Lady Stark had been at Bran's bed day and night for almost a fortnight, not once did she leave the room, and so Jon had stayed away.

But now there was no more time.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

I CAME TO SEE BRAN. TO SAY GOOD-BYE.

YOU'VE SAID IT. NOW GO AWAY.

PLEASE, HE'S MY BROTHER.

WE DON'T WANT YOU HERE. SHALL I CALL THE GUARDS?

CALL THEM. YOU CAN'T STOP ME FROM SEEING HIM.

BRAN. I'M SORRY I DIDN'T COME BEFORE.

I WAS AFRAID.
I'm going north to the wall. Uncle Benjen is waiting. We have to leave today, before the snows come.

Don't die, we're all waiting for you to wake up. Me and Robb and the girls. Everyone...

He was my special boy. I wanted him to stay with me.

I went to the sept and prayed seven times to the seven faces of God that Ned would leave him here with me.

Sometimes prayers are answered.

It wasn't your fault.

Jon?

It should have been you.
JON! UNCLE BENJEN IS LOOKING FOR YOU. HE WANTED TO BE GONE AN HOUR AGO.

DID YOU SEE HIM?

YES.

AND MY MOTHER...

SHE WAS VERY KIND.

THAT'S GOOD.

SO THE NEXT TIME I SEE YOU, YOU'LL BE ALL IN BLACK.

FAREWELL, SNOW.

I WILL.

AND YOU, STARK. TAKE CARE OF BRAN.
Arya?

I was afraid you were gone. They wouldn't let me out to say goodbye.

What did you do now?

Nothing! I was packed and everything. Septa Mordane says I have to do it all over again.

A proper Southron lady doesn't throw her clothes inside her chest like old rags, she says.

And is that what you did?

Well, they're all going to get messed up anyway. Who cares how they're folded?

It's just as well. I have something for you to take with you, and it has to be packed very carefully.

Nymeria, here. Guard!
A SWORD?

IT'S SO SKINNY.

SO ARE YOU. IT WON'T HAK A MAN'S HEAD OFF, BUT YOU CAN POKE HIM FULL OF HOLES IF YOU'RE FAST ENOUGH.

I CAN BE FAST.

YOU'LL HAVE TO WORK AT IT EVERY DAY.

FIRST LESSON. STICK THEM WITH THE POINTY END.

SEPTA MORDANE WILL TAKE IT AWAY.

NOT IF SHE DOESN'T KNOW YOU HAVE IT.

KING'S LANDING IS A TRUE CITY, A THOUSAND TIMES THE SIZE OF WINTERFELL. YOU'LL FIND SOMEONE TO PRACTICE WITH, UNTIL THEN, WATCH THEM FIGHT IN THE YARD. RUN. MAKE YOURSELF STRONG.

BUT WHATEVER YOU DO...

...DON'T TELL SANSAN.
I almost forgot. All the best swords have names.

Like ice. Does this have a name?

Can you guess? It's your favorite thing.

I better go. I'll spend my first year on the Wall emptying chamber pots if I keep Uncle Ben waiting any longer.

Needle!

I wish you were coming with us.

Who knows? Different roads sometimes lead to the same castle.
The summons had come to Eddard Stark in the hour before dawn.

Robert had set the pace, leaving the Kingsroad behind. When the king finally pulled up, they were miles south of the main party.

Gods! It feels good to ride. I've half a mind to leave them all behind and keep going.

Robert had set the pace, leaving the Kingsroad behind. When the king finally pulled up, they were miles south of the main party.

What do you say, Ned? Just you and me. Two vagabond knights on the Kingsroad. Our swords at our sides and the gods know what in front of us. Maybe a farmer's daughter to warm our beds tonight.

Would that we could, but we have duties now. My liege, we are not the boys we once were.

You were never the boy you once were. And yet there was that one time. What was her name? Your bastard's mother, I mean.

Her name was Wylla, and I would sooner not speak of her.
I did not bring you out here to talk of graves or bicker about your bastard. There was a rider in the night from Lord Varys in King's Landing.

"Would that I could forget him. Ser Jorah tried to swell his coffers by selling poachers to a Tyroshi slaver. His crime dishonored the North."

He's in Pentos now and anxious for a royal pardon, so Varys makes good use of him. What do you make of his report?
A Knife, perhaps a good sharp one, and a bold man to wield it.

Your Grace, she is hardly more than a child.

The murder of innocents would be vile. Unspeakable?

What Aerys did to your brother Brandon was unspeakable, and Rhaegar. How many times do you think he raped your sister?

I will kill every Targaryen I can get my hands on until they are as dead as their dragons!

I should have killed them both when it was easy to get at them, but Jon was as bad as you.

And more fool I, I listened to him.

Jon Arryn was a wise man and a good hand.

This Khal Drogo has a hundred thousand men. Do you forget how many houses fought for Targaryen?

