

G.O Thrones 451

Chapter 451: Dragon's Wroth

The words were simple, yet their articulation conveyed an unyielding cold determination.

"Dragon's Wroth!?"

Rhaenys was stunned and instinctively reached for Dark Sister. Helaena quickly lowered her head, haunted by visions of bloodshed.

Dragon's Wroth!

It wasn't just a phrase or a description of a normal event. It harkened back to the First War of Dorne when Queen Rhaenys fell at Hellholt. In their grief, the Conqueror and Queen Visenya unleashed a brutal and inhumane massacre. Riding Balerion and Vhagar, they attacked all of Dorne without warning, burning every castle and village.

Any resistance was reduced to ashes by the Dragonfire. Whether inhabited or not, all farmland, wells, and oases were destroyed. This Dragon's Wroth lasted for two whole years, leaving not a single castle standing in Dorne, nor a single piece of arable land. The death toll was incalculable.

"The Dornish dared to assassinate my father. They wanted the Dragon's Wroth, and they will get it," Rhaegar declared, his eyes as sharp as a hawk's. "Let the world see the glory of ancient Valyria."

"Dragon's Wroth," Daemon repeated, his eyes showing interest, his mouth curling into a smile. "If they want my brother's life, they'll have to pay with more lives."

An eye for an eye, a life for a life. This suited Daemon's tough personality perfectly. Rhaegar glanced at him but said nothing.

"Daemon, you should stop for now," Rhaenys whispered a rebuke, her eyes fixed on her unusually calm nephew. "Rhaegar, the war in Dorne is to put down a rebellion. Don't forget the original purpose of the war!"

The root of all evil was Qoren's selfishness. He had already been punished, and the war should not be allowed to continue unnecessarily.

Rhaegar replied calmly, "Aunt, the war has been going on for months. Do you still remember why it started?"

"Of course," Rhaenys responded immediately. "The Smoking Sea Wild Dragon, Morghul!"

The cause of the war wasn't Braavos, Dorne, or Rhaegar and Daemon trying to invade. It was Lys, who captured Morghul, and the Triarchy making a comeback.

"Then why did the Triarchy fall, and why did the battlefield expand to Dorne?" Rhaegar continued.

Rhaenys hesitated, "Qoren was afraid of the Targaryen expansion of power. He had always had close ties with Braavos and the Triarchy."

It was said that Aliandra, who was burned to death by Dreamfyre, had been betrothed to the son of the Sealord of Braavos.

"No," Rhaegar shook his head, smiling. "Human desires are like rolling stones. Once they start, they can't be stopped."

"Whether it's the Triarchy, the Sealord of Braavos, or Qoren, they all covet the power of House Targaryen and seek to suppress and annihilate the last remaining Dragonlord family."

"The Triarchy coveted Morghul, Braavos hid dragon eggs, and Qoren took advantage of the situation to invade the Stormlands and The Reach," Rhaegar explained. "They are like vultures circling over the Targaryens, waiting for the moment when the dragons are weak."

Daemon clapped lightly, approving. Despite Rhaegar's lengthy explanation, Daemon supported the idea of ruthlessly eliminating their enemies.

Rhaenys glared at Daemon and sighed helplessly. "The Conqueror unleashed the Dragon's Wroth but failed to conquer Dorne, sowing hatred for generations. The Iron Throne wants to rule, not govern a territory of ashes."

In short, she did not approve of another Dragon's Wroth. Such an act would drag the kingdom into a swamp of war, with enough lives already lost.

Rhaegar's resolve remained firm. "War can bring peace. Hatred exists only because we are not strong enough," he stated, standing up and looking directly into his aunt's eyes. "Don't forget, Laenor died in this war. How can I honor his memory and all the soldiers who died?"

"My son," Rhaenys's hand trembled as she gripped her sword, her sore spot struck. She couldn't accept her son's death and harbored hatred for Dorne. However, with the war already moved to Dorne, she knew it shouldn't be expanded further.

Rhaegar walked to the window and looked at the dragons circling over Yronwood. "The Conquerors had only three dragons, but we have many more," he said.

The three others in the room watched him intently.

Rhaegar's expression grew stern, and he spoke quickly: "We have Cannibal, Dreamfyre, Caraxes, Meleys, Sheepstealer, and Sunfyre—six dragons in all."

He continued, "We also have Seasmoke, who has lost his rider, Vermithor, who was driven back to Dragonstone, and even Vhagar, who patrols The Gullet."

"In Dorne, we have far more dragons at our disposal than the Conquerors did. The first six dragons have all experienced battle."

He finished in one breath, assessing their strength. In the Conqueror's era, Balerion was only slightly older than the Cannibal, and Vhagar and Meraxes were comparable to the current Caraxes and the other dragons. With the Cannibal leading the way and Dreamfyre almost reaching adulthood, the three prime-aged dragons, including Sheepstealer, were already stronger than the original three.

Daemon's eyes shone with excitement, eager to start the battle. Rhaenys hesitated, weighing the pros and cons.

Knock, knock!

The door opened, and Cole entered, looking grim as he handed over a letter. "A Blackhaven letter," he said.

"Open it," Rhaegar nodded.

Cole tore open the envelope and read quickly. "The garrison at Blackhaven, numbering 1,000 men, was attacked by the House Wyl at night. The castle suffered heavy losses, with only one in ten soldiers surviving."

"What about Lord Symon?" Rhaegar asked.

Cole turned the page, his expression softening slightly. "Lord Simon was besieged by the enemy who invaded the castle, but the guards arrived in time. Lord Simon personally killed two men from Dorne."

An old man, who normally had difficulty walking, proved more powerful than a young man when fighting for his life.

Hearing this, Rhaegar shook his head and laughed. Yronwood had been ambushed, and Blackhaven's garrison was depleted, making an attack inevitable. It was a relief that Lord Simon managed to hold them off.

After signaling Cole to leave, Rhaegar turned to Rhaenys again and said bluntly, "Aunt, what is there to hesitate about?"

The king was almost killed in Yronwood. Blackhaven, which guards the Boneway, almost fell. You are kind-hearted, but the people of Dorne only want to see you dead.

Rhaenys understood the stakes. She took a deep breath and said, "You're right. Human desires are like rolling rocks. We have no choice!"

Rhaegar smiled.

Helaena stood up clumsily, put her arms around his, and whispered, "I'll help you."

"Haha," Daemon laughed, but his eyes were cold and full of vengeance.

Dorne, prepare to face the Dragon's Wrath.

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Time flew by, and a week later, Vermithor, temporarily without a rider, returned to Dragonstone to hibernate. Viserys, still in a coma, was escorted back to King's Landing. The Cargyll brothers also departed, leaving Cole behind to continue leading the troops.

Donald led 15,000 Riverrun forces to Yronwood, took control of the town, and sealed off the Boneway. Everything was proceeding in an orderly manner.

Sunspear.

"Roar..."

Under the blue sky, six dragons of varying sizes spread their wings and soared, spewing dragonfire hotter than the scorching summer heat.

On the west side of the old palace, in the densely populated Shadow City, more than 10,000 Dornish civilians gathered. Their eyes were filled with resentment as they cowered in the dirty, poorly lit shadow area.

In the midst of all the attention, a platform more than ten feet high had been built. An iron cage and dozens of spears adorned the stage. The spears were stuck into the eyes of the dead, and a naked, armless man was locked in the iron cage. It was Harmen Uller.

Harmen had lost an arm in the dragonfire, and half of his body was badly burned. After a week of captivity, his eyes were glazed, and he was curled up on his side, huddled in the narrow confines of the cage like a dog. The cage was suspended from a gallows, ensuring that all the people of Dorne could see him.

Daemon stood on a high platform, signaling for the cage to be lowered. Soldiers dragged Harmen Uller out like a dead dog.

"No! No!" Harmen screamed, on the verge of a nervous breakdown. "I'm innocent! I'm innocent!"

His gray eyes involuntarily glanced at the heads impaled on the spears. Many of them had gray pupils, and all bore hideous, blood-stained features.

"Be good!" The soldiers punched and kicked him, pulling his hair and dragging him.

Daemon looked down at the man who had almost killed his brother, forcing him to look at the heads on the spears. He smiled and said, "Take a good look. Your sons, your family, the old and the weak of House Uller—they're all watching you."

House Uller was almost completely wiped out. Only Harmen Uller remained.

Harmen shook his head, his fat jiggling. "I'm innocent! I want to slay the dragon..." he shouted deliriously. He still saw himself as a dragon slayer reviving his ancestors' glory. Those who were tortured and killed in front of him couldn't be his children and house members. No, definitely not...

"Don't waste your breath. He's already dead," Rhaegar said, stepping onto the platform with murderous intent in his eyes.

The soldiers saluted, and Harmen Uller was dragged up to the gallows, a rope around his neck. Daemon watched with bored indifference.

Rhaegar was joined on stage by Mors of Kingsgrave and Qyle Martell, the five-year-old son of the late Prince of Dorne.

Rhaegar looked down at the commoners of Dorne and announced that Qyle would be named the new Prince of Dorne in the name of the Iron Throne, with House Martell bowing to the Iron Throne. Mors was appointed Regent of Sunspear, the Desert Warden throughout Dorne and the Prince's Pass Warden in the Red Mountains.

From now on, Dorne would be formally under Targaryen rule.

Rhaegar crossed his arms. "It's your turn," he said.

Qyle's face froze. He walked slowly to the front of the stage, trembling. "In the name of the Prince of Dorne, I declare that the rebellion in Dorne is over. Any nobles or commoners who disobey will be surrounded and suppressed throughout the territory," he proclaimed.

Mors, embracing his role as a "loyal subject," raised the spear symbolizing House Martell and shouted for peace. The Dornish commoners remained silent, dazed by the scene. Especially young Qyle. They still wished to fight to the death, wondering why their prince surrendered first.

Rhaegar remained calm, knowing the consequences of this decision. House Martell had ruled Dorne for a thousand years and had deep roots. Dorne was doomed to lose to the Targaryens, especially after Sunspear, the seat of House Martell, fell into the hands of the Iron Throne.

Despite resistance, the Dornish nobles and commoners would eventually surrender, if not out of fear, then in the name of survival.

Qyle and Mors stepped back at Rhaegar's signal.

Aemond, now bearing the nickname "One-Eyed," presented Rhaegar with a hammer and a silver dagger. The dagger had been named the One-Eyed Dagger, a constant reminder of the hard-won battle.

Rhaegar took the hammer and dagger and approached the hanging Harmen Uller.

"No! No..." Harmen's terrified cries echoed as Rhaegar swung the hammer high and brought it down hard on his chest.

Pop! The entire chest cavity shattered, bones caving in, and the blow nearly pierced through him. The hammerhead became embedded in the bone, making it impossible to pull out.

"Ho ho..." Harmen's face turned black and blue, blood oozing from his eyes, ears, mouth, and nose. He gasped for breath, his trachea blowing up the broken lungs, creating a series of blood blisters on his chest.

"The House Uller is finished. I warned you," Rhaegar said calmly, wiping his hands without any sign of excitement from avenging his family. He then pulled out the One-Eyed Dagger and cut the rope holding the gallows.

Plop! Harmen fell with a thud, the rope around his neck tightening, cutting off his breath. In a desperate flash, his legs kicked violently. After a dozen seconds, he fell still.

Rhaegar watched the entire scene, maintaining his composure throughout.

Hum... The One-Eyed Dagger glowed faintly, and a loud dragon roar seemed to emanate from within. Then, a bright light shot out, splitting into two and landing in the palms of Rhaegar and Aemond. Rhaegar noticed the phenomenon, but no one else did. When he raised his hand, there was no visible pattern, but his blood flow seemed to increase slightly, as if it had become more sensitive to the scent of a dragon.

Rhaegar nodded to himself, tossed the dagger back to Aemond, and turned away from the Dornish civilians who had witnessed the execution. Without looking back, he declared, "The Dornish nobles have rebelled. Accept the request of Prince Qyle and suppress the rebellion throughout the territory!"

As soon as he finished speaking, the six dragons raised their heads and roared, their fangs bared as they danced in the sky.

Chapter 452: A Sacrificial Altar? No, It's a Blood Sacrifice to a Dragon Mountain

After this day, a shadow fell over Dorne, casting a pall across the Red Mountains and Boneway.

"Run! Get into the tunnel!"

"Wait for me..."

Hundreds of Dornish soldiers, armed with bows and arrows, cried out in distress as they fled in panic along the steep cliffs.

Roar...

A scarlet dragon shadow flew past, accompanied by a commanding female voice: "Dracarys!"

Meleys, swift as lightning, unleashed her Dragonfire.

At that moment, a younger voice echoed: "Dracarys!"

"Roar..."

A light blue dragon swooped down, and the orange and blue Dragonfire cascaded like a waterfall.

Helaena's eyes were serious and determined as she performed her task with precision. The Dorne soldiers, unable to reach the tunnel in time, were incinerated in moments.

Rhaenys, exultant, shouted, "To Wyl! Burn their lair to the ground!"

Meleys roared, leaving a red afterimage as she sped away. Helaena, not to be outdone, flapped Dreamfyre's wings and followed close behind.

The two, steadfast and relentless, pressed on with unwavering resolve.

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The Broken Arm, Ghost Hill

The low, sandy brick castle and the sprawling, disordered town stretching for miles marked the fiefdom of House Toland.

Suddenly, a deafening roar pierced the air.

"Dracarys!" Daemon, clad in black steel armor and wearing a defiant expression, looked down at the city below.

Caraxes's pupils gleamed with cruelty as the serpent-like dragon descended upon the town, spewing Dragonfire from its maw.

"No! Run!"

"The dragon is coming..."

The civilians of Ghost Hill screamed in terror, fleeing the town in a desperate attempt to escape the fiery destruction.

"Haha," Daemon laughed from atop Caraxes, directing the dragon with ease. Having mastered the binding spell, he no longer needed to shout to control the dragon, their bond now seamless.

Caraxes slowly crawled, its scarlet wings like two bloodthirsty scythes, harvesting lives with every passing moment. Dragons are merciless, and Daemon even more so.

