

G.O Thrones 461

Chapter 461: Alicent Suffers a Sword Cut

A familiar voice echoed through the hall, causing the two Kingsguard and Alicent to freeze.

Rhaenyra turned quickly to the source of the sound.

In the long corridor leading to the council chamber, a slightly stooped figure approached.

"Father."

Rhaenyra's face was a mask of surprise, wondering how her father had awakened.

"Leave us. Didn't you hear me?"

Viserys, pale but determined, wore the crown of authority.

Alicent, caught off guard, stammered, "Viserys, why are you here?"

Realizing her mistake, she quickly fell silent.

Several figures gathered behind Viserys.

Lorent and Steffon, members of the Kingsguard, glared at the two brothers in the hall.

Maester Munkun, who had been bribed, stood with a calm expression.

Alicent's personal maid, Tera, stood with her head bowed, avoiding eye contact.

Understanding dawned on Alicent.

Maester Munkun spoke, his tone measured, "I am sorry, but every Maester must uphold justice or he is unworthy to serve the realm."

He could not betray his conscience, especially after the king had treated him so well.

Tera, the White Worm's secret agent and later joined as a member of the Master of Whisperers birds, trembled in the background.

'I'm sorry, I have always been an undercover agent.'

Viserys surveyed the room and waved his hand dismissively, "Take these traitors who dared to threaten my daughter."

"Yes, Your Grace!"

Lorent and Steffon quickly moved to disarm and capture the two Kingsguard brothers, who did not resist.

Clang!

The situation intensified as a deputy commander of the royal guard led his team into the corridor, weapons at the ready.

Seeing the king, the young commander hesitated, "Your Grace, the Red Keep is on lockdown. Please give your orders."

Viserys, startled, looked at Rhaenyra seated in the chair.

With unwavering confidence, Rhaenyra commanded, "Guard the corridor and remain on standby."

"Yes!"

The deputy commander responded, leading his team to secure the corridor exit.

The tension in the room eased slightly as everyone began to grasp the unfolding events.

Alicent was the first to react, rushing to her husband, her voice frantic, "Viserys, listen to me. Rhaegar tried to—"

"Silence!"

Viserys's face darkened, his voice thunderous.

Alicent froze, mere steps from her husband, unable to move closer.

Rhaenyra seized the moment, pushing The Realm's Delight away.

Today, Alicent would face the consequences of her actions.

As Viserys's shouting subsided, he began to pant, clearly exhausted.

Maester Munkun had not administered any milk of the poppy, instead awakening Viserys from his coma.

His prolonged bedridden state had weakened him significantly.

"Viserys..."

Alicent, tears streaming, stood paralyzed with guilt.

"I said shut up."

Viserys's gaze was sorrowful as he looked at his wife. "Alicent, I never thought you could be so foolish."

Alicent shook her head, feeling as if the ground had given way beneath her.

"Don't bother arguing. I know everything."

Viserys's voice was heavy with disappointment. "You are my wife, yet you treat the children so harshly. You couldn't wait to tear our family apart before my death!?"

His breathing grew erratic, and he began to cough.

He couldn't fathom how much chaos had erupted during the two months he had been unconscious.

Viserys was well aware of the strained relationship between Alicent and his eldest son and daughter. Before his marriage to Alicent, she and Rhaenyra had been inseparable, sharing everything as best friends.

The marriage changed everything, with Rhaenyra feeling deeply betrayed. The threat posed by Alicent's children to the succession led to the formation of the rival factions known as the Blacks and Greens.

Fortunately, his eldest son, wise and capable, managed to keep his younger siblings in line, and they all went to war together. Viserys had cherished the times spent with his children, riding dragons on the battlefields of Dorne.

Despite a near assassination, his passion for dragon riding remained undiminished. He was especially impressed with Aemond, who was determined to protect him, and felt immense pride in his eldest son and second daughter's timely arrival.

The arrival of the seven Targaryen dragon riders at Dorne was a significant honor for the realm.

As these thoughts swirled in his mind, Viserys' gaze hardened and he spoke in a low, authoritative voice, "Alicent, you've overstepped your bounds! You should never have interfered with the Small Council while I was incapacitated."

He recalled how Alicent had ignored the dignity of his eldest son and openly threatened his eldest daughter in front of the royal advisers. If he hadn't awakened in time, Rhaenyra wouldn't have had control of the Kingsguard. What would have happened to his poor pregnant daughter?

Alicent, unable to contain her frustration, shouted hoarsely, "Viserys, I'm sick of your favoritism! Rhaegar wants to tear up the peace treaty between His Grace the Old King and the Faith of the Seven. Do you even understand the implications, or are you just pretending to be ignorant? The Faith of the Seven nearly toppled Targaryen rule, and you were the one who reversed the tide. Breaking the treaty is courting disaster."

Pop!

Viserys, enraged, slapped her across the face. "Who do you think you are? House Hightower taught you nothing about power struggles. You think you know everything, but you're no better than a country bumpkin!"

Alicent, stunned and devastated, retorted, "Don't you believe in the Seven Gods? Why do you pray to them every night? You invoke Queen Aemma's name to bless your children!"

"Alicent!" Viserys's eyes turned red at the mention of his late wife Aemma.

But someone was even angrier than he was.

"Alicent, don't you dare mention my mother's name!" Rhaenyra stood up, gripping her sword tightly, and charged at Alicent.

Alicent, seemingly mad, paid no heed to the reactions of father and daughter, crying out, "What's wrong with mentioning it? When he was in bed with me, he called out the names of other women. Am I guilty for that?"

Since marrying Viserys, Alicent had felt like a living ghost. Used by her father, unloved by her husband, and with children she deemed useless, she was consumed by despair. Who could understand her needs, or truly love her?

"You are a shameless slut, seducing your best friend's father and stealing your children's birthright!" Rhaenyra's fury was palpable as she drew *The Realm's Delight*.

Viserys, shocked and weakened, tried to call out to the Kingsguard to stop her.

"I gave up the throne to Rhaegar long ago. You forced me into this! You wouldn't even let me have a place to live!" Alicent, unafraid, revealed the depths of her suffering.

Seeing her old friend approach, she became even angrier, advancing without fear. She was the queen, and she demanded respect.

"Bitch, go to hell!" Rhaenyra screamed, her eyes blazing with hatred.

In a split second before the Kingsguard lunged, Rhaenyra swung her one-handed sword.

"Ah!"

Alicent, instinctively raising her hand to block, was struck with a terrifying realization as the blade descended.

Sizzling—

The blade sliced through skin, and blood splattered everywhere.

"Alicent!"

Viserys's eyes widened, his heart skipping a beat.

He saw Alicent raising her hands in front of her face, the sword slashing diagonally across her arms. The green sleeve with gold thread was torn, instantly soaked in blood.

A gruesome gash ran from her left wrist to her right elbow, an 18-inch wound. Her pale skin was a mess, flesh splayed open like petals, revealing the white bones of her forearm.

"Ah!"

Alicent let out a piercing cry, collapsing to the ground, unable to stand. Her noble green dress was stained with blood, and she trembled uncontrollably.

The pain was excruciating, as if her arms were on fire and being rubbed with hot salt. She wished she could sever them to end the agony.

Rhaenyra seemed to sense Alicent's thoughts, raising her sword again with a fierce gaze. "Alicent, you are a scourge!"

She swung again, aiming for Alicent's head, but was blocked just in time.

Unfortunately, she had lost her initial advantage.

The nearest Kingsguard, Steffon, leapt forward, grabbed the sword, and disarmed the Princess with a swift motion.

Viserys shouted, "Rhaenyra, you're mad!"

Rhaenyra dropped the sword, standing in a daze, her mind blank. Looking down at Alicent, who had fainted, she was momentarily disoriented.

Viserys's body shook, his head seeming to explode. "If you killed Alicent, what will your brothers and sisters think of you and Rhaegar?!"

The delicate balance between the families could easily lead to tragedy if upset.

Rhaenyra, forehead slick with cold sweat, knew the danger she was in but insisted, "If we don't eliminate her, the royal family will fall to the Hightowers sooner or later."

"Rhaenyra, my firstborn," Viserys said, his voice uncharacteristically serious. He looked between Alicent's unconscious form and his daughter. "You and Rhaegar must not be tainted by Alicent's blood."

Rhaenyra glanced at the onlookers, then avoided her father's gaze.

Viserys sighed deeply. "Leave her to me, and I promise she won't affect you and Rhaegar anymore."

"What will you do with her?" Rhaenyra asked, not convinced.

"First, she will be confined to the temple," Viserys said. "When Rhaegar returns, we'll decide her fate together."

Rhaenyra was silent. This outcome was far from satisfying.

Viserys took The Realm's Delight from Ser Steffon and handed it to his daughter, his expression conflicted. "You're pregnant. Leave the rest to your father."

He knew the family issues could no longer be ignored. The long-simmering tensions had erupted with the conflict between the two women.

Rhaenyra hesitated, then touched her pregnant belly with her left hand. Resolutely, she took the sword and walked out.

"Rhaenyra," Viserys called after her, unable to find words of comfort.

His eyes fell on the unconscious Alicent. Her arms exposed, a pool of blood beneath her, she looked pale as a corpse. Her hair was disheveled, and she was covered in wounds, no longer resembling a queen.

"How could you be so foolish?" Viserys muttered vacantly, repeating the phrase as he signaled the Kingsguard to take her away.

Finally, he said, "Lock her in the tower of the cathedral and allow no visitors except to deliver food and water."

Lyonel hesitated, then pointed at the two Kingsguard who had accepted bribes. "Your Grace, these two knights should be detained for trial."

Viserys, seemingly indifferent, replied, "No trial is needed. Return their bodies to their families for burial."

With a single sentence, he sealed their fate.

"Your Grace..."

The two Kingsguard hurriedly knelt, desperate for the king's mercy.

Bang! Bang!

Lorent and Steffon delivered swift kicks and punches, dragging the disgraced knights away with force.

A breach of principle could not be forgiven.

Viserys glanced at his royal advisers one last time, thinking of their role in safeguarding the kingdom during his absence. Forcing a smile, he said, "Everyone, disperse."

As he turned to leave, he felt a sudden dizziness and fell backward.

"Your Grace!"

Maester Munkun reacted quickly, catching the king before he could hit the ground.

Lyonel and the others rushed over, the scene immediately descending into chaos.

"Your Grace... Your Grace..."

"Send a letter to Oldtown and recall the heir prince immediately!"

"..."

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Meanwhile,

Rhaenyra returned to her chambers, cradling her stomach.

"Princess..."

In the bedroom, her foster daughters, Baela and Rhaena, were crouching by the door and greeted her anxiously.

"You're here."

Rhaenyra closed the door behind her, leaning against the door frame for support. She reached into the long hem of her skirt with her right hand.

At first, she felt nothing.

Then a cool hand met a warm, wet sensation between her legs.

When she looked at her hand, she saw blood.

Her distress had triggered the rupture of her water.

"Princess?"

The twins, alarmed at the sight of blood, immediately surrounded her.

"It's nothing. I'm going into labor."

Rhaenyra forced a wry smile, looking at Baela first. "Go tell Grand Maester Orwyle I'm in labor."

"Okay!"

Baela nodded repeatedly.

Rhaenyra then turned to the shy Rhaena and spoke softly, "Go to the Master of Whisperers and ask him to send a letter to your mother, telling her to ride Vhagar to King's Landing."

Having Laena by her side would bring her comfort.

"Mm-hmm!"

Rhaena nodded eagerly.

"Good girl." Rhaenyra felt a wave of relief and moved to the bed.

