

A Feast for Crows Study Guide

A Feast for Crows by George R. R. Martin

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Plot Summary

A great war has left the Seven Kingdoms mostly in ruin and in a power vacuum. The last of a great line of kings has been killed and the succession is weak at best. Young King Tommen sits the Iron Throne now, but he is only a child. His mother rules as queen regent, but her lack of leadership skills and her own lust for personal power leaves her son's hold on the throne tenuous at best.

The Iron Born, a rough people who live on the sea, have a new king of their own. The iron men have been launching small raids on the mainland for generations, but with the promise of blood and conquest, their new king, Euron the Crow's Eye, has little trouble convincing his people that the Seven Kingdoms are ripe for the taking.

The brother of one of the late kings, and self-appointed king himself, King Stanis, has launched an attack against King's Guard and young King Tommen to claim Westeros for himself. His conquest of the Wall has led the Night's Watch to be labeled outlaws and traitors, leaving their Lord Commander little choice but to send a letter to the king begging his leniency.

The queen regent's brother and former lover sends a hideous sword maiden on a quest to find the escaped daughters of Eddard Stark. Stark has been deemed a traitor and was executed as such, but his only crime was to attempt to bring light to another, darker treason. Brienne, Swordmaiden of Tarth gathers an unlikely group of comrades on her search for young Sansa Stark, only to find that she is on the wrong trail all along. Meanwhile, Sansa is posing as Alayne, daughter of Lord Pyter Baelish, Lord Protector of the Vale. Baelish, known throughout the realm as Littlefinger, is secretly plotting to marry Sansa to the only remaining Heir of King Jon Arryn, who is also in hiding.

As all of these would be rulers each get closer to the Iron Throne, a question arises. Who will win the Game of Thrones and who will be swept off the board and forgotten in the coming battle?



Chapters 1 through 4

Chapters 1 through 4 Summary

The story opens with five friends hanging out at a tavern, The Quill and Tankard. They are out on the terrace drinking fearsomely strong cider, for which the tavern is famous. The friends discuss dragons and a few of them would like to see a dragon. Armen, who is an acolyte of the Citadel, informs them that dragons are extinct and that they were born a few generations too late to see them.

Lazy Leo, the son of the city guard captain, interrupts the group and asks for a drink. The five friends do not like Leo and refuse to buy him a drink. Leo tells them that there are indeed dragons and that dark times are coming. The sailors are all talking about it down on the wharfs. Armen assures the other four that Leo is wrong, and that the stories of sailors are simply stories of sailors. All of the group leave, save one. Pate is waiting to meet someone, so he must wait until dawn. Pate is in love with Rosey, the pretty daughter of one of the serving wenches at the tavern. Pate knows that in order to marry her, he must first present her mother with a gold dragon, as this is the price she has put on her daughter's hand in marriage. Leo knows about Pate's love for Rosey and he uses this to insult Pate and to wound his feelings. Leo asks Pate what Rosey is doing and wonders if she sleeps naked. He tells Pate that perhaps he will go make a woman of her. He says that if he is with her before her marriage, that it should bring her price down so that even Pate could afford to marry her. Pate knows that even if he could manage to defeat Leo in combat, which he probably can't, that he would still be killed for it.

When the sun comes up, Pate decides that the person he is waiting for is probably not coming. Pate is waiting for an alchemist who will make a gold dragon for Pate so that he may marry Rosey. All that Pate must do in return, is steal the key to the Citadel from Archmaester Walgrave. Pate decides to do it, and now he is waiting for the alchemist with the key hidden in his sleeve. On the way back to the Citadel, Pate meets the alchemist, who had stayed away to keep from interrupting Pate's fellowship. Pate and the alchemist make their trade, but on the way back to the Citadel, Pate falls out. He does not understand what is happening, and in his mind, he hears a voice say that he never will. His last thoughts are of Rosey.

In the Prophet, Aeron Greyjoy is the prophet of the Drowned God. He is drowning men and resuscitating them so that they may be born again believers, as well as his followers. A trio of riders arrive at his camp to tell him that the king, his older brother, is dead. Aeron rides to the Hammerhorn, the citadel of the lord who has summoned him. The lord asks Aeron who they should support to be the new king, but Aeron says that he must pray about it first. Meanwhile, his other older brother, Euron Crow's Eye, has taken the throne. Euron is a godless man, and so he must not be allowed to rule. Balon had chosen his daughter to rule in his stead, but the law of the Iron Born forbids that they be ruled by a godless man or any sort of woman. Aeron leaves the Hammerhorn and rides



out to spread the news, recruiting more Drowned Men along the way. After some restless time in his tent, Aeron decides that he must go out into the sea to seek the wisdom of his god. After returning from the sea, Aeron demands a Kingsmoot. The Kingsmoot is an ancient ceremony during which the Iron Born people raise up their most worthy, regardless of lineage, and make him king.

In *The Captain of Guards*, Prince Doran Martell receives news that his brother, their king, has been killed in a duel. The king's daughters seem to want to either march off to war, or to assassinate the man responsible. Doran cautions them that they do nothing, as the man who committed the act has been promised to them. The girls do not see this as being enough, and want Lord Tywin's head as the man responsible for the whole thing. Doran also says that it was not murder since he died in honorable single combat, over an issue that was none of his business. After leaving the comfort of his home, Doran and his guard arrive at Sunspear, which is the closest thing to a city that the Dornish have. Here, he holds audience with his nieces. The oldest three want revenge. The others are but girls. Doran orders his captain, Areo Hotah, to gather a group of his most loyal guards, then arrest all of his nieces, all eight of them. They are to be confined to the tower. Hotah warns that the people of Sunspear will howl at such actions when they find out, but Doran corrects him and says that all of Dorne will howl at it. He only hopes that Lord Tywin can hear it and will know that he has a friend in Doran.

In *Cersei*, Queen Cersei is awakened in the night by several guardsmen. Her brother, the Lord Commander, has summoned her to their father's chambers. When she arrives she sees her father in bed, dead with a crossbow quarrel deep in his abdomen. Her brother has gone down the secret passage that still lies open by the hearth. Cersei summons a maester, who points out that there is a second body in the bed. The woman was a whore and a servant of a criminal. Cersei orders everyone there to remain silent about the woman's presence, and assures them all that her father did not cavort with whores. When Jaime returns from the secret passage, he has bad news. The tunnel meets several other tunnels, all behind locked doors. Just then another guard arrives and says that their other brother, who had been locked in the dungeon, has escaped. Now Cersei is sure of what happened. Their brother had escaped from his cell, gone through the tunnel, and then killed their father while he used the privy. Soon he will come for her.

Chapters 1 through 4 Analysis

In the Prologue, Pate's desire to be with Rosey leads him to do something that he would normally not do. The stranger asks Pate if he is a thief or not, and if he is not, then he can forget about Rosey. Maester Wallgrave is a feeble old man who has trouble remembering even the simplest of things. For this reason, Pate knows where the Maester keeps his key to the Citadel, and has no trouble stealing it from him. The prologue opens this story with a group of characters who do not reappear for much of the book. While Alleras does appear again in the end, for now the main purpose of this group of friends is to foreshadow the coming events and start the rumors of dragons.



In the Prophet, Aeron Greyjoy was once a drunk. However, after drowning in the sea, Aeron becomes a devoutly religious man, swearing his life to the service of the Drowned God. The Iron Born believe that the Drowned God of the sea created them and the Iron Isles. Aeron baptizes people into his Drowned Men by drowning them and resuscitating them after they die. The Drowned Men believe that anyone who has already died can not die again. They see the Drowned God as the only true God, and all others are considered godless men. When Aeron's older brother, King Balon, dies, Aeron blames the Storm God of killing him.

In The Captain of the Guards, Prince Doran Martell of Dorne has joined with House Lannister in King's Landing in an alliance. When one of Tywin Lannister's men kills his brother, Doran's daughter and nieces want war and blood for revenge. Doran counsels them against it, but ends up having them arrested and confined to a tower to be safe. Doran has settled with Tywin already. The man responsible has been killed, and his head is on its way to Dorne. Prince Doran understands that his brother entered a duel over a woman who he had no claim over, and died in fair combat.

In Cersei, Cersei is understandably upset at her father's death. She refuses to believe that the whore in her father's bed was there for his father. Instead, she suggests that Tyrion planted her there after killing their father to make him look bad. Most likely, Tywin Lannister was enjoying the company of this woman, but his daughter refuses to see this. She also commands everyone to remain quiet about the woman. When Cersei discovers that Tyrion has escaped the Black Cells, she decides that he must have killed their father and is now paranoid that he is coming for her.



Chapters 5 through 8

Chapters 5 through 8 Summary

In Brienne, Brienne is traveling all around the kingdom in search of Sansa Stark. Sansa has no family, no home, and very few friends. She has fled because she is believed to be the one guilty of poisoning the king. The Lord Commander, Jaime, has sent her out to find her on a good horse, with good gold and silver, and with Sansa's father's sword. After searching a few towns, Brienne comes across a pair of hedge knights in the road. The fat one, Ser Creighton, is loud and boastful, telling tales of battles he has never fought. The smaller, older one, Ser Illifer the Penniless, speaks much less, and seems slightly wiser. They offer to share their trout with her, and to ride along with her, and she grudgingly accepts. On the road, the trio comes across a merchant and his servants, with only one hired guard. After hearing Brienne's questions about the girl, who fits Sansa's description, but who she claims is her little sister, Ser Shadrich the Mad Mouse tells her that she is not the only one looking for Sansa Stark. Later, at an inn, Brienne slips out in the night after the others have gone to sleep to continue her quest on her own.

In Samwell, Samwell Tarly has spent all night in the library, trying to discover all he can about the Others. When he finally comes up onto the wall, his friends give him a hard time about it, but they tell him that the Lord Commander of the wall wants to see him. On his way to see Jon, Gilly comes running out crying. She doesn't tell Sam what is wrong, instead begging out of it by saying that she must get to the baby lest she leak on herself. In Jon's office, Jon shows Sam a letter to King Tommen. He is writing it as a paper shield, a plea for help, or if nothing else then at least a plea not to attack. Jon doesn't feel that he will get any help from that avenue, but he knows that he must at least try. The Lord Commander, Jon, orders his brother of the night watch, Sam, to go to Oldtown. Jon needs Sam to learn to be his new maester. Sam does not want to, but this is the Lord Commander's order, not his friend Jon's request. Samwell, the old maester, Gilly, and her baby will all sail to Oldtown. If Sam still wants to claim Gilly's baby as his bastard, Jon tells him to send her and the boy to Sam's family in Oldtown to take care of. Sam and the old maester are bound for the Citadel.

In Arya, Arya Stark is on a ship headed for Braavos. She did not want to go there, but she has not ended up going where she wanted to go lately. Arya is posing as a common girl named Salty. She only speaks a few words of the language of Braavos, but the captain of the ship knows common tongue. When the ship arrives at Braavos, she sees the Titan of Braavos. The Titan is a giant statue that straddles the main channel into the island city. The Titan is full of murder holes and arrow slits, and as they pass under it, she can see the faces of many soldiers looking out at the ship. When she is left at the island that bears the temples to all of the various gods that are worshiped, all across the world, she heads to the main temple. Here, she is found by a young girl. Arya warns the little girl not to grab her arm as she did, but the girl can not understand her. She asks if the girl speaks the common tongue, but instead of the girl, a man answers her from



behind. He asks her who she is. He does not believe her when she lies about her name, and already knows that she is Arya Stark. He tells her that this is no place for a girl of the house of Stark, and asks her if she fears death. Arya declares that she does not fear death, and so the man pulls down his hood. The man has no face, just a decomposing skull, with a grave worm crawling around. She kisses where his nose should be, and tries to eat the grave worm. The man drops the illusion, showing the face of a kindly looking old man. He admits that no one has ever tried to eat his worm before, and asks if she is hungry. Arya is hungry, but not for food.

In Cersei, Cersei and the young king Tommen ride out for Tywin's funeral. At the wake, there are many nobles and wealthy citizens who offer their condolences, but many of them are as false as they are useless. Several pregnant women offer to name their sons after Cersei's father. Cersei has given order that her brother, the dwarf, be killed on sight and his head brought to her, no matter where he goes. Cersei does receive some good news at the wake, as a highborn woman with many powerful friends in many lands tells Cersei that she has spread word that the dwarf be killed. After the funeral, Cersei asks her uncle Kevan to be the new Hand to the king. He refuses, telling Cersei that he is tired, has a wife he has not seen in two years, and a brother and son to mourn. Kevan will accept the position only if Cersei turn over her regency to him and return to Casterly Rock. She is furious, but Kevan reminds her that he is powerful and wealthy, and that he can summon more knights than she can. He tells her that he will leave her be, but that it would be unwise to make him her foe.

Chapters 5 through 8 Analysis

In Brienne, Brienne is first worried that the hedge knights might try to rape her. After Brienne's capture, and several close calls with rape, she is very cautious about who she allows around her. Brienne is very ugly, having an unattractive face and a manly build. While the two hedge knights turn out to be gallant enough, Ser Shadrick, the Mad Mouse, quickly figures out that Brienne is looking for Sansa Stark. He comments to her that he is also looking for Sansa, and Brienne believes that he intends to find the girl and turn her in to Queen Cersei for the substantial bounty on her head.

