

“You’re not bad, boy,” Ser Jaime said as he and Jon circled each other. “Did your father train you?”

“We’ve sparred before, but my instruction came from our Master-At-Arms, Ser Rodrick,” Jon replied, wondering how in all the hells he was actually crossing training swords with Jaime Lannister of all knights.

To say that his life had changed dramatically in the past few weeks would be an incredible understatement, and it had all spawned from a single conversation he’d had with his father back in Winterfell.

“You...what?” Ned asked, stunned almost to silence by Jon’s words. “You...you’ve wanted to join the Night’s Watch since you were a boy.”

“Perhaps his uncle finally told him that the Wall’s nothing but an overglorified prison for rapers, murderers, and, more recently, dragon-lovers,” Robert chuckled. “No offense, Benjen.”

“None taken, Your Grace,” Benjen replied tiredly.

“To be clear, Father, I’m not saying that I don’t still want to join the Night’s Watch, but I just wonder if waiting a year or so wouldn’t be a good idea,” Jon replied, practically feeling Catelyn’s icy glare on him as he stood before the high table.

The king and his father had returned from their hunt earlier that day, having successfully slain a massive stag out in the woods, and he’d been forced to wait until this moment to speak with him, as he’d been busy all day since.

“Ned, I don’t want him here without you,” Catelyn hissed. “Him joining the Watch is something we’ve been discussing for years.”

“With respect, Cat, he’s committed no crimes,” Benjen said firmly. “If Jon doesn’t want to join the Watch, or if he wants to put it off another year, he has that right.”

“His rights do not extend to an indefinite stay in this castle,” Catelyn glared.

“Mother, in Father’s absence, that call will be mine, not yours,” Robb said, earning a hurt look from her. “I’ve always thought he could make a fair replacement for Ser Rodrick when the time comes, not that it’s likely to anytime soon, good Ser.”

Ser Rodrick said nothing to that, knowing better than to stick his nose in Stark business.

“Robb...thank you, but my lady, you don’t need to worry about me staying here indefinitely,” Jon said. “I was actually wondering if it might be possible for me to accompany you down to the capital, Father.”

Ned stared at him in shock, wondering where this could possibly be coming from and how in the world he could justify saying no. Jon had the Stark look, but he couldn’t say for absolute certain that there was nothing about him that might remind people of Rhaegar, and there were still a couple around the Red Keep, who remembered the late prince.

“Honestly, the idea makes perfect sense,” Sansa said casually, and Catelyn nearly choked on her own spit as she stared at her daughter in betrayed shock. “Jon still plans to join the Night’s Watch, as he said, and in the capital, he’d get the opportunity to train with the finest knights in the realm. That sort of experience would prove quite useful, would it not, Your Grace?”

“Frankly, Sansa, the best experience any warrior can get is in a real battle where, in every engagement, your options are death or killing the cu...man in front of you,” Robert replied wistfully, “but training with the better members of the Kingsguard would be a fine experience too. How are you with a blade, Jon?”

“I like to think I’m good, Your Grace,” Jon replied neutrally, and the king laughed.

“So does everyone,” Robert replied. “You can test your skills against Ser Mandon later, and if you prove to have talent, I could have the rest of them teach you.”

“Yes, Your Grace,” Mandon Moore nodded behind him.

“I...are you certain, Robert?” Ned asked, more taken aback than he’d been in years.

“Of course!” Robert grinned. “To be honest, Ned, there are a couple members of the guard I could see needing to replace in the coming years, and if your boy has talent, who knows? You can never have enough good warriors around you, and you, boy, have the bearing of a warrior already, though we’ll see if you have the skills.”

“I’m honored, Your Grace,” Jon breathed, nodding his head.

“And I’m thirsty,” Robert chuckled. “More beer, girl!”

“Yes, Your Grace,” one of the serving girls replied, giggling as he grabbed her arse.

Between Ned’s bafflement, Catelyn’s fury, and Sansa, Robb, and a completely gobsmacked Arya’s joy, no one noticed how unusually pleased Cersei looked at the development.

Jon raised his blade to parry Jaime’s downward slash, realizing a moment too late that it was a feint, and grunted as he felt the knight’s training blade rake across his ribs. Riposting with a thrust towards his chest, he grinned when he sidestepped to the left and rushed forward, seeking to drive his shoulder into his opponent’s chest to make him stagger back and give him a chance to gain any sort of find his first true opening in their spar. To his shock, Jaime twisted out of the way of him and, using his open momentum against him, reached out to trip him. Jon lost his footing immediately and fell on his face, groaning as he felt the blunted tip of the knight’s training blade press against the space between his helmet and brigandine.

“In real combat, you’d have a proper mail coif here, but even that wouldn’t save you,” Ser Jaime chuckled, stepping back and letting Jon pick himself up. “As I said, you have talent, but you fight like a boy who’s gotten too used to sparing against opponents who can’t challenge him.”

“I have much to learn, I know,” Jon said as he stood up, and the Lannister knight cocked an eyebrow in surprise.

“That’s a surprising degree of humility for someone your age,” he commented, and Jon chuckled.

“It’s just realistic,” he murmured, “though I imagine you’ve trained plenty of boys whose unearned pride made them annoying.”

“I’m no master-at-arms,” Ser Jaime drawled, “and I am not truly in the habit of training others, though I’ve taken on squires in the past who were generally more proud. A consequence of being what you are, I imagine.”

“Having too much pride is a dangerous thing,” Jon shrugged, “for a bastard, especially.”

“A budding warrior and a philosopher,” Ser Jaime sneered. “Is that why my niece interceded on your behalf as she did? A fondness for your way with words?”

Jon kept his face blank and said, “I don’t know why Princess Myrcella asked you to train me, Ser Jaime. A favor for my sister, would be my guess.”

“They have grown close, those two,” Ser Jaime murmured. “I…”

“Uncle,” Myrcella called out, and both he and Jon turned to see the princess walking towards them with Sansa in tow.

