

"I love those towers," Dacey gushed as she watched Sunspear come into view.

"A Rhoynish design," Arianne smiled. "You can see little hints of their influence on the architecture throughout Dorne, but nowhere is it stronger than in Sunspear."

"So this whole place was a desert before?" Dacey asked.

"What's a desert?" Val asked.

"A land of sand and heat," Missandei replied. "Apparently, before Daemon and Arianne used the blood of the Drowned God to alter the lands, most of Dorne was like that."

"You mean it was even hotter?" Dalla asked in horror, and the locals among them all laughed.

"It wasn't all that much hotter, to be honest," Obara replied, "but it was a lot drier."

"The greenery and lakes seemed to bring more frequent rain," Nymeria added. "Before that, though, it could actually get a fair bit cooler at night for some reason."

"I miss the cool nights, to be honest," Tyene murmured. Grinning, she added, "It made it all the more fun to cuddle up to someone to keep warm."

"Like you've ever needed an excuse for that," Elia teased, and the blonde grinned at her.

"Someone's grown more confident," Tyene smirked. "I wonder what the reason might be for that?"

"I'd say it's about this long and made her squeal like a pig last night," Nymeria grinned, holding her hands apart in front of her, and Elia blushed scarlet, making them all laugh.

"There's no shame in enjoying all the pleasures of life, my dear," Bellegere murmured, resting a hand on her newest lover's shoulder.

"Even for a Dornish girl, you lot are quite...open about such things," Elia replied, and Falia chuckled.

"That took some getting used to for me as well," the brunette sighed, grunting as their ship rocked suddenly.

Arianne was about to reply to her when a loud roar from behind them drew her attention, and she looked to see Morning flying overhead.

"He timed that quite well," Dacey murmured, smiling as Ghost, Maegor, and Brynden all reacted to their master flying overhead.

"Is that the king's ship there?" Bellegere asked, noticing the large Targaryen sails on a sizable galley in the harbor.

"It is," Arianne replied. "Dracarys, it's called, a massive warship with four hundred oars. King Rhaegar commissioned it after the Dragon's Wrath, his father's personal warship, was destroyed by a terrible storm that hit King's Landing years ago."

“That was...more of an explanation than I’d have expected from you,” Dacey murmured. “Has Daemon talked your ear off about it before?”

“Aegon,” Arianne chuckled, shaking her head. “Daemon’s never been one to obsess over ships, but his brother is far fonder of them.”

She smiled as she watched Morning land next to the Old Palace, wondering just what the king and Maester Aemon had thought up since Daemon last spoke to them.

“Make sure she’s well fed,” Daemon commanded as he stroked Morning’s flank and looked at the servants who had, clearly reluctantly, come to greet them.

“Of course, my prince,” one of them replied. “His Grace wished for us to tell you that he’s waiting in Prince Doran’s solar for you.”

“Right,” Daemon nodded, giving Morning one last pat before walking past the servants into the palace.

The guards at the door nodded at the sight of him, but he paid them little heed, too focused on what he planned to say to his father. He had given the matter of the Citadel quite a bit of thought since he last saw him and had come up with a few possible ways that they might mitigate the potential fallout from their planned strike against the traitorous maesters. As he reached the solar, Areo Hoteh nodded.

“Prince Daemon,” the Norvoshi man rumbled. “They’re expecting you.”

Daemon nodded at that, and Areo let him into the room, where he found not just Doran and his father, but also Ser Arthur, Oberyn, and someone that he hadn’t seen in so long that he honestly thought she was a boy at first, something that he knew was very intentional.

“Sarella,” he said, smiling slightly at the sight of the Sand Snake he was, by far, the least familiar with.

“Hello, Prince Daemon,” Sarella replied. “I’m surprised you recognized me.”

“So am I, to be honest,” Daemon chuckled. “Your disguise is...quite well done.”

Upon closer inspection, you could tell that Sarella was a girl. Her jaw was slight, her figure quite slim, and her face was hairless a in way that men’s only ever was for a few hours after they shaved. Her hair had been cropped quite short, though, the dark curls barely reaching her ears, and the simple beige tunic and breeches she was wearing were loose enough to hide any curves that might give her away.

“Saying I look like a boy, are you?” she asked, her voice tinged with challenge, and he grinned.

“Not at all,” Daemon replied, “but I can see how fools who haven’t spent all that much time around women might be confused.”

“You’re severely underestimating how little time maesters spend around women,” Sarella chuckled. “The whores who work in brothels around the Citadel do very well for themselves.”

“So,” Daemon murmured, looking to his father, who was looking over a map on Doran’s desk, “who here...”

“Everyone in this room is aware of what we’re dealing with,” Rhaegar replied before he could finish. “I can trust you all to be discreet, I’m confident.”

“Of course,” Doran replied. “I still cannot believe that the maesters have been tied up in something this blatantly treasonous for so long.”

At Daemon’s concerned look, Oberyn said, “This room is secure, Daemon. Our great-great-grandfather picked it specifically for his solar back in the day because it’s so far removed from any other room.”

“There are no secret passageways in and out of it either,” Rhaegar added.

“Most keeps that have secret passageways are owned by people quite familiar with them because they weren’t designed by madmen who had all the builders killed and then took half the locations of them to his grave,” Oberyn added, and Daemon chuckled.

“Maegor was a...unique one,” he said before growing more serious. “So, I came up with a few ideas during my journey to Pentos, but I am eager to hear what you and Uncle Aemon thought up. He isn’t here, I trust.”

“No, he isn’t,” Rhaegar replied. “Trying to get him to undertake such a journey at his age would be foolish. I was surprised to learn that you’d gone to Pentos.”

“I had something to take care of,” Daemon replied. Looking at Doran, he added, “Something that went rather well, all things considered.”

The prematurely aged prince nodded at that, giving him a slight smile, and then pointed at the map on his desk, saying, “This is a map of the layout of the citadel.”

“Really?” Daemon asked, looking down at it. “From their own collection?”

“My own creation,” Sarella replied. “There are a number of maps of the Citadel in their collection, most of which were drawn by Maester Tallys about fifty years before the conquest. He was obsessed with maps, and...it’s not really important. I borrowed them and recreated them to the best of my ability here.”

“What’s this large spot you’ve blacked out with ink here?” Daemon asked. “It looks too square to be a mistake.”