Half a month ago, after a new prince was elected at Sunspear, it was declared that Dorne would be brought under the rule of the Iron Throne. Rhaegar issued a decree: those who willingly submitted would be relocated to Skyreach, Yronwood, and Sunspear. The Iron Throne would provide food and living space, concentrating the population to strengthen management.

And the rebels? Every inch of Dorne that the dragon flew over would be burned to the ground, leaving no castles or villages.

"Roar..." Caraxes slithered across the ground, its massive form dominating the landscape.

Aemond, his left eye now healed and covered with an eye patch, shouted, "Dracarys, ugly beast!"

Sheepstealer swooped down with a sideways glance, spreading brown dragonfire across the city like a stain.

In a matter of moments, half of Ghost Hill was engulfed in smoke. Aemond, adjusting his eye patch - a black cloth held in place by two straps, one of which his sister had embroidered with a peaceful blue flower - looked down at the scene.

"Roar..." Sheepstealer performed a somersault, gliding close to the ground. Its claws snatched a Dorne soldier, tossing him into the air before biting him in half. Blood and flesh splattered Aemond's face.

Unfazed, Aemond wiped his face slowly, maintaining his composure. "Dracarys," he commanded calmly.

He was now a mature Targaryen, not one to be easily disturbed.

"Roar..." Sheepstealer, seemingly surprised by Aemond's newfound maturity, continued its charge.

Below, Caraxes wreaked havoc. The archers of Ghost Hill organized a counterattack, unleashing a dense rain of arrows.

Crackling... Caraxes shielded herself with a wing, then unleashed a torrent of dragonfire. The screams of the archers were quickly silenced as they were consumed by the flames.

"Roar!" Caraxes, growing bored, flapped its wings and ascended, its body winding like a serpent.

Daemon, seizing the moment, yelled at Aemond, "Hurry up! We need to burn down Tor by this afternoon."

Aemond, glancing over his single eye, urged Sheepstealer to intensify its efforts.

Daemon grinned as the dragon continued its fiery rampage against the fleeing Dornish people. This nephew of his was proving to be quite promising, just as he liked.

...

In the south of Dorne, at Hellholt, the sky was overcast, and the desert wind blew fiercely, raising a dark sandstorm. The sand and gravel rolled across the landscape, revealing the broken and dried bones of the dead. As the wind and sand intensified, the sky darkened further, and the air was filled with the smell of death.

Tapping...

A Dornish soldier, his face pale and covered in blood, ran out of the dust, his pupils dilated in fear.

Plop.

The soldier collapsed to the ground, sand covering his mouth and nose. He shook violently, his mouth and tongue dry with thirst, on the verge of death.

"Monster... monster..." he murmured, his breath getting weaker, his eyes staring back in the direction he had come from. He died with his eyes wide open.

Through the swirling sand, a large shadow approached.

"Ah! Don't kill me, don't..." came the sounds of wailing, pleading, and gnashing of teeth. The desert was stained red with blood, and severed limbs lay scattered about, emitting a strong stench.

A large banner lay buried in the sand, depicting three black scorpions on a red background - the sigil of House Qorgyle of Sandstone, a noble house known for their insidious, cunning nature and expertise with poison, much like the desert scorpions.

"Roar..."

A gust of wind swept through, intensifying the sandstorm. A dark figure tore through the chaos. Dark as coal scales, green vertical pupils—the Cannibal. Its appearance was terrifying, with dark pupils like the abyss. Its dragon maw was stained with blood, chewing on something unknown.

The dragon gulped down a mouthful, blood spilling from its fangs and running down its chin and neck. The dragon's mouth twitched slightly, making it look even more sinister.

Rhaegar sat on the dragon's back, surveying the ground littered with flesh and blood. "This meat is very dirty. You must be really hungry," he remarked.

"Roar!" The Cannibal's pupils narrowed as its large wings flapped, scattering dust. Its huge body soared into the sky, soon returning to Hellholt.

"Roar..." Sunfyre danced through the air, spewing Dragonfire. Aegon, looking tired, yawned, relying on his dragon to do all the work.

Meanwhile, Ormund Hightower led his troops to defend the city. After occupying Hellholt for nearly a month, they faced constant attacks from civilians, including assassination attempts and poisoning. Troops from Sandstone in the west and Vaith in the east harassed them continuously.

It was clear that reinforcements had arrived.

Roar!

Cannibal descended from the sky, and a torrent of dark green Dragonfire, as intense as a volcanic eruption, blasted the gates of Hellholt.

The Dragonfire was searingly hot and highly corrosive, melting the gates at a visible rate. The Cannibal continued its onslaught, spreading Dragonfire over half of Hellholt.

The castle, reeking of death, was reduced to ashes, indifferent to the cries of the people within.

By dusk, the impregnable Hellholt had vanished without a trace, completely erased from history. All that remained on the banks of the Brimstone were solidified magma and sand-glass.

Ormund stood rigid, eyes fixed on the sight of the disappearing castle and town. Rhaegar landed his dragon and glanced at him casually. Ormund immediately straightened his back, adopting the demeanor of a wooden man who could neither speak nor move, his fear of Rhaegar's cruel methods palpable.

Rhaegar laughed. This was nowhere near the end.

He stopped the drowsy Aegon and addressed Ormund, "Sandstone and Vaith have been reduced to ashes. Remember to send someone to transport the remains of the nobles and knights to Yronwood."

"Yes, Prince!" Ormund shouted, not daring to neglect a single detail.

Rhaegar pointed his spear at Aegon and lectured him, "Return to the Greenblood River tomorrow. The minor nobles by the river are eager to die."

Aegon shivered, snapping to attention. "Yes."

He was genuinely afraid of Rhaegar at that moment. Despite Rhaegar's gentle smile, his determination to carry out the Dragon's Wroth to the end was unmistakable.

The Cannibal alone had burned three castles and destroyed countless fields. Rhaegar just smiled, even feeling inclined to pat Aegon on the head.

He, Rhaenys, and Daemon had split into three groups, each accompanied by a younger sibling, to accelerate the Dragon's Wroth while minimizing accidents. Rebellion was spreading throughout Dorne, with countless supporters. However, no castle or village was left standing.

The Sea Snake controlled the Greenblood River and the sea routes of the lower half of the Narrow Sea, blocking overseas reinforcements such as those from Braavos. The Prince's Pass was completely sealed off and temporarily under the jurisdiction of The Reach. The Boneway was still troubled by House Wyl, but Rhaenys and Helaena were expected to handle them.

Once the blockade plan was fully implemented, Dorne would be cut off from the outside world. Dragon's Wroth destroyed everything, trapping the Dornish rebels completely.

Resist, and you will all die.

...

In the blink of an eye, a month had passed.

"Roar..."

"Roar..."

Six dragons danced and intertwined in the sky.

Below, the Scourge and Vaith rivers converged, and the semi-ruined city of Godsgrace lay desolate.

Amid the ruins, Lord Allyrion stood dazed, supported by two of his men, barely conscious.

He was the Lord of Godsgrace, now reduced to rubble.

Roar!

Caraxes swooped down, his blade-like tail slicing through the three men's heads.

"Dracarys!" Daemon ordered nonchalantly.

Caraxes, brimming with energy, unleashed a torrent of Dragonfire, reducing the three corpses to ashes.

"Roar!"

"Roar..."

The other five dragons soared above, hunting down the Dornish men attempting to flee and pouring out their fury.

Rhaegar's eyes were full of murderous intent as he set about destroying the farmland and docks along the river.

The Dragon's Wroth was in full force. House Allyrion of Godsgrace was the first to surrender, bowing to the Iron Throne.

A few days prior, Lord Allyrion had secretly supported the Dornish rebels in the desert with food and maintained covert contact with Qyle Martell of Sunspear. This treachery did not go unnoticed. Tormund and Syrio, experts in intelligence, along with the Sea Snake, thoroughly investigated Allyrion's actions.

Just as Rhaegar and the others finished the first wave of Dragon's Wroth and returned to Yronwood to regroup, House Allyrion in Godsgrace ran into the dragon's fury. They became the first house in Westeros to endure the siege of six dragons.

In a twisted way, they made history, though it cost them their family.

After the ruins of Godsgrace were cleared, the bodies of Lord Allyrion and his Knights were collected and taken away.

Rhaegar drove the Cannibal to burn the Godsgrace into rock, while Daemon and the others rode their dragons back to Yronwood

Two months later, Yronwood had undergone a drastic transformation.

All civilians had been relocated, leaving behind an empty, desolate city. Broken walls and debris were left uncollected, with more rubble piling up. Stones were heaped into dense mountains.

When Rhaegar landed, Cole was directing soldiers to carry bodies into the city, piling them next to the stone heaps. There were many bodies, at least a thousand, hacked to death, burned to ashes, and everything in between.

Rhaenys frowned and asked, "Rhaegar, what do you want with the remains of these nobles and knights?"

She worried her nephew was dabbling in some evil blood magic. Daemon, Helaena, and the others also stared at Rhaegar, their eyes full of curiosity.

Rhaegar did not hide his intentions. "I want to build a Dragon Mountain. Dragon dung is too far away to transport, and these noble corpses are better."

The raw material for Dragonstone was typically the byproduct of dragons, even their dung. Without these, flesh and blood could serve as a substitute. Dorne was now part of Targaryen territory, so it was only fitting to leave a Targaryen symbol behind.

Nothing would be more meaningful than a Dragon Mountain, especially one infused with the flesh and blood of countless Dornish nobles who had rebelled against Targaryen rule.

He wanted to remind all of Dorne how the Targaryens conquered it, and what fate awaited rebels.

Chapter 453: Oldtown Should Fend For Itself

Rhaegar tied back his long hair and reminded them, "Without my help, you'll have to get involved."

His men had very little experience with magic. Tru was in Oldtown, and it was hard to discern loyalties in Lys.

Aemond was the first to raise his hand, saying enthusiastically, "I'll do it. Dorne should remember blood and fire." Dorne was his greatest enemy, and he had paid the price of an eye for it.

Helaena raised her hand silently, avoiding the sight of the corpses.

Aegon glanced at his siblings and smiled as he stepped forward. How could he miss out on such an opportunity?

Daemon and Rhaenys exchanged a glance, nodding in agreement. They recognized that the battlefield in Dorne was not under their control, and their nephew's request carried more weight than any reprimand from Viserys. Besides, Dorne needed a lesson.

Rhaegar nodded with satisfaction as he looked around. "Very good. In the next few months, let Dorne feel the full aftereffects of the Dragon's Wroth."

At his command, a large number of corpses were transported into the city. Rhaegar shared the Dragonstone Spell with them, enlightening each one to feel the magic in their blood.

The idea of teaching this magic had been around for a long time, but it had been delayed for various reasons. Conquering Dorne presented the perfect opportunity.

The Targaryens had never been so united, transforming into a full-fledged Dragonlord House. How can a Dragonlord who doesn't know the ways of a bloodmage be called a Dragonlord?

...

Yronwood, a Month Later

Time had flown by, and Yronwood, once a bustling city, was now a desolate wasteland covered in rubble and corpses. At first glance, it resembled a vision of hell.

Outside the crumbled city walls, a large number of soldiers from The Reach gathered to guard a camp that stretched for miles along the Boneway.

"Roar..."

"Roar..."

On this day, six dragons flew out of the camp, chasing each other and snorting. The black wings covered the sky, the scarlet dragon was as fast as lightning, and the pale blue scales blended into the blue sky. Among them, an ugly mud dragon stood out against the backdrop of the other magnificent and fierce dragons. It was unmistakably unique.

The dragons slowly descended, resembling six mountains of different sizes taking root.

Six figures in red robes stepped down from the backs of the dragons and gathered together. One of them removed his hood, revealing a delicate, paper-pale face.

Rhaegar, in his Dragonborn form with a horn protruding from his forehead, took out a glass candle as he always did.

"It's been almost a month since the first round of Dragon's Wroth ended. It's time to give the people of Dorne some memories," he said, inserting the Truefyre at his waist into the ground. The red heart of flame at the end of his sword's hilt glowed in unison with the glass candle.

"Let's get started," Daemon said impatiently, removing his hood, his eyes full of curiosity. He had learned the binding spell early on and didn't want his nephew to know more. Dragonstone was a strategic-level blood magic.

Rhaegar's expression was indifferent. He took one last look at Yronwood and said to himself, "Next time we meet, we'll call it the Dragonlord Altar."

He placed the glass candle at his feet.

Pop! The glass wick of the candle emitted a flame, swaying in a strange arc. As if receiving a signal, the dragons became instantly restless.

"Roar!" Cannibal's green pupils were menacing as it soared into the sky, spitting Dragonfire at the ruined town. The other five dragons followed suit, hovering over the ruins and spewing Dragonfire in unison.

Boom! Boom! Wood and oil had been placed in the ruins beforehand, and after detonation, the fire intensified. In the blink of an eye, the entire ruined town was engulfed in flames again, repeating the tragedy of the dragons burning the city.

Rhaegar's eyes shone brightly as he silently recited a strange incantation. Daemon and the others did not hesitate, gathering together to chant after him.

From a high vantage point, the six of them looked less like the royal family of the Targaryens and more like a group of red sorcerers from beyond the Narrow Sea.

A magical scene unfolded. As the incantation was spoken, the stone lit by the Dragonfire melted into a liquid, engulfing the remains of the Dornish nobles and knights that had piled up, solidifying into black Dragonstone. Wherever the Cannibal passed, the dark green Dragonfire engulfed everything, and the materials changed in composition at a speed visible to the naked eye.

Truefyre was planted diagonally in the ground, and the fiery red heart at the end of its tail absorbed the fire magic, causing the flames to grow. The glass candle glowed with a rainbow of colors.

Before they knew it, the sky darkened. The pungent smell of ashes filled the air, and the scorching wind blew. Rhaegar remained calm, using his abundant fire magic to control the formation of the black Dragonstone.

The fire spread, engulfing the entire town. Gradually, it became night. The fire illuminated the darkness, and the smell of sulfur spread for miles.

...

Seven Days and Nights Later

The weather was clear, and clouds drifted lazily across the sky.

At the exit of the Boneway, the once-majestic city of Yronwood had transformed into something out of a dream.

"Roar!"

