



## DAENERYS

**A**ll?” The slave girl sounded wary. “Your Grace, did this one’s worthless ears mishear you?”

Cool green light filtered down through the diamond-shaped panes of colored glass set in the sloping triangular walls, and a breeze was blowing gently through the terrace doors, carrying the scents of fruit and flowers from the garden beyond. “Your ears heard true,” said Dany. “I want to buy them all. Tell the Good Masters, if you will.”

She had chosen a Qartheen gown today. The deep violet silk brought out the purple of her eyes. The cut of it bared her left breast. While the Good Masters of Astapor conferred among themselves in low voices, Dany sipped tart persimmon wine from a tall silver flute. She could not quite make out all that they were saying, but she could hear the greed.

Each of the eight brokers was attended by two or three body slaves . . . though one Grazdan, the eldest, had six. So as not to seem a beggar, Dany had brought her own attendants; Irri and Jhiqui in their sandsilk trousers and painted vests, old Whitebeard and mighty Belwas, her bloodriders. Ser Jorah stood behind her sweltering in his green surcoat with the black bear of Mormont embroidered upon it. The smell of his sweat was an earthy answer to the sweet perfumes that drenched the Astapori.

“All,” growled Kraznys mo Nakloz, who smelled of peaches today. The slave girl repeated the word in the Common Tongue of Westeros. “Of

thousands, there are eight. Is this what she means by *all*? There are also six centuries, who shall be part of a ninth thousand when complete. Would she have them too?"

"I would," said Dany when the question was put to her. "The eight thousands, the six centuries . . . and the ones still in training as well. The ones who have not earned the spikes."

Kraznys turned back to his fellows. Once again they conferred among themselves. The translator had told Dany their names, but it was hard to keep them straight. Four of the men seemed to be named Grazdan, presumably after Grazdan the Great who had founded Old Ghis in the dawn of days. They all looked alike; thick fleshy men with amber skin, broad noses, dark eyes. Their wiry hair was black, or a dark red, or that queer mixture of red and black that was peculiar to Ghiscari. All wrapped themselves in *tokars*, a garment permitted only to freeborn men of Astapor.

It was the fringe on the *tokar* that proclaimed a man's status, Dany had been told by Captain Groleo. In this cool green room atop the pyramid, two of the slavers wore *tokars* fringed in silver, five had gold fringes, and one, the oldest Grazdan, displayed a fringe of fat white pearls that clacked together softly when he shifted in his seat or moved an arm.

"We cannot sell half-trained boys," one of the silver-fringe Grazdans was saying to the others.

"We can, if her gold is good," said a fatter man whose fringe was gold.

"They are not Unsullied. They have not killed their sucklings. If they fail in the field, they will shame us. And even if we cut five thousand raw boys tomorrow, it would be ten years before they are fit for sale. What would we tell the next buyer who comes seeking Unsullied?"

"We will tell him that he must wait," said the fat man. "Gold in my purse is better than gold in my future."

Dany let them argue, sipping the tart persimmon wine and trying to keep her face blank and ignorant. *I will have them all, no matter the price*, she told herself. The city had a hundred slave traders, but the eight before her were the greatest. When selling bed slaves, fieldhands, scribes, craftsmen, and tutors, these men were rivals, but their ancestors had allied one with the

other for the purpose of making and selling the Unsullied. *Brick and blood built Astapor, and brick and blood her people.*

It was Kraznys who finally announced their decision. “Tell her that the eight thousands she shall have, if her gold proves sufficient. And the six centuries, if she wishes. Tell her to come back in a year, and we will sell her another two thousand.”

“In a year I shall be in Westeros,” said Dany when she had heard the translation. “My need is *now*. The Unsullied are well trained, but even so, many will fall in battle. I shall need the boys as replacements to take up the swords they drop.” She put her wine aside and leaned toward the slave girl. “Tell the Good Masters that I will want even the little ones who still have their puppies. Tell them that I will pay as much for the boy they cut yesterday as for an Unsullied in a spiked helm.”

The girl told them. The answer was still no.

Dany frowned in annoyance. “Very well. Tell them I will pay double, so long as I get them all.”

“Double?” The fat one in the gold fringe all but drooled.

“This little whore is a fool, truly,” said Khaznys mo Nakloz. “Ask her for triple, I say. She is desperate enough to pay. Ask for ten times the price of every slave, yes.”

