

A Game of Thrones Study Guide

A Game of Thrones by George R. R. Martin

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Plot Summary

A Game of Thrones is set in medieval times with a knights-and-ladies sort of kingdom, and a wider, exotic world around it. This world, where seasons last for years, is ineptly ruled and a struggle for power is about to erupt. Over the sea, the heir of the previous dynasty, Viserys Targaryen, is struggling to win back his crown by marrying his sister Daenerys off to a powerful nomad chieftain. In the north the Starks are reluctantly drawn into a web of politics and plots. Further north, the ubiquitous otherworldly forces of evil are gathering. As the story expands, the subplots branch out and intertwine with increasing complexity, and the reader is drawn deeper and deeper into the tale. Martin's story is intricate, gripping and original, but his greatest strengths are his memorable characters and a rich, assured writing style.

Eddard Stark, Lord of Winterfell and the North, is on the way home from the execution of a man of the Night's Watch who betrayed his vows and fled from the Wall. His sons Robb and Bran, his illegitimate son Jon Snow, and his ward Theon Greyjoy all attend. On the road, Robb finds a dead direwolf killed by the antlers of a stag, which gave birth to five pups before it died. Robb and his brothers ask to keep them and Eddard consents. Unexpectedly, Jon finds a sixth pup lying separately nearby, an albino runt with white fur and red eyes. Jon claims this one for himself.

A short time later King Robert Baratheon travels to Winterfell with his court and many retainers, including his wife, Queen Cersei of House Lannister, and their children. The Queen's twin brother, Ser Jaime Lannister of the Kingsguard, and their younger brother Tyrion also accompany the group. Robert, who grew up as a foster brother to Eddard, asks Eddard to become the new Hand of the King after the death of the previous office holder, Lord Jon Arryn. Eddard reluctantly agrees, despite hearing a rumor that the Queen's family had Jon Arryn killed. Eddard leaves to take his post with his daughters, leaving his wife behind to care for one of their children who was injured after witnessing Jaime and Queen Cersei participating in inappropriate behavior.

Jon Snow elects to travel north to the Wall to join the Night's Watch. Tyrion, eager to see the fabled construction for himself, accompanies Jon. At the Wall Jon finds the Watch is beset with problems. A new King-beyond-the-Wall has arisen in the northern lands to rally the wildlings to his banner. This man, Mance Rayder, was once a brother of the Watch before fleeing to join the wildlings. Jon also learns the Watch is grievously under strength, mustering barely a thousand men to cover the three hundred miles of the Wall, and its manpower is now made up of murderers and criminals who chose the Wall over execution or imprisonment.

After Eddard leaves for the south, an attempt is made on Bran's life. Catelyn realizes that Bran must have seen something, his injuries were inflicted deliberately, and the would-be murderers are trying to cover their tracks. Catelyn learns the assassin is Tyrion Lannister. Traveling north, Catelyn and her party encounter Tyrion by chance in an inn and take him captive to the Eyrie, where he is placed on trial. Tyrion chooses trial by battle and his champion, Bronn, wins freedom for him.



During training for the Night's Watch, Jon and many of the other young men are bullied by the master-at-arms, Alliser Thorne, but Jon concocts a plan for them to stand up to him. Through this experience Jon wins the friendship of Samwell Tarly, and Maester Aemon. Jon is eventually promoted to the status of full brother of the Night's Watch, but is dismayed that, instead of being sent to the rangers, he has been made a steward, servant to the Lord Commander of the Watch, Jeor Mormont. Sam points out this is not an insult. Instead, the Commander is going to keep Jon close, as fathers keep their heirs nearby. Jon is being groomed for command.

In the capital at King's Landing, Eddard investigates Jon Arryn's death and learns Jon Arryn and King Robert's brother, Lord Stannis Baratheon, discovered that King Robert's three children were actually the products of an incestuous liaison between Queen Cersei and her twin brother Jaime. Rather than arrest the Queen for her indiscretions, Eddard instead offers Cersei the chance to flee. Before this can happen, King Robert dies while hunting and Cersei's eldest son Joffrey is proclaimed King before Eddard can pass the crown to Stannis, Robert's true heir. When Eddard tries to right this wrong, he is accused of treason. Eddard reluctantly agrees to sign a confession in return for his daughters' lives and the chance to go into exile on the Wall. Instead, Joffrey has Eddard executed.

After the death of King Robert, a civil war erupts. Robb Stark leads an army of northmen into the Riverlands to support Lord Hoster Tully, whose forces came under attack by Lord Tywin Lannister after Catelyn takes Tyrion prisoner. Riverrun, the Tully stronghold, is besieged by an army under Jaime Lannister, while another large Lannister army sits south of the River Trident to prevent Robb's advance. Unexpectedly, Robb wins the support of House Frey, allowing him to detach his cavalry and cross the Green Fork while his infantry carries on to the Trident. Tywin, joined by the liberated Tyrion, defeats the Stark footmen before learning Robb has outmaneuvered him. Shortly afterwards, Robb's forces surprise and capture Jaime Lannister before smashing the Lannister army at the Whispering Wood outside Riverrun. Tywin falls back on the strong castle of Harrenhal and orders Tyrion to go to King's Landing and help Joffrey. Lord Renly Baratheon is declared King of Westeros, becoming the second of the war's five kings. Robb Stark becomes the third, when he is proclaimed the King in the North.

While Jon and Sam say their vows just beyond the Wall, Jon's dog, Ghost, returns with evidence that the bodies of two of Benjen Stark's men are nearby. The bodies are carried back to Castle Black, where they come back to life and attack the Commander's Tower, including Mormont. Jon succeeds in killing them by burning them. Shaken, Mormont resolves to lead the Watch beyond the Wall in strength to test Mance Rayder's strength. Although news of his father's death causes Jon to doubt his calling, he decides his place is with the Watch. Mormont takes this time to pass down the Valyrian-steel sword of House Mormont, Longclaw, to Jon.

In the Free City of Pentos, Magister Illyrio Mopatis and the exiled Prince Viserys Targaryen conspire to sell Viserys' thirteen-year-old sister Daenerys in marriage to Khal Drogo of the Dothraki. Drogo commands a clan of forty thousand mounted warriors whom Viserys plans to use to reclaim his homeland. Unexpectedly, Daenerys and



Drogo find love as they journey east into the vast grasslands of the Dothraki Sea, and Daenerys becomes pregnant with a son. Viserys becomes angry about how long he must wait before Drogo decides to invade Westeros and, in a drunken rage, insults Drogo grievously. Drogo decides to crown him right there—with molten gold. Daenerys picks up her brother's quest to reclaim the Iron Throne, but Drogo remains reluctant. The tables turn when a Westerosi assassin nearly kills Daenerys and their unborn child; a furious Drogo agrees to invade Westeros.

During a raid on the peaceful Lhazareen, Drogo takes a wound which becomes infected. Drogo dies and soon after Daenerys loses her unborn son to the sorcery of a Lhazareen witch. Daenerys has the witch burned in a pyre. While the witch is being burned she places the eggs in the fire. Incredibly, the eggs hatch, and Daenerys Targaryen, the Stormborn, becomes mother to the first three dragons seen in the world for one hundred and sixty years.



Prologue

Prologue Summary

A Game of Thrones is set in medieval times with a knights-and-ladies sort of kingdom, and a wider, exotic world around it. This world, where seasons last for years, is ineptly ruled and a struggle for power is about to erupt. Over the sea, the heir of the previous dynasty, Viserys Targaryen, is struggling to win back his crown by marrying his sister Daenerys off to a powerful nomad chieftain. In the north the Starks are reluctantly drawn into a web of politics and plots. Further north, the ubiquitous otherworldly forces of evil are gathering. As the story expands, the subplots branch out and intertwine with increasing complexity, and the reader is drawn deeper and deeper into the tale. Martin's story is intricate, gripping and original, but his greatest strengths are his memorable characters and a rich, assured writing style.

The Night Watch is a special organization, made up of men who have fallen from grace in society, such as thieves, disgraced knights, and beggars. The Night Watch's sole responsibility is to guard the Wall in the north, built centuries ago to protect against The Others when winter comes. The men wear all black and from the moment they say their vows, they cannot father any sons, nor take a wife. Three members are outside of the Wall chasing wildling raiders. Their scout, Will, spots the raiders' camp, but all the people appear dead. Will rushes back to tell the others and Ser Royce wants to see for himself. When they get to the camp all the bodies are gone yet their weapons are in the same exact spots. Ser Royce commands Will to climb a tree and when he does, he notices it gets noticeably colder. When he looks down he sees men crowded around Ser Royce, yet they do not seem like men because their bodies are covered in frost and their hands are black. Ser Royce pulls out his sword and attempts to fight but the men cut him down. When Will climbs back down to see if Ser Royce will live, he finds his body missing. Bewildered, he turns around looking for it, and is attacked by Ser Royce himself. Will dies.

Prologue Analysis

The prologue introduces us to the Night Watch and the Others. The Others are like modern day zombies, reanimated corpses who kill mindlessly. The Night Watch exists to protect the civilized world from these monsters, but the Night Watch itself is troubled due to the fact it is populated mostly by criminals. These criminals tend to have a difficult time getting along with one another, as shown by the commander of this small group who is a disgraced knight. This knight still believes himself to be superior to those under his command and treats them poorly, leading to the situation that causes his death. The reader is left with the impression these troubles run deep in the Night Watch and leaves the reader wondering how this troubled guard can help keep the civilized world safe if they cannot keep each other safe.

The author uses this prologue to setup the story of endless summers and winters, and the fear of winter. This fear, based on the plague of the Others, is important to the novel because the Night Watch will play an important part in the life of one of the characters. It is also important because it does show the reader how the seasons are unusual in this world, proving that the world in which this novel is set is different from the modern world, and is a world with its own unique rules and customs. This helps the reader to get a feel for the setting of the overall novel.



Chapter 1, Bran, Chapter 2, Catelyn, Chapter 3, Daenerys

Chapter 1, Bran, Chapter 2, Catelyn, Chapter 3, Daenerys Summary

A couple of days later, the Starks guard arrest a deserter from the Night Guard. Lord Eddard Stark executes the deserter with a sword called Ice, while his two sons, Bran and Robb, and his illegitimate son, Jon, watch. After the execution they are riding back to town when Robb finds a mother direwolf lying dead on the snow. Next to the mother are five direwolf pups. At first, Lord Stark does not want to keep the pups but then Jon speaks up, saying there are three female and two male pups. Jon claims this is a sign for the Starks since their symbol is the direwolf and Lord Stark has three daughters and two sons, excluding Jon. Lord Stark thinks it over and agrees to keep the pups. As they prepare to continue their journey, Jon hears a noise and goes to investigate. Jon finds an albino direwolf pup with red eyes that seems to have wandered away from the others. Jon decides to keep the pup as his own.

That night, Lord Eddard Starks' wife, Lady Catelyn Stark, finds him in the godswood where the people of the north worship their gods, thinking about the day's events. Catelyn tells Eddard the Kings Hand, Jon Arryn, has died. Jon Arryn took Eddard and Robert Baratheon as wards when King Aerys Targaryen demanded their heads, becoming a foster father to them. When Eddard and Robert defeated the Targaryens, Robert became King, and Arryn his hand, while Eddard became the Lord of the North. Catelyn then gives Eddard a letter from Robert telling him he is coming to visit and is bringing his wife, Cersei Lannister, her brother Jaime Lannister, and Robert's three children.

Across the sea lives the last two descendents of the dynasty of the Targaryens, Prince Viserys and Princess Daenerys. They lost their father to the war and their mother died while giving birth to Daenerys. Now Viserys and Daenerys are dressing to go to a party and meet the Dothraki King Viserys is preparing to marry his sister to in exchange for ten thousand men to attempt to retake the seven kingdoms his family lost to Robert Baratheon.

Chapter 1, Bran, Chapter 2, Catelyn, Chapter 3, Daenerys Analysis

When Eddard Stark executes Gared, we see for the first time the sword Ice. Ice is one of the only swords left that was forged by the Valyrians and will prove to be important later in the novel. The discovery of the mother direwolf introduces the direwolf as an animal thought to have been extinct as well as the symbol of the House of Stark. The



fact the direwolf has been killed by a stag and the stag is the symbol of Eddard's good friend, Robert Baratheon, introduces a great deal of symbolism that suggests there will be trouble between these two houses at some time later in the novel. Later, Eddard learns his foster father, whom he shared with Robert, has died and Robert himself is coming for a visit. It does not seem to the reader that this is coincidental. During Eddard's conversation with his wife, Catelyn, the reader learns Eddard does not like Robert's wife and her family. Robert dislikes the way the Lannisters took control of King's Landing. The violence Robert mentions again suggests trouble between these two houses later in the novel.

The last remaining descendants of the House of Targaryen are introduced in this chapter. The reader learns Viserys is obsessed with regaining the throne in Westeros lost to his family after the war. Viserys will do anything to gain the throne back, even sell his sister to a Dothraki lord in order to gain the armies necessary to fight the battle that lies before them. The fact that Robert, Eddard's foster brother, is the man Viserys blames for his family's shame and loss ties this story in with the previous, adding tension to the novel as the reader begins to see looming trouble between these three houses.



Chapter 4, Eddard, Chapter 5, Jon, and Chapter 6, Catelyn

Chapter 4, Eddard, Chapter 5, Jon, and Chapter 6, Catelyn Summary

Robert and his party arrive at Winterfell. Robert asks to be taken to the crypts to pay his respects despite his wife's protests. In the crypts, they pass the ancient Kings of the North to Lyanna's crypt. Robert loved Lyanna, Eddard's sister. Seeing her statue, Robert is bothered she was not buried in a beautiful place. Eddard says she was a Stark of Winterfell and belongs in the crypt because it is what she wanted. Robert tells Eddard of Jon Arryn's death, how sudden his death was. Robert then asks Eddard to be Hand of the King, something Eddard does not want. However, Eddard tells Robert he needs time to consider it. The King also wants to marry Sansa, Eddard's daughter to Joffrey, his own son, in order to unite the great houses of Baratheon and Stark.

At dinner, Jon Snow hears Uncle Benjen talk about how the Night's Watch needs strong young men. Jon suggests he might like to join, but Benjen implies Jon is not strong enough. Ben insists the Wall is a hard place for a boy and Jon has no idea what he must give up to become a member. They start to argue and Jon flees the Great Hall in tears. Outside he meets Tyrion Lannister, Cersei's brother, and a dwarf who is disfigured. The dwarf talks with Jon about being illegitimate. Later, as Tyrion reenters the castle, his shadow is cast across the yard and, for a moment, Tyrion Lannister stands as tall as a king.

That night, Eddard and Catelyn are in bed together discussing his appointment as Hand of the King. Catelyn insists Eddard take the position, as his refusal might be seen as opposition by the King. Eddard swears Robert would never harm him or any of his family, but Catelyn insists Eddard knows the man, but not the King. They are interrupted by the delivery of a package containing a lens from Myr, but also with a false bottom. Inside is a sealed message for Catelyn's eyes only. The letter is written in code by Lysa Arryn, suggesting Jon Arryn was murdered by the Lannisters and the Queen. Catelyn tells Eddard this makes it more important he take the appointment as Hand so he can learn the truth. Eddard agrees, suggesting he take Bran, Sansa and Arya south with him. Catelyn does not want him to take Bran. Catelyn also wants Jon Snow gone from Winterfell. Catelyn understands Eddard's desire to care for his son, but does not like him treating Jon equal to their children together. The problem is solved when Catelyn and Eddard learn that Jon Snow wants to join the Night's Watch. Eddard gives his consent.