A black dragon soared through the sky, circling around a conspicuous coal-black mountain. Behind it, several dragons of various colors followed, surrounding the "coal mountain."

It was a towering, steep, grotesque peak. Black and ominous, it stood alone in the desert, its shape resembling a crouching dragon, its surface covered with rough black stone that looked like obsidian scales. At the base of the mountain were the remnants of the original castle, now dwarfed by the towering formation that reached a height of 1,500 feet. At the top, a dragon-like neck stretched out, topped by a ferocious dragon head.

At that moment, the black dragon slowed down, flapped its wings, and landed, gripping the steep mountain with its hind legs. The dragon's neck stretched out, and its head rested just above the black stone dragon's head.

"Cannibal, you're blocking the view," Rhaegar smiled, sitting on the edge of the Blackstone Dragon's snout, the cool wind whistling around him.

Helaena, wrapped in her loose red robe, lay sleeping on her brother's lap. Aemond, full of envy, leaned back against Rhaegar, taking out his dagger and showing it off to Aegon, who looked down on him with contempt. Daemon and Rhaenys, the elders, dodged the sudden downward pressure of the Cannibal and stood on the horned throne, looking down.

"It's like a miracle, if you hadn't seen it with your own eyes," Rhaenys said, still in a daze, unable to recover from the shock of shaping a giant mountain.

Rhaegar pinched Helaena's cheek and said with a smile, "Compared to building a castle, a Dragon Mountain is much simpler. All you need to do is prepare the supplies, and you don't have to worry about planning."

"Roar..." A shrill neighing came from the mountainside. Caraxes's snake-like neck stretched out as it slowly crawled out of a cave. All over the mountain, large and small holes were exposed, forming a natural dragon's lair. From the outside, it looked like a giant black dragon had fallen to earth and turned into a giant peak to feed its offspring.

In both substance and appearance, it far surpassed the Dragonpit in King's Landing and the Dragon's Lair on the Isle of Faces. It was a truly amazing work that transcended the ages.

Daemon's eyes lit up, and he mused, "This is just the tip of the iceberg of ancient Valyria. What a great place it must have been in its prime."

When he and Laena traveled around the Free Cities, he had delved into the libraries to read about the Dragonlords of ancient Valyria. Thousands of dragons, forty Dragonlord families. During the War of the Rhoyme, 300 dragons burned the Rhoyme, known as the "Mother River," to a cinder.

Rhaegar smiled and said, "The Targaryens will have magic from now on. As long as there are no problems within the family, Valyria's glory will be restored sooner or later."

It took the forty Dragonlord families thousands of years to conquer the western part of the continent of Essos. House Targaryen has no competitors, and now they have the entire continent of Westeros. All they need is stability and long-term development.

Daemon's smile was filled with ambition. "I can't wait to get started." After seeing the resources of the top Dragonlord family, his horizons had quickly broadened. A small Tyrosh no longer seemed as satisfying as it had at first.

As he spoke, a commotion erupted on the Dragon Mountain.

A messenger, sweating profusely, clung to the steep Blackstone Dragon's neck, his words laden with urgency: "Prince, news from Oldtown: Starfall and Blackmont are attacking the defenses of The Arbor, with the intention of striking Oldtown itself."

Rhaegar remained silent, glancing at Daemon.

Daemon, with a knowing smile, said nothing, his hands clasped in front of his chest as he observed the scene. His eyes lingered teasingly on his niece, wrapped up like a red caterpillar.

"Oldtown?" Before Rhaegar could respond, Aegon interjected, his face turning red with irritation. "We haven't overlooked Oldtown. What's the rush?"

The messenger looked embarrassed and replied, "The Castellan of Oldtown sent a message. Lord Ormund requests that the royal family destroy Starfall and Blackmont to ensure the safety of Oldtown."

Aegon, extremely irritated, retorted, "The war in Dorne is already chaotic, and my father hasn't even addressed it. Now Oldtown wants to complicate things?"

Rhaegar, surprised, thought to himself, "Has my brother finally grown a backbone?" Then he remembered Hightower's forced marriage to Aegon and understood his anger.

The messenger, frightened, fell silent.

Rhaegar waved his hand dismissively, "Go on. I will protect Oldtown if it comes to that."

Having personally burned Starfall and Blackmont, Rhaegar knew the reality. Oldtown would hold out for a while longer. He would intervene at the crucial moment.

The relieved messenger descended the mountain as if pardoned.

The first wave of Dragon's Wroth had swept across Dorne, and the crown prince had used the remains of the Dornish people to build a monstrous peak, darkening House Targaryen's reputation.

The name Rhaegar Targaryen was now known throughout Dorne, instilling fear and respect.

"Hmm..." Helaena, awakened by the noise, curled up and said, "Brother, the news of Dragon Mountain will spread back to Dorne."

Rhaegar tugged at her cheeks. "And?"

"You might be branded a cruel man," she mumbled, half-asleep.

Rhaegar laughed. "Dragon's Wroth was the conqueror's first act. Don't forget how many died in those flames of anger."

History is written by the victors. Maegor was called cruel not just for his insane behavior but because he lost his life. Rhaegar intended never to lose.

He patted Helaena's waist. "Wake up. The people of Dorne haven't learned their lesson and are ready for the second wave of Dragon's Wroth."

The gentleness in his tone contrasted sharply with his intentions.

Helaena shivered and quickly got up.

Rhaenys interrupted, "What about Oldtown? Lord Ormund has already asked for help."

"I will step in when the time comes," Rhaegar replied, revealing his plan. "My father was attacked and is still recovering. Dorne hasn't paid enough."

He wanted to continue the killing until no one in Dorne could resist, until the mention of the Iron Throne made their knees weak.

"Let's go," Rhaegar commanded, riding on the Cannibal. "There have been movements in Boneway and Sunspear. If we don't act, resistance will burst forth like a spring."

Oldtown, you should fend for itself. Next time I visit, I'll settle some old scores.

Chapter 454: Otto's Guess Was Right

The Dragon Wroth reappeared, this news was spreading rapidly throughout the Seven Kingdoms.

King's Landing

The city buzzed with rumors about how many Dornish people the heir prince had killed and the battles he had won. In Flea Bottom, the most chaotic district, orphans exaggeratedly described Dragon Mountain. The latest rumor claimed that countless Dornish people were buried under Dragon Mountain, their spirits rising up to avenge the suppression of the rebels.

The people didn't know whether the rumors were true, but they spread them regardless. They didn't understand how the war between the Triarchy and the Kingdom broke out, or when it would end. They didn't know why Dorne had rebelled.

But they knew one thing.

Rhaegar Targaryen was a brave warrior, and the Princes of Dorne, House Martell, had surrendered. Dorne had finally submitted to the Iron Throne.

The seven kingdoms of Westeros were now all firmly under the Targaryen dynasty.

...

The Red Keep

The King's Bedroom

The royal guards stood guard at the door, peering in through the open door. Viserys lay unconscious on the bed, his face pale and his forehead glistening with cold sweat.

"Viserys, are you all right?" Alicent sat by the bed, wringing out a wet towel to wipe away his sweat, and called softly, "Wake up, your servants are waiting for you."

"..." Viserys frowned, his face showing discomfort at the noise.

Alicent, visibly worried, couldn't help but complain, "I told you not to go on that campaign, but you wouldn't listen."

After muttering for a long time, she packed up the basin and got up. Before leaving, she pleaded helplessly, "Get better soon, the kingdom needs you."

She left the room with the basin.

Outside the Door

Lyonel looked grave and asked in a low voice, "Your Grace still shows no sign of recovery?"

"No." Alicent shook her head and sighed, "Since returning to King's Landing, he has been in a daze, and he has been in a coma more often than he has been awake."

"This is not good news," Lyonel said, frowning.

A house cannot be without a master for a day, and a kingdom cannot be without a king for a day. With Viserys in a coma, the Small Council cannot function normally.

Otto opened the door and changed the subject: "His Grace needs to rest. If there is anything we need to discuss, we can convene a Small Council meeting."

Alicent, realizing the necessity, instructed the Kingsguard Lorent and Ser Steffon to watch over the bedchamber.

Seeing this, Lyonel did not insist and suggested, "Then let's move to the council hall and invite Princess Rhaenyra."

Alicent, surprised, said, "Rhaenyra is seven months pregnant; it's best not to disturb her."

Rhaenyra had returned to King's Landing from Dragonstone long before Viserys was brought back.

Lyonel did not answer, instead looking at Grand Maester Orwyle.

Orwyle nodded, "The Princess is in good health and can handle daily affairs."

Alicent frowned slightly, sensing the unspoken implications. Rhaenyra dealing with royal affairs while Viserys rested on his sickbed and Rhaegar was on an expedition to Dorne weighed heavily on her.

After thinking it over, Alicent found no reason to argue and swallowed her pride. "Fine, that's it then."

She turned to leave, giving the excuse that she needed to change her clothes.

Otto nodded kindly at Lyonel and followed his daughter. Soon, father and daughter were out of sight.

Lyonel and the others looked at each other and headed toward the council hall, whispering along the way.

"His Grace's poor health is not good for the kingdom."

"Be careful what you say. His Grace will get better."

"According to my diagnosis, His Grace is suffering from shock, leading to post-traumatic stress disorder. There is nothing wrong with his body, just like a mild cold."

"Targaryens don't get colds, let alone faint from shock," Lyonel said with displeasure.

Orwyle stopped and said seriously, "This is a result of both mind and body, not something herbs can cure."

He didn't appreciate having his skills as a healer questioned.

"Sorry, I didn't mean to doubt you," Lyonel realized he had overreacted.

"It's fine," Orwyle replied.

The Mellos incident was too shocking, and it was inevitable that the position of Grand Maester would be scrutinized more closely.

Lyonel sighed deeply, struggling internally before he spoke. "Gentlemen, His Grace has been in a coma for a long time. We must prepare for the worst."

"What kind of preparation?" Jasper's interest piqued.

Lyonel glanced at him and said frankly, "Viserys is my king and my friend. I don't want him to be in danger."

He paused and continued, "But if he becomes unable to handle the affairs of state or falls into a sleep from which he never wakes, there must be an heir ready to immediately take over the Iron Throne."

"Wait a minute," Linman interrupted, his old face showing surprise. "We have the best heir to the throne, and he's in Dorne. Prince Rhaegar has won many battles, and no one dares to cross him."

Jasper shrugged, laughing to himself, recalling a near-targeting by the heir prince.

"I understand, but times have changed," Lyonel said seriously. "Braavos watches the Narrow Sea, remnants of the Triarchy are vigilant, and with Dorne rebelling, the kingdom is in chaos. It's a precarious time for accidents."

The room fell silent, the gravity of Lyonel's words sinking in. Finding a good heir wasn't the problem—the Targaryens had lost two in a row. One was assassinated in his tent, and the other died of a bloated stomach.

"I propose that we recall the heir prince to ensure a smooth succession to the throne," Lyonel stated firmly.

Linman hesitated. "The Prince is waging war against Dorne and has already begun the second wave of Dragon's Wrath. How can he abandon that so easily?"

"Lord Corlys is in charge of Sunspear, and with Prince Daemon and Princess Rhaenys, Dorne won't be able to cause much trouble for long," Lyonel argued.

"No," Linman insisted. "The conquest of Dorne must be completed by the heir prince and cannot be left to others."

"If His Grace were to have an accident, the Prince must be here immediately," Lyonel countered.

"Do you think someone would dare to do something foolish?" Linman asked, suddenly sharp.

Lyonel's silence spoke volumes.

The group exchanged uneasy glances, knowing that in theory, the heir prince's succession was unchallenged. But the fear of someone losing their mind and tarnishing the royal family's reputation lingered.

Tormund, who had been silent, broke the tension with a smile. "Gentlemen, His Grace is only sleeping, not physically ill. Perhaps we are overreacting."

"This is the proper preparation!" Lyonel responded, anxious.

Ormund's expression changed, his eyes turning white as he stared straight at Lyonel. "I am the Master of Whisperers. There will be no accidents in the Red Keep."

He stepped forward, his thin frame contrasting sharply with Lyonel's. Lyonel swallowed, feeling the intensity of Ormund's pale eyes.

Ormund touched the Valyrian steel badge on his chest. "Or do you think Prince Rhaegar, the Young Dragonlord, is just a normal person?"

"This..." Lyonel hesitated.

Of course, Rhaegar was not normal. His mysterious nature was unparalleled. Valyrian steel weapons appeared at his command, and he could create black Dragonstone with simple spells. The latest news claimed he was molding a giant peak of Dragonstone at Yronwood, known as the Targaryen Dragonlord Altar.

Tormund, exuding a dangerous aura, said, "If there is an accident in King's Landing, I will inform the Prince immediately. Rhaegar instructed me to let nothing stop him from continuing the Dragon's Wroth."

The Red Keep was full of rats, but Tormund's little birds had made their nests there. Lyonel, realizing the futility of his argument, nodded reluctantly, the other person is the prince's right-hand man and a strange skinchanger, so he can be trusted.

...

The Queen's Chambers

Bang!

The door slammed shut, and Alicent, red-faced with anger, sat down in her chair without regard for her appearance. Humiliation, pure and simple! All three of her children were fighting in Dorne, never failing the Targaryens and the realm. Yet, the Small Council still targeted her, using Rhaenyra's pregnancy to put her in her place.

Crack!

The door opened, and Otto walked in. Alicent didn't need to turn around to know who it was. She poured a glass of red wine and took a sip.

Otto sat down across from her, his eyes deep in thought. "Fools waste their energy by getting angry, but the wise prepare for the future."

Alicent, stunned, soon became angry. "Viserys is not dead yet. He will wake up sooner or later."

"No one in this world can be sure they'll see the next sunrise," Otto replied as if it were a trivial matter.

Alicent was shaken and hesitated. "What can I do?"

Otto smiled and explained patiently, "We can't touch the throne. Lyonel and the others are probably discussing how to spy on you and me right now."

He knew his colleague well. Lyonel was resourceful and reliable, but such people often lacked quick thinking and were impatient.

Alicent sat up straight, listening to her father's advice.

Otto carefully took a cup from the tea tray. "Ormund sent me a message saying that the people of Dorne were harassing the Arbor and asking for Rhaegar's help, but he refused."

