Who Will Remember When We are Gone?

by yamarazazzy

Summary

This document contains a summary of a work that is not relevant to the current conversation. It includes a rating of 'Teen And Up Audiences,' archive warnings for 'Major Character Death,' 'Graphic Depictions Of Violence,' 'Rape/Non-Con,' and 'Implied/Referenced Character Death.' The category is 'Multi' and the fandoms include 'Game of Thrones (TV),' 'Aegon I Targaryen/Visenya Targaryen,' 'Maegor Targaryen/Rhaena Targaryen,' 'Aenys I Targaryen/Alyssa Velaryon,' 'Elissa Farman/Rhaena Targaryen,' 'Aegon I Targaryen/Rhaenos Targaryen (Sister of Aegon I),' 'Alysanne Targaryen/Jaehearys I Targaryen,' 'Bobar Baratheon/Alyssa Velaryon,' 'Maegor I Targaryen/Tyanna of the Tower,' 'Orys Baratheon/Visenya Targaryen,' 'Ors Baratheon/Aegon Targaryen,' 'Baelon Targaryen/Vissaya Targaryen,' 'Alyssa Targaryen/Baelon Targaryen,' 'Daemon Targaryen/Nettles "Netty" Corlys Velaryon/Rhaenos Targaryen,' 'Aegon I Targaryen/Rhaenos Targaryen (Sister of Aegon I)/Visenya Targaryen (Sister of Aegon I),' 'Brynden Rivers/Shiera Seastar,' 'Aegor Rivers/Shiera Seastar,' 'Aemon "the Dragonknight" Targaryen/Naerys Targaryen,' 'Aegon IV Targaryen/Naerys Targaryen,' 'Aemon "the Dragonknight" Targaryen & Daeron I.'

Additional tags include 'Fluff and Angst,' 'Romance,' 'Implied Sexual Content,' 'Implied Relationships,' 'Pre-Canon,' 'Inspired by Game of Thrones,' 'Angst and Hurt/Comfort,' 'Implied/Referenced Character Death,' 'Magic,' 'Dragons,' 'Tragic Romance,' 'Memories,' 'Inspired by A Song of Ice and Fire,' 'Love,' 'Unrequited Love,' 'Alternate Universe - Canon Divergence,' 'Heartbreak,' 'Neglect,' 'Abandonment,' 'Implied/Referenced Torture,' 'Implied/Referenced Rape/Non-con,' 'Depression,' 'Suicide Attempt,' 'Family,' 'Grief/Mourning,' 'Friendship,' 'Happy,' 'Hope,' 'Hopeful Ending,' 'Music,' 'Fear,' 'Sibling Love,' 'Sacrifice,' 'Duty,' 'Trust,' 'Devotion,' 'Anxiety,' 'Guilt.'

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This is planned to be a series of drabbles about Visenya Targaryen through the memories of her descendants/family. It will explore her legacy, rumors about the First Dragon Queen, and her relationships with her siblings and children. It has also expanded to investigate the relationships of other Targaryens and deal with some major events throughout the Dragon's Rule and at this point no character or event is off the table for a potential chapter. Tags will be changed as more drabbles are added and the potential for new pairings is always there.

Notes

Hi Guys,

This is the first chapter in a planned series of drabbles about Visenya Targaryen. I always felt like she had so much potential as a character, but has yet to be fully explored. This first chapter is from the POV of her son, Maegor the Cruel, and explores his own relationship with her and the relationship he saw between his mother and his father, Aegon I. In general, the era of the Targaryens is pretty hazy within the cannon which leaves so very much possibility for expanded characterization and interesting story arcs. So, if you're interested in seeing an interesting take on the world before the GoT we all know and love, this story may be the one for you.

PS. I own nothing, all characters belong to George R.R Martin and Game of Thrones
Maegor-Anything Good in me, I Owe to Her

Chapter Summary

King Maegor contemplates the rumors surrounding his mother, Queen Visenya Taragaryen and reminisces about his sixth name day. Although he can't speak of the relationship between his parents before he was born, he knows that some tales are hardly true...

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for notes

Maegor

As I lay in bed beside Rhaena I found myself thinking about my mother. People say so many things about her, but they don’t really know who she really was. They say she was cold, cruel, overly ambitious. They claim she was barren, hateful, and that if not for her dragon and undeniable prowess in tactics and battle my father would have discarded her long before my birth. How my mother was before my birth I cannot say. I have heard tales of her conquests, how brutally she destroyed the Arryn Fleet at Gulltown, how easily she had taken the Vale without spilling a drop of blood. All these things made me proud to call her my mother. Made me happy I had been born to her and not my Aunt Rhaenys who is known only for her beauty, her death, and how often my father supposedly fucked her. However, how much is true about that is also unknown to me, after all, she died years before my birth. All I can say to the rumours about my mother is that she was a good one. She was not doting, as some mothers were, after all, she was a Queen and my father had constant need of her to protect him and his realm, and she didn’t feign interest in my small actions. However, every big milestone, every important moment, she was there. It was she who took me on dragonback for the first time when I was four years old. It was she who watched with a beautiful smile as I became a squire at the age of eight. It was she who took my face gently in her hands on my thirteenth name day and said,

“You are the true blood of the dragon, you deserve a dragon’s blade.” she then handed me her own Valyrian Steel Sword. I had stared at in wonder and could almost feel the power of the blade as I clenched my fist around Dark Sister's grip. I didn’t know then that one day I would have my father’s sword, Blackfyre, as well. Rhaena asked me on our wedding night why I am so cruel. She didn't ask it in a malicious manner, after all, she had chosen to be here when she sent her brother-husband to his untimely death. I responded that I believe the world was cruel to my mother, although she never allowed it to break her, and for that I am cruel to the world. She shrugged at my response, not taking me seriously, but it was the truth. To all those who dared question my parentage, I sent them screaming when I ascended the throne. To all those who had dared call my mother barren, I made sure their houses would die with them. I rid King’s Landing of all those who had dared to slander my mother during the reign of my father and weak half-brother. Eventually Rhaena took me seriously on that claim, after all, she admired my mother as well. People always claim I take after my mother more than my father. How could I not when she was the only parent I knew for six years? Anything good in me I owe to her, anything bad was the price taken by the Valryian Gods as payment. I will defend her name until the day I die, which I know will be soon enough although I am not old yet. However, there is one rumor I can dispel about my mother: that my father didn’t love her. I too doubted his love for her when I was young, after all, why were they
apart for so long? Yet, when I finally saw them together, even as a child, I knew that what they had was almost deeper than love. I remember a day when I was very young, six years old and my mother sent me to King’s Landing for my name day. She had originally planned to go with me, but the morning of our planned departure she could not leave her chamber due to a fever that was turning her skin to fire. I tried to be strong as I looked upon her ashen skin and her beautiful white-gold hair that had lost its luster. She smiled at me, although her violet eyes were exhausted. “You will have to fly to your father by yourself, little dragon.” she murmured in a soft, raspy voice. I clasped her hand, holding it to my small chest.

“I don’t have to go, mother. We can wait until you are well.” I replied, still fighting to hold back tears. She shook her head.

“Your father is expecting you and I will not allow this weakness to rob you of this day.” she coughed, an awful sound that wracked her whole body. “Take my cloak and explain carefully to Vhagar why I am not with you. She will take you to Balerion if I am not there to guide her.” My nurse gently took my shoulders in her hands and began to draw me away from my mother’s bed. “Hold on to her tightly, Maegor, and do not be afraid.” her hand fell from mine and I fought against the nurse to return to her side.

“I’ll be brave mother.” I told her, refusing to cry until the door to her chamber closed behind us. I didn’t think she would die, but something about how weak she looked frightened me to my bones. My mother was strong, but she had looked so sad and alone in that moment that it broke my young heart. My nurse gently took my hand and led me down to the courtyard where Vhagar was napping. The bronze she-dragon looked at me with curious orange eyes as I clipped my mother’s red cloak around my shoulders.” My mother is sick, Vhagar,” I told her, approaching the she-dragon cautiously, “I need to see my father. Will you take me to him?” Vhagar’s eyes pierced mine and for a second I feared she’d refuse, but after a few moments she bowed her head. Servants slowly approached the dragon behind me, holding her saddle. Vhagar paid them no mind and kept her beautiful eyes on me. When the servants had finished saddling her I slowly approached, forcing myself not to betray the fear I felt as I clambered onto my mother’s mount. Vhagar made no movements and when I was settled turned back to appraise me. “Soves.” I ordered and I swear Vhagar looked vaguely amused by the child ordering her to fly. She spread her wings and leapt skywards. I clung to the saddle chain with all my strength as my eyes watered. Vhagar gave a loud roar to tell Westeros we were coming as we leveled above Blackwater Bay. I laughed in delight as the wind tousled my gold-white hair, seeing the boats below me shrink to the size of toys. Soon enough we were at King’s Landing, descending into a courtyard. The servants and courtiers scattered at our arrival. I slid off Vhagar and took a few steps back as she rocketed back towards the sky. I heard a distant roar from far away and knew Balerion must have sensed her return. The courtiers stared at me in awe, murmuring about the little prince they had never seen before. I ignored them and ran into the palace, only distantly hearing their inquiries as to where my mother, their queen, was. I knew where to find my father without even asking a servant. I burst into the great throne room and stared in awe at the Iron Throne. The sun glinted coldly off the blades and my breath hitched as I laid eyes on the man seated upon it. My father had not seen me since I was a toddler, and although he always sent me ravens on my name day, I had no memory of his face or voice, even if I knew his script well. He was tall and strong, with white-gold hair and deep, indigo eyes. A short beard graced his face and a ruby circlet sat upon his brow. I pushed through the sea of courtiers and darted towards him. I fell to my knees before the Iron Throne and looked up at him with violet eyes that matched my mother’s. “Father,” I said, forcing myself to speak slowly, “My king, it is an honor to finally be in your presence.” My mother had long instructed me on what I would say when I finally met my father. He stared down at me in shock for a second. No doubt he had been expecting me to arrive with my mother, hand in hand, but no, he was face to face with a little boy. He slowly stood and approached me. He reached down and gently cupped my face with
hands calloused from years of battle.

“Maegor?” he asked in awe, his voice deeper than I had imagined it would be.

“Yes, father.” I responded and then I was in his arms. I heard the courtiers behind us clap as I wrapped my arms around his neck, burying my face in his hair. He smelled similar to my mother, of the sky and the same Valyrian oils. His hair was more white than hers was and his eyes dark, but it was clear that they were of the same Old Blood. He pulled away, still holding me in his arms, a smile lighting up his chisled face.

“You have grown so big, I haven’t seen you since you were a baby.” suddenly his face clouds over.

“Where is your mother?” he asked, glancing at the sea of courtiers as if she might be hiding there. My lip began to tremble against my will as I remembered my mother’s burning skin and weak voice. I see worry creep into his strong gaze.

“Mother is sick with a fever. She could not ride.” I whispered to him. “She didn’t want me to miss my name day with you, so she sent me on Vhagar alone because she didn’t want to ruin our meeting, didn't want the court to know she is sick.” My father’s eyes bore into mine with a startling intensity.

“Your mother has fought off many an illnes, I’m sure she will be fine.” father says comfortingly, although I can hear trepidation in his voice. I immediately knew what I needed to do in this moment.

“I think she misses you.” I tell him, forgetting that I had only just met my father and in truth knew little of his feelings towards my mother. “If you went to see her I think she’d recover a lot faster.” my father sighed and gently lowered me to the ground.

“Maegor, I don’t think your mother would want to see me.” I stared into his eyes. “We argued last time we met and she has not forgiven me for letting her down.”

“Even if mother is angry, she still would want to see you. I know she does.” my father pursed his lips. “She loves you very much.” I see his eyes soften at my words. “When I was younger she’d tell me stories about you and how brave you were during the Conquest. She’d tell me how you were as a child to inspire me when I was frustrated.” my father smiles. “She always said that you would protect us against anything and anyone, like the Warrior reborn.” I see something else enter his face in that moment, a dark cloud of emotion.

“Your mother is very brave and strong too, she doesn’t need my protection.” he responds. I see it now, clear as day, my father was ashamed in that moment. I take his hand.

“I know that, but that doesn’t mean she doesn’t want it. Are you scared to see her?” I asked and he raised a golden eyebrow at me. No doubt he wasn’t used to be questioned like this, wasn't used being called a coward by his own son.

“Of course not, it’s just complicated, son.” I shook my head.

“No it’s not. Do you love her?” my father glanced at the courtiers behind us, then back at my pleading face. "You do, right?"

“Of course I love your mother-”

“Then come with me to Dragonstone. Forget what else you were going to do for my name day. Your gift to me can be coming to see her.” I pouted my lips at him and my father laughed.
“You look just like her when you do that. Very well, son, let’s go see your mother.” he takes my hand and leads me through the crowd of courtiers, ignoring the calls of his council and the surrounding lords and ladies. I followed him eagerly, rejoicing in the warmth of his hand. We entered a courtyard and he whistled, yelling, “Māzigon!” I heard the flap of leather wings and soon enough the sun was blotted out by a huge black shape. My mother had told me about Balerion, the Black Dread, how his shadow could dwarf entire towns, but even with her tales I couldn't believe how large my father's mount was. Before this day I had thought Vhagar huge, and she definitely was, larger and stronger than any other dragons on Dragonstone, but Balerion was even larger than her. He descended, sending my cloak streaming behind me as I laughed in delight. I rode the Black Dread back to Dragonstone that afternoon, feeling my father’s strong, warm arms around me, and it was a better name-day present than any jewels or sword he could have given me. That was also the day I decided that Balerion would be my mount one day if he became riderless before Vhagar. The she-dragon flew behind us, twirling around Balerion with the grace of a dancer. When we landed at Dragonstone all the servants panicked at the unexpected arrival of their king.

“My lords,” a guard said, bowing low as my father dismounted. He picked me off the saddle and gently placed me beside him. “We were not expecting you-”

“I understand, this sojourn was a last minute decision. I am here to see my wife.” my father says imperiously and the two guards before us shared a worried glance.

“The Queen is very ill, your majesty-” one begins, but my father cuts him off with a wave of his hand.

“I am aware, it’s why I’m here.” the guards share another look. My father sighed, turning to me. “Maegor, take me to your mother.” I grabbed his hand and all but ran through the halls, ignoring the gaping servants who stare at my father like they’ve seen a ghost. As we approach my mother’s chambers I smell the sickly sweet smell that so often accompanies illness. I see my father’s brow crease in worry. Outside her door stands an old Maester, his chain clinking lightly as he instructs a maid. When he sees my father he falls to his knees.

“Your grace,” he says, keeping his eyes downcast.

“How is my wife?” my father asks, glancing towards the oaken door.

“She has a fever, my lord. It will not be fatal, but is nonetheless dangerous. It is not contagious as far as I can tell, but I would advise against putting your royal person in harm's way by visiting her.” he responds, in an old, creaking voice. My father sighs.

“Thank you for your advice.” he then strides around the Maester and pushes open the door. My mother’s chamber is dark except for a fire burning in the hearth. I see furs piled on her great bed and can only see her luminescent hair beneath them. My father’s face was pinched with worry as he approaches. He hesitates for a moment, then sits by her side. I stand by the door, watching them. He gently places a hand on her shoulder. She turns to him, with clouded purple eyes, but the second she sees him her eyes go wide.

“Aegon?” she whispers, staring at him in shock.

“I’m here, my love.” he responded quietly, with such tenderness that I couldn't quite reconcile it with the strong father I had been taught about. She took his hand and I could see she was shaking. “I’m sorry.” my mother’s face hardened.

“For what? For letting those rats slander me? For not denouncing their damned daughters when they were offered to you?” she coughed and her entire body shook. “For letting them spread such
vile rumors about our son?"

“For all that and more. I know he is mine, Visenya and that no dark magic could have created something as perfect as our boy.” my father squeezes her hand gently. “I will have the councilors who spoke against him removed from office at once upon my return.” I see her face softened slightly. “I missed you.”

“You could have come any time you wanted.” she says weakly.

“I know, I should have come sooner.” he responds. Her body continued to shake, although I think it may have been with silent sobs rather than from the cold. It was hard to see in that dim room.

“I’m very tired,” she murmured. "and cold." My father unclasped his cloak and quickly removed his boots and doublet. He then slowly slid beneath the covers beside her.

"I'll burn the cold away,” he murmured. “I won’t leave you again.” I saw two forms become one as I closed the door. My mother and father were near inseparable in the weeks after that and I was not surprised at all when it was announced I’d have a younger sibling soon enough. Aemma, whose conception was little short of a miracle given my mother's age, was born of that rekindled fire, although her gruesome death in the reign of my half-brother no doubt was a price taken by the Gods for something as well. It certainly turned my mother against Aenys. That night had been much like this one, cool and calm, if I closed my eyes, I could almost be six years old again, sleeping contently knowing both my parents would be there when I awoke the next morning. I know what they say about my parents, how my father couldn't stand my mother by the end, but that's not true. Those lies were planted by my half-brother’s supporters, meant to strengthen his claim to the throne. The truth is far different, but everyone who was involved with that is dead now. My father, my half-brother, even my mother now. Soon I’ll be dead as well and the truth about my mother will be gone. For now though, my memories of her, the real her, are alive and well. I stare at Rhaena’s sleeping form and wonder what my mother would think of the king I've become. I suppose I’ll know soon enough when the Stranger takes me to meet her.

Chapter End Notes

I know Rhaena was one of Maegor's black brides and that in canon it was a pretty non-consensual relationship, but I chose to explore it in a different light, sorry if you don't agree with this interpretation. Definitely serious canon-divergence in this story, so if you're not into that then this probably won't be the series for you. This chapter was the first in a planned trilogy surrounding the first and second generation of the Targaryen Dynasty, so next up, memories of the "weak half-brother Aenys"
Aenys-Sacrifice for the Crown

Chapter Summary

Aenys I muses on his childhood as Westeros rises in rebellion against the second generation of Targaryen rulers. After many years, he finally tells his wife Alyssa Velryon how he survived the death of his mother and explains his relationship with his aunt, the Dowager Queen Visenya Targaryen.

Chapter Notes

Hello again,

This chapter is from the POV of Aenys I and explores the aftermath of Rhaenys' death for her son and for her siblings. In canon, Visenya's relationship with her siblings and her nephew are kinda murky, although it definitely soured as time went on. Personally, I always felt like it was probably more nuanced than what's implied, not all hate or love, but a mixture of both. This chapter is a little longer than the first one, so if you like it, please give kudos and leave any constructive comments.

PS. I own nothing, all characters are the property of George R.R Martin

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Aenys I

When I was three years old, my mother was killed by the Ullers as she sought to bring Dorne to my father. Although barely out of infancy at the time, I still remember the last time I saw her. She was dressed in light armor, her beautiful gold-white hair still loose around her shoulders. She carried me on her hip down to the courtyard where her gorgeous dragon, Meraxes, glittered in the sunlight. She gently set me on the ground, crouching in front of me so we could be eye to eye.

"Be good for me while I’m away, Aenys.” she said in her beautiful, song-like voice.

“I will, mama.” I replied, wiping away the tears that were already trailing down my face. She brushed her nose against mine, smiling at my laugh.

“My beautiful boy, my little dragon,” she murmured, kissing me on the forehead. "I will come back to you, I promise." She then stood and led me over to my aunt, Queen Visenya. She embraced her sister-wife, placing a soft kiss on my aunt's lips before handing me to her. “Take care of him for me, sister.” my mother said. My aunt was half a head taller than my mother and gazed down at her with her violet eyes.

“Of course. No harm will come to him.” my aunt responded evenly. Her hand was cold against mine and I wanted more than anything to return to my mother’s arms. My mother nodded.

“Perhaps when I return he will have a little sibling on the way?” my mother asks. My aunt shook
“As long as you live, there will be no need for that.” I clung to my aunt’s hand as I watched my mother walk towards my father. She embraced him passionately and they stayed locked together for a small eternity. To this day I do not know what was said in their final goodbye. My father never spoke of it to me, in fact, he rarely spoke of her at all. Her death pained him and my aunt so much that even speaking her name was likely to garner their wrath. Despite the whispers that my aunt and mother were at each other’s throats for much of their reign, I knew they loved each other, perhaps not in the way that my father and mother did, but they certainly did not hate one another. If we were still on speaking terms I’d ask my aunt about my mother. I crave to know everything about her, about my father as well. I know the official histories as the Maesters tell it, but I know that’s already tainted with rumours and hearsay. My aunt is the only one who knows the truth now and it will probably die with her. If only she were here with me! I know my daughter wonders why the great-aunt who she considered a grandmother no longer sits on my small council. I know my sons wonder why their uncle no longer teaches them how to hold a sword. How can I explain to them that I cut our family in two to ensure they’d wear crowns one day?

“Did Visenya accept our invitation to the wedding?” Alyssa asks me, drawing me out of my reverie.

“She made no reply.” I respond, feeling my weariness creep over me. I have been tired since Maegor was banished to Pentos. My brother and I may not have been close as children, but he and my aunt had been crucial to my early rule. Without them now, well, the realm was falling apart before my eyes and I felt helpless to stop it.

“Cold woman, she should not hold such a grudge. I didn’t want to believe it, but perhaps what they say about her is true.” my wife says, anger flickering in her purple eyes. I sit forward, staring at her.

“What do they say about her?” I ask. My wife seems surprised at my interest.

“They say what they’ve said about her for years. That she’s cold and cruel and such.” I sit back in my chair, deflated. “They say she was the first wife in name, but second in heart. They say she’s a witch-”

“Enough!” I yelled, cutting her off with more force than I meant to. She looks at me strangely.

“I’m sorry, Alyssa.” she gently takes my hand.

“What troubles you, husband?” she asks lightly.

“So many things. The rebellions throughout the realm, the damned Faith of the Seven, what they say about our family. I hate how the court besmirches her honor.” I respond. “She did so much for this family, it’s wrong that people say such things.” My wife sighs at my words, her delicate lips pursed.

“We’ve spoken about this. It was necessary to cement your reign. People still claim that Maegor, disgraced as he is, has the better claim as the son of your father’s first wife. She still holds unimaginable power-”

“I understand why you and the council supported the rumors, it doesn’t mean I have to like them. She saved my life, you know.” I can’t meet my wife’s eyes. The shame that had been hidden within me for so long begins bubbling to the surface.

“You never told me she saved your life.” she murmurs. She’s right, I haven’t told anyone that
story, I had hidden how much I owed to my aunt, so I wouldn't feel guilty over allowing people to
wrong her.

“It’s not one that shows the best of me.” I say. Alyssa looks at me expectantly.

“You’ve always been so eager to please her. I thought it was because you are a people pleaser, but
it’s something more, isn’t it?” her voice is wise and knowing. I had married her out of duty, but as
time went on I realized she was the best wife a king could have.

“Yes.” I say. She squeezes my hand.

“Tell me.” and so I tell her this story:

As I said, my mother died when I was three. I had watched her fly off atop her silver dragon, my
small hands clutching my aunt like she was a life line. She had picked me up as I began to cry and
gently held me as tears leaked out of my lilac eyes. I heard my father approach us.

“You'll tend to him?” he asked.

“Of course.” I heard her reply, running a strong hand softly through my hair. She carried me
through the castle to my chambers. I still remember the look in her eyes as she put me down there:
soft and gentle, but also strangely cold. “Come now, little dragon, your mother will be back before
you know it.” She said to me in a voice as smooth as a calm sea. I had nodded, wiping my eyes
with pudgy hands. She sighed. “If you behave, I’m sure your father will take you with him on
Balerion.” I perked up at the promise of a ride. “Will you stop crying if I promise you he will?”

“Yes Aunty.” I responded. She smiled, although it lacked warmth.

“Good, I'll go ask him for you immediately.” she gestured for a nurse to take her place and walked
out the door. As she walked away, her silver hair glinting in its braids, I thought she looked just
like my mother. My aunt visited me in the weeks to come, but she never stayed for more than five
minutes. I got the distinct feeling she wasn’t fond of me, even if she was kind enough. My father,
on the other hand, spent more time with me than he had ever before, even taking me for rides on
Balerion as my aunt promised he would. I remember one ride distinctly. We were soaring above
the Aegonfort, the sun kissing our faces, when I looked down and saw my aunt in the courtyard
below us. Her hair was kept out of her face by braids, but the lower part of it was still down and
blew in the wind. I waved at her, giggling happily and she blew us a kiss as we swooped by.

“Aunty is very pretty.” I told my father. He had smiled at my words. “Don’t you think?”

“Yes, your aunt is very pretty, just like your mother.” he said, gazing down at the shrinking form of
his wife. I shook my head. “They are not the same pretty.” I said.

“No, I suppose not. Your mother is as shining as the sun and your aunt is as striking as the moon,
different, but no less beautiful.” we swooped by the courtyard again, but my aunt was gone.

"You love them both, right?” I asked. I couldn't see my father's face behind me.

"Of course I do." my father replied promptly.

"Will I get a brother soon then from Aunty?" I inquired. I felt my father mull over his words before
answering me.

"That is up to your aunt. I would love for you to have a brother. If your aunt is satisfied with you,
then I will not force her. If that is the case, you will likely get one from your mother." I smiled at
the thought of a little brother, it didn't matter to me whether he was born of my mother or aunt at the time, as long as he would play with me. How naive I had been in the happy days of my childhood, unaware that my golden, carefree days were numbered. Soon the day came when my father came to me with tears in his eyes. My nurse began crying when my father told her the news, but I was too confused to understand what was wrong. He gently knelt in front of me, putting two warm hands on my shoulders.

“Aenys,” he said, his voice cracking, “I’m sorry to have to tell you this, but your mother isn’t coming home.” I didn’t understand him.

“Are we going to her then?” I squeaked. My father shook his head. “No. I’m afraid we can’t ever see her again, she has gone to the next world.” After that my world descended into darkness. I couldn’t speak, I couldn’t walk. All I could do was crawl and cry. My maids and nurses were at a loss with what to do with me. No matter their coaxing or threats, I wouldn’t eat, wouldn’t bathe, wouldn’t speak. I withered away in my dark chambers. Even my father couldn’t rouse me from my despair. Weeks turned to months and I knew people thought I was going to die. The world seemed very distant, but I learned from my nurses what was happening. My father and Aunt rode their dragons to Dorne and brought the Dragon’s Wrath down upon that land. They burned everything, turning cities into piles of melted stone, keeps into skeletal rubble, and the desert into shards of glass. I heard my Aunt had personally burnt Hellholt and walked through the blazing inferno to look Lord Uller in the eyes as he fried alive. I believe that story is entirely fictional, but to this day the idea of my aunt laughing as Lord Uller died brings me minimal comfort. When they returned, however, there was nothing but sorrow left. My father retreated within himself and my aunt began to act as more of a regent than a queen. I saw neither of them and every night I begged the Stranger to take me to my mother. More than anything I felt totally alone. One night, when I was close to starvation, I thought my prayers had been answered. The door to my chamber opened and in walked a woman with loose white-gold hair wearing riding leathers. I gurgled at her weakly and fell out of my bed to crawl to her. I reached her feet and looked up at her face. I then realized it was not my mother. Although similar, her eyes were brighter, her cheekbones sharper, her body harder. It was not my mother after all, but my aunt. She knelt down in front of me, her violet eyes boring into my lilac ones.

“Aenys,” she said softly, her usually imperious voice warm to my ears. “It’s time for you to come back to us.” my eyes filled with tears at this voice that was so similar to my mother’s, but also so different. “Your mother is gone, but do you remember what you promised her before she left?” tears spilled down my ashen cheeks. She gently wiped them away with a calloused thumb. “You promised you’d be good for her, but from what I’ve been told, you’ve been giving everyone a very hard time. It’s time that stopped.” she spoke to me like she would a child, but also like I was an adult. I began to cry in earnest and she picked me up in her arms and held me close. I wrapped my thin legs around her hips and buried my wet face in her hair. She smelled like my mother, of lavender oil, sweet and floral, but with a touch of dragonfire and the sky. When my sobbing slowed she gently put me down. I fell to the floor unable to stand. She gently put her hands under my arms and pulled me up, forcing my feet to grip the ground beneath me. “No more crawling, little dragon.” she ordered kindly. She slowly released me and I fell again. She didn’t yell or scream as some of my nurses had done in their frustration, but simply picked me up again and stood me up. A servant walked in carrying a tray. On it I could see a bowl, no doubt filled with plain porridge. My stomach rumbled for the first time in months. The servant settled it on my table then left without giving me a glance. “Are you hungry?” she asked, I nodded. “Well, then walk to your dinner.” she let me go and I took a shaky step and fell again. Tears filled my eyes. I felt her hands again, strong and comforting, much like my father’s. “It’s all right, try again.” she said patiently. Slowly, but surely, we shuddered our way towards the table. I felt exhausted when we reached it, but I had walked for the first time in months. She sat across from me as I ate, reading a series of
papers, looking up every once and awhile to watch me. When I had finished. She sat them down and gave me a slow once over. “Let’s take you to a bath.” she gently took my hand as we walked towards my bathing room. Every step was agonizing and my body felt exhausted. When we finally entered the tiled room, it was warm and bright, a nice change from the dimness of my bedchamber. A tub full of steaming water sat in the center. I slowly approached it on my weak legs. When we reached it, I looked around for the nurses who usually bathed me, but they were nowhere to be found, only my aunt was there. She sat on a chair beside the tub and stared into my lilac eyes. I knew she expected me to undress myself. I pulled off my soiled nightshirt slowly, struggling to remove the sleeves. When I eventually did she picked me up and placed me in the water. I giggled happily at its warmth. She gently took a cloth and dipped it in the tub, pouring in vials of scents and oils. Soon the room smelled sweet and floral, much like she did. She gently scrubbed down my body, turning the water grey, then took a comb through my tousled locks. She gently untangled my dirty strands and soon it gleamed silver-blonde under the light. After she rinsed me off she gently dried me and wrapped me in a fluffy robe. I was yawning and tired, and clung to her like a baby. I heard her sigh, but she didn’t force me to walk this time and carried me to my bed. She hummed lightly as she tucked me in. “Good night, Aenys.” she said, moving to leave. I grabbed her hand. She looked back at me in surprise. “Stay.” I said in a cracking and weak voice. “Please.” my aunt smiled softly. The look in her eyes from before, the cold detachment, melted away.

“All right, I’ll stay.” She responded softly and sat down beside me on the bed, placing an arm around me as I curled up beside her, feeling her warmth through the blankets. She ran her hands through my hair and began singing. It was an old Valryian lullaby about a young dragon who was scared to fly, one that’s been passed down through our family since the Freehold. I sang it to my own children and no doubt they’ll sing it to theirs. I had never heard my aunt sing before that night. My mother had always sung for me and her voice was beautiful, high, clear and resonant. I knew my father loved to hear her sing as well and some of my fondest memories are of the three of us curled up in my bed as my mother sang me to sleep. My aunt’s voice was different. It was powerful and strong and felt like it came from her very soul. I felt magic in her words as she sang the song from a world now gone and the song seemed to seep into my soul, sewing together something my mother's death had torn apart. The lullaby carried me off to sleep that night and for the first time I didn’t have nightmares. When I awoke the next morning, she was not beside me and I immediately felt the loss. I almost began to cry again as the loneliness returned, but then I saw her. She no longer wore riding leathers, but a dark red tunic and black breeches. Her hair was half braided, the silver strands around her face pulled back. In the morning sun she looked like a warrior goddess from old Valryia. I got out of bed and slowly padded over to her. She looked up at my slow, shuddering approach. “Good, you’re awake.” she said. Beside her sat a tray like the one from the night before. On it was another bowl of porridge, this time with a smaller bowl of berries beside it. “Eat up, little dragon, we have much to do.” For the first time since my mother’s death I ate all of my breakfast. In the following days Visenya barely left my side. She forced me to dress myself, to walk, to eat, to live. Without her, my body would have surely perished. To this day I wonder why she helped me. As I’ve mentioned, she was not overly fond of me, or children in general. In fact, I know she doubted my legitimacy and refused to bless me for some time after I was born, yet here she was, nursing me back to health. Perhaps it was to protect the Targaryen Dynasty, after all, at that time I was the only heir my father had. More likely, I think, my father asked her to, begged her to save his son. In either case, she saved my life and for that I am forever in her debt. Within two weeks she had me walking, within three I was eating consistently. Slowly I began to look less like a skeleton and more like a prince. As my body improved however, my mind remained lost to darkness of my sorrow. The day that all changed was when she came to me with a covered cage. Something moved within it and I backed away in fear. My aunt looked at me with warm eyes. “Don’t be afraid, Aenys.” she soothed, placing the cage on the floor and removing the
cloth covering it. Within sat a small silver hatchling, looking at me with soft, blue eyes. The second I saw him my skin prickled and my heart began beating faster. It was like a ray of sun breaking through a thunderhead. I slowly approached the cage, glancing at my aunt to make sure I was doing the right thing. She nodded at me encouragingly. I slowly opened the cage door and held out my small palm for the dragon. It was barely the size of a kitten and it clambered onto me clumsily. I felt its claws sting my palms, but I couldn’t care less. It was as if my heart was reborn when I saw him. “What are you going to name him?” she asked me.

“Quicksilver.” I responded after a few moments of thought, my voice no longer cracking, but still soft from lack of use.

“A lovely name.” she comments. “Do you want to show your father your pretty dragon?” I had not spoken my father since he told me of my mother’s death. He had come to visit me in the months since he returned from Dorne, but every time his visits had grown shorter and his patience thinner. In fact, I think he may have given me up for dead and that thought made me begin to shake. My aunt’s face creased with worry.

"Does papa want to see me?" I asked meekly. Visenya gently stroked my hair as she knelt down to look me in the eyes as my mother had all those years ago.

"Of course your father wants to see you, in fact, I think a visit from you will make his day." she answered with a soft smile. Quicksilver mewled encouragingly from my shoulder.

“You’ll come with me?” I inquired wearily, fearful that my father would turn away from me as he had done before.

“Of course.” she responded. I grabbed her hand and held onto it for dear life as we walked through the castle. I felt everyone’s eyes on me as we slowly descended through the corridors, heard their whispers about me. My aunt paid them no mind, so neither did I. We entered the throne room and I heard my father yelling in a loud, enraged voice that scared me to the bone.

“How dare you accuse her of these things! How dare you besmirch her memory!” I heard him yell, followed by the crack of a fist breaking bone. I shrunk behind my aunt as the crowd of courtiers parted for her and when I finally saw past the sea of hostile faces, my eyes fell on a man lying on the floor, groaning in a pool of blood. I shrunk closer to my aunt. “Dispose of that.” my father ordered, returning to sit on his throne. My aunt squeezed my hand, seemingly unbothered by this display of violence, and walked forward as a Kingsguard dragged the unconscious man away. My dragon clung to my shoulder with its little claws, its presence giving me the strength to keep walking forward. My aunt stopped a little before the throne and squeezed my hand. I looked up at her and she nodded towards my father, gesturing for me to call out to him. I swallowed, but finding strength in her violet gaze, I found my voice.

“Papa?” I called out, my voice weak and reedy. My father’s eyes darted to us. They went wide with shock upon seeing me standing there. I saw them dart to my aunt as he stood, approaching us. He knelt in front of me, putting a hand on my shoulder in awe. “Papa, do you see my dragon?” he looks at Quicksilver, who growls on my shoulder.

“I do,” he murmurs, “he’s beautiful.” I don’t know if he was talking about the dragon, or about me. He stands, keeping a hand on my shoulder. “How?” I hear him ask my Aunt softly.

“With patience.” I hear her respond. I look up and see him gazing at her with pure adoration. He gently cups her face and kisses her lips lightly.

“I owe you so much.” he whispers, leaning his forehead against hers. She smiles.
“You’ll owe me even more soon.” she responds. My father looks back down at me.

“I am so glad to see you well, Aenys.” he says, the gentleness of his words clashing with the scene I had just witnessed and the ambivalence he had shown me during my extended illness. "I have greatly missed you, my boy."

"I have missed you too." I responded shyly. A beam of light catches my eye and I glance towards the Iron throne, which loomed ominously behind my father. He follows my gaze. “Do you want to sit on the throne?” he asks. I hear a hiss from behind us and the crowd goes silent, all eyes on us. I turn to my aunt with fear, but her encouraging smile helps settle my anxious heart.

“Only if mama comes with me.” I reply. I see confusion cross both their faces before my father glances at Visenya in shock. She too looks surprised, although she’s better at hiding it behind a smile.

“Aenys, I’m not-”

“Of course she can come.” my father interrupts. My aunt glances at my father, but says nothing. I slowly walk towards the throne, leading my aunt by the hand. When we reach it I look at her expectantly.

“Sit.” I order. She raises an eyebrow at me, but acquiesces, sitting on the throne so I can perch on her lap. I hear the courtiers gasp as I settle myself on her, feeling her heartbeat against my back. On my shoulder, Quicksilver roared. My father’s smile that day was the brightest I’d ever seen and for the first time since my mother's death I felt the will to keep on living.

As I finish the story, Alyssa’s eyes are wide.

“I didn’t know,” she whispers. “That seems so unlike her.” I sigh. As I feared, Alyssa and everyone else had begun to believe the lies about Visenya.

“It’s the truth. I even called her mother for most of my childhood. Our children called her grandmother until you put a stop to it.” I lace my words with the slightest accusation. Alyssa shakes her head at me like she would a simpleton and I fight back against the anger that glows inside me. She stands, stretching her fair arms above her head.

“It matters not now. I’m off to bed, will you join me?” she asks. I shake my head.

“I have some things to ponder, good night.” she narrows her eyes at me, but nods, retreating to our chamber. I stared into the dying fire. It’s funny, I hadn’t thought about my childhood in years, but now it was all coming back to me. I wish I knew what my father would do in my stead right now. I miss him more than ever. He probably wouldn’t have banished my brother. He probably would have kept my aunt, who had been like a mother to me, close. He would not have sacrificed her for this crown, for the throne she helped forge. Perhaps I should send her another raven, beg her to help me, to advise me. I sensed a storm coming and I didn’t know if I was prepared to handle it. I gently pick up a strip of parchment and begin writing:

Dear Mother, I need your help....

Chapter End Notes
I always wondered if part of the reason so many negative things were said about Visenya was because of efforts to ensure Aenys' succession and ensure his line stayed on the throne. Although order of birth was used to determine who would succeed Aegon I, it's likely there were a few people who at least debated whether the child of the First Wife should be first in succession, hence why Visenya and her son would have to be discredited. Additionally, Aenys' own questionable legitimacy would have made it even more important to weaken the position of Maegor, whose parentage was never as questioned as his brother's (although his conception always did seem rather miraculous). As for Aenys' recovery, I always imagined Visenya would have been the one to help him, as a tribute to her sister and because duty was so important to her. As for the childbirth part, I'm not convinced Visenya was barren as much as that she just didn't want to have children. In either case, she probably wouldn't have had Maegor (supernatural conception or otherwise) if Rhaenys had lived. If you don't agree with that interpretation that's okay. Up next, Rhaena (daughter of Aenys I)
Rhaena-Take, Even When We Cannot Give

Chapter Summary

Rhaena Targaryen, Daughter of Aenys I, is not the victim history claims she is. Although named for her blood-grandmother Rhaenys, she became more like her Great-Aunt Visenya then any maester will tell you. As time moved past the life of the original conquerors, history began to muddle with political intrigue and rumors. Fact became myth and myth became history. Here is a single truth: If Visenya was a witch, then Rhaena was a wicked one.

Chapter Notes

Hi guys,

this is the last of the planned trilogy surrounding the first and second generation of Targaryens told from the POV of Aenys’ oldest daughter, Rhaena. Rhaena is an interesting character since in canon she suffered so much: the death of her father, murder of her husband, having to send her children away, being one of Maegor's black brides, and being robbed of a crown that arguably should have been hers before her uncle or siblings. I chose to explore the more supernatural elements of the Targaryens in this chapter and this chapter is the farthest from cannon of all the ones I've written so far. If you enjoy it, please leave kudos and leave any constructive comments you'd like. Additionally, now that the OG trilogy is done, any suggested character povs are more than welcome.

PS. As always, the characters and places are property of George R.R Martin

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Rhaena

“I always knew one day we would be together.” I told Maegor as we lay beside each other one dark night. He rolled over to look at me, his powerful shoulders rippling in the moonlight.

“Did you now?” he asked playfully, running a hand down my arm causing my flesh to shiver in anticipation.

“I did. Your mother told me long ago that despite everyone’s best efforts we’d be married.” his hand stops at my words. “She knew you’d be the king and I’d be your wife.” I can barely make out his face in the moonlight, but I can see his eyes shining in the faint moonlight, the same rich violet that was so characteristic to the fierce ones of his mother.

“You’re saying we were fated?” he asked lightly, although his words hold such heavy implications.
“Fated? Perhaps, but I certainly did my fair share to push fate in the right direction.” I respond, gently running a hand over his face, feeling his short beard lightly tickle my palm. He looked at me intrigued.

“What sort of help?” my king inquires. I shrug my shoulders absentmindedly.

“Weakening a dragon, dooming a husband, minor things like that.” his eyes flare for a second at my words. He’s known as Maegor the Cruel, but even he seemed impressed by what I was telling him.

“You sent Aegon to his death?” he questioned softly, although his tone doesn’t sound accusatory. He’s not one to judge on morality. I smile coyly at him, pulling myself closer to his strong form.

"Not just him." I whisper almost seductively. "but my father as well." he raises his eyebrows in surprise.

"Really?” he asked, clearly as intrigued by this revelation as surprised. "How?"

"Well, I didn't kill them directly, but I may have gotten me and my brother besieged at Crackenhall, perhaps drugged a certain dragon, not that Balerion needed any more of an advantage.” I respond and saw admiration flash across his face as well as desire, his hands slowly pulling the thin fabric of my nightgown up my legs. "I may have even ensured that I could be found when the time was right.” I gasp as his had lightly strokes my inner thigh.

“You did all that for me?” he asks, I feel his thumb tracing up my leg to my hip, causing me to squirm slightly in pleasure.

“Of course, I love you.” I gasp out as his lips meet mine, moaning as he moves to hover over me. My arms wrap around his muscled neck and then we're lost to the night. I have only truly loved another person twice in my life. When I say love, I don’t mean that comfortable, lukewarm affection so many mistake for love. I mean the kind that burns with passion, which licks at your very soul, that will kill you unless fulfilled. I suppose twice is almost too much to experience that type of all-consuming love. The first person was my uncle, the second Elissa Farman. Of the two, I love my uncle Maegor more, although both would desert me before my death, Maegor for the Stranger, Elissa for the unknown. I still remember the first time I saw him as a girl. He was training in the yards of the Aegonfort with some of my grandfather’s Kingsguards. I was seven at the time and he was a man of eight and ten. His hair glowed like a golden halo around his head and sweat glistened on his powerful, muscled shoulders. He was as tall as my grandfather had been at that point and was destined to be taller. All other men seemed puny and small compared to him. When I was born my great aunt had asked I be betrothed to Maegor, who had just celebrated his eleventh name day. If rumor is to be believed my grandfather was not opposed to such a match, but then again, he rarely denied anything my great aunt requested as long as it was reasonable. Despite my parents’ staunch disapproval, I would have been his wife from the beginning. Alas, my grandfather was eventually swayed by my parents’ appeals, or, more likely, was influenced by the threat of a religious uprising when the High Septon himself objected to the match. So instead, my uncle married Ceryse Hightower, the High Septon’s niece, and I was left free to marry another. That didn’t change how I felt towards him though. I would find any excuse to be in the training yards to watch him. At first I would bring a book, claiming it was the only place I could find solitude. As I grew older and my brothers began training there, I pretended I was there to watch them. Over time, I learned how each man in the yard fought, learned their tricks, their styles, whether they preferred to attack or defend, whether their weapon of choice was a spear, sword, or even axe. The only person I ever saw fight in the yard and go undefeated was my great-aunt, Queen Visenya. Although in her fifth decade, she was still strong and tall and no man could match her. I’d
watch her gracefully defeat men half her age or twice her size, parry, riposting, and disengaging their blades with seeming ease. Even her son and husband were no match for her skills with a blade. I saw her face Maegor on many an occasion and although he lasted longer than most, he too would find a sword at his throat before the duel was done. Maegor always told me his mother was his greatest teacher, having seen them fight, I can’t help but take him at his word. The conqueror himself often claimed the same, and one of my favorite stories of his was when he told us how his sister had beaten him since childhood. With all this in mind it was no surprise that as a child I came to greatly I admire my great-aunt. Not only was she a beautiful woman, but she was also a skilled warrior, a successful general, and an almost unrivaled tactician. I almost wished I’d been named for her and not my grandmother, who although praised in song, didn’t seem to have done much except die tragically. At night I’d dream of being with my great-aunt, of learning all she had to teach and becoming as strong as her. My parents, however, disagreed with these aspirations.

“I want to be like grandmother.” I told my father at breakfast one morning. He chuckled softly, but my mother had begot a cold, strange look.

“Your grandmother is dead, Rhaena, you should not wish to be like her.” she responded. I remember being confused. I knew my grandmother was alive, I had seen her fly into the Aegonfort just yesterday on Vhagar. Grandfather had been there to greet her and lifted her from her dragon with strong arms. He twirled her around as she laughed and I had whispered to my younger brother Aegon that I wanted a husband like that when I grew up.

“She means Aunty Visenya.” Aegon clarified, stabbing his plate with zeal. My mother's face had darkened at his words.

“Visenya is not your grandmother and you should not seek to be like her either. No man would want a woman like her, at least not in Westeros.” my mother commented. My father shifted uncomfortably in his chair.

“Grandfather certainly loves her.” I replied defiantly. My mother began to scowl in earnest.

“Your grandfather is perhaps the sole exception.” she answered sharply.

“Well then I'll just fine one like-"

"Enough Rhaena!” she commanded, hitting her fork against the table, causing it to shake ever so slightly. "I will hear no more of this nonsense about learning to use swords or being like your grandfather's wife. You will be a proper princess of Westeros and that is final.” I had sat in sullen silence for the rest of the day and refused to speak to her for at least a week. As I grew older my mother continued her campaign against Visenya. She ordered that we stop calling her grandmother, although that earned her my grandfather's ire, and seemed to work so we barely saw her. To this day I wonder if it’s because she feared Visenya would negatively influence us or if perhaps she thought we’d pick Visenya’s way over hers if given the chance. In either case, I saw little of my great-aunt unless it was in the yards. Despite this lack of contact, I suppose it was only a matter of time before she noticed how much I watched her son in adoration. One day after training she caught me watching him wistfully as he taught my brothers how to parry an attack. She walked over and sat beside me on a bench, smelling strangely like incense despite her recent combat.

“Do you wish to join them, Rhaena?” she asked me. As always, her voice fascinated me. There was something magical about the way she spoke, like every word she said pulled an answer from me.

“I do, but my parents would never allow it.” I responded, looking back at my book. It was one I had read before about Old Valyria.
“Why?” my great aunt asked.

“They don’t believe it is a woman’s place. What man would would a wife who could use a blade better than him?” I respond, quoting my mother. My great-aunt laughs.

“Your grandfather certainly enjoys it.” she responds, smiling lightly.

“Of course you’re the exception, grandmother.” I respond. As requested, I had stopped calling her that in public since my mother was so adamant that Visenya was not my grandmother, but when it was just the two of us, I fell back into old habits. “But I don’t think my husband, whoever he will be, would be as fond of a warrior wife as grandfather is.” my great-aunt shakes her head.

“Most men are idiots with such fragile manhoods that they can’t fathom a woman surpassing them in any way, lest their cocks shrivel and die. A true man would not have such qualms. Maegor, for instance, would not have such an issue, in fact, he’d probably have the opposite reaction.” she said slowly, her knowing eyes glancing at me. I felt my cheeks heat up.

“Lady Hightower is a lucky woman then.” I reply, trying to keep the bile out of my voice.

“Many people don’t believe so-”

“Lesser people who don’t know his worth.” I interrupt before I can help myself. My great-aunt raises an eyebrow at me.

“You hold affection for your uncle, don’t you?” her tone is gentle and there is no hint of disdain or judgement.

“Yes.” I say meekly, not even bothering to try and lie.

“How long have you felt this way?” she asks me. I look away from her piercing gaze.

“Since I was seven.” I replied softly, feeling as though her potent violet gazing was pulling the words from my lips, preventing me from lying.

“And you are two and ten now?” she asked me, although she already knew the answer.

“Three and ten, your majesty.” I respond. She hums thoughtfully. I take her hand, drawing her attention.

“I would do anything to be with him.” I say, imploring her with my eyes. “Anything.” she smiles sadly at my declaration.

“Be careful what you wish for, child.” she answers and I look at her confused.

"What do you mean?” I ask, almost breathlessly. "Are you telling me that one day-"

“It will be a long time from now and you will have to endure much, but one day you will be with my son.” she finishes and I hear a strange, portentous tone creep into her voice. Overhead a cloud covers the sun, drenching the training yards in grey shadows.

"How do you know this?” I inquire, a strange anxiety filling my heart as I glance up at the previously unclouded sky.

“I just do.” she responds. I clutch hand tighter.

“Will you teach me how to see as you do?” I implored, although we both knew I was asking to
learn more than how to see. She shook her head.

“No.” I began to grow angry.

“Why?!” she stroked my hand with her thumb.

“Because you are so young and filled with something you cannot fully control. When you call to the gods from a place of passion, you promise more than what you can ever pay. I will not help you down a path that will lead you and those around you to misery.” I hear footsteps approaching and released her hand. My grandfather strode in front of us, his hair, more silver than gold now, glinting in the sunlight which returned as the cloud passed.

“I hope I’m not interrupting?” he jested, smiling at us warmly. He looked the picture of good health, still slim and strong despite his years of fighting, little did we know he would die of a stroke later that year.

“Not at all.” my great aunt said, standing. “I was just explaining to Rhaena how unlike most husbands, you don’t mind having a wife who can best you in a duel.” my grandfather laughed and took her hand in his. The way he looked at her is the way I wanted my husband to look at me one day. It shone with warmth and affection, like all that mattered was her.

“I wouldn’t love you if you couldn’t. If we’re being honest, you only beat me because you distract me with your wiles.” My grandmother arched an eyebrow and I suppressed a childish giggle.

“A seasoned warrior would not allow cheap tricks to distract him.” she responded coolly, although mirth danced in her striking eyes.

“I suppose you’re right,” he responds, then looks at me. “As you so often are. Forgive me Rhaena, but I have need of my wife.” I nodded and watched them walk off together, hand in hand. Despite my great-aunt’s words I was determined to see as she saw and do what she could do. I wonder if she already saw the path I would take, the life I would live. Sometimes I question whether she tried to stop me or was resigned to the fact that the gods would take everything I desired from me. I suppose it doesn’t matter much anymore, she’s long dead now and so is everyone else in the generations before my siblings, save perhaps my mother. The funniest part of the historical rewrites, in my opinion, is that the maesters claim Visenya was not there when my grandfather died. I can attest she definitely was. According to my brother Aegon, she was with them when my grandfather collapsed from his stroke. I can only imagine how devastating it was for her. My brother told me she had cried out and clung to his body as Maester’s swarmed the room, examining him with zeal, only to tell everyone what they already knew: that he, my grandfather, Aegon the Conqueror, the first king of the seven kingdoms, had died. After that everything went to hell, and I mean that quite literally. My father was crowned King and unfortunately, he was not as imposing a figure as my grandfather had been and the kingdoms erupted in chaos. To his credit, however, my father was prudent at the beginning. Understanding that he needed a more imposing man to cow the kingdoms back into submission, he made Maegor Hand of the King and put my great-aunt on his small council. At first this worked well. My uncle easily handled the Arryn rebellion, although it cost my aunt her life and signalled the beginning of the end for the peace of my father's reign. People claim it all went wrong when my Uncle took a second wife, Alys Harroway, but that is only a half-truth. My Aunt Aemma's death began a period of tension between my father and my great aunt, with my uncle siding firmly with his mother. She never forgave him for his indecision which cost Aemma and her family their lives. Yet, if it had just been that, perhaps peace would have eventually been restored, but all chances of that happening ended when my father announced that I would wed my oldest brother, Aegon, a few weeks after my eighteenth name day. In truth, I loved my brother, but as a boy of barely six and ten, he was not the husband I desired and paled in
comparison to my uncle, whose exploits in the Vale of Arryn had only increased his status in my eyes. I remember the night I heard the news. I ran from my chambers to my father’s study to beg him not to make me do this. I burst in, ready to use every ounce of persuasion I had to turn him against this union, but unfortunately he was not alone. My mother was with him, as were Maegor, and Visenya. They were deep in discussion, all their faces clouded with barely suppressed worry, which only increased when I burst in unannounced.

“Rhaena? What is wrong, child?” my father asked, concern dripping from his tired lilac eyes.

“Please do not make me marry Aegon,” I begged, looking into my father’s eyes as I fell to my knees. “I beg you as your oldest child, please don't force this upon me!” my father smiled sympathetically, but shook his head.

“You are a Targaryen, we have a tradition of such unions, I dare not break them lest the old gods bring more calamities down on our heads.” his voice was soft, but firm. "He will treat you well Rhaena and your children will be kings one day." I shook my head wildly at his words.

“Where was your respect for tradition when you protested against me marrying Uncle Maegor?” I asked, keeping my eyes averted from him and my great-aunt. “Or are you going to ignore that blatant hypocrisy?!” I saw his eyes harden under my reproach.

“This is different. You were a baby then, Rhaena, but now you are a flowered woman.” my mother responds coolly. “It is what is best for this family.”

“If the High Septon objected then, he will object now. In fact, he’ll probably object more because Aegon and I are full-blooded siblings!” I cry, desperate to avoid this at all costs.

“Your daughter has a point,” my great-aunt says, her voice heavy with wisdom. “The faith will not take kindly to this union. It is a harmless enough beast when kept content, but if roused to anger, it could cause great havoc, which would only result in further unrest. Perhaps it will be best if you listen to your daughter, Aenys.” My aunt meets my eyes and I find comfort in their violet depths.

"No one is more suited for Rhaena than Aegon." my mother objects, narrowing her eyes at Visenya. "Although the faith may object at first, I highly doubt the old High Septon will incite a rebellion, his niece is the king's good sister, he has reason to support our family." My uncle clears his throat.

“As true as that is, Alyssa, everyone in this room knows that my marriage is still barren. Without a child, the High Septon has no hope of seeing his bloodline come anywhere close to the Iron Throne and as the one amongst us who has had the most dealings with the old goat, I will tell you he will not take to this marriage kindly, nor will his anger lessen as you predict it will.” his violet eyes fell on me. "Additionally, as a partner in an unhappy arranged marriage I would advocate against forcing your daughter into one. If my niece doesn't wish to marry her brother, then perhaps you should find another groom for her. You are risking much for a union that no one seems very excited about except you.” his eyes glare into my mother's, heaving with implied accusations.

“This is not an Old Valryian Tale, Maegor,” My mother responds dismissively, "Love is not essential to a successful marriage and even if it is not present at the beginning, it is up to the two people within the relationship to make it grow. Do not project your own marital failures onto my daughter's upcoming nuptials.” My uncle's jaw clenched in irritation, but before he could retort my father ended the argument.

“This is not up for debate Rhaena. You will marry Aegon and that is final.” he declared. "It is your mother and I's wish and there will be no further discussion on the matter.” I glared at him and then
my mother, hating them in that moment. I couldn't understand why my parents, especially my mother, were so determined that I marry my brother. Later on I would realize it was my mother's way of ensuring her son sat on the throne. As the first grandchild, I had a strong claim to my father's crown and throne. If I married Aegon, that would ensure no one, such as my husband, could use my claim against him. At the time, however, I was just a hurt and angry child who felt betrayed by all those she loved. Without another word I stormed from the room, wiping angry, hot tears from my face as I did. My father called out to me, but I ignored him storming down the hall back towards my chambers. I heard someone follow me and when I felt a hand on my shoulder I turned angrily, expecting my mother of father, but no, it was Visenya. My anger died in my throat and I was just filled with sadness.

"You said I'd be with him," I blubbered, tears running down my cheeks from my lilac eyes. "I believed you." she gently embraced me and I clung to her like a drowning man does a log. My great-aunt was not an overly affectionate woman by nature, but at times like this there was no one who I felt cared for me more.

"You will be, but not now." she soothed, gently stroking my hair. I pulled away and looked up at her imploringly.

"I want to be, though. I crave him as a dragon does the sky." my body trembled with the passion I had long been suppressing. "And I will be with him, even if I have to make my brother-husband a cuckold." My great-aunt sighed.

"Your mother and father made one good point in their mess of an argument, you are a Targaryen. Do you understand what that means?" she asks me.

"I can ride a dragon and am doomed to ride my brother in the same fashion." I respond petulantly. Visenya gives me a rueful smile.

"That is part of it, but more importantly: Targaryens take what we want." I hear a strange implication in her words. She takes my hand. "My husband and I wanted an empire that rivaled the freehold, so we took it. Your uncle wanted Balerion, so he claimed him. If you want to be with Maegor, then you will have to take him for yourself." to this day these words ring within my very soul. Her eyes almost glow in the dim corridor as she whispers to me, "If you go to him, he will not refuse you, but you must act swiftly." she then kissed my forehead and walked away into the darkness, her red cloak billowing behind her. I stood in shock for what felt like hours before returning to my room. I pulled off my gown, nearly ripping the seams of the delicate silk. I stared at my body in the mirror. I was truly a woman now: tall and full, with swaths of smooth, fair skin. I drew my robe around myself and took a deep breath. My great-aunt’s words reverberated in my mind. Targaryens take what we want. I wanted Maegor more than I had ever wanted anything. I had been waiting for him to be given to me or me to him, but perhaps my time of waiting was over. I swallowed my doubts and stepped into the dark night. I crept through the halls, fearing every sound was a guard who’d drag me back to my chambers. None did, and I wondered if some magic was helping me along the way. I entered his chambers without much trouble and sat on his bed waiting. When he finally entered he seemed strangely unsurprised at my presence.

"If you have come to ask me to speak on your behalf, I already have. Your parents are quite determined for you to marry your brother." his voice is strong and sends shivers running down my spine. "You are not the first to be forced into a loveless marriage and you will not be the last.” he looked up at me and I held his gaze. "if it's any comfort, know that it is not as bad as it may seem. If you do not agree with him you can find numerous excuses to be apart and only share his bed for the purpose of providing our family with the heirs we need."
“I know my parents will not be swayed on the issue of my marriage, I haven’t come for that.” I stand and remove my robe. He stares at me in shock for a second. "I am here for you."

“Rhaena-” he begins, but I stride across the room and cover his mouth with my hand.

“I know what you’re going to say. You are married, you’re the king’s brother, but who cares about them? They don’t care about us.” he gently removes my hand from his lips and my fingers tingle where they had brushed his fair beard.

"I don't think you quite understand-" he begins, but I wave my hand to cut him off.

"If you don't want me, then tell me now and I will leave. I will marry my brother without complaint and fuck him until I grow large with his child and give our family, as you say, the heirs we need, but if you want me, then I am yours and it is your children who will sit on the Iron Throne.” He could easily force me away. He is much larger than I and without doubt three times as strong, but he cradles my hand in his with a softness I did not expect.

“I want you to understand what you’re doing. You are the king’s daughter, the future Queen, doing this could ruin you and even rumors of it could destroy your legacy.” I stood on my tiptoes and pressed my lips to his. When I pulled away his eyes were filled with lust.

“Screw the king and screw his plans for my legacy.” I said and threw myself into his arms. I gave him my maidenhead that night and have never regretted it for an instant. What I do regret is not leaving him before the dawn, which I blame on my inexperience with illicit affairs. My carelessness ensured his wife found out about our tryst. Lady Hightower was enraged, as one would expect, and stormed to my parents about her husband’s betrayal. They were also understandably incensed. My father promptly banished my uncle for this breach of trust, stripping him of his office and sending him to Pentos. Their resulting argument almost culminated in my father killing him on dragonback as my uncle flew off on Balerion. The official reason was not given for some time, until news reached us that he taken a second wife, but really, it was a scandal concocted to hide a much larger one. This was the final straw that soured my great-aunt’s relationship with my father. I heard her screaming at him as I sat waiting for my own reprimand.

“Mother, he gave me no choice!” I heard my father yell, his voice pleading and broken. "Please don't be angry!" his weakness disgusted me. It also appeared to do little to pacify my great-aunt, who replied,

“There is always a choice! Countless terrible ones on your part have led us here! Do you think I have not seen how you and your wife have been behaving of late?! You allow your court to whisper obscene things about your family, allow your councilors to kick you around as if you were a diseased dog! You have had so many choices, Aenys, yet you have always chosen wrong!”

"Mother-"

"I am not your mother and never have I been so glad of that fact!” she stormed out of the room, barely sparing me a second glance as her words pierced my father like a thousand blades. She may even have forgiven this betrayal with time, but my father added insult to injury when he gave my brother Aegon the title of Prince of Dragonstone at the banquet for my brother Viserys’ name day. She stormed from the banquet in disgust, ignoring the outraged murmurs of the attending courtiers. I ran after her.

“Grandmother!” I yelled, running to keep up with her swift strides. “Grandmother please!” she stopped, turning towards me. Her eyes were as cold as a Winter’s night.
“I expected better of you.” she says, her condemnation more painful than my father's disappointed looks or mother's baleful glares. I swallowed.

"I was foolish, I'm sorry." she shook her head in disdain."My father is a fool and we both know it! If not this, my mother and his councilors would have found another reason to banish him! We both know they see him as a threat to my father's rule!" she regards me coldly, but says nothing, only turning to continue her journey towards her stabled dragon. “It doesn’t matter what they do anyways, the deed is done and it is your line who will rule!” she stopped, turning to stare at me. Her eyes drift to where my hands protectively clutch my stomach and she gives me a smile that is worthy of a dragon. She flew off that night to Dragonstone and I wouldn’t see her again until my family fled there during the Faith’s uprising, she didn't even bother to attend my sham of a wedding. When my children Aerea and Rhaella were born on Dragonstone, she held them in her arms, gently running hand along their chubby cheeks and through their white-gold hair. To this day, I always say Aerea looks like her, she certainly has her eyes. Perhaps that is why Maegor made her his heir over Rhaella, because she looked more like his mother. It’s not like he could use blood to choose, after all, they were both equally his. After Crackenhall and the battle beneath the God’s Eye which took my brother’s life, I didn’t see her again until she came to fetch me on Fair Isle. I remember when I saw Vhagar fly overhead and land in the central courtyard, scaring the Farman guards who happened to be there. I ran through the castle and straight into her arms. “You found me.” I whispered to her. “I did the spell right.” When I looked into her eyes I saw nothing, but pity.

“Oh my child, you have no idea what you’ve done.” I found her words strange, but was too excited at the prospect of returning to King’s Landing to fully ponder the severity of her words. After all, I was about to see Maegor again. When I think of our reunion now, I believe this may have been when she realized there was no way for me to escape the fate she had tried desperately to save me from. She had feared I'd offer the gods too much and even then she had been right. For when I returned to King’s Landing I found he already had multiple Queens, Alyss Harroway for one, but worse, the formidable Tyanna of the Tower. I saw the spells she had cast over him, stroking his lust for blood, amongst other things. I wondered why my Great Aunt has not dealt with the witch herself, she certainly had the power to. To this day I don't have an answer. Perhaps she could no longer pay the price for magic or perhaps she was unwilling to offer more. In either case, we worked together to rid Maegor of her. Compared to us, Tyanna was an amateur, but when the time came I told the gods I would give them anything if I could be Maegor's wife, his one true love. They granted my request and Maegor killed his wife and Mistress of Whispers with his own hands. I revelled in the sight, but my aunt had looked at me with disappointed eyes. She knew I had made a deal with the gods I could not possibly complete.

I can still remember the last time I saw her. She was still strong then, but in less than a year she would weaken and die. I could see her death looming and so could she, so once again, I begged her to teach me what she knew.

“Please, grandmother,” I begged. “I already know so much, with your help I could easily learn it all.” she shook her head at me as she had done all those years ago.

“No.” she said, denying my request again. As before I grew angry.

“What are you so scared of?” I asked, taunting her slightly. She raised an eyebrow at me, eyes boring into my soul, robbing me of my strength and confidence. "I have already proven my abilities, have I not? Proven my strength?" I suppose i was like my father in this regard, I wanted to please her.

“You still don’t understand, do you?” she murmured. “You have not even begun to pay the price
for what you have bartered from the gods. I can smell the deals hanging over you like an axe. Obviously you did not heed my words of warning." she pursed her lips and looked down at me with such imperious command that I felt myself shrink slightly. "Tell me, Rhaena, what price do you think you will have to pay for the siege at Crackenhall? For the spell which slowed the swift Quicksilver? For the charms that led me to you? For the enchantments that finally ended that bitch Tyanna?" I stared at her in confusion. I understood her words, but not their meaning, or perhaps I did understand, but refused to accept what she was saying.

“I paid in blood.” I respond, but she shakes her head again. “As the gods demand.”

“Blood is only the beginning.” she responds, sitting down in a chair like it was a throne, staring at me like I was a disobedient child. “You will have to pay much more before your life is done.”

“What have you paid, grandmother?” I asked, beginning to feel fear nipping at my heart. She sighed, and I began to see the beginning of the weariness that would eventually consume her.

“The gods are not clear with what they take, but I can guess,” she answers. “I know what I paid for Maegor’s birth, although the gods didn’t cash in until they took Aemma from me.” my heart dropped at the mention of youngest aunt. I still remember her laughing at her wedding to Ronnel Arryn and how Maegor had hanged all those who participated in the rebellion that had killed her. “For Westeros they took your Grandmother, perhaps they even took Aegon as payment for this kingdom. If they took all that from me, I can only imagine what they will take from you.”

“What else will they?” I asked, suddenly scared.

“I’m not sure, Rhaena. Your daughters perhaps. Pretty Aerea is your favorite, no? No doubt she will suffer. Maybe they will even take my son from you.” my heart stopped inside my chest.

"No, not him, anything, but him.” my voice cracked and I felt tears form in my eyes, but Visenya stared back at me coldly, no trace of sympathy crossing her fair face.

"Here is my one and only lesson for you: magic demands balance and your dues have not yet been paid. You made a no strings attached deal with the gods, and when they come to collect their payment, you will be ripped asunder. Do not ask if you can protect yourself from them, for no mortal can withstand a god. Enjoy what you have now, granddaughter, for the future is dark and will not be kind to you.” she had dismissed me after that and soon enough she was dead. She was right, of course. The gods would take many things from me to pay for the magic I used to reach my goal. When Maegor died five years after he ascended the throne, I knew the gods had come to collect their debts. Soon enough, I lose almost all that was precious to me. When Balerion flew off with Aerea and she returned riddled with disease I knew it was my payment for Maegor. When Elissa left me and took three of my dragon eggs, I knew she was also payment for something I had done. I am old now, and filled with bitterness. Soon enough I will die and no one will care enough to remember me.

“Did my mother die as a part of a deal for my ascension?” Maegor once asked me as he sat on the Iron Throne with me in his lap.

“It is best not to ponder the will of the gods.” I had replied, nuzzling his neck. Part of me did wonder, however, if he was right. Was her death payment for Maegor’s ascension? For his birth? Did she die to pay for my sins? The gods are cruel and I know they’re waiting to collect their debts. I curled closer to Maegor, feeling the warmth of his body against mine. His embrace always made me feel safe, as if he could protect me from everything and anything, but I know it’s no use to think such things. If the gods could defeat someone as indomitable as Visenya Targaryen, then they will make easy work of the likes of me.
Chapter End Notes

This chapter got way darker than I originally planned it to be. Visenya's mystical abilities have always fascinated me, as it certainly seemed like the Targaryen's conquest of Westeros was supernaturally aided (other than their dragons of course). Rhaena is not one of my favorite Targaryens and researching her for this chapter made me question whether she was actually as victimized as history claims. She seemed pretty terrible to all those around her, especially her third husband Androw. Her relationship with her brother certainly lacks the true-love aspect that characterizes other Targaryen marriages, such as Alysanne and Jaeherys or Baelon and Alyssa, so I found it likely she was in love with some one else. Obviously in canon, she was not in love with Maegor (although Elissa Farman is a completely different story), but I definitely found it intriguing exploring the potential mentor relationship Visenya might have had with her grand-niece, especially within the parameters established by chapters 1+2. Up next is a planned trilogy involving Jaeherys, Alysanne, and Alyssa Velryon, but again, if there's any Particular Targaryen you'd like to get a pov from, feel free to suggest one and I'll see what I can do.
Aegon the Conqueror is dead and Orys Baratheon returns to King’s Landing to say farewell to his king and brother and to comfort his sister, soon-to-be Queen Dowager, Visenya.

Why hello there,

As requested, here's a chapter from Orys' POV. Although the next trilogy is already underway, it was a lot of fun to take a break from that and explore the OG Targaryen Trio's relationship again. It's pretty unclear exactly why Aegon married both his sister's and how exactly Orys fit into the Conqueror's trio, so I tried to flesh that out in the context of what I've already written. Hope you like it! If there's any other character you'd like a POV from while I work on the Alysanne, Jaeherys, and Alyssa stories, please feel free to comment and I'll see what I can do.

Yeah, yeah, I own nothing, please don't sue me

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Orys Baratheon

“I never thought we’d out live them.” Orys murmurs to Visenya as they watch Aegon’s pyre burn. “I always thought we would die first.” the Queen, soon to be Queen Dowager, stared at the fire with admirable stoicism. If he hadn’t known her all his life he’d think she was almost unmoved by her husband of nearly half a century’s death, but he did know her. He saw the slight redness beneath her eyes, the tenseness of her shoulders, and the slight down turn of her full lips. She was hurting deeply and Orys wanted nothing more than to wrap her in his arms and comfort her.

“We should have. Both of us have nearly fallen in battle, but come out alive, yet they, who were better than both of us in spirit, are gone.” her words are pragmatic, but he can hear the pain dripping from every word. “For the gods are cruel, and they take the best and leave the rest of us behind to mourn.” he stares at her for a second, tracing the lines of her face. He gently wipes a tear as it escapes from her violet eyes. “Sometimes it feels as if they take those we love most, just to feast on our suffering.”

“Perhaps that is our payment for what they granted us and taken from others.” Orys murmurs. A strange look crosses the Queen’s face.

“Oh, it is payment indeed and our debts are not even close to being paid.” her words chill Orys to the bone. Visenya’s wise, sad eyes bore into his for a second, before she returns to watching Aegon’s body burn. His eyes drift back to the pyre as well. He regrets not seeing Aegon before he died, regrets leaving Visenya here alone. He had been so angry, so full of rage against Dorne all
those years ago when he had resigned his position of Hand of the King that he had refused to see how much his family needed him. In his shame and lust for revenge he had forgotten that which was most important. Instead of by his brother's side as he breathed his last, he had been planning another campaign against those cursed Dornishmen. If not for Visenya's raven, he might not have even come to the funeral.

"I'm sorry, brother." he whispers to the pyre. "I'm sorry for letting you down." he thought no one could hear his words, but when he felt a hand grab his he knew Visenya had heard him, or perhaps sensed his apology. He looked down to see her pale hand in his then back up at her. She didn't look at him, her eyes remaining locked on her husband's pyre, but her grip is strong. In her hand, he can feel her forgiveness, both from herself and Aegon. He squeezes back and for a second things are as he wishes they always had been. Part of him still thinks, greedily, that Visenya should have been his wife instead of Aegon's. He would not have forced her to be one of two wives, even if, as Aegon claimed, they didn't align sexually. He can still hear Aegon's words now:

"I love her, of course I do. Visenya is the strongest, most beautiful woman I know!" his brother had said, indigo eyes staring into Orys' black ones, begging him to understand.

"Then how can you shame her like this? She is the firstborn, the first to claim her dragon, in Valyria she would be your father's heir without question. She should be a Queen, not the first of two wives!" Aegon's shoulders slumped in exhaustion at Orys' rebuke.

"I know that." his brother's voice was tired, but firm. Orys could sense he wouldn't back down.

"Then tell me, Aegon, why do you need another wife? Rhaenys may be lovely, but she does not outshine Visenya." Orys replies, judgement and scorn dripping from every word he spoke.

"You once said Visenya was your perfect partner, equal to you in every way: wits, intelligence, interests, the only thing she is not equal to you in is her prowess with a sword," he stares his brother right in the eyes, "for she has been beating you in duels since we were children. What has changed?"

"Nothing! We are still perfect for each other in most everything! It's just, well, we have different carnal desires." Aegon looked down at his hands as he spoke. "On our wedding night, Orys, she cried after the bedding. Despite her sensuality, she doesn't have nearly the amount of lust I do and I hate to have to force her. Rhaenys and I are matched sexually if in nothing else." Orys stared at his younger brother in shock for a second.

"You're willing to bring shame to our sister because she won't wet your cock as much as you'd like? What kind of selfish fool are you?" Orys voice brimmed with rage. Aegon's purple eyes, darker than Visenya's, but no less dangerous, narrowed at his brother's words.

"Careful, brother. Don't forget we are not equals." Orys bristled at his brother's rebuke, at his audacity to pull rank to defend himself against an uncomfortable truth.

"This will hurt her, Aegon! Even if she is as," Orys clears his throat. "Averse to marriage relations as you claim. She loves you." Aegon did have the decency to look ashamed in that moment, but his eyes were hard and his mouth was set.

"I know and I love her too, but I am Lord of Dragonstone and this is not old Valryia. Here she will have to accept what I decide." Orys had hit him in the face for that and despite Aegon's threats, he had not had Orys' hand cut off for daring to hit the future Lord of Dragonstone. Orys would have gladly lost the hand though if it could have dissuaded his brother from his course of action. How ironic he would end up losing his hand anyways, and for a much worse cause. He had despised
Aegon for moons after that, especially as he saw the pain in Visenya’s eyes as Rhaenys paraded Aegon’s affection and lust for all to see. Perhaps that his when his abhorrence for his youngest sister had begun. He knew Rhaenys was not an unkind woman and normally she would never have hurt their sister so, but she loved Aegon, perhaps fiercer than Visenya did, and delighted that he had apparently chosen her over their older sister.

"Do you have no shame?" he had asked Rhaenys, glaring at the dragon necklace Aegon had gifted her for their wedding. "Are you so self-absorbed that you can't see how much this hurts your sister." Rhaenys' normally gentle eyes had flared at Orys angrily.

"Careful, Orys. Your jealousy is beginning to show." the youngest Targaryen had replied. "Visenya will get over it eventually." It had taken all Orys' willpower not to rip that golden dragon from around her pale neck. "This passion you hold for dear Visenya will do neither of you good. Perhaps it is time you find a wife." Rhaenys had smiled at him dazzlingly. "Perhaps a bastard Velryon girl will do, One that looks like my sister?" she had leaned close, whispering in his ear. "or perhaps a boy that looks like my beloved husband." if Orys had had a dragon in that moment, he would have fed her to it. She was right, however, his long held passion for Visenya is unfair. He knows Aegon loved Visenya, even if he could only spend one night with her for every ten he spent with Rhaenys, and that Viseanya, despite everything Aegon did wrong, loved her. Even worse, it’s cruel to his own beautiful, loving wife, his Argella, who bore him two hearty sons and was loyal to him until the day she died. It would be a lie to claim he didn’t come to care for his lady, who was once a princess in her own right, but not in the way he has always cared for Visenya. He had loved her since they were children, since the day she was born to his father’s wife. He still remembers the day when his father, although he was never allowed to call him that, had taken a young Orys to the new baby’s nursery. In a single moment of almost unheard of tenderness, Lord Aerion had picked up his infant daughter and handed her to the three year old boy.

“This is your sister,” the Heir of Dragonstone had said softly, looking down at his dark-haired bastard with an expression that one could almost call love. “She will be Lady Of Dragonstone one day, but until then, she is yours to protect.” Orys looked down at the baby in his arms as she cooed softly.

“What’s her name?” Orys had asked softly, staring down at the pale bundle in awe.

“Visenya, Visenya Targaryen.” Lord Aerion replied. “She will do great things, her mother has seen it.” The baby cooed softly and opened her eyes. As soon as his black eyes met her purple ones, Orys was struck my a deep, fraternal love. This was his little sister, his father’s heir, and one day she would ride a dragon and surpass all those who were bound to the earth.

