

The Northern Tyrant [Game of Thrones] Chapter 48 - Madman's Plot, The Deal, The She-Devil & The Family Dilemma

"What can you tell me about the Maester, Benjen?"

"Medrick?" Benjen frowned. "He's not so old as he seems. Keeps to himself most days. Speaks little, and only when spoken to. I never had much dealings with him. Never saw the need."

Wylis nodded and tiredly glanced around. His heart felt heavy at the sight of Ashara holding sleeping Arthria in her arms. He was personally confused. He did believe that it was the Maester. But he didn't understand why he did it.

As long as it was Maester Medrick's personal action, it was fine. But if it was a grand strategy of the Citadel, then that was an issue. Yet, he couldn't understand why the Citadel would do that.

While it wasn't proven, he had spoken with Archmaester Marwyn enough. The man hinted that the Citadel didn't like dragons and could have used poison, sabotage, and other ways to kill them and bring science and reason to Westeros.

If that was the case, then Wylis believed that he was the greatest inventor and bringer of science. Targeting him made no sense. Unless it was due to jealousy and a need for control, as he didn't share his inventions with the Citadel.

Qyburn isn't important enough to earn me such ire either.

"Could be anything. For now, I don't think Lord Hornwood did this. Poison like that is a Maester's craft. If you look at what's come before, it smells of the Boltons. Still, I won't rule out the Maester having his own cause. We'll need a trap to catch the bastard."

"What trap?" asked Benjen.

Wylis looked at Ashara. "I'll need you to play the sick one. Not for long, I swear it. But you must look near death, as if poison's taken hold. Chett will bring your food and water himself, clean and safe. Lord Hornwood has to think this dire, else he won't grant me leave to handle it."

"I will do it, Wylis." Ashara agreed right away. "Best Arthria remains with me. It's not safe anymore."

"I agree." Wylis turned to Benjen. "Go, tell Chett what's passed. He'll know what must be done. Come morning, I'll stir trouble in the castle and play the angry man and feign fury. I'll lay the blame on Lord Hornwood. You, in the meantime, catch me five small mice and bring them here."

"What will you do with mice, my lord?" Benjen asked.

"A demonstration."

####

Lord Halys Hornwood woke up with a headache, groaning in his bed. He only remembered snippets from last night. All the tales Lord Kaiser had shared with him. He truly felt honored that he could host a man like him.

"Another day, another feast." Lord Halys muttered and got out of his bed, gazing at his noble wife getting ready, combing her hair by the dresser. "I shall go hunting with Lord Kaiser today. You should keep Lady Ashara and the little one company."

"Of course. But... I find it difficult to know how to address her. She is a paramour and—"

"Now then, she's still of noble birth, mind you. Daughter of House Dayne, sister to a famed knight. She's a lady, my wife. Give her the same respect you'd grant Lady Kaiser, won't you? I've not seen Lord Kaiser treat her otherwise."

"Understood—"

Knock! Knock!

Interrupting his wife, Halys noted a heavy knock on his bedchamber's door. He walked over to it and unlocked it, finding his captain standing with a grave face.

"M'lord! Lord Kaiser... L-Lady Ashara... She's been poisoned!"

It took moments for the smile to fade away from Halys' face. It took moments for his mind to fully register what his captain had just said. And he was actually was looking forward to the day's activities with Lord Kaiser...

"What? Nonsense, who would dare such a thing in my castle?"

"M'lord, Lord Kaiser is furious! He... he nearly killed me in range. It's true, the poison."

"Move!" Lord Halys pushed the stammering captain aside and stormed out of the chamber, still dressed in his sleeping robes. He didn't just walk, he ran like his life depended on it and quickly reached the guest chamber.

He noticed Lord Kaiser's guards standing outside the door. Once he reached the door, there stood Lord Kaiser's tall squire, blocking the way.

"What's happened here? Where is Lord Kaiser? How fares Lady Ashara?"

Lord Halys felt somewhat intimidated by that tall squire. But to his luck, Lord Kaiser appeared right then and invited him in. He eyed the bed right away and found Lady Ashara on it. Her face was paler, her eyes baggy, and her lips dry. The little girl, Arthria, was snuggled beside her.

