

LYRA stood in front of the doorway with fear gnawing in her chest. The train of her wedding gown rustled as she took a step forwards. Blue petals fell from her fingertips in a windstorm. She peered down the hall from underneath her veil, seeing nothing. Hearing nothing. Only pitch-black darkness awaited her.

Whispers from the deep reached her ears, haunting and rasping, pulling her this way and that. It was only when she caught the voice of one of them did she follow. Deeper and deeper into a winding labyrinth, her feet treading on frosted ground. She emerged onto a familiar courtyard of falling snow.

Winterfell. Home Her breath escaped her in a heated sigh. She ran across the deserted square, hand skimming past the stone pilaster that connected the castle to the towers. Past the withering fringe flowers and winterberries. The yawning entrance of the crypts loomed ahead, larger than she remembered.

She passed through the shadows, displacing the gathered dust and ash beneath. White as bone, pure as truth. A light flickered in the darkness, wispy hair glinting in the gloom. She approached the figure, passing the voiceless witnesses of that silent hall with muted veneration.

He looked at her, or through her, she was not sure. Gaunt and wizened, almost a century's worth of knowledge etched into deep creases and fine lines. Long had he lived and longer still would he be remembered as the greatest king of the most golden reign of his dynasty.

"It was a vision," he said, voice as crackling as dried parchment, "of a song." He turned back to the sepulchre, faded hands of stone covering tearless and unseeing eyes. "Can you hear it?"

And she did. A formless yet poignant melody that swirled palely in the air. Its tune was of bygone memories that were the past, present and future all at once. Notes of frozen glass and melting steel, words spoken and unspoken.

"Vædar Suvio Perzo", he whispered. "Rûnagon se nârhêdegort."

Lyra repeated the words to herself, over and over, committing them to her memory. To her soul. Until it was the only thing that she could remember.

Yet when she awoke, she still forgot.

Like murky water, the dream dwindled out of existence as if it had never been. Lyra brushed a hand across her eyes. She had been back in Winterfell, she remembered. Her heart still longed for home.

A knock sounded on the door and her handmaidens entered, smiling graciously in excitement. "My lady, today is a big day for you and the entire realm."

Lyra looked at them and could not help a wide smile of her own. Her heart fluttered inside her, elating at the thought of what was to come. She quickly got out of her bed, allowing the handmaidens to bathe and robe her. They rubbed scented oils into her skin and hair, of roses and lilacs.

Her mother was already waiting in the morning chamber with Aemma and Rhaenyra. Lyra caught her little niece in her arms, swinging her around before putting her down in a fit of laughter.

"Today is finally the day!" Rhaenyra giggled happily for her.

"She could hardly sleep from all the excitement," Aemma said with a chuckle. "I hope you had managed to, at least, Lyra."

"I had," Lyra responded but the handmaidens did not allow her any time to waste. They pulled her behind the partition and started to change her. "Is there even any time for breakfast?"

"Here, I brought something for you. I know how these things can go." Aemma handed her some buttered bread baked with blueberries. Lyra stuffed it into her mouth right before her arms had to go into the wedding dress.

"Thank you!" she said with muted difficulty.

After having put on her dress, the handmaidens started to arrange her hair. Lyra's mother chose her jewellery as she always did, picking silver winter flowers to match her dress. Rhaenyra fed her more bread while Aemma entertained her with lively court gossip.

After an hour, she was finally ready and just in time to be taken to the royal sept. Rhaenyra, Aemma and her mother had gone ahead of her to take their places amongst the main families.

The smell of burning candles mixed with fragrant oils and incense greeted Lyra as she walked down the hallways above the serpentine steps of the keep. She could already hear the murmurs of a hundred voices all crowded within the sept to witness the royal wedding.

One of the knights that escorted her opened the door a tiny gap to signal to her father that they were waiting. The babble dimmed as the septon started to recite prayers from The Seven-Pointed Star, words of wisdom and holy sermon.

Then the doors opened and Lyra saw the altar standing between the statues of the Mother and the Father with the septon in front of it. Next to him stood Daemon, robed in stalwart gold and crowned with his glistening silver locks. Her breaths grew frayed, heartbeat drumming to an irregular rhythm. From above, sunlit crystals glowed with vivid rainbows.

Her father held a hand out to her which she took and he led her down the aisle. Lyra was only vaguely aware of the familiar faces watching her, lost amongst a sea of hazy recollections. Her eyes only ever upon her awaiting groom. As they drew near, she could finally behold him in all his unsung glory. A vision of morning gems and spectral starlight. How she yearned for him.

Her father presented her in front of the altar and she took her position by Daemon's side. Their gazes locked onto one another as if in a spellbound trance. The septon gestured to them and spoke, "You may now cloak the bride and bring her under your protection."

