

## The Dread Lord of Essos

### Chapter 26

“W-What was that again? I’m sorry, I didn’t hear you,” Mace sputtered as Harold sighed and began speaking again. His lapse in etiquette wasn’t his fault. It was all the fault of the buxom temptress that was sitting next to the Lord of Summerstone. Her dress was more revealing than normal, giving him a very good view of the valley between her glorious breasts.

The hem of her dress was very short and rode up her thighs even further as she sat there with her long, smooth legs crossed. His eyes didn’t know where to look. One moment they were focused on her perfect tits, the next they were focused on her lovely legs. Was it him, or was it getting hot in there, he asked himself as he brushed away a bead of sweat that was threatening to run down his forehead. He didn’t notice the smirk on her beautiful face as she curled a lock of her red hair around her slender finger in such a tantalizing way. Her eyes blazed like the brazier from the Red Temple that she preached from every morning.

“I said that I would be willing to make proper assurances that I will not attack the Reach, and should I march on Westeros, I will continue acknowledging your family’s place as Wardens of the South,” he repeated. Beside Mace, his mother sat looking very annoyed at her son’s antics. She was equally annoyed at the big-breasted harlot that was stealing her son’s attention. She, of course, knew that it was Harold who asked her to be there. It was a brilliant move to keep Mace off of his game. She only wished that she was able to bring Margaery to the negotiations so that maybe Harold would be distracted as well. No doubt he would not have acted in such a pathetic manner, however. Giving her oaf of a son one last glare, she turned back to Harold.

“And your price for this assurance?” she asked as her son dabbed his head with his silk handkerchief. Melisandre had bitten her lower lip in such a seductive manner that Mace had forgotten that he was negotiating for the safety of his family and kingdom once again.

“Forgo attacking the Lannisters and King’s Landing. You need not join their cause, but I would ask you to avoid creating problems for them. If Joffrey wishes you to join his side, then he must be the one to negotiate that.”

Like he always claimed, Harry didn’t care much about his family ruling the Seven Kingdoms. That was his grandfather’s ultimate goal. Harry didn’t even consider Joffrey his family. However, Harry did have a bit of a soft spot for the Westerlands. It was where he had grown up after all. Despite Tywin being a cold and heartless man, many of the Lannisters were actually decent folk who had treated him with kindness over the years. Negotiating for their continued safety wasn’t a hardship for him. Harry still had no plans to invade Westeros, and if he ever did, the Tyrells were as good as anyone else to rule the Reach ... assuming they lived up to their end of the deal. Should they break that deal, Harry would consider it a personal insult ... and they would pay dearly for it.

Lady Olenna nodded wisely. "I believe that sounds fair. Isn't that right, Mace?" When no answer came, she turned to look at her son again who was staring at Melisandre. "MACE!" she bellowed, whacking him in the shin with her exquisitely carved, wooden cane.

"OW!" Mace hissed, leaning down and grabbing his throbbing shin. "Wha..." Mace suddenly remembered what he was there for. He flushed red with embarrassment. "OH! Umm ... Yes, of course!" he declared.

"Excellent. Then it is agreed," Harry said. "Now ... Margaery mentioned something about a trade pact for the upcoming winter ..."

Olenna opened her mouth to continue to negotiate since she had spoken with her granddaughter extensively about the subject. Unfortunately, her son beat her to the punch.

"Oh, there's no need for that, I'm sure," he declared with a puffed-up chest. He was proud of his family's lands and wanted to show off to the Red Goddess sitting across from him. Perhaps he could tempt her to come to the Reach where she could spend her time spreading her religion ... when she wasn't spreading other things, of course, Mace pervertedly thought. He didn't see his mother looking at him as though he were an idiot. Harry, of course, wanted to laugh but held it in.

"The Reach is one of the leading producers of foodstuffs, not only in Westeros but all of the world. We've never had a problem feeding our people. In fact, I will have other Houses coming to me on their hands and knees, beggar cups in hand," he proudly stated. Harry raised an eyebrow.

"Oh? I wasn't aware," he said. "While I'm not a historian by any means, I seem to remember reading about the winter of 59 through 60 AC. The winter was particularly brutal and famine set in across all of Westeros. Even nobles were forced to eat their dogs and horses. Then once the outbreak of the Shivers started, over a quarter of Oldtown perished."

"Well ... I ... " Mace blustered.