The tall Grazdan with the spiked beard spoke in the Common Tongue, though not so well as the slave girl. “Your Grace,” he growled, “Westeros is being wealthy, yes, but you are not being queen now. Perhaps will never being queen. Even Unsullied may be losing battles to savage steel knights of Seven Kingdoms. I am reminding, the Good Masters of Astapor are not selling flesh for promisings. Are you having gold and trading goods sufficient to be paying for all these eunuchs you are wanting?”

“You know the answer to that better than I, Good Master,” Dany replied. “Your men have gone through my ships and tallied every bead of amber and jar of saffron. How much do I have?”

“Sufficient to be buying one of thousands,” the Good Master said, with a contemptuous smile. “Yet you are paying double, you are saying. Five centuries, then, is all you buy.”

“Your pretty crown might buy another century,” said the fat one in Valyrian. “Your crown of the three dragons.”

Dany waited for his words to be translated. “My crown is not for sale.” When Viserys sold their mother’s crown, the last joy had gone from him, leaving only rage. “Nor will I enslave my people, nor sell their goods and horses. But my ships you can have. The great cog *Balerion* and the galleys *Vhagar* and *Meraxes*.” She had warned Groleo and the other captains it might come to this, though they had protested the necessity of it furiously. “Three good ships should be worth more than a few paltry eunuchs.”

The fat Grazdan turned to the others. They conferred in low voices once again. “Two of the thousands,” the one with the spiked beard said when he turned back. “It is too much, but the Good Masters are being generous and your need is being great.”

Two thousand would never serve for what she meant to do. *I must have them all*. Dany knew what she must do now, though the taste of it was so bitter that even the persimmon wine could not cleanse it from her month. She had considered long and hard and found no other way. *It is my only choice*. “Give me all,” she said, “and you may have a dragon.”

There was the sound of indrawn breath from Jhiqui beside her. Kraznys smiled at his fellows. “Did I not tell you? Anything, she would give us.”

Whitebeard stared in shocked disbelief. His hand trembled where it grasped the staff. “No.” He went to one knee before her. “Your Grace, I beg you, win your throne with dragons, not slaves. You must not do this thing —”

“*You* must not presume to instruct me. Ser Jorah, remove Whitebeard from my presence.”

Mormont seized the old man roughly by an elbow, yanked him back to his feet, and marched him out onto the terrace.

“Tell the Good Masters I regret this interruption,” said Dany to the slave girl. “Tell them I await their answer.”

She knew the answer, though; she could see it in the glitter of their eyes and the smiles they tried so hard to hide. Astapor had thousands of eunuchs, and even more slave boys waiting to be cut, but there were only three living

dragons in all the great wide world. *And the Ghiscari lust for dragons.* How could they not? Five times had Old Ghis contended with Valyria when the world was young, and five times gone down to bleak defeat. For the Freehold had dragons, and the Empire had none.

The oldest Grazdan stirred in his seat, and his pearls clacked together softly. “A dragon of our choice,” he said in a thin, hard voice. “The black one is largest and healthiest.”

“His name is Drogon.” She nodded.

“All your goods, save your crown and your queenly raiment, which we will allow you to keep. The three ships. And Drogon.”

“Done,” she said, in the Common Tongue.

“Done,” the old Grazdan answered in his thick Valyrian.

The others echoed that old man of the pearl fringe. “Done,” the slave girl translated, “and done, and done, eight times done.”

“The Unsullied will learn your savage tongue quick enough,” added Kraznys mo Nakloz, when all the arrangements had been made, “but until such time you will need a slave to speak to them. Take this one as our gift to you, a token of a bargain well struck.”

“I shall,” said Dany.

The slave girl rendered his words to her, and hers to him. If she had feelings about being given for a token, she took care not to let them show.

Arstan Whitebeard held his tongue as well, when Dany swept by him on the terrace. He followed her down the steps in silence, but she could hear his hardwood staff *tap tapping* on the red bricks as they went. She did not blame him for his fury. It was a wretched thing she did. *The Mother of Dragons has sold her strongest child.* Even the thought made her ill.

Yet down in the Plaza of Pride, standing on the hot red bricks between the slavers’ pyramid and the barracks of the eunuchs, Dany turned on the old man. “Whitebeard,” she said, “I want your counsel, and you should never fear to speak your mind with me . . . when we are alone. But *never* question me in front of strangers. Is that understood?”

“Yes, Your Grace,” he said unhappily.

“I am not a child,” she told him. “I am a queen.”

“Yet even queens can err. The Astapori have cheated you, Your Grace. A dragon is worth more than any army. Aegon proved that three hundred years ago, upon the Field of Fire.”

