A Song of Ice and Fire

Campaign Guide

George R.R. Martin's World of Westeros

By David Chart, Joshua J. Frost, Brian Kirby, Jon Leitheusser, Anthony Pryor, Robert J. Schwalb and Owen K.C. Stephens

A Song of Ice and Fire
Campaign Guide

A Setting Sourcebook for
A Song of Ice and Fire
Roleplaying

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INTRODUCTION

"Winter is coming." No words better represent the impending doom that awaits the lands of the Seven Kingdoms, the looming sense that the careful balance won in the last war that ravaged Westeros teeters on the brink of collapse, and with the barest touch, the faintest spark, the entire land could collapse into war once more. To the north yawns wide the Lands of Always Winter, a realm plagued with old evils, secrets, and a dark threat that hungers to renew the violence of the Longest Night. At King's Landing, whispers of infidelity, suspicions, and corruption unravel the dreams held by those lords who supported Robert Baratheon in his crusade to rid the lands of the last Mad King. Meanwhile, across the narrow sea, rumors of the exiled Targaryen king, Viserys, trickle into the ports, where dissatisfied smallfolk recall the glory days of the great Targaryen kings and look to the scandalous reign of King Robert with something bordering on regret. There is peace, but it's a tenuous one, for who can say if Viserys will return at the head of a new army? Who can say what will tumble out of the North on the heels of the mustering wildlings who flock to join the King-beyond-the-Wall? And who can say for certain when and if the crimes committed against Princess Elia and her children will bear the fruits of war with Dorne? This is the time of *A Song of Ice and Fire,* the moment before the game of thrones produces a resounding clash of kings, before the storm of swords breaks to leave a feast for crows, and before the dragons dance once again.

> *"Winter is coming."*
>
> —The Words of House Stark

It is also the time for telling your own tales, using *A Song of Ice and Fire Roleplaying*, where you create the noble houses, ambitious heirs, and prime movers in stories about the Seven Kingdoms and the lands beyond.

THE CAMPAIGN GUIDE

A Song of Ice and Fire Campaign Guide is your indispensable resource for playing and running games set in the Seven Kingdoms of Westeros. This volume presents a detailed look at the various regions, the houses, and the notable figures that represent the most powerful individuals just before the War of the Five Kings erupts and brings these realms to the brink of destruction. The primary focus of this sourcebook is to help Narrators construct stories and chronicles in these lands, providing the details needed to breathe life into George R.R. Martin's incredible cast of characters while presenting useful information about noble houses and locations the player characters might explore.

Of course, this book is also valuable to players. Armed with this sourcebook, the players can make informed decisions about where they might place their noble house, which houses they might forge alliances with, and which houses they might oppose as they make their own climb to greatness. As well, the *Campaign Guide* presents useful information for people who aren't playing the game, making it a great reference for fans of the novels alone.

Using this Book

While this sourcebook provides extensive details about the Seven Kingdoms, not every detail is filled in, not every secret revealed. The point at which *SIFRP* takes place is before the War of the Five Kings but after Greyjoy's Rebellion. Specifically, the game focuses on the last year before the start of *A Game of Thrones.* As a result, no details about the plots and fates of the various characters are revealed, and each house and individual is presented as they are at the opening of the novels.

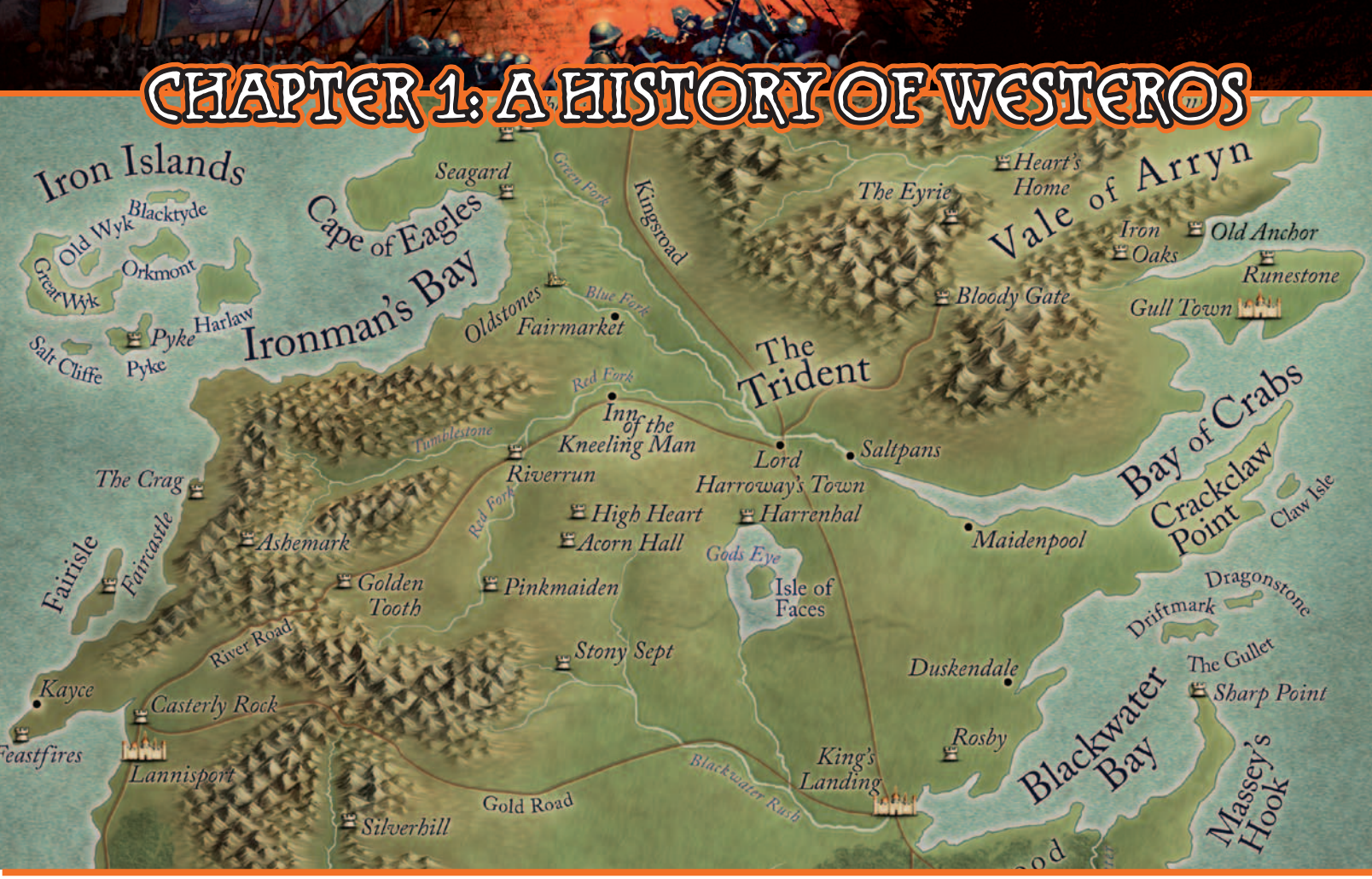
As you make your way through the book, you'll notice some characters have statistics, whereas others do not. Those characters with mechanics attached are defined since they are considered major players, individuals who should live and last throughout the player character's stories leading up to the disastrous war. The rest is left for you, the Narrator, to define as needed for your own stories. In some cases, scant information is provided, giving you more room to define these figures, while others have greater information, owing to their greater presence in the stories to come. To create statistics for these characters, simply refer to the guidance in *SIFRP* in **Chapter Eleven: The Narrator**.

In addition, each chapter that covers a region includes a complete list of all the known houses sworn to the lords of the realm. The amount of information associated with each banner varies based on how they are presented in the novels. Some houses, specifically the great and major houses, have extensive information, whereas the minor and landed houses may and do have little. The less we know about a house, the more room you, the Narrator, have to develop these obscure families for your own games. In addition, players can also select these houses as their own, adding their own details to this rich setting. For houses with little to no information, the text defaults them to minor houses, positioned somewhere between major and landed. Future novels may contradict these entries, but this designation should serve for creating chronicles and stories in this world.

Final Thoughts

Exploring any game setting based on media—novels, films, comics, and video games—can be daunting, especially if you try to cleave to every truth found in the source material. The closer you stay to the original works, the more constricting it can be on your games. **Chapter Fourteen: Exploring Westeros** provides extensive tips and guidance for handling these problems, but it bears mentioning here. By picking up this book, you make the world of Westeros your own. You are only as confined to the novels and short stories as you want to be. You can run an authentic game that follows the steps of the characters in the novels, or you can diverge from those events to tell your own stories. Whatever you decide, the game, the world, and the experience are yours to do with as you like. Have fun, and please, kill a Lannister. You'll feel better, promise.

Chapter 1: A History of Westeros



The history of Westeros is written in blood and steel, a tale combining love, duty, sacrifice, and treachery in equal measure. The saga of the children of the forest, the First Men, the Andals, the Seven Kingdoms, and all that goes with them lies at the heart of *SIFRP*. Your players will be witness to—or better still, the makers of—great events to shape the future of the Seven Kingdoms, and may, if they are ruthless, courageous, and cunning enough, become part of future legends.

Spanning over a dozen millennia, the history of Westeros is at times confused, uncertain, or entirely unknown, but the following entries detail knowledge commonly held by maesters, septons, and other chroniclers of history. All dates are in relation to the Landing of Aegon the Conqueror.

The Dawn Age

As with many things regarding the history of Westeros, controversy exists regarding the true age of the land. Maesters claim the world is anywhere from forty thousand to five hundred thousand years old. A broad range to be sure, but the trouble stems from incomplete records from this time, conflicting stories involving various characters of myth, and the often magical nature of those stories stemming from that era. In fact, many tales suggest kings and heroes lived for centuries, and other tales attribute astonishing deeds to figures before they were born. Regardless of the inconsistencies as to exactly when this era occurred on Westeros, it was a period of great magic, bold heroes, and fantastic exploits. For all the myth and splendor of this era, however, it was also one marked by bloodshed and war.

The Children of the Forest

Before the coming of men, Westeros was home to the children of the forest, a curious and mysterious people, remembered for their magical prowess and strange customs. Legend holds that the children of the forest were a diminutive people, a society that dwelt in caves, crannogs, and hidden tree villages. They were dark and beautiful, no taller than children, even

> *"Oh, my sweet summer child," Old Nan said quietly, "what do you know of fear? Fear is for the winter, my little lord, when the snows fall a hundred feet deep and the ice wind comes howling out of the north. Fear is for the long night, when the sun hides its face for years at a time, and little children are born and live and die all in darkness while the direwolves grow gaunt and hungry, and the white walkers move through the woods."*
>
> —*A Game of Thrones*

in adulthood. They worshiped the gods of the natural world, the spirits of the streams, and trees, and rocks, and wind. Unlike the men who would follow, the children did not use metal or weave cloth; instead, they crafted their implements from stone and clothing from leaves and bark. They were a people with a deep and powerful connection to the land.

The oldest tales gift the children with many supernatural powers, including the ability to fly like birds and swim like fish. They could cast their minds into beasts, wearing animals like second skins, and visions and portents of things to come haunted their dreams. Such was their influence on the land that many of their works remain in the present day, though more so in the North than in the plundered south. White weirwoods bear faces carved in their bark, faces, it is said, that allow the old gods to peer into the world of men and watch over their followers. More than just their works, however, the methods and beliefs of the children still inform many of the customs upheld in the North and those scattered throughout the rest of the Seven Kingdoms. In particular, the crannogmen of the Neck are close in stature and in beliefs to the children of old, while the Sacred Order of the Green Men still upholds the ancient pacts forged when the First Men and children of the forest set aside their grudges to embrace a lasting peace. While the children of the forest are believed to be no more, some swear these lost folk live on, far from the lands of men, lurking in the quiet places, the unspoiled wilderness beyond the Wall or in the depths of the trackless wolfswood in the North.

The First Men

One can only speculate how long the children of the forest dwelt in the lands that would one day become the Seven Kingdoms before they encountered the First Men, but the First Men would change the course of history and lay the foundation for the struggles to come. It's possible the children of the forest anticipated the arrival of these barbarian hordes, what with their prophetic dreams. But if they did, it seems it did them little good in stemming the flood, for when the First Men came, they brought with them violence, war, and death.

The First Men entered the lands of Westeros some twelve thousand years ago by the Arm of Dorne, a land bridge that would be shattered in the coming struggle. Mounted on horseback and bearing weapons of bronze and shields of boiled leather, they swept through the lands, felling trees and clearing the land for their farms and villages, as well as raising temples to their queer gods and violent ways. At first, the children of the forest hid themselves in the deep woods, afraid of the horses, nearly as much as the First Men were afraid of the faces in the trees. The First Men were a warrior culture, a people unaccustomed to the ancient power of this land, and so, as they raised their holdfasts and cleared the forests for farmlands, they cut down the faces in the forest and despoiled the perfect wilderness. It was enough to rouse the children from their fear and impel them to war.

The Wars of the Dawn Age

Driven by their outrage at the First Men's destruction of their homeland, the children of the forest abandoned the peace and took up arms, harrying their enemies with flying snares and arrows fired from weirwood bows. The greenseers' mystics and sorcerers used dark magic to raise the seas and sweep away the land, shattering the Arm of Dorne and, thus, creating the Stepstones of the modern era. Although the destruction was widespread, it was too late, for the First Men had come to stay.

It's believed the wars raged for nearly two thousand years, and though the children fought fiercely, they could not stand against the larger, stronger men, who wielded bronze against the obsidian blades and arrowheads used by the children. When the earth was sodden with the blood of the slain and the dead surely outnumbered the living, the chieftains and heroes of the First Men joined the greenseers and wood dancers of the children on a wooded island in the center of the Gods Eye, a great lake in the center of Westeros. There, it was decided the First Men would receive the coastal lands, the meadows, the bogs, and the mountains, while the children would be free to live in their forests unmolested for all time. The First Men pledged to never again cut down the weirwoods and to leave the children of the forest in peace. To ensure the gods would look upon the truce, the children carved faces in every weirwood tree. The Sacred Order of Green Men was formed to keep watch over the Isle of Faces and ensure the Pact remained for all time.

The Age of Heroes

For nearly four thousand years, the Pact endured, and in that time, the children of the forest and the First Men grew closer. In time, the First Men set aside many of their cultural beliefs to embrace the ways and customs of the children of the forest. With the exception of the Drowned God of the Iron Isles, the gods of the children came to be those of the First Men, and a deep reverence for nature blossomed in the peace that followed. The children continued to live as they always had lived while in the realms of the First Men, great cities sprang up, and mighty kingdoms rose and fell.

Heroes of the Age

The Age of Heroes takes its name from the great men and women who lived in the years of peace that followed the forging of the Pact. While many stories, songs, and legends circulate about this era, maesters point to this era as the beginning of the Seven Kingdoms. Garth Greenhand founded House Gardener of the Reach, and from him sprung numerous other lines and families. Durran, first of the Storm Kings, raised Storm's End to check the wrath of the gods for wedding their daughter, and legends hold that the Grey King of the Iron Islands wed a mermaid and became king of the western isles and all the sea beyond. While much was achieved during this ancient era, it was at a cost.

The Long Night

In the midst of the Age of Heroes fell the longest and blackest of winters. The sun set and did not rise again for a generation, and the ice spread down from the north, carrying with it monstrous beings from the far-flung north to prey on the First Men and the children of the forest alike. Amongst these horrors were mammoths, giants, direwolves, and more, but nothing compared to the demonic Others, a mysterious people who sought to purge Westeros of the human infestation, and so the Others were merciless in their slaughter.

The War for the Dawn

The Long Night wore on as the Others marched and killed and raised up the dead to be their servants in unlife, but in the darkest hour, a great hero arose. Uniting the First Men and the children of the forest, the people of Westeros threw back the Others, pushing them back into the frozen reaches of the Far North.

The Wall

With the Others defeated, legend tells that Bran the Builder, with the aid of the giants, First Men, and, perhaps, the children of the forest, raised up the Wall, a looming barrier of ice that travels from one side of Westeros to the other and shelters the lands in the south from the old evil of the far North. The Wall, although ensorcelled with ancient magic and taller than any structure ever built, needed men to guard it, to walk its length, and to shield the lands to the south. Thus, the Order of the Night's Watch was formed. These men foreswore their kin, their hopes of children, and their allegiances to the kings that ruled the lands and vowed to protect the Wall and all people by safeguarding it and remaining vigilant against the horrors that would tumble out of the night. In these early days, the Night's Watch was a valiant institution, a body of noble warriors who made the ultimate sacrifice to be protectors of all.

The Night's King

Not long after the Wall was complete, the thirteenth Lord Commander of the Night's Watch embraced the dark and became a dreadful terror in the North. According to legend, he took for his bride a strange woman, pale and believed to be undead. After the unholy union, he declared himself king and she his queen, and he ruled the Night Fort as his own castle. During the dark years of his reign, horrific atrocities were committed, of which tales are still told in the North. It wasn't until Joramun—who blew the Horn of Winter and roused the giants in the earth—and the King of the North joined forces that the Night's King and his dreadful queen were cast down and destroyed.

The Andal Invasion

After the War for the Dawn, the First Men and the children of the forest lived in relative peace, but in these years, the children of the forest began their slow withdrawal from the lands of men, retreating deeper into their forests or beyond the Wall. The peace would not last: nearly two thousand years after the victory over the Others, a new invader came to Westeros' shores. Landing on what would one day become the Vale of Arryn, the Andals swept across the Seven Kingdoms, much as the First Men did thousands of years before. Armed with battle-trained steeds, wielding weapons of steel, and bolstered by their religious fervor, the Andal invaders proved too much for the First Men to stand against, and thus, they—like the children of the forest before them—fell to the invaders.

These new men came from the eastern continent, a place called the Hills of Andalos. There, they received a visitation from seven holy beings who were believed to be aspects of a single, supreme deity. The worship of the seven took shape and eventually became the Faith of the Seven. Whether by divine missive, fleeing some other threat, or perhaps out of a hunger for conquest, the Andals came and conquered.

Bearing the seven-pointed star of their new gods, they drove out the First Men, destroyed the weirwoods, and slaughtered the children of the forest wherever they were found. One by one, the seven kingdoms fell until only the Kingdom of the North remained, due to the strength of Moat Cailin and the doughtiness of its warriors. Even though the North remained secure, the victories in the south spelled the end of the Pact. Those children of the forest who remained there were viciously stamped out, driven out, or quit Westeros altogether.

Forging the Seven Kingdoms Anew

With the victories of the invaders, the Andals raised up six powerful kingdoms of their own, and with the old kingdom of the First Men, they became, in truth, the Seven Kingdoms. The Kingdom of the North clung to the beliefs in the old gods, while the Kingdom of the Iron Islands, although defeated, still followed the Old Way and worshipped the Drowned God. The Kingdom of Vale and Sky spawned the oldest and purest line of Andals—House Arryn, and the Kingdom of the Rock, the Kingdom of the Storm Kings, and the Kingdom of the Reach supplanted the First Men kings. Of the seven kingdoms, the Kingdom of the riverlands, formerly ruled by the Kings of the Rivers and Hills, became a bloody battleground, as the ironmen, First Men, and Andals fought bitterly to

control this kingdom. Finally, to the far south, a loose confederacy of principalities arose in Dorne and remained staunchly independent from the squabbles of the Seven Kingdoms, consumed by their own petty wars for dominance.

Beyond the Seven Kingdoms

While Westeros groaned under the weight of its own conflicts, a new force rose in the east, the Freehold of Valyria. Once a race of humble shepherds, the Valyrians rose to greatness by taming the dragons of the volcanic region known as the Fourteen Fires, and in the end, they established a mighty empire. There, magic flowered, topless towers rose toward the heavens where dragons soared, stone sphinxes gazed down through eyes of garnet, and smiths forged swords of legendary strength and sharpness. Although it was located far from Westeros, the history and ultimate fate of Valyria was tied inexorably to that of the Seven Kingdoms, and echoes of Valyria's fall sound to this day.

Conquest of Old Ghis

Old Ghis was the greatest empire of the eastern continent, and its rulers were greedy conquerors, always looking to swallow up more lands to add to their own. In time, Ghis turned hungry eyes to the Freehold of Valyria. Five times, Ghiscari troops marched on the Freehold, and five times they were defeated. In the end, the Ghiscari's greed was their undoing, for the Freehold struck back, utterly destroying Old Ghis, slaying its people, grinding its cities to dust, pulling down its walls, and sowing the land with salt. Of Old Ghis, only its old colonies survive as the cities of Slaver's Bay, inhabited by a mongrel people descended from the folk of Old Ghis and its conquerors.

War against the Rhoyne

In Westeros, the Andals built their cities and founded new kingdoms on the ruins of the old. As Valyria and Old Ghis engaged in their death struggle across the water, the Andals consolidated their power, erecting temples to the Seven and transforming the southern kingdoms into their own vision of civilization. In the North, the old traditions still held sway, but an uneasy peace remained between the First Men's Kings of Winter and the Andals. But the peace would be shattered yet again, this time by a far greater threat that would land on the shores of Westeros in the years to come.

With the destruction of Old Ghis, Valyria found other foes, including war against the Rhoynar, in which they were victorious. Nymeria, the Rhoynar warrior-queen, led her people in ten thousand ships to find refuge in Dorne. There, she formed an alliance with Lord Mors Martell, wedding him and finally bringing unity to the unruly land. Thus, House Martell was established, and has ruled Dorne from Sunspear ever since.

The Doom of Valyria

To the east, across the narrow sea, the Freehold of Valyria ruled supreme. Its cities were filled with wonders, its sorcerers cast mighty spells, and its academies were filled with the wisdom of a thousand lands. Valyrian ships plied the high seas while its dragons ruled the skies and kept the realm safe from invasion. But even as Valyria rose to its greatest glories, its doom drew near.

No one knows what doom befell Valyria, but the realm's devastation was complete. Many stories claim the region was blasted by volcanic eruption—perhaps involving the Fourteen Fires, the mountains where the dragons were first discovered. The Valyrian peninsula was shattered, and the Freehold devastated, the ruin a smoking demon-haunted place. With its fall, the empire crumbled, and the Freehold's various colonies and vassal cities broke away, surviving to this day as the cities of Slaver's Bay and the Free Cities of the narrow sea, among others. On the vast grasslands of the eastern continent, nomadic tribes rose to prominence; chief among them is the wild Dothraki. Everywhere, Valyrian power was utterly destroyed. Everywhere, that is, save for Westeros, where a last remnant of the Freehold lived on.

Age of the Dragons

A century or so before the Doom befell them, the Valyrians took control of a small island located at the mouth of Blackwater Bay in Westeros. The Targaryens, a noble Valyrian family, ruled this isle, the westernmost outpost of the Freehold, and called it Dragonstone. There, the Targaryens dwelled until word reached them that the Freehold had fallen, leaving them as the last Valyrian rulers in the world.

As the Andals struggled for dominance in the Seven Kingdoms, the Targaryens remained in their holdfast at Dragonstone with more than enough strength to keep themselves secure. Yet the cunning and ambitious Aegon Targaryen came to want more than mere security. With limited forces and the old lands in turmoil, Aegon and his sisters Visenya and Rhaenys, both of whom he had taken to wife in the Valyrian tradition, were forced to decide between returning to their homeland or striking west to topple the Seven Kingdoms. At length, Aegon chose the latter, as his forces were small in number, and Westeros was close at hand. In this, Aegon had significant advantages, for in addition to Valyrian steel and sorcery, he had something else that no other ruler of Westeros had—the last three living dragons.

Wars of Conquest

A century after the Doom of Valyria, and three hundred years before the present day, the Targaryen host landed upon Westeros, with Aegon the Conqueror, his sisters Visenya and Rhaenys, and their dragons at its head. The dragons were named for the old gods of Valyria—Balerion the Black Dread, whose teeth were long as swords, and his sisters Meraxes and Vhaghar. Though the smallest of the three, Vhaghar was huge enough to swallow a man on horseback.

First House Hoare, rulers of the Iron Islands and the riverlands, fell when its ruler King Harren the Black was roasted alive by dragonfire in his fastness at Harrenhal. Then the Storm King Argilac the Arrogant perished at the hands of Aegon's bastard half-brother Orys Baratheon. The stage was set for the final great battle of the Wars of Conquest.

Army of the Two Kings

Despite its success, constant battle weakened and overstretched the Targaryen host. Only ten thousand men marched with Aegon and his sisters, most of them conscripts or unenthusiastic levies drawn from conquered lands. Kings Loren Lannister of the Rock and Mern of the Reach decided the time was right to strike, and their combined forces—over fifty thousand foot soldiers and five thousand armored knights—descended upon Aegon as he marched south. At first, it seemed the Targaryen conquest was over, for the two kings' initial charge shattered Aegon's host and sent it fleeing.

It was then that the three dragons appeared on the field, together for the first and only time. Four thousand of their foes burned on what was to be called the Field of Fire, including King Mern, and the rest were put to flight. Seeing his cause was lost, King Loren bent the knee to Aegon and was allowed to rule as the Targaryen's vassal. On that day, the last real hope of defeating the Dragonlords died. Soon after, Aegon marched into Oldtown, where on the advice of his High Septon, Lord Hightower threw open the gates and welcomed the Targaryen host. This year was the first of the Targaryen dynasty, and all dates from that point on would be referred to as "AL" or "after Aegon's Landing."

The Targaryens did not triumph everywhere, however. To the south, the wily Dornishmen refused battle, raiding and harassing the Dragonlord's host as it went. Finally, Aegon acknowledged that taking and holding Dorne would be far too costly, and he allowed the realm to keep its freedom.

Formation of the Great Houses

It was during and immediately after the Wars of Conquest that the noble houses of today's Westeros were founded or granted their current status by Aegon. Vickon Greyjoy and Edwyn Tully of Riverrun both aided Aegon against King Harren—the Iron Islands to Greyjoy and the riverlands to Tully. Orys Baratheon, Aegon's half-brother, was awarded the territory of Argilac the Arrogant, and Loren Lannister was allowed to keep his family holdings, including the fortress at Casterly Rock, when he bent the knee to the Dragonlords after the Host of the Two Kings was defeated. Highgarden, home of the slain King Mern, was surrendered by Mern's steward, Harlan Tyrell, who was in turn granted Highgarden and the Reach as his own.

Of the southern kingdoms, only Dorne and the North remained free. Even as Aegon consolidated his gains, it seemed another war was coming as Torrhen Stark, the King of Winter, marched south to battle at the Red Fork, east of Riverrun. In the end, however, awed by the might of the Targaryen dragons and by the size of Aegon's host, which was now swollen with troops from the conquered lands, Stark chose to submit as well, accepting Aegon's authority and receiving mastery of the North in return. And so nearly all of Westeros was united, though the Dornishmen still ruled in the south. The swords of Aegon's foes were melted down and re-forged into the shape of a mighty seat that is today known as the Iron Throne.

The Faith Militant

Though Aegon, his sisters, and their dragons had triumphed almost everywhere, the Targaryen crown did not rest easy. Upon Aegon's death in 37 AL, the armed order of the old gods known as the Faith Militant rose

up against Aegon's successor, Aenys I. Overwhelmed and outmatched, Aenys gives the task of stamping out the rebellion to his brother and heir Maegor. It took the remainder of Maegor's rule to stamp out the rebellion, and he did so with such ruthlessness that he was known ever after as Maegor the Cruel. When Maegor passed, and Jaehaerys I took the throne in 48 AL, the Faith Militant accepted pardon and amnesty in exchange for disbanding and swearing allegiance to the Dragonlords. For his mercy and diplomacy, Jaehaerys was called "The Conciliator," and the realm remained at peace for another seventy years.

Dance of the Dragons

The first of the three great civil wars to rend the Targaryen's empire began when wise King Viserys I died in 129 AL, passing the throne to his daughter Rhaenyra. The commander of Viserys's Kingsguard, Ser Criston Cole, disdained the notion of a female ascending to the throne and proclaimed Aegon, Viserys's son by his second wife, as king. War ravaged the land as nobles threw in their lot with one side or the other. Styled Aegon II, the old king's son seemed to triumph when his dragon slew Rhaenyra, but her followers carried on under the banner of her son, Aegon III. Most of the surviving Targaryen dragons perished in the bloody conflict, which ended in 131 AL with the death of Aegon II and the ascension of Aegon III.

The trauma of seeing his mother devoured by his uncle's dragon proved too much for the new king, and thus, he grew to manhood with a terrible fear of the creatures. Though most of the Targaryen dragons had perished in the war, a handful had survived. The last two dragons

hatched on Dragonstone some time after the war, but they were weak and misshapen creatures. As they died during his reign, he earned the title of "Dragonsbane." The last dragon left behind a clutch of eggs, but they would not hatch, and thus it spelled the end of dragons in the world—or so the maesters believe—forever.

Conquest of Dorne & the Dornish Rebellion

Dorne had long been a source of frustration to the Targaryens. Upon taking the throne in 157 AL, the young King Daeron I marched south and brought the Dornishmen to battle, quickly defeating them. The eldest son of Aegon III, Daeron was a bright and talented young man, who wrote eloquently of his achievements in *The Conquest of Dorne,* and led his troops with great bravery, despite being only fourteen years old when he took the throne.

It is said the conquest of Dorne lasted but a summer and that the Young Dragon spent ten thousand men taking Dorne and lost fifty thousand trying to hold it. As before, the Dornishmen proved cunning and all but impossible to rule. The Lord of Highgarden was entrusted with governing the fractious people, and he spent much of his time chasing down elusive rebels, moving from estate to estate and displacing local lords from their homes. One night, he pulled on a sash to summon a servant but instead opened up the canopy over his bed, sending a rain of a hundred red scorpions down on his head. At the news of Highgarden's death, the Dornishmen rose in rebellion, and in a fortnight, they had driven out the Targaryens and regained their freedom, which they would retain until Dorne joined the Seven Kingdoms by marriage thirty-six years later.

Despite his good qualities, Daeron I's rule did not last long; he died at age eighteen and was succeeded by his brother Baelor, who is known to history as Baelor the Blessed. Legend holds Baelor walked unharmed into a Dornish viper pit in order to rescue Aemon the Dragonknight and made peace with the Dornishmen. Despite his title (he was also called "The Beloved"), Baelor was a severe and inflexible man who refused to touch his sister-wife Daena and even went so far as to imprison her and her two sisters in the Red Keep at King's Landing, so they would not tempt him into sin. Although sealed away in the Maidenvault, Daena managed to bed her cousin Aegon, thus giving birth to a bastard boy who would be named Daemon Blackfyre.

For all his eccentricities, Baelor left his mark on the realm, and one of his greatest achievements was the construction of the Great Sept in King's Landing, which would later be named the Great Sept of Baelor. He finally died in 171 AL and was succeeded by his uncle, Viserys II, who ruled for but a single year before making way for a king who more than made up for Baelor's austerity.

King Aegon IV, eldest son of Viserys II, was called "the Unworthy" due to his life of dissipation and self-indulgence. On his deathbed in 184 AL, he decreed all of his dozens of bastards by his many mistresses to be legitimate, setting the stage for the untold bloodshed to come. Known as the Great Bastards—and including the likes of Daemon Blackfyre, Aegor "Bittersteel" Rivers, and others—they and their descendants would trouble the Seven Kingdoms for five generations until the last of them perished in the War of the Ninepenny Kings.

Blackfyre Rebellion

In 184 AL, Aegon's eldest took the throne as King Daeron II. Known to history as "the Good," Aegon's rule began well enough, as he peacefully annexed the troublesome realm of Dorne by taking Myriah Martell to wife and bringing many of her Dornish customs to court. Many objected to this, and rumors arose Daeron was not even Aegon's son but rather the result of an adulterous liaison between Aegon's queen Naerys and the legendary Aemon the Dragonknight. Given Aegon's faithlessness, few could have blamed the queen for seeking solace outside her marriage. If the rumor was true, however, Daeron's claim to the throne was invalid, and rulership should have passed to one of Aegon's legitimized sons.

Chief among these was Daemon, who had been knighted by his father at age twelve and who bore the Valyrian sword *Blackfyre*. Known—depending on who was telling the story—as Daemon Blackfyre, Daemon the Pretender, the King Who Bore the Sword, or Daemon the Traitor, the young princeling declared himself king in 195 AL and raised his own standard, a black three-headed dragon on a red field, the reverse of traditional Targaryen arms.

Blackfyre was joined by his half-brother Aegor "Bittersteel" Rivers and many other great knights, such as Robb Reyne, Black Byren Flowers, and Ser Aubrey Ambrose, as red dragon fought black for control of Westeros. It is said Daemon was invincible in combat while wielding Blackfyre, but his end came as it does to all men, when Daeron's son Prince Maekar and Lord Hayford brought him to battle at Redgrass Field. At first, all went well for the pretender—Hayford was slain, and Blackfyre engaged Ser Gwayne Corbray of the Kingsguard in single combat. Just as it seemed the black dragon was on the verge of victory, a second loyalist army under Prince Baelor arrived and took the rebels from the rear, known as "the Hammer and the Anvil." From there, Brynden Rivers the Bloodraven—another son of Aegon who had remained loyal to Daeron—commanded his archers, the Raven's Teeth, to rain arrows upon the pretender's forces. Blackfyre fell to one of the Bloodraven's own arrows, and the black dragon's host fled in disorder.

Bittersteel rallied the disheartened rebels and led a charge against the Raven's Teeth, taking Bloodraven's eye in the process, but in the end, Bittersteel's efforts were futile. Baelor's Dornish spearmen surrounded and destroyed the surviving rebels, though Bittersteel escaped to the Free Cities along with the sword Blackfyre.

Raymun Redbeard

Over the ages, the wildlings of the Far North tried many times to overcome the might of the Night's Watch and the Wall. But with long summers and prosperity in the south, the threats in the North seemed less urgent, and the Watch began its slow decline. In 184 AL, the wildling King-beyond-the-Wall Raymun Redbeard took advantage of the Watch's laxness and had his men surreptitiously scale the Wall, bypassing the black brothers and leading his horde south. Evaded and humiliated, the Night's Watch played almost no role in the war that was to follow, in which Lord Willam Stark and Harmond Umber of Last Hearth met and crushed Raymun's wildlings north of Long Lake. The valiant Lord Willam perished in the fight and was succeeded by his son. Grieving and disgusted with the Watch and its Lord Commander

(known to history as "Sleepy Jack") he commanded the black brothers to bury the slain wildlings while he mourned.

War of the Ninepenny Kings

It was not until two hundred and sixty years after the landing that the Seven Kingdoms were finally rid of the Blackfyre descendants. Maelys Blackfyre, called "the Monstrous" due to the reputed second head growing from his neck (the result, so the stories go, of his consuming his own twin in the womb), gathered a group of mercenaries, pirates, merchant lords, and adventurers known as the Band of Nine and sought to conquer Westeros. The band met with initial success, conquering Tyrosh and setting up bases along the Stepping Stones—the remnants of the old Arm of Dorne. The Targaryens met the threat decisively, however, and under Ser Barristan Selmy, they broke the conspirators on the Stepping Stones. Maelys fell to Barristan's blade, and one of the conspirators, Alequo Adarys the Goldentongued, escaped to Tyrosh where he lived until his death six years later. The alliance dissolved and once more, the Iron Throne remained securely in the hands of the Dragonlords, but the bloody end of Targaryen rule was soon to follow.

War of the Usurper

The Targaryens had long been weakened by generations of inbreeding due to their tradition of marrying sister to brother. It was said in those days that half of all Targaryens were born mad, and in the end, it was this madness that destroyed them.