The twins quickly opened the door and rushed out.

As soon as Rhaenyra sat down on the bed, she looked up to see Sara standing at the door.

Sara's face was solemn, but she nodded reassuringly.

Rhaenyra smiled, her heart finally at peace.

The twins were quick at their tasks.

In less than half an hour, Orwyle arrived with the midwife and the maid, practically flying through the halls.

The king had Maester Munkun with him, so Orwyle had to hurry to the Princess.

Bang!

The door closed and the maids helped Rhaenyra lie down.

Rhaenyra's eyes were tightly shut, fear gripping her heart.

She suddenly regretted not agreeing to Alicent's plan to summon Rhaegar back sooner.

And she regretted not killing Alicent when she had the chance.

She feared she wouldn't survive the birthing bed, wouldn't see Rhaegar again, let alone deal with Alicent.

"Mother, please keep me and my child safe."

Rhaenyra prayed silently, and then the pain hit her.

The next second, her screams of childbirth echoed throughout the Red Keep.

Chapter 463: Sealord's Sacrifice, Young Dragon's Hatching

Upon hearing the newborns' cries, the servants of the Red Keep breathed a collective sigh of relief. No matter their duties, they paused to join their hands in a sincere wish for the well-being of the children.

Princess Rhaenyra, beloved since her childhood and known as "The Realm's Delight," along with her brother Rhaegar, who had cleaned the streets of King's Landing, mobilized the homeless to cultivate wastelands, and provided shelters for orphans, were held in high regard. Their deeds had earned them the affection and praise of the people.

The birth of Rhaenyra's children was not merely a familial joy but a momentous occasion celebrated by all, seen as the continuation of a noble lineage deserving the attention of both old and new gods.

In the princess's bedroom, Rhaenyra lay on the bed, her complexion pale and her eyes reflecting a mix of confusion and awe as she embraced her new role as a mother. The pain of labor receded as she eagerly looked to see the infants she had just brought into the world. She remembered the stories Rhaegar told her about infants being switched at birth, and she was determined not to let such a fate befall her children.

"Don't worry, your children are right here," Laena reassured her, wiping the sweat from Rhaenyra's forehead with a gentle touch.

Meanwhile, Grand Maester Orwyle efficiently performed the necessary post-birth procedures. He swiftly cut the umbilical cords and secured them with knots. Rhaenyra watched anxiously, her throat hoarse from exertion but her mind somewhat eased by Laena's reassurances.

The midwife carefully washed the newborns in warm water, inspecting them thoroughly before finally handing them to Rhaenyra. "The arms are normal, the legs are normal," she reported, confirming their health.

Rhaenyra's face lit up with joy as she held her children for the first time. "Praise the Mother, they are lively children," she exclaimed, her laughter filling the room. Holding one baby in each arm, she looked to Laena, her expression one of both pride and relief. "They are healthy children, right?"

"Absolutely!" Laena responded, her smile broad as she brushed away a silver strand of hair from Rhaenyra's forehead.

Rhaenyra couldn't contain her laughter as she opened the swaddling clothes to better view her sons. The infant in her left arm wriggled, his tiny hands reaching out as if to grasp the world, while the one in her right lay quiet but alert.

"Why are they so pale?" Rhaenyra wondered aloud, gently stroking the silvery-gold fuzz atop their heads.

"They are certainly your children!" the midwife chimed in, her voice warm and cheerful. "I've never seen such fair babies at birth. They're absolutely adorable."

Unlike the typical newborn's red and wrinkled appearance, Rhaenyra's twins were surprisingly pristine and rosy.

"Pop! Pop!"

Rhaenyra gazed lovingly at her newborns, kissing each on the cheek.

The two infants remained calm, nestled in their mother's arms, absorbing her warmth.

Laena watched with a mixture of envy and admiration. "Rhaenyra, you truly have two wonderful children," she whispered.

Rhaenyra's smile widened as she inhaled the sweet scent of the newborns. "Rhaegar will be overjoyed when he sees them."

"Roar..."

A loud dragon roar suddenly echoed from the balcony, followed by a thud and the smell of something burning.

"Rhaegar!?" Rhaenyra turned swiftly, eager to see her beloved.

She saw a yellow-orange dragon head peering through the window, its large, round eyes fixed on her.

Laena, momentarily stunned, then chuckled. "It seems someone's dragon is very responsible."

Syrax crouched at the window, wings raised to block the sunlight, hind legs planted firmly on the balcony, resembling a giant yellow lizard clinging to the wall.

"Roar..."

The dragon's vertical pupils dilated with excitement as it spotted its rider and let out a joyous roar.

Syrax lived in the backyard of the Godswood and had sensed Rhaenyra's emotional turmoil during childbirth and rushed to her aid.

Rhaenyra sighed, looking fondly at her dragon. "Good girl, I'm a mother now. Go rest."

Although it wasn't Rhaegar, Syrax's presence brought her immense comfort. The dragon had been her loyal companion since childhood.

"Roar..."

Syrax blinked with an almost comical understanding before flapping back to the garden.

Laena hugged her friend gently. "Lord Lyonel has sent a letter to recall Rhaegar. You'll see him soon."

"Mm."

Rhaenyra nodded, leaning into Laena's embrace, closing her eyes in exhaustion.

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Meanwhile, Rhaegar was flying back at breakneck speed.

"Roar!"

The Cannibal soared through the skies, crossing the Mander River basin without slowing.

Rhaegar leaned against the dragon's back to reduce wind resistance, his eyes fixed ahead.

He guessed that Rhaenyra had given birth and was racing back to her side.

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Late at night, beyond the Narrow Sea in Braavos, a clandestine operation was underway. A small group of men discreetly transported wooden barrels deep into the underground corridors of a remote harbor, the bottom of the carts cushioned with soft sand to muffle their passage. These barrels, filled with rare and potent wildfire, emitted a strong, pungent odor that hung heavy in the air.

Soon, a carriage approached slowly, and a tall figure with silver curls stepped out, cursing under his breath. "Damn the management of the Iron Bank. Without sufficient funds, how can I compete with the Iron Throne?" he grumbled. The moonlight revealed his face—the Sealord of Braavos, Ferrego.

Accompanied by a handsome swordsman, always at his side, Ferrego's bloodshot eyes and impatient expression betrayed his tension. "Have you arranged for the pyromancers and bloodmages?" he demanded.

"All are involved in the plan," the swordsman replied in a low voice.

"Good!" Ferrego's mood shifted to excitement. "This is our last chance. Everything depends on tonight!"

For half a year, Ferrego had meticulously planned the incubation of a dragon egg, and now, at last, the moment had arrived. He entered the underground palace, followed closely by his loyal knight. As the heavy doors closed behind them, sealing in the guards with the wildfire, Ferrego vowed to keep the operation a secret, not even confiding in his wives and concubines.

Thus began the long-awaited sacrificial ceremony. Time ticked by slowly.

Outside the harbor, a carriage stopped on a purple bridge, far from the port. A curtain lifted to reveal a young man with purple curls and mismatched eyes—one yellow, one green—peering shrewdly at

the hidden entrance to the underground palace. "What is Ferrego up to? He's so secretive," he mused.

The young man, Sparda, was a representative of the powerful families behind the Iron Bank. Since Ferrego's election as Sealord, his failures had only fueled their dissatisfaction and disgust.

"Let's wait and see," Sparda muttered, settling back in his carriage, waiting for Ferrego to falter.

Midnight descended, and Braavos lay in near-total darkness, the quiet punctuated only by the distant sounds of the city's nightlife. Suddenly, a deafening explosion shattered the silence. The ground shook, and the granite walls of the underground palace cracked.

A second blast followed, and then a third. Greenish fire erupted like a volcanic inferno, lighting up the night sky. The harbor quaked as explosions continued, the earth collapsing beneath the force.

Sparda, jolted awake by the noise, lifted the curtain just in time to see a torrent of foul-smelling heat rushing towards him. The carriage and horses were thrown back, nearly toppling off the bridge as the horses screamed in agony. Sparda felt a burning heat on his face before losing consciousness.

The underground palace collapsed entirely, the wildfire's relentless eruption consuming everything in its path. Braavos, plunged into chaos, was illuminated by an eerie, bright green fire that burned with an insatiable hunger, devouring all in its wake.

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The next day dawned, still cloaked in darkness. The fire had consumed everything, leaving the harbor in smoldering ruins. Broken limbs and charred corpses littered the landscape, a grim testament to the night's devastation. The entire population of Braavos had not slept, huddling in their homes, gripped by fear of the rumored Deathwing attack.

Deep within what remained of the underground palace, now a pile of rubble, a massive dragonbone lay in the dust, its impressive length undeniable even without its skull. Surrounding the skeleton were the charred bodies of those whom Ferrego had hired to hatch the dragon eggs. Ferrego had misunderstood the alchemist's instructions, using wildfire to incubate the eggs—a fatal error that cost him his life.

Suddenly, a crisp sound broke the silence. Beneath the bones, three oval dragon eggs, buried in ashes, began to shake as if drawn by an unseen force. Cracks appeared in their shells.

Click! The middle egg broke open, revealing a small black dragon head. The dragon, its head no larger than a fist, looked around curiously, the charred shell still clinging to its top.

Click! Click! Two more cracking sounds followed, and the remaining eggs split open. Two small creatures, each the size of domestic cats, emerged. One was completely red with slightly gray wing membranes that it tried to spread. The other had blue scales with deep stripes, its back scales and wing membranes tinged with light red.

A faint hissing sound came from the black dragon still partially stuck in its shell. It was the first to hiss, biting through the remaining shell to reveal its entire body. Its black scales were highlighted with red on its back and wings, and its head bore small horns and lively amber pupils.

As the sun began to rise, a rooster crowed. The black dragon, startled by the sound, flapped its wings in panic and burst out of the cramped ruins. Its siblings, the red and blue dragons, followed

suit, imitating their brother with shrill cries. Though they struggled to fly and couldn't yet breathe Dragonfire, they managed to stabilize themselves in the air.

The black dragon, driven by instinct, resisted the ruins of its birth and flew toward the sea. The other two dragons hesitated, snorting at each other in defiance before choosing their own paths. The red dragon, wild and unruly, headed east towards the rising sun, flying along a deserted ditch. The blue dragon, timid by nature, spotted a field and flew south.

Had anyone been there to witness, they would have noted the significance of the dragons' chosen directions. The black dragon, repelled by the rooster's crow and the island beneath, fled west, opposite the rising sun. Across the Narrow Sea lay Westeros, the fabled Western Continent.

Chapter 464: Family Reunion

Dragonstone Island, across the sea.

"Roar!"

Cannibal lay panting before the stone drum tower, its chest heaving from the exertion of a night-long flight from Oldtown to Dragonstone.

Inside the stone drum tower, a figure hurried out. "Cannibal, let's go," Rhaegar called, his face beaming with excitement as he cradled two dragon eggs in his arms—one bronze, the other dark green. These were precious relics from the ruins of the Dragonlords families, intended for the children's cradle.

Cannibal's deep, green eyes flickered as it spread its wings and prepared for flight. Rhaegar mounted the dragon, securing the eggs against his chest. With a powerful whoosh, the dragon's jet-black wings unfurled, and they soared into the sky.

Rhaegar's smile never wavered as they left Dragonstone behind, heading toward King's Landing. Soon, they entered the Blackwater Bay area. Suddenly, the sea below began to churn subtly, and the atmosphere seemed to shift.

"Hmm?" Rhaegar glanced around, sensing something amiss.

