

LYRA barely clung to consciousness on most days as she had been pulled out of the bay. Her hands were cold as ice during the nights when the waves calmed and the seas hummed. Then greensickness would strike her when the ship churned in tandem with the tempestuous tides.

Time became irrelevant when one was always in a constant flux of agony. She only wished for it to end. The *Blue Dowager* as the ship was called, had spirited her over the Narrow Sea. Away from her home and family. She was nobody aboard the galley of more than a hundred crewmen.

Days passed in a haze of rising suns and falling moons. She would sometimes whisper to the stars, through cracks in the bulkheads. They had sequestered her away in one of the holding cells, behind barrels of fragrant herbs and spices. Only the cook would visit her with a new bowl of food. Dried bread and salted meats.

But she had a greater worry that gnawed constantly at her waking thoughts. It may have been a moon or more since she had been adrift at sea. She was sure that she was quickening once more. Lyra had never been devout but she found herself murmuring prayers on black lonely nights. To the Old Gods and the New. Please spare her child.

Then one day, she awoke to the trudge of heavy boots. Her cell opened with a deafening squeal from rusted hinges. A gruff voice ordered her to stand. Her wrists were bound with a rough woven rope that the captain used to lead her with. Once the first mate to Caaro Noqane and now elevated in position after his demise.

Lyra squinted painfully under the daylight, ethereal spots bursting forth in her vision. She stumbled slightly across the deck, hearing gulls flocking overhead. Her feet touched a pathway of uneven limestones. The heat shimmered upon the air like an ebbing dream.

They took a double boxed palanquin into the eastern half of the city. Lyra saw majestic domed structures, towering pillars with numerous statues and hallowed temples reaching high to the heavens. She had never seen such sights before in Westeros. How mighty the blood of Old Valyria had been in its prime.

They went through a thick black wall made of imposing dragonstone that reached hundreds of feet above them. Harder than steel or diamond, spell-forged with dragonfire. Inside its obsidian heart, Old Volantis protected palaces and temples and cloisters of the Old Blood. Lyra's own blood ran colder than the waters lapping against the Frozen Shore.

The palanquin arrived upon a courtyard of a grand establishment. Gossamer curtains hung from connecting stone pergolas, and women as elegant as swans frolicked amongst verdant blooms. She was pulled over the covered litter and brought to the front doors.

A woman with sandy blonde hair turned to look at them in greeting. She had warm sun-kissed skin and earthy brown eyes. Lyra thought the woman could not be any older than herself. The captain spoke in the Lyseni dialect, a corruption of High Valyrian that flowed like liquid silver.

The woman walked forwards, tipping Lyra's chin upwards to expose her face to the light. "Issay daora *ǰ* ris. Skorydosa böse emaganon ao mirre *z*ǰles?" she asked.

"Mēri ilā hūraš", the captain responded.

A month Lyra pondered. It had felt far longer than that.

"Kesani sindigos *z*ǰles!"

And like a piece of ivory or jade, Lyra passed hands from the captain to the proprietress.

The woman had brought her to a private chamber upstairs, overlooking the large fountain nestled within the gardens. Lyra was allowed a change of clothes and nourishment. Then she fell asleep upon the divan by the window.

Gentle footfalls soon woke her from a light slumber. She heard hushed voices on the threshold of the chambers. "Look at her, Saera, do you not find it familiar?" The voice belonged to the woman from before.

A new voice answered, deeper and more measured in tone, "What am I supposed to see, Johanna? Another poor girl taken like you? Keep her if you wish it."

"Look closer," Johanna insisted.

Lyra heard them step into the chamber, their presence drawing closer to her position. "She is highborn?" the voice of Saera asked.

"A Stark"

"Impossible." There was a pause and Lyra was aware of her missing wolf's pin that Johanna took. "Skorkydoso gōntan *z*ǰy jǰōragon kesīř?"

Lyra fluttered her eyes open then. "Ondoso ilā gaomagorī." She turned to look at the women in front of her. Her surprise was evident when she laid eyes on golden sunspun hair shot with silver highlights, and pale lilac eyes of familiar hues.

Saera looked back at her curiously. "Who taught you the tongue of High Valyrian?"

"I am Lyra Stark, firstborn daughter of Lord Rickon Stark of Winterfell and Warden of the North," she told them, "Daemon Targaryen is my husband."

