

Jon looked her over with all his fourteen-year-old wisdom. "You're too skinny," he said. He took her arm to feel her muscle. Then he sighed and shook his head. "I doubt you could even lift a longsword, little sister, never mind swing one."

Arya snatched back her arm and glared at him. Jon messed up her hair again. They watched Bran and Tommen circle each other.

"You see Prince Joffrey?" Jon asked.

She hadn't, not at first glance, but when she looked again she found him to the back, under the shade of the high stone wall. He was surrounded by men she did not recognize, young squires in the livery of Lannister and Baratheon, strangers all. There were a few older men among them; knights, she surmised.

"Look at the arms on his surcoat," Jon suggested.

Arya looked. An ornate shield had been embroidered on the prince's padded surcoat. No doubt the needlework was exquisite. The arms were divided down the middle; on one side was the crowned stag of the royal House, on the other the lion of Lannister.

"The Lannisters are proud," Jon observed. "You'd think the royal sigil would be sufficient, but no. He makes his mother's House equal in honor to the king's."

"The woman is important too!" Arya protested.

Jon chuckled. "Perhaps you should do the same thing, little sister. Wed Tully to Stark in your arms."

"A wolf with a fish in its mouth?" It made her laugh. "That would look silly. Besides, if a girl can't fight, why should she have a coat of arms?"

Jon shrugged. "Girls get the arms but not the swords. Bastards get the swords but not the arms. I did not make the rules, little sister."

There was a shout from the courtyard below. Prince Tommen was rolling in the dust, trying to get up and failing. All the padding made him look like a turtle on its back. Bran was standing over him with upraised wooden sword, ready to whack him again once he regained his feet. The men began to laugh.

"Enough!" Ser Rodrik called out. He gave the prince a hand and yanked him back to his feet. "Well fought. Lew, Donnis, help them out of their armor." He looked around. "Prince Joffrey, Robb, will you go another round?"

Robb, already sweaty from a previous bout, moved forward eagerly. "Gladly."

Joffrey moved into the sunlight in response to Rodrik's summons. His hair shone like spun gold. He looked bored. "This is a game for children, Ser Rodrik."

Theon Greyjoy gave a sudden bark of laughter. "You are children," he said derisively.

"Robb may be a child," Joffrey said. "I am a prince. And I grow tired of swatting at Starks with a play sword."

"You got more swats than you gave, Joff," Robb said. "Are you afraid?"

Prince Joffrey looked at him. "Oh, terrified," he said. "You're so much older." Some of the Lannister men laughed.

Jon looked down on the scene with a frown. "Joffrey is truly a little shit," he told Arya.