“Hello Visenya.” Orys said and the baby gurgled happily at his voice, waving her chubby fists at him. “You’re a beauty and will have lots of lords and knights fighting for your favour, but don’t worry, I will protect you from anyone who tries to hurt you, even if you will one day have a dragon and no longer need me to.” Lord Aerion smiled and for that instant Orys had felt like a part of the family. Naturally, he hadn’t assumed the person who would one day break her heart would be their brother, someone Orys couldn’t and wouldn’t kill, even for her. A burst of flames drew him out of his reverie as Balerion shot another arc of hot fire onto his rider’s pyre. Aegon was finally consumed and the court drifted away. Young Aenys, soon to be king, approached Visenya, followed closely by his family. Tears filled the Prince’s eyes.

“Mother,” he said. “I’m very sorry-” she pulled him into a hug, hiding his watery eyes in the curtains of her hair, which was turning more silver every day. Orys stood by her side, smiling comfortably at Aenys’ children. Young Rhaena stood with a stiff upper lip, although her eyes were red from crying. Her younger brothers were not nearly as strong, and tear tracks could be seen
clearly on their faces. Maegor, Visenya’s only son and Orys’ favorite nephew looked the picture of royal mourning. He was dressed in a black tunic with a sorrowful expression his handsome face, but no tears were seen in his violet eyes. He nodded to Orys as he approached.

“Uncle,” Maegor said, taking his hand in his. “It is good to see you, despite the sad circumstances.” he was a man of two and five now, and taller than Aegon had ever been. He was tall and imposing, looking every inch the king he should have been. Orys often wondered if Aegon regretted the order of his children’s birth. Maegor looked the part of the king, had the warriors body and mind for a throne as new and perilous as the one Aegon had forged from fire, blood, and iron. Aenys, on the other hand, had a mind to be the Hand of the King as Orys had been. In another life they would have made the perfect pair, holding together their father and mother’s kingdom, but as it was now, Maegor was a threat to Aenys’ rule and even Orys could see how the soon-to-be-king's supporters were working against the Prince of Dragonstone.

“It is good to see you as well, Maegor.” Orys responds, grasping his nephew’s hand as he had once done his brother’s. Maegor steps closer to Orys, glancing at his mother who is still surrounded by the family of his half-brother.

“I have a request for you.” he says softly, his violet eyes holding sadness, but also worry. Orys nods.

“Anything.”

“Look after my mother tonight. I have to fly to Dragonstone to fetch Ceryse for Aenys’ coronation, but I don’t want her to be alone.” Maegor’s words are surprisingly caring. Orys had heard that the quiet and studious, if dower, Maegor had grown into an equally stoic and cold man. In many ways he was similar to his mother in that way, stoic in public, but caring in private. “With my father gone, the vipers at court will no doubt begin to work against her and attempt get rid of her. I will not have two of my parents die this moon.” Orys nods in understanding.

“Of course, no harm will come to her while you’re away. Have you a dragon of your own now?” Orys asked. Maegor’s eyes strayed to the Black Dread, who still sat by his master’s pyre beside Vhagar, who was nuzzling him comfortingly.

“I do now.” Maegor responds, then gave short bow and walked off towards the dragons. As he retreated, Orys couldn’t help, but notice how much like Aegon he looked.

Chapter End Notes

I always felt like Orys had a real thing for Visenya. After all, they were both warriors and probably would have had a great relationship if she hadn't married Aegon. I kinda tested the waters with the conflict that might have occurred when Aegon decided to marry both his sisters instead of just one, so that could be a potential interlude chapter in the future. I had a lot more freedom when writing this little story since it wasn't a part of a larger story arc. If you like this type of story, feel free to comment and I'll be happy to write some more one-shots like this.
Jaehaerys-The Price We Pay

Chapter Summary

As Alysanne and Jaeherys rejoice at the birth of their daughter, the king and queen disagree on what to name the new princess. Alysanne wishes to honor their great aunt, but a dark night from long ago makes Jaeherys weary of naming any of his children "Visenya".

Chapter Notes

Hi people,

Here is the first chapter of the Jaeherys, Alysanne, and Alyssa Velryon trilogy. This chapter is from the POV of Jaeherys, one of my all time favorite Targaryen kings. I always wondered if all the tragedy that befell the second and third generations of Targaryens was the result of some magical fallout. It's also fascinating to me that although the Targaryens had the tendency to reuse names, see the six Aegons, multiple Rhaenyses, and numerous Viserys, that there are only two Visenyas, the Dragon Queen and a stillborn princess. In canon this is likely the result of her unpopularity due to the whole "Maegor the Usurper" episode, but I always thought it could be because of some fear of the legacy of that name. In anycase, this was a fun chapter to write, so if you like it please leave kudos and any constructive comments you like.

as always, I own nothing, no lawsuits please

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Jaehaerys

Jaeherys stares down at the bundle in his sister-wife’s arms. The baby looks much as her sister Daenerys had at birth, a soft head of golden hair and an angelic pale face that caused his heart to clench so painfully with love that he wondered if it would kill him. Alysanne, glowing like a goddess despite the ardors of childbirth, held the baby tightly to her chest, as if afraid their new daughter would melt away into the mist and darkness that had taken her older sister.

“She’s beautiful, my love.” he whispered to his wife softly. Alysanne looked at him with tears in her beautiful blue eyes.

“She has your nose Jae.” she murmurs.

“But your hair, she’ll be a beauty when she is grown,” he says, smiling at his wife. “Just like her mother.” A tear falls down Alysanne’s cheek which Jaeherys wipes away with a gentle hand. “Daenerys would have loved her.” Alysanne replied, gently stroking her baby’s soft down of hair, tears still glittering in her azure eyes.

“Indeed she would.” he responded, feeling the familiar ache that talk of his oldest daughter always
awoke in him. Sometimes he thought the grief might kill him, other times it seemed like but a flesh wound. He often wondered if he would grieve her for the rest of his life. Part of him hoped he would, another part selfishly wished for the hole in his heart to be filled.

“What should we name her, Jae?” his wife asked softly, running a gentle finger along the newborn’s plump cheeks.

“That’s a difficult question for we have so many good names to choose from.” he replies in half jest. “We could name her Rhaena after our sister, Aenya after our father, Aemma after our aunt—”

“I want to name her Visenya.” Alysanne interrupts and Jaeherys was struck my the force behind her word. There was a spark in his wife’s eyes that he hadn’t seen in quite some time.

“Why?” he asks, dread beginning to fill his heart.

“Why not? It’s a good name.” Alysanne responds and Jaeherys sighs.

“For starters, mother hates that name above all others, save our Uncle’s—” he begins, but Alysanne shakes her head.

“Mother also disproved of our marriage, her opinion really has no place here.” Alysanne interjects, tossing her head dismissively.

“Nevertheless, the name has, well, certain connotations—” he tries again, but his wife rolls his eyes.

“Connotations of fearlessness, of intelligence, of strength—” Alysanne rants, her voice rising.

“Yes, but also of dark sorcery, ruthlessness, and cruelty!” his tone grows louder to match hers.

“You know what they say Visenya—”

“Our grandmother.” his wife interjects forcefully.

“Our Great-Aunt.” he asserts.

“The woman who was mother to our father in all the ways that matter!” Alysanne’s eyes bore into his, blue against purple, dragon’s will against dragon’s will.

“The woman who also bore Maegor the Tyrant!” he spits. Alysanne frowns at him. “That’s what people call him now, even if it is far from the truth.” Alysanne shakes her head at him, but Jaeherys persists. “They say Visneya killed our father, Aly. People whisper that she’s a kinslayer and Kingslayer.” His wife scoffs at his words.

“Both of us know that’s not true.” she replies and she’s right. Jaeherys knows well Visenya did not kill their father, but that doesn’t change the fact that the world does.

“It’d still look bad if we name our daughter after her. Look at her, my love, she is an innocent babe, spare her the legacy of that name! Please, pick another, for her sake.” Jaeherys pleads, using his most persuasive tone. His wife, however, remains unmoved.

“I like Visenya.” Alysanne repeats stubbornly. “Our Grandmother was a great woman, without her you wouldn’t have your life, let alone that crown you so proudly strut about with upon your head.” Jaeherys feels his pride bristle at Alysanne’s jab.

“I shouldn’t have had to wear it! If not for her, Aegon would be king and many people would still have their lives, including Viserys.” his retort is laced with grief and contempt and his heart aches for his two older brothers, both who died as a result of their Uncle’s rise to power and reign.
“What Maegor did was not his mother’s fault. She gave him life, yes, but what he became was as much our father’s fault as hers!” tears dot Alysanne’s pale cheeks. “Who let the realm fall into such chaos? Who left our uncle no choice but to rule with a heavy hand and cold heart?” rage rises within Jaeherys at Alysanne’s attack on their father.

“Don’t you dare speak ill of our father, he was a victim of circumstance.”

“And how dare you try to use our siblings to win an argument! I miss Viserys and Aegon as much as you do!” she cries, her blue eyes dancing with grief and rage. “But if you’re so keen to speak of rumours about our family, need I remind you of what they say about our sister?” Jaeherys swallowed nervously as Alysanne glowers at him. “It is said Rhaena had as much a hand in Aegon’s death as Maegor did. The smallfolk whisper that our dear sister drugged Quicksilver, ensuring that Aegon would die in the Battle Beneath the God’s Eye! Is that the legacy you want this sweet babe to have?” Jaeherys feels his wife’s words cut through his arguments like a knife through meat.

“I too have heard what Rhaena supposedly did, but who taught her what she knew? Whose example did she follow?” he cuts back. The baby begins to whimper in her mother’s arms and the anger seeps out of Alysanne’s beautiful face.

“Don’t tell me you believe mother’s lies about her?” his wife whispers, rocking the baby slowly. “You know Visenya would never have used sorcery so thoughtlessly.” Jaeherys feels his own rage melt away as he watches his wife rock their daughter. “We’d both be dead if not for her. Don’t forget what she did for you.” a flash of guilt strikes his heart. “Mother claims she was cruel and cold, but that’s not true and you know it!” He looks at the floor and feels ashamed. For he remembers his Great-Aunt well and owes her much more than history will ever tell. Without her, he would be dead for his sister’s sins, as his brothers and father already were. A flash of light from the window draws his eye and suddenly he remembers the night his family fled from King’s Landing and the knives of the Faith of the Seven. The night had been dark and stormy, the rain feeling like needles against his face as the dragons sped through the angry, violent sky. His father shook on Quicksilver’s back every time lightning flashed around them as they flew and Jaeherys was convinced they’d all die long before they reached the safe haven of Dragonstone. When the rocky island finally came into view, he had never felt more relieved to see the harsh towers of the imposing castle. Quicksilver roared in greeting, his cries echoing around the desolate looking island. For a second there was no response and he felt his father tense in fear and anxiety. If the Targaryen Stronghold had fallen, all was lost. Just as Jaeherys was about to give up all hope, a deep cry was heard from the Keep. A tower of bronze and red flames shot up from the central courtyard and Vhagar’s song was music to the terrified prince’s ears. The Dragons landed in the courtyard under Vhagar’s watchful gaze and Jaeherys will always remember the sight of his Great Aunt standing there waiting for them. Her hair glimmered in the dancing torchlight, the strands escaping her long braid clinging to her face and neck like molten silver or gold as the rain poured down upon the Royal Family. Jaeherys’ father motioned for them to stay on the Dragons as he approached the Dragon Queen, whose face was as still as that of the statue that would one day denote her crypt.

“Mother.” he said, falling to his knees in front of her. Jaeherys heard his mother hiss in anger at this self-abasement, but Aenys I ignored her. “We need your protection. I know we have wronged you, but I pray you can find it in your heart to forgive us and help us in our hour of need.” Visenya stared down at him for a moment and the world itself seemed to hold its breath. Lightning flashes, thunder roared, but no one in the courtyard, not even the dragons, moved a muscle. Visenya was beautiful in that moment, appearing to be one with the storm, gorgeous, in a dangerous, deadly way that was as enticing as it was frightening. Jaeherys’ grandfather had once leaned down and asked the small prince,
“Who is the most beautiful woman in the seven kingdoms?” Jaeherys had thought of many women in that moment. His mother was gorgeous, his sister striking, but even at that young age he knew the answer his grandfather was looking for.

“Aunt Visenya, of course.” he responded, smiling at his grandfather. The Conqueror’s indigo eyes sparkled as he watched Visenya teach Aegon how to dance.

“Smart answer, Jaeherys. If you’re lucky, you’ll fall in love with a woman half as good as your Great-Aunt.” Jaeherys hadn’t thought Visenya particularly beautiful at that point. Sure, she was handsome, in a cold, harsh sort of way, but the most beautiful woman in the seven kingdoms? He thought not. Yet on that fateful night, when her violet eyes glowed with ferocity, her hair shone like the finest gold, and her smooth, pale face radiated a calm chaos that made her seem like a goddess reborn, he saw what his grandfather had spoken of. Visenya was more than beautiful. He wouldn’t understand what he felt for her in that moment until Alysanne had blossomed years later. He had fallen in love with her in that moment, a deep, filial love, mixed with admiration and respect.

Lightning crashed and the world seemed to breathe again. Visenya knelt down and wrapped her arms around the shaking man at her feet.

“You will be safe here, Aenys.” she murmured, staring past him straight at Jaehaerys. “Dragons must fight together, or not at all.” it was the look of pure determination that convinced the young prince that all would be well. That, and a host of dragons on the island that would keep even the most zealous fanatic at bay. Unfortunately, Visenya couldn’t protect them from Rhaena’s folly. Despite her objections, and that of their parents, Rhaena and Aegon decided to take a royal progress around the kingdoms. It was plain to anyone that this was a terrible idea, likely to end in their death or capture by the militant faith. Yet they flew off anyways and soon found themselves besieged at Crackenhall. Upon hearing this news, King Aenys I collapsed and fell into a death-like-sleep from which no one could rouse him. Jaehaerys can still hear his mother screaming at Visenya as his father lay on his deathbed.

“Help him!” his mother ordered the Queen Dowager, her body shaking with fear and grief.

“Do I look like a Maester to you?” Visenya had replied, her eyes hard as stone and sharp as a blade. “If they say there is nothing to be done, then there is nothing I, or anyone else, can do. He was always a fragile child, it seems this latest misfortune has taken its toll.” his mother grew angry and threw curses and abuse at Visenya. His sister began to sob beside him and Jaeherys pulled a small Alysanne closer to him, although he couldn’t protect her from the misfortune that was quickly consuming their family.

“You cold bitch! For all your talk of being his mother, you just want him dead so your son can take his place!” his mother’s words were high and manic. “I know you know magic, spells, potions, old valyrian charms, something that could save him!” Visenya placed her hands on Alyssa’s shaking shoulders.

“You speak of that which you don’t understand, Alyssa. The “magic” you claim I possess is not something you can just use on a whim. Asking the gods for favours is as likely to backfire as it is to be granted and there is always a price-”

“And I will pay it, as long as you save him!” his mother retorted desperately. Visenya shook her head.

“We are not talking a price of gold or jewels, Alyssa. We you bargain with the gods, you do not choose what you pay or when you pay it. It could cost you one of your children’s lives, or perhaps the lives of their children. Perhaps Aenys’ condition is even a price being paid for something your daughter has already bartered for. Would you risk your remaining children, all of them, so that
Aenys can live a few more miserable years?” her tone is kind, but words cold and Jaehaerys watches his mother collapse on the floor. “Look at them,” she orders his mother “Look at Jaeherys and Alysanne.” their mother looks at them with purple eyes filled with tears. “Are you willing to sacrifice them for Aenys?” for a second Jaeherys fears his mother will say yes, but through her sobs she shakes her head.

“No.” she whispers, looking down at the floor. Visenya sighs, then turns her eyes to Jaeherys and Alysanne. Alysanne pulls away from Jaeherys and runs towards them. He expects her to run to their mother, but instead she wraps her small arms around Visenya’s legs. Their great-aunt looks down at her tenderly, stroking Alysanne’s fair hair.

“Is papa going to die?” she asks Visenya in a high, weak voice.

“Yes.” their great-aunt replies softly and gently untangles the girl from her leg. Alysanne begins to cry and Jaeherys watches as Visenya picks the sobbing girl up and hugs her close. She turns and heads towards the door. As she puts her fingers on the handle she turns back and stares at Jaehaerys. “Come along, little prince, no one should have to see their parents in such a state.” she orders and walks out of the chamber of death. Jaeherys stares at his mother’s sobbing form for a second then moves to follow her.

“Don’t follow that snake!” his mother cries, eyes red from crying. “Stay here.” Jaeherys stares at her for a second. The woman on the floor looks like his mother, but her eyes scare him. They are wild and remind him of a feral dog’s. She reaches for him, but he recoils from her outstretched arm and runs out the door. He follows Visenya back to her chambers. When he arrives he sees Alysanne sleeping in his great-aunts impressive bed. His eyes immediately drift to the sword hanging above the headboard. Second only in fame to Blackfyre, Dark Sister shines in the light from the hearth, radiating a strange aura of calm power. Visenya motions for Jaeherys to sit with her in front of the hearth.

“Listen to me closely, little prince.” she said, speaking softly. “Your father will die tonight. When he does the gods will begin to collect on all the debts incurred by your sister on her foolhardy quest to be with the man she loves.” Jaeherys stares at her in confusion.

“There is no mention of blood debts in the Seven Pointed Star.” he replies. Visenya scoffed at his words.

“We are not talking of that sorry excuse for a faith that is currently tearing our kingdom apart. No, Jaeherys, I speak of the Gods of Old Valyria, who when given leave, take and take and take until they feel a debt is paid. Your brothers are doomed and by all rights so are you, but I will not let Rhaena’s foolishness cost us everything.” Jaeherys stared at her as a sense of dread began building in his chest. Normally he would laugh if someone began speaking of gods and deals, but not Visenya. When she spoke, there was no jesting, no lies, she spoke as if what she was saying was fact.

“My brothers are alive, though. Aegon and Viserys are healthy, as am I.” he says. The sadness that bloomed in Visenya’s eyes scared him to the bone.

“For now.” she replied softly. “But as I said, your father’s death is opening a door, and many will exit through it before the gods decide to close it.”

“I’m scared, Aunty.” he whispers.

“You should be. Your sister has made a deal she cannot possibly understand the implications of. I warned her long ago, but she did not listen. Your brothers will pay the price, as will your mother,
but you are not fully doomed yet.” She draws a knife from its scabbard at her side and Jaeherys
jumps up, retreating from her in fear. “Don’t worry, this isn’t for you.” she takes the knife to her
wrist and draws it across the skin there, where multiple pink scars show she’s done this before.
Blood oozes from the cut, but Visenya doesn’t even flinch. “Give me your arm.” Shaking, Jaeherys
pulls up his jacket sleeve, revealing the pale skin of his forearm. She takes his arm in her hand and
with a practiced grace, Visenya draws her finger through her own scarlet blood and begins writing
on his arm. At first the blood just feels warm and sticky, but then it begins to burn. He grits his
teeth in pain as each symbol seems to sear into his very skin.

“It hurts.” he cries.

“That’s a good sign.” she replies and finishes the last symbol on his wrist. The blood catches fire
and he screams in pain as his flesh sizzles beneath it. Then, just as suddenly as it started, the flames
dissipate and he’s left with crimson marks up and down his arm. He gently touches one, but it too
begins to vanish and before long his skin is as white and smooth as before. He stares at his great
aunt in wonder.

“What did you do?” he asks breathlessly.

“I replaced you and your sister in the bargain.” she murmurs. “I am pure-blood of old Valryia and
know more of the Gods than any other, I am well worth the two of you.” She stands and goes to
her desk, removing a strip of bandage and wrapping it around her weeping wrist. Jaeherys stands,
following her.

“Rhaena once said you were a sorcerer, but I didn’t believe her until now.” he tells her and she
raises an eyebrow at his words. “Can you really see the future as Rhaena says you can?”

“Your sister knows not of what she speaks.” she responds. “The future so many speak of does not
exist. What happens after each moment is not fixed, there are many possibilities. There is no one
future to see.” Jaeherys takes her hand, clutching it like it was log in a rushing river.

“But you can see a future?” she doesn’t respond, just stares back at him with her wise, tired eyes.
“Tell me mine.” she sighs at his words. “Please.”

“No.”

“But you already told me so much! You said my brother’s and mother would pay the price for
something my sister has done, but you wouldn’t let them take Aly or I! You must know something
about what we will accomplish, or you wouldn’t risk yourself on our behalf.” she knelt down and
took his small shoulders in her hands.

“Jaeherys, it is dangerous to know too much. I made the mistake of telling your sister a fraction of
what I had seen in store for her, and it only made her more committed to the path I was trying to
help her avoid. I will only tell you this: there will be fire and blood before long, but it will not take
you. I have ensured it.” she stood and walked away from him. “There will be many struggles for
our family in the years to come, but I promise you that you will be happy.” she turned to him and
her eyes were filled with unshed tears. “Even if it will cost me everything and curse my name for
generations.”

“Jae, please just let me name her Visenya.” Alysanne’s voice says, drawing him out of his reverie.
He looks back at her and for a moment he wants to concede.

“I want to, I really do.” he responds. “But we can’t.” the baby opens her eyes and Jaeherys’ breath
is taken away. Two eyes, large and innocent in shades of green and purple meet his. “But we
cannot name her Visenya.” he hums thoughtfully. “Her name will be Alyssa, after our mother.” Alysanne looks down at the baby, a frown pulling at her lips.

“I suppose that’s acceptable, she doesn’t look like a Visenya anyways.” Jaeherys shakes his head.

“No one could, our great-aunt was one of a kind.” he murmurs. If only she knew why he wouldn’t ever give his child that name. Visenya had given herself to the gods so he could live, but what he saw that night and what she had said still haunted him. Curse my name for generations, she had said. He wasn’t sure if she meant ruin her legacy or if she meant a legitimate curse. He often cursed his lack of knowledge about the gods of his ancestors, but part of him thought it was better if he didn’t know too much about the. In fact, that night had made him weary of those supposed deities who haunted and blessed his family. Perhaps that was why he had been so ready to reconcile with the Faith of the Seven. After all, the only thing that can fight a god is another god. He wondered if deep down he had thought that this reconciliation would protect his family. For awhile he had believed this had worked, or at least that the gods considered their debt paid, but Daenerys’ death from a cold shattered that illusion. He knew Visenya deserved better than the lot history had given her. She was willing to pay the price so he wouldn’t have to, and for that he would always be thankful. Yet, looking at his daughter, he couldn’t help, but hoped she’d be nothing like Visenya.

Chapter End Notes

If you can’t tell, I’m really into the Valryian Magic. In canon it’s never explicitly stated how Valryian Magic worked, so I’m having a lot of fun writing it as a sort of "eye for an eye" situation. Next up is Alysanne's chapter, but if you have any Targaryen you'd like to see narrate a chapter, feel free to comment and I'll do my best to oblige.
Alysanne was devastated when the third search for her missing niece, Aerea, proved as fruitless as the first two. As she sat in her chambers, waiting for news which was increasingly bleak, she couldn’t help, but blame herself for Aerea’s disappearance. After all, had the girl not begged Alysanne to take her back to King’s Landing? She had seen the look of pure desperation in the young girl’s eyes, but Alysanne had refused. Partially because Rhaena objected, although Alysanne cared little for her sister’s thoughts after all she had done, but also simply because she was not overly fond of the girl. Aerea was wild and stubborn, sometimes even a terror to those around her. Alysanne had selfishly thought to spare herself the headache of caring for her willful, fiery young niece, and it seems her escape on Balerion was the result of that decision.

“Your Majesty,” a voice says, interrupting Alysanne’s train of thought. The Queen turns her azure eyes to the young girl, who blushes under her queen’s steady gaze, “The Black Dread has returned with your niece.” Alysanne stands, her heart pounding.

“Are you sure?” she asks the girl, who nods vigorously in response.

“I saw the great dragon land myself, my lady. Although, the princess did not look well-” Alysanne didn’t wait to hear the rest of the girl’s description and rushes from the room. As she all but runs through the halls of the Red Keep she pictures all the horror the girl must have endured in the last year. She prepares herself to apologize to her young niece for not taking her request seriously and vows to raise the girl as if she were her own child, no matter what Rhaena says. However, when
she reaches the courtyard she finds neither the famous Balerion, nor her long absent niece, only a white-cloaked Kingsguard donning a stoic expression.

“I heard Balerion had returned with Princess Aerea, where is she?” Alysanne questions, fighting to keep the desperation out of her voice.

“The Princess has been taken to Grand Maester Benifer, your highness.” he responded calmly.

“I heard she appeared unwell, is she all right?” Alysanne continues to inquires as calmly as she could with her heart beating like a drum within her chest.

“I am no maester, my lady, but she did not appear to be well at all. She was almost unrecognizable. Her body was horribly thin and malnourished and she appeared to be crying tears of blood. She collapsed in Ser Strong’s arms and he carried her to Maester Bonifer’s chambers,” dread bloomed in Alysanne’s chest at the description of her niece’s condition. Where had she been hiding? Where did Balerion take her to cause such a condition? The Queen was bursting with questions, but she knew the Kingsguard would have no answers for her, so she forces herself to nod and maintain her facade of a dignified and calm queen.

“Thank you. Tell no one else what you saw until given leave to do otherwise.” she orders kindly and he nods at her words and bows as Alysanne heads towards the Grand Maester’s quarters. As she approaches the Maester’s chambers she feels a familiar lightheadedness overcame her. Strange whispers pull at the edges of her senses, a heaviness blooms in her chest, and she knows what she’ll see even before she opens the door. When she first enters the sickroom, she is hit with a horrific acidic smell and her eyes are immediately drawn to Aerea’s writhing form. As the Kingsguard had described, the girl was horribly emaciated and malnourished. Her skin was an unhealthy grey-yellow color and her eyes were indeed leaking blood. The most terrifying sight however, was the swellings that moved underneath her flesh. Her skin bulged and caved as something, some things, slithered beneath the thin layer of unhealthy skin. Alysanne covered her mouth to prevent herself from being sick at this grotesque sight. The whispering intensified and Alysanne’s eyes were drawn the corner of the room where a shadowy figure stood watching the proceedings of the room. Grand Maester Bennifer and Alysanne’s husband, King Jaeherys, took no notice of this figure, but it followed the Grand Maester’s movements with its slitted, glowing eyes. At first it was blurry, almost like a mirage, but Alysanne forced herself to focus on it. The figure stood as tall as man and besides its eyes it almost could be mistaken for one in the shadows, but as it stepped into the light she could see it was far from mortal. It’s flesh looked like the skin of a cooked pig: brown, blackened and cracked, and around its arms curled two snake-like creatures that hissed and steamed in the air. Alysanne gave a scream as it fixed its eyes on her and gave her a toothy smile, revealing yellowed teeth as sharp as dragon fangs. She knew immediately where Aerea had gone and was horrified that she had brought this thing back with her. The chanting grew even louder, drowning out all other sounds in the room. She recognized the language as High Valryian now, repeating the same phrases over and over:

Ābrar iksis enkagon (life is owed)

Mazemi skoros iksis īlvon (we take what is ours)

Se gods kessa ērogon skoros iksis enkagon (the gods will take what is owed)

Se tōlī (and more)

She covered her ears to drown out the sound, but to no avail. The chanting seemed to pierce her mind, relentless and unbreaking as the ocean tide.
“Alysanne?” her husband asked, stepping in front of her. He grasped her arms as she began to shake. “What is it?”

“She went to Valyria!” she cries, grimacing in pain. “She brought a god back with her!” she could still feel the attention of the god despite Jaeherys blocking her direct line of sight. She saw the fear bloom across his usually calm face, the same fear that had tormented her for as long as Alysanne could remember. She had always been afraid of the Valyrian Gods, but not in the way that most people fear their deities. The smallfolk feared the Seven, but their fear was a reverent, awe-struck kind that pushed them to their septs and sacred groves to pray and worship. Most people loved their gods as much as they feared them, but not Alysanne. Her fear was different, hers was a soul-crushing fear of beings she knew were real, that could swoop in and kill her or anyone she loved in a moment. The gods of her ancestors were bright as fire, but just as dangerous, as likely to warm their supplicants as to burn them. Ever since she was a child she had seen their hold on her family. She would see them hovering over her father, sucking out his strength to support their own. She would see them following her sister Rhaena, whispering in her ear. It was even worse when she was asleep. She had horrible dreams of dragons fighting, clashing in the sky beneath a god’s eye and one falling with blood spraying from its silver throat. Her living nightmares throughout her youth nearly drove her to madness. She was scared to leave her room sometimes, and even more afraid to sleep at night. Perhaps this would not have been too bad if her parents had sought to help their daughter, but no they thought her damaged. Alyssa Velryon, who desired above all to be loved and praised, had been ashamed of her youngest daughter. When Alysanne would cry out that she saw a woman with fire for hair, her mother would tell her to stop sputtering such nonsense. When she wept to her father she had seen a man with two rivers for eyes following her sister, he had sent her to the Maester, who had prescribed an awful tasting draught meant to “soothe her frayed nerves”, which turned out to only increase the length and vividness of her nightmares. Her whole family thought she was deranged, damaged, a blight on the great ruling dynasty of Westeros. Well, almost her whole family, there were two exceptions. Her brother Jaeherys, who loved her so fiercely that he believed her wholeheartedly. Only with him by her side could she sleep at night. The other was her great-aunt, Visenya, who she always called grandmother. If not for Visenya, Alysanne would have thrown herself from a tower long ago.

“Which one?” Jaeherys asked her, glancing around the room, although he wouldn’t be able to see it unless it let him.

“I don’t know.” her head began to split and her vision went dark. “It came back with her, I—” she collapsed into his arms and the last thing she heard was Septon Barth ordering everyone out of the room as Jaeherys bellowed for help. Alysanne drifted through a familiar darkness. She allowed her senses to spread out around her and suddenly feels a light behind her closed eyelids. She opens her eyes and immediately knows she’s dreaming. She’s sitting in her room in Dragonstone, the familiar blue canopy shining above her head as dragons roar in the distance. She feels tears running down her face and hears two people arguing outside her door. She sighs in relief, this is not a dream of the future, but one of the past. The door creaks open and she sees her mother standing there, speaking to someone.

“She claims she sees monsters following our family. I’ve tried to convince her these are just nightmares, but she’s convinced they’re real.” her mother says almost scornfully.

“Perhaps they are real to her.” she hears a feminine voice responded. She knows that voice, the rich, wise tone, the confidence. It’s her great-aunt.

“It doesn’t matter what she thinks. If she keeps this up we’ll have to lock her away to prevent her shaming this family. You are my last resort, talk her out of it.” her mother responds, she can hear the anger in her tone. She must have been quite desperate to go to Visenya for help considering
how much she disliked the older woman. Alysanne hears the swish of skirts and knows her mother is gone. The door creaks open and in walks Visenya, her silvering hair pulled back in a braided bun and her violet eyes as stormy as the sky the night her family fled King’s Landing. Alysanne knows what’s going to happen next. This memory is like watching a play she’s seen before. All she need do is watch until she wakes up. Visenya sat on Alysanne’s bed, staring the young girl in the eyes. She takes a cloth from the bedside table and gently dries Alysanne’s wet cheeks.

“Your mother says you’ve been having nightmares.” she says casually.

“They’re not nightmares.” Alysanne shoots back angrily, clutching her blanket closer. “Everyone says they are, but they’re not, they’re real.” Despite the sunlight pouring in through her windows, she felt cold and afraid. None of the scary spectres were in her room, they never stalked her, but she could never be too sure. Often in the dark of night if Jaehaerys wasn’t with her, she’d be convinced one was hiding beneath her bed or behind the curtains that hung by her windows.

“What are they then, Alysanne?” Visenya asks lightly. Alysanne presses her lips together, too used to negative reactions to her visions to trust that Visenya wouldn’t rebuke her like her parents did. Visenya studies her face, seeming to learn as much from her silence as she would from any words Alysanne might have said. “Do they happen when you’re awake or asleep?”

“Awake is when the monsters appear, that’s why they’re not nightmares.” she replied without thinking, her voice shaking. “but I see dragons fight and die in my dreams.”

“Ah, I see. What do these monsters look like?” her great-aunt asks leadingly. Her eyes seem to draw answers out of Alysanne against her will.

“They look like monsters, but they’re also like men.” Visenya furrows her brow at Alysanne’s words. “One is like a tall woman, with black and red skin and fire for hair. Another looks like man, but pale as snow with rivers running from his eyes.” she shivers as she remembers each of the spectres. “There’s one, with no face, but when he looks at you it feels as if he is draining you of all energy, will power, of everything.” she sees Visenya’s face cloud with worry. Alysanne wants to cry. “You think I’m insane, don’t you, grandmother?” Visenya shakes her head.

“No, I don’t believe you’re insane, child, although from what you just described you’ll wish that you were.” she replies, gently taking Alsyanne's hand. “You have Dragon Sight.” Alysanne scrunched up her face in confusion.

“What’s that?” she asked. She had heard of dragon dreams, but never of this “Dragon Sight”. Her great-aunt sighs.

“It’s complicated, much too complicated for a girl as young as you to fully grasp, but in extremely simple terms: it’s an ability that very special Targaryens have. You’ve heard of Daenys the Dreamer, have you not?” she inquires. Alysanne nods. Everyone in their family had been told the tale of Daenys the Dreamer, who warned her father, Lord Aenar Targaryen, of the Doom of Valyria.

“She had Dragon Dreams.” Alysanne responds. “She could see the future. People say you have them too.” Her Great-Aunt purses her lips at Alysanne’s words.

“I wish I just had Dragon Dreams,” Visenya murmured, more to herself than Alysanne. “But I am not so lucky, and neither are you, my poor granddaughter.” Visenya’s voice was low and her words took on a dark tone. “You and I have something much worse, we have Dragon Sight. We can see what is hidden from others, we can see the Gods.” Alysanne’s stomach dropped at Visenya’s words and she began to shake. Despite having relived this memory several times, she was always
overcome by the tidal wave of emotions she felt in this moment. Relief, fear, excitement, confusion, anxiety, gratefulness. She was so relieved to know she was not insane as so many had told her she was. She was so thankful that there was someone like her, but she was also very afraid. She had read about the Gods of Old Valyria and knew they were not kind. They were the type of gods who demanded blood along with fidelity, who demanded balance for any favor, who demanded an eye for an eye. She threw herself into Visenya’s arms, wrapping her own small arms around her aunt’s slim waist. Her great-aunt hugged her close and the slow beating of her heart helped calm the frightened girl.

“Will the gods kill me?” she asked, her voice shaking. Visenya stroked her hair.

“No, sweet child.” she responds soothingly.

“How do you know?” Alysanne asks as she trembles.

“I’m alive, aren’t I?” her aunt responds, her voice half in jest. “I saw them and lived to tell the tale.”

“How have you lived with it though? Seeing them it’s-” her voice cracks and tears dampen her Great-Aunt’s tunic.

“How horrifying? Maddening?” Visenya suggests, all Alysanne can do is nod against Visenya’s chest. “I know, oh believe me I know. Our gods are not pretty as the Seven are. They are from a world long dead and ugly to our mortal eyes, but they are nonetheless powerful.” she pulls away from Alysanne, looking into the girl’s blue eyes. “I will give you the recipe for a draught that will allow you to see as others do. If you take it twice a moon, then you will not have to see them.” Alysanne wiped her teary eyes.

“Will it really stop me from seeing them?” Visenya nods. “Forever?”

“Unless you stop taking it.”

“Is there a way to make it permanent? To never have to see them again?” Alysanne asks. Her aunt’s face remains blank. “Is there?”

“Theoretically, although I wouldn’t do that if I were you.” her aunt’s tone is warning, but Alysanne persists.

“Please give it to me, I can’t live with seeing them anymore!” the girl cries desperately and Visenya sighs at her words.

“Let me teach you a lesson your grandfather once taught me. I was once like you. Young and scared, wanting nothing more than to rid myself of this curse. I actually had the draught in my hand ready to take, but Aegon talked me out of it.” Alysanne’s eyes grew wide as Visenya talked. When Visenya spoke of the Conqueror, something about her changed. Her eyes grew a little wistful, her face the slightest bit sad.

“What did grandfather say to you?” Alysanne asked, both intrigued and afraid of the answer.

“He told me: Visenya, what you have is a two sided coin. One side is the curse and that is the side you keep seeing, but it is also a blessing. You can see the gods, they will talk to you, if you ever need something you would have the best chance at securing what you want. What you need to do is control the terms of the meeting. Right now you're letting them choose the time, place, and terms, but if you could control that, it’s you who can make the bargains, state the terms.” she smiled as she told the story. “He helped me understand that I only had to see them on my terms, when I
needed to, not just when they wanted me to.”

“Grandfather was very wise.” Alysanne says in awe.

“Sometimes he was.” Visenya responds. “Not always, but he had his moments.” when her great-aunt smiles she looks decades younger, as if she hadn’t watched her husband and nephew die, and her son be cursed by two amateur witches.

“Did you ever need to talk to them?” Alysanne wonders.

“Twice.” Visenya answers, with a causal air of dismissal that sets Alysanne on edge.

“Why?!” Alysanne screams incredulously. “What could be so important-”

“The Conquest and my son.” her aunt answers and Alysanne can see no sign of regret marring her porcelain face. “You have lived ten years now, I’m sure you can imagine why. Here is an important lesson, Alysanne, the only one I will give you about magic for it ruins all it touches: making deals with something unseen ensures you will be cheated. Your sister has made that mistake time and time again, I’m sure you’ve seen the consequences.” As always, images flash before Alysanne’s eyes. She sees the faceless figure stalking her father. She sees the one with black wings like a raven flying after Rhaena and Aegon as they left for their tragic royal progress. This memory always evokes the same emotions from her. Despair fills her as usual when she remembers what Jaeherys had told her about the night their father died, how Visenya had done some strange ritual on him. At the time he had been scared, but only half-convinced about what she had told him. However, as their father, then Aegon perished as she said they would, he had taken her words to heart, especially what she said about their sister’s culpability.

“I won’t rid myself of it permanently, “ Alysanne decides. If Visneya could do it, then so could she. “I want to be as strong a queen as you one day, perhaps I will have need of it.” Alysanne had told her. Visenya had smiled sadly at this declaration.

“I would hope you never would have to child, but I have seen that you will and I’m sorry. Sometimes I wonder if all my sacrifice was worth it, I suppose I’ll know soon enough. I do hope the Stranger takes me, for he is kinder than the alternative.” Suddenly, the room began to spin and Alysanne recognizes that she’s being pulled back to the waking world. She hears muted voices as the vision faded.

“The Princess’ fever is burning hotter than any I’ve ever seen. Her skin is cracking, her eyes are cooking in her skull. Whatever it is that has infected her, it is not anything I’ve seen before.” the Maester says. She hears Jaeherys sigh.

“No, it wouldn’t be. Alysanne said she went East, Balerion must have taken her home.” she could hear worry and exhaustion dripping from her husband’s voice.

“To Dragonstone?” the Maester asks, although she can tell he’s only hoping that’s the answer.

“No, to Valyria, or at least, whatever’s left of it.” Jaeherys speaks the name with awe, but also fear. The Doom had ruined all that was good in Valyria, according to legend, all that was left there were monsters now.

“Well, I have exhausted all known treatments in Westeros, your majesty. The only other thing I could try would be to treat her with an ice bath in the vain hope that it would lower her fever. I doubt it will do anything to save her at this point, but-”

“Do whatever you think is best, Maester. I assume Septon Barth has already administered last
rights?” her husband replies, cutting the weary maester off. She can imagine his face now, sad, defeated, and tired.

“Aye.” the maester replies sorrowfully.

“Then she is in the Seven’s hands now.” her husband says. “All we can do is pray-”

“Not the Seven, Jae,” Alysanne interjects sitting up. “Prayers will be of no use in regards to the one who holds her life.” both men start to see her conscious.

“Alysanne, are you alright?” Jaeherys asks urgently, his loving eyes boring into hers. She still can’t quite fathom how much he loves her, despite her flaws.

“Yes, my love, it’s just the fifteenth day since the last moon,” she sees understanding flare in Jaeherys’ purple eyes. There are no secrets between them, he knows of the concoction she must take every fifteen days to prevent her visions and nightmares. “So I can see.” Fear sparkles in the King’s eyes.

“Who was there?” he asked, his voice low. The Maester stares at the royal couple in a mixture of confusion and worry.

“I’m not sure, as I said before, she brought it back with her. All I do know is it’s taking her for a debt our family incurred.” Alysanne responds and Jaeherys’ shoulders slump. “I’m not sure which one considering our sister has many.” She sees Jae’s eyes harden. He still resents their sister for all she’s done. Without her none of this sorrow would have happened. Alysanne long gave up on hating Rhaena for her mistakes, her sister wasn’t worth the effort, however, she did hate that their entire family was cursed to pay for her folly.

“Do you think you can do anything?” the king asks carefully. Alysanne’s heart skips a beat at his words. She knows what he’s hinting at. He wants her to talk to it, to beg it to spare Aerea, to not let a child pay for its mother’s sins. She knows she’s the only one that can, but she doesn’t want to, however, she can’t just let the girl die. So she nods.

“If the price is reasonable, say we’ll pay it.” she moves to object, but he raises a hand to stop her. “I know, we don’t get to choose the price, I remember Visenya’s warning well, but use your discretion.” he then turns to Grand Maester Bonifer who is staring at them in a confused silence. “Grand Maester, attempt to save my niece. Whatever you hear or see in there, you are never allowed to speak of it, do you understand?” Jaeherys’ tone is authoritative and threatening, leaving little room for objection or questions. The grand maester nods in confusion and allows Alysanne to lead the way towards the room where Aerea was being treated. She steels herself before entering. You are the granddaughter of Aegon the Conqueror. The same blood that ran through Visenya’s veins runs through yours. This curse and blessing was given to you and now you must use it as she did. She turns to handle of the door and enters. The ominous chanting has ceased, but the creature still stands by her niece, who is lying limp on the table. Steam rises from her body and blood leaks from her eyes and ears in rivers of promised death. It's glowing yellow eyes fix upon her and it smiles again. She swallows her revulsion and stares right back.

“Who are you?” she asks as the grand maester prepares the ice bath. He glances at her, but as his king orders, says nothing. The creature smirks at her words. She wonders how long it’s been since someone directly addressed it.
“I am the snake,” it says in High Valyrian, although she hears it inside her mind rather than with her ears. “The swallower of sin, the bane of the virtuous and the guardian of the secrets of Valyria.” Its voice reminds her of the sound of sharpening blades, painful and almost beyond her range of hearing, causing her entire body to shudder.

“What do you want with my niece?” she inquires, forcing her voice to remain calm. If it senses any weakness in her, it will pounce.

“She is promised to me.” it responds offhandedly, as if this was a small matter of no importance. She can sense a strange amusement in its response. She wonders how many times it has found itself in this situation.

“By whom?” Alysanne continues, although she already knows.

“By the one who gave her life. You know this, seer, ask the question you really want answered.”

By the one who gave her life. You know this, seer, ask the question you really want answered.” she can sense its growing impatience. It is a god, she will only have its attention for so long before the novelty of this wears off. Alysanne swallows nervously.

“What would it cost for you to let her go?” the thing laughs at her question. It’s an awful sound that causes her head to pound and vision to go black around the edges. How had Visenya survived making two deals with these things? In fact how had she ever stomached any type of Valyrian sorcery knowing its source? Out of the corner of her eye she sees Jaeherys and the grand maester lifting Aerea to put her in the tub filled with ice.

“Well, well, your family certainly loves deals. Let’s see.” it sounds excited now, like a child that’s been given a new toy. It’s yellow eyes drift to Jaeherys. “I want his potency.”

“Well, well, your family certainly loves deals. Let’s see.” it sounds excited now, like a child that’s been given a new toy. It’s yellow eyes drift to Jaeherys. “I want his potency.” Alysanne tenses as it continues to appraise her husband, like he’s a good on display at a market. “He was promised to us as well, but the last seer was a wily one. Clever of her to pit two of us against each other, ensuring neither could make a claim, but you aren’t that talented are you?”

“Alysanne makes sure to give no reaction, but this thing can obviously tell she’s not nearly as strong as Visenya. “Give him to me and I will trade you the girl.” Alysanne balls her fists. “It’s more than fair, one for the other, no hidden strings, no debts. An even trade.”

“No.” Alysanne responds almost without thinking. The thing seems more amused by her refusal than angered.

“He would still live. I cannot take his life, she ensured that.”

“But he would weaken and die before his time, I know how your deals work.” she forces herself to stare it dead in the eyes. “I am not my sister, you cannot con me.” it shrugs its shoulders, the things around its arms began hissing loudly. It turns towards the tub where steam is bellowing and Aerea is screaming.

“Well, It’s too late now to change your mind.” it says and before her eyes it vanishes. She rushes to the tub and is met with another horrifying sight. Aerea's body contorts wildly as slimy, worm-like things emerge from her parchment-thin skin. They are black as night with red markings, leaving trails of red slime as they slither from the holes from were they emerged. They hiss and scream as they come in contact with the ice water, their red designs fading as lava does until all that's left are shriveled black things that begin falling apart before their eyes. Jaeherys glances at her with wide eyes, but she is speechless. She feels so nauseated staring at the disfigured body of her niece that she can barely think straight.

“I assume it wasn’t a reasonable deity?” Jaeherys whispers. Alysanne glances at him as tears filled her eyes.
“The price was much too high.” is all she can say as guilt overcomes her and without another word she turns towards the Grand Maester’s collection of herbs. After Visenya’s death, Alyssa had fled Dragonstone with her children in tow. Jaeherys had grabbed Dark Sister while Alysanne has clutched Visenya’s journal. She had memorized the draught to take away her visions before having Silverwing burn the book in a torrent of dragonfire. She mixes them together quickly, ignoring her husband's inquiries about her actions and before anyone can stop her swallows the whole thing. Her head hammers and something within her screams in pain, but she doesn’t care. She never wants to see the gods again, never wants to hear their voices or make another deal with them. She is not Visenya, she is not that strong. Her vision goes dark and she smiles, knowing when she wakes up, she’ll remember nothing about the gods, her nightmares and visions will be wiped from her memory. To her, the Gods of Old Valyria are dead.

Chapter End Notes

When I initially started this trilogy I didn’t expect it to go as mystical as it has. Not all the trilogies will be focused on the same thing, but this one is going to be pretty magic heavy, let me know if you like this interpretation of Valryian Magic. Additionally, thanks to the people who suggested POVs for future chapters. I'll get started on those after I finish this trilogy, so stay tuned and feel free to suggest anymore you'd like to see. Up Next, Alyssa Velryon.
Alyssa Velryon-Wait For Me A Little Longer

Chapter Summary

Aerea Targaryen has gone missing and the royal family is sent into disarray. The young princess' disappearance reminds a heavily pregnant Alyssa Velryon of a prophecy told to her a decade earlier by the Dragon Queen and begins to fear for the life of her unborn child. Unwisely she descends into the royal crypt of the Red Keep and asks a question only one person has the answer to, how lucky for her she has guide that will help her speak to the dead....

Chapter Notes

Well Hello there,

Here is the final chapter in the Jaehaerys, Alysanne, and Alyssa Velryon trilogy and the end of the super magic focused series. This chapter is the first to involve ghosts and I'm not entirely sure if I like it or not. Alyssa has been rather antagonistic throughout previous chapters, so it was interesting to write a chapter from her POV for once. This also kinda closes the story for the first three generations of Targaryens, and the next few trilogies will be mainly focused on the Dance of Dragons(yikes), although I will continue to write requested oneshots on a variety of characters, so this time frame will be revisited from time to time. If you enjoyed this chapter, please leave kudos and any constructive or reflective comments you like.

Usual spiel, please no lawsuits

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Alyssa Velryon

“This is not a place for a woman as far along as I.” Alyssa Velryon murmured to herself as she stood in the crypts of the Red Keep.

“But where else could you go for the answers you seek?” a smooth voice answers, soft as satin, but sharp as a sword. Her hand rested on her heavily pregnant stomach protectively. “Come now, don’t you want to ensure your child will survive?” she swallows at the ghost's words as her skin prickles uncomfortably. Her constant companion could barely be seen down here, more of a cloud of mist than a physical form, yet it still scared her. Truly, she shouldn’t be down here, nothing good resided in this place meant for the dead, but she truly needed answers. Above her she fancied she could still hear her daughter’s anguished cries over the loss of her precious daughter, Aerea. Rhaena had arrived at the Red Keep that morning with her usual imperial airs, but the second she learned her daughter was not here, she had broken down in a fit of hysteric sorrow. Her brother, King Jaeherys, had rushed Rhaena behind closed doors as he comforted her. The king assured Rhaena, and Alyssa, that Aerea and Balerion would be found soon, yet Alyssa doubted that would be the case. So here she was, standing in front of the double crypt of Aegon the Conqueror and his
sister-wife Visenya, the Dragon Queen talking to something that was a little better than a ghost itself. “Beautiful workmanship,” the ghost hisses. “Maegor never invested that much in me.” The crypt and statues had been commissioned by Maegor upon his ascension. He had claimed it was to honor his parents and he has spared no expense in its construction. The stone was the finest pearly white color, almost glowing in the dim light and the carvings were as intricate as they were precise, denoting the Battles of Harrenhal and Gulltown.

“That’s because you were a witch who lost, Tyanna.” Alyssa replies evenly and the ghost huffs angrily. She knows she should have banished the ghost of this wretched woman long ago. After all, she had killed Alyssa’s son, but Tyanna, even as little more than a wisp of smoke, had proved surprisingly useful.

“Ask her what you seek to know.” the witch’s ghost instructs.

“Is she even here to answer?” Alyssa asks, already feeling anxiety begin to scratch at her resolve.

“There’s only one way to find out.” the ghost replied. Alyssa cleared her throat and looked at the eerily lifelike statue.

“You once told me that our family would suffer because of me.” she says to the statue in a low voice. “At the time I thought you simply a cruel, old woman who was angered that your place was being usurped, but now, well, I believe you.” the statue doesn’t move, but she feels rather than sees a shift in the room’s atmosphere.

“It’s working, they sense the bond of kinship, go on.” Tyanna eagerly instructs.

“I know you could see better than the rest of us. Aenys told me of your dreams, how without them the Conqueror would have failed before he started. Did you see how I would set Rhaena on the path that led us to this point?” the air seems to grow even colder around her and her neck prickled as if someone is watching her, but no one answers her inquiries. “I suppose you must have. I suppose you dreamed of me, saw that I’d give birth to a monster who would condemn her own siblings, her own children, to the so called mercy of the gods, just so that she could marry a man who did not love her back.” she feels the attention of something focus on her and her words seem to be drawn from her lips now.

“That’s it, Alyssa, you’ve got their attention.” Tyanna murmurs encouragingly, although Alyssa wonders why she’s so eager to meet these ghosts.

“The spells she used to get Maegor she got from a bargain with the gods, but that wasn’t enough, she had to keep him. You knew, didn’t you, that these would begin to drive him mad and cost me my husband,” Alyssa’s voice cracks. “and Aegon and Viserys.” Tears filled the Queen Mother’s eyes at the memory of her two boys. “You tried to stop her, but I wouldn’t let you. I was so preoccupied with securing my family’s succession that I refused to listen to you, even when King Aegon and Aenys bayed me to. I was foolish, but no longer. I’ll listen now if you’ll speak to me, if you’ll answer a single question: will my baby be all right?” she felt a presence in the room and looked around, but there was no one other than her and Tynna’s faint spectre, only silence. Alyssa covered her mouth as tears began to flow down her face. “Will the gods take my baby as they did its siblings?” She heard a rustle from the shadows and stared into the darkness with fear dancing in her purple eyes. For a second she thought she saw two pairs of purple eyes staring at her from the dark, one violet, one indigo, but then they were gone. She turned back to the statues and saw that now there was a piece of parchment on top of the tomb. She picked it up with shaking hands and read it. On it was written a single line in what she prayed was red ink,

*The Gods will take Seven*
Alyssa’s hands shook violently and the paper fell from her hand, turning to dust before her eyes. The darkness seemed to reach for her and there were those eyes again. She gasped as the darkness took shape, a man and a woman, dressed in armor.

"Yes!" Tyanna cried and began chanting. Alyssa's eyes went wide as the Darkness consumed her and Tyanna's chanting grew louder, but then she heard the ghost of Tyanna begin to scream and the darkness receded. She felt her eyes close and was lost to a memory from little more than ten years ago. The morning was bright as Alyssa Velryon, Dowager Queen of the Seven Kingdoms, walked with her two children to the chambers of the Queen Mother. It was late 44 BC and although Visenya had once resided primarily with her son in King’s Landing, acting as his primary advisor, she had returned to Dragonstone earlier that year. It was clear to anyone who saw her that she was weakening. She still stood tall, but she now no longer rode her great dragon. Her hair was now silver-white with no trace of gold and her violet eyes, once bright enough to make the strongest warrior shake with a single gaze, dripped with exhaustion. Alyssa couldn’t help but look forward to the Dragon Queen’s death. Part of her hoped that with her death, Maegor would finally lose the support of the people and they would return to her line, support the true rulers of Westeros, but until then, she was still a prisoner and must do as she was bid. So, as commanded, she brought her children to see their great-aunt. When they entered the chamber, Visenya did not stand to greet them, but remained in her seat near her hearth, hair braided loosely behind her back. She was not wearing armor or leathers as she had in her stronger years, but a simple black robe embroidered with gold over an equally plain black gown. Beside her sat Dark Sister, her famous blade, and a leather-covered book with the three-headed dragon emblazoned on it in gold, an equally deadly object no doubt. She looked up at the children and smiled, although her face appeared gaunt and slightly grey. Jaeherys and Alysanne clamored to their great-aunt, babbling at her all the lessons they’ve learned and adventures they’ve had. Alyssa forced her face not to reveal the disgust she saw when her children displayed their love for their grandfather’s wife. She had long fought against their silly habit of calling her grandmother, but that was a battle she had unfortunately lost. Visenya coughed loudly and the children quieted at the sound, probably just noticing how unhealthy their beloved great-aunt appeared to be.

"Are you unwell, grandmother?" Alysanne asked, her blue eyes shining with worry. Most people would have lied in that moment to protect the children’s innocence, but not Visenya.

"Yes, quite unwell." Visenya replied easily and she glanced at Jaehaerys. Her young son’s face suddenly took on a solemn expression that made him appear older than his years.

"Is it because of me?" he asks and Alyssa laughs, drawing her family’s attention.

"Don’t be silly, Jae, of course it’s not because of you." Alyssa says, chuckling, but neither Visenya nor her children join her. In fact, Visenya acts as if Alyssa had not spoken at all. “It’s because you took my place, isn’t it?” Her son continues, also ignoring her outburst.

"Perhaps. The gods are never clear in what they do, even for those who can see more of them than the rest of you.” Visenya answers and Alyssa hears Alysanne whimper at these words. She remembers when Visenya had informed her that Alysanne had Dragon’s Sight. Alyssa had been astonished that her youngest daughter had such a gift, but she soon learned that it was as much a curse as a blessing.

"Please don’t die for me!" Jaeherys begged. “It’s not your fault what Rhaena did, it’s not-”

"Fair? What have I taught you about things being fair?” Visenya interrupts sternly. Jaeherys hangs his head.

"Men are only fair when it suits them, but the gods are never fair.” he whispers dutifully. Visenya
nods at his words.

“I’m glad one lesson of mine stuck with you. It doesn’t matter whether it is fair or not, for I will die either way. Pity that after all my years as a warrior, I will die in my bed, but my death does not concern me. I am afraid for the future of this kingdom.” Jaeherys and Alysanne stare at their great-aunt solemnly, looking like the king and queen they would eventually become. “I fear that when I am dead, Rhaena will truly drive my son to madness, and all of you, including him, will suffer for it.” her eyes glanced towards Alyssa and she can tell Visenya is no longer speaking to her children. “I have some gifts for you, ones I hope will help you in the coming years,” she glanced towards the sword and the book, which the children picked up reverently, “these have been passed down through our family for generations, use them well and remember what I’ve taught you.” Jaeherys glanced at Visenya with strong, purple eyes that were much like her own.

“We’ll be strong, grandmother.” he promised. “We will not let your kingdom fall.” she smiled at him.

“I believe you, little king, but I’m afraid this is goodbye. I need to speak with your mother alone. Listen to me carefully and do not cry. I need you and Alysanne to go to your rooms and pack a bag with all you will need. Don’t ask me any questions, don’t think too hard about it, just do what I ask and know that I love you both very much.” Alyssa’s children looked at her in surprise, but nodded, both confident in the great-aunt’s wisdom. They both hugged her tightly, tears dancing in their purple or blue eyes, but not escaping to fall down pale cheeks. Once they left and the door closed Visenya turned her eyes to Alyssa. “We do not have much time, Alyssa.” she tells her brisly, although her voice holds a touch of disdain. “I was hoping this day would wait until your children are older, but it seems the gods are far from kind. If not for your children, I would not help you, in fact, I probably would have ended your miserable existence long ago, but you are their mother and the only one who can do as I ask.”

“You’re always so gracious, but I don’t want any help from you.” Alyssa bites back before she could stop herself. Visenya smiles, although it’s more of a sneer.

“I’m afraid you do, girl. Do you remember how I warned you long ago about what would happen if you married Aenys? You believed me insane then and have done your best to thwart me at every turn. However, much has changed since then. Do you believe my visions now?” the Dragon Queen asks. Alyssa swallows, looking into the woman’s violet eyes. For years she had not, refusing to believe that her child would cause such suffering, that Aenys would die before his time, but now, well, it was different. Aenys was dead, as Visenya had forseen, and now so was Aegon. Visenya had been right twice, why would this time be any different?

“Perhaps.” Alyssa concedes.

“Well, that’s better than nothing. Listen to me well, Alyssa, and perhaps your children will survive what is to come. I will die tonight, don’t bother to hide your glee, I can smell it from here, but when I do a series of events will begin that will cause our family much suffering, I have seen it.” Visenya says.

“Suffering from the old gods?” Alyssa inquires. She had never believed in the Gods of Old Valyria, but now that her daughter had seen them and she had experience first hand their wrath, she at least acknowledge their existence.

“Unfortunately, yes. When we converted to the Faith of the Seven, Aegon hoped they would help free us of our ancestral gods. This was not the case and made them harder to deal with as they were enraged by our blasphemy. For years I kept the door between us and them firmly locked, since the deals I made with them could only be applied to my siblings. They took much, but dared not kill us
all lest they lose their strongest followers. Your daughter, however, broke open the door and
allowed them access to all our family.” Alyssa’s chest grows cold. Jaeherys had told her of
Rhaena’s witchcraft, but she had never wanted to believe it. After all, Rhaena had always been a
sweet child, more interested in songs and books then swords and war. She had refused to see the
cuts on Rhaena’s wrists or the herbs that would go missing from the maester’s collections, but she
couldn’t afford to be blind anymore.

“Jaeherys told me she promised more than she could pay.” Alyssa murmurs.

“She did indeed, much more. The gods always take more than you bargained for, but from what I
can tell Rhaena didn’t care for the long-term consequences as long as she was rewarded
immediately with what she desired.” Visenya spits scornfully. Alyssa fights back the despair that
was clawing at her heart.

“What are they going to take?” Alyssa asked, fearing the answer.

“In truth, I am not sure, but I used the last of my power to see how one debt will be paid. They will
take seven of us now that there are plenty to keep them alive, seven as a rebuke for our attempt to
flee to the the Seven. They have already taken two, Aenys and Aegon, I will be the third and
Viserys the fourth-” Alyssa’s heart stops at her words and a cry escapes her lips, cutting Visenya
off.

“No!” she cries, thinking of her innocent son held in King’s Landing as Maegor’s squire. “No, you
can’t let them take him! You let them have Aenys, you can’t let them take another of my sons!”
Visenya’s eyes were cold as she stared at Alyssa.

“You still don’t understand magic, do you? I can’t just speak a spell and ensure his safety, the gods
would laugh at such a thing. The only way to ensure he would be protected would be to trade
someone to them who is of equal value. If not for me, they would have taken Jaehaerys as well, but
he was the best of your children and I could not allow that, so I offered myself to them instead.”
Tears run down Alyssa’s face. For a second she doesn’t despise Visenya, who would apparently
sacrifice herself to ensure a child who was not even her bloodline survived.

“Offer them me instead.” Alyssa orders. If Visenya would sacrifice herself for Jaehaerys, then
Alyssa could certainly do the same for Viserys. “Say they can take me if they spare him.” A look
of surprise flashes across Visenya’s face.

“It is honorable that you would sacrifice yourself for your child, but unfortunately, you are already
part of the seven promised to them. They already own you.” her eyes meet Alyssa’s and cold fills
her heart.

“My daughter would never-”she starts, her voice dripping with betrayal.

“But she did. She was willing to throw you to the dogs so she could have my son. The only way to
save Viserys would be to offer him another of your children, and even if you wanted me to, I would
not give them sweet Alysanne.” Visenya says, disdain filling her voice. Alyssa looks down at her
hands.

“I would never ask you to.” Alyssa murmurs. "I suppose this is my penance for not listening to you
all those years ago.” Never before has she felt such despair, not even when her husband and son
died. How could she have raised so selfish a daughter? How could she have allowed such a snake
to grow under her care?

“Perhaps it is, but we have no time to dwell on the past. Tonight is when I die, although I will lose
consciousness when the sun sets and not awaken again. When this occurs, you must flee in the chaos. Take two eggs and the gifts I gave your children and run as far as you can from here, tell no one where you go, especially Rhaena. In two years my son will die, not as part of the seven, but to fulfill another deal your daughter made. When he does, Jaeherys will be king, I have seen it, but only if you flee tonight.” she sat back in her chair, completely exhausted.

“But Viserys will die.” Alyssa responds, watching Visenya’s face. It remains neutral, but she sees a spark of sadness in those violet eyes.

“Yes, he will die, but if you don’t flee, all of you will. My son’s current queen will torture him, but you must not go there and claim the body. If you do, all will be lost. You’ve always been a cold bitch, Alyssa, in the next few years you will have to be colder than ever before.” Alyssa mulls over Visenya’s words. Part of her believes the Dragon Queen, but another part suspects foul play.

“How do I know you’re not sending me and my children to our deaths?” she asks suspiciously.

“You don’t.” Visenya answers with a smirk “But we’ve known each other for decades, Alyssa, you know what I’ll do for this family.” Alyssa nods, for she does. Visenya slumps in her chair, seeming to droop with exhaustion. “Let the gods know I’ve done all I can,” she says to herself. “Help me to my bed, Alyssa.” Alyssa does as she is ordered, assisting the aging woman to her bed. As Visenya lays down, Alyssa can’t help, but say.

“You seem strangely at peace with your death. I expected you to be the type to bite and snarl until the Stranger comes to claim you.” Visenya laughed at this.

“There is nothing for me to fight for. Everyone who loved me best, save Maegor, is waiting for me on the other side and he will join me there soon enough.” The woman closed her eyes. “Aegon, Rhaeny, I am coming, you’ve waited for decades, but I’m coming home to you know, just wait a little while longer.” she opens her eyes and glances at Alyssa. “Do as I bid, Alyssa, and do not hesitate.” Alyssa bowed a walked from that room. She would never see Visenya again, but Alyssa still remembers that day. All Visenya had said came to pass. She died that night and when Alyssa fled, Maegor’s queen, Tyanna, killed Viserys. Her heart had wept as she heard of the tortures her son endured, but Visenya’s warnings echoed in her heart, so she fought all her urges and did not go to claim the body. Yet, Jaeherys was king, so she told herself it was all worth it. Yet, for the last ten years Alyssa had been haunted by the prophecy of the seven. She was reconciled with her own death, as Visenya had been, but ever since she learned of her second pregnancy with Robar’s child, she feared it would be the seventh. She felt a hand on her shoulder and opened her eyes. She remembered where she was, she was in the crypt in the Red Keep. Before her stood a woman of perhaps twenty, her hair white-gold and violet eyes as bright as lightning.

"You should know better than to consort with the dead,” Visenya reprimanded her, although she looked younger than Alyssa had ever seen her.

“Tyanna-” she asks.

“Gone, condemned to torment forever.” Visenya answers and Alyssa sighs in relief.

“My baby, is it one of the seven?” she asks, remembering her purpose in coming here. Visenya shakes her head.

“No.” Alyssa laughs in relief, but a strong hand grabs her face. Visneya’s eyes bore into hers.

“But never disturb the dead again. This is dangerous magic, Alyssa, not yours, but we both know that others often suffer from the sorcery of a single individual.” Suddenly the room grows even
“Visenya,” a new voice calls, and Alyssa sees the figure of a tall man standing on the equator of light and shadows. “We must return, this is no longer our world.” Visenya nods and releases Alyssa. She walks towards Aegon, both of them beginning to glow and then they’re gone. The temperature rises again and for the first time in months Alyssa feels truly alone. She hears steps behind her, hurried and desperate.

“Mother?” a living voice calls. Alyssa turns and there’s Alysanne, standing in the doorway to the crypt, face pale.

“I’m here.” she responds, standing. Alysanne rushes to her side.

“You’ve been missing for hours, it’s not good to be wandering around by yourself when you’re so close to delivering.” She takes Alysanne’s hand as they leave the crypt.

“I know, I was just making peace.” Alysanne glances at her.

“With Visenya?” she asks.

“Yes, but also my future.” Alysanne nods, but Alyssa knows her daughter won't understand. She had been afraid for a long ten years, but now she felt lighter than ever. She remembered Visenya's words the last time she saw her. Aegon, Aerys, she thinks to herself, I'm coming to you soon, wait for me a little longer. She gets no reply, but she's not worried. After all, the dead have little more to do than wait for the living to join them.

Chapter End Notes

So, there you have it. When I originally wrote this chapter the ghosts were more implied than actual characters, but I rewrote it because I just didn't like where the story was heading. I'd love to hear guesses about who you all think the seven Targaryens who Rhaena sacrificed are, we already know five, but I'd love to hear guesses about the final two. The next trilogy I'm planning is Prince Baelon Targaryen, Viserys I Targaryen, and Aemma Arryn, although while I'm planning it, I'm going to write up a few chapters from the POV of suggested Targaryens, so we're not quite done with the era of conquest yet(hint, hint). As always, if you have a specific Targaryen(or Targaryen adjacent) character you'd like to see narrate a chapter, feel free to suggest it and I'll see what I can do.
Maegor II-Mercy

Chapter Summary

Maegor's rule is coming to an end. His nephew Jaehaerys is approaching the capital to claim the throne his father once sat on, and Maegor makes the decision not to fight his brother's children. Instead, he sits on the Iron Throne and waits for them to arrive, reflecting on his rule and the important lesson his mother taught him about mercy.

Chapter Notes

Hello again,

Here is another chapter from Maegor's POV as requested. It's always fun writing from Maegor's POV because there's so much opportunity for character development. He and Visenya really got the short end of the stick when it comes to characterization, both often coming across as very flat, antagonistic characters with little more personality then: they were cruel, mean, and you shouldn't like them. Personally, I think history does both of them a real disservice when it comes to their portrayals. Yes, they both did some terrible things, there's no denying it, but it's also pretty clear that without them the Targaryen Dynasty would have fallen really before it even began. Maegor did commit atrocities, but given the state the Seven Kingdoms were in after the debacle that was Aenys' reign, did he really have a choice when it came to being cruel? Do the ends justify the means? I'm not a philosopher, so I don't have an answer, but I hope this chapter makes Maegor seem a little more of a person and less of a flat villain. If you like it, please leave kudos and any constructive comments you like.

I own nothing, no court orders please

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Maegor

“You have to flee.” Maegor tells Rhaena. The moon glows overhead and all is quiet in the Red Keep, but not too far away a storm is brewing, carrying with it his niece and nephew coming for his throne.

“I will not. I am your wife and queen, my place is with you.” she replies fiercely, and he takes her pale face in his hands, stroking her cheeks with his calloused thumbs. ""You think after all I've done to be with you I'd just abandon you?" he sighs at her words. More than anyone he knew what she'd done, what she'd sacrificed, but that didn't change the situation they were in or what needed to be done.

“Rhaena, you must, if you stay here with me, you will die.” he tells her, watching as a tear escapes her purple eye. His heart aches to see her in pain. He might not love her as much as she loves him, but he has grown to love his niece-wife and valued her company above all others.
“Why would we die? We can easily beat my bastard siblings! We have Balerion and Dreamfyre, dragons older, larger, and more powerful than theirs, which are little more than hatchlings! Give the word and I will ride with you to Storm’s End and help you burn them for their impudence!” the fervor in her words, the complete disregard for her sibling’s lives both disturbs and entices him. Rhaena had proven his equal in many ways, but her cruelty, her willingness to do anything to achieve her goals, was perhaps the one place where she surpassed him. She is also right about the dragons, of course. The two of them could likely beat the new claimants without much difficulty if their dragons met in battle, but even if they did, the realm would still be against them.

“Even if we do beat Jaehaerys and Alysanne, the realm will not allow me to remain on the throne. I have had to be harsh to fix the mistakes your father made and the people seem to have finally lost their tolerance for it. They would simply find another claimant and rally behind them, or worse, break our hard won kingdom back into the pieces from whence it was forged.” his words are kind, but his tone firm. He needs her to leave, he can’t have her blood on his hands too. “Listen to me, my darling, I need you to flee to your siblings, tell them I held you against your will and used your daughters to blackmail you into becoming my wife and queen. Cry, beg, plead, do whatever you must, join them in their quest for the throne if you have to-”

“I will not betray you!” she declares firmly, fire burning in her purple eyes. “I cannot besmirch our love in that way!” her words touch his heart, which does exist, contrary to what court gossip would have people believe. He always admired Rhaena’s strong will, how the dragon’s blood flows through her veins just as it does his, but this is a battle he will not allow her to win.

“You are not betraying me or our love, Rhaena, you are preserving our family. Who will protect our daughters if you die with me? I am fated to die and I am reconciled with that, but I cannot have you following me into the Stranger’s arms. It would break my heart.” she throws herself into his arms and sobs into his chest. He holds her tightly and buries his face in her golden locks. People don’t understand their love and he knows when all is said in done they will twist it into something horrible, but history is no longer his concert. They stay locked in each other’s arms for what feels like hours, a small blissful eternity before hell is unleashed, but all good things must come to an end. When she finally pulls away, he sees the slightest light blue peaking over the horizon in the east. “The sun is rising and you must go.” he tells her gently as tears run from her eyes. She stands on her toes and kisses him for the last time.

“I love you.” she whispers. “If you would let me stay, I would.”

“I know,” he says. “Believe me, I know.” their eyes lock for a second and then she rushes from his chambers. The door closes with a low thud and Maegor allows a tear to fall from his violet eyes as he watches the sun rise, feeling, rather than seeing, her departure on Dreamfyre. She would return shortly, he knew, but he would not be here to see it. For the end is nigh and he can’t find it in him to fight the inevitable any longer. So, Maegor the Cruel, the Tyrant, the Usurper, sits on the Iron Throne and waits for his family to come and take it from him. He tells his servants to flee, instructs his few loyal courtiers to scatter to the winds. Most don’t ask twice and run for their lives from the impending storm, but his kingsguard remains, much to his surprise. He thanks them for their service and tells them to wait outside the throne room and tell him when their enemies arrive. They all salute, their armor and white cloaks gleaming in the sun from the stained glass windows and leave him alone to reflect. As he sits there, feeling the cold iron beneath him, he finds himself thinking of his mother. She had been dead two years, but not a day went by where he didn’t miss her. He wonders what she’d do in this position, not that she would have ever made the choices that landed him here in the first place. It seems only yesterday that news of his mother’s death had arrived in the Red Keep, only yesterday that part of his heart had died with her. Maegor remembers how he had cried out in animalistic, guttural sobs that echoed throughout the castle. In the sanctuary of his chambers and the tower of his holdfast, he had allowed his grief to overcome him
and when Rhaena finally had dared to enter his chambers, she found the King sitting on the floor, Blackfyre beside him, surrounded by piles of debris which once were chairs, tables, and tapestries. Although his face was hard as that of a statue, tears had fought his way out of his violet eyes and Rhaena had held him in her arms as he cried for the woman who had given him everything. When he thinks of the beginning of the end, this was always the moment he pictured. His mother had been an imposing figure, revered, if feared, by the smallfolk and while she breathed and rode her great dragon Vhagar, no one dared to rise against him, but with her dead, well, people suddenly found their tolerance for his heavy handed tactics severely lowered. Yet, it was her who had taught him that mercy was a gift that most do not deserve. He still remembers when he had been forced to learn that important lesson. It had been nearly ten years ago when his father died in 37 AC and everything began to fall apart in rapid succession. Rebellions arose across the Seven Kingdoms, but none as personally aimed at the Targaryens as the Arryn Rebellion in the Vale. His sister Aemma resided there as lady with her husband Lord Ronnel and their two children, Maega and Loras. When Jonos Arryn rose up in rebellion he deposed his brother and Aemma, declaring himself King of the Mountain and Vale, a title Ronnel had ceded years earlier to Maegor and Aemma’s mother for a ride on Vhagar. Aenys handled this dire situation as he had so many others: poorly, and when a force came to depose Jonos he sent Ronnel flying out the Moon Door. If he had committed only that crime, perhaps the Targaryens would have found it in their hearts to spare his followers, but what he did next sealed their fate. He remembers his mother’s face when news of his sister’s fate was given to the royal family. For the first time in his life he saw her lose her stoic mask and allow her emotions to shine forth.

“Ronnel Arryn is dead,” Aenys informed Visenya, Maegor, and Alyssa. “Jonos had him thrown through the Moon Door when Lord Royce began to cut his way through that rebel’s supporters.” A look of horror had flashed across his mother’s face.

“And Aemma?” she asked Aenys, fear filling her voice. Maegor’s older brother looked sick with grief.

“If rumor is to be believed,” he answered, his voice shaking while is eyes filled with tears, “Jonos forced her to kill her dragon, watch as he threw Maega and Loras from the Eyrie and then,” he choked, “and then—” Visenya stood, eyes blazing as she grabbed the letter from the king’s trembling hands. Her violet eyes went wide as she read the words detailing his sister’s demise and she began shaking so violently that Maegor feared she would collapse. He stood, steadying her between his arms, taking the letter from her as he did. She shook against him as he read what Jonos Arryn had done to his beautiful little sister, the Jewel of the Realm, the apple of their mother’s eye, supposedly beloved by all. Anger like he’d never felt before bloomed in his chest as the edges of his vision turned red. His mother finally stopped shaking and a deadly calm overtook her whole being. She turned to him, her eyes blazing like a thousand fires.

“Go to Vale and burn them all, leave none of them alive, set the whole Vale on fire if you have to! Make sure Jonos Arryn suffers for what he’s done.” her voice was hard and sharp as Valyrian Steel, cold as the last winter. He had never seen his mother this grief-stricken and it was terrifying to behold.

“That sounds a little extreme,” Aenys piped up meekly, “perhaps we should show a little mercy—” and the full force of Visenya’s wrath became focused on Maegor’s half-brother, who shrank under her rage-filled gaze.

“Mercy?!” she cried, "How dare you suggest any one of those bastards, those cockless usurpers, those disloyal worms, receive mercy! That cunt killed your niece and nephew and raped, tortured, and mutilated your little sister and you think that burning him for his crimes is “extreme”? Mercy is a gift that you have given in excess and this is the result! If you are a dragon, if you have any
sense of honor in your brittle bones, you will shut up and let your betters handle this!” her tone was so scornful, so hurt, so angry, that Aenys cowered in the face of it, nodding weakly in consent to her plans. She took Maegor’s hand and led him from the room, her face torn between crying and fuming. “Your brother is a weak fool, this is as much his fault as Jonos’!” she spit, tears sliding down her face. “If he had allowed me to ride Vhagar to the Eyrie when Aemma first sent word, she would still be alive!”

“He is a coward, afraid of action, but we will certainly make them pay for this.” he responds passionately, feeling his own rage spread through his body with every beat of his heart. She grabbed his hand, clutching it with surprising strength.