She turned for him and Daemon removed her cloak of grey and white. The wolf sigil fell away and he passed it back respectfully to her father nearby. He then slipped his cloak from his shoulders and placed it upon hers so that she now donned black and red.

"My lords and ladies," the septon proclaimed, "we stand here in the sight of gods and men to witness the union of man and wife. One flesh, one heart, one soul, now and forever."

Lyra brought her hand up to meet Daemon's. They held each other with a tender touch as the septon proceeded to tie a knot around their joined hands. Their union.

"Let it be known that Lyra of the House Stark and Daemon of the House Targaryen are one heart, one flesh and one soul. Cursed be he who would seek to tear them asunder. In the sight of the Seven, I hereby seal these two souls, binding them as one for eternity."

Daemon mouthed to her, "For eternity".

She can't help but grin at his antics.

The septon unraveled the knot before commanding, "Look upon each other and say the words."

With their hands still clasped together, they started to recite their vows. "Father, Smith, Warrior, Mother, Maiden, Crone, Stranger..."

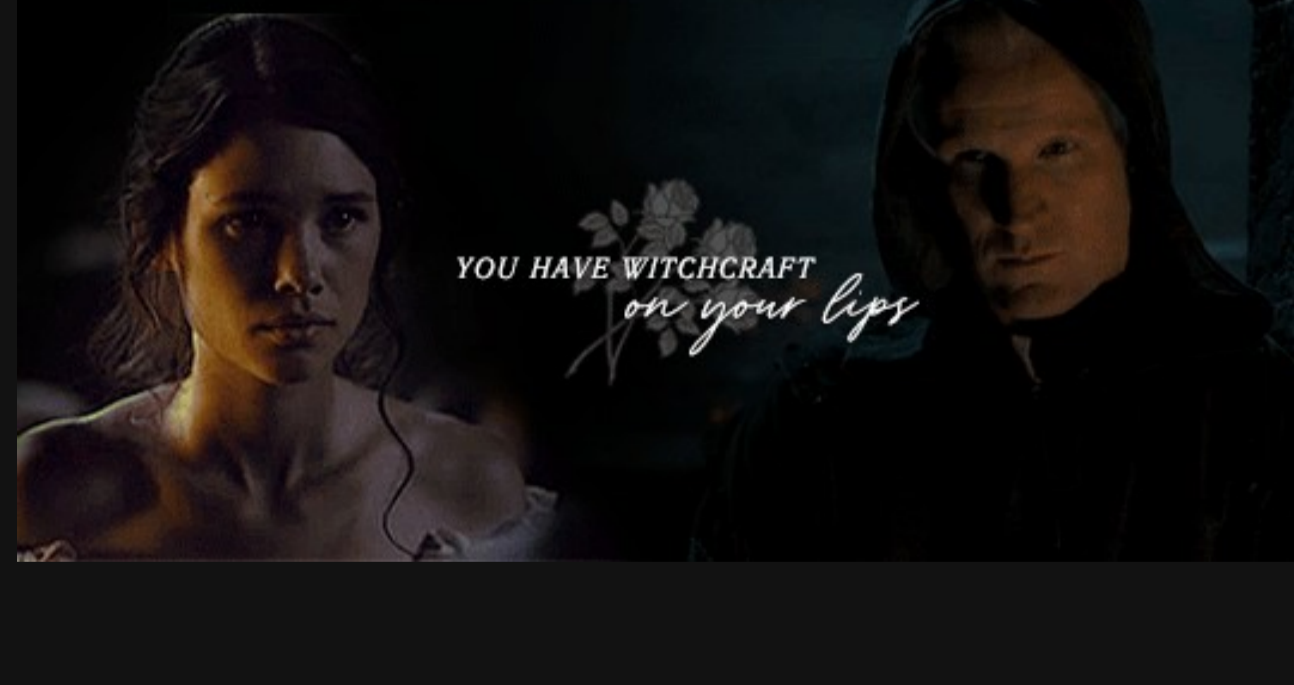
"I am his and he is mine."

"I am hers and she is mine."

Daemon interlaced his fingers with hers as they ended together, "From this day, until the end of my days."

"With this kiss," he then said, "I pledge my love."

He leaned forward and kissed her gently, so ly like spilt sunrays across a glass sea. And she could hear it, a faint hum on the breeze with the sweetest and bitterest of melodies. Dancing forth from a lonely virescent dream. Of summer rain and winter snow. Blazing suns and glimmering moons. Crossing azure heavens and midnight shadows. A song of ice and fire.



AUTHOR'S NOTE

(breathing heavily) I have been waiting for this chapter all my life.

everything before this is like the biggest prologue I have ever written.

I'm so excited to hear what you guys think of this chapter. we're

gonna start entering the house of the dragon next <3

Translations:

Vædar Suvio Perzo a song of ice and fire

Rûnagon se nârhêdegort remember and forget

Continue reading next part