

## The Dread Lord of Essos

### Chapter 24

After being shown to her room, Margaery threw open the doors to her personal balcony and walked out onto it. She gasped in delight at the sight that stretched before her. When she thought that perhaps Ser Jaime's bastard was spreading rumors that were little more than exaggerations, she was definitely wrong. Her grandmother was right to tell her to wait and see before forming an opinion.

Margaery shivered as she overlooked the magnificent city. Whether it was from the cool air from being so high up or the exhilaration that she felt from a new challenge, she didn't know. At the moment, she didn't care. In the distance, she could see his gargantuan, black dragon flying lazily over a vast green field that was beyond the closest city wall. In front of her, the city stretched far into the distance. Too far for her eyes to see. Nothing looked dirty or disgusting. Nothing looked grimy or old. Everything was shiny and new. She breathed in deeply and exhaled. Even the air smelled better here. It was clean and fresh with a hint of the sparkling blue ocean that dozens of ships used to travel to and from the sprawling city.

She nearly giggled at the sight of her mother as she walked into her room. On one hand, she was angry at her father for his antics with the gorgeous priestess ... and rightly so. He should have known better. On the other hand, she looked quite pleased to have received such a compliment from the very handsome and dashing King Harold.

King Harold ... She knew many back home would scoff at him calling himself a king. Now that she was here, she could unequivocally state that he was indeed a king. Just being in his presence for that short period of time, whenever anyone came across him, they immediately bowed and sang his praises. The castle alone was more than anyone back home had ... including the King of Westeros. If anyone from Westeros visited his city, they too would have no doubt about his legitimacy, whether they liked it or not.

"So what do you think about the so-called Dread Lord, my dear?" her grandmother asked as she joined them in her room.

"He's not as scary as rumors would have me believe," she smirked, and her mother chuckled. Margaery left the balcony door open to provide the room with a nice, cool breeze.

"No, to you he wouldn't be, but I certainly didn't miss that nugget of information that the red whore let slip. The ruler of Volantis ... The last I heard, he had not involved himself with any of the other Free Cities. If she is correct, and Harold has indeed conquered the city, then I find it greatly disturbing," Olenna told them.

"In what way?" Lady Alerie asked as she sat down on the bed while Olenna sat in a large and comfortable chair.

“It means that he is expanding his kingdom. If true, then he now controls every major port between Lys and New Ghis. The Reach sells a good portion of our grains to the cities in Slaver’s Bay, and we use Volantis as a resupply stop. If he suddenly decides to stop letting our ships dock, we could find ourselves having to look elsewhere to sell our food,” she told them.

“Would it be that much of a financial hit?” Margaery asked, sitting next to her mother on the bed.

“Nothing drastic, but a hit nonetheless. The real problem, however, is that he may not be done expanding. What if he suddenly decides to look west?” Neither of the women had anything to say about that. Margaery stood back up and began to pace.

“Harold seemed to enjoy my company. Perhaps I can get some information out of him,” Margaery told them. Alerie nodded.

“I will attempt to do so as well. We must be subtle though. It would not be smart to offend him,” she said. She suddenly jumped when someone knocked on the door. Margaery walked over to the door and opened it up.

“Your Grace!” she chirped in surprise. “I was not expecting you! Please, come in,” she curtsied slightly as she got out of his way.

“Thank you,” he said as he walked in. “Your father has asked, and I have agreed to give a tour of the city. I was hoping that you ladies would join us,” he said, smiling at Margaery. The young woman smiled back as her mother joined her side.

“We would be delighted,” she smiled beautifully, her eyes shining. Behind her, Olenna rolled her eyes at her daughter-in-law’s antics. She forgot that Margaery was the one that was supposed to be working her magic.

“Wonderful! Be down in the Common Room in half an hour. We can all walk down together.”

“Of course. Thank you for inviting us,” Margaery thanked him, moving closer and edging her mother out of the way. She made sure to get as close to Harry as possible. She was wearing her special scent that always seemed to drive men wild. It was made from a special flower that only grew in certain areas of the Reach.

“You’re welcome, my dear. I’ll leave you ladies to get ready,” he nodded and left them for the time being. As he left, both Olenna and Margaery huffed while looking at Alerie annoyed.

“What?” she asked, confused.

## **The Dread Lord of Essos**

Margaery marveled at the luxuriousness of the carriage that her family and Harold were sitting in. From the size alone, she was surprised that it could even be pulled. That was before she saw the four, monstrously large draft horses that were strapped to the front. Each was at least twice as large as a normal-sized horse. When the carriage took off from the front of the castle, she wasn't the only one in her family to notice the calm, smooth ride.

What they didn't know was that it was due to a combination of things. The very smooth and even road was one. The fact that Harry designed all the carriages and carts in his city meant that they were built with shocks installed on the axles. The final bit was that Harry put vulcanized rubber on the wheels. Rubber trees were recently found in Sothoryos which gave him ample amounts of rubber to use. Harry, however, wouldn't be selling it. For one thing, there wasn't enough to go around. Second, he wanted it only for the lands that he ruled. He always wanted to have an advantage in every aspect of day-to-day life. He was trying to get his city to the point where if someone visited, they wouldn't want to leave, and if they did, their homes would feel that much worse.

