

JON

WHITETREE, THE VILLAGE WAS NAMED ON SAM'S OLD MAPS.

ABOVE IT LOOMED THE BIGGEST WEIRWOOD JON SNOW HAD EVER SEEN.

THE SIZE DID NOT DISTURB HIM SO MUCH AS THE FACE... THE MOUTH ESPECIALLY, NO SIMPLE CARVED SLASH, BUT A JAGGED HOLLOW LARGE ENOUGH TO SWALLOW A SHEEP.

THOSE WERE NOT SHEEP BONES, THOUGH. NOR WAS THAT A SHEEP'S SKULL IN THE ASHES.

AN OLD TREE.

OLD, OLD, OLD, OLD.

AND POWERFUL, JON THOUGHT.

LOOK AT THAT FACE. SMALL WONDER MEN FEARED THEM, WHEN THEY FIRST CAME TO WESTEROS. I'D LIKE TO TAKE AN AXE TO THE BLOODY THING MYSELF.

MY LORD FATHER BELIEVED NO MAN COULD TELL A LIE IN FRONT OF A HEART TREE. THE OLD GODS KNOW WHEN MEN ARE LYING.

MY FATHER BELIEVED THE SAME. LET ME HAVE A LOOK AT THAT SKULL.



JON REMEMBERED THE WIGHT RISING, ITS EYES SHINING BLUE IN THE PALE DEAD FACE. HE KNEW WHY, HE WAS CERTAIN.



WOULD THAT BONES COULD TALK. THIS FELLOW COULD TELL US MUCH.

HOW HE DIED. WHO BURNED HIM, AND WHY. WHERE THE WILDLINGS HAVE GONE.



GO THROUGH ALL THESE HOUSES. GIANT, GO TO THE TOP OF THIS TREE AND HAVE A LOOK.

PERCHANCE THIS TIME THE TRAIL WILL BE FRESHER.



JON WAS PAIRED WITH DOUR EDDISON TOLLETT, WHOM THE OTHERS CALLED DOLOROUS EDD.

BAD ENOUGH WHEN THE DEAD COME WALKING. NOW THE OLD BEAR WANTS THEM TALKING AS WELL?

NO GOOD WILL COME OF THAT, I WARRANT. THE DEAD ARE LIKELY DULL FELLOWS, FULL OF TEDIOUS COMPLAINTS—THE GROUND'S TOO COLD, MY GRAVESTONE SHOULD BE LARGER, WHY DOES HE GET MORE WORMS THAN I DO...



WHAT A DISMAL PLACE TO LIVE.

I WAS BORN IN A HOUSE MUCH LIKE THIS. THOSE WERE MY ENCHANTED YEARS. LATER I FELL ON HARD TIMES.

THERE'S NOTHING HERE.

NOTHING WAS WHAT HE HAD EXPECTED.



WHAT DO YOU THINK HAPPENED TO THEM ALL?

SOMETHING WORSE THAN WE CAN IMAGINE.

WHITETREE WAS THE FOURTH VILLAGE THEY HAD PASSED, AND IT HAD BEEN THE SAME IN ALL OF THEM. THE PEOPLE WERE GONE, VANISHED WITH THEIR SCANT POSSESSIONS AND WHATEVER ANIMALS THEY MAY HAVE HAD.



NONE OF THE VILLAGES SHOWED ANY SIGNS OF HAVING BEEN ATTACKED. THEY WERE SIMPLY...EMPTY.

WELL, I MIGHT BE ABLE TO IMAGINE IT, BUT I'D SOONER NOT. BAD ENOUGH TO KNOW YOU'RE GOING TO COME TO SOME AWFUL END WITHOUT THINKING ABOUT IT AFORETIME.



GONE.
GONE, GONE,
GONE.

THERE
WERE WILDLINGS
AT WHITETREE
ONLY A YEAR
AGO.

A YEAR
AGO ROBERT WAS
KING, AND THE REALM
WAS AT PEACE. MUCH
CAN CHANGE IN A
YEAR'S TIME.

ONE THING
HASN'T CHANGED.
FEWER WILDLINGS MEANS
FEWER WORRIES. I WON'T
MOURN, WHATEVER'S BECOME
OF THEM. RAIDERS AND
MURDERERS, THE LOT
OF THEM.



JON HEARD A RUSTLING
FROM THE RED LEAVES
ABOVE. BEDWYCK
STOOD NO MORE THAN
FIVE FEET TALL, SO THE
OTHER RANGERS
CALLED HIM GIANT.

THERE'S WATER
TO THE NORTH. A LAKE,
MIGHT BE. A FEW FLINT
HILLS RISING TO THE
WEST, NOT VERY HIGH.
NOTHING ELSE TO SEE,
MY LORDS.

WE MIGHT
CAMP HERE
TONIGHT...



NO. GIANT,
HOW MUCH DAYLIGHT
REMAINS?

THREE
HOURS, MY
LORD.



WE'LL PRESS
ON NORTH. IF WE REACH
THIS LAKE, WE CAN MAKE
CAMP BY THE SHORE,
PERCHANCE CATCH A
FEW FISH.

JON, FIND
TARLY AND SEE
THAT HE GETS
THIS ON ITS WAY
TO MAESTER
AEMON.