“I know what Aegon proved. I mean to prove a few things of my own.” Dany turned away from him, to the slave girl standing meekly beside her litter. “Do you have a name, or must you draw a new one every day from some barrel?”

“That is only for Unsullied,” the girl said. Then she realized the question had been asked in High Valyrian. Her eyes went wide. “Oh.”

“Your name is Oh?”

“No. Your Grace, forgive this one her outburst. Your slave’s name is Missandei, but . . .”

“Missandei is no longer a slave. I free you, from this instant. Come ride with me in the litter, I wish to talk.” Rakharo helped them in, and Dany drew the curtains shut against the dust and heat. “If you stay with me you will serve as one of my handmaids,” she said as they set off. “I shall keep you by my side to speak for me as you spoke for Kraznys. But you may leave my service whenever you choose, if you have father or mother you would sooner return to.”

“This one will stay,” the girl said. “This one . . . I . . . there is no place for me to go. This . . . I will serve you, gladly.”

“I can give you freedom, but not safety,” Dany warned. “I have a world to cross and wars to fight. You may go hungry. You may grow sick. You may be killed.”

“*Valar morghulis*,” said Missandei, in High Valyrian.

“All men must die,” Dany agreed, “but not for a long while, we may pray.” She leaned back on the pillows and took the girl’s hand. “Are these Unsullied truly fearless?”

“Yes, Your Grace.”

“You serve me now. Is it true they feel no pain?”

“The wine of courage kills such feelings. By the time they slay their sucklings, they have been drinking it for years.”

“And they are obedient?”

“Obedience is all they know. If you told them not to breathe, they would find that easier than not to obey.”

Dany nodded. “And when I am done with them?”

“Your Grace?”

“When I have won my war and claimed the throne that was my father’s, my knights will sheathe their swords and return to their keeps, to their wives and children and mothers . . . to their *lives*. But these eunuchs have no lives. What am I to do with eight thousand eunuchs when there are no more battles to be fought?”

“The Unsullied make fine guards and excellent watchmen, Your Grace,” said Missandei. “And it is never hard to find a buyer for such fine well-blooded troops.”

“Men are not bought and sold in Westeros, they tell me.”

“With all respect, Your Grace, Unsullied are not men.”

“If I did resell them, how would I know they could not be used against me?” Dany asked pointedly. “Would they do that? Fight *against* me, even do me harm?”

“If their master commanded. They do not question, Your Grace. All the questions have been culled from them. They obey.” She looked troubled. “When you are . . . when you are done with them . . . Your Grace might command them to fall upon their swords.”

“And even that, they would do?”

“Yes.” Missandei’s voice had grown soft. “Your Grace.”

Dany squeezed her hand. “You would sooner I did not ask it of them, though. Why is that? Why do you care?”

“This one does not . . . I . . . Your Grace . . .”

“Tell me.”

The girl lowered her eyes. “Three of them were my brothers once, Your Grace.”

*Then I hope your brothers are as brave and clever as you.* Dany leaned back into her pillow, and let the litter bear her onward, back to *Balerion* one last time to set her world in order. *And back to Drogon.* Her mouth set grimly.

It was a long, dark, windy night that followed. Dany fed her dragons as she always did, but found she had no appetite herself. She cried awhile, alone in her cabin, then dried her tears long enough for yet another argument with Groleo. “Magister Illyrio is not here,” she finally had to tell him, “and if he was, he could not sway me either. I need the Unsullied more than I need these ships, and I will hear no more about it.”

The anger burned the grief and fear from her, for a few hours at the least. Afterward she called her bloodriders to her cabin, with Ser Jorah. They were the only ones she truly trusted.

She meant to sleep afterward, to be well rested for the morrow, but an hour of restless tossing in the stuffy confines of the cabin soon convinced her that was hopeless. Outside her door she found Aggo fitting a new string to his bow by the light of a swinging oil lamp. Rakharo sat crosslegged on the deck beside him, sharpening his *arakh* with a whetstone. Dany told them both to keep on with what they were doing, and went up on deck for a taste of the cool night air. The crew left her alone as they went about their business, but Ser Jorah soon joined her by the rail. *He is never far,* Dany thought. *He knows my moods too well.*

“*Khaleesi.* You ought to be asleep. Tomorrow will be hot and hard, I promise you. You’ll need your strength.”

“Do you remember Eroeh?” she asked him.

“The Lhazareen girl?”