"Roar!" The Cannibal's heightened senses had detected it first. The dragon turned its neck, eyes fixed on the northeast corner of the Narrow Sea, toward the Shivering Sea.

Rhaegar followed the dragon's gaze. In that direction lay Claw Isle and Gulltown, and further north, White Harbor and the Three Sisters Islands. Across the Narrow Sea was Braavos, one of the Nine Free Cities.

"Roar!" Cannibal let out a hoarse growl, dragon saliva dripping from its mouth. Rhaegar shuddered, a flicker of doubt in his eyes. Since his transformation into a Dragonborn, his sensitivity to magic had intensified.

The steady tide of magic had stirred, as if a pebble had been thrown into still waters. This subtle shift, imperceptible to normal people or even pyromancers, was as clear to Rhaegar as a fly buzzing past his face or a drop of water landing on his ear.

"Cannibal, you sense it too, don't you?" Rhaegar patted the dragon's back, his thoughts drifting. Since the appearance of the Red Comet, the tide of magic had been rising, revitalizing both dragons

and dragonlords. This resurgence was like a nourishing mother's milk to a baby, creating an environment of comfort and growth.

The sudden tremor in the magical tide unsettled him.

"Roar!" The Cannibal's cold, green pupils scanned the horizon, sniffing the air, trying to pinpoint the disturbance.

Rhaegar stroked the dragon egg in his arms, contemplating the possibility. After a moment, he said, "Let's return to King's Landing first. Then we'll investigate around the Shivering Sea." He suspected the source of the magical disturbance was near Braavos. With Dorne conquered and the Oldtown issue settled, Braavos would soon need to account to House Targaryen.

"Roar!" The Cannibal roared, flapping its wings as they flew over Blackwater Bay. As they ascended through the clouds, the dragon cast a final, inquisitive glance back, its green pupils reflecting a deep, unspoken question.

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King's Landing

As dawn broke over King's Landing, the sun rose, casting its first light over the bustling streets of Flea Bottom. The early risers were already out, busy making a living.

Roar!

A black dragon soared into the sky from the Mud Gate, its massive wings blotting out the sun like a dark, ominous cloud. The dragon circled the city before slowly descending into the back garden of the Red Keep.

Maegor's Holdfast, Princess's Bedroom

In the princess's bedroom, Rhaenyra lay on a chaise longue, her eyes tender as she cradled two swaddled babies. Suddenly, the door burst open with a bang.

Rhaegar rushed in, his eyes locking onto Rhaenyra as she hummed a lullaby to soothe the children. The song halted abruptly. Rhaenyra looked up, her eyes lighting up with a radiant smile. Rhaegar stood transfixed, overwhelmed by the sight before him.

Rhaenyra kissed the baby's face and said, "Come on, the children are waiting for you."

Rhaegar snapped back to the present and hurried forward, carefully setting down the dragon eggs he had brought. He approached the recliner and squatted down, his purple eyes wide with emotion as he looked at Rhaenyra and the two tiny faces swaddled in her arms.

"What, don't you have anything to say?" Rhaenyra asked, adjusting herself into a more comfortable position, her smile growing.

"On the contrary, I have so much to say," Rhaegar replied, his voice thick with emotion. He reached out and gently held one of the baby's tiny feet, laughing with pure joy. "Balerion be praised, you really have two babies in your arms."

Rhaegar's expression softened as he felt the delicate life in his hands, his heart melting.

"Do you want to hold them?" Rhaenyra offered a swaddled cloth.

"Of course!" Rhaegar answered immediately. Instead of taking the cloth, he gently embraced Rhaenyra, burying his head in her neck. "Rhaenyra, I'm home," he whispered. He loved children, but he loved the mother of his children even more. Children were an extension of one's emotions, but they could never replace the person in one's heart.

Rhaenyra's eyes softened further as she rubbed her cheek against his head, softly complaining, "You haven't been back for a long time."

Rhaegar tightened his embrace, saying nothing. Since the rebellion in Dorne, it had taken two months just to prepare for Dragon's Wroth. Including the time spent planning, he and Rhaenyra had been apart for four months—the longest separation since he became heir.

"Look up. I don't blame you," Rhaenyra said softly, enjoying the closeness.

Rhaegar obediently looked up and noticed her slightly pale complexion. Concerned, he asked, "Let me guess, something must have happened while I was away from King's Landing, right?"

"You didn't receive a letter from the Hand of the King?"

"Letter?"

Rhaenyra was taken aback. "You really didn't receive a letter? Why did you return to King's Landing?"

Rhaegar replied sincerely, "I felt my child was born last night, and I rode the Cannibal dragon back to King's Landing."

The Cannibal was known for its speed, and the dragon's wings had almost smoked from the journey.

"You're something else," Rhaenyra laughed, skipping over the question. She brought the two swaddled babies closer together and changed the subject: "Come and see, the two babies look exactly like you when you were little."

Rhaegar took the swaddling clothes and observed them closely. He knew better than to spoil the joy of the moment, understanding that sometimes, happiness was best savored without probing too deeply into the worries that could cloud it.

He lifted the swaddling cloths and gazed at the two children intently. They were tiny, their white, delicate arms and chubby legs resembling bamboo stalks, their faces no larger than his palm. One slept soundly, thumb in mouth, while the other, legs exposed, swung his chubby limbs unconsciously—the little feet Rhaegar had just touched.

Entranced by the sight, Rhaegar asked, "They look so similar. Which one is the older brother?"

Rhaenyra gently touched the child sucking his thumb. "This is the older brother. He was born five minutes before his younger brother," she said proudly, her chin lifting slightly.

Rhaegar tried to distinguish between the two. The older brother lay on his left, the younger with the dangling legs on his right. He looked up to see Rhaenyra's expectant smile. She declared, "Compared to conquering Dorne, you're the true hero, overcoming the hardest challenges."

Rhaenyra's playful snort turned into laughter, and Rhaegar joined in, raising his left arm to examine his eldest son. "A healthy baby who can eat and sleep—definitely my heir, the future king on the Iron Throne."

Rhaenyra's smile widened, her amusement clear. Rhaegar then raised his right arm and kissed his second son's cheek. "Look at him, even exercising in his sleep. He'll be a powerful warrior and dragon rider, conquering the Disputed Lands and supporting his brother."

"Haha, you really know how to make me happy," Rhaenyra said, charmed by the family warmth but still pragmatic. "Are you sure you want to give him the entire Disputed Lands?"

"Why not?" Rhaegar replied confidently.

Rhaenyra's eyes sparkled with relief. "You can assign them as you wish. I am confident I can raise them well."

Rhaegar's actions and words hinted at his intentions—his children were destined for greatness, with the Iron Throne and the Narrow Sea as their inheritance. He kissed the children repeatedly, savoring their presence. Legally and emotionally, his eldest son would be his unshakable heir. Beyond the Iron Throne, there were many lands to bestow upon the princes. The second son, if capable, would lead conquests in Essos, expanding their domain. If less so, he would inherit the title of Prince of Lys from Rhaenyra, keeping control over Daemon and Aegon.

Breathing in the sweet scent of milk, Rhaegar suggested, "We need to give the children names befitting their status."

"You've finally come to your senses," Rhaenyra teased, rolling her eyes. "Father is still bedridden. I want him to name the children when he wakes up."

Rhaegar paused, then agreed. "Yes, that's the right thing to do."

Naming was not his greatest strength, and Rhaenyra had often mocked his choices for their swords. He noticed two exquisite yellow pine cradles at the edge of the bed and gently placed the children in them, covering them with soft silk blankets.

Rhaegar took out two dragon eggs, full of hope. "Shall I place them, or will you?"

Rhaenyra took a dragon egg and looked at him. "One each. You can't have them all."

Rhaegar grinned and placed the bronze dragon egg in the firstborn's cradle. He wondered how pure the blood of these children would be, considering he had not yet transformed into a dragonborn when Rhaenyra conceived. The pros and cons of being a dragonborn were yet to be seen in them.

Rhaenyra placed the dark green dragon egg in the second son's cradle. Rhaegar, returning from his thoughts, looked at the two beautiful, innocent children. These healthy babies, he was sure, would grow up to achieve greatness.

Chapter 465: Blessed by the Stars, the Young Dragons are Born

"Guess when they'll hatch?" Rhaenyra asked excitedly, pinching her child's cheeks.

"Don't pinch them, they'll drool," Rhaegar gently chided, stroking her face. Her cheeks were soft and plump, even softer than custard pudding.

Rhaenyra pouted and reluctantly withdrew her hand. Rhaegar smiled, trying to make up for it. He flipped his right hand over, and a halo of light appeared out of thin air. Rhaenyra stared in surprise. Rhaegar had many mysteries, but he rarely revealed them to her.

"This is a treasure I acquired in the Starry Sept, a gift from the Seven Gods," Rhaegar said casually, deliberately showing it to Rhaenyra.

Rhaenyra, intrigued but restrained, asked, "What is it for?"

Rhaegar smiled, knowing she guessed it was for the children. "A gift for the birth of our children, to bestow certain blessings," he explained. He reached into the halo with both hands and split it in two like an apple.

A system panel appeared before him:

Seven Gods' Blessing

Level: Legendary to Rare (Blue)

Effect: +50% magic talent, Stars Blessing

Comment: "The gift of the Stars is divided into two, nurturing a blessing of excellence."

A legendary relic transformed into two rare ones. Rhaegar held a halo of white light the size of an apple in each hand, feeling no regret—only excitement. The relic could be divided, and as its level dropped, it adapted into a new form. The original magic talent blessing had become a stars blessing, which was still quite valuable.

"Children, are you ready?" Rhaegar said, amused, as he placed the two halos in the cradle.

Rhaenyra watched intently, her eyes wide with concern and wonder, ensuring she didn't miss a single detail.

Hum...

The halos glowed brightly, sensing something before disappearing into the two children's round bellies. A system prompt sounded in Rhaegar's ear.

"Stars blessing activated, triggering effect determination..."

Rhaegar watched as the two children's bodies emitted a radiant mix of red, white, and green light, shining and rotating. The light first stopped on the eldest son.

[Born Warrior]

Level: Rare (Blue)

Function: Favored by Warriors, born with extraordinary fighting talent.

Comment: "Excellent physique, agile, but too young to be burdened with such a task."

Before Rhaegar could take a closer look, the light of the second son also solidified.

[Unforgettable]

Level: Rare (Blue)

Function: Flexible thinking, learns everything far beyond the average person.

Comment: "Don't let him read too many books, unless you want his rebellious period to come early."

"Wow!" Rhaegar was stunned. These two blessings essentially laid the foundation for the future lives of his children. The Longevity (Green) he received as a child and the Long Lasting Face (White) triggered by Rhaenyra seemed less valuable than the Stars blessing.

Of course, blessing relics are usually most suitable for the user's needs. Rhaegar was born sick, so Longevity helped him overcome his illnesses. The blessings of his two children, one for martial prowess and one for intellectual prowess, were added talents.

Rhaegar's eyes flashed as he looked at his eldest son, who was fast asleep. He thought to himself, "You have to discipline a child when they're young, or they won't listen when they're older."

A lesson learned the hard way. Before the age of ten, he was oppressed and disciplined by Rhaenyra daily. Only after he grew taller than her was he able to turn the tables, treating her as she had treated him. After that, Rhaenyra never spanked him again.

Soon, the light faded, and everything returned to normal. Rhaenyra, unable to see the magical display, couldn't wait to ask, "What's changed? Is it for the better?"

"Of course," Rhaegar replied, sitting on the edge of the recliner and wrapping his arm around her shoulders. "They are blessed children."

