

The Dread Lord of Essos

Chapter 27

“What are you arguing about?” Harry asked as he walked into the building that was being used as the city’s administration center. Inside, two men were yelling at one another while the harassed-looking underling that he had left in charge was trying to control the disorderly conduct. The arguing stopped when they saw that he had walked into the room.

“Your Grace,” his underling greeted him and bowed his head. The other two men quickly followed his actions. “These men are arguing about the size of their merchant stalls. They rent the plots that are next to one another in Fishmonger’s Square. This one claims that the other man’s stall has been encroaching into his plot.”

There was little doubt as to what these men sold. Each stunk of fish. “And has he?” Harry asked.

“That is yet to be determined, Your Grace,” his underling replied. Harry sighed.

The man, while loyal, didn’t have the makings of a good ruler. Too often he let others push him around and disrespect him. He took too long to settle petty disagreements and couldn’t stomach handing out severe punishments when necessary. To prove the point, one of his drones that he had left in the city to help police the citizens suddenly burst into the room practically dragging a man who was thrashing to get away. His drone pushed the man forward and he fell at his underling’s feet. Both of the arguing men stepped back.

“What is the meaning of this?” his underling asked.

“He was caught buying goods with filed coins. We then checked his home and found more coins with their edges filed. We also found the file and the silver and copper shavings,” the drone reported before handing over the evidence.

Coin Clipping was a crime punishable by death in practically every kingdom and city in Westeros and Essos. People would file or cut very small pieces of the precious metal from coins before using them to buy stuff. If done enough times, the culprit would have enough gold, silver, or copper left over to sell for a tidy profit. The only problem was that it debased the value of the coin by reducing its weight. Using it at its face value was stealing. It was a major problem that every kingdom faced. Harry stood back to see how he would handle it.

It was no surprise when the criminal begged for mercy. Harry sighed unhappily when his underling sentenced him to a year in the dungeons. Already the dungeons were overflowing with men that should have been hanged. The criminal cried out happily and thanked his underling over and over.

“T-Thank you ... Oh, thank you!” he said from his knees, kissing his underling’s hand. His underling smiled and looked on benevolently. He opened his mouth to say something and was hit in the face with a mist of blood. He looked down in time to see the criminal’s neck open up as blood began to stream down his chest. The wet gurgling and spitting of blood made one of the fishmongers faint and fall to the floor while the other screamed and ran from the room. His underling vomited from catching a mouthful of blood. Harry cleaned his sword on the dying man’s back as he fell face down into the pool of his own blood. Putting his sword away, he looked at his underling who was wiping his mouth on his sleeve.

“It seems that you are not fit for the job,” Harry told him. The man was never meant to be permanent, but even so, he was causing more harm than good. “Continue ruling and I will be back to replace you as soon as possible,” Harry told him. The man’s face was turning green at the sight of the dead body on the floor. He gave a shaky nod before Harry turned and left.

After leaving the Administration building, Harry strolled around the city to see how things were going. For the most part, everyone was doing what they were supposed to. Many of his drones were actually teaching the former slaves different trades. Some were being taught to take over as city guards, while some were being trained to join the ranks of his army. There were others being taught by specialized drones to perform the duties that would help Harry’s personal business ventures. Some were being taught to make candles and incense, some were being taught how to weave silk, and some of the smarter ones were being taught how to manage certain businesses that Harry was setting up in the city. New brothels and blacksmithing shops were springing up, as were different shops that sold anything from his lumber to his alcoholic drinks. Volantis was a major port city on the way to the Far East, so it would only make sense for Harry to use it as a major hub to sell his goods.

At first, business had fallen drastically. Who would want to do business in a city that was recently sacked? Thankfully, traders and merchants didn’t stay away for long. Now the city was back up to its previous GDP, and Harry was expecting the economy to grow very soon. Because of all of this, he needed to get someone he trusted to run the damn city. He didn’t want just anyone though. He needed someone intelligent. The first person to come to mind was his Uncle Tyrion. Tyrion was still back home in Westeros, taking care of his businesses while he was absent. From the reports that he regularly received, not only were the businesses doing well, but his uncle had actually increased the profits more than he would have guessed. ‘Perhaps he deserved a raise in status?’ Harry thought as he smiled at a particularly buxom whore who was jiggling her big tits at him as he walked by. If he were a weak-minded man, he might have given in to the temptation, but he was the King of the Dreadlands. He would not be ruled by vices such as wine and women.

