

## G.O Thrones 351

### Chapter 351: Cannibal vs Smoking Sea Wild Dragon

At night, the stars shone brightly.

In the Stone Drum Tower, a pair of silhouettes intertwined on the couch.

After a long while, their truce came, and Rhaegar lit the candle.

Draped in a silk robe, he stepped out onto the open balcony to catch the breeze. The heat made his blood feel like it was boiling.

As far as the eye could see, a faint cluster of firelight flickered in the direction of the distant beach.

"She's gone," Rhaegar muttered under his breath.

The red priestess, who had participated in the daytime ceremony, had returned to Valantis by boat overnight. She had a cunning mind and was useful in her way.

A month ago, after he and Rhaenyra returned to Dragonstone Island, a fire had broken out in Harrenhal. A dozen barrels of wildfire stored in the sanctuary's cellar had accidentally ignited, creating an explosion. Two priests and the Tully family's second son, Milov, were buried in the wildfire.

A slight smile curled on Rhaegar's lips as he closed his eyes, enjoying the cool night breeze. It was a pity that Ormund Hightower was in constant contact with Otto and Aegon, making it hard to find him alone. Otherwise, there might have been another unfortunate accident.

"Rhaegar, I'm thirsty," came a soft, hoarse voice. A warm embrace wrapped around his waist from behind.

Rhaegar turned and smiled, wrapping his arms around the warm, soft body. He lowered his head and lightly kissed her forehead.

Rhaenyra's eyes were dreamy as she pressed against his chest, her breath carrying a faint scent. Clad in a light nightgown, her bare feet touched the expensive red carpet from Myr.

After snuggling for a while, Rhaegar broke away and went to the table to pour a glass of warm water.

Today's ceremony, light and slow, had sated him for now.

Rhaenyra rubbed her flushed cheeks and tilted her head back to accept the water he offered. Her red lips pursed around the cup, swallowing the water tantalizingly.

"Drink slowly, don't choke," Rhaegar said, his eyes dotting on her as he lightly wiped her lower lip, slightly red and swollen from the cut.

Having broken through the barriers, they were now in a legitimate relationship.

One day, when he ascended the Iron Throne, Rhaenyra would be his Queen.

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A feast was in full swing, filled with singing and dancing. Viserys was all smiles, accepting toasts from every bannerman. He hadn't been this happy in years. Seeing his children marriage come to fruition meant he had lived up to the expectations of his late wife, Aemma.

The only slight disappointment he felt was that the banquet wasn't grand enough. It should have been held in the Hall of a Hundred Hearths in Harrenhal, allowing all the nobles of the Seven Kingdoms to attend, and providing three days of food for the poor.

But this traditional ceremony, following the ancient Valyrian ancestral system and witnessed by thousands of nobles and lords, was still significant. It was enough to be written into the history of the continent alongside the God's Eye Tourney.

"Brother, congratulations."

Daemon, carrying his wife Laena, raised his cup in a toast.

Viserys grinned. "In the blink of an eye, the children have grown up, and you and I are no longer young."

"Oh, I can still toss and turn six times a night," Daemon quipped, his magnetic voice carrying a hint of cynicism as he wrapped his arm around Laena's waist.

Years had left few traces on Daemon's handsome face, which still looked flamboyant and prodigal. Viserys squinted at him and grunted disdainfully, never forgetting how Daemon had tried to seduce his daughter and assassinate his son. If not for their former brotherhood, he would have driven Daemon out of Westeros long ago.

The two brothers sat together, drinking wine and reminiscing about their youth. Viserys laughed, "I remember your first great wedding. You refused to go into the bedchamber, so I got you drunk and carried you in."

"I was so drunk, that Bronze Bitch stripped me naked and left me outside the door to stand in the cold wind all night," Daemon replied, his tone light but filled with lingering resentment toward his late wife, Lady Rhea.

The conversation stretched late into the night, with the brothers sharing a moment of silent camaraderie as they watched the revelry in the hall. After a while, Daemon broke the silence.

"Brother, my bloodline has blossomed, and I need a territory to sustain it."

Viserys froze, gazing into his brother's face. Aside from his usual ambitions for the Iron Throne and his previous desire for Rhaenyra, this was the first time Daemon had earnestly asked for something.

After a moment of contemplation, Viserys rubbed his face and spoke seriously, "I'll grant you the outlet of the Blackwater Rush and build a castle for you at the royal family's expense, according to your specifications."

It was a generous offer, one Viserys had clearly considered before, just waiting for Daemon to ask. Daemon took a sip of wine, a slight smile playing at the corners of his mouth.

Viserys patted him on the shoulder and said, "The outlet of the Blackwater Rush allows for trade and navigation. You and your descendants will never have to worry about money."

There were many territories in Westeros, but few as rich and strategic as the Blackwater Rush, adjacent to King's Landing and flowing into Blackwater Bay - a true treasure.

Laena furrowed her brow in concern, holding her husband's large hand. Daemon glanced at her, then back at his brother.

Viserys watched him expectantly.

"Brother, it's better to leave Blackwater Rush to your descendants," Daemon said bluntly. "I have my sights set on the land beyond the Narrow Sea. It's suitable for the second Targaryen bloodline to thrive, away from the political quagmire of King's Landing."

He was clear-headed. His brother's bloodline would stay in Westeros to inherit the Iron Throne, while his would claim the old Valyrian lands across the Narrow Sea and avoid internal conflict. As the Pentoshi say, don't put all your eggs in one basket.

Viserys' face darkened. He slammed down his wine goblet and said, his voice cracking with anger, "Daemon, why can't you ever make things easier for me? Why do you always have to disappoint me?"

He was the king, and peace was of the utmost importance. He had put up with a lot from his troublesome brother, but Daemon kept testing his patience.

Daemon's expression remained calm. "Volantis will take the lead in the war. The Sea Snake and I will participate, sensibly occupying a city-state."

"For saying such things, I could have you executed for treason!" Viserys hissed through gritted teeth, his gaze darting towards the Sea Snake, Corlys Velaryon, who mingled in the crowd.

The Velaryons had always been a thorn in his side, never allowing him peace. Now, united with Daemon to seize a free city-state, they seemed to have ambitions that might rival the Iron Throne itself. Viserys couldn't shake the worry that the Driftwood Throne would rise to challenge his own.

"Your Grace..." Laena began, her voice filled with urgency, trying to salvage her house's image.

But her words were drowned out by a thunderous roar that echoed through the night sky. The Stone Drum Tower shook under the gusty wind, reverberating like a drum struck by a heavy hammer.

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On the top floor of the Stone Drum Tower, Rhaegar stood at the balcony's edge, hands gripping the railing. Beside him, Rhaenyra snuggled close, as if she couldn't get enough of him.

Suddenly, a pitch-black dragon shadow flickered across the night sky, and a furious spectral green Dragonfire swept across half of the horizon.

"Roar..."

In a flash, another dragon's roar pierced the night, and a second dragon shadow sprang into view, emerging from the firelight. The dragon's appearance was indistinct, but its size was clearly formidable.

Rhaegar's eyes widened. He turned and wrapped his arms around Rhaenyra, pulling her back as he continued to gaze out into the night sky.

The moon was bright, and the stars dotted the sky, casting just enough light to reveal some features of the dragon's shadow. This dragon had a well-proportioned body with silver-black scales, a haze-like gray wing membrane, and an extraordinarily large dragon head.

"Rhaegar, what's going on?" Rhaenyra asked, curling up in his arms, her voice trembling with confusion.

"It's that wild dragon," Rhaegar replied gravely. The unique silver and black scales immediately identified it as the wild dragon he had seen in the Smoking Sea. It had followed the footsteps of the fleet and the Cannibal, eventually arriving at Dragonstone Island.

With a sense of urgency, he urged Cannibal to hunt it down. The wild dragon was already fleeing, and if he didn't act quickly, it would escape again.

Cannibal roared repeatedly, flapping its pitch-black wings as it wove through the clouds, chasing after the wild dragon. The wild dragon was incredibly fast, disappearing into the thin clouds within moments, flying hundreds of meters in the blink of an eye.

The two dragons raced out of Dragonstone Island and soared towards the Gullet.

In his last glance, Rhaegar saw the wild dragon suddenly twist its massive head, releasing a mouthful of grayish Dragonfire that looked like smoke and mist. The Dragonfire shot out with meteoric speed.

Cannibal's green eyes flashed with malice. The massive dragon turned deftly, its black wing membrane batting away the dragonfire. The gray dragonfire dissipated into sparks, igniting gravel and seawater like tarsus maggots, burning intensely before gradually dying out.

Within moments, the two dragons vanished into the night, one in pursuit of the other.

Rhaegar, taken aback and awed, whispered, "This is a dragon of Ancient Valyria!"

The texture of the wild dragon's Dragonfire was so similar to Cannibal's ethereal green Dragonfire. Its shape and features were markedly different from the family's dragons, with an exceptionally large head and fierce, thick fangs. There was a distinct similarity to Caraxes' slender body, a testament to its ancient Valyrian heritage.

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The Gullet, Sharp Point

The wild dragon fled frantically, its black jewel-like eyes flashing with fear as it swooped below the clouds and swooped down toward the sea.

"Roar--"

A muffled dragon roar echoed from behind. The beast, more than twice the size of its prey, struggled to keep up.

Cannibal swooped down, slicing through the waves with ease, its green pupils fixed on its prey. The desire to kill filled his mind, his blood boiling like lava. Its jagged teeth gleamed with traces of green dragonfire, and saliva hung from its fangs.

This was a rare opportunity for an open hunt, and Cannibal, who had long thirsted for dragon blood, would not allow failure.

"Roar..."

The putrid stench of Cannibal reached the wild dragon's nostrils, and it roared shrilly, turning to spray mouthfuls of grayish Dragonfire.

Boom--

Cannibal responded with a torrent of eerie green Dragonfire, which engulfed the gray flames, exploding into a cloud of green smoke in the night air.

Cannibal plunged headlong into the Dragonfire, its black scales glowing with a sinister black light, and its green pupils radiating bloodthirsty madness.

"Roar--"

The monstrous dragon's head loomed ever closer. The black dragon, as huge as a mountain, closed in, its abyssal mouth aiming to tear its prey apart.

"Roar!..."

A burst of boiling dragon blood bloomed, and the wild dragon's wail resounded through the wilderness, its figure enveloped by the ghastly beast.

## Chapter 352: The Enemy In the Narrow Sea

The following day, the sun rose above the sea.

In the Lord's bedroom of Stone Drum Tower, Rhaenyra lay with her eyes closed, her face relaxed, sleeping lightly on Rhaegar's legs. He leaned on the edge of the bed, the neckline of his loose robe falling open to reveal a delicate collarbone, his skin as smooth as carved jade.

The siblings had waited all night for Cannibal's return, eventually falling asleep in the early hours of the morning. Separated from reality, Rhaegar drifted into a slumber, his dreams filled with scattered fragments of a pitch-black dragon roaring angrily over a vast sea.

Creak—

The door to the room was pushed open with a soft rattle.

"Uh huh~"

Rhaenyra grunted, rolling over in a daze. Rhaegar woke up from his light sleep, raising his eyes sleepily. He saw Sara enter with a platter of hearty breakfast, her steps noiseless on the floor.

"How was the feast last night?" Rhaegar asked, rubbing his brow, thinking about the ceremony.

"The king celebrated late into the night, and everyone praised it," Sara whispered softly before quietly exiting the room.

Thump—

The door closed gently behind her, and Rhaegar shook his head, fully waking up. He looked out the window; dawn was just breaking.

"Cannibal hasn't returned yet," Rhaegar murmured, a slight anxiety rising in his heart.

"Rhaegar, I'm so hungry," Rhaenyra muttered vaguely, arching her head against his leg. Even in her sleepy state, she couldn't escape her hunger.

Rhaegar gently brushed the hair covering her face, revealing her flushed cheeks. The more he looked at her, the more he was moved. He leaned down and kissed her cheek, his nose nuzzling against her.

Rhaenyra wrinkled her delicate face, mumbling in confusion, "Stop it, I'm hungry."

"Wait a little," Rhaegar replied with a smile. He carefully moved her off his legs, feeling the ache in his back and legs as he stood.

He walked over to the table, where a tray held a breakfast for five: bread, ham, jam, and a large jar of fresh buttermilk. He picked up a piece of bread, dipped it in jam, rolled it with a few slices of ham, and stuffed it into his mouth, chewing thoughtfully.

Yesterday had been a busy day, and in the evening, he had to serve Rhaenyra. He was tired and hungry. As he swallowed the food, he felt his energy return and his mind started to clear.

After a moment of silence, he wondered, "It's about time for Cannibal to return." Regardless of the hunt's success, the dragon shouldn't stay out all night.

As if responding to his thoughts, a low roar echoed from near the beach. A dark behemoth descended from the clouds.

"Roar—"

Cannibal had returned.

Rhaegar snapped his head up and ran quickly to the balcony to look out.

The pitch-black dragon immediately came into view. Cannibal was covered in blood, one of its great wings half fallen off, its body trembling and unsteady as it leapt over the sea cliffs.