With her long, flowing golden hair, porcelain skin, and vibrant green eyes, she was absolutely stunning, he had to admit. Joffrey’s twin, she was the same age as Sansa, and the two of them had become inseparable since they arrived in the capital. Jon couldn’t say for certain when the friendship between them had started, as Myrcella hadn’t appeared to be too interested in his sister during her stay in Winterfell, but all he knew was that the pair of them spent all their time together now, something that had, more than once, gotten in the way of their own time together.

Myrcella’s green gown clung to her surprisingly generous figure well, its cut showing off tantalizing hints of her breasts, and yet while she was undeniably beautiful, he still found himself looking at his sister instead. Her gown was a deep blue, one that matched her gorgeous eyes well and contrasted sharply with her red hair. She was flushed, her pale cheeks slightly pink, and the way she looked reminded him all too much of how she did when they were together. He forced himself to look away, not wanting at all to think about how beautiful she looked when she came and flushed scarlet, and only barely caught the amused glint in her eyes.

“Cella,” Jaime nodded, smiling softly. “If you came to watch us spar, I’m afraid we’re likely done for the day.”

“That’s alright,” Myrcella said. “Sansa here was telling me about the market in Wintertown, and I wanted to show her how much more…extensive the shops in the city are.”

“Have you spoken to your mother?” Jaime asked, and Myrcella shook her head.

“She’s having a bit of a lie-in,” the blonde replied. “I hope she’s not under the weather, as she seemed to still be quite tired when I went to her chambers earlier.”

“The feast last night was long and tiring, and your mother probably just needs a little more sleep,” Jaime said, realizing his sister was almost certainly still drunk. “She would probably…”

“Tell me she was coming along if she were feeling better, but as she isn’t, I figure we can go as is,” Myrcella interrupted sharply. “I know you’re not scheduled to guard any of us today, so I want you to put together an escort for us.”

“Jon, if you could come as well, I’d appreciate that,” Sansa said. “The queen will object to our guards coming along to protect Princess Myrcella, but no one will object to my brother serving as my guard.”

“As you will,” Jon nodded, and Jaime watched the interaction curiously, keeping his face entirely blank and neutral with practiced ease.

“I’ll see to it,” he said. Turning to Jon, he quickly added, “I expect you to be by the front gate when we’re ready to leave.”

“Of course,” he nodded, turning to leave.

“It could be that the girl just wants someone she’s familiar with around, but I can’t help but feel there’s a little more to this,” Jaime thought to himself as he went inside to command a few of their more competent guards to join him.

“What in the seven hells did I drink last night?” Cersei thought to herself as her servants finished helping her into gown. The ruby-studded gold silk clung to her voluptuous form perfectly, and she smiled despite how bad she felt as she looked in the mirror.

“My queen...” Alys, one of the servants said as she finished, sounding nervous.

“What is it?” Cersei asked.

“Ser Jaime asked that we inform you that the princess has gone into the city with young Lady Stark,” Alys replied, and Cersei turned to look at her, her eyes narrowing.

“Why was I not informed sooner?” she asked, and the woman winced.

“You had given orders that you weren’t to be disturbed, and Ser Jaime obeyed,” Alys replied. “We received word of his orders only just as they were leaving.”

“Well, I’m sure she’ll be fine if my brother’s guarding her,” Cersei sighed, annoyed that she hadn’t been told first. “Who did he bring with them? I hope he wasn’t so foolish as to bring any of the Stark guards. My own men, I can trust with me children, but them...”

“The guard was composed almost entirely of royal guards,” Emma, the other servant replied and Cersei glared at her.

“Almost?” she asked slowly, and the two of them looked at each other fretfully.”

“They brought the Stark bastard with them too,” Emma replied. “It was Lady Sansa’s requ...”

“Leave, now,” Cersei hissed, and the two of them jumped, scurrying out with barely a word.

The queen glared out the nearby window, wishing that she could drink just then without it threatening to make her stomach give up its hold. She knew all too well why her servants had been so reluctant to tell her that, as she'd not been subtle in expressing her feelings about Jon Snow over the past couple weeks since they had returned. She'd seen him as a useful tool when it was first announced that the bastard would be coming with them, figuring that his continued presence in their lives would make it all the more likely for her to expose Sansa Stark as the whore that she was, but his usefulness in that regard had proven lacking, and she couldn't think of him without remembering, what had happened on the road back from Winterfell. She'd not witnessed it, getting only Joffrey and Myrcella's conflicting accounts, but that had been more than enough to make her furious.

"It's a shame I can't use Needle," Arya grinned as she held the blunted short sword in her hand, testing its weight and balance.

The two of them had gone off into the woods together while the rest of their party was camped out, with Jon finally giving into her incessant begging for training.

"I like having my blood in my body, little wolf," Jon chuckled, holding his own training blade at his side. "Now show me your stance and hold still."

Arya took her position, holding her blade out in front of her defensively, and Jon circled her, observing her as Ser Rodrick had observed him countless times.

"Your legs are too close together," he murmured, and she looked over at him.

"You said before that my slightness was a potential advantage, though," Arya said. "If I widen my stance, I make myself a bigger target."

"Yes, but you'll also make it harder for me to do this," Jon replied, shoving her without warning and grinning down at her as she landed on her arse.

"Arsehole," Arya muttered, though she was grinning as she quickly stood back up.

"Your slightness can be an advantage, but it can also be a weakness, for obvious reasons," Jon replied. "Your footwork is the first thing we'll need to work on if you want to truly learn how to use that blade, and learning how to position yourself so that it makes it harder for your opponent to make you lose your footing is critical. Move your feet a little further apart like this...perfect. You're not only sturdier like this, but you're in a better position to correct your footing if I try to knock you down."

"You're so much heavier than me, though, that you'd still do it if you shoved me like that," Arya scowled.

"Are you calling me fat?" Jon asked teasingly, and she smiled despite her annoyance.

"The way you've eaten the past few days, it's a wonder you're not already bigger than Hodor," Arya said, and he laughed.

“Since we left, the king has realized how much I look like Father and insisted I join them a few times,” Jon murmured, still barely able to wrap his head around being treated like something other than an unpleasant annoyance.

