Valyrian, he realised.

They kept heading east until they reached the temple of the Lord of Light. The temple was situated on a huge torch lit plaza. Tyrion was immediately blown away by its size, it had to be at least three times the size of the Sept of Baelor. It was an enormity of towers, domes, pillars, steps and bridges. All flowing together as if they were made out of the same piece of stone. The lights from the torches
bounced off the side of the building giving the impression that the whole building was constantly aflame. He realised that this must be a beautiful sight in the evenings.

They walked slightly past the temple and saw the black walls, the heart of Old Volantis. Tyrion knew from his books that this is where the nobility lived. Only noble families who could prove unbroken descent from Valyria itself lived behind those walls. The walls were built high, almost two hundred foot tall and made from a strange dark material. He had heard that the walls protected a labyrinth of palaces, temples, towers, bridges, cellars and courtyards. Tyrion had heard that the heart of Old Volantis is like a city within a city itself, raised by the Valyrian freehold at the start of its youthful expansion. He had heard that some of the Old Blood even followed the old gods of Valyria. He saw spikes at the top of the walls. In the watchtowers, he saw guards with crossbows and spears, all standing in attention.

“They say the walls are so thick that at least six four-horsed chariots can race side by side along the battlements. They hold this race every year to celebrate the founding of the city,” Haldon said as they stared in awe at the black walls.

“It’s like a last line of defence,” Tyrion muttered as he craned his neck upwards to try and see the top.

“It is, that’s exactly why they built it. If all else fails, the nobility will be protected behind their black walls,”

They walked onwards for a few more moments before they decided to stop for a drink. They entered an inn by the waterfront and sat down at a table. They ordered their drinks and sat and drank in silence. He looked around saw a middle aged man across the inn staring at him. He looked like a Westerosi, probably a northerner. As their eyes met the man quickly looked away. Tyrion shrugged his shoulders and looked out over the waters. He found this to be calming, and it helped to settle the uneasy feeling that he had in his stomach.

Tyrion had nearly finished his drink when an old lady sat down at the table with them. She had thin white hair that barely concealed the pink of her scalp, her face was heavily scarred and she had mismatched eyes. One was bright and the other was black.

She sat down at the table and stared at Tyrion intensely, he found her gaze unsettling.

“Can I help you?” he asked politely. He knew some Valyrian, it was very rusty but he knew enough.

“You should leave,” she said in a strained voice.

“Why?”

“It is not safe here for you here. Foreigners should not be on this side of the city,”

“Is that so?”

“Yes. Especially today,”

“What makes today so special?”
“King Aegon and Queen Daenerys will arrive today,” she whispered and Tyrion immediately felt that uneasy feeling return. He took a quick sip of his drink before continuing again,

“How do you know?”

“The High Priest of the Red Temple saw it in his fires. He told everyone about it last night,”

Tyrion nodded slowly. Now, he understood why the slaves were all looking up at the sky, they were waiting for their saviors.

“Well, you heard the woman, let’s leave,” Haldon said quickly. Tyrion could tell that he was nervous but he was still curious.

“What is happening to this city, why have the Golden Company been hired?” he asked. This was something else that had been bothering him. For the Golden Company to betray Volantis, they would need a reason to be hired in the first place.

“The dragons have destroyed the slave trade in the east. This affects the lords of the old blood who live behind their black walls. They sleep poorly. They listen as their kitchen slaves sharpen long knives. Slaves are used to grow and prepare their food, clean the streets, teach their children. They guard their walls and fight their battles. Now, the slaves look east and see this young King and Queen shining from afar. They are the breaker of chains. The Old Blood can’t suffer that. The Dragon King and Queen will rob them of all their wealth. So they must be destroyed. That is why they hired the Golden Company,”

“Tyrion you heard the woman, let’s leave,” Haldon said desperately, tugging at his clothes.

As they stood up to leave, the woman reached out and grabbed him on his wrist and Tyrion was surprised at the strength of her grip.

“Good luck,” she whispered and Tyrion felt his heart hammering in his chest.

They quickly left the inn and headed back towards the bridge. As they reached the bridge, Tyrion turned back and saw that the man was following them. He was not close behind, but Tyrion was sure of it.

“Haldon, I think we are being followed,” he said and gestured behind him. He turned and looked at the man and scowled.

“Let’s hurry then,” and they quickly stepped onto the bridge. As his foot hit the stone steps of the bridge he heard a loud ear splitting roar.

He froze and felt his heart hammering in his chest. They were here.

He heard a loud screech in response and he quickly looked up to the sky, craning his neck to find the source of the noise. He didn’t see the dragons at first. All he saw was a shadow that descended upon the city from the south-east direction. He heard a loud clapping noise like thunder coming from that very same direction. He lifted his eyes higher and then he saw them.

Two dragons flying side by side in the sky. One as dark as the night and the other a beautiful combination of green and bronze. They were huge. Griff had thought that since they were so young, they would not be very big but he was wrong. Very wrong. Tyrion was amazed by what he saw. Real dragons. Live in the flesh.

The black dragon gave another loud roar which was answered by a roar from the green dragon.
Tyrion couldn’t begin to tear his eyes away from them. They were beautiful, magnificent and utterly mesmerizing. He watched as they flew overhead, covering him and everyone else around in the shadow of their wings. He could barely see the Targaryens on the back of their dragons, all he saw was long flowing silver hair. He watched as they flew low over the city and landed on what could only be the Red Temple. He found himself walking towards that direction, almost as if he was drawn to the magic exuded by the dragons. He felt Haldon grab him by the neck.

“Where are you going?” he hissed. “They’re here so we need to head west, back to Connington.”

“And how do you propose that we get through that mob of people?” Tyrion said gesturing over his shoulder. Behind Haldon on the bridge there was a horde of slaves, all walking quickly to where the dragons had landed. There was no way they could walk through this many people and get back across the river to the inn. To make matters worse, this bridge was the only place to cross the river.

“I told you we should not have crossed, I told you,” he hissed angrily as they turned themselves east and followed the crowd of people. Many were pushing and shoving in their eagerness to see the Targaryen dragon riders.

The sun was directly overhead when they all spilled into the plaza that was home to the temple of the Lord of Light. He could hear excited murmuring and whispering as they waited. They were packed so tightly together that Tyrion couldn’t see. He cursed his height and decided to climb onto Haldon’s back.

“Just be quiet I need to see,” He said before Haldon could complain. From this position, he could see everything. He turned his neck and observed the whole plaza, it was completely filled with slaves who were here to see the Dragon King and Queen. Thousands upon thousands of slaves were crammed into this plaza waiting to see them. The two dragons were circling above, covering parts of the plaza in the shadow caused by their large wings. Tyrion stared at the dragons as they flew. He could begin to see the details of each dragon. The black dragon had red streaks on its plates and horns. The green dragon was not purely green, it had streaks of bronze and its claws were black. They waited in the plaza for what felt like an eternity.

Then, the dragons dipped down for a few minutes. The dragons appeared to have landed behind the Black walls. This did not make sense to Tyrion, if they were the breakers of chains, why were they meeting with the nobility who depended on the slave trade?

He did not have long to think about it because suddenly the dragons once again took to the sky and landed on top of the Red Temple. He could hear the crowd start to scream and point towards the roof of the temple.

Then he saw them.

They walked side by side, hand in hand towards the edge of the rampart. They stood tall. The King was wearing what could only be Valyrian steel armor. Tyrion was amazed by the way the armor seemed to change color in the light, one moment it seemed to be smoking, the next it was shimmering. His silver hair was blowing lightly in the wind. The King was very handsome, his beauty easily surpassed Jaime’s golden looks. On his right stood the Queen, and the songs had not done her beauty justice. She was so beautiful she seemed other worldly. He looked back at the King and then at their dragons. Neither of them belonged to this world. Then Tyrion’s eyes drifted downwards at the Queen’s stomach.

She was clearly pregnant.

Tyrion laughed loudly at this.
“Look Haldon,” he giggled “The boy’s precious Queen is pregnant,"

He could feel Haldon’s unease at the sight. Their plans were going up in smoke. Not only did his precious Queen already have a King, but she was carrying his child. Tyrion looked up in the sky and saw the two dragons circling above the plaza.

The crowd had started to cheer wildly but the King silenced them with a wave of his hand. Once the crowd’s cheering died down, then he spoke,

“People of Volantis. I am King Aegon of House Targaryen. Trueborn son of Prince Rhaegar Targaryen and his wife Lyanna Stark, Rightful King of Westeros,” he said in a loud clear voice.

“I am Queen Daenerys of House Targaryen. Daughter of King Aerys II Targaryen and his wife Rhaella Targaryen, Rightful Queen of Westeros,” she said in an equally loud voice.

“We have come to Volantis with our dragons, Vedros,” he said gesturing towards the green and bronze dragon which gave a loud screech.

“This is Anogar,” she said as the black dragon gave an even louder roar. This gave Tyrion a look inside his mouth. He saw row after row of razor sharp teeth. He also got a good look down the dragon's throat, and he could see the dark molten flame.

“Our mission is to build a better world and to rid the world of the great evils that plague it. We will not only reclaim Westeros, we will also build a new empire based on more noble values and principles. We have already begun to destroy the vile practice of slavery in the east. Slaver’s Bay is no more, it is now the Bay of Dragons. Now, we will add Volantis to our new empire by liberating all the slaves in this city. We offered the old blood of this city a chance to be a part of our new world but they refused, so now they will perish along with their old world,” he said as she held their hands aloft.

“The better world we will build starts here!” Daenerys shouted. “We have heard that in this city the slaves outnumber the freemen by 5 to 1. They cannot stop you!”

“People of Volantis take your own freedom! Slay the masters. Slay any man who holds a whip! Slay the soldiers that keep you in your chains! Strike the chains off any slave you see” Aegon shouted. “Dracarys! Dracarys! Freedom!”

And then the dragons released their flame high in the sky. Tyrion watched the colors. One flame was black with red streaks. The other released a flame that was a beautiful bright green with yellow streaks. They were at least 150 feet in the air but he could still feel the heat from their flames. Then he heard the slaves,

“Dracarys!” the slaves all shouted in return and Tyrion was thrown off Haldon’s back as the slave revolt began. He heard loud shouting and screaming all around him and then he heard two more loud roars from the dragons.

He was nearly trampled by the stampede of slaves all running off to slay their masters. He quickly looked around but he could not see Haldon through the throb of bodies. He was pushed and shoved around until he felt a strong pair of arms grab him and lift him up off his feet.

“You are mine, Tyrion Lannister,” his captor said and Tyrion was dragged away.

The Dragon Reborn
It was a warm morning and Jon was standing at the brow of the ship looking out over the blue waters, feeling the gentle sea breeze blowing onto his skin. They had been sailing for around two months now and he was eager to get back on land. They had first spotted the faint outline of Volantis several days ago. They were closer now, close enough to fly to. They had a plan, he and Daenerys along with a few members of the crew would sail onto a small island just outside Volantis. Then, they would get on Vedros and Anogar and ride into the city.

The slaves in Volantis outnumbered the freemen by 5 to 1, they had debated bringing their armies with them and into the city but they realised that could cause unnecessary confusion. The last thing they wanted was for their own forces to fight the slaves. He had argued endlessly with Dany throughout the voyage, he wanted her to stay on the ship and rest but she refused.

She insisted that they would do this together.

He turned his eyes away from the city and headed back inside and down to their cabin. He pushed their door open and saw her asleep on her side on the bed. Ghost was lying down on the floor at the bottom of the bed. When he entered, Ghost raised his head to check who had entered before lying back down again. Ghost had been very protective of her lately and he was glad. He smiled to himself as he watched her sleep. Her skin was still glowing and she looked beautiful. He smiled to himself as he watched her sleep. Her skin was still glowing and she looked beautiful. He pulled the chair closer to their bed and sat next to it. For a few moments, he listened to her soft gentle breathing. Then he started to gently brush her silver hair which eventually woke her up. She looked up at him with sleepy eyes.

“Jon,” she murmured softly, her voice still heavy with sleep.

“It’s time to go my love, we’re nearly there,” he said softly. “I’ll go get Missandei and Irri, they will bring your breakfast and then they’ll help you dress,” he said as he pressed a soft kiss to her lips. He fetched his armor, which lay on a chair in their cabin and left to find his father. Rhaegar would be staying on the ship and Caraxes would stay behind. They would not leave their fleet undefended. Rhaegar had spent time on the ship reading the books they had brought back with them from Valyria. He had bonded with Caraxes and was able to ride him but his dragon riding skills needed a lot of work. He and Daenerys had tried to tell him everything they knew about dragon riding but they all agreed that he would need more time and practice to be on their level. They would also need space to maneuver and this was something they did not have on a ship.

He knocked on the door to his cabin and found Rhaegar reading. He cleared his throat, gaining his attention and then lifted his armor up with one hand. Rhaegar smiled and then he helped him to don his armor. When he was finished, he stepped back to admire him.

“This armor is magnificent. No other armor in the world comes close. If your mother could see you now,” he whispered as he looked at him. “She would be so proud,”

Jon felt a rush of happiness flood through him.

“Thank you father,” he said as he strapped Darkfyre to his side. He headed above deck and he waited for Daenerys. She arrived a few minutes later, with Ghost dutifully trotting along beside her. Her hair was tied in a simple braid ready to be tucked down the back of her clothes.

“Are you ready?” she approached him and he nodded “Let’s go,”

They climbed into the small row boat that would take them to the island just off Volantis. He sat opposite Daenerys as they were rowed to shore.
“If we have a boy, I think we should name him Daeron,” he said softly and she smiled.

“Prince Daeron,” she cooed as she rubbed her stomach. “I like it.”

He leaned forward and moved his hands with hers and he felt something.

“I felt a kick!” he said excitedly, it was the first time he had felt their baby move. “Well, I guess it’s settled, if it’s a boy he will be Prince Daeron,” she said with a warm smile. He held onto her hand all the way until they reached the shore. He quickly hopped out and then helped the men drag the boat onto the sandy beach. Jon offered her his hand and helped her out of the boat and then they walked further inland.

She closed her eyes and looked up towards the sky and within a few moments Anogar landed behind her, as gracefully as he could. He pulled her into his arms and pressed her forehead against his,

“Daenerys, I know I can’t change your mind, but promise me that you’ll take it easy. No spirals or twists, just normal safe flying, please,” he said quietly.

“I promise,” she whispered. She gave him a quick kiss and then moved to climb onto Anogar. Surprisingly, she managed to do it all on her own. He waited by Anogar’s wing until she was fully seated. She gave him a quick thumbs up to let him know that she was ok. He walked around to his snout and gently petted him.

“Keep her safe,” he said quietly and Anogar gave a small puff of smoke and a low protective growl. It was almost as if he could not believe that Jon needed to ask him to protect Daenerys.

He then walked across the beach towards Vedros. She lazily stretched her wings as he approached, showing her impressive length. He reckoned that from tip to tip, her wings would be over 50 foot wide and possibly closer to 60. The dragons had continue to grow during their long sea voyage. Anogar was ever so slightly bigger than Vedros and Caraxes. As he approached, she gave a low growl in greeting which Jon returned in his mind. She bent her neck and dipped her wing, allowing him to climb on. Her scales were hot and rock hard. Once he was seated, she waited for Anogar to take flight. Jon was pleased to see the black dragon gracefully leave the ground and Vedros quickly followed. Jon ducked his head to protect himself from the wind and he settled in for the flight.

Volantis was not far, and they were flying for less than an hour until they flew over the harbor. As they flew over, Anogar gave a loud roar that carried all the way across the water and into Volantis and beyond. A few seconds later, Vedros answered her brother’s roar with a loud screech of her own. Jon smiled to himself, the dragons loved to announce their presence.

As they flew over the city, the dragons started to fly lower. Jon craned his neck and he could see the people all staring up at them and pointing. He could see some of their faces, they looked amazed at the dragons and happy to see them. They did a quick lap of the city before he told Vedros to head east to where the Old Blood lived behind their black walls. He and Daenerys had spoken about this before. Volantis was the closest city to Slaver's Bay and as a result, the Old Blood of Volantis were the ones who funded the slave trade. They needed to see if they could get the Old Blood to surrender peacefully. Without the financial backing of Volantis, there would be no way for the slave trade to return in the east.

If the Old Blood did not surrender peacefully, then they would have no choice but to take matters into their own hands.

They flew low over the Black Walls, and Jon’s mind immediately reminded him of Harrenhall. The
great castle in Westeros built by the proud and arrogant Harren the Black. They landed in the middle of the courtyard. Vedros landed first and Anogar landed soon after. Jon knew that meeting the Old Blood behind their walls was risky, but to do this peacefully, they had to take the chance. He knew that the people who lived behind these walls could prove they were of an unbroken descent from Valyria, he hoped that this shared ancestry would provide them with common ground to start this meeting and eventually broker a peaceful resolution.

The dragons took off and flew low overhead. They stayed close enough so that they could intervene at a moment’s notice. He looked up at the watchtowers which were manned and he saw men with spears and crossbows on the roofs and balconies of some of the palaces, overlooking their meeting. Jon turned his head and saw a group of men approaching him. They wore colorful flowing robes and even from this distance Jon could see their jewelry shining in the sunlight. He had no doubt in his mind, these were the nobles of Volantis.

“Greetings,” the man in the middle called out as he arrived. “My name is Aurion Nagaerys, I am the head of my house, the oldest house here and I speak on behalf of the rest of the Old Blood of Volantis,”

“I am King Aegon of House Targaryen,”

“I am Queen Daenerys of House Targaryen,”

“It is a pleasure to meet you, your graces,” he said sweetly with a bow. Jon took a good look at the man. His silver hair was long, almost down to his knees and his eyes were a very bright purple. He was middle aged, tall and slender. He was clean shaven and he had a square jaw.

“Although forgive me, but I had learned many years ago that Aegon Targaryen was killed in the sack of Kings landing?” he said as he cocked his head to the side.

“You heard incorrectly. My parents loved each other. My father annulled his marriage to Princess Elia and married my mother in a secret ceremony,”

“My apologies, your grace. Forgive me. Come, let’s head inside and break bread. Everyone here can trace their lineage back to the Valyrian freehold. It would be an honor to hold a feast for the last dragonlords in our halls,” he said sweetly.

“We thank you for your hospitality but we are here to discuss a more important and pressing matter,” Daenerys said stepping forward.

“Oh,” the man said and his smile turned into a frown, “And what is this urgent matter?”

“The freedom of all your slaves,” she said fiercely “We ask for you to stop all slave practices and to peacefully join our new Targaryen Empire,”

“Your new empire? Are you recreating the freehold?” he asked, excited.

“Not quite. There will be no slavery in our empire. We have already destroyed the slave trade in Slaver’s Bay and we intend on abolishing it here as well. We urge you to accept our offer. You will retain your titles, wealth and social standing. The only difference will be that you will earn your
riches through trade of goods instead of slaves. You will treat your former slaves with dignity while compensating them fairly for their services,”

“We’re offering you the chance to help build a new world which will be based on far more noble ideals and principles.”

The man was quiet for a few moments, scratching his chin as he thought.

“No thank you, we do not want to join your empire. We like our lives as it is. With slaves,”

“Then you leave us with no choice, we will free the slaves by force,” Daenerys aggressively said.

“Oh, how do you plan on doing that?” he asked with an amused voice.

“By starting a slave revolt. The slaves outnumber the freemen by five to one. When we tell them to rise up and break off their chains you will not be able to stop them,” Jon said.

The man gave a snort of laughter,

“We may not be able to stop them, but you will not stay here forever. Soon, you will leave to conquer Westeros and then we will be able to resume slaving,” he said cockily.

“Our armies will be coming into the harbor shortly. Over 80,000 Dothraki, 10,000 Unsullied and 8,000 sellswords” Jon told him

“So? Look at our walls! Look how thick the fused stone is! Have you ever seen the Dothraki lay a siege?” he said laughing. Jon was frustrated by the man’s arrogance. He looked at the black walls that surrounded them and his mind thought of Harrenhall.

And then he understood.

He felt Daenerys tug at his arm he turned to look at her and she had the same look of understanding on her face.

“Jon, my dreams, my dragon dreams,”

“I know, I understand,” he said quietly. He then turned to face Aurion again. He took a deep breath and puffed out his chest. He knew what he had to say, it was like he had said these words years before.

“Yield now and you will keep your place as Leader of the Old Blood. Yield now, and your sons will rule after you. We will have over 80,000 outside your walls soon,”

“What is outside my walls is of no concern to me. Those walls are strong, thick and very high,”

“But not so high as to keep out dragons. Dragons fly.”

“These walls were built in stone. Stone does not burn,” he said cockily. Jon smiled before he spoke
again.

“When the sun sets. Your lines will end,”

The Imp of Casterly Rock

Tyrion was dragged kicking and screaming through the city of Volantis. His captor had gagged him and tied up his arms and legs and was carrying him over his shoulder. Due to the riots going on in the city, progress had been slow and it was only the early evening when they had finally managed to escape the city. Tyrion had long since given up kicking and screaming. Instead, he used this time to recap the recent events.

King Aegon was claiming to be the trueborn son of Rhaegar Targaryen and Lyanna Stark which had surprised him. Everyone in Westeros knew that Rhaegar had kidnapped and raped her but no one had known that she had given birth to a child, let alone the fact that she was married to him. But then again, Rhaegar would not be the first Targaryen to have more than one wife. Still, he couldn’t help but wonder where this Aegon could have been hiding his entire life.

Looking at King Aegon, there was no doubt that he was a Targaryen in appearance at the very least. More importantly, Daenerys stood next to him as he made his proclamation which made his story seem all the more credible. No one doubted her birth and if she claimed that he was Rhaegar’s legitimate son, then who was going to doubt her. Most importantly, she was carrying his child.

Tyrion still couldn’t help but laugh at this. All of Varys’s plans had gone up in smoke. Not only did Rhaegar have another secret son lying around, this one had actually managed to beat Varys’s Aegon to the finish line. This Aegon had actually managed to gain Daenerys’s love and affection. There was no chance for Varys and his chosen prince now, all those years of planning, all for nothing.

He wondered where they were now. Were they still planning on betraying Volantis to impress her? If so, they were fools. Nothing the boy says or does would be able to break those two apart. That plan had also fallen apart. He wondered if Haldon had made it back to their inn. If he had then he likely would have informed Connington of everything that transpired in front of that temple. If that was the case, then Connington’s best plan would be to take the Golden Company and sail far, far away. If Aegon and Daenerys caught wind of a second Aegon, and a pretender at that, they would not be long for this world.

Still, he had gotten a good first impression of the Dragon King and Queen. They wanted to do good in the world. Abolishing slavery was a noble endeavor, and something that should have been done years ago. Perhaps, they would not support the murder of the innocent children like Tommen and Myrcella, even if they were Baratheons and Lannisters by blood.

He was interrupted from his thoughts by his captor who roughly placed him on a saddled horse before climbing behind him. As his feet were tied, Tyrion had to sit side on, which meant that he could get a good look at the man. He was definitely a Northerner. He had a black beard and was rather hairy. Tyrion began to grunt and moan at the gag in his mouth, trying to annoy his captor into at least removing his gag.

He continued at this for what felt like hours before finally he relented and his gag was removed.
“Thank you very much, my good friend,” he said immediately. “What is your name?” he asked after a pause. He waited, but the man did not respond.

“You know my name, why should I not know yours?” and again he got no response. Tyrion gave a loud sigh before speaking again,

“Very well, I will try and guess. You are definitely an ex-Westerosi. Most likely a northerner. You are not of the right age to be a Stark. So I guess I’ll just start naming houses. Bolton, Glover, Karstark,” he paused, trying to remember all he could about Northern houses. “Hornwood, Manderly, Umber,”

“Just shut up. I am from House Mormont. I am Ser Jorah Mormont,”

Tyrion faintly recalled the name.

“Didn’t you win the Tourney at Lannisport all those years ago after the Greyjoy rebellion?”

“Aye, I did,” he said bitterly.

“You don’t sound like you’re too happy with the memory,”

“I’m not, it was the beginning of the end for me in Westeros,”

“Why?” Tyrion asked intrigued. The sun was starting to set now, bathing the land in a light orange glow. Jorah gave a huff of frustration,

“I met my second wife at the Tourney. I married her and took her home with me to Bear Island but I couldn’t afford to give her the lifestyle she wanted. So, I was forced to do some unsavory things in order to try and keep her happy and to pay off my debt. This eventually led to my exile,”

“Unsavory things?” Tyrion asked not understanding his meaning.

“I sold slaves. When Lord Stark discovered that I sold poachers to a Tyroshi slaver, he condemned me to death and I had to flee across the narrow sea,” he said angrily. Tyrion nodded and they rode together in silence for a few moments. Tyrion watched as the sun got lower and lower in the sky. They were somewhere in the hills on the eastern part of the city. Tyrion could see the Red Temple from here. The way the torchlight reflected off the stone made the building look beautiful in this dusk light. It provided a stark contrast to the black walls was home to the Old Volantis. That place gave off almost no light at all.

“Where are you taking me?” he asked

“To the King and Queen,” he said immediately and Tyrion gave a snort of laughter.

“Why? What business do you, a former slaver, have with a King and Queen who are working to abolish the practice?”

“My business with them is my own. I’m bringing you to them as a gift,”

“A gift?”

“Yes. Your father sacked Kings Landing, did he not? I am sure they have heard stories about Princess Elia and her children. Offering you to them is giving them a chance at some measure vengeance for their dead kin,” he said with an evil grin and Tyrion felt an uneasy feeling spread in his stomach. Perhaps his father would cause his death after all.
“Did you hear what was said at the plaza today?” he asked trying to change the subject. “Aegon is claiming to be the son of Rhaegar and Lyanna.”

Jorah gave a non-committed grunt.

“If Queen Daenerys chose him as her King then I will not question her,”

Tyrion opened his mouth to question him but he was interrupted by a loud screech. Jorah stopped the horse and turned to the noise. The King and Queen were back, they were flying in from the south-east again. Tyrion watched as they flew low over the city before hovering low over the black walled heart of Old Volantis.

He had to squint his eyes to see the Black Dragon, Anogar was his name he remembered, in the fading sunlight. The sun had nearly set and soon they would have to set up camp. He wondered how Jorah had planned to do it in the near darkness.

He watched as the dragons hovered. He could faintly hear the flapping of their wings as they maintained their level height. Tyrion watched as they flew upwards and slightly further out until they were at opposite ends of the black walled city.

Tyrion’s eyes widened in shock at what he saw next.

Almost simultaneously, the dragons opened their mouths and released a ferocious torrent of their flame onto the black walled palaces. One dragon breathed flame that was so dark that it was nearly the as dark as night, the only reason it was visible was due to the red streaks. The other’s flame in contrast was a beautiful green and it had bright yellow streaks. He watched mesmerized as the Black stone walls slowly turned red, then they turned orange, then yellow then finally white from the heat from the dragonflame.

The Black walled palaces of Old Volantis was burning right in front of his eyes. Tyrion could see the tall towers glowing brightly like candles in the near darkness. He watched as smoke tendrils started to rise high, polluting the sky. The force of the dragons wings forcing the smoke to ascend in a tight funneling spiral above the black walled palaces like a Volcano.

He could barely tear his eyes away as he watched the palaces and temples beginning to melt and crumble in front of his eyes. The Old Blood lived behind those walls, he remembered. They were the ones who financed the slave trade. They were the ones who stood the most to lose by the Dragon King and Queen’s reforms.

But they were not the only ones who lived behind those walls. Hundreds if not thousands of innocent men women and children lived there. Plenty of slaves who cooked for them, cleaned for them, taught their children.

All being burned alive in front of his eyes.

Chapter End Notes

This chapter was the reason I actually started writing this fic. Way back in like October when I started my first draft/outline this burning of Volantis was something that I was
determined to put in, Dany has dreams of this happening as far back as chapter 4 I think. It's something that I'm confident will happen in TWOW (if that book ever comes out). GRRM sets it up quite well. Dany is described as Aegon the Conqueror with tits, Drogon is described as Balerion the Black Dread come again and the Black walls of Volantis is the substitute for Harenhall

Chapter 15 will be up when I finish writing chapter 17, so let's say Friday.

As always, let me know what you think. I have no idea if you'll like this one. Comments are always appreciated

Sleepy
The New Volantis

Chapter Notes

The Lost Lord POV, actually takes place the day prior. I decided to move it into this chapter to spread things out a little. If it helps, you could probably insert this POV between Tyrion's and Jon's POV in chapter 14.

As always, Thanks to GOT88 for the help provided with this story

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The Lost Lord

The former Lord of Griffin’s Roost sat in his room at the inn where they were awaiting the arrival of Daenerys and her brother. He was staring out of the window into the deep blue waters of the harbor. He was nervous, incredibly so. All those years of planning, all those years of humiliation were nearing their end. Soon, they would meet Daenerys, Aegon will wed her and together they will take back Westeros. His chance at redemption would soon be here.

Their plans had changed numerous times over the years which only added to his frustration. Varys and Illyrio seemed to be changing the plan each and every month. A year ago, Viserys was supposed to meet them in Pentos with 50,000 Dothraki screamers at his back. Now, Viserys had three dragons as well as the Dothraki and Unsullied.

Viserys also had him slightly worried. Jon had heard that the boy had started to call himself King Aegon which brought a sly smile to his face. Little did Viserys know that he had the real Aegon right here. Hopefully, Viserys would respect Aegon’s birthright and set aside his claim in accordance with the normal laws of succession. If he didn’t, then Aegon would need to ensure that Daenerys chooses him over her brother. Viserys may be a dragonrider, but Aegon too would become one when he meets the dragons. It's in his blood. With Daenerys by his side, Viserys would be forced to give up his claim.

Then, Jon remembered that the dragons would be very young, less than a year old. They were unlikely to be very big which reassured him. He relaxed a little, the dragons were not going to be a factor. If Viserys wanted to fight for his claim then he would be dependent on his armies and not his dragon at least for the time being.

Jon stood and poured himself a drink. Over the years, he had grown used to the Essosi wine. Volantis produced its own unique sweet wine. It was not as good as the famous Arbor Gold or the Dornish Reds but it was good enough and most importantly, it helped him calm some of his nerves. Drinking the wine caused him to remember the shameful lie he was forced to live.

Varys had insisted that he fake his own death and Jon could understand that. Raising the secret prince would be dangerous and having a new identity would help keep them both safe. What he did not understand, is why Varys had chosen such a shameful death for him. Instead of dying gallantly in
battle, the story was that he drank himself to death in Lys after being driven away from the Golden Company for stealing from the war chest. It was a shameful lie and when he told Varys about his displeasure, the eunuch had only laughed and tittered at him. “We want no songs to be sung about the noble and brave exiled Jon Connington,” he tittered in his condescending voice. “Those who die heroic deaths are often remembered, thieves and cravens are not.”

He and Myles Toyne had only been serving in the Golden Company for a few years before they were approached by Varys and Illyrio and he has been caught up in their schemes ever since.

Jon sighed in frustration as he walked back to his seat by the window and he thought about where it all began.

He remembered when he first met Rhaegar. It was a warm, summer’s day in Kings Landing and they were two fresh faced boys standing in the courtyard of the Red Keep. They were both young squires then but he quickly became friends with the young prince, they would walk the streets of Flea Bottom together, they would spar together and explore the Red Keep. Jon even squired for Rhaegar as they grew older.

Jon was an only child, and the sole heir to Griffin’s roost. After his father’s death, he had named his cousin, Ronald Connington as Castellan whilst he served in Kings Landing. Jon was there for Rhaegar’s marriage to Princess Elia Martell. Elia was never worthy of his silver prince. She was pretty, but not pretty enough in Jon’s eyes. On top of that, she was frail and sickly, ever since she was born. Childbirth only made her weaker, the birth of Princess Rhaenys had caused her to be bedridden for over half a year, and Prince Aegon’s birth had almost been the death of her. The maesters had told Rhaegar that she would bear no more children.

Perhaps, this is what caused Rhaegar to go after the northern girl, Lyanna Stark. Jon could not remember much about her, he briefly saw her at the Tourney at Harrenhal. He supposed she was pretty, as pretty as northern girls got but Rhaegar could have done better than her. To this day, he could not believe that Rhaegar had crowned her the Queen of love and beauty. The logical choice would have been his sickly wife, Elia, but no, he had chosen to crown Lyanna Stark.

In the years that followed, Jon had often wondered what was it that had drawn his noble silver prince to the Northern girl. Perhaps, she was a temptress and had ensnared Rhaegar with her foreign northern ways, at the least that was the best explanation he could come up with. Rhaegar was a good man and he would have been a good king. Yes, he had been seduced by her and this caused him to forget his duty. It was the only thing that made sense.

It was her fault that the realm was thrust into rebellion. The fall of a dynasty was all her fault. She should have known her place and married her betrothed, the usurper Robert Baratheon. If she had, then the rebellion would not have occurred. Those Starks could not be trusted, they followed false gods and isolated themselves in the north. That idiot Brandon had just charged into the Red Keep and demanded that Rhaegar come out and die. He was just another idiot Stark, it must have run in the family.

Their actions had started a rebellion and it gave Jon his chance at glory. It had been his chance to prove his worth to his silver prince but it turned into his greatest failure.

King Aegys had dismissed his former Hand of the King, Lord Owen Merryweather. He saw the effect that the young and bold Usurper had on the troops and so he wanted someone young and vigorous of his own to be his next hand and this had been Jon’s chance to shine. He had promised Aegys that he would deliver the head of Robert Baratheon to him and end the rebellion, and he had the chance, but he failed.
It was his arrogance that led him to his great defeat.

After the Battle at Ashford, Robert Baratheon had fled north to meet up with the rest of the rebel forces. Connington had tracked him all the way to the Stoney Sept where Robert had taken shelter after being wounded in battle and was all alone. He remembered when he first arrived outside the city gates, he was young and he was full of pride and who could blame him?

He knew that Robert’s head on a spear would end the rebellion then and there. King Aerys had named him Hand and given him an army, it was his chance to prove himself worthy of that trust, of Rhaegar’s love. He would slay the rebel lord and carve out a place for himself in the history of the Seven Kingdoms.

He descended upon the town with a part of the royal army. He closed off the town and began a search. He had his knights go from door to door, from cellar to cellar, he even sent men down into the sewers to look for him. The small folk were hiding him, he knew that clearly enough. They were always one step ahead, moving him from one house to the next. The whole town was a nest filled with traitors, they even hid him in a brothel. What kind of King chose to hide behind a woman’s skirts?

The search had gone on for so long that the traitor Hoster Tully and the Stark Dog came down with their rebel host to free the town. The Battle of Bells soon followed, he remembered Robert charging out of the brothel where he was hiding, blade in hand. He nearly killed Jon on the steps of the town's famous old sept. He was forced to flee that day and his army was scattered.

For years, he had told himself that he could do no more. He had offered pardons, rewards, he even took hostages and hung them in cages for all to see yet the townsfolk would not give up the usurper. He even told Myles Toyne as much a few years ago. “The great Tywin Lannister would have done no better,” Jon had adamantly maintained.

“That is where you are wrong,” his old friend had replied. “Tywin Lannister would not have bothered with a search. He would have burnt down that entire town with every living creature in it. Men and boys even young babes. Noble knights and septons. Whores and rebels. He would have burned them all to a crisp. Then when the ash had settled, he would have sent his men to find Robert’s bones,”

Over 15 years had passed since the Battle of the Bells, yet the sound of a ringing bell still tied his stomach in knots. Many had said that the realm was lost when Rhaegar fell to Robert’s warhammer that fateful day on the trident. But the war would not have gotten to the Trident, if the Griffin had slayed the Stag in Stoney Sept.

The bells tolled for them on that day. For Aerys and Rhaella. For Elia and Rhaenys. And for my silver prince.

He had failed the father. He would not fail the son.

The thought of his friend, Myles Toyne was a bitter memory. Myles had been the only one in the company who fully understood Illyrio and Varys’s plans. Homeless Harry Strickland was a good man no doubt, but he was not from Westeros. He did not have the same hunger to go home as he did. He wondered what Varys had told him, it was probably not a lot. The eunuch and the cheesemonger liked to play their cards close to their chest.

He was interrupted from his thoughts by a loud noise from beneath his window, it sounded like people cheering and shouting. Was it Daenerys? He stuck his head out the window in the hot southern Volantene sun and looked out on the street below. He saw a group of mummers singing...
loudly as they walked down the street. Jon scowled and then sat back on his chair. He rubbed his hands through his hair and took deep calming breaths. He took another drink of his wine. He needed to relax. He should have gone out with Tyrion and Haldon to explore the streets of Volantis, some fresh air and a change of scenery would do him good.

Yes, that was exactly what he would do. Jon stood up and reached for his sword and strapped it in place by his side. He would take the future King with him. His ancestors lived behind the black walls of Volantis. Perhaps, they would be hospitable to him.

He stood up and walked to the door of his stuffy room and put one hand on the cool metal door handle. As soon as his fingers touched the metal he heard a loud roar that made his blood run cold.

He froze on the door handle. It could not be true, the dragons were only a few months old, they could not produce a noise like that. He waited with baited breath as the seconds stretched into minutes. He slowly let out a loud long breath and relaxed, he let go of the door handle and his hand fell loosely to his side. Jon remembered that he was going to get the King. He reached for the door handle again and this time he heard another loud screech.

He instinctively ran over to the window and stuck his neck outside, he craned his neck from left to right looking for the noise. He finally looked upwards and then he saw them. Two dragons flying side by side in the sky. One black, the other green with bronze scales.

Jon was amazed by their size, they were much bigger than he had expected. This caused some of his earlier worries to return. Viserys would have to respect Aegon’s superior claim, he simply had to.

The dragons gave another loud roar and this snapped him out of his daze. Daenerys was here and it was time to act. It was time to earn his redemption.

He quickly entered the hallway and went to Aegon’s door. Unsurprisingly, he saw the boy staring out of the window at the dragons.

“Come your grace, it is time to get your bride,”

“The dragons, I only see two, where is the third? Where is my dragon?” he asked, still not able to tear his eyes away from the dragons flying in the sky.

“Hunting perhaps? It doesn’t matter, we need to execute our plan. Your plan.” and then he put a hand on his shoulder. His touch seemed to break him from his gaze and he quickly looked back at him. They gathered their meagre belongings and went downstairs to the stables. Septa Lemore and Duck were waiting for them, standing next to their horses.

Jon quickly found a grey gelding for the King to ride and found a mount for himself as well.

“What about Haldon or the Imp?” Duck asked. “Are we not going to wait for them?”

“They will know to look for us outside the Golden Company’s camp,” Connington immediately replied as he quickly led them out of the stables. They could not afford to wait, he could not afford to wait. This was his chance, he would not fail. He could not fail.

He quickly led them out of Volantis and north along the Valyrian road to Sar Mell. The day was hot and sticky and the mid-day sun was beating down on them. Still, Connington would not be deterred, he led a ferocious pace to try and get back to the Golden Company camp. They quickly reached Sar Mell where they found Yandry and the Shy Maid waiting to take them across the rushing blue waters of the river Rhoyne.
As they crossed the river, he looked back towards the city of Volantis. The dragons were not in the sky, and if they were, he could not see them from this distance. Still, he could not get distracted with thoughts of the dragons, they still had a plan and he needed to focus to execute it. He turned away to the city and stared across at the other bank of the Rhoyne. He saw the ships that had been brought upstream to ferry the troops, as they got closer, he could begin to see activity on the deck. That was good, hopefully they were preparing for their departure.

Once they disembarked they got back on their horses and rode for the camp. The camp had a deep ditch dug around it, with sharpened spikes inside. The tents stood in need orderly rows with plenty of space between them to navigate. The latrines had been dug next to the river, so the current could wash away the waste. To the North of the camp were the elephants, they had around two dozen. Jon smiled to himself, there was not a warhorse in the world that would stand against an elephant.

As they reached the edge of the camp, their pace slowed down as they passed the line of soldiers heading towards the ships. Jon was happy about this, the sooner the soldiers were on the ship, the sooner they could make the short journey to Volantis. As he walked, he saw Harry walking purposely towards him with one of his generals following closely behind.

“Connington!” he said warmly “Today is the day, eh?”

“It looks like it,” Connington said. He did not share Harry’s excitement, this was not the time for celebration.

“The men are all heading towards the ships, the elephants should be on soon and then we should be ready to depart. What is the plan for the city?”

“We will sail and dock in the western harbor. Queen Daenerys and her forces are coming from the east and will likely dock in the eastern harbor. We will sack the city first, so when their forces arrive we will be ready to hand the city over to them,” Aegon said immediately. “How long until we are ready to depart?”

“We should be ready by mid-afternoon,” Harry answered

“Too slow, make it sooner,” and Jon agreed with him. They could not afford to be late, sacking the city and proving their loyalty is essential to their plan.

“Very well, I will speed up the preparations for our departure,” Harry said and he quickly went away to make the necessary arrangements. Jon then led them back down towards the water and towards their ship. They would be travelling on the flagship at the front of the fleet.

As they finally reached the muddy banks of the Rhoyne he looked out across the river and he saw a small boat approaching and as he looked closer, he saw who it was. Haldon had returned, without Tyrion. Jon scowled, the one time he had listened to the dwarf and it had backfired on him.

“Where is Tyrion?” he asked Haldon as soon as his little boat touched the muddy bank.

“I don’t know. Dead maybe. I lost sight of him in the riot,”

“Riot?” Aegon asked. “What riot?”

“The slave riot they started,” Haldon said breathlessly. “They landed on top of the Temple of the Lord of Light and said that they were freeing all the slaves in the city,”

“How? They have no army?”
“They said they didn’t need an army. The slaves outnumber the freemen by 5 to 1. They basically told the slaves to free themselves,”

“Start from the beginning,” Jon ordered. He had a bad feeling about this, this was not the plan. There was not supposed to be a slave riot. How could the Golden Company enter and sack the city when the slaves had already done it for them?

“Well, as you know, we left the inn to go and explore the city. We were on our way back across the Long Bridge when we heard the dragons roar. Everyone looked up at them as they flew over the city. We saw that they had landed somewhere by the Red Temple and seemingly every single slave in the city flocked towards them, we had no choice but to go with the flow of people,”

“Once we reached the Red Temple, everyone waited in the plaza for them to appear. There were thousands of slaves there, all crammed into that plaza. The dwarf had to climb onto my back so that he could see our surroundings. When they finally appeared on the balcony of the temple, the place erupted into cheers. They walked side by side, hand in hand as they stood over the people. They gave their speech and then they started the revolt.”

“Shit,” Jon said. This was not good.

“It gets worse,” Jon shook his head in disbelief. Their plan was already falling apart, how could it possibly get any more worse.

“She was pregnant and obviously so,”

Connington was stunned. How could Aegon marry her when she was already carrying another man’s child? It would be like the Blackfyre rebellions all over again.

“That is unfortunate, very unfortunate,” Aegon said after a pause. “But it is not the end of the world. When we meet with them and explain the situation, we could move past this. Viserys will learn of his betrothal to Arianne and he will see the need to honor it. We need the Dornish forces to take back Westeros and I’m sure he will agree to honor the pact.”

“What about the babe?” Jon asked quickly.

“The child will be a prince or princess in their own right. If need be, we could marry Viserys’s child to mine to bind the two lines,” Jon was impressed by his quick thinking, it would serve him well as King. However, he noticed Haldon shaking his head.

“What is it?” Jon asked fearing the worst

“The man with Daenerys had the looks of a Targaryen but he announced that he was not Viserys. He claims that he is Aegon Targaryen, the trueborn son of Rhaegar Targaryen and Lyanna Stark,”

Connington looked at the half maester in shock. It could not be true, his silver prince fathered a child on the northern slut? No, it could not be true. Polygamy was considered a sin in the faith of the seven. The child could not have been trueborn, it simply could not be true. Most importantly, where could this child have been hiding? Aegon had been smuggled out of the capital. No, it was a lie, Varys would have known about another child.

“Impossible,” Connington said. “It’s just not possible,”

“I am not sure it matters,” Haldon began. “He has Daenerys and dragons by his side and that makes him seem much more legitimate in the eyes of the realm,”
Jon stared at the half maester but he could not doubt the truth and logic of his words. If Daenerys was truly committed to this false prince then there was nothing they could do.

“It makes no difference. We will still sail to Volantis, I will slay this false prince and take my bride,” Aegon said arrogantly.

“No,” Jon said quietly, Aegon turned to look at him in disbelief.

“No? What do you mean ‘No’? You can’t tell me ‘No’!” Jon was shocked, Aegon had never spoken to him like this before.

“Your grace, forgive me,” Jon said immediately “But I urge you to seek caution. If it is true that Daenerys loves this false prince, then you cannot fight him today. You will be fighting against dragons, you will need a plan,”

Aegon stared at him intensely, his dark blue eyes almost becoming purple in his anger but Jon held his gaze. Barely. Finally, Aegon dropped his gaze and in turn headed to look out over the waters.

Jon breathed a sigh of relief, he was no longer the young prince that he had met all those years ago. He was growing into a King, and he was beginning to realise his power.

“If we don’t sail to Volantis today, then what do we do?” Aegon said as he turned back towards him. Jon was quiet for a few moments. Varys and Illyrio’s plans had been destroyed, they could not rely on them. He would not head back to Pentos and wait for them to come up with a new one. From now on, he would make the plans.

They needed allies, the Golden Company would not be enough, they were only 20,000 strong.

“Dorne,” he said after a pause.

“Dorne?” Aegon asked

“Yes, we need allies in Westeros. You are Elia’s son, the Dornish will rally behind you. Once the realm sees that the respected Prince Doran Martell is your ally, it will add to your legitimacy,”

Jon could see Aegon pondering this for a moment. “You’re right. That false prince has no allies in Westeros, no one will join his cause. He is claiming to be a son that no one knew existed. Fetch Harry, tell him that the King has decided that we will sail for Dorne,”

Jon nodded and went to find Harry Strickland. They would sail for Dorne and then he will have his redemption. He will sit the true Aegon on the throne and slay the pretender, dragons be damned.

The Hand of the King

Ned Stark was dreaming, he was in the south, over Kings Landing. He drifted towards Aegon’s high hill and towards the Red Keep. Ned floated through the walls until he was above the throne room in the Red Keep, but as he looked around he realised that this was throne room before Robert took the throne. He saw massive dragon skulls adorning the walls of the room. Even though the beasts that they once belonged to were long dead, he was still in awe of their size. He looked around the throne room and he saw the Mad King sitting on his throne, pointing and leaning forward with glee on his face. Ned looked around and saw what brought such a wicked smile to his face.
This was the day of his father and brother’s death, Ned had heard stories, but now he was able to witness it firsthand. He watched helplessly as his brother strangled himself to death whilst trying to free their father. He listened to the screams of his father as the wildfire cooked him slowly inside his own armor. Ned was horrified, he landed on the floor of the throne room and turned his back to the dragon skulls and turned to face the audience. He saw the knights of the Kingsguard in the room, all watching grim faced as the King carried out this mad act. They would not raise a hand to stop this, they couldn’t.

Ned drew his sword and he started to walk forward but as soon as he took the first step he heard a low, guttural growl. He slowly turned around and he was face to face with a dragon. A huge black monster with red streaks on his scales. He heard another growl and he turned towards the noise. This was a different dragon, green with bronze scales, the dragon bared its teeth and Ned was able to look down its throat. Row after row off razor sharp black teeth and deep down its throat, he saw the bubbling molten green flame. Ned backed away slowly from the dragon until he felt something hot behind him.

He quickly span around and he saw a third dragon, it was cream and gold. Ned walked backwards as the dragons slowly moved forward. Each of them growling and baring their teeth at him. Ned was terrified. He heard a loud roar that shook the throne room and caused him to fall to his knees. He turned and faced the green and bronze dragon which was looking down on him, judging him.

He heard a loud scream coming from where his father and brother were bound. He turned towards the noise and too his horror, it was no longer his father and brother but Catelyn and Sansa in their places. Catelyn was above the fire whilst Sansa was being strangled to death. Their screams, Ned would never forget their screams. He heard a low growl and he realised that the green dragon had grown angry.

He watched as the dragon observed him, its eyes were bronze, brighter than polished shields. Ned watched as the eyes stared into his soul, almost as if it was judging him for everything he had ever done in his life.

“Please,” Ned whispered and then the dragon opened his mouth, and Ned was engulfed in its bright green flame.

Ned awoke with a start. He looked around his dark room in the Eyrie and he realised that it was just a dream. Still, the dream had shaken him.

He had never dreamed of that tragic day before. He was not sure what to make of that, were those old dragons or new? It would make sense that they were the dragons of old. They must have come from the skulls that lined the throne room. Yes that makes sense, the Black dragon could only have been ‘Balerion the Black Dread’, and the other dragons would have been similar legendary dragons. Ned realised that he had forgotten their names, Arya would remember, she loved the stories about the Targaryens and their dragons.

His mind betrayed him and thought of the alternative. Could these be the new dragons that the Targaryen children had hatched in the east? Was his dream showing him that the Targaryens and their dragons would hurt his family yet again?

Ned pushed himself out of bed and crossed over to the stone basin in the room. He splashed some cold water on his face and then crossed over to the window. His room was in the maiden tower, the eastern most tower in the Eyrie. From his window, he could see all the way down the Giant’s Lance. He could faintly see the Gates of the Moon and the way castles, they looked like children's toys from this height.
They had been in the Eyrie for the last few days. Robert had ordered all the Lords of the Vale to come to the Eyrie so he could address them individually. They had a massive problem on their hands, with the death of Jon Arryn, Lysa and Robin, House Arryn had no heirs. They would need to meet the Lords and agree on a new Lord of the Eyrie and Warden of the East.

He closed his eyes and took a deep breath, faintly in the background he could hear the waterfall. He opened his eyes and then decided to dress. Last night, Lord Royce had informed them that the Lords of the Vale had assembled at the Gates of the Moon. Today, they should all make the ascent to the Eyrie.

He dressed warmly, due to the altitude, the Eyrie was always rather chilly. Once he was dressed, he left his room and headed to the High Hall where their meals were served. It is a long austere hall, the walls were made from white marble with blue veins in it to represent the colors of House Arryn. The hall had several arched windows with torches sat in between them. At one end of the High Hall, sat the throne of the Mountain Kings, a seat made out of weirwood. He could also see the moon door, and if he closed his eyes, he could still see Lysa jumping out of it with her child.

He wished she hadn’t have done that. They would have been merciful to her, sent her to serve with the silent sisters if needs be. As for the child, they would not have punished the child. The little boy had played no part in this awful matter.

Ned moved to one end of the hall where he found a table piled with food. He filled his plate with bacon, grabbed a heel of bread and poured himself some ale. He sat at the table and ate his breakfast, watching as the hall filled with people. He saw Bronn, that sellsword, sauntering in. His plan had worked, he and the mountain clans had scaled another path that led to the Vale. They distracted all the castle’s defenders which meant that the royal forces had not bombarded with arrows or more boulders. He nodded his head in greeting at the man who gave him a cheeky grin in return.

Eventually, Robert arrived and he piled his plate high with food.

The King had been in a good mood ever since Littlefinger had lost his head. He was laughing and joking with the soldiers who had made the ascent with them to the Eyrie, it reminded him of the Robert he saw after the Battle of the Trident. Robert sat at the far end of the hall near the weirwood throne as he ate. He was talking and eating with Ser Barristan and Ser Arys.

Robb entered the hall and sat opposite him.

“So, how was your first taste of battle?” Ned asked

“It was...not what I expected,” Robb answered after a moment and Ned nodded in understanding.

“What was different?”

“Nothing and everything. It was just like how we practiced in the yard. Everything was the same, just this time, a man died,”

“Do you remember the first man you killed?” He asked and Ned nodded

“It never leaves you. I still remember my first kill. Didn’t even know his name or where he was from, whether he was highborn or lowborn. He was just a man that I had to kill. It never leaves you, but you learn to live with it,”

Robb nodded and was silent for a few moments as he considered his words.

“Tell me about the Targaryens,” he said and Ned froze.
“What do you want to know?”

“The men around the camp have heard stories. They say they have dragons,“

“Yes, there are a lot of stories from Essos that say the same thing. They say the Targaryen children have dragons and they’re using them to sack cities and burn them down,”

“Do you think Jon is with them?” he asked hopefully,

“I don’t think so. None of the reports mentioned his direwolf. Someone would have mentioned a white direwolf with ruby red eyes,”

Robb paused as he considered this. “You might be right. Although, these are the first dragons in over a century. Perhaps the reports focus on the dragons and not a wolf within the Targaryen forces,”

Ned paused as he considered this information, there was a certain amount of sense in his son’s words. Perhaps, Jon had also survived the storm, but the reports had just failed to mention him.

Then he realised that if Jon was alive, then he would still be with the Targaryens, and the Targaryens were sacking cities and putting them to the torch. Thousands of people were dying because of their actions and Jon was a part of it. No, Jon could not have been a part of such cruel atrocities. The Jon that he knew and had raised protected those who could not protect themselves. Jon would not sack cities and burn them down. Perhaps, Jon had realised how terrible the Targaryens were and he had left them behind. That would explain why Jon or his direwolf were not mentioned in those reports.

“Robb, you know Jon. Surely he would return to us and help us fight these monsters? The Targaryen children are sacking cities, does that sound like something Jon would be part of?” he said and Robb was quiet for a few moments.

“You’re right father, Jon would not stand by the Targaryens as they commit these horrible crimes. Maybe he is returning home right now,” he said hopefully and Ned nodded in agreement.

“What I don’t understand is why Jon would serve the Targaryens in the first place, especially after what they did to our family especially, Aunt Lyanna,” and Ned froze. How much could he tell him? Nothing was the answer, there were too many ears listening.

“The Targaryens are said to possess an otherworldly beauty to them. Perhaps, Jon had been smitten by the girl’s beauty,” Ned said weakly and Robb laughed,

“You don’t know, Jon. Our Jon would not follow them because he has fallen in love with a pretty face,” Robb said laughing but it seemed he was willing to drop the topic. It was hopeful optimism on Robb’s part.

He saw Maester Colemon enter the hall and he quickly walked over to the King and handed him a scroll. After they had taken the castle, they had demanded to read all the ravens Littlefinger had sent and received. There was nothing interesting in those letters, it was mostly him corresponding with the Vale Lords that he had won to his side. They had also sent a raven to Kings Landing, letting the small council know that Baelish had been executed.

Ned watched as the Maester handed the scroll over to Robert, as he watched Robert read it, he quickly realised that it was not good news.

Robert finished reading and stood from the table, not caring that he had not finished his meal.
“Ned, follow me,” he said as he left the hall, he pointed at Tywin Lannister and got him to follow them as well. Ned quickly followed him as he led them through the castle and eventually to the Moon tower, this was where Lord’s chambers were located. Robert pushed open the door to the solar and entered. He sat behind the table and Ned sat opposite him.

“The Targaryens?” he said immediately and Robert nodded. “What have they done now?”

“The reports say that they have acquired a large Dothraki Khalasaar,”

“How?” Tywin asked.

“Doesn’t matter. Probably those damn dragons. You should be asking how many Dothraki screamers do they have in their army?”

“Does the report mention the number?” Ned asked and Robert shook his head. “Can I see the report?” he asked hopefully. Perhaps, something in the report would deny Jon’s presence. Ned had heard stories about the Dothraki, they were a savage bunch of people who raped and pillaged their way through the lands. It was no surprise that the Targaryens would associate with their type. The Jon that he had raised would no better than to join forces with those savages.

“Well, aren’t you going to say anything?” Robert asked, breaking him from his thoughts, Ned realised that he had been daydreaming.

“The Dothraki are no true threat,” Ned said as he put the scroll back down.


“Everybody knows that the Dothraki will never cross the narrow sea, Robert.”

“And what if they do? What if these Targaryens and their dragons cause them to cross?” he said angrily.

“There are still those in the Seven Kingdoms who call me usurper. There are still those who pray for the dragons to return. How many Lords will flock to their banners if they land on our shores with a large army and dragons?”

“They have no allies Robert. There is not a single house in the Seven Kingdoms that would support them. You have House Lannister and House Stark tied directly to you through marriage, your son is betrothed to my daughter. House Arryn and the Vale is in disarray, but whichever Lord you put in place here will be loyal to you. Hoster Tully fought to overthrow the dragons in your rebellion and Balon’s son is my ward. Renly has close ties and friendship with House Tyrell. The Dornish may support them but Dorne alone will not be enough. You will have at least 5 of the 7 Kingdoms behind you. They cannot win. If they cross, we will throw them back into the sea,”

“What about their dragons?” he said as he leaned back in his chair.

“Your grace, it will be years before their dragons grow to a size that would allow for them to be used in warfare and that is if they grow. I have heard that the last dragons were no bigger than cats,” Tywin said dismissively. The room was silent for a few moments and Robert drummed his fingers on the wooden desk. They heard a loud knocking on the door and Robert ordered the person to enter.

“The Lords of the Vale are here your grace, they are all assembled in the High Hall,” Ser Jaime told him.

“Come, let’s get this over with, the sooner we appoint a new lord, the sooner we can head home.
This place isn’t the same without Jon Arryn around,” Robert said and Ned was inclined to agree with him. They made their way back through the hallways of the Eyrie and entered the High Hall. Nearly all the Lords of the Vale were present, Robert quickly strode to the weirwood throne and sat on it.

“Quiet!” he shouted and the hall immediately fell silent. “As you all should know by now. Lord Jon Arryn, former Hand of the King and your Lord Paramount was murdered. He was murdered by his wife Lysa Arryn under the orders of her lover, Petyr Baelish,” Ned looked around as he spoke, none of the lords looked shocked. Ned looked at some of the older lords he knew. Ser Vardis and Lord Royce were loyal to the crown, he knew that. He spotted Lyonel Corbray, he was also said to be loyal. As he looked to the back of the hall, he saw his brother, Lyn Corbray. The previous Lord of House Corbray had died during the Battle of the Trident. Apparently, Lyn had picked up their ancestral Valyrian steel longsword, ‘Lady Forlorn’ and led a charge at the Dornishmen, causing them to scatter. He even slew the great Prince Lewyn Martell of the Kingsguard in combat.

Ned watched Lyn closely, he was sticking to the shadows, Lord Royce had warned them about not trusting him.

“Lysa Arryn decided to kill both herself and her child by throwing herself out of the moon door,” Robert said and this time there was some quiet whispering and mutters going through the crowd. Robert allowed them this time before demanding silence again.

“Now, as you know, Jon Arryn has no heir. So we will need to appoint a new Lord of the Eyrie and Warden of the East,” and this caused a few excited whispers to go through the crowd. No doubt, some Lord was excited at this opportunity to elevate their house.

“Your grace,” Maester Colemon called from the side. “I have been looking into this issue and it appears that Jon Arryn does indeed have a heir,”

“Who?” Robert demanded to know immediately

“A boy named Harrold Hardyng. He is Jon Arryn’s great nephew,”

“How?” the King asked.

“Lord Arryn’s father, Jasper, had three children, two boys and a girl. Jon was the eldest. His brother Ronnel is dead and so is his issue, Elbert. Lord Arryn’s sister, Alys, had 9 children. 8 daughters and a son. One of the daughters married a knight from House Hardyng and she gave birth to Harold,”

“Is he here now?” Robert asked and Maester Colemon shook his head.

“Actually your grace, he is,” a silky voice said. Ned turned towards the noise and saw that Lyn Corbray had stepped forward, with his arm around a young man’s shoulder.

“As I am sure the other Lords can attest to the fact, this is Harrold Hardyng, or Harry the Heir as some call him,” he said

“Boy come forward,” Robert said. “Lord Royce, you too.”

The boy stepped forward and made his way to the front of the hall where he stood before King Robert. Robert looked towards Yohn Royce expectantly.

“Your grace, I have met him before, he is who he claims to be,”

“Very well, it seems we have a new Lord of the Eyrie,” Robert said loudly and there was a polite round of applause. Some of the Lords looked disappointed but not Lyn Corbray. The man was
beaming. Yohn Royce and Harrold stepped back away from the throne.

“Lord Royce, I have not dismissed you,” Robert said as soon as he walked away.

“My apologies your grace,”

“Lord Yohn Royce. I appoint you Warden of the East until Lord Hardyng proves his loyalty to the crown. In say, 2 years, we will return to revisit the issue,” Robert ordered and Ned saw Lyn Corbray’s smile falter.

“It would be my honor, your grace,” Yohn Royce said with a wide smile.

“Now, that will be all. I order all of the royal forces to ready themselves for our departure, we’re going home,”

Home. Ned missed Winterfell. He missed the smell of the Godswood, he missed his family. He needed to go home, even if it was for a few weeks. He needed to see his family. He quickly walked over to Robert,

“Your grace, I would like to spend some time back at Winterfell, with my family,” he said quickly. Robert looked surprised.

“Of course, spend time with your family Ned. Why did you look so worried? Did you think I would keep you trapped in that shithole we call a capital?” he said with a chuckle.

“I’m your Hand, my place is by your side. I thought you would have wanted me to return with you,”

“I’ll be fine for a few months, spend time with your family,” he said warmly. Ned smiled and turned to walk away to pack his things.

“Ned. I’m serious. Spend time with your family,” he said and Ned looked at him. He had a grim look on his face. “There’s a war coming Ned, I don’t know when but we know who we’ll be fighting. It might not be tomorrow, it might not be in a month, but they’re coming,”

Ned knew he was right and his good mood soured slightly. War was coming. The Targaryens were coming to wage war and it was going to be brutal. The Targaryens had dragons and they had the Dothraki. He thought back to his dream, the dream in which dragons were killing his family.

He would have to fight them.

The Imp of Casterly Rock

It was early in the morning and Tyrion and Ser Jorah were camped in the hilly region to the east of Volantis. It was early in the morning but he could still see the smoke billowing out into the sky. If Tyrion closed his eyes, he could still see the towers burning like candles in the skyline. The dragons and the heat from their dragonflame was so powerful that even from this distance he could see small fires within the black walls.

What Tyrion did not understand is why had they done this?

He remembered in their speech, they had claimed the Old Blood did not want to join them in their
new world, so they would perish in their old, but he did not think they would be so literal. They had literally burned thousands of people alive right in front of his eyes.

Perhaps, they were no better than Griff after all. Perhaps, the world was filled with terrible people.

They had said that they would abolish slavery and Tyrion was inclined to believe them, but how had they gone from abolishing slavery to killing innocent people? On some level, Tyrion understood the need to be ruthless and pragmatic. He had briefly walked past the Black walls and they were very high and seemed to be incredibly thick. Perhaps, they had reasoned that a conventional siege would not work, but still. Surely, there had to be some sort of middle ground in this situation.

Or perhaps, they were just like the Mad King.

Tyrion was interrupted from his thoughts by the sound of Ser Jorah waking up from his sleep on the hard ground.

“Sleep well?” Tyrion asked as Jorah got up groggily and stretched. He looked around before his eyes settled on the ruined black walls.

“It’s been burning and smoking away all night I think,” Tyrion said to him. “Tell me Ser Jorah, how much do you know about your King and Queen,”

Jorah just looked at him and shrugged. “I was hired to protect them, many months ago,”

“And how long were you in their service?”

“Not very long, no more than a month perhaps,”

“So you don’t know what type of people they are. You don’t by chance know why they would want to burn thousands of people alive in their homes?”

Ser Jorah just gave him a dark look.

“So you don’t know them, so why are you sending me to them?”

“Your father killed the Queen’s niece, nephew and good sister,”

“So you believe I should be punished for my father's crimes? I must say Ser Jorah, you seem like a terrible person. First you trade slaves, now this. What have I ever done to you?” this caused the northerner to scowl fiercely at him. He opened his mouth to retaliate but they heard a loud screech. They both turned towards the noise and saw the third dragon.

This dragon was pale cream and gold and it looked just as big as the other two. They watched as this dragon flew low looping laps over the city and the smoking ruins before landing on the temple of the Lord of Light which appeared to have been untouched by the nearby blaze.

“Eat,” Jorah said as he thrust some hard bread into his hands. It wasn’t much, but Tyrion was not in the mood to complain. As they ate, they looked out to the harbor and they saw the Targaryen fleet slowly approaching.

“Looks like our King and Queen are here,” Tyrion said quietly as he watched all the dragons flying high above the ships. He could not believe that these magical creatures that he had dreamed about since he was a child were actually real. He couldn’t believe that they were so beautiful and yet so utterly destructive.
“Good, let’s go,” Ser Jorah said as he quickly grabbed him by the shoulders.

“Must we do this again?” Tyrion said as Jorah bound his ankles. “Where would I run to? I’m not very fast, even an old man like you could probably catch me,” and for that line, Jorah tied the ropes around his wrist so tight that Tyrion felt his skin burn

“Even If I chose to run, where would I go? I am miles away from home, I have no friends here, I don’t speak the language and believe it or not, I actually want to meet the Dragon King and Queen,”

“You want to meet them?” Jorah asked disbelievingly as he hoisted Tyrion onto the horse and sat behind him. “Even though they will probably kill you?”

“Yes,” Tyrion said quickly, surprising himself. “My family hates me, I’m in a foreign land with no money or means of making money. If you take me to the King and Queen then perhaps in my final moments I’ll be able to see a dragon up close. That would make my miserable life worth it,” he said simply and honestly.

Jorah gave grunted at him and led them off towards the city. The ride back into Volantis took a few hours and the hot sun was not helping. The day was as hot and sticky as the one before and Ser Jorah led a grueling pace.

“You could at least give me some water, I won’t be a good gift if I’m dead,” he said after a few hours and mercifully, he was allowed a drink. The water was warm but he didn’t complain, it was better than dying of thirst. After this short break, they continued to ride into the city. Tyrion watched as the dragons flew overhead, all three dragons were circling above. It was like they were playing games with each other, one would dive and the others would follow. As they were nearing the city, the dragons all took off to the north and Tyrion wondered where they were going.

Finally, they reached the city and Tyrion was stunned by what he saw. The slave revolt had been brutal. Many of the shop fronts and inns had been vandalized. He saw people lying in the streets. Some were already dead, others were heavily wounded and were slowly dying in the streets.

They were both silent as they rode through the cobbled streets, taking in the damage that had occurred in the city. As they rode east towards the Red Temple, they saw soldiers enter the streets.

“Unsullied,” Jorah said gruffly. Tyrion watched as these Unsullied walked into the streets carrying stretchers and supplies. Following the Unsullied were healers, Tyrion watched as the Unsullied and the healers tended to the wounded. The Unsullied gathered the dead and put them on the stretchers or loaded them onto carts. Whilst they did this, the healers tended to the injured, cleaning and bandaging their wounds. As they got closer and closer to the Red temple, they saw a steady stream of Unsullied going back and forth, dutifully helping to restore order to the ruined city.

Tyrion was impressed by this, but also confused. He was not sure what to make of this young King and Queen. Were they truly good liberators who wanted to do good in the world? Or was this an elaborate facade to cover up their true intentions and desires.

Jorah took them past the ruined black walls. Tyrion could not believe that he was here only yesterday. The huge black walls that were so high had now been melted to at least half their height. All of the guard towers and spires had been melted away. As he looked up towards the sky, he could still see trails of smoke from the fires that must still be slowly burning. He scrunched up his nose at the acrid smell that came from the ruins.

“Hurry up Ser Jorah, otherwise I might just vomit up my breakfast,” and thankfully Jorah seemed to agree with him.
They continued to ride through the city for a few moments until they reached the red temple. Surprisingly, the entire temple seemed to have been untouched. Half of the plaza had been turned into a makeshift camp, it seemed. He saw tents where the Unsullied were taking the wounded to be treated.

Jorah led them all the way to the great stone steps that led them to the front of the temple, Tyrion looked around and he saw that the acolytes were walking back and forth, bringing supplies from inside the temple. Jorah dismounted and roughly grabbed Tyrion and hauled him off the horse.

“You probably should untie me,” Tyrion told him,

“Why would I do that?” Jorah said in his gruff northern voice,

“You’re taking me to the King and Queen who came here to free the slaves from chains...and you’re taking me to them in chains. It’s not the best look,” Jorah just grunted and quickly untied him. Tyrion flexed his sore wrists and stretched his legs before setting off inside the temple.

The inside of the temple was well lit. There were white marble pillars that led up the high ceiling and the marble floor was painted in a beautiful mix of reds, oranges and yellows. They waited in the antechamber for a few moments, neither of them knew which direction to head in.

“Ser Jorah, do you speak any Valyrian?”

“No,”

“Then what was your plan? How were you going to find the King and Queen in this vast temple?”

“I would have figured something out,” he said and Tyrion sighed in frustration.

“Excuse me,” Tyrion said to a passing acolyte in his best High Valyrian. “Where are the King and Queen?” the acolyte gave him a funny look and Tyrion realised that he had probably butchered some of the words.

“King and Queen please?” he said again slowly and this time the acolyte seemed to understand. He pointed towards a marble staircase on the far side of the antechamber. They headed towards the steps and headed upwards. Once they reached the top of the staircase, they found themselves on an impressive landing. The hallway was long and had a high painted ceiling and Tyrion saw Dothraki warriors lining the walls of the hallway. At the end of the hallway was a huge ebony double door.

“Can I help you?” a man said to them and mercifully he seemed to speak the common tongue. Tyrion turned towards the source of the voice and saw that it came from a blue bearded Tyroshi.

“We’d like to see King Aegon and Queen Daenerys,” Ser Jorah said immediately and the man just cocked an eyebrow at them.

“I’d like to do a lot of things too, but why would the King and Queen want to see you?”

“Tell them that I am Ser Jorah Mormont, they know who I am,” he said proudly.

“Mormont?” he said and Tyrion saw Jorah smile. “They’ve never mentioned you,” and Jorah scowled. Tyrion knew that it would be up to him to get them into that room.

“They will most certainly know who I am,” Tyrion said stepping forward. “Or at the very least, they would have heard of my father. I am Tyrion Lannister, son of Tywin Lannister,” and he watched as the Tyroshi considered his words, it seemed that he recognized the name Lannister.
“It was my father who sacked Kings Landing and ordered the murder of Princess Elia and her children and it was my brother who killed the Queen’s father,” Tyrion knew that this was a risky thing to say, but he wanted to see the King and Queen and to do that, he needed to get into that room. Understanding dawned on the man’s face as his eyes opened wide.

“Stay there,” he said as he quickly went to the end of the hallway and into the room. They waited for a few minutes until he returned.

“They will see you, but you need to be searched. Both of you,” he said. “Strip,”

Tyrion looked at the man and he held his gaze, Tyrion cursed his luck and realised he had no choice. He quickly stripped and allowed himself to be searched. Once the man was satisfied they weren’t carrying any secret weapons, he allowed them to dress and led them down the hall. He eyed the Dothraki warily but they paid no real attention to him.

The man reached the end of the hall and pushed open the huge ebony doors and led them into the room.

On the other side of the doors, they entered into a lavish room. There was a thick Myrish carpet on the floor and he saw several doors leading off to other rooms. He spotted a tall man standing on one side of the room. The man had long silver blonde hair and the classic Valyrian looks. To the right of the room, he saw a woman standing with her arms behind her back, she had the looks of a Summer Islander. In the middle of the room, the King and Queen were seated on a couch. The King was not wearing his armor but instead wore a simple black and red doublet with the Targaryen sigil embroidered on one side. The Queen sat very close to him, wearing a long red dress with a black scarf around her shoulders. They both watched him as he entered and Tyrion felt nervous. In front of the Queen, a large white animal laid on the floor and Tyrion was unsettled by its bright red eyes.

“Tyrion Lannister,” The King said softly “And Ser Jorah Mormont. I must say Ser Jorah, we are surprised to see you, we would thought you would have left the city and journeyed elsewhere by now,”

“I stayed your grace, and I bring you a gift,” the northerner said as he shoved Tyrion forward.

“A gift,” the Queen said as she stared into him, her purple eyes were quite striking.

“Yes, a gift. His father killed your niece and nephew. His brother killed your father,” Ser Jorah said immediately.

“How do we know you are who you say you are?” The King asked,

“If only I wasn’t,” Tyrion said sadly.

“He is a Lannister,” the blonde haired man said immediately. “Everyone in the realm had heard about Tywin Lannister’s dwarf of a son,”

“Why shouldn’t they kill you for what your family did to ours?” Tyrion was caught out by the man’s words. ‘Our family?’

“Calm down, let’s not be rash in making decisions,” The King said warily as he raised his hand.

“We do not punish children for the sins of their fathers,” the Queen said. Tyrion let out a sigh of relief, they did not seem like complete monsters.

“Tell us why we shouldn’t put you on a ship and send you back to Westeros? Or put you back out
on the streets to fend for yourself?”

“Throwing me back onto the streets would be the kindest course of action. Although you seem to have caused quite a disturbance in the streets on account of that slave revolt you started and the destruction caused by your dragons,” Tyrion said casually.

Both the King and the Queen’s faces hardened and he realised he should have kept his mouth shut.

“My apologies, your graces. I get carried away sometimes,”

“Do you want to know why we burned the Old Blood of Volantis?” The King asked after a moment.

Tyrion was silent but he needed to know why they had done it. Why they did it would make all the difference?

“Very well. The Old Blood of Volantis are descendants of the Valyrian freehold. As a result, they follow many of the ancient Valyrian practices. They even follow the same gods,” the King began,

“They also followed the vile practice of slavery,” The Queen said fiercely. “A practice that has no place in our new world. We spoke with them yesterday and presented them with a chance to peacefully resolve the matter. We offered them the chance to peacefully join our new world. They could keep all their wealth and titles and in return all they had to do was release their slaves and stop financing the slave trade. They refused our offer and then spat in our face by saying that even if we freed the slaves today, they would simply re-enslave them later after we departed to reclaim Westeros.”

“The man bragged about how high and thick his walls were. He said that they would be able to withstand any kind of siege. So we taught him a lesson, the same lesson Aegon the Conqueror taught Harren the Black. We reminded them that we are dragonlords and we are not afraid to use our power,” the King told him.

Tyrion was quiet for a moment as he considered what they had said. He could see that they had good intentions, but what they did was completely ruthless. He thought back to the Reynes and the Tarbecks, this type of ruthlessness is something his father would approve of.

“You don’t approve,” the Queen said when he didn’t respond.

“It matters not as we weren’t seeking your approval,”

“The way you recounted your story to me, made it clear you were seeking some form of approval,” Tyrion said quickly which brought a scowl to their faces.

“I’m not sure I like you Tyrion Lannister,” the Queen said.

“It seems this meeting is at an end” and she stood up to leave.

“Wait, I have information for you, information that will be of great interest to both of you,” Tyrion said quickly. The Queen was still glaring at him but it seemed that he still had their attention.

“Very well,” The King said as he guided the Queen down to sit next to him again.

“I have discovered a conspiracy masterminded by Lord Varys, the Master of Whisperers in Kings Landing, to seat a false prince on the Iron Throne. The pretender is claiming to be Aegon Targaryen, son of Elia Martell who was smuggled out of Kings Landing by Varys during the sack. Also, this
boy has been raised by Lord Jon Connington who is known as a close friend to the late Prince Rhaegar to add more legitimacy to his claim. Lord Connington, himself, was presumed to have died in exile but has truly been in hiding with this false prince for years. The plot was to have this imposter marry you to cement his identity and then together both of you would take back Westeros with the help of the Golden Company, Dornish forces along with your dragons and armies” Tyrion watched them both as he spoke but surprisingly it was the blonde man in the corner of the room who looked most surprised by the words.

“How do you know all this?” he demanded.

“I was travelling with them,” Tyrion said and they all gave him questioning looks and he realised he would need to start from the beginning.

“My father and my sister were conspiring to kill me, but with the help of Lord Varys, I learned of the plot and was smuggled out of Kings Landing after faking my own death. Then I was taken across the narrow sea to Pentos where I met Varys’s friend and co-conspirator, Illyrio Mopatis,”

“Illyrio Mopatis, the Pentoshi Magister?” the Queen asked immediately and Tyrion nodded.

He noticed that she grew angrier upon hearing Illyrio’s name, he heard a loud roar and he realised that the dragons must have been close by.

“I take it that you know Illyrio?”

“We met briefly. Continue your story,” the King said waving him on,

“After I met Illyrio, he took me to the edge of the city where I met up with the pretender and his company. We travelled together to Norvos where they met up with the Dornish. It seems like there was a plan to marry Prince Viserys to Princess Arianne Martell and you to the false Aegon but clearly that plan will not materialize now,” he said gesturing at the two of them.

“After we left Norvos, we sailed south down the Rhoyne until we reached Volantis. The Golden Company remained camped outside the city whilst we stayed inside the city awaiting your arrival. The plan was for us to wait in the city and then go get the Golden Company when you arrived. The boy wanted to sack the city to impress you,”

“To impress me?” the Queen asked in disbelief. “Was he foolish enough to believe that I would be impressed by senseless and unnecessary violence?” and Tyrion just shrugged.

“That was his plan, your grace. Yesterday, I was exploring the city with another member of his party, the maester that Illyrio sent to the boy to teach him about Westeros. We were walking through the eastern half of the city when we heard your dragons. We heard your speech to the people and then after that, I was captured by our friend here,” he said gesturing at Ser Jorah.

“Why do you think this boy is a fake?” the man in the corner asked.

“I believe he is actually Illyrio’s son. He has a statue in his manse that looks just like the boy. Illyrio claims that the statue was made for him when he was a young man but his story does not make sense. The statue is clearly new and Illyrio, by his own admission, was quite poor in his youth. Most certainly too poor to have commissioned his own statue,”

“I knew that he had a son,” The King muttered under his breath.

“But Illyrio looks nothing like a Targaryen and he is unmarried as far as I know, so who is the boy’s mother?” the Queen asked.
“I believe the boy is from his marriage with his second wife, Serra. He said that he had met her in a pillow house of Lys, which would explain the boy’s coloring,” Tyrion answered.

“I also discovered a conspiracy to murder the royal children,” he said and he paid close attention to their reaction. They both look shocked at this news and the Queen’s hand immediately went to her stomach.

“Why?” The Queen asked, horror etched on her face.

“For revenge. My father gave the orders for murder of Princess Elia and her children, so the Dornish are planning to seek revenge of their own,” Tyrion watched as the King gently reached out and touched the Queen’s hand, comforting her.

“The Golden Company are here?” The King asked after a pause.

“Yes, your grace. They were camped outside Volon Therys, a city on the Western Bank of the river. They were supposed to be ferried down to Volantis when you arrived,”

The King considered this for a few moments before he stood up.

“Where are you going?” the Queen asked,

“If the Golden Company are still here, we can add them to our army and perhaps I can meet this false prince,”

“Stay,” she said as she looked at him. Tyrion saw something pass between their eyes and the King sat down again.

“Brother you go, take Caraxes,” she said and the man in the corner began to leave. That must have been Viserys.

“They thought I was Viserys?” the King asked with a hint of a smile on his face and Tyrion nodded, although he was very confused.

“Viserys could not do half the things you have done my love,” the Queen said softly, she gently kissed him and then Tyrion looked towards the door and saw the other man had not yet left

“Viserys wait,” he called and the man stopped and turned to look at him questionably.

“I am not Viserys,” he said with a scowl and Tyrion froze. The man looked very much like the King and Queen.

“The Queen called you her brother, so who are you?” he asked. The man looked at him suspiciously before looking back at the King and Queen.

“You may as well tell him, father. The world will soon know the truth anyway,”

“Father? Surely not” Tyrion thought.

“I am Rhaegar Targaryen. Son of King Aerys II and his wife Rhaella Targaryen. Husband to Elia Martell and Lyanna Stark. Father of Rhaenys, Aegon and Aegon his grace. Brother to Queen Daenerys,” the blonde man answered.

Tyrion was shocked. He was supposed to be dead.

“How?” Tyrion asked after a moment.
Rhaegar opened his mouth to speak but the Queen interrupted him.

“Brother, the Golden Company.” and then Rhaegar swiftly bowed and left.

“Forgive me your grace, I know we have only just met but I do have some questions for you,” Tyrion said addressing the King.

“Very well. As you have provided us with this information, I will allow you one question,”

“Who are you?” he asked and he saw a wry smile tug at the corners of the King’s face.

“For me, your grace for being so blunt, but everyone in Westeros knows the story of the two Targaryen children that fled into exile after Robert’s rebellion, but no one seems to know who you are,“

“I am Aegon Targaryen, son of Rhaegar Targaryen and Lyanna Stark although for the majority of my life I was unaware of my true parentage. I grew up as Jon Snow, the Bastard of Winterfell, under the protection of Lord Eddard Stark,”

Tyrion nearly kicked himself. It made perfect sense that Eddard Stark, a man known across the realm for his honor would have pretended to having sired a bastard in order to protect his sister’s son. Everyone had heard the story of how Lord Stark returned from the war with a bastard who he had decided to raise alongside his trueborn children. No one would suspect a thing. During war, many bastards were fathered. It was the perfect cover although he quickly spotted a flaw in the story.

“Your grace, I understand Lord Stark’s need and plan to protect you, but I have never heard any stories of a child with silver hair and purple eyes growing up in Winterfell. I’m sure King Robert if not the entire realm would have taken note of such a crucial fact,” and this time the King smiled.

Tyrion’s mouth fell open as he watched the King’s hair and eyes changed color to black and steely grey and then it changed back to silver and purple, just as easily.

“How?” Tyrion whispered after a few moments.

“I believe that’s your second question,” the King said with a smile on his face.

“Valyria,” the King answered with a smile.

So the rumors were true, they had sailed the smoking sea of Valyria, he would be a fool to doubt it. The Queen stood up.

“I’m tired,” she said simply to the King who quickly stood up to join her.

“Tyrion Lannister. We will allow you to stay with us for a while longer. Ser Jorah, you too can stay. We will discuss your position later,” he said after quickly looking at the Queen.

“Am I your guest or prisoner?” Tyrion asked

“In your situation, what’s the difference?” the Queen asked with a sly smile before they both turned and left the room.

The Dragon Reborn
“So what do you think of his information?” Daenerys asked as they entered their private room in the Red temple. The High Priest, Benerro had been kind enough to offer them these luxurious apartments. They had their own balcony and even a spacious bath that they could both fit into. Daenerys was seated on a couch whilst Jon brought her a cup of water which she graciously accepted.

“It seems like a lot to take in. A whole secret conspiracy for a secret prince? It doesn’t even make sense. Wasn’t Aegon’s head crushed against a wall?” Jon asked as he sat down next to her.

“Yes, I didn’t want to say anything to upset Rhaegar, but that is how he died,”

“Honestly Dany, I’m not sure whether it’s true. Father will be able to verify the part about the Golden Company, and if that’s true, why not the rest of it. I don’t see why Tyrion Lannister would make up such an elaborate lie,”

“Perhaps, he’s lying to get us to chase this false prince? He seems to have no love for his family, perhaps he means to use us to get revenge?”

“Maybe. Although, we could still use him. If he proves loyal, he could hold the Westerlands for us,”

“If he proves loyal. We only just met him. I’m not about to invite him into our inner circle,”

“I agree, we need to be careful around him. He could just as easily be a spy,”

“Then why did you tell him the truth? Especially about Rhaegar?”

“People will find out eventually. Anyone he tells in a letter won’t believe him, you have to see it to believe it,” Jon pointed out and she gave a sigh of agreement.

“How are you feeling?” he asked softly,

“Well, I’m tired. My feet are swollen and my back hurts,” she said and Jon smiled, “but I can’t wait to meet our baby,” she said quietly as she stroked her stomach. “I feel him more, he’s going to be a strong boy,”

“What do you think our children will think of us,” she said after a moment.

“What do you mean?”

“What we have done here will be no secret. People to this day still know the story of Aegon the Conqueror and Harrenhall, our children will know what we did here today. Will they think we are monsters?” she asked nervously.

“No,” he said immediately as he held her hand in his. “Our children will learn that as a ruler, sometimes you have to make tough and difficult decisions. There is a time to show your strength, and there is a time to show mercy. We showed the world our strength today. No one in Essos will ever rise up against us after they hear what we have done here and back in Slaver’s Bay. That will help keep people in line. It allows us to be more merciful in the future and not to be underestimated or taken advantage of,” he said reassuringly.

“Daenerys, I need you by my side, I can’t do this without you. If you start doubting me, if we start doubting ourselves then we can’t change the world. I need you by my side,”

“I will always be your side,” she said softly and she leaned forward and gently kissed him. He closed his eyes and remembered his vision of the little boy and the little girl. Their family. He wanted
to marry her, he truly did, but he wanted to wait for Westeros, but Westeros seemed so far away.

They were planning on staying in Volantis until she had their baby. He did not want to put her at risk. Only when the baby had been born and was a little older would they finally depart for Westeros. They also wanted to stay and ensure that Volantis recovered after the slave revolt, they would not leave the city to the carrions.

“Jon?” she said interrupting him from his thoughts. “What were you thinking about,” she asked softly. Jon stared into her lovely lilac eyes for a few moments.

“Marry me,” he blurted out before he had a second thought. “Today,”

She looked at him before breaking into a smile. “Yes,” she said happily with a smile that stretched all across her beautiful face.

“I thought you wanted to wait until Westeros, to do it in front of the Old Gods?”

“I do and if you want, we could get married again in front of the old gods,” he said quickly and she nodded.

“I think we will have to, seeing as I am not really in a position to properly consummate our marriage at the moment,” she said with a sly smile and Jon gave her a soft kiss. Her lips were soft and sweet and as he moved closer to her he began to smell her scent. Her hair smelt of lavender and he opened his mouth to try and deepen the kiss but they were interrupted by a loud roar.

“That sounded like Caraxes, so that means Rhaegar has returned,” she said breathlessly as they broke apart.

“Do you want to tell him?” she asked.

“We’ll tell him together,” he said.

They didn’t have to wait long before Rhaegar entered their room.

“What are you two so happy about?” he said as soon as he entered.

“We’re getting married,” Daenerys blurted out, “Today,” and Jon looked at her and she gave him an apologetic smile.

“I’m happy for you both. I truly am. It’s not often that we get to marry those we love,” he said and Jon realised that he was thinking of his own marriages.

“Do you think the high priest will marry us?”

“Yes, but Benerro is still waiting to speak to you both. I think you should see what he has to say and then ask him,”

“Did you see the Golden Company?” Jon asked,

“No, but I spoke to a few of the locals and then I flew lower over the lands. The Golden Company was camped across the river, I saw the marks in the ground from their camp. The locals said that they left yesterday,”

“Where do you think they’ve gone?” Daenerys asked but neither Jon nor Rhaegar had an answer.

“What do you think of Tyrion Lannister information?” Jon asked “Do you believe there is a
conspiracy?”

“Honestly,” Rhaegar said as he ran his hand through his hair. “It makes a certain about of sense. I knew Varys back in Kings Landing and my father got worse when he arrived in the capital. I do not know Illyrio well, but it would explain why he gave Viserys those sellswords to attack us. Jon and I were not part of his plans, so he tried to kill us off,”

Jon nodded, his words made sense. They would have to pay Illyrio a visit.

“I think I believe him. This boy is Illyrio’s and not mine. If he was my son, Illyrio would have said something to me. The fact that he didn’t speaks volumes. He gains nothing if the boy is mine, he gains everything if the boy is his son. As for Jon Connington, he was my friend but we were not that close to begin with. He never liked Elia and would often tell me that I deserved better than her. He was a man who was often blinded by his own prejudices and notions, it’s one of the reasons why I did not share my feelings for Lyanna with him. Whether he is a willing participant in this conspiracy to place a false Aegon on the throne or just another pawn being manipulated by Varys and Illyrio, I do not know for certain.” Rhaegar said and Jon again agreed with his father’s logic. They were silent for a few moments before Rhaegar spoke again,

“Come, I’ll take you to see Benerro now,” Rhaegar said. He led them through the complicated network of hallways in the Red Temple. Eventually they reached a large oak door that opened out into the sanctuary.

There were huge red stone pillars that stretched all the way to the ceiling. The sanctuary floor was made of that same fused stone that they had seen in Valyria. It was the same stone that made up the black walls. The stone reflected the torchlight back onto the white walls. At one end of the sanctuary he saw the eternal fire. Rhaegar had told him that this fire was sacred and it had to remain constantly lit.

In front of the eternal fire, he saw the man who could only be the High Priest. He wore red robes with yellow and orange accents. The High Priest seemed to notice their presence because he turned towards them and smiled.

“Aegon and Daenerys Targaryen. I have waited so long to speak to you,”

“Well, here we are,” Jon said weakly “Why do you want to speak with us?”

“Come, let us speak somewhere more private,” and he led to another chamber just of the side of the main sanctuary. Inside the chamber, there was a simple desk and chairs.

“There is a great danger brewing to the north,” he said slowly after observing them both. “A danger that only you can defeat,”


“Beyond the wall, the great enemy grows stronger, and should he win, the dawn may never come again. You must defeat it,” Jon noticed that the man closed his eyes as he spoke.

“You haven’t explained what the danger is,” Daenerys said quickly.

“The danger is the eternal foe of our god. The Great Other. Beyond the wall, his cold children are mobilizing, slowly rising from their graves,”

“How will we defeat this enemy?” Jon said realising he wasn’t actually going to explain who their enemy was.
“The Great Other is the god of darkness, cold and death. So you must defeat it with light, fire and life. I have seen a great sword of fire in the flames, this will be your weapon,”

“A sword of fire?” Jon asked in disbelief “Our dragons?” and Benerro nodded.

“Where is this enemy?” Dany asked,

“North, in the lands where nothing grows. The lands of the dead is their domain,”

“So what do you want us to do? Go beyond the wall and seek out this danger? We don’t know what they are even?” Jon pointed out.

“The dead are the enemy,” he said calmly. “You will be fighting the dead,”

Jon stole a quick glance at Daenerys and found that she looked just as confused as he felt.

“Right. We will head back to Westeros and then we will look for this enemy,”

“No. You must unite the realm behind you first. You will need every man,” he said as he opened his eyes.

“Now, I believe you have something to ask me,” he said brightly, as if their previous conversation had not just happened.

“We’d like you to marry us, please,” Daenerys said, equally as put off by this sudden change in mood.

“It would be my honor to marry the future King and Queen of Westeros. I can have the acolytes prepare the ceremony so you can have it this evening?”

“That would be ideal,” Jon said and the Red Priest stood up to leave.

“Wait please, I have something else to ask you,” Daenerys said. “Jon could you give us a moment, I want this to be a surprise,”

Jon realised that she wanted to keep this secret so he stood and waited outside. She came out a few minutes later smiling and linked her arm in his,

“Take me back to our chambers, hopefully my handmaidens have something nice that still fits me,”

Jon led them back through the temple, this time taking the more conventional route to their chambers. When he reached the door, she entered first and then pushed him out

“Sorry my love, you’ll see me at our wedding,” and she gave him a cheeky wink before shutting the door. The door quickly opened and Ghost slowly walked out.

“I don’t want you warging into him and peaking,”

Jon smiled and shook his head. “Come on boy, we still have some time to kill,”

Jon and Ghost spent the next few hours walking around the temple. The temple was huge and as much as he tried to see every room, he knew that there were thousands that he missed. He looked outside and saw that the sun was lower in the sky, so he headed back upstairs towards their chambers. It seemed that someone had picked out all his clothes for him, he would be dressed all in
They arrived at the location where the wedding would take place. Jon was nervous as he waited out on the balcony. An acolyte had briefly talked him through the ceremony but that did little to calm his nerves. He felt Ghost gently push his face into his hand and Jon rubbed his hand through his fur which helped to calm him. He looked up and he saw Vedros in the sky flying with Anogar, ducking and diving together, this brought a smile to his face.

Below, the plaza was filled with people. The Unsullied and the Dothraki healers had set up other camps in the city so they would not have to transport the wounded very far. Thousands of people had crammed themselves into the plaza to witness their wedding it seemed.

He heard a noise coming from the terrace doors that led inside. Bennerro had changed into a different set of robes, these were red with white accents all over. He walked to the balcony and took his position.

“All praise R’hllor, the Lord of Light,” he shouted and the people in the plaza all answered in union. Then there was silence, the ceremony was about to begin.

His mouth was dry and his palms were sweaty as he waited and he felt his heart fluttering. Then, he saw her.

Her hair was simple, straight and flowed down over her shoulders. She wore a flowing white dress that hugged her form and showed off her beautiful curves. She didn’t wear any jewellery.

This was not Daenerys Targaryen, the rightful Queen of Westeros, Khaleesi to some, Mhysa to others.

It was just his Dany, the woman he loved. Pure and simple.

He felt his face stretch into a wide smile as he saw her approach and she beamed at him in return.

“Who brings this woman to be wed?” Bennerro asked loudly and clearly.

“I do, Rhaegar Targaryen, her elder brother,” Rhaegar answered. “Now comes Daenerys of House Targaryen, a woman grown and flowered, of noble blood and birth,”

“Who comes forth to claim this woman,” asked Bennerro

“I do, Aegon Targaryen,” he paused “Jon Snow,” she was Dany and he was Jon.

“Jon. Will you share your fire with Daenerys and warm her and illuminate the path with your light when the night is dark and full of terrors?”

“I swear I will,”

“Daenerys, will you share your fire with Jon, and warm him and illuminate the path with your light when the night is dark and is full of terrors?”

“I swear I will,” she said with a smile at him and Jon smiled in return

“Then come to me as one,” he beckoned towards the flames that had been set up on top of the balcony. Jon felt Daenerys reached for his hand and he held her hand and gave it a gentle squeeze.

And together they leapt through the flames.
“Two went into the flames and one emerges. What fire joins, none may put asunder,” he shouted to the crowd who had started to cheer. Overhead he heard the dragons roar and screech. They even started shooting small balls of flame into the evening sky. Jon stood and turned to her. He cupped her face in his hands and he gently kissed her. Her lips were warm and soft and sweet.

“My King, my husband,” she whispered as she broke the kiss. She walked away from him then and waved her hand in the air.

“I have something for you. Since we can’t consummate our marriage tonight, I thought we would do something else,” Jon looked over her shoulder as Rhaegar walked forward carrying two small wooden cases. When he got closer, he opened the cases and Jon saw what was inside.

Their crowns.

Daenerys walked towards his crown and took it out of the case, holding it delicately between her fingers.

“Wait,” Jon said and she looked disappointed “Let me go first,” and Jon quickly reached for her crown. Her crown was slightly smaller, but no less beautiful. Jon felt the balcony shake twice and he realised that both Anogar and Vedros and landed on two towers above and slightly behind the balcony. Vedros on Jon’s side, Anogar on Dany’s. Both dragons shot short blasts of their flame into the evening sky.

Daenerys slowly crouched down on the edge of the balcony, and Jon gently placed the crown on her head. He then helped her up and then crouched down whilst she crowned him. They walked hand in hand to the edge of the balcony with their beautiful crowns on their heads. Jon looked down and saw that the entire plaza had fallen to their knees, he quickly looked behind him and saw that all the acolytes and priests on the balcony had done the same.

“People of Volantis,” Rhaegar shouted over the edge of the Balcony, “I present to you King Aegon and Queen Daenerys. Long may they reign!”

“Long may they reign!” the people answered in a loud chorus.

Chapter End Notes

This chapter is the end of an arc. Next up we have "The Embers of Essos" which takes a few months down the line. There will be no White Walkers in this fic, but I am starting to do some set up for a sequel fic to this one.

I hope to have it out for you guys either on Tuesday or Wednesday, depending on when I finish 18.

As always, let me know what you guys think. Comments are always appreciated and thanks for reading

Sleepy.
Arya Stark stood on the battlements of Winterfell looking out towards the fields and hills that surrounded her home. It was early in the morning and she could see the sun slowly making its way up the horizon, fighting hard to break through the early morning clouds. Several months had passed since she and Sansa had returned to their home. Their father had sent them back from the capital by a ship sailing to White Harbor after those men had nearly attacked them in the Tower of the Hand. After they had arrived in White Harbor, several Manderley men had joined their retinue for extra protection during their journey back to Winterfell. That had been over half a year ago.

Whilst they were making their way to Winterfell, their father had stayed back in Kings Landing and then he had ridden off with the King to make war in the Eyrie. The entire realm knew the story by now. Petyr Baelish had poisoned the previous Hand of the King and was hiding in the Eyrie with her aunt Lysa Arryn. Then her father, Tywin Lannister and King Robert had gone and taken the Eyrie, a castle that many thought was impregnable.

Arya had heard that the King had ordered a feast in Kings Landing to celebrate justice being served but the good mood failed to spread in the North especially in Winterfell. Aunt Lysa’s death had hit her mother hard and they did not even have a body to bury. When the raven brought the awful news, her mother had spent nearly all her days in the small sept of Winterfell. It was only the arrival of their father that had helped bring her mother out of her sorrowful state.
Sansa had been very upset when they returned home. She had loved her life in Kings Landing and she missed that idiot Prince Joffrey. She would send letters every day and she spent nearly all of her time in the rookery waiting for his reply. Arya wasn’t certain, but she was quite sure that Joffrey had never replied to even a single letter. Sansa had been terrified when she learned that Joffrey had gone off to war with the other Lords and his father. Arya was secretly glad, she had hoped that the prince would find himself impaled on someone’s sword but they had received news that the prince had survived.

Home had changed since she left. Maester Luwin had said that Bran would no longer have the use of his legs. Maester Luwin had built a contraption that helped him to move, but she could still see the pain behind his eyes. He was supposed to go to Kings landing with them. He had hoped to become a squire which would lead to him becoming a knight in time, now he would have none of that.

He still had Summer though, his direwolf. When she first ran into Bran’s room she found the direwolf lying at the foot of his bed, staring at her with his yellow eyes. She was happy that he still had his wolf, even though she didn’t have hers. Arya wondered where Nymeria was, maybe she stayed in the Riverlands or maybe Nymeria had tried to come back north. Arya wished that their father would have let them ride north but he said that it was too dangerous. Arya wondered if she would ever see her direwolf again.

They would have to head back to Kings Landing soon. Her father said in a month or two, they were just waiting for the autumn harvest feast. Sansa had begged to head back to Kings Landing earlier so they could see the harvest feast in the south. She had heard that they would have masked balls and mummers shows, something that they didn’t do in the North. However, their father refused and said that they should celebrate the autumn harvest in the north with their family. Sansa probably wanted to head back south to have her wedding with the stupid prince.

Arya did not want to go back to Kings Landing. There was nothing there for her. She didn’t like Joffrey and his family and she didn’t like how she had to pretend and act a certain way in order to fit in. She let out a sigh as she looked out over the area surrounding Winterfell.

She enjoyed being home, but home was not the same.

Jon was missing.

Her father had said that he was dead and that thought still brought a tear to her eye. They didn’t even get to say goodbye to each other, Jon just left. Her father had never told her why he left, or how he died. Lately, whenever she tried to talk to him about Jon he would immediately change the subject. It was like whenever someone mentioned Aunt Lyanna to him. The last time that she had spoken with Jon was in his room and she was hiding from Bran. They were talking about the names they had given their direwolves. Now, Jon and Ghost were dead, and probably Nymeria too.

All she had left to remember him by was ‘Needle’. She spent nearly every hour of the day training with Syrio, that was until he left a few months ago. He said that he had to go back to Braavos to see his family. Arya wasn’t an idiot, she realised that there was another reason as well. It was probably the Targaryens and their dragons.

Everyone in the castle had heard about them by now, it was all the servants and the maids talked about. Even the stable boys liked to gossip on this topic. They said that the Targaryens and their dragons had burnt down entire cities. They said that Volantis had been completely burned to its foundations stones along with the entirety of Slaver’s Bay. They said that they didn’t even follow old or new gods but instead followed the foreign red god of fire.

Then, there were the dragons. Arya had been fascinated with stories of the Targaryens and their
dragons. She fondly remembered Visenya Targaryen, a fierce warrior Queen who rode the dragon, Vhagar. Perhaps, she should consider herself lucky that she might one day get to see a real living dragon. Arya was not sure what to make of the Targaryens, she doubted that everything the stable boys had said was true but whenever she went to talk to her father about them, he always quickly dismissed her questions. As she thought about it more, she realised that her father had been acting rather strange lately. He spent more hours in the godswood and in the crypts.

Arya sighed as a cold breeze cut across her. The sun had finally managed to break through the clouds and she decided to head down towards the castle courtyard. After seeing how good she was during her training with Syrio, Ser Rodrik had agreed to let her train with some of the boys and she would be training with them again today.

“Arya Stark, you’re late,” Ser Rodrik immediately said as she entered the courtyard.

“Sorry, Ser Rodrik,” she said quickly.

“Now, partner up and spar,” he ordered and Arya smiled as she faced her partner. He was one of the older boys, perhaps 3 or 4 years younger than Robb. He was also considerably taller than her and Arya planned to use this to her advantage. She assumed her stance and held her blunted sword out in front of her. It was nothing like needle, this sword was heavier and longer, but the principles were roughly the same. She took a deep breath and remembered what Syrio had taught her.

Her opponent lunged forward and she quickly spun out of the way. Light as a feather she remembered. The boy brought his sword down again, trying to hack off her head and Arya simply stepped out of the way of his strike so his sword hit nothing but the ground. Swift as a deer. They continued this little dance. Arya checked the next blow, spun away from the second and deflected the third.

Her opponent was panting now and Arya knew that this was her chance. Quick as a snake and she leapt forward and quickly knocked her opponent’s sword out of his hand. She gave him a smug smile and she heard a round of applause from above.

“Nicely done, Arya,” Robb said with a smile on his face.

“Would you like a spar, big brother?” she asked him as she walked towards him.

“Arya Stark, we are not finished,” Ser Rodrik called and Arya was forced to go back to her training.

They trained for the majority of the morning and when they were finished, Arya was sweaty and tired. She was getting better, and training with the bigger boys only helped her improve more. She realised that she would never be as strong as them, so she had to use her speed and guile. Arya was walking back to her room when she saw Robb and Theon quickly whispering to each other. She had noticed that Robb had been acting differently lately, ever since Syrio had left and the first news of the Targaryens started to trickle in, he had become more secretive. Often, spending long hours with their father or walking along the castle battlements. Now that she thought about it, she had noticed that there had been a lot of work done on the castle walls ever since her father had returned. He had said that they were routine repairs but Arya realised that this might not be the full story.

They started to walk together quickly and Arya immediately decided to follow them. Quiet as a shadow she remembered. She followed them throughout the castle, left then right then back left again, always taking care to make sure that she was not spotted. She ducked into archways and hid behind boxes when necessary. She did not need to worry, they did not notice that they were being
followed.

She followed them until they reached the doors that led them to her father’s solar. Her father's solar was in the Northern tower, and there were no secret entrances that she knew off. Deciding to risk it, she quickly walked forward and pressed her ear to the wooden door.

“How was the harvest?” her father asked.

“The harvest was good. We have several more shipments of grain coming in and we should have enough to last us throughout the winter. Mother says that the preparations for the harvest feast are going well.” Robb answered “The repairs and improvements to the castle walls are also going according to plan,”

“They won’t be of much use against dragons,” Theon muttered.

“I agree, especially after what happened in Volantis,” Robb said quickly “An entire city burned down,”

“A terrible act,” her father said. “Along with what happened in Slaver's Bay. Whilst getting rid of slavery is a good thing, the way they have gone about it was ugly and brutal,”

“Have you heard any more news from the east?” Robb asked,

“The last reports we received said that they are making preparations to leave Volantis,”

“So, they could be here any day now?” Theon asked and Arya heard no response.

“You should allow me to go and see my father. Get him to join our side,” Theon said,

“No,” Ned replied quickly,

“What do you mean ‘No’? We will need every man we can get to fight them,” Theon said quickly,

“I would have to speak to the King about this first. It is not just my decision to make,”

“We don’t have enough time to wait. They could be here tomorrow for all we know,”

“Enough Theon, we already have enough problems as it is. The Northern Lords are all preparing for the inevitable war with the dragons, especially the Karstarks and the Glovers. They keep reminding the other Northern Lords that the north remembers, and the north remembers what the Mad King did to my grandfather and Uncle Brandon along with what Rhaegar Targaryen did to Aunt Lyanna,”

“Arya Stark!” she heard a voice shout and she quickly turned. It was her mother and she had a stern look on her face. She had been caught.

“What do you think you are doing?” she hissed and then she walked forward and pushed open the door to her father’s solar.

“Did you know that your daughter was eavesdropping on your conversation?” she asked and her father turned towards her, disappointment written all over his face.

“Is this true Arya?” he asked and she nodded “What did you overhear?”

“Just the stuff about the Targaryens. You’re preparing the castle’s defenses for them but why? They have dragons. Dragons can fly over walls. Why not make peace with them?”
Her father looked at her with a conflicted look on her face, she looked to Robb and he also looked sad.

“What is it?” Arya asked quickly, she noticed that something was wrong.

“It doesn’t matter, run along now,” her father said trying to dismiss her.

“Tell me,” she said quickly and her father just shook his head.

“You should tell her, he was her favorite,” Theon said and Robb nodded.

“It’s about Jon isn’t it,” Arya said “Is he alive? Did he send a letter?”

“No Arya, he did not,” he said sadly.

“Tell me. You haven’t told me anything about Jon, you haven’t even told me why he left in the first place,” Arya said quickly as she felt tears forming in her eyes. Her father looked at her for a moment before sighing,

“I decided to send Jon to Essos with the hope that he would have been able to make a better life for himself there rather than in Westeros. In Essos, he’d be able to carve out a better life for himself without the stigma of being a bastard hindering his opportunities. He travelled to Pentos and found work as a guard for a magister of the city and this magister happened to be hosting the Targaryen children as his guests at the time. There was a report that the Targaryens were sailing on a ship headed for Astapor where they sought to purchase Unsullied slave soldiers for their army but the ship was destroyed in a storm at sea. The report stated that the Targaryen children along with their protectors had perished at sea. One of their protectors was described as a young northern man who had a large white dog as his companion,”

“But that doesn’t make any sense, the Targaryens are alive and they have dragons,” Arya quickly pointed out. “Maybe there was no storm and Jon is still alive,”

“Arya, my dear, I checked, I really did,” he said sadly “When we were in Kings Landing, I went to the harbor, I asked every sailor arriving from Essos that I could find and they all reported the same thing. There was a terrible storm in the area at that time. And though the Targaryens have survived, not a single report that we have received from the east contains any mention of a young north man or a white direwolf;”

“Why would it? If I saw three dragons that’s all I would talk about,” she said after a pause.

“That could be true but the Targaryens have done terrible things in the east. They have burned down entire cities and thousands of people have died because of their actions. Even if Jon had somehow survived the storm along with the Targaryens, would he stay with them after all the horrible things they have done?” her father asked and Arya shook her head.

“Most importantly, they’ve done horrible things to our family, have you forgotten about Aunt Lyanna?” Robb said and Arya noticed that her father winced when Robb said that name.

“There is no love lost between our families. The north remembers,” her father said.

Arya was quiet for a few moments, her father’s words made a certain amount of sense, but something felt wrong. She knew Jon and this did not sound like the Jon she knew.

“Father, Jon knows about the history between our two houses. Why would he work for the Targaryens in the first place? I think the reports are wrong.” she said defiantly. She looked at her
father and then at Robb and neither seemed like they had a good answer to her questions. She looked back at her father and she saw that he had a pained look on his face.

“I think that Jon had been infatuated by the beauty of the Targaryen girl,” her father said and Arya laughed loudly,

“I don’t believe that. I don’t believe you. If you knew Jon at all you would know that what you’re saying is nonsense,”

“Arya Stark, watch your tone,” her mother scolded but her eyes were still on her father. She looked closely at his face and then she realised something. Even he did not really believe what he was saying.

“Father, what is really going on with Jon, why did he leave? You’re not making sense. None of what you said makes any sense. If you sent Jon away then why would he leave without saying goodbye? It doesn’t make sense,”

“Arya that’s enough questions,” he said as he stood up. “I am still upset at you for eavesdropping. Now go to your room, I don’t want to see you again until dinner,”

Arya was left with no choice to leave but she left with more questions than she had before she entered. One thing that she did know for certain was that her father was hiding something about Jon.

The Mummer’s Dragon

After the disaster in Volantis, they had quickly set sail for Dorne. To make matters worse, they had faced severe storms in the summer sea. They were forced to wait in Lys for over a month whilst their ships were repaired and also for the storms to blow over.

Even the beautiful city and its beautiful people could not lift his spirits.

Their plan was in ruins. Not only was he not going to marry Daenerys, but it seemed that she was in love with a false prince. Worse still, this imposter had claimed to be his father’s son with that Stark girl. He had spoken to Jon about this and he had reassured him that this was impossible, someone in Westeros would have heard about this boy if he was real. Jon had insisted that he was probably some Lyseni boy with a drop of Valyrian blood in him.

Aegon was not worried, he would slay this false prince and take back his family's throne. If Daenerys came to her senses after he won, then maybe he could find a place for her, but she would need to denounce this false prince.

After several months of travel, they were finally approaching Dorne. They had decided to sail to Sunspear, the seat of House Martell. House Martell were his kin, his mother was sister to Prince Doran and Prince Oberyn and he would see them today. He had briefly met Prince Oberyn in Norvos. Jon had informed him that Oberyn was a well-travelled man and a skilled warrior but their meeting had been too short for him to form a good impression of the man.

He had also met Princess Arianne Martell in Norvos, that house in the city had belonged to her mother. As they frequently moved from place to place to keep his identity secret, he had not been around a lot of girls or women in general, he only really knew Septa Lemore. What he did know,
was that Arianne Martell was by far the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. He had barely been able to speak during that meeting, as he was trying hard to not stare at her.

He shook his head and tried hard to clear his mind of Arianne Martell. They were in a small boat being rowed to shore. Jon, Septa Lemore and Haldon were all in the boat with him. Aegon looked towards the shore and he saw people on the pier waiting for them. As they got closer, he could begin to see their faces. He saw Prince Oberyn leaning against a spear and behind him were two women. Soon, they had reached the pier and they got out of their boat.

“Prince Oberyn,” Jon greeted warmly as he offered his hand, to his surprise Oberyn didn’t take it

“What happened? We had a plan,” Oberyn said quickly and Aegon noticed that one of the women behind him was twirling her spear.

“Prince Oberyn,” Aegon stepped forward confidently. “We had a plan but our plans have changed. Take us somewhere private and we will explain the situation to you,”

Oberyn stared at him and Aegon stared back into his dark snake like eyes. He was the rightful King of Westeros, why should he be afraid of a mere Prince? They continued to lock eyes and eventually Oberyn dropped his gaze.

“Obara, Nymeria come. We are heading to the Old Palace,” he said as he led them away.

Oberyn walked in front along with Obara and Nymeria with Jon and Aegon behind. Jon slowed his pace slightly before quickly whispering in his ear.

“Stay focused. Especially if Arianne is here again, stay away from her,” he whispered and Aegon quickly nodded although he knew this would be easier said than done.

Aegon had learned much about Dorne. Sunspear was the capital city of Dorne, it was a walled settlement and inside of Sunspear was the Old Palace. The Old Palace was built after the union of House Martell and the Rhoynar and it was the seat of House Martell

The rest of Sunspear seemed to be a winding labyrinth of alleyways. Aegon noticed that in the city there were three huge winding walls that seemed to divide the cities into three rings. However, Prince Oberyn led them through a gate that bypassed all these walls and straight into the Old Palace.

Aegon saw two tall towers stretching out from the Old Palace, one tower had a large golden dome and this is where they seemed to be headed. They entered the tower and they found themselves in a large round room with painted glass windows. The floors were made of pale marble and he saw two chairs seated on a dais. They were identical apart from the different sigils. One had the Martell spear, the other had the blazing Rhoynish sun, Aegon quickly realised that this was their throne room.

Several guards lined the walls holding spears and shields.

“Obery, are these the people? Is that him” Aegon heard a voice ask and he turned to see it came from a man in a wheelchair. This man could be none other than Prince Doran Martell, he quickly realised. As he looked around the room he saw that two young men stood with him, they must be his sons. He quickly looked around the room, surely Arianne should be here? He shook his head quickly. He could not get distracted, he needed to impress Prince Doran.

“Yes, these are the people that we met with in Norvos. Although, they seem to have arrived empty handed,” he said with a pointed look at Jon Connington.

“This is Jon Connington, one of Prince Rhaegar’s squires and the former hand to his father,”
Doran’s eyes opened wide and he nodded slowly in understanding.

“And this, is Aegon Targaryen, Elia’s son,”

“Come closer,” he said pointing towards him. Aegon slowly walked closer towards Prince Doran. He stopped a few steps in front of him, close enough for Doran to reach out and touch him. Doran frowned at him as he stared at his face.

“Yes,” he said quietly “I can see it,” although Aegon had no idea what exactly Doran saw.

“You have her cheeks, Elia’s cheeks,” and he reached out and gently touched his face. His hands were hot and sweaty but Aegon stayed perfectly still, content to be examined. He was not worried, this was his family, why should he worry?

“How did you survive? We heard the stories about what happened in Kings Landing after the sack,” he asked as he let go of his face.

“My mother knew that the war was lost after my father’s defeat at the trident. So, she had me smuggled out of Kings Landing and I was replaced by another baby. She sent me across the narrow sea to be raised by a group of Targaryen loyalists. They hid me and protected me for years until it was safe for me to come out of hiding,”

“They think that it is safe now?” Doran asked cautiously.

“Yes. It is time to strike. I am a man grown and we can’t wait forever,” Aegon said confidently which brought a smile to Jon’s face.

“You have not explained as to why we should support you. We had a plan, an agreement. You would sail to Volantis and meet with Viserys and Daenerys,” Oberyn said as he gestured at them.

“Where are they?”

“They are in Volantis the last we heard,” burning it to the ground Aegon was tempted to add.

“So, why should we support you?” Oberyn asked “There are other Targaryens across the narrow sea and they have dragons. Why should we not wait for them?”

“They are in Essos and no one has any clue when they will come back west. That is even if they ever decide to come back west. I am already here in Westeros. I have 20,000 men of the Golden Company sworn to my service,” he said confidently, they had rehearsed this conversation before. He opened his mouth to speak but he was interrupted when she entered the room.

She wore a yellow dress that hugged her figure tightly, it was cut low so the tops of her large breasts were exposed. She wore a pretty golden necklace around her neck. Her long black hair was flowing freely to around the middle of her back and her hips swayed beautifully as she walked. Aegon slowly lifted his eyes up past her breasts and to her face. She had large dark eyes that he found himself getting in lost in.

“Your grace,” Jon whispered in his ear as he tapped his elbow. He had lost his train of thought. He looked quickly back at Doran and he realised that he had no idea what he needed to say next. His mouth opened and closed repeatedly as he desperately searched for his words.

“You will support us because the boy that is with Daenerys is a false prince. An imposter. He claims to be the son of Rhaegar and Lyanna Stark,” Jon said coming to his rescue. Aegon gave him a quick thankful look and was given a worried glance in return.
He turned back towards the Dornish and saw that they all had angry looks on their faces. Oberyn in particular looked furious.

“He claims to be a child born of that whore? Lyanna Stark?” Oberyn seethed and Aegon quickly nodded. They had discussed this and guessed that the Dornish would not support Daenerys and this false prince once they knew of his supposed parentage. However, Aegon was surprised by the fact that the news of this false dragon’s parentage had not spread throughout Westeros by now. Haldon had said that he had announced it to all the slaves in Volantis. Were the slaves really so stupid that they could not accurately relay this information? Perhaps, there was an issue in translation.

Still, that appeared to have worked out in their favor. Now the Dornish were angry and they would never support the false prince, so now Aegon was their only option. He chanced a glance at Arianne and he found that she was staring at him, licking her lips slowly. Aegon felt his breath quicken and he quickly looked away and started to fidget with his clothes. He couldn’t look at her again, he would get distracted.

Instead, he looked around the room. He spotted a new man who must have entered with Arianne. He had thick silver hair that fell to his collar, a strong prominent jaw and dark purple eyes. Aegon would have thought that he was a Targaryen cousin if it wasn’t for a streak of black in the middle of his hair. The man was looking at him angrily. This confused him, he didn’t even know this man’s name so why was he so angry at him?

“We have heard rumors of this. Tales from drunken sailors in taverns and brothels but we did not believe that it was true. Rhaegar dishonored Dorne when he ran away with that Northern girl,” Doran said softly.

“He dishonored Elia and House Martell. Dorne has mourned the death of Elia and her children for years, and it seems the gods have granted us this one mercy. For they saved her son and returned him to us,”

“Doran no, we need to discuss this,” Oberyn said quickly,

“What is there to discuss? Is he not our sister’s son? Should we not support him to avenge her?”

“Yes, but we need to be careful. They have dragons. Should they return to Westeros, how do you plan to defeat them?” Oberyn asked.

“We will be careful, we will lay patiently in the grass until it is time to strike. We are outnumbered, but they will not be expecting us. They have not seen my face in years and they have all forgotten the strength and cunning of Dorne. King Robert has been at war in the Vale, we do not know how many men he lost but to take a fortress that was considered to be impregnable, you would have to assume that he lost a lot. When the Targaryens arrive in Westeros, they will serve as the distraction that we need to enact our plans,”

“What makes you so certain that they will return to Westeros, brother? Our reports have said that they are still in Volantis,”

“There was a new report. The Targaryens and their fleet have finally set sail,” Doran said and Aegon saw a small smile creep onto his face, as if all of this was due to his careful planning. “West,”

“As for the dragons. Aegon the Conqueror and his sister wives never conquered Dorne with their dragons, why should this time be any different?” Doran asked.

“We need to start making Scorpions,” Aegon said quickly and Doran nodded. Oberyn however
seemed deep in thought.

“I should send a raven to Sarella,” he said softly, so softly Aegon barely heard him. However one of the boys did hear him,

“Why Sarella, uncle?” one of the young men asked.

“Sarella is at the Citadel, Quentyn. I spent some time at the citadel, I even forged six links of a chain before I grew bored. I will send a raven to her, perhaps she will find something that can help us defeat the dragons,” Oberyn said with a shrug as he left the room to send his raven.

Again, Aegon found his eyes wandering to the lovely figure of Arianne Martell, he quickly looked away before meeting her eyes.

“You must be tired after your journey, rooms have been prepared for you,” Doran said.

“Quentyn and Trystane will escort you to your rooms in the Tower of the Sun,”

“Actually father, Gerold will take Quentyn and Tystane to the courtyard to help them with their swordplay. I will escort our guests to their chambers instead,” she said in a sweet voice. Doran watched her carefully before slowly nodding his head. Arianne flashed him a smile and he felt his mouth go dry.

“Follow me then,” she said to their group but her eyes were only on him. She led them through the tower and pointed out their rooms. Jon’s room was next to his and he flashed him a worried glance before heading inside. Then, it was just him and Arianne.

“Would you like to take a walk with me through the gardens, your grace?” she asked in her husky voice and Aegon meekly nodded. She linked her arm in his and pulled him away towards the gardens.

“These are the gardens of Sunspear,” she told him as they arrived. “Of course, these gardens are nowhere near as big or as beautiful as those in the water gardens,”

Aegon was silent as they walked, trying to focus on everything else around him. The grass, the flowers, the grass again. Arianne was shorter than him, and if he looked in her direction his eyes would look straight towards her breasts.

“How are you finding Dorne?” she asked

“Dorne is nice, a little hot, but I’m used to it after my travels in Essos,” he said quickly and she nodded in understanding.

“The heat is one of the reasons we love the water gardens! We have the cool sea breeze blowing in on our skin. The children play by the beach or in the fountains and pools,” she told him.

“We even swim naked in some of the pools,” she said in a husky voice and Aegon’s mind immediately imagined her naked. With water dripping down her olive skin and over her round breasts. He felt his breeches tighten and he awkwardly tried to readjust them without her noticing. He allowed her to walk slightly in front of him but he was sure he saw a small smile on her face.

They continued their walk around the gardens of Sunspear and Arianne was right, they weren’t very big and thankfully, this meant that they were soon heading back towards his chambers. She walked him to his door and he was about to say goodbye but she pushed her hand on the door and stepped closer to him.
“Do you mind if I come in? I’d like to hear some of your stories about Essos, please your grace,” she asked in a sweet voice and Aegon merely nodded before pushing open the door to his room wider and allowing her to enter.

His room was large, it contained a big double bed and several tapestries hung on the wall. There was a desk with two chairs on one side of the room and that was where Aegon began to walk to. Arianne however had other ideas, she quickly walked over to the bed and patted her hand on the bed indicating for him to sit. She smiled to him and Aegon found himself walking over and sitting on the bed. They sat a comfortable and respectful distance apart. She looked at him expectantly and he found himself staring into her eyes. They were so dark that he could have sworn they were bottomless pits.

“Your grace?” she asked breaking from his trance “You were going to tell me some of your stories about Essos,” she reminded him and he quickly nodded. He told her all the stories he could remember about Essos. He had been to most of the free cities and he could tell some stories about them. However, Jon had usually restricted him for doing anything too exciting that could put him in danger. So, Aegon was forced embellish some of his stories, it seemed to work because Arianne laughed loudly and asked questions at the right times, causing an indescribable feeling of happiness to wash over him.

“Tell me about yourself,” he asked feeling a bit more confident in the presence of this woman.

“There is not much to tell your grace,” she began. “I am the oldest child of Prince Doran and Lady Mellario of Norvos who you have already met. I am the heiress to Dorne ahead of my two younger brothers, Quentyn and Trystane who you met earlier today. Quentyn was sent away to be fostered at a young age and Trystane is much younger than myself so I am not especially close to either of my brothers. I spent the majority of my childhood with my friends Andrey and Tyene. Did you see them earlier?”

Aegon shook his head. “I will point her out to you later at the feast. Tyene is my cousin and best friend, and we share everything,” she whispered, letting the last word hang in the air between them. Aegon noticed that somehow during their conversation, she had gotten closer to him. Now, their knees were almost touching and he could begin to smell her intoxicating perfume.

“When I was younger, I did not look like this you know,” she said, running her hands along her body, slowly over the top of her breasts, pushing them together and then down her sides. Aegon watched her hands and wished that they were his.

“I was pudgy and flat chested,” she said as she slowly ran her hands over her large breasts, pushing them up slowly and then letting them go and Aegon felt his breeches get even tighter. “Can you believe that?” she asked in her husky voice and Aegon could only shake his head. His mouth was so dry that he could not speak.

“I used to pray to the seven every night, praying that one day I would become beautiful. Do you think it worked, your grace? Do you think that I am beautiful?” she asked.

Aegon knew the answer but he couldn’t speak, his mouth was dry. She was the most beautiful woman he had ever seen. He quickly nodded but realised he had no idea what to do next. He had never been with a woman before. Fortunately for him, Arianne seemed to know the answer. She began to slowly lean forward and Aegon awaited her eagerly. She stared into her dark eyes that he was now completely lost in. He felt her warm lips pressing against his, she grabbed his hand and moved it to her breast. Aegon cupped and squeezed it greedily, it was as round and as large as a melon, he realised. He smelled her hair, it smelled of orchids and of something else, something earthy. She opened her mouth and he opened his in response, letting his instincts guide him. Her
other hand went downwards to feel his length beneath his clothes

Then, he heard the door open and she quickly pulled away and pushed herself off him. Aegon looked to the door and saw that it was Connington. Arianne had quickly stood up and she looked completely composed, she quickly walked past Connington but before she left she turned back to look at him. She mouthed the word “later” and Aegon felt his cock twitch beneath his clothes.

Once she was gone. Connington turned on him.

“What are you doing?” he hissed “I told you to stay away from her. The Dornish have already agreed to support you, you don’t need to her,”

‘No’ Aegon thought. He does need her, she had given him a taste and he was yearning for more.

“You still need to marry wisely, I have heard that the Tyrells have a girl, they could be a useful ally. That would bind 2 of the 7 kingdoms to your cause. Think about your crown,” Jon angrily reminded him and Aegon conceded that he was right. He needed to be more careful with Arianne, he could not be alone with her, although he quickly realised that would be easier said than done

“I will have Duck guard your room, just in case she gets any ideas,” Jon said and Aegon quickly nodded. Duck was reliable, he could count on him.

“Now, get some rest. Later in the afternoon, you will have a spar. Show Prince Oberyn that you are a capable warrior and you will begin to earn his respect. Then after that we will have a feast,”

“A feast?” he said, vaguely remembering Arianne had said something similar.

“Yes, now get some rest,” he said as he left the room. Aegon sat back on the bed and tried to get some sleep, but his mind was filled with thoughts of Arianne Martell. He remember the smell of her, the shape and feel of her breast in his hand. The feel of her lips against his. He groaned and turned over to try and find sleep.

Aegon awoke a few hours later and he went to the courtyard to show off his skills. It was mid-afternoon and thankfully the sun was not as hot as it was earlier. He fought well in the yard, beating every partner he had and even managing to defeat two men at once. This particular feat earned him a small smile from Oberyn and a wide smile from Arianne.

After the sparring session, they attended the feast, although calling it a feast would have been an exaggeration. Everyone had agreed that they would need to be as secretive as possible, and having a massive feast in his name would not be the right thing to do. In reality, it was just a large meal. Aegon, Jon, Duck, Haldon and Lemore all joined the Martell family. Aegon was given a proper introduction to them all. He met the three oldest ‘Sand Snakes’ as they were known. Obara, Nymeria and Tyene. He found himself paying particular attention to Tyene, she was fair skinned, with golden hair and deep blue eyes. She sat next to Arianne and the two spent the entire meal talking, giggling and not once glancing in his direction. This frustrated him but he quickly realised that it was for the best.

The Dornish food was very different. It was filled with strange spices and fiery peppers that seared his mouth and made him gasp for wine. He quickly found that the Dornish wine was incredibly sour and it was not something that he was accustomed to. Still, Aegon politely finished his meal so that he did not upset his host. After the meal was finished, he returned to his chamber with Jon. Jon and Duck had decided to split the guard duty. Jon would guard him for the first half of the night, and Duck the second. The hot Dornish sun had sapped his energy and the spicy food had also helped to compound to his feeling of fatigue. Once his head hit the soft pillow, he quickly fell asleep.
Aegon was sleeping peacefully, dreaming of the lovely Arianne Martell. He dreamt that they were swimming together naked in the pool, she swam over to him and pressed her lips against his. Her lips were warm and soft and felt real.

“Your grace,” he heard a voice whisper. He opened his eyes and then he saw her leaning over him. She wore a sheer red nightgown that left little to his imagination.

“What are you doing here?” he croaked

“I said later, now is later,” she said huskily as she climbed onto the bed and straddled him. She bent down again and kissed him deeply. No, Aegon thought, he couldn’t have her.

“Duck,” he whispered as he broke away.

“Tyene,” she said simply as she leaned in to kiss him again. Aegon held his hands limply by his side. Arianne quickly grabbed his hands and pulled them to her breasts, taking the decision out of his hands.

“Feel my nipples your grace. Feel how hard they are for you,” she said as she broke the kiss and Aegon obediently did as he was told. She let him feel her breasts for a few moments before seductively pulling the nightgown up over her head, giving Aegon an unrestricted view of her body. The hollow of her throat, her round ripe breasts and her dark nipples. He looked down and saw the lush curves at her waist and hip. Her skin was smooth to touch, soft and as warm as sand baked by the Dornish sun. With surprising strength and expertise, Arianne ripped the under tunic that he slept in. She then slid down his body and placed warm wet, kisses along his body.

She stopped and then slowly slid off the loose breeches that he slept in, freeing his painfully hard cock. She caught it in one hand and slowly jerked it and Aegon felt his breath hitch in his throat.

“Has no one done this to you before?” she asked as she slowly moved her hand up and down and Aegon just shook his head. He couldn’t speak, his mouth was as dry as the Dornish deserts.

“Oh, then you will love this,” and then she took his cock in her mouth. Her mouth was warm and wet and he felt a loud moan leave his lips. He quickly realised that she was good at this. He had never felt something like this before, the feeling was unbelievably pleasurable. His hands gripped the sheets tightly as she worked, his head was shaking from side to side, trying to fight the pleasure that was building. He knew he couldn’t do this. They already had Dorne, he needed to be free to marry someone else.

“Do you want me to stop?” she asked innocently as she slowly stroked his throbbing cock. Her fingers worked on the head, she seemed to know exactly which spots made him weakest. Aegon just shook his head, still unable to speak. He was staring into those dark eyes, losing himself and soon only Arianne and her words remained.

“I think we would be great together,” she said as she slowly licked the entire length of his cock

“Queen Arianne,” she said as she popped his cock back in her mouth and slowly moved her head down, never breaking eye contact. Aegon felt his toes curl and he gripped the sheets even tighter “Doesn’t that sound nice?”

Aegon nodded as she slowly pumped his cock. She really was good at this, she knew his body better than he did. He felt his pleasure recede as he closed his eyes and listened to her words. “This is only the beginning, I could show you so much more. I have only given you my mouth, imagine the feel of my cunt around your cock? Imagine the feel of your length buried in me as my walls clamped
around you, pulling you in deeper and deeper, would you like that?” and Aegon eagerly nodded, his cock twitching in her hand.

“It’s easy, I promise. All you have to do is give yourself to me,” she said and she began to quickly pump his cock. She had made his mind her thrall and he felt a strange serenity pass over him. Submitting to her was easy, he told himself. She would not hurt him, she would make him happy, just like she’s doing now.

“Aegon, who am I?” she asked and then Aegon finally found his voice

“My Queen,” he croaked and he saw a wide smile stretch on her face at the sound of his surrender.

“Good boy,” and Aegon closed his eyes and felt her suck and lick at his cock. His release was quickly on him and she finished him with her hands. His back arched off the bed and he let out a loud grunt. His release was so strong that most of it landed on his chest and some drops even landed on his face. Arianne moved up the bed and rested his head in her lap, she scooped up one of the larger drops and then teased his lips with it. Aegon opened his eyes and looked up at her.

“Long may I reign?”

“Long may you reign” He opened his mouth, closed his eyes and sucked.

The Stunted Lion

Tyrion Lannister stood on the deck of their ship and watched as they slowly sailed into the free city of Braavos. In reality, Braavos was made up of hundreds of islands grouped together in a lagoon. The islands were linked together by many stone bridges that spanned the canals in the city. To enter the lagoon, you must pass under the Titan of Braavos, a massive stone and bronze fortress built in the shape of a Titan Warrior that guarded the entrance to the lagoon. The Titan was so big that its feet laid on two separate islands.

Tyrion had also learnt that the Titan was actually used to defend the city. The bronze chest plate contained slits from which arrows could be fired and the space between his legs was filled with murder holes, from where defenders could pour boiling oil and pitch on attackers. There was also the Titan’s roar, a terrible groaning noise that drowns out all the surrounding sounds. The roar was used to warn the armada of Braavos, so that their ships would be ready to defend against an attack.

He had heard impressive things about the warships of Braavos. Their ships were built in the Arsenal, a citadel of sorts. It sat just past the Titan and protected the main harbor of Braavos. It was located on a piece of heavily fortified rock, filled with scorpions, spitfires and trebuchets. Along its shores there was said to be countless docks, quays and wooden sheds, all dedicated to ship building. As they passed by, Tyrion saw an innumerable amount of warships and galleys sitting in the docks, ready to defend Braavos. The warships and galleys were impressive, and they were the reason for which Braavos was counted among one of the best naval forces this side of the narrow sea.

The King and Queen had sent Prince Rhaegar and Archmaester Marwyn to Braavos to secure the support of the Iron Bank and at the last moment, they had sent Tyrion with them. Tyrion wasn’t an idiot and he quickly saw their intentions. This was a test, to see if he could provide anything of use to their cause. Tyrion had not been treated poorly, he had been given an adequate room in Volantis and he was free to move about as he pleased. However, it was incredibly boring for him, he was forced
to sit idly by for weeks as they restored order to the city.

He had spent some of this time observing the King and Queen. Despite his earlier misgivings, he could see that they had good intentions. They both realised that they had great power in their hands and they both seemed to be cautious about using it. This reassured Tyrion. He had also noticed that they actually seemed to listen to their council before making a decision. Well, the King certainly does, the Queen had become increasingly short tempered and indisposed in the months leading up to the birth of her son.

Tyrion had seen the babe though they both didn’t seem to care for each other, all it took was one look at him and the babe would begin to cry. Still, Tyrion had more concerning matters on his mind. If he could impress the parents eventually the babe would come round. As he thought more on the matter, he remembered that Tommen and Myrcella had been like that when they were young. It took a while for them to become accustomed to him, but eventually they grew to love him.

Thinking of Tommen and Myrcella caused a twinge of worry to pass over him. The King and Queen had wanted to help but they were powerless to do so. They couldn’t just fly off to the Red Keep on their dragons and claim that they wanted to save the royal children from an assassination plot. All he could do was send an anonymous letter and hope that Tommen and Myrcella would be saved.

He was distracted from his thoughts by a loud screech from above, Caraxes was flying freely in the sky. Whilst Tyrion was still completely in awe of the dragons, he couldn’t help but think that it would have been better if the dragons stayed with the King and Queen. They were here to win their support, not bully them into submission. He tore his eyes away from the dragon and looked out ahead of him. They were nearly in the port and soon they would have to disembark. Tyrion quickly headed back to his room to dress in an extra layer, it was cold in Braavos. Much colder than in comparison to Volantis.

He dressed and then they got off the ship. They were forced to dock in Ragman’s harbor, a harbor specifically meant for the docking of foreign ships. It was loud, dirty and busy, Tyrion heard many different tongues and accents but all were being spoken quickly. Rhaegar led them quickly through the harbor until they found a Braavosi who could speak the common tongue. He was a young boatman, who wore worn and tattered clothes.

“Where would you like to go?” he asked as they approached,


“Hop in!” he said with a wide smile and the three of them got into his small pole boat and he pushed them off and into the network of canals. Rhaegar sat next to Marwyn and Tyrion sat opposite them both. He still could not believe that Rhaegar Targaryen was actually alive. He had heard his story and even seen the scars but he still could not believe it. Tyrion, had only heard stories about Rhaegar. Stories from Jaime and from Cersei, two people that he could not trust.

“I heard that you were supposed to marry my sister,” he said casually.

“Not exactly. Your father put forward the idea of a betrothal and my father spat in his face,” he said with a slight smile.

“Yes, I heard my father was not too happy with that,” Tyrion said with a small smile of his own. “I fear it was the beginning of the end of their friendship,”

“Perhaps, although he still remained as his Hand for a few years after the incident, he even brought
“Your sister to court with him,” Rhaegar replied.

“Really? Why would he do that?” Tyrion was surprised by this, he must have had the timeline wrong in his head.

“Perhaps, he was hoping that she would be able catch the eye of young Viserys,” Rhaegar said after a moment.

“Do you think it would have been a good match?” Tyrion asked and Rhaegar frowned before answering,

“I did not know my brother well, I lived on Dragonstone with Elia throughout our marriage in order to get away from my father. I only knew Viserys for a short time and in that time I found him to be cruel, sadistic and weak,”

“Cruel and sadistic? Then the Seven Kingdoms would not have seen a more perfect match,” Tyrion said with a laugh that brought a smile to Rhaegar’s face. Tyrion then turned to Marwyn.

“What is a maester of the citadel doing so far from Oldtown?”

“Archmaester,” he corrected. “I was travelling the world, studying distant lands. Learning from shadowbinders and warlocks,”

“So, you were studying magic essentially?” and Marwyn nodded. “Why couldn’t you do that at the Citadel?”

“The grey sheep at the Citadel don’t believe in magic. They prefer to stick their heads in the sand and ignore what is blatantly obvious,”

Tyrion agreed with this. “I have been fascinated with dragons since the day I was born. I have spent years trying to research everything that I could about dragons. I even read an incomplete copy of The Fires of the Freehold, Galendro’s history of Valyria since I could not find a complete copy,”

“You won’t. Even the Citadel’s copy is missing some 27 scrolls,” Marwyn muttered.

“Why is that? Does the Citadel not even care about this gap in their knowledge?”

“The world that the Citadel wants to build has no place for sorcery, prophecy or glass candles. Much less dragons. I wouldn’t be surprised if they all have their heads stuck in the sand trying to come up with a plausible way to deny the very existence of the current dragons,”

“The Citadel doesn’t have a say in it, what can they do against Dragons?” Tyrion asked and Marwyn gave a loud snort.

“Who do you think killed all the dragons the last time around? Gallant dragon slayers with swords?” he spat “Why do you think Aemon Targaryen spent all his years freezing on the wall when he should have been raised to the position of Grandmaester? His blood is why, he is the blood of the dragon and he can’t be trusted. No more than I could be,”

“Blood and Fire?” Tyrion asked tentatively and Marwyn shrugged.

“Even I don’t know about it. If the Citadel had a copy, it would be kept under lock and key buried deep underneath the citadel in the locked vault. Only the grand archmaester has the key, but I’m not sure it even exists,”
“My friend, any news from Westeros?” Rhaegar asked the young man who was guiding them through the canals.

“No, my friend. Nothing exciting has happened since the war they had,”

Tyrion nodded and was quiet for the rest of the journey. They had heard about Robert Baratheon’s war in the Vale against Baelish. Tyrion could not believe that Baelish had actually been caught. Baelish was far too smart to actually poison Jon Arryn directly, in fact he was far too smart to even be seen with the poisoner. When they got back to Westeros, he would have to find out the full story.

He sat back in the boat and looked around him, taking in the surroundings. In Braavos, all gods are honored. There were a series of tiny islands collectively called the Isle of Gods and each different island had a temple dedicated to a different god. Tyrion saw the temple for the Lord of Light, the temple of the Moonsingers and the House of Black and White. Tyrion had read stories about the House and Black and White and their faceless men, he had been tempted to hire one to kill Cersei but they were extremely expensive.

They continued on for around half an hour before they found the Iron Bank looming ahead of them. It was a massive building made of white marble. Tyrion saw huge painted windows along the bottom floor, and there was a huge golden dome in the middle. They got out of their little boat and made their way across the vast stone plaza that stood in front of the Iron Bank. Tyrion spotted several children playing in a fountain that stood in the middle of the plaza. Rhaegar led them up the painted stone steps towards the 12 foot ebony doors that led them into the Iron Bank.

The entrance hall of the Iron Bank was grand, Tyrion saw a large marble staircase that stretched upwards and led to the second floor. An attendant came up to them and led them to their meeting. They were led to another huge hall with a high painted ceiling. Lanterns hung on the large brick pillars along the walls of the room. At the far end of the room was a table with three representatives of the Iron Bank sat on the opposite side. Tyrion, Rhaegar and Marwyn took their seats and then the meeting began.

“Welcome to the Iron Bank, my name is Tycho Nestoris. It is a pleasure to meet with the Targaryen envoy, although it does not seem like we have any current business with House Targaryen,” Tycho said with a pleasant smile.

“It is a pleasure to meet the Iron Bank. Unfortunately, the King and Queen have other matters to attend to, so we will be speaking on their behalf. We are aware that you don’t have any current business with House Targaryen but we’d like to start one today, please,” Rhaegar said.

“Why does House Targaryen need a loan?”

“When we take back Westeros, we will need money to rebuild the country. The King and Queen have ideas for a lot of reforms that they will put in place and they need gold to implement them,”

“Ah, of course, King Aegon and Queen Daenerys, the great liberators. The abolishers of the slave trade in the East,” he said and Tyrion saw his smile falter slightly, Rhaegar also seemed to pick up on this.

“Forgive me if I’m wrong, but Braavos was the only free city to never be a part of the Valyrian freehold, correct?” Rhaegar began,

“Correct,”

“Braavos was actually founded by a group of escaped slaves. They rebelled, took control of the
ships they were being transported on and they travelled North. I believe it was the Moonsingers who predicted where shelters would be found.”

“That is correct,” Tyrion understood where Rhaegar was going, but he did not think that this was the right way to go.

“Isn’t the first law of Braavos that no one in this city should be a slave?” and Tycho nodded.

“Then why do you not wish to support King Aegon and Queen Daenerys,”

“Your history is correct, but you are missing some details my friend,” Tycho said with a frown

“The group of slaves were fleeing from the might of the Valyrian freehold. They were on a ship from Valyria to a new colony in Sothoryos. It was on this ship that they rebelled and turned North instead of South. You are correct about the fact that the Moonsingers found this place, it was hidden from the eyes of the dragonlords by the high hills and the low lying fog.”

“My apologies, it has been a while since I studied history,” Rhaegar said with a smile. “King Aegon and Queen Daenerys are against the act of slavery. Your interests are aligned,”

“Are they?” Tycho asked and Tyrion quickly understood. Despite being against the act of Slavery, the Iron Bank had no issue with profiting from it. When Aegon and Daenerys destroyed the slave trade in the east, this likely had a knock on effect on the Iron Bank and their investments in the slave trade.

“Yes they are, there is no more training of slaves in the place formerly known as Slaver’s Bay, Volantis has freed all of its slaves. Their principles and yours align,” Rhaegar said adamantly.

“I am not so sure. You see, we have heard about what happened in Volantis. The dragons came and rained their fire down from the sky, just like the dragon lords of old. They even sent a dragon with you today. Do you plan on burning Braavos to the ground if you don’t get your way?” Tycho asked and Tyrion saw Rhaegar begin to grow angry. Tyrion knew that he had to step in before this conversation got even more out of hand.

“Forgive me Tycho, but this seems to be an issue about money, correct?”

“Amongst other things,” he said but Tyrion continued onwards anyway

“As far as I know, the Iron Throne is heavily indebted to the Iron Bank, correct?”

Tycho nodded and watched him carefully. Tyrion looked into his brown eyes briefly before continuing,

“The Targaryens have their dragons, have you heard the story of the last time the Targaryens came to Westeros with their dragons? Of course you have. Aegon the Conqueror brought six of the seven Kingdoms to heel,” he looked back at Tycho and saw the man processing what he said, he was watching Tyrion warily.

“Now, King Aegon and Queen Daenerys will return to Westeros one day and they will take back the throne. If they do and you don’t support them. The Iron Bank will never get its gold back,” Tyrion looked at Tycho and he saw him deep in thought.

“In fact, even if the Targaryens go back to Westeros and lose the war for the throne, you still won’t get your gold back. I am sure you have met Robert Baratheon and if you haven’t, I’m sure you’ve heard stories about his spending habits. Does he strike you as the type of monarch who will pay back
his debt? Now, you’re thinking that perhaps his heir will pay the debt upon his ascension to the throne. A single meeting with Joffrey Baratheon will convince you that he would be a far worse investment even in comparison to Robert. Perhaps, the great Tywin Lannister will pay the debt since he is the richest man in Westeros and bound to the throne by blood. Once again, you will be disappointed because if House Lannister was capable of funding Robert’s excessive lifestyle, then why would he have bothered to take out loans from your bank in the first place? The Targaryens are your best chance for recovering the vast amount of gold that you have sunk into Westeros.”

Tycho looked at him carefully, “It seems that you have raised a series of interesting points, many of which we did not consider before. Please, allow me a few moments to confer with my colleagues,” he said with a smile. Tycho and his two stooges then stood and left to enter a small side chamber. Once, they were gone Rhaegar quickly turned to him,

“What are you doing? We had a plan,” he hissed.