"No matter what Aenys says, even if he tries to recall you, do not hesitate. Rain down fire and blood on them and bring me his head and those of his noble supporters. I want to display them on the walls of the city, to send a message to those who dare challenge the dragon's might.” it was at this moment he remembered his mother was a conqueror, that she had taken Westeros with fire and blood. She was not just a queen, not simply a mother, but a hardened warrior, a ruthless general, she was the Dragon Queen and her wrath was terrible to behold. It was easy to forget that their kingdom was young and if they failed to act now, it all could fall apart. She held his hands close to her heart as her voice lowered, sadness filled her eyes and she murmured. “Give Aemma and her family the Targaryen funeral they deserve.” he had nodded in acknowledgement, kissing her knuckles before turning to mount Balerion. He flew towards the Vale, intent on burning that entire cursed kingdom to the ground, but he soon found that Jonos’ men were true cowards. At his approach they threw their supposed king from the Moon Door as they had his enemies and prostrated themselves before Maegor, begging for forgiveness. He might have granted it, if he hadn’t seen the head of his sister’s beautiful red dragon, Morningstar, stuck on a pike in the throne room. His rage burned hotter than dragonfire in that moment and all thoughts of mercy were swept from his mind. He had them all hanged without a second thought. With the few survivors left in the Vale, he had them retrieve Jonos' broken body from the valley floor and gather firewood for four funeral pyres. Seeing his poor niece and nephews broken corpses was horrible, but that was nothing compared to the pain of seeing his sister’s tortured and abused body. Her face was bloody and bruised and he could only imagine what the rest of her looked like. In a single moment of weakness he cried as he sent her and her family into the flames. The one mercy he granted was to his mother, sparing her the sight of her daughter and grandchildren as they were then: broken, mutilated, and very, very dead. What he did bring back to her was a bag full of the heads of the men who had caused them this great sorrow. He can still remember his mother’s face when he presented her with the traitor’s head, a look of grief and joy, sorrow and relief, hatred and satisfaction. She stared at it long and hard, violet eyes glowing with hatred and loathing. For awhile she had not spoken a word, but he will always remember what she finally said: “Promise me when you are king you will never let a rat like this live long enough to give a speech, let alone lead a rebellion.” her voice was hard as she placed Jonos' head and those of his noble followers on pikes lining the walls of king's Landing. “Promise me you will show no mercy to those who dare defy our rule.”

“I promise, mother.” he answered, staring into the dead eyes of the men who killed his sister. “I promise.” He had kept that promise throughout the rest of his life. He crushed his enemies beneath his feet like the ants they were and although people might hate him, he had ensured that the kingdom his parents had built would live on after him. A Kingsguard ran in, his white cloak streaming behind him.

“Our majesty,” he gasped between breaths, “the usurpers are at the gate, Queen Rhaena is with them.” the man swallowed nervously. “They have three dragons!” He distantly he heard the roar of of the mentioned dragons and knew it was time.
“Tell the men not to engage, I will wait for them here. There is no need for any further bloodshed.” the man looked shocked at his king’s words, but also relieved.

“As you wish.” he responded, bowing, he then looked up at Maegor. "they may call you Maegor the Cruel, my King, but to me, you will always be Maegor the Strong, first of his name, keeper of oaths and Savior of the Seven Kingdoms.” then he left the room, leaving Maegor alone once more. He was genuinely shocked at this man's declaration, but it also seemed somewhat fitting to learn. on the day of his death, that he was not universally despised after all. He sighed wearily. Jaehaerys would inherit the kingdom he had reunited, and although it pained him that it wasn’t his own daughter succeeding him, he could only hope Jaehaerys was a stronger king than Aenys had been. He closed his eyes and slid his wrists along along the sharp blades of the Iron Throne, feeling it bite into his flesh, drawing scarlet blood.

“I kept my promise, mother.” he says to the empty throne room. “I did as you asked. I saved your kingdom from ruin, I ensured our dynasty will live on.” he felt his blood run down the throne in rivers and his eyes grow heavy. “I’m coming to see you now, you, father, Aenys, Aemma, Aegon, Viserys, I’ll join you all now.” he saw a dark figure approaching, walking slowly towards him as if it had all the time in the world. “I hope you’re proud of me.” he whispers and his violet eyes close. He feels a hand on his arm and welcomed the Stranger as an old friend.

Chapter End Notes

Maegor's death is super suspicious and there are a lot of theories on how exactly he ended up dead. Although we may never know what exactly happened, I personally always believed he killed himself on the Iron Throne. In any case, I really appreciate the suggestion for another Maegor chapter and welcome any other POV character suggestions you all may have. Up next, Aegon the Conqueror.
Aegon was king of all Westeros, Shield of His People, King of the Andals, the Rhoynar, and the First Men, Lord of the Seven Kingdoms and Protector of the Realm. Yet, even with two wives he has only one son and his advisors have begun whispering about his queen, suggesting he set her aside for a woman who can provide him more heirs, or at least take another wife to protect the fledgling Targaryen Dynasty. These slanders against Visenya remind him of his decision twenty years before to take Rhaenys as his second wife, but thing have changed now and with Fire, Blood, and perhaps a little help from the gods, that's all about to change....

Chapter Notes

Hello from the world of narrowly avoided writer's block,

This is the requested chapter from the POV of Visenya's husband, Aegon the Conqueror. In all honesty, this chapter was a struggle to write because these characters are so complex and their relationship is murky at best. There were so many scenes and directions I wanted this chapter to go, from the birth of Aenys to their conflict over Maegor's marriage, but I eventually settled on Aegon's decision to marry Rhaenys. In canon he did this because he loved Rhaenys, but I always thought there had to be more to it then that. Given Visenya's characterization in the books(limited as it is) it makes sense that she wouldn't be the motherly type and potentially was just not a sexual person, both of which would have strained her marriage with the Conqueror, who would have been in need of heirs to secure his hard-won kingdom. In either case, this was an interesting chapter to write and thanks again for the suggestion. If you enjoy this chapter, please leave kudos and any constructive, reflective, or funny comments that you'd like.

I own nothing, yadayada, please don't sue me

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Aegon

The Aegonfort was quiet as the moon reached its zenith. The dragons slumbered peacefully in the courtyard, smoke wisping from their noses and mouths, and the people of the court either slept or screwed in their beds. King Aegon, the Conqueror of Westeros, slipped through the shadows like a bandit. His indigo eyes searched the hallways for wayward servants or half-asleep courtiers, but finding none, he dashes to the door to his queen’s chambers. He was worried Visenya would have locked them, a worthy precautions given the ongoing Dornish War, but the door opened with ease, the hinges well oiled to prevent creaking. He closed the door softly and approached the grand bed. His wife lay on her side, her long hair free of its usual braids spread out on her pillow like waves of luminescent gold. Her face was peaceful in the moonlight and he loathed to disturb her. As softly as
he could, he crawled into bed beside her and rejoiced in the warmth that always emanated from her strong body. She shifts against him and he knows he’s woken her up, her warrior’s sense still sharp as ever.

“Why do you sneak about as if mother and father are still around to send you back to your own bed?” she asks him, her voice half filled with sleep. He smiles as he rests his head in the crook of her neck.

“For the same reason you still keep your door hinges so well-oiled.” he responds, a slight jest in his tone. “Old habits die hard.” she laughs lightly and shivers as he kisses her jaw. Yet, he can feel a tightness in her manner and knows immediately she is unhappy about something.

“I heard Lord Lannister brought up an interesting topic in council today.” she says with forced casualness and he knows she can feel him stiffen against her.

“He brought up many important matters.” he replies, trying to avoid where this conversation was headed.

“Don’t play the fool, it doesn’t suit you.” she cuts back and he sighs.

“Who told you?” he asks.

“Does it matter?” she responds.

“I suppose not.” he answers, after all it would be useless to punish whoever told her since she already knew. He feels her sigh. She doesn’t accuse him in that moment, instead there is empty, potent, silence. Visenya was a shrewd politician, stoic in public, but deeply passionate in private, adopting either position when necessary to achieve her goals. Everything she did was planned, purposeful, expertly mapped like her conquests had been and her silence was no less effective than a fit of rage. If anything, it was a greater condemnation than any emotional outburst she could have thrown at him. He knew how to fight her with words, but he had no defense against her silence. They chafed under this uncomfortable, forced quiet for hours, or at least that’s what it feels like to Aegon. When they argue there are two paths they often take, that of screaming or that of waiting. In the latter she usually proves victorious, her patience much harder than his own. Tonight is no exception and as always, it is him who speaks first. “Visenya,” he whispers in her ear, even his quiet tone seeming loud after such a long silence, “please talk to me.” she doesn’t respond at first, doesn’t even turn to look at him, and he almost believes she’s fallen back to sleep. He sighs and closes his eyes, breathing in the sweet smell of her hair. He knew there was a chance she would have heard about Lannister’s outburst today. He understood that she might be angry, hurt even, but he had expected screaming, anger, rage, not this quiet condemnation.

“I heard that you didn’t say anything.” she finally whispers, her words piercing the darkness like a knife through butter. “They say that you just sat there and listened, didn’t defend me, didn’t even stop him.” he still can’t see her face, but he can feel her trembling breaths against his chest. “Your silence is as good as an encouragement to them.”

“I know,” he replies softly, stroking her arm, pale as marble in the faint moonlight. “I should have stopped them. They had no right to say such things.” he hears her exhale angrily. “But what they said, they said out of concern for the kingdom. They are advisors, they were doing their job.” she turned her head slightly at his words and he can feel her muscles tense against him.

“Claiming your wife is barren? Suggesting that you discard me and wed another woman? I was not aware that meddling in their king’s marriage was a part of their job or that inquiring what we do in our marriage bed was for “the good of the kingdom.” she states rhetorically, her voice bitter and
I understand how that might offend you, it offends me as well. Yet, they do not say these things out of malice, they are just concerned that having only one heir makes our dynasty weak.” he keeps his voice calm, afraid to rouse the dragon that lies within his sister-wife. However, as much as he loves her, he is also loathe to condemn them since, if he was being honest with himself, he’d admit that his counselors’ fears had often plagued him as well. Despite once having two wives, he had but one son and if something were to happen to Aenys, well, it would be disastrous for them all.

“As if half-blooded brats born to their damned daughters would help fix that!” she cuts back, her voice rising as she grows angrier. "They’d have me discarded so you can have children who may not even be able to learn high Valryian correctly, let alone ride dragons?!”

“They did not want you discarded, they all respect you as a general and as a queen.” he says, attempting to soothe her, both for her sake and his. “I believe they simply wanted me to consider taking a second wife-

“How dare they claim their base-born daughters are equal to Rhaenys!” she snarls, cutting him off. “How dare they suggest you take one of them as a second wife!” he rubs her arm gently, feeling her begin to shake. He doesn’t know if she’s shaking with fear or anger.

“They are lesser men, Visenya, they do not understand that you and I are the only ones left in this world worthy of one another.” he continues to stroke her arm, attempting to assuage any fears she may have over his affection for her. “Fear not, my love, I desire no one, but you and will be married only to you for the rest of my days.” she stiffens at his words.

“You promised me that once before, but you didn’t keep it for very long.” she murmurs softly and her words cause his blood to turn to ice. She finally turns over, her violet eyes meeting his indigo ones. They are hard as diamonds and bright as lightning, beautiful to behold, but also terrible in their ferocity.

“That was different.” he responds weakly, but he can tell from her arched eyebrows that she doesn’t see it that way. “Rhaenys was our sister-”

“Who you wed out of carnal desire. What would stop you from doing the same with a Lannister or Tully girl?” Visenya inquires. She holds his gaze and he wonders what terrible futures those eyes have seen to make them look as old and wise as they do.

“We both know the circumstances were different.” he replies, but she shakes her head.

“If I recall correctly it was much the same as today, save the Throne you sit on.” her voice is hard and she turns her back to him again. She’s right, of course, the circumstances that led him to marry Rhaenys were much like the ones he was currently embroiled in. He had told Orys, rather foolishly, that he married Rhaenys because he and Visenya did not align sexually. As much as he wished it was a joke, this was the literal truth. More often than not he would want to bed his wife and find her body cold and hostile, despite her obvious love for him. This had been the case on their wedding night and he can still remember how she had cried afterwards as he held her in his arms. He had promised he’d never bed her again if that’s what she desired, although she had assured him that was not the case. At first Aegon had been resigned to his situation, willing to live with and cherish the few times Visenya was more than happy to go to bed with him. Those special nights of passion always left him more than satisfied and aching for her touch, but it was only rarely that she would welcome his touches for a second night, let alone a third. There was no doubt amongst any who saw them that Aegon loved Visenya, and truly he did, but as two years passed his frustration increased and he began to resent her, a feeling he knew was unfair since it was not
her fault. When Rhaenys blossomed and began sleeping with any comely man who caught her eye, he found himself presented with what appeared to be an easy solution to his carnal frustration. There had also been another important matter that affected his decision: the need for an heir. “You remember what you told me the day you announced your engagement to our sister, I assume?”

Dread and regret fills Aegon’s chest, for yes, he did remember that day, that fight. Later, he would chuckle with Orys, in dark humor, that in his attempt to have two wives he had almost ended up with none, but at the time he had felt as if his world was collapsing. He can still remember that day so clearly, as if it had been etched into his memory detail by detail. It had been a cool spring day and he had thought to tell Visenya himself about his second engagement. Part of him hoped it would soften the blow this would no doubt deal her, another part wanted to make sure Orys didn’t tell her first. He recalls they were all breaking their fast that morning, Visenya blissfully unaware of the planned announcement. Throughout the meal he and Rhaenys had been exchanging worried glances, both afraid of how their sister would take this news or if she had already dreamt of it. Visenya must have noticed these exchanges because she finally went:

“What?” she asked in a low, dangerous voice.

“No, you will not be wedding our sister.” she responds, standing as she stared into his eyes. “I forbid it.” He bristled at her commanding and condescending tone.

“I am the oldest, the first dragonrider, Lady of Dragonstone. In Old Valyria I would be the unquestioned heir.” her words are proud, but both of them know they meant little in Westeros. “If I say you two will not wed, then you will not wed.” she had often spoken to her siblings in this manner when they were children, but Aegon was her ward no longer.

“We’re not in Valyria,” Aegon retorts with irritation, “and you are without doubt the Lady of Dragonstone, but here, in this land, that title means little.” Both of them knew he was right. She could refuse all she wanted, but Visenya could not stop Aegon from doing as he wished, at least not using the law.
“Visenya, I know this must come as a shock to you, but please be reasonable. Aegon loves me and I love him. He wishes to wed me and the sooner you accept it, the easier it will be for all of us to come to terms with what this marriage will become.” Rhaenys says, her eyes pleading for Visenya to understand. “You will be the first wife, sister, with all the honor and the titles. Please don’t be too angry.” Rhaenys had always been a gentle spirit, begging for the praise and respect of her older siblings. It seems, even when she was embarking on something that was so obviously hated by her older sister, she still wanted her approval. Visenya, however, was having none of it.

“I don’t see why he would want to marry you, Rhaenys.” Visenya replied coolly. “After all, you’re a little more than a pretty face.” her words were cutting, cruel, and tore at Rhaenys’ confidence with ease. “But I suppose it’s not your face he’s interested in.” Tears filled their sister’s eyes at her older sister’s condemnation and Aegon felt his protectiveness for Rhaenys further fuel his anger.

“Enough, Visenya! It’s decided. Out of love for you I told you before we announced it, but there is no amount of cruel words to our sister or defiance towards me with change what is to come.” Visenya’s eyes flared and he was reminded that she had the blood of the Dragon too. She would not back down as long as she believed she had a chance, however, small, at victory.

“Rhaenys, get out.” she ordered. “I need to talk to my husband alone.” Rhaenys remains seated, glaring at their sister defiantly as tears streamed down her pretty face. Visenya stared straight back, violet eyes against Rhaenys’ lavender, and Rhaenys shrank under their older sister’s angry gaze. She glanced at Aegon for support, but when he simply stood there, watching her, the youngest Targaryen scurried from the room. When the door closed, Visneya’s fury was focused on him and it was like being eyed by an angry dragon.

“Why?” she asks, her voice dripping with fury.

“I love her.” Aegon declares, earning him a baleful glare.

“I don’t doubt that, but you’re not dumb enough to do something so drastic out of love alone, tell me the real reason.” their eyes are locked for a second and the look in her eyes tells him she already knows his reasons.

“You know why.” he responds, matching her cruel tone. She walks around the table to stand directly in front of him, the proximity taking away his ability to lord over her. He is barely three inches taller than her and she is just as deadly with a blade. He is suddenly glad they had both left their respective weapons in their rooms this morning, or one of them would be bleeding by now.

“Be man enough to say it to my face.” she snarls back.

“I want children,” he said coldly, “and we both know you won’t give those to me.” the betrayal, hurt, and rage in her eyes almost caused him to back away from her in fear. “I know of the draught you take monthly to ensure no child can grow in your womb.”

“So if I could just fuck you every day and had been pregnant twice since our marriage you wouldn’t marry Rhaenys?” she asked him, judgement and contempt dripping from every word.

“The situation would be different, yes.” he answers back, taking a sick, malicious joy in seeing the hurt flash in her eyes. She looks as if she’s about to strike him in that moment, but then, her rage is replaced with a strange, deadly calm.

“And to think, I always thought my brother above being yanked around by that worm between his legs, how disappointing that he turns out to be a man like any other.” she says almost seductively, taking a step forward. He can feel the heat from her skin, smell the perfumes in her hair as she
leans in and whispers in his ear. “I wish I had fucked Orys and married him when I had the
courage.” Aegon’s eyes went wide at her words and he felt a hot, jealous rage rise within his chest.
She must sense this change in him because she laughs, her breath tickling his neck. “He would
have loved me better than you and perhaps I would be willing to spend more nights with my
husband if his hair was black instead of gold.” His vision went red and he felt his hand raise as if to
strike her. Her eyes drifted to it, but she only sneers in response. “Go on, Aegon, strike me. Prove
to me you are unworthy of being my lord. Even if you hit, we both know it won’t hurt nearly as
much as if I hit you.” His hand shook in the air, but he clenched it to his chest, refusing to strike
her, refusing to prove her right. She laughed at this, a cruel, malicious thing, turning on her heel
and leaving. He had stood for a moment then raced after her, but had reached the courtyard just in
time to see Vhagar leap skyward, his wife on her back. She had looked down at him as she flew
off, her eyes bleeding contempt, seeming to say:

If you want Rhaenys, then you shan’t have me.

She had flown from Dragonstone that day and not returned for days. On the fourth day since her
departure, Aegon and Rhaenys had begun searching for her, but no matter how long or how far
they scoured on their dragons, she was nowhere to be found. Although neither Rhaenys nor Aegon
voiced it aloud, but began to fear that she was dead. It was not until their mother’s desperate ravens
finally reached her, wherever she had been, that she even made contact with her family. To this day
Aegon still has no idea what his mother said to Visenya to convince her to return or where she had
flown off to in her grief and rage. When Balerion cried out signalling her return, Aegon, Rhaenys,
their mother, and Orys had rushed to the courtyard as Vhagar landed. His mother had feared she
would be wounded or hurt after having been gone for three weeks, but she dismounted with ease,
dressed in a new set of riding leathers, the picture of good health, her hair glittering in the sunlight.

“Visenya-” he said coldly, but she had not even glanced at him, pushing past him throwing herself
into their mother's arms. Valaena Targaren wept as she embraced her oldest child, stroking her hair
and peppering her forehead with motherly kisses. When Visenya finally extricated herself from
their mother's worried clutches she embraced Orys, placing a chaste kiss on his lips in greeting,
making Aegon's blood burn hotter than dragonfire. Then, without a word to her siblings, she strode
into the castle, requesting her chambers be moved to the East Wing of the castle, and then locking
the doors to her room, seeing no one save their mother. When Aegon finally allowed her to move
her chambers as requested, to the ones farthest from Rhaenys' and Aegon's, she quickly established
almost a second court on Dragonstone, separate from the one led my her siblings, filled with the
best strategists, maesters, scholars, and warriors she could find. She had avoided Rhaenys and
Aegon like they were diseased in the months following her flight and their wedding, refusing
requests to dine with them, spurning public events such as Rhaenys’ name day(although she did
dismiss her mother's), and spending most of her days training in the yards, studying in her libraries,
or riding Vhagar over the nearby coasts, scaring the smallfolk silly. The only family member
besides their mother she would allow in presence, was Orys and every time Aegon saw his black-
haired, bastard half-brother walking towards her wing he would be struck with a bolt of red, hot
jealousy. One day, when his brother came to him smelling of Visenya's favorite perfume, he
pushed his brother against the wall, hands gripping the other man’s doublet, and spit,

“Are you fucking my wife?” his older brother had looked at him with the utmost contempt and
replied.

“Of course not, who do you think I am? Rhaenys? I don't seduce married men, or women.” Aegon
pushed him harder into the wall at that comment.

"Careful what you say, brother. Besmirch my wife and I'll have your tongue cut out." Orys
narrowed his eyes at him, his black ones looking like a dark reflection of Aegon's own.
"I apologize for offending you, my lord." he replied with mock reverence. "But even if I was having an affair with Visenya, you would have no grounds to punish either of us for it." His words were cold and Aegon was shocked to see that Orys had chosen Visenya over him.

"No grounds? She's my wife! She swore to love me, and only be, until the end of our lives!" Aegon snarled back. Orys raised an unimpressed eyebrow, an expression so characteristic to Visenya that it made Aegon's heart ache just the smallest bit.

"Well, you made that vow two, but here you are with two wives. Would it not be fair for her to have two husbands as well?" Orys responded and Aegon saw red, using all his strength to grind his fists into Orys' chest.

"No!" he responded, but then he released Orys as he recognized his own hypocrisy.

"Ah, he sees the error of his ways," Orys responds, straightening his doublet. "Are we going to go hunting or not?" He never did find out why Orys smelled like Visenya's perfume, but that day is when he began to realize how much he missed her. Rhaenys and him had the best physical connection he had ever experienced, but slowly he found himself missing his deep connection with Visenya. For as long as he could remember they had been almost two parts of the same soul, and her absence left a hole in his heart that no amount of wine, sex, or duels could fill. He craved to talk to her about his dreams of conquest, wished to spar with her as they had when they were children. He realized, above all else, that he loved her and his heartsickness grew every day he was apart from her. It eventually grew to an agony he could not bear, so one night, three months after his wedding to Rhaenys, he finally broke and fell to his knees at her feet. As she watched him with cold, violet eyes, he confessed to her much he missed her, how much he loved her, and how he could not live without her. She watched him prostrate himself and cry, begging her to allow him to just speak with her if nothing else. To this day he wonders why she forgave him, although it would still be a long while before she let him share her bed. Part of him hopes that it was because she loved him so dearly, needed him as much as he did her, and later in their lives that would certainly be true. Yet, when he told her of his dreams of conquest, of his aspirations for their future, she didn't seem surprised although she, unlike Rhaenys, was wholeheartedly in favor of conquering Westeros. Part of him figures that she forgave him because he saw what they could accomplish in one of her dreams and knew that the dragons would have to fly together. He wondered if that was what she was thinking about now, as the whole court seemed to cry against her.

"Visenya, you are the great love of my life, I will never love another as I love you." he tells her. "I know I hurt you so long ago, I know I may seem unworthy of the love you bear me, but please know that I will never allow anyone to come between us. I swear on the gods of Old Valyria that I will never lust after another woman as long as I shall live." she turned to him, her eyes wide. She of all people knew the dangers of swearing to the gods of their ancestors. In her eyes burned such a passionate, hardy love that in this moment that he could not dream of caring for another. He would gladly die for her. She captured his lips in hers and his hands tangled in her long, gold-white hair. When they broke apart they were both breathless.

"I had a dream." she told him as he stroked her face.

"Of what?" he asked between breaths, longing for her touch, for her lips to be on his again. She shook her head at his question, a shadow of fear clouding her face.

"It's too terrible to speak of." she answered. "It is of beautiful and terrible dragons, of fire and blood. The specifics are vague as the future always is, but as much as I despise your advisors, they are right. Our dynasty needs another prince." she moved closer, pressing herself against him "I did not take that draught tonight, nor will I in the near future." his eyes widen at her words. She had
been taking the draught to prevent conception since she first bled, but it seemed no longer. “I also received herbs from the Maester to ensure I can fulfill my wifely duties and not be a slave to the whims of my body.” her eyes glimmered. For years she had been afraid to take the medicines suggested to her, afraid they might make her ill or ruin her wits. He had supported her decision, agreeing that the risk was too great while they were at war, but it would be a lie to say he wasn’t overjoyed by her change in attitude.

“I am surprised, my love.” he whispered. “You do not have to do this for me, you know.” she stroked his face lightly, a smirk playing upon her full lips.

“Don’t be arrogant. I am not doing this for you, but for our family, for the future we’ve dreamed of, but most importantly, I’m doing this because I want to.” she leaned closer, her lips only inches from his. “They all claim I’m barren, that I will never bare you the son our dynasty needs, well, let’s prove them wrong.” Before he can even reply she straddled him, her smooth, muscular thighs glowing in the moonlight. He gasped at the sensation and brought her mouth to his for a passionate kiss, as much a battle as an act of love. Two months after that night, when Visenya had missed her moon blood twice and was increasingly sick in the morning, a Maester confirmed that the Queen was indeed with child. He had hugged Visenya close in that moment, holding her to his chest as she shook with exhilaration and fear. Seven months after that wonderful day she gave birth to a healthy son and Aegon thanked all the gods that she and the baby survived the ordeal. When his son was two weeks old and Visenya was well-enough to leave her chambers, they stood before the court and the throne forged from the swords of the conquered, hand in hand, as he held their son before all those who had dared to call his wife barren. Few moments have brought him the same satisfaction as seeing all those snakes bowe to his and Visenya’s son, Maegor, the Prince of Dragonstone, of the pure blood of Old Valyria and in many people’s minds, the heir to the Iron Throne.

Chapter End Notes

There was a lot in this chapter that I wanted to explore, but only managed to brush upon. Since there is so much murkiness surrounding the first generation of Targaryens, it's both easy and hard to come up with consistent characterizations for them and their relationships. For instance, it'd be easy to make Rhaenys and Visenya's relationship strictly a rivalry, but it was definitely more complicated than that and tv already oversimplifies the relationship between women(like, excuse me, women aren't always catty to each other and stabbing each other in the back, that's way too much energy and most women have better things to do with their time). Another example is Orys' relationship with the Targaryen trio, he almost definitely had thing for Visenya(whether they ever acted on that attraction is up for debate, even in this story), but other than "loyal" it's unclear what his relationship with Aegon was like. In any case, I appreciate the suggestion for an Aegon POV and hope I did this pair justice. If you have any other character you'd like to see a POV from, feel free to suggest it. Next up, Daeron the Drunk(son of Maekar I).
Daeron the Drunk-A Clouded Sight

Chapter Summary

Daeron, son of Maekor I, hates his dreams. They are filled with terrifying images and frightful visions that send him running to the nearest tankard of wine or jug of ale. However, in all his years of dreaming and drinking, he's never had a dream quite as strange as this before..

Chapter Notes

Why Hello There,

Here is the requested chapter from the POV of Daeron the Drunk. This was a rather unexpected chapter and was an interesting character to write a POV from. Daeron would obviously not have known Visenya since she had been dead for over a hundred years and would have no memories of his own of her, so I had fun figuring out how this chapter would work. His dragon dreams that were supposedly what drove him to drunkeness provided an easy way to have him interact with my favorite Targaryen, but it will certainly be interesting to figure out how the generations who had no interactions with Visenya deal with her memory. I also want to take a minute to acknowledge that I've gone pretty far afield from the source material at this point. When I originally planned this out, I thought it would simply be a reflection on Visenya and an opportunity to flesh out her characterization a little more and explore the Targaryen Dynasty through an interesting lens: memory. I didn't really expect it to diverge from the canon as much as it has, but it has kinda taken on a life of its own at this point and I'm not inclined to change it. If you're a real stickler for cannon and the characterization your favorite Targaryens receive there, then this probably won't be the story for you, sorry. There are lots of good works out there though and I'm sure there's one that will suit your tastes. For those of you who genuinely enjoy this series, then I hope you continue to give kudos and leave constructive comments about your favorite chapters.

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See the end of the chapter for more notes

“Do you dream of me?” Mayrah asks him seductively, her brown-gold eyes looking at him with practiced adoration.

“No.” he responds, stroking her hair. He sees hurt flash across her beautiful face.

“And here I thought I was your favorite.” she replies cheekily.

“You are my dear, no courtesan is quite as skilled as you,” he soothes her, although they both know it wouldn’t really hurt her if he did favor another. “Believe me, beautiful Mayrah, it’s best if I don’t dream of you. I only dream of sorrow and disaster and-”
“Your dreams come true.” she finishes for him, running her deft hand up his smooth chest. Most people would make fun of him for that claim, although no barbs from his brothers or dismissals from his father could hurt his pride, mainly because he didn’t have any to wound. Mayrah, however, is too well-trained to jest at her best customer’s expense.

“Yes, what I dream often comes to pass in one way or another.” he responds. He knows that many people doubt his claim that his dreams come true. After all, how can there be dragon dreams when dragons have been dead for two generations now? Yet, here he was, dreaming and when he dreamt it often led to drinking. When he saw a golden dragon consumed by its own bright flame he would wake and reach for a cup of arbor gold. When he saw a great dragon falling upon a brown-haired knight, well, that would require an entire tankard to forget. When he was presented with a vision of a crowned stag trampling upon the dead corpse of a white dragon with the eyes of his youngest brother, he was not surprised when he consumed not only his tankard of wine, but an entire barrel full of his liquid escape. He could still taste the wine he had consumed earlier on his tongue as his eyes grew heavy. He allowed his eyes to close and prayed to whatever god listened to drunken fools like him that he had fucked enough and drunk enough that he would have no dreams. Unfortunately, his plea fell on deaf ears and when the darkness took him he found himself dreaming. He stood in a dark hall carved from stone, filled with a strange chill. Moonlight glimmers through the windows and the faint light from the torches lining the walls barely illuminates the triple headed dragons carved in stone. Recognition flashed through his mind and he groaned in anguish. “Dragonstone, it just had to be this cold, lifeless hunk of rock.” he murmurs to himself in annoyance. Almost habitually, he looks around for a tankard of wine to make this more bearable, but it seems this miserable vision lacked wine as much as warmth. As he stands in the dimly lit hall he becomes uncomfortably aware of his lack of intoxication. His mind is clear, his eyes keen, and his hands free of their usual shuddering grip. “Sober and on Dragonstone, can this dream get any worse?” he curses to himself and right as the words left his lips he hears a child crying. “I just had to ask.” he reprimands himself as he follows the sound, deducing that whatever vision he was about to endure, it would be there. He easily finds the door from which the cries are emanating and opens it. It’s a grand room, not one he recognizes in this dark night, but from what he can see it’s still luxurious. A huge four poster bed, a gilded vanity, a shelf full of well preserved books, all the trappings that usually accompanied the quarters of one of the blood. Another sob drew his attention and his eyes fixed on the child in the bed. It’s a girl, probably about ten years old, with the gold-white hair so deeply associated with the Targaryens and pearly, pale skin. He sighs as he watches the child cry, feeling nothing but resignation. He had witnessed the deaths of too many gold and silver haired kinsmen in his dreams to be particularly moved by them anymore, even if it was a child. He sits in a chair to watch whatever was about to occur and hears it scratch against the floor. Much to his surprise the girl looks up at the sound, her eyes, a shade of startling violet, focusing on him. A look of fear takes over her young face as she takes him in.

“Who are you?” she asks him, her voice rough from the crying. “How did you get in my room?” Daeron stares at her in shock. In his dreams he was always an observer, forced to watch whatever was occurring, but otherwise invisible. A figure from his dreams actually talking to him? Now that was new. What had been in that wine? “Are you one of them?” her voice shakes with fear at that, her entire body trembling. He wonders what could make a Targaryen child so afraid.

“I am Daeron and entered you room by way of the unlocked door, as most people probably do.” he answers, unsure of what he’s supposed to do in this situation. He wished his brother Aemon was here, he would know what to do with this figment from a nightmare. “And I don’t know if I’m one of them, since I have no idea who ‘them’ is.” she swallows nervously, her teeth worrying at her bottom lip.

“Daeron?” she repeats, saying his name like she’s tasting a new food, seeing how it feels on her tongue. “That’s a strangely Valyrian name. You appear like one of the monsters, I assume you
only got in here because no one else can see you, but you look like you could be my brother, or perhaps a cousin. Are you real?” she asks and he isn’t sure how to answer her. After all, he is dreaming, so he should be the realest thing here, but he couldn’t be sure this was his dream anymore. Something about this one felt different, perhaps it was the feeling in the air, or the smell of the dream, but something was different and it worried Daeron greatly. He was used to strangeness, after all, he dreamed of the future, but this was pushing even his limits.

“I don’t know if I am real. I fell asleep and next thing I know I’m in this awful place.” he responds casually. The girl scrunches up her face at his words.

“So this is your dream?” she inquires, playing with a piece of her long hair.

“I’m never sure about anything, but I don’t believe so. I am dreaming, but I don’t think this strange vision is my own. Is it yours?” he asks her. “Are we in your dream?” she shakes her head at his words.

“I’m not asleep as far as I know.” she responds, looking around the room anxiously. “If I was asleep there’d be monsters, dragons, or horror, although I also see them when I’m awake so who’s to say what’s real or not anymore.” something about what she said strikes a chord in him. He begins to feel a strange kinship with the girl who appeared to suffer as he did.

“You see monsters?” he asks and she looks down at her covered legs, her hair closing like a curtain in front of her face. He recognizes that action, it’s one done out of embarrassment and shame. How often had he looked down to avoid disappointment in his father’s eyes? How often had he stooped to avoid the judgement of others?

“Father says it’s my imagination.” she whispers, her voice dripping enough sorrow that even Daeron’s hardened heart begins to open to her. He stands and slowly approaches the bed as she looks up at him between the strands of her hair. Something about this little girl was strangely familiar. She was not someone he had seen before in the waking world, that much he was certain of, but some part of him recognized her. Perhaps he had seen her in another dream? He certainly hoped not, then she was most likely dead in the real world, whatever and wherever that may be.

“Do you think it’s your imagination?” he asked her, although he wasn’t sure why he was so fascinated with this girl. Normally, he avoided children. They were too trusting and breakable to be allowed near someone like him, but this one seemed to draw him in. He wondered if it was some kind of magic.

“No, they’re real. The man without a face follows my father around like some evil shadow, sucking his weak life force from him like some parasite. My younger sister is followed by a woman with red eyes that drip blood. I have watched a creature with black wings like a raven’s fly after my grandfather as he takes to the skies. No one else can see them, but they are real. Where they walk in the mud footprints are made and I have found the feathers from the winged man although everyone else claims they come from a raven. They all think I’m at best imaginative, at worst delusional.” what she says resonates with Daeron’s own broken and battered heart. Her words are also strangely familiar to him and he tugs at a memory hovering at the edges of his consciousness. He vaguely remembers drunkenly stumbling across an old tome when he passed out one night in the Library of Summerhall. He had thought to use it as a pillow, for its cover was soft and comfortable. When he had come to the next morning he had found that the book was ancient, even written in High Valyrian. He had brought the book, now smelling of spilled arbor wine and bile, to his brother as an apology for defiling his library. Aemon had been amazed at Daeron’s discovery, if disgusted by his treatment of this “priceless tome”. He had told Daeron it was about Dragon Sight, not that those words meant anything to the prince nursing a wicked hangover.
Aemon had opened up a passage and found small notes written next to it, which delighted him even more. If Daemon was recalling correctly, which was unlikely, they had been word for word a description of the monsters plaguing this child. “And those are just what I see when I’m awake. What I dream is possibly far worse.” she murmurs, her eyes boring into his. Her eyes seemed too old for her face and he recognized the broken, scared look within them. It was the same fear that he saw in his own eyes anytime he looked into a mirror.

“Do your dreams come true?” he asks the girl and her eyes go wide.

“Yes.” she whispers. “I know when someone will die or sometimes when something will happen. I knew the grand fishing fleet would be sunk by a storm. I’ve seen a great dragon falling from the sky, an arrow through its bright eye. I’ve witnessed a cold, darkness beyond a wall of ice with eyes like illuminated glaciers. I see a throne made of swords forged in dragonfire covered in blood.” Daeron’s eyes go wide at her words. He was starting to think he wasn’t dreaming of the future.

“What did you say your name was?” he asked her and she looked at him strangely.

“I never said it.” then her eyes go wide at something behind him. The temperature in the room seems to rise exponentially and he turns to see a new figure has joined them. A woman stands before them, her skin like the surface of magma, black with red cracks glowing through it. Her eyes were two pits of flame and her hair was made of black and red fire. Daeron falls back onto the bed in fear.

“I thought I sensed something strange here.” it hisses at him in High Valyrian. “You are not where you are supposed to be.” it slowly approaches them and the girl grabs his arm, clenching it with surprising strength. He holds her close instinctively, reminded in that moment of his own little sister, Rhae.

“Go away! You know you can’t come in here without my permission.” she shrieks with surprising bravery. The woman chuckles.

“Normally that is true, little seer, but your guest is a special circumstance. Fear not, I will not harm you, I only wanted to see what had fallen out of time.” the flames of her eyes are almost too bright to look at and he squints under their painful intensity. “Which one of us sent you?” she asks him, her voice like an avalanche.

“No one sent me,” he responds in confusion. “For me this is but a dream, I fell asleep in my bed and found myself here, wherever and whenever “here” happens to be.” she narrows her eyes at him, the flames turning a dark purple. She seems to sniff him.

“You smell strange.” she sniffs him again, making him almost as uncomfortable as he was afraid. “You have not the pure sight, blood of the dragon, but you should, you have the magic in your blood for it. Something is wrong where you are from and it has given you only a half sight, a clouded sight.” The girl continues to cling to him and he glances at her, but her face is as confused as his. It’s clear this creature, whatever it is, is making sense to neither of them. “Your magic is weak.” something shifts in the little girl’s eyes and they fill with a strange intensity.

“Perhaps he is from when the dragons are no more.” she suggests, her eyes challenging the intruder. “When you and your kind have faded to almost nothing.” Daeron stares at her in shock, wondering how powerful this child actually is.

“How do you know that?” he asks her.

“I dreamed of it. A land without dragons, without magic, without even these monsters.” she
answers, although her eyes remain fixed on the creature, who seems to stare into Daeron’s soul. Personally, he didn’t think there was much to find there, any soul he had was no doubt drowned in all the wine he had consumed. Nevertheless, it seems to be searching for something inside him and he feels his chest warm from within, feels a heat behind his eyes.

“She’s right,” he tells the creature, anxious to make it leave. “Where I am from dragons have been dead for two generations.” the creature’s flames blaze violet and both he and the girl shudder as the temperature continues to rise.

“If the dragons are no more, than magic itself will suffer. No wonder you are so weak, it must have taken much power to get you so far.” she approaches them as she speaks, the air around her almost painfully hot. He scrambles back from her, feeling as if he was standing directly by a forge. “They need my help fixing that. They need magic from the past.” Suddenly he is frozen, unable to move, unable to escape as she places a hand on his chest and he screams in agony, feeling as if he had been stuck with a white, hot poker. The girl shouted in rage and turns to the woman.

“Don’t hurt him!” she shrieks, eyes blazing with fear, but also confidence. “I forbid it!” the creature, surprisingly, removes its hand at this declaration. Daeron looks down at his burning chest and a symbol within a hand print glows as brightly as fire.

“Touch it,” it tells her, “and see what he cannot and I will end his suffering.” The girl glances at him as his chest burns in agony and with a trembling hand places her own hand over it. She whispers as it seers her hand, smoke wisping from her small hand. Her eyes close and she is suddenly deathly still. When she opens her eyes they are filled with tears, but the burning ceases. The fiery woman watches them with what Daeron can only call amusement. “You are strong, seer, you will serve us well.” she says with the smallest hint of respect. She then turns her gaze to Daeron. “When you wake you will be home and what she has seen will be yours. You bring with you, Daeron Targaryen, a glimmer of magic. It is a seed that will have to grow, but grow it will and one day things will be as they were.” then she erupts in flames and is gone. The girl stares at him in fear and reverence.

“Are the dragons really gone where you’re from?” she asks him, her eyes still teary from her ordeal.

“Yes, they died in a war.” he tells her, feeling the heat emanating from his chest. Horror erupts across her face. “We lost nearly all of them and although we still have eggs they are little better than pretty decorations.”

“I can’t imagine such a world.” she responds sadly. “I’m glad I shall be long dead by then.” suddenly, the memory of what his brother told him hits him like lightning.

“I know what that was,” he tells her, the pain from his branding having finally jogged his memory. She looks up at him eagerly. “And I know what allows you, and by extension me, to see them. You have Dragon Sight. You can see the Gods.” the girl’s face goes wide with surprise.

“Those monsters are gods?” she whispers, her horror only growing as he nods in confirmation. “They’re horrible!” he looks at her sadly.

“Yes they are, but you have a powerful gift. Where I’m from no one has had the gift in generations, possibly because of the death of dragons and if I’m the one who’s supposed to have it then may the gods help the Seven Kingdoms, but you’re different. If you can learn to hone the power within you, why, you could accomplish anything.” he sees a light blossom in her eyes.

“Anything?” she asks, he sees in he a glimmer of ambition, a shadow of the face that could one day
lead armies.

“Anything,” he responds. A hunch forms in the back of his mind as to who he’s been talking to this night. “Even conquer a continent.” he hears footsteps by the door and both of them go silent as it opens soundlessly. Daeron wonders how the hinges are kept so quiet. Does the girl oil her door hinges? A boy comes into view, no older than the girl, with the same Targaryen features: white-gold hair and purple eyes, although his are more indigo than violet.

“Senya?” he asks sleepily. “Who are you talking to?” Daeron looks at the boy curiously, seeing in him his own little brother.

“No one, Aegon,” she answers quickly. “Just a ghost.” Daeron’s eyes widen as he turns to her, his suspicion about her identity confirmed. The girl before him was one of the founders of his house and he suddenly knows where he recognizes her from. The violet eyes who had challenged a god for him were the same ones that seemed to watch him from the portrait in his father’s study. Her face was a younger, softer version, of that grand statue that still stood in the crypt beneath the Red Keep. This girl, small and scared as she was now, would one day conquer a continent. The boy climbed into his sister’s bed, snuggling beside her. It was certainly strange to see the boy who would one day conquer a continent with fire and blood seem as innocent and sweet as any child could be.

“Was this ghost nice or was it one of the bad ones?” he asked her and Visenya looked down at him with a soft smile. “Do you need me to set Balerion on him?”

“No, there’s no need for dragonfire here. He was a very nice ghost from far away. He’s going to go home now to awaken dragons.” her eyes met Daeron’s. “He’s going to go back to the kingdom we will make one day.” and just like that Daeron awoke. Sunlight streamed into his room at Summerhall and he groaned as his head pounded. Mayrah was gone, as all good whores are in the morning, and he was instead faced with his youngest brother. Having just seen Aegon the Conqueror as a child, Daeron was struck by the resemblance. He had never realized how much young Egg looked like his namesake. He instinctively put a hand to his chest, but felt no heat nor mark there. Whatever magic had occurred, it was no longer within him.

“Did you dream again?” his brother asked him, eyes worried. Of all his family, only Aemon and Aegon took his dreams seriously, the rest laughed at him behind his back, or right in front of him if they were feeling unkind. Not that it particularly mattered to him if they laughed, most the time he was too drunk to care.

“Yes.” he answers, rubbing his face tiredly. Gods he needs some wine. “Of what?” his brother inquired. Daemon groaned at his brother’s question, but Egg looked so earnest that he couldn’t help but tell him.

“Of gods, dragons, and children who would be conquerors.” he responded, although his description made it seem a lot less nightmarish than it actually had been.

“Oh that’s nice, I wish I had a dragon.” his brother said sadly. Daemon sighed. “I think it’d be fun to be able to ride through the clouds.”

“It would indeed, and if my dream is true, then one they’ll come back.” he told his brother. Aegon’s face lit up at his words.

“They will?” his brother asked, now as excited as a puppy.

“I think so, or at least that’s what I think Visenya saw. It’s all a blur, really.” his head throbbed
again, it was too early in the morning not to be drunk. His brother looked confused at his words, but knew better than to question him. It’s best not to analyze his dreams too much. All he dreams come to pass, but not always in the way people think.

“Well, Father wants to see us, something about wanting us to go to some Tournament and bring honor to our line. He wants to speak to you about the journey.” Daemon groaned at his brother’s words.

“Can’t he just send Aerion?! That bastard brother of ours can do enough damage on his own, no need for me to be there and make it more of a shit show.” Aegon shrugged his shoulders.

“I think he hopes your presence will stop Aerion from bringing greater shame to our house than he already has. He says to be in his study in half an hour, so don’t drink too much before seeing him, you know how he gets.” Daeron groaned again and covered his eyes with his arm. He hears his brother leave and sighs. Violet eyes seem to glare at him from the darkness.

“Visenya dreamed of a throne of iron forged in dragonfire.” he murmurs to himself as a vision of a huge pyre burns before his eyes, no doubt the vision Visenya had seen all those years ago. “She saw what I see and used our curse to build an empire, yet I drown my dreams in tankards of wine. She would probably find me unworthy, but I suppose the gods have lost the power to choose their seer wisely.” The pyre burns under a clear blue sky and horde of men stand around it as a woman with hair a brilliant white-gold emerges from the flames. He sees the crowd gasp, stammer, and kneel as he hears the roars of dragons. Around her he sees three small forms, tiny in size, but he sees the flap of their wings and can feel as the world itself seems to be reborn. He opens his plum colored eyes and stares at the rich canopy of his bed. “This curse of mine will be the death of me.” he murmurs, his eyes fixing on a tankard of wine by his bedside. “But at least I got one good dream: a dream of magic and dragons reborn.”

Chapter End Notes

In all honesty I wasn't exactly sure how to write from the POV of a drunk person, so this one was a bit of a stylistic experiment, feel free to give me pointers for next time. Daeron is a really interesting Targaryen for a variety of reasons and he has a lot of potential as a character, especially in the realm of this story due to his prophetic dreams. Again, I took some liberties with how these dragon dreams work, but I did enjoy having a brief glimpse at the conquerors as children. We know very little about them in canon since they aren't really relevant until they, you know, conquer Westeros, but they obviously were children once and must have gotten the idea for conquest somewhere. It also helped me attempt to fix a plot hole from some earlier chapters about how Visenya learned about Valyrian Gods and magic. Anyways, I hope you enjoyed this chapter and a big thank you to those who continue to suggest POV characters. As always, feel free to suggest more, I love a challenge. Next up, Viserra(daughter of Alysanne and Jaehaerys).
Viserra-The Buzzing of Flies are Nothing to a Dragon

Chapter Summary

Little is known about Viserra Targaryen. It is said she was beautiful, it is said she was vain, and it is rumoured that she tried to seduce her older brother Baelon to fulfill her ambitions of ascending to the position of Queen. This may be true, but there is more to Viserra than history will tell you. Behind this short-lived princess is a story almost as tragic as her death. Who knew being a Dragon Princess could be so hellish and who knew a story about Visenya Targaryen could send a young girl down such a dark path....

Chapter Notes

Hi Everyone,

Here is the suggested chapter from the POV of Viserra(Daughter of Jaehaerys I) and boy was it a struggle to write. As with many minor Targaryens, very little is known about Viserra and the stuff that is in canon is, well, not positive. Very little is known about her other than the fact that she was the most beautiful of Alysanne's daughters(quite a feat, really), was vain as all heck by the time she was in her early teens, and that she tried to get with Baelon after Alyssa died only to be soundly rejected. Oh, and she also died at the age of fifteen by colliding with a wall in a race gone wrong literal hours before being shipped off for marriage. However, I am all for fleshing out minor characters, so here is my take on Viserra. If you like it, please leave kudos and any constructive or reflective comments you like.

bla, bla, bla, don't sue me

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Viserra

As long as Viserra could remember she'd been fond of pretty things. She loved the gowns worn by her mother and her ladies. She adored the intricately carved murals and bright shades of the stained glass in the throne room. She was dazzled by her brother Aemon’s indigo eyes and the sharp cheekbones and silver-gold hair of her sister Saera. Yet, what she thought more beautiful than anything else were dragons and the most admirable of them all was Vhagar, the all but the unchallenged queen of dragons, more beautiful and terrible than any others. Sure, Balerion was enormous and his roar could shake mountains, but he was old and spent most of his time sleeping in the Dragonpit anyways. Silverwing was undoubtably lovely with her silver and white scales and Vermithor striking with his majestic tan wings, but Vhagar outshone them all. Despite the she-dragon’s many battle scars, her bronze scales shined brighter than gold and her eyes were the most startling orange Viserra had ever seen. Her roar inspired nothing but awe and respect and Viserra could only imagine how many armies had cowered before Vhagar's might. When other children would cry out at the sound, covering their small ears as tears filled their large eyes, Viserra would
laugh in delight. There were other reasons she loved Vhagar, but those ones had little to do with the
dragon herself and more to do with her riders. She had been the mount of Queen Visenya, the
Dragon Queen who Viserra grew to admire the most of all her ancestors and had flown during the
Conquest. For that reason she held a certain amount of mystique, but beyond even that allure she
was also currently ridden by Baelon, Viserra’s second oldest brother and the person she loved most
in this world. In truth, that final reason outweighed all the others. Although fourteen years her
senior, Baelon was her uncontested favorite and as a child she made no effort to hide this fact. It
was him that she would beg to take her on dragon rides, it was his bed she’d clamor into if she had
a bad dream, it was him who she would go to for solace or comfort. Her attachment to Baelon
became so well known that even their sister Alyssa noticed.

“With all the practice you’ve had with Viserra, you should be an experienced father by now.” she
had told Baelon with a smile. “Although, she’s pretty enough that if she were any older I’d fear
she’d steal you from me.” she and Baelon had laughed at this and Viserra, then aged twelve, had
laughed as well.

“No one could steal him from you, sis, he loves you too much.” Viserra had answered with what
she knew, even then, was a perfect childish innocence and Baelon and Alyssa had been charmed.
Little did they know what keen and dangerous thoughts danced behind that angelic mask, what
desires lay hidden beneath her innocent facade. When she was twelve people had already begun to
note her vanity, although at the time they had thought her nothing compared to the monster that
was her sister Saera. The small lectures of her septas, and the less subtle rebukes from her family
all tried to curb her growing pride, yet her response to them was always: “If you didn’t want me to
be vain, you should have noticed something other than my beauty, should have praised something
other than my looks.” For how could a young girl not be the smallest bit vain when only her
pretteness had been praised for as long as she could remember? In many ways, she felt her beauty
was the one thing she could take pride in given that all other positive traits seemed to have been
claimed by her siblings. Although, most of them like Maegelle, Daella, and Aemon, were gracious
enough to her and didn’t go out of their way to make her feel like a bug, that didn’t make her feel
any less forgotten. Vaegon and Saera, on the other hand, seemed to actively work to make her feel
inferior and of the two Saera was the most malicious. It was Saera that would tell their father about
every little mistake Viserra ever made and Saera that first taunted Viserra about her attraction to
their married older brother. However, despite the fact that Viserra despised Saera the most of all
her siblings, she also thought that she probably understood her cruel, conceited sister the best. She
saw through Saera’s facade and understood that everything Saera did was out of a potent desire to
be loved, to be praised, to be noticed. She was their father’s favorite, but even then he still spent
more time with Aemon and Baelon than her, for no other reason than they had dicks and she didn’t.
Viserra could understand why this hurt her. Perhaps she would have had more luck with their
mother, had her favorite not already been unquestionably Alyssa, the daughter borne to replace the
sister who died long before Saera or Viserra were born. So, in a way, Saera, who desired to be the
center of her parents’ world, found herself shoved to the sidelines. The feelings of abandonment and
neglect that this brought on were familiar enough to Viserra as her father and mother barely had
time for her, but when they did it was always as if they wished she could be someone else, possibly
because they really only noticed her when she did something wrong. She imagined this must have
been what Saera’s existence was like before her own birth and no doubt she was desperate to avoid
returning the lowest place on the pecking order. So, if only to get a scrap of attention from their
parents, Saera would tell their parents if Viserra did even the slightest thing wrong, which was
frequent enough, or just make up lies about her, which her parents believed for some strange
reason.

“Why can’t you be more like-” was how many of her father’s rebukes started and Viserra would
often find some trait of hers far inferior to that of one of her siblings. The sibling in question that
her father wished her to emulate changed depending on her crime, but he always wished she could be different then what she was. Why couldn’t she be as studious as Vaegon, as dutiful as Alyssa, as kind as Maegelle, etc, etc, etc. The list went on and on and on. It became abundantly clear to young Viserra that her parents did not want her as she was, high spirited and slightly wild, a girl who wanted to be free above all else. Perhaps her parents neglect would have been acceptable if her older siblings had stepped in to fill the void, but they too had little time for their youngest sister. From Alyssa and Maegelle she received minimal attention, but even Aemon preferred Saera over her, amused by their sister’s rambunctious pranks. The only one who ever seemed to want Viserra as she was and not wish her to transform into someone different was Baelon and it was this beloved brother that set her on the path that would ultimately ruin her. She remembers the day he had enlightened her, shown her that she had to change. Her eleven year old body had been wracked so hard by sobs that her back was sore the next day. In many ways, the event leading to this breakdown had been rather ordinary. Her father had scolded her for slipping away from her septas to go sneak into Saera’s room. Her older sister had promised to show her how to braid her hair in the complicated styles she so often wore, but instead she had found her sister naked in the arms of a man. She had screamed and Saera had thrown so much abuse at her that she had run off into the castle sobbing. It was Alyssa who had eventually found her and dried her tears. When asked what was wrong, Viserra had been unable to tell her, just blubbering about Saera. She had felt hopeless and defenseless, knowing that even if she did expose Saera’s crime, no one would believe her. Alyssa had misunderstood her sister’s sob-filled explanation and thought the two had simply quarreled, not knowing then what her younger sister had truly seen. So after comforting her at first inconsolable sister, Alyssa had left her to the mercy of their parents. Unfortunately, Saera had gotten to their father first and when Viserra had gone before him and her mother, they had rebuked her harshly for her continued disobedience. This final injustice was what finally broke her and she had felt a small piece of her heart die as her father’s words stabbed her like a valyrian steel blade. When her father finished and asked,

“What do you have to say for yourself?” she looked up at him with her deep purple eyes and replied, with a voice as fragile as glass.

“I am sorry for being so unworthy a daughter. I apologize for being born such a disappointment to you. I am sorry that you cannot love me as you do the rest of my siblings.” she had turned on her heel and left the room, ignoring her father’s calls for her to come back or her mother’s sad sigh. Viserra had walked to her room and closed the door, trying to wish herself into oblivion. When that didn’t work, she sat down on her bed and cried. Never before had she cried so hard, or with so much pain. When she heard her door open, she didn’t look up. Part of it hoped that it would be her mother, but she quickly realized the tread was too heavy to be the queen’s. She felt the bed shift as someone sat beside her and felt an arm wrap around her shaking shoulders. When she was pulled into a strong, warm embrace she realized only one person would have cared enough to come and comfort her: Baelon. Instead of comforting her, this caused her to sob harder, her small, lithe body shaking with all her overflowing sorrow.

“You’re not unworthy, Viserra.” he told her gently, stroking her hair with his slender, but strong hands.

“Mother and father think I am,” she gasps between sobs. “I can’t do anything right and they only ever notice me when I’m doing something wrong!” her brother sighs against her. “They don’t have any room in their hearts to love me.”

“Now that’s just not true.” he replied soothingly, “You have the misfortune of being the youngest of many children, which by itself would be hard, but your parents are also the King and Queen and therefore doubly busy, but they do love you.” Although touched by his words, they did little to help the young princess’s broken heart. After all, what are a few words in the face of years of pent up
loneliness and sorrow?

“But how can they love me when I'm so-” she swallowed and Baelon pulled away from her, looking into her eyes with his matching ones.

"When you're so what, Viserra?” she buried her face in his chest again, his tunic muffling her words.

"When I’m not as brave as you,” she cried, “or confident as Alyssa, or pious as Magaelle or smart as Vaegon-“ her sobs cut off her words and for a few seconds all that could be heard were her attempts to stifle her tears and her brother's deep, slow breaths.

“They love you because you're you. Of course you’re not exactly the same as any of us, little sister, you can't be because you're you. If our places were reversed no doubt father would tell me: why can't you be as clever as Viserra.” he tells her as she continued to cry. “Just because our father rebukes you, doesn't mean his love for you is any less than it is for me. We all love you, Viserra, we really do.”

“Sometimes I don’t feel like you do,” she whispers back and her brother holds her tighter.

“I know, believe me, I know, but we do and you can't let yourself doubt it, not even for a second.” he replies as she snuggled closer to him, breathing him in. He smelled of the sky and Alyssa’s perfume, but also uniquely him and it brought her the smallest comfort. “Do you want me to tell you a story?” she nodded against him. “Well, you know of Aegon, Rhaenys, and Visenya, do you not?” she nods again. “Well, you know the story of Rhaenys and Aegon. How in love they were, how passionately they adored each other? How everyone admired Rhaenys’ beauty and Aegon’s strength? Well, with both of them so praised and so beloved, I imagine Visenya often felt left out. I think she probably felt as you do, second to her bright, talented siblings.” Viserra looked up at him through her teary eyes.

“Really?” she asked softly. “But she was strong, fearless, and powerful. How could she ever feel second best?”

“In truth, I don’t know if she actually felt this way, but I imagine she must have. She may have been fearless and powerful as you say, but at the beginning it must have been hard for her. It’s not easy to be different like she was, like you are. Visenya was beautiful, but in a cold, austere way that inspired fear as much as love. She was not bright like the sun, but incandescent like the moon, and because she was not what people thought a woman should be, she was not as praised like her brother or beloved like her sister. She was a strong woman who was as intelligent as she was beautiful and people had trouble understanding her and people have trouble showing their emotions towards people they don’t understand. If anything, they react negatively to the unknown and if father is to be believed many people did everything they could to blacken her name. Yet, she never let anyone bring her down, not ever.” he tells her in a tone dripping with reverence, drying her tears with a soft cloth. “She remained strong and I know that her husband loved her for it.”

“But Aegon loved Rhaenys.” Viserra interjects and Baelon nods at her words.

“Yes, he loved Rhaenys, but he loved Visenya too. Not in the same way, of course, no two loves are the same, but just because love is different doesn’t mean it isn’t true. Think about it, he never strayed from her after Rhaenys died, not even once. How could he not love her when he had his kingdom because of her? It’s true that he didn't display his love for his sister-wives equally, but just because it wasn't so obvious, didn't mean it wasn't there.” he replies wisely and she can hear what he’s hinting at, the message he's trying to convey. She always wonders if he planned this story or if it just happened naturally.
“How do you think she did it?” Viserra asks, her voice still gravelly from the crying, not focusing on the part that he wanted her to. “Remain strong and be so powerful, if she felt as weak as I do?” he hummed in thought for a second.

“Well, I imagine Visenya forced herself to ignore the cruelties others did to her and never allowed anyone, not even her sister, to make her feel inferior.” he looked at her knowingly as he spoke, as if he truly did understand how horrible Saera had been to her all these years. “She knew what she was worth and didn’t care what others thought as long as those she loved, loved her as well.” Viserra swallowed, mesmerized by his words. “That doesn’t mean, of course, that she didn’t have to work hard. As strong as she was, she had to be twice as smart and learn how to use her gifts to her advantage. Half of the Conquest was won with intelligence, and Visenya was as skilled a tactician as she was a swordsman. She knew when to smile and when to sneer; when to use her sharp tongue or when to remain silent; when she needed a sword or when the situation required words. More than anything she was confident and when you are confident, little dragon, no one can make you feel less than. If you believe in yourself and understand your worth, you can do whatever you want.” she smiled as he gently stroked her hair. “Even conquer a continent.”

“I want to be like her.” Viserra told him earnestly, ignoring whatever lesson he was trying to convey to her about their father's love. “I want to be a beautiful, powerful, and confident queen like her.” Baelon smiled down at her.

“You can be, little sister. You are already pretty, no matter what Saera says, and you are almost too clever for your own good, you just have to choose your words more carefully. The confidence though, only you can make yourself confident—” she threw her arms around his neck, cutting off his lecture and knocking them both back onto the bed. He laughed as he held her.

“I will be confident like Visenya was as long as you love me.” she whispers to him. He held her tightly.

“You will never have to doubt my love for you, little sister.” he responds. “never.” From that day on Viserra changed and many would argue not for the better. She absorbed her brother's words and turned them into a mantra that would shape the remainder of her short life, although not the part he had wanted her to take to heart. She practiced how to smile, learned how to laugh. She studied what her parents and siblings wanted to hear and repeated her brother’s story of their ancestress over and over in her mind whenever she felt her old weakness returning.

She became confident in all she did, some would even say arrogant, and learned how to take revenge on those who slighted her. A knight who made bawdy remark about her incestuous desires? He soon found himself banished from King’s Landing. A cousin who dared compare herself to Viserra’s beauty? She erupted in an unfortunate case of pox which scarred her face and ultimately claimed her life. When Saera began taunting her over Baelon? Well, even her siblings weren’t allowed to treat her like that anymore. A few careful words to her father about her sister’s favorites after an unfortunate incident at a brothel and Saera was locked in her chambers as a whore. This final victory made Viserra’s blood sing like never before and she found herself craving this feeling of power. She wanted to be praised, she wanted to be loved, but more than anything she wanted to be powerful and feared like Visenya had been before her. Her final maturation into the most beautiful of Queen Alysanne’s daughters put the world at her fingertips and seemed to make that dream possible. Men began to praise her, begging for her favor, willing to give their lives for a moment in her arms. She ate up their words, their affections, their desires, and used them to repair her broken heart. When she looked in the mirror, taking in her curves and shining hair, she was

She was strong like Visenya, the Dragon Queen, as cold and beautiful as the moon, and the buzzing of flies was of no consequence to a dragon like her.
more than pleased. After all, she had always been fond of pretty things and now she was more than pretty. She was beautiful and as her brother had said, she could do whatever she wants and take whatever she desired, be a queen if she so wished it. If she could bring down Saera, if she was like Visenya, then why not be a queen in truth and not just in spirit? So, one night she slipped past her brother’s guards and waited in the dark night for the one she loved most in the world, the one who could give her the crown she deserved, to come to her.

Chapter End Notes

In all honesty I really struggled with this chapter. At first I had no idea how to characterize Viserra and then I wrestled with how Visenya would fit into this story. I knew I wanted to explore her legacy a bit and address the "history versus reality" theme I've had going for a bit, but it took several drafts and rewrites to get a story I was happy with. I know Jaehaerys and Alysanne may seem out of character in this chapter, given how amazing they supposedly were, but I was trying to view it from a child's perspective. I imagine it would have been hard being the youngest of such an impressive group of royal siblings and given the personalities of some of said siblings, there could have been some real unpleasantness. Just to be clear, I'm not saying Viserra was secretly a good person, but as always I'm just trying to make some pretty flat Targaryens appear a little more well-rounded and realistic. If you don't like my interpretation, I'm sorry, I really had very little to work with. In either case, thanks so much for suggesting Viserra as a POV. If there's any other characters you want to see a chapter POV from, please feel free to comment. Up next is actually something a little different based off a very intriguing suggestion made about the original trio and their dealings with Dorne, so stay tuned.
Rhaenys-The Song of Love and Remembrance

Chapter Summary

Rhaenys Targaryen, Sister wife of Aegon the Conqueror, has been captured in Dorne. As she begins to succumb to her months of torture she finds herself drifting on the verses of an Old Valryian song in a strange existence between the realms of wake and sleep where she sees those she loves most for what may be a final farewell...

Chapter Notes

Hi Everyone,

As requested, here is the first chapter of a planned two part storyline exploring the Aegon/Rhaenys/Visenya relationship in the context of the First Dornish War. Full disclosure, this has been one of the hardest chapters to write. As before with the Aegon chapter, there is just so much to explore with the original Targaryen trio that it's hard to focus on any one spot and there is just so much character potential that it makes it ridiculously hard to come up with and maintain a solid characterization. This chapter is also really dark as it pretty much takes place when Rhaenys is being tortured in Dorne(based of the theory that she did not, in fact, die when Meraxes was shot through the eye over Hellholt), so if you're uncomfortable with violence, this chapter may not be for you. An interesting writing style I chose to use here was the framework of the song, which was actually something I added because I felt the story was clunky and that the disparate parts didn't flow together. Since I've never used this style before I'm interested in people's opinions about it. Was it a good idea? Too cheesy? Not a good idea? Feel free to leave a comment about it. In any case, I hope you all enjoy this chapter, if you do, please leave kudos and any constructive comments you like.

(insert mildly sarcastic quip about no lawsuits here)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Rhaenys

Rhaenys could not remember a time when she hadn’t been in pain. She knew those times existed, but those happy days seemed far off and distant from her present situation. Every part of her body felt like it was on fire. Her right arm throbbed, the skin on her left side screamed, and her throat was so swollen she could barely swallow. She had lost track of the days she had been in this awful place. She knew she had been moved from her original prison some time back, thrown into a cage and carried on a cart like some rabid animal. but that awful journey felt like months ago. Whether it was actually months she didn’t know, pain does happen to slow the passage of time, after all.

“I always wondered about what you Targaryens were made of.” her torturer mused, although he knew as well as she did that she could barely see, let alone speak at this point. He had begun talking to her often of late when she had slowly stopped screaming as he broke her skin, muscles,
and bones. She figured he hated the silence, hated that he could no longer abuse her body and get a response now that she’d endured so much. Her mind, however, still possessed some weak spots and she figured he was probing and prying until he could find another way to make her scream.

“You certainly look different than those of us trapped on the ground with your fair hair and purple eyes. Imagine my disappointment when all I could report from our time together is that you bleed, scream, shit, and cry the same as all us regular mortals.” she stiffens as she felt something slice her leg, felt hot blood begin to drip down her scarred calf, but did not cry out. Her torturer moved around her, running a hand over her bound body like she was a piece of meat, feeling her scars and her older wounds. “You were such an imposing, beautiful figure atop that silver dragon of yours,” He tells her, his accent still strange to her ears even after all this time. “So strong, so frightening, yet once we shot your overgrown bat out of the sky you turned out to be just a normal woman after all.” she strangled a howl in her throat as she felt a hand brush over her burned side, sliding towards her hips. “I wonder if the same will be true for your siblings when we bring them crashing to earth.” Her heart stops at the mention of her beloved sister and brother. He smirked in satisfaction, knowing he had found a weak spot. “Yes, you heard me right. Aegon the Conqueror and his Dragon Queen have come to Dorne. People are calling it the Dragon’s Wroth. If rumor is to be believed they’re burning everything in sight, turning the desert into glass.” a small shred of hope ignites in her heart. She let out a small hiss as he pressed down on her broken right arm. “I’ve been considering of late whether I should leave them a gift. A braid of your hair perhaps?” she feels him stroke her singed and wilted hair. “No, they wouldn’t recognize it now, it’s more like straw than hair at this point.” His calloused hands move to her face, tracing the bone of her eye socket. “An eye would be nice. Purple eyes like yours are hard to come by I’ve heard, but it’s small, too small to lure them to the ground and so easily missed.” she shivers as he moves to stroke her bruised and bloodied leg, “Perhaps a fair haired child from between your once beautiful legs?” her eyes went wide and a wave of fear overtakes her. He laughs at this, no doubt proud of his ability to make her afraid, even after all this time. “No, that wouldn’t be fair to whoever would have to father the child. Even I probably couldn’t perform with you given how horrid you look.” a wave of relief floods her as he moves back to examining her hand and its healing joints. She could survive many things, but she wasn’t sure if her sanity would be able to endure what he had just described. “I doubt even your beloved husband would recognize you now, even if he didn’t think you were dead.” he continues to muse, glancing at her as her breath hitches in her throat and her stomach drops. Aegon and Visenya thought she was dead? How is that possible?! They had to know she was alive, had to feel it! She couldn’t believe they would have given up on her without proof, without her body! “I suppose we’ll have to wait for them to be shot from their high perches as you were to find out. I’m sure it’ll be a touching reunion when you watch me carve up your husband and wife like I’ve been doing to you for the last few months.” suddenly a hand grabs her throat and she began to choke. “I wonder if the Conqueror will cry out as you did the first time you met my blade or if the Dragon Queen will scream as loud as you when I broke your hand all those months ago. I certainly hope she will, she burnt Hellholt to the ground and watched as my father burned alive. I certainly owe her a long, slow, painful death.” Rhaenys smirked up at him as he gripped her throat harder. She knew he could understand in her eyes what she could no longer say. His dark eyes hardened and she thought might kill her in this moment. She felt her lungs began to burn as her vision went black. She faded into the abyss imagining Visenya walking through a burning keep, her hair glistening in the flames, violet eyes watching as the man who had done this to Rhaenys burned and screamed. She felt a smile grace her bitten and bloody lips as all went dark.

Rhaenys hadn’t dreamed in a long time. The few times she was allowed to sleep, she was often so dead exhausted that she simply fell into the darkness with open arms. This time, however, was different. She found herself lying on a soft bed with sheets of the smoothest silk. She couldn’t move, couldn’t even open her eyes, yet she found herself strangely at peace. Somewhere nearby a familiar voice was singing a beautiful, soul-wrenching song in high Valyrian:
syt mirre ñuha ābrar eman jorrāelatan ao(for all my life I have loved you)

syt mirre ñuha jēdri eman cherished ao(For all my years I have cherished you)

o tolvie īlē naejot part hen nyke (if ever you were to part from me)

Ao’d iēdrosa glaesagon va isse ñuha memory (you’d still live on in my memory)

sīr vestras se vāedar hen jorrāelagon se remembrance (so says the song of love and remembrance)

She seemed to ride the waves of the song, feeling the chords of the melody soothe and heal her broken body and soul. When the song finally ends Rhaenys opens her lavender eyes and sits up. She’s in a beautifully adorned room with bright sun streaming through the windows. Her eyes fall on a woman sitting in front of the vanity, her long silver-gold hair glimmering in the sun as she combs through it. Rhaenys almost sobs with joy and relief at the sight of her.

“Visenya!” she cries, jumping from the bed and rushing to her sister. Visenya turns with wide, violet eyes as Rhaenys throws herself into her older sister’s arms. She clutches her wife’s body close, feeling strong arms wrap around her in a fiercely protective hug.

“Rhaenys?” Visenya whispers. She feels a hand stroking her hair as she buries her face in her sister’s neck. Even in this dream she smells of Valyrian incense and lavender, a sweet, exotic smell that always comforted Rhaenys. “Oh my heart! What sweet dream is this?” Rhaenys pulls back, the comfort she had just felt leaching out of her. She feels a sob build in her throat as she stares into Visenya’s teary eyes.

“Is this a dream?” she asks her older sister as tears slide down her face.

“It is no dream, but it is certainly not reality.” her sister replies sorrowfully, cupping Rhaenys’ face with her hands. Rhaenys sobs and pulls Visenya in for another hug, wanting to feel every part of her for she feared she would never see her beloved sister in the waking world again.

“As far as I know it is not.” her sister’s, melodious voice replies. “If I could have come to you I would have. I would have fought the gods themselves to see you again, would have flayed all those Ullers if it could have prevented your death.”

“So it’s true, you and Aegon think me dead.” her sister holds her tighter at her words.

“We were told the Ullers had killed you with Meraxes.” her sister’s voice, ever strong and confident, shakes. “That you fell to your death upon Hellholt.”

“I wish I had died then,” Rhaenys’ says as her voice begins to shake. ”But instead they pulled my broken, but breathing, body from Meraxes and…” she can’t finish the sentence. Visenya pulls back from the hug to look into Rhaenys’ eyes, seeing in them everything the youngest Targaryen could not bring herself to say. “In truth I may as well be dead, perhaps I am dying now.” Her wife’s face erupts in anger worse than she’s ever seen.

“I will turn Dorne into a blackened wasteland for this!” she declares with rage. “I will find you, little sister dead or alive, and I will kill them all!” suddenly Rhaenys is ripped from her sister’s embrace and shrieks as she’s dragged into the darkness. She hears the song again, faster this time, but no less beautiful:

jēda ēza taken īla ondoso se ondos(time has taken us by the hand)
She feels it pushing her like a wave through the darkness and when she next opens her eyes she is lying beside Aegon in her bed in the Aegonfort. The moon shines through her windows, making his skin glow and face look younger, much like it had on Dragonstone on their wedding day. She watches him sleep, gently stroking his face. She loved him more than anything, loved him more than life. He smiled softly under her caresses and tears filled her eyes as she remembers this is a dream and she will likely never see him or Visenya again. He groans and opens his indigo eyes. His brow furrows as he sees her tears.

“Why are you crying?” he asks, sleep dripping from his voice.

“Because I love you so much.” she responds, feeling her throat close up. “More than Orys, more than Visenya, more than anything in this world.” sadness fills his eyes at this declaration and she knows he can’t say the same for her. He loves her, but not more than everything.

“I love you too.” he responds, pulling her close against his muscled chest. “Love you more than the seven kingdoms, more than the iron throne.”

Distantly she hears the cry of a baby. “Aenys.” she whispered to herself as the darkness retreats, saying his name like she would a prayer. She stands on shaky legs, in a familiar room, walking towards the crib beneath three spinning dragons. She begins to sob in earnest as she picks up her baby, although he was already walking when she left him. Aenys' sobs slow as he sees. She rocks him gently against her chest, delighting in his contented coos as his lavender eyes look up at her with such trust and adoration. Seeing him so small, so innocent breaks her heart. She had promised him she’d come back to him, but now, more than ever, she was beginning to believe she would
never see him again. Her heart breaks as her son grabs a strand of her hair, tugging lightly. If he saw her in the waking world, she figured he would not recognize her and might even cry out in fear at the scarred, charred monster she had become. “Little Dragon,” she whispers, brushing her nose against his, “my perfect boy, I hope you know I love you, that your mother loved you so very much.” he coos at her again, as if to tell her that he knows, and then her baby vanishes. The song renews, this time more sinister than before:

*bōsa issi se bantior mijegon* (long are the nights without you)

*kempa iksis se prūmia bona loves a0* (heavy is the heart that loves you)

*sir bona emă flown beyond* (now that you have flown beyond)

*parı no iksis morghe se lēda a0* (part of me is dead and with you)

*sír vestras se vāedar hen jorrāelagon se remembrance* (so says the song of love and remembrance)

She always hated this part of the song, found it depressing and dark compared with the lighter parts. For a song about love it certainly took a very dark turn. Yet, it carries her despite its sad tones and she finds herself standing outside a doorway in the Aegonfort. It’s night and the windows are pitch black, the halls illuminated only by torchlight. Within the chamber stand two figures with silver-gold hair, each carrying a sword that glints in the torchlight.

“Rhaenys will not go to Dorne!” she hears Visenya cry, her face stained with desperation. “I forbid it!”

“We both know you don’t have the authority to forbid anyone from doing anything, much less our sister!” Aegon retorts coolly, his voice dripping with irritation. “She wants to right her failure to bring Dorne under the Dragon’s Wings, who am I to deny her that?” Visenya narrows her violet eyes at him, clenching her fists at her sides.

“Who are you to deny her?” their sister answers with gritted teeth, her voice sounding more desperate than Rhaenys had ever heard it. “You are her husband, her brother, her king, the one she loves most in this world! I know what I’ve seen, I know what waits for the dragons in Dorne—”

“Yes, you have told me about your dreams, how you see two dragons burning keeps in a desert while a third is a frozen shadow within the flames.” Aegon replies testily. “But come now, Visenya, Dragons can’t be burned, they live in fire! Can’t you see that your dream as likely predicts victory as defeat?”

“Don’t act as if you can interpret what I see and do not let your lust for conquest blind you to the truth. We both know dragons can burn. Although it is harder and they can endure much. with a fire hot enough they scream and char like all else.” Visenya cuts back. “I know what I saw, I know what will happen, but if we act now it can still be stopped.” she takes his hand, clasping it, almost begging him with her eyes to listen to her words. Rhaenys could hardly believe what she was witnessing. Visenya never begged anyone for anything. “She thinks she has to prove herself, that she has to conquer Dorne to show you and the kingdoms that she is worthy, seeking our approval, as always, but we don’t need her to conquer Dorne to love her! She doesn’t have to bring the kingdom to you to be worthy of being your second queen. Please, Aegon, tell her that you love her above all else and that she doesn’t have to go!” their brother’s face melts at her words, but Rhaenys can see that his mind is still unchanged. He pulled her closer, cupping Visenya’s angular face. “We need Dorne.” Aegon tells her gently. “How can I be king of seven kingdoms, but only have six?” Visenya growls at his words. “And you ask me to lie to her? We both know I don't love her above all else.”
"A single lie to prevent catastrophe!" Visenya counters, but their husband shakes his head.