The various nobles who had visited them over the years had either ignored him or openly looked down upon him when his father wasn't looking, but since his sparring session with Ser Mandon the day before they left, King Robert had become downright pleasant. He didn't really understand it, as he hadn't landed a single hit on the emotionless knight, but the warrior king had seemed to see some sort of potential in him. It was either that or, again, he saw so much of his old friend in Jon that he didn't care what he was, and either way, it was decided strangely for the young bastard, though far from unpleasant.

“We'll work on helping you stay on your feet in a fight later, but for now, I want you to try to attack me and watch how I parry and avoid your strikes,” Jon said, stepping into position and raising his blade.

“Are you saying you don't think I'll hit you?” Arya asked coyly, and he grinned.

“I'll be very impressed if you do,” Jon replied.

“What will I get if I manage it?” Arya asked in excitement, but before Jon could reply, a decidedly unpleasant voice cut in.

“What have we here?” Joffrey asked as he stepped closer with Sansa by his side and Sandor Clegane following them. “Fighting with girls, bastard?”

“Prince Joffrey, Jon's just teaching Arya how to wield a blade,” the redhead said, suddenly fearful that this might go poorly.

“Why in the world would you do that?” Joffrey scoffed. “She's a girl, and a scrawny one at that. How could she fight anyone?”

“You...” Arya went to say when Jon placed a calming hand on her shoulder and nodded to the prince.

“It was just something she wanted to learn, my prince,” he replied, “and I had no objection to teaching her.”

“Given how you handled yourself against Ser Mandon the other day, I don't know if you're exactly qualified to teach anyone,” Joffrey snarked, and Jon ground his teeth together.

“Jon was up against a Kingsguard and got a few good hits in before he took him down,” Arya snarled. “I'd like to see you do better.”

“Arya!” Sansa exclaimed, and Joffrey glared murderously.

“Your little sister has a point, bastard,” the prince said, his angry eyes turning to Jon. “Expecting someone around our age to beat one of the finest knights in the realm would be silly. You said you wanted to teach her how to fight, well, how about we give a demonstration?”

“You want to spar with me, your prince?” Jon asked, growing tense as he saw Joffrey reach for his sword, a sword he knew damn well wasn’t blunted for training purposes. “I’m just a random bastard; would this not be a waste of your time?”

“My father seems to think you’re worth wasting time on, so why shouldn’t I?” Joffrey spat, and Jon barely resisted the urge to grimace. That was what this was really about.

“My prince, please,” Sansa breathed. “I wouldn’t want to see one of you get hurt.”

“Oh, don’t worry,” Joffrey grinned at her. “I promise not to hurt your half-brother too badly. Hound, watch her and the other one.”

“Fuck,” Jon muttered under his breath as Arya beamed up at him.

“Kick his arse, Jon,” she whispered, and he sighed, signaling for her to go wait by Sansa.

“He’s Ser Jaime’s nephew, so he might actually have some skill with a blade,” he thought to himself. “Of course, he sparred with Robb, who didn’t seem to think much of him, but he could have been bothered by having too much to drink the night before, and it’s not like I watched the duel myself.”

“First blood then?” he asked as Joffrey took his place across from him.

“First blood sounds great,” the prince hissed, lunging forward and stabbing towards his chest.

Sansa screamed just as Jon parried the blow and sidestepped, glaring at the prince, who was clearly trying to greatly wound him. He feinted towards Joffrey’s head, making him flinch and bring his blade up desperately before slicing low, grazing his blunted blade against the prince’s thigh. The blonde boy snarled and jumped back, bringing his blade in an upward arc clearly meant to buy him a chance to put greater distance between them, and Jon let him.

If this had been a real fight and he’d seen someone do that, he’d have simply dodged and pushed his advantage, but he was well aware of the fact that he couldn’t treat Joffrey like any normal opponent, and that actually wounding him at all would likely be a terrible idea. The two started to circle each other just as the sound of crunching leaves and branches reached his ear, and Jon looked over to see Ser Mandon standing there with Princess Myrcella, looking exasperated as he glared down at his young charge.

“What’s going on?” the princess asked Sansa, who went still at the sight of the white-cloaked knight behind her.

“Prince Joffrey found Jon teaching Arya to wield a blade and asked for a spar,” the redhead explained, and Myrcella nodded, looking over at the pair with some interest.

“Do you think he can win?” she asked Ser Mandon, who sighed.

“The spar? Yes, but in general...” he replied, watching as Joffrey attacked suddenly, raining down a flurry of blows against Jon, who parried them all with ease.

“What are you doing here?!” Joffrey demanded as he spotted his sister, his frustration becoming more and more evident by the moment.

“We heard a scream, and I wanted to see what was happening,” Myrcella replied.

“You heard a scream and ran toward it?” Arya asked, sounding impressed.

“Despite my protests,” Ser Mandon rumbled, and Myrcella just chuckled.

“I’ve heard enough of Father’s old stories to know that there’s a difference between a single short scream and more protracted screaming,” she replied, “and besides, you’re one of the finest knights in his guard; I knew you’d protect me.”

“I am but one man, Princess,” Ser Mandon replied. “I will need to mention this if asked by either His Grace or the queen for a report.”

Myrcella scowled at that and looked away, knowing there was no point in trying to convince him not to. Joffrey continued to press his attack, and his sister watched keenly, intrigued by how Jon Snow was handling him. He was easily the better swordsman of the two but was electing not to show that off, likely knowing how her brother would react. It showed both skill and intelligence, she realized.

“Fight me, you coward!” Joffrey exclaimed as Jon ducked under his latest slash and stepped to the side.

He was tiring out, which was perfect, as far as Jon was concerned. Up against an opponent genuinely trying to wound him, who was armed with a sharp blade when he wasn’t, but who he also couldn’t strike without consequences, his best course of action was to let him tire himself out and then disarm him cleanly. So long as he only wounded his pride, he figured he’d get out of this without too much trouble, and so, when Joffrey stepped forward, looking like he was going to try to stab at his chest again, he took it as his moment to act.