Rhaegar's eyes widened in surprise, and a shiver ran down his spine.

Cannibal roared weakly, each flap of its wings a struggle. Its green pupils locked onto the empty cliffs at the edge of Stone Drum Tower.

Boom...

The huge body descended slowly, its wings suddenly losing their balance. Cannibal fell heavily from the sky, plowing a deep furrow into the cliff.

"Cannibal!!!" Rhaegar cried in alarm, shocked to see the dragon in such a sorry state after so many years.

He quickly turned from the balcony and ran from the room.

Rhaenyra, awakened by the dragon's roar, saw Rhaegar's urgent expression and asked, confused, "I heard the dragon roar. Is Cannibal back?"

"Eat your breakfast first. I'll go see what's going on," Rhaegar replied, stepping into his boots, grabbing a jacket, and hurrying out the door.

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With urgency driving him, Rhaegar hurried to the cliff's edge.

"Roar..."

Cannibal shook its dragon head, slumping helplessly in the gully, panting heavily with its mouth open.

"Cannibal, how are you?" Rhaegar exclaimed, stepping forward to approach the pitch-black dragon, cautiously reaching out to touch its scaled muzzle, which emitted a warm, sticky plasma residue.

Wide-eyed, Rhaegar meticulously examined every inch of the dragon's wounded body.

Near the thick base of its neck, deep, meter-long bite marks marred its scales, oozing hot dragon blood that sizzled on the scorched green grass beneath.

Its majestic chest bore a gaping laceration, where shattered scales mixed with blood to release a pungent fishy odor.

On its left wing, a broken supporting bone left a gaping hole in the membrane, evidence of a savage encounter with a large beast.

Shocked, Rhaegar asked, "Cannibal, did you face the wild dragon?"

Cannibal hailed from noble lineage, its wild dragon origins endowing it with formidable prowess in combat. Yet, how could it sustain such injuries while hunting a dragon significantly smaller than itself?

"Roar..."

As if sensing Rhaegar's concern, Cannibal forcefully lifted its massive dragon head, its throat pulsating as it regurgitated a sizable mass onto the ground.

With a wet thud, a silver-black half of a dragon tail splattered with corrosive acid hit the earth, surrounded by chunks of shredded meat and several fresh, lifeless human bodies.

"Roar..."

Cannibal let out a muffled roar, its green eyes reflecting a hint of pride as he jabbed its muzzle at Rhaegar, seeking recognition.

Struggling to maintain his balance, Rhaegar gripped the dragon's muzzle firmly.

He sensed Cannibal's attempt to suppress its fury and demonstrate its strength.

Lowering his gaze, Rhaegar examined the regurgitated remains.

The severed dragon's tail, about five meters long, indicated that a substantial portion had been torn off in a single bite.

Chunks of shredded flesh covered in silver-black scales included pieces large enough to have come from the dragon's neck.

Unfortunately, there were no remains of the dragon's head or wings.

Frowning, Rhaegar surmised that the Smoking Sea Wild Dragon had likely escaped Cannibal.

Finally, his gaze fell on the faceless human corpses.

They were male, their disheveled reddish-purple hair and clothing resembling Myrish mercenaries.

"Roar..."

Cannibal regained some strength, its wings supporting its body as it revealed a belly pierced with a dozen steel spears.

Apart from the cracked bone in its left wing, the severe injury was primarily due to the elite steel spears embedded in its abdomen.

"Pirates of the Triarchy!" Rhaegar's expression turned icy.

Cannibal's green vertical pupils narrowed tightly, its dragon head resting against Rhaegar's hand as its ragged panting gradually subsided.

Rhaegar felt as if his eyes were closing, vague thoughts forming in his mind.

His head buzzed, fragmented memories flashing before him.

Nighttime, above the Narrow Sea.

Cannibal's green eyes gleamed with dominance, its hind feet gripping the neck of the Smoking Sea Wild Dragon, jaws open to rend flesh and blood.

"Roar..."

The Smoking Sea Wild Dragon struggled fiercely, claws slashing Cannibal's chest, releasing a burst of gray Dragonfire.

After a fierce skirmish, Cannibal, with its size advantage, subdued its prey, sinking its teeth into the thick neck of the Smoking Sea Wild Dragon.

The Smoking Sea Wild Dragon screamed in agony, snapping its claws at Cannibal's left wing, shattering bone and tearing a large chunk of flesh in a furious struggle.

Boom—

Seizing the opportunity, the Smoking Sea Wild Dragon spat a mouthful of gray dragonfire at Cannibal's head and attempted to escape with a two-legged leap.

Cannibal tightly closed its vertical pupils to shield its eyes from the Dragonfire.

Despite the injuries to its left wing, Cannibal refused to let go of the dragon meat in its mouth, furiously chasing its prey through the air.

The two dragons chased each other, their speeds evenly matched.

From the Throat Channel to the Narrow Sea, the Smoking Sea Wild Dragon sought refuge among the ruins of Ancient Valyria, heading towards scattered archipelagos.

The Stepstones Islands!

"Roar—"

Cannibal roared furiously, accelerating dramatically, its massive form overtaking the Smoking Sea Wild Dragon, attacking with eerie green Dragonfire.

Soon, the dragons clashed again, crashing onto a deserted island.

Cannibal's vertical pupil glowed with a sinister green light as it pounced on the Smoking Sea Wild Dragon, jaws snapping ferociously.

In the chaotic battle, the Smoking Sea Wild Dragon retaliated with tail swipes and bites, its dragonfire erupting sporadically.



Then, a tragic incident occurred.

The dragons' erratic Dragonfire struck a fleet of warships lurking offshore.

Seven or eight warships immediately retaliated, scorpion crossbows firing relentlessly at the battling giants along the coast.

Cannibal managed to evade the direct hits aimed at its head and neck, but its chest and abdomen were exposed, pierced by steel spears.

The Smoking Sea Wild Dragon suffered similar fate, its spine and wings pierced by projectiles, screaming in pain.

"Roar—"

Enraged by the interruption of its hunt, Cannibal spread its wings, swooping over the warships and unleashing billowing green Dragonfire.

The scene blurred in Rhaegar's mind.

The last image he saw: the ships ablaze, the Smoking Sea Wild Dragon seizing the opportunity to escape.

Cannibal devoured a few unfortunate souls, then returned to the beach to devour the severed dragon tail left by its prey, reluctantly flying back to Dragonstone Island.

"Roar—"

Cannibal unleashed a torrent of Dragonfire, its head held high, green vertical pupils heaving with exhaustion as it laboriously dragged itself towards the open grass.

Failing to capture the wild dragon left resentment and anger festering in its heart.

Rhaegar shook off the surreal images from his mind, covering his forehead in disbelief.

That was the combined effect of [Dreamscape] and [Knight's Oath], accidentally triggered by Cannibal.

Relieved to see the pitch-black dragon relocated and resting, Rhaegar sighed inwardly.

Cannibal's injuries were superficial; mainly trauma to its left wing and severe exhaustion—30% due to physical damage and 70% due to sheer exhaustion.

Chasing the Smoking Sea Wild Dragon all night, battling twice during daylight, and scorching three ships of pirates...

It even made a round trip from Dragonstone to the Stepstones Islands before dawn—a feat that would exhaust any other dragon of its lineage.

Rhaegar sighed, dragging a chunk of flesh to offer to Cannibal, satisfying its hunger.

"Roar..."

Cannibal buried its head, swallowing the meat with disdain, flicking its tail in dissatisfaction—it wasn't enough to sate its hunger.

Rhaegar couldn't take out the large chunk of dragon meat and half of the dragon's tail just yet; Cannibal would have to endure a little longer.

Approaching Cannibal's belly, Rhaegar found over a dozen steel spears shattered where they had fallen on the cliffside, their barbs caught between scales.

He grasped the end of one spear, pulling it out with all his might.

Pfft...

Hot dragon blood spurted out as the spear clattered to the ground.

"Roar..."

Cannibal roared in agony, its body trembling, kicking up dust.

Rhaegar grimaced, running his hands over the pitch-black scales, muttering through clenched teeth, "Damned pirates from the Triarchy, what a foolish way to meet their end!"

He didn't mention how he had sought out trouble with the free cities, and how he had recklessly attacked with two dragons.

Did they truly believe the Targaryen House was defenseless?

"Roar..."

Cannibal snapped its jaws, its thick, elongated tail sweeping over the mess, biting into the silver-gray scaled dragon tail, tearing and devouring it.

It needed the magical-laden flesh and blood to aid its recovery from the injuries.

Chapter 353: Pentos Arrival

It took considerable effort for Rhaegar to remove the dozen steel spears embedded in Cannibal's body.

Dragon blood gushed from the wounds, drenching his body and scorching his loose robe, leaving him a sticky mess.

"Rhaegar!"

Rhaenya's voice cut through the tense atmosphere as she rushed in, her long hair disheveled.

"Don't come any closer," Rhaegar warned hastily.

"Roar..."

Cannibal roared, head held high, ethereal green dragonfire seeping from its jaws, its alert green vertical pupils scanning the area.

It was wounded and irritated.

Rhaegar placed his hands on Cannibal's muzzle and exhaled, "Cannibal, calm down!"

Whew...

Cannibal snorted disdainfully, turning its head away from him.

The Dragonkeepers of Stone Drum Tower entered in formation, casting fearful glances at the bloody, pitch-black dragon.

Cannibal's appearance alone was terrifying, resembling a malevolent deity, and its bloodstained form only added to the horror.

Rhaegar acknowledged them and instructed firmly, "Do not disturb it; its wounds will heal on their own."

Cannibal had consumed [Life Essence], making its vitality exceptionally robust.

Other than a slight issue with a broken bone in its left wing, the remaining injuries were negligible.

Several seasoned Dragonkeepers nodded in understanding and encircled Cannibal from a safe distance, armed with wooden poles.

The Dragonkeepers split into two groups, guarding the entrance of Blackstone Castle to ward off any potential noble visitors.

"Rhaegar, how is Cannibal?" Rhaenyra inquired anxiously, still unsure of the situation.

Shaking his head, Rhaegar replied, "Nothing serious, except that the wild dragon escaped.

If the Smoking Sea Wild Dragon escaped with injuries, the consequences would be dire.

"Cannibal was attacked by humans?" Rhaenyra probed, eyeing the field of steel spears.

Fine steel of such quality was not commonplace and carried a hefty price tag.

Rhaegar touched her arm reassuringly and chuckled, "Don't worry about that now; let's return to Stone Drum Tower."

\*Gulp...\*

Rhaenyra was about to ask another question when her stomach rumbled audibly, and her cheeks flushed crimson.

Raising an eyebrow, Rhaegar took her hand and guided her back to the castle.

Stone Drum Tower, hall.

As soon as Rhaegar entered, he saw his father Viserys and his aunt Rhaenys gathered near the door, along with several others.

"What's the situation with Cannibal?" Viserys asked, his face drawn with concern.

Cannibal's strength was well-known, and the commotion had alarmed everyone.

Rhaegar looked around the circle, his expression serious. "The injuries are not severe. The wild dragon we were tracking escaped, but it is also injured."

His eyes met Daemon's, who was standing on the edge of the group. Rhaegar walked straight to him.

"Uncle, that wild dragon can't have gone far. Mobilize your men to search the Stepstones Islands and the Summer Sea thoroughly," Rhaegar said urgently. "From what Cannibal showed me, the wild dragon is severely wounded. Its balance is compromised with its tail damaged. It can't make it back to the Smoking Sea in one go."

Daemon's eyes narrowed, and he nodded. "I'll send word immediately and organize a thorough search."

Despite his differences with his nephew, Daemon understood the importance of the task. A wild dragon loose in the realm could not be allowed to fall into the wrong hands.

After addressing the crucial matters, Rhaegar gave a few more instructions before taking Rhaenyra upstairs.

Tormund, dressed in his black and white robes, crossed his arms and followed them quietly.

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Returning to the bedroom, Rhaenyra, famished, immediately began eating her breakfast.

Rhaegar sat beside her, picking at his food absentmindedly. His gaze fixed on Tormund, the Master of Whisperers, standing by the doorway.

"Prince," Tormund greeted, his tone softening.

Rhaegar grunted in acknowledgment, his eyes narrowed in silent scrutiny.

Tormund, aware of the tension, offered an excuse. "The princess said if I interfered in your personal affairs, my sister would never want to return from the Vale."

"Skylar is my subordinate and works for Lady Jeyne," Rhaegar replied curtly.

Rhaenyra, her cheeks puffed with food, paused for a moment, then resumed eating in small bites.

Tormund, his voice careful, added, "The princess advised me to be reasonable."

Rhaegar turned to Rhaenyra, who continued to eat, avoiding his gaze.

Rhaegar sighed and waved dismissively. "Send a message to Syrio. Keep a close eye on the movements of the Triarchy and Volantis."

"As you wish," Tormund replied, pursing his lips before retreating with light steps.

Rhaegar, exasperated, held his forehead and tore at a piece of bread in frustration.

Tormund, despite his delicate health since childhood and extensive maester care, displayed an unexpected strength, perhaps influenced by Skylar's nature.

