

“You shouldn’t be crying all the time,” Joffrey told her. “You’re more pretty when you smile and laugh.”

Sansa made herself smile, afraid that he would have Ser Meryn hit her again if she did not, but it was no good, the king still shook his head. “Wipe off the blood, you’re all messy.”

The outer parapet came up to her chin, but along the inner edge of the walk was nothing, nothing but a long plunge to the bailey seventy or eighty feet below. All it would take was a shove, she told herself. He was standing right there, right there, smirking at her with those fat wormlips. You could do it, she told herself. You could. Do it right now. It wouldn’t even matter if she went over with him. It wouldn’t matter at all.

“Here, girl.” Sandor Clegane knelt before her, between her and Joffrey. With a delicacy surprising in such a big man, he dabbed at the blood welling from her broken lip.

The moment was gone. Sansa lowered her eyes. “Thank you,” she said when he was done. She was a good girl, and always remembered her courtesies.