"You brought me the Vale of Arryn without shedding a drop of blood, you secured us Gulltown when our fleet was defeated, it is only right that Rhaenys should have equal glory and finish the conquest of Dorne she started.” A tear slipped out of Visenya’s eye.

“This isn’t about glory!” Visenya cries, pulling away from him. “This is about saving our sister’s life!” she falls to her knees before him and Aegon's face erupts in shock.

“I have never asked you for anything, husband. Not for jewels, or gowns, or titles, but I am asking you, no, begging you for this. Send me to Dorne instead if you need it so badly. Send me to die, not her.” Aegon kneels down in front of her, once again cupping her face with his strong hands.

“No one will die, Visenya, I promise.” but Visenya shakes her head, tears streaming down her face. The darkness consumes her again as a cold realization overtakes her. Visenya had known, she had known what danger awaited the Targaryens in Dorne, yet Aegon had allowed Rhaenys to go anyways. The song begins again with a startling intensity.

\[
\text{Nyke would emagon morghültan naejot tepagon ao ábrar (I would have died to give you life)}
\]

\[
\text{fought átsio se pogry naejot gaomagon ao (fought too the and nail to keep you)}
\]

\[
\text{yet jorräelagon iksis iä dyni bona tears se weeps (yet love is a beast that tears and weeps)}
\]

\[
\text{se tēmbi mērī ash se memory (and leaves only ash and memory)}
\]

The song carries her over a desert and through a burning town. She flies over a pillar of smoke and before her rises a melted monstrosity that was once a great keep. The stone appears to have been liquified into piles of misshapen rubble and all around her lay singed skeletons. The song continues, floating upon the wind, emanating from a single figure. Her red cape blows in the hot desert wind with her hair and by her side Dark Sister gleams. Rhaenys approaches her. The woman’s shoulders shake silently as a great dragon stands guard nearby, her melodious voice laced with magic.

"You knew, didn’t you?" Rhaenys tells the figure as the song dies on Visenya’s lips, the world now deathly quiet, “You knew I would fall in Dorne, you knew I would suffer.” Visenya doesn’t answer, doesn’t even seem to hear her. The haunting echoes of her melody seems to float around them and Rhaenys feels as if they’re resonating with her soul. “When you told me not to go, begged me to stay I thought you were just being overprotective, or worse, feared my glory would overshadow yours, but I should have known you would never lie about a vision.” She can’t see her sister’s face through the curtains of her braided hair, but she can hear her shaky breaths. “I wish I had listened to you.” Visenya looks up at her words, but doesn’t look at her. Rhaenys doesn’t know if this is a dream or if she has truly died and become a ghost. Her mother had joked there was
magic in that old song, perhaps she was right.

“It should have been me.” Visenya murmurs, violet eyes filling with tears although she still doesn’t look at Rhaenys. “I’m the oldest, it was my job to protect you.” tears slide down her face as she looks over the castle. “I should have died in this awful place, not you.” Vhagar gives a low comforting growl and Visenya sends her mount a weak smile. Tears stream down Rhaenys cheeks. She embraces her sister from behind, although Visenya doesn’t react, doesn’t seem to feel her.

“I’m so sorry, sister.” she tells her. “More sorry than you will ever know.” Rhaenys feels her body shake against Visnaya’s “I love you.” For a second she thinks Visenya can hear her and puts a hand on Rhaenys’ own, but then a roar can be heard and a monstrous shape approaches the ruins. Vhagar roars in response as Balerion soars overhead, coming to land nearby. Aegon dismounts, his hair longer, looser, and wilder than when Rhaenys had last seen him. His indigo eyes glow with rage and grief from a face covered in soot. He strides over to Visenya whose face is now dry and eyes hard.

“Where do we fly next?” she asks him.

“Does it matter?” he responds, his voice dripping sorrow and bloodlust. She takes his hand and Rhaenys can see how their fingers lock together perfectly. “We’ll burn them all until we find her killers. We’ll burn them all.” Almost without thinking Rhaenys finds herself singing the final verse of the song:

lo ilden ojūdan isse iā tolmiot hen tegun (if I was lost in a far off land)

īā ojūdan rī` se embar (or lost across the sea)

Nyke gīmigon hae sure hae se vēzos burns jehikagrī (I know as sure as the sun burns bright)

bona īnuha jorrāelagon would māzigon syt nyke (that my love would come for me)

syt sīr vestras se vāedar hen jorrāelagon se remembrance (for so says the song of love and remembrance)

And when the song dies she turns and sees two pairs of purple eyes on her, one in shock and one in tears as a dark, as a hooded figure approaches her from behind them.

Chapter End Notes

I apologize to anyone who experienced discomfort from the treatment Rhaenys received in this chapter. I was tempted to either gloss over it or tone it down, but any time I did I felt like the story was negatively impacted as her current situation makes every interaction she has with her loved ones during the "song" more meaningful. As before with the Aegon chapter, I wanted to provide some more depth to Rhaenys’ relationships with her siblings and son, especially her relationship with Visenya. I really hate that female relationships in popular media always get simplified and flattened. They’re all either fighting over a guy or backstabbing each other, or walking stereotypes of friendship. This is an easy thing to do when writing because representing the complexities of human relationships is, well, very hard. I am as guilty of that failing as anyone else, for example some earlier characterization of Alyssa and Rhaenys who I wimped out on a and kinda just made flat antagonists until I was forced
to write chapters from their POV. ANyways, I hope this chapter is better with all that. As always, thank you for your continued suggestions for POV characters and storylines. If there is any character you'd like to see a POV from or if you want to see a certain relationship explored in the realm of this story, feel free to suggest it and I'll try my best. Up next is going to be the conclusion of this mini arc from the POV of Aegon(again). Hopefully it's not as hard to write as this one was and won't take so long to perfect.
Chapter Summary

The First Dornish War has raged on even after Queen Rhaenys Targaryen fell at Hellholt in 10 AC. In their rage, her siblings set fire to the desert kingdom, but despite their relentless attacks Dorne remained unbowed, unbent, and unbroken. Now, as Aegon is finally negotiating a peace with Dorne, he is informed of Rhaenys' true fate and is forced to remember how he and Visenya grieved the loss of their beloved sister as he contemplates whether he will accept a peace with Dorne or continue the war at her expense...

Chapter Notes

Hello from the land of burnout,

As promised here is the concluding chapter for the mini-arc surrounding the OG Targaryen trio and the First Dornish War. There is a lot of mystery surrounding this war: how Rhaenys was shot down, if she actually died at Hellholt, why the Dragon's Wroth ended after only two years, and why Aegon would have accepted a peace treaty with Dorne that essentially made Rhaenys' death in Dorne pointless as Dorne remained independent and a pain in the Targaryens' side for years to come. This chapter attempts to answer some of these questions within the parameters previous chapters have established and boy was this hard to write. I can't tell you how many drafts of this were written before I finally found a storyline I felt could believably conclude this arc. At first it was going to be a revisit to Maegor's birth, but I didn't feel like that could properly conclude the plot launched by Rhaenys' chapter. Then it was going to be years later, with Aegon reminiscing as he traveled to Dorne for the "Feast of Friendship", but I wasn't happy with how that chapter was progressing either. So, I finally came up with this and although it is not my favorite chapter, I feel like it provides the best conclusion for this mini-arc. Also, I feel like I should warn you that this chapter follows some of the more disturbing aspects that the first chapter dealt with, so some readers may find the themes explored in this chapter unnerving and upsetting. As always, if you enjoy this chapter(or find it well-written, moving, etc) please leave kudos and any constructive or reflective comments you like.

I own nothing, no lawsuits please and thank you

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Aegon

Aegon revelled in his dark solitude. How many years had it been since he had truly been allowed to lay alone in the dark and just contemplate? Five? Ten? Perhaps longer. Ever since the beginning of
his conquest he had been constantly beset by people. Every hour, be it night or day, there was someone pestering him about something. A lord wanted an audience, a counselor had an issue that needed his attention, or somewhere in his newly made empire some rebel was stirring and needed to be dealt with. Often times he felt as if a swarm of gnats was constantly flying around his head, leaving him unable to simply sit and focus on any one problem. Yet here, alone in this dark, cursed room on Dragonstone he could do just that. He clutched the letter in his hand, feeling the parchment crackle in his firm grip. Prince Nymor’s words played over and over in his mind to the rhythm of his heartbeat.

....end her suffering

....as a father I’m sure you understand

....the child

A sob escaped his lips.

“Rhaenys,” he whispers into the bed. “My love, I am so sorry.” his soft words seem to scream into the empty room. “If you were in my stead, what would you do?” he asked softly, in a voice that trembles like curtains in the wind. “Would you give Dorne the peace it asked for? Would you swallow your pride to stop me from suffering?” his words hung in the darkness, suspended in the inky black silence that permeated this dead room. “You probably would,” his voice broke as tears ran down his face, “you were always the best of the three of us, the kindest, the most moral. I know you would sacrifice anything for me, so why can’t I do the same?” a deep self-loathing erupted from his aching heart as he felt the familiar feeling of despair wash over him. “I am not worthy of being your husband, I am hardly worthy to sit on the Iron Throne.” but you would not give it up to have her back. He sobs again and clutches the letter to his forehead. He opens his eyes and through his fingers he could almost force himself to see her before him, her long hair glowing in the dark, her smile lighting up the room like a sun. Then he blinks and she’s gone. There were no words to describe the grief he felt at her loss. Every day since he received that letter telling him she had fallen in Dorne his heart had been heavy and the world itself seemed to lose color without her. At first he had revelled in the pain, clutching his grief as proof of his love for her, but as time went on and the years had slipped by since he lost her, he had begun to feel this despair less and less. At first he had hardly been able to breath for the loss of her, but now those times when despair overcame him were far and few between. The guilt he felt at his ability to laugh and smile now, sometimes even forgetting her loss, was immense. He knew one could not mourn forever, but it had hardly been three years and already his heart seemed to be tired of grieving. What did that say about his love for her? What did that say about him? In this moment he longed for Visenya, for her counsel, for her comfort, but part of him also hoped she wouldn't come and find him. She was too adept at convincing him of his own goodness, too experienced at reflecting her own love for him back at him in a gauze that would cover his eyes to his own faults, and too good at comforting him for him to be able to reflect on himself clearly. He heard a distant crash somewhere in Dragonstone that sounded like the shattering of porcelain. The sharp clang along with the heavy darkness reminded him of the day he had first heard that the Ullers had somehow shot Meraxes out of the sky. Back then his grief had been as hot as dragonfire and just as scorching. He took pride in it, how his first bout of grief had manifested itself in rage and part of him longed to feel that again. A sick, twisted piece of him longed to shake with that burning anger once more, not because he wanted the pain, but because it would prove to him that he did indeed love her, that he mourned her properly. He remembers striking the poor messenger who dared to give him the news and when that unfortunate man had fled, he had turned his anger towards the furniture in his study. Blackfyre had glinted coldly in the firelight as he turned his ornate chairs into piles of broken wood, his desk into chunks of lumber, and the rich curtains on his window into rags. When his burning eyes turned to the walls of his study and the map of Dorne seemed to smirk at him, gloating that it had
conquered a dragon, he found his blade rushing to cut that cursed place to pieces. He would have too, hurt any piece of Dorne he could find, possibly would have left his study in utter ruins had another blade not intercepted his strike, and his grief, in that moment. At first he had been shocked to find his attack blocked, but then even more enraged that he couldn’t even destroy this small representation of the place that had taken his little sister, his beloved wife, from him. He bared his teeth angrily at Visenya, his indigo eyes burning into her violet ones, and yelled:

“Out of my way, Visenya!” He had disengaged her parry as he spoke and moved in for another attack, but she captured his blade again, sending blue sparks flying through the air. He gritted his teeth and angrily pushed against her bind, but she held firm, using the guard of Dark Sister to hold back Blackfyre’s bite.

“I’ll move away when you calm down!” his wife declared, glaring at him between their locked blades. Although he was physically stronger than her, she was an experienced swordswoman and her parry held strong against his continued pressure. “Tearing apart your study, ruining the few good maps we have of that cursed place will not bring her back.” He retreated, pulling his blade from her guard and went for a feint to the left. She moved to stop him, but he was quick to redirect his attack around her to the right. She cursed lightly and retreated as he continued his onslaught, but once again she managed to catch his blade in a strong bind, forcing him to halt his attack. “Stop acting like a child!” she reprimanded him forcefully, “This is not the way a king should grieve!” he growled at her words, baring his teeth in a snarl that would have sent even his most seasoned Kingsguard running. His rage seemed to burn so hot inside his chest that he could barely think coherently, let alone see straight. All he knew was that he needed to destroy any piece of Dorne in reach, whether it be a map or the prisoners rotting in camps and cells throughout his six kingdoms.

“Don’t tell me what to do!” he yelled back. “Don’t defend any part of that land from my rage!” he disengaged again and made to slash the maps of Dorne, determined that she would not stop him from this act of revenge. “Who are you to tell me how to be a king?!” He extended towards the maps, his wrist cocked to slash it in half, but this time her blade didn’t rise to meet his. She simply backed up as he continued to swipe at the wall, finally pressing her back against the detailed map of the desert kingdom. She stood still, violet eyes locked into his as his blade rose a final time to attack the map. He swung down, expecting her to parry him, but she didn’t, simply taking deep, slow breaths as his blade moved closer and closer to her face. With an angry cry he stopped Blackfyre right before it would have cut into the soft flesh of her neck. For a second neither of them said anything, both breathing hard, radiating with anger, grief, rage, and sorrow. Finally she spoke,

“I am your older sister,” she said imperiously “I am your advisor, your general, and your queen. When you are not in the right state it is I who protect you, from others and yourself,” Blackfyre shook in his hands and she slowly approached him despite the blade hovering dangerously close to her beautiful face. Her hand covered his, strong and warm. “I know you’re hurting, Aegon, I know your grief is burning hot as dragonfire in your chest and it feels like it will eat your from the inside, but this is not the way to douse the flames.” he gripped Blackfyre's cold hilt under her steady hands. “Please put the sword down, you might hurt someone.” his hands shook as she took the Valryian steel blade from his grasp, gently placing it on the shelf beside her. Her eyes meet his and his legs gave out under him. He collapsed into her arms, his knees cracking against the floor of his study, as he wrapped his arms around her slender waist. He began to sob as he buried his face in the crook of her neck.

“She’s gone, Senya,” he whispered to her in a shaking voice, tears running from his indigo eyes. “They killed her, or worse, those dogs have her and are-” he couldn’t even finish his sentence, could barely stand to imagine what those barbaric Dornish were doing to his beautiful wife.
“I know,” she murmured back. “I know.” Her hands cradled his head, stroking his hair in long, comforting movements. Her body shook against his and he can hear her hitching breaths. Her tears make his heart break anew as he holds onto her with all his might. If only the world could see them now, Aegon the Conqueror and Visenya the Dragon Queen, crying like children surrounded by broken furniture. Would the kingdoms still shake at the mention of their names if they saw this? Would people's eyes still go white with terror as the dragons fly overhead if they knew the beasts’ riders cried like normal men? He feels her hands gently grab his face, bringing it up to look into her tear stained one. “When we leave this room I need you to display the grief of a king. You may cry in my arms here as long as you need, but when you address those snakes that inhabit our court you will not shed a tear, do you understand me?” he nods mutely. His sister wipes her own tears away. “That rage you just felt, that anger and despair, direct it at those who deserve it, direct your fire at Dorne!” her voice is shaky, but imperious, strong enough to inspire armies, but human enough to move the hardest of hearts. He locks onto her confidence and bloodlust with the desperation of a drowning man to a raft.

“We will bring them fire and blood,” he tells her, the hatred burning in her eyes turning his own blood to fire. “We will bring a suffering down on those Dornish Pigs like they have never even dreamed of!” Visenya’s chest heaves with sobs, but she nods, gracing him with a watery smile.

“That’s my king,” she whispers. “There’s the conqueror you must show them.” he grips her tightly, taken over by his need for revenge and a strange, grief fueled bloodlust.

“We will show them the dragon’s wrath, starting with the Ullers of Hellholt!” her eyes meet his and a manic cruelty dances in them that stokes his own inner fire.

“When we burn them, leave the lord of the castle to me. I want to look into Lord Uller’s eyes as he screams and burns.” she responds with passion. He doesn’t remember how long they stayed there, surrounded by the remnants of his study, but when they had left that broken and grief-filled room neither of them had a tear stains or red-rimmed eyes. He had cried vengeance down on Dorne from the dais of the Iron Throne, Visenya beside him, and the court had roared in approval. Only after, when he had been alone again, had he allowed the tears to flow again.

He wipes his face, feeling new tear tracks staining his cheeks as a distant roar drags him out of his reverie. How long ago that day had been, yet it still burns so painfully in his memory. He always wondered how Visenya had managed to hold back her own grief long enough to drag him out of his despair. He’ll add that to his list of debts to her. Another roar forces him out of Rhaenys’ bed to her window. He parts the curtains and looks languidly towards the sky through the clouded glass. The sun has almost set, meaning hours have passed since he flew to Dragonstone. The sky is a deepening purple, almost the color of his eyes, and he sees a familiar shape flying towards the island. For a second he thinks it might be Meraxes, but when bronze flames shoot from the approaching dragons he knows it’s Vhagar. Another sob escaped his lips. He knew in his heart that she would be the one to come and drag him back to King’s Landing. He wonders if she brought Maegor with her. He hopes not, his son, even as an infant, should never see him as he is now. He closes the curtains and allows the darkness to envelop him once more. He slowly trods back to the bed and lays back down, turning on his back to stare up at the ceiling.

“We burned them for you, Rhaenys,” he murmurs to her room, his eyes tracing the elegant swaths of her bed curtains as he had once done the curves of her body. “We flew to Dorne and turned their desert into a wasteland, their castles into rubble, and their lords into ash,” his chest aches from his hours of crying, yet he welcomes the pain as an old friend, as something else he can give to Rhaenys as atonement for his failures. “but they still didn’t bend the knee to us.” a brief surge of anger burns through his body. “Even dragonfire couldn’t break those damn Dornish!” as before his words hang in the air, suspended in the thick darkness, seeming to scream back at him in
accusation and despair. “And all the destruction in the world couldn’t bring you back to us.” His eyes drift closed as tears burn down his face and he found himself taken back to a night early in his and Visenya’s attack on Dorne. He can see the flames dancing before his eyes as if he was back there now, feel them scorching his skin, but more than anything he can remember the deep, cold despair that seemed to engulf him. Balerion stood behind him, shooting pillars of flame into the already blazing inferno from the ground as Vhagar roasted the castle from above, but neither the destruction nor the heat of the flames seemed to fill the cold abyss in his chest. As he watched the keep burn in front of him, he found himself walking into the flames. Balerion ceased his attack on the ruins as Aegon approached the inferno and Vhagar roared above him in protest, but he ignored them and entered the flames. The heat seemed to suffocate him as the smoke began stinging his eyes and choking his lungs. In truth, he wasn’t really thinking, wasn’t consciously trying to set himself ablaze, but a part of him wondered if these flames would warm him enough to dispel this cold ache that had taken over his heart. If only his rage hadn’t burnt itself out so quickly! The flames licked his red cloak and burned his hands, but he smiled as his nerves screamed. After all, he could feel the pain, and feeling anything at this point was better than the dark nothingness that had consumed him as his assault on Dorne dragged on and on. “Rhaenys,” he murmured to the flames, and as his eyes teared in the smoke he thought he could see her in the inferno, reaching out her slender arms to embrace him. “I’m coming to you.” but right before he jumped into the inferno, before she could embrace him in her burning love, large, strong claws grasped his body and pulled him out. He screamed in rage at Vhagar, who turned to look down at him with her luminescent orange eyes. The she-dragon carried him away from the blaze, growling in warning for him to stop struggling as she circled the inferno once before dropping him in the warm ashes fifty yards away from the now melted castle. Vhagar landed beside Balerion, both dragons’ eyes glaring at him accusingly as Visenya dismounted. Aegon slowly stood as she stormed towards him, her face streaked with soot, but glowing with rage. Her hand met his face in a resounding slap that seemed to echo throughout the dead landscape, louder than the crackling flames behind him.

“What were you trying to do?!” she yelled, smacking him across the other cheek with enough force to send him staggering. “Trying to get yourself killed?!” he stood and stared back at her with eyes as dead as the night sky above them.

“Yes.” her eyes went wide with horror and rage.

“Why?!” she asked him in a voice like broken glass.

“Because I can’t live, Senya!” he cried back, hot tears burning through the grime on his face. “Even as my body breathes, I don’t live! I feel nothing now, not love, not hate, not grief, just a cold emptiness that makes me want to sleep for the rest of eternity!” He clenched his fists, ignoring the protests of his scalded skin. “I promised to protect her, I promised her she would live a long and happy life, but I sent her to her death!” he stumbled forward, grasping her face with his burnt hands, ignoring the stink of his singed hair and the disgust gracing her harsh face. “I can’t live with myself!” her eyes burned into him like the sun, shining with grief, rage, sorrow, and pain that he wished he could still feel.

“And you think I don’t feel that way too?!” she answered back with just as much intensity, gripping his wrists tightly. “She was my little sister, my charge, my wife too! You were not the only one who failed to protect her, but even worse, Aegon, I have had to support your grief on top of mine these last few months and it has been agony!” tears ran down her sooty face. “As my heart has broken and shattered and bled I have had to comfort you, and coddle you, and strengthen you because you are my brother, my husband, and my king! I could barely grieve myself because I had to be strong for you!” a sudden flash of guilt strikes his heart as he looks into her weary and heartbroken eyes. “But even in the complete agony that comes with bearing your grief along with my own I will not betray her memory by sending myself to an early grave! I will not succumb to
despair!” the anger in her voice shocked him and she’s suddenly shaking with anger so passionate it lights a fire in him that had been dormant for months: he feels her rage, her anger, her grief, and it’s like he’s awake and breathing again after a long, dark sleep. “We owe her justice, Aegon! The justice of bringing Dorne to its knees! But more than that, we owe it to her to burn every keep until they give her back to us, dead or alive! We owe it to her to fight on!” her voice suddenly dropped. “And we owe it to her to continue living, for our dynasty, but also for her son.” her eyes bore into his with a strange, heartbroken intensity. “For your son.” Aegon stared at her for a second as his fire bloomed, raged, and burned within him again. To him, Visenya would never be as beautiful as she was in that moment. Covered in soot, but still shining like a star in the night sky, she looked like a true goddess from the great songs that had escaped Valyria with their ancestors. The fire behind him burned in her violet eyes and without thinking he pulled her face to his in a passionate kiss. Ever since Rhaenys had died he had felt nothing after his initial rage other than cold despair. Yet now something had changed. A fire burned within him, a lust for revenge, for justice, but also for the woman who stood before him. She gasped as he devoured her lips hungrily, like a starving man and he yearned to be one with her, to comfort her as she had him for all these long months. When they broke apart, hot tears were rushing down her face, but she grasped his sooty tunic with her shaking hands and pulled him to her again, her lips tasting of a mixture of sorrow, grief, and lust. He was consumed by a fire that night, not the one he had tried to burn himself in, but a different kind, one that helped beat back his despair, helped light up the darkness that had long consumed him. They consummated their grief and love in the ashes of their enemies, intoxicated with pain, desire, and destruction and he had never felt more alive. As he lay on his cloak, Visenya straddling him, both writhing with pleasure, but also crying in grief, he felt for the first time the will to live again. When she finished a little after him with a cry and lay her head on his chest in the ashes of a fallen keep in Dorne, he vowed he would never stop until he had won justice for not only Rhaenys, but for him and Visenya as well.

“Aegon?” a voice asked as a light knock echoed from the door. He opened his eyes and was pulled back to the present once more. He heard the door creak open and his eyes drifted to the small shaft of light. What had he meant by justice? Did he mean revenge, an eye for an eye, a broken heart for a broken heart? Or did he mean something else? Would ending this war and caving to Prince Nymor’s demands, saving her, but losing Dorne, count as obtaining justice? A figure coughs lightly from the door and he has to squint to focus on her after so long in the dark. “I figured you’d be here.” Visenya says to him, leaning against the doorway. He glances at her, but says nothing. “Orys told me you stormed from the hall without finishing our negotiations with Dorne.” He remains silent and she sighs in frustration. “He thought you would be off flying somewhere, but I knew better. After all, you do love to brood and here has been your favorite brooding place of late.” he can’t tell if she’s making a jest at his expense, insulting him, or simply stating a fact. Things had not been well between them of late and this negotiation with Dorne, which she had strongly objected to, was not helping matters.

“I have much to brood about, Visenya.” he replied coolly, “I’m sorry if you find my mood unfavorable.” she sighed again, but finally enters the room, gently closing the door behind her. He traces the lines of her figure as she approaches him. Despite the birth of their son, she is still slim and strong as ever, with the only signs of her new maternal status being the slight widening of her hips and enhancement of her bust along with some new pink and white marks along her abdomen. That along with the sweet babe she kept at her hip as much as possible, although Maegor was nowhere to be seen now.

"Maegor?" he asks lightly, their son being one of the few points where they were agreed these days.

"Safe in his nursery in King's Landing. I fed him a little while ago and didn't want to wake him for the flight here." She sat on the edge of Rhaenys’ bed, turning to look at him. “Is it a bad day or did
"Orys should keep his damn mouth shut." he growls, feeling a stab of jealousy pierce his chest. He still hates how close she and Orys are, even though he knows that Visenya loves him, despite the current cold between them. He still hasn’t shaken the suspicion that she strayed from him all those years ago when he first married Rhaenys and his jealousy does little to improve his mood.

"So you’re just having a dark mood?" she asks leadingly and he shakes his head.

"No, I was already irritated, but that Dornish cunt did little to help, I’ll freely admit to you that seeing Princess Deria walk into my throne room with Meraxes’ skull, that gloating smirk on her pretty face, enraged me.” he replies, fighting to keep his voice even, to not let her know how long he’s been here crying. Visenya stares down at him, her face stoic.

“I told you we should never have let her set foot in our city.” she murmurs accusingly, “You should have sent her back to her wasteland of a country for that insult.”

“We both know why I couldn’t.” he answers and she sighs lightly. “And if I had we never would have received this,” he holds up the letter.

“Is this why your face is covered in tears?” she asks, taking it from his hands. “What could that shriveled excuse for a prince have written-” He sees her violet eyes go wide as she scanned the letter and watches as her grief over their sister’s loss is reborn in her eyes. “Oh.” he nods and allows her to continue reading. By the time she’s finished it, her hands are shaking violently and Aegon sits up to steady her, fearful she’ll collapse off the bed and injure herself. “My sweet sister,” she whispers, tears falling down her pale cheeks. Her eyes drift to his. “I never imagined they would—” a sob cuts off her words, but Aegon knows what she means. He pulls her against him as he takes the disgusting letter from her wavering hands.

“It turns out the Dornish are even more barbaric than we thought.” he tells her, feeling more like a child than a king, “I knew she was alive, knew what we saw in Dorne was real, was a sign that she was still in our world, within our reach.” Visenya turns her head to look at him, her lips quirving. “She must be in Sunspear for Nymor to be so acquainted with her.” Visenya closes her eyes at his words. “In that cursed city where we dared not go lest we be shot from the heavens as she was, leaving our hard won kingdom to splinter and Aenys to be torn apart by the wolves.” his voice breaks as he speaks and he holds her tighter. She shifts to wrap her strong arms around his torso, comforting him despite her own sorrow, as always. For a few minutes all they can do is hold each other as the grief they both held back for the remainder of the Dornish War burns anew thanks to Prince Nymor’s letter. When he can finally speak, he pulls the pale braid that came enclosed in a letter from his pocket. “This came with the letter.” he chokes, “This was the price she paid for our act of wrath.” Visenya’s eyes fall on the silver-gold braid and horror, although not shock, blooms across her face. “Prince Nymor says she’s called Aenya.” he feels Visenya stiffen against him.

“Aenya?” she repeats, so softly he can barely hear her words. “Yes, she named her for us.” he answers and a heart-wrenching sob erupts from his sister-wife’s lips. “Who is the father?” Visenya asks, holding him closer, as if his presence could lessen the pain these words were causing them both.

“Prince Nymor doesn’t say,” his voice cracks. “He only says if we stop our assault on Dorne he will end Rhaenys’ suffering.”

“And the child?” she inquires softly. “Will the child be sent to us? I doubt she’s a dragon rider, but she has the blood of the dragon nonetheless-”
“The child’s hair will be died black and she will be raised as one of Princess Deria’s daughters.” He says, cutting her off. In truth, he doesn’t know if he could stand to have the child so near, knowing how she was conceived. Part of him hopes he’d be a good enough man not to blame an innocent child for the sins of its conception and that he could love her for Rhaenys’ sake. Yet, part of him knows he’d barely be able to stomach the sight of her and poor Aenya would be worse off for being with her mother’s family. “What am I supposed to do, Senya?” he asks her, clinging to her like he used to as a child. The darkness, comforting a few minutes before, now seemed to surround them on all sides, threatening to consume them. "What can I do? How can I keep the promise I made to her? How can I get justice for her when Nymor has us by the throat?!" His wife took a deep breath and was silent in his arms for a few minutes, but he and she both knew that the choice was almost already made.

“She has suffered for a long time.” Visenya finally murmured. “Time enough for us to have conquered another seven kingdoms, yet that cursed place still refuses to bend, break, or bow.” her voice drips bile. “I hate them with my whole being and I hope our children will bring that kingdom to the Iron Throne screaming, but,” she sighs.

“But?” he asks.

“But we failed her twice.” Visenya whispers with guilt and regret. “We failed to protect her as we promised and we failed to avenge her fully and bring Dorne to its knees. I think, and this is not as a queen or as a general, but as her sister and her wife, I don’t think I could live with failing her a third time, with failing to give her the peace she deserves.” she swallows. “And although the means of her conception are deplorable, we have to think of the child-”

“Is she actually Rhaenys’ child?” he asks, interrupting her. “Before we do this I need to know, is Aenya what Nymor claims she is?” a vain hope flares in his heart. “Or is he just screwing with us to try and force a peace?” Visenya takes a shaky breath, looking off towards the wall. He gently cups her face, forcing her to look at him. “I need to know if he’s telling the truth, no matter how painful.” she swallows and he feels another tear drip down her face.

“On our last night in Dorne, do you remember how I had a vision so horrible I wouldn’t tell you?” she whispers and Aegon nods. Of course he remembers that night, how could he not? Visenya had been near hysterical, begging him to leave Dorne immediately. He hadn’t understood why and she had refused to tell him, but after ignoring her counsel had cost him Rhaenys, well, he wasn’t willing to take that chance again and the next day the Dragons had flown home to the Aegonfort, leaving Dorne scarred and burnt, but still unbroken. “Well, I dreamed of a dragon trapped in a desert. Its wings were broken, its hide scarred, but it was still breathing. It screamed in pain and I realized it was giving birth to something.” Aegon’s heart grew cold at her words. “Dragons don’t have live births, so I couldn’t understand what I was seeing, but the broken dragon gave birth to a living hatchling with amber eyes and wings too small to fly.” her voice broke, but her words were all the confirmation Aegon needed. She takes a deep breath and when her eyes meet his they are completely resolved. “Aegon, Prince Nymor will keep her for years more if we refuse his terms and Aenya will have who knows how many siblings forced upon her mother in those awful years, if the flightless dragon is even allowed to continue breathing to see them born-”

“She won’t be, you saw what he wrote: she’d have more siblings, but he’d have her and every other child that shares our blood burnt as revenge for our wrath.” Aegon responds, shivering at Nymor’s cruelty. “A burnt child for every Dornish child we burnt in our conquest.” Visenya hisses in anger, but when her eyes meet his he knows they’re in agreement.

“You know what you have to do then.” she tells him. "For Rhaenys' sake." she begins to shake again and he holds her just that much closer, inhaling her sweet smell of lavender and incense.
“Yes,” he answers. “I know.” they lay in silence as the darkness settles over them once more, two heartbeats filling the night that once had heard three.

Chapter End Notes

I can't state enough that I really didn't want this chapter to become as dark as it did. I legitimately tried so many different iterations of this, some included "Aenya", some didn't, some just vaguely referenced her, but this draft was the only one that felt like it fit the first chapter from Rhaenys' pov in tone and theme. Any time I tried to remove the darker aspects, the story seemed to suffer and I couldn't see any of the other drafts save this one as a fitting conclusion to this ark. I am terribly sorry if anyone was disturbed by what Rhaenys' experienced or if the grief displayed in this chapter was upsetting.

On another note, this will be the last chapter for a little bit. I have several other chapters in the works, such as one from the pov of Rhaenys, the queen who never was, and one for Aerea, but I'm going to put all projects on hold for a little while due to burnout. I've been trying to get these out on a weekly basis for a bit and at first I could and really delighted in writing the arcs, trilogies, and especially the suggest one-shots, but I think my creativity has become a little over-extended recently and it just seems like some of the chapters have been suffering because of it. This break will be really short, I promise, but I want the next few chapters to be the best they can be, so please have patience with my exhausted brain and I'll be back soon. If there are any characters you want a pov from in the future, feel free to suggest them and I'll get on those as soon as my burnt out brain has some time to recharge.

Be Back Soon!

-YZ
Vhagar-Heartbeat's Echo

Chapter Summary

The Dance of Dragons rages on and Vhagar finds herself in the Riverlands with her current rider, Prince Aemond, as they wage a one dragon war against the unfortunate region. As they rest for a night, ever wary of their two pursuers who have dragons of their own, Vhagar looks back at her long life and finds herself comparing her four masters, contemplating the sorrow and joy that comes with being bonded to these fair-haired princes, princesses, and Queens. Despite their shared fair-hair and purple eyes, her riders were not all the same and if she does happen to die in this damn war, she knows which one she would choose to spend the rest of eternity with. As they say, there's nothing like your first....

Chapter Notes

Well isn't this a surprise,

So, that break was shorter than anticipated and long story short, boba tea fixed my burnout. Just kidding, it was a lot more complicated than that. When I finished my last chapter, my brain genuinely felt like it had been turned into jello. I was already working on two other chapters, but suddenly I couldn't figure out how to complete the stories I had already started. So, I decided to take a break and was planning on getting a few weeks of R&R before returning to try and clean up my mess. However, I happened to meet up with a good friend of mine and we had an interesting discussion about my little burn out problem. After I explained the jellofication of my brain, this friend looked at me and went: you sure your burnout isn't linked to writer's block? I said: of course. I've had writer's block, and it doesn't feel like this. She didn't believe me and asked to see what I was working on. After she looked them over she asked: where any of these your idea or suggested? The two I was working on were the Aerea and Rhaenys (daughter of Aemon) stories so I answered: suggested. She then goes: hmmm, have you tried writing anything else other than these two? I said: no, mostly because juggling more than two stories at a time doesn't usually work out well for me. So she goes: well why don't you try to write a chapter from a POV of your choosing? At first I was like: No, my brain is broken, that would be terrible, but after much convincing and bribing with various boba drinks, I agreed and it was not a fun process, but out of the ashes of my brain this POV from Vhagar was born and I don't even know, but something clicked in my brain and I knew I had to write this. In all honesty, I was a bit weary at first writing from the POV of a non-human character, but this new territory and the unknown were also really fascinating to me. How should I characterize her? Can I use human terms to describe her emotions? Would she know the human names of places like the Riverlands, or the Dragonpit? How would a dragon describe the bond between her and her rider? Yet, as I was writing it, everything kinda just came together and I realized it was a really great opportunity to explore the bond between dragonriders and their dragons. It also gave me the opportunity to lightly brush the Dance of Dragons without full on jumping into that monstrosity. So, here's the result of all of that. If you enjoy it, please leave kudos and any constructive comments you like.
I own nothing, no lawsuits, thank you very much

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Vhagar

“Where should we fly next, Vhagar?” Prince Aemond asks her as he rested his back wearily against her warm hide. The fire beside him lit up the map he held in his hands, although both of them knew he never really used it. She watched as his single violet eye traced the line of devastation they had carved through the Riverlands and felt the warmth of his satisfaction flow through her veins. He had been happier these last few months than he had been since he was a child, the war against the Riverlands bringing out a strange, perverse joy in the usually stoic and serious prince. Personally, Vhagar couldn’t care less about the burning of certain keeps or why it mattered that certain men burn slower than others, but the joy it brought him to see his enemies perish in dragonfire warmed her old bones like few other things could. “It matters not to you where we go, I suppose, for with your power we can burn any keep, stronghold, or castle we choose and feast on the spoils.” she curled her lips back in a mimicry of his own tight smile and he laughed lightly. Yet, despite his joy and confidence in their invincibility, she could also sense her brethren’s presence in the Riverlands casting a shadow of their every move. Their enemies and their dragons were far away, resting within the walls of an enemy keep, but the danger they posed was a threat that must be taken seriously. He met her shining eyes and as always he sensed her warning. “Of course we will have to be wary of my damn uncle and his bastard of a bedmate. They are not close now, are they?” she shook her great head and he sighed in relief. “How like Uncle Daemon to ruin my fun. Perhaps when they are out hunting the Riverlands we should burn Maidenpool and that traitor Mooton?” she narrowed her orange-jasper eyes at him and he sighed. “You’re right, the risk is too great, even if you do dwarf their puny mounts, but I will see that place burn before this war is through.” she nodded at his words encouragingly. He yawned and his shoulders sagged slightly with exhaustion. She gently nuzzled her nose against his shoulder, careful not to spit sparks or snag him in her fangs and gestured for him to rest. “I am not tired.” she growled softly at him and although his lips pursed at her in defiance, they both knew she was right. “Fine, I shall rest, but wake me before dawn.” she purred in acknowledgement as he curled himself against her side. “You’ll keep watch for me?” she gently curled her neck around him, encircling him in her warm presence. Always.

As he slowly drifted off into the land just beyond this one, where he could fly on his own wings and he could wear the crown he so coveted, she could feel the anger pumping through his heart, the rage boiling in his blood, cool and dissipate. She always preferred him best when he slept, cradled in her warm embrace. Of all her riders, Aemond’s inner fire burned the hottest, almost scalding even to her, stoked by a strong need to prove himself worthy, but his inner fire had been raging at an all time high since he had lost his city to his older half-sister. It was funny to the dragon, who had lived over a century now, how quickly men turned on each other, how swiftly things changed. After all, had it not been only a decade ago that Vhagar had happily flown beside gorgeous Rhaenerya while beautiful, sweet, cool-headed Laena was her mistress? She supposed that was the way of men given how short and bright their lives were. Nevertheless, it almost brought Vhagar sorrow to think she might have to kill the Realm’s Delight one day, but as with all her brethren, she was bonded to her rider and his enemies were hers as well, even if they had once been her companions in flight. If Aemond ordered her to, Vhagar would slay any dragon or rider he wished, no matter her previous relationship with them, just as she knew her brothers would rip out her throat without hesitation if their fair-haired riders gave the word. Well, more like try to rip out her throat since almost any attempt would end in her attacker’s painful demise. Ever since her
The oldest brother had died, she had been the unquestioned queen of dragons and no living beast could match her in size or ferocity. It also helped that Aemond’s constant rage made her blood run hotter and flames more ferocious than ever before, making her already considerable powers even more deadly. Only once before had a rider’s emotions stoked her flames so, and when that was the case she and her favorite brother had laid waste to an entire kingdom. She wondered if the Riverlands would resemble Dorne after she was done with it, even if it was only her bronze flames doing the burning this time. Her prince sighed in his sleep and she appraised his sleeping form with her keen eyes. It was silly to compare riders, but she couldn’t help it, not when she had carried so many.

Vhagar was the oldest living dragon, the proud mount of four fair-haired dragonriders, and the she-dragon would be lying if she said they were all the same. There were some similarities, of course. All of them possessed the fair hair of the dragonriders and those famous purple eyes of old Valryia. They all knew the old songs and spoke the ancient tongue of a world now gone, but even in these physical similarities there were differences. The hair was silver-white, or gold-silver, or just gold. The eyes ranged from bright violet to somber indigo, from two eyes to one. Their accents too varied, the notes of their voices different as they ordered “dracarys”, “māzigon”, or “sōvegon”.

Even more obvious to Vhagar than these visible differences was the heat, intensity, and feel of the bond the she-dragon had created with each rider. One had been a fierce bond of kindred spirits who had learned to conquer together, another a bond of friendship formed when there were no wars to fight and flying had been an activity of joy rather than one of necessity. Yet, no matter the feel of the bond or the character of the rider, Vhagar had learned to love each of them, for how could she not when they became and extension of herself? Their hearts had beat in tandem with hers, their joy, rage, and triumphs became hers to live as well. They were hers as much as she was theirs and she would die to protect any one of them. Yet, if she and they could live forever, she knew which of her four riders she’d fly with for eternity. Aemond knew it as well and he didn’t seem angry when he realized she wouldn’t choose to be his in the next life.

“I suppose there’s nothing like your first, eh girl?” he had told her jokingly as he stroked her glittering neck. She had nuzzled him softly as she felt his heart break a little bit, but he had given her a strong smile. “Don’t worry, I’m used to being second best.” he wouldn’t have been her second choice either, but he needn’t know that. All he needed to know was that she loved him. Although, that was not particularly special either since she had loved all her riders in their time: she had adored Laena, she had happily served Baelon, and she knew that when the time came she would spill her brother or sister’s blood for her one-eyed Aemond, but her bond with any of them could not compare to the one she had with her first rider. For even after all these years, she still missed the little girl who had first tamed her. She saw bits of her violet-eyed Queen in each of her other riders, perhaps that was another unifying factor between her four masters, but none of them could ever match her or the bond Vhagar and the Great Queen had shared. Vhagar can still see her now as she was the day they were bonded. She remembers how Balerion called for her and Meraxes, although neither of them had been named yet, to land in the courtyard of the fortress built with magic and dragonfire. Her beautiful sister with her silver scales and golden eyes roared back as they flew down to their older brother. His black eyes had been turned towards his rider, Old Lord Daerion, and the child he had by his side. The girl was small, most likely having lived less than seven years, but she was already tall and her violet eyes shone with a strong inner fire. The Old Lord had pushed the little girl towards the dragons and she had approached the three beasts slowly, but without a trace of fear on her tiny face. Vhagar had wondered if Meraxes would try to claim the girl, as the elder and larger dragon that would have been her silver sister’s right, but before she had the chance Vhagar’s glowing orange eyes had met the girl’s bright violet ones and everything had changed. Suddenly she could feel a second heart beating alongside her own. A wave of exhilaration washed over the bronze beast and Vhagar realized that it must be what the girl was feeling at the sight of the dragons. Even stranger, Vhagar was now aware of every movement the girl made. Her fast, excited breaths, her twitching, anxious fingers, even the blood rushing
through the child’s veins, Vhagar could feel it all. The girl’s face was awestruck as she approached Vhagar and when she reached out her small, pale hand, Vhagar lowered her nose to it, careful not to blow sparks and burn the child. When the dainty hand touched Vhagar’s bronze scales, the she-dragon immediately felt an unconditional love sprout within her armored chest for this child.

“Hello Beautiful,” the girl had whispered in perfect High-Valyrian. “I am Visenya Targaryen, future Lady of Dragonstone, and from this day you and I will rule this island together.” her High Valyrian was smooth and cool, like the strong rush of a stream compared to the fiery shouts of Old Daemon Targaryen. She purred softly as the girl stroked her muzzle and the smile that graced the girl’s lips and the happiness that erupted through her chest warmed Vhagar’s body like nothing else.

“What is her name?” her new mistress had asked her grandfather. The old man smiled down at her with a mixture of happiness and relief.

“She has no name yet.” he had answered. Vhagar could tell the old man was proud. She distantly remembered that his son had failed to claim a dragon for years now and if Balerion’s growls had been any indication, the Old Lord had feared the ability to ride dragons would die with him. She could smell his anxiety drifting off him in the morning breeze and Vhagar wanted to laugh at the absurdity of this man. He need not have worried, the girl had more fire in her blood than he did and Vhagar could already tell she would do great things. “You are the one who will tame her. so you may choose her name, little dragon.” Visenya’s eyes had stared into the she-dragon’s for a moment and then she said,

“Vhagar, for Balerion’s warrior wife and queen, for she will be a queen amongst dragons as I will be one amongst men.” Vhagar had roared approvingly at this name and the future it seemed to bring with it. The laugh of delight that escaped Visenya’s full, dainty lips as Vhagar shot an arc of bright bronze flames into the sky was music to the dragon’s ears. Vhagar’s eyes bore into the child’s and she motioned for her new mistress to climb onto her back and become a dragonrider in truth. The girl’s happiness and excitement spread through Vhagar like the warmth of the Dragonmount and when the small body was safely clinging to her ridged back, Vhagar spread her wings and rocked into the air. She roared in triumph as she circled Dragonstone and revelled in her new rider’s pride as the people on the ground stared up at the mounted dragon in surprise. They flew thrice around the island and twice more around the castle before Vhagar landed again in the courtyard and felt the small body slide from her back. The loss of contact was startling and from that day forward Vhagar never felt whole unless her rider was with her. Visenya had run to face the she-dragon and thrown her small arms around the still-untamed dragon’s neck. “You and I will accomplish so much together,” she told the dragon. “Just you wait.” and Vhagar did wait. She waited twenty one long years as she and Visenya trained above the harsh, rocky cliffs of Dragonstone. While Visenya’s younger brother claimed Balerion and her sister bonded with Meraxes, as the silver-dragon was anointed, and spent their time flying idly, Vhagar and Visenya were training.

“Training for what?” Lady Valaena Targaryen had once asked her daughter as the girl gently oiled Vhagar’s bronze scales.

“For a war, if we are ever unlucky enough to find ourselves in one.” Visenya replied simply, although the pretty lady, whose own fire could possibly have earned her a dragon, had not believed her daughters words. After all, why would a girl of three and ten be thinking about wars? Vhagar knew, but even those who didn’t stopped questioning Visenya’s reasons eventually. After all, as long as she learned her lessons as her parents instructed and did what she was supposed to, why not allow the pretty future-lady to spend her free time as she liked? In fact, Lord Aerion and Lady Valaena might have even preferred that Visenya spend her time with her dragon in full view of the court, since that prevented whispers of secret affairs and the breeding of scandals. So, with the tacit blessing of her parents for what they deemed a “childhood fancy” and the confusion of her younger
siblings, Visenya and Vhagar trained for months, years even, with glorious results. Under Visenya’s strict regimen, Vhagar, although the youngest and smallest of her fire-breathing siblings, grew to be the most ferocious and fastest of them all, able to dance circles around strong Balerion and outpace nimble Meraxes. Her fire could not burn hotter than Balerion’s normally, but she and Visenya learned that with the right combination of rage, excitement, and joy from Visenya, Vhagar’s fire could melt iron just as the Black Dread’s could. As Meraxes happily allowed Rhaenys to rule her, Visenya and Vhagar became two parts of the same whole. Visenya could feel Vhagar’s needs without asking, knew when her Dragon needed to rest or when she needed to fly, when she was hungry, or when the dragon’s capricious nature demanded blood. In turn, Vhagar could feel Visenya’s emotions. Her every joy was Vhagar’s joy and her sorrow made Vhagar want to burn the world down for her and soon enough she would. When the time came for the Targaryen siblings and the dragons to fly across the Blackwater Bay and take Westeros, Vhagar was ready, and her fire helped carve her Queen an empire. The silver, black, and bronze beasts burned Westeros into submission for their fair-haired riders, just as Visenya had told Vhagar they would long ago, and when their beautiful sisters fell in Dorne, Vhagar had indeed burned the world to help soothe Visenya’s sorrow.

Harder, however, then even losing her beloved silver sister was when Visenya herself died. Vhagar has lost two riders since that terrible day, but she still remembers the pain that first loss brought her. She had been bathing in the setting sun in the courtyard of Dragonstone when suddenly a strange cold had washed over her. For a second she had stilled in confusion, but then the she-dragon had let out an agonized roar as the second heart that had beat with hers for so long stopped and the entire world had gone silent to her. Overcome with unspeakable pain, she shot towers of bronze flames into the sky as a hole opened up in her heart where the part of her that was Visenya’s died with the warrior queen. As her flames burned in the air, Vhagar threw herself into the sky as the people of Dragonstone screamed in fear and the grieving dragon cried her pain and loss to the darkening heavens. In her crazed grief she flew out across the dark water, beating the air with her wings and taking dives that brought her closer and closer to death each time. Finally, a roar echoed from across the bay and a hulking shape shot up from the Capital Vhagar had helped forge. Her brother flew to her as she roared in complete and utter agony, continuing to throw herself towards the unforgiving sea below her. She was nearer to his size then, but he was still her superior, so when he growled at her to cease her acts of grief and follow him, she had no choice but to do so, lest he drag her away by her neck. The two dragons flew to the Dragon Pit, where Balerion was now housed within easy reach of his new rider, and Vhagar had crashed to the ground, curling on her side as she mewled at the loss of the one she loved most. Balerion and the other dragons there had cried out with her in her grief, shaking the city with their roars. As the dragonguards ran to see what the commotion was, Balerion curled up beside the grief-stricken bronze queen, blowing steam on her glistening scales to warm her as Visenya’s presence used to. She knew he’d experienced this when his own great riders had died, and once, not too long ago, she had been the one to curl beside him in the courtyard as he sent his beloved conqueror to the next world on a wave of dragonfire. Vhagar knew she would survive this loss, but this was her first and therefore the most painful. She had been with Visenya for sixty five years, had lived for her for over half a century, and the dragon had forgotten what it was like to have but one heartbeat pulsing within her. For three days she lay limp in the center of the Dragonpit, unwilling to move or eat, despite Balerion’s admonishing roars and efforts. It was not until the tall man with Visenya’s eyes came to her that she found herself willing to live on without Visenya. The man had walked into the Dragonpit, his eyes so like hers, staring at the fallen dragon with a strange, grief-filled intensity. Balerion had stiffened as his rider approached them, growling in warning for the king not to touch her, but the man had ignored her brother and approached the fallen bronze queen. Despite the danger, proven by the fiery death of an unfortunate attendant had tried to stable the grief-stricken beast, Maegor placed a gentle hand on her muzzle as their eyes met. In his violet eyes she could see the boy she had once carried to this city on his name day, the boy Visenya loved above all others,
but more than that, she could see an echo of her, and she gave a low cry that resonated with all her grief and despair.

“Oh Vhagar,” he had whispered, gently stroking her face. “Beautiful, loyal, Vhagar, there are no words-” his voice had broken and he swallowed a sob that was building in his throat. “there are no words to describe what we have lost.” she mewled again and bright tears escaped his eyes as he saw his own grief reflected in her jasper eyes. He placed his forehead against her nose, hiding his face from the Kingsguard behind him and although they could not bond as rider and dragon, they became bonded in their grief. As he wept silently, crying the tears she was unable to, she found the will to continue living, not for herself, but for the descendants of her beloved Visenya. She would live, painful as it was, to ensure that Visenya's legacy lived on. And so she lived, although at times she certainly wished to die.

For twenty nine cold years Vhagar flew without another rider, for twenty nine long years she lived with but one heart. At first this was her own doing as she could not bare to be around anyone, especially after Visenya’s son died not three years after her. When Balerion's screams alerted her to Maegor's passing they took to the skies together and bronze and black flames illuminated the sky as the King and Queen of Dragons cried their loss to the heavens, whose bright light mocked their pain. They had flown the Dragonstone after that and Vhagar had spent a long, sleep-filled, and lonely decade curled up in the caves of the Dragonmount where only Balerion would live long enough to see her. Any fair-haired Targaryens or their kin who had tried to claim her were sent running from bronze flames hot enough to cook a knight in his armor(which happened on more than one occasion). When her grief finally dulled to a low throb she allowed herself to be stabled with her brethren in the Dragonpit and it was there, after five years of watching more dragonblood princes and princesses claim their mounts, that she met her next rider. When the boy had walked in she had immediately been interested in him, both for the fire burning hot in his blood, but also because he had the audacity to thump her hulking brother on the nose. Luckily for this fair-haired prince, this idiotic, if brazen, act amused the Black Dread more than annoyed him, and when he turned his sparkling eyes and fearless gaze towards Vhagar, she saw in their indigo depths the shadow of the one she loved most. So, when he met her gaze for the second time, indigo eyes burning into her jasper ones, Prince Baelon became hers and her heartbeat had an echo once again.

A low rustle drew her attention as some small creature stirred nearby and she realized the faintest light was creeping over the horizon to the East. As the world began to awaken, she felt a change at the edges of her senses as two creatures from a world now gone took to the air across the Riverlands. They were too young to sense her from this distance as she could them, but soon enough they’d be in range to feel the blood boiling in her veins and smell the scent of their queen. She gently nudged Aemond awake, although she loathed to see the peaceful look melt off his face as he awoke. His violet eye opened and met hers and he understood immediately that they had to leave. He scaled her saddled back and slid into his saddle, putting his well-worn map in his saddlebag. In the distance she heard the faint roar of Caraxes, although no human could hear it from so far away, and she glanced back at him urgently. He fastened his saddle chain and he ordered:

“Sövegon!” and they rocketed skyward. As the sun kissed her scales, and the wind hugged her wings, she allowed him to direct her towards their next target as they left their approaching adversaries far behind them. She knew with certainty that Caraxes and Sheepstealer, as her brethren were called, would not catch her. They were not near fast enough and she would be able to sense their approach long before they even knew she was there, but even if they did somehow reach her, she could kill them without a second thought. Yet, if they did somehow manage to kill her, she wasn’t sure she’d be opposed to that. After all, three of her riders had passed on to the next world and with them waited three pieces of her heart. If she did die with one of her brothers ripping out her throat, she figured she would pass to the next world happily, ready to be whole once more, but until then, she would rain fire down on Aemond’s enemies with a force not seen since
Visenya’s rage lead her to burn Dorne black. So, with her rider’s strong heart beating alongside her own, she flew towards the rising sun as the world was washed in a red light which heralded the fire to come.

Chapter End Notes

So, there was my first dip into the mess that is the Dance of Dragons. I was planning to have Viserys I be the first chapter that really dealt with the Targaryen Civil War, but I always wondered how the dragons, who were really the main casualties in this war, felt about it. Did they understand what was happening? Did they care? I decided that they probably did understand what was happening since dragons are supposed to be incredibly intelligent and that they fought more out of loyalty to their riders than out of anger towards each other. I'd love to hear opinions about that interpretation.

Additionally, I got to explore the bonds dragonriders and their dragons had, which I find really fascinating. It's pretty common knowledge that dragons know when their riders die, see Dreamfyre when Helaena died, and it's also theorized that riders could feel their dragons pain. Yet, I felt the connection had to be deeper than just that, so I made it a kind of symbiotic relationship here, which kind of coincides with my earlier explorations of Valryian Magic. In any case, I hope you all enjoyed it. I am continuing to work on the Rhaenys and Aerea chapters, but from now on the pace of publication will be a bit slower so expect to see those in a couple weeks at best. I also have some other chapters underway which conclude some earlier arcs(*cough Viserra, *cough Maegor's disgrace) so those will also be popping up soon. As always, if you have any POVs, premises, or other Targaryen related shenanigans you'd like to see explored, please suggest them and I'll do my best to oblige.

PS. Thank you for all the comments of support, I really appreciated all compliments on past chapters, well wishes for my health, and suggestions on ways to recuperate. You guys are awesome and I hope you continue to read and enjoy this story!
Viserra Targaryen is dead. She broke her neck on the eve of her journey to White Harbor where her betrothed awaited her and has followed many of her siblings into the next world. Her death shatters her mother Queen Alysanne, who is heartbroken to outlive yet another of her daughters, and Prince Baelon is left guilt-stricken over her fate and how he failed to prevent it. As he comforts his mother, he remembers his last conversation with his doomed little sister and contemplates what she made him promise her...

Hi Guys,

Here’s a chapter from the POV of Prince Baelon (son of Jaehaerys I). Awhile ago I promised a trilogy from the POV of the 4th and 5th generation of Targaryens, including Baelon here, but I don’t think I’ll be writing anymore trilogies for a bit and will instead focus on one-shots and perhaps two to three chapter arcs (like the one about The OG trio and Dorne). This chapter can kind of work as a conclusion to my earlier chapter from Viserra dealing with her fate and how her family may have reacted to the her death. However, if you’d rather it just be a one-shot you can read it unconnected to earlier chapters as well. If you like it, please leave kudos and any constructive comments you like.

I own nothing, no lawsuits, etc.

See the end of the chapter for more notes.

“Mother,” Baelon says softly to the shaking woman on the bed. “Mother, please, you have to leave this room.” Queen Alysanne barely reacts to his words, her blue eyes still shining with unshed tears.

“How can I?” she whispered brokenly as she hugs Viserra’s pillow to her chest. “How can I leave when I left her alone so often?” Baelon sighs sorrowfully, unable to answer her question or help relieve her of her guilt and grief. He gently sits by his mother, placing a comforting hand on her black-clad shoulder.

“You didn’t leave her alone-”

“Don’t lie to comfort me, Baelon!” she yells at him angrily. “We both know I did!” Baelon stares at her in shock as she covers her trembling mouth with her hand. “I’m sorry, I shouldn’t-”
“You don’t have to apologize, mother,” he tells her gently. “For anything.” a the tear escapes her azure eyes.

“We both know that’s not true, my sweet boy.” she responds brokenly. “There is much I must seek penance for. Your father and I were not the same parents to her as we were to you and your older siblings. We got so caught up in everything else,” she swallows as more tears slide down her face. “Perhaps if I had been a mother to her in truth she wouldn’t have-” his mother's throat constricted with a sob as her body began to shake harder. “She wouldn’t-” she buries her face in Viserra’s pillow, breathing in deeply the scent of her daughter's hair with agonizing, gasping breaths. Baelon can only watch helplessly as she sobs. “She was so lonely.” he hears her whisper, more to herself than him. “So abandoned.” Baelon feels a hot blade of built stab his heart at his mother's words. “She just wanted to be loved, to be noticed, and what did I do? I arranged for her to marry a man who was so much older than herself. I condemned her to live the rest of her life as she had the beginning of it, without love.” a sob wracks his mother’s body as her fingers dig into the soft fabric covering the pillow. “I think she hated me at the end.” Baelon looked at his mother in surprise before taking her cold hand in his. “And I can’t even find it in my heart to blame her.”

“No mother, she didn’t.” Alysanne’s eyes bore into his with an almost crazed grief. “Viserra was a difficult child, but she loved you very much, she truly did. She could never hate you—”

“No, Baelon, she could. You weren’t there the last time we spoke, you didn’t see how the light left her eyes, how it seemed as if something within her died when her pleas to be freed from her betrothal fell on deaf ears. She told me that she would rather die than marry him, that she would rather go to the Stranger than live in a world where everyone she loved sent her away again and again and all I did was sit there as she cried and tell her that Lord Manderly was a good man.” Baelon’s eyes tear up at her words as he imagines his little sister's final pleas. “I should have said something else, held her, or done anything except—” she buries her face in the pillow once more and Baelon’s own eyes leak tears of grief. “I always thought my heart would stop if I ever lost another daughter, yet here I am, my heart still beating, even if it's broken beyond repair. Oh how I wish I could have died in their steads!” fear strikes his heart and he pulled her to him, clutching his mother to his chest as he too began to shake.

“Please mother, don’t say such things.” he begs, feeling her sob against him. “You’re not the only one wracked with guilt about what happened, but you can’t truly wish to follow her. She wouldn’t want that.” his mother mumbled incoherently, but held onto him like he was the only solid thing in this world. He wished he could absolve her of this horrible guilt, but he couldn’t, not when he too was wrestling with his own feelings of culpability. He curses his past self for not spending more time with his sister, for refusing to intervene as she trekked down her misguided and dangerous path. He had watched as the sad little girl he had cared for become cold and prideful. He had seen her bright smile fade, replaced with arrogant smirks, and watched her eyes lose their innocence. Yet, instead of trying to help her, he had abandoned her. As he gently rubs his mother's shoulders, he remembers the last time he saw his sister and how he had acted in the months since he found her in his chambers and he can’t help but hate himself the smallest bit. He can still see her now, standing in the portrait gallery, shining like the sun in the soft candlelight. How many times had he tried to return to that moment in his dreams? How many times had he wished he could go back and sweep her into his arms and tell her how loved she was? Yet, that is not what he had done when he had found her there. In fact, when he had spotted her staring up at the portrait of Visenya Targaryen, he had immediately tried to back out of the room, but she had already seen him.

“Come now, Baelon,” Viserra had said, turning to him with a cold smile so unlike the bright ones she used to give him. “There’s no need to run away, I won’t bite you.” her orchid eyes burned into his and he found himself paralyzed. “Come talk to me as you used to. I’m leaving for White Harbor soon and we’ve spent precious little time together.” Baelon swallowed nervously as he held her
cold gaze. After all, there was a very good reason why he had been avoiding her, but something within him told him to go to her. He had not seen her in many moons, not since the night he had found her in his bed as naked as her name day. He remembers that night well, and he is still filled with disgust at what had occurred. After that, he had avoided the places he knew she’d be. Afraid of what would happen if they did meet.

“What do you wish to talk about?” he asked lightly, ensuring that he was a good foot away from her as he came to stand beside her in front of the grand portrait.

“Anything,” she said, turning to look back at the painting. “I’ve had very few conversations of merit these last few moons.” Baelon laughed lightly in disbelief.

“I find that hard to believe. Viserys tells me that you’re always surrounded by poets, knights, and men of all stature these days.” he replies, “my poor boy is feeling much neglected by you.” She smiles softly, sweetly, almost like she used to when she was a child, although at five and ten she’s not far removed from those youthful days.

"Viserys is a sweet child, the best of you and Alyssa truly. Yet, he should not be around the men who have taken to attending to me." Her mouth turned down in distaste as she finished her sentence. “They’re little more than maggots.”

"Oh come now, how bad can your adoring crowd be?" He inquired jokingly, but she didn't even smile.

“They are brutes, brother, little more than silly men who are enticed by my flesh and royal blood.” She murmured stonily. "They want little more than to nestle their small cocks between my legs and when I try to talk about the histories of Valyria or the Conquest they look at me like I’ve grown another head.” she gently stroked the portrait’s golden frame. “They want a silent, docile, beauty, not a woman who can speak or think, the Rhaenys they see, not the Visenya that lies beneath.” she glanced up at the painting before them as her hand dropped to her side. “I like this one better than the one of her with the Conqueror.” he raised an eyebrow at her quick change of subject, but decided to humor her.

“Why is that?” he asked her as he too looked up at the painting.

“She looks like the queen she was meant to be in this one,” his sister answered, flicking her deep purple eyes at him. “Fierce, powerful, unstoppable. I always thought she deserved to rule more than Aegon did and here she certainly looks the part of the Dragon Queen.” He traced the lines of the painting in front of him. She was right about the portrait looking fierce and powerful. This portrait was of Visenya as a warrior and she was dressed as such. A silver circlet glinted on her brow, but other than that she was dressed for combat. Her silver armor gleamed from the dark canvas, fitted tightly to a body that promised danger as much as sensuality. Her violet eyes seemed to shine from the portrait defiantly, daring any man to challenge her.

“Do you think she looks weak in the other one?” he inquired, picturing the portrait of Visenya and Aegon that hung in a hall in Dragonstone.

“Not weak, but in the other she is made secondary to Aegon. He is the focus of the painting, the Warrior reborn, the Great Conqueror, holding Blackfyre before him him triumphantly, while she stands beside him, crowned, but dressed in silks with Dark Sister held downwards close to her chest. It makes it look like he’s protecting her, like she was lesser than him,” she glances at him out of the corner of her orchid eyes. “Which we both know was not the case.” their eyes meet for a moment and he forces himself to look away, clearing his throat before speaking.
“Well, here she is presented as a warrior, there she is painted as a queen.” he commented. “Those two roles are very different and are portrayed differently. A warrior must be able to invoke fear, but a queen, well, a queen must inspire confidence for her king and it seems she was supporting his position, making him look strong, even in painting form.” his sister tutted by his side, tossing her shining silver-gold hair over her shoulder contemptuously.

“But what does it say about our ideals that she, who was both a queen and a warrior, must be presented as either one or the other? Nothing good, I imagine.” she hummed thoughtfully for a moment. “She should be remembered as she was, don’t you think?” she turned her body to face him and he couldn’t help but look at her. He forced himself to focus on her face and ignore the rich curves of her sensual body, forced himself not to remember how she had pressed it against his own that night.

“Ideally yes. She and everyone else should be remembered in death as they were in life, but people are complex and it is hard to maintain all that nuance once the person is no longer present to reinforce all their beautiful complexities. It’s easier to remember people as one thing, even though they were often many different things all at once.” he looked up at Visenya as an interesting thought struck him. “I suppose we will all be remembered in different ways after we are gone.” he commented. “For we will be remembered by many different people.” she arched a perfect eyebrow at him.

“What do you mean?” Viserra asked and he could feel, rather than see her shift slightly closer to him.

“Well, Visenya was a warrior and those who read of her military exploits remember her as such. Yet she was also a queen, a queen dowager, and a queen mother, so depending upon who you ask they will remember her as one of those. Since we never met her, we are forced to see her through the lenses others present us, through portraits, prose, and whatnot.” Viserra had glanced at the floor as he spoke. “We never really knew her, so we will never truly be able to comprehend her as the complicated woman she surely was. We can try through stories, tales, and histories, but who she was in all her living complexity will probably die with our parents since they were the last ones who truly knew her.” a sad look crossed his sister’s stunning face and for a second neither of them spoke and just gazed up at the woman who had helped forge the empire their family ruled.

“If people remember a woman as great as Visenya like that, fractured into little pieces, each only a shred of what she really was, then how will they remember me?” she finally asked and he sighed, disappointed she’d turn a philosophical conversation into one about herself. He was about to make a snarky reply, but when she looked up at him, her eyes shining with unshed tears, his insult died on his tongue. It had been quite some time since he saw any genuine emotions from his beautiful little sister and he found himself unprepared to deal with it. “What will people say about me when I am dead and gone?”

“You won’t die for many years, Viserra—” he began, but she laughed, cutting him off.

“Daenerys died when she was seven, Daella at eight and ten, and Alyssa at two and four, our mother’s daughters seem to have a frighteningly short life span.” Baelon scowled at her reference to their deceased sisters, especially her callous reference to his beloved wife, but she continued speaking. “No doubt I’ll be dead soon enough.” she finished this statement with a tight smile and Baelon was torn between anger at her lack of respect for their dead siblings and a strange sense of foreboding her words awoke in him. “And what will people say about me, who they already despise in life, then?”

"They'll sing your beauty praises-" he began, but when she laughed, a dark, painful thing that had
haunted him in the weeks since her death, his words seemed to evaporate in his throat.

“Of course they’ll remember me as beautiful, after all, that’s all anyone says about me even as I breathe. "The most beautiful of Queen Alysanne’s daughters", that’s what they call me, is it not?” she laughed scornfully. “What a silly and short legacy to leave behind amongst the giants that are my siblings.” She shook her head as a strange, disturbing smile consumed her porcelain face. "I suppose the kind historians will forget my failed attempt to become queen and remember me as another Targaryen princess that died young, but if they’re not, they’ll remember me as just another ambitious whore who attempted to seduce you for a crown.” she twirled towards him as she spoke, her carefree action contrasting starkly with her dark words. “That’s how you think of me, right? As yet another woman attempting to wed and bed you out of ambition?” he opened his mouth to answer, to say that he didn’t think that of her, but he couldn’t make the words come out. She met his eyes and gave him a sad smile that was so beautifully tragic his heart couldn't help, but break a little. She was now barely an arms length away from him and he could feel the heat emanating from her skin.“It’s all right, brother, you don’t have to lie to me. It’s good that history will only know the official lies, after all, what actually occurred is so much worse.” she snaked her arms around his neck as she spoke and stood on her toes, bringing her lips closer to his. Part of him screamed at him to throw her off, another part, a part he didn’t like, was whispering for him to do much worse. “What we did has forever tainted your view of me, I know, and the saddest thing is,” her lips ghosted against his, making them tingle ever so slightly. “It wasn’t even worth it.” and then she spun away from him, resuming her previous place in front of Visenya’s portrait. He takes a breath in relief as she twirls once more. “After all, one night is hardly worth losing the little affection our parents had for me. Mother is now convinced I’m some sort of ambitious siren.” she shook her head with a smile. “If only she knew who had made me this way.” she looks up at him through her long eyelashes and his face hardened in distaste.

“I didn’t tell you those stories to give you false aspirations.” he told her coldly, but she simply shrugged at his reprimand. “I know, you did it to make me feel better about how awful our family was to me.” she sighed, her full lips forming a perfect pout as she continued to study the portrait. For a minute there is silence and Baelon genuinely considers just leaving the room, but something kept him in his place. A strange fear that this would be the last time he saw her and he didn’t want to leave with a heavy conscious.

“They weren’t purposefully like that, Viserra.” he tells her, trying to use the tone he used to when he comforted her as a child. “I don’t want you to leave here with a false hatred for us.” she laughed. “Don’t fret, dear brother, I hate no one. None of you are worth the effort of hating.” she turned to him again. “And don’t act like you aren’t happy that I’ll be gone soon enough. I’m sure it’ll be a relief to no longer nervously look into rooms before entering them once I’m far away, unable to tempt you to stray from the sweet embrace of your dead wife.” her voice had cracked at the last part, despite the smile on her face and for a second he had wanted to comfort her, despite her cruel jab at his continued devotion to Alyssa’s memory. In the woman before him he could still see the little girl who he had all but raised. The smiling child who had begged him for rides on Vhagar and looked at him with wide, sparkling eyes as he told her stories of the Conquest. Despite everything she had become, Viserra was still the girl who struggled to climb into his bed when she had dreams of monsters and shadows, who had clung to him in her sleep because she believed he could protect her from anything. Despite what had happened between them, she was still his sister and his brotherly instinct prompted him to reach for her, but when his fingers brushed the skin of her forearm she backed away.

“Viserra-” he said, but she held up a hand to stop him from speaking.

“No, don’t force yourself to fake that which you do not feel.” she told him, with eyes that lacked
the light he used to find there. “I don’t need you to pretend to love me anymore, I don’t need your reluctant comfort as I did when I was a lonely and miserable child.” her voice grew louder as she spoke, echoing in the empty gallery. “Frankly, brother, I can’t even be bothered to care that you, our parents, and the rest of our cursed siblings hate me. I’m too tired of this loneliness to care about much of anything anymore.” she took a shaky breath as a tear dripped down her smiling face. “But I’m scared, Baelon.” he furrowed his brow in concern and moved to approach her again, but she continued to back away.

“What are you scared of, Vis?” he asked her softly, using his pet name for her for the first time since the night he had made her a woman.

“I’m scared that when I am gone people will just forget me entirely.” her voice is so soft he can barely hear it and without thinking he took her hand gently and held it in his.

“No one will forget you-”

“But they will!” she cried, then she closed her eyes and inhaled slowly. “They forgot me when I was alive so how could they not when I am dead, gone, and sent into the fire?” she looked off towards the portrait of their ancestress again. “Perhaps that’s for the best given how history treats women like her. If they have so twisted her, I think I’d rather be lost to time.” she lightly brushed the canvas of the portrait with the delicate fingertips of her free hand. “Poor Visenya, history has not been kind to you and they will probably be crueler still to me.” she looked at Baelon with her beautiful, dead eyes as she clasped his hands tightly in her own.

“Promise me one thing, brother.”

“Anything within reason.” he answered and she brought his hands to her chin and looked at him pleadingly.

“That you will forget rather than flatten me into some one dimensional caricature.” he looked at her strangely, perplexed by her request.

“No one will forget you, Vis-”

“Promise!” she pleaded desperately and all he could do was nod.

“Very well, I promise.” he answered and the look of relief that passes over her face only caused him more confusion.

“Thank you.” she whispered before kissing his knuckles softly. “You are the one person I will miss when mother ships me off to White Harbor and its fat lord and I hope you know that I am grateful for everything you ever did for me.” Her grip was strong as her eyes bite into his, two different shades of purple staring intently into each other. She stands on her toes and gently places her lips on his in a gentle, chaste kiss tinged with sorrow, longing, and the shadows of what had been and what was to come. “I love you, Baelon, more than anyone, and I hope that one day you will find it in that beautiful heart of yours to love me again.” she then released his hands before he could speak and was backing away from him towards the door. “And when I am gone, sent to the next world on a wave of dragonfire, cry for me, but do not turn me into a figure of legend. If you do, I will not welcome you warmly when we meet in the next world.” she then turned on her heel and skipped out of the room, singing a song in Old Valyria that had been familiar to all Targaryen children since their childhoods. She sang it happily, quickly, as if it was a gay tune, not a verse of tragedy.

Ńuha prūmia iksis morghe se buried(my heart is dead and buried)
ñuha soul ojūdan naejot se embar(my soul lost to the sea)

tyt jorrāelagon’s vēzos ēza zaltan nyke(for love’s sun has burned me)

se ŋuha lover ēza forgotten nyke(and those I love have forgotten me)

sīr vestras se vāeda…. (so says the song…)

She never finished the final line and it rang around him, incomplete and waiting, as she disappeared down the hall, the door closing behind her with a low thud. Not three days later she was dead, lying on a pyre with a broken neck as a tearful King Jaehaerys ordered Vormithor to send another of his daughters to the next world. Officially, it was an accident. Her palfrey had collided with a stone wall during a night of revelry before her departure for White Harbor and it was no one’s fault save hers.

“Just a tragic misjudgement.” the Maester had told her grief-stricken parents, but his mother had whispered.

“She said she’d rather die than marry him. She begged me to be free, do you think—” his father had hugged his mother close before she could finish, but the damage was done. Now, all three of them would always doubt if it was truly an accident. His mother shifted in his arms, bringing him out of his dark memories.

“I was not the mother she needed.” his mother whispered brokenly.

“And I was not the brother she deserved” he responded. “Mother, the night she came to me, I—” his mother’s hand covered his mouth.

“Please,” she whispered. “Don’t. I don’t think I could bare it.” he nods and she removes her hand. He supposed he would have to live with his guilt, with this lie for the rest of his life. Such was the price for his weakness. Without thinking he finds himself singing the song he had always sung to Viserra when she had nightmares.

Konīr istin iksin mirrī zaldrīzes tolī zūgagon naejot sōvegon(there once was a little dragon too scared to fly)

zīry zūgagon se clouds, se jelmio se se open jēdar(she feared the clouds, the wind, and the open sky)

yn ųdra daor limagon zaldrītsos syt konīr’s daor jorrāelagon naejot zūgagon(but don’t cry little dragon for there’s no need to fear)

se vēzos iksis bāne, se jēdar iksis jehikagrī, se iksan lēda ao paktot kesīr(the sun is warm, the sky is bright, and I’m with you right here)

sīr spread aōha ōkuni, zaldrītsos, se sōvegon(so spread your wings, little dragon, and fly)

His mother joined him as he repeated the verse and their voices combined to form a heartbreaking melody that seemed to fill the dark room with all the love it had been denied when its occupant was living.

“I loved her.” he told his mother as his voice cracked. “Not like Alyssa, but I did love her.”

“I know my brave boy, I know.” she says. “We all did, we just didn’t show her.” she holds him tighter. “And that was our fatal mistake.”
It really is sad how many of Alysanne's children predeceased her and Jahearys. Every single one of them, including Baelon who narrates this chapter, would die before them (except perhaps Maegelle and Vaegon), which of course would be the catalyst for the succession crises that would ultimately lead to the Dance of Dragons. I am not quite ready to dive into that whole mess quite yet because it is just so complex and all around awful, but before I finish this series I definitely plan on examining some of the characters involved in that. In any case, this chapter was fun to write and I think tied up Viserra's story rather nicely, if sadly, and hinted at my opinion of what really happened when she waited for Baelon that fateful night. As always, if there's any POV you'd like to see a chapter from, please feel free to suggest it and I'll try my best.

