

laid him down on his cushions and silks, his head toward the Mother of Mountains far to the northeast.

“Oil,” she commanded, and they brought forth the jars and poured them over the pyre, soaking the silks and the brush and the bundles of dry grass, until the oil trickled from beneath the logs and the air was rich with fragrance. “Bring my eggs,” Dany commanded her handmaids.

Something in her voice made them run.

Ser Jorah took her arm. “My queen, Drogo will have no use for dragon’s eggs in the night lands. Better to sell them in Asshai. Sell one and we can buy a ship to take us back to the Free Cities. Sell all three and you will be a wealthy woman all your days.”

“They were not given to me to sell,” Dany told him.

She climbed the pyre herself to place the eggs around her sun-and-stars. The black beside his heart, under his arm. The green beside his head, his braid coiled around it. The cream-and-gold down between his legs. When she kissed him for the last time, Dany could taste the sweetness of the oil on his lips.

As she climbed down off the pyre, she noticed Mirri Maz Duur watching her. “You are mad,” the godswife said hoarsely.

“Is it so far from madness to wisdom?” Dany asked. “Ser Jorah, take this maegi and bind her to the pyre.”

“To the... my queen, no, hear me...”

“Do as I say.” Still he hesitated, until her anger flared. “You swore to obey me, whatever might come. Rakharo, help him.”

The godswife did not cry out as they dragged her to Khal Drogo’s pyre and staked her down amidst his treasures. Dany poured the oil over the woman’s head herself. “I thank you, Mirri Maz Duur,” she said, “for the lessons you have taught me.”

“You will not hear me scream,” Mirri responded as the oil dripped from her hair and soaked her clothing.

“I will,” Dany said, “but it is not your screams I want, only your life. I remember what you told me. Only death can pay for life.” Mirri Maz Duur opened her mouth, but made no reply. As she stepped away, Dany saw that the contempt was gone from the maegi’s flat black eyes; in its place was something that might have been fear. Then there was nothing to be done but watch the sun and look for the first star.

When a horselord dies, his horse is slain with him, so he might ride proud into the night lands. The bodies are burned beneath the open sky, and the khal rises on his fiery steed to take his place among the stars. The more fiercely the man burned in life, the brighter his star will shine in the darkness.

Jhogo spied it first. “There,” he said in a hushed voice. Dany looked and saw it, low in the east. The first star was a comet, burning red. Bloodred; fire red; the dragon’s tail. She could not have asked for a stronger sign.

Dany took the torch from Aggo’s hand and thrust it between the logs. The oil took the fire at once, the brush and dried grass a heartbeat later. Tiny flames went darting up the wood like swift