Swinging his blade around, he sought to bring it right against his foe’s sword so he could twist it out of his grip, but Joffrey’s foot caught on a root at the last moment, and he fell forward, right into the path of Jon’s swing. He jumped back as soon as he realized what was happening and mostly managed to get out of the prince’s way, but he still ended up accidentally slapping him in the jaw with the flat of his blade and went deathly still as he felt the reverberation up his arm.

“Kill him!” Joffrey shrieked in indignant rage, pushing himself up and glaring murderously at Jon while hot pain flashed in his jaw.

“No!” Sansa and Arya screamed at once, the latter actually drawing Needle and turning around to intercept the Hound, who took a step forward.

“You will do nothing of the sort,” Myrcella said firmly, doing her best impression of her mother’s command face as she looked at Sandor. “Brother, if Father learns you had someone killed because he beat you in a spar, the son of his dear friend, no less, do you have any idea how he’ll react or what he’ll have done to the people who followed that order?”

That last part was directed at the Hound, who stopped in his tracks, as well as Ser Mandon, whose only move so far had been to rest a hand on the pommel of his blade. Nymeria and Ghost, sensing the tension, jumped into action, the former growling warningly while the latter just stared down at Joffrey, who froze.

“You acquitted yourself well in that spar, Prince Joffrey,” the knight lied. “The bastard didn’t land a hit on you that entire time until you were tripped by the ground.”

“You kept me on the defensive the entire time, my prince,” Jon lied, and Joffrey, realizing that his father wouldn’t take his side in this, decided to take the out, and simply spat at the ground next to him.

“Let that be a lesson about challenging your betters, bastard,” the prince scowled. “Hound, with me.”

“I…” Sansa went to say, only to slump over as she saw him stalk off without a single glance her way.

“I’m sorry about that,” Myrcella said softly. “My brother finds traveling tedious, and it can put him in a terrible mood. Are you harmed, Ser…”

She went silent as Jon turned to look at her, and she saw the color of his eyes. They were dark, nearly black, yet in the light of the clear day she saw that they were actually purple. She hadn’t paid much attention to him yet, knowing better than to be caught staring at a bastard, but up close now, she couldn’t help but notice that he was, if anything, even more handsome than his brother, who she’d thought quite a bit of.

“I’m no knight, Princess,” Jon said with an easy smile, and she barely resisted the urge to shudder as she felt suddenly warm. “Thank you for your help.”

“It was no trouble,” Myrcella breathed.

Cersei scowled to herself as she left her chambers. When she’d seen Joffrey’s bruised jaw and demanded to know what happened, he muttered out something about the bastard and she saw red, going straight to Robert and demanding that something be done. He’d had everyone present gathered for questioning, and from the story they got, he’d seen no reason to do anything, much to her fury. The bastard had dared to strike a prince and gotten away with it without so much as a word against him. That would have been bad enough, but she’d been completely unable to prove that he and his whore of a sister had been fucking as well.

“They must have already explored enough of the hidden passages in this keep to get around undetected,” she thought to herself as she made her way through the halls of the keep.

She couldn’t just demand that Sansa Stark be examined by Maester Pycelle without cause, as her father would be outraged and Robert would take his side. She knew that the silly twit had lost her maidenhead, as she’d seen how she limped around for a couple days back in Winterfell and didn’t believe at all that she’d simply stumbled down some stairs and caught herself at the last moment as she claimed.

“I’d question her myself, but if I spend too much time around her in this keep, it might make it more believable when she inevitably says that I told her what I did,” Cersei thought to herself, having kept her distance since they left Winterfell. Her last serious interaction with the little whore had been when she gave her a dose of barely steeped tansy water that she knew wouldn’t actually stop her from carrying a child and which she suspected the girl didn’t even take. “Bringing the bastard with her was a bolder move than I thought her capable of, and it will be her undoing, but I need

someone to catch them together first. Luckily it will be a long while yet before my Joffrey will be expected to wed the fool, so I have time.”

“M...m...my queen,” Grand Maester Pycelle called out. “Do you have a moment to spare?”

“Is this about what we discussed the other day?” Cersei asked, and when he nodded, she gestured for him to follow and led him into the nearest room. “Did you find anything amiss?”

“It was as yo...you suspected,” the old man stuttered. “My supplies of tansy, mint, wormwood, and pennyroyal had been pilfered. Some...someone in this keep is making...”

“I know what they’re making,” Cersei hissed. “Do you have any idea how they got into your storage room?”

“I...i...it’s not the most well...guarded room in the keep, my queen,” Pycelle stammered, swallowing thickly as she glared at him. “It might help to know why you thought to warn me of this.”

“One of my servants overheard a young pair talking about figuring out how to make moon tea,” Cersei lied. “She didn’t know who they were and didn’t see their faces.”

“At the risk of sounding indelicate, these things happen,” Pycelle murmured. “If you suspect one of the ladies here, I could keep a subtle eye on them.”

“No, I’ll have the investigation handled myself,” Cersei replied. “That will be all.”

With that, she left the room, even angrier than she’d been before. What she’d actually been told by one of the servants was that the bedding in Sansa’s room had become blood-stained the other night, meaning that she wasn’t with child, and while she initially wondered if perhaps the bastard’s seed just hadn’t taken yet, it then occurred to her that there was another possible explanation.

“Clearly they know the recipe for the concoction, and I doubt they’re going to be stupid enough to take the ingredients from Pycelle again,” she thought to herself in annoyance. “The girl’s a fool, but clearly her brother isn’t, and they’ve been annoyingly good at avoiding consequences so far.”

It wouldn’t matter in the end, she was sure, as she knew all too well how much effort went into hiding such an affair as theirs, and she’d never had to do so while under active suspicion. They’d slip up in time, she was sure, and then she’d be able to save her son from being married off to a Stark and, hopefully, remove the entire family from their lives for good. The plan would work, she knew; it was just going to take time.

“This is gorgeous!” Sansa gushed a while later as she looked down at herself and the flowing length of cloth-of-silver she’d bought earlier. “I cannot wait to have it made into gowns.”

“The seamstress Mother and I use is incredible,” Myrcella smiled, seated on her bed and looking up at her. “I know you’ll look wonderful in whatever she ends up making for you.”

“Princess...” Sansa went to say.