Rhaenyra patted her chest in relief.

At that moment, a childlike grunt sounded. The eldest son opened his eyes in confusion, his little hands scratching around randomly as his body twisted. Bound by swaddling clothes, he wriggled like a caterpillar, exerting effort to free his chubby legs.

Bang! His right leg kicked hard, landing on the bronze dragon egg next to him. The egg shook slightly but then settled back against his little feet.

"Ooh~" The eldest son grunted with effort, his face flushing as he kicked the dragon egg, pushing it back and forth like a soccer ball.

Click!

A crisp sound suddenly echoed through the room, catching Rhaegar's attention. His spirits lifted as he glanced first at his eldest son's cradle and saw the diligent baby playing with the dragon egg.

"He's awake? And not crying or fussing," Rhaegar noted, pleasantly surprised.

But it wasn't his eldest son who was causing the commotion. His gaze shifted to his second son's cradle. Unlike his busy older brother, the younger one was still fast asleep. Somehow, the baby had managed to push aside his swaddling clothes and roll onto his side. His face, pressed against the blanket like a plump peach, was all flesh and softness. It was hard to believe that these twins, born prematurely at eight months, had developed so well.

Rhaegar immediately moved closer to inspect the cradle. The baby lay on its side, its tiny hands clutching the dark green dragon egg. The newborn and the oval dragon egg were nearly the same size. The baby, apparently dreaming, had its head pressed against the egg, its mouth open as if to nibble at it. Drool trickled down the corner of his mouth, sticky and slimy.

"Good thing he didn't bite it," Rhaegar thought, remembering that this dragon egg had been found in fossilized dragon droppings.

Click!

The dark green dragon egg shook slightly and cracks began to appear on the shell.

"Is it hatching?" Rhaegar whispered, a mixture of surprise and joy in his voice.

"Let me see," Rhaenyra said, coming to life. She climbed out of her chair and peered intently at the cradle.

Crack, crack, crack... The shell of the dragon egg continued to crack, gradually turning into a shattered mosaic. The baby, still nibbling at the egg, began to stick out its tongue and lick it.

Rhaegar and Rhaenyra watched closely, their eyes never leaving the egg.

"Roar..." Finally, a small, dark green dragon head broke through the shell, emitting its first feeble roar.

Then, an unexpected miracle occurred. As soon as the baby dragon emerged, it fell forward, tumbling over the egg.

"Aww~" The baby persistently grasped the dragon, opening his mouth to bite down on one of the dragon's wings.

"Roar..." The baby dragon screeched in surprise. It hadn't expected to be attacked so soon after being born and was ready to retaliate.

"Shut up!" Rhaegar acted quickly, shoving his hand into the baby dragon's mouth, saving his child from potential harm.

"Ga!" The young dragon, its mouth stuffed with Rhaegar's fist, snorted in frustration.

Rhaenyra, shocked, swiftly separated her son from the baby dragon.

"Wa wa wa~~" Deprived of the "delicious" object in his dream, the little one awoke and cried in distress.

Rhaenyra, a mix of anger and fear in her eyes, picked up the baby and cradled him, loosening her sling to breastfeed him. The baby immediately stopped crying, his purple eyes gazing up at his mother with a teary but contented look.

Rhaenyra lightly slapped his little butt and said in a scolding tone, "You're really hungry, aren't you? Trying to eat anything you can find."

"It's not his fault," Rhaegar interjected, looking at the baby with a peculiar mix of amusement and concern, trying to smooth things over.

"Roar..."

The young dragon was terrified, struggling to hiss. Rhaegar withdrew his hand, gently grabbing the dragon's wing and cradling it in his arms. He stroked the small dragon's head, secretly summoning the magic of fire to nourish its body. The young dragon shivered at first, but gradually relaxed, its tense body softening as it allowed itself to be petted like a kitten.

"Be a good boy," Rhaegar murmured.

He took the opportunity to closely examine the young dragon's appearance. The egg had been excavated from the ruins of House Belaerys, different from the eggs of House Targaryen.

The young dragon had dark green scales, black pearl-like horns on its head, and bright red wing membranes. At first glance, it resembled two red mushrooms growing on a clump of moss. Its body shape was similar to that of a young Tessarion or Stormcloud, appearing quite normal and unremarkable.

It lacked the distinctive, massive heads of Morghul or Tyraxes, and it was not a mutant like the snake-like Caraxes.

Rhaegar noted the lack of obvious dorsal scales on the dragon's neck or tail, which was consistent with the Cannibal, Vermithor, and Caraxes. The scales were a functional feature, varying according to the dragon's needs. Dragons like Dreamfyre, Syrax, and Seasmoke had distinct dorsal scales.

The most intriguing part of this young dragon was its slightly elongated, curled tail. Rhaegar couldn't tell if this was an individual trait or a matter of bloodline.

Rhaenyra, observing his scrutiny, asked, "What's different about the dragons of House Belaerys?"

"The young dragon has just hatched, so it's hard to tell," Rhaegar replied, not wanting to jump to conclusions. He placed the dragon back in its cradle.

"Roar..." The young dragon whined reluctantly, lying down on the quilt and looking pitifully at the world.

Rhaenyra mused, "Forty Dragonlord families lived together in THE Fourteen Flames. Even if the dragons are different breeds, they must have interbred with each other."

She considered the difficulty of determining whether dragons with distinct differences, such as Morghul and Caraxes, belonged to different bloodlines. The color and shape of dragonfire could also indicate some connection, as seen with Sheepstealer and Grey Ghost, whose dragonfire differed significantly from that of Vhagar and Vermithor.

Rhaegar, still hoping for a unique trait from the Belaerys family dragon egg, smiled and said, "When the young dragons grow a bit, we can observe their appearance and dragonfire."

"As you wish," Rhaenyra replied, smiling and emphasizing, "This young dragon will belong to the little one in my arms in the future."

No one had expected the egg from House Belaerys to hatch just a day after the baby was born. This egg had been sealed for hundreds of years, and the chances of it hatching were slim. Rhaegar was convinced: "Of course. When the little one grows up, it will be just right to ride the a young dragon."

The relationship between dragons and men is complex and dependent on fate. The fact that this egg retained its vitality for over a century suggested something special. The little one's ability to hatch it proved that dragon and human were meant to be together.

Rhaenyra's eyes sparkled with pride. "When I was small, I hatched Syrax. From the eggs it laid, new young dragons will also hatch," she declared, raising her chin defiantly.

Rhaegar glanced at his eldest son in the cradle. The baby stared wide-eyed at the ceiling, reaching for things, but the bronze dragon egg under his feet showed no signs of hatching.

The same parents had given birth to them, yet they were so different. "Is it really my problem?" Rhaegar wondered.

After all, few Targaryens were capable of hatching a dragon egg in a cradle. The black egg he had as a child was still in the Dragonpit. It should, perhaps...

No, It wasn't his fault!

Chapter 466: The Miraculous Effects of the Soul Restoring Orchid

Knock, knock...

Someone was knocking on the door.

Laena's voice came from outside the bedroom. "Rhaenyra, may I come in?"

"Come in!" Rhaenyra quickly agreed.

The door creaked open, and Laena stepped in, her eyes widening in surprise as she saw Rhaegar training a young dragon. "Rhaegar, another dragon?"

"Cousin, thank you for coming all the way from Driftmark," Rhaegar said, putting down the baby dragon and rising to greet her.

Laena chuckled. "It's nothing. I'm just glad Rhaenyra has given birth safely."

Rhaenyra, who was nursing her baby, turned her head to cover herself, interrupting, "Is something wrong?"

Noticing her discomfort, Rhaegar draped a thin blanket over her back.

Laena watched the couple's tender interaction, momentarily speechless. Then she remembered her purpose. "The Cannibal has arrived at the Red Keep. The Hand of the King sent me to find you, Rhaegar. There's much to be done."

From the king's coma to the queen's power play, and the financial strains and gathering of undesirable elements by the Greens, the issues required the attention of the heir prince, who also held regent powers.

Rhaegar's expression darkened slightly as he realized the gravity of the situation. Sensing his concern, Laena continued, "Alicent fed the king poppy milk to manipulate the Small Council, but the situation is now stabilized."

She added that the king had stopped Alicent but had fallen back into a coma. Upon hearing this, Rhaegar's face immediately turned grim.

After a moment's thought, he decided to see his father first. "I'll check on my father."

Rhaenyra agreed. "I'll go with you."

She also wanted to take the two children. Rhaegar did not object, taking the eldest son first, leaving Laena to help Rhaenyra change clothes. The young dark green dragon was also taken and handed over to the Dragonkeeper stationed at the Red Keep to be sent to the Dragonpit.

As they climbed the stairs, Laena walked behind, her eyes on the two boys. "Rhaenyra, you're amazing, solving the heir problem in one fell swoop."

Rhaenyra turned back, trying to comfort her. "You will have more children in the future. The Maester's diagnosis is not always accurate."

After a difficult birth, Laena had been told it would be hard for her to conceive again. She shook her head, showing no disappointment, and suggested, "You are my good friend and the foster mother of my daughters. Would you consider a marriage alliance between our houses?"

"This..." Rhaenyra hesitated, clearly tempted.

Rhaegar took over, smiling. "There's no rush. The children are still young. If they like each other in the future, we can consider a marriage contract."

Rhaenyra looked stunned but Rhaegar gave her a reassuring look. The proposal was indeed tempting. With Laenor's death, Laena was set to become a representative of House Velaryon and a future councilor of Lys. A marriage alliance would strengthen ties with Daemon and the Sea Snake, bringing them closer to the royal family.

Laena, sensing the hint of refusal, smiled. "That's good. The children growing up together will surely develop feelings for each other."

Rhaegar smiled back and continued helping Rhaenyra upstairs. He anticipated Daemon and the Sea Snake's power would expand significantly in the next decade. While a marriage alliance would strengthen the royal family, it would also place heavy expectations on them. He didn't want Daemon and the Sea Snake to wield undue influence or make it difficult to take necessary actions if they made mistakes. Moreover, the children were still young, and premature arrangements might prevent them from finding more suitable matches in the future.

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The King's Chambers

Rhaegar entered the king's chambers with his eldest son in his arms, met by two Kingsguard standing at attention. Their eyes lit up at the sight of the heir prince and the swaddled baby.

"I've come to see my father," Rhaegar announced.

"Please come in, Prince!" one of the Kingsguard responded, quickly opening the door.

With yesterday's farce still fresh in their minds—the heir prince's return from Oldtown and the Princess giving birth to two little Princes—the Kingsguard hoped that things would soon be back on track.

Rhaenyra entered first, followed by Rhaegar and their child. Inside, Grand Maester Orwyle and Maester Munkun were deep in discussion, their faces etched with worry. Upon seeing Rhaegar, Orwyle quickly bowed and greeted him, "Prince!"

"Shh!" Rhaegar whispered, leaning closer to the bedroom door. He peered through the bead curtain and saw his father unconscious on the bed. "Has anything been found out?" he asked.

Orwyle shook his head sadly. "Unfortunately, no."

"He's just in shock. There's no sign of any external injury," Rhaegar said, frowning deeply.

Orwyle remained silent, the unusual nature of the king's condition troubling him deeply. The unhealing wound had been a harbinger of worse to come.

Maester Munkun spoke up. "I once obtained a Valyrian steel chain ring of the occult and know a little about magic. Perhaps I can help."

"Tell me," Rhaegar urged, taking the word "magic" very seriously.