In Samwell, Sam is an overweight coward. He is afraid of almost everything, and everyone knows it. Despite his cowardice, Sam did manage to slay an Other with a piece of obsidian, revealing their weakness to obsidian. Since that day, he has been known mockingly as Sam the Slayer. When Jon Snow orders Sam to the Citadel, Sam does not want to go for fear of the sea and his father. However, Jon does not offer him the choice. He also orders Sam to never again call himself craven.

In Arya, Arya Stark has fled King's Landing just as her older sister has, but her journey has brought her to the hidden city of Braavos. Arya is not intimidated by the illusion of death on the old man's face, and even tries to eat the worm crawling on his face. Arya believes that she has come to the right place to avenge her family, as the House of Black and White are known to give death as a gift. Arya is hungry for the knowledge and power to kill all those who have betrayed her.



In *Cersei*, Cersei grieves her father, but at the same time celebrates her rise to Queen Regent. Until her young son Tommen comes of age to take the throne, she will rule for him. Cersei's confrontation with her uncle helps to show her immaturity, as well as the fact that many in the kingdom will not tolerate her.



Chapters 9 through 12

Chapters 9 through 12 Summary

In Jaime, Jaime has sworn to stand a vigil of seven days and seven nights over his father's funeral bier. Jaime refuses to be relieved, though a few do offer. During his vigil, Jaime muses to himself over the events that have occurred. Jaime freed his brother from the dungeon, which resulted in the death of his father. Toward the end of his vigil, Cersei asks him again to be the Hand to Tommen. Jaime refuses. The next morning, Tommen is overcome by the smell of Tywin's body, that he vomits in the sept and runs out. Jaime asks another to relieve him and runs after Tommen. Cersei confronts Jaime in public, but regains her control before Mace Tyrell manages to get to them. Jaime counsels Cersei to go to dinner with Mace and his wife, then ask him to conquer Storm's End. If he succeeds, then Cersei wins out, if he fails he will look like a fool. There is even the possibility that Tyell die in the attempt.

In Brienne, Brienne arrives in Duskendale and attracts the attention of the town guards. One of the guards, noticing her shield, points out that those are ill reputed arms to be carrying. She tells him that she found the shield in her father's armory, and means to have them repainted. The guard tells Brienne that his sister paints shields, and gives her directions. Brienne has the shield painted while she is waiting to see the lord of Duskendale. After finding that the lord is not in, and that Sansa definitely did not come to Duskendale, Brienne wonders where else to look. Brienne meets a dwarf in the inn who tells her that he had seen a fool in Maidenpool who was looking for passage for three. Brienne figures that this is as good a lead as any, and heads out for Maidenpool. On the road to Maidenpool, Brienne stops at the ruins of an old Hollard castle. A boy comes riding by, and looks around at the crossroads. After he chooses a road, Brienne realizes that the boy looks familiar because he has been following her. She catches him and interrogates him, only to find that the boy was once the Imp's squire. The boy is following her to try to find Sansa, who the boy claims is the Imp's wife.

In Sansa, Sansa has been hiding in the keep at The Gates of the Moon, posing as Alayne, the daughter of Ser Petyr Baelish. However, Sansa is Sansas Stark, and Petyr is Lord Littlefinger from King's Landing. They fled after Sansa was suspected of killing the king. Littlefinger married Sansa's aunt, thinking that Sansa would be safe there. Instead, the mad woman who already killed her last husband, also tried to kill Sansa. Petyr pushed Sansa's aunt off the mountain to save her, and they blamed it on the vile singer, Marillion. Marillion always sang rude songs to mock the nobles, and even tried to rape Sansa. He became an easy enough scape goat, as no one but the dead woman liked him anyways. Oddly enough, when the lord of the keep below comes up to interrogate him, Marillion says that he loved her. He tells the lords and knights that he loved the woman, and could not bare the idea of her going to bed with another man. Then, when she married Petyr, Marillion was driven mad and threw her off the mountain. After the interrogation, Petyr drinks wine with Lord Nestor, and gives him a



grant, making him Keeper of the Gates of the Moon, a lofty position that binds him to Petyer and his daughter and the young king.

In *The Kraken's Daughter*, the former king of the Ironborn, Balon Greyjoy, is dead. His throne is hotly contested. His brother, the priest, has called a kingsmoot. Balon's daughter has made a bid for the throne, and is rounding up men and ships. When she arrives at Ten Towers, Asha Greyjoy learns that she does not have enough men to take the throne from her uncle. She also learns about the Kingsmoot. Lord Rodrick advises Asha not to go to the Kingsmoot, but she is going and will make a bid for the throne there. She plans to gather enough men that will speak out for her that she can be the first queen chosen by a Kingsmoot. She calls it a Queensmoot.

Chapters 9 through 12 Analysis

In *Jaime*, Jaime feels guilty for his father's death. Jaime knows that if he had not freed Tyrion, that his father would still be alive. Everyone else who notices his vigil believes that he is a pious and loyal son, doing his duty as he grieves the loss of his father. Many try to relieve him of his vigil, so that he may rest, but Jaime refuses them all.

In *Brienne*, after leaving Duskendale, Brienne realizes that Podrick is following her. She hides to let him get ahead of her, then catches up to him from behind. Brienne feels sorry for the boy, as he was Tyrion's squire. He has no formal combat training, so she offers to teach him. Podrick agrees readily enough, as he wants to learn to fight and to find Sansa. Podrick also believes that Tyrion will come back for him some day, and can not understand why Tyrion left him behind.

In *Sansa*, while Sansa fears that Lord Nestor will discover their ruse, Littlefinger assures her that there is nothing to worry about. Sansa is surprised when Murrion confesses to the murder he did not commit. Littlefinger shows his great cunning when he effectively buys Nestor with the grant and title. As Littlefinger is fond of telling Sansa, men will believe what they want to.

In *The Kraken's Daughter's*, Asha, much like Cersei, resents the customs of her people that prevent her from ruling in her own right. Without children by a king, Asha is forced to either give up or pursue her desires for the throne more violently. Asha plans to either take the throne by force from her uncle, or to gather up enough men to speak for her at the kingsmoot. Asha is so certain that she will become queen, that she renames the kingsmoot queensmoot.



Chapters 13 through 16

Chapters 13 through 16 Summary

In Cersei, Tommen is married to Margaery Tyrell, his brother's widow, to unite Highgarden and Casterly Rock. Jaime has several knights surrounding the building, and make several rounds to inspect the area himself during the wedding and feast. After Tommen chokes and coughs, Cersei and Jaime both are mortified, suspecting poison. However, it was simply a gulp of wine that went down wrong. Still, it is enough to bring tears to Cersei's eyes. Cersei leaves the room to avoid anyone seeing her cry. Lady Merryweather finds the queen outside the hall, and mistakes her tear of fear for her son as tears over the wedding. The Myrish lady tell Cersei that her own handmaid spies on her for Tommen's new queen, and tells her exactly how. Cersei makes plans to investigate this. After the wedding feast, Cersei takes everyone outside to watch the Tower of the Hand burn to the ground.

In The Soiled Knight, Ser Arys is a Knight of the White, a Kingsguard. He is protecting Tommen's older sister, Myrcella. Myrcella has been betrothed to the young prince of Dorne, and is living at Sunspear. Prince Doran of Dorne tells Arys that he does not feel that Sunspear is safe for Arys or Myrcella, as the Dornish bear no love for those of King's Landing. Doran plans to return to his palace the next day, and take Myrcella and Arys with him. After talking to Doran, Arys goes to meet his lover, Princess Arianne, who is also Prince Doran's daughter. Arys plans to break off his relationship with the princess, but when he arrives she is naked, wearing nothing but a copper snake coiled around her arm. They go to bed, but after Arys tells her that they must stop. She questions his love for her, but he tells her that he does love her. He has a duty to his king, and has sworn never to marry or bear children. After some conversation, and some pleading, Arianne convinces Arys that Myrcella is more fit for the Iron Throne than her brother, and points out that if he really loves Myrcella or Arianne, that he would defend her right to the throne. She points out that if Myrcella were queen, that she could also allow Arys to marry Arianne, allowing him to fulfill his duty and have his love. Arianne promises to be his wife and bear his children should Myrcella take the throne and allow it.

In Brienne, Brienne arrives at Maidenpool, and is immediately recognized by a knight. He takes her to Lord Tarly, who decides to let her go where she will. Tarly believes that she did not kill the former king, but does still blame her for his death. The knight who took Brienne to Tarly was the same knight who started a cruel game with her the last time she was at Maidenpool. He made a wager with his friends on who could take her virginity, and the wager spread to many others as well. With the payout growing dangerously high, Tarly worried that someone might decide to take the money, and therefore Brienne's virginity, by force. At The Stinking Goose, Brienne finds Nimble Dick who tells her that a scared fool wanted passage for himself and two girls. Dick sent him to the Whispers. He will take Brienne to him, for a price.



In Samwell, Sam and his company are sailing on the Blackbird, the Night Watch's largest ship. After days at sea, Sam is seasick more often than not, as is the babe. The storms are terrible on the trip from The Wall to Braavos. Gilly seems scared of the sea, and completely inconsolable. As the days pass, Sam finally convinces the singer to sing a song to Gilly and her son to try to calm them. The song only serves to upset Gilly more. Sam doesn't understand why she is so upset, but the maester explains it to him. Lord Snow swapped Gilly's baby for the child of the king from beyond the wall. Snow's thinking was that if the wall is overrun, no one will care that Gilly's son, born of incest, would be killed. The young king would be safe with Gilly at Sam's father's castle.

Chapters 13 through 16 Analysis

In Cersei, Cersei's oldest son, King Joff, died choking on poison. Cersei is certain that Tyrion is the one who poisoned her son, so when Tommen is wed to Margaery Tyrell, Cersei and Jaime are beyond paranoid. When Tommen swallows a gulp of wine wrong, and chokes for a moment, it is enough to bring tears to Cersei's eyes. Cersei hates the Tyrells, and only agreed to marry Tommen to Margaery because she believes she can manipulate the relationship to destroy Mace Tyrell.

In The Soiled Knight, Arys is in love with Prince Doran's daughter, Arianne. As kingsguard, Arys has sworn never to be with a woman. After being with Arianne and falling in love with her, Arys is eaten up by the conflicting feelings of love and guilt. He is happy when he is with her, but immediately after he becomes guilty and grieves for his honor. Myrcella, Tommen's older sister, should be next in line to the throne in Arianne's opinion. She has little trouble convincing Arys of the same, since he was never sworn to protect Tommen, only Joff and Myrcella. Arianne seals the deal by assuring Arys that when Myrcella is queen, she could give him permission to marry Arianne.

In Brienne, while Lord Tarly admits that he knows that Brienne did not murder the former king, he still blames her for it. Tarly feels that a lady's battle should be in the birthing bed, not the battlefield. He also believes that it is Brienne's own fault that some of his knights were tempted to rape her, saying that she should not be there in the first place to turn the heads of otherwise good men.

In Samwell, Jon Snow swapped Gilly's baby with that of the king from beyond the Wall. With King Stanis coming for them, Jon did not want the heir to be present when Stanis took the Wall. Gilly is distraught about the loss of her son, but continues to care for the baby that is not hers. Sam is too naive to see this without Maester Aemon explaining it to him.



Chapters 17 through 20

Chapters 17 through 20 Summary

In Jaime, as the funeral procession takes the late Lord Tywin out of the city of King's Landing, Jaime rides along side the column to talk to his relatives. Kevan assumes that Jaime is there on Cersei's account, and makes it obvious that he does know about Jaime and Cersei, and that Tommen is their son. After Kevan rides off, Jaime decides to test the theory that Cersei has been with their cousin Lancel. He makes a joke about Lancel's new wife to be, who is a widow. Lancel has never wed before, and Jaime tells him that his new wife will be glad to show him what goes where in the bedchamber. Lancel assures his cousin that he knows well enough to do his duty as husband, to which Jaime answers that it is good news for any wife. This turns Lancel so red in the face that Jaime feels certain that Tyrion had lied to him. After leaving the funeral procession, Jaime goes to his sister. She is laughing about Lolly's son. Lolly delivered her son just a few days before, and named him Tyrion. Jaime cautions Cersei of keeping counsel with Lady Merryweather, as she is a creature of the young Tyrell queen. Cersei knows this, and tells Jaime that while she informs on Cersei, she also tells Cersei everything that goes on with the new queen as well. Jaime tries to counsel his sister on her choices of appointments to public office, but she informs him that she governs the realm, and that he should just leave.