The rule of Aerys II began well enough with his ascension in the year 262 AL. Son of Jaehaerys II, Aerys was kind to his friends, enlightened in his rule, and frugal with the realm's income—to the point the Seven Kingdoms' coffers were overflowing with gold. He was given to fits of madness, however, and he was utterly brutal to his enemies, frequently immolating them in wildfire. Although the realm continued to prosper, and Aerys continued to take the wise advice of his council—especially that of his Hand, Tywin Lannister—his bouts with madness grew more and more frequent as he grew older until all were forced to acknowledge that the king teetered on the brink of utter insanity.

When the end came, it came quickly, though it was all started by Aerys's son Rhaegar. Long had Crown Prince Rhaegar been in love with the beautiful Lyanna Stark, even though she was betrothed to Lord Robert Baratheon. In 282 AL, Rhaegar vanished with Lyanna, leading many, Robert chief among them, to accuse him of abducting her. Lyanna's brother Brandon and several companions—his squire Ethan Glover, Jeffory Mallister, Kyle Royce, and Elbert Arryn, the nephew and heir of the Lord of the Eyrie—rode to King's Landing to demand her return, but King Aerys's madness got the better of him, and he ordered the young nobles seized and charged with treason. He then summoned the fathers of the prisoners, including Brandon's father Lord Rickard Stark.

Arriving at the Red Keep with the fathers of the other knights, Lord Stark demanded trial by combat. His sanity utterly gone, King Aerys chose fire as his champion and had Lord Stark roasted in his armor as his son watched, helpless. Brandon Stark was placed in a strangulation device and died, his sword kept just out of his reach. Other prisoners were slain without trial. The Mad King then sent word to the Eyrie, demanding Lord Jon Arryn hand over the heads of Robert Baratheon and Eddard Stark. Instead of complying, the three houses called their banners and rose in revolt. War had once more come to the Seven Kingdoms, and this time, it would not end until the Dragonlords' dynasty lay in ruins.

The war was swift and bloody, and its tragic conclusion was inevitable. Robert Baratheon first saw triumph at the Battle of Summerhall, but his offensive was later blunted by Mace Tyrell at Ashford a few weeks later. In a ferocious house-to-house fight known as the Battle of the Bells, Aerys's forces were driven from the town of Stoney Sept by the combined forces of the three allied houses. After this battle, Aerys realized Robert Baratheon was no simple bandit chieftain or rebel but rather a serious threat to his realm. He began to set stockpiles of wildfire around King's Landing, intending to burn the city and all its inhabitants rather than surrender it to the Usurper, and he dispatched Prince Rhaegar to bring the upstart lords to heel.

The armies met where the kingsroad crossed the Trident River. There, the fate of the Targaryens was decided when Robert Baratheon slew Prince Rhaegar in single combat. Driven by rage at the prince's abduction and rape of his betrothed Lyanna, Robert shattered the prince's ruby-studded breastplate with a single blow from his great warhammer, and soon afterward, the loyalist host fled in disorder. Today, the place is known as Ruby Ford, and it is said that rubies from the slain prince's armor can still be found there.

Now at last, with Aerys's forces in full retreat and doom nearing the gates of the Red Keep, the Lannisters, who had until this time remained neutral, arrived at King's Landing under the command of Lord Tywin

Lannister. Once a fast friend of Aerys, Tywin had served as the King's Hand until the king's madness and bitter disagreements drove the two apart. Now it seemed Tywin had returned to save his old friend in his hour of need. Aerys opened the city gates at the advice of Grand Maester Pycelle and allowed the Lannister host entry. He was to learn of his mistake quickly, for the Lannisters turned on him and sacked the city.

Desperate, Aerys commanded his Hand, the pyromancer Lord Rossart, to ignite his wildfire caches and destroy the Lannisters, along with the entire city of King's Landing. Further, he commanded the captain of his Kingsguard, Jaime Lannister, son of Tywin, to slay his father. Rather than obey, Jaime instead killed Rossart before he could set the town aflame and then slew King Aerys himself.

Tywin was not finished, however. He dispatched his knights Gregor Clegane and Amory Lorch to slay the rest of Aerys's family and exterminate the Targaryens once and for all. The ruthless Gregor slew the infant Prince Aegon, son of Rhaegar, and then raped and murdered Rhaegar's wife Princess Elia of Dorne. Amory found Aegon's daughter Princess Rhaenys cowering beneath her father's bed, dragged her out, and put her to the sword.

So fell the house of Targaryen, but Tywin did not succeed entirely. With the help of the still-loyal Ser Willem Darry, the Mad King's pregnant sister-wife Rhaella escaped to Dragonstone with their young son Viserys. The last Targaryen, Princess Daenerys, was born on Dragonstone a few months later. Her mother died in childbirth, and Ser Willem then took the two children to the Free Cities, where, upon reaching manhood, Viserys would plot to regain the throne. Dragonstone fell to Stannis Baratheon's fleet—but too late to catch the last two Targaryens.

The war was done, and the Seven Kingdoms were changed forever. The victory was a sorrowful one, for Lyanna Stark, whose supposed abduction had started the war, died in the Tower of Joy. Sad and bitter, Robert Baratheon ascended to the Iron Throne and took Tywin's daughter Cersei Lannister to wife. The other rebels all received their due rewards, and it seemed the Seven Kingdoms had finally found peace, rid forever of the scourge of the Dragonkings.

GREYJOY'S REBELLION

As had happened so often in the past, Robert Baratheon's kingship failed to live up to its early promise. Embittered at Lyanna's death, consumed by hatred of the Targaryens, and trapped in a loveless political marriage, Robert soon turned his back on the throne, immersing himself in drinking, whoring, hunting, and gaming. Sensing weakness, the wily Lord Balon Greyjoy of Pyke declared himself King of the Iron Islands and dispatched his brothers Victarion and Euron to burn the Lannister fleet as it sat at anchor in Lannisport harbor. Balon's triumph was short-lived, for his son Rodrik was slain on the walls of Seagard, and his fleet was sent to the bottom of the sea by the combined forces of Stannis Baratheon and Paxter Redwyne.

King Robert and his liegemen unleashed their hosts upon Pyke, shattering the fortress walls and taking the city after a ferocious battle. All his sons slain save one, Balon was forced to bend the knee and accept Robert as lawful sovereign. His son Theon was sent as hostage to Winterfell, where he grew up in the company of Lord Eddard Stark and his children. Though defeated, Balon Greyjoy never gave up on his desire to become King of the Iron Islands, and he still seeks a way to fulfill his ambition.

THE PRESENT DAY

Today, fifteen years after the War of the Usurper, nine years after Greyjoy's Rebellion, and two hundred and eighty-four years after Aegon's Landing, the Seven Kingdoms appear to be at peace. In the North, the Starks hold a vast territory, larger than all other kingdoms put together. Out of honor, Eddard Stark married his slain brother's betrothed, Catelyn Tully, and she has given him three sons—Robb, Bran, and Rickon—and two daughters—Arya and Sansa. To Catelyn's dismay however, Eddard has chosen to allow his bastard son, Jon Snow, to live at Winterfell as part of his household.

In the south, the other lands remain stable and prosperous under the rebel lords and their allies. Elsewhere, Balon Greyjoy still schemes to throw off King Robert's rulership, and the Dornish continue to live as they please, bound to the Seven Kingdoms in name only. Lord Tywin Lannister remains secure at Casterly Rock, but he has shown himself to be a master of both politics and strategy. Few expect Tywin to remain idle in the game of thrones for long.

Outwardly, all seems well. Yet there are rumblings of greater things to come. King Robert continues his life of hedonistic indulgence, growing fatter and more bitter with each passing year. It is commonly known that his wife Cersei despises him and spends more time with her gallant brother Jaime Lannister than with her lord husband. Their children, Princes Joffrey and Tommen and Princess Myrcella, take more after their golden-haired Lannister mother than their dark Baratheon father. On Dragonstone, Stannis Baratheon broods, wondering why his brother Renly seems to have Robert's favor, while he does not.

Tales, often exaggerated in the telling, come from distant lands, speaking of troubling events and frightening portents. The long summer is coming to an end, and with it, say the maesters, will come a winter of memorable length and ferocity. In the North, there are rumors of giants and even darker suggestions that the Others are stirring once again, served by the icy-fleshed walking dead. Across the narrow sea, it is whispered the lost prince Viserys builds an army of ferocious barbarians, intending to sail back to King's Landing and take the Iron Throne by force.

Soothsayers and priests of all faiths claim that summer is at last ending. How the coming winter will affect the Seven Kingdoms is anyone's guess, but the pieces appear to be in place for a bloody endgame that might once more bring ruin to the war-weary land of Westeros.

Chapter 2: Westeros Culture

Westeros is a vast continent, each of the Seven Kingdoms a mighty realm in its own right. From the First Men to the Valyrians, invaders have left their mark, and wars and raiding have changed things further. The culture of the lands changes from place to place and over time, sometimes with surprising speed. This living world cannot be trapped in amber.

As a result, this chapter can only deal with general patterns. Probably nowhere in Westeros is everything said here true, and everything said here is likely false somewhere. Still, south of the Wall, not everything here is false, either. This chapter serves to give you a cultural bearing in a complex world.

Laws & Justice

Westeros has few laws and little justice. Instead, it has a large number of pragmatic lords acting to keep the peace as best they can in their lands. In some cases, this comes to much the same thing: murderers, rapists, and thieves disrupt the peace and, thus, must be dealt with. If the murdering rapist is the captain of the lord's guard and a younger son of the lord's liege, however, wisdom might dictate overlooking his excess of exuberance.

Pit & Gallows

"Pit and Gallows" is the traditional name for the rights of justice held by a landed lord; the "pit" refers to the right to throw people into a dungeon, and "gallows" refers to the right to execute them. However, lords may apply other punishments as well, such as flogging, if they feel they're appropriate. The rights are limited, in that they only apply on the lands held by the lord. If a criminal flees to the lands of another lord, he is, in theory, safe. In practice, fleeing only helps if exceeding the lord's rights in that way is likely to cause him trouble. This rule might apply if the lord of the second set of lands is hostile and of at least comparable power, or not hostile yet known to be very sensitive about infringements on his authority. Of course, the first lord can always ask the second to take the case up himself.

Lords are not required to follow particular laws when making their judgments; their word is law. However, lords who wish to hold on to their positions generally do follow laws of their own devising and ensure the laws are at least somewhat reasonable. Arbitrary "justice" is a prime cause of smallfolk uprisings.

"Where is the king's justice? Is the Eyrie not part of the Seven Kingdoms?"

—Tyrion Lannister

Common Punishments

Execution is a very common punishment, typically hanging or beheading. Other methods may also be applied in particular cases; King Aerys was fond of burning people, a preference shared by followers of the Lord of Light. As a rule of thumb, beheading is a nobler death. Nobles are more likely to be beheaded than hanged, but similarly, a high noble is more likely to command a beheading than a hanging.

Fines are only common when the criminal is wealthy, but they are very popular in those cases. Members of the nobility who commit crimes are likely to face no punishment (if the victim was one of the smallfolk), a fine, or execution if the crime was very serious.

Flogging is a more common punishment for members of the lower social classes, and the severity of the flogging can be determined by both the number of strokes and the nature of the whip.

Mutilation is popular across the narrow sea, but it's quite rare on Westeros. Rapists are likely to be gelded, but a thief is more likely to be flogged or hanged.

Imprisonment is not a common means of punishment, but it is a common way to hold people for trial or for ransom. Although, there are some exceptions: the Arryns of the Eyrie imprison people in their Sky Cells, but this is, in effect, a form of execution.

Taking the Black

"Taking the black" means joining the Night's Watch. As the Watch is perennially short of men, it sends recruiters called Wandering Crows across Westeros, who accept anyone willing to say the words. Genuine volunteers are few in number, given the conditions, though some desperately poor individuals do. However, many lords feel guilty about not giving the Watch any help but not so guilty as to send useful men to freeze at the end of the world. Thus, they offer to pardon male criminals on condition that they take the black. This practice has become the main source of recruits to the Night's Watch, a situation the Lord Commander does not particularly like.

Pardons

Because lords have complete discretion in making judgments, they can choose to pardon anyone who commits a crime within their jurisdiction. Similarly, a lord can pardon anyone condemned by one of his vassals. A few lords pardon criminals on compassionate grounds, but the overwhelming majority of pardons are offered for political reasons. Most pardons are conditional on the pardoned criminal taking the black, as described above, and any crime can be pardoned for this reason.

The crime most likely to be pardoned, perhaps surprisingly, is treason—it is often essential to turn a powerful noble into an ally after defeating him in battle. A pardon requires the noble to accept that he did wrong, which is useful, and displays the new king's magnanimity. King Robert pardoned all the surviving members of Aerys's Kingsguard for their actions against him for just this reason, though in the case of Ser Barristan Selmy, admiration for the man may have played a part in it. However, Jaime Lannister, the Kingslayer, was almost certainly pardoned to avoid alienating his father and for his part in ending the Mad King's reign.

Customs of Westeros

Although the Seven Kingdoms are diverse, they do share a common culture and a number of common customs. In particular, the lands between the Neck and the Dornish Marches have a great deal in common. Even the North and Dorne are recognizably part of the same culture, but there are more, and more important, differences. It's not possible to cover all of the customs of Westeros in this short section; instead, a few of the more significant are discussed in some detail.

Hospitality

The obligations of hospitality are taken very seriously in Westeros. It is socially difficult for nobles to refuse hospitality to other nobles, even if they turn up unexpectedly. Of course, turning up with an army changes the situation, as does a time of war.

The real obligations arise after hospitality has been offered and accepted, symbolized by the "bread and salt," which now means any food. If the host welcomes the guest, offers food, and the guest eats it, then both sides have accepted hospitality and its responsibilities. Both host and guest are bound not to use violence against each other and to fight together against any assaults against the host. Ideally, they will also be mutually courteous, but in tense situations, it is more important to overlook minor insults than to declare the rules of hospitality void. This relationship lasts at least until dawn the following day, at which point the host can ask the guest to leave. The relationship is not truly over until the guest has left and, according to etiquette, traveled out of sight of the host's home.

Hospitality is normally respected, even between enemies. When it is broken, it is universally regarded as a particularly base act—treachery of the highest order, and any lord with a reputation for honor would instantly lose it. Other lords might use it as a reason to break an alliance, and a serious breach of hospitality could certainly be grounds for war—or even for the king to intervene. However, these serious consequences exist because, despite everything, lords do occasionally break the bond; those who trust to the tradition too much can lose a great deal, with the most egregious examples being their lives.

Many smallfolk also maintain the tradition to a certain extent among themselves, but it is a much less exalted matter. Very few nobles would think it reasonable, or even possible, to extend formal hospitality to one of the smallfolk.

Marriage

Marriage in Westeros is a relationship between one man and one woman, who, if they are not Targaryens, should not be any more closely related than first cousins. The Targaryen tradition of marriage between brother and sister derives from Valyria and has remained alien to the general population of Westeros, to the extent that such unions are deemed ungodly and even accursed. It is a religious bond, most commonly solemnized by the Seven, and it requires the consent of both the man and the woman. Although, particularly among the nobility, most

marriages are arranged by the families, a particularly strong-minded young man or woman can always derail proceedings by simply refusing to consent. Such rebellion is normally very unwise unless there are powerful factions supporting the reluctant partner.

Noble marriages are typically arranged to strengthen alliances, to bring land and wealth into a family or to resolve enmity. The first type has the best chance of being happy; in the last case, a girl might be married to her father's killer, which is rarely a good start. A marriage in which the bride and groom have never met one another is relatively normal.

In principle, marriage lasts until one spouse dies, though high nobles can generally find some way to wriggle out of burdensome alliances. Even for them, however, it is a difficult procedure. The smallfolk can simply abandon a spouse and run off, but that is generally politically impossible for the nobility.

Women are expected to be virgins on their wedding night, and if the husband's family is at all hostile, the bride had better be so. However, it is well known that horse riding can break a girl's maidenhead, so few families are insistent on physical proof. Unweaned infants can be married if there are political circumstances making it urgent that the wedding goes ahead, but the nobility normally waits until a girl flowers. While it isn't unheard of for noble girls to get married around thirteen, it is much more common for them to be at least fifteen or sixteen. Noble maidens would, however, normally expect to be married by twenty. Smallfolk tend to marry a bit later.

Marriage ceremonies vary greatly in splendor but—at least among the nobility—include three main elements. The first is the religious ceremony in which the bride and groom swear their vows, and the priest blesses them. As part of this, the bride, who enters in a cloak in her father's colors, has it removed and replaced by her husband with a cloak in his own colors. The second element is a feast, where the bride and groom eat and drink with their relatives, their relatives' vassals, and anyone else it is deemed wise to invite.

Finally, there is the bedding. The groom is carried to the chamber by female guests, the bride by male guests. As they go, the guests strip them of their clothes, so they end up naked in bed together. They may then be granted some privacy to consummate the marriage, though that does not always happen. Needless to say, this ceremony can be somewhat traumatic for a virginal thirteen-year-old, whether bride or groom.

Inheritance & Lordship

The lordships of Westeros are, for the most part, hereditary. Lordship passes automatically to the proper heir, according to the rules of succession, on the death of the previous lord—in most cases, to the eldest son. However, if the lord has no sons, then his daughters can inherit in some lands. If there are no daughters, then brothers or their children inherit. It is even possible to trace up the family tree and then back down again, looking for living heirs. Once you start doing this, however, things get complicated and politicized. In theory, men take priority over women, and older siblings over younger. Once you have started going down a branch of the family tree, you are supposed to go all the way down before looking for other heirs; thus, the great-grandson of the eldest son of the lord has a better claim than the lord's second son, even if the great-grandson is a babe in arms with a mother from a rival house and the second son a mighty warrior. Those

are, however, exactly the sorts of situations in which politics are likely to trump the theoretical rules.

There are regional variations on this rule. Most notably, inheritance in Dorne is determined by order of birth, with women having equal rights with men. In the Iron Islands, the kingship was originally determined by popular vote at a kingsmoot, but that custom has long fallen into disuse.

In theory, then, it is all but impossible for a noble house to become extinct; enough poking around in dusty archives can turn up heirs for just about anyone. In practice, however, a distant relative is unlikely to inherit, particularly if the king has other plans for the lands or if the reputed heir is living like a commoner. However, such situations do not prevent people from fighting for their "rights."

A variation on this practice is that nobles sometimes dig around in their family history to find hereditary justification for taking on a certain position. King Robert claims some hereditary right to the Iron Throne, for example, but no one really believes he justifies his rule by hereditary right. Such discovered justifications are used to excuse acts of aggression or to bolster the security of a position taken by force. A noble with such a claim might launch a legal case first, but such action would merely be a part of demonstrating the "validity" of his right; he would not expect to actually win unless he had stitched matters up with the liege lord beforehand.

Some positions are not hereditary. These posts include placements on the small council and the posts of Warden. Many of them, particularly the Wardens, are strongly associated with particular lordships and are effectively hereditary. Although the king must make the appointment, it would

be a brave, or foolish, monarch who made anyone other than a Stark of Winterfell Warden of the North. Kings have more freedom in appointing their small council and in accepting knights into the Kingsguard.

Bastards

Bastards, children born to parents who are not properly wed, are common in Westeros. Whores, for example, frequently have bastard children and may raise them in their own profession. Bastards do not have a good reputation. Popular belief says the lust and lies leading to their conception lives on in the child, making bastards naturally lecherous and treacherous. The law reinforces this belief: bastards may not inherit, nor may they become knights, septons, or maesters. However, the Night's Watch does not discriminate against bastards, and some have even become Lord Commander.

Among the smallfolk, bastardy is a private matter. Things are different when the father of a bastard is a nobleman. Although bastards cannot legally inherit, they can cause problems in a number of ways. First, the bastard is the nobleman's child, and in most cases, he had at least a certain degree of affection for the mother. If the father feels some responsibility towards the child, he acknowledges the bastard and pays at least some attention to the child's career. In this case, the child is given a name that depends on the region in which the father holds his lordship (see **Regional Names for Bastards** sidebar) or on the region where the bastard is born. Lord Eddard Stark has taken his bastard Jon Snow into Winterfell and is raising him with his own children; such a situation is unusual. It's more common for the bastard to be found employment suitable to his mother's station, often some distance from the lord's seat. King Robert is rumored to have numerous bastards, but only those with noble mothers are acknowledged, and the king has very little to do even with them.

Regional Names for Bastards

Region	Surname
Dorne	Sand
Dragonstone	Waters
Iron Islands	Pyke
North	Snow
Reach	Flowers
Riverlands	Rivers
Stormlands	Storm
Vale	Stone
Westerlands	Hill

Bastards can only be declared legitimate by the king. Such declaration is rare, due both to the prejudice against bastards and to the concerns of legitimate heirs over the potential sudden appearance of older brothers. However, in some cases, it can be the best way to resolve potentially nasty political crises caused by unexpected deaths or to ensure that an important lordship is held by an ally. As a result, while rare, it is certainly not unheard of.

Pastimes

The people of Westeros spend their time in many different and varied ways, including the universals of social eating, drinking, and conversation. Children play improvised games and climb trees (or castles) just as they do anywhere. Taverns and brothels do a good business, and both are legal almost everywhere, if not regarded particularly highly.

The most common and important (acceptable and public) social pastimes among the nobility are tourneys, hunts, and feasts. Training for hunts and tourneys is as much pastime as work in many cases, but the events themselves are more anticipated. Tourneys are probably the most important, so much so that they have their own section (see **Tournaments** on pages 25-26).

Hunting

The hunt is very popular, most notably with King Robert. Two main forms of hunting are practiced. In one, prey such as deer and wild boars are pursued with the aid of hounds. The hunters may wield bows or spears, but in any case, the hunt is dangerous. Wild boars are fully capable of killing even a skilled warrior and are very stubborn, and there is always the risk of stray arrows from other members of the hunting party. Hunting accidents are common enough that they are a popular form of assassination; it is difficult to prove a hunting accident was not exactly that. Women do not generally participate in this sort of hunt.

The second form is falconry, in which trained birds of prey are loosed at small game, such as rabbits. This form of hunting is popular with women, as well as men, and is much less dangerous; even the largest

eagles are not capable of killing a human being in most cases, and only smaller falcons are normally used. Still, it is quite possible to pick up some nasty scratches or even lose an eye if you are unlucky.

Feasts

Feasts are probably the least dangerous entertainment since poisoning—deliberate or accidental—is rare. Alcohol is an important component, however, which means that drunken brawls are bound to occur. When the atmosphere is calmer, minstrels perform while lords and ladies dance.

Other Pastimes

Many other more solitary pastimes are also popular. Most nobles are literate, having learned from their maester, and some do enjoy reading. In most areas, however, a noble who likes his books overmuch is sometimes regarded with some suspicion. *Cyvasse*, a board game similar to chess, is also popular, and women and girls spend much of their time embroidering, singing, and playing music. It is very rare for nobles to be completely alone; servants and maids-in-waiting are usually present. The maids of the daughters of important nobles are often of significant rank themselves and become friends of their nominal mistresses, but maid-in-waiting is also a suitable destination for a bastard of moderate rank.

Social Status & Rank

As should be very clear, the Seven Kingdoms are not an egalitarian society. More to the point, a person's status depends strongly on his parents' status, in a very direct way. Someone who is a son of the Starks of Winterfell has a higher status than someone who is a son of a farmer, even if they have achieved exactly equivalent deeds and both become members of the Kingsguard. Indeed, even if the farmer's son has achieved vastly more on his way to the Kingsguard (which is very likely), the Stark still has higher status.

Almost no inhabitants of the Seven Kingdoms even think to question this ranking. Even the smallfolk think there is something unnatural about those of smallfolk stock ruling. On the other hand, the barriers are not absolute. Lord Stannis Baratheon's so-called Onion Knight, Ser Davos, was born among the smallfolk and was a smuggler before being knighted. Although a knight, he is not well regarded by the "true" nobility.

Outcasts

On the whole, being an outcast is not an inherited status. Rather, it is earned by the commission of crimes, by desertion in war, or by unfortunate political events. The wildlings beyond the Wall could be considered outcasts, but they could also be considered to be outside the society of the Seven Kingdoms.

Outcasts are not defended by the law, and so they take their survival into their own hands, which makes most of them into criminals.

Smallfolk ⚙ Apprentices ⚙ Novices Sellswords ⚙ Hedge Knights ⚙ Squires

This station is the level encompassing the vast majority of people in Westeros. Although these groups are considered to be on a level, attitudes to them vary considerably.

The smallfolk are simply the ordinary people. They are generally below the notice of the nobility as individuals, though in large groups, they can be a worry. They are born into their position and are likely to die in their position.

Apprentices, novices, and squires start out in respected careers that may well see them reaching a higher status as they get older. Of course, some people never get beyond the initial stages.

Sellswords would be outcasts, apart from the fact they are just a bit too useful to the nobility; they are tolerated but nothing more than that.

Finally, hedge knights are knights who do not have the wealth and status that is normally expected and lack a lord. Their status is the most ambiguous of any in this group. As knights, they should be respected, but they lack any power or influence to demand that respect.

Sworn Swords ⚙ Household Servants Lesser Merchants ⚙ Acolyte Maesters

The next level up again falls into different groups. Sworn swords are knights or similar warriors who have sworn service to a lord but who do not have a long-term commitment on either side. Household servants are those who are physically close to the nobility. Social closeness is not to be expected, but the nobility typically do know their names, and their characters, and may have a degree of affection for a few.

Lesser merchants and acolyte maesters are on their way up through non-noble careers. They have succeeded enough to deserve some respect, but they are still, as yet, in the lower ranks of society. A merchant might well finish his career here and only be a little disappointed; a maester who dies an aged acolyte is likely bitter.

House Retainer ⚙ Landed Knight Merchant ⚙ Maester ⚙ Septon

This rank is the first that commands general respect. A house retainer has a long-term, probably lifelong, commitment to a noble house, whereas a landed knight has lands of his own, though not the title of nobility. Merchants are respected for their wealth, and maesters are looked up to for their learning. Septons draw on both their own character and the backing of the Faith.

There is no shame for anyone in ending his career at this level; indeed, only the exceptional or wellborn advance any higher. Similarly, this level is the first at which friendship with a true member of the nobility is at all likely. A maester who was friendly with Lord Hoster Tully would be regarded as lucky, but the lord would not be looked down upon for his friendship. Obviously, friendships between the nobility and those of lesser rank do happen, but they are rare and not socially acceptable.

Member of a Minor House ⚙ Greater Landed Knight ⚙ Greater Merchant

With the next level, we have entered the nobility. Members of minor houses are undisputed nobles, even if their house is minor. Greater landed knights are arguably not, strictly speaking, nobles, in that they do not hold a heritable title, but as they hold heritable lands and the power to knight their sons, this distinction is one that is rarely pressed. Once a man has become a greater landed knight, he stands a very good chance of being granted a minor noble title.

Greater merchants are on this level out of a mix of courtesy and necessity. While still technically smallfolk, or at least clearly not noble, their wealth and influence make them impossible to ignore. Wealthy traditionalist nobles treat greater merchants as lower than any true noble, while penurious nobles usually treat them with a great deal of respect.

Member of a Great House ⚙ Archmaester Brother of the Kingsguard ⚙ High Septon

People at this exalted level draw great respect, at least in public, from everyone. Even a young child in a great house receives this level of reverence. Archmaesters have earned it with their learning, the High Septon with his piety, and the brothers of the Kingsguard with their martial prowess. While there are degrees within this level as within all others, there are few occasions on which they matter. This level of society is so small that, among the people who have enough status to act on distinctions, personal alliances and animosities take precedence.

Member of the Royal Family

The royal family is a step above the great houses in power and influence but not different in kind, at least not since the overthrow of the Targaryens. Its members have a claim on the throne when the monarch dies, or at least, in the case of the monarch's consort, a claim to be regent. At present, the royal family consists of King Robert Baratheon, his wife Queen Cersei, and their three children, Joffrey, Myrcella, and Tommen. King Robert's brothers, Lords Stannis and Renly, are also members of the royal family but largely in default of having another great house to belong to; as King Robert has two sons, they have no claim on the throne.

King ⚙ Queen

The reigning king or queen is different from the other nobles. He is the font of honor and justice, able to make and unmake nobles with a stroke of the pen, legitimize bastards, and command the execution of anyone by any means.

In practice, of course, the king is constrained by political realities. When the king was Aegon Targaryen, who had three dragons to back up his commands, his actual power may have matched the rhetoric, but that is not the case under King Robert. While no individual command

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is likely to be countermanded, he could still lose his position to intrigue if he were to offend the wrong people. Of course, as kings do not retire, this loss of position would also involve his death.

GOODS

From the porridge of the peasant to the Valyrian greatsword *Ice*, the goods of Westeros make the Seven Kingdoms work, and the work of the Seven Kingdoms makes those goods. While the nobility can generally hold themselves aloof from the details of commerce and manufacture, they cannot remain completely untouched.

Commerce

The economy of Westeros relies on commerce as much as any other complex society, though its agricultural base is still strong enough that most areas could survive a temporary cessation of all trade. While it is not a land of merchants, the mercantile economy is still fairly sophisticated.

In the first place, most transactions in the Seven Kingdoms involve cash. The coinage, minted primarily by the king, is tri-metallic, with gold dragons, silver stags, and copper coins for minor purchases. Most smallfolk never own a gold dragon, but only the most isolated never even see one. A crannogman in the heart of the Neck might get through his life without handling money, but everyone else deals with it at some point. The coinage is generally reliable; the Targaryens never debased it, and King Robert hasn't either, yet. There are still older coins around, which are often less valuable than the current minting, as they weigh less. Old and foreign coins can be changed by moneychangers, who take a percentage of the value as their cut.

This is not to say that bartering is unheard of; it is common in rural areas, up along the Wall, and between friends in towns and cities. A stranger in a town had better have cash, however, and few smallfolk would refuse cash payment.

Trade within the Seven Kingdoms is quite vigorous, as the products of Dorne are very different from those of the North. However, long distance trade is almost entirely in luxuries, as transport is very expensive, not to mention dangerous. Transport by land is around ten times as expensive as transport by water, which means that almost all goods travel by river or coastal ship for at least part of their journey. Furs from the North, silks and gems from the south, fine craft work from anywhere—these are the items that are gathered at great markets. Grain, meat, and fish are also found there, but they have almost exclusively come from nearby areas.

Farming smallfolk meet most of their basic needs from their land, and they buy the remainder from traveling peddlers or at local markets. Few rural areas support permanent shops, though a busy road can support an inn or two, and those inns may also sell necessary supplies. Farmers can also sell their surplus crops at market, but taxes generally leave them with little; most surplus is sold by the lords.

Towns and cities do support permanent shops, as well as market stalls and wandering street traders. Prepared food is often sold by wandering traders, who call out the merits of their wares, whether they are "Sweet Puddings!" or "Hot Pies!" Equally, there are taverns and inns, and shops sell both ingredients and finished meals.

The cities are also home to the wealthier merchants. Some may deal in large quantities of basic goods, such as grain or cloth, but virtually all the wealthy ones also deal with luxury goods, which may be imported from overseas. Some wealthy individuals and groups also indulge in money lending, which can be very lucrative, if unpopular. The crown, particularly under King Robert, is a common client—and one the moneylenders cannot refuse. On one hand, the king will be able to repay the loans, eventually. On the other hand is the possibility that he will simply decide not to.

Most nobles keep commerce at arms' length, at least. A noble family gets its wealth from its land, whether through farming, forestry, or mining. A few families who have fallen on hard times intermarry with wealthy merchants, but this practice is usually frowned upon.

Clothing

Clothing is necessary across Westeros, though in some parts of Dorne the reasons are merely cultural. While clothing styles vary, it is to less of a degree than one might imagine, particularly among the nobility. What does tend to change is the materials used; the weight of the clothes are suited to the climate. In addition, smallfolk generally have to make do with clothes made locally—something that does not restrict the nobility, of course.

Smallclothes are worn next to the skin, reducing the need for cleaning the outer clothes. For men, a loincloth or breeches and undershirt are normal, while women wear undershirts and underskirts. The best smallclothes are made of silk, but most people must make do with linen. For some outfits, there are further layers between the smallclothes and the outer layer, particularly for dresses for noble ladies. Whores may forego smallclothes, but such omission is not done among respectable folk.

The basic outfit for a man consists of a tunic and breeches or hose, whereas a woman would wear a dress. A belt both keeps the cloth under control and provides a place to hang pouches of money and food, and shoes or boots, typically of leather, protect the feet. Shoes are normally soft leather and are simply discarded when they wear out; boots are tougher and much more expensive. A cloak and hat complete the basic traveling outfit; both would normally be removed indoors.

The Basics

For the smallfolk, the basics are what they get to wear. Money, however, opens up more options. Cloth can be dyed in many colors, some of which are expensive, and it is not uncommon for members of noble houses to include at least a reference to their house's colors in their clothing. Cloth can be costly; silks and satins are expensive choices, but elaborate embroidery, or slightly cheaper, painted fabrics are also a possibility. The richest garments, particularly for women, are decorated with small jewels sewn on in elaborate patterns. Combining more than one fabric in a single garment is popular, either by letting in a panel of a contrasting color in the front of a gown, for example, or by lining the garment in a contrasting cloth and cutting through the outer layer so that it shows through. Fur is often used to trim garments, providing a border round the edge. Such trim is particularly common on cloaks and cloak variants, such as mantles or kirtles. Some fur is not particularly ex-

pensive, but some kinds, such as sable, are. A cold-weather cloak might be entirely made of fur.

Gowns for adult women are often designed with low necklines (to bare the shoulders and draw attention to the breasts), tight tops, and long, full skirts. Short skirts are essentially unheard of; an underskirt is not a loincloth, which means that female clothing is just not practical for certain activities, which in turn makes it socially acceptable for women to dress somewhat like men in many contexts. Just how socially acceptable depends on the activity; a woman wearing a tunic and breeches to help build a house would have no problems, whereas one dressed like that to fight would encounter more prejudice. Men, however, do not wear women's clothes unless they are desperate to conceal their identity.

Tools of Battle

Arms and armor are owned mainly by the nobility of Westeros; the items are expensive, and many nobles are unnerved at the idea of large numbers of armed peasants. However, in most cases, it is not illegal for smallfolk to own armor or weapons, and it would be a foolish man who traveled through the countryside without either a weapon or armed guards of his own.

Arms

The most admired weapon is the sword, the ideal weapon of a knight. Swords are also the most expensive weapons, as it is difficult to forge a good blade. Bad sword blades can be knocked out easily (sharpen one side of a thin metal bar), and these may be distributed to levies in an emergency. Castle-forged weapons, produced for the nobility, are of high quality, generally better than those produced by smiths in the cities. Smallfolk are unlikely to get their hands on a castle-forged weapon.

The rarest and most desired swords are those forged in Old Valyria, of Valyrian steel. The secrets of making them have been lost, though a handful of smiths know the secret of re-forging them to make new blades. There are perhaps a couple of hundred Valyrian steel swords in Westeros, and all the known ones are held as heirlooms by noble houses. In some cases the sword may be almost as famous as the person or house holding it. These swords are stronger, lighter, and sharper than all others, and the steel is typically dark, almost black.

Other weapons are also common. Almost everyone carries a knife or dagger, as it is useful and practical in many circumstances. Spears and mauls are relatively cheap to make and are, thus, popular weapons for men-at-arms. A cheap spear can still be a good weapon; the same cannot be said of a cheap sword.

Armor

There are various kinds of armor in common use. Shields are almost universal, as they are both inexpensive and extremely useful. The most basic shield is simply a few wooden boards joined together, and even at that level, it can be remarkably effective. Nobles carry shields with steel fittings, leather coverings, and elaborate designs, which make them much more expensive, as well as slightly more effective.