“That is where I think you’ll find what you seek,” Sarella replied. “There’s a corridor on the first floor of the Citadel that no one is allowed to enter. It’s sealed off by a door that only three specific archmaesters have keys to, and unlike the other areas that we’re told not to venture into, there is absolutely no tolerance here. You can sneak into the room where they keep the glass candles before your time, access the parts of the library that only true maesters are permitted to enter, and even break into the archmaesters’ quarters without being kicked out. You’ll be punished, and if you do it again, you’re fucked, but there is a degree of grace for such offenses, but if you try to get in here without authorization, you’re gone immediately without any hope of pleading your case.”

“Uncle Aemon spoke about that area too,” Rhaegar murmured, staring down at the map. “He didn’t know the specific number of archmaesters given access to it, though.”

“He might have forgotten in the decades since he last saw the place, but it’s also possible that he’s not quite as overcurious as I am, Your Grace,” Sarella said. “That corridor has fascinated me since I arrived, as one of the older initiates happened to tell me that a friend of his had, while drunk one day, tried to sneak in just behind Archmaester Theobald. He was kicked out that day, and the man hadn’t heard from him since.”

“It wouldn’t shock me if he was disposed of,” Daemon murmured.

“Given the magnitude of the secret that they’re keeping here, such extreme measures would be prudent,” Arthur sighed. “I still can’t believe the order has been maintaining treason of this magnitude for generations.”

“People are cunts,” Oberyne shrugged, “and the truly self-important ones are the worst. These men have, generation after generation, from their point of view, brought their most trusted underlings into a duty given them by a king to protect the realm from monsters. Of course they’d feel justified doing anything in the name of such a calling.”

“Including regicide,” Rhaegar scowled. “The Tragedy at Summerhall was horrific enough when I thought it was the result of my great-grandfather’s foolishness and desperation, but to learn that it was deliberate murder...”

“A good and just king, his son, and one of the greatest knights to ever wear a white cloak all killed deliberately,” Arthur muttered, shaking his head. “Alas, the men who arranged that would be dead by now.”

“Their successors aren’t,” Rhaegar muttered, “yet.”

“That’s the part that confuses me,” Sarella said. “This conspiracy can’t be too vast, and I wouldn’t be shocked if it turned out that only the specific archmaesters who are able to access the basement are involved, but somehow they managed to arrange for Summerhall to burn.”

“We don’t truly know how Summerhall burned,” Rhaegar muttered. “Maester Corso’s letter is the only thing we have detailing exactly what Aegon V attempted, and much of it is blotted out by spilled ink...”

“Something perhaps more convenient than any of us thought,” Oberyne murmured, and the king nodded.

“Perhaps,” Rhaegar sighed. “If these firewyrms are in the basement and only three specific men are able to access that area, then we know exactly who to interrogate for the names of their other co-conspirators. Who are they?”

“Archmaester Theobald, Archmaester Agrivane, and Archmaester Nymos,” Sarella replied.

“Agrivane is the youngest of them and apparently only started being allowed to enter that area after Archmaester Gyldayn died.”

“Wait, *the* Gyldayn?” Daemon asked, and she nodded.

“He was ancient when he died a year or two ago,” Sarella replied. “He had been at the citadel since early in the reign of Aegon V.”

“He might have had a hand in Summerhall,” Rhaegar muttered, rubbing his forehead.

“Isn’t he the one who wrote those histories on House Targaryen?” Arthur asked, finally remembering why that name seemed familiar.

“He is,” Doran sighed. “That does call the accuracy of his writings into question.”

“Perhaps not, Uncle,” Sarella replied. “He apparently prided himself on accuracy, and I could see him write faithful histories even while knowing that he’d committed such a terrible treason out of sheer pride.”

“It matters not,” Rhaegar hissed. “These men will die as will their co-conspirators.”

“Indeed,” Daemon nodded. “The question is: what will be the best way to bring them in without risking tragedy in Oldtown? Sarella, I was hoping to lean on your greater knowledge of the citadel here, plus perhaps also get your help distracting the archmaesters.”

“I will if that’s what it takes, but doing so would be risking my place at the Citadel, as even with his Grace intervening to assure my place there, I’d be considered a traitor to them and watch my back for the rest of my time there or else out myself as Prince Oberyn’s daughter and lose it entirely,” Sarella replied. “I’m willing to risk all that, as I said, but His Grace had another idea.”

Daemon cocked an eyebrow at his father, who smiled for the first time in that meeting.

“I’m going with you to Oldtown,” he announced. “The whole family is, actually.”

“What?” Daemon asked.

“The royal family attending a tourney is no strange thing,” Rhaegar explained, “and while in Oldtown, I’d be able to help you in one very specific way.”

“What’s that?” Daemon asked, not at all comfortable with the idea of his entire family being within burning range of the Citadel.

“I can be your distraction,” Rhaegar grinned. “While I’m in the city, I will reach out to the archmaesters and say that I wish to tour the Citadel.”

“Out of the question,” Daemon muttered. “It would be bad enough having the others in Oldtown at a time when so much could go so wrong; I’m only bringing Arianne and the others on the condition that they all pile onto the Silence and bugger off once I go in, but to have you actually in there...”

“I’m no frail thing, son, and your family won’t be the only one getting piled onto a ship when we go in,” Rhaegar replied. “The last time something like this happened was when Prince Baelor and Prince Maekar attended a tourney in Oldtown together...”

“Probably not the best names to bring up while discussing the idea of bringing the entire royal family to a tourney,” Daemon said dryly, and Oberyn snorted, earning a glare from Doran.

Ignoring both of them, Rhaegar continued, saying, “Prince Baelor requested a tour of the Citadel, and, seeing as he was the Prince of Dragonstone and the Hand of the King, they agreed, showing him all around the place, save for the basement, clearly. Every archmaester showed up to see him and help show him around, and I imagine, as king, I’d receive no cooler a reception.”

“The archmaesters would all be away from the basement,” Sarella breathed as Daemon looked contemplative.

“I suppose that would be a simple enough plan,” he murmured. “I’d still need to get into the Citadel and then into the basement.”

“Everyone will want a look at the king,” Rhaegar grinned, “and those who don’t will want a look at the Sword of the Morning here.”

“I’ve never been asked to preen like a peacock before, but I figure I can give it a try,” Ser Arthur drawled.

“I might be able to swipe one of the archmaesters’ keys for you,” Sarella offered.

“Don’t bother,” Rhaegar said. “Ser Barristan can pick locks and will be going with Daemon.”