In Cersei, three would be lords bow before the queen. They have a dwarf's head in a sack, green, rotting, and covered in maggots. This head they present to the queen as Tyrion the Imp's head, but she knows right away that it is not. Tyrion's nose was sliced off in a battle, and yet, this head has a nose. After sending the three off to find the right dwarf, Cersei goes to council. She apologizes for making them wait, but the council agrees that there is no trouble in waiting for the queen. During the council meeting, Cersei reveals that she has made a former maester the Lord of Whispers, her master spy. Maester Pycelle is aghast at this, as no maester is allowed to bear the rank of lord or to own lands. However, Cersei reminds Pycelle that his order stripped Qyburn of his maester's chain, and that he is no longer beholden to his maester's oath. After the meeting, Cersei summons the young knight Osney Kettleblack. Kettleblack must seduce the new queen. When he is caught with the queen, he will be sent to the wall, while the young queen will lose her head. When on the wall, Kettleblack is to kill Lord Snow, then return to King's Landing, assuming he lives long enough.

In The Iron Captain, Vitarion Greyjoy, one brother of the late king of the Ironborn, arrives at the kingsmoot. Aeron greets him, and would see him on the throne if the Drowned God wills it. Euron Greyjoy the Crow's eye currently sits the Iron Throne, but the kingsmoot might well dethrone him. All of the great captains, as well as some peasants, have come to the kingsmoot to either place their bid for the throne, or show their support for the one they would have crowned. Asha has come, calling it a queensmoot. Vitarion warns Asha that no woman has ever ruled them, and none likely ever will. Asha offers to give her support, as well as the support of those with her, to her uncle if



he will make her his Hand. He refuses to do it, as it will mean stopping the war. Asha decides that she will try for the throne herself after all.

In *The Drowned Man*, as the sun rises, the sea seems to wake. Now is the time for the kingsmoot, and so Aeron calls the kingsmoot to order. The first several captains and lords who make a bid for the throne get little to no support. One great bear of a man does well, until Asha tells him to stand. When the giant old man is unable to rise up from his cart, he loses his support as king. Finally, Victarion takes the floor. He tells of his brother's rule, and of his conquests at his brother's orders. Victarion ends his speech by telling them that he will continue Balon's work, and to raise him as king is to have more of his brother. Asha makes her bid for the throne, telling the crowd that the cost of the north is too high. Too many are widows and orphans because of her father's war, and they have little to show for it. As Asha's people argue with Victarion's people, a terrible horn sounds. Euron the Crow's Eye tells the crowd that if he is king, he will bring them all of Westeros. He claims that he can bind dragons to the Iron Born, and then he opens his chests of gold. Thousands of voices call out his name, and the Iron Isles have their king.

Chapters 17 through 20 Analysis

In *Jaime*, Tyrion has told Jaime that he knows about Cersei's children. Jaime is the true father of all three of his sister's children, and Tyrion mocks him for it. He also tells Jaime that Cersei has been with Ser Kettleblack and their cousin Lancel. He even goes so far as to suggest that Cersei has been with the court fool, Moon Boy. Jaime tries to tell himself that he does not believe his brother, but it clearly bothers him.

In *Cersei*, Cersei has bounty hunters roaming all across the Seven Kingdoms looking for Tyrion. Unfortunately, each time one of them shows up with a dwarf's head, it is the wrong dwarf. Cersei makes Qyburn a council member because of his special skills. Qyburn was dismissed from the Citadel because he carried out forbidden experiments. Qyburn is said to be a necromancer, which fits Cersei's plans well, as Qyburn makes a good spy and better assassin.

In *The Iron Captain*, Victarion Greyjoy might well have been the king declared by the kingsmoot, but his refusal to accept his niece's help ensured that he would not be. Asha agrees to lend her voice and the voice of her men to Victarion if he will appoint her his Hand and stop the war. Victarion does not want a woman as a Hand any more than he wants a queen. Victarion believes in the war, and refuses to stop it. Aeron Greyjoy devoutly believes that his brother Victarion will be the one chosen by the kingsmoot, as no godless man or woman is allowed to sit the Seastone Chair.

In *The Drowned Man*, Aeron announces the beginning of the kingsmoot, and the circus begins. Many captains and lords step up to take the throne, but they all range from poor to foolish to ancient and weak. Only when Victarion steps up does any one candidate seem to get a large vote. Victarion might well get the throne, but Asha disrupts his

moment by announcing that she would be queen. When Euron takes the floor, his chests full of gold and promise of Westeros gains him the throne.



Chapters 21 through 24

Chapters 21 through 24 Summary

In Brienne, Brienne, Podric, and Nimble Dick make their way through the bogs and forests to find the narrow sea. On the way, they notice a man on a horse following them. As the road disappears, and the trio is forced to follow streams and game trails, Brienne realizes that she is not safe here. Dick Crabb knows these woods, and she is lost. Crabb eventually leads them to the ruins of Crackclaw. When they arrive at the castle, they find proof that another has been there recently. Dick calls out to see if anyone is around, and three men step forward. One of them is a fool, but it is the wrong fool. These three are part of the group of bandits that captured Brienne and Jaime before, leaving Jaime short one hand. Their battle today leaves two of the three bandits and Nimble Dick Crabb dead. Brienne makes the fool dig a grave for Dick, as he did what he promised. She tosses two gold coins into the grave as his pay for leading her to the fool, even if it is the wrong fool. She kills the fool and prepares to bury Dick, when she hears laughing. Ser Hyle, who was the rider behind them, followed them from Maidenpool. Lord Tarly has ordered him to follow her and bring them back to Maidenpool should she find Sansa Stark.

In The Queenmaker, seven people meet on the dessert sands. Arianne Martell, Ser Gerold Dayne the Darkstar, Spotted Sylvia, Ser Arys Oakheart, Princess Myrcella, Ser Andrey Dalt, and Garin of the Orphans are all setting out on a quest to make Princess Myrcella queen on the Iron Throne. They ride out to the Greenblood, where they plan to take a pole boat up to Hellholt, where they plan to crown Myrcella and begin their war. When they arrive at the Greenblood, and the pole boat that is to take them up river, the crew is nowhere to be seen. Garin calls out for them to come out, and out comes Aero Hotah, Prince Doran's captain. Before the seven can escape, Hotah taps the deck with the base of his pole ax, and many crossbowmen come out on deck. Hotah tells Arianne that if she does not surrender, that he is to kill all but her and the child. Everyone surrenders but Arys, who charges alone into the crossbowmen. Despite the crossbow bolts sticking out of him and his horse, he manages to slay several of them before he is thrown from his horse. On the ground, he raises his sword to cut down Hotah, but his wounds slow him. Hotah lops off his sword arm first, then his head.

In Arya, each night before bed, Arya Stark prays for the death of those who have betrayed her. When the kindly man asks her who they are, and who she is, she lies. The kindly man can always tell when she lies. The kindly man tells Arya that no magic is required to see a lie, only eyes. Anyone who can see the difference in a sunset and a sunrise can see a lie. He tells Arya that if she ever leaves the House of Black and White, she can never come back. However, if she is to stay, she must serve. The House of the Him with Many Faces is not an orphanage. Everyone must serve. In this temple, the weary come to pray for death. After hours, days, or even years of prayer, these tired souls drink from the poisoned waters of the temple pool. They then go to sleep in the many alcoves, and never wake. The priests wash and prepare the bodies, then take



them down into the catacombs. The Kindly man tells Arya that he does not think she is willing to truly serve, as those who serve Him of Many Faces must give everything they are to the god. Arya must first rid herself of all of her possessions. That night, Arya throws her belongings into the sea, all save for her sword, which she hides. Arya returns to the temple as naked as a newborn. The next day, the kindly man gives her her robes and begins her training. After practicing tongues with the waif, Arya learns just enough Braavosi to make get by out in the city. The kindly man sends her out to work for a fishmonger to hone her Braavosi through full immersion learning.

In Alayne, eight Lords Declarant camp outside, below the Eyrie, with one thousand men apiece. After the long climb, Littlefinger receives them in the solar. The Lords and the Lady demand that he leave the Vale and leave his young, ill stepson with them. Littlefinger's only ally in this is Nestor. The other seven are all against him. As Littlefinger tries to parley with them, the Lords Declarant cut to the chase. They refuse to bandy words with him, as they Littlefinger's reputation. One Lord warns that if they listen to him long enough, Littlefinger will have talked them all out of their smallclothes. The younger and more angry Lords make the mistake of drawing their blades and threatening Littlefinger. Littlefinger is the stepfather of Lord Robert, and has been appointed his Lord Protector. For the other lords to have drawn steel in his presence, after eating his food, Littlefinger could have them arrested. The older Lords see what has happened and know that their cause is lost. Due to the impatience and lack of restraint from three young lords, now they can no longer demand he leave. Instead, the Lords Declarant find themselves apologizing to Littlefinger. Littlefinger makes a point to let them know that he is insulted, betrayed, and well within his rights to deny them that forgiveness. He warns that he is going nowhere, and if they attack he will call to his friends and the crown, and a war they shall have. Instead, Littlefinger offers the Lords one year. If by the end of the year, Littlefinger has set the Vale right, then he will willingly step down.

Chapters 21 through 24 Analysis

In Brienne, when Nimble Dick dies, Brienne feels guilty for it. The whole time, Brienne was paranoid and distrustful of Dick, thinking that he meant to lead them out into the woods to rob and kill them. He dies trying to defend Brienne from the three outlaws on Crackclaw point. Despite his reputation as an outlaw himself, Dick faithfully led Brienne and Podrick to the fool. The fact that he had the wrong fool was no fault of his own, so Brienne buries Dick and leaves the two gold coins she promised him with his body.

In The Queenmaker, of the seven people who meet in the desert, only Darkstar is a stranger. All of the others are old friends. Arianne agrees to take Darkstar with them, as he is a renown knight who has never been defeated. When the seven arrive at the river, they find Aro Hotah waiting for them. Arys Oakheart refuses to give in, and dies a warrior's death. Arianne is crushed by this, as she really did love him and intended to marry him when Myrcella was queen. Hotah is gentle with Arianne, and tells her that someone told. She should not be surprised, as someone always tells.



In Arya, Arya only wants to serve the House of Black and White because she feels that she has nowhere else to go and she believes that she can get her revenge from there. Arya prays for the death of those who betrayed her, but the Kindly Man tells her that it is for the Many Faced God to determine everyone's time to die. Arya claims to be ready and willing to give everything that she is, but she is unable to part with her sword. In the end, Arya is too attached to the memories that go with her sword, and she hides it instead. The Kindly Man never says anymore about it.

In Alayne, the Lords Declarant do not believe that Littlefinger belongs at the Eyrie. However, the law requires that anyone who eats food in another man's house is his guest, and no harm may come to either from either. Littlefinger knows that if he gets the eight lords to dine with him, he will be able to provoke one of the younger, more angry lords, creating a problem with the Lords Declarant. When the young lords draw swords against Littlefinger, the other lords find themselves forced to defend Littlefinger and apologizing to him. Though the lords do not like it, they are left with little choice but to give Littlefinger his year. When Alayne expresses her concern that they will have to leave in a year, Littlefinger points out that in a year, some of the lords will be dead and others will be fighting each other.



Chapters 25 through 28

Chapters 25 through 28 Summary

In Cersei, in King's Landing, Cersei discovers that her young son's new wife will be difficult to control. The new queen is filling Tommen's head with visions of jousting and valor, but Cersei will have none of it. The new queen's brother has been training Tommen, but Cersei does not allow this to continue. She doesn't want Tommen forming a bond to the Tyrells, so she is sending for a Dornishman to be the new master at arms. The new queen has also told Tommen that everyone must obey the king, and so he has marched into his mother's bath chambers and demanded that his horse be ready for him in the morning, he be given a kitten, and the eating of beets be outlawed. Cersei reminds Tommen that while he is king, she rules until he comes of age.

In Brienne, after defeating the outlaws, Ser Hyle insists that they take the heads of the three outlaws back to Randyll Tarly. Brienne says no, as they have no tar to preserve the heads, but Hyle takes the heads anyways. By the time they arrive at Maidenpool, the three heads are rotting and covered in maggots. They are tarred and posted on a spike atop the wall, and Hyle reports to Lord Tarly. To his credit, Ser Hyle does not try to take credit for the slaying. He admits to Tarly that Podrick killed one with a rock, and that Brienne took the others easily. Lord Tarly tells Brienne that he will not shelter her and tells her to return home. She refuses, declaring her intentions to look for the Hound, as she had heard that the Hound might know where Sansa is. The next day, Ser Hyle finds her and announces that he has been dismissed from Lord Tarly's service for his insolence while defending Brienne, and that from here out he will be a hedge knight. He goes with Brienne on the search for Sansa, and brings local roving septon with him. As they march through the marshes, the septon tells them what he knows of the area, and they get on the subject of broken men. Brienne calls them outlaws, but the septon corrects her. They are simple village people who have never been more than a mile from the house in which they were born, at least until some lord comes to their village and tells them that they are now in his army. They march off to war without armor or arms, and eventually they break. They steal off during the night, or hid amongst the corpses. They hid in the wilderness, stealing food from the locals, and then eventually their daughters as well. They are to be feared, certainly, but also to be pitied. After a moment, Brienne realizes what the septon is really saying, that he was once a broken man himself.