PS. The Rhaenys(daughter of Aemon) chapter finally has a conclusion and once I straighten some of my facts out and put it through the editing process it will be good to go, so expect that one by next Friday. As for the Aerea one, it is also progressing and now has a premise i'm really excited about(did someone say more magic?), but still needs a lot of work before it's even close to being ready. I do apologize to those who requested these chapters for the long wait and I promise that they are coming. Thank you for your patience.
Aegon strode towards his wife’s rooms, revelling in the respite his unexpected sojourn to Dragonstone had given him. Every day since he had arrived he had silently, and often not so silently, thanked his son for bringing him back here. In the four years he had been apart from Visenya he had grown used to the loneliness that nipped at his heels and slashed at his heart. He had become accustomed to an empty bed, to a cold bedroom, and a vacant seat beside him as he dined. Yet now that he had finally found his way back to her, he can’t imagine how he’d ever lived without her for so long. He slipped into her chamber soundlessly and despite the sun already being high in the sky, he smelled the distinct scent of Valyrian Bath oils. He slowly approached the bathing room, sighing as a wave of humid heat hit him as he entered. Steam rose from the bath in light wisps, dancing in the midmorning sun, the air heavy with Visenya’s favorite bath oils. His eyes fell on his sister-wife, who was lying in the steaming water. Her eyes were closed and her face looked the picture of perfect bliss. Her wet eyelashes fluttered slightly as she breathed deep and slow, while her hair gently floated in the water, freed from its usual confining plaits, in mesmerising swaths of silver-gold, making her look almost divine. For a second he could only
stand and stare at her in wonder, afraid to move and break her bliss. He often wondered how the gods had seen to grant him two beautiful sister wives like Rhaenys and Visenya. He knew people often had compared the two, and all his courtiers had a favorite, but he would always scoff at people who tried to claim one was more beautiful than the other. Their beauty was different, that was undeniable, but neither poor, sweet, deceased Rhaenys’ shining beauty, nor Visenya’s cold, harsh, but luminescent one, outshine the other. He slowly approached the tub and when he got within a yard her violet eyes flew open and locked onto him. She smiled and pulled herself to the side of the tub, droplets racing from her hair in what looked like rivers of pure gold.

“Hello husband.” she says to him with an easy smile, resting her arm against the side of the tub. He approached the bath and placed a soft kiss on her wet lips.

“Hello my queen.” he responds, placing another kiss on her lips before moving for the chair against the far wall of the room. “I’m sorry I left so early this morn, I hope I did not wake you.” she laughed lightly.

“Neither have I, but you, my dear wife, are excellent at tiring me out.” he responded with a wolfish grin, earning him an arched eyebrow.

“I always have been.” she answered back, her voice almost seductive. “But I am curious, what drew you out of my bed so early?” Aegon sighed, thinking of the Raven from Ser Osmund Strong, his current Hand of the King.

“Nothing of importance.” he replied easily, but she raised a disbelieving eyebrow.

“Aegon-”

“Please,” he interrupted. “I don’t want to think about any of that right now.” she reached out a glistening hand and he took it instinctively.

“You are king, my love, and a king has duties. If you have pressing issues in the Capital then you should return there.” Aegon leaned down and kissed her damp knuckles, rejoicing in the smell and feel of her soft skin.

“I understand my duty, but you know that I will not return to that snake pit without you again. Maegor’s chambers have been completed and your new rooms are under construction as we speak, ones much closer to mine, may I add, because I am tired of having to walk through the entire Aegonfort just to visit you.” she laughed at this, squeezing his hand.

“Does that mean I will have to endure your presence more often?” she asked with mock seriousness.

“That is the plan, yes.” he replied with equal severity. “I believe both of us will be sleeping sounder for it. Fear not, the walls are thick, no one will be disturbed by your sounds of passion.” she rolled her eyes.

“Of the two of us, Aegon, I seem to recall you being the noisier one.” she answers primly.

“You should take that as a compliment, dearest wife.” he shoots back. “Once those chambers are completed, we will return together, not a second before.” she smiled at this. “You are a queen
through and through, but can I not just enjoy the pleasure of your company without those rabid
dogs watching our every move for a week or so more?” she laughed, pulling her hand from his.

“As you wish, husband.” she glances at him mischievously. “Would you like to join me as you
used to when we were younger?” her violet eyes met his indigo ones and within seconds he began
unlacing his doublet and unbuttoning his shirt.

“But of course.” he responds as he quickly discards his clothes. She laughs as she moves away
from the edge of the large tub to allow him to enter. He hissed as he slides in, the intense heat
working its way into his tight muscles. “You always did like your baths scalding.” he tells her as he
leans against the curve of the tub, smiling as she lays herself back against him, resting her smooth,
muscled back against his chest. He wrapped an arm around her slender waist, resting a hand on her
smooth stomach as the other strokes the scar on her right shoulder. “I remember when you got
this.” he tells her, stroking the slightly raised white flesh.

“At the Field of Fire.” she responds softly as he traces the old wound. “An arrow shot by one of
those damn Lannister Archers.” he strokes the scarred flesh gently as she speaks.

“When Vhagar cried out my heart stopped.” he told her, kissing her neck softly, rejoicing in how
she shivers slightly against him.

“I remember, you put yourself in danger to fly to me, you fool.” she responded affectionately,
leaning back to rest her head in the crook of his neck.

“They were like me?” he asks her. “I remember as a child being in danger of drowning.”

“I remember, you put yourself in danger to fly to me, you fool.” she responded affectionately,
leaning back to rest her head in the crook of his neck.

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leaning back to rest her head in the crook of his neck.

“Can you blame me? Vhagar was crying out like you were dying, even Balerion panicked, fearful
his sister had been wounded beyond recovery.” he shudders at the memory. “Him and I both.” He
remembers how Vhagar’s roars had pierced the air in high, angry shrieks that caused the fighters
below to cover their ears in pain, how the Dragon had barreled down towards the archers who had
wounded her rider, turning them all into human torches. Visenya herself had barely cried out, but
even from a distance Aegon had seen the arrow lodged in her. It had turned out to have struck the
joint in her armor, but as he had desperately flown to her, he had thought for a second it was lodged
in her neck. She gently strokes his cheek.

“That was a long time ago.” she whispers. “We survived, there’s no need to dwell on past pain such
as that.” Her lips meet his in a slow, sensual kiss. When they part she rests her forehead against his
chin for a moment and Aegon thinks that perhaps he could die right now a happy man. Then a
wave of water splashes his face, leaving him sputtering. She laughs as she wipes the scented water
from his eyes, hitting him with another wave of scalding water. He grins challengingly and
splashes her back. Their laughter rings throughout the tiled room, as they hit each other with
scented water. Finally he resorts to grabbing her hands and pulling her to his chest to protect
himself from further attack. “Cheat.” she accuses.

“Minx.” he responds and then she throws her arms around his neck and their lips meet again. When
they break apart she’s laughing once more and stroking his mussed hair. For a minute they’re silent
as she curls against him, her fingers raking through his now damp hair. “Do you remember when
mother caught me in your bath when I was five and ten?” he asked her as she poured some oil into
his hair, spreading it through his silver-gold strands.

“How could I not? Few times have I seen mother as aghast as that moment when she walked in and
found you under the water between my legs.” she responds as he sighs in pleasure from her
ministrations. “All would have been well if you had stayed down there a little longer.”

“I was on the verge of drowning, Senya.” he complains as she finishes with his hair, earning him a
roll of her violet eyes.
“Hardly an excuse.” she answers and he lightly kisses her forehead.

“Well, please forgive me for not having lungs of Valryian steel.” he requests and she purses her lips for a second in mock consideration.

“Very well, I suppose you’re forgiven just this once.” she answers back as he gently plays with her dripping hair. He had forgotten how long it was, so used to seeing it confined in intricate braids and rings.

“Thank you, gracious lady.” he responds, earning him a chuckle. “I can still remember what she yelled at us. “You two are not children anymore! There is no excuse for this behavior! Think of the scandal you two could have caused!” he mimics. "As if we weren't already destined for each other since birth.”

“I believe she was more scandalized by the idea of her children participating in the pleasures of the flesh. I can hardly imagine Maegor or Aenys screwing a woman without feeling ill.” she muses lightly. "I still find it amusing that she only did the yelling after she dragged us from the bath to father’s study, still dripping wet mind you. I think he was more annoyed that we got water on his carpet than the fact you were pleasuring me in the bath.” she adds. She curls against him under the water. “That was so long ago, we were not even twenty, yet now we’re both over forty with children of our own. How quickly the years have flown by.”

“They have not all been quick.” he replies, his tone darkening. “Some have felt quite long, but not the happy ones.” she curls closer to him, her hand gently running from his chest to his neck.

“Let’s not speak of such darkness now.” she answers softly and he nods in agreement.

“Indeed. Now is a happy day, a happy time, the happiest I’ve been in four years and it’s all thanks to you.” he tells her, raising her chin up so he can capture her lips in his. Her hand snakes around his neck as their lips and tongues meet and she presses her bosom against his chest.

“I think I have news that can make you even happier.” she tells him when she pulls away, and he looks down at her in confusion.

“What could be better than what we already have?” he asked her and she smiled. She gently took his hand and moved it to her smooth abdomen.

“I’m with child, Aegon.” he stares at her in shock as his eyes drift down to her stomach where his hand currently rests.

“Truly?” he asks her with wide eyes, his heart racing in his chest. “How do you know? Not enough time has past to-” she covered his mouth with her hand.

“My moon blood was due a week after you arrived and it has not come, not to mention my breasts have been, well.” she glances down at them. “I’m sure you’ve noticed.” he had, but he was a gentleman and had not spoken of their increased size. “And, well, I had a dream, and for once it did not leave me stricken with fear.” for a second all he can do is stare at her in shock. “It was beautiful, brother, a beautiful dream of five dragons circling the Dragonmount, two adults and three hatchlings, all with their own wings.” again, he is at a loss for words. "Their song was one of the most soothing sounds I've ever heard. They sang of peace, of happiness, of tranquility, for the next few years." he gently strokes her face as he contemplates her words. Visenya had not had a child until very late in life. She had been almost forty when she gave birth to Maegor, a time when most mothers’ fertility was already in decline. Both of them had suspected he would be there only child and Aegon had long reconciled himself with the fact that Aenys and Maegor would likely be
his only children. At five and forty, most women had outlasted their fertility, or if they hadn’t, had stopped trying due to the increased risks. Yet, looking down at her earnest and hopeful violet eyes, he had no doubt she was right. Visenya had always been in tune with her body, even before she took the medicines to help her control when she could share his bed. If she said she was with child then she was and the excitement racing through his veins was intoxicating. "Are you happy?"

“Oh my love,” he said to her, stroking her cheek with his thumb. “Of course I am happy, I am overjoyed by this news.” he kissed her forehead gently. "I just never thought-”

“Neither did I.” she replies softly. “Yet here we are, another little dragon growing within me with a grand future stretching before us.” he rested his forehead against hers.

“You have made me the happiest man alive.” he tells her truthfully. “And when our dragon is born we will raise him or her together.” he opened his eyes and gazed into her violet ones. “I regret how much time I lose with Maegor and Aenys. I want this one to be raised knowing their parents love them, and each other.” she gently strokes his face. “I hope we have a girl, a little princess to call our own.”

“A girl would be nice, a sister to help temper our boy, teach him to respect the women in his life. Yet, I think I will be content as long as our baby is born healthy.” she responds and he sees the slightest hint of fear hiding in the violet depths of her eyes. “You know what they say-”

“It matters not what they say. We are not like other men, we are Targaryens with the blood of Old Valyria rushing through our veins. Our baby will be born healthy and beautiful, strong and smart as their mother.” he tells her comfortingly. “All will be well from now on.” he then slides out from under her and moves to position himself between her smooth thighs. “Now, let’s see if I’m better at holding my breath than I was thirty years ago.”

Chapter End Notes

So there you have it, a nice, happy, light chapter where for once the characters aren’t being put through some emotional torment. I actually didn’t realize how dark my chapters were getting until it was pointed out to me, so this was a nice change of tone for me to write in as well. I do love exploring deep, emotional journeys with characters and it is so interesting to see how hardship, loss, etc, effect characters and their relationships, but I do agree that we all need a little light every once in awhile so here’s a little ray of sunshine I hope makes you feel a little happy. I’d love to hear you guys' opinions on this half-chapter and if you all like it I’d be super open to writing some more in the future(although, I will still be focusing primarily on my full-chapter one-shots and arcs). A regular chapter, the long awaited Rhaenys(daughter of Aemon) one, is almost ready and will be released sometime this week, so stay tune for that. As always, if you have a particular event, character POV, or relationship you want to see explored in the context of this story, feel free to suggest it and I'll see what I can do.
Rhaenys the Queen Who Never Was-Like an Image in the Sand...

Chapter Summary

Rhaenys, daughter of Aemon, granddaughter of King Jaehaerys I, has long been predicted to be the first Queen of the Seven Kingdoms in her own right, but when her father, Prince Aemon, is killed in 92 AC during the Myrish Bloodbath, her grandfather passes over her in the succession, naming his son Baelon the new Prince of Dragonstone. As the Queen Who Never Was mourns the loss of her father and her birthright, she finds herself pulled out of time, where she witnesses the past, but also the future and nothing is as horrific as watching dragons dance...

Chapter Notes

Hi Everyone,

Here is the long awaited Rhaenys, the Queen Who Never Was, chapter. I actually was not familiar with this character before this chapter was requested and was actually really fascinated by Rhaenys’ story. Not only did the injustice dealt to her by her grandfather make me reconsider my opinion on Jaehaerys I(who I previously liked, but am now more on the fence about), it also gave me a new lense to consider the Dance of Dragons through. So, a big thank you for the suggestion and I apologize again for the long delay. If you like it, please leave kudos and any constructive comments you like.

I own nothing, etc.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Rhaenys

“How dare you!” Rhaenys screamed at her grandfather, her fists clenching at her sides as her voice echoed around the empty throne room. “How dare you do this to me after everything me and my mother have lost!” her grandfather, King Jaehaerys, stared down at her with a mix of sympathy and irritation as his Queen sits by his side, alternating between glaring at her husband and sending Rhaenys warning, but sympathetic, glances.

“It’s for the best, Rhaenys-” King Jaehaerys began, but she cut him off with a snarl worthy of Meleys.

“Why is it best, your majesty?” she asked, her voice dripping with sarcasm as much as anger. Despite the turbulent emotions boiling within her chest, Rhaenys forced her face to portray only rage as she reminded herself of who she was. She was Prince Aemon Targaryen’s daughter, the rightful Princess of Dragonstone, heir to the Iron Throne, but above all that, she was a dragon, and dragons do not cry, especially when they are under attack. Looking in her grandfather’s eyes now,
she could tell he was hoping she would break down before him and prove all his assumptions about the fragility of women right. He wanted her to cry so he could brand her an emotional, weak-willed woman and rob her of her birthright with a clear conscience. She gritted her teeth at him, refusing to give him that satisfaction. “I am the daughter of your oldest son and his presumed heir. Now that he has gone to the Stranger, his title is mine! That is how it has been since our ancestors fled from Valyria. What is your excuse for denying me my birthright?” King Jaehaerys sighed wearily at her words. For a second he doesn’t speak, simply appraises her with his purple eyes.

“You are a woman.” he answered back in the tone he had often employed when he lectured her as a child, stoking the fire in her chest to an inferno. “And women are by nature weaker.”

“You are a woman!” Rhaenys fired back before he could even finish his sentence, glancing at Alysanne, whose lips were pursed in irritation. “And she has endured far more than you! You dare to call us weak because we lack that small lump of flesh that sits between your thighs? When blood pours from between your legs in rivers, and you can barely walk from the pain that can accompany moonblood, then you can tell me we are the weaker sex!” her grandfather’s eyes narrowed at her as a dark cloud passed across his face, but his displeasure did nothing to douse her anger. “When you have endured the pains of the childbed like your queen has, King Jaehaerys, you may lecture me about strength! Until then, your are but a man, and you know nothing of pain, strength, or weakness!” The King’s eyes danced with irritation as his lips forming a stern line that made his aging face appear almost malevolent. Clearly she had struck a nerve. “If we can endure the pain that comes with birthing, suckling, raising, and losing children along with running households, families, shops, and keeps, then we can surely cope with any hardship the crown may bring!”

“Rhaenys, no woman has ever ruled Westeros. Childbirth and motherhood are incomparable to the weight of holding the fate of a kingdom in your hands. When you are a mother, you have to care for but one life, but as a king you must care for tens of thousands.” she opened her mouth to respond, but he held up a hand to stop her. “And don’t speak to me of history. Tell me, granddaughter, if women can rule, why was Aegon the Conqueror named king, not Rhaenys or Visenya? What was the reason they conquered under his name, not under one of theirs?” His condescending tone grated on her already frayed nerves.

“You are asking questions based on a certain interpretation of historical events.” Rhaenys spits at him, her mouth curling in an angry smirk, “You twist the tale of the Conquest into something done in Aegon’s name. Sure, it’s called “Aegon’s Conquest”, but we both know why. The histories were written by men and so they named it after a man, but the conquest itself was done for the Targaryens by three dragonriders, and if I’m doing my figures right, the majority of the Conquerors were women.” she saw him narrow his eyes at her and sensed a weakness in his argument. “Aegon did not conquer Westeros alone, if he had tried, the Conquest likely would have ended in disaster. Without Visenya and Rhaenys he never would have conquered the Vale, or the Reach, or the Rock! Those are the facts! What you’re spitting is conjecture and the problem with conjecture, grandfather, is it is almost impossible to defend.” he opens his mouth to speak, but she keeps going, refusing to yield the floor to him so he can lecture her once more. “If we’re sparring with interpretation now, let’s face an unpleasant one. Of the three conquerors, it was Visenya who should have been queen!” she saw Jaehaerys grip his throne tightly, the blades of the Iron Throne cutting into the soft flesh of his scholar’s fingers. “Visenya was the better strategist, the better warrior, and the firstborn! In Old Valyria she would have been Lady of Dragonstone and Queen-”

“But this is not Valyria!” Jaehaerys yelled, cutting her off. “This is Westeros and it is, and always has been, a patriarchy!” he took a deep breath and sent her a look that would have sent most men running, but she stood her ground, glaring back proudly. “Do not speak of my grandparents like you knew them! Do not dare invoke their names against me! If you knew the truth,” he swallows, “then you would not revere her so much. You speak to me of conjecture, but you are now arguing
with fantasy. The Lords of Westeros would never bow to a woman, especially one such as Visenya, not during the Conquest, not now. That is why she crowned Aegon king instead of naming herself Westeros’ new ruler, and that is why Baelon shall be my heir and I will hear nothing more of it!” Rhaenys glanced towards Good Queen Alysanne, whose face had grown more and more angry as her granddaughter and husband fought. When Jaehaerys reached for her hand she wretched hers from his, drawing a surprised look from the king.

“You really believe women are so inferior?” she asked in a low, dangerous voice that was just as powerful as Rhaenys’ yells. The queen’s blue eyes were burning with rage and disappointment, pulling Rhaenys’ grandfather apart with ease.

“My love, that’s not what I meant. It’s just that most men, not I, but most, believe that women have no business in public life, let alone on the Iron Throne—”

“So if Daenerys had lived,” Alysanne murmured in a broken voice dripping with disdain. “You would have disinherited her like you are Rhaenys?” Jaehaerys turned to face her, blood trickling down his hands from where he had clutched the throne too tightly.

“No, of course not, she would have wed Aemon and been Queen—” he protested, but Alysanne cut him off when she stood in disgust.

“A ruler needs a good head and a true heart. A cock is not essential. If your Grace truly believes that women lack the wit to rule, plainly you have no further need of me.” she turned from him and strode towards Rhaenys, clasping her granddaughter’s shoulders, her blue eyes boring into Rhaenys’ purple ones. “Come, Rhaenys, this fool may sit on his throne alone.” She put a comforting arm around her granddaughter’s shoulders and gently steered her from the room as King Jaehaerys yelled for them to return as he hadn’t given them leave to go. Queen Alysanne ignored him and when a kingsguard moved to intercept them, sent him a look more terrifying than a dragon’s roar. After that, they met no opposition as Alysanne led Rhaenys back to her chambers where her husband awaited. The second Corlys saw Rhaenys’ face, his own curled into an expression of pure rage.

“He denied you your birthright?” he asked and all Rhaenys could do was nod her head in her grandmother’s arms. He snarled angrily, glancing at Alysanne. “With all due respect, madam, if he was not the king I would strike him.” Alysanne smiled coldly.

“Believe me, Lord Velryon, I feel the same.” she pulled away from Rhaenys and looked into her pale violet eyes. “My husband is a fool and although I love my son, this injustice burns me as it does you. I will take up your case with him, but I have an unfortunate feeling that he will not be swayed. For all Jaehaerys wisdom, he is also blind when it comes to issues such as these.” Rhaenys looks down at the floor in defeat although her rage still burned hot within her.

“He is making a grave mistake, grandmother.” she murmured. “I can feel it in my bones. No good will come from this dishonor.”

“I know, my sweet, I know. I too have a strange foreboding sense about this. I will alert your mother of your grandfather’s unfortunate decision and together we and I will attempt to pressure the fool back to sense, but until then, I would not approach him yourself.” she felt Corlys move behind her. “You have shown him one of his own flaws and men hate that above all else. He will not welcome your company in the near future and your presence will only hurt your cause.”

“We will leave for Driftmark as soon as possible, my lady. It is clear that King Jaehaerys no longer values the closeness our families have shared since the marriage of Queen Alyssa and King Aenys.” Alysanne nodded in understanding, her wise blue eyes shining with grief, but also
resilience.

“I wish you both well. Just know, Rhaenys, that I think you would be a fine queen, perhaps even better than my husband, for the very reason he and other men fear your ascension.” and with that Queen Alyssanne swept out the door, leaving Rhaenys and Corlys alone. Corlys slowly moved to stand in front of her, trying to meet her eyes which she had focused down the floor. She did not want to cry. She was raised to be strong, to show no weakness, and take no prisoners. Her father had often told her,

“You must have a dragon’s hide, my child, you must have a hide so tough that no barbs, or spears, or attacks can hurt you. Only then will you be strong enough to be Queen.” she had taken these words to heart and to this day she still despised crying. Yet, now, as everything seemed to be falling apart a single tear escaped her pale violet eyes, and then another, and then another, and soon tears were pouring from her eyes in an unstoppable river. Corlys gently embraced her, hugging her close as she cried into his firm chest. Her many losses tore at her heart like clawed beasts, first her father had been taken from her, and now her birthright. Her grief was so potent it felt like it might rip her in two.

“It’s all right.” her husband murmured, gently rubbing her back. “It will all be all right.” she just shook her head against his chest.

“No,” she responded, suddenly feeling slightly dizzy as a strange chant began echoing deep within her soul, pulling her away from the waking world. “It won’t be.” she heard him begin calling her name as she felt her legs give out under her as the chanting grew in volume and intensity. She could almost make out what the words were, could almost understand what the voice within her was crying, but then it all went black. Rhaenys found herself sitting in a familiar courtyard. Its paved, stone floor was warm beneath her feet and in the distance she heard a dragon’s powerful roar. She looked around in confusion. “Dragonstone?” she murmured to herself. “How did I get here?” her eyes drifted around her as she perused her surroundings. There was no doubt in her mind that she was on Dragonstone, but something about the Castle was different. It wasn’t that it was cleaner, it still possessed the harsh, worn look that was so characteristic to the Targaryen Seat, but it felt younger, like the stone itself had lost some years. As she looked towards the farthest corner of the courtyard from where she sat, she noticed a figure standing there. It appeared to be a cloaked man at first glance, but then Rhaenys realized with horror that it wasn’t a clock draped on the ground behind him, but huge, dark, feathered wings. The figure looked up at her and she nearly screamed when she realized that no hood was obscuring her view of his eyes or nose, he had neither. All the creature possessed was a huge mouth filled with rows of sharp, yellow fangs. He lifted a seven fingered hand to this horrible orifice and put a single finger to his torn and weeping lips. She just stared at it in paralyzed horror, torn between running from this creature and approaching it, since whatever it was probably brought her here, but suddenly a great shadow covered the courtyard and the figure seemed to melt into the shadows until only its fanged smile was left. When Rhaenys blinked the figure was completely gone, leaving no trace of its presence except a terrifying, cold feeling consuming Rhaenys’ chest. A roar echoed above her, drawing her attention to the bright sky above. Her eyes fell upon a bronze dragon descending from the skies, the bright sun glinting off its scales as it roared in greeting towards the castle. Rhaenys recognized those jasper eyes and bronze flames. It was Vhagar, but not the same Bronze Queen ridden by her damned uncle, who she had last seen comforting the mourning Caraxes as the Blood Wyrm shrieked in pain at the loss of his rider, Rhaenys’ father. This Vhagar, was smaller and less scarred than the one Rhaenys was used to, and her roar, although ferocious, was not nearly as loud or deep. A girl dismounted from the she-dragon’s back, her silver-gold hair braided down her back in a perfect plait, and strode into the castle. As if propelled by some unknown force, Rhaenys found herself following suit, although she did glance a final time at the spot where the winged creature had been. It may have been her imagination, but she swore Vhagar’s eyes were also locked to that
corner, her jasper eyes glaring at the dark feathers left on the stones.

Almost against her will, Rhaenys found herself following the girl through the halls of Dragonstone. Although the corridors were adorned differently than they were when she had last visited, the rich curtains and paintings gave her no clue as to the year this strange vision was taking place. The only recognizable ornamentation she could see were the three-headed dragons carved into the walls, signalling to any who walked through them whose castle this was. Her eyes fell upon the child, who could be little older than ten, but was already quite tall, and possessed a strange, cold prettiness that drew the eye. Rhaenys thought she’d be quite the beauty when she was grown. Not the warm beauty that graced Queen Alysanne in her younger years, or the bright beauty her namesake, Queen Rhaenys wife of Aegon I, was so famous for, but the cold, austere beauty that some of Valyrian blood possessed. The same type of beauty Rhaenys herself was praised for now. Right as the child was about to enter a chamber, presumably her bed chamber, a man in servant’s livery approached her, bowing low as he did.

“Lady Visenya,” he said and Rhaenys’ heart stopped in her chest. “Your grandfather wishes to see you immediately.” the girl smiled prettily at him and Rhaenys recognized that smile from the portrait that hung so proudly in her Dragonstone. Could this truly be Visenya Targaryen? There was only one, but she struggled to believe she was somehow seeing a girl who died fifty years before she herself was born.

“Of course, I will go to him at once.” she replied and the servant nodded, moving aside to allow her to walk swiftly down the hall. Rhaenys was once again compelled to follow, now more intrigued than ever about what she was witnessing. If this was truly Visenya Targaryen she saw before her, then she was experiencing something that had occurred over a century ago. A myriad of questions raced through her mind. How was she on Dragonstone a hundred years before her own birth? Why would that strange, winged figure in the courtyard have brought her here? How could she escape and return to her own time? The girl continued to be oblivious to Rhaenys’ presence and strode to the Lord’s chambers, which for her had always been the Prince of Dragonstone’s chambers where she would one day reside. Visenya pushed through the old engraved wooden doors and entered the room with a confidence that reminded Rhaenys of how she used to stride into these hollow chambers, like she knew one they would be hers. The room was arranged differently than she was used to. The drapes were colored red instead of blue, the furniture changed and arranged in a way foreign to her, but it was undeniably the same room her parents had slept in for years. Her eyes were drawn to an old man sitting at a grand desk whose wood was so dark it appeared almost black. His hair was completely white and his face lined with wrinkles and crags, but he still sat strong and tall despite his apparent advanced age. “You wanted to see me, grandfather?” Visenya asked, her voice low and properly deferential. The Old Lord turned his eyes towards the child and Rhaenys saw that they were the same shade of rich violet that Visenya’s, and his face still held traces of that same cold, harsh beauty.

“Yes child, I wanted to speak to you about something important.” he replied, gesturing for Visenya to approach him.

“What is it?” she asked, standing before him with a furrowed brow. The old man sighed, seeming to mull over his words for a moment before speaking.

“You know well that you are my favorite grandchild.” he told her softly, looking at her with pride and love. “You are the first dragonrider of your generation and have proven yourself apt at learning your lessons and training at arms.” Visenya smiled proudly, her eyes flashing with joy at her grandfather’s praise.

“I know, grandfather. I have worked hard to make you proud.” she responds, her voice tinged with
pride, but also with appropriate modesty. Rhaenys slowly approached the pair to better watch their exchange. At first she was weary that one of them would notice her and yell for the guards, but although she thought Visenya may have glanced her way for a second, neither of them acknowledged her presence.

“I am aware of your efforts, child, and you have indeed made me most proud. It is for that reason that it pains my heart to tell you this.” Visenya’s face fell at his words.

“Father’s decided about Blackfyre, hasn’t he?” she asked in a low whisper, earning a nod from Lord Daemion. “I’m afraid so. Despite your mother and I’s best efforts, your father has decided that Aegon shall have Blackfyre after him.” Visenya’s jaw clenched at his words, as did the fists by her side. Her violet eyes shone with disappointment at first, but quickly turned to anger.

“Why?!” she asked softly, although Rhaenys could hear fury dancing in her tone. Her grandfather put a soothing hand on her shoulder.

“This was always a likely outcome—”

“Why?!” she asked again, this time louder, her face white with fury. She angrily shrugged out of his grip and Old Lord Damion sighed.

“Because Aegon is his son.” he answered and for a second neither of them spoke and Visenya’s face only portrayed complete disbelief, the mirror image of what Rhaenys’ own face had displayed when King Jaehaerys declared Baelon his new heir.

“And I am his daughter, his first born! Giving my brother Blackfyre is tantamount to announcing Aegon as his heir, your heir, the dragon’s heir!” her voice was shaking with barely suppressed anger. “All of which is my birthright! I have a dragon, I heed neither gods nor men and Aegon is still trapped on the ground lest I deem to allow him to ride behind me! Dragonstone is mine! Why am I to be overlooked like this?” her grandfather sighed at her words.

“Because you are a girl.” he answered sadly. Visenya opened her mouth to protest, but he held up a hand so she could let him finish. “I understand you don’t see that as a legitimate reason, but Blackfyre has always been given to the first born son. This has been our way since our great ancestor fled here before the Doom. I tried to push the point with your father, as did dear Valaena, but Aerion is set in tradition.” Visenya’s jaw clenched at his words and Rhaenys could tell she could not understand her father’s reasoning. Rhaenys could empathize, after all, had not a similar, unfair verdict just been handed out to her?

“But I am the better swordsman!” Visenya cried, almost desperately, although for a girl of ten was putting up a valiant effort to control her emotions. “I beat Aegon nine times out of ten!” she looked at her grandfather wildly, desperation leaking from her eyes. “You could force him to give it to me, or bypass him all together and give me the blade yourself!” she glanced towards the wall where Blackfyre proudly gleamed.

“You know I can’t do that, little dragon.” he replied gently. “If I did, your father would resent you beyond words and what would he do when I am gone and no longer around to protect you? The sword is his right as my only child.” Visenya glared at him and Rhaenys could see the frustration and disappointment dancing in those violet depths and could feel those same emotions dancing within her own chest.

“And what of my rights, grandfather? In Valyria, as the firstborn and the first dragonrider, I would be the unquestioned heir! You said if I worked hard enough, trained hard enough, then I would be equal to any man!” her voice cracked slightly. “Does my lack of a cock really make me so
inferior?” her grandfather stood and gently put a hand on her shoulder, shaking his head. How Rhaenys wished Jaehaerys felt the same as Lord Daemion did.

“No, Visenya, it doesn’t, and I wish I could make you my heir. You have more fire than your father or you brother put together, but this is not old Valryia.” she looked down at the ground, but he gently put a hand under her chin. revealing two pearly tears which had escaped her fierce eyes.

“And I know this hurts you, but I have something for you that may help ease your pain.” he stood up and walked towards the elegant trunk at the end of his great bed. He pulled open the lid and brought out a parcel wrapped in red cloth. He handed it to Visenya. “Unwrap it.” she looked at him tentatively, but did as instructed, carefully removing the red fabric from the item. When it was fully unwound, Rhaenys spotted a familiar sword. Visenya pulled it from its scabbard and gasped in delight as it glinted coldly in the bright sunlight.

“Is this Valyrian steel?” she asked breathlessly. Her grandfather nodded.

“This is Dark Sister, the second, but no less lethal, of our ancestral blades. She has not been wielded since my grandmother, Lady Elaena Targaryen, wore her proudly at her side when she ruled Dragonstone alongside her husband, Lord Aegon.” Visenya was captivated by the blade turning it in her hands and stroking the engraved hilt with an expression of wonder. Rhaenys stared at the sword with longing. The last she had seen of this legendary blade was on the hip of Baelon. At the time she had felt no great loss that her uncle should have the second Targaryen blade, after all, Blackfyre would one day be hers, yet now that she knew he would have Blackfyre and the Throne along with Dark Sister, it only made her loss seem more unfair.

“You’re giving her to me?” Visenya asked in a soft voice, drawing Rhaenys out of her sorrowful reverie.

“I can think of no one better to wield her. Her grip is more slender than Blackfyre’s, and blade slightly shorter, but her bite is just as lethal and she craves blood as much as her brother blade. It will take practice, and you must train diligently, but I am confident that you will one day wield her with unsurpassed skill.” he wiped a tear from his granddaughter’s cheek. “And it is the proper weapon for the future Lady of Dragonstone.” she looked up at him in surprise.

“But Aegon is the heir, you just said-”

“Yes, Aegon is the heir, but you will be his lady and rule with him when your father’s time comes to travel beyond.” Visenya furrowed her brow at her grandfather’s words.

“But Aegon won’t like me ordering him around, even if I am his wife. He barely tolerates it now, despite the fact that I am older.” she swallowed. “And as you said, this isn’t Valyria, I don’t think the Lords who answer to us would like a woman ruling them.” her grandfather gently stroked her hair. “Even if I wield Dark Sister.”

“No, but a sword and title are not the only way to hold power and rule, little dragon. Marrying Aegon will give you a title, and this sword is a sign to all that I view you, girl or no, as an heir to my domain, but these are simply stepping stones to achieve what you want. If you did not have these gifts, your path would be hard, but still achievable if you are clever and patient. Your path will not be easy, little dragon. If people will not bow to you, make them bow to you by kneeling to Aegon. If they will not be cowed by might, you will have to conquer them with guile. You will have to be strong, Visenya, and ruthless, but if you play your cards right, people will bow to you, not because you wield Blackfyre, or because you are the Dragon’s Heir, but because they respect and fear your power.” Visenya stared at him with wide eyes, clearly mesmerized by his words. Meanwhile, Rhaenys also took his words to heart. Could she achieve something similar in her own time? Could she be a queen even if she never wore a crown?
“I will make you proud, grandfather.” she told him seriously, sheathing the sword and fastening it to her belt over her riding leathers. Her violet eyes sparkling in the sun with almost intoxicating excitement. “I promise.” her grandfather leaned down and kissed her on the forehead.

“Of that I am sure. Now run along, I’m sure your tutors are waiting. Drag your brother along with you and tell him if he skips another lesson, I will be most displeased.” she smiled and strode from the room. The second she was out of sight the Old Lord sagged with weariness and sat back in his chair tiredly. He glanced towards the corner of the room and Rhaenys flinched as she saw the figure with just a mouth lurking in the shadows. “I have done all you asked.” he told it and the thing gave him a toothy smile.

“You have done well, Lord Daemion.” it hissed back in the ancient tongue, its wings fluttering behind it, shedding long, dark feathers.

“And you will do what you promised?” the Old Lord asked, his purple eyes glaring with the remnants of once great strength at the monster.

“Yes, all I promised and more. Your grandchildren will not only be lords, but kings. She has seen it and you should know whatever the seer sees comes to pass in one way or another. Your debts to us are paid in full and we will uphold our end of the bargain.” then the creature’s attention was turned towards Rhaenys, although how it could see her without eyes was a mystery. The light from the window suddenly became twice as intense and she was forced to blink and look away. As she did she felt the air change, become cooler and she was beset with the scents of the sea. When she opened her eyes, she found herself standing on a balcony overlooking the ocean, although she was still on Dragonstone. The sun was setting and the sky to the West burned a bright orange as the sky above turned from pink to a deep purple. She felt a change in the air behind her as something descended from above and turned to face the creature, reaching for a knife which was no longer on her belt. Not that her small weapon would have done much good, for now that it was within a yard of her, she could see it was much larger than a man. It was close to seven feet tall and the ends of its feathered wings sparked against the stone floor of the balcony, leaving dark gauges in the rock.

“What are you?” she asked, forcing her face to remain neutral and voice to remain steady, despite the fear nipping at her heart.

“I am the bringer of death,” it told her in High Valyrian, “the raven of war, the harbinger of destruction.” it’s voice echoed strangely, as if she was hearing three different people speak the same line, but each one slightly after the other.

“Why have you shown me all this?” she asked it, retreating as it began to approach her.

“I have shown you what is needed to prevent catastrophe.” it answered in its strange round of voices. “I have given you a way to still gain your birthright.”

“Why would a bringer of destruction wish to help me?” Rhaenys asked. The creature laughed, a high, shrieking sound that reminded her of crows cawing.

“I do not wish to help you. You are but an ant, barely worthy of our attention. If the seer had not cut herself off from us, I would have used her, but another has not been born and will not be born until it is too late.” Rhaenys swallowed nervously.

“What do you-” but suddenly her voice was caught in her throat as the thing waved its seven fingered hand.

“I don’t have time for your questions. A terrible storm is coming, Rhaenys Targaryen, so awful and
vicious it will rob the world of true magic for half a century or more and leave us all but powerless. We have already sent magic through your blood to when this has already occurred, but we must still try to stop it now.” she stared at the creature with a mixture of fear and confusion. “You heard the counsel of your ancestors, you know what you must do, even without the title you can still be queen. If you fail, it is you and your house who will suffer.” it leapt at her and grabbed her face with its strange, clawed hands, and twisted her head to look up at the darkening sky. Although her mouth moved to protest, whatever spell it had cast on her still robbed her of her voice, forcing her to obey it in painful silence. “Look!” it ordered, direction her eyes to two lines of dragons facing each other in the darkening world. A golden dragon, more beautiful than any she had ever seen, lead one side, with Vhagar close by along with a manic Dreamfyre. Opposing them was a formidable yellow dragon, with the red Caraxes and proud Silverwing flanking it on either side. A roar echoed from above the ranks of dragons and Rhaenys’ eyes went wide as Meleys swooped down from the darkening clouds to hover beside Caraxes. Vhagar roared from the opposing side, and Dreamfyre spit a torrent of blue-white flames at her mate of old. The ground below Rhaenys shook as a huge crack cut through the stone of the balcony, cutting the heads off the three-headed dragon carved into the stone. Behind her the Dragonmount seemed to groan in despair. Then, with a cry so loud the air itself seemed to shake, the dragons lunged at one another, spewing fire and screeching with enough force that Dragonstone shook. Rhaenys could count about twenty dragons in the air, and never before had she seen anything like what she was witnessing. As the dragons bit into each other’s scaled necks and spit sparks and flames in each other’s eyes, further cracks appeared on the balcony and it shook so violently she feared it would collapse. She felt the thing’s claw dig into the flesh of her neck and face and felt it’s teeth knick her ear as it leaned down to whisper in her ear. “Remember, you must be queen, or all will fall, remember-” and then she awoke. Her eyes shot open and focused on a maester hovering over her. Her eyes darted in a panic along the room as her hand brushed the skin of her neck anxiously, but she sighed in relief when she realized she was in her own chambers, lying in her own bed. Behind the maester she glimpsed her husband and mother, both of whom watched the old man anxiously.

“Your highness,” the old man greeted, relief flooding his face, “it’s good to see you awake.” Rhaenys groaned as she tried to sit up, putting a hand to her pounding head.

“What happened?” she asked and Corlys tentatively approached her.

“You fainted, my love.” he tells her, taking her hand in his.

“Really?” she asked, rubbing her throbbing temples.

“Indeed, most likely from the strain you’ve been under recently.” the maester informed her. “The stress induced by the loss of your father, along with the fact that you’re with child, overstressed your body-”

“Wait,” she interrupted, staring at the maester in shock. “I’m with child?” the maester nodded, a warm smile gracing is grizzled face.

“Indeed, your highness, I’d say about three months or so along.” Rhaenys turned to her husband who was smiling at her with more joy then she had seen in a long time. She placed a hand on her stomach in wonder as the maester explained to her what she must do in the coming months to prepare for her child and ensure both she and her baby remained healthy, although, he started addressing most of his instructions to Corlys and her mother, Jocelyn Baratheon at some point, realizing she was not entirely listening to him. When he finished, Corlys thanked the maester profusely and escorted him from the chamber. As he did, Rhaenys’ mother slowly approached the bed. She gently took her daughter’s hand and put a warm hand on Rhaenys’ clammy forehead.
“Are you feeling alright, my darling?” she asked, her dark eyes staring into Rhaenys' light ones. “You gave poor Corlys quite the scare.”

“My head aches, mother, but otherwise I feel quite all right, but I had the strangest dream while I was unconscious.” she murmured, “I feel like it was important.” Lady Jocelyn stared at her daughter in concern.

“What was it about?” her mother asked, but Rhaenys could only shake her head in confusion. The dream, what she had just experienced, was gone, like an image in the sand carried away by the incoming tide. All she remembered was the image of a little girl pulling a sword from a scabbard swathed in red cloth and the feeling of claws digging into her neck and face.

“I can’t remember.” she answered, a strange feeling of foreboding clutching at her heart. “All I can remember is a feeling that, whatever it was, it was horrific, and it was important that I remember what I saw.” Rhaenys shook her head. “But it’s gone.”

Chapter End Notes

Good job Jaehaerys, you actually just set up your family for disaster. I'll admit, my knowledge of Targaryen history was actually really weak when it came to Rhaenys’ generation(which is the 6th generation I think), mostly because the pure number of kids and ridiculously tragic early deaths in generation 5 really screwed me up when reading about it. Yet, it's kind clear, at least to me, that the seeds for the Dance of Dragons were actually sown here. That's not to say other things couldn't have prevented that whole mess from occurring(*cough cough, Viserys keeping it in his pants, *cough), but Jaehaerys legit could have prevented the whole set up by just not being sexist about the succession. I know no one's perfect, but Jaehaerys is supposed to be one of the best(if not THE BEST) Targaryen king, but upon further reflection of how he treated his wife, his daughters, and his granddaughters, I'm starting to think perhaps he may have been a less than stellar person, even if he was a fair king. In any case, I hope you enjoyed this chapter and its dealings with the sexist issues our strong queens and princesses may have had to endure, and as always, if you have a particular pov you want to see, please suggest it and I'll see what I can do.

PS. next up is the Aerea chapter which is looking really...let's say out there, so stay tuned for more magical shenanigans
Rhaenys cowered under her coverlet, shaking as another bolt of lightning hit the island outside her window.

“One, two, three, four-” she counted before crying out as another wave of thunder boomed overhead. In her seven years of life, Rhaenys had never experienced a storm as fierce as this. The entire world seemed to shiver and quake under the ferocity of the maelstrom and she feared Dragonstone itself would be swallowed by the huge waves crashing against the island’s rocky shores. She hugged her knees to her chest under the protection of her blanket, trying to breathe deeply enough that her heart would stop pounding. “It’s just thunder.” she told herself weakly, “It’s just-” another wave of thunder shook the castle and Rhaenys threw off her coverlet and sprinted from the room. She barely breathed as she rushed down the hall, throwing open her brother’s bedroom door and leaping farther than she thought possible to land in his bed. She expected him to be sleeping, after all, her strong older brother was fearless and could sleep through any number of
loud and disturbing scenarios, but instead she found her ten year old brother curled up as she had been. A bolt of lightning illuminated the room and Rhaenys saw that his face white with fear.

“Rhaenys?” he asked, his voice shaking slightly. She wiggled under his blankets and wrapped her arms around his trembling body. He gratefully embraced her as well and they clung together as torrents of rain bombarded their home.

“Are you scared, Aegon?” she asked him in a whisper. He glanced down at her with shining indigo eyes.

“Of course not.” he replied, but his words were undercut by the yelp he elicited as lightning struck the island once more, followed soon by the loudest crash of thunder Rhaenys had ever heard. His arms constricted around her, making it hard to breath.

“Are you sure?” she inquired, although her voice sounded an octave higher than it usually did, more from fear than her brother’s tight grip. Despite her own fear, she couldn’t help but lightly rib him in revenge for all the times he had teased her for her fear of the dark.

“Yes,” he replied, sounding a little more convincing this time. “It’s only thunder, there’s nothing to be scared of.” Outside a huge wave rose and hit the castle, the stone walls groaning from the impact. Rhaenys’ heart hammered wildly in her chest as her brother’s breath hitched in his throat. “They’re most likely not as large as they appear.” he told her as her eyes anxiously watched the waves, although he sounded more like he was trying to console himself. Lighting struck again, blinding white, making her wince from the sudden illumination. The sky seemed to roar with the ferocity of a wounded beast and the castle seemed on the verge of collapse. Aegon’s indigo eyes met Rhaenys’ teary lavender ones and within seconds they were both sprinting towards the door. They ran further down the hall, their feet barely touching the ground as they sprinted with all their might towards their sister’s room. Aegon burst through the door first, being faster than little Rhaenys, and threw himself on their sister, who gave a startled yelp from the unexpected impact. Rhaenys was slightly more graceful and clambered onto the bed on her shaking legs, moving to her older sister’s other side. Visenya had a candle burning low beside her bed, which gave the room a low warm glow compared to the cold darkness of Rhaenys’ and Aegon’s chambers, and a book lay on her coverlet where Aegon had knocked it out of her hands.

“Aegon, get off.” Visenya’s muffled voice said as she attempted to pry a frightened Aegon off her. “I can’t breath.” their brother loosened his grip on her neck, allowing her to shift against him as Rhaenys grabbed her right arm, clutching it with all her might. “Rhaenys, I’m losing feeling in my arm.” Rhaenys loosened her hold slightly.

“Sorry.” she murmured, burying her face in her sister’s warm shoulder as lightning struck once again, followed by another roll of thunder. Rhaenys swore it became louder and more violent each time. Her sister stiffened as the sky cried out above them. Her sister must have seen the scared looks on their faces because she put on a brave face and gave them a confident smile.

“It’s just a storm.” Visenya said, although Rhaenys swore her voice was slightly weaker than usual. “It will pass.” Aegon groaned from her other side, still partially resting on her as he clung to her neck like a babe.

“It will pass, but it might take the castle with it!” he declared. Two bolts of lightning struck in succession and Rhaenys cried out, desperately grabbing at the covers. This had the unintentional effect of dragging them all beneath her sister's coverlet, which although comforting, did little to block out the sounds of thunder. Rhaenys closed her eyes, almost petrified with fear.

“The Sea God’s going to eat us, Senya.” Rhaenys told her sister, who struggled between them as
they clung to her, attempting to force Aegon to loosen his grip once more. “It’s going to drown the castle and suck us all to our deaths!” her sister’s eyes flickered for a second with what Rhaenys almost thought might be fear before she laughed lightly, extracting her arm from Rhaenys’ grasp to drag Aegon’s stubborn arms from around her neck.

“Don’t be silly, Rhaenys.” she told her soothingly. “The Sea God already has so many castles, he doesn’t need to drown Dragonstone.” she turned to their brother who was once again attempting to climb onto her. “Aegon, no, get off, you’re too heavy to lay on me now.” He grumbled as she finally pushed him off. He was forced to content himself with cuddling her arm and curling against her as she turned to Rhaenys.

“Are you sure he won’t take the whole island?” Rhaenys asked and Visenya gently stroked her hair.

“I’m sure he doesn’t want it, but even if he tried, Dragonstone was built with strong stone walls and magic, no waves could wash as away.” they saw the flash even through the coverlet and Rhaenys hid her face in Visenya’s shoulder as the sky roared once more.

“Well, then the thunder will knock the castle down on top of us.” Aegon’s voice said, sounding slightly muffled. Rhaenys peeked open her eyes and saw her brother had buried his face in the crook of Visenya’s neck. Her sister shook her head.

“Thunder is just noise, it can’t knock down stone.” she soothed, giving Rhaenys a confident smile. Although it doesn’t quite reach her eyes.

“But Father once said thunder was a sign that the gods are fighting.” Rhaenys murmurs to her sister. "What if they knock us down?"

“I think he said rutting.” Aegon interjects, "And you know-" he’s cut off when Visenya lightly smacks him.

“Don’t be obscene, Egg.” she reprimands. “The gods have nothing to do with this storm, it is wholly natural and will pass like all others have before.” Rhaenys looks up at her with scared lavender eyes.

“Promise?” she asks, yelping as another rumble shakes the castle.

“I promise.” Visenya answers before wincing in pain. “Aegon, my arm!” Rhaenys laughs as Aegon and Visenya briefly fight over her left arm before she manages to pull it loose from his grasp. He doesn’t take this quite well and tackles her, sending all three of them falling back onto the mattress. Rhaenys laughs as Aegon climbs onto Visenya as she jokingly tries to push him off. “Can I have some sisterly help?” she asks Rhaenys, who grabs onto Aegon to try and pull him off. Aegon instead grabs her arm and starts tickling her stomach, causing her to collapse onto both of them in a fit of giggles. Visenya groans under their combined wait, but when Rhaenys looks down at her face she’s smiling. They lay in this heap for a few minutes as Rhaenys’ giggles slow and Visenya struggles to get Aegon, and partially Rhaenys, off of her. She eventually succeeds, causing Aegon to almost fall of her bed, which only makes Rhaenys laugh more. For a second all is peaceful and Rhaenys almost forgets about the storm raging all around them, but then thunder roars again and Rhaenys’ fear returns with a vengeance.

“Can we sing to pass the time, Senya?” Rhaenys asked meekly, snuggling into her sister’s side, grabbing Aegon’s hand which rests on their sister’s stomach.

“That’s a good idea,” her older sister answers, shifting as Aegon rests his head on her chest. “What
do you want to sing?"

“A Song of Love and Remembrance.” Rhaenys answers immediately, but Aegon groans in protest.

“You always pick that one.” he complains, earning him a glare from both his sisters.

“Well it’s my favorite.” Rhaenys replies, put out at his boorishness.

“I can’t understand why, it’s so boring and sad.” he cuts back petulantly, his eyes peeking at her over their sister’s slowly rising and falling chest.

“It’s not sad, it’s sweet!” Rhaenys protests. “If you were smarter you’d understand that every line has an important symbolic meaning.” he rolls his eyes at her.

“You’re just repeating what mother said about it last week. Do you even know what all the regular words mean?” Aegon asks condescendingly. Rhaenys face burns.

“Of course I do!” she shoots back angrily.

“Liar-”

“Okay, enough.” Visenya interrupts, her eyes rolling at their foolishness. “If you don’t like that one, Aegon, what do you want to sing?” their brother hums in though for a minute as they hear the waves crash against the island once more.

“Little Dragon.” he decides, but now Rhaenys frowns in disapproval.

“I don’t like that one, it’s dumb.” she tells him and she sees his indigo eyes narrow at her.

“It is not!” he yells back, seemingly enraged by her disapproval.

“Dragon’s are never scared of flying though, Dummy!” Rhaenys responds with irritation. Their sister sighs loudly.

“You’re the dumb one!” Aegon shouts.

“Well at least I know how dragons work!”

“That’s it, I’m using my prerogative as the oldest, I’m choosing.” Visenya declares, interrupting their brewing fight. They both fall silent, glaring at each other as the rain continues to beat down on the island. She clears her throat.

*oh lyka sir ŋuha jorrāelagon*(oh quiet now my love)

*oh ēdrugon sir ŋuha vilbāzmio*(oh sleep now my warrior)

*oh ēdrugon sir ŋuha phoenix, ŋuha nāmorghālilaros hontes (oh sleep now my phoenix, my immortal bird)*

Her voice rises and falls with stunning clarity despite the storm raging all around them and Rhaenys can only watch her sister in awe as she sings. There was something about Visenya’s voice that always entranced her, something about her words that soothed her heart and soul. Her sister was often serious, stoic even, not as prone to laughter and smiles as she had been when they were younger. She always had this air about her that made her act and appear older than her years. Orys had told her it was because her eyes saw what others couldn’t, but that didn’t make much sense to
Rhaenys. She just thought her sister was getting a little too grown for her liking. Yet now, as she sang, a sweet smile graced her face that made her look like the girl of one and one that she was. She glanced at Rhaenys and Aegon, who were both watching her with slack jawed awe.

“Are you two going to sing with me?” she asked, seeming almost uncomfortable with the worship glowing in their eyes. “I am not a minstrel for your amusement.” Rhaenys and Aegon shared a knowing look.

“We’ll join you, keep singing.” Aegon told her, smiling at their sister with adoration. Orys had also said that Aegon was “sweet” on their sister, whatever that meant. Again, all Rhaenys knew was that often times they’d steal away to fly, leaving Rhaenys with her nurses on the ground since mother said she was “too young” to fly with them. Visenya pursed her lips, but nevertheless began singing once more.

*oh lyka sir ſuha jorrāelagon*(oh quiet now my love)

*oh ēdrugon sir ſuha vilibāzmio*(oh sleep now my warrior)

*oh ēdrugon sir ſuha phoenix, ſuha nāmorghūlīlaros hontes* (oh sleep now my phoenix, my immortal bird)

This time Aegon and Rhaenys joined in, their voices floating in the air in beautiful harmony. Rhaenys taking the high part and Aegon harmonizing an octave lower than Visenya, creating a beautiful tune that seemed to cut through the fear that had gripped them since the storm began.

*oh lurugon aōha tīkuni se sōvegon naejot aōha nest sir* (Oh fold your wings and fly to your nest now)

*oh zālagon hae se vēzos isse se perzyssy bona issi aōhon* (Oh burn like the sun in the flames that are yours)

*se vēzos ēza returned hen zŷha bōsa slumber* (the sun has returned from its peaceful, long slumber)

*oh zālagon jehikagrī ſuha phoenix, ſuha gevie jorrāelagon* (oh burn bright my phoenix, my beautiful love)

*oh zālagon jehikagrī ſuha phoenix, ſuha forever jorrāelagon* (oh burn bright my phoenix, my forever love)

Visenya began the lullaby anew and Rhaenys followed suit, feeling as if she was floating on the notes of the melody. She only noticed how Aegon’s voice was slowly fading as they reached the second verse once more and by the end of the song all that was heard from him were his slow, soothing breaths. She could understand why, something about this song and how Visenya was singing it was soothing and made her feel safe and secure despite the storm on their doorstep, almost like magic. Rhaenys curled close to Visenya, feeling her own eyelids growing heavy as her sister’s voice flowed over the notes of the lullaby.

“Love you, Senya.” she whispers as her eyes drift shut.

“I love you too Rhaenys, I’ll see you when the sun returns.” her sister resumed her song and Rhaenys was carried off into the land of dreams, feeling safe in her siblings’ arms.

Chapter End Notes
It is always interesting to think of what the Conquerors were like as children. After all, they weren't always incredibly imposing, ruthless generals who used their incredible advantages in magic and firepower (literally) to conquer a continent. They were once children too and a much better fluff writer than me could definitely write some really great stories about them.

Anyways, this is one of two back to school specials, at the request of two readers who are heading back to school this week. The next is a bit different than my usual style of memory and deals with the concept of "what if..." and is, well, not fluffy...not fluffy at all (guys, we're heading back to the worst day in Aegon's life so....). If you aren't a fan of this "back to school" stuff and are just like "please give us the Aerea chapter it's been forever and we're still waiting" then please bare with me a little longer. It's done, the story is complete and it doesn't entirely suck anymore, it just needs to be edited and will be released by the end of the week as usual.

This is a long note, but if you have relationship you want explored, or a character you'd love to see narrate a chapter, then feel free to suggest it and I'll be happy to oblige. (btw if you like AUs I'd really suggest checking out "Dragons Awakened", it's a really cool premise with a great story and a really interesting take on the the idea of Dragon Lords. Not sure if I'm supposed to recommend other stories, but I really do enjoy it and although I'm no expert, it's really well written too, so who cares if I'm supposed to or not, I highly recommend it)
Chapter Summary

There are moments, events, people, and decisions that influence all of history. A marriage determines the future of a dynasty, a death the fate of a kingdom, and a birth the state of the world. The universe one knows is the result of thousands of these little things, but what if one small thing changed? What if that marriage didn't occur or that person never died or was never born? What would happen then? Welcome to the world of what if...

Chapter Notes

You know, I never thought I'd write this story, but here we are...

As requested here is a "what if" chapter. Now, I am not a stickler for canon, I depart from it rather often and completely make up events, interactions, etc. if the canon doesn't provide concrete examples or reasons to explain/support whatever theme, character, etc I'm exploring. However, I am much more comfortable dealing with a "this is the secret reality" kind of writing rather than a "what if this didn't happen and now everything is different" sort of situation. Yet, you asked and you shall receive, so here's a "what if" chapter. If you like it please leave kudos and any constructive feedback would be greatly appreciated.

yada yada, no lawsuits, thanks

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Aegon

Aegon was awoken from his slumber by a frantic beating at his bedroom door. He blinked groggily, wondering if he had dreamed the intruding noise, but then it resumed with increased intensity. He groaned and gently shifted out from under his wife’s slender form, grabbing his dressing gown as he pulled himself up from the bed. The knocking continued as he rubbed the sleep from his eyes, stumbling towards the source of the offensive noise.

“What is it?” he asked in annoyance, pulling open his door. He winced as the torchlight hit his eyes.

“Aegon, I’m sorry to wake you, but it’s important.” Orys answered. Normally he would have yelled at his half-brother to shove off, but something about Orys’ voice grabbed his attention. Usually confident, calm, and smooth, it now sounded cracked, unsure, and shaken. “The queen has fallen in Dorne.” Aegon’s eyes immediately flew open, all remnants of sleep being burnt from his mind.

“What?!?” he asked, panic filling him as he saw the roll of parchment clenched in his brother’s fist.
Orys’ hand shook as he handed his brother the scroll. Aegon tore it open, reading its contents feverishly, then reading them again to be sure he hadn’t misread those cursed words. “No.” he said, looking up at Orys, feeling his body begin to shake. “No. Nothing could have-

“Princess Meria had purchased a weapon from Lys,” Orys murmurs, his dark eyes looking shattered in the torchlight. “The bolt went straight through the dragon’s neck, the next through her eye-

“NO!” Aegon yells again, shaking with anger beyond words, with grief beyond comprehension. “No, she is not dead, she can’t be!” his chest felt like it was being torn open, like a hot blade was burning its way through is heart leaving only blackened, charred, and aching flesh in its wake.

“Brother-” Orys begins, putting a hand on his shoulder, but Aegon shakes his head at him violently.

“NO!” he yells. “Just-

“Aegon? Orys?” A voice calls from the bed, tainted with drowsiness. “What’s happened?” Orys glances at Aegon with worry as their sister drew her dressing gown around herself as she approached the door. Aegon’s mouth opens, but all that comes out is a strangled sob. Orys squeezes his shoulder, turning to the gold and silver haired woman with a face of pure sorrow.

“The Dornish shot Vhagar down during the attack on Sunspear.” he whispers to her. Rhaenys gasps, tears filling her gorgeous lavender eyes as she moves to clutch Aegon’s arm, another hand resting protectively over her pregnant stomach.

“Visenya?” she asks, the smallest bit of hope lacing her words. A sob chokes his dark-haired brother at the mention of their fallen sister. He swallows thickly.

“Visenya fell with her dragon.” his voice breaks on the last word and he covers his mouth with his shaking hands. Aegon’s jaw clenches as Orys tries to regain his composure, tears run hot and fast down his own face. Rhaenys’ hands have clenched around his arm, her nails digging into the skin of his forearm, but he barely feels her hands or his own pain.

“How is this possible?” Rhaenys asks Orys, tears leaking from her eyes. “How did this happen?! Aegon stands mutely as Orys explains the tragedy again, but he can barely hear him. All he could hear was the voice inside him crying out in grief that this was not true, that it could not be true. Visenya was not dead, could not be dead. He had seen her but six months ago, had felt the heat of her skin, the softness of her lips, the warmth of her smile. Rhaenys was shaking violently against him and he wrapped his arms around her slender form to prevent her from collapsing, but instead of her, all he could see was Visenya the day she had flown to Dorne. Rhaenys had wanted to go, had begged Aegon to allow it, but when she realized she was once again with child, the first since her hard labor with Aenys almost three years ago, Visenya had forbidden it. Aegon had then suggested Orys lead the campaign instead, but their older brother’s wife Argella had also been heavy with child and Visenya had wanted their brother to be present for the birth. With few options, they had all agreed Visenya would ride Vhagar to Dorne and be the dragon that finally brought that cursed desert under their wings. Yet still, Aegon had tried to convince her not to, that they didn’t need to personally oversee the campaign, but she had been insistent that a dragon’s presence would provide unmatched support for the Targaryen Forces. As always she was a persuasive orator, so within a month he had agreed to her plan and the family had been assembled in the courtyard to see her off. Rhaenys was present, holding little Aenys by the hand, and Orys was there, a pinched look upon his usual stoic face. Visenya and Aegon had walked down to the courtyard together, Visenya carrying Maegor on her hip. She had kissed their two-year old son goodbye, promising him she would return to him soon. The boy barely shed a tear as his mother handed him to his nurse, only
waving his small fist to her in farewell. Aenys is not nearly as stoic when Visenya bids him goodbye and clings to his beloved aunt with a ferocity befitting a dragon. Only with another promise that she would return home and bring him lots of pretty gifts from Dorne does he allow her to go. Aegon himself had watched with regal stoicness as he had whispered her goodbyes to a tearful Rhaenys and been nearly crushed by Orys as he warned her to be careful, but when it had been his turn to wish his wife and queen farewell, he had held no emotion back. He had pulled her close, hiding his sorrow in the curtains of her hair, trying to capture the feel of her body against his to hold until her return.

“Come now, husband,” she had murmured in his ear, her arms wrapped around his neck. “There is no need to be filled with such worry, I will be back within a year.” he had gazed into her violet eyes as he stroked her face.

“It is my prerogative to worry, as your brother and as the man who loves you.” he had whispered, gazing at her face, trying his best to memorize every feature from her full lips to the small strand of silver-gold hair which he brushed behind her ear. “Don’t take any unnecessary risks.” he instructed her. “If something were to happen to you-”

“Nothing will happen.” she interjected, cutting him off, cupping his face with her slender hands. “I know well what must be done, remember, this is not the first campaign I’ve led nor will it be the first kingdom I conquer.” she brought her lips to his in a passionate kiss and he clung to her like he used to when they were small, scared to let her go.

“I know,” he told her, leaning his forehead against hers as she pulled away. “I know you’ll succeed and bring us unimaginable glory.” She smiled at him, her striking beauty intoxicating to behold.

“Of course I will, I am the Dragon Queen after all.” she responded gayly. He held her tighter.

“I love you.” he told her, gazing into her violet eyes with his dark indigo ones.

“How could you not?” she kissed him a final time. “I love you as well.” she pulled out of his embrace and moved to mount her great bronze dragon. “Farewell, Aegon, the next time you see me I shall be Queen of Dorne.” he had smiled, although he knew it looked strained and bowed low to her as Vhagar growled in anticipation. They all retreated to the outskirts of the courtyard as she waved to them all a final time. “Soavegon!” she ordered and Vhagar had leapt into the air, blasting them all with a gust of wind as she breathed an arc of brilliant bronze flames. Rhaenys had taken a crying Aenys inside soon after, followed closely by Maegor’s nurse with her charge in tow, but Aegon had stayed in the courtyard, watching Vhagar and Visenya grow smaller and smaller until they vanished over the horizon.

“She would never have gone to Sunspear!” Rhaenys declared, drawing him back to the present. “She knew that toad had likely purchased Lysene weapons!”

“But she did.” Orys told her gently, although his own grief cracked his voice and tears were now running down his face. “And although she took the city-” Rhaenys grabbed the scroll from Aegon’s limp hand and their brother stopped speaking. They both watched their sister read it furiously. He saw her read it again and again, searching as he had for any word, any comma, any small sign that Visenya could have survived her dragon’s fall. Yet, he knew she would find, as he had, that there were none. He felt as if he was lost in some dark dream and all he had to do was find a way to awaken. “The one small consolation is that the city was all but conquered and when Visenya fell, she took the remaining defenders with her. The Capital of Dorne is little more than ruin now and the kingdom shall be ours if we move swiftly,” this final sentence snaps Aegon out of his grief filled haze. He gently removes Rhaenys from his embrace and clenches his fists at his sides hard enough that he can feel blood bubbling from where his nails broke his skin.
“Then we shall fly to Dorne,” he orders, turning back towards the room. “Tonight!” He pulls his nightshirt and dressing gown off and pulls on his armored riding leathers. Ignoring the blood trickling from his hands, fueled only by potent grief and a lust for revenge.

“Aegon, you can’t be serious?” Rhaenys begins, but he cuts her off with a low growl.

“I am. We will fly to Dorne and I will retrieve her body. Orys, you said that Dorne is all but beaten?” Orys stares at him in stunned confusion. “Orys?!”

“Yes, Visenya had conquered most of the land and the majority of the populace had turned against the Martells before she marched on the city. She was already being heralded the Dragon Queen of Dorne.” Orys’ voice chokes on the last part. Aegon, however, feels his grief condensing within his chest into a bolt of pure rage and anger. “The capital was largely abandoned before Visenya and the Dragon Guard reached it. Anyone left would have been killed in her attack or the flames spewed by Vhagar’s death throes.” Orys’ last sentence almost breaks Aegon. He can almost hear Vhagar’s dying cries as the she-dragon collapses upon that damned city. He grits his teeth and forces himself to stay on his feet.

“Good, then there are no survivors to desecrate her body. We will fly there tonight, you and I on Balerion and Aegerax. I will bring her home!” Rhaenys grabs his arm, her face pale with fear.

“Aegon, this is madness! What if you’re killed as well, what if-” he grips her shoulders tightly, allowing his mask to crack for a second and his grief to shine forth from his face. His heart screams in pain within him and his body is wracked with agony.

“Rhaenys, Visenya is our sister, our wife, the mother of my son! I can’t just leave her there for the carrion, I can’t abandon her in Dorne!” his voice cracks as a sob claws its way up his throat. “If our places were reversed, she would burn the entirety of Dorne to avenge us! I can't just leave her there!” not all alone in a land far from all those who love her.

“At least let me come with you, let me help you avenge her!” Rhaenys cries, but he shakes his head.

“No, I will not risk you or the baby.” he tells her as softly as he can. She was eight months along now and he could not risk losing her and their child as well. If he did, Visenya would never forgive him. “You will be regent in my absence, tell the Court we have flown to Dragonstone to retrieve an egg for our child, let no one know of Visenya’s fate. Once word is out of her death, there will likely be upheaval and I will not have everything she worked for undone!” he gently cups her teary face. “We will return within five days, be strong, my love. I will bring our sister home.” he kissed her tear-stained cheek.

“Very well.” she replies softly. “But if you can, bring me Meria Martell and her children’s heads! I want them displayed on the walls of King’s Landing.” he nodded, seeing the dragon within her yearning to be freed. He then strode from the room, dragging his half-brother with him. He knew his siblings’ fears were well founded. Despite Visenya’s considerable victories in Dorne, there were still pockets of resistance hiding in the Red Mountains, even if the majority of the lords had already sworn fealty to House Targaryen under her assault. The message had said the ruins of Sunspear were still smouldering, but the Dragon Guard meant to provide support for their queen on the ground, feared they would not be enough to protect their queen and her dragon’s corpses should the last of the Dornish Armies decide to drag it from the ruined Capital. Aegon could not allow this. If anyone tried he would bring the Dragon’s wrath down upon them that would make the Doom of Valyria seem pleasant.

“Aegon-” Orys began, but quick as lightning he pushed his older half-brother against the wall,
glaring into his dark eyes where only the faintest purple could be seen.

“Don’t even try!” he ordered, his hand steady against Orys throat despite the tumult of emotions burning through him. His brother remained deathly still, taking slow, shallow breaths as he stared into Aegon’s eyes of weeping indigo. “We’re going and that is final. I will not lose her.” he turned and stormed down the hall. Orys followed closely behind.

“We already have.” Orys whispers. “She has gone to the next world-”

“But I will not let the Dornish gain any satisfaction from abusing the part of her left in this one!” Aegon yelled as they approached the courtyard. His brother grabbed his shoulder, forcing him to turn around.

“Brother-” Aegon nearly collapsed under his grief.

“I have to go,” he says, feeling his body almost shake with the force of his sorrow and rage. Tears burn in his eyes, but he will not let them fall, not yet. “I have to bring her home. Dorne may have slain her, but she is a Targaryen, they shall not keep her.” Orys sighs, but Aegon sees resolve form in those brown and purple depths.

“Very well, brother, we shall bring her home.” Aegon nods and turns to the courtyard. “We shall make Dorne suffer for this.” Aegon's blood boiled in his veins.

"Oh we will, they will bend the knee to me now, or they will burn, all of them!” they burst out into the cool night air, but Aegon takes little notice of the shining stars above. The whole world had lost its lustre under this tragedy and all he could think of was what must be done to right it. “Māzigon!” he yelled and Orys whistled loudly. Soon enough two huge shapes flew above them, darker than the night sky and twice as terrifying. Balerion and his twin land in the courtyard before their riders. Aegarax’s red and black scales glint in the low torchlight as Balerion’s black and red flames flicker at his maw. Aegon met Balerion’s red and black eyes and saw within them a reflection of his own grief. Balerion gave a low, mournful growl as Aegarax blew a torrent of red flame into the sky. The dragons too wanted vengeance for what had been taken from them. “We fly for Dorne.” he told the dragons as he and Orys approached their mounts. Balerion bobbed his great head in understanding as Aegon secured himself in the saddle.

“Sōvegon!” Orys ordered and both dragons jumped skywards, their wings pumping furiously as they flew South towards Dorne. Aegon’s cloak rippled behind him in the wind, but the tears running from his eyes were not because of the breeze. He rested his head against Balerion’s scaled back, taking small comfort in the warmth of the dragon’s hide, and finally, in the dark of the night sky, allowed his sobs to overtake him. He had loved Visenya for as long as he could remember and could not fathom a time when he had not. A low guttural sob escaped his throat as he remembered how her hands used to move so quickly as she deftly braided her luxurious silver-gold hair. His heart broke as he recalled how her voice would rise and fall as she sang the old songs from a world long gone. Balerion growled comfortingly as tears clouded his vision and ran down his face in rivers, burning compared to the cold of the air. He would never see her bright violet eyes sparkle with mirth again. He would never hear her laugh, or cry his name in a fit of passion. He would never again hear her words of wisdom or the sarcastic edge that entered her voice when she knew she was right and he was wrong. He would never again feel the warmth of her embrace or the contentment being held in her arms always brought him. He growled, a sound so low and biting it could have come from Balerion’s own fiery throat. He had lost her for a kingdom, but would a kingdom comfort him in his darkest moments? Would all the riches of Dorne make him smile as she had? Would an empty crown comfort Maegor when he cried out for the mother who would never come home? He glanced up at the moon which was high in the sky. She had been shot down
a little before sunset, so her body had already been exposed for at least ten hours. The thought of her lying there all alone made him spur Balerion to fly even faster. If the news had reached King’s Landing of the Dragon Queen’s demise, then those traitorous rebels would know as well and would already be moving to take advantage of the situation. They passed over those cursed Red Mountains and rushed over the desert, both Dragons roaring furiously to tell the land the Dragons had not yet been beaten, warning the land of the blood to come. As they flew over the desert Aegon could see the path of conquest Visenya had carved out. He saw burnt keeps and desolate fields of glass, twisted ruins and the trail left by the Dragon’s undefeated army. He remembered her final message from the campaign.

*The Lords from Sandstone to Godsgrace have bent the knee and the Dornish are once again in retreat. Despite Meria’s words, they do seem to be trying very hard to give themselves to the Stranger honorably and have lost countless men trying to defeat us on the open field. Tomorrow I will fly to Plankytown and will burn that silly place to the ground if they fail to bend the knee to me. Once I have finished there I will move on towards the Greenblood River. Victory is close and when I bring Dorne to the fold along with her abundant riches, you will have to spend hours making it worth my while. Avy jorrāelan.*

-Visenya

He had laughed as he read that, as always, swept up in her confidence and bravado. Maegor had not understood the words written on the note, but he recognized his mother’s name for even at barely two he was a bright child with great promise, and had gurgled happily at the mention of her. He groaned as he thought of how he would explain this to his youngest son and his heart broke anew to think he would never truly know the woman who gave birth to him.

“Why did you do it?” he whispered to himself. “Why did you attack that damned city, my love?” the wind nor his own grieving mind provided an answer. Visenya was a skilled tactician and her prowess in warfare were near unmatched. If she knew Meria Martell, that fat toad, had an ounce of poison left, why would she have flown to Sunspear, especially when her army was a day’s travel behind her? Had she become overconfident? Had she miscalculated? It wasn’t likely. What Aegon feared was that she had seen something, that the gods had shown her a vision that gave her no choice but to attack the Capital. Did they tell her that was the only way for her to conquer Dorne? Did the vision portend of great catastrophe if she did not take the city by nightfall? He hears Aegarax growl and looks up to see the still smoking ruins of Sunspear appear below them. Balerion roars, no doubt sensing his fallen sister’s blood and the entire world seems to shake in the face of his fury. A few hundred yards away, Aegon sees the encampment of the Dragon Guard, their proud banner fluttering in the wind. Despite Balerion’s desire to fly straight into the still smouldering city, Aegon forces him to land near the camp, watching Orys compel an angry Aegerax to do the same. The men immediately jump to attention as their king and his hand land, many of their faces smeared with soot and ash. The Lord Commander rushes to him.

“My Lord,” Ser Hull says, bowing low, “we were not expecting-”

“Where is the queen?” Aegon asks, cutting the man off. A look of grief passes over his sooty face.

“She lies in the heart of the ruins, your majesty. The fires are still burning and we have not yet been able-” without another word Balerion takes off without Aegon even ordering him to. Without a single thought to his own safety he flies towards the ruins, unsure and uncaring if Orys is still following him.

“Find zirŷ.” he orders Balerion. *Find them.* His dragon roars in assent and dives down into the city, past the burnt and melted towers, the walls that have been reduced to rubble, and past the charred
corpses of the city’s remaining, rebellious inhabitants. The entire city stinks of fire and death. They reach the center and just as the Lord Commander had said, there lies the fallen dragon. Vhagar’s bronze body glows in the light of the fires and Balerion begins keening at the sight of his fallen mate. Aegon dismounts his dragon as the poor creature gently nudges Vhagar’s bloodied and scarred scales, and walks towards the fallen beast. Embers still glow around him, but he takes no notice. No fire, nor smoke, nor heat can hurt him as much as grief within him. Vhagar’s body is still warm to the touch as he clambors over it and if he closes his eyes he could almost believe she was still alive. Almost. He reaches the saddle, but finds it empty. In a panic he looks around wildly. He glances at Balerion, who is blowing steam on his fallen sister. The dragon’s eyes meet his and glance down towards his mate’s broken wing. Aegon follows the line of his gaze and spots a glint of steel in the fire. He slides down Vhagar’s belly and onto her wing, walking across the scarred and torn membrane to reach the sword. He picks it up with shaking hands. Dark Sister glows mirthlessly in the firelight, untouched by fire and unbent by the fall. He takes but a few steps further and he senses her before he even sees her. Wrapped in Vhagar’s wing is the fallen body of his beloved sister-wife. He can only imagine how Vhagar must have tried to shield Visenya as she fell, unable to fly as she choked on her own blood and was blinded by the scorpion bolt through her once bright eye. He rushes to the corpse and pulled her from the bloodied wing. Unlike Vhagar’s body, she is cold, cold as the North, cold as death. Half her face is burnt, the skin red and charred, and her hair is stained with scarlet blood and ash. “Oh my love,” he whispers, stroking her face. “I am so sorry.” tears fill his eyes as he hugs her to his chest and before he can stop himself begins crying out at the night. His screams of pain, agony, grief, and loss echo around the broken and dead castle until it sounds like the whole world is crying with him. The sound is feral, inhuman, and mixes with Balerion’s own mournful roars into a terrifying symphony that pierces the early morning air. He doesn’t know how long he stayed there, clutching her to him, telling her he’d take her home, that he’d make this right. At some point he sheathed Dark Sister at her side where it belongs, but he can’t remember how or when he did. All he remembers is the pain and darkness that surrounded and consumed him. Orys eventually finds him there, still clutching her body as the sun rises.