"My lord, what happened?" he asked.

“Ashara was poisoned, Lord Hornwood. I felt something was off at the feast last night, but I let it pass. Fool of me. Poisons don’t touch me, and bad meat’s never laid me low. But Ashara... she isn’t made the same.”

Lord Halys nearly lost his footing, his legs gone weak. “Poisoned? But my lord... we both ate from the same tray, aye, and drank from the same pitcher. How can that be?”

Instead of an answer, he saw Lord Kaiser move. He watched as Lord Kaiser filled a cup with water and then fed it to a small mouse. It took a few moments, but the mouse started to squeak and wail.

"The poison was not in the food and water served, Lord Hornwood. It was smeared on the cups and plates. A slow, creeping poison to weaken my body and leave me open to any common fever that comes along. Not some simple brew, mind you."

Lord Halys stared at the mouse dying a slow death. At last, he dropped to his heels and gazed at the dead mouse. His hands shivered, scared of this incident coming out in the open. Lord Kaiser was a famous man with many enemies but powerful allies. Especially his friendship with King Robert, it was widely known. If word of this reached King's Landing, he feared there would be retribution.

"My lord, this was none of my doing. I had longed to welcome you here, to feast beside you as is right." Lord Halys clarified. "I will see this matter set right, I will find the truth—"

“No need. Call the maid who set these cups and the water jar here. And the ones who brought my plates. I’ll find the guilty hand myself. If you’re clean of this, it will be settled within hours.”

"Of course!"

Lord Halys didn't question it and immediately got to work. He called in additional men-at-arms and locked down the entire castle, gathering everyone in his great hall so none could destroy evidence if there was any.

After that, he arrested the maids who brought water to Lord Wylis' bedchamber and served the plates during the feast.

By the time Lord Kaiser came to interrogate them, he had dressed fitting his stature, yet... the inside of his robes was drenched in nervous sweat.

His hope for a delightful gathering and forging new connections had come to this.

I will tear them alive who did this!

He rarely got angry. That day he was.

####

Wylis stood in front of the three maids who had served him during his stay. He was taller than them by more than two heads and looked imposing. His dark, fur-collared cloak only made his shoulders broader.

He stared at their frightened faces. The three maids were all young, but not new in the castle.

Wylis had a hidden trump card in this matter. Normally, it would have been hard to find the true culprit. But with his Eye of the Judge skill, it was innate to him to recognise a criminal merely by the way of speech and standing.

"Tell me, did you try to poison me? Or did someone tell you to poison me? Who placed those plates in your hands before they reached me? And who gave you the jar and cup for my chamber?"

Wylis asked multiple questions at the same time, overwhelming the three maids. All three of them were reacting the same, crying, pressing their hands on their mouths. Their eyes were wide, filled with panic and fear.

"Speak!" Lord Hornwood roared with rage. "Tell the truth, or I'll see the three of you hanged for it. Bread and salt were given beneath my roof, a sacred bond, and it's been broken all the same. I would know who's done this, I would, so tell me now!"

Wylis only focused on three women. The Eye of the Judge wasn't a magical ability. It was a skill instead, one that made him highly perceptive of the other person's body language and speech patterns. It was tuned to find criminals, and that meant if someone felt guilty in their heart for something they did, he would notice.

Two of the three maids were crying and revealed nothing but fear to him. They were weeping nonstop. However, the third maid, on the right, was hiding something more. The faint movements of her eyes, the little movements of her fingers. They stood out to Wylis.

"You!" Wylis stepped right in front of that maid. "Gemma, was it? Why did you do it? Who ordered you? Was it for coin?"

"I-I didn't do it—!"

Pa!

Wylis slapped her right across the face with controlled strength. He didn't want to knock her or break her neck.

"Next time I strike, I won't be gentle," Wylis said again, though her lips were already bloodied. "I'm not saying you poisoned me yourself. But someone put those plates and cups in your hands, didn't they? Someone told you they were meant for me."

"I—"

Wylis raised his right hand again.

"It was Ser... the Captain!"

Wylis frowned and turned on his heels and stormed towards the Captain of Castle Hornwood. The man was armed, dressed in chainmail and leather armor, but that didn't stop Wylis from grabbing him by the neck and lifting him in the air.