In Samwell, Samwell and his group are marooned in Braavos. The maester is dying, and can not take ship. The singer has all but abandoned them. Gilly cries and the baby cries, and Sam does all he can to comfort them all, but there is little he can do. The maester wakes up once, and tells Sam that he is dying. He makes Sam promise to go talk to the sailors and find out about dragons. The singer had come home once, drunk and talking of dragons. Sam can not refuse the maester his dying wish, so he goes out in search of the singer, who is Dareon, his sworn brother of the Night Watch. Sam does not find Dareon in any of the inns or brothels that he normally frequents, but he does



manage to run afoul of two Bravos. In Braavos, the bravos are cocky, low born swordsmen, who dress in vibrant colors and roam the streets at night itching for a fight. The bravos mistake his black cloak for the plain garb of a noble. A girl pushing a wheelbarrow of clams drives them off, and points Sam to the place that the singer of the Black Watch is staying. Sam arrives at the Happy Port and finds many naked women, some of whom are busy with their customers. In the middle of it all, is Dareon and the woman who he calls his wife. Sam tries to get Dareon to return and to bring the food, wine, and firewood that he promised, reminding him that he is a sworn brother of the Black. Dareon tears his black cloak off the otherwise naked woman, and throws it in Sam's face, telling him that he is done with the watch. He is done with the dying old man, the screaming baby, the crazy wild woman, and he is done with Sam. Without even thinking, Sam punches Dareon in the face. After severely beating Dareon, Sam is grabbed up by some others and thrown into the canal. He is rescued by a large dark man named Xhondo. Xhondo tells him that he speaks a little of many languages, and that he hears and sees much. He sees Sam beat the singer, and he laughed. He hears their words. He hears of dragons.

28. Jaime

Cersei sends Jaime to reclaim Riverrun. Jaime will ride with several other knights, two of whom he chose specifically. One was a good childhood friend of his, the other the tongueless headsman who served Jaime's father. All together, the knights have slightly less than one thousand men, but Jaime notes that numbers is not what is needed to take Riverrun. There is already a great Lannister host there, and the Freys have even more troops in the siege. Jaime and his men ride through Harrenhall on their way to Riverrun, and Jaime places Ser Bonifer and his Holy Hundred in charge of the castle. The castle is said to have a curse, as every lord to hold it so far has come to a terrible end. Bonifer, however, is not worried. He believes that the Seven will protect him and his men from any spirits, and the neighboring lords will protect him from other harm.

Chapters 25 through 28 Analysis

In Cersei, tension rises between the young king and his mother. Cersei blames Tommen's willfulness on his new wife, believing that Margaery is plotting against her. She also believes that Ser Loras is poisoning Tommen's mind against her.

In Brienne, Randyll Tarly refuses to give Brienne recognition for her skills, even after Ser Hyle tells him what happened with the outlaws. Tarly believes that she should go home to her father and don a dress. He tells Ser Hyle that he feels that Brienne might well benefit from a "good raping". Septon Meribald explains to the group how broken men come about. He accepts that they are dangerous, but argues that they should be pitied, not hanged. It becomes clear that Meribald was once a broken man, and he lives as a septon in order to try to atone for his past sins.

In Samwell, Dareon has abandoned his sworn brothers, and doesn't care what happens to them. Maester Aemon tells Sam that it is his dying wish that he find out about the



Dragons, leaving Sam little choice but to face his fears. It is his fear that drives Sam to find Dareon. Sam may be a craven, but his dedication to the Night Watch is strong. When Dareon throws his blacks at Sam, the anger and amazement that he would forsake his oath drives Sam to forget his fear long enough to severely beat Dareon.

In Jaime, Ser Bonifer believes that his faith will protect him from the curse of Harenhall. Jaime, on the other hand, is skeptical. So far, each lord that has ruled Harenhall has come to a terrible end. The last one went mad and forced his prisoners to eat each other. At dinner, Jaime makes certain that the cook, who was the very cook to have cooked the Goat, knew better than to serve goat.



Chapters 29 through 33

Chapters 29 through 33 Summary

In Cersei, on her way to see the new High Septon, Cersei's way is blocked by the Sparrows. There are literally hundreds of them camped outside the Great Sept. The bones of their holy dead litter the area, almost burying the statue of Baelor. When she finally reaches the doors, the Sparrows block her way, saying that no sword shall be worn into the Great Sept. Cersei orders the kingsguard to wait outside, as she does not want a confrontation here. She only has two of the knights with her, and there are hundreds of these sparrows, many armed with clubs or axes. When Cersei finally gets into the sept, she is surprised to see all of the septons on their knees cleaning the floor. The new High Septon turns out to have been one of these Sparrows, and he has made many changes. The septons have all sold their expensive clothes and given all of their gold and silver to feed the hungry. Cersei feels that these men are mad, to give up all of their wealth for the poor and hungry. Cersei has come to demand the blessing of the High Septon for her son Tommen. The High Sparrow, as Cersei sees him, argues that there are many kings in the land now, and he does not want to raise one above the rest until he is sure that it is the time. He wants to pray and fast until the gods tell him who to anoint. Cersei promises that Tommen would protect the faith if he were the king, but the High Septon feels that the crown does not have the power or inclination to keep that promise. Cersei agrees to have Tommen repeal the three hundred year old law that forbids the faith from maintaining their own army. In return for the High Septon's blessing on Tommen as king, and for forgiving the crown's debt of almost one million dragons, the faith will once again have their Holy defenders. The Sword and the Star will be reborn.

In The Reaver, Victarian Greyjoy boards a Tyrell ship and conquers it quickly. The Iron Fleet under Victarian's command is attacking the outlying islands of the Seven Kingdoms. Victarian might hate his brother, but his brother is still his king. After destroying the fleet, Victarian and his men go to one of the castles to find that Euron and his men have conquered on land. At the feast, Victarian is reluctant to celebrate. Euron makes some of Victarian's men lords to replace the Lords of the Four Shields. At first, Victarian doesn't understand why, but then it hits him. By giving Victarian's men money and land, Euron buys their loyalty out from under Victarian. The lord Hewitt is the former lord of the castle Euron's men occupy. The former lord sits at his place at the tables, in his finest garb, but he is tied hand and foot with a turnip in his mouth to keep him from talking. Euron makes Hewitt's wife and daughters and ladies serve drinks to his men, and sits with Hewitt's bastard daughter in his lap. At the bastard girl's behest, Euron orders Hewitt's wife and daughters to strip naked and serve without clothes, to keep from getting wine, food, and grease stains on the fine clothes. After the feast, many of Euron's men rape the former lord's daughters. Lord Hewitt, his wife, and his other daughters are made to watch. Euron Greyjoy sends for his brother Victarian. When Victarian arrives in Lord Hewitt's chambers, he finds his brother naked, with the former Lord's bastard daughter snoring naked on the bed. Euron instructs Victarian to



go to Slaver Bay and retrieve a woman. Euron calls her the most beautiful woman in the world, and she is the last of her line. Euron tells his brother that when he marries her, the Kraken marries the Dragon, and he will rule the Seven Kingdoms from the Iron Throne. He promises Victarian the Seastone Chair, throne of the Iron Born, as payment.

In Jaime, when Jaime arrives at Darry, he finds the gates barred. After blowing the horn, the gates open, and a maester greets them. Jaime has his men camp outside the walls, as he knows that his cousin can not afford to feed a thousand men. Inside, Lancel's new wife prepares a feast for Jaime and his chief knights. Jaime's uncle has left, and Lancel spends all day and night fasting and praying in the sept. At the feast, Jaime finds Lancel's wife mildly attractive, and notes that she gets aroused any time anyone mentions a certain knight's name. Jaime feels that his cousin is a fool, and when he finally gets to see him, he tells him so. Lancel tells Jaime that he plans to renounce his lordship as well as his wife, then go back to King's Landing and take the vow to serve the High Septon as a member of the Warrior's Sons.

In Brienne, Septon Meribald leads Brienne and Hyle to a wealthy sept at the mouth of the Trident. The brothers here have all sworn an oath of silence, and only the Elder Brother and the Proctors are allowed to speak at all. The proctors may speak every one of seven days, and the Elder Brother may speak as he wishes, though he spent ten years silent to earn that privilege. The Elder Brother tells Brienne, Hyle, and Meribald and Podrick about the war and the things that wash up from the river. Often the river brings them driftwood and coins and gems, but also it brings them bodies. The brothers bury the knights and the knaves together, as they feel that this is their payment for the gifts of wealth that the river brings them. They are used to the men, but in war time it is the women that bother them the most. Many woman and young girls who have been raped wash up on their shores. The brothers work to heal those who are not yet dead, and bury those who are. After dinner, the Eldest Brother tells Brienne that the Hound is dead. He buried Sandor Clegane himself, and placed his helm on the grave. Someone stole the helm, and this is who is raiding under the Hound's name. He also tells Brienne that the hound had Arya Stark, not Sansa.

In Cersei, Lady Margaery demands that Cersei give ships to fight the Iron Born. In her anguish, she forgets that she is not yet queen. She demands that something be done at once. Cersei tolerates this insolence because she does not want to make a bigger scene with the girl. Ser Loras and Lady Margaery bring news that the Iron Born have conquered the shields and seem ready to attack Highgarden. They say that the Iron Born had one thousand ships with them, but no one in the council believes it. Cersei tells the two Tyrells that Dragonstone and Storm's End are more important to her than ten Highgardens, and she will not divert troops or ships from those assaults. Ser Loras tries to calm his sister, knowing that she is treading dangerous ground with the current queen. As Cersei tries to leave the chambers, Ser Loras offers her the solution to all of her Tyrell problems. He begs her to give him command of the assault on Dragonstone. He says that Lord Paxter will take half a year or more to starve them out, but that he will give her Dragonstone in a fortnight if he has to pull it down by hand himself. Cersei releases her flagship to him and gives him command. If Ser Loras succeeds, then she will have won Dragonstone and Ser Loras will be away from his sister. If Ser Loras fails,



he will be ruined by the blame of his failure, and will be away from his sister and the young king. If Ser Loras dies, then the youngest Kettleblack will be there to comfort Margaery, which would prove to be her ruin. Either way, Cersei sees victory.

Chapters 29 through 33 Analysis

In Cersei, Cersei does not understand true faith. In her experience, the septons have all had pretty much the same goals as other men. Cersei is baffled by the High Septon who sells the crown and fine clothes of the faith and uses the money to feed the poor. She is baffled by the High Septon who scrubs the floors next to his other septons. Cersei is quick to barter power for money, promising to restore the faith's right to hold an army in return for forgiveness of the crown's debt. Cersei saves the crown close to one million dragons, but she does not have the foresight to see what the true cost will be.

In The Reaver, Victarian does not like the fact that his brother seems to be buying his men with titles. Victarian hates his brother, but continues to serve simple because he knows no other way to live. When Euron asks Victarian to go to Slaver's Bay to retrieve his beautiful young wife, Victarian agrees. Euron thinks that Victarian is doing this because he ordered it as king and because he is willing to give Victarian the Seastone Chair when he gets the Iron Throne. However, Victarian has his own reasons for accepting the dangerous mission. He will get his revenge on his brother by taking the girl for himself instead of delivering her to Euron.

In Jaime, Lancel admits that all he ever wanted was to be Jaime. He even admits to bedding Cersei while Jaime was in the custody of the Starks. Lancel is renouncing his lordship and wife to join the Warrior's Sons to atone for his sins, and wants Jaime to pray with him. Jaime is not sure what to feel anymore, and asks Lancel to pray for him too, as he has forgotten all the words.

In Brienne, The Eldest Brother of the Silent Sept was once a warrior, just as Meribald was. He also killed many men and raped a few women. When he washed up on the shore at the Silent Isle, he felt that he had been given another chance at life. He was glad to spend the next ten years in silence to atone for his past. Brienne breaks out in tears while talking to the Eldest Brother, as she does miss her father. She loves her father, but does not feel that she is good enough to go be his heiress. She had an older brother and a sister who died, leaving only her. She feels that her father deserves better than her as an heir.

In Cersei, Cersei is shocked by Margaery's demands. She is angry that the girl has the audacity to make demands of her, but she sees this as an opportunity to further her plans for Margaery's ruin. When Ser Loras practically begs Cersei for the chance to break the siege so that the ships may be released to defend his home, Cersei sees the perfect opening. Cersei agrees to give him command, and begins planning her public celebrations in his honor. By speaking so highly of Ser Loras, Cersei believes that she will convince the public that she liked him. She doesn't mind this farce, as she believes that Ser Loras will be dead soon enough.



Chapters 34 through 38

Chapters 34 through 38 Summary

In Jaime, Jaime is surprised by the arrival of his cousin, Daven, the Warden of the West. He greets Jaime fondly, and the two discuss the war. Daven tells Jaime about the siege on Riverrun. They are camped outside Riverrun, and the Blackfish is camped inside. They sit around all day and do little to nothing, as no one is willing to risk combat. Inside the castle, they have enough food and water to last at least two years. Outside, the newly appointed lord of Riverrun refuses to allow the siege engines to reduce his new castle to rubble. Jaime has sworn an oath never to draw sword against a Tully or Stark again, so he plans to avoid battle if at all possible. Jaime plans to simply walk up to the castle and offer Blackfish very generous terms should he surrender. However, if Blackfish refuses Jaime, then he will kill him. Jaime does not want to forsake his oath, but he feels that his oath that he swore to the king is more important.