"That right there is the Iron Bank of the Dreadlands," he told them as they drove by. The bank was a beautifully crafted building made from a single slab of stone ... or so they believed. The look on Mace's face told him everything he needed to know. The man was incredibly jealous, though he was trying not to show it. It was known that several of the Great Houses in Westeros had been trying to get the Iron Bank to open a satellite branch in their lands. Sadly for them, they hadn't been able to make it happen.

"Why not start your own bank?" Mace asked. He was already feeling salty since Melisandre wasn't accompanying them on their tour. Believe it or not, she had better things to do than to puff up the ego of a blowhard like Mace. "If the rumors are true, you should have more than enough gold to do so." The ladies listened carefully, hoping to get some hidden piece of information from the answer.

"I certainly could and have thought about it. In the end, I think I made the right decision. In order to run a large bank properly, you must have dozens of skilled bankers. I have none in my lands. I'm not so arrogant to think that I could just lead a bank to success because I'm successful at other things. Also, running a bank is a full-time job. I could not give it the dedication that it would need. Another reason is the prestige. The Iron Bank is the largest and most successful on Essos ... or Westeros for that matter. Mine would not have such a level of prestige. Not for a very long time anyway. Besides that, I love seeing the jealousy in others' eyes when they find out I have the Iron Bank in my city," he told him, looking Mace right in the eyes. He watched the man flush in embarrassment. "The Keyholders of the Iron Bank also have a lot of connections. Hopefully, I can use those connections in the future to further my goals.

Margaery oohed and ahh'ed at the marvels that were on display. She had never seen such dresses as the ones displayed in the shop windows. That was strange to her all together. She found it weird but wonderful that many of the shops had large, perfectly clear glass windows that displayed what was going on inside. Many of the shops displayed their finest goods in the front

windows. The dresses she saw made her want to get out right then and start shopping. Thankfully, she was able to calm herself. There would be plenty of time for shopping. During their ride as he explained everything that they were seeing, Margaery began to scoot closer and closer to him, and before long, she was pressed right up against him. She made sure that he absolutely knew that she was flirting with him, though she couldn't be too outright with it since her father was in the same carriage. This carried on throughout the tour. When finally they returned to the castle, she hoped to get some alone time with him.

During dinner, Harry found it amusing to watch Cersei and Alerie subtly go at it while Mace drooled all over Melisandre. He had Cersei's children, Missandei, and Dany eating in private to give him time to work his magic on the Tyrells.

"You saw the bank did you?" Cersei asked, taking a bite of her stuffed crab. "That's nice. I had lunch the other day with Tesho Anoralis in fact."

"Another fishmonger from Pentos?" Alerie smirked as Cersei's eye twitched.

"No. He is just a keyholder and the largest stakeholder of the Iron Bank. Fabulously wealthy ... or so I've heard. Not as much as the Lannisters, of course, but then again, who does?" she smirked.

"I don't know. I've heard rumors of handouts and outstanding debts. It must be incredibly embarrassing. I wouldn't know anything about that though. The Tyrells always pay their bills."

To his other side, Melisandre was turning the tubby lord inside out with her words alone.

"My, my. You must love seasoned ribs. You've devoured the entire plate!" Mace declared, amazed. The bones on her plate were stripped clean, and to top it off, she hadn't spilled a single drop on her scandalously skimpy dress.

"Oh, yes. I love the feeling of having something hard and succulent in my mouth," she told him, the reflection of the flames in the fireplace dancing in her eyes. She noticed him staring at her large chest, so she arched her back a bit, making it look even bigger.

"Indeed!" he gasped while squirming in his chair. "Tell me, my dear, have you spent any time in Westeros? Highgarden is lovely this time of the year ..."

Olenna, like most days, was annoyed at her oafish son and his dimwitted wife. At least her protege was doing better than those two buffoons.

Margaery let her shoe drop from her small, dainty foot before she reached out and grazed his leg with it. That certainly caught his attention. Smiling cutely at him, she pressed her bare foot against him and gently started rubbing his leg. "Did I hear correct earlier this morning, Your

Grace?" she asked. "You are now the ruler of Volantis?" Next to her, Olenna was carefully listening though she pretended to be paying attention to her idiot daughter-in-law.

"I am," Harry responded. "And please, my dear, call me Harold."

"Of course ... Harold," Margaery responded with a breathy voice. She moved her foot up higher. She knew exactly how to play him. Across the table, he was trying not to smirk.

