

Ābrar Glaesis

a *Game of Thrones* ficlet

for Artemis1000

by Rodo

“SER JORAH.” Missandei nodded in greeting.

“My lady,” the knight replied, inclining his head in response. It looked slightly grotesque with the enormous scar disfiguring the left side of his face and throat. “Her Grace is not within.”

Missandei sighed. She’d suspected as much, but seeing Ser Jorah guarding the royal quarters had given her hope; the Lord Commander usually guarded his queen. Not today though, it seemed. Perhaps it was because Ser Jorah had come back, while the king had not.

“And how is His Grace?” Missandei asked.

“With his nurse, and a bit confused. He doesn’t understand why everything is different today. He’s enjoying the warmer weather and wants to play in the gardens with his mother.”

Missandei suppressed the urge to sigh again. “The small council has sent me,” she explained. “Neither Lord Tyrion nor Lord Varys, brave men that they are, dare to face her today. But needs must, I suppose.”

Ser Jorah huffed, but whether it was in derision or out of amusement was hard to tell. “You know where to find her, I presume? She’s with Ser Qhono.”

“I do,” she said and walked away. Six years it had been, and every year, spring arrived on the anniversary of the final battle. And while Westeros rejoiced, its queen did not. Neither did Missandei, but life had taught her to move past tragedies. Grey Worm wouldn’t wish for her to drown in sorrow after his passing. Still, sometimes a small part of her resented the queen. Daenerys had a child to comfort her, yet she still fell victim to melancholy as soon as the flowers in the gardens started to bloom.

Qhono stood guard outside the godswood. He let her pass without comment. Missandei found Queen Daenerys at the foot of the heart tree, staring off into space.

“Your Grace,” Missandei said quietly, not wishing to startle her.

The queen’s head turned towards her and she could see a sad smile.

“Missandei. Come, sit with me.”

Missandei did as she was bid. She liked the godswood. The trees were beautiful and it was always calm and quiet, unlike the rest of the city.

“How are you?” the queen asked.

“I’m well.”

The queen’s smile turned slightly bitter. “I envy you. I wish I could be well, on this day. But I can’t help but remember. So many people died for me and because of me. Would they still live, had they stayed in Essos, had I not wanted to be queen in a land I had never seen? And Jon...” she trailed off, sighing deeply. “Would he have died had I gone into battle beside him, instead of letting Drogon fight without me?”

“You couldn’t have gone into battle,” Missandei reminded her, not for the first time. “You were carrying Prince Aemon.”

“I was not so far along yet. Be that as it may, I doubt you have come to discuss things long past.”

Missandei nodded. “The small council requests your presence. The Citadel sent a representative again. The Princess of Dorne wants to have your support to fight pirates in the Stepstones, and we’ve received news from Meereen.”

“And is my council incapable of ruling in my stead for one day?” The queen scoffed. “What good are they, if they cling to my skirts more than my son does?”

“These matters do need your seal, Your Grace.”

“And can’t that wait for one more day?”

It could, Missandei thought. But the maester would feel slighted, the Princess was as impatient and impetuous as her father was said to have been, and Missandei doubted Daario would listen to a word if it wasn’t the queen’s. “Tomorrow you will be busy with the festivities for the Great Sept’s reconstruction,” she pointed out.

The queen rolled her eyes. She had little patience for the Seven, and far more sympathy for her husband’s northern gods. She wasn’t as subtle as she should be when it came to her indifference either. It was imperative that she showed favor to the Faith, however little she wished to. Else she might make an enemy she couldn’t afford to make.

“It’s like being back in Meereen sometimes,” Daenerys said, “with the shadows full of harpies and everybody expecting me to become someone I hate. I

don't remember why I wanted to be queen so much in the first place on days like these."

"Because you wanted to change the world," Missandei replied. She never forgot. "And because you are strong enough to stay true to yourself, no matter how much the lords and ladies pressure you. You are a dragon."

Daenerys smiled at her then. One of the rare, true smiles that were mostly reserved for her son. "Without you by my side, I might not be. You always manage to find the right words, even in troubled times. How do you do it?"

Missandei returned the smile. "Ābrar glaesis, Your Grace. All women must live."

"It is no use to dwell on what has passed, you mean? Very well. I will do my best. What does Daario want?"

"He wishes to travel to Westeros, to tell you personally of the success he has had as ruler in your stead. He will come alongside a delegation of merchants and craftsmen from the Bay of Dragons."

Daenerys looked up at the sky, where birds were dancing in the warm light. "It can't be put off any longer, I dare say. We will write to him that we will be glad to receive him and his delegation."

"Will we?"

Daenerys snorted. "No, but he doesn't need to know that."

"He will try to bed you again," Missandei warned.

"And I'll try to let him down gently. I've outgrown men like Daario Naharis. Now, what exactly does the Princess of Dorne want?"

Missandei explained as they walked back to the keep, ready to face the world again.

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