“Aegon,” he murmurs, his voice cracking and body shaking at the sight of their dead sister. “Aegon we can’t stay here. The Dornish army is approaching.” Aegon ignores him, continuing to cradle Visenya to his chest, stroking the half of her face that remains as it was, chillingly beautiful and as luminescent as the moon. If he only looks at that part...“Aegon!”

“We have to burn them.” he murmured, more to himself than Orys. “We need to give them a burial fitting a Dragon.” Orys glances around anxiously, but nods.

“Of course,” he turns to his dragon, who is gently rubbing his head against a still keening Balerion. "Aegerax.”

“Not here!” Aegon cries. “I will not have her spirit be trapped here in this awful place. She promised she’d come home, I will help her keep that promise.” Orys mournfully sighs as Aegon looks up at his older half-brother in desperation. “Rhaenys and the children need to say their goodbyes. We need to give them closure.” I can't leave her, not yet. He can see doubt in his brother’s dark eyes. “She is Targaryen, she shall be burnt on our soil, nowhere else.” Orys takes a deep breath. Aegon knows his brother thinks he’s gone insane, that his grief has gotten the better of him, but Aegon is still his king so after a minute of thought he nods in agreement. So, as Aegerax mournfully burns the Bronze Queen in red flames, for even Aegon agrees it would be impossible to carry the she-dragon back to Dragonstone, Aegon mounts Balerion with Visenya’s body and takes off towards the sky. Afterwards he’d wonder if it was the sight of him carrying his wife’s corpse that finally ended the Dornish War in his favor or the fact that he burnt the entirety of the Red Mountains and all the remaining Dornish Army while cradling the fallen Dragon Queen. Probably the latter. After Dorne bows, their heads bent and wills broken, he has the Dragon Guards sift
through the rubble of Sunspear when the fires have finally died. When he flies back to King’s Landing, leaving Orys to stamp out any small acts of rebellion that occur as Dorne becomes the seventh kingdom of Westeros, he brings the Martells’ heads with him along with his sister's body, keeping his and Visenya’s promise. Rhaenys also keeps hers and has them placed on spikes on King’s Landing’s walls, where they remain until the carrion finally pick all the flesh from the scorched skulls. After that, there is nothing left. Maegor can barely comprehend Aegon’s words as he tells him that his mother has gone to the next world and although his son cries, Aegon doubts he understands fully understands the entirety of what he lost. He will later, but all he knows now is his mother will never sing for him again. Rhaenys, on the other hand, understands too well, and he, Aegon, and Rhaenys cry together as Aenys sings Visenya’s favorite lullaby. Then, once they’ve all bade her their goodbyes, he brings her home to Dragonstone, like she would have wanted, and she rides a wave of black and red flames to the next world. He prays she remains patient and will wait for them on the other side. Yet, from all this sorrow comes a single spark of joy. Right as the last of the flames die, Rhaenys goes into labor. He holds her hand as she screams in agony, bringing their beautiful daughter into the world a few weeks early, but nonetheless the girl cries with the ferocity of a dragon. Of course they name her Visenya and when her violet eyes open-

Suddenly, a loud crash yanks Aegon out of the realm of sleep and he awakens with a yell, his face covered in sweat, gasping for breath.

“Aegon?” a voice calls groggily. “What’s wrong?” he turns desperately to look at the woman beside him. Violet eyes look up at him from the bed and he sighs with unimaginable relief. He gently cups Visenya’s face, his thumb lightly drifting over her lips. She sits up slightly to appraise him, her eyes still clouded with sleep. “What is it?”

“Nothing,” he answered, breathing harder than he would like. “Just a nightmare.” she furrowed her brow as he pulled her close, taking a deep breath as he buried his face in her hair.

“Do you want to tell me about it?” her muffled voice asks but he shakes his head.

“No, it’s all right.” he murmurs, his hand moving down to rest on the growing swell of her stomach. Within, their child kicks his hand comfortingly and he sighs. “Everything’s all right.” he closes his eyes and lets sleep take him once more.

Chapter End Notes

So...what if Visenya died in Dorne instead of Rhaenys? That's a question that could have rather dramatic impacts on the timeline of events, especially since without Visenya helping Maegor succeed Aenys I, you never get Jaehaerys and Alysanne, Viserys I, the dance of dragons...Basically, the entire world of GoT would be different. Now, the second you step away from canon, there are thousands of different directions you can go. You can throw everything out, throw some things out, or keep it as similar as possible with minimal changes. I chose to change a lot for this story (including answering another few what ifs: what if Orys was a dragonrider? What if the Dornish had weapons that could kill the dragons?), as you can tell. Now, I'm not saying Visenya could have actually conquered Dorne, the first Dornish War was difficult because the Dornish refused to actually, well, fight a proper war against the Targaryens(which was smart) and I honestly don't know if Visenya would have been better at dealing with that that Rhaenys was. My big problem with "what ifs", is they often lead to even more "what ifs", and although I enjoyed writing this, I'm not a big
fan of falling into that rabbit hole, so these will be far and few between unless someone really, REALLY, wants another one.

Someone who was really good at world building could probably go nuts with the foundation laid in this story, determining how Westeros would look with Dorne entering it much earlier than in canon, determining how the Targaryen Dynasty would play out without Visenya there, and exploring how our favorite characters would be different(or if they'd even exist), but for now that someone is not me, so I coped out and made it a dream. If you want to write a story based on this chapter though, please do, I'd be super excited to see where people take this. In any case, thanks for the suggestion, I enjoy trying new things and its always good to expand your horizons. As always, if you have a pov you want explored, a relationship you're dying to see, or an event you'd like fleshed out, feel free to suggest it and I'll see what I can do.

Aerea's chapter is coming tomorrow and boy does that child have a lot to unpack...
Aerea-I Can Fly

Chapter Summary

Aerea Targaryen has been looked on with disdain all her life. At first she thought it was out of envy, but after overhearing an argument between her mother Rhaena, Lady of Dragonstone, and Queen Alysanne, she finds out that perhaps the reason she's so despised has less to do with her and more to do with who gave her those violet eyes she's so famous for her. As the moon rises she and a ghost from the past hatch a plan to find out if what she hear is true and unfortunately, that plan involves seeking the most feared dragon on the island, the Black Dread...

Chapter Notes

Hello All,

It's here! Finally, after weeks of wait here is your chapter from the POV of Aerea. Now, Aerea is an interesting character within the canon and although she's rather infamous, very little specifics are know about her, but boy are there a lot of rumors. This chapter is slightly lighter hearted than some of the previous ones and although it has its fair share of magical elements, the magic actually didn't play as big a role as I thought it would. During the first drafts of this chapter, and there were many, many drafts, the magic was a lot more prominent and although I really liked some of the more insane parts, they didn't fit within the continuity I already established. Let's just say the first versions involved a lot more blood than this one and, well, it just wasn't working so instead we got this. If you like it, please leave KUDos and any constructive comments you like.

I own nothing, etc.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Aerea

Aerea rested her head against the cold stone of her windowsill as she stared off into the darkening sky. The room wasn’t cold despite the fire being little more than glowing embers, but nevertheless goose-prickles erupted across the skin of her bare arms as her thoughts ran at blistering speeds. Her eyes flitted to the moon and she sighed as it began its climb into the sky, glowing softly as the stars began to glitter like diamonds.

“Aerea?” a familiar voice called out, soft and soothing to the shaking child’s ears. “Aerea, are you there?” for a second the young princess doesn’t speak as a familiar cold permeated the room. In the reflection of the glass she sees a wisp of a figure appear, almost insubstantial, but not quite.

“I’m here,” she finally calls out, turning to face the spirit, “I’m by the window.” The shimmer of
mist floats towards her, growing stronger as it passes the dying embers of her fire.

“Will you let me see you?” the wisp asks, its voice sounding very far away despite its growing opaqueness. Part of Aerea wants to say no. She doesn’t want to see anyone, not now, not when she had lost the one thing she believed would always be true. Yet, as she stared at the vague figure made of moonlight and mist, she found she couldn’t turn it away. After all, they were each other’s only friends left in this world.

“Yes.” she holds out her hand and opens a small cut on her finger, offering it to the misty figure. It reaches out its transparent arm and puts its hand in hers, feeling like nothing more than a cold breeze. Slowly, the mist grows warmer, feeling more like water than air and a pale face glows pleasantly in the moonlight: an elegant, aquiline nose, small, full lips, and large, almond shaped eyes that are the mirror image of Aerea’s own. “Hello Aemma.” she says as she withdraws her hand from her great aunt’s now solid one. Aemma smiles, looking almost as alive as Aerea does save for the faded colors of her skin and hair.

“Hello Aerea,” Aemma replies brightly, looking no older than Aerea’s own age of three and ten despite the fact that she had died at the age of nine and ten during the Arryn Rebellion. Her face scrunched up in concern as she studied Aerea’s tired face. “What troubles you this night?” Aerea shudders as she remembered the words her Aunt Alysanne had spit at her mother.

“No, but I most likely will. My Aunt, Queen Alysanne, has come to Dragonstone to comfort my mother after the horrors inflicted by my cunt of a step-father, but my mother refused to see her so she’s spent her time with me.” Aemma furrowed her brow at Aerea’s words.

“Is that bad?” Aemma asked, tilting her head slightly to appraise Aerea’s anxious face.

“No,” Aerea answered. “My aunt is kind, kinder to me than anyone else has been and I asked her to take me back with her to King’s Landing.” Aemma’s eyes go wide with excitement.

“What did she say?” her friend asked, a smile of anticipation lighting up her almost ashem face. “Did she say yes?”

“Well, she was not opposed to the idea, but wanted to receive my mother’s permission first.” Aemma’s eyes fell as she spoke.

“I assume your mother was not fond of the idea?” Aemma murmured, her tone dripping disdain. Aemma was not fond of Aerea’s mother, a feeling Aerea herself shared, and she never bothered to hide that fact.

“That is putting it lightly. She grew so enraged she actually allowed my aunt to speak to her face to face.” Aerea felt a frown grace her lips as she remembered her mother’s furious order for her aunt to enter the chambers and how she had snuck in through the side passage to listen in.

“I’m assuming you heard what they said?” Aemma inquired, her face growing serious in the strengthening moonlight as she saw Aerea’s body begins to tremble.

“I did and I-” she swallowed. “I heard-” she can barely say the words, “My aunt, she said-” Aerea shakes her head in disbelief, still unable to fully process what she had heard. She laced her fingers together in a futile attempt to stop them from shaking, but it did little to help since it was not just her hands, but her entire body that was trembling with all the thoughts that were racing through her fevered brain. Aemma took Aerea’s trembling hands in her steady, cold ones and looked into her
violet eyes.

“What did Queen Alysanne say?” she asked softly. Aerea swallowed and closed her eyes, remembering how her aunt’s beautiful face had been white with rage, her azure eyes glaring into Aerea’s mother’s lavender ones. She can still hear the rage of their voices as they fought, Aerea’s own heart racing as she watched the exchange from her hidden spot.

“She has our uncle’s eyes, Rhaena! **Her eyes!**” her aunt had yelled, earning her a contemptuous scoff from Aerea’s mother.

“She was our father’s aunt, who’s to say how Aerea’s eye color came to be?” her mother had replied with cold words, but there was something strange about her mother’s face, something unfamiliar. “I see not how that has made you desire to take my daughter from me.”

“I desire nothing, sister.” her aunt shot back, her tone as cold as her mother’s, “I came here to comfort you in your time of distress and I came to your rooms today to relay a request your daughter made to me, but even if she hadn’t asked me, I would have come here to take her back to the Red Keep anyways once I realized why the servants and your few courtiers left kept whispering about your daughter’s face.” Rhaena leaned forward in her chair and glared at her sister with enough ire to make a warrior shiver.

“And what do they say?” she asked angrily, although Aerea swears a flicker of fear dances in her irate eyes.

“What do you think? They cry and whisper that she does not look like her supposed parents.” Aerea’s mother hissed at Alysanne’s words. Something between a laugh and a sneer that makes her beautiful face contort unnaturally.

“What a silly fuss to be making over her eyes-”

“It is not just her eyes, sister!” Alysanne interrupts, taking a step closer to her sister’s seat. “Your daughter, supposedly our brother’s child, looks the image of our Aunt Aemma, bares a striking resemblance to our grandmother, and has the eyes characteristic to her line. Now, **who is the one person who could have fathered her to give her that cold, harsh beauty?**” her aunt’s tone had been laced with angry accusations and Aerea’s mother had clutched her chair so tightly that her knuckles had gone completely white.

“Careful with your words, Alysanne, lest you give credence to these slanders.” her mother warned, but her aunt shook her head in disbelief.

“One only fears slanders if there’s a sliver of truth within.” she shot back with ferocity.

“I fear nothing.” Rhaena replied with malice, but Alysanne arched an unbelieving eyebrow.

“Then why have you ruined the upholstery of our mother’s favorite chair?” her aunt inquired accusingly, glancing at the gauges left by Aerea’s mother’s nails. Her mother’s eyes narrowed dangerously. “Tell me, when did you fuck him? Before he was banished to Pentos? After?” Her mother remained silent, glaring at her sister with malice as Aerea’s heart beat wildly inside her chest. “Did you lie with his other wives as well?” Aerea stuffed her forearm in her mouth to stop herself from crying out. “When did you make a cuckold out of our brother?!”

“I never made a cuckold out of anyone!” her mother bit back angrily, standing to face her sister. “I was faithful to Aegon until the day he died!” Alysanne’s blue eyes glowed with rage as Aerea’s heart hammered in her chest. She couldn’t believe what she was hearing, could barely comprehend
all her mother and aunt were saying.

“So it was before.” her aunt had concluded, but then her eyes went wide. “Was that what forced our father to banish him?!” her aunt grabbed her mother’s shoulder almost wildly. “Is that what tore our family apart? You fucking our uncle?!” her mother’s face remained emotionless, staring down at her sister with dead eyes. “Oh gods.” her aunt released her mother, putting her head in her hands. “How could you?”

“How could I?!” her mother yelled, almost shaking with rage despite her cold control only seconds before. “How could I not?! You had the luxury of loving Jaehaerys, I was not so lucky with Aegon.” her mother laughed, a high, almost manic sound that chilled Aerea to the bone. “The thought of screwing him, of growing large with his child, repelled me! I loved our uncle since I was seven years old! Our grandmother told me once that Targaryens take what we want. Aegon and Visenya took Westeros because they wanted a kingdom. Maegor wanted the throne so he took it for himself. I am no less dragon than they, so when I had the opportunity, I took him and made him mine as a Targaryen is supposed to do!” Aerea’s aunt’s eyes shone with horror, shock, and loathing as she listened to her sister’s declaration.

“Don’t twist our family legacy, Rhaena! Our uncle was married! And to the High Septon’s niece no less!” her aunt yelled back.

“We are Targaryens, we answer to neither gods nor men, especially the ones who claim to speak for the other!” her mother responded wildly. “I would have fucked our uncle in front of that loathsome excuse for a man just to remind him of how truly powerless he was!” Her aunt had glared at her mother with loathing so pure Aerea wondered if her mother wouldn’t catch fire from it.

“You can’t keep her here on Dragonstone, Rhaena, where there are so many people who remember them!” her aunt declared, clearly finished indulging her sister’s follies. “I’m surprised her heritage hasn’t already become scandal, although that's probably thanks to Lord Androw and his poisons keeping everyone either dead or occupied, but the second a servant or courtier looks too closely at her face and sees what is so obvious to me, she will be in danger, our throne will be in danger!” Alysanne’s face become hard and imposing, the very picture of regal confidence. “She must come back to King’s Landing with me, where there are few who remember Maegor or our grandmother well enough to see the resemblance and those who do can be controlled.” her mother’s face had erupted with rage.

“No!” she answered and Alysanne looked taken aback. “She won’t be going anywhere with you!”

“That wasn’t a request, sister.” Rhaena slowly approached Alysanne, using her few inches of height over the queen to stare down at her with frightening malice. “And neither is this: You have my crown, content yourself with that, you shall not have my child, the last remnant of the man I loved and the grandmother I revere, as well. You will leave this island, Alysanne and you will never return. If you do, I will have Dreamfyre rip Silverwing to pieces and laugh as your broken body falls to the sea.” Aerea had watched this exchange with growing fear as her heart hammered in her chest and everything she believed to be true about herself proved to be a lie.

“That’s treason, sister.” her aunt responded. “Our brother could have you executed for threatening me so.” Rhaena’s eyes had burned into Alysanne’s fearlessly.

“Fuck our brother and fuck you.” she had answered, “you may have the gift of sight, but I know how to use it. Ever speak of my child to me again and I will bring the gods down upon your head!” The air in the room crackled with power as the two dragon sisters glared at each other and Aerea felt as if the attention of something horrible had just been drawn by their angry words. The
temperature in the room dropped, the shadows seemed to eat the light and her aunt looked around wildly at something Aerea could not see, her breath beginning to mist in the air, and Aerea had ran. She heard her aunt’s scream, but she didn’t turn back, didn’t stop running until she was in her own chambers. Only there, shaken beyond words did she allow herself to breath once more. A cold hand brought her back to the present and she found herself looking into Aemma’s faded violet eyes.

“Aerea, what did my niece say?” a tear slipped from Aerea's violet eyes and wiped it away with a shaking hand, staring at her wet palm almost in confusion. “What did she say?!?”

“I am not my father’s daughter.” Aerea finally whispered, wiping yet another tear from her face as the words seemed to cut into her heart.

“What?” Aemma asked, suddenly confused. Aerea swallowed the bile and disgust climbing their way up her throat. The emotions rolling within her were making it hard for her to concentrate.

“Aegon, your nephew, is not my father.” Aerea repeated, putting a hand to her head, her forehead was hot to the touch.

“How is that possible?” Aemma asked, although the growing horror in her eyes told Aerea she already suspected what Aunt Alysanne had figured out.

“My aunt said,” Aerea swallowed, scared to say the words lest they make the horrible truth more real. “I look like you,” Aemma’s eyes went wide as she spoke, “and I have ‘her grandmother’s eyes’, and the only way she thinks that could happen is if my mother,” Aerea's face heated up as the words tumbled from her mouth in a torrent of disgust and revulsion, “had relations with her uncle, your brother.” Aemma’s face went completely blank for a second as she processed Aerea's words.

“Her,” Aemma swallowed, grimacing as she thought over what Aerea had just said, “Your mother slept with,” she shook her head in disgust. “My brother?” Aerea nodded, although her revulsion was only growing stronger the more she thought about it.

“I think so.” she whispered and Aemma groaned.

“And that,” Aemma scowled, “tryst resulted in you and Rhaella?”

“If I understood half their conversation then, well, I don’t know, but my aunt thinks so.” Aerea responded and both she and Aemma leaned against the wall, staring off into Aerea’s darkened room in disgust. For a second they both stand there, backs against the cold stone, marinating in shared horror, disgust, and revulsion, but then Aemma’s faded eyes fixed on Aerea’s face and they both started laughing. Not because this situation was at all deserving of laughter, but because neither of them knew what to do. They fell to the floor, hysterical laughs and giggles erupting from their lips. How strange it was to laugh at what felt like the end of everything she had known.

“Oh gods that’s,” Aemma shook her head, wiping ghostly tears from her eyes. “That’s the most disturbing thing I’ve heard in years!”

“I know!” Aerea replied between laughs, feeling her stomach spasm from the force of her laughter. “He was eleven years older than her!”

“And basically helped raise her!” they both shuddered at the thought. “That would make you both my niece and great-niece along with Aenys’ niece and granddaughter.” Aemma commented, causing Aerea to scrunch her brow at the thought.

“I pity the poor maester who will have to untangle our complicated family line.” she murmured
before bursting out in another fit of laughter. Her sides heaved as she imagines an old face, scrunched up in confusion and disgust, trying to decipher the Targaryen lineage.

“I wonder how she convinced him to do it.” Aemma murmured and Aerea pressed her lips together in thought.

“My mother was a beautiful young woman—”

“So was Ceryse in her time. Honestly, she would have had to throw herself at him naked—” her words die in her throat as their eyes meet. Aerea groans. “Oh gods, you don’t think—”

“No, she would.” Aerea answered as they both stare at her bedroom ceiling. “It’s lovely to think I was conceived from a one time tryst rather than the love story I was told about my parents.” the smiles faded off their lips as their mirth died. Aemma rubbed her eyes.

“I can’t believe my brother would do something like that.” Aerea pulled herself to her feet.

“Well, if my aunt’s correct, you’re in the presence of living evidence of that tryst.” Aerea replied, rubbing her neck in slight disgust. Aemma stared up at her from her position on the floor.

“Are you sure she is?” Aemma asked, her voice low, “because if she is this changes—” Aerea yanked her to her feet, interrupting whatever thought she was about to say and pulled Aemma in front of her long mirror. For a second they just stared into the mirror, willing its reflective surface to disprove the truth they were afraid of. “That’s deeply unfortunate.” Standing side by side it was hard to deny that they looked very similar. Their eyes were the same shape, as were their lips, even their pinched, worried expressions seemed to echo one another’s.

“You could be Rhaella.” Aerea murmured softly, staring at their reflection in the mirror. Aemma worried her bottom lip as she appraised Aerea’s face.

“And you could be my mother’s daughter.” Aemma whispers and Aerea turns away from the mirror to stare back out at the quiet sky.

“Is it the eyes?” Aerea inquires, trying to quiet her wild thoughts.

“No, it’s everything. You have that cold beauty she was so famous for, you actually resemble her somewhat.” Aemma answers and Aerea groans, putting her head in her hands, not even looking up when her friend’s cold hand rests on her shoulder, causing her flesh to shiver.

“All these years I wondered why fear and hate danced in people’s eyes as they looked at me.” Aerea murmured into her hands in a broken voice, feeling her ever present rage begin boiling inside her. “I thought they were jealous at first, since I was heir to the throne, then I thought that perhaps something was wrong with me.” she met Aemma’s large eyes. “But it turns out, they hated me because somewhere deep down they knew what I did not, knew whose child I was!” she collapsed to her knees hugging herself tightly. “They knew that I was not valiant Aegon the Uncrowned’s daughter, but Maegor the Cruel’s! They all could tell I have the blood of a monster!”

Aemma knelt down beside her, embracing her with her cold form.

“Neither you, nor my brother, are monsters, Aerea.” Aemma whispered, stroking her arms comfortingly.

“Of course you say that, you’re his sister, but that’s not how most of the realm views him.” Aerea spit back with more venom than she meant. “Rogar Baratheon and my grandmother, Alyssa, made sure the kingdom considered him a usurper during their regency and Jaehaerys has done little to change that perception lest the taint of illegitimacy haunt his own reign.” Aerea shuddered. “Even
if the tales of him are deeply exaggerated, it doesn’t matter. There are those who still praise him, but many do not and if I truly look like him then—” she shook her head in despair. “I will be hated wherever I go on this continent.” Aemma squeezed her shoulders comforting.

“Not by everyone.” Aemma says. “I won’t hate you, and from the sound of it neither will your aunt and uncle. I know little of who my brother became, but he was once a rather serious, but ultimately honorable young man. Would it be worse to have him as a father than a man whose sole accomplishment is flying straight into the maws of death on a doomed mission for glory?”

“It would be worse! Who cares if he died a fool’s death fighting a superior force, history has vindicated him!” Aerea cried. “People curse Maegor’s name, Aemma!”

“Who cares about people?” Aemma asked, her voice soothing. “People are but sheep, you are a dragon, you can herd them where you want and they’ll follow you blindly. The only people who matter are those you love. I do not curse my brother’s name and neither does your aunt-”

“You’re a ghost, Aemma,” Aerea responded as gently as possible. “As for my aunt, there is something about her. You didn’t see her with my mother today, but there is some power in her, something ancient and horrible tied to her.” she shivers at the memory of how her aunt’s azure eyes had almost glowed as the room began to darken, how the air had seemed to shiver with a power unlike Aerea had ever experienced before. She shakes her head to dispel the fear blooming in her heart. “She is also bound to my uncle, who would strike me down if he knew I am Maegor’s daughter. There are those who still believe he, as Visenya’s son, was right to claim the throne after Aenys I died and they would raise my cause on battle banners and tear the realm apart once more. No king would allow that and I fear fleeing to them will result in nothing, but misery for me.” Aemma pursed her lips.”Then again, I’m already miserable here.”

“That is, of course, if we assume that your aunt is right and you are Maegor’s child.” Aemma responds thoughtfully and Aerea’s head snaps to look at her friend.

“Are you saying there’s a chance it’s not?” Aerea asked, feeling a tree of hope begin to grow within her chest.

“The evidence that it is true is compelling,” Aemma answered, ”but I also can’t say definitively that you are my brother’s daughter. You look the part, but our blood runs through your veins through your mother as well. The cold beauty we are so well known for is characteristic to the Dragon Queen, but not exclusive to her line. Your appearance is not sufficient to either prove or disprove what we’ve just learned.”

“How could we know for sure?” Aerea asked. “Is there even a way to know?” Aemma pursed her lips.

“There is, well, at least I believe there is. We’d have to ask someone who would know.” Aerea’s eyes narrow at her great aunt skeptically.

“Please tell me you don’t mean asking my mother, all that woman does is lie.” Aerea spits, although, who else they could ask is unclear. Luckily, Aemma shakes her head.

“No, I don’t mean your mother.” Aerea grasped her friend’s arms as she spoke.

“Then who? My aunt? Because that’s ridiculous since she wouldn’t know unless she was in the room when-”

“I meant the dragons.” Aemma buts in, shuddering at what Aerea was about to say. The princess
furrowed her brow at her friend’s words.

“The dragons?” Aerea asks in confusion.

“Yes, the dragons. Balerion and Vhagar have taken up residence in the Dragonmount, have they not?” Aemma asks, her eyes shining with mischief, glinting much like Aerea’s did when a brilliant idea would strike her. “They can tell you.”

“How?” Aerea asks breathlessly, caught up in her friend’s excitement and the promise of having one of the greatest questions of her life answered.

“The bond between dragons and their riders is one true love, the two become two halves of a whole. There are no secrets for they feel everything and can sense things far beyond the perception of men. If you are Maegor’s daughter, Balerion will know and in his eyes you will see the truth.” Aerea furrowed her brow at her ghostly friend, not truly understanding her words. “Or that’s what one of my favorite Valryian songs says.” Aerea’s shoulders slump, she knew the song Aemma was referring to.

“Balerion and Vhagar have refused to allow anyone near them since Maegor’s death, and several unfortunates have perished trying. You want me to risk my life based off a children’s song?” Aerea asked in disbelief. “There isn’t some magic that can just answer all my questions?” Aemma shook her head.

“For one, I have little knowledge of magic-” “Your mother was the greatest practitioner of the Old Arts since the Doom and you’re telling me you know nothing?” Aerea questioned in disbelief.

“Precisely. Magic is dangerous, Aerea, and my mother was adamant that I should never indulge in it because the cost is always too great. That danger you sensed surrounding your aunt? If I had to guess, I’d say it’s the stink of magic and the god’s attention.” Aerea sighed in annoyance. “If you don’t wish to ask the dragons, then perhaps that means that your question doesn’t need to be answered-” Aerea jumped up and turned towards her window before Aemma had even finished her sentence.

“Let’s go.” she told her friend, unlatching the window and pulling it wide, revelling in the sea breeze that blew her gold-silver hair out of her face.

“Well that’s a quick change of heart.” Aemma comments. “Please tell me you’re not considering jumping out the window?” Aerea looked back at the ghost of her great aunt and narrowed her eyes.

“You said Dragons were the only way you know to find my answers, so let’s go.” Aemma hauled herself off the floor and moved to stand beside her, glancing down at the waves at least a story below them.

“Do we really need to jump out? Can’t we just take the stairs like sensible people?” her friend asked, sounding surprisingly nervous.

“And have the guards catch us? Don’t be ridiculous.” Aemma pushed her lips together and looked at her unconvinced. “Come now, Aemma, you’re already dead, what harm can a little water do?” Her great-aunt sighed at Aerea’s light prodding.

“It’s not for me I’m afraid, Aerea.” she responded, glancing at her nervously. “I might not need air, but you certainly do.” Aerea took her hand.

“Don’t worry, I’ve done things like this before. I used to run wild with a group of girls in the Red Keep and I would often throw myself from my window into piles of hay so we could run about the
city at night and I’ve been swimming for as long as I can remember. This will be easy.” Aemma sighed at her words.

“Fine.” she responded sulkily and Aerea smiled. “But if I somehow die again, my proverbial blood will be on your hands.” She laughed lightly, turning back towards the window. The breeze seemed to call to her and for the first time in what felt like years she felt like herself. She stepped onto the sill, grabbing hold of the wall to steady herself as she looked down at the crashing waves. Aemma stepped up beside her, clutching the wall. Aerea reached out a hand. Aemma’s faded eyes bore into hers for a second before she grabbed the outstretched hand with her own cold, but now very solid, one.

“On three.” she told her friend, who swallowed nervously. “One, two, three!” she yelled and jumped, dragging her ghostly friend with her. Aemma yelped in surprise as they fell, but Aerea only laughed. The drop was farther than she anticipated and when she finally hit the water below the shock from the cold nearly made her muscles too tense to move. For a few seconds all she could do was float in the murky depths as the waves pushed her back towards the castle, but a hand grabbed her arm and began dragging her back towards the surface. Aemma looked at her with scared eyes, no bubbles of air escaping her nose or mouth, and Aerea forced herself to kick towards the surface. Their heads broke through the waves and Aerea gasped for air as Aemma’s eyes glared at her.

“This was an awful idea!” her friend declared, but Aerea only laughed as her limbs began moving once more, delighting in the intoxicating liberation that was coursing through her veins.

“On the contrary, this is the most fun I’ve had in months!” Aerea declared, brushing her now soaked hair out of her face. “Follow me, I know the beach we have to swim to.” she then began kicking, swimming parallel to the castle towards the rocky beach in the distance. Aemma grumbled behind her, but moved to follow. The two girls hair shone silver in the moonlight above and although the water was cold, Aerea found it strangely invigorating. It had been a long time since she had done what she wished and now that she had tasted freedom once more, she was loathe to let it go. If she could, she would freeze time now and remain in this happy moment forever. Soon enough the two girls reached the rocky, black beach and pulled themselves ashore, Aerea breathing hard. Despite her bravado, the current had been strong, and her muscles had strained to keep her from being thrashed upon Dragonstone’s rocky foundations. As she struggled to catch her breath, she just lay on the rocky beach for a second, her eyes appraising the sky. She could only imagine how liberating it would feel to be able to fly though that glorious expanse amongst its thousands of bright stars. The air was warm in contrast to the cold sea behind her and she found herself smiling at Aemma as she hauled herself to her feet, still dripping wet. “Let me guess, you never snuck out of your room as a child?” Aemma glanced at her out of the corners of her eyes.

“Believe it or not I did.” her friend responded as they began to walk towards the Dragonmount. “But never in my life did I jump from my bedroom window into the rough sea below because unlike you, I valued my mobility and life.” Aerea chuckled, but they both grew quiet as they approached the great mountain, both looking out for the supposedly ever present guards meant to keep the smallfolk away from the dragons. They ducked into the undergrowth as they approached the mouth of the cavern. Two torches glowed brightly by the entrance, but the Dragonguard were absent.

“Aren’t they supposed to be watching the cave at all hours, night or day?” Aemma whispered, glancing around for any sight of the guards.

“Supposedly, but they may have been called away or we might be between rounds. Either way, we must hurry.” Aerea answered softly, and they both darted towards the cavern’s gaping mouth. Ever
since she came here, one of her few places of solace was the Dragonmount and its hoard of Dragons. In fact, it was where one of the few good memories she had of her mother took place. She remembers how Rhaena had led her to the mouth of one of the mountain’s smaller caverns and Aerea had peeked in to see several sleeping baby dragons. She had gasped in delight to see the small, scaled creatures, little bigger than Dragonstone’s hounds, and her mother had smiled at her delight. She had gently taken Aerea’s hand and led her down into the cavern, making sure her movements were kept slow as to not scare the small dragons. One had awoken and stared at them with interested green eyes, slowly approaching to sniff the Targaryen visitors. It apparently decided they were safe because soon after it had curled up in Aerea’s lap and allowed her to pet its smooth, scaled body. Yet, she did not bond with that baby dragon as her mother had hoped, nor had she become the rider of some of the older ones. She enjoyed these dragons, of course, the younger ones were pleasant enough to hold and the older ones were terrifying to gaze upon, but Aerea never felt any special connection with any of them. However, there were two she had yet to meet. Her mother had warned her to stay away from the two largest caves on the Eastern side of the Dragonmount, for there slumbered the two greatest dragons of the age: Vhagar and Balerion. Both had fought in the Conquest and although once tame, had become angry and hostile after the deaths of Visenya and Maegor. Vhagar had sent many a hopeful Dragonseed running and had cooked an unfortunate knight who got too close to her cavern. Balerion was little better, and although he spent most of his time sleeping, she had heard his ferocious roars when he awoke and several smallfolk had been eaten when they tried to protect their sheep from the Black Dread’s hunger. “You’d better be right about this.” she murmured to Aemma as they approached the cavern wearily.

“They won’t hurt you, you’re a pure Targaryen.” Aemma said, although her voice sounded less than sure. Aerea winced as the stink of sulfur and rotting meat hit her nose. “And if you’re really my niece, then these two dragons are your birthright and it is your destiny to claim one. According to the song, once we enter you must tell them who you are and ask your question. Try not to show any sign of fear, or they might mistake you for a snack.” Aerea bit her lip nervously, but nevertheless entered the cavern before she could talk herself out of it. She could barely see into the dark cave despite the torches by the entrance, but in the faint moonlight that trickled in she could faintly make out Balerion’s great head. She took a deep breath and approached him. Almost immediately the great dragon’s black and red eyes sprung open, the pupils focusing on her and Aemma as black and red flames dance at his mouth. She heard Aemma whimper softly behind her, but she stared at him defiantly, knowing well that you do not show weakness in the face of a predator.

“I am Princess Aerea, Balerion.” she introduced herself as the dragon narrowed its eyes at her. “And I need to ask a question of you.” a low rumble echoed throughout the cavern and something else shifted behind Balerion, scraping against the stone floor of the cavern. Aerea’s heart stopped as a pair of Jasper eyes glared at her out of the gloom and bronze flames illuminated the cavern as Vhagar growled at the intruder.

“Oh f-” Aemma cursed, shoving her hand in her mouth to stop herself from crying out. Aerea grabbed her friend’s hand as she fought the urge to run, feeling her previous confidence drain as the two dragon’s eyed her angrily. Balerion opened his mouth in an annoyed growl as red and black flames danced amongst his teeth.

“I need to know if I am Maegor’s daughter!” she cried and Balerion’s jaws snapped shut at her words. He seemed to glance at his mate in confusion as Vhagar’s menacing growls also died. “Am I your last rider’s daughter?” Aemma squeezed her hand encouragingly as the two dragons eyed them with newfound curiosity. Vhagar made a low rumbling sound in her throat as she stretched her long neck over her brother’s girth to better appraise Aerea. “Please, tell me who my father is.” Vhagar leaned her large head down and blew a whiff of hot air into Aerea’s face. Aerea remained still as a statue, too afraid to move a muscle lest the Bronze Queen turn her to ash. Vhagar’s jasper
eyes glanced at Aemma beside her before glowering into Aerea's scared, violet eyes. She made a low call in the back of her throat and Balerion's head leaned down to hover beside hers, his black and red eyes seemed to pierce her very soul.

"Look into his eyes." Aemma instructed in a frantic whisper. "They can’t speak, but they can show you." Aerea forced herself to gaze into Balerion's dark eyes and in those ancient depths she saw her own reflection. Aemma was not beside her as she was in reality, she was standing all alone. Then Vhagar blew a cloud of steam over her, causing her flesh to prickle from the heat and as the steam dissipated she saw a figure forming behind her. With bated breath she watched as a tall man appeared behind her, with large, muscled shoulders and violet eyes. She recognized him immediately from the few portraits that remained of him, Maegor the Cruel, son of Aegon the Conqueror. He nodded at her in recognition, his eyes the same shape and shade of her own. He mouthed her name and she felt a tear escape her eyes. Vhagar blew again and slightly behind him a woman appeared from the mist. Her silver-gold hair was braided out of her face, which radiated a cold, harsh, luminescent beauty and those same violet eyes bore into her own. Visenya. Vhagar growled low in her throat and Balerion blinked. When he opened his eyes the figures were gone, but Aerea had received the answers she needed. Vhagar retreated, disappearing back into the darkness of the cave, but Balerion stayed where he was, his eyes fixated on her.

“So, I’m your master’s daughter after all.” she murmured and a low keening erupted from Balerion’s throat. His eyes bore into hers and she felt another heartbeat begin echoing along with hers. Her breathing slowed and her skin seemed to heat up from within. Balerion moved his head towards her and closed his great eyes. Without even thinking she rested her forehead against his great face, feeling a strange, potent love spring forth in her chest. She heard a voice echoing in her mind, a man’s voice, strong and powerful, but also shaking with emotion.

“Isn’t she beautiful, Balerion?” the man’s voice said, and Aerea could hear a toddler’s coos. “Her name is Aerea and one day she will be a queen amongst women.” she heard Balerion growl at the baby softly and she heard the man laugh. “Yes, she is my daughter, but that’s our little secret. Look after her if something happens to me, all right?” she opened her eyes as more tears fell and she looked at her reflection in the ancient dragon’s deep eyes. Aemma was beside her this time, but the man was also there, his hand on her shoulder, smiling at her with pride, approval, but most of all love. Then, like the mist as the sun rises, he vanished. She wiped her teary cheeks as Balerion appraised her.

“I suppose you’re mine now.” she told the dragon and he Black Dread gave her a fanged smile, as terrifying as it was heartwarming. He gestured with his head towards his back and for a second she could only stare at him in shock. Could she actually ride this famous dragon? Without a saddle? Aemma squeezed her hand again.

“Go on, it’s what you’ve always wanted.” she told her and gave her a little push towards the great dragon’s back. Aerea swallows and approached, careful not to make any sudden movements and spook the deadly creature. Balerion stood still as she clambered onto his back. She glanced back at Aemma who hadn’t moved from her spot near the mouth of the chamber.

“Come on.” she called, gesturing for her friend to climb on behind her. Aemma glanced at Balerion who seemed to nod in agreement and Aerea slowly approached. With a look of glee radiating from her faded eyes, she climbed up the dragon and settled herself behind Aerea, wrapping her arms around her waist. Balerion glanced back at them and she grabbed hold of his ridged back to secure herself. With a nod he moved to the mouth of the chamber, his gate slow, allowing Aerea to become accustomed to the movements of a dragon. He padded into the cool night air where the moon was once again approaching the horizon and gave a low growl. She looked down towards Balerion who was staring at her expectantly. “Sovegon.” she ordered and the great beast spread his
wings and jumped into the air, roaring with triumph as he flew into the clouds. Aerea laughed in delight as the wind tussled her silver-gold hair, delighting in the feelings of excitement, joy, and freedom she felt as her new dragon soared through the sky.

“I guess you are my niece after all.” Aemma murmurs, gripping Aerea tightly as Balerion continues to soar upwards. They break through the layer of clouds and into a different world. The sinking moon makes the clouds glow a brilliant white and below is only the shining reflection of the glittering sky above. “What will you do now that you know?” Aemma asks as Balerion circles around the great castle, scaring a flock of birds roosting there. Aerea hums in thought.

“I will speak with my mother.” she decides. “And then I will leave this place, forever.” Aemma’s faded eyes stare into Aerea’s with a mixture of sadness, but also understanding.

“Where will you go?” Aemma asked, looking down at the dark and quiet island.

“Who knows.” Aerea replied happily, stroking Balerion’s scaled hide. “But with a dragon I can go anywhere. I can fly to Pentos or the free cities, I can journey North, or South, West, or East. I can go anywhere, we can go anywhere.” Aemma smiled at Aerea’s joyful declaration.

“That sounds like quite an adventure.” she replies. Aerea sighs happily.

“It does. We’ll fly everywhere, Aemma.” Aerea tells her excitedly. “We’ll go where nowhere can tell us what to do or look at us with disdain and hatred.” she grasped Aemma’s hand. “We’ll let Balerion take us wherever he wants, live on the winds and be free! Perhaps we can even fly to Valyria and walk where our ancestors trode so long ago.” She turned back and watched as the stars slowly glowed above them. “Hear that, Balerion, you can fly home, we'll fly home.” Balerion roared in triumph as they rose for a final flight around the castle.

Chapter End Notes

I am actually rather disappointed in this chapter to be honest. Although I really do like the Aemma and Aerea relationship and I got to tie up a lot of plot strings from earlier chapters, I feel sort of like this chapter is a bit of a let down after so long a wait. Aerea has so much potential as a character and I feel like I only brushed the surface here, so I'll likely write another chapter from her pov in the future to try and do a little more justice for her character. As always, if you have character pov you really want to see, please suggest it in the comments and I'll see what I can do. Up next and arc on the "Feast of Friendship"
Aegon the Conqueror III-A Little Solace

Chapter Summary

Ten years have passed since the end of the First Dornish War, nearly thirteen since Queen Rhaenys was shot down over Hellholt, and Aegon the Conqueror once again finds himself in Dorne. This time, however, he has not come to conquer, but to celebrate peace, but before he toast ten years of peace and friendship, he must meet the child who forced him and his Dragon Queen to peace all those years ago...

Chapter Notes

Hi Guys,

Here is a chapter revolving around the "feast of friendship" that marked the ten year anniversary of the end of the First Dornish War and in many ways this can be seen as the conclusion of the earlier arc involving Rhaenys' death during that conflict. This chapter is lighter than the two chapters that actually took place during the war, but it still references some topics and themes that readers may find disturbing, so please read at your own discretion. However, if you are comfortable reading this chapter and you enjoy it, please leave kudos and any constructive comments you like.

I own nothing and I think this running gag is getting a bit old

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Aegon

The corridors of Sunspear were dark and empty as Aegon was led through the winding castle and his warrior instincts were on high alert. The two Kingsguards behind him watched the shadows vigilantly, hands on their swords and Aegon himself couldn’t help but regret leaving Blackfyre in his quarters. Despite the “peace” between his kingdom and Dorne, it was not too long ago that they had placed prices on each other’s heads, leading countless greedy would-be assassins to strike at him and his family. Every unexpected noise sent his heart racing and he kept his hand on the small dagger on his belt. His guide’s pace was steady, but every so often he wanted to yell at the man to proceed faster. After what felt like an eternity of walking, they reached a chamber, its door made of polished wood, and their guide gestured for them to enter. Aegon moved to open the door, but his Kingsguard put a hand on his shoulder, halting his advance and drawing his attention.

“The Queen instructed that a Kingsguard should enter any room before you to ensure your safety.” the man told him, his brown eyes shining out from under his helmet.

“Oh course she did.” he muttered, fighting the urge to roll his eyes at his wife’s overprotectiveness. Part of him wanted to push past this man and into the room, but he thought better of it. After all, it had been Visenya who had established the Kingsguard and she who had ensured he survived the
fatal bite of Dornish blades. Her caution had never led him astray as of yet, so with a grudging sigh he moved aside to allow the Kingsguard to enter first. The man pulled open the door and strode in while the second remained with Aegon outside the chamber. The room was largely empty with a single table and two chairs placed in its center. The walls were covered in intricate and impressive murals that glitter in the torchlight while a soft breeze from the open windows sent the silk curtains dancing. This room provided a picturesque view of the Sea of Dorne and the moonlight glinting off the calm water and Sunspear’s Shadow City made the place seem almost ethereal in its beauty. As promised, there was only one person in the room: Princess Deria. She turned to face him, her long dark hair, now only lightly touched with gray, swinging over her exposed shoulder as she did. Aegon glanced towards his Kinsguard who gave a nod of approval, allowing him to finally enter the room. He walked around the table and sat opposite the dark-haired princess, glaring into her amber eyes.

“Did you expect a trap?” she asked him, her smirk and accent the same as it had been ten years ago when she challenged him in his throne room.

“No, you are a woman of honor, I expect you will keep your word and no one will be harmed while my retinue is here, lest we lose the peace we are supposedly celebrating.” he answers back cordially, repressing the anger her face ignites in him.

“You, you have a guard search the room before you enter.” the Princess comments almost casually, although her body language is anything but. “That would seem to contradict your words of trust.” he smiled at her statement, although he doesn’t put too much effort into making it look genuine.

“It does, yet it is not I, but my wife, who is concerned for my safety,” he tells the princess, with a smile and confidential tone that suggests they’re sharing a secret. “She has a long memory and her distaste for Dornish Steel at her throat and anger that it was once aimed at our children’s cribs has not yet faded.” And neither, it seems, has mine.

“I suppose that is understandable. There are people on both sides who have yet to forgive the other for what happened during the war. How lucky that we are more benevolent and open minded than they.” she tells him, her eyes flashing in the torchlight like a snake’s.

“Yes,” he responds coldly, raising his chin to look down at her. “How lucky we are.” she glances towards his Kingsguard, who still stand by the door, watching the two royals intently. Their hand still rest on their sword hilts beneath their white cloaks and Aegon knows that he could order them to kill her and they’d do it in a moment. However, no matter how much he wants to, he would lose the peace and all chances of obtaining justice for his poor Rhaenys and solace for himself and his queen. She cocks her head at him expectantly, obviously unwilling to allow this meeting to continue unless they are truly alone. For a second they just glare at each other, although he knows this is not a battle he’s willing to fight. “Leave us.” he finally instructs and he sees the two men glance at each other. He wonders what exactly Visenya had instructed them to do and what she had threatened them with should they disobey her orders. He is both touched and annoyed by the lengths she had gone to in order to ensure his safety. Honestly, if she was so concerned she should have just flown here with him herself.

“My lord, we have orders-” one finally says, but Aegon cuts him off with a look.

"I know your orders, but I am your king and you will obey my commands. Fear not, gentlemen, no harm will come to me and your queen shall never know that you let me out of your sight.” he puts some mirth in his tone as he finishes his sentence, but neither of the Kingsguard even crack a smile. Oh Visenya, what did you do to these poor men?

“Very well, my king, but we shall remain outside.” the kingsguard finally concedes. They clasp
their arms across their chest, their armor clinking as they bow, before taking their leave.

“Their loyalty to your safety is admirable.” Princes Deria comments as the door closes, turning back to face him. “I would pay good coin for men like that.”

“They are the best knights in my Kingdom, loyal solely to the royal family.” he tells her, clasping his hands on the table.

“Loyal to your Queen in particular it seems.” she notes, a slight smirk playing upon her painted, red lips. “I suppose that is understandable as they owe their positions to her, do they not?” she asks, the slightest insult in her voice. He forces himself not to rise to the bait and his face to remain neutral as he nods.

“Indeed, she is the greatest swordswoman of our age. It is she who chose them, she who directed their training, and she who deals with those who disappoint us,” he answers. “And her wrath is almost more frightening than my own.”

“Indeed, I have heard so many interesting details about your Visenya. It’s a pity she could not attend this historic meeting herself.” he hears the smallest accusation in her tone. “I have long yearned to meet the infamous Dragon Queen and am disappointed to be denied her company.” he feels her eyes searching his face, looking for a weakness she could exploit, looking for a sign about whether or not she can use his Queen against him. He kept his face impassive, determined to give her no more leverage than she already has. “I’d hate for someone to take her absence as an insult and undermine our peace.”

“My queen is a busy woman with a kingdom to run and two small children to care for.” he responded coolly. “But my son is here. If he can sit amongst the people who took his mother, then peace will indeed be upheld.” the Princess gave him a tight smile.

“Indeed, it is for the children this peace was forged and it is they who will keep it. In any case, I’m glad you decided to come, part of me feared you would not. I am also pleased that you’ve pledged yourself to keeping the peace for the rest of your reign.” the Dornish Princess told him, smiling the way she had when she handed him that damn letter a decade ago, reigniting the rage he thought faded long ago.

“We both know why I did.” he responded stiffly, his tone barely concealing the anger simmering under his skin. “And it has little to do with my taste for peace.” The Princess pursed her lips at him and he revelled in how worn down she looked in that moment, a mere shadow of the woman who had ten years ago so brazenly walked into his throne room with Meraxes’ skull. Nonetheless, her eyes were still fierce and daunting and kept him on his guard. “We are old friends now, princess, so allow me to speak plainly. I came here in good faith, tired of war and hopeful my children will never have to lose what their mother and I have, but a simple gesture from my own castle could have reaffirmed our peace. I flew here, to a place I swore I’d never return to, for one reason and one reason only.” he saw her swallow nervously, the muscles of her jaw clenching ever so slightly.

“Fulfill your promise and all will be as you desire.” she sighs, her fingers fidgeting slightly on the table. His eyes followed her every movement, noted her every action and he was intrigued by her poorly concealed anxiety.

“I assure you the girl has been well treated.” she tells him, licking her lips. “No one save us knows of her true heritage and all persons involved in your sister’s captivity are dead as you wished.”

“I believe you, but you promised a meeting and I wish to see her for myself.” he answers back. She sighs, leaning back in her chair. Outside, a dark shape passes over the moon as Balerion leaps into the sky for a nightly hunt, roaring as he does. A shiver of satisfaction rushes through him as he sees
a flash of fear in the Princess’ amber eyes.

“May I ask why?” Princess Deria asks. In truth, he was not entirely sure. Part of him wanted to do justice by his sister, ensure her child, however it was conceived, was treated well and fairly. Another part of him, a part he was not proud of, wished to see any part of his beloved sister wife again, hoping to see a reflection of her in this child’s face. Yet, the real reason was not one he was proud of.

“No, you may not.” he responds curtly. “Just know it is for me and my queen’s peace of mind.” her fingers stiffen slightly as their eyes lock, both testing the other’s will.

“Very well, a promise is a promise.” she finally concedes, breaking their gaze. “I will fetch her to your presently.” She stands, her chair screeching against the stone floor as she does. “She is a girl of ten and two, King Aegon. I understand if she has caused you and your family great pain over the years, but please be kind to her.”

“I simply wish to meet her, Princess Deria.” he responds evenly, doing is best to appear entirely neutral. “Nothing more.” she pursues her lips and in her eyes he senses genuine fear. Is she truly worried he would do harm to the child? Their eyes meet for a few seconds more, amber to indigo, and he wonders if she too is reminded of their last meeting. He certainly is. “I’ll hold you to that.” she finally says and exits the room, her skirt swishing as she does. Aegon stands as the door closes and moves to the window. Sunspear and its Shadow City are truly beautiful in the bright moonlight. As he had flown here, he had seen some remnants of his and Visenya’s attack. Some keeps had never been rebuilt and still lay in twisted, melted ruins although the desert had begun to reclaim them and small plants now grew where the fires had raged. Yet, of all keeps, Hellholt was once again standing and he had fought all his instincts not to descend on that cursed place and return it to rubble. His anger had only increased as they grew closer to the capital and he had barely suppressed his fury as Sunspear, where is wife had been held for three long years, appeared before them, untouched by dragonfire. Oh how he had wished to blast it from above and bring hellfire down upon the city. He clenched his fists against the cool stone windowsill, aching to strike something. Over a decade ago Rhaenys had been tortured and raped somewhere in this castle. She had been cut, beaten, bruised, and abused in ways he couldn’t even imagine and he was here to play nice with her torturers. Aenys had been reluctant to attend, claiming that every second he was here he felt as if he were trampling on her memory. Visenya had outright refused to come for the same reasons. What did that say about him that he was so willing to come here? Was his selfishness greater than theirs? He looked up at the moon as a tear escaped his indigo eyes. “I’m sorry, Rhaenys.” he murmured to the empty night. “I’m so sorry. I wish I was stronger, that I was the man you deserved.” He wipes the tear away quickly. It would not do for the Dornish to see him weep. Another roar echoed across the land as Balerion and Quicksilver dance through the night and Aegon’s thoughts drift back to his and Visenya’s mission of grief all those years ago. They had set out to burn Dorne seeking justice for their sister, seeking a kind of solace in the destruction of those who had caused them pain. In many ways they had gotten it. They had burnt Hellholt and Plankytown, Godsgrace and almost all the settlements along the Greenblood River. People had screamed and fried, as he and Visenya burned Dorne, consummating their grief in the ashes of their enemies and although it had burned away the worst of his despair, the Dragon’s Wroth hadn’t brought her back to them and even now he still felt as if they had failed her. Perhaps that’s why he had wished to come here? To sate his guilt at failing to conquer Dorne for her, for failing to avenge her? Did that make his journey here less for her and more for himself? Visenya certainly had thought so. Their final argument on the matter still rings in his ears. The sun had been shining brightly in his study, the air warm, but the atmosphere in the room could only be described as frozen.

“Why do you insist on celebrating the worst thing that ever happened to our family?” Visenya
asked him, almost shaking with anger as she glared at him across the papers of his desk.

“Because it’s the right thing to do.” he answered softly, although he doesn’t meet her eyes. “We swore peace with Dorne and it is our duty to uphold it.”

“There are ways to do that without celebrating with the people who cut off our brother’s hand, assaulted and killed our sister, and put prices on our children’s heads!” she cut back, her voice dripping with disdain. He can’t look at her, can’t bare to see the hate he knows will be shining in her violet eyes. He keeps his eyes fixed on the papers in front of him, burning under her angry gaze.

“Princess Deria made it quite clear that the continuation of the peace we sacrificed so much for is intrinsic with this “feast of friendship”. If we do not attend, then we may lose everything.” for a second there is only silence as her eyes roam his form. He heard her sigh and move around the desk, could feel her approaching him. He readies himself for a slap to the face, but instead finds himself yanked out from behind the desk with his chair. He groans lightly as her knee slams down on his thigh and her hand presses down on his chest, wincing as her remaining hand forces his chin up, keeping him both stationary and forcing his indigo eyes to look into her violet ones.

“What did that dornish bitch promise you?” for a second he doesn’t want to tell her, wants to just continue to hide behind duty and honor, but lying to her has never done either of them any good. He glances towards the letter on his desk, marked with the sun crest of the Martells and she narrows her eyes before grabbing it, keeping her knee on his thigh as she does. He remembers how she had reacted the last time she read a letter from the Dornish Royal family, how her hands had shook, how they had curled together in Rhaenys’ childhood bed and cried, but this time her hands remain steady and no tears escape her bright eyes. She looks down at him when she’s done, moving to straddle him on the chair, wrapping an arm around his shoulders to steady herself as she does. “Really?” she asks with disdain, settling herself onto his lap.

“I need to go back.” he tells her softly, begging her with his eyes to understand. “I need to see her in the flesh, to put a face to that name.” She shifts slightly and he hisses as an arc of pleasure runs up his spine.

“Do you really?” she asks, confusion dancing across her face.

“Yes, I really do.” she arches an eyebrow at him in disbelief. “For years I’ve wondered about her, Senya. Is she treated well? Is she happy? Did we do the right thing? This is the only way I’ll ever have the answers I need.” Visenya groaned at his words, running a hand through her hair as his hands naturally found their way to her hips.

“Aegon, how many times must we go over this? We had no choice all those years ago. If we hadn’t-”

“I know what would have happened.” he interrupts softly. “Believe me, I know.” she sighs at his words, her violet eyes looking into his with a mixture of sadness and irritation.

“Well, then you also should know that you owe nothing to this child.” she tells him gently, in the same tone she would often reprimand Aemma or Maegor for a small slight. “Seeing her will not help assuage your guilt over our failure-”

“But it will!” he tells her, cupping her face with his hand, she moves again and he groans in pleasure. “I promised her justice when we agreed to peace all those years ago. At the time we only thought of ending Rhaenys’ suffering and finally ending the war, but that decision has haunted me, Visenya!” she gently strokes his face with her thumbs, wiping a tear away that escaped his eye.
“I know, brother.” she tells him. “I know how you’ve suffered.”

“Then you should understand why I’m doing this. If I can do right by Rhaenys’ child, ensure she is happy and well treated, then perhaps I can grant Rhaenys the justice we never got for her and finally.” He swallowed thickly. “Maybe I’ll finally find some solace.” her eyes met his and he could see in those violet depths empathy, but also confusion. As wise as his sister was, she couldn’t understand his motives. For her, the decision to end the Dornish War was the only one that could save their sister from years of further torture and Aenya was little more than a product of that torment. Although she didn’t blame Aenya for existing, she could never see the girl as family. She, perhaps being stronger than him, never allowed herself to think about what could have been, burying herself in her daily tasks and the problems of their young empire. Aegon’s feelings were more complex. Part of him did truly wondered if there had been another way. Could they have somehow rescued Rhaenys? Would she have survived if they had continued the war? Did they take the easy way out? Those thoughts often plagued him at his darkest moments, as he was dripping with exhaustion and despair, and he’d often find himself crying into Visenya’s breast on important dates such as Rhaenys’ name day, or their wedding anniversary. And then there was the child. Some part of his sister still lived and breathed in that girl, but she was the product of the worst thing a woman could ever experience. What was his duty towards her? Could she ever be family? Did she want to be? Princess Deria’s promise of a meeting seemed to provide the opportunity to answer all these questions that had burned through his mind and no matter how rational Visenya’s arguments were, he couldn’t give up the opportunity to finally find a little solace after so many years of confusion and sorrow. He brushed a stray piece of silvering hair out of her face. “You don’t have to agree with me, my love, but I will fly to Dorne and that is final.” she pursed her lips, but said nothing. Even if she didn’t understand his motives, she could not doubt see the intensity of the emotions driving him. “If you could find it in your heart to come with me-”

“No.” she interrupted, pulling away from him slightly and he could feel her entire body stiffen at the suggestion. “Absolutely not.”

“Visenya-”

“No, Aegon.” she took a breath, forcing herself to relax as he comfortingly rubbed her shoulders and back. “Just no. I swore I would never set foot in that damned place again, and I shall not as long as I breathe.” he opened his mouth to argue with her, but she covered it with her hand. “If you believe this will help you find that solace you have so longed for, then you have my blessing to go, but you shall fly there without me. I cannot make myself smile in the face of those who cost us so much. I will not dine with those who have our sister’s blood on their hands. As strongly as you feel you need to go to Dorne, I feel that I cannot.” He had thought to ask if it was a vision that kept her from Dorne, but his question died in his throat. Visenya’s visions had grown dark of late, no longer the ones of happy, frolicking dragons, but of dragons falling from the sky and being torn apart by the bugs below and other such ominous images. So instead kissed her hand before he bringing his lips to hers, soft at first, but slowly their kiss grew more intense and she devoured him hungrily. His hands found their way to her hair, whiles hers began unbuttoning his tunic. With a grunt he had thrown her against his desk, knocking his carefully organized papers to the floor as he lay her back against the wood surface. They had lost themselves in pleasure and when they were finally both spent she curled up against him on the floor of his study. As they lay in the afterglow of their coupling he asked.

“Do you think we’ll ever be free of this grief? Do you think we should?” her breathes had been slow and even and when he looked down into her eyes they had been filled with unshed tears.

“I don’t know, Aegon. Grief and pain are fickle beasts. I know we will never be whole without her and that no matter how hard we try, things will never be as they were, but we can do nothing else
for her now, she has gone to the next world. All we can do now is to help those who still live in
this one, like our children.” like Aenya. The door creaked open, drawing him out of his memories.
He quickly composed his face before turning around. Princess Deria entered followed by a small
girl, whose dark head of hair barely reached the Princess’ shoulder. The child was slight, perhaps
even delicate, clinging to Deria’s hand and glancing at Aegon with fearful, large eyes. Aegon’s
breath hitched in his throat as their eyes met. Although they were amber in color, those eyes were
the exact same almond shape as Rhaenys' had been and although scared now, seemed to be familiar
with the feeling of joy.

“Ellaria, this is King Aegon.” Deria murmured to the child softly as she lead the girl towards him.
Aegon was surprised by the tenderness in her tone and demeanor. “King Aegon, this is Princess
Ellaria, but you know her by her first name, Aenya.” Aegon slowly approached the pair, adopting
the smile he always wore when speaking to Aemma.

“It’s a pleasure to meet you, Aenya.” he told her, extending his hand towards the girl. She
tentatively released the Princess’ hand and put her small, trembling one in his.

“Likewise.” she murmured, although her voice was shaking. Princess Deria smiled, although it
didn’t reach her worried eyes.

“I’ll leave you two to talk for a little while.” she said, glancing down at Aenya with a comforting
look. The child’s face erupted with fear at her words.

“Mama-”

“Don’t worry, I’ll be back soon.” she said softly, before forcing herself to turn her back and walk
away. Aegon smiled as kindly as he could at the girl. She looked up at him with a determined face
although her eyes still glittered with fear.

“Just so you know, I have no memory of the woman who gave birth to me.” Aenya said seriously,
clasp her hands nervously before her. “The only mother I’ve ever known is Princess Deria of
Dorne. Rhaenys Targaryen is but a name to me, killed when I was three years old.” Aegon
swallowed, examining her face as she spoke for any trace of his sister.

“I understand.” he answered.

“I am Dornish.” she told him, although she was almost trembling. “My loyalty is to Dorne and
always will be.”

“Of course,” he replies, continuing to appraise her. “I would expect nothing less.” She licked her
lips nervously and for a few moments they just stare at each other. She seemed to be fascinated
with his fair hair and he was desperately searching for further evidence of his sister in her eyes and
expressions. Yet, the silence grew to painful even for him. “When did you learn the truth?” he
finally asked her. She looked down for a second before answering.

“I was told of my true parentage when I was seven and first questioned why my hair oils would
stain the towels and dressing gowns. When my parents avoided my questions, I stopped using those
oils for a little and found that the top of my head slowly becomes gold. Once I found that out, it
was difficult to tell me anything but the truth given how both my supposed parents have dark hair.”
she responds quickly, her words rushed and clumsy. “At first I didn’t want to believe it, but when
my grandfather confirmed what my parents said, I finally learned who my blood-parents were.”
Aegon swallowed awkwardly at her story.

"Did they tell you everything?” he asked and a dark cloud passed over the child’s face.
“It wasn’t until later that I learned how and why I was conceived, but yes, I know everything.” Her face grew even darker as she spoke, a sadness creeping into her amber eyes that seemed much to potent for a child her age.

“And why were you conceived?” he asks her, seeing, just for a second in her sad expression, the ghost of his sister’s face.

“To hurt the Targaryens, to give Prince Nymor a weapon against the Conqueror and his Dragon Queen.” she quickly exclaimed, her voice becoming high and brittle as she spoke, almost alarming in the pain held there. “To bring the Dragons to heel.” she closed her eyes and inhaled slowly. “If you have come here to hate me, I am ready. Release your anger upon me and leave in peace, King Aegon.” Aegon just stared at her in shock. For years he had wondered what he would do if he ever met his sister’s daughter in the flesh. Yet, standing here before her, he found that all his expectations were false. He was not angry at the child, but neither did he feel any special connection to her as his niece. He only felt sadness for what had happened to Rhaenys to bring this child into the world and that seemed to loathe herself and expect his anger.

“I don’t hate you, Aenya.” he told her gently, using his softest tone. “What happened to your mother is not your fault. Children are not guilty for their parents crimes.” a tear slid down her face as she stared at him in surprise for a few moments.

“You don’t want to beat or kill me?” she asked softly, meekly, as if the wrong word could result in his kind veneer shattering. He looked at her aghast.

“Of course not! Why would you think that?” he asked her shocked. She worried her bottom lip, much like Rhaenys used to when she was a child and that small similarity both exited and broke his heart.

“Grandfather always said the Targaryens hated me, that you would kill me if given the chance, that you’d do everything in your power to rob him of the weapon he had used to force you to peace.” more tears slid down her face as she spoke and in her eyes lay a great depth of pain that seemed to reflect his own. “He said your queen could use spells to kill me in my sleep, that my cousins and brother would reject me if they knew of my existence, and you’d slit my throat if you ever laid eyes upon me.” Aegon could only gape at her in horror as she told him this.

“Aenya, we would never hurt you.” he told the shaking child, the father in him longing to approach and comfort her. “Your aunt and I ended a war to save your mother from further pain and protect you and any siblings you may have from death. I only wanted to meet you today to see for myself that you were treated kindly and help earn justice for my sister by protecting her child.” And for more selfish reasons, but she needn’t know those. She furrowed her brow at him.

“So you don’t hate me?” her voice was so soft he could barely hear it as she wiped her tears from her face. He took a small step towards her, reminded in her quivering lip and teary eyes of his own daughter.

“No, I don’t hate you. I hate what happened to your mother, I hate that Prince Nymor leveraged her and you against us to force a truce, but I do not hate you. You are my niece in blood if nothing else and I am no kinslayer. Neither is your aunt.” he keeps his tone soothing as he speaks, watching as more tears escape her eyes. “We are not the monsters Prince Nymor made you think we are and we will never hurt you. We don’t hurt little girls in Westeros or threaten to burn them alive as Nymor had done all those years ago. She wiped her face with a shaking arm. “Have you been treated well?” she sniffled at his question.

“My grandfather was cruel to me, but mama has always been good and papa was too when he was
alive. They always treated me as if I was born from her own womb and my siblings are all kind to me. My brother Tye can be rude at times, but he taught me how to shoot a bow so I forgive his tasteless pranks.” she smiled sweetly as she spoke. “And my sister Symera has never said a harsh word to me in her life and has promised to teach me how to apply colors to my face, as well as how to design buildings as she does.” her brow furrowed slightly. “My grandfather didn’t like seeing me with them, but all has been well since he passed to the next world.” he nodded, smiling at how her face lit up as she spoke of her adopted siblings and family. Yet, a part of him was also sad as he saw the girl blossom with joy. Despite his examination, he saw very little of Rhaenys in Aenya and he began to realize she wasn’t really Aenya at all. He knew beneath the dark dye her hair was silver-gold, but her skin, her eyes, mannerisms, even her voice, were Dornish. Rhaenys may have given her a Targaryen name, but any hope of her secretly being a dragon in Dornish skin died as she began to truly live and the only similarity to his dear sister was in her expressions and the shape of her face. “I am happy and contented.”

“I’m glad for you.” he tells her, and although his last vain hope of recapturing Rhaenys dies in his chest, he truthfully is. For years he feared she would be abused by the Dornish for the crimes of her mother’s family. He had been scared that by agreeing to let her be raised in Dorne he had caused not only Rhaenys’ suffering, but that of her child as well. It was a relief to see she had not suffered unduly for his decision. His sister may be gone forever, and although Aenya never had the chance to exist, Ellaria was happy and loved and perhaps there was some small solace in that.

“And you should know my father is dead.” she blurts out, causing his blood to run cold in his veins.

“How?” he asked, struck both my relief, surprise, and disappointment.

“Your sister killed him one night when he tried to get a sibling for me off her. She strangled him when he let his guard down.” Aegon’s heart broke, but also healed within his chest at her words and he had to fight the tumult of emotions that erupted in him from that revelation. Part of him was proud of Rhaenys, for never giving up, for fighting until the end, for not allowing her captors to break her. Another part was enraged beyond words that she was treated so and he longed to rip that man apart. A final part, the most barbaric sliver of his soul was disappointed as he had wished to kill the bastard himself, to see the light drain from his eyes as Blackfyre spilt his putrid blood. Aenya, no, not Aenya, but Ellaria scanned his face and although he kept it completely blank, she took his hand gently, although hers were trembling, and squeezed it kindly. “I never knew her, but I think, had she lived and I been born to her in different circumstances, I would have been as proud to be a Targaryen as I am a Martell. Please don’t worry about me anymore, King Aegon.” he smiled as he fought the emotions climbing up his throat.

“I don’t think I have to, Ellaria.” he answered softly, feeling his heart letting both her and her mother go. The door cracked open and in walked Deria Martell. Both of them turned to her as she strode in and the Dornish Princess’ face instantly relaxed to see her daughter still alive and untouched.

“Are you satisfied?” she asked Aegon, her voice perfectly even despite the desperation in her eyes. He looked down at the small girl in front of him, whose hand still clasped his. “Yes, I am.” he knelt down to be eye level with Ellaria.

“I’m glad I met you Princess Ellaria, I hope you have a long and happy life.” she smiled at him, a bright, happy smile that was the mirror image of Rhaenys’. Seeing that smile brought back memories of happy days and he knew that he’d done the right thing all those years ago.

“I’m happy I met you too, King Aegon.” she responded shyly before throwing her arms around his
neck in a quick hug. Her body was small in his arms, and so light, but she squeezed tightly with a surprising hidden strength. "I will always be Ellaria, but I shall keep the name Aenya close to my heart, in honor of you and your sister." She then smiled at him a final time, before running out the door. As he watched the dark haired princess retreat, he baid goodbye not only to her, but to Rhaenys as well. Her daughter was safe and happy and she could rest easy until he and Visenya came to join her in the next world. His heart could rest now.

“Was she what you expected?” Princess Deria inquired as Aegon stood.

“No, but she is happy and loved and that is all I can ask.” he turned to Princess Deria. “You shall have your peace princess.” just as I have found a little bit of mine.

Chapter End Notes

So there you have it, Aegon's journey through grief is finally over. At first I had this interaction going, well, let's say not nearly as well. In earlier drafts, Aenya was a lot more resentful and cold towards Aegon and I actually considered having him kill her at one point before deciding that was not a plot thread I could follow through with, both because that's awful and because it undoes so much character development in both him and Visenya and would open up even more plot holes. In any case, thanks for this suggestion as it was immensely satisfying to finally tie up the first generation's dealings with Dorne. Next up is a requested chapter from the POV of Brynden Rivers, aka Lord Bloodraven. Also in the works is another requested chapter surrounding Aenys I's birth, so look forward to those in the future. If there are any povs, situations, or characters you'd like to see explored, feel free to comment and I'll do my best to oblige.

PS. I might end up moving this chapter so that it and "the song of love and rememberance" and "when once there were three" are a trilogy(feel free to comment if that makes more sense)
Brynden Rivers: The Price of Glory

Chapter Summary

Brynden Rivers is no stranger to love, duty, and sacrifice. Yet when he finds himself dragged through time to before the Iron Throne is forged he finds himself face to face with the woman whose sword he bears. As he attempts to discover why the gods have sent him here, he is forced to confront his own values as he attempts to ensure the Conquest proceeds as planned and left to wonder: what would he sacrifice for eternal glory?

Chapter Notes

It's been a bit, hasn't it?

This chapter has been one of my favorites to write so far and deals with the continued question of: how did Visenya react to Aegon's decision to take Rhaenys as a second wife? and more importantly, why did she stay with him if she objected? Given what little we know about Visenya in canon, I can't imagine she just accepted that situation. It also allowed me to explore Brynden Rivers(Lord Bloodraven's) connection to Valryian Magic and work in a little bit of him and Shiera Seastar, both of whom I find fascinating as characters. Anyways, I hope you all enjoy it and if you do, please leave KUDOS and any constructive comments you like.

Disclaimer, disclaimer, I own nothing

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Brynden Rivers

Brynden studied Shiera’s sleeping face as moonlight shone through the large windows of her chambers. Many songs had claimed that to look upon Aegon IV’s youngest daughter was to be blessed by the gods themselves and as his blood-colored eyes roamed her heart shaped face, he found he could believe it. With her luxurious silver-gold hair spread out around her face like a halo, her full, perfect lips opened slightly, and her mesmerising eyes closed and relaxed, she looked the true picture of a resting goddess. How many artists would impoverish themselves to paint her sleeping form? How many already had? His heart clenched painfully as he thought of the many men who had lain where he lay. Did they love her as he did? He imagined they probably thought they loved her, but not the way he did. No, love was too small a word to describe the feeling that burned within his chest for his half-sister, this goddess amongst men. What he felt for her, his star of the sea, was so much stronger and more painful than the love poets sang about.

Ever since he had set eyes on her, his heart had belonged to her, and he knew he would give almost anything to have her love him, although he knew well that he was not the only man, or woman for that matter, to feel this way. His, no, not his, *Lady Shiera belonged to no one but herself*, was without doubt the most beautiful woman living, perhaps the most beautiful woman in all of history,
and he knew countless men had fought for her honor, and died of heartache and despair when they
either lost it or failed to receive it. Most of these men he at best pitied, at worst ignored, but Aegor,
their older half-brother who had long hated him, held a place in his sister’s heart he would never be
able to take back and the fact that she loved another cut into him more painful than any sword
could. Poets claimed that love and pain were tightly intertwined and that one could not have the
former without the latter, but he laughed at their pretty verses. They truly knew nothing of love,
nor of pain. If they could feel what he felt every moment of every day, well, let’s just say if they
lived as he did there would be many less poets to sing Lady Shiera praises.

She clutched him in her sleep and he held her tightly as she whimpered, plagued by the terrors that
lurked in the realm beyond this one. He gently placed a kiss on her forehead to comfort her through
the nightmare. When Shiera was awake, she was like the sun, the only thing people could see, but
when she was asleep she was but a woman. A woman who had broken his heart twice already and
would probably break it many more times before the end, but a woman nonetheless.

“How it hurts to love someone like you.” he whispered to his exquisite paramour. She sighed in her
sleep, her hand resting right above his heart. He kissed her forehead a final time as his red eyes
became heavy and closed, leaving him in darkness. No sooner had his sight been dimmed when the
familiar beating of raven’s wings began rustling at the edges of his consciousness. A high, shrill
call echoed from far away, seeming to sing through every muscle in his body and he knew he was
no longer awake. Yet, he was not fully asleep either. He was in the world between and he felt a
strange, dark presence watching him, pulling him, calling to the latent darkness within him. His
blood eyes searched the infinite void of night before him, and the empty black depths seemed to
curl and twist before his sleeping eyes into the vague shape of a great, hooded figure. In many
ways, Brynden couldn’t see the figure at all, but he could sense it, perceive it, feel the darkness
darker than the rest lurking out there, its attention focused on him. A familiar low chanting echoed
out of the darkness, the words more magic than sound, and Brynden immediately tried to wrest
himself from this half-world. He tried to awaken and return to the waking one he had just left, or
dive deeper and reach the world of dreams, but neither world opened the door to him. He was
trapped by this creature, by its attention. There was no escaping what was to come. The chanting
increased in volume and intensity as it always did and Brynden shut his eyes in preparation for
whatever vision was about to present itself to him. Another high cry echoed around him and then a
rush of cool air hit his face. For a second he dares not open his eyes, not out of fear of his
surroundings, but out of consideration for his vision. He had long since learned that dream or no, a
dramatic change in lighting always brought pain. When he finally opens his eyes of famous red he
groans out loud.