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Cersei arched her back and moaned loudly as her nephew poured expensive wine all over her bare tits. Her eyes fluttered as Harold captured her wine-coated nipple in his mouth and sucked it clean while his hand was securely placed between her parted thighs. Her supple body

squirmed in pleasure as his fingers rubbed her wet folds. She felt that he was about to remove his hand, so she closed her legs and trapped his hand between them. Thrusting her hips, she rubbed her sticky wetness all over his hand as she pleased herself against his skin. Desperate for more, she placed her hands on the top of his head and pushed it down. Her sensitive nipple popped free from between his perfectly straight and white teeth causing her body to shiver when her wet skin was removed from his warm mouth and hit the cool night air of her bedroom. Cersei's balcony door was wide open, letting in the moonlight from the nearly full moon that was shining brightly in the dark sky. She let out a gasp when he kissed down her stomach and nipped at her belly button. Her eyes fluttered as his lips traveled further down, first gently brushing over her mound before touching her swollen clit.

When Cersei found out that the vapid whore, Alerie Hightower had weaseled an invitation to stay there longer than she was welcomed, needless to say, she wasn't pleased. Everything about the woman rubbed her the wrong way. 'The bitch struts around like she's the Queen of Seven Swords!' Cersei thought fiercely. 'She thinks that all she needs to do is snap her bony fingers and Harold will come running to her?' Cersei snorted upon hearing the news. She was even less pleased that young Margaery Tyrell would be staying as well. Feeling threatened by the young beauty, Cersei sat down and thought things through. In truth, there weren't many options for her. She could play by Harold's rules and attempt to behave, or she could go back to Westeros and violate their agreement.

Now that she knew what his kingdom had to offer, she definitely would not be voluntarily leaving any time soon. No doubt Alerie would eventually feel the same way ... if she didn't already. So far, Cersei had been doing a fairly good job of keeping herself useful. She taught Daenerys how to act properly at the dinner table and how to hold herself in the presence of other highly-ranked members of society. She even taught her about things like makeup and fashion. Of course, she would never teach her the most important thing about being a woman ... How to manipulate men. That was something that the young Targaryen would need to discover on her own. No one had taught Cersei, but she had always been a natural at it. Unfortunately, one of the few men that she had been unable to manipulate was her bastard nephew. He absolutely refused to bend the knee to her whims. It was quite annoying, she had thought many times. Though in a way, she found it thrilling. Cersei was beginning to enjoy trying different ways to get what she wanted. She wasn't talking about new dresses or shiny jewelry. Harold didn't care about that stuff and would lavish it upon her and her daughter without asking for anything in return ... other than access to her body, of course. That was something that she was more than willing to give. She was only human and needed someone to satisfy her body's demands, after all.

No, Cersei wanted more than just materialistic trinkets. She wanted what she had always craved ... power. From when she and Jaime were children, she was forced to watch as her father took her brother away to teach him how to rule. He was taught how to fight, how to use a sword, and basically how to run a kingdom. Every time she attempted to show Tywin that she was just as good as Jaime, she was laughed out of the room and told to go and learn how to be a Lady. That was what she had been taught ... How to please her future husband. Even now that she was an adult, it still made her seethe at how quickly she was pushed aside. She got her revenge

on her father though. It was she who talked Jaime into becoming a Kingsguard, thereby robbing Tywin of his beloved heir. The thought of her successful revenge still sent tingles up her spine. Unfortunately, that didn't change her fate. She was still destined to be only a wife and mother.

Few knew what she actually wanted ... to be King. It wasn't something that she could confess to anyone, not even Jaime. The mere thought was ridiculous. A woman becoming King? She would be ridiculed and humiliated if anyone ever found out. Even she knew that it was to never be. How could she possibly ever become a King? Cersei did eventually become a Queen, but she quickly found that position to be less than desirable ... likely due to the drunken whoremonger that she had been forced to wed. After all the horrible things that Robert had put her through, she finally got her revenge on him as well. Now that she was free, Cersei had to find a new goal to accomplish. Her son was King of Westeros, and her nephew was King of the Dreadlands ... but what of her? The little slut Margaery came waltzing in, shaking her tight ass and was suddenly given the newly created position of Ambassador of the Reach. The thought rankled her nerves.