"That, perhaps, was a blessing in disguise for Oldtown. The survivors had plenty of meat to sustain themselves by eating the dead," Harry went on. Mace turned green at the thought.

"Even the Tyrells barely survived. Almost all of them succumbed to the disease ... lips blue and coughing up blood. It was only Bertrand Tyrell's miraculous recovery and the fact that the King was gracious enough to legitimize many of the Lords' surviving bastards all over Westeros that kept your family and many others in power." By then, Mace was squirming in his seat.

"That winter is expected to be a very short one compared to the one that we are about to face. According to the Maesters of the Citadel, the winter will arrive in less than a year and will be abnormally long. The smartest among them are saying that it will last years. I have no doubt that

many families will die, including many nobles. I, however, have prepared. I have farms further south than anyone where I can continue to grow during the winter. I have ten years' worth of food stocked up for my city alone. I will take care of my allies, but others will have to pay a steep price to secure my meat and grains. Even so, there is not enough to go around. Even I can't grow enough to feed the entire planet. That is good for me, however. It will only drive up the price. I can only hope that no wars break out to try and thin the competition for my food," Harry smiled.

"You are lucky to have thought ahead and secured your family's safety, not to mention your Kingdom's. Others will not be so lucky in the coming months ..." Harry left off.

"I suppose a bushel or two wouldn't hurt," Mace muttered.

"I talked with Margaery about this, and she was willing to be fostered here in exchange for a trade alliance. She is worried about the coming winter. Tales of cannibalism are enough too much for her to ignore, or so it seems. I thought long and hard about this and decided that fostering wasn't appropriate for a young woman of her age and social rank. Instead, I decided to make her an Ambassador for the Reach. The political position is a first of its kind," Harry told them. Olenna perked up.

"And what does this position entail?" the old woman asked, fiddling with her cane. She was having a hard time not whomping her son over the head with it.

"Basically, she would be the representative of the Reach. It would be her job to maintain diplomatic relations between our two Kingdoms and promote the policies and products of the Reach. Many very important men come to my city for trade and to promote their own cities. I'm sure she would have done an excellent job promoting the Reach to these leaders and businessmen. Unfortunately, I suppose I'll have to find someone else for this prestigious position," Harry said, getting up.

"Now wait a moment! Let us not be too hasty!" Mace called out, getting up as well. "If Margaery is so set on this, perhaps I should think about it," he said, turning to his mother. "Besides, a little extra food certainly won't hurt."

Olenna rolled her eyes. "No, Mace. More food will not hurt. Now sit down and keep quiet," she ordered. Mace cleared his throat and did what he was told. She turned back to Harry. "Let us work out a fair deal for both of our families," she told him.

### **The Dread Lord of Essos**

Margaery was nervous as she waited in her room. At that moment, her father and grandmother were deciding her future. Whether she would be leaving or staying depended on them getting a deal done. She wouldn't lie to herself, Harold's words had worried her.

She knew that he didn't just say them to try and trick her into something. He believed everything that he said. Once she got back to her room, she had spoken with her grandmother to ask about the Maester's predictions. She confirmed what he had told her. The coming winter was expected to be long and severe. Her grandmother also told her that her family did have stocks of food saved up, but if the winter lasted longer than a year, they would be in big trouble. Harold, however, didn't seem worried about any of that. He was quite confident that not only would he have more than enough for his people, but he would have plenty to barter with.

Margaery knew the importance of this. Her grandmother also knew. The only one who didn't was her father, but Margaery was hopeful that her grandmother would rein him in. If things worked out the way that she hoped they would, Margaery would be in a position to elevate her family's standing among the other Houses. She was very confident that she could use her feminine charms to help persuade Harold into giving her a few favors that she could use. No doubt other Houses would be turning to the Reach for food if the winter was as bad as they say. If they didn't have enough to sell, she could use her favors to get Harold to agree to trade his stocks to them. Of course, those other Houses would then owe her a great debt. Margaery shook her head and sighed. Going back into her room, she closed the balcony doors and sat on her bed. 'Perhaps I'm getting ahead of myself,' she thought. It was only a few minutes later that the door opened, and her grandmother came into her room. She remained silent as she closed the door behind her and sat down next to her on the bed.