"How could that be?" Alicent looked anxious. "Dorne was ravaged by the so-called Dragon Wroth. How dare they threaten Oldtown? And Aegon and Aemond—Ormund is their great-uncle."

Otto tapped his fingers lightly. "As far as I know, Rhaegar personally rode his dragon to burn down Starfall and Blackmont. Compared to places like Hellholt, these castles were only briefly burned, scattering their defenses."

In the first round of Dragon Wroth, the soldiers in Dorne were unable to follow the dragons into battle due to the large span between the east and west of Dorne. Castles in remote locations like Sandstone were burned to the ground. For Vaith and other inland castles, not only were the castles destroyed, but the nobles who resisted were also captured and taken to Yronwood.

Even though Starfall and Blackmont are more remote, they should not be treated as mere formalities.

Alicent suddenly realized, "Did Rhaegar do this on purpose?"

"Probably," Otto analyzed. "The Dayne and Blackmont Houses live along the river, with boats that go straight to The Summer Sea. Fearing the dragons, their first place of retaliation would be Oldtown."

"Something is wrong with House Dayne. They've been targeting Oldtown from the start. Their scouts have had unimpeded access to the coastline of The Arbor and have repeatedly surveyed the harbor of Oldtown."

"I knew they would retaliate!" Alicent panted. "What should we do? We can't just stand by and watch Oldtown get destroyed."

Otto: "Recall Aegon and send him to Oldtown to take control of the remaining forces of House Hightower."

"Aegon?" Alicent hesitated.

Otto nodded. "And Aemond. Recall him to King's Landing under the pretext of his youth, to win over the nobles of the Stormlands."

"Those two..." Alicent hesitated, then rolled her eyes. "They are like mice in front of a cat when they see Rhaegar. What can they do?"

Since his marriage matter, Aegon had stopped contacting his mother. Aemond wrote occasionally, but his letters were full of adoration for Rhaegar, almost forgetting his own family.

Alicent thought for a moment. "Why not transfer Helaena back? She's still a girl."

Dragon Wroth was so cruel that she could accept her two sons taking part in it. But Helaena was a young girl. Which lord would dare to marry her in the future?

Otto looked at his daughter and asked, "You really don't know why?"

Alicent was stunned. She suddenly remembered her daughter's desire to be a third party. Did she say she had succeeded?

Otto did not pursue the matter and got up, saying, "Lady Jeyne of the Vale is suspected of being pregnant, and her belly is starting to show. Someone else has been planning to share the happiness of two people."

"The Dornish are at the gates of Oldtown, which is just the right excuse for him to enter Oldtown with his dragons and use coercion and bribery."

"By the Seven Gods, disobeying the church's will is a sin that will be punished by God," Otto said with a hint of meaning, then pushed the door open. "Think carefully. You'll be attending the Small Council later."

Alicent was stunned.

Bang!

The door closed with a soft thud.

For a long time, Alicent remained motionless. Then, suddenly snapping back to reality, she picked up the wine jug and poured herself another glass, exclaiming, "How dare he? That was a contract signed by His Grace, the Old King."

The Old King was the perfect king in her eyes. He had given her honor, confidence, and a prominent position in the court.

"No! No one should ever question the Old King laws."

Alicent mumbled to herself, took a swig of her wine, and gulped it down. And Helaena, she must be involved in Rhaegar's plan. That rebellious girl!

Chapter 455: Oldtown, Here I Come!

Narrow Sea, Lower Half

The blue sea was calm.

"Roar!"

The black dragon let out a low growl, its body gliding close to the surface of the sea, claws dipping into the water and splitting the waves.

The Stepstones, Outside Grey Gallows

Two small cargo ships drifted, their decks conspicuously covered with black cloth.

Boom!

The black dragon soared into the sky, spewing Dragonfire onto the cargo ships. The black cloth ignited immediately, revealing two heavy scorpion crossbows.

Rhaegar, seated on the dragon's back, was unsurprised and commanded coldly, "Dracarys!"

Cannibal complied, circling the ships and unleashing dark green Dragonfire, evenly spreading the flames. Soon, a commotion erupted from the cabins as hundreds of pirates in ragged clothes and armor crawled out, wailing and cursing before being consumed by the fire along with the ships.

"Cannibal, let's go!"

Watching the ships' planks float away, Rhaegar remained unmoved, steering the dragon back toward Sunspear.

"Roar!"

The Cannibal growled softly, its huge body turning nimbly as it soared towards The Broken Arm. Rhaegar's expression relaxed, and he leaned back in the saddle, lazily looking up at the sky.

A month had passed since the start of the second round of Dragon's Wrath. Dorne had been bathed in Dragonfire several times, and its already sparse castles and villages had been thoroughly destroyed. With the war in Dorne, forces outside the Narrow Sea couldn't resist stirring up trouble. Pirates frequently harassed the shipping lanes of the Stepstones and secretly entered the Sea of Dorne to transport goods, leading to countless incidents of theft and robbery.

Feeling the sea breeze on his face, Rhaegar closed his eyes and thought quietly: "The rebellion in Dorne is not over. Nobles everywhere are calling on the common people to organize small-scale uprisings."

These small-scale rebellions were not taken seriously. Rhaenys guarded Sunspear, overseeing Qyle Martell and a portion of the Dorne nobles who had surrendered. The Sea Snake moved to Planky Town, restoring the Greenblood River shipping route to the Stepstones and connecting the entire Disputed Lands, effectively blocking the shipping lanes in the lower half of the Narrow Sea.

The only drawback was the insufficient naval forces. Although the patrol fleet could spot enemy ships, pirates occasionally managed to sneak in.

"The Prince's Pass is sealed, and the Boneway is being rebuilt into a fortress." With the sea defenses in place, Rhaegar thought about garrisoning the Red Mountains.

The blockade of The Prince's Pass was completed. Nightsong was in the interior, and Kingsgrave was in the middle. House Fowler in Skyreach had surrendered after several months of imprisonment.

Lord Fowler had three sons. The eldest, a radical who hated the Iron Throne, was poisoned by his second brother, who coveted the house head position.

When the eldest died, the third brother led Ormund into Skyreach to capture the second brother, who was caught red-handed. With only one brother left, the third inherited Skyreach. Ormund took control of the military forces and allocated territory to accept Dorne civilians who had fled there. Meanwhile, the blockade of Boneway was extended to the far reaches.

Helaena rushed to the Prince's palace to oversee the transportation of supplies from all over the place, using Dragonstone to complete the palace ahead of schedule. Blackhaven, severely depleted, could only defend Boneway and cooperate with Daemon to search for rebel forces hiding in the mountains. A new town for refugees was built at the eastern end of the Dragonlord's Altar, at the exit of the Boneway. Donald Tarly led 10,000 men from The Reach to oversee the town's construction and take in the refugees, providing shelter and dry food while drafting young men as laborers.

The blockade plan of three parallel lines—the Prince's Pass, Boneway, and Greenblood River—was successfully implemented. Resistance forces, active in the hinterland of Dorne and the desert, were

unable to leave the Red Mountains. Without a port or access to the Narrow Sea, they were essentially imprisoned.

Rhaegar thought to himself, "Dorne has no farmland or wells. The remnants of the resistance will surely be desperate, and then the third round of Dragon's Wrath will be unleashed."

In less than half a year, civilians would abandon the rebellion due to hunger. Nobles, losing the support of the common people, would be reduced to insignificant threats, mere grains of sand in the vast desert.

"Roar..."

Suddenly, Cannibal let out a low growl, its head turning to stare in one direction. Rhaegar detected a note of curiosity in the dragon's voice and braced himself with his elbows.

Cannibal was incredibly fast, and in no time it had flown beyond the range of the Stepstones, now approaching the west coast of The Broken Arm. Following the dragon's line of sight, Rhaegar realized it was focused on the island of Estermont.

The island lay across the sea from the Stormlands, adjacent to Mistwood City in the south of Rainwood. It was the fief of House Estermont of Greenstone. The blue sky was dotted with drifting clouds, and the weather was clear and sultry.

"Roar..."

A piercing roar of grief echoed through the air.

Whoosh!

A pale silver dragon leapt out of the island and disappeared into the clouds. Rhaegar recognized it instantly and frowned. "Seasmoke?"

Seasmoke flew away like a fugitive, its mournful cries lingering in the air. Rhaegar remembered hearing from the Sea Snake that fishermen near Sunspear had spotted a dragon wandering between The Broken Arm and The Summer Sea. It seemed Seasmoke had not given up its search.

"Alas, cousin Laenor has truly failed as a friend," Rhaegar sighed, deciding to pay no further attention.

In total, eight dragons had appeared on the battlefield in Dorne. Six of them unleashed Dragon's Wrath and participated in the conquest of Dorne. Vermithor had returned to Dragonstone, but Seasmoke was still mourning its master.

...

Sunspear

A man and a dragon returned, landing in the courtyard of the old palace.

"Moo, moo~~~"

The Sheepstealer crouched in the corner of the courtyard, savoring the goat being fed by an attendant and listening to the prey's moans.

Cannibal lowered his dragon's head, giving a quick, disdainful glance with his green pupils.

"Roar..."

The Sheepstealer let out a scream, swallowed the goat whole, and moved to a more secluded corner, unwilling to provoke further conflict.

Rhaegar climbed down from the dragon's back and entered the old palace. He glanced up just in time to see the golden Sunfyre perched at the tip of the Sun Tower, its pale pink membranous wings spread wide.

Rhaegar shook his head, thinking, "A dragon is only as good as its master."

Fortunately, Sunspear was still secure. With the two dragons kept in the open air, there was no need to worry about anyone with evil intentions.

The Old Palace, The Prince's Study

Rhaegar was alone, removing his loose black robe and sitting at the desk. He took out a knife with engraved inscriptions on the surface. The war was winding down, leaving only the work of polishing.

Taking a break from his busy schedule, he decided to cultivate his skills.

Swish, swish, swish...

With small, precise movements, the knife gradually transformed a grapefruit-sized stone into the shape of a fiery peak. The solid wood table was covered with many stone carvings, mostly of dragons and various buildings.

Rhaegar took a few looks at the fire peak and continued polishing it until he was satisfied. The carving knife required exquisite skills to simulate the engraving.

For now, he specialized in stone carving, imitating his father to create a complete Freehold Empire.

Knock, knock...

The door was knocked open, almost kicked off its hinges.

Rhaegar's hand trembled, carving a gap in the base of the fire peak. His face darkened, and he looked up stiffly.

Aegon stood there, his face as sour as if he owed everyone a bag of gold dragons.

Bang!

Rhaegar slammed his hand on the table, nearly sending the carving knife flying like a concealed weapon. He said with a smile that didn't reach his eyes, "Aegon, you better have a good reason for kicking in my door. Otherwise, something will definitely happen to you."

Aegon froze for a moment, noticing the fire peak stone carving his brother had marred. He immediately calmed down.

Rhaegar's tone was stern. "Hurry up and say it. Don't make me slap you when I'm in a good mood."

He thought it had been a while since he had beaten his younger brother. Glancing at the carving knife, he shook his head.

If he cut him down, not only would he lose his brother, but he would also have to explain it to his father.

"Grrrr..."

Aegon shivered and swallowed. "Well, Otto wrote to me, urging me to go to Oldtown to prepare for an attack by the Dornish."

He hurriedly added, "You know me, brother. I hate Oldtown and Hightower, but my mother is also urging me, and it's really annoying."

"So what?" Rhaegar's eyes narrowed.

Is this boy trying to show his loyalty to me?

Aegon glanced at him and asked tentatively, "Why don't you go to Oldtown and take care of it for me?"

"Me?" Rhaegar's eyes flashed with incredulity.

Do you even hear what you're saying?

Guess why Otto and the others are insisting that you go, repeatedly bypassing the overall commander.

Aegon, pretending to be wise, raised his chin. "It's better if you go. I'll continue to attack Dorne with Aemond, and we won't get in each other's way."

He had heard about the situation in King's Landing. His father was bedridden. His mother and Otto were urging him to go to Oldtown, while they were urging Aemond to return to King's Landing. It was obvious that they were up to something.

He's just a fool, not a complete idiot.

He thought for a moment and decided to continue acting like an idiot.

Rhaegar laughed and, instead of making a decision, asked, "Do you know what's going on in Oldtown?"

"Dayne and House Blackmont have gathered a thousand men and are approaching Oldtown via the mountain pass," Aegon replied without hesitation. "House Hightower has half his troops stationed on the Stepstones and 30% at The Prince's Pass, leaving only a few hundred to defend the city. The Castellan ordered Oldtown to be sealed off, and the Dornish are looting the crops in the fiefdom."

He knew very well.

Rhaegar hinted, "Ormund is making a big deal out of nothing, and Otto is meddling."

"That's right," Aegon agreed wholeheartedly. "Ormund has been urging me to go back to Oldtown. He said that if I don't go back, he'll return himself."

Rhaegar said calmly, "He's already gone back. He might be in the Hightower or the Citadel right now."

"Ah?" Aegon was confused.

Rhaegar smiled, not revealing the full truth. The reason the Dornish could enter The Reach and precisely target Oldtown was that someone had opened the back door. Hightower had committed many sins, and whether Aegon went to help or not, Ormund, as the lord, would not feel at ease. He was even more afraid that the heir prince would destroy Oldtown with his men.

The Shadow Messenger of Nightsong had sent word that Ormund had slipped away two weeks ago. The Prince's Pass was now under the control of the Nightsong Castellan.

Aegon was puzzled, the gradually growing fullness of his pale face frozen in confusion, his eyes revealing a clear stupidity.

Rhaegar put away his carving knife, got up from his chair, and walked out. When he reached Aegon, he patted him on the shoulder and said, "Call Aemond and go to Oldtown tomorrow. The three of us will go together."

Then he walked past him.

"???"

Aegon was almost shocked off his feet, pointing at his own face and stammering, "Am I still going?"

Chapter 456: The High Tower Lit With Dragonfire

The Next Day

The sky was clear, and clouds floated leisurely.

Three dragons soared over the Dorne desert, entering The Reach. Rhaegar rode the Cannibal in front, glancing back at the two dragons trailing behind.