...

Time flew by, and three days later, the guests attending the ceremony gradually departed, making way for a new batch of visitors arriving at Dragonstone.

A three-masted sailing ship was anchored offshore, and a small boat ferried a group of luxuriously dressed individuals to the island.

At the black stone gate, Kingsguards Steffon and Lorent stood ready to greet them.

"Roar..."

As the group stepped onto the long stone bridge behind the gate, a sharp roar echoed from the sky. A huge scarlet figure, a dragon, soared between the clouds.

"Goodness! It's the Blood Wyrn," exclaimed a middle-aged man at the head of the group. He had a round face, a neatly trimmed beard, and an air of wealth about him. His eyes were fixed enviously on the dragon.

Lorent's face turned solemn. "Prince Reggio, it is best to keep quiet on the long bridge," he said in a deep voice.

A long-faced man with black hair and a lush beard, wearing a badge of golden scales on his chest, spoke up. "Kingsguard, the Prince is merely marveling at the dragons of House Targaryen. Please don't mind."

Lorent remained unmoved and replied indifferently, "Dragonstone Island is full of dragons. It's wise to be cautious when coming from afar."

With that, he and Steffon led the way. Steffon, who had been silent, seemed unsympathetic.

The visitors were Prince Reggio of Pentos and his three important advisors in charge of trade, war and justice. Despite their importance, the Kingsguard showed little warmth.

Prince Reggio's brown eyes twinkled with amusement. "Let's go. The scenery on Dragonstone Island is a rare sight," he said with a laugh.

As they walked across the long stone bridge, thick clouds surrounded them. Looking down, they saw rolling hills and green fields, making it seem as if they were on top of a mountain.

"Roar..."

Another dragon's roar came from the clouds above them. A golden-yellow dragon burst forth, swooping mischievously over the crowd and stirring up a biting sea breeze.

...

In front of the Stone Drum Tower, two figures stood serenely, observing the guests as they emerged from the clouds and mist, reaching the end of the long stone bridge.

Rhaegar's expression was neutral. His long silver-gold hair was braided into a twisted braid that hung naturally down his back. His purple eyes were calm and composed. He wore a white tunic under a red vest, with a white skirt embroidered with red Dragonfire patterns on his lower body. A lacquered black belt adorned with a dragon seal and green gem-studded pupils cinched his waist.

Beside him stood Daemon, a faint smile on his lips, clad in a simple black robe. Rhaegar glanced at him, the corners of his mouth twitching upward slightly. Since the ceremony, Rhaenyra had taken over his wardrobe, making his attire increasingly elegant and opulent. It was a change he appreciated, even if too much money was spent.

"The Prince of Pentos is very wealthy. He'll bring gifts that will dazzle you," Daemon remarked, his eyes fixed on the approaching visitors.

Rhaegar responded calmly, "I've already looted the Rogare Bank. We're not exactly in need of more funds."

"Pentos has endured the Triarchy's oppression for years. They'd make a considerate ally," Daemon said confidently, ignoring Rhaegar's sarcasm.

Rhaegar remained noncommittal. "Uncle, they're your guests. Just don't annoy Father."

As they spoke, the group from Pentos crossed the long stone bridge.

"Prince, the visitors have arrived," Lorent announced, standing tall and gripping the hilt of his sword.

"Thank you, Ser," Rhaegar nodded.

"It's my duty," Lorent replied, his voice clear, positioning himself behind the Heir Prince with Steffon.

Prince Reggio of Pentos, flanked by his advisers, approached with a warm smile. "Prince Daemon, it's been a long time."

"Welcome, Prince. I miss the fine wine of Pentos," Daemon replied with a grin.

Reggio reached out to pat Daemon's arm, his eyes discreetly observing a dark-haired, olive-skinned woman in the background. Rhaegar watched quietly, suppressing an eye roll. He vividly recalled Daemon's disdainful remarks about Pentos' wine.

Noticing Rhaegar, Reggio turned to Daemon and asked humbly, "Prince, you have yet to introduce me to this handsome Prince."

Daemon, with a smile that didn't quite reach his eyes, introduced, "My brother's eldest son, known as the Ruin Maker."

Reggio's face lit up as he stepped forward to shake Rhaegar's hand. "Prince Rhaegar Targaryen, I've long heard of your great deeds. It's an honor to finally meet you."

His advisers nodded and smiled in greeting. Rhaegar, however, ignored the outstretched hand, keeping his own at his side, and replied with a faint smile, "I've heard of you as well. Please, enter the castle."

Without waiting for a response, Rhaegar turned and walked into the Stone Drum Tower, followed by the Kingsguard, leaving the visitors momentarily stunned. Armor-clad Dragonkeepers emerged to greet them, carrying trays with salt and bread, the traditional welcome.

Prince Reggio's smile faltered as he looked to Daemon for an explanation.

Daemon, after a brief pause, said calmly, "It seems he doesn't welcome here."

There was no attempt to hide the truth.

...

Inside the Stone Drum Tower, Rhaegar ascended the stairs with a calm expression and rubbed his hands together. With Rhaenyra pregnant, he took extra care to maintain personal cleanliness and refrained from shaking hands indiscriminately.

Lorent noticed Rhaegar's meticulousness and straightened his posture, mirroring the Prince's honorable manners.

When they reached the meeting hall on the middle floor of the Stone Drum Tower, the open door was flanked by Kingsguards Arryk and Willis, standing alert.

"Prince," the Kingsguards greeted in unison.

Rhaegar nodded softly. "Uh-huh." He stepped into the hall, where a crowd had already gathered.

At the head of the hall, on a molten black stone throne reminiscent of the Iron Throne, sat his father, Viserys. The hall's sides were lined with royal advisers and the family of Sea Snake Corlys.

Viserys, wearing a golden crown and an ornate robe, frowned. "Are the guests here?"

"Daemon is leading them," Rhaegar responded.

As he spoke, Daemon appeared at the entrance to the hall, leading the delegation from Pentos around the corner of the passageway. The guests were ushered in, ready for the meeting to begin.

#### Chapter 354: Wild Dragon's Trail

As they entered the council chamber, the Pentos delegation's eyes were immediately drawn to the throne. The heavysset, black-haired adviser with a golden scale on his chest stepped forward and addressed Viserys in a grave tone, "Your Grace of the Seven Kingdoms, Pentos sends its greetings."

Prince Reggio nodded and smiled, placing a hand on his chest in greeting.

Viserys, holding Blackfyre handle, replied flatly, "Welcome, honored guests of the Free Cities."

It was clear from his demeanor that the king, despite his constant smile, was not truly welcoming.

Prince Reggio's eyes flashed with shrewdness as he took the initiative, "Your Grace, as Prince of Pentos, I come with sincere intentions to establish a friendly alliance with the Targaryen Dynasty."

"Is that so? I thought the Free Cities always looked down on the poverty and backwardness of Westeros," Viserys retorted, raising his head proudly.

With a dozen dragons at his disposal, including the formidable Bronze Fury Vermithor, Viserys had ample reason for his pride. His smile was a mere formality, lacking genuine warmth.

Prince Reggio, usually composed and dignified, found himself momentarily at a loss for words.

The black-haired adviser beside him glanced at Daemon, who was observing the exchange with a hand on his chest, and took over, "Your Grace, the Triarchy is amassing armaments and poses a potential threat."

"The Prince believes that an enemy's enemy is a friend. Pentos and the Iron Throne should be allies."

Daemon nodded in agreement and added, "Indeed, the Triarchy's growing presence in the disputed lands is quite hostile."

The intentions were clear: to target the Triarchy.

Viserys frowned, his gaze shifting to Sea Snake Corlys before settling on the Hand of the King, Lyonel Strong. The proposition was straightforward: unite with the Iron Throne to confront the Triarchy and satisfy certain ambitions.

Lyonel stepped forward, his expression serious, "The Iron Throne will not reject a sincere ally. However, the Triarchy has already suffered two defeats. I doubt they would dare to act rashly again."

The black-haired minister was about to respond when Prince Reggio interrupted, "Hand of the King Lyonel Strong, the Triarchy is allied with Prince Martell of Dorne, who in turn is allied with Braavos."

"The three parties are not just eyeing the disputed lands but the entire Free Cities and sea routes."

Turning to Viserys, Reggio pressed, "Your Grace, the Iron Throne cannot contend with Braavos and Dorne simultaneously. To prevent the flames of war from reaching your homeland, you must prepare accordingly."

The room fell silent as the two sides engaged in a flowing conversation. Viserys frowned deeper with each mention of the Triarchy's impending war. The discussion was primarily led by Hand of the King Lyonel, who weighed the potential gains and losses.

Viserys took a moment to look at his eldest son to gauge his thoughts. Rhaegar, however, remained silent and distant, his mind wandering. The recent incident with the wild dragon of the Smoking Sea had made him wary of the Triarchy's intentions. While an alliance with Pentos seemed advantageous, he was reluctant to become entangled in the web of conflict woven by Daemon.

At that moment, footsteps echoed from outside the hall. Rhaenyra entered, accompanied by her handmaiden Sara. Rhaegar moved quickly to greet them.

Due to her pregnancy, Rhaenyra had opted for a more comfortable outfit: a white lining with a delicate skirt and robe of greenish-white satin. Despite her casual attire, she looked elegant, with red diamonds adorning her neckline, a blouse strung with fine pearls, and a golden necklace adorning her snow-white throat.

Rhaegar raised his hand to assist her, his concern evident. "You should be resting in your bedroom," he said softly.

Rhaenyra placed her hand on his arm and smiled lightly. "I heard there were guests and wanted to join in the fun."

Her pregnancy seemed to have softened her once-strong demeanor, introducing a touch of petulance. Rhaegar sighed helplessly and led her into the hall.

Rhaenyra, likely carrying twins, had a noticeable baby bump, larger than most at three months. Rhaegar's concern for her comfort was palpable.

As the siblings entered the hall hand in hand, they immediately caught the attention of everyone in the room. Rhaenyra smiled, her bright eyes subtly scanning the crowd. The hall was filled with elite representatives of various powers and factions.

Sea Snake Corlys stood with Rhaenys on one side, while Daemon stood with Laena on the other. Despite being blood relatives, the two sides were clearly divided.

Pentos and his party were, without a doubt, Daemon's allies. Among the Small Council members, their positions were telling. Hand of the King Lyonel was engaged in conversation with the visitors, standing alone in front of the throne.

Master of Coin Lyman, a friend of Lyonel, occupied the first seat below. Otto, the Master of Civil Affairs, and Jaspy, the Master of Laws, stood together. Grand Maester Orwyle and Master of Whisperers Tormund were positioned near Rhaegar.

These alignments clearly represented the interests of the King, Queen, and Heir Prince respectively. The hall was also guarded by Kingsguard, and its Commander, Erryk Cargyll, was also present at the Small Council, was always close to the king.

Seeing Rhaenyra's noticeable baby bump, the Pentos delegation nodded in greeting, acknowledging her presence.

Prince Reggio stepped forward with enthusiasm. "Princess, forgive me for not being able to attend your ceremony with the prince. It is truly a lifelong regret."



Rhaenyra, maintaining her dignified demeanor, smiled graciously. "That's quite all right. I will certainly ensure you are well received as a guest of Dragonstone Island."

Dragonstone Island was her domain, and she alone had the authority to extend such hospitality.

"Thank you, princess," Reggio replied. He then beckoned to a noblewoman who presented a wooden box. "This is a gift I have prepared for you and the prince. Please, open it."

With a glance at Rhaegar and his nod of approval, Rhaenyra opened the box to reveal a clear glass candle, the thickness of a baby's fist.

"This is an ancient Valyrian glass candle, acquired from an alchemist," Prince Reggio explained.

Rhaegar's eyes widened as he touched the candle, subtly channeling his magic into it.

A system notification echoed in his mind: "Quest mission activated: Bloodmage's Secret Art Candle."

He opened the system panel to see the details.

[Bloodmage's Secret Art Candle]

Exploration progress: 0.5%

"Thank you for your kindness. This is a remarkable and memorable gift," Rhaegar said, withdrawing his hand and expressing his gratitude.

Prince Reggio smiled warmly. "I am aware of your interest in antiquities. I've also brought an ancient sculpture of the the Mother, one of the Seven Gods, as a blessing for the fetus in the princess's womb."

His words were carefully chosen, aiming to please while maintaining decorum, and addressing their immediate needs.

Rhaegar couldn't help but smile. "Your passion is evident, Prince Reggio."

It became clear why even someone as proud as Daemon befriended him. Reggio's ability to understand and manipulate people's desires was impressive.

With this gesture, he had won favor with both Rhaegar and Rhaenyra, making the conversation flow much more smoothly.

Viserys, growing tired of sitting, proposed, "Prince, I have prepared a reception banquet. Let us continue our discussions there."

"As you wish," Prince Reggio replied graciously.

...

In the afternoon, Dragonmont

The deep, resonant roar of the dragon echoed repeatedly. The pitch-black dragon lay lazily on the lawn, a low growl rumbling from its throat.