Chapter 4, Eddard, Chapter 5, Jon, and Chapter 6, Catelyn Analysis

Robert's love for Eddard's sister, Lyanna, is important because it shows a strain in Robert's marriage to Queen Cersei, suggesting they married for something less than love. Also, while Robert is thinking of Lyanna he suggests he and Eddard began the war with the Targaryens because of her abduction. This war is an important backstory because it is the reason why Robert is king and it is also the motivation for the misplaced royalties, Viserys and Daenerys. When Robert asks Eddard to be his Hand, Eddard's first reaction is to refuse. Eddard has a sense that this role will only be trouble for him and his family.

Jon Snow wants to join the Night Watch despite his Uncle Benjen's warnings of how difficult this life can prove for a young man. These two men argue and Jon leaves in tears. Outside Jon meets Tyrion Lannister for the first time. Tyrion is a severely disabled dwarf who in many ways has many things in common with Jon. Tyrion is also shunned by his family because of his physical disabilities and has a few things to say to Jon that help him face his future with more optimism than he might have before.

Lysa Arryn, Catelyn's sister, suspects the Lannisters have killed Jon Arryn. Catelyn has been trying to convince Eddard to take the job as King's Hand. This information gives her the weapon she needs to finally convince him to do as she wishes, suggesting that by taking the job Eddard can learn the truth behind Jon's death. As they make their decisions over who should go with Eddard to King's Landing and who should remain in Winterfell with Catelyn, the reader sees Catelyn's dislike of Jon Snow, Eddard's illegitimate child. Catelyn appears jealous because Eddard has refused to reveal the identity of Jon's mother. Catelyn insists Jon leave Winterfell, so when they learn Jon wants to join the Night's Watch, it seems a gift to them both. It takes away a very difficult situation in a way that may mean certain honor for all of them, since Jon has a chance to rise quite high in the Night's Watch hierarchy.



Chapter 7, Arya, Chapter 8, Bran, and Chapter 9, Tyrion

Chapter 7, Arya, Chapter 8, Bran, and Chapter 9, Tyrion Summary

Arya, Eddard's daughter, and her sister are in a room learning how to sew. Arya's needlework is terrible, and embarrasses her sister in front of Princess Myrcella. Arya runs away in anger after being criticized and finds Jon on a parapet watching the sparring in the yard. Bran and Prince Tommen finish sparring, and then Prince Joffrey challenges Robb to a fight with real steel swords. Ser Rodrik will not permit it, however. Joff mocks Robb, nearly causing a fight.

Bran dreams of being a Kingsguard one day. Bran loves to climb the walls of the castle, especially the older First Keep and feed the crows that nest there. Bran is climbing near the broken tower of the First Keep and hears a conversation between Jaime and Cersei. Cersei is saying Jaime should be the Hand of the King. Cersei fears Eddard Stark because Robert will listen to him and that could put the Lannisters in danger. Cersei fears Eddard intends to move against them, that that is why he accepted the position, that perhaps he has somehow heard Lysa Arryn's suspicions. Jaime claims Lysa has no proof. Cersei fears what Eddard might do if Joffrey takes the throne, although she thinks they will all be safer when that comes to pass. Bran finally gets a peek in the room and sees Jaime and his sister Queen Cersei are in bed together. Bran slips and is clinging to the window for dear life when Cersei discovers him. Jaime shoves him off the window.

Tyrion is reading as dawn approaches. Tyrion hears Bran's direwolf howling as the boy lies dying, causing Tyrion to find the boy. Later Tyrion runs into Prince Joffrey in the yard. Tyrion tells Joff he should go pay his respects to Lord Eddard and Lady Catelyn, and that his absence has been noted. Joff laughs at this so Tyrion slaps his nephew twice across the face and forces him to present himself to Bran's parents. Later at breakfast, Tyrion notes his younger nephew's difference in personality to his older brother Joff when the young man expresses concern over Bran's injuries. Tyrion says Bran is likely to live and catches a glance between Cersei and Jaime at this news. Tyrion states his wish to go with Benjen Stark and see the Wall. After Cersei leaves, Tyrion remarks that he hopes Bran wakes, because he would be most interested in hearing what the boy has to say.

Chapter 7, Arya, Chapter 8, Bran, and Chapter 9, Tyrion Analysis

The characters of Eddard's children are seen in more detail in this chapter. The chapter is seen through the eyes of Arya, one of Eddard's daughters. Arya is not very good at



her sewing and is criticized to such a degree that she runs out of the castle to find Jon with whom she has a strong bond. Jon is watching his brothers spar in the yard with Robert's sons. Jon, the reader will note, is not invited to be involved in this play. Jon is not only disliked by his stepmother, but is shunned by the other children as well—not because they dislike the young man, but because tradition keeps the illegitimate son away from the legitimate children. Down in the yard, Robb tries to challenge Robert's son, Joffrey, to a sword fight with real swords rather than the play swords they have been using. However, it is not allowed by their adult supervisors, leading to a fight between the two boys.

Bran is climbing walls even though his mother does not like him doing this. Catelyn is convinced Bran will someday fall. Bran is sure footed, however, and fearless. While climbing this day, Bran overhears Jaime and Cersei talking. Cersei is worried Eddard, as the King's Hand, will learn something that will hurt the Lannisters. Cersei's fear suggests perhaps Lysa Arryn's claims that Jon Arryn was murdered might have some truth to it. However, this is not the most scandalous part of this conversation. Bran discovers these siblings are in bed together. The shock of this causes Bran to lose his hold on the wall and he is left hanging from the window. When Cersei and Jaime find him here, rather than help him, they throw him out the window. Jaime's actions suggest he is afraid of anyone finding out about his relationship with Cersei and that this information could be the motivation behind the death of Jon Arryn.

Tyrion finds Bran's body and gets him help. Later, Tyrion encourages his nephew to pay his respects to Eddard and Catelyn. Tyrion does not like Joffrey's attitude, but finds his younger brother to be kinder and more aware of the world around him, thinking perhaps it is too bad he is younger and will not be first in line for the throne should something happen to Robert. At breakfast when Tyrion suggests Bran will survive, he sees a look exchanged between Jaime and Cersei that suggests this is not something they would like to see happen. Tyrion is curious about this situation, but not enough to do anything about it. Tyrion then announces he plans to go to the Wall.



Chapter 10, Jon, Chapter 11, Daenerys, Chapter 12, Eddard, and Chapter 13, Tyrion

Chapter 10, Jon, Chapter 11, Daenerys, Chapter 12, Eddard, and Chapter 13, Tyrion Summary

Jon goes to visit Bran on his sickbed, but Catelyn orders him to leave. After praying at his brother's side, Jon prepares to leave. Catelyn tells him it should have been him who fell. Jon then says his goodbyes to Robb, and visits Arya. Jon gives Arya the sword Needle forged for her. Jon then begins his journey to the Wall in order to join the Night's Watch.

It is the night of the wedding and Daenerys is extremely nervous. During the wedding, she receives a great many gifts, the most important being three dragon eggs given to her by Magister Illyrio. One egg is deep green with bronze flecks, another cream colored with gold streaks, and the last black with scarlet ripples. Drogo gives her a beautiful white mare. After the wedding, Drogo treats Daenerys gently, easing her fears.

Eddard is woken early and told that Robert has requested he join him in riding. The King shows Eddard a letter from Lord Varys that reveals Daenerys's wedding to Khal Drogo. Robert wants to send men to kill Daenerys, but Eddard says the slaughter of innocents is not honorable. The King's hatred of Targaryens is legendary because of their treatment of his beloved Lyanna. The discussion turns to the naming of a new Warden of the East, and Eddard learns Jaime Lannister was promised the position. Eddard cautions this would give one family half the armies of the Kingdom, as the Wardens of both East and West would be Lannisters.

Tyrion travels north with Benjen and Jon to visit the Wall. Tyrion and Jon talk, and Tyrion tells him the truth about what the Night's Watch has become, with most members societal discards such as criminals, disgraced knights, and illegitimate sons. Jon takes offense. Tyrion feels sorry for what he said and reaches out to touch Jon on the shoulder, Jon's direwolf smashes the dwarf to the ground. Jon later comes to realize what Tyrion said of the Night's Watch is true.

Chapter 10, Jon, Chapter 11, Daenerys, Chapter 12, Eddard, and Chapter 13, Tyrion Analysis

Jon goes to see his injured brother, Bran, but is sent away by Catelyn. In her grief, Catelyn expresses the wish that Jon was the one injured, once again highlighting her dislike and anger where Jon is concerned. Catelyn is grief stricken over her son's



injuries and fearful of his possible death, but this does not excuse the terrible thing she says to Jon as he prepares to leave Winterfell. Jon says goodbye to Robb and Arya, giving Arya the gift of a sword. As he travels with his uncle, Jon is joined by Tyrion. While talking one night, Tyrion tells Jon how the Night's Watch, which was once an honorable organization, has become a safe harbor for criminals and illegitimate children, like Jon himself. Jon is offended by the implied sentiment that this is the only place Jon has to turn, but he soon comes to realize there is some truth to Tyrion's statements.

Daenerys gets married and discovers her husband is a kind man who does not mean her any harm. Her husband's kindness helps Daenerys commit herself to their new relationship more completely, just as she had wanted to do in order to support her brother's quest to restore their kingdom. However, Robert is not happy with this union because he too can see why the marriage was arranged. Robert wants to send an assassin to kill Daenerys, but Eddard will not allow it. Eddard feels it is not honorable to kill an innocent young woman despite what Daenerys's family did to his sister.

Daenerys receives three dragon eggs as a wedding gift. These eggs are assumed to be incapable of hatching since there have been no dragons for thousands of years. However, they are a gift Daenerys holds dear and will be important later in the novel. At the same time, Eddard learns Jaime is to be named Warden of the East. This causes Eddard great concern because it means the Lannisters will control both the East and the West, giving them a great deal of power.



Chapter 14, Catelyn, Chapter 15, Sansa, and Chapter 16, Eddard

Chapter 14, Catelyn, Chapter 15, Sansa, and Chapter 16, Eddard Summary

Maester Luwin tries to persuade Catelyn to leave Bran's bedside and attend to business left undone upon Eddard's departure. Robb tells Luwin he will make those decisions. Outside, the direwolves are howling and Robb notices a fire in the library. As Robb runs off with the guards to fight the blaze, an assassin enters Bran's room. Catelyn tries to prevent him from killing Bran, but suffers injuries to her hands. Bran's direwolf saves both Catelyn and Bran, killing the assassin. Catelyn knows someone sent the assassin to kill Bran because they feared what he might say if he awoke. Ser Rodrik points out the dagger is expensive, made of Valyrian steel, and should not have been in the hands of such an apparently poor assassin. Catelyn admits her suspicion Bran was pushed from that tower. Catelyn decides she must go to King's Landing to learn the truth of who sent the assassin. Ser Rodrik is to accompany her.

Sansa is getting ready to spend the afternoon with the Queen and Princess Myrcella. When Sansa arrives at the Queen's wheelhouse, she sees a commotion involving the mute, Ser Ilyn. Later, Joffrey takes her for a horseback ride in the forest. Joffrey drinks too much at a farmstead. On their way home, they come upon Arya and Mycah practicing sword fighting. Joff challenges Mycah, but is attacked by Arya. Before Joffrey can hurt her, Arya's direwolf knocks Joff to the ground and mangles his arm. Arya throws Joff's sword in the river and runs off with Nymeria. Sansa is horrified by how the day turned from dreamy to a nightmare. Joffrey yells at her in loathing when she tries to comfort him.

Arya is found by Jory, to Eddard's relief, because had the Lannisters' men found her she would have been killed. Arya is taken before the King and Queen to tell her side of the events. Joffrey tells his side with lies. Sansa pretends not to remember what happened, leaving it as Joff's word against Arya's. The King feels there should be no punishment, but the Queen wants someone to be punished. Cersei calls for the hide of a direwolf, and Robert is disgusted, but does nothing to stop her. Since Nymeria has not been found, Cersei decrees that Lady, Sansa's direwolf, will be killed. Eddard pleads with Robert, and finally tells him he should at least have the courage to carry out the sentence himself, but the King just walks off. Eddard kills Lady himself. Afterwards, Mycah is found dead.



Chapter 14, Catelyn, Chapter 15, Sansa, and Chapter 16, Eddard Analysis

An attempt is made to kill Bran. The reader suspects this has been engineered by Cersei and Jaime, but Catelyn has no way of knowing this. All Catelyn knows is that the would-be assassin appeared to be a peasant, poor and desperate. However, the dagger he used is of fine steel that only someone of means could possibly own. This suggests both to Catelyn and the reader that the assassin has been hired by someone else in order to protect someone's identity. The attempt also proves to Catelyn that Bran's original accident was not an accident after all. Catelyn decides she must find out who is trying to murder her son and begins to travel to King's Landing.

Sansa is in King's Landing with her father and sister. Sansa is to marry Joffrey so she is happy when he asks her to go for a ride. However, the fairytale afternoon turns bad when she and Joffrey, who is by now drunk, run into Arya sword fighting with the butcher's son. Joffrey challenges the young man to a sword fight, but Arya steps in instead. Before Joffrey can injure the weaker girl, her direwolf interferes and attacks Joffrey, injuring his arm. Arya then runs away. When she is found, Arya is brought in front of the King and Queen to tell her side of the story. Arya tells the truth, but Joffrey lies to appear less obtrusive. The King wants to end the matter there, but the Queen insists that a direwolf be killed in punishment. Since Arya's dog cannot be found, Sansa's is put to death. Later that night, the body of the butcher's son is discovered. The question of who killed this child makes the reader wonder if Joffrey did it out of revenge and if he is as morally depraved as his mother and uncle. If so, the reader fears what this might mean for Sansa.



Chapter 17, Bran, Chapter 18, Catelyn, and Chapter 19, Jon

Chapter 17, Bran, Chapter 18, Catelyn, and Chapter 19, Jon Summary

Bran, in a coma, is dreaming he is falling from a great height. A crow flying next to him keeps telling Bran to fly. Bran is afraid at first to look down, but when he does, he sees many strange images. He sees his father and sisters surrounded by shadows. One has the terrible face of a hound, another is armored in gold and is beautiful. Then Bran looks toward the Wall. Bran looks into the heart of winter and is terrified by what he sees. The crow tells him that is why he must live. Bran finally begins to fly and then the crow starts pecking at Bran's forehead. Bran awakens.

Catelyn and Ser Rodrik arrive at King's Landing. Catelyn and Ser Rodrik go to an inn and then the knight goes off to find Ser Aron Santagar. Catelyn is awoken when a City Watchman brings her a paper with Littlefinger's seal on it. Catelyn goes to the Red Tavern and is brought before Littlefinger. Littlefinger wants to know why she is in King's Landing and offers his help. Varys arrives and recognizes the dagger Catelyn has with her, the same used in the attempt against Bran. Littlefinger tells her the dagger was his, although he lost it betting on Ser Jaime Lannister in the tourney on Prince Joffrey's name day, when Ser Loras Tyrell won the joust. Littlefinger tells Catelyn he lost it to Tyrion Lannister.