Would she really allow some newcomer to elevate herself while she remained static? Not likely. Now she just needed to ask herself, what did she want? She wanted to do what Harold had done. She wanted to break free of conventions and create something for herself. No one would dare call him a bastard to his face anymore. She wanted to free herself of her father's influence and name just as her nephew had accomplished. She wanted to be Cersei, the first of her name. She just didn't know how to go about it. Establishing a new Noble line wasn't something that could be done on a whim. It needed time and planning. Most importantly, it needed Harold's blessing. While she figured it out, she thought that the best thing she could do was to keep him happy and out of Alerie's bed. If she had to hear one more subtle hint about how Harold was supposedly mesmerized by her beauty and the pleasure that her body could bring, she might just slap the bitch.

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Harry was always the happiest when the wind was blowing through his hair while on the back of his flying companion. It meant excitement and freedom. He was already planning to continue his exploration of the planet very soon. Winter was within striking distance, and it might be ten years before Spring settled in again. This may be the only opportunity that he would get for the foreseeable future. The trip he was planning wouldn't be long. Perhaps only a couple of months, but that was good enough to quench the desire for adventure that was burning in his heart. Before he could finalize his plans, he needed someone to handle Volantis. For that, he was heading back to Westeros to see his Uncle Tyrion. As Daemon flew over the open ocean, Harry thrust his hand out and watched as a shimmering portal appeared right in front of them. Daemon didn't even slow as he sailed right through. A small flash of light later and they both appeared high above Casterly Rock. After doing a few lazy circles, Harry mentally ordered him to dive.

Tyrion groaned as his eyes opened up. He heard yelling in the hallways which wasn't doing much for his headache. "Eeuck!" she grunted from the horrible taste in his mouth. He remembered drinking plenty of wine, but he couldn't remember what he ate that was so horrible. As he looked to his side, he saw an old, raunchy whore with her legs spread wide. "Oh, yes ... that's what I ate," he said aloud as he leaned over the side of his bed and vomited heartily onto the floor. The smell of the woman was only making him vomit even harder. A sudden tremble of the floor went unnoticed as he retched and heaved. Tyrion didn't know how long he had been vomiting, but when his belly was finally empty, he laid back on the bed and promised himself that he would never touch another cup of wine for as long as he lived. When he looked to his side and saw the toothless smile of the raggedy, old prostitute in his bed, he promised himself that he would never touch another whore for as long as he lived either. He was barely able to turn his head and look as his bedroom door was opened. He groaned pathetically as his nephew came loudly barging in.

"Uncle Tyrion! What a pleasant morning it is!" he sang happily.

"Go ... Fuck ... Yourself," he slurred, which made Harry laugh. Harry pulled out a bottle of his patented hangover cure and handed it to his uncle.

"Drink that."

Tyrion had nothing to lose. Even losing his life would be better at that point rather than having to deal with such a hangover for the rest of the day. He placed the bottle to his lips and quickly drank it down, retching and gagging as he did. Within moments, however, his bloodshot eyes cleared up, and he got to his feet.

"Absolutely brilliant!" he declared, looking at the bottle.

"It is ... isn't it?" Harry chuckled before looking at Tyrion's bed partner who was wiggling her messy eyebrows at him.

"Would you like a go, M'lord? Ten pennies or fifteen for the both of you," she said, sensually caressing her withered, old skin.

"As tempting as that may be ... I'm going to have to pass," Harry told her and reached into his pocket. He flipped a coin to the woman. "That will be all," he said, clearly dismissing her. Her eyes bugged out when she saw the shiny gold coin with a lion's head on the front. She looked up at him in shock.

"O-Of course, M'lord! Thank you!" she cried out and balled up her clothes before eagerly running out of his room completely naked. She clearly wanted to go spend her newfound wealth. Harry looked at his uncle.

"Has the quality of whores fallen to such a level in my absence?"

“What are you talking about? That woman was a spring flower,” Tyrion argued.

“Yes ... Well ... I could smell her nectar from down the hall. Let’s take a walk,” Harry told him as his nose wrinkled from the scent of sweaty whore and vomit.

“Of course, Nephew ... but first ...”

Tyrion went to his table and poured himself a large cup full of sweet wine for the trip. He placed the cup to his lips and drank deeply. “Ahhh! That’s good,” he said, smacking his lips. Not long after, they were walking side-by-side in one of Casterly Rocks’ courtyards.