"Easy there, still sulking over the failed hunt?" Rhaegar murmured as he faced the massive dragon's head, his hands gently rubbing its rough scales.

The Cannibal's green vertical pupils closed, and its broad, pitch-black wings stretched out, casting shadows that covered hundreds of meters in the sunlight. The dragon continued to feign sleep, its skin wound from broken scales nearly healed, and the bone fracture in its left wing almost mended.

The Smoking Sea Wild Dragon had proven formidable, with superior dragonfire and impressive flight speed. Its massive head and fang-filled mouth were deadly.

A sudden gust from the dragon's wings knocked Rhaegar off his feet, sending him sprawling. Rolling his eyes, he lay on his back, observing the fearsome black dragon. Its head alone was larger than a house, and its thick neck, seven to eight meters in diameter, was covered in steel-like scales.

The dragon's body was far too large to fit in the vestibule of an ordinary castle and its wingspan seemed to blot out the sun when it flew.

"Roar..."

The Cannibal's green pupils snapped open as it rose to its feet, wings supporting its massive body. A low warning growl escaped its throat. Rhaegar turned to see Tormund, clad in black and white robes, leading a team of Dragonkeepers carrying a three-meter-tall bronze statue.

The statue depicted a compassionate woman, the Mother, one of the Seven Gods. Rhaegar couldn't help but smile. Priests from Harrenhal had repeatedly begged for a bronze statue of the Mother, and now one had been sent to him.

The Dragonkeepers set the statue down, and Rhaegar examined it closely. The ancient carving process was evident, the surface coated with a greenish layer of oxidation that obscured the original bronze and gold color.

As he touched it, a system beep sounded in his ear: "This exploration mission is open, the target is the Ancient Bronze Statue of the Mother Above."

Rhaegar spread a smile and opened the explorer panel.

[Ancient Bronze of the Mother Above]

Exploration progress: 0.3%

"Another relic," Rhaegar thought. "I wonder what treasures there are to explore."

"Leave the statue here on the cliff for now," he instructed. "I will spend the night with the Cannibal."

"Yes, Prince," the Dragonkeepers responded respectfully before departing.

Rhaegar sat cross-legged, leaning against the statue of the Mother as his exploration progress continued to rise. He didn't want to bring unknown artifacts into the Stone Drum Tower. Besides, there were other reasons.

"Rhaenyra is so intense," he muttered, holding his forehead. Grand Maester Orwyle had mentioned that a woman's desires might increase during pregnancy. Since the ceremony, Rhaenyra had sought his company for three consecutive nights. Fearing for her condition, he had to be gentle, but holding back left him exhausted.

If he didn't take a break, the dark circles under his eyes would return.

"Prince, Syrio delivered news about Pentos and Braavos," Tormund said, handing him a letter.

Rhaegar read the letter, his expression growing serious.

The first sentence read: The Smoking Sea Wild Dragon appeared in the Lyseni waters, and the fishermen claimed that the dragon's blood scalded the fish and shrimp in the sea.

#### Chapter 355: Suspected Lost Dragon Eggs

Rhaegar's eyes narrowed, his grip on the letter tightening involuntarily.

"Prince, this is troubling news. We should have been better prepared," Tormund suggested softly.

Rhaegar quickly composed himself. "Tell Syrio to keep a close watch on the movements of the Triarchy. We can't afford to miss anything."

His immediate instinct was to mount Cannibal and head straight for the Summer Sea in search of the wild dragon. But he knew that was impractical. A wounded dragon could be hiding anywhere, and his chances of finding it were slim. Moreover, arriving with a dragon would only draw unnecessary attention and alert everyone in the region to his presence.

Tormund nodded, his tone serious. "Prince, this is only one part of the troubling news."

Rhaegar continued to read the letter.

"Prince Qoren's eldest daughter, Aliandra Martell, is engaged to the youngest son of the Sealord of Braavos..."

"Sunspear is purchasing armaments and equipment from Braavos and Qohor in large quantities..."

Rhaegar read on, a cold smile forming at the corners of his mouth. Dorn's ruler was truly cunning, marrying his daughter to the Sealord's son to bolster Dorne's military strength.

Tormund, his head bowed, produced another letter from his pocket. Hesitantly, he said, "Our spies in Sunspear report that Prince Qoren used three large ships to transport a complete dragon skeleton as a gift to the Sealord of Braavos."

"Dragon bones!" Rhaegar exclaimed, his eyes widening. "Could it be the remains of Meraxes?"

During the First Dornish War, Aegon the Conqueror's sister and queen, Rhaenys Targaryen, was killed in battle. She and her dragon, Meraxes, had been attacking Hellholt in the heart of Dorne.

During the battle, Meraxes flew too low and was struck in the eye by a scorpion bolt, crashing to her death. On the eve of the truce between Targaryen and Dorne, the Dornish envoys had returned Meraxes' skull to Aegon as a gesture of goodwill. To this day, Meraxes' skull remained in the Red Keep.

Tormund nodded. "It's almost certain that these are the remains of Meraxes. Despite missing the skull, the skeleton still measures a massive eighty meters."

"Worthy of being one of the family's original three dragons. Meraxes even surpassed Vhagar in size," Rhaegar sighed, feeling a pang of pity.

In the records, Meraxes had a noble lineage, featuring striking golden vertical pupils and bright silver scales, combined with a fierce yet loyal temperament.

As his thoughts raced, Rhaegar felt a growing sense of unease. "What is the Sealord of Braavos doing with the remains of a dragon?" he wondered aloud.

Dragon remains, whether living or dead, were incredibly valuable. Even dragon feces could be transformed into black dragonstones through blood sorcery, let alone the remains of an adult dragon.

"I suspect the Sealord of Braavos has ulterior motives," Tormund said thoughtfully, handing Rhaegar the letter and pointing to the last line. "The previous Sealord of Braavos was assassinated ten years ago, and a close associate hinted that he had hidden treasures of great value."

"This man once sought an alliance with House Velaryon by marrying his only son to Lady Laena, fostering close ties between the two houses."

"The current Sealord of Braavos was one of his trusted vassals and is rumored to have inherited many of his legacies."

Rhaegar listened intently, his mind racing. He had heard many tales about the last Sealord of Braavos—a wealthy, generous, yet capricious magnate.

When Rhaegar was born, his mother, Queen Aemma, died in childbirth, leaving him frail and in a coma for three years. Initially, the Sea Snake Corlys suggested his father, Viserys, marry again and offered his 12-year-old daughter, Laena, as a prospective queen.

Viserys, however, did not favor the young Laena and feared marrying into the already powerful Velaryon House, which could further complicate his rule with overbearing in-laws. Humiliated by the rejection, the Sea Snake Corlys angrily withdrew from the Small Council.

The former Sealord of Braavos, sensing an opportunity, arranged for his only son to marry Laena, forging a political alliance. After the Sealord died in an accident, his son did not seek revenge but instead stayed on Driftmark Island for sustenance.

Daemon and Laena spent time together, eventually leading to a duel where Daemon killed Laena's suitor, ending the farce.

Rhaegar's eyes widened as he connected the dots. "The marriage with House Velaryon was for dragons!"

During that period, the Targaryens were vulnerable. Rhaegar was a frail infant, and several of Aegon's younger siblings were still in their wombs. Only Daemon, exiled to the Vale, and an eight-year-old Rhaenyra, who rode a young Syrax, could be considered dragonlords.

In contrast, House Velaryon had three dragons: Vhagar, Meleys, and Seasmoke. Viserys could hardly sleep, fearing that Sea Snake Corlys might lead a fleet of ships and dragons to seize King's Landing.

Understanding dawned on Rhaegar. "The Sealord sought to strengthen his position through dragons."

Tormund nodded. "Rumor has it that the three dragon eggs lost from Dreamfyre were acquired by the former Sealord of Braavos. King Jaehaerys was unable to retrieve them."

"The treasures amassed by the previous Sealord might include those dragon eggs."

"And that's why he was assassinated, leaving the current Sealord to benefit."

Rhaegar's brows knitted together. "Can you determine the current Sealord's purpose for collecting the dragon's remains?"

"We're investigating," Tormund replied. "He has displayed the remains publicly. It's unclear whether he intends to keep them as a collection or if it's a cover for something else."

"Investigate thoroughly," Rhaegar ordered sharply. "The dragon eggs must not fall into anyone else's hands."

At the very least, the eggs must remain unhatched, ensuring they pose no threat.

Tormund bowed his head. "I will do my best, Prince."

...

Three days later, banquets continued to be held daily in the Stone Drum Tower, entertaining the guests from Pentos and discussing the elements of the alliance between the Iron Throne and Pentos. Daemon was particularly active, constantly persuading his brother, King Viserys, to support the alliance.

Outside the Stone Drum Tower, on the cliffs overlooking the sea, Rhaegar leaned against a bronze statue of the Mother. He held a dragonglass candle in his hand, his eyes closed in concentration. He wasn't praying, but rather testing the latest blood sorcery he had discovered.

The Explorer System panel documented this blood sorcery:

[Bloodmage's Secret Candle]

Exploration Progress: 100%

"Exploration complete. Please retrieve the lost treasure."

"Retrieval successful. Detecting..."

"Detection successful. Determined to be an epic-level relic: Bloodmage's Treasure."

After a brief pause, the text on the panel changed slightly.

"Congratulations, the Bloodmage's Treasure has been activated. You have obtained..."

[Reflection of the Moon]

Grade: Epic (Purple)

Function: To be used with glass candles, enhancing the greatness of the bloodline and gaining insight into the hidden secrets of all things in the world.

The succinct description explained the approximate ability of this blood sorcery. Rhaegar calmed himself and skillfully used his mind to activate the [Reflection of the Moon].

Zira!

With a surge of magic, the transparent glass candle lit up, a tiny orange flame flickering within. Rhaegar slowly opened his eyes, focusing on the delicate flame.

Buzz—

A buzzing filled his head, and the image before him began to shift and swirl. The green lawn beneath his feet vanished, replaced by an all-encompassing perspective similar to a dreamscape.

The sky above was a brilliant blue, dotted with white clouds. His vision plunged into the vast ocean below, revealing an endless expanse of water with a few small black dots resembling isolated islands.

"Where is this?" Rhaegar wondered.

Before he could acclimate to this new perspective, his vision accelerated, moving at a speed imperceptible to the naked eye. He traversed the vast ocean, and a lush, primordial jungle came into view.

With the [Reflection of the Moon]guiding him, Rhaegar looked down on the world from an unfamiliar vantage point, the scene shifting in response to his thoughts.

A crisp deer call rang out, and a small, agile deer emerged from the jungle and made its way to a meandering stream to drink. The water was crystal clear, the silt interspersed with pebbles, and fish, shrimp, and river crayfish were faintly visible.

Rhaegar, watching from a distance, froze and wondered, "This feels so real, almost like I've seen it before."

Suddenly, the viewpoint shifted again, moving uncontrollably. At the edge of the vast jungle, an uninhabited mountain range blocked any further expansion of the jungle.

A sharp, squealing roar shattered the silence as a colorful dragon-like creature emerged from a valley, its narrow wings flapping as it soared into the air. Rhaegar's heart skipped a beat, thinking it might be a wild dragon.

The creature dove into the dense jungle and emerged with a squealing, red-haired monkey in its sharp claws. It was only then that Rhaegar got a full look at the creature.

It looked 80% dragon, with a bloody mouth full of fangs, bat-like wings, and long, sharp claws on its lower limbs. Its body was covered in turquoise scales with white stripes.

However, there were key differences: its pointed, thin head lacked dragon horns or a crown of horns, it didn't breathe fire, and its body was only twenty feet long, similar to a juvenile dragon.

"This is not a real dragon," Rhaegar realized. After a moment's thought, he identified the creature. "A creature that looks like a dragon, or more accurately, a Wyvern."

As his thoughts raced, he suddenly exclaimed, "This is the Continent of Sothoryos!"

During his great-grandfather Jaehaerys' time, his Hand of the King, Septon Barth, had written a classic book, "Dragons, Wyrms, and Wyverns: Their Unnatural History," documenting the Wyverns of the distant and unexplored continent of Sothoryos.

Another sharp roar echoed as a much larger brindled Wyvern, about thirty feet long, soared out of the valley. It immediately attacked the first Wyvern, trying to steal its prey. The two creatures fought fiercely, their fangs and claws tearing at each other with ferocity.

Rhaegar watched their battle, noting their low intelligence and aggressive nature. He remembered Septon Barth's writings, which mentioned several species of Wyverns. The brindled wyverns was the most common, growing up to thirty feet in length and more ferocious than dragons.

The Citadel of Dragonstone also had statues of wyverns, and other creatures.

Buzz—

Suddenly, Rhaegar's vision blurred, and the image disappeared. When he opened his eyes again, the flame of the transparent candle had gone out. He shook his head, realizing that the magic in his blood was nearly depleted.

"Not enough magic," he muttered, regaining his senses.

Holding the clear glass candle, he marveled at the treacherous nature of blood sorcery. It could show someone places thousands of miles away through a small dragonglass candle.

Pinching his brow, Rhaegar reflected, "The vision isn't well controlled. The farther the distance, the greater the magic consumption."