“Myrcella, please, or Cella, if you prefer,” Myrcella said.

“Cella,” Sansa smiled. “You’ve been so wonderful to me since I arrived here, and I truly cannot thank you enough for that.”

“We’re to be sisters down the line,” Myrcella said softly, standing up, “and between you and me, I’ve always wanted one.”

“I have one you can have if you want to take her off my hands,” Sansa quipped, and Myrcella burst out laughing. “Arya’s fun to have around, I’ll admit, but I must say I prefer you.”

“Myrcella...never mind,” Sansa sighed, and the blonde cocked her head, reaching out and grasping her shoulder.

“What is it?” Myrcella asked.

“Does...do you think your brother likes me?” Sansa asked, and Myrcella tensed. “Is it about that day in the woods? Because I swear...”

“Joffrey’s...complicated,” Myrcella replied, figuring that was a far more diplomatic thing to say than ‘a cunt.’ “He’s our age, but he’s...not quite developed the obsession with girls that boys do just yet. He’s far more interested in riding and using a bow and things like that, but that will change in time, I’m sure.”

“So it’s not about me specifically?” Sansa asked.

“I can guarantee you it isn’t,” Myrcella replied, wishing that wasn’t the only honest statement she could make on that particular subject.

She knew all too well what her brother was like and had wished more than once growing up that he wasn’t. There was nothing she could do, though, as he was the heir to the throne and that was that, even if she was a few minutes older. She liked Sansa, though, and hated that she was going to end up bound to someone who very likely would not be kind to her.

“I guess boys can be difficult,” Sansa murmured. “Of course, Arya is too, so maybe it’s just people.”

“Your brother seemed perfectly gallant back in Winterfell,” Myrcella said, “and even your bastard brother is perfectly lovely.”

“Aye, Jon’s...nice,” Sansa said, sounding like she wanted to say more. When Myrcella cocked an eyebrow at her, she sighed and added, “My mother is...not fond of him for obvious reasons, and I...for many years I wasn’t much better. I realized in the last moon or so that I was wrong to treat him as I did, and I’ve tried to make it up to him. I just wish he wasn’t...”

“Baseborn?” Myrcella asked. “I can understand that.”

“Wait, do you have any...” Sansa went to ask, and Myrcella just snorted.

“You saw how my father is,” the blonde sighed. “I’d be utterly shocked if I didn’t have any half-siblings out there I don’t know about. I could have sisters, girls who share my blood, and I will never know them.”

“You really want sisters that badly?” Sansa asked, making her sigh again.

“Joffrey and I are...very different, and Tommen’s so young that, well, we’re not the closest family, to be honest,” Myrcella replied. “I have my parents and my uncles, three of whom are genuinely fun to be around, but...I envy the close relationships you seem to have with all your siblings, even Arya, though she clearly annoys you.”

“I imagine you’d envy one of those relationships more than the others if you knew,” Sansa thought to herself, having seen how Myrcella looked at Jon when no one was around. “Well, you have me now.”

The princess beamed at her for, and hugged her tightly, making her gasp.

“Is something wrong?” Myrcella asked.

“No, I just...I think I slept oddly the other night and ended up with a sore spot in my back,” Sansa replied, unable to tell her that her brother had held her up against the wall the last time they fucked and pounded her until she was practically sobbing with pleasure. She’d been too overwhelmed by how good he felt inside her to realize how much having her bare back pressed against the wall had hurt until it was all over.

“Oh, I’m sorry,” Myrcella murmured. “If you think something is off about your bed, I could have the servants replace the mattress.”

“No, it’s fine, really,” Sansa replied. “Thank you, though. I...”

She trailed off as the distinct sound of two thumps on her far wall reached her ears and froze just as Myrcella looked around in confusion.

“What was that?” she asked, and Sansa had to actively try not to panic.

“Nothing, I’m sure,” she said. “The walls in Winterfell make sounds like that now and then. I was convinced as a young girl that it was ghosts and used to beg Father to come in before I went to bed and shout at them that bothering me would be a bad idea!”

She raised her voice for those last two words, hoping more than anything that Jon heard her, and tried to look normal as Myrcella stared at her strangely.

“Anyway, thank you again for showing me to your favorite merchants and shopkeepers,” Sansa continued. “I honestly couldn’t have fathomed there being that many shops in one area.”

“One of the benefits of living in a city of a five-hundred-thousand people,” Myrcella said, deciding not to comment on how strange that had been. “There are, of course, certain downsides too.”

“The smell?” Sansa asked, and Myrcella shuddered.

“I swear on particularly hot summer days it can be enough to make your eyes water,” she muttered. “I’ve visited Lannisport before, when I went to see my grandfather in Casterly Rock, and the difference is night and day.”

“Is the rock really as tall as they say?” Sansa asked, and Myrcella smiled.

“It really is magnificent,” the blonde replied. “After you wed Joffrey, perhaps we can visit it together.”

“I’d like that,” Sansa murmured, hugging her. “Thank you again for being wonderfully welcoming.”

“Like I say, I’ve always wanted a sister, and I think you and I are going to be very dear friends,” Myrcella replied. “The feast will be starting in a couple hours, and my mother is going to want to speak to me first, I’m sure, so I should go.”

“I’ll see you there,” Sansa murmured.

“I can’t wait to see you in that,” Myrcella replied, pointing to the rolled-up cloth-of-silver.

Sansa sighed happily as she watched the princess leave, only to march over to her wall and quickly open up the hidden door she’d found the first night she stayed there.

“Are you completely ma...” she went to ask, only to go silent as Jon walked inside and took her in his arms, capturing her lips with his own.

She melted into his embrace, moaning into his mouth when his tongue slid across hers, and all her annoyance at him melted away as she felt heat pool in her core, though as he finally broke the kiss for air, it flared back with a vengeance.

“The princess was in here,” Sansa hissed.

“I did knock,” Jon said defensively. “You know I don’t enter unless you open up the door.”

“We cannot get caught,” Sansa breathed.”

“I know,” Jon nodded.

“We should stop,” Sansa said weakly.

“I know,” Jon nodded before kissing her again.