“Barristan Selmy can pick locks?” Sarella asked, surprised, and Ser Arthur chuckled.

“It’s how he got...the previous king out of Duskendale, actually,” he replied. “Your role will be to show the prince, Ser Barristan, and the few Unsullied they bring with them to the basement and stand guard outside. If one of the Archmaesters happens to return back within the first few minutes, bog him down with questions for as long as you can.”

“I can do that,” Sarella nodded.

“Now, about killing these wryms...” Rhaegar said, looking to Daemon, who nodded.

“That giant block of ice I ordered from Bear Island some weeks ago is well on the way, according to Dacey,” the prince replied. “By the time we arrive in Oldtown, it should be in the icehouse I had set up for it, and that will provide us the weapons we need against them.”

“It will be nice working together for a change, rather than you just doing something insane and filling me in about it after the fact,” Rhaegar said, and Daemon chuckled despite himself.

“So long as we can be sure that the others are all out of harm’s way before we enter the Citadel, this can work,” Daemon nodded.

“It might look odd for your heir not to go with you, your Grace,” Sarella pointed out, “especially given that he is known to have a scholarly nature.”

“Sarella’s right,” Oberyn nodded. “I’m not saying Aegon should go with you, but having a simple, offhand explanation for that might be a good idea if the whole point of you going is to keep everyone focused on you without arousing suspicion.”

“Would the maesters really suspect the king of anything, though?” Doran asked, “Especially given that they have no idea that any of us know about the wryms.”

“The conspirators are likely on edge because of Morning’s reappearance,” Rhaegar murmured, scratching at his bare chin. “Saying something about how he and his wives wished to enjoy the day aboard the Dracarys would be simple enough.”

“Have there been any attempts on Uncle Aemon’s life?” Daemon asked.

“Not yet,” Rhaegar sighed. “Maesters are not warriors; they don’t think like warriors, and while you, in this position, might have struck quickly upon learning that there was another living dragon, I wouldn’t be surprised if they remained paralyzed by shock for some time. At any rate, he is well guarded and is, at the moment, feigning illness to further isolate himself in the safety of his chambers while Jon rules in my stead.”

“A wise precaution,” Daemon nodded. “So, when are we leaving?”

“On the morrow,” Rhaegar replied. “The tourney starts in six days, and us arriving early won’t be out of the question, particularly since there are a few things I should discuss with Leyton Hightower. We’ll move against the conspirators the day after that and, with luck, have them in chains and their vile pets dead before the tourney even begins. Lord Leyton and I can then discuss how best to deal with the Citadel writ large, and then we can all relax and watch the spectacle.”

“What are you thinking of doing to them?” Daemon asked. “I suppose we could, theoretically, build a new structure capable of housing their collection in the capital, where they could be watched more closely.”

“That would cause a greater stir than I truly need to,” Rhaegar replied, shaking his head. “With the Sept of Baelor being the heart of the Faith, we’ve already taken much from Oldtown, and I can’t truly fault House Hightower for failing to see something that none of us did.”

“Well, technically, if Otto Hightower hadn’t been such a grasping cunt...” Daemon quipped, and his father rolled his eyes.

“We’re not going there,” Rhaegar said flatly. “If it turns out that the conspiracy is more far-reaching than we currently believe, then I will consider taking more drastic actions, but as it stands, I will be imposing on them permanent royal oversight. Going forward, the conclave will be headed by a man of the crown’s choosing so we can ensure that the Citadel never again becomes a site of treasonous conspiracy.”

“That’s not a bad idea,” Doran nodded. “Who were you thinking of sending to them?”

“I had considered Viserys, but he seems wholly opposed to the idea,” Rhaegar grumbled, “so I will be sending Jon.”

“Who would be hand?” Daemon asked.

“Your brother is ready to take on more responsibility,” Rhaegar replied. “I will handling most of the actual ruling duties for the next couple years as I prepare him for the role, but after that, he and I will rule together.”

“That’s wonderful,” Daemon smiled. “We know that we can trust Connington at least.”

“Completely,” Rhaegar replied. “I’ve discussed the matter with them both, and they see the necessity of it. Jon will oversee the Citadel for some years while my preferred candidate grows old enough to justify being appointed.”

“Preferred candidate?” Oberyn asked as Sarella looked out the window, spotting Morning flying around over the city.”

“I believe ‘he’ goes by Alleras,” Rhaegar replied, and she choked on her own spit.

“What?” Sarella coughed. “I mean, what, your Grace?”

“You are Elia’s niece and already live in the Citadel,” Rhaegar replied. “Had you already forged your chain, I might have simply picked you outright, but sending my former Hand to keep me abreast of goings-on in there will be less strange for the time being, and once you’re older...”

“You want me to command the Citadel?” Sarella asked, still half-convinced he was going to say it was a joke.

“I do,” Rhaegar replied.

“An honor to be sure,” Oberyn nodded. Grinning, he added, “Having the maesters ruled over by someone their own rules would prevent from even joining their ranks will also be very funny.”

“I’m honored...shocked, but honored, your Grace,” Sarella replied.

“Considering that you’re likely going to have more children than Aegon IV, Daemon, you might consider raising one of them to be her successor,” Rhaegar continued. “Our family will need to keep keen eyes on that place, lest anything like this happen again.”

“Allow me to name them first, but I’m sure I’ll find one willing to do so,” Daemon drawled, and his father nodded.

“It will be decades before they’re needed,” Rhaegar sighed. “I’ve just had a lot of time to think over how we got here and how to prevent it from happening again. I understand how and why Aegon III ended up wanting what he did; I really do, but he empowered men all too eager to weaken his own house, and they continued to do so for generations. We cannot allow another threat like this to rise.”

“We’ll do everything we can to ensure that,” Daemon nodded, and his father relaxed some.

“That’s all that I wanted to discuss for the moment,” Rhaegar said. “You and Sarella can go over the best way to actually infiltrate the Citadel on your own.”

“Of course,” Daemon said. “Sarella?”

“Hmm?” the dark-skinned girl asked, shaking out of her shocked stupor. “Oh, right. Thank you again, Your Grace.”

“Just continue your studies and keep them in line down the line, and that will be thanks enough,” Rhaegar replied. “Now, about this new trade you’ve set up with the Summer Isles, Doran...”

Taking that as their cue to leave, Daemon and Sarella walked out of the room, one far calmer than the other.

“I can’t believe he...” she went to say when Daemon silenced her with a look.