The most effective—and expensive—armor is plate, which consists of a number of shaped plates of steel fitted to the body, normally worn over chain mail and padded leather. Even an unadorned suit of plate armor is expensive, and the nobility often color it or add decorations. The Kingsguard, for example, wear white plate armor, and other nobles decorate their tournament armor with precious stones. Prince Rhaegar's armor was decorated with rubies, which were lost when he was killed.

Those who cannot afford plate may wear the chain and leather that goes underneath, and this coverage still provides good protection. It is also possible to add a few pieces of plate; a plate helm, for example, is common, as are breastplates and guards for the joints. Ring and scale mail are also known but possibly less common.

Leather armor is worn by itself, particularly by scouts and levied men-at-arms. While little better than nothing, it cannot stop an on-target sword blow, whereas plate armor can.

Food & Drink

Food and drink are much the same across Westeros, with the exception of Dorne, where tastes are notably different. For the most part, the diet is based on grains, such as wheat, maize, oats, or barley, with plenty of vegetables added in. Leeks, onions, turnips, peas, and spinach are all important.

For the small folk, meat and fish are an occasional delicacy, but the nobility can expect them everyday. Beef, pork, and lamb are all common meats, along with chicken, pheasant, partridge, and pigeon. Venison is eaten after successful hunts, and the meat of wild boars may also be served.

Fish and seafood are an important part of the diet for people living near water; fresh water fish are as important as salt. Trout, herring, salmon, and lampreys are important fish, and clams, mussels, lobster, and crabs are significant shellfish. Salted fish keeps well and can be eaten far from the place it was caught, even up in the mountains.

Fruits, including apples, pears, plums, peaches, and oranges, are a popular source of dessert, and honey is commonly used as a sweetener. Nutmeg and cinnamon are among the spices used in desserts and wine. Cheese is a fairly common part of the diet and comes in a range of types, some white and some blue.

Most drinks are alcoholic, and beer is popular with the lower classes. However, wine is the drink of the nobility, and it is said the best comes from the Arbor. However, personal opinions differ, as some favor the sweet summerwine, and others loathe it.

Dornish cuisine emphasizes spices, so their dishes can be quite difficult for northerners to stomach. The Dornish also prefer drier and stronger wines. Nevertheless, Dornish cuisine is not so different as to confuse visitors, though they may swear off eating anything that looks red.

Dangerous Dining

Food and drink are among the many hazards encountered in Westeros; all it takes is a bit of spoiled meat or tainted grain to cause a distress of the stomach and bowels, or even worse food-borne illnesses. People drink primarily wine and beer because water often carries a cocktail of contagion, especially in urban areas, where the water is the most tainted.

Among the higher classes, there is also the ever-present risk of poisons placed in food or drink. The nobility often employ food-tasters specifically because poison is a favored weapon of rivals and assassins, relatively easy to administer, and difficult to trace. Many rare and deadly toxins are known in Westeros, detailed on pages 130–134 of *A Song of Ice and Fire Roleplaying*.

SONGS, STORIES, & LEGENDS

The history of Westeros has been glorious enough to give rise to songs, stories, and legends, but that has not stopped maesters, minstrels, and others from making up still more. There is not enough space here to mention all of even the most famous.

Stories & Legends

The first group of legends are those concerning the Age of Heroes and the Dawn Age. These stories involve kings who reigned for centuries, knights who did great deeds of chivalry long before the creation of knighthood, and monsters the like of which have never been seen in Westeros. Understandably, many educated folk think these stories are all made up, particularly as they were first written down by septons thousands of years after the events they describe. Still, the possibility of being grounded in truth cannot be ruled out in all cases.

The second group, tales of the Long Night and the Others, are legends few truly believe but equally few would rule out entirely. The tales of mysterious Others coming with the cold and dark from the North to destroy all men, only to be defeated and pinned back behind the Wall, sound a lot like the other legends of the Age of Heroes. Except, of course, that the Wall is definitely there, and the Night's Watch have a warning signal to announce an attack by the Others. There are few in the North, at least, willing to say there is nothing to these stories, though few among nobles and the educated would confess to believing everything.

Next come the tales based on history. As might be expected, many tales exist concerning the Targaryens—scions of fallen Valyria who conquered Westeros from the backs of dragons. All of the great houses also have their own stories of the great deeds of their ancestors. These stories often exist in multiple versions, which diverge the older the events recounted. Telling the wrong version in a Great Hall can be a fatal mistake. Examples would be the tales of Aegon the Dragonknight, or of the Dance of Dragons.

Finally, some tales are almost contemporary. Robert Baratheon's taking of the throne is already a matter for story, as are the deeds of Ser Barristan Selmy, head of the Kingsguard. These stories rarely have vastly different versions, but anyone with common sense knows which to avoid telling.

Songs

Songs fall into two main groups, those based on tales and those that are simply entertainment. The first group draws on all the tales mentioned previously; a particularly famous example is *The Rains of Castamere*, which tells of the vengeance of Lord Tywin Lannister on the Reynes, a family of bannermen who defied him. More historically, the Dance of Dragons is the subject of an elaborate cycle of ballads.

Entertaining songs include love songs, such as *Two Hearts that Beat as One*, as well as more comedic and bawdy songs, such as *The Bear, and the Maiden Fair*. Some of these songs also have multiple versions, one for polite company and other versions for when the only ladies present are for sale.

These tales and songs are told and sung across Westeros, so few are completely ignorant of their contents. On the other hand, since most people are illiterate, many regional variants exist, particularly for bawdy songs. The best minstrels take pride in knowing all the relevant versions and on creating their own songs and stories.

LANGUAGE

A single language, known as the Common Tongue, dominates Westeros. Although there are minor variations from place to place, Dornishmen can communicate with Northmen without difficulty. Other languages exist on the continent across the narrow sea. The most important is High Valyrian, the language of the old Valyrian Freehold, spoken now in the slave cities, but one can also find speakers of Braavosi (the language of Braavos), Ghiscari (the language of old Ghis, which fell to the Valyrian Freehold), and more. These tongues are rarely heard on Westeros, outside the trading ports.

In the Far North, beyond the Wall, the giants and some of the most remote wildlings have their own languages, but few in Westeros believe that the wildlings have anything worth saying in their crude tongue.

There is also the trade talk, which is not really a language. Rather, it is a pidgin of the Common Tongue, High Valyrian, and other languages, put together to allow traveling sailors and traders to communicate. It is far easier to learn than any full language but is also limited in expression. While wholly adequate for haggling over the price of fish, it is not a vehicle for poetry.

FAITH

Almost all inhabitants of Westeros are religious in one way or another. The Faith, the worship of the Seven, is by far the most common religion, but those who live in the North still revere the nameless and countless gods of the First Men, lodged in their godswoods. Other faiths are of minor importance in Westeros, though some are outposts of religions that are very strong in other lands.

The Seven

The religion that follows the Seven is so dominant in Westeros that it is referred to simply as "the Faith." It was brought over by the Andal invaders, some of whom wore the seven-pointed star of their gods painted or carved into their flesh.

The Seven are the Crone, the Smith, the Mother, the Father, the Maiden, the Warrior, and the Stranger. The Crone, Mother, and Maiden are female, the Smith, Father, and Warrior male, and the Stranger both and neither. Each has a broadly defined area of concern, so the Crone watches over wisdom and discernment, the Smith over creation—particularly through crafts of all sorts, the Mother over parental love, the Father over rulership and justice, the Maiden over innocence, joy, and youth, and the Warrior over valor and combat. The Stranger is concerned with death. While most people, nobles and smallfolk alike, treat them as seven gods, the doctrine of the Faith is they are seven aspects of a single god.

Worship takes place in a seven-walled building called a sept. Each god is represented inside, and candles burn in front of the images, lit by those who have prayed. The Stranger rarely has more than a handful of candles, while in times of war, the Mother and Warrior stand behind rank upon rank of lights. The decoration of the sept depends on the wealth of those who support it. A simple village sept might have crude charcoal drawings of the gods on the walls, while the Grand Sept of Baelor in King's Landing has stained-glass windows, mosaics, fine statues, and gilded surfaces. Private worship consists mainly in saying prayers and lighting candles before the images. Public worship includes devotional hymns and an address. The Seven also feature in many popular songs, which treat them with varying levels of respect.

The clergy of the Faith are known as septons if male and septas if female. In some places, they live together in institutions known as septries, but a poor village might rely on a wandering septon to come and lead the services and hear confession every few weeks. Septons and septas are celibate and are generally expected to also be chaste. The distribution of virtue and vice is about the same among septons as it is among all other people, so there are saints and villains among them, but most are just people. Some education is necessary to become a septon, and most of them are literate, some being great scholars—most of the legends of the distant past of Westeros were written down by septons. On the other hand, a village priest might only know the necessary prayers, and being illiterate, know them only by heart. However, this rote memorization is still more education than most baseborn receive.

The Faith is led by the High Septon, who resides in the Grand Sept of Baelor. The next rank below him are the Most Devout, who are responsible for electing a new High Septon when the current one dies. On election, the High Septon renounces his name, which can make history somewhat confusing. The election is largely free; even the king can exert little more than subtle pressure. The Faith has strong enough roots among the population and nobility that not even the royal family can directly challenge it. Perhaps, fortunately, the militant branches of the Faith were suppressed centuries ago by Maegor the Cruel, so it has no warriors and must rely on moral authority alone.

There are a number of orders within the Faith. Among the most visible are the begging brothers, who wear simple clothes and walk the roads of Westeros, begging for their upkeep. The septons who live in septries are known as Brown Brothers, and are somewhat apart from the world, having taken special vows. However, the order about which most stories circulate is the Silent Sisters. These women have sworn vows to the Stranger and never speak. They are given charge over the dead, and one of their duties is escorting the corpses of noblemen home to their estates.

The Old Gods

The old gods are nameless and numberless; once, they held sway over the whole of Westeros, as they were worshiped by the children of the forest. When the First Men came, they first fought with the children but then made peace and accepted their gods. The children of the forest probably worshiped their gods in the groves of the forest, but the First Men created godswoods, groves within their castles and villages where the gods could be found.

The Andals brought the worship of the Seven, and the old gods retreated before them. The Faith never sought to eliminate the old gods, however, and in some regions, they remain strong still. In particular, most Northmen still worship the old gods, though small septs can be found in large settlements. In contrast, while the Faith is far stronger in the south, most castles still have a godswood, even if it is treated more as a garden than a place of worship. Beyond the Wall, there are only the old gods, and the Night's Watch allows new men to say their words before either the Seven or the old gods, making no distinction between them.

Worship of the old gods tends to be a private matter, even when a number of people gather for it, but marriages can be contracted in a godswood as well as in a sept. Knights, however, are purely a creation of the Faith.

Weirwoods

Weirwoods are the great trees at the heart of a godswood. White-barked, they are carved with faces that stand out red. It is said the old gods look out of these faces and that the children of the forest could do the same. Weirwoods also grow wild, and they are still treated as somewhat holy even when they are not carved. Sometimes, people claim the face in the godswood weeps when tragedy is approaching, but few believe such stories.

Not all godswoods have a weirwood, but those without feel incomplete. A godswood may lose its weirwood to damage, and some, such as the godswood in the Eyrie, are in places that make it impossible to grow the tree.

The Drowned God & the Storm God

The Drowned God is the god of the ironmen, inhabitants of the Iron Islands. A hard god, he is locked in a constant war with the Storm God, a war that spills over to affect his worshipers. (If the Storm God has any worshipers, they keep their affiliation secret.) The Drowned God is a god of the sea and of raiding, and his priests bestow their blessings by pouring salt water over the heads of their followers. All ironmen are symbolically drowned at birth by being dipped in or anointed with salt water, but rank in the faith is reserved for those who have actually drowned in seawater. This process requires immersion in salt water until you lose consciousness and inhale seawater. Some men become priests because they drowned and survived naturally, but it can also be administered as a ritual. In this case, the priest holds the man under the water and then pulls him out and resuscitates him before he actually dies (usually). These men are known as drowned men, and while they are not all priests, all priests must be drowned men.

Mother Rhoyne

Mother Rhoyne is the chief goddess of the orphans of the Greenblood, in Dorne. She is a personification of their ancestral home, the river Rhoyne, and is also known as Mother River. Her worship does not extend beyond the orphans, though most Dornishmen claim some Rhoynish blood.

R'hllor, Lord of Light

R'hllor is an important god across the narrow sea, but he has yet to find many inroads into Westeros, though the red priests are more numerous in Dorne. He is a god of light and fire, and he is eternally struggling with an unnamed, possibly nameless—or even unnameable—enemy, who rules over darkness and cold. His priests are known as red priests (red priestesses, if female) because of the red robes they wear, and his rites center on flames. Most notably, fires are lit every day at dusk, as part of a prayer to R'hllor that he brings the dawn.

The followers of R'hllor have a prophecy of a great warrior called Azor Ahai, who will come to the world and tip the balance in the war against the darkness. Azor Ahai will bear a sword of fire and bring dragons to life. This prophecy is not widely known in Westeros but is common knowledge among the followers of R'hllor.

Many rumors say the red priests have magic powers, seeing the future in the flames and wielding burning swords. Thoros of Myr is probably the best-known red priest in Westeros, as he is a frequent competitor at tourneys, wielding a burning sword. Some attribute this to magic, others to alchemists' fire and a constant supply of new swords.

Other Religions

The world is full of gods and monsters, and their shrines and idols litter cities and ruins alike. Along the coasts of Westeros, sailors erect small shrines dedicated to strange gods, often cobbled together from mis-

understood figures and beliefs encountered on their travels. Across the narrow sea, the Drowned God, Storm God, the Faith, and the myriad of other religions fade as peoples embrace their own gods. While the Lord of Light commands a strong following throughout the Nine Free Cities, even his influence wanes once one passes the girdle of civilization and enters the wilderness of ancient societies. When traveling abroad, a person quickly learns to keep his pious devotion to himself lest he offend others by his zeal or become offended when others mock his beliefs as fantasy.

KNIGHTHOOD

Knighthood is an honorable position, both martial and religious. It is limited to men but not to noble men, as it is possible for the base-born to become knights. Bastards, however, are forbidden from being knighted by law. A man becomes a knight on his merits, not by birth. Knights are skilled at arms, courteous and honorable, clean and graceful, elegant and enduring, and they are referred to with the title "Ser" before their names.

That is the theory. The practice is, naturally, slightly different but more in the sense that some knights fail to live up to the ideals than in the sense that the whole institution is morally bankrupt. Of course, some knights spectacularly fail to live up to the ideals, though even Ser Gregor Clegane can claim to fulfill one of the ideals: he is a mighty warrior.

In reality, skill at arms is the most important aspect of knighthood. All knights are at least competent in battle, and a nobleman with no martial interest or ability would neither seek nor be granted knighthood. In principle, there is no dishonor for a noble not to become a knight, though some families have fixed ideas about the sorts of sons they should have. Martial ability is not, by itself, enough; sellswords cannot become knights just for the asking.

The religious aspect is also of some importance. Although the ceremony of knighting can be very simple, it is intimately bound up with the Faith, involving, at the very least, an invocation of the Seven. The standard ceremony involves a night-long vigil in a sept—with the knight normally dressed in simple clothes—before being dubbed by another knight and anointed by a septon. Deep piety is not required, but men who hold to other religions, in particular the worship of the old gods, do not become knights.

However, a man of noble birth with skill at arms who is willing to take part in the ceremonies of the Faith can become a knight if he wants to. While any knight can dub a knight, it is prestigious to be knighted by someone of high status, the most prestigious being the king. A knight who granted the title to those who were obviously unworthy would quickly become an object of ridicule and probably a target for duels by knights who care about such things, so such appointments are rare. If the candidate is of noble birth, the qualifications are primarily martial, but for base-born candidates, the standards are much stiffer. Indeed, a knight who grants that status to someone who is not noble had better be sure the candidate will be a fine addition to the ranks of chivalry. As a result, the lower a knight's birth, the more likely he is to act as a knight "should," though there are knights of impeccably noble lineage who also uphold its requirements. By most people's reckoning, Prince Rhaegar Targaryen was one such.

The other requirements of a knight are somewhat nebulous, but there is agreement on the core principles. Knights should be brave and loyal and not resort to trickery in battle. They should defend the weak and innocent, particularly the young, and be respectful to all women. They are courteous to all, possess cleanly manners, and fight mounted and armored in metal. The sword and lance are the classic weapons of the knight, but more flexibility is allowed here.

Some interpret the rest quite broadly as well. "Cleanliness" can mean "a bath every year, whether I need it or not." Loyalty, particularly for hedge knights, may be a fleeting thing, lasting only until the outcome of a battle is no longer in doubt. Trickery is a matter of opinion, as one man's trickery is another's tactical masterstroke. The line between cowardice and discretion, or bravery and suicidal recklessness, is also up for debate. The thing about the weak and innocent is that they cannot actually do anything if you attack them, and a distressingly large number of knights take advantage of that. Similarly, respect for women often limits itself to noble women with knightly husbands, fathers, or brothers.

Knights are consistently called "ser," however.

Hedge Knights

Hedge knights are the lowest level of chivalry. They are called such because of their habit of sleeping under hedges, along with peddlers, wandering minstrels, and the keepers of trained bears. Many other knights feel hedge knights are little different from their traveling companions. Many hedge knights feel the same but from a rather different perspective.

The key feature of a hedge knight is that he is poor, for a knight. Almost all own a horse, a suit of metal armor (though it may be merely chain, ring, or scale), and a sword. These possessions are enough to make them rich by many standards. However, since they cannot sell these, almost all of their wealth is tied up, leaving them little to spend on such fripperies as food and lodging at an inn. Hence, the importance of sleeping under hedges.

Thus, a hedge knight needs employment. Some seek employment from passersby, offering to guard them as they cross a bridge. However, since the hedge knight is the only danger present, most people regard this act as robbery, and other knights are likely to set out to deal with

Peril at King's Landing

The *SIFRP* adventure *Peril at King's Landing* provides a detailed look at a royal tournament, including the various events and the kinds of intrigue that can go on there. The adventure also offers more detailed rules for jousting and guidelines for other tournament competitions. Narrators interested in running stories based around tourneys should take a look at it.

the blemish on their honor. Other knights seek to reclaim their rightful inheritance from the usurpers who have taken it. Such an incident is often characterized as raiding and banditry, at least until the hedge knight re-establishes his claim and, again, provokes retaliation.

The most common form of employment for a hedge knight is employment by a nobleman who finds himself in need of an extra sword or two for a short time. As soon as the hedge knight has outlived his usefulness, he is sent on his way; this dismissal is what distinguishes him from a sworn sword, who has at least some security. As a result, most hedge knights wander a great deal.

While a hedge knight has low status, his position is far from hopeless. If he has skill, virtue, and a good dose of luck, he stands a good chance of turning into a sworn sword, retainer, or even a landed knight at some point. The most dangerous hedge knights are those who have held a higher position but lost it through incompetence or villainy. They are unlikely to climb once more and often feel they have nothing to lose.

Heraldry

Heraldry is the practice of painted personal devices on shields and flags, so a knight can be clearly identified. It is not regulated, so in principle, anyone can take any device as his own. However, practical limits do exist.

First, the device must be easily recognizable in the heat of battle; that is what heraldry is for, after all. This rule keeps arms simple, with typically no more than three images on a simple background. It also means that two knights cannot bear the same arms. There is no formal mechanism for resolving conflicts, but they are rare; mistaken identity on the field of battle could be deadly.

Second, most of the noble houses have their own designs, and variants of these designs are adopted only by members of the house. The direwolf of the Starks, the trout of the Tullys, and the flower of the Tyrells are all examples. Ser Loras, the Knight of Flowers, often bears three flowers on his shield, for example. An outsider who dared to imitate the heraldry of a great house without permission would most likely be hunted down and persuaded of the error of his ways.

But beyond this, a knight can choose his own design—and change it at will. A few knights combine the arms of their mother's house with those of their father's. This combination generally happens when both are from great houses, but it is rare, as it tends to make the arms complex and difficult to recognize at a glance. Similarly, frequent changes are rare, as others could lose track of what the knight's arms were this week. A knight's arms normally refer to his house, an important event in his life (Ser Davos' arms bear an onion) or pun on his name. The most common reason for a change is another great event. A knight who slew a dragon—were any still alive—would be quite likely to put a slain dragon on his arms; a live one would indicate affiliation with the Targaryens and is less likely.

Tournaments

Tournaments are the most popular form of knightly entertainment. They are, essentially, formalized battles that allow warriors to show off their abilities. Beyond having consensual violence as a centerpiece, however, tournaments and true battles have very little in common.

All tournaments are held by a particular lord, who determines the events, the qualifications for entry, and any prizes. King Robert likes tournaments and is often very generous with the prizes, but he has a tendency to leave little time for organization, which often makes them less grandiose. The great tournament at Harrenhal was backed by the king and organized well in advance, making it an event still remembered decades later. At the other extreme, a minor lord might organize a small tournament to celebrate his son's nameday, inviting his neighbors and offering nothing more than honor to the winners. Since many knights enjoy competing in tournaments, such a reward would not necessarily prevent them from attending.

Although most people, quite rightly, associate knights with tournaments, one does not have to be a knight to participate. Thoros of Myr is no knight (as a priest of the Lord of Light that would hardly be possible), but he is a frequent competitor at tourneys. Even women can participate, in theory, though that is extremely rare. Some tournaments, particularly in the Arbor, are closed to all who are not knights, but their restriction is still the exception rather than the rule.

The events at a tournament are martial but can take many forms. The jousting list is extremely popular, and a tournament without one is unusual. In this event, competitors pair up and charge each other on horseback while armed with blunted lances. The aim is to unhorse the other while retaining your own seat. Jousting is most often organized as a knockout competition, but other forms are possible; a challenger might have to defeat a series of champions, for example, or all competitors might have to fight all others, one at a time.

Another popular form is the melee, which is essentially a battle with blunted weapons in which you try not to kill anyone. Again, various detailed forms are practiced. In some cases, the melee continues until only one man is standing, and he is named the champion. In others, the competitors divide into teams and must take a flag from their opponents.

Both jousting and melee are dangerous, and accidental deaths are distressingly common. "Accidental" deaths are also suspected in many cases, but they are nearly impossible to prove. The simple fact that hundreds of people saw a knight batter his sister's rapist to death does not prove it wasn't merely a regrettable accident on the tournament field. People are entitled to their suspicions, however, and they can lead to feuds.

Beyond those two events, almost any other martial competition is possible. Archery contests are perhaps the next most popular, but single combat, ship (or at least boat) combat, and mock sieges and assaults on temporary castles are also performed.

Most competitors at a tourney stay in pavilions, round tents with a shield bearing the knight's arms outside. These pavilions are as spectacular as the owner can afford, in most cases, as they are an acceptable way to display wealth. Even kings often stay in a pavilion during a tournament; it is the traditional thing to do.

Tournaments are grand social events where the victor in the lists or the melee has a substantial advantage in his socializing. Some formalize that idea, allowing the winner to anoint a Queen of Love and Beauty, or similar. A few have noticed that doing so tends to have complicated consequences if the winner gives the rank to anyone other than his wife or betrothed. But such consequences do not stop men flushed with success from choosing the most beautiful woman present, no matter who she may be.

MAESTERS OF THE CITADEL

The maesters of the Citadel are the scholars of Westeros. All men, they are trained in the Citadel in Oldtown, where they are led by the archmaesters. Maesters wear chains about their necks, as reminders of their vows to serve, with every link made of a different metal. Each link represents mastery of a different field of learning; gold is money and accounts, iron is ravenry, steel is warcraft, and so on. Most maesters are found in castles, serving the current lord, whoever he may be, and their loyalties belong to their role rather than particular individuals.

No formal entry requirements exist for study at the Citadel, apart from being male. Study, however, takes years; most novices forge one link of their chain in a year, with some taking five times as long, and even the most exceptional may only manage three in one year. The Citadel does not pay its students, so only those with some form of support can study. In practice, this limits maesters to the sons of the nobility and wealthy commoners. Still, the absence of formal entry requirements is not mere rhetoric; a son of the smallfolk can become archmaester and face no prejudice, though his chances of being elected Grand Maester are slender at best. The archmaesters claim to look only to ability when appointing the Grand Maester, and it could be legitimately argued that noble blood is an important talent when you must negotiate with the king.

Maesters take vows when they complete their initial studies, renouncing their house name (if any) and swearing to celibacy. This vow is supposed to demonstrate their independence and dedication. Most maesters continue studying and forging links for their chain throughout their lives; the chain of an archmaester typically has dozens of links, forged of every conceivable metal.

The archmaesters are the acknowledged masters of one field of study. They are granted rooms in the Citadel, as well as a mask and rod made of the same metal as the appropriate link in their maester's chain. Archmaesters hold their posts until death or retirement, in most cases, and meet in Conclave to determine when the seasons have changed, and to select a new Grand Maester.

Among the many fields of study pursued by the maesters, a few stand out. By far the most important is healing, represented by a silver link. Rare is the maester who does not forge this link.

Second in significance is ravenry, represented by a link of black iron. This skill refers to the breeding, raising, and training of ravens to deliver messages. While ravens are sometimes shot by hunters, they are by far the fastest means of communication in Westeros, and a maester without this link would find it difficult to find employment in most castles. Most ravens are black, of course, but the Citadel also breeds white ravens. These are used only to announce the coming of winter.

A third link of special significance is the link of grey Valyrian steel, which represents the study of sorcery. This link is uncommon; indeed, fewer than one maester in a hundred forges it. This rarity is for the very good reason that sorcery does not appear to work. The maesters believe it once did, in the days of High Valyria, but that fire has gone from the world. Part of the initiation of a new maester involves a night in a sealed room with a Valyrian candle of obsidian. He can have light if he can

light the candle; sorcery says it should be possible. Of course, he cannot, and the ceremony teaches him about the limits of knowledge and the need for humility in the face of the world.

Medicines

The maesters who study healing learn a lot about medicines and how to help them to do their work. Westeros is short of medicines that actually cure illnesses, but a number are effective in relieving symptoms, allowing the patient to heal. Most notable are the medicines for pain: dreamwine and the stronger milk of the poppy. Both cause sleepiness, and both can be dangerous in large quantities or if taken repeatedly. Chewing willow bark also has some effect, and while it is weaker, it is also less dangerous.

Wounds are often cleaned with boiling wine or treated with Myrish fire or firemilk, both of which burn on contact. Maggots may be used if a wound is going rotten, as the maggots eat out the rotten parts. Maesters also learn to stitch wounds closed and can use poultices containing mustard seeds, nettles, and bread mould to prevent infection. Leeches are also used to drain bad blood that builds up in wounds.

While there are still wounds and diseases maesters cannot handle, a nobleman with access to a competent maester could survive something as traumatic as having his hand amputated. It is this ability with healing that gets the maesters most of their respect.

Poisons

The opposite side of the ability to heal is the ability to harm, and many maesters know a good deal about poisons. This knowledge has legitimate uses; it is hard to treat a poison you do not recognize. On the other hand, the possibility of misusing the knowledge is never far from people's minds.

Common poisons include nightshade and powdered greycap, derived from a plant and a toadstool, respectively. Animal and insect venoms, such as basilisk and manticore venom, are also known, if harder to gather. Manticore venom is particularly vicious and can be treated to make it work slower, making its victim die in slow agony.

Rare poisons include the strangler, made from a plant found only in the Jade Sea. It kills by closing the windpipe, suffocating the victim. It is a poison with which to kill a king, and kings know that, one reason for food-tasters. The tears of Lys is odorless and colorless, and kills by attacking the stomach and bowels.

There are also ambiguous poisons. Moon tea aborts pregnancies, which makes some maesters reluctant to call it a medicine. Sweetsleep brings deep sleep in small doses, but larger ones kill. Indeed, large enough doses of most medicines kill; the problem with sweetsleep is that the fatal dose is still quite small. A maester must be very careful when administering it.

As noted on page 20, poisons are commonly administered to victims in food or drink, which also serve to mask their taste and odor. Noble kitchens are often guarded because of this, and food tasters employed to protect their masters' lives with their own. Even still, clever poisoners manage to slip past the safeguards from time to time, and at least as many nobles deaths are caused by a poisoned cup or dish as a bloodied blade, if not more so.

Illness

Westeros is not free of disease; although, thankfully, nothing on the scale of the Great Spring Sickness has come about for many years. The Great Spring Sickness killed about a third of the population in many cities and struck so quickly that a man who woke up healthy could be dead by nightfall.

A wide range of minor colds, fevers, and fluxes are rarely deadly or even seriously debilitating. The bloody flux can kill, however. Whores often carry unpleasant poxes, and the sufferers rarely find much sympathy. Fortunately, most are minor—if not embarrassing.

A number of diseases are primarily of childhood. Redspots is common, but it never kills anyone over the age of ten, and once you have had it, you are immune. But adults who did not contract it in childhood remain at risk of infection. Greyscale is rarely fatal to children, but nearly always fatal to adults. It makes the skin grey and hard as stone and often disfigures survivors.

Other diseases stay with the sufferer for a lifetime. The shaking sickness, for example, causes fits of uncontrollable shaking, particularly when the sufferer is stressed or emotional. These fits can be fatal if precautions are not taken.

Still, while disease is widespread, nobles are far more likely to die at the hands of other people than by some common malady. The maesters are quite adept when facing plagues but can do little once an assassin has strangled someone in his bed.

WESTEROS
THE SEVEN KINGDOMS
The Land of Always Winter
(Unmapped)
The Shivering Sea
The Frozen Shore
Thenn
The Frostfangs
The Skirling Pass
Milkwater
Fist of the First Men
Antler River
Hardhome
Storrold's Point
Craster's Keep
Whitetree
The Haunted Forest
The Wall
The Gorge
Shadow Tower
Castle Black
Eastwatch by-the-Sea
Skagos
Brandon's Gift
Queenscrown
New Gift
Bay of Ice
Bay of Seals
Sea Dragon Point
Bear Island
Last Hearth
The Last River
Long Lake
Karhold
Deepwood Motte
Wolfswood
The Dreadfort
Winterfell
White Knife
N
Stoney Shore
Torrhen's Square
The Rills
Barrowlands
Widow's Watch
White Harbor
Blazewater Bay
Saltspear
Moat Cailin
Flint's Finger
The Neck
Three Sisters
The Paps
Pebble
The Fingers
Cape Kraken
The Flint Cliffs
Greywater Watch

Iron Islands
Old Wyk
Blacktyde
Great Wyk
Orkmont
Pyke
Harlaw
Saltcliffe
Pyke
Cape of Eagles
Ironman's Bay
The Twins
Seagard
Green Fork
Kingsroad
Oldstones
Blue Fork
Fairmarket
Red Fork
Inn of the Kneeling Man
Tumblestone
Riverrun
The Crag
Fairisle
Fairastle
Ashemark
Red Fork
High Heart
Acorn Hall
Harrenhal
Golden Tooth
Pinkmaiden
River Road
Stony Sept
Kayce
Casterly Rock
Feastfires
Lannisport
Goldroad
Silverhill
The Reach
Crakehall
Red Lake
Goldengrove
Old Oak
Ocean Road
Shield Islands
Highgarden
Mander
Brightwater Keep
Horn Hill
Honeyholt
Honeyline
Blackcrown
Old Town
Whispering Sound
Three Towers
Nightsong
Dornish Marches
Prince's Pass
Kingsgrave
Blackmont
Starfall
Dorne
Hellholt
Sandstone
The Arbor
The Trident
Lord Harroway's Town
Saltpans
Gods Eye
Isle of Faces
Maidenpool
Bay of Crabs
Crackclaw Point
Claw Isle
Dragonstone
Driftmark
Duskendale
The Gullet
Sharp Point
Rosby
King's Landing
Blackwater Rush
Blackwater Bay
Massey's Hook
Kingswood
Wendwater
Roseroad
Bronzegate
Tarth
Evenfall Hall
Blue Byrn
Grassy Vale
Bitterbridge
Longtable
Storm's End
Cider Hall
Ashford
Cockleswent
Summerhall
Shipbreaker Bay
Blackhaven
Boneway
Rainwood
Cape Wrath
Mistwood
Estermont
Greenstone
Wyl
Sea of Dorne
Yronwood
Ghost Hill
The Tor
The Broken Arm
The Scourge
The Vaith
Godsgrace
Vaith
Greenblood
Sunspear
Salt Shore
Lemonwood
Brimstone
Longbow Hall
Heart's Home
The Eyrie
Vale of Arryn
Iron Oaks
Old Anchor
Runestone
Gull Town
Bloody Gate

CHAPTER 3: KING'S LANDING

King's Landing is the heart of the Seven Kingdoms. It was built on the spot Aegon the Conqueror first set foot in Westeros, when he started the War of Conquest, and it's been the center of military, economic, and political power ever since. From its founding over three hundred years ago, King's Landing grew to be the largest city in the kingdom, with a burgeoning population reaching upwards of half a million.

Being the center of attention for all of Westeros and the center of trade for the rest of the world, it's no wonder the city occupies such a place of prominence. All roads lead to King's Landing, and its streets are filled with bakers and smiths, thieves and whores, sellswords and knights, strange foreigners from the Free Cities, and simple farmers from the farthest reaches of the Seven Kingdoms. Almost anything can be found here. All of which makes it a dangerous and intriguing place to explore.

HISTORY

For a city of its size and significance to the Seven Kingdoms, King's Landing is young, at least compared to the great Free Cities, beyond the narrow sea, and Oldtown, deep in the Reach. Indeed, King's Landing is but a paltry three centuries old and traces its origins to a time of blood and conquest, when Aegon the Conqueror and his sisters first set foot on Westeros and began their campaign to crush the Andal kings and construct a new empire from the ashes of old Valyria.

Before the coming of Aegon, the lands on which King's Landing now stands were forested hills, a quiet region populated by simple fisherfolk who pulled fish from the depths of the Blackwater Rush.

Three hundred years ago, Catelyn knew, those heights had been covered with forest, and only a handful of fisherfolk had lived on the north shore of the Blackwater Rush where that deep, swift river flowed into the sea. Then Aegon the Conqueror had sailed from Dragonstone. It was here that his army had put ashore, and there on the highest hill that he build his first crude redoubt of wood and earth.

—Catelyn Stark, upon seeing King's Landing

It all changed when the Targaryens came, for they selected this site to be the place where they would mount their invasion. From the ancient trees, the Targaryen host raised a crude redoubt of wood. From the hills, they built the ramparts and reinforced the crude shelter for their legions. And as the Targaryens gained victory after victory, filling their coffers with the spoils and tributes from defeated lords, the fortress grew, taking the shape of a proper city. When the victory over the lords of Westeros was complete, Aegon settled in King's Landing and named it the seat of his power. He had the swords of his defeated enemies melted down and fused together to form the Iron Throne, the symbol of the Targaryen dynasty and the perilous seat held by all the kings who would follow.

After Aegon, King's Landing continued to grow. His successors built upon the works of those who came before, replacing walls of earth with walls of stone. Castles and fortresses appeared in the heart of the city, and smallfolk gathered in the shadows of these mighty structures to gain the protection of their kings. Baelor the Blessed raised up the Great Sept, and the city came to look as it does today. Not all the years have been kind to King's Landing, for nearly a century ago, the Great Spring Sickness laid claim to the city, wiping out much of the population. King's Landing suffered from extensive fires, and nearly the whole of the community was ashes. In the years that followed, the city recovered and grew stronger than ever before.

GEOGRAPHY

King's Landing may be the seat of Robert Baratheon's power, the heart and soul of the shifting tapestry of politics and conflict, but at heart, it is still a city—one that has grown up in starts and stops to assume its current shape. Tales of the city spread to every corner of the Seven Kingdoms, growing wilder and more fantastic the farther one travels, but nearing the capital, its splendor swiftly diminishes as the harsh realities of people, filth, and squalor come into view.