Munkun nodded to Orwyle before continuing. "I read about a similar case in the autobiography of a wandering healer. It described changes in the body after a shock, lethargy, or a loss of spirit."

He paused. "Some young children fall into comas, which is called 'loss of soul.'"

"Soul?" Rhaegar's brows knitted together, finding this a challenging problem. Despite his unique physical and magical abilities, he had never studied the soul. Pyromancer knowledge, runes, and the dragonborn transformation process seemed related to the soul, but none were suitable for healing.

After a moment of thought, Rhaegar asked, "Are there any ancient texts that describe how to heal this? Do we need the help of a healer?" He knew of a few people with peculiar skills—Greenhand Gar, the Red Priest Varys, and the Red Priestess of the Red Temple.

"Useless!" Munkun shook his head. "That wandering healer was not very capable. His autobiography is mostly an exaggeration. The soul is not a physical body and cannot be easily tampered with."

Rhaegar pondered. "If the healer is no good, there must be a special treatment formula?"

"Ancient texts record several strange plants and minerals that can refresh the mind and perhaps help the soul," Munkun said.

"Where can I find them?" Rhaegar inquired.

"Prince, you can see for yourself," Munkun replied with some embarrassment. He picked up a yellowed parchment from the table and handed it to Rhaegar.

Rhaegar scanned it carefully, his face growing solemn. Munkun explained, "The old books are from Valyria, about 380 years ago. The plants and minerals were buried in the lands of the Long Summer - the Smoking Sea."

Rhaegar closed the book with a thud, his mood complicated. The Smoking Sea was not a place one could venture lightly.

Orwyle and Munkun kept their eyes down, adhering to the golden rule of silence. Rhaenyra stepped forward, worry etched on her face, and took Rhaegar's hand. Laena spoke up solemnly, "Daemon and I once wanted to explore the coast, but Vhagar and Caraxes were very resistant. We failed."

Rhaegar's mind raced as he repeated a passage from the ancient text. "It grows on carrion, looks like an orchid, its pollen is fragrant, and picking it can nourish the spirit." It was very similar to the description of the Soul Restoring Orchid he had found.

"Rhaenyra, do you still have any of the powder I gave you?" Rhaegar asked. There had been two Soul Restoring Orchid powders, and his had been used up long ago during the war.

Rhaenyra paused for a moment, then quickly replied, "There's still a little left."

She pushed open the door and called for someone to fetch it. Seeing this, Munkun breathed a sigh of relief and left with Orwyle.

Soon, Sara, the maid, arrived with a delicate powder box. Rhaegar opened it and found that about a third of the powder remained, enough for roughly a month's use. The Soul Restoring Orchid, which grows in the Smoking Sea, is incredibly rare and difficult to obtain.

Rhaegar had used the powder sparingly, only sprinkling a little on his pillow occasionally. Now, he hoped it might help his father. He sprinkled some of the powder on Viserys's pillow and then gently reached out to hold his father's hand. Summoning his fire magic, he sought to stimulate the blood flow in Viserys's body.

One minute, two minutes... Ten minutes passed. Rhaegar's forehead was covered in a fine layer of sweat, and his body temperature rose noticeably. The eldest son in his arms squirmed, kicking his legs in discomfort from the heat.

"Mmm-hmm," Viserys groaned, his face gradually flushing with color.

Overjoyed, Rhaegar put his struggling son on the bed and called softly, "Father, wake up."

Viserys opened his eyes slowly, disoriented. He saw his eldest son and asked, "Rhaegar, you're back?"

"Yes, Father. You suddenly fainted yesterday, so I hurried back to King's Landing last night," Rhaegar explained. "How do you feel? Are you still dizzy?"

Viserys, still confused, replied, "Not bad. I feel more spirited than yesterday, and my body is warm."

Rhaegar and Rhaenyra exchanged relieved smiles.

"Wait!" Viserys's eyes fell on the baby in Rhaenyra's arms. "This child...?"

Didn't he just fall into a coma a day ago? Yesterday, Rhaenyra was still pregnant, and today she held a baby.

"Ooh-wa-wa~" The sound of a young, squeaky voice came from nearby.

Viserys turned his head. A white, clean baby lay beside him, staring up with clear, purple eyes. The old king and the baby locked eyes, studying each other.

"Gurgle~" The baby tilted his head, thumb in his mouth, his little tummy gurgling.

Viserys's spirit brightened, and he almost jumped out of bed. He pinched the baby's chubby hand and his eyes shone with affection. After a moment, he turned to Rhaenyra and said, "The child is so small, how can he grow tall and strong on an empty stomach?"

Rhaenyra blushed and handed her second son to Laena, then took the eldest son and began to breastfeed him. It was amusing that the eldest son remained particularly calm and quiet, no matter what was done to him.

Viserys eagerly reached out. "Show me this little guy."

Laena handed over the baby, causing a flurry of contented grunting. Viserys's face split into a broad smile as he held the little one, pinching his meaty legs. "This little one has such strength. He will definitely grow up to be a great warrior."

Rhaegar smiled. "The one in Rhaenyra's arms is a natural warrior."

"Don't jump to conclusions. You should believe that children have infinite possibilities," Viserys gently corrected, teasing the little one and then turning back to Rhaenyra. "Who is the older twin? Have you named them yet?"

Chapter 467: Baelon and Aemon

The King's Chambers

"This one in my arms is the elder brother," Rhaenyra said with a proud smile.

"Oh, then this little one here must be the younger brother," Viserys teased, cradling the baby.

Rhaenyra beamed. "He's amazing. He hatched the dragon egg on his first day of life."

"Then he is a natural-born dragon knight," Viserys marveled, looking at his grandson with even greater affection. A descendant with such pure blood was a true blessing. "They're both wonderful and will both be the best dragon knights in the future."

Rhaegar, feeling the warmth of the moment, added, "The two children haven't been named yet."

Viserys's eyes lit up, and a newfound strength seemed to infuse his frail body. Rhaegar smiled, "Rhaenyra and I agree that as their grandfather, you should have the honor of naming them."

Viserys, excited and touched, nodded eagerly. Rhaenyra encouraged him further, "Father, the naming rights of the children are officially in your hands."

"Good! Good!" Viserys said, repeating himself in his joy. In the loving presence of his family, his happiness was palpable, and his pain seemed to fade.

Rhaegar watched his father with a hopeful smile, wishing that the newborns would bring Viserys renewed vigor and a prolonged life. He wanted his father to be there for many more years, sharing in their joys and challenges.

"You are really, really good children," Viserys said, understanding his children's intentions. His eyes welled up with tears as he gazed at his family.

After a moment of thoughtful consideration, Viserys made up his mind. With the expectant eyes of Rhaenyra, Rhaegar, and Laena upon him, he spoke firmly, "Baelon! This child will be named Baelon Targaryen, after your grandfather."

Rhaenyra looked thoughtfully at her father, then nodded in approval. Rhaegar added, "Good, this child will be called Baelon. May he be as brave as his grandfather."

The name Baelon had a special significance, honoring Rhaegar's late grandfather, a name chosen long ago by Viserys.

"I'm glad you like it," Viserys said, looking down at his grandson, who was babbling and blowing bubbles. "Baelon's best friend was Aemon Targaryen. They were the pride of their generation."

Rhaegar listened quietly, knowing what his youngest son's name would be. As expected, his father continued, "This child will be named Aemon. I hope they can be as close as those two brothers were and become the pride of an era."

Aemon and Baelon, heirs to the Iron Throne and brave warriors. Their namesakes had tamed dragons and brought glory to the realm.

Rhaegar and Rhaenyra exchanged a look of mutual understanding, both satisfied with the meaningful names.

Rhaenyra pinched Baelon's cheek, ignoring that he was still nursing, and laughed, "Did you hear that? Your grandfather named you Baelon."

"That's a good name, for sure!" Viserys said proudly.

The room filled with laughter. Laena, who had been watching the entire time, joined in, sitting by the bed and looking at baby Aemon. "He will be a fine Targaryen, inheriting his grandfather's name," she said softly.

Viserys wiped the smile from his face and looked at Laena with soft eyes. "My cousin couldn't continue Aemon's glory, so I named this little one in the hope that it would be a consolation to your mother."

"I think my mother would have loved this little one very much," Laena smiled softly.

Viserys nodded seriously. "When the war in Dorne is over and Rhaenys returns to King's Landing, she must hold this child in her arms."

Laena, slightly distracted, said, "Thank you, Your Grace."

"We are family!" Viserys said warmly, setting aside his kingly airs.

At the 101st Great Council, Viserys had competed with Rhaenys for the Iron Throne. Although he emerged victorious, he lived in constant fear of the Sea Snake's rebellion for the next ten years, enduring sleepless nights.

Over time, his relationship with Rhaenys deteriorated, filled with resentment and mistrust. Even Rhaegar's victory over Driftmark and the proclamation of the Dragon's Law with Corlys, which restricted House Velaryon from taming dragons, couldn't heal the rift between them.

Now, with six wonderful children and twin grandchildren, Viserys felt a profound sense of security. His once troubled heart was at peace. In contrast, Rhaenys had lost her eldest son Laenor, and House Velaryon was forced to submit to the Iron Throne.

Viserys's resentment had dissipated. He only wished to care for his lonely cousin and strengthen the bond between their families. Laena's eyes flashed with warmth, feeling the genuine kindness of the king.

The room fell into a rare moment of peaceful silence. After a quarter of an hour, the two children had fallen asleep, their eyes closing peacefully. Viserys, though loving the children dearly, felt his shoulders aching and reluctantly handed Aemon back to Rhaegar.

Rhaegar took his son and then addressed another pressing issue. "Father, what do you want to do about Alicent?"

Viserys, stunned by the question, fell silent. After a long pause, he said, "You and Rhaenyra don't need to worry about it. I will handle it myself, and it won't affect you."

Rhaegar understood the unspoken meaning. This "you" referred not just to him and Rhaenyra but also included Aegon, Helaena, and their other siblings. His father had a plan.

Viserys suddenly laughed and patted Rhaegar's shoulder. "Don't think too much about it. Alicent went too far this time."

Rhaegar remained silent, a complex expression on his face. The baby in his arms moved, and little Aemon hummed in his sleep. Rhaegar stroked his son's rosy cheeks, then glanced at his father's left hand, noting the missing ring and little fingers, pale and wrinkled.

A realization struck him. "I'm a father too?" The thought stunned him, deepening his understanding of the word. His father would do anything for him, including dealing with Alicent.

The father and son fell silent together. Rhaenyra gently rocked the cradle, noticing the somber atmosphere and feeling a mix of curiosity and unease. She realized that her father's mention of "dealing with it" wasn't about covering up for Alicent.

Rhaenyra's chest tightened with a strange mix of emotions. Sensitive to the tension, Laena gave her a look and quietly left the room. Rhaenyra hesitated but then followed her out, not wanting to be involved in the plans between father and son.

Left alone, the atmosphere grew even more somber. After a long silence, Rhaegar spoke. "I'll go see Alicent later."

"There's no need," Viserys replied.

"It's better to see each other and talk things over face to face," Rhaegar insisted.

Holding his younger son, Rhaegar placed the Soul Restoring Orchid powder box on the bedside table. "I'll be going to Oldtown in a couple of days. You just rest and relax. I'll take care of everything."

He smiled reassuringly and left the bedroom with the baby. Viserys watched him leave, raising his hand as if to stop him, but it hung in the air, unable to fall. He understood his son's intentions and felt there might be room for maneuver.

Viserys was lost in thought, surrounded by the mixed scents of medicine, orchid, and baby milk brought by his family.