“They were raping her, but I stopped them and took her under my protection. Only when my sun-and-stars was dead Mago took her back, used her again, and killed her. Aggo said it was her fate.”

“I remember,” Ser Jorah said.

“I was alone for a long time, Jorah. All alone but for my brother. I was such a small scared thing. Viserys should have protected me, but instead he hurt me and scared me worse. He shouldn’t have done that. He wasn’t just



my brother, he was my *king*. Why do the gods make kings and queens, if not to protect the ones who can't protect themselves?"

"Some kings make themselves. Robert did."

"He was no true king," Dany said scornfully. "He did no justice. Justice . . . that's what kings are *for*."

Ser Jorah had no answer. He only smiled, and touched her hair, so lightly. It was enough.

That night she dreamt that she was Rhaegar, riding to the Trident. But she was mounted on a dragon, not a horse. When she saw the Usurper's rebel host across the river they were armored all in ice, but she bathed them in dragonfire and they melted away like dew and turned the Trident into a torrent. Some small part of her knew that she was dreaming, but another part exulted. *This is how it was meant to be. The other was a nightmare, and I have only now awakened.*

She woke suddenly in the darkness of her cabin, still flush with triumph. *Balerion* seemed to wake with her, and she heard the faint creak of wood, water lapping against the hull, a football on the deck above her head. And something else.

Someone was in the cabin with her.

"Irri? Jhiqui? Where are you?" Her handmaids did not respond. It was too black to see, but she could hear them breathing. "Jorah, is that you?"

"They sleep," a woman said. "They all sleep." The voice was very close. "Even dragons must sleep."

*She is standing over me.* "Who's there?" Dany peered into the darkness. She thought she could see a shadow, the faintest outline of a shape. "What do you want to me?"

"Remember. To go north, you must journey south. To reach the west, you must go east. To go forward you must go back, and to touch the light you must pass beneath the shadow."

"*Quaithe?*" Dany sprung from the bed and threw open the door. Pale yellow lantern light flooded the cabin, and Irri and Jhiqui sat up sleepily. "*Khaleesi?*" murmured Jhiqui, rubbing her eyes. Viserion woke and opened his jaws, and a puff of flame brightened even the darkest corners. There was

no sign of a woman in a red lacquer mask. “*Khaleesi*, are you unwell?” asked Jhiqui.

“A dream.” Dany shook her head. “I dreamed a dream, no more. Go back to sleep. All of us, go back to sleep.” Yet try as she might, sleep would not come again.

*If I look back I am lost*, Dany told herself the next morning as she entered Astapor through the harbor gates. She dared not remind herself how small and insignificant her following truly was, or she would lose all courage. Today she rode her silver, clad in horsehair pants and painted leather vest, a bronze medallion belt about her waist and two more crossed between her breasts. Irri and Jhiqui had braided her hair and hung it with a tiny silver bell whose chime sang of the Undying of Qarth, burned in their Palace of Dust.

The red brick streets of Astapor were almost crowded this morning. Slaves and servants lined the ways, while the slavers and their women donned their *tokars* to look down from their stepped pyramids. *They are not so different from Qartheen after all*, she thought. *They want a glimpse of dragons to tell their children of, and their children’s children*. It made her wonder how many of them would ever have children.

Aggo went before her with his great Dothraki bow. Strong Belwas walked to the right of her mare, the girl Missandei to her left. Ser Jorah Mormont was behind in mail and surcoat, glowering at anyone who came too near. Rakharo and Jhogo protected the litter. Dany had commanded that the top be removed, so her three dragons might be chained to the platform. Irri and Jhiqui rode with them, to try and keep them calm. Yet Viserion’s tail lashed back and forth, and smoke rose angry from his nostrils. Rhaegal could sense something wrong as well. Thrice he tried to take wing, only to be pulled down by the heavy chain in Jhiqui’s hand. Drogon coiled into a ball, wings and tail tucked tight. Only his eyes remained to tell that he was not asleep.

The rest of her people followed: Groleo and the other captains and their crews, and the eighty-three Dothraki who remained to her of the hundred thousand who had once ridden in Drogo’s *khalasar*. She put the oldest and weakest on the inside of the column, with the nursing women and those

with child, and the little girls, and the boys too young to braid their hair. The rest—her warriors, such as they were—rode outside and moved their dismal herd along, the hundred-odd gaunt horses that had survived both red waste and black salt sea.