Jon is training under Ser Alliser Thorne at Castle Black, and keeps beating the other recruits, often injuring them. Jon injures Grenn's hand during a spar, so later that day, Grenn, and several others attack Jon in his cell. Jon fights them off until Donal Noye intervenes. Afterward Donal Noye explains to Jon that the other recruits have little to no formal training in sword fighting, but Jon was trained by an anointed knight. Jon realizes that what he has been doing is wrong. Jon goes to Grenn and promises to help him learn to fight better. That same day, Jon meets Tyrion. They go to the mess hall together and Tyrion mentions that Benjen Stark, who went in search of Ser Waymar Royce, has been gone too long. Ser Alliser tells Jon that the Lord Commander wants to see him. A message from Winterfell reveals Bran has woken. Jon is overjoyed.

Chapter 17, Bran, Chapter 18, Catelyn, and Chapter 19, Jon Analysis

Bran has a dream that implies his family is in danger. Bran is flying with a crow that is showing him the dark shadows surrounding his family and the danger outside the Wall. Bran wakes up from a coma it was feared he might not survive. His mother, at the same time, is in King's Landing in order to find out who sent the assassin to kill Bran. Catelyn



meets with an old friend and learns the dagger is his. The dagger was lost in a bet to Tyrion Lannister, the brother of Jaime Lannister, who is now in the company of Eddard's illegitimate son, Jon Snow. The reader knows Catelyn will jump to the conclusion that Tyrion is the killer since he was at Winterfell when Bran had his first accident, is the one who supposedly found his body, and is the owner of the dagger that nearly killed Bran the second time. The reader knows Tyrion is not responsible, but Catelyn is not aware of the information the reader has and is still grieving for the son she believes is lost to her. Catelyn's next actions will most likely be an attempt to get misguided justice, predicting trouble for Tyrion.

Jon Snow is having a difficult time in his training for the Night's Watch because he is so much better in swordsmanship than his fellow classmates. Donal Noye finally takes Jon aside and explains he has training the others do not and he should take it easier on them. Jon agrees, even offering to help one of his fellow classmates in a generous gesture of friendship. Later Jon sees Tyrion, who mentions that it seems Benjen has been on the other side of the wall too long in his search for the missing knight (who the reader knows died in the prologue). Tyrion's concern suggests to the reader Benjen has run into trouble and might bring trouble back on the Night's Guard. Finally Jon gets word Bran is awake, something that brings him great pleasure. Despite the way Catelyn and some other members of the Stark family treat Jon, Jon still loves his brother and is happy he will be okay.



Chapter 20, Eddard, Chapter 21, Tyrion, Chapter 22, Arya, and Chapter 23, Daenerys

Chapter 20, Eddard, Chapter 21, Tyrion, Chapter 22, Arya, and Chapter 23, Daenerys Summary

Eddard learns that over the last fourteen years, the King and his council have caused the crown to develop a debt of six million gold, most of it owed to the Lannisters. Eddard cannot believe Jon Arryn allowed this to happen, but Littlefinger claims it was Robert's extravagance. Littlefinger takes Eddard on a roundabout journey through the castle to mislead anyone who might be watching them. Eventually they arrive in a brothel Littlefinger owns, where Catelyn and Ser Rodrik wait. Catelyn tells Eddard everything that has happened. Eddard feels that he should take his case and the dagger to the King. Littlefinger tells him there is no proof. Littlefinger advises he throw away the dagger and forget it ever existed. Eddard is unhappy with everything that is happening and everything he is learning about Robert's time as king. Catelyn too is afraid. Eddard gives Catelyn instructions for his men to fortify Moat Cailin and to keep a careful watch over Theon Greyjoy in case his father's fleets are needed.

During dinner at the Lord Commander's table Tyrion mocks Ser Alliser. Both Ser Alliser and Ser Jaremy were forced to join the Night's Guard by Lord Tywin Lannister when he took over King's Landing because they had fought for the Targaryens on the walls of King's Landing. Later Lord Commander Mormont beseeches Tyrion to speak to the King and his lord father about the condition of the Watch. Mormont tells Tyrion that the Watch now totals under a thousand men and he has only three men to guard each mile of the Wall. Tyrion promises he will. When Tyrion leaves Mormont's chambers, he decides to see the Wall one last time. There Tyrion runs into Jon. Jon asks Tyrion to help Bran, as Tyrion has helped him. Tyrion promises he will.

Arya leaves the table of the Hand in anger because she wants nothing to do with tourneys and hates being in King's Landing. Eddard comes to her and discovers Needle. Arya refuses to tell him Jon gave it to her. Eddard pleads with her to stop quarreling with her sister. Eddard tells her she resembles Lyanna, although Arya does not believe him because she has heard her aunt was beautiful. Eddard tells her Lyanna would have carried a sword, if his father would have permitted it. Lyanna was strong, like Arya. Eddard feels Arya should be trained in the use of a sword. The next day, Syrio Forel begins to train Arya in the ways of being a Water Dancer, the fighting style of the First Sword of Braavos.

Daenerys' group is entering the Dothraki Sea, a large grassland. Daenerys is learning how to ride as well as adapt to the culture of the Dothraki. One day, Daenerys goes off on her own to walk in the grass, but Viserys finds her and they argue over him receiving



command of an army. Viserys threatens her, telling her she will wake the dragon within him, and attempts to grab her. Daenerys shoves him to the ground, and then Jhogo's whip lashes around his neck. Humiliated, and told to walk behind the khalasar, Viserys tells Ser Jorah to hit Daenerys. Ser Jorah bows before Daenerys instead, further humiliating Viserys. Afterward, Daenerys asks Jorah if she has woken the dragon as Viserys suggested. Ser Jorah tells her that her brother Rhaegar was the last Dragon, and that Viserys is just a shadow of a snake. Daenerys later notices her dragon eggs are warm to the touch. That night, Daenerys brings Drogo outside and makes love to him. This act culminates in a pregnancy.

Chapter 20, Eddard, Chapter 21, Tyrion, Chapter 22, Arya, and Chapter 23, Daenerys Analysis

Eddard learns what has been going on in King's Landing under Robert's control and is not happy with it. Not only this, but Eddard learns the kingdom is indebted to the Lannister family, something that not only compromises the kingdom, but also creates a situation that gives the Lannister family an appearance of power over the kingdom. Eddard then learns about the assassination attempt on his son, discovering the suspected assassin was hired by yet another Lannister. The Lannisters seem to show up every time trouble appears. The reader should be suspicious of this family and their motivations, especially knowing it is Jaime and Cersei who are really behind Bran's near death. At the same time the commander of the Night's Watch is asking a Lannister to help arrange more men for the watch, to possibly improve conditions. This Lannister, Tyrion, seems to be a friend where his brother and sister are not, but Catelyn believes he is the one responsible for Bran's second attack. This leaves the reader wondering if Tyrion will be able to convince Catelyn of his innocence before things get out of hand.

Arya is unhappy in King's Landing. When Arya's father, Eddard, discovers her unhappiness and her hidden sword, he thinks of his own sister who was much like Arya. Arya is flattered by the comparison but does not fully believe it because she does not think she is as beautiful as her aunt was reputed to be. However, Arya does manage to convince Eddard to allow her to be trained in the use of her sword.

In the Doraki Sea Daenerys is adjusting to life as a married woman. Her brother, Viserys, is unhappy with how long it is taking for him to get command of an army to help him win back the territory lost to his family during the civil war. An argument with Daenerys only serves to humiliate Viserys and leave him angrier at Daenerys. Daenerys ignores her brother's unhappiness, however, and concentrates on her marriage. During this time Daenerys also discovers the dragon eggs she was given as a wedding gift have grown warm. No one else seems to notice the heat, but this does not keep Daenerys from believing these eggs may surprise everyone yet.



Chapter 24, Bran, Chapter 25, Eddard, and Chapter 26, Jon

Chapter 24, Bran, Chapter 25, Eddard, and Chapter 26, Jon Summary

Bran is unhappy with his still recovering body, so Old Nan begins to tell him a story. The story is about a night lasting a whole generation that happened more than a thousand years before. During that winter the Others came and stole the children. The story is interrupted by Tyrion's arrival. Robb is hostile toward Tyrion, but Tyrion has drawn plans for a saddle for Bran, attempting to keep his word to Jon. While they are examining the sketch, the boys' three direwolves enter and start growling at Tyrion. The direwolves assault Tyrion, but are called off in time by the boys. Soon after, Tyrion leaves. That evening, Robb and Bran host a member of the Night's Guard for dinner. The man informs them that Benjen is probably dead. Bran believes Uncle Benjen will be saved by the children of the forest. Maester Luwin tells him the children have been dead for thousands of years, but the Night's Guard suggests no one truly knows what exists beyond the Wall.

Eddard speaks with Grand Maester Pycelle and discovers Jon Arryn was melancholy but healthy in the weeks before his death. Eddard asks if poison could be the cause of Jon's death, but Pycelle thinks poison is a woman's weapon, suggesting if it was poison, Jon Arryn's killer was either a woman or a coward. Pycelle also warns Eddard against Varys, a eunuch in Robert's court, saying he was born a slave in Lys and that Eddard should not trust him. On the way out, Eddard learns the Queen was not in King's Landing when Jon Arryn died. Eddard also borrows the book the book Jon Arryn was reading just before his death.

Later Littlefinger visits Eddard, telling him he has a lead for Eddard. Lord Baelish reveals the name of Ser Hugh of the Vale, squire to Jon Arryn who was knighted after his Lord died, as well as three other servants of Jon Arryn still in King's Landing. Then Littlefinger shows Eddard two spies outside his window, one is Varys', the other is the Queen's. Littlefinger cautions Eddard to send one of his men to question these servants, rather than doing it himself.

Jon is helping the other recruits to fight when a new boy, Samwell Tarly, enters the yard. The boy is fat and immediately ridiculed by Ser Alliser. After he is fitted with armor, Halder is sent against Sam and hurts him. Ser Alliser wants Halder to hit Sam further, but Jon objects. Ser Alliser sends three boys against Jon, but Grenn and Pyp come to Jon's aid. Ser Alliser leaves in a fury. Later, Jon joins Sam at dinner and walks with him outside. Jon talks about a dream he has been having of returning to Winterfell but finding it completely empty. Then Jon descends the stairs to the crypt. At this point, Jon always wakes. Sam tells how his father, Lord Randyll Tarly, sent him to the Wall and



disowned him as heir, passing the title to his younger son, Dickon. These two young men become fast friends and Jon convinces the others not to hurt Sam.

Chapter 24, Bran, Chapter 25, Eddard, and Chapter 26, Jon Analysis

Bran is frustrated with how slowly his body is healing from his fall. To distract him, Old Nan tells him a story about the Others, but is interrupted when Tyrion arrives. The reader might remember that Catelyn, Bran's mother, believes Tyrion is the one who hired the assassin to kill Bran, but here Tyrion is designing a new saddle for Bran to help him ride while he continues to recover. Tyrion does this, not because he is simply a generous person, but because he made a promise to Jon with whom he has forged a strong bond. Bran is grateful, but the direwolves do not like Tyrion and nearly attack him while he is in the house. The direwolves reactions could cause the other Starks to believe Catelyn is on the right track with Tyrion despite his kindness. Later, a Night's Guard arrives and informs the family Benjen is most likely dead since he has been missing so long. Bran does not believe it, thinking perhaps the children from the story Old Nan had been telling him might rescue him and the Night's Guard agrees that no one knows for sure what lives on the other side of the Wall.

Eddard has begun investigating the death of his foster father, Jon Arryn. Eddard learns the details of his death and begins to think perhaps he was poisoned. The use of poison seems to reduce the possible suspects to a woman or a coward. It is implied that perhaps a eunuch in the king's court might have had something to do with Jon's death. Eddard is warned not to trust this man and is later told the eunuch has a spy following Eddard. However, so does the Queen, which is curious to Eddard who does not know the Queen is behind the injuries to his son and that she is concerned about what Eddard might learn about Jon's death.

Jon Snow is settling into his training for the Night's Guard. A new boy arrives and Jon goes out of his way to help this boy. Jon proves that despite the fact he has been shunned by his own family, he has not become bitter. Jon is now helping his classmates and becomes good friends with this new boy, Sam. It seems Jon has finally found the family he always wanted in his classmates.



Chapter 27, Eddard, Chapter 28, Catelyn, and Chapter 29, Sansa

Chapter 27, Eddard, Chapter 28, Catelyn, and Chapter 29, Sansa Summary

After attending routine business, Eddard looks at the book Jon Arryn was reading before his death, Grand Maester Malleon's *Lineages of the Great Houses*. Eddard's assistant, Jory, arrives to tell Eddard that Littlefinger's leads are not panning out except for the fact Jon Arryn spent a great deal of time with Lord Stannis. Lord Stannis now has gone to Dragonstone and cannot be reached. Eddard suspects Lord Stannis is hiding and does not understand why. Eddard and Jory go to visit the master armorer Tobho Mott, who also received a visit from Jon Arryn and Lord Stannis, and learn they wanted to see a boy apprenticed there, Gendry. Eddard immediately sees Gendry's resemblance to the King when he was younger. Eddard confronts Mott and learns that an unknown lord visited and paid twice the normal apprentice fee for Gendry and told Mott to remain silent. Eddard is fascinated by this information but does not see how it fits in with his investigation of Jon Arryn's death.

On the way home, Catelyn and Ser Rodrik enter an inn at the Crossroads. When they go down to the common room for dinner, Tyrion arrives with his two men and Yoren. Tyrion notices Catelyn when the musician jumps up to declare a performance in Tyrion's honor. When Tyrion notices Catelyn, she decides to play her hand. Catelyn asks for support from men in the room who were loyal to her father. Catelyn tells how Tyrion was a guest in her home and sent an assassin to kill her son. A dozen men draw swords and help Catelyn take Tyrion captive.

Sansa watches the tourney from a place of honor. The fighting is brutal that day with Ser Hugh ending up dead. By the end of the day's jousting, there are only four knights remaining, including Ser Jaime Lannister. At dinner, there is an argument between the King and Queen that leaves the room filled with tension. Joffrey, who had been attentive to Sansa up to this point, suddenly sends her away. The guard, the Hound, who escorts Sansa to her room tells her Ser Hugh was killed intentionally by his own brother, Ser Gregor. The guard says Ser Gregor is a cruel man who burned the guard's face intentionally as a child. Then the guard threatens Sansa's life if she should ever tell anyone what he has said.

Chapter 27, Eddard, Chapter 28, Catelyn, and Chapter 29, Sansa Analysis

Eddard continues his investigation into Jon Arryn's death and learns he spent a great deal of time with Lord Stannis, King Robert's brother. Together Jon and Stannis appear



to have been investigating something, but Eddard is unclear what this is. However, it has something to do with a child, Gendry, an apprentice to the armorer, who happens to look a great deal like the King as a child. Eddard's investigation seems to be making progress, but Eddard does not know what it all means, therefore the reader is still pretty much in the dark. At the same time, Catelyn, who is returning home after telling her husband her suspicions Tyrion tried to kill Bran, runs into Tyrion in an Inn. Catelyn gathers the support of her father's loyal allies in the Inn and arrests Tyrion.