“Yes and your plan was faring terribly in case you hadn’t noticed. The Iron Bank cares only about gold not families, principles or ideologies. The only thing that matters to them is if the man can pay back the gold, whether he is good or evil makes no difference. You were trying to sell them on King Aegon and Queen Daenerys and you got entangled in the complicated and difficult history between Valyria and Braavos. I sold them a way to make money, one they appear to be receptive of,”

Rhaegar opened his mouth to respond but then Tycho returned. He sat opposite them and then spoke,

“The Iron Bank will support King Aegon and Queen Daenerys. We will supply you with gold for all the endeavors necessary to win the Iron Throne,” Tyrion felt a rush of pride flow through him. He tried hard not to let a smug smile form on his face but he knew he was failing miserably.

Tycho quickly pulled out a set of papers which Rhaegar signed on behalf of the King and Queen and then they stood and then left. Once they were outside, Rhaegar turned to him,

“My apologies Tyrion, it was a good idea. I will let the King and Queen know what happened today,” and Tyrion nodded. This was progress. They headed back towards the canal and got into a different canal boat.

“Take us to the Sealord’s palace please,” Rhaegar said as they got in and Tyrion looked at him in shock.

“That is where the Sealord of Braavos lives,” Tyrion said quickly and Rhaegar nodded and gave him a sly smile “I was not aware we had business with him,”

“Tyrion, they don’t tell you all the plans. Yes, the ruler of Braavos lives at the Sealord’s palace and no we don’t exactly have business with him. Jon and Dany told me to speak with him to see if he would be willing to join their new Targaryen empire,”

Tyrion was surprised by this although it did make a certain degree of sense. “What will you be offering the Sealord of Braavos?”

“I have a list of concessions I am allowed to make and so on,” Rhaegar said vaguely as he sat back in the boat. The Sealord’s palace was on a small peninsula to the Northeast of Braavos. It was a huge palace with numerous domes and towers which stretched upwards into the sky. One dome in the middle of the palace had a spire with a golden thunderbolt turning on top of it. Tyrion guessed that it was slightly smaller than the Red Keep, although he could not say for certain.
They got out of the little pole boat and headed towards the gatehouse which had several guards posted outside. As they saw them approach, the guards quickly stepped forward to meet them.

“We would like to see the Sealord of Braavos please,” Rhaegar said as the guards reached them.

“The Sealord is not taking visitors today, come back tomorrow,” the guard said and he began to walk back to the gatehouse. Rhaegar quickly ran past and stood in front of the guards,

“He will see us. We are envoys sent on behalf of King Aegon and Queen Daenerys Targaryen,”

The guard laughed. “I don’t believe you and I’m not going to let you into his palace”

Tyrion was about to open his mouth to try and convince this man but it seemed Caraxes had other ideas. The cream and gold dragon burst down through the clouds and let out a loud ear splitting screech over the palace. The dragon made a few low passes over the palace before giving a loud roar and disappearing up into the clouds. Tyrion looked at Rhaegar who had a smug smile on his face.

“Now, will you take us to the Sealord please?” and the guard quickly nodded. He led them into the palace and into the entrance hall, then he spoke to a few other guards who quickly left, seemingly to inform the Sealord of their arrival. Tyrion looked around the inside of the palace. He saw numerous tapestries that showed the various stages in Braavos’s growth. He followed the line of Tapestries and saw Braavos grow from a small series of huts located on a central island to the sprawling city that it is today.

Tyrion looked up towards the wide main staircase and he saw a man slowly making his way down the stairs. He walked towards them and Tyrion noticed that he frequently had to stop and cough.

“My apologies. My name is Ferrego Antaryon and I am the Sealord of Braavos,” he said in a quiet voice. Tyrion was surprised, how could such a sickly and frail man be the ruler of a powerful city such as Braavos?

“There is no need to apologize, we are here on behalf of King Aegon and Queen Daenerys Targaryen. We are here to present you with an offer from them and to discuss its terms with you if you accept it,” Rhaegar said quickly. “Preferably, somewhere more private,” he added looked around the cavernous entrance hall, the Sealord nodded slowly before speaking.

“We will discuss this in my solar,” he said and he slowly led them through his palace. His solar was a large room with a thick Myrish carpet on the floor. The Sealord slowly sat down behind the polished wooden desk and he gestured for them to sit opposite. A servant brought drinks in for them. Tyrion took a sip of his wine and realised that it was very sweet, sweeter than anything he had tasted in Westeros.

“What is this offer that you would like to discuss?” the Sealord asked,

“As you may have heard, King Aegon and Queen Daenerys have worked hard to stop the slave trade in the east,” Rhaegar began and Tyrion groaned in frustration. Had he not learnt after what happened in the Iron Bank?

“The great slaver cities have all been conquered and turned away from the trade of slaves. They are now part of the new Targaryen empire, along with Volantis. They have sent us here on their behalf to try and negotiate an agreement for Braavos to join their new empire,”

The Sealord nodded slowly.

“We praise and commend them for destroying the vile practice of slavery but what does Braavos
stand to gain by accepting their offer?"

“Better trade links with the other free cities. The islands surrounding Braavos are filled with pine and spruce trees that protect the city from the strong sea winds. It is illegal to cut those trees down therefore there is a low supply of wood in the city which makes the price of wood high. If you join the Targaryen empire, the King and Queen will make sure there is a steady supply of wood to the city, enough wood to make it affordable for all. If your people are spending less money on wood for their fires, they can spend their money on other things, which would increase the growth of your city,”

The Sealord nodded and Tyrion was impressed. The King and Queen had done well to identify this need and figure out a way to address it, although he was not sure where they would get this excess wood from.

“I take it we would still have to buy this wood?” The Sealord asked with a small smile.

“Of course, nothing comes free. Although you will be able to purchase it at a much cheaper rate than you would otherwise. Also, joining the Targaryen empire would not only bring vast opportunities for trade but Braavos would gain the protection and support of dragons,” Rhaegar said and the Sealord sat back in his chair and considered this offer for a few moments.

“Very well. This is a good deal, one that will help the city substantially in the long run. Although I am not so foolish to think that you have come all the way here just to sell me some wood,” the Sealord said.

“We would also like some of your galleys. You seem to have an abundance of warships in your Arsenal. We would like some,”

“How many do you need?"

“As many as you can spare on such short notice,” Rhaegar said somewhat nervously. Tyrion was no expert in warfare but even he had noticed that they had no true warships in their navy. Dragonfire was powerful but they could not risk their own ships. Having a naval force with their own warships would be important to help clear the way for their transport ships

The Sealord nodded slowly.

“Very well. I believe that I can give you 60 galleys,” and Rhaegar nodded in thanks. Tyrion was no expert in the military strength or warfare but 60 galleys did not seem like a lot, they could only hope that the dragons would make up the difference.

They stood and shook hands and then left the palace.

“Pretty successful day, don’t you think Tyrion?” Rhaegar said happily.

“We managed to secure the support of the Iron Bank and the Sealord of Braavos, very successful,” Tyrion said with a smile as they headed back to their ship. “What is the plan now?”

“We wait, collect the Galleys and then we sail them south to meet up with Jon and Dany,” Rhaegar said happily. Tyrion thought that it was as good a plan as any.

The Mother of Dragons
Daenerys Targaryen awoke early, their cabin was still dark and the candles were burning low, she heard Jon breathing deeply as he slept beside her. Still, she realised that she would have to be up soon anyway, Daeron still didn’t sleep through the night. He was getting better, he now only woke up once a night instead of twice. Daeron was a few months old now, he was born in Volantis on a very hot night. Jon had told her that when she finally held him in her hands, the dragons screeched and roared and filled the night with the music of dragons.

They had spent a few more weeks in Volantis putting the city to rights. Volantis was ruled by three triarchs and only the nobility were allowed to run for election. They changed that rule, all freedmen and women were allowed to run for election. A new government had been put in place in the same style as Meereen.

Volantis was a key player in the slave trade and when they abolished slavery, Volantis’s economy had suffered badly. A few of the freedmen and women of Volantis had informed them of the sweet beets that was grown in abundance around the city. It was served in many of the foods of the city. The Volantene people used the beet to make a thick purple soup, they served it with their fruit salads and they even chewed it as they went about their daily business. Most importantly, they used it to make their sweet wine, which was famous throughout Essos.

Jon had decided to increase the production of wine so that the people of Volantis could trade it in larger quantities. Whilst they increased the production of wine, he had also made plans for them to increase the farming done on the fertile lands on the western bank of the Rhoyne. Dany didn’t mind this, she had mostly spent her time resting until Daeron was born.

As if on cue, she heard a soft cry coming from the crib in their cabin. She quickly threw the soft sheets off her and then crossed over to the crib and lifted her beautiful baby boy into her arms.

“Good morning my sweet prince,” she said softly as she slowly rocked him in her arms and her baby quickly stopped crying and smiled at his mother. Dany smiled back as her heart warmed and she quickly gave him a kiss on the top of his little head.

“Everything ok?” she heard Jon ask she turned and saw that he was slowly pushing himself up in bed.

“Everything is fine, our young dragon is hungry that’s all,” she said as she sat down on the bed and began to feed him. Jon pulled her closer and she rested against his side.

“His hair is growing,” Jon said softly as he stroked Daeron’s silver hair. “I’m happy he has your hair,” and Dany smiled at this. They had been arguing playfully over this for weeks before he was born.

“At least he has your grey eyes,” Dany said to him. “Although, I think I see tiny flecks of purple,”

“Really?” Jon said quickly “Can I see?”

“When he’s finished,” Dany told him with a wave of her hand. She looked out the window and saw that the sun had risen. They had left Volantis a few weeks after Daeron was born. They had sent Tyrion, Marwyn and Rhaegar ahead to Braavos to try win the support of the Iron Bank and of the Sealord. Then, a few weeks later, they had left Volantis and set sail for Pentos. After Tyrion’s revelation, they had both agreed to head to Pentos to speak with Illyrio. Illyrio would provide them with the truth regarding this false prince and he would also need to explain why he gave Viserys those sellswords.
“We should arrive today,” Jon said, reading her thoughts.

“Good. It’s time we get some answers,” she said as Daeron finished feeding. She wiped his mouth and then tickled him and soon the room was filled with the sound of their babe’s laughter. Dany quickly found herself laughing and for a moment she forgot that she was a Queen, it was just Jon, her and their beautiful baby boy. It was these moments that kept her going, these moments with her family.

“He’s strong,” Jon said as Daeron gripped his index finger in his tiny hand.

“He won’t be a warrior,” Daenerys said quickly and protectively. “We will fight his wars for him. We will win the throne for him. We will be the conquerors. He will not need to fight. He will be like Daeron the Good. He will have a long and prosperous reign” Jon laughed.

“Daeron the Good had to work to fix all of his father’s mistakes and unjust decisions during most of his reign, not to mention deal with the Blackfyre rebellions. I’ll admit that we will leave our son a better realm and legacy but we can’t fight all his battles for him,”

“I can try,” she said determinedly and Jon laughed again as he played with Daeron. Soon, sunlight filled their cabin and Dany regrettably realised that they would have to leave soon.

“I don’t want to leave him,” she said softly as she held him in her arms.

“I know, but we have to. It'll only be a short while. The sooner we leave, the sooner we’ll be back,” he said and she agreed. They would leave Daeron with Missandei, Irri, Jhiqui, Doreah and a wet nurse. She hated leaving him with a wet nurse but she had come to accept that there would be days when she would not be there to feed him. Still, she had spent months getting to know these woman before she trusted them with her son.

“I’ll go get your handmaidens, they’ll take him while we dress,” he said.

He quickly returned and she reluctantly handed over Daeron to Missandei. Daeron didn’t seem to mind, the boy loved her handmaidens.

“I will keep him safe your grace, nothing will happen to the prince,” she said reassuringly.

“We will take the city and then we will send word. Then, you can bring him into the city,”

They planned to deal with Illyrio and the council of magisters that ran the city. Even though by law, Pentos had no slaves, Daenerys knew that this was not the case. They would stop the act of slavery in this city as well. She quickly helped Jon dress in his armor, taking her time to feel his warm skin and his strong muscles. When Jon was ready, Irri helped her to dress. Thankfully, her body had quickly recovered and she was now able to wear her normal clothes. Irri braided her hair in a simple braid that she would be able to tuck into her clothes. Jon had also commissioned a set of light armor for her to wear while heading into battle. The armor design was based upon the description of outfits worn by female dragon riders of the freehold, which they had read about in one of their books. She also took her Valyrian steel dagger, she was not expecting to use it, but Jon would insist that she carry it.

Once they were dressed they headed up onto the deck of the ship. She could see Pentos ahead of her, the city was not far. They would probably be able to sail in today. They had the majority of their army with them and as she turned around she could see the majority of their ships still with them. Still, they had not planned on taking their army into the city. They did not want to sack yet another city.
She saw Missandei holding a giggling and laughing Daeron and she quickly walked over to them.

“Goodbye my sweet prince, mommy will see you later,” she said sadly as she placed a kiss on his forehead. Greyworm and several of the Unsullied were on this ship, and she knew that they would guard the Prince with their life. There was also Ghost. Ghost would stay behind on the ship and she knew that nothing would get past the direwolf and this reassured her. She saw Jon say goodbye to his son and then they got into their little boat and sailed to a small neighboring island.

As they sailed to the small island she looked at Jon. He was running his silver hair through his fingers and he looked like something was bothering him.

“What’s the matter, love,” she asked softly,

“The Tyrells,” he said simply and she nodded. An envoy from House Tyrell had arrived in Volantis a few days before they left. They had come to discuss terms of a possible alliance with the great house.

“We need allies,” she said simply and Jon nodded. They both knew that they would never have the support of House Lannister, Baratheon or Stark. After Tyrion’s revelation, they knew that Dorne was unlikely to join them. They had heard of the recent developments in Westeros. There had been a war in the Vale and the crown had installed a new Lord in charge, this meant that it was unlikely that they got the full support of the Vale. House Tully and the Riverlands were an option, but they were not enough.

On one hand, the crown had seemingly made enemies of House Tully when they exposed Lysa Arryn’s crimes in front of the entire realm. On the other hand, House Tully had fought hard to depose their family in the rebellion and had blood ties with House Stark.

“They were loyal to our house in the rebellion,” she told him

“Loyal?” Jon said with a small laugh. “Perhaps. What did they do during the entire war? They were sieging a castle that was practically empty, hundreds of miles away from where the actual fight was taking place. I was taught that Mace Tyrell sat there along with most of the Reach forces for the better part of a year when he should have been on the Trident helping my father fight the real enemy,”

“True, but that is in the past, Jon. If we are going to take back our throne, we will need allies. Right now, House Tyrell and the Reach are our best chance,” she said calmly but Jon remained unconvinced.

“Jon, we will meet them properly in Westeros where we will discuss this in more detail,” she said as she sat next to him and gave him a comforting squeeze of his hand. They saw the little island approaching and they quickly got ready to get out of the boat.

Anogar and Vedros were waiting for them. Their growth had slowed slightly during the last few months but they were still fearsome. Anogar growled at her as she slowly approached and she froze for a moment before she realised what was wrong.

“Are you jealous?” she asked softly and Anogar gave another growl and turned away his head. She had not really interacted with him much since Daeron was born. Dany had shown Anogar the newest member of their family but apart from that, she had not spent much time with him.

Dany slowly walked up to him and did not let his low growls deter her.

“I am sorry my child,” she said softly “I was busy with our littlest one,” and she gently patted his
snout. She closed her eyes and reached out to him in her mind and she found that their bond was still there. She saw what he had been doing these last few days, he had flew over the grasslands with Vedros and they had devoured an entire flock of sheep.

“I see you have been eating well,” and Anogar gave another quick growl before turning his head and lowering his wing. She smiled and quickly climbed onto his back and got comfortable. Anogar took a few steps before he quickly took off, taking his time to gain height. Dany quickly realised that she missed this feeling. The wind was rushing past her face and she laughed happily. Anogar dipped his wing to one side to give her a good few of the deep blue water. Dany looked up at Jon and saw that he and Vedros were flying above waiting.

“Let’s find Illyrio,” she told Anogar and her dragon gave a loud throaty roar in response and took off towards Pentos. Anogar quickly covered the short distance and soon they were flying over the city. She saw the red priests at the red temple, she saw people on the streets looking up towards them and pointed and then she saw Illyrio’s manse.

Anogar flew overhead and gave another loud roar but she reigned him in. Jon and Vedros landed first and made sure the courtyard was clear and safe for her. Once she landed, they made their way through the manse towards the garden.

Dany knew that Illyrio likely had several cupboards and secret rooms that he could hide in but she was not expecting him to hide. Illyrio likely thought that she was married to his prince. The poor fat fool.

As expected, she saw Illyrio sitting in the garden.

“Queen Daenerys,” he greeted happily. “King Aegon,” and Daenerys had to fight hard not to laugh.

“Magister Illyrio, it is nice to see you,” she said with as much sincerity as she could manage.

“How was the wedding?” he asked and she looked at Jon and gave him a smile.

“It was wonderful. I love my husband,” and then she gave him a quick kiss and looked back at Illyrio. He was smiling proudly at the pair of them, as if all his plans had paid off.

“Please sit,” he said gesturing to the bench in the gardens. He had some food on the table and Daenerys helped herself to some grapes. She popped one into her mouth and bit into it, savoring the sweet taste. “Why have you come to see me today?”

“Did Connington not write to you?” Jon asked,

“No, why would he?” Illyrio asked shaking his head in confusion and Dany had to quickly eat another grape to contain her smile. “I have heard some rumors from Volantis about a boy claiming to be the son of Rhaegar and Lyanna Stark, but that is impossible and seeing the two of you hear together confirms that,”

“We have some questions for you,” Dany asked in an innocent voice “Why did you give Viserys those sellswords?” and she watched as Illyrio’s smile turned into a frown.

“What do you mean?” he asked.

“On the ship that we took from here to Astapor, we were attacked by a group of sellswords that were present on the ship. The sellswords attacked Rhaegar and Jon, but not Viserys. Why?” she asked and she saw Illyrio begin to sweat.
“I don’t know what you’re talking about,” he stammered.

“Yes, you do,” Jon said quickly “I saw the leader of the sellswords meet with Viserys here at the manse through Ghost’s eyes. Then I saw him speaking with Viserys again on the ship before the attack. Viserys had no friends or gold to hire sellswords. Someone must have been helping him and that someone was you,”

Illyrio looked at Jon stunned, he thought Jon was his Aegon and he could not understand how he knew these things.

“No, impossible. Why would I want to hurt you? Why would I want to hurt Queen Daenerys?”

“Who is that?” Daenerys asked, pointing towards the statue. Tyrion had told them that this was a statue of his son.

“That’s a statue of me, when I was a young boy,” he said quickly and Daenerys cocked her head to the side and smiled sweetly at him.

“Illyrio Mopatis. If you tell the truth now, we will show mercy to you. Who is the boy in the statue?” and she stared into his eyes. She saw fear. With surprising speed, Illyrio stood up from the table and started to run but Jon was quicker. He leapt over the table and tackled him to the floor.

“The Queen asked you a question,” he growled as he held his dagger to his throat.

“He is my son,” Illyrio blurted out as Jon kept the pressure on him.

“And you conspired with Lord Varys to present him as the son of Rhaegar Targaryen and Elia Martell?” Dany asked quickly and Illyrio quickly nodded.

“So, he is the real reason as to why you sent those sellswords to kill Jon and Rhaegar. You wanted them out of the way because they were a threat to your plan. I daresay you would have even killed Viserys when he too became disposable,”

“Jon, get off him,” Jon stood up and Illyrio gasped for air.

“This is the real Aegon Targaryen. Son of Rhaegar and Lyanna Stark. He is the true King of Westeros.” Dany noticed a small locket and the floor and bent to pick it up. Inside it, was a picture of a beautiful woman.

“This is the boy’s mother?” she asked and Illyrio nodded. “Who is she?”

“Serra,” and Daenerys raised her eyebrow at him, waiting for a better answer.

“She was my second wife. I met her in a pillow house in Lys, I took her home and then I married her,” and Daenerys nodded in understanding. The pieces were finally fitting together but something was not making sense.

“Why would you do this?” she asked and Illyrio shook his head, not understanding the question. “I can see that you love her and this child is all that you have to remember her by. But why take this risk and create this great conspiracy. You could have given the boy a good life filled with luxury and comfort, growing up here with you. Instead, you have sent him off along a path filled with great dangers and many enemies. You must admit that even if your elaborate plan had worked, there was still a good chance that your son would either die fighting in the war to gain the throne or fallen prey to great game of thrones played by the lords of Westeros,”
“I promised her. I promised Serra I would do this for her,”

“You promised a whore from Lys that you would sit her son on the Iron Throne?” Jon asked in disbelief.

“Don’t you dare call her a whore,” Illyrio spat and she saw Jon reach for his sword. Dany quickly raised her hand to stop him. “She was the last Blackfyre, forced to live in exile because of your family. I loved her, she wanted to see her son on the Iron Throne which her family had died fighting for and I swore I would make it happen,”

“Are you saying that this false Aegon is the last heir of the Blackfyre pretenders? Are you saying that he’s a black dragon?” Jon asked,

“Black or Red, a dragon is still a dragon” Illyrio said with a shrug and Daenerys felt a rush of anger pulse through her. Their house had already suffered enough pain, shame and ridicule brought on by the past Blackfyre pretenders and the Usurper, and now Illyrio had planned to sit a black dragon on their throne.

“Illyrio Mopatis. You will die today,” she told him and Illyrio swallowed nervously. Dany looked around the manse. She had spent a short amount of time here but it had changed her life. She had met Rhaegar, she received her dragon eggs and she had met Jon, the love of her life and it all happened here.

“Dragonflame, or a sword,” she asked simply.

“Dragonflame,” he answered.

“Jon find some rope and tie him to the statue,” she instructed him and then she pulled out her dagger and pointed it at Illyrio who was still lying on the floor. Jon quickly returned with the ropes.

“I suppose I should also be thanking you,” she said whilst Jon picked him up and started to tie him to the statue “You gave me these dragon eggs, I met Rhaegar in your manse and I met Jon, the man that I love. All under your roof. Did you know I have a son now? A beautiful baby boy with my silver hair and his father’s grey eyes. I should thank you as none of it would have happened if you had not entered my life,” she said and she smiled happily at the thought of little Daeron.

“But you have also betrayed me. I could have lost everything because of you and your greed. You used me as a pawn in your game, not caring if I lived or died, all you ever wanted was for me to marry your false prince and grant him the claim and legitimacy to the throne which he has no right to,”

Jon had finished tying him up and he stepped back to stand next to her. She held onto Jon’s hand and then led him backwards.

“I, Queen Daenerys of House Targaryen. Wife to King Aegon Targaryen trueborn son of Rhaegar Targaryen and Lyanna Stark, sentence you, Illyrio Mopatis to die,”

She heard Anogar loudly approach. He perched awkwardly on the wall and the watchtower and his weight caused the stone to crumble slightly. Anogar then leaned his long neck downwards and snarled at Illyrio. She saw Illyrio shaking uncontrollably with fear.

“Dracarys,” she whispered.

Anogar slowly pulled back and then bathed Illyrio in his black flame. Illyrio burned for a few moments before Anogar stopped and then flew off.
There was nothing left of Illyrio Mopatis. Both, he and the statue of the boy had been completely burnt to ash.

Chapter End Notes

Next up we have chapter 17 which is called "Dragonstone" which should be out on Saturday or Sunday, probably Sunday

I have no more plans for Essos, perhaps in the future Jon/Dany will deal with the remaining free cities, but for now, we're heading to Westeros

As always let me know what you think. Comments are always appreciated, especially the longer ones

Thanks for reading

A slightly older Sleepy
The Onion Knight

Ser Davos Seaworth stood on the battlements of Dragonstone looking out over the narrow sea. He looked down at the port, the usually empty port at Dragonstone was now filled with warships. After they had returned from the Vale, King Robert had ordered that the majority of the royal fleet should remain at Dragonstone. He had given Lord Stannis orders to launch the royal fleet if they saw any sign of the Targaryen fleet approaching Dragonstone.

There were 200 ships from the royal fleet floating in the port of Dragonstone, 120 of which were Galleys that dipped 100 or more oars. The flagship of the fleet was unquestionably King Robert’s Hammer, a huge warship with 400 oars capable of outrunning any ship in Westeros. Davos had been on the vessel a few times recently and he was certain that he would see no finer warship in his life. House Velaryon had also provided an extra 10 warships to the fleet.

Under Lord Stannis, he had been given his own galley, Black Betha he called it, it boasted of 180 oars and his own son, Mathos, was among the crew. All of his children who were of age to fight were on Dragonstone. His eldest son, Dale captained a galley named Wraith, Allard captained Lady Marya and Maric was an oar master on Fury. Thankfully, his wife and his youngest children were back at home in their keep at Cape Wrath, he missed his family but his place was here with Lord Stannis.

Lord Stannis had been in a good mood lately, or a better mood since he seldom had good ones. A few weeks ago, the Redwyne fleet under the command of Lord Paxter Redwyne had arrived at Dragonstone, adding an extra 150 warships to their fleet. The Reach had also sent a portion of their bountiful harvest through several merchant ships to stock up the stores of Dragonstone.
Still, even the extra soldiers and supplies could not lift the dreary mood that had cloaked the castle. The skies were grey and he could see a layer of fog rolling in from Crackclaw point to the north east, he wasn’t worried though. This type of morning fog was a common occurrence in Dragonstone and it usually cleared pretty quickly. Davos turned behind him and looked up towards Dragonmont, the volcano that gave rise to the Island. As usual, he could see the pale grey steam rising out from the vents in the Volcano, spiraling into the overcast sky. Davos had heard that many years ago, the dragons used to make their lairs inside the Volcano and that fact only added to the feeling that they did not belong here.

The castle of Dragonstone had been built over 500 years ago by the Valyrians and it served as the western most outpost of their freehold. The castle had been built by using magic and sorcery and Davos quickly realised that it was supposed to be a show of their power. They created fanciful, ornate shapes and figures, at first Davos thought that they were beautiful, but recently they just added to the foreboding feeling that surrounded Dragonstone at the moment. It was a place meant for dragons and dragonlords, not for men like Ser Davos Seaworth.

His hand went to the pouch that contained the joints of his left hand, they had brought him luck so far and he only hoped that this would continue. Davos pulled his cloak tightly around him and then headed back inside, it was best to get his breakfast now whilst the food was still warm. Davos headed inside to the great hall, which had been carved in the shape of a dragon lying on its belly. To enter the great hall, you had to pass through the mouth of the dragon. Davos entered the great hall and quickly piled his plate with food. The tables in the great hall were filled with nobles and knights all eating their breakfast. Davos didn’t really like speaking to these men so he quickly found an empty end of a bench and sat there. Quietly eating his bacon and bread.

His quiet breakfast did not last for long as he was soon joined by a sellsail, Salladhor Saan. To further boost their naval numbers, the crown had hired numerous sellsails from across the narrow sea and Salladhor was the most prominent of them all. He was a notorious sellsail and he even called himself ‘The Prince of the narrow sea’. He hailed from Lys but did not possess any of the beautiful valyrian features that was generally found in the inhabitants of the free city. He sat across from him eating grapes from a wooden bowl.

“Salla,” Davos greeted warmly.

“Ser Davos,” he replied grimly. The two shared a history together, when he was a smuggler, Davos would often buy cargo from the man. It was this shared history that had helped Davos to convince Salla to join their fight against the Targaryens.

“I take it you are still unhappy with me,” Davos said quickly and Salla gave a loud snort.

“Unhappy, why would I be unhappy? You promised me gold. You said that if I fought for the King’s brother I would have my pick of some of the treasures kept below the Red Keep. Though, you did fail to mention that we would be fighting against the dragons,”

Davos nodded slowly. Lord Stannis had instructed him not to let any of the sellsails they hired know of the enemy they would be facing, and Davos quickly understood the wisdom behind those words.

“Dragons breathe fire my friend and our ships are made out of wood. Wood burns,”

“The dragons shouldn’t be large enough to use in battle as per the Citadel’s assessment. However, if the Targaryens decide to use them, we have a plan in place to deal with the dragons,” Davos told him and Salladhor just rolled his eyes.

“And what pray tell is the plan? You haven’t told me,” he said as he slowly chewed a grape and
Davos sat quietly. Lord Stannis had told Davos and his captains parts of his plans, enough so that each captain would know their role in the battle, but he had kept all the major details secret.

“Either you don’t know the plan, or you are unwilling to share it with me. This is a pity seeing as we have been friends for so long,” Salla said to him. “Have a grape my friend, I daresay it might just be the last nice thing you eat,” and then he stood up and left, leaving his bowl behind. Davos finished eating quickly before leaving the hall. Salla’s words had only added to his growing fears, hopefully Lord Stannis would tell him his full plan soon and this plan would reassure him.

He headed towards the stone drum tower, the central keep of Dragonstone. Davos quickly walked up the stone steps to the chamber of the painted table, where he knew he would find Lord Stannis. The great oak doors were designed in such a way that each half of the door contained half a dragon that would fit together to form a single dragon when the doors were closed. Davos quickly knocked before entering.

The chamber of the painted table was a round room with tall windows facing north, east, south and west. He saw Lord Stannis gazing out of the eastern window, staring out across the narrow sea. He looked around the room and he saw several of the Reach lords were also present, including the famous Lord Paxter Redwyne. Lord Paxter was a middle aged man with a few tufts of orange hair remaining on his head. He had blockaded Storms End and shipbreaker bay during the rebellion and had supported Lord Stannis in the sea battle off Fair Isle. Davos smiled in greeting at Lord Paxter and he was given a smile in return. Davos had been relieved when Lord Paxter arrived, he was an experienced naval commander and a man that they could trust.

“My Lord,” he said to Lord Stannis,

“What is it, Ser Davos,” he said in a frustrated voice, Davos knew this voice and he would not let it deter him.

“I was wondering about our plans for the battle,” Davos said and Lord Stannis didn’t respond for a few moments.

“The sellsail wants to know. Salladhor Saan is his name, correct?” and Davos nodded in answer.

“Yes, my Lord,” he said once he realised that Stannis would still not turn around to face him.

“The man is a sellsail, loyal only to gold. I will not tell him our plans. The man would sooner sell this information to the Targaryens than he is to stay and fight with us,” Lord Stannis said.

“Then, why hasn’t he?” Lord Paxter asked.

“His galleys are closer to Driftmark than they are to the narrow sea. He knows that if he tries to leave, our fleet would destroy his. He is trapped in all sense of the word,”

“I don’t think it is wise to anger the sellsails my lord, they are a fickle enough bunch to begin with, they likely don’t need a reason to betray us and join the Targaryens,” Lord Paxter said as he took a drink of his wine.

“We don’t have a choice,” Lord Stannis said as he turned around. “We need every ship that we can get,”

“Ships burn my Lord,” Lord Paxter said “I don’t think it’s wise to engage in naval warfare,”

“A battle at sea is our best chance,” Lord Stannis snapped. “They have no warships. They are most likely transporting their troops on merchant cogs or carracks. They cannot beat us at sea, we have the
“What of their dragons?” Lord Paxter asked,

“I have spoken to Maester Pylos, he has said that it will take years for the dragons to grow and reach their full size. The Grandmaesters from the citadel have also confirmed this, the dragons are not a threat,” Lord Stannis said and Lord Paxter gave a small laugh which clearly irritated Lord Stannis.

“Then, how do the Grandmaesters explain what happened in Volantis? That sounds like the work of dragons and big ones at that,” Lord Paxter said evenly and Davos could almost see the teeth grinding in Lord Stannis’s head.

“Unconfirmed rumors from sailors and drunkards, nothing more. I’ll believe what I can see with my own eyes instead of listening to drunken gossip of sailors,” Lord Stannis said after a moment. “But I will grant you your wish, Ser Davos, I will tell you our plan,” he said and he gestured for Davos to take a seat.

“When we see the first sight of the Targaryen fleet, or any fleet for that matter we will sail out into the narrow sea. The Redwyne fleet will be on the port side and Salladhor Saan’s fleet on the Starboard, the royal fleet will make up the center. We have 360 warships in our fleet and each line will contain 20 ships. The first 3 lines will contain our biggest galleys, behind that line we will have a line of ships mounted with Ballistas,”

“You mean the keep the Ballistas in the center of the battle?” Ser Imry asked immediately, “That is far too risky. If we lose the ballistas then what hope do we have?”

“If these dragons are as fearsome as you believe, what are they going to target first?” Lord Paxter asked “The plan is to have the Ballistas as close to their own ships as possible. That way they can’t use their dragons, otherwise they run the risk of sinking their own ships in the process,” and Davos nodded in agreement, he could see some logic behind those words.

“Lord Redwyne will also take a part of his fleet and wrap around and attack from the side. This will distract them and give our Ballistas more time,” Lord Stannis informed the room. “If we destroy their fleet, this Targaryen invasion will end before it even begins,”

“What if they don’t land at Dragonstone?” one lord asked,

“Where else would they land?” Lord Stannis replied quickly as if it was the dumbest question in the world. “Dragonstone has deep water ports for their ships and the best place to launch an invasion of Westeros. Dragonstone is also their ancestral castle, they will want to take it back to send a statement,”

Again, Davos found himself agreeing with Lord Stannis but it did not make him feel much better.

“I don’t like the fog. The visibility is going to be low, we won’t be able to see their fleet if the fog remains,” one lord said as he pointed out of the eastern window. Davos looked out the window and saw that the earlier fog had now rolled in from Crackclaw point, but Davos was experienced.

“The fog will blow past quickly. It always does,” Davos said and Lord Paxter agreed with him.

“My Lord,” Davos said as he bowed to Lord Stannis and begun to take his leave. His hand reached the door when he heard a voice call his name,

“Ser Davos, let’s not tell the sellsail too many details,” Lord Paxter Redwyne said to him. “He might still betray us,”
Davos nodded and left the room, he walked through the hallways of Dragonstone until he arrived outside of Shireen’s room. He knocked on the door and entered.

Shireen was sitting in her room at the table reading a book whilst Patchface, the court’s fool, sat on the floor singing softly.

“What are you reading?” he asked as he entered.

“I wanted to read about Aegon the Conqueror but Maester Pylos took those books away,” she said unhappily. Davos was thankful for this, he did not want to hear any more news about dragons today. “So instead, I am reading about King Daeron the first. He went to war and conquered Dorne and he did it without dragons,”

Davos groaned and cursed himself. He loved Shireen, almost as if she was his own child. One day he had let it slip that there were dragons in the east, and the girl had been obsessed ever since. She went through every book in the library looking for information about dragons, she pestered both Maester Cressen and Maester Pylos to tell her stories about the dragons. Stannis had wanted to keep the news of the dragons a secret, but Davos had clearly ruined that.

“Do you think we’ll see the dragons, Ser Davos?” she asked sweetly. Davos looked into her blue eyes and he felt as if his tongue was tied. Shireen was still a child and he did not want to lie to her, but he did not want to tell her the truth. The truth was that she would probably see a dragon, and those dragons were coming to kill them.

He opened his mouth to speak but he was interrupted.

Ahoooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooo

Davos froze as the call echoed on and on throughout the castle, it was a loud sound that resonated throughout the castle, so loud that it was impossible to ignore. This was the call to arms. They had spotted a fleet, Davos swallowed nervously before he spoke,

“Ok my dear, there will be guards outside the door, stay in here with Patchface,” he told Shireen.

“Yes, I hope that you will,” he said with a smile and then he left her room. Davos followed the line of shouting and running men as they made their way through the castle and out onto the beach. As Davos left the castle he looked out over the narrow sea, the earlier fog had cleared as he expected and this meant that he could see clearly out across the narrow sea.

In the distance he could see ships with black sails, they were too far away to make out any more details but he was certain that the Targaryen fleet was here.

The loud war horn was still blowing and Davos started to run towards the port in Dragonstone. Lord Stannis was Lord Stannis and this meant that he had made sure that every single captain had their responsibilities drilled into them. Every captain would know their place in the line of ships and their role in this battle. Davos quickly boarded Black Betha and within a few minutes they were smoothly sailing away. Davos and the Black Betha were on the port side of the third line, right in front of the
Ballistas. Davos stood at the prow of his ship looking out towards the oncoming fleet, Davos guessed that battle would commence soon, but they still had time and there was no need to tire the oarsmen just yet. He quickly looked up in the sky at the grey clouds, he saw no signs of the dragons.

Then he looked towards their fleet, he knew that King’s Roberts Hammer would be at the center of the first line in battle, she would likely be flanked by Lord Steffon and The Stag of the Sea each ship boasting a mighty 200 oars. Davos looked to his left and saw that the Redwyne fleet had drifted off, likely to begin their plan to wrap around to attack the Targaryen flank. His stubby hand went to the pouch around his neck and he whispered a short prayer.

“Father, I don’t see any dragons,” Mathos said to him as he approached “Does that mean they’re not real?”

“Let’s hope so boy,” he muttered quietly. “Get back in your position, we need to be ready for the signal,” he said and Mathos quickly ran back to his position as oar master.

Davos then looked out towards the fleet, they were closer now. He looked to his left and saw that the Redwyne fleet were angling themselves for their attack.

Ahooooooooooooooooooooooooooo Ahooooooooooooooooooooooooooo
Ahooooooooooooooooooooooooooo

The call rolled off the waves from the rear of King Robert's Hammer. Lord Stannis had given the order and now Ser Imry was blowing the warhorn to signal the attack.

“Out oars!” Davos barked “Form the line,” A hundred oars dipped into the water as the oarmasters drum began to boom. It was a slow methodical beat like the beating of a great big heart and the oars moved at every stroke, a hundred men all pulling together as one.

He looked forward and watched as the wooden oars from Wraith and Lady Marya sprung out of the side of the ship and then slowly dipped into the water, his sons were young but he had taught them well. They were good captains for their ships.

“Slow cruise,” Davos shouted to his men. They had to maintain their distance. He looked out to the starboard side and saw that Bold Laughter was lagging, it had only just gotten its oars into the water. Bold Laughter was a huge galley, boasting 180 oars and it had one of the biggest rams in their fleet, however Davos had always questioned its captain’s competency.

The sea was filled with the sound of men shouting, drums beating and the rhythmic slapping of oars on the water. A gust of wind whipped across the ship and Davos tugged his old cloak tighter around himself. He only had a boiled leather jerkin and a small pot helm for armor. Davos refused to wear heavy steel at sea, he believed that the steel was more likely to kill him than to save him. He looked around at the decks of the other ships and saw the other highborn captains glittering in their fresh steel. They clearly did not share his opinion.

Ahooooooooooooooooooooooooooo
“Fast cruise,” Davos shouted and the beat of the drum began to pick up pace. Davos quickly looked up at the sky, if they had dragons they would have been here by now. Surely.

The speed of the strokes picked up as the oars splashed through the water, *splish splosh splish splosh splish splosh*. Davos looked behind him and saw the men all on the deck ready for battle. Archers strung their bows and pulled the first arrows from their quivers and soldiers banged their swords against their shields. The galleys of the first line were starting to obscure Davos’s vision so he paced back and forth on the deck nervously. Battle would only be minutes away.

Ahoooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooooo

“Battle speed!” Davos yelled and *Black Bertha* surged forward. He looked to his starboard side and saw that *Bold Laughter* had caught up and was moving alongside them. The thumping sound of the drums furiously beating filled his head and Davos focused on what was going on in front of him. He looked up into the clouds in the sky, still no dragons. Davos felt reassured. Lord Stannis was right, he is always right. They have no dragons.

“Port!” Davos heard a voice shout and he looked in that direction and what he saw stunned him. The Redwyne fleet were on the port side but they were supposed to be heading out to attack the Targaryen flank. Instead, the Redwyne fleet had performed a quick turn and was now heading towards them, attacking *their* flank. Davos was rooted to the spot, there was nothing he could do to stop the Redwyne fleet ramming towards their side. They were too close and they were moving too quickly.

Davos stood rooted to the spot as the first iron ram made contact with the ships containing the Ballistas. Davos heard the sounds of the wood cracking and he watched as boarders quickly swarmed the ships. The ships with the Ballistas on them did not have many soldiers onboard and the Reach traitors quickly overwhelmed them.

Davos realised that they were powerless to stop the attack going on in the rear, they could only go forward. *Black Betha* continued onwards, the sound of the oar masters drums thundering loudly in Davos’s ears as he looked for a victim for their ram. His eyes settled on a Targaryen galley not too far ahead of them. He opened his mouth to issue the command but then he heard a loud roar coming from the clouds above and the words were lost on his lips.

The seconds seemed to stretch into minutes and then into hours as Davos desperately looked into the clouds for the source of the noise. Davos had just managed to convince himself that he was imagining things before he heard a second high pitched screech. The noise was so loud that it drowned out all the sounds of the battle. Davos knew that it could only be one thing. He lifted his eyes to the clouds as he heard a third roar and then he saw them.

Three dragons descended from the clouds above the battle, one midnight black, the other green and the third a pale cream. Lord Stannis was wrong, he quickly realised. Lord Stannis was very wrong. The dragons were huge, monstrously big. Davos’s eyes followed the midnight black dragon as it flew low over the starboard side and released a jet black torrent of flame. The black dragon quickly pulled up into the sky as the green dragon made a low pass of its own. Davos watched as the green dragon released a swirling blast of emerald green flame from its mouth and onto the poor galleys that happened to be in the dragon’s path.

Davos then heard a loud roar that could only have come from the third dragon, which had flown far
behind them, releasing short blasts of golden flame onto their rear.

“Father!” Mathos shouted and he turned to look at his son. “What are our orders!” and Davos just looked at his son. The Ballistas were their only hope, if they could not take out those fire breathing monsters then the dragons would burn through the entire royal fleet within an hour.

“We need to protect the Ballistas!” he shouted. “Get us out of here! Backwater!”

He felt the boat jerk and then slowly move backwards. Davos knew that this was a very risky and difficult maneuver. It would be very difficult to turn the ship but at the very least they could use their own ship as a shield. The air was quickly filling with smoke and the rhythmic sound of the oar masters drums had been quickly replaced by the panicked screams of men as they desperately tried to avoid the dragonflame.

Davos heard a loud whistling noise and he saw a long bolt shoot into the sky towards the black dragon. Davos watched with bated breath as the slim silver bolt flew through the air towards the dragon, Davos was sure that the bolt would hit, the dragon was not looking in that direction. Davos heard a screech from another dragon and then the black dragon rolled out of the way with unbelievably agility. The dragon then released an angry roar that resonated loudly across the water. Davos watched as the dragon turned its great black head from side to side before it found the Ballista and then gave out another roar.

He watched as the dragon quickly took off towards the ship containing the Ballista. Davos hoped and prayed that the crew had managed to load a bolt and that they were ready to fire, this was an easy shot, their best shot. If they could just kill one dragon, then King Robert and his forces would have an easier job later on.

Davos watched as the dragon closed the distance with ease, all it took was a few lazy flutters of its wings and then the dragon was upon the ship with the Ballista. The dragon flew overhead and then released its black flame. As they were closer now, Davos could feel the terrible heat from the dragon flame on his face.

Davos scanned the sky for a few moments, desperately hoping to see some more Ballista shots but he couldn’t find any. They had two lines of Ballista, one in the front, the other in the rear. Davos quickly realised that the dragons and the Redwyne fleet must have made short work of the first line, but what about the second? Those Ballista were placed on ships provided by House Velaryon, had they been betrayed again?

Davos did not have time to think about it as he heard a loud clapping noise like thunder coming from behind him. He quickly turned and saw the green dragon coming towards him. The dragon released a loud roar that caused the Black Betha to rock and sway heavily. Davos stared at the dragon at its approached, the sight of it seemed to stop his heart.

The dragon opened its mouth again and Davos could see the molten green flame bubbling and building down its throat. Then, Davos felt a shove in his back and the dragon vanished from his vision and the seawater smacked him hard in the face, filling his nose and his mouth with saltwater.

Davos forgot everything that he had learned and he just wrestled with the sea in a blind panic as he desperately tried to reach the surface. His arms flailed from side to side and his chest tightened until he finally broke the surface. He spat out the salt water, sucked in a large gulp of air and found the nearest piece of debris and clung on to it.

Black Betha was reduced to a burning hull that drifted aimlessly in the sea. Plumes of dirty black smoke trailed upwards into the sky, mixing with the clouds. He watched as burning men jumped into
the water to escape the fire only to end up drowned instead. He saw *Fury* and *Kings Robert's Hammer* listing heavily whilst *Lord Steffon* and the *Stag of the Sea* were burning freely. His eyes searched for *Wraith* or *Lady Marya* but he could not find them. They were somewhere in that thick smoke, either burning or sunk. His sons were dead.

Davos was carried by the sea aimlessly through the wreckage, the sea seemed to be boiling with the heat from the dragon flame. He could hear the hiss of the steam and cackling of burning wood. The battle appeared to be over, as the dragons were roaring and screeching victoriously. In between their roars Davos could hear the shrieks of dying men, some were burning to death, some were drowning and Davos was powerless to change his course. It was almost as if the sea was letting him know how foolish they were for daring to challenge the dragons.

“Father!” he heard a loud voice shout and Davos quickly turned towards the noise. He saw Mathos drifting on a similar piece of wood and waving towards him. Davos did his best to work with his current to try and move towards his son.

“Mathos,” he said as he arrived “What happened to you?”

“I saw you staring at the dragon so I pushed you into the water and then I jumped after you,” he told him and Davos was very thankful for his son. He surely would have been dead otherwise.

“What happened to our Ballistas?”

“We were betrayed. The Redwyne fleet took out the first line and I don’t think the Ballistas in the second line ever got fired,” Davos said bitterly and Mathos slowly nodded.

“Father, what do we do now?” he asked after a few moments and Davos didn’t have an answer. They were floating through the wreckage of their ruined fleet. They would have to be picked up by the Targaryen vessels and end up as captured prisoners otherwise they would float aimlessly in the sea and eventually die, and truthfully, Davos was not sure which option he would prefer.

Live, he would have to live. For Mathos, for Shireen, for Marya and his boys back at Cape Wrath

“We find a ship and we live,”

**The Golden Lion**

Ser Jaime Lannister leaned against the wall outside the King’s door in the Red Keep, he was on guard duty with Ser Meryn Trant. Neither man spoke to each other, Jaime found Trant to be sly and cruel, although he probably didn’t have kind thoughts for him either. They were ‘guarding’ King Robert as he took his pleasure from today’s selection of whores. Jaime had seen 5 girls go in there with him and for the past however many hours all he heard was loud grunts and moans as the King took his pleasure.

King Robert was not a good King, Jamie had known that straight away. Whilst he didn’t have the same cruelty and sadism as Aerys, it was clear to see that Robert had no desire to rule. The man would rather hunt in the Kingswood and have his whores rather than rule. Fortunately, Robert had poor Jon Arryn and then later Ned Stark to do most of the work for him. The worst part about it was that Robert was married to his sister.
It was Cersei who had gotten him this position on the Kingsguard. She had heard that their father had been discussing terms with Hoster Tully to betroth him to Lysa. Cersei had told him to do nothing but trust her to resolve the matter. That had been easy for Jaime, he had always trusted Cersei and listened to her plans, it was she who had started things between them. Within a few weeks, a raven had arrived at Casterly Rock informing him of his selection to the Kingsguard. His father had been furious, but as Cersei had deduced, he could not object to it publically. Instead, he did what he could, he resigned his position as Hand and took Cersei back to Casterly Rock and left Jaime alone to guard a mad King.

He remembered the day that he had knelt before the King to say his vows. It was at that tourney at Harrenhall, where it all started to unravel. He had knelt in the mud before the King, young and full of pride. There was no higher honor for a knight than to be named to the Kingsguard, and Jaime had done it at 15, he was the youngest ever. The moment had been so sweet but Aerys had been quick to turn it sour. That very same night, he had sent him back to Kings Landing to guard the Queen and little Viserys who had been left behind in the capital. The Lord Commander of the Kingsguard. Ser Gerold Hightower had even offered to head back to the capital in his place so that Jaime could participate in the tourney but Aerys had refused.

“He’ll win no glories here,” the King had said “He’s mine now, not Tywin’s, He’ll serve as I see fit. I rule and he will obey,” and Jaime’s moment had been ruined. It was not his skill with the sword or lance that had won him his white cloak but instead his white cloak was meant as a slight to his father. It was the first time that Jaime understood the hard truth of the world.

“In the name of the Warrior I charge you to be brave.” The sword moved from his right shoulder to his left. "In the name of the Father I charge you to be just." Back to the right. "In the name of the Mother I charge you to defend the young and innocent." Then left. "In the name of the Maid I charge you to protect all women. ”

Those were the words that Ser Arthur Dayne had said to him as he knighted him after they had defeated the Kingswood brotherhood. Ser Arthur Dayne, the finest Knight that he ever knew. The man that he had desperately wanted to be growing up had knighted him and told him his vows.

What a joke it all was. No one had told him it would have been like this.

His time with Aerys had been short, but it only served to add to that feeling of disillusion that he felt. Aerys was mad and cruel and yet he was sworn to protect him, to guard his back and to protect his secrets. Worse still was his treatment of Queen Rhaella. Whenever Aerys gave a man to the flames, the Queen would have a visitor in the night.

Jaime remembered one time he was guarding the Queen. He heard her sobs and her screams through the door and he was powerless to stop them. He was sworn to protect her, but not from him, those were the words he was told. He was charged to protect all women, but he was also charged to protect his King. No matter what he did, he was forsaking one vow or the other. The entire thing was a cruel joke.

So, Jaime started to shut himself off from what was happening around him. Content to let it all pass him by and this is how he found himself going from guarding one bad King to another. He was happy to move from post to post and sneak between Cersei’s legs when he had the chance.

Jaime heard a faint noise and saw Ser Barristan walking towards them, Jaime leaned off the wall and allowed a small smile to form on his face. Ser Barristan would relieve him of his duties and he could do something slightly more enjoyable.

“Lord Commander,” he said in greeting.
“Ser Jaime, Ser Meryn,” he said in return before nodding to both men.

“Any news of the Targaryens?” Meryn asked and both Jaime and Barristan quickly looked at him before looking towards the King’s door. They all knew how dangerous it was to say that word in his presence.

They had all heard the rumors of the Targaryen children in the east. They had heard how the boy was claiming to be Rhaegar’s son by Lyanna. Jaime had not been in the meeting when Robert received that news but he had heard that the King had gone into a dark rage, he had heard that the King nearly destroyed half the small council chamber in his anger. Jaime had looked into the small council chamber after and it looked like a summer storm had raged inside. He saw broken chairs and shattered cups strewn around the room.

Jaime had heard that Lord Varys eventually calmed the King down by saying that it was most likely that Viserys had crafted this lie because he knew that it would hurt Robert since Lyanna had been his betrothed. Lord Varys had also proposed that they spread rumors to the common folk. Letting them know that these dragonlords believed in foreign gods and they were coming with their dothraki horse lords to rape their women and to enslave their children. Still even these measures could barely calm the King. King Robert had only calmed down enough to head into the woods for a week long hunt. He had also called his banners in the Stormlands and had ordered Renly to bring the vast majority of them to the capital, leaving only a small amount of men to garrison the castles.

“Nothing. We know they have left Volantis and that they were headed west but there is nothing new,” Ser Barristan said once they were certain that the King did not overhear. Jaime nodded and then he thankfully left.

As Jaime wandered through the castle, he thought more about the rumors that they had heard. Rhaegar had run off with Lyanna Stark, they were missing for nearly a year so Rhaegar could have managed to sire a child on her? But then, where could have the child been all these years? Robert would have surely heard about such a child from Varys and promptly snuffed him out, so it was impossible. Rhaegar could not have had another child.

Jaime reached a battlement that overlooked the main courtyard of the Red Keep and he remembered that this was where he had said goodbye to Rhaegar. It was a windy day and he had begged him to let him join the fight but Rhaegar had refused him. He said that Aerys wanted him close, so that his father would not betray House Targaryen, he was a hostage yet again. Jaime felt bitter about this until he remembered that by staying behind, he had been entrusted with the task of protecting Rhaegar’s children. Aegon and Rhaenys. He had failed to protect Rhaegar’s family, just like he had failed to protect his own brother.

Jaime walked through the castle and he pushed those thoughts out of his mind. Rhaegar was dead and his children were dead. It wasn’t his fault, none of it was his fault.

Even killing Aerys wasn’t really his fault. Sure, it was his hand and his sword that had done the deed, but he had to do it. An entire city was at stake. He killed his king and in the process, he protected a city full of innocents from a mad man’s plans. He had done exactly what he was supposed to do as a knight and where did that get him?

Nowhere that’s where. He was given the title of Kingslayer, ridiculed by the entire realm. Jaime had learned to live with the name by now, the people wanted a villain so he gave them one, but he couldn’t deny that it bothered him.

He walked past the great hall that contained the throne room and as Jaime stopped to press his ear to the door, he heard that it was empty. That was a change. In the past few weeks, the small folk had
flooded the great hall begging for food but there was scarcely any to give. Unsurprisingly, the river lords had not sent any of their harvest to the capital, saying that they had barely enough to feed their own. So now, they were waiting on the Reach lords to share some of their harvest. Lord Stark would have done something to appease the smallfolk, but he was still in that frozen wasteland that he called home.

Lord Varys had urged the King to summon the Hand but Robert had said no. He said that Lord Stark would return after the autumn harvest and they would begin preparations for the royal wedding.

Tyrion would have probably figured something out. He would have found a way to persuade some of the lords to share their harvest but Tyrion was dead. His body was an unrecognizable bloody mess that Lord Varys discovered at the bottom of the battlements near the Blackwater. Jaime was sure that he was the only one who had mourned him. Cersei and their father had just carried on with their lives as normal, they hadn’t even mentioned his name. The only person in their family that had cared was their Aunt Genna who had come to the capital to pay her respects.

It was this most recent failure that stung Jaime the most. Tyrion was his own brother and he should have done more to help him. Smuggled him out of Kings Landing in the dead of night, if he had to. Instead, he had sat idly by and saved himself. He had put his own comfort over the life of his own brother.

Without realising it, he had found himself outside of Cersei’s apartments, the ones that used to belong to Queen Rhaella. He knocked twice and then entered. He walked through her lavish apartment to her balcony where he found her sipping wine.

“How is my Lord Husband?” she asked. They both knew what the King was doing and it didn’t bother her, it usually spurned them on.

“The King is fine,” Jaime said as he went over to pour himself a drink of wine. “What do you think of the rumors?”

“What rumors?”

“About this Aegon who is claiming to be Lyanna’s son,”

“Lies. Although why anyone would want to be the rape child of that northern slut is beyond me,” she said bitterly. She then took a long drink of her wine.

“Exactly, why would anyone want to be her son so why would anyone make this up?”

“You heard what Lord Varys said, it is a lie created by that mad fool Viserys to anger Robert,”

“Do you trust, Lord Varys? The spider has a way with words, he knows what to say to get what he wants,”

Cersei gave a frustrated sigh, as if she was explaining this to a child.

“If that northern whore had a child, where has it been for the last 18 years?” she asked as she turned to face him. Jaime didn’t have a good answer.

“Lyanna Stark has caused me enough pain for one lifetime,” she said and Jaime did not truly understand what she meant. “He still loves her. The fat drunken fool. On our wedding night he stumbled drunk into bed and called me Lyanna,” she said softly and if Jaime hadn’t known better, he would have thought Cersei was about to cry.
“Rhaegar kidnapped her and raped her and it was no more than she deserved. She ruined my marriage before it even began,” she said and her voice grew hard. “Now, this fool Viserys wants to throw her in my face,” she spat out his name angrily and Jaime was silent for a moment, content to let her anger fade.

“When are they going to get here?” she asked.

“We don’t know. We know that they have sailed from Volantis,”

“So, they could be here any day now?”

“Yes, Dragonstone is our best guess. Robert will want you to leave the capital, you and the children” Jamie said and Cersei snorted.

“Good. I’ll gladly spend some more time away from that fat drunken fool. The months that he was off at war were the happiest that I’ve ever been in the capital,” she said as she finished her wine. Jaime noted that Cersei was so happy at Robert being away in the Vale that she did not even miss him.

“It’s dirty, it’s ugly and it stinks, and I’m not talking about the city. Every day the peasants come to our gates with their bowls out begging for food. If they stopped their whoring and their drinking they would find the coin to be able to feed themselves;”

“There’s no food from the Riverlands or from the Reach. We need them;”

“There is plenty of food for us here in the Red Keep and I imagine father keeps Casterly Rock well stocked,” she said. Jaime didn’t care much for the smallfolk either.

“Do you miss him?”

“Who?” she asked

“Our brother, Tyrion;”

“No. Of course not. The day I heard that they had found his body broken and mangled on the rocks in the bay was one of the happiest days of my life;” she said with a wide smile that made Jaime sick.

“He was our brother and we conspired to kill him, that makes us no better than kinslayers;”

“Is Ser Jaime Lannister the Kingslayer, going to give a lecture on what’s right and wrong,” she said with a sneer.

That stung and Jaime found himself taking a step backwards. Cersei, however was completely oblivious to the effect of her words.

“He was our brother;”

“He was no brother of mine. He was a deformed, evil, spiteful little man who took my mother from me;”

“You can’t blame him for that;”

“Yes I can, who else can I blame?;”

Jaime was silent for a moment.
“Come with me to Casterly Rock,” she told him.

“Casterly Rock? Why would I go there?”

“To be with me, to be with the children,” she said as she stepped closer to him.

“Father is there,”

“So? He is part of our family,” and so was Tyrion, until they decided that he wasn’t. Rhaegar had trusted him with his family, but he had failed him.

Cersei stepped forward and cupped his face, so he was able to look into her emerald green eyes. On days like today after conversations like this, Jaime would often allow himself to get lost in her eyes and to take comfort in her, but not today. His mind was filled with thoughts of Rhaella, Rhaegar and his children and his failures. He looked into her eyes and saw that she held no remorse for how they treated Tyrion and he pushed her away.

“Where are you going!” she demanded as Jaime walked forward. “Don’t walk away from me!”

Jaime froze at the door handle and then for the first time in his life, he walked out the door and away from his sister.

**The Mother of Dragons**

Daenerys Targaryen flew high over the dark blue sea, surveying the battle below. Large plumes of smoke trailed up into the sky as fires burned through the ships beneath her. The naval battle was nearly over, Paxter Redwyne and his fleet had betrayed the crown and joined their side. They had spent a few weeks in Pentos awaiting Rhaegar. Whilst they were there they had met with the magisters of the city and had them outlaw the practice of slavery in all forms and got them to join their new empire. The laws of Pentos limited them to have only 20 warships in their navy and prohibited them from hiring too many sellswords, as a result of this, the magisters quickly agreed to their terms when they were faced with their vast army and dragons.

Whilst they were there, they had received another message from House Tyrell, informing them of the crown’s defences on Dragonstone and their plans to betray them. Daenrys and Jon both agreed to this plan as a test to prove their loyalty.

Daenerys had heard of Ballistas but she had no idea what they looked like and so she had no idea which ships she needed to target. Vedros had spotted the ballista and warned Anogar, likely saving them from a hit. Once the Ballistas were removed from the battle, the rest of their armada had an easy time picking off the remnants of the royal fleet.

Anogar took her towards the rear of their fleet, over the ship where they had left little Daeron. Dany did not like having him this close to the battle but she could not leave him all the way in Pentos. She looked over the side of her dragon and saw Missandei and her handmaidens waving up at her in reassurance, letting her know that everything was fine.

Anogar gave a loud roar and then he took off again, this time heading towards Dragonstone. She turned and saw Jon to her left and Rhaegar to her right. Dany kept looking forward as she saw the
castle of Dragonstone approaching. She felt a strange feeling inside of her as the castle grew bigger and bigger. This was the place where she was born, it was the first piece of Westeros that their family had ever owned and it was the last piece that they had lost.

Now, they were taking it back.

Dany had read all that she could about Dragonstone in the days leading up to her arrival. She had learned that the Valyrians had used their magic to shape the stone to look like dragons. As she got closer to the castle she could see that the first part of their fleet had arrived and their soldiers were now on small boats making the short journey to shore.

Anogar flew a couple of low laps around the castle, allowing Dany to take a good look at her birthplace. Then, she looked out over the sea and saw that the majority of their fleet was ready to dock in the port of Dragonstone. Anogar gave a happy roar and then he took her lower until she landed on the beach in front of the great stone steps that led to the castle. She slowly climbed off Anogar and gave him an affectionate pat on the snout and whispered her thanks before he took off again, likely to explore his new home. She reached down and ran her fingers through the sand, getting her first feel of the place. She looked up at the castle and it reminded her of the palaces and buildings they saw in Valyria. She turned and saw Vedros making a slow descent before she landed next to her, once Jon got off his dragon she began to lead them up the stone steps that led them towards castle of Dragonstone.

“Dany wait,” she heard Jon call out. “Let the Unsullied go first,” she nodded and then let Grey Worm and Hero take the lead up the stone steps.

“They will still have some men in the castle, guarding the women and children. They should come out and surrender when they realize that they have no chance of escape,” Jon told her and she nodded. On cue, Anogar flew over the castle and gave his loudest roar and then the castle doors opened and the remaining men quickly hurried out.

Jon stepped forward and spoke to the first man.

“Who are you?”

“Maester Pylos, one of the maesters of this castle;”

“How many men remain in the castle?”

“Only the 100 that you see here. The rest are women and children,”

“Bring them all out onto the beach,” Jon said firmly and the maester went to carry out his orders. Within a few minutes, the remaining people in the castle had all lined up on the beach below them.

“I am King Aegon of House Targaryen and this is my wife Queen Daenerys. I am sure Robert Baratheon has filled your ears and heads with lies about us. We are not here to burn down your homes or murder your children,” Jon began.

“We are here to build a better world. We have already improved the lives of thousands of people in the east, and we are here to do the same in Westeros;”

“The battle here today is over. The royal fleet has been destroyed, there is no need for more blood to
be spilled. Bend the knee and you all will live,” Jon said and slowly, every person in front of them fell to their knees.

“Stalwart Shield. Take their weapons. They will camp outside amongst the Unsullied. Ensure that they are fed and that no fights break out,” Jon instructed the Unsullied guard who quickly left to carry out those orders. Daenerys turned and she saw Missandei holding Daeron who was flanked by Rhaegar, Irri and Ghost. She smiled as she walked up to them and quickly took the sleeping baby from Missandei’s arms.

“Thank you for looking after him,” she said to the women as she held her son.

“He was no trouble, your grace,” Missandei said with a smile. “He slept through the entire thing,”

Dany then turned and began the ascent up the stone steps towards Dragonstone. The steps seemed to be made out of that same black stone that they saw in Valyria. After a few minutes of steady climbing, they finally reached the top of the staircase. Two huge stone dragonheads flanked the giant wooden doors. Jon began to walk up the steps towards the doors but she quickly stopped him, this was her birthplace and she needed to see it first.

She walked through the doors and for the first time in over 18 years, Daenerys Targaryen was back in the castle of Dragonstone. She walked silently through the hallways, taking in her surroundings. She remembered the story Viserys had told her, of how she was born during a raging summer storm, that’s how she got the name Stormborn.

Dany was interrupted from her thoughts when she heard a soft cry from Daeron.

“Shhh, don’t cry my child, I am here now,” she whispered. She rocked him gently and the babe quickly stopped crying at the sound of his mother’s voice. Dany pressed a quick gentle kiss on his forehead and was rewarded with a small giggle. She smiled and continued to walk until she entered the great hall.

All the tables had been cleared away to one side and the great hall was empty. At one end of the great hall stood the throne, it seemed to be carved into a piece of dragonstone in the wall, or was it dragonglass? Daenerys walked closer and saw that the throne itself was indeed made of dragonstone. It was of a similar quality to the dragonstone they had seen in Valyria all those months ago.

She walked up the throne and touched it with one hand, feeling the smooth stone under her fingers. Then, she took Daeron and carefully placed him on the throne.

“Daeron Targaryen, you are the Prince of Dragonstone and one day, this will be your seat,” she whispered to him. His grey eyes seemed to open wide with excitement as he was shown his new home She tickled him gently before picking him up again. He was still young and she didn’t want him to fall on the hard floor.

“Daenerys,” she turned and saw Rhaegar walking towards her. “Grey worm said that they have found Stannis Baratheon’s daughter,”

“Bring her here,” she commanded.

“Give Daeron to me, you sit the throne,” Jon said as he held his arms out for Daeron and she handed him over, she then walked over and sat on the throne of Dragonstone to await Stannis Baratheon’s daughter. Jon stood to her right and Missandei, Marwyn and her handmaidens stood on her left. She sat patiently on the throne but before they arrived, Tyrion entered the throne room.

She had heard from Rhaegar that Tyrion’s quick thinking and wits secured them the support of the
Iron Bank and because of that, she and Jon were more trusting towards him.

“Your grace,” he said in greeting. “A few survivors from the naval battle have been captured by our fleet. They are outside of the hall now, should we send them to dungeons?”

“No. Bring them in. We will speak to them,” she commanded.

Tyrion left and then quickly returned with the survivors. There were only a handful of men and they were all huddled in blankets to ward off the cold.

“You have fought on the side of Stannis Baratheon in the name of the Usurper. You fought and you lost. Now, bend the knee and you will live,” she said and she looked each and every man in the eye. Most sunk to their knees immediately, whilst two remained standing. An older man and a younger one, they looked to be a father and son based on their resembling features.

“You will not bend the knee?” Jon asked

“Not until I hear of your plans for Shireen,” the man said quickly. Dany took a good look at him, he was an ordinary man with slightly greying hair. He did not look like a warrior.

“Shireen?” she asked,

“Lord Stannis’s girl,” and she nodded in understand, wondering when Rhaegar would return.

“We will not harm her. We do not hurt children,” she informed the man. “What is your name?”

“Ser Davos Seaworth,” he replied.

“Where are you from?”

“Cape Wrath, in the Stormlands,” and Dany nodded. Then, the doors to the great hall opened and Rhaegar returned with Stannis’s daughter. The girl looked around the hall nervously before she spotted Ser Davos. When the child saw him, she smiled and immediately ran towards him and jumped into his arms, not caring if he was still a little wet. Rhaegar took this moment to walk over to her.

“We could not find the girl’s mother,”

“Is she dead? Where could she have gone? Find her,” she said quickly. Rhaegar went to speak to some of the Unsullied who then left the throne room to search the castle. Rhaegar then stood on one side of the hall.

“Your grace, if I may have a moment,” Marwyn said as he stepped forward. “Are those scars from greyscale on her face?” and Davos quickly nodded.

“Your grace, in the books you brought back from Valyria, there was a book which contained detailed instructions on how to cure greyscale. I believe that I can remove the scarred and damaged tissue from the girl’s face.”

“Is it a difficult procedure?”

“No really. I would have to create a special salve that softens the skin and then I would be able to cut through the damaged skin. Then, I could create a second salve which will speed up the healing and restore her skin tissue” Daenerys winced, it sounded painful. She looked at the girl and then back at Marwyn.
“Very well, I will speak to the girl if she agrees to the treatment, then you have our permission. Seek out the maesters of this castle, I am sure they will be able to help you find the necessary supplies,” Marwyn nodded and then he left the throne room. She turned back to Ser Davos.

“Ser Davos, do you still not wish to bend the knee?”

“What are your plans for Shireen? Do you intend to use her as a hostage?” he said as he protectively stepped forward in front of the girl. Before she could answer, Jon stepped closer to her and looked at her for permission to speak. She smiled and nodded,

“Ser Davos. You seem to care for the girl as if she was your own”

“I do,”

“Rest assured. We are not evil butchers like Robert Baratheon or Tywin Lannister who revel in pleasure at the sight of murdered children. We believe that children should not be held accountable for the crimes of their parents.”

“I have a proposal to assuage your fears and show everyone that we are indeed fair rulers. Stannis Baratheon is dead at sea or even if he has survived, he will be punished for his crimes and he will lose all his rights and titles. His wife is also missing. So, until she is found, you will act as Lady Shireen’s guardian. After we win this war, you and Lady Shireen will return to the Stormlands and you will hold Storms End for us in her name. That is of course, if you swear fealty to us,”

Dany thought the offer was generous and it was a good solution to the current problem that they faced.

“I cannot hold the Stormlands for you. I am only a landed knight, I know nothing of ruling,”

“You will only hold the Stormlands until Lady Shireen comes of age. You will be her guardian, helping her as she learns her duties and responsibilities. We will also help you if you are faced with problems that you cannot solve on your own,” Dany said and she watched as he considered the offer.

“Please, Ser Davos,” the girl said as he tugged at his arm and his face softened. Dany smiled at the relationship they had.

“Very well. I will accept your offer, you have been generous and kind, more than I expected,” he said as he sunk to his knees and the man next to him quickly joined him. “Although I should warn you. I am not much of a fighter,” he said as he flexed one of his hands.

“Why is that?” Jon asked.

“I met Lord Stannis towards the end of the rebellion. I smuggled onions and salted fish into the castle. If it wasn’t for me, the castle might have fallen. Stannis awarded me with a knighthood and lands as a reward for my bravery and then chopped off my fingers as punishment for the crime of smuggling,”

Daenerys thought that this was exceptionally harsh, but she appreciated his honesty.

“We will not need you to fight. We only need you to help Lady Shireen hold Storms End once the war is over. In the meantime, you will remain in this castle in rooms befitting your status,” she said.

“Lord Tyrion, see to it that they are assigned to appropriate rooms,”
“Guarded rooms,” she nodded. She looked at Jon and she saw that he agreed. They were not foolish enough to let these men walk around the castle unguarded.

“Is that all?” she said to the room and she saw that no one else came forward. She took this as her cue to leave. She left the great hall through a back exit and then she made her way through the castle. She walked through a courtyard and into the main keep which she knew was the stone drum tower.

Dany walked up the stone stairs to the top of the tower. The hallway went in two directions. She went to the left and found that the hallway led to the Lord’s chambers. The hallway led to a large antechamber with the Lord’s chambers behind the main doors in front of her. Dany pushed open the door and was amazed at what she saw. A thick myrish rug lay on the floor underneath the massive bed that lay in the center of the room, the bed was large enough to fit seven. She walked over to the bed and touched it, realising that this is likely where she was born all those years ago. The bed was made of ebony and a large red canopy hung overhead. She saw a fireplace on one wall that was shaped like a dragon’s gaping jaws.

On the left side of the balcony was a wooden door. Dany walked towards the door, opened it and stepped out onto the balcony. The balcony was huge and she saw several stone dragons spaced out along the railing. Dany walked out to get a closer look and saw that these dragons had been made using magic. As she walked back inside she looked up and saw Anogar lazily resting on a ledge below the top of the tower.

“Are you comfortable, my dear?” she asked and Anogar let out a small puff of smoke and blinked at her. He closed his eyes and let out what could only be a content sigh. She smiled before heading back inside. She found Jon walking around the room and Daeron was sitting on the floor, seemingly playing with Ghost.

“Jon, what is he doing?” she asked quickly.

“He kept wriggling around so I put him down on the floor and then he crawled over to Ghost,” she watched as Daeron put his tiny hands on the sides of Ghosts face. Ghost stuck out his tongue and gave Daeron a little lick which caused the boy to break out into laughter.

“I have given orders for the room to be cleaned. There are several rooms in this wing through those other doors in the antechamber where your handmaidens can sleep. There is also a nursery through that door,” he pointed to another door in their room.

“Let me guess, like everything around here, it’s designed to resemble dragons in some form?”

“Correct my love,” he said with a smile. “Shall we see what is down the other hallway?”

Dany nodded and then quickly crossed over to scoop up Daeron. The boy started to squirm but she gave him a few quick kisses and he quickly settled down.

“He never does that for me,”

“Call it a mother’s touch,” she said with a smile. She led them back down the hallway and into the other hallway. At the end, she saw a great oak door with a metal dragon on each one. Jon opened the door for her and then she entered. She found herself in the famous chamber of the painted table, where Aegon the Conqueror planned his conquest around 300 years ago. Daenerys walked around the table and she saw the famous cities and castles in Westeros carved into the table. Sunspear, Oldtown, Lannisport and Winterfell. She took a seat at the northern end of the table and she settled Daeron in her lap. She watched as the members of their council all started to file in and stand around the table. Rhaegar, Tyrion, Missandei, Ser Jorah and Grey Worm all took their respective places. Jon
sat himself in the special seat at the table. It was an elevated seat that gave him a perfect view of the entire map, Aegon the conqueror must have sat there, once upon a time.

Marwyn came in last, accompanied by two maesters.

“Your graces,” he said addressing both Jon and Daenerys. “These are the maesters of the castle, Cressen and Pylos.”

“I thought that each castle in Westeros was assigned only one master, then why does Dragonstone have two?” she asked.

“Maester Cressen is Dragonstone’s official master. I was summoned to the castle by Stannis Baratheon to help treat his daughter after she had contracted Greyscale and stayed on to help check on her health due to my great knowledge on the subject, your grace.” the master answered calmly.

They had met Pylos earlier but not Cressen. Maester Cressen was an old man with thin grey hair, he gave a small bow at both her and Jon, and then his eyes widened in shock.

“Am I so old, that my eyes are playing tricks on me?” he whispered.

“Your eyes are fine, Maester Cressen,” Rhaegar said with a smile as he reached offered his hand to the maester who eagerly shook it.

“Prince Rhaegar, how are you still alive?”

“It is a long tale, one that I will tell you another time. We should not keep the King and Queen waiting,”

Dany nodded in thanks.

“Maester Cressen and Maester Pylos. We would like you to send a raven to every single house in the realm, letting them know that their rightful King and Queen has returned. The messages should contain an invitation for a great council which will be held at Harrenhall within the next three months. This council will provide the opportunity for both sides to present their claims to the throne and decide the issue through words rather than violence. For those who acknowledge and support our claim, let them know that they should come to Dragonstone and swear fealty to us.” Jon began,

“Even the great houses?” Pylos asked.

“Yes, especially them. House Baratheon of Kings Landing and Storms End. House Lannister, House Tully, whoever is in charge in the Vale, the Greyjoys, the Martells and of course, the Starks. I will actually compose the letter to Winterfell myself. There is no need for a raven to the Reach since they are on their way to meet with us,”

She looked at Jon and gave an encouraging smile. They were hoping that House Stark would peacefully bend the knee although they both knew that it was very unlikely.

“My Queen?” Jon asked. “Would you like to add anything?”

Her eyes wandered from his face down onto the table until they settled on Kings Landing.

“Today, was the first step. With your help, we have taken back our ancestral home, but this is only the first step. This is only the beginning. We have plenty of planning and preparation that needs to be done, both for the council and then for the war if all does not go according to plan. So for the rest of today, I want you all to relax and get comfortable in the castle,” she said as she looked at each and
every person in the room.

Then her eyes went south and they settled on Kings Landing.

“And tomorrow, the second conquest of Westeros will begin,“
The Wolf's Secret

Chapter Summary

Ned tells his family the truth
Jon and Daenerys meet the Tyrells

Chapter Notes

This chapter is a little late. Chapter 20 is/was tough to write and I had to do a lot of rewriting to better set things up for that chapter. So there was a delay in getting this one out. So apologies for that

Thanks to GOT88 for the help provided with this story

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The Lord of Winterfell

Ned Stark was sitting in his solar. He was reading some reports detailing the amount of grain and salted fish that had been collected and stored away for winter, he had found that completing these mundane tasks helped to distract his mind from thoughts of the inevitable war with the dragons. He had been thinking about Jon a lot lately, ever since he had first heard the rumors from Volantis, he had realised that his earlier assumptions were wrong. The Aegon Targaryen from the east was in fact Jon and not Viserys. He had not wanted it to be true, it would have been so much simpler if it really was Viserys.

He was interrupted from his thoughts by a knock on his door, he told the person to enter and he saw Maester Luwin enter the room with a grave look on his face.

“What is it?” Ned asked.

“A raven came,” he said quietly as he pulled out a sealed scroll that was hidden away beneath his sleeves. The nervous look on the maester’s face caused a foreboding feeling to pass over him. ‘Dark wings Dark words’, Ned remembered. Ned reached out his hand to take the scroll and the first thing he saw was the seal.

The seal was the three headed dragon, the sigil of House Targaryen.

Ned’s hands started to tremble as he quickly broke the seal and he read the letter.

King Aegon and Queen Daenerys of House Targaryen, the Rightful King and Queen of the Seven Kingdoms invite all the lords of the realm to a council at Harrenhall which will take place within the next three months. Those who acknowledge our right to the throne are welcome to meet with us on Dragonstone and swear fealty to their rightful King and Queen.
For those who dispute our claim, the invitation at the council will provide an opportunity for them to express their views and hear our response. We strongly urge all the lords to attend this council so that the issue of the Iron Throne can be resolved peacefully. We do not seek unnecessary bloodshed or violence and this is our attempt to spare Westeros the horrors of a great war.

King Aegon Targaryen, trueborn son of Rhaegar Targaryen and Lyanna Stark.

Queen Daenerys Targaryen, trueborn daughter of Aerys Targaryen and Rhaella Targaryen.

The letter had confirmed his worst fears. Jon had indeed returned to Westeros, and he was bringing war with him. Jon had invited all the lords to a council at Harrenhall to decide the matter of the throne and he had chosen Harrenhal of all places. Ned could understand why, it was the place where it all began. It all could have been avoided if Rhaegar had done his duty and left his sister alone. He was sure that this choice of location would anger Robert. In fact, the location was probably chosen specifically to anger Robert. He also realised that Robert likely would have received a similar letter along with all the other lords in the realm.

“Thank you Maester Luwin, I would appreciate it if you keep this letter secret for a while. I also would like for you to send letters to all the great lords to find out whether they will attend this council,” he said quietly and the Maester nodded before leaving the room.

The room was very quiet, only the soft popping and cracking from his fireplace provided noise. Ned unfolded the letter and read it again and again. Almost as if he was trying to find convince himself that the words meant something else entirely. He folded the letter and hid it away, then he decided to take a walk to get some fresh air and clear his mind. He walked through the castle and silently nodded in greeting at the guards that he saw along the way. He reached the castle courtyard and looked around at the castle.

When he had returned from the Vale, he had ordered extensive repairs and renovations for the castle. Their walls were made higher and fortified and they had even started working on building Ballistas, he only hoped they wouldn’t have to use them. He saw Robb and Theon sparring together in the yard, he stopped to watch them for a moment and he was pleased with what he saw. Robb was a good fighter and what he saw from him in the Vale confirmed this notion. He also remembered that Theon was an excellent archer, which could be very useful as he thought back to the story of King Torren’s bastard brother Brandon Snow and his plan to kill Aegon the Conqueror’s dragons.

He had also considered Theon’s suggestion of getting Balon Greyjoy and the Iron fleet on their side. It would be a very important alliance and it will help to restore some naval parity, but Ned still needed the King’s approval on the matter. He had sent a raven to Kings Landing but he was still awaiting the King’s response. Truthfully, Ned was not sure what to expect from Balon Greyjoy, the man likely still held a grudge after suffering a crushing defeat in his rebellion along with the death of his two sons. Theon was still held in Winterfell as a ward or hostage as Balon would see it. Perhaps, the best way to get Balon on their side was to offer Theon’s return to the Iron Islands. Ned hated using Theon as a hostage but in this situation they might not have a choice in the matter if Balon would not listen to reason.

Ned decided to head to the Godswood, it would be the perfect place for him to clear his head. Stepping into the Godswood was like stepping into another world. The multitude of trees created a canopy overhead that filtered the sunlight. Ned walked along the soft grass until he was in front of the heart tree. He stared at the faces on the tree and their red tears looked like blood. He had knelted in front of this heart tree many times asking for guidance or for favor and today would be the same.

Once his eyes were closed, he thought about all that had happened. He thought about the day he told Jon the truth about his parents. Jon had been so angry with him, angrier than he had ever seen
him. He had come to realise that telling Jon the truth was not a mistake, he deserved to know and he could not go through his whole life without knowing who he truly was.

The mistake had been his decision of sending Jon to Essos along with Wendel Manderly. Ned knew that the Targaryen children were staying in Pentos and like a fool, he had decided to send Jon there in the hopes that he would meet his Targaryen family. Well, it appears that his wish had been granted, Jon had indeed met his Targaryen family and they seemed to have changed him into a completely different person. He had been so shocked when he heard the first rumors from Volantis, he could not believe that was the same Jon that he had raised.

The Jon that he had raised and knew would protect the weak and fight for those who could not protect themselves. He had heard that the Targaryens had destroyed slavery in the east but the Jon that he knew would not have gone to those extreme lengths to do it. Everyone in Westeros had heard about the burning of Slaver’s Bay and Volantis, there was no need for that to happen. None at all. It was senseless violence and the Jon that he had raised should have done better. Such actions were expected of a man like Tywin Lannister, not the boy who he had raised to be as honorable as a Stark.

Ned had also heard rumors that they had sailed the smoking sea of Valyria, perhaps it was true and that experience had changed Jon for the worse. He also wondered how he had managed to convince people that he was actually Aegon Targaryen, he certainly did not look like a Targaryen. Perhaps, he had colored his hair silver, yes, that along with Daenerys’s presence would make him look like a legitimate Targaryen king.

He would learn the answers to his questions soon enough at that council. He knew that when he did share the news, the secret that he had kept for over 18 years would finally be exposed.

The rumors had already started to spread, that the eastern invader Aegon Targaryen was claiming to be the son of Rhaegar Targaryen and Lyanna Stark. Thankfully, no one believed them yet and Robert had not summoned him back to the capital to give his opinion on the matter. The Northern Lords had been bristling with anger when they had heard this rumor, they had deemed it as another slight from the Targaryens against the Starks. They had all sworn that they would ready their men to march south to defeat the Targaryens once and for all, for the North remembers.

He would have to tell the lords the truth, but only after the council. He would still need to speak to Robert first. He would have to tell him the truth now, there was no other way around it. Robert would not take it well, there was no doubt about it but he would have to do it. Ned also realised that there wasn’t much Robert could do now. Robert couldn’t kill or punish him and risk losing the support of the North. Robert was going to need every single man he could get if he was going to fight the dragons.

Ned also realised that if he told Robert the truth then it would most likely result in the royal wedding being called off. Ned didn’t really care about this fact but he knew that Sansa and Catelyn would. Although, if Robert Baratheon was defeated by the Targaryens then there would be no royal wedding anyway. Still this presented an interesting opportunity, Sansa would be disappointed about not marrying Prince Joffrey but from what he had seen of Joffrey, he would not be a good match for her anyway. Perhaps, he should have called off the wedding earlier but that would have sent the wrong message, marrying the crown prince was a huge honor and it was not something you could turn down. However if Robert called off the wedding then Ned could choose a better match for her, Sansa would not care for northern marriage but perhaps a southern house like the Tyrells would be to her liking. The more Ned thought about it, the more he realised that this could even be a blessing in disguise. A marriage with House Tyrell would secure a powerful alliance and it would make Sansa happy, that truly would be an ideal outcome.
Despite, Maester Luwin’s constant reassurances and correspondences with the citadel, it seemed that the rumors of the dragons strength and power were indeed true. Ned knew that the royal fleet had been stationed at Dragonstone but the Targaryens and their dragons had taken the castle anyway.

“Ned?” he heard a voice say and he opened his eyes and saw Catelyn standing over him. “What is it my love?”

He looked up at his wife and he realised that he had to tell his family today, he couldn’t hide it from them any longer. He had forced Catelyn to take Jon into her household and he didn’t even tell her the truth. Perhaps, that was another mistake he had made, not trusting his wife with the secret. Although the more he thought about it, he realised that it was for the better. Catelyn's open dislike for the boy, whilst hard to watch, had been necessary. It had helped sell his lie. If Catelyn had shown any love or affection for the boy then it would have been more suspicious. On top of that, there was never a good time to tell her.

“Ned?” she asked nervously, Ned realised that he hadn’t answered her.

“Everything is fine, my love. Go round up the children and bring them to my solar, all of them including Bran. We need to have a family meeting,” he said grimly and he saw Catelyn grow fearful.

“Is something wrong?”

“I will tell you all when you bring the children, just do it quickly,” he told her and she quickly walked away to carry out his instructions. Ned sat by the heart tree for a few more minutes collecting his thoughts and preparing himself. Once he was ready, he began to walk through the castle towards his solar. Along the way he walked past Jon Umber who had made the long journey from Last Hearth.

“Lord Stark,” he said in greeting.

“Lord Umber,”

“Have you heard the news? They have asked all the Lords to come to this council to swear fealty to the rightful King and Queen,” he said with a deep laugh. “I will never kneel to a dragon. House Umber will stand beside House Stark and we will defend the north from these foreign invaders,”

Ned gave a fake smile, Umber’s words of encouragement did little to better his mood.

“Thank you. I have a few things I need to take care of,” he said as he continued to walk through the castle until he reached his solar. He walked to the end of the hallways and ordered the guards not to let anyone past under any circumstances, not even if the castle was burning down around them. This conversation should not be overheard. Then, he went back to the door and he heard the sounds of his children speaking inside and he quickly pushed open the door. Inside, he found his entire family awaiting him in his solar. Hodor had likely helped Bran to make the journey. He smiled at them all before crossing over to the room and sitting behind the desk. He filled his cup with ale and took a small sip before beginning.

“As you all know, it is rare that we have a family meeting,” he began as he looked at everyone and they all quickly nodded. “But, it seems that we must have one now,”

“What is if father? Is everything fine?” Sansa asked immediately and Ned just shook his head.

“There is something I need to tell you all, something that I have kept secret for over 18 years. This secret starts at the end of the rebellion when I found my sister dying inside a tower in Dorne. I had told everyone that she died of a fever and that is true but this fever was no common fever. It was the
fever of a childbirth. With her dying breaths, Lyanna asked me to protect her child and I did, by claiming him as my bastard son,” he said and everyone in the room gasped. Sansa and Catelyn covered their mouths to hide their shock, whilst everyone else had their mouths open.

“I always said that Jon is my blood and it’s true but Jon is not my son,” Ned said firmly “He is the son of Rhaegar Targaryen and my sister Lyanna Stark,”

All the children looked at him as if he had spoken in a different language and for a brief moment, he wondered if he had.

“So, he is the child born of rape?” Robb asked slowly.

“No. Rhaegar did not kidnap and rape her. They loved each other and ran away together,”

“Ned that can’t be true. Prince Rhaegar had a wife and children. He would have known better,” Catelyn said and Ned sighed in frustration. He agreed with his wife, Rhaegar really should have known better and he should have acted better.

“How do you know this?” Robb asked and Ned sighed and realised that he would have to start from the beginning.

“As you all may know, Rhaegar crowned Lyanna as the Queen of love and beauty at the great tourney of Harrenhall all those years ago, perhaps it was at the tourney where they fell in love with each other. Regardless of when it happened, you should all know the story by now. Rhaegar’s actions caused a great scandal but when the tourney ended and everyone left for their homes, the incident started to fade from the realm’s memory and everything returned to normal. Sometime later, my elder brother Brandon, Lyanna and Benjen journeyed to Riverrun for Brandon’s marriage to his betrothed, your mother, Catelyn. A few days after their arrival at Riverrun, Lyanna went missing. Brandon received news that Rhaegar had kidnapped Lyanna which spurred him to ride to King’s Landing with his trusted friends to demand Rhaegar’s head. However, Aerys’s madness led to Brandon’s imprisonment and the execution of his comrades. My father, Lord Rickard, answered Aerys’s summons to answer for Brandon’s crimes,”

“However, the Mad King was not interested in justice, he brutally murdered them under the guise of a fair trial and when he was finished, he demanded that Jon Arryn hand over Robert and me to him for execution and this is what started the rebellion. You all know of the victories, losses and battles fought during that time from your Maester’s lessons and stories. We won the rebellion after Robert killed Rhaegar on the Trident and Tywin Lannister sacked Kings Landing soon after. After the war had ended and all the Targaryen loyalist had surrendered, I rode south in search of Lyanna with six loyal friends at my side, I found her at the Tower of Joy in Dorne. She was guarded by three knights of the Kingsguard - Ser Gerold Hightower, Ser Oswell Whent and of course, the Sword of the Morning, Ser Arthur Dayne,”

“It was seven against three but we were no match for them. If it were not for Howland Reed, I likely would have been killed that day by Ser Arthur,”

“But father, you said that you killed the Sword of the Morning,” Bran pointed out.

“I did kill him but I did not best him. The truth is that Ser Arthur had disarmed me and he would have killed me were it not for Howland stabbing him in the back. I let people think that I beat him in straight fight in order to protect Howland’s honor,”

“But people thought that you had fairly defeated the Sword of the Morning. That is a very high praise,” Robb said quietly.
“It was, but I took no pleasure in what happened that day. In fact, I tried to avoid a fight. The war was already won and there was no need for more bloodshed. I asked them why they were not on the Trident defending Rhaegar, I asked them why they were not in King’s Landing defending their King or on Dragonstone defending the Queen Rhaella and Prince Viserys but they would not answer. They only said that they swore a vow and their duty was to be there. I did not know what that meant until after the battle was over and I found Lyanna dying in that tower,”

He was silent for a few moments as he let them take in the words, surprisingly it was Bran who worked it out first.

“Kingsguard are sworn to protect the King above all else. They were protecting Jon because he was the heir to the Iron Throne,” he said quietly and Ned nodded. He looked around and once again everyone was surprised. Sansa and Catelyn were both looking at him as if had grown horns on his head. Arya had her hands over her mouth and she had tears in her eyes, Ned was not sure if she was happy or if she was crying.

“So, he’s not a bastard? He is the trueborn son of Rhaegar Targaryen and Lyanna Stark? How is that possible? Rhaegar was already married to Elia.” Catelyn whispered.

“Apparently, Rhaegar had annulled his marriage to Elia. She must have married Rhaegar in a secret ceremony some time. I found the documents to prove this fact within the tower and therefore, Jon is a trueborn Targaryen King” Ned answered.

“I couldn’t tell you. I made a promise to Lyanna to protect him,”

“Protect him from who father? We’re his family. You should have trusted us,” Arya said immediately.

“From Robert and the Lannisters, you all know about what happened to Princess Elia and her children. They would have killed Jon since he had a superior claim to the throne, it was safer if everyone thought of him as my bastard,”

“Safer but not any better for him,” Arya said fiercely and Ned wondered if he should have told her separately. “You let Sansa and mother treat him horribly because of this lie,”

“I did not treat him horribly,” Catelyn began but Arya immediately cut her off.

“Arya Stark, watch your tone,” Catelyn warned as she glared at her but Arya did not back down and returned her glare and Ned was reminded of Lyanna in that moment.

“I do admit that my lie caused Jon to be treated poorly around here,” and he saw Catelyn open her mouth to protest but he quickly gave her a look that silenced her. “I do not blame you for it, if
anything I am thankful, if you had shown affection for him, then it would have raised suspicion,”

“Why is that?” Arya snapped and Ned gave her another glare before answering.

“I told everyone that he was my bastard and if your mother had shown affection for the boy people
would have questioned that, which could ultimately lead to Jon’s secret being exposed. It was harsh
on Jon but it was for the better and he never complained.”

“That was Jon though,” Robb pointed out. “Jon would never complain if you told him to sleep
outside in the cold. He would quietly accept it and think of the best way to stay warm at night,”

Ned conceded that he was right but he decided to continue onwards.

“I found Lyanna in that tower dying in a bed of blood and roses. She was so happy to see me and so
weak at the same time. It was with her dying breath that she told me his name and made me promise
to protect him,”

“What is his name?” Sansa asked.

“Isn’t it obvious? He’s Aegon Targaryen. The exact same one that you all are worried that will
attack us,” Arya said immediately.

“What? I did not know about this. Father, is this true?” Sansa asked and Ned quickly nodded.

“His name is Aegon Targaryen but I could not give him that name, so I chose Jon for him. A much
simpler and northern name that no one would question. I also chose it as it honored my foster father
Lord Jon Arryn. As for the attack, yes I believe that this Aegon Targaryen is in fact Jon, although I
am not sure how you know about this Arya, have you been eavesdropping again?” he asked and
Arya just shrugged her shoulders. Ned didn’t have it in him to punish her, it would be pointless.

“So, he is the Aegon Targaryen that has been burning cities in the east?” Catelyn said and Ned
nodded.

“I was right not to trust him, it was good that he left before he corrupted the rest of you children. His
true bastard tendencies have finally come through just like the septa said they would,”

“But he’s not a bastard. He is a trueborn, were you not paying attention?” Arya snapped.

“Arya Stark,” Catelyn warned.

“It’s true and I am sure Jon had a good reason for doing those things, he is a good person,” Arya
said defiantly.

“What good reason could he have for burning down the entire city of Volantis?” Catelyn said as she
glared at Arya.

“We have heard that they have been working to stop slavery in the east,” Robb said after a moment.
“Slavery is a vile practice so if Jon is working to remove it then that is a good thing,” and Arya and
Bran quickly nodded in agreement.

“What about the Dothraki, Robb? You have heard stories about those savages and your father says
that Jon has amassed an entire khalasaar of his own and he has brought those savages to Westeros.
How do you explain that son? How many villages and towns will be burned and pillaged because of
Jon’s Dothraki? Those savages are murderers and rapists. How does Jon plan to control them?”
Catelyn demanded and Robb had no answer.
“He may have stopped slavery, but did he need to go to these extreme lengths to do it?” Sansa asked. “If what father and mother say is true, then he has burned down entire cities. How many people have died because of Jon?”

The room was silent then, no one had a good answer.

“Father. You told us that Jon was dead,” Bran said.

“I thought he was and truthfully I am not sure how I did not figure it out earlier,”

“Start from the beginning, start from when he left,” Arya said and Ned sighed. He took another drink of ale before starting.

“I had kept this secret from Jon for years, I considered telling him many times but I realised it would be safer if he never knew,”

“Safer for you but no better for him. Not telling him was a cowardly move,” Arya said and Ned glared at her, he was starting to lose his patience.

“One day, Jon came to me expressing his desire to join the Nights Watch. He said that there was no place for him here and that he would like to live his life on the wall. I couldn’t let him do that, I couldn’t let him live out his life on the wall alongside rapists and thieves without him knowing the truth of who he was and so I told him the truth that day. He did not take it well, he was angry that I kept it from him for so long. I realised that he would not stay at Winterfell any longer so I decided to send him to Essos,”

“I had received a letter earlier which informed me that a magister was hosting the Targaryen children in Pentos and I knew that was where Wendel Manderly would take him,”

“So you intentionally sent him there with the hope he would find his family?” Arya asked quickly and Ned nodded. “That was so dangerous! You didn’t know what could have happened to him! He could have died in some alley and there would have been nothing we could have done!” Arya shouted as she sprang out of her chair.

“Arya calm down and let me finish or I will send you away,” Ned said with a frustrated sigh and Arya slowly sat back down. Ned looked at her and he could tell by the way she was fidgeting that she was not calm but he decided to press on anyway.

“Yes, I sent him there in the hopes that he would find his family. It was foolish on my behalf but it worked out in the end. He did meet his family. He sent a note saying that he was staying with a kind magister in the city who employed him as a guard. I hoped that this was the same magister who hosted the Targaryen children and it turns out I was correct,”

“When I was in Kings Landing, as part of King Robert’s small council, I received updates about the Targaryens in the east. One day, we received a report saying that the Targaryen children had perished at sea in a terrible storm. The report mentioned they had 3 guards with them. One of them was described as a young northern man with a white dog as a companion which could have only been Jon and his direwolf. That is why I thought he was dead,”

Ned looked at everyone and they all nodded encouraging him to continue.

“I am not sure what happened but it seems that the Targaryen children and Jon survived,”

“I told you that he could have survived,” Arya said smugly and Ned decided to ignore her.
“I asked all the sailors from Essos that I could find in the harbor and they all confirmed that there was a severe storm in that area, that it is why I was so hesitant to believe it at the time,”

“I made further inquiries after news of the Targaryen children’s survival reached Westeros but there was not a single detail that mentioned Jon or his direwolf. So, I held onto my assumption that he had died at sea.”

“Is that why you came up with that stupid excuse of Jon being enamored by the Targaryen girl’s beauty when Arya and I questioned you about Jon joining the Targaryen children?” Robb said. “Although now that I think about it more, I was with you when you received these reports about the Targaryens in the east. I’m sure some of them mentioned that they called themselves King Aegon and Queen Daenerys, why didn’t you think that was Jon?”

“Because Jon looks like a northerner and all the reports said that these Targaryens possessed the classic Valyrian features of silver hair and purple eyes. Why would I think that would be Jon? It was only after we heard of what happened in Volantis, that my curiosity got piqued. The reports stated that he was calling himself Aegon Targaryen, trueborn son of Rhaegar and Lyanna and that was when I knew,”

The room was silent for a few minutes whilst everyone processed this information.

“Ned. If we heard this report in the North, what will King Robert in the south think? Surely, this puts us in danger?” Catelyn asked worriedly

“Robert won’t believe the rumors. No one would believe this. The northern lords think that it is Viserys making up a lie to anger us. Robert will likely think the same,”

“Ned, you can’t be sure,”

“I am fairly confident in this. No one will believe it unless I tell them. No one knows that Lyanna had a child, let alone be able to trace this back to me. However, I will have to confess this secret to Robert soon enough.”


“I don’t have a choice. Jon has already proclaimed his parentage to the world. Sooner or later, he will also explain his whereabouts for the last 18 years to Westeros and then there will be no denying it. It would be best if Robert and the other lords heard it from me instead. As for Robert killing me, I don’t think he will. Now, that the Targaryens have returned with their dragons and armies, he will need every man he can get to fight against them. He needs me as an ally. If he kills me, then the North will not rally behind him.”

“Rally behind King Robert? Father, you cannot possibly be considering fighting against Jon. The North should rally behind Jon because he is family,” Robb said firmly.

“We should rally behind him. He’s our brother, it doesn’t matter if he’s not your son. Jon is still a Stark in blood,” Arya said with Robb and Bran nodding in agreement.

“What about Sansa? She is your sister. Does her happiness mean nothing to you?” Catelyn asks. “We need to support the King otherwise her marriage to the prince will never occur,”

“Joffrey is cruel and selfish just like the rest of his family. Besides, he won’t be a prince for long since Jon has dragons. Jon will win even if we fight against him. We would be stupid not to support him,” Arya said.
“Arya, you do not understand the politics behind a highborn marriage and are allowing your feelings for Prince Joffrey and Jon to cloud your judgment. Also, the dragons aren’t very big. That’s what Maester Luwin told us. He wrote to the citadel and they confirmed that it takes years for dragons to grow to a size where they can be used in war. Isn’t that right, Ned?”

“Yes, Maester Luwin did say that but I have reason to doubt his words now. The stories we have heard from Volantis makes me doubt the truth of the citadel’s assessment. There is also the matter of the battle at Dragonstone. The royal fleet had over 200 ships and still the Targaryens wiped it out with ease. This could only be the work of large dragons,” he said and the room was silent.

“Father, you said that the reports described Targaryens with classic Valyrian features, how could have Jon gained those features?” Sansa asked and Ned shrugged, he did not have an answer. The room was silent for a few moments and Ned took another sip of his ale.

“I received a raven today from Jon. He and Queen Daenerys have taken Dragonstone and they have invited all the great houses to Harrenhall for a council to decide the issue of the throne,” and he heard a very sharp intake of breath.

“Ned you can’t go,” Catelyn said quickly. “We can’t trust him, this could be a trap. He’s changed,”

“What do you mean we can’t trust him? He is our brother. We grew up with him. Of course we can trust him,” said Arya.

“I agree, we should go see Jon,” Robb said.

“What if it is a trap? What if he means to get all the great lords into one room to kill them all at once?” Sansa asked.

“Jon would never do that,” Arya said immediately. “He is our brother, he has the honor of a Stark and we should go to meet him,”

“I agree,” Ned said calmly.

“Ned you can’t be serious. Are any of the other great Lords attending?”

“I have sent ravens out to ask but I would imagine so. Everyone is curious about the Targaryens. With the exception of Robert, no one wants to risk waging a war against dragons if a peaceful solution is possible. Besides, Harrenhall is a castle at the center of Westeros, it’s the easiest location for all of our armies to reach to ensure our protection. Both sides will also protected by laws of guest right. Guest right is sacred, no one will not forsake it,”

“So you have made up your mind. You will see the boy,” Catelyn said unhappily.

“Yes. You and Robb will accompany me. Along with a few northern lords”

“Me? Why do you need me to come?”

“Because of your family. Lord Hoster is undoubtedly upset about the business with Lysa and he might side with the Targaryens for vengeance. You can help to keep him loyal to our side.”

“I want to go too,” Arya said.

“No, you will not,” Catelyn said and Ned nodded in agreement.

“This council is no place for you, you will stay here,” Ned said in a tone that brokered no argument.
Arya looked like she was going to complain but she decided against it.

“We will attend this meeting and will see what Jon has to say. Hopefully, we will be able to reach a peaceful resolution and avoid another war.”

“What if Jon decides to fight against the North?” Sansa asked.

“He won’t. He’s family,” Arya said firmly.

The Mother of Dragons

Daenerys Targaryen stood out on the balcony attached to their room in Dragonstone watching the sun slowly rise. They had been on the island for several days now and it had been a very busy time. They still had not found Stannis’s wife which meant that Ser Davos would continue to be the little girl’s guardian. Dany had seen a little of Shireen over the past few days and she seemed to be a nice girl. She did not have it in her to treat her unkindly, after all she knew all too well what it felt like to be punished for a father’s crimes.

Several of the lords from the narrow sea and from the Crownlands had come to Dragonstone to swear fealty. House Velaryon had been amongst the first, they were a house of Valyrian descent who had been instrumental in helping to defeat Stannis Baratheon and the royal fleet. House Celtigar, another local Valyrian house, had also sworn fealty. Houses Bar Emmon and House Sunglass had also arrived to swear fealty. It was not surprising since these houses had served House Targaryen long before Aegon’s Conquest.

These houses weren’t very big, but it was a start, getting the local vassals on their side was important and it allowed them to gain some more knowledge of Westeros. They were expecting some more lords to arrive at Dragonstone in the coming days to swear fealty. Perhaps, House Rosby and House Rykker of Duskendale. They had sent some gold to House Whent who held the castle of Harrenhal. They were more than happy to host the council and were happy to see that the Targaryens had returned to reclaim their throne. They were also awaiting the Tyrells, Lord Paxtor Redwyne had informed them that they should arrive within the next few days and then their most important negotiation to date would begin.

She, Jon and Rhaegar had also spent a day in the local village on the island speaking to the common folk there. Needless to say, most were shocked to Rhaegar alive and well but after some time the locals cited Rhaegar’s survival as a miracle and a sign that the dragons were the true rulers of Westeros. Most had all been happy to see the Targaryens return, it seemed that they had no love for Stannis. Rhaegar had even indulged them by playing and singing a song for them one afternoon.

Things in the castle had been going well. The castle had been cleaned and nearly all the signs of Stannis’s stay here were gone. All the Baratheon flags and banners had instead been replaced by Targaryen banners.

Dany heard the loud flutter of wings and looked up behind her. She saw Anogar lazily taking off from his lair somewhere inside the dragonmont. All the dragons had found homes somewhere on the
island. Jon had told her that Vedros had made her home in one of the large caves on the island and Caraxes frequently slept on a cliff overlooking the Blackwater Bay. Anogar flew slowly overhead and she closed her eyes and said good morning to him in her mind. Anogar let out a small puff of smoke before heading off to hunt.

She felt something brush against her leg and she looked down to find Ghost had come out to enjoy the sunrise with her.

“Good morning Ghost,” she said as she slowly stroked his fur and scratched him behind his ears. “Why are you not guarding my little prince?” she asked softly. Ghost just looked up at her with ruby eyes before dutifully trotting back inside. Dany laughed softly before looking back over the water. Whenever she or Jon could not spend time with Daeron, she had heard that Ghost had always been there with him. The prince seemed to enjoy his company as well.

Dany looked out over the water and saw that Caraxes had also woken up and was also flying off to hunt. Of all the dragons, Caraxes seemed to be the one who paid the most attention to Daeron. Anogar and Vedros didn’t seem overly interested in the little boy but whenever they took Dareon outside for some fresh air, Caraxes was seemingly always nearby. Dany was not particularly worried by this, if anything it was reassuring. She knew that they would likely be at war soon and with both Ghost and Caraxes taking such an interest in Daeron, he would be safe.

She looked down onto the beaches and saw the smoke from campfires trailing into the sky. Their Dothraki were camped out on the far side of the island away from the village. Their tents were sprawled out in a random order and whenever she visited the village she would hear constant laughing and shouting. Instead of killing for sport, they had taken up practice sparring, it was usually the first man to disarm the other or the first to draw blood. Dany did not like this but she accepted that it was a compromise they would have to make. The Unsullied camp was far more organized in comparison.

Dany was interrupted from her thoughts when she felt a strong pair of arms wrap around her waist. She smiled and pressed herself backwards against him.

“You didn’t come back to bed,” Jon said softly as he placed soft kisses on her neck.

“I put Daeron back to sleep and then I saw you fast asleep in bed. I didn’t want to disturb you so I decided to enjoy the sunrise. I thought you would be tired so I let you sleep,”

“You made me tired,” he said and she smiled at the memory. They had been up nearly all night again.

“It’s not my fault,” she said innocently as she grinded her hips slowly against his length. “Am I not doing my duty as a wife?”

“You truly are insatiable,” he whispered as he kissed her up and down her neck.

“You never complained last night. Not the first time, or the fifth time, or the last time” she whispered as she closed her eyes. She let out a loud gasp when Jon kissed that precise spot that made her weakest.

“I’m taking you back to bed,” he said huskily as he scooped her up with ease and carried her back inside. Jon carried her inside and then placed her gently on the bed. She breathed in his scent as he leaned down and kissed her. He broke the kiss and then started to kiss along her jawline before kissing his way down her neck.
He stepped back to take off the thin shirt that he was wearing and Dany quickly sat up on the bed. She smiled deviously at him and then she decided to take charge. She wanted Jon to take her, but she knew that he wouldn't. He was too kind and too loving, she would have to tease him and make him want it.

She kissed him aggressively before pushing him back onto the bed and straddling him. She looked down into his grey eyes and gave him a wicked smile. Her hand reached out behind her and to find his cock, she stroked his hard length a few times and then she moved backwards until she was sat between his legs. She leaned forward and then took his cock into her mouth.

Her lips went to the base and then slid slowly back up, never breaking eye contact with him. She repeated this a few times before focusing on the head, always going slowly, making sure to continue this tease. Doreah had told her about the things that she had learned in the pillow houses of Lys and Dany put them all to good use. She hummed and she spiraled her tongue and it didn’t take long until Jon put his hand in her hair and tried to force her to increase her pace. She heard his breathing grow heavier and his hips started to move upwards. Dany smiled to herself and lifted her mouth off his cock with a loud audible pop.

“Impatient are we? Who is insatiable now?” she asked as she slowly stroked his cock.

“Get on your hand and knees,” he ordered, his voice was so low it almost sounded like a growl and Dany felt herself getting wetter. She quickly rolled off him and did as he commanded. She pushed her head down onto the bed and presented her arse to him and she felt the mattress dip as Jon moved behind her. She felt Jon’s strong hands on her hips as he positioned her the way he wanted. She was entirely submissive to him in this moment and she loved it.

The anticipation was pooling in her stomach as she felt his fingers slowly move up and down her slit before he slid one digit inside. Dany gasped and she squirmed around on the bed whilst his fingers probed his fingers inside of her whilst his thumb worked on her clit. She moaned and mewled as Jon worked before he removed his fingers and replaced them with his tongue. He greedily lapped at her folds which caused her to moan and pant and Dany found herself pushing herself back into his face, trying to force his tongue deeper. Instead, she was surprised when he moved his tongue up and licked her there.

She gasped loudly and she felt her fingers tightly grip the furs on their bed. Doreah had mentioned this to her but she would never have thought that Jon would do it to her. The feeling of his tongue on her back entrance caused her back to arch sharply. Jon was maddeningly patient as he relished in this newly discovered power he held over her. He was devouring her, like Anogar would do to a flock of sheep. She felt him slide two fingers into her drenched cunt whilst his thumb went back to her clit and the noise she made almost sounded like she was sobbing.

“Beg for it,” he barked as he took his mouth off her.

“Please, Please!” and Jon thrust his fingers back into her.

“Please what?”

“Fuck me!” she felt him draw his fingers out and then he smacked her arse like she was a disobedient child. That was ordering not begging, she realized.

“Please fuck me!” she said quickly and he slapped her other cheek causing her to squeal. “Please, please, please,” she begged as she moved backwards, hoping to simply fall onto his cock. “Please Jon I need I -”
Dany moaned loudly as Jon filled her with his cock. He quickly started to thrust and soon their chamber was filled with the sound of flesh hitting flesh and Dany’s loud moans. Mindlessly her hand went back between her legs to find her clit but Jon quickly grabbed her wrist and pulled it back, leaving her completely at the mercy of his cock.

She felt him raise foot onto the bed to change the angle and Dany let out a loud throaty cry as he hit all the hidden spots inside of her with each thrust. She felt his hand grab her hair and use it to hold her head up and the brief flash of pain only helped to push her closer to her pleasure. Jon was fucking her at a furious pace and it didn’t take long for her to reach her climax. She closed her eyes and threw her weight back at him, over and over, harder and harder until all she could do was bite and scream into the bed.

Dany’s muscles clenched around his cock and pulled him in deeper. Her pleasure passed over her like a wave and threatened to split her into two, her legs shook and gave out and as she came down, she felt the warmth of his seed spilling inside of her. She let out a long satisfied sigh as she felt Jon slowly pull out and collapse on the bed.

“Are you okay?” he asked as she lay on his sweaty chest and she smiled happily.

“I love it when you take me like that, I’m fine, my love. More than fine. I have to push you but it’s worth it.” she said as she traced patterns on his body.

“I need to see Marwyn today,”

“Moon tea?”

“Yes,” this was something they both agreed on. Whilst she loved Daeron, she knew that they could not have another child right now. They were too close to war and she would not sit at Dragonstone whilst Jon went out and fought.

“I’m surprised you didn’t wake up Dareon. You were especially loud this morning,”

“I just fed him, remember our little dragon sleeps well after he eats,”

“You’ve never licked me there before,” she said softly.

“I know, but I know you and I know you wanted me to try it,”

“Perhaps, next time we could,” she said as she slowly moved her hand down to play with his cock.

“If it pleases you then we will,” he said with a smile.

They were quiet for a few moments and Dany closed her eyes and listened to his heartbeat.

“Don’t fall asleep on me,” he said in a warning tone.

“I’m not going to sleep,” she protested and to prove her point she decided to get out of bed. “Come on my love. I’m sure my handmaidens are awake and they should have a bath ready for us. We have another big day ahead of us and I want us to both look like the King and Queen that we are. Right now, I feel like a whore, not a queen,” she said with a smile. Jon quickly climbed out of bed and followed her. They quickly donned their robes and headed into an adjoining room. They could have gone to the bathhouse they discovered in the castle but Dany knew if she took him there they would spend the entire day in each other’s arms and as much as she wanted to, they still had duties to take care of.
They bathed in their large copper bathtub before heading off to their separate rooms to dress. Missandei and Doreah helped her to dress whilst Irri and Jhiqui watched over Dareon. She watched as the two dothraki girls stood in the corner whispering and giggling.

“What are they talking about?” Dany asked.

“Probably about Rakharo again,” Doreah said with a sigh.

“Our bloodrider,”

“The very one your grace,” Missandei said as she walked over with the dress she would wear today. It was colder on Dragonstone than in Essos so she could no longer wear the light, cool and revealing dresses that she wore in Essos.

“What about him?” she asked confused about the topic.

“They are arguing about which of them would make a better match for him,” Doreah replied with a smile. Dany just shook her head and left them to their silly games.

“You look radiant this morning your grace,” Doreah said with a knowing smile and a wink at Missandei.

“Thank you Doreah. I had a wonderful morning. We will need fresh sheets,” and she winked at her. Once she was dressed she went into the nursery to check on Daeron. As expected, she found Ghost asleep in the middle of the room. She went over to the crib and saw that Daeron was on his back sleeping peacefully. She gently brushed his hair before leaving the room.

“Irri and Jhiqui can you stay and watch over Daeron please. I will have food sent for you to eat whilst you are here,”

“As you wish Khaleesi,” they said with a bow. Dany left her dressing room with Missandei and Doreah in tow and they went to get their breakfast. She and Jon had decided to stop having meals in the great hall, they wanted that room to be a throne room only. So breakfast was served in a slightly smaller hall located deep in the castle near the kitchens. The kitchens, like everything else on Dragonstone, was designed to honor the dragons in some way. The kitchens resembled a curled up dragon where the smoke and heat went through the nostrils of the dragon. They passed the kitchen and entered the hall attached to it.

Dany took her seat next to Jon and was served her breakfast of porridge and boiled eggs. Rhaegar and Ser Jorah were also seated at the table.

“The porridge needs honey,” Jon said as she sat next to her. “Plenty of it,” he said as he passed her the honey. She smiled in thanks and ate her breakfast. As they ate, she saw Tyrion enter the hall and she remembered that they would need to speak with him today. She decided to call him over and get the conversation over with right now. Tyrion quickly filled his plate before walking over to sit opposite them.

“Your graces,” he said once he arrived.

“Good morning, Lord Tyrion,” she said. “We’d like your opinion please,”

“On the council?” he replied, sharp as ever and she quickly nodded.

“We need to know your opinions on the houses. Which houses are likely to join us and which we should not waste our time with,”
Tyrion ate a spoonful of porridge before answering.

“Let’s start with the obvious. There are 8 great houses. The Martells, Baratheons, Arryns, Lannisters, Greyjoys, Tyrells, Tullys and of course the Starks,” and Tyrion held up eight fingers in the air.

“Robert Baratheon will never support you and Cersei Lannister is his wife so that’s two of the great houses gone. The Martells will never support you seeing as your father left Elia Martell for your mother,” and Tyrion put down three fingers.

“I have no idea who is in-charge at the Vale, but it would be a safe guess to assume that it’s a puppet loyal to Robert so you are unlikely to have the full support of the Vale. Perhaps, a few of the Vale houses can be swayed to your side, but you would have to speak to them individually which could be time consuming.”

“So we are left with the Tyrells, Greyjoys, Tullys and the Starks. The Tyrells have already expressed interest in an alliance so we have that going in our favor. The Greyjoys are a wild card, they have never held any kind of loyalty towards the mainland houses since the days of the conquest. Robert Baratheon humiliated Balon Greyjoy when he crushed the Ironborn rebellion which also caused the death of two of his sons, so he could side with us for revenge. But, his last son Theon Greyjoy is a hostage in the North and the crown could use Theon to gain the Ironborn’s support, so it’s really undecidable at the moment. The Tullys are another tricky case. Robert Baratheon and Ned Stark exposed Lysa Arryn’s infidelity in front of the entire realm which would undoubtedly anger Hoster Tully. That being said, Hoster Tully fought hard to overthrow your family during Robert’s rebellion. So his loyalty could go either way,”

“I agree,” said Rhaegar. “Hoster Tully used Robert’s rebellion as leverage to secure two very good marriages for his daughters. He is an ambitious man and he will side with whoever offers him and his family the most. As for the Greyjoys, you killed Balon’s brother. They might not be willing to join you,”

“Which leaves us with the Starks,” Tyrion said with a hesitant smile at Jon. “I’m sure his grace would be better suited to guess as to where their loyalties lie,”

She heard Jon give out a loud sigh before speaking,

“I have no idea what Lord Stark will do. He is not the man that I thought I knew. If Robb was the lord, I would be confident that he would rally behind us, but with Lord Stark I am not sure. Sansa is still betrothed to Prince Joffrey. By now he would know who I am and the fact that he has not distanced himself from the usurper does not fill me with confidence. I am not sure we will be able to get his support,”

Tyrion nodded slowly before continuing.

“If Robert Baratheon acts wisely, or if he listens to his council. Then he will keep Lord Stark close. He needs every man that he can if he wants to oppose you,”

“I can’t stress how important having alliances with the great houses is to our cause. If you have them behind you, winning this war and ruling afterwards will be much easier. You can bully them into submission with your dragons but you will need their loyalty and for them to work willingly with you instead of plotting against you if you want to truly restore your family’s dynasty,” Tyrion said.

“You have brought dragons back into the world and that gives you great power, but the way you use that power will define your reign. If you use your dragons to bully Lords into submission, then you will be remembered as fondly as the Mad King and people will plot to overthrow you. You will have
to use the dragons in battle but at the end of the fighting you need to win the allegiance and loyalty of
the lords to create a stable realm. Even the Conqueror made concessions to appease the lords and
common folk, you will have to do the same.”

Dany nodded, Tyrion was right. “So at the moment, our potential allies are just the Reach, the Iron
Islands and the Riverlands?” Dany said flatly and Tyrion grimly nodded “Will they be enough?”

“Probably not,” Rhaegar said and she heard Jon sigh in frustration and she shared his feeling.

“Your grace if I may?” Ser Jorah asked as he looked at them nervously.

Jorah had informed them of his crimes and begged for forgiveness. They had learned that he had
informed on them to King Robert briefly. This had angered them deeply but Rhaegar had advised
them to be merciful and give him a chance at redemption. He said that it was important that the
people knew they could be kind and that kindness and forgiveness is sometimes more effective than
violence. So they had given Ser Jorah a second chance.

“Go ahead Ser Jorah,” Jon said.

“The Reach and the Riverlands maybe the two most important regions that you need to secure. They
produce the most food and armies need food. If your enemies don’t have food, they can’t feed their
troops, so their soldiers will be weaker and more likely to surrender. Not to mention, if the Crown
cannot feed the small folk, then the people will be willing to accept a ruler who can,”

Dany considered this information and she realised that Ser Jorah was correct.

“That may be true, but even if we take the Riverlands, defending it is nearly impossible,” Jon said
and Rhaegar nodded in agreement.

“Why is that?” Dany asked

“The Riverlands are surrounded on all 4 sides. They have the Vale in the East, the Lannisters in the
west, the Reach in the south and of course, the North. From the drawing on the painted table, it’s
clear that they have no natural defenses. So, no mountains or rivers to protect their borders. Our army
would be spread too thin trying to defend the Riverlands,” and Dany slowly nodded.

“Very smart observations Jon,” Rhaegar said with a proud smile.

“Which brings us back to the Reach,” Dany said and they all nodded. “Let’s hope that their terms
are reasonable,”

“What are you willing to offer them?” Rhaegar asked.

“They will probably want some positions on our council. Which we will agree to, Master of Laws. I
have heard they have 3 sons, perhaps we could offer one of them, a place on our Kingsguard with a
Valyrian steel sword as well. That’s fair enough,” Dany said

“That is a good start, but be prepared to offer more,” Tyrion said and Rhaegar nodded in agreement.

“They will want the office of Hand of the King, it’s the most prestigious position that you can offer
and I recommend you don’t offer it at first. Only if they ask and you should make them work for it.
The Tyrells are an ambitious house. When Aegon the Conqueror arrived in Westeros, he
exterminated the entire house of the previous King of the Reach in battle. The Tyrells, who were
merely stewards at the time, seized this opportunity to climb up the ladder. When Aegon arrived,
they opened the gates of Highgarden for him and he appointed them Lords of the Reach in return,”
Rhaegar said.

“Don’t you want to be Hand?” Jon asked and Rhaegar just laughed.

“I’ll leave the politics to you kids. I have had enough of it. I’ll spend my time playing the harp and looking after your children,” he said with a smile. “And by the sounds that I heard this morning there are more on the way,” and Dany felt herself blush heavily. Thankfully, Tyrion changed the subject

“Your graces, what do you think happened to Jon Connington and Illyrio’s son?”

“I have no idea. They could be anywhere,” Jon said.

“They don’t have a lot of men and Connington was never the best at military tactics from the little that I remember of him,” Rhaegar said. “My best guess is that wherever he is, they’re waiting for both sides to weaken each other and then fight the winner. They can’t win in a head on fight. So with that in mind, I would guess Dorne. We didn’t see any Golden Company ships in Braavos and you didn’t see them in Pentos. The boy is claiming to be Elia’s son and if there was one thing I learned is that Doran and Oberyn would do anything for Elia and for revenge against those who have wronged their house,” and the table fell silent again

“Your graces,” she heard a voice say and she turned and saw Lord Paxter Redwyne and Daario standing near their table. They both bowed to both her and Jon before Daario spoke,

“We have spotted ships approaching,” Daario said.

“They are ships from the Reach, your grace,” Lord Paxter confirmed. “The Tyrells should be here, they should be docking within an hour. I can meet them if you wish.”

“That sounds like a good idea. Rhaegar, Missandei and Tyrion will go with you. We will await you in the throne room,” Dany said quickly as she stood. Everyone quickly stood up and left to carry out their instructions. Dany led Jon to the top of the stone drum tower and they looked out onto the narrow sea. They looked out over the bay and saw the Tyrell ships approaching and all three dragons were flying high overhead.

“They probably think that the dragons are going to attack them,” Jon muttered and she laughed at the comment. “I wonder what they will think when see my father. Lord Paxter already informed them of his survival in his raven but I’m sure seeing father in person will still be quite a shock to them,”

“I wish we were there to see that,” she said with a laugh “Do you remember what Rhaegar told you about the Tyrells?” she asked and Jon quickly nodded. “I want to check on Daeron before they arrive, we might be busy for the rest of the day,” she said as she led them back down the stairs. As they approached the nursery, they heard the sound of Dareon’s laughter. They pushed open the door and found their little baby on his stomach in the center of the room whilst Irri tickled him gently.

At the sound of the door opening Dareon turned towards them and giggled excitedly before slowly trying to crawl over to them. Dany watched him for a few moments before she quickly crossed over and scooped him up into her arms.

“Good morning sweetling,” she cooed as she peppered his face with kisses. She passed him over to Jon who lifted him up high which caused him to laugh even more.

“I hope he hasn’t been much trouble,” she asked the girls and both quickly shook their heads in response. “I’m afraid it looks like we will be busy for the rest of the day. I am not sure I’ll be able to feed him so you might have to get the wet nurse, ok?” she said and the girls nodded. She heard Jon
making loud silly noises on Daeron’s stomach and she smiled at the sight. Jon turned and saw her and realised that they had to go. He handed Daeron back to her and she gave him a quick kiss goodbye before they headed towards the throne room.

Once they entered, Jon took his seat on the throne and Dany stood to his left, she watched as he quickly turned his hair silver as he got ready to greet their guests. They both agreed that they would have new thrones made but they hadn’t had time to do that as of yet, so as of right now, they alternated on who got to sit the throne. They had several members of the Unsullied lining the halls with their spears and shields. They waited silently for a few minutes before they heard voices approaching.

The doors to the throne room swung open and the Tyrell host walked in, all clad in various shades of green and gold. Rhaegar, Tyrion and Missandei took their places lower on the dais.

“You stand in the presence of King Aegon and Queen Daenerys of House Targaryen. Emperor and Empress of the Bay of dragons and the Dragon cities of the east and the rightful King and Queen of Westeros,” Missandei called out.

Dany looked down at the Tyrell party expectantly, waiting for them to introduce themselves. Eventually one man stepped forward,

“I am Mace Tyrell, Lord of Highgarden and Warden of the south,” he said unconvincingly. He opened his mouth to speak again but was interrupted.

“I am Olenna Tyrell. Grandmother to Willas, Garlan, Loras and Margaery,” she said confidently. “This is Loras and Margaery,” she said proudly gesturing towards the young boy and girl. “I am also mother to Mace,” she said and Dany could hear the slight twinge of disappointment in her tone. She was the Queen of Thorns that Rhaegar had told them about. She looked at Loras and Margaery and found that they looked quite similar and they were undoubtedly very attractive, it was no wonder Lady Olenna was so proud of them.

“We thank you for journeying here to meet with us, we hope that the seas were kind,” Jon said with a smile.

“Oh most, my king,” Lord Mace replied and Dany was sure she saw Lady Olenna roll her eyes at his response.

“We have had rooms and baths prepared for you. We can also have food sent to your rooms if that is what you wish. Then once you are settled and well rested, we can begin our talks,”

“Thank you for your hospitality,” Lady Olenna answered before Lord Mace could get the words out of his mouth.

“Actually grandmother, I am not too tired, perhaps I could tour the castle? I have read many stories about Dragonstone and I would like to see it for myself,” Lady Margaery said with a smile. Dany looked at Jon and he gave a small nod.

“We will give you a tour ourselves, Ser Loras would you like to join us?” Dany asked and he nodded. She knew that starting off these talks on good terms would increase their chances of it being successful. Dany also realised that as Queen she would have to spend a lot of time with highborn women and this was not something she had much experience doing.

Jon and Dany led them out of the throne room and began to give them a tour of Dragonstone. They showed them all the various towers and then they took them outside. It was a cloudless day and they
walked around the cliffs surrounding Dragonstone.

Dany walked with Ser Loras whilst Jon and Margaery walked a few steps ahead of them. Tyrion had met Ser Loras at a tourney in Kings landing and he had said that half the girls in the realm wanted to bed him and Dany immediately understood why he had said that. Still, Ser Loras could not compete with her husband in looks.

“So Ser Loras, you seem to be very young to be a knight?” she asked absentmindedly. She had noticed that Margaery was walking very closely next to Jon and occasionally she would reach out and briefly touch his arm. Dany did not grow up in Westeros, was this something that highborn women did often? Dany was not sure, but the sight unsettled her. Jon was hers alone to touch. She was focused so much on Jon that she missed most of his response.

“Who knighted you?” she asked, hoping that he had not already answered that.

“Renly Baratheon,” he said. Dany looked at him after he said that and she noticed that he had a guarded look on his face. They continued to make small talk before switching partners.

“So Lady Margaery, what is Highgarden like?” Dany asked as they walked out over the cliffs. Jon and Ser Loras were slightly ahead of them whilst their Unsullied guards were trailing behind.

“Highgarden is beautiful your grace,” she said with a warm smile “All the autumn flowers are in bloom right now. There are fountains and plenty of shady courtyards. My father keeps plenty of singers in the court who fill the halls with their beautiful voices,” she said and Dany gave her a smile in return. Highgarden sounded like a wonderful place.

“What was it like growing up there? Tell me about your family,”

“I grew up with my three older brothers. Loras, who you have met, as well as Willas and Garlan. Willas had an accident when he was younger, he was injured in a joust by Prince Oberyn Martell and as a result he is a cripple now who needs a cane to walk, but he is the nicest man you will ever meet. He used to read to me when I was a little girl,” she said with a smile and Dany felt a pang of jealousy flash through her. Margaery Tyrell grew up with a loving family and brothers who cared for her, almost the complete opposite of her childhood.

However, that moment quickly passed. She had Jon and Dareon now, her own family. She had Rhaegar and her handmaidens as well. She may not have had the best childhood, but things have changed for the better.

“Forgive me Lady Margaery,”

“Just Margaery your grace,” she said with a warm smile which Daenerys found herself returning.

“Very well Margaery, what do highborn women do to pass the time? I did not grow up in Westeros so I am unfamiliar with the customs,”

“Well, I like to go out hawking with my friends, or we go riding, I usually go riding every day when I can, it is something that I love. Speaking of riding, what is riding a dragon like?”

“Oh well, it’s like riding a horse, but it’s not. It’s so much more exciting, there is nothing like feeling the wind on your face,” Daenerys explained to her.

“Your grace, how did you get your dragons?” she asked and Dany smiled and told her the story. When she was finished, Margarey looked at her with her eyes wide open.
"Your grace, that is incredible. A truly amazing story. I must confess, when we first heard the rumors of your dragons we doubted them but seeing them today was amazing, they were so big!" she gushed and Dany smiled, she noticed that Margaery had started to touch her arm lightly, perhaps she was just friendly. She heard a loud roar and she knew that Anogar was close by.

Dany heard the loud fluttering of his wings and then she saw him. He slowly rose up from below the cliff they were standing on and let out a large puff of smoke. He stared at the Tyrells with his magma red eyes before he quickly flew away. Dany watched as he did a series of flips and rolls in the air clearly showing off to impress their guests.

"Wow, that is amazing," Margaery said as she watched him fly. Dany just smiled and closed her eyes and told Anogar to show them his final trick. When she opened her eyes she saw Anogar fly low over the water before releasing a torrent of his black flame. She heard Margaery gasp and she couldn’t stop the proud smirk from forming on her face.

"Can I touch him?" she asked and Dany laughed.

"A dragon is not a pet for us to play with and stroke. If he wants you to touch him, it’ll be on his terms in his time," she warned and Margaery nodded in understanding. They were silent for a few moments before Dany decided to ask her another question.

"Margaery, what do you want?"

"I don’t understand the question, your grace?"

"I asked what you wanted. It’s a fairly simple question. Our families are about to enter a very important set of negotiations. I may have not grown up in Westeros but I do know that women in any part of the world have very little power of their own. In Westeros, as per my understanding, highborn women have very little say in the governance of their house and lands. Yet, your father and grandmother decided to bring their third son and only daughter to such an important meeting instead of the heir of your house. So, it’s safe to assume that they have brought you here for a reason and I’d like to know what that reason is," she said and Margaery looked at her nervously.

"I have a duty to my house. I have to do my duty," and Dany slowly nodded. This was not a lie, but it was not the complete truth. Anogar shared her opinion and he let out a loud roar in their direction.

"As a highborn noblewoman, I know what my duty is, but it does not mean I like not having a choice," and Dany nodded in understanding. She was likely referring to being forced to marry a lord to secure an alliance, regardless of whether she liked the match or not. Dany realised how lucky she was that she had Jon then, she would have hated to be sold into a marriage to a man she did not know or trust. Dany realised that whilst Margaery had the life that she should have had as a princess, Dany herself had plenty to be happy about and she had no reason to be jealous of Margarey.

"Come, we best head back inside. I may have only just met her, but I do not think it is a good idea to keep your grandmother waiting and Margaery laughed before quickly agreeing.

"A very astute observation, your grace," she said. Dany knew that this was only their first meeting, but she had a good first impression of Margaery Tyrell.

Jon and Dany headed back to their rooms to have a quick lunch.

"What do you think of them?" she asked

"Loras is quiet but he seems confident. He is a tourney knight, not battle tested, but he seems like he would make a good member for our Kingsguard,"
“I agree. He was knighted by Renly Baratheon, believe it or not. So we would have to watch him carefully. If we ally with them, perhaps it would be better if he did not fight against the Stormlands,”

“That’s an interesting idea but we may not have a choice. The Stormlands and the Reach border each other and if the Storm lords invaded the Reach, he would not have much choice,” Jon said and she nodded conceding his point. “What did you think about Margaery?”

“She seems nice. I daresay in a different life we would have gotten along and been friends. We both would have been highborn women around a similar age and Highgarden is not too far from Kings Landing,”

“So you like her?” Jon asked and she nodded.

“I do like her, but I would have to speak to her more. It seems that the Tyrell’s have brought her here for a reason and she has no choice but to go along with it,”

“We will learn more about them in the upcoming days,” Jon said. “Come on, we can’t be too late,”

She fed Daeron before putting him to sleep for his afternoon nap and then they headed towards the chamber of the painted table where the negotiation would take place.

As they were the King and Queen, they were allowed to arrive whenever they wanted, and when they entered they found that everyone was already waiting for them. Lady Olenna Tyrell gave them a look as they entered but she did not say anything. Rhaegar, Tyrion and Lord Mace had all taken seats around the table. Clearly, Ser Loras and Lady Margaery were not allowed to be at this meeting.

“Thank you for joining us here on Dragonstone,” Jon said once they took their seats at the head of the table. She sat to Jon’s right and opposite Mace Tyrell.

“Excuse me, your grace, there have been quite a few shocking events in recent time which we have accepted – The returns of dragons, the revelation of your existence and not to mention Prince Rhaegar’s miraculous resurrection but we still have a few questions for you,” Olenna Tyrell began and Jon nodded, letting her continue.

“You claim to be king despite the fact that your father is alive and well.”

“Lady Olenna, I have willingly abdicated my position and forsaken all claim to the crown. I have come to realize that I was not meant to sit the throne and rule. My son and sister have proven to be far better at the task than I ever was. Rest assured, when we reclaim the realm, Aegon will be the one to sit the throne.” Rhaegar answered.

“Very well, then where has our new king been for the last 18 or so years?”Lady Olenna inquired.

“I was hidden away although I will not tell you where and by who. At the council, I will reveal the truth but rest assured I am who I say I am. And I am not Viserys before you ask. My father can attest to my identity and Viserys’s death,” Jon said. “We received an envoy from your house in Volantis and again in Pentos expressing your interest in an alliance with us,”

“Also Lord Redwyne helped you to destroy the royal fleet. It was a gesture to show that we are capable allies,” Lord Mace added which caused Olenna to roll her eyes yet again.

“We are willing to enter an alliance with you. Your house was one of the few houses who stayed loyal to ours during the rebellion,” Dany said, they had decided to give the Tyrells the benefit of the doubt about this. “We would like to continue the close relationship between our houses and I’m sure you would like to discuss terms of an alliance,”
Lord Mace opened his mouth to speak but Lady Olenna must have kicked him from under the table because he quickly closed his mouth. Dany smiled at the elderly woman, she was smart. She wanted them to offer their terms first.

“We are prepared to offer you positions on the small council, Master of Laws and Ships. We would also appoint Ser Loras to our Kingsguard and give him one of our Valyrian steel blades, this blade will be yours to keep and can be passed down in your family for eternity,” Jon said and Lord Mace nodded. “In return, we would like the full support of the Reach. All of your armies and ships will join our forces in battle and we would like you to share your harvest with us in the coming months as well,”

“The Reach can rally over 80,000 men, with a foot to horse ratio of 2:1. I know nothing about war but I do know that it is a better ratio than you will get from any other Kingdom and on top of that, you want to share all of our harvest?” Lady Olenna said immediately.

“I take it you want more?” Dany asked and Lord Mace nodded eagerly.

“Very well, speak freely. We have told you what we are prepared to offer, it is only fair if you tell us what you want from this alliance,”

“We are willing to give you our full support and all of our harvest but there are a few things that we want in return. A position on the small council, we would also like the ability to send some of our children to join the royal court and we would like Loras to be a member of your Kingsguard,” Olenna said and Dany looked at Jon before she nodded. They both agreed that this was reasonable although she felt that they had left something out.

“We already offered most these terms so there must be something else that you want as well,” Jon responded, he too had that same feeling. Lord Mace looked at his mother quickly before speaking, “We would like for our daughter Margery, to be Queen,” he said and the word hung in the air.

“Queen?” Dany repeatedly as she stared at the man who would not meet her gaze. “There already is a Queen,” and she felt her anger bubbling inside of her. Did these people mean to set her aside like she was nothing?

“We know that you are the Queen. We are proposing two Queens,” Lady Olenna said “Aegon the Conqueror had two Queens, we are proposing the same,”

“I already have a wife. Daenerys is my Queen, I will not take another,” Jon said firmly.

“King Aegon, your family is no stranger to polygamy. If you think about it, it’s all rather poetic really. As King Aegon VI, you are set to recreate the conquest of King Aegon I with 3 dragons at your command. Then, why not have two queens as well? You would appear as the Conqueror reborn to history. You asked what we wanted and this is it,” Lady Olenna said and Dany remembered what Rhaegar had told them earlier about their ambition and he was correct.

“There can’t be two Queens. What will we do about the succession?” Tyrion said. “The King and Queen already have a child who will inherit after them. If the King takes Lady Margaery as a second wife, her children could lay claim against Queen Daenerys’s children in the future. It could result in a second dance of dragons. How do you propose to solve this issue?”

“The line from Queen Daenerys will be the royal line. We are not foolish, their children will be dragon riders without a doubt while Margaery’s line may possess the ability or not, it’s a coin toss really. If her children are dragon riders what chance do ours have? We only want royal blood to mix...
with Tyrell blood to secure our hold on the Reach.”

“Why does your hold need securing? Your family has ruled the Reach since the days of Aegon’s conquest” Jon asked.

“Our House was once stewards to the previous Gardener Kings and we were previously below other Reach houses like the Florents who like to constantly remind us of this fact. Our vassals have always made subtle comments of how unlike them, House Tyrell does not possess any royal lineage. If we have blood from the most powerful dynasty in the world running through the veins of our children, it secures our line and puts an end to the issue once and for all,”

“There are other ways to secure your hold without the need for this marriage. We would be able to provide military support, dragons if need be. Your hold will be secure,” Jon said firmly and Lady Olenna cocked her head at him and smiled, as if she was questioning his words.

“Aegon the Conqueror already gave us that kind of support 300 years ago and we still face this issue. A royal marriage is the best way to quell this issue. You asked us what we wanted from this alliance and this is it. We want Margaery to be Queen,” Lord Mace added.

The room was silent for a few minutes until Lord Mace spoke again,

“So, do we have an alliance?” he asked and he finally looked at Dany. Their eyes met for a few seconds before Lord Mace quickly looked away out of fear.

“I am the Queen,” Daenerys said quietly but she knew that everyone in the room heard her clearly. Anogar gave another loud roar and she knew that her dragon was closer much closer.

“I think that we have made a good start to the discussions today. I think we should retire and reconvene tomorrow after we all have had to time to rest and ponder over the discussion,” Jon said quickly as he stood up. He had sensed her anger and he was trying to end the meeting quickly.

Dany did not wait for anyone else to speak, she quickly left the room and walked back to their chambers. She didn’t close any of the doors behind her, she knew Jon would be following closely. She walked into their room and then out onto the balcony and she saw Anogar flying closely. Dark plumes of smoke were being released from his mouth and she knew that he shared her anger.

“Dany,” she heard Jon say and she quickly turned around to face him. He was looking at her nervously, as if he was unsure of what to say. After a moment, he held his arms out and she found herself walking into them and he quickly held her in his embrace.

“Dany my love. I only love you. I would never set you aside. We will find another way around this, I promise you,” he whispered into her hair. Dany closed her eyes and just held onto him tightly, inhaling his scent and letting this feeling calm her down. She reached out to Anogar and let him know that she was fine and after a few moments she heard him reluctantly fly away.

“Jon, we need them,” she whispered. Her mind recalling Tyrion’s conversation earlier that day at breakfast.

“No Dany, we need allies. We will offer them the position of Hand of the King and any other position on the council. I’ll offer lands, castles and titles. Anything else except this,” Dany listened to his words but she knew that they would not go for it. They had their eyes set on Margaery becoming Queen.

“If don’t agree to our terms, then we will secure the Reach and Riverlands by force. I know that I said the Riverlands are impossible to defend but I’ll find a way. I’ll fly and fight 5 battles in a day if I
have to,” he said firmly. He started to rub her back and his touch was reassuring.

“Thank you Jon,” she whispered “I love you,”

They spent the rest of that day in their chambers. She gave her handmaidens the rest of the day off and she and Jon took care of Daeron, they fed him, read to him and sang songs to him. Surprisingly, Jon actually had a really sweet voice.

The next day the sunshine was gone and the skies above Dragonstone were grey and cloudy, matching her mood. Anogar was incredibly agitated and Dany had to fight hard to keep him reigned in. She ate her breakfast with Jon, Tyrion and Rhaegar and whilst they ate they discussed new terms to offer the Tyrells that morning. They would offer lands from the Stormlands and increased tax breaks.

“Tyrion,” Jon began “Why did they not ask for a betrothal with Daeron?”

“Jon would you really offer Daeron for a marriage? Before he could even walk or talk?” Dany snapped as she looked at him sharply. He looked taken aback at her words before quickly shaking his head.

“No, but I was wondering, that is all my love,” he said as he reached out to gently stroke her hand.

Dany let out a sigh, she was still agitated after the meeting yesterday.

“The crown prince is only a babe,” Tyrion said after a moment.

“That is one reason, but not the most important. The Tyrell’s have no children in that age range and it will be years until Daeron is of age to marry. A lot can change in that time and there is no guarantee that the betrothal will still lead to a marriage,” Rhaegar added.

“We will keep our word,” Jon said firmly.

“No one knows what the future holds. Targaryens have a history of being reckless in matters of the heart. You cannot guarantee that Daeron would honor the betrothal, after all a lot can happen in such a long time. There is the story of Prince Duncan and Jenny of Oldstones. Not to mention, the tale of Prince Rhaegar and Lady Lyanna does not add much weight to the issue either.” Tyrion added.

“Also, there is history between our houses,” Rhaegar said “Olenna Tyrell was betrothed to King Aegon V’s son, Prince Daeron herself. I think they were very young at the time. Obviously, that marriage never occurred but this explains why she would not want a long betrothal,”

Dany nodded slowly before giving them all a look telling them that this particular topic was over. She would not force Daeron into a marriage, no matter what.

Jon, Tyrion and Rhaegar tried their hardest, they offered the Tyrells numerous positions in the court and in the council, far too many in fact but as Daenerys expected, they insisted that Margery would be the second Queen. So after several days both sides agreed that these negotiations were proving fruitless and they would have to revisit this issue later. This failure left a foreboding feeling inside of her

As Tyrion had pointed out, securing the support of the great houses was very important, and the Tyrells had been the most likely to join them. Jon has assured that they could take the kingdoms by force if need be but Tyrion’s argument for building a more stable reign was fresh in her mind. If they could not get the Tyrells to support them willingly, what chance did they have of winning the support of any other house?
Daenerys stood on their balcony with Daeron as she watched the Tyrell ships leave. Lady Olenna had said that they could think over the proposal again and give them their final answer at the great council. Daenerys hoped that their attempts to secure an alliance would be more successful at Harrenhall.

Chapter End Notes

So, Marg as the second Queen. Not many people guessed that was what they wanted. Ned is heading to the council with Robb...and his wife.

The next chapter is called "The Knight's Dilemma" and I'll give myself some more time and say it'll be out on Thursday next week. So in 6 days

As always, let me know what you think. Comments are always appreciated, especially the longer ones, they help me push through on those days of slow progress (and they happen a lot more than you think)

Thanks for reading
Sleepy
The Knight's Dilemma

Chapter Summary

Jon and Daenerys have a visitor on Dragonstone

Chapter Notes

Thanks to GOT88 for the help provided with this story

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The Lord Commander

Ser Barristan Selmy was seated at the round table in the White Sword Tower. The table was made of weirwood and shaped to look like a shield and the stone walls of the room had been whitewashed. In front of him was the white book that listed every single member of the Kingsguard that had ever served in the brotherhood. The book was open at his page and Barristan had spent the last few hours staring at the words in front of him.

He had become a squire at a young age and had entered a tourney as a mystery knight at the tender age of 10 using borrowed armor. He had been unhorsed by Prince Duncan Targaryen and was given the nickname of “the bold” by the Prince. Several years later, he earned his knighthood after unhorsing Prince Duncan as well as the Lord Commander, Ser Duncan the Tall, at a winter tourney in Kings Landing. He had even been knighted by King Aegon V himself. He had earned further glory during the War of the Ninepenny Kings. On the Stepstones, he cut through a line of men to slay Maelys the Monstrous which ended the line of Blackfyre pretenders for good. After this, he had been selected to the Kingsguard by Aegon’s son, King Jaehaerys II at the young age of three and twenty.

However, that is where it all started to go wrong for Ser Barristan.

He remembered his early days serving in the Kingsguard. Jaehaerys II had been a capable but sickly King and he died of his sickness shortly after giving Barristan his white cloak.