“Not here,” he said softly. “Would you like to see the Silence? I’ve grown rather fond of the ship since I claimed it as my own.”

“Yes, that would be great,” Sarella replied, realizing at once what he actually wanted from her.

“You would...rule the Citadel?” Nymeria asked in shock as they finished telling the others about their meeting with the king.

“Better you than me,” Viserys drawled, tossing an apple up into the air and catching it repeatedly.

“Yes, he mentioned that you turned him down,” Daemon chuckled, looking around the deck of the Silence, where Arianne, their many lovers, his siblings, his aunt, and his uncle were all crowded around at sea, enjoying the sort of privacy and security that you could only really get at sea.

“I can think of a few things I’d choose spending with my life among maesters over, but the list isn’t all that long,” Viserys said. “No offense, Sarella.”

“If I’d been eating or drinking anything when he brought it up, I think I’d be dead right now,” Sarella said, still trying to wrap her mind around the idea.

“Is this something you want to do?” Aegon asked, beating Arianne to it, “Because if not, I could speak to Father...”

“No, it...all my life I’ve loved learning new things, poring over dusty tomes, and just immersing myself in the great knowledge and wisdom of learned men through the centuries...” Sarella replied.

“Is that why I kept finding Father’s copy of *A Caution for Young Girls* in your chambers when we were younger?” Tyene teased, laughing as Sarella replied with a rude gesture.

“I’ve loved studying at the Citadel, and while I always knew that I wouldn’t actually get to become a true maester and never had any desire to serve as one in some far-flung keep, the idea of spending my life in those hallowed halls, having full access to any tome or scroll that I wish for the rest of my days...it is not unappealing,” she finished. “I’ve never desired men, so wedding and having children isn’t an appealing option for me, and I have no desire to become a septa, but this...this is a path for my life that I never envisioned, but I think I could quite enjoy.”

“Well, if it’s what you want and you’ll be able to aid our families from the position, then I’m more than happy for you,” Arianne smiled.

“I’m surprised that Father told you all,” Daemon murmured. “He was so furious and panicked when I told him everything that I honestly thought he’d keep knowledge of it between us and Uncle Aemon.”

“Once he had a chance to calm down and actually assess the situation in full, he realized that bringing the entire family in on it was for the best,” Aegon replied.

“It did seem odd when he announced that we were all taking a mandatory trip to Dragonstone, but the moment the Dracarys left the port, he gathered us all together and filled us in,” Rhaenys added. “I don’t think I’ve ever seen him angrier in my entire life.”

“He’s felt like he lived in the shadow of Summerhall all his life,” Viserys murmured. “I recall, when I was very young, hearing Mother try to tell him that being born during the tragedy didn’t need to set the course of his entire life, but he clearly felt differently. I thought he was a moody cunt as a boy, though I eventually learned how much it bothered him to know that he was born in such grief. To learn that it wasn’t a terrible accident but deliberate murder...”

“Those men will die,” Daenerys said, “as will anyone else they brought into their treason.”

“The part that confuses me is that this was all set off by a Targaryen,” Falia said. “I know that watching Queen Rhaenyra die as she did must have been horrifying for Aegon III, but the loss of the dragons weakened his house for generations. Did he have no concept of that, or did he just not care?”

“Fears can often be completely irrational,” Missandei said, “especially for those who experience terrible things. To this day the sight of chains bothers me on a level that I cannot truly explain, and I doubt that I’ll ever truly get over that odd impulse.”

“Whatever the reason and however this began, it ends here,” Daemon scowled. Looking to Aegon and the others, he asked, “You know your roles in all this?”

“Meet with the Hightowers, accept their generosity graciously, and then decide that we really want to go sailing when Father goes to see the Citadel,” Aegon replied.

“We must pray that it doesn’t rain, or that excuse won’t work,” Viserys pointed out.

“If it does, the king can just say that Aegon caught a chill,” Arianne replied. “The conspirators might be on edge at the moment because of Morning’s continued existence, but most of the maesters will just be touched that the king came to see the Citadel at all.”

“We’re likely overthinking things, but there are just so many ways this could go wrong,” Daemon murmured.

“Under no circumstance can the wyrms be allowed to escape the confines of the basement,” Sarella said. “The damage they could do to the Citadel’s library, the irreplaceable thing that it is, not to mention the population of Oldtown, is too catastrophic to contemplate.”

“That’s why Father isn’t just charging in with a host of knights to end the problem outright,” Aegon said. “What’s your plan, exactly?”

“There is a hidden entrance to the tower here that I think would be the best spot to use,” Sarella replied, pulling out her map, unfurling it on the driest section of the deck, and pointing to the specific spot. “It’s covered by shrubs and further obscured by a statue of Urrigon and Peremore Hightower, the brothers responsible for the Citadel’s creation. Full-fledged maesters and initiates alike use it often to go out into town without being noticed, usually to visit brothels. If the king’s visit is as big a distraction as he believes it will be, it shouldn’t be difficult to sneak you in through there while everyone else is paying attention to him.”

“From there, we’ll just have to make our way through this corridor, turn here, and we’ll be right by the locked door,” Daemon nodded, and Sarella grinned.

“Exactly,” she replied. “It will be a short trip from that door to this corridor, one easy enough for us to manage without being spotted if we move quickly. Once you’re in there, though, you’ll be on your own, as I have no idea what the layout of that section is like.”

“Of course,” Daemon said. *“I don’t suppose you’re able to provide any help yet, are you?”*

He received no reply, as he had the past several times he tried that. Bloodraven had exhausted himself helping him and Ser Barristan to deal with R’hilor’s colder half and didn’t yet seem to have recovered. Having an all-knowing ally had been most useful in that fight, but Daemon had been in plenty without him and would just need to make do as he was.

“Alright, so we have that settled, but it is a lovely day, and I see no reason to leave the ship just yet,” Arianne grinned. “How have you four been since I was last in the capital?”

“Wonderful, at least until this mess was dropped on us,” Rhaenys replied. “Dany and I are both expecting children.”

“That’s wonderful,” Arianne sighed.

“I know you were both hoping it would happen so quickly,” Obara added, palming her own swollen belly.

“Well, it’s not like there was much chance that it wouldn’t,” Tyene giggled, pointing to her own, only to freeze when she remembered that not quite everyone on the ship was aware that Daemon, not Aegon, had impregnated the Princesses of Dragonstone.