"Your father wishes to speak with you," Olenna told her before continuing. "But thankfully, the news will be pleasant. They have agreed to allow you to stay," the older woman smiled. Margaery smiled back as her heart beat fast in her chest. This was a load off of her mind. At the very least, her family would be safe and secure.

"So I will be fostered here?" she asked excitedly. Olenna smirked.

"Your father wished to share the news with you first ... so pretend to be surprised," she told the younger girl. "But Harold has created a new political position which he calls an Ambassador. You are to be the first. According to him, it will be your job to represent our House while here and to maintain relations between his Kingdom and ours. It is also your job to try and further the influence of our family, not only in his Kingdom but the surrounding cities as well," the old woman continued to smirk.

"While making sure that Harold remains pleased with you and our family as a whole is of the utmost importance right now, it is equally important that you do your best to grow the Tyrell's power and influence in Essos. Right now, it will be hard, because everyone is preparing for winter. I will, of course, help you in the coming weeks. Your father needs to return soon, but you, your mother, and I will remain for a while longer."

"So what else did we have to give for the agreement?" Margaery asked her.

“We will provide him with the crops that only grow in the Reach. There are other smaller favors and such, but the biggest thing we had to give was two small pieces of land very close to Highgarden and Oldtown. He plans to open warehouses on them to store the imported food and goods that he wishes to sell. It will be your job to eventually convince him to give us some land to open our own. If we play this right, our family could benefit greatly even beyond the winter,” Olenna told her wisely. Margaery nodded. The two women continued to talk and plan while Mace took a walk in the garden with Melisandre, bragging about how he got everything that he wanted from the agreement. The fool had completely forgotten that he was supposed to break the news to his daughter. All it took was one sultry look from the Red Priestess.

Harry, meanwhile, was already planning to visit the Reach once Mace finally returned and Olenna remained. He would convince the portly Lord to hand over the best parcels of land while Olenna wasn't there to convince him otherwise. On those plots of land, he would open up sprawling warehouses that would hold not only the food and spices that he would sell to the region, but also his clothing and silks, his lumber, tools, furniture, charcoal, incense, scented candles, and all of the other items that he could purchase from the artisans who operated in his city. That in turn would keep the economy strong and incentivize other merchants and crafters to move to his city and open shop.

The best part was that he would have the lovely Margaery Tyrell within his sphere of influence. Once her grandmother was gone, he would do his best to get her to become loyal to him. He already had the loyalty of her mother.

“OH! The Blessed Seven ... Please don't stop!” Alerie gasped as her fingernails dug into his back. Her parted legs squeezed his hips tightly as the brute thrust deeply into her.

The day had turned into night, and once again, her husband was nowhere to be seen. ‘Likely attempting to seduce the Red Whore,’ Alerie thought as her eyes fluttered. That suited her just fine. It wasn't like she was in their room waiting for him. The moment she could, she immediately made a beeline for the Royal Suite. As soon as he opened the door, she barged in and wrapped her arms around the back of his neck. Before he could speak, her lips were dancing with his while her tongue explored his mouth. She jumped up and wrapped her legs around his waist as he shut the door and carried her to bed. Once her back hit the bed, she loosened her grip around his waist and opened her legs wide. The bottom of her flowing, silk dress was bunched up, and Harry could see that she was wearing nothing underneath. He reached down and brushed his fingers along her damp slit. Alerie arched her back and gripped the sheets tightly while letting out a deep moan.

“What would your husband say if he found out where you have been spending your nights?” Harry teased her. His fingers moved from her slit, up to her hard clit. Alerie reached down and grabbed his muscled forearm tightly. She could feel the hard cords of muscles flexing as his fingers toyed with her throbbing bead. The lights in his large and luxurious room were low, making his lovely face seem even more ethereal. Alerie could see the youth in his face. He seemed so young, and yet, still a man. This turned her on even more. She practically swooned

at the idea of a young and perfect man treating her body as though it were a toy. Her husband, who had once been very handsome, no longer cared about his appearance. Now that he was married and had control of the Reach, he let himself grow fat and lazy. All of this made him appear to be much older than her. When the bitch Cersei had needled her by thinking that Mace was near the age of her father, Tywin, she wanted to slap that cunt. After all, her former husband was even worse than Mace. At least Cersei was lucky enough for her husband to die. She was stuck with Mace for the foreseeable future. How long Alerie would get to stay with her new lover, she didn't know. Mace was set to leave without her, but she was still expected to return eventually. Once she did, there was little doubt in her mind that Cersei would take her place upon his long and perfect cock. 'I cannot let that happen,' Alerie thought as his fingers entered her, and his lips wrapped around her hard and crinkled nipple after she opened the front of her dress, exposing her chest to him. As his fingers curled inside of her, bringing on the first orgasm of the night, those thoughts left her mind temporarily. They were soon replaced with thoughts of the many positions that he would force her body into that night.