Outside the Bedroom

Two Kingsguard stood guard at the door, watching as the heir prince and Princess disappeared down the corridor. Suddenly, a restrained sob came from the bedroom behind the door. Startled, the Kingsguard lowered their heads, trying to make themselves less noticeable.

...

Behind Maegor's Holdfast, the Hall of the Seven.

Rhaegar and Rhaenyra left their father's bedroom and headed directly to the place where the queen was being held. Laena had already left to inform the Hand of the King to prepare for a Small Council meeting.

The hall was adorned with statues of the seven gods, placed against the four walls and encircling the open space. In the center stood a round altar, prominently displaying the skull of Balerion the Black Dread.

Rhaegar approached the altar, placing his palm near the candles, feeling the warmth of the flames. As a child, Balerion's skull was the first relic he had ever seen, and it was here that he had explored the skull and acquired the relic of "Blood and Fire" while holding a candle.

"Balerion, you are truly the greatest hero of the Targaryen family."

Rhaenyra joining him with the baby in her arms. Her white fingertips touched Rhaegar's hand as they both flicked the wick of a candle.

Rhaegar smiled, taking her hand. "Come with me to meet our stepmother," he said.

He had refused his father's sacrifice—not for Alicent's sake, nor because he was weak, but because he didn't want his father to suffer the loss of another wife in his old age.

He also felt a deep affection for his younger siblings and didn't want to deprive them of their mother, even if she was not his own. Growing up without a mother, he had envied Aegon for having one, and Rhaenyra had filled that emotional void for him. If Alicent died, he wouldn't be able to provide the same emotional support to his siblings.

Rhaenyra caught the teasing tone in his voice and gave him a look, but she obediently took his hand and followed him upstairs. Rhaegar held Aemon in his arms, glancing at Rhaenyra and Baelon beside him. His mood was as bright as spring.

Over the years, Alicent had not been entirely bad. He had no interest in her, leaving it to his father to deal with her. Instead, Rhaegar wanted to address the root of all the trouble. "House Hightower, you've been living too comfortably in Oldtown," he thought.

The Church, the Attic

They climbed the ladder to the small, dark, forgotten room in the attic, covered in cobwebs and dust. At the end of the corridor, a broken wooden door let out a muffled cry.

Chapter 468: Riding a Dragon With a Child

Rhaegar's eyes flashed with determination as he brushed aside the cobwebs and approached the door.

Knock, knock!

The dilapidated wooden door, emanating a foul, rotten smell, creaked under his touch. The wailing from behind the door abruptly ceased, replaced by frantic rustling. Rhaegar pushed the wooden partition aside, allowing a beam of light to pierce the dark, damp room.

"Who is it?" Alicent, huddled in a corner with bloody gauze wrapped around her arms, shielded her eyes from the sudden brightness.

Rhaegar remained silent, observing her quietly. Sensing she was being watched, Alicent forced herself to calm down and quickly wiped her tears with the gauze. Despite her dire circumstances, her pride as a queen refused to let her appear weak.

"It's me," Rhaegar said calmly, his voice like still water. "Didn't you want me to come back?"

Alicent froze, recognizing his voice. Her tear-streaked face turned towards the door, struggling to adjust to the blinding light, revealing Rhaegar's face illuminated in the sunlight.

"Rhaegar!" Alicent screamed, throwing herself at the door, trying to block the gap with her body. Rhaegar stepped back, allowing her the illusion of control. It was a harsh reality to accept—her transition from queen to prisoner.

Alicent's screams turned to hoarse cries, punctuated by violent coughs as she attempted to regain her composure.

"Move aside. I'll handle this," Rhaenyra said, pushing past Rhaegar. She glared at Alicent, who now sat on the floor in a disheveled, dirty green dress, looking like a noblewoman fallen from grace.

Rhaenyra's eyes gleamed with satisfaction. "Alicent, stop acting like a shrew. Look at me."

Alicent, driven by her pride, raised her head and glared back with bloodshot eyes. As she shifted slightly, her entire face came into view. Rhaenyra was momentarily taken aback by the drastic change. In just one night, Alicent's face had become pale and bloodless, her lips white, deep eye bags forming under her eyes, and her face severely swollen.

Rhaenyra, her expressionless face pressed against little Baelon's cheek, made sure he could see everything. "Thanks to you, my children have been born. Two boys of pure blood," she sneered, beckoning Rhaegar to hand over the sleeping Aemon.

Holding both twins in her arms, she boasted, "These are my children. Can you see them clearly enough?"

Memories of the past surged through her—how Alicent's birth of Aegon had caused her, the heir, countless grievances. Now, she wanted Alicent to know she wasn't the only one who could bear children.

Rhaenyra reveled in this moment, showing off her children, a privilege that Alicent's execution would have deprived her of. Alicent's face contorted with jealousy, and Rhaegar, standing aside, watched the bitter exchange between the two women.

In the dark room, Alicent stared at Rhaenyra and the twins, a hint of struggle flickering in her red eyes.

Alicent sat stubbornly on the damp, moldy floor. "So what? Giving birth is just a woman's destiny. It's the same for everyone."

Rhaenyra retorted, "Does your fate include this rat-infested attic?"

"You—!" Alicent's chest heaved with anger, her throat too sore to respond.

Rhaenyra continued mercilessly, "My children have a father who loves them. How much of that love will your children get?"

Alicent glared at her, her anger boiling over. She wanted to lash out, but the truth stung too deeply.

Rhaegar's scalp tingled at the escalating tension. He gently pulled Rhaenyra away and whispered, "I'll talk to her. You take care of the children."

Rhaenyra looked down at the twins in her arms, their wide, curious purple eyes looking up at her, startled by the confrontation. She blushed, feeling a mix of satisfaction and guilt. "I'll wait for you downstairs," she said softly, needing to calm down.

Rhaegar watched her descend the stairs, shaking his head with a small smile. Her need for revenge was understandable, given all she had endured. But the situation called for a cooler head.

Turning back to Alicent, his smile faded. Her face was stern and unyielding. "Where is Viserys? How is he?"

"You still have time to worry about my father," Rhaegar retorted, his tone icy.

Alicent snorted in disgust, unwilling to engage further.

"Do you want to stop me from suppressing the Faith of the Seven?" Rhaegar's eyes narrowed.
"Why?"

He was curious why Alicent, who had endured so much over the years—even when Aemond lost an eye—was suddenly causing trouble now. It was ill-timed and disruptive.

Alicent replied coldly, "The peace treaty is the work of His Grace, Jaehaerys. You are playing with fire by going against the Faith of the Seven."

Rhaegar's gaze was piercing. "Do you know the circumstances under which my great-grandfather signed the treaty with the Faith of the Seven?"

Alicent hesitated, speechless for a moment. She knew the history but it wasn't a pleasant one. Maegor I had died a tragic death on the Iron Throne, and Jaehaerys had been hastily enthroned amidst a crusade by the Faith of the Seven against the Targaryen dynasty. Jaehaerys had consolidated his rule by aligning with the Faith of the Seven.

Seeing her uncertainty, Rhaegar lost interest in the conversation. "Think whatever you want. It doesn't matter."

He patted the dust off his robe and turned to leave. "You've made a mistake. Prepare to atone for the rest of your life."

Alicent, narrow-minded and ignorant, was not worth his time. Stabilizing the court and addressing the issues in Oldtown were far more important.

As Rhaenyra and Rhaegar left, Alicent's fear of the darkness returned. She wanted to stop them but couldn't bring herself to speak. She knew there would be no escape.

As Rhaegar hurried down the corridor, Alicent, tears streaming down her face, croaked, "His Grace, the Old King, often praised my beautiful voice and liked me to read to him."

Rhaegar paused briefly, then continued walking away without a word.

In the dim attic, Alicent was left alone with her suppressed grief and weeping, the sound of her sobs echoing in the darkness.

...

Rhaegar stepped out of the sanctuary and saw Rhaenyra sitting on the edge of the flowerbed, struggling to coax the two children to eat. The little ones were quite a handful, and their weight was clearly straining their mother.

Rhaegar hurried forward to take the two squirming children, joking, "Next time, remember to bring your maid, or you might drop them."

Rhaenyra rubbed her sore arm and rolled her eyes at his remark. "I'm surprised Alicent hasn't gone completely hysterical. I thought she wouldn't be able to bear the shock."

"Who cares?" Rhaegar replied casually.

Rhaenyra lowered her eyes, speaking softly, "I almost wish she had. At least then it would feel a bit like our childhood."

Rhaegar's eyes widened in surprise, slowly shifting to understanding. "She had no choice, but she still made her decisions."

Rhaenyra smiled and opened her arms again, clapping her hands to indicate that he should return one of the swaddled babies.

...

Half a Month Later at the Red Keep, Throne Hall.

Half a month has passed since Rhaegar took up his duties.

In the Throne Hall, paved with black stone, advisers led by the Hand of the King gathered together, their attention focused on a single figure.

Rhaegar, flanked by two Kingsguard, slowly walked in, clad in a black dragon rider's outfit. His eyes swept over the assembled advisers as he approached the Iron Throne, encircled by swords and spears.

With a calm expression, Rhaegar ascended the stairs, ignoring the flashing blades around him, and took his place on the top step. He turned to face the advisers and, with measured composure, sat down on the cold, hard Iron Throne.

The Iron Throne, with no back or armrests, was surrounded by sharp blades, a testament to the will of the conqueror and a reminder to future kings that the throne is never comfortable.

Sitting upright, Rhaegar held Truefyre in one hand, looking down at the ministers from his elevated position. At the foot of the Iron Throne, Erryk and Arryk stood guard with their swords unsheathed, their eyes never straying from their duty.

The advisers were silent, accustomed to seeing the heir to the command. With the king resting on his bed, Rhaegar had been handling all state affairs for the past six months.

Rhaegar pondered for a moment before speaking. "Lord Lyonel, has the caravan transporting the food for the Prince's palace in The Reach left yet?"

Understanding the advisers' tendency to remain passive unless prompted, Rhaegar knew he had to direct the conversation.

Lyonel stepped forward and replied solemnly, "It has already left. Princess Helaena has sent a letter and will personally escort the grain convoy."

With the Hand of the King breaking the silence, other advisers began to report their updates.

Linman, the Master of Coin, stepped forward with a list in hand. "According to the Prince's instructions, a site was selected in King's Landing for the Seven-Star Grand Temple. The site has been cleaned and is ready for construction."

After detailing the progress, he added a note of caution, "The kingdom is at war with the Triarchy and Dorne, and the treasury is overtaxed. The cost of the temple is a significant expense."

As a prudent Master of Coin, he always advised against unnecessary spending.

Rhaegar responded calmly, "Lord Linman, the royal family supports the establishment of the new religion. The current expenses are justified."

According to the Master of Whisperers, hundreds of holy brothers and sisters had moved from Oldtown to help build the new church, preferring tangible leadership over the distant prayers of the Starry Sept.

The meeting continued, with Lyonel addressing another matter. "There are two vacancies in the Kingsguard. I have announced this across the realm and will select qualified candidates soon."

"As you wish," Rhaegar nodded.

With the meeting concluded, Rhaegar stretched and smiled, "I'm going to Oldtown. Please take care of the palace, Lords."

The advisers exchanged helpless glances but agreed. After being treated with special incense powder, the king could remain awake for a few hours each day, ensuring the court functioned normally.

Rhaegar descended from the Iron Throne, eager to leave. The advisers, after a moment's hesitation, followed him out to see the heir prince off.

...

Godswood, Back Garden

"Roar!" Cannibal crouched restlessly, its tail flailing. Nearby, Syrax waited patiently.