Barristan Selmy had known a great many kings. He was born during the troubled reign of Aegon the Unlikely. Aegon’s son Jaehaerys had bestowed the white cloak on him. Dressed in that same cloak, he had stood by the Iron Throne as madness consumed Jaehaerys’s son Aerys. He stood, saw, heard all the horrors and he did nothing. Aerys’s reign had started out as promising but as time progressed, Aerys’s grasp on his own sanity weakened.

His eyes went down the page and landed on those words. ‘The Defiance of Duskendale’, the event that truly broke Aerys’s mind.
In the years following the rebellion, he often wondered if he had not done his duty too well. He had sworn his vows before the eyes of gods and men and he could not in honor go against them, but keeping those vows had become hard during the final years of Aerys’s reign and more than once he wondered how much of that blood was on his own hands due to his actions that night in Duskendale. He had scaled the walls late at night using nothing but his bare hands and he had disguised himself as a hooded beggar as he made his way to the castle. He killed a guard on the walkway before he could raise the alarm and then he had snuck into the dungeons where his King had been imprisoned. By the time, he had gotten the King out of the dungeons, the alarm had been raised. Rather than surrender, he had stood and fought for his King. He killed many men on his way to the stables where he got the King onto a horse and hurried them out of the town before their gates could have been closed.

It had been his proudest moment, a moment the singers would sing about for generations. He had been a hero, a true knight, but Aerys had been quick to turn his moment of pride to a memory of shame and guilt. Once he rescued his King, Lord Darklyn and his family had nothing left to fight for so they soon surrendered and were presented to the King in chains. Aerys demanded not only the deaths of them and their immediate kin, but of all their distant kin as well. Even their kin by marriage, the Hollards were attained and destroyed. There was a young boy, Dontos Hollard, and Barristan had to beg the king to spare him and the King knew that he could not refuse his savior. Barristan had heard of what happened to Lady Serella who suffered an especially cruel death. Her womanly parts were torn out and then she had been burnt alive. The freed King had ordered the slaughter of every Darklyn and Hollard, innocent and guilty alike.

The memory was still painful to recall. If he had not gone into the dungeons to rescue the King, Aerys may have died when Tywin Lannister inevitably sacked the town. But by saving his king’s life, he had doomed countless lives to death. Aerys’s imprisonment only served to heighten his paranoia. How many people died in the following years because of Aerys’s madness? Barristan had been in the throne room when King Aerys burned Lord Rickard and his son, were their deaths on his hands? He closed the book and massaged his temples slowly. He had begged Lord Tywin for the chance to rescue the King who had given him one day until he used steel and fire to take the town. Barristan had protested that the King could die if he took the town by force but Lord Tywin didn’t seem to care, he said that they had a better King right in front of them as he pointed towards the young Prince Rhaegar.

Prince Rhaegar would have been a good King, he was just, smart, determined and able. Even as a young boy, he had been bookish to a fault so much so that the maesters had been in awe of his intelligence. He was also a capable warrior. Prince Rhaegar had been seventeen when he rode in the Tourney at Lannisport celebrating Prince Viserys’s birth. Prince Rhaegar had unhorsed him before falling to the Sword of the Morning in the champion’s tilt. Then of course, there was the Tourney at Harrenhall, he had unhorsed all four Kingsguard knights to win the tourney. Barristan sometimes wondered if the rebellion was on his hands as well, had he unhorsed Rhaegar in the champion’s tilt, he would never have crowned Lyanna Stark as the Queen of love and beauty. Then perhaps, Rhaegar would have ascended to the throne and he would have finally been able to serve a good King.

Had he not rescued King Aerys from those dungeons then Prince Rhaegar would have ascended to the throne and healed the realm. Prince Rhaegar would have been a good King and he had failed him. It was these failures that haunted him and kept him up at night. Princess Elia and her children,
Prince Aegon who was just a babe, Princess Rhaenys and her kitten named Balerion, Rhaegar himself. Dead, every one of them whilst he lived. He who had sworn to protect them.

“Lord Commander, there is an urgent small council meeting,” he heard a voice call out. Ser Arys was poking his head around the door. “The King has just received a raven, if I were to guess it would be news of the Targaryens, suffice to say, he did not look happy,”

“Thank you Ser Arys,” Barristan said as he stood up to leave. As he walked to the small council chambers, he thought of all the rumors that they had heard over the last few months. Varys had been informing them of the Targaryen children and their actions in the east.

When Barristan heard the news of what had happened, he had been conflicted. The Targaryen children had destroyed slavery in the east and Barristan, strangely, had felt proud of their deeds. It was something that Prince Rhaegar would have done. Then, he heard of what happened in Volantis and his mind immediately reminded him of Aerys. He knew that it was not fair to judge these children without meeting them for himself, but Barristan feared he would not get the chance.

As he walked closer to the small council chamber, his thoughts turned to Robert Baratheon. Robert was a good knight, chivalrous and brave, he had spared his life and many others, but he was a bad King.

He was a bad King because he had no right to the throne he sat on and his actions over the last 18 years had cemented this belief.

When he entered the small council chamber, he saw that most of the small council members were present. The Hand, Lord Stark, was still in the North, he was not supposed to return until after the harvest feasts. The Grand Maester was not here and Lord Stannis was still on the island of Dragonstone with the royal fleet. He took his seat and waited for the King to arrive. The King arrived a few moments later with the Grand Maester in tow. Surprisingly, the Queen and her brother attended the small council meeting, this was a very rare occurrence. Ser Jaime stood behind the King whilst Queen Cersei sat at the opposite end of the table.

The King took his seat at the head of the table and then threw the scroll at Lord Varys.

“Read,” he barked. Lord Varys read silently for a few moments “Louder so everyone else can hear you bloody fool!”

“King Aegon and Queen Daenerys of House Targaryen, Rightful King and Queen of the Seven Kingdoms invite all the lords of the realm to a council at Harrenhall which will take place within the next three months. Those who acknowledge our right to the throne are welcome to meet with us on Dragonstone and swear fealty to their rightful King and Queen.

For those who dispute our claim, the invitation at the council will provide an opportunity for them to express their views and hear our response. We strongly urge all the lords to attend this council so that the issue of the Iron Throne can be resolved peacefully. We do not seek unnecessary bloodshed or violence and this is our attempt to spare Westeros the horrors of a great war.

King Aegon Targaryen, trueborn son of Rhaegar Targaryen and Lyanna Stark.

Queen Daenerys Targaryen, trueborn daughter of Aerys Targaryen and Rhaella Targaryen.”

Barristan froze. They called a council at Harrenhall, Harrenhall of all places. He would get a chance to meet them, a chance to see if they were a King and Queen worth serving.

“How dare they!” Robert shouted and he slammed his fist into the wooden table and Barristan saw
his face beginning to grow red. “How dare they call a council to discuss my throne? Do they mean to take it from me with just words? Fat fucking chance!” and the room fell silent. Barristan’s mind considered the possibilities.

“They must have taken Dragonstone. They must have killed Stannis and destroyed my fleet. They kill my brother and then they dare ask for peace. How dare they!” Robert shouted and Barristan could see the spit flying from his mouth. “How dare he call himself the trueborn son of Lyanna. How. Dare. He.” Robert seethed.

“Your grace, it is a lie created to anger you. Viserys knows of your betrothal to the lovely Lyanna and he is trying to tarnish her memory,” Varys pointed out.

“I know he is. Rhaegar Targaryen raped and murdered her,” Robert said but Barristan doubted that. Rhaegar was not that type of man, he had loved his Lady Lyanna, and thousands had died because of it.

“Even the location for this council is meant to mock you,” the spider said. “Harrenhall is where the great tourney took place. They are trying to remind you of.”

“I know exactly what,” Robert said angrily.

“Calling your banners from the Stormlands was smart, very smart. You should take them to the council,” Varys said eagerly.

“I disagree. It is a council, they wish to find a peaceful solution, we should pursue that option first,” Barristan said quickly.

“You think the dragonspawn will play fairly?” Robert asked with a loud cruel laugh.

“They have chosen the time and the place of the meeting and they have invited all the lords of the realm. They could be setting all manner of traps for us,” The Queen pointed out and Robert nodded quickly.

“We can’t trust them. We should not go,” Robert said.

“Although your grace, there will be many lords who will go this meeting. If you stay in Kings Landing they might deem you a coward,” Varys said and Barristan saw the King look at Varys sharply.

“Careful spider. I am no coward,” he said darkly directly to Varys.

“My apologies my King. I was not meaning to call you a coward, I was merely trying to make you aware of how your actions may be perceived, my apologies,” he said with a bow. Robert continued to glare at him before turning away.

“We will go to the council. Write to Lord Tywin and to Ned, they will come too. Tell them to bring men and plenty of them,”

“Your grace, this is a council they want to discuss peaceful terms. Bringing our armies will send the wrong message,”

“Do you think they will be showing up empty handed? I can guarantee you they will be bringing their dragons at the least,” Varys pointed out. “Bringing as many men as possible would be wise, you cannot trust them,” and Robert nodded. Barristan knew that he was fighting a losing battle, if only Lord Stark was here, he would be able to talk sense into the King.
“Your grace, May I suggest a compromise. The council will be held in three months, we should get there early. If we get there first then we can search the castle for any traps that they may have prepared,” Barristan said and surprisingly Varys nodded in agreement.

“Very well. Grand Maester, send those ravens. Renly,” he said turning to his brother who was sitting quietly. “You are still friends with the Tyrell’s right?”

“Yes brother,” he said with a smile.

“Weren’t you telling me about their girl? What was her name?”

“Margaery,”

“Good. You will marry her. That will secure the Tyrell’s to my side. Hoster Tully may not support us and the Reach are the biggest producers of food in the realm. If the dragonspawn do not have food, they cannot feed their armies,” Robert said and Barristan was inclined to agree with him.

“Would you like me to ride for Highgarden?” Renly asked.

“No, there is no time. At the council, I want you to meet with the Reach Lords, what’s the father’s name?”

“Mace, Mace Tyrell,”

“I remember now. Meet with him and express interest in an alliance between our houses. In fact, write to him now. Give him time to think on the matter. The Reach and the Stormlands border each other, an alliance between our houses will be very powerful,”

“As you wish,” Renly said with a smile.

“Do not fail me, Renly. If we secure the Tyrell’s we will have nearly half the Kingdoms on our side. Ned will support me and his daughter will marry my son. Tywin Lannister will already support us. We already have the Stormlands and the Reach will push us over the top,”

“I will be able to secure the Reach. What about the other Kingdoms?” Renly asked,

“The Vale will be loyal to me. Lord Yohn Royce is the warden and I appointed him for that very reason. The Riverlands could go either way, but Ned is married to Catelyn and hopefully they’ll be able to convince the Riverlords to support us. Hoster Tully helped us to overthrow the dragons in the first place. The Dornish alone will not be enough,”

“What about the dragons, your grace?” Ser Jaime asked, speaking for the first time.

“We have been building scorpions for the last few months. Some of them can be mounted and pulled by horse, we will take them,” Robert said immediately and Varys nodded. “We will start mounting them on the city walls as well,”

“That sounds wise, my King,” the spider nodded in agreement. “The Targaryens mean to call this council to intimidate some of the weaker lords with their strength. It is important that you do the same. You will need every man on your side,” Robert nodded and Barristan looked at the spider warily. It was not like him to be so eager to contribute to war.

“Cersei, you will take the children and head back to Casterly Rock. Joffrey will stay with me,”

“Why should Joffrey stay?”
“He will stay with me and fight. He is of age and he will be King one day. The other children are too young, they will be safe in Casterly Rock. One of the Kingsguard will accompany you,” Robert said firmly. The Queen opened her mouth to speak but Robert interrupted her,

“War is coming, do not fool yourself. I will not be peacefully abdicating my throne. The children will leave Kings Landing and Joffrey will stay,” he said as he glared at Queen Cersei.

“Your Grace, I have a suggestion,” Pycelle stammered. “We should spread rumors about the Targaryens. They have wed brother to sister again which is an abomination. They follow foreign gods and the people should know that,”

“Pycelle. That might be the first useful thing you have said in 15 years,” Robert said as he slowly nodded. “Spider, I want you to get it done. I want all the Lords to start spreading these rumors,”

“That will be all. Now go. Pycelle and Renly I want you to send your letters immediately. We do not have time to waste,”

Barristan left the small council and headed back to the White Sword tower. Surprisingly, he had a small smile on his face. He realised that he was eager to meet the Targaryens at this council. Harrenhal was a special location, obviously there was the tourney where Rhaegar crowned his Lady Lyanna as the Queen of love and beauty, but it was also where Aegon the Conqueror showed Harren the Black, the true power of dragons.

The Targaryens came from Valyria hundreds of years ago and they forged a single realm from the Seven Kingdoms. Barristan knew that they were the true and rightful rulers of Westeros. He had known Prince Viserys when he was younger, and he often reminded him of Aerys in ways that Prince Rhaegar did not. However, Barristan remembered that this Aegon was claiming to be the son of Rhaegar and Lyanna. Barristan was not sure where this boy could have been hiding but he would soon meet him to find out.

Then there was Daenerys, he had never met Daenerys, she too could be a good Queen. Perhaps, Varys’s reports were wrong, Barristan had never trusted the Spider. Perhaps, the Targaryen children were good and if they were, he would serve them. He would finally get to serve a good King.

It would be his chance at redemption.

The Griffin

Jon Connington stood out on the deck of their ship, the sun was setting but they were nearly at their destination. They had spent several weeks in Dorne, firstly for that damn wedding. Jon could not believe it, he had told him to stay away from the girl but he had completely fallen for her. He had woken up the very next day and found that Duck was not guarding King’s door as he was supposed to. A sense of dread washed over him as he walked towards the King’s door. He pushed open the door to his room and saw him asleep, his head nestled between Arianne’s breasts. He could not scold the King, but he could scold Duck. Apparently, he too had fallen into bed with a Dornish woman.

The wedding had followed soon after, Doran Martell had been quick to point out that the King had dishonored his daughter and Jon really couldn’t argue with him. So, the King had married Princess Arianne in Dorne at Sunspear. They had stayed there for a few more weeks waiting for news from Kings Landing.
Fortunately, good news seem to have found them in the form of the Targaryens. They had taken Dragonstone and invited all the Lords of the realm to a council. When he heard the news, Jon had been beside himself with glee. This was exactly the distraction they had been looking for. Jon was not foolish enough to believe that the matter of the throne would be resolved peacefully. No, war would soon be upon Westeros and they would be able to fight the weakened victor.

The Dornish were able to provide 40,000 spears to their cause to go with the 20,000 Golden Company men that they had. It was a decent sized host, more than capable of picking off the remains of whichever side won. Jon was hoping that the Usurper won, it would be much easier to fight against a conventional army than the dragons. Still, Oberyn told him not to worry, they had friends in the Citadel who were willing and able to help in regards to the dragons. The Spider had also reported that the Usurper had called his banners from the Stormlands and ordered them to the capital, leaving behind only a small force to garrison the castles. This had been their sign to strike.

War would soon break out and there would be no way that the Usurper would split his armies when the Dragons were on his doorstep, at best he would send a small paltry force to clear up any disturbances they caused in the Stormlands and these would be easy pickings for Jon and his forces. Jon knew that nothing motivated an army better than the taste of victory.

Jon was on the deck of the main ship as they approached Griffin’s Roost. He had been eager to take back his home, it was the first step in his redemption. They had decided to make their approach in the middle of the night in order to maintain the element of surprise. He did not know who held the castle now, but he was determined to take it back.

They had split their forces, the majority of the Dornish forces were sat in the Boneway, waiting for the raven to inform them that it was safe to advance. They did not want to draw attention to themselves by having 40,000 Dornish spears marching through the Stormlands. For now, it would only be the Golden Company and a few Dornishmen, then when war broke out, the rest of the Dornish forces would advance.

Jon stood on the deck of the main ship, watching the land slowly approach. Soon, they would disembark and begin the final stretch of the journey on foot. They would not be taking any elephants, they were too loud and they were not be able to maneuver in the woods surrounding Griffin's Roost.

He turned away from the land and went to find Black Balaq, he was in charge of the Golden Company’s archers. Before they had left Sunspear, he had told him to put 100 archers on each ship. He knew that the autumn storms could be particularly strong in Shipbreakers bay so he wanted to ensure each ship had archers in case they were separated.

He found the Summer Islander at the stern of the ship, counting his arrows and preparing for battle. In his youth, Jon had not been a fan of archers, he thought that it was a cowardly way to fight. However, during his time in exile he had begun to appreciate to art. All of Black Balaq’s men were seasoned veterans with hundreds of raids, skirmishes and battles under their belt. Black Balaq was one of the few men who had served in the Golden Company before Jon’s ‘death’ and he had been happy to see him when he returned.

“Black Balaq,” he said in greeting.

“Jon Connington,” he said “I take it you have instructions for me?”

“Yes I do,” Jon said as he pulled out a map that he had spent a few days drawing. “Here is the Maester’s tower where the rookery is. I want you to bring down every bird that leaves the castle. We do not want them to spread word of our attack,”
“This, I can do,” the summer islander said in his deep voice before walking off to relay the instructions to his men.

Then, Jon headed below deck to go and find the King. He walked to his door and heard low whispering and giggling from inside. He sighed in frustration and knocked on the door twice. He waited for a few moments but they did not seem to hear him, he banged on the door louder and this time he heard a female voice telling him to enter.

He entered and saw the two of them in bed together. Aegon had his head in her lap whilst she fed him grapes from a bowl.

“What is it?” Aegon asked as he looked up at him, he noticed that his smile had turned into a frown.

“It is time for battle we will be leaving soon,”

“Will the King not be joining you?” Arianne asked as she fixed him a look.

“No. We agreed on this earlier. It is too risky,” he said firmly.

“I think the men will be filled with confidence seeing their King fighting alongside them,” she said as she slowly massaged his chest. “Their strong and brave King,”

“My Queen, we did agree on this earlier. I am not going to take part in this fight,”

“Aegon, I think you should. How will the singers ever sing songs about your bravery if you fight in no battles?”

Jon noticed that she called him by his name, not his title and this disturbed him. He watched as his King considered her words.

“Do it, for me,” she said and Jon watched as she slowly pushed her finger into his mouth. Aegon slowly nodded.

“Gerold will accompany you. He’s one of the best swordsmen I know, some say even as good as his uncle,” she said softly.

“Jon. See that Ser Gerold and Duck are ready. I will be joining you shortly,”

Jon held back a frustrated sigh and bowed to his King and went to carry out his orders. He found Ser Gerold and Duck quickly and told them that they would be guarding the King during the battle. He did not like this change of plan, but Ser Gerold was a fine swordsman so the King would be well protected. He saw the men preparing the smaller boats that they would use to ferry the men to the shores of Cape Wrath, Jon was pleased with what he saw. The preparations were moving quickly. A few moments later, the King joined him on the deck and Jon was surprised by the sword that he was strapping to his waist.

“Your grace, May I see your sword?” he asked and Aegon quickly handed it over. Jon had not seen many swords like this, but he knew that this was Valyrian steel. “Where did you get this?”

“It was in the chest that Illyrio gave to me in Pentos. Illyrio said that it was a wedding gift, so I opened it on the night of my wedding. There was a note along with the sword that said that the sword is called *Truth* and explains that Illyrio bought it from a Lyseni nobleman especially for me. When we take back the throne we will repay him for this kindness,” he said and Jon nodded slowly, soon it was time to depart.
They got onto the smaller boats and made their way towards the muddy shores of Cape Wrath. Once they landed, some of the men quickly headed into the tree line to start cutting down trees to form rams and whilst they did that, Jon told the rest of the men his plan.

Griffin’s roost was surrounded on three sides by the surging waters of Shipbreaker bay. The only way to approach was defended by a gatehouse and behind the gatehouse was a long ridge known as the Griffin’s throat. Making their way through the Griffin’s throat would be difficult as they would be exposed to spears, stones and arrows that the defenders might launch at them. Jon expected to lose over a hundred men taking the castle.

They only lost four.

They made their approach in the middle of the night and fortunately the woods surrounding the castle had been allowed to encroach on the field up to the gatehouse. This meant that Ser Franklyn Flowers, a Golden Company general, had been able to lead the men to within a few yards of the castle gates. They emerged from the trees and quickly brought their rams forwards and crashed them into the gate.

The sound of wood on wood brought some guards to the battlements but they were quickly brought down by arrows from Black Balaq’s archers. The gate itself was only closed, not barred shut and this meant that it gave way fairly quickly. They were halfway up the Griffin’s throat before someone managed to blow the war horn to awaken the rest of the castle.

The first raven took flight as their grapnels made contact with the wall but the bird did not make it beyond the castle walls before it was shot down. As the men of the Golden Company ran along the battlements they shouted “A Griffin!” the call of House Connington, which must have thoroughly confused the castle’s defenders.

The whole thing had been over within minutes. Once they reached the castle courtyard, the rest of the castle’s defenders had thrown down their weapons. With the resistance over, Griffin’s Roost was his again, and Jon Connington was a Lord once more.

“Ser Franklyn, go through the keep and kitchens and roust everyone you find. Have your men do the same for the rookery, the stables, the armory and the Sept. Try not to kill anyone, it would reflect badly on our King,” he said to the general. Jon turned and looked for Haldon.

“Haldon, head to the rookery. We have messages to send, firstly to Dorne to update Doran Martell on our progress and then to our friend in Kings Landing,” he said and Haldon quickly scurried off to complete his instructions. He still disliked Lord Varys but right now, they needed him and his network of spies.

Jon had been surprised that it was so easy, he did not expect the Usurper to leave the castles this empty. He walked with Harry Strickland through the great hall and he studied the old faded tapestries hanging on the walls, the place had not changed in the slightest in all the long years he had been gone.

“Didn’t you say that there is a secret way out?” Harry asked

“Below the castle, there is a hidden cove. It’s only visible when the tide is out,” Jon said. Griffin's roost was small but strong, it would do for now until they received more information.

“Excuse me, my Lord Father has been buried beneath the Sept and it has been years since I prayed for him,” and Harry nodded in acceptance.
However, instead of heading to the Sept, he headed towards the tallest tower. He had made this trip thousands of times before but only once with Rhaegar Targaryen. Jon remembered that day as if it was yesterday. The prince and his party had been travelling back from Dorne and they had lingered at the castle for a few weeks. At the welcoming feast, he had picked up his silver stringed harp and he had played for them. All the women had wept, but not the men, and certainly not, Jon.

Jon pushed open the door to the tower and looked out at the view of his lands. He had shown the prince this very same view.

“Your father’s lands are beautiful,” the Prince had said.

“And one day they will all be mine,” Jon had said as if these measly lands would impress a prince who would one day inherit all the lands in the realm. Jon let out a sigh of frustration, he had failed Rhaegar, he had failed his silver prince, but he would not fail the son.

The false prince would be at the council, he would serve as a good distraction for the Usurper while they secured the Stormlands. Jon knew there was a good chance that the false prince would defeat the Baratheon pretender but this in turn would weaken his own forces and make his fall to Rhaegar’s true son inevitable. The false prince would be no match for the true King and his sword.

Jon made his descent to the castle courtyard and saw that all the small folk had finally been rounded up. Doing this in the middle of the night was unfortunate, but they did not have any other choice. Jon knew that the castle had been left to his cousin Ronald Connington. Ronald was likely off at war with the rest of the Storm lords but his brother and his sister were still here. Jon was pleased about that, they would make useful hostages. He had them sent to the west tower where they would be guarded heavily.

The small folk looked at him warily, only a few of them would have been here before he had been exiled.

“Some of you will know me. The rest of you will soon learn. I am your rightful lord, returned from exile. My enemies have told you that I had died, as you can see that is false. Serve me as faithfully as you have served my cousin and no harm will come to you,"

He brought them all forward one by one and had each man kneel and swear their allegiance, it all moved swiftly and no one tried to refute his claim. When he was finished he saw that the King had returned, with the Queen by his side. Jon walked over to them and his King greeted him with a smile.

“Lord Connington,” the King said. “I like your castle,” he said with a smile.

“So do I, although it is rather...small,” Arianne said with a sweet smile that Connington did not return. “Although. I hear that there is a bigger castle not too far from here,”

Jon froze, this girl was crazy.

“You mean to take Storms End?” he asked and she just looked at him with a small smile. “No. That is crazy, that is the seat of House Baratheon,”

“I know it is. If we take it, we look credible, we look strong,” she said firmly.

“Your father said it would be best if we lie low and wait for the Usurper and the dragons to weaken each other. If we take Storms End, Robert Baratheon would soon be on our doorstep;”

“Why don’t we let Aegon decide?” she said sweetly. Jon looked at the King who was looking
between them nervously. His eyes lingered on Arianne for a few moments before shooting Jon an apologetic look.

“We will ride for Storms End,”

The Dragon Reborn

Jon was out alone on the cliffs of Dragonstone overlooking the narrow sea, the sea was growling and breaking against the rocks below. The sun was just barely poking over the horizon and it was still rather chilly. He had a sleepless night so he went out to get some fresh air to try and to clear his mind. He ran his hand through Ghost’s fur as he watched the sun slowly rise.

The Tyrell’s had left a couple of weeks ago and their failure to secure this alliance still hung over them like a dark cloud. It put much more pressure on them to secure allies at the council. They would definitely need the Riverlands now to provide food for their soldiers and that presented a problem. They knew that they would be able to persuade some of the Riverlords, but there was no guarantee that Hoster Tully would come to their side. On top of that, if they took the Riverlands they would have to split their forces to defend it. Tywin Lannister would be in the west, Robert Baratheon in the east and likely the Reach lords in the south.

It simply would not work.

He remembered that Lord Stark was married to Catelyn Tully so the North and the Riverlands would likely come together. Could he convince Lord Stark to fight with him? He was not really sure anymore, he was not sure who Lord Stark truly was. Hopefully, he would be able to speak with Robb, he stood a much better chance of getting through to him.

“What do you think Ghost? Will the North ally with me?” he asked and Ghost just looked at him before running off back towards the castle.

He sighed in frustration before heading back inside. Ghost was still running ahead of him clearly eager to get back to the castle. He walked past the guards that were on duty and headed back to his chambers in the Stone drum tower. However, Ghost had other ideas, his direwolf ran towards the kitchens and then turned back and looked at him expectantly.

“They won’t have any food, Ghost,” he said. Ghost just looked at him patiently before Jon decided to follow him anyway. He walked into the kitchen and saw that some food had actually been cooked. He piled a plate high with sausages and then tossed one high in the air for Ghost to catch which he dutifully did.

“Impressive,” he heard a voice say and he turned to saw Tyrion was sitting on a bench on the far side of the room. “I did not know you were an early riser,” he said.

“I’m not. I couldn’t sleep I had a lot on my mind,”

“The council I presume,” he said and Jon nodded. “Well, there is not much use worrying. We still have some time to think about which lords we need to speak to and what terms we will offer. It will be a very emotional meeting with plenty of animosity between both sides, so it is important that we have a plan that we stick to,”

Jon nodded at the words. “I also had a dream last night. I saw Dany’s father, he was with a strange
woman with blonde hair. He kept grabbing at her and pulling at her clothes. I didn’t see much more before I woke up.”

Tyrion looked at him with a confused look on his face. “Why are you telling me this?” he asked after a moment.

“You asked why I was awake and this why. I had this dream and I couldn’t get back to sleep. Some of my dreams are weird, they’re dragon dreams. Dany has them too. They’re usually trying to tell us something, but I don’t understand this one. You may find it hard to believe but I witnessed some key moments in history during these dreams. Also, they generally give warning or direction of events which will occur in the future.”

Tyrion nodded slowly in understanding. “I will keep this in mind. Perhaps, the Mad King had a mistress or two, it wouldn’t surprise me. Perhaps, that’s why your mind gave you that vision. You might end up with two wives,”

Jon didn’t respond, he already had a wife. He did not want another.

“Lord Stark is married to Catelyn Tully. If the North does not support you, then we will have to go back to the Reach,” Tyrion said. Jon knew that he was right, they would need food for their armies but this just made him feel more nervous for this council meeting. “She’s very pretty. Some men are married to ugly women and you could have two of the most beautiful women in the entire realm,”

“Tyrion, I don’t want to talk about this,” Jon said in a frustrated voice.

“I know you don’t, but my job is to advise you and I would be a poor advisor if I did not let you know of all the possibilities and the pros and cons of each possibility. You don’t have to love Margaery but it would be a marriage with a significant political upside. I know you love the Queen and I know that nothing will come between you,” A small part of Jon knew that Tyrion was only being helpful and he was speaking the truth, still he did not want to hear it.

“There is also another possibility,” Tyrion continued and Jon looked at him curiously. “You need the food from the Reach, but you don’t actually need the Tyrell’s. The Tyrells are an ambitious house and there are likely other ambitious houses in the Reach that would jump at the opportunity to take their place,”

“Which houses?” Jon said eagerly,

“That is where it gets more difficult. Olenna Tyrell was born a Redwyne and Mace Tyrell’s wife is a Hightower, so if you remove the Tyrell’s, you immediately lose the support of three of the most powerful Reach lords. The Florents could be an option but they might not be a house you could trust, after all, we still haven’t found Selyse Baratheon. You would not know if they would want to enact revenge. Your best bet to replace them would be another noble house such as the Rowans or the Tarlys. Personally, House Tarly would be the best choice since we would gain the support of Randyll Tarly who is known as great military commander in Westeros. Not to mention, he was the only man who was able to defeat Robert Baratheon during the rebellion.” Tyrion said and Jon nodded, thankful for his advice. Jon was impressed with his solution.

“Are you excited to meet your family again?” Jon asked deciding to change the subject.

“In a way. It will be interesting to see what my father has to say to me, and unlike you. I don’t have to be nice to form an alliance,” he said with a wicked smile. Jon smiled to himself, at least he had nothing to worry about.
“What about your siblings? I presume the Queen will be there.” and Tyrion snorted.

“I doubt she’d be there. She holds no real power,”

“Ser Jaime?” and he heard Tyrion sigh.

“Perhaps. He is a knight of the Kingsguard after all,” Tyrion said with a pained look on his face and Jon realised that he did not want to talk about his brother so he stood up to leave.

“Do you know why he killed his King?”

Jon paused for a moment.

“No, but in my dragon dreams I saw the event and my dream dragon nodded his head in approval, so I assume that Ser Jaime had a good reason,” Tyrion looked surprised at this statement.

“Well it seems your visions are indeed accurate. He did have a good reason” and so Tyrion proceeded to tell him the truth and reasons behind Ser Jaime’s actions on that fateful day.

Jon had assumed that Ser Jaime was justified in his act due to his visions but upon learning the complete truth, Jon could not help but feel grateful towards the knight who spared his grandfather and their family from being stained with an act that would have haunted their image and future descendants for centuries. Perhaps, Ser Jaime truly deserved a chance to redeem himself in the eyes of the realm and his family.

Jon assured Tyrion that he would share the truth with Dany and take Ser Jaime’s actions into account when the time came to face him. Jon also suggested to Tyrion that he should share the story with Rhaegar himself later today when he and Dany left for a surprise trip. Tyrion nodded in acceptance. Now, that his curiosity towards Ser Jaime was satisfied, Jon wanted to learn about his family’s greatest enemy.

“Tell me about your father. I want to hear it from you the good and the bad,”

“There isn’t much good to tell you,” Tyrion said bitterly.

“Really? Even when you were a child?”

“My father hated me since the day that I was born, he thought I was sent by the Gods to humble him. He hated me because I was a dwarf, he thought that I was unworthy to carry the Lannister name. My sister blames me for killing our mother when I was born and she has hated me ever since. The only person in my family to treat me with any sort of kindness was Jaime, but even that had its limits. He chose to save himself instead of trying to help me,” he answered.

Jon nodded slowly, Tyrion had told them this before. Growing up as a bastard in Winterfell, he knew exactly what it felt like to be feel like an outsider despite being surrounded by family.

“Did you know that I was married once?” and Jon shook his head.

“Tysha, she was my first love. She was a crofter's daughter that we just happened upon. We saw her surrounded by a group of men. Jaime ran the men off whilst I took her to a local inn. I cared for her and we got married that same night with only pigs for witnesses. It was the happiest time of my life,”

Jon could tell by the way that he was talking that she was dead, and the memory sounded painful.

“Tyrion, you don’t have to tell me this,” Jon said. He could tell that this topic upset Tyrion and it
was beginning to make him feel uneasy.

“You wanted to know the good and the bad. This is the bad. This is the very worst. Do you know what happened to Tysha?”

Jon shook his head and swallowed nervously.

“My father found out that we were married and then he had his guardsmen bring us all back to Casterly Rock. He told me that she was a whore that he had Jaime hire to turn me into a man. To prove his point, he had every guardsmen in the barracks rape her and pay her a silver piece when they were finished. Then he made me go last and he made me pay a gold piece because Lannisters were worth more;”

Jon was stunned, he didn’t know what to say. What could he say? Nothing in his life compared to this.

“Do you know what the worst part is?” Jon didn’t answer. He couldn’t imagine how this could get worse

“She actually loved me, she was actually a crofter’s daughter. She wasn’t a whore. Jaime knew but he too stayed silent and helped to cement my father’s lie. Then years later, I discovered the truth along with my family’s plot to murder me, as I heard their plotting through a hidden alcove with Varys’s help. Jaime barged in on their meeting demanding they abandon such plans but when my father threatened to send him to the wall, my brother went silent and consented to silently stand by as I was murdered. He was the only person who I thought truly cared for me and he chose to let me die rather than stand up to our father,” and Tyrion’s voice cracked at the end.

Jon was stunned. He looked at Tyrion who was staring at the floor.

“Tyrion I’m sorry. You didn’t deserve that, no one deserves that,” he said after a few moments.

“It’s not your fault, you don’t need to apologize. You wanted to know about my father and that is the worst of the worst,”

Jon was quiet for a few moments. “I am sorry that your family treated you like this. Nothing that I can say will ever bring Tysha back but we will bring your father to justice. For what he did to you and for what he did to my family,”

Tyrion didn’t say anything in response and Jon realised that he probably wanted to be left alone. So, he picked up the plate of sausages and made his way back to his chambers. As he walked back to his chambers he thought on what Tyrion had said. What Lord Tywin had done to Tyrion was unbelievably cruel and what was worse, was that Tyrion’s own brother had played a part in it. He could never do something like this to Robb, or Bran or Rickon. He had heard about the brutal sack of Kings Landing and what he did to the Reynes and the Tarbecks, but he had no idea that Tywin Lannister could act so cruel towards his own family.

He pushed open the door to their chambers and found Daenerys asleep in the middle of the bed. She had half the covers strewn off her body and he could see that she was sleeping peacefully.

He walked outside onto their balcony and put the plate down for Ghost before heading back inside. He slowly climbed into bed and was surprised when Daenerys immediately snuggled into him and draped her arm over his chest.

“I thought you were asleep,” he said softly,
“I sleep very lightly now. If Daeron wakes up I need to be there for him,” she said. “Where did you go?”

“I had a dream and then I couldn’t go back to sleep so I went outside to get some fresh air to try and clear my mind,” she looked up at him and Jon looked into her lovely lilac eyes.

“What was the dream about?” she asked, she sounded concerned.

“I dreamt of your father, he was with a woman with blond hair,” he said softly.

“Oh,” was all she said as she looked downwards again.

“I’m sure it was nothing,” he said quickly. “I also saw Tyrion and we talked about Ser Jaime, particularly his decision to kill your father. He told me the truth behind Ser Jaime’s actions and I found them completely valid.”

So, he narrated the entire story to her who could not help but share Jon’s opinion on the matter and agreed to offer a second chance to misfortunate knight.

“We also talked about preparing a strategy while dealing with potential allies”

“Ok. We will speak to him about it today,” she said as she moved to get up.

“No, no, no, relax my love. The day has not even started. We can discuss strategy another time,” he said as he held her tightly to his chest.

“I know, I just want to do something. We’ve been stuck on this island ever since the Tyrell’s left and that was weeks ago,”

Jon nodded, she had been particularly restless these last few weeks. She spent a lot of her time either with Daeron or out flying Anogar over the bay when he was asleep. He guessed that the failure to secure the Tyrell’s was weighing heavily on her.

“You’re still thinking about their terms,” it wasn’t a question, they both knew she was.

“How could I not? Perhaps in another life, Margaery and I could have been friends, perhaps we could still be friends but I’m not sure I can do this. I’m not sure I could share you with someone else. If I could maybe we would have allies right now,”

“Dany stop, don’t blame yourself. It won’t come to that. We will find a way. If we have the North, then we will get the Riverlands and then we won’t need the Reach.” he said with more confidence than he felt.

“Jon you know that the North is not a guarantee. You have said it yourself, Sansa is still betrothed to Prince Joffrey, and it seems that Lord Stark and the Usurper are still on the same side. We need allies, you know we can’t win the throne using only violence. If we don’t get the North then we will have to -”

But Jon interrupted her with a kiss. He pressed his lips to hers and tried to convey all the love he felt in his heart for her.

“Don’t worry about the Tyrell’s I have a plan,” he said to her. Dany looked at him slowly before she quickly looked away. Jon was about to open his mouth to say something but she pressed a finger to his lips.
“Daeron,” she said before quickly getting off the bed and heading into the nursery. She returned a few moments later clutching Daeron to her chest. Dany was singing to him softly and then she climbed into bed and began to feed him, Jon pushed himself up onto the bed and pulled her into his arms so that she was resting against his chest. He smiled to himself, everything was perfect.

“Good morning, sweetling,” Dany said happily once Daeron was finished. Jon loved the way her eyes lit up with happiness as she looked at their son. Daeron was happily kicking his feet as she held him up.

“He’s ready to walk,” Jon said and Dany laughed.

“Walk? Jon please. He’s not even a year old and he can barely crawl,”

“He can crawl plenty,” he said adamantly. He knew Daeron was still young but he was sure that he could crawl and perhaps walk. He remembered that Rickon had started to walk much younger than Maester Luwin expected and perhaps Daeron would do the same.

“Not very far. Move all the way across the bed,” she said and Jon quickly obeyed.

“Now, Daeron my sweet prince, crawl to papa,” she said softly as put their son on the bed in between them. Their bed was huge, big enough to fit six or seven people. Jon looked at Daeron who was still lying flat on his stomach.

“Come on,” he said softly as held his arms out. Dany whispered words of encouragements and gave him a gentle push. Daeron smiled and reached out to grab the sheets with his chubby hands to try and pull himself along. This went on for a few seconds and Jon watched with a smile as Daeron slowly but surely made his way across the bed towards him.

“See!” he said triumphantly as he scooped up their son. “Crawling is easy for him,” and he lifted him high into the air. Daenerys laughed before she made her way over to him.

“I still think he’s too young to walk but soon I think,” she said softly as she rest her head on his shoulder. Jon pulled Daeron closer and gave him a quick kiss on his nose.

“I think you’re right. I think he does have purple flecks in his eyes,” he said as he paid closer attention to Daeron’s eyes.

“Of course I’m right,” she said as she reached out her arms. “Let’s do something together today. How about we take some food and we spend the day in Aegon’s Garden. Just the three of us,” Jon smiled at her. “Sure. That sounds perfect my love,”

Daenerys then held onto Daeron and got out of bed. They bathed together before getting dressed and heading out to Aegon’s garden. Daenerys carried Daeron whilst Jon carried a basket containing their breakfast.

Aegon’s garden sat on the eastern cliffs hidden away from prying eyes by the numerous twists and turns of the castle. To find it, you had to head away from the Stone drum tower and under the dragon’s tail. They walked through the black dragonstone archways and entered the garden. The garden had a pleasant piney smell to it, he saw familiar Westerosi plants mingling with the exotic plants from Essos. There was a flower bed made up of smaller blue flowers ringed by a circle of taller white ones. There were tall trees surrounding the garden, protecting those inside from the outside world. There were wild roses and towering thorny hedges.

“This place is beautiful” Dany said quietly as they walked through it.
“Aye. It reminds me of the glass gardens in Winterfell. It enables them to grow food even in the coldest part of winter. One day, I’ll take you there,” he said with a smile.

They settled on a patch of grass and Jon laid out the blanket and put their breakfast on it. They had a loaf of warm, fresh bread and a plate of sausages. The cooks had also given him a small bowl of cranberries for them to eat as well. They ate together and they watched the sun slowly make its way across the sky. The sea breeze was gentle and felt pleasant on his skin.

“Daeron,” Dany said in a warning tone, Jon turned to look at him and saw that Daeron had his hand in the bowl of cranberries. Daeron just looked at his mother with an innocent look on his face before she eventually relented and gave him a cranberry. Jon smiled and looked out over the narrow sea. The dragons were awake and he saw Anogar and Vedros fly away to hunt. However, as usual, Caraxes was flying nearby watching over Daeron.

They played with Daeron after they ate. Jon was convinced that he was ready to walk and so he spent time trying to get him to take his first steps. With his help, Daeron was able to stand, albeit unsteadily. Jon would let go of his tiny hands and he would wobble for a few seconds before falling onto the soft grass. Dany would give him words of encouragement but it seemed that she was right, Daeron was not quite ready to walk.

“There are ships approaching,” Dany said quietly as she pointed towards the water. Jon saw ships with black sails approaching but they were far enough away that he could not see their sigil properly. “Probably lords coming to swear fealty to us,”

“We better head back,” he said and she nodded. He noticed that the earlier happiness on her face was gone. The weight and pressure of getting these alliances seemed to be weighing down on her.

“Daenerys, do not worry about allies, they will join us. Do not worry,” he said as they walked back to the castle. He gave her squeezed her hand reassuringly and he was rewarded with a small hint of a smile. They headed back to their chamber in the Stone drum tower and they prepared themselves to meet the Lords. Doreah and Irri took Daeron whilst they headed down to the throne room to await the Lords. He looked towards Daenerys and gestured for her to take her seat on the throne.

Rhaegar and Marwyn entered the throne room together and stood to one side on the dais. A few minutes later, Tyrion and Missandei entered with their guests in tow. Jon was confused, none of them looked like lords.

“You stand in the presence of King Aegon and Queen Daenerys of House Targaryen, the Breakers of chains, Emperor and Empress of the Bay of dragons and the Dragon cities of the east and the Rightful King and Queen of Westeros,” Missandei called out. Jon looked at the small group and waited for their leader to step forward. Surprisingly, it was the woman who seemed to be dressed in man’s clothing.


“Lady Asha. We thank you for journeying to see us. I take it you are here to swear fealty to your rightful King and Queen?” Daenerys called out from the throne.

“Opinions differ on whether I am a lady, but aye, I am here to swear fealty,”

“What of your father?” Jon asked. “Does he know that you are here? After all, Theon is still a hostage at Winterfell. If you swear fealty to us, does that not put this own son and heir in jeopardy?”

“My father does not know that I am here. He intends to ally with King Robert and use this alliance...
to get Theon back,”

“Why do you mean to oppose him?” Tyrion asked. “Surely you should be happy to get your brother back,”

“As you may know, my father is a fool. He started a rebellion to overthrow the iron throne but he had no allies and so his rebellion was crushed. After Theon was taken away to Winterfell, I was his only remaining child. We worked together side by side for years and eventually, he named me his heir. However, we did not always agree, my father wanted a return to the old way and I urged him not to. A return to the Old way would only lead to more defeat and embarrassment. I told him that the Iron Islands needed to forget the old way and move forwards to keep up with the other kingdoms but he never agreed. Perhaps, it was this constant disagreement that has led to his decision to try and get Theon back to name him as his heir once again,”

“What is the old way?” Daenerys asked and Yara gave a grim smile before answering,

“The old way is the ancient tradition of reaving and plundering. In the old way, we do not trade, we take things by force. It is called paying the Iron Price. Before Aegon the Conqueror came, our ancestors would conduct lightning raids along the coast of Westeros, taking away women and plunder. Aegon the Conqueror stopped the old way, but my father has been eager to bring it back. To carve himself a special place in history,”

He looked at Daenerys who was considering those words.

“If you ally with us. We will put you in charge of the Iron Islands and we are entrusting you to ensure the Old Way does not return. There will be no reaving, raiding or raping,” she said and Asha nodded.

“How many ships do you have?”

“Under my command I currently have 30 Longships,”

“How many of the Lords will support your claim?”

“Quite a few, there will be a very small amount of resistance if any to the idea of me ruling the Isles. The lords know of my skill and ability, plus they are weary to follow my father ever since they were crushed by Robert Baratheon. Theon has not lived on the Iron Islands since he was a boy, he probably doesn’t even remember me. Many of the Ironborn think of him as a greenlander now and not a true Ironborn. My uncle Victarion commands the Iron Fleet but he has no desire for power, he is a follower, a warrior and he loves battle, not ruling. He will likely follow whatever direction my father tells him. My only real competition would be my Uncle Euron, but he has been exiled for years,”

Jon shared a look at Dany and they exchanged a small smile.

“Euron Greyjoy will not oppose your claim,” Jon said firmly.

“What makes you so sure?”

“I killed him,” Dany said and Asha looked at her with a surprised look before slowly smiling and nodding her head, seemingly in thanks.

“You have done the world a favor by getting rid of the Crow’s Eye,” she said with a smile. “I would love to hear the story one day,“
“You shall hear it but not today. I am sure that you have heard of the council?” and Asha nodded. “Good. You will be attending the council with us. We need you to secure the loyalty of as many of the Ironborn as you can,”

“As you command your grace,” she said with a smile.

“Very well, Lady Asha. It seems that we have an agreement. Have the Iron Islands ever been ruled by a woman before?” Jon asked.

“No more than Westeros, but it seems that times are changing,”

“Thank you for coming to see us. We will have rooms prepared for you and hot meals sent to them. Although, we will all have to depart for the council soon. Within the next few days really,” Daenerys told her.

“Of course, your graces,” Asha said with a bow before she turned to leave the hall. Once she left, Daenerys turned to him and smiled happily, she had that look in his eye. “Come on, let’s head upstairs,”

“Sister, I think we should have a small council meeting first,” Rhaegar said quickly, Jon agreed and eventually, so did Daenerys. They made their way through the castle and up to the chamber of the painted table. Jon sat next to Daenerys and they waited for the room to fill. Tyrion, Rhaegar, Marwyn, Greyworm, Ser Jorah and Missandei were all present. Once it was filled, it was his father who spoke first.

“We have received a raven from the Night’s Watch. The Lord Commander Alliser Thorne says that they need urgent aid to deal with the threat of the Wildlings beyond the wall,”

“Wildlings?” Jon asked immediately and Rhaegar nodded. Jon had heard that small groups of Wildlings would somehow get past the wall and raid some of the northern towns and villages.

“Yes, Wildlings. The Lord Commander says that the Night’s watch went on a great ranging where they were attacked by a horde of Wildlings and that any aid that we can send would be helpful,”

“Don’t they have the wall to protect them?” Daenerys asked and Jon nodded.

“They do, but small groups of Wildlings have been known to get past the wall and raid,”

“Your graces, how do you wish to proceed?” Marwyn asked.

Jon was silent for a moment. They were about to begin their war for Westeros and they could not afford to split their forces, especially without knowing how many allies they would have,”

“You could send the sellswords. Daario and Brown Ben Plumm could take their forces North to man the wall,” Jorah suggested.

“I do not trust them to carry out our instructions. They would sooner sail back to Essos than they would stay on the wall and help,” Jon said quickly and Dany agreed.

“Marwyn and I could go. Maester Aemon is there and we are both old acquaintances with him. It would be nice to see him again,” Rhaegar said.

“No. We need you to stay here to attend the council with us and for the war that will likely follow. Then when the war is over and we have won, we can see what is happening in the North,” Jon said firmly. When Rhaegar had first told them that Maester Aemon was their great uncle, they had both
wanted to go to the wall to see him, however they realised they never had the time. They still didn’t have the time.

“Your grace, you are also supposed to protect the realm,” Rhaegar pointed out.

“I know, but we can’t divide all of our forces like this. Lord Stark had told me that in the past, the North would often send troops to support the Night’s watch in times like this. House Stark and House Umber would often work together to defeat these so called King’s-beyond-the-wall. They will have to do the same again,” Jon said firmly. Jon also realised that this could be a blessing in disguise, if the North was distracted, perhaps they would stay neutral.

“Marwyn, you can go. Take a ship and head to the wall and send reports back to us detailing what you find. If the situation is desperate. We will send more troops and bring our dragons if necessary. I agree with Jon, we need to prioritize our own war. We can’t separate our forces,” Daenerys said. Marwyn nodded, bowed and then left, likely to prepare himself to leave.

“We should also start preparations to leave for the council,” Dany said. “Daeron will stay here with Irri and Doreah. Missandei and Jhiqui will come accompany me,”

“I will also leave Caraxes,” Rhaegar said and Dany looked at him with a confused look. “Caraxes loves your son and I know the more protection around him, the more you will relax,” he said with a pointed look towards Dany who reluctantly seemed to agree.

“I think it would send a better message if all three of us came with our dragons,”

“Dany dearest, we have been over this. The two of you will rule. I will only be helping. It only took one dragon to raze Harrenhall, two will still be very impressive,” he said with a smile.

Jon looked at Daenerys for a moment and he gave her a quick look and she nodded.

“Tyrion. We have something for you,” Daenerys said lightly as she stood up and went to a cupboard near the back of the room.

“What is it?” he asked nervously as his eyes flicked back and forth between them.

“After the meeting with the Tyrell’s we came to a realization,” Jon began,

“We are missing a member for our small council,” Dany continued.

“We are missing a Hand,” Jon said as Dany unwrapped the special pin they had crafted.

“Your graces. You can’t name me hand. What if you need to offer that position to another House to win them to your side?”

“We are dragons,” Daenerys said firmly. “There will be plenty of people eager to join our small council. We want you to be our Hand. Your knowledge of Westeros, its houses and your political acumen is invaluable and you have proved your worth to us. We can think of no other person better suited for this office,”

She passed the pin to Jon and he walked over towards him. He smiled and slowly crouched down.

“Tyrion Lannister. We name you as our Hand,” he said as he pinned the pin onto his clothes. He stepped back and everyone in the room started for the clap for him. Jon looked a Tyrion who smiled at him.
“Thank you both, this really means a lot. I wish I had a sword to lay at your feet but sadly I don’t won one,” he said quietly once the applause had died down.

“We need your wits and loyalty, we already have plenty of swords.” Jon answered.

“Then I pledge them to you and will strive to prove myself worthy of your trust.” Tyrion replied solemnly.

Jon looked down at the map to where Harrenhall was. It sat in the center of Westeros, near the Gods Eye.

“Father, could you do me a favour?” he asked and Rhaegar nodded. “Could you look after Daeron for the rest of the day and for a bit of tomorrow?” he asked and Rhaegar looked at him curiously before nodding. Rhaegar looked at the map and then back at Jon and then he gave him a wide smile.

“Daeron and I will have a grand time. You two have fun,”

“Jon. What are you planning?” Dany asked curiously but Jon just gave her a sly smile.

“I have a surprise for you,” he said and he could see that she wanted to protest but she kept quiet. Jon left the chamber of the painted table and went down the hallway to their room. He turned and saw a bag on the bed containing some clothes that Missandei had prepared for them.

“Jon, did you pack my clothes?”

“No, Missandei packed them earlier. She’ll help father with Daeron while we’re gone,”

“So you’re conspiring with my handmaidens?” she asked and Jon gave her a cheeky grin.

He then grabbed her hand and led her away through the castle. He stopped briefly at the kitchens to pack some more food before he led her outside to the cliffs outside Dragonstone. He grabbed her by the hand and took her down to the beach where Vedros slept and he closed his eyes. When he opened them, Vedros landed in front of him and thankfully, Anogar soon followed her.

She looked at him with a confused look on her face and he quickly gave her a kiss.

“Follow us,” he said with a smile. She rolled her eyes at him before heading over to Anogar and did as he said. He climbed onto Vedros and then they took off into the cloudy afternoon sky. He turned and looked behind and he saw Anogar following them. He smiled to himself and led them away.

The Silver Prince

It was late in the afternoon and Rhaegar Targaryen was walking outside the castle of Dragonstone. He and Missandei were looking after Daeron and they decided to take him for outside for some sunshine and fresh air. Daeron was resting his little head on Rhaegar’s shoulder as he rubbed Daeron’s back gently to soothe his fussing.

“We should take him back inside,” Missandei said. “It gets cold in the evenings and we don’t want him to get sick”

Rhaegar nodded in agreement and began to lead them back towards the castle. As they walked a large shadow passed overhead and Rhaegar looked up to see Caraxes was flying low overhead. The
cream and gold dragon flew lower and lower before he landed gently in front of them, blocking their path. Rhaegar looked at his dragon curiously and tried to get him to move by using his mind but Caraxes stayed fixed in his place.

“Caraxes, we’d like to get inside. We don’t want the little prince to get cold,” but his dragon just gave a small grunt. Rhaegar stared into his golden eyes at a loss for what to do. However, it seemed like the Prince had other ideas and he started to squirm and cry in his arms.

“Do you want me to put you down?” Rhaegar asked him as he put him on the ground but that didn’t seem to calm the Prince.

“Perhaps, he’s hungry,” Missandei suggested. Rhaegar was about to answer but Caraxes made a low whining noise before slowly making his way towards the Prince. Missandei shot out to grab him and she quickly scooped Daeron up in her arms. However this action only caused Daeron to cry even louder, suddenly Rhaegar understood.

“Give him to me. I think I know what he wants,” he said as he held his arms out. Once Missandei passed Daeron to him, he slowly walked forward towards Caraxes. As he walked closer, he noticed that Daeron began to stop crying. Once he was a few steps away, he watched as Daeron held out one of his tiny yet chubby hands to touch Caraxes’s snout.

Once Daeron’s hand touched the snout, Caraxes made an unusual sound, almost like the purr of a cat and when Daeron heard this he started to giggle. This interaction continued for a few moments before Caraxes seemingly got what he came for and then he took off with a loud flap of his wings.

“How did you know that would happen?” Missandei asked.

“I didn’t. I just had a feeling,” he said as they entered the main doors to the castle. “I must say that I am confused. A dragon can only have one rider and I have already ridden Caraxes. I’m not sure why Caraxes is so interested in Daeron. Jon and Daenerys have told me that Vedros and Anogar only acknowledge Daeron whilst Caraxes seems to be guarding him,”

“Perhaps because these dragons were born in Valyria they are different and are able to have multiple riders?” Missandei asked.

“Perhaps,” Rhaegar said although he was not really sure. He would have to read the books from Valyria again later.

“Do you want to ride my dragon,” he asked Daeron as he held him up. “Do you want to ride Caraxes, my prince?” he asked as he kissed him lightly on his head.

“Wait your turn sweet prince,” he said as they reached the small hall where Daeron usually played. “One day I will pass and then Caraxes will be yours,” he placed Daeron on the carpet in the room and handed him a few toys. Rhaegar had found these toys in a cabinet in the nursery, he had brought them to Dragonstone many years ago for Rhaenys and Aegon.

“How long do Dragons live for?” Missandei asked.

“They live much longer than us men. Balerion the Black Dread lived for nearly 200 years. Perhaps these dragons will live even longer,”

“Dragons lay eggs, do they not?” she asked.

“Yes they do. We have a book about it actually. Marwyn was studying it so I haven’t had a chance to read it yet,”
They sat in a comfortable silence as they watched Daeron play with his toys.

“He’s a sweet little boy, isn’t he,” Missandei said as they watched him.

“Yes, he is. He reminds me of my own children,” Rhaegar said sadly. In truth, he had only gotten to watch Rhaenys grow. Aegon had been murdered when he was only a babe and he had no idea that Jon was even alive until they met in Pentos.

“You must be so proud of them,” Missandei said after a moment.

“Of who?”

“The King and Queen,”

“Of course, I truly believe in them. They will be good rulers to this land, the type Westeros needs in the coming years,” Rhaegar said. The door to the hall opened and Tyrion walked in.

“Mind if I join you?” he asked and Rhaegar quickly nodded. Tyrion crossed over and sat at the table with them.

“It seems that the prince hasn’t noticed me. He usually starts to fuss as soon as I get anywhere near him,”

Rhaegar laughed at that.

“He’s probably gotten used to you by now. Although, we can test this theory,” he said as he scooped Daeron up from the floor. Rhaegar lifted him high in the air and Daeron began to laugh and babble with happiness.

“Come on, let’s go by Tyrion,” he said as he kissed him softly. Tyrion was looking at the babe nervously as Rhaegar walked over to him. Tyrion held his arms out and Rhaegar gently passed Daeron to him.

“Now Daeron. No crying,” he firmly told the babe. He was not sure if he heard him because Daeron was just staring at Tyrion intensely, almost as if he was unsure of what to do. Rhaegar watched patiently as Tyrion held him. Slowly but surely Tyrion began to relax and he held Daeron more comfortably instead of at arm’s length.

“No don’t cry,” he heard Tyrion say frantically as Daeron began to scrunch up his face. “We were doing so well,” Rhaegar laughed and then held his arms out and Tyrion quickly passed him over. Rhaegar rocked him for a few moments before he settled down again.

“Are you tired?” Rhaegar asked him as he rocked him. “I think you’re tired that’s all,”

“I think it’s time for his nap,” Missandei said. “I can take him upstairs to put him down if you like,”

“That would be nice,” Rhaegar said as he handed Daeron over.

“The council is in a few weeks,” Tyrion said. “Who are you most looking forward to seeing?”

“None of them,” Rhaegar said immediately and this was the truth.

“Okay, which ones do you least want to see?” Tyrion said with a small laugh. Rhaegar thought on this for a moment.

“It’s close between your father and Robert Baratheon,” Rhaegar said after a moment. “Robert took
my family’s throne and your father murdered Elia and my children. Probably your father,”

Tyrion nodded slowly. “I expected that. You forgot to mention my brother,”

“I did not forget Ser Jaime Lannister. I trusted him with the protection of my wife and children and he betrayed me, but I have no doubt that it was Lord Tywin who gave the orders,” Rhaegar said bitterly.

“Do you know why my brother killed your father?”

“I assume that Lord Tywin commanded him to do so,” Rhaegar said bitterly.

“No. That’s not it,” Tyrion said and Rhaegar looked at him suspiciously.

“Do you know what Wildfire is?”

Rhaegar nodded quickly. Everyone in his family knew about wildfire. Especially after prince Aerion Targaryen death when he drank a cup of it, with the foolish hope of transforming into a dragon. Not to mention the Tragedy at Summerhall where he was born. His father had an unhealthy fascination with the substance. During the latter years of his reign, the court had been filled with pyromancers willing to meet need his needs.

“After the Battle of the Bells, the rebellion became very serious. Your father had given the order for caches of wildfire to be placed underneath the city. Under the Sept of Baelor, the cellars of the Red Keep, the stables and so on. After your defeat at the Trident, Jaime said your father became even more paranoid. He began seeing traitors everywhere. Eventually my father arrived outside the city gates, claiming that he would protect the city. Of course, that was a lie and we all know how that turned out. My father’s army began to brutally sack the city and that is when your father gave the order to light the wildfire caches,”

“He meant to burn down the city,” Rhaegar said horrified

“Yes. He meant to have the greatest funeral pyre of all. Jaime told me that he said let Robert be the king of ashes and charred bones,” Tyrion said quietly. Rhaegar ran his hair through his hands. He knew that his father was mad but he never imagined him committing such a horrible act.

“I should have stopped him. I tried to stop him,”

“How. You were his son, you couldn’t overrule him,”

“I meant to call a council of lords to overthrow him,” Rhaegar told him. “It would have been at that Tourney at Harrenhal, believe it or not.”

“Really? What happened? Why didn’t you call it?”

“From my conversations with Lyanna, I learned that the lords were not only planning to overthrow my father but replace my family’s dynasty as well. Lord Rickard Stark, Lord Tully, Lord Arryn all stood to gain more by having Robert Baratheon on the throne instead of me. If I had called a council they would have probably exposed me to my father which would have resulted in my death and further weaken the already fragile position of our house in the realm,”

“I don’t understand,” Tyrion said.

“Robert Baratheon was betrothed to Lyanna Stark. Remember, Robert was the closest kin to House Targaryen and in the event of our house’s extinction, he would be the lawful heir. If Robert gained
the throne, then it would mean that Lyanna would become Queen which would please Lord Rickard whose grandchildren would one day rule the Seven Kingdoms.”

“Brandon Stark was going to marry Catelyn Tully and this meant that Hoster Tully would be not only be able to have greater influence in the court due to his daughter being good sister to the Queen but also his own grandchildren would one day rule the North.”

“Lord Rickard brought Jon Arryn into his plans by fostering Ned Stark with Robert Baratheon in the Eyrie, Jon Arryn was a father figure to Robert Baratheon and he would have been the most logical choice for Hand of the King.”

“So, as you can see all these lords stood to gain a lot more by supporting Robert instead of me for King. I was already married to Elia and would have filled the court with my own people,”

“I did not know that. That makes a great deal of sense. Although, I am surprised that my father did not try to get in on this conspiracy,” Tyrion said after a moment.

“He did. When his scheme to wed me and your sister failed, he started to reach out to other lords to create powerful alliances. I heard rumors that he tried to betroth Jaime to Lysa Tully,” Rhaegar said and Tyrion slowly nodded.

“Does hearing about your father’s heinous actions change how you feel about my brother?” Tyrion asked after a few moments.

Rhaegar thought long and hard on this. If what Tyrion said was true, and he was inclined to believe that his father was more than capable of attempting such a horrid act, then Jaime Lannister had saved an entire city and countless lives, but he had also allowed his own father's dogs to brutally murder Elia and their children.

“Why didn’t he tell anyone the truth?” Rhaegar asked,

“He said that when Lord Stark found him, he had already judged him guilty and nothing would have changed his mind. Also, my brother had his Lannister pride and was not about to beg before the Wolf and Stag for forgiveness for an act that they both wanted to perform themselves.”

Rhaegar nodded slowly.

“I asked Lord Stark to meet with me, the night before the Battle of the Trident. I wanted to tell him the truth about his sister but he did not show up. For years, I have wondered why he wouldn’t even give me a chance to explain myself. How could he refuse my attempt at a parley that would have saved the thousands of lives who would perish in battle? But now, I think I know understand. He had already judged me guilty, just like he did with your brother,”

“Your family planned to kill you,” Rhaegar said after a few moments “Are you ready to see them again?”

“Yes,” Tyrion said immediately. “My father and my sister hate me and they were the ones who came up with the plot. They did not tell Jamie, he was not part of it,”

“So you’re on good terms with your brother?” he asked and he heard Tyrion give out a sigh before reaching for his wine.

“Jaime was not part of the plan, but he did not try and save me either when he discovered the plot. My father threatened him. If Jaime tried to save me, he would have him sent to the wall,”
“Impossible. Your brother is part of the Kingsguard, they serve for life. Lord Tywin is a powerful man but he has no authority over the Kingsguard,” Rhaegar said immediately.

“Yes, but the crown is heavily indebted to my father and he said that he would wipe that debt in return for that particular favor,”

Rhaegar looked at him skeptically,

“He was bluffing, I remember the way he used to talk about his golden twins, and he even resigned as Hand of the King once Jaime was appointed to the Kingsguard. He was furious about losing his heir. Your father always wanted Jaime to take his place as next Lord of Casterly Rock. Most certainly, he would cashed in that favor to have Jaime released from the Kingsguard vows rather than send him to wall,”

“Exactly, you know that he was bluffing. I know that he was bluffing, but Jaime didn’t. He was never good at using his brain and wits, he always preferred to solve his problems with his sword,” Tyrion said with a loud sigh. “The one time Jaime needed to use his brain and think, he didn’t,”

Rhaegar was quiet for a moment as he regarded Tyrion.

“I don’t think you hate him,” he said quietly. “I think you hate the fact that he didn’t save you. I think this failure hurt you the most and so you’re turning that hurt into anger,”

“With all due respect, this isn’t the whole story. There is plenty more bad blood between me and my family,’’ Tyrion muttered as he took another sip. “But that is a story for another day. I already told your son a part of it this morning and I have no desire to retell that tale,” he said as he stood up to leave.

“Don’t drink too much Tyrion, we still need you sober,” Rhaegar said as he left. Once Tyrion was gone, Rhaegar stood and slowly paced the room. What he had learned about his father had horrified him and it only made him realise how much he had failed by not doing more to stop him. He was a prince and one day, those would have been his people, yet he had been oblivious to his father’s evil schemes. He would have to speak to Jaime to find out the truth about the sack. Jaime had saved an entire city and Rhaegar could not believe that he would have willingly let those men murder his family.

His thoughts then turned to Lord Stark. He was still immensely grateful towards him for the way that he had raised Jon. He could not have asked for a better son. However, Rhaegar would have to meet him to find out what type of man he truly was. He still had not forgotten what Jon had told him about the disgusting way Lady Catelyn had treated him and most importantly, he still had not forgotten the fact that Ned had rejected his request for a meeting the night before the Trident. Perhaps if he had, then they would not be in this situation today.

He sighed in frustration and decided to head upstairs to check on Daeron. He would clear the air with Lord Stark at the council.

The Mother of Dragons

Daenerys and Anogar followed Jon and Vedros as they led them away from Dragonstone. It was mid-afternoon and the skies were cloudy. He led them North for a few minutes, before taking a sharp banking turn to the west. Truthfully, Daenerys had no idea where he was taking her. He flew above
the clouds so they were not seen by those on the ground and this meant that Daenerys had no idea where she was.

As she was flying she took time to reflect on these last few weeks. The failure to secure the Tyrell’s had stuck with her for a while and it was not helped by the feeling of isolation of being on an island. The Tyrell’s had raised an interesting point, the original Aegon the Conqueror had two wives and she had read that Aegon only married Visenya out of duty, perhaps this would be the same with Jon and Margaery. She had read that Aegon would spend 10 nights with Rhaenys for everyone with Visenya, although now that she thought about it, she realised that that would not work with her. She would never let Margaery bed him alone. Jon was hers.

She also remembered that the Tyrells had failed to mention that Visenya had caused a succession war when she had helped her son, Maegor to usurp the throne. Daenerys knew that even if she and Margaery became good friends, this was always a possibility. People would always look to turn their children against each other to increase their own power.

She pushed those thoughts from her mind, Jon said that he had a plan for the Tyrells and he trusted him completely. Instead, she thought of the Greyjoy meeting. Having a positive meeting with Asha Greyjoy had lifted her spirits and it made her hopeful of the council that was coming soon.

She saw Vedros start to make her descent and Anogar quickly followed. They dove quickly through the clouds and once they were on the other side, Dany finally had a clue where they were.

The first thing that she saw was the blackened ruins of Harrenhall, the towers were tall, much higher than any she had ever seen but they had not been tall enough to stop the power of the dragons. The castle was huge, much bigger than Dragonstone and she knew that it would be a good place for the council. Vedros flew past Harrenhal and over a large beautiful lake. The sun was lower in the sky and its waters were glimmering red and gold, bright as a sheet of beaten copper. Vedros flew lower and lower until she landed in a clearing in the middle of an island and Anogar followed her. Daenerys realised that this must be the Gods Eye.

She saw that Jon had dismounted and was now waiting for her.

“Come on love. I have something special planned,” and he held out his hand and started to lead her away.

The clearing that they landed in was surrounded by trees. She saw large sentinel trees along with smaller pine and oak trees. Their feet crunched on the fallen leaves that lay along a path that seemed to be leading them up a small incline. As they walked, Dany listened to the wind whispering through the trees, it sounded different, magical. She saw little birds fluttering through the trees and chirping to each other and filling the air with their music.

They finally reached the crest of the hill and Dany let out a loud gasp. They were at another clearing but this one was different. They were at a rock lined pool and in the center of the pool was the most unique tree Daenerys had ever seen. The tree was huge, with a bone white trunk and a blood red canopy of leaves.

“It’s a weirwood tree,” she whispered and she knew what Jon wanted to do.

“Come on, my love,” He led her along a natural path made from stones and rocks to the middle of the pool where the weirwood stood tall. She reached out her hand to touch the tree, as she ran her fingers along the wood and found that it was smooth but cold under her fingers.

Dany turned back to Jon and saw that he was busy unpacking one of the bags.
“Are you building a tent?” she asked and he nodded.

“We’ll need somewhere to sleep tonight. I don’t want you to get cold,” he said. She watched him work quickly before she walked over to the pool and dipped her hands in the water and splashed some over her face. The water was refreshingly cool and she decided to take off her shoes and dip her feet in. She looked up and realised that they would be able to swim under the sun and the stars. This truly was a special place.

She heard him get up and then she turned to face him.

“You brought me here to marry me,”

“Properly this time. In front of my gods,” he said firmly as he took her hand and led her to the tree. “In the future, we will probably have to do this again. In front of a septon and witnesses otherwise it won’t be official, but this time is not for anyone else. It is for you and me,” he said as he reached a particular spot on the tree. She looked up at the tree and saw that a face had been carved into the tree. Its face was long and melancholy and the deep cuts of its eyes were filled with red sap that looked like dried blood.

“This is a heart tree, it’s older than the one in Winterfell and perhaps it’s one of the oldest this side of the wall. My parents were married here. My father told me how to find this place and I knew that this place would be perfect for us,” he said,

“Your parents were married here?” she asked.

“No one but that does not matter. You will give yourself to me and I will give myself to you, just as it always has been, just as it always will be. I am yours and you are mine. Anything else will be a lie meant to please others,” he said as he knelt in front of the tree. Dany knelt next to him and waited for him to speak.

“Old Gods hear my vow. I Aegon Targaryen, Jon Snow vow to take Daenerys Targaryen as my wife. I will shield her, protect her and love her from this day until the end of my days. I swear it by the blood of the first men that flows through my veins alongside the blood of old Valyria,” he said in a low voice.

“Old gods hear my vow. I Daenerys Targaryen vow to take Aegon Targaryen, Jon snow as my husband. I will shield him, protect him and love him from this day until the end of my days. I swear it by the blood of the dragon and the blood of old Valyria that runs through my veins,” she in a clear voice. She stayed silent for a few moments, waiting for Jon to take the lead. She realised that they were supposed to pray, so she did.

They sealed their vows with a long kiss under the shade of the heart tree. Afterwards she grabbed him by the hand and led him away from the tree and out to a piece of grass that was not covered by the canopy. She kissed him softly and inhaled his familiar musky, leathery scent. Her fingers went to his clothes and she slowly started to undress him whilst he did the same to her.

His body was warm and familiar and she pushed him down onto his back and straddled him. She was wet and ready and she easily took his length inside of her. She rode him gently, rolling her hips back and forth and loving the feeling of him inside of her. Dany looked into his grey eyes and then leaned down to kiss him gently, capturing his bottom lip between hers like she loved to do.

She broke the kiss and pressed her forehead against his “I love you,” she whispered.

“I love you too,” he whispered as he kissed her. Jon then gently flipped her over and put her onto
her back. The grass was soft and cool beneath her skin and she felt it gently scratch her as her body moved in time with his thrusts. She closed her eyes and just focused on the feeling of him moving inside of her. Dany felt him plant a kiss and then she opened her lids to find him looking at her. His lovely grey eyes that she knew so well, filled with nothing but love.

She felt her heart swell with happiness and he leaned down to kiss her. She felt her pleasure approaching, building and bubbling deep inside of her. His thrusts picked up in speed and started to hit that special spot deep inside of her. She came violently and cried out his name as her walls clenched around his throbbing length. She heard him growl and shudder as he emptied himself inside of her. Spurt after spurt flooded into her, filling her perfectly. He rested his sweaty forehead on her breasts before he gently pulled out of her and rolled onto his back. She instinctively cuddled into his side, again amazed at how well their bodies fit together.

The sun had set and she could see the stars in the sky above him. She knew that tomorrow they would have to head back to oversee the preparations and head to Harrenhal but for now she was content to lay in Jon’s arms, listen to his gentle breathing and look out onto the stars.

Whatever happened at the council, they would always have each other, and she knew that for certain.

Chapter End Notes

The next chapter is called 'Harrenhal' and it should be out Thursday next week. It's the first part of the 3 part council sequence

As always, let me know what you think. Comments are always appreciated, especially the longer ones

Thanks for reading
Sleepy
The Lord of Winterfell

Ned Stark led his party south towards Harrenhal. He had decided to take his wife, Robb, Theon and several of the Northern Lords with him to the council. Lord Manderly had sent his son, Ser Wylis in his place along with Lord Bolton, Lady Mormont and Lord Glover who had been selected by him to attend the council. Ned had decided against taking all of his bannermen, some needed to remain behind in the North to protect it and muster their forces if the talks failed. He had also brought 2,000 men with him as per Robert’s request. Ned was unsure of how this meeting would go, so having some men of his own was a precaution that he knew he had to take. Ser Rodrick would remain behind in Winterfell to help Bran rule the North in his and Robb’s absence.

They had been travelling for several weeks and their progress was not helped by the frequent autumn rains. These rains meant that the Kingsroad had been reduced to a bog in places which slowed their progress. Ned had expected this to change once they got further south past Moat Cailin but even the weather in the south was starting to grow colder. Ned looked up at the sky and saw that there were some clouds spotted here and there but the rest of the sky was clear.

They had passed the Crossroads Inn a few days prior where they had found a message awaiting them from Hoster Tully, he said that he would be unable to attend the council as he was ill. As a result of that, he would be sending his son Edmure and his brother Ser Brynden in his stead. Edmure was his heir and he would have the power to act in Hoster’s name. However, Edmure was not waiting for them at the inn, he must have continued on towards Harrenhal. Ned thought that this turn of events was fortuitous. Catelyn would have an easier time convincing her younger brother to fight with the North, on whichever side they chose.

They had set out early in the morning in order to arrive at Harrenhal that day. Ned knew that the castle wasn’t far from the Crossroads Inn and he was eager to finally get there. He wondered which Lords would attend, he knew that the King certainly would be there along with Tywin Lannister. The Reach lords would also be likely to attend. He had received a raven from Mace Tyrell conveying interest in forging an alliance between their houses. Catelyn and Robb were quite intrigued by this offer, it would be a great boon to have the Reach allied with the North especially if they were headed for war. Ned was unsure of whether the Greyjoys or the Dornish would attend. The Dornish never usually involved themselves with the affairs of the other kingdoms since the
rebellion so Ned would not be surprised if they remained absent from this meeting.

He was also eager but slightly nervous to see Jon again. So much had changed since the last time they had spoken. Ned knew that Jon was not the same man anymore. His experiences had certainly changed him but were these changes for the better? Would it be a change that Ned could live with? He was unsure about that and that was what made him nervous. He remembered the stories they had heard about the burning of Volantis, it had been a truly horrible act, one that Ned would need to understand before deciding on which side to back. Perhaps, he could convince Jon to return to the east as that would be the best way to avoid a war and maintain peace. Robert could stay the King of Westeros while Jon would be able to rule his new eastern kingdom.

They crested a hill and finally saw Harrenhal looming in front of them. He turned to Robb who was riding alongside him. His direwolf, Greywind had run off ahead of their group. Robb had a look of amazement on his face at the sheer size of the castle. Ned found that the castle still looked as daunting as ever.

“Aye, I know that feeling,” Ned said to him. “I was also amazed the first time I saw it. Harren the Black thought that this castle would be his legacy, he thought it would be the greatest fortress ever built. I suppose he got his wish, it’s still the largest castle in Westeros but it is impossible to maintain,”

“And now it is half a ruin,” Robb said quietly and Ned nodded. “Aegon the Conqueror did this with one dragon,”

“Yes, he did,”

“And Jon has three,” Robb said as he looked out at the castle. Ned remembered that it had five towers, the largest was the Kingspyre tower. It had been given that name because that was where Harren and his sons had perished from the fire of Aegon’s dragon.

“How big is it compared to Winterfell?” Robb asked.

“I heard that it takes up three times as much the land area but I can’t remember exactly,” Ned said as they continued to ride towards the castle. As he got closer he could see that the royal banner had been raised from the tallest tower and it was fluttering proudly in the wind, confirming that at the least the royal party was here. Ned also saw lines of tents on the western side of the castle, these would likely belong to King Robert’s forces.

They rode closer to the castle and they even passed over the grounds where the tourney was held all those years ago. Special stands had been constructed to hold all the people that had been invited to the tourney. He still remembered that day vividly. Robert had been joking with Jon Arryn as Prince Rhaegar had circled the field after unhorsing Ser Barristan in the final tilt. The crown prince had worn the same armor that he died in, gleaming black plate with the three headed dragon made of rubies wrought in its chest. Ned remembered the moment when all the smiles died. It was the moment that Prince Rhaegar had urged his horse past his wife, Princess Elia Martell to lay the crown of the Queen of love and beauty in Lyanna’s lap. Ned could still remember it, it was a crown of winter roses, as blue as frost. Winter roses had been Lyanna’s favorite flower and a symbol of the North.

If only Rhaegar did not crown Lyanna. If only he had done his duty then all of this could have been avoided. Lyanna would have married Robert and the rebellion would never have broken out. He could have easily crowned his wife but instead he had done something foolish and as a result, the realm had bled. Thousands of people died because Rhaegar Targaryen did not do his duty.
Had Rhaegar done his duty, Robert would have married Lyanna and he would have changed for her. During their time together in Kings Landing, Ned had observed Robert and he saw traces of that young man that he became best friends with in the Vale. When they left for war in the Vale, Robert became more and more like his old self. He was laughing and making jokes like he used to and it was a sight that warmed his heart. Ned came to the conclusion that it was his marriage to Cersei that was causing Robert the most trouble. If he had been married to Lyanna this would not have been the case, it all would have been fine.

As they got closer to the castle, Ned gave orders for the majority of his men to start making up their camp near the northern banks of the God's Eye close to the troops from the Stormlands. Whilst his host of men broke off to make their camp, he and the lords continued to ride on towards the castle. As they rode in, he could see the Golden Rose of House Tyrell on a few banners, he saw the Golden Lion of House Lannister on others. Surprisingly, the Golden Kraken of House Greyjoy was also present which confirmed that at least someone from the Iron Isles was in attendance. He also saw plenty of other banners, confirming that even some of the minor lords were in attendance. Ned saw the sigils of Houses Hightower and Tarly amongst those in the Reach camp.

“Catelyn, which Riverlords have attended?”

“I see the banners of House Bracken, Blackwood, Darry, Mooton, Mallister and Piper,” she said. “Oh and House Frey as well,” she added pointing to an awkward looking set of tents. Ned stored this information away for later, it would be important to know which Lords were attending and which weren’t.

They approached the castle gatehouse, which itself was as large as Winterfell’s Great Keep and then they entered one of the castle’s numerous courtyards. Ned looked around and eventually they were greeted by the Castellan.

“Eddard Stark. Lord of Winterfell, Warden of the North and Hand of the King,” Ned introduced himself to the man.

“Of course, my Lord. Rooms have been prepared for you and your wife. Will your vassal lords be staying with you in the castle?” he asked as he offered them all some bread and a cup of wine which Ned gratefully accepted. At least, guest right was being observed.

“Yes. They will also need separate rooms,” Ned replied and the Castellan nodded. Ned hoped that their room would be as far away from the King as possible, he would have to tell him the truth today and he was not sure how Robert would handle it.

“I will send word to the King, letting him know of your arrival,” the castellan said and Ned forced a smile onto his face.

“Thank you that would be most kind. Which other lords have arrived as well?” Ned asked as he dismounted his horse, Robb Catelyn and the other lords followed him. A few stable boys came forward and then led the horses away to the stables.

“Lord Lannister, Tyrell, Baratheon, Tully and some of their bannermen are already here, my Lord,” the Castellan said which confirmed what Ned had seen earlier.

“What of the Vale?” Ned asked,

“A few noble houses from the Vale have arrived. Notably Houses Egen, Royce and Corbray,” the Castellan said. Ned thanked him for his help and then the castellan walked away into the castle, likely to find the King.
“Ned. Will you tell the King now?” Catelyn whispered. Ned looked at her face and saw that she looked very worried.

“I don’t have any choice. Jon will arrive soon and the Lords will ask him where he has been for the last 18 years. He will tell them the truth,”

“You don’t know that Ned, he could lie. He’s changed,”

“I do know,” he said with a sigh. “All the Lords think that he is Viserys. The only way to prove them wrong is if he tells them the truth,” Ned told her, he realised that his words did little to calm her down but he had no choice, he simply could not lie anymore.

He had debated telling the Northern Lords before he travelled south but in the end he had decided against it. There was always the chance that someone could send a raven south to the King and then Ned would not be able to tell him in person which would only make the situation worse.

“Perhaps, we should not stay in the same part of the castle as him. We don’t know what could happen in the middle of the night,” Cat suggested.

“No, don’t be silly Catelyn. Robert is a good man, he is not a butcher. He will sort out any issues that we have the proper way,” Ned said firmly. Still, Catelyn did not look assured.

“Go and find Edmure and take Robb with you. War will be upon us whatever happens, we will need him on our side. I will meet with the King alone,” he told her. She gave him a quick kiss before dutifully heading off to leave. Ned noticed that Lord Bolton was watching him but he didn’t have time to worry about the Lord of the Dreadfort. Truthfully, Ned had not wanted to bring him to the council, but the Bolton’s provided a lot of troops and he was one of his most powerful bannermen. It also would have been safer to have Lord Bolton here where he could watch him, there was no telling what trouble he would cause if he left him back in Winterfell with his family.

He had spent the journey south debating the best way to tell Robert the truth. He decided that the best way to go about it, would be to ease Robert into it, like he was explaining something to Rickon.

“Lord Stark,” he heard a voice call. He turned and saw that the voice came from Lord Mace Tyrell.

“Lord Tyrell,” he said with a smile

“It is nice to see you at this council. I have not seen you in years. I hope you received my message,” Mace said and Ned smiled. He was clearly eager for this alliance but over the years Ned had learned that sometimes it was better to be quiet and wait for the other person to speak in order to truly gauge the situation.

“I was hoping we could have a private conversation at some point. I hear you have an unmarried son and daughter,” he said and Ned smiled, and this one was genuine. It seemed that the Tyrell’s were indeed willing to enter negotiations for a marriage alliance. Before he could respond, he heard the King call out to him.

“Ned!” Ned turned and saw Robert quickly walking across the courtyard towards him. He noticed that he was flanked by his squire and Ser Barristan. Lord Tyrell bowed and walked away, realising that he was not wanted in this conversation.

“Your grace,” he said. He felt his mouth going dry so he decided to take a drink of water from his skin. Robert had changed in the past few months, he had continued to lose weight and was starting to regain his old fighting form.
“How many men did you bring? I brought over 5,000” he said gleefully.

“2,000 as per your request,”

“Where is your daughter?” he asked.

“Sansa?” he asked and the King nodded. “Why would she be here?”

“To marry my son of course,” he said as if it were the most obvious thing in the world. “War is coming and we need to secure the line of succession. I brought him here specifically for that purpose. You did the same thing with Cat at the start of my war,”

Ned looked at him and he realised that there would be no way to ease into it.

“There is something I need to tell you,” Ned said and Robert eyed him warily.

“What is it?”

Ned looked around the courtyard and saw that Roose was still watching him, he wanted to move someplace more private but then he realised that perhaps having witnesses would be a good thing. Robert would not try to kill him as that would automatically lose him the support of the North.

Ned spied an empty area on the opposite side of the courtyard that would suit his intentions.

“Your grace, how about somewhere more quiet,” he said as he gestured to the corner. Robert looked at him warily before nodding and letting Ned lead him over to the spot. Ned turned and saw that Ser Barristan was walking a few steps behind. Once they reached the corner Robert looked at him impatiently. Ned swallowed nervously before he spoke,

“Do you remember after the war, I left the capital to find my sister,” he began and Robert nodded.

“I found her in a tower in Dorne. She was guarded by three knights of the Kingsguard, Ser Oswell Whent, Ser Arthur Dayne and Ser Gerold Hightower,” Ned said slowly and again Robert nodded. He was staring at him intensely and his eyes were a deep, striking blue.

“I found Lyanna in that tower, dying of a fever,”

“Ned. why are you telling me this?” he said and Ned could see that the intensity from his gaze was gone, he was now looking at him nervously.

“Riders approaching!” He heard a loud voice shout and Ned cursed his luck.

“The Dragonspawn might be here,” Robert said and he saw his face grow hard and determined. “Whatever this is, it can wait,” he said as he stomped away. Ned shook his head, this really couldn’t wait. He had kept this secret for over 18 years, it could not wait any longer.

He sighed in frustration and then went to follow the King. Robb and Catelyn had returned to the courtyard and they quickly fell into line behind him. They all filled out of the gatehouse and turned towards the east where they saw riders approaching.

“Those are Targaryen banners!” someone shouted. Ned looked closely and saw that this was true, the three headed red dragon on a black field was slowly becoming more and more visible. Catelyn grabbed his hand nervously and Ned gave hers a reassuring squeeze. Jon was finally here, after all these months he would see him again and this caused his nervousness to return.

Ned turned his head from side to side and saw that nearly everyone in the castle had come out to see
their arrival. Some in the back were being lifted onto others shoulders to get a better view, Ned even saw people in the towers and on the battlements.

“Where are the dragons?” Robb asked, barely able to hide the excitement in his voice.

“Let’s hope they left those monsters behind,” Catelyn whispered.

The Targaryen host was slowly coming towards them, seemingly in no particular hurry. Ned noticed that they did not bring a large host, perhaps only 1,500 men in total. Ned knew from their copper skin and the spears and the shields that they carried that these must be their Unsullied. They were flanked by a cavalry force that could only be their Dothraki horselords. Even from this distance he could see their weapons dangling by their sides. Robert seemed to grow impatient and he started to stomp towards them. He led the royal forces down towards them so that they would meet with Harrenhal behind them and the Godseye to their right. Ned felt a cold breeze on him as they made their approach. He pulled his cloak tightly around him as he followed the King.

The man in the lead of the host was on a large midnight black horse and he wore a hood on his head to hide his face. That must be Jon, Ned thought. Although, he was not sure why he would need to hide his appearance. Ned saw a familiar face in their party. The man was riding a brown horse and he looked like Ser Jorah Mormont. Ned scowled, why was Jon keeping company with a criminal like him?

Robert stepped forward and Ned moved to follow him. He was still his Hand so he had to appear at his side. Several of the Kingsguard also walk forward, he saw Ser Barristan, Ser Jaime, Ser Arys and Ser Meryn all begin to form a protective guard around their King. Prince Joffrey stood near Lord Tywin and they too started to walk forward. Everyone else stood behind, it seemed like everyone was collectively holding their breath.

The Targaryen host was finally here. The man in the lead slowly dismounted his horse and walked slowly towards them. The man wore leathers and a red and black doublet but he would not remove his hood. Ned looked at the man, he was tall and possessed Jon’s lithe build, could it truly be Jon? Ned also saw the sword strapped to his waist, the handle was encrusted with jewels that sparkled brightly in the sunlight.

“You stand in the presence of Robert of House Baratheon. King of the Andals, the Rhoynar and the First Men. Lord of the Seven Kingdoms, and Protector of the Realm,” the herald called out, “Impressive titles though you have no true right to them,” the man said in a low voice. The hood covered his face so you could only see his lips and a part of his nose.

“Viserys fucking Targaryen,” Robert spat once they were a few feet apart. “Where is your whore of a sister? I don’t see her,”

“Cousin Robert,” the man said, Ned could faintly remember the voice. “Queen Daenerys will be along shortly,”

“Did the bitch not travel with you?” Robert asked and the man just gave out a loud sigh.

“The Queen has other means of travel. She will be along with the King shortly,”

“The King? Then who the hell are you?” Robert asked angrily

“I’m offended,” the man said and it sounded like he was barely able to contain his laugh. “Do you not remember my voice cousin? It seems not. Perhaps you will remember my face,” and then the man pulled back his hood and Ned gasped loudly.
It was Rhaegar Targaryen.

Standing the in the flesh only a few feet in front of him, Ned wanted to reach out and touch him. To see if he was real and not merely a ghost or something that he imagined. Ned studied his face, the man looked exactly like him. He had the classic Valyrian silver-gold hair, his eyes were a dark shade of indigo. His face bore the few wrinkles of his age but even they could not eclipse his ethereal beauty. He tore his eyes away from Rhaegar to look around, to see if anyone else saw what he did.

Ser Barristan had fallen to his knees in front of him. Lord Tywin had his mouth open in shock and all the other older lords had similar looks of surprise on their face. Only Lady Olenna Tyrell and some of the Reach lords did not look surprised to see Prince Rhaegar. He turned and saw Robb and Catelyn. Catelyn was ghostly white but Robb looked confused and Ned realised that he had no idea who he was. Ned heard plenty of whispering from the crowd and he saw some of the Lords and knights pointing towards Rhaegar.

“I fucking killed you,” Robert said into the silence and Rhaegar only cocked his head to the side and simply smiled.

“I don’t think you did cousin. I am very much alive,” Rhaegar said with a smirk.

“Who the hell is he?” Prince Joffrey asked loudly into the silence.

“I am Rhaegar of House Targaryen, the Prince of Dragonstone, Son of Aerys Targaryen and Rhaella Targaryen,” he called loudly and Ned heard several loud gasps whisper through the crowd. Those that didn’t know already, now knew. Rhaegar even held his hand up, waved and smiled at the crowd.

His eyes met Ned’s and he smiled. Ned scowled at him, he caused this entire mess when he ran away his sister. He survived and she died and he comes back and just smiles? Did he think that this was some sort of joke?

Rhaegar noticed this and his smile disappeared, he instead looked at him curiously before turning back to Robert. As Ned was behind Robert, he could not see his face but he saw his hand. His hand was on the pommel of his sword.

“I would not do that if I were you. We are here for a peaceful talk after all,” Rhaegar said to Robert.

“I killed you. I swear I killed you,” Robert repeated but Ned could tell that he didn’t even believe those words.

“You were close. So very close. Did you ever find my body?” and Robert shook his head. “Then how did you know I was dead?” he asked in a mocking voice.

“So you have been hiding for the past 18 years? I always knew you were a coward,” Robert sneered. “You hid from Brandon Stark and you have been hiding from me,”

“I was not hiding. I was waiting for the right time to make my return and that time is now,”

“You said that you are not the King. Where is he?” Lord Tywin asked as he stepped forward.

“The man that ordered the rape and murder of my wife and children finally steps forward,” Rhaegar said with a frown. “My father trusted you, and you betrayed him,”

“Your father was a madman,” Robert sneered. “He deserved what he got,”
“He did not deserve to be stabbed in the back by those sworn to protect him,” Rhaegar said with a glare at Ser Jaime. “I trusted you with my family, you were supposed to protect them. Instead you let your father's dogs into the castle to butcher them.”

Ned looked at Ser Jaime and he saw that his usual arrogant look had been replaced by something else, Jaime Lannister looked almost apologetic and Ned was shocked.

“Where is Viserys?” Robert demanded.

“Viserys is dead and the true King and Queen will be here shortly,” Rhaegar said with a small smile.

“I swear if this is some trick. I swear if they are attacking my city, I will kill you and have your head on a spike,” Robert said angrily as he stepped towards Rhaegar. Immediately, the Unsullied stepped forward in unison and lowered their spears. The Kingsguard stepped forward in response and drew their swords in response. Well, at least Ser Meryn and Ser Arys did. Ser Barristan and Ser Jaime did not move, their hands were limp by their sides.

Ned was rooted to the spot like everyone else, one hand on his sword ready to draw it if necessary. They were at a stalemate and Ned was sure that within the next few seconds, the air would be filled with the sound of steel on steel.

He watched as Rhaegar slowly raised his hand and motioned for the Unsullied to stand down. Rhaegar looked at them and gave them a wide cocky smile. Ned looked at him warily.

Then, he heard a loud screech coming from above. Ned immediately looked upwards into the clear blue sky and then he saw them. Two massive dragons were flying above over the castle. One midnight black the other a dark mossy green. Ned was in awe to see the beasts of legends appear in the flesh. He had heard about them but seeing them was something else entirely. He watched as they circled lower and lower and Ned could not believe he did not hear them earlier. The sound of their wings beating was deafening. The dragons landed on a small hill to their left with a loud thud that shook the ground.

Once the dragons landed he was able to see their riders, a man and a woman with silver hair. Jon must have dyed his hair silver as Ned had guessed. They dismounted the dragons and stood on top of the hill, looking down on the crowd below. The dragons were at their back and the wind was blowing lightly. Ned was unable to tear his eyes away from the breathtaking sight in front of him.

They looked down on them all before slowly making their way down towards them. Their dragons made a low snarling noise before taking off again into the sky. The girl wore a black outfit with a black fur cloak that was lined with red. Her silver hair was styled in a single braid that she had tucked away. Ned could not deny that they looked the part of a King and a Queen. The boy, Jon, was dressed very similarly to Rhaegar. Both of them wore beautiful crowns which sparkled brightly in the sunlight.

Then, Ned suddenly understood all the events that happened in the east. He understood why Jon had performed such horrible and brutal acts in Essos such as the burning of Volantis and the sacking of the slaver cities. It was Rhaegar who had been influencing him, poisoning his mind. Jon held her hand as they approached. They looked united and then Ned looked at Rhaegar who had a proud look on his face.

Ned realised that Rhaegar was probably the one who was whispering in his ear providing him with advice. He let Jon be King but he was the true power behind the throne. Jon was just a puppet and Rhaegar was the evil puppet master pulling the strings. It was Rhaegar’s fault again. His actions had started the rebellion and now he was here guiding Jon into another war. He would have to speak to
Jon alone that would be his best chance to get through to him.

“You stand in the presence of King Aegon and Queen Daenerys of House Targaryen. Emperor and Empress of the Bay of dragons and the Dragon cities of the east. Khal and Khaleeasi of the Great Grass Sea, The Breakers of Chains and the rightful King and Queen of Westeros,” a young woman who appeared to be a Summer Islander, called out and Ned could see Robert’s fist clench in anger. He was about to move for his sword but the dragons gave a loud roar, seemingly to remind him of their presence.

Jon stopped in front of Robert and looked up at him. Robert was a huge man and he was easily taller than Jon yet Jon held his ground.

“Robert Baratheon,” he said and his voice carried the slightest hint of disgust. “I have heard many things about you.”

“Viserys fucking Targaryen,” Robert spat. “And your whore of a sister. I should have sent more assassins after you. I should have doubled the reward,”

“The King of Westeros sending assassins after mere children?” Jon asked. “Is the King too craven to wield his own blade? I wish I could say that I was surprised” and Ned saw Robert reach for his sword.

“Careful. I will kill you right here. Fuck your peace talk,” Robert said angrily. Ned saw Jon look Robert up and down, almost as if he was nothing more than a disobedient child. Robert still had his hand on his sword and Jon was not even wearing any armor. All he had was his sword yet he seemed to be completely unfazed by the King. Ned was worried, where did he get this arrogant and reckless attitude from? He was worried that Robert might take this the wrong way and start a fight that would ruin any chance of these talks going ahead peacefully.

“I don’t think you could kill me,” he said simply with a dismissive shake of his head. “But I am here for a peaceful talk. Let’s head inside the castle, it’s rather cold outside. I have never been to Harrenhal but I hear that you have, would you please show me the way?”

Ned was sure that Robert would draw his sword. Jon stood there with an arrogant smile on his face almost daring him to do it. Ned realised that he had to step in now before the situation got out of hand.

“Come on your grace, let’s head inside,” he said as he reached out to touch Robert on his arm. His touch seemed to break Robert out of his daze because he turned around and began to stomp back towards the castle. Ned walked next to him and turned to look at Jon angrily. If this was truly a peace talk, why was he trying to antagonize the King?

Jon looked at him and gave him a confused look then he shook his head, Ned was unsure of what he meant but he would speak to him later. Now, he needed to take the King away and calm him down so these talks could actually go ahead properly.

The Dragon Reborn

Jon stared at him as he walked away, side by side with the Usurper. He couldn’t believe it. He still could not separate himself from him, he even had the nerve to look at him angrily.
“Was that Lord Stark, with the King?” Daenerys asked as they watched them walk away.

“Yes. That was him,” Jon said unhappily.

“Where is the rest of his family? Is Arya here?”

“No. It doesn’t seem so. I saw Lady Catelyn and Robb, but not her.”

“Perhaps she’s just in the castle,” she said hopefully but Jon didn’t answer her. He knew if Arya were here she would be right there at the front of the crowd, just like he would be if the roles were reversed.

Whilst they waited for everyone to enter the castle he turned to his father.

“What happened before our arrival?” he asked. They had planned their entrance and they had been pleased to see all the Lords and Ladies were in awe of them and their dragons. All of the eyes had been on them and not the usurper.

“Well, everyone was very surprised to see me as you would imagine,” Rhaegar said with a hint of a smile. “I spoke briefly with Tywin Lannister and Robert, it was tense as you can imagine. Robert was about to draw for his sword like the brute that he is but it seems that you showed up at the right time. What took you so long?”

“I landed earlier so that Ghost could head off to hunt somewhere. With all the Dothraki and Unsullied, he probably doesn’t get a lot to hunt on Dragonstone,” Jon said. The topic of food was something else that was weighing on his mind. Whilst they had the Iron Banks gold to buy more food and they had ships to import more from Pentos, it was still a slow process. They would have to secure either the Reach or the Riverlands today.

“Jon, I want to speak to the Tyrell’s today,” Dany said to him. He looked at her curiously before he nodded, he trusted her to carry out their plan.

“Come on, let’s go,” Jon said as he began to lead their host towards the castle. His father had not been exaggerating, Harrenhall was huge. There were 5 towers and they were all crooked, likely from the heat from the dragonflame.

“Jon, who is Ser Loras with?” Dany asked as they walked towards the castle. Jon turned towards where she was looking and she saw Ser Loras was walking with a man with black hair. The man wore enameled green armor and he had Jon thought that he saw a stag on the breastplate.

“I think he is a Baratheon,”

“Perhaps, it is Renly, Ser Loras mentioned that he was the one who knighted him. I’m not from Westeros but they look very friendly, is that the custom for knights and their squires?” she asked

“It might be although I can’t say for certain. I have never been a squire and Knights are not common in the north. They are more of a southern thing,” Jon said and Dany nodded slowly.

As they walked, they saw the lines of tents surrounding the castle. He saw the banners of nearly all the great houses flying. The only banner that was missing was that of House Martell.

“I don’t see any banners belonging to House Martell or any other Dornish houses,” Dany said to him, reaching the conclusion at the same time.

“Perhaps, they’re on the other side of the castle,” Jon said even though he knew this wasn’t likely.
“Or, they’re not here because they’re with Illyrio’s son,” she whispered to him as she held onto his hand.

“Most likely but we can’t worry about them today. We can only focus on this council,” Jon said to her as they finally reached the castle gatehouse. The gatehouse was huge and the stone was discolored and cracked in places. They were greeted by an old lady who looked very happy to see them.

“It is an honor to have the Targaryens in my halls once again,” the woman said to them with a wide smile. “I am Lady Shella Whent and welcome to Harrenhal,” his father had mentioned that she was the good sister of the Kingsguard knight, Ser Oswell Whent.

“Thank you for agreeing to host this council for us and we thank you for your family’s service to House Targaryen,” Jon said politely.

“It is no trouble. House Whent fought alongside yours before and they will do so again. Harrenhall is yours, my King and Queen,” she said with a bow. She straightened up and then offered them some bread and some wine which Jon took and ate quickly. He had made sure to stress the importance of this tradition to everyone who would be travelling with them. He also made sure that some bread and wine was sent back to their Unsullied and Dothraki who would remain outside camping.

They walked through the gatehouse and into the main courtyard. Everyone was staring at them. He saw Knights and their squires, Lords and Ladies all stopped what they were doing to stare at them. The yard was silent as everyone took a good look at them. Then after deciding enough was enough, he closed his eyes, searched for Vedros who answered him. He heard her screech loudly and at that sound, everyone was snapped out of their daze and they went back to what they were doing.

“Forgive me. We have rooms prepared for you in the eastern tower. They are the most comfortable rooms in the castle,” Lady Whent said and she began to lead them away from the courtyard. Jon turned around and motioned for some of their Unsullied to come with them. It would be important to have men that they could trust guarding their rooms in case anything went wrong.

“You can hold your council in the great hall, it can fit all the Lords present. I thought it would be best if you ate in a separate hall,”

“Thank you. You are a kind host,” Dany said politely. As they walked, Jon saw Robb standing in a corner of the courtyard looking at them.

“Lady Whent, if you would be kind enough to lead the way for our Unsullied so that they can assume their positions guarding our rooms. We will make our own way to them shortly after we have spoken to some of the lords in the courtyard,” he said with a polite smile. Lady Whent bowed and continued to lead Grey Worm and a small group of the Unsullied into the castle.

He quickly grabbed Dany and began to walk towards him.

“Father, we will see you in the great hall soon. I would like to speak to Robb first,” Rhaegar nodded. Robb stared at them as they approached. He looked nervous and Jon was unsure why that was.

“Robb?” he said once he reached him,

“Jon?” Robb said in an unsure voice and then Jon understood. They were in a quiet corner of the courtyard and people seemed to be looking elsewhere. He closed his eyes and quickly turned his hair dark and his eyes grey and then looked at Robb. Robb had a shocked look on his face and Jon
quickly turned his features back. He was being presented to these people as a Targaryen King and he had to look the part.

“It’s really you,” he whispered as Jon pulled him into an embrace that Robb returned. “I’ve missed you brother,”

‘Brother’

The word warmed his heart. Robb was his family, he was still his brother.

He pulled apart but still held him at arm’s length. He looked at his face, he was clearly older, he could see the beginnings of a beard growing, but he still looked like Robb and he gave him a warm smile.

“What the hell happened? We’ve heard so much. How did you do that with your hair and eyes?” Robb asked as he stared at him.

“It’s a long story brother. Let’s just say I learned some magic along the way,” he said with a smile.

“Wait. This is Dany. Daenerys. She’s my wife,” he said as he wrapped his arm around her waist and Robb just looked at her with a blank expression on his face. Jon couldn’t help but laugh. Robb had always been better with girls when they were growing up around Winterfell. He was always talkative and he always knew the right thing to say and now he was completely stunned.

“Hello Lord Robb?” Dany greeted flawlessly.


“Of course you can. You’re Jon’s brother, you can even call me Dany if that’s easier,” she said with a smile.

“It’s nice to meet you Daenerys,” Robb said with a smile.

“Where’s Arya?” Jon asked and Robb’s smile faltered.

“She’s at home in Winterfell. She begged father to come but he said no and he wouldn’t hear another word from her,”

Jon scowled. Lord Stark knew how close he and Arya were and he did not even bring her with him. He denied both of them this reunion.

“Does he really not trust me? Does he really not trust my word when I said this would be a peaceful meeting?” Jon asked and he saw Robb’s smile fade.

“Jon, it’s been difficult at home. We thought you were dead then,”

“Dead? Why would I be dead?” Jon interrupted.

“Father said that he received a report saying that you died in a storm on the way to a place. I think it was Astapor?”

Jon nodded, the pieces were beginning to come together.

“It doesn’t matter anyway. You’re alive, that’s all that matters,” Robb said with a smile. “I think we have some time now, tell me what you’ve been up to? I can’t believe you got married already,”
“Already? I haven’t been gone that long,” Jon said with a laugh.

“Jon. You’ve been gone for over a year. Probably closer to a year and a half,” Robb said with a smile.

“The time has gone by quickly. I’ve been very busy,”

“I can imagine. You even managed to pick up a dragon or two along the way. How did you manage that? Where’s Ghost by the way?”

“Ghost is hunting. Where’s Greywind?”

“Hunting somewhere close by. I haven’t seen him since the morning,” Jon nodded and smiled, perhaps Ghost and Greywind were out hunting together.

“Right, the dragons,” Jon began and then he looked towards Dany “It’s a long story,”

“Well, we were in Valyria. We walked into a fire with some dragon eggs and we came out with three dragons. That’s the short version,” Dany said quickly which only served to confuse Robb further.

“I think I need to hear the full story,” Robb said after a moment and Jon laughed at the confused look on his face.

“Here look at this,” Jon said as he pulled out his sword. “This is Valyrian Steel,”

“I can see that. It looks like Ice, where did you get it?”

“Valyria. We have more of them,” Jon said with a proud smile.

“So, it’s really true,” Robb said as he held the sword.

“I’ve named it Darkfyre,”

“It’s impressive. It feels so light, much lighter than my sword,”

“So what have you been up to? Married yet?” Jon asked but he felt Daenerys hit him lightly on the arm.

“Jon you’re forgetting someone,” she said to him as she gave him a pointed glare. Jon looked at her curiously before he understood.

“We also have a child, a little boy named Daeron,”

“He’s lovely, we love him so much. He’s such a sweet little boy. He has my hair and his eyes,” Dany gushed.

“I’m happy for you. I take it you left him home?” and Jon nodded. “So I’m an uncle and Arya’s an aunt. I could never have imagined that,” he said as he ran his hand through his hair.

“Gods, I hadn’t even thought of that. The trouble they would get up to would be unimaginable,” Jon said with a laugh.

“She’d be teaching him to fight before he can even walk,” Robb said chuckling “Can he walk?”

“No,” Dany said quickly with a smile at Jon. “He’s only crawling. Do you have any children
Robb?”

“No. Not married, although father said he was looking at betrothals for me. Probably, a Northern
girl although he did say that an alliance with the Tyrells is also possible. The Tyrell’s have a daughter
around my age, he said that they wanted to meet with him today. He might even be with them now,”
Robb said and Jon tried hard to maintain a neutral face. It seemed that Olenna Tyrell was willing to
move on without them. Although now that he thought about it more, he realised that this was not
necessarily a bad thing. He would not have to marry Margaery and the Starks and the Tyrell’s would
be allied. If he could convince Lord Stark to join them then this alliance would be nearly unbeatable.

“I’m sure she’s lovely Robb,” Dany said with a smile and Jon could tell she was thinking similar
thoughts to him.

“How are Sansa, Bran, Arya and Rickon?” Jon asked

“Sansa is the same perfect little lady that you would remember. Although she has been over the
moon since her betrothal with Joffrey she is eager to return to Kings Landing. Arya is still as wild as
ever. Father allowed her to learn water-dancing sword style from a Braavosi instructor while they
were in the capital and since her return to Winterfell, she has started to train with some boys in the
yard under Ser Rodrick as well and she is good for her age. Much better than I expected she would
be, she takes her training very seriously. Rickon is still young, he doesn’t understand that you left.
Bran had a fall whilst he was climbing, he’s lost the use of his legs,” Robb said and Jon gasped.

“When did this happen?” he asked immediately.

“It was during the King’s visit to Winterfell,” Robb said sadly and Jon nodded. He knew that Bran
wanted to be a knight and losing the ability to walk would have put an end to his dream.

“Is that really Rhaegar Targaryen?” Robb asked and Jon nodded.

“Yes, that’s my father,”

“How did he survive?”

“When the Usurper hit him with his hammer, the force of the blow knocked him into the river but it
did not kill him. He washed up further downstream and was nursed back to health by a red priest.
Then, he went to Essos to find me and Viserys,” Dany explained to Robb.

“Oh. Where is Viserys? Is he with the third dragon?”

“No. Viserys is dead. He died in Valyria,”

“Oh I’m sorry,” Robb said sincerely.

“Viserys was a cruel man and a poor excuse of a brother. I am better off without him. I have Jon
now,” she said as she gave him a kiss on the cheek.

“You two look really happy together,” Robb said with a smile. “I am happy for you both. Especially
you Jon. You’re actually smiling for a change,” and Jon just rolled his eyes.

“What was he like growing up? Did he spend all of his time brooding? Because he does that all the
time,”

“I do not do that all of the time,”
“Yes you do,” they both said at the same time and Jon looked at them both in disbelief. They had only just met but they were already uniting against him.

“Why do you even do it?” Robb asked.

“I only do it because I have a lot on my mind. I haven’t done it much recently.”

“Oh my goodness Jon. Just the other day you woke up early to have an early morning brood on the cliffs. You even told me,” she said with a smile. Jon didn’t answer her instead he looked at Robb who was laughing to himself.

“How long have you two been married?”

“A few months really. Probably just over half a year,”

“And yet you two argue like you’ve been married your entire lives,” Robb said with a chuckle, He suddenly stopped laughing and was looking at something behind Jon. Jon turned and then he saw Lord Stark. He had not changed much in the time that he was away, and to his left was his wife, Lady Catelyn, who had wrinkled her nose and was looking at him unpleasantly.

“Queen Daenerys,” he said in greeting. His voice was stiff.

“Lord Stark,” she said in return, all the happiness and playfulness gone. Her face was now serious. He gave her a small imperceptible bow before he turned to him.

“King Aegon,” he said. King Aegon not Jon. The good, friendly feeling that he had while speaking with Robb was gone. Instead it felt as if the air had gotten colder, he pulled his cloak tightly around himself and pulled himself up to his full height.

“Lord Stark,”

The Dragon’s Hand

Tyrion Lannister walked through the huge castle of Harrenhal. He had stayed out of sight during the encounter outside Harrenhall. Seeing one dead man was shocking enough for the lords but two would have been a bit too much. But now, as he made his way through the castle, he knew that knowledge of his resurrection would become common as well. The King and Queen were talking to the Stark boy. Tyrion observed their reunion and was pleased with what he saw. It seemed that they still shared a brotherly bond. That would be important, perhaps if all else failed, the son would be able to convince the father to join their cause.

What he was not pleased with, was the interaction he saw between King Robert and his Hand earlier. Lord Stark led Robert Baratheon away like a brother would. The two of them still looked like they had a close relationship and this was not what the King would have wanted to see. Hopefully, Lord Stark would have called off the betrothal between Prince Joffrey and Sansa Stark at the least, that action would be very important in making sure their talks got off on the right foot.

He had debated telling the King and Queen the truth about Joffrey’s parentage but that was a risky endeavor. Firstly, he had no proof to convince people. Secondly, if Robert believed these rumors there was always the possibility that he would have Tommen and Myrcella killed along with Cersei, Jaime and Joffrey. Tyrion realised that until he could ensure the safety of Tommen and Myrcella, it
would be best to keep this secret to himself. The only advantage of revealing this secret now would be that it would destroy the Baratheon and Lannister alliance, but Tyrion did not think that these advantages were worth the potential risk to the children.

Tyrion watched their interaction for a few minutes before heading away. He too had several people that he needed to meet.

Tyrion walked through the castle and he saw a few people look at him with curiosity and shock as he passed them. Tyrion had expected this reaction since he had faked his own death. He also remembered that Varys had helped him with this and he would know where the false prince is, perhaps the Spider would be here today. That would be a very interesting reunion.

Tyrion walked aimlessly through the castle for a while before he realised that Harrenhal was simply too big for him to find the people he was looking for. His best bet would be to head to the great hall where the Lords would begin to congregate. He began to head down the stairs onto a lower floor and then he saw him.

His brother was standing in front of him, dressed in his white Kingsguard garb. Jamie just looked at him with a shocked look on his face.

“Tyrion. You’re alive,” he said with a smile after he had gotten over the shock.

“I’m surprised you noticed that I was even gone,” he said bitterly. Jaime was his brother and yet he had chosen to save himself instead of helping him.

“Of course I noticed you were gone. How could you ever think that I wouldn’t? I’m your brother,”

“You’re my brother yet you decided to save yourself instead of trying to help me,” Tyrion spat and Jamie’s eyes widened in understanding.

“How did you know?” he asked not even denying it. That was good, Tyrion would have hit him if he had denied it.

“Varys,” Tyrion answered.

“Of course,” Jaime muttered as he ran his hand through his hair. “He probably set this whole thing up,”

“He set that up?” Tyrion gave a cruel laugh. “Even the Spider can’t manipulate the Lions,”

“No, he can’t but he can use them. He told you this for a reason,”

“I know that. I’m not stupid,” Tyrion sneered. “I know exactly why he did it. He did it to further his own goals as usual. Is he here?”

“No, he’s not,” Jamie said “Cersei isn’t either. It’s only me and father,”

“Where is he? I want to speak to him,” Tyrion demanded.

“He’s in his chambers. They’re on the second floor in the western wing,”

“Take me to him,”

“Wait. Not now you’re angry and I want to talk to you,” Jamie said.

“Why do you want to talk to me? We have nothing left to say to each other,” Tyrion said as he
began to walk away. He angrily pushed past Jamie and was halfway down the corridor when he heard Jamie speak again,

“I’m sorry,”

Tyrion froze. He had not expected to hear those words from his brother. “I am sorry Tyrion. I am sorry for not doing more to save you. I should have fought against our father and our sister to try and save you. I should have snuck you out of the city in the middle of the night if it came to it but I did nothing. I am your brother, I am supposed to protect you but I chose to save myself and I am sorry,” Jaime’s voice broke and began to crack at the end and Tyrion immediately turned to look at him.

Tyrion was stunned, he had never seen his brother like this. His brother was the brave gallant knight who loved to fight, not the type to break down and get emotional. Tyrion quickly walked over to him and tried to pull him down for a hug which Jaime gladly returned. He held onto Jaime tightly and he felt what could only be Jaime’s tears fall onto his clothes.

“Tyrion. I need to tell you about Tysha,” he began but Tyrion made a shushing noise.

“I know Jaime. I know the truth,” Tyrion said softly. The pain of Tysha still wore heavily on him. He could still remember her face, the shape of her nose and her lovely, musical laugh. Thinking about his wife was still so painful but deep down he knew that Jaime was not to blame.

Jaime had always thirsted for battle and had always shied away from politics. It was perhaps one of the reasons they got along so well. His father and sister only saw him as a dwarf, and a stain on their family legacy. Jaime had always been their father’s favorite and he had never known hardship and this is what made Jaime’s apology so shocking to him. He had not expected Jaime to actually own up to his mistakes, he had expected Jaime to ignore it and to feign ignorance of Cersei and their father’s plans.

“How could you know?” he said as he broke apart.

“Varys and I overheard your conversation. We were in a secret passageway behind the room and we heard everything,”

“I’m sorry Tyrion. I should have told you earlier. I should have done more,”

Tyrion nodded. He didn’t have it in him to be angry at Jamie at the moment, hearing his apology caused that anger to fade. He was not sure that if he could trust him, but he wanted to try.

“Let’s head somewhere else,” Tyrion said, painfully aware that they were still in the middle of a hallway where anyone can see them or overhear their conversation. Jaime stood up and then led him into an empty room.

The room was lightly furnished. There was a double bed in the room and several chairs positioned by a table. There was a bowl of fruit and some wine sitting on the table. There was a small fire crackling in the hearth which provided the room with some warmth.

“Whose room is this?” Tyrion asked

“I don’t know. It doesn’t matter,” Jaime said as he pulled the chairs closer to the fire and sat on one. Tyrion moved to the table and poured them both a cup of wine.

“The men that had been hire to kill you said that you had fallen over the edge and we found a body on the rocks below on the battlements,”
“Varys told me about that spot. There is a hidden alcove that can’t be seen from above. I did fall off the balcony but I rolled into that spot where Varys was waiting for me,”

“Then where did you go? How did you meet the Targaryens?”

“Varys smuggled me across the narrow sea to Pentos where I met some of his ‘friends’ or rather fellow conspirators. We then travelled from Pentos, to Norvos and then to Volantis and that it where I met the true Targaryens. Varys has been plotting this for years,”

“Plotting what? This invasion? Is he working for the Targaryens? That doesn’t make any sense,”

“Not quite Jaime. Tell me, is Varys still in the capital?”

“Yes,” he said. Tyrion was surprised at this, he would have thought that Varys would have left the capital as soon as he found out that his plans had failed.

“Varys is not working for the Targaryens although he was plotting to use them,” Tyrion said and Jamie looked at him curiously. “Varys is or was, plotting to put another boy on the Iron Throne. This boy was pretending to be a Targaryen but we have found out that he really is a Blackfyre,”

“A Blackfyre?” Jamie said with disbelief “Tyrion, the Blackfyre’s died out years ago, Ser Barristan killed Maelys the Monstrous on the Stepstones and that was the last of them. Even I know that,”

“Only the male line,” Tyrion insisted and Jamie had a questioning look on his face. “Think about it Jamie. Let’s look at Catelyn Stark as an example. She is a Tully but all her children have the surname Stark even though they are half Tully by blood. Now, if the all the Tully heirs perished, then one of her children could not only lay claim to Riverrun by citing their Tully mother as a basis for their claim but also potentially take the name to ensure that the house lives on. It is the same thing here. Varys’s Blackfyre pretender is a descendant born of a female line of black dragons but is claiming to be a Targaryen since everyone thinks that the Blackfyres are extinct,”

Tyrion saw his green eyes widen in understanding. “Why would Varys want to sit this boy on the throne?”

“To be his puppet probably, having a King of his choosing would make him the most powerful man in the entire realm,”

“So where is this false prince now?”

“I don’t know. The last time I saw him was in Volantis,”

“Do you think he could have burned in the fires?”

“No. He left with the Golden Company the day before, we checked and they were gone,”

“He has the Golden Company?”

“Yes. 20,000 men and their elephants,”

“And you have no idea where they are?” He asked and Tyrion could tell that Jaime didn’t believe him

“We think that they might be with the Dornish but we have no way to know for certain. I know you don’t believe me Jaime but I am telling the truth,”

“I believe you Tyrion. If you say that Varys is plotting this, then I believe you,” Jamie said and
Tyrion was surprised but relieved. His brother had changed.

“What happened to you since I left? You’re not usually like this,” Tyrion asked suspiciously.

“Like what?”

“Like this. First you apologized to me then you believe my crazy tale. Next you’re going to tell me you’ve broke things off with Cersei,” Tyrion said with a laugh and to his surprise Jaime had a reluctant smile on his face.

“You have, haven’t you? Jaime, are you well?” he asked as he reached out to touch his face. Jaime quickly batted his hand away.

“What happened between you two?” Tyrion asked.

“I heard the rumors that this King Aegon is Rhaegar’s son with Lyanna Stark. I wasn’t sure if it was true, but it reminded me of Rhaegar nevertheless. He trusted me to protect his family whilst he was gone and I failed. Worse still, it was my family who killed them and it reminded me of my failure to protect you. I asked Cersei if she missed you and she said no. She showed no remorse.”

Tyrion knew that his sister did not like him and had planned to kill him, but the words still stung. Tyrion nodded slowly and he felt some of his anger return.

“Hearing about Rhaegar’s son made me feel guilty about my failings. My failings to protect his family and my failure to protect you,” he said sadly.

“Where is Cersei?” he asked

“Robert sent her back to Casterly Rock along with Tommen and Myrcella to wait out this war,” Jaime said and Tyrion nodded slowly an idea beginning to form in his mind.

“Is that really Prince Rhaegar?” Jaime asked and Tyrion nodded “How is it possible?”

“I didn’t believe it either but he survived. When Robert hit him with his hammer, the force knocked him into the river. He washed up further downstream where he was found by a red priest who nursed him back to health. Once he was strong enough to travel, he went across the narrow sea to find his family again,”

Jaime nodded slowly. “I would never have believed it if I had not seen him today. What does he think of me?”

“You’ll have to meet him today and find out,”

“He probably hates me because of what I did to his father and for not protecting his family,” Jaime said as he ran his hands through his hair.

“I told him why you killed Aerys,” Tyrion said quietly.

“How did he take it?” he asked quietly,

“He looked horrified. I don’t think he realised the extent of his father’s madness,”

They were quiet for a few moments and Tyrion watched the flames flicker in the hearth.

“How are the children?” Tyrion asked after a moment.
“Tommen and Myrcella are fine, they’re headed back to Casterly Rock. Joffrey will stay with the King and fight despite Cersei’s protests,”

“Have they changed much?” Tyrion asked and Jaime just shrugged.

“You know I can’t be too close to them,” Jaime said and Tyrion sighed, he was their ‘uncle’ not a stranger.

“What did Cersei tell them about me?”

“Nothing. She didn’t even take them to your funeral,” Jaime said and Tyrion scowled. Cersei was unbelievably cruel. “They missed you Tyrion. Don’t doubt that.”

“I have also missed them dearly,” Tyrion said.

“Tyrion, you’ve only told me bits and pieces and I’m still a little confused. Tell me the full story please,”

“After faking my death, Varys smuggled me to Pentos where I met his co-conspirator, a magister named Illyrio Mopatis. I later learned that he had been harboring the Targaryen children, Viserys and Daenerys for months earlier before they departed for Astapor and were presumed to have died at sea. Later, he introduced me to a sellsword named Griff and his son Young Griff. I eventually learned that Griff was Jon Connington and young Griff was the false prince who I told you about. He believes himself to be Aegon Targaryen, son of Elia and Rhaegar,” Tyrion saw Jaime open his mouth to object but Tyrion quickly carried on. “His story is that Princess Elia knew that the war was lost so she agreed to let Varys smuggle the boy out of Kings Landing across the narrow sea by swapping him with a babe from Flea bottom. That is obviously a lie, but it is the story that Varys has created. We travelled together to Norvos where they met with the Martells in secret to discuss a potential alliance. While in Norvos, we learned about King Aegon and Queen Daenerys from the Dornish. Everyone assumed that King Aegon was actually Viserys who was styling himself after the original conqueror. We then decided to head to Volantis to meet with the Targaryens who were headed towards the city. Whilst the Dornish returned to Westeros to prepare for their arrival. The plan was for Young Griff to marry Daenerys and for Viserys to marry Arianne and then they would invade together,”

“Now that plan fell apart in Volantis. I was in the city itself along with a member of Connington’s group when King Aegon and Queen Daenerys arrived on dragonback. It turned out that Viserys was already dead and that Aegon was actually the son of Rhaegar Targaryen and Lyanna Stark and he was already married to Daenerys. The Targaryens then started a slave revolt in the city which caused me to get separated from my companion. Then, I was captured by the exiled knight Ser Jorah Mormont who took me to the dragons with the hope of gaining their favor. Surprisingly, they did not execute me on sight and gave me a chance to prove my loyalty to them after I explained my turbulent family history. I assume when Connington and the false prince heard this piece of information, they departed from Volantis in a hurry,”

Jaime nodded slowly.

“It sounds like quite the adventure little brother. Pentos, Norvos and Volantis all within a year?”

“I also went to Braavos briefly. Only for a day or two. Oh, they appointed me as their Hand as well,” he said with a small smile and pointed towards the Hand’s pin on his vest.
Jaime had an incredulous look on his face but calmed down soon enough.

“Is he really the son of Rhaegar Targaryen and Lyanna Stark?” and Tyrion nodded “Where has he been for all these years?”

“I was also very surprised to hear that Rhaegar had another child. I know who was hiding him but I’m afraid I can’t tell you. It is not my secret to tell. I believe the King will tell everyone the truth today at the council,”

“How can you work with them?” Jaime asked and Tyrion must have looked confused “The Targaryens. I’ve heard rumors about what happened in Volantis and Slaver’s Bay. How could you work with them especially after what I told you about the Mad King?”

“Jaime, it’s not like that,”

“Tyrion everyone has heard it. Are you saying the city did not burn?”

“Not the entire city. It’s more complicated than that. The King and Queen led an anti-slavery campaign in the East and they have helped improved millions of lives. The slave trade was financed by the nobility in Volantis who lived behind the black walls of Volantis. The King and Queen asked them to stop financing the slave trade and offered them a peaceful solution but the Volantene lords not only refused their offer but mocked them by stating that they would re-enslave all the freed slaves once they left for Westeros, so the dragons destroyed them.” Tyrion finished unconvincingly and Jaime looked at him suspiciously.

“I have also heard the rumors about them working to abolish slavery in the east but it does not excuse their actions, Tyrion. How many innocents have died because of them?”

“Jaime, I understand your reservations but they are a good people. Tell me which great feat was achieved without violence or bloodshed. Aegon the Conqueror performed a similar act at this very castle and he went on to unite all of Westeros and establish the greatest dynasty that the world ever knew. I have worked with them for the past half a year and they have good intentions. They will be good rulers for Westeros, I am confident in that,”

“You don’t know what type of rulers they would be,”

“I know that they’ll be better than Robert Baratheon, or the Mad King and you know that is the truth,”

“I don’t know if they’ll be any better because I don’t know them. What I do know is that they know nothing about Westeros, how do they plan on ruling it?”

“I will help them since I am their Hand,” Tyrion said defiantly and Jaime just looked at him.

“Tyrion. They want to kill our family,” he said quietly.

“I know that Jaime but they are not my family. They tried to kill me. They did not even feel any remorse or guilt for killing me,”

“I am still your family,”

Tyrion was quiet for a moment. He had come to this council expecting to see that his family had not changed at all but Jaime had changed and it caused a small seed of doubt to form in his mind.

“I know you are my family, Jaime. Join us, fight for the right side this time. Don’t fight to keep
someone like Robert Baratheon on the throne, fight for rulers who are just and good. I assure that they will show mercy to the innocent. Our father’s crimes are too great to pardon but you can still save all the remaining members of our House."

“Tyrion you’re asking me to fight against my father,"

“The same father who threatened to send you to the wall if you tried to save me,” Tyrion said quickly.

“He’s still our father,” Jaime said quietly.

“Perhaps, there is another way. Speak to Rhaegar, speak to the King and Queen, we could come up with a way to resolve this without bloodshed. We could convince them to send father to the wall instead of killing him. They are not monsters, I’m sure they will treat the rest of the family fairly if they peacefully submit to them. You need to explain your side to them.”

Jaime still looked at him uncertainty.

“Tyrion. They won’t trust me,” Jaime began,

“Jaime, you have to try. This is the same thing that you did at the end of the rebellion. You killed Aerys to save a city but you didn’t tell anyone why and you were given the title as Kingslayer as a result,”

“They can call me Kingslayer if they want. I don’t care what people think of me,” he said as he looked at the floor but Tyrion laughed loudly.

“Dear brother. Are you seriously going to tell me that when you hear the name Kingslayer it doesn’t bother you?”

Jaime looked at him for a while before he dropped his head.

“Of course, it bothers me,” Jaime muttered.

“Then do some good. Try and clear your name. Fight for the right side this time,” Tyrion urged and he could see his brother was considering the offer.

“Jaime. If you take me to father, then I will take you to Rhaegar and then to the King and Queen, I will vouch for you. You have to trust me,” Tyrion said as he held out his hand. Jaime stared at it for a few seconds before he took it and shook it firmly.

“Come on then. I’ll take you to see father,” he said as he led Tyrion away. Tyrion took several deep breaths to calm himself as he walked through the castle. In a few moments, he would meet his father, and Tyrion had been dreaming of this meeting for months.

Chapter End Notes

Chapter 21 is called "The Dragons and the Wolves" and it should be out next week some time. Let's say in 6 days

Comments are always appreciated, especially the longer ones
Thanks
Sleepy
The Silver Prince

Rhaegar Targaryen was walking on the grounds surrounding Harrenhall. He had not been back to Harrenhal since the tourney but he still remembered the castle perfectly. He was standing in the exact same spot that his horse was in, all those years ago when he had crowned Lyanna. As he closed his eyes he was able to remember her face when he presented the crown to her. She was wearing a grey dress that she had reluctantly put on, she had told Rhaegar that she would rather wear riding leathers than dresses. Her long hair fell straight down over her shoulders and down her back. She had blushed heavily before graciously accepting the crown of blue winter roses. She had given him a small nervous smile that had warmed his heart. Rhaegar smiled at the memory before turning away.

He walked around the outside of the camps, taking care to stay away from the crown’s forces. He headed back to the Targaryen forces camp, he would ensure that everything was going according to plan before heading back to the castle. He had several people in mind that he needed to speak to before the council started. Rhaegar looked up at the sky and realised that since Jon and Dany had arrived later than expected, the council would have to take place the following day.

He walked to their camp on the eastern side of the castle and saw that the Unsullied had set up sentries. Their camp was far from the crown’s forces and Rhaegar was pleased to see that it was being constructed quickly. Even their Dothraki had made an effort to build an organized camp. Rhaegar walked towards the camp and looked for either the Unsullied commander Stalwart Shield or for one of the Dothraki bloodriders. Eventually, he found Jhoqo, one of their bloodriders. They had decided to leave Aggo and Rakharo back at Dragonstone with the majority of their horde. Jhoqo spoke the common tongue the best and he would ensure that their orders would be carried out quickly.

“Jhoqo,” he called and the Dothraki man quickly walked over. “Have the horses been put out to graze?”
“Yes,” he said. “Big castle,”

“Biggest in Westeros,” Rhaegar said with a smile. “Did you receive a barrel of wine from the castle?”

“Yes,” he said and then he scrunched up his face. “It tasted disgusting,”

“Did everyone drink it?” Rhaegar insisted.

“If Khal and Khaleesi says we must drink it, then we will drink it,” he said and Rhaegar nodded. He knew that the Dothraki would do anything for their Khal and Khaleesi.

“Take care Jhoqo, I might return later. Stay clear of the men in the steel dresses,” Rhaegar said with a smile as he headed towards the castle. His gloved hand brushed over the hilt of his sword as he walked. Jon had given him a new sword for this meeting, he had yet to name it but he would get around to it eventually. There were only a limited number of Valyrian steel swords in the world and this sword deserved its own special name.

Robert Baratheon had changed over the years. He had allowed his beard to grow and he had clearly put on a lot of weight. He was not the same man that he had been 20 years ago. Still, he was not as fat as Rhaegar had expected based on the reports they had received. Rhaegar had assumed that Robert would be too fat to fight in battle but this did not appear to be the case. Still, Robert’s surprise when he saw his face had been worth it. His face had gone from shocked to confused and then to angry so quickly Rhaegar found himself biting his tongue to refrain from laughing. Robert’s blue eyes had widened like saucers at first but then they had been reduced to mere slits in anger.

Robert seemed to have brought his eldest son as well, a boy who looked more Lannister than Baratheon. Cersei and her other 2 children did not appear to be here but that didn’t bother him in the slightest, he had more important people to see today than Cersei Lannister.

As he walked towards the main castle gatehouse, he observed the camps and the banners that were flying. He did not see any signs that any of the Dornish houses had arrived to attend the council. He had hoped that at least some of the Dornish houses would attend, Arthur Dayne had been his best friend and at the very least Rhaegar could have convinced House Dayne to join them. The fact that the Dornish were not here only served to confirm his suspicions that Jon Connington and his false prince were in Dorne, he would need to relay these thoughts to Jon and Daenerys.

He reached the castle gatehouse and walked to the courtyard on the other side. He saw that the courtyard was nearly empty which surprised him. Then, he realised that the Lords must be gathered elsewhere having their own private discussions before the council, perhaps Jon and Daenerys could have the council today after all. He looked around the courtyard and saw them standing at one side, talking to who he believed was Lord Stark’s heir. It looked like they were having a happy reunion so he decided to leave them be. Instead, he turned and headed across the courtyard and into the castle. He walked up a flight of stairs and then he walked along a torch lit stone corridor that led further into the castle. Rhaegar had not been to Harrenhall in years but it seemed that his feet still remembered the way through the castle.

He walked through the corridors until he reached a large wooden door, he pushed the door open and entered a gallery that overlooked the great hall of Harrenhall. It was called ‘The Hall of the Hundred Hearths’. Rhaegar knew that the hall did not actually contain 100 hearths, it only had around 30 or so. However the hall was still the largest hall in Westeros, huge enough to entertain an army.

Or as Rhaegar guessed, large enough to hold all the Lords and knights that would gather here for the great council. Rhaegar watched as servants went about their tasks preparing the room. The fires were
maintained and the tables had been removed or pushed to the far end of the hall. The room was well lit, there were torches along the walls and there were numerous chandeliers on the ceiling with candles in them.

At the far end of the room, there was a large dais with three chairs on it. Two on one side, one on the other. This would be where Jon, Daenerys and Robert Baratheon would be seated later and address the lords of the realm.

The first Great council had been held in this very hall hundreds of years ago. That council had been held for two rival Targaryen claimants (a male and a female each) in a bid to determine the heir to King Jaehaerys I. All the lords had their discussion, voted and that council had been resolved peacefully. Unfortunately, that was not the normal outcome for such councils. Rhaegar was not foolish enough to believe that Robert Baratheon would peacefully set aside his crown, he would sooner die with his sword in hand than give up the throne. This council was their chance to gather enough support to make a war unfeasible for Robert.

Rhaegar’s eyes stayed on the dais and he remembered the time when he was seated at the high table next to his father during the feasts at the tourney. One evening, he even played his harp and sang a special song for the lords in attendance. He sung it especially for Lyanna, it was their song. A song that he had played for her during their short time together. He had not played it since and he knew that he would never play it again. Even though she was seated at a table in the middle of the hall surrounded by her family he was still able to find her with his eyes.

He smiled at the memory. Jon looked so much like her and he knew that she would be proud of their son. He had even begun to work on a song for Daeron, the little prince loved it when he sang and he deserved a song of his own.

“Your grace,” he heard a familiar voice say. Rhaegar stood up and turned towards the voice of Ser Barristan Selmy. Rhaegar looked at him. His face had aged and his hair was now completely white. He was dressed in his white Kingsguard garb and his blue eyes were looking at him nervously.

“Ser Barristan Selmy,” he said, his voice formal.

“Your grace,” he began and Rhaegar knew that he was unsure of what to say. “How are you alive? I thought that you fell that day on the Trident,” the old knight said, his voice shaking.

“I survived Ser Barristan. I fell into the river and washed up further downstream. I was nursed back to health by a red priest,” Rhaegar answered and he saw Barristan nod slowly.

“My wounds? Robert said that he hit you with his hammer, right in your chest,”

“My wounds have healed but I still bear the scars, Ser Barristan. It was a miracle that I survived, do not doubt it,”

“Your grace, if I had known you survived. I would have come to you,” he said quickly and Rhaegar knew that it was true.

“You could have gone to Essos to seek out Princess Daenerys and Prince Viserys,” Rhaegar pointed out even though he knew that this would have been too much to expect of Ser Barristan. Rhaegar knew what he was, he was a follower. Ser Barristan was raised in the Stormlands. A region that not only produced fearsome warriors but also placed emphasis on service and obedience.

“I should have. I should have never accepted his pardon. I am sorry your grace,” he said as he fell to his knees. Barristan accepting Robert’s pardon did not surprise him. When he had fallen that day on
the Trident, Barristan would have felt lost. The Targaryen dynasty was approaching its end and he needed a new King to serve.

“I should have never accepted his pardon,” Barristan repeated. “He was not the true King. I know that now. Robert has proved his unworthiness through his actions and decisions during his reign. Please your grace, I beg for forgiveness,” he pleaded.

“Rise, Ser Barristan,” he said wearily as he tapped him lightly on the shoulder. He watched as the knight slowly stood and looked at him nervously.

“What will you have me do your grace?” he asked nervously.

“Swear your sword into the service of King Aegon and Queen Daenerys. Guard their back as you would mine,”

“You want me to join their Kingsguard?”

“I want you to lead it,” Rhaegar said firmly. He knew that Ser Barristan could be trusted. He could think of no better knight that Ser Barristan Selmy to lead their Kingsguard, it would add an extra layer of legitimacy to their cause. It would also send a message, if the Lord Commander of Robert Baratheon’s Kingsguard left him, then he was not worthy to be King.

“Your grace, you honor me. I am not worthy of this,” he said and Rhaegar sighed.

“Were you serious about not accepting his pardon?” Rhaegar asked and Ser Barristan nodded.

“Then prove it by serving the true King and Queen,” he said firmly. He saw Ser Barristan look at him uncertainly before he slowly nodded. “Come with me and I will introduce you to the King and Queen,”

Ser Barristan nodded slowly.

“Why are you not the King?”

“My son is better suited to rule than me. I know that now. He and Daenerys are the rulers that Westeros needs in the upcoming years. They have good intentions and they care about the people they will rule over,”

“Is he your son? By Lyanna Stark?” and Rhaegar nodded.

“Yes. Aegon is my trueborn son by Lyanna. My marriage to Elia was annulled and I married Lyanna not too far from here on the Isle of Faces,” he said with a smile.

“Your grace, why did you not tell anyone?” Ser Barristan asked. “Nearly everyone in the entire realm believed that you kidnapped and raped her or ran off with her,”

Rhaegar sighed in frustration.

“We did leave messages. Lyanna was supposed to be heading to Riverrun for her brother’s wedding, I met her a few miles from Riverrun with some of my men. She sent word ahead to Riverrun and then to Winterfell by raven, letting them know that she was breaking off her betrothal and leaving with me of her own free will but it seems that our messages were never delivered or concealed on purpose,” Rhaegar said bitterly. It was something that he had thought about many times over the years. Someone had disposed of the letters, perhaps it was Hoster Tully and Lord Rickard Stark himself. Hoster was an ambitious Lord and Rhaegar now knew that he wanted to remove the
Targaryen dynasty at the tourney. Perhaps, Hoster realised that by destroying this letter, he could move the realm towards rebellion while Lord Rickard probably hid the letter in an attempt to save face in the realm.

That would make a certain degree of sense. Rhaegar knew that the letter had likely made its way to Riverrun, after all, how else would Brandon Stark know that he was with Lyanna?

As Rhaegar thought about it more, he realised that this must have been what happened. Brandon Stark would have been near Riverrun for his wedding to Catelyn Tully, perhaps he had been fed wrong information and this was what caused Brandon to rush off to Kings Landing. That person would have guessed that Brandon, or his father, would do something rash and stupid which would have provided the excuse to start the rebellion.

Was that person Hoster Tully? It was a possibility, he would have to speak to the Tullys today and see if they knew about this. Rhaegar knew that he was unlikely to get an honest answer but he would still ask to see if they knew anything in the slightest.

“I don’t understand. Why did you go to Lyanna? Why did you meet her outside Riverrun?”

“I heard that my father planned to arrest her. He did not have a good reason to do so but he was the King so having a good reason did not matter. When I heard this piece of news, I left Dragonstone with some of my most trusted men to meet with her and explain the situation,” he said Barristan nodded slowly. Rhaegar decided to omit the part about her being the Knight of the Laughing Tree.

“Where was your son? Was he with you the entire time in Essos?”

“No. He grew up here in Westeros,” Rhaegar said.

“Really? Someone would have noticed,” Barristan said and Rhaegar sighed.

“It’s a long story. One for another time,” Rhaegar said, saving the conversation for another time. Barristan looked at him curiously before nodding slowly. “Truthfully, I did not know that he was alive until recently. When I first saw him, I could not believe it. I knew that he was my son immediately, he looks so much like her,” Rhaegar said with a wide smile. He still remembered the day that he had met Jon in Pentos, it was one of the happiest days of his life.

They were stood silently on the gallery for a few moments as they watched the servants carry out their tasks. It was Ser Barristan who spoke next,

“Your grace, do you know what happened to my sworn brothers? I knew that Ser Arthur and Ser Oswell were away with you. Then after the Battle of the Bells, the King had sent Ser Gerold to fetch you back so that you could command the royal armies. You returned but he did not, none of them returned from wherever they were,”

Rhaegar was silent for a few moments whilst he considered how much he could tell him.

“Do you know how they died?” he settled on and Barristan shook his head. “I had them with me. First, Ser Oswell and Ser Arthur and then later Ser Gerold. I told them to guard Lyanna whilst I was away at war, she was pregnant with my son then and I could not leave her unprotected, ”

“Wait, I remember now. I had heard a rumor that Lord Stark had slain Ser Arthur but I never asked and Lord Stark never mentioned it. This means that Lord Stark found Ser Arthur and my brothers when they were guarding Lyanna?” he said and Rhaegar nodded.

“So, Lord Stark found his sister and my brothers and then they fought. Lord Stark and his friends
must have killed my sworn brothers. What happened to Lyanna and the child?”

“Lyanna died in childbirth,” Rhaegar said and he watched as Ser Barristan worked out the rest.

“All these years. Lord Stark had your son?” he asked as he leaned in towards him.

“Yes,” Rhaegar said quietly. He was still immensely thankful that Lord Stark took Jon in and raised him in his household but he was not happy with the way Lady Catelyn had treated him. Even if Lord Stark could not tell everyone that he was a prince, he still deserved to be treated better than a bastard who was born from a drunken mistake.

“I would never have guessed, although it still does not make sense. The King looks like a Targaryen somebody would have alerted the King if a boy matching those description was spotted in the North,”

“Ser Barristan. That is a good question, but like I said earlier, I will tell you that story later. It is part of an unbelievable story, one that you should hear from them and not from me,” Rhaegar said and after a moment Ser Barristan nodded.

“Now, come with you. I will take you to the King and Queen,” Rhaegar said as he led them away. He walked through the stone corridors until he reached a balcony overlooking the main courtyard again. They were on the second floor and Rhaegar was able to see nearly the entire courtyard. He could see a group of Northmen talking on one side of the courtyard. He saw a group of knights from the Reach and the Stormlands talking too, they seemed to be showing each other their weapons for some reason.

Then his eyes found Jon and Daenerys, they were in the opposite corner of the courtyard and they were still talking to the Stark boy. Jon had his arm around Daenerys’s waist and it looked like they were having a good time catching up. Jon had mentioned that he had a good relationship with the Stark heir and they had hoped that his would be helpful to their cause.

Rhaegar watched as they spoke for a few minutes and then he saw Lord Stark approach the trio with his wife following closely behind him. Rhaegar saw that the mood immediately change, both Jon and Dany stiffened and stood up straighter. He watched their conversation for a few moments before deciding to head over. He had wanted to meet Lord Stark alone and he knew that now would be a good time as any.

The Lord of Winterfell

Ned Stark looked at Jon standing next to his Queen. They made a striking couple that was for certain, even though Ned was taller than them, he noticed that they exuded an unquestionable aura of authority and power. The Queen was even more beautiful than described in the songs, she truly possessed the same ethereal beauty that Rhaegar did. Underneath her black fur cloak she was wearing a gown that was of a deep plum color, she wore a beautiful jeweled crown on her head. Ned could see gemstones shimmering in the light, it was unbelievably detailed and Ned could not even begin to imagine the cost of such items. However, what was most shocking was the color of their eyes. Daenerys had lilac eyes and so did Jon, and this really confused him. How was Jon able to change the color of his eyes? The hair can be explained with the use of dyes, but the eyes were a different matter entirely. Perhaps somewhere in Essos Jon had picked up this trick, maybe from an Essosi mage or a witch.

Ned looked him up and down. He wore a black fur cloak over his black doublet that had the sigil of
House Targaryen sown into it. Ned looked down and saw that he had a sword strapped to his waist and like Rhaegar’s, this sword also looked very expensive. Ned saw emeralds, rubies and sapphires glimmering in its hilt. The pommel was crafted into the shape of a dragon head and it had red rubies for eyes. Jon wore a full crown and like Daenerys’s Tiara, it too was a showcase of their apparent wealth. The crown and the tiara matched perfectly, as if they were made for each other. As he saw them side by side he realised that this is what a King and Queen should look like. Then Ned looked at Jon, his silver blonde hair, his purple eyes, his Targaryen attire and even his sword was styled after dragons.

Jon was a Targaryen now. Not a Stark.

He swallowed and then drew himself up to his full height, Rhaegar would have probably pushed him to embrace the Targaryen ways, but Rhaegar was not here and that was good, he would be able to have a better conversation with Jon now. He took a deep breath and wondered how to start this conversation.

“Lady Catelyn,” Jon said icily as he greeted his wife. Jon’s voice was formal and he slowly extended a gloved hand for her to shake. Catelyn ignored him and turned towards Daenerys.

“Lady Daenerys,” she said,

“Queen Daenerys,” Jon growled as he stared at her, his purple eyes narrowed to slits. Ned saw Daenerys slowly reach out to pat Jon on the arm lightly and this action seemed to make him to relax.