Sansa is having a difficult time getting along with her new fiancée. At times Joffery is attentive and kind, but at other times he seems angry and resentful. On this night there is an argument at dinner between the King and Queen over the King's participation in the tourney. Afterward the mood is spoiled. Sansa is sent to bed and is escorted by the Hound, Joffrey's personal guard. This man is drunk and tells Sansa that a death during the tourney that day was intentional and the man who committed the murder, his brother Ser Gregor, is a cruel man who once burned him as a child. Then the Hound threatens Sansa should she ever tell anyone what he has said, leaving Sansa in a curious position of having possession of information she has no idea the value of—is it just the ramblings of a drunk guard or more important in the development of the stories plot? At this point, the reader does not know either, but hopes to find out later in the novel.



Chapter 30, Eddard

Chapter 30, Eddard Summary

Eddard walks in on Robert having an argument with his squires because his armor does not fit. Robert wants to fight in the tourney that day. Eddard tries to talk him out of it, but Robert only changes his mind when his possible opponent claims he will not hit the King. When the argument is over, Robert confesses to Eddard he believes his son lied about his sword fight with Arya. The King is unhappy with his son's behavior, unable to accept he could father such a child. The King is also unhappy in his marriage, admitting he only married Cersei because the kingdom needed an heir. Robert also admits he is thinking of leaving Cersei in order to marry the sister of another lord.

At the tourney later, the Hound defeats Ser Jaime, then Ser Gregor faces Ser Loras. Loras' mare is in heat, causing Ser Gregor trouble controlling his horse, allowing Ser Loras to unseat him. In his anger, Gregor kills his horse, then turns on Ser Loras. The Hound prevents his brother from killing Ser Loras, so Gregor turns on his brother. Eddard watches and takes note of the fact that the Hound never attacks his brother, he only protects himself. The Kingsguard finally stop the fight. Ser Loras defers the championship to the Hound, who takes the winner's purse.

Alone that night, Eddard thinks of all he has learned this day and how it might relate to Jon Arryn's death and the attempt on Bran's life. Eddard recalls Edric Storm, a son Robert fathered on Stannis' wedding night and was forced to recognize because his mother was highborn. Eddard's thought is interrupted when Varys arrives at his door. Varys tells Eddard how Cersei wanted Robert to be killed in the tourney that day. Varys says the fact Eddard talked Robert out of the fight makes Varys trust him. Varys then tells Eddard all he knows about the Queen, including the fact that the Queen fears Eddard because the King will not harm him, not even at Cersei's command. Varys claims the Queen has several powerful men on her side, leaving Eddard and Varys alone in their fight against her. Then Varys tells Eddard Jon Arryn was killed by his squire, Ser Hugh, who is now dead. Varys claims Jon Arryn died because he was asking too many questions.

Chapter 30, Eddard Analysis

King Robert wants to fight in the tourney, something that caused an argument between him and the Queen the night before. Eddard, however, talks him out of it with the help of Robert's potential opponent who claims he would not fight should Robert be his opponent. Robert then admits to Eddard he does not like his own son, finding him to be a liar and unkind. Robert also confesses to being unhappy in his marriage, having only married Cersei because the kingdom needed an heir. Robert is considering leaving Cersei and marrying the sister of another lord. This revelation tells the reader Robert is not only unhappy, but that he has become an obstacle to Cersei and her plans, of which



the reader is still not entirely knowledgeable. However, it seems it would be important for Cersei to remain the Queen in order to keep the power that helps her lord over those around her.

At the tourney, Ser Gregor nearly kills his opponent when he loses their match. Ser Gregor, who in the previous chapter killed Jon Arryn's squire, is stopped by his own brother, the Hound. Eddard watches this fight and makes note that the Hound never attempts to hurt his brother in this fight, only attempts to protect himself. The Hound is later declared the winner of the jousting competitions. The fact the author returns to these characters a second time suggests one of two things. First, they will play an important role in the novel as the plot continues to develop, and second, Ser Gregor is an aggressive man willing to kill for any reason presented to him. This second is underscored when Eddard learns that the man Ser Gregor killed the day before just happened to be the man who administered the poison that killed Jon Arryn. The reader wonders if perhaps someone told Ser Gregor to kill Ser Hugh in order to cover up the murder of Jon Arryn.

Varys, the eunuch in the King's court, comes to visit Eddard. Varys, whom Eddard has been warned not to trust, suddenly trusts Eddard because of his efforts to keep Robert out of the tourney that morning. Varys tells Eddard the Queen is afraid of him because she cannot control him. Varys also says the Queen controls a great deal of the kingdom and it had been her desire to have Robert die in the tourney. Varys also tells Eddard how Jon Arryn was killed, but not why, only that he was asking too many questions. Now Eddard needs to find out what those questions were.



Chapter 31, Tyrion, Chapter 32, Arya, and Chapter 33, Eddard

Chapter 31, Tyrion, Chapter 32, Arya, and Chapter 33, Eddard Summary

On the trip to the Vale of Arryn as Catelyn's prisoner, Tyrion attempts to convince Catelyn he is not guilty of the assassination attempt on Bran. Tyrion claims Littlefinger is lying to Catelyn. Before Tyrion can tell Catelyn why Littlefinger's story is untrue, the group is attacked. Catelyn allows Tyrion and his men to be armed in order to help fight the attackers. During the fight, Tyrion saves Catelyn's life. Afterward, Tyrion claims Littlefinger's story about the dagger is clearly not true because Tyrion never bets against his brother even though Littlefinger claims Tyrion bet on his brother's opponent.

During her sword training, Arya finds herself in the basement of the Red Keep. While there, Arya overhears a conversation regarding her father. One of the men is Varys who tells the other man that once Eddard learns the truth he will not be quiet and will insist on justice, especially where his son, Bran, is concerned. Eddard could possibly be a problem. Varys also says war is brewing. Lysa Arryn and Lord Stannis are raising men to bring against the Lannisters and the Targaryens are preparing to invade Westeros. However, Daenerys is pregnant, so her husband will not get involved in a conflict until the child is born. Not only this, but there is a plot to marry Robert to Margaery Tyrell when Robert leaves Cersei. The men then leave and Arya rushes to her father to tell him what she has heard. However, Eddard does not believe Arya. While Arya is still trying to convince him, word arrives of Tyrion's arrest at the Crossroads.

When Robert learns of Daenerys' pregnancy he again wants to have her killed. Eddard instructs him not to do this, but Robert is filled with hatred against the Targaryens. Robert consults his advisors and receives overwhelming support with a few even offering suggestions on how it should be done. Eddard is so disgusted with the situation that he resigns as the King's Hand. Eddard wants to go home to Winterfell, but feels he still has so much left to learn about Jon Arryn's death. Instead Eddard considers going to Dragonstone to speak to Lord Stannis. Before he can make any definite plans, Littlefinger comes and tells Eddard how Robert has offered a lordship and lands to anyone who kills Daenerys. Finally Littlefinger tells Eddard if he will stay in King's Landing, he will take him to the brothel Jon Arryn and Lord Stannis were seen visiting together.



Chapter 31, Tyrion, Chapter 32, Arya, and Chapter 33, Eddard Analysis

Catelyn runs into Tyrion and immediately has him arrested for attempted murder. Catelyn was supposed to be on her way home, but she cannot pass up the opportunity to make this man pay for the pain and suffering she believes he inflicted on her young son. Following the theme of loyalty, Catelyn plays on the loyalty of the local people to her father to get them to help her make the arrest. The reader sees this loyalty and wonders if it will be there later in the novel when loyalty becomes even more important.

Arya is making good progress in her attempts to learn sword fighting. However, while practicing one day she stumbles on a private conversation between the King's eunuch and another man. The conversation talks about a plot to begin a war against the Lannisters, or perhaps the King himself. However, these men seem to think Eddard is an obstacle to this plot. Arya is afraid what this might mean about her father's safety so she rushes to tell him. However, Eddard does not listen to Arya because he believes Varys is a friend. The reader is concerned with Eddard's refusal to listen because it seems there are a lot of secret plots going on behind the scenes and Eddard is about to stumble into one. If Eddard does stumble into this plot, the reader knows it cannot be a good thing.

There is hope when Eddard suddenly quits his job over the decision to have Daenerys killed. However, this hope is quickly dashed when Eddard refuses to give up his investigation into the death of Jon Arryn. This continued investigation is surely dangerous in light of all the deadly plots perculating around Eddard. So when he decides to stay in King's Landing to learn what Jon Arryn was investigating before his death, the reader anticipates trouble.



Chapter 34, Catelyn, Chapter 35, Eddard, and Chapter 36, Daenerys

Chapter 34, Catelyn, Chapter 35, Eddard, and Chapter 36, Daenerys Summary

Rather than take Tyrion to King's Landing to be put on trial, Catelyn begins the journey to take him to her family home of Eyrie. Along the way, Catelyn visits with an uncle who warns her that her sister, Lysa Arryn, is unstable and deeply afraid in the wake of her husband's death. Lysa is ruling as Lord of the Eyrie in her husband's stead until her son is old enough to rule himself. This situation concerns the uncle as he feels Robert, Lysa's son, is not as strong as his father was. Once Catelyn arrives at Eyrie she finds Lysa is indeed out of her mind with fear. Lysa is angry with Catelyn for bringing Tyrion to Eyrie, thus dragging Lysa into a feud with the Lannisters. Catelyn responds it was Lysa who accused the Lannisters of killing her husband. Robert comes into the room then and is visibly upset. Lysa puts him to the breast even though he is six years old. Although the child is clearly weak and sickly, Lysa believes him to be strong. Jon's final words on his deathbed were "the seed is strong" and Lysa believes this refers to her son.

Eddard discovers at the brothel that a prostitute there has a child that is clearly King Robert's. This makes Eddard think of Robert's other illegitimate children, especially Edric Storm, a child Robert fathered with a woman of high birth. On the way back to his rooms, Eddard and his men are surrounded by Lannister guardsmen. Jaime Lannister arrives and challenges Eddard to a sword fight. While Littlefinger goes for help, Eddard tells Jaime that if he should kill him, Catelyn would do the same to Tyrion. Jaime backs off, instructing his men not to hurt Eddard. Instead, Jaime orders his men to kill Eddard's men. A fight ensues leaving all Eddard's men dead, several of Jaime's men dead, and Eddard with a broken leg.

As Daenerys, her husband, and their party continue their journey, they discuss their chances of success should they attack the Seven Kingdoms. Drogo feels they have a good chance of success, but is concerned the armies of the Seven Kingdoms have an advantage because of their castles. Robert is the type of man who would bring his armies out from behind the castle walls and fight head on, but his lords would never allow this to happen. This could mean a long, drawn out battle for the Dothrakis. Later, Daenerys attempts to make a gesture toward her brother with a gift of traditional Dothrakis clothing, but Viserys is so crazy with a need for revenge that he spits on her gift. Daenerys strikes him for his behavior and Viserys leaves in anger.



Chapter 34, Catelyn, Chapter 35, Eddard, and Chapter 36, Daenerys Analysis

Catelyn takes Tyrion to her family castle, Eyries. On the way she meets an uncle who warns her Lysa is insane with fear. Catelyn finds this warning to be true. Lysa is afraid of being drawn into a war with the Lannisters despite the fact she is the one who has accused the Lannisters of killing her husband, Jon. Catelyn is also told Lysa intends for her son, Robert, to be the Lord of Eyries when he is older, with Lysa taking the position in her husband's place until that time. However, Robert is a weak child who will most likely be a weak man. This fact is proven when the six year old child is put to the breast like an infant. The situation seems unstable and leaves the reader wondering what will happen if a war breaks out, as has been suggested in earlier chapters.

Eddard visits a brothel only to find another of King Robert's illegitimate children. It is curious to both Eddard and the reader why Jon Arryn and Lord Stannis would be investigating illegitimate children of the king. The reader is unclear what this might have to do with Jon Arryn's death, unless someone is trying to cover up the existence of these children. Later, Eddard is attacked by Jaime Lannister. Eddard himself is not killed since his wife has custody of Jaime's brother, Tyrion. However, all of Eddard's men with him at the time are killed and Eddard is left injured and alone.

Daenerys, her husband, and his men discuss the chances of success in a battle against the Seven Kingdoms. Drogo believes his men could win, but it will be a difficult battle since the Seven Kingdoms have the advantage of fortified castles. The reader takes from this the idea that Drogo is in full support of Viserys's desire to win back the crown for his family. Later, Viserys shows his displeasure at the delay of the battle when he spits on a gift made to him by his sister. Daenerys shows her growth of character when she fights back rather than allowing her brother to steamroll her. The theme of maturity is illustrated here because Daenerys is clearly not the scared fourteen year old child she once was.



Chapter 37, Bran, Chapter 38, Tyrion, Chapter 39, Eddard, and Chapter 40, Catelyn

Chapter 37, Bran, Chapter 38, Tyrion, Chapter 39, Eddard, and Chapter 40, Catelyn Summary

Robb, Bran, and some of their men are out riding in the woods. Robb tells them about a message he received informing them of the fight Eddard had with Lannister's men and the death of his own men. Robb is encouraged to raise his men against the Lannisters, but Robb does not commit to this idea. Later, while Robb is searching for their direwolves, Bran is left alone. Bran is taken captive by a group of people known as wildlings. The people ride for a man named Mance Rayder who lives Beyond-the-Wall. They want to take Bran to Rayder who would pay well for a relative of Benjen Stark. However, Robb returns and manages to kill all but two of the wildlings. One of these men holds a knife to Bran's throat and threatens to kill him if Robb does not execute the direwolves. Before he can do this, however, one of Robb's men kills the wildling. They interrogate the surviving wildling and learn that two of the men were deserters from the Night's Watch.

Robert comes to visit Eddard with his wife, Cersei. Cersei accuses Robert of causing the fight between his men and Jaime's, claiming Eddard and his men were drunk. Eddard denies these charges and tells Robert the fight was initiated by Jaime after Eddard had gone to the brothel to meet Robert's child. Eddard wants to find Jaime so he can face charges, but Robert refuses to allow it. Eddard then announces he intends to return to Winterfell. Robert tells Eddard he has refused to accept his resignation and if he deserts his post he will allow Jaime to do as he pleases against Eddard.

Before Tyrion's trial, Catelyn is informed Jaime is moving his army in their direction. Catelyn is concerned about returning home safely, but her more immediate concern is Robert Arryn. Catelyn feels Robert needs to be fostered in order to help him learn some discipline. Catelyn feels the child should be sent to Casterly Rock, but is informed that Jon Arryn intended to send Robert to Dragonstone to be fostered by Lord Stannis.

At the same time, in Eryie, Tyrion is brought before Robert Arryn to face trial. Tyrion has chosen trial by combat. Lysa, acting as lord, chooses Vardis Egen as her champion and Tyrion's champion is Bronn. The trial seems as though it should be an exciting fight, especially since Bronn only wears thin armor. However, Bronn is a superior fighter to Lysa's fighter, Ser Vardis Egen. Bronn quickly wins the trial. Tyrion is allowed to go free. However, Lysa refuses to provide him with an escort despite the brewing conflict taking place outside Eryie's walls.