"You poisoned Ashara?"

"Ahh... m'lord, no! I... I wouldn't dare, I swear it. I admire you, m'lord, I do. You're what I see when I think on true knights. I'd never, I... ah! I didn't... I remember it clear. I was by the crockery cabinet, see, makin' sure only the proper pieces were set aside. Aye... it were Maester Medrick. He chose them. Pointed at the cleanest, brightest plate and cups, said they'd serve Lord Kaiser well. Gods... I swear it on me mother's name, m'lord!"

Wylis sighed and finally put the captain down and turned towards the Maester. "So it's as I feared. Not every man can brew a poison like that. You didn't see this turn, did you, Maester Medrick? Thought I'd weaken on the road and die in my own hall. No questions asked. No whispers of how Wylis Kaiser truly died."

"My lord, I would never do such a thing!"

"But you did," Wylis stated coldly, staring at the expressions. He saw it, the guilt, the actual crime. The Eye of the Judge was pointing at the Maester strongly. It was a sloppy job to begin with since he wasn't supposed to find out about the poison this quickly.

In Maester Medrick's ideal life, the poison went unnoticed. But Wylis wasn't a common man. His absolute poison immunity also let him know when he was poisoned.

"The question is, why?" Wylis asked, "I've never set foot here, never laid eyes on you. So tell me, what cause does a simple Maester have to kill me?"

"I did no—"

Wylis pressed a hand on the Maester's shoulder, squeezing. "Arthria is too small. That poison would've wrung her out in agony. The thought of it sets my blood on fire. I'll see you suffer for it a thousandfold. Now speak. Did the Citadel order you?"

"N-No! No, my lord!"

"Was it the Boltons? They made you a sweet offer?" He asked, his nails now digging into the Maester's shoulder.

"I would never!" Maester Medrick replied, face full of horror. "I would never serve the likes of them."

"Then speak, Maester. Why poison me? What do you hope to gain from it?"

The game was over already. Wylis wasn't going to let this man live. All he wanted was a clear confession and the true reason why the Maester did it. If not for Citadel and not for Boltons, then why?

"Because I must, I must! Gods help me, you're a soreness in the order of things. It festers, it does. You went and kept that Qyburn as your Maester. The Citadel cast him out, aye, threw him to the wind, and still you kept him close! And your lands, full of whispers they are. Rumors of magic, crawling through the dark like... like... ahk!"

Wylis clawed at the Maester's neck and squeezed hard, fury blazing in his eyes. "That's it? No grand design? Just a doddering old fool chasing some cursed vision of how it should be? That's why you came for me? That's all?!"

His grip hardened further, turning the Maester's face red.

"I came here to speak of trade with Lord Hornwood. I came as a friend, as a man of the North. And still I must stand on edge because of some cursed rat from the Citadel? This won't end here. I'll skin you, pull your nails, carve you piece by piece till every secret you've kept spills out. Chett. Take him to the dungeon. I want eyes on him at all times."

Wylis threw the Maester like he was a ragdoll.

"I'll remain with Ashara until she gets better."

He gave Lord Hornwood a nod and left the great hall.

Ting!

Of course, now it appears.

[Hidden Quest Completed - The Maester's Folly

Description - A hidden plot is brewed to bring down the Tyrant. A lesson to be learned, the enemy strikes when least expected.

Goal - Catch the mastermind behind the plot.

Reward - Bird Master Skill: Train any bird to follow simple commands.]

Oh? Does that mean... I can fuck the Citadel up?

#####

Ashara was well to begin with. But Wylis still remained in the bedchamber with her, holding her and Arthria in his arms and taking a nap. It was very heartwarming and sweet. That was until Ashara's hand began to tease his erection.

They didn't take it far, however. He left her and Arthria to sleep and headed to the dungeons.

There were witnesses when Wylis tortured Maester Medrick. From his and Lord Hornwood's side. Sadly, there were no grand schemes uncovered. Other than finding the proof of the Maester's fanatic madness, he found out how the Maester was siphoning money.

Since timber was one of the major industries in Hornwood lands, the Maester made deals with certain timber traders to help them get exclusive contracts at a certain price. The Maester would then subtly influence Lord Hornwood to agree to those traders. In return, the Maester got a cut.