The city is a sprawling metropolis, covering the shores of Blackwater Bay for as far as the eye can see and extending inland along the Blackwater Rush for several miles. Steep stone walls contain an eclectic mix of storehouses, merchant stalls, inns, granaries, and arbors, all jumbled together to create a strange blend of the old and new. So crowded is King's Landing that it spills over the walls and through the gates, crowding the roads leading from this port to the interior of the Seven Kingdoms for leagues before fading completely into the wilderness. Ships crowd the docks throughout the year, and a din of voices, of laughter and tears, the clash of blades, and the hum of commerce sounds day and night. But as a massive city, it is dirty and stinks of sewage, smoke, and the press of people; those accustomed to the capital swear they can scent the smell of treachery wafting up from its very streets.

Gates

Those who would visit the city must pass beneath one of the city's seven gates. Each has its own personality and atmosphere, absorbing something of the city to which they grant access. In times of trouble, the City Watch can close and bar the gates, but in these peaceful years, most of the gates remain open day or night.

River Gate (Mud Gate)

Of the gates, the River Gate, or Mud Gate, is the busiest. The River Gate opens onto the Blackwater Rush to the southeast and sees regular traffic at all times, as a large number of people use it everyday to do their business. Anyone looking to go to or from the docks for any reason uses it, from the fish-sellers and merchants, to laborers and members of noble families who have come to King's Landing by ship.

King's Gate

This gate lets out onto the land along the riverfront to the south. An open area, the kings have regularly used these lands to hold festivals, tournaments, and the like.

Lion Gate

The Lion Gate stands to the south of the city, granting access to roads leading into the interior via the goldroad. It's possible this gate takes its name from House Lannister and their long association to the Iron Throne, though whether or not this is true, few can say.

Gate of the Gods

This gate takes its name for its proximity to the Great Sept of Baelor. The gatehouse is decorated with exquisitely carved figures whose eyes have been created in such a way that they seem to follow each person as he or she passes through the gate.

Old Gate

One of the original gates of the city, the Old Gate opens onto the wealthier section of King's Landing. It stands to the west of the city.

Dragon Gate

This gate is another old gate and opens to the west.

Iron Gate

The Iron Gate exits to the north of the city. Roads out of town lead to Rosby and Stokeworth, nearby settlements to the north.

Streets

From the main thoroughfares to the smallest back alleys, the streets of King's landing—like any great city—are the scaffolding around which the rest of the city is built. In some cases, the streets are straight, safe, and easy to navigate, but at other times, they're crooked, dangerous, and cramped. Depending on the time of day and the part of the city, the characteristics of a single street could vary widely along its course.

Most streets in King's Landing are unpaved and muddy. High-traffic streets and lower-class alleys tend to be the most worn or dirtiest, but the entire city becomes quite sloppy in a good rain. There are certainly

streets and squares, particularly in the wealthier areas, paved with cobblestone, stone, or even brick, but they are the exception.

The quality of the streets and their heavy traffic often makes it difficult to get around. Even a short trip, such as from the Red Keep at the top of Aegon's Hill to a place on the backside of Rhaenys's Hill can take a litter about an hour when the streets are busy. The same trip on foot or by horse would go faster, but even that is a significant amount of time, considering the distance covered.

The naming conventions of the city are simple, but they do vary a bit. Streets are typically named for whatever sort of business predominates, which also makes it easy to get an idea of what the streets are like. For instance, the Street of Steel hosts a large number of smiths and their forges. As such, it may be crowded with sellswords, knights with their squires, stablehands, criminals, guards, builders, or just about anyone else looking for nails, horseshoes, arms, armor, or any other piece of worked metal. In addition, the shops are littered with weapons and armor of all sorts, and most of the customers and shop owners are men of varying ages. The street and much of the surrounding area smells of burning wood, charcoal, and hot steel. The forges are hot and made humid by dirty tubs and barrels of water used to quench the smith's items while they work. The walkways are slightly louder than most other places in the city due to the addition of the clanging and pounding of smiths crafting their goods, and inside the forges it's even louder.

The Hook

Curving out from the Muddy Way, the Hook cuts through the heart of the city and leads up Aegon's High Hill.

Muddy Way

This broad street runs from the Mud Gate to a large square at the center of the city.

River Row

The street runs from the King's Gate to the Fishmonger's Square and the Mud Gate, tracing the flow of the Blackwater Rush until it ends at the eastern side of Aegon's High Hill.

Street of Steel

The Street of Steel begins at the Fishmonger's Square fronting the Mud Gate and cuts diagonally across the city to Visenya's Hill. Home to the city's smiths and forges, one can find poorer shops near the Mud Gate and better establishments closer to the hill.

Street of the Sisters

This road runs straight as an arrow between the hills of Visenya and Rhaenys and takes its name for the fact that it connects the two hills that were named for the sister-wives of Aegon. The entrance to the Guildhall is located on the Street of the Sisters, close to the foot of Visenya's Hill.

Minor Streets of Note

In addition, there are a myriad of paths, side streets, and alleys, some named and others not. A selection of the more notable follow.

- **Coppersmith's Wynd:** This street was most likely named for the coppersmiths that do business along it.
- **Eel Alley:** This alley is located halfway up Visenya's Hill. The most notable feature is a rambling old inn with large, airy rooms. A suspicious, sour, old crone owns it.
- **Pigrun Alley:** An alley at the foot of Aegon's High Hill, Pigrun is packed with stone-and-timber buildings that lean so badly their upper stories nearly touch the buildings across the street.
- **Pisswater Bend:** A street in Flea Bottom.
- **Shadowblack Lane:** A twisty street leading up to the foot of Aegon's High Hill.
- **Sowbelly Row:** A lower-class street of the city.
- **Street of Looms:** A street named for the community of weavers working here.
- **Street of Flour:** This street was named for the many bakeries that line it. Just below the Street of Flour is the maze of streets that make up Flea Bottom.
- **Street of Seeds:** This street leads from the Gate of the Gods, passes by brothels, bakers, alleys, and then passes through Cobbler's Square before ending at the Red Keep.
- **Street of Silk:** Located behind Rhaenys's Hill, the Street of Silk is lined with a wide range (in terms of price and quality) of brothels.

Districts

King's Landing contains a number of distinctive areas, usually distinguished by a geographical feature. These districts each have their own personality and characteristics to set them apart from the areas of the city around them. The districts given here are in addition to those given in the

Blackwater Bay

The Blackwater Rush spills out into Blackwater Bay, a deep inlet that opens onto the narrow sea. For the most part, the bay is navigable, but a stretch of sea monts called the *spears of the merling king* rise from the sea floor. The waters around these jagged peaks are extremely treacherous, for hidden beneath the dark waters are dozens of jagged peaks capable of tearing through the hull of a passing ship. Most captains keep clear of the *spears,* but many pirates and smugglers know the routes through this forest of stone, making it an excellent haven for fugitive vessels.

Key Locations section following. If the **Districts** section doesn't contain a particular district, look to the **Key Locations** section for more.

Waterfront

King's Landing is a port, and as such, it has a thriving waterfront district. To the east flows the Blackwater Rush, a deep and treacherous river draining from the heartlands of the Reach into Blackwater Bay. Most commerce occurs along the river, where quays and long docks reside for the innumerable ships and trading vessels that weigh anchor in King's Landing over the course of a year.

The smell is ripe, to say the least, and signals the presence of wastewater and the nearby fish markets. Fishmonger's Square is located just inside Mud Gate (more politely referred to as the River Gate) as one enters the city. It's packed with fish, fresh and otherwise, that the fishermen have brought in for the day.

The Three Hills

King's Landing was built on and around three hills, each named after Aegon, Rhaenys, and Visenya. As one travels up these hills, the neighborhoods become wealthier, safer, and are filled with a better class of people.

Aegon's High Hill

The site of the Red Keep and its environs, Aegon's High Hill is the highest of the three hills and commands a view of the city and its surroundings.

Rhaenys's Hill

Rhaenys's Hill bears the ruins of the Dragonpit, a mighty, domed amphitheater sealed after its huge dome collapsed. Now the bronze doors that once stood open during the early years of the Targaryen reign are closed. The Targaryens used this castle to house the royal dragons; thus, the structure has unusually large proportions. In fact, the doors are so wide, thirty knights could ride through them side by side.

Visenya's Hill

Finally, Visenya's Hill bears the Great Sept of Baelor, with its white marble plaza and walls, as well as its seven crystal towers. The Gate of the Gods is on Visenya's Hill.

Flea Bottom

Flea Bottom is an area of the city just below the Street of Flour at the bottom of Rhaenys's Hill. It is a maze of unpaved, narrow alleys and streets that twist, turn, and crisscross each other in a confusing pattern. The buildings that line this section of the city lean across the streets so far that the upper floors nearly touch and make the entire area shadowy even at noon.

Flea Bottom is bustling with activity day and night. During the day, its pigsties, tanneries, and stables are busy doing their smelly business. The odors of the place are so strong as to be nearly overpowering, and they stick with visitors and residents even after they leave. At night, it's no less smelly, but then the bars and taverns are the center of attention and

KING'S LANDING
HEART OF THE SEVEN KINGDOMS
Key Locations
1. Great Sept of Baelor
2. The Red Keep
3. Alchemist's Guild
4. Dragonpit
City Gates
A. River Gate (Mud Gate)
B. King's Gate
C. Lion Gate
D. Gate of the Gods
E. Old Gate
F. Dragon Gate
G. Iron Gate
OURS IS THE FURY
Street of Seeds
Cobblers' Square
Street of Seeds
Street of the Sisters
Visenya's Hill
Street of Steel
Eel Alley
Street of Steel
Waterfront
River Row
Fishmarket
TOURNEY GROUNDS
BLACKWATER RUSH
KINGSWOOD

E
F
G
A
Street of Silk
Coppersmith's Wynd
Rhaenys's Hill
4
Rosby Road
Street of Flour
Street of the Sisters
Reeking Lane
Flea Bottom
Pisswater Bend
Sowbelly Row
Street of Seeds
Street of Looms
Pigrun Alley
Muddy Way
Shadowblack Lane
The Hook
Aegon's High Hill
2
Blackwater Bay
shmonger's Square
River Row
Winch Tower
N
S
Winch Tower
Kingswood

usually packed with laborers looking to enjoy their time away from work with a drink and a pot of brown from the ever simmering potboils.

Flea Bottom is known as a haven for criminals and less savory elements of society. Considering even the children from this part of town are tough and vicious, the criminals are the worst of the worst. It's not safe to be in Flea Bottom any time of the day unless you're a local or you have guards, business, or know someone who will vouch for you. Otherwise, it's best to just stay away.

KEY LOCATIONS

King's Landing is a major city and contains a number of important locations. Some of these are only important locally, while others are important for their religious or political significance. In some cases, these locations hold symbolic value, and who appears to control them and what happens there makes a great difference.

Great Sept of Baelor

At the top of Visenya's Hill, surrounded by a white marble plaza, is the Great Sept of Baelor, named after the Septon King. It features a statue of Baelor the Blessed at the head of the plaza on a painted marble plinth.

The sept itself is an impressive domed structure of glass, gold, and crystal surrounded by seven crystal towers. The towers each contain bells that sound when something important happens in the city, such as the death of a king. In such a case, the bells toll for a day and a night, and the king is laid to rest in the tombs of the Great Sept of Baelor.

Around the doors leading into the building is a raised marble pulpit from which a septon can address a gathering crowd. Past the doors is the entrance hall of the sept, which is known as the Hall of Lamps. Those entering the hall walk beneath suspended globes of leaded glass until they reach the doorway of the cavernous Great Sept itself, which has seven broad aisles that meet at the front of the room at a point below the center of the dome. The rows of seats can accommodate thousands of worshipers or well-wishers if need be.

Surrounding the main floor of the sept are seven transepts, each containing an altar and a towering statue of an aspect of the Seven surrounded by lit candles. Different altars are used for different ceremonies, depending on their purpose. For example, marriages are always conducted at the altar between the Mother and the Father.

In addition to being the center of worship, the Great Sept is the center of religious training for septons from all over Westeros, so there is a constant stream of visitors and students of all ages through the sept.

The current High Septon is a fat, pompous man, who gives long-winded sermons and is filled with the arrogance of one too long in his station. The High Septon is a great friend to the Baratheon family and is considered to be firmly in their pocket.

The Red Keep

Crowning King's Landing is Aegon's High Hill, and atop it thrust up the towers of the Red Keep, the seat of the king and, until recently, the Targaryen dynasty. Raised up by Aegon the Conqueror when he brought the Andal kings and the last king of the First Men to heel, such was the scope of the construction that it took his son, Maegor the Cruel, to finish the work. While by no means the largest of Westeros' castles, it is one of the most splendid. From its tall towers, one can see the whole of King's Landing and the lands beyond. It is well built, constructed to be a castle within a castle, as inner walls cordon off different sections of the keep to slow invaders' progress and safeguard the royal family.

The Red Keep was constructed out of a pale red stone (hence its name) and is made up of seven huge drum-towers with iron ramparts, a powerfully built barbican in front of a cobbled square, halls with vaulted ceilings, covered bridges, barracks, granaries, and immense curtain walls with a stone parapet four feet high with crenellations cut into it every five feet for archers. Below ground, the keep has four levels of dungeons, each level of which serves a different function. The doors throughout the castle are made of oak banded with black iron, except for those in the dungeons, which are four-inch-thick grey wood with iron studs.

A series of hidden passages, tunnels, and secret chambers worm their way throughout the castle. There are so many, no one is quite sure how many of these secret ways exist, as Maegor the Cruel had each man who worked on the castle executed to ensure their secrets. So he and he alone would know the true extent of these tunnels, though the Spider likely has thorough knowledge of them.

Treasures from the long history of the Seven Kingdoms are displayed throughout the Red Keep, including Myrish carpets, tapestries from Norvos, Qohor, and Lys, carved screens from the Summer Isles, a pair

of black marble Valyrian sphinxes, and even suits of armor. Many of these items are on display in places of honor, such as the meeting chambers of the small council, whereas others do little more than collect dust, their significance forgotten.

Some of the greatest treasures found in the Red Keep are the bones of the dragons that once roamed the world. In the days of the Mad King Aerys, these dark skulls adorned the walls of the Great Hall, but with Robert's ascent, they were removed and tucked away in a dank cellar. There are nineteen skulls in all; the oldest bones were brought to King's Landing by Aegor himself and are more than three thousand years old. Inspecting the skulls reveals the sharp decline in the last dragons, for while the eldest skulls are massive and magnificent, large enough for a mounted knight to ride through, the last skulls are small, no bigger than a mastiff's skull.

One of the most curious features of the Red Keep is that it plays host to a large number of wild cats. They come in all shapes, sizes, colors, and temperaments. They survive by hunting vermin and most likely make off with table scraps or benefit from the kindness of some of the human residents regularly enough that they are very healthy. They have free reign of the castle and its grounds.

Maegor's Holdfast

Maegor's Holdfast is a large square fortress at the center of the Red Keep. It's located behind walls twelve feet thick and a dry moat lined with iron spikes. It contains the royal apartments, including the king's bedchambers with its twin hearths and the royal nursery, which is located on the floor below the royal apartments.

Throne Room

The throne room inside the Red Keep is a cavernous chamber that one enters through doors of oak and bronze. The room itself runs north to south and has high, narrow windows in the eastern and western walls, so it shines with sunlight throughout the day. At the far end of the room, behind the throne, is a tall door that acts as the king's personal entrance and exit.

The room is quite large, big enough to accommodate upwards of a thousand people—or many more than that standing. Although the room rarely holds that many people during the course of a normal day, everyone is required to stand when court is in session, except for the king, his family, and his small council. Petitioners stand in the center of the room with the court to either side. A normal day in which the king, or his Hand, sits in session sees as many as a hundred lords and other petitioners come to plead their case. These sessions can last for many hours and include resolving disputes over the placement of boundary stones, disputes between rival holdfasts, or almost anything else. Smallfolk may also make appeals at these sessions, but they must wait in the wings until they're called, which only happens if all other disputes have been resolved.

At the head of the throne room, on a raised dais with narrow stairs, is the seat of power for the Seven Kingdoms, the Iron Throne. It is a beastly chair made from the thousands of swords surrendered to Aegon the Conqueror during the War of Conquest and forged using the flaming breath of Aegon's dragon, Balerion the Black Dread. The swords weren't fully melted down to create the throne, so it's pointy, uncomfortable, and dangerous—so much so that sitting back in the throne is impossible. Mad King Aerys cut himself on it so often that he was called King Scab. It was Aegon's opinion that no king should sit easily on a throne, and the Iron Throne reflects that idea perfectly. That the chair is said to have killed a man serves as a reminder of both the chair's significance and mystique.

The Queen's Ballroom

This small room with its long, trestle tables that allow it to seat about one hundred people is luxuriously appointed. It has silvered mirrors installed behind every wall sconce, so light is reflected into the room, its walls are paneled in carved wood, and its floor is covered with sweet-smelling rushes. Above the main floor, along the south wall, are arched windows covered with heavy, velvet drapes. A gallery where musicians play when the hall is in use overlooks the chamber. The entryway doors are tall and may be closed and barred if need be. Also, a back door exits into the grounds of the Red Keep.

Tower of the Hand

The Tower of the Hand is the part of the Red Keep set aside for the Hand of the King. It contains the Hand's living quarters, meeting rooms, and the Small Hall, a long room with vaulted ceilings and benches that allow it to seat two hundred people. The Tower of the Hand is a short distance from the small council's meeting chamber, which lies across the inner bailey and through the courtyard.

A secret entrance into the Tower of the Hand leads to the Hand's chambers. From an unknown location outside the Tower, it leads down a ladder to a passage that turns in many directions until it ends at an iron gate. Past the iron gate is a room with a dragon mosaic made of red and black tiles on the floor, after which is another ladder leading up to a small tunnel that a full-grown man must crawl to get through. Another sixty feet down the tunnel is the secret door into the chambers.

The Royal Sept

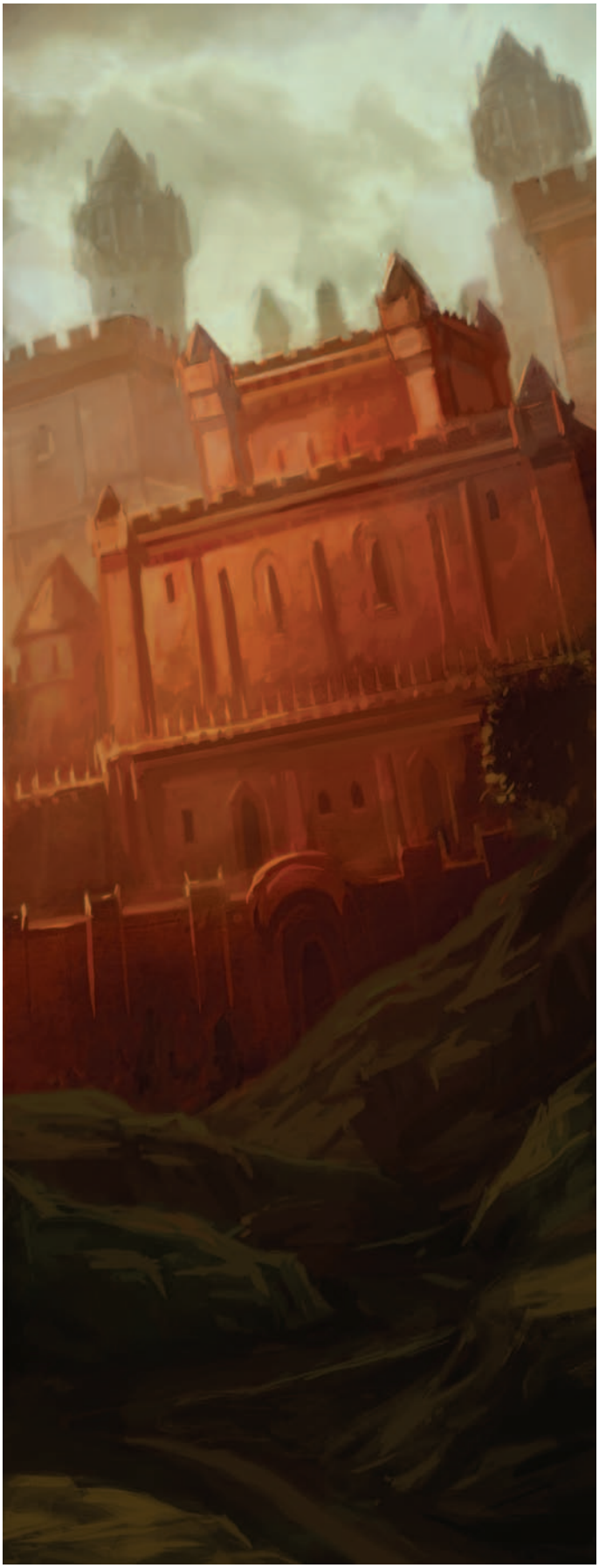
The Red Keep includes the royal sept, which is located in the outer castle. It has high windows made up of crystals that cast rainbows into the sept when light passes through them. There are altars to each of the aspects of the Seven and benches for parishioners to use while praying, singing, or attending a sermon.

The Godswood of the Red Keep

Although most of the people in King's Landing pay homage to the Seven, some, including visitors, keep to the old ways. As such, the Red Keep has a small godswood. It is located not far from Maegor's Holdfast, just across the drawbridge, up some winding steps, through a pig yard, and along a river walk that passes a small kitchen. The godswood is an acre of elm, alder, and black cottonwood. Its heart tree is a great oak, its ancient limbs overgrown with smokeberry vines.

The Maidenvault

The Maidenvault is a slate-roofed keep located behind the sept. It has been called the Maidenvault for centuries because King Baelor the



Blessed, fearing he would be driven to impure thoughts or actions if he were to see them, locked his sisters in it.

The Kitchen Keep

Outside Maegor's Holdfast is Kitchen Keep, just across the courtyard from the castle's main kitchens. The top floor of the Kitchen Keep features spacious apartments with a large bedchamber and solar, a bath, dressing room, and small, adjoining chambers for servants. Some of the cells for the serving men and women have windows that are little more than arrow slits. Atop the keep is a rooftop garden. The cellars of the keep have vaulted ceilings, and passages in the cellar link to the rest of the castle. Below the Kitchen Keep is the damp cellar that now houses the dragon skulls.

White Sword Tower

The White Sword Tower contains the living quarters for the Kingsguard. It is a slender structure, four stories high, built into an angle of the castle wall that overlooks Blackwater Bay. The first floor of the White Sword Tower is a round, whitewashed room with white woolen tapestries hung from the walls. The second and third floors are filled with the small, spartan, sleeping quarters of the six members of the Kingsguard. The fourth floor belongs to the Lord Commander; his rooms are spacious but just as bare, and they look out over the walls. Under the tower is a crypt used to store arms and armor.

Dungeons

There are four levels of dungeons below the Red Keep. Maegor the Cruel oversaw their construction and designed each one to fill a specific role. The upper level contains cells with high, narrow windows in which common criminals are imprisoned together. The second level has small, windowless cells with barred doors to allow in torchlight; these cells are reserved for highborn prisoners. The third level down contains the black cells, which are smaller than any of the others and have solid doors that don't allow any light. The last level, the fourth, is a thing of rumor, but anyone reportedly taken there never sees the sun or hears a voice again. In reality, the fourth level is set aside for torment, and anyone unfortunate enough to be here lives in agonizing pain. It is said it's safest to go through the fourth level in darkness because no one should see the things contained there.

All the layers of the dungeon have doors of four-inch thick grey wood with iron studs set into walls made of the same red stone as the rest of the Red Keep. The dungeons are not well tended, so prisoners are filthy, sleep on unclean rushes, and niter grows in patches on the walls.

Secret Passages

The Red Keep is riddled with secret tunnels and hidden passages. Maegor the Cruel wanted to make sure he had an escape route out of the Red Keep in case his enemies ever trapped him inside. During construction, Maegor made sure the builders included a number of such points of entrance and egress; then, he had all the workers killed so only the Targaryens knew of them.

Some of the passages are built into the walls, while others are tunnels that are held up by timber support beams. Many of these passageways lead to different parts of the castle, whereas others lead outside; at least one leads to a network of tunnels under the city from which one can reach the Blackwater Rush via a sewer pipe. Other examples include a passage located in a chamber beneath the north wall in which there is a large, flat stone meant to be used as a bed. With the push of a hidden button, the stone bed can be easily raised due to a system of counterweights to reveal steps that descend into darkness. Another passage leads to the Hand's private chambers in the Tower of the Hand, and a secret way to leave the Red Keep exits onto the cliffs above the sea where one can climb down to Blackwater Bay using small handholds that have been carved into the rock.

Crownlands

The lands around King's Landing are under the direct purview of the Iron Throne, and the nobles dwelling in this area are banners sworn directly to the king. More information about these banner houses can be found starting on page 57.

Crackclaw Point

Crackclaw Point is a peninsula that extends out into the narrow sea. It is a rugged place, a land of bogs and pine forests. The people of Crackclaw Point have traditionally been fiercely independent and even managed to repel the Andal invaders, though it's known they later mingled with them. At various points throughout history, the Darklyns, Mootons, and Celtigars tried to seize these lands, but each attempt met disaster. Most houses of Cracklaw remain loyal to the Targaryens but have none of that same loyalty for each other. Skirmishes and blood feuds are common, making this stretch of land particularly dangerous.

Duskendale

Duskendale is a large port off the coast of Blackwater Bay. It was formerly held by the Darklyns, an ancient family descended from First Men kings that was wiped out as a result of the Defiance of Duskendale (see **House Darklyn** on page 59 for details). The town spreads out around the harbor. To the north rise the chalky cliffs, and to the south is a rocky headland that shelters the harbor from the storms of the narrow sea. The most impressive feature of the town is the Dun Fort, a squat square stone castle with big drum towers. It sits on a hill and overlooks the entirety of Duskendale.

The town's largest inn is the Seven Swords, so named for the seven sons given to the Kingsguard by House Darklyn.

Kingswood

Just south of King's Landing is a great forest called the kingswood. This land is the king's personal preserve, and Robert uses it for hunting, as did the Targaryen kings before him. For a time, this great forest was also home to the Kingswood Brotherhood, a villainous group of brigands and bandits that caused endless trouble.

Old Stone Bridge

The Old Stone Bridge is an inn sitting adjacent to a bridge on the kingsroad between Rosby and Duskendale. It's run by an innkeeper named Naggle.

Rosby

The seat of House Rosby, a tiny community of daub-and-wattle hovels surrounds the family castle. Rosby lies just north of King's Landing.

Summerhall

Summerhall was a retreat for the Targaryen family, built by King Daeron the Good after the union with Dorne. It burned to the ground in a terrible fire during the reign of Aegon IV and now lies in ruins, overgrown and, some say, haunted.

Wendwater River

This wide river flows through the kingswood.

Alchemist's Guild

The Citadel in Oldtown produces the finest minds in the Seven Kingdoms, but this was not always the case, for before the maesters came to power, lending their expertise in the sciences, the arts, nature, history, and more, the preeminent keepers of wisdom in Westeros were the pyromancers of the Alchemist Guild. In some ways, the two institutions fulfilled a similar role, but where the maesters cordon supernatural studies to one field of knowledge, the pyromancers embraced magic, blending it into their arcane formulas to produce all manner of strange materials, of which the Substance, or wildfire, is easily the best known and most dangerous.

The Alchemist Guild thrived long ago but began a steady decline over the last several hundred years, as their recipes lost their strength, and their efforts to explore the rituals and incantations needed to produce more wildfire and other products began to fail. For a time, the Alchemist Guild enjoyed renewed strength during the reign of the Mad King and even managed to elevate one of their own to the post of the King's Hand. Aerys II had fully intended to burn the city to the ground rather than let it fall into enemy hands, and so pots and barrels of the Substance lay in hidden stores beneath much of the city. This ascent was brief, though, for during the Sack, a great many of their numbers were put to the sword, leaving a few pockets of acolytes and masters to carry this ancient institution forward.

Alchemists refer to each other as Wisdoms and make a great show of how much knowledge they have accumulated. Aside from making wildfire, the alchemists claimed they could transmute lead to gold, along with countless other miracles. Most Wisdoms shroud themselves and their order in mystery to hide the loss of knowledge and talent within the Guild. To many, it seems the Guild's star has fallen and will never ascend again.

The Alchemists occupy a guildhall beneath Visenya's Hill. Inside is a maze of cold, black stone, with cells for the acolytes, chambers filled with sand to contain the Substance, and a veritable labyrinth of passages, and hidden rooms. Currently, Hallyne the Pyromancer commands the Guild.

LAW & ORDER: THE GOLD CLOAKS

The City Watch of King's Landing is commonly referred to as the "gold cloaks" because they wear woolen cloaks dyed with a golden hue. Every member of the City Watch is armed with a spear, longsword, or iron cudgel and wears black armor; some members even wear full suits of mail. Officers of the City Watch are distinguished from the guardsmen by four ornamental golden disks on their black enameled breastplates and by their spears topped with black iron heads. Overall, a company of gold cloaks looks rather impressive and intimidating.

Generally, the members of the City Watch are competent and vigilant. They man the gates to the city, always on the lookout for trouble, and they're the first to respond when it appears. They are responsible for the security of the city and confront anything that threatens the peace and safety of the city. They are not, in the truest sense of the word, soldiers and don't fight wars (though they would certainly defend the city if it were under siege… and have). When there is a murder, riot, rape, theft, burglary, fire, horse race in the streets, or other disrupting incident reported in the city, the gold cloaks are sent to investigate, put down, or arrest, as the situation demands.

In addition to their work policing the city, they are often used as escorts and bodyguards for the important, wealthy, or noble denizens of the city. When they are given a task, they carry it out to the best of their ability, and very few people cause trouble for anyone with an escort of gold cloaks.

Janos Slynt

The current Commander of the City Watch is a grasping and ambitious son of a butcher named Janos Slynt. A sycophant if ever there was one, he simpers and scrapes before King Robert Baratheon, to ensure the office remains his. Like many on the cusp of nobility, Slynt craves power and has a reputation for bending the rules—or breaking them—to advance his station. Rumors swirl about the man, and many whisper he's not above bribery, graft, and all manner of unsavory scandals, and though King Robert is aware of his excesses, he tolerates Slynt's corruption so long as the man doesn't overreach.

Janos Slynt is a man of common appearance, with dark hair, plain features, and nothing at all impressive about him. He wears the uniform of his office, which he maintains with diligent pride. When not overseeing the duties of his station, he can be found lingering in the shadows of the king's court. Slynt has a number of children, including his three sons Morros, Jothos, and Danos. Morros is the eldest son, and he has inherited the worst of his father's traits, making him ugly and frog-faced.

Allar Deem

The chief sergeant of the gold cloaks, he is Slynt's second in command and one of his most ardent supporters. He has few friends in the city outside of the gold cloaks, largely for his penchant for violence and his cruel behavior. He's a man who knows how to follow orders, making him an excellent servant but a poor leader.

Janos Slynt		Middle-Aged Schemer
Abilities		
Athletics	4	—
Awareness	4	Notice 1B
Cunning	3	—
Deception	4	Bluff 2B, Cheat 1B
Endurance	3	—
Fighting	4	Spears 2B
Knowledge	3	Streetwise 1B
Language (Common)	3	—
Persuasion	3	Bargain 1B, Intimidate 1B
Status	4	—
Warfare	2	Command 1B

Attributes			
Combat Defense	8	Intrigue Defense	10
Health	6	Composure	6
Destiny Points	2		
Benefits: Treacherous			
Drawbacks: Flaw (Endurance), Flaw (Status)			
Scale Armor: AR 6; AP –3; Bulk 2 (Movement 3 yards)			
Spear	4D+2B	4 damage	Fast, Two-handed
Dagger	4D	1 damage	Defensive +1, Off-hand +1

Allar Deem		Secondary
Abilities		
Agility	3	—
Athletics	3	—
Awareness	3	Notice 1B
Deception	3	—
Endurance	4	—
Fighting	5	Long Blades 2B
Persuasion	4	Intimidate 2B
Will	2	Dedication 1B

Attributes			
Combat Defense	9	Intrigue Defense	7
Health	12	Composure	6

Mail: AR 5, AP –3, Bulk 2 (Movement 3 yards)

Longsword	5D+2B	4 damage

Ser Jacelyn Bywater		Secondary
Abilities		
Agility	3	—
Athletics	4	—
Awareness	3	Notice 1B
Endurance	4	—
Fighting	4	Long Blades 2B
Status	3	—
Warfare	4	Command 2B
Will	5	Dedication 2B

Attributes			
Combat Defense	10	Intrigue Defense	8
Health	12	Composure	15

Mail: AR 5, AP –3, Bulk 2 (Movement 3 yards)

Longsword	4D+2B	4 damage

Ser Jacelyn Bywater, Ironhand

Another important member of the City Watch is Ser Jacelyn Bywater. A minor noble of a lesser branch of House Bywater, he earned his knighthood fighting at Pyke during Greyjoy's Rebellion. King Robert raised him up for his heroism, as well as for the loss of his hand. Bywater commands the River Gate, and as one of the busiest gates in the city, he's one of the more influential of Slynt's officers. It's whispered there's no love lost between Slynt and Bywater. Unlike other members of the City Watch, Bywater is a courageous and honorable man, above the petty greed and ambition plaguing the ranks of the gold cloaks. While a man of substance, he lacks the affection and support of his men, who have come to see him as a barrier for their less noble acts of graft, extortion, and blackmail.

The King & His Court

Since the death of the Mad King, the Seven Kingdoms have known peace for nearly a dozen years. With the exception of the Greyjoy Rebellion, Westeros has returned to an era of peace and prosperity not known since Aerys's lucid years. As a king, Robert leaves much to be desired. While a great and fearsome warrior, he lacks the qualities of a king and would rather fritter away his time drinking, eating, whoring, and hunting than attend to matters of state. However, he's well loved by the smallfolk, who delight in his excesses and magnanimous ways, but the debts his reign has incurred leave the great noble families concerned for the future.

For all of Robert's failings as king, he was wise enough to surround himself with people better suited to rule than he. His small council, a group of competent advisors, manages the affairs of the kingdom in his stead, attending to disputes, taxes, and averting disasters with expert skill and cunning. In addition to the small council, Robert has the support of House Lannister. By wedding Cersei Lannister, Robert gained the loyalty and allegiance of Tywin Lannister, and with him came his vast wealth, power, and experience.

King Robert Baratheon

"I swear to you, sitting a throne was a thousand times harder than winning one. Laws were a tedious business and counting coppers was worse. And the people... there was no end of them. I sit on that damnable iron chair and listened to them complain until my mind was numb and my ass was raw. They all want something, money or land or justice. The lies they tell... and my lords and ladies were no better. I am surrounded by flatterers and fools. It can drive a man to madness, Ned. Half of them don't dare tell me the truth, and the other half can't find it. There were nights I wish we had lost at the Trident. Ah, no, not truly, but..."

—King Robert Baratheon

King Robert Baratheon, the first of his name, rules the Seven Kingdoms from the Iron Throne in King's Landing. A great hero beloved by the smallfolk and feared by those lords who serve him, Robert's life approaches legend, for even before his war against House Targaryen, his was a life of great adventure and heroism, enough for singers to spin songs and tales to make him equal to other notable knights in the Seven Kingdoms. Even though he toppled King Aerys II and seized the Iron Throne, his life has been anything but happy, and in the last years, since crushing Greyjoy's Rebellion at Pyke, Robert's reign has devolved into one of excess and decadence.