That poor girl doesn't know what she's getting into, he thought to himself as he wanted to laugh. It was clear to him that Olenna wanted information. They did visit to try and negotiate a peace between him and their family. The best way to negotiate was when you had all of the information. At the moment, they had very little. Harry didn't mind filling them in on a few different things. In truth, the negotiations were unneeded and pretty much meaningless. Harry had no desire to attack the Tyrells or the Reach. He didn't give a shit if they marched on King's Landing and put Joffrey's head on a pike. So long as they didn't attack him or his interests, they could do whatever they wanted. Of course, he wasn't going to tell them that. Not if he could get something out of it. He looked over at the lovely flower sitting across from him. Her cheeks were flushed, and her pupils were dilated. Focusing on his powers, he began silently infusing her body with his magic. Margaery tried to fight it, but he could see the subtle tells that his magic was working. Her breathing increased while she gripped her fork and knife just a little bit tighter than normal. The biggest hint that it was working was that her foot continued upward until she was practically massaging his inner thigh. Not wanting things to get out of hand, he slowly lowered his levels of magic until he cut it off completely.

Margaery cleared her throat as she pulled herself together. "Well, do not leave me in suspense! Tell me how you came to rule. It must be a harrowing tale ... even for a man of your power," she purred.

"It is indeed a tale for the ages!" Harry declared. "It all began with the Triarchs of Volantis repeatedly violating the sanctity of my borders. I am a patient man, but even my patience can be stretched thin," he told her. Harry spent the next half an hour telling them of the brutal slaughter that had occurred, leaving them all speechless and worried. After dinner had concluded, he had his servants lead Mace, his wife, and Olenna to their rooms while he escorted Margaery.

"Thank you for the tale, Harold. I found it quite ... exhilarating," she told him.

"It was my pleasure, Margaery. I hope to hear some of your tales during your stay. Have a good night," he told her. Soon, the door closed behind her, and Melisandre walked to him from around the corner. They walked back to his room where she wrapped her arms around his neck and kissed him deeply.

"We have them right where we want them, My Lord," she purred, nipping at his skin. Harry chuckled as he groped her fat bottom.

“Yes, it certainly appears that way. You’re doing an excellent job angering Mace’s wife,” Harry laughed as she smirked.

“She’s about to get angrier. He told of his plan to sneak out soon so I can give him a moonlight tour of the castle gardens,” she snorted, rolling her eyes. “No doubt he wishes for a little more than a mere tour guide. Sadly for him, you are the only man who may have my body,” she said huskily, kissing him deeply again while he fondled her shapely ass. Eventually, she broke the kiss with a wistful sigh. “I must go. The oaf will be pounding on my door soon.”

Harry ran his hands up and down her sides. “As unpleasant as it may be, souring their marriage may possibly benefit us in the future. Thank you for doing this, my dear.” Melisandre smiled lovingly at him.

“You’re welcome, My Lord. I live to serve you. Besides, Mace is pleasant enough to talk to. It’s no great sacrifice on my part.” Harry smiled at her and slapped her thick ass. Melisandre squealed and grabbed her stinging cheek.

“Good. Now get going. I will reward you greatly when they leave,” he promised her. Melisandre flushed red and bowed before leaving. Harry shook his head and had a quick bath before getting in bed. He had been running himself ragged dealing with his city and Volantis. He needed to find someone suitable to rule in his name.

He was thinking about starting a hierarchy similar to that in Westeros. Harry was obviously the King. Below him, he would create the Great Houses of Essos who would be loyal to him. Below them would be the Noble Houses who answered to the Crown and the Lord who ruled their land in Harry’s name. At the moment, however, he didn’t have a whole lot of land that needed to be ruled by proxy. Only Volantis fit that bill. No doubt other lands would soon follow. There was so much of the world that hadn’t yet been explored. He couldn’t wait to take his show back on the road once things around there cooled down a bit. As his newly instated Hand of the King, Missandei would do a wonderful job taking care of his city when he was gone.

As much as he wanted to give Missandei her own land to rule, it simply wouldn’t be good for her. As a Naathi, she was an extreme pacifist. Her people wouldn’t even kill animals to eat. It made them the perfect slaves. Only the butterfly fever and the fact that the Naathi moved further into their island’s interior saved them from being completely wiped out. Missandei could never properly rule in this world. Practically everything on Planetos revolved around violence. The good news for her was that she didn’t need to be violent to rule Seven Swords when he was gone. If someone was acting up, she could simply order them into the dungeon where they would be treated fairly until his arrival. Besides, he liked having her around. She was incredibly smart and did more work around there than Harry did. He also liked having her soft, smooth body in his bed whenever he desired.

At the moment, she didn’t even want to leave. She liked being with him, and Harry wasn’t going to make her go anywhere. If that ever changed, he would gladly give her her own land to rule.

He needn't worry about gifting her children titles and lands since he planned on having her carry his children ... if she agreed of course. There was no doubt in his mind that she would agree. At the moment, he wasn't ready for children. There were too many adventures waiting for him.

Getting in bed, he groaned as his head hit the goose-down pillow. He would think about who to let rule Volantis once he was nice and rested. Closing his eyes, he gently drifted off to sleep.