Maester Medrick also confessed to passing private information to the Citadel, and said most maesters do it. It was an open secret at that point, but it still got Lord Hornwood angry. And it didn't take long for the lord of the land to officially condemn Maester Medrick to death.

By that point, Wylis had already turned the man into a half zombie. Barely alive, toothless, a few fingers missing, and all his nails gone. Of course, his cock as well, since the Maester had no use for it to begin with.

In the presence of at least fifty men and women of Hornwood, the Maester was beheaded on the block after the herald read his crimes, the gravest of them being plotting the assassination of Lord Wylis Kaiser.

At that point, Lord Hornwood stopped trying to hide it. Since the blame was the Maester's, he didn't mind if the word spread across Westeros.

And Wylis saw all of it as an opportunity. While it enraged him, especially the danger if Arthria had drank that water, he planned to use this incident to emotionally blackmail Lord Hornwood into agreeing with the trade.

By evening, another feast was prepared.

This time it was more private, the involved persons being Wylis, Ashara, Benjen, and Chett, and Lord Hornwood with his immediate family. The food this time was tested, and the plates were cleaned many times.

"I truly wanted to go hunting with you, Lord Kaiser."

Wylis gave a small smile, seated opposite Lord Hornwood. "Plans rarely heed our wishes. No matter. Let's leave the clutter behind and tend to the present. Benjen told you why I've come, I trust?"

"He has indeed, my lord, that he has. Went on about trade for a spell. I've given it good thought, I have, but I've come up empty all the same. House Hornwood's got naught worth offering in such matters. You hold lands, a port, a fine fleet, and the word is your trade's doing right well."

"Aye, trade's going well enough. But coin won't fill a man's belly." Wylis straightened and leaned in. "I'm sending Archmaester Marwyn to Essos. He'll bring back seeds, rare ones. Might grow in the North, might not. It's a long wager, but I've no choice. Truth is, I lack the land."

"Which brings me here, my lord. I hope to buy the land by the Broken Branch. Two miles along each side. The river should make it fertile enough. It lies wild now, unused, thick with trees. I'll clear it for fields, and all the timber will be yours to sell. I know this is no small ask. Land holds more worth than anything. So when I've grain to spare, your house shall have it first, and at a kinder price than the realm. And..."

Wylis didn't want to drag this. He wanted to settle it all in one go and lay out his offer. He nodded towards Chett and sent the squire to bring out the actual price he was going to pay.

He waited for Chett to walk around the table and place the elegant, wooden box on the table, in front of Lord Hornwood.

"Lord Hornwood, few houses can claim what I bring. Men have bled for less, and more will to keep it. I hold my lands dear, as you do yours, so I reckon this a fair price for what I seek." Wylis gave a small nod, and Chett stepped forward to open it. "I present you Nightfang. Forged of Valyrian steel."

An instant silence eclipsed the entire small dining hall. Only the crackle of the burning wood in the hearth was a sound.

Lord Hornwood was dumbly staring at the bastard sword with a dark blade and beautiful patterns. Its hilt was elegant, and the pommel had a strange, dark gem in it. It shone so bright yet.

Donella Manderly was staring at the thing similarly. Even House Manderly didn't possess a Valyrian steel sword. Gods, even the Lannisters didn't have one. Everyone at that table knew Lord Tywin would happily gift not only lands but gold and even a virgin maiden of his house for this sword.

And yet, Wylis was offering it to Lord Hornwood for land that sat unused, and quite honestly, he wasn't asking for a lot. Not enough to warrant a Valyrian steel sword. It wasn't just a sword but the highest sign of status in Westerosi nobility, and earned the greatest bragging rights. It was something passed down through generations.

Of course, only Wylis knew the truth. The sword wasn't just for the land but also for all the gold he was going to extract. Wylis wanted to make Lord Hornwood happy enough that he wouldn't regret his decision later.

"A-Are you certain, m'lord?" Lord Halys asked, eyes wide and near dreamy, hands trembling yet never once brushing the sword, as though he feared he might soil it. "This is... this is precious... there's no equal to it."

