

The Forest Lass

Von Bint-Lilith

She was standing beneath the Weirwood tree. Dressed in leatherbreeches and a heavy furcloak around her shoulders. Dark wavy hair framing her white somber face. Red lips, full, pursed as if she was pouting. Yet her eyes looked blank into the yonder. Grey eyes. Both soft like the fog and hard as steel.

"Arya", he said softly but she did not turn her eyes to him. "'Tis me, Arya."

After some minutes had passed she replied. "Tis you and yet 'tis not you."

Indeed, he might have not been the baseborn bastard she once had known but still he was Gendry. Gendry Baratheon, legitimized by Stannis shortly before the war had ended.

"Yes. I am a Lord now. Lord of Stom's End."

Finally she turned to look at him. Her face still a mask. "Good for you." A hint of disdain twinkled in her eyes. "*My Lord*"

The last words she had spat out like venom. Gendry felt a pain forming in his chest. He had been warned by her sister, Lady Sansa, but still he had hoped she would be showing at least some kind of delight upon seeing him after all those years. "Have you forgotten me, Arya?"

A faint smile formed across her lips, she was gazing into the distance again. "How could I forget the person that I trusted betraying me? Shoving a dagger into my heart and leaving me. When he was the only one that I had left? I wanted to, but I couldn't." Gendry furrowed his brows. Her words were expressing her hurt, yet her face never faltered. "Never did I leave you, Arya. You left me. But you are right, I should've gone after you, searching for you. Across the Narrow Sea. I should've roamed the free cities. I should've reached the world's end and never stopped. not until I'd have found you."

"But you never did. You rather became a knight. And now a Lord. No more a bastard. Good for you."

Gendry sighed. "I will always remain a bastard, wether I'm a Lord or not. I became a knight so that I can be worthy of you."

She snorted. "Worthy of me?"

"Aye, worthy of you, Lady Arya."

"I'm not a lady."

"But you are", he grinned being reminded of a similar debate in the past with her.

"You are, m'lady"

"Don't call me that." she wrinkled her nose. Gendry could not help but snigger. "What do you want here, Gendry?"

He tried to supress the feeling of hope growing inside of him after she had called him by his name. "I've come to take you with me, Arya. Given that you're willing to come.

But I have come to make you my Lady."

Arya smiled but never looked at him. "I am home. After all these years I am finally home. Home in Winterfell."

He swallowed trying to ignore the sting in the left side of his chest. "I... I understand."

Arya then turned her stance to face him. "Yet I don't feel like home."

Gendry dared to approach her for another few steps. He began to hum a melody both known to him and Arya.

My featherbed is deep and soft and there I'll lay you down.

I'll dress you all in yellow silk and on your head a crown.

For you shall be my lady love and I will be your lord.

I'll always keep you warm and safe and guard you with my sword.

It was the song Tom Sevenstrings had sung back in Acorn Hall. From then on Gendry had always associated the song with him and Arya. He extended his hand for her to take it.

Arya furrowed her brows. She seemed lost in thoughts. Perhaps she was starting to remember. "Apparently you've given that song to much thought.", Arya smirked at him. His heart skipped a beat. He was excited by any kind of emotion her face was betraying. Arya shut her eyes and after a few moments she slowly began singing the second verse of the song.

"And how she smiled and how she laughed, the maiden of the tree. She spun away and said to him 'No featherbed for me. I'll wear a gown of golden leaves and bind my hair with grass. But you can be my forest love and me your forest lass.'"

She then placed her hand in his. Her cold, strong, delicate hand. Gendry felt tears forming in his eyes. He could not tell whether they were tears of joy, pride or relief. He pulled her nearer to him and into an embrace. At first Arya's body tensed but she eased after a while and surprisingly put her arms around him, as well. He stood there, inhaling her scent. She smelled like wood and earth.

"So will you come with me, Arya? Will you become my Lady of Storm's End?"

She firmly placed her head into his chest and tightened her arms around his body. "I don't know about me becoming a Lady. But I shall come with you to Storm's End. I shall be your forest lass."

Gendry's lips formed into a smile that made his cheeks hurt. The tears had fled his eyes and his voice was shaky.

"Whatever you want, as long as you shall stay with me. 'Tis all I want in this life. You, Arya Stark. Or Arya Baratheon. It does not matter, as long as you are with me." He cupped her face and searched for her eyes before placing his lips firmly unto hers. "Be my forest lass. Be my forest love. Until the day I die."