“Lady Catelyn,” she said politely as she offered out her hand, palm facing down. She wore golden bracelets crusted with amethysts on her wrists and Ned saw a strange ring on her finger, Ned was not sure what the gemstone was made off. Catelyn stared at it for a few moments before moving to shake it.

“You may have treated me as if I was nothing more than a bastard but I always learned my courtesies,” Jon began in a soft voice “I believe the custom is that you should kiss the Queen’s hand, not shake it,”

Catelyn turned to him and gave him a cold glare as she stood up straight.

“She is not my Queen,” she said stiffly and Ned saw Jon raise his eyebrow in surprise before he quickly scowled. He opened his mouth to speak but Daenerys cut him off.

“Perhaps, we should skip the courtesies my love,” she said to Jon who reluctantly nodded.

“Lord Stark,” she said as she turned to him, her voice was clear and carried an element of authority to it. “It is a pleasure to finally meet you, your wife and your son,” she said with a polite smile.

“Thank you. It is nice to finally meet you, although I wish it was under better circumstances,”

“What is wrong with these circumstances?” Jon asked immediately and Ned turned towards him.

“We are here at a council to try and prevent the outbreak of a war. A war that you have started,” Ned said firmly and he saw Jon’s eyes narrow. This conversation was not off to the best start.

“A war that I started?” he asked “I did not start this war. The Usurper started this war over 18 years ago,”

“Usurper?” Ned said and then he laughed cruelly. “Robert is not a usurper. He,”
“He what? Did he not rise up against his rightful King?” Jon said.

“His rightful King? Aerys was mad and had no right to sit the throne,” Ned spat.

“He was a Targaryen and just in case you memory has failed you, you should know that House Targaryen have been the rightful rulers of Westeros since King Aegon I defeated all the old royal houses of the kingdoms. So, he was your King by right and law. You were sworn to obey him. Who are you to judge him?” Jon asked angrily. “Your actions over the years prove that your judgment isn’t without flaw either.”

“I judged him after he brutally murdered my father and my brother. Your uncle and your Grandfather,” Ned pointed out. He was shocked that Jon was defending the Mad King, especially after what he did to their family. Although as he looked at Jon’s appearance, he realised that Jon no longer considered himself a Stark.

“Be that as it may. You should have supported my father and moved to put him on the throne. Even if you did not approve of my father, you should have acted to place me on the throne after the supposed fall of my father and the brutal murders of my siblings. By all laws of succession, the throne was mine and you gave it to the Usurper.”

Ned felt a rush of anger and betrayal pass through him. Father? He called him his father? He would have known Rhaegar for barely over a year and yet he called him a father and him Lord Stark.

“But why should I be surprised? This was the plan after all. Your father, Hoster Tully and Jon Arryn were all plotting together to overthrow my family’s dynasty long before the rebellion,” Jon said and Ned looked at him in disbelief.

“What nonsense are you talking about?” Ned asked. Perhaps this was yet more of Rhaegar’s lies. Jon looked at him curiously for a moment.

“Do you remember the Tourney at Harrenhal? Of course you do. My father secretly funded that tourney with the purpose to gather all the great Lords together so that he could propose his plan to overthrow his father,”

Ned was surprised, Rhaegar wanted to overthrow his father? Why would he do that? For power? If this was true, Ned would have heard about it.

“My father knew of his father’s growing madness and he meant to call a great council here in order to gather support to overthrow him. However, the plotting of your father and his allies prevented him from taking action. It was thanks to my mother that he learned of the conspiracy that was brewing against House Targaryen in Westeros,”

“You are talking nonsense,” Ned said as he shook his head. “Our fathers had nothing to gain by betraying Rhaegar or House Targaryen. This is a lie,” he said and he saw Catelyn nod her head in agreement.

“These are nothing but the lies from a bastard,” Catelyn said.

“He is not a bastard. He is my brother’s trueborn son and your rightful king. You would do well to show respect,” Daenerys snapped as she stepped forward.

“Yet you have married him?” Catelyn asked and she nodded. “The Seven decree that incest is a monstrous sin and they will strike you down,”

“We don’t follow the Seven. We are dragons and we do not answer to either gods or men,”
Daenerys said with a fierce glare at Catelyn who did not back down. The two women stared at each other before Daenerys closed her eyes briefly. When she opened them, Ned heard a roar from a dragon, it was not close, but it was still loud. Ned knew that she was sending a message and clearly so did Catelyn.

“Jon, please continue your story,” Robb said somewhat apprehensive.

“Don’t worry about Lady Catelyn, she listens to everything her stupid septa says since she has no thoughts of her own,” Jon said as he took hold of her hand. Then he turned to Ned, his purple eyes blazing.

“Your fathers had everything to gain. If my father had called the council, your father and his allies would have most likely exposed him as a traitor to my grandfather. You can very well imagine the outcome of such a scenario. My father would have been executed, his wife and children would have been punished as well and the realm would be left at the mercy of an unstable king whose only heir would have been a young boy. House Targaryen would have become vulnerable without any stable and strong heir and leader.”

“Even you cannot deny that at the time everyone looked to my father as the hope for a better ruler. With him gone, the realm would have to search elsewhere,”

Ned shook his head at Jon who continued anyway.

“Let me ask you, did you not find it odd that your lord father was trying to forge multiple connections with the south unlike all the lords of the North before him? He arranged the betrothal for his heir to ruling house of the Riverlands instead of choosing a northern bride as was the tradition. Surely, the northern lords would not have been pleased by this decision. Instead of trying to appease his lords by sending you, his second son to foster with a Northern house, he sent you to the Vale. Most likely in the hope that you would develop a strong connection with Jon Arryn and his other ward Robert Baratheon. Another southern alliance which would have not sat well in the North.”

“Lord Rickard has already used his two sons to build connections with the south and then he arranged the marriage of his only daughter to Robert Baratheon instead of a loyal northern house. Why was your father so keen on making allies in the south? The North has always prided itself for keeping out of southern politics, then why did your father break away from the norm?”

Ned shook his head, this was not true, it had to be a lie. His father was a Northman, and northmen prided themselves on staying out of Southern politics. The marriage to Catelyn made sense, the Riverlands were a neighboring region, having a favorable relationship with them was just a smart decision nothing more. The Riverlands would be able to provide food to help during the cold winters, yet it was just a good move by his father to benefit the North, it was not part of a grand conspiracy.

As for Lyanna’s marriage with Robert. That had been something that he had set up and pushed for because Robert had asked it of him. His father had little to do with that marriage, it was a favor to a friend.

Ned explained this reasoning to Jon who simply laughed and looked at him like he was simple minded.

“If the North had survived for centuries without the assistance of any southern houses then why the sudden need to build an alliance with the Riverlands? But for the sake of argument, I’ll agree with your logic and accept that the Riverlands alliance served the North’s interest. But then how do explain the decision to send you to foster in the Vale? Did your father think that the northern houses
were unworthy or unfit to foster his son? Why not send you to a Riverland house to strengthen ties with his new allies? Why choose the Lord Paramount of another kingdom for this task especially the one who was fostering the heir to the Stormlands? He could have sent you to foster in Riverrun to strengthen ties or another kingdom like the Reach or Westerlands who could provide valuable trade opportunities in the future. The Vale offered no trade or financial benefits in an alliance but they did have a powerful army and were already the foster home for a future Lord Paramount. Your father was forming alliances with kingdoms who not only had powerful military forces but also had no strong ties to the crown as well, unlike the Tyrells who owed the status to the dragons or Tywin Lannister who was Hand of the King and a childhood friend of my grandfather.”

“The marriage between Robert and Lyanna was something that came from me. My father had nothing to do with it, do not speak like you knew him or his thoughts,” Ned said firmly.

“Do you truly believe that your father, the Lord of Winterfell and Warden of the North agreed to marry his only daughter to a southern lord because his second son had advised him to do so? Tell me, do Arya or Bran tell you what to do when you make critical decisions for your house and lands? No they don’t. Your father agreed to betroth his only daughter to a man neither she nor himself had ever met just because you suggested it. Did he not consider that his bannermen might feel offended at continuously being ignored in favor of the South? Please admit it, he simply saw a good opportunity to increase his power and took it.”

“One time is an accident, twice is a coincidence but three times is a pattern.”

“Now, let me continue my explanation. Once the lords had decided that they could no longer abide the Targaryen rule, who would have been the most eligible choice for king? Your friend, Robert Baratheon who was the closest living relation to House Targaryen,”

“Robert did not only have blood ties to House Targaryen but he also was poised to receive the support of the North, the Riverlands and the Vale along with the Stormlands due to the alliances formed by both of your fathers.”

“Your fathers had everything to gain. Robert becomes the King while Lord Rickard’s daughter would become Queen of Westeros and Stark blood would sit on the throne one day. Similarly, Lord Hoster would gain influence at court through his marriage connections with House Stark along with having his grandchildren become the rulers of the North eventually. As for Lord Arryn, the new king would surely reward his foster father and loyal supporter. Appointing him Hand of the King would be the logical choice.”

“Lord Hoster even tried to bring the Westerlands into their alliance by trying to arrange a marriage between Jaime Lannister and his daughter Lysa. But sadly, my grandfather’s paranoia and madness destroyed that alliance before it could be formed. Still, you can clearly see the great web of treason and conspiracy that was being created in the realm”

“This means nothing,” Ned said to Jon “These are just coincidences and there is no proof of any conspiracy,” and Jon simply laughed and Ned scowled.

“Do you really believe that?” he asked and Ned nodded. “How can you not see it? All of these lords had a lot more to gain by placing Robert on the throne. Surely you are not so naive to think that all of these outcomes were mere coincidences. They were ambitious men who sensed an opportunity to seize more power for themselves,”

“How dare you accuse my father! You do not know him. He would not do this. Family, Duty, Honor—these are House Tully’s words and we live by them,” Catelyn said angrily.
“Greed, Opportunism, Hypocrisy—these words describe your family’s actions far better. When the rebellion broke out, he gave the support of the Riverlands to the rebel cause only after you were wed to Lord Stark and Jon Arryn married your sister. The grief of his daughter who was mourning her dead betrothed, justice for a fellow Lord Paramount or loyalty to the crown were not part of his thought process. He used the war to improve the standing of his own house. He forgot that it was a Targaryen who raised his family to the status of Lord Paramount. Your father had neither honor nor loyalty,” Jon told her as he glared at her.

“You are a rude, ungrateful, spiteful boy. I took you into my household for 18 years and I”

“Did what?” Jon asked angrily “Put a roof over my head? Put clothes on my back? You did the minimum for me. If it wasn’t for your husband you would have put me outside with the horses and the dogs. You did not care for me. You gave me nothing to be grateful for,” Jon spat as he glared at her.

“That is my wife you are speaking to,” Ned said as he stepped forward to close the distance between them. He had no right to speak to her that way, he raised him better than that.

“Yes, your wife. The woman you let treat me as if I was nothing for nearly my entire life. That says a lot about you as well. It shows that you didn’t care about me either,”

“That’s not true. You’re Lyanna’s son, you’re my family,” Ned said as he shook his head, surely he still remembered this.

“Then why did you let her treat me like that!” Jon shouted angrily and Ned heard another roar. This one was different, it sounded higher pitched. “You either didn’t know which means you are stupid because this happened under your own roof. Or it means that you didn’t care for me at all since you did not stop her. That means that your claim of being ‘family’ is nothing but a lie as you would not let family be treated like that. So which one is it?”

Ned angrily stared at him, he could not believe that Jon would act like this. He refused to answer his stupid question.

“You know when I was growing up at Winterfell, I often heard how people sympathized with you and your wife. Lord Eddard is so good and honorable, no lord would ever do so much for his bastard and poor Lady Catelyn, she truly is a dutiful wife to tolerate the bastard’s presence in her home. That boy does not realize how blessed he is and he should be eternally grateful to them. It’s far more than the son of some southern whore deserves.”

“So, I am grateful to you both. Thank you for stealing my name and birthright and giving it your drunk lecherous friend. Thank you for turning the trueborn heir of the most powerful dynasty to ever exist into a lowly bastard. Thank you for constantly reminding the true king of Westeros of how lucky he was to have the scraps that you threw his way. Thank you for letting people slander my father’s name for 18 years. Thank you for allowing people to taunt and make insulting comments about my mother, your own sister. I sincerely hope that I get the chance to repay all your acts of kindness and love.”

Ned stared at him and Jon stared back. They were inches apart and grey eyes stared into purple and Ned felt like they were the only two people in the world. He could hear him breathing they were standing that close to each other. How dare he accuse him of this? How could he take all of those years of kindness and throw it back in his face?

Eventually Robb pushed them apart.
“We are family,” Robb said firmly. Glancing at both of them. Ned took a few deep calming breaths before he decided to change his approach.

“I saw Ser Jorah Mormont with your party today,” he said and Jon nodded. “Did you know he was a former slaver? Did you know I was going to arrest him and execute him for this crime before he fled Westeros?”

“Yes we know that,” Daenerys said.

“Then why is he with you? He can’t be trusted,”

“He is with us because we believe in second chances,” Jon said firmly and Daenerys nodded. Ned looked at him in disbelief before he shook his head, he could let the issue of Ser Jorah slide.

“What happened in Slaver’s Bay? I have heard stories that you have been sacking cities,”

“Yes, we sacked two cities. Astapor and Meereen,” Daenerys said. “We sacked the cities and killed the masters that ruled and oppressed the slaves,”

“We set the slavers of Astapor aflame while in Meereen, we crucified them. The masters of Yunkai were wise to submit to us and their city was spared.” Jon said without a hint of remorse.

“That is what our reports told me, but did you have to do it so violently? Do you not feel any remorse for committing such atrocities?”

“Violently? Have you never sacked a city in your time? Have you never been to war?” Jon asked and Ned could hear the disbelief dripping from every word.

“I have been to war. You know that,”

“Then you should know that sometimes innocents die. Cities get sacked. It happens,” Jon said defiantly. “I don’t know why you act like such a hypocrite. You are still friends with Robert Baratheon, the man who condoned the brutal murder of innocent children!” Jon yelled and Ned winced.

“As for remorse, the slavers treated slaves like they were cattle. They tore babes from their mother’s breast, they crucified children to posts and left them out in the sun as food for the carrion to punish the slaves. The masters performed many cruel acts to their slaves and in my opinion, they deserved every ounce of pain and suffering that we inflicted on them,” Daenerys added with conviction.

Ned shook his head. Violence was not the answer to violence, just because the masters were cruel did not give him the right to be cruel in return. ‘It happens’ was not good enough. Ned still remembered the brutal sack of Kings Landing. ‘It happens’ was definitely not good enough. As for Robert…..

“What happened in Volantis?” Ned asked as he changed the subject again.

“What do you mean?” Jon asked and Ned looked at him curiously.

“You burned down an entire city,”

“No, we didn’t,” Jon said as he shook his head.

“So the reports were false?” Ned asked. “We received countless reports all detailing the same thing. Tell the truth,” he said firmly.
“Tell you the truth? Why would I do that? It sounds like you’ve already judged me guilty,” he said as he folded his arms across his chest. “We did not burn down an entire city. That is not the complete truth,”

“Then tell me the truth,” Ned said firmly.

“Volantis is known as the first daughter of Valyria. It was the first colony of the Valyrian freehold and as a result it followed many of the freeholds practices, including slavery,” Jon said.

“The nobility of Volantis were called the ‘Old Blood’ and they lived behind the famous black walls of the city, a place where only the highborn nobles can reside. These nobles could trace their ancestry back to the Valyrian freehold and they were the ones who financed the slave trade in the east. They refused to stop financing slavery, so we removed them,” Daenerys said, her voice unwavering.

“Removed them? By burning them alive in their homes?” Ned spat angrily. Perhaps she was truly the Mad King’s daughter.

“Yes, we did,” Jon said stoutly.

“Could you not think of another way to get them to see things your way? You could have sieged them or starved them out,”

“The Black Walls of Volantis are huge and they are so thick that 6 horses can ride abreast at the top. It would be impossible to siege them with a conventional army. Luckily for us, we have dragons, and dragons fly,”

“So you burnt them alive because they did not agree with you. Is that how you plan to rule over Westeros?” Ned asked.

“No. We killed them after they did not agree to peacefully join us and our new empire. They were supporting slavery. Only a few moments ago you were criticizing us for working with Ser Jorah as he is a former slaver. Now you are defending the slavers? Another example of your hypocrisy?” Jon asked as he cocked his head to the side and Ned scowled.

“I am not defending the slavers. Abolishing slavery is a good thing, I am criticizing your method of doing it. You burned the nobility alive in their homes, that is cruel and a terrible act that is something that Tywin Lannister would do,”

“Are you comparing me to Tywin Lannister?” Jon asked and then he laughed, loudly and cruelly.

“You have some nerve to accuse me of that. You’re still friends with the man that condoned the brutal murder of my half brother and sister. What does that say about you? Worse still, you knew he did that and you’re now his hand. You’re actively trying to help him keep his stolen crown,” Jon spat.

Ned looked at him and cursed himself. He should have told Robert the truth earlier. He was about to open his mouth to correct Jon but then Rhaegar arrived with Ser Barristan following behind. What was Ser Barristan doing with him?

“Lord Stark,” he said, his voice was calm and clear. Ned felt his anger returning and he opened and closed his fist repeatedly.

“Prince Rhaegar,” Ned said and he tried to keep his voice level. He stared at Rhaegar, whose eyes were a much darker shade of purple than Jon and Daenerys. They stared at each other for a few
moments before Rhaegar looked away and turned towards Robb.

“I presume you are his son?” he asked and Robb nodded quickly, he looked a little in awe of Rhaegar which annoyed Ned. Did Robb not realize that Rhaegar was the cause of these problems?

“Yes. I am Robb Stark,” he said as he offered his hand.

“It is a pleasure to meet you Robb,” he said as he shook his hand and offered him a smile which Robb returned. “I have heard good things about you,”

Then he turned to his wife.

“Lady Catelyn,” he said in an icy voice. Rhaegar opened his mouth to speak again but then he closed it, perhaps he thought better of it.

“Say it,” Ned spat and Rhaegar turned towards him and then he shook his head. “You were going to say something to my wife. I want you to say it,”

“No,” he said with a shake of his head. “It wouldn’t be proper,”

“He was going to thank Lady Catelyn for her kind treatment towards me during those years. Only that would have been a lie,” Jon said and Ned watched as Rhaegar shot him a scathing look.

“Sorry father,” Jon said after a moment and Ned felt another flash of anger pass through him.

There was that word again. Father.

Jon had cast him off in place of Rhaegar Targaryen, a man he hardly knew yet he called him father all the same. Ned’s hand twitched with anger. He had raised him in his household for over 18 years and he had betrayed him for Rhaegar, a man that did not deserve to be his father.

“I would like to thank you,” Rhaegar said and Ned looked up to see that he was looking right at him. “You took Jon in and you protected him for his entire life when I could not. You were a father to him when I could not be and, for that, I am thankful,” he said as he held his hand out in front of him.

Ned stared at the hand as if it was laced with poison. He had taken Jon in and he had raised him to be a good man and yet here he was, burning down cities causing innocents to die and his stance was ‘it happens’. Rhaegar had clearly changed him and caused Jon to think this way and now here he was, thanking him for raising Jon.

Ned looked at his hand and then up at Rhaegar who had a smile on his face. Was he being mocked?

“I have raised Jon. I raised him for 18 years. I did my best to ensure that he would grow to be a good man that would do good and noble things. The Jon that I knew would protect the innocent and the weak, not burn down cities. It seems that since he met you his mind has been poisoned by you,” Ned said angrily as he voiced started to grow louder.

“I did not poison his mind. What on earth are you talking about?” he asked as his smile faltered.

“Yes, you did. The Jon that I knew would not have committed these horrendous crimes. He would not have been so nonchalant about it. It is your influence that has caused these changes. It is your fault,” Ned said angrily as he voiced started to grow louder.

“Do not blame my father for these things,” Jon said as his voice started to get louder in turn. “Those decisions were made by Daenerys and myself. Do not blame him,”
“You do not know Jon as well as you think. Jon and Daenerys hated the fact that innocents died, but they both knew that to build a better world, some people would suffer. They are both determined to build a better world and they both know that they will have to make some difficult decisions along the way. Volantis was one of those decisions,” Rhaegar said.

“I don’t know Jon as well as I think?” Ned asked in disbelief and Rhaegar nodded which caused him to laugh cruelly. “If I do not know Jon well then you don’t know him at all. You have been in his life for a little over a year,” Ned sneered and Rhaegar scowled.

“I know I have not been in his life for a long time and it is one of my biggest regrets. I wish I could have known him as he grew up just as I wish I could have had more time with Lyanna,” he said.

When he said her name Ned’s hand twitched and he nearly reached for his sword.

“How dare you speak of her name to me,” he said angrily.

“Why would I not? I loved her. She was my wife and the mother of my child. The only child I have left,"

“You did not love her. How could you love her when you barely knew her? All you did was crown her the Queen of the love and beauty. She held a childish affection for you. That is all. It was not love,”

“Don’t speak for her. You do not know what we shared, you barely knew her,”

“I knew her better than you. She was my sister,” Ned spat.

“Yes she was your sister and yet you were still willing to force her into a marriage with that pig known as Robert Baratheon,”

“I did not force her to do anything,”

“Yes, you did. She asked you to speak to your father to try and stop it and you decided not to. You stood up for Robert, you told her that he would change. You chose your friend over your sister’s happiness. What kind of man are you?”

“That is not true,”

“Yes, it is true. She spoke to your father and Brandon who did not care. She spoke to you but you were too busy defending Robert. The only one who listened was Benjen but he was powerless to do anything. You are a terrible judge of character, you thought Robert would change but you were wrong. He is still the same lecherous man that he was 18 years ago. You don’t know Jon as well as you think you do and you didn’t know Lyanna very well either,” Rhaegar said angrily, his purple eyes seemed to be growing darker in anger.

“You were the crown prince. You should have done better, you ran away with her without leaving a note. You had a wife, you did not need my sister. The entire realm rebelled and it all started because you did not do your duty,” Ned said to him and thankfully Rhaegar actually looked apologetic.

“I know I should not have ran away with her, but I loved her and I had to protect her. I had no choice,”

“Protect her? From what?” Ned asked

“From my father and from Robert,” he said simply and Ned looked at him skeptically.
“Why would your father want to harm my sister?”

“Do you know the story of the Knight of the Laughing tree?” Rhaegar asked.

“Yes but what does that have to do with this? It was just a mystery knight,”

“The mystery knight was Lyanna, my father seemed to have worked that out and he had sent men to arrest her when she arrived at Riverrun for your brother’s wedding. I found out so I went to rescue her. I got to her a few miles outside of Riverrun and explained the situation to her. She agreed to leave with me and she sent a note ahead to Riverrun and another letter by raven to Winterfell that explained her decision to leave willingly with me,” Rhaegar said and Ned shook his head. Lyanna was not the mystery knight.

“I know nothing about a note or letter. Neither did Brandon or my father, they would not have gone to Kings Landing if they knew the truth,”

“I disagree. I think the note arrived in Riverrun and someone hid it from your brother. Or perhaps Brandon saw the note and decided to rush to Kings Landing anyway. Either way, someone told him that Lyanna was with me and that is how he knew to come to Kings Landing to look for me,”

“If the note made its way to Riverrun, my father would have known about it. I would have known about it,” Catelyn said as she shook her head. “You are lying,”

“My father is not a liar,” Jon said angrily.

“Then where did the note go? No one seems to know of its existence so somebody is lying,”

“Your father is an overly ambitious man. It would not surprise me if he hid it to further his own goals,” Jon said to her

“And your father is a foolish prince who plunged the entire realm into war with his foolish actions,” Catelyn snapped

“My father is a good man and he would have been a good King, had your fathers given him a chance,” Jon said and Ned groaned. He was still repeating this nonsense.

“Jon this isn’t true. They were not plotting to overthrow him or whatever nonsense he has told you,”

“It is not nonsense, it is the truth,” Rhaegar said.

“Who told you this? I am sure that my father would not tell you his conspiracy to overthrow you,”

“Lyanna told me. She loved me and she told me of her family’s plans to betray me. She was a brave woman and that is one of the reasons that I loved her,” he said and Ned shook his head in disbelief

“You are wrong. Lyanna would never betray her family,” Ned said and Rhaegar sighed and ran his hands through his hair

“Did you truly know her? It does not sound like you did. What Lyanna did was not betraying her family, she was doing what was right,”

“Stop this nonsense. You would only have known her for a short while. Stop claiming that you truly know her,” Ned said and Rhaegar opened his mouth to speak but he interrupted him. “I have had enough of your lies,”

“They are not lies. Why are you so stubborn!” Rhaegar shouted as his frustration boiled over and he
started to get more animated as he spoke. “You have this habit of judging people and then not opening your eyes to new information. You did it with me and you did it with Jaime Lannister,” Ned looked at him in disbelief, was he really comparing himself to Jaime Lannister

“Jaime Lannister killed your father, the man he was sworn to protect. I judged him guilty because he was guilty. He did not even try to deny it,” Ned said and he watched as Rhaegar slowly shook his head

“You never thought to ask why? You never wanted to know why he did it. Just like you did not want to meet me before the Trident. Once you make your mind up about a person, that’s it. There is no changing it. I played my part in starting the rebellion but so did you. You are just as guilty as me,”

Ned quickly shook his head. This was not his fault.

“It is not my fault. By the time the battle of the Trident was upon us, the rebellion was already in full force. You are delusional if you think that I am guilty,”

“No, you are not guilty of that. If you had done more for your sister, if you had stood up for her like a brother should have then she would not have been so unhappy at the thought of marrying Robert. The betrothal would have been broken off,”

“You are foolish. Great lords do not simply break off betrothals,” Ned said as he shook his head. “My father would have had to honor this agreement,”

“Is this what you intend to do with Sansa?” Daenerys asked “Do you still intend to marry her to the Usurper’s son?”

“Yes he does,” Jon said quickly and Ned looked at him incredulously. After all Rhaegar had just said about judging people, here he was doing the same thing. Judging him before he had the chance to properly explain himself. “He is still close with the Usurper. I saw them together this morning when he led the Usurper away like he was his brother,” Jon spat.

“Jon you do not know what you are talking about,”

“I know exactly what I’m talking about. The Usurper named you his Hand and then you agreed to marry Sansa to his son to tie your houses together. From the reports that I’ve heard, Joffrey attacked Arya and was bitten by Nymeria. Then when the Lannisters demanded that Nymeria be killed for protecting Arya, you killed Lady who was innocent of any crime since Nymeria had managed to escape and you needed to appease the Usurper and his cruel family. Direwolves are a symbol of your house, they are sacred in the North but you slaughtered one like a common sheep, where was your sense of honor or justice?”

Ned shook his head, how could he know these things?

“Then when you heard rumors that I was with alive in Essos, instead of breaking the betrothal, resigning as Hand and distancing yourself from him. You have remained as his Hand and not broken the betrothal. In fact, seeing as you are working as his Hand, you are probably helping him think of ways to stop us. Tell me that that is not true,”

“Jon you don’t understand. I can’t break off a betrothal, especially one with the royal family,” Ned said quickly.

“Yes you can. It’s simple. You open your mouth and you tell him that you don’t want Sansa to marry Joffrey!”
“Ned he does not understand. He has spent his entire life as a bastard, he does not understand that there are certain courtesies and traditions that must be maintained, especially when you are dealing with the King,”

“If you call me a bastard one more time I’ll”

“Son stop,” Rhaegar commanded “He is not a bastard. He is my son. He is a prince and yet you treated him cruelly like he was nothing, you should be ashamed of yourself,” Rhaegar said as he turned towards her.

“Father don’t waste your breath on that woman. It’s amazing that she goes on about blood and birth status but forgets that she is the one who descends from a family with no royal lineage. She is the daughter of a house that grew up on the scraps thrown to them by our ancestors and then like the ungrateful dogs they are, they bit the hand that fed them,” Jon said with a dismissive wave of his hand.

“Don’t speak to my wife like that,” Ned growled at Jon. Catelyn may not have treated him as well as her own children, but that was something that could not have been avoided. It was something that was necessary. How could he insult Catelyn and her family like this?

“So she is allowed to call me a bastard but I’m not allowed to call her an ungrateful bitch? Once again you show me where your priorities lie,” Ned raised his fist in anger before he slowly dropped it. Jon was being unbelievably disrespectful, this was not the same boy that he had raised.

“Nothing here changes what Jon has said. You have not broken off the betrothal between Sansa and the crown prince, and you have not resigned as Hand. Instead of readying yourself to help us, you are defending the Usurper’s actions and laying accusations against us,” Daenerys said to him, her voice had taken on a cold and judgmental tone.

“That is not true,” Ned said quickly

“Then tell me Lord Stark” Jon said, his voice laced with venom. “What have you done to help us take back our throne?”

Ned stared at him, he did not have an answer.

“That’s exactly what I thought. You have done nothing to help us. You were never planning on helping us. You are too committed to the Usurper. You chose him over my mother, and you’re choosing him over me,”

“Jon,” Robb began but Jon cut him off.

“Robb. I know he is your father and I am sorry that it has to be this way, but it’s clear that he has made up his mind. He never intended on helping us and I’m not even sure why he’s even here,”

“I am here to see you for myself. To see if those reports are true. I knew that your experiences would have changed you, but I wanted to see if those changes are ones that I could live with,”

“Oh, so it’s all about me,” Jon said as he waved his arm back and forth in his anger. “It’s all about how I have changed. What I did in Essos or what my father did years ago. It’s never about you, is it? It’s never your fault!” he shouted and Ned heard another roar.

“Of course it’s about you!” Ned shouted. “I have not changed I am still the same man I have always been,”
“I can see that and after listening to my father, I can only question whether you were a good man in the first place,” Jon spat and the words stung.

How dare he question his integrity, he took him in and sheltered him for all these years. He did it for Lyanna, he accuses him of being loyal to Robert but he had gone against Robert for over 18 years by hiding Jon, but of course Rhaegar had failed to mention that. He looked towards him and saw that Rhaegar was staring back at him.

Ned looked away from him and then he looked at Daenerys who had her arms folded across her chest as she stared at him. Catelyn looked angry and Robb looked conflicted. Then he turned and looked around the courtyard, everyone had stopped what they were doing and they were staring at them. He saw Lady Olenna and Lord Mace Tyrell observing them from above, then he saw Roose Bolton staring at him, no emotion on his pale face. They probably overheard parts of their argument but Ned was past the point of caring.

“I have one question for you,” he said to Jon. “If you had it to do over, would you do it again?”

“Do what over?” Jon asked.

“Everything, from the day you left Winterfell. Would you change how you handled things in Essos? Would you still have burned and sacked those cities?” Ned asked, he had to know. If Jon showed the slightest remorse for what he did then perhaps their relationship could be salvaged.

Ned watched as he looked at Daenerys and then at Rhaegar. His eyes settled on Daenerys and they seemed to communicate using only their eyes. He seemed to reach an answer with her because he grabbed hold of her hand and kissed it.

“If I had it to do over,” Jon began, his voice was softer now. Soft and dangerous. “I would not do a single thing differently,” he said and Ned nodded his head slowly. He finally saw who Jon was, Rhaegar had poisoned his mind and caused him to think this way.

“Then we have no more to discuss here today. I will see you at the council King Aegon,” he said as he turned and walked away. He did not turn back and he heard Catelyn and then Robb fall into step behind him.

“Father what are you doing? He is our family,” Robb whispered to him as they walked quickly through the castle towards their rooms.

“No Robb. He has his family, Rhaegar and Daenerys. If he was family, he would not have spoken to me like that.”

“Father, he was angry that’s all. He was angry because for all his life he knew one thing and now he has learned that things that are not what they seemed. He’s trying to figure it all out at a very difficult time,”

“Robb. He did not even give me a chance, he had already made up his mind before this meeting started. Everything he said about how I was guilty about judging people and he did the exact same thing to me,” Ned said angrily.

“Perhaps you deserved it,” Robb said and this caused Ned to stop and turn around to look at him angrily.

“Robb Stark. Think of what you are saying. You can’t be siding with that bastard,” Catelyn said sternly.
“Mother, he is not a bastard and you made everything worse by repeatedly calling him that. What were you thinking? I don’t blame him for judging father. The facts are that as soon as you knew that Jon was alive, you should have done more to help him but you didn’t. What else was he supposed to think?”

“Robb Stark. Do not defend him, he is going to attack us with his armies. His Dothraki and his dragons, Robb. I am your mother and he did not treat me with respect, you should be defending me,”

“Defending you! If you had treated Jon kindly then he would not be so angry!” Robb shook his head. “You don’t know him. Neither of you know him, he’s my brother and I know he won’t fight again us,”

“That may be true but he is not our ally Robb. Think about it. Even if he does not attack the North he will likely be at war with the Riverlands and your mother’s family will be counting on our support,” Ned told him, he realised that he would have to choose between his wife or his sister’s son.

“But if we support the Riverlands then we will be fighting against Jon,” Robb pointed out quickly. “We can’t do that,”

“Why can’t we? He is no family of mine,” Catelyn said viciously. “I will not leave my brother and my father undefended against the bastard and his army of savages,”

Robb looked conflicted but he quickly composed himself before speaking.

“You don’t know Jon’s battle plans. We don’t know where and who he will attack,” he pointed out.

“That is true Robb,” Ned said as he sighed. “We will have to find out who he is allied with at the council later. Then we will make our decision,”

He saw Robb shake his head. “I can’t believe it. I can’t believe either of you. Why do you have to make this so difficult?”

Chapter End Notes

The next chapter is called the Great Council. I don't know when it'll be up, I'm behind schedule and I'm probably going to be busier in the next few weeks so I'll have less time to write this

The latest it'll be up by is the 3rd March.

Let me know what you think, comments are always appreciated, especially the longer ones

Thanks for reading
Sleepy
The Great Council

Chapter Summary

This character has POV...that character has a POV

Everyone gets a POV

Chapter Notes

Thanks to GOT88 for the help provided with this story

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The Dragon’s Hand

Tyrion and Jaime walked silently together through the castle. Jaime was a few steps ahead of him as he led the way to their father’s chambers. Tyrion was nervous, he had no idea how his father would react to him. Would he be surprised? Disappointed? Relieved? Tyrion settled on disappointed. His father had thought that he had gotten rid of him and that was clearly not the case.

Then, he remembered Tysha and what his father had done to her. His nervousness turned into anger.

As they walked through the corridor, Tyrion saw Lannister guards posted along the hallways. None of them had their helmets on so Tyrion was able to see their faces. Several of the younger guards nodded towards Jaime, they all knew who he was, Jaime was Lord Tywin’s golden son. They didn’t pay Tyrion much notice which suited him perfectly.

However, some of the older guards seemed to recognize him. They nodded and smiled to Jaime before looking at him and realizing who he was. Their eyes and their mouths opened in shock and Tyrion heard them whispering to each other after they had walked past. Did any of these men take part in that shameful act? Tyrion shuddered at the thought.

They continued to walk through the stone hallways until Jaime stopped outside of a large wooden door. Two Lannister guardsmen stood on either side, Tyrion didn’t recognize these men.

“You two,” Jaime said to them authoritatively. “Move along,” he said to them and the guards quickly moved to take up positions further down the hallway.

“Here we are,” Jaime said to him. “Would you like me to go in first?”
“No,” Tyrion said as he shook his head. “Let’s do it together,”

Jaime pushed open the door and led them into the room. Tyrion immediately saw his father standing on the far side of the room with his back to them as he stared out the window.

“What is it Jaime,” he said quietly. Tyrion knew this voice, he was likely deep in thought.
“How did you know it was me?” Jaime asked

“I have guards outside of my door and you are the only person that can send them away and enter without knocking. If the King wanted to see me, his squire would have knocked before entering,” he said as he turned around. He stared at Jaime before his eyes drifted downwards until they met Tyrion’s.

Tyrion saw a brief flicker of something on his father's face, it looked like he was disappointed. They stared at each other for what felt like an eternity. Tyrion knew his father, he knew that he was planning something. He was always planning something, it was just his nature.

“Leave us,” he said as he moved towards the desk in the room. He pulled out a chair and sat on it. “That was not a request,” he said with a pointed glare towards Jaime. Tyrion looked towards him and nodded, he was not afraid of his father. Jaime looked at him nervously before silently walking out of the room.

Once the door closed they stared at each other for a few moments before Tywin wordlessly pointed towards a chair. Tyrion looked towards the hearth and he realised that it was not lit and he quickly began to feel cold, it was a stark contrast to the room that he was in with Jaime. Tyrion sat on the chair and stared at his father, he had not aged in the slightest. His green eyes were still as sharp and dangerous as ever.

Tyrion waited patiently, he wanted his father to speak first, he was curious as to what he would say.

“I knew you survived,” he said as he shook his head and Tyrion heard the disappointment dripping from every word. “It was too good to be true,” Tyrion felt his anger return, his father had plotted to kill him, failed and all he felt was disappointment. There was not a hint of remorse.

“What do you mean father?” Tyrion asked, deciding to play dumb.

“Don’t play stupid with me. You are much smarter than that,” he snapped. “I take it Jamie told you the plan and he helped to smuggle you out of the city?”

“No, he did not,” Tyrion said. This confused Tyrion briefly, if his father had suspected that Jaime was behind his supposed escape then why had he not punished him? Then Tyrion remembered who his father was. As long as Tyrion remained out of sight, his father’s wish would have been fulfilled. Also, it was not in his father’s interests to punish Jaime as it could have driven Jaime away from him.

Tyrion was also surprised that Tywin had not yet gone to Robert to have Jaime released from his vows anyway. Wiping out the crown’s debt to his house in order to get his son back as his heir was something Tyrion would have expected him to do.

“Then who helped you?” he asked.

“Varys,” Tyrion simply said. He saw no reason to lie and if more people knew of the Spider’s schemes it would be for the better. His father nodded slowly.

“Of course, it was the Spider. This was far too well done for it to be Jaime’s scheme. How did he do it?”

“He led me into a secret passageway behind your rooms and I overheard your entire plot,”

“So you overheard everything?” he asked and Tyrion nodded. Surprisingly, his father did not look angry. “So Varys is plotting with the Targaryens,” he said and Tyrion paused before answering.
Whatever his answer was, Varys would become Tywin’s enemy.

“No, he’s not plotting with the Targaryens,” he settled on. He decided to tell his father about the conspiracy. He would likely tell Robert and at the very least, they would divert some of their attention to finding Varys’s false prince.

“Varys is working for himself. He is planning to sit a false prince on the throne,” Tyrion said, Tywin looked at him curiously and Tyrion decided to tell him the full story. When he was finished, Tywin just looked at him curiously before he shook his head

“Impossible,” was all he said.

“What’s impossible?”

“He did not survive, I saw the body. I presented it to King Robert myself,”

“Varys outsmarted you once when he helped me escape. Perhaps, he outsmarted you again with this boy,” Tyrion lied. He knew that the boy was a fake but he wanted to needle his father. It seemed his words had the desired effect because his green eyes narrowed.

“So there is a boy claiming to be Aegon Targaryen, so what. That seems to be the popular trend these days,” he said and Tyrion knew who he was talking about.

“This King is real. He is who he says he is,”

“So Rhaegar Targaryen actually had a son with Lyanna Stark?”

“Yes he did, I did not believe it at first but his story makes sense. He will tell all the Lords and ladies his story at the council,” Tyrion said lightly as he looked around the room. “We will find out their plans for the realm, who is allied with who and many other fascinating things,”

“I take it that you are their Hand?” he said with a glance at the pin on his chest and Tyrion nodded.

“So you are here helping them to try and take back Westeros. You’re going to attack your own family,” he said with a shake of his head. “You have no shame,”

“After you all plotted to kill me!” Tyrion shouted. He was outraged, was he really trying to portray him as the bad guy?

“I was not going to go through with it. You are my son and you are a Lannister,” he said firmly but Tyrion was not buying it. He shook his head quickly

“You are lying to me,”

“I am not,” he said firmly and for a moment, he almost believed him. “We are Lannisters and we are family and the family always comes first,”

Tyrion looked at him curiously. He was trying to work out what game his father was playing. Tyrion looked into his father’s eyes, his green eyes were staring into him and Tyrion returned his gaze.

“You want me to help you,” Tyrion said slowly and his father gave a quick almost imperceptible nod of his head. Tyrion couldn’t help but smile, he did not need his father, and neither would he help him. He had not shown a hint of remorse, he only saw him as a pawn to be used.

“I don’t believe it. The great Tywin Lannister, the most powerful man in Westeros, wants help from
his dwarf of a son,” he said with a cruel laugh. “I will never help you,” Tyrion spat as he stood up and kicked the chair back.

Tywin stared at him angrily. “Then why are you here?”

Tyron stared at him for a few moments. Why was he here? Was he hoping that his father would apologize for his actions like Jaime? He knew that it was a foolish thing to hope for. No, he knew exactly why he was here

“Tysha,” he said simply. He stared at his father who had a blank expression on his face and Tyrion felt his blood boil.

“Who is Tysha?” he asked with a shake of his head.

He did not even remember her, the woman that he loved. The woman that he had his guards brutally rape and he did not even remember who she was.

“I will never forgive you for what you did to Tysha,” Tyrion said as he began to move to the door. He put his hand on the handle before he turned around to face him. “I spoke to Jaime earlier and he knows that I am trusted advisor to the King and Queen. He wanted me to try and save you, to send you to the wall and I would have tried to do that for you. But you don’t deserve mercy,” Tyrion said bitterly as stared at him.

“I came here to let you know that you will die for what you did to Tysha,” he said and he watched as his father’s green eyes narrowed. Tyrion took one long last look at the man he had to call a father and then he left the room.

The Dragon Reborn

Jon stomped angrily through the castle towards their rooms in the eastern tower. His blood was pounding in his ears and he knew he was making a lot of noise. He knew that Rhaegar and Daenerys would be following him. As he walked towards their rooms, he saw several of their Unsullied guarding the hallways, this confirmed to him that he was at least heading in the right direction.

As he walked, he replayed the conversation with Lord Stark, it had gone badly, much worse than he had hoped for. After speaking to Robb, he had hoped that he and Lord Stark would also be able to have a happy and good reunion. Instead, he had started the meeting by attacking him and blaming him for starting this war. Jon could not believe he had the nerve to say that to his face. He grunted in anger and continued to stomp through the castle.

Eventually he saw Red Flea standing guard in front of a large wooden door.

“Are these our rooms?” he growled at him and the man had a confused expression on his face as he looked at him. Jon decided to push past him and enter the room anyway. He was the King and he had dragons, every damn room in this castle should belong to him.

The door opened into a large room that seemed to be the separate hall that Lady Whent had mentioned. Jon saw numerous doors along the sides of the hall that must have led off to other rooms. At the far end of the hall, there was a long table that was lined with food and wine. There were several tapestries hanging from the walls and Jon saw large wooden shelves lined with books. The floor was covered in several thick rugs and clearly Lady Whent made sure that their rooms were appropriately furnished. Jon took a few steps into the room and then he turned around.
Rhaegar and Daenerys were looking at him, his father looked unhappy whilst Daenerys had a cautious expression on her face. Behind them stood a knight that Jon had never seen before. Jon opened his mouth to speak, but Rhaegar got there first

“What the hell happened?” he asked as he looked at him “I thought we wanted to have a conversation with him and convince him to join us? Instead when I get there I find you all arguing so loudly I’m surprised the entire castle did not overhear you!”

“What happened is that he accused me of starting this war when it was his friend, Robert fucking Baratheon who started this war! But he can’t see that because he is too busy protecting him!” Jon yelled. “The first thing he said to me was that he wished we were meeting under better circumstances, like the whole thing was my fault. He was never prepared to offer me help today. He is still committed to the Usurper!”

Jon started to pace around the room in anger. He walked to the table and picked up a silver goblet, he felt its weight before throwing it across the room and into a stone wall. The sound of it cracking and breaking into a pieces did not satisfy him like he thought it would.

“Jon,” he heard Daenerys say quietly but he ignored her.

“Then he brought his wife, who is still the same vile, unkind, unrepentant spiteful woman she always has been,” Jon continued. “She dared to call me a bastard despite knowing the truth,” he said as he turned around to face them. Rhaegar and Daenerys were both looking at him warily and that strange man had a neutral expression on his face. Jon realised that the man was likely judging him but he didn’t care about that, he could judge him all he wanted.

“A bastard. She called me a fucking bastard. I am the trueborn Targaryen King and she cannot even treat me with the respect that I am due,” Jon spat as he began to walk around the room again. “Lord Stark had the nerve to ask me if I showed any remorse for what happened in Essos and yet his wife did not show any remorse for how she treated me. I was a child without a mother and she treated me as if I was nothing,”

“Jon,” Rhaegar said to him. “You still should have kept your composure, you are the King,” and Dany slowly nodded in agreement. He looked at her in disbelief before he quickly walked over to her until he was stood right in front of her.

“How would you feel if it were Daeron in my situation? How would you feel if some strange woman had our child and instead of loving him and caring for him, she treated him like he was nothing? Imagine a woman treating him like he was a mistake. What would you do in my situation? How would you react?” he looked at her after he finished speaking. He saw the fire behind her lilac eyes and he knew that she agreed with him and she shared his anger.

"How are you so calm?” Jon said as he turned towards his father. “Lord Stark said horrible things to you as well. He blames you for mother’s death and refuses to acknowledge his own mistakes. He believes that you have poisoned my mind, he is a fool. A northern fool,” he finished with a shake of his head.

“Jon, I am trying to be calm because we are still at a negotiation and we need to leave a good impression. This is your first public appearance in Westeros and you just made a massive scene in the courtyard!” Jon rolled his eyes and turned around to look out of the window.

“Yes I am angry at what Lord Stark said to me. It seems that he is still the same stubborn man that he was all those years ago, but we must push past this and refocus. You’ve gotten your anger of your chest. So, now try to calm down so we can accomplish something productive,” Rhaegar said. Jon
stared out of the window and took deep breaths, trying to calm himself down. From this window, he could see their camp being constructed.

“Forgive me your graces, this may not be my place,” the strange man said and Jon turned around to look at him. He was looking at him nervously and Jon nodded, letting him speak.

“Lord Stark is a good man. I was a part of King Robert’s small council and he did good things when he was Hand of the King.”

“You served on King Robert’s small council?” Daenerys asked “Who are you?”

“I am Ser Barristan Selmy, Lord Commander of the Kingsguard,” he said as he fell to his knees in front of them. “Or I was part of his Kingsguard. I would like to serve House Targaryen, the true rulers of Westeros,”

Jon looked at him before speaking

“Ser Barristan Selmy, you are well known throughout Westeros. I admired you when I was a child but I am no longer a child. I am King now and I have to look at things from all perspectives. If I look at your actions from Lord Stark’s side, you are an honorable knight who pledged your sword to a man who showed you mercy after defeating you in battle. But if I look at you from my side, then you are a knight who forsook his oaths to my house, the moment the tide turned against us and then loyally served a man who condoned the murders of my half siblings and their innocent mother.”

Jon looked at the kneeling old knight and then he looked at Daenerys and then Rhaegar who nodded slowly, if his father trusted him then it was good enough.

“But I believe in second chances and if my father trusts you then it is good enough for me.”

“You may rise Ser Barristan,” Dany said and the knight rose to his feet. “We will have to get you some new armor,”

“Tell me about the relationship between Lord Stark and the Usurper,” Jon commanded and Ser Barristan nodded. “Tell me everything. Do not leave anything out,”

“I will have to start from the beginning. I have served throughout King Robert’s entire reign. I watched him as he changed over the years, he transformed from a young charismatic warrior to a fat drunk whoring King. King Robert was not faithful to his wife and he frequently spent his time whoring, drinking or hunting. He was not what a King was supposed to be. It was only due to the tireless work of Lord Jon Arryn that the realm didn’t collapse from neglect. King Robert frequently threw feasts and tourneys which only served to bankrupt the realm,”

“Forgive me Ser Barristan, but what does this have to do with Lord Stark and the King?” Daenerys asked and Jon agreed with her. He was rambling and Jon was not in the mood for this.

“When Lord Arryn died, the King ignored the Queen’s requests to summon her father or name Ser Jaime as Hand, instead he named Lord Stark. When Lord Stark came to the capital, I noticed a change in the King. He started to laugh more and it seemed Lord Stark was the only person able to get through to him and change his ways. This continued during the war in the Vale,” he said “They shared a common goal in getting justice for Jon Arryn,”
“And you think this event brought them closer together?” Daenerys asked and Ser Barristan nodded.

“How would you describe their relationship?” Jon asked as he stepped closer to him.

“It was a close relationship, like brothers,” he said and Jon nodded and turned around. This only served to confirm what he already knew, he was committed to the Usurper.

“Ser Barristan. When the first reports of our presence came in from the east were you with Lord Stark?” Daenerys asked and the room was silent for a few moments.

“Yes I was your grace. I remember it clearly, we were about to start our march into the Vale, we were not too far from here when we received the raven. It arrived in the presence of the King, Lord Stark, Lord Tywin, Prince Joffrey amongst others. When Lord Stark read the letter he looked angry,”

“Angry?” Dany asked.

“Yes your grace he looked angry,”

“Why was he angry? Did you ask him?” Daenerys asked as Jon turned around. He saw Ser Barristan shake his head. Why would Lord Stark be angry? Then Jon understood.

“He was angry because he knew that we had dragons and would return to take his brother’s throne,” Jon sneered and no one in the room answered him. Jon ran his hands through his hair and sighed.

“Fine. It seems we don’t have the support of Lord Stark, which means we won’t have the support of Hoster Tully and the Riverlands. Which means we need the Reach,” Jon said. He would rather have waited for Tyrion but it seemed that he was busy elsewhere.

“Your grace, when I was serving on King Robert’s small council in the weeks before the council, he instructed Lord Renly to treat with the Tyrells and to marry their daughter, the Lady Margaery,” Ser Barristan said and Jon let out a loud sigh of frustration and held his face in his hands. Things were not going according to plan at all.

“The Tyrells are more trouble than they’re worth. First they want to me to marry their daughter, then it was Robb and now it’s Renly? What games are they playing? Where is our god damn Hand?” Jon asked into the silence, they really needed Tyrion right now. This was the type of situation where he would excel and his absence really annoyed Jon.

“That doesn’t make any sense,” Rhaegar said after a few moments. “The Tyrells want royal blood to secure their hold on the Reach. They are an ambitious house and they want to be on the winning side. They won’t accept that offer,”

“I will deal with the Tyrells” Dany said firmly. “I will speak to Lady Olenna alone,”

“Why can’t I come with you?” Jon snapped as he scowled angrily at her.

“I know you Jon. You are not in the right mind now. I think you should stay here for a while and unwind. Push the thoughts of Lord Stark out of your mind and refocus ahead of the council. We will have a chance to speak to all the lords as a whole and convince them to join us,” she said as she gave him a pointed look. Jon nodded slowly, he was not happy being left behind, but he did not want to argue with Dany of all people today.

“Ser Barristan,” Rhaegar said. “Tell us about the Riverlands? We know that the Usurper went to war in the Vale and he exposed Lysa Arryn’s infidelities. How did the Riverlords take it?”
“Not very well as you would imagine. Hoster Tully did not send men to join our cause and all the Riverlords stayed out of the conflict. They only did the minimum that was required,” he replied.

“So we have a chance of convincing some of the Riverlords to our side?” Dany asked,

“I doubt it,” Jon said bitterly. “Lady Catelyn hates me and she will never join our side, not after today,” he left the rest unspoken. If the Tullys did not support him then Lord Stark would be faced with a choice, him or his wife. Judging by the fact that he had let her treat him terribly for every day of his life, Jon already knew which side he’d pick.

If and when Lord Stark sided with his wife, then that would mean that they would be at war with the North. He would have to fight against Robb, his brother. No, he wouldn’t he shook his head. He would think of another way, he would not fight against them.

“You’re right, we wouldn’t be able to get the Tullys but we’d be able to get some of the Riverlords,” Rhaegar said to him. “House Whent is already loyal to us. House Darry, Mooton, Goodbrook and Ryger all remained loyal to the crown during the rebellion,”

“That’s not a lot, those are smaller houses right?” Dany asked and Rhaegar nodded.

“A divided Riverlands could be a problem. We would have to devote a lot of resources to support those houses,” Jon pointed out. “House Mooton is at Maidenpool which is relatively close to Dragonstone. House Darry is not too far from here but I have no idea where those other two houses are, we could end up spreading our forces very thin,”

“That is true but you should still speak to their lords and convince them to join us. Any food they can spare will be a bonus,” Rhaegar said and Jon nodded. The pieces were starting to come together in his mind. The Stormlands and the Westerlands will never support them. The North and the Riverlands would likely ally together and this gave Jon an idea to weaken this alliance.

“If I tell the Lords that Lord Stark had been hiding me all these years then it would ruin the relationship between him and the King which would cause Lord Stark to be wary of supporting the man who would view him as a traitor. Then the Usurper will lose the support of the North. The Riverlands are connected to the North by blood and they have no love or bond with the Usurper which would mean that Robert would lose two of the kingdoms before the war itself. Lord Stark would have no choice but to remain neutral, he can’t fight against us and the Usurper,”

“I’m afraid that won’t work,” Rhaegar said with a shake of his head. “War will come to the Riverlands, it always does. Lord Stark would have to come to Lord Tully’s aid seeing as they are related through marriage,”

Jon sighed in frustration but he knew that his father was right. When he declared war on House Tully, the North would follow, there was just no winning in this situation. The room was silent for a few moments before the door opened and Tyrion entered.

“Where on earth have you been?” Jon asked as soon as he saw him. Then, he saw who else entered the room. He was wearing the same armor as Ser Barristan and his golden hair was unmistakable, it was Ser Jaime Lannister.

Jon immediately stepped forward and stood next to Daenerys, he eyed Ser Jaime warily. Ser Jaime however was not focused on him, he was looking at his father.

The Silver Prince
Rhaegar stared into Jaime’s green eyes. Jaime had changed over the years, he was not the wide eyed young man that he remembered from when he had left the capital for the Trident. He had grown older over the years, his face had aged and looked worn down, but he was still unquestionably Jaime Lannister

“Prince Rhaegar,” he croaked. His voice had changed, it was deeper than he remembered.

“Ser Jaime Lannister,” he replied in a formal tone. Rhaegar already knew why he killed his father, he knew that he was justified in that act.

“Prince Rhaegar, I am sorry for what I have done. I am sorry for not protecting Princess Elia or Rhaenys and Aegon. I had no choice,” Jaime began but he was interrupted by Ser Barristan.

“You should have been protecting them, not killing your King,” he said viciously. Rhaegar quickly glanced at Ser Barristan and saw that he was red in the face with anger. Rhaegar was confused by this until he realised that Jaime had probably not told Ser Barristan why he had did what he did.

“That is exactly why I had no choice,” Jaime said as his eyes fell to the floor. “My father and his forces were sacking the city and the King was about to give the order. I had no choice, if I did not stop him it would have all been for nothing,”

Then Rhaegar understood. Jaime could not protect them both, if he tried to protect his family, then his father would have blown up the entire city. His family had to be sacrificed in order to save an entire city. Rhaegar sighed, he did not know what he would have done in that situation

“Prince Rhaegar, your father, he was,”

“Mad?” Rhaegar said as Jamie looked up at him “Cruel? Evil?” I know what he was Ser Jaime,” he said

“Your grace. Your father had a terrible plan. The city would have been destroyed.”

“I know Jaime,” Rhaegar said in a tired voice. “Your brother told me, he told us all,”

“What plan was this?” Ser Barristan asked and Rhaegar turned to him. “My father planted caches of wildfire under the city. His plan was to turn the entire city into one huge funeral pyre. If Ser Jaime did not kill him, that is exactly what he would have done,”

Rhaegar watched as Ser Barristan flinched at the words. “Wildfire?” he whispered and Rhaegar nodded. “Why did you not tell anyone? There could still be wildfire under the city. We could have a disaster on our hands,”

“Who would have believed me? Lord Stark judged me guilty from the moment he saw me, he was not interested in the truth. My father did not care, he was busy organizing the marriage between Cersei and Robert. Who would I have told?” he asked Barristan who did not have an answer.

“You have despised me for years and you of all people did not ask me the truth. You were my Lord Commander and you did not even think to ask me why. You’re just as guilty as Lord Stark,”

“Enough of this,” Rhaegar said as Ser Barristan opened his mouth to retaliate. “Ser Jaime, you were right to stop my father but that was not your duty. I should have stopped him myself,”

“You said you were going to call a council,” Jamie said and Rhaegar nodded. He was surprised that
he remembered.

“Why are you here Ser Jaime?” he asked

“I would like to join you,” he said quietly and Rhaegar looked at him in surprise.

“You are Tywin Lannister’s son. His golden lion,” he pointed out. “You want to fight against your own family?”

He saw Jaime hesitate for a few moments and Tyrion quickly stepped in.

“He does not want to fight against his family,” Tyrion said quickly before Jaime interrupted him.

“I don’t think I will be able to take up arms against my own family.” he said as he looked at him.

“But my family have done some horrible things. I have done horrible things and I want to atone for them, I want to do good, I want to be a true knight,” he said sincerely.

“I want to be truthful to you both. I have done things in my past that I am not proud of, things that I should confess before you decide if you want to take me into your service,” Jaime began and Rhaegar saw Tyrion try to stop him.

“Let him speak,” Daenerys commanded

“The royal children are not Robert’s. They are mine, all three of them,” he said and Rhaegar froze.

“You fathered children with the Queen? Your sister?” Ser Barristan asked and Rhaegar noticed Tyrion did not look surprised.

“Yes, I did. We used to have intimate relations but I broke it off with her,” Jaime said

“Tyrion did you know this?” Jon asked and Tyrion nodded “Why didn’t you tell us?”

“I had no proof and even if I could prove this what would you have done?”

“We would have told Robert! We would have told the entire realm and let them know that the King is a cuckold! This information would destroy the Lannister and Baratheon alliance and make our job much easier,” Jon said immediately.

“What about the children? What about Joffrey, Myrcella and Tommen? What about Jaime and Cersei? If Robert believed you then he would have had them all killed,”

“So is this why you hid it? To protect your family?” Jon asked in an accusatory tone.

“To protect Tommen and Myrcella who are innocent children. They did not deserve to die for the actions of their parents or the circumstances of their birth. You two of all people should understand that,” Tyrion replied and Rhaegar saw both Jon and Dany purse their lips.

“You should have told us and trusted that we would not have revealed it. This relationship does not work if we don’t trust each other,” Daenerys said firmly and Jon nodded.

“I apologize your graces,” Tyrion said with a small bow

“That is not the only shameful act that I have committed,” Jaime continued but Daenerys interrupted him.

“That is enough Ser Jaime, we can continue this topic at a later time. We are very busy today as you can imagine,” she said and Jaime nodded.
Rhaegar looked at him slowly before he turned to look back at Jon and Daenerys. They were both looking at each other before Jon stepped forward.

“Ser Jaime,” he said in a clear voice. “As I informed Ser Barristan earlier, I believe in second chances. It seems that you are genuine in your wish to atone for your sins so we will try and find a place for you,”

“We will speak to you later Ser Jaime, after the council come and find us again,” Daenerys said dismissing him. Ser Jaime nodded and bowed to them both before leaving the room. Once he left Jon and Daenerys turned to Tyrion.

“Do you trust him?” she immediately asked,

“Yes,” Tyrion said firmly. “I know my brother and he is telling the truth, this is not a trick,”

“What happened between you?” Jon asked. “You told me what happened between you and your family and how Jaime failed to protect you. Why do you trust him now?”

“He apologized to me for everything and it was the first thing he did when he saw me,” Tyrion said as he looked at both of them. “He also apologized for Tysha and he was going to tell me the truth about her without me asking. He would not have done that if he was not serious about making a change,”

Rhaegar nodded slowly. Tyrion had told him about what happened to his first wife, Tysha and Jaime’s role in the deception.

“Your graces,” Rhaegar said “I think you should trust Tyrion. If he believes that his brother is sincere, and he knows him better than we do, then we should trust his judgment,” he looked at Tyrion who gave him a small grateful smile.

“Ser Jaime is still one of the best swordsmen in the realm,” Ser Barristan pointed out through gritted teeth and Rhaegar nodded in agreement.

“He was named to the Kingsguard at a very young age for that reason,” he added.

“Fine,” Jon said with a sigh. “We will take in Ser Jaime. However, we will be careful about where we use him. I don’t want him to fight against Lannister forces. I don’t want him to see his father’s army and start questioning his loyalty on the battlefield,”

“What are your plans for Lord Tywin after you win the war, your grace?” Ser Barristan asked.

“Death” Daenerys said firmly and Jon nodded. Rhaegar usually found himself counselling mercy to them but in this case he agreed. What Tywin Lannister did to his wife and children was inexcusable. They were innocent of any crimes and he had his dogs attack them all the same. He turned his head towards Tyrion and saw that he too was nodding in agreement.

“Tyrion, I thought you would have had an objection to this,” Rhaegar said and he shook his head.

“I spoke to my father before I came here. He has shown no remorse for what he did to me,” Tyrion said bitterly and Rhaegar nodded slowly.

“Tyrion we spoke to Lord Stark earlier,” Jon said and he saw Tyrion look at him hopefully. “It did not go well,” and Jon briefly recapitulated the conversation to him, somehow the tale grew worse at the second time of telling.
“That is not good,” Tyrion said after he heard the story. “It means we need the Reach now,”

“I will handle the Reach,” Daenerys said firmly. “We need to discuss something else with you,”

“We need to discuss the Riverlands,” Jon said “Some of the Riverlords are already loyal to us and perhaps we will be able to convince more of them to join our side today however we will need new overlords,” Jon said and Rhaegar agreed with him. The Tullys had tried to betray him before as part of the conspiracy to sit Robert Baratheon on the throne. They had also fought to overthrow his family in the rebellion when they had no right to feel aggrieved by his house. They should have remained loyal to the crown. There was also the selfish actions of Catelyn Tully towards his son, actions she clearly did not feel any remorse over. Yes, the Tully’s would have to be punished.

“I understand the need to punish House Tully,” Tyrion said “Stripping them of their position as Lord Paramounts of the Riverlands would be a wise step as would reducing the amount of lands they own and giving those lands to neighboring, loyal lords. Who will you raise to the position of Overlord in their stead?”

“We don’t know. We don’t know much about the Riverlords,” Dany admitted “That’s why we need your help. We need a Lord that is powerful enough to hold the Riverlands for us and we don’t know who to choose,”

“House Whent could be an option your grace,” Ser Barristan said.

“They are unable to maintain Harrenhal,” Rhaegar pointed out. “As we are hosting and paying for the council, they have enough money to hire enough people to clean the entire castle but they cannot do it without our help. I am not sure you should raise them to the position of Lord Paramount of the Riverlands,”

“I imagine the other houses are in a similar position,” Tyrion muttered “You could just annex the Riverlands,”

“What?” Ser Barristan asked

“Join the Riverlands to the Crownlands. That way you will be their overlords,” Tyrion explained and Rhaegar found himself shaking his head.

“That wouldn’t work. It would put an enormous amount of work on their plate. One of the advantages of having overlords is that it they can manage their own region and filter issues so only the more serious matters get brought up before the King,” Rhaegar said. “If you remove that then you will have to deal with nearly every issue in the Riverlands as well as the other bigger issues in the realm and beyond,”

“That’s true but it is an alternative to selecting a new overlord. Perhaps, the best course of action would be to wait until the war is over until you select a new lord paramount,” Tyrion advised and Rhaegar nodded in agreement.

“We have a bit of time before the council starts,” Daenerys said. “Brother, can you stay here with Jon and Ser Barristan. Tyrion and I will speak to the Tyrells,”

Rhaegar looked at Jon who nodded slowly. She gave him a quick kiss before she and Tyrion left the room to go and find the Tyrells. Once she was gone, he saw Jon run his hands through his hair.

“How do you feel son?” he asked

“I hate the fact that it’s come to this. I don’t want to fight against Robb, or Bran, or anyone from
Winterfell,” he said quietly and Rhaegar sat next to him and gently rubbed his back trying to comfort him.

“We’ll find a way Jon. I think that our best plan will be to win in the south as soon as we can. If we defeat Robert quickly, then there will be nothing left to fight for,”

“Well, let’s hope we defeat Robert quickly,”

The Kraken’s Daughter

Asha Greyjoy was walking through the hallways of Harrenhall with her father. They intended on seeing King Robert and Lord Stark to try and negotiate terms to get her brother back. However, her father had no idea that she had already personally agreed terms with the Targaryens.

A part of Asha was curious to see her brother again, she had not seen him in over 10 years and she realised that he would scarcely remember her. However, another part of her was jealous of Theon. She had worked side by side with their father for years but her father had jumped at the opportunity to get his son back to name him as his heir.

Asha knew that her father was a brave but foolish man, his embarrassing defeat in the rebellion had proved this. She knew that he likely had some pathetic scheme or trick in his mind that would likely only serve to bring further embarrassment onto their people. Asha loved her father despite his weaknesses and she did not like the idea of going against her family, but she needed to do this to help the Iron Islands in the long term. If her father tried to bring back the Old Way then the Ironborn would never recover.

She carefully watched her father as they walked towards the King’s rooms. He was muttering things to himself and she saw him smile after a few words. Yes, he was definitely plotting something.

Soon, they arrived outside of a door that was guarded by two knights of the Kingsguard.

“Lord Balon Greyjoy to see King Robert Baratheon,” her father said to the men. They looked at each other slowly before one entered the room briefly. He returned and then he sent them in. The King’s rooms were moderately sized, much bigger than her’s at Pyke however Asha couldn’t help but notice that the room looked, plain. The room was simply furnished and Asha could not help that the King would not be happy with this accommodation.

She spotted the King sitting in a chair by the fire. She had heard stories about King Robert, she heard that he was a strong and fierce warrior. As she looked at him, she realised that those stories were probably true but she knew that he would be no match for the dragons that she had seen. Her father truly was a fool for even trying to negotiate with him. Perhaps, she should have told him of her agreement with the Targaryens, they would win this war and he would get Theon back regardless.

“Balon Greyjoy,” the King boomed. “My Hand will be here shortly. Then, we can discuss whatever it is you want to discuss,” Asha noticed the cup of wine not too far from him. They waited in silence for a few moments before Lord Stark thundered into the room. The first thing Asha noticed was how angry he looked, his face was red and he was his hair had come loose.

“Ned, what happened to you?” the King asked in a quiet voice.

“I will explain it to you later,” he growled. Then he turned towards Asha and her father. “Lord
Greyjoy,” he rumbled in greeting.

“Theon?” her father as she turned towards the young man that had walked into the room with him. Theon wore a thick black fur lined cloak, underneath she saw that he was wearing an expensive looking doublet with a white leather belt. She saw several pieces of gold jewellery on his body including one around his neck, he truly looked like a greenlander.

She glanced at her father who seemed to have reached a similar conclusion, however he quickly fixed his face and turned it into a smile. Asha was certain now, he was plotting something.

“Father,” Theon said confidently as he puffed his chest out and swaggered over to their father. Asha nearly laughed at the display, what on earth had Lord Stark been teaching him?

“It’s been 9 years,” Balon said quietly.

“10 in fact. I left a boy but I am a man now,” Theon replied loudly and Asha rolled her eyes. Theon was cocky, she knew that straight away.

“Do you remember me little brother?” she called out and Theon immediately turned towards her and she saw him gape slightly as his eyes widened.

“The pimples left and the breasts came,” she said with a smirk. “But I kept the vulture’s beak,” Theon opened his mouth to respond but the King interrupted them.

“Yes, yes you have your reunion now let’s get down to business,” the King ordered and all eyes turned towards him.

“Balon. You can have your heir back if you support us in this war,”

“Thank you your grace. You do me a great kindness,” her father said in his best impression of a sincere voice. “How may I serve during this war?”

“We will need your fleet,”

“The Iron Fleet is one of the most feared fleets in the world. It is captained by my brother, Victarion Greyjoy,” her father said eagerly.

“How many ships do you have?” the King asked

“There are 100 Longships in the Iron fleet your grace,”

“Good. I want you to sail them all towards Dragonstone. Then we can trap the Dragonspawn on the island,”

“They have Dragons and wooden ships burn,” Asha pointed out and the King gave her a dirty look.

“Silence yourself woman,” her father whispered.

“You think I don’t know they have Dragons!” the King roared and Asha saw his face start to go red.

“My apologies your grace, my daughter often forgets herself. I should not have brought her here, I only wanted her to see her brother that is all,” her father stammered and she rolled her eyes before apologizing to the King.

“Don’t bother. We are finished here,” the King said as he stood up. “Do we have a deal? Do I have
your support?”

She watched her father look at the King before he nodded. “Yes my King, you can count on my support,” he said with a deep bow.

“Ned stay. We need to finish that conversation we started earlier,” the King said to his Hand. Asha watched as he scowled before he slowly nodded. Asha, Balon and Theon quickly left the room and headed away towards the great hall where the council would be taking place. They walked in silence until they reached an alcove in a wall and then Balon turned and pushed Theon roughly against the wall.

“What is this?” he asked as his hands touched the golden necklace he wore around his neck.

“It’s a golden chain father,”

“Was it brought with iron or with gold?” his father demanded as his fingers slowly wrapped around the chain. In the old way, woman would sometimes decorate themselves with ornaments brought with coin but a warrior wore only the jewelry he took off the corpses of the enemies he had slain, it was called paying the Iron Price.

Her father saw Theon’s hesitation and then he ripped the necklace off his neck with so much force Asha was sure Theon’s head was going to come off.

“Even my daughter for all her flaws understands the Iron way. I will not have my son and heir dress himself like a whore,” he spat and Asha scowled at his words. He had just gotten Theon back but he was already treating him as his heir.

“Look at the rest of you. You a dressed like a greenlander, the Starks have made you soft,”

“That is a lie,” Theon proclaimed. “The Starks were my captors, my blood is still salt and iron,”

Her father watched him before he smirked.

“We shall see about that. We need to find you some proper clothes. You need to look like a Greyjoy,” he said as he looked up at down at Theon in disgust.

“Father, what are you planning?” Asha asked and her father quickly whipped around to face her. “I may not be your heir but I do know when you’re planning something. You are a terrible actor and you were clearly trying to hide something in that meeting. So why don’t you tell us what it is?”

Her father flashed her an evil smile before he stepped closer to her to whisper in her ear.

“My son was the only thing they had that was stopping me. Now with my heir back where he belongs, the old way will return,”

Asha nodded slowly, her father was going to betray the King. He was a fool, a stupid fool. The Old way had died with Harren and his sons, right in this very castle but he was too blind to see that.

She would have to let the Queen know and she may even have to stop her father herself.

The Lord of Winterfell
Ned sat opposite Robert in his rooms, they had just finished speaking to the Greyjoys. They had agreed to return Theon to his father in return for the support of the Iron born in the upcoming war. Ned really did not see the point in sending the Iron fleet to Dragonstone, it just seemed like sending more men to unnecessary deaths. However, he wasn’t going to tell the King that, he was already about to have a very difficult conversation with him.

For a brief moment he considered lying about this whole situation but then he realised that Jon would likely tell all the Lords the truth anyway and then this secret would be exposed regardless. If Robert found out at the council, there would be no telling how badly he would react. Ned hoped that by telling him now, the King would show some form of mercy and kindness to him and his family.

“What has happened to you? I have not seen you this angry ever,” the King said and Ned sighed. He did not even know where to start. He looked into Robert’s blue eyes, over the past few months serving as his Hand, the boy that he had known growing up in the Vale had returned. He only hoped that boy was still listening to this conversation. That boy would remember their shared childhood and that would hopefully be enough to grant him mercy.

“I need to talk to you about Lyanna,” Ned said firmly, he decided to get this over with quickly, there was no point slowly building up to it. “I found Lyanna in that tower in Dorne. I told you that she was dying of a fever, but it was also due to complications in childbirth,”

“Lyanna had a child. He put a child in her?” Robert whispered as he leant forward. “I’ll kill the bastard myself. He raped her and that’s what killed her,” he seethed and Ned saw him stand up and angrily start to pace around the room. Ned saw him reach for his sword.

“He did not rape her. They ran away together,” Ned said quietly, so quietly he was sure that the King did not hear him. However, he quickly realised that he was mistaken. Robert stopped his angry pace and stood still, perfectly still like a statue. He slowly turned towards Ned. His face was as red as a tomato and his blue eyes were piercing into him. Ned’s hands grew incredibly sweaty as he forced himself to hold his gaze.

“You are lying. He kidnapped her and he raped her. You are fucking lying,” he whispered and Ned shook his head slowly.

“I thought so too, but I was there as she died. She wanted me to protect him. Her child, she loved him,”

He saw Robert shake his head. “No,” he whispered as he started to clench and open his fist. “NO!” he yelled and this time he picked up his chair and threw it across the room and into a stone wall. He started to throw more and more furniture around the room, Ned watched him in his rage and he was stunned at this reaction, he was going to destroy half the room in his rage. Ned slowly rose to his feet and watched the King warily almost as if he was a wounded animal. Robert had not fully understood what he had said, perhaps this was his chance to leave. He slowly moved towards the door, he did not want to make too much noise in case Robert noticed him. He had nearly reached the door when he heard Robert call out.

“Wait!” and Ned slowly, regretfully turned around to face him. “Protect him, her child,” he said slowly and Ned knew that he was close. “It’s true isn’t it? That boy out there really is her child,” and Ned gave a small nod of his head.

“And you protected him? You hid Lyanna’s child from me? You hid the dragonspawn from me? Why would you do that?” he asked and Ned thought of Aegon and of Rhaenys. That was why he hid Jon.
“She made me promise. I promised to protect him,” he whispered and this was true, but Ned wondered if he had failed in that promise. He had protected Jon for his entire life until that day he had told him the truth. He had stopped protecting Jon that day and it had all gone wrong. It had spiraled out of control and Ned knew that on that day he had broken his promise. Lyanna would be ashamed of him, he had let her down. He failed to protect Jon from his father.

“This is all your fault,” Robert said to him angrily. “These Dragons are coming for MY crown and it’s all your fucking fault!” he yelled as he turned towards him. Ned could not answer him, if he had not told Jon then he would not be in this situation.

“Where did you hide him? In Essos? Did you pay for his protection?” and Ned shook his head slowly.

Robert’s eyes widened in understanding.

“Your bastard. You disguised him as your fucking bastard. I asked you about the boy’s mother and you lied to me. You lied to my fucking face,” he spat every word at him.

“I bet you’re going to fucking betray me aren’t you. Yes, you are a traitor, you are probably working with him to overthrow me,” Robert spat and Ned shook his head,

“We argued earlier and that is why I was angry. He has changed, Rhaegar has changed him, he is not the boy that I raised,” Ned said but Robert interrupted him.

“I don’t care about your lies anymore,” he said as he reached for his sword. “I should kill you right now. I really should smash your fucking head in for this,” Ned eyed him warily and he started to slowly back towards the door. Robert was much stronger than him and they both knew it, he would not stand a chance in a fight. He felt his breath quicken and he could feel his heart pounding in his chest. Robert drew his sword from its sheath and Ned stared at Robert not trusting himself to look at the blade that would take his life. Robert raised the sword over his head and Ned closed his eyes, preparing for the worst.

“Go,” he said quietly and Ned didn’t move, he was not sure he heard him properly. He opened his eyes and looked up at Robert, who had lowered his sword. “Go. Run back to Winterfell!” he shouted and Ned quickly scurried out of the room. He ignored the questioning looks that the Kingsguard gave him and he quickly walked away, determined to put as much distance as he could between him and Robert.

Ned kept walking for several minutes before he finally stopped in a dark alcove and tried to catch his breath. His hands were shaking and he sunk to the floor and closed his eyes and he forced himself to breath. In and out in and out in and out until eventually his heartbeat returned to normal. His lies had finally caught up with him and he had been mere moments from losing his life. He had not tried to pick a side and truthfully he cared for both Robert and Jon, but his indecision had backfired. He had lost them both; there was a war coming and neither King had any love for him. Robert had been moments away from killing him and that made Ned wonder if he was foolish to care for him in the first place.

He was an impossible situation, no matter which side he chose he would be breaking one vow or another. The Targaryens seemed to have a particular dislike of House Tully. Jon and his wife held no love for each other and that was something that he could only blame himself for. Had he told Catelyn the truth or told her to treat him better then perhaps this animosity would not have grown to this level.

Ned realised that if he sided with Jon he would be forsaking his vows to Catelyn, what kind of husband would he be if he did not defend his wife and her family? How could he ever look at his
children or the other Lords of the realm if he allowed this to happen? However, he promised Lyanna that he would protect her son and he could not take up arms against Jon, he still had to keep his promise. He would have to be neutral and stay out of it.

Where had it all gone wrong for him? Since when did keeping his promises become so difficult? Where was his mistake? If he had never told Jon then this would all have been avoided, perhaps the Targaryens would not have their dragons and they would not have invaded.

As he sat there in the dark alcove, Ned Stark realised that he was truly alone.

The Mother of Dragons

Daenerys and Tyrion walked through the stone corridors of Harrenhall towards the main courtyard. As they walked, Dany could not stop her thoughts from turning towards Jon and Lord Stark. She knew that Jon hated the fact that they might be going to war against his friends and family in the North but she did not see a way around it.

She did not have a good impression of Lady Catelyn, she found that she was rude and disrespectful, she had no right to call Jon a bastard. No right at all. Worse still she had shown no remorse for how she treated him and that was unforgivable. Jon had asked how she would feel if someone had treated Daeron that way and she felt unbelievably angry at that thought. How could she call herself a mother and treat Jon like that. The Tullys would have to be punished, that she was certain of.

Dany knew that by punishing the Tullys they would have to fight the North but she did not see a way around it. She would not let Lady Catelyn get away with her treatment of Jon and she would not let the Tullys get away with their overambitious scheming.

As they walked through the hallways her thoughts turned to Daeron. She did not like being so far away from him. She trusted Irri and Doreah with him but she missed her baby boy dearly. Going to war and leaving him on Dragonstone would be tough, but she did not want to take him with them. Dragonstone was an island and the Usurper did not have a navy to attack it, he would be safest there and if needs be she could fly back to see him, twice a day if she had too, she was a Queen and she could do as she pleases. She wondered what he was doing now, was he asleep? Perhaps he was, he usually slept around this time of day.

They walked through a corridor and Daenerys heard low voices whispering to one another, she slowed her pace slightly and Tyrion did the same. They turned a corner and saw Ser Loras walking closely with the man she thought was Renly Baratheon.

“Your grace,” Ser Loras said immediately.

“Ser Loras,” she said with a smile and then she turned towards his friend.

“Forgive me, but we haven’t been introduced?” she said politely.

“I am Lord Renly Baratheon,” the man said in a sweet voice.

“Ser Loras, is this the man that knighted you?”
“Yes he is,” Loras said quietly. Daenerys found this odd, during their conversation on Dragonstone, he was also very quiet and guarded when it came to Renly, yet they seemed to be close together today. Perhaps he was hiding something, she would not be surprised if he was. Nearly, everyone had something to hide.

“Ser Loras, do you know where we can find Lady Olenna?” Tyrion asked and he nodded.

“Could you escort us please? We would like to speak with her,”

She saw him share a quick glance with Renly before he nodded and turned around to guide them towards Lady Olenna. He walked a few paces in front of them and she turned to Tyrion to give him a curious glance.

“I will explain later,” he said quietly and she nodded. Ser Loras led a quick pace through the castle and soon, they arrived outside the rooms where the Tyrells were staying. It seemed that Lord Mace had brought his entire family to the council. She saw Margaery sitting with a group of ladies by the window.

“Queen Daenerys,” he said in greeting. “It is kind of you to grace us with your presence. How can we be of service?”

Daenerys watched as everyone in the room stopped what they were doing to stare at her and she decided that she would need a more private audience.

“Lady Olenna, could we speak privately please?” she said with a smile. The old lady gave her a sharp look before looking to her family.

“You heard the Queen, leave us you useless hens,” she said with a wave of her hands and Dany stood to the side as everyone in the room quickly filed out of the door. Only Tyrion, Lord Mace Tyrell, Daenerys and Lady Olenna remained in the room.

Once the room was empty, Daenerys took a seat opposite Lady Olenna.

“Lady Olenna,” she said politely.

“Queen Daenerys,” she said with a smile. “I overheard your discussion with the Starks earlier,” and she gave her a pointed look, she knew that it was an argument not a discussion.

“I have come here to discuss your terms,” she continued and Olenna looked at her expectantly.

“We do not accept your offer. Lady Margaery will not marry my husband, she will not be Queen,” Dany said adamantly as she stared at the old woman. Her brown eyes were shining brightly and her mouth started to twist upwards into a smile.

“Very well. It seems to be your loss,” she said in a casual tone.

“We do not accept your offer. Lady Margaery will not marry my husband, she will not be Queen,” Dany said adamantly as she stared at the old woman. Her brown eyes were shining brightly and her mouth started to twist upwards into a smile.

“Very well. It seems to be your loss,” she said in a casual tone.

“It does not matter I already spoke to,” Mace Tyrell began,

“Shut up you blundering idiot,” Olenna said as she interrupted her son.

“Renly Baratheon? Lord Stark? Both?” Daenerys asked and she saw a flicker of surprise in Lady Olenna’s eyes. “You didn’t think I knew that you were looking for other options?”

“I expected you to find out and I would be a fool if I wasn’t,” Olenna replied.

“We have new terms for you,” Tyrion said from his seat but Olenna’s eyes remained firmly on her.
“You will support House Targaryen in this upcoming war. You will provide all of your troops and you will share your harvest with us. In return, we will name Loras Tyrell to our Kingsguard and grant you a Valyrian steel sword that your family will keep throughout eternity,” Tyrion told them.

“I don’t understand. You offered those terms before and we did not accept. Now you have taken away a council position!” Mace stuttered,

“Shut up and listen. There is more,” Olenna said and Daenerys smiled at her.

“If you do not accept these terms. House Tyrell will no longer be Wardens of the South,” Daenerys said in a clear voice. She glared at Lady Olenna and for a few moments and no one spoke.

“You can’t replace us,” Mace said quickly.

“Why can’t I?” Daenerys said as she turned to him. “It was Aegon the Conqueror who raised your house to the status of Lord Paramount of the Reach, he was the one who gave you the position as Warden of the South. Why can’t my husband and I take that away? You already showed us your weakness. I am sure there are plenty of Reach houses that would jump at the chance to replace you. I could speak to the Tarlys or the Rowans, I know that they are currently in attendance,”

“You can’t hold the Reach without us. We have allies, the Redwynes and the Hightowers will stand with us,” Mace stammered.

“Do you think I care about the Redwynes or the Hightowers? Do you think my dragon cares about these small houses?” she asked scornfully and she saw Mace Tyrell meekly shake his head. “House Tyrell, House Redwyne, House Hightower and any other house in the realm is more than welcome to stand against the power of House Targaryen. I will warn you that when I am finished with you, there will be nothing left of those houses. Not a father, mother, son, daughter brother or sister, not even a keep. They will all be gone,”

“That it is a bit of an overreaction,” he said quietly.

“You tried to interfere with my marriage. You are lucky I am offering you another chance at all,” Daenerys snapped at him. “I am sure you have heard rumors of what happened in Volantis, don’t think we won’t do the same here,”

Then she turned her eyes to Lady Olenna, she knew that she was the real power in this family. The two women glared at each other before Olenna broke into a small toothless smile.

“So the dragon does know how to roar,” she said with a smile which caused Daenerys to scowl. “I was curious to see what you were made of,” then Dany understood.

“So this was a test?” she asked but Olenna did not respond and this angered Daenerys. She leaned forward and spoke sharply to her. “Do not presume to play these games with me again. The next time you do this, you will see just how much of a dragon I am,”

Daenerys continued to glare at the woman until her smile faltered. “Very well Queen Daenerys. You have our full support,”

“What about Margaery?” Mace complained,

“Lady Margaery can have a place at court. She can be one of the ladies in waiting to the Queen of the seven Kingdoms,” Tyrion offered. “When the war is over I am sure we will be able to find your daughter a suitable match,”
“With who?” Olenna said to Tyrion “I am not an idiot. You and the Starks are clearly at each other's throats, so the Stark boy is probably not long for this world. The Tullys will go with them so that rules out Edmure too,”

“Perhaps you should let Margaery choose who she wants to marry instead of shopping her around like a brood mare,” Daenerys snapped, she did not understand their insistence to marry off Margaery, she should have a say in who she married.

“Lord Tyrell. We will be in touch to coordinate troop movements. Feel free to start sending shipments of food to Dragonstone. Our armies will need it,” Daenerys stood as she rose to her feet. “The council will start shortly, I wouldn’t want you all to be late,”

The Dragon King

It was the middle of the afternoon and Jon stood gazing out of the window, with Ghost by his side. Whilst Daenerys had been away, he had gone out into their camp to find Ghost and he found that his presence helped to calm him. They had sent men to inform the lords that they were ready begin the council and they knew that they would nearly all be congregated in the great hall awaiting their arrival. Daenerys had returned earlier informing him of her success in bringing the Tyrells to their side. That was one victory but it would not be enough, they would need more Lords on their side, as many as possible.

They would let the Lords know of their plans for the new Westeros that they would build, some of the Lords might not like it, but they would have to deal with it.

“Are you ready, my love?” he heard Daenerys ask and he turned towards her. She was now wearing a grey dress with a silver chain stretching over her shoulder. When he stepped closer, he saw that it had three dragon heads on it, it was a sign of their house. She had also changed her hair, it was now braided in a style he had not seen her in before. The ends of her long silver hair was now tied into two braids near the bottom.

“New outfit?” he asked in surprise.

“Yes. Do you like it?” she asked as she did a little twirl for him. When she was finished he quickly caught her in his arms.

“I love it,” and then he gave a kiss. His hands roamed over her body, greedily feeling her lovely curves.

“Stop that. We don’t have time,” she whispered as she pulled away from him. He saw that her lips were parted slightly and lilac eyes were dilated, he gave her another quick kiss before he pulled away. He turned around and reached for their crowns. He gently placed her crown on her head before she did the same to him.

“Are you ready my Queen?” he asked and she quickly nodded. She grabbed hold of his arm and together they left their room and started to walk towards the great hall. Tyrion, Ser Barristan, Rhaegar and Missandei were waiting outside with a few Unsullied guardsmen.

The castle was quieter now and it seemed like nearly all the Lords were already in the great hall waiting for them. As they got closer to the great hall they could begin to hear voices from the Lords.
“Here we are,” Rhaegar said once they got to a set of large wooden doors which had the sigil of House Whent carved into the wood. Jon took a deep breath, gave Daenerys a reassuring squeeze of the hand and then nodded towards Unsullied who pushed open the doors.

A wall of noise quickly rushed out of the hall and into the hallway, however their voices quickly faded away as one by one they all turned around to look into the doors. Jon saw several lords looking at them curiously, perhaps this was their first good look at them.

Jon took a deep breath and then led them all into the hall. He kept his eyes glued on the dais in front of him, there were two seats on the right side for him and Daenerys. He looked to the left and he saw the Usurper sitting in his seat with his son and a two Kingsguard knights standing behind him. Jon would have thought that as his Hand, Lord Stark would stand next to the King but clearly that was not the case.

Eventually, they reached the front of the dais and then they turned around to look at all the Lords that had been packed into the hall. Jon could not even begin to count the number of people in this hall, there were hundreds of people here and as Jon looked up, he saw more people packed onto the balconies above. Jon noticed every single Lord and Lady was looking at them, it was as if they were trying to unsettle him. Jon felt Ghost by his side and this reassured him. The walls on one side of the room was draped with Targaryen banners, the other side had the crowned stag of House Baratheon.

The room was warm, probably on account of the many fires he heard roaring in the hearths.

“You stand in the presence of King Aegon and Queen Daenerys of House Targaryen. Emperor and Empress of the Bay of dragons and the Dragon cities of the east. Khal and Khaleesi of the Great Grass Sea, The Breakers of Chains and the rightful King and Queen of Westeros,” Missandei called out into the silence.

None of the Lords or Ladies made any sounds of acknowledgement at their titles, they all continued to stare back at them. Jon began to see a few familiar faces in the crowd. He saw Theon Greyjoy who still looked as cocky as ever. He saw Robb standing next to his mother and father and in a crowd of other Northern Lords, they were standing to his right. He saw the Tyrell party standing to his left near the wall.

“Foreign invaders with foreign titles,” he heard Robert announce and that brought a few mutters of agreement. Then, he turned towards Ser Barristan and Ser Jaime and Jon was pleased to see his face grow red with rage, he stood up in anger as he began to address them.

“Ser Barristan Selmy is a traitor. I should never have pardoned you, you have always been loyal to the Targaryens!”

“Ser Barristan is doing what is right, he is serving the true rulers of Westeros. What does it say if the Lord Commander of King Robert’s own Kingsguard no longer wishes to serve him? What does it say about your legitimacy?” Daenerys asked and Jon saw the King angrily grip his chair. Jon smiled at this, clearly the King was fighting hard to control his anger.

“What about the Kingslayer eh? He killed your father in case you were too stupid to forget that,” he spat venomously.

“I know what Ser Jaime did and I know why he did it. My father was an evil man and on behalf of House Targaryen we apologize for his actions,” Daenerys asked as she spoke to the crowd. Jon saw a few lords look at her suspiciously whilst a few nodded their heads.

“Lords and Ladies, We thank you all for travelling here for this council. I am Aegon of House Targaryen, trueborn son of Prince Rhaegar Targaryen and his wife Lyanna Stark,”
“Liar,” he heard a voice call out from somewhere to his right. Jon did not see who spoke but it was not a voice that he knew.

“Rhaegar Targaryen kidnapped and raped Lyanna Stark,” he heard a northern voice shout and several others made noises of agreement.

“You may not know of my son but many of you know me. I am Rhaegar Targaryen but I did not rape or kidnap Lyanna. I married Lyanna Stark a few miles from here at the Isle of faces and we had a child, Aegon,” he said as he gestured towards him. Jon nodded in thanks for the endorsement before he turned back to the lords.

“Many of you will be wondering how this is possible, so I will tell you the truth. I was born here in Westeros towards the end of the war. I was found by Lord Eddard Stark of Winterfell who took me with him to Winterfell. He disguised me as his bastard when in reality I was his sister’s son,”

Jon turned towards the Usurper after he finished speaking, wanting to see his reaction. To his surprise, and perhaps disappointment. He was not frothing with rage like Jon thought he would be. Instead he just glared back at him, his blue eyes shining brightly like the blue sapphires in his crown.

“How does it feel Usurper? That my mother loved another?” Jon whispered and thankfully this angered him. Jon smiled before turning back to the crowd.

“That’s a lie,” he heard a familiar voice call. “The bastard’s name was Jon Snow and he looks nothing like you. Jon Snow could barely talk to a serving girl, there is no way he could get a woman as beautiful as the Queen,” Jon glanced at Theon who was smiling arrogantly as he shook his head.

“I am surprised you don’t recognize me, Greyjoy. Perhaps, I did some permanent damage to your small brain after beating into the ground all those times sparring back in Winterfell. If you don’t believe me. Watch this,” Jon said as he turned his eyes and his hair back to its normal color. He watched with a smirk as Theon’s cocky smile disappeared. He felt Ghost rise to stand briefly on his hind legs behind him.

Then he turned towards the Usurper, giving him a good look at his face. He watched as Robert just stared at him muttering words under his breath that Jon could not hear.

He heard the hushed whispers from the crowd that gradually got louder. ‘Sorcerer’ was a word he heard frequently and Jon wondered if he should have kept this trick a secret.

“My Lords,” he called but the crowd would not quieten down. So he closed in eyes and called for Vedros, a few seconds later he heard a loud roar over the castle and he thanked her for her help.

“Aye he’s looks like Lyanna,” he heard one Northern Lord shout and this warmed his heart.

“Lords of Westeros, King Aegon speaks the truth. He is who he says he is,” he heard Lord Stark call. Jon looked at him briefly before he continued onwards.

“We are here to discuss the issue of the Iron Throne,”

“The Iron Throne belongs to House Targaryen by rights and we intend to take it back,” Daenerys continued.

“I will not give you back your throne. If you think that then you are a fool,” Robert said angrily as he rose to his feet again
“We are offering you a choice. Surrender your crown now and we will allow you to live out the rest of your days at the wall. Decline this offer and we will defeat you on the battlefield” Daenerys said as she turned to him.

“The wall? You think that is a fair choice? I would rather die,” Robert shouted and he heard several of the lords mutter noises of agreement. They had expected him to reject their offer of a peaceful solution and frankly they would have trusted him less if he had accepted. Their focus was on the other lords.

“Where is Lord Tywin Lannister?” Jon called and he saw a man step forward. “Lord Tywin. For your role in the sack of Kings Landing and for the brutal murder and rape of Elia Martell and for the murders of the royal children, Rhaenys and Aegon, we will strip you of your position as Lord of Casterly Rock and Warden of the west. We will execute you for your role in those horrific crimes,” He saw Lord Tywin glare at him for a few moments before Daenerys spoke again.

“What of the North?” Daenerys called and Jon looked at her curiously, they did not plan for this. “Will the North stand and fight for Lyanna Stark’s son?”

The northern section was quiet for a few moments before he heard a few voices shout “Aye,” this brought a smile to Jon’s face. Lord Stark may not like him, but he could not go against his bannermen. Daenerys turned to him and beamed at him and he returned her smile. Gods he wanted to kiss her then.

“Enough of this nonsense,” he heard Robert call.

“Why do you want these children to rule? They know nothing of Westeros. Nothing. The bitch has spent her entire life in Essos and the boy was disguised as a bastard, what do they know about ruling? Nothing!” he shouted and Jon heard a few voices agree with him.

“We know plenty enough about ruling. We have our advisors who will help us rule,” Jon began,

“Advisors?” Robert interrupted and then he laughed loudly and cruelly. “These children will not be your rulers they will be puppets listening to their advisors. They don’t have the spine to rule,” he bellowed and Jon scowled to him.

“Their Hand is my dwarf of an uncle,” he heard the prince call. “Lords of Westeros, are you going to be taking orders from a dwarf?” he called and he saw some of Lords nodding in agreement. Jon looked at the prince who was smiling cruelly at Tyrion and Jon wanted to punch him in the face. He quickly looked towards Tyrion who gave him a warning look and Jon bit his tongue.

“No. We will be ruling,” Daenerys said firmly. “We have a vision for Westeros and we will improve this country,”

“It is impossible to improve Westeros if you do not know what it is like currently. What improvements could you possibly have?”

“We will start with the smallfolk. We will start by building schools for all the children. First in Kings Landing, Oldtown and Lannisport and then eventually all throughout Westeros,”

“Where will you find the money to build these schools?” one Lord asked

“We have the support of the Iron Bank and we have several of the Dragon cities in our empire. Braavos, Pentos and Volantis are all cities that we can trade with in order to fund these schools,”
“What do we have to trade with the Dragon cities?” another Lord asked,

“The Reach in particular produces an abundance of wines, especially the famous Arbor Gold. Under our rule and with our connections in the free cities, we will be able to help the Reach Lords export their wine to the Dragon cities. This is an extra source of income that the Reach Lords will use to build schools for the smallfolk,” Daenerys told them.

“Meereen, one of the cities in the bay of Dragons, exports tin and other metals from the ground. I am sure there are several mountain ranges that have precious metals and minerals in them that have yet to be discovered,” Daenerys began but she was interrupted by Robert’s cruel laugh.

“The foolish girl does not even know what she is even looking for! If you follow her your men will spend all of their time digging up useless dirt!” the Usurper called and Jon turned to him and scowled.

“She is doing more than you have ever done to improve Westeros,” he said firmly as he glared at the Usurper. “It’s amazing that you mock our ideas and reforms, when you have not done anything other than drink, hunt and whore around during your reign.”

“My lords, I do not dispute the fact that my grandfather was mad, cruel and evil but even he managed to keep the realm’s financial state afloat. The royal treasuries were overflowing with gold at the end of my family’s reign but now over 18 years later, the crown is 7 million gold dragons in debt to the Iron bank. The Usurper did not use this gold to better your lives or the state of Westeros but spent it all on tourneys, feasts and whores for his own pleasure. Are these the actions of a good ruler?”

“If you choose to support the Usurper and by some miracle he defeats us, then what? He will go back to spending gold that he does not have to quench his desires while you and the people of Westeros will shoulder the burden of increased taxes to pay his debts.” Daenerys said and Jon saw a few of the reach lords nod their heads.

“The city of Braavos has a severe shortage of wood to use for their fires. Several regions of Westeros, particularly the North, has an abundance of trees in their forests. There are large forests surrounding Karhold, there is the Hornwood and there is of course the Wolfswood. We will cut down trees in those forests and export them to Braavos,” Jon said firmly.

“No. Leave the North out of these southern plans. We will not sell our trees to fund your greedy plans,” he heard one northern lord say and this was followed by several grunts of agreement which caused Jon to frown.

“My Lords, I have grown up in the North,”

“Then you should understand that we are Northerners and we do not get involved in these southern games. We are not greedy and we have survived for hundreds of years without the need to sell our wood. We will be fine without it,” and then Jon heard several more noises of agreement. Jon frowned, how can they be so silly?

“The North has been stagnant for countless years. The south is much more developed, the North needs to move forward to keep up with the times,” Jon said,

“You are no true Northerner, otherwise you would understand,” he heard a different voice shout.

“My Lords. This is not up for debate, these are the reforms I will be pushing through and these reforms will improve the North in the long run. I am doing to help your children,”
“So do you not care if the Lords do not want these changes?”

“If so he is no better than the Mad King, a good King will listen to his people,” he heard another voice shout and Jon could not believe what he was hearing. Were they really comparing him to the Mad King? All because he wanted to chop down some fucking trees?

He turned towards Daenerys and saw that she too had a frown on her face.

“My Lords. You have to trust us. We are acting in your best interests. This is an additional source of income that will help to improve the North in the long run.”

“Lords of the North. They do not know what they are talking about, they do not know what is best for you. If you support them they will push through these reforms regardless of what you think. They are not fair rulers, they are tyrants,” Tywin Lannister called out and several of the Lords nodded and voiced their agreement.

“They even come with foreign savages! Horselords and their eunuchs! These are the type of scum that your King and Queen have working for them! These savages will come to rape your women and enslave your children! They will burn down your homes and steal your crops. Lords of the North, they do not care about your best interests!” Robert yelled and Jon saw several of the Lords nod in agreement. He heard several of the lords shout the words ‘savages’ and ‘Dothraki’ in his direction and Jon could not believe it.

Surely the Lords were not so foolish. Did they not see their dragons, did they not realize that they would win this war regardless? Jon realised that he could not tell them this. Telling the Lords that he would enforce his rule with his dragons would only serve to antagonize them further. He would need another approach.

“My Lords,” Robb said as he stepped forward, “We should trust King Aegon. If he says these changes could improve the North then I believe him. We should not be afraid of change,”

“Be quiet boy, what do you know about ruling?” he heard one voice call.

“I am Robb Stark, son of Lord Eddard Stark and the heir to Winterfell. I know that we should ally with King Aegon. One day I will rule the north and you will all answer to me” he said firmly and his eyes met Jon’s as he said the words. Jon gave him a quick nod in thanks.

“One day, but not today,” he heard one voice shout.

“He’s soft, he is,”

“It’s his friendship clouding his judgment, best not to listen to him,”

“The North rode south for justice after what happened to Lady Lyanna. You are her son, but you have forgotten your roots. You want to change the North, but the North will not change. The North will not support you,” One Lord called and he heard several loud shouts of agreement.

“I have not forgotten my roots,” Jon told them.

“Yes you have. Look at you! Targaryen wife, you have your dragons you have even taken the Targaryen name!” a lord shouted “The first chance you got you turned your back on the North!” and the Northern Lords started to rise up in agreement

“I have a direwolf, a symbol of the North. I am sure you have seen him when he entered the hall with me,” Jon shouted but it seemed like the Lords did not hear him.
“They even have a criminal in their ranks,” he heard a lady shout. “Jorah Mormont brought shame and dishonor to our house and I see him here with the Targaryens! They have no honor!” which caused more northern lords to chime in.

“Honor? They do not know the meaning of the word! They are mad! Just like the Mad King!” Robert shouted “They burned down Volantis and they will do the same here! They must be stopped!” and Jon heard an even loud chorus of Lords agreeing with him and Jon felt his blood go cold. They would have to explain this and it would not go well.

“That is not the full story, what we did was justified,” Daenerys protested. “All we did was use our dragons to execute the slavers in Volantis,”

“Then why do people say the city burned?”

“The slavers refused to surrender peacefully,” Jon began but he was interrupted by Tywin Lannister

“They refused to surrender so you burnt down their city,” he said,

“That is not true,” Jon lied. There was no good way to answer this, none at all

“You are one to talk, especially after what you did to the Reynes and the Castameres,” Tyrion pointed out, thankfully coming to their aide. “Every child in the Westerlands knows the Rains of Castamere and every lord in the realm knows about the brutal murder of Princess Elia and her children. Those are crimes committed by Tywin Lannister and condoned by King Robert Baratheon, crimes they are too coward to admit to,” Tyrion spoke to the crowd and he heard several of the Lords nod their heads in agreement.

“The Dwarf speaks the truth,” he saw a bald Reach lord say.

“There is blood on both of their hands. Both Kings have committed terrible acts,” Another Lord said and then the crowd fell silent. Jon decided to turn his attentions back to the North.

“Lord Tywin, we both have committed horrendous acts but there is vast difference in our motives. We performed them to rid to world of the evil of slavery while you murdered women and children simply to increase your fear and power.”

“Do not think that we are the same. You needed a song to remind everyone of your power but neither me nor my ancestors ever needed a bard to prove their might. All you have is fear built upon the bodies of women and children, we have power that can destroy entire armies and kingdoms. The mewling of a hundred lions cannot match the roar of single dragon,” Jon said to the old lion who seemed to be fuming with anger.

Jon frowned and he turned towards Lord Stark, surely he would speak up and stop this nonsense. He found him and his grey eyes looked empty.

“Lord Stark you are the Warden of the North, what is your decision?” Jon asked as he looked at the man. He stared into his grey eyes and then his eyes looked down, towards his father.

“What are your plans for the Riverlands?” Lord Stark asked in a loud clear voice.

“House Tully will lose their status as Lord Paramount of the Riverlands, and they will lose their lands and incomes from those lands. They will be replaced by a loyal house in the future. This punishment is for their role in the rebellion where Hoster Tully betrayed his rightful King for no
good and justifiable reason,” Jon said firmly with a glance towards Lady Catelyn and he heard a few outraged gasps from the crowd.

“You have no right to depose my family. We will not stand for this,” she spat out angrily.

“We have every right. House Targaryen elevated your family to this position and we can take it away,” Daenerys said fiercely. “Your father did not join the rebellion till his daughters were wed to Lord Stark and Lord Arryn. He used the grief and turmoil in the realm to increase his influence while forsaking his duty to the crown solely out of ambition and greed. Lady Catelyn, you are no better than him. You should be ashamed of yourself, your treatment of a motherless child is reprehensible and you have shown no remorse. You will be punished,”

Jon turned towards Lord Stark who was not even looking at him, he was still looking at his father. Then he looked back at Jon and he had a sad look in his eyes.

“You have put me in a difficult situation. I can’t stand by idly as you threaten my wifes family,” Lord Stark finally spoke.

Jon looked at him and then he shook his head slowly. Once again he had chosen Lady Catelyn over him.

“If the Dragon’s wrath is what you want, then you shall have it,” he did not turn towards Robb, knowing his conviction would falter if he did. He did not know what happened to Lord Stark but he had lost all faith in him.

“Jon wait,” he heard Robb call. “I think we need some time to think about your offer further,” and Jon saw a few of the Lords nod their heads.

“Very well. I will give you this opportunity to discuss this in more detail, until then we will not attack the North. You have my word,” Jon said firmly and he saw Robb return nod in agreement.

“You cannot win this war,” he heard the King say with a laugh. “The Westerlands, the Stormlands, the Reach and the Vale are all allied against you,”

“You don’t have the Reach,” Daenerys said simply and he saw Robert give her a confused look.

“House Royce and the Vale will stand behind King Robert,” he heard one voice shout and several others followed. Jon was confused, did these Lords forget that they had Dragons? Did they not see the size of Anogar and Vedros? Were they forgetting that they had a third dragon?

“Not all of the Vale. House Egen will not support King Robert,”

“Neither will House Corbray,”

“House Waynwood will stand with House Royce and King Robert,”

“You are all fools. Did you not see the size of their dragons? House Mooton will support the Targaryens,”

“As will House Darry!”

“So too will House Whent!”

“As will House Frey!”

“You are all disloyal. The Targaryens are trying to depose your rightful liege lords. House Mallister
will stand behind House Tully,” and Jon heard several ayes of agreement.

“Have you all forgotten the power of the dragons? Look around us we are in Harrenhall. Aegon the Conqueror destroyed this castle with one dragon and the Targaryens have three. My loyalty lies with the Dragons,”

“Three Dragons? You must be blind I only saw two!” he heard another voice shout.

“What is your point? Two is more than enough!”

“The Dragons can be killed! That is why the third is not here!”

“My brother Stannis must have slain one!” Robert shouted.

“Stannis Baratheon the Dragonslayer!” he heard the Prince shout and then several others Lords followed. Jon looked towards Daenerys and nodded towards her. They closed their eyes and when they opened them, both Anogar and Vedros roared loudly, one after the other and this caused the hall to quickly fall silent once again. Several of the Lords and Ladies looked up at them fearfully but Dany continued anyway.

“I will put an end to your curiosity. We have three large dragons and Stannis Baratheon is probably lying dead at the bottom of the sea for his foolish attempt of trying to fight them. It seems some of you all do not wish for us to be your new King and Queen. Some of you foolishly wish to fight and die for the Usurper,” Daenerys said to the crowd in a clear voice.

“Those of you who wish to declare for us, we invite you all to send a representative from your house to our wing on the third floor of the eastern tower,” Jon said.

“Those of you who wish to fight for the Usurper. We will see you on the battlefield,” Daenerys said.

“We wish you good fortune, you will need it,”

She turned to him and reached out for his hand. Together, they walked off the dais, through the crowd and back to their rooms and not once did they turn back to look at the Lords. As they walked, Jon’s thoughts turned to Lord Stark and the North.

“They’re just fucking trees,” he said to Dany as they walked. “I knew the Northern Lords were stubborn but they’re just fucking trees, Dany and had it not been for Robb asking for more time they would have gone to war with me over them and they still might,”

Perhaps, you should not have mentioned your plans to change their lands,” Tyrion suggested.

“In hindsight you’re right but the whole point of this council was to give the people a chance to see us and form a good impression of us. I thought honesty was the best approach,”

“I agree but it seems to have backfired,” Tyrion pointed out and Jon didn’t answer him. “Let’s just say that this is a learning experience. It’s a mistake that we won’t make again in the future,”

It was a mistake that could have turned the North against him for good. It was a mistake that could mean he would now have to take up arms against the Northern Lords.

“Jon we will think of a plan, don’t worry. You won’t have to fight against Robb,” Daenerys said as she gave him a reassuring squeeze of his hand. He gave her a thankful smile and they continued their walk towards their rooms. Once they were inside Jon issued an order.

“Tyrion, father and Missandei. We will need you to make notes on which houses have come to
declare for us. Then we can work out which houses will declare for the Usurper and this will help us plan our war,” they all nodded and moved around the room to collect paper to carry out these instructions. Jon and Daenerys sat down on a plush couch and readied themselves to receive the Lords.

The Stag King

Robert Baratheon was walking in his room in Harrenhall. The dragonspawn had called their council and they had failed, they had expected the realm to kneel before their dragons and just depose him but they were wrong. The realm still wanted him to be their King and that meant he had a fighting chance.

They couldn’t even win the support of the North. Even that traitor, Stark, would not support them, and the spawn was claiming to be his sister’s son. The pain of his betrayal was still raw, and thinking about it caused him to reach for his cup of wine. He had long since finished the first bottle of Arbor Gold and he was now well into the second of his bottle of Dornish red. However even the sour taste could not dull the pain that he felt.

Lyanna betrayed him for the greasy haired cunt Rhaegar. That silver haired bastard had stolen his betrothed and he had a child with her. Rhaegar took everything from him, he took his wife, he took his family and even a crown could not make up for this loss.

“Fuck the Starks,” he muttered to himself. Traitorous bastards, I’ll kill the Dragonspawn and then I’ll march my army up to Winterfell and slay the lot of them, then I’ll burn down that shit hole once and for all.

“We need them,” he heard the tired voice of Tywin Lannister say. He was sitting in a chair facing the desk.

“I don’t give a fuck if we need them. I will never trust that bastard again,” Robert slurried.

“We need his men. We need every man we can get and he brings the North and the Riverlands,”

“You think I don’t fucking know how many men he has?”

“I think you don’t know that together, we will have the North, the Westerlands and the Stormlands. We will also have parts of the Vale and parts of the Riverlands. Who do they have? The Reach?” he said and Robert grunted in agreement.

“I don’t care,” he repeated as he continued to pace around the room. “I want him dead. I want the Starks gone, every last one of them,”

“Then you shall have it. Use them to win this war and when it is finished, slaughter them all where they stand. Every last man woman and child. When we are finished, House Stark will be nothing,”

Robert looked at him and smiled, this was what he wanted.

“Befriend him, let him lower his guard. Let him think that you have forgiven him for his betrayal,”

“I should have named you my hand. Fuck Ned Stark,” he muttered.
“We need to destroy the Reach first,” Tywin said. “They need the Reach for food and without food they can’t feed their armies,”

“The Greyjoys,” he said immediately. “I’ll tell Balon to send his fleet to attack the Redwyne fleet. I’ll let him reave and rape and do whatever he wants in the Reach. Those bastards will pay for opposing me,”

Renly had failed him, all he had to do was marry the Tyrell girl. Perhaps, he was wrong to give Renly Storms End. Stannis was the only useful brother that he had.

“I do not trust the Greyjoys. I would not give them that much freedom,” Tywin countered. “Once they start reaving and raping they will not stop,”

“I’ve destroyed Balon Greyjoy once before and I’ll do it again if I have to!” Robert shouted and he saw Tywin purse his lips.

He continued his angry pacing throughout the room and then he filled his cup with more wine. As he stomped around the room his thoughts turned to the boy.

“Where the fuck did he learn that?” he asked. “How could he change the color of his hair and eyes?” but Tywin did not answer. Did he look like her? Did he look like Lyanna? Robert found that he could not remember her face. He could remember Rhaegar, with his long nose and his greasy hair. He would kill him again, he’d rip out his throat and gouge his eyes out with his fingers. He’d make sure he was dead this time. He’d make damn sure of it.

Chapter End Notes

1) So no Arya at the council. I did not forget her, but she hasn't left Winterfell yet. She plays a role in the next part of the story and she couldn't sneak out of Winterfell until we reached that stage
2) Storms End. Whatever happens with Storms End will happen on screen. Originally, this entire Harrenhal sequence was meant to be one chapter, but it's actually three. Chapter 20-22 really all takes place on the same day.
3) Speaking of chapter length. This is the longest I'll ever give you guys, it's sitting at 17k words. I was contemplating splitting this one but I decided not to. The council has already been split twice
4) The next chapter is called The Griffins Ruse
5) I'm probably forgetting something else - It's the chapter date. Let's say 8, Friday the 9th

Thanks for all the comments, I read them all and appreciate every single one of you.

Sleepy
The Griffin's Ruse

Chapter Summary

Ned returns to the North

Jon and Dany make a discovery

Jon Connington takes his biggest risk so far

Chapter Notes

Thanks to GOT88 for the help provided with this story

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The Lord of Winterfell

Eddard Stark could finally see Winterfell against the grey and dreary sky. They had been riding for weeks after the council and everyone was tired, cold and eager to get back home. Theon had gone back to Pyke with his family and Ned felt conflicted about the decision. On one hand, it felt good to be able to reunite Theon with his father and family but on the other hand Ned knew that they had just returned their only hostage and leverage against the Ironborn and now there was nothing left to ensure that Balon Greyjoy stayed in line.

He rode at the front of the line with Catelyn alongside him while Robb was further back. Robb had not been happy with him after the council and Ned could tell he was biding his time and collecting his arguments against Ned’s decision. Robb had been one of the most vocal people in favor of accepting Jon’s terms and Ned knew that he would continue to do the same now that they had returned to the North. Ned knew that Jon’s plans to improve the North with the construction of these schools and other projects was good and had great potential to improve the North’s economic state. However, changing the North just to raise money to build these projects was something that his bannermen might not accept. They might view it as southern greed.

He pulled his hood tighter around himself and continued to ride towards the castle. He thought about the offers that he had received at the council. Jon had given the option to be neutral throughout this war whilst they thought about his terms and perhaps this was the best option. However, Jon and the Targaryens had announced their plans to depose House Tully for all the realm to see and this meant that he would be expected to defend his wife’s family.

Ned knew that whatever he did, he would be breaking one vow or another.

A vow to a dying sister or his wife.

Catelyn had been very distressed during their ride back from Harrenhall after hearing Jon’s plans for
her family. She had not been eating properly and she had been restless during the nights. Even as he looked at her now he could see how tightly she gripped the reigns of her horse. Ned would do anything to put her at ease, but he was not sure if he could do this for her.

Ned sighed in frustration and he watched his breath condense on the cold air in front of him, it was starting to get colder now and soon winter would be here. As he got closer to the castle he could see the figures standing around the gates and on the walls above the main castle gates, they had sent a rider ahead to let Ser Rodrik and those in the castle know that they were nearly back. Ned was eager to get back home and away from these Kings.

“It’s Arya,” he heard his wife say as they got closer and closer to the castle gates and Ned saw that she was right. His youngest daughter stood alone on top of the castle ramparts watching their arrival. Ned released another tired sigh, Arya had complained and begged to go to the council with them and he had repeatedly declined. Now, he would have to tell her the bad news. Perhaps, he should have taken Arya and left his wife behind. That certainly would have helped their reunion with Jon to go better.

The castle’s gates opened for them and they rode into the castle courtyard. He looked around and saw that the Northern Lords were already here which was good, he would have to speak to them all today. Some of them would have already heard the rumors travelling by raven and so he would have to tell them the complete truth now. Ned wondered if Howland Reed was here, he would have to speak to him if he was. Howland was there on that fateful day all those years ago, he would understand Ned’s decision.

He dismounted his horse and handed the reins to a stable boy, he looked up and saw several of the Lords had now taken up positions on the balconies overlooking the courtyard and they were all looking at him. Ned saw several concerned and worried glances from his bannermen and he knew that he would have to speak to them today.

“Ser Rodrik,” he called out and saw that the man quickly walk forward. “How were things in Winterfell whilst we were away?” he asked.

“Things have been fine, my Lord. There were a few small incidents but Lord Bran and his sisters ruled well in your stead,” he said with a bow. Ned was relieved, the last thing he needed was from more trouble in the North. Whatever these incidents were, he trusted Ser Rodrik and his children had dealt with them appropriately.

“Any word from Benjen?” he asked and Ser Rodrik shook his head. This disappointed Ned, as soon as he had heard that Jon was alive he had sent a raven to the wall to let Benjen know. He had not expected him to return to Winterfell but he had hoped that he would at least sent a raven back in response. Ned realised that he was probably out ranging, hopefully he would return soon. He could not afford to spend time travelling to Castle Black to look for his younger brother.

“How was the council?” Ser Rodrik asked and Ned gave out a small sigh.

“Eventful,” he settled on that response.

“We have heard stories. They say that the King Aegon is the son of your sister Lyanna, they say he is a shape shifter and they say that Prince Rhaegar is alive as well,” he said in a tense and slightly worried voice which only caused Ned to sigh again. If Ser Rodrik had heard this then all the other Northern Lords would have heard similar stories, ones that would only become more and more embellished with the passing time.

“No he cannot shape shift, not exactly. He can change his hair and eye color, seemingly at will. Yes,
he is my sister’s son and yes Prince Rhaegar is still alive,” and Ned added the last part through gritted teeth. He saw Ser Rodrik’s eyes widen in shock and Ned quickly raised up a hand to silence him.

“Please, no more questions. I am weary from my travels and I will most likely have to tell this story to all the Lords later as well. So please Ser Rodrik can you let the Lords know that I will meet with them in the great hall shortly, probably within the hour,” he said in a tired voice and Ser Rodrik nodded.

Ned then began to walk towards his rooms to refresh himself but Arya quickly bounced into the courtyard.

“How is he father?” she asked immediately.

“Jon is fine Arya,” he heard Robb answer.

“Did he have dragons? How big was his dragon? What color was it? Did he give you a ride? Please tell me he didn’t, I want to be the first one,” she said excitedly and Ned turned around to see Catelyn and Robb both looking at him nervously.

“Arya, go and get your siblings and meet me in my solar,” he said and he saw Arya open her mouth to protest.

“Arya, Jon is fine, I met him and he is doing well, go do what father says and I’ll tell you more,” Robb said quickly and this seemed to satisfy her for now. Ned watched as she quickly ran off into the castle to complete his instructions. Ned noticed that she still wore that sword that Jon had commissioned for her on her waist.

“She’s going to hate you both,” Robb said quietly and Ned did not answer him, he knew that he was right. Instead, Ned began the walk through the castle towards his solar and he heard Robb and Catelyn walking behind him. He was grateful to be back in Winterfell, he was safe in his home, at least for now.

He pushed open the wooden door to his solar and thankfully he saw a fire crackling in the hearth, the shutters were closed and the room was pleasantly warm. A servant quickly arrived with a plate of warm bread and sausages which Ned accepted and he quickly started to eat. They were nearly finished with this rushed meal when the door to the solar burst open and Arya returned with Sansa, Rickon and Bran in tow. Bran was being carried by Hodor. His children all had the eager and expectant look on their faces and he could tell they were waiting on him to explain the events of the council and his meeting with Jon.

“Take a seat,” he said quickly as he pointed to the chairs on the other side of his desk. As they all sat he remembered the last family meeting that they had here, it would have been several months ago when he had told them the truth about Jon’s parentage. A lot had changed since then and once again he would have to tell them all the truth. He wondered where would be the best place to start.

“Tell us about Jon,” Arya said quickly and Ned sighed. Jon was no longer the same person that he had raised for all those years.

“Jon is, different” he replied in an uneven voice.

“What do you mean by that?” she asked and Ned could hear her voice develop an accusatory tone.

“He’s changed Arya,”

“Of course he’s changed. He’s been gone for over a year, how could he not change?” she asked and
Ned sighed. “We’ve heard stories about him back here. All the stable boys have been talking about him and his dragons, you would have thought they saw him themselves!”

“Arya, he has a dragon,” he confirmed for her, he was about to tell her more but she interrupted him in her eagerness.

“And? What color was it? Did he let anyone ride it? How big was it?”

“His dragon was a dark green like the color of moss. The dragon had green and bronze scales and bronze eyes. The Queen rode a black dragon, dark as night with black and red scales and had blood red eyes,” Ned informed her.

“And? How big were they?” she asked excitedly and Ned swallowed nervously. They were big and terrifyingly so. Ned still remembered the sheer size of them and the thunderous sound of their wings beating and of course their earth shattering roar. Ned could not imagine what they would be like on the battlefield.

He looked towards Arya and nodded slowly. “Aye, they were big,” he said quietly.

“And? Did you not get close to them? When did he say he would get here? What was the Queen like?”

Queen Daenerys was not what he had expected her to be. He had heard tales of her beauty and even they did not do her justice. Then there was her strength, she was passionate and confident and she was very much a Dragon Queen.

“Queen Daenerys is beautiful,” Robb said “She and Jon get along well. You would like her, as would you Sansa,”

“Is she like Visenya or Rhaenys?” Arya asked and Robb chuckled.

“I’ve never met either Queen Visenya or Queen Rhaenys,” he said with a shake of his head. “I have only met Queen Daenerys and only briefly at that. She makes Jon smile believe it or not,” Robb said and he saw Arya’s eyes widen.

“Really? She must be special. You should have let me come with you,” Arya said as she folded her arms across her chest.

“They also have a little boy called Daeron,” Robb told her and Ned saw that both Sansa and Arya’s eyes widened in surprise.

“Did you see him?” Arya asked quickly.

“What did he look like?” Sansa asked with a smile.

“They didn’t bring the baby with them,” Robb said “I think they said that he had silver hair and grey eyes but I can’t remember,”

“When is Jon coming North? As soon as he wins the war? Can I go South to meet him?”

“No,” his wife said firmly. “You will not go South and that boy will not win this war,”

“He has dragons, mother. Of course, he’s going to win,” Arya said and Ned agreed with her. There was no army in all of the seven kingdoms that would be able to stop those dragons, none at all.

“Arya, that boy is threatening to destroy my family and if he wins this war then your sister cannot
become Queen in the future,” Catelyn said but Ned just shook his head in exasperation.

“Mother you can’t be serious! I haven’t even seen his dragons but I even I know you won’t be able to stop them. Sansa can’t become Queen when King Robert loses his crown and Joffrey is an idiot anyway who would be horrible king if he ever sat the throne,”

“Arya Stark!” his wife said but Ned interrupted her.

“Catelyn, Sansa will not be Queen. She will never be Queen,” he said in a cold, flat voice and his wife looked at him in surprise “Robert hates me and I will never marry Sansa to his son, that would be too dangerous and foolish,” he said firmly and he saw Sansa quickly turn to look at him.

“Why does he hate you father?” she asked quietly.

“He hates me because I kept Jon’s secret from him. He loved my sister and he was supposed to marry her but she did not love him in return. She loved Rhaegar Targaryen and I never told him, I even hid their child from him,”

He saw Sansa starting to grow upset but to his surprise she took a deep breath and calmed herself. “Sansa when this is over, I will find a suitable match for you, truthfully I don’t think Prince Joffrey was the best match for you in the first place itself,” he said and that seemed to bring a smile to her face.

“Why would you not tell him?” Bran asked and Ned sighed.

“Sometimes Bran, the truth can do more harm than lies. Sometimes people deserve the comfort of a lie over the pain of the truth,” he said quietly.

“What does that mean?” Arya asked as she folded her arms across her chest.

“Arya after the war was over, my sister was dead and I thought Rhaegar was dead as well. What good would have come if I had told Robert that the woman he loved and fought a war over, did not love him and chose his most hated enemy over him? If I had informed Robert about Jon then the Targaryen loyalists would have rallied to place Jon on the throne and a new war would break out. The time for fighting was over and it was time to move on with our lives. Besides, Jon was a newborn babe and a Targaryen at that and the realm needed a strong leader to heal it. I believed Robert was the best option especially since many people remembered the atrocities committed by the last Targaryen king,” he said firmly and he saw Arya slowly nod her head in understanding. He thought Robert was the best ruler but looking back at it, he realised that he was clearly mistaken. Still, what other option did he have? Neither he nor Jon Arryn had any blood right or desire for the throne and the realm was not ready for another war.

“Wait father. So the rumors are true? Prince Rhaegar is really alive?” Bran asked and Ned sighed. Rhaegar Targaryen, Jon’s father was indeed still alive.

“Yes, he is,” he said through gritted teeth.

“Did he ride a dragon too?” Arya asked immediately.

“Did he sing a song on his harp?” Sansa asked.

“Father, how did he survive?” Bran asked.

“Who is Prince Ragger?” Rickon asked and Ned groaned. He could not believe his children at times like this. Sansa asked about his bloody harp and Arya was still fascinated by those dragons. Ned
shook his head and started to answer their questions.

“Prince Rhaegar is Jon’s father, Rickon. No, Arya he did not ride a dragon, No, Sansa he did not sing a song on his harp and Bran I have no idea of how he survived,”

“Jon said that when the Usurper hit him with his hammer, he fell into the Trident. He washed up downstream and was found by a red priest who nursed him back to health,” Robb said and Ned noticed that he had started to call Robert the Usurper.

“Jon listens to his father now,” Ned said somewhat bitterly.

“Are you not happy for him?” Arya asked, it seemed she picked up on his tone. “Jon has his father, he has a wife that loves him and child, we should be happy for him,” she said firmly and Ned noticed that she gave her mother a stern glare.

“Arya Stark, I will not be happy for that boy. Not after what he said to me,”

“What did he say to you mother?” Bran asked.

“He accused me and my family of some horrible things. He accused both of your grandfathers of treasonous acts against his family,”

“What did he say?” Arya asked immediately.

“He accused your grandfathers of conspiring to overthrow the Targaryens at the Tourney of Harrenhall all those years ago. He accused my father of deliberately hiding a letter that could have prevented the deaths of Lord Rickard and your Uncle Brandon and thus in turn stop the war from breaking out itself,” Catelyn said

“Rhaegar said that he had sent letters to Winterfell and Riverrun, informing our fathers that Lyanna had willingly chosen to leave with him and that they were safe together. He then accused our fathers of hiding these letters to push the realm towards rebellion to further their ambitions for power,”

“Did they?” Arya asked nervously.

“Of course not!” Catelyn shrieked “My father is a good, honorable man and so was Lord Rickard as well. That boy has no right to accuse them of these things! None at all.”

“Well Jon wouldn’t just lie, he wouldn’t make this up,” Arya said defensively.

“He got these lies from Rhaegar,” Catelyn told her and he saw Arya frown.

“Why would his father lie?” she asked and Ned frowned at her choice of word.

“His father is a bitter prince who is angry that his foolish actions started a war that ended his family’s dynasty and because he cannot accept this shameful fact, he is making this vile lies to discredit our families,” Catelyn said and Ned saw Arya’s frown deepen.

“What do you think Robb?”

“I’m not sure, Arya. I’m not sure why Jon or his father would lie about these events. They have nothing to gain by angering the Tullys,” he said with a small shrug of his shoulders.

“He said that he will strip my family of their titles, lands and position. If he gets his way, my house will no longer be Lords of the Riverlands but instead reduced to nothing more than landed knight house in status and that is why we must fight him” Catelyn said and he saw Bran and Sansa gasp.
“We can’t fight him, he’s our brother. He’s family,” Arya said immediately and Bran nodded in agreement.

“He is no family of mine. He has let the entire realm know of his plans for my family and I will not sit here and let him do this. The North will stand with me,” Catelyn said and Arya shook her head.

“He is my family and he is a Stark. The North will remember that he is our father’s sister only son and they will stand with him,” Arya said firmly as she folded her arms across her chest. The two glared at each other before Catelyn spoke again.

“Arya Stark, I am your mother,” she began but Arya interrupted her.

“And Jon is my brother,” she said fiercely and they continued to glare at each other until Bran spoke,

“Father, what are you going to do?” he asked quietly. “Whichever side you pick, you will be fighting against your family,” and he saw everyone’s eyes turn to him. Ned sighed and ran his hands through his hair.

“I will need to speak to the Lords first and let them know the full story,” Ned said in a tired voice. “Jon has plans to improve the North but the Northern Lords may not like them so I will need to discuss this with them,”

“Who cares if they don’t like his plans! You’re in charge, not them!” Arya said which brought a small smile to his face.

“I can’t force them to accept changes they don’t like. I am not a tyrant, Arya,”

“What happens if the Northern Lords reject Jon’s plans?” Sansa asked nervously. “Will we have to go to war against him?”

“I don’t know Sansa,” he replied. Ned knew that if the Northern Lords did not accept Jon and his plans then they would most likely push towards war, and this was a war that he did not want to fight. He made a promise

“Jon has given us the option to stay neutral,” Robb reminded him. “He said that until we decide, he will not attack the North,”

“That’s good,” Sansa said as she smiled at her brother.

“It is not good for my family,” Catelyn repeated. “The North can’t stay neutral, the North needs to join the Riverlands and fight against him,” Ned saw Arya open her mouth to protest so he quickly stepped in.

“Enough,” Ned said before they repeated this argument. “We will worry about this later, we need to meet with the Northern Lords first,”

Ned looked at both of them before he heard a knock on his door. He told the person to enter and he was surprised to see Maester Luwin.

“A raven came my Lord, from the King,”

“Which one?”

“Is it from Jon?” Arya asked and Ned saw her eyes light up eagerly.

“I have not opened it but the seal belongs to King Robert Baratheon,” he said as he passed the scroll
to Ned. Ned saw Arya’s smile fade as she scowled at the offending piece of paper.

“Are the Lords in the hall?” Ned asked as he took the scroll.

“Yes, my Lord,”

“Good. Tell them I will be there shortly,” he said as he broke open the seal and began to read the letter. His eyes widened in surprise as he read the letter and then he gently put the letter down on the table. Ned could not believe it, did Robert think he was that much of a fool?

“What does it say father?” Robb asked as Catelyn snatched up the letter. He put his head in his hands as he listened to Catelyn read the letter.

“Ned

I apologize for my actions the last time we spoke, I overreacted when I was faced with some shocking news, I do not know what came over me. I am not usually like that. I loved Lyanna but that boy is not your sister’s son, you and I both know that. I see no trace of Lyanna in that boy. He is Rhaegar’s son, the son of the man who stole your sister and my betrothed from me, the grandson of the mad man who brutally murdered your father and elder brother. Now, this boy seeks to steal my crown and punish our families for fighting against a tyrant all those years ago. We have been friends for nearly our entire lives, please do not forget that. Let us ride into battle together again. Let us get justice for Lyanna and the realm once again,”

“Ned, he wants to work with you again. He brings the Stormlands and the Westerlands. If you add the Northern forces to his then we will be able to win this war,”

“No, you can’t. Jon has dragons. A single dragon is worth over several armies in itself,” Arya said quickly.

“How do you know that? Dragons have not fought battles in over a hundred years,”

“Enough!” Ned said. He knew the two of them would continue this same argument if he did not stop them. “I am not sure if we should trust him,”

“Ned, we have to take the chance, my family,” Catelyn began as she looked at him anxiously and Ned could see the pain and desperation in her eyes.

“The letter could be forged and if he is serious about apologizing then a letter is a poor way to do it,” Robb interrupted and Ned agreed.

“Cat. Robb is right we should not trust this letter. I know Robert, he knows how to hold a grudge, I doubt he would forgive me this quickly. He has held a grudge against the Targaryens for nearly 20 years till now,” he reached out to gently squeeze her hand. He knew that she wanted to take this offer to save her family but it was too risky. “Catelyn, if we take these terms Robert could turn around and betray us, we will find another way to save your family,”

He saw Catelyn frown as she considered this, she opened her mouth to protest more but Ned interrupted her.

“I’m sorry Catelyn but we need to meet with the Lords now, we will discuss this offer later,” he said gently as he rose to his feet. “Sansa look after your siblings whilst we are meeting the Lords,”

“Can’t we come to the meeting?” Sansa asked and Bran and Arya both nodded and looked at him expectantly. Ned looked at them, he knew that if he said no, they would argue with him and force
him to recap the events later anyway.

“Fine, you can come with us to the meeting but I want you all to listen, do not speak out of turn,” he said with a pointed look at Arya. “Arya, I want your word,”

She looked at him and bit her lip before she slowly nodded. “I promise I won’t speak out of turn,” she said and Ned nodded. He led them out of his solar and then through the castle, Hodor had been waiting outside and he helped by carrying Bran towards the great hall. They entered through the doorway behind the dais and he saw all the Lords talking amongst themselves as they waited for him. Once they saw him enter the hall they all quickly fell silent.

The She-Wolf of Winterfell

Arya Stark took her seat at the high table and watched as her father stood up to address the Lords. She was very unhappy with her parents. They had gone to this council and they had messed everything up. She should have gone with them, she would’ve sorted them all out.

“My Lords,” he said in greeting. “I have returned from the great council, I am sure that you have heard many rumors so I am going to address them immediately before we move forward,” he said in a clear voice. Whilst he spoke, Arya looked at each of the Lords, particularly those who did not go to the council such as Umber and Cerwyn.

“Prince Rhaegar Targaryen is in fact alive,” her father said and those in the room who had not attended the council looked up at her father in shock. “Believe me my Lords, I saw him with my own eyes,”

Then the outrage came.

‘Murderer’

‘Rapist’

Were the words she frequently heard from the onlookers. She closed her fist in anger, how dare they speak about Jon’s father like that! Why wasn’t her father speaking up to stop them? This was not true, he had told them that there was no kidnapping or rape.

“What are we waiting for!” she heard Lord Cerwyn shout. “This man kidnapped and raped Lady Lyanna! We should be marching South to kill him right now instead of having this talk!” and Arya heard several Lords shout noises of agreement. Her father let them speak for far too long before he spoke again.

“I am sure that you have heard the rumor that King Aegon Targaryen is the son of Rhaegar Targaryen and Lyanna Stark. This is true,” he said in a loud clear voice and he heard several loud gasps. “I found Lyanna dying in a tower in Dorne after birthing a child. I took that child in and raised him as my own, some of you would know of him as my bastard, Jon Snow. Rhaegar Targaryen did not kidnap and rape my sister, they were in love and ran away together. They were married and their child is the legitimate Targaryen heir.”
Arya watched and listened as the Lords continue to talk to each other and dissect this piece of information. The earlier loud outrage had passed and it was replaced by a quiet set of whispering and eventually Lord Umber spoke,

“Aye, I had my reservations about this King Aegon, but if he is the son of Lyanna then he is a son of the North!” he said in a loud voice and she heard several Lords agree with him which brought a smile to her face.

“Once!” she heard Lady Mormont call out. “Now, he associates with criminals like my nephew Jorah!”

“Aye, Lady Mormont speaks the truth,” she heard Lord Karstark shout. “The boy has forgotten his roots. He wants to change the North, chop down our trees and mine our mountains to fund his southern greed!”

Arya frowned about this, Jon was not greedy. If he wanted to chop down their trees and mine their mountains then he would have a good reason. She knew that for certain.

“My Lords,” she heard Robb speak up. “King Aegon wishes to cut down these trees and mine for minerals to help the North progress. The wealth that the North generates from these sales will be used to build schools and other beneficial projects here in the North for your children and our people,” Robb said and this brought a smile to her face, she knew her brother had a good reason.

“To build these projects we do not need to chop down our trees!” Lord Karstark shouted.

“Aye. I saw the King dressed in his rich silks and jewels, he is more than rich enough to fund them on his own. Leave the North as it is!”

“Next, he’ll start telling us to chop down our Weirwoods!” she heard one lord shout and this caused Arya to frown.

“Aye, there is a reason there are no weirwoods in the South!”

“My Lords, you are being ridiculous, he will NOT chop down our weirwoods. It is only a small change and we can use the increased wealth to help us during the harsh winter!” Robb said and thankfully she heard a few of the Lords agree with him.

“I agree with Lord Robb,” she heard a Lord say, she thought it was Lord Wyman Manderly but she was not sure. Sansa would know, she had always been better at this sort of thing. “We should not be afraid of change,”

“I agree with my son,” her father called out which brought a smile to her face. He was siding with Jon. “Winter is coming and extra wealth and resources can help it become more bearable for all of us, from the Lords all the way to the smallfolk,”


“For change!” she heard the other Lords shout in agreement. Some Lords did not chime in, she noticed that Lord Bolton was tight lipped as ever.

“My Lords, there is more news from King Aegon,” she heard her mother call “He has disrespected my family and he plans to depose my family from their positions as Lord of the Riverlands! He wants to strip my family of its lands and titles!” and Arya frowned. Why was she bringing this up now?
“Is this true Lord Stark?” she heard one Lord asked.

“Aye it is. At the council, King Aegon and Queen Daenerys announced their plans to depose House Tully,”

“Why would they do that?” she heard Lord Glover ask.

“He believes some vile lies about my family. He says that my family tried to betray his family before the rebellion at the Tourney of Harrenhall. He implicated Lord Rickard Stark in this treasonous act as well!” she said and this caused the northern lords to stand up in uproar.

Arya lost track of which Lord said what but she felt herself getting angrier and angrier as they yelled. It was as if they had forgotten that they had just agreed to support Jon and his plans to improve the North!

“He dares to disrespect Lord Rickard!” she heard Lord Karstark shout.

“He forgets his Northern roots! He forgets that the Mad King burned Lord Rickard alive!” she heard Lord Umber shout. Arya wanted to speak up but she promised her father that she wouldn’t.

“My Lords!” she heard her father shout. He started to bang his fist against the table to get the Lords to calm down. “Settle down!” he shouted and eventually the Lords quietened down.

“Is this true Lord Stark?” she heard Ser Wylis Manderly ask in a calm voice.

“This is true, he levelled these accusations against our families,”

“Then we should rise up against him. He is forgetting his roots! My brother went to Essos and died in his service and this is how he repays us!” Ser Wylis shouted and Arya scowled at the fat man. Who did he think he was, of course Jon remembers his roots. What a stupid thing to say.

“Aye. Just like the Mad King!” she heard one lord shout which brought another chorus of agreement. Arya bit her lip and her hand went to the hilt of needle.

“You are a fool, King Aegon will make our lands rich and prosperous!” she heard another lord shout. Was it Lord Manderly? Arya was unsure.

“Enough!” her father roared and the Lords fell silent “Obviously, we have a very difficult situation on our hands here. On the one hand, my wife’s family is being threatened, my father’s name is being disrespected whilst on the other hand we are talking of going to war with my sister’s son,”

“We should defend Lady Catelyn’s family and the memory of Lord Rickard!” she heard one idiot lord yell in response.

“Aye” she heard the Lord’s shout and Arya had enough.

“Are you all stupid! Jon has three dragons and they’re all huge if you fight him you will LOSE,” she told them all as she stood up and they all just stared at her. She knew her parents were glaring at her but she did not care in that moment.

“I agree with my sister,” Robb said after a moment. “We can’t fight against the Targaryens. We will lose. King Torren understood the destructive power of dragons and bent the knee to spare the North from that destruction over 300 years ago. We should keep this fact in our minds before marching off to fight against dragons,”
“We will not be fighting alone!” her mother shouted. “King Robert has offered us an alliance to fight against this common enemy. If we ally with him then we will have the support of the Stormlands, the Westerlands and parts of the Riverlands. The might of these kingdoms combined with the North can defeat this invader. We can win!”

Arya scowled at her mother, she always hated Jon.

“That offer does not come without strings my Lords. I am not sure that we can trust King Robert,” her father called out. “I do not trust King Robert,”

“Why not?” Ser Wylis called out and Arya was beginning to get frustrated by the fat lord.

“King Robert hates the Targaryens and I had hidden the last Targaryen from him for over 20 years. He has plenty of reason not to trust me and to seek vengeance,”

“Then, what should we do Lord Stark,” she heard a strange voice ask, she looked and saw that it came from Lord Bolton who had finally stepped forward to speak. Strangely enough, it seemed as if everyone had to step closer to hear him. “You have to defend your wife but you cannot take arms against your sister’s son,” and the hall fell silent after these words.

“I have a solution,” Robb said as he stood up again. “I am friends with King Aegon. We grew up together and are brothers in all but name and blood. I will write to him and ask for mercy for my mother’s family. If he grants it then the Tully’s will have nothing to worry about,”

“Mercy!” her mother shouted “He will not grant us mercy!”

“King Aegon has already offered the North the option to stay neutral during the war on account of our blood ties and his love for his mother’s homeland. So, the possibility of him being merciful to our southern relations is not outlandish. Besides, what other choice do we have but to ask?” Robb said as he turned to her. “I have seen his dragons if you try and fight against them you will lose!”

“I agree with Robb,” her father called. “Getting the Targaryens to show mercy and to stop their attack on the Tullys will be the best solution,”

“My Lord, surely we should send some of our forces south regardless? House Tully is our ally and if we send none of our troops then it looks like we are abandoning them in their time of need,” Roose Bolton pointed out and Arya frowned.

“If we send our troops to Riverrun then it looks like we are taking up arms against the Targaryens,” Robb pointed out and Arya was thankful for this. “The North is currently remaining neutral in this war whilst we consider his offer and proposal of reforms. If Northern forces fight against the Targaryens then King Aegon will be forced to attack us in retaliation,”

“His reforms are terrible for the North,” Lord Karstark shouted and she heard several Lords agree.

“Enough,” her father said. “It is clear that we are beginning to talk in circles and no more progress is being made. Here is what I propose. Robb will write to King Aegon to ask for mercy for the Tullys. He will ask that they do not lose their position as Lord Paramount of the Riverlands and if King Aegon grants this request then we will remain in the North. However if this request is not granted then we will have to ride South to help house Tully during their time of need,” Arya was outraged by this, was he really considering fighting against Jon?

“My Lord, surely you can’t expect us to sit here and do nothing whilst we wait?” she heard Lord Karstark ask and she heard her father sigh
“Whilst we await the response of King Aegon, assemble your fighting men and bring them to Winterfell. That way, if we need to ride south, we will be ready,” her father said in a tired voice.

“House Karstark will be ready for war,” Lord Karstark said as he rose to his feet.

“As will house Hornwood,”

Arya frowned at these Lords, they were all fools. Going to war would be the death of them and they were all too stupid to see it.

The Dragon King

Jon lay in bed looking up at the canopy in their rooms in Dragonstone. Usually Daenerys would wake up before him but she was still currently asleep on her front next to him, her silver hair partially covering her face. They had left the council that same night on the back of their dragons as they had both wanted to head home to see Daeron again after the council.

Jon had wished the council had gone better, he had hoped that he would be able to win the support of the North however Lord Stark had brought his wife and it had all gone badly from there. Lord Stark had not believed him or his father when he informed them of the conspiracy to overthrow the Targaryen regime and this frustrated Jon. Worse still, he had not brought Arya with him. Seeing Robb was great but he would have loved to see Arya most of all.

Arya would love Daeron, he had no doubt about it. Still Jon realised that he could not focus on her right now, he had a war to win. Jon sighed in frustration, he knew that it could have gone better and he was not blameless. Rhaegar was right, he had let his emotions get the better of him and he would have to do better in the future. He could not let his anger get the better of him again.

The first shipment of food from the Reach had arrived in the last week and this was an added bonus. Ser Loras and Lady Margaery had also arrived on Dragonstone. Loras would join their Kingsguard and Lady Margaery would become one of Daenerys’s ladies in waiting.

Margaery had come with several of her cousins and neither Jon nor Daenerys minded this. Margaery was nearly always in a good mood which was a big contrast to her brother Loras who was always gloomy. Jon had not figured out what was the matter with him but he knew that he would learn in time. His father had decided to house all their Kingsguard knights in Windwyrm tower until they took the Red Keep. They would also need new armor to show their affiliation to our house but they would deal with that at a later time, their current armor would be good enough for battle.

He felt the bed shift as Daenerys rolled over onto her side and now her back was towards him. Jon smiled to himself as he reached out to touch her, her skin was soft and warm underneath his fingers. He continued to gently touch her skin until she slowly rolled over and opened her lovely eyes.

“I’m sorry,” he said quietly and she looked at him and shook her head. “I’m sorry for what happened at the council. I should have handled myself better, please forgive me?” she looked at him for a few moments before she slowly nodded her head

“We are both young and we will both make mistakes. It’s ok my love, I forgive you,” she said and she leaned forward to kiss him softly. The kiss started off slow before it grew deeper and deeper.
He gently cupped her breasts and rolled one of her nipples between his fingers. She fidgeted slightly under his touch and the little noises she made caused his cock to stiffen. At night after a long day she was always full of energy during their lovemaking, she liked to try and pin him to the bed to ride him wildly. However during the mornings, she was usually soft and submissive.