The Sheepstealer crept forward, with Aemond lowering his head to pull a blue eye from its socket. He took a breath, wiped his eye, and put the blue eye back in place. Aegon, meanwhile, was slumped over Sunfyre's back, looking utterly dejected.

"Tsk!"

Rhaegar sighed as he wiped the blade of his great sword. The sword was long and thick, with a meteor pattern carved on its surface, and the blade was pale like milky glass.

A voice interrupted his thoughts.

"This exploration is complete. Please pick up the lost treasure."

Rhaegar's eyes lit up as the system panel appeared.

[Dawn]

Exploration Progress: 100%

Rhaegar's mouth curled up slightly, and his eyes searched the area. On the edge of the saddle, a purple halo the size of a ball floated, bobbing up and down.

Rhaegar reached out and touched it. The aura shattered, turning into a small purple light that entered his palm.

"Relic successfully picked up, testing..."

"Detection successful. Judged to be an epic relic, the Heart of the Stars."

"As expected, it's at least an epic relic," Rhaegar thought to himself, and a milky white iron ingot called the Heart of the Stars appeared in his mind.

As he thought about it, the iron ingot fell from the sky. Rhaegar quickly reached out and grabbed it. It was quite heavy.

Without wasting any time, he checked the trigger clue provided by the explorer.

"The fallen star, absorbing the magic of the stars, awakens the mysterious treasure."

Rhaegar raised an eyebrow and whispered, "Magic of the stars?"

It was the first time he had heard that stars had magic. In the past, he had only heard that the Rhoynar had water mages and the ancient Valyria had fire mages.

The stars...

"When I was a child, I went to flea markets with Rhaenyra, and only the charlatans talked about the stars and the moon."

Rhaegar shook his head and laughed, then put away the great sword and the Heart of the Stars.

The hint was very clear. The magic of stars awakens the secret treasure. I'll try it out under the night sky tonight.

"Rhaenyra is eight months pregnant."

Rhaegar let his thoughts wander, remembering the letter Rhaenyra had sent him. His father had been in a coma all day and had not managed the government for a long time. Alicent was constantly stirring up trouble, gathering disgraced nobles she had secretly recruited, acting as if she were facing a great enemy.

Rhaenyra was pregnant and unable to walk, so she lay in bed and participated in Small Council meetings, hoping that he would find time to return to King's Landing.

The people are in a panic and need encouragement.

"Roar!"

As Rhaegar's thoughts drifted, Cannibal flew over land and into a bay. Rhaegar looked down and recognized Whispering Sound, the location of Oldtown. The bay was narrow and deep, resembling a banana from above.

Cannibal soared over the eastern tip of Whispering Sound, where the Three Towers, a fortress loyal to House Hightower, stood.

"Ah, so it's Oldtown again," Aegon sighed as he climbed off Sunfyre's back.

Aemond, muttering to himself, added, "Oldtown is nice. It's cleaner and prettier than King's Landing." It's no wonder Mother hated King's Landing and always missed her childhood.

"Roar!"

Cannibal's pupils suddenly fixed on a patch of land, and it roared as it swooped down.

Rhaegar's eyes widened as he saw a group of dark-skinned refugees within the territory of the Three Towers. They rushed into the village, looting like hungry wolves.

Boom!

A shower of dark green Dragonfire fell from the sky, engulfing more than a hundred refugees. The crackling sound was followed by sudden silence.

Rhaegar carefully examined the scene below. The refugees wore leather armor under their ragged clothes, and they were all dark-haired and dark-skinned Dornish people. Some carried a small flag with a black vulture on a yellow background, a baby in its beak.

"They're from House Blackmont!" Aemond, following on the Sheepstealer, was the first to identify the group. The loss of an eye had left an indelible mark on his young mind. He knew every noble house in Dorne and their corresponding crests by heart.

Rhaegar glanced at them briefly before continuing on his way on the Cannibal. House Blackmont, like House Dayne, was not wealthy, but after the Dragon's Wrath, they had managed to muster a force of 2,000 men. Intelligence reported that 1,000 men had entered The Reach. Apparently, they had the idea of looting goods from the start.

"Let's keep moving," Rhaegar commanded, steering the Cannibal back on course.

...

The largest and oldest city in Westeros, Oldtown was built by the First Men long before the Andal invasion. Nestled in the southwest corner of The Reach, it sits where the Honeywine River flows into the estuary of Whispering Sound and the Sea of Sorrows, boasting naturally endowed harbor resources. Under House Hightower's rule, it stands as one of the five largest ports in Westeros.

At this moment, the port bustled with activity, filled with crowds and a variety of ships. If not for the ongoing conflict, the number of people and ships would surely double.

Oldtown's elegant layout, with its canals, cobblestone streets, and hidden southern water town charm, contrasts sharply with the power center of King's Landing. Clean and refreshing, it resembles a beautiful maze.

The towering Hightower serves as the residence of the lord. In a luxurious bedroom, Ormund paced back and forth in front of the floor-to-ceiling windows, his face anxious. His frown and clenched jaw betrayed his unease.

"Damn it, the Dornish haven't finished looting the farm yet, and now the prince is meddling," Ormund muttered, beads of sweat forming on his forehead.

The Dornish threat was manageable; they couldn't breach Oldtown's gates. But with the king's failing health, House Hightower had to prepare and summon their vassals and Aegon's grandchildren. His younger brother and niece had coveted the throne for years, undermining the heir prince at every turn. If the king died, House Hightower might face retribution.

In the past, Oldtown couldn't withstand the Conqueror's black dragon, Balerion. Now, Rhaegar Targaryen's black dragon, the Cannibal, posed a similar threat.

As the Lord of Oldtown brooded, a deep, magnetic voice interrupted.

"Brother, you are troubled."

Ormund turned sharply to see Otto, looking indifferent, holding a glass of wine near the door. "The heir prince hasn't even arrived yet, and you're already so scared?" Otto asked, peering through the ruby red summer wine in his glass.

It was unbecoming to be afraid before the battle.

Ormund, seizing a reason for anger, approached the table quickly and hissed, "You enjoy the power and nourishment of King's Landing, what do you know?"

The Dragon's Wrath could be unleashed at any moment, killing thousands of Dornish nobles and casting their bodies into an altar. Even Maegor the Cruel hadn't gone this far.

Otto took a sip of wine, remaining calm. "Don't let negative emotions affect your judgment. I came here to help you."

Having recalled Aegon and Aemond, he knew his grandchildren were unreliable. Rhaegar's reputation was too great for any direct opposition to succeed. In critical moments, Hightower unity was essential.

Ormund, curiosity piqued, asked, "What are you thinking?"

Bang!

Otto dropped his wine glass and countered, "What is the heir prince here for?"

"What else? To wipe out the remnants of Dorne and pay a visit to Oldtown," Ormund replied without thinking, then paused, taken aback by his own words.

Wipe out? Visit?

Otto smiled. "The heir prince's visit to Oldtown is nothing more than a show of force. Oldtown actively participated in the war and he has no leverage over us."

In other words, if you don't expose your weaknesses, you have nothing to fear.

As a member of the House Hightower, he still had some privileges.

Ormund's face brightened, and a smile returned. "So, we just need to be ourselves and treat him normally."

He is the best at hosting banquets.

Apart from the Lannisters in the Westerlands and House Velaryon in Driftmark, House Hightower is the richest family. They have money!

"No," Otto shook his head, his eyes deep. "The prince's visit to Oldtown is not only a deterrent but also has ulterior motives."

He rubbed his fingers against the glass of the wine cup and said thoughtfully, "Who knows, we may even be able to take the initiative and use the Seven Gods' faith and the Citadel to suppress their arrogance."

The Greens and the Blacks have been hostile for a long time, and the Greens have always been suppressed and unable to breathe. Now, on the Green Faction's own turf, they can still be suppressed by outsiders.

Ormund was shocked to hear this, and then it dawned on him that he was the Lord of Oldtown.

According to the tradition of Westeros, a noble's castle is a place where the wind and rain can enter, but the king cannot.

The heir prince is visiting as a guest, so he should respect me! Thinking this, Ormund straightened his back, and a sense of inexplicable confidence welled up in him.

Otto's eyes flashed with a hint of brilliance, and he said with a bow, "The prince is almost here. Don't waste time in this bedroom."

Otto did not look up and replied, "Your wife died the same way as my wife, but as a lord, you should marry another wife."

Ormund was stunned, his mood immediately dropping. He turned and left, "You should have said so earlier. I'll go play with little Lyonel for a while."

Little Lyonel was his son, whose full name was Lyonel Hightower. His wife died the day after giving birth to their son. In order to ensure that his son grows up safely, he has not considered taking another wife.

Bang! The door closed, leaving Otto alone in the bedroom.

Otto looked up again, his eyes flickering, and looked out the window at the scenery, sipping the strong summer red.

The members of Hightower all care deeply about their families and loved ones.

...

Noon.

Above Oldtown.

A black dragon soared through the sky, sending gusts of wind that stirred the ships in the harbor and swept through the city.

Suddenly, a dragon roar as loud as a bell sounded.

"Roar!"

Cannibal took a deep breath, his green pupils gleaming with ferocity, and his roar shook the entire Oldtown.

The residents on the cobblestone streets covered their heads and screamed, feeling as if thunder was striking their ears and making their eardrums vibrate wildly.

Some even fainted on the spot.

Fortunately, the Cannibal only roared once before flapping its wings and soaring into the sky.

Just as the residents let out a sigh of relief, thinking they were safe,

"Roar!"

"Roar..."

Two loud roars echoed in unison.

The Sheepstealer flew swiftly with Aemond into Oldtown, making a special detour around the bell tower of the Starry Sept.

Its rough tail fluttered, causing the bronze bell to ring.

Sunfyre snorted and whinnied, shining golden in the sunlight and showing off its pale pink wings.

The two dragons flew through the city, following the black dragon, which was much larger than them.

Cannibal soared across the wide city, heading straight for the towering tower where House Hightower resided.

A lake flowed into the Honeywine, with a large, fragrant island in the middle.

The island was connected to the city by a bridge, and boats floated on the lake.

The tower stood on the island in the middle of the lake.

Cannibal flew over the lake, and the white tower loomed ahead.

Rhaegar looked at it silently, a strange look in his eyes.

The High Tower lived up to its name, towering over 800 feet high and built entirely of stone.

"When human power is exhausted, this must be a magical building," Rhaegar thought.

Looking down, he saw the gate of the High Tower wide open, with Ormund leading a group of attendants out to greet them. From a high vantage point, they looked like tiny insects.

Rhaegar smiled, his eyes fixed on the top of the tower.

Why hadn't they lit the tower's fire and summoned their vassals to prepare for battle when Dorne invaded?

"Haha, let me help you."

Rhaegar's eyes flashed, and he patted the Cannibal on the back.

"Roar!"

The Cannibal immediately understood, his green pupils full of arrogance, and his wings flapped to surpass the highest point of the High Tower.

Ormund waited on the ground, ready to entertain the heir prince.

Unexpectedly, the black dragon circled once and flew over the top of the High Tower.

"Could it be that the prince wants to enjoy the view from the sky?"

Ormund thought proudly, confident in the beauty of the High Tower.

The next second.

"Roar!"

The black dragon circled the High Tower once, its ferocious dragon's mouth wide open, aiming at the tip of the High Tower.

From a distance, it looked like a terrifying evil god peering into the human world.

Boom

A mouthful of dark green Dragonfire burst out, crashing through the white walls that had stood undamaged for a thousand years and covering the entire spire.

In front of Ormund's eyes, the entire population of Oldtown looked up in shock.

The tower was lit up!

The war-like spire once again glowed green.

Rhaegar's lips curved into a smile as he admired his handiwork.

In contrast, Ormund was frozen in place, as if in a deathly silence, unable to believe what he was seeing.

Until a walnut-sized stone fell from the sky and landed at his feet.

Then a piercing cry of anguish erupted:

"No!"

Chapter 457: Let the High Septon Come and See Me

Watching the High Tower crumble, Ormund's knees gave out, and he fell to the ground in a daze. The sense of powerlessness he felt now was no different from sitting on the vast resources of Oldtown, yet being unable to save his wife from a difficult labor, watching her bleed to death.

Ormund looked up at the falling debris with a sorrowful expression. It was as if he was watching his wife, who had been tortured beyond recognition, slowly and painfully take her last breath.

"The High Tower!"

Ormund's eyes were bloodshot, and he was on the verge of a breakdown. House Hightower had built the High Tower a thousand years ago. It had withstood the invasion of the Andals, escaped the wrath of the First Men, and survived the Conqueror's period. It stood proud just a moment ago. But now, a black dragon had burned the spire, a symbol of war and power.

Unfortunately, people's joys and sorrows are not the same.

Cannibal circled slowly around the stone structure, its green pupils fixed on the burning spire, its nostrils flaring lightly.

"Hey, partner, do you smell magic?"

Rhaegar, curious about the dragon's behavior, rode on its back, feeling content. At an altitude of 800 feet, even if Ormund shouted at the top of his lungs, Rhaegar wouldn't hear a thing. Not that he cared.

House Hightower was indeed powerful enough to build the largest port in Westeros, with trade spanning two continents. They knew how to take advantage of opportunities and avoid dangers. Throughout history, no matter which invader came, Hightower could kneel down in time, offering their allegiance. Even the Conqueror Aegon and the Black Dread, Balerion, did not harm the Hightowers in the High Tower.

But this time, Hightower had offended Rhaegar, stepping into a hornet's nest. Killing those with the Hightower surname wasn't necessary; he only needed to take two pieces of stone from the tower their ancestors built.

Cannibal shook its dragon head, its pupils flashing with disgust, and slowly descended with its wings spread wide. There was no smell of magic. Perhaps there was some magic once, but it had long since dried up and withered.

Rhaegar touched his Truefyre and Dragon Whip at his waist, unusually silent for the first time. The Hightower name was indeed ancient, noble, and very mysterious. Unlike other native nobles, the Hightowers seemed to have appeared out of nowhere in Westeros.

But that didn't matter. No matter how noble the bloodline, it couldn't be more noble than the ancient Dragonlords of Valyria.

Rhaegar stroked the dragon's back and looked down at the nearly collapsed Ormund. The Targaryen name represented blood and fire. The dragon had granted him privileges. His father was now bedridden, and Alicent was at his side.