#### Chapter 356: Cannibal's Reinforcement

A sudden cold touch startled Rhaegar out of his thoughts.

"Hisss..." he shivered involuntarily.

Looking down, he saw the culprit looking up at him innocently. Helaena, resting on his legs, had a small, chubby hand shamelessly buried in his shirt.

Wearing only a white shirt with slightly spaced buttons, she had taken advantage of the gap to slip her hand inside.

"Helaena, who told you to poke around like that?" Rhaegar frowned.

"Brother..." Helaena's expression was all innocence, hoping to get away with it.

"Take your hand out!"

Rhaegar didn't indulge her. He grabbed her pink and white ear and lifted her up.

Helaena's face crumpled in displeasure and she quickly withdrew her small hand and scrambled to her feet.

Rhaegar gave her a stern look and straightened his rumpled shirt.

The third drawback of [Reflections of the Moon], he mused, was that the immersive view ignored some senses, leaving one vulnerable to sneak attacks.

"Brother, sister told me to bring you back."

Helaena's head dropped, her pleated skirt brushing the grass, revealing half of her gleaming white calves.

Rhaegar remained silent, looking at her skeptically. He could still feel the sting of her earlier pinch.

Helaena glanced up at him, her large light purple eyes twinkling mischievously.

Smack...

Rhaegar raised his hand and slapped her lightly on the head. "Concentrate on proper things."

Helaena winced and covered her reddened head without saying a word.

Ignoring her, Rhaegar put down the dragonglass candle and stood to survey the area.

Not far away, a simple tent was ablaze, the flames of a campfire roaring inside.

Rhaegar's mouth twitched. "How ruthless!"

Helaena climbed to her feet and muttered, "Sister told me to burn it. She said you should take your time camping since you like so much."

Rhaegar sighed, accepting his sisters' eccentricities.

"Roar..."

A deep dragon roar echoed, vibrating with a surge of life and energy.

Boom!

In an instant, ghostly green dragonfire erupted from the ground, rolling like a torrent straight into the sky. The surrounding air became scorching hot.

Rhaegar quickly pulled Helaena back, his eyes wide with astonishment.

At the edge of the cliff, a black dragon roared skyward, its massive wings spreading wide as it unleashed a torrent of green dragonfire.

The dragonfire was relentless, a volcanic eruption that cascaded down onto the beach below, igniting the gravel with a fierce green blaze.

"Cannibal!"

Rhaegar breathed in sharply, his shout filled with excitement.

"Roar..."

Cannibal roared fiercely, its pitch-black wings spread wide, its sharp hind claws taking powerful strides as its massive body leapt into the air.

As it charged headlong into the spectral green dragonfire, Cannibal's green vertical pupils flashed with hostility. It rose vertically into the thick layer of cloud.

Moments later.

Boom...

An ethereal green firework exploded, and the clouds stretched for miles, quickly dissipating as if swept away by a storm, clearing the sky.

"Brother."

Helaena let out a soft cry, her hands wrapped around Rhaegar's waist as she looked up, her eyes alight with wonder.

"Don't be afraid, it's celebrating," Rhaegar reassured her, his voice strong and filled with joy.

He understood what was happening with Cannibal.

Glancing at the bronze statue of the Mother standing on the lawn, Rhaegar smiled and summoned the explorer panel.

[Ancient Bronze of the Mother Above]

Exploration Progress: 100%

"This exploration is complete. Please collect the lost treasures."



"Treasure collected successfully, detection in progress..."

"Detection complete, item identified as an epic relic, Blessing of the Mother."

At this point, a pink wreath appeared on the panel, accompanied by the relic's activation conditions.

Note: "Unwavering Will."

Rhaegar had no immediate use for it, so he chose to bestow the blessing on Cannibal.

Having failed to capture the wild dragon of the Smoking Sea, Cannibal's frustration triggered the relic.

"Congratulations, the Blessing of the Mother has been activated. You have gained..."

[Toughness]

Quality: Legendary (Red)

Effect: "The power of resilience acts not only mentally but also physically."

Evaluation: "A remarkable enhancement."

In the sky, Cannibal's gaunt body flipped over, its wings flapping at extreme speed as it sprayed Dragonfire in a cathartic release.

When the Dragonfire formed a huge ghostly green sun, Cannibal plunged headfirst into it.

Boom...

Cannibal dispersed the monstrous Dragonfire in a single move, its pitch-black scales glistening with a cold, ebony light. After shedding its damaged scales a few days ago, new ones had grown on its neck, chest, and abdomen, hardening and thickening with the boiling dragon blood coursing through its veins.

From a distance on the cliff, Rhaegar watched Cannibal, feeling the dragon's strength. Their minds intertwined, communicating without words.

"Roar..."

Cannibal turned its head, swooping down and landing steadily on the cliff bank, its green vertical pupils locking onto Rhaegar with a manic intensity.

"Helaena, go back to the castle," Rhaegar instructed, breaking away from her embrace and rushing to the dragon's side.

Nimbly climbing onto Cannibal's back, he settled into the saddle and shouted excitedly, "Cannibal, fly!"

"Roar..."

With a powerful roar, Cannibal lifted off, its wings cutting through the air as it swooped down towards the sea, its chest skimming the water's surface.

"Hahaha, you're faster than ever!" Rhaegar laughed joyfully, letting go of the reins to fully enjoy the weightlessness of flight and the rushing sea breeze.

The [Blessing of the Mother] had not gone to waste. Following the [Life Essence], Cannibal had once again been strengthened, this time in its scales.

"Roar..."

Cannibal spat a mouthful of ethereal green Dragonfire, flapping its wings rapidly as it soared through the wide throat channel. It believed the failed hunt was due to its scales not being hard enough, which had allowed the Smoking Sea Wild Dragon to bite its left wing. Now, with its new scales, Cannibal felt invincible.

After a long flight, one man and one dragon returned to Dragonstone Island by noon.

Boom...

Cannibal's pitch-black wings flapped slowly as it landed on the cliff bank, its massive body prostrate on the ground. Rhaegar slid off the dragon's back and quickly approached its head.

Whew! Whew!

Cannibal lay on the lawn, panting heavily, sticky saliva dripping from its jaws. It was ravenously hungry, craving fresh, magical blood and flesh to replenish the life energy consumed during its transformation.

Sensing its thoughts, Rhaegar stroked Cannibal's muzzle and murmured, "Cannibal, hold on a bit longer. I know where to find the food you need."

Wyverns were also dragons. Even without Dragonfire, they were more than ordinary animals, belonging to a low-level magical creature category. A trip to Sothoryos to find such prey was a small price to pay for Cannibal's successful transformation.

"Roar..."

Cannibal's throat rumbled, exhausted from the earlier Dragonfire, its eyes closing in feigned sleep.

The transformation was complete, but it needed to replenish its energy. Dragonstone Island offered little nourishment except for many of its kinds.

Rhaegar patted Cannibal reassuringly and returned to the Stone Drum Tower. Before leaving, he instructed the patrolling Dragonkeepers to send a herd of cows and sheep to Cannibal to sate its hunger.

...

Stone Drum Tower, Chamber of the Painted Table

The Chamber of the Painted Table, located on the top floor of the Stone Drum Tower, was a circular chamber with tall, narrow windows facing each of the cardinal directions. At the center of the room stood a long, dragonstone table.

This table, fifty feet long and half as wide at its widest point, dominated one-fifth of the room. Carved into its surface was an intricate map of Westeros, with mountains, rivers, and cities meticulously sculpted by skilled craftsmen.

This giant sand table was commissioned by Aegon the Conqueror, who had ridden Balerion the Black Dread across the continent, recording every detail for his campaign of unification.

"Daemon, I have already agreed to ally with Pentos. You should be satisfied!" Viserys' voice, laden with suppressed anger, echoed through the hall.

He sat at one end of the table, gripping a dragonstone sculpture, his face a mask of somber frustration. Opposite him, Daemon lounged, his elbows on the tabletop, fingers interlaced as he spoke.

"Sooner or later, we will have to confront the Three Daughters. You must understand the necessity of striking first."

"I will not repeat myself a third time. I will not allow you to start a war for your own selfish desires!" Viserys retorted, glaring at his brother.

War would be a disaster for the realm. Daemon and the Sea Snake Corlys would drag House Targaryen into an abyss.

Undeterred, Daemon pressed on, "Patrol ships from the Triarchy have been sighted near the Stepstones. They are already preparing for war."

"So what!?" Viserys slammed his hands on the table, unable to contain his anger. "If war breaks out, the entire kingdom will be consumed in a fight against the Triarchy. And if by some miracle we win, should I grant you the Stepstones as your fief?"

He continued, his voice rising, "And what of Myr and Tyrosh? Should I also grant fiefs to the Sea Snake and Rhaenys, allowing all of you to break away from the Iron Throne and rule as kings?"

Viserys' memories of Daemon and Corlys waging the first Stepstones War without his consent were still fresh. After his victory, Daemon had declared himself "King of the Narrow Sea" and donned a crown of driftwood. If not for the barren nature of the islands, Daemon might never have returned to King's Landing.

Daemon's gaze hardened, and he fell silent, absorbing his brother's words.

At the Same Time

Rhaegar ascended to the top floor of the Stone Drum Tower, signaling to Erryk and Arryk, who were guarding the entrance to the Chamber of the Painted Table, to be silent and listen to the argument inside.

When he returned to the tower, he had overheard his father and uncle talking privately, prompting him to investigate.

The hall fell silent.

Rhaegar's eyes flickered as he surveyed the Dragonstone corridor, considering entering to see what was happening. In truth, he did not support the invasion of the Triarchy, especially to grant Daemon a fiefdom.

"Prince, news from Volantis!" Tormund's face was worried, his shoulders bare of the usual White Falcon and Raven, as he hurried over with a letter in his hand.

Rhaegar turned, sensing the urgency, and took the letter. It was from Syrio, sent by raven.

The letter, written in hasty script, got right to the point:

[The Smoking Sea dragon was caught alive in a trap and has fallen into the hands of a Magister of Lys, Bambarro Bazanne.]

After reading the first sentence, Rhaegar fell silent, his eyes growing cold and distant. He took a deep breath, suppressing his emotions.

Without a word, Rhaegar pushed past the Cargyll brothers and stormed into the Chamber of the Painted Table.

Inside, Viserys and Daemon were locked in a tense standoff across the table, the atmosphere thick with unspoken conflict.

Rhaegar's sudden and forceful entrance immediately caught their attention.

"Rhaegar..." Viserys began, surprised at his son's boldness.

The Daemon's eyes narrowed and fixed on his nephew.

Ignoring their reactions, Rhaegar's expression was as cold as winter.

He slammed the letter down on the table, then tilted his head back and closed his eyes. In a solemn voice he declared, "No need to argue. Prepare for war!"

Chapter 357: There Can Only be One Dragonlord House in the World!

At noon, the sun blazed high in the sky, casting bright light through the tall, narrow windows of the Chamber of the Painted Table. Despite the sunlight, the air inside remained cold and tense.

The circular chamber was filled with figures standing around the sandstone table. Rhaegar stood off to one side, his hands resting on the stone tabletop, his eyes scanning the room.

Corlys the Sea Snake, Rhaenys, Laena, Aegon...

Lyonel, Otto, Laenor...

It was an impromptu council that included every significant member bearing the Targaryen and Velaryon surnames. From King Viserys down to young Daeron huddled by Alicent's leg, everyone was involved.

Rhaegar's mission was clear: to inform those present of the looming war.

Slamming his palm on the table, Rhaegar's face remained stern as he began, "My lords, silence won't solve our problem. We must discuss how to reclaim that wild dragon!"

A wild dragon must not fall into the hands of outsiders, especially since the Smoking Sea wild dragon was still heavily injured from its encounter with Cannibal. Rhaegar felt partially responsible for its capture.

"Prince, with all due respect, you know they will not hand over any dragon, nor will they return one to us," Corlys spoke sharply, his head held high. "Lys hunting wild dragons is a direct provocation to House Targaryen. War is inevitable."

"I agree," Daemon chimed in, firmly supporting the sentiment.

The two were eager for war, a desire that had been simmering for a long time. Rhaegar glanced at them, his cold eyes unreadable. Though he did not want to fuel their ambitions, the prelude to war had already begun.

The rest of the Small Council members were silent, deep in thought. They were all weighing the sacrifices that war would bring. Even King Viserys, seated at the head of the table, looked grim as he repeatedly examined the letter in his hand.

The letter was clear: the Smoking Sea wild dragon had been seriously injured and strayed to a deserted island in the Summer Sea. A group of mercenaries found it and used livestock to lower its guard. While the dragon was resting, they used chains and human lives to capture it alive, selling it to the Magister of Lys, Bambarro Bazanne.

Seeing his father's silence, Rhaegar frowned and spoke directly, "Father, you are the King of the Seven Kingdoms and the head of House Targaryen. The decision must come from you."

As the Heir Prince, Rhaegar knew that his authority was limited until Viserys made the final decision.

Viserys, restraining his anger, let reason prevail. "Once war starts, many will suffer. We should try to find a way to reconcile first."