“Jon,” she murmured as she broke the kiss and moved her hand down to stroke his stiff length. He gently placed kisses on her neck and below her ear and each kiss caused her to moan softly. He kissed her on the collarbone before gently rolling her onto her back.

He kissed each of her lovely breasts before leaving a trail of soft kisses gently down her body. His right hand reached out and he slowly slipped one finger inside of her warmth. He curled his finger and searched for that spot that would cause her to moan and writhe in pleasure

“Jon,” she whispered, her voice heavy with desire. He ducked his head down and began to greedily lap away at her folds. He savored her sweet taste and she lifted one leg to give him more space. She started to squirm her hips on the bed and he used his strength to gently but firmly hold her in place. He felt her put her hand in his hair and gently pull at his raven locks

“Jon, please fuck me,” she moaned but Jon was not finished tasting her. He lapped away at her as if he was dying of thirst. He expertly used his tongue, flattening it to give her long slow licks which caused her to grind her hips more against his face. He brought her close to her peak before he pulled away from her. She gasped and her hips moved up in the open air trying to find his face again. He moved between her legs and slowly pushed his throbbing length inside of her.

He kissed her gently and she returned his kiss. Jon began to move his hips slowly and lazily, loving the tight feeling of her warmth wrapped around him. He felt her hands roam around on his back before they settled in his hair.

Jon lost track of the time as he slowly thrust into her. He alternated between kissing her soft plump lips and gazing into her lovely lilac eyes. He started to roll his hips from side to side and he heard Daenerys moan in pleasure.

“Faster please,” she begged and Jon increased his pace. He began to thrust into her harder but apparently that was not enough because she pushed hard on his chest before quickly turning around to move onto her hands and knees.

“Jon please,” she said huskily as she wiggled her hips from side to side. Jon was not about to refuse her and so he quickly moved forward and sheathed himself inside her and he began to thrust. She started to quickly rock backwards and forwards and Jon began to move his hips in time with her and soon, their room was filled with the sound of flesh hitting flesh.

Dany started to moan and shout and this only drove Jon on further. His hand snaked its way into her hair and he used that to pull her head back and she began to moan and scream even louder. Jon continued to thrust into her and he knew that it wouldn’t be long until she reached her peak. Her moans turned into soft high pitched cries and then he felt her walls tighten around him, threatening to swallow him whole.

Jon slowed his pace and began to roll his hips, knowing this slow teasing would help her extend her pleasure. He slapped her pert ass with both hands, savoring that lovely sound. He leaned forward and slowly rolled one of her nipples between his fingers. It took her a few minutes to come down from her release and when she was finished she turned back to look at him with her lovely lilac eyes. He growled at the sight of her and began to thrust again, this time chasing his own pleasure. His hands went to her hips and he pulled her back against him.
She started to moan and mewl again and her back glistened with sweat. She turned back to look at him once more.

“Cum in me my King,” she said in a soft sultry voice. Jon felt his release approaching and he buried himself deep inside of her cunt and he released his seed with such intensity he felt his knees shudder and go weak and his toes curl. He gave her spurt after spurt and when he was finished he pulled out of her and rolled onto his back. He stared up at the canopy as he caught his breath and he felt Daenerys lay her head on his chest and she let out a content sigh.

“I love you,” he whispered and she hummed in agreement as she placed a few kisses along his collarbone. His fingers traced patterns over her flat belly and he saw the sunlight slowly lighting up their room. He remembered how radiant she looked when Daeron was growing inside of her, he would love to see that again.

“What are you doing today?” she asked after a few moments.

“I will probably spend some time sparring in the morning. We will take some of the best Unsullied, our blood riders and our Kingsguard and we will practice for a while. We will be going to war soon and it has been far too long since I’ve used Darkfyre in battle,”

“Be careful,” she said quietly “You shouldn’t need to fight with your sword. We have three dragons and you shouldn’t need to get off Vedros,”

“I shouldn’t but it’s better to be safe than sorry. You should keep practicing with your dagger as well,”

“I’ll try today. How about we do it together, after lunch?” she asked as she raised her head up off his chest

“How about we do it before the evening meal. That way when we’re finished we can bathe once and then retire to our chambers for the rest of the evening,”

“That sounds even better,” she said as she rest her head on his chest again. Jon gently stroked her hair as they lay in bed together

“Do you speak to Margaery often?”

“I do. She is a nice girl, obviously we had very different upbringings but we’re starting to get along more,”

“Do you know why her brother is always so upset?” Jon asked

“I think there’s one good reason,”

“Like?”

“Don’t you know?” she asked as she looked up at him as if it was obvious.

“No?”

“Well, I wouldn’t be happy in his situation,”

“What situation is he in?” Jon asked as he frowned and this caused her eyes to light up.

“Do you remember who knighted Ser Loras?”
“Renly Baratheon,” he answered after he took a moment to think about it.

“So?” she asked expectantly.

“He’s upset because he will have to go to war against the man who knighted him? That hardly seems like the end of the world,” Jon said and this caused Dany to laugh softly.

“You don’t get it do you,” she asked as her eyes shone brightly.

“Get what?” and Dany laughed again, louder this time. Jon frowned, what was he missing?

“Never mind,” she said playfully “I couldn’t believe it when I was told but it makes perfect sense,”

“What makes perfect sense?” Jon asked and now he was thoroughly confused.

“Don’t you worry your pretty little face about Loras Tyrell and Renly Baratheon, I’ll handle it,” she said as she gave him a quick kiss on the nose. Then, she got up from the bed and Jon watched as she walked naked across the room and into the nursery.

“I really don’t understand,” he said as he ran his hands through his hair. He shook his head and decided that if Daenerys said she’ll handle it, she’ll handle it. He had plenty of other things to worry about.

Daenerys returned a few moments later with Daeron in her arms. Jon pulled himself up onto the bed and she settled into his side and she began to feed him. Jon loved how happy she was in these moments.

“Good morning my prince,” she said with a smile as she kissed him on his stomach once he was finished. Daeron started to twist out of her arms and she put him down on the soft bedding and they watched as he began to crawl over to Jon.

“He’s eager to start his day,” Jon said as he watched his son.

“He is. Today, he gets to try Banana’s,” she said with a smile. Jon scooped him up and held him high and repeated the words to him which caused him to giggle.

“He is growing so fast,” Dany said to him and he nodded in agreement. “I want to take him with us. I can’t bear to be apart from him,”

“I know but we can’t take him. He is safest here on an island,” Jon said sadly as he held onto Daeron.

“I know,” she said sadly “I’ll fly back to see him every day,”

Jon looked out and saw that sun was up and he knew he had to get up. “I have to go now my love,” he said. He gave her a quick kiss before slowly getting out of bed.

“Will I see you at lunch?” he asked and she nodded.

“We should head and see the armorers as well,” she said and Jon nodded, hopefully they had finished the task they had assigned for them.

“Say bye to daddy,” she said softly to Daeron who was playing with her hair. Jon smiled at them, gave them both one final kiss before heading across to his dressing room to dress himself for the day ahead. He wore a simple grey and black doublet and he pulled on a fur cloak over his clothes, he was much more affected by the cold than she was.
Ghost came trotting into the room and Jon ran his hands through his fur and together, they went off through the castle to find their breakfast. They went to the breakfast hall and Jon was one of the first to arrive. He piled his plate high with sausages, bacon and warm bread and he filled a similar plate for Ghost. He also decided to try some of the orange juice that had come from the Reach. Lady Margaery had said they had a sweet taste and he was eager to try it.

They ate silently and Jon watched as gradually the hall filled with people. First, Ser Davos arrived with Tyrion and the Lady Shireen. Jon noticed that her face was healing after the treatment Marwyn had given her. Marywn himself had recently sent a note letting them know that he had arrived at Eastwatch by the Sea and he would send another letter once he arrived at Castle Black.

Next came Lady Margaery and her cousins who filled their plates and took seats at their own table. Jon had noticed that Margaery had now started to wear a similar style of dress to Dany. Jon remembered that the Tyrells and the Starks had been considering a match between Robb and Margaery, perhaps this was something he would consider after the war was won.

His father came down next and he sat down to eat next to him.

“Morning,” he said in a tired voice.

“Morning father,” he said quickly then he took a deep breath. “I’m sorry for what happened at the council, you were right, I let my emotions get the better of me and I’ve done more harm than good,”

“There is no use dwelling in the past, let’s learn from this and make sure it doesn’t happen again. You are a King now and you have to act better than that. You need to prove to the people that you deserve to be their King, you can’t just demand it,” Rhaegar said sternly and Jon nodded slowly.

“But it is in the past now, we need to focus on the future,”

“How did you sleep?” Jon asked after a few moments

“Not too well. I was up late reading those books from Valyria. It’s going to take me weeks to finish them,”

“Did you find anything interesting?”

“Nothing that we did not already know. I’ve also began to copy them, some of the books are in a damaged state and we don’t want this knowledge to be lost forever,”

“That sounds like a good idea but we should be careful. Those books have knowledge on how to defeat our dragons, we don’t want it to fall into the wrong hands,”

“I will be. I’m only making one copy,” he said and Jon nodded “Where’s Daenerys?”

“With Daeron. She fed him before I got up, she should be down shortly,” Jon told him. “Want to join me for a spar this morning?”

“Sure. I suppose a bit of practice won’t hurt,” he said with a shrug. Once they were finished they put their plates to the side and together they headed outside to the area where they would be sparring. Jon was pleased to see that everyone had arrived and they were waiting for them. The spars would be taking place in an open area with plenty of space for spectators to see what was happening

“Good morning everyone,” Jon said in a clear voice. “We are going to head to war in a few weeks and you are amongst our best warriors. Some of you have not been in a fight for months if not years and it is important that all of you are ready for battle. This morning we will be having a series of spars to help prepare us all for battle,”
Then he repeated these instructions in Valyrian for the Unsullied and finally in Dothraki. The men all nodded in understanding and then Jon began to divide them up into pairs.

Ser Barristan would start with Grey Worm, Ser Jaime with Rakharo, Rhaegar with Aggo and this left Jon with Ser Loras. Jon had done this intentionally, he was of a similar age to Ser Loras and he was eager to see how good he was. As the Dothraki did not believe in using blunted weapons, they were all sparing with real weapons.

Jon stood opposite Ser Loras and pulled Darkfyre from its sheath and he watched as Ser Loras did the same. Ser Loras had been chosen a Valyrian steel Longsword and because it was to remain in the possession of House Tyrell, the hilt and handle had been jeweled with emeralds and roses.

“That’s Valyrian Steel, it’s much lighter than normal steel. It’ll take some time to get used to,” he warned and Ser Loras nodded. Jon took a half step forward and then their spar began.

Jon decided to let Ser Loras dictate the pace whilst he got used to the new sword. Jon used his quick footwork to move out of the way of Loras’s strikes. Jon quickly realised that he had earned his reputation, his strikes were sharp and precise and Jon eventually had to start raising his own sword to parry. The sound of Valyrian steel clashing together quickly filled Jon’s ears. It was unlike the sound of regular steel colliding, it was higher pitched and it sounded like a gong being struck.

Jon shifted his feet and then sunk lower in his stance. He had seen how well Ser Loras could attack, now it was time to see how well he could defend. Jon tensed his calves as he stayed low in his stance as he waited for his opportunity. Staying this low was difficult and painful and to make matters worse, Loras did not give him many opportunities to launch his counter attack. Loras continued to patiently poke and probe without giving Jon any opportunities.

So, Jon decided to take matters into his own hands. He took a small half step forward and to his right and he began to bring his sword around his right hand side in a feint to draw Loras out. Loras fell for his trap and Jon smiled to himself.

Instead of continuing his movement to the right, he exploded all the way to his left. Loras had not expected him to move with that much speed and this put him on the back foot. However, he quickly recovered and he was able to block Jon’s downward strike but the force of the block was too much for him and his sword clattered to the floor next to him.

He stared at the young knight for a few moments before smiling and offering him his hand.

“Well fought. You have great patience and discipline, not many knights would have been able to block that strike,” Jon said as they shook hands.

“I can see why. You move impossibly fast and you’re stronger than you look,” he said as he caught his breath. Jon nodded to him before he turned to look around, Rhaegar and Aggo were still fighting whilst everyone else was finished. Jon noticed that his father struggled slightly and this worried him, perhaps it would be best if he remained in the air with Caraxes.

Once his father was finished, he reassigned everyone and they went at it again. Jon spent half the time fighting and the other half observing what he saw. Ser Barristan and Ser Jaime clearly had an advantage over Ser Loras, they both disarmed the younger knight with tricks and moves that Jon had not seen before.

Grey Worm, Rakharo and Aggo fared much better against the experienced knights, their Essosi style gave them an advantage and this pleased Jon. If the great Ser Barristan struggled against these men, then the Usurper and his knights would not stand a chance against their forces.
Their sparring continued for most of the morning and continued until well past midday until Jon stopped. The session was definitely a success, not only did it help to keep everyone in shape, it also allowed the Dothraki and Unsullied to learn and understand how Westerosi men fought. This would help them in battle and hopefully it would build up a sense of trust and respect between the different groups of people.

Jon then headed back to the castle for lunch with Daenerys, he found her in the small hall near their chambers. She was sitting at a table with Missandei, Shireen and Margaery. He saw Daeron on the floor playing with some toys and a half eaten banana on the table. Daeron turned towards him, smiled and slowly started to crawl towards him.

“What happened to him?” he asked as he noticed the banana on the table.

“I tried to feed him some banana, he ate about half of it before he decided that he had enough,” Daenerys said with a smile. Jon picked him up and gave him a kiss on his nose.

“He is a lovely boy,” Margaery said to him with a smile.

“How was your morning?” Daenerys asked,

“It was tiring but good. Your brother fights well Lady Margaery,”

“Thank you, your grace,” she said with her signature smile

“Shall we have lunch Jon?” Daenerys asked “We were waiting on you to join us,” Jon nodded to her and then he took his seat next to her. Jon held Daeron in his lap and he reached out to grab the banana.

“Good luck getting him to eat that,” Dany said as she signaled for a servant to start bringing their lunch.

“Daeron is going to be a good boy and eat his banana isn’t he?” Jon said as he broke off a small piece of banana and fed it to him. Daeron opened his mouth wide and ate the small piece of banana.

“See?” he said with a wide smile.

“Just wait,” Daenerys said with a smirk. Whilst he tried to feed Daeron, there lunch was served. They were severed venison pies and honey covered mutton chops. They had plenty of peas, turnips and sweetcorn and they were given a light mead to drink. As Jon ate this rich meal, he was once again reminded of the importance of having the Reach as an ally. Their soldiers will all be well fed and that would be a good way to keep their morale up.

As they ate, he noticed that Daeron slowly started to fall asleep on his chest. He gently passed him to Daenerys who offered to take him up stairs and put him in his crib. Whilst Daenerys and Missandei were away with Daeron, Jon spoke with Shireen and Margaery.

“How are you finding Dragonstone?”

“The architecture is amazing your grace,” she said with a smile. “I read in a book that this castle was constructed by your ancestors using magic and I am honored to be able to see it for myself,” Jon smiled at her response, she reminded him of Sansa. She seemingly always knew the right thing to say.

“How is compared to Highgarden?”
“Different,” she settled on “But it is still special in its own way;”

“By different do you mean gloomy?” he said with a small smile which she returned.

“I wouldn’t use that word,”

“How would describe Dragonstone, Shireen?”

“Dark but beautiful. I like it. I’ve lived here my entire life,”

“Do you like Storms End?” Jon asked. After the war was over and the Usurper was defeated, they would be sending Shireen to Storms End and he wondered if she had ever been there before.

“It’s a great castle, I love the fact that it’s by the sea as well although my father never liked visiting there much. I’ve only been a few times to visit Edric. We would spend a lot of time playing together and exploring the castle. The last time we were there we tried to find the secret tunnel that Ser Davos used to smuggle in his onions but we couldn’t find it,” she said and Jon nodded, he wondered if there were any secret tunnels in Dragonstone that they hadn’t found. He would have to ask his father or the maesters to see what they knew. Then he turned to Margaery

“Did you meet Robb Stark at the council?”

“I was never introduced but my grandmother pointed him out to me. It sounds like the two of you were close?”

“Yes, we are close,” Jon said firmly. “He’s my brother in all but name and blood,” and he saw Margaery nod slowly. She seemed to realize how close they were.

“I think you would like him,” Jon began and she raised an eyebrow in surprise. Before he could continue Daenerys returned.

“Come on my love, let’s check on the armorers,” she said and Jon quickly rose to his feet, he smiled at both Shireen and Margaery before leaving the small hall.

“What were you talking about?” she asked as they made their way through the castle

“I asked her how she was finding Dragonstone and I told her a little bit about Winterfell. I mentioned Robb and my siblings to her,”

“Robb?” she asked in surprise. “What are you planning?”

“I was thinking that if they marry, they could unite the North and the Reach. Robb is my brother and from our conversations in the council I don’t think he will fight against us. He’s the heir to a great house so he’s a suitable match for Margaery. If they marry it will only strengthen our ties and relations with the other Kingdoms,”

“This is true,” she said after a pause. “What do you plan to do with the North after this war is over?”

“What do you mean?”

“Will Lord Stark still be Lord of Winterfell or will you put appoint Robb in his place?”

Jon was quiet for a few moments as he thought on this. He realised that it would be difficult for he and Lord Stark to work together again after the war was over, perhaps appointing Robb as the Lord of Winterfell would be a good idea.
“Appointing Robb has its advantages, he and I will have a closer relationship and that will help us work together. However, I can’t just depose the previous Lord of Winterfell, I would need a good reason to do it otherwise Robb’s own bannermen might rise up against him or force him to rise up against me. The last thing we want is a civil war in the North,” he said to her.

“You’re the King, we have dragons and your word is law. After Aegon’s conquest, he appointed new Lords and everyone grew to accept this, the North will do the same in this case,”

“Perhaps they will in time, but I think deposing Lord Stark should be the last resort,”

“Jon, I think you’re underestimating the power of our dragons. Some Lords are still foolishly opposing us but once they see our dragons in action for themselves no one left in the lands will doubt us. If you want to appoint Robb as Lord of Winterfell you will be able to. If a Lord is foolish enough to rise against us then, perhaps they don’t deserve to be Lords at all. If you need a good reason to depose him, you can tell the realm that he did not support his sister’s son. He chose the Usurper over his own blood,”

Jon was silent for a few moments as he considered her words. Their dragons provided them with a lot of power and he realised that she was right, if a lord was foolish enough to oppose them then perhaps they deserved to be stripped of their positions. However, he also realised that there was a fine line between justice and tyranny when using their dragons. He did not want to use their dragons to oppress the people and force them to accept their rule. His father had pointed this out to him this morning, he had to prove to the people that he deserved to rule it wasn’t something that was his right.

“We will talk about this more later,” he settled on. After the war, they would have a more accurate picture of the realm. There would be no point deposing Lord Stark and risking a potential conflict in the North if other areas needed their attention.

They walked outside of the castle and down to one of the beaches below the Dragonmont. The sun had been covered by clouds and the wind was starting to pick up. Jon saw smoke trailing high into the sky from the forges. Ever since they arrived on the Island, they had set their armorers to commission armor for their dragons. This was a monumental task and it was something that had not been attempted for centuries. Tyrion, Rhaegar and Marwyn had been working together to design the armor and today they would finally see the finished product.

“You graces,” he heard Tyrion call to them from his position at the entrance to the camp. He saw his father and Ser Jaime also with him.

“The armorers are finished with one set of armor,”

“Why did you only make one set?” Jon immediately asked.

“Think of it like a test. We’ve thought of plenty designs but we have only made a few. We don’t want to waste time and resources building a design that we are not happy with,” Tyrion replied.

“Are you sure this will work? Is the metal light? Will it impact their ability to fly?” Daenerys asked.

“Not really,” Rhaegar said “It is pointless to armor their bodies. As they grow older, their scales will grow harder and harder and act as a natural protection against arrows and such,”


“They are the same thing,” Tyrion told them. “It would require a powerful scorpion shot to puncture the scales of your dragons. Marwyn did some calculations and he concluded that such a design would be too big and cumbersome to carry to battle, it would have to be stationary, likely mounted in
place on a castle wall,” Jon nodded slowly.

“So we only need to worry about this when we try to take Kings Landing?”

“Yes. They might have several smaller scorpions but those should not be powerful enough to take down your dragons,”

“So what armor have you constructed?” Daenerys asked.

“It is more of a head piece to protect their eyes since that is their weakest area,” Tyrion told them and Jon nodded. He remembered the stories of Rhaenys and Meraxes and how that dragon died from a bolt to the eye.

“Here, we’ll show you,” Tyrion said proudly, he led them around the side of the forge and Jon saw the armor sitting on the floor. Jon was unsure on how to describe it.

“I actually came up with the idea myself. Imagine a normal helmet for a knight, it would cover their entire face. I took this design and changed it slightly. The idea is that it sits on your dragons head and the metal comes down around their eyes with slits for them to see through. There will be nothing blocking their mouths”

“Will that not obstruct their sight?”

“It will slightly but that is the only way to protect their eyes,” Tyrion said slowly. Jon looked at Daenerys and saw that she too look concerned, the armor would be almost pointless if their dragons could not see properly.

“We may as well try it,” he said diplomatically and Daenerys nodded.

“Vedros is probably our best bet,” she said. “She is the gentlest of the three,”

“Not lately,” Jon said “Ever since we’ve returned from the council she has been more agitated than usual. Perhaps, we should try Caraxes,”

“I saw Caraxes fly away to hunt earlier and he hasn’t returned,” Rhaegar told them. Jon nodded slowly, no one bothered suggesting they try it with Anogar. So, it seemed Vedros would be the first to test this new armor. Several of the Dothraki men picked up the armor and carried it down the beach towards the cave where Vedros usually slept in. Jon noticed that it took 8 men to transport the armor and Jon hoped that it was not too heavy.

They reached the cave mouth and Jon told the men to drop the armor down on the beach.

“Vedros,” he called softly as he walked up to the entrance to the cave. He saw broken and charred bones littering the floor so Jon knew that his dragon was still eating well. He closed his eyes and searched for her in the cave, he found her and then he gently asked her to come out to see the armor. He heard a low rumbling noise and then he felt the ground shift as Vedros slowly made her way out of the cave. He saw her bronze eyes first and then he saw the rest of her hulking green mass. He gently patted her snout and whispered to her,

“We have something for you to try today,” he said and then he pointed towards the armor. He kept his hand on her side as the men picked up the armor and began to slowly make their way towards them.

“No, leave it there,” Jon said to them. He would let Vedros take a look at the armor first. The men put the armor down and again and they slowly backed away. He heard Vedros growl and snarl as
she moved closer to the armor. Jon closed his eyes and searched for her and he knew that his dragon did not approve of this armor.

As if to prove his point, Vedros turned around and struck it repeatedly with her tail. Once she was finished, Tyrion’s carefully constructed armor was completely ruined.

“Vedros that was not nice,” he said as he scolded her and she gave a low angry rumble in return before she stomped back into her cave. Jon frowned at her before he decided to follow her. He took a torch from one of the men and then entered her lair.

The cave was much bigger on the inside than he had thought. He held the torch up high to look at the ceiling and to spread more light around the cave. He saw Vedros curled up on her side towards the back of the cave, her bronze eyes were staring at him intensely.

“What’s the matter with her?” Daenerys asked.

“I’m not sure,” he said as he began to slowly walk towards her. He approached her slowly and put his hand on her snout and spoke to her. She gave another low rumble before she shifted slightly and lifted her wing. Jon immediately grew concerned, if there was something wrong with her wing then she would be completely unable to fly. As he moved closer he saw what was under her wing and he nearly fell to his knees in surprise. Under her wing, were three Dragon eggs. One was a frosty silver color that reminded him of Dany’s hair, the second was a pale evergreen blue and the final was a beautiful gold.

“I don’t believe it,” Daenerys whispered “What are we going to do with these eggs?”

“We can’t hatch them,” Jon said quietly, he remembered what they had to do in Valyria to get them to hatch and this was not something he wanted to do again. They may have been Valyrians, but they were not willing to use all of their blood magic.

“There has to be another way,” Daenerys said as she picked up an egg. “We’ll read the books again but I know that after Aegon’s conquests, there have been dragon hatchlings here on Dragonstone. I’m sure there must be another way because someone would have noticed if our ancestors were performing these complicated rituals,”

“That sounds like a good idea. In the meantime what should we do with them?”

“We could put one in Daeron’s crib, that is something that our ancestors used to do with their children,” and Jon nodded slowly.

“Which egg?”

“Whichever he likes the most I guess. When I had my eggs I was drawn to Anogar’s egg. Perhaps Daeron will do the same,” she said and Jon nodded in agreement.

“Well, we will need two more children,” Jon said with a cheeky smile.

“Soon my love, soon,” she said as she returned his smile.
It was a cold, dreary day and Jon Connington was seated on his horse as he led his forces through the muddy fields towards the gates of Storms End. They had left their elephants behind at Griffin’s Roost, they would not be necessary to his plan.

He had spent the past few weeks searching for a plan to take the impenetrable fortress that was Storms End. He knew that trying to siege it would be useless, the castle’s defenders would sit safely behind their walls. Jon knew that Stannis Baratheon had endured the entire rebellion safely behind these massive stone walls, he would not be able to breach them with only the men of the Golden Company.

So he had to come up with a different plan, one that even the great Tywin Lannister would be proud of. When he had unveiled the plan to the rest of the generals of the Golden Company, they had all looked at him in bewilderment before they all nodded slowly. It was risky, incredibly so but their King, or rather, his Queen had set her sights on this castle and as a result they had no choice but to do as she wished.

Jon could almost see her logic, taking this castle would provide a morale boost to their men. However, he did not understand her goals and that meant he would have to watch her carefully. He had been watching her carefully but she had given nothing away, whenever she was not with the King, she was with the other Dornish girl, Tyene was her name.

Still, she would make a mistake soon, and Jon would have to be ready to capitalize on it. He knew he could not replace her, they needed the Dornish support, however he could use this mistake to try and control her.

As they got closer and closer to Storms End, it started to rain lightly but Jon pulled his cloak tightly around him, raised his hood and continued onwards. It was too late to turn back now, this was their only chance to take this castle. He brushed a gloved hand over the pommel of his sword and gripped it tightly. He would have this castle, and he would sit his King on the throne.

Jon wondered how many men were inside. The Spider had told them that the Usurper had called his banners and he was now positioning them around the capital, ready to march for war, but Jon knew he would not leave this castle undefended. The castle was held by the Usurper’s brother, Renly. Jon hoped that he was in the castle, he would make a valuable hostage. The Spider had said that they had a fierce argument after the council and Jon hoped to use this to their advantage. Varys and his little birds had said that the argument was so fierce, Renly stormed out of the castle that same night to ride straight back to Storms End, not even stopping in Kings Landing.

Jon could hear the sea raging against the cliffs that surrounded the castle and Storms End’s great curtain wall loomed ominously ahead of him. He saw several men on the battlements and soon he saw several riders leave the castle to ride towards them. Jon slowly raised up one hand to send the signal to stop their advance.

“No turning back now,” he heard Harry say from his horse and Jon nodded slowly. “It all rests on the Spider. If he fails us and his information is wrong, then we’re fucked.”

“He will not fail us,” Jon said firmly. If there was one thing he knew, he knew that the Spider wanted his King on the throne just as much as he did. However, even he couldn’t completely erase that small seed of doubt that was growing in his mind, what if Varys was wrong. What if Renly already knew who they were? Their plan relied on the fact that whoever held the castle did not know that they had already declared for King Aegon, if they knew otherwise, this little deception would fail.
It was too late to turn back now and his hand went to the pommel of his sword and he wondered how many he would be able to kill if it came to it. It had been years since he was in a proper fight and he could be out of practice. He took a deep breath and waited for the riders to approach. He had allowed his beard and his hair to grow long during the past few weeks to hide his appearance.

The riders were closer now and Jon could begin to pick out their faces, he saw a bald headed man with a red beard approaching and he was flanked by another man on a black horse. Jon stopped his men and awaited their arrival.

“Who are you and why are you outside of my castle?” the man in the middle asked. Jon looked at him curiously, he was well dressed and Jon noticed that he wore the colors of House Baratheon. Could this be Renly Baratheon? He certainly looked the right age.

“I am Gylo Rhegan, commander of the Golden Company and we have come to fight for King Robert Baratheon,” Jon said to the man. He looked at him curiously and he scratched his chin.

“My brother sent out the a raven to Essos months ago, why are you only here now?” he asked. Jon bit the inside of mouth to stop himself from smiling. This man must be Renly, who else would he be referring to?

“We were completing a contract,” he lied and he saw the man look at him curiously.

“My Lord...?” Harry began and Jon realised that they still had not been introduced

"I am Lord Renly Baratheon, Lord of Storms End and brother to King Robert, although he seems to hate to admit it," Renly said bitterly and Jon was surprised by this. Perhaps this bad blood between the brothers was worse than he thought. If they hated each other, Renly would be a worthless hostage

"The Golden Company are the best sellsword company in the whole of Essos. We are the best fighters that you will find," Harry said to him and Jon nodded.

“Why do you want to fight the Targaryens?” Renly asked,

“The Golden Company was originally founded by Aegor Rivers who fled Westeros after the first Blackfyre rebellion. The Targaryens are our enemies and have been since we were founded, we are here to try and defeat them, once and for all,” Jon said immediately and he saw Renly nod slowly.

“Very well, you may camp outside the castle. Tomorrow, I will send a raven to the my brother, the King informing him of this,” Renly said. Jon grimaced slightly when he heard this, they would have to launch their plan tonight before the raven could be sent.

“Could our commanders stay inside the castle?” Harry asked immediately “It’s much colder here than it is in Essos,” The man looked at him for a few moments and Jon held his breath, getting into the castle was essential to their plan.

“Fine, you can bring 20 of your commanders,”

“30?” Harry asked and the man gave him a sharp look and then he shook his head.

“20,” he said firmly and Jon quickly glared at Harry, it would not do to push their luck, even 10 men in the castle would be enough.

“20 is fine,” Jon said quickly and he saw the man nod.
“Very well, follow me,” he said and Jon smiled to himself, the first step of their plan was complete. He gave one quick look back at the men who would be staying outside the castle, he gave a small nod of the head and opened his palm giving them the signal. They would have to be ready tonight.

Chapter End Notes

So this chapter was a little late

I've been busy with uni stuff this week and It'll probably be the same over the next month or so. Can't really get around it. And my laptop is literally dying. So I've got to get it repaired and all that.

I should be able to upload the next chapter in a weekish. Expect it within the next 7-10 days. I think I'm calling it 'The Griffins Gambit' but I could change it

As always, thank you all for the comments. I read them all and I do my best to reply to as many as I can, but I'm really busy so if I don't reply I'm sorry

Thanks for reading
Sleepy
The Griffin's Gambit

Chapter Summary

The Dragon and the Stag make their plans for war. Whilst Ned learns an important piece of information.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes.

The Griffin

Jon Connington was seated in the main hall of Storms End sipping his wine. They were being served an evening meal of mutton stew which Jon had barely touched. The Castellan, Ser Cortnay Penrose had allowed 20 of his men to reside in the castle whilst the rest of the Golden Company forces would have to remain camped outside the walls of the castle. Jon estimated that there were at least 500 men inside the castle but that did not faze him. If the rest of the plan worked perfectly then they would not see him coming.

The men were well into their cups at this time of the evening and Jon was pleased with this, the men would be difficult to rouse if they were drunk. He watched as they laughed and joked with each other, one man boasted about how he was going to slay a dragon, another boasted about what he would do if he had a night with the Dragon Queen. Jon shook his head at these idiots, they would be lucky to see the morning.

Lord Renly was not in the hall and Jon was worried. He hoped that Renly was still in the castle as he would make a valuable hostage. He also hoped that Renly had not sent word to the Usurper informing him of their presence. Jon knew that if the Usurper found out they were in the Stormlands, then he would turn around and send his forces south. Jon did not want this, this would make it easier for the false prince to win his war. Jon hoped that the false prince and the Usurper would weaken each other and that would make it easier for him to seat the true King on the throne.

Ser Cortnay was seated at the high table but his meal was untouched as well. Jon noticed that he had been staring at him throughout the entire meal and this made Jon uncomfortable. Had he been recognized? Jon hoped that he hadn’t. His sweaty hand drifted subconsciously to his dagger and his fingers brushed over the hilt. He had to be patient, if he acted too soon it would all be for nothing. He had to be patient, they had been accepted into the castle, and it was all going according to plan.

But what if they got lost? Or what if the seas were too rough? 20 men were not enough to swarm the castle, they needed their reinforcements. Jon took a nervous sip of his wine before setting it back on the table. He swirled the sweet taste in his mouth and used it to try and calm his nerves.

He looked up at the high table and saw that Ser Cortnay was no longer there, he quickly scanned around the hall and then he spotted him standing in front of him. Jon rose to his feet but he was quickly waved away and Ser Cortnay instead chose to sit opposite him at their table. Jon looked at
the man and nodded.

“How long have you been serving in the Golden Company?” he asked,

“Nearly 20 years,” Jon replied, this was close enough to the truth.

“Where are you from?” he asked and Jon looked at him suspiciously,

“Essos,” he lied. “I was born in Pentos or thereabouts,”

“Parents?”

“Dead,” and the man nodded slowly.

“How many men do you have?”

“20,000 roughly. How many men do the Targaryens have?” Jon asked nonchalantly.

“Not a clue,” he said with a shrug and this disappointed Jon, although he realised that the Spider would have this type of information.

“When do you plan on marching to Kings Landing?” he asked,

“Soon. Within the next few days,” Jon lied. “The King is expecting us and we shouldn’t keep him waiting,” and Cortnay nodded.

“Did you know they called a council?” he asked and Jon shook his head, it would be better to act as if he did not know.

“The Targaryens called a council to ‘discuss the issue of the Iron Throne’. King Robert went and he sent us a raven telling us about what happened,” he told him and Jon reached to take a drink of his wine.

“The Targaryens showed up, but only with two dragons,” he said and Jon raised an eyebrow in surprise. Could they have killed a Dragon already? That thought filled him with confidence if the Usurper could kill one, he could easily kill the other two. The Dornish had friends in the Citadel and they had made great progress on this issue. They would soon share what they have found with them. He lifted his cup to his lips and he started to drink.

“He also said that Rhaegar Targaryen is alive,” and Jon nearly choked on his drink. He spluttered loudly and Harry looked at him with a concerned look on his face. Jon shook his head repeatedly, Rhaegar could not be alive, everyone knew the story, that he had died on the Trident.

“Rhaegar Targaryen died on the Trident,” Harry said and Cortnay shook his head.

“That’s what I thought,” Cortnay said to them “But the King himself saw Rhaegar Targaryen and so did everyone else at the council, it must be true,”

Jon nodded slowly and focused on his drink. He felt a warm, hopeful feeling build inside of him. Rhaegar was alive, his silver prince was alive after all these years and Jon had his son. He had the true prince.

Varys should have known, he was the Spider, he knew everything. Why would he hide this piece of information from him? Did he not trust him? Jon started to grow angry, the Spider was playing games with him again. He would have to deal with him properly when he finally saw him. He knew the Spider was hiding from King Robert somewhere, but the Spider would find a way to survive, he
Then Jon realised that if he was at the council, then he would be with Daenerys and the false prince. Why would Rhaegar do this? Surely he of all people would know that this boy was not the true King? Something was not making sense.

“I have heard stories about King Aegon, I have heard that he is the son of Rhaegar Targaryen and Lyanna Stark, but that can’t be true,” Jon said but Cortnay shook his head

“No. It apparently is true, it was confirmed by Lord Eddard Stark of Winterfell, and apparently he had hid the boy and disguised him as his bastard,”

Jon was silent for a few moments as he took in what was said. He had always known that Elia was not good enough for his silver Prince but he was sure that Lyanna Stark was no better. Lord Stark hid the boy? Jon did not understand that, Lord Stark was the Usurper’s dog, why would he do this?

“Rhaegar already had a wife, Elia,” Jon said. “This boy is no more than a bastard,” but Ser Cortnay only shrugged.

“Bastard or not. We’re still going to have to kill him,” he said. “Why do you care anyway?” he asked as he looked at him suspiciously.

“No particular reason,” Jon said as he took a small sip of his wine.

“I’m sure there is a reason, a sellsword from Essos is taking an interest in the Targaryens,” he said as he stared at him. Jon swilled his wine and shrugged his shoulders.

“Can’t a man be curious?” he asked and Cortnay looked at him suspiciously before he slowly nodded. “It’s getting late, I think I will retire for the evening,” Jon said as he slowly stood up.

“You know where your chambers are?” he asked and Jon nodded. He shared one last quick glance at Harry before leaving. He left the warm great hall and entered the cooler corridors of Storms End. He quickly walked to his chambers and then bolted the door behind him. Once he was in his room he sunk to the floor and ran his hands through his hair and breathed a loud sigh.

Rhaegar was alive, his silver prince was alive, but he was with the false prince. Jon would have to meet him and show him his true son and then Rhaegar would put a stop to this foolishness. If Jon could return his firstborn son to him, then he would finally be worthy of him.

Then Jon realised that returning his son would not be enough, he would have to do better. If he could sit the boy on the throne first, then Rhaegar would be impressed and he would be unable to refuse him. Jon took a deep breath and looked out of the window. It was dark but they would have to wait for the castle to quiet down, then they could strike. Jon stood up and looked out of the window, it was a cloudy moonless night and this wasn’t good. Black Balaq might have trouble shooting down any ravens that tried to leave the castle.

Then Jon moved back inside his room, sat on his bed and he waited. Soon it would be time to strike.

**The Lord of Winterfell**

Ned Stark stood alone in the cold crypts of Winterfell. He had entered the crypts late last night and
Ned was sure that the sun would have come up by now. He stood opposite the statue of Lyanna, staring at the stone figure. It was nothing like her and the stonemason had been unable to do her justice. Lyanna was much more beautiful than this. Ned closed his eyes as he remembered the last time he saw her, dying in that bed all the way in Dorne, so far from home. Then his thoughts turned to Jon, and how poorly he had handled the situation.

The political situation in the North was very difficult at the moment, he had never seen his bannermen so divided and unruly, nearly every day in the great hall they had held the same debate. Some houses, such as Karstark and Hornwood strongly opposed Jon and his reforms and they wanted to go to war. Other houses like Manderly and Cerwyn had agreed with him and agreed that Jon’s vision for the North was good and they should stand behind him. Other Lords were unhappy after they had heard of the allegations that Jon had levelled against his father, Lord Rickard. Then when they heard about his plans to depose House Tully and strip them of their lands, titles and positions, more Lords had been willing to go to war against Jon.

Ned knew that whatever decision he made in the end, a portion of his bannermen would be upset. Whilst he was the Lord and his word was final, he knew that he did not have enough support to win a civil war in the North if it came down to it, and even if he could win, Winter was coming and a depleted North might not live to see the spring.

To avoid a civil war, he would need Jon’s support. If he bent the knee to Jon, then he would have the support of the dragons on his side and those in the North who opposed him would not be able to win a war against the dragons. Ned knew that Jon would win this war against Robert Baratheon and this would serve as an example to those in the North who were foolish enough to oppose the dragons.

As he thought of Jon, he thought back to their meeting at the council. Ned knew that their meeting at the council had gone badly and perhaps he was to blame for that. Had he not brought Catelyn with him, then Jon would have had less reason to be angry with him. Ned had realised that Jon was right, his decision to allow to Catelyn to treat him poorly was a selfish one. He had reasoned that allowing Catelyn to treat Jon poorly would help sell the lie that he was his bastard, no one would expect a highborn woman to treat her husband’s bastard well. Yet that decision had backfired and it had allowed an unhealthy level of resentment to build up and this was something that only he could take the blame for.

Ned wondered that if he went south now, without Catelyn being present, if they could have a better conversation and clear the air properly. If he had that chance Ned knew that he would have to apologize to Jon for what had happened to him whilst he was at Winterfell. If he could speak to Jon alone, without Catelyn and Rhaegar being present then maybe they stand a chance at having a better and more fruitful conversation.

As Ned’s thoughts turned to Rhaegar, he realised that the silver prince was once again, the cause of his problems. Ned knew that Rhaegar was the one who had told Jon these lies about his father. He remembered that Rhaegar said that Lyanna was the mystery knight at the tourney all those years ago, another obvious lie.

Ned knew his sister, she was wild and fierce, but she was not the mystery knight. Mystery knights showed up at Tourneys all the time. The great Ser Barristan the Bold dressed up as a mystery knight once. There was no hidden conspiracy behind it, it was just a mystery knight.

“My Lord,” he heard a voice call and Ned turned to see that it was Howland Reed. He was meaning to go and look for him to speak privately, but it seems Howland had found him first.

“Please, you can call me Ned, you should know that by now,” Ned returned with a smile. The small
crannogman smiled in return. Ned looked at his face in the flickering light. He had also aged since that day, he had a few streaks of grey in his hair and he had allowed his beard to grow slightly.

“Ned, what can I do for you?” he asked

“I wanted to speak to you about Lyanna, and Jon,” he said and Howland nodded slowly.

“Her husband is alive,” Ned began and Howland again nodded but kept quiet, he was a man of little words.

“I met them both again at the council and it did not go well. Jon does not like me, he is angry at me for the way I treated him when he was growing up around Winterfell. I admit, his anger is justified but I think that Rhaegar is using this anger to turn him against me,”

“How is he doing that?”

“He is making up lies about my father. He says that he was part of a conspiracy to overthrow the Targaryen dynasty. Rhaegar said that the only reason that this conspiracy failed was because my sister told him about it and therefore he was able to stop it but the whole thing does not make any sense. If Lyanna knew about this conspiracy, who would have told her? I was not told and even if she knew, she would never betray her family like that,”

Howland was quiet for a few moments before he spoke,

“I didn’t know Lyanna as well as you did, but I do know that she would always stand up and do what is right,” he said softly and Ned paused, he remembered that Rhaegar had said something similar to him at the council.

“How could she find out about this conspiracy? If my father had planned this, he would have told all of us, or none of us,” Ned pointed out.

“Perhaps, she overheard a conversation that she should not have. I am sure that we can agree that Lyanna did not usually care to do what society told her to do,” he said quietly and Ned nodded in agreement. “I can’t tell you if this conspiracy is true or not but I do know that if there was injustice, she would have stood up to stop it,” he said calmly and Ned nodded. He knew his sister, this sounded like the type of thing that she would do.

“Howland, what do you know about the Knight of the Laughing Tree?” he asked and he saw Howland’s eyes widen in surprise. “At the council, Rhaegar said that the mystery knight was Lyanna and he was the one that found her. He lied and said that his father somehow found out that she was the mystery knight and had sent men to arrest her and this was why they ran off together,”

Howland nodded slowly. “Lyanna was the Knight of the Laughing Tree, that part is true. I am not sure about the rest of it,”

“What?” Ned said as he whipped his head around to look at him “That can’t be true,”

“It is true. Lyanna found me when I was being attacked by those squires and she was the one that saved me. After that, she decided to dress up as the mystery knight to teach them a public lesson,” he said and Ned just shook his head.

“That doesn’t make sense. She was the daughter of a great Lord, if she wanted to send a message, she could have stood up at the feast and those knights would have all listened to her,” he said adamantly but Howland just shrugged.
“Perhaps, she thought that it would be better to teach them a lesson with actions rather than words. By defeating them in the joust, she embarrassed them in front of all the Lords of the realm and forced the knights to take their squire’s punishment seriously. I don’t think they would have done so if Lyanna stood up and spoken about it at the feast to do this,”

Ned was quiet as he thought about Howland’s words. He could see his logic, by defeating them in the joust she did send a better message but this revelation also had further implications.

If Lyanna was the mystery knight, then Rhaegar’s story about his father wanting to arrest her would be true. Ned still remembered the King’s anger that day, he had set a bounty on the Knight’s head and he had been determined to find him. Perhaps, Rhaegar really did save his sister from a terrible fate at the Mad King’s hands. If this was true, then maybe he would have to rethink his opinion on Rhaegar Targaryen after all.

Then Ned thought about the conspiracy, perhaps Howland was right. Maybe Lyanna had secretly overheard a conversation that she should not have and then she had told Rhaegar, maybe there really was a conspiracy after all. Jon’s arguments and the reasoning did have a certain amount of logic, his father’s decisions on the marriages of Brandon and Lyanna, his own fostering in the Vale broke the traditions and general views of all the previous Lords of Winterfell. However, this still did not sound like something his father would have done, he needed proof.

Ned shook his head and sighed in frustration. There was only one man who would be able to prove this conspiracy, Lord Hoster Tully, but to see him Ned knew that he would have to ride South and take his bannermen with him. Then Ned thought about Robb’s raven to Jon, they were still awaiting his reply.

“I need to ride south to see Hoster Tully, only he can confirm this conspiracy,” Ned said but Howland shook his head.

“Your bannermen will want to accompany you. The Karstarks and the Hornwoods especially,” he said and Ned knew that he was right. “Worse still, this could look like an act of war, you can’t go to war against Lyanna’s son, Ned.”

“I know that I can’t. I will ride as far South as our borders with the Riverlands and no further. Lord Hoster will have to meet me in Northern territory,” Ned said and Howland nodded slowly.

“What about your bannermen, what will you tell them?” he asked and Ned paused before he replied.

“I will bring them all south. The Lords such as Karstark and Hornwood who wish to go to war against the Dragons will have an opportunity to see the dragons for themselves, that way they can all see how foolish they are for even entertaining this idea,”

“What will you do if you see him?” Howland asked and Ned took a deep breath and closed his eyes. Their meeting at the council had gone badly but Ned still made a promise to his mother, he could not go to war against him.

He would have to bend the knee and support his claim. Ned knew that Jon would win the war without his help, but he also knew that in order to repair their relationship, he would have to reach out and make an effort. Ned hoped that if he saw Jon again with the intention to bend the knee and acknowledge him as King, then Jon would in turn be merciful towards his wife and they can work to repair this relationship.

“I will bend the knee,” Ned said quietly and he saw Howland nod and smile “But I will not tell this to the Lords. Some of them are already unhappy and if I tell them that I plan to bend the knee then
this could cause them to make some rash decisions. If I keep them in the dark, then they will be willing follow me,”

“I think that you should leave them here and I don’t think you should lie to them,” Howland said quietly

“I have no choice Howland. If I tell them that I plan to bend the knee and they don’t agree, then they have the entire march south to create a plot to get rid of me. If I tell them and I leave them here, then they are free to wage war in the North whilst I’m gone. By lying to them, I take these options away from them,”

He heard Howland sigh before speaking,

“Aye, you’re probably right but I don’t think your bannermen will betray you, they will grumble and complain, but I think that eventually they will accept your decision,” he said but Ned was not so sure and he knew than it was better to be safe than sorry.

The Onion Knight

It was early in the morning and the sun was barely over the horizon as Ser Davos Seaworth made his way towards Kings Landing. The ink coloured waters of the Blackwater Bay were smooth and this meant sailing from Dragonstone had been relatively straight forward. He spied the Red Keep looming tall on Aegon’s high hill and he could see the royal flags waving gently in the morning breeze. He wondered how soon until the crowned Stag of House Baratheon would be replaced with the three headed red dragon of House Targaryen.

The King had been planning his war in the recent few weeks and Davos had not been invited to those war councils. However, a few weeks ago, the King had come and spoken to him to ask for a favor. King Aegon had asked if he could use his skills as a smuggler to sneak into the city and gauge the city’s defenses. Davos was unsure of how suitable he would be for this task, he knew nothing of war but he decided that he would give it his best effort. They told him to pay attention to the city walls to look for those scorpions that could harm their dragons.

Davos had been wary of the young King and Queen at first, they had made their fiery arrival on the back of their screaming dragons breathing fire down onto him and his fleet. He had thought that they would soon depart from Dragonstone to bring fire and blood to Westeros in the typical Targaryen way. He had been surprised to know that were not like that. They could have imprisoned Shireen and used her as a hostage but instead they had treated her with kindness. They had allowed her to roam the castle and spend time with their child, a cheerful young boy who reminded Davos of his own little children home at Cape Wrath.

Davos believed that this kindness helped Shireen to move past the death of her parents. It was a difficult transition for her but she had been feeling better lately and this pleased Davos. She had been spending time with the Queen more and Davos guessed that she thought of her as a bigger sister of sorts. This was kind of Queen Daenerys, Davos had seen Queen Cersei a few times during his trips to the capital and he was sure that this was something she would not have done.

He knew many of the coves that surrounded Kings Landing from his days as a smuggler so it would
be relatively easy for him to slip into the city undetected. Davos took a deep breath as he focused on directing his small boat into the cove. He had used this cove for decades and it was one of his favorite spots to smuggle his goods into Kings Landing. The cliffs provided a natural cover from the guards on the walls and Davos knew that the entrance to this cove was one of the blind spots in the city’s defenses.

He skillfully navigated the boat around the rocks and then hauled it onto the smooth pebble shore. He pushed the boat to one side and then hauled out a sack of onions that he had brought with him. If anyone spotted him, he was just an ordinary merchant looking to sell some of his goods.

This cove was in a cave and towards the back of the cave, Davos knew that there was a stepped path that would take him up to the surface in Flea Bottom. As far as he knew, the city watch had forgotten about this cave and they were unlikely to travel into Flea Bottom just to search for it. Perhaps, once this cave was a secret exit to help people escape the city in case it fell, either way, it was long forgotten.

He ran a hand through his rough beard and made his way up towards the surface. Once he surfaced, he breathed in the familiar flea bottom stink. That familiar stench of pig sties and stables that he had grown up with, it almost felt like home. Flea Bottom sat at the bottom of Rhaenys hill, site of the famous Dragonpit.

Davos saw the people slowly waking up and beginning to start their daily activities. Bleary eyed people were rising from their hovels and he could smell the pot shops cooking up their usual bowl of brown mush, he only wondered what was in them this morning. He carefully navigated the maze of narrow alleyways and dirty streets.

Davos decided that the best course of action would be to start from Flea Bottom and to inspect as many of the city gates as he could. He found that the Iron Gate, Dragon Gate and the Old Gate were all closed and barred shut. The Mud Gate and the Gate of the Gods were open, but only to merchants and fishmongers who wanted to enter the city to sell their goods. The guards did not allow anyone to leave.

Those who were allowed to leave the city left through the Kings Gate and the Lions Gate but Lannister men in their crimson cloaks were always on guard manning the posts. Davos watched from afar as they stopped every wagon and carriage that made their way to the gates. They forced riders to open their saddlebags and they searched every single wagon and carriage and they questioned everyone who tried to leave on foot. Davos was unsure why they cared so much about who was leaving the city, surely it only mattered who was trying to enter.

He was not allowed to get onto the city walls as they were filled with Gold Cloaks but he did see a few large mounted scorpions in the stretch of wall between the Iron Gate and the Old Gate. He was unable to get a good look at them but from this distance they looked much bigger than the ones they had on Dragonstone. He would have to report this back to the King and the Queen.

As Davos walked through the city, he quickly realised that the city was close to starving and as a result his bag of onions was empty within minutes. Davos wondered where all the food went and how the people in the city would cope. The people in Flea Bottom would make do, they always had. Whether it was pieces of rat or pieces of bird they would find something to eat and to throw into their bowls of brown. They also still had the sea and the river, fishmongers square was still bustling with activity and the King and Queen had thankfully not sailed their fleet down the Blackwater.

What the Highborn would do was another matter entirely, he saw several small riots break out in the streets. One baker had his store completely overrun by a group of men who quickly made off with all of his bread. Then a few streets later, Davos saw the same men fighting amongst themselves as they
tried to share the loot. Unfortunately for them, the gold cloaks quickly intervened and hauled them all away, but not before giving them a good beating first.

It was around mid-day by the time Davos reached the Sept of Baelor on Visenya’s hill. The Sept stood on a white marble plaza with a statue of King Baelor standing tall looking over the city. From this height Davos could see nearly everything in Kings Landing, he looked out towards the Blackwater and he saw a few war Galleys in the Blackwater itself. Davos was surprised by this, he had thought that the entire Royal fleet would have been destroyed during the naval battle at Dragonstone. King Robert must have kept a few ships behind in case he needed to make an escape.

People had started to gather on the plaza. Davos noticed that these people were mostly low born and they all shared the same look of unhappiness and resentment. Perhaps, the lack of food in the capital was upsetting them more than Davos anticipated. The High Septon came out to preach to the crowd. He was a short squat man with greying hair and Davos stopped to listen to him speak.

“People of King's Landing,” he called out in a loud high voice “We gather here in this holy place to hear the words of the Gods. The Targaryens are here once again in Westeros. They follow the red god of fire, that god is false!” he shouted and Davos saw several of the commoners nod their head in agreement. “If the Targaryens win, they will destroy the Septs and will force you all to follow their false Gods! The Targaryens practice the sinful act of incest, the Seven decree that incest is a sin! We must join together and pray! We must pray to the Father! For he shall protect the good King Robert in battle! We must pray to the Warrior! For he shall give King Robert strength! We must pray to the Crone! For she shall give King Robert wisdom to win this war! Pray! We must pray!” he shouted to the crowd.

Davos rolled his eyes and decided to leave the plaza, he had seen those dragons in battle himself and they were gods in their own right. He made his way through the crowd of people and he headed down Visenya’s hill. The talk of war and the Targaryens were on the lips of everyone he passed by, for lowborn to highborn. He heard people talk about Queen Daenerys. One man said that she bathed herself in the blood of virgins to keep her skin smooth and supple, another man said that the King fed their dragons human flesh to help to grow. Another said that they practiced blood sacrifices every day and this is what gave the King his ability to change his appearance.

Davos ignored these rumors, the people of Kings Landing often had nothing better to do than to gossip and spread rumors. This was especially true now since they were not allowed to leave the city. Davos decided to head along the street of flour, home of the many bakeries in Kings Landing. He saw several members of the Gold Cloaks patrolling these streets and keeping the King’s peace. Davos decided to head into one of the stores to see what he could find out.

The baker was a tall lean man with a long pointed nose and a completely bald head. His thin lips were locked into a grimace and Davos quickly purchased a loaf of bread which he would give to someone on his way back through flea bottom.

“Why are they stopping people from leaving the city?” he asked the baker.

“The King has decreed that every single armorer and apprentice on the street of steel must stay and commission weapons for war. The Gold Cloaks stop and search everyone that tries to leave, if they find so much as a dagger they will take it from you and keep it,” Davos nodded slowly.

“Why haven’t you left?”

“Where would I go? I am a baker and this is my store. It belonged to my father, and to his father
before him. I will not leave,” he replied simply.

“But still, war is coming,”

“I have already survived one sack of this city, I can survive another,” Davos nodded and then thanked the man before heading back into the street. The baker was a fool for staying, his shop would not survive a sack and his stubbornness could cost him his life He decided to head towards the Street of steel to see if the baker’s words were true and he was surprised to see that they were.

The sky above the street of steel was filled with black smoke from the forges. Davos slowly made his way to the top of the hill where he knew the more expensive shops could be found. At the top of the hill was a large shop made of timber and stone, this store was larger than any other shop in the street. Davos pushed open the door and entered the shop.

The inside of the shop was bustling with activity, he saw several apprentices walking quickly back and forth carrying various pieces of armor. He heard loud shouting, clanging and banging as they all worked. Then he saw the owner of the shop, a man that went by the name of Tobho Mott. He was shouting at his apprentices and the man did not look like he was in a good mood. Davos had visited this shop once with Lord Stannis, he only hoped that he remembered him.

Tobho eventually saw him standing near the front of his shop and Davos was pleased to see a brief flicker of recognition pass over his face.

“You came here once with the former Hand,” he said as he walked over and Davos nodded. “If you’re here to see if I’m finished making the Prince’s armor, I haven’t. I told the Gold Cloaks earlier that I would have it finished by tomorrow,” he said angrily but Davos shook his head.

“I take it you’re overworked?” Davos asked,

“You people have me working like a slave,” he growled “Day and night my smiths are laboring over their fires. I have lost half my apprentices over the past month. Some of them don’t show up again and the ones I replace them with are so incompetent that I kick them out before lunch! Then every day you and your Gold Cloaks keep coming back telling me you want more and more armor. I have no more!” he yelled as he slammed his fist down on the wooden table. Davos raised his hand up apologetically.

“I am not here on the behalf of King Robert and I no longer work for Lord Stannis either,” he told him and he saw his eyes widen in surprise before they narrowed suspiciously.

“Then why are you here?” he asked quietly and Davos stepped closer to him so he was not overheard.

“I have heard that none of the smiths are allowed to leave the city, is that true?” he asked and the man nodded. “Would you like to leave?”

“I come from Qohor, my people know the power of the dragons,” he whispered as he nodded.

“I can help you,”

“How?”

“I can smuggle you out of the city, tonight,“

“Impossible, the gates are all barred and closed at night,“
“Not by land but by sea,” Davos told him but he shook his head.

“By sea? Where to?”

“Dragonstone,” and this time he shook his head vigorously and stepped away.

“No. This is a trick, I do not believe you. I want you to leave my shop,”

“No no, this is no trick I promise you,” Davos said as he reached inside of his robes. Inside he carried a scroll with King Aegon’s seal on it.

“This is a scroll from King Aegon and Queen Daenerys. I told them that you are the best armorer in the city and they would like you to work for them,” he told him as he handed him the scroll. He broke the seal and read it quickly before he clutched it tightly in his hand.

“Why would I work for them? Why should I trust you? For all I know this could be a trick to test my loyalty. If I come with you then you lead me to the Gold Cloaks and they imprison me,”

“They won’t. They need you to make armor for their knights, they won’t hurt you,” Davos told him but he still looked at him suspiciously. He shook his head before he took the scroll and threw it into the fire.

“We should go with him,” Davos heard another voice say. He turned towards the speaker and saw that it was a tall young man with black hair and bright blue eyes.

“Boy get back to work!” Tobho roared but he stood there defiantly.

“What’s the point? These weapons will do nuffin for them. They have dragons and they’re coming to take back their city. I don’t wanna be here when they do,”

Tobho looked at him and shook his head. “You are like new steel, crude and in need of a beating,”

“The boy speaks true,” Davos pointed out. “If you’re here when the city falls, I don’t think your chances are very good,”

“There’s already small riots in the streets and it will only get worse,” the boy pointed out.

“If you decline our offer, then I will take the young lad at least,” the King and Queen would be able to find a use for him, that’s a strength of theirs. Finding uses for the people who followed them. He saw the young lad look at him eagerly and nod in thanks. Tobho looked at him and shook his head.

“How does a man like you end up speaking on behalf of the Targaryens?” he asked,

“I was on Dragonstone with Lord Stannis when the Targaryen fleet arrived. I was there on my ship during the battle and I saw their dragons. Let me tell you this, those dragons are real and they are fierce, anyone who tries to stand against them will be defeated. Lord Stannis lost that day and so did I. However, the King and Queen showed mercy on me and found a place for me in their service. I am a common man with no real skills, imagine what they can do with you,”

He saw Tobho look slowly around his shop.

“Your shop is in danger whatever you do. If you stay here when the city falls, who knows what will happen to it. However, if you take a chance and join me then when this is over, the King and Queen will allow you to build a bigger and better shop and to make armor for the new Targaryen dynasty. Your armor will be worn by princes and knights, that is something that you will not get if you stay
The man looked at him slowly before he nodded. “Fine, I will go with you and this boy can come. I want you to stay here until we leave. I don’t want you to alert the Gold Cloaks,” and Davos nodded before moving to find some place to sit.

“What is your name boy?” he asked the young lad.

“Gendry,”

The Dragon King

Jon laid in bed at Dragonstone, Daenerys was cuddled under his arm as they looked up at the canopy. It was the middle of the morning, but they had taken the morning off so they could speak and discuss things among themselves. He gently rubbed her shoulder as she laid on his chest.

“I’m sweaty,” she said simply and Jon chuckled,

“You’re the one who woke me up this morning and started this all off,”

“I know, I wanted to repay the favor from last time when you woke me up in the morning,” she said softly.

“You didn’t have to repay me like that,” he said but she just shrugged.

“I know but I wanted to try it. I have done for weeks,”

“You’re much tighter there,”

“I know I could feel you more,” she said as she ran her hands along the fine hair on his chest. “I liked it though, we’ll have to try it again sometime,”

Jon smiled, he would like that.

“Jon,” she said in a light voice “Have you ever wondered what it would have been like if we grew up together?”

“As if the war didn’t happen or if my father won the war?”

“Let’s say if Rhaegar won that day on the Trident, imagine how different our lives would be,”

“I would have grown up as a prince,” Jon said quietly as he thought about it. He would have grown up in King’s Landing, away from the North. He would not know Arya or Robb or anyone from Winterfell nearly as well, would they still have grown close? Jon shuddered to think of what his life would be like without those relationships. “I would have been a prince and you would have been a princess,”

“You would have been such a serious little prince,” she teased and Jon shook his head.

“I would not,”

“Yes, you would. I could just imagine you spending all of your days sulking around the Red Keep
with your serious face on, and I would have followed you around trying to cheer you up,” and Jon laughed at that.

“We would have gotten into so much trouble together,“

“I know. We would sneak into each other’s rooms for starts,” Dany whispered to him.

“And what would we be doing in each other’s rooms?”

“I would be doing this,” she whispered as she slowly moved her hand on his cock and Jon took a deep breath.

“Careful now. If I have you again I will have you screaming so loud half the castle will hear it,”

“Let them,” she whispered.

“What about Daeron? We don’t want to wake him,” he said and this caused Dany to stop.

“We have never woken him up once, but go and check,” she said to him. “If he’s still asleep I want you to comeback and ravish me,” she said seductively and Jon felt his cock twitch in excitement.

Jon lifted the covers off him and then slowly climbed out of bed. He crossed over to the nursery and he was surprised to see that Daeron was indeed awake. His son was sitting inside of his crib and he was playing with his egg, he was using his small hands to try and roll it in his crib. Daeron had seemed to have chosen the golden egg and he had slept with it in his crib every night since. When Daeron saw him he smiled and to Jon’s surprise he pulled himself up using the side of his crib.

“Careful now son,” he said as he bent down to lift him up out of his crib. Daeron babbled happily and Jon gave him a gentle kiss. “I think you’re ready to walk,” and Daeron seemed to agree with him because he kept squirming in his arms until Jon sat down on the floor and put him on his feet. He looked at Daeron expectantly as he wobbled back and forth before falling down.

“Come on son, I know you can do it,” he whispered as he picked him up again. Jon and Daeron repeated this for a few moments before he heard Daenerys enter the nursery.

“Everything okay?” she asked.

“I was just giving him a little bit of help that’s all,” Jon said as he turned to face her. She had put on a long dark red robe.

“Help with what?” she asked but before Jon could reply Dany squealed loudly.

“Look look!” she said pointing at Daeron and Jon quickly turned around to see that Daeron had slowly started to totter towards him. He managed two steps before he fell down but it was enough to give Jon one of the widest smiles he’d ever have in his life. Dany quickly swooped in and peppered his face with kisses and Jon heard Daeron laugh and babble happily.

“I can’t believe it, he’s not even a year old,” she said happily as she gently put him on the floor again. Daeron held onto her robe tightly and he used her to help him along.

“Our baby boy has taken his first steps!” she gushed. “Come on Jon, let’s get dressed. Today will be a family day,”

Jon smiled and stood up. They gathered their things and made their way through the castle to the secret bathhouse that they had found. The grey tiled floors led to a huge tub in the center of the room
with steps leading down to it. They quickly disrobed and settled in the tub. The warm water was relaxing and soothing and on occasion they had spent hours alone together in this room, but he knew that today would not be one of those days. They bathed Daeron first and then themselves before they headed back to their rooms to dress.

After they bathed, they dressed and to Jon’s surprise, Daenerys had styled her hair differently.

“Why did you change your hair?”

“Margaery and I found a portrait of Queen Visenya and I loved the way she braided her hair so I decided to try it. Do you like it?”

Jon cocked his head to the side as she slowly turned around and gave her a smile.

“I think it looks nice. Daeron seems to like it,” he said as he noticed Daeron hold onto her braids.

“He always pulls my hair,” she said quickly as she gently pulled his hand away. She wore a long pale blue dress with no slits or cut outs to go along with her black sandals. They then walked to a small hall near their rooms and helped themselves to some of the fruits that were in a bowl on the side. As they ate, Dany cut off little pieces of fruit to feed to Daeron. Jon chuckled as he slowly ate his pieces of banana but shied away from the peaches.

“They’re actually really sweet,” Jon said to her as he took a bite of the peach.

“I know but it takes him a while to get used to it. See he has to taste it first then if he likes it he’ll try a bite,” she said as she gently put a small piece in his mouth again. Jon watched as Daeron scrunched up his face before he spat out the piece of peach.

“Ok so no peaches. We'll have some more Banana instead,” Dany said as she kissed him on his forehead. “Morning brother,” she said as Rhaegar walked into the hall.

“Good morning,” he said as he sat down with them. He reached out and slowly tickled Daeron and he was rewarded with a giggle.

“Daeron, show your grandfather what you did this morning,” Dany said as she put him down on his feet a short distance away from her. Daeron looked up at her before he slowly wobbled his way back over to her.

“Wow,” Rhaegar said as he watched Daeron make his way to his mother. “I can’t believe it. I’ll let you both know he is going to be even more of a handful now,” he said with a cheeky smile.

“No, Daeron will be a good boy for us. Isn’t that right?” Dany said as she kissed him on his stomach. “Would you like to join us in the gardens today?”

“I have to show you something first,” Rhaegar said as he turned towards him and he pulled out a raven scroll. “A raven came, from Winterfell,” he said as he passed over the scroll. Jon looked at the scroll nervously and wondered who it was from? Had Lord Stark thought about his offer to remain neutral and was issuing his response? He took the scroll from his father and opened it and he was surprised to see that it was from Robb.

“Dear Jon

We have safely arrived back in Winterfell after the council. Arya misses you dearly and she is eager
to meet your family. Bran and Rickon are well and are also eager to see you again, but their excitement pales in comparison to Arya.

Father and I have spoken to the Northern Lords about your reforms. I think that father and I will be able to convince the Lords to accept your reforms, chopping down trees to sell in Braavos will help the North during the long and hard winters. However, when the Northern Lords learned of your accusations against our grandfather, Lord Rickard they rose up in anger. Some lords want to march south to help defend House Tully as they know you are planning to depose them. King Robert has also sent an offer to my father expressing interest in an alliance but I am not sure he will take it. However, the Northern Lords know of this offer so they may force my father to go south to join his strength to Robert’s.

Jon, I know this may be difficult for you due to the animosity between you and my mother but I beg that you agree to show mercy on House Tully. If you do this, then the Northern Lords will not ride south to go to war. Jon, you are my brother and I beg that you have mercy on my mother’s family. If you don’t, then I can’t promise that I will be able to stop the Northern Lords from marching south.

Please reply as soon as you can.

Robb Stark,

Jon finished reading the letter and then threw it onto the table, he ran his hands through his raven hair as he considered Robb’s words. So many thoughts crossed through his mind at once, this offer changed a lot of their plans.

“Call a war council meeting,” he said in a low voice after a pause. “This affects our war plans,”

“Jon, what are you going to do?” he heard Rhaegar ask as he stood to his feet. Jon just shook his head and walked through the hallways of Dragonstone towards the chamber of the painted table. He entered the large room and immediately crossed to the North facing window and he looked out over the grey ocean that made up the narrow sea. He heard people slowly making their way into the room but he didn’t turn around to look at them.

Could he forgive Lady Catelyn? After all the horrible things she had done to him? At the council, she couldn’t even call him by his proper title, she called him a bastard and she clearly had no remorse for her actions, she deserved to get punished, for everything she did to him. Then, he thought of Robb, and Arya and everyone else in Winterfell, could he let go of his anger at Lady Catelyn to avoid going to war with them?

For all her faults, she was still their mother and Jon could not deny that she loved her children and her family. Jon knew what he needed to do, but he decided to let everyone in the room voice their opinions on the matter before making his final decision.

“Jon,” he heard Daenerys softly call as she gently brushed his elbow. “Everyone is here,” and then he turned around to look at the room. Rhaeger, Tyrion, Ser Barristan, Ser Loras, Asha Greyjoy, Ser, Jaime, Ser Loras, Grey Worm, Ser Davos, Ghost and Dany were all here for this meeting. Dany must have given Daeron to one of her handmaidens whilst they held this meeting. He was surprised to see Asha Greyjoy here, he did not know she was on the island.

“My Lords,” he said in greeting “and lady,” he said with a nod towards Asha, “As you may know, we have spent the last few weeks planning our strategy for the war, but something has come up that means we may have to reconsider. I have received a raven from Robb Stark of Winterfell, my brother. He asks that we show mercy on House Tully,” Jon said and he saw Tyrion’s eyes widen in surprise.
“Can I see the message?” he asked and Jon handed over the scroll. He saw Tyrion scan it quickly and then he repeated the message for the rest of the room to hear.

“Son, I think you should let it go,” Rhaegar said immediately.

“Brother, are you forgetting what Lady Catelyn did to him? She treated your son like he was nothing, she was rude to us both at the council, she should be punished,” Daenerys said firmly.

“I agree with Queen Daenerys,” Asha said.

“I agree with Prince Rhaegar,” Ser Barristan countered. “We should try for peace with the Starks and the Tullys,”

“And let Lady Catelyn get away with treating an innocent child in that way?” Daenerys returned sharply.

“We can still punish Lady Catelyn if the King desires it, send her to the Silent Sisters after the war is over,” Ser Jaime suggested.

“That would soon start another war with the North and the Riverlands,” Rhaegar told him and he saw Ser Barristan nod.

Perhaps deposing House Tully was not the best idea,” Tyrion said “They have no love for Robert Baratheon and offering them peaceful terms would have won them to our side,” and he saw Rhaegar nod in agreement. Jon paused as he heard this, he realised Tyrion was right and this was something that he had caused by letting his anger get the better of him at the council.

He let everyone in the room voice their opinions on the matter until Rhaegar grew frustrated.

“Jon, they are your family! If you don’t let this grudge go, you will have to fight against your family!” he shouted and this caused everyone to fall silent.

“Brother, did you forget what their family did to ours? Hoster Tully used the rebellion to improve his house’s standing. I am not defending what our father did, but house Tully had no grievance with House Targaryen,”

“Dany, I remember what they did, but it is in the past and we can’t let old grudges affect our judgment today. Right now, the best decision is to let go of our anger against House Tully,”

“We can’t let their actions go unpunished,” Dany said as she crossed her arms across her chest.

Jon decided to interrupt them before they could argue further.

“Ser Davos, I have noticed that you haven’t spoken, what do you think?”

“Your grace. I can’t begin to understand what it was like growing up for you in that environment, no child should have to go through that. I served Lord Stannis for many years and he was a just man and he always believed in doing what was right. In any other situation, I would agree that she should be punished for what she did, but this is no ordinary situation. I agree with your father, you should show mercy on the Tullys,” he said and Jon nodded in response. Jon thought back to what happened at the council, where he had let his anger get the better of him and it had cost them some alliances. He was a King now and he had to do better, he had to let this anger go. But Dany was right as well, the Tullys had betrayed his family for the chance to increase their power, he could not let such a betrayal go unpunished. Not to mention, how could he trust such a dubious house to rule the Riverlands in his name.
“Send a raven to Winterfell informing them of my decision. The Tullys will get to keep all their lands but will no longer be the rulers of the Riverlands due to self-serving actions in the rebellion. Further, I promise not to seek any further punishment on them if they willingly bend the knee. I hope that Robb and the Northern Lords understand that my decision is just and merciful. I will sign and stamp it later,” he said and he saw Rhaegar look at him before he slowly nodded. He knew that his father would have wanted no punishment, but Jon knew that would have made him look weak, so this was the compromise he was willing to make.

“Now, we need to reconsider our war plans slightly. Asha, you will still be blockading Kings Landing with our fleet, we don’t want any supplies to enter the city. As Ser Davos has found out, there is a lack of food in the capital, whilst it is unfortunate that the citizens of the city will have to suffer, this lack of food will turn them against Robert and towards us. With the support of the Reach, we will be able to feed the people and this will be important in winning them to our side after the war and building some good will,” Jon said. He had heard that Robert was spreading vile lies about them in the capital.

“Now, we will not be taking the city right now. They have scorpions mounted on the city walls. Our plan is to draw King Robert out and then defeat him in battle first, that way those in the city will have nothing left to fight for and they will stand down, that way our dragons are not at risk,”

“Ser Loras, you will sail back to Highgarden. You and your brothers will lead the forces from the Reach north into the Riverlands until you can meet us around Harrenhall or Castle Darry. Dany and I will head into the Vale to rally the Vale lords loyal to us. Then, we will use our armies to head west into the Riverlands to meet Tywin Lannister. I want you to stay as far away from Lord Tywin’s territory as possible, I don’t want him to spot your army”

“Your grace, will the Riverlords not see this as an act of aggression?” Ser Barristan asked.

“We will inform the Riverlords loyal to us of our plans. Hopefully, House Tully will accept our offer and either join us or stay out of the conflict,” Rhaegar said immediately.

“We don’t have a lot of choice. Robert Baratheon knows that we have the support of the Reach and he needs food for his army. We know that he wants an alliance with House Stark and therefore the Riverlands. If he doesn’t get this alliance, he will have to find food for his army someplace else. The army from the Reach is just as big as his and if he wages war in the reach, he will deplete his army before he meets our main host. I think that he will try to appeal to Hoster Tully directly and if that fails, he will attack the Riverlands which are an easier opponent to defeat,”

“Why would he not send troops from the Stormlands and from the Westerlands into the Reach? If they attacked from both sides they stand a better chance of being successful,” Dany asked.

“Your grace, King Robert has already called most of his banners North from the Stormlands to the capital, they have been camped outside the city walls for months,” Ser Jaime informed her.

“Besides, Robert needs troops, he will only lose troops if he attacks the Reach, he stands to gain more troops if he heads North to convince Lord Tully to join his side. At the council several of the Riverlords wanted to stand against us, he knows that and he will try to convince those Lords to support him. I am confident, Robert will not attack the Reach” Jon told her and she slowly nodded.

“Why don’t we send some of our troops to Storms End and the Stormlands?” Tyrion asked. “The Stormlands are Robert Baratheon’s home territory and if we take it, he would look incredibly weak. Not to mention, you are planning on letting Shireen rule Storms End after the war, if you show the Storm Lords that they have an alternative Baratheon that they can back, I am sure that they will be much more receptive to leaving Robert’s side,”
“Shireen is still just a girl, not a political piece to be used,” Dany said coolly and he saw Ser Davos nod

“Why can’t she be both? Surely you knew these were the implications when you decided to appoint her Lady of Storms End after the war? What I am suggesting here is that we use this option to try and win this war faster,”

“What would you have her do?” Ser Davos asked.

“Nothing much. I think that if we showed her to some of the Storm Lords and she tells them that she has been treated well and kindly, then the other Storm Lords will listen and they may be more willing to lay down their weapons and not to fight for King Robert,”

“They won’t believe that,” Ser Davos quickly replied “I certainly wouldn’t. It would look like you have her as a captive and you’re trying to use her,”

“Your graces, I am from the Storm Lands and the Storm Lords are all fiercely loyal to House Baratheon. The Stormlands are a martial society and I do not believe that you will be able to convince the Storm Lords to join you with words alone, and certainly not with the Lady Shireen, Why would they choose a young girl over their liege lord who broke your family’s dynasty and is a proven warrior and commander.” Ser Barristan wisely said

“However, Tyrion does raise a good point. Taking the Stormlands from Robert would weaken him significantly, and it would certainly cut off his last place of escape,” Dany said “Perhaps we should send some of our forces to try and take these lands. Ser Jaime has told us that Robert Baratheon has called his banners North, so these lands should be relatively easy to take?”

“How many men were you planning on sparing for the task?” Jon asked.

“We could send either the Second Sons or the Stormcrows. Ser Loras can accompany them instead of heading into the Reach. I am sure his brothers can coordinate the attacks without him,”

“Your idea has merit but I have other plans for our sellswords,” Jon said “There is no strategic gain in taking the Stormlands from Robert. If he were to retreat, he would head to King’s Landing where we know he has his scorpions to protect him from our Dragons. The Stormlands don’t produce much food to make it worth our while to take it. If we sent Ser Loras along with our sellswords, we would just be splitting our forces thin for no good reason,”

He saw Dany frown and she folded her arms across her chest “So what plan do you have for our sellswords?” she asked.

“Right, so once our host and the Reach forces meet up around Harrenhal, we will then march West, eventually into the Westerlands. Whilst we are doing this, Tyrion and Ser Jaime will take our sellswords and sail to Casterly Rock. That way we cut of Tywin Lannister’s base and his place of retreat. We will have him out in the open where our Dothraki work best,”

“Casterly Rock is built into the side of a great stone hill, it may be one of the only castles in Westeros that could survive your dragonflame,” Tyrion said. “If we take it, he will not be able to hold out in a siege,”

“I think Asha should join you,” Daenerys said and Jon looked at her curiously.

“My father has allied with King Robert in exchange for getting his son back. He promised him the Iron Fleet in return, commanded by my Uncle Victarion,”
“I think Asha will be of much better use escorting our ships to Lannisport rather than here blocking a bay. If the Iron fleet sail, then Asha should be there to battle them,” Daenerys said and Asha nodded.

“Does your father know that you are here?”

“My father told me he is bringing back the Old way, so I agreed with his suggestion to head east, to reave and rape through these lands,” she said with a roll of her eyes. “I know my father, he won’t lift a finger to help the Usurper. He’ll serve himself first,”

“You probably should have told me earlier,” Jon said,

“I told the Queen,” she replied immediately and Jon just shook his head and let the issue slide.

“Our plan right now is to meet King Robert in battle somewhere in the Riverlands. We defeat him and then we turn our armies south again towards Kings Landing,” Jon said to the room.

“Ser Loras, We’d like you to leave as soon as possible. The sooner the Reach mobilizes and moves north into the Riverlands, the better. We have had your armor commissioned first so it should be ready for use in battle,” Dany said to him and the young knight nodded.

“Right, does everybody understand what they have to do?” Jon asked and they all nodded. “Good, now I want everybody to get ready. I want to leave as soon as possible,”

The She Wolf of Winterfell

Arya Stark stood alone on the battlements of Winterfell. Her father was readying his army to go south to bend the knee to Jon. He had come to her room earlier to tell her this earlier but he had instructed her to not speak of this to anyone since his bannermen could not learn of it now since they may protest against it. Her father had hoped that he would be able to sway them to his side after they see Jon’s entire army and dragons.

It was good that her father had decided to bend the knee to Jon and would do so in person, however she was not happy that he was bringing his bannermen. He should have left them at home. Arya knew that she would not wait behind for them again. Arya had let Robb go without her last time and it had not worked out well, she would go herself and make sure that Jon and her father worked everything out.

She also wanted to see Jon again, it had been far too long since she had seen her brother. Truthfully, she had been planning to leave Winterfell for weeks, her plan was to take a horse and then ride to White Harbour and then on to Dragonstone. Now it seemed she would just follow the army south to meet him.

She also wanted to meet his wife. Arya knew that she must be pretty special to win Jon’s heart but she wanted to see her for herself. Then of course there was his baby, Arya didn’t really care much for babies, Sansa was usually more interested in them but she was eager to meet Jon’s son. She would teach him to ride and to fight and she would love him as if he was her own.

As soon as Arya had heard that her father was planning to ride south she had put her plan into
action. She had snuck into the kitchens earlier and she had stolen some food. Her plan was to head into the Wolfswood and then meet up with the tail end of her army as they got further away from Winterfell.

Arya heard a noise coming from the hallway and she instantly spun around and hid her pack under the bed again, she saw it was Jojen and she scowled.

“What do you want?” she asked suspiciously,

“I came to see you off,” he said casually.

“I’m not going anywhere,”

“Yes you are, you’re going to meet your pack again,” he replied calmly and Arya scowled at him.

“You don’t know what you’re talking about,” and this caused him to smile slightly.

“You should cut your hair. If you look like a boy no one will bat an eye,” he said and Arya chewed her lip nervously. If she cut her hair, Jon might not recognize her. “I can cut it for you if you like,” he offered and Arya nodded slowly, she realised that it would be for the better.

Jojen entered the room and bolted the door closed. Arya took a seat on a chair and Jojen moved behind her.

“You should be careful when you’re out there, my father told me that the Northern Lords are unhappy,” he said as he pulled out his knife.

“I know that,” she said quickly, she was not stupid. “The Manderlys, Hornwoods and the Karstarks want to go to war. The Cerwyn’s, Glovers, Dustin and Reed don’t. The Manderlys are always complaining loudly to father,”

Jojen was quiet for a few moments before he spoke again,

“Lord Karstark is the loudest but you should always be wary of the quiet ones, often times they are the most dangerous,” he said quietly and Arya scowled. What was he talking about? Was he talking about his father? Robb did mention that he was the quietest during the meetings and during that day in the great hall, Lord Reed had been silent.

“Hurry up,” Arya said quickly as she began to feel uncomfortable. Arya looked at the door and saw that it was bolted shut. Arya knew that Needle was behind her under the bed and he currently had his knife very close to her neck.

“There, all done,” he said and she sprung up out of her seat and turned around to look at him suspiciously. He seemed to notice her unease because he raised his hands up to show that he meant her no harm.

“Arya, when you’re out there. Never forget who is a part of your pack,” he said cryptically. Arya shook her head and scowled at him.

“I need to get going,” she said as she donned her cloak, attached needle to her hip and headed to the door. She put one hand on the handle before she heard him speak again.

“Never forget,” he whispered.
The Stag King

King Robert sat in the largest chair in the small council chamber, he looked at the other lords looking at him nervously waiting for the meeting to start. He remembered when his council was filled with people, now the table was quiet and almost empty. Baelish, Stark, Selmy, Varys, all traitorous bastards, they could all go and rot in hell for all he cared. It was good that all the vermin was gone, after the war was over he’d scrap it and fill it with loyal people, or he’d scrap it all together. Who could he honestly trust at this point? Ned Stark had been his best friend for years and he had betrayed him. Even his brother had failed him, all he had to do was marry the Tyrell girl, it was a simple enough task but he had failed him. Robert had not seen Renly since that night they argued at the council. He looked at the men sitting at the table, it was just Pycelle, Tywin Lannister and Joffrey.

He wasn’t even sure if he could trust Tywin Lannister, even his own children had gone over to the Targaryens and his daughter was far away in Casterly Rock, the bastard could easily betray him. In fact, Robert would not have been surprised if he was already working behind his back, that would certainly explain why his children had gone over to the other side. He would have to keep Joffrey close, Tywin would stay loyal because of Joffrey. Then, he turned to Pycelle, the blundering old fool.

“Pycelle!” he roared “Have you found the Spider?” and the old man meekly shook his head

“No, your grace,”

“Why?”

“The Spider knew we were coming. Once we received your raven from the council, I summoned the Gold Cloaks and we went to his room but he was long gone,”

Robert shook his head in anger.

“Gone where?” he asked angrily and Pycelle shook his head, the useless fool did not know.

“Perhaps Dorne or Essos,” Tywin suggested “If Tyrion’s tale is true then the false prince would be in Dorne with the Martells, or he would be in Essos. Either way the Spider is gone,”

“We need to find him,” Robert said angrily and Tywin just looked at him.

“He is one boy with a handful of sellswords at best. We need to focus on the Targaryens with their dragons,” he said simply. Robert glared at him for a few minutes. This false prince was something that he did not want to deal with. He was not surprised that there was a boy pretending to be a false prince. Rhaegar fucking Targaryen was alive, Ned Stark had betrayed him, why couldn’t there be another foolish boy pretending to be a Targaryen prince.

“Send word to your brother or to Storms End. If the false prince is with the Dornish, then they may try to attack the Stormlands whilst you are away,” Tywin said and Robert nodded.

“Pycelle see that this is done, send a message to Storms End as soon as we are finished here. Hopefully, Renly has run back to Storms end,” he ordered and Pycelle quickly nodded.

Robert then took a long drink of his summer wine before continuing.
“Right. We need to plan this war for my throne,” he began before he belched loudly. “The scorpions are on the city walls, if they fly those dragons close I want them all shot down. Let it be known that I will give 100,000 golden dragons to the man who slays a dragon. I will give Dragonstone to the man who captures either the boy, the girl or that bastard Rhaegar,” he spoke and no one answered him, they just nodded obediently.

“Father, where will our troops go?” Joffrey asked,

“The Riverlands, the Dragonspawn are hoarding all the food from the Reach and I need food to feed my armies. Hoster Tully and the Riverlords have food that we will take,”

“Stealing from the Riverlords might turn them against you,” Pycelle said.

“I am not stealing,” Robert spat as he glared at the old fool. “They are my subjects and they are helping their King defend the realm against foreign invaders!”

“Of course your grace,” Pycelle said quickly as he nodded at him.

“I agree, the Tullys will be our allies. The Targaryens have foolishly announced their plans to depose and humiliate the Tullys and we should use that to our advantage. Send a raven to Lord Hoster and express interest in an alliance,” Tywin said wisely.

“Lord Tywin will send a portion of his troops from the Westerlands and they will raid in the Reach. Mace Tyrell is a useless fucker who will spend half the time chasing his own tail. He will not march until he is sure that the Reach is safe, he will be of no help to the Dragonspawn,” Robert said before he took another deep long drink. The wine was good and it helped him think better. He belched loudly and he the sound it made caused him to laugh darkly.

“We need to be quick about this,” Robert slurred. “We will start marching for the Riverlands today. The sooner we get to Hoster Tully and the Riverlords, the better. If he doesn’t want to join with us, we’ll just take what we can and burn what we can’t,” Robert said with another laugh.

“What about Lord Stark?” Tywin Lannister said from his position on his right hand side. “You send a raven expressing your interest in an alliance. Has he responded?”

Robert shrugged. “Pycelle!” he yelled and the Grandmaester jolted, he looked like he was sleeping. “Has the Northern bastard replied?”

“No your grace,” he stammered quickly and Robert just shrugged and reached for his drink of wine only to find the cup was empty.

“Wine!” he roared and his squire quickly came forward to refill his cup. It was another Lannister boy, Lancel was his name. Robert shook his head and drank heartily from his cup. Once he was finished he sat back and shrugged his shoulders.

“Fuck Ned Stark. We don’t need him, I will deal with him after I deal with the dragonspawn,” Robert said with a dismissive wave of his hand. If Stark wanted to stay in the freezing cold he was more than welcome to.

“We need to know where he is anyway,” Tywin said immediately. “If he rides south, then he will bring at least 20,000 Northerners with him, we need to know where those troops are going. He will either fight against the Targaryens to defend his wife’s family or he will fight against us for his sister’s son,”

“He won’t fight for the boy, they hate each other,” Robert said immediately.
“That does not matter, Stark is an honorable man and he hid the boy for over 18 years. He clearly cares deeply for him and that bond will not vanish instantly. We should be very careful,” Tywin said and Robert shook his head at him. He took another deep drink of his wine before leaning forward onto the table speaking again.

“Fine. Pycelle, send a raven to Stark again and find out where he is and what he is planning. We will still ride for the Riverlands,” Robert said.

“Father, what about their Dragons, surely we should stay here where it is safer?”

“Stay here? And let them take over MY country?” he angrily asked as he fiercely stared at him. “You were there at the council, how long until the Lords turn against me? How long will they stand behind their King who is too much of a coward to defend them?”

“But they have Dragons,” Joffrey repeated.

“We have built smaller scorpions that can be pulled by our horses,” Tywin said.

“Smaller? They will be useless if they are small!” Joffrey screeched “And they have Dothraki, thousands and thousands of Dothraki! Where are our men! We don’t have enough men! We should stay here!”

“The Dothraki are a bunch of untrained savages who prey on the weak. Our knights will cut through them with ease,” Tywin said but Robert shook his head.

“They might be savages, but only a fool would underestimate the Dothraki in battle,”

“Luckily I am no fool,” Tywin said sharply and Robert nodded slowly. He knew that Tywin Lannister was devious and he would need him and his schemes to defeat them. Both he and Tywin had been in many battles over the years whereas that boy was still new to the ways of war. They may not have the men, but they were much more experienced than him.

Robert smiled to himself as he drained his cup of wine, all hope was not lost yet, if he could secure the Riverlands, then his chances would increase dramatically.

The Griffin

It was almost the middle of the night and Jon Connington moved silently through the dark hallways of Storms End. He had roused Harry a few moments earlier and he was a few steps behind him. They moved on the balls of their feet as they did their best to make little noise. They were near the cellars on the seaward side of the castle and Jon could still hear the waves battering against the rocks below. He led Harry down a flight of stairs and into another dark hallway. There were no guards on duty down here and this pleased Jon, they did not want to spill blood too early.

The corridors in this part of the castle were cold and damp and Jon moved quickly to the end of the hallway where he found an old barred door. Jon looked at the door and saw that the hinges were orange and rusted.

“You sure this is it?” Harry whispered, he sounded nervous and Jon didn’t pay much attention to
“Yes,” he whispered in return. He had been here exactly once before many, many years ago during a tourney at Storms End. He gently rested his sword by the side of the door and knocked twice against the door. The sound of his knuckles on the wooden door sounded impossibly loud in the silence and Jon waited with bated breath, they had to be there otherwise this plan would fall to pieces.

He waited and he waited and Jon could see his breath condensing in front of him before he heard a soft knock in return and Jon breathed a loud sigh of relief. His hands went to the door and he pushed on it firmly but it wouldn’t open. He pushed his shoulder against the door and pressed but he realised the door was stuck, it must not have been used in years.

“Fuck sake,” Jon said to himself. He took a step back and then he rammed his shoulder into the door repeatedly, the noise sounded scarily loud in the otherwise complete silence. He continued to hammer his shoulder into the door until it finally burst open. He stood back and he saw that Duck, Gerold Dayne and other men of the Golden Company were here.

“How many men did you bring?”

“We set out with 200 but only 100 made it, the rest of the men are ready in the camps,” Duck replied. “It was difficult to find the cove in the darkness, we lost another boat on the rocks,”

Jon cursed but they had to go on.

“We will change the plan slightly. Duck and Gerold, you head to the castle walls and get the gates opened. Did you tell Black Balaq to shoot down any ravens?”

“Yes,” he said quickly. “He said it would be difficult in these conditions, it’s very cloudy and there is no moon,” Jon shook his head, this was not what he needed to hear

“Fine. Just go. Head down this corridor and then take the second hallway on your left. Keep climbing the stairs until you reach the ramparts. Take out any guards that will sound the alarm. Harry go with them. I will take 20 men and head towards the castellan and the other officers. If we take out their leaders, they won’t be able to retaliate. Lord Renly is still here, we need to take him hostage, do not kill him whatever you do,” he said to them and they all nodded.

“Good, now go,” he urged.

Jon watched as the men hurried away to complete his orders. He looked at his remaining portion of men and then led them away. Renly and his commanders would be staying in the Western side of the castle where the Lords chambers were, he knew that from his time here as a boy. He led his men quickly but quietly through the castle, he knew that there would be no sentries on the inside of the castle. They would all be on the castle walls standing watch.

They were nearly there when Jon heard a loud war horn blow. Shit, they were already starting the attack. Jon heard loud shouting and he quickly drew his sword and started to sprint. His footsteps pounded against the stone floor as he sprinted towards the Western wing. He jumped up the stairs two at the time and rounded the corner.

The first man he saw didn’t even have his sword out, he had staggered into the hallway in only his shorts. “What’s going on!” he yelled as he looked towards Jon. Jon just shrugged before he quickly plunged his sword into his stomach and he felt warm wet blood trickled down onto his arm. The man squealed in pain like a pig being put to slaughter and Jon pulled the sword out and cut the man’s
throat to quickly finish him off.

“Quickly. Kill every man you see, they are not prepared!” he roared to his men and they all split up down the hallway. As Jon suspected, the men in the castle were not ready for this attack. He quickly slayed three unarmed men who had barely gotten the sleep out of their eyes before he was upon them like a wild wolf. Jon killed them all without mercy, this was necessary, it was to sit the rightful King on the throne.

He turned left down a hallway and he saw Cortnay Penrose standing in front of him. His sword was dripping red with blood and his eyes were wide with rage.

“You bastard!” he yelled as he charged towards him. Jon took a deep breath and set his feet. Once Cortnay was in range, he stepped forward and brought his sword down in a savage arc that was aiming for his shoulder. Surprisingly, Cortnay saw the attack coming and he was able to block the attack. Their swords met in a loud dizzying clash of steel that sent shockwaves flowing up his arm and into his shoulder.

Jon yanked his sword away and quickly thrust it forward but Cortnay batted it away with ease. He’s stronger than me Jon realised and he took a few nervous steps backward.

Cortnay seemed to realise this as he stepped forward and to send a flurry of attacks towards Jon. Jon did not even try to block them, instead he tried to evade. He kept backing down the hallway hoping that someone would come and help him. Cortnay swung his sword in a savage downward arc that came at Jon too quickly. He took a step back and tried to duck out of the way of his grazed the side of his face. Warm blood poured into Jon’s vision and he stumbled backwards blindly.

He tripped and fell backwards and he heard Cortnay standing over him. Jon started to breath heavily, he knew this was the end. Cortnay was going to kill him, he only hoped he had done enough to take the castle for Aegon. Hopefully, this would help him take back his throne.

“Fuck you,” Cortnay spat and Jon took his last breath. Then he heard a loud shout followed by a thud to his left. Jon reached out with his right hand to wipe the blood off his face and saw Duck standing over him, his sword was gleaming with bright red blood. Then he looked to his left and he saw Cortnay lying flat on the floor on his stomach, blood pooling out of the back of his head.

Duck held out his hand helped pull Jon into a sitting position.

“The cut doesn’t look too deep but you’re bleeding heavily,” he said worriedly to him.

“What about the rest of the attack?” Jon slurred. His head was spinning slightly and he felt a little bit dizzy.

“We got the castle gates open and I saw our forces storm the courtyard. I think we should have the rest of the castle,” he said and Jon gave a long deep sigh of relief, their plan worked.

“Where is Renly?” he asked faintly, he noticed that his breathing was getting heavy.

“We’ve got him, Ser Gerold found him in the rookery. He has received a raven from the Usurper informing him about us. He knows about the King and he told Renly to let the other Storm Lords know about us,”
Jon was confused. How could the Usurper have found out about them? It didn’t make sense. He closed his eyes and tried to focus but his head was throbbing with pain.

“Chains,” Jon murmured as he closed his eyes to try shut out the pain. “Get him to send a raven to the Usurper…. tell him….tell him...everything is fine,”

“Jon, you need to lie down and I’ll go and find a master,” Duck said as he ripped off a sleeve of his garment to press against the wound on his head. Jon leaned backwards slowly until he passed out as his head hit the cold, stone floor.

Chapter End Notes

This chapter is a little late, but my laptop is fixed so everything should proceed normally now

The next chapter is called 'The Wolf's Discovery' and it should be out in 7-8 days.

As always, let me know what you think, comments are always appreciated

Thanks for reading
Sleepy
The Lady of Winterfell

Lady Catelyn was sitting on a wooden bench in the small Sept of Winterfell. Her husband had this Sept built especially for her upon her arrival but it had never felt the same as the beautiful one back at home in Riverrun. She did her best in this small Sept, she lit her candles and prayed but sometimes she wondered if her gods could even hear her all the way in the North.

Septa Mordane and Sansa were also with her in the Sept and they were all praying silently. She prayed to the Father for he was responsible for justice. In the weeks following the council, Catelyn had been unable to control her nerves. She had been barely eating and when she did eat, it was only in the confines of her room. Catelyn had not been to the great hall in weeks. She only left her room to head to the Sept and she spent many of these cold nights restlessly tossing and turning, searching for sleep that never came. She had bags forming under her eyes and her skin was looking paler than normal. The fate of her family was in the hands of a boy who hated her and her family.

Catelyn knew that she shared some of the blame for this because she had treated the boy poorly, but how was she to know that he was her husband’s nephew and not bastard son? How was she to know that this boy would go on to become a dragon rider? How was she to know that he would have the power to enact a terrible revenge on her family? She grew up in the faith of the Seven and she had learned to not trust natural born children. They were to be separated from trueborn children and Catelyn had abided by her faith.

Her family would be destroyed all because she couldn’t love a motherless child. She knew that her father and uncle would not sit ideally by and let Jon take away their lands, titles and positions so they would have to go to war. She remembered the size of the dragons at the council and she was no fool, if those dragons took to the sky then it would be almost impossible to defeat them. Catelyn needed Jon to show mercy on her family otherwise they would be destroyed.
Although, she did not see what else she could have done at the time, no woman in Westeros would have raised their husband’s bastard amongst her own children. Not one woman would have treated him any differently and if they said otherwise, they would they were lying. Maybe if Ned had actually told her the truth she would have treated him differently. It hurt that Ned could not trust her with the truth, especially after all their years of marriage.

At first, their relationship had been difficult and how could it not be? She was not supposed to marry Ned, she was supposed to marry Brandon and she had gotten to know him well.

In contrast, she did not know Ned at all, she had only met him on the day of their wedding. After their rushed marriage in Riverrun, they had spent two weeks together in Riverrun and then Ned had rode off south to war, giving her nothing but a son in her womb. She had carried Robb for nine months whilst Ned warred in the South and she had spent many months wondering if he would ever get to hold his son. Thankfully, her husband had returned but to her surprise he had brought home a bastard.

Catelyn knew how the world worked, she knew that men often fathered bastards when they were at war. But she did not expect her husband to keep the boy, nor did she expect him to be so protective over him. Catelyn took this as a sign that he had loved the boy’s mother so fiercely that he would never love her in the same way and this hurt. She had worked hard to find out who this mystery women was. Catelyn had heard of the rumors from the Tourney of Harrenhall and she thought that Ashara Dayne was the boy’s mother but she had been wrong and Ned’s reaction to her inquiry had deterred her from guessing again.

If only Ned had told her who his mother was, she would have treated him better. Perhaps, it was her own jealousy that her husband loved another so much that he insisted on raising her child amongst his own. To make matters worse, he even looked more like a Stark than her own trueborn children! That served to further fuel her jealousy and paranoia that one day, he would come and try to take what belonged to her children. This jealousy made her angry and she took her anger out on him and it had backfired and now it looked like it would cause the downfall of her family.

It was not part of her duty as a wife to care for her husband’s bastard, yet this had put her family in danger anyway.

Catelyn opened her eyes and silently walked over to the corner of the Sept devoted to the Mother. She lit a candle and then she slowly fell to her knees and closed her eyes in prayer, she prayed to the Mother to ask for mercy on her family. They were still awaiting the response to their raven and Catelyn had been so nervous that she had sent three copies of the letter to ensure that Jon would get it, now all she had to do was wait.

Waiting was difficult and Catelyn could not keep her mind focused. Her thoughts constantly turned to Ned and Robb who had ridden south. Ned had told her that he planned to bend the knee to Jon and he would be going without her. She understood why her husband had left her behind, if she and Jon met again there was a chance the meeting would go badly once more and Catelyn did not want to risk that. Catelyn hoped that this act would be enough to save her family. She had already lost Lysa, she did not want to lose Edmure or her father and uncle.

Robb was certain that Jon would not go to war against him, but he could not promise the same for her family in Riverrun.

Catelyn then slowly stood up and moved to the altar of the Warrior and knelt underneath the painted marble image. She lit a candle for Edmure, Uncle Brynden and her father, she prayed for the Warrior to watch over and protect them if they needed to go to battle. If they needed to go to battle, then s he prayed that the Warrior would keep them safe.
Septon Chayle entered the Sept, he was a young and cheerful man and he tried to lift her spirits with his rich and pleasant voice. However, Catelyn found herself thinking of Septon Osymnd, the Septon in Riverrun when she was just a girl. He spoke in thin and quavering tones and he would know what to do, he would help her in this crisis. But Septon Osymnd was dead now and he was unable to help her through this crisis.

Her family was in danger and yet there was nothing she could do to help them, all she could do was wait and pray. Ned had gone South to bend the knee, hopefully that act will help to convince Jon to show mercy on her family, Catelyn shuddered to think what would happen if they had to go to war. She had seen his dragons, they were fearsome beasts and she was not sure if any man or army could defeat them in battle.

Once the Septon finished singing his hymns, Catelyn slowly rose to her feet and straightened out her skirts. She decided to head to the rookery in the Maester’s tower to see if a raven from Jon had arrived. She quickly walked outside and entered the castle courtyard, she looked up and she saw the sun straining to break through the thick grey clouds. A cold wind blew across and Catelyn hurried towards her destination.

As she made her way to the rookery, she passed by the entrance to the crypts. In all her years at Winterfell, she had never gone down there and why should she? It was a place that the Starks buried their dead, it was a place where she did not belong.

Yet, Catelyn felt herself slowly being drawn towards the solid ironwood door. The door was tall and intimidating but surprisingly it opened easily. Catelyn stood at the top of the stone stairs to the crypts and took a long deep breath. She reached to her left and took a lantern that had been left on the side and then she descended down the stairs.

The door swung shut behind her and the sounds of the outside world were gone and only then was Catelyn aware of how eerily quiet it was. Every step she took seemed to echo loudly in the large cavernous underground space. She could hear her breath and it was so cold she could see it condensing in front of her. Catelyn walked slowly through the crypts and she raised her torch high in the air. The light from the lantern flickered and it made the statues look older and more unforgiving.

She walked for a short while until she stopped in front of the statue of who could only be Lyanna Stark. Catelyn looked around the statue and saw fresh blue winter roses on the floor next to her statue. She had never met Lyanna but Catelyn was sure that this statue was looking at her harshly. Her stone eyes looked cold and unforgiving and Catelyn found herself unable to hold her gaze. Her shoulders slumped and her eyes fell to the floor.

“I am sorry,” she whispered. “I am sorry for the way I have treated your son, I am sorry for not giving him a home. I am sorry for not loving him,” Catelyn spoke into the silence. She was ashamed to raise her head and look at Lyanna’s statue. She felt tears wet her face and she broke down into sobs that wracked her body.

The fate of her family was in the hands of a child that she had neglected growing up. Catelyn knew that she was wrong for doing this and she only hoped that her mistake would not cause the demise of her family. She opened her eyes and wiped the tears from her face. She looked up at Lyanna again and found that her expression had not changed and this unsettled Catelyn. Perhaps, Jon would not have mercy on her family after all, perhaps this was what she deserved.

Catelyn heard a noise and she quickly jerked her head to the right, the noise came from further down deeper in the crypts where the old Kings of Winter were buried. Catelyn shook her head and quickly
walked away from the statue of Lyanna and towards the stairs that would take her up to the surface.

She quickly hurried out of the crypts and then headed across the courtyard towards the rookery. As she climbed the stone steps to the rookery, she noticed a young man heading down the spiral stairs. He was average height and he had long jet black hair that fell down onto his shoulders and he had startling pale blue eyes that caught Catelyn by surprise.

“My Lady,” he said with a small bow and Catelyn nodded her head in return. Catelyn looked at the man as he continued his descent downwards. Catelyn shook her head and continued upwards, she had not been keeping up to date with all the comings and the goings in the castle. He was probably the son of a lord or a squire, it did not matter to her.

She reached Maester Luwin’s rooms below the rookery and knocked on the door. She knocked then waited. Then she knocked and waited some more. After the third knock, she pushed open the door and found that he was not in his room, this was not unusual, he had other duties to take care of in the castle. She decided to take a seat by the window and wait. It wasn’t long until Maester Luwin returned.

“Lady Catelyn,” he said in surprise once he entered the room “If I had known that you needed me, I would have come to you,”

“There is no need,” Catelyn said quietly. “I was just waiting to see if a raven came,”

“Nothing came this morning when I checked my lady. I was summoned away to deal with another issue in the castle so perhaps one came whilst I was away,” he said and Catelyn nodded eagerly. Hopefully, a letter would have arrived and all she would finally be put at ease.

She waited impatiently for him to return from the rookery and her heart fell when she saw him return.

“No raven came today,” he said sadly and Catelyn swallowed nervously and she felt her stomach roll. “My Lady, I have not seen you in the halls often, are you feeling unwell?”

“It is just the nerves,” she said with a fake smile.

“I understand, but my lady you need to eat. You are the Lady of Winterfell and you are still needed to help run the household,” he said and Catelyn knew that he was right. She still had her duty to do but it was difficult to concentrate on that whilst her family was in danger. Then Catelyn remembered Arya, Sansa, Bran and Rickon they were still here and they still needed her.

“Something to calm my stomach would be nice,” she said and she saw the Maester nod his head and he turned around to face his shelves. She watched as he quickly pulled bottles from the shelves and mixed them together, eventually he poured the mixture into a bowl and gave it to her to drink.

“This should calm your stomach,” he said with a smile. Catelyn took a small sip of the silvery mixture. It tasted bitter, like dried leaves but Catelyn forced herself to take another sip, and then another. She would need her strength in the upcoming weeks, she needed to be strong for her family.

After she had finished the mixture, she pushed the bowl to the side and remained in Maester Luwin’s tower for the rest of the day waiting for Jon’s raven. She brushed and combed her hair, washed and changed her clothing and ate a warm bowl of mutton stew but still the waiting was hard. The sky had started to grow dark again when she heard loud knocking on the door to the rookery. She turned and was surprised to see Ser Rodrik burst into the solar, his face was red and his breathing heavy.

“Lady Catelyn, Arya is missing,” he blurted out and Catelyn froze. How could this be true? She had seen last seen Arya yesterday, or was it the day before? Or was it the day before that? Catelyn was
ashamed to realise that she did not remember the last time she had seen her daughter. She had been too consumed with thoughts of what was happening in Riverrun that she had neglected to think of her own children.

“Have you checked her room?” she asked as she quickly stood to her feet.

“We have, it’s neat and tidy but she is not there;”

“How long has she been missing?”

“At least two days my lady. It was only this evening at dinner that Sansa commented that she had not seen her sister in days. Then, we all realised that we had not seen Arya,”

Catelyn shook her head and wrung her hands. This was all her fault, if she had been more attentive this would never have happened. She had failed her family again.

“Have you searched the castle?” she asked and he nodded.

“I am just about to lead a party out into the Wolfswood to search for her,” he said.

“I will come,” Catelyn said immediately.

“My lady, we will be gone for a while, we do not plan to return until the morning,” he said warily but Catelyn shook her head. She could not stay here and wait any longer. She could do nothing to help Ned and Robb at the moment, but she could still help Arya.

“I will come Ser Rodrik, I will find my daughter.”

The Dragon King

It was another grey, cold and windy morning on Dragonstone as Jon stood out on the balcony of their rooms at Dragonstone. He looked out at the stormy grey waters of the Narrow Sea as they angrily crashed against the beach below. They had sent the entirety of their Dothraki and a large portion of the Unsullied ahead to Maidenpool a few days prior. They would leave behind a force of 2,000 Unsullied to garrison the castle and to protect Daeron whilst they were away.

House Mooton had declared their loyalty for House Targaryen and therefore Maidenpool was the ideal landing place for their forces. From Maidenpool, they could head west towards Harrenhall and Castle Darry and then eventually, West into the Westerlands. Jon knew that eventually they would encounter Robert Baratheon, he would not sit idly in Kings Landing whilst Jon took his lands and this was something that he wanted. If Robert left the capital to face them in the field then he would not stand a chance.

Jon paused to consider what would happen if Robert didn’t leave the city. They would have to siege it without the use of their dragons and whilst this would not be impossible, it would lead to an increased loss of life. The city itself was already starving and a prolonged siege would only make it
worse, Jon hoped that it would not come to that.

He headed away from the balcony back inside. He was already dressed in his Valyrian steel armor as they would be flying to the Vale today to try and rally the entire Vale behind him. They already had the support of some houses such as Egen and Corbray, but Dany hoped that they could convince other Vale lords such as Lord Royce to join him. Jon hoped that without Robert present, they would be more receptive to joining their side.

Once the Vale was secure, they too would march West towards Harrenhall to meet up with their main host. Jon hoped that today their army would get even bigger. Jon had heard that Robert was a warrior and he knew that he would not back down, but the same could not be said for his men. When faced with a bigger army and three dragons, Jon expected the majority of Robert’s men to flee.

“Are you ready to go?” he heard a soft voice ask. He turned and saw Daenerys standing in the doorway to her dressing room. She was dressed in her light armor that she wore to battle, Jon hoped that they wouldn’t need it but he would not have her leave unprotected.

Since Tobho Mott had arrived on the island, he had designed her a new set of armor. This new chest piece was made out of metal that had been colored a very dark red, similar to the color of wine. Jon noticed that he had the bright red three headed dragon engraved into the center of the metal. It was not a full suit of armor, but it would be enough to protect the vital organs in her chest.

“Are you okay my love, is it too heavy?” he asked as he saw Dany shift the armor slightly.

“No it’s fine, I’m just trying to get comfortable,” she said but Jon pursed his lips.

“Can you move okay?” he asked in a concerned voice which seemed to annoy her slightly

“I’m fine Jon,” she said as she did some stretches to prove her point. “I told you we would do this together, you are not going to leave me behind,” she said firmly and Jon nodded, he knew he was not going to win this argument.

“Don’t forget your dagger,” was all he said and she nodded in return.

“Let’s see Daeron and then we’ll go,” she said as she led the way towards the Nursery. Daeron would be staying behind with Rhaegar for today but when they were at war, it would just be Daeron and her handmaidens. Irri and Missandei had gone on ahead with Grey Worm and the Unsullied, but Doreah and Jhiqui would stay here with Daeron. It also helped that Dany trusted Margaery and Shireen who would also be staying on the island.

They headed towards the Nursery and as they approached, they heard music and singing. They pushed open the door and he was pleased to see his father on a stool playing a song for Daeron on his harp. They stood in the doorway as Daeron sat perfectly still on the floor, captivated by the song. They both stood quietly in the doorway and listened to him sing, he truly had a beautiful voice. Jon noticed that Ghost was also in the room lying down next to Daeron.

“I would love it if you sung to me like that,” Dany whispered to him and Jon gave her a playful push to her shoulder. It was only when he finished singing that he noticed they were standing in the doorway.

“Are you two leaving now?” he said as put his harp on the ground.

“Yes, we’ll be leaving shortly,” Dany said to him. “I will return to Dragonstone today but Jon will spend some time in Maidenpool to check on our armies before returning,”
“That’s good. We’ll be safe,” he said as he helped Daeron to his feet. Jon watched as he slowly managed a few steps towards them before Dany quickly walked forward to scoop him up.

“Mama and Papa are going away today” she said softly. “We will return later sweetling,” She passed him to Jon who gently kissed him on his nose.

“Be good today my son,” he whispered and Dareon gave him a puzzled, mischievous look in response. He gave him one final kiss before he put him back on the floor.

“I’ll keep him safe today,” Rhaegar said as Daeron slowly walked away towards Rhaegar.

“Make sure he eats properly, try and feed him some fruit as well. He likes bananas but not the peaches. He usually sleeps after he has his lunch. If the weather clears up, please try and take him outside for a while,” Daenerys informed Rhaegar who just smiled at her.

“Dany I will be fine, I have raised children of my own,” he said as he gently rubbed her shoulder. “Besides, I have your handmaidens who will help me, don’t worry, he will be fine,”

Jon could tell that Dany was still nervous but she settled for giving Daeron one last kiss before they left the room. Jon called to Ghost who followed them through the castle and out towards the beach.

“Did you saddle Anogar?” he asked as they stepped outside. It had started to rain lightly and Jon pulled his cloak tightly around himself.

“Yes, I managed to get it on him yesterday, he took it surprisingly well,” Dany said. After the disaster with the dragon armor, Tyrion had put his efforts into designing saddles for them. The saddles were made out of leather and they were quite comfortable, much more comfortable than sitting on their tough scales. The dragons were much more receptive to this design which was an added bonus. They reached the northern part of the beach and then Jon closed his eyes and called for Vedros.

He waited for a few moments before he heard a loud roar and he saw his dragon make her way gracefully through the clouds to land gently on the beach. Jon gently walked up to her and rubbed her gently on the snout, and he got a happy purr in return.

Both she and Anogar were huge and the ground trembled every time they took a step. Their eyes were bigger than his head and some of their teeth were longer than his legs. Vedros seemed to be much happier since they had discovered the clutch of eggs. She dipped her wing and Jon slowly climbed on and got himself comfortable in the saddle before he turned to look at the beach. Ghost and Vedros stared at each other for a few moments. Then, Vedros released a small puff of smoke and Ghost started to wag his tail happily. Jon chuckled at the little interaction and watched as Ghost made his way up Vedros’s wing to settle in front of him.

One of the advantages of the saddle was that Ghost would be able to come with him into battle. So whenever Jon got off Vedros, Ghost would be by his side on the ground. Jon looked up and saw that Dany had mounted Anogar and she was waiting patiently for them to be ready.

“Come on girl,” he whispered to Vedros who gave a loud screech before lazily taking flapping her wings and taking off. As Vedros climbed, Jon felt the wind and the rain cut into his skin like daggers so he closed his eyes and trusted that she would lead them to where he wanted to go. They climbed higher and higher until the wind started to howl loudly in his ears then suddenly it stopped.

Jon opened his eyes and he realised that they had gone through the clouds and they were now on the other side. The turbulent grey clouds had been replaced by a carpet of fluffy white ones and
thankfully, the rain had stopped and the wind had quieted down.

He looked to his left and he saw Dany on Anogar who were soaring gracefully. He lazily dipped one wing into the clouds as he flew.

“Let’s have a little race, girl,” he said to Vedros in his mind and Vedros gave a loud roar in return. Jon smiled to himself as he felt Vedros start to beat her wings rapidly and increase her pace. Anogar gave an angry screech and Jon knew that he was up to the challenge. Anogar was slightly bigger, but Jon knew that Vedros was faster.

Vedros flew lower so she was skimming over the clouds and they were inching ahead. Anogar was not happy about it and he seemingly put on a burst of speed to take the lead again. They went back and forth for several minutes and he heard her musical laughter on the wind. Vedros started to edge ahead until suddenly Anogar gave a loud roar and dived through the clouds. Vedros quickly followed her brother through the clouds and Jon once again closed his eyes to protect his eyes from the wind.

When he opened them he was amazed by what he saw. They were now in the Vale and the mountain tops were covered in a thick blanket of snow. He saw frozen rivers and streams snaking their way through the trees down the mountain to the valley floor. Along the sides of the mountain were tall evergreen trees

Anogar took them lower and Jon noticed that he was headed towards a castle in the side of the mountain, next to a milky white river. This castle was further down the mountain and as a result, there was no snow in the courtyard. As they flew lower and lower, Jon noticed that there were several men in the courtyard and they looked like they were arguing.

Anogar flew lower and then Vedros gave out a large intimidating roar and Jon saw all the men stop and turn up towards them. Some men dropped their swords in shock and looked up in awe at the two dragons descending. As they flew lower, Jon was able to see the banner flying on the top of the castle. It was three black crows flying on a field of white carrying red hearts, the sigil of House Corbray. House Corbray had declared for them at the council.

The men slowly backed away and left the center of the courtyard clear, Jon landed first and as soon as Vedros touched the ground, Ghost jumped off and stalked around the courtyard making sure it was safe for Dany. There was just enough space in the courtyard for both dragons to land and Jon heard, and felt, Anogar land across from them.

Jon quickly climbed off Vedros who gave a low warning growl towards the men who were lined up opposite her in the courtyard.

“What is going on here?” Jon shouted “Why are you fighting?”

“King Aegon, Queen Daenerys, thank the gods that you are here,” he heard a man say, Jon turned and saw that it came from Lord Lyonel Corbray who walked forwards and then fell to his knees in front of him.

“Lord Royce has come down from the Eyrie to try and bully Vale lords into supporting King Robert,” he said and Jon heard Vedros give a low growl. Then, he felt the ground tremble and shake as one of the dragons took off into the sky.

“Where is Lord Royce?” he heard Dany call and he saw one man step forward. The man had grey hair and eyes the color of grey slate. He wore a thick fur coat and Jon could see his bronze armor beneath his cloak.
“Lord Royce, is it true that you are trying to rally the Vale lords to support the Usurper?” Dany asked and Jon saw the man nod in response.

“Why do you wish to fight for the Usurper? Have you not seen our dragons? You will not win this war. By fighting for the Usurper, all you are doing is sending countless men to unnecessary deaths,” Dany told him.

“There would be no unnecessary deaths if you had stayed in Essos,” he said bitterly and Jon frowned and shook his head.

“Lord Royce, we are asking you to do the right thing. Think of the men that are loyal to you, by fighting against us you are sending those men to their deaths. I am asking you to do the smart thing and bend the knee,” Jon said and as if to prove his point he heard a loud intimidating dragon roar, it was Vedros.

Jon saw that Lord Royce did not react but several of his men behind him visibly recoiled.

“Lord Royce, why do you fight for Robert Baratheon?” Jon asked,

“My reasons are my own,” he replied in a gruff voice but Jon and Daenerys both knew better.

“It’s because he was raised to the position of Warden of the East by King Robert after the war in the Vale, he is doing this out of loyalty,” Daenerys said and Jon nodded in agreement.

“We admire loyalty, it is one of the things that we look for in those that follow us, but loyalty has its limits,” Jon said but Lord Royce shook his head.

“I will be the judge of that,” he said firmly.

“What about all of you?” Dany said as she walked past Lord Royce to speak to the men behind him.

“Do you wish to fight against our dragons?”

Jon saw several of them look towards him nervously before one ginger haired man towards the end of the line bravely shook his head in no.

“What is your name?” Daenerys asked as she stepped towards him, Jon was not worried because Ghost was by her side.

“Rodwell, your grace,” the man said quietly. Jon took a good look at him, he was a middle aged man and he was not even wearing armor, only boiled leather. He was no more than a common man who had been forced to join this conflict.

“Rodwell, do you wish to fight against our dragons?” Daenerys asked calmly and he saw the man shake his head again.

“No your grace;”

“Then, bend the knee and join us. We are not here to burn down your homes, we are here to help you. We have plans to improve this realm, we will build schools for your children and several other projects which will benefit the realm. All children will have the opportunity to build a better life for themselves irrespective of their birth. We have the support of the Reach and we will be able to feed you all throughout this harsh winter. Please, don’t throw away your lives for a King that does not care for you,” Daenerys asked and Jon watched as Rodwell slowly fell to his knees after her speech, he could not have been prouder of her in that moment.
Slowly, the rest of the men fell to their knees in front of them until it was only Lord Royce and a few others on their feet. By the looks of them, these men looked highborn, perhaps they were part of Lord Royce’s family. If that was the case then, Jon knew they would follow him and copy what he did. It would be difficult to convince them.

“Lord Royce. Your men do not wish to fight for you. You cannot win, bend the knee and you will still keep your lands and your titles,” Jon said to him and he saw his grey eyes look at him curiously. Jon heard Vedros roar loudly and then he saw Anogar fly low over the castle. The loud beating of his wings sounded like thunder and he released a quick blast of jet black flame into an empty part of the courtyard. His flame was so hot that Jon had to raise his hand to shield his face from the heat. Anogar gave a screech and then took off again with a loud thunderous flap of his wings. What was once a grey stone slab had been completely reduced to a charred black mass by his fire.

Jon watched with a smirk as Lord Royce’s wide grey eyes stared at the scorched earth in front of him. His mouth was wide open in disbelief and he slowly shook his head from side to side. Vedros gave a roar that seemed to shake him out of his stupor because he then fell to his knees. Clearly, he had underestimated the power of their dragons.

“Thank you for making the right decision Lord Royce,” Jon said calmly. “Will you be able to rally the rest of the Vale Lords behind us?”

“Yes your grace,” he said quietly and Jon looked at Dany who nodded. At the council they had not shown off the strength of their dragons, perhaps they should have. Maybe a live demonstration was the best way to win these Lords to their side.

“Lord Corbray,” Dany called. “We would like you to mobilize your troops and meet us around Castle Darry,”

“I have already called the banners, we are ready to march,”

“Good. How long will it take you to reach Castle Darry?” Jon asked.

“A week,” he said and Jon nodded, that would be perfect, their forces should arrive around Castle Darry at that time, this was ideal.

“Good, see that it is done,” Jon said firmly.

“As you command your grace,” Lord Corbray said with a bow.

Jon turned towards Daenerys who gave him a nod and a smile before she looked up at the sky. Lord Royce was their main opposition in the Vale and it seemed that their dragons had cowered him into submission, now that the Vale was secured they could go back home.

The Dragon’s Hand
Tyrion Lannister was starting to grow used to boats, it seemed that he spent the majority of his time travelling on them. He travelled from Kings Landing to Pentos on a boat. He travelled all the way down the Rhoyne on that small pole boat before finally taking a long voyage back to Westeros. He had grown to appreciate being on the sea, and this ship in particular was one of the more comfortable ones in their fleet. He had a large desk to sit and read at, his window was a nice size and his bed was soft and comfortable.

Asha Greyjoy led the way aboard her longship, the Black Wind as they made their way through the arbor straights towards Old Town. They should arrive at Lannisport within the fortnight. The King and Queen had given them the support of their sellswords which brought their numbers to 5,000 in total, which should be more than enough to take his father’s castle. Tyrion and Jaime followed behind in another war galley, the Queen Rhaella. It was one of the warships that had been given to them by the Sealord of Braavos. It had 100 oars and two large black sails with the Targaryen sigil embroidered onto them. Asha had brought 15 longships with her and the King and Queen had spared another 5 warships of their own, the rest would remain behind. The majority of their fleet would stay and blockade Kings Landing whilst some would remain on Dragonstone to protect the island and ferry the Prince away if necessary.

Tyrion’s thoughts turned from the now toddling Prince Daeron to his niece and nephew. Tyrion was eager to see Tommen and Myrcella again. He had not seen the children since he had left and he wondered how they would have grown over the years. He wondered if they would still remember him. He knew that his sister would be there, she would still remember him and likely still hate him. Still, he was not worried about Cersei just yet. She would not be expecting this attack and by the time they took the castle it would be too late for her to send for help.

Tyrion smiled to himself as he imagined taking his father’s castle, the castle his father swore he would never have. It was his by rights. Tyrion had not specifically asked the King and Queen about this, but he was sure that after they had won the war, they would grant him Casterly Rock. Jaime was still a Kingsguard and Cersei was Cersei.

Although Tyrion was unsure about what he would do once he had Casterly Rock. As their Hand, he would naturally have to spend the majority of his time by their side in Kings Landing, he probably would not be able to spend a lot of time at the Rock. Perhaps, the best course of action would be to appoint a castellan, or better yet, he could have Tommen hold it for him.

As long as his status as a bastard did not get announced to the world, then Tyrion saw no good reason for him not to be able to hold Casterly Rock. He was part of the main Lannister line and the role will teach him responsibility. The King and Queen were already doing a similar thing with Shireen in the Stormlands.

As his thoughts turned to Shireen, he remembered the last conversation he had with the Queen about the girl. Tyrion could understand why she would object to using her in this way, but his approach was just pragmatic. It was something that he learned from his father.

His father was a cruel man, and Tyrion knew that in his mind, the ends always justifies the means. He was desperate enough to appeal to him directly for help at the council and this gave Tyrion confidence. His father had no real plan to deal with these dragons. In fact, knowing his father, he probably did not believe they existed until he saw them for himself. His father had a very unique ability to ignore the most obvious things. Like his family for example. Tyrion was sure that his father had no idea of the truth regarding Cersei’s children.

His father had tried to appeal to Tyrion by saying that they were still family and they should not go to
war with each other. Yet, he had been oblivious to the fact that it was his cruel actions that had sent Tyrion off on this path in the first place. If he had only treated him like a son, then he would not be in this situation. In fact, had he not brutally murdered Princess Elia and her children then he would not have to fear the dragon’s wrath.

Tyrion knew that he would never forgive him for what he had done to Tysha and even taking his prized Casterly Rock from him could not replace the pain that he still felt from Tysha’s loss.

Tyrion knew that his father would take his brother Ser Kevan with him to war, now that Jaime was gone, Kevan would become the person he trusted the most. Aside from Kevan, Tyrion knew that there would be a few of his uncles and cousins in Lannisport, likely Kevan’s children that would stay behind to guard Lannisport and Casterly Rock.

He decided to leave his cabin to head above the deck to look for his brother, Jaime would be better suited to making the battle plans. He found Jaime alone on the prow of the ship staring into the distance, his brother had been quiet on the journey and Tyrion knew it had to do with his sister.

“Cheer up brother,” he said quietly as he reached him. “We’ll see our sweet sister soon and then we’ll be able to put this mess behind us once and for all,”

Jaime was quiet for a few moments before he released a loud sigh.

“I haven’t been thinking of Cersei lately,”

“Then what’s on your mind? You’re never usually this quiet,” Tyrion asked and he was starting to grow concerned. If his brother was having second thoughts about this, he had to find out now and change their plans. He continued to look at Jaime who would not return his gaze.

“How well do you know the King?” he asked nervously after a few moments and Tyrion grew unsettled by his tone.

“I have worked with him for around a year now, I would say that I know him well,”

“Do you know his feelings about the Starks?” Jaime asked and Tyrion was truly unsettled now.

“He cares a lot for the children, he grew up with them after all. They are his siblings in everything but name and blood,” Tyrion began “I also think that deep down, he also cares for Lord Stark, he was a father to him for many years. I do not think he truly wishes to go to war against them,”

He saw Jaime nod slowly and continue to look out over the ocean.

“Why Jaime? Why do you want to know?” Tyrion probed and he saw his brother shift from foot to foot uncomfortably.

“What did you do Jaime?” he asked in a tired voice. He had a bad feeling about this.

“After Jon Arryn died, the King took the court to Winterfell to name Lord Stark as his Hand. I went along with Cersei and the children. Whilst we were there, Robert went out hunting with Lord Stark and some of the others and I stayed behind with Cersei. Cersei and I had the afternoon to ourselves so we hid away in some dusty broken tower,”

“And you got caught,” Tyrion interrupted and he shook his head. “So Lord Stark knows about your indiscretions? Although that does not make sense, if he caught the two of you he would have told Robert and Robert would have had you both killed,”
“Well if you’re quite finished interrupting me,” Jaime said with a pointed look and Tyrion raised up his hand apologetically. “We were caught, but by the boy, Bran. He climbed up the side of the tower and he saw us,”

“What did you do?” Tyrion asked

“Cersei saw him first and she screamed and pointed so I quickly pulled him in and asked him what he saw. I don’t think he understood what we were doing but I couldn’t take any chances. I pushed him out of the window,” and Jaime ducked his head in shame.

Tyrion was stunned, Bran was just a boy, likely of age with Tommen, and Jaime had nearly killed him.

“Why?” Tyrion whispered.

“I couldn’t take the chance that he would tell someone what he saw. Joffrey, Myrcella, Tommen, Cersei and I would all have been killed if he told someone. Father would have started a war over this. I did it for love, I loved her and I did it to protect our secret,”

Tyrion was stunned into silence. Whilst Jaime had a point, Robert likely would have killed them all and a war would have broken out, it still did not justify what he did, this was not a noble act. Even worse, it seemed like it was for nothing. Tyrion had heard that Bran was awake but he had not mentioned this incident at all.

“Jaime, why didn’t you tell the King? He grew up with Bran,”

“I did not know how he would have taken it! I was there at the council and I was going to tell him that day but the Queen said to save it for later. I saw the King at the council and he did not look like he was in a good mood so I decided to save it for a better time but it never came,”

Tyrion shook his head.

“Jaime, you need to tell him. He will find out eventually,”

“Will you tell him?” Jaime asked nervously and Tyrion shook his head, Jaime was family, and family was most important.

“No, I won’t tell him but I’m sure he’ll find out. The King and Queen sometimes have dragon dreams where they see events that have happened in the past,” Tyrion said and he quickly explained the concept to him. As he was talking, he remembered when the King had told him about that dream of the strange blond woman. Tyrion briefly wondered if the King had figured out what his dream had meant.

“So you think the King might find out about this in a dream?” Jaime asked in disbelief and Tyrion nodded.

“It’s possible but you need to tell him first. Jaime you said you wanted to change and do some good, in order to do that, you need to tell him the truth about this,” Tyrion said and he saw Jaime run his hair through his hands.

“I will, I will tell him when I next see him. You have my word,” Jaime said and Tyrion nodded. He walked away from Jaime and headed back to his room below deck. This was something he did not see coming and truthfully he was not sure how the King would handle it. Tyrion knew that he truly cared for his siblings that he grew up with in Winterfell.
If he found out that Jaime had intentionally tried to kill Bran, Tyrion did not know what punishment he would consider in return. Tyrion realised that it was a good thing that Jaime did not tell him after the council, the King had been in such a foul mood that he might have considered killing Jaime on the spot.

However in the past few weeks, his mood had mellowed and Tyrion hoped that he would choose a suitable, and more merciful method of dealing with this issue. Hopefully, the King would account for the fact that Jaime was confessing to his own crimes in the hope to repent.

Tyrion entered his cabin and reached for his bottle of arbor gold, he would have to do his best to manage this situation. Perhaps Tyrion was wrong to suggest that Jaime tell the truth. If Bran had remembered who pushed him, then surely he would have told someone by now. Perhaps, it would be best to leave this situation in the past.

Tyrion sighed in frustration as he took a sip of his wine, he would have to think long and hard on how best to handle this situation.

The She Wolf of Winterfell

Arya Stark was sore and tired. Her plan had gone well, she had snuck out into the Wolfswood and she was now on the tail of the army marching south. She had managed to fit in with a group of boys who were tending to the horses at the back of the march. They were older than the stable boys at Winterfell but no less silly. At first, they had made fun of her voice but Arya quickly showed them that she was able to handle herself. They walked together during the days and they camped together at night. Arya had to be careful not to get too close, if they found out she was a girl, her little deception would soon be over.

Arya worked hard to fit in, after the day’s march she would help them tend to the horses before she would sit around their campfire and share their food. Olyvar was the youngest of the group. He was short and squat with short curly black hair and brown almond shaped eyes, his voice was higher than Arya’s and the other boys made fun of him because of that.

Hullen was tall and lean, with short straight black hair and bright vibrant green eyes. Lastly, there was Karlon. Karlon was the oldest of the group and he had long black hair and he was a similar height to Hullen. Karlon was the only one of them who had come with a weapon. His axe was a cruel piece of iron that was far too heavy for Arya to lift. Karlon and Hullen were the best hunters and that meant that Arya and Olyvar were in charge of cooking whatever they caught. They had no tents, so they slept out in the open in their cloaks.

This evening, she had an entire leg of rabbit to herself, it was the first warm piece of food that she had in days. The meat was tough and definitely needed some spicing but she would not complain. As she sat around the cackling campfire, she listened to the boys speak.

“Do you reckon we’ll see a Dragon?” Olyvar asked somewhat nervously.

“Of course you idiot, that’s why we’re going south, to fight the dragons,” Hullen replied as he bit into a piece of his rabbit.
“I heard the Dragons are so big they can eat an entire horse whole,” Karlon said.

“I heard they could eat an entire auroch,” Hullen said with a small hint of a smile and Olyvar shook his head.

“If they are so big then why the fuck are we going South towards them?” Olyvar asked.

“I heard Lord Karstark wants to go to war against the dragons,” Karlon said as he licked the grease from his slender fingers before he threw his rabbit bone to the side.

“Aye, so did I,” Hullen said grimly “Bloody fool,"

“Careful Hullen, you never know who could be listening,” Karlon said as he took a drink from his skin before he passed it to Hullen.

“If we do go to war against the Dragons, what do we do? How do you even kill a dragon?” Olyvar asked and Arya could see how nervous he was.

“I dun no ,” Hullen said with a shrug. “But I won’t be sticking around to find out,”

“Craven,” Karlon muttered and Hullen laughed darkly.

“I’d rather be called a craven and live than be called brave and die,” Hullen told him but Karlon shook his head.

“Then why are you even here?”

“Don’t have a bloody choice, do I?” Hullen snapped. “When the Lords call their banners what choice do I really have?”

“It’s our job to fight for our Lord and if Lord Stark wants us to go South to fight that’s what we must do,” Karlon replied.

“What are we fighting for? Do you think I care who sits on the bloody Iron throne? Do you think whatever King wins this cares about me?” Hullen demanded and Arya saw his eyes shine brightly in anger.

Arya had never considered this before. It was not fair that people like Hullen had to go and fight in wars that they did not want to fight in. They were all young men, probably of a similar age to Robb or Jon. They probably all wanted to stay at home with their families and help to prepare for the winter.

But she knew that Jon would care about people like Hullen. That’s why he planned on building these schools, these plans would help them. She knew that Jon was good and she trusted him.

“What do you think Harry?” Olyvar asked quietly as he turned towards her. Arya took a deep breath and did her best to make her voice sound a little different.

“I think that Lord Stark would not force his men to go South just to die in a fight they would not win. I don’t think Lord Stark wants to go to war,” Arya said as she remembered what her father had said to her. He planned to bend the knee to Jon and when he did that, there would be no war.


“Because Lord Stark cares about his people. He’s not an idiot. King Aegon wants to build schools and improve the North and Lord Stark agrees with him. King Aegon is a King who cares,” Arya
said adamantly as she folded her arms across her chest but Hullen shook his head and laughed.

“You’re young, you don’t know how the world works,” he replied dismissively. “All these Kings and Lords are the same, they use us to get what they want and when they’re finished, they just leave us by the side to feed off the scraps.”

Arya felt her temper rise, how dare he judge Jon and her father like that when he didn’t even know them.

“Enough Hullen, you’ve had too much to drink tonight,” Karlon said quietly as he reached out to take away his drink. “You never know who could be listening,” he said as he gazed out into the surrounding woods. Arya stayed quiet and huddled tightly into her cloak. It was shaping up to be another cold night. She heard laughter coming from other parts of the camp but she knew that she had to stay here with this group.

She also wondered if Jon’s raven had arrived. It would have been over a week by now and Arya was sure that Jon would have gotten the raven by now and he would have replied. Arya realised that she would not hear what he said, her father would keep that news private. Still, Arya was confident that Jon would have mercy on her mother’s family. Her mother may have treated Jon poorly, but Jon was kind and she was sure that he would do the right thing.

She missed her mother, she had not seen her much lately and Arya was worried that she was unwell. However, Arya knew that she had to leave Winterfell in order to see Jon again, she did not want to wait behind.

Arya felt a wave of guilt pass over her, if her mother was unwell, then her running away without leaving a note would only make her feel worse. Hopefully Sansa, Bran and Rickon would help her through this difficult time. Whilst her parents and Robb were away at the council, Sansa was the Lady of Winterfell and she had helped Bran to run the castle. Arya knew that she would be capable of doing the same again if her mother was unwell.

During this time, her relationship with Sansa had improved and Arya was sure her father would be proud. Arya wondered what would happen if she got up and walked into his tent. Her hair was cut short and she was a lot dirtier than she had ever been but she was sure that he would recognize her. Would he send her back to Winterfell or would he let her stay with him. Arya decided to wait a few more days, the further away from Winterfell they were, the less likely he would be to send her home.

Arya stood up from the wooden log she was sitting on and then she went to stretch her legs. She walked towards the back of the camp and looked up at the sky. Her father was at the front of the march with Lord Reed or Manderly. Lord Bolton and his forces were at the rear of the camp and they brought up the rear. Arya had seen Lord Bolton on numerous occasions as she usually had to tend to his horse and help to set up his tent. She was sure that the Lord of the Dreadfort would not recognize her but she did not want to take any chances.

The sun was very low in the sky and it bathed the land in a soft orange glow. She would have to head back to the other boys before it became dark. She walked to a tree in the forest a bit away from camp and quickly made water, hopefully she would be able to get through the night without having to get up again.

She finished and then she made her way back towards the camp. As she walked back, she saw a rider approach a top a brown horse, his long black hair was bouncing as he rode. It was difficult to see him in the fading light but Arya could clearly see his pale blue eyes. He came from the North and
Arya was naturally curious as to what he wanted.

As she made her way towards him. She remembered what Syrio had thought her all those months ago. Quiet as a shadow she told herself as she slowly walked forward, careful not to make any noise.

The rider seemed to be waiting for someone in particular so Arya was able to slowly approach. She ducked behind logs and hid behind tents as she slowly made her way towards him. Light as a feather Syrio had said.

Suddenly, a man approached from the shadows. Arya looked closely and she saw that it was Lord Bolton. He wore a black cloak but she could tell that it was him, he had the same long gaunt face. They stood behind his tent and Arya had to make a choice. If she got closer, she might be discovered, and she would not be able to see what they were doing. But if she stayed here, she would be unable to hear what they were saying.

Arya was about to leave her cover when she saw the man reach into his pocket and pull out a folded piece of paper, maybe it was a raven scroll. Lord Bolton quickly took it and hid it beneath his robes. The man held out his hand expectantly and he was given a small pouch in return. She saw Lord Bolton quickly turn away whilst the man got atop his horse and then he rode further into the camp.

Arya was confused, what did he give Lord Bolton and who was he? She decided that the rider was not important, what was important was what Lord Bolton received. She decided to follow him.

She kept low and stuck to the shadows as she made her way quickly through the camp towards Lord Bolton’s tent. It was easy enough to find, he had the flayed man of House Bolton flying high above his tent. She stopped a few meters away from the entrance because he had guards outside his tent. They were Bolton men and Arya knew that she would not be able to get past them.

Arya sighed in frustration. She needed to see where he put that letter.

Then, Arya was struck with an idea. She looked around on the floor in the fading light and found a few rocks, they weren’t too big, but they would serve her purpose all the same. She collected her rocks and then she moved around to the side. She crouched down and hid in a gap in between two tents. The guards were to her left and Arya was half hidden by these tents.

She took the first rock and threw it at the guard.

She missed.

The rock had gone too far and it sailed harmlessly over his head. Arya cursed and then she adjusted her aim again. She took a deep breath and then threw the second rock and this one hit the first guard in the leg.

Arya immediately ducked behind her cover and then peered out to look at the guard. He was discussing something with his partner and then he was pointing at the rock by his feet. His friend just shook his head and laughed it off.

Arya picked up the next rock and then she threw it, slightly higher this time. This one hit the second guard on his shoulder and Arya heard him curse loudly. She saw both men abandon their post to search for the person who was throwing rocks at them.

She quickly moved backwards between the two tents and hid in the shadows, out of their sight. The men loudly walked past her hiding spot and then Arya quickly burst out and headed in the opposite direction. It was dark now and she silently approached the entrance to Lord Bolton’s tent. She knew she did not have much time.
She flattened herself into the cold muddy ground and then she slowly lifted the bottom of the tent flap. Arya looked inside and saw Lord Bolton over to the right with his back towards her. He had something in his hands and Arya was sure it was the letter he had received earlier. Arya was not sure what to do, it would be impossible to read the letter now and she could not stay here forever in case the guards returned.

Then, she saw Lord Bolton turn towards a candle, he picked up the candle and held the letter above the flame and Arya was powerless to stop the letter burning in front of her eyes.

She waited as long as she dared before she dropped the tent flap and hurried away. Arya was sure of it, that letter was now gone. But what could possibly be on it that Lord Bolton wanted to pay for and then burn?

Arya shook her head as she walked back towards her camp, she would have to follow Lord Bolton very closely in the next few weeks. He was hiding something, and Arya was determined to find out what it was.

Chapter End Notes

Thanks for all the love and support this story gets. The next chapter is called 'The Red Door' and it should be out 5th April.

As always, let me know what you think, comments are always appreciated

Thanks for reading
Sleepy
The Red Door

The Griffin

Jon Connington was dreaming. He dreamt of a warm summer's day in King's Landing many years ago. He was standing in one of the many courtyards of the Red Keep and the hot sun was bearing heavily down on him from above. He was breathing heavily, as he sparred with his Silver Prince.

Rhaegar had always been gifted at everything that he put his mind to and the art of combat was no exception. Rhaegar had been trained by several legendary knights of the Kingsguard including the great Ser Arthur Dayne and due to this invaluable experience and training, Rhaegar had become a very formidable opponent in battle.

They had been sparring with tourney swords, Jon would never risk harming his Silver Prince with real steel. Rhaegar stood opposite him. He had sweat dripping from his brow and his thin linen shirt stuck tightly to his well-defined muscular form. Rhaegar raised one hand to slowly push his long silver hair back out of his eyes. His eyes were an irresistible shade of purple and they were looking at him closely.

Suddenly, Rhaegar sprung forward and he thrust his blade upwards into his face. Jon instinctively took a quick step backwards to dodge the strike, Rhaegar was undeterred and he launched a quick flurry of attacks that forced Jon onto the defensive. Rhaegar had always been faster than him. Always. He quickly raised his sword to parry Rhaegar’s rapid attacks and then he spotted an opening. Rhaegar had stepped too far forward and that had left his right hand side exposed. He brought his sword up and to his left and aimed a quick strike at his rib section.

Jon brought his sword up but connected with nothing but thin air, Rhaegar had moved with the speed of the wind. Jon whipped his head around to see that Rhaegar had baited him and he had easily spun out of his attack and he was now nearly behind him. Rhaegar kicked out his leg and then swept his feet out from under him, and Jon landed flat on the back in the dirt, his face burning as bright as the sun with embarrassment.
Jon groaned loudly as he slowly sat up and looked at Rhaegar who was smirking at him. The sun was behind his head this meant that it was difficult to see his face, so Jon had to raise up one hand to shield his eyes from the bright light.

As his eyes adjusted, he saw that Rhaegar was gone and in his place was Ser Cortnay Penrose. His sword was still dripping red with blood and Jon could see the scars along his chest and the large ugly one on his face where the fatal blow had been struck.

Cortnay took a step towards him and then Jon noticed the sun had been covered with thick grey clouds. He shook his head as he squirmed backwards along the floor. He looked around for his sword but he saw that it had somehow slid away from him. Jon’s breath quickened as he looked up at Cortnay and he shook his head.

“No, you’re dead,” he thought to himself but Cortnay just shook his head and he gave him a smug smile. Jon felt his shoulders hit something and he turned around to see that he had reached the end of the courtyard and there was nowhere further to go.

He fearfully looked back at Cortnay and pleaded to him with his eyes. Cortnay’s eyes were grey like slate and they were cold and unforgiving. Jon watched as he slowly lifted his sword arm and then he brought his blade down towards his head.

Jon awoke with a start. His chest was heaving and he was sweating profusely. He looked around him and saw that he was in a dark and unfamiliar room and for a few moments he struggled to work out where he was. Then he remembered what had happened. Ser Cortnay had nearly killed him and he had been saved by Duck. Jon’s hand slowly went to his face and he found a thick bandage covering one side of his face. The bandage covered parts of his eye left eye and Jon shuddered to think what he would look like.

He quickly tried to sit up until but he realised that his head was absolutely throbbing with pain. That brief exertion had caused his head to start spinning and a brief wave of nausea passed over him and he laid his head back down to wait until it passed. He tried to call out for help but his throat was as dry as the Dornish desert and any sound that he made, came out in a quiet hoarse croak. He needed water.