In The Cat of the Canals, Arya has taken the identity Cat of the Canals. She works for Brusco selling shellfish, but one night every month, when the moon is dark, Cat returns to the House of Black and White. The Kindly Man asks her what three things she knows. Every time Cat returns, she knows must report at least three things that she did not know the last time she was there. When Cat returns to the House of Black and White this time, she tells the Kindly Man that Little Narbo's has lost the use of three of his fingers, and means to be an oarsman. She also tells him that Quence and Alaquo had a fight and left the mummer's ship, and that Daeon the singer of the Black Watch was killed and that the killer kept his boots. When the Kindly man asks Cat who could have done it, she tells him that it was Arya Stark. The Kindly Man tells the waif to bring Arya some warm milk, and welcomes her back. The milk tastes somewhat funny and when Arya/Cat wakes the next day, she is blind.

In Samwell, Sam repayed the big Summer Islander for rescuing him with his sword, so when they needed to barter passage on the Islander's ship, he only had the maester's books and himself. Sam must work on the ship during the trip, and leave the books with the captain, who plans to sell them to the Citadel anyways. Maester Aemon dies on the ship, and Sam is left to say the eulogy. Afterward, the maester is kept in a cask of rum to preserve him on the trip. There can be no fire on the ship, and a Dragon must be burned. After the wake, a very drunk Sam ends up in the women quarters with a very drunk Gilly. She kisses him and before he can stop himself, he is kissing her back. When Gilly feels his arousal, she pushes him back onto her pallet, and slides down onto him. The next day, Sam is ashamed of what he has done. He tries to spend all day avoiding Gilly, but eventually the captain's daughter corners him, and tells him that he can either go to Gilly, or he can swim to Oldtown. Sam chooses to go to Gilly.

In Cersei, on a cold, wet, gray day, Cersei hears the news she has been waiting for. Everyone else is in mourning, and to keep up appearances, Cersei must pretend to mourn also. Within half a day of taking command of the siege, Ser Loras stormed



Dragonstone with nearly one thousand men. Nearly one thousand men died, mostly those of the crown, but Dragonstone fell. Ser Loras took Dragonstone in under a day, but it cost him most of his knights and lords. Ser Loras led every charge, and survived several sword blows and crossbow hits. However, when they reached the inner wall, the boiling oil burned off most of his skin. Dragonstone has fallen, and so has Ser Loras. Margaery grieves her brother, but refuses to believe that he will die. Ser Loras is stubbornly holding on to life, and Margaery hangs on to this slight hope. However, the maesters say that he will almost certainly die. Cersei has finally rid herself of the young Tyrell knight. Tommen also grieves, but Cersei is certain that he will get over it. Everyone remembers Loras as a hero, and Cersei tells herself that she will raise a statue for him and prepare the largest funeral that King's Landing has seen in years. Now that Loras is dead, Cersei can afford to treat him nicely. Soon, she will have Margaery's treason, and her victory will be complete. With Dragonstone out of the way, Cersei releases the fleet and allows them to head down river to turn back the Iron Men.

In Brienne, as Brienne, Pod, Ser Hyle, and the septon make their way north of the river, they begin to see bodies. Many bodies hang from trees and gibbets, broken men who have been rounded up and hanged, with salt rocks in their mouths. When they arrive at the castle at Saltpans, they lord there refuses to open the gate. They must continue on to the Crossroads Inn. The old inn was build several hundred years ago, and has had many names, but now it has no name, and due to the war it has been abandoned. When they arrive at the inn, they hear the sounds of a smith hard at work. The inn is full of children, mostly girls. They are the orphans of war. Willow, who is somewhere around twelve, seems to be the leader, and shows signs of high birth. The young smith, Genly, looks so much like Renly, that at first Brienne calls him lord. Brienne is almost certain that the boy is one of Robert's bastards, but when she mentions it, he takes offense. He is making him a sword, and when it is done he shall be a knight. After dinner, Brienne brings the boy smith some food. They hear horses, but the boy assures her that they are friends. The boy is wrong. Seven riders approach, and the leader is wearing the helm of the Hound. Brienne fears she knows who too the helm, and when she gets close enough, she sees that she is right. One of the outlaws tells the children that if they will give them fresh horses and fresh food, that they will leave them be. However, when the new Hound notices Brienne, he offers a new plan. He plans to cut off Brienne's legs and make her watch him rape Willow with her own crossbow. Brienne calls out an insult to him to goad him into attacking her, hoping against hope that the other six will stand back and watch. Sure enough, he attacks and the others watch the show. Brienne and the Hound fight, sword to ax, until Brienne manages to kill him. Afterward, Biter attacks Brienne. After driving her to the ground, he begins choking her and biting her. At one point he even begins to swallow the chunks of flesh that he tears out of Brienne. He is actually eating her while she is still alive. Brienne hears the ring of steel on steel and realizes that Ser Hyle has come out and joined the fight. For Brienne it does not matter. As Biter takes another bite and slams her head down again, Brienne is swallowed by the darkness.



Chapters 34 through 38 Analysis

In Jaime, Jaime once looked up to Blackfish, and longed to be just like him. Now the two are on opposite sides of a siege, and Jaime only hopes that Blackfish will treat with him nicely. Jaime wants to end this siege without bloodshed, as he once swore an oath never to draw arms against a Tully or Stark again.

In The Cat of the Canals, when Arya talks to Dareon, she is upset by what he says. His blatant disregard for his oath offends Arya greatly. She kills him and dumps him into the canal, taking his boots with her. She believes that the Kindly Man will find it as amusing as she does, but instead he is upset. He says that he thought Arya had left, but now she is back. He has the waif bring some odd tasting milk to Arya, which causes her to be blind the next day.

In Samwell, After Aemon dies, Sam retells part of his life. Aemon was next in line to be king, but instead passed the crown to his younger brother. He went to the Wall to serve as maester to the Night's Watch to avoid being used in a plot against his brother. Aemon thought that he was the last living Dragon, but it turns out that he is not. After saying the words, Sam learns that the Summer Islanders honor their dead by celebrating life. They get drunk and go to bed with whoever is nearby. The day after bedding Gilly, Sam is distraught that he has broken his oaths. At this point, he sees himself as no better than Dareon. Sam admits that he loves Gilly, and that if he could he would gladly take her as his wife.

In Cersei, as promised, Ser Loras delivered Dragonstone. It only took him half a day to break the siege, but he also cost the crown many lords and knights. Margaery as well as the common people mourn Ser Loras, but Margaery refuses to accept that her brother is going to die. Cersei is annoyed that Ser Loras is clinging so persistently to life. Cersei once again pretends to revere Ser Loras, calling him a hero and promising to raise a statue in his honor.

In Brienne, when Brienne first sees the boy smith, Genly, she believes for a moment that he is King Renly. Once she remembers that the king is dead, she is able to see the boy better. He does not look exactly like Renly, but it is clear that he is one of Robert Baratheon's unclaimed bastard children. When the riders arrive, Brienne realizes that it is what is left of the Brave Companions. Even after managing to kill the new Hound, she is almost killed by Biter.



Chapters 39 through 42

Chapters 39 through 42 Summary

In Jaime, Jaime tries to reason with Blackfish, but it is plain from the start that Blackfish will not yield. He greets Jaime as Kingslayer, and insults his honor at every turn. Jaime thinks to himself that if he had his sword on him, he would kill Blackfish for his insults. Blackfish does not trust any of Jaime's oaths or promises, and declares that he and his men would rather die on their feet, sword in hand, than yield to the Kingslayer. After his failed attempt at a bloodless siege, Jaime calls a war council. The various lords argue amongst each other until Jaime dismisses the council. Lord Frey has been keeping the true Lord Tully as a hostage, and threatens daily to hang him. Jaime takes Ser Ilyn to the gallows and cuts the rope from Edmure Tully's neck. He punches Lord Frey in the face to demonstrate that he does not make idle threats, then takes Tully and a singer to his tent. He draws Lord Tully a bath and gives him food and wine. Jaime then explains why he has saved Edmure. Jaime tells Edmure that he is the true lord of Riverrun, as he knows, and that Blackfish only serves at Edmure's pleasure. He tells Tully that he will take him to the castle and release him and all of the other prisoners. From there, it is up to Tully. If Edmure Tully yields to Jaime, no one else will die. Blackfish will be allowed to serve on the Wall, as will Edmure if that is what he wants. Otherwise, he may return with Jaime to King's Landing to be his hostage. He will be well treated and his wife will be brought to him. If their child is a boy, he will be squired there at King's Landing, and eventually knighted and given some small piece of land. A daughter will be well dowered.

In Cersei, Cersei uses her treacherous cunning to discover something important about the young queen. When Lord Gyles finally dies of his cough, Cersei blames Maester Pycelle, and accuses him of killing the man. Maester Pycelle denies any involvement in the lord's death, but Cersei counters that he has been spending too much time with the young queen, Margaery Tyrell. Maester Pycelle does not want to tell her what he does for Margaery, but when Cersei threatens to lock him in the black cells again, the maester cracks. He has been making Moon Tea for the young queen. Moon Tea is to prevent a woman from becoming pregnant. A true maiden has no use for such a thing, as she has no lovers. Tommen is far too young to consummate his marriage, and even if he were not, Margaery would have no reason to try to stop his children from happening. Cersei now has the proof of what she has suspected all along. Margaery did indeed consummate her first marriage, and as a older girl who long ago lost her maidenhood, she has urges and desires that Tommen can not yet take care of. The young queen has a lover, which is treason. Cersei arrests the Blue Bard and has him tortured to get the truth. When it becomes plain that the man truly knew nothing of this, Cersei has him tortured more, until he agrees to lie at her the young queen's trial. Cersei summons Osney Kettleblack, who is supposed to be seducing the young queen, but so far has failed. She orders him to go and confess to the High Septon that he has had carnal knowledge of the queen. Cersei plans to send Kettleblack to the Wall, and use his confession along with the bard's to doom the young queen.



In *The Princess in the Tower*, Ariane has been confined to a tower after her rebellion was crushed before it could get a good start. She sits in her lavish prison cell and reads or sleeps. She does not know what has become of her friends, and no one will speak to her. All of her servants are silent now, having been commanded not to say a word to the princess. After more days than Ariane can count, she gives up and stops eating. After several more days of only leaving her bed to use the privy, her father summons her to his solar. Princess Myrcella is still alive, but she has lost an ear and will forever bear the scars of Darkstar's attempt to kill her. Arys Oakhart is dead, of course, and her other friends have been sent off as hostages to other lords. Darkstar escaped and still has not been found. Doran is worried that Ariane will get the war she was looking for, since they now have to explain away Myrcella's injury. Ser Balon of the Kingsguard is coming with the head of the Mountain, and will most likely want to see the young princess and his sworn brother, Ser Arys. Prince Doran has been stalling the knight as long as possible, but eventually he arrives. Doran explains to his daughter that Dorne could not hope to survive a war with King's Landing, and that if she had been successful in raising Myrcella to queen, she would have lost her life instead of just an ear.

In *Alayne*, with winter approaching, the inhabitants of the Eyrie must make their yearly descent to the Moon Gate. On the way down, Lord Robert, or Ser Sweetrobin, as Alayne calls him, has one of his shaking fits. He is terrified of the descent down the mountain, but Alayne convinces him that he is brave, and tries to maintain a lordly image for him in front of the others. Upon arriving at the Gates, Alayne is notified that her father is waiting for her. Alayne finds Littlefinger in counsel with three hedge knights, who he has hired on. After the knights leave, Littlefinger tells Alayne of a gift that he has got for her. Lady Waynwood, one of the Lords Declarant, has named her ward her heir, instead of one of her own sons. Littlefinger has arranged a marriage contract between Alayne and Harry. Alayne can not understand why the Lady would willingly wed her heir to Littlefinger's bastard daughter. For one, Littlefinger has dowered her greatly, and the Waynwoods are not exactly wealthy. Lady Waynwood would never marry one of her wards or sons just for coin, but she does have another reason. Harold's birth mother was the last of Elys Arryn's daughters, which makes him Robert's heir, not Waynwood's. When Robert eventually dies, as he must, Harry will be the Lord Protector of the Vale.

Chapters 39 through 42 Analysis

In *Jaime*, Jaime tries to deal with Blackfish, but Blackfish makes it clear that he will not surrender to Jaime the Kingslayer for any reason. Jaime has sworn two conflicting oaths. His oath to never draw arms against a Tully or Stark was at sword point. As much as he would like to keep that oath, he feels that his oath to protect Tommen, his king and his son, is more important. Jaime is angry that he may have to break an oath, and this might explain the brutality of his threat to Edmure Tully. Edmure can either surrender the castle, or Jaime will send his own bannermen in to fight him first, then he will kill everyone inside the castle. If Edmure's wife gives birth, Jaime will hurl his newborn child over the walls to him out of a trebuchet.