“Gods be damned.” he muttered, glancing around. He was on an unfamiliar shoreline under a
crescent moon with the sea stretching out to his right and a dark forest to left. A cool seabreeze
whipped his cloak and he looked down to see himself dressed in his armor. “Why am I here?” he
asked the empty night and something, a bird hopefully, called out behind him. He turned around,
feeling the scabbard of his sword brush his leg, and spotted the small orange glow of a fire a little
ways down the rocky shore, almost obscured by the canopy of trees. “If a child dies before me, I
will renounce you once and for all.” he threatens the night, although nothing stirs to tell him that
the gods heard, or cared, for his words. The breeze propelled him forwards and he slowly
approached the fire. He expected there to be a group of people sleeping around it, or perhaps a
figure in the flames(now that had been a strange dream), but all he found when he reached the
orange light was the fire itself, crackling under the stars. He barely had time to consider what this
all meant before his legs were knocked out from under him and he fell to the ground with a thud.
As he recovered from the sudden impact, he heard the low cry of a sword being pulled from its
sheath, hissing as it swung through the air. He instinctively rolled away from his unseen assailant
and this turned out to be a good move since where he lay soon found itself slashed by a dark blade.
With a curse he drew his own sword to face his attacker, glaring into the darkness as Dark Sister gleamed in the firelight. Whoever they were, they were smart and kept in the shadows out of his sight, and unfortunately, seemed to be able to see him, unlike the vast majority of people in these damned dreams. He kept the fire at his back, his eyes scanning the perimeter of light admitted by the flames, his senses on high alert. Suddenly, a blade flew at him from the right and he barely managed to parry in time, escaping death by a matter of inches. He counterparried the attack, pressing his opponent back, but they disengaged and rolled to his other side, still staying in the half-lit zone on the perimeter of the campsite. They dashed back into the darkness and Brynden cursed every god he could think of for putting him through this. His attacker came again, except this time they went low, forcing him to almost jump into the fire itself to avoid being stabbed through the leg. His opponent seized this moment of unsteadiness and bound his blade, forcing the guards of the two swords together, sending blue sparks shooting in all directions. As their blades remained locked Brynden finally got a good look at his attacker’s sword and he realized, with an unsettling chill, that they were identical. Dark Sister bit into a mirror of herself, and when he looked up into his opponent’s face he found himself staring into determined violet eyes. Those eyes were the last thing he saw before his opponent used his distraction to press the bind up, forcing the guard’s of the two blades against his face in a blow that sent him back to the ground. His last thought as his vision went dark was about how strange it was to lose consciousness in a dream. He also decided if the Valyrian Gods ever asked him for another favor, he’d spit in their faces.

When he next opened his eyes it was no longer night and the sun shone brightly down upon him, causing his skin to feel pleasantly warm and the sea before him to glow a bright azure color. Birds danced amongst the clouds gracefully and the air smelled of a mixture of forest dew and salty sea air. Most people would have been awed by the beauty of this scene, but Brynden had long lost his taste for these damn visions of times long past or yet to come. Also, any appreciation he had for this place was lessened by the fact that he was lying on his stomach, stripped of his armor with tight ropes biting into the skin of his wrists and constricting his ankles. He searched the area for whatever god had brought him here, but neither the darkness nor any of the others were to be seen, no doubt they were still skulking in the black depths between worlds, leaving him to do their work for them while they sat back and watched.

“Fuck you all!” he yelled at the bright blue sky. “Fuck you, and fuck your damn dragon dreams and fuck-”

“Now, now, there’s no need to be so vile.” a voice said in a tone dripping displeasure. He quickly turned his head towards the voice and his eyes fell on a woman sitting about three yards from him, resting her back against a large rock with her sword, the mirror image of his own, resting in her lap. “Who are you?” he asked as the woman stands, sheathing her sword at her side. She smirks at his question.

“You’re in no position to ask question, sir.” the woman replies, in a voice he immediately recognized as one touched by magic. “You are my prisoner and it is I who shall ask the questions. Who are you and how did you find me?” He stares long and hard at her as she fearlessly approaches him. Something about this woman is familiar, not just her sword, but her face and mannerisms. Clearly she was of Valyrian descent, her hair was a rich silver-gold pulled away from her face in half braids, glittering in the bright sunlight like woven metal, and her eyes were the richest violet he had ever seen, a more potent purple than his father’s had been and more brilliant than Queen Naerys’. Yet, although her face was familiar, he could not place where he had seen it before. She narrowed her eyes at his silence. “You’d best answer before I decide to use less pleasant ways of making you speak.” her hand drifts to her sword hilt and he decides not to test if he can indeed feel pain in this dream.
“I am Brynden Rivers and I didn’t so much as find you, good lady, as much as be thrown into your company by the will of the gods.” she raised a skeptical eyebrow at him and Brynden was only further tormented by the familiarity of that expression.

“The gods you say?” she asked, her voice low and he was surprised that she appeared neither amused nor offended by his outlandish explanation. “Which one?”

“The one who lurks in the dark, but is more black than night and colder than ice.” He tells her and he sees the slightest bit of tightness creep across her beautiful face, although not as beautiful as Shiera’s, which he supposed is hardly a fair comparison since no one could compare to his half-sister.

“You speak of the gods and your armor bears the dragon of my house, yet you say you are a Rivers, a house whose name I have never encountered.” she responds, continuing to approach him, although now that he had mentioned the gods she seemed slightly more weary. “What Kingdom do you swear to?” he furrows his brow at her in confusion.

“I swear allegiance to Westeros and the Iron Throne.” she narrowed her eyes at him and for the first time he was genuinely afraid. Her eyes were striking to behold, but also too old for her face, as if they had seen too much for their years, much like his own often appeared to be. He glanced towards the rock where she had sat and spots his own weapon and discarded armor. If only he- “Don’t even try it.” she tells him, her tone ominous. His eyes flit back to her face as she glared down at him and a memory, a thought, nags at the back of his mind. This woman’s beauty was more distinctly Targaryen than Shiera’s was, cold, harsh, and austere in a way only a Targaryen could be. Some poets had called it the dragon’s beauty, describing it as:

Bright as flame, cold as ice, beautiful to behold, but deadly in its ferocity

Or at least that’s what the songs claimed. If tales were to be believed, his father had once had it, although Brynden could hardly imagine that since whatever handsomeness Aegon the Unworthy possessed had been buried beneath his layers of fat, excess, and wine. His cousin Daena was said to possess a little of it, although hers was more tempered than the woman’s before him. Perhaps she resembled his brother Daemon, or the famous prince he was named for? She knelt down before him, grabbing his chin with her hand, forcing his eyes to stare into her own. They seemed to pierce his mind, pulling at the strings of his heart, examining every inch of his soul.

“You know of the Iron Throne?” she asked, her voice so low he could barely hear it.

“Of course I know of it. My father sat upon it and now my brother.” he answered, gritting his teeth as his head pounded in protest. It seemed he could feel pain here after all. “But you don’t know of it, do you?” her eyes narrowed and she drew a knife from her belt. He stiffened as the silver blade glinted in the sunlight and winced as it traveled along his back. For a second he fears she’s going to cut him open, but then he feels the ropes on his wrist snap, quickly followed by the ones around his feet. He sighs in relief as he rolls his wrists, rolling over to look at the sky. The woman retreats, picking up his sword and armor and returning them to him.

“I’m sorry for restraining you, but I had to be sure you were not one of my husband’s emissaries.” she tells him as she gently places his possession at his feet. He sits up slowly, feeling his muscles ache from his hours spent in those restraints. He brushes his long white hair out of his face as he looks up at her.

“You are a woman traveling alone, you do well to take precautions.” he says, eyes fixed on her as she slowly stood. He moved to grab his armor and hears his joints pop and crack as he does. “But the least you could do to make it up to me is tell me your name.” she stares at him for a long
moment with those cold eyes and he wonders if perhaps he should not be so forward.

“I am Visenya, Visenya Targaryen.” she tells him and he nearly falls back to the ground. Gods be damned, this was not what he had expected. “It is a pleasure to meet you, Brynden Rivers.” she extends a hand towards him and he instinctively brings her hand to his lips, pressing a light kiss on her knuckles.

“The honor is all mine, my lady.” he murmurs against her slender hand, his mind still reeling. It all made sense now. The sword, her face, those eyes, all of them he had seen before, although he must admit her portraits did not quite do her justice.

“Perhaps not, if the gods brought you here as you say they did.” she mutters, withdrawing her hand. “For whenever they are involved there is only pain and you may wish you never had this honor.”

“Perhaps, but it is not often one gets to meet a woman such as yourself. Personally, I welcome the risk.” she raises and eyebrow at him as the smallest smile teases the corner of her mouth.

“How very brazen of you to say, but that boldness reeks of ignorance.” she tilts her head slightly as she appraises him, as if he was a particularly perplexing puzzle for her to solve. “I assume you have no knowledge as to why the gods dragged you through the sands of time back here?” he shakes his head, fastening his belt around his waist once more.

“You are correct, as always they are not forthcoming about their motivations. I expect it has to do with you since, veteran as I am at these lovely visions, this is the first time I have ever spoken to someone during one of these damned dreams. Most of the time I am just a forced, powerless observer.” Visenya hummed thoughtfully as her eyes drifted off towards the horizon.

“Another visitor once said something very similar to me during one of their visits, although if I recall correctly, his explanation was interlaced with curses about not being able to become inebriated.” she chuckled lightly and he was left wondering how many times the gods had dragged people like him back to speak with her. “Those of us who can see often lose our voice when pulled from our own time, except, perhaps, when we meet others like us.” her violet eyes focused back on him. “Dragon Dreams, the gift and curse of our line, are they not?” he nods, pulling his cloak around his shoulders, although he neglects to put on the rest of his armor since he was beginning to feel the heat of the bright sun above them despite the cool seabreeze.

“Blessings from our gods are always so.” he answered, slowly approaching her. “They cannot give without taking, cannot grant without demanding payment in return.”

“Indeed.” she responds wearily. “And they take and take until the only thing left is our tired bones, and even that they will take eventually. It’s isolating, is it not? Being in the focus of the gods?”

“More so than those untouched would think. Speaking of isolation, it strikes me odd that a woman of your status and importance is out here all on her lonesome. I know we are not well acquainted, but may I ask why you’re out here all alone, my lady?” Visenya glanced at him from the corners of her eyes and a shiver up his spine, both from the coldness there and from the heat that suddenly erupted across his neck. He had just gotten some thing’s attention. “I assume it has to do with your husband, Aegon, since you feared he sent me.” she turned to face him fully, crossing her arms over her chest.

“You may ask, but I am unsure whether I should answer since you have me at a disadvantage, Lord Brynden. You know much about me, but I know not about you. I have no proof that you are who you claim and no insurance you will not turn on me the second I let down my guard.” her words
were cold, but he could easily see through her half-hearted deflection. Underneath the calm sea of her face lay a raging ocean. He could feel, rather than see, that Visenya was deeply conflicted about something, something that flashed in her eyes like pain and pulled at her lips like sadness. He felt the attention of the gods grow stronger, like a torch held close to his head, almost painful in its intensity, and he knew his presence had something to do with whatever had driven Visenya out here all alone. Perhaps if he unraveled her mystery and set it right, the gods would allow him to return to his own problems.

“Your fears are well founded, Lady Visenya, but you also have me at a disadvantage. You know the present of which I am ignorant and I believe it is there that my reason for being here lies. Meanwhile, I know but the chronicles of the past, which for you are the future. Perhaps there is a way to rectify both of these problems and help me return to where I belong.” she arched an eyebrow at him, although her eyes glittered with the subtlest spark of amusement.

“What would you suggest?” she inquired as he approached her once more to stand but an arm’s width from her. She was quite tall and at this proximity their eyes were almost level. Not to mention Visenya reeked of magic so strongly he was almost intoxicated by the power rolling off her. He had never felt such pure magic in his life. Part of him wondered if it had to do with dragons, but that was a line of thought for another time.

“A game of knowledge, information for information. You tell me what I need to know and I shall enlighten you about myself and the future, although I shall have to tread carefully as to not unduly change my present.” she pursed her lips at his comment and he sensed a reluctance in their tenseness. “Unless you have something better to do with your time than satisfying the whims of the gods?” she glanced towards the sky for a moment and part of him thinks she’ll refuse, but when those violet irises meet his again he sees within them interest outweighing her caution.

“My dragon returns for me within the hour, you have until she arrives to play your game. You may begin,” She sits down on the rock behind them and looks up at him expectantly. Despite his suggestion, his mind is suddenly blank. For as long as he could remember he had heard tales of this woman and of all his ancestors, he always empathized with her the most. How hard it must have been to be a woman like her, a skilled warrior, an expert tactician, but utterly unappreciated by those she loved most. It was a tragic tale he found he could well relate to. There were so many questions he wanted to ask her, but strangely enough, a question sprung from his lips that he hadn’t even been considering.

“Why did you think your husband had sent me?” something asked using his mouth, forcing him to sit down beside her.

“Because Aegon has been searching for me for over a week and I know he’s offered a reward to anyone who brings him information about me and my dragon. You appeared so suddenly I thought he had found a sorcerer who was powerful enough to break through my concealment.” she answered, her face as blank as the sea behind her, although that same dark glint appeared in her eyes. The heat lessened slightly, signalling the gods encouragement. “My turn.” her eyes roamed his face for a second in thought and he wondered if she was disgusted by the pallor of his skin or the crimson tint of his eyes. “You said your father was the king and now your brother is, but your family name is Rivers, not Targaryen. Why is that?” Brynden raises an eyebrow at her question, relieved she was not so superficial as to focus on his appearance, but also confused as to how she knew so much about her own future. She had already revealed that she experienced Dragon Dreams, but her knowledge of the future seemed much more specific than the visions he experienced would reveal. She said others had visited her from other times and part of him wondered if it was from them she had learned everything. It was also highly probable that her visions were stronger than his due to her strong connection to magic. “Well?” he blinked,
remembering he owed her an explanation.

“I am called Rivers and not Targaryen because although the king was my father, his queen was not my mother.” he grimaced at that last part. Although his mother had been a mistress and not a wife, she had been well-loved by his father’s court and Brynden still idolized her to this day. He had never quite forgiven his father for discarding his mother, even if it had been in part thanks to the connivances of Lord Bracken, but despite his hatred and his mother’s wishes, his father had still been king, so they were powerless when he announced that Brynden should return to court. It was there, in the cesspool of depravity that he was forever labeled-

“So you’re a bastard?” she asked, although her tone held no hostility or disdain, which was usually the case when people spoke of his status.

“Yes, I’m a bastard. One of many, actually.” he answered back softly. A look of disappointment flashed across her face, but he gets the distinct feeling that it's not aimed at him, which is a nice change from the usual jeers. Despite the fact that he and his many siblings had been legitimized at his father’s death, the stink of bastardy had never truly left them. Daemon tried to hide it behind his pure Targaryen heritage and Blackfyre’s dark blade; Aegor tried to bury it behind warrior’s skill and military glory; But he and Shiera knew that no one would ever see them as anything other than what they were: the product of their father’s lechery and lust. “That does not disgust you?”

“Why should your parentage disgust me, Brynden? I have two brothers, one legitimate, one not. The fact that one was not born from my mother matters not to me. The only disgust I feel is directed towards my father and yours, for failing to keep their vows of marriage.” a dark cloud passed over her face and the intensity of the heat on the back of his neck increased once more. He almost wanted to yell at the sky that he fully understood the path they wanted him to pursue and there was no need for their interference. Perhaps if they kept this up he would.

“If only all thought as you did, Lady.” he told her, studying her face once more. If the gods were not watching and coercing his every move, he might have wished to ask her opinions about other subjects, but the gods had not dragged him through the sea of time for such trivialities. “Now for my next question: you said your husband is seeking you, why?” Visenya sighed, running her fingers through the braids of her hair.

“Of all the things you could ask me, you ask about my marriage?” she murmurs, glancing at him. “One can’t help but wonder why.”

“By the rules of the game I owe you no reason for my questions.” Brynden replies, although he thinks she probably suspects what is prompting his line of inquiry.

“He’s seeking me because I left him, and he knows if he doesn’t find me I will likely never return.” a cold hole opens in Brynden’s chest and he suddenly realizes why the gods have sent him. He glances towards the sky almost in contempt. As important as the marriage of the Conquerors was, he wondered why they had sent him of all people to ensure it survived whatever conflict was currently tearing it apart. “My turn once more.” he nods, although he’s still trying to figure out the nuances of this strange task he’s been presented with. He figures he’s supposed to somehow convince Visenya to return to Aegon, but without knowing exactly what has happened-

“You have a very interesting birthmark and I can’t help but ask if you think it resembles something?” a familiar shame bubbles in Brynden’s chest, interrupting his train of thought. He breaks their gaze and looks off towards the birds flying high in the sky above them.

“Some say it looks like nothing.” he responds as evenly as he can. “Many say that it is simply a disfigurement, nothing more. However, Shiera and Daeron like to claim it looks like a raven and I
like to believe that is the case.” he looks back at her and feels her eyes trace his right cheek. He fights his instinctive urge to hide it behind his shoulder length white hair.

“You are ashamed of it.” she comments, reaching out a hand. “But you really shouldn’t be. May I?” he nods, closing his eyes as her fingertips lightly brush the edges of his birthmark, tracing its outline across his neck and cheek. “It was once claimed that the gods marked their chosen with images such as these. Birthmarks were their way of showing the world who their seers and augiers are.” he feels her fingertips stroke the skin lightly, although he still dares not open his eyes.

“Do you have one?” he asks, his voice barely above a whisper. He had never felt quite so intimate with someone before, even though her touch was only the barest of whispers against his skin.

“No, but I used to wish I did when I was younger. I wanted one like Daenys the Dreamer, but no matter how hard I tried, my skin remained as it was.” he feels her hand drift away and for a moment he misses her touch. “This Shiera is right, it does look like a raven.” he opens his eyes at her words and he knows that she can no doubt see the great sadness leaking from his heart.

“I’m glad you think so.” he responds, before almost groaning as a brief burning sensation lashed across his neck. For beings that lived without the constraints of time, they were mighty impatient. “But turning the conversation back to you, why are you hiding from your husband?” he asks, forcing them back to where the conversation had begun. Her face stiffens and hardens at his question, becoming more like porcelain than skin. Clearly he had hit a nerve and he recognized the familiar defense mechanism. After all, how many times had he himself employed it when faced with the painful and cruel?

“Because he betrayed me and our marriage.” her voice is hard as she speaks, but under it are currents of pain that run deep. He recognized that sound of mixed longing, sorrow, and despair. It is how his own voice sounded when he spoke of Shiera.

“How?” he asks, continuing to push her, although he wishes he didn’t have to. Damn the gods, they should do their own dirty work for once! She glances at him for a long moment and he wonders if she’ll claim that’s another question and avoid answering. Instead, she sighs wearily and says, “He married our sister, broke his vow to love only me out of lust and selfishness, and threw everything I have worked all these long years for away as if it was nothing. He showed me the man he truly was and burned everything our grandfather worked so hard to preserve!” her voice becomes high and almost a little manic as she speaks, as if everything within her has slowly been building and she can no longer contain the power of her emotions. “And the saddest thing is that I probably could have forgiven all that if it wasn’t for the fact that now I know, without a shadow of a doubt, that he loves someone else the way he was supposed to love only me. He betrayed our love and our future and that betrayal, of all the betrayals, is the one that I could not stand for.” she shakes her head and looks out at the water. No tears dot her face, no anger disturbs that porcelain facade, but her eyes resemble shattered glass: sharp, beautiful, but broken, and oh so very sad to look upon. “You probably think I’m just a silly, emotional woman now.” she murmurs softly. He slowly reaches out and takes her hand, feeling a strange kinship with his ancestress. After all, who better than him can understand her pain?

“No, I don’t think that. I think you just feel betrayed, hurt, and lost.” he comforts her softly, lightly stroking her hand with his thumb. She turns to face him, her violet eyes boring into his red ones. “You sound like you’re speaking from experience.” she says, tilting her head slightly to look at him. He can hear the magic in her voice again, and the words seem to spring from his lips without him meaning to speak.
“I am.” he clears his throat, but before he can stop them even more words sprint their way through his parted lips. “I am in love with someone, someone who I care for more than my own life, someone I would sacrifice almost anything for, but she doesn't feel the same way for me and even the lesser love she gives me I must share with another.” his voice wavers slightly as he speaks, but now that he’s started, it seems he can’t stop. “Her name is Shiera, Shiera Seastar and she is the most beautiful woman in the seven kingdoms.” a wry smile creeps across her face. It seems they’ve both decided to drop the ruse of the game at this point. Now they were just two kindred spirits, speaking as if they were old friends.

“I’m sure she’s glad you dub her so.” Visenya tells him softly.

“What need does she have to be glad when every other man who sees her sings her that same, or greater, praise?” he asks and he can feel all his heartache boiling under his skin, almost hotter than the fire the gods were pressing against his scalp. Her eyes scan his face and it seems to him that she can read all the pain his words cannot convey.

“There is no pain like the knowledge that your love is not fully reciprocated.” Visenya murmurs, glancing at their still clasped hands and intertwined fingers. “Because although they love you, their heart will never truly be yours and every time you wish they loved only you, you feel-”

“Selfish.” Brynden finishes. “Selfish for wanting more of them, but also hurt because you feel that you deserve all they can give. You would give the world for them, but they would not do the same for you and oh, what agony that causes.” Visenya nods mournfully at his words, her fingers tightening slightly around his own.

“We accept the worst from those we love and that gives them more power than any one should have over another.” she comments, her words resounding with his own tattered heart.

“And we settle for the scraps of what they give us because any part of their love is better than none.” he finishes and for a second they just sit in silence.

“Perhaps we should fight not to settle.” she finally whispers, her voice almost shaking with anger. “After all, we are dragons and dragons settle for nothing less than what they desire. If those we love refuse to give us what we deserve, then perhaps they do not deserve us.” her voice is loud and defiant, almost inspiring, but Brynden can see through them. After all, words are easy, but-

“If it were that easy, then it wouldn’t be love, now would it?” he replies. “After all, according to the Valryians love is-”

“Sacrifice, I know.” she interrupts, eyes downcast. “Wanting those you love to be happy even if you are not:

\[
\text{Jorrāelagon iksis daor easy (Love is not easy)}
\]

\[
\text{mērī fools claim issa (Only fools claim it is)}
\]

\[
\text{jorrāelagon iksis bāne hae iā zaldrīzes's perzys (Love is hot like a dragon's flame)}
\]

\[
\text{jorrāelagon iksis supple hae iā vīlībāzmio's egros (Love is supple like a warrior's blade)}
\]

\[
\text{jorrāelagon iksis se act hen taking narys naejot save another (Love is the act of taking poison to save another)}
\]

\[
\text{jorrāelagon iksis se act hen kneeling sīr aōha lover kostagon hepnon (Love is the act of kneeling so your lover can climb)}
\]
Silly poem, really.” she says after she recites it, her Valyrian perfect in every way.

“Silly it may be, but there is truth in its simplicity.” Brynden comments, continuing to chafe under the god’s focus. He knows what he must do, but part of him wishes they would just let them all be. What business is it if there’s whether he convinces Visenya to stay with her husband? Nevermind, that’s a silly question, of course it’s their business, they have as much at stake here as Brynden does. “It is why I have never left Shiera, even though all sense has told me to flee from her as if she was diseased. I would also wager that within the poem lies the reason you have remained in the Blackwater Bay.” she glances at him coldly and he knows if he stops now she may still escape. If it were up to him, he might leave the choice to her, but he presses on. “You could be leagues from here by now. You could have flown to the farthest reaches of this continent, or to the Free Cities of Essos, but you remained here. You may claim to be hiding, but really, I think we both know why you didn’t leave.” You can no more leave him than I can her. Her eyes burn with anger as his words die and he fears she’ll storm away before he can complete his task, but then she deflates and the anger turns to sadness.

“I suppose you’re right.” she admits softly, her eyes looking down at the grey stone of the rock below them. “Part of me does hope that Aegon will find me and that all will be well if he does, but if my marriage was the only thing at stake I would be long gone. Finding another man to love is easy enough, Lord Brynden but we both know what would happen if I did truly leave him.” her voice grows cutting as she speaks. “It is not just my fate here, but the fate of everything. I have seen what the gods want of me and our family, I have seen the deals my grandfather worked hard to forge in order to ensure his descendants were the kings and queens we deserved to be. If I choose my own happiness now, if I fly off beyond the horizon, everything will be lost and so much will have been sacrificed for nothing. There will be no Conquest, no Iron Throne, no Targaryen Dynasty.” she sighs and wipes a tear that escaped her eye. “It is not just Aegon I am abandoning, but the future, my future, my destiny. If I were stronger, I would fly from here right now and throw everything away, but instead I am too weak to decide and have remained within reach of either.”

“No, Visenya, if you were weaker you’d already be gone. You cannot lie and claim you do not love your husband anymore than you can claim you don’t desire the future the gods have shown you.” the pain in his head intensifies even more and he has to fight to keep his vision straight. “I cannot ask you to stay with your husband because you love him. I am the last person to wish that fate upon anyone, but what is at stake here is much greater than a single marriage and I think, deep down, you know that.” she sighs wearily. “You are a warrior born to be a queen, Visenya Targaryen, and you know that to achieve great goals, sacrifices must be made. Love requires sacrifice, but glory requires even more.” his words are not quite his own in that moment and he knows someone, something, is using him to speak once more. Damned gods. “Glory requires everything, it requires blood, and death, and sweat, and tears, but if achieved, it grants you something love almost never does: immortality. You cannot lose everything because of foolish Aegon. He does not deserve to take what you can achieve away from you.” he takes a shaky breath, feeling his tongue become his own again. “Do not stay for him, but for your future, for your own glory. Sacrifice your happiness now so you can live on for eternity.” her eyes are wide as she listens to him and he squeezes her hand tightly, bringing it to his chest. “The gods chose you as their seer, your grandfather trusted you to achieve his dream. Rhaenys cannot do what is necessary, and Aegon certainly can’t conquer Westeros alone, not without you at his side. Prove that they all chose well.” he tells her, although he feels as if fire is licking his throat. Visenya’s eyes are wide and he wonders if she can see what has possessed him in that moment. Suddenly, a black speck
appears in the sky above them and the spell of the moment is broken. Both of their eyes are drawn
to it as it lets out a high, shrill cry and slowly descends towards them. At first Brynden fears it’s
one of the gods, but as it draws closer he sees that it is but a normal raven, a scroll tied to its leg. It
lands beside Visenya, flapping its wings at her until she releases it of its burden. It shrieks a final
time before taking off into the sky once more, a black speck in a sea of bright blue. Visenya stares
at the small scroll in her hand before she unfurls it, her eyes quickly scanning its contents. He
watches her read it once, then twice, before crumpling it in her first.

“Is it from your husband?” he asks lightly, feeling the heat begin to lessen.

“No, it’s from my mother.” Visenya answers, her face forlorn. “She’s begging me to come home to
her.”

“Will you?” he asks as a roar echoes from far away. He glances towards where the sky meets the
sea and sees a huge shape appear on the horizon, its scales burning bronze in the noon sun. He was
almost out of time.

“I won’t go back for Aegon.” she mutters and for a second he thinks the gods will incinerate him
on the spot, but then her shoulders slump in defeat. “But you and the god that just used you as a
mouthpiece are right.” she sighs and wipes a single tear from her face as she looks up towards her
approaching dragon. “I suppose part me always knew that I could never truly be free.” The dragon
grows ever closer and he is awed by Vhagar’s majesty. But also by Visenya’s willingness to
sacrifice her personal happiness for eternal glory. If he were in her shoes would he make that
choice? “Thank you for reminding me of who I am, Lord Brynden.” he raises an eyebrow at her in
confusion.

“And who is that?” he asked. Her violet eyes meet his red ones and he can easily see how she
would lead armies one day.

“I am Visenya Targaryen, first of her name, Lady of Dragonstone and one day I will be hailed as
the Dragon Queen, but above all that, I am the oldest dragon of my generation.” she swallows
thickly, but her eyes are hard and determined. “I am bound by duty to preserve and strengthen my
house. I have never sacrificed my duty for emotion before and I shan’t start now. I may be bound to
him by my heart, but my connection to Aegon is stronger than that. We are bound by a common
future, a shared glory that will make our names famous.” she squeezes his hand a final time. “The
gods may take you home now, Brynden, you have done what they require. They shall have their
empire and I shall have my throne, even if I must sacrifice my heart to achieve it.” her eyes flash,
like lightning in an approaching thunderhead. “I suppose there are worse things to lose than that.”
his vision goes black, her hand dissolves in his, and he finds himself back in the darkness between
worlds.

“Well done.” the the creature in darkness hisses, although he hears its voice in his mind rather than
out loud. “You have served us well. You should be proud.”

“I helped you rip her heart from her chest.” he yells back, unable to see even his own body in this
thick blackness. “I have little reason to be proud.”

“You did no such thing.” the voice replies, seeming to approach him even though he couldn’t see a
shift in the space before him. “This was always her path, you simply ensured she stayed on it. She
understood her duty, Bloodraven, as you should.” he growled low in his throat at the creature’s
words.

“I want no part of your concept of duty! I shall no longer be your instrument, not after causing
Visenya such suffering-”
“Hold your tongue and gain some perspective, child.” it hisses at him, its voice bordering on anger. Somehow the blackness around him becomes even colder than before. “She suffered yes, but only fools believe you can achieve anything of merit without suffering. Her name is immortal now, the stuff of legends. You claim we gave her suffering, but no, we gave her glory, we gave her eternity! We always honor our debts and rest assured we paid our dues to her in full, as we will do to you if you continue to serve us well.” suddenly a space seemed to open up before him, a shape darker than the blackest night, more sinister than the thickest shadow, colder than anything he had ever felt before. He feels something, perhaps a hand, perhaps not, begin to compress his throat, so cold it burned his skin, cutting of his breath. “Break with us, however, and you will know suffering like you’ve never known before. You think you know pain now, Brynden Rivers? Test us and we will rip your world apart until you are nothing. Visenya understood duty, it’s time you learned yours. Do as you are told, child, or else we will make you.” then he is thrown into the dark void. He is falling, down, and down, and down for eternity, and he feels as if he will be consumed by this place. Just as he thinks his heart will stop, that his body will break, his eyes fly open and he awakes with a start, breathing hard. He glances wildly around him and is relieved to find himself back in Shiera’s bright chambers. His half-sister groans beside him, beautiful to behold in the sun shining through her windows.

"What is it, love?" she asked groggily, her mismatched eyes fluttering as she looks at him. “Are you well?” she sits up slightly, putting a comforting hand on his bare shoulder. “Was it another dream?” he looks at her, beautiful in the morning sunlight and although all is well, he feels as if he is still lost in that darkness. “What did they make you do this time?” He can only shake his head at her question.

“My duty.” he responds, feeling the echoes of heat slash his neck. “And I will regret it for the rest of my days.”

Chapter End Notes

I always thought that Aegon’s decision to wed Rhaenys would have felt like a pretty large betrayal to Visenya, no matter the relationship she and her siblings shared. By Targaryen Tradition, she would have probably been engaged to Aegon pretty much since birth and would have expected to be his only wife and the only Lady of Dragonstone, so it could not have been pleasant for her, even if they were not as romantically attuned as I have them in this story. I also have always really wanted her to and Bloodraven to meet, so much so that I actually put it as one of the original pairs when I first began this series all those months ago(it's been like two, but it feels like forever). I feel like they could have a really nice connection and would love to explore that possibility in the future, whether it be in this series or another.

This story also forced me to touch up on my knowledge of Aegon the Unworthy and oh boy, I forgot how depraved and disgusting that entire era was. However, it's also inspired me to maybe write a series about him, his mistresses, and the Great Bastards. If that's something you'd be interested in seeing, please let me know in the comments. Anyways, thanks again for the wonderful suggestion and I always welcome more, so feel free to leave them all down in the comments and I'll see what I can do. Aenys’ birth is still in the works, but I also have another chapter whose concept I think will be really interesting, so stay tuned!
The Handmaiden

Chapter Summary

Silence has fallen across the city of King's Landing since the death of Dowager Queen Visenya Targaryen, and as the city holds its breath in fear of what King Maegor will do now that is mother is dead, Gwenys Shawney, once a handmaiden to Queen Rhaenys, recalls her own experience with the Great Dragon Queen and how history so often turns on those who shape it...

Chapter Notes

Hi Guys,

Well, this chapter certainly took longer than I thought it would, but here it is at long last. This chapter, from the POV of a handmaiden, is the first in a small arc that portrays a series of events involving the Original Trio from the POV of non-Targaryens, in this case a handmaiden. It was a suggested premise and I actually have really enjoyed exploring how a newly conquered citizen of Westeros would react to the Conquerors and how they might have perceived their new rulers. Now, fair warning, this chapter is very non-canon, so if that bothers you, maybe skip this arc in general. If you are interested in this premise though, I hope you enjoy it! If you do like my take on an outside perspective of the Targaryens, please leave KUDOS and any constructive comments you like.

I own nothing, blah, blah, blah

See the end of the chapter for more notes

The Handmaiden

A deep, potent silence hangs over a grey King’s Landing. The streets are deserted, the bells quiet, and even in the Streets of Silk not a person stirs. I watch the city through the windows of my chambers in the Red Keep and wonder if all the inhabitants are filled with the same fear and anxiety that had permeated the royal court since the Bronze Queen’s terrifying roars echoed across the Blackwater Bay and news Queen Visenya’s death reached us. Behind me, my husband and youngest son talk in whispered tones, their voices kept low as to not disturb the fear-filled quiet of the court and city.

“With the Dragon Queen dead the king’s days are numbered.” my son, Brendyn, murmurs imploringly to my husband. “Without her, it will not be long before the smallfolk turn their loyalties to Aenys’ line.”

“Careful with your words!” my husband, Lord Arneld Paege, reproaches anxiously. He glances around with worried eyes, his greying hair glittering in the torchlight, as if the walls themselves had eyes. Some would call his anxious glances paranoid, but he was right to be worried, the king had ears everywhere and any inkling of treason was stamped out with a quick and heavy hand. My
son purses his lips, his eyes narrowing in slight contempt at his father’s fear.

“You know what I say is true. Queen Visenya may have been cold and unforgiving, but people say she was the last one who could curb the king’s worst impulses. With her gone—” “I know.” my husband interrupts, shaking his head,

“I know.” We all do. Half the reason for this thick fog of silence was that the whole city feared what King Maegor would do now that his mother had left this world. The other reason was, of course, that the order of mourning which had originated from the King’s Holdfast, although even if he hadn’t given the official order the whole court would have been garbed in black in an attempt by courtiers to win his favor. Yet, these same courtiers, who now veiled themselves in dark mourning clothes, were already spreading stories about his cruelty as a child, slowly turning history against him and Queen Visenya. When once their strength had been heralded and praised by those tired of King Aenys’ weakness, now their actions were being painted as cruel, unjust, and malign. Slanders were running rampant, whispered in the depths of night and shadows of the city: monsters born of incest, tyrant, usurper, kinslayer. I shiver as I think of that last one, even though I don’t believe it. How quickly history turned on those who had made it. It’s not as if any of these people whispering ever really met King Maegor or Queen Visenya, most had barely even seen them, but if anything that had helped spread the more dramatic and unbelievable stories. After all, the less people knew, the more they were willing to believe.

I am proud to say I am not one of those people, and unlike those who sneered in the shadows, I can still remember when Aegon the Conqueror ruled Westeros and Queen Visenya was in her prime. In fact, it was in this golden time that I first laid eyes on the famed Dragon Queen. It was a warm day in 3 AC and she had just returned from rooting out dissent and rumors of rebellion in the farthest regions of the Reach. Back then I was not a Lady of House Paeg, or a noble lady at all, but the youngest daughter of a petty knight of the Riverlands, attending the parade not as a lady of the court, but as one of Queen Rhaenys’ many handmaidens. When I first came to court I had been scared of the Conquerors, too scared to meet my new mistress’ eyes let alone speak in her presence, but Queen Rhaenys soon dispatched my fears. Despite the tales of King Aegon and his wives, I found Queen Rhaenys to be lovely in almost every way. Not only was she beautiful with her long silver-gold hair and bright, glorious smiles, but she was also kind-hearted and lively. King Aegon was more subdued than his queen, more stoic and regal in a way that sent my older cousins blushing when they whispered his name to each other in the safety of our shared chambers, but he too was hardly the monster the songs had claimed he was. Additionally, he treated Queen Rhaenys with such adoration and love that I nearly forgot that they were siblings, almost. When that thought did come rushing back, I always hid my disgust behind a handkerchief or hand. I found I was quite good at forgetting things like that which brought me comfort and that included the King’s polygamous marriage. Queen Visenya was absent during my first few months at court, and with her gone it was easy enough to ignore the more egregious slights to the Seven, but then Queen Rhaenys informed us we would be attending the parade to welcome her triumphant sister-wife home. That night my cousins and I had stayed up long into the hour of the wolf, each whispering about how court would change with Queen Visenya’s return and how we could reconcile this with the Faith. In the end, we all agreed we would simply hide our discomfort behind smiles and try our best to forget our new monarchs’ blasphemies. Young as we were, we understood that practicality often outweighed religious devotion. The pomp and circumstance of the event certainly helped us all move past our reservations. I remember how loud the music was as we stood in the Courtyard of the Aegonfort and if I close my eyes I can still feel the tight grip of my friend Elena as she clasped my hand in anticipation. I can still hear the steady beat of the returning men as they marched through the streets of King’s Landing, all looking handsome and dashing in their bright armor. When they knelt before their King and he thanked them for their service, all us maidens had rushed forward to throw garlands of colorful flowers around their necks, blushing and giggling as
we did. Yet, as we all laughed, the sun was blotted out by a huge beast and a roar pierced the air so loudly that I swear the city itself trembled. We all fell silent and glanced skyward as Queen Visenya soared above us on her beautiful bronze dragon and even I couldn’t suppress the gasp of fearful delight as the great beast landed before the assembled court. The dragon’s scales gleamed brightly in the ample sunlight and for a moment I thought that Queen Visenya could be nothing less than a goddess of war reborn. Sitting astride her dragon, with her long gold-silver hair braided behind her back and her violet eyes shining from beneath a crowned war-helm, I wondered if perhaps this was but a dream plucked from my wildest imagination. King Aegon too seemed in awe of her for a moment before stepping forward to greet her.

“My Queen.” he intoned, his voice weighted with stoic gravitas.

“My lord husband,” she answered, her voice equally regal, “I have brought peace to your kingdom and won great victories in your name.” King Aegon nodded and approached the dragon, coming to stand directly next to the beast’s scaled shoulders.

“You have indeed and for that we honor you and are forever in your debt,” he reached out a hand to her. “Welcome you home.” both their faces were the pictures of regal dignity as she slid off her saddle and took his hand. For a moment their eyes remained locked and the entire world seems to hold its breath, but then the king’s mask breaks and a smile tugged at the edges of his full lips. He gently placed two hands on either side of her helmet and removed it, revealing her face, and allowing him to pull her to him in a passionate kiss. Queen Rhaenys laughed happily and clapped, an act which the rest of the court followed once we had regained our wits. Elena blushed a bright red beside me, watching the seen on her toes beside me.

“I hope my husband kisses me like that!” Elena declared as we watched King Aegon finally release his wife. Once again, I did my best not to think about their family resemblance. “Do you think she’s taller than the Conqueror?” I tilted my head slightly as Queen Rhaenys approached her siblings, her arms outstretched to embrace her older sister.

“No, but he’s not taller than her by much, half a hand at the most, but almost certainly less.” I watched as Queen Rhaenys hugged her sister happily, her famous smile lighting up the world for all to see. All of her handmaids, including Elena and I, clapped happily at their reunion, knowing full well how much our lady had missed her sister. “She’s certainly much taller than Queen Rhaenys though.” Elena’s blue eyes searched the two queen’s forms, nodding in agreement.

“They’re more different than I thought they would be.” I nod in agreement at my friends words, watching as King Aegon whispered something in Queen Visenya’s ear. She was right, Queen Rhaenys and Queen Visenya were in many ways opposites of each other. They shared the famous Valyrian features, of course, that silver-gold hair and purple eyes, but Queen Rhaenys was sweet and almost delicate, with a soft, warm kind of beauty that reminded me of the sun, while Queen Visenya was tall, strong, and lithe, with a beauty that was as cold and harsh as the moon. She glanced over the crowd of courtiers and her eyes met mine for a moment and a chill ran down my spine. Her eyes were beautiful, but utterly pitiless, a color purple so bright they almost glowed in their intensity. Yet, it is not the coldness in her eyes or their bright color that I found unnerving. I can’t quite put my finger on it, but something about those violet eyes were strange, almost otherworldly to gaze upon. I glanced down in deference and the next time I looked up, her gaze had returned to her husband, but I couldn’t shake the feeling of cold that had wormed its way into my heart. “Did you see that? She looked at us!”

“I did see, but did you notice-”

I’m dragged out of my memories by a low cry and the sound of a body hitting the floor. I drag my
gaze from the desolate city and turn to see my son on the floor, my husband looming over him, breathing hard. I immediately rush to Brendyn’s side, glaring up at my husband angrily.

“What is wrong with you?!” I yell, my voice shattering the layer of quiet we’ve all been working so hard to preserve. My son, a boy of eight and ten, groans as I lift his head into my lap, seeing the red welt on the left side of his face begin to bruise before my eyes.

“Stay out of this, Gwenys.” Arneld replies angrily. “I must teach him a lesson lest he doom us all! Did you hear-”

“No, I did not, but this is uncalled for.” I cut back, stroking my fallen boy’s hair lightly. “Control yourself! You could have woken Liya!” the mention of our good-daughter and her delicate condition stays my husband’s angry hands. His jaw clenches and his fingers still itch to strike our boy, but he turns on his heel and storms to our bedchamber, closing the door with a low thud behind him. My son glances up at me with his green eyes he got from me and I lightly kiss his forehead. “You must be more careful, Bren.” I tell him softly. “Your mistakes can not only harm you, but your family as well.”

“I am trying to save us.” he whispers back.

“I know, but speaking treason is not the way to go about it.” I tell him softly as I embrace him, hugging his shaking form to my bosom. He hides his face in my shoulder, considering himself too old to cry and I pretend I don’t feel his tears on my gown. I know he doesn’t mean to speak treason, nor is he duplicitous by nature, he’s just scared. Scared like the rest of us of what will happen now. For so long Queen Visenya had been a looming presence at court, her son’s chief supporter, most trusted advisor, but also a strangely reassuring figure since she was the one entrusted by King Aegon to protect his kingdom. Yet, now she was gone, and those of us old enough to remember the terror of the Faith Miltiant’s uprising feared a return to instability and violence. It’s strange that although so many hated her, they still relied on her life to ensure their prosperity and safety. I close my eyes and I’m once again whisked back into my memories.

Elena sat beside me as we feast at grand tables laden with food. Minstrels play gay tunes that dance through the air and the whole of the Aegonfort’s great hall is filled with mirth laughter. The Conquerors sit at the grand table, King Aegon at the center with his two queens seated on either side of him, although the ball is namely in Queen Visenya’s honor and she is truly the center of everyone’s attention. The Great Lords constantly approach the table of honor to introduce themselves and give her lavish gifts, while all their ladies sing her beauty luxurious praises. Many of Queen Rhaenys’ ladies were not among this crowd and opinion was split about whether we were supposed to like her or despise her. Was she a rival to our lady that we must disparage at all costs, or was she a dear friend who we must lavish with praise as we did our own Queen?

“She’s so fierce.” Cersye Charlton mutters softly, her eyes tracing Queen Visenya’s form as the Queen speaks with the dark-haired Hand of the King.

“Too fierce, my brother says.” Elisabeth Leygood replies dismissively, taking a swing of wine as she does.

“Your brother also said she was more man than woman, but from where I’m sitting he certainly seems to have changed his mind.” Elena cuts in, nodding to young Leygood, who was pressing his lips to the Queen’s knuckles. The boy nearly trips over himself as the Queen smiles down at him, drawing giggles from the rest of the ladies at Lady Elisabeth’s expense.

“She’d be prettier if she didn’t have all that muscle.” Kiera Vance butts in once our laughter dies. “My septa always said being muscled like a man stops the gods from giving you a baby.”
“The gods have nothing to do with it, Kiera.” Lady Ceryse teases with a smile. “Even our Queen Rhaenys would only get a baby from King Aegon’s cock.” Lady Kiera turned so red she had to hide her face behind her napkin while the rest of us laughed.

“Her figure doesn’t really matter anyway,” I say once our laughter quiets and Lady Kiera’s face has returned to its usual golden complexion. “Everyone knows it’s her mind the King values. Beautiful as she may be, there’s a reason he sent her to deal with the unrest in the Reach.” I turn my eyes back to the grand table. “But if I were a man, I certainly wouldn’t neglect my husbandly duties when it comes to her.” my companions all gasped at this declaration, both entertained and awed by my daring.

“Has our Gwenys fallen in love at last?” Elena asks mockingly, her lips twisting into the mischievous cat-grin she was so famous for.

“She’s no worse an object for my affections than Orys Baratheon, Elena.” I quip back and our company all laughs so bawdily that it draws the eyes of some nearby courtiers. As the conversation drifts back to its usual paths of marriage, lords, and court gossip, my eyes remain focused on the table. Despite my earlier praise, there was little doubt that, of the two queens, Queen Rhaenys was more conventionally attractive, but there is something about Queen Visenya that is more than beautiful, something that catches and holds my attention almost like magic. She sits tall and straight in her chair, her black and red gown shining in the torchlight, emphasizing her full figure and no doubt sending most of the young men in the room drooling into their boar. Her hair is loose around her shoulders and the circlet of rubies on her brow only completes the picture of regal perfection. She glances over the crowd and once again I am captivated by her eyes. They are different than Queen Rhaenys’, a darker more intense shade than hers, but lighter than King Aegon’s, yet, once again it wasn’t the color that was so unnerving. Her gaze was piercing, the gaze of a predator, of a general, of a warrior, but she didn’t have the same weary, war-torn look that my father and brothers had. Her gaze met mine again and I got the distinct feeling she was seeing right into my soul and her eyes—“Her eyes are too old for her face.” I murmur and Elena stops whatever bawdy joke she was making to look at me with a confused smile.

“What?” she asks and I risk another glance at the royal table. Queen Rhaenys is over with the minstrels and mummers, her dress a rich red and almost scandalously low cut. I see King Aegon’s face darken slightly as he sees a minstrel take her hand to show her how to play his ornate instrument, holding her a little closer than proprietary would dictate. Queen Visenya’s gaze flickers from Orys Baratheon to her husband and I can see her follow his irritated line of sight. She gently takes his hand, and their fingers entwined perfectly in a way that reminds me of my favorite love stories. She asks him something and his gaze flickers to her as he nods, bringing her hand to his lips and holding it there for a long moment. “What do you mean her eyes are old?” my friend asks, drawing my attention back to my immediate surroundings. The whole of our group is looking at me now and I swallow nervously.

“Her eyes just look too old to be in a face that young, it’s like they’ve seen more than she could have lived to see.” I say softly. Lady Elisabeth hums softly in thought.

“Well, she’s not that young. Queen Rhaenys is over thirty and Queen Visenya is supposedly older than both her and King Aegon. I imagine she’s probably no younger than three and five, but who is to say with these Targaryens? Perhaps that’s young for them.” we all glance at her in worry. We all adhered to an unspoken rule not to mention certain things about our King and Queens, namely their incest and polygamy, but it was best to avoid speculating about the Targaryen family, lest someone mistake it for slander and have us dismissed. Lady Kiera clears her throat. “Or perhaps it’s because,” she glances around quickly and leans forward, “she’s a sorceress!” she says the last part in such a low whisper that I almost can’t hear her. Now all of us are truly worried.
“You can’t be serious?” I inquire, my words prompted by a perverse interest and perhaps that extra cup of wine. She nods in confirmation.

“My brother said there’s a rumor that she sees more than what we do, that she can see into the future. He said that she is responsible for the Field of Fire, that she saw it before it happened.” Lady Kiera leans back as she finishes. “Naturally, this is all just hearsay.”

“I heard she dabbles in the dark arts.” Lady Elisabeth adds, her pretty face scrunching in thought. “And that she and the King have performed strange rituals to their bloodthirsty gods.” I glanced around anxiously, worried someone would overhear this conversation. Luckily everyone seemed too drunk or occupied to pay us any attention, but this conversation was still asking for trouble. Lady Ceryse also seemed to be worried, because she quickly diverted the conversation back to safer waters.

“I wonder if she’s in need of handmaidens? I’d certainly be interested in serving her to see if any of these rumors are true.” she says brazenly, causing all of us to relax as we began to speculate which families would have the honor of serving the Dragon Queen. I spare a glance back at the King and Queen and sense a change in the air surrounding the royal family. King Aegon, Queen Visenya, and Orys Baratheon were all speaking intently, the slightest of frowns tugging at the Hand of the King’s lips. Queen Visenya’s brow was furrowed in thought and my eyes were drawn to her nimble fingers, which were twirling her fork almost without thought. Her dress was sleeveless and I caught a brief glimpse of the inside of her wrist as she lifted her hand to gesture for Queen Rhaenys to rejoin them at the table. The white flesh of her inner wrists were lined with straight, pink scars, as if she’d been repeatedly cut there.

“You’re smothering me.” my son says, bringing me back to the present. I blink and stare down at him.

“Sorry.” I whisper as I release him, wiping a stray tear from his face as I help him get to his feet. His cheek is already bruising and I figure it will be a few days before the discoloration fades.

“What do you think will happen, mother?” he asks me, gently taking my hand from his face and clasping it in his.

“Do you really think the Dowager Queen was all that stood between King Maegor and madness?” his voice is barely audible for fears of malevolent ears listening.

“In truth, son, I don’t know. King Maegor has always been quicker to use force than his predecessors and I don’t know the inner workings of the King’s Council well enough to guess how much influence his mother truly had over him.” I keep my voice low and even, trying to put as much comfort as I can in my words. “But whatever happens we will be all right.” his eyes flit from my face towards the window and I can tell he doesn’t believe me. “You should go check on Liya, ensure she is comfortable.” my son’s lips pursed at the mention of his wife. They had never been particularly close and if not for her current condition he probably would have set her aside long ago. “She is the mother of your future child, you owe her this much.” he sighs, but he is a good boy who was raised to respect duty, so he heeds my suggestion and goes to his bedchamber, closing the door softly behind him. In truth, I know not what will happen to the realm now despite my assurances to my youngest boy. My oldest son, Jon, had written that the Lords at Riverrun were growing increasingly weary of King Maegor’s brutish ways and my daughter had reported similar disquiet from her home in the Reach. It makes one wonder how many stirrings of rebellion were kept quiet by Queen Visenya’s looming shadow. Despite all the upheaval since King Aegon’s death, I, and many others it seems as well, had always rested well knowing the Queen Visenya was still alive. I trusted her above all others to ensure the Seven Kingdoms did not fall to ruin. My
husband had often teased me for my ardent faith and loyalty to her, claiming, like the friend’s of
my youth had, that I was no doubt in love with her. I always responded that she was the first love of
my life, but that wasn’t quite true. I was faithfully loyal to Queen Visenya, but not because of some
youthful adoration. No, I was loyal to her because I owed her my life.

I can still remember the night I had sprinted through the seemingly abandoned corridors of the
Aegonfort. My heart was pounding in my chest so hard and fast that I could barely breathe, but I
could still hear their drunken laughs and threats behind me so I kept running.

“Come now, sweetling, there’s no need to run!” the drunk male voice of my betrothed cried,
dripping with lust. I nearly tripped on the hem of my gown as I rounded a corner. I caught a
glimpse of my pursuers as I did and the sight of their four glistening, bawdy faces caused me to run
even faster.

“The harder you make this for us, the worse it will be for you in the long run!” one of his equally
intoxicated companions called, earning evil sniggers from the rest.

“You can’t run forever sweetheart, we’ll have you one way or another, may as well make it
pleasurable for us all.” the third one declared, his words slurring from the ale, mead, and wine he
had consumed that night. I had long abandoned my shoes and my bare feet slapped against the
carpets of the floor and stone of the staircases. It seemed that no matter how hard or fast I ran, they
were always right behind me and I knew, as did they apparently, that I could not run forever and
the way to my chambers was currently behind my four pursuers. As I rounded another hall, my
eyes fell upon the entrance to a staircase and without thinking I sprinted down it, almost tripping
over my feet in my haste. As I reached the landing below, I turned my head briefly in order to
gauge my lead on my pursuers when I suddenly ran into someone. I gasped as I bounced off a
warm body and fell to the floor, my legs and behind aching from the impact. For a second I was too
stunned to move and the only thing that drew me out of my shock was the drunken threats of my
pursuers which echoed terrifyingly from the top of the stairs from whence I had come. I glanced up
at the person I had run into and my eyes went wide when I found myself staring into the unnerving
violet eyes of Queen Visenya. Although she had been back at Court for almost six months, I still
hadn’t lost my reverence or fear of her, and as always the sight of her eyes petrified me and even if
my lungs had not felt like they had been set on fire, I probably would have been unable to speak.
For a second, all I did was stare at her in awe and fear as my breaths came in agonized, breathy
gasps. She looked down at me with mild irritation as behind her two guards glared at me in
annoyance.

“I’m,” I gasped between my words, “so sorry, my-” I inhaled slowly, “queen.” Queen Visenya
offered me a hand, which I shakily took, as she appraised me with those cold, knowing, violet eyes
of hers.

“My lady do you wish me to-” one of the guards began to say, but she held up a hand to silence
him, her eyes boring into my scared green ones. I had seen those eyes tear apart lords in front of the
Iron Throne and watched as seasoned warriors sweated under their violet gaze. Elena and I had
always wondered why these great men were so intimidated by a woman, even one as fierce as
Queen Visenya, but now I understood. Never before had I seen eyes as cold and knowing as hers. It
was as if she could see all my secrets from a glance and already knew the worst parts of me.

“Why are you running so quickly at this time of night, child?” she asked me softly, and her, like her
eyes, seemed to have some strange, compelling power that demanded answers from my trembling
lips.

“I’m running,” I whispered, “because-” but then my throat goes dry and my voice dies as I hear my
pursuers traipse down the stairs, still yelling their threats. My face clenched with fear and Queen Visenya must have seen it, for she put a hand on my shoulder and drew me to her side, putting a protective arm around me as my drunken fiance and his loathsome companions tripped their way down the staircase. The air around her had a comforting smell of exotic incense and the warmth emanating from her skin seemed to soothe my terrified heart, it was almost as if she was a small fire. I saw her guards each put a hand on their sword hilts at the offensive group's approach and part of me hoped they’d slit my damn fiance’s throat.

“Your cunt better be tight for all this trouble!” he yelled. “Or else-” they round the corner of the staircase and their piggy eyes go wide at the sight of Queen Visenya.

“My lord,” my fiance, Lord Wayne says, trying his best to look dignified in her presence. He smiles that charming smile he had used to convince my father to betroth me to him in the first place and it made my blood boil in anger. “How lovely you look this evening.” Queen Visenya raised an unimpressed eyebrow at him and his companions, and I curled closer to her, almost hiding in her red cloak. I saw them all shift uncomfortably as she gazed at them, and I knew they were feeling the effect of her eyes as I had. “I’m afraid you’ve just been accidentally caught up in a game of ours.” My blood runs cold with fear as he talks, my heart hammering in my chest.

“What game would that be?” the queen asks, her voice cold and cutting. He smiles once more, although it looks slightly more strained than usual, and his brown eyes sparkle prettily under his mane of golden hair.

“It’s a tradition, really, you see we chase a willing maiden through the halls-”

“In order to what?” she interrupts, her eyes narrowed at the quartet. “Have your way with her?”

No, of course not, these jokes are just part of the game.” he defends, looking to his companions, other second and third sons of minor lords who will inherit next to nothing other than their names when their fathers die. “The girl cowering behind you is simply playing her part, and why should she not, beautiful Gwenys Shawney is my wife-to-be.” he reaches out a hand, smiling at me coyly. “Come now, my dear, I think we’ve played long enough.” I clutch the queen closer, looking up at her with scared eyes. For a moment I’m scared she’ll give me over to them, scared she’ll believe his lies and charming grins.

“Is what he says true?” she asks me and I shake my head violently.

“Everything save that I am his betrothed are falsehoods.” I whisper and she glances back at them. Her guards shift uncomfortably behind her. She turns to the one on the right, a tall man of perhaps two and eight whose hair was as black as night and eyes as blue as the sea.

“Ser Shett, I have never heard of such a barbaric tradition, have you?” the guard shakes his head at her question, his hand still resting on his weapon.

“No, my lady, it is not.” he tells her, glancing at the youths with barely disguised disgust.

“Well, it’s from the Riverlands, your majesty.” My fiance’s friend, Mace Ryger, cuts in, licking his lips nervously as he speaks. “The Shetts are from the Vale and would not know of it.” The Queen raised an unimpressed eyebrow.

“Is that so?” she asks coldly and the red-haired man on my fiance’s left nods.

“Yes, only a man from the Riverlands would know this game.” he says and I can see in his eyes how proud of himself he is. Queen Visenya glances down at me and I shake my head at her, trying
to convey how false all these men are playing. She turns to the other guard, who is shorter than the other, but with broad shoulders like a bull that would intimidate most men in a tourney.

“Ser Smallwood, you are from the Riverlands are you not?” the guard nods his brown-haired head in confirmation.

“Yes, my lady.” he responds dutifully.

“And have you ever heard of such a tradition?” she asks, although it is quite obvious to everyone at this point that she does not believe my betrothed’s lies.

“No, my lady. Never in my twenty-six years.” she nods and turns her eyes back to the contemptible quartet and in them writhes such disgust and abhorrence that I’m surprised they all don’t fall to the ground like the worms they are.

“Then it seems we have a case of attempted rape on our hands and such acts of debauched-violence will not be tolerated in my court. You heard what they said?” both guards nod at her words. “Good, arrest them and have them thrown into cells until they sober up.” The guards advanced at the four men, swords drawn and the red-haired coward pushes my fiance towards them as he sprints off. Their fourth companion does the same to Mace Ryger, sending both tumbling to the floor in a pile of drunken limbs. The other two sprint up the stairs as the guards restrain my struggling fiance and his cock of a friend. “You can’t do this!” My fiance yells angrily as his hands are tied behind his back.

“My father won’t stand for this!”

“Your father is but a lord, sir. Need I remind you who subdued your proud father? Or How?” she asks calmly and spark of joy erupts in my chest as his face goes pale with fright and I almost laugh at how pathetic he looks. "I'm glad we have an understanding."

“My queen, should we go after the other two?” Ser Shett asks and the Queen glances down at me.

“Do you think you’d be able to identify them if necessary, Gwenys?” she asks me lightly and I nod in response, surprised she knew my name. “Good, then no, Ser, you don’t have to. Take these two to the cells. I will ensure Lady Gwenys is safe.” the two guards glance at each other for a moment.

“My queen, we’re not supposed to-”

“Leave me unguarded, I know. I will return directly to my chambers and will not stir from there until you two return. Now, do as you are told.” the guards share another look, but nevertheless they listen to her and bow before leading my disgusting fiance and his depraved friend away. The Queen keeps her arm around me and leads me back through the castle. It is late and the castle is still mostly empty, something I find that I am grateful when I begin crying. At first I tried to muffle it, and mostly succeed, but all the fear and terror I felt from my flight suddenly pours out of me in rivers of tears that will not be stopped. Queen Visenya says nothing as we walk, simply leading me into her chambers and sitting me on a plush chair by the hearth. She hums softly as she rummages through her drawers and then presses a soft handkerchief to my face, drying my tears. Her touch is not soft, not like that of a mother, but practical and clinical, like that of a Maester. Nevertheless, I can’t meet her eyes as she dabs my face.

“How old are you, Gwenys?” she asks me, her voice kind, handing me the handkerchief as she stands to get something else.

“I am almost at my fifteenth name day, your majesty.” I answer back meekly, wiping away the
tears that continue to leak down my face. I hear her growl almost angrily at that statement.

"Do you wish to tell me what happened to lead to our meeting this night?" she inquires from behind me.

"Eddard, that is, Lord Wayne, wanted to take his husbandly right before our wedding day and then he and his friends drank too much and-" I can’t even finish the sentence, the words becoming like balls of anger stuck in my throat. I feel a goblet placed in my hand and glance over to see the Queen sitting across from me in the other chair. “What is this?”

“Mulled wine, it will help revive your spirits a little.” she answers easily, leaning forward to appraise me once more. Her eyes are softer now, but they still seem urge me to tell her all my troubles. “Tell me, why are you marrying him?” I take a sip and find the brew surprisingly sweet with a hint of spice. I carefully form my response for a minute before answering and although I consider lying, I decide it'd be pointless to even try.

“I am from a barely noble family, my lady. For me, Lord Wayne is a step up and a way for my family to rise within the ranks of Riverland Nobility. It’s what most girls are expected to do, it’s why I was brought to court in the first place.” like a mare to pasture. Queen Visenya seems unimpressed by my explanation.

“I understand the politics of it all, child. I may not be from Westeros, but marriage for political gain is hardly unique to this Continent. I meant: why him? There must be better matches to be made. You are one of my sister’s handmaidens, surely she could find someone better than that mongrel?” her voice is calm and soothing and had a cadence that made everything she said seem sensible and wise. I couldn’t quite place it, but her voice had a strange, exotic quality that entranced the ear and made it want to hear more.

“Queen Rhaenys has been occupied of late and it is my father’s will that I-”

“Do you want to marry him?” she interrupted, waving away my excuses like she would an insect. I opened my mouth and then close it, unable to answer.

“Well? Do you?”

“My father-” I begin and she shakes her head, cutting me off.

“Not your father. I meant you. Do you want to marry the man who just tried to rape you with three of his grotesque friends?” she asks and despite my mind telling me to say yes for the sake of my family, I find myself shaking my head. No, I don’t.

“No.” I answer. I had when I first met him, for he had been dashing then and his charm and beauty had clouded my eyes to his true nature, but now, well, I’d rather become a septa.

“Then that’s settled, you will not marry him.” she concludes casually and I stare at her in shock, her words almost too sweet for me to believe.

“Truly?” I asked breathlessly. “But my father-”

“Your father will have to curb his will to mine, I am his queen after all.” Queen Visenya answers casually. “And if marriage is still something you want, then I will speak with my sister and she will no doubt take up your case once she learns of what your betrothed tried to do. Your mistress is rather fond of making matches and she will find you a good man, one will not attempt to have an orgy with you against your will.” My first instinct was to ask her why she was helping me. After all, she was Queen, why should she concern herself with someone like me? The daughter of a
lowly knight who was not even in her household? My second instinct was to not question her mercy and pour honey-sweet thanks into her ears, but before I could do either her chamber doors burst open and in strode King Aegon, his face like an approaching thunderhead and my heart began hammering once more in my chest.

“Visenya, we need to-” his voice died as he saw me in the chair across from his wife, irritation beaming from his indigo eyes. His eyes were regal and a beautiful purple that seemed to hold such dark and mysterious depths that I imagined it would be hard to ever predict what he was thinking. Yet, as intimidating as they were, they lacked that strange quality that brought Visenya's gaze so unnerving.

“We need to what, Aegon?” she asked, standing to approach him, giving me a reassuring glance as she did. He swallows, his fist clenched at his side.

“I was told by the jail master that you had Lord Wayne’s and Lord Ryger’s sons imprisoned this night! Need I remind you that it was barely a year past where the Reach began to rumble in unrest and that any wrong on our part could be used as kindling for rebellion?” The king’s voice was angry and irritated and I had the feeling he would be yelling if I was not here. I bit my lip in worry as the meaning of his words washed over me. Was I going to be punished for the crimes of my fiancé? Was the King going to blame me for what had transpired this night?

“Well, how lucky then that I have committed no wrong.” she answers back, her voice matching his in irritation. “I had them arrested for a just cause.” she glanced towards me again and in her violet irises I found a strange semblance of comfort. For some reason, I had confidence that she would not forsake me. “They were chasing this girl through the halls with the intent of raping her!” the king’s eyes narrowed at her words and her too looked at me. I shrunk under their purple gazes and wished with all my might that I was asleep back in my own chambers.

“Did she tell you that?” he asked and Queen Visenya nods. “Are you sure she’s telling the truth?”

“Well, I personally heard some of what was said to this girl and my guards will second my statements.” she took a step towards him. “Even then, Aegon, my word should be good enough. I believe her and you have never questioned my judgement before so why would now be any different?” he opened his mouth to say something, but he closed it when she took his hand softly with both of hers. “When we made this court and conquered this continent we promised we’d make something better than what was here, that includes making it better for the women as well as men. Rhaenys has already begun this work and we must employ a higher standard here, in our court, for example of the realm. For the gods’ sake, Aegon, she is four and ten! She is a little older than a child! Would you want your daughter to grow up in a court where men force young girls into orgy’s against their will? Where they chase them through the halls with threats of rape?” the king’s face softens and becomes contemplative under her words and I here again that strange, exotic tone underpinning her speech once more. I wondered how someone learned to speak as she did. “Do not doubt me now, brother.” he sighed and clasped her hands in his, stroking it with his thumb.

“I want proof of this, Visenya.” he tells her softly. “I want evidence that cannot be disputed and I want to know everyone who was involved. You say your guards can second your account?” she nods and he turned towards the doors. “Guard!” he yelled and the two guards from earlier strode in, clasping their hands across their chests as they bowed low to the royals. “Ensure that this lady,” he gestures to me, “returns safely to her chambers and then return here, I want to know everything about what happened tonight.” The last thing I saw before the door closed behind me was the Queen's eyes, looking ever so tired, but also strong and unbreakable and I’m happy to say the rest of that dreadful night was perfectly uneventful, although in the days following I was afraid that
King Aegon would turn against his queen and that I would be forced to marry Lord Wayne, but none of that came to pass. All four of my attackers soon vanished from court without a word. There was no trial, no fuss, but all of them were soon gone and I found myself free from that damned betrothal with very little reason given. My father did fret about this, but soon enough I was betrothed once more thanks to Queen Rhaenys, who succeeded in convincing Lord Arneld Paeg’s father to allow his son to pursue me. I would marry later Arneld later that year and, although he was not as handsome as Lord Wayne had been, he was kind enough to me and never, ever, forced me into bed against my will. Once married I was no longer Queen Rhaenys’ handmaiden and spent very little time at court over the next twenty or so years. I saw Queen Visenya from time to time after she saved me that night and each time she’d nod to me in respect and share a secret smile with me, as if we shared some delightful secret, and eventually I lost my fear of her eyes, although they still seemed to reach into my soul every time our gazes met. Yet, after the First Dornish War everything changed, and not for the better. Beautiful, kind, beloved Queen Rhaenys fell with her Dragon in Dorne and the next two years were spent with the King and Queen unleashing their wrath on Dorne. Even once they returned nothing was ever as it was. Court grew cold without Queen Rhaenys and although Queen Visenya and King Aegon had a son, what followed were the long years where they were estranged, which was signified by greater irritation on the part of King Aegon and general unrest in the realm. Once Princess Aemma was born and they were reconciled, court became filled with life once more and there was peace in Westeros for awhile. The old Aegonfort was torn down and the Red Keep slowly rose above King’s Landing, but after the Conqueror died we all found ourselves on the road which led here, to this city petrified with grief and fear. Sometimes I did wonder how it had all come to this, but although it had been thirty nine years since the night Queen Visenya saved me and I still don’t know all that occured to send my four attackers away, she won my eternal loyalty that night and although others may only pretend to grieve her death, my sadness and tears were real. I hear a scream echo from my good-daughter’s room, breaking my reverie, and my son rushes out, his face wild with excitement and fear.

“The baby’s coming mother, it’s coming now!” my husband runs out from our room where he had been sulking, anticipation also lighting up his aged face.

“Go for the Maester, Arneld!” I tell him, standing to enter Liya’s chambers, from which stangled yelps were resounding. “I shall attend to Liya until his arrival.” I grab my son’s shaking hand, squeezing it comfortably. “All will be well.” I tell him softly. "No matter what happens, all will be well." As Liya screams in agony I enter the chamber and part of me hopes the child is a girl so I can convince him to name the child Senya.

Chapter End Notes

First off, I'd just like to say that I usually don't write in first person and I tried really, really hard to write this in third person like most of my other chapters have been. In my personal opinion, I always feel like first person makes my writing seem less professional and doesn't allow for the same eloquence that I can achieve with third person. That's one of the reasons why I switched to predominantly third person after the first trilogy. Yet, every time I tried to write this in third person, it just didn't "work", it sounded fake, or just wasn't conveying the story in the way I wanted it to, so I was stuck in first person. So, if the writing seems a little different, that might be the reason.

Also, Gwenys is entirely noncanonical, as are most of the supporting characters of this story. They do no exist in the canon and neither do any of the events that are described
here. I looked for some major canonical events to cover, but none of them quite
inspired me to write the way the three different situations Gwenys remembers did. All
the house names are from canon though, so that's something.

As mentioned above, this is the first chapter of a planned arc and there will be at least
two other chapters following this which will attempt to show the Targaryens and the
events in this story from as many POVs as possible. As always, if you have any
suggestions or povs you'd like to see explored, feel free to comment and I'll try my
best to oblige.
Aemon the Dragonknight-The Place Between

Chapter Summary

After taking a poisoned arrow meant for his King, Daeron the Young Dragon, Aemon the Dragonknight finds himself lost in a strange, dark world, where reason is absent and logic has failed. As he's lost in this strange place, he finds himself face to face with something more terrifying than a poisoned arrow and encounters an unlikely savior in the form of a violet eyed girl, whose name is almost as unnerving to him as the darkness trying to consume him...

Chapter Notes

Hello Everyone,

It's been awhile, hasn't it? NGL this was not a planned hiatus and was more the result of me just getting lost in my own enthusiasm and forgetting the premise of this series. I was so excited by all these suggested concepts, the back school specials, the what ifs, the "outsider povs", that I kind forgot that this story is about memory and how various TARGARYENS interact with Visenya Targaryen's memory and legacy. So, I took a break to clear my head and that's where this chapter came from. Now, it's definitely not one of my best chapters, I'm pretty sure my writing peaks with the Rhaenys, the Queen who never was, chapter, but it helped get me back on track so here it is, a chapter from the POV of Aemon the Dragonknight, who is one of my favorite Targaryens in the post Dance eras. Again, it's not the best, but it was a lot of fun to write so I hope you all enjoy it. If you do, please leave KUDOS and any constructive comments you like.

Disclaimer, I own nothing, etc. etc. etcetera

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Aemon The Dragonknight

Aemon saw the archer before anyone else, and only because of the glare off his helmet. As King Daeron, the Young Dragon, strode down the opulent streets of his newly conquered Sunspear, a glare had caught Aemon’s indigo eyes. At first he had thought it was just the sun reflecting off some piece of ornamentation, but then it had moved, revealing the helm of a Dornish archer. It was only a second, perhaps two, but Aemon saw where the bolt was aimed, knew whose neck that black arrow was destined for. Panicked, he ran towards his cousin, thinking of nothing but that he had to protect Daeron, had to protect the victory they had just spilt so much blood for. The twang of the bow seemed to echo far and wide and without a second thought he threw himself onto the King, covering his cousin’s body just in time for the arrow to pierce his own shoulder instead of the king’s neck. He groaned in pain as his shoulder screamed in agony, hearing the shouts of the rest of the Kingsguard as they fired back at the would-be-assassin and ran to bring him before the king. Daeron caught him as he collapsed, cradling Aemon’s suddenly leaden body close to his armored chest. His violet eyes and gold-silver hair glowed in the sunlight as he clutched Aemon to
him with shuddering arms.

“You owe me a shoulder, Cousin.” Aemon jested weakly, wincing as Daeron shifted his body to examine where the arrow had pierced his flesh.

“You fool!” his king told him in a slightly shaking voice as examined Aemon's weeping wound. “You absolute fool! Why would you use yourself as a shield?!” Aemon cracked a weak smile as his arm suddenly began feeling numb.

“Because you’re my king, your life is worth much more than mine.” Aemon hissed as Daeron pressed a cloth to his wound. “Also, can you imagine the rebuke I would get from my father if you died on my watch? I’d never hear the end of it.” Daeron scoffed as he dabbed at the weeping wound, brow furrowing as it was slowly stained black and red.

“Perhaps, but of all the arrows to get struck by, you couldn’t have just gotten hit with a normal one?” Daeron teased in a light, joking voice, but Aemon knew as well as the king what that black stain meant.

“What glory is there in getting struck by a normal piece of sharp wood?” he asked through a forced smile. “When poison is so much more dramatic.” Daeron laughed, although it sounded more strained than it should and Aemon squinted up at his cousin as the edges of his vision began to darken. “Looks like I got the strong stuff too.” his eyes slowly grew heavy and had almost drifted shut when Daeron smacked him across the face, forcing his eyes open.

“Don’t you dare, cousin. Dying of a poisoned arrow is beneath you!” Daeron ordered him harshly, although worry danced in the young king’s eyes and the smallest tinge of fear hung under his imperious tone. “You’re not dying in this cursed land. Dorne shall not have another dragon, I forbid it!” Aemon almost laughed at that, probably would have if his mouth hadn’t felt like it was stuffed with cloth. Daeron had always been so self-assured, so confident that he could do just about anything, but even he couldn’t beat death.

“Even you have no power over death, your majest.” he replied weakly as the numbness spread up his shoulder. Behind Daeron he saw men rushing towards them with a stretcher, but he doubted it would do much good at this point. “This might just be the Father’s plan for me—”

“We are Dragons!” Daeron told him desperately, gripping his face with a bloodstained hand. “We answer to neither gods nor men, if I say you will not die than you will not die, do you understand me?!” Aemon felt his head nodding towards his chest as his wounded arm hit the ground beside him, no longer able to be supported by the now completely numb shoulder. “Think of Naerys!” Daeron suddenly cried, his voice more desperate than Aemon had ever heard it. “Think of your sister, if you leave her alone, what will Aegon do to her? You wouldn’t leave her, would you?”

“Naerys?” he asked softly, feeling himself lifted from Daeron’s lap onto the stretcher.

“Yes, Naerys. Don’t you dare leave her, Aamon, I know you don’t want to.” His eyes drifted from Daeron’s handsome face up towards the brilliant blue sky. Daeron was right, he didn’t want to leave his sister, he couldn’t bear the idea of leaving her in this world alone, but he was so tired. A deep cold heaviness was seeping into his bones and he had not the strength to push it out. “Aemon! Don’t you dare!” Daeron screamed, all pretense of jest and mirth gone. “Aemon, don-” and then his eyes closed and he felt himself falling.

It seemed to him as if he fell straight through the world, through the earth beneath him, down and down into a black abyss. Part of him wondered if he’d ever stop falling, but since he was dying anyways he supposed it didn’t matter much. Perhaps this was what death was, falling endlessly
through the darkness. Perhaps- Then, all of a sudden, he stopped falling and found himself lying in
a strange, empty, darkness without any trace of pain or paralysis. He clenched his hands, moving
the fingers in awe as he searched his right shoulder for any wound. Much to his surprise, there was
none, no wound, no arrow, no poison, just his shoulder, full and untouched. He glanced around
him suspiciously, but found nothing, literally. He couldn’t find a floor, walls, sky, horizon,
anything, just empty, silent blackness. Yet, it wasn’t like normal darkness, this dark void seemed to
move and shift around him like water, rippling and twisting almost as if it was alive, as if it had a
mind of its own. He slowly stood, although he couldn’t quite figure out what he was standing on,
and surveyed his surroundings. He imagined this must be some strange poison induced nightmare
and that eventually he would escape it, either for life or for-

_No, he couldn’t think of death._ He was not allowed to die, Daeron had decreed it, but more
importantly, he could leave Naerys alone with his despicable brother. Sweet, Beautiful, kind,
Naerys, who was too pious and good for this world, deserved better than to be left at the mercy of
Aegon.

“Naerys.” he whispered, as the image of her beautiful amethyst eyes hung before him, shining from
a face as pale and delicate as the moon, “I’ll return to you.” he reached out towards the illusion that
wasn’t really there. “I won’t leave you alone.” these words echoed around the void, curling around
him as they were caught in the currents of darkness. At first he only heard his own voice, repeating
his declaration over and over until it faded beyond his range of hearing, but just as his own voice
disappeared, a new one called out to him from the darkness.

“I love you.” his sweet sister’s voice said from the darkness. “I love you more than life. You are
the reason my heart keeps beating.” his heart clenched painfully at those words as he felt tears
prick at the corner of his indigo eyes. He remembered those words, remembered when she had said
them. Yet, how could she be here now? In this strange and unnatural place?

“Naerys?” he asks softly, scanning the darkness before him. At first he sees nothing, as before, but
slowly a figure appears from the darkness.

“I love you.” the figure says, as slowly amethyst eyes appear on its face and silver-gold hair shines
from beneath a delicate hair net. “I love you more than life. You are the reason my heart keeps
beating.” he slowly approaches her, his arms reaching instinctually out to embrace her, but
something is wrong. Naerys isn’t looking at him, instead her eyes continue to stare blankly off into
the darkness, unblinking and unmoving, still as those of a statue, still as those of a corpse. He
gently reaches for her face, but when he gently caresses her cheek, he feels not the warmth of
human flesh, but the chill of porcelain. He withdraws his hand in horror, backing away as the
figure before him reaches out stiffly for him, repeating Naerys’ profession of love.

