



TWILIGHT started to descend upon the Red Keep in a blanket of feeble starlight. Nervous fingertips unfurled the raven scroll in pale hands, before furling it once more. Over and over in silent rumination, pondering thoughts lost astray upon knotted streets.

It leaves tonight Three words, imprinted on smudged fading ink. Driving her to the brink of disaster.

The door to the chambers opened and Lyra stirred from the chair. She slipped the message back into her sleeve. A candle was lit in a golden flicker and she saw Viserys through the greyness of the gloom. She rubbed her eyes tiredly and leaned forwards.

It was cold and still, like the gathering of a brewing storm. A servant should have come to lit the hearth. "Good-brother..." she murmured.

"Lyra, thank you..." Viserys said, "but you need to rest too. Daemon is waiting for you."

She looked to the bed where Aemma lay in a sound sleep. Her fever had finally broken a er strenuous childbirth. She did have twins as Lyra thought. But one was a stillbirth and the other perished not more than two hours later. Viserys had just burned the funeral pyre that morn.

He placed a hand on her shoulder and she nodded, standing from the chair. She replaced the cloth on Aemma's forehead before leaving. The corridors seemed dark and foreboding that evening as she crossed the tower alone.

Daemon had moved their chambers to an isolated corner of the holdfast, having found one with a balcony that overlooked the glazed Bay below. She would spend most of her time reading in front of it now if she wasn't engaged in some other activity.

Lyra arrived just in time to find the bath drawn in the adjoining small chamber. Daemon stood there with a suggestive smile. He helped her out of her dress before joining her in the large stone tub. The warm waters eased the weariness from her tense muscles. Daemon's arms wrapped around her from behind, resting against her growing belly.

"How is Aemma?" he asked.

"The fever broke," she told him. "Thankfully. And Rhaenyra?"

"Disconsolate..." he said so ly. "She stayed in the godswood the entire day a er the funeral pyre."

Lyra sighed heavily, as if shouldering an unfathomable burden. "Childbirth is never an easy thing."

Daemon caressed her cheek gently, violet eyes holding her with a poignant gaze. He pressed his lips on the edge of her shoulder, as silken as rose petals in first bloom. "I know you will do well when your time comes."

She held in another sigh, wanting to tell him that they could not possibly divine what the gods had in store for them. Instead, she leaned back against his chest and relished the warmth. The bouquet of cloying lavender rose in twining lace with the steam. Her eyelids fluttered close.

"What should we name them?" she asked.

"Well, if it's a boy ... we should name him a er Brandon," Daemon said. "I know you wish it, in your heart."

Lyra smiled gratefully but shook her head. "Not the firstborn ... I thought Baelor, a er your father, for a boy."

"Baelor is a good name," he agreed.

"And a girl?"

"I've always thought of Alyse, a er my mother," he said.

Her eyes closed again with a blissful smile. "Then it is decided."

"We are not stopping there, are we?" Daemon asked and she could hear the smirk in his voice. Lyra splashed bathwater into his face, then shrieked as he scooped it with both hands and dumped it over her head in return.

When the water started to run tepid, they quitted the bath and readied themselves for bed. Swathes of sombre clouds shrouded the silver moon in the stygian sky. Lyra waited for Daemon's breaths to grow even, steady as whispering waves. She then stole away from his arms, crossing the chambers with bare feet.

Nervous fingertips unfurled the scroll within its grasp, pale virescent eyes gazing faraway. She picked up the candle and walked slowly towards the balcony. It flickered gold and blazing orange against the chilled breeze. Lyra looked out to the Bay, calm as a slate of black ice.

In the distance, she saw a glow that grew with evanescent fury. Embers igniting as the docked ships were set alight in a growing furore. The streets writhed with wailing screams, ash and smoke spiralling in the air.

Lyra watched with a fulgent gleam in her eyes, with fire and blood.



Imminent motherhood had not seemed to suit Lyra well. She ached constantly, from her feet to her head. Pain was an ever present companion in her last few months. Nothing could help or ease her discomforts, nor could anything or anyone o er her distraction.

There was a festering inside of her that continued to grow. She tried, for the sake of the babe, to cut it out of her. To be content. But with every raven that came, every letter crushed in trembling pale hands, the rot inside her festered. Crimson and black.

Her only solace was the waxing moon and distant ghostlights. Crisp winds against her swollen, distended skin.

"Nuha jorrælagori! Daemon wrapped his arms around her. "The bath is ready."

She turned to smile at him, caressing her cheek against his own. "Go ahead. I will join you shortly."

"Don't take too long," he told her before slipping away. She turned back to the moon and the Bay, closing her eyes with a weary sigh.

There was a shu le of boots behind her, clothes rustling in motion. Briefly, she wondered what Daemon was up to when a hand was clamped around her mouth.

Lyra tore her eyes open, heart jumping into her throat, and saw a blade as thin as glass coming down on her. She threw her hand in the air, grabbing hold of it and felt the searing sting of its gash across her palm. Blood ran thickly down her wrist and she bit hard into the hand around her mouth.

There was a cry of pain as the hand withdrew and Lyra spat out. They struggled briefly before she pushed her assailant with an elbow to the ribs. Hands freed, she pulled out her own dagger from the folds of her dress. Silver flashed cold and cruel as she turned around, plunging her dagger through flesh. She fell together with the robed figure, thrusting the blade over and over with frenzied cries.

"Lyra?!" Firm arms wrapped around her, pulling her away. Daemon was wiping the blood and tears from her face, staining his own hands in vivid scarlet. "What—What happened? How?" he was questioning.

Crimson pooled on the pale red stone. Her heart continued to drum heavy and quick against her breastbone. She shook her head in equal uncertainty. "I—I don't know, he just came up behind me..."

Perhaps the man scaled the walls in all his madness. Though she suspected they both knew the reason why

Then a shiver went down Lyra's spine with ice-cold dismay. She seized Daemon's hand in a vice, just as she felt a scorching pain stab between her belly. Liquid dripped between her legs, soaking her skirts.

"Daemon..." she called, voice strained and pitched.

Violet eyes widened with dread, sweeping over her face and towards her abdomen. It was still too early. Immediately, he picked her up from the floor and carried her to the bed. Then he was running out of the chambers to summon the midwives.

The labour was long and arduous, until the moon fell from the sky and hid within the cusp of the horizon. Her screams filled the expectant night, echoing under a heedless void. It was only when tendrils of an unripened dawn clawed out from beneath the twilight was her child born at last. Wailing in the silence of a new morn.

Lyra held him in her arms, tu s of ebony sable peaking from beneath his swaddling cloth. She looked to Daemon beside her who smiled serenely. "A wolf it is," he said.

Baelor Targaryen, their firstborn son. Forged from frost and flames.

News of the babe promulgated quickly throughout the Keep and it was not long before Lyra received her first visitor. Rhaenyra shot towards her aunt with delighted grins and eager hands. She nudged her small finger between her cousin's teeny ones, laughing as he made faint sounds. Her eyes studied him with misty adoration.

Rhaenyra leaned in close to Lyra's ear to whisper, "I love him already."



AUTHOR'S NOTE

just to shed a triarchy lmao. on this chapter, lyra is waging a private war against the triarchy of lmao. how she's doing it will be more or less revealed in the next chapter. i wrote it to be a bit vague and mysterious because she's keeping it a secret even from daemon but he totally suspects what she's doing. so basically she caught wind of the tyroshi captain coming back to king's landing and burnt his ship. then he sent an assassin as pay back lol. let me know what you think of the chapter! xx

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