History

Robert was the eldest son of Lord Steffon and Lady Cassana Baratheon, and he was heir to Storm's End, the ancestral castle of House Baratheon, a mighty fortress raised ages ago by the Storm Kings in defiance of the gods of wind and sea. As heir, Robert was especially suited to his

Robert's Bastards

Robert has sired a large number of bastards. He has an appetite for women that matches, or perhaps exceeds, his appetite for food and drink. And the fact he is king means there is no shortage of willing partners. Although he never takes responsibility for any of the children that result from his trysts, he treasures the memories of the women for years afterward, recalling their names, where they met, and what sort of work they did. If he were a better father, he might be able to turn some of his bastards into the sort of young men and women his heirs aren't.

- **Barra:** The youngest of Robert's bastards, she's still in the womb of her whore mother, who fast approaches her time of birth.
- **Bella:** Another of Robert's bastard daughters, she works at the Peach, an inn near Stony Sept, as a whore.
- **Gendry:** The son of a whore in King's Landing, Robert had him apprenticed to a blacksmith in the city. He is a stubborn youth and the spitting image of his father. He suspects he's the son of a lord, but he has no idea who his father really is.
- **Mya Stone:** Robert's eldest bastard, she was born and lives still in the Vale. Robert was very fond of the girl, and his friends knew of her and her origins. She works as a guide for those going to and from the Eyrie.
- **Edric Storm:** Unlike all the others, Edric is Robert's only acknowledged bastard. His mother was Delena Florent, a well-born noblewoman and now wife of Ser Hosman Norcross. Edric lives at Storm's End as ward to the castellan Cortnay Penrose. A bright boy, he loves his father and delights in telling tales of his greatest exploits.
- **Others:** There are undoubtedly many more of Robert's bastards scattered around the Seven Kingdoms. Some may have no clue as to their parentage, while others may have mothers that remember their "encounter" with the king and have passed that knowledge on to their children.

role and pursued it with gusto. A powerful young man, big, strong, and full of youthful exuberance, he easily overshadowed his siblings, Stannis and Renly, and even when his parents were dashed on the rocks of Shipbreaker Bay, he managed to thrive in the vacuum their loss created.

Perhaps the most important moment in Robert's history was his fostering with House Arryn, where he won a place of affection in Lord Jon Arryn's heart. At the Eyrie, Robert also met the somber Eddard Stark, and not long after, the pair became close friends, almost as brothers. Through his association with Stark, Robert eventually met and fell in love with Lyanna Stark, Eddard's beautiful sister. Utterly enamored by her, Robert fully intended to wed the young woman and live out his days in Storm's End with her and their children. Fate, however, would intervene, and Robert's hopes were dashed.

It was during the Year of False Spring that the course of the Seven Kingdoms would be changed. During that year, at the great Tournament of Harrenhal, Rhaegar Targaryen met and fell in love with Lyanna Stark, even though he himself had a wife of his own. From this tragic first meeting, Rhaegar was moved to steal her away to the Tower of Joy, where he held her as a prisoner, or at least so claimed Robert and his allies. Her brother, Brandon Stark, and heir to Winterfell, traveled to King's Landing with an entourage of close friends and loyal knights to demand her release and for Rhaegar to face them. Rather than find a diplomatic solution, Mad King Aerys had them arrested and summoned their fathers. He then had them all killed as punishment.

Bereft of his love and with the loss of so many good men and their fathers, Robert, Eddard Stark, Jon Arryn, and others called their banners and rose in rebellion against the king. Robert was a popular man even then, and he gained the support of a number of noble houses. Robert's Rebellion, also known as the War of the Usurper by those loyal to the Targaryens, split the Seven Kingdoms in two. Robert's goal was the removal of the Targaryens from power, and battle after battle he proved his might as a warrior and a leader. When Robert met Prince Rhaegar in single combat and caved in his chest, scattering rubies from his armor into the waters, he won his most important victory—not only because the prince was dead, but also because he'd avenged Lyanna.

When Robert's forces arrived in King's Landing, they found it already sacked by Lannister forces and the royal family dead by their hands as well. Robert had successfully ended nearly three hundred years of Targaryen rule, but it hadn't saved his beloved Lyanna from dying at the Tower of Joy just as she was found by Eddard Stark at the war's end.

Robert became Robert of House Baratheon, the First of his Name, crowned King of the Andals and the Rhoynar and the First Men, Lord of the Seven Kingdoms, and Protector of the Realm. This post, however, has proven a poor match, for Robert is a warrior, not a king. He lived for the battlefield and the camaraderie of men like him. The role of king means a long, slow death, and it's said that while the Targaryens couldn't kill him, the Iron Throne is just as effective, but much crueler.

The Royal House

Since Robert is king of the Seven Kingdoms, his lands and holdings technically extend to all corners of Westeros, making the presentation of his household's resources dubious at best. Rather than defining the true range of Robert's power, simply assume that nearly anything the royal family wishes can be achieved given enough time and loans.

KING ROBERT BARATHEON	MIDDLE-AGED FIGHTER	
ABILITIES		
AGILITY	3	—
ANIMAL HANDLING	5	RIDE 2B
ATHLETICS	5	STRENGTH 4B
ENDURANCE	6	RESILIENCE 1B
FIGHTING	6	BLUDGEONS 4B, SPEARS 2B
LANGUAGE (COMMON)	3	—
PERSUASION	5	CHARM 1B, CONVINCE 3B, SEDUCE (+1 INFLUENCE) 3B
STATUS	7	BREEDING 3B, REPUTATION 7B, TOURNAMENTS 4B
SURVIVAL	5	HUNT 3B, ORIENTATION 1B [GREAT HUNTER]
WARFARE	6	COMMAND 4B, STRATEGY 2B, TACTICS 1B
WILL	3	—

ATTRIBUTES			
COMBAT DEFENSE	10	INTRIGUE DEFENSE	11
HEALTH	16	COMPOSURE	9
DESTINY POINTS	0		

BENEFITS: BLUDGEON FIGHTER I, BLUDGEON FIGHTER II, COMPELLING (SEDUCE), FURY, GREAT HUNTER, HEAD OF HOUSE, LEADER OF MEN, TOUGH

FLAWS: BOUND TO THE BOTTLE, FLAW (ENDURANCE)

SUPERIOR FULL PLATE: AR 11; AP –5; BULK 3

SUPERIOR WARHAMMER	6D+1+4B	10 DAMAGE	BULK 1, POWERFUL, SHATTERING 3, SLOW, TWO-HANDED; BLUDGEON FIGHTER II, FURY
VALYRIAN STEEL DAGGER	6D+1	2 DAMAGE	DEFENSIVE +1, OFF-HAND +1

Every king needs a queen, and Robert was quickly married to Cersei Lannister. She is an intelligent and severe, though beautiful, woman. However, their marriage is a disaster, cold and loveless, their couplings forced and unhappy. Robert has retreated to his cups and his whores while the gulf between him and his wife widens. Despite their strained marriage, Cersei has born him three children, Joffrey, Myrcella, and Tommen, though none of them look anything like Robert, having the Lannister's golden curls and bright green eyes. Robert has little to do with his heirs, preferring instead to remain removed from children he cannot believe he has sired, because of Joffrey's cruelty and their fair coloring, preferring instead, in the rare times he feels like being a father, to dote on his highborn bastard.

Now the long summer of Robert's reign is at an end, and the autumnal stirrings of winter blow down from the north. There's treachery afoot in King's Landing, and Robert sees it everywhere. His Hand, Jon Arryn, has become gravely ill and spends more time in bed than attending the king. Robert must consider a new Hand to replace his ailing old friend and who better to bring new life to his dreary one than his old friend Eddard Stark?

PERSONALITY

Before becoming king, Robert was an exuberant, fun-loving man, a force of nature blessed with an infectious personality that could make friends of enemies and bring endless numbers to fight on his behalf. As king, the responsibilities of his station have weighed him down, and though he fills his loneliness with the comforts of courtesans and the spectacles of great tournaments, they are fleeting (and expensive) pleasures.

Robert holds his friends and family (at least those he cares for) in the highest regard and is fiercely loyal and generous, but he can also be impulsive and immature. Most of the time, he is a good-natured man who enjoys the rougher side of life. This said, he has his vices: he is too free with money, eats and drinks too much, and can be exceedingly vindictive, holding grudges for years—even after a matter has been resolved. He often laments he was only able to kill Prince Rhaegar once.

Robert knows who and what he is and is secure in it. He regrets taking the throne, not because he didn't want it but because he wanted the life he had before even more. As a king, Robert is fair but lazy. He detests sitting on the throne and dispensing justice or determining right from wrong. He leaves these sorts of decisions, as well as most of the decisions about the running of the Seven Kingdoms, to the small council, and he knows he can trust them to do it well. In fact, his ability to surround himself with competent advisors may have been his greatest strength as a king.

As a husband and father, Robert is a failure. He and Cersei barely tolerate each other, and instead of trying to improve the situation, he treats her cruelly, taking what he desires of her. His treatment of

her may be why he steps back from raising their children. So instead of producing heirs he might have liked, he left their education and training to their cold, manipulative mother, ensuring Robert would reject them.

Appearance

Robert has always been a large man: big, hairy, and intimidating. As a youth, he looked the part of a warrior and carried a huge warhammer into battle. After becoming king, he lost something. He no longer trains or fights, and he eats far too much. In the relatively short time he has been king, he has grown obese and wheezes when he walks. Whereas before he smelled of sweat and leather, as king he smells of perfume and powder, which is a marked change his close friends have observed.

Queen Cersei Lannister

His sister liked to think of herself as Lord Tywin with teats, but she was wrong. Their father had been as relentless and implacable as a glacier, where Cersei was all wildfire, especially when thwarted. She had been giddy as a maiden when she learned that Stannis had abandoned Dragonstone, certain that he had finally given up the fight and sailed away to exile. When word came down from the north that he had turned up again at the Wall, her fury had been fearful to behold. She does not lack for wits, but she has no judgment, and no patience.

— A Feast for Crows

Queen Cersei Lannister		Adult Schemer
Abilities		
Agility	2	Quickness 1B
Awareness	3	Notice 1B
Cunning	3	—
Deception	4	Act 1B, Bluff 2B
Knowledge	3	—
Language (Common)	4	—
Persuasion	6	Charm 2B, Incite 2B, Intimidate 1B, Seduce 3B, Taunt 2B
Status	7	Breeding 4B, Reputation 4B, Stewardship 2B
Will	5	—

Attributes			
Combat Defense	7	Intrigue Defense	13
Health	6	Composure	12
Destiny Points	2		

Benefits: Attractive, Expertise (Seduce), Famous, Magnetic, Treacherous

Drawbacks: Flaw (Will)

Dagger	2D	1 damage	Defensive +1, Off-hand +1

Cersei is a Lannister through and through. She is hungry for power and believes it is her right, a feeling that has only grown over her years as Queen. She is a twin to her brother Jaime, whom she loves and has had an ongoing incestuous relationship with, and she is the older sister of Tyrion, whom she despises. She is the eldest of the Lannister children and probably the most heartless. She hates that despite being first born, even if it was by only a few seconds, she won't inherit the power that normally passes from father to son. This dynamic has done more to influence Cersei's personality and outlook on life than has anything else.

History

Cersei is the only daughter and eldest child of Tywin Lannister and his wife, Joanna. Even as a child, she believed she should be the one to carry on her family's name. She's spent her entire life climbing the social and political ladder to amass more power. Her ambition started early in life when she was married to Robert Baratheon after he took the throne. The marriage was politically motivated, to cement the relationship between House Baratheon and House Lannister, but Cersei reveled in the power it afforded her.

She has suffered through her years of marriage to Robert. She hates her husband and sees him as a boor and a dullard, a fool who has no business being king. She flees into the arms of her brother, continuing a long-standing illicit love affair that started when they were children. In fact, so frequent and passionate are their couplings, all three of Cersei's children are born of incest, though this fact is, for now, not known, though there are stirrings of suspicion, especially from the Hand, Jon Arryn. Cersei is an expert at manipulation and sees binding her brother to her as just another way to expand her power and that of her house. Whether or not she truly loves Jaime is unclear. She believes she does, but at the same time, she also feels it's fine to manipulate and use her brother to achieve her own ends.

Personality

Like all Lannisters, Cersei is intelligent, brave, and ruthless; unlike the rest of the Lannisters, she's also volatile and impatient. Many of her personal traits spring from the fact she resents the restrictions placed on her simply because she's a woman. It angers her that a man, no matter what his shortcomings, would have been *given* power she'd never be able to earn despite her strengths.

In her mind, her only failing came when she was unable to make Robert forget Lyanna Stark. While she feels she could compete against any woman alive, she can't compete with Robert's dead first love. Cersei cannot accept that she is not enough for him. Her one advantage in the world is her appearance, and Robert is immune. Being queen has made it easier for her to accept her place, as has her relationship with her brother.

She and Jaime came into the world together—her first and him following after, clutching her ankle. They make an interesting pair, and their bond is unique. They think of themselves as two parts of a whole or possibly even two people who share a single soul. They express this physically and rationalize it as being pure, natural, and as following the tradition of their Targaryen kings.

Appearance

Cersei is blessed with more than her fair share of physical charms. She knew her looks would win her a position of power, even if it meant being used only as breeding stock, a thought she loathed. She's kept her looks through the years, and she's still as beautiful and desirable as ever, with a full head of golden hair, bright green eyes, and a curvaceous, sensual body.

Prince Joffrey Baratheon

"Joffrey is truly a little shit."

—Jon Snow

Joffrey is the eldest of the royal children and the heir to Robert's throne. As the oldest, he lords his size and position over his younger siblings and especially over people who aren't members of his family while still managing a polite façade—most of the time. Everyone, except his mother, regards him as a horrible, spoiled brat with no self-control or humility.

History

In truth, Joffrey is the bastard-born son of Cersei and Jaime, but the truth of his birth has been carefully concealed from the king and the rest of the Seven Kingdoms. Still, his golden curls and decidedly Lannister features have raised some suspicion in those closest to the king, leading many to wonder just what, exactly, is going on. Regardless of the rumors, Joffrey stands as the king's eldest son and heir and has been raised to take his "father's" place.

Joffrey has never had a close relationship with Robert, partly because his father scarcely recognizes him as his own but also because Joffrey is definitely Cersei's creature, and he is a constant reminder of Cersei's cruelty and ambition. To make matters worse, Joffrey's cruel streak emerged early in his life, further widening the gulf between the king and the prince.

Personality

Joffrey is truly his mother's son. Volatile, uncontrollable, and cruel, he is as savage and unpredictable as the maddest Targaryen king. He delights in inflicting pain, an unsavory trait that emerged early in his life in his wicked torture of the castle's cats, though such behavior was cut short when Robert learned of his horrific acts. Joffrey gets people to do what he wants by threatening them, believing himself immune to retribution. He has little sense of right or wrong, which often leads him to trouble, especially when he loses his temper and screams out exactly the wrong thing. And when things go wrong because of his temper, he always blames the problems on others. He is the perfect example of what his mother hates about power—that it's handed to men simply because they're male.

Appearance

Joffrey is tall for a boy his age, with blond curly hair and bright green eyes. While he carries himself regally most of the time, he has pouty lips and an evil sneer. He always wears the finest clothing and accents, as befits the royal heir and king.

Prince Joffrey Baratheon		Adolescent Schemer
Abilities		
Agility	4	—
Athletics	3	—
Cunning	3	—
Endurance	3	—
Fighting	3	Long Blades 1B
Language (Common)	3	—
Marksmanship	3	Crossbow 2B
Persuasion	4	Intimidate 2B
Status	6	Reputation 1B
Will	3	—

Attributes			
Combat Defense	9	Intrigue Defense	11
Health	9	Composure	9
Destiny Points	2		
Benefits: Attractive, Expertise (Intimidate), Heir			
Drawbacks: Cruel Insanity			

Longsword	3D+1B	3 damage*	
Dagger	3D	2 damage	Defensive +1, Off-hand +1
Light Crossbow	3D+2B	5 damage	Long Range, Reload Lesser, Slow

*This weapon is sized for Joffrey; hence, its base damage is Athletics

Other Children

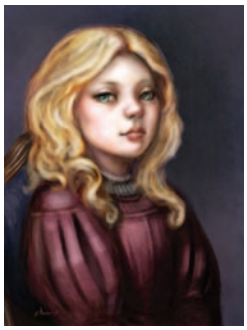
In addition to Joffrey, Robert and Cersei have two other children, Princess Myrcella and Prince Tommen.

The younger children are quite unlike their elder brother in temperament, although still quite used to the idea of royal privilege, having known it for all their lives. King Robert tends to ignore them for the most part, leaving the task of raising them in the hands of their mother and royal servants. Queen Cersei dotes on them and generally spoils them, although she reserves her most lavish attention for Joffrey.

Princess Myrcella Baratheon

"Will Bran get better, Uncle?" little Myrcella asked. She had all of her mother's beauty and none of her nature.

— A Game of Thrones



Myrcella is the middle child, and as with her brothers, she's secretly the illegitimate product of Cersei and Jaime's incestuous coupling. With Joffrey slated to be king after their father passes, Myrcella has been born to the role of the waiting bride, a valuable commodity for cementing alliances in the realm since a marriage would elevate any house blessed with such an arrangement. To prepare her for her role, she has spent most of her short childhood learning the womanly arts.

Myrcella is a little girl in every way. She enjoys spending time with other noblewomen, learning the proper way for a princess to act. Unlike her brother, she is everything a royal heir *should* be: kind, gentle, brave, smart, strong willed, and respectful.

The young Myrcella is a pretty little girl with cherubic features and the signature golden locks of the Lannisters. She enjoys dressing nicely but also likes to spend time playing as any girl her age does.

Princess Myrcella — Youth

Abilities		
Cunning	3	Logic 1B
Language (Common)	4	—
Persuasion	3	Charm 2B
Status	5	Breeding 2B

Attributes			
Combat Defense	6	Intrigue Defense	10
Health	6	Composure	6
Destiny Points	5		

Benefits: Charismatic (Charm), Famous

Fist	2D	1 damage	Grab, Off-hand +1

Prince Tommen — Youth

Abilities		
Animal Handling	2	Charm 1B
Awareness	4	Empathy 2B
Language (Common)	3	—
Status	5	Breeding 1B

Attributes			
Combat Defense	8	Intrigue Defense	11
Health	6	Composure	6
Destiny Points	5		

Benefits: Expertise (Empathy), Famous

Fist	2D	1 damage	Grab, Off-hand +1

Prince Tommen Baratheon

"I don't want Bran to die," Tommen said timorously. He was a sweet boy. Not like his brother, but then Jaime and Tyrion were somewhat less than peas in a pod themselves.

— A Game of Thrones

Like his siblings, Tommen is the offspring of Cersei and Jaime Lannister. Unlike his elder brother, he has none of the madness incest often produces, being a sweet child with a pleasant disposition. At seven years old, he's just a little boy, more interested in games and kittens than in being a proper young princeling. He has little interest in politics and has the same fascination of being a knight as any boy his age would. He is fun loving and easily lead, but he enjoys attention, a rare commodity in the shadow of his elder brother. He is sweet, harmless, and easily manipulated. Tommen isn't fat, but he's pleasantly chubby with light-blond hair and beautiful green eyes.

The Small Council

The king of the Seven Kingdoms appoints a small group of intelligent and resourceful individuals to positions within the small council, which was designed to advise the king and attend to matters of state on his behalf. A post on the small council brings honor, so much so that regardless of their station before, they gain the title of lord. The influence the council wields depends largely on the king. With Robert's disinterest in governing, the small council commands a great deal of power and is, in many ways, the true power behind the throne.

The small council consists of seven positions: the Hand of the King, the Grand Maester of the Citadel, the Lord Commander of the Kingsguard, the master of coin, the master of ships, the master of laws, and the master of whispers. Some of these roles may be vacant at any given time but never the first three on the list.

The Hand of the King

"What the king dreams, the Hand builds."
"The king eats, and the Hand takes the shit."

—King Robert Baratheon

By far the most important position on the small council, the Hand of the King is the monarch's closest advisor and attends to most matters in the Seven Kingdoms, leading the council when the king isn't available and attending to the needs of Westeros when the king is indisposed. For as long as there has been a king, there has always been a Hand. Some have proven to be great men, going so far as to eclipse the kings they serve, while others have been wretched, leading the Seven Kingdoms into war, famine, and hardship.

The post of Hand is famously unstable for all that the position provides in wealth and status. King Aerys went through five of his own, and few of them left the position alive. The first was Lord Tywin Lannister, who survived twenty years as Hand. Lord Owen Merryweather and his successor Lord Jon Connington were exiled and died penniless. Lord Chelsted was burned to death, and the last, Lord Rossart the Pyromancer, was killed in the Sack of King's Landing after serving as Hand for only a month.

Since Robert has come to the throne, the realm has known only one Hand: Lord Jon Arryn, Warden of the East, and Lord of the Eyrie. A devoted friend and ally of the king, Jon takes his responsibility seriously and has proven to be an exemplary Hand, even though he has been forced to leave his holdings in the hands of a castellan. Unfortunately, Jon has been stricken with a mysterious illness, and despite the best efforts of the Grand Maester, it seems his death is near. Whispers abound at court about a possible replacement, and a number of names have been mentioned, though it seems Eddard Stark is Robert's favorite.

For details on **Jon Arryn**, see **Chapter Eight: The Mountains of the Moon and the Vale of Arryn**.

Grand Maester Pycelle

Grand Maester of the Citadel

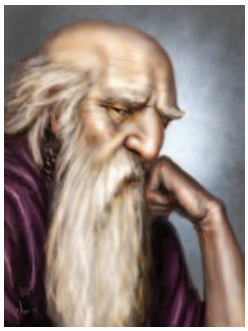
Pycelle's breathing was rapid and shallow. "All I did, I did for House Lannister." A sheen of sweat covered the broad dome of the old man's brow, and wisps of white hair clung to his wrinkled skin. "Always... for years... your lord father, ask him, I was ever his true servant... 'twas I who bid Aerys open his gates... "

— A Clash of Kings

A fixture in King's Landing's politics for decades, Grand Maester Pycelle has served on the small council the entire time. He is old, wise, and typically underestimated by everyone who knows him. Only a handful know the truth, and those few welcome his council and loyalty.

History

Pycelle has been the Grand Maester of the Citadel and a member of the small council for over forty years. During his time, he has seen the rise and fall of numerous Hands, witnessed the heady days of Aerys's early rule and his sharp decline into madness, and through it all, the fat maester has survived, always attending to his own needs before those of the state. In the twilight years of the last Targaryen king, Lord Tywin Lannister won over Pycelle, and even after Tywin abdicated his post as Hand, Pycelle's loyalty to House Lannister remained strong. While not common knowledge, Pycelle betrayed Aerys as the Lannister host descended on King's Landing, advising the Mad King to throw open his gates and welcome the army, even when Aerys doubted Tywin's intentions. This act was instrumental to Aerys's defeat, and from this cunning advice, Pycelle brought the war and the Targaryen kings to an end.



Personality

To everyone else, he appears to be a kind, completely harmless, old man who falls asleep at inopportune times. Beneath his fatherly veneer, Pycelle is an incredibly intelligent and loyal man who is ultimately interested in power. He bends the vows of his order to suit his needs, indulging the needs of the flesh and dabbling in poisons and politics with a skill few maesters dare approach. In a strange way, he's highly protective of the Seven Kingdoms and believes he's only done what's best for it.

Grand Maester Pycelle		Old Schemer
Abilities		
Animal Handling	3	—
Awareness	3	Notice 2B
Cunning	4	Decipher 1B, Logic 1B, Memory 2B
Deception	5	Act 2B, Bluff 1B
Healing	4	Diagnose 2B, Treat Ailment 1B, Treat Injury 1B
Knowledge	5	Education 3B
Language (Common)	4	—
Language (Various)	3	—
Persuasion	4	—
Status	5	—
Will	3	—

Attributes			
Combat Defense	6	Intrigue Defense	12
Health	6	Composure	9
Destiny Points	0		
Benefits: Trade (Poisoner), Treacherous			
Drawbacks: Flaw (Athletics), Poor Health			
Robes: AR 1			
Fist	2D	1 damage	Grab, Off-hand +1

Appearance

Pycelle appears to be an old, pot-bellied man with white hair and a long white beard. He wears fine, though not ostentatious, robes.

Ser Barristan Selmy the Bold

Lord Commander of the Kingsguard

Barristan the Bold is one of the finest knights of the realm and the leader of the Kingsguard. He fought on the side of the Targaryens during Robert's Rebellion until he was seriously wounded at the Battle of the Trident. He accepted Robert Baratheon's pardon and has served him loyally since. (For more information on Ser Barristan Selmy, see **The Kingsguard** on page 51.)

Lord Stannis Baratheon

Master of Ships

Stannis is Robert Baratheon's younger brother, the Lord of Dragonstone, and the master of ships on the small council. He is a serious, stubborn man with an inflexible sense of duty and justice. For more information on Stannis Baratheon, see **Chapter Four: Dragonstone**.

Lord Renly Baratheon

Master of Laws

Renly is the youngest of the three Baratheon brothers. He is the Lord of Storm's End and the master of laws on the small council. For more information on Renly Baratheon, see **Chapter Eleven: The Stormlands**.

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Lord Petyr Baelish, Littlefinger

Master of Coin

"I've angered you my lady. That was never my intent." He looked contrite. The look brought back vivid memories for Catelyn. He had been a sly child, but after his mischiefs he always looked contrite; it was a gift he had. The years had not changed him much. Petyr had been a small boy, and he had grown into a small man, an inch or two shorter than Catelyn, slender and quick, with the sharp features she remembered and the same laughing grey-green eyes.

— A Game of Thrones

Lord Petyr Baelish acquired the nickname "Littlefinger" while fostered at Riverrun, due to his slight stature and the fact that his family holdings are located on the littlest of the Fingers—the name has stuck with him ever since. Other men might have been hampered by such an ignoble title, but instead, Lord Baelish has risen to the position of the king's master of coin, and an influential place on the small council, and he aims to rise higher still.

History

The man who became one of the most powerful and influential lords in the Seven Kingdoms was not born to greatness. The Baelishes are barely a step up from hedge knights and have no banners, no armies, and no great strongholds; they have poor holdings and equally poor prospects for great marriages and alliances. As a result, Petyr Baelish yearned for a life greater than the one his forbearers left him. His grandfather was a Braavosi mercenary in service to Lord Corbray, given land on the smallest of The Fingers as a reward for his service. When Petyr's father became a hedge knight, he took the head of the Titan of Braavos as his sigil. At some point during his youth, Petyr choose a field of mockingbirds as his personal sigil, leaving behind the Titan his father had chosen.

When Petyr fostered at Riverrun he became fast friends with Catelyn and Lysa Stark, and was their constant companion. As they grew older, however, Petyr fell deeply in love with Catelyn. She, on the other hand, while fond of the lovesick young man, did not share his feelings, and Catelyn also knew her role in life. The Baelish family was too small, too insignificant for her father to ever wed her to one such as Petyr Baelish, a fact driven home when Lord Hoster Tully arranged for Catelyn to marry Brandon Stark, the heir to Winterfell.

Lysa Tully, unlike her sister, fell madly in love with Petyr, somehow overlooking his infatuation with Catelyn. Her obsession with the young man rivaled Petyr's own with Catelyn, and so when Petyr was drunk with melancholy after Catelyn's rejection, Lysa crept into his bedchamber and bedded him. Petyr's ill-advised challenge against Brandon Stark for Catelyn's hand—a fight that saw him wounded and confined to his quarters for two weeks—and the tryst with Lysa eventually led Hoster Tully to send the young man back to the Fingers and wash his hands of him.

Such a setback might have destroyed a lesser man, but Petyr proved resilient as always. Perhaps it was the harsh reality of his situation, the rejection of the one woman he loved, that drove Littlefinger to rise above his lowly birthright and become something greater, to prove to the world he was more than some sheep lord and not a man to be trifled

with. Petyr maintained a relationship with Lysa Tully even after her marriage to Jon Arryn, and through her, Littlefinger managed the customs at Gulltown, where he proved skilled in commerce and coin. Jon Arryn quickly saw his worth, and steadily offered Petyr greater appointments until he finally landed himself the office of master of coin on the king's small council. Under Petyr's guidance, the incomes of the crown increased considerably but so, too, did the crown's debts. Petyr's ability to seemingly create coin from thin air when the crown needs it has made him a trusted and indispensable retainer of King Robert.

Petyr Baelish hasn't sat idle as the master of coin, either. He's spent a great deal of money to buy the right people in the right places and positioned himself at the head of large, non-associated group of people from all of the social strata in the Seven Kingdoms. His network rivals even that of another member of the small council, the eunuch and master of whispers, Varys. Petyr has also invested a great deal of money in buying up most of the brothels in King's Landing to keep him even more aware of what the noble lords and ladies of King's Landing are up to.

Personality

Even as a boy, Petyr Baelish never minded his place and was always bold. He has a mocking, even taunting, way about him, even as he exerts a boyish charm that makes people want to like him. The only thing that eclipses his audacity is his ambition, for Littlefinger craves power, status, and accomplishment. He is confident and surprisingly likeable, considering his Machiavellian attitude. Unflappable and fearless, even in the face of men who are his physical superior, Littlefinger is always the one in control and never lets situations get out of hand.

Appearance

Littlefinger is a short fellow with handsome features, and sports a well-manicured goatee, grey threads running throughout his dark hair. Other than his small stature, he's of average build, a bit pale but certainly healthy. He favors dark clothing that is stylish, expensive, and functional. He is just shy of thirty years old.

Varys, the Spider

Master of Whispers

"Nothing happens in this city without Varys knowing. Oftimes he knows about it before it happens. He has informants everywhere."

—Lord Petyr Baelish

Nicknamed "the King's Spider," Varys has served on the small council through years of Aerys's reign and all of Robert's reign. He is a consummate spymaster and fills the role of the master of whispers. Physically, he is no threat at all, but politically, he is a powerhouse because of his knowledge and web of informants.

History

Since the only things known of Varys are what Varys reveals, there's no way to know if it's the truth or not, but the details of his past, such as they are known, are not beyond the realm of possibility, and thus they suffice in establishing a history for this elusive and mysterious figure. This said, take everything here with a healthy dose of salt.

Varys was born a slave in Lys and was eventually sold and apprenticed to a traveling folly, a troupe of mummers who worked the Free Cities, Old Town, and occasionally King's Landing, by means of a fat little cog owned by the troupe's master. Varys was a quick study and learned the art of mummery early. For all of his accomplishment, however, it was not enough for his master to refuse the coin a strange man offered to take ownership of the young man.

Knowing the tastes of the strange and powerful, Varys suspected he would serve as a love slave, but what lay in store for him was far worse. The man who purchased him proved to be a wizard, a trafficker in dark forces, and he needed something from Varys to complete some wicked ritual. He plied the young man with a powerful potion, and while Varys was paralyzed by the concoction, the wizard cut off his manhood, and Varys watched as it burned in the brazier to appease the vile spirit and complete the spell.

With the terrible act complete, the wizard had no use for the boy, and so Varys found himself hurt, alone, and tossed out on the streets. Rather than succumb to his injuries, as the wizard would have liked, Varys found a way to survive. At first, he lived by begging and stealing, using the techniques learned from the mummers to make ends meet, but eventually, he realized there were things far more valuable than gold. Varys learned to read, learned to spy, and learned the secrets of other men until he became valuable enough that no man would move against him.

At some point, Varys won a post on the small council, serving King Aerys as master of whispers. Installed in this position, his vast network expanded until his "little birds" worked throughout the Seven Kingdoms and beyond. The eunuch became so powerful that when Robert took the Iron Throne, the new king pardoned him and, thus, Varys' position on the small council remained secure.

Lord Petyr Baelish		Adult Schemer
Abilities		
Awareness	4	Empathy 1B, Notice 1B
Cunning	4	Logic 1B, Memory 1B
Deception	6	Act 2B, Bluff 3B, Cheat 2B
Knowledge	3	Education 1B, Streetwise 1B
Language (Common)	4	—
Persuasion	4	Bargain 2B, Charm 3B, Convince 2B, Incite 1B, Taunt 2B
Status	4	Reputation 2B, Stewardship 1B
Will	4	Coordinate 2B

Attributes			
Combat Defense	8	Intrigue Defense	12
Health	6	Composure	12
Destiny Point	1		

Benefits: Adept Negotiator, Charismatic (Convince), Compelling, Connections (Free Cities), Expertise (Bluff), Favored of Nobles, Head for Numbers, Head of House, Treacherous

Excellent Dagger	2D	1 damage	Defensive +1, Off-hand +1

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Varys	Middle-Aged Schemer	
Abilities		
Awareness	5	Notice 3B
Cunning	4	Decipher 1B, Memory 1B
Deception	5	Act 2B, Bluff 2B, Disguise 4B
Knowledge	4	Streetwise 1B
Language (Common)	4	—
Language (Various)	3	—
Persuasion	3	Bargain 1B
Status	5	—
Stealth	4	Sneak 2B
Thievery	4	—
Will	4	—
Attributes		
Combat Defense	9	Intrigue Defense 14
Health	6	Composure 12
Destiny Points	3	
Benefits: Connections (King's Landing, Free Cities, Elsewhere), Mummer, Talented (Disguise)		
Drawbacks: Eunuch		
Robes: AR 1		
Excellent Dagger	2D+1	1 damage, Defensive +1, Off-hand +1

Personality

Secrets are Varys's trade, and he knows them all. Varys believes his own worth can be measured by what he knows, what he tells, and what he keeps to himself. Thus, he ever gathers his secrets from his little birds, doling out only the most vital information, bit by bit, and almost always in ways that paint him the hero. More than anything, Varys wants an ordered and stable Seven Kingdoms, and his loyalty extends only so far as this can be achieved. For this reason, he provides information to all sides, aiding enemies, pitting rivals against one another, and manipulating events through the information he reveals to achieve his true ends.

Appearance

Varys is the quintessential eunuch, being plump and effeminate. He has a girlish giggle and shaky, nervous fingers that flutter about. Hairless, he's a disturbing creature and one that immediately rouses distrust. Varys prefers comfortable clothing, fine silks often in outrageous colors. He is always perfumed and powdered, smelling of lilac and other pleasant aromas. Of course, this appearance is just a display, one of the many masks the master of whispers wears. Adept at disguise, he can alter his appearance using make-up, wigs, prosthetics, and all the other tricks mummers use to blend into any environment, more often than not, fooling everyone around him.

The Kingsguard

Protecting the king and the royal family is an elite cadre called the Kingsguard. First founded by Aegon the Conqueror, their storied ranks have included great heroes and dastardly villains, but most have been men of honor and include such men as Prince Aemon the Dragonknight, Ser Ryam Redwyne, Ser Duncan the Tall, Ser Gerold Hightower, and Ser Barristan Selmy. The members of the Kingsguard are often referred to as the White Swords or "white cloaks," and they reside in White Sword Tower in the Red Keep.

The Kingsguard stands as a shining symbol of honor throughout the Seven Kingdoms; its members, of which there are only seven at a time, are each paragons of courage, discipline, and skill. To join the White Swords, a knight must be selected by the king, and then the candidate must stand a vigil, speak his vows, and swear to have no wives or children. To be a member of the Kingsguard is to be a member for life and have the right to bear the pure white, unmarked shield of their order.

Leading these great knights is the Lord Commander, who also holds a seat on the small council. It is his duty to maintain the knights, to command them, to see to their ongoing training, and discipline them when they falter. The Lord Commander also maintains the records of their deeds in a great tome called the White Book, which is held in the White Tower at King's Landing.