“I have to say that I really don’t understand that,” Val said, mercifully drawing everyone’s attention to herself. “You are your husband’s sister and aunt; do you not fear that your children will suffer for that?”

“What we do is…” Viserys went to reply testily when Daemon raised a hand calmly to him.

“Our family’s practices are unusual, even among our people, but we’ve practiced them for generations,” Daemon replied. “My father’s parents were brother and sister and the three of us turned out alright, as did he, Viserys, and Daenerys here.”

“Among the Free Folk, everyone was always taught that the children of such unions would come out…wrong,” Dalla said, figuring it best not to use words like ‘monster.’ “If you all resulted from a union, though, perhaps we were wrong all along.”

“It’s a practice that goes back to the Valyrian Freehold,” Daenerys explained. “The Doctrine of Exceptionalism, drafted by Jaehaerys I with the aid of Septon Barth and others, laid out that we Targaryens, as the last house of Dragonlords, were exempt from the Faith of the Seven’s usual stance on incestuous marriages.”

“Besides, it’s not like you two haven’t enjoyed a bit of incestuous fun before,” Arianne grinned, and both wildling women blushed scarlet.

“Arianne!” Val complained, making the others laugh.

“It’s not like you’re the only ones,” Elia grinned, winking at Tyene, who smirked.

“There’s no shame among us, Val,” Daemon said softly, wrapping his arms around her and kissing her softly. “We’re family and all quite aware of what the others do for fun.”

“For the most part,” Rhaenys whispered in Arianne’s ear. “How much do you trust Falia, Val, and Dalla?”

“Enough that I think they could be made aware of everything,” Arianne whispered back, “if you agree.”

Her cousin pulled back, eyeing the three women curiously as Belleghere realized one thing that they hadn’t discussed yet.

“Where will Morning be in all of this?” she asked. “I doubt that Oldtown has anywhere good to keep her.”

“Did Tessarion spend much time in Oldtown?” Viserys asked. “I imagine so, but I can’t recall ever reading about it.”

“You read through the histories of that era, and you’d be forgiven for forgetting that Daeron even existed, at least until you get to the Dance,” Aegon chuckled. “I imagine so, but at any rate, not only was that more than a century and a half ago, but Tessarion was never anywhere near as large as Morning, who actually did stay there for a while back in the day, if you’ll recall.”

“Bringing her there might provoke the already uneasy conspirators to do something stupid, but I can’t just leave her here,” Daemon said. “If things go poorly, which they could, having her around to help tear apart any wurm that managed, to escape might be our best bet for preventing Oldtown from turning into a giant pyre.”

“I guess her flames might not work on them, but they’re not her only weapons,” Viserys murmured.

“There are woodlands in the area between Oldtown, Blackcrown, and Bandalion where she could stay,” Falia suggested.

“The stretch of land between the coast and the Honeywine,” Daemon nodded, recalling the region. “That could work. It would be far enough away that any word of her being spotted there would reach them only after we had entered the Citadel if I pulled it off properly and yet close enough that if I needed to call her in quickly, she’d arrive posthaste.”

“Wait, can you warg into Morning?” Aegon asked, and the others all looked back and forth between the two princes in shock, having been told by then about what Daemon could do with Brynden.

“I can,” Daemon replied. “If I need to bring her in to aid me, I’ll be able to do it easily.”

“I can’t fathom how useful that ability must be,” Viserys chuckled. “Egg told me how you managed to spy on the High Septon back when you were investigating Varys’ final plot.”

“It’s come in handy,” Daemon smiled. “At any rate, I’m hoping not to need it in this case, but I’d be a fool to deny myself the option.”

“Then we have a plan,” Aegon sighed. “One way or another, this conspiracy of maesters will be ended in two day’s time.”

“It will,” Daemon said firmly, watching Sarella roll up her map, “at which point I will be quite desperately hoping to be able to go at least a year without having to put down any other threats to our family.”

“You have been rather busy with that of late, haven’t you?” Viserys chuckled. “Something that we’re all quite appreciative of, by the way.”

“I have,” Daemon sighed before grinning, “and while I would like a moment’s peace for a change, I can’t exactly complain. I always have been at my best with a foe in front of me and my blade in my hand.”

“We’ll agree to disagree about where you’re at your true best, my love,” Arianne smirked, “but you are quite well suited to this fight. I guess Ser Arthur has filled Ser Barristan in about the latest developments?”

“If he hasn’t, I will,” Daemon shrugged, having been more than happy to give his old sworn shield a moment to himself on the grounds that he really didn’t need a member of the Kingsguard at his side on his own ship while surrounded by other guards. “In fact, we probably should head back. I’m sure the feast will be starting soon enough.”

They all smiled at that, and he gave the order to weigh anchor and return them to the dock.

“I mean, you’re really certain?” Daenerys asked as she followed Arianne through the hidden hallway connecting their chambers to hers.

“Falia’s already carrying Daemon’s child and as obsessed with him as I am, Dacey’s in love with him, and as for Val and Dalla, not only aren’t they too reliant on his protections to make trouble, but even if they did, no one would believe them,” the princess replied. “I do trust them, at any rate.”

“The twins turned out to be fine?” Rhaenys asked, having forgotten to ask Dacey at the feast.

“Yeah, they just didn’t care for such a long ride by ship,” Arianne replied. “I understand why she wanted to stay with them, of course, but they had already perked up by the time we returned to Sunspear earlier.”

“Daemon really is going to flood the Seven Kingdoms with children at this point,” Rhaenys chuckled.

“He hasn’t said anything, but I think he’s gotten pretty close to reaching his limits where women are concerned,” Arianne said.

“He has limits?” Daenerys asked, and all three of them burst out giggling.

“Turns out he’s actually mortal,” Arianne laughed as they reached the hidden door to her chambers and she pulled the lever.

“Oh gods, oh gods, oh gods!” Falia’s pleased cries reached them immediately, and as they entered, Rhaenys and Daenerys both stopped in their tracks at the sight of the buxom woman riding Daemon’s cock wildly, her massive breasts bouncing hypnotically with her every movement.

“Arianne, we were beginning to wonder if you’d gotten lost,” Obara grinned, gasping in pleasure as she ground her dripping slit on Belleger’s face.

“And you even brought our daring cousin and her lovely aunt,” Tyene purred, busy fucking the dark-skinned beauty with one of their fake cocks, delighting in her every muffled scream.

“Princess?” Falia breathed, looking back and forth between Rhaenys and Daenerys in confusion. “What are...wait, is Daemon the father?”