Rhaenyra, who hadn't worn her dragon rider armor in a long time, held two children in her arms. The tiny babies stared wide-eyed at the enormous, jet-black dragon, utterly mesmerized.

Rhaegar emerged from the Godswood, smiling as he took one of the swaddled babies from Rhaenyra. "I'm here," he said, revealing little Baelon, who never cried.

"Let's go," Rhaenyra's eyes sparkled with excitement. She secured Aemon's swaddling clothes around her chest and climbed decisively onto Syrax's back.

Rhaegar hesitated briefly, then fastened little Baelon securely before mounting Cannibal.

Once everything was in order, Rhaenyra commanded, "Syrax, fly!"

"Roar!" Syrax obediently sprinted a few steps and then soared high above the Red Keep.

Cannibal roared, its dark wings casting a shadow over the entire Red Keep as it took flight.

In the back garden, people looked up, awestruck, watching the Prince and Princess take to the skies.

Syrax, playful and energetic, circled the Red Keep twice before flying over the city of King's Landing.

"Giggling..." Aemon, nestled in Rhaenyra's arms, looked up at the clouds, his small, happy laugh echoing in the air.

Rhaegar, riding the Cannibal, followed closely behind, weaving through the skies like a showman, drawing the attention of countless commoners.

Little Baelon's clear eyes widened in wonder as he reached out, trying to grasp the clouds. Rhaegar looked down at his son, kissed his forehead gently, and smiled, "Good boy, worthy of being my son."

"Giggling~" Little Baelon shook his head, thinking his father was playing with him, and laughed joyously.

King's Landing

From Silk Street to Flea Market, people filled every corner, looking up in anticipation. News of Princess Rhaenyra's safe delivery had spread throughout King's Landing, and the heir prince had held a seven-day soup kitchen to feed the hungry.

The commoners stretched their necks to see the two dragons circling above, eager for a glimpse of the two little princes.

"Long live the little Prince!" someone shouted, and the cry spread like wildfire.

"Long live the little Prince!"

"Long live the Targaryens!"

"Let's see the little Prince..."

The crowd cheered and chased after the soaring dragons, waving their arms and shouting with all their might. King's Landing was in a frenzy, celebrating as if it were a world-famous event.

"Roar!" Cannibal roared again, carefully avoiding the buildings below. Rhaegar's silver hair fluttered in the wind as he cradled little Baelon, both of them laughing heartily.

Rhaenyra had been right: the children should be seen by the people of King's Landing. Emulating her grandmother Alyssa, she soared through the sky with her newborns, showcasing the strength and legacy of House Targaryen.

Targaryens were born to ride dragons, and today, the people of King's Landing witnessed that legacy in all its glory.

Chapter 469: Grey Ghost Recognizes a Master?

High Above King's Landing

"Roar!" Syrax roared nonstop, playfully scampering through the towers before swooping out of the Dragon Gate. Rhaenyra's face lit up with joy as she held Aemon, who giggled happily. Their laughter echoed throughout King's Landing, filling the city with their joy.

"The mother loves dragons just like her children," Rhaegar thought, feeling a sense of triumph akin to taming Cannibal.

"Roar!" Cannibal circled King's Landing for the third time, chasing Syrax as they flew past the Dragon Gate.

The two dragons soared through the sky, one after the other, leaving the people of King's Landing in awe, their hearts pounding with excitement. This magnificent display was etched into the memory of all who witnessed it, a moment so vivid that even twenty years later, it would be remembered with the same intensity.

...

The Banks of the Blackwater Rush

Rhaegar spread his arms wide, his voice booming over the rush of the river. "Rhaenyra, shall we race to see who can fly faster?"

Little Baelon's face turned red, fully exposed to the wind, and he whined in protest.

Rhaenyra, riding Syrax, flew ahead and turned to scold him, "Why don't you challenge Meleys to a race instead of Syrax?"

"Mm-hmm," Rhaegar grunted in agreement.

Cannibal's deep green eyes glowed as its massive wings flapped, catching up to Syrax with a powerful gust that nearly unbalanced the smaller dragon. Poor Syrax dared not resist, stubbornly hanging behind the tail of the formidable Cannibal.

Cannibal had grown rapidly, now surpassing even the oldest dragon, Vhagar, in size. In contrast, Syrax was a young female dragon, barely past the threshold of adulthood and less than a third the size of the Cannibal.

Rhaenyra snorted, giving little Aemon a playful pat on the butt. The giggling baby's eyes filled with misty grievances. She pinched his cheek, saying teasingly, "Though you are still young, you should understand the principle of paying for your father's debts."

Aemon pouted, tears welling up as if he was about to cry.

Meanwhile, high above the riverbank, Rhaegar, oblivious to the exchange, opened Baelon's swaddling clothes to let the baby fully enjoy the breeze. After a while, Baelon shook his head vigorously and buried his face in his father's chest.

"What a funny little thing," Rhaegar laughed heartily. The Targaryens were not afraid of the cold, and he knew his children would inherit his robust constitution.

As they flew south along the Blackwater Rush towards Oldtown, the siblings followed the river all the way to Highgarden. They planned to spend the night there before continuing to Oldtown the next day.

Rhaegar looked down at the roaring Blackwater Rush, its surface sparkling in the sunlight. Suddenly, a light gray dragon shadow emerged from the clouds.

"Roar..." The melodious call of the dragon caught the attention of the two riders and their dragons.

Rhaegar turned his head to see a pale gray dragon floating towards them, looking ghostly against the backdrop of white clouds. "Grey Ghost?" he said in surprise.

This shy wild dragon had returned to Dragonstone after the battle of the Triarchy and had been hiding there for months.

"Rhaegar, it's come to see you," Rhaenyra noted, covering Aemon's mouth with her fingers. The little one sucked on them for comfort, teary-eyed.

"Then Oldtown will soon be home to five dragons," Rhaegar smiled.

As they spoke, the Grey Ghost emerged from the high clouds, its pupils shining brightly as it warily approached Rhaegar. Cannibal glanced at it, and the Grey Ghost, seeing no aggression, cautiously flew closer.

Rhaegar adjusted his breastband and tried to communicate with the Grey Ghost. "Good fellow, are you coming from Harrenhal?" he asked.

The Grey Ghost had been a regular visitor since the dragon's nest was built at God's Eye.

"Roar..." To Rhaegar's surprise, the Grey Ghost showed little interest in communicating. Instead, it snorted and focused its vertical pupils on the sash on his chest, more precisely, on little Baelon swaddled within.

Rhaegar hesitated for a moment before lifting the cover to reveal the snotty-faced Baelon. The wind was too strong for the baby, and he couldn't stand it. Baelon sucked his thumb, his pale face calm, staring directly at the light gray dragon.

Covered in light gray scales, Grey Ghost's back scales and wing membranes glowed faintly in the sunlight, camouflaging it among the clouds. Its head was not fierce but rather handsome, adorned with pale horns and a neat, dense horn crown. The most distinctive feature was its pair of amber pupils, which shone with a curious, inquisitive, and shy light.

"Roar..." Grey Ghost's vertical pupils fixed on the human cub, sniffing like a drug addict and snorting excitedly. Rhaegar's eyes were full of confusion.

"Roar..." Grey Ghost turned and flew towards Syrax, who was in a bad mood and felt provoked. Syrax opened his dragon mouth, ready to attack.

"Quiet, Syrax," Rhaenyra commanded at the critical moment. She, too, was curious about the wild dragon's intentions.

"Roar..." Not having been driven away, Grey Ghost flapped its wings merrily and circled Syrax. Born at about the same time, the two dragons were similar in size. Syrax, with its thick, large wings, appeared somewhat clumsy, while Grey Ghost, well proportioned and relatively small, had light gray wings large enough to cover its entire body. This configuration made it faster and more agile in aerial combat.

Rhaenyra noticed Grey Ghost's exploratory nature and exposed baby Aemon in her arms, allowing the dragon to take a good look. Grey Ghost's pupils widened as it sniffed the second baby, showing a puzzled expression. Unlike Baelon, Aemon had the scent of other dragons on him.

"Roar..." Grey Ghost, uninterested in Syrax, flew back to the Cannibal. Rhaegar, observing the dragon's unusual enthusiasm, went from confusion to surprise, and finally to deep doubt. Could this timid little dragon have taken a liking to his son?

The thought flashed through his mind, and Rhaegar quickly unwrapped the swaddling clothes, holding Baelon out for Grey Ghost to observe more closely.

Little Baelon: "Suckling~" His little nose wrinkled, and half of his snot dripped out. Grey Ghost didn't let the opportunity pass and sniffed the baby like a crazed dragon.

Grey Ghost had been busy. It had exchanged ideas with a green female dragon abandoned on Dragonstone, only to be chased away by an angry dragon returning to its mate.

This led to a homeless wandering life. Two days ago, it had been near Gulltown when it encountered a newly hatched black dragon cub. The young dragon was fierce and yelled at him, causing Grey Ghost to leave in a huff. Remembering a dragon's nest outside the black castle, it stayed there for a couple of days.

Today, while fishing in the Blackwater Rush, Grey Ghost had smelled the scent of dragon eggs from afar. It also detected something delicious, leading it to sniff around the two human pups.

"You're not being very nice, little dragon."

Rhaegar's expressionless face masked his true intentions towards Grey Ghost. He cherished his precious son too much.

Without waiting for Grey Ghost's reaction, Rhaegar pulled out a swaddling cloth, tied it securely, and turned his back to block the dragon's view.

"Huh?"

Grey Ghost tilted his head, its large vertical pupils flashing with confusion.

Rhaegar patted the dragon's back and urged, "Cannibal, hurry up."

"Roar!"

Cannibal growled irritably, shaking off Grey Ghost like an annoyance, and leapt over the Blackwater Rush into the Mander River basin.

Roar...

Grey Ghost whinnied in worry and chased after him.

Rhaegar pretended not to hear, even covering little Baelon's ears. He admitted he was prejudiced against the timid dragon. Grey Ghost was smart, like all wild dragons, but his gentleness had made him timid and shy.

Rhaegar had other plans for his eldest son. The dragon egg in the cradle had the highest priority for hatching, ensuring the most compatible companion for Baelon. Growing up together would foster a strong bond.

If the egg didn't hatch, Stormcloud and Tyraxes, bred in the Dragonpit, were excellent choices.

Stormcloud, supposedly laid by Meraxes, showed terrifying fighting talent. Tyraxes, inheriting characteristics of Morghul, the Smoking Sea Dragon, promised combat effectiveness.

But Rhaegar preferred Vermithor, Silverwing, and Seasmoke. If Baelon didn't hatch an egg or tame a young dragon, he could wait until his teens to tame a wild dragon, as many Targaryens did.

With his father's health deteriorating, Rhaegar knew he might not live for too long.

Little Baelon, following in Maegor I's footsteps, could inherit Vermithor, an adult dragon second only to Cannibal and Vhagar. Vermithor's age gave him longevity, likely outlasting Vhagar.

As the eldest son, Baelon taming Vermithor would easily suppress his siblings. Silverwing, almost as big as Dreamfyre, was another strong contender, not inferior to Caraxes.

Seasmoke and Grey Ghost were alternatives. Seasmoke, a young dragon with battle experience, was neither hot-tempered nor docile, making him a good choice for novice riders. Grey Ghost's

temperament was problematic; it wasn't suited for head-on fighting. But if Baelon could help Grey Ghost overcome his shyness, he could still be powerful, not inferior to Sunfyre and Seasmoke.

"Roar..."