Chapter 37, Bran, Chapter 38, Tyrion, Chapter 39, Eddard, and Chapter 40, Catelyn Analysis

Bran is attacked by a group of people called wildlings. These people believe they can make money if they take Bran to a man named Mance Rayder, a man who lives Beyond-the-Wall, and supposedly attempting to build an army to attack Westeros with. However, Robb returns and manages to kill the majority of the wildlings. One of the wildlings gets a hold of Bran and threatens to kill him, but the wildling is instead killed by one of Robb's men. This attack against Bran seems random and separate from the other attacks on his life, but the reader can see how it relates to another subplot, that of the missing Benjen Stark. The reader is beginning to wonder why Benjen is so important to the wildlings and Mance Rayder, as well as wondering if Benjen Stark is still alive after being missing for so long.

Eddard receives a visit from Robert and Cersei. Cersei accuses Eddard of beginning the fight between his men and Jaime's, claiming he was drunk after visiting the brothel. Eddard denies this, telling Robert the true reason he was at the brothel. Eddard wants Jaime to pay for what has happened, but Robert refuses him. Then Robert tells Eddard he must remain in his role as Hand and if he leaves, Robert will allow Jaime to kill him.

Catelyn is concerned about Robert Arryn. Catelyn believes he needs to leave his mother and be taught discipline. Catelyn learns Jon Arryn believed the same thing, but is surprised when it is revealed Jon Arryn wanted Robert to be fostered with Lord Stannis, King Robert's brother.

The trial by combat Tyrion has chosen to face the charges against him goes in Tyrion's favor and Tyrion is free to go. The reader is happy about this because the reader knows Tyrion is innocent. However, Tyrion's continued safety comes into question when Lysa Arryn refuses to give him an escort through the mountains, even though Lysa knows Jaime is building an army and there is more than likely other armies also moving into the area.



Chapter 41, Jon, Chapter 42, Tyrion, Chapter 43, Eddard, and Chapter 44, Sansa

Chapter 41, Jon, Chapter 42, Tyrion, Chapter 43, Eddard, and Chapter 44, Sansa Summary

Jon is promoted, along with several of his classmates. However, Sam is not. Jon becomes concerned Sam will be alone without the protection he has come to depend on. Jon goes to the Maester to ask that Sam be promoted and the Maester promises to consider it. At the same time, Tyrion and Bronn travel alone out of the mountains around Eryies. Tyrion tells Bronn about a time when he married a woman who turned out to be a prostitute. When his father learned about the marriage, he ordered the woman violated by his men in order to humiliate Tyrion. This event left Tyrion filled with anger toward his father. Later, Bronn and Tyrion are set upon by a local band of outlaws. Tyrion manages to talk his way out of sure death by promising if these men will escort them out of the mountains he will provide them with weapons from his father's armory and help in attacking the Vale of Arryn.

While Robert is hunting, Eddard sits on the throne. Three knights from Riverrun appear before Eddard with a story of slaughter and injustice in Riverrun by the knight, Ser Gregor. Eddard listens to the testimony before he passes judgment on Ser Gregor, sentencing him to death. Eddard then hand picks the man to enforce the sentence, purposely choosing not to send the King's Justice due to the fact the King's Justice is a Lannister man. Eddard believes the Lannisters are behind Ser Gregor's behavior in order to weaken Riverrun's defenses, so he does not want to take any chances the sentence will not be enforced.

Sansa and Arya have an argument that ends with Sansa's dress being ruined. Sansa returns to her rooms where Eddard visits her and Arya. Eddard tells his daughters he is sending them back to Winterfell. Sansa does not want to go, she wants to stay with Joffrey. When Sansa mentions she and Joffrey will have beautiful, blond haired children, Eddard suddenly realizes what it is that Jon Arryn learned that caused his death.

Chapter 41, Jon, Chapter 42, Tyrion, Chapter 43, Eddard, and Chapter 44, Sansa Analysis

Jon has been promoted, but his friend Sam has not. Jon is concerned about Sam being left behind, so he goes to the Maester and asks that Sam be promoted as well. Jon's actions show the reader the depth of his character, his kindness and concern for others. It also touches on the theme of maturity as it shows a maturity Jon has developed since



joining the Night's Guard. At the same time, Tyrion is making his way out of the mountains with the fighter Bronn. Tyrion tells Bronn why he dislikes his father. However, a short time later Tyrion promises a group of outlaws his father's weapons, suggesting that despite Tyrion's hatred of his father he is still loyal to him, or perhaps only appears loyal in order to get things he needs. This leaves Tyrion's true loyalties in question, leaving the reader wondering whose side he will pick when war breaks out.

Eddard is sitting on the throne while Robert is hunting. Eddard hears a case against Ser Gregor that suggests the Lannisters are attempting to compromise Riverrun, one of the strongest holds in the Seven Kingdoms still loyal to the King. Eddard sentences Ser Gregor to death but instead of sending the King's Justice to execute him, Eddard handpicks another knight. This causes a small uproar, but Eddard feels if he sends one of Lannisters men to execute Ser Gregor, it will not happen. Later, Eddard visits his daughters and tells them he is sending them home. Sansa becomes upset because she still believes in Joffrey and is still anxious to marry him. Sansa attempts to persuade her father by telling him how she and Joffrey will have beautiful blond babies together. When she says this, Eddard suddenly realizes what it was Jon Arryn discovered before he died. The reader does not know what this is right away, however the fact the conversation is about babies and Jon Arryn visited so many of King Robert's illegitimate children, it is safe for the reader to believe the secret has something to do with children.



Chapter 45, Eddard, Chapter 46, Daenerys, Chapter 47, Eddard, and Chapter 48, Jon

Chapter 45, Eddard, Chapter 46, Daenerys, Chapter 47, Eddard, and Chapter 48, Jon Summary

The King remains hunting long past the rest of his party. While he is gone, Eddard goes to speak with Cersei. Eddard tells her he knows her three children are the product of her relationship with Jaime and not Robert. Cersei admits it, even tells him Jaime threw Bran out the window when he discovered the truth. Cersei offers herself to Eddard if he will keep silent, but Eddard is disgusted by this suggestion, asking if she did the same with Jon. Eddard then tells her he plans to tell Robert the truth and she should get out of town before that can happen. Cersei laughs, calling Eddard a fool for not having more ambition, suggesting he has made a mistake, one of many.

Daenerys is presented to the dosh khaleen in a ceremony honoring her unborn child. Viserys comes to the ceremony drunk and angry, complaining about where he is seated for the ceremony. Viserys is so angry that he pulls a sword on Daenerys, something forbidden in Vaes Dothrak. Drogo has his men take Viserys away and later punishes him by pouring molten gold over his head.

The King has been injured during the hunt and lies dying in his bed. King Robert was drunk when he went after the boar, making him reckless. Eddard demands to know who gave Robert the wine and learns it was a Lannister, one of his squires. When Eddard visits with Robert, Robert makes him the Protector of the Realm and Lord Regent, giving him the right to sit on the throne until Robert's heir, Joffrey, comes of age. Eddard does not tell Robert Joffrey is not his child. However, Eddard sends a letter to Lord Stannis, offering the throne to him because he is the rightful heir. Then Eddard arranges guards for his daughters, expecting trouble from Cersei since he has refused to have her jailed. Eddard does not want to arrest Cersei before Robert dies.

It is time for Jon and Sam to take their vows. Jon wants to take his vows in the godswood in the Beyond-the-Wall as does Sam. Before they go, they are giving their assignments. Instead of being sent to the rangers as Jon hoped, he is made steward to the Lord Commander. Jon is angry, seeing this as a slight. However, Sam tells him it is possible he has been given this assignment so the Lord Commander can train him to take his place one day. Later, after Jon and Sam have said their vows, Jon's direwolf brings him a severed human hand.



Chapter 45, Eddard, Chapter 46, Daenerys, Chapter 47, Eddard, and Chapter 48, Jon Analysis

Eddard goes to Cersei and tells her what he knows about her relationship with Jaime and the paternity of her children. Cersei does not deny it. In fact, Cersei tells Eddard the truth about Bran's fall. Cersei then tries to coax Eddard into bed, hoping it will keep him quiet. Eddard refuses, giving Cersei notice that he is going to tell Robert the truth. Eddard suggests she leave town. Cersei laughs, suggesting to the reader Cersei is not afraid of Robert learning the truth. Cersei's lack of fear makes the reader wonder if she knows something Eddard nor the reader already knows.

Daenerys's brother Viserys is put to death by her husband after he draws a sword on her. The reader knows Viserys has been miserable toward his sister most of her life and wonders how she will feel about his death. Daenerys should be relieved, but the reader can see how loyal she has been to her brother throughout the novel and wonders if perhaps she will be grief stricken over Viserys's death despite his behavior toward her. The reader is also unsure how Viserys's death will affect Drogo's plan to attack the Seven Kingdoms.

Robert has been injured and is going to die. While Eddard does not want to tell Robert the truth about his wife's infidelity and the paternity of his children, he also does not want Joffrey to take the throne. Eddard writes a letter to Lord Stannis inviting him to take the throne since, as Robert's brother, he is the true heir. The reader doubts, however, that Cersei will allow this to happen. How Cersei will stop Eddard, however, remains to be revealed.

Jon takes his vows as a Night's Guard in the godswoods in the Beyond-the-Wall. Before this, however, Jon learns that instead of being assigned to the rangers, he is to be a steward to the Lord Commander. Jon believes this is his training officer's way of punishing him, but later begins to believe Sam's insistence that it simply means the Lord Commander wants to train him to take his place. Later, after taking his vows, Jon's direwolf appears with a severed hand. Since Benjen Stark and his men have been missing for a long while, the reader wonders if perhaps this is might be a hand belonging to one of them.



Chapter 49, Eddard, Chapter 50, Arya, and Chapter 51, Sansa

Chapter 49, Eddard, Chapter 50, Arya, and Chapter 51, Sansa Summary

The men who were Eddard's support have fled King's Landing. Eddard continues his fight after the king dies, however. Eddard convenes the council in order to read into the record Robert's dying wish, that Eddard be named Protector of the Realm. However, before this can be completed, Cersei announces Joffrey has been named King. Eddard goes to her and shows her Robert's writ, but Cersei tears it up, announcing there is a new king now. Cersei tells Eddard if he will bend to the new king she will let him go, but Eddard refuses. Eddard attempts to have Cersei arrested, but Cersei's men turn on Eddard, kill his men, and arrest Eddard.

Arya is training with Syrio Forel before they are due to board ship for Winterfell. As they are training, five Lannister guardsmen and Ser Meryn Trant of the Kingsguard barge in saying her father wants to see her. Arya and Syrio know her father would never send Lannister men to retrieve her. Syrio, armed only with a wooden practice sword, kills all five Lannister guards, but is then confronted by Ser Meryn, who is armored head to toe. Syrio tells Arya to run, but when she tells him to escape with her, he refuses. Arya runs, but when she gets near the Tower of the Hand, she hears fighting and sees dead bodies at the door. Arya runs for the stables, finding Fat Tom dead, and sees her chest on the floor. Arya retrieves Needle, and uses it on a stable hand that discovers her, killing someone for the first time. Arya enters the dungeons beneath the Red Keep, hoping to find a way out into the city.

Sansa is held prisoner for several days after the death of the King. Eventually Sansa is taken to Cersei and told her father is a traitor. Sansa denies it, but eventually breaks under the Queen's insistence. The Queen dictates letters for Sansa to write to her family members demanding they come to King's Landing and bow before the new king. In exchange, Cersei promises to allow Sansa to marry Joffrey.

Chapter 49, Eddard, Chapter 50, Arya, and Chapter 51, Sansa Analysis

Robert has died. Eddard acts quickly to have Robert's final wishes acted upon, but discovers Cersei has acted even more quickly. Cersei has already had Joffrey crowned king, making any wishes of Robert's obsolete. Eddard refuses to bow before the new king, instead attempting to have Cersei arrested. However, Eddard is alone in his attempts and it fails. Instead, Eddard is arrested and labeled a traitor. Immediately Eddard's daughters are sought. Arya manages to escape when her teacher fights off the



men sent to arrest her. However, Sansa does not get away. In fact, Sansa is not even aware of what is happening until Cersei informs her that her father is a traitor. Sansa is forced to write letters to her family members, telling them to come to King's Landing in order to bow before the new king. In exchange, Cersei promises to allow Sansa to marry Joffrey.

It seems the Lannisters's plan to take over the crown has finally come to fruition. Although Joffrey is not the true heir, he is made king by his mother, who claims he is the rightful heir. Now Eddard appears to be the traitor, when the true traitor is the Lannister family. The plot is filled with tension now as the reader is left wondering what will happen to Eddard and why Cersei has insisted all the members of the Stark family be brought to King's Landing. It appears Cersei intends to rid the country of all Starks, leaving the reader anxious to learn if she will succeed.



Chapter 52, Jon, Chapter 53, Bran, and Chapter 54, Daenerys

Chapter 52, Jon, Chapter 53, Bran, and Chapter 54, Daenerys Summary

A group of men go Beyond-the-Wall in search of the body belonging to the hand Jon's direwolf found. They stumble on two men, both men who were with Benjen Stark when he went in search of the missing knight more than six months before. The men appear to have been dead only a short time, but Jon believes they have been dead much longer by the state of the blood in their veins. Jon also believes they were not killed here, but moved. It is also suggested they were killed by wildlings, but Jon notices their blue eyes, which suggests that they were killed by the Others. The men decide to take the bodies back to Castle Black.

Over dinner that night Jon gets into a fight with Ser Alliser when it becomes public knowledge that Eddard has been arrested as a traitor. Jon is sent to his room under guard for this indiscretion. In the night, Jon hears a noise outside his door and finds the guard has been killed. Moments later Jon sees one of the corpses walking through the hallways toward the Lord Commander's room. Jon follows and tries to stop it from hurting the Lord Commander but finds all his struggle is in vain. Jon lights the curtains on fire, burning himself when he throws them down on the corpse, finally stopping it.

Eddard's men return to Winterfell. One attempts to take command from Robb, but is stopped. Robb will command these men. However, the girl who was with the wildlings that attacked Bran suggests Robb is trying to fight the wrong people. The girl believes Robb should go north, to Beyond-the-Wall and fight Mance Rayder. This girl also tells Bran that many of the mystical creatures who once populated Westeros still exist on the other side of the wall, including the giants. Bran wants to be a knight and go see all these creatures, but his fall has left him disabled. Bran is told he could still become a knight, but in the same breath Bran is mocked for still believing in the existence of the children of the forest. Rob and his army leave a few days later.

With Vinerys dead, Drogo tells Daenerys he no longer intends to take his men to invade the Seven Kingdoms. However, while Daenerys is visiting a market, a wine merchant attempts to poison her and receive the lordship offered by King Robert. Filled with anger, Drogo changes his mind and promises to reclaim the throne of Daenerys.



Chapter 52, Jon, Chapter 53, Bran, and Chapter 54, Daenerys Analysis

Jon goes into the Beyond-the-Wall with a group of men to find the bodies belonging to the severed hand his direwolf brought him. When they find the men, Jon believes they were killed by the Others, but the men believe them to have been killed by wildlings. Jon proves to be correct, however, when one of the men, returned to the Castle Black, is reanimated in the night. The corpse tries to kill the Lord Commander but Jon manages to stop him by dropping burning drapes on him. Jon, however, is injured in the process. Jon has once again proven himself to be mature, a theme of the novel, and a man to be trusted.