In Cersei, Cersei's cunning gains her a valuable piece of information. Margaery Tyrell has been drinking Moon Tea. Moon Tea is a contraceptive. Since Tommen is too young to consummate his marriage, Margaery should have no reason not to be a maiden. Now Cersei knows that Renly and Margaery did consummate, and that she has a current lover as well. For the king's wife to be with another man is high treason. Now all Cersei must do is have someone lie about having sex with Margaery to get the investigation started.

In The Princess in the Tower, after being imprisoned in the tower for more days that she can count, Arianne finally gets her chance to talk to her father. He is disappointed in her, and she is disappointed in him. It is clear now that for years she has despised him. Doran has tried to arrange several marriages over the course of his daughter's life, but none of them had been suitable. Arianne always held this against him, but only now does she discover that her father intentionally picked men that she would refuse. He had to be seen to at least try to marry his daughter off, but in truth he had already made a secret marriage contract for her.

In Alayne, Lord Robert of the Vale was born sickly, and is not likely to live much longer. He was on his mother's milk until age six, and has been constantly coddled and spoiled. Even if he were to live, Robert would never be fit to rule. The maester cares for Robert, and only looks out for his good as a boy, but Alayne points out that what is good for Sweetrobin the boy is not always best for Lord Robert, the Protector of the Vale. The maester only cares about the boy, but Alayne and Littlefinger must be more concerned with the lord. All of this promises to change after Littlefinger's news. When Robert dies, Harold will take his place. He is strong and well loved by the people. When Alayne marries him, her position as lady of the Eyrie will be solid. When she attends her wedding in the white and gray of a maiden, with a dire wolf on her back, Littlefinger predicts that every knight in the Vale will pledge his sword to regaining her birth right. Littlefinger's gift to her is not the marriage itself. His gifts are Harry, the Eyrie, and Winterfell for Sansa Stark.



Chapters 43 through 46

Chapters 43 through 46 Summary

In Brienne, Brienne spends the next several days coming in and out of terrible dreams. She is surprised to be alive, but alive she is. When she finally wakes up in a cave, her fever has broken. She has been stripped of her sword and armor, and clothed in a woolen shift. Her arm has been set and is in a splint, and her face has been bandaged. As she calls out, she startles an old man awake. He tells her that the sister of the girl at the inn set her arm, and that they had to cut out some of the flesh around her cheek, as Biter's bites had caused infection and her fever. Septon Meribald has been released, but Ser Hyle and Podrick are there in the caves as well. The three of them await the justice of the Lady Stoneheart. When Brienne is finally brought before the lady for her crimes, she discovers that her crimes are serving house Lannister and the young king. The Lady reveals her face, showing that she is Lady Caitlyn Stark. When the Lightning Lord found her, she had been dead for three days. He gave her the kiss of life, and she rose even as he died. The Lady's flesh is partially rotten, and it is clear that she was dead for several days. She has to hold her neck together when she speaks, as her throat was cut from ear to ear. She offers Brienne a choice. She may either kill Jaime for her, or she can hang. Brienne tries to explain that Jaime is not the same as he was before, and that he sent her to find Sansa and keep her safe. No one believes her, and she is left with her choice. Brienne refuses to choose, so she, Podrick, and Ser Hyle hang.

In Cersei, after Ser Kettleblack confessed to having sex with the queen, the High Septon has Margaery arrested and examined. His examination and the examination of several of the septas shows that Margaery is no maiden. When this is revealed in public at court, the gossip starts even before court is dismissed. Several people get up and leave court. Cersei knew that Margaery had a lover, but was unsure who. She has ordered her gold cloaks to allow them to leave, but to make note of who leaves. To make it look good to the public, Cersei pretends to be shocked at this and pretends to not believe it. She demands that Maester Pycelle be allowed to examine the young queen himself, to prove for the crown whether or not this is true. Pycelle is forced to admit to the court that he has been making Moon Tea for the young queen, and so knows for certain that she is not a maiden. When court is dismissed, Cersei savors her victory. She goes to visit Margaery and Kettleblack in the High Sept. Margaery has been stripped of her fine clothes, and left the thin robes of a novice. Cersei pretends to give her options, and tells her that she is working to get her out, but Margaery doesn't believe her. Everything is going well for Cersei, until she asks to take the knight back to the castle to be questioned there. The High Septon refuses, and takes her to see the young Kettleblack. The knight has been hanged from the ceiling by chains, and is being beaten with a lash. He has confessed that his original confession was a lie, and that he had sex with Cersei, not Margaery. He also confessed that Cersei sent him to do his, just as she sent him to kill the former High Septon. Cersei realizes what has happened, and runs. If she can escape out of the tower, she can order her gold cloaks to kill the septons and break Kettleblack out of the tower. Before she can get out, however, she is



cornered and captured. Cersei is left naked but for a robe of her own in a tower cell, just as Margaery had been. After a couple of days, when Qyburn finally comes to see her, he only has bad news. Pycelle has taken over the council, and Qyburn himself has been dismissed. Mace Tyrell is on his way back, and Kevan has been named the new regent, so long as he arrives before Tyrell does. Waters has taken the new fleet and sailed off to make his own destiny as a pirate. Tommen signs the arrest warrants and changes just as he did for his mother, not knowing what they say. Cersei has Qyburn send for Jaime, as only he can get her out of this. Qyburn points out that with only one hand, Jaime is not likely to be the best champion, but Cersei doesn't care. Either he will save her from this, or they will leave this world just as they came into it, together.

In Jaime, Edmure Tully hands over Riverrun, just as he promised Jaime he would, allowing Jaime to take Riverrun without loss of life or property. However, Tully did allow his uncle, Blackfish, to escape. He raised the water gate about three feet, just enough for the man to swim out under the waterline and down the river. Jaime mounts a search for Blackfish, but comes up empty handed. Jaime is worried that Blackfish is not done fighting, and that he will return at the head of some bandit army. Jaime keeps his promises to Tully, allowing his bannermen to either go free or join the wall, and not harming any of his household. Only Tully himself and his family will be taken hostage, and they will be treated nicely at King's Landing. Now that the siege is over, pretty much everyone else is gone, leaving Lord Eammon and Jaime and their men alone at Riverrun. When Jaime wakes on the day of his leaving, he finds that winter has come and brought snow. Qyburn's letter is brought to him, and he reads Cersei's words. The courier has read the letter, and asks if Jaime will answer. Jaime says no and hands the letter to his squire to throw in the fire.

In Samwell, on their trip up the river toward Oldtown, Sam and the crew of the Cinnamon Wind encounter several Iron Born longboats, but always manages to either outrun or out shoot them. When they arrive at Oldtown, Sam heads straight to the Citadel. When he asks to see the Seneschal, he is left to cool his heels on a bench. Sam sits for several hours, watching many others get in to see the Seneschal, even those who came after Sam. Sam doses off, and wakes to find a young man sitting beside him. He introduces himself as the Sphinx, and tells Sam that he'll wait there forever unless he pays the man a penny. When Alleras the Sphinx asks Sam what brings him to the Citadel, Sam tells Alleras the entire story. Alleras takes him to see Archmaester Marywn the Mage. Sam tells Marywn just as he told Alleras, the story of Maester Aemon. Marywn tells Sam that he already knows most of this, and that he will go to Slaver Bay to teach the girl himself. He tells Sam that the maesters of the citadel are building a world with no room for sorcery or dragons. This is why they sent Aemon to the Wall, instead of making him an archmaester. Aemon was a Dragon, and therefore not fit to be trusted by the Grey Sheep, as Marywn calls them. It is Marywn who has made the obsidian candle burn, and he has used it to see things. Alleras admits that the archmaester saw Sam's coming, and sent him to collect Sam. Marywn tells Sam to tell the other maesters that he wants to become a maester, and to forge his chain as quickly as possible, as the Wall will likely have need of him sooner rather than later. He then leaves for the docks, and the Cinnamon Wind, on which he will sail to Slaver Bay. Sam will bunk with Pate under the raven rookery.



Chapters 43 through 46 Analysis

In Brienne, Brienne's fevered dreams feature the dead. The Hound and the outlaws who kidnapped her and Jaime visit her many times, as does Nimble Dick. They are all dead, and they torment her. The Hound threatens to hang her. In one dream, Brienne remembers being twelve, and her father arranging her marriage to a knight. The knight arrives, but instead of greeting her as she was taught, she accidentally bites her tongue off. Brienne spits the tongue at the young knight's feet, and he turns and leaves. In her dream it is Jaime, and he says that he has seen more beautiful boars, and that the flower is all that she will ever get from him. Brienne tries to beg Jaime to come back to her, but she can not do so without a tongue.

In Cersei, Cersei had planned to falsely accuse several people of having sex with Margaery. She knows that the young queen has at least one lover, she just doesn't know who. The loss of maidenhead and the Moon Tea will be all the evidence she needs to prove Margaery a traitor, but she must still get it started some other way. Her plan backfires on her. The Kettleblack man does confess to having sex with Margaery and two of her cousins, but they do not take into consideration the true nature of the new High Septon. Instead of confining the young knight comfortably, then returning him to Cersei's custody when she asks for it, the High Septon has had the young man whipped. Under the lash, Kettleblack has confessed the truth of everything. Cersei gave the Septon his army, and it is this army that confines Cersei in the end. Cersei gave the Septon the power to try people and administer his own justice, and it is this court and justice that Cersei must now face. The old king had taken this power from the Sept for a reason, and now Cersei has learned first hand why.

In Jaime, on the night before Jaime leaves, he has a dream. He is back at the High Sept standing his vigil over his father when Cersei comes to him. In the dream, it is not Cersei, but some other sister. Jaime remembers her vaguely, but her identity is not revealed to the reader. Jaime realizes that it must be a dream, but this girl does tell him that it is not. She tells him to look at his hand. In his dreams, Jaime always has both hands, but in this dream he has a stump. The girl tells him that we all dream of what we want and can not have. She asks Jaime if he truly knew his father. Tywin wanted his son to be a great knight and his daughter to be queen. When Jaime responds that he is a knight and that Cersei is queen, this other, unidentified sister leaves. Jaime calls out to her to stay, but she pays him no more attention.

In Samwell, Sam is unsure what to do with Gilly. He does not want just leave her in Oldtown, now that war has come there, and he is unsure about leaving her at his father's keep alone when his father and his father's men leave for Hightower to fight. Finally, Sam decides to take her to his father's keep himself, and then if he doesn't like it there, he can simply take her back to Oldtown with him. He is worried about their relationship. He knows that the longer he allows it to go, the harder it will be to leave her. Sam decides that if things don't work out at his mother's house, he will have to hide her and try to keep her a secret from the maesters at the Citadel.



Characters

Cersei Lannister

Cersei Lannister is the daughter of Tywin Lannister. She is the queen regent and rules in King's Landing until her son Tommen comes of age. When Cersei was a young girl, she went to see a maegi, Maggy the Frog. The old sorceress foretold her marriage to the king, Robert Baratheon. The Frog also foretold that King Robert would have sixteen children, which he did. He had sixteen bastard children, siring none with his queen Cersei. Cersei's own children were all fathered by her twin brother Jaime. Cersei and Jaime keep the true lineage of their children a secret, as young Tommen's only claim to the throne is that Robert was his father.

Cersei is as beautiful as she is wealthy and powerful, but she feels trapped by her father's shadow. Cersei looked up to her father and wishes that people would recognize her as the true fruit of his loins. However, unlike Tywin Lannister, Cersei does not have the skills and qualifications to rule. Despite murdering and conspiring to gain her position as Queen Regent, she does not hold it long. Cersei surrounds herself with other people who are unqualified to rule. By plotting against her son's older wife, Margaery Tyrell, Cersei seals her own doom. In order to try to save the kingdom some money, Cersei grants the High Septon the right to once again raise the Warrior's Sons, thus arming the faith. In return, the faith would forgive the crown their debt of almost one million dragons, and bless Tommen as king. However, when Cersei plots to use the faith against Margaery, it backfires on her, and ends in her arrest by the High Septon, and imprisonment in the High Sept. Maggy the Frog also foresaw that Cersei would be killed by her younger brother. She had always thought that the old woman meant Tyrion, but when it becomes clear that it is Jaime who is the death of Cersei, when he refuses to champion her against the faith.

Jaime Lannister

Jaime Lannister is known throughout the realm as the Kingslayer and as Oathbreaker. Jaime is Cersei's twin, younger by only a few moments. He is also the father of all three of her children. Jaime and Cersei are much alike, until something terrible happens to Jaime. On the way to Maidenpool with Brienne, Jaime loses his sword hand defending Brienne from being raped by outlaws. As revenge for Tywin's leaving his side, King Aerys raises Jaime to the Kingsguard, thus robbing Tywin of his heir.