Wylis made a hesitant face, but nodded. Although he had found the Valyrian steel for free, sunken in the sea, it had still taken effort to get, and that warranted some acting. He needed to sell the fact that this was the greatest ever deal of Lord Halys Hornwood's life.

"Aye, the sword is yours if you agree." Wylis reminded him that this wasn't a gift.

In fact, Wylis had more to offer. He was going to take all of the Bolton lands soon. He could offer a small piece of it to Lord Hornwood, something of equal size to what he was taking now. But at the moment, he saw no need to offer it.

The sword was doing its magic. He was near certain the man was going to drool.

"Of course, I agree! Aye, without a doubt. I'd be a fool to say otherwise, Lord Kaiser. Still, I can't help but feel I'm taking more than I ought. That land's hardly equal to such a blade. Are you certain about it? Might be wiser sellin' it on to Lord Tywin, wouldn't—"

"Lord Tywin is not my neighbour, is he?" Wylis cut in. "Besides, if this makes us friends, I'll call it a fair bargain."

"Hah! Friends, is it? Gods be good, you're more than that to me, Lord Kaiser. You're kin in all but blood now, my brother, and I swear it true. I'll ride wherever you've a mind to go, battle or no, and I'll wield this blade of mine right there beside you."

Hope you still say that after I start digging the damn gold.

Ting!

[Hidden Quest Completed - The Almighty Scammer!

Description - A good deal is where you lose nothing and gain everything. Scraps you found with ease have earned you lands.

Goal - Scam Lord Halys Hornwood

Reward - Pickpocket Skill]

"..."

Wylis dumbly stared at the hovering blue screen. First of all, this wasn't a scam. He gave Lord Hornwood a sword as precious as that damn, ugly goblin's ring. Second, he fucking dived into the sea to get those scraps. And third, what the fuck was pickpocket skill? Why would he need it? He'd be the worst pickpocket in the world because, before he'd even get close, they'd jump away in fright from his size.

I guess. Can't always get useful rewards.

Wylis grinned and rose at once. Arms wide, he circled the table toward Lord Hornwood. "In that case, my brother. How about a little spar to test out this new blade?"

Lord Hornwood clapped his hands and jumped to his feet. "You stole words from my mouth, my lord."

Wylis followed the lord to the great hall, and under the bright light of dozens of torches, they did a little mock spar. It was no real fight, just fancy footwork and clashing of blades hard enough to make sparks and light pangs.

Once Lord Halys was out of breath, he retreated to his solar to prepare the written agreement. Wylis stayed outside, and noticed how Chett was lost in thought.

"What happened?"

"The blade is beautiful, my lord."

Wylis chuckled and stood beside his tall squire, gazing at Arthria pulling Lord Hornwood's son's hair. "I will make you one when you become a knight."

Chett became alert. "My lord? You'd make me a knight?"

"War draws near. You'll have your chances to prove yourself. Do well, and I'll have Robert make you a knight, and I'll see you armed with Valyrian steel." Wylis tapped his shoulder. "Enough dawdling. Go on, meet the others. Perhaps a fair lady will catch your eye."

"My lord... I don't think so. They're all too short, I'm afraid."

"Huh?" Wylis looked hurt because he was even taller. "Chett, have you ever seen my wife beside me? She seems like a gorgeous midget."

Chett grunted and rubbed his face. "My lord... I beg you, say no more. I'll carry on as though I'd heard nothing."

"Why? She asks you about me?"

"Aye, she does, my lord. She asks me near every day what you did and how it fared. I... I speak true to her, as it is."

Wylis dragged a hand down his face. "Gods. Just don't say anything. What's the worst she can do?"

"My lord, she threatens me. Says she'll cut off my supper. And you told me never to yield on my protein, so I—"

"Come now, come now. Try 'lovely little mite' in place of a midget. Surely you can manage so small a courtesy for your dear lord. I pay you, buddy."

Chett gave a small nod. "I can do that."

"Good. Come now. Let us drink to the troublesome little she-demons who rule our lives." Wylis pulled his squire after him.

"I've no such woman in my life, my lord."

"Chett, lad, my squire, I call it a gut feeling. I know you'll soon have one."

"My lord, I beg you, don't speak such curses on me."

