

It was his first misstep, but how to make him see it without wounding his fledgling confidence?
“Your father once told me that the Greatjon was as fearless as any man he had ever known.”

Robb grinned. “Grey Wind ate two of his fingers, and he laughed about it. So you agree, then?”

“Your father is not fearless,” Catelyn pointed out. “He is brave, but that is very different.”

Her son considered that for a moment. “The eastern host will be all that stands between Lord Tywin and Winterfell,” he said thoughtfully. “Well, them and whatever few bowmen I leave here at the Moat. So I don’t want someone fearless, do it.

“No. You want cold cunning, I should think, not courage.”

“Roose Bolton,” Robb said at once. “That man scares me.”

“Then let us pray he will scare Tywin Lannister as well.”

Robb nodded and rolled up the map. “I’ll give the commands, and assemble an escort to take you home to Winterfell.”

Catelyn had fought to keep herself strong, for Ned’s sake and for this stubborn brave son of theirs. She had put despair and fear aside, as if they were garments she did not choose to wear... but now she saw that she had donned them after all.

“I am not going to Winterfell,” she heard herself say, surprised at the sudden rush of tears that blurred her vision. “My father may be dying behind the walls of Riverrun. My brother is surrounded by foes. I must go to them.”