The Kingsguard has accompanied the kings, queens, and children of the royal family since its creation. They serve their charges silently, and their discretion is as important as their martial skills. When Robert took the throne, he had to fill five of the seven Kingsguard positions. Many were filled by Cersei for political reasons and not because of their fine examples of the knightly tradition or having earned their way to the post.

Ser Barristan Selmy the Bold

Lord Commander of the Kingsguard

Ser Barristan of House Selmy. Firstborn son of Ser Lyonel Selmy of Harvest Hall. Served as squire to Ser Manfred Swann. Named "the Bold" in his tenth year, when he donned borrowed armor to appear as a mystery knight in the tourney at Blackhaven, where he was defeated and unmasked by Duncan, Prince of Dragonflies. Knighted in his sixteenth year by King Aegon V Targaryen, after performing great feats of prowess as a mystery knight in the winter tourney at King's Landing, defeating Prince Duncan the Small and Ser Duncan the Tall, Lord Commander of the Kingsguard. Slew Maelys the Monstrous, last of the Blackfyre Pretenders, in single combat during the War of the Ninepenny Kings. Defeated Lormelle Long Lance and Cedrik Storm, the Bastard of Bronzegate. Named to the Kingsguard in his twenty-third year, by Lord Commander Ser Gerold Hightower. Defended the passage against all challengers in the tourney of the Silver Bridge. Victor in the melee at Maidenpool. Brought King Aerys II to safety during the Defiance of Duskendale, despite an arrow wound in chest. Avenged the murder of his Sworn Brother, Ser Gwayne Gaunt. Rescued Lady Jeyne Swann and her septa from the Kingswood Brotherhood, defeating Simon Toyne and the Smiling Knight, and slaying the former. In the Oldtown tourney, defeated and unmasked the mystery knight Blackshield, revealing him as the Bastard of Uplands. Sole champion of Lord Steffon's tourney at Storm's End, whereat he unhorsed Lord Robert Baratheon, Prince Oberyn Martell, Lord Leyton Hightower, Lord Jon Connington, Lord Jason Mallister, and Prince Rhaegar Targaryen. Wounded by arrow, spear, and sword at the Battle of the Trident whilst fighting beside his Sworn Brothers and Rhaegar, Prince of Dragonstone. Pardoned and named Lord Commander of the Kingsguard by King Robert I Baratheon. Served in the honor guard that brought Lady Cersei of House Lannister to King's Landing to wed King Robert. Led the attack on Old Wyk during Balon Greyjoy's Rebellion. Champion of the tourney at King's Landing, in his fifty-seventh year...

— *A Storm of Swords*

Ser Barristan Selmy is the Lord Commander of the Kingsguard and is oft considered one of the greatest living knights in all the Seven Kingdoms and certainly as great as most of those knights who came before. Although an aging man, his honor, strength, martial skill, and every other knightly virtue stand unimpeachable.

History

A legend in his own time, Selmy was a young knight when King Jaehaerys asked him to walk away from his old life and join the Kingsguard. Although it meant giving up his ancestral keep and lands, as well as leaving his wife-to-be, Selmy did it because he felt it was his duty to serve his king and the realm. During the War of the Usurper, he defended Aerys to the best of his ability, until seriously wounded at the Battle of the Trident.

After his defeat and the death of King Aerys, Selmy accepted Robert's pardon and eventually became Lord Commander of the Kingsguard. Selmy owed his loyalty to the kingdom, not to a specific king, and so he has served Robert as well as he has any of his predecessors.

Lord Commander Barristan Selmy — **Old Fighter**

Abilities		
Agility	4	Quickness 1B
Animal Handling	4	Ride 2B
Athletics	5	Strength 1B
Awareness	3	Notice 1B
Endurance	5	Resilience 2B, Stamina 2B
Fighting	5	Long Blades 2B, Pole-arms 1B, Spears 2B
Language (Common)	4	—
Language (Various)	2	—
Persuasion	3	—
Status	5	Reputation 3B, Tournaments 2B
Warfare	4	—
Will	**4**	**Dedication 4B**

Attributes			
Combat Defense	10	Intrigue Defense	10
Health	17	Composure	12
Destiny Points	2		

Benefits: Blood of Heroes, Famous, Long Blade Fighter I, Long Blade Fighter II, Man of the Kingsguard, Tough, Tourney Knight

Drawbacks: Flaw (Agility), Flaw (Athletics)

Superior Full Plate: AR 11; AP –2; Bulk 2 (Movement 3 yards)

Excellent Longsword	5D+1+2B	6 damage	
War Lance	5D+1B	9 damage	Bulk 2, Impale, Mounted, Powerful, Slow, Vicious
Large Shield	5D–1D	3 damage	Bulk 1, Defensive +4

Personality

Unlike many knights who have greatness attributed to them, Selmy lives up to all the tales and legends and has long proven himself to be all that he represents—a constant man of great discipline and martial prowess, and a man who epitomizes honor and every virtue one expects to find in a knight.

Appearance

Selmy is an older man, with long white hair and lined features. Despite his advanced age, he is still strong and fast and every bit the skilled knight he was in his youth. Like all members of the Kingsguard, he dresses in pure white, from his clothing to his armor and shield.

Ser Jaime Lannister

Kingslayer

"It fell to me to hold the Red Keep, but I knew we were lost. I sent to Aerys asking his leave to make terms. My man came back with a royal command, 'Bring me your father's head, if you are no traitor.' Aerys would have no yielding. Lord Rossart was with him, my messenger said. I knew what that meant.

"When I came on Rossart, he was dressed as a common man-at-arms, hurrying to a postern gate. I slew him first. Then I slew Aerys before he could find someone else to carry his message to the pyromancers."

— Ser Jaime Lannister

Jaime Lannister is easily the most infamous of all the Kingsguard, for it was by his hand that the last Targaryen king was slain. In betraying his vows, he earned the name Kingslayer and is reviled as a treacherous man of loose loyalties. In spite of the cloud of suspicion hanging above him, next to Ser Barristan Selmy, he is the greatest of the White Swords.

History

Jaime Lannister is twin to Cersei Lannister, brother to Tyrion Lannister, and the eldest son of Tywin and Joanna Lannister. Jaime was everything his father wanted in a son. Smart, skilled, and courageous, he had the makings of warrior, and it appeared to all that he would follow in his father's steps and become the next Lord of Casterly Rock. Things, however, did not turn out as Tywin Lannister expected.

Jaime and Cersei had always been close, closer than one would expect even of twins, and early on, their relationship blossomed into forbidden love. Even with Lady Joanna's best efforts to keep the two apart, they found ways to be close, and with their mother's death, they found ways to be closer until Jaime was squired to a knight in preparation for his birthright.

When Jaime turned eleven, Ser Sumner Crakehall took him on as a squire. In his service, he proved his courage and skill time and again, and when Ser Sumner and others entered the kingswood to root out the Kingswood Brotherhood, Jaime's bravery won him his spurs. A newly minted knight at the age of fifteen, having already won a tourney as a squire, it seemed to the world this young lion could achieve anything he desired.

However, fate would intervene when he arrived at King's Landing, where his father served as the Hand of the King. Tywin intended to wed Jaime to Lysa Tully to cement the bond between the west and the riverlands. Lord Hoster Tully was en route to King's Landing to discuss the dowry. Faced with a marriage to a woman he didn't know or love, and consumed with passion for his sister, it seemed the situation was hopeless. Cersei, who believed she would remain at King's Landing with her father, put forward the idea that Jaime join the Kingsguard. Since she

Ser Jaime Lannister			Adult Fighter
Abilities			
Agility	4		—
Animal Handling	4		Ride 1B
Athletics	4		—
Endurance	4		Resilience 1B, Stamina 1B
Fighting	5		Long Blades 3B, Spears 2B
Language (Common)	3		—
Persuasion	3		Taunt 1B
Status	4		Breeding 1B, Tournaments 1B
Warfare	3		Command 1B
Attributes			
Combat Defense	10	Intrigue Defense	8
Health	12	Composure	6
Destiny Points	2		
Benefits: Blood of the Andals, Long Blade Fighter I, Long Blade Fighter II, Man of the Kingsguard, Talented (Fighting), Tourney Knight			
Drawbacks: Ignoble, Reviled			
Superior Full Plate: AR 11; AP –2; Bulk 2 (Movement 3 yards)			
Excellent Longsword	5D+1+2B	5 damage	
War Lance	5D+1B	8 damage	Bulk 2, Impale, Mounted, Powerful, Slow, Vicious
Large Shield	5D–1D	2 damage	Bulk 1, Defensive +4

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was part of the Aerys's court, such a position would keep her brother in the city and necessarily cancel the terms of the marriage. Jaime agreed, his love for his sister outweighing the cost of the sacrifice. Cersei arranged his nomination, and in short order, Jaime was named to the Kingsguard at the great tourney at Harrenhal and became one of the youngest to wear the white. What neither of them expected was Tywin's wrath. Their father surrendered his position as Hand and returned, with Cersei, to Casterly Rock, thus spoiling their plans.

As a member of the Kingsguard, Jaime soon found that service to Aerys was intolerable. The king's madness grew by the day and Jaime was forced to endure his excesses. When war broke out, Jaime was commanded to attend Aerys at King's Landing while the rest of the Kingsguard went to the field to meet Robert's host. It was clear to Jaime that Aerys was using him as a hostage to ensure Tywin would not turn against the throne.

As Robert's armies converged on King's Landing, Jaime learned of the king's plan to burn the city to the ground with wildfire rather than be taken alive, and after Aerys foolishly allowed Tywin and the Lannister host into the city, the king ordered Jaime to bring back his own father's head. Jaime refused, killed the Hand of the King, and then cornered Aerys in the throne room, putting the Mad King to the sword and bringing a close to the War of the Usurper with one act of oathbreaking. It didn't help his case when Eddard Stark found him seated on the Iron Throne, and in the years that followed, infamy has dogged Jaime's heels.

For his part in turning over the Iron Throne to Robert Baratheon, Jaime was pardoned for his loyalties and allowed to serve the crown in his former capacity. Even though he was saddled with the name Kingslayer, his honor soiled, and his name sullied, he didn't care, for his sister was soon wed to Robert Baratheon, and for the first time in years, Cersei and Jaime could continue their tryst.

From their illicit meetings, Jaime got three children on his sister, and though he wanted to be a part of their lives, he assented to his sister's demands that he remain distant to avert suspicion on them for cuckolding the king. Even though they are cautious still, the signs of their acts are visible for all to see in Robert's "children," for they look nothing like the king, and those closest to Robert know his blood runs strong, evidenced in his likeness reflected in the coloring and features of his many bastards. It's just a matter of time before someone stumbles on the truth. It remains to be seen what fruits their treachery will produce.

Personality

Jaime is the quintessential warrior, and all of his skills lie in that area. He isn't a politician, an information broker, or a leader: he is a fighter, and he accepts that fact completely.

For all of Jaime's apparent simplicity, he is quite complicated. He comes off as arrogant, amoral, and dishonorable, but it's more accurate to say he's pragmatic and follows his own personal code of honor. Because he has such a bad reputation, everything he says is cast in the worst possible light. An offhand joke is taken as a grave threat by others, just because it is spoken by the Kingslayer. And as for honor, Jaime takes his vows to heart, but when they conflict, he chooses a course of action and follows it to its conclusion, no matter the consequence. He is interested only in the most expedient way to overcome whatever challenge faces him.

To his family (and those he allows to get close to him), Jaime can actually be a very kind and likable man. In his family, Jaime is liked by his father, sister, and brother—no mean feat considering how the three of them treat each other.

Appearance

Jaime is a handsome young man with all of the Lannister line's associated traits: golden hair, bright green eyes, and comely features. He dresses in white, like any member of the Kingsguard when on duty, but he also wears his family colors at other times and carries himself regally, like a king.

Other Kingsguard Members

In addition to Ser Barristan Selmy and Ser Jaime Lannister, five other knights make up the current body of the White Swords.

Ser Boros Blount

"You speak to me thus? You?"

—Ser Boros Blount

Boros is a member of the Kingsguard under Robert's and Joffrey's reign, though he is a poor representative of that fine knightly order. How Blount became a member of the Kingsguard is a bit of a mystery; he is everything a member of the order *shouldn't* be. Most likely, he attained the station due to his loyalty to Queen Cersei and the Lannister family.

Blount is a bully with a mean streak he mostly holds in check. He has no issues abusing the weak or innocent. Unsurprisingly, he is easily cowed by a real threat and is likely to avoid conflict if he thinks he can't win.

Ser Boros Blount is an ugly man, with jowls and a flat face under a head of grey, brittle hair, despite the fact he's only in his forties. He has short, bandy legs and a broad torso.

Ser Meryn Trant

"I shall do whatever His Grace commands."
"As I do," he replied.
"Yes...but you were no true knight, Ser Meryn."

—Ser Meryn Trant and Sansa Stark

Ser Meryn Trant is among those knights appointed by Robert, most likely at Cersei's urging, when he had to fill the ranks of the Kingsguard after the former members were killed during Robert's Rebellion. He has served dutifully and does everything asked of him.

Trant is a man inured to violence. He no longer cares what orders he is given and, in fact, no longer cares about anything. He is willing to commit violence against anyone without a second thought. He is capable of politeness and a courtly demeanor one moment and violence the next. Unlike Boros Blount, Trant isn't cruel; he's just uncaring.

Typical Kingsguard

The following statistics can serve for the minor members of the Kingsguard. You can easily modify the knights' abilities and specialties as needed to reflect the idiosyncrasies of these knights.

Knight of the Kingsguard		Secondary
Abilities		
Agility	3	—
Animal Handling	3	Ride 1B
Athletics	4	—
Awareness	3	—
Endurance	4	—
Fighting	5	Long Blades 1B, Spears 1B
Status	4	Reputation 1B
Will	3	Dedication 1B

Attributes			
Combat Defense	10	Intrigue Defense	9
Health	12	Composure	9

Full Plate: AR 10; AP –3; Bulk 2 (Movement 3 yards)

Longsword	5D+1B	5 damage	
War Lance	5D+1B	7 damage	Bulk 2, Impale, Mounted, Powerful, Slow, Vicious
Large Shield	5D–1D	2 damage	Bulk 1, Defensive +4)

Trant is a physically imposing man, especially in his armor of enameled scales chased with gold. He has dour eyes with bags under them, a wide sour mouth, and a rust-colored beard spotted with grey.

Ser Arys Oakheart

"I was drunk on you. It had been ten years since... I never touched a woman until you, not since I took the white. I never knew what love could be, yet now... I am afraid."
"What would frighten my white knight?"
"I fear for my honor," he said, "and for yours."

—Ser Arys Oakheart and Arianne Martell

Ser Arys Oakheart is a dedicated and competent member of the Kingsguard, the quintessential bodyguard. Oakheart has served as a member of the Kingsguard for over a decade. He distinguished himself as one of the purest knights of the lot, is one of the most skilled with the lance, and even won a tournament on Joffrey's name day in which he rode against other members of the Kingsguard.

Ser Arys is kind and committed to the knightly ideals but is not particularly bright. His decade of service has been exemplary. Ser Arys is a handsome, well-built man with light brown hair. He dresses in the traditional white of the Kingsguard.

Ser Preston Greenfield

"There have always been men who found it easier to speak vows than to keep them," he admitted. Ser Boros Blount was no stranger to the Street of Silk, and Ser Preston Greenfield used to call at a certain draper's house whenever the draper was away, but Arys would not shame his Sworn Brothers by speaking of their failings.

— *A Feast for Crows*

Ser Preston is a stalwart member of the Kingsguard who performs his duties without comment or question. Greenfield joined the Kingsguard under King Robert and has proven to be a solid and reliable addition to their ranks. His lot is most often to attend to the royal family. Greenfield is quiet and dependable, though he's no paragon of virtue, as his ongoing affair with a married woman testifies.

Ser Preston is a dark-haired man who wears the traditional white armor and clothing of the Kingsguard.

Ser Mandon Moore

In the chilly white raiment of the Kingsguard, Ser Mandon Moore looked like a corpse in a shroud. "Her Grace left orders; the council in session was not to be disturbed."

— *A Clash of Kings*

Ser Mandon was originally from the Vale and was brought to King's Landing by Lord Jon Arryn to serve on the Kingsguard after Robert's Rebellion. Moore is a fine member of the order and is regarded by Jaime Lannister as the second most deadly member, behind himself, of course.

Ser Mandon is hard to read and seems to cultivate that characteristic. He is brusque and businesslike, but he hides his motivations from the rest of the world. Despite his inscrutability, he is a passionate man capable of pettiness, duplicity, and violence.

The most outstanding physical traits Ser Mandon possesses are his oddly lifeless, pale grey eyes and a face that never betrays his next move.

Former Members of the Kingsguard

The White Book holds the tales of the brave and noble men who have served the kings of Westeros. What follows are a few of the more notable members to have donned the white cloak.

- **Prince Aemon the Dragonknight:** A member of the Targaryen family, he took his vows when he was seventeen and was known to have wielded a sword named *Dark Sister*. Among his many exploits, he once won a tourney as the Knight of Tears, so he could name his sister the Queen of Love and Beauty in place of the king's mistress. He even championed Queen Naerys's honor against the slanders of her enemies. He was killed defending his brother Aegon IV from assassins from House Toyne. He is among the most famous of the Lord Commanders of the Kingsguard.

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- **Ser Arryk and Erryk:** During the Dance of the Dragons, these twin brothers died on each other's swords as they each fought for a different Targaryen master.
- **Lord Commander Alyn Connington:** A former Lord Commander of the Kingsguard, also known as the Pale Griffon, he was deemed one of the best to have served in this position.
- **Ser Gwayne Corbray:** A member of the Kingsguard during the reign of King Daeron II, he fought in the Blackfyre Rebellion. At the Battle of Redgrass Fields, he faced off against Daemon Blackfyre for nearly an hour before the rebel defeated him, leaving the knight blind and bleeding.
- **Ser Roland Crakehall:** A noble knight who served during the reign of King Daeron the Good.
- **Ser Criston Cole, Kingmaker:** Lord Commander of the Kingsguard during the reign of King Viserys I and King Aegon II. He convinced Aegon to seize the throne from Rhaenyra, Viserys's favored heir. Ser Criston paid for his plotting with his life and the life of his house. Remembered as the Kingmaker, he was one of the greatest and worst of the knights to serve on the Kingsguard.
- **Ser Jonothor Darry:** Another of King Aerys's knights, he fought and died at the Trident during the War of the Usurper. He is remembered for his great honesty.
- **Ser Arthur Dayne, the Sword of the Morning:** Another of the great knights to serve King Aerys, he is remembered to have been the deadliest of his peers. He wielded a greatsword named *Dawn*, a weapon forged from the heart of a fallen star, distinctive for its milky white blade. Arthur Dayne died at the Tower of Joy, slain in single combat with Eddard Stark, though the match was a close thing and Stark might have died had it not been for his friend and companion Howland Reed.
- **Ser Donnel of Duskendale:** A knight of some worth who served on the Kingsguard over a century ago.
- **Ser Duncan the Tall:** Oft regarded as one of the greatest knights to serve on the Kingsguard, Duncan began his life as an orphan in Flea Bottom, eventually became squired to a hedge knight, and became a hedge knight himself on his master's death. After befriending Aegon, who would be remembered as Aegon the Unlikely, Duncan eventually became a member of the Kingsguard and Hand of the King.
- **Ser Gwayne Gaunt:** A member of the Kingsguard during the reign of King Aerys II. He was slain by Ser Symon Hollard when Tywin Lannister and the Kingsguard moved to rescue the king from Lord Denys Darklyn.
- **Ser Harlan Grandison:** A minor member, he is remembered for being Jaime Lannister's predecessor and for dying in his sleep, appropriate enough as his blazon was a sleeping lion.
- **Lord Commander Gerold Hightower:** Known as the White Bull, he was Lord Commander during Aerys II's reign. He died at the Tower of Joy at the hands of Eddard Stark and his companions. He is regarded as one of the greatest knights in the Seven Kingdoms.
- **Prince Lewyn Martell:** A member of the Kingsguard in service to King Aerys II. He died fighting on the Trident.

- **Ser Ryam Redwyne:** A former Lord Commander, he had an exemplary and distinguished service as a member of the Kingsguard, but his life ended in disaster when he was raised to be Hand of the King.
- **Ser Serwyn of the Mirror Shield:** A legendary knight who bore a shield polished to a mirror finish. Many tales, most of which are fantastic, are attributed to this knight, including his saving of Princess Daeryssa from the giants.
- **Ser Lucamore Strong:** Also known as Lucamore the Lusty, this dishonorable knight secretly had three wives and sired a number of children. For his treason, he lost his manhood and spent the rest of his days on the Wall.
- **Ser Oswell Whent:** Another of Aerys's knights, he died at the Tower of Joy. He is remembered for his black humor.
- **Ser Terrence Toyne:** An infamous member of the Kingsguard, he was executed for his affair with King Aegon IV's mistress, which ultimately led to his brothers' ill-advised assassination attempt on Prince Aemon.
- **Ser Willem Wylde:** A knight who served during the reign of King Daeron the Good.

NOTABLE SERVANTS

King's Landing and the Red Keep are populated by a vast number of people who play important roles, some more significant than others. It's impossible to give a complete list of the characters, but here are a few that bear mentioning because of the parts they play or because of their relationships with other characters.

Lancel Lannister

"Piss on the both of you. Pick it up. Don't just stand their gaping, Lancel, pick it up!"

—King Robert Baratheon

Squire to the king at age fifteen, Lancel Lannister was not prepared for the rages of his Grace.

Lancel Lannister is nephew to Lord Tywin Lannister, the eldest son of a younger son. An attractive and well-formed youth, he is dependent on the power of his family's name to earn him a place of honor, having no title or lands in his own right. His cousin, Queen Cersei Lannister, insisted her husband take Lancel as a squire. Lancel had little martial experience prior to this appointment and learned under King Robert's rough voice the basics of tourney combat. If King Robert bore Lancel no particular love, he also bore him no specific ill will. Aware his fortunes were more tied to the goodwill of Cersei than King Robert, Lancel is dutiful in reporting the king's activities to the queen and doing her bidding in minor manners.

Lancel wishes to be a great knight but lacks the conviction of character to steer through the plots and poisons of court life at his tender age.

Lancel is a handsome man, with a trim form, sandy hair, and bright emerald eyes. He attempts to appear older and more experienced by growing a mustache, but the result is never more than a wisp of light hair that does little for his sense of maturity.

Moon Boy

Moon Boy is King Robert's royal fool, and is skilled and amusing at his role. However, he often makes comments that are humorous and wise at the same time, which makes some wonder just how much of a simpleton Moon Boy really is. His position at court gives him free access to just about every place in the Red Keep, so it's very likely he knows a lot of very valuable information if one were able to get it out of him.

Ser Ilyn Payne

Ilyn Payne once served Lord Tywin Lannister as his captain of the Hand's guard. Fourteen years ago, King Aerys II had Payne's tongue cut out for boasting it was the Hand who truly ruled the Seven Kingdoms. After Robert took the throne, he raised Payne to King's Justice—or executioner, and ever since, he has been a dour and sinister presence in the king's court.

Payne is a grim and joyless man who only finds solace in his work—and not much at that. Appropriately enough, Payne looks like death. His face is pockmarked, and he has deep-set eyes and hollow cheeks. What little hair he has left is long and grey, and it sprouts from above his ears. He wears iron-grey chainmail over boiled leather and carries a greatsword on his back.

Ser Aron Santagar

Ser Aron Santagar, of House Santagar, serves Robert as the master-at-arms. A vain but honest man, he is part of Robert's inner circle of companions and advisors. He often accompanies Robert when he travels.

OTHER CHARACTERS

In addition, the Red Keep is home to a number of other characters of varying status and importance.

Rennifer Longwaters

As chief gaoler of the dungeons, Longwaters rarely emerges from the depths of the Red Keep. He claims to have royal blood in his veins, but nothing about his bearing or manner suggests this is true.

Ormond of Oldtown

As the royal harper of the Red Keep, Ormond is often in attendance at the king's court.

Ser Ilyn Payne	Middle-Aged Fighter	
Abilities		
Agility	4	Quickness 1B
Athletics	5	Strength 1B
Awareness	2	Notice 1B
Endurance	5	—
Fighting	4	Long Blades 2B
Persuasion	3	Intimidate 2B
Status	4	—
Will	3	Dedication 1B

Attributes			
Combat Defense	11	Intrigue Defense	8
Health	15	Composure	9
Destiny Point	1		
Benefits: Armor Mastery, Long Blade Fighter I, Sinister			
Drawbacks: Mute			
Mail: AR 6; AP –3; Bulk 1			
Greatsword	4D+2B	9 damage	Powerful, Slow, Two-handed, Unwieldy, Vicious

Thoros of Myr

The Red Priest

A fat red priest who hails from Myr, Thoros is an irreverent follower of the Lord of Light and spends most of his time drinking with Robert and his other companions. As the youngest child of eight, his father gave him to the Red Temple. There, he proved a reluctant servant, going through the prayers and spells as required, but he delighted in raiding the kitchens and bedding servant girls. His gift for tongues and disruptive presence saw the Red Temple dispatch him for the Seven Kingdoms, where he would serve at the king's court, in the hopes of converting King Aerys.

Thoros is a skilled warrior and often participates in tournaments and battles, famous for his flaming sword and flapping red robes. Thoros fought for Robert during the Greyjoy Rebellion and proved his worth at Pyke, being one of the first to enter the castle once the stonethrowers battered down the walls.

Jalabhar Xho

Prince of the Red Flower Vale

An exotic member of the king's court, Jalabhar Xho is an exile from the Summer Isles and is one of Robert's favored companions. He wears a cape of green and scarlet feathers, and he has the telltale dark coloring found in all Summer Islanders.

Thoros of Myr	Middle-Aged Fighter	
Abilities		
Agility	3	Quickness 1B
Athletics	4	—
Endurance	5	Resilience 2B, Stamina 1B
Fighting	4	Long Blades 1B
Healing	3	—
Knowledge	3	Education 1B
Language (Common)	3	—
Language (Others)	3	—
Will	3	—

Attributes			
Combat Defense	9	Intrigue Defense	6
Health	15	Composure	9
Destiny Points	2		
Benefits: Berserker, Fury, Lucky			
Drawbacks: Bound to the Bottle			
Robes: AR 1			
Flaming Longsword	4D+1B	5 damage, 1 fire damage	

Banners of King's Landing

The minor noble houses around King's Landing fall under the rule of whichever house controls King's Landing. For most of the history of the Seven Kingdoms, it was House Targaryen, but after Robert's Rebellion, it became House Baratheon. Because these bannerhouses are so close to the seat of power for the kingdom, they have produced a number of important people over the years, including Hands of the King, members of the Kingsguard, and servants or retainers for some of the more important houses.

House Blackfyre

Ranking	Extinct
Arms	A three-headed black dragon breathing black fire on a red field

House Blackfyre included the descendants of Daemon Blackfyre and plunged the Seven Kingdoms into a terrible war known as the Blackfyre Rebellion. Although defeated, the Blackfyre family continued to plague the Seven Kingdoms until the male lines was finally stamped out in the War of the Ninepenny Kings.

House Blount

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A red bend sinister between two black porcupines on a green field

House Blount is located in the crownlands, which were under the direct control of House Targaryen before they were forced from the Seven

Kingdoms. A noble family sworn to King's Landing, House Blount owes its significance to Ser Boros Blount, who serves on King Robert's Kingsguard.

House Bogges

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Crackclaw Point

One of many houses to lay claim to the lands of Crackclaw Point, they fought for Rhaegar Targaryen at the Battle of the Trident.

House Brune of Brownhollow

Ranking	Landed
Castle	Brownhollow
Lands	Crackclaw Point
Arms	A bear paw, brown on white, with a double tressure brown

The Brunes of Brownhollow are a lesser, poorer branch of the Brunes of Dyer's Den. Ser Bennard Brune, the Knight of Brownhollow, is the head of this house. Like many of Crackclaw Point, the Brunes have little love for the Baratheon dynasty and remain Targaryen loyalists.

Ser Lothor Brune

A freerider and minor member of this lesser branch, what Lothor Brune lacks in wealth and status, he more than makes up for with his skill at arms. He wears drab and unadorned armor, and when not fighting in tournaments, he works as a freerider and sellsword. Brune is a small, stocky man with a square face, squashed nose, and a mat of tangled grey hair. He doesn't speak much, but then he doesn't need to in his line of work.

House Brune of Dyre Den

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Dyre Den

The greater branch of the Brune family, House Brune rules their lands from Dyre Den, a small castle with three crooked towers atop a wind-carved cliff overlooking the narrow sea. Eustace Brune is lord of this house, and he has a number of sons and grandsons, of whom most are or are near adulthood.

House Buckwell

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Antlers
Arms	A rack of golden antlers on vair
Motto	Pride and Purpose

A minor house not far from King's Landing, the only member of this family that is known is Jarmen Buckwell, who now serves on the Night's Watch, presumably for his part against King Robert in the War of the Usurper.

House Byrch

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Quarterly, gyronny white and black, a silver axe on green

A house sworn to the Iron Throne, Ser Balman Byrch and his wife Lady Falyse Byrch regularly attend the king's court, though Falyse more so than her husband. Rumors suggest Lady Byrch is barren and that her husband spends more time with young virgins than he does his wife.

House Bywater

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Fretty blue on white, three silver fish on blue chief

A small house in the crownlands, it is best known for Ser Jacelyn Bywater, who attained knighthood for his heroism and courage during the Greyjoy Rebellion.

House Cargyll

Ranking	Extinct
Arms	A golden goose on bendy sinister black and red

Once an established house, the Cargylls died out sometime after the reign of King Daeron II.

House Cave

Ranking	Minor House

One of the many houses located on Crackclaw Point, House Cave is sworn to the Iron Throne. One of the house ancestors served in the Kingsguard.

House Chelsted

Ranking	Major
Arms	Per bend green and white, a crossed spiked mace and silver dagger

This house may have been entirely removed from the political landscape in the last twenty-five to fifty years. Lord Qarlton Chelsted was the most well-known member of the house because he served as Hand for King Aerys II during his final days. It was Qarlton who learned of Aerys's plan to burn King's Landing to the ground with wildfire if Robert managed to claim the city. Lord Qarlton resigned his position when the king wouldn't abandon the plan and was burned to death by Aerys shortly thereafter.

House Chyttering

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Three golden bendlets enhanced on white

House Chyttering holds lands near King's Landing but has long held close ties to House Baratheon. The head of the house is Lord Chyt-

HOUSE BUCKWELL

HOUSE CHELSTED

HOUSE CRESSEY

HOUSE GAUNT

tering, and he has at least one teenaged son named Lucos, also called Little Lucos.

House Crabb

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Whispers (formerly)

Another house of Crackclaw Point, House Crabb long ago ruled a mighty fortress known as the Whispers, but their castle has stood in ruins for at least a thousand years. The Crabbs, as a family, still haunt the Point—Dick Crabb (Nimble Dick) is the best known, though they are far diminished from their storied roots. Indeed, House Crabb produced no less than three knights who served on the Kingsguard. One tale involves Ser Clarence Crabb, a massive knight so large he rode an aurochs into battle. According to legend, Ser Crabb fought and defeated dragons, wizards, and knights, claiming their heads and delivering them to his wood witch wife, who could tease out their secrets in whispers, hence the name of their castle.

House Cressey

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Seven silver coins upon a red bend sinister, between two helmets, silver on blue

House Cressey is a small noble family of the crownlands.

House Darklyn

Ranking	Extinct
Lands	Duskendale
Castle	Dun Fort (formerly)
Arms	Fusily black and gold, seven white escutcheons upon a red tierce

In ages past, long before the Andals crossed the narrow sea, the Darklyn family ruled their lands as kings. Eventually, their holdings were swallowed up by another kingdom, then again by the Andals, and later by the Targaryens. Through it all, the Darklyns ruled Duskendale and its environs. Their long history came to an abrupt end when Lord Darklyn, at the behest of his Myrish wife remembered as the Lace Serpent, convinced him to rise up against the Iron Throne. On his orders, Aerys II was kidnapped and taken to Duskendale. There, Lord Darklyn held the king, all while Lord Tywin Lannister mustered his host just outside the walls of the city. In the end, Ser Barristan Selmy brought out the king, and with his freedom, Darklyn was no more. Each member of the house was put to the sword or cruelly tortured to death, and the Darklyn lands were bestowed upon the loyal House Rykker.

House Edgerton

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Quartered, black and white half-fusily, a wheel of flame on indigo

House Edgerton is a small noble family of the crownlands.

House Farring

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Per pale purple and white, two knights combatant with swords, counter-charged

House Farring is a noble house that managed to secure some notoriety when Lord Walder Frey took Annara Farring as his seventh wife, and the pair added six children to the Walder line. House Farring enjoys close ties to the Baratheon family and has even given a son, Bryen Farring, to serve as squire to Stannis Baratheon. Ser Gilbert Farring is a known knight in these lands, and Ser Godry Farring counts himself as one of Lady Selyse's men.

House Follard

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Gyronny of twelve red and white; in a gold canton, a two-peaked fool's cap of red and white with silver bells
Motto	None so Wise

House Follard is a minor noble family of the crownlands.

House Gaunt

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Three black lances upright on pink, between black flanches

A minor family of the crownlands, House Gaunt has the distinction of Ser Gwayne Gaunt's service in the Kingsguard.

House Hardy

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Cracklaw Point

A minor house formerly sworn to House Targaryen, the only members of note are the late Lord Lucifer Hardy, who was lord of the house, and a Hardy who once served in the Kingsguard.

House Harte

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Three red hart's heads caboshed on a white bend on vair

Another minor house of the crownlands, Ser Elwood Harte is a known knight in service to the crown.

House Hayford

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Green fretty over gold, a green pale wavy

House Hayford maintains a castle only about a half-day's ride to the north of King's Landing along the kingsroad. At one time, a lord of Hayford was a stalwart and skilled Hand to King Daeron II Targaryen. He died during the Blackfyre Rebellion.

House Hogg

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Sow's Horn

A minor family in the crownlands, Ser Roger Hogg serves as the Knight of Sow's Horn.

House Hollard

Ranking	Extinct
Castle	None
Arms	Barry red and pink, three golden crowns on a blue chief

House Hollard was once a house sworn to House Darklyn of Duskendale, and since the time when the Darklyns ruled as kings, the Hollards were among their greatest allies. House Hollard was attainted and extinguished for their part in the Defiance. Their lands were forfeited, their castle torn down, and their names were stripped of their nobility. The only survivor of this family is Ser Dontos Hollard, also called Dontos the Red, who is a famed drunkard and hanger-on at King's Landing.

House Kettleblack

Ranking	Hedge
Lands	None
Castle	None
Arms	A black kettle on red, a border of orles

A family of hedge knights and sellswords, they have no holdings in the crownlands, though they are often found in the service of various lords. Oswell Kettleblack is the patriarch of the family, and though old, he possesses great strength and a fierce voice. He has at least three sons, each more ambitious than the last: Osmund, Osfryd, and Osney.

House Langward

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Per fess undy; a crown of white stars on burgundy above black

House Langward is a minor family in the crownlands.

House Mallery

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Six white mullets, 3-2-1, on violet

A minor family of which little is known, it is currently led by Lord Lothar Mallery, a regular presence at the court of King Robert.

House Manning

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A red sea lion between two black pallets on white

House Manning is a minor family in the crownlands.

HOUSE HARTE

HOUSE MALLERY

HOUSE RYKKER

HOUSE STAUNTON

House Massey

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Massey's Hook
Castle	Stonedance
Arms	A triple spiral, red, green, and blue on white

House Massey rules a long peninsula called Massey's Hook that stretches out from the mainland south of Dragonstone and northeast of the kingswood. There, they command a castle named Stonedance. Wallace Massey is a steward in the Night's Watch and squire to Ser Denys Mallister, while Ser Justin Massey is a sworn man to Lady Selyse.