His eyes roamed around the room slowly and he saw that he was in the chambers assigned to him in Storms End. This was good as it meant that they had won the battle and therefore the castle now belonged to them. If he was a prisoner then they would have just thrown him into the dungeons to rot.
On the bedside table, there was a goblet and what Jon hoped was a pitcher of water. He thought about sitting up to try and grab it but he decided that it was not worth sending the room spinning in circles just yet.

He laid in bed and thought about what had happened. They had snuck into the castle by pretending to be loyal to King Robert. They had shared bread and wine with the enemy and then he had slain them all, guest right be damned. It was necessary to sit the true King on the throne, the gods would understand.

His dream was just his consciousness playing tricks on him, nothing more. His mind had also given him a dream of Rhaegar, his wonderful Silver Prince. Somehow, Rhaegar had survived the Usurper’s attack and he was alive, in Westeros. He would finally see him again.

Jon remembered that day in the courtyard. It was a warm summer’s day and Jon had been squiring for Rhaegar for several years at that point, Griffin’s Roost had long been forgotten. Rhaegar had been a great knight and a fantastic swordsman. He had spent the entire morning sparring with the Kingsguard, showing those prestigious knights his skills. It was only at the end of the session that Jon had been given the chance to spar him, he knew he was not going to win, but he had been determined to give a good account of himself.

That dream had only been a part of their long spar. Rhaegar had remarkable stamina and he was still strong even that late into the fight when normal men would have tired and this had caught Jon by surprise. Rhaegar had baited him and he had lunged in like a fool and he ended up flat on his back. Rhaegar had looked down on him and smiled before he offered him his hand to help him to his feet. He didn’t brag or laud his victory over him, he was a true friend and a good man. Jon was about to suggest that they head back to the Red Keep to bathe and have their lunch together when a runner came.

This runner came with news from Dorne, news that Jon had grown to resent. Rhaegar had been summoned back to the throne room of the Red Keep. Jon remembered following him from afar as they made their way back to the castle. He remembered standing on the left hand side of the throne room as Aerys sat upon the Iron Throne and made the announcement.

Rhaegar Targaryen had been betrothed to Princess Elia Martell of Dorne.

Jon remembered the smiles and the applause and he forced himself to politely join in. His arms felt heavy and his smile was forced but he did his best. He had heard that Princess Elia was weak and sickly and he knew that she would not be good enough for his Silver Prince. He was proven right, the birth of Rhaenys had left her weak and then after the birth of the King, she had been unable to have any more children.
Jon’s thoughts turned to Arianne Martell. She and the King had been together for months yet she was still not with child. Perhaps, she too was unable to bear children. If Jon could prove that, then he would be able to persuade the King to set her and her foolish ways aside.

Jon felt the seeds of an idea taking root inside of his brain. He would have to be careful about how he went about this. They still needed the Dornish and their forces, if he showed his hand too early and without proof, he would be the one who would be thrown aside.

Then Jon realised they might have another problem, the Dornish would be angry if they found out Rhaegar was alive. He remembered Oberyn’s rage in Sunspear when he heard that Rhaegar had a son with Lyanna Stark, Rhaegar had dishonored Dorne with those actions. Jon shuddered to think of Oberyn’s reaction when he found out that Rhaegar was alive, perhaps he already knew.

As he thought about it more, he realised that it was highly likely that Oberyn and the Dornish already knew. Doran had his own network of spies and he would have heard about what had happened at the council. Jon groaned to himself and then he cursed Varys. Why had he left him in the dark about this, did he really not trust him? He trusted him enough with the true King of Westeros yet he would not tell him that the King’s father was alive? The Spider must be playing his games yet again.

Rhaegar being alive changed everything. He would be overjoyed to have his son and heir returned to him and he would reward Jon for keeping him safe for him throughout all of these years in exile. Perhaps, he should write to Rhaegar to tell him this, and to tell him that he too had survived.

Rhaegar would be overjoyed to see him alive, Jon knew that for certain. They had been close friends, best friends during their youth. Jon wondered how much he had changed over the years. Would his hair be longer, would it still be that same shade of silver that shimmered in the sunlight? Would he even remember him?

Jon removed that silly thought from his mind, of course his Silver Prince would remember him and he would be so happy to see him. Sure, he had let his hair grow long but he could simply cut it, there was nothing to worry about. As Jon thought about it more, he realised that he wanted to surprise Rhaegar with news of his survival in person. Jon felt giddy with excitement as he imagined Rhaegar’s face when he saw him. It would be one of the best days of his life.

He realised that he needed to get out of bed, he would not be able to meet his Silver Prince if he stayed in bed all day. He slowly sat up and thankfully, the room stayed still and his head didn’t spin. He ran his hands through the furs on his bed as waited for a few moments before he reached over to the bedside table and took the goblet of water.
The water was warm and tepid but he drank it nevertheless and slowly his dry throat returned to normal. After his thirst was quenched he heard his stomach rumble loudly. How long was he asleep for? Surely, it was no more than a day or so.

Jon then slowly swung his legs off the bed and rested them on the cool stone floor. He saw that his clothes had been folded and placed on top of his shoes and that his sword had been cleaned and was propped up on the side of his bedside table. Jon slowly dressed himself, ignored the rumbling of his stomach and then he made his way out of the room.

The hallway was dimly lit and it was colder than in his room. Jon did not want to move too quickly in case he felt dizzy again so he slowly shuffled down the hallway in the direction of the main hall. As he walked, he saw blood stains on the stone walls that had yet to be cleaned. Jon would have to have a word with the men about that.

He was halfway to the main hall when he heard someone call to him.

“You’re awake!” and he turned and saw that it was Duck who was walking towards him. As he approached Jon noticed that he had a few small cuts on bruises on his face and hands but apart from that, he looked no worse for wear. His ginger hair had been cut short and his beard had been neatly trimmed

“You look….better than you did a few nights ago,” he settled on as he looked at him up and down. “You took quite the hit to the head, we weren’t sure how long were you going to be asleep for,”

“How long?” Jon croaked, his voice still not his own

“Were you asleep? Four days, nearly five,” Duck replied with a shrug and this shocked Jon. Four days was too long, who knows how the King had been faring without him

“Where is the King?”

“In the castle, he arrived the morning we took the castle,” he said slowly and Jon looked at him curiously, he was holding something back. “The Dornish are here, specifically Prince Oberyn,”

Jon understood, he was being warned.
“You should see the Maester first and make sure it’s ok for you to be up and about,” he said cautiously but Jon just shook his head.

“I’m fine,” he croaked. “Take me to his grace,” he commanded and Duck slowly nodded. As he led him through the castle, more and more of the fight came back to him. He remembered charging up those stairs and then heading down that hallway.

“Where’s Renly?” he asked

“We have him. He’s in a cell,” Duck quickly said. This was good, Renly was a valuable hostage for them to have and he would be very useful in the next step of their plan. Duck led him towards the Eastern side of the castle where the Lords chambers were. They were the best rooms in the castle and it made sense that his King was staying there. There were several large hunting tapestries hanging along the walls of the hallways.

They finally reached a large ornate door wooden door with two huge brass handles. Duck opened the door and led Jon into the room. This room was a lavish solar with shelves stacked with books. There was a large thick myrish carpet along the floor, a polished wooden desk with a leather armchair sitting behind it. Jon looked around and saw several large sofas spread out around the room and they were nearly all currently occupied.

Prince Oberyn sat on one arm chair and opposite him the King and Queen, seated very close together. Jon’s eyes landed on his King and he saw that he had concern etched all over his face.

“Are you alright?” he immediately asked.

“I’ve been better but I’ll live,” Jon replied immediately and he moved to sit down on the free sofa. Before he sat, he poured himself another cup of water for him to sip slowly whilst they talked.

“You’ve been out for a few days, have you seen the Maester?” the King asked and Jon shook his head.

“I’ll see him after, if it pleases your grace,” he said politely.

“I think you should see him now,” Arianne said immediately and Jon scowled at her, she was trying
to get rid of him.

“No, I want him to stay,” the King said firmly and Arianne tore her eyes away from Jon to look at the King. She raised her eyebrow in surprise as she glared at him but to his surprise, and happiness, the King held her gaze. “He will stay my dear,”

Arianne continued to stare at him before she nodded slowly. She turned back towards Jon and shifted slightly, so she was no longer touching the King. She gave a quick nervous look towards Prince Oberyn which Jon caught but did not understand.

“Prince Oberyn, it’s nice of you to join us,” Jon said politely.

“Nice to see you too, Connington,” he said with a smirk “Although I can’t say you’re looking well,”

“It’s just a small cut,” Jon said with a shrug. “But unlike some, I am willing to risk my life to help King Aegon reclaim his rightful throne,” he said with a glare at Oberyn. Whilst he had been out fighting for his King, Oberyn and the rest of the Dornish forces had been nowhere to be seen. Had it not been for Arianne, Jon would have sworn that the Dornish were playing them.

“I’m willing to let that one go, your little head injury is affecting your judgment, ”

Jon opened his mouth to speak again but Oberyn raised a hand to silence him, which was rude.

“I didn’t come here to trade insults with the likes of you. I have news, news that changes everything,” Oberyn said and Jon nodded slowly, he had a feeling of what the Dornish Viper was going to say.

“I already know it,” Jon said and Oberyn looked at him in surprise but Jon ignored him and turned to his King. He took a deep breath before speaking.

“Your grace, your father is alive,” he said in a calm and gentle voice. Aegon’s eyes widened and then they filled with tears.

“How ? ” he whispered,
“I don’t know how he survived your grace, but I do know that he is alive. He was at the council and all the Lords of the realm have seen him,”

The King nodded slowly as he processed those words.

“Where is he?”

“He is with the false prince and Daenerys,” Jon said sadly and he saw the King’s eyes narrow slightly.

“Where is he?” he repeated and his voice got firmer again, it was the same tone that he used on Arianne.

“Likely on Dragonstone,” Oberyn answered.

“Then that is where I will go,” the King said immediately.

“Your grace, that is not wise,”

“Why is it not wise?” he hissed “That is my father. I am going to see him,”

“Your grace we need a plan, we can’t just sail into Dragonstone,” Jon said.

“Why not? He is my father and he will see me,” the King snapped.

“He is with the false prince and Daenerys, we need a plan. Tyrion Lannister is with them as well and he knows who you are and he has probably told them about your rightful claim for the throne. They might not accept you with open arms,” Jon pointed out and the King scowled.

“He is my father and this is nothing more than a petty dispute between brothers. My claim is superior to his and my father will force him to step down. In fact, my claim does not even matter, my father is eldest son of our family so he should rightfully sit the throne and I will be his heir,” he said
confidently and Jon nodded. This was wise and it was something that he had not considered. He was no longer Prince Rhaegar but King Rhaegar instead. Jon found that it sounded right.

“That may not be the case. They are styling themselves as King Aegon and Queen Daenerys, it seems that Prince Rhaegar has stepped aside for them,” Oberyn pointed out.

“What? Why would my father do that, that doesn’t make any sense,” the King said as he shook his head.

“Perhaps, Rhaegar is running away from his responsibilities again. He caused this entire mess when he disrespected our family and abandoned his wife and children all those years ago,” Oberyn spat venomously.

“Don’t you dare speak about my father like that,” the King snapped as he stared daggers into Oberyn. Jon watched helplessly as they stared at each other before Oberyn slowly bowed his head in apology.

“We will sail for Dragonstone,” the King repeated. “I will see my father and then we will end this petty dispute once and for all. I will name my half-brother as my heir until I have one with my wife,” the King said firmly.

Jon groaned to himself, he knew he would have to manipulate him to get what he wanted.

“I don’t think that idea is wise. They have bigger armies and they have dragons, if we sail to Dragonstone, we have nothing to offer them, we have nothing that they need,” Jon said slowly and the King turned to look at him. His dark purple eyes were startling and Jon did his best to maintain his gaze.

“It does not matter, we are family and our father will help to mediate this situation,” he said.

“Perhaps he will, but this will not go smoothly your grace,” Jon continued. “The boy and Daenerys have been thinking of themselves as the true King and Queen but that is not the case. If you sail to Dragonstone now and tell them that you are the rightful King they might not step aside and endorse your claim, they might imprison you on the island,” and this caused his purple eyes to narrow to slits.

“My father will not allow them to imprison me,” he repeated but Jon continued anyway.
“Your grace, if Prince Oberyn is correct, then it seems that your father is not the one in charge, the Pretender Prince is,” Aegon scowled and then he stood up and began to pace around the room.

“Perhaps, you are right. Yes, it would not be wise to sail to Dragonstone empty handed. I need to have something to negotiate with, I need to have something that they want,” he said quietly as he continued to pace.

“What do you think that would be?” he asked him and Jon shook his head. He didn’t have an answer. He sat quietly on his chair and he racked his brains for something significant that they could use to tip the scales in their favor.

“Do they have any enemies?” Jon asked Oberyn.

“Aside from the pig Baratheon?” he asked and Jon nodded. “My brother had spies at the council, he said that he had a big argument with Lord Stark. He also announced plans to remove the Tullys from their position as Lord Paramount of the Riverlands, he wants to strip them of their lands and titles,”

“The Pretender Prince or Rhaegar?” Jon asked.

“The bastard of that northern whore,” Oberyn spat and Jon nodded in thanks. He knew there would be no chance he could take the Golden Company North to capture Lord Stark and it was equally unlikely that he would be able to help him remove the Tullys in the Riverlands, this idea was not going to lead anywhere.

“Perhaps, we could offer them gold?” Duck said, Jon quickly turned to look at him, he forgot that he was even in the room.

“Are you paying?” Oberyn asked and Duck shook his head. “Then gold is not an option,”

They sat in silence for a few more minutes, Jon kept trying to think of a solution but he could not find one and to make matters worse, his head was starting to spin slightly.

“You men are so foolish,” Arianne said in a bored voice as she reached forward to take her cup of wine. “You need to have something that they want, but they currently don’t have. It is simple,”
“Then tell us smart girl, what is it?” Jon snapped he was not in the mood for her games. Arianne took a sip of her wine before she smirked at him.

“Kings Landing,” she said simply and Jon just stared at her, completely gob smacked.

This girl was crazy. So, so crazy but yet Jon knew that she was right. He started to nod his head slowly as he was enlightened by her idea. It was perfect, if they took the city, then Jon would be able to achieve his mission and sit Rhaegar’s son on the throne. It would be his proudest accomplishment and then he would finally be worthy for his Silver Prince. It was brilliant and Jon kicked himself for not thinking of it.

“I don’t understand,” Duck said slowly.

“If we take Kings Landing, then we control the Iron Throne. We can use this as our negotiating power. By taking the city, we show that we are strong and that his grace is the true King. Then, once the Targaryen banners once again fly above the city, we will be able to negotiate, we will offer them the chance to peacefully end this war and join us and to make the family whole once more. They want the Iron Throne and Kings Landing and they will not destroy the city with their dragons, they will have no choice but accept our peaceful solution ,” Jon said eagerly.

“Couldn’t they just siege the city?” Duck asked and Jon scoffed at that.

“And go to war against their own Kin? The common folk of Westeros would never forgive them and neither will the gods. Kinslaying is a vile sin,” Jon said as he felt himself getting carried away by his excitement.

“What about the Usurper?” the King asked and Jon’s smile faltered slightly. To take the city, they would have to defeat the Usurper. He might know that they were coming and he would be on the lookout for them.

Jon knew that he would defeat him in battle, he had to, and failure was not an option. Defeating the Usurper and taking Kings Landing was the final step in his redemption, the final thing standing between him and his Silver Prince.

“The fat pig has rode out into the Riverlands,” Oberyn said as he lazily pulled out a scroll from inside his clothes. “Here, read,” he said as he flicked the paper in Jon’s direction. It was a note from Varys, detailing exactly what Oberyn had just said.
“How old is this?” Jon asked immediately.

“A few weeks, possibly as old as month,” Oberyn said as he leaned back and Jon frowned slightly

Perhaps this information was outdated and the Stag had turned around and returned to the capital. Perhaps, he was even riding south to their location as they spoke. Jon was not afraid of him, if he tried to take back Storms End then he would be wasting his own time, this castle was built to withstand a siege.

“We need the Spider,” Jon said to the room and Oberyn nodded slowly. As much as Jon hated it, he knew that they were once again reliant on the Spider’s intelligence and spies.

“Send a message to him and tell him of our plan to ride for Kings Landing,” Jon said quickly.

“I am not your squire,” Oberyn returned but Jon just sighed in frustration and ignored him.

“Duck, you do it,”

“I’m not usually part of the plan making process, but you guys aren’t thinking this through. How do we even plan to take the city? What if you’re wrong and they use their dragons anyway?”

“The Spider will help us to get us into the city. I spent years squiring for Prince Rhaegar and in my time in King’s Landing, I learned that there are many secret passageways and tunnel systems that run through the Red Keep and the entire city itself. If there is one man who will know of these tunnels, it’s the Spider,” Jon said quickly. “And if all else fails, we have Renly Baratheon, the King’s Brother. No castellan will want to be the man who doesn’t open the city’s gate and risk getting the King's brother killed,”

Duck nodded slowly, Jon could tell that he was still not fully convinced but it seemed to placate him for now. “What about the Dragons?”

“Don’t worry about the Dragons, our friends in the Citadel are close and they have found what we are looking for,” Oberyn said and Jon saw a malicious twinkle in his dark snake like eyes. “Dorne has defeated the Dragons before and Dorne will do it again if necessary,”

“How?” Duck asked nervously
“His grace, King Robert Baratheon, Lord of Westeros and all his other useless and undeserved titles, has kindly gone through the trouble of preparing the city of Kings Landing for a dragon attack,” Oberyn said. “Varys tells us that there are huge scorpions lining the city walls. When we take the city, those scorpions will belong to us,”

“Is that it?”

“We also have a few additions and modifications in mind to make them more effective,” Oberyn said, “But I will share those with you at a later date. No need to confuse you just yet,”

“Duck, make sure that message is sent,” Jon commanded and then he quickly scurried out of the room.

“Why is the Usurper riding out of the city?” Aegon asked.

“The Spider says there is no food in the city to feed him or his armies. Lord Tully and the Riverlords have been withholding their food after the King exposed Lysa Arryn’s indiscretions in front of the entire realm. Then, the Reach has decided to ally with our friends on Dragonstone. Perhaps, the Usurper heard of the argument between the Tullys and he saw an opportunity to secure an alliance. Either way, he appears to be riding North, not South,”

Jon nodded slowly. The Reach would have been a valuable ally to have and now it appeared that they would have to deal with a food shortage when they took the capital. Once they landed in Westeros, Jon had hoped for an alliance between the King and House Tyrell but Arianne got there first, hopefully this would not come back to hurt them.

“What about Tywin Lannister?” Jon asked, he was no fool and he knew that Tywin Lannister was the real threat. The Usurper was a capable warrior and military man, but he did not possess that same cruel ruthlessness that belonged to Tywin Lannister. It was something that Jon himself had tried to emulate and it was the inspiration for his idea to take Storms End.

“Not a clue. Varys reported that he left before the King to ride West towards Casterly Rock. Queen Cersei and her two youngest children are at the Rock, whilst the eldest remains with his father,” Oberyn informed him. This was interesting, it appeared that Tywin and Robert were still allied together. Jon had guessed that Tywin Lannister had ridden West to collect his armies, they would have to move quickly before he returned.
“Your grace, taking King’s Landing is a chance for us to make a statement,” Jon said as he turned towards his King once again. “If we take this city, we show the world that we are a serious threat and you get a chance to impress your father. If you come to him with the Iron Throne already secured, you can show him that you are your own man and that you are strong, capable and worthy,”

Jon looked at his King as he turned towards him and he considered his words.

“Of course. If I sail to Dragonstone, I will look like a beggar but if I take King’s Landing and have the city waiting for them then I will look like a Conqueror.” he said quietly and Jon smiled.

“Get to work, I will take back my family’s city and I will show my father that he should be proud of me, his eldest son.”

The Winged Wolf

Bran Stark was flying. Ever since his fall, he had always been able to fly in his dreams. The crow had told him that every flight begins with a fall and he was right, the crow seemed to be right about a lot of things.

Bran was flying, he was flying so high that he could see the entire realm and everyone in it. He saw Winterfell, the tall towers looking squat and stubby from this height, the castle walls were just lines in the dirt. He saw his mother in the Wolfswood, on a brown horse desperately searching for her daughter. He flew south and saw his father’s host snaking its way down the Kings Road. He saw Arya in disguise working in the shadows, trying to discover the secrets of a man who held them close to his chest. He saw his father pacing back and forth in his tent, waiting for something that would never arrive.

Then he flew further south past the roaring blue green waters of the Trident to a small castle. He saw his brother hunched over a map on a table trying his best to plan his war. Then it changed and the images flickered and danced in front of him. Changing into stranger and seductive shapes. He saw great beasts appear and take off towards the south. Through curtains of fire great winged shadows wheeled against a dark stormy sky

Then Bran heard the crow caw, the crow was calling to him, telling him that his fight was not in the
south, it was in the North. He flew past the great wall of ice, past endless forests covered in snow until he saw a tree. A tree that sat on the banks of a frozen lake. It was a large weirwood tree, its bark the color of the snow and its leaves were dark ruby red in color. When it felt Bran watching it lifted its eyes from the frozen waters and stared at him knowingly.

“Come” the tree said and then Bran saw the crow. Circling high in the sky before it flew lower and settled in the tree.

“Come” the tree said and then Bran awoke.

He was in his room in Winterfell, there was a small fire crackling in the heath providing his room with warmth. Summer was curled up at the foot of his bed, and his yellow eyes were looking up at him. Bran put a hand to his head and rubbed a sore spot in between his eyes, it was the same spot that the crow had pecked him, and it still hurt after his dreams.

“Jojen,” he whispered at the boy who seemed to be asleep. He had come to Winterfell a few months ago. He said that he saw a winged wolf trapped to the Earth in chains and that it was his job to free him. Bran was not sure what he meant, but Jojen seemed to know things about his dreams and because of that, Bran trusted him.

“Jojen,” he whispered

“What,” he replied, his voice heavy with sleep.

“I saw the crow again. I know where he is,”

“Where,"

“Hundreds of miles from here to the North. North of the wall. I saw a weirwood tree by a frozen lake, that is where we need to go,"

Jojen’s deep green eyes stared into his for a few moments before he spoke again.

“Then that is where we will go,” he said calmly as he stood up.
“How will we get there? We can’t leave,” Bran said

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“Hodor will have to help carry you in the basket like he usually does. Meera and I will come with you on your journey,”

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“What do I tell my mother? She won’t let me leave, she’s already out there looking for Arya,”

“What do I tell my mother? She won’t let me leave, she’s already out there looking for Arya.”

“We will use that to our advantage,” Jojen said after a pause. “It is still early in the morning and if we hide in the crypts, then your mother will head out to look for you. Once her search parties have finished going North, then we will leave,”

“We will use that to our advantage,” Jojen said after a pause. “It is still early in the morning and if we hide in the crypts, then your mother will head out to look for you. Once her search parties have finished going North, then we will leave.”

“How will we know that?”

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“We won’t know that. You will know,” Jojen said calmly as he jabbed him in the forehead, right on that still sore spot. Bran swallowed nervously.

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“I’m not sure I’m ready,”

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“Bran you will have to be ready. You are a warg, the winged wolf and the crow sent us here to break your chains. You can do it,” he said quietly and Bran nodded. He needed to meet the crow, the crow would help him to fly. He loved his mother and he hated that he would be causing her more pain by leaving, but he knew that he had to see this crow. Jojen moved to the window and checked behind the shutter.

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“It is nearly sunrise, we should head to the crypts now before the rest of the castle awakens,” he said quickly.

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He left the room to summon Meera and Hodor. Meera’s long brown hair flowed over her shoulders and she was looking at him nervously. Bran quickly reassured her and then it was time to go. The Reeds help to hoist Bran into the wicker basket that sat on Hodor’s back and then they quietly made their way through the castle.

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They were just outside the First keep and opposite the entrance to the crypts when they were discovered.
“Where are you taking the little lord?” Bran heard a voice ask and he turned to see that it came from
the Wildling Osha.

“We’re heading down into the crypts,” Jojen answered truthfully.

“At this hour?” she asked suspiciously “I don’t believe you,”

“We’re telling the truth Osha,” Bran said to her but he could tell she didn’t believe him.

“Tell me what’s really going on here or I’ll scream and wake half the castle,”

Bran looked at Jojen who gave a sigh of frustration before he slowly nodded his head.

“We’re going there to hide,” Bran said to her.

“Why?”

“We need to go North,”

“Where?”

“Beyond the wall,” Bran said and he saw her shake her head fiercely.

“No, you don’t. There is nothing for you beyond the wall,”

“Osha you know what’s out there and Bran can help stop it,”

“Aye, I know what’s out there. Death is out there,” she whispered as she looked around the court yard. “The little Lord can’t help. Those Kings need to help, send for the Dragon King. I heard he’s your brother,”
“All the Kings in Westeros and their armies can’t stop what is out there. Only he can,” Jojen said cryptically.

“You don’t know that,” she said nervously with no conviction in her voice.

“I do. Osha, you are a wildling, you know that the Old Gods have power. Bran is a Stark and the blood of the first men flows through his veins. He has power that he needs to learn to wield, the world depends on this,” Jojen insisted and Bran saw Osha frown.

“You’re talking about skin changing aren’t you?” she asked nervously and Jojen nodded.

“Those are not the only powers he possesses, but he needs to head North to train. The world is depending on it,”

Osha turned to look at him and Bran looked into her deep brown eyes.

“What about you little Lord, do you want to go North?”

“Yes,” Bran said confidently. “I want to go, I want to learn,”

Osha considered this for a few moments before she spoke again.

“Then I will go with you but only to the wall, but no further. When I crossed the wall, I swore I would never return and I mean it,”

“Thank you Osha,” Bran said kindly.

“Don’t thank me yet, this crazy mission has only just begun,” she said with a shake of the head.
Daenerys was flying atop of Anogar as they made their ascent away from Dragonstone. The sun was slowly making its way across the morning sky and it was a cold, cloudless day. Their armies had landed on the mainland and they should reach Castle Darry today. Jon and Rhaegar had stayed overnight whilst she had returned to Dragonstone to see Daeron.

To her surprise and relief, Daeron had been relatively well behaved during her absence. Now that he was learning to walk, he liked to explore the castle more but her ladies had said that they had kept a watchful eye over him.

He had his name day a few days ago, they only had a small celebration for him as most of their time and effort went into the war. Still, they were all able to take a break even just for a few hours to celebrate this special day.

She hated leaving him behind on Dragonstone, but she knew that this was the safest place for him. They had left 2,000 Unsullied on the island and they controlled the Blackwater bay, it would not be possible for any assailants to sneak onto the island.

As if to reassure her, Anogar made a low rumbling noise, reminding her that he too would protect her son from any danger. She rubbed her gloved hands over his warm scales and settled in for the flight.

Dany peered over his Anogar’s right hand side and she looked at the land passing below them. The trip from Dragonstone to Castle Darry would not take long and they were already passing over the mainland. They flew quite high, Anogar was big enough now that his wings were able to put some of the smaller sized castles in Westeros completely in his shadow.

She had been tempted to fly further ahead to see if she could scout out any armies, either the Tyrell army or the Usurper’s, but Anogar started to descend so she decided against it. As they descended lower towards the castle, Dany could see the camps made by their Dothraki and Unsullied. The Dothraki camp was sprawled along the Western side of the castle, whilst the Unsullied camp had been neatly constructed on the southern side.

She was eager to meet the Darrys, she had fond memories of Ser Willem Darry who had protected both her and her brother Viserys during their early years in exile. He was a kind old man with soft wrinkled hands that reminded her of old leather. He used to read her stories at bedtimes and he always seemed to have a lemon cake on hand to cheer her up. They had been very young then and
Viserys had been kinder to her. They lived in Bravos, in the house with the red door. It was a simpler
time for her, it was a time before she truly understood who she was and the danger she was in.

When Ser Willem died of illness they were forced to leave that house and she was forced to grow up.
As they spent the next few years travelling from place to place, running from the Usurper’s hired
knives, Dany longed for the house with the red door. Then when Rhaegar found them, that longing
started to fade and when she met Jon it disappeared entirely. Still, she would be eternally grateful to
the Darrys for their loyalty and what Ser Willem did for her. She planned to make them their Lord
Paramount of the Riverlands after the war was won.

Castle Darry was a small castle, it had 2 large towers that were connected to the main central keep.
Dany was happy to see the Targaryen flag proudly atop of one tower. Anogar gave a roar to
announce his arrival and Dany heard two answering calls from his siblings. Anogar was too big to fit
inside the castle courtyard so she told him to land outside the castle near the main gates.

He landed gently and Dany stretched and began to climb out of her saddle. She stepped onto the wet
grass and she walked around to give her dragon a few pats on his snout and whisper her thanks.
Then, she turned and headed up towards the castle. She saw several men of the castle battlements
looking down on her.

“Khaleesi,” she heard a deep voice call and she turned to see Rakharo was making his way towards
her. He still spoke with a heavy accent but his common tongue had been getting better over the past
few months.

“Rakharo,” she said as he fell into stride next to her. “How are you this morning?”

“I am well Khaleesi. Khal tells us to send riders out to scout, so I will go now,” he said.

“Where is my husband?”

“Inside main hall,” he said and Dany nodded.

“Thank you Rakharo, ride safe,” she said and he nodded before he strode away towards the Dothraki
camp. She strode through the castle gates and entered the courtyard and she saw Jon waiting for her
on the other side. He wore a fur cloak over a simple grey and black doublet. She saw the hilt of his
sword that was strapped to his waist. He had tied his hair up behind his head. He had never styled his
hair like this before but Dany found that she liked it.
She walked over to him and gave him a brief kiss on the lips and settled for a hug. They were in a public place and she knew they could not be too affectionate. She settled in his embrace and inhaled his lovely homely smell.

“I missed you, and so did Daeron,” she said quietly once she reluctantly broke away.

“I’ve missed you both, how is he?”

“He is fine, he misses you a lot, I can tell,”

“I will see him soon, I promise,” he said sincerely.

“What has happened whilst I was away?” Dany asked as Jon led her into the castle.

“Nothing much, we arrived yesterday and we have set up our camps. The castle is not very big, so I’m afraid Missandei and Irri are sleeping together in a small room attached to ours. I have sent ravens out to the other Riverlords. Lords Mooton, Whent and Darry are here, we will collect the rest of the Riverlords as we march west,”

“Any word from Hoster Tully?” Dany asked, they had informed him of their plans to march in his lands to chase Robert Baratheon.

“Aye, he has replied to our raven. He has agreed to stay out of the conflict and we will meet with him after the war,”

“Does he know about our terms? We are still removing him of his position as Lord Paramount of the Riverlands. We will also meet him to discuss the reduction of some of his lands,”

“Yes he does, I made that clear in the letter that I wrote. Perhaps, he realises that we are still intent on punishing him and he has decided to take this more lenient offer. I’m more concerned about the North, they have not replied to my letter telling them of our new terms for the Tullys.”

“Really? Perhaps you should send another one,”
"I'll give it a few days, we are in no rush. As long as they have received it, it's fine," Jon said casually as he led her into the great hall. Four long trestle tables had been arranged into a broken square. In the middle there was a large painted map, it was not as good as the one they had at Dragonstone, but it was good enough. Atop the table there were several markers taking up various positions on the table, denoting the locations of various armies.

She saw her brother, Ser Barristan, Aggo and Grey Worm sitting on one side of the room. Ser Barristan wore his new armor. It was white steel with a three headed dragon emblazoned onto the chest piece, he had a white cape and he looked every bit like a true knight of their Kingsguard. As Dany thought about it more, she realised that she might think about changing the name. She and Jon both ruled as equals so the name Kingsguard did not quite fit. She would think of something better after their war was won.

On the opposite side of the room, she saw several Lords that she had not met before. As soon as she entered the room, they all rose to their feet.

"My Lords, this is my wife, Queen Daenerys of House Targaryen," Jon said as he introduced her.

"Your grace," they all replied in unison as they bowed their heads in greeting.

Jon took his seat at the head of the table and Dany sat to his right and then the war council began.

"Your grace, we have received reports that Robert Baratheon’s host is marching through the Riverlands, somewhere around the Stoney Sept," a man said.

"Thank you Lord Darry," Jon replied as he stood up and picked up a Stag pieced and moved it to the appropriate part of the map. "Do you know how many men he has with him?"

"No your grace, our reports do not have that much information," Lord Darry replied. He was a tall slim man of similar age to her brother, except that he had a thick bushy red beard and short cropped hair.

"It seems our plan is going better than we expected," Jon said quietly as he gazed at the map. "We had planned to draw him into the Riverlands but he appears to have come here anyway,"
“He will most likely be after food,” Rhaegar pointed out and Dany nodded.

“How many days ride is the Stoney Sept from where we are?” she asked.

“Probably a week’s ride, your grace,” another Lord said.

“Thank you Lord?”

“Lord Mooton your grace,” the man said and Dany gave him a warm smile.

“Perhaps, we should head towards him. Our Dothraki should be able to get there at least a day or two quicker,” Dany suggested.

“How old is that information, Lord Darry?” Jon asked.

“About a week or so,” he replied and she saw Jon frown.

“Then by the time the Dothraki arrive, he will be long gone. If we are going to use our Dothraki, then we need to have a better idea of where Robert’s armies are,”

“We could use our dragons to scout,” she suggested and Jon nodded.

“I had a similar idea but we will do that later,” Jon replied.

“Perhaps, he has headed West into the Westerlands to meet Tywin Lannister?” Lord Mooton suggested

“That is a pointless march,” Ser Barristan said immediately. “Marching is tiring and Robert has little food as it is. He won’t march his troops unless he has a target in sight,”

“So what do you think he wants?”
“Food most likely,” Rhaegar said and Ser Barristan nodded. “He is probably foraging food from the fields and towns towards the West of the Riverlands, he will take as much as he can carry.”

“We could cut him off,” Ser Barristan suggested as he moved back to the map. “We can have the Dothraki ride south along the banks of the Gods eye and then west towards the Goldroad.”

“Where in particular?” Jon curiously asked

“Right here,” Ser Barristan said as he indicated a spot to the southeast of the Stoney Sept. “Then once they are in position they slowly move up North through the Riverlands. Whilst we do this, the Unsullied and the other Riverlords will march west along the River road and then south and hopefully we should meet Robert somewhere in the middle of our two armies,”

The room was silent for a few moments and Dany thought that his plan was good, although it would need a few tweaks.

“I like it. We can also add the Tyrell army to this, they should be coming from the Southwest and we should be able to meet them at this bridge,” Jon said as he pointed to a spot on the map where the Gold road crossed over the Blackwater rush. “It is a bit further south than we would like, but your plan will still work,”

“Jon and I will ride South with the Dothraki,” Dany said and Jon nodded. The Dothraki would only follow them. “Rhaegar will head in the opposite direction, that way both of our armies will have Dragons,”

“Ser Loras sent a message saying that he and the Tyrell army have left Highgarden are now marching,” Jon told her. “If we wait here, then it will take them at least 3 weeks to reach us,”

“Three weeks?” Rhaegar asked in disbelief and then understanding passed over his face. “I forgot Lord Tyrell is leading the army. We will be lucky to see the Tyrell army at all if he’s setting the pace”

“The message says that he is leading the Vanguard as well,” Jon replied grimly.

“Aggo, ready the Dothraki, we will ride tomorrow morning. I will send a raven to Highgarden and hopefully they can send a rider to inform Lord Tyrell of this change of plans. Grey Worm, I want
you to ready the Unsullied. Father, I want you to rally the Riverlords in our name as you march west. The Knights of the Vale will catch up with you. ” Jon commanded and they all nodded.

“What about House Frey?” Dany asked as she looked at a small figure towards the North of the Riverlands.

“Lord Walder Frey has amassed 2,000 men but he will not march south until he meets you personally,” Rhaegar said and Dany sighed in frustration. The Twins were in the opposite direction to where she and Jon were headed.

“Don’t worry about him, I will deal with him myself,” Rhaegar told her.

“I thought he wanted to meet Jon and me?”

“He does, but he will have to make do with me. He only has 2,000 men, we don’t need him to win this war, but it is important to let him know that he can’t order you both around,” Rhaegar said firmly and she nodded in thanks.

“Ok, I think we’ve covered everything,” Jon said and he looked at everyone in the room.

“The Lannisters,” Ser Barristan gently reminded him. “Tywin Lannister has a considerable force at his disposal and we have no idea where he is,”

“Have none of the Riverlords spotted him crossing into the Riverlands?” Jon asked,

“No your grace. We have not received a raven,” answered Lord Darry.

“Perhaps Lord Mooton was right, maybe he and Robert Baratheon are meeting in the Riverlands somewhere,” Jon said as he picked up a Lion piece and he moved it across the table. “But we have no idea where exactly they are,”

“Perhaps he’s not in the Riverlands, perhaps he’s still at Casterly Rock,” Dany suggested.
"That could be even worse for us, Tyrion and our sellswords are headed there under the assumption that Tywin is not there. If he is, then they might be sailing into a trap," he said worriedly and Dany could see the concern etched on his face.

"Jon, don’t worry. Tyrion has a plan to take the Castle remember? He has Asha with him and Ser Jaime, if needs be, they can always abandon the mission and sail back to Dragonstone, we can take Casterly Rock at a later time," she said as she reached out to reassuringly squeeze his hand.

"You should send a raven to the Riverlords in the west near the Lannister border to be on the lookout for Lord Tywin. They can send all news back here and we will send a rider out to meet with your forces," Lord Darry suggested and Jon slowly nodded.

"That sounds like a good idea. The Queen and I will also head west later this afternoon to try and find him on the back of our dragons,"

"That may not be wise," Rhaegar said "There is a lot of ground to cover and you have no idea where Tywin Lannister is,"

"We will be fine. We have each other and we have used our dragons to track our enemies before in the past. We did it to Khal Drogo over a much longer distance ,"

"That may be true, but Khal Drogo was not expecting you and he did not have anything that could stop your dragons. Tywin Lannister will be expecting you and we know they have weapons that can hurt your dragons," Rhaegar said to her but she turned to Jon.

"Jon, I think that we should do this anyway. How can we ask thousands of people to risk their lives fighting for us in this war and then not do the same? ”

"I agree. If we do find him, we will remain at a safe height and not attack him, it is only a scouting mission," Jon said firmly and she saw Rhaegar reluctantly nod.

"Now, I really do believe that is everything and I want everyone to prepare themselves for their respective missions. Dany and I will depart this afternoon and we should return to the castle by nightfall," Jon rose to his feet and so did the following Lords.

"Lord Darry, a moment of your time please," Dany said as she stood up. “I would like a tour of this wonderful castle,”
“Of course your grace, it would be my honor,” he said as he rose to his feet. Dany let him lead her out of the hall and through the castle. He took her down a tall hallway and Dany was startled by what she saw.

Along the walls of the corridor, were woven tapestries of past Targaryen Kings. They were huge, over 10 foot long and Dany slowly walked over to feel the material.

“How many of these do you have?” she asked as she stepped in front of the first Tapestry.

“We have every Targaryen King who has ever sat the Iron throne your grace,” he said proudly. “Starting from King Aegon the first of his name all the way to your father, King Aerys,”

Dany looked down the hall and she saw that this was most likely true. The detail in these tapestries were astounding, they must have cost a fortune to make. She could see the flecks in Aegon’s light purple eyes and she could see the jewels in his sword, Blackfyre. Dany walked slowly down the hallway, studying the detail of each and every tapestry that hung along the walls.

“House Darry has always been loyal to House Targaryen,” he said. “Our house supported King Daeron II during the Blackfyre rebellions and we supported your house during Robert’s rebellion,”

“And House Targaryen is eternally grateful for your years of loyal service. It must have been difficult in these past few years when a false King sat on our throne,”

“It was, but now that House Targaryen has returned, House Darry is happy to serve once again,”

As Dany reached the portrait of King Daeron II, she remembered the Blackfyre boy who was pretending to be a member of her house. They had not accounted for him during their war plans, Jon and Rhaegar had insisted that his army was too small to do anything significant on its own. They were more concerned with Robert Baratheon and Tywin Lannister and whilst Dany knew that those men were the bigger threat, she did not like the fact that this boy was still unaccounted for.

When she stayed in Illyrio’s manse, he had given her a book that detailed every single Targaryen King and some of their more famous deeds. As Dany walked through this hallway, she recalled what she had learned about her ancestors. Illyrio had told her of a story surrounding the birth of King Daeron. He told her that there was a rumor that Daeron was not the son of King Aegon, but the son of his brother Aemon the Dragonknight which made him illegitimate.
Illyrio had said that if this rumor was true, then that would mean the entire Targaryen line from Daeron II onwards would be illegitimate and the true heirs of the throne would be the descendants of Daemon Blackfyre due to Aegon IV’s deathbed legitimization decree. Dany had immediately passed this off as a silly rumor made up by her family’s enemies, but now she realised that Illyrio had an ulterior motive. Still, this had happened decades ago and no one believed these rumors now.

“One day, the realm will see King Daeron III,” Dany said softly as she looked up at his tapestry. He was a clean shaven man and he wore an elaborate dragon crown on his head. Dany took a closer look and saw that it was the same as his father, Aegon IV.

“I am sure he will rule as wisely as his namesake,” Lord Darry said kindly. They continued along the hallway and Dany studied the illustrious line of Targaryen Kings. After Daeron came Aerys I, then Maekar, Aegon V was followed by Jaehaerys II and finally she saw her father. This portrait must have been made early during his reign, he lacked the long nails and untidy hair that Rhaegar said had plagued him during his later years. His dark indigo eyes were staring at her, the daughter he had never met. She wondered what he would think of her. She was cleaning up the mess that he had made, trying to restore her family’s throne, would he be proud? Apologetic? Dany was not sure.

She began to move and then she remembered that he was the last Targaryen King, there were no more portraits.

“Soon you will need to add two more,” she said quietly. “One for my Husband and myself,”

“I look forward to the day,” he said as he led her away from the corridor.

“Ser Jonothor Darry served in my father’s Kingsguard,” Dany said.

“He did your grace, he died at the Battle of the Trident when the royal forces were defeated,”

“He was a good man and a true knight. Ser Barristan and my brother speak fondly of him,”

“I know. We all had a drink and shared stories about my cousin last night,”

“I did not know him, but I did know his brother, Ser Willem. He was a good, kind man and he
protected both me and my brother during our early years in exile. He smuggled us out of Dragonstone and we lived together in a house in Braavos. I had my own room with a lemon tree outside of the window. He used to read me stories and treat me with lemon cakes when I was just a little girl. He called me little princess” she said quietly as she remembered the memory. She had cried when the house with the red door closed behind her forever.

They had reached the castle battlements and they were now overlooking the fields surrounding castle Darry.

“They were good men and I am proud to say that they were members of my house,”

“You should be. I wish to reward you for their service. Ser Jonothor and Ser Willem served our house until their dying breaths and in the case of Ser Willem, I would not be standing here without them. I am a woman who values loyalty, and I plan to reward your house for this,” Dany said as she turned to him and she saw his brown eyes had widened in surprise.

“Your grace, you are too kind. I don’t know what to say,”

“I plan to name you our new Lord Paramount of the Riverlands. You will hold these lands in our name and this position will stay with your family for eternity,”

“Your grace,” he said quietly.

“Please, Lord Raymun, take your time to think about it, you have some time until the war is won and we make this official,”

They were quiet for awhile and Dany looked out over the fields. From the position of the sun she could see that it was around midday. There were a few dark clouds towards the West and there was a gentle, but cold breeze blowing.

As she looked out over the fields, she saw the dragons appear.

“They are amazing creatures,” Lord Darry said as they passed overhead. They were so big that they put the entire castle in their shadows. “I would never have thought that I would see a dragon in my life and now I have three flying over my castle. Their flames must be a sight to behold,”
“It is. When they were young, they all breathed the same color flame but as they’ve grown their flame has changed color. Caraxes, the cream and gold releases a beautiful stream of pale gold flame. Vedros the dark green, releases a bright green flame that has yellow trails in it. Whilst Anogar the black Dragon releases black flame,”

“How old are they?”

“Nearly 2 years old I think,” Dany said after a moment. They would be around 9 months older than Daeron so 2 years was close enough.

“They have grown this much in two years?” he asked in disbelief “Do dragons stop growing?”

“No, I don’t think so,” Dany said as she watched Caraxes and Vedros circle and chase each other in the air.

“Is it true that you sailed through Valyria?” he asked and Dany gave him a small smile.

“Yes, it is. Have you seen my husband’s armor?” she asked and he nodded his head. “We found it in Valyria, it is the only full set of Valyrian steel armor in the world,”

“That’s incredible. What is it like?” he asked curiously.

“It’s a strange, magical place. Words can’t do it justice,”

“I can imagine,” he said quietly. They watched the dragons circle and play until suddenly Anogar flew lower until he landed on the ground in front of her. His red magma like eyes looked up at her and Dany immediately felt his concern. Something was wrong and her dragon could sense it.

“What is the matter?” she asked him. “Is it Daeron? Do we need to go home?”

“Daenerys,” she heard Jon shout as he came running up the stairs. “We need to go,”

“Dragonstone?” she asked quickly as she felt the bottom drop out of her stomach. She could not bear it if something happened to her little boy.
“No, the Tyrell’s are in trouble. We need to go help them,”

“What happened? Where are they?”

“Randyll Taryll has said that there are men burning, raping and raiding in the Reach, they are not using any banners and they leave each town almost as soon as they take it. He says that Lord Tyrell has ridden ahead with the Vanguard to chase these men,”

“Your grace, this could be Lord Tywin,” Lord Darry said grimly and Jon nodded.

“I believe so as well, we should go and check. Our plans do not change much. We will fly south ahead and our Dothraki will follow. Our blood riders will wait for us at the bridge that I specified earlier,”

Dany nodded slowly and she heard Anogar growl, her dragon was eager to get into action.

“Good. Then let’s go.”

Chapter End Notes

Next up is chapter 27 called 'The Mander'

I have no idea when it'll be out. Although it won't be next week like I usually do. I have two exams this month and as you can imagine, my priorities lie elsewhere. However, I will probably post chapter 27 sometime within the fortnight, most likely between the 17th and 19th of April. Then 28 will go up after my exams are finished, so after the 25th.

Let me know what you think of this chapter, did the maps help? I only really did them as a last minute addition type of thing and paint wasn't being friendly.

https://quartermaester.info/ That's the link to the map

Thanks for reading
Sleepy
Arya Stark was tired, cold and frustrated. They were somewhere south of Moot Cailin and she was still with the same group of boys. Her hair had started to grow long again so she was forced to cut it herself using the reflection of a pool of water to guide her. The march had been slow and it seemed that her father was in no particular rush to get south. Arya didn’t mind this, as she still had not figured out what Lord Bolton was up to.

She had been watching him from afar and she took nearly every opportunity that she had to get close to him. She brought him his horse in the mornings before the march and she did the same again in the evenings. However despite her best efforts, she could not discover what he was hiding, he made no reference to that piece of paper and he acted as if he never received it in the first place itself.

Arya did not even know what information was on the stupid letter that he had burned. It just not make sense. She sat around the fire with the other squires as they ate their meagre supper. Arya did not know what she was eating as it was bland and tasteless. She was just happy that it was warm.

She heard a wolf howl somewhere in the forests near their camp, and for some reason the noise made her feel more hopeful. Hullen and Karlon were telling each other vulgar tales that Arya was sure that she or any other girl for that matter was not supposed to hear. Sansa would have turned bright red with embarrassment if she was here.

Arya missed her older sister, more than she expected. She missed the little arguments that they used to get into that were over things so silly that would soon forget what they were even about. She had even began to notice the little things that Sansa would notice if she were here. Despite everyone here being part of the same army, she could tell the difference among the men that came from different regions of the North. All the men had different shields representing the houses where they came from. Stark men wore softer shades of blue and grey whereas the Bolton men would wear darker colors, this was one of the things she had observed during her otherwise fruitless spying sessions.
She missed all of her siblings that were back home in Winterfell. She missed Bran with his soft voice and she missed playing games with Rickon. She saw Robb today as he made his way through the camp. He had allowed his beard to grow and he looked older than he was. Arya was sure that he would recognize her so she quickly hid from him. She hardly ever saw her father though, he was always leading from the front of the march.

Now that they were further south, Arya had considered revealing herself to him, but she needed to find out what Lord Bolton was doing first. Her father would not believe her if she told him that she caught Lord Bolton burning a letter, especially when she didn’t even know what was on it!

Arya beat the ground with her stick in frustration and she heard another howl from a wolf. Arya looked in the direction of the noise but she did not see the animal. She had heard stories about a pack of wolves somewhere in the forests near to them and this pack of wolves had stopped them venturing too far for their food.

Arya pushed the thoughts of the wolves from her mind and instead tried to focus on her mission. She had considered of trying to impress Lord Bolton with her fighting skills in the hope that he would allow her to act as his cupbearer or his squire, but she had not thought of a good way to go about it without it looking suspicious.

She watched as Hullen picked up his spear and began to use it to help him narrate his story. It was clearly very funny because Olyvar and Karlon were holding onto the sides and howling with laughter. She decided that she was wasting her time sitting here and listening to their stupid story, her time was better spent trying to find what Lord Bolton was up to.

She stood up and slowly slipped away from the boys and their stories. The sun still had not set so she knew she would not be able to get too close to Lord Bolton but she had to try. Arya walked carefully through her camp until she found her familiar spot behind Roose Bolton’s tent. She sat on her haunches behind a bush as she peered at his tent. Arya had learned that after his tent had been set up, Lord Bolton would only leave once for the night. He would usually go for a walk through the camp to check on his men, before retiring for the rest of the night.

Arya waited for a few minutes before she saw Lord Bolton leave his tent and begin his evening walk. She kept a safe distance behind him. She was constantly on her toes, ready to throw herself into the shadows if necessary. However, Roose Bolton did not turn around, he walked at a leisurely pace until he reached a group of men seated on logs around a fire. Arya took a quick look at them and she saw the badge of the flayed man on their chests. She also took a look at their weapons, she saw a few swords, but she saw mostly crossbows and bows.

One man in particular rose to his feet. He had a long narrow face and thick coarse black hair on his head and face. He had dark brown eyes, the color of mud. He stood up when he saw Lord Bolton
approach and Arya saw that he was very tall, probably over 6 and a half foot. They spoke briefly before the man led Lord Bolton away, further into the trees.

Arya waiting a few beats, before she took off after them. They walked in between the lines of tents and out into the surrounding woods. Once they slipped past the tree line the sounds of the camp immediately faded away and it was replaced by the foreboding silence of the forest.

Arya had to move as quietly as she could, taking care not to step onto any twigs or broken branches that would crack and alert them of her presence. This meant that she was moving slowly, and Lord Bolton nearly got away. They had stopped underneath a huge oak tree and Arya saw the man get down on his knees. He began to dig through the mud for a few moments before he pulled out a large heavy parcel. He unwrapped it and showed it to Lord Bolton. Arya was not sure what it was, but it looked like a large heavy cloak. Arya was not sure what color it was, maybe it was blue like a Stark cloak, maybe it was black like a Bolton one. She took a step closer but she stepped on a stray branch that she had not seen.

The sound of the wood splintering was as loud as a crack of thunder.

Arya watched as both Lord Bolton and the man stopped before they immediately turned around to look in her direction. She immediately sunk down low and hoped that she would not be seen. The seconds seemed to stretch into hours as Arya waited with baited breath. The muscles in her legs started to burn with pain but she knew that she could not move.

“Probably just an animal,” she heard the man say loudly but nervously. Lord Bolton however did not look convinced, several times his pale grey eyes passed over the exact spot that Arya was hiding in. After what felt like several years, Lord Bolton finally turned back to the tree. Arya let out a quiet sigh of relief and moved to stand up.

Then suddenly, Arya was yanked up by the scruff of her neck.

“What the fuck are you doing out here,” she heard a rough voice ask. Her captor spun her around so she was able to see his face. He was a bald man with a long ugly scar running along the side of his face. He had a thick ginger beard and Arya looked down to see he had the flayed man of House Bolton displayed on his chest.

“I asked you a question, boy. The fuck are you doing here?” he spat but Arya was too afraid to answer. The man carried her forward.
“My Lord, I have found a spy,” he said as he easily flung her into the dirt in the middle of the clearing. She scraped her knee against a stone and she knew that she would be bleeding. She turned to look up at Lord Bolton who was staring down at her with his cold unforgiving eyes. Did he recognize her?

“What were you doing out here boy?” he asked softly.

“I went to take a piss,” she said nervously as her heart hammered within her chest.

“That is a lie,” he replied as he stepped towards her. “Tell me the truth and I will let you live,” and Arya saw the first man reach for his dagger, it was a long and ugly blade.

“I followed you,”

“Why?”

“Marching is boring so I went out here to explore in the woods and then I saw you walking somewhere. I was curious,”

“What did you see?” he asked but Arya did not answer. Lord Bolton looked at her before he slowly held out his palm and the man put his blade in it. “Tell me, what did you see?”

“You are hiding something in it. I think it was a cloak,” she said and she saw something flicker in his eyes for a moment. Was it anger?

“It is a cloak. Do you know whose cloak it is?” he asked but Arya shook her head. He cocked his head slightly to the side as he looked at her before he returned the knife.

“You might be telling the truth, but I cannot take that chance. You have seen too much,” he said quietly. “Kill him and dump the body far in the woods for the wolves,”

Arya’s heart hammered in her chest as Lord Bolton walked away back to the camp. She had Needle with her but she knew that she would not be able to defeat these two huge men. They were too big and too strong. She slowly squirmed backwards along the ground until her back hit the tree.
The two Bolton men seemed to be getting some sort of sadistic satisfaction as they slowly made their way towards her, reveling in this act.

“Please, don’t kill me,” Arya pleaded as she slowly stood up. “Take me to my father, he’ll make you rich, he’ll make both of you rich. He’ll give you anything you want, please,”

“Your father will give us nothing,” the first man said with a dark laugh. “He’s probably back in the camp, drunk off ale and looking to bed a camp whore,”

“My father is Eddard Stark of Winterfell,” she said quickly as the men got closer and closer. “I’m Arya Stark,” and this caused the first man to laugh loudly.

“If you’re Arya Stark then I’m Aegon fucking Targaryen,”

“Wait. I think she is a girl,” the second man said and Arya looked at him hopefully. Then that hope vanished as she saw the evil glint in his eyes.

“I like little girls,” he said quietly. Arya swallowed nervously as the ugly man dropped his knife and slowly step towards her. She heard a lone wolf howl loudly somewhere in the distance. The wolf sounded closer now, and her captor seemed to realize that as well.

He hesitated for a second and then Arya turned on her heels and ran.

She sprinted as fast as she could through the bushes and trees. She felt her skin getting cut by branches but she did not stop. She heard her pursuers loudly trample through the trees and the undergrowth. Arya was quicker than them but she knew that she would tire first. She would have to conserve her energy. They were behind her and to her left so Arya quickly ran to the right.

This was a mistake because the ground quickly started to slope upwards and Arya felt herself beginning to tire. She slowed down and then she hid behind a tree to try and catch her breath. Her breathing was loud and heavy but Arya didn’t care, she needed to get her breath back so she could run again.

After a few moments, her breathing began to quieten down and the sounds of the forest returned to her. It was quiet, which hopefully meant that she had lost the men who were chasing her. She peered around the right hand side of the tree back in the direction that she came from and thankfully, she
could not see them. Perhaps, they had lost her trail in the fading light. However, Arya realised that by running this quickly, she had left a trail of broken branches and bushes for the men to follow. She would have to move quickly and more carefully this time.

Just as she was about to move, she heard the men again. She froze in place and listened to them loudly break branches as they searched for her.

“Come here pretty girl,” she heard the man say “I like it when they run. I like the chase, it makes it better for me. It gets the blood flowing.”

Arya was silent, she knew where the men were but as long as she did not move, they would not be able to hear or find her. The men continued to move and now they were starting to be quieter, less branches broke and Arya began to feel incredibly nervous again. She considered moving from this spot, but she did not want to risk it.

Then she heard another branch crack, and then another one, and then another and each one sounded louder than the last.

“There you are!” and Arya turned and saw the ugly bald man bearing down on her. Her hand reached for Needle but then the man froze. His eyes settled on something behind her and Arya saw the color drain from his face.

“Wolves!” he cried and then he turned and ran. Arya turned to look behind her and then she saw them. An entire pack of wolves had surrounded them. Some had thick black fur, some had silver fur as pale as the moonlight. They all slowly walked towards her and bared their long, sharp fangs.

Arya’s throat went dry as the wolves surrounded her. She knew that she could not out run them, not in this terrain. Somewhere in the distance, she heard a loud anguished cry followed by several howls. She wondered if the man chasing her had been caught by the pack, she hoped he had.

The wolves advanced and they started to growl, the low rumbling noise resonated all the way through to her bones. She closed her eyes as they got closer, so close she could feel the heat from their breath.

Then she heard another howl, this one was the loudest of them all and somehow it felt familiar to her. She heard loud heavy breathing in front of her and she slowly opened her eyes
In front of her was the largest wolf of the pack, she had thick grey fur and unmistakable dark golden eyes. Arya let out a choked sob as she reached her hand out for the wolf to smell.

“Nymeria,” she whispered softly and her direwolf gave her a long loving lick.

The Old Lion

Tywin Lannister sat atop his white destrier on the top of a hill. It was a chilly but cloudless day and his army was waking up and getting ready to march in the valley below him. His brother Kevan, was alongside him. He was in the Reach, somewhere to the west of the Mander and a comfortable distance North of the Roseroad. He had split his army into several smaller parts. One part followed Gregor Clegane and Armory Lorch, he had sent them ahead to do whatever they wanted in the Reach, as long as they did so without flying any banners.

As far as he knew, they had already raided Longtable and Bitterbridge and they should be heading North to Tumbletown. This was part of his plan. Mace Tyrell would not ride North leaving the Reach whilst his lands were under attack, he would have to try and deal with Clegane first.

Mace had done everything that he had hoped for. His scouts had reported that he had separated his host and his Vanguard was racing forward along the Roseroad to try and chase Clegane. He was already two days ride away from the main Tyrell host and this meant that Tywin would be able to get between them and quickly smash his army. That was the plan for today.

Tywin sighed in frustration, if he had it his way, he would have stayed in Casterly Rock and prepared himself for a long drawn out siege where the dragons would not be a factor. He would have defeated the Targaryens in his own way, just like he had all those years ago. He had been building scorpions of his own and the fact that his castle was carved in the side of a mountain meant that it was naturally protected from Dragonflame.

But he couldn’t do that because of Cersei, his only remaining loyal child, had made a mistake due to her stupidity.

She had left the capital without her son, Joffrey. As long as Robert had him, he had leverage on him. Tywin hated that. He hated the feeling of being forced to do something that he did not want to. Had Cersei done the sensible thing and left the capital with all of her children, then he would have been
able to conduct this war in his own manner, instead of listening and trying to work with Robert Baratheon.

His children had all failed him. Tyrion had always been a drunken fool, but it appeared that he had sobered up enough to land in the lap of someone who wielded power. Tywin knew that he had some intelligence, but he would never amount to anything. He knew that from the day that Tyrion was born. Tyrion had been shocked to find out that Tyrion had defected and joined his enemies but that was not entirely surprising. He was a dwarf, sent from the gods to punish him.

The child that he did not understand was Jaime.

Jaime was his son and heir. He had killed the Mad King and yet he had gone over to the side of the Targaryens. It did not make sense. What had gotten into him? Tywin blamed Robert, years of serving that fat drunken oaf must have caused Jaime to grow disillusioned with the crown, but even still, he was his son and he was a Lannister. He of all people should understand the meaning of family. Tywin should have worked harder to take him back to Casterly Rock so he could take his place as his heir. He should have found a way to free of him of that white cloak and get him dressed in crimson once again.

“Sound the horns and get the men up. I want them marching within the hour,” Tywin barked and Stafford hurried off to complete his order. Tywin sat atop the hill tightly gripping his reins and watched as his men quickly and efficiently took apart their camp and got ready to march. Every so often, he would glance up at the sky but he saw nothing that would concern him.

He had 20,000 men in his army, half of which were mounted and another 5,000 were archers. He had left half of his host back in Lannisport and another small amount back at Casterly Rock to hold the castle in his absence, he would not suffer the embarrassment of losing his own castle.

He continued to anxiously look up at the sky as he waited for the men to get ready, it was taking too long and he was feeling nervous. He took his left hand of his reigns and it went to his sword. He hadn’t had gotten his hands bloody in years, hopefully today would not be that day.

“Sound the warhorns again. We need to get going,” Tywin urged Kevan but his brother didn’t move.

“Do you hear that?” Kevan asked quietly as he turned his head to the side

“What?” Tywin snapped and Kevan held up his hand to silence him. Tywin would not normally take
this level of disrespect but then he heard it.

He heard a faint rumbling noise that was gradually getting louder, like a band of musicians warming up their instruments. Again, his horse began to shift and whine beneath him. The noise came from the North, this confused him and it was very unsettling.

“Sound the horn. We need to leave,” Tywin urged.

“It’s too late,” Kevan said as he raised one trembling bony finger to point over towards the North. “They’re here,”

Tywin looked out in the direction that his brother was pointing in and then he saw them. A line of black dots slowly cresting a hill and making their way towards them. How on earth had they gotten past his scouts? Tywin did not know the answer but he could not worry about that now. He had to plan their defense. They still had time, no more than a handful of minutes but it would have to be enough.

“Dothraki!” Kevan shouted and Tywin nodded as he watched the horde gallop towards them. Tywin shook his head and got himself focused, he could handle the Dothraki, he was Tywin Lannister, Lord of Casterly Rock and Warden of the West.

“Archers on me!” he shouted. He would have to use the terrain to his advantage. “Spears and shields!”

Tywin watched as his men quickly spread out and followed his orders. He knew that they could not outrun the Dothraki, they were too fast and they were a pure calvary force whilst his force was split between mounted knights and foot soldiers. It was now impossible to retreat.

Instead, he had to stand and fight. He would have to use the natural landscape to his advantage. He was currently on the crest of a hill with the Dothraki charging into the valley below him. He would put his line of spears and shields at the front in a defensive crescent, with spearmen and axemen behind. His archers would remain at the top of the hill to maintain the high ground and hopefully they would have free reign to release volleys of arrows onto their enemies.

“Kevan!” Tywin shouted, he had to shout. The sound of the Dothraki calvary was growing louder and louder. The ground was beginning to shake as they approached “You will lead the heavy horse!”
“Where?” his brother asked.

“We need them to counter attack. Once the first wave hits ours. Lead our knights into their flank!” Tywin ordered. This was the best plan, he knew that they could not sit in this defensive formation forever, the Tyrell host was in the area. He did not want to be in a long drawn out battle today, they would need to defeat the Dothraki today so that they could escape.

“If I lead the horse out then we will be exposed to our own arrows!” Kevan shouted in return but Tywin did not care. His men had sworn to serve House Lannister and if they had to die to do it then they had to die.

He looked back at the Dothraki. They were closer now, he could begin see the sunlight bouncing off their steel weapons. The loud rhythmic drumming sound of the horse hooves was beginning to fill his ears.

They were getting closer. Much closer.

“Do it!” he shouted and Kevan galloped away to complete his orders. Tywin knew that he might have just sent his brother to his death but he had no choice. Tywin then turned to look at his men beneath him, they were all in the defensive crescent that he had ordered. This was good. Then he heard a faint whistling sound in the air which could only be arrows.

Were they firing arrows from horseback? Tywin quickly realised that they were. How was that even possible? No Westerosi archer could do that and certainly not from this distance. He saw two of his men fall to the floor in front of him, clutching arrows in their thighs.

He swallowed nervously, shook his head and then rode further up the hill to get a better view of the battle. The hill was not too steep, but it was steep enough to at least slow down the Dothraki calvary.

He took another look at the Dothraki. They would be upon them in a few minutes and the noise they brought with them was nearly at a crescendo.

“Spears out!” he heard someone call. Perhaps it was Stafford, it didn’t matter. A strange wave of satisfaction passed over him as he saw them lower their spears in unison, like the well drilled unit that they were. He could imagine them poking out like thorns from a bush. He swallowed nervously as he watched the Dothraki get ever closer.
“Archers knock!” Tywin screamed and he saw his archers all reach for their arrows and draw for their bows. He looked at the Dothraki, soon they would be in the range of his archers. He opened his mouth to issue the call to let loose their arrows but his words were lost on his lips as he was suddenly plunged into shade.

Tywin quickly looked up into the sky and he saw that the sun had been blocked by the black dragon. Its large monstrous form had cast the entire hillside into shade. Tywin felt his throat go dry as a desert. Then, he heard the roar.

There were two roars, too loud bloodcurdling roars that caused his horse to buck uncontrollably, he was thrown off the horse into the air and he landed flat on his back in the soft earth. He looked up in the sky again and he saw the other two dragons. The green one was flying low and fast above the Dothraki horde and heading straight for his line of spears.

He had seen the dragons at Harrenhal, but they were not like this. Seeing them as they flew was one thing, but seeing them in complete anger was another. It was the first time in Tywin Lannister’s life that he had felt truly afraid.

Then, he heard the screaming.

Urged on by the sight of the dragons, the Dothraki had started to scream and the shrill noise was loud enough to cause a cold sweat to break out on his forehead.

The green dragon surged upwards and then Tywin saw its great wide jaws open and a barrage of bright green flame came tumbling out onto his men. Tywin lifted his hands to shield his eyes from the light and heat and then he heard the thunderous thumping of the dragon’s wings as it flew overhead.

He heard the anguished screams and cries of his men and Tywin knew they were being burned alive. He sat up and looked down the hill. His once uniformed defensive crescent was starting to become fragmented. There were gaps forming in the shield line as men dropped to the floor and succumbed to their burns.

Worse still, the Dothraki horde was just about to make contact with the rest of his men.

Tywin heard a sickening crunching of bones breaking and the sad high pitched wines of the horses
dying as the two lines met each other. Tywin felt a brief wave of relief pass over him as his line held firm as it withstood they first wave of attack. Then, that relief was drowned out by a loud screech.

He turned towards the noise and then his blood ran cold. He had spread his line too thin. The Dothraki had charged at his center whilst they had ignored his flanks. His men on the left hand side had remained untouched whilst those on the right were about to come under attack from the third dragon.

The cream and gold dragon darted down from the sky in a steep spiraling dive and it released a long golden tongue of flame that lapped away at his men, burning them alive in front of his eyes.

Long plumes of smoke trailed high into the sky as the dragons set fire to the dry fields. This battle would not last much longer at this rate, those dragons were too big and too powerful and they were reigning freely in the skies. They had to do something, they needed their scorpions.

Tywin pulled himself to his feet and he staggered blindly through the smoke up the hill towards the scorpions. He started to cough and his eyes began to burn due to the acrid smelling smoke. The smoke was so thick, that even if he stretched out his hand he was unable to see the tips of his fingers. His eyes were useless, so he had to rely on his other senses.

His ears heard another roar from the dragons followed by more screaming and Tywin could not tell who was killing who anymore. He heard the sound of hooves somewhere close to his left in the smoke. Tywin did not know if it was a friend or foe so he quickly fell to his knees. He felt the loose dirt beneath his fingers and he began to crawl through the dirt like a dog.

The battle raged around him, he heard the dragons roaring and men dying. The pained screams of men as they were burned alive was a noise that would haunt him until his final days. Some men cried for their mothers, some cried for loved ones, others just screamed.

At that moment, he thought of Aerys, his former friend and the King who he had betrayed. The Mad King loved to burn his enemies with wildfire, the sight of this battle would surely bring a sadistic smile upon the dead king’s face.

Tywin knew that he had to get to the scorpion, if he did not then all would be lost. He coughed and sputtered as he blindly made his way through the smoke, each breath was more difficult than the last. His hands landed on something warm and bloody, he raised it up close to his face and then quickly threw it away. It was a hacked off body part and Tywin had no idea who it belonged to.

He knew that the scorpion was near the top of the hill, he just had to reach it. A dragon screeched
and roared as it flew overhead and the draft from its wings briefly blew some of the smoke away. Tywin saw the scorpion ahead of him, sitting unused primed and ready for action. He felt hopeful and began to quickly scurry towards it.

Then, he heard a loud roar and saw the scorpion bathed in a torrent of jet black flame. Tywin was forced to watch helplessly from his knees as it burned right in front of his eyes. The heat from the dragon’s flame was so intense that Tywin was sure that he was going to melt inside of his plate armor. The Dragon took off and roared victoriously as Tywin’s head fell to the dirt in defeat.

For a moment, he considered lying there and letting the toxic smoke fill his lungs and wait for the sweet release of death, but then he remembered who he was. He was Tywin Lannister of Casterly Rock, the Warden of the West. He would not die in a field amongst these pigs and savages, he would not die today. He would live, and he would remind them all why they did not cross Tywin Lannister. He would have his revenge.

He coughed twice and started to crawl faster through the smoke, he shoved the dirt and bodies out of his way as he fought to live. He crawled for what felt like an eternity until he thankfully saw the smoke beginning to thin. Once he was on the other side, he greedily gulped down the clean air, coughed and then slowly stood up and turned around to look at the battle.

The hill that he had set up on was somewhere in the middle of that thick swirling black smoke. Thankfully, he had emerged upwind from the smoke, but that was all he had to be thankful for.

The dragons were circling overhead, screeching and roaring to each other and providing an encore after their victory. Tywin knew that the battle would have been over in minutes. The Targaryens had used shock tactics to overwhelm his forces, they would not have stood a chance. Not one of his men had gotten to the scorpions in time, he did not know what happened to his heavy horse, nor did he know what happened to his archers. His Lannister army had been completely overwhelmed.

As he looked around he could see the fields burning around him, and he felt ash floating down and landing on his skin. He saw carts burning and horses were galloping away from the smoke and smell of battle. The dragons flew lower and Tywin realised they were looking for survivors. He would not be taken alive. Not a chance. He would live and he would have his revenge. The Targaryens had thought they had humiliated him once before when they refused his daughter and called him a servant but he had settled that debt long ago. Elia Martell had paid for that insult and Daenerys Targaryen would pay for this humiliation.

He quickly ran for a stray horse and jumped on its back, not caring if it was saddled. The Lion of Casterly Rock slinked away from battle with his tail between his legs, he may have lost the battle, but he would not lose the war.
The Dragon King

Jon flew low on the back of Vedros as they flew low over the battlefield, the wind was cool and felt refreshing on his face. Ghost was in his saddle in front of him, curled up and keeping warm. The battle was over now and he could see the Dothraki beginning to herd the survivors out of the smoke and towards Daenerys and Anogar who had already landed in a field nearby. Jon had planned this attack with Dany’s help, they decided to fly and ride through the night to slip past the Lannister scouts which they had positioned along the Goldroad. Then they had flown out to the west whilst the Dothraki descended from the North.

Once they had located the Lannisters, they had launched their attack. Initially Dany would stay above to look any archers or scorpions, whilst Jon and his father swooped down on the army. Then when they flew up in the air, Dany would swoop down for her attack, then they would continue to alternate their attacks. Vedros had reveled in the destruction that she caused and Jon could feel the happiness coursing through her.

Vedros took a gentle slow banking turn before she landed on the ground next to Anogar. Ghost quickly jumped out of the saddle and made his way to the floor and Jon followed him. He landed gently and gave Vedros and affectionate pat on her snout and thanked her for her help today. His dragon gave him a happy purr before she slowly took off to fly with Caraxes.

“Aggo,” Jon called as he saw him ambling towards him. He carried his bow over his shoulder and his quiver of arrows was empty. He was their best archer and his accuracy on horseback was astounding. “You rode well today,”

“Thank you,” he said with a wide smile. “We thought it would be more of a challenge,”

“Aye, we caught them by surprise,” Jon said but Aggo just shrugged.

“Surprise or not, they were easy,” he said as his brown eyes sparkled.

“How many did we lose?”

“I am not sure, No more than a thousand,” he said and Jon nodded. “Rakharo has been injured. A
slice to his arm. He will live,” Aggo added solemnly.

“Is he with a healer?” Jon asked and Aggo nodded.

“Good. Now go and help the others to round up the survivors, take away their weapons. I want to make this quick. I think that we will have to ride North again soon,” Jon said and Aggo bowed before he left. Jon and Ghost made their way over to Dany, who was standing on top of a rock waiting for the survivors to finally be rounded up. She was wearing her battle armor, and she had her long silver braid tucked away. Ghost quickly went over to her and Dany gave him an affectionate scratch behind his ears.

“Are you okay?” he asked as he gave her a quick kiss.

“I’m fine. They only had one scorpion that we quickly destroyed, I don’t think they expected us,”

“I didn’t see Tywin Lannister,”

“Neither did I,” Dany said. “We will have to ask their men if he was here today at the battle,”

“I spoke to Aggo, we only lost a thousand or so men today,”

“How many do you think they lost?”

“We’ll find out now,” Jon said as he pointed out in front of them. The remaining Lannister men were slowly entering the field, shepherded by their Dothraki with Caraxes bringing up the rear. Their shoulders were slumped and many had ash and mud on their faces and in their hair as they entered the field below them. There were thousands of them, much more than Jon had expected.

Caraxes flew low overhead and landed behind them and both Jon and Dany immediately walked over to him. Rhaegar stayed mounted in his saddle as they spoke.

“Are you all right?” he asked and Jon nodded.
“We’re both fine. You?” Dany asked.

“I’m fine, Caraxes flew well today,” he said proudly.

“Brother, we need your help. Whilst we deal with the survivors here, can you find the main Tyrell host? We will have to change our plans slightly. The Dothraki will need to ride North again to assist us in the Riverlands. Part of the Tyrell army will have to escort these Westermen back home,” Dany said and Rhaegar nodded.

“I will search for them now. After I will head North to meet with the Unsullied again as planned,” Rhaegar said.

“Thank you father,” Jon said as he smiled at him.

“Be safe and look out for each other,” Rhaegar said as Caraxes began to unfold his large pale wings.

“We will. Fly safe,” Dany said to him and Rhaegar nodded before he gracefullly took off with Caraxes. They watched him fly away until he was no more than a speck on the horizon. Then, they turned around and faced the defeated Lannister army. They had Anogar at their backs whilst Vedros flew low overhead. Daenerys took her position on top of the rock whilst Jon stood beside her.

“My name is Daenerys Targaryen and this is my husband Aegon Targaryen. I am sure your ears have been filled with vile lies from Robert Baratheon and Tywin Lannister. We are not here to burn down your homes and enslave your people, that is not true,”

“We want to help you. We are going to build schools and other beneficial projects for you and your children, we will teach them how to read and write. They will have more opportunities to build a better life for themselves. We have already improved the lives of thousands in Essos and we want to do the same in Westeros,” Jon said.

“The battle here today is over. There is no need for more blood to be spilled, bend the knee and you will all live,” Dany said to the crowd of men. Jon watched as some men slowly fell to their knees, it was only one or two while the rest remained on their feet. Anogar gave a loud, intimidating roar and this caused the majority of the men to quickly fall to their knees. However, a few remained standing. Jon took a look at them, they had golden hair and green eyes. They wore expensive plate armor and Jon could see Lions engraved onto the metal, these were the Lannister generals.
He raised one gloved hand towards them “Step forward,”

“What are your names?” Daenerys asked.

“I am Ser Kevan Lannister,”

“Ser Stafford Lannister,”

“You are Lord Tywin’s brother and good-brother?” Jon asked and they both nodded. He shared a quick glance with Dany before continuing.

“Do you not wish to bend the knee?”

“I would rather die than betray my brother,” Kevan said. “My brother is a good man and he served under the Mad King. It was because of him that the realm was as prosperous for as long as it was. The Mad King would have been nothing if it was not for my brother and he was too stupid to realise that,”

“Do you see Lord Tywin here?” Dany asked and they both shook their heads. “Your brother is likely already dead. Burned alive or crushed by our Dothraki,”

“Tywin Lannister was a failure of a man who only succeeded due to his cruelty and his barbaric methods. He built his reputation on the savage murders of innocent women and children. He has nothing to be proud of and he is not one to be loyal too” Jon said as he remembered the gruesome deaths of Elia Martell and her children.

“That is ironic considering the horde of beasts and savages that you have at your disposal,” Stafford said and Anogar gave him a fierce growl that caused him to flinch.

“Careful, Ser Stafford,” Daenerys warned then she turned to Jon and walked over to her

“What should we do with them? They do not want to bend the knee,” she asked.
“Perhaps, we should imprison them? They’re Tyrion’s family after all,” Jon suggested and Dany nodded.

“That sounds good. We should hear Tyrion’s opinion before passing judgment on his relatives,”

“Ser Stafford. Ser Kevan. It seems that the smoke from the battle is affecting your judgment since you refuse to submit to us despite witnessing our power first hand. We will respect your position and give you some time to think about our offer. We will take you both as our prisoners. If you fail to bend the knee again, our Hand, Lord Tyrion Lannister, will decide your fate,” Dany said

“Aggo. Take them away, make sure that they have enough to eat and drink, but no more,” Jon said firmly and he nodded before leaving to carry out his orders. Then Jon turned to Daenerys.

“We need to find Lord Tyrell and those men that were burning and raiding in the Reach,” he said and she nodded.

“We will have to wait for the Tyrell army to arrive. Once they’ve arrived, we can head back North with our Dothraki to the Riverlands,”

“Father should have found them by now, it’s easy to spot an army from the sky,” Jon said as they began to walk away.

“True, although it could be a while until their army arrives,” Dany said as she looked up at the sky. The smoke from the battle was slowly drifting away as the fires stopped.

“We haven’t talked about Illyrio’s boy,” Dany said as they sat down on a rocky outcrop that overlooked a plain of lush green fields.

“There’s not much to talk about. He’s just one boy with a handful of sellswords at best. He holds no lands or castles that we need,”

“That’s true, although I hate not knowing where he is,”

“Father thinks if he’s in Westeros, he’ll be with the Dornish,”
“Perhaps, we’ll have to head to Sunspear after the war is won,” she suggested.

“The Dornish probably aren’t going to be willing allies. They would have reached out to us already like the Tyrells did if they were interested,”

“We will need to bring them into the fold eventually,”

“True, but that is something we will have to deal with later. Today, we defeated Tywin Lannister, next we have to defeat Robert Baratheon,” Jon said simply and she nodded slowly.

“I miss him,” she said quietly as she rested her head on his shoulder.

“I know, I miss him too. I haven’t seen him in over a week,”

“I hope he’s doing well. We’ve never been away from him for this long. We were only at the council for a day,”

“I am sure Daeron is fine. Your handmaidens will take good care of him and I’m sure that if something happened to him, the dragons would know,” Jon said reassuringly as he gave her a gentle kiss. He also missed his son dearly but he knew that he could not return to Dragonstone until this war was won, certainly not until they had defeated Robert Baratheon.

“You can fly home today,” Jon suggested “After we meet the Tyrell army and we find those men who were raiding and burning, then I’ll lead the Dothraki back North whilst you visit Daeron,”

“Jon, you don’t have to do that. I can stay and you can fly back to see him this time,” she said but Jon shook his head.

“After we defeat Robert Baratheon, I will fly back to Dragonstone for a few days before we march towards Kings Landing,”

“Jon that might not be for another few weeks” she said quietly as she turned to look at him. Jon
could see the concern etched across her face.

“I know Dany but I’ll manage. I’ll have years and years to watch him grow, losing a few weeks here is nothing in comparison,”

Dany nodded slowly before she rested her head on his shoulder and settled into his side. Daeron was growing quickly. Quicker than he remembered Bran or Rickon growing. He had a full head of silver hair and he had already managed to take his first few steps.

Then he thought about the North, he had not heard anything from Lord Stark. This was not a surprise, it would be very difficult for a raven to find them currently. He hoped that when Dany returned to Dragonstone there would be a raven waiting for them. He still regretted his actions at the council, he knew he had a lot to thank Lord Stark for, he had kept him safe and protected him. The next time they met, Jon would have to thank him for that.

He had spent some time with Dany discussing what they would do with the North later. They had decided that the best course of action, would be to fly there themselves to speak to all of the Northern Lords in person. They would try to answer all of their concerns and questions and get them to embrace their new vision.

It would also allow him to see Arya again which brought a smile to his face.

“Caraxes,” Dany said quietly as she pointed up to the sky. Sure enough, the cream and gold dragon was flying overhead, heading north.

“That means he’s found the main Tyrell host,” Jon said and he felt her nod. “They should be here soon,”

“Let’s head towards them, it’ll save time,” Dany suggested as she stood up. Together they walked across the fields in the direction the Tyrell army would be coming from and after only an hour or so, they saw the Tyrell army arrive. Jon was impressed with their numbers, he estimated that they had at least 50,000 and many of them were mounted knights in shiny steel armor.

“I see Ser Loras,” Dany said as she pointed towards a man galloping towards them on a white horse. Sure enough, it was Ser Loras. His Kingsguard armor had not been made yet so he wore his old armor. It was silver with black twirling vines and blue sapphires in it.
“My King, my Queen,” he said as he dismounted his horse in front of them.

“Ser Loras. Are you in charge of this army?” Jon asked

“No, your grace. Lord Tarly is in charge of half and my older brother, Ser Garlan the other half. Father has rode off ahead in search of those cowards who are terrorizing our lands,”

“We have heard and are going to help, but we will need your help here,” Dany said to him. “We have defeated Tywin Lannister and his army. Their men have surrendered and we will need you to escort them back to the Westerlands. We also have two of his relations as prisoners, Kevan Lannister and Stafford Lannister,”

“I can do that. We saw the smoke from the battle miles away from here, did they have any scorpions?” he asked.

“They had one, but we quickly destroyed it,” Dany told him.

“Very well, that’s good. Have you heard anything from the U surper?”

“We know that he is somewhere in the Riverlands. After we help your father, we plan to head North with our Dothraki again to find him once and for all,”

“Do you need our help? It will not take our entire army to escort these men home,” Ser Loras asked.

“We will be riding north with our Dothraki, so only your fastest riders and their horses,” Jon said and Ser Loras nodded.

“I will see that it is done, your grace. I will lead that force, whilst Garlan leads the defeated Lannister men back into the Riverlands. I will ask each Lord to give me their 5 best riders, we should have around 200 or so,”

“Thank you, Ser Loras,” Dany said with a smile. “When you’re ready, speak with Aggo as you will ride north together,”
“As you command, your grace,” Loras said with a bow before he leapt back onto his horse and bounded away to complete their orders.

“Are you ready?” Jon asked as he turned to her and she nodded.

“Let’s go and find these men so we can move on with this war,”

They both looked up into the sky and soon enough their dragons landed next to them. Ghost quickly climbed up Vedros’s wing and settled in the front of his saddle. Jon followed him and then they took off quickly into the afternoon sky.

Vedros and Anogar gave one last loud roar towards the Dothraki before they turned North. Jon closed his eyes and spoke to his dragon in his mind.

“We need to find Lord Tyrell,” he said and Vedros made a low rumbling noise of agreement.

Then she banked gently to the right and she flew lower to the ground. To his surprise, Vedros and Anogar were leading them in a northeasterly direction and they were seemingly following the river Mander. They passed over miles upon miles of green fields as the Dragons flew lower and lower over the ground. Jon pushed himself up to look out over Vedros’s body and then he saw a small town up ahead.

“What is happening here ?” Jon said to himself as they flew closer and closer. Jon saw the Tyrell army camps outside of the city, but he did not see the men.

“Vedros, let’s fly lower to take a look,” he said and his dragon complied. She flew low over the town and Jon saw that a fierce battle had taken place here. There were bodies lying in the streets and several of the houses and stores had been badly damaged.

Jon was very concerned, it seemed as if the Tyrell vanguard had fought a battle in this town, but he was not sure if they were victorious.

“Let’s land outside the city walls, tell Anogar not to land just yet, Dany should stay in the air,” he said. He was unsure if Anogar or Dany would listen to him but he did not want to take the chance.

Vedros landed outside the city walls and he was immediately greeted by some Reach Lords.
“King Aegon,” he heard a man call and he turned to see Lord Tyrell approaching. He too was in his extravagant Tyrell armor.

“Lord Tyrell. What is happening here? ” Jon asked and he felt Anogar land next to him.

“We have tracked the raiders into this village. We believe its Tywin Lannister’s dog, the Mountain,” he spat. Jon tensed, his father had told him stories about the Mountain and he remembered what he did in the sack of Kings Landing.

“How many men does he have?” Daenerys asked.

“We don’t know, 100 or so would be my best guess,”

“How many men do you have?”

“1,000,” Lord Tyrell proudly said. Jon was quiet for a few moments, he knew what type of man, the Mountain was, and he could not leave him with these people for any longer than necessary.

“We will have to go in and go door to door to flush them out,” Jon said slowly.

“What if they use hostages?” Dany asked.

“We don’t have a choice. If we don’t do anything then they’ll stay in the village and torture them anyway,” Jon replied and she nodded.

“We will move in groups of 10, starting at this end of the town and we make our way to the other. Dany, I’d like you and Anogar to fly overhead to see if they try and escape or change their hiding spots whilst we’re searching for them,”

“I don’t think it’s a good idea for you to head in their Jon, you are the King,” she said to him but he shook his head.
“It’s dangerous, but I will have Ghost,” he said as he ran a gloved hand through Ghost’s fur.

“Will you at least have a personal guard?” she asked and Jon nodded, having an extra layer of protection will set her at ease.

“Please be careful,” she said.

“I promise I will,” Jon answered and Dany turned to climb onto Anogar’s long scaly wing. Anogar took off with a huff and a roar and then Jon turned to Lord Tyrell and his men.

“Your grace, Ser Myles Rowan, Ser Desmond Redwyne, Ser Horas Redwyne will be your personal guard,” Lord Tyrell said as he gestured towards three knights. They were all older than Jon but not by much. Jon thought that it was unlikely that they had been in any actual battles before, he hoped that their inexperience would not cost them.

“Very well. Lord Tyrell are the rest of the men ready?”

“Yes, your grace,”

“Then let’s clear the scum out of this town,” Jon said firmly as he led the way into the market town of Tumbleton. They were slowly but carefully going from house to house searching for the mountain and his men. Ghost led the way and Jon felt reassured by his presence. His direwolf had his nose to the ground as they went from door to door.

Many of the small folk had heard their dragons as they roared and flew overhead and they were reassured by their presence. Jon worked quickly as they tried to evacuate the town. In only around an hour, they had cleared half of the town. Then they came to a large tavern in the middle of the town and he felt Ghost slow down and begin to grow unsettled.

“Ghost is unsettled. I think they’re in here,” Jon said to his group of men. They all gave him grim faced nods of agreement.

“Your grace, I will lead the way,” Ser Myles said as he stepped forward. Jon nodded and fell in behind. He drew Darkfyre from his scabbard and he followed them into the Tavern.
The inside of the tavern had been vandalized. The long tables had been turned over and the chairs had been scattered across the room. Cups and plates lay cracked and broken on the floor. Tiny streams of sunlight filtered through cracks in the drawn shutters and the wooden floorboards creaked loudly under his feet.

Jon crouched down and he saw some dried blood on the floor.

“They were definitely in here at some point,” Jon said quietly as they stepped further into the Tavern, then he turned to his men. “I want two of you to go back and find another two groups of men and then bring them here quickly,” he commanded.

As the two men left to complete his instructions, Jon edged further into the room, with Darkfyre held out in front of him. Ghost nosed in front and Jon slowly followed his wolf. He crouched down, closed his eyes and for a brief moment, he saw through Ghost’s eyes. He smelt what he smelt and he saw what he saw.

“They’re surrounding us!” Jon shouted as he stood up. The first man quickly vaulted over an overturn table and ran screaming at Jon. He was wielding a morning star and he swung the weapon wildly in the air. One of Jon’s guard quickly stepped forward and raised his shield to block the blow and Jon took the opportunity to drive Darkfyre through the man’s stomach. His eyes widened in horror but Jon did not focus on him for long.

He quickly yanked his sword out and turned to look around the tavern. All around him the Mountain’s men were springing out of their hiding places and running towards them.

“Heard his men shout as they all stepped around him to form a protective triangle. The Mountain’s men were ferocious but the Reach Knights were good and well-disciplined. They maintained their defensive shape and Jon was able to quickly poke his sword through the gaps to weaken their assailants.

One man charged forward but he was quickly pounced on by Ghost who knocked him to the floor and ripped out his throat. Jon saw an ugly man lunge at Ghost and he quickly leapt forward between his guards to save his wolf.

The man had lifted his sword high in the air as he tried to hack away at Ghost’s back. Jon quickly blocked the strike with Darkfyre and the sound of their swords clashing rang loudly in his ears. Their swords were locked and Jon used his superior strength to push the man back backwards.
The man quickly pulled his sword away and swung it wildly in the direction of Jon’s head. Jon quickly stepped underneath his outstretched arm. He stepped behind him and drove Darkfyre through the back of his knee and Jon heard the man howl in pain. He didn’t howl for long before someone slit his throat and silenced him.

Jon quickly looked around and saw that the battle was raging inside the tavern, but his men were sticking together and they were slowly picking off the Mountain’s men. Jon moved further into the Tavern with Ghost by his side. He spied two men running towards him from a door behind the bar stall and Jon quickly raised his sword, ready to do battle.

He knew that he had to be careful here. He lowered his sword and then he crouched low in his stance, tensing his calves. The two men came at him from opposite sides. He felt Ghost behind him and he knew that his wolf would take care of one so Jon focused on the other.

He threw a quick feint to his right before he sprung quickly to the left. The man fell for it and lunged into the empty space. Jon brought his sword up and cut through the light leather armor that he was wearing and he screamed loudly as the contents of his stomach spilled out of his stomach and out onto the wooden floor.

Jon heard a loud thud followed by a yell and he knew that Ghost had killed the other.

“We need to find the Mountain!” Jon yelled to whoever was listening. He turned around and he saw that Ser Myles and Ser Desmond were with him, their swords dripping red with blood.

Jon turned and began to walk towards the door behind the bar stall but a humongous man stomped through the door. Jon was blown away by his size, he was over 8 foot tall and he was clad from head to toe in steel armor. To make matters worse, he wielded a large greatsword, the sword was so big that Jon thought it was bigger than his entire body. On his other hand was a thick oak shield that held the sigil of his house.

Jon did not see his face as he wore a thick steel helmet with only a narrow slit for the eyes. Jon immediately took a few steps backwards as more men spilled out from behind the Mountain, he must have been hiding in the basement.

Jon had never faced an opponent like this before and he could not find a weakness in his armor.

“Your grace, get back,” he heard one man say and Jon immediately followed his instructions. The Mountain however had other ideas, he leapt forward and his large stride meant that he covered the
distance in nearly one step. As he moved forward, he swung his greatsword with ease and Jon quickly dropped to duck underneath the blade.

Jon continued to step backwards as he dodged the Mountain’s attacks, he knew that he absolutely could not step into his range, if he did he would be crushed.

“Outside!” Jon yelled as he continued to blindly step backwards. Jon’s foot caught on something and he stumbled and fell to the floor. The Mountain saw this and he quickly swung his sword downwards, trying to crush Jon’s skull on the floor. With speed he did not know he had, he rolled out of the way and he heard the loud clanging sound as the sword made contact with the floor.

Then he heard a loud yell and he saw Ghost leap up and land on the Mountain’s shoulders. Ghost was a huge animal, even as big as some of the horses in the stables but even he was not big enough to knock over the Mountain.

However, Jon thought this was his opportunity, Ghost let go off the mountain and slipped away from him and then Jon swung his Valyrian steel sword with all his strength into the man’s exposed ribs. The sound of the Valyrian steel colliding with the metal plate was loud and high pitched and Jon was sure he would have cut through his strong armor and into his soft flesh but the plate was too thick and he was not strong enough. He quickly pulled his sword away to inspect a damage.

His sword had made a cut in the armor, but it was not big enough and the Mountain barely noticed it. Then Jon realised his mistake, in order to deliver this strike, he had stepped well inside of his range and now he was in trouble.

He quickly began to step backwards but he was not quick enough, the Mountain’s Greatsword smacked into his chest plate and the force of the blow combined with Jon’s own momentum meant that he was sent flying across the room into an overturned table.

The force of the blow rattled Jon’s head and his sword slid harmlessly across the floor. Jon felt groggy, his ears were ringing loudly and the room was swimming in front of him. The chairs and tables were completely out of focus and he felt much disoriented. He saw a white blur flash somewhere across his vision but he did not know who Ghost hit. He took long deep breaths and tried to stop the dizziness from affecting his vision.

He barely saw the Mountain making his way towards him and Jon flexed his empty hand as his fingers automatically searched for his sword. He saw the jeweled blade lying harmlessly along the floor too far away from him. Then he looked nervously up at the Mountain who seemed to be reveling in this moment.
The Mountain stepped closer and launched a kick into his stomach. The force of the blow winded him and he felt himself coughing up blood. Jon’s hand went to his stomach as he coughed and spluttered in pain.

Then, he heard a loud noise and then bright light flooded into the Tavern from above. Several large beams fell down from the wooden roof and the Mountain was forced to step back to dodge the falling wood. This gave Jon a chance.

He crawled on his hands on knees towards his sword but these movements caused a wave of nausea to pass over him, it was so strong that he put his head to the floor and took long deep breaths again. He heard more pieces of wood fall as the roof slowly fell apart.

This time he moved slowly across the floor until he felt the dragonbone handle of his sword beneath his fingers. He closed his eyes and summoned all of his strength and then he slowly rose to his feet, using his sword to help him. He stumbled for a few steps before the room slowly righted itself.

Then, he saw the Mountain lying underneath a pile of rubble. Two large wooden beams were crushing him and for the briefest of moments Jon wondered if this beast of a man was finally dead.

Those hopes were quickly dashed as the giant began to wake from his slumber. He pushed the long wooden beams off him and he slowly, drunkenly rose to his feet but Jon was pleased with what he saw.

The Mountain was moving slowly and he had lost his shield. His metal armor was dented and damaged and Jon knew that it would be weaker than before. As the Mountain rose, Jon saw gaps within his armor, gaps where if he was quick enough, he could pierce Darkfyre through. Most surprising of all was the fact that the Mountain rose clutching his head, as if he was in severe pain.

Jon slowly walked forward, determined to kill this man and avenge Princess Elia and her children. The adrenaline was pumping in his veins and the pain from his injuries faded into the background. The Mountain saw him coming and he shrieked before he swung his greatsword wildly in Jon’s direction.

The strike was lacking the same speed and ferocity as before and Jon was able to duck under his attack. Now, he was behind him and quickly swung Darkfyre downwards to slice at his knees. His sword easily sliced through the weakened and damaged metal and Jon saw a fountain of blood spring forth and the Mountain staggered to the floor on one knee as he released a high pitched cry.
Jon did not stop, he raised Darkfyre and he brought it down onto the top of the Mountain’s helmet. Jon had hoped to crack the metal, but instead all he could do was rattle it but that seemed to be enough, because the Mountain screamed again and dropped his sword to hold his head in his monstrous hands.

Then Ghost sprung forward and knocked him onto his back on the floor and then Jon saw his opportunity. He twisted his wrists and then stabbed Darkfyre downwards, right into slit in his helm. Dark red blood spilled out as the Mountain screamed and howled but Jon did not stop. He kept pushing with all his strength until the screams stopped and the Mountain laid still.

He twisted his sword and yanked it up and out of the Mountain before he collapsed to the floor in exhaustion. Darkfyre fell out of his hand as he surveyed the remains of the Tavern.

Lord Tyrell and the other men had finally arrived and they had quickly defeated the rest of the Mountain’s men. Some surrendered whilst others fought like idiots to their deaths. Ghost slowly padded over to him and gently licked his face.

“Thank you for today, my friend,” he whispered as he used a broken piece of wood to prop himself up. As the adrenaline from the fight slowly faded from his veins, he noticed the throbbing pain in his left hand side and his headache was starting to return along with a faint ringing noise. He took a look at his chest plate and saw that it was dented slightly, but not punctured. Hopefully, he only had a few sore ribs and nothing more.

“Your grace,” he heard Lord Tyrell say as he walked over to him. “Are you alright?”

“Aye, I’ve been better,” Jon said groggily as he tried to stand up but this was a mistake and he started to feel dizzy again.

“I’ll send for my personal maester,” he said as he remained crouched by his side.

“Jon!” he heard an anguished voice say. He saw Daenerys quickly walk into the tavern and then she ran over to his side.

“Are you alright? I knew I should not have let you go in there. I knew it, please be fine Jon,” she said desperately as she cupped his face. Her beautiful face was etched with concern and Jon needed to reassure her.
“I’m fine. My ribs are a little sore and I have a little headache. That’s all,” he said slowly and he realised that he was not as convincing as he had hoped for.

“Jon,” she whispered as she started to look at him. Thankfully, he was not bleeding from any wounds and this seemed to reassure her.

“There is a maester coming,” he said gently as he reached out to reassuringly squeeze her hand. “Thank you for saving me,”

“It was all Anogar and Vedros. She knew you were in danger and they worked together to break through the roof,”

“They did it just in time. He hit me pretty hard,” Jon said and he saw her frown at those words.

“Please don’t do this again, Jon. I know how good you are with a sword and I know I can’t tell you to stay away from danger, but please be as careful as you can. If you have to beat Robert with Vedros, use Vedros please. I need you, Daeron needs you and your father needs you, just please be careful,” she pleaded and Jon nodded slowly.

“I will be careful,”

“Promise me?” she whispered as she pressed her forehead to his.

“I promise,” Jon whispered as he sealed it with a soft, gentle kiss.

Chapter End Notes

So let me know what you think of this one. Comments are appreciated and they mean a lot

The next chapter should be out in 10 days or so. Once my exams are finished. It's called 'The Last Storm'

Thanks for Reading
Sleepy
The Last Storm

Chapter Notes

Bit of housekeeping before we begin

1) My exams are finished so I'll have more time to write
2) The ending of this story has been outlined, we're looking at around 34-36 chapters here. So not too much left. There won't be White Walkers in this fic, I might return and cover it in a sequel.

Thanks to GOT88 for the help provided with this story.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The Dragon King

Jon was seated atop his grey horse as they slowly made their way North once again. It was a cold grey day and he could see a storm approaching from the North. They were in the Riverlands yet again after they had made their departure from Tumbletown a week ago. The Maester had inspected him and concluded that whilst his ribs were bruised and sore, they were not broken. At times, it hurt to lift his arms too high over his head and it hurt when he stretched sometimes but he was healing. He had taken part in some light exercises in the evenings and had started to train with his sword again. His armor had also been mended and looked no worse for wear.

They had united their Dothraki and Reach armies so now their host was over 100,000 strong. Robert Baratheon would not stand a chance wherever he was hiding. They were heading towards the Stoney Sept. The Tyrell host was further to the west and taking a different path towards Riverrun. His father should be with the Unsullied and the Vale Knights and circling around towards Riverrun from another direction.

Jon looked up at the sky, they had only just started their daily march but he was already thinking of stopping it. The weather was getting worse by the minute and the clouds looked heavy with rain. Perhaps, they should just halt and resume the march tomorrow when the conditions were better. Get everyone inside and in tents where they could be out of the rain and cold.

He sighed in frustration and looked up towards their dragons. Vedros gave a sad moan and Jon could tell that she too was not enjoying the weather.

Daenerys rode next to him at the head of the column. She was riding a silver horse that matched the color of her braid which she had tucked away. She wore a black cloak over her riding clothes and black gloves.

“There’s a storm coming,” Jon said as he looked up at the sky.

“I know. I don’t like the look of it,” she said as she gripped the reins of her horse. “We have to keep going though. We only just started,” Jon nodded in agreement. The wind was starting to pick up and
it was starting to bring light rain. Jon bundled his cloak tightly around himself and continued
onwards. It was only a little rain, he grew up in the North, he had seen far worse weather.

Dany had returned to Dragonstone a few days prior. Apparently, Daeron had been a little unwell but
when she arrived he was feeling much better and he was back to his lively self. Jon missed him
dearly and he wanted to defeat Robert quickly so he could fly home to see him. Dany said that he
had grown but he wanted to see him for himself. She had also said that he she had finally spotted the
first tooth in his mouth. She had been slightly concerned that it was taking him so long but the
maesters had told her that some babes took longer than others.

Jon saw a flash of lightning in front of them followed by a loud booming clap of thunder. He took
one more look at the dark clouds in front of them and he decided that enough was enough.

“Dany, we need to stop. We’re marching straight into a storm and won’t be making much progress.
The fields will turn to mud and our horses and men will become bogged down and miserable. Our
Dothraki are a cavalry force and if they can’t ride, then we lose some of our advantage,”

“I agree, the Dragons will struggle to fly through it as well,” Dany said as she looked up in the sky.
The dragons had turned and wheeled away from the inclement weather. Jon looked around the
empty fields for a good place to stop.

“There over by those hills,” he said as he pointed in the not too far distance. “The hills should
provide us with at least some shelter from the wind,”

“That sounds like a good idea, should we send out scouts and outriders?” she asked and Jon paused.

“No. I doubt Robert Baratheon is foolish enough to march in these conditions and our Dragons will
warn us of any approaching danger,” Jon replied and she nodded.

“Very well. I’ll start giving the orders while you lead us to camp,” she said and Jon nodded. She
pulled her hood up over her head and turned away to send the message to the rest of the Dothraki.
Jon sighed and then guided his horse towards their destination, he only hoped that this storm would
pass quickly so they could return to their march.

The Silver Prince

Rhaegar Targaryen stood on the battlements of Castle Darry. He had flown back to the castle after
the battle in the Reach was over in order to meet with the Unsullied and Vale army. They had gone
ahead of him as planned and Rhaegar would be flying out to meet them today.

The remaining men at Castle Darry had been happy to hear of Tywin Lannisters defeat in the Reach
and they had persuaded him to send ravens out to all of the other Lords in the realm informing them
of this victory. Rhaegar realised that this was a good idea as it could lower the morale of those still
trying to fight against them.

Flying Caraxes into battle had been an exhilarating experience. His dragon had flown perfectly and
they had worked together instinctively. Rhaegar realised that he had underestimated the strength of
the bond between the Dragon and rider. As he closed his eyes and focused, he could almost feel
Caraxes as he flew through the cloudy skies.
Defeating the Lannisters had been personal to him, especially after what Tywin Lannister did to Elia. He may have married her out of duty, but he still cared for her and their children. Rhaegar knew that justice had finally been served for Elia and her children. He only wished they would have found his body to confirm it. Perhaps, now that the man who ordered the murder of Elia had been killed, the Dornish would be more receptive to peacefully join with them. He would have to bring this up the next time he saw Jon and Dany.

Rhaegar wondered if they had found Robert Baratheon as of yet. He was still somewhere in the Riverlands but they were not sure where. The last reports had said that he and his army were near Pinkmaiden camped near the Red fork but they were not sure in which direction he would be heading. One thing was for certain, he was not in the Riverlands meeting Tywin Lannister. Therefore, it was most likely that he was foraging for food.

They would not have found him yet. Rhaegar knew that Caraxes would take him to the battle if they had.

He also had to meet Lord Frey. The riverlord was still demanding a meeting with Jon and Daenerys but he would have to make do with him. Rhaegar planned to fly there today. Lord Frey had promised to support them at the council and he would leave the Twins with his troops. Lord Frey was probably delaying his troops to try and leverage something out of him but Rhaegar would not put up with his games today.

Rhaegar looked up at the sky and then decided that it was time to get going, he had to meet up with their armies soon. He made his way through the quiet castle and then he entered the courtyard. The guards on duty saw him approaching and quickly opened the main gate so he could exit. He left the castle behind and continued into the neighboring fields.

He closed his eyes searching for Caraxes and he felt his dragon answer. When he opened his eyes, he saw that his dragon was circling lower and lower before he landed gently in front of him. He ran his hands along his warm scales and then he climbed onto his back and sat in the saddle that they had crafted. Caraxes gave himself a running start before he took off into the cold air. Rhaegar immediately pulled his cloak tightly around himself and settled in for the ride. Thankfully, he had worn an extra layer under his boiled leather jerkin.

They were flying towards the west and Riverrun. Caraxes flew below the clouds and this meant that Rhaegar had a good view of the land that they were flying over.

They flew past the roaring waters of the Trident and then Caraxes took a turn towards the North which took them along the Green fork. Caraxes was taking him North to the Twins. The Green fork passed through fertile valleys and green woodlands. The dirt Kingsroad ran somewhere to its right and Rhaegar could see the Ironman’s bay to his west. He hoped that he would not have to spend too much time in the Twins dealing with Lord Frey.

As they flew further North, the weather started to get colder and the wind was starting to feel like ice cold daggers cutting into his skin. Thankfully, Caraxes started to descend and Rhaegar could see that they were approaching their destination. The Twins were two identical stone castles with a bridge connecting them. This castle was the only place to cross the Green Fork for hundreds of miles and this gave the Freys a lot of power.

To travel between the North and the Rivererrun, you had to pass through the Twins. The Frey’s were able to use this to charge a substantial toll for people to cross their bridge.

To his surprise, he saw Targaryen banners camped outside of the castle and as he flew lower, he saw that there Unsullied were outside of the castle. Caraxes gave a loud roar before he landed in between
their camp and the castle.

He quickly climbed out of the saddle and landed on the grass. He saw Grey Worm and Ser Barristan approaching.

“Ser Barristan. Grey Worm. Why are you outside of the Twins and not in the Riverlands as we planned?” Rhaegar asked.

“My Prince. We received a raven from Lord Frey saying that the Northern army had come south and was camped on the border between the two regions,” Ser Barristan answered and Rhaegar’s eyes widened in surprise. Why would Lord Stark march south when they had agreed to show mercy on the Tullys? It did not make sense.

“Do we know why Lord Stark has marched south?” he asked curiously.

“No. When I heard that he had an entire army with him I assumed the worst and instructed our armies to march North to meet them. The Twins is a very defensible position and if the worst occurs, holding the castle will provide us with a key strategic advantage,” Ser Barristan said and Rhaegar nodded. He was right.

If Lord Stark was riding south for war, then holding the Twins would prevent him from crossing the Green fork and uniting with Robert Baratheon who was in the Western part of the Riverlands, probably somewhere near Riverrun. The Twins was the only crossing point and Ser Barristan was right to try and fortify it. Rhaegar was surprised that he had gone against his orders, Ser Barristan was not usually like that.

“Thank you for taking the initiative, Ser Barristan,” Rhaegar said after a moment.

“What should we do now?” the experienced knight asked, looking for direction once again. Rhaegar paused, Lord Stark marching south with his army had caught him completely by surprise. They had already offered to show mercy on his wife’s family and Rhaegar could not imagine that he was foolish enough to fight against them.

Rhaegar realised that he needed to speak to Lord Stark properly and clear the air. He would have to speak with him about this war and about Jon and Lyanna. Rhaegar knew that he was a good man, he just had to get through to him. Rhaegar knew that this was the only way for them to move forward.

“We will go and speak to him. We will go under a peace banner. Send a runner to let him know I would like to talk,” Rhaegar said and Ser Barristan nodded before he hurried away.

Rhaegar took one look up at the grey sky and then ran a hand through his silver hair. He felt nervous about this conversation, it needed to go well otherwise the war could take a turn for the worse.

**The Dragon’s Hand**

Tyrion Lannister stood on the prow of the *Queen Rhaella* as the warship sailed in towards Casterly Rock itself. After Victarion Greyjoy had burned the Lannister fleet during the Greyjoy rebellion his father had never really rebuilt their fleet, always preferring to spend his time on other more worthwhile tasks. This worked out in their favor because there was no naval force to spot their
attack.

Their plan was to use the morning fog to approach Casterly Rock whilst leaving Lannisport untouched. Jaime had guessed that their father would leave behind a healthy garrison to hold the city and they would not have the men to take it. Therefore their best plan was to take the castle itself quickly and use the castle’s natural defenses to their advantage. Whilst they sailed into the small port of Casterly Rock itself, their sellswords would infiltrate the castle via the sewer systems and hopefully take them unaware.

Trickery and deception, Lann the Clever would have been proud.

Tyrion wondered whether his father would be in the castle. He hoped that he was, he would love to see his face as he walked in with an army at his back.

Having a clear plan reassured Tyrion. He and Jaime hung back on their war galley whilst Asha led her Ironborn in their longships for the initial wave of attacks. Jaime on the other hand was clearly restless as they waited. He had been pacing relentlessly on the deck, almost as if he was trying to burn a hole through the wooden floor of the ship.

He was doing this right now.

“Jaime relax,” Tyrion said in his most reassuring voice. “I believe that the battle is going well and we have taken them unaware,”

“Tyrion. Father made this army. When has he ever been taken by surprise?” Jaime asked and Tyrion reluctantly nodded his head in agreement, their father always had a tendency to be a few steps ahead.

“At least, we get to see the children again,” Tyrion said as he tried to change the subject and Jaime flashed him a dark look.

“What exactly do you think Cersei is telling them about us?” Jaime asked “Can’t be anything good. Especially now that we’re coming to kill them,”

Tyrion paused, he hadn’t considered this but Jaime was right, Cersei had probably told the children horrible things about them and Tyrion knew how impressionable they were.

“Well, I’m sure that we can win them around again,” Tyrion said hopefully and Jaime just rolled his eyes and continued to look out over the Sunset Sea. It had been years since he had seen Cersei and Tyrion found that a small part of him missed her.

He missed all the annoying things that he would do to her, like making snarky comments that took her a moment too long to understand. Or saying rude things that would amuse the children but annoy her. Although he did not miss all her plans to kill him, that was a welcome change. Still, he could understand why Jaime was more anxious about meeting Cersei again

“Will you tell them the truth?” Tyrion asked after a while and Jaime just looked at him with a blank face. “The children Jaime, will you tell them the truth about you and Cersei,”

Jaime looked at him before he continued to stare long and hard out over the waters.

“I don’t know. It depends on how today goes,” he said quietly and Tyrion decided to let the issue slide. Instead, he turned and looked towards the formidable fortress that was Casterly Rock. The deck began to get busier as the crew began to prepare the ship for docking. He nudged Jaime on the elbow and together they walked and got into the small row boat that would take them to shore.
Once they docked in the port they were immediately greeted by Asha Greyjoy.

“Come on Golden boy. We need you to direct us,” she said as soon as Jaime’s feet touched the land again.

“Did the battle go well?” Tyrion asked as he hurried along after them.

“Aye. They were all either drunk or half asleep, I couldn’t tell the difference,” she said with a shrug.

“Drunk?” Jaime asked in disbelief, something that Tyrion shared. He struggled to believe that his father would allow his men to be this unprepared. This could only mean that he was not home.

“He’s not home then,” Jaime said as he reached the same conclusion as him.

“Doesn’t make much difference. We quickly swept through the port and pushed them back towards the castle itself. Hopefully, your tunnel plan has worked because we have nothing to break this place down with a siege,” she said as they approached the main entrance, known as the Lion’s mouth.

“What do you mean that we don’t have anything for a siege?” Jaime asked as he looked at Asha.

“We need wood to make siege weapons, and there’s no wood on the sea,” she said with a wry smile. "If we don’t get these gates open soon enough, we’ll have to head back. We don’t want them coming up from Lannisport,”

Tyrion nodded and then turned to look up at the castle gates, hoping that they would swing open.

“I don’t see any guards,” Tyrion commented.

“Aye,” Asha said quietly “Hopefully, they hurry up,”

Tyrion waited for what felt like an eternity as he stared up at the smooth castle walls. They were tall and without any ladders, impossible to climb. Tyrion hoped they would not have to turn back, that would be admitting failure and Tyrion did not want to fail, not like this.

Then he heard shouting coming from on top of the castle walls.

“Jaime, what’s happening?”

“They’re fighting again,” he said and Tyrion quickly realised that his brother was right. The fighting had begun again, then it quickly stopped.

“What’s happening now?” Tyrion asked but before his brother could answer, the gates of the Lion’s mouth slowly started to swing open.

“I take it we’ve won?” Tyrion asked nervously and then he saw Targaryen banners unfold and flow down the castle walls.

“Let’s get inside quickly,” Jaime said as he stepped forward and led them into the main courtyard. Once all their men were inside, the gate swung shut once again and a wooden bar was put a cross it to reinforce it.

“Nice castle. Better than Pyke,” Asha said as she began to casually walk around to inspect the place. “Aren’t you going to offer us a tour?”

“We will when we find out who’s still in the castle,” Jaime reminded her but Asha was already walking away.
“We need to find Cersei and the children,” Jaime said quickly and Tyrion nodded in agreement. “Hopefully, whoever arrested them has treated them kindly.”

“There’s Daario, he led the attack, he should know,” Tyrion said as he pointed out the sellsword who was slowly walking towards them. His clothes were bloody and he seemed to have lost one of his weapons.

“Captain Naharis,” Tyrion said once he reached them. “What happened in the battle?”

“Your little sewer trick worked. We ended up in a dark damp cellar and then we quickly swept through the castle. They did not see us coming.”

“What about our sister and her children?” Jaime asked.

“Cersei? We have her, couple of my men have her guarded in a cell,”

“Don’t tell me that you put the children in a cell,” Jaime asked in a threatening voice.

“No. The children are still in their rooms. Guarded of course,” he said with a shrug. Then he turned to look at Asha who had returned. “Did the Lady Captain fight?” he asked with a smirk and Asha rolled her eyes.

“Of course I fought, unlike you my weapons aren’t for decoration,” she said as she showed him her axe.

“If you like, I can show you just how well I fight,” Daario said with a cocky smile.

“No thanks, you’re not my type,”

“Oh?”

“Yes,” Asha said as she looked him up and down. “I prefer my men a little more….manly,”

“Daario, just take us to them,” Tyrion interrupted. The sellsword scowled at them.

“Very well. This way,” He led them through the castle and then down the stairs towards the dungeons. The castle was huge and it took them several minutes until they finally reached Cersei’s cell.

“In here,” Daario said as he pointed towards a cell that was guarded by one of his men.

“Step aside,” Tyrion ordered and the man quickly obeyed. Jaime pushed open the door to the cell and there she was. His sister was huddled on the floor at the back of the cell with her knees tucked into her chest. Once the door opened she quickly looked up at them and scowled.

“I knew it was you,” she said scornfully. “I knew you would come for me with that foreign whore,”

“Because you tried to kill me,” Tyrion said defensively.

“You killed our mother,” Cersei snapped at him and Tyrion felt himself getting angry.

“I did not kill her,”

“Cersei, he did not,” Jaime said quietly.
“I can’t believe you either. You betrayed me. You, Jaime, my twin, my everything. You have betrayed me,” she seethed but Jaime shook his head.

“Cersei, I’ve done horrible things in my past. I want to atone for them and this is the only way that I know how,” Jaime said and Cersei laughed loudly and cruelly.

“‘We’ve done some horrible things and if you think that betraying your family will do a thing to help you then you truly are the dumbest Lannister,”

Jaime looked at her coldly after she said that.

“What even is your plan here?” Cersei asked. “To take father’s castle and then what? Hand it over to the Targaryen whore and her bastard King? Father has 20,000 men in Lannisport. You won’t have a chance of holding this castle,” she said smugly.

“Well my sweet sister, you forget that King Aegon and Queen Daenerys have Dragons. 20,000 men do not stand a chance against their dragons,” Tyrion pointed

“My Husband will kill the dragons,” she sneered at Jamie and his brother had enough and left the room. “Then, he will kill your foreign whore and your bastard King,”

“He will not. We have scouted Kings Landing and we know where your defenses are, we will not fall for your tricks,” Tyrion said. “Robert will die, not that you loved him anyway, and so will Joffrey. Not that I cared for that spiteful boy anyway,” and with that, he quickly left the cell to follow his brother.

His brother had stormed away up the stairs somewhere and Tyrion was forced to follow his loud angry footsteps. He eventually caught up with him.

“How could she say those things? How could she say that about Robert?” he asked and Tyrion could hear the pain in his voice.

“Jaime, she said it to hurt you,”

“You think I don’t know that? He snapped “She’s my twin sister, of course I know that,” “Then you should know to ignore what she says. We’re here to take the castle in the name of the King and Queen. We’ve completed the first part of that mission, now we just need to keep our heads and see the job through,”

Jaime looked at him before he slowly nodded.

“We can’t keep her down there, the children would hate us,” Jaime said and Tyrion knew that he was right.

“We will have her moved to her rooms and put under constant guard,” Tyrion said and he nodded in agreement. “Come on, let’s find the children and see how badly Cersei has damaged our reputation,”

Together they walked through the castle through the familiar hallways towards the children’s rooms but before they arrived, they were found by Asha.

“I was counting all the people in the castle who surrendered to us and there was a woman claiming to be a Genna Lannister. She claims to be your aunt. Is that true?”

“Yes,” Tyrion said immediately. Aunt Genna was his father’s youngest and only sister and she was like a mother to him growing up. “I’ll go see her and you go see the children,” he said and Jaime
nodded in agreement. He followed Asha through the hallways and it seemed like she was taking him back to the courtyard.

“So that was the former Queen Cersei?” Asha said as they walked.

“Yes, that’s my sweet sister,” Tyrion replied in a tired voice.

“She’s not as pretty as Queen Daenerys….or as nice,”

“No, she’s not and you haven’t seen the worst of it,”

“It gets worse than that?”

“Much worse. You should see her when she thinks she’s won,” Tyrion said as he shuddered at the memory. They walked in silence for a few moments until Asha brought him to a small room near the main castle courtyard.

“She’s in here. I’m off to find your rookery and maester to send a message back to Dragonstone informing them of our victory,”

“Please do, if my sister is right then we might have 20,000 of my father’s men besieging us shortly, having the support of a dragon or two would greatly help us get out of that jam. The Rookery is in the Northern part of the castle, keep going down the hall and then up the second flight of stairs,”

“Thanks, hopefully I don’t get lost in this huge castle of yours,” she said as she walked off. Tyrion watched her leave before he entered the room and he saw his Aunt Genna sitting at the table.

“Tyrion,” she said in an angry voice. “What is the meaning of this?”

“Aunt Genna, you don’t understand,” he started as he sat down but he was quickly interrupted.

“Your sister said that you were working with the Targaryens, but I would never have imagined this?”

“What happened Tyrion? What happened to our family?”

“My family tried to kill me!” Tyrion spat out, he was not entirely surprised that his father and sister failed to mention their plot. Aunt Genna looked much taken aback by this news.

“Who?”

“My father and sister,” Tyrion spat. “When we were in Kings Landing they planned to orchestrate an ‘accident’ for me,”

“How do you know this?” she asked as she grew paler.

“I overheard their conversation. Then when I returned to Westeros both Jaime and my father confirmed it to me,”

“Tyrion, I know your father may not love you as much as his other children,”

“He doesn’t love me at all,”

“But he would not try to kill you,” she said but Tyrion shook his head.

“Go and ask Jaime if you don’t believe me. He’s right here in this very castle,” Tyrion desperately
repeated and Aunt Gemma looked nervous before she slowly nodded.

“Tyrion, tell me everything and please don’t leave anything out. I have a feeling that Cersei and my brother may have missed some parts,”

Tyrion sighed and then launched into the full explanation, it took him the better part of an hour because Aunt Genna kept asking for more details but he finished and it seemed that she believed him.

“Tyrion, I am so sorry,” she said. “I can’t believe Tywin would do that,”

“He did something similar with Elia Martell and her children,” he muttered darkly.

“Tywin has had a difficult history with House Targaryen,” Genna said after a moment. “He was good friends with the Mad King growing up, they served together in the war of the Nine Penny kings. Then of course, as you know, he was his Hand. Their relationship soured towards the end and I don’t think it ever recovered,”

“I know. The Mad King refused his proposal to marry Cersei to Rhaegar and father took it as an insult,”

“Yes. Then there was also the rumors that the King allowed to circulate about himself and your mother.”

“What rumors?” Tyrion asked immediately as he leant forward in his chair.

“The Mad King made several rude and unsavory comments about your mother. He made it seem as if your mother was one of his mistresses,”

“Was she?” Tyrion asked stupidly and Aunt Genna looked as if she was going to slap him.

“Of course not. You know your father would never allow something like that to happen to him. He would sooner kill himself than suffer that shame and embarrassment,”

Tyrion was quiet after Aunt Genna spoke, he felt the beginnings of an idea forming in his head. He would have to do some research, but he could make it work. An evil and cruel smile began to creep on his face.

“Tyrion?” and he saw that Aunt Genna was looking at him curiously. “What are you thinking about?”

“Nothing,” Tyrion said as he stood up and rose to his feet. “I will see that you are put into appropriate accommodation. I’m afraid that you’ll have to be guarded but you won’t be in a cell,”

“Tyrion,” she called as soon as his hand reached the door. “What are you going to do about your father?

Tyrion paused for a moment before he gave her an innocent smile.

“I just want to have a little chat with him,”
They had left Storms End several weeks ago and had begun the long march along the Kings Road towards Kings Landing. The Spider had informed them that the Usurper was still somewhere in the Riverlands and this was good for them. They had slipped through the Kingswood undetected and now they were approaching the city of Kings Landing itself.

He had marched their army towards the King’s gate, it was the only gate appropriate for the rightful returning King and now he waited. Their Targaryen banners were fluttering proudly in the wind and he could see the Red Keep looming tall on Aegon’s high hill.

The King himself sat tall atop his war horse next to him, whilst their hostage, Renly was on his feet next to them. Jon had made sure that he was fed and looked well, he needed him. If using Renly failed, then they would be forced to use Varys and the network of secret tunnels that existed in the city.

The King was dressed well in his gleaming armor and he had his Valyrian steel blade tucked away by his side. He wore a Targaryen cloak over his shoulders and he looked every bit of the King that he truly was.

Prince Oberyn and Queen Arianne were also with them. Once the city was theirs, Oberyn would send word and the rest of the Dornish forces would march North to help secure the city. Jon did not think they would need them now, if the Spider was to be believed, it was only the city watch left protecting the city and they were only 2,000 or so strong. The men of the Golden Company would have no trouble taking the city if they needed to use force.

After spending far too long waiting outside of the city’s gates, a group of riders finally left the city to speak with them. From the looks of his gold cloak, he was a man of the city watch. As he got closer, Jon could see that he was a stout man with a bald head.

“You are in the presence of King Aegon Targaryen, rightful Lord of Westeros and Protector of the realm,” Jon announced as the man stopped.

“I am Ser Janos Slynt, Lord Commander of the City Watch,” he announced. Slynt? Jon frowned, he had never heard of that house. It was probably some minor house in the Crownlands.

“I am here to take back my family’s city and our throne,” Aegon said as he nudged his horse forward.

“I have been entrusted by his grace, Robert Baratheon to hold the city until he returns,” Janos answered and Jon noticed that he puffed out his chest with pride.

“We have his brother,” Aegon said as he waved towards Lord Renly who was shoved forward. “State your name and titles,” he commanded.

“I am Lord Renly Baratheon, Lord of Storms End, Master of Law and brother to King Robert Baratheon, first of his name,”

“The Usurper will never forgive you if you let his brother be harmed, open the city gates for me and order your Gold Cloaks to stand down,” the King ordered. Janos looked at the King with his mud brown eyes and then he slowly shook his head.
“King Robert will kill me anyway if I hand over his city. You’ll kill me as soon as you’re finished with me. I won’t do it,” he said slightly petulantly.

“Are you refusing your rightful King, Slynt?” Aegon asked and Jon saw him puff out his chest.

“You are just a boy. A boy with no dragons, might I add,” Slynt said scornfully and then Jon realised this method was going to prove fruitless.

“Lord Slynt,” he said calmly. He had to change approach and get him to want to help them. “You are Lord Commander of the City Watch for King Robert, but that is all you will ever be. The dragons are coming for him and he will not survive,”

Jon knew that it would be best to trick him, to get him to believe that they had the dragons on their side.

“Once he is defeated, we will take this city anyway, and we will start our new dynasty. Perhaps, we will need a new commander of our city watch or perhaps, the current one will get to keep his job,” Jon said as he let the words dangle in the air between them. He saw that he now had Slynt’s full attention and as he expected, the man was interested. Now, it was time to sweeten the deal.

“Forgive me, but where is the keep of House Slynt?” Jon asked.

“We don’t have a keep. We are only a new house from the Crownlands,” he said quickly as his ears started to go slightly red around the edges. He was embarrassed, just as Jon expected.

“Join us today and we will improve your house’s standings tenfold,” Jon said, “We will make you the Lord of Storms End and all its lands and incomes will pass to your descendants when you die.”

As expected, Slynt’s eyes lit up with greed.

“Storms End?” he whispered and Jon nodded. He would do no such thing, a man like Slynt was only loyal to his own pocket. He would soon betray them for the next man who offers him something better.

“The castle will be yours, all you have to do is open the city gates and have the City Watch stand down for us,” Jon repeated and then he looked at the King, who nodded in agreement. Janos looked at them both before he held out his hand.

“I believe we have a deal,” he said with a smile as Jon shook his slimy, sweaty hand. “Follow me,”

Janos turned his horse around and then led them back into the city towards the King’s gate. Jon led the way with the King and their men following. He nervously looked up at the tall pale, curtain walls that encircled the capital as they loomed up ahead. The King’s gate remained open and then they rode underneath the portcullis and then into the city itself.

They burst through the end of the tunnel and then finally, Jon Connington had returned to King’s Landing. Slynt’s Gold Cloaks lined the streets and they made sure the path was clear from any of the peasants who might try cause a scene and ruin their glorious return. Jon turned in his saddle to turn and look at his King who was looking at his city in amazement. Then, Jon turned to the crowd.

They were all staring back at him with blank faces and dull eyes. They were peasants, with old and ragged clothes. In their hands were their empty begging bowls. Jon frowned. Where were the richer upper class? Why weren’t they smiling? They should be happy to see their rightful King, they should be rejoicing now that Rhaegar’s son had finally returned home and freed them from the evil Usurper.
The crowd was silent as they made their procession through the cobbled city streets towards the Red Keep. The only noise came from the sound of the horses hooves on the stone streets. It was eerily quiet. No applause, no cheers. Just silence.

Jon did not know what to do, he didn’t understand what had happened to these people. He decided to increase the pace again, the sooner they got to the Red Keep the better it would be. They quickly rode through the stinking fish market, past the River gate and then they began the long ascent up Aegon’s high hill. House Baratheon flags fluttered at the top of the castle. Jon frowned, then smiled, soon those flags would be replaced by those belonging to House Targaryen.

The visage of the Red keep began to grow bigger and bigger and Jon could see its 7 huge towers poking out into the skyline. The massive stone curtain walls had nests and crenellations for their archers. The walls had great bronze gates and portcullises. It was a very defensible castle and with the huge scorpions already mounted on the city walls, it would be the perfect place to hold out against the dragons.

The gates to the castle slowly started to open as they approached and Jon saw that the Spider was waiting for them. He had hardly changed in all of those years.

“Lord Connington,” he said sweetly as he arrived. “It is so good to see you again after many long years. Thank you for taking care of our King,”

Jon gave him a false smile, he needed to have words with him later. He still wanted to know why he would hide the truth about Rhaegar’s survival for him. Varys seemed to sense his unease because he quickly turned towards the King.

“Your grace, I am Lord Varys, I served as the Master of Whispers under your grandfather and I am friends with Magister Illyrio,” he said with a low deep bow.

“You are friends with Magister Illyrio?” The King said in surprise and Varys nodded. “He is a kind man and a loyal supporter to our house. Send for him, he shall have his reward,”

“I will send a message to him your grace,” Varys said with another small bow.

“Lord Varys, you look well. Has the comfortable Kings Landing life been treating you well?”

“Comfortable? My life has been anything but comfortable as of late old friend,” he said with a sweet smile. “Ever since the great council I have had to lie low as they say. Although, I’m sure you of all people know what that is like,”

Jon opened his mouth to speak but Varys had already turned away.

“Forgive me, your grace. I know you must be tired after your travels but there is something that I would like to do today before you retire to your chambers,”

“What is that?” the King asked curiously as he dismounted and stepped foot in his rightful castle.

“Your coronation, your grace. We can hold it here in the throne room, there is no need to go to the Great Sept of Baelor ,” Varys said quickly and Jon agreed, there was something unsettling about that crowd. They were safe enough inside the walls of the Red Keep.

“Is it not tradition for me to be blessed by the High Septon?” he asked

“It is only a tradition your grace. I am sure we can do it at a later date,” Connington urged.
“Very well. Lead the way, Lord Varys,” the King ordered and Varys bowed again. He led them through the Red Keep. The King was amazed as he walked through his family’s castle and Jon did his best to give him a brief tour. He pointed out the various gathering halls and the basic layout of the castle for him. He told him where to find important places such as the White Sword Tower, the Tower of the Hand and Maegor’s holdfast.

He spent so long talking that he did not realise that they had approached the throne room. So much had changed since he had last been here. The candles burned low in their holders and they gave the room a slightly darker feel. Thankfully, Varys had the sense to take down the Baratheon banners, but the famous Dragon skulls were gone as well. The balconies overlooking the throne room were empty but that did not matter, the Iron Throne was still there.

The asymmetric monstrosity of spikes, barbs and twisted metal sat where it had always sat for the past 300 years. It looked as formidable and daunting as ever.

Jon watched as the King slowly walked up to the elevated throne and he slowly reached out one hand to touch it. He quickly pulled back.

“I cut myself,” he said as he wiped the blood of his finger.

“Your grace,” Prince Oberyn said. “My brother cannot be here but he entrusted me with something to give to you on this day,” and he stepped forward pulling a chest. He opened the chest and he pulled out a crown. It was a long band of Valyrian steel encrusted with rubies. Jon gasped and looked towards Oberyn and Arianne. Oberyn looked proud, whilst Arianne looked shocked. Her dark eyes were wide and she started to shake her head as she looked at her uncle, this confused Jon.

“Your grace, this is the crown of King Daeron, it was lost in Dorne many years ago and it has been in my family’s possession for years. This crown was once worn by Aegon the Dragon and my brother thought it would be fitting if you wore the crown in your reign. Aegon the Conqueror took Westeros 300 years ago and you King Aegon have taken it again,”

Jon’s chest swelled with happiness as he stepped forward with the crown. His King sat down on the Iron Throne, wincing slightly, before he settled and looked up at Prince Oberyn. Jon quickly turned around and saw that the throne room was filled with their men, all lucky enough to see this monumental event. There were even several of the smallfolk here, this was good, as they could spread the good news. He quickly realised that Varys must have opened the gates and allowed some of them in, likely in exchange for some food.

He turned away from those worthless peasants and focused on the true spectacle.

“I now proclaim you Aegon of House Targaryen, the 6th of his name. Trueborn son of Rhaegar Targaryen and Elia Martell of Dorne, the one true King of Westeros, Lord of the Seven Kingdoms and Protector of the realm,”

Oberyn stepped forward and placed the jeweled crown on the King’s head and then stepped back.

“Long may he reign,” he shouted as pride rushed through his body.

“Long may he reign,” Jon answered as his chest threatened to burst with happiness. He had finally done it, he had seated his best friend’s son on the throne. Years of ridicule and torment had now come to an end, he was successful.
A tear formed in his eye and slowly trickled down his face.

Now, he was finally worthy of his silver prince.

He looked up at his King sitting on his rightful throne. He had a wide smile on his face and his purple eyes were filled with happiness.

“Send a raven to Dragonstone,” he called after a few moments. “It’s time to tell my brother the good news,”

The Dragon King

Jon and Daenerys sat together in their tent and they listened to the rhythmic sound of the rain drops falling on their roof. He had taken his armor off and sat in a thin undershirt with Daenerys cuddled into his side on their bed. They sat sipping some hot tea as they waited for the storm to pass. The rain had intensified ever since they had set up camp and Jon was sure that they would not be moving again until the storm had passed. Ghost was curled up in the middle of the floor in front of them.

“This has to be one of the worst storms that I’ve ever seen,” Dany said as she took a small sip.

“Aye, although it’s nothing like the snowstorms we get in Winterfell,”

“The first time I saw the snow was in the Vale a few weeks ago,”

“Really?”

“Yes, I spent most of my childhood in Essos and it’s much hotter there than here,”

“Well, you haven’t seen true northern snow yet,”

“You’ll have to show me sometime,” she said quietly.

“What’s the matter?” he asked, he could tell she was unsettled about something.

“I don’t know, I just feel nervous about today. It doesn’t feel right,” Dany said as she turned around to face him.

Jon looked at her curiously.

“Did you dream about this?” he asked quietly and she shook her head.

“I didn’t dream, it’s just a feeling I’ve got,”

“Hmmm. Well, we should be safe here today, nothing will get through this storm. Daeron is back on Dragonstone and safe. We control the Blackwater and no ship will be able to approach the island. Father has Caraxes, everyone will be safe,” he said reassuringly and she nodded slowly before settling back into his side. He was grateful for her warmth.

“Yes, I suppose you’re right. Did I tell you that Daeron is teething?”
Jon smiled. “Yes, you did. He has his first tooth now,”

“He likes to chew on things more, the last time I saw him, he spent half the night chewing on my shoulder,”

“I can imagine,” Jon said with a chuckle.

“He also sings,”

“He sings now?” Jon asked in surprise.

“Yes. I think he wants to sing the same song that Rhaegar sung for him but he can’t pronounce the words so it all sounds like nonsense,” she said as she started to laugh and Jon quickly joined in.

“I can imagine. When did this happen?”

“I had finished feeding him and I put him down for a few minutes and then he started to sing on the floor. He didn’t even notice, he was just in his own little world playing with his rattle and singing,” she said happily.

“Does he walk much?”

“Not much. He still mostly crawls but the maesters say it’s fine and perfectly normal. He’ll get better with time”

“That’s good. I’ll spend some more time with him when we return. We’ll walk around the castle together,”

“Jon, he’s not Ghost, you can’t take him on walks,” Dany said as she laughed lightly.

“I know that, but Lord Stark used to do that with his children,” Jon said quietly as he recalled the memory. He had always found time in the evenings to do this for all his children. He was a good father to them, and to him as well.

Jon noticed that Ghost got up from the floor and he had started to edge towards the exit of their tent.

“Ghost, here boy,” Jon said but his wolf didn’t listen and this troubled Jon. The rain was still heavy and Jon was unable to hear what was going on outside. Then, the ground shook.

“The dragons,” Dany whispered as she immediately sat up. “Something is wrong. We need to get dressed,”

With her help, Jon quickly donned his armor again, not caring about the slight pain in his ribs before he helped her with hers. Once they were both dressed again, they stomped outside into the mud and freezing rain. As he listened to his feet squelch in the mud, he quickly realised that he was right to stop the march, their horses would not be going very far in this terrain.

Once they were outside they saw that the storm had somehow gotten even worse. The wind was picking up speed and the rain was blowing heavily in his face, so much so that he had to use his hand to block it. He followed Dany as she walked towards the dragons who landed in the middle of their camp. As they got closer, Jon could begin to feel Vedros’s unease.

“Khal! Khaleesi!” he heard a voice called and he turned to see that Aggo was quickly hurrying towards them. “We have spotted an army from the North,”

Jon froze, surely it could not be Robert Baratheon in these conditions. He would have to be mad to
march in this.

“What army? Did you see their flags? Their banners?” Jon asked but Aggo did not seem to understand him, the wind was too loud

“Banners? Flags?” Jon repeated, louder this time. “Did you see any?”

“Not clearly, too much rain. They looked yellow,” Aggo said and Jon nodded.

“Dany, it might be Robert,” he said as he leaned closer to her ear

“Then we will have to fight him. Aggo can you ride?” she asked.

“We will do our best for Khal and Khaleesi,” he said firmly but Jon shook his head.

“Dany, we can’t ride towards him. The wind is blowing into our face and that will cause the rain to blind our men,” Jon said and she quickly realised that he was right and nodded in agreement

“Then what should we do?”

“We stay on these hills and let them come to us. If he tries to charge his warhorses up the hill they’ll get bogged down in the mud and we will have two dragons waiting for them at the top,”

“What about archers?” she asked.

“I’m not sure how useful they will be. Their bowstrings will be wet and they won’t be able to see much due to the rain,” Jon said in a frustrated voice.

“So you just want to sit here and wait?” she asked and Jon nodded.

“We wait until the storm dies down a little and then we can go on the offensive with our Dothraki and our dragons,”

“Fine Jon, I trust you,” she said and then Jon turned to Aggo.

“Have all of our men form a protective ring around the dragons at the top of the hill. If they manage to charge up here, then the dragons will be able to scatter them using their flame,” Jon said and Aggo nodded before running off to complete his order.

“Dany, I need you to stay on Anogar and control the Dragons. Your job is to scatter them when they get too close,”

“I will, be safe, remember that you are injured, Jon,” she said as she gave him a quick wet kiss. Jon spotted a nearby horse and then jumped onto its back. He gripped the reins tightly and then slowly rode off to get the Dothraki into position. It was hard work and was not helped by the freezing rain that kept on tumbling down from the skies. He heard several loud claps of thunder and he wondered just how strong this storm was. Robert Baratheon must have sensed that this was his best chance, but surely this storm was too heavy even for him.

The storm continued to rage over their heads as Jon sat in position on top of his horse. He could barely see the enemy army at the foot of the hill, the rain was driving too hard in his face and it limited his vision greatly. He wrapped his cloak tightly around himself and tried to keep warm as he waited.
It felt like he was waiting for hours on top of that hill. He was beginning to wonder if Robert actually had any intentions of attacking or whether he was just trying to get them all to freeze to death in this cold rain. He was about to turn and speak to Dany when the first wave hit them.

He heard loud shouting coming from the hill and Jon realised that the rain was so intense that he had been unable to see their approach.

Several knights on black warhorses crested the hill and began to charge at their line. However, it was far too muddy and their horses could not pick up any real speed. Their charge lost all cohesion and momentum and their Dothraki was able to easily beat away this attack with arrows.

Several horses and knights fell whilst the majority managed to escape. As the Usurper’s army fell away down the hill and Jon was tempted to give the order to chase them however he decided against it. The storm was still too heavy.

Jon realised that he could not afford to leave his army in limbo like this so he issued some more orders. Some of his men would rest whilst the others would stand guard at the top of the hill until the next wave of attacks hit. Jon had no idea when the Usurper would attack next and so he could not afford to have his entire army standing around doing nothing and getting tired. He had to use his resources to the best of his ability.

Once his wave of orders have been carried out, Jon pushed his wet hair out of his eyes and began his watch again.

It was the middle of the night when the Usurper attacked again. Jon had been freezing in the saddle for hours at this point but he could not go inside. His hands were starting to go numb from the cold but he still remained in position. He was in-charge and he would have to stay. The Usurper sent more of his heavy horse up the hill but their Dothraki batted them away again with ease. Only a handful of Robert’s horse made it to their line, the rest gave up halfway up the hill.

Perhaps, Robert was trying to catch them unaware, maybe he hoped that they were sleeping, either way Robert had failed. Jon watched as the enemy army retreated down the hill as the storm continued to rage.

It was the early hours of the morning when Jon felt the storm start to relent. He could see faint streaks of orange light struggling to break through the wall of grey clouds. The wind had died down and the rain was no longer as heavy. Still, Jon was freezing cold and very stiff after sitting in his saddle all night.

However, the rain dying down meant that they were at an advantage. Soon, the dragons could take to the sky and then they would be able to defeat Robert Baratheon once and for all. He turned in his saddle to see that Daenerys was still sat in her saddle atop Anogar, she had clearly also spent the night watching and waiting.

Then he turned back towards the hill and saw that Robert Baratheon had reached a similar conclusion. With the rains weakening, his window of attack was closing and it was now or never for him. He had sent his spearmen forward and unlike the heavy horse, they were able to make better progress up the muddy slopes.

Jon frowned, it was still too muddy to use the Dothraki but he had something better in mind.

“Fall back,” Jon shouted to the Dothraki and they quickly obeyed. Then he turned around and rode back to Anogar and Vedros who were awaiting further up the hill. Due to the angle of the slope, Jon was sure that they would not be able to see the dragons, not until it was too late. He rode up to
Vedros’s left but remained in his saddle

“Riders get ready!” Jon shouted. He knew that with the weather turning, this would be the final attack. He wanted the Dothraki to be ready to help clean up the fight after the Dragons had their fun. Jon tensed in his saddle with one hand on Darkfyre and he felt Ghost to his left.

The spearmen slowly crested the hill and they were quickly followed by more knights. Jon had not expected this, he thought that Robert would abandon his cavalry charge due to the muddy ground but he was clearly mistaken.

The mounted knights were now picking up speed and they would be on them soon. Some horses floundered on the muddy slopes but the majority of the line stayed united.

That was until Anogar roared.

His roar was loud and carried far across the land and the Usurper’s warhorses immediately panicked and fled in terror. Some threw their riders off in fear and others turned around and fled. The air was filled with the horse’s panicked cries and Jon smiled at the chaos that they had caused. To his right he saw the spearmen approach and so did Dany. She turned her dragon towards them and burnt them all to a crisp.

“Dothraki! Charge!” Jon yelled and the Dothraki answered in unison. They began to charge down the muddy hill to chase down Robert’s fragmented army and the thunderous sound of their hooves sounded loud in his ears. He saw Anogar pass overhead to fly past them and then release his black flame to burn the ground surrounding the hill. Jon saw Vedros do the same on the other side.

Jon understood what they were doing, they were sealing them off with their flame so that no one could escape. The Dothraki quickly overtook him, they were showing their riding prowess even in these poor conditions. Soon the air was filled with the sounds of men screaming and dying as the Dothraki easily cut through them.

Jon kept his eyes peeled, he needed to find and kill Robert Baratheon, it was imperative to ensure that the city would fall soon after. He reached the bottom of the hill and craned his neck from side to side, desperately hoping for a glimpse of him. Then, he saw Ghost bolt off to the right and Jon quickly followed.

He found Robert Baratheon battling 3 Dothraki and winning and he saw several dead Dothraki at Robert’s feet. Jon cursed and quickly dismounted his horse.

“Robert Baratheon!” he yelled and Robert finished killing the man he was fighting before turning to face him. He was clad from head to toe in steel armor and he wore a cape with his house’s sigil on his back. Robert saw him and yelled with rage before charging forward with his huge warhammer.

Jon quickly raised his sword before dodging under his first attack, a savage blow that tried to bash his head in with one clean strike. Jon heard the air whistling past his ears as he ducked. After he stepped under Robert’s strike, he quickly turned and tried to drive his sword through the back of Robert’s knee. Whether due to incredible speed or dumb luck, Robert’s leg moved at the last moment.
Jon immediately lowered his stance and moved quickly on his feet. He had fought bigger men before, Khal Drogo and the Mountain, Robert Baratheon was just more of the same.

They danced together for a few minutes as Jon tried to get a feel for his range. Robert was wild and swung his warhammer with plenty of ferocity and Jon knew that he would have to be careful. Jon side stepped another wild swing before launching another strike of his own. He swung his sword hard and with all his strength into the side of Robert’s armor and the Valyrian steel easily cut through the metal. Robert howled in pain and he swung his hammer blindly in his direction and this meant Jon was unable to follow up on the strike.

Robert faced him again and Jon went onto the offensive. He threw a feint towards Robert’s unguarded head. Robert raised his hammer to block it but at the last moment, Jon brought his sword downwards and cut Robert’s hand.