Rhaegar wondered what mischief Hightower and Oldtown would conjure up next.

"Roar!"

"Roar..."

The Sheepstealer and Sunfyre followed, heading for the High Tower, which was ablaze with green fire.

"Lord, we must retreat!"

Seeing that Ormund's heart was as cold as ice, the household knight led the Lord back to the gate, moving very carefully.

Boom!

Just as they took their first steps, the Cannibal landed. Its feet sank into the soft grass, and its jet-black wings whipped up a wave of searing heat that instantly snapped the spines of the surrounding flowers and plants.

"Roar!"

That wasn't enough. Cannibal's green eyes glared coldly as it let out a roar of defiance at the stunned reception team.

"Protect the Lord!"

The household knight, who had never encountered such a spectacle before, drew his sword and stood in front of Ormund, his hand trembling.

What the Prince and the dragon wanted to do? Protecting the Lord is their mission.

"Roar?"

Cannibal's dragon's maw curled up in a almost mocking arc. Its wings supported its weight as its long tail lashed out like lightning.

Crack!

The knight's sword flew off, spinning 360 degrees in mid-air before plunging into the grass 100 meters away. As for the knight...

The dragon's tail flicked lightly, and the knight was almost blown to pieces, his remains falling into the lake.

The blue lake was stained red, and the small fish and shrimp scrambled to eat.

Ormund stared in disbelief at the scene.

How dare he! Killing his follower knight in front of the Lord of Oldtown. This is a sin against the faith of the Seven Gods.

"Cannibal, behave yourself!"

Rhaegar's face turned cold, and he scolded the dragon in a tone that was neither too light nor too heavy. Then, looking down at the stunned Ormund, he said casually, "Sorry, Lord Ormund, Cannibals are by nature violent and will never tolerate the provocation of the weak."

"You..."

Ormund was so angry that he wanted to rush forward and argue.

"Roar..."

Aegon landed on Sunfyre, stopping a few meters behind the Cannibal, his magnificent appearance shining with gold.

"Roar!"

The Sheepstealer followed closely behind, landing a dozen meters behind the Cannibal, its withered dragon head bobbing back and forth as it swallowed a live goat from somewhere.

The sudden appearance of the two dragons silenced Ormund's words.

Take a look.

The three dragons stared at the High Tower, and the three Targaryen brothers sat on their backs. The three Targaryens were all teenagers, the eldest no more than 16 years old. Led by Rhaegar, they all had a look of defiance and a condescending air.

From Ormund's perspective, the three Targaryens were clearly three active volcanoes that could destroy Oldtown at any time.

The three dragons and three Targaryens left no room for doubt.

"Gulp..."

Ormund swallowed a mouthful of saliva subconsciously, holding back his words of abuse. A phrase kept repeating itself in his head.

The other side has dragons!

Rhaegar looked down at Ormund, who dared not speak angrily, and smiled without saying a word. Aegon and Aemond dared not speak first, listening obediently on the dragon's back.

Ormund looked around, trying to make eye contact with his two grandsons.

Aegon turned his head and pretended to be blind.

Aemond touched his left eye and didn't bother pretending to be blind.

Ormund: ...

Sweating profusely.

Rhaegar took the opportunity to bow slightly forward and smile, "Lord Ormund, the people of Dorne have looted the crops in Oldtown so I lit a bonfire in the High Tower for you. Do you mind?"

Aegon and Aemond looked up at the same time, finally noticing the tip of the High Tower burning. Their eyes fell on the fierce Cannibal, and their hearts skipped a beat. Apart from Vhagar and Vermithor, no other dragon could match this wild, cannibalistic beast.

The Sheepstealer and Sunfyre both had their own painful experiences with the Cannibal. Sunfyre, recalling those bad memories, silently backed away ten meters to create a safe distance. The Sheepstealer, sly and cunning, with wide brown wings, always ready to take flight, kept its distance too. This wild dragon is naturally good at surviving.

The two dragon riders were already afraid of Rhaegar and the Cannibal, not to mention Ormund, who was just a normal person. Ormund forced a smile that was even uglier than a crying face: "Not at all. The three Princes have come a long way, so please come into my humble home and have a chat."

Otto is a real pain in the neck! This is not a Lord intimidating the heir prince; it is the heir prince blatantly intimidating him.

Rhaegar did not answer immediately. Aegon and Aemond were tired of riding the dragon and were happy to get off and enjoy the night. As Rhaegar did not speak, they waited patiently, with their hands on their chins.

If they don't wait, they'll probably get beaten!

Just as Ormund was feeling embarrassed, there was a burst of applause from the High Tower. Rhaegar looked away. He saw Otto, dressed in his best suit, slowly walking out of the hall, holding a plate of bread and salt in his hands.

"Otto?"

Rhaegar's eyes narrowed slightly, a little surprised. Tormund's raven reported that Otto was hiding in the Red Keep, and that only Alicent was left to maintain the court. It turns out he snuck back to his house home in Oldtown.

Otto was easygoing and greeted Rhaegar with a bow: "Greetings, Prince. It is a blessing for the kingdom to see you safe and sound." Then he turned to Aegon and Aemond, and, in the manner of a grandfather, lectured them, "Why don't you come down? Oldtown is your second home. Your mother was always happy to come home."

Aegon and Aemond were taken aback by these words, their hearts wavering. The identity of their grandfather was indeed very effective on them. When they were young, Otto had lectured them a lot, instilling all kinds of knowledge and ideas in them.

Rhaegar's eyes narrowed, and a hint of ill will appeared in his eyes. What a clever Otto! He is indeed calculating to the core, and even his speech is so artistic. First he praises, then he criticizes. He holds him up, tramples on his two younger brothers, and starts by sowing discord.

But as the eldest, Aegon and Aemond could not object.

Ormund's face brightened and he said, "I have prepared a grand banquet to entertain the three Princes."

Aegon's eyes lit up, showing great interest in the banquet. Aemond remained silent, unwilling to get involved in the battle between his brother and his grandfather. One of them was a blood brother, and the other was a powerful house. He didn't want to offend either of them, and he couldn't help either of them.

Rhaegar did not give his two younger brothers any trouble and said directly, "No, there is still time for the banquet. I have more important things to deal with."

Otto frowned slightly. "You're visiting Oldtown, so you're expected to be entertained by House Hightower."

"No hurry."

Rhaegar refused outright, pointing to a magnificent building in Oldtown that was second only to the High Tower. "My father is ill, the rebellion in Dorne continues, and I need to see the High Septon to hear the Seven's guidance."

He could see Otto's plan. He wanted to use the blood ties between the two grandsons to break away from his older brother's chariot. He would undermine his potential power, both overtly and covertly, to achieve the political capital to rival him.

Rhaegar could only shake his head. He really didn't have time to argue about petty power plays. While the three brothers are united, it is the perfect opportunity to take advantage of the situation and suppress the Faith of the Seven and to empty the Citadel of its resources. This would consolidate his rule and benefit his descendants.

He was not so bored as to lower himself to the level of Otto and play by the same rules. In his game of chess, Rhaegar would never see a chance of winning, no matter how great his skills. However, Rhaegar is the one who has the power to make the rules. He wants to play, and Otto has to play. If he doesn't want to play, Otto has to leave the table.

Otto's expression changed slightly. He had not expected the heir prince to be so reckless.

Rhaegar said, "I heard that the House Hightower has a close relationship with the Faith of the Seven, so I would like to thank Lord Ormund for his help in introducing the High Septon to me."

Ormund's mouth twitched, and his heart was in a whirl. The Seven Gods and the royal power are equal. What do you mean by introducing the High Septon to you? The High Septon is already equal to the king in status and is the servant chosen by the Seven Gods.

Rhaegar tilted his head to the side: "Any questions?"

Say it, and I'll listen with the Cannibal.

"Roar..."

Cannibal growled, his voice rough and deep, shaking the eardrums of those present.

Ormund's face tightened, and he said immediately, "Wait a moment. The servant will go and hitch up the carriage."

"Thank you, Lord Ormund."

Rhaegar smiled politely.

"Roar!"

Cannibal roared, raised its head, spread its large wings, and shook its huge body.

"Roar..."

The Sheepstealer and Sunfyre, not knowing what to make of it, followed suit and let out a roar, spreading their wings in a show of force.

Chapter 458: Otto's Cunning

Starry Sept.

The second tallest building in Oldtown and the most magnificent of the Seven Holy Temples in Westeros.

It has long been the center of the Faith of the Seven.

The temple gate stood wide open, and the high white stone steps divided into several sections, hosting a constant flow of believers every day.

Whether noble, knight, commoner, or beggar, all could enter the temple equally to receive sermons from the preachers.

"Roar!"

The sound of a bell tolled as the Cannibal circled Oldtown, its massive form casting a shadow over the Starry Sept.

Roar!

Roar...

The Sheepstealer and Sunfyre spread out on either side, spreading their wings and gliding recklessly, as if guarding the largest black dragon.

This scene stirred mixed feelings among the people of Oldtown.

The dragons' arrival symbolized the presence of Targaryen royalty. The Iron Throne revered the Seven Gods, and even the daughter of the old king had joined the nuns.

But with war raging in Dorne, the dragons should have been on the battlefield.

The sudden appearance of three dragons in Oldtown, first alarming the residents and then circling the Starry Sept, caused a wave of anxiety.

Believers, quite nervous, flocked to the temple to find out what was happening.

...

At this time,

Inside the Starry Sept, there was a high level of alert, and hundreds of preachers ran out of the gate and surrounded the long steps.

"Roar!"

The black dragon roared angrily, its wings covering the sky and blotting out the sun. Its pitch-black scales and green pupils were eerie and terrifying, reminiscent of the demons of hell recorded in the Seven Star Bible.

"Cannibal, land!"

Rhaegar's expression was indifferent as he steered the dragon down, landing precisely on the long steps of the cathedral. The dragon's sharp claws crushed the stone steps, as if hammering a spine.

The Sheepstealer and Sunfyre circled twice before landing on the flagstone floor below the long steps. The Cannibal, being much larger, occupied most of the long steps, blocking all the roads with its wings. The two dragons had to land further away.

Grrrr...

A carriage bearing the Hightower crest sped up, and Ormund and Otto, enduring the jolting discomfort, helped the attendant out of the carriage. Ormund had to come, while Otto came of his own accord, wanting to help his brother.

Rhaegar glanced at them before turning back to the group of preachers at the temple entrance. He declared, "I am Rhaegar of House Targaryen, the eldest son of Viserys I, the rightful heir to the Iron Throne, and the Regent. Tell your High Septon to come out!"

The preachers exchanged confused glances, their hostility evident.

Rhaegar, seeing their reluctance, added sternly, "The heir prince is visiting. Where is the High Septon?"

He had already shortened his introduction, but the preachers still looked bewildered.

Ormund hurried up the long steps, panting, "Prince, I'll do the talking."

There are more people in Westeros who reject dragons than worship them. The Seven Gods and the House Targaryen have been at odds for over a hundred years. Things improved during the reign of the Old King, and Viserys pursued a policy of cooperation and mutual benefit. But even the Old King never rode his dragon directly around the Starry Sept.

Rhaegar waved his hand, sensing the rejection from the Faith of the Seven. He said casually, "I only have one request: to see the High Septon."

He had come to settle old scores, not to be nice. Suppressing the Seven Gods and seeking the privilege of marrying more women was his true goal. He doesn't need the king or the royal family to marry more, but he needs the right to marry more.

Once the king has the right to marry multiple times, the authority of the Faith of the Seven will be weakened, and the king's authority will be elevated above that of the gods.

Ormund nodded and hurriedly exchanged words with the missionaries. The missionaries looked very nervous, each holding a chair, table, or bench, ready to sacrifice themselves for the Seven Gods at any moment.

Rhaegar glanced inside the temple. Hundreds of nuns were kneeling in a row, praying to the Seven Gods. A larger number of monks and silent sisters stood in the corner, peering out at the black dragon outside the temple.

"Quite a large number, comparable to the private soldiers raised by a noble family in The Reach," Rhaegar thought to himself, remembering the long-disbanded Sons of Warriors and the Poor Fellows. That grassroots armed force could bring down an entire kingdom if it rebelled. Even the cruel Maegor, who rode the Black Dread, Balerion, had not been able to completely stamp out the Seven Gods.

After a while, Ormund finished communicating. He approached the Cannibal, hesitating to know how to start the conversation.

Seeing him stammering, Rhaegar became alert and said unkindly, "What, the High Septon died unexpectedly?"

"No!" Ormund shook his head and frowned. "The High Septon learned of the heir prince's arrival and went into seclusion in the secret chamber a quarter of an hour ago. He will not be disturbed."

"Seclusion ?" Rhaegar was taken aback and couldn't help but laugh. "The High Septon thinks of me as a conqueror."

At the beginning of the Targaryen dynasty, the conqueror unified the six kingdoms except Dorne and planned to enter Oldtown. The High Septon locked himself in the inner sanctum of the Starry Sept for seven days and seven nights, during which time he ate only bread and water and listened to the guidance of the Seven.

After seven days, the High Septon, who had almost died on his knees, emerged from his seclusion. When the Conqueror rode into Oldtown on Balerion, Lord Hightower opened the gates of Oldtown and the people lined the streets to welcome him.

It turned out that the High Septon had heard many things during his seclusion.

...

Oldtown could not withstand the wrath of a dragon. To kneel was to survive; to resist was to die.

The Faith of the Seven and House Hightower worked together to ensure compliance.

Ormund replied, "Prince, the Faith of the Seven is widespread throughout Westeros. Perhaps you should wait a little longer."

"Do you know why I'm here?" Rhaegar asked, his white hair standing on end.

Ormund was speechless.

Everyone in the kingdom knew the heir prince was more resistant to the Faith of the Seven than the young king Viserys. He was also rumored to have an affair with Lady Jeyne of the Vale. During the conquest of Dorne, the heir prince rode in on the wave of unification of Westeros. It was inevitable that he would suppress the Faith of the Seven and seize unspoken benefits.

Rhaegar smiled, knowing his thoughts were transparent.

