

(Every character depicted in the story below is a consenting legal adult over the age of 18)

A/N: Easing into the arc slowly here with some Daenerys~

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Even days later, the whole situation feels downright surreal to Daenerys. She should be dead, after all. And not just because Axel Baratheon should have killed her and her dragons to remove the very clear and present threat they represented to his rule.

No, she should be dead because... because she'd apparently sold her soul to the Lord of Light somewhere along the way and swearing service to Axel had rather effectively caused the Red God to turn on her. Daenerys had felt her demise approaching. It was as though R'hllor had reached out and wrapped a hand around her heart, pumping power into her while squeezing harder and harder.

She should have exploded, her and her dragons both. Axel Baratheon was impossibly strong and powerful, but he was still just a physical being. There was nothing that he could do to save Daenerys or her sons.

... Or so she'd thought. Then, just when all was lost, the pain and pressure had alleviated. Axel had prayed to the Seven Who Are One, the gods of her homeland and her House... and they had answered him. They'd saved her from the Lord of Light's wrath. They'd forced R'hllor to retreat while somehow allowing her to keep all of the power she'd gained at Melisandre's feet.

And now here Daenerys sat in well-appointed chambers days later, deep within the Castle of Dragonstone, still trying to come to terms with

everything that had happened. She'd killed Melisandre less than a week ago. She'd fought Axel Baratheon the very next day. And then she'd lost... and she'd surrendered to him.

To be fair, even if she'd kept fighting at the expense of her children, Daenerys isn't sure she would have been able to win. And even if she had managed to pull a victory from the jaws of defeat and kill Axel Baratheon, she's come to realize it would have been a pyrrhic victory at best.

Her dragons would have died and while Daenerys would have been more powerful, she would have still found herself dealing with a furious and belligerent Westeros that had little love for a return to being ruled by House Targaryen.

Melisandre had lied to her. Axel Baratheon was nothing like Daenerys had been told. He was no demon. Demons didn't pray to the gods for the salvation of their enemies. He was no tyrant either. Tyrants didn't spare their enemies, and they certainly didn't try to negotiate instead of fight.

Obviously, the Crownland Lords of the Narrow Sea who had snuck her to Westeros were... disappointed to learn about her defeat. It wasn't as though Daenerys had hid the possibility from them, to be fair. Everyone had known that she accepted Axel's offer of Trial by Combat.

But they'd certainly hoped she'd win. And she'd failed them, ultimately. But Axel had stayed true to his word all the same, at least from what she'd seen. He had given the Lords who had betrayed him the choice of the black or the block, but let it stop there, allowing their Houses to keep their lands and elevating their heirs in their places.

It was mercy, compared to what he could have done to them. Mercy that no 'demon tyrant' would ever show men who had turned their cloaks on him and sided with his enemy.

More than that, her Unsullied and fleet had been left untouched. Daenerys herself had stepped in there, telling them all about her surrender, and that she was now Axel Baratheon's... ward for lack of a better word. She had told them all to stand down and await further commands, but truthfully Daenerys had no idea what to do with them... or if it would even be her choice.

After all, she still didn't fully understand what her place in Axel Baratheon's court would truly be. Obviously, she was bound to him deeper than even oaths of fealty could go. Oaths were just words in the wind... but the moment they'd shared in that cave up on the Dragonmont, where he'd prayed for her salvation and saved her life... that was more than just words.

Except he was already married, and twice over at that. He already had two Queens, just like Daenerys' distant forebearer, the Conqueror himself, and she doubted she would be made the third. The 'Dragon Queen' was no more. She was just Daenerys now... just a woman. Axel Baratheon's woman, to be exact.

She didn't mind it as much as she probably should have. Being his woman. Even if she knew what it was likely to entail, she found herself... trepidatious, but not truly afraid. Axel was a powerful man, but he'd also turned out to be a better person than she'd ever been. It wouldn't be so bad, giving herself over to him, she supposed.