“Please Aemon, save me!” Naerys' voice cries out, but this time from the twisting darkness behind
him. He turns swiftly away from the strange statue-like figure before him and sees another figure
forming from the darkness. “Please, you can’t let father do this!” he feels a cold hand on his
shoulder and ducks away as the first Naerys behind him says,

“I love you. I love you more-” Aemon grimaces and backs away from her, almost tripping over the
new figure, which is kneeling, hands clasped at her chest as she stares up at him imploringly with
tears streaming down her pale face.

“Please Aemon, save me!” she implores once more, her voice dripping with the fear Aemon
remembered they both had felt when their father announced her engagement to Aegon. “Please,
you can’t let father do this!” his feet, almost against his will, carried him towards her and without
thinking he kneels before her, wiping her tears away with his calloused thumb. He nearly yelps
with how cold her tears are, and despite his touch, she’s still not looking at him. Like the other, her eyes stare blankly off into the darkness, as unblinking and lifeless as a doll’s.

“He may have my hand,” another Naerys calls from his right, drawing his eyes away from the crying one before him. “But he shall not have my heart or my maidenhead.” he feels a hand cup his face and he drags himself from the frigid clutches of the crying Naerys, finding himself face to face with a third Naerys, who holds her head proudly like a queen, with her fists balled at her sides, eyes staring off into the void challengingly. He glances around him at the three images of the woman he loves and he fights against the strange combination of fear, love, and sorrow that pierces his chest like the arrow had his shoulder. Thousands of questions burned their way through his mind: where was he? What is this place? What is happening? How could he escape this strange delusion?

“Aemon!” they all screamed, their cry echoing throughout the void so loudly he covered his ears in pain. His ears began ringing as they all began speaking at once.

“I love you, I love you more than life-” the first Naerys said.

“-let father do this!” cried the second.

“He shall not have my heart-” intoned the third. All their voices rose on the waves of the darkness and seemed to swirl around him like chains, trapping him where he stood. Their voices are deafening and Aemon covers his ears desperately as all three slowly start converge upon him, each speaking her mantra over and over again. One is still crying, one’s hands are still balled in fists, but nevertheless they surround him and he is encircled in cold, hard limbs. The three Naerys scream their words in his ear and begin crushing him in their embrace, and with each repeat of their mantras he feels the edges of his sanity begin to rip. His mind becomes confused, the darkness seems to descend around him and-

“You shouldn’t be here.” a new voice says and suddenly the chanting stops and the cold, crushing embrace vanishes. Aemon slowly opens his eyes and finds himself face to face with a young girl, no older than four and ten, with silver-gold hair and the brightest violet eyes he’d ever seen. His teary indigo eyes meet her calm violet ones and he feels his mind begin to clear and warmth began to spread through his veins once more. “This place is dangerous for those who don’t know how to navigate it.” Aemon slowly stands, steadying his shaking hands at his sides as he stares in confusion at the girl.

“Believe me, I am not here by choice.” he responds almost in jest, “and am here by no intention of my own. Can you by any chance tell me where I am?” the girl cocks her head at him, her violet eyes appraising him with fierce interest. He can’t quite put his finger on it, but something about those eyes are familiar to him. The color is similar to those of his cousin Daeron’s, although hers are more intense than his, and her angular face seems to echo Daena’s, although this girl’s beauty was harsher. No, it wasn’t her coloring that seemed to pull at some long lost memory within him, it was the weary look of her eyes. He knew that look well, after all, had not that same tired look swirled in the depths of his uncle’s cold indigo eyes and tainted the once bright eyes of his father?

“This is the place between.” she finally answers, interrupting his appraisal of her appearance, although her explanation only caused him to scrunch his brow in confusion.

“The what?” he inquired and she sighed in irritation.

“The place between,” she repeats slowly, “a world between worlds, a place where you are not anywhere, but not quite nowhere.” she must have noticed his continued confusion because she stopped for a moment, pursing her lips in thought as she threw her silver-gold braid off her
shoulder. “Think of it like road between places, a means of getting to a destination, but not really a location onto itself. In any case, you shouldn’t be here.” he tilted his head at her in confusion.

“Why not?” he asked, glancing at the darkness behind her as it seemed to press out towards the them.

“Because you don’t have the sight and can’t navigate it.” she tells him slowly, although he notices her eyes darting around the darkness worriedly, no doubt noticing the growing proximity of the twisting darkness surrounding them. “This place is like a path between two destinations, but it’s not a clear one. If you don’t have the tools to navigate it, you get lost and if you get lost here, this place will break you down and consume you.” Aemon glanced around him anxiously, suddenly feeling like his initial suspicion that this place was alive was more correct than he would like.

“Well, if I don’t have this sight you speak of, how did I enter this place to begin with?” he inquired, moving closer to her as he sensed something move in the darkness behind him.

“I don’t know. You’re clearly of Valryian descent, so your blood probably opened the door, but I’m afraid I know little else. I try to avoid this place, it has a guardian who has a bad habit of wanting expensive favors.” she responds as both their eyes dart to a spot to his right where the darkness seemed to stretch towards them. “Luckily for you though, I’m here and can help you get out.” she shook her head as a small smile played upon her full lips. “How lucky for you a very drunk friend of mine explained this process to me.” she reached out her hand. “You’re a Targaryen, no?” he nods in response, although he is still perplexed as to what exactly is happening to him. “Good, shared blood makes this whole ordeal easier. What is your name, sir?” he furrowed his brow at her.

“Aemon, Aemon Targaryen.” he told her, looking at her curiously, keeping his hand by his side. “And who are you?” she pursed her lips at this question, almost as if she feared his reaction to the answer. “You know mine, it is only fair I know yours as well.” she sighed, glancing at the darkness swirling closer and closer to them.

“I am Visenya Targaryen.” she answered, hissing at something behind him, yet it was not this ferocious act that caused his chest to fill with ice. Now he knows where he recognizes those eyes from, and suddenly he’s almost as afraid of her as he is of the darkness around them. He takes a step back and she sighs. “How-”

“Magic.” she answered simply. “And I understand you must be confused right now, good Aemon, and I understand how hard it is for those untouched by the Gods to understand the workings of their magic, but the danger is too great for me to waste precious time helping you process your shock. I’m almost on the brink of waking up from the accident that sent me here, and if I leave without you, this place will eat you and I’d like to spite the guardian who lives here and deny it its sacrifices, especially if those sacrifices are my family, so please just take my hand.” she stared up at him imploringly, pale hand outstretched. “Please Aemon, if you want any hope of seeing that woman again, I need you to take my hand.” the darkness reaches for them again and she jumps forward towards him out of its reach. “Now.” he swallows, and although his thoughts are rapidly spiralling out of control, he reaches out his hand for hers.

"open se remio(open the gate)"

"qūvy se seams(tear the seams)"
Her Valryian seems to pierce the air itself and he swears the darkness shrieks in anger as she cries out the last phrase. “Thank you, Daeron.” she whispers to herself and suddenly they were falling. Hand in hand they plummet through the abyss, falling down, and down, and down. She smiles at him prettily as their hair flies around their faces and Aemon can only smile back as the universe itself seems to tear apart below them. He glances at her a final time as they hit the tear and then-

His eyes open weakly and he groaned as bright sunlight streams into his eyes from large, elegant windows. He glanced around in confusion, searching for Visenya and the darkness, but instead his eyes find only light and the happy face of his sister.

“Aemon! Oh thank the Seven!” he heard his sister say before he felt himself clutched in her embrace. He hugs her tightly in return, rejoicing in the warmth of her flesh and the sweet smell of her hair. “Oh thank the gods, thank the gods!” she peppers his face with soft kisses before capturing his parched lips with her own soft ones. When she pulls away, her face is flushed pink, but for once she doesn’t seem to care and he basks in her love, which banishes the horror of what he had just experienced from his mind.

“Naerys,” he murmured weakly, his throat feeling as dry as the Dornish Desert and bones as brittle as wood. “How long?”

“Almost a fortnight, Aemon.” she replied, clutching his hand tightly in her own small ones. “We all feared-” she shakes her head, pressing a kiss to his knuckles. “But it doesn’t matter, you’re alive and when you’re well enough we shall go thank the gods together.” her amethyst eyes shone with unshed tears and although her smile was till on her face slowly her body began to shake with sobs. Without a second thought he opens his arms and pulls her against him in a fierce embrace.

“It is all right.” he murmurs softly, pressing a soft kiss on her forehead. “I am well and shall always return to you, never fear, my gentle dragon.” he kissed her lips softly again as she snuggled closer to him, her breaths steadying as she rested her head above his heart. For a few moments they just lie there together, utterly content.

“Aemon?” she finally asks, breaking their happy silence. “I have a question.” he glances down at her as she raises her head to meet his eyes.

“What is it?” he asks, caressing her cheek.

“Why were you muttering about Visenya Targaryen in your sleep?”

Chapter End Notes

So ta-da, Aemon accidentally got himself sent to a world made of pure nightmares. The concept for the place between actually has its root in the Brynden Rivers chapter, but it was so much fun to expand the idea and see this strange, magical world from the pov of a targaryen who has no connection to magic. This also gave me the opportunity to brush upon one of my favorite Targaryen pairings, after Visenya and Aegon, of course, Naerys and Aemon. I always thought their (supposed) love was so tragic and when you add their relationship into the context of Aegon the Unworthy, you basically
get a tragic romance novel. It's impressive how out of this trio we get Naerys and Aemon, who are literally too good for this world, and Aegon the Unworthy, who literally embodies the worst of the world, which is why I love writing about this era so much. We also get the likes of Daeron, Daena, Baelor, Rhaena, and Elaena, who are all interesting in their own right as well, so this era is just ripe with story potential.

In other news, I don't think I'll be doing any more "specials", except for maybe the occasional fluff special if we ever get a trilogy as dark as the Rhaenys in Dorne arc again, not because those specials were bad or anything, or because I didn't enjoy writing them(I really did), but just because they don't really vibe with the rest of the stories. I'll leave them up here, because why take down good work, which most of them are, but anymore of those will probably be published in their own "WWRWWAG Specials" series(bloody hell, really reconsidering the title of this story, that's ridiculously long). Additionally, I'm abandoning the trilogy from the outside povs for that same reason. It's a great idea and I'd honestly love to see a story where we get outsider povs on the Targaryens, but those chapters just don't work with this story. I'll leave the Handmaidens up, but we won't be getting the planned sequels, at least no here. I might take up that project on a later date, but if anyone else wants to take up that concept than please do.

So yeah, that's what's up. I have reviewed most of the suggestions from when I was on break and will definitely write chapters on those in the coming months, so stay tuned. As always, if you have a pov you'd like to see or an event you'd like explored, feel free to suggest those down in the comments and I'll see what I can do.
Orys Baratheon II-Fear

Chapter Summary

Orys Baratheon has always had the utmost faith in his sister, Visenya. He has never doubted her, never feared for, always trusted that she was strong enough to accomplish and endure just about anything. Yet now, as she struggles to bring her and Aegon's child into this world, Orys is suddenly very afraid for her, and remembers a night not so long ago when he felt a similar fear, although he's still not sure if he was afraid for her on that fateful night, or if he was afraid OF her....

Chapter Notes

Hi Guys,

This was probably not the update a lot of you were expecting, especially on the heels of the Aemon chapter. In my quest to rediscover the roots of this story I decided to read through some of my earlier chapters, and my first reaction was to cringe slightly, but my second was to zero in on my first Orys chapter, because I kind of forgot all about it. Yet, as I re-read "Purple and Black, Love and Death", I remembered how much I loved writing during the Conquest Era and found the inspiration to write this chapter. So yeah, this chapter is kinda a tie back chapter for me, so I hope you all enjoy it. If you do, please leave KUDOS and any other constructive comments you like.

(insert snarky legal disclaimer here)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Orys

Few times had Orys been as afraid for Visenya’s life as he was now, as she struggled to bring his nephew into this world. Her screams echoed around him like thunder, her voice shaking with exhaustion and pain, and as it cracked and broke he had to fight every single instinct in his body to prevent himself from running into her birthing chamber. Aegon sat across from him, his brow furrowed with worry as his wife’s scream finally dissipated. Between the two brothers sat a Cyvasse board, although Aegon was too lost in thought and anxiety to be even close to a good opponent for Orys, and both had given up after Aegon lost his fourth game. His brother flinched as another low cry echoed from behind his wife’s closed door.

“Oh Gods.” His brother muttered, rubbing a slightly shaking hand over his face. “Orys, what if she-”

“Don’t even think it.” Orys orders sternly, narrowing his dark eyes at Aegon. “The Gods need no tempting.” Aegon purses his lips and looks to the floor, his shoulders tense with worry and face pale with anxiety. Orys sighs, taking a breath before addressing Aegon again. “Have you thought of names yet?” Orys asks kindly, attempting to distract Aegon from his sister-wife’s pain. Aegon
looks up at him, indigo eyes heavy and confused with worry, and he stares at him in bewilderment for a second.

“Name for what?” he asked and Orys fought to suppress the exasperated sigh climbing its way up his throat.

“For the child, I mean.” Orys prompts, blaming his brother’s current state of mental lethargy on the hours of anxiety they’ve both experienced.

“Oh, the child.” Aegon responds, although his mind is clearly still elsewhere. “Yes, we have. For a girl the choices are obvious.”

“Rhaenys?” Orys asks thoughtlessly, before his eyes go wide as Aegon’s face immediately goes blank. “I’m sorry-”

“No,” Aegon interrupts, although new lines of sorrow have appeared on his face, making him look older in the low light from the torches and fire, “please don’t be. Of course we were considering honoring our sister, although Valaena is also a worthy choice, as is Aemma.” Orys nods in response, watching his brother visibly flinch as Visenya screams once more.

“Have you considered the name Aenya?” Orys inquires quickly as he sees Aegon begin to rise from his chair towards the birthing room. Aegon halts, and tilts his head at Orys thoughtfully.

“Aenya?” he repeats, reseating himself as he furrows his brow at Orys.

“Yes, Aenya, named for both you and Visenya.” Aegon tilts his head at Orys, his indigo eyes narrowed in contemplation. “It’s unconventional, but it has a nice ring to it.” Aegon hums thoughtfully, stroking his short beard as he repeats the name a few times, seeming to feel how it rolls of his tongue and fills the space of the room.

“Aenya Targaryen,” Aegon murmured, “funny how neither of us thought of that, but it certainly has a nice ring to it.” suddenly his eyes light up as a smirk plays at his lips, “although if Visenya is right, there really is no point in considering names for a daughter.”

“Indeed, I’m surprised she allowed you to consider any at all considering how confident she was that she was carrying a son.” Orys responds in jest, happy to see a little color returning to Aegon’s pinched face. “You know, most women would never think of trying to predict the gender of their unborn child, let alone announce it to the world with such confidence.” Aegon chuckles lightly at Orys’ words, picking up a Cyvasse piece and tossing it into the air.

“Well, Visenya has never been like most women.” Aegon replies, to which Orys could only nod, although he knew many courtiers had snickered at her announcement, both because of her age and because of her audacity to dare claiming she may be carrying a rival for young Aenys. He also was aware that a few bolder ones had suffered for their words against the queen, both at his hand and at Aegon’s, both of whom understood that Visenya knew more and saw more than most, and unnerving as it was, she was very likely right about her child’s gender.

“Will you be naming your son Aegon then?” Orys ribs lightly, raising his eyebrows at his brother as the Cyvasse piece flew into the air once more.

“Do you really think me so vain, brother?” Aegon answers with a tight smile. “No, not Aegon, perhaps some variation on the name Aerion though, in honor of father, although Visenya is not too fond of that idea, I don’t think she’s ever forgiven father for granting be Blackfyre instead of her.” Aegon shakes his head slightly, and Orys sighs. The fight over Blackfyre and Dragonstone
between Visenya and Aegon had been one of the most unpleasant times of their childhood, it was no wonder resentment over that whole debacle still lingered. “In any case, she favores Daemion for our grandfather, although Maegor is also a good choice, as is Orys.” he winked at Orys as he said this, causing a small smile to erupt across Orys’ face.

“I’m honored.” he replied. “I’m not sure people would approve-” suddenly Visenya cried out once more and this time the Cyvasse piece fell to the floor, hitting the rug below their feet with a low thud. This cry was somehow worse than all others before it, and in the ringing sound Orys could hear depths of pain he could only pray he would never have to experience. Aegon’s eyes went wide at the sound and as it slowly dissipated he stood and quickly strode towards the birthing chamber, leaving the fallen piece nestled on the floor, forgotten. Orys swiftly stood and moved to intercept his brother, putting a hand on his shoulder to halt his advance. “Don’t, Aegon.” His brother’s violet eyes bore into his dark ones, reflecting back the same fear that gripped Orys’ tired heart.

“Orys, she’s-”

“I know,” he told his brother softly. “I know, I heard as well as you did and I’m worried too, but that room is no place for a man.”

“But-”

“No buts, brother. You may be king, but Visenya is in capable hands and you will only get in the way if you try to interfere.” he led Aegon back to his chair and gently sat him back down. “She will be alright, Aegon. You know Visenya, you know how strong she is.” Aegon purses his lips at Orys’ words. “Have some faith in our sister, Aegon.”

“I do have faith in her, Orys.” Aegon replies. “But I just don’t know how I’d ever live if she died trying to give me a child. I’d never forgive myself if my actions led to her death, not after Rhaenys-” Aegon’s voice cracked and he looks down at the floor. Orys opens his mouth to respond, but finds his mind empty of any words that could console his brother. He sighs and just places a hand on Aegon’s shoulder, squeezing it gently. He can’t really blame Aegon for his fear, childbirth was not an easy battle for women to fight, he knew first hand from his own dear wife’s struggles in childbed, and he knew as well as anyone the risks involved, especially for a woman of Visenya’s age. He also is aware of his ever present guilt over their younger sister’s fate and he too doesn’t know how he’d live if Visenya-

Fear struck his chest as the loudest cry yet echoed around them and he felt his heart beat wildly inside his breast. He closed his eyes as the screaming continued, telling himself over and over that his sister would be all right, that everything would be all right, yet he couldn’t help but swear loudly as he heard her sob. He glanced at Aegon across the Cyvasse board and almost wanted to laugh at the look on his brother’s face and at the light sweat coating his own brow. Aegon the Conqueror and Orys Baratheon, two great warriors, brought low by the cries of a woman, how the kingdoms would laugh if they could see them now. He wiped the sweat from his brow as silence fell once more and fear once again overtook his senses. How silly it was for him to be so afraid for her now, when he hadn’t been this scared for Visenya’s life during the Conquest, even when she was shot during the Field of Fire or when she flew into the Vale of Arryn without an army. The only time he could remember being this afraid for her life was the night only three months past, when Dornish Assassins had managed to sneak their way into the Aegonfort.

He can still remember the smell and feel of the air that night as he was walking with Aegon down the Eastern parapets of the Aegonfort. The breeze had been slightly cool, carrying the salty smell of the sea, and the sun had barely set, leaving the world in this strange twilight of deep purples and blues, which adequately reflected Aegon’s dark mood.
“Many of my councilors and courtiers are growing tired of our war with Dorne,” his brother had muttered angrily, hands clasped behind his back as they strode in the deepening night. “Cowards the lot of them.”

“The people of this continent are weak, we knew that when we conquered them.” Orys had replied, his missing hand aching with rage at the mention of Dorne.

“Yes, but this cowardice is even more disgusting than I had predicted. If it wasn’t for Visenya’s pregnancy I would fly to Dorne myself and—” suddenly the king had been cut off as a group of ten or more men materialized around the two brothers, their Dornish swords glinting in the torchlight. Orys cursed as he and Aegon drew their swords, retreating with their backs to the wall as their attackers closed in. Aegon’s indigo eyes flashed angrily in the night, as Blackfyre’s blade glowed in the rising moonlight.

“Mazigon!” Aegon yelled into the night, his voice echoing into the open air. “Balerion, Mazigon!” A roar echoed from far away and the leading assassin cursed angrily.

“Finish them before the beast arrives!” the dark-cloaked figure yelled. Steel bit into steel as the Dornish swords descended upon the two brothers, blades singing through the air as they sought to cut flesh and break sinew. Orys heard Balerion roar again, but the dragon was clearly far away, probably off hunting in the Blackwater Bay, and even if Aegon’s mount reached them in time, Orys feared the great beast would be powerless to help his rider without burning the whole Aegonfort in the process. No, they could not count on a dragon’s aid. He met Aegon’s eyes as they repulsed the first attack and saw the same understanding resting in those indigo depths: they’d have to handle this themselves. The battle quickly dissolved into a frenzy, with Orys and Aegon desperately parrying, thrusting, and dodging to avoid the lethal bite of their opponent’s blades. Orys managed to slash one across the neck, and Aegon felled another after relieving the assassin of his sword hand, but they couldn’t keep that up forever. Orys was still not as skilled with his left hand as he had been with his right, and Aegon would be unable to defend himself alone if Orys fell. Just as this thought had crossed his mind, he found his sword ripped from his hand as the hilt of a blade collided with his forehead, sending him crumpling towards the floor. He lay there stunned for a moment, staring up at the masked face of the man he expected to kill him.

“Your time has come, Orys Baratheon.” the man told him, raising his sword above his head. Orys stared up at his would-be-executioner defiantly, unwilling to die like a coward, but just as the sword began to descend the man found himself ripped from the ground. Orys’ eyes went wide with amazement as a hulking shape of pure darkness carried the assassin high into the sky with a roar that seemed to shake the fledgling city to its foundations before dropping the screaming man to his death. To this day, Orys still had no idea how Balerion knew better than to try to fry his rider’s assassins, another part of the bond between the Targaryens and their dragons he would probably never understand. In either case, Balerion spared the Aegonfort his fire, but towers of red and black flame jetted into the sky once the dragon had swooped towards the Blackwater Bay as he moved to make another pass at the parapet. Orys watched as the assassins hesitated, their swords glinting in the fire as their hands shook with barely concealed fear, no doubt remembering when they had heard that cry and seen those flames before. This hesitation was all it took as a great cry erupted from the parapet.

“To the King!” a familiar voice yelled and suddenly the assassins were greatly outnumbered, both by the hulking dragon and by Visenya’s pride and joy, the Kingsguard. The white-cloaks charged to their King’s aid, clearly having continued to follow Aegon despite his orders for them to remain inside while he and Orys talked. The white cloaks crashed against the remaining assassins, as Balerion continued to swoop in and grab ones who managed to escape the Kingsguard, throwing them to their deaths upon the rocks in the Blackwater Bay. Aegon helped Orys to his feet as the
Kingsguard finished off the remaining assassins, killing all save one. As the man was forced to his knees by two Kingsguard, Aegon had stormed towards him, Blackfyre glinting in his hand, and ripped off the man’s helmet, revealing a face half covered in burn scars, with eyes as black as coal. Orys had only seen burns like that a few times before and knew there was only one likely cause for such a disfigurement: dragonfire. If Orys had to guess, he was likely faced with one of the few survivors of the Dragon’s Wroth, which meant there was only a handful of people who could have paid for this assassination attempt.

“Who sent you?!” Aegon demanded, although he likely suspected as well as Orys who the culprit was. “Who?!” the man gave a contemptuous laugh in response.

“What does it matter who sent me, Aegon Targaryen, when my blade speaks for all of Dorne?” Aegon struck the man across the face for that and Orys could see his brother’s fist shaking at his side, eager to strike again. The man stretched his jaw as he looked back at Aegon. “You can strike me all you want, it will change nothing.”

“Oh, we will do more than strike you.” Orys said, coming to stand beside Aegon. “We have ways of making you talk that will make the carnage seen tonight look like child’s play.” the man’s eyes turned to Orys and what he saw there shook Orys to the core.

“That matters not either, Orys One-Hand, for as you have stood here threatening me, my comrades have no doubt already finished their work.” the man’s voice was filled with malicious glee, causing every hair on Orys’ body to stand on end. Aegon grabbed the man’s armor, dragging him up to look into his eyes.

“What work?!” he yelled, shaking the man. The man laughed once more.

“Why the work of cutting off your dynasty. Your son may be safe on your island fortress, but rumor has it your wife is carrying another one.” Aegon’s eyes went wide at the assassin’s words and without another word he released the man and sprinted towards the entrance back into the Aegonfort. It’s awful to lose a wife and a child at once, Aegon Targaryen! I know first hand since you and your bitch of a queen took mine from me! We can compare our pain when you try to pry answers from between my broken teeth, knowing their deaths are on your hands!” the assassin screamed after him, laughing almost maniacally as Aegon disappeared into the Aegonfort. Orys hit the man across the face, feeling the delicate bones of his nose crack under his knuckles. The assassin fell to the ground groaning, although his unnerving smile remained firmly rooted on his now bruised and bloodied face.

“Take him to the cells and ensure he suffers for his crimes against the king.” Orys instructed the remaining Kingsguard. He gripped the mans face, staring deeply into those cold, insane eyes. “Do whatever you want to him, but ensure he lives. Whatever pain he has caused this night he shall experience tenfold before we let death take him.” he tilted the man’s head to the side and surveyed the pattern of burns that crisscrossed across the man’s right cheekbone and neck. He glanced back at Balerion, who was still soaring over the Aegonfort, his great wings causing wind to rip across the parapet where Orys stood. “I recommend using fire, as hot as you can get it.” the man’s eyes go wide and Orys takes perverse satisfaction in the small amount of fear he sees in those black depths. He waits for the Kingsguards to nod in confirmation before sprinting after Aegon and the white-cloaks who had followed him. He rushed past panicked courtiers, paying no mind to their questions or concerns. He had only one focus now, reaching Visenya, and although Orys had never been one to appeal to the gods, he prayed to both the Seven and his siblings’ dangerous Valyrian Gods, to protect his sister and her child. Breathlessly he turned the corner of the corridor leading to Visenya’s rooms and found a large crowd gathered there. Voices rose up from the mess of bodies and each whispered comment seemed to hammer at his anxious heart:
"Seven assassins-"
"She had no chance-"
"What will the king do now that-"

His heart clenched painfully in his chest as he pushed through the crowd, shoving anyone in his way aside.

"Lord Baratheon-"
"Oh thank the Gods-"
"We heard the most awful things-"
"Why is Balerion still over the fort?"
"My Lord, are you hurt?"

He ignored all the titters around him, answering neither the inquiries about his well being or the questions about what had happened that night. They were all meaningless and far away. The people could wait for their answers, the only thing that was real was the hulking door before him, empty of people thanks to the circle of Kingsguard keeping the crowd away from the chamber.

"Orys," Lord Corlys Velaryon said when he saw Orys, gesturing for the crowd to disperse to allow Orys to approach. "I am glad to see you are unharmed."

"Not for lack of trying, Corlys." he responded, gesturing to the bruise forming above his left eye. He looks past Corlys towards to Queen’s chambers, which seemed strangely hazy despite the abundant light from the torches around them. “Is the queen?” Orys asked, his voice soft, but still betraying his desperation.

"The Queen is alive." Corlys answered, putting a comforting hand on Orys’ shoulder. “But there is something strange-” Orys pushed past his cousin and the rest of the Kingsguard parted, allowing him to finally see into his sister’s room. As he approached the doorway, he was immediately hit with the strong smell of incense and his eyes watered as mist wafted from the room.

“What the-” he turned to Corlys, who still stood several feet from the doorway, away from the strongest parts of the escaping mist, with a strange look in his lavender eyes.

“I’m not sure, but I wouldn’t get too close if I were you. A few courtiers have already collapsed from inhaling too much of the mist and only the King and Queen seem to be able to endure it without losing consciousness.” Orys moved away from the doorway as he began coughing, coming to stand beside Corlys as the crowd behind them strained to catch a glimpse inside. They could not, but Orys could. The inside of the room was hazy and dark, with only a few candles fighting the darkness that seemed to permeate the room like some kind of fog. Orys squinted and could barely make out the fallen forms of seven men, clad in the same dark cloth and armor of the assassins that had tried to kill him and Aegon. Each seemed to be dead, their bodies contorted in strange positions, laying in pools of their own scarlet blood. Orys’ eyes had gone wide as he took in the scene and as he looked at his cousin, the Lord Commander of the Kingsguard’s eyes, despite seeing countless battles and carnage like Orys’ own, looked back him with barely concealed horror.

“What happened in there?” someone behind him whispered. “I can’t see.”
“She killed them all?” another asked. “All by herself?”

“How could she have defended herself when she’s six months with child?”

Within the chamber he heard someone muttering, in a low, guttural voice that sounded almost inhuman to his ears. He couldn’t make out any of the words, except the last, which rose like a cry above the courtiers tittering.

“Gīda.” the voice from the chamber cried and before Orys’ eyes the candles seemed to burn brighter, the mist seemed to fade and the darkness retreated back into the corners of the room, revealing two figures huddled in its center. At first Orys struggled to make them out, his eyes still watering from whatever that mist was, but as the last of it dissipated, he finally saw that the kneeling figure was Aegon and the figure held in his arms was-

“Visenya!” Orys muttered in horror as he finally made out the form of his sister. He couldn’t see her face in that moment, as it was hidden in Aegon’s chest, but he could see her hands and part of him thinks he’ll be haunted by that sight for the rest of his life. Her wrists were slashed, not deeply, but enough that small rivers of crimson were trickling down her arms. Her fingers were dripping with blood, her arms stained up to the elbows with red and she and Aegon were kneeling in a scarlet circle, outlined with strange symbols, which seemed to glow with their own unnatural light. “Corlys, remove this crowd immediately.” Orys whispered, both in awe and horror at the sight before him. “And fetch a Maester for the Queen.” Corlys nodded mutely at his side, gesturing for the rest of the Kingsguard to follow his orders. Yet, Orys himself remained fixed on the spot where he stood, watching his two siblings as they knelt in the middle of this carnage. Orys will never forget how his siblings looked at that moment, Aegon clutching a visibly pregnant Visenya desperately, stroking her hair with a shaking hand, as both their clothes and skin slowly became stained with more and more red. Never before had he been so afraid and part of him wondered if the fear he felt now for Visenya’s life could ever match the sick fear he had felt in that moment, not for Visenya, but at what she might be capable of-

Suddenly, a cry drew him out of his reverie, higher in pitch, but weaker in intensity than all others before it. He and Aegon stood, listening intensely for the sound to repeat itself.

“Was that what I think it was?” Aegon asks, his voice barely audible.

“I think so.” Orys responds, his voice equally hushed. They both wait for the next cry with bated breath; one heartbeat passes, then another, then another, then-

A high pitch squall rises from the chamber and both Aegon and Orys deflate with relief at the unmistakable cry of a newborn child. Orys grips Aegon’s shoulder tightly as the cries continue, signalling the baby’s health and life.

“It seems you’re a father again, brother.” Orys murmurs with a smile, the baby’s cries banishing his dark memories back from whence they had come.

“It seems so, I just hope-” the door to the birthing chamber opens and a pink faced midwife exits, bowing low to Aegon and Orys as she approaches them, seemingly unbothered by the intense purple and black eyes boring into her.

“Your majesty, I am happy to tell you that you are now the father of a healthy, hearty son.” Aegon’s face lights up in a smile at her words and he glances at Orys with a joy he had only seen a few other times in his life. Yet, his expression quickly soberes and he glances at the midwife with worried eyes.
“And my wife?” he asks her, his voice almost wavering. “Is she all right?” the midwife nods in response and Orys feels as if a huge weight has been lifted off his chest. “Yes, your majesty, the queen is well, if tired.” Aegon sighs with relief at her words, before pressing a purse into the woman’s hands.

“Thank you.” he tells her. “Can I-”

“Aegon?” a voice calls from the chamber, sounding a little raw from all the screaming, But it’s still melodious to Orys’ ears. “Orys?”

“We’re here, Visenya.” Aegon calls back, approaching the doorway. “May we come in and meet my son?”

“Your son, Aegon?” the voice answered back, sounding slightly disgruntled. “He is our son, at the very least.” Aegon smiles, his eyes so happy and his body so light with relief that Orys thinks Visenya could have committed high treason in that moment and Aegon would still have forgiven her.

“Yes, our son, your son.” Aegon answer with a smile, winking at Orys. “May we come and see him, and you?”

“Yes, please do.” she replies, “After all that effort you’d better not expect me to bring him to you.” Aegon turns towards Orys, a wry smile on his face.

“I guess we’d better go in, Orys.” his little brother says.

“Yes, I think we’d better.” Orys replies, and with a light heart and a happy smile, Orys goes to meet his nephew, Aegon’s son, perhaps a future king, but above that, Visenya’s son, a boy who would not doubt prove as strong as his mother.

Chapter End Notes

Well, that got a little...strange, but I suppose that's to be expected whenever I involve Valryian Magic from the POV of someone who doesn't fully understand it, or if I involve Valryian magic at all. I said in the before note that this is a tie in chapter, and it really is. It allowed me to pull some of the more disparate chapters into the larger narrative and it gave me another excuse to write a POV during the Conquerors era, which really is still one of my favorite Targaryen Eras. More chapters are coming, such as a requested Aegon V chapter, and I think I might be emotionally ready to begin delving into the Dance of Dragons(oh my poor dragons, I really don't want to lose you), so I have a few storyboards in the works for those chapters, so stay tuned. As always, if there's any POVs you'd like to see or any events you'd like expanded in this Universe, feel free to leave a comment and I'll do my best to oblige.
Aegon V-Flames

Chapter Summary

Aegon V has gathered all his family and most trusted friends to the Targaryen pleasure palace of Summerhall. There he plans to awaken dragons from stone and regain the lost mounts of House Targaryen. Some snigger at his faith, calling him an obsessed old man who is losing the last of his good sense, but Aegon knows better. He knows the pyromasters will succeed, he knows House Targaryens will have their dragons back. How can they not when his brother dreamed of dragons and magic reborn?

Chapter Notes

Hi Everyone,

Happy Holiday Season! I'm sorry for the month long hiatus, it wasn't planned, this chapter, from the POV of Aegon V, the Unlikely, has been in the works for quite awhile and just took forever to perfect. I'll also admit that it is one of my longest chapters yet, which made it fun to write, but not so fun to edit. In any case, this chapter explores the Tragedy at Summerhall, which essentially is the beginning of the end for the Targaryens, which makes it ripe for explication and character exploration (and feelings, many, many feelings). If you like it, please leave KUDOS and any constructive comments you like.

I own nothing, no lawsuits please, it's too cold to go to court

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Aegon V

“Blood of the Dragon, with amethyst eyes of Old Valyria, approach.” the Grand Master of the Pyromancers intoned as he stepped forward, spreading his burnt arms towards the crowd. “Tonight at Summerhall, we shall awaken fire from stone and bring back the great mounts of House Targaryen!” The crowd was comprised of the most loyal followers of King Aegon, fifth of his name, but even they, who he considered his nearest and dearest, murmured doubtfully at this declaration behind him, and the old King couldn’t help but shudder slightly as anticipation and fear began simmering in his veins. He glanced at his children and grandchildren, noting the looks of doubt shining in their purple eyes and trepidation painted across their beautiful faces. He sighed in disappointment, of all people, he thought they’d understand why they must do this, why it was so important that House Targaryen once more bow to neither gods nor men. Could they not see how their house was suffering without their dragons? Could they not understand that without the beasts that had earned them this kingdom they were as weak as any other men? He shook his head to silence his angry thoughts. They would all understand in time, they would all understand once this was over, they would all understand once Westeros once again shook with the roars of dragons, but for now he’d have to fight through their doubt and lead the way, as always. He narrowed his eyes at their reluctance and gestured for them to follow him as he slowly approached the great hearth and
its seven altars. He took his place at the central pedestal, watching as his son Duncan strode to the altar to his right and his grandson Aerys slowly approached the one to his left, both glancing at him warily, but voicing no objection. “Each of you holds the fire of Old Valyria in your blood and magic that echoes through time in your veins. It is this fire we shall use to reawaken your dragons from their stony tombs.” the Grandmaster called, his eyes seeming to glow with their own dangerous fluorescent light as he studied the last of Valryia’s Great Children before him. “Place your eggs on the altars, sons and daughters of dragons, and stand before them, for it is you who will give them life once more.” he feels the purple eyes of his children and grandchildren glare at him as he produces his egg and places it before him. He can almost hear their sneers as he withdraws his hand.

\textit{This is a pointless endeavor}

\textit{The old man who has become obsessed}

\textit{It's best to humor is whims}

\textit{When will he realize this is folly?}

He meets their barely disguised contempt steadily, fearlessly, because he knows that he's no fool. He knows that dragons will return because even after all this time, he still remembered his brother’s words from all those years ago, right before the tragic Ashford Tourney. If he closed his eyes he could still see his oldest brother now, lying in his bed, white as a sheet, skin sallow, but plum eyes burning with something Aegon would only later identified as magic,

“This curse of mine will be the death of me.” Daeron had murmured, clearly believing Aegon was long gone, “But at least I got one good dream: a dream of magic and dragons reborn.” his brother had seen it, had dreamed of the return of dragons and magic, so ever since that day, he had known in his heart that House Targaryens would have their dragons back, and he knew now was the time. If he had his dragons, the Lords could no longer fight his reforms, could no longer resist his decrees, or plot against him. If he had his dragons there was nothing he could not do, nothing his house could not achieve. So, despite the objections of his advisors, the pleas of his closest friends and the trepidation currently dancing in his descendants’ eyes, he refused to waver from his course. He stared out at them across the semicircle of altars and looked at each of them in they eye, urging them to follow the pyromancers’ orders. Rhaella, his only granddaughter, bravest of them all despite the strain her pregnancy was having on her body, was the first, placing a silver dragon egg on the altar before her. He smiled at her approvingly, more than a little happy to see that not all of his descendents were faint of heart and will. Her father Jaehaerys, Aegon’s heir, soon followed his daughter’s example, placing his red and gold egg down on the altar with a steady hand, although his eyes still shone with doubt. Aegon stared down at the remaining four, and with pursed lips and clenched jaws, they soon followed suit, Duncan, Aerys, Shaera, and finally Vaella, placing their purple, blue, green, and black eggs down upon the stone altars. Vaella’s plum eyes met Aegon’s for a moment and Aegon couldn’t help but feel as if Daeron was watching him through his daughter’s eyes. He closed his own indigo ones briefly,

“I hope I fulfill your dream, brother.” he murmured, feeling as if Daeron’s spirit was there with him, urging him on. "I hope I make our family proud."

“Father?” a soft voice asked and Aegon opened his eyes to find his oldest son clasping his shoulder, indigo eyes worried. “Are you all right?”

“Yes, Duncan.” he muttered, straightening to look towards the Grand Master, whose eyes gleamed almost greedily as he saw the seven eggs glittering on their pedestals, “Quite all right.” Duncan glanced towards the Grand Master with a furrowed brow, then back at Aegon.
“Father, please, there’s something about that man, something unnatural-”

“Oh not this again!” Aegon hissed at his oldest son almost angrily, although for the first time that night a bolt of anxiety struck Aegon’s heart. “Take your place, son. You have already defied me enough for a lifetime, for once, just do as you’re told.” Duncan opened his mouth to object, but closed it at Aegon’s baleful glare, clenching his jaw as he returned to his place. The Grand Master seemed to smirk at Duncan’s retreat, his eyes definitely glowing now. He turned to Aegon with a low bow, and Aegon gave his nod of approval, ignoring the pleading looks Duncan continued to send him and Aerys’ low tuts of disapproval. He couldn’t cave to their fears, not now, not when they were so close-

His thoughts were cut off as the chanting began. It was low at first, barely audible, but slowly it grew as the pyromancers threw strangely scented powders down upon the dry wood. It was not quite musical, the chanting, but it seemed to swirl through the air like something alive dancing around the seven fair-haired Targaryens to it's own uneven rhythm, seeming to worm its way into their minds and bodies. He heard murmurs erupt behind the crescent of Targaryens and he could feel the anxious gazes of his closest friends and family baring into the flesh of his back. He knew if he happened to look behind him, he'd meet the disapproving eyes of Duncan the Tall or Jenny of Oldstones, both of whom had objected to this great endeavor until the last possible moment. The voices of the pyromasters grew in pitch and ferocity as the chant seemed to beat against the Targaryens and the very walls of the great hall. He heard Rhaella cry out at a particularly high note and grip her stomach, Aerys staggered as a strong low note was released through the hall, and Aegon felt his own skin grow hot as a great fire erupted before them, without the pyromasters having even touched the great hearth. It jumped up from the pile of wood like a creature alive and danced wildly as it towered above the seven pyromancers dancing around it, moving and twisting with the beat of their strange chant. The fire was blood red at first, but as the chant continued, it turned a dark blue, then turquoise, before finally it shone as white as Aegon’s hair. He heard a gasp as figures made of flame broke off from the central fire and began dancing with the pyromasters as they stoked the flames with pieces of strange, gnarled wood, driving the already enormous bonfire to even greater heights. He couldn’t understand what the pyromasters were saying, but he knew they were invoking something, begging for something’s attention, urging something to use its power to- Then, suddenly, the chanting stopped and the world stood still. King Aegon found himself petrified as the room’s temperature skyrocketed. He felt the heavy gaze of something he couldn’t quite comprehend land on his back and before him a great figure emerged from the fire. It was made of pure white flames and stood at least twelve feet tall and as two great black holes opened on its face, Aegon felt all the air sucked out of his lungs. It strode towards him, leaning down its great head to stare at him as the heat of its body blasted his skin. He blinked once, then twice, and then he screamed as seven ropes of flame were thrown from the white fiery body, each strand looping around the necks of the Seven Targaryens. He heard angry and scared cries from the onlookers behind him echo through the hall as the pyromancers resumed their dancing and chanting, despite the cries of pain echoing from the seven-leashed Targaryens. His daughter’s eyes flickered to him, filled with fear and pain, her lips struggling to release a scream the fiery chain kept locked away. His own voice proved muzzled as well, and just as he felt his mind passing from the pain, the ropes woven from flames released them, turning violet as they were pulled back into the fiery white form from which they had sprung. Aegon reached a shaking hand towards his neck as the great figure returned to the inferno before them. Vaella collapsed to her knees as Jaehaerys gasped, but Aegon could already tell none of them had been hurt physically by what had just happened. He felt a hand on his shoulder and turned to see Dunk’s terrified face.

“Egg!” his oldest and dearest friend cried as the chanting grew even louder and the heat from the fire became uncomfortable even for him. “Stop this! This isn’t right!” King Aegon shrugged out from his Lord Commander’s grip, staring defiantly into Dunk’s eyes.
“No! It’s working, we can’t stop now!” he yelled as he turned away from his friend. Dunk didn’t understand, could never understand, why this had to happen. He closed his eyes as the chanting continued to grow in volume and intensity, now seeming to echo from the very walls of the castle. None of them understood, but he didn’t need them to, all he needed was for them to follow him. All their doubts, all their fear, would prove so trivial once they had their dragons back. Pain erupted across his back as the gaze of whatever had appeared earlier returned. He felt it trace his skin, setting his flesh ablaze, and in his mind an inhuman voice hissed.

*Open aōha laesi, dārys Aegon!* (open your eyes, King Aegon)

He covered his ears in agony as the voice boomed within his mind, more like the grinding of stones as they fell down a slope than a human voice.

*Open aōha laesi se ūndegon!* (open your eyes and see)

Almost against his will he opened his indigo eyes and watched as the flames grew even larger, hissing angrily as the pyromasters threw vials of bright powders, and glowing liquids into it as their chant grew to a frenzied pitch. The heat of the room was now so intense that the air seemed to be sucked out of Aegon’s lungs as the flames turned from white to blood red to orange to violet. Sweat began glistening on his children’s faces, Rhaella swayed almost drunkenly, and Aegon began to fear that he might have been wrong-

A crack echoed across the hall and Aegon’s breath caught in his throat as glowing cracks appeared across the formerly petrified surface of his green and white egg. A soft growl echoed from within and he slowly bent over to stare in wonder as a piece of shell fell from the egg, revealing a green eye that blinked up at him in confusion. He looked over at his oldest son, whose eyes were wide with amazement and wonder before-

**Flames**

Aegon blinked. He was no longer standing before the great fire in Summerhall. His hands shook before him, hot to the touch, but unharmed despite the curtain of flames that had just engulfed him. He looked around wildly as his entire body shook.

“Duncan?” He called out, searching for the son who had just been beside him. "Aerys? Shaera? Jaehaerys? Anyone?” Only silence answered his calls, so potent and heavy he feared its implications. “Where did they go?” he asked himself softly, “where in gods’ name-” his voice died in his throat as his eyes fell upon a great table depicting Westeros in all its glory. Aegon swallowed as he glanced around once more, beginning to recognize where exactly he was. “Dragonstone?” he murmured fearfully, staring at the great table with a mix of fear and wonder. “How-”

“Dorne is a desert.” a soft female voice said, interrupting his panicked questions. “It is much harder to Conquer such a land with fire.” Aegon’s eyes grew wide as they landed on a group of three people standing beside the table. Their hair glittered silver and gold in the torchlight and two wore distinctly Targaryen armor. He cautiously approached them, hope beating in his heart for the briefest of moments, but he quickly realized they were not his children, although he knew he had seen their faces somewhere before.

“I agree, Dorne is different from any of the other kingdoms we have conquered so far. Two of us at least will have to lead the assault if we hope to use our dragons to conquer it.” the taller woman agreed, her voice rich with something Aegon couldn’t quite place. She glanced over the map with bright violet eyes and Aegon swore they seemed to glow slightly in the dim light. “If we are to beat them we’ll-” her words died as her eyes fell on him. The other two looked up at her sudden silence, following the line of her gaze, but unlike hers, their indigo and lavender eyes flowed over Aegon as
if he wasn’t even there. She shook her head slightly before staring at him once more, her red lips pursing as she scanned him.

"Visenya?" the man asked, putting a hand on her armored shoulder. “What is it?” Aegon’s heart hammering in his chest as he realized why he recognized their faces. Gods be damned, what was happening to him? And where was everyone else?

“I see a man.” she replied, slowly rounding the table to approach him. “A man I swear I’ve seen before, or perhaps dreamt I’ve seen before.”

“What does that mean?” the other woman, who must be Rhaenys, asked, following behind her sister. "Visenya, speak frankly, we don't see, remember?” Aegon could only stare at them in awe as they approached, Visenya and Rhaenys Targaryen, the two conquering queens. How was he seeing them? Visenya shook her head, confusion dancing across her cold, austere face as she stood before him.

“It means I’ve seen this spectre before, but I don't understand why he's here now, or what his presence here means.” she answered, slowly walking towards Aegon, her carefully braided hair bound in iron rings that only sharpened the harsh edges of her beauty. "I know that face," she murmured to him, reaching out a hand as if to touch him. "I saw it so long ago. Aegon, was it not?" She asked and Aegon's heart beat wildly in his chest. “But that dream was so very long ago, how are you here now?"

“How-” Aegon began, but suddenly a painful heat ripped through his chest, causing him to fall over in pain. Visenya barely had time to flinch in surprise before a wave of fire erupted from his form, hitting her across the chest. She gave a small cry as she fell to the floor, her body contorting wildly as arcs of flame raced across her skin. Aegon and Rhaenys cried out in alarm, running to her side.

"Visenya!" Rhaenys cried anxiously as Aegon grasped the fallen queen’s writhing form. “Aegon, what’s happening to her?!?” the Conqueror’s eyes scanned the room fiercely, but no matter how hard he looked he couldn’t seem to see Aegon, his dark eyes always glanced over him like he wasn’t even there. Aegon groaned as he clutched his chest, feeling that painful heat begin to burn again.

“Something’s here!” the conqueror told his sister, holding his writhing queen tightly in his arms. “Rhaenys, get the-” the youngest conqueror jumped up before he even finished his sentence and ran to a cabinet in the far corner of the room. She threw open the doors with enough force to break them and quickly grabbed a dark box covered in Valyrian runes. Aegon watched the youngest conqueror rush back to her fallen siblings as the heat began worming its way up his throat, scalding his heart and burning his vocal cords. Rhaenys, however, seemed not to hear the exclamations of pain that escaped his lips and threw open the box, pulling out a dark green poultice which she pressed to Visenya’s gasping mouth. Aegon sighed with Visenya’s siblings in relief as the Dragon Queen’s spasms slowed. She slowly opened her eyes with a low groan.

“Visenya, what-” Visenya put a hand to her sister's lips to silence her, glancing over where Aegon still knelt, clutching his chest.

“I understand now,” she whispered to him weakly, looking straight into his indigo eyes, “the magic, it's not pure-” Aegon screamed in pain as another wave of flames erupted from his body and-
Aegon grimaced as pain hits his temples, the image of curtains of flame still burning in his mind. He curled his fingers wearily, watching as steam curled from his skin. With a groan he puts a hand to his forehead, confused and in pain. What was happening to him? What had she meant by magic? Why could only she see him? He rubs his temples slowly as the worst of the headache dies down and his skin no longer felt as if its cooking.

“What just happened?” he murmured to himself, attempting to quiet his spiralling thoughts. “Did I just see—” he shook his head, clenching his fists at his side. “No, this is not the time to lose your head.” He took a deep breath and reeled back his panicking mind. What had he just seen? He had seen the Conquerors, that he was sure of, he knew those faces, had seen them glower at him for years from portraits and books. He also knew he had hit one of them with fire, a fire that Queen Visenya had said was magic. Magic, bloody magic. “That must be it.” he muttered, running a hand through his white hair. Whatever was happening to him, it must have been the result of whatever magic the pyromancers had summoned during the ritual. Dread struck his aching heart. If whatever was happening to him was the result of the pyromaster’s magic failing, that probably meant something had gone wrong. Fear like nothing he had experienced before rushed through his cooling veins as he remembered the silence that had echoed around him when he had called for his children. If something had gone wrong then-

“How is the queen?” a new voice asked and Aegon’s eyes flew open to survey his surroundings for the first time. Once again, he was in a new location, although as before it was somewhere he was quite familiar with: the royal chambers of the Red Keep, although they were differently furnished than his own chambers. As before there were three figures in the room with him, although none of them seemed to register his presence. A fair woman lay on the great bed before him, her gold hair splayed out around her head like a halo, although her eyes were shut and rimmed with dark, bruised bags. Two men stood beside her bedside murmuring amongst themselves, one with hair so fair it almost appeared silver and another with a maester’s book chained to his wrist. The Fair-haired man muttered something to the maester, before turning and walking towards Aegon, whose breath caught in his throat as he saw the man's face.

"King Jaehaerys?” He whispered, watching as the Great King gave the woman a final worried look before exiting the chamber. “This isn't possible," He ran a hand through his white hair. "First the Conquerors, now king Jaehaerys and Queen-”

“Are you the swan song of my visions then?” a woman's voice asked and Aegon nearly jumped out of his skin. A mirror image of the woman lying unconscious on the bed stands before him, her blue eyes staring at him with perplexed annoyance. Aegon opens his mouth to speak, but quickly closes it, remembering what had occurred when he had tried to address Queen Visenya. Good Queen Alysanne appraised him slowly, her eyes narrowing at his continued silence. “I can see you for now, there’s no use in playing dumb.” he licks his lips nervously at her words. “Speak spectre, or trouble me no more.” Aegon swallowed nervously, both unwilling to risk speaking to her, but at a loss as to what else he could do in this situation.

“My lady, it is dangerous for me to speak to you.” he finally answered, speaking as quickly as possible as he felt heat begin to bubble in his chest like before. Queen Alysanne tilts her head at his words.

“Why?” she asks, approaching him as Queen Visenya had before her, her face now more worried than annoyed. “Who are you?”

“I am King Aegon, fifth of my name.” he answers, although he doubts that would mean much to her.
“Aegon?” She repeats carefully, raising an eyebrow. "The fifth Aegon? How curious. Tell me Aegon, do you have Dragon’s Sight?” Alysanne asks him gently as looks him over quickly. “Nevermind, I can tell you most certainly do not.” she purses her lips as she stares into his deep indigo eyes. “But if you don’t have the sight, how did you find yourself the focus of such strong magic and how did you find yourself here?” Aegon swallows the heat worming its way up his throat, trying his best to focus on her words despite the pain running through the nerves of his body.

“I’m not entirely sure, my lady. My memory is faulty, but the last thing I remember before this started was that I was participating in a powerful ritual.” and a curtain of flames. He grimaced as he felt his mouth grow hot with fire. “My only thought is that something went wrong.” Alysanne’s blue eyes go wide at his words, understanding dawning in those blue depths that quickly becomes a look of pity

“Oh, something almost certainly went wrong.” she places a hand to his forehead, but quickly withdraws it, her eyes definitely scared now as steams wisps from her hands. “They didn’t just use any magic, the power here had to be taken from-” Aegon cries out in agony and like before a wave of white flame erupted from his body. Alysanne screamed as the flames hit her and Aegon was helpless as she disintegrated before his eyes. The version of Alysanne on the bed howled and sat up, her blue eyes glancing around wildly, but although she looked right at him, it seemed she could no longer see him-

**Flames**

Aegon swore as his vision swam before his eyes, almost collapsing as the room seemed to spin around him. He leaned against something next to him to keep himself upright and worked to suppress the nausea creeping its way up his throat like the flames had before it. So now he knew for sure, something had gone wrong with the pyromancers ritual. Those bastards! Those lying, arrogant bastards! They had told him- He takes a shaky breath as he forces his thoughts to steady themselves. Now was not the time for anger, now was the time for careful thought.

“Take a deep breath.” he told himself as he attempted to slow his breathing. “Take a deep breath and think. You now know how this happened.” he clasped his hands before him as he slowly inhaled. He now knew that a mistake in the ritual had caused this situation, and although he cursed his lack of knowledge, he had a feeling he knew what was happening to him. He had just seen two different eras and spoken to two different Targayrens. That could only mean one thing, right? Either he had gone completely mad, was dreaming, or whatever magic he was caught up in was throwing him through time. If it was the final option, that meant the white flames that always appeared before he was thrown into a new era were the result of a, what? A magic build up? Magic overflow? Gods, he wished Aemon was here, Aemon would know. “But he’s not here and you must make do.” he muttered to himself, “One consolation is that it took longer this time. Perhaps that means it takes longer for the power to build up each time?” he shakes his head. “But if I’m here, what happened to the others? Are they suffering similar fates or are they-” he couldn’t even finish the final sentence, not even to himself. "Gods, I wish I knew more about magic-"

“I highly doubt that.” a familiar voice replied, interrupting his monologue. “Magic is a bitch and there is really no pleasing her.” Aegon’s eyes flew open for the first time since the flames and he realized he was standing in the Lord’s Rooms at Summerhall. “and believe me friend, I’ve tried.” Aegon slowly turned around and he almost cried with relief as his eyes fixed themselves on a familiar face. "Sorry for disturbing you, but since you're probably a drunken mirage anyways, I probably shouldn't bother apologising."

“Daeron?” Aegon murmured, his voice wavering with emotion as he beheld his long dead brother.
Daeron raised a glass with a slightly shaking hand as confirmation before downing the whole thing. “In the worthless flesh.” his brother responded, his plum eyes lazily focusing on Aegon. “And although I've been told not to talk to hallucinations, who might you be?”

“I’m Aegon, your little brother.” the mirth in Daeron’s eyes vanished as they go wide at Aegon’s words. With a shaking hand he pours himself another cup of wine, shaking his head in disbelief.

“Oh gods, no you’re not.” he mutters, downing the whole thing in little more than two gulps. He swallows and turns back to Aegon, staring deeply into his eyes. “Please tell me you’re not.”

“Look at my eyes, brother, look at my face. I’m older than you’ve ever seen me, but you must be able to recognize me.” he rushes to Daeron and grips his shoulders tightly. “It’s me, it’s your brother, it’s Egg.” Daeron staggers away from Aegon as he says this, shaking his head in what Aegon can only identify as sorrow.

“Oh Egg, please just be a drunken vision.” he muttered, turning to look back at the Tankard of wine.

“Daeron, I’m not,” Aegon replies, feeling a familiar heat begin building in his chest. “And I don’t have much time, brother. I need your help.” Daeron laughs, shaking his head with a sad smirk Aegon had not seen for over thirty years.

“What can I possibly do to help you? IF you truly are my brother, you should know that I’ve never been good for anything-”

“Please, Daeron,” Aegon interrupts, the heat beginning to become uncomfortable. “I don’t have much time. I’m trapped in some kind of misfired spell and it seems to be dragging me through time. I’ve already seen the Conquerors, and spoken to Good Queen Alysanne, and now I’m here. You had the sight, you spoke of the gods, what is happening to me?” Daeron furrows his brow, rubbing his hand over his face.

“I’m not drunk enough for this.” he mutters, shaking his head. “Or perhaps I’m too drunk to be much use. I’ve never been much good at this dragonsight, dragon dreams, crap. Any of the others would be better.”

“I think I already met these others you speak of and they couldn't help-” Aegon gasps and clutches his chest, feeling the heat begin eating his heart. “We don’t have much time, the spell is going to drag me away soon. Please, just tell me anything you know.” Daeron clenches his jaw in frustration, running a hand through his sandy hair.

“Oh for the love of arbor gold, fine. Do you know what kind of spell you're caught up in? Perhaps someone who actually knows about this ridiculous stuff has mentioned it to me.” Daeron’s voice is serious now and Aegon is more relieved than he would ever admit.

“It was a spell meant to bring back dragons, to bring fire from stone.” Aegon explains. Daeron stares at him unimpressed for a moment before huffing in barely concealed contempt.

“That a spell is impossible.” he replies after a minute, furrowing his brow in concern as Aegon leans against the bedpost, almost collapsing from the pain of keeping the fire in. "And only a fool would be stupid enough to even attempt it. Well, perhaps someone would have to be more than even a fool, since in my drunkest moments, even I wouldn't attempts such a doomed enterprise.” Aegon's cheeks heat up at his brother's words, but he decides to blame that on the fire, not on the shame his brother’s contempt wrought.
“Why?” he managed to gasp out as Daeron rushed to catch him as he falls to the floor.

“The amount of magic required to achieve such a feet is vast and I remember being told once by something that might have been a god, that with the death of dragons, magic began dying as well. The only way such a spell could even hope to succeed is if the casters found a way to borrow magic from the past.” Daeron tells him as Aegon clutches Daeron's forearms.

"What does that mean?” He rasps, looking at his brother desperately. Daeron sighs in exasperation.

"It means the caster would have to reach back to a time when more magic existed and use that to fuel the spell. Our brother once had a long discussion with a visiting maester from Lys on the very subject." Aegon gasps at Daeron’s words.

“That must be it then.” he mutters, feeling the fire begin working up his throat as he collapses into his brother's arms. “Daeron, you have to run, the spell is about to ignite again-” Daeron furrows his brow at Aegon's words before shaking his head.

“No, Egg. I think, although I have no faith in this belief, I think I know what's happening here and I have an idea about how to stop it, but you'll have to take me with you so we can test it.” Daeron responds as he holds Aegon in his arms.

“No, Daeron, you don’t understand, the fire-”

“The fire will not hurt me, I have a feeling it will simply put me to sleep, Egg, that is if I’m not already passed out insensible in the larder or something like that.” Daeron soothes, grasping Aegon's hand tightly.

"Daeron, no-"

"I'm the elder, Egg," Daeron admonishes as Aegon struggles to escape his grip. "Not to mention, I already know how I will die and it is not by fire, that’s much to grand a death for the likes of me.” Daeron wraps his free arm around Aegon, hugging him close as Aegon still struggles weakly to escape his grasp. “Oh stop struggling old man, I’ll stay with you and I'll help you out of this.” A tear escapes Aegon's eye as feels the fire about to burst. "It's the least I can do for my brother."

“Daeron!” he cries out in pain as he feels his chest explode. “Daeron no!”

Flames

"See? Perfectly intact, although I must admit, that was perhaps one of the worst things I ever experienced." Daeron groaned as Aegon opened his eyes, which still stung from the explosion of fire that had just consumed him. "And I've had so many terrible nights that being able to say that about anything at this point is rather impressive." Aegon proceeded to retch up whatever remained in his stomach. "Oh, well someone can’t hold their magic." Aegon glared at his brother as another wave of retching overtook his body.

"Where are we?” Aegon finally managed to grunt out as the retching slowed.

"Dragonstone, I think we're going to meet some old friends of mine." Daeron replied, gently sitting the still shaking Aegon up against a stone cold wall

"Who-" he begins to ask, but his question was interrupted as two new figures appeared beside them, both grunting as they curled upon the ground. Daeron raised an eyebrow Aegon with a
slightly playful smirk as they watched the two figures groan on the floor, Aegon being sure to keep Daeron’s hand on his shoulder to keep him up right. The first figure to pull themselves off the courtyard floor was a woman and although she was younger than the last time Aegon had seen her, it was clearly-

"Visenya, lovely as always." His brother exclaimed as the woman pushed a long braid of silver-gold hair behind her back. "I'm glad you're not a child this time, you'd be absolutely no help then."

"Daeron? What in the seven hells is happening?" She replies, her voice a mixture of annoyance and confusion.

"Indeed, and who managed to summon us here like this? It would take a God's power to drag us both out of our respective times to this not quite a place." The other figure added, in a familiar voice that made Aegon's blood run cold. He glanced over at the figure beside Visenya and his eyes immediately were met with two intelligent red eyes glowing from a face as white as death. Although Aegon has never seen the man before him with two eyes during his lifetime, he of course immediately recognized that face.

"Exactly the problem, Brynden." his brother answered as Aegon groaned once more, signalling the return of that damned heat. "And I am unfortunately sober right now, too sober really, when one of these dreams finally has some wine that'll be the day I never wake up, but anyways, I do think we're dealing with the powers of a god. You both being here is all but confirmation, but if you wouldn't mind, Visenya? You're old enough that you should be able to check with very little effort." The woman, although she was probably only eight and ten, raised an unimportant eyebrow at Daeron. "Please, you're the seer after all, and we're a bit limited in terms of time." She sighed a his brother's words, but nevertheless slowly approached Aegon and knelt down before him.

"He doesn't look well," she muttered as she put a cool hand on his sticky forehead. "He looks almost as if:" She quickly withdrew her hand as white flames suddenly began dancing across her palm. "Oh gods." Lord Bloodraven slowly approached her as she stared at Aegon with a mixture of fear and pity.

"So," Daeron asked as the two shared a look. "Was I right?"

"Yes, Yes you were." Visenya murmured, looking from Aegon to Daeron with concerned violet eyes. "But there's one thing that doesn't quite make sense here." Aegon looked up at her through slightly teary eyes as his chest began to burn once more.

"What doesn't make sense?" He asks weakly, feeling his ribs crack and his heart twist from the heat.

"How you're still alive." Lord Bloodraven tells him softly, looking into his indigo eyes with a gaze that seemed to reach into Aegon’s very soul. "This magic is more powerful than almost anything I've ever encountered, and the only thing I can think of is that it's being fueled by a god." He gently picks up Aegon's limp wrist. "A god’s power is enough to turn most men to dust, there is no reason you should be alive right now." His brother glanced down at Aegon as Lord Bloodraven traced Aegon’s veins, his eyes weary.

"He’s alive though." Daeron comments, gripping Aegon's shoulder almost painfully as Lord Bloodraven’s hand begins smoking, causing sparks of pain to run up Aegon’s arm.

"For now," Visenya murmured, gently placing a hand on Aegon's chest. “The magic used here makes almost no sense to me.” Lord Bloodraven hisses and drops Aegon’s arm, which falls limply to his side.
“Visenya, I think-” before Lord Bloodraven even finishes his sentence Visenya plucks a knife from her belt and draws a knife lightly across her wrist. Aegon gasps as scarlet blood seeps up from the wound and runs down her hand in small crimson rivers.

“You don’t have to-” he begins, but she shushes him gently, as she gently rubs her finger in the blood before drawing a strange rune on his chest. For a second, the briefest of moments, his chest cools, but then the blood blazes white and the rune vanishes, consumed by white flames. He groans in pain as the heat returns, hearing Daeron curse softly beside him. He sees Visenya glance at Daeron pityingly before drawing yet another rune across his heaving chest. It crackles and vanishes even faster than the one before it and Aegon feels as if the skin of his chest will melt from the heat.

“Well, it’s not the usual blood magic, nor is their a trade involved as far as I can tell.” she tells him, tearing the hem of her tunic and wrapping it around her weeping wrist. “In fact, as far as I’m concerned, this is barely Valyrian magic at all.” Aegon groaned as he felt the fire work its way up his throat once more.

"Then what-" Aegon's scream cut off Daeron's next question and he grabbed Daeron and Visenya's hands before flames erupted from his body-

**Flames**

"This is bad." Aegon heard Daeron murmur from somewhere beside him. "This is really, really bad."

"Clearly," he heard Visenya reply as a cool hand rested on his forehead. "The God is almost certainly using his body as a focus for its power. If he had the sight the toll probably wouldn’t be so great, but-"

"He doesn’t and without the protection of magic this will kill him. I’ve never heard of someone without Dragon’s Sight surviving for long under the attention of a god." He heard Daeron's voice reply. "Have you?" the hand moved from his forehead to his chest as he heard Visenya hum in thought.

“There was this figment that I saw when I was little, a young woman with dark hair and light violet eyes,” she heard her voice falter for a moment. “I don’t think she had the sight, but I don’t know. I suspect that your brother won’t survive much longer like this.” There’s silence for a minute before he hears Daeron speak again, his voice low.

“Is there anything we can do?”

“Without the exact spell? Nothing you’d like, Daeron.” Visenya responds, her hand finally leaving his chest, leaving only a low heat behind. “Perhaps those names he was murmuring about could be helpful.”

"They're the names of my children." Aegon finally muttered, interrupting them. “They won’t help you with this.” Visenya and Daeron remained silent beside him as he worked to suppress the bile pushing its way up his throat and gain control of his spasming leg muscles. He found he was lying under the open sky with stars that shone brightly above him like diamonds in a dark sea. As he turned his head slightly to look around him, he realized he and his companions were sitting in a great ruin. Close to them were the remnants of once strong walls, which reached towards the sky and the vestige of a once great staircase climbing towards an upper story that no longer existed. Beside him sat only Visenya and Daeron, their pale skin glowing slightly in the moonlight. Lord Bloodraven was gone, no doubt lost when the fire took them. "Where?" He asked once the worst of
the bile receded, his voice weak even to his own ears.

"We don't know." Daeron responded quickly, helping Aegon sit up. "How are you feeling?"

"Awful, almost like I've been set on fire a few times." Aegon responds, half in jest, but his pain is evident in his voice, "So, I'm the focus of a god?"

"Something like that." Visenya tells him gently, staring at him with those potent violet eyes that he knew would one day raze Westeros into submission. "As far as I can tell based on the limited amount I've seen, the spell you're caught in invoked the power of a god and trapped it. I believe it was supposed to be focused on multiple sources, but for some reason it's all centered on you and the power seems to still think the spell is happening, which I suppose for a god it might still be since Gods don’t really perceive time like us mortals."

Aegon stared at her blankly and she sighed, rubbing a hand down her face. "Sorry, not helpful. Basically, a god is pumping you full of power which it is taking from different times, your body can’t handle that much energy, so you, for lack of a better term, overheat and are dragged through time to, well, reheat."

“Bad news, Egg, this will eventually kill you,” Daeron juts in from Aegon’s other side, “good news, now that we know what’s happening, all we have to do is find a way to, well, unleash you from the god." Aegon nodded, glancing around him once more. “We probably still have a time limit though, which is unfortunate, but,” Daeron’s voice died as Aegon slowly looks more closely at his surroundings. Something about this ruin seemed strangely familiar to him. "Egg?" his brother asked, but he ignores him, his eyes focusing on a nearby doorway. “Egg, as I was saying, we don’t have much time, certainly not enough to take in the scenery.-” Aegon puts a hand up to stop Daeron’s rambling. He knows that door, knows the curve of it well, knows the stone it was obviously carefully carved from. Dread builds in his chest as he follows the curvature of the arch to the top. He doesn’t want to look, doesn’t want to see, but he has to, he has to know. He cries out as he sees the dragon carved into the burnt keystone, its amethyst eyes blackened and cracked, but still shining ever so faintly purple.

"Oh gods," he cries, finally realizing where they are. "Oh gods, oh gods, oh gods!" He sees Daeron deflate beside him as his entire body begins to tremble. Tears welled in his eyes as despair comes crashing down on him like a tidal wave. "No, gods, please, not Summerhall!?" He glanced at Daeron, whose lips are pursed and eyes glancing off away from Aegon. "It is, isn't it?"

"Aegon-" Daeron begins, but the briefest waver in his brother’s voice and the tenseness of his jaw answer the question more eloquently than words ever could.

"Oh gods, it is!" He glanced around wildly, recognizing the scorched walls and scarred floors. He picked up his hand and finds it streaked with grey ash, lines of dark soot streaked across his shaking, white palm. "I killed them all, didn't I? The spell, when it backfired, it killed them all! It must have!" He looked at Visenya’s face as he said this, watching the famously stoic dragon queen purse her lips as she looked around them at the ruins of Summerhall, the ravages of fire reflecting in her violet eyes. “Right, Visenya?” he asked, saying her name like a broken man begging for scraps.

"I don't know if everyone here would have died," she finally answered, "but I imagine there were casualties from so great a-" tears welled up in Aegon's eyes and she closed her mouth, looking down at the ashes she was kneeling in, fists clenched at her side. There were no words for the pain he felt in that moment. Guilt, anger, rage, shame, and sorrow, all mixed together to make a pain, an agony, sharper than all the fiery deaths he had experienced over the last few hours. His children, his grandchildren, his friends, all of them, lost because of him, because of his stubbornness, because of his folly! Duncan, his wife, Jenny, she had been with child, and Rhaella, sweet, kind,
beautiful Rhaella, what had happened to her? What had happened to poor, simple Vaella, Daeron’s only daughter? To his first great-grandchild? A sob-like scream, or perhaps a scream-like sob, erupted from his lips and he wished a thousand fiery deaths upon himself for this. How many had died for the foolishness of one old man? How many?!

“Egg, please it’s not-” Aegon hits Daeron in the leg, cutting off whatever comfort he was trying to offer. He wanted no comfort, he deserved no absolution. There was only one thing he deserved now, and he knew who had the right to give it to him.

"Visenya, you know what must be done to atone for this, don’t you?” He asked one of the great founders of his house, his voice cracking from the sobs shaking his body. He grasped Daeron's hand as he slowly stood to look around at the ruins he had wrought. She raised an eyebrow at him. "Don't you?"

"I’m not sure I have the right to pass such a judgement." She answered, standing to look him in the eye. "Your mistakes are a king’s mistakes—"

"But we both know that you shall be a Queen, the Dragon Queen, the most feared Queen Westeros will ever see until Rhaenyra Targaryen during the Dance!” he jerked himself away from his brother and grasped her hands, falling to his knees before her. “I killed them all, Visenya, I burned them all for folly, I killed our house! End me now as I ended them, it is your right as the Dragon Queen.”

He closed his eyes, feeling tears escape from beneath his closed eyelids as he grasped her cold hands in his burning ones. "I should have died with them." He felt the air in beside him shift as a hand gently rested on his shuddering shoulder.

"Egg, you didn’t kill them." Daeron's voice soothes, “Perhaps you made a mistake, but what man hasn’t?” Aegon wants to believe Daeron’s words so badly, he wants to grab hold of his absolution and cling to it like a drowning man, anything to make the pain in his heart stop, but he doesn’t. Instead he shrugs out of his brother's comforting grip.

"Yes I did. You said it yourself, brother, only someone worse than a fool would attempt a spell to bring the dragons back. Well, I did Daeron!” he opens his eyes and looks into his brothers plum ones, seeing his pained, grief stricken eyes reflected back at him. “I did. I was worse than a fool! I ordered all my family, my children, my grandchildren, my friends, I ordered them all to participate in a ritual that killed them! I was so sure—” his voice died as melancholy notes sprang through the air, dancing through the night like dragons had once danced through the sky. "I was so sure I was right, but I wasn’t. I led them all to their fiery deaths." The song continued and Visenya released his hands, moving away from him towards the source of the music. Daeron hauled Aegon to his feet, his hands digging into Aegon’s arms as he dragged him to stand beside her as they look down into the ruins. A single boy sat there, hair glittering silver in the moonlight, fingers plucking at the strings of a harp with such melancholy sadness that Aegon's tears begin anew.

"Not all of them, it seems.” Daeron murmured softly as they watch the young boy with hair like silver-gold played his melancholy tune in the ashes of Summerhall. "That boy down there certainly looks like one of the blood, does he not?” More and more tears escaped his indigo eyes as he watched the young boy play until his whole body was shaking with sobs. He hadn't killed them all after all. He closed his eyes and listened to the tune.

"Visenya, founder of my house," He whispered as the song continued. "Please."

"Aegon, it's not my place to—"

"Aegon, you can't ask her to—"
He turns to look at them both. A young girl of eight and ten, face still untouched by war and eyes still unmarred by true bloodshed, stares back at him from the face of a conqueror, and beside her stands a man, probably barely five and two, whose eyes are clearer than they’d ever been in life and whose hands for once are not unsteady with drink. If they were older, perhaps they’d understand. If they were who they would one day become, not doubt they would do what he asked. Yet, they are not, not yet, she was not a conqueror and Daeron was better than he allowed himself to be in life. He almost wanted to laugh at his dilemma, for once, he is the eldest, the wisest, the most experienced. In their young eyes, violet and plum, he sees himself. An old, frail man, shaking with sobs, standing in the midst of a great ruin blackened by flames. How funny it was to be old, older than Daeron would ever be, and what was the saying? “The old should not burden the young?”

“Aegon, we can’t do what you ask.” Daeron says softly, “We’ll find another way, we’ll-”

“No,” Aegon interrupts. “No, you won’t. I suppose you’re right though, you can’t do this for me. Only I can atone for my sins.” he turns away from them and stares down at the boy once more. He seems to be sitting quite a ways down, his harp small, but still shining brightly in the moonlight. He wonders what happened to the boy that made him so sad? Perhaps he had heard stories of this place, of the hope, of the folly, of the sorrow. Perhaps he knew how much death had occurred here. Aegon sighs and silences his mind. It mattered not anymore. He moves to the edge as he dried his eyes, hears the music flow through him as heat begins bubbling in his chest. He hears a gasp erupt behind him as his companions realize what he’s about to do.

“Egg, don’t-” his brother cries, but it’s too late. He’s falling, down and down to the sad notes of the harp. He hears a roar loud enough to shake the Dragonmount and-

Flames

then-

Darkness

Chapter End Notes

So. Many. Versions. Of. This. Oh. My-my brain hurts
I’ve had this concept for literally ever, the idea of exploring the magic that led to the Tragedy at Summerhall, but perfecting that idea into a story with a plot I actually liked was so difficult. The time fluidity was present almost from the very beginning, but then there was the question of: What eras should he visit? Obviously Aegon’s Conquest, but when specifically? Who should he talk to? Visenya, clearly, and probably Alysanne, but how? How involved are the gods in this?(should they be involved in this?) How will it be resolved? (will it be resolved?). All of these questions were only finally answered with the very final draft, which you just read, and combing through the story to concretely answer all of them was tortuously slow.

I also made my life harder my employing a slightly different writing style than usual, which allowed for what I felt like more flexibility for the story, but made it harder to focus on my POV character and since I’m not as experienced with it, meant more editing, and editing, and EDITING, for me. So basically, I made my life really hard when writing this chapter, but all in all I think it was worth it. I really enjoyed tying
together all my known dragonsight/dragondream Targaryens(these are not the only ones in existence, they're just the ones that I've explored so far), and this story allowed me to bring back some of my favorite characters, like Daeron the Drunken, and have a bunch of my faves interact in ways they normally wouldn't. All in all, this chapter was so fun to write, and I'm pretty sure it was a suggestion, so thank you for suggesting it. As always, if you have any POVs you'd like to see, or events you'd like unfolded in context of this story, feel free to suggest them in the comments and I'll do my best.

N.B For those of you who were interested, I wrote the first entry in my exploration of King Aegon IV the Unworthy, which I aptly titled "Unworthy"(a lot shorter than the title of this story, right? I learned my lesson from "Who Will Remember..."). It's definitely a work in progress and I have to do a lot more research on that era since I'm just not as knowledgeable about it, but it'll be a lot of fun to write so feel free to check it out.

Please [drop by the archive and comment](https://example.com) to let the author know if you enjoyed their work!