Lyra's health grew poorer with each passing day. She could not follow Johanna across the Narrow Sea to return home. The journey to Volantis had already taken its toll on her. Hence, she was brought under Saera's care. She was, as ever, still considered family though she had not seen King's Landing for over a decade.

Lyra had heard very little of Daemon's aunt who escaped the Silent Sisters to the Free Cities. All anyone would say was that a scandal was involved. But when Saera told her details, that King Jaehaerys had caught her kissing her handmaids and coupling with two lords (who both thought they were her first), Lyra could only laugh.

The king had been livid when she asked why she could not take two husbands like Aegon the Conqueror or Maegor the Cruel. It reminded Lyra so much of Daemon, that free-spiritedness and tenacity that she so adored. She missed him terribly, as well as Baelor.

"I can arrange a message to be sent to him," Saera had offered.

Lyra had been sorely tempted to, but a legion of doubts stayed her hand. Foremost of all was that she was frightened it would only bring more heartache. She did not know when her body would fail her. Most days, she was bedbound. Even with what little strength returned to her, she could only venture as far as the gardens outside. Like a caged bird with clipped wings.

And as the moons turned, her belly continued to swell with agonising ramifications. Carrying Baelor had been one of the hardest periods of her life, up until then. The healer told her she was now carrying twins and so her pain were twofold.

It was on a sultry, moonlit night when Lyra entered her first throes of childbirth. Saera had summoned the best midwives and healers to attend her. Lyra was terrified. She did not know if she would survive the ordeal, or even had the strength to deliver her children at all.

But she did, after many long hours on the birthing bed. Vaegon and Alyse were born at last, the girl grasping onto her older brother's foot as the midwives proclaimed. Saera professed that she was glad to witness the birth of her grand-nephew and niece.

The celebrations did not last long. As after a few hours of holding her newborn children, Lyra was beset with childbed fever. The healers gave her milk of the poppy so that she would sleep. She also dreamt.

Lyra was taken back to the crypts below Winterfell, cold and silent as the sleeping bones. Once again, she saw the statue of white stone hands covering tearless, unseeing eyes. In front of it stood her father with ice between his hands. She felt a vice squeeze her heart, leaving her gasping for solace.

"Father," she called helplessly, clutching at her breast. "I am here."

He did not seem to hear his nor notice her presence. Keeping his lonely vigil, he closed his eyes with mournful sorrow. The blade of Valyrian steel he bore started to catch aflame. A cold, biting light that burned slowly. Then he sang to her, his deep voice resonating within the crypt and her soul. And the fire consumed him.

Lyra awoke with tears streaming down her face, weeping bitterly in her bed. The chamber was empty and she was still shivering from her fever despite the muggy air. Her skin was colder than the frozen snow beyond the Wall. With tremulous difficulty, she pulled herself out of bed and walked out of the house. Like a ghost, she wandered the gardens in a delirious daze.

Through the quiet streets of Old Volantis, passing sprawling palaces and majestic statues. In the heart of its heart, she saw an eternal flame burning atop a bridge made of sunset stone. Lancing before the moon and stars. She climbed its narrow steps, guarded by servants of the Fiery Hand. None stopped her ascent. The Temple of the Lord of Light was open to all who sought to worship the god of flame and shadow.

Lyra stopped underneath the running buttresses and pillars of chiselled rock. A hundred dazzling shades of crimson gold bleeding across an undying gloam. She fell to her knees in reverence before the great flame burning at its hearth. The red priests and priestesses looked upon her with pity in their eyes.

In the flickering light, she saw herself reflected within its heart. From twilight realms of forgotten dreams, she heard a song as crisp as first snow. Clear as melting ice and crystal lakes. Of sorrow and unending nights. Stars blazing upon empyrean plains.

A winter's song. Sung upon fields of war and falling ash.