“Huh?” Val asked, looking up from between Dalla’s legs as her sister continued to lap at her folds. “I thought you two were wed to the other one.”

“We are, but Aegon has little interest in women and tasked Daemon with fathering his heirs,” Daenerys replied, smiling at Rhaenys as she started to help her out of her purple gown.

“He had to twist my arm but eventually managed to talk me into it,” Daemon grinned, and Rhaenys rolled her eyes.

“I’m sure that took so much convincing,” she said dryly. “Face it, my darling Valonqar, you’re a whore.”

“I’ve never charged a single copper in my life,” Daemon replied, making her laugh.

Dacey, who had been kissing Nymeria passionately as the two of them explored each other’s bodies, broke the kiss and looked at Daemon, saying, “Tis a shame, really. I think half the ladies of the realm would beggar themselves to fuck you if they got but a taste.”

“Well, as fun as it might be to spark history’s most ridiculous rebellion, I’ll pass,” Daemon chuckled, sitting up and cupping Falia’s massive breasts with his hands as she continued to bounce wildly on his cock. “These gorgeous tits are going to get even bigger, filling with milk for our babe.”

“Gods, yes!” Falia cried, her vision going spotty as she teetered right on the edge of orgasm. “I’ll give you all the babes I can, just never stop fucking ME!”

She shrieked as she came, writhing and convulsing in his arms, and Daemon smiled, hugging her to him and holding her lovingly as she rode out the waves of pleasure, her cunt massaging his cock in utterly sinful ways.

“If that’s what you want, Falia,” he whispered in her ear, and she whimpered, turning her head and kissing him even as she panted for breath.

“So...much,” Falia replied, sighing happily as he fell backward and rolled them onto their sides so he could continue holding her.

“I still say you’re utterly mad, Ari, but I’d be lying if I said I wasn’t happy about that,” Rhaenys chuckled, helping Arianne out of her dress as Daenerys finished undressing her.

Neither one was showing much yet, but their bellies did both look a little softer than normal, something that was true of quite a number of women around the room.

“I know it’s strange, but I love this,” Arianne replied, grinning at the way Daemon looked at her the moment her silk gown pooled at her feet, leaving her completely naked. “We’re one big, admittedly bizarre, family, and I wouldn’t have it any other way.”

Daemon pulled his cock from Falia’s depths and chuckled when Dacey and Nymeria settled in on either side of her.

“I was just telling Dacey here how fun it is to worship these magnificent tits,” the Dornish woman grinned. “Care to let us demonstrate?”

“Like I’d ever say no to that,” Falia laughed, gasping when both of them wrapped their lips around one of her nipples.

Daemon walked towards his wife, sister, and aunt, and all three of them looked down at his long, thick length hungrily as the rock-hard shaft swayed with his every step.

“You three decided the time was right?” he asked quietly, and Arianne smiled up at him, wrapping a hand around his cock and stroking him slowly as she gestured for him to lean down.

“We share everything else, and besides, I figured we could trust them,” she whispered. “Did the two of you practice sucking that wooden cock we left you like I suggested?”

“We did,” Rhaenys replied with a grin, sinking to her knees.

“I think we’ve both really improved,” Daenerys added as she joined her, and Daemon groaned when the silver-haired beauty leaned in and pressed her lips to his sack as his sister wrapped hers around the bulbous head of his cock.

“The future queens-consort of the seven kingdoms on their knees sucking your cock,” Arianne purred, wrapping an arm around him and leaning her head on his shoulder as he moaned in pleasure. “How many men have been able to say that they’ve had their cocks sucked by two queens?”

“Probably no one else,” Daemon replied, feeling his knees buckle as Rhaenys bobbed her head up and down on his shaft, swallowing it into her throat, and Daenerys sucked one of his large balls into her mouth.

“You’re probably right,” Arianne grinned. “Visenya strikes me as the biting type, and I doubt she ever did it; Maegor was probably too focused on trying to have children to bother, especially by the time he was king...”

“Viserys I remarried,” Daenerys pointed out, “so that’s possible. Come to think of it, he’s the only king who ever remarried.”

“And that worked out swimmingly,” Daemon drawled, making her giggle before returning to sucking on his balls.

“Technically Aegon III remarried, though his first marriage was never consummated, so I don’t know if it really counts,” Missandei pointed out, entwined with Val and Dalla, and she gasped when Val shoved a third finger inside her dripping slit.

“If you can still discuss history, we’re not doing nearly enough to distract you,” the older blonde purred, pressing her lips to Missandei’s belly. “Suck on her tits while you devour her cunt, Dalla.”

“You...oh gods...can sit on my face if you like,” Missandei offered, and Dalla giggled.

“I’ll never turn that down,” the blonde replied, moving to straddle her face.

Arianne looked around the room and smiled, feeling heat flare in her core at the sight of the orgy in progress. They’d all split off into pairs or trios, as they usually did when they were all together, and would switch from woman to woman when they weren’t riding Daemon. The room was full of the rich, musky scent of cunt, one they couldn’t be more familiar with by then, and the pleased moans and cries echoed out to the grounds below.

“*May we get to keep doing this for decades,*” she thought to herself, grinning when Obara screamed in pleasure and fell off of Bellegere’s face, letting the former courtesan shriek freely as she came around the wooden cock pistoning in and out of her.

“Thank...the gods,” Tyene panted, pulling out of her and sitting down. “I never would have realized how much work it is to fuck someone if we didn’t have these made. No wonder Daemon’s abs are so mouthwatering.”

“I think that has more to do with the time I spend training than the time I spend fucking,” Daemon laughed, and Tyene smirked at him.

“Which do you do more?” she asked, and Rhaenys laughed, sending reverberations along his cock that made his knees buckle. Letting his cock slip from her lips with an audible pop, she said, “She’s got you there, Daemon.”

“Give me a moment and I’ll return the favor,” Bellegere sighed, smiling at Tyene, who immediately started undoing the leather straps holding the harness in place around her hips.

“Arianne?” Elia asked, and the princess looked over at her cousin, smirking when she saw her mouth was glistening.

“I think I made a monster when I had you eat us all out back in Pentos,” Arianne purred, wrapping an arm around the younger woman and kissing her softly. “You might be even fonder of the taste of cunt than Daemon is.”

“I’ll need to taste you two later, my princesses,” Elia said softly, looking at the two of them, and they grinned at her.