They’d had so many close calls already, from the way the guards heard her pleased scream the first night, to the time Arya started banging on her door just as she came a few nights later, demanding to know if she knew where Jon was, to when they realized that the moon tea the queen had given her back in Winterfell had been poorly made. He’d heard enough about the concoction from Theon to know what it looked and smelled like, and when he realized that that stuff wasn’t the same, he’d snuck into the library and found the recipe in one of Maester Luwin’s personal books, managing to brew it himself. They’d acquired the ingredients for a second dose from a storage room in the keep, though they realized that that wasn’t a long-term solution and had already found an herbalist they could buy them from with the limited funds they had.

This was stupid of them, they knew, but neither one was willing to stop, not when it all felt so incredibly good.

“I think she likes you,” Sansa breathed, gasping as Jon started trailing kisses down along her neck.

“What?” he asked in confusion.

“Myrcella,” Sansa replied. “I’ve seen the way she looks at you.”

“She’s a princess,” Jon scoffed. “I doubt she’d be spending her days fantasizing about wedding a Snow.”

“You don’t want to have to wed a man to like looking at him,” Sansa replied, and he chuckled.

“Where in the world did my innocent little sister go?” Jon asked, and she smirked at him.

“Do I really have to tell you the answer to that?” Sansa asked, cupping him through his breeches and making his breath hitch. “It wasn’t that long ago you smeared my innocence all over this giant thing of yours, ruining me forever.”

“Say the word,” Jon growled in her ear, and her knees nearly buckled at the sound, her insides clenching hard in anticipation.

“Cock,” Sansa whispered, flushing scarlet. “You took my innocence with your giant cock.”

“You can grab it without blushing, but you can’t say the word?” Jon teased, and she slapped his shoulder.

“Oh, be silent and kiss me,” Sansa muttered, and he did.

Their tongues dueled for dominance in their mouths, neither able to get enough of each other, and she whimpered when he reached down and grabbed two large handfuls of his round ass.

“Gods, I need you,” Sansa whimpered. “Let’s go.”

“Lead the way,” Jon grinned, and she rolled her eyes.

“You just want to stare at my arse,” Sansa said, making him chuckle.

“Staring at your arse is the least of my crimes,” Jon replied with an easy smile.

“Where did my brother, who hadn’t even seen a woman’s tits since he was nursed and was never able to bring himself to follow Robb and Theon to brothels, go?” Sansa asked, and he chuckled.

“He lost himself in the tight, wet heat of your perfect cunt, sweet sister,” Jon whispered, and she felt her juices start running down her thighs.

“Come,” Sansa said, taking his hand and leading him through the hidden door, which they closed behind them.

Looking for Maegor’s tunnels had been one of the first things they did when they got to the Red Keep, both because they’d long since learned that hidden pathways could be incredibly useful and because they knew that they couldn’t afford to just fuck in her chambers. It had been a risky enough thing back in Winterfell, but here, where their father had warned them they’d likely be watched constantly, it was a far greater risk. Learning that there was a hidden pathway in and out of her chambers had been good, but learning where else they led was even better.

The pair of them continued along the dark wall, the torch Jon had given Sansa being their only source of light, but they’d been through this path enough times to know the way, and soon enough,

they had found what they were looking for. Pulling the lever, they both grinned in anticipation when the hidden door opened up a little and Jon pulled it out, revealing the room inside. This had been something they'd found early on in their stay in the keep, an empty room with no connection to the main hallways.

"I'd still love to know if we're the first ones to make use of this space in the way we have," Sansa murmured as Jon grabbed the bedroll they had rolled up in the corner and unfurled it on the ground.

"It would depend on just who, if anyone, found it before us," he replied, watching her place her torch in a nearby holder on the wall.

The warm glow of the fire illuminated the room just enough to let him make out her form, and he felt himself strain against his breeches at the sight. He'd never realized just how beautiful Sansa had become until the night she seduced him and he honestly didn't know how he'd been so blind. She was absolutely stunning, a vision of porcelain perfection wreathed in hair like fire, and as she reached him, he immediately started undoing the laces holding her dress together, desperate to see more.

"Gods, Jon," Sansa gasped, feeling like she was on fire as he started kissing her neck. "I never want to stop this."

"Neither do I," Jon breathed, stepping back as he finished so he could watch her dress slip off of her.

She helped it along, basking in the raw desire in his eyes as her body was uncovered bit by bit, and when he sank to his knees and brushed his nose against her small clothes, she whimpered.

"You smell so fucking good," Jon rumbled, his hands working quickly to strip away this last bit of fabric keeping him from her cunt, and the second he got it off, he immediately started lapping at her slip.

"Oh, gods," Sansa moaned, staggering back until she was pressed against the wall.

"Careful, sweet sister," Jon grinned as he grabbed her hips to hold her steady. "Your back is still sore, no?"

"It's fine," Sansa assured him. "So long as you don't take me against the wall this time like a barbarian, I'll be alright."

"You didn't complain in the moment," Jon grinned.

"I could barely form words in the moment," Sansa replied, making him snort.

"Let's see if I can make you unable to again," Jon rumbled, brushing his tongue against her taut little pearl and grinning when she cried out in pleasure.

"That sound wasn't normal, and Sansa knew what caused it," Myrcella thought to herself as she slipped into the hidden passageway near her new friend's chambers.

Curious by nature and lacking close friends her age for much of her life, the young princess had explored the Red Keep quite thoroughly over the years, finding many of Maegor's tunnels. Her uncle, Tyrion, had been the one to tell her about them, having read extensively about the keep before she was born, and had even helped her find a couple, something she'd made certain her mother never learned about. When Sansa was given the chambers that she was, she considered telling her about the hidden door leading to and from them but decided to see if she could find it herself.

She liked her, she really did, but she was also very used to finding that she just didn't have much in common with the people she knew and saw that as a test to find out of the redhead and her were all that alike. The knocking sound she'd heard earlier came from the hidden hallway, she knew, and she'd have warned Sansa of that if she hadn't reacted so strangely.