After Mad King Aerys opens the gates for Tywin Lannister, Jaime kills the king, and is found later sitting on the throne, with the king's blood dripping from his blade. He is known throughout the realm as the Kingslayer and as the Oathbreaker. Jaime may be the Kingslayer, but he truly does try to keep his oaths. Jaime swore never to attack a Stark or Tully again, and he doesn't. He also swore to return Eddard Stark and Caitlyn



Tully's children to Caitlyn, but when Jaime returned to Kingslanding, the Stark girls were already gone.

Jaime loves his sister, and would gladly be with her always, but he is more concerned with his honor than his own feelings, and refuses to play along with Cersei's dangerous political games. Jaime's guilt for his sins and his sense of honor, combined with Cersei's paranoia and resentment of anyone who does not immediately jump at her every word, cause the rift between the twins and former lovers to widen even more. By the time Cersei is imprisoned by the faith, Jaime is only looking for a way to rid himself of her machinations. Jaime refuses to answer Cersei's plea for help, and instead throws the letter in the fire.

Tywin Lannister

Tywin Lannister was a lion of a man. All of the people of King's Landing loved and respected him. Those who did not respect him at least feared him. He was the father of twins Cersei and Jaime, as well as the dwarf Tyrion. He loved his older two children, but hated Tyrion for his deformities and for causing the death of Tywin's wife. Tywin was the lord of Casterly Rock, Warden of the West, and the King's Hand. As the King's Hand, Tywin Lannister defended two kings, Mad King Aerys, and King Robert. When Mad King Aerys' paranoia drove him away, the king raised Jaime to Kingsguard to get back at Tywin. When Robert rebelled, Tywin stayed neutral until it looked as if Robert would succeed. At this point, Tywin returned to King's Landing. Aerys, who thought his old Hand had returned to help him, opened the gates to Tywin and his men, thus leaving King's Landing open for them to sack. Tywin may have been a ruthless man, but he was also an able ruler, unlike his daughter who succeeds him.

Tyrion Lannister

The youngest of Tywin's children, Tyrion was also the outcast. He was born a dwarf, and his mother died in childbirth. Tyrion grew up to be cantankerous and cunning, probably the result of his father's shame. Tywin hated Tyrion for both his deformities and the death of his mother. Due to a prophesy, when Joffery dies, Cersei blames Tyrion for poisoning him. Tyrion is imprisoned in the black cells below King's Landing. Jaime, who feels pity for his little brother, frees him from his cells. After being freed, Tyrion the Imp, as he is called, uses the castle's secret passages to sneak into his father's chambers. He kills his own father, then escapes King's Landing.

Brienne, Sword Maiden of Tarth

Brienne is the only heir to Lord Selwyn of Evenfall and thus the heiress to the entire island of Tarth. She is freakishly big for a woman, standing eye to eye with many men. She has an ugly face, and is built almost more like a man than a woman. She does not want to be a wife, and aspires to be a knight. Brienne manages to win a position in King Renly's guard, but is unable to save him from being murdered. After the king's death,



many believe that Brienne herself is the murderer, and those who do not believe that still blame her for his death. It is simply unnatural to most, as a woman should be at home raising children, not roaming around the battlefield in armor, playing at swords. Despite this common view, Brienne is a very skilled and well trained, as well as strong, swordswoman. The fact that most men will always underestimate her only serves to make her more dangerous. After the death of her king, Brienne fled and entered the service of Caitlyn Stark. After Jaime Lannister agreed to free Caitlyn's daughters, Brienne was sent to escort him to King's Landing. On the way, they are captured by the Brave Companions, a group of outlaws who cut off Jaime's sword hand and force Brienne to fight a bear. During their captivity together, Jaime recognizes her skills with a sword, and eventually sends her out on a quest to find Sansa Stark. Brienne leaves out in search of Sansa, but ends up being captured again and hanged. In the end, Brienne wishes that she had taken the advice of so many others. She wishes that she would have returned home to her father and been the heir and daughter that he wanted.

Samwell Tarly

Samwell Tarly is the son of Lord Randy Tarly, commander at Maidenpool. When Sam was a child, his only desire was to go to the Citadel train to become a maester. Randy, however, forbade this, saying that no Tarly would ever wear the chains of servitude. His father's mistreatment caused Sam to grow up a coward. Sam joined the Night Watch of the Wall, and has honed his archery skills. Despite being well known as a craven, Sam does manage to slay some of the Others beyond the Wall, and becomes known as the Slayer. The Lord Commander of the Wall, Jon Snow, was raised up to that position only by the help of Sam. In return, Snow sends Sam back to Oldtown to train at the Citadel, only to return after he has forged his maester's chain. Sam does not want to go, as he is scared of the sea, but he is not given a choice. On the trip, Sam betrays his oath by going to bed with Gilly. Sam is eaten up by grief and guilt, but Gilly assures him that all will be alright. Sam loves Gilly, and would take her as his wife, but he refuses to forsake his oath.

Maester Aemon

Aemon Targaryen the Dragon was next in line to be king. Instead, he joined the Citadel to be a maester, giving the crown to his younger brother. When Aemon dies at one hundred two, he was thought to be the last living Dragon. The Citadel sent him off to the Wall instead of making him an Archmaester simply because he was a Dragon. The world that the Citadel is building has no room for magic, dragons, or sorcerers. Master Aemon realizes the meaning of a vital prophesy just before his death, and sends Sam to the Citadel to tell of it. Aemon is not the last of the Dragons.



Sansa Stark

Sansa Stark is the daughter of Eddard Stark. After her family is cast out and many of them killed as traitors, Sansa manages to escape King's Landing with the help of Lord Petyr Baelish, the former master of coins for King's Landing. They flee to the Vale and the Eyrie, and Petyr marries Sansa's aunt. Sansa poses as Baelish's bastard daughter, Alayne, and waits for her marriage to Harold Hardyng, which Baelish promises will be her chance to announce her true identity and regain her birthright.

Tommen Baratheon

Tommen Baratheon is the son of Cersei and Jaime Lannister, though he and everyone else believes that his father was King Robert Baratheon. Tommen is crowned king at age eight, after his older brother's assassination. He knows nothing of ruling the realm, and is far more concerned with playing games and his kittens. There is one thing about being king that Tommen enjoys, however, and that is stamping papers with his seal. The young boy dutifully stamps any paper that his mother puts in front of him. This backfires on his mother, though. After Cersei's arrest, Tommen continues to stamp any paper that his council puts in front of him, unwittingly authorizing his own mother's arrest.

Margaery Tyrell

Margaery Tyrell is the daughter of Mace Tyrell, lord of Hightower. Margaery was wed first to King Renly. Renly died soon after their wedding, and Margaery claimed that they never consummated, as the king was far too drunk. Immediately after, she is married to Cersei's son, Joff. When Joff dies, Margaery is married to Tommen, the new king. Margaery is supposedly a maiden, but when Pycelle confesses to brewing the Moon Tea for her, Cersei realizes that the young queen must have a lover. It is treason to be with another man when married to the king, so Cersei has Margaery arrested.

Robert Arryn

Young Lord Robert Arryn is the only surviving child of Jon Arryn and is the heir to the Eyrie and the Vale. He is sickly, and often ill, and breaks out in shakes anytime something excites him. He believes that Sansa Stark is his stepsister Alayne. He is stunted not only physically, but mentally too, and is not even weaned at age six. After his mother's death, Robert's condition only worsens.

Myrcella Baratheon

Myrcella is the daughter of Jaime and Cersei Lannister, though she is thought to be the daughter of Robert Baratheon. Myrcella is sent to Dorne as a hostage to ensure the Martells support the Lannisters in the war. While in Dorne, Myrcella is betrothed to a



young prince of Dorne. Her kingsguard, Arys Oakheart, along with Alaine, daughter of Prince Doran sneak off with her. The three meet four more companions in the desert and plot to raise Myrcella up as queen. After their plot fails utterly, Myrcella sustains great injuries to her face, even losing one ear.

Aeron Greyjoy

Aeron Greyjoy is the youngest brother of Balon Greyjoy, the late king of the Iron Born. He is a head priest of the Drowned God and it is the devout Aeron Greyjoy that demands the Kingsmoot to determine a new king.

Euron Greyjoy, the Crows Eye

Euron Greyjoy was banished from the Iron Isles after betraying his brother Victarion by impregnating his wife. Euron goes off reaving for several years, and returns the day of their brother's death. Euron shows up to the kingsmoot with tales of dragons and gold, and wins the crown from his people. Euron mounts an attack against the seven kingdoms, intent on becoming the king of all of the lands, not just the Iron Isles.

Victarian Greyjoy

Victarian Greyjoy is a great sea captain and brother of the former king Balon. Victarian almost became king of the Iron Isles, but lost to his brother Euron because his niece decided to make her own bid for queen instead of throwing her voice with him. Victarian despises his brother for his betrayal. Euron bedded Victarian's wife, and got her pregnant. When Victarian discovered this betrayal, he beat his wife to death with his fists, and would have done the same to his brother had Euron not been banished instead.

Doran Martell

Doran Martell is the prince of Dorne and guardian of Myrcella Baratheon. He is in his fifties and badly affected by gout. After his brother's death, Doran orders all of his nieces locked in a tower to prevent war. When his own daughter Alaine plots to raise Myrcella up as queen, Doran realizes that he may have to face the war that he wanted to avoid after all.



Objects/Places

The Hammerhorn

The Hammerhorn is the keep of Lord Gorold.

Maester

The maesters are healers and scholars who serve the nobles of Westeros.

Kingsmoot

The Kingsmoot is a ceremony in which the Iron Born choose the greatest and worthiest of their men and raise him up to be the new king.

Nagga's Ribs

This stone formation is said to be the remains of Nagga, the first and fiercest sea dragon.

Squishers

The Squishers are monsters from Crackclaw point that steal children and eat them. They look like men from a distance, but are really fish and men hybrids, with white fish bellies and rows of sharp, green teeth.

Citadel

The Citadel in Oldtown is the castle of the maesters where they train and earn their chains and also store their knowledge.

Maester's Chain

At the end of each stage of training, a link is formed of some metal. At the end of a maester's training, he has a chain made up of links of several types of metal. The chain is worn around the neck as a symbol of their training and servitude.

King's Landing

King's Landing is the royal city and capitol of Westeros.



King's Hand

The King's Hand is the king's own bodyguard and chief protector.

Kingsguard

The Kingsguard is a special group of knights who guard the king.



Themes

Honor

Honor is a major theme in *A Feast for Crows*. Many of the characters in this story are driven by Honor. The Honor of the Kingsguard is supposed to be unparalleled. For some, it is. For others, it is not. The Kettleblacks are not particularly honorable and are willing to do pretty much anything that they are ordered to do. However, Ser Loras appears to be very honorable, and Ser Arys Oakheart is a shining example of honor. Samwell Tarly, coward though he sees himself, is actually one of the most honorable characters in this story. Jaime Lannister, for all his past crimes, becomes increasingly concerned for his honor in *A Feast for Crows*.

For every character driven by honor, there are several more who are marked by a complete lack of honor. Tyrion uses his escape as an opportunity to murder his own father. Littlefinger continues to plot and scheme in secret, using his cunning to defeat his foes and manipulate everyone. Qyburn is glad to dabble in the dark arts, and to torture Cersei's prisoners until they confess what ever they want to hear. Queen Regent Cersei herself is perhaps one of the least honorable characters in the whole story. Cersei has multiple people killed in secret to consolidate her own power, and while she claims that everything she does is for her children, it is clear that Cersei is only concerned with maintaining her own power. For all that Jaime tries to atone for his past sins, they are still there. He has killed one king and committed treason against another, despite being raised to the kingsguard. The rest of the Seven Kingdoms is rife with hedge knights, outlaws, and broken men, who are all more than willing to steal, kill, and rape, having no concern for honor.

Betrayal

Betrayal is the driving force behind the actions of many of the less honorable characters in this story, as well as a few of the otherwise honorable ones. In *A Feast for Crows*, it would seem that everyone has at some point betrayed someone else, and in turn has been betrayed by someone else. Cersei feels that she has been abandoned and betrayed by almost all of her friends and ministers, when in fact it is she who betrays everyone who ever makes the mistake of trusting her. In her quest for vengeance, Cersei will stop at nothing to make sure to destroy those who she feels have betrayed her. Jaime betrayed his king by slaying him in his own throne room, then betrays yet another queen by bedding his wife and fathering three children by her. Jaime is in turn betrayed by his own sister and former lover when she forsakes his love for the attentions of several other men. Eddard Stark, who has discovered that Cersei's children are not the children of the king, is betrayed by his own daughters, who tell Cersei of his plans to rebel. In turn, Cersei decides to have the girls put to death. Arya Stark spends her days dreaming of her vengeance, and praying for the death of everyone who has betrayed her. Sansa hides in plain sight with her aunt, posing as



Littlefinger's daughter Alayne. When Lysa sees Littlefinger kissing Sansa, she becomes jealous and tries to kill her own niece. Littlefinger convinces her not to, then throws her off the cliff, and blames it on Marrison. While it is not actually proven in this story, Littlefinger's entire career seems to have been one betrayal after another.