*I ought to have a banner sewn*, she thought as she led her tattered band up along Astapor's meandering river. She closed her eyes to imagine how it would look: all flowing black silk, and on it the red three-headed dragon of Targaryen, breathing golden flames. *A banner such as Rhaegar might have borne*. The river's banks were strangely tranquil. The Worm, the Astapori called the stream. It was wide and slow and crooked, dotted with tiny wooded islands. She glimpsed children playing on one of them, darting amongst elegant marble statues. On another island two lovers kissed in the shade of tall green trees, with no more shame than Dothraki at a wedding. Without clothing, she could not tell if they were slave or free.

The Plaza of Pride with its great bronze harpy was too small to hold all the Unsullied she had bought. Instead they had been assembled in the Plaza of Punishment, fronting on Astapor's main gate, so they might be marched directly from the city once Daenerys had taken them in hand. There were no bronze statues here; only a wooden platform where rebellious slaves were racked, and flayed, and hanged. "The Good Masters place them so they will be the first thing a new slave sees upon entering the city," Missandei told her as they came to the plaza.

At first glimpse, Dany thought their skin was striped like the zorses of the Jogos Nhai. Then she rode her silver nearer and saw the raw red flesh beneath the crawling black stripes. *Flies. Flies and maggots*. The rebellious slaves had been peeled like a man might peel an apple, in a long curling strip. One man had an arm black with flies from fingers to elbow, and red and white beneath. Dany reined in beneath him. "What did this one do?"

"He raised a hand against his owner."

Her stomach roiling, Dany wheeled her silver about and trotted toward the center of the plaza, and the army she had bought so dear. Rank on rank on rank they stood, her stone halfmen with their hearts of brick; eight thousand and six hundred in the spiked bronze caps of fully trained Unsullied, and five thousand odd behind them, bareheaded, yet armed with

spears and shortswords. The ones farthest to the back were only boys, she saw, but they stood as straight and still as all the rest.

Kraznys mo Nakloz and his fellows were all there to greet her. Other well-born Astapori stood in knots behind them, sipping wine from silver flutes as slaves circulated among them with trays of olives and cherries and figs. The elder Grazdan sat in a sedan chair supported by four huge copper-skinned slaves. Half a dozen mounted lancers rode along the edges of the plaza, keeping back the crowds who had come to watch. The sun flashed blinding bright off the polished copper disks sewn to their cloaks, but she could not help but notice how nervous their horses seemed. *They fear the dragons. And well they might.*

Kraznys had a slave help her from her saddle. His own hands were full; one clutched his *tokar*, while the other held an ornate whip. “Here they are.” He looked at Missandei. “Tell her they are hers . . . if she can pay.”

“She can,” the girl said.

Ser Jorah barked a command, and the trade goods were brought forward. Six bales of tiger skins, three hundred bolts of fine silk. Jars of saffron, jars of myrrh, jars of pepper and curry and cardamom, an onyx mask, twelve jade monkeys, casks of ink in red and black and green, a box of rare black amethysts, a box of pearls, a cask of pitted olives stuffed with maggots, a dozen casks of pickled cave fish, a great brass gong and a hammer to beat it with, seventeen ivory eyes, and a huge chest full of books written in tongues that Dany could not read. And more, and more, and more. Her people stacked it all before the slavers.

While the payment was being made, Kraznys mo Nakloz favored her with a few final words on the handling of her troops. “They are green as yet,” he said through Missandei. “Tell the whore of Westeros she would be wise to blood them early. There are many small cities between here and there, cities ripe for sacking. Whatever plunder she takes will be hers alone. Unsullied have no lust for gold or gems. And should she take captives, a few guards will suffice to march them back to Astapor. We’ll buy the healthy ones, and for a good price. And who knows? In ten years, some of the boys she sends us may be Unsullied in their turn. Thus all shall prosper.”

Finally there were no more trade goods to add to the pile. Her Dothraki mounted their horses once more, and Dany said, “This was all we could carry. The rest awaits you on the ships, a great quantity of amber and wine and black rice. And you have the ships themselves. So all that remains is . . .”

“... the dragon,” finished the Grazdan with the spiked beard, who spoke the Common Tongue so thickly.

“And here he waits.” Ser Jorah and Belwas walked beside her to the litter, where Drogon and his brothers lay basking in the sun. Jhiqui unfastened one end of the chain, and handed it down to her. When she gave a yank, the black dragon raised his head, hissing, and unfolded wings of night and scarlet. Kraznys mo Nakloz smiled broadly as their shadow fell across him.