Bran wants to be a knight and learn magic so he can one day meet the children of the forest, despite being mocked. The wildling tells Bran magical creatures do still exist on the other side of the wall and Bran wants to see them. Bran is still a child in many ways, but the reader is beginning to suspect that some of things Bran believes in are true. At the same time, Robb has taken his father's army and is moving south, toward the army Jaime Lannister has gathered. At the same time, Daenerys is nearly poisoned by someone wanting to collect on Robert's promise of a lordship. This event causes Drogo to continue with his plans to invade the Seven Kingdoms.



Chapter 55, Catelyn, Chapter 56, Tyrion, Chapter 57, Sansa

Chapter 55, Catelyn, Chapter 56, Tyrion, Chapter 57, Sansa Summary

Catelyn finds her son's army camped near Moat Cailin, an ancient fortress of the First Men which guards the Neck. Robb shows her the letter from Sansa and they both know the words to be Cersei's. Catelyn learns Ser Jaime's army is nearing Riverrun and has already killed Lord Vance, sending his force running, while Ser Raymun Darry was killed at the Red Fork by Ser Gregor's men. Robb tells his mother of his plan to lead his army to Riverrun to lift the siege, while his main army of foot soldiers move south to intercept Lord Tywin Lannister. Robb intends to give the Greatjon command of the foot, but Catelyn talks him into giving it to Roose Bolton. Robb wants his mother to return to Winterfell, but she intends to go to Riverrun to see her dying father.

Tyrion and his warriors from the clans of the Mountains of the Moon come across his father's army, and Tyrion is escorted to his father's pavilion. Lord Tywin tells Tyrion that Ser Edmure Tully was captured by Jaime's army at Riverrun. Tywin admits that Lord Beric Dondarrion is still harassing his foraging parties. When an outrider informs Lord Tywin that Robb's army is approaching, he convinces Tyrion's clansmen they will be repaid for helping in the coming battle.

Sansa attends King Joffrey's first court session, where the herald reads off the names of all the lords and knights who must bow to Joffrey, most of whom are not present and do not intend to offer their loyalty. Cersei and Janos Slynt are named to the King's council, and Slynt is raised to lord. Cersei then has Ser Barristan removed from the Kingsguard. Ser Jaime is named Lord Commander and the Hound is given a position with the Kingsguard, the first of the renowned white swords to be elevated to the position, even though he is not a knight. Sansa comes forward to beg for mercy for her father and Cersei says that if Eddard admits his guilt and swears loyalty he will be granted mercy.

Chapter 55, Catelyn, Chapter 56, Tyrion, Chapter 57, Sansa Analysis

Catelyn runs into Robb and his army. Catelyn discusses things with Robb, talking about the war brewing and the letters Sansa has sent them. Catelyn advises Robb not only to ignore his sister's letter, but on how to position his armies in order to survive the coming battles. Robb is clearly a smart commander and his plans are solid, giving the reader hope the right side will win the coming conflict. However, Tyrion joins his father and the reader sees the other side of the conflict. Although the Lannisters have already run into some trouble, they have the outlaws Tyrion has brought out of the mountains to help

them. Tension continues to build within the plot as the reader finds themselves on pins and needles waiting to see how this turns out.

Joffrey has his first court session. Joffrey uses this first session to arrange his council, appointing those loyal to him to positions of power while dismissing men loyal to Robert and Eddard from their positions. Sansa watches this before begging for mercy for her father. Sansa is not disappointed. Cersei readily agrees to give Eddard mercy if only he will swear loyalty to Joffrey. However, the reader suspects this will never happen.



Chapter 58, Eddard, Chapter 59, Catelyn, and Chapter 60, Jon

Chapter 58, Eddard, Chapter 59, Catelyn, and Chapter 60, Jon Summary

Eddard is in jail, feverish from his broken leg, and filled with memories of the past. Varys comes to see Eddard and tells him that if he agrees to bow to Joffrey, he will be allowed to join the Night's Guard. However, if Eddard refuses, it does not mean just his life, but possibly Sansa's as well. Eddard also learns Arya got away and Tyrion is no longer in Catelyn's custody.

Robb's army arrives at the Twins and discovers it has been shut down. There is no other way across the river. Robb's men want to take the crossing by force, but realize this will not be a successful bid. Instead Catelyn meets with Lord Walder and, after some bartering, manages to create an alliance. In exchange for giving Robb his army and allowing them to pass, the Starks must foster two of their boys at Winterfell, take a boy as squire, marry Arya to Lord Walder's son Elmar and marry Robb to the daughter of his choosing. Robb agrees.

Lord Commander Mormont gives Jon a sword of Valyrian steel named Longclaw, a sword that has been in the Mormont family for years. Mormont has the pommel reworked to look like a wolf's head to honor the Stark family. Mormont tells Jon he is sending Ser Alliser to King's Landing to warn the new King of the dangers in the north. Later Jon is summoned to speak with Maester Aemon. Aemon knows Jon feels he must go help his father and brothers, so he tells Jon that a day comes in every man's life when he must choose between his vows of duty and his loyalty toward his family. Jon insists Aemon does not know what it feels like to be forced into this situation, but the Maester tells him his vows have been tested three times. Aemon reveals to Jon he is actually Aemon Targaryen and he has kept his vows, living with the choice most of his life.

Chapter 58, Eddard, Chapter 59, Catelyn, and Chapter 60, Jon Analysis

Eddard is told he can go to the Wall if he agrees to bow down to Joffrey and admit he committed treason. Eddard thinks about a life lived beside his son, Jon, and seems almost willing to take the deal. The fact the deal would also save Sansa's life also weighs heavy on Eddard's mind. Eddard is sick and tired, willing to die but not willing to sacrifice the lives of his children. However, Eddard does not make his decision just yet, leaving the reader curious what he will decide to do.



Catelyn is forced to make a deal with the family who lives in the Twins in order to allow Robb's army to pass. The deal marries two of her children off to the children of the master of the Twins, including Robb. Robb agrees because he needs to get to Riverrun soon since it is rumored to have collapsed under Jaime's army. This deal gives the Starks another large army to control in this budding war, giving them another leg up in the fight. The reader waits in anticipation to see if this will make a difference further along in the development of the plot.

Jon is desperate to leave the Night's Watch and go to help his brother in this budding war. His master, Maester Aemon confesses to Jon he knows exactly what he is facing. Aemon is a Targaryen, a relative of Daenerys who has had to sit by and watch his family embattled and dethroned, knowing there is nothing he can do. The reader watches this conversation and wonders if it will have any effect on Jon.



Chapter 61, Daenerys, Chapter 62, Tyrion, Chapter 63, Catelyn, and Chapter 64, Daenerys

Chapter 61, Daenerys, Chapter 62, Tyrion, Chapter 63, Catelyn, and Chapter 64, Daenerys Summary

Drogo's group comes upon a village being destroyed by another army. Drogo defeats the army and takes the men as hostages in order to trade them for the ships he will need to sail to the Seven Kingdoms. Daenerys wanders through town and finds men violating the women of the village. Daenerys makes them stop and takes the women as her handmaidens. Later, Daenerys finds Drogo has been wounded. A healer comes to her and offers to help. Daenerys allows her even though Drogo's men believe her to be a witch. Not only does Daenerys trust this healer with her husband, but she also asks her to help when it is her time to give birth.

Tyrion's father informs him he will be serving under Ser Gregor's command. Tyrion is unhappy with this, especially when he learns he has been assigned to a flank of the army expected to suffer great casualties. Tyrion survives the battle, but learns his father placed him in the flank on purpose. Later, it is learned the battle was a distraction intended to keep Tywin from learning Robb was leading an army into Riverrun. There, Catelyn watches underguard as Robb's army battles Jaime's army at Riverrun. The assault goes as planned and Jaime is defeated, taken captive by Robb's men. Catelyn is pleased with the day's fighting, but is still concerned because Tywin's army is still strong.

Drogo's wound is infected and he is dying. Daenerys sends for the healer. The healer tells her there is nothing she can do. Daenerys begs her and the healer finally tells her there is a spell, but it is dangerous and not sure to work. Drogo's men do not want the healer to weave her spells on Drogo and try to stop it, but they are killed by Daenerys' men. The healer goes into the tent with Drogo and begins the spell. Daenerys goes into labor, so her maids take her into the tent to get the healer and walk in on dead spirits they are not meant to see.

Chapter 61, Daenerys, Chapter 62, Tyrion, Chapter 63, Catelyn, and Chapter 64, Daenerys Analysis

Drogo and his party come across a village being attacked. Through the course of stopping the attack, Drogo is injured. Daenerys finds a healer who promises to make him well. However, her promise is not fulfilled and Drogo becomes deathly ill. Daenerys talks the woman into trying a difficult spell to heal her husband, despite the outright



refusal of Drogo's men. During the spell, Daenerys goes into labor and is taken into the tent even though she has been warned to stay away. The reader does not know what happens when Daenerys enters that tent, but suspects from the healer's warning it cannot be good.

Tyrion later learns his father placed him in a particular flank on purpose. Tyrion's father seems to want him dead, though the reader is not sure why, except perhaps for his father's embarrassment at his son's physical disability. At the same time, Robb's army attacks Jaime's in Riverrun and manages to win the battle, taking Jaime prisoner. However, Tywin's army is still alive and well, causing Catelyn to look forward to the next battle rather than celebrating with her son.



Chapter 65, Arya, Chapter 66, Bran, Chapter 67, Sansa and Chapter 68, Daenerys

Chapter 65, Arya, Chapter 66, Bran, Chapter 67, Sansa and Chapter 68, Daenerys Summary

Arya is living off pigeons and rats in the alleys of Flea Bottom, a suburb in King's Landing. Seeking a way out of the city, Arya is swept along by the crowd to the Great Sept of Baelor where her father will be judged. Eddard proclaims his guilt and swears loyalty to Joffrey, expecting to be given the deal Varys promised. However, Joffrey calls for Eddard's head. Immediately Eddard is beheaded with his own sword. Arya does not see the sword blow because she is caught by Yoren. Yoren cuts her hair and warns her to pretend she is a boy.

Bran wants to go into the crypt because he had a dream his father spoke to him there. However, when they go down there, a direwolf attacks Maester Luwin. Back upstairs, Bran continues to insist the dream was true. Bran also insists the children of the forest still exist. Maester Luwin tells them the tale of the children of the forest. The children lived during the Dawn Age, before the coming of men in the land now called the Seven Kingdoms. They lived in the depths of the woods, in caves and crannogs and secret tree towns. Their wise men were called greenseers and carved the faces in the weirwoods to watch over the forest. No one knows how long they reigned or where they came from. Luwin takes out several arrowheads made of dragonglass, or obsidian, which the children of the forest forged far below the earth and Osha, the wildling, says the children forge it still.

Sansa is in her room grieving for her father when Joffrey comes, insisting she sit with him in court. Sansa objects, but Joffrey has the Hound force her. Later, Joffrey takes Sansa to the gatehouse where her father's head is mounted. Joffrey tells her how Robb won the battle against Jaime that day and that someday Robb's head will be mounted here as well. Sansa suggests that perhaps Joffrey's head will be mounted there instead. Joffrey has one of his knights beat Sansa for her comments. Just as Sansa is thinking about attacking Joffrey, the Hound comes between them and gently wipes the blood from Sansa's mouth.

Daenerys wakes from a fever to learn she has lost her baby and her husband is in a vegetative state. Not only this, but Drogo's men have deserted them. Daenerys accuses the healer of lying to her about the spell she cast on Drogo. The healer says Drogo deserved what he got because of what his men did to her temple. Daenerys has the healer arrested. That night, Daenerys smothers Drogo with a pillow to end his life.



Chapter 65, Arya, Chapter 66, Bran, Chapter 67, Sansa and Chapter 68, Daenerys Analysis

Arya has not been found, but she nearly witnesses her father's execution. Eddard decides to accept the deal and admit his guilt. However, Joffrey does not stay true to his word and Eddard is executed anyway. Arya is whisked out of the square and warned to disguise herself so she will not be caught, suggesting to the reader Joffrey will not be satisfied with just Eddard's death. Later Sansa sees Joffrey's cruel side when he tells her he plans to have her brother executed as well. Sansa is beaten when she dares to speak out against Joffrey. Now Sansa would like to kill Joffrey but she is stopped by the Hound who shows a gentle side to his nature she was unaware of until now.

Bran is at home having dreams about his father. Bran still believes the children of the forest survive. Finally Maester Luwin tells him about the children, perhaps to show him they could not possibly still be around. However, the story seems only to increase Bran's fascination with them, leaving the reader wondering how these children tie in with the plot and if they do, in fact, live.

Daenerys learns she has lost her child and her husband is in an irreversible vegetative state. Daenerys has the woman responsible arrested, realizing now she is the evil witch Drogo's men tried to tell her she was. However, it is too late for Drogo. That night Daenerys is forced to end Drogo's life, once again showing her strength of character. Now Daenerys is alone, leaving the reader wondering what will happen to her.



Chapter 69, Tyrion, Chapter 70, Jon, Chapter 71, Catelyn, and Chapter 72, Daenerys

Chapter 69, Tyrion, Chapter 70, Jon, Chapter 71, Catelyn, and Chapter 72, Daenerys Summary

Tyrion and his father, Tywin, learn Robb has taken Jaime prisoner and most of Jaime's army is either dead or run off. Tywin's men want to surrender, but Tyrion knows that after the execution of Eddard, this is impossible. Cersei wants Tywin to come to King's Landing to protect her and Joffrey, but Tywin decides to head toward the Riverland instead. Tywin does send Tyrion to King's Landing, however, to act as King's Hand and try to straighten out the mess Cersei and Joffrey have gotten everyone into.

Jon has a plan to desert the Night's Watch and join his brother Robb in secrecy. Knowing his life is done if he gets caught, he leaves anyway. Sam is aware, but Jon does not worry he will tell anyone. As Jon passes Mole's Town, he hears voices and realizes they are his friends looking for him. Jon acts tough, but eventually gives in and they ride back to Castle Black. The next morning, Mormont is aware of what Jon did and confronts him. Jon thinks his life is over, but the Lord Commander does not punish him. Instead, Mormont tells Jon mammoth tracks were found near Eastwatch, and Qhorin Halfhand took a captive who revealed Mance Rayder is gathering his people in some secret stronghold. Mormont goes on to say he believes Jon is meant to be here because the blood of the First Men is strong in the Starks. It is said the First Men built the Wall and remember things otherwise forgotten. Mormont plans to march beyond the Wall in force, to find Ben Stark dead or alive, and learn what Mance is doing. Mormont wants to bring Jon with him.

Catelyn arrives in Riverrun and goes first to see her dying father. Later Catelyn finds her son in the godswoods with his men. They are discussing what they should do next. Some want to end the fight now, some want to move on and dethrone Joffrey. Robb wants to continue fighting in order to get justice for his father. Everyone agrees, rallying behind Robb. Robb is declared King of the North by his father's men, an event that has not taken place in more than three hundred years.