### **The Dread Lord of Essos**

Robb Stark threw his cup in anger, accidentally spraying drops of wine on the letter that he had been reading. Using his gloved hand, he wiped away the red drops causing some of the ink to smear. That was of no consequence. He had already finished reading the letter after all. None of what he had read was good news.

His army had beaten back Tywin Lannister's forces in the Riverlands. Since then, they had marched on, gaining ground while the Lannisters retreated. Once they neared the Westerlands, however, their gains lessened until they had almost completely stalled. That was bad enough. Now he had received word that for whatever reason, the Tyrells had stopped their push for King's Landing. This explained why suddenly there were more men available to bolster the old Lion's ranks. Everything was turning poorly for him and the North. Yes, they had gained ground, but winter would soon be at their doorstep ... doubly so for the North. He had already heard from his mother that the mornings in Winterfell were becoming frigid.

He had hoped to have pushed deep into the Westerlands by then. Winter was coming and the North had very little food saved up. They were already spending a lot of their stores by feeding such a large army. If things continued the way they were going, the North would be in a seriously desperate situation soon.

"Your Grace!" said a voice from outside of his tent. "A message has arrived."

Going to the tent flap, he opened it up and thanked the young man who handed him the rolled-up piece of parchment. Taking it back to his desk, he sat down. He perked up once he started reading it. Robb only had a few spies within the Reach, but thankfully, one had been able to gather some useful information. It seemed that not only had Mace Tyrell left on a ship that was headed for Essos, but his wife, daughter, and mother had gone along as well. This was interesting.

After the death of Renly, Robb assumed that Margaery would be married off to another highborn male that was capable of getting Mace what he sorely wanted ... a Tyrell on the throne. He even thought that she might have been promised to Joffrey, and that was why they stopped attacking the capital. Clearly, he was wrong about that. Their family wouldn't travel all the way to Essos if she was to wed Joffrey. So what was in Essos that was so important?

Robb suddenly paled when he realized what was going on. He had gotten word recently that the Lannister bastard, Harold, had left King's Landing to return to his home in Essos, taking Cersei and her children with him ... sans Joffrey, of course. Robb remembered his run-in with the young Dragonlord. Every second, Robb was expecting to be roasted alive. No doubt Mace Tyrell was worried about the same thing. It was even worse for him at the time, because the Tyrells were in direct combat with Harold's family and were marching toward King's Landing. It made sense that once word of his dragon had spread, the hostilities would suddenly stop. It also made sense that the Tyrells would immediately travel to see the young Lord and attempt to sway him into supporting their cause ... possibly through marriage. All the while, Robb was camped out on Lannister lands after having spent the last few months fighting and killing Lannister men. "Damn!" he cursed.

"What's wrong, Your Grace?" Lord Karstark said as he came into the tent. Robb told him of his worries. Lord Karstark was equally worried about the turn of events. "That is troubling. I shudder to think of him turning that winged beast upon the towns and keeps of the North."

"Aye, but what can we do? Simply leaving the Westerlands is out of the question. It will give Tywin time to replenish his forces so that he may march toward Winterfell," Robb told him.

"It is a dangerous game we are playing," Lord Karstark said, rubbing his bearded chin. "What about your mother?" he suddenly asked.

"What of her?" Robb asked, confused.

"Will you consider sending her to meet with this boy? Perhaps she can keep him from turning his sights to the North." Robb also rubbed his chin.

"Yes ... that may be the wisest choice..." He would go himself, but he was needed here on the battlefield. He couldn't send one of the lesser Lords in his stead. That would be an insult. No ... his mother was the only one who made sense.

"And if all else fails ..." Lord Karstark added carefully. "... Sansa is a very beautiful girl. She would make him a good wife and secure him as an ally of the North."

"Fetch me a raven. I must write home," he said. Lord Karstark nodded and left the tent. He hoped everything would turn out alright, but these were dangerous times, and there were no guarantees. Winter was coming after all.