"Your Grace, the only ones who will be devastated are the Triarchy. Seeking peace is nothing but a child's trick," Corlys retorted with disdain.

Lys had already captured a wild dragon, and regardless of whether anyone in the Triarchy could tame it, the threat was real. Viserys clenched the letter, his anger barely contained, crumpling the paper in his fist.

Otto watched the scene unfold and spoke in defense, "Lord Sea Snake, His Grace is considering the peace of the kingdom. We should at least intercede with the Triarchy and demand the return of the wild dragon."

"Whimsical," Daemon sneered.

Lyonel stepped forward, playing his role as the Hand of the King, and said solemnly, "Your Grace, the Triarchy is ambitious. They likely captured the wild dragon with the intention of keeping it for themselves."

"What do you mean?" Viserys hesitated.

Lyonel glanced over the bickering parties and said rationally, "We should prepare for war, but also send envoys to negotiate with the Triarchy to test their intentions."

In short, one sentence: first diplomacy, then war.

Daemon was reluctant, retorting, "This is a waste of time. We should immediately send warships and dragons to attack Lys and settle this quickly."

Tormund interjected, "As far as I know, the Triarchy has constructed no fewer than a hundred watchtowers equipped with scorpion crossbows in every city-state, specifically to guard against dragon raids."

No one was foolish; having suffered losses before, they had fortified their defenses.

Rhaegar added, "Braavos and Dorne are both heavily connected to the Triarchy. If we venture into war, we could face resistance from the entire Free Cities and Dorne."

Three years ago, Rhaegar and his dragon Cannibal burned the city-states of the Triarchy. The remaining Free Cities had resisted strongly, unwilling to face another dragon invasion like the days of the Freehold.

Daemon looked him up and down and said sarcastically, "Have you ever seen a city-state retaliate against us? We have our own allies."

Tormund laughed and turned to the king, saying sincerely, "Your Grace, dealing with the Triarchy is optional, but reaching out to the other Free Cities with a warning is necessary."

Viserys clenched his teeth, his face tense. "Rhaegar, what do you think should be done?"

The opinions of his advisers were united, and as king, he could not afford to appear weak.

Rhaegar had been waiting for this moment and spoke solemnly, "Father, sending envoys to negotiate with the Triarchy is fine, but we must prepare for war and be ready to strike at any moment."

The Smoking Sea wild dragon had fallen into the hands of Lys. The Free Cities were not without the remnants of Dragonlord families, and accidents could happen.

Rhaegar looked around the room, his eyes sweeping over Daemon, Aegon, and Aemond. Every dragon rider present was in his sights.

His gaze was icy as he declared, "No matter what, there can only be one Dragonlord House in the world!"

...

Two days later...

The Summer Sea stretched wide and boundless under a blazing sun.

"Roar--"

A behemoth as black as coal crashed through a mass of white clouds, its hideous, hideous dragon's head emitting a fierce roar.

Rhaegar, clad in black robes, sat in the saddle on the dragon's back, his silver hair fluttering in the wind. It was nearly noon, and the climate was sultry.

He looked down at the sea below and spotted an island in the distance, its greenery vivid against the horizon.

After flying in that direction for a while, the jungle-covered continent came into view below him.

"Sothoryos, finally here," Rhaegar's eyes brightened slightly.

With his father in charge on Dragonstone Island, aided by a group of royal advisers, there was no need for him to stay on the island at all times. War was imminent, and he couldn't let Cannibal suffer hunger on the battlefield. He had come to this uninhabited continent to hunt wyverns.

During his flight, he had ridden his dragon to scout the garrison of Lys from high above. There were numerous patrol ships at sea and hundreds of watchtowers within the city-state, each equipped with multiple scorpion crossbows.

The density of the scorpion crossbows made a low-altitude dragonfire attack risky; a giant dragon could be shot in the eye. Young dragons like Sunfyre or Sea Smoke, who had not long reached adulthood, were particularly vulnerable. An air attack was not feasible; a simultaneous assault by dragon and fleet was the best strategy.

"Roar..."

Cannibal gave a low roar, its figure lowering sharply, swooping and gliding over the dense jungle, its vertical pupils locked on a lofty mountain in the distance.

Rhaegar laughed and asked, "Cannibal, you've been here before, haven't you?"

"Roar..."

Cannibal's green vertical pupil flashed with a touch of loneliness as its speed increased, answering with its actions.

Moments later, dragon and rider passed through the jungle, bypassing the high mountains that obstructed their view.

Rhaegar observed the surroundings, sensing the emotions conveyed by Cannibal. There was no suitable prey in this part of the world; the wyverns they sought were deeper within the continent.

Time passed, and soon, the sun set. Neither Rhaegar nor Cannibal chose to travel by night. After soaring for an entire day, they needed to recover their strength.

Below them lay a primitive jungle, with small streams irregularly distributed and miasma-surrounded swamps. Cannibal, with night vision, picked a dry patch of woodland and jetted a mouthful of ethereal green dragonfire.

Boom--

A large swath of woods incinerated, turning to ash under the Dragonfire.

Cannibal landed slowly, its black wings beating out the remaining flames. The dragon prostrated itself on the ground as if it were second nature.

Cannibal had traveled across several continents and seen far more than most dragons, or even humans.

Rhaegar slid off the dragon's back, pulled dry food from his space bracelet to satisfy his hunger, and set up an improvised tent.

He was used to Cannibal's wisdom and knew how to make the best of it.

Late into the night...

Dangling! Dangling!

Rhaegar, sound asleep in his tent, was jolted awake by a cacophony of sounds.

"Squeak..."

A shrill, familiar yet unfamiliar roar pierced the air.

Rhaegar jerked to his feet in surprise, "A wyvern!"

Stepping out of his cramped tent, he saw a flicker of firelight in the jungle a mile away.

"Roar..."

Cannibal was also startled, lifting its head high. Its green vertical pupils, like two ghostly flames, gazed at the disturbance.

Whoosh--

A grayish dragon shadow flashed over the jungle, chasing its prey.

"Cannibal, let's go check it out."

Rhaegar nimbly climbed onto the dragon's back, eyes burning with anticipation to see the wyvern.

Under the moonlight, the wyvern appeared sizable, at least forty feet long, larger than the usual brindled wyverns.

"Roar..."

The voracious Cannibal roared manically, its muzzle grinning in a ferocious arc. It flapped its wide wings and rose into the air.

It was starving, and the prey was practically feeding itself.

The wyvern, unaware it was being targeted by the formidable Cannibal, roared madly, swooping low to the ground, attacking with fangs and sharp claws.

"Dracarys!"

Rhaegar's gaze was cold as he commanded in High Valyrian.

Boom--

Green Dragonfire shot out, striking the erratically fluttering wyvern below.

"Squeak..."

The wyvern screamed, its spine instantly burned through with a large hole. It died after two feeble flaps of its wings.

Cannibal swooped down, landing on the ground, its feet crushing a swath of forest. It impatiently tore into the flesh and blood of its prey.

Rhaegar examined the wyvern. Its body was covered in gray scales, with green moss growing in the crevices, emanating an earthy smell.

It was likely a swamp wyvern, a species that thrived in swamps.

Beneath the wyvern's carcass lay several large savages with pigmented skin.

Rhaegar looked up and saw other wildlings fleeing through the jungle, holding torches and screaming in terror.

He remembered a bit of history about the continent of Sothoryos. The natives were strong like wild beasts, with skin patterns of white and brown. Women could not reproduce with males outside their race; all births were stillborn or inhuman deformities.

During the Freehold era, powerful Dragonlord families established colonies on the Basilisk Point. They abandoned the land after repeated destruction by the natives.



Cannibal, having devoured most of the wyvern, crunched through its neck and tail, swallowing it whole.

Sniffing around, Cannibal's green vertical pupils locked onto a piece of swampy land.

"Roar..."

With a low growl, Cannibal flapped its wings, soaring into the sky, heading straight for the swamp. Through the scent of the wyvern it had eaten, Cannibal had detected a similar smell of dragon eggs.

#### Chapter 358: Three Hundred Meter Giant Dragon Remains

The following day, the weather was clear.

Sothoryos, somewhere in the barren canyon of the Green Hell.

A dragon, black as charcoal, let out a low roar and flapped its wide wings as it swooped over the canyon, teasingly chasing its prey.

Two thirty-foot green and white striped wyverns roared in panic and scurried away like headless flies. But they were no match for the larger dragon in speed and size.

Stab!

Cannibal's green eyes gleamed with predatory hunger as he opened his mouth and bit down on one of the wyverns. Its sharp fangs closed violently, ripping the creature apart in an instant.

Blood spilled from the sky as Cannibal held its head high and chewed a few times before swallowing the wyvern whole. It was the size of a full-grown dragon.

As it flapped its wings again, Cannibal's massive body cast a shadow over most of the canyon, including the other fleeing wyvern.

"Squeak..."

The sunlight above was blocked, and the wyvern roared in terror as a huge dragon claw, black as steel, fell mercilessly overhead.

The wyvern's small body was like a chicken caught in the dragon's claw. In the next second, with a sickening crunch, the entire wyvern was crushed. Its entrails flew into the air, leaving only its slender neck and wings dangling helplessly.

It fell to the ground with a thud, reduced to a mere snack.

...

Inside the canyon, before a deep cave.

Rhaegar stood with his head tilted, silver hair cascading over his shoulders, his tight black robe flapping in the wind.

With a swift motion, he yanked a lance from the ground, blood splattering around him. At his feet lay a twenty-foot swamp wyvern, its spiky head punctured by the lance, while the Valyrian Steel Sword—Truefyre—remained lodged in its spine.

"That creature was tough," Rhaegar muttered, wiping the sweat from his brow. "It didn't seem to feel any pain. It was almost impossible to bring it down without hitting its vitals."

He pulled the Valyrian Steel Lance Dawn from his space bracelet and shook off the blood with a flourish before returning it to its place. The lance proved more effective against large beasts.

"Roar..."

Cannibal roared, landing nearby as Rhaegar retrieved Truefyre. The hungry dragon did not wait for its rider's signal. It stretched its neck and swallowed the wyvern's carcass in one gulp, chewing briefly before swallowing.

"Oh, you were really hungry!" Rhaegar chuckled, his eyes scanning the rocky canyon floor. The ground was littered with skeletons - boars, monkeys, and even natives. The three dead wyverns had been the dominant predators here.

They showed some pack behavior, but often fought among themselves - a trait of mindless beasts.

"Cannibal, let's go."

Rhaegar climbed onto the dragon's back, securing a bulging pouch to the saddle.

"Roar..."

Cannibal, his mouth smeared with blood, looked back at Rhaegar, his green pupils flashing with a hint of dissatisfaction.

Ignoring the dragon's mood, Rhaegar opened the sack and pulled out a grayish-white wyvern egg. It was about the size of a dragon's egg, but lacked the dragon's scale-like shell.

It was one of the wyvern eggs, two in all, taken from the deep cave. The sack also contained three light green wyvern eggs collected from the swamp the night before.

The swamp wyverns were solitary creatures, and their rarity meant that they did not lay many eggs. Rhaegar had found three clutches in the swamp, each containing three eggs. He took the freshest clutch, leaving the rest for Cannibal to devour.

The brindled wyverns, however, were different. Almost herd animals, three of them had produced only one nest with two eggs. Rhaegar examined the gray and white eggs thoughtfully, pondering aloud, "Can these hatch on their own?"

The brindled wyvern was a formidable creature, its adult size comparable to a full-grown dragon. Even without fire-breathing abilities, its fangs and claws made it a destructive force. If it could be tamed...

Rhaegar shook his head and smiled ruefully. "A beast without intelligence," he mused. "If it could be tamed, the natives would have done so long ago."

He glanced at Cannibal, who was staring hungrily at the gray and white eggs. This sparked a new idea in his mind. "If these can hatch and we can bring a batch back to Westeros, they could serve as excellent training opponents for our dragons."

Rhaegar's eyes brightened at the thought. Most of the family's dragons were kept in captivity from the moment they hatched, fed on cows and sheep. In time, they lost their hunting instincts. Wyverns, fierce and larger than normal flying beasts, would be perfect opponents for young and sub-adult dragons, helping them hone their fighting skills.

"Roar..."

Cannibal, frustrated by the lack of dragon eggs, roared and took off from the canyon, seeking its next hunting ground.

...

It was nearing noon.

Rhaegar and Cannibal had destroyed three nests of brindled wyverns and continued their search without rest. Cannibal's green vertical pupils were cold and focused, its hunger eased somewhat. They left the Green Hell region and searched the nearby islands.

The long-winged dragons in Green Hell had hidden too well, unwilling to come out when they sensed Cannibal's presence. The islands, however, had a larger distribution of wyvern and some rare beasts that were barely edible.

"Roar..."

Suddenly, Cannibal bared its fangs, sniffing the faint scent of its own kind. Its green eyes locked onto a large, mango-shaped island.

Rhaegar sensed the change and commanded, "Cannibal, land!"

"Roar..."

Cannibal roared and dived, its massive black body slicing through the jungle canopy of the island. After a thorough search, it approached a low canyon covered in dense greenery.