“Fuck. You bastard!” he yelled as blood poured out of the back of his mangled hand. Jon did not stop to listen to his petty insults as he lined up his next strike. He moved from side to side as he surveyed Robert, sizing him up like a piece of meat.

Robert’s hand was bleeding profusely and this meant that he was unable to use both hands to wield his weapon. His ruined left hand hung limp to his side.

Jon decided to press his advantage. He threw numerous quick jabs at Robert, some at his face, others at his chest and legs. Robert was unable to block them all and soon Jon could see little rivers of red beginning to fall down his face from all the cuts. Jon spotted an opening and then he lunged forward, trying to slice through his neck. But he slipped slightly in the mud and his strike missed. He quickly stuck his sword into the ground to try to regain his balance but this meant that he was now completely exposed.

He saw Robert’s fat face light up with glee as he brought his warhammer up over his head to try and crush Jon’s skull. Jon began to throw himself out of the way but he knew that he would not get out in time.

Suddenly, Robert Baratheon was knocked to the floor and Ghost was on topping of him pinning him to the ground. Robert’s arms failed from side to side as he tried to knock Ghost off him.

Jon realised this was his chance. He lunged forward, Ghost dove out of the way and then Jon drove his sword through Robert Baratheon’s throat. Crimson blood spurted up high into the air and blood spilled out the corners of his mouth. Robert writhed and squirmed on the ground as Jon twisted his sword and dragged it down his body and through his steel armor.

Pools of blood poured out of his chest and Jon kept going, determined to enact some revenge for what he did to his father. Rage flowed through Jon’s veins as he continued to gut Robert Baratheon and eventually he stilled.

Robert Baratheon laid motionless in the mud in front of him. His blue eyes were still and unmoving in his head. Blood pouring out of his ruined chest and throat. Jon looked at him and realised that the battle was won.

Vedros roared loudly overhead and let off a celebratory blast of bright green flame. Jon was breathing heavily and he looked around the battlefield. Everyone had seen Robert Baratheon fall and his forces were scattering like a rain of needles. Their Dothraki were already riding out to round them up, Jon hoped that they would get the majority of them.
He saw Rakharo striding towards him.

“Well fought, my Khal,” he said in a deep voice.

“Thank you. Guard his body. We need to prove that he is dead,” Jon said and Rakharo nodded. Then he felt the ground shake and he looked and saw that Anogar had landed next to him. Dany scrambled off his back and ran towards him.

“Did we do it?” she asked and then she looked over his shoulder to and she saw Robert lying there in the mud.

“We did my love,” he said happily as she leapt into his arms and kissed him. They kissed and they held onto each other for a few moments as the wave of relief passed over them. The hard part was done and Robert Baratheon was dead. Now the people in Kings Landing had no reason to fight them and the city should fall with ease.

But first, there was something he had to do.

“Let’s go home, I miss my boy,” he said with a wide smile.

**The Lord of Winterfell**

Ned Stark sat atop his horse just North of the Twins and on the Northern banks of the Green fork. They had finally reached their border with the Riverlands and Ned decided to go no further. He still had not received word from Jon and his response to the terms and this concerned Ned.

Perhaps, something happened to the letter although Ned was not sure who would ever think to gain something from that. Ned was sure that Catelyn would have sent a rider south if Jon had sent a response, this could only mean that something went wrong and Jon never received a raven.

Regardless of that, Ned knew that the letter did not affect his goal, he had rode south to bend the knee and to make steps to repair their relationship.

To his surprise, Rhaegar Targaryen had come North to meet them. Ned had not expected this, he would have thought that he was with Jon fighting against Robert Baratheon. Rhaegar would be able to explain what happened to the letter at the very least. Ned had accepted his request for a talk under a peace banner and he was currently awaiting his arrival.

He sat atop his horse with Robb to his right and other Stark men behind them. Ned did not know all of these men personally, there were several that he had not seen before. He had decided to leave his bannermen slightly behind back at their camp. He had not seen them since the morning. The men that he had brought with him had all carried their weapons but no one wore real battle armor. They would be speaking under a peace banner after all.

Ned saw the cream and gold dragon flying overhead, he had not seen this one before but it was still as intimidating and awe inspiring as the others. Ned watched as the dragon flew and twirled
overhead in the air. It was high enough not to be seen as a threat, but low enough to remind them all of his presence.

He was so engrossed with the Dragon’s flight, that he did not notice the Targaryen banners approaching. Then he saw him.

Prince Rhaegar sat atop a white mare dressed in light armor, only a black Targaryen jerkin, still Ned could see his blade strapped to his waist. The jeweled handle still managing to sparkle brightly even on this cloudy day. He came with a small party of men, only 5 or so. Small compared to the 20 that Ned had brought.

Ned dismounted his horse and handed the reins to Robb. He walked towards Rhaegar and he too dismounted and handed over the reins to his horse. They stopped a few paces apart and Ned looked at his face. He really had not changed all that much over the years. His long silver hair fell just to the top of his shoulders, his dark purple eyes were as distinctive as ever. He was looking at him cautiously.

“Lord Stark,” he said in a calm, polite voice.

“Prince Rhaegar,” Ned replied, his voice also formal.

Rhaegar paused for a moment, it looked like he was considering something. Then he offered out his hand.

“Rhaegar,” he said cautiously and Ned looked at his hand for a brief moment before he reached out to shake it.

“Ned,” he said as they firmly shook hands. This filled Ned with a small wave of confidence. Confidence that their relationship could be improved.

“Ned. Why have you marched your army south?” Rhaegar asked.

“I marched south to bend the knee to Jon. He is the rightful King and I want to swear fealty to him,” he said firmly and Rhaegar nodded slowly.

“That’s good to hear, but why the change of heart?” he asked curiously and Ned sighed.

“I spoke to Howland Reed and it seems that there is some truth to the conspiracy you told us about at the council. I realised that if I was wrong about that, then I could be wrong about the other things I said,” Ned admitted and Rhaegar nodded.

“It takes a brave man to admit that he is wrong,” Rhaegar said as he nodded slowly. “Shall we walk?” he said and Ned nodded. They began to walk together along the banks of the green fork in a comfortable silence.

“I’d like to thank you for raising Jon when I couldn’t,” Rhaegar said after a few moments. “He is a good man and I only have you to thank for that,”

“Aye. He is a good lad. You are lucky to have a son like him,” Ned said quietly.

“I know. He’ll be a good King for Westeros, better than I would have been,” Rhaegar said and again the conversation fell silent. They were near the bank of the Green fork, on a series of rocks that hung over the river. As he turned around he could see the rest of his men, some of them seemed to have lost interest and had gone elsewhere.
“I am sorry about Lyanna,” Rhaegar said quietly. “I handled the situation poorly. I was the Crown Prince and I abandoned my duty and responsibilities to my wife and to the realm,”

“Aye. You could have handled it better. But what’s done is done. I was wrong to judge you the way that I did. You are a good man Rhaegar, Lyanna would not settle for anything less,” Ned said and once again the conversation stopped for a few moments. Ned felt like they were making progress here and this was good.

“Where is Jon?” he asked.

“He is with Daenerys and the Dothraki, they should be riding North, looking for Robert,” Rhaegar said and Ned nodded. Robert did not stand a chance against the Dragons and as if to prove his point, the cream and gold dragon flew overhead once more.

“Did you receive our letter?” Ned asked.

“The letter where you asked for leniency on the Tully’s?” Rhaegar asked and Ned nodded.

“Yes, we received and it we replied. Jon and Dany decided to strip the Tullys as their position as Lord Paramount but they have allowed them to keep their lands and other titles. We sent a reply to Winterfell,” Rhaegar said but Ned shook his head.

“That doesn’t make sense. Catelyn would have sent a rider south to tell us of this. I instructed her to do so,”

“Maybe the letter was lost?” Rhaegar suggested.

“Maybe,” Ned said quietly. He felt as if something was amiss here

“I don’t mean to be rude but I have to get going. Jon and Dany may need my help and I can’t stay here much longer,” Rhaegar said and Ned nodded in agreement. “I will relay the message to Jon and Dany and we will speak more after the war,”

“Yes, that sounds like the best course of action,” Ned said as he held out one hand to shake. They shook hands firmly before starting to walk back towards the rest of his men. More men had come from their camp and Ned was unsure as to why. He began to turn towards Robb to ask why these men had come forward but then he heard a loud noise like a bolt being fired followed by a loud cry of pain.

He turned towards the noise and it felt as if his heart had stopped.

Rhaegar Targaryen was falling to the floor in pain and Ned could clearly see a crossbow bolt in his side. Half of the shaft still visible. Ned watched as he fell, almost in slow motion to his knees. Ned could not move, he didn’t understand. It didn’t make sense. He was snapped out of his trance when Rhaegar cried out again as the second bolt hit him in the back of his leg, right in his thigh

Ned turned his head around quickly and searched for the attacker. He saw several men in Stark uniforms throwing their crossbows to the ground and then trying to slip away back to camp. Ned had not seen these men before. One man had turned his back and slipped away but the other turned back towards the scene He was very tall and had a long thin face and thick coarse black hair on his face. He looked Ned straight in his eyes and then he shouted.

“For Winterfell!” and then he was gone.

Ned quickly turned back to Rhaegar and ran over to him. He rolled him over onto his back and he
saw that he was bleeding. Before he could inspect the wound further he was thrown backwards onto the ground.

“Lord Stark! How could you do this!” the man yelled and Ned saw that it was Ser Barristan. He bent over by Rhaegar’s side and Ned was rooted to the spot. Rhaegar Targaryen was dying in front of his eyes, and he had no idea who had ordered this.

No, he could not worry about that now. He had to go and help him. He could be healed, he just needed a maester. The wound was not too deep. Not yet. They had to be quick. The Twins was not too far away and they had a maester. Ned was sure that Rhaegar would live.

He had to live.

Ned began to crawl back towards Rhaegar but he was grabbed by his shoulders by several strong men. He quickly turned his head from left to right and he tried to fight out of it but the men were too strong. They lifted him off his feet and quickly carried him away.

“NO!” he yelled “Put me down. I have to help him! He can’t die!”

But the men did not stop.

“Lord Stark, we need to go. The dragon could start to attack us at any minute,” one man said. His voice was familiar. Was it Jory? Ned hoped that it was.

He looked up in the sky and saw that he was right. The Dragon was swooping lower and lower and Ned was sure that they would soon see its flame. The dragon dropped lower and began to open its jaws and Ned could see pale golden fire bubbling deep down its throat. Ned was sure this was the end.

But instead of breathing its fire, the dragon screeched sadly and it flew back up into the air and towards its rider. Ned did not understand. He did not understand why the dragon had stopped, he did not understand who had tried to kill Rhaegar, he did not understand who had intercepted the letter that the Targaryens had sent to him and he did not understand who was trying to blame him for this.

However, there was one thing that he did understand.

Ned Stark understood that somewhere along the banks of the Green fork, Rhaegar Targaryen was lying in the mud, dying.

Chapter End Notes

The next chapter is called 'Aftermath'

It's slightly shorter and I'll give it to you guys a bit sooner than usual. Most likely sometime this weekend.

Regarding Roose, his plan leaving Winterfell wasn't to kill Rhaegar or anyone in specific. His plan was to create and increase the division between the Targaryens and the Starks, especially after the argument he saw at the council. What we saw here, was Roose making an opportunity for himself.
Let me know what you think.

Thanks for reading
Sleepy
As promised, here is Aftermath, which deals with the fallout of the last chapter.

Thanks to GOT88 for the help provided with this story.

The Mother of Dragons

Daenerys Targaryen was sitting inside the nursery as she loosened her hair and undid the braids. There was a fire blazing in the brazier which provided the room with a pleasant warmth. After they had defeated Robert Baratheon, they had quickly flown to meet up with the Tyrell army to give them the good news and their next instructions. They were to begin their march towards Kings Landing along with their Dothraki and Unsullied whilst she and Jon spent a few days with their son back at Dragonstone before joining them. It would be a respite only for a few days but she would cherish these days with her family nonetheless.

Whilst she sorted her hair, she watched Jon and Daeron playing together on the floor. Jon had raced back to Dragonstone to see him and Dany’s heart melted as he ran into the nursery and scooped up their son into his arms. The laughs and giggles that Daeron had made at the sight of his father again had been priceless.

She watched them playing together now. Daeron sat in the middle of the floor playing with his blocks whilst Jon sat opposite him holding his rattle. Every few moments, Jon would shake it to gain Daeron’s attention but to her amusement, Daeron did not seem to be interested. His little face was scrunched with concentration as he picked up one block and tried to stack it on top of the other.

“Are you building a Tower?” Jon asked softly as he watched him but Daeron didn’t even acknowledge him, he was busy staring at the block in his hand.

“Be quiet Jon, he’s focusing,” Dany said lightly as she held back a laugh. Daeron picked up the block and tried to place it on top of the others but he knocked them over in the process.

“Here, let me help,” Jon said as he moved over to him. Jon sat behind him and together they managed to build a tower, only five blocks high. Daeron smiled and laughed at the sight. He reached
down for another block to try and stack on top but he ended up knocking the whole thing over which
surprisingly, didn’t dampen his spirits. He laughed at the mess he made and then he turned around
and buried his face in Jon’s shoulder.

Seeing the two of them brought a smile to her face, all they needed to complete this joyful family
picture was Rhaegar’s expected arrival. She undid the last braid and shook her long hair out before
she reached for the comb and started to brush her hair. She had given her handmaidens, Doreah and
Jhiqui the evening off, as thanks for looking after Daeron whilst they were away.

She looked at him and saw that Jon had him on his back and was now making loud noises on his
stomach. She smiled at the pair of them before looking out of the window. They had arrived early in
the afternoon and now it was late in the evening and the sun had nearly set.

“Come on boys, it’s time to eat,” she said as she put her brush down on the table. A few servants had
brought up their meal from the kitchen and set it down on the table next to her.

“I don’t think that he’s hungry,” Jon answered as he tickled Daeron some more. Dany rolled her eyes
and decided to join in the fun.

“Daeron, come to mama,” she said as she walked over towards them and crouched down. “Come for
some dinner,”

Daeron heard her voice and then he rolled over onto his front and began to crawl towards her. Jon
helped him to his feet and he slowly made the last few steps over to her.

“Mama,” he said loudly as he got closer to her. He expectantly held up his arms towards her.

“Good boy,” she said as she picked him up and gave him a kiss.

“Shouldn’t we wait for father to arrive ?” Jon asked as he too stood up.

“We will, but I want to feed him first before it gets too late,” Dany said as she sat down on the table
and balanced Daeron in her lap.
"I’ll feed him something solid first. It’ll help now that he’s teething,” she said as she selected a piece of carrot from the plate. She tried it herself first, it was not too hot and not too soft. She cut off a small piece and gently put it near his lips for him to chew. “He’ll chew on this for a while before he eats it,”

“How are you feeling?” she asked as they ate their meals. It was difficult to cut her venison with Daeron in her lap, so Jon cut her meat for her before handing back the plate.

“My ribs are a little sore but they didn’t affect me too much during the fight,” Jon said as he ate and then he pointed to Daeron who was trying to reach for her plate. Dany smiled and cut another piece of carrot for him to eat.

“I can’t believe we were up all night in that rain,” she said as she shuddered at the memory. “I have never been that cold and miserable in my entire life,”

“Aye. I understand why he did it though, it was his best chance to defeat us. He overplayed his hand though, the rain was too heavy and his heavy horse was useless. I think that spending all night in the rain destroyed his men’s morale because the next morning, they did not put up much of a fight as we charged down the hill,”

“Or it was the sight of two huge dragons flying towards them,” Dany replied with a smile. Daeron was quiet in her lap as he slowly chewed his piece of carrot and Dany pressed a kiss to his head.

“On to Kings Landing next,” Jon said as he took a sip of his drink. “We will march our armies to the gates and then we will take back the city,”

“We should also bring plenty of food for the common folk. Ser Davos informed us that the city was starving and that situation is unlikely to have gotten better,” Daenerys said and Jon nodded.

“We will call back our ships and use a few to ferry food into the city. Although, it would probably be better if we take the food into the city by land,”

“We control the Blackwater Bay and no one in the city will fight against us. Why can’t we just sail them down the Blackwater?” Dany asked curiously

“That’s a good point. Although, I think it would look better if we entered united. If the people of King’s Landing see an armada sailing down the Blackwater, it could look bad,” Jon replied.
“As opposed to seeing three dragons flying above their city?” Dany said with a small smile which Jon returned.

“How about we worry about that tomorrow?” he said and Dany nodded in agreement.

“I agree,” Dany said and then she looked down at Daeron who had started to squirm in her lap as he reached for the plate. “Would you like some more carrot, Sweetling? I think you do,” She cut him another small piece of carrot for him to chew on as she took another bite of her meal. The food was warm and flavored well. The onions and peas gave it a rich taste that she savored.

“Our work is still not over after we take the city,” Dany said and Jon nodded.

“Aye. We still need to deal with the Dornish. We have received no word from them at all ever since we arrived on Dragonstone. I think that father is right and they are hiding Illyrio’s son,” Jon proposed.

“I agree. We will have to send a raven and request that they come to Kings Landing to treat with us. Hopefully, they accept our request. I also think we should fly North to see the Northern Lords and to speak with them again in person,” Dany said.

“I agree. Although, I’d like to take Daeron with us as well, he hasn’t met his Northern family yet and I want to change that,” Dany frowned slightly. “That might be difficult. He’s not old enough to fly on a dragon. We’d have to ride all the way North with him and I don’t want to do that in these cold and harsh weather conditions,” she said and she saw Jon also frown so she quickly continued.

“How about, we fly North first to speak with the Northern Lords and then after, on our way South we can bring them with us. I’m sure Arya would love a ride on Vedros,” and Jon smiled.

“Aye, she’ll probably hit me for not coming to get her sooner,”
“You’ve told me a lot about her and I can’t wait to meet her,” Dany said with a smile. She looked
down at Daeron who was starting to nod off in her lap. “I think it’s time for bed for this one,”

“I think I tired him out,” Jon said with a smile as he stood up and opened his arms “Here, I’ll get him
settled for bed and then I’ll come back for you,”

“For me?” Dany asked curiously as she handed over their son

“Yes, you. I mean to tire you out tonight. I’ve been without my Queen for far too long,” he said in a
deep voice which caused blood to rush to her loins.

“You have. We have a lot of catching up to do,” she said as she rose to her feet to press a gentle kiss
to his lips. She let the kiss linger before leaving the nursery, making sure to exaggerate the sway of
her hips as she left.

She began to make the short walk to their rooms when she saw the Maester arrive.

“Your grace,” Maester Pylos said. “Another raven has arrived ,”

“Another one, what happened to the first?” Dany asked.

“His grace told me to keep it until the morning, he said that he did not wish for you to be disturbed
this evening,” he said and Dany nodded. She was thankful for this, it was good to have a small
evening together as a family.

“Show me the messages,” she said. She saw no harm in reading them now. If it was something
important, then the sooner they knew the better and if it wasn’t important then they could deal with
them tomorrow.

He reached into his robes and handed her three scrolls and she quickly opened the first one.

It was from Tyrion. He had successfully taken Casterly Rock but they had not defeated the
remaining parts of the Lannister army stationed in Lannisport. As a result they were trapped in the
castle, effectively under siege. Dany sighed but she was not too concerned. They had defeated
Tywin Lannister in battle and those Lannister men had nothing to fight for.

If what Tyrion said was true about Casterly Rock’s defenses, then they would be able to withstand a siege, certainly until the morning. She read the message again and she realised that if they were in imminent danger, Tyrion would have made that clear. He would definitely survive until the morning.

Then, she turned to the second scroll and broke the seal and read, and then she felt her stomach drop and the room begin to spin. She did not open the third scroll, instead she turned around and sprinted back into the Nursery to find Jon.

He was sitting down near the crib singing softly to Daeron but he quickly looked up as he saw her panicked entry into the room.

“Dany what’s wrong?”

“Rhaegar. He’s in trouble. Something happened to him at the Twins,” she blurted out breathlessly.

“Dany, what happened? Is he well?” he said as he crossed over to her and Dany felt tears coming to her eyes.

“No Jon, it was from Ser Barristan. He’s dying,” she sobbed.

The Princess of Dorne

Arianne Martell was seated in the small council chambers of the Red Keep. Her husband, and now King, sat at the head of the table with his fool, Connington next to him. The Spider and her Uncle, Prince Oberyn made up the rest of the occupants within the room.

They had taken the capital, and this had been much more than she ever expected from them. She had expected them to fail at Storms End and then again outside of Kings Landing but Connington had surpassed expectations, which would surely disappoint her father.
She was following his orders after all.

When news first came from Essos that Viserys was dead and they would not be getting the support of the dragons, her father’s careful years of planning had completely fallen apart. There would be no revenge against the Lannisters or the Baratheons for what they did to Princess Elia and her children, none at all.

That was until this boy had arrived with his sellsword army claiming to be her son. Arianne had been skeptical of it at first, she still was in fact. It was too good to be true. This boy was pretending to be her aunt’s son and the key to their revenge. A boy that the whole world thought of as dead.

Arianne studied him now as he was seated opposite her. He wore his shiny crown upon his head and he wore a rich expensive robe that he had found somewhere in the castle. She looked at the lines on his face, the shape of his jaw, the shade of his eyes. His eyes were so dark blue that they looked purple. He was a handsome boy, but not the son of Elia.

Although she supposed her father already knew that. He was never one to explain his entire plan but she had been smart enough to work out what he wanted. He was to use this boy to win back the throne and he had sent her to seduce him. That part had been easy enough. During that first time it was as if the poor boy had never seen a pair of breasts before.

After that, she had to control him, wrap him around her finger to make Dorne the true power behind the Iron Throne. That part had been going well, until they took Storms End. Ever since then, her husband had gained more confidence and she couldn’t control him like she used to.

To make matters worse, her uncle had given him a crown.

Arianne had hated it when he did that, it had made him even bolder and he listened less and this worried her. This whole thing would be for nothing if she could not control him properly. In fact, Arianne had half a mind to speak to her Uncle about heading back to Dorne and cutting ties with these pair of fools.

Her marriage could easily be annulled, she had been careful and remembered to take moon tea and as a result, she was not pregnant with his child. The only witnesses to the union were her family in Dorne. No one would take the word of the disgraced Jon Connington over Prince Doran Martell.

They would take the Dornish armies with them as well. Due to her careful planning, the Dornish
army was still at full strength, whilst the Golden Company had been weakened when they took Storms End. She would have to speak to her Uncle privately after the meeting, and somewhere far away from the Spider and his spies.

She did not trust Lord Varys. He knew more about her than she did about him and that meant that he was dangerous. She eyed him across the table and he gave her a smile in return.

“Let’s start this meeting, shall we? I fail to see what’s so important” her husband said from his position at the head of the table. He was laid back in his seat and he raised his feet and put them on the table. He had a wide smile on his face, like all his hard work had finally paid off.

“Your grace. The usurper has been defeated. Slain by your half-brother in the Riverlands,” Lord Varys said solemnly and Arianne’s eyes widened. That was not what she wanted to hear. That meant that the real Targaryens had won, and they and their dragons would be coming for them. She looked at her Uncle who did not look surprised by the information. He continued to sit there and inspect the dirt under his fingernails.

Connington however had allowed a brief wave of terror to pass over his face but it returned to that hard mask that he frequently wore. Arianne could see through him though, she knew that he had hoped that Baratheon would win and spare him the trouble of dealing with the dragons.

“As expected,” her husband said with a lazy wave of his arm. “We have sent word to Dragonstone already. My little brother should send a response any day now,”

“I think we should prepare for their dragons,” Arianne said to the table but her husband just scoffed.

“He is my brother. Why would he fight me?” he asked humorously and Arianne bit the inside of her cheek and took a deep breath before answering.

“You have taken the throne, he might be jealous,” she said evenly and Connington nodded in agreement.

“I agree, jealousy can cause a man to do heinous things. We should prepare,” Connington said.

“Fine,” he said as he sighed and leaned forward and rubbed his temples. “I take it you have something in mind,”
“Modifications to the Scorpions,” Connington said eagerly

“Why do they need to be modified?

“They don’t, but these changes will make them more effective,” Oberyn said as he finally joined the conversation. Arianne frowned at him, was he really trying to fight them?

“What changes do you have in mind?” Aegon asked.

“Poison,” Oberyn replied with a smile. “My daughter, Sarella who was studying at the Citadel, stole an item for us. The blackened and bloody tome called ‘Blood and Fire,’” it details several techniques that we can use to kill the dragons,”

“Do you know how to make the necessary poison?” Varys asked and Oberyn shrugged.

“No, but I’m sure we’ll find someone who can. It looks fairly complex but I’m sure someone can do it. The city has Alchemists right?” Oberyn asked.

“Yes, although I fear that they may have fled the city. During the end of Robert’s reign, he locked the city gates and kept most of the people in the city but once he marched away, the gold cloaks did not bother trying to stop them,” Varys said.

“And how would you know that?” Arianne asked.

“I was disguised as one of the common folk for months. It’s amazing what you can learn when you are one with the people,” Varys said.

“We will need men to man the Scorpions anyway,” Oberyn announced

“Black Balaq will do that job well,” Connington said.
“Who is that?” Oberyn asked

“The commander of the Golden Company’s archers. He is the best archer that we have, he and his men will man the scorpions,”

“You are worried for nothing,” her husband said from his position at the head of the table.

“This is nothing but a dispute between brothers, it will all be resolved peacefully,”

What if it wasn’t? What if he did not back down and instead chose to unleash their dragons on them? Arianne wanted to ask but she bit her tongue. She would voice her concerns to her Uncle privately afterwards. This was not the place. Instead, she put her arms into her lap and waited.

“Do we have anything else to discuss today?” he asked.

“Your grace, we should do something about the common folk,” Lord Varys said and her husband gave him a confused look.

“What do you mean?”

“Your grace, they're starving and unhappy, we should do something to win them to your side,” the Spider said and her husband pondered this for a moment. He scratched his chin as he searched for an answer.

“Prince Oberyn, how much food can the Dornish spare?”

“Not enough to feed Kings Landing,” Arianne replied quickly and she saw her Uncle give her a quick glance.

“I am sure you have some to share,” Connington countered as he leant forward on the table.

“We have to feed our armies and our own people. We will have very little left over to transport to Kings Landing”
“Your armies? I had nearly forgotten about your armies, they have been absent from the battlefield,” Connington said as he glared at her and she held his gaze. She was not afraid of him.

“You are the one who made the battle plans, Lord Connington,” she said. “If you wanted the support of the Dornish, all you had to do was ask,”

“Where are your soldiers now? Wherever they are, I want them here, helping to reinforce the city” he demanded and Arianne frowned.

“Lord Connington, you forget yourself. I am your Queen. You do not get to make demands of me,” she said firmly as she glared at him and then she turned to her husband. His purple eyes were flicking between the pair of them nervously.

“That’s enough,” he said quietly. “If the Dornish can’t support us, then we will have to find another way to feed my people,”

Arianne and everyone else looked at him after he said that and she quickly realised that he had no ideas of his own. Arianne sighed and then Connington spoke,

“We could buy food from Essos,” he suggested.

“Unlikely,” the Spider quickly replied. “Your brother and Queen Daenerys have alliances with the free cities of Volantis, Braavos and Pentos as well as the former slaver cities. Any food from Essos will likely come from them and they may not be willing to support us,”

“We could lie,” Connington suggested. “Tell them that the Targaryens in Kings Landing are requesting aid. They would not know which one,”

Arianne gave a small shake of her head. Lies and deception seemed to be Connington’s method of solving any problem that he was faced with.

“Your lie would be pointless,” her Uncle replied. “It would take months for ships to travel from Essos to Westeros and to get here they would have to pass Dragonstone and the Blackwater where they will be stopped and turned around. Essos can’t help us,”
“Then, what can we do?” Aegon asked and she heard a slight hint of desperation creep into his voice.

“Nothing,” Lord Varys said. “We can do nothing until you meet with your brother and join his strength to ours.”

Arianne looked at him curiously. She could not believe that the Spider, honestly believed that this would end peacefully. His face was an unreadable mask so she turned to her husband, who looked unsettled.

“These are my people. I am their King. I can’t leave them to starve,” he said angrily and then he quickly stood up and knocked the chair back.

“I have had enough of this small council meeting, you are all dismissed,” and with that, he quickly stomped out of the room. Arianne remained at the table for a few more moments, not wanting to speak to anyone other than her Uncle.

“Uncle, a word please,” she said as she stood up to leave. Oberyn looked at her curiously before he followed. They walked together through the Red Keep with no particular destination in mind. She had to be careful here, the Spider had his spies everywhere and she did not want to be overheard.

She eventually decided to head outside and into the gardens. It was another grey day and the wind was loud in her ears and this was perfect, they would not be overheard.

Once, she had lost them sufficiently enough in the gardens she turned to her Uncle.

“What are you doing?” she asked.

“What do you mean?”

“Why did you crown him?”

“He is the King of the Seven Kingdoms, he should have a crown,” her Uncle answered plainly.
“Really Uncle? Which Kingdom is he the King of? The Kingdom of Kings Landing?” she snapped and she saw him frown.

“Arianne, what is the matter with you?”

“Father’s plan has failed and we need to leave,” she whispered.

“There is no reason to leave. Rhaegar and his son will join us peacefully, and if they don’t, we can defeat the dragons,” he said confidently.

“Uncle. Don’t be so silly. They have dragons, more men and more food. I know little about the ways of war, but even I know that our situation looks bleak,”

“We have survived worse. I trust that you remember our words,” he said and Arianne sighed. Of course she remembered their words, but they were not relevant here, dragons changed the rules.

“We will stand and fight with Elia’s son,” he added passionately.

“Elia’s son?” she said with a laugh. “Do you really believe that?”

Oberyn just looked back at her with a serious face and Arianne was stunned.

“Uncle. That boy is not your sister’s son, it’s too good to be true,” she said firmly and Oberyn shook his head vigorously.

“No. He is Elia’s son,” he repeated and Arianne could tell from his tone that he truly believed that.

“Uncle,” she said softly. “I know that you loved your sister dearly and I know you want vengeance for what happened to her, but this is not the answer. Staying with this imposter will get us all killed. We need to take our armies and march back to Dorne before the dragons get here,”

Oberyn looked at her as if she had just admitted to treason, which she supposed was right.
“No,” he said quietly. “No. You will not take our armies anywhere. I failed to protect Elia, I will protect her son. That is the last I will hear of this,” and with that, her Uncle turned on his heels and left her alone in the gardens.

Arianne looked at him as he walked away and she shook her head. She knew that her Uncle loved his sister, but Elia had been dead for over 20 years. His love for his sister was clouding his judgment and that was a problem.

She had spoken to her father about this and this was something that he had feared as well. Oberyn’s love for Elia would cloud his judgment and cause him to act rashly. It was also her job to control the situation. However, she did not have the authority to march their armies south again, Oberyn still had the final say. Arianne had argued with her father for her to get full control but he had said no, saying that it would raise too much suspicion. Now, that decision could turn into a big mistake.

She would have to do something about it, before the Targaryens came for Kings Landing with their dragons. They would not be able to defend Kings Landing, but if it came down to it, then they would be able to defend Dorne, just like her ancestors had.

Arianne sighed in frustration and began to walk back into the castle. She would have to find a way to convince her Uncle, to return their troops to Dorne. Could she convince him that this boy was an imposter? She was not sure that she could.

She would have to get her father to withdraw his support, but sending a raven back to Dorne would take too long and there was no guarantee that her words would convince him. For all she knew, her father also believed that he was truly Elia’s son.

She ran her hand through her long black hair, she needed to come up with a plan, and soon.

The Dragon King

Vedros was racing through the cold evening air towards the Twins. They had left Dragonstone as soon as they received the message. As they flew, Jon could not help but think of the worst, what if his father was already dead?
No, he could not be dead. It could not happen.

Vedros roared and then she started to descend. Quick tight spirals that brought them to the ground quickly. Jon could see the castle sprawled out below him on the banks of the Green Fork. He could see the neat orderly lines of tents constructed by their Unsullied sitting outside of the castle walls. Vedros’s claws had barely touched the ground before Jon was already on his way off her side and onto the ground. Ghost leaped out of his place in the saddle and came to his side.

He felt the ground shake as Anogar landed next to him and Dany quickly joined him. Together, they quickly made their way from the camp to the main gates of the castle. He saw several Frey guards manning the walls but he ignored them and kept walking forward, they saw the dragon, they would know who he was.

As they got closer, the gates to the castle swung open and they saw Ser Barristan waiting for them on the other side. He wore a grave expression on his pale face and Jon’s heart sunk.

“Please tell me that he’s fine, Ser Barristan,” Jon asked desperately but the old knight just gave him a small shake of his head.

“Follow me, your grace,” he said and he turned on his heels to lead them through the castle. Jon followed closely as he led them up a flight of stairs and to a guarded room at the end of a long warm hallway. There were Unsullied guards on duty at the door and they quickly stepped out of the way when they saw him.

Jon burst into the room and saw his father lying on the bed with his eyes closed. His chest was rising and falling slowly and there was a large bloody bandage along his side near his stomach. He looked to the floor and saw several bloody and ruined bandages scattered along the floor. The room was hot and smelled of sweat and blood.

“Father,” Jon called quietly as he crossed over to him. He crouched down by his side but his father did not respond. He reached out to gently hold his hand.

“Father, can you hear me?” he asked again but again his father did not respond. A feeling of sadness and despair washed over him completely. It built from low in his chest before rushing out into his entire body. Dany came over to his other side and she too tried to speak to his father but he did not answer. Jon did not know what to do. He felt dizzy and lightheaded. How could this be happening? Was it his fault? He was the one who signed off on the plan, he had to take responsibility.
“Your graces,” he heard a gravelly voice say. He quickly turned his head and turned towards the man that entered the room. He was a short man with a large double chin and a mop of brown hair on his head. “I am Maester Brennet,”

“What happened to him?” Jon interrupted. “Explain his injuries.”

“Of course, your grace. He was shot with a bow in the back of the lower leg. I have managed to bind and clean that wound. He was also shot with a bolt in the lower part of his stomach, I have managed to stop the bleeding,”

“Will he live?” Dany asked quickly and Jon looked desperately at the Maester, pleading for some good news.

“I am not sure, your grace. He has lost a lot of blood and it seems that his body has shut down. There is no telling when he will wake,” he said solemnly. Jon’s head fell.

“There has to be more you can do,” he heard Dany question and he could hear the desperation in her voice.

“I am sorry, your grace. There is no more that I can do. All we can do is to continue to change his bandages and dress his wounds, but I can’t force his body to heal faster. It is up to him now whether he will overcome this,”

“He will overcome this,” Jon said quietly. “My father will live. I know it,”

If his father could survive Robert Baratheon’s warhammer, then he could survive a few arrow shots. He would live. He had to.

“Maester Brennet, if there is no more than you can do, I would like some privacy please,” Jon said quietly and he saw the Maester bow before he left.

“Ser Barristan, what happened? Why are you at the Twins and not where we told you to be?”

“Your grace. We heard that there was a Northern army moving south towards the Riverlands and so I took the royal forces to the Twins to intercept them. I knew that the Twins were the only place to
cross into the Riverlands and so it was important to fortify them. Prince Rhaegar found us here this morning and later he went to meet Lord Stark,” Ser Barristan told them and Jon nodded.

“Were you with them when they met?” Dany asked

“I was not part of their conversation, but they were only a short distance away, your grace,”

“So you don’t know what they spoke about?” Jon asked and he shook his head.

“No, your grace. After they spoke they came back towards us. More of Lord Stark’s men had arrived from their camp by that point and that is when the attack happened. One of his men shot Prince Rhaegar and this first strike dropped them to his knees and then a second man shot him in his side whilst he was down,”

Jon shook his head and he tried hard to keep calm. Stark men had tried to kill his father.

“Are you sure they were Stark men?” Dany asked and Ser Barristan nodded. “They wore Stark cloaks and one of the attackers shouted ‘For Winterfell’ after the deed was done. There is no doubt in my mind,”

Jon took a long deep breath before he turned to Ser Barristan.

“I don’t understand, Ser Barristan. They had sent us a raven asking for mercy and then they go and do this. Why?” he asked and the old knight shook his head.

“I don’t know, your grace. Maybe they did not like the terms you offered. I do not understand why Lord Stark would bring his entire army south if he had agreed to your peaceful terms ,”

“What happened after my father fell? What did Lord Stark do?”

“He came over to the body but I threw him back before he could finish the job. Then, he was swiftly carried away by his men,”
“He fled?” Jon asked quietly and Ser Barristan nodded. Jon shook his head, this was all too much for him. Just earlier, that day they had defeated Robert Baratheon and it looked like the war was finally won, but now it looked like they were entering a new one.

He contemplated going North to confront Lord Stark. He needed to see him again, especially since it looked like he was behind the attack. However, he did not want to leave his father, not here when he was fighting for his life.

“Dany, I want to take him home, back to Dragonstone,” Jon said after a few moments.

“I had a similar thought,” she said quietly. “Someone tried to kill him. He might send assassins to finish the job. We can protect him better on Dragonstone.”

“It might not be wise to move him. We should speak to the Maester first,” Jon said and she nodded in agreement. “Ser Barristan if you could and find Maester Brennet please,”

The knight nodded and then left the room, leaving them alone. They were quiet for a few moments before he heard Dany release a small sob. He immediately crossed over to the other side of the bed and gave her a hug.

“Dany, he will be fine, I know it,” Jon said with all the confidence that he could muster.

“I knew something bad would happen. I felt it and I was right,” she said quietly into his chest.

“I know, but he will live Dany, he is a tough man. He survived Robert Baratheon’s warhammer. He spent years searching Essos to find you. He is tough and he is resilient. He will overcome this. I know it,” he said firmly.

“You’re right,” she said quietly. “He is strong, he will make it through this,”

Jon smiled and held her tighter. He had to hold onto hope that his father would live, he could not think of the alternative.

“What do we do about the North?” she asked as she broke away to take a seat next to the bed.
“Nothing for now. They tried to kill my father and if we fly there alone they’ll try and kill us as well. Winter is here and that makes it more difficult to march our armies North,”

“I agree that we should stay in the South and take care of Rhaegar, but we have to do something Jon,”

“I know,” he said quietly as he looked at him. “I think that he would want me to find more information first and to speak to Lord Stark in person before I involve our armies,”

“That is wise Jon. Although, doing nothing could make us look weak,”

“I know, but we need to make sure he gets better first, and the first step is trying to get him back to Dragonstone. When he wakes then he can tell us the truth,” Jon said.

“Ser Barristan described it as if he was shot in the back, I’m not sure what he could tell us when he wakes,”

“He could tell us what they talked about. If they argued then we know that Lord Stark has a motive,”

“You don’t think Lord Stark did it?” Dany asked quietly.

“Dany, to be honest, I don’t know what to think. It doesn’t make sense. They send a raven to Dragonstone asking for more lenient terms with the Tullys because they don’t want to fight us. Then they march south anyway with most of their men and they try to kill my father. I don’t understand it,”

“You’re right. It doesn’t make sense,”

“That’s why I want to hold off until I have more information. I don’t want to rush us into a decision that we will regret,” Jon said and Dany nodded. Then the door to the room opened and Ser Barristan entered with the Maester following close behind.

“Your graces,” he said with a bow.
“We would like to take him back to Dragonstone so that he can continue his recovery back at home. Is it safe for him to travel?” Dany asked and Jon saw the Maester shift uncomfortably from foot to foot.

“Ideally, I would like him to remain in the same place whilst he heals. If he is travelling it’s possible that the constant temperature changes could cause him to get a cold and that could impact his recovery.”

“We will be able to keep him warm, Maester,” Dany said quickly. “We will also change his bandages and so on,”

“Then it will be safe to move him, although I would not recommend it. In this state, he is only able to consume honey and water, please continue to make sure he is given it. May I ask why?”

“We have our reasons,” Dany said firmly and the Maester nodded and bowed in acceptance.

“Of course your grace, but I do recommend that you wait at least a day to see if his condition changes. In the morning, I will conduct another assessment and then you will be able to take him if you still wish to,”

“Thank you Maester Brennet,” Dany said and the Maester bowed before once again taking his leave. Jon then turned to look at his father. He still had not moved. He just continued to breathe deeply and slowly at the same pace that he did at before.

“I guess we’re staying the night,” Jon said quietly.

“We’ll sleep in those chairs by the fire,” Dany said and Jon nodded in agreement. They both wanted to be here through the night in case he woke.

“Ser Barristan. Start making preparations for us to leave with him tomorrow. We will take him in a carriage south back towards Castle Darry and Maidenpool where a ship will take us back to Dragonstone,” Jon said.

“Of course, your grace,”
“It’s been a long and challenging day Ser Barristan and I am sure that the next few will be just as tough, get plenty of rest if you can,” Dany said kindly and the knight nodded before he left the room.

After he left, they both settled into the chairs by the fire, Jon found a few blankets in a wardrobe and used that to cover them.

“It’s not the most comfortable but I think we’ll manage,” he said once they settled down.

“We’ve slept in worse places, such as that night we spent sleeping next to Caraxes,” Dany said and Jon smiled at the memory.

“Aye,” They were quiet for a few moments and Jon stared at the fire and let out a deep breath. The day had started off so well after they had defeated Robert Baratheon but now he had nearly lost his father. Worse still, he did not understand why Lord Stark had tried to kill him.

He closed his eyes and tried to get some sleep. Hopefully, he would find some answers in the morning.

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**The She Wolf of Winterfell**

Following her reunion with Nymeria, Arya Stark had spent the next few days in the clearing of the forest. Her knee was in more pain than she had previously thought and as a result she had been unable to travel much. Thankfully, Nymeria had been of great help to her. Her wolf had brought her food and Arya had been able to gather enough wood to cook it and keep herself warm.

She had used the time spent in the clearing to think about what she saw but she could not work it out. Lord Bolton had buried a cloak in the ground but she had no idea why he would need an old cloak, it was useless.

To make matters worse, because of her injury, she had been unable to get back to their camp to speak to her father and brother about this. They would be able to make sense of this mystery.

After a few days in that clearing, Arya had enough and decided to hobble her way back to camp. She was a few meters into the woods when Nymeria had appeared again. Her wolf kept nudging her until eventually Arya climbed on her back and let her carry her.

They had spent most of the day travelling and Arya felt as if they made good progress. They had left...
the forests behind and they were now in more open fields. Arya was concerned, she hadn’t seen any
signs of her father’s army yet, although perhaps that meant they had made much more progress south
than she had thought.

Still, she would not let that deter her. She knew that if she kept moving south she would eventually
find her father’s army again.

Arya leaned back and looked up into the clear blue sky. Thankfully it had been dry for the last few
days. If it had rained, she likely would have caught a cold after sleeping out in the open. As she rode
south, her thoughts turned to Jon. She had not seen him in years and she missed him dearly. She
wondered how much he had changed, he was a King now.

It felt weird to think of Jon as a King but that was the truth of the matter. He was a King, with his
own armies and his dragons. Arya remembered what her father told her, his dragon was the large
green dragon and the color of dark moss. Hopefully, Jon would let her ride on his dragon, it would
be amazing.

He was also a King with a Queen and a wife. Arya wondered what Daenerys would be like, she had
to be good if Jon had married her, she knew that for sure. Would she be like Visenya, the Warrior
Queen? Or more like Queen Rhaenys? Either way, Arya eager to meet her.

Arya wondered where Jon was at that moment. She knew that he was in Westeros fighting his war.
He was probably around Kings Landing taking the city from Robert Baratheon.

They crested a hill and Arya saw a castle ahead of her. She closed her eyes and remembered her
lessons with Maester Luwin and she realised that it must be the Twins, it was the only castle this
close to the Green Fork. Arya was confused, surely she should have seen her father’s army by now.

Nymeria started to make her way towards the castle and Arya knew she would have to stop by the
castle to learn about her father and Jon’s current whereabouts. She left Nymeria far away from the
castle gates and made the rest of the way on foot. She hobbled her way to the gates of the castle
before she was stopped by a pair of guards.

“Soldiers go that way,” one of them said in a bored voice. Arya was confused, so she stood there
without moving.

“Are you simple? I said Soldiers go that way,” the guard said again.

“Why?” she asked.

“Cus we’re marching South you idiot,” the guard said as he finally looked at her. “Marching south to
help King Aegon take Kings Landing,”

“Where is he? The King?” Arya asked quickly but the guard just shrugged.

“Gone hasn’t he. He was here then he left a few days ago,”

“He was here?” Arya asked excitedly. She couldn’t believe that Jon was here of all places, they had
been so close. “Why?”

“You really are simple,” the guard said with a shake of his head. “Stark tried to kill his father, Prince
Rhaegar. I heard they hurt him pretty bad and the King and Queen came here to see him. I heard
they’re taking him back to Dragonstone,”

Arya froze as a nauseous feeling passed over her. That couldn’t be true, her father would never do
something like this. Never.

“You’re lying,” she said to the guard.

“Me? Why would I lie?” he asked in an outraged voice and Arya bit her lip to hold off her reply.

“Get out of here, you’ve distracted me for long enough,” he snapped and Arya reluctantly turned and walked away from the guard post. She walked aimlessly in the direction of the Frey camp as she thought over what she had learned.

She could not believe it. Her father would not try and kill Rhaegar, that was just a stupid idea. However, Arya realised that the guard had no reason to lie, there must have been some truth in there. As Arya walked, she realised that Lord Bolton must have had something to do with it. Perhaps, that’s what he wanted the cloak for, to disguise one of his men as a Stark man to get her father blamed for his crimes.

Arya froze as understanding washed over her. Suddenly, it all made sense. Lord Bolton had to be behind this and Arya was the only one who knew. She saw a saddled horse tied up outside of a tent. Without thinking, she walked over to it, untied it and climbed onto its back and headed away. She heard a howl coming from the tree line and she hoped that Nymeria would be following her.

The guard had told her that Jon was going south to take Kings Landing. That was good, it meant that he was not going North to punish her father for a crime that he didn’t commit.

It also gave her time. Time to get south to find Jon and to tell him of this conspiracy. She had to hurry. Sooner or later Jon would have to deal with her father, and Arya needed to tell him the truth before it was too late.

Chapter End Notes

Let me know what you think of this chapter

The next chapter is called 'The Lion's Den' and I should give it to you in the next 9-10 days.

Let me know what you think of this one, comments are always appreciated

Thanks for reading
Sleepy
The Lord of Winterfell

Ned Stark stood alone in his cold room at Winterfell. After that disaster on the banks of the Green Fork, he had raced back North with his army, fearing the wrath of Rhaegar’s dragon. He still did not understand what had happened that day, he had tried to find the men responsible for the attack in order to question them but they had completely vanished.

Ned knew that he had been framed for the attack on Rhaegar, but he had no idea who would do it and most importantly why. He had his suspicions, Lord Bolton for one, but he did not have a shred of proof. Without proof, accusing Lord Bolton, or any of his other bannermen could cause a schism to grow in his ranks and he could not afford that now, not when the possibility of Jon coming north seeking retribution, still loomed ominously over his head.

Then there was the letter. Rhaegar had insisted that Jon had sent a response North but Catelyn said that she had not received a raven. Ned doubted that Rhaegar would lie to him about the letter. The disappearance of the letter combined with the events at the Green Fork had only served to increase his suspicion that someone was plotting against him.

To make matters worse, once he returned to Winterfell, Catelyn had informed him that two of his children were missing. Arya and Bran had both vanished whilst he had been away. Catelyn had gone out to search for them but she had no luck finding either of them. Ned was very concerned, Bran could not walk, so if he had gone missing then that would mean that someone must have taken him. Perhaps, it was the same person who had set him up.

Ned shook his head, he was just being paranoid. The two events were unrelated. He would find his children, and he would prove his innocence.

Arya was a different case entirely, his daughter was very willful and trained in combat to a basic degree, and it was very unlikely that someone could have taken her without leaving any trace behind. The alternative was that she herself had run away but where could she be heading? Maybe, she was
determined to see Jon after he had refused to take with him to the council. But how could a little girl evade search parties and move South without coming across him and his army?

Ned sighed. He had no idea on how to find his children or how he would prove to Jon that he had not tried to kill his father. Ned remembered their last meeting and the terrible terms they had left on, he needed proof. Irrefutable proof. He would have to search for those men again, offer a reward to anyone who had seen them. If he could find and question them, then he would be able to provide proof to Jon that he was not behind the attack.

“My Lord,” he heard a low voice say. He turned and saw that Jory had entered the room, he had been so lost in his thoughts that he had failed to hear him knock.

“The Lords have assembled in the great hall as you requested,” he said quietly and Ned nodded in thanks. He had called for a meeting between all of his bannermen as soon as he returned home, he needed to speak to them all and tell them his side of the story, the true side of the story.

He took a final sip of his ale, set down his cup and then left the room. He walked down the steps from his solar and then he crossed the cold courtyard towards the great hall. The ground crunched underneath his feet and he rubbed his gloved hands together.

The large oak and iron doors of the great hall loomed ahead of him and they were opened by two Stark guards when they saw him. Ned eyed them suspiciously as he headed past them inside. After he returned to Winterfell, he had tasked Jory with reviewing the Stark guards. He wanted every guard in his inner circle to be men that Jory knew personally and would vouch for, he would not take any chances again. He had also assigned personal guards for Sansa, Catelyn and Rickon, he would not leave his family unprotected in these troubled and difficult times. Robb was a man grown and he did not need as much protection.

The first thing that he noticed once he entered the great hall was the silence. It was as silent as the grave.

The sound of his shoes sounded impossibly loud in the silence of the hall, he saw every pair of eyes staring at him. Some looked at him angrily, others fearfully, some just stared at him with completely blank expressions on their faces. He saw fires blazing in the hearths but the room still felt impossibly cold.

He walked to the end of the hall to the high table where Robb sat waiting for him in the right hand seat. He took his position and look at his assembled Lords, wondering which one of them had betrayed him. Lord Bolton stood off to one side of the room, his pale face the usual cold blank mask.
He saw Lord Manderly seated at a long table, Lord Glover opposite him. He saw Lord Karstark, Cerwyn and Umber. It could have been any of them.

“My Lords,” he said in greeting, his voice carried in the large room. “I have called this meeting to inform you all of events that have occurred in the south. Somewhere near the Twins, home of House Frey, I met with Prince Rhaegar Targaryen. Father to King Aegon Targaryen. We had a peaceful discussion where we discussed old issues and made progress to forge a new alliance. However, after our peaceful discussion, we were betrayed and Rhaegar was shot and severely wounded,”

“Shot by who?” one lord asked and Ned took a deep breath.

“He was shot by men who were pretending to be a part of my household guard. I have been framed for the attack,” Ned said into the silence. He looked at all of the Lords, to see who was surprised by this information. He paid particularly close attention to Lords Bolton and Karstark. Bolton’s face remained unchanged whilst Karstark looked shocked.

“You killed the King’s father?” Lord Manderly asked in shock and Ned shook his head.

“No, I did not. I am being framed. The men that shot him were dressed up as my men, but they were not. We have not seen them since. The captain of my guard, Jory Cassel can attest to that fact,”

“Of course you haven’t seen them since! They’re your men, loyal to you. I bet you did not look very hard!” Lord Karstark shouted.

“Lord Karstark. You are being ridiculous. Why would I do such a foolish thing?”

“I don’t know, but I don’t think you have the North’s best interests at heart!”

“Why do you think that Lord Karstark?” Ned asked in return as he could feel his anger beginning to rise.

“First you entertain his proposal to change the North and chop down our trees and mine our lands. Then you go South to treat with him and make peace. You are a traitor,”

“Lord Karstark, you are speaking nonsense,” Robb said as he stood up. “If my father truly does not
care about the North. Then why would he kill the King’s father and expose us to his dragons!”

“Aye, Lord Robb has a point,” he heard Lord Manderly grumble.

“Still. Where are these mystery men that attacked Rhaegar Targaryen?” Lord Karstark shouted. “Surely you would have made every effort to find them and prove your innocence?”

Ned bit the inside of his mouth and opened and closed his fist in frustration.

“As I have told you. I cannot find these men,” Ned said through gritted teeth

“Lord Stark, I have been loyal to you for all of my life,” Lord Manderly began. “But even I find these sequence events difficult to believe. Do you have any proof of what you claim?”

“No,” he admitted.

“Your actions are reprehensible and not fitting of a man of your status!” Karstark shouted. “You are a coward and you put the North in danger!”

“Lord Karstark that is enough. You will not speak to me like that!” Ned shouted as he finally lost his temper. “You can either stand by me and trust my word or you can leave and declare yourself an enemy of House Stark,”

Ned’s chest heaved after his outburst. He knew that splitting up his bannermen like this was a mistake, but he could not go back on his word right now.

“Aye, I don’t agree with his words but Lord Karstark raises a valid point. Your actions have put the North, the people you have sworn to protect, in grave danger,” Lady Mormont said and Ned frowned. He saw several of the Lords nodding in agreement. Ned felt his stomach drop, he could not lose the support of his bannermen not now.

“My Lords, if I may,” he heard a thin voice say and he saw Roose Bolton step forward from the shadows. “Lord Stark has been our overlord for many years and he has guided the North well during that time. We know him as an honorable man, a man who would suffer the shame of fathering a
 bastard to hide his sister’s son from certain death. If he says that he did not do this, then we should give him the benefit of the doubt."

Ned stared into his pale eyes. Out of all the people to come to his aid, Roose Bolton was the last one that he had expected, or wanted. Yet Ned could not turn him down, doing so would make him look guilty.

“Thank you for having faith in me Lord Bolton,” he said evenly and the Lord of the Dreadfort gave him a small curt nod.

“Aye. Lord Bolton is right,” he heard Lord Glover say. “We should stand behind the Starks, just like we have for hundreds of years!”

Ned heard more of the Lords voice their agreement. Lord Hornwood, Manderly and Cerwyn all seemed to be willing to give him the benefit of the doubt. Only Lord Karstark remained angry.

“Furthermore Lord Stark, it seems that the North is in danger of coming under attack from the South. To counter that, I propose that your bannermen bring more of their men to Winterfell to help fortify the castle,” Lord Bolton added

Ned froze. The last thing he wanted right now was more men who he did not know in his castle. However, he could not think of a good reason to turn him down.

“Lord Bolton. You have your own castles to defend. It will be better to spread out around the entire North if it comes to war,” Ned said evenly.

“That is a good point, my Lord. Although there is a saying that I have heard somewhere around this castle. I believe it goes something like this. ‘When the snow falls and the white winds blow, the lone wolf dies, but the pack survives’” Bolton said with a hint of a smile. “We should stick together,”

Ned felt his insides boil with anger. Bolton was using his own words against him and worse still, they seemed to have worked on his bannermen.

“Aye I agree with Lord Bolton,” Lord Glover said. “We will stand behind Lord Stark and fight together!”
“Aye!” he heard more of the Lords shout and Ned sighed in frustration.

“My Lords. There is no need for this,” Ned tried for the final time. “I know King Aegon and I can convince him of my innocence. It will not come to war,”

“Forgive me my Lord, at the Great Council, I saw the two of you locked in a heated argument. What has changed between the two of you since then?” Bolton asked

“Aye, I remember the argument,” one Lady Mormont said and several others nodded in agreement. Ned closed his eyes. He would have to concede, there was no way around this.

“Very well. You may bring your men to Winterfell to help hold the castle,” Ned said and he saw Bolton nod. “However, your men will camp outside the castle and in the surrounding fields. No additional men will be allowed in the castle itself. I hope you understand, but after what happened on the Green Fork, I have to be extra careful regarding these matters,”

He said those words to both Lord Bolton and to Lord Karstark. Bolton didn’t react but Karstark scowled at him.

“That will all my Lords,” Ned said as he dismissed the meeting. He watched them all as they left, paying attention to who spoke to who. He knew that he was not out of danger just yet, his bannermen were angry and unsettled and he still had no idea what Jon would do about the whole situation.

However, he pushed that to one side as he turned to Robb.

“Come son. We have a few hours, let’s head out to search for Bran and Arya,” he said in a determined voice. He may not be able to control his bannermen, but he would do everything in his power to find his children.

The Dragon’s Hand

Tyrion Lannister stood out on the balcony of the Lords chambers. It was his father’s room, now his,
now that he had taken the castle. It was a large lavish room with a huge four poster bed with red
curtains in the middle. There were several rich and expensive myrish carpets along the floor with
intricately woven tapestries along the walls of the room. The room had a balcony attached to it which
opened up to a lovely view of the sunset sea.

He felt a strange feeling of happiness now that he had taken the castle. It was something that his
father had denied him purely due to his birth and taking it from him felt good. Very good.

As they expected, the remainder of the Lannister men had come up from Lannisport and sieged the
castle, trapping them inside for the past few days. Unfortunately for them, his father had evidently
been preparing for a siege himself and the castle had enough food to last several long and cold
winters. Those men would go hungry long before they did.

Tyrion had treated with the leader of that garrison, Ser Cedrick Payne a few days prior. He had
vowed to take back the castle in the name of House Lannister. In response, Tyrion had sent a raven
to his King and Queen, letting them know that the support of their dragons would greatly help this
situation. However, he was not too worried.

They had also received a raven bringing good news, Robert Baratheon was dead, slain by King
Aegon himself. That meant that the war was won and those Lannister men would have nothing to
fight for.

The world would be a better place without Robert Baratheon and with King Aegon and Queen
Daenerys leading it. He would help them, but to do that, he would need to get rid of the surrounding
Lannister army and leave Casterly Rock.

Tyrion quickly dressed, dismissed the blond whore that was in the bed and made his way down
through the castle and out onto the battlements that overlooked the surrounding army. Their
sellswords stood on guard along the battlements, lazily standing on duty. Tyrion did not have time to
reprimand them, not when he himself had been spending his days whoring in his father’s bed.

The surrounding army was in the same position. Their camp was neat and organized and they were
still watching the castle. However, they did not seem to be in any particular hurry. They weren’t
building any catapults or rams or any other siege weapons. They did not seem like they had any
intentions of trying to storm the castle. It looked like they were really trying to starve them out. He
began to walk away from the battlement when he saw a man slowly trudge towards the castle gates.
Tyrion squinted his eyes to look closely and then he laughed at what he saw.

He quickly summoned a few of his men and then walked down to the main gates of the castle. He
saw Jaime walking into the courtyard, from the direction of Cersei’s rooms.

“Jaime, you will want to see this,” he eagerly said to him. Jaime looked at him curiously for a moment before following him to the main gates, around 10 of their sellswords followed them. They walked through the gate, through the outer wall and out into the field surrounding the courtyard. Ser Payne was there once again, along with a very familiar face

Standing in front of him, looking dirty, dishevelled and utterly humiliated was Tywin Lannister.

Tyrion looked at him, he had soot in his hair. His once pristine Lannister army was damaged and dirty and Tyrion gave him his widest smile

“Hello father,” he said cheerfully. “How have you been?”

His father only scowled at him which added to his glee.

“Who are these men?” Tyrion asked

“My army,” his father replied through gritted teeth and Tyrion could hear the anger in his voice

“Your army? I take it these are the poor souls that somehow managed to survive the wrath of three grown dragons?” Tyrion said lightly. “It must have been very humiliating. Seeing your entire army crushed like that,”

“Careful dwarf,” Ser Payne said but Tyrion ignored him and focused on his father who did nothing but continue to stare at him in anger

“I’ve taken your castle in case you didn’t notice,” Tyrion continued and his green eyes grew narrower and narrower in rage. “Tyrion Lannister, the Lord of Casterly Rock. It has a very nice ring to it,”

“Enough Tyrion,” his father snapped. “You’ve had your fun. Now, let me inside so we can talk about this properly,”
Tyrion shook his head. “First you will tell all of these men to stand down and go back to their homes,” His father just glared at him and Tyrion continued. “If you don’t then I will send a raven to the King and Queen who will come with their dragons to break this siege using force. Do you really want to take your chances against the dragons again?”

His father continued to glare at him and Tyrion sighed.

“You might want to keep fighting but what about your men? Those that have come back from the battle have seen the power of the dragons first hand. They’ll talk, tell stories to the others and soon they’ll all flee,”

“Fine. I will issue the order,” his father growled through gritted teeth.

“Good. Now hand over your weapons and you will be permitted inside, but only you,”

Tywin looked at him for a few moments before he nodded. “Ser Payne, see that these men stand down and go back to their homes. This war is over,” his father instructed through gritted teeth.

Tyrion eyed him suspiciously for a few moments before turning and walking back inside the castle. He noticed that Tywin did not say a word to Jaime.

“Guards. Take away his armor and weapons, search him properly and then take him up to my chambers. My father and I need to have a conversation,” Tyrion said and they quickly grabbed him by his shoulders and marched him away. Tyrion then turned to Jaime who was standing quietly off to one side.

“He hates me,” Jaime said quietly.

“He’s hated me for years, Jaime. You’ll get used to the hate eventually,” Tyrion said lightly as he turned away from Jaime.

“Did you?” Jaime asked softly and Tyrion froze. Truthfully, he had not gotten past the hate that his father had for him. He had always wanted to feel like he was part of the family, like he truly belonged. That hate was what drove him, it was the reason he was here today.
“Jaime come with me. I am going to speak to father, but I want you to let me do the talking at first
and just go along with what I say. I’m giving you the chance to make up for your part in Tysha’s fate,,” Tyrion said. His brother looked at him cautiously before he slowly nodded.

They walked back through the castle through the candle lit hallways to the Lords chambers where they should have taken his father. He pushed open the door to the room and saw that he was not yet here.

So, he crossed over to the desk and pulled out the diary that he would need. He also placed a bottle of wine and three cups on the table. Then, he sat down at the desk to wait. Jaime stood alone off to one side.

It did not take long for his father to arrive, he was roughly pushed through the doors by the sellswords and he looked around the room with disgust.

“What’s that smell?” he asked and Tyrion just smiled.

“You know exactly what it is,”

“I told you the last whore I find you with, I would hang,”

“I’m not sure if you’re aware of this father, but you are my prisoner. You don’t get to make threats. I do. So, take a seat and we can talk,” Tyrion said as he looked at him and pointed to the seat opposite him. Tywin took his time sitting down.

Tyrion took a deep breath before he spoke,

“You are an evil and cruel man, you know. All through your life you have ordered vicious acts and you have gotten away with it, until now”

“I did what was necessary to secure the future of my house,”
“Your actions put our house in danger. It is only because of me that our house will survive,” Tyrion pointed out and Tywin laughed.

“Your actions? You are nothing but a treacherous dwarf. You are not fit to wear the Lannister name or fly my colors. You are no son of mine,” Tywin snapped and Tyrion grew angry.

“I am your son. I have always been your son. Despite all the shame and ridicule I’ve suffered, and as much as you have tried to deny it. You can’t take that fact away from me. I am your son,” Tyrion said to him.

“All you have ever done is bring shame upon me and our family’s legacy from the day you were born. Your brother is a distinguished swordsman and commander. A worthy heir. Your sister became Queen and allowed Lannister blood to come to the throne. A great legacy. What have you ever done to bring pride to this house?” Tywin said with contempt filling his voice.

“What a glorious legacy indeed? A knight who sullied his white cloak and is despised by the realm in general. An heir who spent his youth guarding a mad man and a drunken lecher. As for our dear sister, a Queen who is hated her own people and whose firstborn could give tough competition to Aerys in terms of cruelty and insanity. You must be so proud of them.”

“But I shouldn’t really blame them, the coin toss didn’t land well for them. Targaryens and coin tosses after all.” Tyrion coolly countered.

“What do the Dragons have to do with this?” Tywin asked with a confused look on his face.

Tyrion pulled out the diary and waved it in front of Tywin’s face who still did not follow.

“I am sure you of all people heard the rumors about the Mad King and my mother,”

“What rumors?” Tywin said and Tyrion cocked his head to look at him but his father continued to look confused.

“You really don’t know,” Tyrion said quietly.
“Know what?” his father repeated but Tyrion only nodded. It made perfect sense that his father did not know. His father was painfully ignorant when he wanted to be, especially when it comes to matters concerning his own family. He probably had no idea all of Cersei’s children were Jaime’s.

“My mother, was a lady in waiting to Queen Rhaella Targaryen and as a result, she spent a lot of time at court in Kings Landing. There was a rumor, that my mother and your wife had an affair with the King, Aerys. Now of course if this rumor was true, then that would mean that the great Tywin Lannister, Lord of Casterly Rock and Warden of the West, was married to the Mad King’s leavings,”

“That is a lie,” his father said quietly. So quietly that Tyrion almost missed it.

“Is it father? You know as well as I do that she was in fact a lady in waiting to the Queen. I am sure someone could confirm this if you like,”

“This is a lie,” his father repeated, his voice still very quiet. Tyrion looked at his hands and saw that he had clenched his fists so tightly his knuckles were white with rage.

“Of course, if they did have an affair during their time together in Kings Landing, then it’s possible that they would have a child together,”

“Enough Tyrion. Enough of your lies. There was no child. My wife did not have an affair with that bastard Aerys,” Tywin spat as he stood up.

“You’re right. There was no child. They had twins,” Tyrion lied as he stared at his father. He watched as confusion passed over his face, then that confusion was replaced with a face of horror and anger,

“No,” he said as he started to pace, he began to throw his hands back and forth. “No,”

“It’s true. Your favorite children, your golden children aren’t yours. They belong to Aerys. It makes perfect sense really, after all, Cersei and Jaime have been fucking for years, but you never noticed. It must be their Targaryen instincts,”

“That is a lie,” Tywin said as she shook his head and Tyrion laughed mercilessly.

“You talk about the importance of ‘family’ but you have been oblivious to your own for years,” His father looked at him in horror and continued to shake his head at him but Tyrion continued laughing.
“You are lying, Tyrion. Cersei and Jaime did not. No. You are lying,” he muttered and Tyrion sighed.

“Go and ask Jaime yourself, he’s right there behind you,” Tyrion said and his father quickly turned around. Tywin looked pleadingly at his son who only nodded his head, confirming Tyrion’s words. His father released a sob but Tyrion continued onwards.

“I, Tyrion Lannister, your dwarf of a son who you have shunned and mocked your entire life, am your only child,” Tyrion said venomously but his father just shook his head and put his hand over his ears.

“No,” he repeated. “Tyrion, you are a liar,”

“You don’t believe me? Would you like to read her own words?” Tyrion said as he held up the diary. Tywin looked at him and Tyrion quickly opened it at the page he marked out. He nervously watched as his father read it.

His green eyes quickly flicked their way down the page and Tyrion was pleased to see that they widened in horror before they became filled with tears. He began to shake his head and tear at the pages out of the diary.

“She loved him and she wanted to have his children. You were nothing to her, nothing but a second choice. How does that make you feel father? To know Aerys Targaryen has always been better than you. He held your wife's love. He is the father of your precious twins. He embarrassed you in front of the entire realm when he refused Cersei and called you a servant. He said that she was unworthy. Of course, she was, Aerys wouldn’t wed his heir to his bastard spawn. How does it feel father? To be utterly ridiculed and mocked? You may sacked his city and murdered his family but he still got the last laugh. How does it feel?” Tyrion spat at his rage flowed through his veins.

His father seemed to not hear him. He was angrily pacing back and forth, pulling at his hair and scratching at his face. Tyrion smile with glee. He stood up on his chair.

“Look at me!” he shouted as he held his hands out. “Look at me! I am the only thing that is true about your life. Your marriage was a lie. Your children are not yours. I am all you have. I Tyrion Lannister, your dwarf of a son. Is your heir. I am your legacy. I am all that you will leave behind,”

“No!” Tywin shouted, his voice pained and Tyrion felt satisfied.
“I am all that you have left. I am all that your life produced. Your men have already started to abandon you, choosing to kneel to the Dragons rather than fight for your house. Soon the whole realm will know the truth and then they will all laugh at Tywin Lannister. They will laugh from Dorne all the way to the Wall and your name and reputation will go to shit,”

Tyrion watched with a strange fascination as his father fell apart in front of him. It was like he was starting to go mad. He pulled and ripped at his clothes and face. He shrieked and sobbed and cried. He began to throw things across the room in anger and rage then he turned towards the balcony and Tyrion smiled.

“Go ahead and do it. End your own misery. Kill yourself you spiteful coward,” Tyrion whispered. His father slowly stepped forward and out onto the balcony. Each step seeming to take an eternity. When he was on the edge, he turned back to look at him.

Tyrion just cocked his head to the side and looked at him patiently. Tywin eyed him up and down, almost as if he was debating whether he had it in him to come inside and acknowledge all the truths that he had learned.

Clearly the answer was no, because Tywin gave him one last look, before he threw himself off the balcony and onto the rocks below.

The Mother of Dragons

They had finally returned to Dragonstone late the previous night with Rhaegar and unfortunately he still had not awoken. They had sent a raven ahead to the Maesters on the island to prepare them for the situation so they would be ready for their arrival. However, they too had come to the same conclusion as the Maester at the Twins. There was no more they could do for him, it was up to him whether he woke up or not.

Dany had been just as distraught as Jon when she had seen him in that state. It broke her heart to see that her brother, one of the few family that they had left, was fighting for his life and there was no more they could do to help him.

If it had been up to her, she would have gone North immediately to speak with Lord Stark, but Jon
did not want to do that. He wanted to stay in the South and to collect more information before coming to a decision. They had spoken to all of the Unsullied men who were there on that fateful day and they had all said the same thing. Rhaegar had been shot by a group of Stark men.

Following that, they had decided to continue with their plan to return with Rhaegar to Dragonstone where he would be safer. She agreed with Jon, the situation didn’t make a lot of sense. It seemed unlikely for Lord Stark to want to kill Rhaegar, especially after sending a raven asking for more peaceful terms.

Jon had been holding on well, she could tell that he was trying to keep himself busy and focused on other things. She turned over slightly in bed and watched him as he slept. He looked peaceful. She brushed a stray raven lock out of the way and gave him a quick kiss between his eyes before slipping out of bed.

She headed across the room and towards the nursery. On a side table, she saw that some fresh food had been sent up for them, she would have to thank her handmaidens for that later.

“Mama!” she heard a soft voice cry. She immediately turned to see Daeron was standing up and holding onto the bars of his crib. She smiled and immediately went over to him.

“Good morning little one,” she said as she picked him up

“Mama,” he said again and Dany smiled.

“Yes, I’m here,” she said as she gave him a kiss.

“Mama,” Daeron repeated and Dany shook her head and smiled.

“You need to learn some more words little one,” she said as she poked him in the stomach. “What were you doing this morning? Were you making some music? I know you like to make music with your rattles,”

She looked at Daeron and he gave her a smile.
“Were you making music? Is that a yes? Can you say yes for mama?” she asked

“Mama,” he repeated and Dany couldn’t help but laugh.

“I love you little Daeron,” she said as she gave him another kiss. “Now, let’s get you fed and over to Daddy, how about that?”

She carried Daeron over to the table and put some food into a bowl. She took bananas and some soft warm bread.

“Mama!” Daeron said and she saw him look towards the crib.

“Do you want your egg? I can’t carry everything sweetling,” she said softly. She gently set Daeron on the floor and moved to pick up his golden egg to carry with her other hand. She wondered if one day the golden egg would hatch for her little one. Hopefully, not until he was older.

“Come on little one,” she said softly and thankfully Daeron followed her into their bedroom.

He walked all the way to the bed and then he pulled on the sheets to try to climb up but he wasn’t strong enough. Dany smiled, put the things she was carrying on the bed and then helped him up. He immediately crawled over to Jon and woke him up.

“Dada,” he said happily and Dany smiled and climbed onto the bed herself. She quickly peeled the banana and cut it into small pieces and she did the same with the bread. Then she handed the bowl to Daeron.

“Breakfast little one,” she said as she placed the bowl in front of him. Daeron looked up at her and she took a piece of banana from the bowl and put it in her mouth.

“Is he going to be able to handle that?” Jon asked as he sat up in bed and rubbed the sleep from his eyes.

“Yes, he’s growing up and we’ll be watching him,” Dany said confidently as she watched Daeron reach for the bowl. He picked up a small piece of banana, and slowly put it into his mouth. “See Jon.
He’s fine,” she added with a victorious smile.

“Fair enough,” he said quietly.

“How are you feeling this morning?” she asked and he gave her a small smile.

“I’m doing well. Better now that I’ve seen this one again,” he said as he gently rubbed Daeron’s back. Daeron was now trying a piece of bread and he was repeating his same cautious approach.

“What are you planning to do today?” Jon asked.

“I think we should continue our preparations for our arrival into Kings Landing. So organize shipments of food and so on,” Dany said calmly and Jon nodded in agreement.

“Ser Davos is still on the island, he will have to be part of our council now,” he said. Ser Barristan had gone south to Kings Landing along with their Unsullied where they would meet with the Tyrell army and the Dothraki. “Have you received any word from Tyrion?”

“I actually have now that I remember,” Dany said as she kept a watchful eye on Daeron who seemed to be favoring the messy bananas. “That night he sent a raven saying that he had taken the castle although they were being sieged by a garrison that Tywin left behind in Lannisport,”

“Shouldn’t we go and help him? Why didn’t you tell me?”

“It was the same night we got the news about Rhaegar. It slipped my mind,” Dany said quietly and Jon nodded. “Those Lannister men have nothing to fight for anyway. Tywin Lannister has been defeated and those men will surrender,”

“Still we should send a raven to him to see if he needs our help,” Jon pointed out. “I can fly over there today, it won’t take me very long,” he said as he began to get out of bed.

“Jon relax. Tyrion sent his raven over a week ago, if the situation had worsened, he would have sent another one. The soldiers that are being escorted back to the Westerlands will help spread the message of the power of our dragons. If he sends another raven asking for help then I will come with
you,” she said firmly. She looked into his grey eyes and he slowly nodded in acceptance.

“There was another raven,” Dany said as she remembered that night. Three ravens had come, and she had only opened two. “We will read it later before the war council.”

“I agree. First, we have to clean this one up. He’s made a mess,” Jon said with a smile as he pointed at Daeron. He had bits of banana all over his hands and cheeks and he had thrown some of the bread out onto the bed.

“Come on then,” Dany said with a smile as she quickly scooped up Daeron. “Let’s get ready for the day,”

After a short trip to the bathhouse where Daeron made it his mission to splash them as much as possible, they dressed and headed off to have their breakfast in the small hall. They ate with Lady Shireen and Lady Margaery who had remained on the island in their absence along with her handmaidens.

“How was the war, your grace?” Shireen asked as they sat down to eat.

“It went well. We fought two battles. One in the Reach and one in the Riverlands,” Dany told them. “The battle in the Reach was against Lannister men and it was over rather quickly,“

“The Reach? Did you see my brother?” Margaery asked and Dany nodded

“We saw Loras after the battle in the Reach. He looks well Margaery, he took no injuries. We also saw your father and your other brother, Garlan,”

“Tywin Lannister had released his dogs in the Reach and so your father rode forward to fight them,”

“It was the Mountain and his men,” Jon added quietly and Margaery looked shocked.
“I have heard stories about him. Horrible, horrible stories,” Margaery said quietly.

“Aye. He’s a beast of a man, nearly killed me,” Jon said as he put Daeron on the floor so he could walk around.

“What happened?” Shireen asked

“We chased him to a town somewhere in the Reach and that is where we met up with Lord Tyrell. We went from door to door searching the village until we found him hiding in a tavern. I eventually killed him, thanks to the dragons and Ghost,”

“You killed the Mountain?” Margaery asked. “The singers will sing that song for years to come. That is an incredible accomplishment. I saw him in Kings Landing once, he is a beast of a man,”

Dany saw Jon blush and give her an apologetic look.

“After that, we rode North into the Riverlands. A terrible storm passed over us and so we were forced to make camp and that is when the Usurper attacked. We were up all night as we held off his army before finally defeating him in the morning once the rains faded,” Dany said and they both nodded.

“Well done, your grace. You both should be proud. Now is it on to Kings Landing?” Margaery asked and she nodded.

“Yes. We should depart for Kings Landing within the fortnight and once the city is ours the war will be at an end. Then you can finally leave this gloomy island,” she said with a smile.

“Actually your grace, Dragonstone isn’t so bad once you get used to it. And I will miss Prince Daeron,” Margaery said as she scooped him up and tickled him. Daeron giggled and laughed a little before Margaery put him back on the ground. Dany was happy with how comfortable Daeron was around them, it meant that their time together went well.

“Thank you for taking care of him whilst we were away,” Dany said and Jon nodded in agreement.
“It was our pleasure your grace,” Shireen answered. “He is a lovely little boy,”

“I agree, once he became accustomed to us, he was no trouble at all,” Margaery chimed in.

“Forgive me your grace, but what happened to Prince Rhaegar?” Shireen asked after a moment and Dany quickly looked at Jon. He finished his bite before he answered,

“He was shot in the leg and stomach. Ser Barristan said that it was by Stark men,” he said quietly. “However I am not convinced that it was,”

“Why do you think that your grace?” Margaery asked

“It doesn’t make sense. Lord Stark sent a raven asking for more merciful terms with the Tullys. Him attacking and trying to kill my father contradicts that goal completely,” Jon said and Margaery nodded.

“So, what do you plan on doing?”

“When my father wakes, I will speak to him and he will tell us what happened,” Jon said firmly. “Until then, we will continue our plan in the South. We will take Kings Landing and then we will reassess the situation afterwards ,”

Margaery nodded and they continued to finish the rest of their meal. Once they were finished, Jon and Dany got up to head to the chamber of the painted table to make their plans.

As there was hardly anyone still on the island, Dany took Daeron with her rather than give him to the ladies. The meeting was not going to be too long, not with so many of their advisors out in the field.

They entered the chamber of the painted table and they found Ser Davos already waiting for them.

“Your graces,” he said in greeting as he bowed.
“Ser Davos, thank you for joining us,” Jon said. Dany smiled in greeting before moving to take her seat at the table. She held Daeron in her lap whilst Jon took the raven scrolls from Ser Davos.

“The Maesters have kept all the raven messages for you whilst you were away. We have received several from Kings Landing your grace,” he said and this confused Daenerys.

Jon opened it, raised his eyebrow in surprise before releasing a loud drawn out sigh.

“What is it?” Daenerys asked as Daeron fidgeted out of her arms and onto the ground.

“Illyrio’s boy. He has taken Kings Landing and is inviting us for a parley to settle this ‘brotherly issue’ peacefully,”

Dany shook her head. “How could he take the city? He only has the Golden Company,”

“I don’t know. Robert Baratheon would have taken all of his men with him to war so maybe there was only a paltry force holding the city, easy enough for the Golden Company to take,” Jon said as he shrugged. “Either way, this war is not over,”

“We should send a raven back and agree to this parley. Our Dothraki, Unsullied and Reachmen are already marching to Kings Landing. We will have over 150,000 men. He can’t beat us,”

“I agree. I will send a raven back to him today and we will ready ourselves for departure sooner,”

“Your grace. You forget the scorpions mounted on the city walls. Your dragons may be in danger,” Ser Davos pointed out and Dany sighed.

“He won’t attack us at the parley,” Jon said evenly.

“How do you know that Jon? We don’t know anything about him,” Dany asked.

“He says that he wants to resolve this peaceful issue between brothers. Perhaps, he honestly believes that we will step aside for him because he is my ‘brother’”
“That might be true, but we should be cautious. Have him meet us outside the city walls, far away from his scorpions. I don’t want to take the chance,” Dany said and Jon nodded slowly. She quickly looked around the room for Daeron. He was standing next to Jon and holding onto his leg.

“Your graces, the city is likely to be starving. A long battle might not be good for the common people,” Ser Davos pointed out and Dany nodded.

“The quickest way to end this would be to use our dragons to beat his army, but we can’t. Perhaps, we could fly them over the city to intimidate them?” Dany suggested.

“We could do that. I like the idea. Before the parley we will fly the dragons over the city. At the very least, it’ll cause their soldiers to doubt their leader,” Jon said in agreement. He crouched down to pick up Daeron.

“We should stay relatively high outside of scorpion range, just to be safe,” Jon said and she agreed. That would be for the best. “I think that we should tell him the truth and then offer him a peaceful way out. He can head back to Essos, perhaps we can offer him Pentos?”

“I don’t think so. I don’t think we should give him an entire city to do with as he pleases. We can give him Illyrio’s manse. Illyrio was his father after all,”

“Your graces. If he believes that he is true King of Westeros, then he will never accept those terms,” Ser Davos pointed out.

“We have to offer him a peaceful way out. Lives are at stake here,” Jon stated.

“Still, he will refuse,”

“We know that,” Dany said as she stood up. “When he does, then he will learn that we are true Targaryens and he is not. Then he will learn our house words. Fire and Blood,”

The Dragon’s Hand
Tyrion walked through the hallways away from the Lords chambers and he contemplated what had happened. His father had killed himself there was no doubt about it. It would be over 100 feet to the rocks below and there was no way he could have survived.

The idea to fake the diary entry had come to him the day they took the castle. He had wanted to inflict as much pain onto his father as he could, in return for what he did to Tysha, and for what he did to him. Tywin had mocked and ridiculed him every day of his life but he had the final laugh.

He had gone to his grave thinking everything about his life was a lie, Tyrion could live with that victory.

He was walking towards Cersei’s room, a maid had come to him in the morning saying that she wanted to speak to him. Tyrion had accepted her request, but decided to make her wait the entire day. They had let her return to her room but she was still under constant guard and making her way was something small that would annoy her.

He had seen the children. Both Tommen and Myrcella had been overwhelmed to see him, they had thought he died after all. However, explaining the current situation had proven difficult. He was not sure how much he could tell them. He had decided to tell them that he had an argument with their mother and grandfather, he would leave the details to Jaime, since they were his children after all.

Cersei’s room was on the opposite side of the castle to their father’s, and it took Tyrion quite a while to get there. He walked past the guards who were on duty outside her door and into her room.

In all of his years living here, he had never visited her room. The two of them had never gotten along and Tyrion had no reason to enter her chambers, so this was the first time.

Her room was much larger than his and like their father, she too had a view of the Sunset Sea. Another large King sized bed was along one wall whilst she had a wardrobe and a dressing table along the other. There was a mirror on the table and Tyrion saw a door that led to what could only be a dressing area. Thick myrish carpets covered the floor and there was several tapestries that hung along the walls, including one lavish one of a roaring lion.

A flash of anger rushed through him as he looked around Cersei’s room. It reminded him once again the contrast in treatment they had all received. His room only had the bare essentials. A small bed, no carpets or tapestries. Tyrion was sure that his father would have put him in the dungeons if he could
have.

His eyes landed on Cersei who was sat at the dressing table, arms folded across her chest.

“I’ve been waiting all day,” she said angrily.

“I know. You’re my prisoner, all you can do is wait,” Tyrion casually replied and he was pleased to see she was annoyed by that comment. “Why did you want to see me?” he asked as he took a seat opposite her.

“I heard father is here,”

“Who told you that?”

“Jaime,” she replied with a small smile. Tyrion frowned slightly, he knew Jaime had visited her earlier, but he did not know how often he went.

“Did he tell you that your husband Robert Baratheon is dead?” Tyrion asked and she just shrugged. Tyrion was not surprised by this, she had no love for Robert. None at all

“Your precious Joffrey is also dead,” Tyrion added casually as he reached for the cup of wine. Cersei’s eyes locked onto him.

“How?” she asked quietly and Tyrion shrugged. The letter did not specify how.

“Run down by some Dothraki and his arakh, or burnt alive by a dragon. Either way that spoilt little brat is finally gone and the world is a better place because of it,” Tyrion answered as he drank. He watched as Cersei looked at him before her hand quickly snaked out and she slapped him right across the face.

Tyrion’s hand immediately went to his cheek and he sighed.

“You get one of those,”
“I don’t care. My son is dead because of you and your foreign whore of a Queen and her bastard husband. Where are my children? Where are Tommen and Myrcella? I want to see them!”

“Tomen and Myrcella are in their rooms, they are fine. I would not harm them,” Tyrion said sincerely but Cersei just glared at him, her green eyes unforgiving.

“Fine. I want to speak to father,” she said and Tyrion sighed. He looked at her and debated telling her the truth. Cersei picked up on his hesitation because her eyes narrowed. “What happened?”

“Our father is dead,” Tyrion said calmly. “Which makes me, the Lord of Casterly Rock,“

“Father is dead?” Cersei whispered as she shook her head. “No. You are lying, Jaime said that he was here today,”

“He was. For a time. Then we had a conversation in the Lords chambers. Father was led to believe that you and Jaime were in fact Aerys’s children, not his,”

“Why would he ever believe such a ridiculous thing?”

“I showed him mother’s diary and he read about their little affair,”

Cersei looked at him for a few moments before she started to slowly shake her head. “No. You’re lying,”

“I am lying. Unfortunately, we are in fact siblings but father truly is dead. He threw himself of the balcony in the Lords chambers,”

Cersei’s mouth opened and closed in shock as she processed the words. Then her face twisted and her nostrils flared.

“You mean to tell me, that my father is dead because you told him a silly lie?” she asked and Tyrion nodded slowly. Cersei stared daggers into him and Tyrion began to feel uncomfortable. He was about to get up to leave when Cersei lunged at him.
She moved so quickly that she knocked him to the floor in seconds.

“You vile, hateful, evil little creature!” she shrieked as she scratched and clawed at his face. Tyrion rolled and squirmed underneath her as he tried to avoid her hands and sharp nails. She was bigger than him and he knew that he could not let her pin her down.

He reached out with his right hand and grabbed a fistful of hair and he pulled it with all of his strength. He was rewarded with a scream so loud Tyrion was sure they heard it all across Westeros.

Cersei continued to struggle. She pulled her head backwards to try and take advantage of his small arms and pull her head out of his reach. Whilst she did this, she put one hand on his face to try and push him further away.

They struggled for what felt like an eternity. Tyrion twisted and pulled at her hair with all his strength. He twisted and pulled and twisted some more and he listened to Cersei’s screams. He felt her fingers dig and scratch sharply at his skin until suddenly they were gone and he felt Cersei’s weight lift.

He looked around and saw that Jaime had burst into the room and he was standing in between the pair of them. His green eyes were flicking between them both. Tyrion’s chest heaved and he looked at Cersei who was doing the same. Her long golden hair was a mess and as he saw several long strands in his fist and on the floor.

“What the hell are you two doing?” Jaime demanded.

“He killed father,” Cersei blurted out. “He lied to him and told him that our mother had an affair with the Mad King,”

“I know,” Jaime said quietly as he looked away from him, pain still in his eyes. Tyrion did not consider how the death of his father would impact Jaime, he only hoped that Jaime could forgive him.

“See Jaime! I told you what he was. He is an evil little man. First he killed our mother, then he killed our father. You need to stop him before he tries to kill our children next,” Cersei seethed as she stood up to tug on his sleeve. “We can’t trust him. We need to get rid of him,”
“Cersei he didn’t kill our mother,” Jaime said in a tired voice. “Our mother died giving birth to him, how is that his fault?”

“He killed our father,” Cersei carried on, ignoring Jaime’s objections.

“Cersei…,” Jaime said with a sigh.

“Don’t you dare defend him,” Cersei snapped as she stood in front of him. “He even admitted it. If it wasn’t for him then father would be alive;”

“Father has done some horrible things to Tyrion and so have I. I don’t think Tyrion should have did what he did, but I can’t imagine what I would have done if I was in his situation. I’ve killed a King for far less personal reasons,” Jaime said quietly.

“I can’t believe you,” Cersei hissed after a few tense moments. “You’re taking his side,”

“I’m not taking sides. I’m trying to get us all on the same side, so we can put this issue behind us and function like an actual family. All of us. Tyrion, the kids, you and me,” Jaime said to her but she stepped away from him.

“No,” she said coldly. “I will not have my children anywhere near that monster. It’s him or me,”

Tyrion took a deep breath and gave a pleading look towards his brother. He was standing in between them both, arms by his side looking back and forth helplessly. Tyrion was nervous, he did not want to lose his brother.

Jaime stood in the middle and Tyrion felt as if he was holding his breath.

The seconds seemed to stretch into minutes which seemed to stretch into hours until finally Jaime took a step.

He took a small step towards Tyrion and he finally let out a long breath.
Cersei however was not happy and she started to hurl insults at his back.

“I knew it. I knew you would choose your traitor brother over me. You are weak and stupid,” she shouted as she walked behind him. “All you have is your sword, you are nothing without it,”

Then Cersei spun Jaime around so he faced her. “My children would be ashamed to have you as their father. A man so cowardly he wouldn’t even claim them as his own,”

“You know I couldn’t claim them. We would both die!” Jaime shouted as he began to clench his fist.

“The Jaime that I knew would have fought enemies off. The Jaime that I loved would have fought for me. Instead, you’ve betrayed me for our drunken dwarf of a brother,”

“Shut up Cersei,” Jaime said as he tried to push her away.

“You betrayed me and my children,”

“Our children,”

“No. Mine.” Cersei repeated. “You have never cared for them. None of them will ever call you father, how does that feel Jaime?” she taunted. “They believe that Robert Baratheon is their father, not you. Think about that Jaime, you know Robert and what he was like. They think that he is their father,”

Tyrion shook his head as he saw Jaime open and close his fist in anger.

“I don’t want to talk about Robert,” he muttered darkly as he turned away from her.

“Why not Jaime? He’s bigger than you by the way. Much bigger and he’s not the only one,”

“What did you say?” Jaime said as he snapped back around. Tyrion felt nervous then and he took a few steps to the side
“You heard what I said Jaime. I’ve had other men,” she sneered and Jaime started to shake his head.

“When?”

“When you left me to join the dragon Queen. I fucked Lancel right here in this bed. When you went away to the Vale I had him again in Kings Landing. I had others too,” she sneered but Tyrion shook his head quickly. She was lying, he knew it.

However Jaime didn’t.

“How could you do that to me,” he croaked. “This was before anything happened. Why did you do this?”

“Have you ever wondered why Joff was so different to Tommen and Myrcella?” Cersei asked and Jaime shook his head. “He’s not yours. That’s why. When he was born I wasn’t sure, but as time went by and he grew, I became more and more certain. You were away from the keep doing some nonsense or the other. I begged you to stay but you rejected me, saying you had no choice. So I took a hedge knight to my bed one night and” then Jaime snapped.

Tyrion stood rooted to the spot as his brother barreled into Cersei and pushed her to the floor.

“You lied to me for years,” he hissed as he slapped her. “You lied to me and you cheated on me. I loved you,” he croaked as he began to shake

“I thought I loved you but I was wrong. I could never love someone like you, someone who is willing to betray me,” Cersei spat. She opened her mouth to speak again but only a strange gargling noise came out.

Then he noticed his hands.

Jaime’s hands were wrapped around Cersei’s pale throat. They were shaking but his actions were unmistakable.

Tyrion stood rooted to the spot as his hands slowly contracted, tightening their grip.
Cersei started to gargle and choke more and more as the air was cut off from her lungs. The sounds she made were horrifying, and they would haunt Tyrion until his final days. She started to trash about on the floor but Jaime was too heavy and too strong for her to move. Tyrion watched helplessly as her face turned blue and then purple as she choked, then her movements started to slow.

“Jaime,” he called out but his brother did not seem to hear him, he was too consumed in his rage.

“Jaime!” he shouted but again nothing happened. Tyrion’s legs moved forward until he was next to his brother, pulling and yanking at his shoulder and finally Jaime turned towards him.

“Jaime!” Tyrion shouted and that got Jaime to stop. His green eyes were filled with tears as he looked at him and then down to Cersei.

It took him a few moments because he suddenly sprung back off her still, lifeless body.

“Tyrion,” he whispered as he looked at his hands. “Oh gods, Tyrion. What have I done?”

Chapter End Notes

We're nearly there now, only a few chapters left

The next chapter should be up in 10 days. So the 27th.

Let me know what you think of this one, thank you all for the comments. I really appreciate them

Thanks for reading

Sleepy
So this is late. Apologies but chapter 32 was much more difficult to write than I expected. Good news is that it's finished now and I really like it.

We hit 100k reads or hits or whatever it is. Thanks for sticking with this story for so long, I really appreciate it.

Anyway, here is Pride and you know how the saying goes. 'Pride' comes before a fall

Thanks to GOT88 for the help provided with this story

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The Lord of Winterfell

“Father,” Robb called out as he walked into the solar. He was dressed in a heavy cloak and his cheeks were slightly red from the cold. He had just come back inside from his search

“Did you find anything?” Ned asked hopefully but Robb just shook his head and Ned just let out a long drawn out sigh in frustration.

The searches had proven fruitless. They had searched for leagues to the North, east and west but they could not find a trace of either Arya or Bran. He had led searches to the North and east whilst Robb covered the Wolfswood with his direwolf, yet they could not find them.

Ned did not know what to do. He had debated if he should tell his bannermen that two of his children were missing, but he did not want to look like he could not control and protect his own household, let alone the North. Telling them that his children were missing would only serve to encourage those Lords that were looking to betray him by reaffirming their suspicions that he was weak.

He still had yet to make any progress on that front either. He still had his suspicions, with Lord Karstark and Lord Bolton near the top of his list, but as of yet, he had no solid proof. Lord Bolton’s plan to bring more men to Winterfell was already well underway. Ned had been very careful to make sure that none of them entered the castle. He had hand-picked all of the sentries that stood guard at the entrances to the castle and he made sure they were all given explicit instructions to not let anyone unfamiliar within the walls.
To make matters worse, he still had not found those men who had betrayed him on the banks to the Green Fork. They were the key to this mystery and without them, Ned would not be able to prove his innocence.

It had been a frustrating few days for Ned Stark.

Robert Baratheon was now dead, slain by Jon somewhere in the Riverlands. Ned knew that this day would come and surprisingly, he found that it affected him less than he had thought. Robert had been his friend but Jon was his sister’s son, he was a child that he had known his entire life. A child he had sworn to protect and raised himself.

Ned sighed, closed his eyes and rubbed his temples. He knew that he was in this situation because he did not do what was right and support Jon in the first place at the council. This mess was almost of his own making.

Perhaps, Jon had not yet heard of what had happened to his father, Rhaegar. Perhaps, that was why he had not flown North. Although, as Ned thought about it more, he quickly realised how foolish that notion was.

Jon would have definitely have heard about what happened on the Green Fork, it would be foolish to think otherwise. Jon must be busy with something else, that must be the only reason that he did not come North. As to what that task could be, Ned did not know.

He had considered sending a raven south to Dragonstone explaining his side of the story, but he realised how utterly pathetic it would have sounded. He could not provide Jon with any proof that he did not order these attacks. The letter would achieve nothing.

Ned shook his head and returned his thoughts to the North. He needed to figure this out. Then once he had his own affairs in order, he could focus on Jon.

Lord Bolton was one of his most powerful bannermen and House Bolton was one of the most powerful houses in the North. Their houses had been enemies thousands of years ago but House Bolton had been loyal for centuries. Ned sat in his solar and he did his best to recall all of Lord Bolton’s actions ever since he announced his plans to go South to meet with Jon at the council.

Roose Bolton had not acted suspiciously or done anything that would cause him to think that he was
the traitor. He had ridden south with him to the council and observed the argument he had with Jon, but so did everyone else, that alone did not make Roose the traitor. Then when they rode South again to bend the knee, Roose had kept to himself near the rear of the march. Far away from the Starks and their men, which made Ned think it was unlikely that Roose had managed to steal Stark clothing to dress his men as Stark soldiers.

Then his thoughts turned to Lord Karstark. He had been very loud and vocal in his disappointment of him and he had already voiced his displeasure at Ned’s decision to bend the knee. However, the Karstarks had always been loyal to the Starks and Lord Karstark was far too loud and outspoken to ever pull off something like this. He was a northerner through and through and he was not afraid of letting his displeasure be known, as he had demonstrated the other day in the great hall.

Ned sighed and sunk lower in his chair. He needed some help to figure this out yet he was unsure of who he could trust. This was the type of nonsense that he had to put up with in Kings Landing when he was searching for Jon Arryn’s killer. Except only then he had help, he was on his own here.

He heard a knock on the door and he quickly called for the person to enter, it was Maester Luwin.


“My Lord, we have received a raven from Torrhen's Square. There are Iron Born raiders attacking along the coast of the Stoney Shore,” he said in a grave voice and Ned sighed. Ever since they had returned Theon to his father, he had feared something like this would happen. Balon was probably still bitter about his defeat in his rebellion all those years ago. This had been Robert’s idea and he had gone along with it like a fool, now it had come back to bite him.

“How many?”

“We cannot say for certain, perhaps a few hundred,”

Ned was silent for a few moments. Ironborn raiders was the last thing that he needed right now, he had enough trouble internally with his own bannermen.

Then Ned realised that this was an opportunity, crushing the Iron Born would show the Lords that he was still an effective leader and restore some confidence in him. It would also give him a chance to observe his Lords in the field. Ned allowed a small feeling of optimism to grow, he realised that this could be the opportunity that he was waiting for.
“Have the Lords meet me in the Great hall,” Ned said. “We will be riding out to defend our lands, I want to leave tonight,”

The Dragon’s Hand

Tyrion Lannister was in shock. He had seen many things in his life, he seen the Black Wall in Volantis charred by dragonflame, he had seen dragons and direwolves, but seeing his brother strangle his sister and former lover to death was the most shocking one of them all.

Tyrion had no idea that Jaime was capable of such an act. He and Cersei had argued in the past but to do this….Tyrion would not have believed it if he didn’t see it with his own eyes.

It was later in the same day and Tyrion had still not recovered. In the space of only a few short hours, two of his closest family members had been killed. They still had not recovered his father’s body, which had been lost to the waves and rocks, however, Cersei’s corpse was right in front of him.

She was still beautiful, even in death. The light from the window came down at the perfect angle to accentuate the features of her face. Her long golden hair had been combed and brushed. Her face was relaxed. She had been dressed in a dark green dress with a high collar that covered the ugly purple bruises on her neck.

Those last few moments had gone by so quickly, one moment she had been standing there, insulting Jaime about her relationship with Robert, the next she had been on the floor, having the life choked out of her.

Tyrion was sure that she had been lying, she had to be. His sister was a vile manipulative bitch and lying was something she loved to do. However, this lie had clearly been too much for Jaime to handle.

He looked at him now, standing alone in a dark corner of the room, staring at her body. He had barely spoken since.

“Jaime,” he said quietly as he walked over to him. “Jaime, look at me,”
His brother finally tore his green eyes away from his sister’s body to look at him.

“I’ve killed her, Tyrion,” he said quietly, his voice breaking with pain. “I’ve killed their mother, they’ll never forgive me,”

Tyrion was quiet for a moment before he shook his head.

“We don’t have to tell them,” Tyrion said after a moment and Jaime just looked at him as if he was crazy.

“We have to tell them. She was their mother. We can’t hide it Tyrion. We have to tell them,”

“We don’t have to tell them what happened today, we can tell them that she fell ill,” Tyrion said quickly but Jaime just frowned again.

“Fell ill, Tyrion? They saw her yesterday, they won’t believe that she had fallen ill and died all in one day. I have to tell them the truth,” he urged.

“What will you tell them Jaime? That their father killed their mother? How will they live with that?”

Jaime shot him an anguished look as he hung his head.

“I still haven’t told them that,” he said quietly. “I’m not sure they will believe me now,”

Tyrion was quiet before he spoke again. “Jaime, they will believe you if you tell them. They’re your children. But you can’t tell them about what happened today, they don’t need to know about this. Nothing good will come off it,”

Jaime continued to look at him before he nodded slowly in acceptance. “I will tell them in the morning. I’ll let them have the night,”
“I agree. Then after that, I will have to take my leave,” Tyrion added.

“You’re leaving? Now?” Jaime asked in disbelief “Right after we lose father and our sister?”

Tyrion nodded. “Yes. I have to get to Kings Landing, I am their Hand and they need me in these times,”

“Tell them you have a family emergency. That is the truth and they will respect that,”

“Jaime, can I be honest with you?” Tyrion said quietly and his brother nodded. “All of my life, I have wanted nothing more than to prove to my father than I am a Lannister and I am worthy of being his heir and hold this castle in his name,”

“It’s not what you thought it would be?” Jaime asked,

“No, it’s not,” Tyrion agreed quietly “Father is dead. Cersei is dead and this castle is upsetting to say the least, I have no good memories of this castle, only years of ridicule and torment. I don’t want this castle. I’ve come to realise that my place is elsewhere,”

The room fell silent for a few minutes before Jaime spoke again,

“I suppose I can’t stop you. It will just be me, Tommen and Myrcella,”

“And Aunt Genna,” Tyrion added and Jaime nodded. “She will help you,”

Again, the conversation fell silent and Tyrion took a deep breath before speaking again.

“Jaime, I am sorry, I know that I had difficult relationships with our father and sister, but I know that your relationships were different. I don’t want you to blame me for their deaths,”

Jaime gave a dark laugh.
“I don’t blame you, Tyrion. Your lie caused our father to kill himself, but I killed our sister with my own hands. I can’t blame you, I’m just as guilty.”

Tyrion let out a relieved breath, he could not have Jaime hating him. It would not have been worth it if he lost his brother, the only family member that treated him as such.

Instead, he turned again to Cersei’s body.

“I won’t stay for the burial,” Tyrion said “She didn’t go to mine,”

Jaime nodded but didn’t comment, he just turned to look at her body again. Tyrion realised that the conversation was at an end. He took one last look at Cersei lying on the table, before leaving the room, and Casterly Rock for the final time.

The Dragon King

Rhaegar still had not woken up. It had been several weeks now. However, Jon was sure that he was getting better. His wounds were healing well and the Maesters were pleased with his progress, and his breathing was normal, as if he was sleeping peaceful.

Last night, he had started to read through the books that they had taken from Valyria to see if he could find anything that would help them. He was looking for any sort of remedy that the Valyrians may have used but he had not found anything yet. However, he refused to give up hope, he would find a solution, and his father would live.

He refused to even think of the alternative.

They had also started to notice that Caraxes, usually the mellowest of the dragons, was more aggressive than usual. All the dragons tended to follow the commands of their riders, but with Rhaegar unwell, no one was able to control his dragon, all they could do was hope that Caraxes would follow his siblings in battle.

Jon stood in their dressing room in Dragonstone as he got dressed for the day ahead. Dany was on the other side of the room whilst Daeron did his best to slow down her progress. He had his own dressing room, but he liked dressing together as a family to start the day.
They would be flying out to Kings Landing on the back of their dragons to meet with Illyrio’s son. Jon did not have high hopes for this meeting, but they had to attend regardless. They had to give him a chance to surrender peacefully.

Jon had wanted to leave earlier in the morning, but his wife had been particularly distracting that morning. After they made love that morning, they had their family breakfast with Daeron before heading back upstairs to dress.

He would be wearing his full armor today. The Valyrian steel had been cleaned and polished and the jewels in the chestplate would shine brightly in the sun. He crouched down to lace his boots before he stood and looked over at his wife.

She had on a long grey dress over her black riding leathers. She was currently adding the finishing touches to her single silver braid.

“What is Daeron doing?” Jon asked as he spied his son standing next to her.

“Making a mess,” Dany casually replied as she continued to dress.

“Why?”

“Well Jon, he’s growing and he has just discovered that if he stands on his tip toes, he can reach the things on my dressing table,” Dany said as Daeron pulled her brush off the table and onto the floor.

“Should I stop him?” Jon asked but she just shrugged.

“This isn’t so bad. The other day, he pulled all my dresses out of the wardrobe and onto the floor. I’ll pick the stuff up after I’m ready. If I clean up now he’ll just put them back on the floor again,”

Jon chuckled and then quickly crossed over to pick him up before he could do any more damage. He tickled Daeron and he was rewarded with a series of loud giggles. As he laughed, he was able to see all his of his teeth, he had four now, two on the top and two on the bottom. He brushed his silver hair away and gave him a gentle kiss.
“Soon, we’ll have to start cutting his hair,” he joked to Dany and she immediately turned around to give him a dark look.

“You are not cutting my boy’s beautiful hair,” she said in a warning tone which Jon laughed at.

“I know, I was only joking,” he teased and she just shook her head at him. Daeron seemed to like his joke as well.

“Good, he will have beautiful silver hair like his mama,” she said while putting the brush down. “Come on boys, I’m ready,” she said as turned to face him “How do I look?”

Jon looked her up and down and he was stunned, he could not believe how lucky he was to have her love. Her lovely lilac eyes, shapely lips and a wonderful figure.

“Every day, you get more and more beautiful. You look amazing” Jon answered truthfully and she smiled.

“Thank you Jon,” she said with a gracious smile. “What do you think Daeron? Does mama look nice?”

Jon looked at Daeron and nodded his head and to his surprise Daeron copied him. He bobbed his head a few times and Dany gushed. She quickly came over to give him another quick kiss and Jon wrapped his arms around her.

“Thank you so much sweetling,” she cooed as she tickled him gently.

Jon was extremely grateful for moments like these, moments with his family.

The Mummer’s Dragon
Aegon Targaryen woke up alone.

His bed in the King’s chambers of the Red Keep was a large one, large enough to fit 7 or 8 people yet for the past few nights it had felt like it was only him in that bed. His wife came to bed before him and woke up early in the morning to do whatever she did. On top of that, they barely spoke to each other during the day. She was always off doing her own thing.

Aegon found that he missed the warmth of his wife, the familiar smell of her hair and the feel of her tight body. As he lay there, he realised that he could not even remember the last time they had laid together.

Perhaps, he would have to use his husbandly rights.

Although, she had been saying that she had been feeling unwell lately, perhaps she was pregnant. That thought filled him with a strange sense of happiness, he had heard that his brother had a child with Daenerys. He wanted one of his own, a son and heir to his throne.

Still, he had more important things to worry about, his brother should be here any day now and he was eager to meet him and welcome him back to the fold.

He gently pushed the soft covers off him and climbed out of bed. He padded across the cold room and into his dressing room. A servant had left a jug of water and a few cups on a tray on a side table, but apart from that, he was completely alone.

He sighed and shook his head. He would dress and find Lord Connington who had been acting as his Hand. He had debating appointing his brother as Hand but he decided against it, Jon had been loyal to him his entire life, and the Hand of the King was the best position that he could offer him. His brother would have to make do with Dragonstone.

As he dressed, he thought about the fact that he would finally be meeting his father. Aegon had wondered what Rhaegar looked like, but soon he would find out. Varys had reported on a rumor that Rhaegar had been attacked and killed by Stark men but Aegon did not believe it.

If the rumor was true, his brother would have taken his dragons North and burned Winterfell to the ground. He would have killed those traitorous Starks, they had all betrayed House Targaryen once when they rebelled years ago and they did not deserve a second chance.
He finished dressing and then made his way out of the room and through the castle. He decided to head to the small hall where he usually had his breakfast, perhaps his wife would be there although his hopes weren’t very high.

He entered the hall and was proven right, she wasn’t here, although Connington was.

“Good morning your grace,” he said immediately as he entered and Aegon smiled at his most loyal advisor.

“Morning Jon. I take it you haven’t seen my wife?”

“No, your grace. I haven’t seen Queen Arianne,” he replied. Aegon just shrugged and went to fill his plate with bacon, sausages and warm bread. He sat opposite Jon and began to eat.

“How is the city? Have any Lords arrived?” Aegon asked. He was expecting Lords to come to Kings Landing to swear fealty to their new King.

“No, your grace. No Lords have arrived. The situation in the city is largely the same, nothing much has changed,”

“Oh,” he said quietly. He was slightly concerned by this. They had been in the city for several weeks now and he had expected some Lords to arrive, certainly the local Lords of Rosby, Stokeworth or Duskendale were expected to make an appearance in his city. However, he was not too concerned, it was still early in his reign, there was plenty of time for such formalities.

“What about the other positions on my small council? Has the Citadel sent another Maester to replace Pycelle?” Aegon asked. Varys had been quick to point out that Pycelle was just a Lannister crone. It was he who persuaded his grandfather, Aerys, to open the city gates to let that dog Tywin Lannister into the city. He had heard that his brother and Aunt had smashed him in battle and scattered his forces. He was proud of his little brother, it was good that he was avenging their family.

“As of yet no. We have not received another Maester from the Citadel,” Jon said quietly. “Although I have some good news, I have found someone to make the poison,”

“The poison?” Aegon asked and then he sighed as he remembered. “Jon. I am not sure about this poison plot. I will need to ride one of those dragons,”
“It is just a precaution, your grace,” Connington insisted and Aegon sighed.

“Fine. What is his name?”

“Qyburn, your grace. He is a maester, or a former maester,”

“Former?” Aegon questioned.

“Yes, he was stripped of his chain for studying Necromancy and performing forbidden experiments,” Connington told him as he frowned slightly. Aegon began to shake his head.

“No, that will absolutely not do. Find somebody else,” Aegon insisted. He would not have his reign blighted by this. What was Jon thinking, hiring a man kicked out of the Citadel!

“Your grace. There is no one else,” he began,

“Find someone else,,” he commanded.

“There is no time. He could be hear any day now and Qyburn says that the poison would have taken weeks to prepare properly. If he hadn’t already started,”

“He started?” Aegon interrupted again and Jon nodded.

“Tell him to stop and scrap it all,” Aegon demanded and Connington slowly nodded.

“May I ask why?” he quietly asked.

“You said it yourself. This man was stripped of his chain for performing forbidden experiments. We can’t trust him. He can be performing all manner of heinous things that will reflect badly on me and my reign. What will the Citadel say after we hire someone that they deemed unworthy?” Aegon said as he shook his head. “I am here to restore my family and their name. I will not be associated with the likes of him,”
Jon opened his mouth to speak but Aegon raised his hand up.

“Find someone else to make your poison. If you can’t then don’t make it at all. But I will not be associated with this man. This is final,”

Jon looked at him before he slowly nodded.

“At once your grace,” he said as he stood up to leave. Aegon shook his head at him as he left. His reputation was very important, he was here to restore House Targaryen, he could not blemish it by working with these types of people.

He thought about his brother and Daenerys. They were allied with those Dothraki savages. He made a mental note to order them to send the horselords back to Essos. He would not have those savages on his lands.

He would also have to order the reconstruction of the dragon pit to house their dragons. The dragons were a sign of the strength of their house. He was thankful to his Aunt and brother for bringing them back, and he was looking forward to the day when the Dragons flew above Kings Landing.

Varys had also given him a detailed report on the events of the council. Apparently, his brother and aunt had already rallied several of the Lords of Westeros to their side. They already had the support of the Reach and other great houses in Westeros. This was good, as it meant that his job of uniting and leading Westeros would be easier.

He had learned from his Maester that the Reach was also the largest producer of food in Westeros, and they would help him to feed his people in Kings Landing.

He finished the rest of his breakfast alone before he headed off into his castle. He had several things that he needed to do. He would have to establish his Kingsguard. His grandfather, Aerys, had one of the mightiest Kingsguards in the history of his house. He had legendary knights such as Ser Arthur Dayne, Ser Gerold Hightower and of course his great uncle, Ser Lewyn Martell.

He would have to build his own Kingsguard and create his own legacy. Duck would have one spot if he wanted it. He had been his friend for years and he trusted him to guard his back and keep his secrets. If he did not want it, then he would find another position for him. A position on his small council and a castle for him.
Aegon’s thoughts wandered to the other parts of his small council. Varys would retain his position as Master of Whispers. Connington would be his Hand. Oberyn would be his Master of War, his reputation as fierce warrior preceded him. Perhaps, his brother could be Master of Coin.

He was crossing over a bridge that overlooked the courtyard. It was a sunny day, although it was still rather chilly. He saw several men sparring. Prince Oberyn was teaching Duck how to fight with a spear. He watched them go at it for a few moments, Oberyn would knock him to the floor, before helping him up and telling him where he went wrong.

He continued to watch them for a few minutes until he saw a shadow pass overhead.

He quickly looked upwards and then he saw them again.

Two large dragons flying high overhead. The black one and the dark green one. They had grown tremendously since the last time that he had seen them in Volantis. The black dragon banked again as it flew over flea bottom whilst the green dragon flew high over the Great Sept of Baelor. Then, the dragons flew beyond the city gates in between the dragon gate and the old gate.

Aegon was surprised by this, he had hoped they would make a quieter entrance. Still, he was a King and it was time to meet his subjects.

He headed back inside into his dressing room where he dressed, alone.

He decided to wear his armor and crown, he was a King after all and it was important he looked the part. Once he was dressed, he strapped his Valyrian steel blade to his waist and made his way down to the main courtyard.

The courtyard was bustling with activity as horses were brought up from the stable and saddled. This caught Aegon by surprise, he would have thought they would come into the city and the castle to talk.

“Prince Oberyn,” he called as he saw the Dornishman entering the courtyard. “Why are they not entering the city?”

“They declined our invitation and said they would prefer to meet outside the city walls,” he replied.
with a shrug. Aegon nodded and then climbed onto his light brown horse, ignoring the unsettling feeling that was starting to grow in his stomach.

To his surprise, he saw his wife enter the courtyard and climb onto her brown mare. He tried to make eye contact with her, but she seemed determined to avoid him. Was she angry with him? What had he done? He had barely spoken to her.

He shook his head, he would sort her out later. Now, he had a brother to meet.

He turned around and saw that Connington and the rest of their men had assembled and they were waiting on him. It looked like they would be bringing a party of 30 or so men. He nodded and then nudged his horse forward through the gates of the Red Keep.

They poured out into the city streets and made their way down Aegon’s hill. The common folk were out again and they were all whispering to each other and pointing up at the sky. Aegon was no fool, he knew that they were talking about his brother and those dragons.

Some of them were smiling, others were laughing, whilst others were silent with looks of wonder on their faces.

Aegon frowned, his reception into the city had not been like this. Not at all.

His brother was upstaging him.

He tightened his grip on the reins and increased the pace and soon, the whispers were drowned out by the sounds of the hooves on the cobbled streets. He led their party through the Dragon gate and out into the fields surrounding Kings Landing.

It was not too difficult to spot the dragons, they were both on the ground several miles to the North. He did not spot the third dragon, his dragon. Perhaps, it was nearby.

He nudged his horse forward again and it broke out into a gallop. The cool wind rushed through his silver locks and a smile formed on his face. It only took them a short while to close the distance across the green fields.
The black dragon raised its freakishly large head and hissed as he approached and he slowed his horse, it would not be wise to get too close, the horse might startle.

He stopped a very safe distance away and got off his horse, handing the reins to one of his men. He made the rest of the journey on foot. The dragons hissed again and Aegon saw small tendrils of smoke releasing from their nostrils. Would they burn him alive?

No, he was Aegon Targaryen, son of Elia Martell and Rhaegar Targaryen, descendent of Aegon the Conqueror, son of old Valyria. He would not burn.

He stood his ground against the dragons and they hissed again before eventually stepping away from each other, and then he saw them.

Daenerys was beautiful, there was no denying that. She possessed the classical Valyrian features of long silver hair and striking purple eyes. She looked like she had a good shape as well. Aegon felt a slight bit of jealousy, he was a Targaryen King, he deserved a Valyrian wife. His wife was a beautiful, but she did not look like that.

Then, his eyes turned to the other man and he frowned. He had ordinary, raven hair and grey eyes.

However, the rest of him was not ordinary.

He wore a suit of armor that was made from an unworldly metal. It smoked and shimmered in the sunlight as if it was bewitched by magic, first it was dark as coal, then it looked blood red. In the center of the metal, the sigil of their house had been engraved, the three headed dragon. Aegon watched enviously as the jewels in the dragon's eyes sparkled in the sunlight. He saw emeralds, rubies and sapphires, each gemstone as beautiful as the one it was next to.

Strapped to his waist was a sword with a jeweled handle and a dragon shaped pommel. He was dressed well, that much was for certain. Was that the blade he used to kill Robert Baratheon? Perhaps, it was.

Next to him was a large white animal, huge in fact. Probably the size of a horse. It also had unsettling blood red eyes. He shook his head and took a step forward.

“Aegon. Daenerys,” he said in greeting. “Thank you for joining me in Kings Landing,”
They took a look at each other, seemingly communicating something with their eyes before they turned back to him.

“How did you take the city?” Daenerys asked and Aegon smiled, proud to show off his accomplishment.

“It was rather easy. The Goldcloaks were no match for the Golden Company,”

“So whilst I slayed Robert Baratheon and the Mountain, you defeated… the Goldcloaks?” His brother asked and he could hear his Northern accent.

“You killed the Mountain?” Oberyn asked and Aegon could hear the skepticism in his voice.

“Killed?” Daenerys questioned. “He crushed the Mountain, smashed him like he was nothing,” she said fiercely and Oberyn just snorted and shook his head.

“I can only beat what its front of me,” Aegon answered with a scowl. Then he took a deep breath, this was his younger brother, he had to be kind. “Nice armor, where did you get it?”

“Valyria,” he replied with a cocky smile “Its Valyrian steel. Like the sword,”

Aegon nodded slowly and tried not to show his annoyance. Valyrian steel was rare enough, and here he was with a full set of armor?

“Where is your father? Where is Prince Rhaegar?” Connington asked as he stepped forward.

“Rhaegar is home on Dragonstone. I am sure you have heard the reports of his injuries,” Daenerys said sadly.

“Yes, I heard the reports but I did not believe them. Why are you here instead of avenging our father?” Aegon demanded.
“Our investigation is ongoing,” his brother began. “And until we find out who is truly responsible, we will not take any action. It would be unwise to act rashly ,”

“Who is truly responsible?” Oberyn asked. “Even I know that Lord Stark ordered the attack. I should thank him, he did the world a favor . Rhaegar Targaryen dishonored my sister and Dorne with his actions,”

Aegon shot him a dark look but his brother spoke up.

“Do not speak about my father that way. My father is a good man who regrets the consequences of his actions,”

“Still. Why have you not punished the Starks? You have dragons? Go and burn Winterfell to the ground for what they did,” Aegon said.

“I do not believe Lord Stark ordered the attack. And I am not your subject. You do not command me ,”

“I am your elder brother and your King,” Aegon said simply.

“You are not my King,” his brother said.

“And you are not part of our family,” Daenerys added as she stepped forward. “You look the part, but you are no Targaryen,”

Aegon shook his head and began to laugh,

“What are you talking about ? I am Aegon the son of Elia Martell of Dorne and Rhaegar Targaryen, Prince of Dragonstone ,”

“Aye but the whole world thinks you are dead because the Mountain smashed your head into a wall when you were a babe,”
“That’s not true, my mother,"

“Swapped you with another baby and smuggled you out of the city,” Daenerys interrupted and Aegon paused then he understood, the Dwarf must have told them.

“Still. Everyone knows of me but no one knows of you. You don’t even look like a Targaryen,” he sneered. His brother just smirked, closed his eyes and slowly changed the color of his hair. Aegon opened his mouth in shock and couldn’t withheld a gasp as his eyes opened and suddenly they were purple.

“Better now?” he asked and Aegon did not know what to say. He was speechless. “I learnt this trick in Valyria,” he said calmly as he closed his eyes and slowly turned his hair raven black once again.

“My brother stood up at the council and proclaimed to the entire realm that Jon is his son,” Daenerys said. “He won’t say the same for you,”

“Oh so who am I?” Aegon asked in a mocking tone.

“You are the son of Illyrio Mopatis. He was a magister in Pentos,” Daenerys said calmly as her purple eyes glared at him. Aegon shook his head repeatedly and laughed.

“I am not Illyrio’s son. That is nonsense;”

“Yes, you are. Illyrio even admitted it when we went to see him. That statue in his garden? He lies to everyone and says it is one of him, but his story does not make sense. It is really a statue of you,”

Aegon shook his head. He vaguely remembered the statue, it looked nothing like him.

“He told us something else. Your mother was a Blackfyre,” Daenerys continued.

“That is a lie. The Blackfyres have been dead for years. Ever since Barristan the Bold slew Maelys the Monstrous on the Stepstones.” Lord Jon interrupted.
“Only the male line. The female line lived on. Your mother was the last of them and she told Illyrio. She made him promise to sit you on the throne one day, and that is why he backs you,”

Aegon shook his head again. “Alright you’ve had your fun. Stop with the lies,” he said firmly but they just looked at him, their faces expressionless.

“I am Aegon Targaryen, son of Rhaegar Targaryen and Elia Martell. Rightful King of Westeros. I am no Blackfyre. I have the same blood as you, the blood of the dragon. I can even prove it,” he said as he took a step forward towards the black dragon.

The dragon quickly raised its head and leered at him, opening its jaws wide. Aegon froze. He saw row after row of sharp black pointed jagged teeth. He saw broken and blackened bones in between the teeth, and deep down its throat, he saw molten magma flame.

“You are not part of our house and we will not be kneeling to you,” she said.

“Then why are you here?” Aegon asked coldly, not liking the direction this conversation was heading.

“We came to give you a choice. If you surrender now, we will allow you to return to Pentos where you may live in your father’s manse for the rest of your days. You will abide by our laws and swear to renounce your claims and never to use the name Aegon Targaryen again,” Jon said and Aegon scowled.

“Why would I do that?”

“If you don’t. Then we will be take the city by force,”

“Our armies vastly outnumber yours. We have over 100,000 Westerosi men and over 50,000 Dothraki cavalry. We can send 20,000 men to each of the seven city gates and still have an extra 10,000 left over. Surrender is your only option,” Daenerys added.

“You do not have that many men. You’re bluffing,” Aegon said as he shook his head. He was no fool, he knew they had more men, but there was no chance they had 5 times as much. None at all.
“We also have three dragons. Large ones at that,” Jon said and this time both Dragons stretched their necks and looked down at them. Aegon realised that this was a problem, but then he looked towards Connington and gave him a small nod. He would have to find Qyburn again, he would deal with the Citadel after he had won.

“You also don’t have the food to survive a siege,” Daenerys added and Aegon fought hard to keep his face neutral. How did they know that? He must have had a spy in his ranks.

“What about Dorne?” he heard his wife ask “What do you require from us?”

He whipped around to glare at her but she had eyes only on Daenerys. Daenerys in turn looked at Jon and again they seemed to have a silent conversation. Aegon seethed. His wife barely spoke to him with words and yet these two could speak using their eyes.

“As battle has yet to begin and the Dornish have yet to take up arms against us. We will require you to swear oaths of fealty to us as your King and Queen. We will require you to send a delegate to the capital to inform us of all of your affairs. Your financial records, your food stores and so on. We will offer you the same choice we offered those at the council, the chance to bend the knee and peacefully join us.”

“No,” Oberyn said immediately “I will not abandon Elia’s son. We reject your offer,”

“Uncle. We should let father know,” Arianne said quickly and Aegon just looked at her in shock. Was she really considering this? Would his own wife really betray him like this?

“He gave me control of the Dornish armies,” Oberyn began.

“And I am his heir and the Princess of Dorne. My opinion matters just as much as yours,”

“My men will not listen to you. The Dornish spears stay,” Oberyn said coldly as he turned away from her. “Apologies, your grace. My niece, she forgets herself at times. Aegon nodded slowly but continued to glare at his wife, who once again did not meet his eyes.

Perhaps, she was a traitor. Was she already feeding them vital information in return for favorable terms? It certainly looked that way. It would certainly explain why she was acting so cold. He would have to ask Varys to spy on her. He needed to know.
Jon looked at him for a few moments before he slowly stepped forward.

“Look, I know what it is like to find out that your whole life has been a lie. I know it hurts, I was angry when I found out the truth about my parentage and I imagine you feel angry and frustrated. But don’t do something foolish. If this goes to war, you don’t stand a chance, do the right thing and spare these innocent people their lives,”

Aegon shook his head, how dare he disrespect him like this.

“I don’t know what happened to you, brother. But I am exactly who I say I am. I am Aegon Targaryen son of Elia and I am the rightful King. You are a liar and a mad man. I will not give my city to you,” Aegon spat and he saw them both frown.

“Then let us settle this the old way,” Jon said. “You against me. No one else needs to die,”

Aegon looked at him slowly before he shook his head.

“No. I don’t believe you. When I beat you, she will not let me live in peace,” Aegon said as he pointed towards Daenerys. “If you want to fight me one on one, then I want my own dragon,”

“No. You don’t get to choose a dragon,” Daenerys said as she shook her head. “And even if you could, you would never get one from us,”

“Then you have your answer,” Aegon said firmly.

“Very well,” Jon said quietly and they both turned around and climbed onto their dragons. Once they were both sat in their saddles. Daenerys spoke to them,

“We have offered you the chance to surrender and to choose a peaceful option. You declined it. The next time we see you, we will show you the words of House Targaryen. We will serve you with fire and blood,” and with that, they took off. The thunderous sound of the dragon’s wings were deafening and Aegon angrily stomped back to his horse.
“Connington. Do what you have to do,” he ordered. “And when we return. I need to have words with my wife,”

The Lord of Winterfell

“What do you think Robb?” Ned asked as they made their way towards the Stoney Shore. They had been travelling for the past few days and Ned could almost see their destination ahead of them. All that stood between them and the fishing village was a small forest of pine trees.

As he had hoped, the Northern Lords had immediately rallied behind him in this mission. He had managed to rally 2,000 men at such short notice, more than enough to take care of the Ironborn

“About the Ironborn?” his son asked,

“Aye,”

“I think that they have heard what happened to Prince Rhaegar, and they think we’re weak. I think they’re hoping that Jon will be happy that they are attacking us and he will reward them,”

Ned nodded. He had a similar thought.

“Father, what if someone told them?” Robb asked and Ned quickly turned to look at him.

“What do you mean?”

“Someone is obviously working against us to try and cause a conflict between you and Jon. What if that person told the Ironborn that we are weak?”

“So you think this is a trap?”

“I’m not sure father, it’s just something I’ve been thinking of,” Robb said,
“Do you think Theon is here?” Ned asked as he looked at him. He saw Robb’s face harden.

“I hope for his sake that he isn’t. He should have reached out to me for an alliance, not try to attack us when we are weak,”

Ned nodded and let the conversation drop. He had kept his distance from the Greyjoy boy, he always knew that the day might come where he would have to execute him on behalf of Robert’s orders. However, he had allowed him to bond with Robb and form a friendship. He only hoped that their friendship did not cloud Robb’s judgment today.

“What do you think Jon is doing?” Ned asked, wanting Robb’s opinion. Robb was quiet for a second before he answered.

“He is still in the South, perhaps he is finishing the war in the South before he turns his attentions North. You should send a raven to him explaining our side of the story,”

“I don’t trust ravens at the moment,” Ned said as he thought back to Rhaegar’s words. Someone had intercepted the raven that Jon had sent back to Winterfell. Until he found out who it was and who ordered them to do it, he would not trust important information to a raven.

“I still think we should take the chance. Jon needs to know our side of the story,”

“Aye and it would be better if we told him in person,” Ned said.

“And how do you plan on doing that? You could sail to Dragonstone and leave me in charge of Winterfell and the North in your absence,”

“I can’t leave the North Robb, you know how unhappy my bannermen are with me. They would think I am crazy if I went south to Dragonstone at this time,”

Robb was silent and they entered the forest.

“We should go the rest of the way on foot. They might hear the horses,” Robb said and Ned nodded
in agreement. He gave out orders to his men, and they all dismounted and tied the horses to nearby trees. Then they began to make their approach.

The ground crunched beneath his feet as they slowly moved forward into the tree line. Robb and his wolf was to his left whilst Jory Cassel and a few Stark men completed his own personal guard. Lord Karstark and Lord Bolton were to his right. He wanted to keep them close, to observe them during this battle. If there were any signs of their wavering loyalty, he wanted to be close to see them.

He could see the fishing village ahead at the end of the tree line. There was a thin layer of fog rolling in from the sea that stopped just short of the huts that the fishermen used. The village was not very big, only 30 huts or so. If Ned were to guess, the Ironborn were sleeping in those huts rather than on their ships. Each hut could hold about 5 or so people, which would mean that there would only be at most 200 or so Ironborn.

To the south of the village, he saw that they had put two huts to the torch. Ned frowned and turned his head in the other direction. He only hoped that the damage to the rest of the village was not as bad.

The Ironborn would have pulled their long ships onto the shore. He had given orders to the Glovers and the Talharts to flank around to make sure the Ironborn could not escape back to the sea. He wanted a clean victory today.

There were about twenty or small huts in the fishing village. He could see small plumes of smoke still trailing into the sky from campfires that they must have lit last night. The grey smoked mixed with the fog.

He continued to edge forward until he reached the edge of the tree line, then he raised a gloved hand, telling his men to stop. He saw his breath on the cool morning air in front of his face. He crouched behind a bush and waited. He saw one man leave a hut slightly in front of him to his left. He watched as the man walked behind his hut, unbutton his trousers, and go for a piss.

Ned looked to his left in Robb’s direction and nodded. He drew his sword from his sheath and then he began to quickly walk forward. He looked to his right and saw Karstark and Bolton men also making their way forward.

They entered the fishing village and were only a 10 or so meters behind the man before he turned around and spotted them. Ned stared into the man’s green eyes before the Ironborn man yelled at the top of his lungs.
“STARKS!”

Ned quickly moved forward to kill the man but before he could get there, Greywind was on him. Landing on his chest and ripping out his throat in seconds.

The man’s screams woke the other Ironborn men because the doors to the fishing huts starting to open. Blear eyed Ironborn men poked their heads out of the doors to look down onto the streets. Their eyes quickly widened in horror and soon the air was filled with panicked shouts as they all rushed for the weapons they had in the huts.

Ned however did not waste any time.

“GO! Protect the North!” he yelled to his men and received a thunderous answering roar.

He looked towards Robb and followed him up a flight of stairs and towards a hut. One man came barreling out of the hut towards them wielding an axe with one hand. The man yelled and then swung the axe wildly at Robb’s head. Robb quickly ducked under the strike and Ned drove his son upwards into his stomach, gutting him.

He quickly yanked his sword out and threw him over the side of the railing and followed Robb up the stairs to the door. The door was hanging on by its hinges and Ned quickly pushed his way inside.

They entered the dimly lit living area, the only light came from a window to his right. His eyes were quickly drawn to the center of the room where he saw Robb dueling another Iron Islander. His sword was a blue as it moved through the air. Ned stepped through the door and forward to help him and then he heard a whistling sound coming from behind him.

His reflexes took over and he instinctively ducked the strike. He pivoted, turned around and blindly brought his sword upwards and he only narrowly missed his mark. His sword thudded into the wood behind his assailant who was winding up for another swipe with his double bladed axe.

Ned pulled his sword back into a defensive stance and quickly raised it to block it. The sword and the axe were locked in place and Ned used his superior strength to push the man backwards until his back was pressed against the wall.
He used his sword to push the man’s axe upwards until it was pressed against his throat. Ned stared into sea blue eyes and continued to push until blood poured out of the cut he had formed in his neck. The man started to shake and kick and Ned gave one final shove before letting him fall to the floor with a slit in his throat.

He heard a loud thud and he quickly spun his head around, ready to help Robb. He saw that his son had knocked his opponent into the table in the center of the room. Robb spun around and drove his sword through the man’s throat. Killing him instantly.

He withdrew his blade and looked up at him before he jerked his head towards another door.

“I think there’s more inside,” he said and Ned nodded. Greywind took the lead and Robb followed closely behind. There were two bedrooms in the back of the hut.

“They must have climbed out of the back window,” Robb said as they entered the first bed room and Ned nodded. The room was a mess, sheets had been thrown from the floor and Ned realised that they must have left in a hurry.

“Let’s check the other room,” Ned said as he led them away. He pushed open the door. The room was in a similar state as the first one however he saw a woman shivering naked and alone in the corner. She was naked and was crying frantically.

Ned’s stomach fell and he feared what the Ironborn would have done to her. He heard of their ways and their concept of ‘salt wives’. Ned hated the thought that his people had been subjected to such barbaric treatment.

He immediately crossed over and fell to his knees, wrapping his cloak around her naked form. She continued to sob and Ned whispered reassuring words into her ear.

“It’s all right now, we are here to help you,” he said as he gently rubbed her back.

“Are they gone?” she whispered after a few moments and Ned nodded.

“Aye. They’re gone. I’m sorry,”
He continued to comfort her for a few moments before her sobs stopped. He stood up, but left his cloak around her.

“Robb, help her to find some clothes to dress in. I need to head outside to see what the rest of the men are doing,” he said quietly and his son nodded. He gave the woman one last reassuring hug before he stepped out of the room.

He quickly left the hut and re-entered the street and he was pleased to see that the battle was nearly over. His men were dragging the last dead Ironborn out of the huts and into the streets. He spotted Jory Cassel and he quickly called him over.

“Jory!” he called and the man quickly walked over to him. “I need a report,”

“Of course, My Lord. We have gotten them all, we have around 50 captives, the rest of the Ironborn scum died to our swords,”

“How many did they have?”

“Not much, a hundred, maybe two,” Lord Glover replied with a shrug.

Ned nodded.

“How many did we lose?”

“Not too many. Maybe 30,” Lord Glover said and Ned paused as he saw Lord Bolton approach. Ned noticed that he did not have his sword drawn, nor did he have an ounce of sweat on him.


“Lord Stark. I believe we have recorded a decisive victory today,” he replied with a hint of a smile.

“Yes. It looks that way. How many men did you lose?”
“None,” he replied with a shrug. Ned frowned, how had he managed that?

“What about the Karstarks? Do you know how many men Lord Karstark lost?”

“A handful, 10 I believe,” Lord Bolton replied and Ned nodded. He turned away from the Lord of the Dreadfort and headed further into the village to organize the return to Winterfell. He would leave a small garrison of men to help protect the village should the Ironborn return.

He thought about Robb’s words earlier. What if it really was a trap? A ruse to get him out of Winterfell? Lord Bolton had not lost any men and whilst this could be a coincidence, Ned was not sure that he could afford to believe in coincidences at the moment.

He turned around to look at the Lord of the Dreadfort and he saw his pale eyes watching him. Ned looked at him for a few moments before turning away again. It was Lord Bolton who had suggested bringing more men to Winterfell, and then he had used his own words against him.

Ned was certain of it now. He would have to arrest Lord Bolton.

However he would need to be smart about it, he could not do it here. Bolton already had his men outside Winterfell, perhaps he had given orders to his men to attack his family if he was to be arrested. They were several days ride away from Winterfell, should he arrest him now, then anyone of Bolton’s men could slip away and send a message in advance.

He would have to wait until he returned to Winterfell. Invite Lord Bolton to his solar under some pretext and arrest him there. He needed to make sure Cat and his children were safe and out of harm’s way before he acted. If he arrested him now, then the bloodshed would be higher and he did not know which Lord would side with who. Doing it in the safety of his own castle was better, much better.

Ned straightened his back and called to his men, it was time to go home and put this conspiracy to bed.

The Mummer’s Dragon
Aegon Targaryen stood out alone on his balcony in the Red Keep. From this position, he could see all the way out over his city and into the surrounding fields.

It was generally a calming view. However, now what he saw horrified him.

Lines upon lines of men were encircling his city. All the way from the Iron Gate in the North, to the King’s gate in the South. A fleet of ships had come down to blockade the Blackwater, they would be no escape. His city was under siege.

He could see plumes of smoke trail up into the orange evening sky from the enemy forces encamped outside of his city. He did not see the dragons, they were far away from the city walls and his scorpions.

The council had called an emergency meeting earlier when the first Dothraki screamers was spotted on the horizon. The meeting had been short and to the point.

Riding out of those gates would be suicide, they were vastly outnumbered. Their only hope would be to hold out for a siege.

His wife had not been present at that meeting, she would be spending some time in the Maiden’s vault for her insolence earlier. Aegon had wanted to throw her into a dungeon but Connington had said no, they needed the Dornish.

Oberyn had sent a raven to his brother asking for the rest of the Dornish spears but Aegon knew that they would never make it here in time. They did not have enough food to survive a siege. Connington estimated they had enough for three months, Varys said it was closer to one.

Aegon cursed that fool Robert Baratheon for allowing the city to end up like this but he knew that ultimately, it did not really matter.

The point of a siege was to starve a castle and its inhabitants out of food until they surrendered. He would not surrender. He was a Targaryen and he had the blood of the Dragon.

He thought about the vile lies they had told him earlier and he felt himself growing angrier and angrier. He clenched his goblet of wine in frustration and then flung it high into the sky, so far he did not see where it landed.
How dare they disrespect him by calling him a *Blackfyre!* He would show them just who he was.

He was Aegon Targaryen, blood of Aegon the Dragon. He was meant to be a Conqueror, the blood of Old Valyria and he would not be defeated. He would not meekly hand over his birthright and accept what scraps they offered him.

No.

He *was* Aegon Targaryen. Rightful King of Westeros, son of prince Rhaegar Targaryen and Elia Martell. He was the blood of the dragon and the blood of Old Valyria flowed through his veins. He had the blood of conquerors and sorcerers and dragon riders.

He would be victorious and show them he too, had the blood of the Dragon.

Chapter End Notes

The next chapter is called 'The Fall' I should be able to have that out for you in the next 10 days.

Let me know what you think of this one.

As always thanks for reading, comments are always appreciated.

Sleepy
The Mother of Dragons

Daenerys woke up alone in their tent outside of Kings Landing. It was Jon’s turn to spend the night with Daeron on Dragonstone and he still had not returned, it must be early in the morning.

They had been sieging the city for the past month or so. Apart from the small force that remained on Dragonstone guarding Daeron, all of their troops were here. All of their, Dothraki, Unsullied, Vale Knights, River lords and Reachlords were here. Ser Barristan wasn’t sure, but he believed that this was one of the largest hosts ever assembled in Westerosi history.

They did not have much to do apart from speculate on the conditions inside of the city. They were still relying on Ser Davos’s information that the food stores in the city were low. If that information was true, then it would only be a matter of time before they surrendered.

However, a part of Daenerys doubted that a surrender would come. She remembered her encounter with Illyrio’s boy, and he seemed proud and desperate to cling onto the fact that he was a true Targaryen. She only hoped that someone in the city would come to their senses and stop him before it came to that.

Arianne Martell seemed to be a sensible enough women, although it appeared she lacked the authority to truly separate from this false King. Daenerys wondered what had happened to her for speaking out of turn, she hoped that she hadn’t been treated too harshly.

She pushed the fur covers off her body and padded naked across the room to her dressing table. She sat down on the chair in front of the mirror and started to brush out her sleep tangled hair to get ready for the day ahead.
They had received a raven from Tyrion. The siege of Casterly Rock had been lifted without their help and he was now making his way towards Kings Landing, however his brother would not be accompanying him. She would have to ask why when he arrived.

Asha Greyjoy would be sailing back to Dragonstone with their fleet. It seemed unlikely that the Iron fleet would engage in battle against them and so she was not needed in Lannisport. After the war in Kings Landing was won, they would fly out to meet with Balon Greyjoy on the Iron Islands personally, but as they had no idea how long they would be sieging the city for, they decided to have her sail back. Her services might be needed here.

The dragons were nowhere near the city. They preferred to stay on Dragonstone in their lairs rather than try and find a new temporary home outside the city. Dany didn’t mind this, it was only a short trip and they always flew by at least twice a day.

Anogar was restless and Dany shared this feeling. Sieging the city was boring and she couldn’t shake the feeling that it was not the most effective use of their resources. They should be making more of an effort to take the city, instead of sitting out here feasting every night whilst their people in the city starved.

Dany was so caught up with her thoughts that she did not hear the tent flap open and so she was surprised when she felt Jon press a kiss to the back of her head

“You’re back,” she said softly as she turned to look up at him. He placed a tray on the table before giving her a gentle kiss. “I missed you,”

“I missed you too,” he said softly. “Why are you naked?”

“I just got out of bed to start getting ready for the day before you walked in,” she replied. “Do you have a problem with me being naked?”

“Well,” he began as he scratched his head. “You are incredibly beautiful...and very distracting,”

“Distracting?” Daenerys asked innocently as she stood up and ran her hands slowly over her body. She cupped her breasts and did a little twirl for him and she watched with a smile as he bit his lip in frustration.

“Are you distracted right now, Jon?” she asked seductively as she reached out to feel his length
beneath his clothes, as she expected. He was hard.

“We don’t have time Dany,” he whispered without any real conviction in his voice.

“They can wait for us,” she said as she started to undo his trousers. She pushed them down to his ankles and then sunk to her knees. She lazily kissed the sides of his cock before slowly taking him into her warm wet mouth.

She swirled her tongue around the tip before taking him deep so he touched the back of her throat. Her nose nestled in his hair and she held herself there for as long as she could and she heard him groan.

Dany slowly lifted her head up and placed kisses along the side of his cock before taking him back inside of her mouth again. She bobbed hungrily and looked up at him, his grey eyes were dark with lust. His fingers found their way into her hair and he began to slowly guide her.

Dany smiled and let him guide her, they continued like this for a few moments before he pulled her off and to her feet.

“Why do you have so many clothes on?” she whispered as her hands went to work shedding his outer layers, soon he was just as naked as she was. Her eyes raked over his naked form, his hard toned muscles and his hard impressive length.

She raised one finger to him and beckoned for him to follow her towards the bed. She gently lay down on her back and Jon moved between her legs. He reached out to stroke her wet folds and she let out a whimper.

“You’re soaked for me,” he murmured in his Northern accent that she loved. “Did you miss me that much?”

“Yes, I did Jon. I thought about you all night,” she murmured as she began to pinch and play with her surprisingly sensitive nipples. “Please Jon,”

“I just want a taste first,” he murmured as he bent down. His tongue snaked out to lick her slit and Daenerys gasped loudly and sunk lower into the bed. She ran her fingers through his curls and pulled him up.
“Only a taste,” she reminded him.

She saw him smirk before he lined himself up and entered her in one smooth stroke. Daenerys let out a content sigh as he filled her. Jon fell forward and captured her lips in his. The kiss was warm and gentle and it matched the pace and timing of his strokes. She ran her fingers through his soft raven curls and down his back. She was unsure of what part of his body she wanted to touch and cherish, his arms, his back or his biceps.

As her hands settled on his arms, she opened her mouth and accepted his tongue. Her tongue battled his for a few moments before he slowly broke the kiss to look down on her. She looked into his grey eyes and couldn’t stop a smile forming on her face.

“I love you,” he whispered.

“I love you,” she whispered in return as he kissed her again. She felt that familiar feeling building low in her stomach. As her own orgasm approached, she could feel Jon’s thrusts increase in speed.

She felt his cock jerk and spasm as her own walls clenched and she scraped her fingers down his back as the feeling crashed over her like a tidal wave crashing onto a beach.

He rolled off her and she immediately missed feeling him so she cuddled into his side, resting her head on his chest. She felt happy and content and she rubbed a hand over her stomach.

“I don’t want to leave this bed today,” Jon said after a few moments and Dany chuckled.

“I don’t think we have a choice, we aren’t home on Dragonstone, I’m sure we have to go out there today,” she replied. “How is Daeron?”

Jon laughed before answering. “He is fine, he’s living up to his title.”

“Living up to his title?” Dany asked in confusion
“Aye. He’s the Prince of Dragonstone and according to Shireen and Margaery, he’s been taking them all around his castle. He gets up and walks to the door and they have no choice but to follow him on his little adventures. They keep him away from the stairs but he takes them everywhere that he can,”

Dany started to laugh. “They should tell him no. He’s only a baby,”

“He’s not a baby anymore Dany, he’s over a year old, probably closer to a year and a half. He’s a toddler,”

“He will always be my little baby,” Dany said defensively and Jon chuckled. “You don’t understand, if we had a little girl I bet you’d be the same,”

“Aye I probably would, but we don’t have a little girl, only a little Daeron,” Jon said quietly and Dany’s hand immediately went to her stomach. She couldn’t help but wondering.