If the Beosar king crosses with a Dothraki horde at his back, the traitors will join him.
HE WILL NOT CROSSES AND IF HE DOES, WE WILL THROW HIM INTO THE SEA. ONCE YOU CHOOSE A NEW WARDEN OF THE EAST... UNLESS YOU HAVE ALREADY PROMISED THAT HONOR?

AND WHAT IF I HAVE?

IS IT JAIME LANNISTER?

YES.

KINGSAYER. HIS FATHER IS WARDEN OF THE WEST. IN TIME SER JAIME WILL SUCCEED TO THAT HONOR. NO MAN SHOULD HOLD BOTH EAST AND WEST.

HE'S MY WIFE'S TWIN, A SWORN BROTHER OF THE KINGSGUARD, AND HIS LIFE AND FORTUNE AND HONOR ARE BOUND TO MINE.

AS THEY WERE BOUND TO AERYS TARGARYEN.

SEVEN HILLS SOMEONE HAD TO KILL AERYS. IF JAIME HADN'T DONE IT IT WOULD HAVE BEEN LEFT FOR YOU OR ME.

WE WERE NOT SWORN BROTHERS OF THE KINGSGUARD.
“When I reached the throne room that day, a boxed was drowned in his own blood, and Ser Jaime was seated on the iron throne.”

“Have no fear, Stark. He said to me. I was only keeping it warm for our friend Robert. It’s not a very comfortable seat.”

You think I should mistrust Lannister because he sat on my throne for a few moments?

He had no right to it.

Perhaps he was tired of killing kings. Is weary work.

And he spoke truly. It is a monstrous uncomfortable chair.

Come, let’s ride. I want to feel the wind in my hair again.”
They had left Winterfell on the same day as the king. The banners and the wagons and the column of knights and freeholders had turned south. Tyron had turned north with Benjen Stark and his nephew.

The North went on forever.

Farms and holdfasts grew scarcer and smaller as they dressed deeper into the Wolfswood. Finally, there were no more roofs to shelter under and they were thrown back on their own resources.

Why do you read so much?

Why do I look at you and tell you what you see.

I see you, Tyron Lannister.

You see a dwarf, Snow. My legs are short and twisted. My arms are strong, but again too short. But I was born a Lannister of Casterly Rock, and things are expected of me.
My brother has his sword, King Robert has his warhammer, and I have my mind. And a mind needs books if it’s to keep its edge. That’s why I read so much, Jon Snow.

Oh, yes. Even a stunted, twisted, ugly little boy can look down over the world when he’s seated on a dragon’s back.

Whenever I started a fire, I used to stare at the flames for hours, pretending they were dragonfire.

Sometimes I’d imagine my father burning. At other times my sister.

Don’t look at me that way. You’ve dreamed the same.

No! I wouldn’t...
NEVER? WELL, I'M CERTAIN LADY STARK TREATS YOU AS ONE OF HER OWN. AND YOUR BROTHER ROBB, HE'S ALWAYS BEEN KIND.

YOU'RE TOO SMART TO BELIEVE THAT. THE NIGHT'S WATCH IS A MIDDEN HEAP FOR ALL THE MISFITS IN THE REALM.

THE NIGHT'S WATCH IS A NOBLE CALLING!

AND WHY NOT? HE GETS WINTERFELL AND YOU GET THE WALL.

I'VE SEEN YOU LOOKING AT YOREN AND HIS BOYS. POACHERS, RAPERS, THIEVES, AND BASTARDS LIKE YOU MIND UP ON THE WALL WATCHING FOR GRUMKINS AND SNARKS.

THE GOOD PART IS THERE ARE NO GRUMKINS AND SNARKS. THE BAD PART IS YOU FREEZE YOUR BALLS OFF. BUT SINCE YOU'RE NOT ALLOWED TO BREED—

STOP IT!
LOOK HERE, SNOW. I...

HELP ME.

ASK ME NICELY.

I SHOULD BE VERY GRATEFUL FOR YOUR KIND ASSISTANCE, JON.
Why did he attack me?

Maybe he thought you were a grumkin.

I suppose I do rather look like a grumkin.

It's true, isn't it?

What you said about the Night's Watch, it's true.

If that's what it is, that's what it is.

That's good, bastard. Most men would rather deny a hard truth than face it.

Most men, but not you.

No, not me. I seldom dream of dragons anymore.

There are no dragons.
My lady, Lord Eddard is eight days gone. It's past time we reviewed the figures. You'll want to know how much the royal visit cost us.

I know what it cost. Take the books away, the steward will attend to it.

We have no steward, my lady. Poole went south with Lord Eddard.

Besides the steward, we need a captain of the guards to fill Jory's place. A new master of horse?

A master of horse?

Do you think I care what happens in the stables? I would gladly butcher every horse in Winterfell if it would open Bran's eyes.

Do you understand that?

Yes my lady. Hadden rode south and...
Yes, my lady. But the appointments--

I have prepared a list of those we might wish to consider.

I'll make the appointments.

We'll talk about them tomorrow. Leave us now.

Mother, what are you doing?