“After I’ve seeded them, you can clean them up, Elia,” Daemon rumbled, and the youngest of his lovers quivered, her eyes, already dark with lust, turning even blacker.

“Yes, Daemon,” Elia breathed, making Arianne, Rhaenys, and Daenerys all giggle.

“Whatever did you do to this poor girl, Daemon?” Daenerys asked teasingly, and he grabbed a handful of her thick ass, making her gasp.

“The same things I’m going to do to both of you,” he rumbled, wrapping an arm around Rhaenys too and leading them back to the bed.

He saw Arianne pull Elia into a deep, passionate kiss as they reached it and grinned at the sight, happy that she’d fit in so well with them already.

“You brute!” Rhaenys exclaimed unseriously. “How many innocent young girls are you going to ruin forever with this club you call a cock?”

“As many as Arianne throws at me,” Daemon replied, making them both laugh.

“You say that like you were an innocent boy I corrupted,” Arianne chuckled as she kissed her way down along her cousin’s flat stomach.

“Yeah, I mean, you never threw any women into his bed,” Tyene replied, “except me.”

“And me,” Nymeria added.

“And me,” Obara grinned.

“You were the one who suggested seducing me,” Bellegere said.

“I became your pet project because you wanted to get back at my cuntish stepmother,” Falia teased.

“Oh, fuck off, all of you,” Arianne huffed, almost managing to sound serious, and they laughed.

“You know we all love you, Arianne,” Missandei smiled. “I, at least, came to the two of you wanting to join in the fun.”

“How could you not?” Rhaenys purred, pushing Daemon onto his back and crawling atop him until she was straddling his waist. Grinding her slick cunt on his cock, she added, “If he’d grown up in King’s Landing, I’d have been tempted to take my darling valonqar here before you managed it.”

“If Daemon had grown up in King’s Landing, you and Arianne might have come to actual blows over him,” Daenerys giggled.

“And you wouldn’t have?” Arianne asked, and Daenerys shook her head.

“No,” the silver-haired beauty replied. “As much as I love Daemon and love fucking him, my eyes always would have fallen on Rhaenys first. Once you two decided to share, of course, I’d have happily joined in.”

“Well, I, for one,” Dacey grinned, nuzzling her cheek against Nymeria’s inner thigh as she looked over at the thoroughly amused-looking Daemon, “am very glad that you spent so many years in Winterfell, Daemon.”

“So am I,” Daemon rumbled, pulling Daenerys down and kissing her hungrily. “After all, growing up there led me to all this.”

As he and their aunt made out, Rhaenys picked up his cock, taking a moment to marvel once more that something that thick actually fit inside her, and sank down to the root in one smooth motion.

She gasped and moaned, relishing the feeling of being filled so completely, and smiled down at him when Daemon grasped her hips, sinking his thick fingers into her flesh.

“Maybe growing up in the capital wouldn’t have been so bad,” he quipped, and she laughed as she began to ride him.

Daenerys, whimpering as she rubbed her dripping slit at the sight of her niece and nephew having sex, decided that she wanted to join in fully and leaned in close to Daemon, whispering, “Let me sit on your face, please.”

“With an arse like yours, you hardly need to ask,” the prince replied with a grin, looking over as he heard Dalla shriek, still riding Missandei’s face as her sister ate the former slave out.

Daenerys grinned and, moving behind him, crawled over until her dripping slit was directly over his mouth. He grabbed her thick, round ass immediately, sinking his fingers into her plump cheeks, and she sighed happily, loving even that simple touch. Lowering herself down, she waited until she felt his tongue on her sensitive flesh before leaning forward and taking Rhaenys’ hands in hers.

“Gods, I love his fucking cock,” Rhaenys moaned as her aunt and lover started moaning and grinding herself on Daemon’s face. “I can’t wait to see him fill you up again.”

“He clearly intends to finish inside both of us, so maybe...oh gods, right there, we can switch after he fills you up,” Daenerys suggested, gasping when she felt his tongue slither up to her clit and start stroking the sensitive nub with just as much pressure as she liked.

Rhaenys grinned at that thought and, wrapping her arms around her aunt’s neck, leaned in and kissed her hungrily. Daemon lapped at her slick, dripping folds eagerly, more than happy to be smothered by her incredible arse, and began thrusting up into Rhaenys, matching her rhythm perfectly. While drowning in the sinful pleasure of bedding both Targaryen beauties at once, he could also hear the orgy continuing on all around him and let it distract him completely. In these chambers, surrounded by so many women who loved and adored him, he could completely set aside what he’d be doing in a couple days’ time, but while he was so distracted, his enemies were not.

“We’ve received confirmation now from multiple sources,” Theobald scowled, sitting down in his usual chair in the basement.

The majority of this level of the Citadel was taken up by the former storage room, which had, centuries ago, been converted into a heavily reinforced containment chamber for the wyrms. That wasn’t the only room there, though, as they had still needed to build a new storage room, which was further down the long hallway that dominated it, and the large meeting room that the three most prominent archmaesters there were all seated in just then.

“It is Morning then?” Nymos sighed.

“It was going to be either her or the Cannibal,” Agrivane reasoned, “and he would surely be worse.”

“Our order didn’t fail to kill the Cannibal, though,” Nymos muttered. “That one flew off when his favorite food source dried up and probably died in Sothyros or some even further land. He was old during the Dance, unlike this one.”

“Our predecessors did fail there,” Theobald rumbled, “but we will not.”

“And how exactly are we supposed to kill her?” Nymos asked. “The largest dragon our predecessors managed to kill was Silverwing, and while large, she wasn’t this big. From the reports we’ve gotten, Morning appears to have grown as large as Vhagar was during the Dance, as large as Balerion was during the conquest. Gerold and the others won’t be up to the task of killing a dragon that large.”

“I still can’t believe you named one of them,” Theobald muttered.

“I know, I know, we aren’t to form attachments to them, given that we have to kill them,” Agrivane muttered. “Of course, given everything, we might have to keep Gerold for longer than we usually do.”

“If we do that, we risk catastrophe!” Nymos hissed. “We can’t control them past a certain size; all our oldest records confirm that.”

“And we can kill a dragon large enough to melt a castle with a firewyrn smaller than a horse,” Agrivane muttered. “We might be fucked, my friends.”

“No!” Theobald growled, his long grey hair falling over his face as he slammed his fist on the table. “I refuse to believe that.”