House Pyle

Ranking	Minor
Arms	An iron greathelm on white

House Pyle is a minor family in the crownlands.

House Pyne

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Crackclaw Point

House Pyne is one of the many families to hold lands on Cracklaw Point. A member of House Pyne once served on the Kingsguard.

House Rambton

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A white ram's head with golden horns on red

House Rambton is a minor family with close ties to House Baratheon. Ser Hubard Rambton is one of Stannis's loyal men, known for his great piety. He has three grown sons, each equally devoted to the Faith.

House Rollingford

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Six roundels fountain, 3-2-1, on grey

House Rollingford is a minor family in the crownlands.

House Rosby

Ranking	Major
Castle	Rosby
Arms	Three red chevronels on ermine

House Rosby's lands and castle lies just north of King's Landing, and Lord Rosby regularly attends court. His daughter, Bethany, was the sixth wife of Lord Walder Frey, with whom she produced five heirs. Lord Gyles Rosby is an old and sickly man and is just another in a long line of fragile lords. In his case, he is plagued with a cough, but his frequent coughing does not deny him his place in the court of King Robert. His family is wealthy and powerful enough to employ the service of Maester Melwys.

House Rykker

Ranking	Major
Lands	Duskendale
Castle	Dun Fort
Arms	Two black warhammers crossed on a white saltire on blue

House Rykker was a beneficiary of the scheming and duplicity of House Darklyn, in a way. After the Defiance of Duskendale, during which House Darklyn kidnapped King Aerys, the Darklyn lands went to House Rykker.

House Staunton

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Rook's Rest
Arms	Two black wings upon a white fess on checkered black and grey

House Staunton is a minor family of the crownlands.

House Stokeworth

Ranking	Major
Castle	Stokeworth
Arms	A white lamb holding a golden goblet on green
Motto	Proud to be Faithful

House Stokeworth holds lands and a castle north of King's Landing. Lady Tanda Stokeworth is a fixture at King's Landing, along with her daughter Lady Lollys. Tanda has an elder daughter, Falyse, who's married to Lord Byrch of House Byrch. Her family employs a plump, ginger-headed maester named Frenken.

House Thorne

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A silver flail on red within a black border rayonne

House Thorne was a noted supporter of House Targaryen during the War of the Usurper. Alliser Thorne, current master-at-arms at Castle Black, was one of the most ardent knights in Aerys II's service, and when the war was lost, Lord Tywin Lannister forced him to take the black. Since the end of the war, House Thorne is a small and insignificant house in the crownlands.

House Wendwater

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Wendwater
Arms	A green engrailed pall, inverted on white, dividing three trees, green, red, and bare
Motto	For All Seasons

House Wendwater controls lands along the river Wendwater, a waterway inside the kingswood and southeast of King's Landing.

Chapter 4: Dragonstone

Dragonstone has a long and varied history, beginning when the Targaryens first set foot in Westeros up to its occupation by Stannis Baratheon. This chapter delves into the history of Dragonstone and its residents. Although they have long since fled Dragonstone, the few important surviving members of the Targaryens are covered in depth along with a summary of the family's origins, significant historical figures, and the impact the house as a whole has had on Westeros and the rest of the world—both historically and in contemporary times.

Secondly, this chapter deals with the branch of House Baratheon represented by Stannis Baratheon, brother to Robert Baratheon the Usurper. The Baratheons currently hold Dragonstone as part of the spoils of Robert's conquest and the overthrow of House Targaryen. While this house doesn't have a history quite as long and (in)famous as that of House Targaryen, it is significant and commands the loyalty of a number of bannermen and other "interesting" allies, notably Ser Davos Seaworth, "The Onion Knight," and the Lady Melisandre, known as "the Red Woman," a foreign priestess of R'hllor, the Lord of Light.

History of the Targaryens

The origins of House Targaryen lie in ancient Valyria. Now in ruins, Valyria was once a powerful nation that ruled much of the eastern continent. Valyrian kings counted dragons among their forces and commanded wizards who were able to use their magic to work stone as if it were clay. This mighty nation built roads and cities that have survived to modern times, even though Valyria itself was destroyed by a Doom of which few details exist.

Dragonstone, home of the Targaryens, was the westernmost outpost of the Valyrians. After the fall of Valyria, it was their home for two centuries before Aegon the Conqueror, founder of the modern Targaryen dynasty, invaded Westeros and established his rule. Much of the Targaryen's traditions and beliefs come from their heritage—either from Valyria or as exemplified by Aegon.

"King Jaehaerys once told me that madness and greatness are two sides of the same coin. Every time a new Targaryen is born, he said, the gods toss the coin in the air, and the world holds its breath to see how it will land."

—Ser Barristan Selmy

As the progenitor of the line, Aegon is regarded with great reverence, and his life was seen as a blueprint to many of the Targaryens who followed in his footsteps as kings and conquerors. Since it was common in ancient Valyria for brother and sister to wed, Aegon adopted, or most likely continued, the custom in order to keep the bloodline pure and uncorrupted by unworthiness. Because of this practice, the Targaryens have a distinctive appearance, indigo, lilac, or violet eyes and silver-gold or platinum hair. In addition, this inbreeding gives family members an unpredictable nature. Some Targaryens are good and powerful leaders, whereas others are mad, driven to commit insane acts or embrace outrageous beliefs that eventually lead to a spectacular downfall.

Aegon's legend really began when he took his two sisters, Rhaenys and Visenya, to be his wives and started the line of the Targaryens. In fact, the house symbol of a three-headed dragon represents Aegon and his two sister-wives. With his sisters at his side, Aegon led his forces out from Dragonstone to claim most of Westeros and unite it under the banner of the Dragonlords. The old kings of the Seven Kingdoms fell before the onslaught. They might have had a chance against traditional forces, but Aegon and his brides rode dragons they'd named after the old gods of Valyria: Balerion, Vhaghar, and Meraxes. By the time the war was over, Aegon ruled from the Wall in the Far North to the Dornish Marches in the south, and from Dragonstone in the east all the way to the islands along the west coast. The only people to escape the conquest were the Dornishmen in the far south of the continent.

The first city Aegon established was King's Landing, which became the traditional seat of power in the Seven Kingdoms. Aegon had Balerion the Black Dread, one of his dragons, melt down the swords of the defeated kings to build his throne. It took fifty-nine days to hammer together the Iron Throne, and all the kings of the Seven Kingdoms have used it since. It is an uncomfortable monstrosity covered with spikes, jagged edges, and twisted blades that make sitting back in it impossible. Aegon purposely had it made that way because he believed a king should never sit easy on a throne.

After Aegon and his sisters came a long line of great and mad leaders, all of whom held the nation together, though some were more successful than others. The king that stands out from the rest, at least in terms of success, is Daeron II also called Daeron the Good. He was responsible for bringing Dorne into the Seven Kingdoms. Two hundred years after Aegon founded the kingdom, Daeron II married the Dornish princess Myriah and married his sister to the reigning Prince of Dorne. With those two marriages, Daeron succeeded in uniting all of the lands south of the Wall—though part of the agreement stated that Dornish law would always rule in Dorne. In his own time, Daeron was criticized by some as physically unimpressive and possessing little martial talent; he was viewed as a man who surrounded himself with maesters, septons, and singers.

Aegon IV the Unworthy wasn't a bad king, but he was more interested in romantic conquests than anything else. He fathered an impressive number of bastards on noble and peasant women alike, whether they were married or not. He is probably best known for legitimizing his bastard son Daemon Blackfyre. This plunged the Seven Kingdoms into conflict and war for generations, as Blackfyre's descendants believed they held the right of kingship as well as *Blackfyre*, the Valyrian steel sword that Aegon the Conqueror and all of the Targaryen kings after him had carried.

The Targaryen Dynasty

Date	Ruler
1–37	Aegon I, the Conqueror, the Dragon
37–42	Aenys I
42–48	Maegor I, the Cruel
48–103	Jaehaerys I, the Old King, the Conciliator
103–129	Viserys I
129–131	Aegon II
131–157	Aegon III, the Dragonbane, the Unlucky
157–161	Daeron I, the Young Dragon, the Boy King
161–171	Baelor I, the Beloved, the Blessed
171–172	Viserys II
172–184	Aegon IV, the Unworthy
184–209	Daeron II, Good King Daeron
209–221	Aerys I
221–233	Maekar I
233–259	Aegon V, the Unlikely
259–262	Jaehaerys II
262–283	Aerys II, the Mad King

There are many other mad Targaryen kings who failed in their role as a leader of men, including the devout Baelor the Blessed. He once commanded proud Lord Belgrave to wash the ulcerous feet of a beggar, and Baelor locked his sisters away in the Maidenvault out of fear that the sight of them would lead him to impure thoughts. Baelor is also remembered for praying over a cache of dragon eggs for half a year in hopes they'd hatch (they didn't), and he may have even fasted to death. Were it not for his uncle, Baelor might have driven the kingdom into ruin.

Maegor the Cruel (son of Aegon the Conqueror) holds a special place in Targaryen history as one of the harshest and most murderous kings. He finished the work his father started on the Red Keep, and it was he who made sure that secret escape routes were built into the tower and added four dungeon levels to it—the lowest level was built specifically for torture. Once it was completed, Maegor rounded up everyone who'd had a hand in its construction and had them killed, ensuring only the Targaryens would know the Red Keep's secrets—especially that portion of the Red Keep used as the living quarters for the royal family, a structure known as Maegor's Holdfast. During his rule, Maegor had three Grand Maesters killed.

Over their long history as rulers, the Dragonlords have only ever faced two serious threats to their rule. One was the self-created threat of the Blackfyre Rebellion. The other was the one that ended their reign: the War of the Usurper.

The War of the Usurper came about through the actions of Mad King Aerys II and his son Prince Rhaegar. When Rhaegar took an interest in Lyanna Stark, and later the two of them went missing, her friends and

future husband's supporters rode to King's Landing to demand she be turned over to them. Not one to take orders from his underlings, King Aerys let his madness get the better of him, and had the young nobles arrested, charged with treason, and then sent for their fathers. When they arrived, Aerys killed them and their sons, and sent word to Lord Jon Arryn of the Eyrie to take the heads of Eddard Stark and Robert Baratheon and present them to his king. Instead of complying, Lord Arryn and young Lords Stark and Baratheon joined forces in defiance of the king, determined to remove the Mad King and his family from power.

The armies of the three rebels fought a running battle against Aerys's forces. They were so successful the king sent his son, Rhaegar, to put them down. They met at a ford in the Trident where Robert finally defeated Rhaegar with a blow from his warhammer. After that battle, things degenerated even faster for the king.

Back in King's Landing, Aerys closed up the city in order to prepare for the end. He'd always loved the pyromancers and their alchemical wildfire, and he'd commanded them to be ready to set the city afire on his word. Before this could happen, Tywin Lannister, the former Hand of the King, marched up to the gates and appeared to be offering his aid, but once he and his forces were inside, they turned on the king and sacked the city. Aerys fled to the throne room and the protection of the Kingsguard. There, he commanded his Hand to send word to the pyromancers to set the city ablaze, and he told Jaime Lannister, Tywin's son, to go out and kill Tywin to prove his loyalty. Instead, Jaime killed the Hand before he could deliver the message and then turned on his king, earning the nickname the Kingslayer.

When Tywin arrived to find the king dead at his feet he knew the day was won and that the Dragonlords were defeated—but they wouldn't be finished until they were *all* dead. Tywin sent his most loyal (and barbaric) knights to kill the rest of the royal family: Rhaegar's wife, Princess Elia of Dorne; the young Princess Rhaenys, who was just a child; and Prince Aegon, who was a mere infant.

Lannister's men were unable to find Aerys's pregnant sister-wife, Rhaella, or their young son, Prince Viserys, for they managed to escape to Dragonstone. There, Rhaella died a few months later giving birth to a daughter, Princess Daenerys. Still pursuing the surviving Targaryens, Robert's brother, Stannis Baratheon, and his fleet took Dragonstone when the garrison there decided to surrender and turn over the children without a fight. Unfortunately, Ser Willem Darry had already spirited them away to the Free Cities.

In the Free Cities, Viserys and Daenerys were raised by Ser Willem Darry until he died years later; then, they were forced to survive on the streets where Viserys earned the nickname the Beggar King after selling his mother's crown. They moved around the Free Cities for years until they were finally taken in by Illyrio Mopatis, a merchant of Pentos who recognized their worth and protected them from harm. Illyrio has currently arranged a marriage between the now thirteen-year-old Daenerys to a Dothraki *khal*, or leader, named Drogo, and in return, Drogo has promised ten thousand men to Viserys to retake the Seven Kingdoms and restore the Targaryens to power.

DRAGONSTONE

King's Landing is the traditional seat of royal power in the kingdoms, and Dragonstone is the home of the crown prince; as such, it has always been a place of interest to anyone who follows the ebb and flow of political power. As the ancestral home of the Targaryens and the place from which Aegon the Conqueror set forth to take control of Westeros, Dragonstone has always held an important place in the political and mental landscape of the Seven Kingdoms. Appropriately, Dragonstone is unlike any other structure in the Seven Kingdoms. Although it doesn't sport as large a population as King's Landing, isn't as physically imposing as the Wall, and doesn't command as many bannermen as other holdings, its perceived importance and unique construction make it stand out like nothing else.

From a distance, Dragonstone is a small but solidly built citadel on the face of an active volcano, the Dragonmont, that vents grey steam and smoke, casting a haze over the island. A small fishing village sits outside its walls, surrounded by a stormy, rock-filled sea. Upon closer inspection, the shadowy shape of the fortress becomes more solid but no less foreboding. Constructed as it is of black stone (some say it was built using the stones of Hell) and assembled by the Valyrians using old magic to join the stones together and work them into fantastic shapes, Dragonstone appears to be infested with creatures of legend, including gargoyles, hellhounds, griffons, wyverns, demons, and dragons. All of these grotesqueries run at least twelve feet in height and replace the crenellations that would normally festoon the walls.

Its great towers were made to resemble dragons stretching high above the black walls in order to make the entire structure seem more fearsome. The Sea Dragon Tower gazes out at the sea from behind the

walls of the citadel, and the Windwyrm arches into the sky and seems to scream defiantly. Even the interior of the buildings are decorated with dragons. Small dragons frame some gates, and one enters the Great Hall through the gigantic open mouth of a great dragon. The smoke and heat of the kitchens pour out through the nostrils of the curled up dragon they're built to resemble. Draconic claws reach out of the walls in order to hold torches, wings enfold and surround the smithy and armory, and tails stretch from one building to the next in order to make arches, bridges, and stairs.

Inside the thick exterior walls are an outer bailey and gallery lined with arched windows, training fields, and enough room to fit at least three thousand men, as well as middle and inner walls secured with black iron gates. At the center of the fortress is the keep of Dragonstone, a round building called the Stone Drum because its walls shake and rumble with the storms that often rage outside.

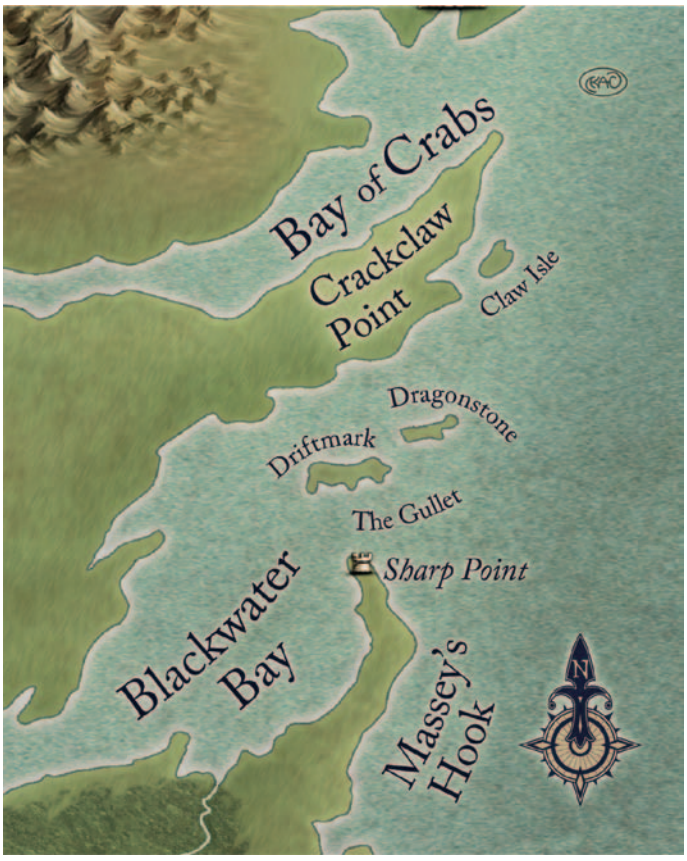
From the outside, the Stone Drum is a plain building with little decoration and few windows. Inside, in addition to its many other rooms, is the Chamber of the Painted Table—a great round room with four narrow windows, one at each of the four cardinal points. In the middle of the chamber is a huge table carved to resemble Westeros. Aegon the Conqueror commanded the table be built and used it to plan his conquest of Westeros before he set out. It is impressive, being more than fifty feet long, almost twenty feet wide at its widest, and less than four feet wide at its narrowest. Its edges mimic the coastline of Westeros, and the interior is painted with the rivers, mountains, castles, cities, lakes, and forests of the Seven Kingdoms—but none of the kingdoms' borders. Off to the side of the table, where Dragonstone would be, sits a single, raised chair so that the lord of Dragonstone may survey his lands.

Dragonstone also contains a sept with carved statues dedicated to the Seven. These idols are carved out of the masts of the ships that carried the first Targaryens to Westeros from Valyria. Over the centuries, the idols have been painted numerous times, gilded, silvered, and inlaid with jewels: the Crone has eyes of pearl, the Father a gilded beard, and the Stranger, for some reason, looks more like an animal than a man. Aegon came to the Sept to pray the evening before he set out to conquer the Seven Kingdoms.

Aegon's Garden lies through an arch named the Dragon's Tail. It is a pleasant, peaceful place that smells of pine and has tall dark trees all around, as well as wild roses, enormous thorny hedges, and a small bog with cranberries.

The passages beneath Dragonstone have smooth, stony walls that grow warmer the farther down one travels due to their proximity to the Dragonmont. While rumors persist of secret passages that lead from the fortress to the obsidian-lined tunnels of the volcano, the only passages people know of for sure are the ones that lead to the cells beneath Dragonstone. The dungeons are dank, windowless, and dreadful, but they are also much warmer than one might normally expect from a storm-tossed island like Dragonstone.

Dragonstone's relative isolation has been both a strength and weakness in the past. Whereas the Targaryens could reach the isle by air with their dragons, others can only do so by sea. This makes piracy and blockades potential concerns for the Lord of Dragonstone, and good reasons for maintaining a strong fleet, both near the isle itself, and in the area of Blackwater Bay.



OTHER ISLANDS & LANDS

Most of the houses sworn to Dragonstone control the islands sprinkled in the narrow sea or along the coast of the mainland.

Claw Isle

This small island stands off the coast of Crackclaw Point in the narrow sea. It is the seat of House Celtigar.

Driftmark

Driftmark is an island of considerable size, equal to that of Dragonstone. It is the ancestral seat of House Velaryon.

Massey's Hook

This long peninsula is home to Stonedance, the ancestral castle and holdings of House Massey.

Sharp Point

Sharp Point is the castle of House Bar Emmon. It stands at the end of the southern peninsula bounding Blackwater Bay.

HOUSE TARGARYEN

Ranking	Exiled
Lands	None
Castle	None
Arms	A red three-headed dragon breathing flame on black
Motto	Fire and Blood

House Targaryen built and ruled the Seven Kingdoms uninterrupted for nearly three hundred years, withstanding rebellions, plague, civil war, and the death of the dragons with which they'd forged the empire. The Targaryens had always set themselves apart from the rest of the noble houses of Westeros, and Targaryen kings claimed to not only be Lord of the Seven Kingdoms, but also King of the Andals, the Rhoynar, and the First Men, as well as Protectors of the Realm. In addition, because they trace their origins to the Freehold of Valyria, they also claim to have the blood of dragons in their veins—a claim no other house can make.

Given the legendary achievements of Aegon the Conqueror and his sisters, most ruling members of the house found it difficult, if not impossible, to live up to the name. In some cases, they would sit back and do very little to merit mention in the history of the realm, while in other cases they pursued a particular goal with monomaniacal glee. In most instances, this vigorous approach worked for being remembered, but it wasn't conducive to being regarded as a good ruler. Kings like Maegor the Cruel, Baelor the Blessed, and Mad King Aerys are all well known for their madness but not well loved. It was this madness that led to the end of three hundred years of Targaryen rule—and nearly caused the extinction of the entire family line.

Because of their illustrious history, members of House Targaryen are prideful, even going so far as to place themselves above the laws of the gods. Nowhere was this clearer than in their practice of marrying blood to blood, like their Valyrian ancestors had. No doubt, this inbreeding served to reinforce the madness that naturally runs in their blood, and it is said every Targaryen is bound for either greatness or madness.

The Targaryens were deposed and run out of Westeros on pain of death to any who might return, even children. House Targaryen no longer has any lands, resources, bannermen, or support among the common people in Westeros. Some people, however, privately believe they and the Seven Kingdoms would be better off if the Targaryens were still in control, or at least returned to power. So far, this belief hasn't resulted in much direct support for the exiled Targaryen children, but that may change if they attempt to return to Westeros. In fact, they've benefited more indirectly from honorable men, such as Jon Arryn, who counseled against sending assassins for them when they were found alive in the Free Cities.

What lies ahead for House Targaryen remains to be seen, for the exiles have nearly exhausted their meager fortunes, have sold all they can sell, and have run out of favors from those sympathetic to their cause. Assassins lurk in every shadow, and little birds report their movements to the Iron Throne, making the prospect of assembling an army capable of retaking the Seven Kingdoms unlikely at best.

Viserys Targaryen	Young Adult Schemer	
Abilities		
Cunning	3	Memory 1B
Deception	3	—
Knowledge	4	—
Language (Common)	4	—
Language (High Valyrian)	4	—
Language (Free Cities Dialects)	3	—
Persuasion	3	Intimidate 2B
Status	3	Breeding 3B
Will	3	—

Attributes			
Combat Defense	6	Intrigue Defense	8
Health	6	Composure	9
Destiny Points	1		

Benefits: Blood of Valyria, Worldly

Drawbacks: Cruel Madness, Nemesis (Robert Baratheon), Outcast, Supreme Arrogance

Longsword	2D	3 damage

Viserys Targaryen

The Beggar King

"Ours is the house of the dragon. The fire is in our blood."

—Viserys Targaryen

Poor, doomed, ambitious, useless Viserys. As the last male heir to House Targaryen, Viserys is a poor inheritor, an unstable youth with more ambition than sense. Dimly remembering his life before exile, Viserys clings to his past and sees his exile as an intolerable setback. Thus, everything he does, he does to regain the throne. Unfortunately, his arrogance and madness have done him few favors, and he has very nearly run out of options; he must now rely on those who would use him for their own ends.

History

Viserys was just a boy when his house crumbled beneath the ferocious assault of Robert Baratheon and his allies. As the armies converged on King's Landing, his mother, Queen Rhaella, and a cadre of valiant and loyal knights spirited him to Dragonstone, where they would wait out the war. It was clear Dragonstone was no longer safe, for Aerys was dead and the war was over. Ser Willem Darry, a sworn sword to the Iron Throne, bundled up Viserys and the newborn babe Daenerys, whose

mother died birthing her, and carried the heirs across the narrow sea to take refuge in the Free Cities.

The aging knight raised and cared for the children as best he could, but when he finally died, the children had nothing and no one, leaving the pair virtually alone in an uncertain world. Viserys was left to care for a sister he hated for killing his mother, all while seeking the means to reclaim what he believed was rightfully his. Viserys drifted from sympathetic house to sympathetic house, selling all he owned, including his mother's crown, to make ends meet, but in time, they had nothing left and no friends.

A ray of hope shone in a master merchant named Illyrio Mopatis. An ambitious man in his own right, he plucked the children from their impoverished lives and installed them into his own house, where he plied the Beggar King with promises of victory, wealth, and the Iron Throne. Mopatis believes and has nearly convinced Viserys that the only chance the Beggar King has of conquering the Seven Kingdoms is to cement a pact with the Dothraki. If Viserys would consent to wedding his young sister to the *khal*, Viserys would gain an army of savage warriors to support his bid to seize Westeros. That Viserys would even consider sullying his family line with a marriage to a barbarian reveals the extent of his desperation and his thirst for power.

Personality

Viserys never really recovered from the death of his mother, and he blames Daenerys for it. He spent every day of his life on the run from people who should have been paying him homage, and it drives him mad. He is paranoid, impatient, vindictive, petty, and abusive—particularly to Daenerys, who often suffers his wrath when she "wakes the dragon," Viserys's term for making him angry.

He knows he should be King of the Seven Kingdoms, and really that's all he needs to know. It is his by birthright. He thinks of himself as the savior of the people of Westeros and *knows* that when he returns the people will welcome him home, despite the fact his father's insanity drove his nobles to turn against him and kill him—a minor detail.

Appearance

Viserys looks like a true Targaryen. He has platinum blonde hair, violet eyes, and a hard, gaunt face. Physically, he is unimpressive, having never squired nor taken an interest in arms. The most physical activity he participates in is beating his sister (who is eight years his junior) on a regular basis. He is proud of the Targaryen heritage and wears their colors of red and black, as well as their three-headed dragon crest, all bought with someone else's money.

Daenerys Targaryen

Stormborn

"He was no dragon. Fire cannot kill a dragon."

—Daenerys Targaryen

A young woman of thirteen, Daenerys Targaryen is the meek and mild younger sister of Viserys Targaryen. Because she was born on Dragonstone in the aftermath of the war, she has known no life other than one

of exile, but her head is filled with stories of the Seven Kingdoms from her brother and those who have taken pity on them. Daenerys believes in her brother and, despite his ill-treatment of her, would follow him to the ends of the earth, unmindful of the strength that hides inside her heart.

History

Daenerys' story is much the same as that of Viserys. She is the only daughter of the Mad King and his sister-wife Rhaella; Daenerys was born after the rest of her family had been slaughtered at the climax of the War of the Usurper, born in the smoky bowels of Dragonstone in the midst of a terrible storm, thus earning her the nickname "Stormborn." Unfortunately, her birth was difficult and resulted in the death of her mother, something for which her brother has never forgiven her. Shortly after her birth, the soldiers of Dragonstone decided to turn the children over to Stannis Baratheon and his fleet, but Ser Willem Darry and his sworn knights spirited her and her brother from Dragonstone to the safety of the Free Cities.

Darry took the children to Braavos, where he raised them as his own and protected them from their Westerosi enemies. Daenerys was an innocent and good child, but she was constantly tormented by her older brother. Viserys pinched and beat her regularly, especially if she'd done something to "wake the dragon." In addition, he liked to remind her that since he was the destined to be the king, that she would most likely be his wife, as was proper for Targaryens.

Her time with Ser Willem was the only home she ever knew, and she mourns losing it still, frequently remembering the red door of the house

Daenerys Targaryen		Adolescent Leader
Abilities		
Agility	3	—
Animal Handling	3	—
Athletics	3	—
Awareness	4	Empathy 1B
Cunning	4	—
Endurance	3	Resilience 1B
Knowledge	3	—
Language (Common)	4	—
Language (High Valyrian)	5	—
Persuasion	3	Charm 1B
Status	2	Breeding 1B
Will	3	—

Attributes			
Combat Defense	10	Intrigue Defense	10
Health	9	Composure	9
Destiny Points	6		

Benefits: Attractive, Blood of Valyria, Worldly

Drawbacks: Nemesis (Robert Baratheon), Outcast

Dagger	2D	1 damage	Defensive +1, Off-hand +1

in which she lived. His death meant moving on, drifting from place to place, and putting her firmly under the care of her elder brother, always trusting him to make the right decision about her future. Most recently, Daenerys and Viserys have taken residence inside the estate of Illyrio Mopatis, where it's becoming clear that the merchant prince intends to use Viserys for his own ends, though he has shown Daenerys nothing but kindness.

Personality

Daenerys would be happy to be a normal girl with no destiny, ambitions, or importance. She enjoys life and appreciates everything she has. She hears stories about what she *should* have from her brother, but none of that really seems to matter to her. She was happy with the house with the red door that she was raised in—she doesn't need Dragonstone or the Red Keep or the Seven Kingdoms. As she grew, she became quiet and withdrawn, mostly to avoid drawing the attention and unpredictable wrath of Viserys. Long abuse at her brother's hands has led her to become shy and unconfident, though she's beginning to question not only her brother's sanity but also his ability to be king.

Appearance

With her silver-blonde hair and lilac eyes, Daenerys looks like the quintessential Targaryen. She's a young woman, newly turned thirteen, and is just coming into womanhood. She has fair skin and will become a great beauty when she comes of age.

Aemon Targaryen

Maester Aemon of the Night's Watch

Prince Aemon was the third son of King Maekar I; the others were the drunkard Daeron, the cruel Aerion (who killed himself when he drank a jar of wildfire), and Aegon V the Unlikely. Aemon was so unpromising as a boy that he was sent to the Citadel to become a maester. After King Maekar's death, the throne was offered to Aemon, but he refused due to his vows. He eventually joined the Night's Watch when he realized that Aegon IV's enemies would try to use him against the king.

Aerys II Targaryen

the Mad King, King Scab

The last Targaryen king of the Seven Kingdoms, many believed him to be a promising king, for he was kind, wise, and devoted to a good rule. But his lucidity would not last, and gradually, he become more and more unstable. He had a penchant for roasting his enemies over a fire and was patron to the pyromancers. Due to the actions of his son, Prince Rhaegar, and his own insanity, Aerys turned many of the noble houses against him. When his forces were finally defeated by the combined might of the Starks, Arryns, and Baratheons, he retreated to his castle where he was killed by Jaime Lannister. Of the entire royal family, his sister-wife, Rhaella, their son Viserys III, and the unborn Daenerys were the only ones to escape.

Rhaegar Targaryen

Despite being vilified by King Robert after his death, King Aerys's eldest son Rhaegar was a highly respected, intelligent man and would have one day made a great king. In his childhood, he favored books over swords, spending much of his youth in study until, one day, he set aside his studies and took up the sword. Although he excelled as a swordsman and knight, he never took to it with the same zeal as others, training out of duty rather than an affection for fighting. A talented singer, poet, and great thinker, he was a favorite of the smallfolk and well loved my many nobles. Things turned sour for Rhaegar, when, after winning the tourney at Harrenhal, he gave Lyanna Stark the honor of being the Queen of Love and Beauty over his own wife, Princess Elia. The details of Rhaegar and Lyanna's relationship is unclear; some claim they had a romance, and others suggest Rhaegar kidnapped and raped her.

In any event, when Lyanna was carried to the Tower of Joy, Brandon Stark and his companions rode to King's Landing to demand her freedom and to mete justice on Rhaegar. Aerys refused and had the young men imprisoned, summoning their fathers to negotiate their freedom. In the end, Aerys ordered their deaths, fathers and sons alike, which precipitated Robert's Rebellion.

In the bloody war that ensued, Rhaegar fought valiantly but met his end in single combat against Robert Baratheon, whose mighty warhammer caved in Rhaegar's chest and scattered the rubies of his armor into the Trident. With Rhaegar's death, it was just a matter of time before the armies of the Usurper converged on King's Landing and brought the war to a close.

Other Notable Targaryens

There have been many important Targaryens in the three hundred years since the conquest of the Seven Kingdoms; some stand out due to their ability to fight and lead, but most are notable due to their depravity, cruelty, or insanity. Regardless, they all merit mention because of their quirks, contributions, or personal character and are all, in some way, important in the history of House Targaryen and the Seven Kingdoms.

- **Aegon I, the Conqueror, the Dragon:** A descendant of Aenar Targaryen, Aegon and his sisters would conquer the Seven Kingdoms and crush the Andal Kings in a conflict remembered as the War of Conquest. Aegon, in the Targaryen tradition, took his sisters, Visenya and Rhaenys, as his brides and fathered children on both of them. When he and his wives set out to conquer the Seven Kingdoms, they had a meager army and would have lost had it not been for their three dragons: Vhagar, Meraxes, and Balerion the Black Dread. With their victory, they bound six of the seven kingdoms and established the Targaryen Dynasty that would last nearly three centuries. His sword, a Valyrian steel weapon named *Blackfyre*, was eventually lost in the Blackfyre Rebellion and is believed lost for all time.
- **Visenya:** Aegon's elder sister and wife, she was every bit the warrior of her brother-husband and wielded a Valyrian steel sword named *Dark Sister*. She was the mother of Maegor I, also called Maegor the Cruel.
- **Rhaenys:** Aegon's younger sister, it is from her line that the majority of the Targaryen kings descend.
- **Aenys I:** Son of Aegon and Rhaenys, Aenys I was the first king to rule after his father. His reign was unimpressive, and he is remembered as a weak king. In fact, when the Faith Militant of the Seven rose up against him, Aenys could do little against them, and so he appointed Maegor to attend to the unruly host.
- **Maegor I, Maegor the Cruel:** The younger brother of Aenys I and son of Aegon and Visenya, he gained the Iron Throne after Aenys's death, somehow before that of his brother's son, Jaehaerys. He defeated and dissolved the Faith Militant and constructed the Red Keep. His reign was marked by his excesses, his wanton cruelty, and his appetites. He eventually died while sitting on the Iron Throne, which some say actually caused his death.
- **Jaehaerys I:** Son of Aenys I, he gained the throne following the death of Maegor the Cruel. Jaehaerys is remembered as one of the greatest of the Targaryen kings, and during his reign, he negotiated a peace with the Faith and established many of the laws still used in the Seven Kingdoms. His reign was also long-lived, lasting nearly fifty years. Through his work and that of his beloved sister-wife, Good Queen Alysanne, the Seven Kingdoms knew great peace and prosperity.
- **Alysanne, Good Queen Alysanne:** Wife to King Jaehaerys the Conciliator. Queen Alysanne traveled with her husband in the early years of his reign two hundred years ago. She is best known in the North because she explored it on the back of her dragon, Silverwing. There is a holdfast and village in which she slept with the name Queenscrown in her honor. After visiting the Wall, she was so impressed by the brave members of the Night's Watch that she gifted them with enough land to double their holdings. Snowgate, one of the castles on the Wall, was renamed Queensgate for her. In addition, Queen Alysanne gave the Watch jewels enough that they could replace another of the castles along the Wall, Nightfort, with a smaller one, Deep Lake, that they could man and keep up.
- **Viserys I:** Grandson of King Jaehaerys, his reign was unremarkable except for fathering both Rhaenyra, his daughter and chosen heir, and Aegon II, his son by a later marriage. Although he favored his daughter to succeed him, in death, Aegon claimed the throne instead, thus setting in motion a brutal dynastic conflict known as the Dance of the Dragons.
- **Rhaenyra:** As Viserys I had no male heirs from his first wife, he prepared Rhaenyra to succeed him, to be the first female monarch of the Seven Kingdoms. Her father later remarried and had a son, Aegon II. When Viserys died, Rhaenyra was to attain the Iron Throne, but a member of the Kingsguard defied the wishes of her father and put forward Aegon in her stead. She rose up against her half-brother in the Dance of the Dragons, but she eventually perished, being devoured by Aegon II's dragon.
- **Aegon II:** While not the rightful ruler, he took the Iron Throne anyway with the support of the Kingsguard. The entirety of his reign is marked by the Dance of the Dragons, and it came to an abrupt end with his death, marking the end of the war and the debate on who should have succeeded Viserys.