“Tell me ... Are you happy here?” Harry asked his dwarf uncle.

“No. I’m quite miserable. In truth, I wish I could do what you did as a young man ... leave here and travel Essos. Finding new places and people. Tasting exotic wines and whores ...” his eyes glimmered with the thought as he stared off into space.

“I have an important job offer for you if you wish to hear it,” Harry said. Tyrion raised his eyebrow.

“Oh?”

“I don’t know if you’ve heard or not, but I’ve recently conquered Volantis. I have no intention of staying there to rule. I have my own city to worry about. What I need is someone smart and trustworthy to rule it in my name.”

“Me?” Tyrion asked, surprised that anyone would give a lowly dwarf such a prize.

“Of course. You’re the smartest man I know and have done admirably concerning my businesses here in Westeros. I have great confidence that you will do equally admirable with the city of Volantis.”

Tyrion felt his face heat up, and this time it wasn’t because of the wine. He so rarely received compliments that it was always shocking to hear them. “You want me to leave Casterly Rock and rule Volantis?” he asked, needing to make sure.

“Yes. Volantis is now part of the Dreadlands. I’ve been talking to my advisors back home about starting new Noble lines, similar to how it’s done here in the Seven Kingdoms. You would be the first of your line. You will be expected to eventually find a wife and produce children to carry your name, but in the end, that will be your choice whether to do it or not. Your family will continue to rule Volantis as Wardens of the City as long as they stay loyal to the Crown.”

“And father?” Tyrion asked. “I do not think he will be pleased to hear your plan.”

“Let me worry about him. So what do you think about it?”

“Can we leave now?” Tyrion asked eagerly, to which Harry laughed and slapped his shoulder.

“There is a ship waiting down in the harbor. They will be making their journey back to Seven Swords in three days. I’ve already informed them to give you a cabin on the ship. So by mid-morning on the third day, be there with whatever you wish to take.”

Tyrion hugged his waist tightly. “Thank you, Nephew. I will do my best.”

“I’m sure you will. The ship will bring you back to my city where I will escort you to Volantis. Now time is almost as short as you are, so hurry up and get your affairs in order. I’ll make arrangements for someone else to take over management of my businesses here in Westeros,” Harry joked. Tyrion laughed and wiped the corner of his eyes.

After a bit more banter, Tyrion set his cup down and scampered off to start getting ready for his trip.

Harry’s grandfather took a bit more convincing. Obviously, he was opposed to his “embarrassment” going to Essos. There were multiple reasons for his opposition. For one, he didn’t want Tyrion further degrading the family name. Second, he despised his son and didn’t want him to live a happy and fulfilling life. The third was likely the main reason. Tyrion was his worst-case scenario for becoming Lord of Casterly Rock. As much as the old man didn’t want that to happen, it would be better than the Lannisters losing their seat as Wardens of the West.

“You need not worry about that. I can always get my father to come back and take over the Rock, and there is still Tommen to consider. And if all else fails, I can always father a child and raise him as the next Lannister Lord,” Harry bargained with him. The old man suddenly perked up.

“Yes ... Jaime would be the obvious choice, but you are correct ... a child from you wouldn’t be the worst choice,” Tywin said with his back to Harry as he looked out the window at the crashing waves.

Tywin knew what kind of man Jaime’s bastard was. He was tall and handsome, everything the dwarf wasn’t. He was a great warrior with a mind as sharp as his sword. He already ruled his own lands, and it was rumored that his wealth was by far the greatest in all of the known world. To top everything off, he commanded a massive dragon. Having him tied closer to the Lannister name had been his number one goal. Having his child as the next Lord of the Rock would be ideal.

“Very well. Take the deformed imp. If Jaime is not willing to do his duty to his house, I will expect you to provide an heir,” Tywin said, turning to look at his grandson.

“Agreed,” Harry replied. If need be, he would provide an heir, but there was no way he would let Tywin have any influence over him. The old man was beginning to outlive his usefulness anyway. It was getting close to the time when he should be put out to pasture. Even so, Harry didn’t care what he did, as long as it wasn’t negatively affecting his plans. Having an heir controlling Casterly Rock wouldn’t be the worst thing in the world. Hopefully, his father would decide to leave the Kingsguard now that Cersei and her children no longer needed protection. He would just have to wait and see.