Dany handed the slaver the end of Drogon’s chain. In return he presented her with the whip. The handle was black dragonbone, elaborately carved and inlaid with gold. Nine long thin leather lashes trailed from it, each one tipped by a gilded claw. The gold pommel was a woman’s head, with pointed ivory teeth. “The harpy’s fingers,” Kraznys named the scourge.

Dany turned the whip in her hand. *Such a light thing, to bear such weight.* “Is it done, then? Do they belong to me?”

“It is done,” he agreed, giving the chain a sharp pull to bring Drogon down from the litter.

Dany mounted her silver. She could feel her heart thumping in her chest. She felt desperately afraid. *Was this what my brother would have done?* She wondered if Prince Rhaegar had been this anxious when he saw the Usurper’s host formed up across the Trident with all their banners floating on the wind.

She stood in her stirrups and raised the harpy’s fingers above her head for all the Unsullied to see. “*IT IS DONE!*” she cried at the top of her lungs. “*YOU ARE MINE!*” She gave the mare her heels and galloped along the first rank, holding the fingers high. “*YOU ARE THE DRAGON’S NOW! YOU’RE BOUGHT AND PAID FOR! IT IS DONE! IT IS DONE!*”

She glimpsed old Grazdan turn his grey head sharply. *He hears me speak Valyrian.* The other slavers were not listening. They crowded around

Kraznys and the dragon, shouting advice. Though the Astapori yanked and tugged, Drogon would not budge off the litter. Smoke rose grey from his open jaws, and his long neck curled and straightened as he snapped at the slaver's face.

*It is time to cross the Trident*, Dany thought, as she wheeled and rode her silver back. Her bloodriders moved in close around her. "You are in difficulty," she observed.

"He will not come," Kraznys said.

"There is a reason. A dragon is no slave." And Dany swept the lash down as hard as she could across the slaver's face. Kraznys screamed and staggered back, the blood running red down his cheeks into his perfumed beard. The harpy's fingers had torn his features half to pieces with one slash, but she did not pause to contemplate the ruin. "Drogon," she sang out loudly, sweetly, all her fear forgotten. "*Dracarys*."

The black dragon spread his wings and roared.

A lance of swirling dark flame took Kraznys full in the face. His eyes melted and ran down his cheeks, and the oil in his hair and beard burst so fiercely into fire that for an instant the slaver wore a burning crown twice as tall as his head. The sudden stench of charred meat overwhelmed even his perfume, and his wail seemed to drown all other sound.

Then the Plaza of Punishment blew apart into blood and chaos. The Good Masters were shrieking, stumbling, shoving one another aside and tripping over the fringes of their *tokars* in their haste. Drogon flew almost lazily at Kraznys, black wings beating. As he gave the slaver another taste of fire, Irri and Jhiqui unchained Viserion and Rhaegal, and suddenly there were three dragons in the air. When Dany turned to look, a third of Astapor's proud demon-horned warriors were fighting to stay atop their terrified mounts, and another third were fleeing in a bright blaze of shiny copper. One man kept his saddle long enough to draw a sword, but Jhogo's whip coiled about his neck and cut off his shout. Another lost a hand to Rakharo's *arakh* and rode off reeling and spurting blood. Aggo sat calmly notching arrows to his bowstring and sending them at *tokars*. Silver, gold, or plain, he cared nothing for the fringe. Strong Belwas had his *arakh* out as well, and he spun it as he charged.

“*Spears!*” Dany heard one Astapori shout. It was Grazdan, old Grazdan in his tokar heavy with pearls. “*Unsullied!* Defend us, stop them, defend your masters! Spears! Swords!”

When Rakharo put an arrow through his mouth, the slaves holding his sedan chair broke and ran, dumping him unceremoniously on the ground. The old man crawled to the first rank of eunuchs, his blood pooling on the bricks. The Unsullied did not so much as look down to watch him die. Rank on rank on rank, they stood.

And did not move. *The gods have heard my prayer.*

“*Unsullied!*” Dany galloped before them, her silver-gold braid flying behind her, her bell chiming with every stride. “Slay the Good Masters, slay the soldiers, slay every man who wears a *tokar* or holds a whip, but harm no child under twelve, and strike the chains off every slave you see.” She raised the harpy’s fingers in the air . . . and then she flung the scourge aside. “*Freedom!*” she sang out. “*Dracarys! Dracarys!*”

“*Dracarys!*” they shouted back, the sweetest word she’d ever heard. “*Dracarys! Dracarys!*” And all around them slavers ran and sobbed and begged and died, and the dusty air was filled with spears and fire.