"She raised her voice to tell whoever was knocking not to come in," she thought to herself. *"Why though? And who was there seeking entrance to the chambers of a young noble girl in a way that would keep them from being spotted?"*

It was a great mystery, and Myrcella adored mysteries. She padded along the pitch-black hallway, the lantern in her hand illuminating her way just barely enough, and when she found the lever that would open the hidden door to Sansa's chambers, she pulled it quickly and poked her head inside.

"Sansa?" she asked, frowning her brow in confusion when no response came.

"I was here mere minutes ago," she thought to herself. *"Why would she have left so quickly?"*

She was about to step inside and look around when she heard a sharp cry from behind her and whipped around, recognizing Sansa's voice.

"Shit," she thought to herself, her heart racing at the thought that the redhead might be in trouble. *"I need to go get the guar..."*

"Don't stop!" Sansa cried, and Myrcella's jaw dropped as she flushed scarlet.

"That...she...oh," Myrcella thought to herself, having come across enough couples in the throes of passion over her years of sneaking around the keep to know what it sounded like.

She should be furious, she knew, as the girl was betrothed to her brother, but her relationship with Joffrey had soured so much over the years that instead all she felt was curiosity, curiosity and a heat deep inside her that she didn't want to dwell on. Closing the hidden door, she continued along, feeling heat pool low in her belly as Sansa's pleased cries kept reaching her ears.

"Fuck, that feels so bloody good!" the redhead cried just as Myrcella found a source of light coming from one of the rooms that the hidden hallway connected to. Steeling herself, she set the lantern down and stole a glance at her friend and the man she was with, barely managing to avoid gasping as she did so.

"Oh, gods, oh, Jon, don't stop, please don't stop," Sansa babbled, confirming what Myrcella had thought the moment she laid eyes on the form of the man kneeling before her.

He was bare from the waist up, revealing his well-muscled arms and back, and she'd spent enough time trying and failing not to notice those arms to suspect at once who he was. Jon Snow, she'd decided in the past few weeks, was the most beautiful man she'd ever seen, a rugged and gorgeous

warrior with eyes like dark amethysts. His high cheekbones and square jaw had earned him more than a few comments from the servant girls that she'd overheard, and she agreed with all of them, but she'd be lying if she said that his looks had been what first drew her attention.

Seeing him handle her brother as deftly as he had back in the woods, outclassing him completely, had been what truly first made her notice him, and she'd *noticed* him quite a bit in the weeks since. Nothing could come of it, she knew, as even if he was the son of a man her father loved like a brother and more than his actual brothers at that, he was still a bastard. He was still off-limits to her, she'd been sure, and here she was watching her new friend, for whom he was even more off-limits, squirming and moaning against the wall as he did things to her the princess had never imagined.

"He's her brother," she thought to herself, feeling her insides flutter at the sheer taboo of it all. *"This is so wrong, but...what exactly is he doing to her?"*

"Oh, gods, lick right there," Sansa moaned, her nails digging into his scalp as she held him to her cunt. "That feels so fucking good."

"What a dirty mouth my sweet little sister has developed," Jon teased, and she squeaked, blushing in embarrassment and pulling him back in.

"Don't tease me," Sansa complained, making him chuckle as he wrapped his lips around her throbbing clit. "Oh, gods, yes, suck...oh, fuck!"

"He's actually licking her cunt," Myrcella thought to herself, both amazed and confused. *"Does that not...taste bad? It certainly looks like it feels good."*

That, she couldn't deny as she watched the redhead squirm and moan, looking like she was in absolute ecstasy. Myrcella had stumbled across couples in the midst of passion before, but she'd never stopped and watched like this, and she was completely enthralled here. A man she'd felt attracted to for weeks was driving her new friend wild with pleasure, and as Myrcella stood there, wreathed in the protective darkness of the unlit hallway, she didn't think she'd ever seen anything so thrilling.

Suddenly Sansa let out a wail that made her flinch and began to writhe in Jon's arms, looking like she actually needed to be held up by him. She undulated and spasmed against the wall, seemingly overcome by something Myrcella couldn't fathom, and if the way she was crying out almost constantly was any indication, it was incredibly intense.

"Breeches off...now," Sansa panted as she came down from her high, and Jon chuckled, stepping back and reaching for his belt.

Myrcella couldn't breathe as she watched him remove his belt. This would be her first time seeing a man in the nude, her first time seeing a man's member, and as his breeches fell, her eyes went wide as saucers at what he revealed.

"Are they...are they all that big?" she thought to herself, rubbing her thighs against each other as the thought of being pierced by that long, thick shaft left her breathless.

"I could have you right here," Jon rumbled, and Sansa grinned.

“Lie down,” she whispered, and he nodded, finishing getting undressed and lying down on the bedroll that Myrcella quickly realized they’d rolled out for themselves.

She watched with bated breath as the redhead sank down to her knees and wrapped a hand around her brother’s shaft, lifting it up into the air and moving in to look more closely.

“It’s so big,” Myrcella thought to herself, blushing when she felt actual drool slip past her lips and quickly wiping it up with her hand. *“How in the world is he even going to fit inside me...her...fit inside her?”*

“Oh, fucking hells,” Jon groaned, and it took Myrcella a moment to realize what Sansa was doing as she started bobbing her head up and down on his shaft.

“She took him inside her mouth,” the blonde thought to herself in shock.

She knew that if anyone found out about this, it would be the end for both of the Stark children. Jon would be sent to the Wall and quite likely gelded like Lucamore the Lusty, and Sansa would be banished to a motherhouse if not the Silent Sisters. Her mother would name her a whore, and most would agree; she should have, but...he was just so handsome.

“How long has this been going on?” she wondered to herself. *“Who initiated it? Is Jon some whoremonger whose lusts are so great he turned to his own kin to sate them, or did Sansa, upon realizing how beautiful her brother was, find herself unable to resist slipping into his bed? I’d find the prospect more tempting if Joffrey were like him rather than...what he is.”*

This was a complete betrayal of her brother, she knew, but in that moment, she couldn’t bring herself to care at all, and as she heard Sansa start gagging on Jon’s cock, her hand subconsciously slipped down between her legs. She had to put her hand over her mouth to suppress her whimper as she felt her hot, wet cunt through her gown and small clothes and stood utterly frozen, fearing that they’d heard her anyway.