“Remember when we were in Valyria,” she said lightly. “You said you had a vision of our children, a boy and a girl right?”

“Aye,” Jon said slowly

“So don’t you think we’ll have to start thinking about a little girl?” Dany asked

“I suppose you’re right, but I’m not sure now is the time,”

“I know but we could at least consider names,” Dany said and she felt Jon laugh.

“Go on, what names have you been thinking of?”

“Well, when we were in Meereen and I was pregnant with Daeron, we agreed that we could name them after our mothers, depending on the color of their hair,”

“I remember,” Jon said as he began to play with her hair.
“What about Alysanne? I like that name,” Dany asked hopefully.

“Aye. Like the Good Queen. I like it, it’s a pretty name. You’ve clearly given this some thought.”

“Not a lot, just a little,” she said quickly and she could tell Jon didn’t believe her. “Well, we’ve had a lot of free time lately, sitting here outside of this city,”

“You hate this, don’t you?” Jon asked

“Yes. I think we should be doing something to help the people in the city. If Ser Davos is right, and we have no reason to believe he’s wrong, then the city is on the verge of starvation,”

“Aye, I know that. That’s why we should continue to be patient. If the city starves, then they will have no choice but to surrender,”

She raised her head off his chest to look him in the eyes.

“Jon you saw him. He did not want to take our offer to surrender before, and that offer included very generous terms. Why should the people in the city suffer for his stubbornness?”

Jon was silent in response to that and Dany knew that he was coming around to her line of thinking

“Jon, we have the advantage in terms of men. We have been making siege weapons in case it came down to it. I think we should do it. Give the order to storm all seven gates simultaneously,”

“That could work. Their forces would be spread very thin trying to protect all seven gates. At least one of them will fall,”

“Good. Then once the gates have fallen our soldiers will enter and head straight for the Red Keep. I want some to start handing out food and other supplies to those without,”
“That’s good. I like that,” Jon said. “You’ve been thinking about this a lot, haven’t you?”

“I have,” Dany said as she got out of bed.

“Where are you going?” Jon asked,

“To get ready,” she said as she turned to him. “Let’s call a war council and tell the Lords our plans. Today is the day,”

“Aye. As my Queen commands,” he said with a smile as he climbed out of bed to join her.

“Thank you for joining us my Lords,” Jon said as he began the meeting. All of their lords and commanders were here. Ser Barristan, Grey Worm, Lord Tyrell, Rakharo, Aggo and Ser Loras were in the tent with them. On the table was a detailed map of Kings Landing that they had brought with them from Dragonstone. They were not sure how up to date it was, but the city walls and gates were all clearly marked and in the same place.

“Now as you know, we have been camped outside the city sieging it for the past few weeks,” Jon continued and Dany watched all of the assembled men as he spoke, they were all listening attentively.

“Jon and I have had a discussion. We believe that it is time to be more assertive,” Daenerys said.

“Assertive?” Ser Barristan asked cautiously. “What do you mean, my Queen?”

“We believe it is time to storm the city gates,” Daenerys told them and she watched as they slowly nodded.

“My Queen, this is a siege, we can wait them out. We have more food,” Ser Barristan said
“I agree with Ser Barristan,” Mace Tyrell said quickly. “With the food from the Reach, we can siege the city for a year, longer if necessary.”

“My Lords, we have no desire to sit outside this city for over a year. Not whilst the people in the city starve,” Daenerys told them and then she looked to Jon who continued.

“We have the advantage in terms of men. We will be able to devote at least 20,000 men to each of the city’s seven gates. Along with our rams and catapults, we should be able to easily overwhelm the gates and enter the city.”

“I agree with the Queen,” said Ser Loras

“I agree with Khaleesi,” said Aggo and Rakharo nodded. Slowly everyone else in the room nodded in agreement.

“Once we take the city. There will be no looting or raiding at all,” Daenerys said firmly, she stared at every Lord in the room to make sure how important this was. “Our soldiers will kill the remaining members of the Golden Company and City Watch who raise up arms against us, but you will not hurt civilians and damage to homes and buildings should be kept to a minimum. We want to take the city, not sack it,”

“Ser Loras and I will lead a party of men towards the Red Keep,” Jon said and Daenerys looked at him quickly. She had expected he would want to do this and she knew she couldn’t stop him, she only hoped he would be careful. “We will take as many men as we can. Ser Barristan you will accompany us seeing as you have extensive knowledge of the castle,”

The old knight nodded and Daenerys felt reassured, with Ser Loras and Ser Barristan, Jon would be safe.

“Your graces. Maegor’s holdfast is a castle within the Red Keep itself. The walls are thick and filled with murder holes and portcullis, taking it will be difficult,”

“During Robert’s rebellion, I heard that several men scaled the walls of the Red Keep to take Maegor’s holdfast. We can do the same,” Jon said.

“I think we should save that option. I think the priority should be securing the rest of the city. We can
take Maegor’s holdfast last. Using our rams again if necessary,” Daenerys said and Jon nodded then he turned to the room.

“Are there any questions?” he asked and no one answered. “Good. Ready your men and get ready to attack,”

“Your grace. How will we know when to begin the attack?” Lord Tyrell asked and Dany answered

“We will give you a sign. Don’t worry, you won’t be able to miss it,”

The Rose of Highgarden

Margaery Tyrell walked through the hallways of Dragonstone with a watchful eye on the little boy in front of her. Daeron was walking slowly in front of her, seemingly with no particular destination in mind.

“Come on Daeron, it’s time for your nap,” she said lightly as she followed him. She had carried him up to the part of the castle where the royal family slept, but she put him down once they were on the floor. Shireen was with her and neither of them had been having much success in telling Daeron what to do.

“Can he open the doors?” Shireen asked as Daeron walked through the hallway. Thankfully, he seemed to be heading towards his nursery where he usually slept.

“No. Although he can reach the handle,” Margaery answered and as if to prove her point, Daeron reached up to try and open a door.

“Not that one little prince,” Margaery said quickly, that was the door to Prince Rhaegar’s chamber and she was not sure if they wanted Daeron to go in there. Daeron tried to turn the circular door knob but he was too short and not strong enough.

So, instead he turned around to face them both and babbled something to them in his own language.
“I think he wants to go inside,” Shireen said as she went to open the door for him.

“I know but I’m not sure we should let him,” Margaery said quickly. “His mother would not let him have free reign of the castle, I’m sure,”

“Well, neither one of us is his mother, we’re allowed to spoil him a little,” Shireen said with a smile as she opened the door. Daeron quickly walked inside and Margaery followed him.

Prince Rhaegar was lying in the middle of the double bed. His chest rising and falling slowly. It truly was like he was asleep.

Daeron stood near the edge of the bed staring up at his grandfather before he slowly started to walk over to try and pull himself up. As Rhaegar’s bed was low to the ground, Daeron was able to pull himself up. Margaery watched as the little prince slowly crawled over to Rhaegar and settled down next to his arm.

“I think he wants to sleep here,” Margaery said as Daeron put his head down. “I’ll stay and watch him for a while. He might not stay here, so I’ll take him up to the nursery if he leaves,”

“I’ll come back in a few hours,” Shireen said as she gently brushed his hair before leaving the room.

Margaery took a seat by the desk on the other side of the room and picked up a book on the table. It was a book about the conquest of Westeros by Aegon the Conqueror, it would certainly help to pass the time until Daeron fell asleep.

The Mummer’s Dragon

Being under siege was hard.

For over a month, his enemies had been camped outside of his walls. Preparing their weapons and waiting. He saw their dragons every day now, flying far enough to be out of the range of his scorpions but close enough to annoy him.
Every night they would fly over the Blackwater and release their flame. Bright green and pale gold, every night, for the past month.

Aegon knew what they were doing, they were mocking him. Showing off their power and their dragons. Aegon hated to be mocked. He would show them exactly who he was.

Lines upon lines of tents had been constructed in the fields surrounding his city. Their host was huge, out numbering them at least 4 to 1.

The situation in the city was worse, much worse. Varys had persuaded him to share what little food they had with the citizens, he said that if the citizens weren’t behind them then they could turn against him and start riots in the city. However, that meant that between feeding his people, his armies and the castle, they had been going through their food supplies at an alarming rate.

“We have around two weeks of food left,” Haldon said in their meeting. “We have enough grain and fodder to feed our horses for another three,”

“We could stretch it to another month if we stopped taking food from our kitchens to feed the peasants,” Connington muttered.

“If we don’t feed the common people, they could rise up against us,” Varys tittered.

“This is war, Spider!” Connington shouted in frustration. “The people should know that our soldiers get priority, they need to be patient and make do with what they’ve got,”

“Make do? My Lord, ever since the end of Robert Baratheon’s reign, the city has been in a dire state. We can’t afford to neglect our people,” Varys countered.

“Then appease the people some other way. Speak to the High Septon, get him to preach to the people,” Connington said and Varys smiled.

“You would ask the High Septon for help? You didn’t strike me as a particularly pious man,” Varys replied.
“We need to keep the people on our side. The faith will help us,” Connington answered through gritted teeth.

“This is true,” Varys conceded. “What about the soldiers? How is there morale?”

“The conditions in the camps and barracks are tough, but my Dornishmen are even tougher, they will persevere,” Oberyn said but Aegon wondered about that. He wondered how long their patience would last.

“What about the Golden Company?”

“Harry Strickland says that his men are fine. They have battled in the deserts in the disputed lands, they have been through worse,”

“Prince Oberyn, where are the rest of the Dornish spears?” Aegon asked.

“They are on their way your grace. They should be here in a few weeks, no more than a month,”

A month. Aegon shook his head and sighed. They did not have that much time.

“We don’t have that much time,” Connington said. “We need to review our options and do something in the short term,”

“Review our options? Nothing has changed. Our plan should remain the same, sit and wait for the reinforcements,” Oberyn said.

“My Lords,” Aegon said. “When the Dornish reinforcements arrive, what is the plan? How do you propose to get them into the city seeing as we are completely surrounded?”

They both looked at him with blank expressions before Connington came up with an answer.

“Perhaps, we can use the secret tunnels that Varys knows about,” he suggested but the Spider shook his head.
“Wouldn’t work I’m afraid. The entrances to the tunnels are too close to the city, the army will be spotted far before they reach the tunnels,”

The room fell silent after those words, no one seemed to have any other ideas.

“So it seems, the Dornish reinforcements, won’t be able to help us,” Aegon said quietly and no one in the room had anything to say to that.

“May I make a suggestion?” Varys said after a few quiet moments. “I think you should visit the soldiers. It could provide them with a boost of morale seeing their King walking amongst them,”

Aegon paused, he didn't see the harm in this.

“That sounds like a good idea Lord Varys. I will see my men,” he said as he stood up, happy for something to do. It would be good to leave Maegor’s holdfast and the Red keep for a change. “Lord Connington, Prince Oberyn, you will be accompanying me,”

The two men stood up and left the room after him and Aegon headed back to his chambers to dress. He dressed alone. He chose to wear his armour, it would show the soldiers that he too, was willing to fight with them. The steel was polished and it shone brightly, in the center was the sigil of his house, the three headed Dragon of house Targaryen. At the last moment, he decided to leave his crown behind.

After he finished dressing, he headed down to the courtyard of Maegor’s holdfast. He looked up at the sky, it was a mostly clear day, with only a few clouds spotted here and there. It was getting a bit colder however.

He mounted his horse, looked behind him at his entourage and then left the city gates. He decided to head towards the barracks and men stationed near the Dragonpit.

As soon as he left the gates of the red keep, the first thing he noticed was the silence in the streets, there were no people, no children playing. It was empty. The sound of the hooves along the cobbled ground was deafeningly loud. On his way down the hill, he peered into the shop windows of the richer merchant class and he saw that all the stores were empty.
Aegon started to feel nervous. Where were all of his people? Was the situation on the streets really that bad?

They quickly reached the bottom of Aegon’s hill and made the right hand turn towards the Dragonpit.

“Careful your grace, we’re heading through Fleabottom,” Connington said in a warning tone as he appeared by his elbow

“Why do I need to be careful?” Aegon asked as he quickly pulled his hand away.

“Fleabottom is….different, your grace,” Connington said quietly. Aegon raised a questioning eyebrow but Connington offered no further comment. So Aegon turned and continued forward and he soon understood what Jon had meant.

The mood in Flea Bottom was different, much different. It was like he had left Kings Landing behind and entered a completely new world.

People of all ages lined the streets. Men women and children in disheveled clothing that only clung to their bodies by thin pieces of thread. Aegon’s stomach fell as he watched them, most of them were hunched in doorways and by the side of shacks, sheltering themselves. They did not acknowledge them, most of them had their eyes closed. They were starving Aegon quickly realised.

Then, there was the smell.

It smelt of shit and of piss and of rotting fruit and vegetables. He saw rotten apples tossed away by the side of the street, with flies hovering over them. It smelt rank and Aegon quickly raised his sleeve to his nose to try and cover the smell.

They passed through the mess quickly, and most people didn’t notice him. They were too busy huddled in corners, starving. Aegon felt terrible, what kind of King was he if he could not feed his own people?

He saw a little girl on the side of the street looking up at him with wide brown eyes. She was sitting next to a woman with her eyes closed with a babe at her breast, it must have been her mother. Aegon immediately jumped off his horse and reached for his water skin, he passed it to the little girl and he saw her eyes light up in happiness.
She drank eagerly from the skin and then passed it to her mother.

“Mama,” the girl said as she nudged her mother in the arm. Aegon watched as slowly her mother’s eyes opened and she too drank from the skin.

“Keep it,” Aegon said warmly as he stood up. He looked along the street and he saw that a few people had noticed this action and they were telling their neighbors. Some of them pointed towards him and Aegon slowly raised a hand and waved. Then he turned to Connington

“Quickly. Give me all of your water skins and all of the food you have brought,”

“We have no food, only water,” Connington replied

“That will do, now hurry,” Aegon urged, they passed out their small supply of water. It wasn’t a lot, but it felt good to help.

“Is that the King?” he heard a loud voice ask. Aegon turned and saw that it came from a large drunk man who was lumbering down the street towards him.

“Yes, I am your King. I am Aegon Targaryen, son of Elia,” he replied confidently as he drew himself up to his full height.

“Finally our King has come down from his castle to grace us with his presence,” the man said scornfully, Aegon looked behind him and he saw several more men appear and they all looked angry.

“Look at him, shiny new armor. He has been living comfortably whilst the rest of us starve here like dogs!” the man shouted.

“Your grace, we should leave, back the way we came. We’ll find another way,” Connington said in his ear.
“We’ve had nothing but rotten food and the scraps sent down from the castle. Fuck the King!”

“Aye. Fuck the King!” a ginger man shouted and several others joined in.

“Fuck the King!” was the cry from the men and Aegon started to walk backwards to his horse. He heard a loud whistling in the air and he instinctively ducked, someone had thrown a rotten apple at him.

“Step away from the King!” Oberyn shouted in a booming voice as he rode forward and lowered his spear. Aegon reached behind him and felt for his horse. He quickly climbed on and ducked more rotten food that had been thrown at him.

From a top his horse, he saw a swarm of angry men coming down the street towards him. Rotten food was flying through the air towards him and Aegon could not dodge it all.

“Goldcloaks!” Connington shouted “Where are the fucking goldcloaks!”

“Forwards! We need to go forwards!” one of his guards shouted and that’s what they did. The goldcloaks had appeared and they helped to keep the mob at bay so they could pass through fleabottom. Aegon could do nothing but watch as his people were roughly shoved aside by the Goldcloaks. He could do nothing but raise his hands over his head to shield himself from the rotten fruit they threw, but there was nothing that could shield his ears from the abuse that was hurled at him. It made him sick. All he could do was close his eyes and wait for it to be over.

“Your grace,” he heard a voice say quietly and he opened his eyes and saw Connington was on the ground next to his horse, concern etched all over his face.

“Why didn’t you tell me?” Aegon asked and Connington looked ashamed. “You should have told me how bad it was. My people are starving Jon and you kept it from me. How could you do that?”

Jon looked taken aback.

“I am your King. Don’t you ever hide these things from me,” Aegon said firmly as he glared at him and Connington had the decency to look away. He felt so angry and betrayed, Jon had been with him the longest and he had kept this from him.
“Why did you do it? Why did you hide it?”

“We felt like it could affect your judgment,” he said quietly.

“Affect if how?” Aegon angrily asked but Connington didn’t answer and Aegon grew even angrier. “What did you think I would do? Surrender? Is that it?” and again Connington failed to answer him.

Aegon threw his hands up in frustration and turned around to look around him. They were in the stables of the barracks and across the small courtyard, he could see the main hall.

“Are the men in there?” Aegon asked as he pointed towards the building.

“They should be,”

“Come on then,” Aegon said as he strode confidently towards the wooden door.

He was halfway across the courtyard when Aegon heard the loudest noise he had heard in his life. It shook him to his bones. He quickly looked up at the sky fearing the worst, that the dragon was on top of him but he didn’t see it. It was further away, still over the fields.

Then he heard the bells.

Dong

Dong

Dong

Dong
Aegon knew what the tolling of the bells meant. His city was coming under attack.

The barracks had been set up near the city walls and that meant that there was a staircase nearby that led to the top of the battlements. He quickly ran up the stairs to the top of the battlements, in-between the Dragon gate and the Iron Gate and when he reached the top his stomach fell.

Their armies were marching.

They were in a perfectly organized fashion, Aegon guessed that they moved in groups of 50, 10 along and 5 deep. What made matters worse was that they stretched as far as his eyes could see. He looked all the way from right to left and all he saw was enemy soldiers. He saw rams and ladders and catapults being carried forward

“They mean to hit all the gates at once,” he said to no one in particular.

“We can defend the gates from their men,” he heard Oberyn say as he stood on the battlements next to him. “We have boiling oil, rocks and archers. We can hold the walls,”

Aegon heard another loud roar from the dragons. They were closer now, much closer. He could see all three of them. Daenerys rode the black one, Aegon the dark green, which left the cream and gold. Aegon licked his lips eagerly, that dragon should be his. That was the only difference between them. The Dragons.

The black dragon roared loudly in the sky and released its jet black flame.

“And we have our scorpions,” Oberyn added.

The Dragon King

Jon and Daenerys were waiting on a hill overlooking Kings Landing. From this vantage point, they could oversee the Northern part of the city. They could see that their soldiers had already made contact with the walls surrounding the city. He could not see much else though, he was too far.
“This doesn’t feel right,” Dany said.

“What doesn’t?” Jon asked.

“This. Standing here in safety whilst others are out there risking their lives for us,”

Jon bit his lip, he agreed with her. “They have scorpions on the city walls,” he pointed out.

“Yes but we don’t need to get too close, even if we fly high above, we’ll distract and intimidate their men. It will help,” she said as she turned towards him. Jon looked at her and slowly nodded. He too was eager to join the action and help in any way that he could.

“We’ll only be flying high,” Jon said and Dany nodded.

“Yes. Only to provide a distraction. We won’t fly too low,”

“What about Caraxes? We can’t control him, not without Rhaegar,”

“He will follow us,” Dany said quickly and Jon nodded. He hoped that she was right. Their dragons were difficult to control even with a rider, all they could do was hope that Caraxes would follow.

“Be safe,” Dany said as she gave him a quick kiss and then Jon turned and looked up at the sky. Vedros landed gracefully in front of him and he quickly scaled her wing and settled himself in the saddle. He looked across at Dany and saw that she too was nearly in position. Caraxes remained high in the air circling above.

Once Dany was ready, Anogar took off with a thunderous clap of his wings and Vedros quickly followed her brother. They climbed up, high into the sky and flew over their troops and over the city proper. Jon could see the tops of the towers of the Red Keep which looked like Daeron’s toys from this height.

As they flew over the city, he heard Anogar release a loud roar which was quickly answered by
Caraxes and Vedros. Anogar started to slowly fly low in a gentle descending spiral and Jon followed. The dragons continued to roar and release their flame above the city and Jon wondered if their attempts were effective.

He soon received his answer when he heard a faint whistling noise fly past his right hand side. He quickly turned around and saw that it was a scorpion bolt. He heard a loud roar from Anogar and Dany guided her dragon to the east over the Blackwater bay and away from the city. Their distraction had worked and they were now looking up at them.

Then, Jon heard a loud screech and he turned and saw Caraxes dive angrily towards the city. Vedros roared in anger and it took all of Jon’s mental strength to reign her in.

Jon watched helplessly as Caraxes released a blast of pale golden flame onto the city wall before quickly taking off into the sky again, roaring victoriously. Caraxes flew up to their height again and Anogar angrily blew a puff of smoke in his direction.

Another scorpion bolt flew harmlessly passed it and again Caraxes dived down in anger and this time, Anogar followed him. Jon groaned in frustration and nudged Vedros into a dive, there was no use staying up here on his own.

The wind rushed through his hair as the ground rushed up beneath him. Jon heard a bolt coming and Vedros rolled so quickly to her right, Jon was nearly thrown from his saddle. The scorpion bolt flew base his shoulder and then Vedros was on it. She flew low and fast over towards the reloading scorpion and then melted it completely in one blast of bright green flame.

Vedros quickly climbed back into the air and Jon looked around him. To his left, he saw that Dany had done the same to another scorpion on another segment of wall and she too was quickly climbing into the sky and out of range. He glanced behind him and then he understood what the dragons were doing. Not only were they burning the scorpions, they were scattering the men on top of the battlements, meaning their troops on the ground would have much better success at breaching the city walls.

Vedros levelled off at the same height as Anogar and he peered over her side to look for their next target. It seemed that the scorpions were placed at regular intervals along the city walls, in between the gates. As there were seven gates, they would have six scorpions in total. They had already destroyed three, so only three would remain.

He peered over the side of Vedros and saw his target, a scorpion on the southern side of the city walls. He reached for her in her mind and she gave a happy roar in approval. She tucked in her long
scaly wings and then dove quickly towards her target.

He saw the men scrambling into position trying to reload the scorpion but Jon knew they would not make it in time. Some men dropped their weapons and tried to run for safety, others just stood their paralyzed in fear as they were engulfed by Vedros’s green flame.

They quickly took off in the air again and then Jon heard an anguished cry.

He immediately turned to look for Anogar and Dany, fearing the worst, fearing that he had put her in danger unnecessarily. He was relieved to see that Anogar was flying above him, safe and out of harm’s way.

Jon looked in the opposite direction and he saw that it was Caraxes who was in trouble. The cream and gold dragon had a scorpion bolt sticking out of his midriff. Caraxes shrieked again in pain before floundering low across the city to land just outside the walls.

Anogar gave a loud angry roar and took off to destroy the one remaining scorpion. Jon however fought Vedros and turned her in the direction of her fallen brother. Caraxes had landed to the North-west of the city, close to the city walls.

Caraxes released another anguished screech and Vedros answered, however before she could reach him, she turned back towards the city walls, Jon was confused for a few moments, but then he understood.

The Mummer’s Dragon

The assault from the dragons was brutal. They black dragon had passed over their section of the wall once and the heat from its flame was blisteringly hot. Their scorpions were ruined, but one of them had managed to find their mark.

“They’re falling back!” he heard one voice shout and Aegon quickly saw that the man was right. His enemies were indeed retreating from the gate, they were retreating towards the fallen dragon, his dragon.
“Ready the men,” Aegon ordered.

“Ready the men?” Connington asked in surprise “What for?”

“We need to ride out to get the dragon,” Aegon said immediately as he began to hurry down the battlements.

“Why would we do that?” Connington asked in disbelief. “We have the city. We have the advantage if we stay behind these walls,”

“How much longer do you think we will have the city for?” Aegon asked as he turned to glare at him. “They’re at our gates. They have more men. How much longer do you think our walls will hold for? Hours? Minutes?”

“Today is the day, Jon. Today is the day. If we do nothing, we lose,”

“What you’re proposing is suicide!” Jon protested,

“Doing nothing is suicide, Jon. My people have no food, my enemies are breaking down my gates. If I do nothing, I may as well have surrendered months ago. Going out there and getting that dragon is the only way we will win this war. It is the only way to secure my throne,”

“But your grace...the poison,” Jon said but Aegon would not have it.

“Oberyn!” he shouted. “Find me Prince Oberyn!”

He stood and waited and soon enough the Dornish man arrived. “Your grace, you sent for me?”

“Yes I did. How effective is the poison?” Aegon asked and Oberyn shrugged.

“I am not sure, it has not been made in centuries,”
“Do you have an estimate? Any idea of how it works?” Aegon asked and Oberyn shook his head.

“No, there is no time. Ready your men. I will be taking that dragon,” he said confidently. Unlike Connington, Oberyn had no objections to this plan, he just nodded and bowed and followed his instructions.

As he reached the bottom of the stairs, he could see that the men of the Golden Company had already left the barracks. They were looking up at him, looking for something.

“Men of the Golden Company. I am King Aegon. I know the situation over the past month has been tough, but today it will come to an end. I promised to give you all Westeros and I will keep that promise. Our enemies are outside our gates, and yes they do have the numbers but they are not invincible. We have already grounded one of their dragons!” Aegon said proudly.

“They were born in Westeros, you weren’t. Your families were stripped off their homes centuries ago and you were forced to live in exile. These men don’t know what that feels like to have your homes ripped from you. They don’t know what it’s like to suffer, to struggle. They’ve had it easy. I want you to go out there to prove them wrong,”

“I don’t want you to fight for me. I want you to fight for your families who lost their homes all those years ago. Fight for the man standing next to you, but above all. Fight for yourselves. This is your chance, this is your moment. This is your chance to make history, your chance to go down as the men that beat the dragons. Westeros is right there in your grasp, all you have to do is reach out and take it,” Aegon said as he opened his arms out wide. He saw several of the men nodding at him.

Now, who is with me!” he shouted as he raised his sword high in the air.

“Aye!” was the responding cry. Several of the younger men had jumped upon the tables and were now beating their chests, ready for battle. Aegon took this for a good sign. He turned and headed towards the gate and got onto his warhorse.

“Open the gate!” he roared and after a loud creak, the battered gate slowly swung open. Aegon led his men out of the gate and into the field. He knew the cream and gold dragon had fallen to his right and he quickly headed in that direction.
The wind rushed through his hair as he raced towards his dragon, his destiny. He would be a
dragonrider, it was within his grasp. The poison could be solved later, he just needed the dragon
today.

He heard a loud roar from above and he saw the dark green dragon taking off again. Aegon didn’t
even hesitate, he just continued to ride hard towards his target. He knew that they had pulled back
some of their men to protect the downed dragon, and he knew that if he could get close enough, the
other dragons would no longer be a factor. They were too ‘good’ to risk their own men.

His assumption was quickly proven right as the dragon roared angrily before flying off somewhere
else. Aegon did not time to look where, because he saw his enemy in front of him. Their knights
were lined up on top of a hill looking down on him, and Aegon guessed that the Dragon would be
on the other side.

He stared his enemy down and then he nudged his horse forward, begging for more speed. His men
were behind him, ready to break the line with him.

Then Aegon heard a loud blood curdling scream and he was thrown off his horse and face first into
the cool mud. He brushed the mud off his face and looked around, his horse was writhing on the
floor in pain with an arrow in its side and his sword had fallen a few feet away. He quickly crawled
to his sword and pulled himself to his feet

The thunderous sound of hooves quickly filled his ears and he turned towards his enemy and his
mouth fell open in shock.

The knights were charging towards him in a perfectly uniformed line. As they drew closer, Aegon
realized that he was mistaken. These were not knights, far from it.

These were the Dothraki. And he had made the foolish mistake of engaging in the Dothraki in the
open.

Their screams filled the air, somehow drowning out the sound of their horses. More arrows whistled
past him and Aegon knew that this mistake could be fatal. He looked down at his Valyrian steel
sword and shook his head.

No, this was not the end. It would not end like this. He was Aegon Targaryen, son of Elia and
Rhaegar, descendent of Aegon the Conqueror and the blood of Valyria ran through his veins. No, he
would not die to some horse Lord S cum.

He raised his sword high and got into his stance. Time seemed to slow down as he stared at them all and awaited the impact.

The impact came, but it was not what he expected. His men had answered his cry and they had rode head first into the Dothraki. The two lines met in a loud clash of bodies and weapons.

Aegon quickly looked to his left and saw a Dothraki man with a long braid savagely slice through one of the men from the Golden Company. Aegon took a step towards him but he quickly threw himself out of the way before he was run over by a horse. By the time the horse passed, the Dothraki man had disappeared.

He spun in the opposite direction and looked for another target. He saw a Dothraki man with his back turned. Aegon quickly drove his sword through his back and out his front. He didn’t stop to listen to the man’s cries, he quickly looked for another target

“Protect the King!” he heard Connington shout and Aegon swore, the last thing he needed was for these savages to know he was the King.

Connington stood to his left and another man, Duck stood to his right, forming his protection.

They stepped forward into the fray in unison. Another Dothraki warrior stood in their way and together they defeated him. Connington distracted him with a feint to his left and then Aegon drove his Valyrian steel blade up into his stomach. The man’s brown eyes widened in pain before his hand went to his stomach, to try and hold in his intestines.

Duck gave a victorious roar and he raised his sword to slice off the man’s head but he was quickly knocked to the floor by a white blur. Aegon looked on helplessly as his friend had his throat ripped out by a large white animal. Aegon saw his bright red eyes and then he understood.

“He’s here!” Aegon shouted as he whipped around to find him. “He’s fucking here!”

He watched as his half-brother sliced through two men with ease before standing before him. The jewels in his chest plate still gleamed brightly in the light. His Valyrian steel blade was dripping with blood.
Aegon gritted his teeth and charged at him, closing the gap quickly. His brother just waited there with his sword held limply by his side. Aegon gripped his sword tightly, stepped forward and swung hard for his ribs.

He was sure the strike would hit but at the last moment, his brother pivoted out of the way with impossible speed. Aegon only hit the air.

He spun his head around quickly and saw that his brother was now behind him and he had he was stepping towards Connington. Connington stepped forward through the mud and aimed a high blow at his head. His half-brother raised his sword to block it, which he did, easily.

Aegon watched helplessly as Connington was out powered and out maneuvered. His half-brother moved blindingly quickly and in a matter of moments, Connington gave an anguished scream as he fell to the floor, his steel plate armor was in pieces.

Aegon surveyed the scene in front of him

Connington laid dying to the left, Duck laid dead on the right and in-between them, his half-brother started to advance towards them. Aegon could not believe it, they were his friends, two of his closest friends in the world.

“You killed them!” he screamed. “They were my friends and you fucking killed them.”

“No, You brought this on yourself. All of this death and destruction is because you did not surrender. You put your people in danger,” his brother replied and then Aegon screamed.

He charged at him recklessly, and then he swung with all his might. The muscles in his shoulders burned in pain as he swung towards his brother’s head.

Aegon missed.

He hit the nothing but the air, again.
Then he felt a sharp blinding pain shoot up from his ribs and up through his arm. He looked down and saw that his armor had been sliced open by the blade and the strength of the strike. He gritted his teeth and ignored the pain and spun around to look for him. He was standing a few feet behind him, looking at him curiously, as if he had not expected him to remain standing.

Aegon stepped forward and raised his sword but his shoulder was burning with pain and he lacked strength. His half-brother easily slapped his sword away and this left Aegon weaponless.

“Kneel,” was all he said as he looked at him, his sword dripping red with blood. Duck’s blood. Connington’s blood. The blood of his men.

Aegon just shook his head and spat on the floor in front of him. He was a dragon, and a dragon does not kneel.

Then, he heard a loud roar coming from his left. Through all this fighting they had ended up close to the grounded dragon. Aegon could see the tips of his cream and gold wings peaking over the crest of this small hill.

Aegon felt a small beacon of hope grow within him, if he could get to the dragon, he could turn this fight, and he could still win.

He looked at his brother, who was staring at him angrily. Aegon just smirked and quickly moved to his left.

“Where are you going? You fool!” was all he heard as he stumbled down the hill.

The slope was steeper than he thought and he landed in a heap right in front of the gold dragon. Aegon could see the offending scorpion bolt protruding from his chest. Aegon could see eyes which were like two pools of molten gold. He could see his gold colored horns Aegon could see his teeth, row upon row of razor sharp black teeth.

The dragon noticed his presence and stared at him menacingly, with wisps of smoke spiraling up from the dragon's nostrils. The dragon hissed.

Aegon slowly made his way to his feet, he could do this. He was Aegon Targaryen, son of Rhaegar and Elia. Descendent of Aegon the Conqueror, son of old Valyria and blood of the dragon. He could
do this, he would not be afraid.

He took a confident step forward towards the dragon and the dragon hissed again.

“My name is Aegon Targaryen. Son of Prince Rhaegar Targaryen and Elia Martell of Dorne. I am here to help you,” he said to the dragon. Aegon waited with bated breath as the dragon listened to his words.

Then, he felt the ground began to shake as the dragon rose up and moved its wings. Aegon turned and threw his left arm across his face to shield himself from the fierce heat.

When he raised his arm, he saw that his sleeve was burning.

His hand as well.

All of him, all of him was burning.

Then he began to scream.

The Silver Prince

Rhaegar Targaryen was dreaming. He was dreaming of days past. Days spent on Dragonstone with his wife and children. He dreamt of his mother, the brave Queen Rhaella, the woman who brought him into this world. He dreamt of his father, the man whose actions had nearly caused the downfall of his family.

He dreamt of his old friends, Ser Arthur Dayne and Ser Barristan Selmy. Ser Oswell Whent and Ser Gerold Hightower.

He dreamt of days with them all, days in the Red Keep, days in the streets of Kings Landing or days spent hunting in the Kingswood.
He dreamt of Lyanna and the days they spent travelling south together. It was almost as if he was reliving those blissful days. He remember how beautiful she looked as she became more and more pregnant, he remembered the songs he used to sing to her.

And he remembered leaving her, and never seeing her again.

He flew above the Tower of Joy as he watched that day play out. If only he had known, he would have said so many things, if only he had known.

He could see her now, flying above him. Close enough that he could see her face, but not quite close enough for him to touch. She was out of arms reach and the more he tried to chase her, the further away she got.

“No,” was what she kept saying. “Not now,”

“Then when?” Rhaegar would reply.

“Soon,” she would say, “It’s not yet your time,”

Then he a woke.

The first thing he noticed, was that he was back in his room on Dragonstone, but that did not make sense, he had left Dragonstone days ago.

The second thing that he noticed was that there was something pressed into his side. He looked down and then his heart melted. Daeron was sleeping peacefully on his side. Rhaegar was shocked by how much he had grown, he had a full head of silver hair and he was much bigger now.

He pushed himself up off the pillows and groaned loudly in pain. He looked down and noticed he had a bandage on his stomach and then he remembered what had happened. Someone had tried to kill him, one of the Stark men, but that did not make sense. Ned and he had talked things out and they had agreed to move past their differences.
No, someone else was making a move in the dark.

“You’re awake!” he heard a voice shout and he turned his head to see Lady Margaery was sitting at his desk reading a book. “I’ll get the Maester!” she said quickly as she rose to her feet.


Margaery nodded and went to fill a cup. Rhaegar raised it to his lips and drank, it was ice cold and deeply refreshing and he finished it quickly. Margaery quickly filled another cup.

“I think you should drink this one slowly, you’ve been asleep for a long time,”

“How long?”

“Over a month, probably closer to two,” she said quietly. “I’ll get the Maester, they’ll want to see you. I was in here because I was watching the little one sleep, he’s grown into quite the handful,”

As if on cue, Rhaegar saw Daeron raise his head from the bed to look at him and he immediately broke into a smile. “I can see that,” he said as he gently tickled his grandson.

Margaery quickly left the room and Daeron sat up on the bed. “Hello little one, did you miss me?”

To Rhaegar’s surprise, Daeron smiled and started to laugh, as if he said yes.

The Dragon King

Jon looked on as Caraxes burned Aegon with his pale golden flame. The boy released a loud shrill scream as fell to the floor. Caraxes stopped burning and shrieked loudly before turning away from Aegon.

Jon quickly went down the slope of the hill to stand on the scorched earth. He heard the ground
shake and he looked up to see that Anogar had landed nearby and then he saw Daenerys quickly make her way towards him

“What happened? Who is that?” she asked as she stood down on him to look down on the body. His silver hair had been completely burned off as well as all the skin on his face. His skin was turned to dark red and black and it contrasted sharply with the whites of his teeth. His armor had started to melt, but not before he had been cooked inside of it.

“That’s Aegon,” Jon said quietly. “Aegon the Dragontamer,”

Jon tore his eyes away from him as he heard Caraxes shriek again.

“Come on Jon, we need to help him.”

They quickly crossed over to Caraxes and cautiously approached him. Caraxes recognized them and allowed them to approach. Together, they put their gloved hands on the scorpion bolt and slowly started to pull it out. Their dragons were large, and Jon had read that fully grown dragons had scales that were virtually impenetrable. Jon realised that this meant that Caraxes at the least had not stopped growing.

However, his scales were still very strong and as a result, the bolt was not embedded deeply into him.

Caraxes shrieked and screamed but together they pulled it out and then Jon noticed the smell. The wound stunk. It smelled off old rotting flesh and Caraxes bled thick pungent black blood.

“Dany, what is that smell?” Jon asked as he quickly stepped away. Caraxes opened his mouth to roar and breath his flame but only a weak feeble orange fire came out. He tried again but this time he fell to the floor. Anogar and Vedros gave anguished shrieks and this worried Jon further. Caraxes moved forward, almost as if he was trying to fly, but he couldn’t.

“I don’t know Jon, it doesn’t smell right. I think something is wrong with him. Perhaps, they coated the bolt with something?”

Jon considered this for a moment before he remembered something. “Follow me, quickly,” he said as he turned and headed back up the hill. As he climbed over the crest of the hill, he saw that the battle was over. The Dothraki had smashed the Golden Company with ease.
He quickly started to retrace his steps and then he found him, dying in the mud from the wound Jon left in his side.

“Him. He was Aegon’s advisor, we met him outside the city,” Jon said as he rolled the man over on his back. “He’s not dead, not yet,”

The man groaned and before he opened his pale blue eyes.

“What did you do to our dragon?” Jon demanded as he shook him quickly “Answer me!”

The man just smiled weakly. He opened his lips to say something but he was so weak, Jon did not hear him. He quickly lowered his ear to his lips.

“Fuck you,” was all he heard and Jon sat back in disgust.

“Leave him, he’ll bleed out slowly,” Jon said coldly as he stood up.

“Jon I think they poisoned their scorpion bolts,” Dany said to him as they made their way from the dying man. “The Dornish are allied with them and the Dornish are famed for their poison,”

“I fear that you’re right, but what can we do? We need the antidote. Where will find someone who knows how to make antidotes for Dragon poison?” Jon asked and she didn’t have an answer.

He heard a wolf howl loudly, it sounded close, very close.

“Our books from Valyria, Jon,” Dany said quickly and Jon gave a confused look. “They’ll have an answer,”

“You’re right,” he replied “Let’s go. We will leave Ser Barristan in charge here. He will oversee the end of this battle and the taking of the city, we need to save Caraxes,”
Dany nodded in agreement and she went to move towards Anogar but then the wolf howled again. Then, he saw a pack of wolves approaching.

“Dany wait!” he called as he drew his sword and stood in front of her protectively. He watched as the pack of wolves approached, Anogar growled and hissed in their direction but surprisingly, the black dragon did not attack them.

Then he saw the leader of the pack, a wolf even bigger than Ghost.

Bigger than Ghost? That wasn’t possible unless...

“That’s a direwolf,” Jon said as he stepped forward. That could be why Anogar was not as aggressive towards them, he was accustomed to Ghost.

“Jon, I thought direwolves were rare creatures,”

“They are, only the Stark children have wolves,” he said quietly and then he saw that the wolf had a rider. “No, it can’t be true,” he said quietly as he broke into a smile.

The girl hopped off her the wolf and jumped into his arms.

“I’ve missed you little sister,” he said into her hair as he hugged her tightly.

“I’ve missed you too,”

Jon did not know how long they stood there, but he knew that he was not the one to let go of her first

“Arya. How did you get here?” he asked as he looked her up and down. She looked like she had been travelling for days, her hair was cut a little differently, but she was still unquestionably Arya.

“I snuck out of Winterfell when my father came South,”
“You snuck out?” Jon asked with a hint of a smile. “You always liked to get into trouble. You kept the sword,” Jon said as he spied needle by her waist

“Of course, I would never lose it,” she said and Jon’s heart swelled in happiness.

“Jon, there’s something important I need to tell you. I know the truth about what happened between our fathers. My father didn’t order those men to kill him, it was Roose Bolton. They were his men and he stole Stark uniforms to disguise them. You have to believe me. You know he wouldn’t do this Jon, please,” she said desperately.

Jon froze, it made sense. It really did.

“Arya. I know someone betrayed your father, I just didn’t know who,” he said reassuringly.

“Jon, go North, I will handle things here,” Dany said and Jon quickly turned around and felt ashamed.

“Sorry, I forgot my manners, Arya this is Daenerys, she’s my wife. Dany, Arya,” Dany gave her a smile

“We’ll have time for more formal introductions later Jon, just go, take care of your family. I’ll head back to Dragonstone and deal with things there. I can handle it don’t worry,”

He looked at her and nodded.

“Just be careful Jon,” she said

“I will,” Jon said as he gave her a kiss

“Come on Arya let’s go,” he said to his sister as he walked forward into the field. He looked up into the sky and closed his eyes. He reached for Vedros and his dragon landed gently in front of him

He looked back at Arya and saw that she was looking at the dragon with wide eyes.
“Arya, this is Vedros, she is my dragon. Vedros, this is Arya,” Jon said. Vedros looked at her with her bright bronze eyes, she hissed and tendrils of smoke curled out the corner of her mouth before she turned away and lowered her wing.

“Doesn’t she like me?” Arya asked and Jon could hear the disappointment in her voice. He laughed lightly as he climbed up her wing.

“She’ll get used to you in the future,” he said as he held out his hand for her. She climbed up on her wing and settled in behind him.

“You should hold onto me,” Jon said and her arms settled around his waist.

“Gently Vedros, we have a first time flyer on board,” Jon warned his dragon. Vedros haughtily released a huff of smoke before gently taking off, climbing in slow gentle circles. Vedros settled at a safe height before turning North and starting to beat her wings quicker to accelerate.

He heard Arya laugh happily as they settled in for the ride.

**The Lord of Winterfell**

Eddard Stark was nearly home at Winterfell, however there had been a complication on the way back.

Another wave of Iron Born attackers had been waiting for them and they ambushed them during the night. They had defeated them, but not at the cost at nearly half of his men. To make matters worse, the attack was led by Theon.

Robb captured Theon himself and Ned had to restrain him in order to keep the Greyjoy boy alive. Theon was their prisoner now, and he would be locked in Winterfell’s dungeons.

He could see the castle in front of him now and there were even a few flurries of snow in the air. He also noticed smoke, as if there had been a fire. Ned urged his horse forward and they entered the castle courtyard. Ned made sure that the castle gate swung shut behind him.
His first concern was his family, he needed to make sure that they were safe. He jumped off his horse and immediately made his way to the Great keep where his family stayed. His first thought was to go to Catelyn. He raced up the stairs until he reached the top floor.

As he put a hand on the door, he felt an ice cold blade at his throat.

“Don’t move,” was all the Lord of the Dreadfort said to him and Ned was forced to comply.

Chapter End Notes

Chapter 33 is called Home and it will be out in around 10 days. I’ve finished a first draft, but I'm going to rewrite parts of it.

As always, let me know what you think of this chapter. Thank you for all the support you've given this story, comments are always appreciated

Thanks for reading

Sleepy
The Lord of Winterfell

Ned Stark sat on the cold stone floor of his cell as he looked up at his captor. Roose Bolton stood opposite him, his face expressionless. He knew that his situation was dire, but he had to play for time. Time would help him to work something out.

“Where is my family?” Ned asked

“In custody,” Bolton replied

“Are they hurt?”

“No,” he replied and Ned felt slightly relieved. Still, he and his family were prisoners in their own home and such situations did not have pleasant outcomes.

“I don’t know what your plan is, but it’s not too late to undo it. Whatever grievances you may have with me, we can work it out and move past it,” Roose just raised up his hand to stop his pleas.

“We both know it’s too late for that,” he said quietly and Ned nodded.
“What is your plan? We both know that it was you who ordered the attack on Prince Rhaegar at the banks of the Green fork,”

“Take a guess,” Bolton said and Ned frowned. He stared at him before he answered.

“I think that your plan was to blame me for the death of Prince Rhaegar. That would cause the Starks and the Targaryens to fight one another and obviously House Targaryen would win on account of their dragons,” Ned said and he paused for a moment before continuing.

“Then I presume. You would plan to offer to be the new Warden of the North. To persuade the King, you would capture me and my family and make it easier for him, showing that you can be trusted,”

Bolton gave a small nod of the head.

“Although your plan has not worked out quite as you hoped. Jon has not come north to wage war on my family,” Ned said.

“I have invited him North, he should be here any day now,” Bolton said immediately and Ned paused. If Jon came north, then he would have a chance to speak with him and convince him of the truth. He felt a small glimmer of hope grow inside of him, he still had a chance.

His eyes scanned the cell for a weapon, but there was none. He would have to think of something else.

“How did you get your men in the castle?” Ned asked as he continued to play for time. Bolton looked at him and Ned realised he was waiting for him. “The fire?”

“Yes. I presume they opened the gates to allow men to enter the courtyard to help put out the fire, and then once they were inside, they hid,” Bolton said quietly and Ned nodded.

“The Greyjoy attack. Were you involved with that?”
“You overestimate me, Lord Stark. I can’t force Lord Greyjoy to attack the North,"

“No, but you can conspire with him so none of your forces take the brunt of the hit,” Ned quickly replied and Bolton just shrugged.

“What have you told the Northern Lords?” Ned asked and Bolton didn’t say anything. “You haven’t told them a thing have you?”

“I don’t need to tell them anything. My men are inside the castle, their men are outside and I have your family hostage,” he curtly replied and Ned bit back a reply. It seemed that Roose had been unable to subdue the other bannermen, whether that was intentional or not, it was a mistake on his part.

Perhaps, he had been hoping to turn more of his bannermen against him. Now he had no choice but to hide in the castle and wait for Jon’s arrival to hopefully support his cause. That meant that Ned and his family would live until then.

“It’s a very bold plan. You are risking the entire future of your house,” Ned said quietly.

“All the risk has passed. The men who carried out the orders have been silenced, and there is nothing left linking me to the crime. I’m sure if there was some proof, you would have found it by now,” he said with a smug smile and a twinkle in his eye.

“Furthermore, the risk to my house is minimal. I am sure House Bolton of Winterfell will thrive,” he added and Ned felt his blood boil. He shifted on the floor and his chains rattled.

“Your house has no future even if you succeed. You have no trueborn children, no one to carry on your legacy,” Ned hissed.

“True. Although, I do have a natural son. Ramsey Snow. He has proved very loyal and useful during this plot and I feel that he will be rewarded. With a name and a wife,”

“What?”

“A name, Lord Stark. I wish to have him legitimized as Ramsey Bolton, he will be my heir and the North will pass to him and his children by his wife,”
“The Northern Lords will never stand for this. No one will marry their daughter to your bastard son,”

Roose raised an eyebrow to that. “I hear you have a daughter,” he said quietly and Ned froze. He would never.

“You leave Sansa out of it!” he yelled as he leapt forward, he got within a foot of Roose before the chains restrained him.

“I believe the King will see the logic in giving me a Stark bride to secure the line and stop any future rebellions,” Roose said with an evil smile. “You also have a wife who I have heard that never cared for the King when he was a boy. I am sure that the King wouldn’t mind if she was duly punished

“Don’t you dare touch my wife or my children!” Ned seethed as he struggled against his chains.

Roose cocked his head to the side as he regarded him.

“And what are you going to do to stop me?” Bolton cockily asked. Ned just glared at him. Bolton smirked at him before turning to head to the door, then Ned heard a loud roar followed by a thud and he saw Bolton freeze. He had not been expecting this

“Looks like he’s here,” Ned said quietly “Earlier than expected,”

“That makes no difference,” Bolton said coldly. “Especially to you,”

He then stood and knocked on the door and two of his guards entered. “I want him gagged and chained then brought out into the courtyard. Do the same for the rest of his family,”

The two Bolton brutes grunted and nodded before they roughly shoved an old cloth into his mouth for a gag and chained his arms in front of him. Then they dragged him to his feet, and out of his cell. The chains were cold and cut into his wrists and his knees banged and scraped along the floor as they dragged him out of the dungeons and into the courtyard.
A wooden podium had been erected in the middle of the courtyard, complete with gallows with rope hanging from them and Ned swallowed nervously. Then he looked up into the sky as a dark shadow passed overhead.

The dark green dragon flew low overhead before it landed just outside the castle walls. Whilst that happened he was dragged up onto the podium where he met the rest of his family. Catelyn had tears falling down her face whilst Sansa was crying loudly. Robb was also in chains, Ned saw that his face was bruised and cut, it looked like he had been in a fight. He saw little Rickon, they even had Rickon in chains.

Ned’s heart fell as guilt washed over him. He had failed. He had failed to protect his wife and his children. He was a failure.

“Ned,” he heard Catelyn say quietly as he was dragged to the front. He didn’t have anything to say to her, nothing that would make it better.

He was thrown to his knees and made to face the castle gates which quickly swung open for Jon to walk through. However, he was not alone. A small figure was with him, and Ned froze when he saw her.

Jon had Arya. In chains.

Ned remembered that he was closest with Arya. Did he really hate him that much that he would capture Arya? How did he even find her? It didn’t make sense to him.

“Your grace,” Lord Bolton said as Jon made his way onto the podium. Roose fell to his knees as did his son and the traitor, Theon. Jon was silent and he motioned for them to rise. He pushed Arya and she fell down next to her sister at the end of the line.

Then Ned looked up at Jon but he saw that he had his back to him. His armor was unbelievable, the metal seemed to smoke and shimmer in the light. Ned could not imagine how much it cost

“Lord Bolton,” Jon said, his voice low and unusual. “Theon and?”

“Ramsey. Ramsey Snow, your grace” he said and Jon nodded.
“Welcome to Winterfell, my King,” Roose said. “As you can see, I have taken the Starks into custody. Your grace, I would like to urge that Lord Stark acted independently and his actions do not reflect those of the other Lords of the North.”

“I understand. Sometimes Lords like to act...independently...and often foolishly,” Jon said evenly. “I will only punish the guilty party,”

“Thank you, your grace. That is a wise decision,”

“Where is Bran? I have found Arya. Where is the last Stark child?”

“We can’t find him, your grace,” Ramsey answered quickly.

“But we will. I can assure you that,” Roose added. “Your grace, what are your plans for the North?”

“What do you mean Lord Bolton?”

“After Lord Stark’s treachery, I can’t imagine that you plan to allow the Starks to retain their position as Warden of the North. To do so may send the wrong message,”

“Queen Daenerys and I have discussed the North at great length. We plan to place it in capable hands. In hands of a man that we can trust,” Jon said slowly. Ned was not sure, but it seemed that he was taking great care with his words. He tried to read his body language but it was difficult with his back turned.

“You have done good work here today, Lord Bolton,” Jon said. “You took matters into your own hands and arrested Lord Stark to protect the North. Perhaps, you could be that person,”

“It was no trouble your grace. I was only doing what was right,”

“Very well. You shall be rewarded,” Jon said and Ned’s heart fell. He began to scream into his gag to try and get his attention but Jon did not turn around. “I plan to name you as my Warden of the
North and raise House Bolton to the position of Lord Paramounts,"

“Your grace. You do me a great kindness,” Bolton said as he fell to his knees in front of him.

“I believe in rewarding those who deserve to be rewarded, and punishing those who deserved to be punished. I strive to be a fair man, and a good King,” Jon said to him

“I believe you will be that, your grace. You have made such a promising start already” Roose said. Jon motioned for him to rise and he did.

“Your grace, may I ask one more thing of you?” Lord Bolton asked

“I have a son. A natural born son. I would like for him to be legitimized so he can continue my line. He would also need a wife of noble birth,”

“Who did you have in mind?” Jon asked warily

“Sansa Stark, your grace. If Ramsey marries a Stark girl, it unites the lines and decreases any chances of future rebellion occurring in the North,”

Ned screamed into his gag and thrashed about as he tried to get Jon’s attention. Jon turned to him and his cold eyes were grey and unforgiving and Ned stopped moving.

“I will legitimize your son, but he will not have Sansa for a bride,” Jon said quietly, this at least, was some relief to Ned.

“Where are the rest of the Northern Lords?” Jon asked

“Their men are outside the gates. Whilst a few Lords are here, such as Lord Karstark and Manderley. It is only my men inside the castle itself,” Roose said proudly and he saw Jon nod. The Bolton men stood at the bottom of the podium, Ned estimated that there were at least a thousand of them.

“What have you told them?” Jon asked
“I have told them that I have arrested the traitor and will hold Winterfell until you come to deliver the King’s justice,” Ned looked at Lord Karstark who was standing there uncertainty, as if he did not know what to do here. Ned gave him a pleading look and Karstark just shifted uncomfortably on his feet before looking away.

“Very well. It is nearly time,” Jon said as he drew his sword. The jewels in the handle sparkled brightly and the Valyrian steel looked flawless. Ned stared at the magnificent blade.

The blade that he was sure would soon end his life. “But first, there is something that I want to clear up. Lord Stark. Hands in front of you, on the floor,”

Ned looked up and tried to plead for mercy with his eyes but Jon looked unforgiving.

“Please don’t kill him Jon!” Sansa begged. “He didn’t do it. Please,”

“Jon please. I am sorry. I am sorry for how I treated you. I was wrong and I was horrible. Please have mercy! Please don’t kill my Ned!” Catelyn begged. When Jon did not answer her, Catelyn broke down into tears and sobs on the floor.

“Hands on the floor. Do not make this more difficult for me,” Jon firmly repeated and Ned slowly pushed his trembling hands out in front of them.

Ned looked up into his eyes and he briefly saw something flash behind them. He did not have time to process what it was because Jon quickly brought his sword down, and sliced open his chains. Bolton opened his mouth to protest but he was silenced by Jon.

“But first, there is something I need everyone to hear. Arya please,” Jon said softly and Ned looked over at his youngest daughter who rose to her feet again. “You may be wondering how I found Arya, and now we will hear her story. However, before we begin, I want you to take a look at her Lord Bolton. Take a good look,”

Ned looked on as Roose stared at her face. At first his face was expressionless, then suddenly his eyes widened.

“You…” he whispered. “You’re that boy. That boy from the forest,”
“I am not a boy. I’m a girl. I am Arya Stark of Winterfell and you tried to kill me!”

Ned paused. Arya met Roose in a forest? In disguise? Was she really with him the whole time?

“I didn’t know it was you,” Roose stammered. “If I had known, then I would have…”

“Done what? Captured me? Used me as a hostage in your scheme against my father?”

“Scheme? What scheme?” Roose stammered and Ned started to nod, perhaps Arya had seen it.

“I saw you in the forest burying those cloaks. You stole Stark cloaks from our camp and used them to disguise your men,” Arya stated and Ned nodded vigorously. She knew the truth, but did Jon believe her?

“No. That is not true,” Roose said firmly as he shook his head. “You can’t believe the word of a traitor’s daughter over me, a respected Lord,”

“Arya is not the daughter of a traitor Lord. Arya Stark is my sister, and I trust her, far more than I trust you,” Jon said threateningly as he stepped forward with his sword drawn.

“Your grace,” Roose said desperately.

“No. Enough lies, Lord Bolton. Admit to what you did, and then I will allow you an honorable death,”

Ned looked on and he saw Roose’s eye look from left to right. Ned could see that he was panicking. Jon stepped forward and Arya moved behind Robb to try and open his chains. Jon lifted the tip of his sword so that it was just in front of his face. The slightest touch caused a stream of blood to flow down his cheek.

“Kill him!” Roose shrieked in panic and Ned watched his son fly forward with his knife already drawn. Ned screamed into his gag and he watched as Jon quickly pivoted onto his backfoot to bring his sword around and up into Ramsey’s stomach. Ned’s face was splattered with warm blood as Ramsey fell to the floor howling in pain.
He removed his gag from his mouth and gulped in air.

“The gate. We need to open the gate for my men!” Ned said desperately.

“Already on it,” Jon huffed as he spun around to deal with Theon. Ned was confused as to what he meant until he saw the Dragon swoop down from the sky until it was hovering above the gate. Ned looked on as the Dragon released a torrent of bright green flame before quickly taking off into the sky again.

The gate of Winterfell had been completely destroyed and his men came streaming in.

Ned looked up at Jon who was dueling with Theon. He watched as he moved with incredible speed, throwing a feint one way before slamming Theon to the ground, seemingly knocking him out.

“Protect your family!” Jon roared as he moved to the stairs of the podium. He kicked a dagger towards him and Ned quickly picked it up. He moved behind Catelyn and his children and sliced through the ropes that bound their hands behind their backs. Once they were free he stepped back and looked down below the podium.

Several Bolton men were rushing towards the podium to attack them. He turned around and saw that Robb had been unchained and he had taken Theon’s sword. Arya held a dagger in her small hands. Then he looked back out and he realised that they were screwed. There were too many Bolton men.

They would be dead long before his own men could save them.

“There’s too many!” Ned yelled towards Jon.

“I know,” Jon returned.

“What do we do?” Ned asked desperately as the first man started to climb the steps of the podium

“Get down!” Jon yelled as he barreled into them and knocked them to the floor. Ned was confused
and he heard another loud roar from the dragon followed by an intense burst of heat. His ears were filled with the anguished screams of thousands of men dying and burning before they were quickly drowned out by the rhythmic thumping of the dragon’s wings.

After a few moments, the heat suddenly stopped and then Ned looked up to inspect the damage.

The first keep was burning wildly and uncontrollably. The top of the tower had been melted away by the intense dragonflame and the earth below had been scorched black. The dragon had eviscerated all of the Bolton men that stood in its way, leaving behind nothing but charred bones and ash.

He heard a loud crumbling noise as the rest of the first keep collapsed to the ground and a plume of smoke rose up into the air.

“Wow,” was all Ned said as he looked at the wreckage. The first keep was one of the oldest parts of Winterfell but thankfully, it was no longer in use. He turned behind him to look at his family who were all surveying the wreckage with wide eyes

“I’m sorry but I had to do that,” Jon said defensively as he rose to his feet. “We would have been overwhelmed long before the men from outside could come to save us. Using Vedros was my only choice,”

“It’s fine Jon,” Ned said quietly. “You saved us,”

“You’re family. Even though we have our differences, I will always protect my family,”

Family.

“Jon, I’m sorry. I truly am. I’ve been a fool. This entire mess was all my fault. You are Lyanna’s son and I should have supported you from the start and cut ties with Robert Baratheon but I didn’t. I acted shamefully and I can only apologize and hope that you forgive me. My oath to my family comes first, and I forgot that,”

“It was not my place to judge you for what happened in Essos. Especially, since I did not have all the facts. You would not have acted dishonorably, your reasons are sound and just. I am sorry Jon. I am so so sorry,” Ned said as he fell to his knees. His guilt washed over him as he shook his head repeatedly, he couldn’t bring himself to look up.
“I too have made mistakes,” Jon said quietly. “I am sorry for the things I said to you at the council. You protected me throughout my life and sheltered me from Robert and then I threw it back in your face. I lost my temper at the council and Roose must have seen it. That is what gave him the confidence for this scheme. I am sorry, I lost my temper and that should not have happened. I am have blame to share here,”

Ned opened his mouth to let him know that this was not his fault, but he was interrupted by his oldest daughter.

Sansa quickly ran over to him and embraced him in a hug which Jon slowly returned. Then he opened his arms and gave Robb a big hug before reaching down to rustle Rickon’s hair. Then he looked up as if he heard something before he made his way off the podium with his sword drawn. Ned cautiously followed him down the stairs.

They found Roose Bolton lying on the floor dying. He had been burned by the dragonflame, however unlike the rest of the men, he had not received the full force of the flame. Parts of his skin was blackened and charred whilst others remained untouched. The flame only found one part of his face, completely burning off all his hair and eyebrows on his left hand side. Ned saw the shallow rise and fall of his chest, he was still alive. Albeit barely.

Sansa gasped before quickly looking away from the gruesome sight whilst Jon drew his sword.

“Roose Bolton, Lord of the Dreadfort. For your conspiracy to murder my father, Prince Rhaegar Targaryen and impose yourself as Warden of the North, I sentence you to die,” Jon said in a clear voice.

He heard a wheezing noise coming from Roose. His lips didn’t move, but he was sure that he was trying to say something. Was it please?

Ned looked down at the Lord of the Dreadfort and shook his head, death would be a mercy for him. A mercy that he did not deserve. Jon looked down at him for a few moments before sheathing his sword again.

“Leave him to die. For what he did today, he can die suffering,” he said coldly and then he turned away. The rest of his bannermen had entered the devastated courtyard and they stood standing around looking for direction.
“Lords of the North,” Jon said in a loud clear voice. “I am Aegon Targaryen, although many of you know of me as Jon Snow. I am sure that you have heard about what happened to my father, Rhaegar, but I am here to set the record straight,”

“My father was attacked, by Lord Bolton, not Lord Stark. Lord Bolton intended to frame Lord Stark for his crime and trick me into giving him the North. That will not happen. The North will stay in the hands of House Stark,” and to reiterate his point, the dragon flew overhead once more and released an ground shaking roar.

“The war in the south is over. Robert Baratheon has been defeated and House Targaryen once again sits the throne. The time for war is over, it is now time for an era of peace and kindness,” Jon spoke to all of the Northern Lords but Ned felt as if he was speaking to him.

He knew what he had to do. Ned quickly fell to his knee, ready to swear fealty to the rightful King. He looked up at Jon who regarded for a few moments, before he nodded and motioned for him to rise.

“I Lord Eddard Stark of Winterfell swear fealty to you Aegon Targaryen and house Targaryen for all of eternity. The North is yours, your grace,” Ned said in a loud clear voice in the middle of the courtyard. He looked around and saw that several of his bannermen had also fallen to their knees. Lord Manderly and Umber had been were already on the ground whilst Lord Karstark looked slightly hesitant. At that moment, his dragon swooped low overhead, menacingly. The rest of the Lords quickly fell to their knees in front of him.

“Thank you for your faith in me,” Jon said. “Rise,”

Ned rose to his feet and looked around the courtyard.

“I think I have some time before I have to head back south,” Jon said after a few moments. “Shall we head inside? Talk some more?”

Ned nodded. “Follow me, we’ll talk in my solar,”

The Dragon King

He remembered the last time he was here in this solar, it was the start of a wonderful journey that
spanned several years. He had gained a wife, a child and a dragon. He looked at Lord Stark. He had several more grey hairs and he had aged a lot over the past few for years. Then he turned to Lady Catelyn, whose eyes were puffy and red.

“Jon,” he heard a voice say and he turned to look at Lady Catelyn. Her eyes and face were puffy and red and Jon knew what she was going to say.

“I am sorry Jon. I am sorry for how I treated you. If only I had known, it would have been different,“

“That doesn’t matter. I was a child without a mother, and you still treated me horribly,” Jon said to her and he saw her eyes fall and Jon took a deep breath. “However, I don’t wish to hold a grudge against you for what happened. The past is the past and I’d like to move forward. We may not grow to be the best of friends, but I do wish for us to move past this,”

He looked at her as he said this and he saw her nod in acceptance. Then he turned to Sansa.

“Thank you for saving us Jon,” Sansa said. “I’m sorry for how I treated you. I was horrible to you,”

“You were just a child,” Jon said to her. He wanted to add that she had only been copying her mother, but he realised that would not be constructive. It was time to let go and move on, holding this grudge would be pointless.

He smiled at Sansa and gave her a quick hug.

Then he turned to Robb. He looked worse for wear, with a bruise along his cheek and several cuts.

“You look like shit,” he said with a straight face.

“You don’t look much better,” Jon replied, and then Robb broke into a smile which he quickly returned.

“I’ve missed you brother,” Robb said as he hugged him. “I see you’ve learned a few tricks whilst you were away,”
“Aye. I’ve picked some things up. I’ll tell you about them in a little bit,"

“How did you find Arya? And Arya where did you go?” Ned asked as he walked up to his daughter and gave her a hug.

“Actually, she found me,” Jon said and then Arya launched into her story. They all listened attentively as Arya rattled off the tale and Jon felt himself growing angrier and angrier with Roose by the second. Arya had been very lucky to escape his men, Nymeria had saved her life.

When she was finished, Catelyn wrapped her in a hug so tight that Jon couldn’t even see her.

“Don’t you ever run away again,” she sobbed as she held onto her daughter.

“Where is Bran?” Jon asked and he saw everyone's eyes fall.

“He disappeared shortly after Arya left,” Catelyn said quietly. “He, his wolf and the Reed children all vanished at once,”

“So they’re together?” Jon said quickly and Catelyn nodded

“I guess, but we can’t find them. We have searched everywhere for him but we have found no signs of him,”

“Could we use your dragon to help find him?” Robb asked

“I don’t know,” Jon said as he scratched his head. “He’s been gone for months, right? He could be anywhere, as far as Essos really. I’ve used her to find a Dothraki horde before, but that was a group of over 100,000. I guess there’s no harm in trying,”

“Jon, you still haven’t told us what you were doing in the South? I thought the war was won after you killed Robert?” Ned asked and then Jon launched into his tale. He started with the defeat of the Mountain and then he told them all about Illyrio’s boy and the secret conspiracy to seat him on the throne. He told them of the battle they had outside Kings Landing, and of Aegon’s demise.
“Wow,” was Robb’s reaction when he was finished.

“I can’t believe you killed the Mountain and Robert Baratheon,” Sansa said quietly. “I saw the Mountain when he was in Kings Landing and he is a huge monstrous man,”

“Where did you learn to fight like that?” Robb asked

“Valyria,” Jon replied “It’s another long story, that I’ll share another time,” he added, forestalling the follow up question

“I can’t believe the Spider would do this,” Ned said quietly as he shook his head “I could never figure out what he truly wanted, but this. This is something on a level that I could not imagine. And to think he operated it all without being discovered,”

“Aye. It was a devious secret that no one would uncover until its too late. You would have had to be told,” Jon said and then the room fell silent.

“I should speak to the maids, prepare a room for you,” Catelyn said as she looked out of the window as it was starting to get dark

“No there is no need. I need to be on my way soon,” Jon said and he saw everyone frown

“Leave? You only just got back here!” Arya protested as she crossed over to him

“I agree, you’ve been away for so long,” Sansa added and he saw everyone in the room nod in agreement

“I can’t stay. Dany needs me,”

“Ah he can’t stay out too late otherwise he’ll upset the wife,” Robb said cheekily and Jon rolled his eyes

“Two things. My wife happens to have a very large dragon and if I don’t head back soon, you’ll have a second dragon overhead by morning. And second, what do you know about having a wife?”
he teased as he pushed him in the shoulder

“Can I come?” Arya asked pleadingly, “Please, I want to see your son,”

“Not this time,” Jon said sadly. “Look I promise you can come South to visit me, but you ran away and you scared your parents. I think you should spend some time with them now,”

Arya opened her mouth to protest but Jon quickly spoke again.

“Once the city is secure I will send an invitation for you all to come south. I am sure there will be a coronation and other processional events that we need to hold. When that happens you all can meet Dany and Daeron properly. Robb, I think you should stay North and help your father clean up this mess. The Bolton’s did not appear to have much support, but you should take extra caution,”

“We should march on the Dreadfort,” Robb said and Jon nodded.

“Aye. I spoke to Roose, and he was planning to do some horrible things. Are there any more Boltons running around the North? He mentioned he had a son, Ramsey but I don’t know of any others,”

“No. There are no other Boltons,” Ned confirmed

“Good. Take the Dreadfort in my name and that will be the end of house Bolton,” Jon said firmly and both Ned and Robb nodded. “You should have no trouble. Plenty of Lords saw what happened today, they will know that you have my support against the Boltons,”

“What do you plan for Theon?” Ned asked. Jon had not killed him, he only disarmed him.

“Throw him in the cells for a few weeks. Then send him up to the Wall where he will live out the rest of his days,” Jon said coldly. He had never gotten along with Theon, he had always found his arrogance annoying and now that he had betrayed the Starks, he had little reason to show him mercy

“Jon. Is your father going to be fine?” Ned asked and Jon could see the concern on his face.
“After he was hit, he fell into a deep sleep. He has not awoken, but he will. I am sure of it,” Jon firmly said. He took another look out of the window and he saw that it was starting to get dark

“I really need to get going, but I will see you all again soon,” he said as he made his preparations to leave. He gave hugs to Robb and Ned.

“Please can I come?” Arya begged as he gave her a hug. He bit his lip as he looked at her and then he looked at her father

“Fine, she can go,” Ned said after a moment. “She’s missed you a lot. I can’t force her to stay here,”

Arya beamed at those words and quickly ran off to her room to pack a small bag. Then he turned to Sansa who gave him a hug and a kiss on the cheek and he rustled Rickon’s hair.

Then he stood before Catelyn, who stood in front of him with tears in his eyes

“Thank you, Jon, thank you for saving us,” she said quietly and Jon nodded once again. He looked into her blue eyes and for the first time in his life, he didn’t see contempt and anger, he saw gratitude and guilt and in that moment, Jon knew that she truly was sorry for her actions.

He was not ready to forgive her, but a small part of him knew that there was hope for their relationship to get better.

The Mother of Dragons

Dany could see the fortress of Dragonstone growing bigger as they approached. She had left shortly after Jon to return to Dragonstone to look for a cure for Caraxes. She had been very surprised to see Arya Stark arrive on the back of her direwolf. The wolf was even bigger than Ghost, and Dany did not think that was possible. Jon had been very happy to see her, and she hoped that they would reach Winterfell in time.

Anogar flew lower over the castle and then he hovered near their balcony. He lowered his wing and Dany quickly slid off and headed inside.
They had brought several books from Valyria and they were all in various places. She and Jon had a few in their room, Rhaegar had the majority in his room and Marywn had a few with him. She decided to start with the books in their room, she had not read them all, and neither had Jon.

She sat down at the desk and flicked through the titles, eventually finding an old tome called ‘Dragons and their Anatomy’s’ that seemed like a good enough place to start. She opened the book and she began to read.

The Valyrians had studied their dragons in great detail and Dany found they had pages upon pages of diagrams showing nearly every part of their body. There were sections covering their skulls, wings, claws and body. She began to move to the section covering the body of a dragon and she began to read.

She was halfway through the first paragraph when she heard a loud high pitched scream that filled her with worry.

“Daeron,” she said quickly as she began to stand up. Her son quickly burst into the room but to her surprise and relief, he was laughing and smiling. He saw her and ran over to her and buried his face in her dress.

“Are you playing a game, sweetling?” she asked as she rubbed his head and picked him up. She gave him a kiss but it seemed that he was distracted as he constantly moved in her arms.

“Okay, I think you’re playing a game with someone,” she said as she set him back on the ground.

As she expected, Daeron slowly walked out of the room and back the way he came. Dany was not too worried about him, he was probably playing a hiding game. He did not seem to be in any danger.

She began to read again and she managed to finish the first page. The book told her all about the strength of the dragon’s scales. When the dragons were fully grown, their scales were tougher than plate and virtually impenetrable. However, their dragons weren’t fully grown, at least not yet. The book told her that it took several years for a dragon to reach maturity. Their dragons were only a few years old, less than a year older than Daeron.

As she thought of her son, she heard him scream again as he ran breathlessly into her room on his little legs. This time, he did not approach her, he just stood by the door, giggled and waited. Dany
watched him as he hid by the door before he slowly crept out into the hallway again. Dany just shook her head and went back to her reading.

The page she was reading provided more information about the dragons, but no information about what type of injuries or ailments could affect them and she closed it in frustration. She reached for another book in the pile and she opened another one. She began to read before Daeron ran into the room, screaming and giggling.

“Ok little one,” she said as she scooped him up. “Let’s see what’s gotten you so excited,”

“Mama!” he said as she carried him out of the room and into the hallway. Then Daeron started to babble to her in his little language and then he started to point down the hallway. She walked down the hallway and poked her head into the nursery but surprisingly, there was no one in there.

“Ok Daeron. Who were you with? Were you with Margaery? Or Shireen?” she asked.

“Magey!” Daeron exclaimed and Dany laughed at his pronunciation as she walked down the hall.

“It’s Margery, little one. “Mar Ger Rey. Like that,”

“Magey,” Daeron said again and Dany just shook her head. He would get it soon.

There weren’t a lot of rooms in this part of the castle and so she was confused. She decided to put Daeron down so he could direct her.

Dany was amused to see that as soon as his little legs hit the floor, he shot off behind her and headed for a door, Rhaegar’s door. She frowned before she moved to follow him.

She entered the room and what she saw nearly caused her heart to stop.

Rhaegar was sitting up in the middle of the bed talking to Maester Cressen and Pylos. Pylos examined him whilst Cressen spoke to him. They changed his bandages and Daenerys caught a glimpse of the gruesome wound and scars left along his stomach.
“Rhaegar,” she said quietly and that caught his attention. He looked at her and he smiled. “I’ve missed you,” she croaked as she ran over to him and hugged him.

“Careful not too tightly,” Cressen warned but Dany didn’t care. Her brother was alive.

“Dany,” he whispered as he hugged her back.

“I can’t believe it,” she sobbed. “You were asleep for so long and now you’re back,”

“I am, Sister,” he said as he broke the hug. “Where is Jon?”

“Oh Rhaegar. You’ve missed so much,” Dany said as she shook her head. She sat down on the edge of the bed and picked up Daeron and held him in her lap. Then she quickly told him the story right up until the events in Kings Landing.

“Poison?” Rhaegar asked as he shook his head “They’ve poisoned Caraxes?”

“I don’t know where they would have gained that knowledge,” Dany said as she shook her head.

“Perhaps the Citadel,” Rhaegar said quietly. “I remember Marwyn mentioning something about a dragon killing book that they had locked away,”

“I need to find an antidote,” Dany said and Rhaegar nodded.

“There should be a book somewhere. It’s an old one, it’s thick and heavy and it has no title,” Rhaegar said as he closed his eyes in concentration. “I remember flicking through it once, I didn’t want to transcribe it yet as it contained secrets that could hurt our dragons,”

“Do you know where it is?” Dany asked as she stood up

“It should be over there somewhere on the table,” Rhaegar said as he held out his arms for Daeron.
She quickly passed him over before walking over to the table.

“Rhaegar there are so many books here!” Dany exclaimed as she reached the table

“It’s a heavy book sweet sister. The pages are old and slightly yellow. You’ll find it,”

Dany quickly started to sort through the books on the table. She put the ones she checked onto the floor until there were only a few remaining.

“Rhaegar, I’ve narrowed it down to these three books,” Dany said as she turned around. “They’re all old, thick heavy and without a title,”

Rhaegar hummed as he scratched his chin

“Perhaps I remembered I don’t remember it well. It might be in any of those books. Hand me one and I’ll start flicking through it,”

Dany handed him a heavy book and opened one of her own. She sat down by the table whilst Rhaegar sat up in the bed

“Ok Daeron. We are going to do some reading. It’s very important and I need you to be quiet. After we read we can play some more. Is that ok?” Rhaegar asked

“You have to nod you head. If you do that he’ll copy,” Dany said with a smile. Rhaegar took her advice and nodded his head and Daeron quickly copied

“Good boy,” he said as he gave him a kiss that made her heart melt. She quickly opened the book and then began to read. The pages were old and fragile so she had to take care when turning them. From the first few pages, she guessed that this book was about architecture and it seemed to be providing instructions on how the Valyrians integrated magic into their structure. It was fascinating, but rather useless information. She continued to quickly look through the book

“Dany. What did the wound look like?” Rhaegar asked
“It wasn’t too deep but he bled thick, black pungent blood,” Dany said as she looked up at him. Rhaegar nodded

“I think I might have an idea,” Rhaegar said slowly. “I think that it’s unlikely that we find the exact poison that they used, however, if we can find the symptoms then we work backwards to find the poison and therefore the antidote,”

Dany nodded, that made sense

“What have you found?” She asked

“There is something here on this page. It’s not a lot really, it seems like a little anecdote but it does mention something about foul smelling blood. It also mentions possible causes and points me to another page. I followed up, and I think I have found the poison that they used, or a poison,” Rhaegar said

“How do we know which one is the right one?” Daenerys asked

“The symptoms are slightly different. Black pungent blood is a common effect of two of the poisons they’ve listed here,” he said as he pointed to a spot on a page. “Do any of these other side effects look familiar?”

Dany quickly looked down the page. “This one,” she said as she pointed at a poison called laesdaor laes. She quickly looked down the symptoms, it was a particularly nasty poison that lead to blindness, loss of flight and eventually death.

“Rhaegar, this stuff is horrible;”

“I know and it appears to be fast acting. It can kill a fully grown dragon in less than 4 days” he said grimly. “However the antidote looks fairly simple. I don’t see any ingredients here that are too difficult to find. Maester Cressen. We will need your stores,” Rhaegar announced

“Of course, although I do confess that I have no experience in mixing antidotes for a dragon,” he stuttered
“They had no experience in making poison for a dragon yet they managed,” Dany said coolly. “You
will provide this service for us,”

“Of course your grace. What do I need?”

“It says here you need. Ground willow bark, crushed mushroom, dragonbone, which we should
have from Valyria?” Rhaegar asked and Dany nodded, they should have a few dragonbone handles
that they could break off if necessary. “Along with summerwine. The mixture needs to be heated
until it turns a lavender colour and then you need to soak a cloth in the mixture and use that to swab
the wound. It says that once the mixture makes contact with the wound, it should hiss and steam and
start to harden as the healing process begins,”

Dany nodded. “Maester Cressen do you have those ingredients?”

“Yes, I have crushed mushroom and willow bark. You have the dragonbone and wine should be
easy enough to come across. Although I have a question. The dragon is not here on Dragonstone, so
how will we apply the antidote?”

“You will accompany me,” Dany said plainly as she looked at him

“Accompany you?” he stammered. “It will take at least half a day by boat, perhaps more if the tide is
not in our favour,”

“On the back of Anogar,” Dany said and she saw his eyes widen

“Your grace. I have never flown on a Dragon before,”

“Its fine, Maester Cressen. Perhaps, it’s not the best idea for you to go. I am sure Maester Pylos can
accompany me,” Dany said as she looked towards the younger maester who quickly nodded.

“Maester Pylos collect what you need from your stores. Bring plenty of cloth to soak the mixture in
as well. Then I need you to meet me outside of the main entrance to the castle, we will depart from
there,”
“I will come too,” Rhaegar said as he began to move out of the bed but Dany shook her head

“You need to rest. No travel,” Maester Cressen said firmly and Dany nodded in agreement

“I agree, brother. You should rest. You have been hurt for so long,”

“There are also more examinations that I wish to carry out,” Cressen said. “You have been on a diet of water and small amounts of honey. You will need to work on getting back your strength,”

She saw Rhaegar frown before he slumped back in the bed.

“You’re probably right,” he said unhappily. “At least I’ll have this little one to keep me company,”

“What were you doing earlier? Why was he screaming? Dany asked

“Oh. We were playing a game. Like this,” Rhaegar said. Dany watched as he got Daeron’s attention, then hid his face behind his hands. He hid for a few moments before popping out and saying “Boo!” and sure enough Daeron screamed and giggled.

“Alright, I guess I’ll leave you too it,” Dany said with a little laugh

The flight back to Kings Landing was quick, Anogar flew low over the Blackwater as he raced towards his fallen brother The afternoon air was cold and bit into her skin and so she hunched low in the saddle. Maester Pylos was behind her, tightly gripping onto Anogar’s scales

He had approached Anogar with much trepidation and her dragon had done little to ease his fears. The man was as white as a sheet, but thankfully, he had not vomited over the side. That would really have annoyed Anogar.

Anogar screeched loudly as they neared the area where Caraxes was grounded. Dany saw that their
men had surrounded the area and protected Caraxes from any more assailants. Dany doubted anyone would dare go near him but it was good to see that their men had left nothing to chance.

Anogar landed as gently as he could and as soon he hit the crown, Maester Pylos was off his back and onto the floor. Dany watched as he quickly threw up his lunch onto the grass.

“You’ll get used to flying soon enough,” Dany said reassuringly but she quickly saw that her words failed to work. “Perhaps, you should take a boat back to Dragonstone?” she suggested and he nodded eagerly.

“That would be best, your grace,” he said as he wiped his mouth. “Shall we get to work? I will need a pot and a fire,”

“We can get a pot, one of the camp kitchens will have one. I will send for one,” Dany said and the man nodded. She found a Dothraki rider named Colo and relayed her instructions. Whilst the pot was being fetched, the Maester set out his equipment. Colo returned with the pot and quickly helped to start a fire for them and then they got to work.

Dany read out the Valyrian instructions for Pylos. First the wine was added, then the Willow bark was crushed to a very fine powder before it could be added. The mushrooms were to be crushed before they were added and finally there was the dragonbone. Once the dragonbone was added, the mixture turned from red to black. The Maester stirred the mixture and Dany was waiting for it to turn lavender but surprisingly it didn’t.

“Does that book say how long I have to keep stirring for?” Maester Pylos asked and Dany shook her head.

“All it says is that the mixture is ready when it turns lavender, it doesn’t say how long that will take,” Dany replied as she flicked through the pages. The next page provided no further instructions. “Just keep stirring,”

The Maester nodded and continued to stir under her watchful eye. He stirred and stirred and stirred but there was still no change in the mixture.

“We must be missing something,” Dany said in frustration.
"Do you know what it could be?"

“I know that the Valyrians used a lot of fire and blood magic and so far, this mixture hasn’t included any of those things."

“I do not believe in blood magic,” Maester Pylos said quietly. “I will continue to stir,”

Dany felt the ground shift behind her and she turned to see that Anogar was slowly edging towards them. She stared into his magma red eyes and she understood that he wanted to help.

“Step away, Maester Pylos,” Dany said quietly as Anogar approached. Pylos quickly scrambled away from the pot as Anogar stopped a few feet away. Dany too stepped back and she watched as he slowly lowered his snout to the pot. She heard him release a low rumbling sound and she saw steam quickly rise up from the pot and into the evening sky. She heard several loud cracks as the pot started to vigorously bubble before Anogar moved away.

Dany quickly moved forward and saw that the mixture had now turned lavender.

“I don’t understand,” Maester Pylos said as he crept up to the pot. “What did he do?”

“Dragons are smart, magical creatures. Anogar realised that we needed help and he helped us,” Dany simply said. “Thank you my friend,”

Anogar blinked slowly before seemingly moving away to wait. Dany took the pieces of cloth that they had set aside along with a spear. The tip of the spear had been removed and in its place, Dany attached the piece of cloth.

“I think we should make several of these,” Dany said to Pylos who quickly copied her. They made four and Dany was first to dip hers into the pot.

She swirled it around in the mixture for a few moments before pulling it out, and heading down the hill towards Caraxes.

“Pylos. Drive your spear into the ground and leave it there, I don’t want you to get too close to him,”
Dany warned

The cream and gold dragon lay flat along the ground with his eyes closed. Dany cautiously approached and once she was a few steps away, Caraxes slowly opened one eye to look at her.

“Please Caraxes, I’m here to help you. We have an antidote,” she said gently. Caraxes looked at her before blinking slowly before slowly pushing himself up with a loud sad groan.

The wound looked worse. The black blood was still flowing had caked his creamy white scales and the smell had gotten even worse. She noticed streaks of black starting to flow from the wound towards his wings, she hoped that the poison wasn’t spreading too quickly. She took a deep breath and slowly approached the wound with the spear held in front of her.

She moved step by step until she gently pressed the tip of the cloth onto the wound and made a downwards swiping motion. The wound started to hiss and smoke and Caraxes cried out in pain. However, Dany continued to swab the wound before she reached behind her for the second spear.

She repeated the process and more smoke poured from the wound and the rotten egg smell almost became overpowering. Once the second swab was used, she decided to take a step forward to take a closer look.

To her relief, she saw that the wound was indeed starting to harden. This gave her the confidence to redouble her efforts. She noticed that the rotten egg smell had only appeared after she had applied the swabs, perhaps this was a sign that the antidote was working.

She quickly applied the third and finally the fourth swap, covering the entire wound with antidote like the book said. Once she was finished, she stepped back from Caraxes who had both of his golden eyes opened now. The black streaks that were creeping up his golden wings had stopped and they had slowly started to retreat.

He opened his mouth to roar and this time a flame came out, it was not as big as it was before, but that signature pale gold had returned.

“Did it work?” She heard Maester Pylos ask and she nodded.

“Yes. I think it worked. I think Caraxes is on the road to recovery,”
“What next your grace?” Maester Pylos asked

“Until my husband returns, we will continue here in the south. The city should be ours by now. I have sent Ser Barristan ahead with others to oversee the transition. I want you to help the wounded and sick using your skills as a Maester,”

“As you command your grace,”

After Maester Pylos walked away, Dany walked over to Anogar and climbed onto his back and sat in his saddle. Once she was safe and secure, her dragon took off.

Anogar flew low over Kings Landing, the city that her ancestors had founded and created. A city that showed the world Targaryen strength and power. She saw ruined Dragonpit that once housed her family’s dragons, she saw the magnificent great sept of Baelor and finally she saw the red keep, their new home.

She allowed a small victorious smile to cross her face before Anogar turned and headed back for Dragonstone. She would have to tell Rhaegar the good news and begin preparations for their arrival. He and Daeron would have to sail from the Island to the mainland and that would take a few days.

Then once Jon came back from the North, they could take the city together and this war would finally be over.

Chapter End Notes

Chapter 34 is called 'A Time for Dragons' and it should be out sometime this weekend. More of the loose ends around Kings Landing will be tied up

Let me know what you think of this one, comments are always appreciated and as always

Thanks for reading
Sleepy
A Time for Dragons

Chapter Summary

The End

Chapter Notes

Thank you all for reading this story. I appreciate every single one of you <3

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Before we begin here is a nice picture of Jon and Daeron that a commentor linked to me

The Dragon King

After saying his goodbyes in Winterfell, Jon and Arya climbed back onto Vedros and made their way south once again. It was well into the evening and the sun had nearly set by the time they reached Kings Landing again. Vedros flew low over the city before heading east towards Dragonstone. He tried to look for Caraxes but it was just a little too dark for him to see clearly.

Dragonstone was only a short flight away from Kings Landing and Jon assumed that Vedros would be taking him to Dany and Daeron. Jon was excited for Arya to meet his son, he hoped Daeron wouldn’t be too shy around Arya.

Vedros gently landed in front of the main Dragonstone steps and Arya quickly slid off her back and landed nimbly on her feet.

“You’ve taken to flying quite well,” Jon said as he joined her on the ground. “I would’ve thought you would be a lot more nervous. I know I was when I first flew her,”

“When did you first fly?” Arya asked as she stretched her legs.
“We first flew in Meereen. Almost two years ago now that I think about it,” Jon said as he led her up the steps. “She was smaller then, and little Daeron was still growing inside Dany then,”

“Meereen?”

“Yes, it’s all the way inside the Bay of Dragons. Past Volantis and all the free cities. It’s months away really,”

“You still haven’t told me the entire story,” Arya said as they made their way inside and upstairs.

“I know, but it would take hours and hours, Arya. I’ve been to a lot of places. Pentos, Volantis, Astapor, Yunkai, Meereen,” Jon listed as they climbed the stairs towards the family wing. “I still haven’t even given you the tour of this castle,”

“It looks so different to Winterfell,” Arya commented. “The architecture is unbelievably detailed,”

“Aye. The Valyrians used their magic to construct it, that’s why you see so many of these intricate designs,” Jon told her as they finally reached their floor. He would have to find a maid and have a room on this floor prepared for Arya to sleep in. In the meantime, he headed towards the Nursery

“That’s odd,” Jon said as he looked inside the quiet and empty nursery. Daeron’s crib was tidy and unslept in and his golden egg was secure in the middle, “Daeron is usually in here, and it’s nearly his bed time,”

“Perhaps, he’s with his mother,” Arya guessed.

“Most likely,” Jon said as he headed down the hall. He checked their bedroom and he finally found Dany and Daeron. Daeron was walking around holding onto her hairbrush whilst Dany dried her arms.

“Hi,” Dany said with a smile. “I just gave him his bath, that’s why I’m a little wet. Hello Arya,”

“Hello your grace,” Arya replied politely.
“No please, call me Daenerys or Dany, we are family after all,” she said warmly as she crossed over to her to give her a hug which Arya returned.

“Jon has told me a lot about you. You were all he talked about when we met in Pentos. It’s so nice to finally meet you” Dany said and Jon blushed slightly.

“It’s nice to meet you too,” Arya replied and then she looked at Daeron who had walked over to hide behind Dany’s skirts, with only half of his face peering out to look at this stranger.

“Come on little one, don’t be shy,” Jon said as he picked him up. “This is your Aunty Arya,”

“He’s so adorable,” Arya said softly.

“Do you want to hold him?” Dany asked and Arya nodded before holding her arms out. Jon gently passed Daeron over who still had not said a word. Once Daeron was in her arms, he continued to stare at her.

“Say hello to Arya,” Dany said gently.

“Hello Daeron. My name is Arya,” Arya said.

“Careful. He likes to hold onto your hair,” Dany warned as she saw Daeron reach out for her hair. “And he has a surprisingly strong grip for such a little boy,”

“Aya!” Daeron shouted as he started to twist in her arms.

“Let him down,” Jon told her. Once Daeron hit the floor, he walked over and picked up the hairbrush before returning to Arya.

“Aya!” he said as he offered the hairbrush.
“Thank you Daeron,” Arya said gently as she crouched down to take it from him. “Why are you giving me a hairbrush?”

Daeron reached out his hand to take back the brush and then he started to clumsily brush his own hair.

“Are you copying mama?” Dany kindly asked.

“I think he’s telling you to brush your hair,” Jon said as he watched Daeron.

“Why?” Arya asked.

“Because your hair is a mess,” Jon added cheekily and Arya playfully punched him in the shoulder. As if to reiterate his point, Daeron tried to give her the brush again.

“See, I told you,” Jon added as he started to laugh.

“Jon, be nice,” Dany warned. “Her hair is lovely.”

“Thank you Dany,”

“Mama!” Daeron shouted as he gave her the hairbrush. Dany took the brush from him and Daeron went over to pick up one of his toys. He picked one up and showed it to Arya and Jon smiled, it seemed that he was already smitten with her.

“I take it that everything went well at Winterfell?” Dany asked as she sat down at the desk in the room. “Actually wait, I have completely forgotten my manners. You both must be hungry after all that flying, I will tell the maids to bring an extra plate for our meal. I will have them prepare a room for you as well.”

“Thank you Dany,” Jon said. “The situation at Winterfell is under control now. Roose Bolton is dead, and his conspiracy has been exposed. What happened here whilst I was gone? Where is Caraxes?”
“Caraxes is safe. He flew back. We found the antidote and healed him,” Dany said proudly. “I left Ser Barristan in charge of the taking of the city, but we have to head back there tomorrow to tie up any loose ends and start fixing the city,” Dany said as she led them out of the room.

“I agree. Where are we eating?” Jon asked.

“The small hall at the end of the corridor. There’s too many of us to fit in our room,”

“Too many?” Jon asked in a confused voice. “Arya isn’t that big,”

“You’ll see,” Dany cryptically replied. Perhaps Ser Davos, Margaery or Shireen would be joining them for dinner as well that evening. He walked into the hall at the end of the corridor and saw that the table had only been set for two.

“Who were you going to be eating with before?” Jon asked curiously and Dany just gave him a coy smile before putting two more plates on the table.

“I think we’re having some lamb stew with some freshly made bread tonight,” Dany told them

“That looks great,” Arya said and Jon realised she probably hadn’t eaten a proper meal in weeks.

“Please take a seat, I’ll go get our guest,” Dany said smiling. Jon watched her as she pulled out a chair for Arya. Jon knew she was hiding something, she could barely hold back her smile. Even Daeron was smiling.

“What’s the secret?” he asked his son as he poked him in the stomach. “You know, don’t you? They never suspect the baby,”

“Dada!” Daeron said as he continued to giggle instead of offering up his mother’s secret.

“He’s a mommy’s boy, he won’t tell me anything,” Jon said in a teasing voice to Arya as he balanced him on his lap. Surprisingly, Daeron started to fiddle and squirm until Jon let him walk on the floor and over to Arya.
“Come on! You just met her!” Jon protested as Arya scooped him up and held him high in the air.

“He loves me already,” Arya said happily and Daeron giggled in agreement.

Jon rolled his eyes at his traitor son before turning around to see Dany return to the room. Then his mouth opened in shock

“Father,” he whispered as he sprung out of his seat. Dany was helping him into the room and he walked with the help of a cane and he wore a loose robe but he was still his father.

“Jon,” Rhaegar spoke and Jon immediately crossed over to him and hugged him.

“I’ve missed you so so much,” Jon said as he hugged him tightly.

“I know. I’ve missed you too,” Rhaegar replied.

“What happened? Can you walk?” Jon asked nervously as he looked at the cane.

“I can walk. I’ve just been out of action for a few weeks, or months as I’ve heard. I’m a bit weak, but I’m getting my strength back,”

Rhaegar pulled away and cupped his face. “I hear that you’ve been very busy whilst I was away. How many battles did I miss?”

“A few,” Jon told him. “I’ll fill you in with the details in a little bit. There is someone I’d like you to meet. Father, this is Arya, Arya this is my father.”

Jon stepped back and he saw his father’s eyes widen.

“It’s a pleasure to meet you Arya Stark,” Rhaegar said “You look just like her,”

“Just like who?” Arya asked.
“Your aunt,” Rhaegar added softly and Arya just nodded slowly. Jon remembered that several people had made this comment to her, however it probably meant a lot more coming from Rhaegar.

“Shall we eat? I know you both must be hungry,” Dany said and Jon nodded. They moved to the table, Jon sat opposite his father with Dany to his right and Arya to his left. Little Daeron tried to sit in Arya’s lap but he was called back by his mother

“Daeron come here,” she said sternly and Jon watched with an amused smile as he obediently walked over. “Good boy,” she said softly as she settled him in her lap. Then they began to eat. The stew was warm and rich and full of flavour and Jon devoured it as if he was starved. Dany soaked the bread in the stew and fed it to Daeron along with little pieces of vegetables and meat. The only person who didn’t eat quickly, was his father

“Is everything fine, father?” Jon asked nervously.

“Yes, everything is fine. Maester Cressen just warned me to eat slowly and to have smaller portions that’s all,” he said as he took a small spoonful. Jon nodded in acceptance and turned towards Arya, who was waving a carrot at Daeron.

“Go on then,” Dany said to him as she put him down. “Go play with your aunty,”

Daeron quickly walked over to her and lifted up his arms “Up,” he said and Arya picked him up to sit him in her lap. Then he reached for the spoon.

“Careful Arya,” Dany warned. “Feed him yourself, don’t let him have the spoon,”

Arya followed her instructions and fed Daeron a little bit of stew

“Aww,” she gushed “He’s adorable,”

“So Jon, what happened in Winterfell?” Dany asked and Jon quickly recounted the story.

“You burnt the First Keep?” Rhaegar asked in surprise and Jon nodded.
"It was the only way for us to survive at the time. The Bolton’s had many so many more men than us," Jon reiterated and Rhaegar nodded.

"Do all the dragons have different coloured flames?" Arya asked. "I know Vedros’s is bright green,"

"Yes. Anogar, my dragon, has a dark black flame. Whilst Caraxes has a pale golden one," Dany told her.

"You also killed the Mountain. Thank you, Jon. That monster murdered my wife and my children. Thank you for avenging them,"

"What happened in Kings Landing whilst I was gone?" Jon asked and then Dany recounted her story. Jon was impressed by her resourcefulness and skill in finding and applying the antidote to Caraxes.

"That’s amazing work, Dany," Jon said proudly as he reached out to squeeze her hand.

"What’s your plan now?" Arya asked

"Now. We have to head back to King's Landing tomorrow and start to fix the city. We have prisoners of war to meet and we need a plan for the Dornish,"

"The Dornish?" Rhaegar asked

"Yes. They allied with the false prince and fought against us," Jon informed him.

"There was a conflict in their camp though," Dany added. "Princess Arianne did not want to fight us. Whilst Prince Oberyn did,"

"I am not surprised. Oberyn was always fiercely protective of his sister. As soon as he heard that boy was pretending to be her son, nothing would have convinced him otherwise,"
“What do you think we should do, father?” Jon asked and Rhaegar scratched his chin in thought.

“Dorne has always been a difficult Kingdom. Even our ancestors could not conquer them with their dragons and their might,”

“Dorne was only brought into the Seven Kingdoms through the marriages of Prince Daeron to Princess Mariah Martell and Princess Daenerys to Prince Maron Martell.” Arya added and Daeron perked his head up at the sound of his own name. Midway through Dany’s story, he had seemingly fallen asleep on Arya, but apparently he had been faking. Arya just softly stroked his hair and Daeron put his head down again.

“Yes, that’s right Arya,” Rhaegar said with a smile. “Now obviously, I don’t think a betrothal will work here seeing as Daeron is still only a little boy and the Martell’s don’t have a daughter of his age but I do think we should remember that lesson,”

“I have an idea,” Dany said quietly. “I’ll run it by you later Jon, it’s getting late now,”

Jon nodded slowly before standing up and stretching, suddenly noticing how tired he was. He had been to Winterfell and Kings Landing, all in one day.

“I’ll put him to bed,” Dany said as she took Daeron from Arya. “Jon will show you to your room,”

“Father, will you be fine?” Jon asked and thankfully Rhaegar nodded. He slowly rose to his feet and using his cane, showed that he was able to walk.

“Goodnight son,” he said with a smile. Jon however insisted on following him to his room and making sure he was settled in for the night. Once he was sure his father was fine, he headed back to his room, undressed and he was asleep by the time his head hit the pillow.

The Mother of Dragons

The next day, Daenerys and Jon flew to Kings Landing. They left Daeron with Arya whose infectious enthusiasm meant that she had immediately gained Daeron’s friendship. Dany was not worried about her, Margaery and Shireen were on hand to help out with Daeron if there was any need. They would all be travelling to Kings Landing today. Margaery would meet her family again and Daeron would see their new home.
Once the dragons had landed, they met with Ser Barristan outside of the city before travelling the rest of the way by horse.

“Your grace, I hope that all is well in Winterfell?” he asked Jon who nodded in response.

“Yes, Ser Barristan. We’d like an update on the city please,”

“Of course your grace. The city is yours. I led the Unsullied into the city whilst Ser Loras led a group of men to the Red Keep to round up the remains of the old regime. He has been successful on that endeavour. The Princess Arianne Martell has been found as well as other members of his small council. Ser Loras found Lord Renly Baratheon locked in the dungeons, his story is that he was a hostage and he was used as leverage to get them into the city. Prince Oberyn Martell's corpse has been found as well. The Silent Sisters have his body and are preparing it to be returned to his family in Dorne as is tradition. Jon Connington is being treated for his wounds,”

“What of the spymaster, Varys?” Daenerys asked.

“There has been no sign of him, your grace. Lord Varys has always been elusive and no one knows the secret passages and tunnels better than him. However, we will find him. No one has left the city, either by land or by ship,”

Dany was unhappy with this, the last thing that she needed was for the Spymaster to escape and to continue his plotting. However, she had faith in Ser Barristan.

“Ghost!” Jon said happily as he spotted his wolf. Ghost and Nymeria slowly approached, it seemed they had been hunting together. Dany bent down to scratch him behind the ears and she was rewarded with a quick lick.

“Arya isn’t here,” Jon told the second wolf. “She’ll return in a few days,” Nymeria didn’t seem particularly bothered by this and Jon quickly stood up to mount his horse once again.

“Are you ready?” he asked and she nodded, and together they rode into the city. They entered through the Dragongate with Ser Barristan leading the way and the direwolves trotting along behind. As Dany looked up into the clear blue sky she could see that the dragons had returned and they were flying above.

She saw that the soldiers from the Reach were in the streets handing out boxes of food to the small folk as per her instructions. They smiled and thanked the men and Dany saw children playing in the
streets. They slowed the pace of their horses and some of the people recognised her by her silver hair and they even waved to her.

Dany smiled and waved back. Soon word spread, and their ride to the Red Keep slowed to a walking pace as the streets were filled with people all trying to get a look at them.

“Your grace. This is not safe,” Ser Barristan said. “I do not have enough men to protect you,”

“We will be fine,” Jon said from his horse. “Nothing will get past the wolves,”

Dany nodded in agreement and then turned around, she saw Nymeria, but not Ghost.

“Jon, where is Ghost?” Dany asked and she saw Jon immediately turn around to look for his wolf.

“He’ll be somewhere nearby,” Jon said reassuringly and Dany nodded. He had a special connection with Ghost, he would not be too far.

They continued to greet people as they made their slow progress through the city. They passed underneath the Dragonpit before slowly making their way up Aegon’s high hill where the Red Keep was waiting for them. Dany could see the seven huge towers stretching up into the sky. The crowd had started to thin out by this point and this meant that they made much faster progress.

They passed through the thick curtain walls, across the long drawbridge that spanned the outer moat and found a welcoming party awaiting them on the other side, led by Ser Loras and Missandei.

“Your graces,” her friend said with a smile. “Welcome to the Red Keep,”

“We have secured the castle. We have several highborn prisoners that we have put in the dungeons and Princess Arianne Martell is in the maidenvault,”

“Fantastic work, Ser Loras,” Jon said as he offered his hand. “Did you lose many men taking the castle?”
“No. We had several injuries, but the castles defenders tried to loot what they could before fleeing,"

“Missandei. Is the castle ready for the arrival of the Prince and the ladies from Dragonstone?”

“Yes, your grace. The nursery is ready and the King’s chambers are being cleaned as we speak. We have not had the time to prepare the Queen’s chambers as of yet,”

Dany frowned until she realised that not all Kings would have slept with their wives.

“The Queen’s chambers is not a priority, Jon and I will share,” she told her friend who bowed and nodded. Then Dany turned to Jon,

“I’d like to speak with Princess Arianne first,” she said and Jon nodded in agreement. “Take us to the Maidenvault,” she commanded. They were led by Ser Barristan, who knew the castle well. He provided them with a quick tour, taking time to point out the important places in the castle. He told them the direction of Maegor’s holdfast, the throne room as well as the Tower of the Hand, the White Sword Tower and the dungeons.

“I always thought that it would be bigger,” Jon said as they made their way through the stone halls.

“What do you mean?” she inquired.

“The castle. I thought it would be much bigger. I’m not sure its bigger than Winterfell to be honest,” he quietly added. Dany nodded and continued on in silence. She did however notice that like Dragonstone, this castle had been designed to honour the dragons. She saw door handles that had dragons designed into them. The three headed dragon of House Targaryen had been carved into the pale red walls and they even saw several soldiers bringing old dragon skulls out from the dungeons.

The Maidenvault was a tower found behind the royal sept in the Red Keep. They entered through two large wooden doors and Dany was impressed with what she saw. The apartments looked spacious and suitable for a highborn prisoner.

Princess Arianne was guarded by two men at the top of the tower. Her room was large and had a view of the fields to the North of Kings Landing as well as the Blackwater Bay itself. She had a jug of wine and some fruits at her table. Princess Arianne wore a long olive green dress that showed little cleavage, but still hug tightly to her form. She was an attractive woman, there was no doubt about
“Queen Daenerys, King Aegon,” she said in a polite voice. “Welcome to my modest chambers,”

“Your husband is dead,” Jon said in a flat voice.

“I know,” she replied without a hint of emotion which surprised Daenerys.

“He thought that he could fight against your dragons, he was a foolish boy,” Arianne said as she sat down to pour herself some wine. “I saw parts of the battle from my window,”

“What exactly did you see?” Jon asked.

“Bright bouts of flame at first. Everyone looked like little ants from up here. Ants dancing with dragons,” she said as she took a sip of wine. “Tell me. Did you kill him yourself? Did he have a good death?”

“He tried to ride a dragon and then he burned. There is little left of him,” Jon told her. Dany watched her carefully as Jon spoke. Again, she showed no real emotion or sadness that her husband was gone. Either she was a good actor, or she truly held no real love for him.

That would explain why she was so eager to cut ties with him when they met earlier. It was starting to make sense now.

“He believed that he could ride a dragon?” Princess Arianne asked as she raised an eyebrow in surprise. “Silly boy. Silly, silly, boy. He truly believed that he was a Targaryen,”

“Did you know that he was not?” Dany asked and the Dornish Princess scoffed in response.

“Do you take me for a fool? This boy arrived in Dorne claiming to be Elia’s son. Everyone knows that the Mountain killed Elia’s true child, this boy was nothing but a pretender. Probably a boywhore that the fool Connington found in Lys,”
“Connington did not find him. The Spymaster Varys was the one behind this plot,” Daenerys replied. Arianne gave her a surprised look.

“Then why did you marry him?” Jon asked.

“I did not have a choice in the matter. My father told me to do it,”

“Why?” Jon asked. “What would he have gained?”

“If he was successful and he held onto the throne, Westeros would have a Dornish Queen, as we should have had, if Elia had not been murdered,”

“And if he was not. You were instructed to cut ties with him and head back to Dorne?” Daenerys added, she was beginning to understand their plan now. Arianne looked at her and nodded.

“So, why did your Uncle side with Aegon when you wanted to leave? What happened there?” Daenerys asked.

“My Uncle loved Elia dearly. He still feels anger over her death and this boy was his chance to avenge her. You will have to ask him for yourself,”

“We can’t ask him anything,” Jon replied.

“Is Oberyn dead?” Princess Arianne asked and for the first time Dany saw emotion cross her face, she seemed genuinely upset at the death of her Uncle.

“He died on the battlefield. His remains will be sent back to Sunspear,” Dany told her and she slowly nodded.

“What about me? Will I be sent back to Dorne?”

“You will remain in the capital and act as our advisor on matters concerning Dorne. We have learned that under the previous regime, Dorne was not really part of the Seven Kingdoms and we want to
change that," Dany told her

“Well as your Dornish advisor, I can tell you that keeping me here against my will is a bad idea,”

“We know that it will complicate our relations with House Martell, but your actions have caused these circumstances. We had offered you the chance to bend the knee and join House Targaryen and you not only declined it but Dornish forces fought for the false Prince against us. We will not let that go unpunished,” Jon told her.

“Despite your initial refusal to bend the knee, it seems that you at least, had intentions to do so. I have not forgotten that either. As a result, you will write to your father and tell him that he is required to come to Kings Landing to swear fealty to us as the rightful rulers of Westeros. After he does that, you will stay behind and remain in the capital as an advisor,”

“How long do you intend for me to be advising you?” she asked

“Until we are assured that Dorne has integrated itself fully with the rest of Westeros,” Dany told her. “Princess Arianne. Take this seriously, if you are willing to work with us, this arrangement does not have to be difficult and your time in the capital can be an enjoyable and productive experience,”

“We also have a peace offer. Princess Elia Martell and her children were murdered by the monster known as Ser Gregor Clegane. My husband has slain Gregor Clegane and we have his rather large
bones to prove it. With the death of the Mountain, we are one step closer to avenging the death of Princess Elia and her children,”

Princess Arianne regarded her coolly for a moment.

“The Mountain’s bones may appease my family for a few moments, but the death of Oberyn at your hand will destroy any good will that the Mountain’s demise would have earned you in Dorne’s eyes.”

“Prince Oberyn died on the battlefield,” Jon pointed out but Princess Arianne just shrugged in response.

“He is dead at your hand, that is how my family will see it. That is how his daughters will see it,”

“Is that a threat?” Dany asked as she raised her eyebrow.

“Consider it as my first piece of advice,”

“More reason to keep you here in the capital then,” Jon quickly said and Arianne just shrugged.

“I can control my family. With Oberyn gone, I am the only person that my father can turn to now. My father is not bold enough to openly wage war against the dragons, not without Oberyn pushing him. My brothers are young and naive, if my father is assured that I am safe, then I will be able to control Dorne and my cousins for you,”

Dany regarded her coolly before she slowly nodded. She would have to be very careful around her, that was for certain. She did not know her at all, but they did not have much choice in this matter. They needed some measure to control Dorne and keeping their Princess in the capital was the best measure that they had at the moment. The least they could do was give her the title of ‘advisor’ to appease Dorne’s pride.

“Very well. We will be moving you to another chamber in the castle. As lovely as the Maidenvault is, you alone can’t take up all of this space. A guard will come to escort you if you wish to see your Uncle’s body. That will be all,” Daenerys said as she rose to her feet. Jon silently followed her out of the room and they didn’t speak again until they had left the Maidenvault entirely.

“Do you think that we can trust her?” Jon asked. “What was all that stuff she mentioned about her
“I presume she means Oberyn’s daughters. Tyrion mentioned them once or twice. We will have to watch her carefully but I don’t see what other choice we have here. If we send her back to Dorne then we have no leverage against Prince Doran,”

“She did mention that her father would not push for war against us. Especially since we have dragons,”

“True. Although the situation is delicate. If we send her home, we lose any leverage that we have over Prince Doran and he can plot against us freely but if we keep her here, we risk antagonising him and giving him a spy and he still plots against us,”

“Aye, you’re probably right,” Jon said as he scratched his chin. “Better to have some leverage against him. And if Princess Arianne lets him know that she is being treated kindly, then perhaps Doran’s anger will fade,”

“Perhaps. Let’s hope so. Who shall we see next? I’d like to speak to Renly Baratheon,” Dany said and Jon nodded in agreement. Renly was Robert’s last surviving brother and Shireen’s last trueborn Baratheon relation. He had not been an active participant in the war and he currently held no lands or titles.

“I think that we should wait and see him later. We already have a plan for the Stormlands and we did not account for Renly Baratheon. I think we should wait for Father and our other advisors before we meet with him,”

“What do you have in mind?” Dany asked.

“I don’t think we should change our plans. Shireen will hold the Stormlands for us and Ser Davos will help her. However, we should speak to Shireen and Davos, find out their opinions on Renly first. That way when we meet with him, we will have a plan in mind,”

Dany nodded slowly, that sounded wise. “I agree with that. In the meantime, we can continue with the cleanup of the city, particularly removing the wildfire that has been stored. It is a miracle that nothing ignited accidentally when we took the city,”

“That sounds good. Ser Barristan, we will need an alchemist, or as many alchemists as you can find. We will need their expertise,”
“I will do my best, your graces. Although it will take me several days. We will need the streets to calm down and we will need a detailed map of the city. No one knows where Aerys hid his wildfire,” the Kingsguard replied.

“Very well, Ser Barristan. Get it started. We will explore the castle for a while,” Jon told him. The knight bowed before leaving them in the hallway.

“Where to now, my Queen?” Jon asked as he linked his arm in hers.

“I’d like to see the throne room and the Iron Throne that we have won,” Dany answered and Jon led her away. They wandered around the castle, finding the Tower of the Hand which itself contained a small hall large enough to fit over a hundred. The audience chamber had myrish rugs, with wall hangings along with a tall window that provided a great view.

Then they found the White Sword tower, home of the Kingsguard. There was a circular room with whitewashed walls and white woolen tapestries on the first floor. In the middle was a weirwood shaped like a shield and a large book in the middle of it.

“This book contains stories of all the Kingsguard knights to ever serve,” Dany said as she flicked through the pages. The book had not been updated since the end of Robert’s reign. As far as they knew, all of his Kingsguard had died on the battlefield and they still had several spaces on theirs.

“Ser Barristan will update the book when he gets time,” Jon said as he looked at the entry over her shoulder.

“He’s a very busy man,” Dany commented. “We also need another four knights to complete the seven. We already have Ser Barristan, Ser Loras and Ser Jaime. Do you have any suggestions for the other four?”

“Not really,” Jon said as he scratched his chin. “Perhaps, Ser Jorah would like the opportunity? I doubt he will ever hold Bear Island again. If not, then perhaps one of the knights who helped to kill the Mountain in the Reach, but to be honest, I haven’t given this a lot of thought. We’ve had more pressing matters,”

Dany nodded and after a few more minutes of exploring the room, they continued their self-guided tour of the castle. The last room they entered was the Great hall. The huge doors were already open and together they walked into the throne room of the Red Keep.
There were two galleries overhead which could hold more people. Torches were burning in holders on the arches that lined the wall and on the opposite end of the room, was the Iron throne itself.

“That is an ugly thing,” Jon said quietly and his thoughts echoed hers. The throne itself was made of melted swords, it looked grotesque, prickly and uncomfortable.

“Do you remember in Meereen? Where we ruled from a wooden bench?” Dany asked and she saw Jon nod.

“If you want to design a new throne for us, I agree wholeheartedly,” Jon immediately said and Dany smiled.

“What type of throne were you thinking of?” she asked,

“I was thinking of two thrones, one for me one for you. We will be ruling as equals, and two thrones will reflect that,”

“I like the idea but I want you to choose the design. Surprise me,” Dany teased as she turned to leave the throne room.

“Dany, I grew up in the North, we don’t have fancy thrones,” Jon said grumpily as they walked through the castle. They were now overlooking one of the main entrance from where they had arrived a few hours ago.

“I know, but I’m sure you’ll do a splendid job,” she said and Jon just huffed. “It’ll be good for the city as well. It’ll attract back some of the carpenters and woodworkers that left the city. We’ll certainly need them to continue the rebuild,”

She saw Jon scratch his chin before he slowly nodded “Fine. I’ll work on it.”

“Good. Now what else do we need to do today? Start sending out invitations for the coronation?”

“Aye, I believe so. To the rookery?”
“To the rookery,” Dany agreed and they headed off in that direction

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After they went to the rookery and started sending out invitations to all of the Lords of the realm for their coronation, they had a few petitions to deal with. Several homeowners had their shopfronts and homes damaged during the taking of the city. To compensate for this, they sent a few soldiers to assess the damage and to help make temporary repairs.

They also received further reports from the rest of their men in the city. During the taking of the city, all of the gates were destroyed and would have to be rebuilt. The city walls were also heavily damaged due to the heat and power of the dragonflame and extensive repairs to the city's defences would have to be carried out. This did not worry them, as they had the Iron Banks gold to finance them. Not to mention, these construction projects would provide jobs for those without and it would help the transition from war back into peacetime.

After that, they re-entered the main courtyard. The ship from Dragonstone had arrived around an hour or so earlier and their carriage was finally pulling into the courtyard itself. The door swung open and Margaery was the first one out, carrying a sleeping Daeron in her arms.

“Your grace,” she said with a smile and soon as she saw her.

“Margaery,” Dany replied as she opened her arms to take her son. “Is he fine? He doesn’t usually sleep this early in the day,”

“He is fine. Just tired. Lady Arya was playing games with him all throughout the boat journey and she must have tired him out,” Dany chuckled as she spied Arya on the back of her chestnut mare. She did not ride in the carriage with the others.

“How was the trip?” Dany asked,

“The seas were calm, your grace. Your belongings and chests are being brought up to the castle as well,” Margaery told her. “Are my father and brother here?”

“Your father is here and I believe your brother is in the castle, guarding Lord Renly,” Margaery gave her a knowing glance before quickly walking past her to envelope her father in a hug. Dany smiled,
it was nice to see them reunited once again.

Rhaegar was next out of the carriage. He wore a simple black pants with a red and black doublet with the sigil of their house woven into the black side with red thread.

“I have not seen this castle for over 15 years and it has not changed a bit,” Rhaegar said as he walked over to her. He still used the stick for balance.

“It is good to see you brother, although I am sure you’ll find something different,” Dany told him. Rhaegar was about to reply, but they were interrupted by Ser Barristan

“Oh your grace. My prince,” he said as he bowed. “It is good to see you Prince Rhaegar, I must confess, I feared the worst after I saw you fall.”

“My friend, it seems that I am a hard man to kill,” Rhaegar replied as he smiled at Ser Barristan who didn’t return it.

“It seems you aren’t the only one,” he said as his expression turned grave. “Lord Jon Connington is alive, and he is our prisoner. He was part of the false prince’s council,”

Rhaegar’s face grew dark when he heard these words and this was one of the rare times she had seen her brother angry.

“Take me to him,” he said in a low deep voice and Ser Barristan quickly complied and led him away.

“Where is he going?” Jon asked as he finally arrived.

“To see Jon Connington,” Dany told him. “Come on, we’ll wait for him inside, he’ll know where to find us,”

Now with Daeron safely tucked up in her arms, they made their way through the castle and into Maegor’s holdfast, the inner part of the castle. It was a square fortress, with thick tall walls and a dry moat separating it from the rest of the keep.
They crossed the bridge and entered an entrance hall with several doors leading off it. At the opposite end was a huge pair of oak doors with bright bronze door handles. A chandelier with over a hundred candles hung from the ceiling. Infront of them, was a grand staircase that led off to a balcony with seemingly more rooms attached to them.

“I take it we have to go up the stairs,” Jon said quietly and Dany nodded. Together, they climbed the polished steps towards the top floor. Then they headed left along another well lit corridor towards a set of doors guarded by their Unsullied. They uncrossed their spears and then nodded to let them past.

On the other side of the doors, were the King’s chambers. The room itself had an antechamber, with several other doors. On the floor of the antechamber was a mosaic of the three headed dragon made in red and black tiles, judging from the marks on the floor, Dany could tell that it had been covered with a carpet for several years. One door led to a private solar and another door led to the main bedroom. Inside the bedroom was a large double bed, big enough fit five people.

There were myrish rugs on the floor and there were twin hearths in the room which meant that the room was pleasantly warm. Along one wall was a large gold tinted round window and on the other side there was a door to a balcony that looked out over the city and the fields beyond.

She gently put Daeron on the bed to continue his nap but surprisingly he immediately sat up. Dany laughed at his blurry eyed face. He looked uncertainly around at his new surroundings and then back at her.

“Hello Daeron, this is our new home,” she told him as he rubbed his eyes.

“We need to find somewhere for him to sleep,” Jon said as he looked around the room. “Unlike Dragonstone, there doesn’t appear to be a nursery attached to the room,”

“I’m sure we can convert a room for him. For now, we can put a crib in the room. Although I imagine, soon enough he’ll need to start sleeping in his own bed,” Dany said as she gently stroked his hair.

She watched as Jon walked around the room, opening and closing the doors and drawers that he found. As he did this, Daeron slowly started to wake up.

“Mama, where Aya?” he asked as he looked around the room.
“Arya isn’t here, little one,” she told him. Daeron looked up at her and then around the room, almost as if he was trying to find her himself. “You can play with Arya later but first mama has some important news,”

This caught Jon’s attention and he quickly turned around to look at her.

“News?” he asked and Dany smiled and nodded. She picked Daeron up and sat him in her lap so that he was facing her.

“In a few months, you’re going to have a little brother or sister,” she told him with a smile.

“Sister?” Daeron repeated and Dany nodded. She watched as he pondered the word.

“Or a brother Daeron,” Jon reminded him as he sat next to her on the bed. “A little brother or sister for you to watch over and protect. Can you do that?”

“Sister,” Daeron repeated and then Dany saw him smile.

“I think that he feels I’m going to have a girl, and I agree,” Dany told Jon.

“What makes you say that?”

“I don’t know. It feels different to when I had Daeron, that’s why I think she’ll be a girl,”

“Sister!” Daeron repeated, almost as if he was voting.

“Yes, I agree, a little sister for you. That sounds nice doesn’t it?”

“Well, we will love whatever baby we have. Whether it’s a boy or girl.” Jon chimed in.

“I agree,” Dany added and then they sealed it with a kiss.
Rhaegar followed Ser Barristan through the dark hallways that led down to the dungeons. The dungeons were beneath a squat round tower and they had four layers to it. The top level had cells with high windows for common criminals. The second level had personal cells without windows for highborn captives. The third level contained the black cells. Smaller cells with wooden doors so no light could enter. The lowest level contained cells used for torture, many of his father’s enemies found themselves in those cells.

Jon Connington was being held in the third level.

Rhaegar felt betrayed. Connington had been his friend whilst they were growing up, and yet he had sided with their enemies. Enemies that had tried to harm the dragons that were a symbol of their house.

“In here my Prince,” Ser Barristan told him as they stopped outside a wooden door. “You will need a lantern, and I will wait outside,”

Rhaegar nodded, took the lantern, then headed inside the dark, cold cell. He held the lantern high in the air to provide as much light as he could to the room.

“Who’s there?” he heard a voice ask. Connington’s voice hadn’t changed, it sounded slightly raspy, but Rhaegar could still tell who it was.

“Me,” was all he replied as he cast the light over Connington. He saw his old friend lying against one wall, he had several bandages over a wound he had along his side. His hair was long and untidy and his face looked old and leathered.

“My Prince,” he whispered as he saw him. He began to struggle towards him but Rhaegar stopped him.

“Don’t move,” Rhaegar told him his voice cold and harsh and then Connington flinched.

“My Prince?” he asked as he looked up at him with piercing eyes
“What were you thinking?” Rhaegar angrily asked and Jon was taken aback.

“What do you mean?”

“Supporting that boy. That imposter. He was claiming to be my son, how could you fall for that?”

“He was your son. Varys told me. He told me that he saved him,” Connington stuttered.

“You believed Varys?” Rhaegar asked as he shook his head. “I thought that you were smarter than that. I thought you were smart enough to see through the Spider's lies,”

“Why would he lie?” Jon asked,

“Because he is a schemer and a manipulator. This boy was not my son, he was the son of Varys’s friend, a cheesemonger in Pentos. A Blackfyre. A fraud,” Rhaegar repeated.

“A Blackfyre?” Connington asked “That doesn’t make sense. They're all dead?”

However Rhaegar ignored him, he did not have time to explain it all to him.


He tried to remain angry but it soon faded and he quickly looked away.

“They are my family, the only family that I have left and you tried to kill them,” he repeated, his voice heavy with hurt and pain.

“I didn’t know,” Connington uttered.
“Lies! You met with them. You heard what they had to say and yet you still tried to kill them. How could you do that?”

Connington had no answer to that, he just hung his head.

“What will happen to me?” he asked after a few moments. “Will you leave me here to die?”

“No,” Rhaegar said quietly. “They will want to execute you for what you did, but I won’t let that happen. Instead, you will serve out your days at the Wall,”

“The Wall? You mean to send me to that barren wasteland?” Connington asked in disbelief. “I’d rather you kill me,”

“No. Death is too merciful. You can be of use at the Wall,”

“Use of what? Guarding the realm against wildlings?” he scoffed

“This is not up for debate. Once you have recovered from your injuries, you will be sent to the Wall. That is all,” Rhaegar said with a tone of finality. He dropped the lantern and began to leave the room, he was nearly out of the door when Connington spoke again,

“I am sorry. All I wanted was to sit your son on the throne. I failed you once in the rebellion, I just wanted to do this one thing for you. That’s all I wanted. Please, you have to forgive me,” he said quietly.

Rhaegar froze but then slowly started to shake his head. He may have believed he had good intentions, but his actions were anything but good.

“I don’t think I will ever be able to forgive you for this betrayal,” and with that, he left the room.

**The Dragon King**
They had been settled in Kings Landing for over a month now and the day of their coronation was here. Kings Landing was slowly recovering. The richer upper class had started to return to the city after fleeing during the end of Robert’s reign. The repairs to the city had been going well. Most of the fire damage had been repaired and only 2 of the 7 gates still needed to be fixed.

They were in their dressing room getting ready for the day. Now that they were in Kings Landing, Daenerys had her full assortment of ladies to help her dress. Missandei and Irri had helped her dress for the day but before that she dressed Daeron. As they no longer had to travel, Dany could spend as much time as she wanted to with him. She gave him his bath every morning and night and she always fed and dressed him.

Today, she had managed to coax him into his own little outfit for the occasion. He wore a red and black doublet with black pants and she had even managed to brush his hair back so it was nice and tidy. Jon looked at him as he sat on the edge of the bed, patiently waiting. Every so often, he would fiddle with his collar and Jon knew it would be a task to keep him fully dressed for the entire day.

“I know, she takes a long time,” he said to him as he sat next to him. Daeron just pointed at the floor.

“Ghost,” he said simply as he pointed towards the direwolf.

“Yes. Is Ghost a wolf?”

“Woof,” Daeron told him as he nodded and Jon smiled.

“Wolf,”

“Woof,” Daeron repeated and Jon decided to let him have it. As he grew older, his pronunciation would improve.

“Are you excited? You get to meet more of your family today,” Jon told him. The Starks had arrived the day before and Daeron was yet to meet them. “You get to meet Uncle Robb and Aunty Sansa. They’re Arya’s brother and sister,”

“Arya?” Daeron asked as his eyes lit up. He started to bounce on the bed excitedly. “Where Arya?”

“We will see Arya later. We have to do something first,” he told his son and at that moment the
double doors connecting their rooms swung opened and in walked Daenerys.

She wore a full length dark red gown that hugged her form tightly and showed off the small, but noticeable bump in her stomach. It looked like there were little jewels that had been embroidered into the dress to give it a glittery effect. She wore a thin gold headband in her silver hair that fell all the way to her shoulders. Her hair had been brushed so that it shone brightly like molten silver and she wore gilded sandals on her feet and golden bracelets encrusted with amethysts around her wrists.

“Mama!” Daeron said excitedly as he slid off the bed to run towards her. Dany quickly crouched down to scoop him up.

“There’s my handsome boy,” she said as she picked him up.

“Mama! Mama pretty,” Daeron told her and Dany blushed before turning to him.

“Did you tell him to say that?” she asked.

“Maybe, but it’s still true, you look beautiful my love,” he said as he stood up to give her a kiss.

“I am such lucky Queen to have a King as handsome as you,” she said as she broke apart. Jon was wearing the finest silks that they had. The cloth was smooth and seemed to move through his fingers like water. It was so light and soft that it felt like he was wearing nothing at all. He was dressed in the colors of House Targaryen, complete with his sword strapped to his waist.

“Are you ready?” Jon asked and she nodded. They would be holding their coronation in the Great Sept of Baelor as was tradition, then returning to the castle for the celebration and the feasts and dancing.

They held hands as their made their way through the castle and out towards the main courtyard. Tyrion stood waiting for them, he had finally turned up in Kings Landing a few weeks prior, bringing his tale of misery from Casterly Rock. They had immediately agreed to grant Jaime’s request for an extended break as he mourned those tragic events.

He stood in the middle of the yard in a wearing a black shirt and pants, with his pin of office in place on his chest.
“Your graces. It’s a beautiful day,” he said in greeting and Jon nodded.

“Aye, makes a change from all the rain that we’ve been having,” Jon commented and Tyrion turned to little Daeron who was still perched in Dany’s arms.

“Hello my Prince,” he said and Daeron looked at him for a moment before giving him a little wave which brought a smile to Tyrion’s face.

Then Jon turned to Ser Barristan and Ser Loras, who were proudly wearing their new Kingsguard armour. Their white armour shone magnificently in the sunlight, their jewelled blades tucked securely at their waist. Ser Barristan’s armor had special gold pieces added to it to signify his status as the Lord Commander, whilst Ser Loras’s armor had golden roses crafted into the metal at the shoulders to represent his house. Jon liked these personal touches, Tobho Mott and Gendry had done sterling work.

“Your graces. We are ready to proceed to the Great Sept of Baelor to begin the coronation. Will you be taking the carriage?” Ser Barristan asked and Dany shook her head.

“No. The Dothraki women spend all their lives riding, even when they are pregnant or nursing a newborn. Daeron and I can handle a short horse ride to the Sept,” she said confidently. Ser Barristan nodded and then motioned for a stable boy to come over with her horse. It was a silver mare, like she had in Essos. Jon watched as she handed Daeron to Missandei before swiftly mounting the horse and then taking him up in her arms again. She held the reigns with one hand and Daeron in the other. She raised a questioning eyebrow at him and Jon quickly took the hint and climbed onto his black horse and rode next to her.

Ser Barristan was in the lead, Rhaegar and Tyrion were behind them and Dany’s handmaidens were behind them. Finally bringing up the rear were Ser Loras and Ghost. As they did not have a complete Kingsguard, they chose Aggo and Jhoqo to fill out extra positions as part of their guard along with several members of their Unsullied such as Greyworm and Stalwart Shield.

Their procession slowly started to move out of the castle courtyard and into the city streets. Tyrion had advertised this day saying that it would be a day of festivities after more troubled times and as a result, the streets were lined with people eager to get a look at their King and Queen.

As soon as they saw them, they started to wave and shout and point and Jon smiled and waved in return. He saw little children sitting on their parent’s shoulders as they tried to get a look at them. Jon
suspected that Tyrion had done some work and told the people of some of their good works and perhaps this was what helped to fuel this excitement and good will. Perhaps, it was the presence of his father, who was still remembered fondly in Kings Landing.

He turned to his right and saw Daenerys was carefully waving to the crowd. However, poor little Daeron looked a little awestruck. His little hands were tightly holding onto her dress as he stared at all these people that he hadn’t seen before. Perhaps, it would have been better if he rode in a carriage after all. Still, they could not change their decision now, he would just have to keep a careful eye on him throughout the rest of the journey.

A shadow passed overhead and Jon looked up into the sky to see that all three of the dragons had arrived. Caraxes was recovering slowly, Rhaegar said that he was not as quick or as agile as he was before but they still hoped he would make a full recovery.

The dragons had seemingly all chosen to stay behind on Dragonstone. Jon did not mind this, the Dragonpit was still a ruin and likely couldn’t hold their dragons anyway. The dragons ducked and weaved through the air much to the amusement of the people below. They released a few short bouts of flame before flying off over the bay once again.

Jon continued to wave to the crowd as they made their slow procession towards the Sept which was located on Visenya’s hill. The white marble plaza was filled with nobles that had travelled to the city to witness this event. The Sept itself was an impressive marble domed structure with seven large crystal towers. It reminded him of the temple of the Lord of Light that they had seen in Volantis, although it was nowhere near as big.

There was a large raised marble pulpit from where the Septon could stand and address the crowd and this is where the ceremony would take place. A path had been cleared for them and they dismounted their horses before slowly making their way down the aisle to the front.

As they walked down the aisle, he saw the Starks near the front left and the Tyrells to the right. He saw members of Houses Redwyne, Mooton, Darry, Whent, Rowan, Tarly in the audience. He saw Asha Greyjoy and then Willas and Garlan Tyrell.

Ser Barristan took up his position of vigil just below the steps. Dany handed Daeron to Missandei before they continued to the top.

“My King, My Queen,” the High Septon said in greeting as he met them. He was an old man, with a thin white beard and a small crystal crown on his head. “Shall we begin?”
Jon looked towards Dany, squeezed her hand and then nodded.

“People of Westeros. We thank you for gathering here today to witness this historic event. We are here to officially begin the reign of Queen Daenerys of House Targaryen and King Aegon of Houses Stark and Targaryen. The gods have seen fit to grant them with the power of dragons and the ability to restore House Targaryen to the throne. Over three hundred years ago, Aegon the Conqueror was blessed in Oldtown and now his descendants will be blessed here in the city that he created,”

“May the Father help you, so that you rule justly and fairly. May the Mother bless you with her mercy and more heirs. May the Smith give you strength to carry this heavy burden. May the Crone show you the path that you should walk, and guide you throughout this journey. In the light of the seven, I now proclaim you. Aegon and Daenerys, King and Queen of the Andals and the first men. Lord and Lady of the Seven Kingdoms,”

With that, he placed their crowns on their heads.

“Long may they reign!” he shouted.

“Long may they reign!” the crowd chanted in return and then they all broke out into applause. The dragons roared and screeched overhead as they shot their flame and Daeron wrestled free of Missandei’s grasp to run up the stairs into Dany’s arms.

Jon looked down at the crowd and smiled. He saw Robb, Sansa, Arya and Ned all clapping for them. He saw the Tyrells and the Darrys also clapping in their section. He looked towards Dany and gave her a gentle kiss, which earned them another loud round of applause.

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After the coronation, they returned to the Red keep for more feasts and celebrations. Dany had changed into a different gown, a deep plum purple that highlighter her eyes. She said it would be simpler for her to move about it. Over 500 guests had been invited to these celebrations, but the festivities were spread throughout the city. They made sure that no one would go to bed with an empty stomach tonight.

The feasts took place in the gardens as it was a sunny afternoon day. Jon and Dany sat at on an elevated dais with everyone spread out around them. There was roast boar, honeyed chicken, stewed
lamb, fish stew, sweet pumpkin soup, bread, sausages and bacon along with apples, oranges and strawberries. Lord Redwyne had also brought several barralels of his finest Arbour Gold to go along with the sweet wine that they already had served. It was a magnificent spread of food and Jon could only manage two plates before he felt full.

That was not the same for Dany and Daeron, who seemed to be trying a little bit of everything. Dany sat him in her lap and fed him little pieces from her plate.

“I’m eating for two now,” she reminded him as she quickly took another bite of her chicken. Jon just smiled and looked the other way. Daeron seemed to have perked up again, he ate whatever his mother ate and he was happily laughing and smiling. Jon laughed at the little facial expressions he made when he found something that he didn’t like. He was not a fan of the pumpkin soup but both he and Dany loved the stewed lamb.

He decided then it was time for Daeron to meet his family. He led them off their dais and towards the Stark table where they were all eating and drinking.

“Hello everyone,” he said in greeting. “This is Daeron and Dany,”

Sansa immediately rose to her feet and performed a perfect courtesy before Dany gently told her off and offered her a hug. Sansa smiled before gratefully returning it.

“Daeron, this is your Aunty Sansa. Do you want to say hello?” Dany asked. Sansa held her arms out and surprisingly Daeron went into them.

“Aw. He’s so cute,” Sansa said as she held him. “He looks just like you Daenerys. Although, he has Jon’s eyes and nose,”

“Arya!” Daeron said excitedly as he saw her. His face stretched into a wide smile and Jon watched as he wriggled free of Sansa’s grasp and over towards Arya. Arya picked him up and sat him in her lap and poked his nose.

“Hello Daeron. This is my brother Robb. He is your uncle,” Arya told him. Daeron looked at Robb for a few moments before he turned his attention towards Arya again.

“I think that’s it for him now,” Jon said. “I promised him that he would play with Arya later and I
don’t think he’ll look at anyone else for the rest of the evening,”

Arya however seemed to have other ideas.

“Daeron, can you wave to Robb? Like this?” she asked as she demonstrated. Daeron looked at her hand, and then he quickly copied her.

“How about my father. Wave to Uncle Ned?” Arya asked and she showed him what to do and again Daeron copied. “Good boy,” Arya told him as she gave him a kiss on his cheek.

“Careful Arya. Don’t get him too excited otherwise you’ll be the one who chases him around here,” Jon warned her but Arya waved him away.

“I’ll be fine, Jon. Daeron never gives me any trouble,” she said as she tickled him. Jon did not have time to reprimand her further because at that moment, the musicians started to play and it was time to dance.

Truthfully, Jon had not been looking forward to this part of the day, the last thing he wanted to do was to embarrass himself here. However, Dany gave him a reassuring smile and together they entered the middle of the dancefloor. Jon knew that everyone was watching them as they slowly waltzed however he only had eyes for her. He had one hand on her hip and he held her other hand in hers. It was a slower tune, and Jon was very careful with his feet.

“Have you been sneaking out to have dancing lessons?” she whispered as he led her across the floor.

“No why?”

“You’re very good,”

“No, I’m not. You’re just leading me,” Jon returned and as to prove his point, she started to twirl and he automatically helped her through it.

“See, you’re a natural,” she teased. Jon just smirked and kissed her. Then more people entered the dancefloor to dance as the band moved to a more faster song. He saw Robb and Sansa. Loras and
Margaery. Missandei was with Grey Worm. Shireen and Ser Davos. Arya was even spinning around with Daeron in her arms, much to his amusement.

As the song changed again, so did the partners. Jon ended up with Sansa whilst Robb was dancing with Dany.

“Is that Margaery Tyrell in the pretty olive dress?” Sansa asked.

“Yes. Do you know her?”

“I met her once. Years ago really, during the Hand's tourney,”

“Oh,” Jon said as they continued to dance.

“I’ve noticed Robb looking in her direction a few too many times today,”

“Oh,” Jon said quietly as he glanced at Robb, however he seemed to be busy trying to keep up with Dany. “Should I introduce them?”

Sansa laughed lightly at that. “Yes, that would be nice. Before Robb makes a fool out of himself,”

“Robb won’t do that. Robb is great with women,” Jon said as he remembered their childhood at Winterfell.

“Are you sure about that? Because right now, Robb is starstruck by the most beautiful woman here. Well second most, the most beautiful is your wife,”

“Thank you Sansa,”

“I mean it, Jon. I’m so happy for you. You have a wife and an amazing little boy and you seem happy. I’m truly sorry for how I treated you when we were younger. I hope that you can forgive me and accept me into your life,”
Jon looked at her and then smiled. “Of course, I can Sansa,”

The song came to an end and he placed a kiss on her forehead and he headed off to his table before he could get dragged out for another song. At the last moment, he saw Robb and quickly pulled him over to an empty table on the side. From this position, they could see the people dancing.

“This is a grand celebration,” Robb said as they sat down to take a drink of wine. “Your grace,” he added and Jon punched him in the arm.

“You don’t have to call me that,” Jon said as he took a sip of summerwine. “Lord Stark,“

“I am not Lord Stark,“

“Not yet but you will be one day,”

“It’s a little ironic. Father always said that one day you would be my bannerman and I will rule the North with your help. Now one day I’m going to help you hold the Seven Kingdoms,”

“Aye,” Jon said quietly. “How are things in the North?”

“Things are getting better. We marched and took the Dreadfort. Roose is dead, as is Ramsey,”

“Good,” Jon said as he took another drink of wine. They watched the people dance and he did notice that every few moments, Robb’s eyes would land on Margaery.

“Her name is Margaery by the way,” he casually mentioned as he took a sip. “And if I’ve noticed you staring at her, then she, definitely, has,”

Robb contorted his face for a few moments before he frowned.

“Was I really that obvious?”
“I didn’t notice until Sansa told me, but Margaery is very perceptive. I’ve noticed that about her,”

“Do you know her?”

“She was on Dragonstone for several months during the war. Daeron loves her, he calls her Magey,”
Jon told him.

“What’s she like?”

“She’s nice. Very perceptive and she’s smarter than she lets on,” Jon told her. “Although, you’d find
out what she was actually like if you spoke to her. Be careful though, her grandmother has a sharp
tongue,”

“Her Grandmother?” Robb asked in surprise. “Wait,”

“Come on, I’ll introduce you now,” Jon said as he quickly jumped to his feet to forestall the question.
He saw Margaery talking to her brother Loras over by the fountain and he briskly walked over to
them.

“Ser Loras, Lady Margaery. This is my brother, Robb,” he said with a smile.

“It’s nice to meet you, Lord Robb,” Loras said as he gave him a firm handshake. Jon stole a glance at
Margaery who had a smirk across her face.

“Lady Margaery. It is a pleasure to meet you,” Robb said with his most charming smile.

“Ser Loras, I believed the Queen needed your services,” Jon said weakly. He probably should have
come up with a better excuse because that one didn’t fool Loras for a second.

“Go ahead, Loras. I’m sure Lord Robb will keep me company until you return. Perhaps, he can tell
me of all the wonders of the Northernmost Kingdom,” Margaery said airly and Jon bit back a laugh
at Robb’s hopeless expression.
“It was nice to meet you Lord Robb, perhaps we can spar together sometime?” Ser Loras asked and Robb nodded. Jon led Ser Loras away and he quickly searched his brain for some pretext as to why Dany would need him, however he ran out of time because he nearly bumped into her.

“Your grace. We were just looking for you,” Loras said with a smile.


“The King said that you needed my services?” Ser Loras asked innocently and Dany gave him a questioning look. She glanced back in the direction they came from and then she understood.

“Why did I need Ser Loras, Jon?” Dany asked as she stood next to Ser Loras, she had decided to prolong his suffering. They both looked at him patiently before Dany broke out laughing.

“Never take up lying, you are terrible at it Jon,” she teased.

“As a matter of a fact, your grace. I must get back to my duty. I believe that I am supposed to be guarding the Prince for the rest of the evening,”

“Prince Daeron will be fine, Ser Loras. He has two Direwolves and a very protective Aunty. Enjoy yourself tonight. You’ve worked hard. Don’t worry about Ser Barristan either, we’ll let him know that we gave you the evening off,” Dany kindly told him. Ser Loras bowed in thanks before heading off in his own direction.

“How is your evening going?” Jon asked as they took a seat on a chair. Dany decided to settle herself in his lap with half her body to him. From this position they could see the rest of the garden and the sun slowly set across the horizon. The dragons could be seen off in the distance and Jon knew that when night fell, they would fly over to provide their own brand of entertainment.

“It’s going well. I’ve invited Sansa to have cakes with me and the ladies tomorrow. I think that I’ll invite her to stay at court for a while, if that’s fine with you?”

“Sansa staying is fine. She’ll get to spend some more time with Daeron as well,”
“Good. Marge and I will also be heading out to the orphanages and homeless shelters tomorrow to help distribute the leftovers from today’s feast. What will you be doing?”

“I’ll probably watch them spar for a while in the morning, then I think I’ll head out with Ser Davos to see the new armor shop that Tobho Mott is opening up.”

“He’s done fantastic work. I’ve heard that some of the Lords want to buy his work already,” Dany commented and Jon nodded. They were fell quiet as they saw Arya come over carrying Daeron.

“I think he’s tired, he keeps yawning a lot and rubbing his eyes,” she told them.

“Give him here,” Dany said as she held out her eyes

“Aw. Are you tired sweetling? Don’t worry, mama will take you to bed soon,”

“Thanks Arya. I’ll take him to bed soon,”

Arya smiled and then left, off to enjoy the rest of the celebration.

“Soon, they’ll all leave and we’ll have to start working again. Conquering is one thing, but ruling is something else entirely,” Dany said quietly.

“Aye. It’ll be difficult, but we’ve got good people around us. Father, Tyrion, Davos, and everyone else. They will all help us,” Jon told her.

“And we will have each other. We will have Daeron and his little brother or sister. We aren’t going to be facing this challenge alone. We’ll do it together,” Dany said as she turned to look at him.

“Aye, we’ll do it together,”

Chapter End Notes
So here we are. After 34 chapters and nearly 400k words, we're at the end. This is actually the first fan fiction I've ever written, and honestly, I did not expect it to get to this size. To put this work into perspective, it has more words than AGOT.

Thank you all for sticking with me and with this story. I've learned a lot about writing and I've gotten better and thank you all for having the patience and for giving me the opportunity to do this.

A special thank you once again goes out to GOT88. Without him, this work really would not have been possible. He has helped a lot with the planning and the outlining that goes into this work. Super super thanks.

We are planning a sequel, to this, covering the White Walkers. Would that be something you guys are interested in? If so let me know. It won't be for another month or two at the least.

So, thank you all once again. It has been a pleasure to write this story for you all

See you sometime in the future
Sleepy <3

Please drop by the archive and comment to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!