Daenerys plans a funeral pyre for her husband despite the objections of her men who believe she plans to kill herself with the fire. Daenerys insists she intends to live and to be their queen, asking them to take the oath to be in her Queensguard. Only one agrees. Daenerys places the dragon eggs beside Drogo and then has the healer brought to her. Daenerys ties the healer to the pyre before lighting it, restating what the healer said before, a death for a life. When the fire is going strong, Daenerys walks into the middle of it. When the fire dies, Daenerys is found unharmed, nursing three baby



dragons. This is the first time in hundreds of years dragons have hatched, making Daenerys the mother of three very important dragons.

Chapter 69, Tyrion, Chapter 70, Jon, Chapter 71, Catelyn, and Chapter 72, Daenerys Analysis

The war looks bleak for the Lannisters. Tywin sends Tyrion to King's Landing, to take on the role of King's Hand and perhaps to straighten out the mess Cersei has created there, while he continues up the Riverlands. Robb decides to continue the fight as well, seeking justice for his father, and is anointed King by his father's men. Jon wants to join Robb and seek justice for his father as well, but is talked into returning to the Night's Guard where he is to join an expedition to Beyond-the-Wall in order to find Benjen Stark. Daenerys kills the woman responsible for the death of her husband and her child while at the same time hatching three dragon eggs thought to be fossilized. Daenerys is now the mother of three dragons, the first in hundreds of years.

The book ends with many threads of narrative incomplete. Jon is about to go on a new journey in his life, as are Tyrion and Robb. Daenerys becomes a mother to dragons. These things suggest a new story for each character, leaving the reader anxious for more. However, the reader is satisfied Jon appears to have chosen his path in life, sticking with the Night's Guard. Robb is a king now, which means he finds himself in a role of great responsibility and maturity, touching on one of the themes. Catelyn too finds herself at Robb's side, taking on the role of matriarch with grace and confidence. Tyrion has finally gotten his father's respect, to a small degree, and a role that gives him a chance to prove himself once and for all.



Characters

Lord Eddard Stark

Eddard 'Ned' Stark is Lord of Winterfell, Lord Paramount of the North, and Warden of the North. From the age of eight, Eddard, and another young man, Robert, are fostered by Jon Arryn at the Eyrie. Eddard befriends Robert, and comes to consider Lord Arryn a second father. After Eddard's father and brother die by command of King Aerys II, the king demands that Arryn send him the heads of the two wards. Arryn refuses and instead launches a rebellion, in which Eddard and Robert join as lords of their houses and chief commanders. Shortly before the final battles of the rebellion, Eddard marries Catelyn Tully, who had been engaged to Eddard's brother Brandon before his death.

During the rebellion, Eddard was present at a tower on the Dornish border, known as the 'tower of joy,' when his sister Lyanna died there. This incident is surrounded in mystery and haunts Eddard ever after. After the conflict ends and Robert took the throne, Eddard returns home, bringing with him a illegitimate son, Jon, about whose origins he refuses to speak, even to his own wife. The only thing Eddard will say is that the boy's mother is not the Dornish noblewoman, Ashara Dayne. Eddard will spend the next fifteen years as Lord of Winterfell, a task he never expected and does not always feel equal to. Eddard rarely leaves his lands and does not involve himself in the complex intrigues of the southern courts.

After Jon Arryn's death, King Robert asks Eddard to replace him as Hand of the King, the monarch's closest advisor. Eddard wants to decline the request, but instead goes south at his wife's urging to investigate Arryn's death. During this investigation, Eddard discovers Robert's children are actually the product of incest between Robert's wife Cersei and her brother, Jaime Lannister. Eddard confronts Cersei with this knowledge, giving her a warning to flee while she can. Instead, Cersei orchestrates Robert's assassination and buys off the city watch, known as the Gold Cloaks. Cersei then has Eddard imprisoned for treason. Eddard is later executed.

Princess Daenerys

Daenerys is a member of House Targaryen, the former royal family of Westeros, descending from Aegon I and his wife, Rhaenys. Her father was King Aerys II, and her mother was Aerys's sister, Queen Rhaella. Daenerys was conceived during Robert Baratheon's rebellion that would ultimately end her family's reign. Before Daenerys was born, her mother and brother, Viserys, fled the royal seat at King's Landing for the safety of Dragonstone, the family's ancient home. Queen Rhaella soon went into labor and died giving birth to Daenerys. Shortly thereafter, Dragonstone fell to the rebel forces, and Daenerys and Viserys were smuggled away to the Free City of Braavos by a loyalist knight, Willem Darry. In Braavos, they lived in a house with a red door. After the knight's death, his servants drove Daenerys and Viserys from the house. Daenerys



wept as they were forced out and the house with the red door became a symbol for the childhood she never knew.

Viserys and Daenerys consider themselves the rightful rulers of Westeros. In the years that follow, she and Viserys wander among the nine Free Cities looking for aid, which earns Viserys the mocking title of 'the Beggar King'. Viserys is often a cruel, abusive companion, prone to mood swings and fits of violence. Viserys' obsession with regaining the crown he feels is his by bloodright instills in Daenerys a similar belief that reclaiming Westeros is the most important thing in her life. It is even suggested by Maester Aemon that Daenerys is the Prince who was Promised. In the Free City of Pentos, the Targaryens are the guests of Illyrio Mopatis, a rich and powerful magister. Illyrio and Viserys arrange to marry thirteen-year-old Daenerys to Khal Drogo, a great leader among the Dothraki people, who are nomadic horse lords. Viserys hopes to use the thousands of men in Drogo's khalasar to conquer Westeros. Despite Daenerys' fear and apprehension, she has no choice but to accept to wed Drogo. Now out of her domineering brother's control, the freedom and power of her new role as khaleesi, or queen, helps Daenerys blossom into a strong and confident young woman, even beginning to stand up to Viserys.

Daenerys, her brother, and the khalasar travel east to the only Dothraki city, Vaes Dothrak, in the heart of the Dothraki Sea, where Daenerys is presented to the crones known as the Dosh Khaleen. Daenerys becomes pregnant with Drogo's child. The crones prophesy her child will be 'the stallion that mounts the world', a long-prophesized Dothraki conqueror. During a drunken rage, Viserys breaks Dothraki law by drawing a blade in the holy city, causing Khal Drogo to put him to death. The group continues east, conquering foreign lands. Drogo takes a wound in battle that threatens his life. Daenerys commands a maegi to heal him. However, the maegi betrays her, leaving Drogo brain-dead and also causes the death of Daenerys' unborn child. Daenerys ends Drogo's life herself and is abandoned by most of his group. Daenerys has Drogo's body burned and walks into the flames with her dragon eggs. The resulting magic restores life to the eggs, from which three dragons hatch, the first to be born for centuries. Daenerys becomes the first female Dothraki leader, a khaleesi in her own right.

Tyrion Lannister

Tyrion Lannister is Cersei and Jaime's brother, a dwarf nicknamed The Imp and The Halfman. Though Tyrion shares his father's talent for political maneuvering, he receives little respect from his father because of his deformity and a sharp tongue. Tyrion is capable of cruelty to his enemies, but also has great sympathy for his fellow outcasts and the mistreated. It is this empathy that later allows Tyrion to develop a friendship with Jon Snow, the illegitimate son of Eddard Stark.

Tyrion joins the royal family on their fateful trip to Winterfell, after which he visits The Wall with Jon Snow. On his return, Tyrion meets Catelyn Stark at a roadside inn. Catelyn has come across evidence that suggests Tyrion sent an assassin to Winterfell to kill her son, Bran. Catelyn arrests him on suspicion of the attempted murder and



brings him to the Eyrie, her family home. Lysa Arryn puts Tyrion on trial for that crime, as well as the murder of Jon Arryn, her husband, who was poisoned weeks before Bran's fall. Tyrion escapes punishment with the victory of his champion, Bronn, in a trial by combat. After leaving the Eyrie, Tyrion recruits the mountain clans of the Vale into his service as a new civil war begins to break out. With his new troops, Tyrion participates in the Battle of the Green Fork against Stark forces. After the battle, Tyrion becomes the King's Hand.

Jon Snow

Jon Snow is the illegitimate son of Eddard, by a mother whose identity is not known. Despite his wife Catelyn's objections, Eddard insists on taking responsibility for the boy, and he grows up side-by-side with the trueborn Starks and is close with everyone but Catelyn and Eddard's daughter, Sansa. During King Robert Baratheon's visit to Winterfell, Jon asks his Uncle Benjen Stark to join the Night's Watch and is refused at first. Jon is only allowed to go later because his father and sisters are leaving to King's Landing and Catelyn does not want Jon to stay in Winterfell.

Jon is initially resented by the other recruits for his noble background, but eventually learns to fit in by uniting the recruits against their cruel master-at-arms, Alliser Thorne. Jon even makes a friend in another recruit, Samwell Tarly. Jon himself has trouble adjusting to the Watch life, which is much different from what he imagined, and tries to desert to help Robb after the war breaks out. However, Jon returns and is appointed personal steward and squire to Lord Commander Jeor Mormont as a means of grooming him for command. During a night attack on Castle Black, Jon saves Mormont's life and receives serious burns on his hand. Mormont gives him a sword of his family crest and has a direwolf head engraved onto the pommel in honor of House Stark.

Arya Stark

Arya is a spirited girl with an interest in fighting and exploring. Arya is annoying to her sister who is more interested in pomp and circumstance. Throughout her travels, Arya displays great resourcefulness, cunning, and an unflinching ability to accept hard necessity. Arya is skinny, athletic, and often mistaken for a boy. Arya has strong Stark family features, with a long face and brown hair. Arya is said to take after her fiery aunt Lyanna, though Arya struggles to see the comparison since she has always been told how beautiful Lyanna was. Arya does not see herself as a great beauty.

Arya travels with her father to King's Landing. Shortly after arriving, there is an altercation between Arya and Prince Joffery, culminating in the execution of her sister's direwolf. The entire event creates a deep hatred of the Queen and Prince Joffery in Arya. While at court, Arya trains under Syrio Forel, a celebrated Braavosi swordsman. Arya learns to fight in the Braavosi style with Needle, a sword Jon Snow gave her. After her father's arrest, Syrio helps Arya escape. Afterward, Arya lives on the streets until the



day of her father's execution, where she is taken away by a member of the Night Watch before she can see her father's beheading.

Cersei and Jaime Lannister

Cersei is the Queen through her marriage to King Robert. Cersei and Robert married because Robert needed to wed in order to produce an heir and Jon Arryn thought a Lannister would be a good match. However, Jon Arryn did not know Cersei and her brother, Jaime, were lovers. Unhappy in her marriage, Cersei refused to go to her husband's bed and instead shared her bed with her brother, producing several children with him. When Jon Arryn learns the truth of the paternity of these children, he is poisoned and dies.

Cersei and Jaime want to rule all of the Seven Kingdoms. Cersei and Jaime scheme to kill Robert and install their son, Joffrey, on the throne. However, when Robert appoints Eddard the King's Hand, this puts a wrench in their plans. Jaime attempts to kill Eddard, but when he learns his brother is a prisoner of Eddard's wife, he instead kills his men. Later, when Eddard finally discovers the truth of Cersei's infidelities, he threatens to tell Robert. However, before he can, Robert becomes injured in a hunting accident and dies. Eddard then attempts to arrest Cersei only to have her use her new powers as mother of the new king to have Eddard arrested and beheaded.

Catelyn Stark

Catelyn Stark is the wife of Eddard Stark of Winterfell and mother of their five children, Robb, Sansa, Arya, Bran, and Rickon. Catelyn is seen as honorable and upright by acquaintances, holding duty over desire as a governing principle of behavior. Catelyn has a deep love for family and a strong faith in the Seven. However, Catelyn regards the illegitimate Jon Snow as an outsider in her family and has never forgiven Eddard for bringing him into her home.

After Bran is attacked by an assassin, Catelyn travels to King's Landing to inform Eddard. There she is told the dagger used in the attack against Bran belonged to Tyrion Lannister. On her way home, Catelyn accidentally runs into Tyrion in an inn and arrests him. Despite Tyrion's insistence he is innocent, Catelyn takes him to her family home in order to have him placed on trial. However, Tyrion chooses a trial by combat and his fighter wins.

Bran Stark

Catelyn and Eddard's second son Bran enjoys climbing and exploring Winterfell. Like his siblings, Bran is dutiful and tough-minded. Bran's full name is Brandon, for his deceased uncle. Bran dreams of one day being a great knight. While climbing the walls of Winterfell one day, Bran sees Cersei and her brother, Jaime, in bed together. Jaime Lannister pushes him from the window to kill him and keep their secret, but Bran



survives. While in a coma, Bran has visions of a three-eyed crow. With the crow's guidance, Bran wakes from his coma, but not before a second attempt is made on his life. However Bran is partially paralyzed.

Robb Stark

Robb is Eddard Stark's eldest child and heir to Winterfell. When Eddard became the King's Hand, Robb remains at Winterfell to rule in his father's place. Robb handles his large amount of responsibility without complaint because he shares his father's devotion to honor and justice. Upon Eddard's execution, the armies of the north and the riverlands rally around Robb. Robb takes this new army and battles the Lannisters and their supporters. Robb proves to be a strong commander, taking his troops successfully through several battles. After winning the Battle of the Whispering Wood, Robb is declared King in the North by his father's men.

Khal Drogo

Drogo is a powerful khal, or warlord, of the Dothraki people, a tribal nation of expert riders and raiders. Drogo is an accomplished warrior and has never been defeated in battle. Drogo takes Daenerys Targaryen as his wife because Viserys Targaryen conspires with Magister Illyrio to marry Daenerys to Drogo in order to get his support in an invasion of The Seven Kingdoms. Though Daenerys is initially unhappy with the arrangement, Drogo proves to be a sensitive and loving husband. Drogo promises to invade Westeros to reclaim the Seven Kingdoms for the Targaryens, but Viserys's impatience ultimately causes Drogo to kill him. Drogo maintains his promise for the benefit of his wife, but is wounded by an enemy khal before he can begin the invasion. The wound festers and Drogo loses the ability to ride his horse. Most of his khalasar of Dothraki abandon him, but Daenerys sacrifices their unborn child for a spell to revive him. The spell works, but leaves him a vegetable. Daenerys smothers him to end his indignity. Daenerys throws her dragon eggs into Drogo's funeral pyre and they hatch. Daenerys names her favorite dragon after her husband, Drogon.



Objects/Places

Winterfell

Winterfell is in the north and is where Lord Eddard Stark reigns as Lord of the North. Winterfell is also where Eddard and his family live.

King's Landing

King's Landing is in the south. It is the place where the King of the realm resides. King's Landing is also where Lord Eddard Stark rules as King's Hand and where he is beheaded.

Ice

Ice is Eddard's personal sword which he uses in the novel as a tool of execution. It is also used to behead Lord Eddard himself.

The Wall

The great Wall, which is in the north, protects the realm from the evil forces of winter. The Wall is manned by the men of the Night Watch.

Westeros

Westeros is the continent where the majority of the novel takes place. In the beginning of its existence, Westeros is inhabited by the fairy-like children of the forest and the Giants of the North. When the First Men came, they initially warred with the children but then made a pact with them. When the House of Targaryen invaded they united the Westeros calling it The Seven Kingdoms. Later the defeat of Rhaegar Targaryen at the Battle of the Trident causes the Taragaryen's to be dethroned and Robert Baratheon becomes king.