The canyon was adjacent to a short peak. Observing closely, Rhaegar felt a distinct warmth—it seemed to be an active volcano that had been dormant for years.

"A volcano," Rhaegar murmured.

Since the eruption of the Fourteen Flames in Ancient Valyria, the only known active volcano was Dragonmont on Dragonstone Island. The underground magma beneath the Isle of Faces was sluggishly developing, barely qualifying as a miniature volcano. Other volcanic landscapes were exceedingly rare.

Sensing his rider's anticipation, Cannibal circled the dormant volcano and landed above the canyon.

Rhaegar examined the area closely. The volcano was densely covered with green plants, and many birds had nested there, indicating it hadn't erupted for decades.

"Roar--"

A thunderous roar echoed as Cannibal was suddenly stimulated by something. Green Dragonfire accumulated in the depths of its throat.

Rhaegar's eyes widened in shock as he looked around.

Before him lay the remains of a colossal dragon.

The skeleton was pitch black, crowned with a dense array of horns. A pair of grayish horns extended more than a dozen meters from its head. The canyon, a few hundred meters long and a few dozen meters wide, nestled deep in the forest, was filled with the giant dragon's remains. Its wing bones jutted out, drooping into the clearing on both sides, spreading hundreds of meters away.

"Cannibal, get closer," Rhaegar ordered.

After the initial shock, Rhaegar's breathing steadied, though his mind raced. In comparison to Cannibal, the dragon remains were about three times larger. From the enormous dragon head to the thick tail, Rhaegar estimated the dragon had been over three hundred meters long in life, with a wingspan of over six hundred meters.

"Seven hells! Is this really a dragon?" Rhaegar muttered, waves of terror rising within him.

Throughout the Targaryen House's history, the largest dragon had been Balerion the Black Dread. Even at over 200 years old, Balerion, who was larger than the current Vhagar, did not reach two hundred meters in length.

Balerion, from the most prosperous noble bloodline of ancient Valyria, was among the top dragons of the 40 Dragonlord families. Yet, the remains before Rhaegar were easily over three hundred meters. The sheer size left him momentarily unable to process the shock.

"Cannibal, put me down!" Rhaegar ordered, taking several deep breaths to steady himself.

He had to examine the giant dragon's remains up close. For one, he wanted to trigger the Explorer's System. A dragon bigger than Balerion deserved to be considered a relic. Moreover, he was incredulous at the sheer size of this dragon and needed to see it firsthand to believe it.

Determining the dragon's age might provide clues as to when it died. If it was more than 200 years old, it must have hatched before the Doom. Given its extraordinary size, it was unlikely to have gone unnoticed by the Dragonlord families. Even if it was a wild dragon, its existence seemed too important to remain hidden.

"Roar..."

Cannibal hesitated, sniffing the air and lowering its head as if searching for something. After a moment, a look of doubt flickered in its green eyes, and its tense body gradually relaxed. It seemed to have discovered something that eased its vigilance.

"Roar..."

With a dull roar, Cannibal flapped its wings and flew towards the canyon, landing in an open space near the dragon's skull.

"Cannibal, stay alert," Rhaegar instructed as he slid off the dragon's back, rushing toward the giant remains.

The dense vegetation of the canyon intertwined with the dragon's bones, creating an absurd yet beautiful contrast of life and death. As he drew closer, Rhaegar was struck by the enormity of the skeleton.

The dragon's skull was as large as a small castle, with fangs thicker than his waist. The sheer scale was staggering.

"A miracle..." Rhaegar muttered, reaching out to touch one of the thick dragon teeth.

Crack-

The anticipated beep from his Explorer System didn't come. Instead, the crunching sound of bone breaking filled the air.

Rhaegar froze, pressing on the dragon tooth with more force.

Thud.

The massive tooth, once securely attached to the lower jaw, broke free and fell heavily to the grass.

Rhaegar's mouth opened slightly, half in shock. He crouched down and examined the junction where the tooth had come loose. It wasn't weathered or broken; it just came loose.

A flash of insight struck Rhaegar, and he exclaimed, "A three-hundred-meter dragon still has its horns?"

Typically, as dragons aged, their bones and muscles grew, pushing out non-essential structures like horn crowns, dragon horns, and sometimes even scales. Vhagar, at 170 years old, had lost its once-majestic horns, leaving only fine, new ones. This dragon's horns were intact, and its jaw and neck muscles were slack, hanging loosely.

Rhaegar's eyes flickered with uncertainty. He quickly retreated from the dragon's skull and shouted, "Cannibal!"

"Roar!"

Cannibal responded instantly, its massive body turning sharply. With a powerful sweep of its thick, pitch-black tail, it struck the giant dragon's skull.

Boom!

The impact sent the skull flying, separating it from the spine and smashing it into the canyon wall. In an instant, the skull shattered into pieces, fangs snapping at the roots, and the giant dragon horns snapping off and disintegrating into a pile of bone fragments.

Clatter...

As the bones scattered, Rhaegar's eyes grew cold with disappointment. "True dragons bones are supposed to be almost indestructible."

Dragon bones are renowned for their strength, capable of withstanding magma and enduring centuries of weathering while maintaining steel-like hardness. Something was very wrong with these remains.

Chapter 359: Negotiation With Braavos

Testing the oddity of the dragon's remains, Rhaegar decided to explore the canyon further.

The canyon was small, dense with shrubs and plants that tripped him up as he moved. After some searching, he discovered a cave nestled beneath the left rib cage of the giant dragon's remains.

Clearing the obstructing shrubs with Truefyre, the pitch-black sword ignited a layer of flame, illuminating his way. Wielding Truefyre, Rhaegar cautiously stepped into the cave.

The cave was large and deep, with the occasional gust of wind carrying a faint, putrid odor.

Rhaegar scanned his surroundings, and after walking a dozen meters, he found a pile of stale dragon dung. "It really is a Dragon Nest," he muttered, continuing deeper into the cave.

Truefyre's firelight illuminated most of the room. Soon, Rhaegar stumbled upon a concave mess of dragon droppings and rocks, with a pile of broken scales in the middle.

Pinning Truefyre to the ground, Rhaegar moved closer to examine the mess. "Fossilized dragon eggs!" he exclaimed as he saw the fragments, each one ancient.

He pushed the fragments aside, revealing a complete dragon egg with dark red scales, its surface fossilized. The egg had long since become a lifeless stone. "A nest of dragon eggs?" Rhaegar wondered aloud.

The broken fragments indicated that two dragon eggs had hatched. With difficulty, Rhaegar dug out the fossilized egg embedded in the dung and continued his meticulous search of the cave.

Considering the remains of the giant dragon outside, this nest of eggs probably belonged to it. The dragon had been dead for at least a hundred years, before the Doom. A wild dragon of this size roaming Sothoryos would not have gone unnoticed by the dragonlord families of ancient Valyria.

Records indicated that Jaenara Belaerys, a dragon rider of the House of Belaerys, had roamed Sothoryos with her dragon for three years. If dragons existed in Sothoryos, the Dragonlord families would have known about it. That left only one possibility: this dragon had a rider, or had had one at some point. For unknown reasons, the dragon had come to Sothoryos, deliberately hidden itself, and disappeared from the eyes of the world.

Holding the fossilized dragon egg in his hand, Rhaegar walked silently out of the cave.

"Roar..."

Cannibal's green vertical pupils watched him, its wings patiently supporting its weight. It sensed its rider's somber mood.

Rhaegar exhaled deeply and climbed numbly onto Cannibal's back. "Fly," he commanded.

"Roar..."

Cannibal let out a low roar, its pitch-black wings stretching and flapping as it swiftly took to the air.

There was no need to explore the gorge or the dragon's remains further.

Rhaegar discovered vague stone inscriptions on the walls of the cave, written in High Valyrian script. These inscriptions contained the fragmented knowledge of a family of dragonlords, including speculations about a dragon's age and growth cycle based on its size.

They vaguely outlined the stages of a dragon's life: young dragons, subadults, adults, and old age. The Dragonlord family had detailed classifications beyond sub-adults: young dragons, strong dragons, giant dragons, and weakened dragons.

A dragon egg hatches into a young dragon. When the dragon is about thirty feet tall and about ten years old, it enters the subadult stage. During the subadult stage, which lasts 10-20 years, the dragon grows to about one hundred feet, with scales, claws, and teeth maturing - this is the young dragon stage.

After another 30 years or so, depending on its talent, it reaches a prime size and becomes a prime dragon. At 100 years old, with a body size of about 100 meters, it becomes an adult dragon.

Rhaegar briefly pondered this information, comparing it to his own estimations. In his family, Cannibal and Vermithor, both 90 years old, had already exceeded 100 meters, making them proper adult dragons. Dreamfyre and Silverwing were of similar age but slightly smaller. Silverwing, one-fifth smaller than Vermithor, was less than 90 meters. Dreamfyre, the oldest, had been imprisoned in

its prime, stunting its growth, and was just over 80 meters. Neither dragon met the adult dragon standard.

A dragon enters its weakening stage around 150 years old, when size affects strength and speed. Vhagar, still possessing decent combat power, was in this stage.

Riding on Cannibal's back, the wind in his face, Rhaegar held the heavy fossilized dragon egg. Besides impractical knowledge, the dragon's lair contained a deliberately destroyed pattern, which Rhaegar couldn't decipher. However, he noticed subtle symbols on the pattern's edges, indicating blood sorcery.

"Cannibal, continue the hunt," Rhaegar commanded, placing the fossilized dragon egg into a sack.

The remains of the dragon and the unknown blood sorcery were disturbing. Fortunately, the Dragonlord family responsible for these things had been wiped out in the Doom of Valyria. The two hatched dragon eggs had owners, so there was no need to worry about wild dragons roaming the land.

...

Sunrise and sunset passed in a blur, and two days passed quickly.

On a small island in the Stepstones, a tense confrontation unfolded.

"Attack!"

On the azure sea, several warships flying the banner of the Triarchy, known as the Three Daughters, advanced on a patrol ship flying the Three-Headed Red Dragon flag of Westeros.

The warships were armed with scorpion crossbows, which they fired in rapid succession, puncturing the patrol ship's hull several times.

As the ships closed in, their ramming horns dug into the hulls and the battle began.

Above, the sky was clear and calm.

Suddenly, a black dragon shadow flashed across the sky, churning the wind and clouds with the speed of a shooting star.

Below, the Triarchy's warships surrounded the patrol ship, and pirates jumped overboard to launch a ruthless attack.

"Roar!"

A deep, thunderous roar echoed like a tidal bell, and the black dragon dove into the clouds, its terrifying head descending toward the battlefield.

Boom!

A ghostly green dragonfire erupted like smoke and fog from the dragon's mouth, sweeping across the Triarchy's warships and incinerating their masts and decks in an instant.

"Ahhh!..."

The Triarchy pirates had no chance to escape. Their screams were cut short as they were consumed by the flames, reduced to charred remains.

Some of the unlucky ones were bumped by their comrades, their clothes catching the ghostly green sparks that clung to them like maggots, quickly igniting and burning their flesh.

On the dragon's back, a black-robed young man watched with indifferent eyes, muttering, "Dracarys."

"Roar..."

The pitch-black dragon swooped down, spewing more Dragonfire, turning the sea battle into an inferno of ghostly green flames.

The patrol ship was destroyed, and its crew lowered small boats to escape to the island.

"Prince..."

The survivors looked up at the dragon and the young man, cheering and shouting as if reborn.

Rhaegar looked back and rode his dragon in wide circles overhead, making sure no enemies remained.

Five days later he returned to Westeros. Sothoryos's trip had been generous.

The Cannibal had hunted a dozen wyverns, fully sating its hunger with a satisfying feast. Rhaegar sensed that the dragon beneath him seemed to have grown slightly larger. The trouble with such a massive creature was that even a small growth was barely noticeable.

"Roar..."

As several warships burned and sank into the sea, a sharp, thin dragon roar pierced the air.

Rhaegar turned to see a scarlet dragon with a serpentine body swooping swiftly toward him.

Blood Wyrms—Caraxes.

On the dragon's back, Daemon, clad in black steel armor, called out, "Rhaegar, back from Sothoryos already?"

"It was a good trip, quick and efficient," Rhaegar replied, surveying the carnage below. "What's happening here, is it war?"

Daemon tilted his head, a hint of smugness in his voice. "Not yet, just an initial skirmish. War is coming soon."

Lys had captured a wild dragon. The Iron Throne sent envoys to deal with Lys's magister, but they were rebuffed. All of Westeros and the nine free cities knew one thing clearly: war was imminent.

Rhaegar's eyes grew cold as he strategized in his mind. He patted the Cannibal's pitch-black scales, preparing to return to Dragonstone Island.

Daemon spoke up, "An emissary from Braavos is meeting with the king today. Your return is timely."

"Thank you," Rhaegar acknowledged, and the Cannibal immediately took flight.

...

Dragonstone Island.



"Roar--"

The Cannibal flew swiftly, landing on a rocky shore of the Dragonmont.

