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FOUR YEARS LATER

1.10 AC

LYRA was weary. She felt it in her bones, her soul and the empty spaces between them. Each breath she took had become a labour. Every word passed through her lips akin to hollow promises. All her efforts executed for nought but fruitless endeavours.

Viserys stood from the table as their meeting concluded. The members of the small council respectfully followed suit, returning their marbles to the centre of the table. Her green eyes caught the cool blues of the King's Hand. An icy wave of enmity passed between them before each tore their gazes away with raking claws.

She was brought back to that night in Winterfell. The sound of ringing metal echoing through the hall as Daemon dropped his goblet to the stone floor. "Is this revenge for Sharra?" he had asked then.

She thought that was the moment, when she had brought the direwolf back to the Red Keep with them. The moment that Otto Hightower decided that he despised her as much as he did Daemon. A black, blind hatred.

Lord Beesbury turned to her entreatingly. "Please do ask your lord husband to send me a report of the latest requisitions he made for the City Watch, Lady Lyra." He paused before adding, "I do not doubt your reports of the city's dwindling crimes but there are certain accountings that still need to be assessed."

She gave a strained smile, thinking of how her next few days will be spent. "Of course, my lord, you will see it soon."

"Thank you." He nodded gratefully before departing the chambers himself.

She gave a small sigh as she glanced at Daemon's empty seat. Opposite her, Corlys was furling his maps in dejection. Lyra wondered if this was the true reason that Viserys appointed her to the position. She leaned towards the Lord of Drimark.

"I will ask for Lysene support, Corlys," she told him discreetly, "I have contacts in Lys that might help alleviate the situation on the Stepstones. If the gods be kind."

He looked at her with an expression that matched how she felt. "I know I can always count on you, Lyra. You have my thanks, even if others may not be as willing to provide it."

She chuckled, knowing full well what he meant. "If the gods be kind," she repeated before bidding him farewell.

Lyra found herself clinging to a perishing, broken faith recently. If there had been any higher power before, they have been reclusively silent. After having bathed in heaven's light, felt its fiery breath course through her veins. She now felt incredibly desolate. Lost to a starless forsaken sea.

Like clockwork, she made her way back to the nursery in Maegor's Holdfast. Aemma was the first to greet her with a cheerful, "Good morrow, Lyra!"

Lyra smiled at her. "Good morrow to you too. How was your morning?"

"Restless. He keeps kicking every hour or so," she replied.

The wet nurse carefully laid Aerion onto Lyra's waiting arms. "You think it's a boy too?" she asked with a grin. Her two-year-old son peered up with mismatched violet and green eyes. Wispy tarnished gold tresses in a disarray. A tiny hand clasped around her finger.

"Viserys is so convinced that it's a boy that he has me convinced too," Aemma told her.

"He almost has everyone convinced of it," Lyra remarked wryly, walking over to sit by the window as well. Warm resplendent sunrays spilled across her skin in a gentle caress.

"You look exhausted, Lyra," the queen commented disapprovingly. "Has Daemon been keeping you up at night again?"

She scoffed lightly with a slight roll of the eye. "More like his absence."

Aemma tutted. "What has he been doing?"

A sigh escaped her. "He is Lord Commander of the City Watch." As if it explained anything.

"He is also a husband and a father. Sometimes they need a little reminder of that." Years of experience laced her voice, blue eyes stern but sympathetic.

Lyra hummed with acquiescence. "So this is the last one?"

Aemma chuckled. "Yes, I've told Viserys as much. I am tired, Lyra. I can't remember the last time when my body did not ache."

Lyra leaned forwards conspiratorially. "We should go somewhere, after the children are grown enough. Just the both of us. We could visit Highgarden, Lady Elinor has always been pleasant to spend time with. Or we could go to Lys, men are not the only ones to partake in simple pleasures."

Aemma laughed loudly at the wild fantasy she spun. "That sounds lovely. Highgarden would be nice, I don't think I would survive the voyage to Essos. Neither would you!"

Lyra grinned widely, content in the knowledge that she was not truly alone. She clasped Aemma's hand, the sister that she never had in her youth. Her kindred spirit when both their husbands drank too deeply from their cups. When the men had flights of fancies and soared too close to the sun. In every moment, they always had each other.

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The candles had burnt low into the night, the only sound was the scratching of her quill across rough parchment. Lyra had lost track of time as she poured over Daemon's ledgers in his cabinet. It might have been the hour of the owl but she could not be certain. Her shoulders ached from hunching over the tabletop.

She leaned back to close her eyes for a moment, and perhaps she fell asleep. For the next thing she was aware of was so familiar lips on her neck. Lyra groaned awake, feeling goose flesh on her skin.

"Daemon?" she called.

His violet eyes peered up at her with a low chuckle. "I'm sorry, I couldn't resist." He pressed a kiss against her temple. "You looked so beautiful."