“Gods, that’s so fucking good,” Jon groaned. “I still can’t believe you’re willing to do that.”

“You’ve licked me often enough,” Sansa replied, letting his cock slip from her lips with an audible pop. “It seems only fair.”

“You’ll get no argument from me,” Jon chuckled, and she giggled, wiping her mouth.

“I can’t wait any longer, Jon,” Sansa breathed, moving to straddle him. “I need you inside me.”

“Ride me,” Jon rumbled, making her shiver as she reached down and lifted his heavy cock again, carefully lining him up with her dripping slit before pushing down.

“Gods,” Sansa gasped, feeling him spread her inner walls wide with his immense girth.

“You say that every time,” Jon smiled, and she giggled.

“You feel like you’re splitting me in half every time,” Sansa replied. “You’re so big.”

“You take me so well,” Jon praised, reaching for her hips to steady her. “It’s like you were made for me, sweet sister.”

“Mother would object to the notion but not nearly as much as she’d object to everything else,” Sansa replied, and Jon shook his head.

“Catelyn Stark is the last thing I want to think about right now,” he said, and Sansa leaned in, kissing him softly.

Myrcella watched as she lowered herself down inch by inch, wiggling her hips and eventually bouncing gently to take his cock inside her.

“She’s actually going to take it all,” the princess thought to herself. *“How stretchy are we? I mean, I know babes come from there, but...still.”*

“I don’t know how I’ll ever give this up,” Sansa whimpered, her eyes growing misty as she stared down at him. “I still want to be queen, and I have to wed...”

“Let’s not talk about that yet,” Jon whispered, cupping her cheek. “It will be ages before you actually wed the prince; plenty of time for you to tire of me.”

He meant it as a joke, but the most selfless part of him also meant it as a hope because he didn’t know how he was going to find the willpower to stop going to her either. She started riding him, choosing to focus on the sheer pleasure of him rather than the reality of their situation, and moaned loudly when she felt him brush against a spot inside her that made her see stars. He leaned in, capturing one of her pebbled pink nipples with his lips, and she wrapped her arms around his head, holding him tightly to her chest.

It wasn’t lost on her that the brother she’d all but discounted as one for years had quickly become one of the most important people in her life and for decidedly non-brotherly reasons. Part of her saw this as a way of making up for how she’d treated him for years, while the rest of her just couldn’t get enough of him.

“Gods, you’re so fucking tight,” Jon groaned, his fingers digging into her hips as she picked up her pace, rolling her hips back and forth and moaning loudly as he speared into her again and again.

He let her set the pace to start with, knowing that she still usually needed a little time to adjust to his size, but as he felt her relax a little around him, he started thrusting up into her and grinned when she immediately cried out in pleasure. Holding onto his shoulders for support, she tried to keep her pace steady, but between the feeling of him pounding up into her and the way he was worshiping her sizeable breasts with his lips and tongue as he did so, she quickly found herself struggling.

Snaking her arms around his neck, she slowly let him take over, more than happy to simply be fucked by him, and her pleased moans and cries soon turned to screams. He changed the angle of his thrusts slightly and bumped against a spot inside her that made her shriek.

“There!” Sansa cried, seeing lights go off behind her eyes at the sheer pleasure her brain was drowning in. “Gods, don’t fucking stop!”

“Wouldn’t dream of it,” Jon replied, picking up his pace and fucking her with long, hard strokes. The sound of her dripping cunt squelching around him filled the room, drowned out only by her pleased screams, and he adored every moment of it. Wrapping his arms around her more tightly, he hugged her to his chest and braced his feet against the hard floor to make it easier to fuck her hard and fast.

“Oh, gods, Jon!” Sansa screamed, barely able to speak; the pressure in her core had become so intense. It was almost unbearable, and if she didn’t know that that pressure was going to release soon and that she was going to be drowned in pleasure as her orgasm hit, she’d have feared it. Instead, she let go, surrendering completely to the ecstasy already starting to thunder in her veins, and when it finally hit, all she could do was squeal at the top of her lungs. “JON!”

“Oh, fuck,” Jon groaned, barely managing to stop from joining her as her already tight cunt spasmed around his pistoning shaft.

He held her writhing, convulsing form in his arms, burying his face in the mane of red hair that had half fallen over her face and inhaling her scent deeply. This was his favorite part of bedding her, better even than filling her up with his seed, he thought. She was so beautiful when she came and felt like she was utterly his in these moments, and for him, that was perfect in a way he couldn’t put into words. As she went limp in his arms, he rolled over, carefully making sure that she ended up pressed into the bedroll rather than the hard stone, and stared down into her glassy, unfocused eyes.

“You didn’t...finish?” Sansa panted, brushing her hair out of her face, and he shook his head.

“It takes more than that to finish me now, sweet sister,” Jon replied, kissing her softly. “You know that.”

“You’re a...god,” Sansa panted, and he chuckled, moving her legs up until her feet were resting by his head.

“There’s nothing godly about what we do,” Jon murmured, pulling most of his shaft from her clinging depths before thrusting back inside.

“I don’t care!” Sansa cried. “Gods be good, I love your bloody cock!”

“You’re barely going to be able to walk straight at the feast later,” Jon promised, his voice low and rumbling. “You’ll feel me for hours after we’re done.”

“I’ll feel...fuck...you tomorrow,” Sansa moaned. “Harder!”

As Jon picked up his pace, fucking his sister with long, hard strokes while she shook and shivered under him, Myrcella continued to watch in enthralled silence, still protected by how dark the hallways was, and how distracted Sansa and Jon were. She should do something about this, she knew, tell someone that they were doing something so terribly wrong, but she already knew as she continued to watch them that she wasn’t going to. She didn’t want to expose them, even for what it would mean for her house if their deception went unnoticed, or even to convince them to stop. What she really wanted, she knew, was to find out for herself if everything she was watching truly felt as amazing as Sansa made it sound.

She couldn’t say how long she stayed there, watching the pair of them unseen, but she knew that by the time she finally forced herself to leave, that desire had only grown.