Riverrun

Riverrun is the ancestral stronghold of House Tully, lords of the riverlands since the Conquest. The castle is a massive structure of sandstone located at a fork of the Tumblestone River. Riverrun is the location of Robb Stark's appointment as King in the North. At the beginning of the Civil War, Jaime Lannister attacks Riverrun with a large army, but later is defeated and captured by Robb Stark at the Battle of Whispering Wood.



Needle

Needle is the name of the sword Arya's illegitimate brother, Jon Snow, gives her. The sword was forged by the Blacksmith, Mikken, out of Valyrian steel. The sword is later used to save Arya's life after the arrest of her father, Eddard Stark.

Dragon Eggs

At Daenerys wedding, she receives three dragon eggs. Throughout the story, Daenerys can feel heat radiating from the eggs but no one else can. When Daenerys burns the body of Khal Drogo on the funeral pyre with the maegi, she throws the eggs into the fire and the eggs hatch, becoming the first dragons seen in three hundred years.

Trident

The Trident is located in the south. The Trident, a river with many branches, is the site of the final battle of the War of the Unsurper. It is there Robert Baratheon kills Rhaegar Targaryen, ending the House of Targaryens's reign in Westeros.

Dragonstone

Dragonstone is one of a group of islands in the Narrow Sea, close to the Westeros shore. It used to be the westernmost outpost of the freehold of Valyria. For centuries, the island has been the seat of House Targaryen, and after the conquest, the Targaryen heir apparent is named Prince of Dragonstone.

The Eyrie

The Eyrie is the ancient seat of House Arryn, one of the oldest lines of Andal nobility. Eyrie is the home of Lord Jon Arryn, who fostered Ned Stark and Robert Baratheon prior to the War. Lord Arryn was the first to raise his banners in rebellion against House Targaryen. After the war Lord Arryn serves as King Robert Baratheon's King's Hand. After Lord Arryn is assassinated, his wife Lysa Arryn takes their child, Robert, and returns to the Eyrie.

The Twins

The Twins are a heavily fortified set of castles connected by a stone arch bridge on the Green Fork River. The Twins have been the seat of House Frey for over six hundred years and they have grown wealthy by charging a heavy toll on all those who need to cross the river.



Themes

Maturity

Maturity is one of the major themes of this novel. Several of the main characters within the novel are children who grow into a young adulthood with a speed modern day teens could not imagine. The first of these is Daenerys Targaryen. Daenerys is an infant when the war that dethrones her family takes place. Ever since Daenerys has been moved around from place to place as her brother searches for a safe place for the two of them to take refuge before they can raise an army and regain what is rightfully theirs. Daenerys's brother, Viserys, is obsessed with the idea of regaining his rightful place on the throne of Westeros, punishing anyone he sees as standing in his path, including Daenerys. In fact, Viserys arranges a marriage for Daenerys when she is only thirteen in order to gain control of her husband's armies. Daenerys takes this marriage the way she believes her brother wants her to, accepting it and even finding some pleasure in it when her husband proves to be a gentle man.

However, Daenerys is still just a child. Daenerys wants to please everyone around her. Daenerys tries to adjust to her husband's lifestyle, finding it difficult at first, but soon discovering she can overcome any obstacle if she tries hard enough. The one obstacle Daenerys cannot overcome, however, is her brother. Viserys is angry he is not given an army right away and takes this anger out on Daenerys. Daenerys continues to be kinder to him than he deserves, however. When her husband finally kills Viserys, Daenerys grieves despite finally finding herself free of her brother's cruelty. All of this shows maturity in Daenerys beyond her numerical age. When cruelty visits Daenerys later in the story when she suffers a miscarriage and loses her husband, Daenerys once again raises to the challenge. Daenerys' dragon eggs hatch and she takes on a role not seen in thousands of years.

Robb Stark is another example of maturity in this novel. Though still a teenager, Robb steps up to run his father's kingdom when Eddard leaves to become the King's Hand. Later, after his father's death, Robb becomes King of the North, taking an army and defeating Jaime Lannister in the war that erupts after King Robert's untimely death. Others too show maturity, including Robb's sisters, Sansa and Arya, as well as Jon Snow. Jon Snow is only a year older than Daenerys at the beginning of the novel, but this does not stop him from running off to join the legendary Night's Guard. Jon begins his training almost showing off in his abilities with a sword but soon shows a depth of understanding beyond a modern teen of his same age when he begins helping his classmates with their own training. Jon's leaders see his maturity and soon begin to groom him for leadership. This is why maturity is one of the major themes of this novel.



Ambition

Ambition is another major theme seen in this novel. The Lannisters want to rule the all of Westeros, believing it is their right because of their wealthy standing among the Seven Kingdoms. To achieve their goals, Cersei marries King Robert to gain the power she will need to achieve her goal, despite having a long time love affair with her twin brother, Jaime. When Bran, Eddard Stark's son, overhears them plotting against the King, Jaime throws him from a window and later attempts to have him assassinated, allowing his younger brother to take the blame. Cersei and Jaime also arrange Robert's death and have Eddard put to death when he learns the truth about their ambitions. Soon a war erupts and the Lannisters believe they will come out on top. However, Jaime is defeated, ending the Lannister's reign in Westeros.

Viserys Targaryen also has ambition. Viserys' ambition is to return to his rightful place as king of Westeros. Viserys believes Robert stole his birthright during the conflict that ended the Targaryen reign and he is the only one who can win it back. Viserys plots to marry his young sister off to a small lord in exchange for an army to take to King's Landing. However, Viserys' greed rubs his new brother-in-law wrong and he is put to death in a horrible fashion. Daenerys, Viserys's sister, sees this and takes on Viserys's desire as her own in a gesture to his memory. All these things make ambition an important theme of this novel.

Loyalty

Loyalty is another theme of this novel. Loyalty is very important in the time this novel takes place. When war breaks out, it is the loyalty of the neighboring houses that makes each Kingdom strong enough to stand up against the Lannisters. It is also loyalty that helps Catelyn arrest Tyrion Lannister whom she believes tried to kill her son. If not for the men in the inn who were loyal to her father, Catelyn most likely would not have been able to arrest Tyrion without a fight. Loyalty also comes into play when Jon Snow makes Tyrion promise to help Bran, the same boy he supposedly tried to kill. Jon does not receive love or loyalty from Catelyn or a number of the members of his family due to the fact he was conceived out of wedlock. However, Jon remains loyal to his family, asking for Tyrion to help his little brother, as well as going in search of his uncle when he goes missing.

Loyalty also enters the novel when Daenerys decides to follow in her brother's footsteps to recapture the crown of Westeros for her family. Viserys always believed his family was cheated out of the crown and lived every moment of his life trying to find a way to get it back. Despite the fact Viserys is cruel to Daenerys, even marrying her off to a stranger in order to gain an army, Daenerys remains loyal to him. Daenerys becomes determined to finish her brother's dream, allowing nothing to stop her. Daenerys and other characters like her are what makes loyalty an important theme to the novel.



Style

Point of View

The point of view is third person omniscient. The narrating character shifts from chapter to chapter, including most of the main characters at one point or another. This point of view shows insight into the minds of not only adults, but also many of the young people who populate the novel. The point of view allows the reader to see the motivations of each character, those with good motivations and those with bad, making it difficult for the reader to see a pattern of good versus evil. Everyone in the novel believes they are doing the right thing. The point of view also allows the reader to see more of the story since a great deal of the events described within the plot development can only be seen through the eyes of one or two characters, even though most events have an impact on all the characters.

This point of view works because it allows the reader to see inside the minds of the majority of the main characters and thus allows the reader to see their motivations. This is an epic novel with a great deal of action taking place, much of it spread over the hundreds of miles of land that make up Westeros. It is important the reader be allowed to see all the action in order to understand the impact of each situation on the overall plot. The point of view also works because if the novel had been told in a first person point of view or through the eyes of only one character, there would be mass confusion as many events that affect the main plot could not be seen or properly explained.

Setting

The setting in this novel is primarily the continent of Westeros. Westeros is split into three different parts. There is the South, where it is warmer and the majority of the population reside. The South is where King's Landing is, the town where the King of Westeros, Robert, lives with his family. King's Landing is one of the main settings of the novel as this is where Jon Arryn dies, bringing Eddard Stark there to investigate his death, and where Eddard himself is later beheaded. The North is where Winterfell, the Stark home, is located. Winterfell is the scene of Bran's fall from the window, a fall that leads to an assassination attempt. Catelyn, Bran's mother, wrongly accuses Tyrion Lannister, brother of the Queen, of hiring an assassin to kill her son. Finally, Beyond-The-Wall is where the unknown Others live, creatures of the winter known to kill brutally and with little warning.

In the east beyond the sea is where Daenerys Targaryen and her brother, Viserys, live. The Targaryens once ruled Westeros, but have been banished as the result of a war that left the Targaryen king dead. Viserys is obsessed with regaining the crown to vindicate his family, going so far as to wed his sister to a powerful lord at the age of thirteen. This setting is important only because it is not Westeros.



The setting of the novel is very important because it is the setting that gives the novel both its medieval and magical feel. Westeros could be a country just like the United States, except it is divided into Seven Kingdoms, each ruled by an important family. These kingdoms should be united, but ambition on the part of the Lannister family, a family who feel they should rule the entire country, causes a rift between the houses and begins a civil war. Westeros is only one of three settings, however, that fill the novel. The setting of Beyond-the-Wall gives the novel the best of its magical feel as this place is populated by creatures, The Others, who are almost like modern day zombies. Finally, the most benign of settings, the east where the Targeryens have been banished, is important simply for the fact that it represents all this banishment means to Viserys and gives the reader a visual sense of the humiliation and shame Viserys lives with every day.

Language and Meaning

The novel is written in simple English. There are made up words sprinkled through the text, enriching the sense of the medieval as well as the magical. This novel is not only a medieval text, but it is fantasy, which includes such things as dragons and frost-covered killers that require strange words to explain their existence. The novel can be difficult to understand at times since there are so many locations and people to remember, with names that make little sense in the world outside the novel.

The language of this book works because the strangeness of it is expected in a fantasy novel. The reader settling down with a book like this one would almost be disappointed if there were not strange words thrown into the mix, as well as dialogue that sometimes includes modern slang alongside old English spellings. Although the writing can at times be confusing or even downright indecipherable, the reader knows to be patient as the explanations will become apparent later within the text.

Structure

The book is written in seventy-two chapters with a prologue at the beginning and an appendix at the end, detailing which characters belong to each house. Each chapter bears the name of the character acting as narrator in the text. The chapters are short, about four to six pages in length with some slightly longer. These short chapters keep the pace of the novel fairly quick and allow for a fast transition from character to character and event to event.

The main plot of the novel follows Eddard Stark who has taken a job in the King's court in order to find out who killed the man who was once his foster father. Eddard does discover the truth, but does not act on it fast enough. Eddard is put to death for his knowledge. Many subplots also dot the novel, including that of Eddard's wife, who believes her son was the target of an assassin hired by the brother of the same Queen who will put her husband to death. Also included in the novel is the subplot of Eddard's illegitimate son, Jon Snow, who goes into service with the Night's Guard to protect the



people of Westeros from the creatures who live Beyond-the-Wall. Finally, another subplot follows the lives of the Targeryens, a couple of orphaned children obsessed with the idea of restoring the crown of Westeros to their family. All of these subplots come together at the end of the novel when a great war erupts and each plays their own part in the war.



Quotes

"Do the dead frighten you?" Ser Waymar Royce, Prologue, p. 1.

"Can a man still be brave if he's afraid?" Chapter 1, Bran, p. 13.

"Never forget what you are, for surely the world will not. Make it your strength. Then it can never be your weakness. Armor yourself in it, and it will never be used to hurt you." Chapter 5, Jon, p. 47.

"First lesson... stick them with the pointy end."

Arya gave him a whap on the arm with the flat of her blade. The blow stung, but Jon found himself grinning like an idiot. 'I know which end to use,' Arya said."

Chapter 10, Jon, p. 81.

"Dragon's eggs from the Shadow Lands beyond Asshai... The eons have turned them to stone, yet still they burn bright with beauty." Chapter 11, Daenerys, p. 86.

"A man could not always be where he belonged, though. Resigned, Eddard Stark put his boots into his horse and set off after the king." Chapter 12, Eddard, p. 94.

"No... not me. I seldom even dream of dragons anymore. There are no dragons." Chapter 13, Tyrion, p. 106.

"Someone is afraid that Bran might wake up, afraid of what he might say or do, afraid of something he knows." Chapter 14, Catelyn, p. 113.

"We all need to be mocked from time to time, Lord Mormont, lest we start to take ourselves too seriously..." Chapter 21, Tyrion, p. 173.

"Tyrion Lannister sighed. His sister was not without a certain low cunning, but her pride blinded her. She would see the insult in this, not the opportunity. And Jaime was even worse, rash and headstrong, and quick to anger. His brother never untied a knot when he could slash it in two with his sword." Chapter 38, Tyrion, p. 347.

"Vengeance?' Ned said. 'I thought we were speaking of justice. Burning Clegane's fields and slaughtering his people will not restore the king's peace, only your injured pride.'" Chapter 43, Eddard, p. 391.

"As Daenerys Targaryen rose to her feet, her black hissed, pale smoke venting from its mouth and nostrils. The other two pulled away from her breast and added their voices to the call, translucent wings unfolding and stirring in the air, and for the first time in

hundreds of years, the night came alive with the music of dragons." Chapter 72, Daenerys, p. 674.



Topics for Discussion

Discuss why Daenerys and Viserys Targaryen are on the run. Do you think Viserys' obsession with getting the throne back is justified? Do you think they deserve to rule Westeros again? Viserys is unkind to his sister but she continues to be loyal to him. Why do you suppose this is? Does Daenerys really want to restore the Targaryens to the crown or does she have another motivation?

Why does Eddard insist on keeping Jon Snow with his family? Why does Catelyn not like Jon? Are Catelyn's feelings really about Jon himself or do they have more to do with Eddard's refusal to tell her who the mother is? What does Catelyn's treatment of Jon say about her own personality?

Compare and contrast Catelyn's treatment of Jon with her behavior toward Bran. Why does Catelyn treat Bran differently? Why does Catelyn become obsessed with finding the person who attempted to kill Bran? Why does Catelyn become so focused on Tyrion? Do you think Catelyn's treatment of Tyrion is unkind? How does Catelyn's behavior toward Tyrion compare with the Lannister's treatment of Bran and Eddard?

Eddard fights to learn the truth about Jon Arryn's death. Why is Eddard so determined? How does this illustrate the theme of loyalty? When Eddard learns the truth, why does he give Cersei the chance to escape? What does this behavior say about Eddard's personality? What does it say of his relationship to Richard, Cersei's husband?

Compare and contrast Arya and Daenerys. In what ways are they similar? In what ways are they different? How do these two characters illustrate the theme of maturity? Compare these characters to Sansa. How is Sansa different? How is Sansa similar? Is Sansa as mature as her sister?

Discuss the theme. How is maturity important to this novel? Loyalty? Ambition? Can you name other themes? What plot points support your theme? Why is theme important to a novel's plot? Have you ever read a novel without a clear theme? How did the lack of theme affect your understanding of the novel?

Discuss the language of the novel. How is the language different from a novel set in modern times? Is the language of the novel true to the language used in medieval times? How is it the same? How is it different?