Intrigue

Intrigue seems to be the favored method of playing the Game of Thrones. In *A Feast for Crows*, most of the powerful characters and many of the not so powerful ones resort to intrigue to advance their goals. Qyburn, as master of whispers, leads Cersei's spy network and tortures her prisoners for information. Cersei uses her cunning to wring vital information from Maester Pycelle, allowing her to hatch her plot against Margaery, in which she even goes so far as to have sex with a young knight to convince him to lie about Margaery to the High Septon. Cersei attempts to gain power from the faith by secretly restoring their right to administer justice and raise an army, though that backfires terribly on her. Jaime secretly sends Brienne off to find Caitlyn Tully's and Eddard Stark's daughters, going behind Cersei's back to have Tommen stamp an official letter for Brienne that ensures that anyone must cooperate with her. Jaime conspires with his brother to release the Imp, resulting in their father's death, a secret that he must never reveal to Cersei. Arys Oakheart and Arianne Martell conspire to steal away with Myrcella Baratheon and raise her up to be queen to replace King Tommen. Littlefinger has secretly promised Sansa Stark's hand in marriage to a boy who will end up being the heir to the Vale, which he promises will win Sansa her birthright back, but it may be that he only wants her for himself. In the end, it is revealed that there is intrigue even in the Citadel, where the maesters conspire to keep Aemon the Dragon from attaining any high rank, and a secret group of maesters work against the rest to restore the Dragons to the throne. For most of these characters, their intrigues ultimately cost them their lives and or their dignity. However, for a select few, their intrigues seem to pay off, and those players of the Game of Thrones advance, while the others are swept off the board.



Style

Point of View

The point of view of this novel is subjective third person or limited third-person perspective with multiple view points. In total, there are thirteen point of view characters. Twelve of these characters are main characters, central to the storyline. One character is the focus of the prologue, a single chapter that is unrelated to the rest of the story, and only serves to foreshadow the intrigue to come and set the scene.

The narrator follows one of these characters in each chapter and only knows the personal thoughts and observations of that one character at a time, which allows the author to build several plot twists and a great deal of intrigue and suspense. Most of the story is told through exposition in the form of the memories and observations of the point of view characters, and the author does employ some descriptive world building techniques. Most of the character interactions have two sides. The public side is carried out through dialogue between the characters. Most of the private, personal side is told through private thoughts of the point of view character and in the sarcastic way that many of the characters speak.

Setting

A Feast For Crows is set in a fictitious world that mirrors several regions of our own. King's Landing and Oldtown, as well as the Vale and most of the area around there are very similar to medieval Europe. Dorne puts one in mind of the Middle East, and the Iron Born are very similar to the Vikings. In Westeros, Seasons seem to last far longer than normal. Physically, the land is divided into various regions that represent the extremes of climate. The area around King's Landing is temperate forests and plains, sliced by rivers and sits between mountains and the sea. To the north, the land gets rougher and the climate gets colder, until finally the kingdom ends at the Wall, a great wall of ice that defines the northern border. South of King's Landing is Dorne, which is mostly desert. Most of Westeros is fairly mountainous, and it is surrounded completely by the sea. The Iron Isles are a harsh, rocky set of Islands that are home to the equally rough Iron Born. The Iron Isles are constantly at the mercy of the sea and storms. Braavos is another Island kingdom, a large city made up of hundreds of islands of varying size.

Language and Meaning

The language of this novel is often stiff and formal, as many of the characters are royal, or at least of noble birth. The nobility speak to each other with stiffly formal courtesy, but often the sarcasm is so strong that no amount of formal courtesy can mask the speaker's true feelings. The low born use very base language, full of misspellings and profanity. There is much profanity in this novel, with even the nobility resorting to



profanity and threats to show their feelings for each other. The language is much as it would have been in our own world during the middle ages. By having the two distinctly different castes use distinctly different language, the author effectively draws a large rift between the two sets of people, demonstrating the lack of education amongst the common folk, as well as the nobles' disdain for them. The author also marks another difference with language. The honorable members of the kingsguard, the faith, and the honorable nobles rarely use profanity, and more often tend toward and older English, using words like 'shall' instead of 'will', and 'nonce' instead of 'for now' or 'this time'. On the other hand, the less honorable characters, such as the outlaws, broken men, and crueler nobles, tend to rely heavily on profanity and threats of murder, torture, and rape.

Structure

This novel spans a period of probably less than year and takes up nine hundred and seventy-six pages. There are a total of forty six chapters, which are not numbered. Instead they are named for the point of view character on which the chapter focuses. This does slow the pace somewhat, and makes it hard to tell what chapter the reader is on, as there are several chapters for each character, most of which are simply titled with the character's name. The prologue actually only serves to set the scene and foreshadow some of the intrigue to follow, as most of the characters in the prologue are never heard from again.

There are actually several plots to this story, which are recounted from the view point of only half of the characters. Another book is to be written telling the same story from the point of view of the other half of the characters in this series. There has been a terrible war, the war of five kings, which has left a power vacuum in Westeros. After the death of last Dragon king, several kings have taken the throne, only to live very short lives, while other kings are raised up in secret and prepare to make their bids on the Iron Throne. Queen Cersei, the widow of King Robert Baratheon, sets her sons on the throne, one after the other, and sets herself up as Queen Regent and rules in their names. Cersei's only desire is to solidify her own power in the land. Two of Robert Baratheon's brothers have made a claim to the throne as well, and one of them is mounting an attack on the Seven Kingdoms. Stanis has just as much claim on the throne as any of Cersei's children, but so does the Dragon girl from Slaver's Bay, who is the daughter of the last Dragon King. The Iron born have a new king of their own, and are now openly attacking the rest of the Seven Kingdoms, in a bid to take all of Westeros. The Tyrells intend to take the throne through the marriage of Margaery Tyrell to the young king, becoming royalty by marriage, and Lord Petyr Baelish is plotting to set up the heir of Jon Arryn as king, with Sansa Stark as his wife.

In addition to the Game of Thrones, there is also Brienne's quest to find Sansa Stark as well as Samwell's mission to the Citadel. Arya Stark hides out in Braavos and becomes Cat of the Canals, a young novice in the House of Black and White. Her only desires are to avenge her family and punish House Lannister for their betrayal of the Starks and Tullys.



The pace of this novel tends for the most part to be very slow. The Prologue seems to set up one plot line, but then it is abandoned immediately for a different set of plot lines with the first chapter. Each chapter shifts view point characters, and with them often plot line and language style. The language itself, which tends to be stiff and dry, certainly does not speed up the pace any, nor does the sheer size of the novel. Despite its slow pace, toward the end the novel does pick up a bit, as the various plot lines start to come together and the action tends more to the climatic. In the end, the story leaves several plot lines unresolved as cliffhangers for future books.



Quotes

"Have courage. We came from the sea, and to the sea we must return. Open your mouth and drink deep of god's blessing. Fill your lungs with water, that you may die and be reborn. It does no good to fight" (The Prophet, p. 23).

"All Dorne will howl, I only pray Lord Tywin hears them in King's Landing, so he might know what a loyal friend he has in Sunspear" (The Captain of the Guards, p. 64).

"The Imp...his cell's open, Your Grace...no sign of him anywhere" (Cersei, p. 78).

"You are not the only hunter in the woods. I seek for Sansa Stark as well" (Brienne, p. 94).

"Your grandfather would want you to look a proper king at his wake. We will not appear at the Great Sept wet and bedraggled" (Cersei, p. 140).

"You did not kill him. I did. Tyrion might have loosed the crossbow bolt that slew him, but I loosed Tyrion" (Jaime, p. 165).

"We had one king, then five. Now all I see are crows, squabbling over the corpse of Westeros" (The Kraken's Daughter, p. 237).

"Ours is a harsh land, and poor, yet not without its beauties. It grieves us that you have seen no more of Dorne than Sunspear, but I fear that neither you nor your princess would be safe beyond these walls. We Dornish are a hot - blooded people, quick to anger and slow to forgive. It would gladden my heart if I could assure you that the Sand Snakes were alone in wanting war, but I will not tell you lies, ser. You have heard my smallfolk in the streets, crying out for me to call my spears. Half my lords agree with them, I fear" (The Soiled Knight, p. 266-267).

"Crackbones fought a dragon too, but he didn't need no magic sword. He just tied its neck in a knot, so every time it breathed fire it roasted its own arse" (Brienne, p. 402).

"Then you have come to the wrong place. It is not for you to say who shall live and who shall die. That gift belongs to Him of Many Faces. We are but his servants, sworn to do his will" (Arya, p. 445).

"I like it not, but it seems you have your year. Best use it well, my lord. Not all of us are fooled" (Alayne, p. 488).

"No mother should outlive their children, and no captain should outlive his ship" (Cersei, p. 492).

"His lordship informed me that he had no further need of my sword, or my insolence. It amounts to the same thing. Henceforth I shall enjoy the adventuresome life of a hedge



knight...though if we do find Sansa Stark, I imagine we will be well rewarded" (Brienne, p. 525).

"Not this time Sam. I dreamed...in the black of night a man asks all the questions he dare not ask by daylight. For me, these past years, only one question has remained. Why would the gods take my eyes and my strength, yet condemn me to linger on so long, frozen and forgotten? What use could they have for an old done man like me?" (Samwell, p. 545).

"They like the smell of roses but have no love for lions. My sister would be wise to take note of that" (Jaime, p. 562).

"The Warrior will defend us, not this fat boy king" (Cersei, p. 594).

"The Drowned God raised him up, let the Drowned God cast him down" (The Reaver, p. 616).

"You are not wrong, but my folly is behind me, ser. I have asked the Father Above to show me the way, and he has. I am renouncing this lordship and this wife. Hardstone is welcome to the both of them, if he lies. On the morrow I will return to King's Landing and swear my sword to the new High Septon and the Seven. I mean to take vows and join the Warrior's Sons" (Jaime, p. 653).

"Your Dornishman did not lie, but I fear you did not understand him. You are chasing the wrong wolf, my lady. Eddard Stark had two daughters. It was the other one that Sandor Clegane made off with, the younger one" (Brienne, p. 668).

"It will take half a year or more to starve Dragonstone into submission, as Lord Paxter means to do. Give me the command, Your Grace. The castle will be yours within a fortnight if I have to tear it down with my bare hands" (Cersei, p. 680).

"The siege drags on. The Blackfish sits inside the castle, we sit outside in our camps. Bloody boring, if you want the truth" (Jaime, p. 696).

"The Nine Free Cities are the daughters of Valyria that was, but Braavos is the bastard child who ran away from home. We are a mongrel folk, the sons of slaves and whores and thieves. Our forebears came from half a hundred lands to this place of refuge, to escape dragonlords who had enslaved them. Half a hundred gods came with them, but there is one god all of them shared in common" (Cat of the Canals, p. 722).

"He was a good man, no. He was a great man. A maester of the Citadel, chained and sworn, and Sworn Brother of the Night's Watch, ever faithful. When he was born they named him for a hero who had died too young, but though he lived a long long time, his own life was no less heroic. No man was wiser, or gentler, or kinder. At the Wall, a dozen lords commander came and went during his years of service, but he was always there to counsel them. He counseled kings as well. He could have been a king himself, but when they offered him the crown he told them they should give it to his younger brother. How many men would do that? He was the blood of the dragon, but now his fire



has gone out. He was Aemon Targaryen. And now his watch is over" (Samwell, p. 740-741).

"Your Grace, Dragonstone is yours" (Cersei, p. 754).

"It is being common-born that is dangerous, when the great lords play their game of thrones" (Brienne, p. 782).

"A siege is deadly dull. I wanted to see this stump of yours and hear whatever excuses you cared to offer up for your latest enormities. They were feebler than I'd hoped. You always disappoint, Kingslayer" (Jaime, p. 805).

"My son has been betrayed, Margaery has a lover. That is high treason, punishable by death" (Cersei, p. 823).

"You would have crowned Myrcella queen, to raise a rebellion against her brother. Instead of an ear, she would have lost her life" (The Princess in the Tower, p. 855).



Topics for Discussion

Discuss Honor. Is honor important to the people of Westeros? Who acts with honor, and who lacks it? How does honor or the lack of it effect the actions of the characters?

Discuss pride. What characters in this novel are full of pride? What are the consequences of their pride?

What is the point of view of this novel? What did the author accomplish by choosing this point of view? Is the narrator reliable?

Discuss betrayal. Who is betrayed and who does the betraying in this story? How do these betrayals effect the characters?

Discuss intrigue. What is intrigue? How does intrigue fit into the plot of this story? Give some examples of intrigue from the story.

In this story, there are a few characters accused of kinslaying and kingslaying. Explain these two concepts. How do these titles effect the characters upon whom they are bestowed?

What role does the Citadel and its maesters play in this story? Do the maesters have any ulterior motives?

What is the main plot of this novel? What, if any, are the subplots?

What role does the faith play in this novel? Does that role remain static or does it change? If so, how?

Discuss the social structure of the society of Westeros. How do the nobles and the commoners relate? Is it possible to move from class to class?

Discuss the language of this novel. How does the author choose to express his characters and build his world? Is the language static throughout the novel, or does it change?