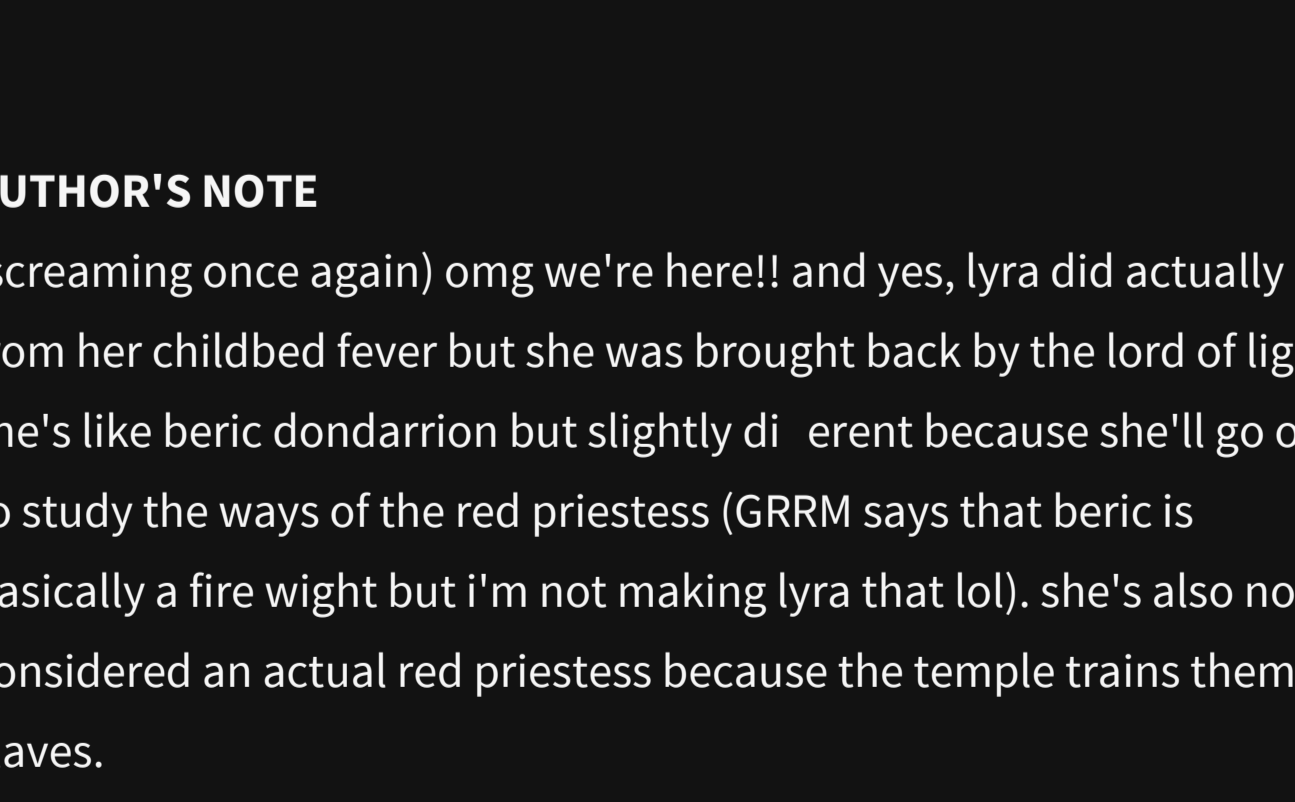
Lyra foresaw and she listened, before her body failed her at last. Collapsing onto the faded cerise stones. Her vision dimmed, sinking beneath waters of oblivion. As cold as the hands of death itself. A red priestess darted forwards to assist, only to find she had drawn one final rasping breath.

With R'hllor bearing witness, Lyra Stark passed into the shadows.

As was their rite, the priestess filled her mouth with fire and breathed its cleansing flames down Lyra's throat. A kiss of life.

And she awoke, reborn. Gasping and clawing for air into her lungs. Green eyes opened with renewed radiance. With pale fire glimmering.

It was later said, as Daemon had come to hear of it from the priests and priestesses, that the Lord of Light touched her in a way that he had yet to touch any other.



AUTHOR'S NOTE

(screaming once again) omg we're here!! and yes, lyra did actually die from her childbed fever but she was brought back by the lord of light. she's like beric dondarrion but slightly different because she'll go on to study the ways of the red priestess (GRRM says that beric is basically a fire wight but i'm not making lyra that lol). she's also not considered an actual red priestess because the temple trains them as slaves.

lyra doesn't have a dragon but at least she can still kick some fiery ass :)) ask me your burningquestions (haha lol) and let me know what you think of her development! xx

Translations:

* i made up the lyseni dialect by butchering original high valyrian lol

* "Issay daora *ǰ* ris. Skorydosa böse emaganon ao mirre *z*ǰles? - she is ill. how long have you kept her?"

* "Mēri ilā hūraš", - only a moon

* "Kesani sindigos *z*ǰles!" - i will buy her

"Skorkydoso gōntan *z*ǰy jǰōragon kesīř?- how did she get here?"

"Ondoso ilā gaomagorī"- by a mistake