She smiled at him, smelling the heady scent of wine. "And where have you been?"

He went down on his knees and laid his head against her middle, arms wrapped around her waist. "A tavern," he said, voice muffled in the folds of her dress.

"For five days in a row? She raised a brow, an edge to her voice.

Daemon winced. "No, I came back here to sleep in the mornings but you were out." He turned his head to the side to look at her. "I'm sure one of your little doves has told you all about it. Did you tell Mysaria to send me a message?"

"Aemma said that you might have needed a little reminder," she said.

"She almost gelded me with a knife." Her lips twitched with amusement. "You like that, don't you?"

She feigned innocence. "I didn't say anything."

He straightened from his position, leaning over her closely with his face inches from hers. Lyra felt her ire melt away like ice crystals in the throes of a spring thaw. She gazed fondly into his violet eyes that she adored, helpless under his charming allure.

"I don't need to be reminded of the fringes of her hair." "I think of you all the time, jorrælagon hen ñuha äbraf.

Lyra laughed at him. "You and your honeyed lips. I will not fall for it."

Daemon smirked. "Perhaps you need a taste." He pecked her softly. "What about now?"

"That was hardly convincing," she remarked with disbelief.

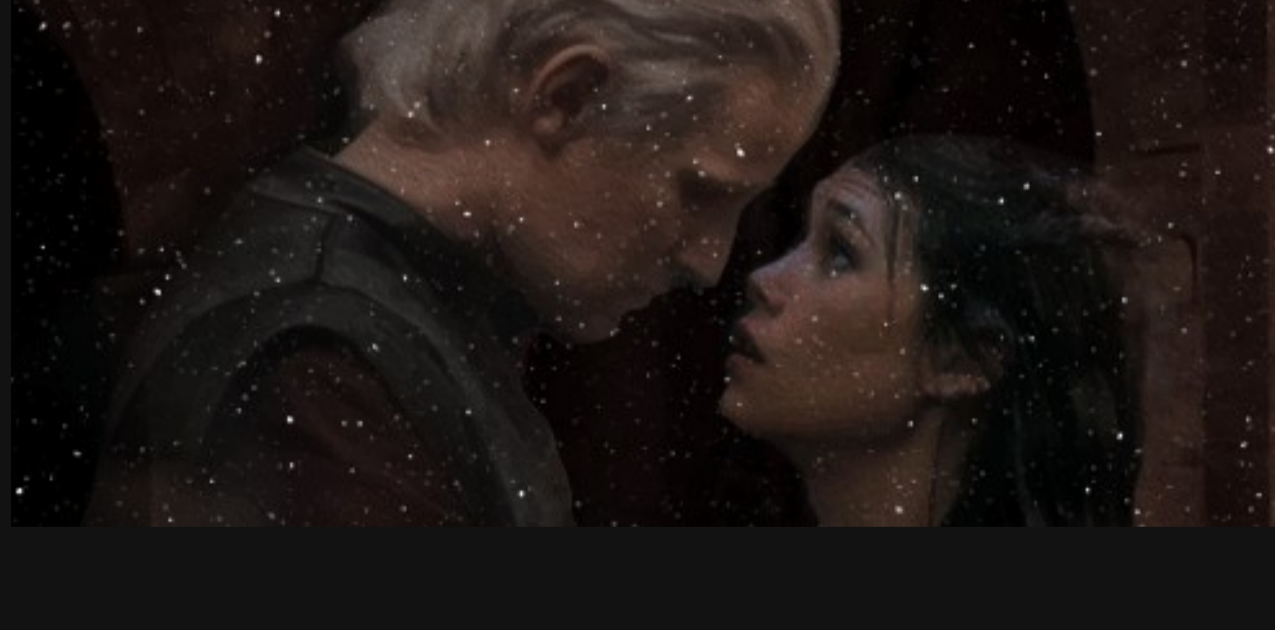
With a wolfish grin, he closed the scant gap between them and kissed her with a passionate zeal. His hands swept through her dark hair, curling around the length of her neck to cradle her face. She tasted his saccharine tongue, like a potent nectar that sent her into an enraptured haze.

He picked her up from the chair, turning around to lay her against the table behind. Her elbow knocked against the ink well and a black cloud engulfed the parchment of her report. She cursed inwardly.

Now she had to redo everything.

Daemon ran his lips down her throat, his warm breath against her skin. She closed her eyes with heated fervour, her arms encircling him tightly. The candles died out, the darkness filled only with their amorous sighs and ardent whispers.

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AUTHOR'S NOTE

we're finally in hotd, prep for tears :(((

btw i have an aemond fic on my profile titled 'tears of lys'. it's supposed to be a darker fic though and my new obsession. please send it some love if you're interested <33 here's a little tease:



Translations:

jorrælagon hen ñuha äbrar love of my life

Continue reading next part