As such, when the door to her chambers finally opens to reveal the King himself, Daenerys is prepared. She stands with her back straight and

nothing but a shift to cover her body. As she meets Axel's eyes, she reaches down and begins to grip at the shift, ready to pull it over her head and expose her naked body in full.

"I'm ready, Your Grace."

... Except, Axel takes one look at her and shakes his head.

"No, you're not."

What? Daenerys blinks her violet eyes in stupefaction, caught off guard by his... rejection? Was that what it was? Before she can question him further however, the blood drains from her face as Axel steps aside, revealing that he hasn't come alone.

"I'm not here for anything like that. I'm here to deliver you a gift. You've been drifting for days now, so I thought you could maybe use a friend."

Missandei of Naath stands in the doorway, staring at Daenerys with a tremulous smile on her lips. The dark skinned woman looks unharmed and untouched, which makes Daenerys happier than she could have possibly imagined. Not that she thought Axel would do or have anything untoward done to Missandei, but at the same time... you never knew in these situations.

"She is your handmaiden, I'm given to understand?"

"Y-Yes... yes, she is."

"Good, then I'll leave you to it."

Daenerys can only stare with wide eyes as Axel just... leaves. He doesn't want anything from her right now? He doesn't have questions or... or demands? She's supposed to be his woman now isn't she? So why isn't he taking the liberties he's owed of her?

Of course, that thought while in the same room as Missandei makes feelings of guilt and shame well up inside of Daenerys' chest. Her throat sticks and she has to swallow hard to get past the lump there, even as Missandei rushes over to her the moment the King is gone.

"M-My Queen, I'm so glad that you're okay! I feared the worst, even when I heard that he let you surrender..."

Daenerys shakes her head, struggling to find the words for a moment even as Missandei takes her hands in her own. She hadn't... truth be told, she and Missandei hadn't talked since before Melisandre's death. Daenerys had spent the entire night out on the Dragonmont, not returning to the Castle even after Drogon had burnt the Red Priestess to a crisp and consumed the ashen bones that remained.

"... I killed Melisandre."

Missandei's eyes widen and remain wide as it all comes spilling out of Daenerys' lips. Everything she'd learned about Melisandre and her manipulations, all of the evils that the Red Priestess had visited upon Daenerys and her loved ones. And then, of course, what she'd done in her rage. Stealing the amulet and Melisandre turning into an old woman, breaking the amulet and having Drogon burn Melisandre alive.

By the time she's done speaking, Daenerys is heaving for breaths and sobbing into Missandei's chest even as the darker skinned woman holds her close and embraces her tightly.

“Good.”

Sheer, vindictive satisfaction meets Daenerys’ confession. Missandei just smiles at her grimly.

“You did the right thing, my Queen. Melisandre was a rot. She had to be excised.”

Yes... as was the Lord of Light. Nothing but a parasite, in the end. After all, if the Red God was truly the source of her power, why did she still have it after his... removal?

Daenerys feels a little lighter in the face of Missandei’s assurances. But not too light, given the rest of it.

“I... y-you cannot call me ‘Queen’ anymore, Missandei.”

Her handmaiden, lover, and closest confidante looks mulish at that. Daenerys growls and clings to Missandei a little harder.

“I’m serious. You mustn’t. You may... you may address me as ‘my lady’ if you wish, but even then... I am nothing now, Missandei. I am nobody. I am...”

She falls quiet for a moment, struggling with the words. Funny how just minutes ago, she was almost happy to be Axel Baratheon’s woman. It was certainly better than being his enemy. But now she’s face to face with her lover, the only woman who has shared her bed since the death of her sun and stars.

Daenerys' tongue feels heavily laden in her mouth and of course, Missandei notices that something is wrong. She grips Daenerys' arms back, furrowing her brow as she gently tugs them both over to the bed and makes them sit down.

"I will do as you say, my lady. But... what is wrong? What do you struggle to say?"