"Bah!" Wylis laughed with a howl, happy now that the tension was relieved. "Can't run from destiny, Chett."

####

Wylis didn't stay in Hornwood Castle for too long. After putting their seals on the agreement, both of them went hunting the next day. Wylis taught Lord Hornwood a few things about it and helped him hunt a boar.

After that, on the fourth day, he journeyed back to Ramsgate early in the morning.

The journey home was far more calming to him as he could now proceed with the quest. It was a Main Quest, however, and considering that, things had been going very smoothly. The only bloodshed until now was the Maester.

But he knew not to celebrate too early. The quest wouldn't be over until he extracted all the gold from that river. And it was going to take time if he did it alone. What he needed was to man the blast furnace and Bessemer converter, and make some specialised equipment to process gold from mud from the river in large quantities.

As soon as he returned home that evening, without even wasting time, he got to work with the young blacksmith boy, Martyn. But to Wylis' delight, the boy's sick father, Galbart, had returned to health.

He took both of them to make the equipment that night. But they made nothing; he only taught them how to do things right without getting themselves killed. Immediately, they all knew they needed more blacksmiths.

In the end, defeated, he returned to his castle and ate with his big family.

After that came a dip in the spring with all his gorgeous ladies and the kids. Elia was there as well, but she kept a towel tied around her body the entire duration.

Finally, at night, he went to bed with Lyanna.

"So I'm a little mite now?"

"..."

Goddamnit, Chett. That fast?

Wylis awkwardly scratched his head. "I remember saying lovely as well."

"On the bed!" Lyanna ordered.

Wylis gave her a salute and threw away his clothes, climbing into his bed butt naked on his back. He watched Lyanna do the same, and gods, she was so fucking beautiful. His cock was hard already, and the way she crawled between his legs and kissed his cockhead, he cooed.

But she kept climbing, up and up, and before he knew it, she sat straddled on his face, knees planted wide, her cunt an inch from his mouth.

"Your punishment is to pleasure your she-demon."

"..."

Fucker told her that, too? Ten more rounds on the walls, he needs it.

"As the lady commands."

Wylis had no apprehension and shamelessly wrapped his arms around her hips and roughly pulled her down on his mouth. His heavy tongue rammed straight through her warm, soaked petals and fucked her open.

"Ooooooh!" Lyanna moaned, grabbing the headboard and riding his mouth.

Her soft thighs were like plush cushions against his ears. Oh, he fucking loved doing this to Lyanna. Biologically, he enjoyed eating the fuck out of his wife. There was no finer cunt to eat in the whole wide world.

Slurp! Slurp!

"Aaaaah! Coming!"

Wylis stared up, over her belly, her tits, and to her face. He smirked at how fast she was coming and fucked her harder with his tongue. He slurped, he ate, he licked like a madman.

She came undone. Her doughy thighs trembled in his grip, her smooth, pale back tensing up into an arc. Her silky hair swaying behind as she cried out breathlessly, breast jolting in delicious agony. Gushes of her sweet nectar flowed out of her core and onto his face, soaking him in her scent.

Oh, how much he loved the way she shivered in his hands, sinking his tongue even deeper between her clenching lower lips and slurped.

Once Lyanna was done and panting, Wylis took control. With ease, he lifted her off his face and settled her on his lap. He sat up, back against the headboard, and held Lyanna on his cock like it was a chair.

"Did my she-demon miss me?"

"Mmm..." Lyanna got up and guided his cock between her petals herself and sank down slowly.
"More than you can think... oooooh! This tasty... bite!"

Wylis pulled her face close and kissed her. And finally, it felt like home sweet home.

#####

Citadel, Oldtown,

The Conclave had gathered inside the closed doors. The group of archmaesters ran the Citadel. Their words and dealings were confidential, and they used all the information gathered from across the Seven Kingdoms to make decisions.

Just a day ago, they had received word about the fate of Maester Medrick of Hornwood. Normally, the death of a Maester didn't mean much to them, even if it was a murder. However, the graveness was in the fact that the Maester tried to assassinate Lord Kaiser, the strongest man in Westeros.

"This has damaged the standing of the order of maesters amongst the nobles and smallfolk alike."