“I know you don’t want to believe it, and neither do I, but what alternative is there?” Agrivane asked. “I’m no happier about the prospect of the dragons returning, which they surely will if the Targaryens manage to keep a living one around for a while, but unless we think of a viable way to kill Morning as our predecessors should have when they had her in their clutches back then.”

“She escaped and fled to Skagos of all places,” Nymos muttered. “If you’d listed every landmass in the known world and told me to rank them from the most to least likely to find a living dragon, that might not have been at the bottom of my list, but it would have been damn close. There has to be something we can do.”

“There must be,” Theobald scowled, trying to think. “The Dragonsbane turned out to be a greater boon to us than we ever could have imagined, and I refuse to let the gift he gave us be undone. The Targaryens are useful, for sure, and Westeros has known greater periods of peace and far greater prosperity since the Conquest than it ever did in the millennia before it, but dragons made them too powerful. A strong hand to hold the lords together and stop them from tearing the realm apart every ten to fifteen years is good, but less so when it’s wreathed in fire.”

“The Dance proved that, and there have been plenty of examples since of why its best that the dragons never return,” Nymos sighed. “Could you imagine if Aerion or, the gods forbid, Aerys II had had a dragon under their command?”

“If Bloodraven and Bittersteel had ridden dragons, the Riverlands would look like Valyria to this day,” Agrivane sighed. “I understand it, I do, but we have to be realistic. We’re in the same position that Rhaenyra and Daemon were in after Aegon II ascended his father’s throne. Unless we can find a way to deal with the very large, borderline unstoppable dragon, we’re better off doing nothing than trying to rise against its rider. It didn’t end well for either of them, I’ll remind you.”

“Their blood won out in the end,” Nymos grumbled, knowing full well that it was a useless point to make.

“They had dragons of their own,” Agrivane replied. “Unless you can pull a monster the size of the Blood Wyrms out of your arse, there’s little that we can do.”

“If Aegon V had had dragons under his command, he’d have torn the realm apart in his ridiculous naivety,” Theobald sighed, standing up and pacing back and forth. “Gyldayn regretted the part he played in Summerhall to his last breath, knowing that he’d killed good men that day, it had to be done, and this has to be done too. I still say that the first course of action must be replacing Aemon.”

“And I still say that killing the king’s uncle, I forget how many greats, could blow up in our faces,” Agrivane muttered.

“The man has lived for a century, Agrivane,” Theobald scoffed. “He is, by all accounts, a decrepit ruin whose mind is just about the only thing that hasn’t gone yet. No one will question it when he simply doesn’t wake one day, and frankly, I’d pick death over being that feeble.”

“It would be highly difficult for the Targaryens to figure out that he died of unnatural causes if we used one of the kinder poisons, which we would, much less tie it back to us,” Nymos pointed out.

“You read the reports on what happened with the spymaster and the High Septon who were killed in King’s Landing a few moons ago,” Agrivane argued. “Daemon Targaryen, armed with only a few scraps of correspondence between Varys’ Pentoshi ally and the Golden Company, unraveled a scheme going back the better part of two decades, brought everyone responsible to heel, and crushed them without losing so much as a single man of his own. It was masterful from what I’ve read, and that is not an enemy I’d make lightly.”

“He does seem to be less of a dumb brute than we had thought,” Nymos admitted, “and he does have a penchant for pulling off blatantly ridiculous feats. He did, after all, just shatter the Wall, conquer the Wildlings, and expand the territory of the kingdoms by the gods alone know how many square miles.”

“He’s at least as much of a terror as his namesake,” Agrivane muttered.

“You speak truth, but it changes nothing,” Theobald sighed. “We have to be able to stop any attempt the Targaryens make to hatch eggs before it has a chance to work, and as for Morning, there are a number of poisons that we can try to see if they’ll at least weaken her. Perhaps once sufficiently weakened, she’ll become vulnerable enough that the wyrms can best her. Have we heard back yet from the man we sent to Sunspire?”

“I received his report just before I came down here,” Agrivane nodded, pulling the scroll from his robes and setting it down on the table. “Caleotte is far too meek and womanish to ever go along with anything like this. He’d be more likely to report us than risk his neck trying to poison a dragon.”

“That fits what little I recall of the man,” Nymos sighed. “What about the other one? Name started with M.”

“Myles,” Agrivane nodded. “He’s apparently more interesting. He’s younger and likely possesses more nerve, but more than that, he seems not to care for the prince.”

“Really?” Theobald asked. “Any particular reason?”

“Not that our agent has managed to divine yet,” Agrivane replied. “He theorized that the princess might have taken him to bed once, and simple jealousy was his motive. He wouldn’t have been the only one.”

“Bloody Dornish,” Nymos muttered, scrunching his nose up in disgust and shaking his head.

“Quite,” Agrivane drawled. “He might be of use to us, but if not...that’s two maesters...”

“It could be two hundred, and I’d give the order all the same,” Theobald said coldly. “For the good of the realm, the dragons cannot be allowed to return, and there is no sacrifice too great in the name of preventing that. For more than a century, we have done as Aegon III tasked us to do, and no matter what it takes, we will fulfill our charge.”

“Yes, Archmaester,” Agrivane nodded, and Theobald chuckled.

“You don’t need to defer to me so, anymore, good man,” he smiled. “We’re equals now, my young pupil, brothers in an order within an order, one which might just cease to be needed soon if we can pull this off.”

“Really?” Nymos asked.

“Morning is surely the last living dragon by now,” Theobald muttered. “If she dies mere moons after the Targaryens get her back and their inevitable attempt to hatch eggs fails, surely even those stubborn cunts will finally conclude that they just can’t have dragons as things stand.”

“One could hope,” Agrivane replied. “What are you going to do about Aemon?”

“I’ll make sure it’s quite, and painless,” Theobald sighed. “After serving in his role so honorably for so many years, he deserves that. Once he’s gone, he’ll be replaced with someone we can rely upon. Perhaps Pycelle might be of use.”

“That might work, if you think we can trust him,” Nymos said.

“He has no great love of the dragons,” Theobald nodded.

“If you think it best, I’ll not argue the point anymore,” Agrivane sighed. “I’ll write back to our agent in Sunspear and have him continue to observe Myles.”

“Good,” Theobald said. “*We’ll manage this; we have to.*”

With that desperate thought, the eldest of the three watched the other two leave, hoping that they would be able to do as their order hadn’t needed to in a century and actually kill a dragon.