Grey Ghost let out a shrill cry, unable to keep up with Cannibal, who sped up and stayed by Syrax's side.

Rhaenyra laughed, having never seen Rhaegar and Cannibal so flustered. Grey Ghost, clever as ever, realized Rhaenyra was the mother of the human cub and tried to show off his well-proportioned figure.

Rhaenyra wanted to stroke his head, but he was too far. She laughed and said, "You can go back first. Wait until my child is a little older." Her words, in High Valyrian combined with a binding spell, reached Grey Ghost's mind.

The dragon paused, understanding, and stopped pestering the ill-tempered Syrax. After hovering for a while, it disappeared into the clouds.

"Roar..."

Before leaving, Grey Ghost let out a mournful neigh for the rejection.

The second time! The last time was when Rhaegar was riding on another dragon, also as a human child.

Rhaenyra couldn't help but laugh and cry. She patted Aemon's soft, round butt and said, "Your brother is more popular than you."

"Wa wa wa..."

His butt was attacked again, and Aemon's little mouth pouted, crying out loud.

Chapter 470: All Rights of Interpretation Belong to the Iron Throne!

The next day, the weather was sunny and warm. Despite being December, The Reach remained pleasant and mild, a stark contrast to the cold of The North.

In Oldtown, at the Starry Sept, the roar of thunder echoed for miles. A pair of black dragon wings enveloped the majestic cathedral. Simultaneously, an yellow dragon, gleaming like gold in the sunlight, slowly flew in. Soon after, Cannibal and Syrax arrived.

"Come, give me your hand," Rhaegar said, stepping off the dragon's back to take Rhaenyra in his arms, holding a baby swaddle. She gave him a proud look and held out her hand.

The Starry Sept was filled with people—holy brothers, holy sisters, and believers all mixed together. Rhaegar glanced at the crowd and saw a pale, thin young man in the front, dressed in flashy attire and holding a Seven Star Bible. Several priests surrounded him.

Rhaegar recognized the man at once: the current High Septon, Corben Flowers, rumored to be the illegitimate son of a noble family who had ascended to his position through his eloquence in debating scripture.

"Roar!" "Roar..."

Rhaegar had just dismounted with Rhaenyra when two distinct dragon roars echoed in the distance. He glanced back. Sunfyre, with its pale pink wings and golden hue, flapped energetically. The Sheepstealer chased after Sunfyre playfully, its vertical pupils flashing with mockery, flaunting its own slender figure as if showing off to Sunfyre.

Rhaegar couldn't help but smile. Wild dragons were special, embodying the truth that they could survive independently. The two dragons landed slowly in the temple square, and their riders dismounted.

Aegon walked over, dark circles under his eyes, looking disheveled and exuding a decadent, lazy air. Aemond, on the other hand, was young but mature. Noticing the swaddled baby in Rhaegar and Rhaenyra's arms, Aemond's eye widened in disbelief. "This... this is?"

Rhaegar straightened and clenched his fist, clearing his throat. "Your little nephew."

"Two at once?" Aemond looked back and forth, as if one eye wasn't enough.

Rhaegar's mouth curled into a smile. "That's right."

"Congratulations, brother," Aemond said, momentarily stunned, then added shyly, "Can I see them?"

After half a month apart, he was surprised to find two new nephews. Life was full of surprises.

Rhaegar patted his chest and said generously, "Feel free to look around. If they cry, give them back to me."

"Hmph!" Rhaenyra snorted in contempt. What a big talker! He even wants to take on the children's tasks.

Despite her irritation, she didn't relent. Rhaenyra handed the swaddled babies to Aemond naturally. Rhaegar did the same.

Aemond froze in place, holding the two babies, one on each side, his eyes full of mixed emotions.

Aemon stared at his uncle with wide eyes, chewing on his hand as he watched him intently. He was so engrossed in the sight that he reached out, trying to pull off Aemond's blindfold.

Aemond instinctively looked up and dodged, then laughed at himself for his reaction. When he looked at the two babies again, the strangeness in his eyes disappeared, replaced by a sense of kinship.

Rhaenyra said from the side, "His name is Aemon, which is similar to yours."

Similar names in House Targaryen often evolved from "Aegon."

Aemond looked at his eldest sister, his expression unchanged, and thought to himself, "They are my nephews. I will take care of them in the future."

Aegon approached, yawning sleepily and reeking of bad humor. "Two cute little things. Let's see how good they are," he said, trying to open the swaddling clothes.

"Aegon, don't be a nuisance!" Aemond scolded, quickly returning the children to Rhaenyra. "Those are our nephews. You'll scare them."

He took on the responsibility of being an uncle to his brother's children.

Aegon missed his chance and said uninterestedly, "Oh, I was just joking." He had only wanted to see the babies' features, recalling seeing Aemond's as a baby. What was the big deal?

Aemond's face turned red at the memory of a childhood humiliation, and he turned away angrily, ignoring Aegon.

Rhaegar, after watching the exchange, tried to smooth things over. "Well, where is Lord Ormund? Have the Dorne raiders been dealt with?"

Aegon shook his head and replied casually, "Ormund will be here soon. The old guy pesters me every day about when you'll be back."

Aemond added, "I rode Sheepstealer and burned two groups of Dorne raiders. The remnants are hiding and will take time to clear out."

"I see," Rhaegar nodded, turning to ascend the steps of the Starry Sept. He had said all he needed to. It was time to stop procrastinating.

Halfway up the steps, High Septon Corben ignored the other Most Devout and walked straight up to him. After a few steps, he broke into a sweat and began to pant.

Rhaegar stopped and looked at him quizzically. After avoiding him for seven days and seven nights, what other tricks did he have up his sleeve?

Corben's youthful face looked weak, and he hunched his back, bowing with extreme respect.

"Prince Rhaegar, I have been waiting for you for a long time."

"Oh, waiting for me?" Rhaegar laughed. It felt like a lie to say that.

Corben stepped aside to make way for him, exhausted. "I sought guidance from the Seven, but I was unable to receive a divine message like the High Septon of history. However, I am willing to believe you, who claim to be the messenger of the gods."

"Are you sure that High Septon told the truth?" Rhaegar smiled wryly and continued up the stone steps. If you say the Old Gods or the Lord of Light R'hllor have some power, I can barely believe it.

Rhaegar had encountered them before. The Faith of the Seven had been around for thousands of years without miracles or representatives like the forest children or the red sorceress walking the earth. The so-called guidance of the Seven Gods was hardly convincing.

Upon hearing this, Corben's already pale face turned even more ghastly, and he hunched over like an old man. Facing life and death, the Seven Gods had not given him a response, contrasting starkly with the experiences of past High Septons.

Rhaegar was not interested in him. The crowd retreated as he passed, and he entered the sanctuary. With his previous experience in Oldtown, the Faith of the Seven and the Citadel were no longer concerns. He had no soldiers and no power here but Cannibal's dragonfire had silenced all dissent.

His main objective on this trip to Oldtown was House Hightower. More precisely, the two brothers, Ormund and Otto.

...

It was almost noon.

Ormund, with his house sword at his waist and vigilance in his heart, arrived at the Starry Sept accompanied by a large retinue. As they approached, they saw four dragons lying prostrate on the ground, exhaling heat waves intense enough to cook raw meat.

"Gulp..."

Ormund swallowed hard, steeling himself before entering the temple. He mustn't show fear! After all, he stood on the soil of Oldtown, the fiefdom of House Hightower.

Inside the temple hall, Rhaegar and Aemond sat on the floor, each cradling a swaddled baby and playing gently with them. Rhaenyra stood by the window, enjoying the breeze with her back to the room. Aegon, ever the charmer, had mingled with the holy sisters and was now flirting with a long-legged sister.

Ormund entered and took in the scene, his arrival drawing the attention of the others. Rhaegar looked up and gave him a cold, indifferent glance, sending a chill down Ormund's spine. He stepped forward and bowed. "Congratulations, Prince, for your new sons."

Rhaegar nodded in acknowledgment.

Rhaenyra walked over slowly and said softly, "Give me the children. You two talk." She took the swaddled babies and, led by a holy sister, retired to the inner hall.

Aemond, reluctant to part, turned his head away in silence. Aegon, looking dejected, watched the holy sisters leave with a bitter expression.

Ormund saw everything, noting the absence of his two grandnephews, and introduced the person behind him. "Prince, this is Archmaester Fischer, the head of the Citadel Conclave, who has come to pay his respects."

Ormund pointed nervously to a fat, bald old man. The old man, with dead fish eyes, pale sagging skin, and a hunched back, bowed. "Prince, I represent..."

"How many people are there in the Conclave?" Rhaegar interrupted, staring at him.

Ormund hesitated, cold sweat trickling down his face. The bald old man frowned slightly, displeased at the interruption, and said with forced patience, "Usually, seven Archmaesters preside over it. The Citadel has expanded in recent years, and there are now ten Archmaesters involved. I am honored to be one of them."

He made it clear he was hinting at the prosperity of the Citadel, hoping for leniency from Rhaegar.

Rhaegar was unimpressed and asked, "Ten Archmaesters, but only one is sent to see me. Can you represent the other nine?"

The bald old man was momentarily speechless and then said hesitantly, "I am the representative. If you have any requests, I will convey them to the Conclave."

Ching!

Truefyre flashed from his waist, a swift black blur. A red line appeared on the bald old man's neck, and blood splattered immediately.

Rhaegar shook his head and said indifferently, "You send just one errand boy to see me? Are the public servants of the Citadel so arrogant?"

As he finished speaking, the corpse fell to the ground with a thud, limbs twitching unconsciously. In an instant, the temperature in the hall dropped, as if a cold wind from the North was blowing.

Aegon's eyes widened in surprise, and he took a step back, arms folded. Aemond's one eye widened, his gaze flickering between his brother and the corpse. Shock registered first, then calmness returned, a faint smile curling his lips. He admired his brother's decisiveness.

"Prince, he's a Archmaester from the Citadel," Ormund stammered, nearly collapsing in shock.

Rhaegar glanced at him, curious. "So what?" What's so great about the Citadel? Do they really think knowledge is power? The old debts are still unsettled.

Aemond stood straighter, blood pumping in his veins. Ormund was speechless, his right hand trembling slightly holding Vigilance.

High Septon Corben emerged from the corner and ordered a few Silent Sisters to drag the corpse away. He closed his eyes in silent prayer for the dead. After a few minutes, he opened his eyes and handed a parchment contract to Rhaegar.

Rhaegar leaned back, propping himself up on his hands, and gave Aemond a wink. Aemond understood immediately, quickly getting up to grab the parchment and place it before his brother.

Rhaegar glanced at Corben and Ormund, then read the contract carefully.

"In the name of the High Septon, I hereby recognize the Protestant branch of the Faith of the Seven, grant the Targaryen royal family the right to appoint and dismiss the High Septon at will, and issue a new edition of the Seven-Pointed Star Bible..."

The contract stripped the Faith of the Seven of its power.

"The new religion is established, and the Targaryen royal family shall bear the responsibility of protecting it. The religion may be amended, and the Starry Sept shall not refute. All rights of interpretation belong to the Iron Throne."

With each provision, Corben's emaciated body seemed to age thirty years, standing only with support from others. The contract terms cemented a tyrannical alliance between the Iron Throne and the Faith of the Seven, crushing the Faith's prestige.

Rhaegar's eyes were as sharp as a hawk's. He said calmly, "High Septon, when I find a second wife, I hope you will personally perform the ceremony for us." He pointed up and down with his index finger, delivering a verbal blow: "The location will be the Starry Sept, in front of all the believers."