Facing the armed uprising of the Faith of the Seven, Queen Visenya had once told her nephew, Aenys I:

"My nephew, you are an idiot and a coward. Who would dare offend your father like that? You have a dragon under your belt. You should ride it to Oldtown and turn the Starry Sept into a second Harrenhal. If you don't have the guts, let me go and roast that pretentious clown for you."

Rhaegar also had a dragon at his command and the courage to burn everything.

There was only one agenda for his trip to Oldtown: "I will! I want!" House Hightower, the Faith of the Seven, and the Citadel had no right to refuse.

Even Otto, who had come to help, was left speechless.

The Targaryen kings were mostly fierce and domineering. Aenys I and Viserys' weak character were the exception.

Rhaegar patted the back of the dragon, and the Cannibal slowly crawled forward. "The history High Septon has been in seclusion for seven days and seven nights. I will also give the High Septon seven days and seven nights. During this time, I will stay at the Starry Sept and wait for good news."

Cannibal climbed to the door of the temple, his towering back level with the dome, then lowered himself to allow his rider to dismount.

Rhaegar paid no attention to the hostile stares of the preachers and got off the dragon's back. He waved to Aegon and Aemond and headed for the hall of the temple.

The priests' hearts sank, and they tried to block the door with a human wall.

"Roar!"

Cannibal's green eyes glared fiercely at the Starry Sept. The hot air from his roar knocked over all those in his way, burning their skin through their clothes. Screams echoed everywhere.

Rhaegar walked into the temple, his long, silver-blond hair blowing in the wind, his hands behind his back. He treated the preachers like insignificant insects, blowing them away with a single breath and scattering them.

As his right foot stepped onto the threshold of the temple, Rhaegar paused. Ormund and Otto jumped, thinking trouble was imminent.

Rhaegar turned and said, "The task of clearing out the Dorne invaders is entrusted to Aegon and Aemond. After I meet with the High Septon, I hope to meet with a representative of the Citadel's Conclave immediately."

The Conclave, composed of maesters, had the power to appoint and dismiss the Grand Maester.

Rhaegar then entered the cathedral and sat down in a corner, leaving a black dragon crouching at the entrance, its green pupils watchful.

Ormund and Otto clenched their fists, realizing their palms were sweating. They had already seen many potential problems in a short time.

Otto, in particular, was taken aback by the depth of Rhaegar's eyes. His hands and feet felt numb.

When he saw the heir prince enter the temple, he thought the Old King had come back to life. He knew full well the prince was making a statement. If they met his demands, all would be well. They could choose to refuse, but Dragonfire was unavoidable.

"Roar..."

"Roar..."

Cannibal let out a long, low growl, its pupils gradually closing like a guard.

"Let's go."

Otto came to his senses, his face grim: "We need to go back and discuss. Overturn all previous plans."

Ormund nodded eagerly, and the two brothers climbed back into the carriage.

...

Night falls.

High Tower, Lord's bedroom.

Ormund had taken a bath and was sitting dejectedly by the bed.

The Faith of the Seven and Oldtown were allies of House Hightower, and he had always been proud of them, highlighting the prosperity and knowledge of Oldtown.

Now, both were huge problems.

Creak

The door opened and Otto, dressed in his usual green uniform, walked in.

Ormund gave him a sideways glance and then slumped his head again.

"Aegon and his dragons will be searching for Dorne raiders tomorrow," Otto began, keeping his composure.

Ormund remained sullen.

Otto saw this and said with a deep voice, "My two grandchildren have grown up and have their own ideas."

"I knew it," Ormund replied, sickly.

After dinner, he had asked Otto to try to win over his two nephews. Clearly, it hadn't worked.

"Brother, don't be so easily discouraged," Otto said, sitting down next to Ormund. "The heir prince's suppression of the Faith of the Seven and the Citadel will not affect the family for the time being."

The knife is not pointed at him, and House Hightower is honest, so the other side can't get a handle on it.

Ormund frowned, hearing the unspoken meaning: "For the time being?"

Otto sighed lightly. "The heir prince is doing his best to suppress the influence of Oldtown. If Your Grace has an accident, it will be difficult for House Hightower when he ascends the throne."

"Your Grace is only in a coma," Ormund said, knowing the inside story and not so worried.

"Viserys has always been in poor health, and a long coma is not a good sign for anyone," Otto replied.

Ormund thought about it carefully. It made sense, but he hesitated. "Do you have a way to avoid the heir prince's difficulties?"

Otto's question was not answered: "What would you do if pirates blocked your trade routes?"

"We can still do something about it. We should clean it up..." Ormund paused, unable to believe it. "No."

Fortunately, Otto denied it in time and guided him: "What should you do when you face an enemy that is many times stronger?"

Ormund thought for a while and hesitated, "Strengthen allies and suppress the pirates' prestige to achieve parity."

He had done the same thing when the pirates of the Triarchy were wreaking havoc, by uniting with the Lannister and Arbor fleets.

"That's right," Otto smiled. "The heir prince has won a great victory and is in the spotlight. We should avoid the limelight for now and concentrate on consolidating our power."

"Alicent is weak and her children are of little use," Ormund said, not hopeful about this.

Otto shook his head and said with certainty, "We were wrong before, trying to pit the Targaryen blood against itself. What we should have done is strengthen the children's recognition of Hightower and keep them close to their mother, surrounding their mother."

As long as the children don't distract their mother, they will always protect her from harm.

Ormund was shocked and exclaimed, "Yes, there is no child in the world who does not love their mother."

Otto stood up and patted him on the shoulder, saying, "Don't think too much. Let the heir prince take what he wants. The real battlefield is always in King's Landing."

Ormund reasoned, "The heir prince wants to compete with the Faith of the Seven for power. We can use this to undermine his prestige."

"Haha, maybe."

Otto left the bedroom with a deep look in his eyes, his back turned to his brother.

...

Starry Sept.

The moon was high in the sky, and the stars were shining brightly.

Rhaegar sat in the hall of the temple, a huge sword that looked like milky glass in front of him.

Chapter 459 Rhaegar: Son of the Gods?

The Great Sword Dawn.

Rhaegar looked at the sword with surprise in his eyes. The surface of the sword glowed with a milky white light, shimmering with a gorgeous array of colors. It wasn't the sword itself that was magical, but something else altogether.

A man and his sword. Within a three-meter radius, the blade was surrounded by flickering starlight and silvery moonlight.

The Starry Sept, a large building with a black stone exterior and a typical dome-shaped roof, was bathed in the night sky's starlight. The light shone through the glass skylight onto the seven statues of the gods.

Rhaegar sat in the center of the seven gods, and the starlight seemed to fall like cotton wool, showering them with a brilliant glow.

The giant sword glistened in the dawn light, and the iron-forged blade of the meteorite sword absorbed the starlight bit by bit.

This scene resembled a vision of the gods.

Dozens of holy sisters serving the Seven Gods in the sanctuary were awestruck by the sight and fell to their knees in reverence.

Looking back,

Rhaegar's face remained calm, his long, silvery-gold hair falling over his shoulders, and he wiped the blade of the sword slowly and deliberately.

The Dawn sword trembled slightly, absorbing the starlight with increasing effort.

With each additional ray of starlight, the milky white blade became more transparent, as if it were an invisible sword.

The elegant and handsome prince, the mythical holy sword.

This scene in the Starry Sept, among the sculptures of the seven gods, could easily be mistaken for a divine descent of a man and a sword from the heavens.

"Seven gods above..."

The holy sisters were all dumbstruck, clasping their hands together and praying fervently.

Rhaegar, as always, chose to ignore them, revealing his true nature as a god-like figure above the world.

Only he knew that it was all a misunderstanding.

The system panel appeared.

Trigger prompt: "The fallen star absorbs the magic of the starlight and awakens the mysterious treasure."

The System Exploration was complete, and the [Heart of the Stars] produced by Dawn was obtained.

At night, he tried to trigger the [Heart of the Stars] in the Starry Sept.

Hum~

The great sword Dawn emitted a hum, and one-seventh of the blade turned transparent.

At this point, the silky moonlight disappeared, and the firefly-like starlight retreated.

Rhaegar's eyes were full of doubt, and he whispered, "Can't take too much?"

The blade of Dawn, made of star-falling iron, could not absorb too much starlight magic at once.

This was Rhaegar's first encounter with starlight magic.

How should I put it?

It's... strange.

Compared to the violent and restless fire magic, starlight magic is sometimes peaceful and calm, and sometimes cold and piercing.

More often than not, it is a sense of distance that is both tangible and intangible.

Once you cross the borderline, a black hole-like darkness, emptiness, and a feeling of being swallowed up are born.

What's more, Rhaegar can't absorb Star Magic.

The fire magic in his blood is like a lord with a bad temper, driving away any outsiders who try to enter his territory.

"This shouldn't be!"

Rhaegar placed one hand on his forehead and the other on the hilt of the ten-kilogram sword he was wielding with the ease of a child.

The knowledge of the Pyromancer's heritage did not mention that the magic of fire was so exclusive.

Damn it!

He is a Pyromancer, but he only knows the blood sorcery of the Bloodmages, and he doesn't know any fire sorcery.

How did the Pyromancers of ancient Valyria survive? They didn't pass on any knowledge to future generations.

"One in seven. It looks like I'll have to wait six more days."

Rhaegar carelessly stuck the great sword Dawn on the floor next to him, stroked the blade, and closed his eyes.

He had given the High Septon seven days and nights to meditate, just enough time to absorb enough magic of the stars and activate [Heart of the Stars] in the Starry Sept.

If the High Septon had thought it through, the relics would be triggered and everyone would be happy.

If he couldn't make up his mind, then Rhaegar would just chop off his head with the Sword of the Morning.

...

Time flies, and six days have passed.

Rhaegar stayed in the Starry Sept, not eating or drinking for the entire time, embodying the discipline of a septon more devout than the septons themselves.

On the first day, the holy sisters were drawn to the vision surrounding Dawn.

On the third day, the holy brothers admired his endurance and willpower.

By the fourth and fifth days, the entire Starry Sept was captivated by him, watching the Targaryen prince under the Seven Gods sculpture in hushed awe.

Rumors began to circulate.

Whispers spread that the one sitting in the middle of the Seven Gods was no longer a mere mortal or a stereotypical Dragonlord but rather a messenger chosen by the Seven Gods—a son of God.

His handsome appearance and unyielding will, combined with his ability to go without food or drink, added to this divine image.

The presence of the black dragon outside the temple only fueled these rumors.

People claimed the dragon was a guardian appointed by the Seven Gods to their messenger, and its infernal green Dragonfire symbolized the cleansing of all injustice and sin.

These rumors spread like wildfire, morphing into various versions.

Some said he was a warrior reincarnated, blessed by the Mother, or even the hand of the Stranger.

Others attributed the victory in the war in Dorne to the guidance of the Seven Gods and the boundless power of the Warrior.

After all, it's not against the law to make up stories.

These tales became popular in Oldtown.

holy brothers and holy sisters couldn't get enough of it, and it attracted a large number of Seven-God believers to visit.

Rhaegar was aware of these rumors but paid them no mind.

He just sat quietly under the statue of the Seven Gods.

During the day, he explored the power of fire, trying to create his own fire magic.

At night, he bathed his giant sword in the magic of the stars and fell asleep in a cross-legged position.

Why didn't he eat or drink? As a Dragonborn, his body was extraordinary. He could go seven days without eating or drinking without any problem.

The magic of fire was enough to nourish his body.

Of course, it didn't help that Aegon and Aemond seemed to have forgotten about him, not bringing him any food.

He was also wary of the bread and water provided by the Faith of the Seven.

Even a Dragonborn feared being poisoned; his grandfather Baelon had died in a rather unpleasant way.

"Wait a little longer. It will be tonight," Rhaegar thought, glancing back at the temple gate packed with Oldtown believers who had come to witness the spectacle.

He was puzzled by the mentality of these believers, then a thought struck him as he gazed at the statue of the seven gods, his eyes seeming to shine with starlight.

...

King's Landing, Red Keep.

Seven days had passed since the last Small Council meeting.

Alicent had just fed her husband some vegetable porridge until he fell asleep again and left the bedchamber.

Two Kingsguard stood guard on either side, and a tall, thin, dark-haired Maester waited silently.

"Your Grace, the Queen."

Maester Munkun greeted her in a low voice.

Alicent closed the door behind her, took one last look around the room, and then deliberately walked a little further away with Munkun.

She made sure that the two Kingsguard couldn't hear their conversation.

She put her arms around her chest and covered her face with her other hand, saying, "Viserys is in a very bad state. He often has nightmares and is startled. Can you prescribe some milk of the poppy to calm him down?"

"This is against what the Prince said."

Munkun replied matter-of-factly, as if nothing had happened. While saying this, he looked at the queen with a not-so-deep gaze. From her behavior, he sensed a sense of anxiety.

Alicent's face fell, and she said in a threatening tone, "Rhaegar, it's all Rhaegar! I am the queen, the one who has always taken care of Viserys."

Munkun remained silent, not wanting to offend her.

"Listen to me, Maester Munkun."

Alicent calmed down and smiled, "You are a learned man with a wealth of knowledge. I believe you have the talent to rival Orwyle, but you just lack the opportunity to show it."

Munkun was surprised and refused, saying, "Your Grace, I don't think I'm smarter than anyone else. I just put extra effort to learn."

Alicent frowned.

Unexpectedly, Munkun changed the subject: "Of course, I don't think anyone is smarter than me, and knowledge is not a tool for comparison."

His words were humble and arrogant, and they also had a strong philosophical flavor.

"He's smooth-talking, no wonder Viserys likes him," thought Alicent to herself.

The two negotiated for a while, though no one knew what was said.

In the end, Alicent left satisfied.

...

2:00 p.m.

The Small Council was convened again, initiated by Alicent in her capacity as Queen.

In the council chamber, the elderly Lord Beesbury was the last to arrive. The first thing his dimmed eyes saw was Alicent sitting in the main seat. He frowned but did not speak out against her because of her status as queen.

The King and the heir prince were absent, so the Hand of the King should have taken the king's place. Linman turned his head and found Lyonel, his face dark and tense, sitting in the lower right corner of the main seat. Lyonel was already heavysset, and when he got angry, his whole face puffed up like a bear.

