

# Godswood

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She wondered if she would ever truly hear silence again.

She could see, she could *feel* the absence of sound. It was the lightness of the snow as it settled on the ground, ever so slowly; it was the stillness of blood red leaves. It was a godswood that was haunted and had long stopped breathing, haunted by memories but the only memories were dead.

But just as the world had gone silent her mind could not – because if the world was still then she was running, if the world was haunted by the dead then the memories that clamoured for space in her head were very much alive. Her skin was steel now, a wall built between her past life and the one she led now but she hadn't counted on what would be trapped inside.

Running was chaos but chaos was life.

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He found her in the godswood, though he doubted that the gods spoke even here. The place was a vacuum, even his footsteps were buried in snow. It was silent, too silent, and he longed to break it - for silence was an ending, silence was death, and he couldn't stop, hadn't stopped, not since he had climbed out of his old life into the one he led now.

He made no sound but she still heard him; chaos was a cacophony and he carried it with him always. She turned to face him, both of them still in a world frozen in silence; both of them burning, raging, radiating heat that howled.

And it was her that broke the silence of the godswood, her words dripping with ice despite her blazing with fire – “What do you want?”

And her words plunged into him, a rush of ice that he felt crack inside his chest, and he was uncertain. He knew she had asked those same words before but this time was different, and he couldn't read her – those very walls he had helped her build were the ones that kept him out now.

But uncertainty was chaos and chaos was life, and he challenged her words of ice with words that melted, words of fire – “I thought you knew what I wanted.”

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She knew, of course she did. But beneath her words was a question unspoken. *Can I trust you?* And for that she needed him to put their games aside, their conversations that said everything and nothing; there was no room for falsehoods masked as a mockingbird's song in the silence of the godswood.

“I need you to say it.”

And she saw what she had seen on those few occasions before, the mask slip away and Petyr, only Petyr, was standing there in front of her. A man who had been broken and reborn as chaos, who was the fire that sparked and had stoked the flames of her own chaos burning inside.

His voice was dark, blackened, and as he stepped even closer it was his fire that took what little air was left between them. "I told you once I wanted everything, Sansa," he said with eyes that flamed like wildfire. "But I was wrong. I want, more than anything, for you and I to have everything – together."

His gaze, that emerald fire, faded to earnest embers as she gave no response.

*Could he have been so wrong?* He cursed the day he had given her away, and all the days that his absence had caused her to suffer, as her face was an impassive mask while his was in shards on the snow around them. She had trusted him once, had known him once. She had been reborn again in his own image, a mask that hid the fire within, and that mask hurt him the way his had hurt her.

He needed to *know*, needed a response. And as waiting became torture he realized she was waiting too, and she was winning this game. All those times she had asked, and he had never... and it was as if suddenly there was air to breathe, air to consume, and he found the words.

"Sansa – is that what you want?"

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She had resigned herself to winning, a bittersweet victory if it meant that he lost. But then he said those words, ones she never expected to hear, and they cut through silence and turned it into uproar, and who needed silence when there was commotion and chaos.

Her mask had been ice and steel, but it was no match for fire. She smiled at him, a mirror image of that smirk that he knows so well, and she watched his face change as he deciphered its meaning.

"Yes, Petyr – and I always get what I want."

And they were both smiling as he reached out to touch her hair, flaming bright enough to melt silence around them; as she reached out to touch his face, burning hot as if engulfed in fire.

And as they kissed the godswood was silent but they only heard the roar of their flames.