A whimper leaves Daenerys' lips rather than the words she knows she has to speak. Until Missandei, always so perceptive, cuts straight to the heart of the matter.

"Does this have to do with how you reacted to the Baratheon King's arrival before you knew I was present? And why you are so... under-dressed at the moment?"

Daenerys freezes at that. Of course. Missandei might have been a slave, but that did not make her stupid or unobservant. In fact, she was actually extremely intelligent at the end of the day. Strangely enough, realizing that Missandei already has her suspicions makes it easier. There was no hiding the truth from her handmaiden and lover. Not now, not ever.

"... Yes. Part of the terms of my surrender... involve me becoming one of the King's women. I have been waiting for him to... lay claim to me these past few days."

Silence falls as Missandei processes that. Daenerys expects anger. Or maybe not anger, but certainly sadness and even heartbreak. She doesn't want to hurt her lover, truly she doesn't. But at the same time, she would be lying if she said she was doing this solely to save Missandei and the others who had followed her to Westeros.

To her surprise, rather than get upset, Missandei actually sounds relatively calm when she finally speaks again. She also sounds very, very serious.

“And how do you feel about that, my lady? Do you... want to be his woman?”

Here is where Daenerys lowers her head in shame, feeling the heat rising to her cheeks as she blushes in embarrassment. She’s always had a weakness for strong men. Drogo taught her as much but where Drogo had been her first true love, Axel Baratheon... promised to be so much more.

Still, she knows she’s betraying her handmaiden with this. The other woman has every right to be upset and Daenerys waits for the tears with a fresh lump in her throat. Only for Missandei, sweet submissive Missandei of all people, to suddenly reach up and tuck a pair of fingers under Daenerys’ chin, lifting her head and forcing their eyes to meet.

To Daenerys’ shock, Missandei isn’t upset at all, at least outwardly. Instead... she just smiles at her.

“Well then, it seems that we’ll have to work together to make our new Master happy, won’t we?”

Choking on her spit, Daenerys is the one who rises to her feet instead, backing away a step in disbelief.

“What?! No, Missandei I would never ask that of you! S-Slavery is illegal in Westeros anyways! Axel would never demand your servitude e-either! Even me... he still has yet to touch me. I think he might be w-waiting for me to come to him if anything...”

“You don’t have to ask anything of me, Daenerys. I am yours, now and forever. And if that means sharing a bed with you and this Westerosi King, then I will do so... gladly.”

Daenerys stops, trembling as she wrings her hands and stares at Missandei with wide eyes.

“You can’t... you can’t possibly mean that.”

Rising to her feet, the darker skinned woman steps over and takes ahold of Daenerys’ hands again.

“With all the essence of my being, Mistress.”

Blushing harder, Daenerys bites her lower lip. She couldn’t possibly be so lucky. She was... she was supposed to be dead. She didn’t deserve such a happy ending. Besides...

“He might not even go for it. What if... what if he doesn’t want to share me with you?”

Missandei chuckles and shakes her head in amusement.

“This King who brought me to you instead of simply taking you as you say was his right? This King who has two Queens and is said to have a harem of concubines besides? You think he will not want to have us both kneeling at his feet, Mistress? Truly?”

Well... when Missandei put it that way...

Leaning forward, the Naathian woman presses her forehead against Daenerys’, causing an explosive breath to leave the Targaryen’s lips.

“Even after everything, we still have each other. I stand by your side, now and always my Lady Daenerys. Together, we will tackle this challenge like every other.”

Yes... yes, together. Daenerys shuts her eyes as tears streak down her cheeks. But at the same time, a smile alights upon her face... and her soul feels just a little bit lighter as she embraces Missandei and they hold one another oh so very close.

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A/N: Daenerys: “I’m sorry Missandei, I promised to be the King’s woman...”

Missandei: “The hot hunky king who seems to actually care about your mental state and brought me here just to make you happy? That king? Mmm, nice.”

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