"Lord Kaiser may no longer look at the Citadel kindly."

"The miraculous healing Lord Kaiser created with Qyburn is near-magical. Forget his giant nature and might, his mind alone is worth a hundred Medrick."

"We must send a representative to Ramsgate."

"I am of the same mind," said Archmaester Norren, Seneschal of the Citadel. "We cannot allow this to diminish the standing of our order. But there is no need to send another. Archmaester Marwyn is already at Ramsgate. We shall send him a raven and... I judge that Qyburn's recent works merit his restoration to our ranks."

"I agree. This new healing method must be a result of his... curiosities."

One by one, all archmaesters gave their agreement.

"Very well. Qyburn shall be restored to his former standing, and a raven will be sent to explain the position of our order."

#####

Ramsgate,

Days had passed since he had returned. Every night, he went out and felled a lot of trees with Earthbending. He at least wanted Lord Hornwood to think that he had discovered the gold after buying the land.

On the tenth day after returning, he finally announced the discovery of gold. He expected the word to reach every noble lord in the North in a matter of days. He paid no mind and focused on teaching the blacksmith duo everything he could.

Twenty days after his return, the first batch of gold extraction equipment was complete. And that morning, he sat in his ground-floor solar, reading a raven from Lord Halys Hornwood.

A good man.

The raven, instead of being filled with curses and tantrums, congratulated him on his discovery. The man wrote that he didn't feel regret for losing what he did not know he possessed. It also said that Lord Hornwood was going to declare his possession of the Valyrian Steel sword now, and tell everyone that he received it for selling the land.

Wylis agreed as it would save Lord Halys the embarrassment.

I'll make it up to you, my friend. Let's hope there are raw minerals under your lands.

Wylis placed the parchment aside and prepared to write back a response. He flashed a gaze at the kids huddled near the hearth. Rhaenys was reading Snow White's story to Arthria, Magnus, and the twins.

Knock! Knock!

"Enter."

Lyanna stepped inside, a tray of fruity refreshments in her hand for him and the kids. She first gave them to the children and then took the seat opposite him.

"Busy?"

"For you? Never." Wylis set the quill aside. "I've known you since we were kids. I know that face."

"What face?"

"The 'I got something serious to discuss' face," Wylis replied, arms crossed. "As it happens, I've words of my own. But you speak first."

Lyanna shifted in her seat, fingers worrying at her sleeve. "Wylis, I... I was speaking with Brandon and Benjen, and... I think I've come to see something. My Mother must be terribly lonely at Winterfell, now that Benjen's here as well. Ned was always away, and now he has his wife, his duty, his children, and... I never truly thought about what that left her with."

"You mean to bring her here?" Wylis cut in. "Then we're in the same boat. I've left my own kin to scrape by in Winterfell, still mere servants. Old Nan grows frail. I could give them warmth and comfort here. But..."

"It's frightening?" Lyanna finished his words. "I'm the same, Wylis. I don't know what to do. Mother... She'll be overjoyed seeing me alive, and wed to you, but she..."

"...Won't accept other women?"

Lyanna nodded and continued. "And what if Ned one day decides he wishes to see her and comes here?"

Wylis scratched his beard. "Truth be told, I can't say if Old Nan will take to this. She has long served House Stark, and that falls to Eddard now. What if her loyalty lies with him over me? And I've kin besides. Two uncles, two aunts."

"We'll be spelling our own doom." Lyanna sighed.

Wylis reclined back, his eyes resting on his children. Their cute smiles, Rhaenys' recital. It was his duty to protect. But then, was he not someone's son and grandson? Had he no duty towards them?

Ting!

[New Side Quest - Shame Of The Tyrant

Description - A Tyrant does not leave family behind, for they can be a source of strength. Yet you never gave them the chance.

Goal - Right what was wrong. Make the House Kaiser whole.

Reward - TBD]

Huh? TBD? That's new.

Story Poll - Bringing Lyanna's mother is one thing. She won't have a major role. But Wylis' family may. They are all tall men, strong. His own father and two uncles could serve his growing city as administrators and protectors.

But the question remains. Will they be loyal? Will they be greedy? Will things work out for Wylis? You can decide.