Rhaegar dismounted calmly, carrying a sack of dragon eggs. As he approached the main gate of the Stone Drum Tower, he encountered Kingsguard Steffon, who was escorting a group of finely dressed messengers.

"Prince," Steffon greeted respectfully when he saw Rhaegar.

Rhaegar glanced at the black-haired, brown-skinned envoys and asked, "Ser, are these the envoys from Braavos?"

"Yes, His Grace is to receive them," Steffon replied.

"Understood." Rhaegar handed the sack to the Dragonkeepers, instructing, "Ensure these eggs are looked after carefully."

The sack contained a dozen dragon eggs from brindled, swamp wyverns, as well as a rare egg from a shadow-wing wyvern. The latter could grow up to sixty feet long, and its dark scales made it much stronger and rarer than other wyverns. To obtain this precious egg, several shadow-wing wyverns had to be hunted.

Rhaegar entered the Stone Drum Tower and headed straight to the conference hall on the middle floor. Along the way, the emissaries from Braavos spoke in fluent Valyrian, attempting to converse with him.

Rhaegar engaged in brief conversation, learning the purpose of their visit. The Sealord of Braavos was hosting a meeting, inviting House Targaryen and the Triarchy to Braavos for negotiations between Westeros and the Free Cities.

...

It was nightfall, and the moon and stars cast a faint glow.

The Small Council was meeting in the Chamber of the Painted Table.

Viserys sat with a group of royal advisers, flanked by Corlys Velaryon, known as the Sea Snake, and Daemon Targaryen.

Rhaegar sat alone on one side of the stone table, his younger siblings Aegon and Helaena standing beside him. The flickering candlelight danced as Viserys, his face stern, began to speak.

"Should we go to the negotiations in Braavos, and who should we send as the proper personnel?" Viserys deliberated.

Braavos was close to the Triarchy Kingdom, and it was difficult not to see it as a potential trap.

"The negotiations are about Westeros' relationship with the Free Cities. It is necessary to attend," Corlys said, his face calm as he toyed with a seahorse stone carving. "If you trust me, I can lead the fleet and coordinate with one of the royal advisers."

Corlys had numerous business partners in Braavos and the Free Cities and felt confident about handling the sea journey.

Lyonel hesitated briefly before agreeing. "Your Grace, as your Hand, I should negotiate on your behalf."

The king couldn't risk his life; it seemed most appropriate for Lyonel to go.

"No need, Lord Lyonel," Rhaegar interjected. "Not to question your abilities, but this negotiation is crucial, and you might not have the leverage required."

Lyonel paused, then asked, "Prince, do you intend to go personally?"

"A Targaryen negotiation requires a Targaryen presence," Rhaegar replied firmly. He looked at his siblings and declared, "I will lead the delegation personally, and Aegon will accompany me with our dragons."

Braavos was often called Valyria's bastard daughter, but in truth, it was mostly the offspring of Valyria's slaves. This time, Rhaegar intended to remind Braavos of what a true dragon was.

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"I want to go too!" Helaena exclaimed, her eyes glowing with enthusiasm as she raised her hand.

Aemond glanced at Aegon and added, "I have a dragon. Take me."

Even little Daeron, who was not yet as tall as the stone table, looked eager to join.

Rhaegar ignored their pleas and looked directly at his father. "What do you say, Father?" he asked.

Negotiations in Braavos would likely yield little, but bringing his siblings to display their dragons would serve as a powerful deterrent.

Viserys frowned slightly. "If you all go, what if something happens?" he said quietly. Braavos was known for its assassins, and he didn't want to take any unnecessary risks.

On the other side, Rhaenys looked relieved. Despite her husband's protests, she stood and said, "Your Grace, as a Master of Dragons, I should accompany them and participate in the negotiations."

Viserys hesitated, scanning the faces of his children without speaking.

Understanding his father's concern, Rhaegar pressed little Daeron's shoulder and turned to Aegon, Helaena, and Aemond. "Do you want to go?" he asked.

Aegon sighed deeply, his reluctance clear. "I don't want to go, but it seems my opinion doesn't matter."

Helaena patted her chest confidently. "Dreamfyre will protect me!"

"I have no problem with Sheepstealer," Aemond added, glancing at his sister for reassurance.

Viserys swallowed his objections and turned his gaze to Daemon, who was watching the proceedings with amusement. "You're responsible for the war," Viserys said sharply. "You go with them!"

Daemon, caught off guard, snorted and replied, "Yes, Your Grace."

...

The next day at dawn, Rhaenyra reluctantly embraced Rhaegar, kissing his forehead to say goodbye.

"Be careful," she urged repeatedly.

Rhaegar smiled, nodding, and gently touched her bulging belly before turning to leave the room.

In the early morning light, Helaena waited outside the door, smiling. "Brother, let's leave right away."

As they descended the stairs, Rhaegar said, "It might get a bit rough in Braavos."

"I'm not afraid. I won't hold you back," Helaena responded proudly. "I've been practicing my swordsmanship. Ser Arryk says I'm very talented."

"Really?" Rhaegar was intrigued. "Where's your sword?"

Helaena smiled mysteriously and said, "I won't tell you. I'm hiding it from you."

Rhaegar laughed and rubbed her head as they exited the Stone Drum Tower.

"Roar!..."

Meleys, the scarlet-scaled dragon, stood on the long bridge of Stepstones, stretching its neck and roaring.

On its back, Rhaenys, clad in red leather armor, looked down at Rhaegar and Helaena. "Boys, it's time to go!"

"Roar!..."

"Roar!..."

Two more dragon roars echoed from the clouds, and the radiant Sunfyre and the rugged Sheepstealer emerged from Dragonstone Island, one after the other.

Rhaegar grinned, his heart swelling with pride.

The Targaryens were not weak.

...

A day later, a cargo ship arrived at the bustling port of Braavos, teeming with people from all over the world. Among the ships was a large and luxurious vessel carrying a group of merchants from Pentos, all of whom stood on deck as they approached the city.

Before entering the harbor, they had to pass a historical marvel—the Titan of Braavos. This colossal statue of stone and bronze stood guard over the entrance to the lagoon that led into the city.

The Titan's feet rested on the peaks of two separate islands, creating a natural gateway. The giant figure wore a green bronze battle coat, and its hollow eyes contained roaring fires. One hand grasped a massive boulder on the left ridge, while the other reached skyward, clutching the hilt of a broken sword.

Closer inspection revealed arrow holes in the giant's thighs and holes in the lower part of his battle coat. More than just a symbol of Braavos' bravery, the titan was the city-state's first line of defense.

"Gods above, such a magnificent structure exists in the world!" a merchant exclaimed, awestruck, praying that his venture would bring him great fortune.

"Roar—"

Suddenly, a dragon's roar echoed through the sky as a massive black dragon swooped down, its thick tail brushing the top of the Titan's head. With a thunderous crash, the half-helmet crown on the Titan's head was knocked off, plummeting into the sea like a boulder.

"A Dragon!" the sailors on deck shouted in shock and fear, falling to their stomachs as they watched the black dragon fly toward the city-state.

"Is it gone?" whispered one sailor, relieved to think the dragon was gone.

"Roar..."

Another roar filled the air as a light blue dragon with glittering scales descended from the clouds, its well-proportioned body and magnificent wings chasing after the black dragon.

"Roar..."

Next came a procession of dragons: a brown, rotting dragon; two scarlet dragons of varying sizes; and a golden dragon that shone like the sun. Each dragon leapt over the Narrow Sea in quick succession, heading straight for Braavos behind the Titan. None of them seemed to regard the ancient statue with any seriousness, playfully circling it as if to tease an awkward pet.

Near the Titan, numerous cargo ships had gathered, and merchants from all over the world looked up in unison, one thought dominating their minds.

The dragons were coming.

...

Braavos, the most unique and powerful of the free-trading city-states, sprawled across a series of islands in the northwesternmost section of Essos. It sat at the juncture of the Narrow Sea and the Shivering Sea. Passing through the imposing Titan of Braavos, an endless lagoon spread out before visitors.

Hundreds of densely packed islands carved the bay into numerous narrow channels, interconnected by a network of stone arch bridges that spanned the waterways. The city-state was devoid of trees, dominated instead by stone buildings and granite statues. The streets were lined with gray stone houses, packed so tightly together that they seemed to lean on each other, highlighting the city's overcrowded population.

To the south of the largest harbor stood a cluster of imposing buildings, marking the administrative heart of Braavos—the Sealord's Palace.

"Roar—"

A deafening roar announced the arrival of Cannibal. The dragon's pitch-black, charcoal body blotted out the sun as it slowly descended and landed beside the fountain pool outside the Great Hall.

Boom!

With a gentle flap of its massive wings, a fierce wind kicked up, blowing the assembled guards off their feet. Soon the rest of the dragons arrived in turn, each landing with a resounding thud around the towering hall.

Rhaegar slid off Cannibal's back and straightened his robes with a calm expression as he looked at the trembling guards who dared not approach. Rhaenys, Daemon, and the others gathered beside him, their eyes fixed on the approaching delegation sent to greet them.

...

Sealord's Palace, Great Hall.

The Sealord of Braavos personally escorted the Targaryen delegation into the impressive chamber. Rhaegar, silent and observant, led his three younger siblings as they took in the surroundings.

The entire structure was made of white stone, decorated with carvings of nautical scenes, storms, and other maritime motifs. The floor was covered with rich red carpets from Lys, and the walls were hung with oil paintings and various collectibles. The mix of opulence and history gave the room a sense of literary grandeur.

"Targaryens Guests, please come in," The Sealord of Braavos invited, leading them into the conference room.

Rhaegar took a moment to study him. The Sealord was a typical Valyrian descendant, with platinum blond wavy hair, blue eyes, and pale skin tinted with red. He was a mature man in his late forties, not particularly young or handsome, with thick eyebrows, a full chin beard, and a booming voice. He introduced himself as Ferrego Antaryon.

Inside the conference room, several people were already seated around a long, oval slate table inlaid with carvings of shells and smiling faces. Ferrego beamed as he introduced them, "These are the princes and princesses of House Targaryen..."

The assembled representatives were from Pentos, Qohor, and the Triarchy. The other three Free Trade city-states had not sent delegates. After brief introductions, everyone took their seats.

Ferrego sat facing the entrance, with a slender swordsman standing silently at his side. Rhaegar took the seat directly across from the Sealord, while Rhaenys and the others sat along the sides of the table as best they could.

Once everyone was seated, Ferrego cleared his throat and spoke gravely, "Gentlemen, we are gathered here today to resolve the conflict between the Iron Throne and the Triarchy."

Knock, knock...

Rhaegar leaned back in his chair, his fingers drumming on the tabletop. Calmly he spoke, "The feud between the Targaryens and the Triarchy will be put aside for now. I've come to reclaim my family's dragon."

His gaze then shifted to a dark, burly man sitting to his left: Khaeldor Astor, one of Myr's magisters and the Triarchy's primary representative at this meeting.

Under Rhaegar's icy gaze, Khaeldor's already dark face seemed to darken even further. He squinted at the representatives of Lys and Tyrosh before replying in a gruff voice, "Prince Rhaegar, we are here to discuss matters of war, not a wild dragon."

"What do you mean by 'matters of war'? And what do you mean by 'wild dragon'?" Rhaegar's expression grew stern. "Morghul is a Targaryen dragon, maliciously captured by Lys. War is my only recourse if this injustice is not righted!"

Morghul, the given name of the wild dragon of the Smoking Sea, was named after an ancient Valyrian god who symbolized disaster and nature. Regardless of Morghul's origins, Rhaegar claimed it as a Targaryen dragon.

Khaeldor hesitated, his round face contorting as he considered the complexity of the situation. Lys had indeed captured a wild dragon, unprecedented among the Targaryens. The Triarchy had overreached.

Yet the Magisters of Lys had rallied the mighty men of the Triarchy to tame this fierce dragon, despite the risk of provoking war with the Targaryens.

Since time immemorial, only the Dragonlord families, now represented only by the Targaryens, have been able to control dragons. The presence of a wild dragon had ignited a fervor within the Triarchy, driving them to attempt to tame it.

The atmosphere grew tense. Everyone felt the pressure mounting. Daemon glanced at the Pentosi dignitaries around him, sipping his wine with a dangerous glint in his eyes. Aegon, Helaena, and Aemond sat poised, ready to act at their elder brother's signal.

Ferrego coughed lightly, trying to break the tension. "Prince Rhaegar, this negotiation is for the sake of peace. I urge you to honor that peace."

Rhaenys' displeasure was immediate. She spoke coldly, "Sealord, my cousin sent us here to negotiate because he values the relationship with Braavos. But that does not give you the right to undermine House Targaryen."

The negotiations seemed increasingly futile. The Sealord of Braavos appeared to be a shrewd politician, cloaking his intentions in a facade of peace.

Ferrego's face tightened, and he began to speak again, but the atmosphere had already chilled. The warm sunlight streaming in felt like cold, harsh light.

Rhaegar's eyes were piercing as he addressed the young Lyseni sitting beside Helaena, his voice like ice. "Lys should return Morghul, or the only thing awaiting you will be blood and fire!"