How can you ask that? I'm taking care of your brother. I'm taking care of Bran.

Is that what you call it? He's not going to die, mother. Maester Luwin says the time of greatest danger has passed.

And you have other children.

Rickon needs you. He's too young to understand what's happening. He follows me around clutching my leg and crying.
I NEED YOU...
I CAN'T...
I CAN'T...
I CAN'T...
I CAN'T...
NOT...
WHEN...
ANY...
MOMENT...
COULD...
BE...
LAST...
I...
HAVE...
TO...
BE...
WITH...
HIM...
IF...

AAAPPOO000

CLOSE...
THE...
WINDOW!
BRAN...
NEEDS...
TO...
STAY...
WARM.

HE...
NEEDS...
TO...
HEAR...
THEM...
SING.

"SHAGGYDOG...
AND...
GREY...
WIND.
YOU...
CAN...
TELL...
THEIR...
VOICES...
APART...
IF...
YOU...
LISTEN...
CLOSE."

AAAPPOO000

MAKE...
THEM...
STOP!

I CAN'T...
STAND...
IT.
MAKE...
THEM...
STOP!

AAHPPO000

MAKE...
THEM...
STOP!

KILL...
THEM...
ALL.
IF...
YOU...
HAVE...
TO,
ONLY...
MAKE...
THEM...
STOP!
DON'T BE AFRAID, MOTHER. THEY WOULD NEVER HURT HIM.
PLEASE, REST. YOU'VE HARDLY SLEPT AT ALL SINCE...

I CAN'T. WHAT IF HE DIES WHILE I'M ASLEEP? I CAN'T...

OH GODS, CLOSE THE WINDOW!

I WILL, IF YOU PROMISE TO SLEEP, BUT...
WAIT. THE DOGS ARE BARKING TOO. THEY'VE NEVER DONE...

FIRE!
THE LIBRARY TOWER'S ON FIRE.

MOTHER, STAY HERE. I'LL COME BACK AS SOON AS THE FIRE'S OUT.
NO ONE WAS SPOSED TO BE HERE.

YOU WEREN'T SPOSED TO BE HERE.

IT'S A MERCY. HE'S DEAD ALREADY.

NO.

NO. YOU CAN'T.
That was the way they found them when Robb and Maester Luwin and Ser Rodrik burst in with half the guards of Winterfell.

They wrapped her in warm blankets and led Catelyn back to the great keep, to her own chambers. Old Nan bathed her and Maester Luwin dressed her wounds.

Finally, she closed her eyes. When she opened them again, they told her she had slept for four days.
Robb arrived before her food, Ser Rodrik Cassel and Theon Greyjoy with him.

No one knows his name, my lady. He was no man of Winterfell.

It was no great trick to hide from the stableboys. Hodor may have seen him. There's talk he's been acting queer, but simple as he is...

We found where he slept. He had ninety silver stags in a bag under the straw.

It's good to know my son's life was not sold cheaply.

Why would anyone want to kill Bran?

If you are to rule in the North, you must think these things through, Robb.

Someone is afraid Brans life might wake up afraid of something he knows.

Why would anyone want to kill a sleeping child?
Lady Stark? Did you chance to notice the dagger the killer used?

Circumstances did not allow me to examine it closely. I can vouch for its edge. Why do you ask?

"The blade is Valyrian steel, the hilt dragonbone. A weapon like this has no business being in the hands of such a man. Someone gave it to him."
What I am about to tell you must not leave this room. I want your oaths on that.

Ned and my girls have ridden into deadly danger, and a word in the wrong ears could mean their lives.

Lord Eddard is like a second father to me. I do so swear.

You have my oath.

Robb?

Of course, mother.

My sister Lysa believes the Lannisters murdered her husband, Lord Arryn, hand of the king, and Jaime Lannister did not join the hunt the day that Bran fell.

I do not think Bran fell from that tower. I think he was thrown.

Your proof is in the dagger. A fine blade like that will not have gone unnoticed.

Someone must go to King's Landing.

I will.

No. Your place is here. There must always be a Stark at Winterfell.

I must go myself.
WHAT ABOUT BRAN? YOU CAN'T MEAN TO LEAVE HIM.
I HAVE DONE EVERYTHING I CAN FOR BRAN.
AND AS YOU REMINDED ME, I HAVE OTHER CHILDREN TO THINK OF NOW.

MY LADY, LET ME ACCOMPANY YOU. THE KINGSROAD CAN BE A PERILOUS PLACE FOR A WOMAN ALONE.

I WELCOME YOUR COMPANY, SER RODRICK, BUT WE WILL NOT BE TAKING THE KINGSROAD. WE WILL FOLLOW THE WHITE KNIFE DOWN TO THE SEA AND HIRE A SHIP AT WHITE HARBOR.

STRONG HORSES AND SWIFT WINDS WILL BRING US TO KING'S LANDING AHEAD OF NED AND THE LANNISTERS.

AND THEN, SHE THOUGHT, WE SHALL SEE WHAT WE SHALL SEE...