"Something's happened," Linman thought immediately.

After a moment's thought, Linman slowly walked to his seat and said with a smile, "People get drowsy at noon when they get older. Don't blame me."

Alicent leaned back in her chair and made a tolerant gesture: "It's okay. You are the pillars of the kingdom. I hope I didn't disturb your sleep."

"Oh, Your Grace is so understanding," Linman replied, sitting down in his seat.

With his arrival, the advisers of the Small Council placed their stone balls into the slots, and the council meeting officially began.

There was a strange and quiet atmosphere in the hall for a few seconds. Linman looked around, paying particular attention to the queen, the Hand of the King, and the Master of Whisperers, trying to read something in their expressions.

Tormund had changed his usual friendly smile, his eyes narrowed and his hands interlocked in his sleeves. The black and white robe hung from his shoulders like a pendant, and he turned his head to look at those present. Linman immediately guessed that the heir prince was involved.

In the high-pressure atmosphere, the sound of a pin dropping could be heard in the hall. Alicent looked around and tried to break the tension. Before she could say anything, she was interrupted.

Lyonel frowned and said solemnly, "The heir prince is visiting Oldtown, and the Starry Sept and Citadel should receive him with the highest level of hospitality. It is best not to mention things that are just hearsay."

"Lord Lyonel, how can something that has attracted so much attention be without foundation?" Alicent frowned and said, "Rhaegar used the pretext of supporting Oldtown to damage the High Tower with his dragon."

She paused, impatiently adding, "Of course, this could have been an accident, and Lord Ormund may not want to pursue it."

"But!" Alicent looked around and said seriously, "Rhaegar used his dragons to force the Starry Sept to break the peace treaty signed between His Grace the King and the Faith of the Seven for his own selfish gain."

The Old King and the Seven Gods were the pillars that had supported her rise to power. She could not tolerate anyone trying to destroy both.

Lyonel said, "This is unfounded. The Starry Sept has not issued any news, and it is the High Septon who has been negligent in his treatment of Prince Rhaegar."

Alicent almost laughed in anger, thinking that Lyonel would defend Rhaegar no matter what. Knowing that she could not reason with the stubborn Hand of the King, she turned her attention to Lord Beesbury.

"Lord Beesbury, you are the Lord of Honeyholt and a nobleman of The Reach. You should understand the importance of the Faith of the Seven, shouldn't you?" she asked. It seemed like a question, but it was actually full of threats.

Lord Beesbury, wary and cautious, pretended to be ignorant: "I am old and don't know much. The heir prince's visit to the Starry Sept is a good thing in any case."

Alicent was furious and said excitedly, "Rhaegar wants to break the peace treaty. He threatened the church with his dragons and forced the High Septon to go into seclusion."

Upon hearing this, Linman thought for a moment and said, "Your Grace, why don't you just tell us what you want or what the solution is."

Bang!

Alicent had been waiting for this moment and slammed her hand down on the table: "I demand that the Iron Throne reprimand Rhaegar for his bad behavior, and if necessary, recall him to King's Landing!"

"That's impossible," Lyonel was the first to object, retorting, "The Prince is on the front lines of the conquest of Dorne. No one can stop this but the King."

"Then let him leave Oldtown and give up his delusions of violating the peace treaty!" Alicent's eyes widened, and she shouted back without flinching.

Chapter 460: The Realm's Delight

The bickering in the council hall could be heard halfway up the Red Keep. The servants kept their heads down, silently going about their tasks. The marble floor was polished until it shone.

...

The Princess's Bedroom.

Rhaenyra was taking a nap and heard a murmur outside the door. First, she frowned, then opened her eyes, blinking in confusion.

"Sara, what's going on?" Rhaenyra struggled to sit up, her voice hoarse and soft.

Creak.

At the sound of her voice, the door was pushed open. Sara, with no expression on her face, came quickly to help, worried. "Watch your stomach. The Maester said not to push it."

"I will." Rhaenyra smiled and stroked her belly through her nightgown. She was eight months pregnant and her belly was quite impressive.

Sara was worried that she wasn't taking it seriously, so she advised, "The Maester said to eat less and walk more. Twins are not born easily."

With one baby in one womb and one in the other, there are still cases of difficult births. With two babies in one womb, the risk increases exponentially. According to the Maester, starving the babies a little would reduce the chance of a difficult birth.

"Don't always listen to what the Maester says." Rhaenyra looked distressed. "I walk around a lot, but I'm really hungry. I've never been that hungry since I was a child."

Sara sighed. "As you wish."

Rhaenyra took her hand and gave her a sweet smile. "Don't be angry. What's going on outside?"

After all the years they had spent together, she still had a lot of affection for her servant-friend who protected her.

Sara told her the truth. "The Queen has called a Small Council to impeach Prince Rhaegar..." She rambled on, telling Rhaenyra all the information she had gathered.

Rhaenyra was shocked and couldn't believe her ears. "Did Alicent ask about the Faith of the Seven because she wants to recall Rhaegar?"

She was afraid Alicent was crazy!

Since the succession of Aerys I, the Faith of the Seven has been openly and secretly opposing the Iron Throne and restricting the rights that the House Targaryen should have. Aegon and Rhaena, the children of Aerys I, followed the family tradition and were almost beaten to death in the streets by the nobles and commoners incited by the High Septon.

When Jaehaerys, their great-grandfather, came to power, he was forced to sign a peace treaty with the Faith of the Seven in exchange for peace. The unspoken rules of those terms were almost enough to make the Targaryens abandon their ancient Valyrian traditions and assimilate into Westeros.

Sara simply said, "The Queen accused the Prince of selfishness."

"Bastard!" Rhaenyra cursed under her breath, her anger boiling over. She knew who was selfish.

She gritted her teeth and got up from the bed. "Help me get dressed."

She was the Princess of Dragonstone, and the Small Council could not bypass her. Rhaegar may have had selfish motives, but the purpose of suppressing the Faith of the Seven was more than just a trivial joke. As long as the Faith of the Seven defied the crown, the Targaryens would be constrained. Rhaegar had conquered the Triarchy and Dorne, and he had finally gained the opportunity he had been waiting for.

Sara helped her out of bed and quickly fetched a long, sleeveless dress. She said casually, "You don't need to show your face. It will disturb the baby."

"I'm Rhaegar's sister!" Rhaenyra retorted. "Alicent is a foolish woman. Only I can keep her in check in King's Landing. She won't be able to cause any trouble for my brother."

After getting dressed, she was ready to go out. As she was about to step out of the bedroom, she caught a glimpse of a sword hanging on the wall. There, hanging on the wall, was a delicate one-handed sword. A Valyrian steel sword—The Realm's Delight.

Rhaenyra's eyes narrowed, and she turned back with her pregnant belly, taking down the exclusive house sword from the wall.

Swish!

The blade of the sword was unsheathed, and the silver-white blade reflected the refracted light of the water ripples. The hilt was in the shape of a cross, with a brilliant sun and a full moon engraved on the front and back, respectively.

Pat-ta-ta.

Rhaenyra was satisfied and swung her hand to put the sword back in its sheath. She turned around and strode out of the door. The sword had not yet seen blood.

If Alicent dares to make a fuss, Rhaegar may be unable to kill her. But as his sister, she will let that evil stepmother see if The Realm's Delight is as good as it is made out to be.

...

The Council Hall.

Rhaenyra entered with a determined look and a threatening air about her.

The two Kingsguard at the door hesitated, unsure if they should stop the princess. They glanced at each other in confusion until Rhaenyra's fierce glare caused them to bow their heads and step aside.

Meanwhile, a heated argument raged inside.

Alicent, no longer calm, rose from her chair, her voice raised, "I will not allow anyone to disrupt the harmonious relationship between the royal family and the Faith of the Seven. If Viserys were sober, he would never allow it!"

As his wife for many years, she knew Viserys well. A man who often sought lessons from history books, he was cautious. The ancient Valyrians had used dragons to conquer the world but were ultimately destroyed by a cataclysmic disaster. After losing Balerion, Viserys had grown wary of dragons and resisted using them to disrupt peace.

Maegor I's brutal attacks on the Faith of the Seven had left a dark legacy. Viserys followed his grandfather Jaehaerys' political path, maintaining good relations with the Faith of the Seven and often granting their requests. Alicent was confident that her husband would support her stance.

"Gulp..."

She raised the wine goblet to her lips and took a sip, unconsciously trying to cover her inexplicable guilt. Viserys would support her. They were husband and wife. Though she had asked Maester Munkun to give her sleeping husband some milk of the poppy, it wasn't because she feared he would wake up and oppose her.

That dim-witted husband who favored their eldest son. Alicent clenched her teeth, her fingers going white with tension.

Bang!

The hall door was abruptly pushed open. Alicent was startled and looked up.

The two Kingsguard, who had been bribed by Alicent, opened the door quickly and forcefully with their heads bowed. Alicent was stunned, unable to react.

"Alicent, you have no right to represent my father!" Rhaenyra declared, her head held high as she entered the hall with great momentum. Her appearance shocked everyone.

Tormund and Orwyle stood up at once, greeting her in unison, "Princess."

They were the two advisers Rhaegar had helped to rise to power, so they quickly responded to Rhaenyra's entrance. The queen's position was powerful, so there was no point in arguing, but now, the Princess had arrived, and the balance of power had shifted.

Rhaenyra graciously waved the two men to sit down and walked straight to her former friend, demanding, "Why wasn't I informed of the Small Council meeting?"

"Rhaenyra, you..." Alicent stammered, looking her up and down.

Rhaenyra's long, silky, silver-blond hair was loose and unkempt. Her beautiful face was free of makeup, and she wore no other jewelry. It was obvious she had rushed over. She held a silver sword in one hand and her big belly in the other.

Alicent's pupils constricted, and she exclaimed in alarm, "Rhaenyra, you're a pregnant woman, about to give birth, and you're running around with a weapon? Have you forgotten all about your noble upbringing!?"

This was a stereotype of Westeros. Noble girls were expected to receive a lady's education, learn to spin and weave, and be taught to read and count. Girls were not allowed to hold swords, and their most powerful influence was limited to managing the household affairs of their husbands' castles.

Rhaenyra had served as the king's wine steward and learned to govern at the Small Council, all out of special favor as the heir to the Iron Throne.

"I don't want to discuss trivial matters. Answer my questions!"

Rhaenyra slammed her sword down on the table, the sound echoing through the room. Then she calmly sat down in Rhaegar's former place, her voice steady and stern. "What authority do you have to bypass the Small Council and convoke it in my place? By what right do you accuse the heir to the throne?"

Her words were sharp, her accusations precise.

Alicent, taken aback by Rhaenyra's boldness, struggled to find a rebuttal.

By the laws of the realm,

The Queen has no right to assume the role of regent or to accuse the heir prince without a cause.

Conversely, Rhaenyra, as the Princess of Dragonstone, retains her right to participate in the Small Council despite her altered succession status.

Alicent, trembling with anger, whispered through clenched teeth, "Rhaenyra, the Maester said you are in labor. You should return to your chambers and rest."

The complications of carrying twins differ greatly from a normal pregnancy.

Ignoring Alicent's concerns, Rhaenyra retorted sharply, "The peace treaty signed by my great-grandfather was intended to quell rebellion, not to elevate the Faith of the Seven above the king. As Queen, it is your duty to remain rational."

The room fell silent, shocked by her open defiance of both the queen and the Faith of the Seven, sentiments many had secretly harbored.

Alicent, near a breaking point, shouted toward the doorway, "Kingsguard, the Princess is pregnant. Escort her to her quarters!"

Prepared for opposition, Alicent had already stationed guards nearby.

Two Kingsguard stood at the ready, and at her command, they entered with heads held high, though visibly uneasy.

Rhaenyra's glare bore into them.

Ser Rickard Thorne of House Thorne in the Crownlands, a lesser noble's second son.

And Ser Willis Fell of House Fell in the Stormlands, from an unimportant branch of the family.

The brothers Erryk and Arryk, protectors of the king, were still recovering from their injuries.

Cole had returned to the Kingsguard but he's in Dorne.

Loyalists Lorent and Steffon vigilantly guarded the royal chambers.

Rhaenyra, confident no one would dare defy her, commanded, "Leave the Council Hall, Sers. I will overlook this breach of protocol."

The two Kingsguard exchanged glances before responding in unison, "The King has instructed us to protect the Queen. Forgive us, Princess."

Rhaenyra's expression hardened.

Alicent sneered, "Save your breath. They know their allegiance lies with the true mistress of the Red Keep. Now, tend to your condition."

"Utter nonsense!" Rhaenyra snapped, her temper flaring.

Stunned, Alicent briefly wondered if she had misheard.

Rhaenyra, ignoring further provocations, signaled to Tormund across the table.

She had previously secured the loyalty of two Kingsguard under the guise of friendship.

With the City Watch, the Dragonpit Knights, and the Kingsguard under her sway, she commanded significant power—even in Rhaegar's absence.

Tormund caught her glance and nodded silently.

Outside, a white falcon soared from the hall, a signal understood by all.

Alicent, aware of the Skinchangers' mysterious ways, ordered hastily, "Secure the Princess immediately and do not disrupt the Small Council further."

Exhausted by the ongoing resistance, she hoped to seize the moment to solidify her sons' claim to the throne while King Viserys slumbered, unaware of the unfolding chaos.

The two conflicted Kingsguard advanced, murmuring regretfully, "Princess, please make this easy for us."

Despite their remorse, they were compelled by duty.

The Kingsguard, a revered order, often found redemption unless charged with treason.

Rhaenyra remained seated, defiantly pushing The Realm's Delight across the table, and asked calmly, "Do you truly dare?"

The two hesitated, turning to the Queen for guidance.

Alicent, anxious, covered her face with one hand while gesturing with the other, "Just don't hurt her."

As they reached out, the atmosphere tensed, the implications of their actions dawning on everyone present.

Rhaenyra recoiled instinctively, her dignity affronted.

If the Kingsguard forcibly removed a Princess from the Council Hall, it would scandalize the realm for decades.

Just as Rhaenyra prepared to lash out, a frail voice pierced the tense silence from outside, "Insolent! Leave her alone!"