- **Aegon III, the Dragonbane:** The eldest son of Rhaenyra, he took the Iron Throne with Aegon II's death. Aegon III is blamed for the extinction of dragons from the world, for the last of their kind perished while he was king, and with that death, the summers grew shorter and the winters longer. Some speculate that Aegon actually feared the dragons, for he had watched his uncle's dragon devour his mother alive.

- **Daeron I, the Young Dragon, the Boy King:** King Daeron I took the throne at age fourteen and was the first king to conquer Dorne, though it cost ten thousand men and another fifty thousand to hold it. After conquering Dorne, he left it in the hands of the Lord of Highgarden, who was eventually assassinated, after which the Dornishmen rebelled and reclaimed their land—all within a single summer. He was an excellent warrior and an even better writer who died at the age of eighteen in the Dornish uprising.

- **Baelor I, the Blessed, the Septon King:** Baelor was both king and High Septon. He is regarded as both a good king and as one of the worst kings because he would have left the Seven Kingdoms penniless if it hadn't been for his uncle and Hand, Viserys II. Baelor once walked the Boneway in order to make peace with Dorne, and he rescued Aemon the Dragonknight from a snakepit; it may be the poison that finally unbalanced him. He locked his sisters in a keep to protect himself from impure thoughts and once prayed over a clutch of dragon eggs for six month in an attempt to hatch them, but his prayers went unanswered. Baelor eventually starved himself to death with fasting. A statue of Baelor the Blessed stands at the head of the plaza beneath the steps of Baelor's Sept in King's Landing.

- **Viserys II:** Although he kept the Seven Kingdoms stable during the excesses of Daeron and Baelor, when Viserys finally took the throne, his reign was utterly unremarkable. Some claim Viserys II poisoned his nephew Baelor to gain the throne, a strange accusation since Viserys did nothing once he claimed the Iron Throne.

- **Daena:** Briefly the wife of Baelor the Blessed, her marriage was never consummated and was dissolved when Baelor took the Iron Throne. She and her sisters were soon after confined in the Red Keep in a place known as the Maidenvault, and despite her isolation, she became pregnant and gave birth to Daemon. It wasn't until Daemon was a squire and proved to be a skilled warrior that King Aegon IV claimed him as his own.

- **Aegon IV, the Unworthy:** King Aegon the Unworthy sired many bastards and is said to have slept with any woman he wanted. He gave the Valyrian sword *Blackfyre*, the traditional blade of House Targaryen, to his bastard son Daemon when he knighted him at age twelve, instead of his true heir, Daeron. Aegon legitimized all of his bastards on his deathbed, an act that started the Blackfyre Rebellion and almost ripped the Seven Kingdoms apart. He is remembered as one of the worst kings to sit the throne.

- **Aemon, the Dragonknight:** Prince Aemon the Dragonknight was the noblest of knights and a member of the Kingsguard. He championed Queen Naerys's honor against the slander of Ser Morgil and even protected her from her brother-husband, Aegon the Unworthy. It was rumored Aemon the Dragonknight was the true father of Daeron II and not Aegon IV. In battle, Aemon wielded the sword *Dark Sister*.

- **Naerys:** Sister and wife of Aegon IV, she is rumored to have had a love affair with her other brother, Ser Aemon the Dragonknight.

- **Daeron II, the Good, the Falseborn:** He managed to "conquer" Dorne not by strength of arms but by marriage; he wed Princess Myriah and had his sister marry the prince of Dorne. He successfully brought resolutions to the Blackfyre Rebellion and was called Daeron the Falseborn by the Blackfyre Pretenders because it was rumored that King Aegon IV was not his father, but rather Prince Aemon the Dragonknight. He perished, along with many of his grandchildren, during the Great Spring Sickness.

- **Brynden Rivers, Bloodraven:** As one of Aegon IV's bastards, Brynden Rivers was legitimized as his father lay dying. Bloodraven, an albino, gained his nickname for the queer red birthmark that stood out on his pale face. During the Blackfyre Rebellion, Bloodraven stayed loyal to Daeron II and was instrumental in the defeat of the Pretenders, going so far as to kill his half-brother, Daemon Blackfyre, at the Battle of Redgrass Field, though it cost him his eye when he later fought Bittersteel—Aegor Rivers. After the war, he rose high, become Hand of the King to Aerys I, and presided over a particularly dark period following the death of Good King Daeron. Bloodraven is best known for his network of spies and his penchant for using sorcery, all of which came to an end when Aegon V took the throne. The king stripped Bloodraven of his office and sent him to the Wall, but even in this exile of sorts, his influence and power gained him the title of Lord Commander of the Night's Watch.

- **Daemon Blackfyre:** He was one of the greatest and most distinguished knights in recent history, as well as the most feared and reviled. After proving himself time and again a great warrior, his father, who had long remained unknown, was revealed to be none other than Aegon IV, who legitimized his son and gave him the Targaryen blade *Blackfyre*, the sword of kings, thus passing over his trueborn son Daeron II. Daemon laid claim to the Iron Throne with his father's death, pointing to the sword he wielded as proof of his right, plunging the Seven Kingdoms into a bitter war, pitting Targaryen against Targaryen and dividing Westeros between those who supported Blackfyre and those who supported Daeron II. Although Blackfyre won many victories, Bloodraven's betrayal at the Battle of the Redgrass Field brought the war to a close, if only for a time, as Daemon and his twin sons perished there.

- **Aegor Rivers, Bittersteel, The Soiled Knight:** Another of Aegon's great bastards, he joined his half-brother Daemon Blackfyre against Daeron II in the Blackfyre Rebellion, distinguishing himself on the battlefield. After Daemon's death, Bittersteel fled the Seven Kingdoms to take refuge in the Free Cities. There, he founded the Golden Company, a famous band of mercenaries noted for never breaking a contract.

- **Shiera Seastar:** The last of Aegon IV's bastards, Shiera is the daughter of Lady Serenei of Lys, whispered to be the last of an ancient line of Valyrian nobility. She was the greatest beauty of her age, with all the best features of the Targaryens but with one dark blue eye and one bright green one. Her half-brother, Bloodraven, sought to wed her, but Seastar refused, consenting only to be his mistress, a fact widely known throughout King's Landing and beyond.
- **Baelor Breakspear:** The son of Daeron II, Baelor was the Prince of Dragonstone, the Crown Prince of the Seven Kingdoms, and Hand of the King. He was, by all accounts, the finest knight of his time and earned the name Baelor Breakspear. He died at the age of thirty-nine while fighting for Ser Duncan the Tall in a trial of seven. His own brother, Maekar, struck the killing blow but swore he never meant it to kill. Had things not gone the way they did, Baelor Breakspear may have one day taken the throne and prevented the reign (and downfall) of Mad King Aerys.
- **Aerys I:** The bookish son of Daeron II, he took the throne after the Great Spring Sickness ravaged the lands. Aerys proved an ineffective and disinterested king, leaving much of the rule to his half-brother, Bloodraven. Aerys never produced an heir and left the throne to Maekar.
- **Maekar I:** Maekar took the throne after Aerys since his elder brother had no children. As the youngest son, Maekar had long suffered in the shadow of his elder brothers, his children overlooked and himself passed over for the post of Hand. Still, he gained the Iron Throne and resided over a somewhat peaceful realm until his death a little over a decade later, at the hands of a rebellious lord.
- **Aerion Brightflame:** Easily one of the more unstable of the Targaryen princes, Aerion Brightflame was the son of Prince Maekar. Aerion is remembered for his arrogance and cruelty, and Maekar eventually exiled him to the Free Cities in the hopes of tempering the young man's madness. Instead, all it did was inflame his excesses, and Aerion eventually died when he drank a quantity of wildfire, believing the substance would trigger his transformation into a dragon. His infant son was passed over after his father's death in spite of his stronger claim.
- **Aegon V, the Unlikely:** Aegon gained the Iron Throne after the Great Council chose his brother Aemon, a maester, who refused the crown. As the fourth son, no one ever expected him to wear the crown, hence the name the Unlikely. In his youth, Aegon squired for a hedge knight named Ser Duncan the Tall and undertook a series of great adventures that carried the pair all over Westeros. During his reign, he saw the last of the Blackfyre Pretenders defeated in the War of the Ninepenny Kings.
- **Rhaelle:** Aegon V's daughter, she was wed to a Baratheon lord and was mother to Steffon Baratheon, who would himself father Robert, Stannis, and Renly Baratheon.
- **Jaehaerys II:** Jaehaerys II ascended the throne after his father's death at the Tragedy of Summerhall. A fragile man, he died three years later, leaving the throne to Aerys II.

House Baratheon of Dragonstone

Ranking	Major
Lands	Dragonstone
Castle	Dragonstone
Arms	A crowned black stag on a golden field
Motto	Ours is the Fury

House Baratheon's claim on Dragonstone came about with the death of King Aerys and the flight of the last Targaryen scions when Stannis Baratheon sailed his fleet to lay siege to the ancient Targaryen stronghold. At the war's end, King Robert awarded Dragonstone to Stannis and gave Renly Storm's End, even though by rights Storm's End should have been Stannis's. In spite of the offense, Stannis said nothing, containing his rage and serving the king as duty demanded.

Lord Stannis Baratheon

Lord of Dragonstone

"We do not choose our destinies. Yet we must... we must do our duty, no? Great or small, we must do our duty."

—Stannis Baratheon

When the Targaryen survivors fled Dragonstone to seek refuge across the narrow sea, the former seat of House Targaryen fell to Stannis Baratheon. Attaining this forlorn fortress might have been a great honor for some, but as the second son in House Baratheon, Storm's End was Stannis's birthright; thus, acquiring the lordship of this dark and sinister island was an obvious slight by the king, especially since Storm's End went to the youngest brother, Lord Renly. Still, Dragonstone's brooding character fits Stannis well, and from this island fastness, Stannis performs every duty required of his king and country.

History

Stannis has never been loved or had the affection of nobles or smallfolk, for he has always been a dour and humorless man, even as a boy. Perhaps Stannis might have grown differently had his parents not been dashed upon the rocks of Shipbreaker Bay, but even if they had lived, none doubt Stannis would ever have been anything but a serious man. Little is known of the man's life after the deaths of his parents, but presumably, he used his time wisely, studying law and warfare, training to be a better swordsman, and doing his duty to his family and his people.

When Robert called his banners, rising up against the Mad King, Stannis joined his brother, presumably because his ties to kin were stronger than his fealty to king, though such a position to be in was un-

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doubtedly a tenuous one, for Stannis always held law and justice as the highest ideals. In any event, Stannis held Storm's End in the face of the siege sent by King's Landing, holding out when lesser men would surely have surrendered. While his brother was off fighting the war, Stannis was left to rot with his men inside the walls of his family's castle, slowly starving to death rather than submit to their enemies. Stannis's story might have ended there but for the courageous efforts of a brave smuggler named Davos, who risked everything to bring in fresh supplies and foodstuffs to the beleaguered defenders.

After the fall of King's Landing, Robert sent Stannis to take Dragonstone, for it was known that Aerys had sent his pregnant wife and young son to their ancestral fortress to wait out the war. Stannis's fleet converged on the fortress but arrived too late to capture Viserys and the newborn Daenerys. Although he seized the fortress with little trouble, fully expecting to return to Storm's End as was his right, he was shocked to learn that Robert named him Lord of the wretched isle and his younger brother Lord of Storm's End.

This affront haunted Stannis, who had ever done his duty in service to his brother and family, even going so far as to betray his king. Still, Stannis hid his outrage, and when called to serve on the small council in King's Landing, he left his wife and young child at Dragonstone to once more serve as he must. Stannis's time at King's Landing has not been agreeable. Craftier men with greater ambitions drown out his voice; each day brings the revelation that few share his high ideals. Stannis suspects something is queer about Robert's children and has worked closely with Jon Arryn to sort out the truth. However, with the Hand ailing, Stannis expects to be named the next Hand of the King. If Robert betrays him in this, as he suspects he might, Stannis plans to quit King's Landing altogether and return to his holdings on his rocky isle.

Lord Stannis Baratheon		Middle-Aged Leader
Abilities		
Agility	3	—
Athletics	3	—
Awareness	3	—
Cunning	3	Memory 1B
Endurance	4	Resilience 3B, Stamina 2B
Fighting	4	Long Blades 2B
Knowledge	3	—
Language (Common)	4	—
Persuasion	3	Intimidate 1B
Status	6	Breeding 1B
Warfare	5	Command 2B, Strategy 2B
Will	5	Dedication 2B

Attributes			
Combat Defense	8	Intrigue Defense	12
Health	15	Composure	17
Destiny Points	3		
Benefits: Head of House (Dragonstone), Stubborn, Tough			
Drawbacks: Flaw (Athletics)			
Superior Plate and Mail: AR 7; AP –3; AR 3			
Shield	4D	1 damage	Defensive +2
Excellent Longsword	4D+1+2B	4 damage	

Personality

Stannis is stern, unforgiving, humorless, grim, and unlikable. He's also never thought about changing: he knows who he is, and he's sure of himself and his place in the world. Stannis has little use for the gods and believes in things he can touch, things he can see. He's not a man to give into mystical devotion easily, and for him to set aside his doubt, he would have to witness true supernatural power. He's uncomfortable around women, even his own wife, so the post in the small council is a good excuse for him to put distance between himself and his loveless marriage.

He's an accomplished commander, sailor, and warrior, and although he has the potential to be a great leader if he would only change a few things about his personality, that's just not how he works. Changing would mean compromising his values, and compromise has never been something of which Stannis is capable. He has a black and white view of things: wrong is wrong, right is right, and justice is always fair, even if it seems extreme to those who don't understand it as well as Stannis. That said, Stannis is an intelligent man and knows when to change strategies in order to take advantage of the shifting landscape.

Appearance

A man with a warrior's build, Stannis has broad shoulders and sinewy limbs. His face is gaunt and hard, like leather cured in the sun. Not yet thirty-five, he carries himself as a man much older, and his thinning

hair only supports his image. Stannis wears a closely trimmed beard and moustache that does little to hide his scowling mouth. Stannis always appears tightly wound, tense, and on the cusp of outrage.

Family

Stannis is married to Lady Selyse of House Florent. It is a loveless marriage, and the two have little patience for each other. Selyse is not a particularly attractive woman; she is tall and thin and has ears too large for her head, pale eyes, and a bit too much hair on her upper lip. She is a follower of R'hllor and works to bring the cult into Stannis's household.

Shireen is Stannis and Selyse's only child and daughter. When she was younger, her face was disfigured by a sickness called greyscale that left a portion of her cheek and neck stiff, dead, and flaky, mottled black and grey and hard to the touch. She is guileless and innocent and is the only person on Dragonstone who gets any amount of enjoyment out of Patchface, their mad, broken fool she calls "Patches," though his ravings sometimes frighten her. Despite all the strikes against her, she is a happy young girl who hasn't been drawn into the problems of her house.

Servants

Like any lord or king, Stannis has a number of followers, servants, advisors, and hangers-on.

Septon Barre

Dragonstone's septon, he attends the sept on the isle and is growing more and more distressed by Lady Selyse's commitment to R'hllor—more specifically, Melisandre, the Red Woman, who has the lady's ear.

Ser Davos Seaworth

Davos Seaworth is one of Stannis's most loyal supporters. For more information on the Onion Knight, see **Ser Davos Seaworth, the Onion Knight** on page 207.

Lady Melisandre of Asshai

One of the more recent additions to Stannis's court at Dragonstone is the Red Woman, an Asshai priestess named Melisandre, who came to the seat of Stannis's power at the invitation of Lady Selyse. A mysterious woman with alien views and in service to a strange and otherworldly god named R'hllor, God of Flame and Shadow, Lord of Light, and the Heart of Fire, she has slowly turned Lady Selyse from honest worship of the Seven to becoming one of the Lord of Light's most ardent supporters. Stannis has not yet dealt with the Red Woman, as his position on the small council keeps him from Dragonstone for months at a time. But Stannis, always suspicious of the gods, is not sure what to think of the sorceress, for the letters sent by his wife wax on about her powers of prophecy and the mysteries of her religion.

Melisandre is a great beauty, with long hair the color of burnished copper and pale, unblemished skin. She's slender and graceful, but she's tall—taller than most knights. She has full breasts, a narrow waist, and a

heart-shaped face. Her voice is sonorous, with an exotic accent putting her from some land far from the Seven Kingdoms. As is the custom of her faith, she wears red or crimson clothing, usually long gowns of silk the color of blood. She's never without the red gold choker that fits snuggly around her neck. When she works magic, some say the ruby setting glows with strange power.

Maester Cressen

Maester Cressen is the aging advisor and healer at Dragonstone. Having long served on the isle, he has come to accept the macabre and grotesque statuary, even finding comfort in their unsettling appearance. Nearly eighty, he knows he hasn't much time left in this world and accepts that Pylos, his assistant, will one day replace him. Although he has retained his keen wits, his body has begun to fail, especially after shattering his hip nearly a year before.

Cressen is a loyal servant to Stannis but harbors a great deal of guilt over his inability to halt the ravages of the greyscale that deformed Shireen, especially when he sees the sadness that haunts her during her lessons. Cressen fears the unnatural power within the Red Woman and is unsure of her intentions, especially since she seems to have gotten her hooks into Lady Selyse and several other members of Stannis's court.

Maester Pylos

Pylos came from the Citadel to aid Maester Cressen in his duties, the elder man's health being as fragile as it is. Pylos resents having to aid the elder maester as much as he does, and he craves his position as

Stannis's advisor. He takes comfort from the fact that Cressen has not much time left in this world and struggles to find the patience required to temper his ambition. Pylos is clever, diligent, and well meaning, but he lacks humor.

Patchface, "Patches"

Patches is Stannis's court fool and jester, but the queer man lacks a great deal and is instead a raving lunatic, haunted by the tragedies of his past. Patches takes his name for the tattoos covering his face and bald head. In his youth, he was a clever boy with astonishing wit, so much so that he impressed Lord Steffon while the Baratheon lord sought a wife for Prince Rhaegar on behalf of King Aerys. Steffon bought the boy's freedom with the intent of bringing him back to Storm's End. However, just as Steffon's ship entered Shipbreaker Bay within sight of their family's castle, a storm tore the ship to pieces, smashing it against the rocks and killing all on board except for Patches, who washed up three days later.

Strangely, the boy was alive, naked, his skin white and wrinkled, coughing up water, impossibly surviving when he should have drowned. Some said that a mermaid taught the boy to breathe water in return for his seed, but what truly happened to the boy, Patchface never said. His mind and body are broken, his gift of clever words and mocking rhymes lost forever.

Now, years later, Patches is fat and slump-shouldered, his face a motley of red and green squares. He spends most of his time with Shireen, offering strange insights and stranger songs, sometimes touching upon what may have really happened to the boy at the bottom of the bay.

Banners of Dragonstone

There are a number of houses sworn to Dragonstone. This list is far from exhaustive, but it gives some of the more interesting houses and a bit of description about each. Stannis has described the houses sworn to Dragonstone as being a poor crop with little money or men.

House Bar Emmon

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Massey's Hook
Castle	Sharp Point
Arms	A leaping blue swordfish on fretty silver on white

House Bar Emmon is led by a fifteen-year-old boy named Lord Duram Bar Emmon. Duram is very young and described as fat and feeble. Sharp Point Castle is located at the end of Massey's Hook and includes a watchtower in which they burn a great fire to mark the end of the outcropping for ships that sail in the area.

House Celtigar

Ranking	Major
Lands	Claw Isle
Arms	Red crabs strewn on white

House Sunglass

House Velaryon

Lord Ardrian Celtigar, the Red Crab, is an old, sour man. His house is old and long established, and if rumors can be believed, astonishingly wealthy, commanding such treasures as Myrish carpets, Volantene glass, gold and silver plate, jeweled cups, a Valyrian axe, chests of rubies, a legendary horn able to summon krakens, trained hawks and eagles, and a cellar of valuable and eminently drinkable wines. If the house possesses such wealth, it keeps it hidden from the rest of the world.

Claw Isle is located on an island north of Dragonstone, just off Crackclaw Point. The Celtigars claim Crackclaw Point falls under their control, but the people there disagree because they were freed long ago from bending the knee to anyone but the Iron Throne for helping Visenya during the Wars of Conquest. The Red Crab has sent a number of tax collectors to Crackclaw Point, but none of them have ever returned.

House Sunglass

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Sweetport Sound
Arms	Seven golden stars, each with seven points, arranged in a ring on white

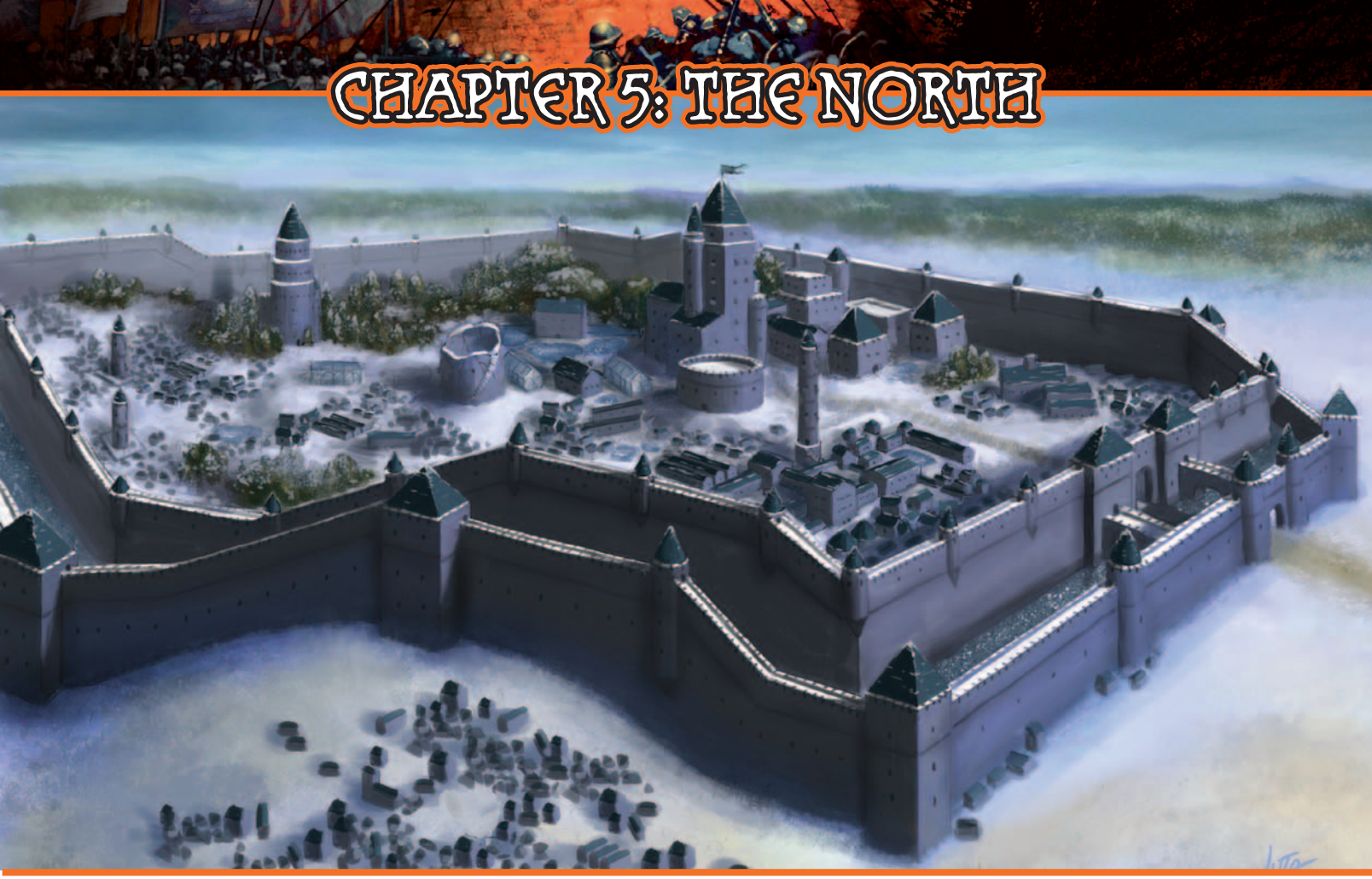
House Sunglass is a minor house sworn to Dragonstone. Lord Guncer Sunglass is the head of the house and is known to be a deeply religious man.

House Velaryon

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Driftmark
Castle	Driftmark
Arms	A silver seahorse on sea green
Motto	The Old, the True, the Brave

Just west of Dragonstone lies the isle of Driftmark. The established Velaryon family rules here; they claim descent from ancient Valyria and have three times provided brides for Targaryen princes. The current lord, who styles himself Lord of the Tides and Master of Driftmark is Lord Monford Velaryon. He's a hasty and impulsive man, who often acts without thinking. His son is Monterys Velaryon, a boy of six; Aurane Waters, the Bastard of Driftmark, is kin to Monford, though the connection between them is not clear.

Chapter 5: The North



Winter seems a distant threat in warm southern climes, but when one follows the Ice Dragon's gleaming blue eye north, the truth is made clear. In the shadow of the Wall, the Northmen toil and prepare for the winter that will inevitably follow summer, and they look to the black brothers of the Night's Watch to protect them from what lies beyond the Wall in the ever-frozen lands. The southerners may laughingly speak of snarks and grumkins, and repeat tall tales about the Night's King and the Rat Cook, but the northerners know better. They have felt the threat of the King-beyond-the-Wall, and they remember the cities of the First Men that fell before the Others' onslaught during the Long Night. In the south, it is said that the Northmen are made of ice and iron, but in the end, only ice and iron can stand against the coming of winter.

A History of the North

The peoples of the North are nearly all descended from the First Men, those first peoples to cross the narrow sea and steal the land from the children of the forest. Of this first crossing, little is known, for the First Men left no records, only cryptic runes carved in old stone. What historians have are the tales passed down from generation to generation, accounts—some fantastic, others strange—of what transpired in those days of yore. What is known is that the First Men of the North fought the children of the forest, as did the First Men scattered throughout

Finally, he looked north. He saw the Wall shining like blue crystal, and his bastard brother Jon sleeping alone in a cold bed, his skin growing pale and hard as the memory of all warmth fled from him. And he looked past the Wall, past endless forests cloaked in snow, past plains where nothing grew or lived. North and north and north he looked, to the curtain of light at the end of the world, and then beyond that curtain. He looked deep into the heart of winter, and then he cried out, afraid, and the heat of his tears burned on his cheeks.

"Now you know," the crow whispered as it sat on his shoulder. "Now you know why you must live."

"Why?" Bran said, not understanding falling, falling.

"Because winter is coming."

— A Game of Thrones

Westeros. However, it's also known that when the violence abated and peace was achieved, the northerners were among the first to embrace the beliefs and customs of their former enemies, even going so far as to raise godswoods in their castles and halls, replete with the carved faces that still adorn their ancient weirwoods found throughout the North.

The greatest event that would define and shape the North into its present day was the Long Night, a terrifying period in Westerosi history when the northern winds blew more than cold into the southern regions. Others and their wight thralls boiled out of the frozen north, slaughtering everyone and everything they encountered, awakening them into new slaves to serve them in death. After the climactic Battle for the Dawn, Bran the Builder—founder of House Stark and legendary figure of the Age of Heroes—raised the Wall, a grand edifice ensorcelled with mystical bindings, to create an impassible barrier between the lands of the south and the festering evil that lurked in the extreme north. Having achieved this with the aid of the giants, the children of the forest, and ancient magic long since lost to mortal men, the Wall became one of the great wonders of Westeros, and it stands to this day, guarded by the tattered descendants of the once-noble order of the Night's Watch.

In addition to constructing the Wall, Bran the Builder also oversaw the construction of Winterfell, the ancestral seat of all the Starks to come. Winterfell is easily the strongest citadel in the North and eclipses most others in all the Seven Kingdoms in terms of size and strength. Having never fallen, Winterfell symbolizes the authority and strength of the Kings of Winter who were sovereigns of the North for centuries, even when the Andals spilled out from what would be known as the Vale of Arryn and conquered the rest of Westeros. Even when the last King of Winter knelt before Aegon the Conqueror, Winterfell was not so much conquered as it was surrendered, and then it was given back to House Stark to rule as they had, with the understanding that their fealty was owed to the Iron Throne in perpetuity.

In the years that followed, the North has remained a wild and somewhat independent realm through a succession of Stark rulers, both good and bad, and they remained loyal, if grudging, servants of the crown at King's Landing. It wasn't until Lord Rickon Stark and his son Brandon Stark were executed by King Aerys II that the Starks broke their ties to House Targaryen and committed their forces to Lord Robert Baratheon in the resulting War of the Usurper. Since the victory at the Trident, the North has proven to be ardent supporters of the Iron Throne, raising their banners in times of need, such as when Balon Greyjoy strove to break from the Seven Kingdoms in a bid to gain his independence. Northmen were among those who laid siege to the Pyke, proving once again the ferocity and loyalty of the valiant northern warriors. IIn the years since, their ties to the south while still strong, have become strained as King's Landing has descended into a quagmire of corruption and the Lannisters have asserted greater and greater influence on the crown.

Still, Eddard Stark, the Lord of Winterfell, is one of King Robert's oldest and dearest friends and allies, even if the two see almost nothing of each other these days, separated as they are by the demands of their respective realms. Stark loyalty counts for a great deal, and the king knows he can call upon his old friend and loyal subject, something Robert is counting upon as he finds himself surrounded on all sides by sycophants and schemers.

GEOGRAPHY OF THE NORTH

The lands called the North compose the largest of the Seven Kingdoms, being as large as the other six kingdoms combined. A sparsely populated land speckled with tiny villages and holdfasts, it is much as it was when the First Men crossed the narrow sea. The North technically begins at Moat Caitlin, north of the Neck. From there, it encompasses the bogs and fens of the Neck, the barrowlands, and the wolfswood, and it marches all the way up to the grasslands designated as the New Gift, about one hundred leagues south of the Wall.

General Features

The North includes mountains and hills, vast forests and windswept plains, bogs, mires, and everything in between.

Barrowlands

The barrowlands is an expanse of territory extending north to the wolfswood, east to the White Knife, south to the Neck, and west to the Rills. This region takes its name for the numerous barrows dotting the lands. These tombs are said to hold the remains of the First Men.

Brandon's Gift

A stretch of grasslands extending fifty leagues to the south of the Wall, Brandon the Builder bequeathed these lands to the Night's Watch, so they could sustain themselves in the performance of their duty.

Eastern Lowlands

East and north of Winterfell, the terrain flattens as it stretches to the east. These rolling plains, crisscrossed with narrow rivers forded by stone bridges, are sparsely populated aside from a few farms and armed encampments. Where farms exist, they spread out and around a single holdfast, generally little more than a wooden palisade around a small tower.

Western Mountains

West and north of Winterfell, the land rumbles and tumbles, gaining elevation as the ground rises to meet the mountains. The hills here are largely flint, and many bear watchtowers used by the mountain clans to watch for wildlings and ironmen. Further to the west, the hills give way to towering mountains that extend as far south as the wolfswood and travel north beyond the Wall.

Lonely Hills

This small range of hills lays south and west of the Last River and forms the easternmost boundary of the wolfswood.

New Gift

After Good Queen Alysanne visited the Night's Watch centuries ago, she was so impressed by the task before the black brothers that she doubled the size of Brandon's Gift. The lands added are called the New Gift.

The Rills

West of the barrowlands is the hilly region called the Rills. It extends west until it approaches the Stony Shore and south to Blazewater Bay.

Sea Dragon Point

The Sea Dragon Point thrusts out from the mainland and marks the western edges of the Bay of Ice.

Stony Shore

The Stony Shore is the barren coastline marking the western border of the Rills. The Stony Shore is home to a number of tiny fishing villages.

Wolfswood

The wolfswood is the largest contiguous forest in all of Westeros. Ancient and mysterious, it covers nearly a quarter of the North. Thick with sentinel trees and soldier pines, it is a dark and gloomy place. As the forest extends northward, the pines give way to oaks and hawthorns that grow across the stony hills, where one can find quarries and mines used to provide stone and iron to Winterfell and other communities in the North. The Deepwood lies far to the west, and few if any people dwell there. For all that, the wolfswood has a sinister character, and it is far from uninhabited. Tiny communities of hunters, crofters, and woodcutters flourish in its depths, and there are even a few lords with holdings here.

Islands

Scattered along the eastern and western shores of the North are numerous islands, both inhabited and uninhabited. Most of these isles fall under the demesne of House Stark.

Bear Island

Situated at about the center of the Bay of Ice, this island of tall pines and moss-covered rocks is under the rule of House Mormont. The folk of Bear Island live along the coasts, where they work as fishermen and brave the icy waters to haul in their catch. Bear Island came to the Mormonts after King Rodrick Stark won it in a wrestling match.

Skagos

Skagos is the largest island in a cluster of desolate rocks off the coast in the Bay of Seals. A number of tiny clans carve out an existence here. Nominally, these clans are sworn to Winterfell and House Stark, but their isolation and remoteness mean they are more often than not left to their own devices.

Skane

One of the smaller islands of Skagos, it's believed Skane has stood empty since the people of Skagos descended on them, slaughtering and eating the men and carrying off the women.

Roads & Paths

As the North is largely uncultivated, there are few roads of import here.

The Kingsroad

The main overland route into the North is by way of the kingsroad—an ancient highway that begins its journey at King's Landing and travels as far north as Castle Black at the center of the Wall. Although the kingsroad sustains numerous inns and villages along its length south of the Neck, this is simply not the case in the Neck and beyond. Inns exist, but they are farther apart and much less able to accommodate large parties. Once the kingsroad moves beyond Winterfell, the grand road becomes a sparsely traveled path, and aside from a few farms, there's no one around.

Waters

Streams and rivers crisscross the northern lands, collecting in mountain lakes or wending their way to the sea.

Bay of Ice

On the northwestern coast of Westeros lays the Bay of Ice, bounded by the Frozen Shore to the north and Sea Dragon Point to the south.

Bay of Seals

The Bay of Seals stands on the northeastern coast of Westeros, and Skagos and Skane mark the point where the bay empties into the Shivering Sea.

The Bite

The Bite marks the southernmost extent of the North and is bounded by the Neck to the west, the narrow sea to the east, and the Vale of Arryn to the South.

Blazewater Bay

Lying in the southwestern corner of the North, this long bay narrows as it moves inland. At its narrowest point, it is called Saltspear.

Broken Branch

The Broken Branch is another river, with Ramsgate standing at its mouth.

Fever River

The Fever River flows from Saltspear into the Neck, almost as far as Moat Cailin.

Last River

This waterway drains the western mountains and feeds many of the narrow streams found in the eastern lowlands. The Last River crosses the kingsroad, heading southeast past the Lonely Hills and eventually spills out into the narrow sea. It is the last major waterway crossed before one reaches the Wall.

Long Lake

Long Lake is one of four large lakes found in the North, and it stretches between the wolfswood to the west and the Lonely Hills to the east. Long Lake feeds the White Knife River.

Weeping Water

The Weeping Water, along with the White Knife, drains the Lonely Hills into the narrow sea. On its course lies the Dreadfort, the ancestral seat of power for House Bolton.

White Knife

The White Knife flows from Long Lake, heading south, where it meets another river, and then travels further south, where it empties into the Bite at White Harbor.

Castles

Most northern lords command castles surrounded by farmland.

Cerwyn Castle

The seat of House Cerwyn, this castle lies about half a day's ride from Winterfell.

Castle Hornwood

Castle Hornwood lies somewhere near the Bolton's lands. This castle is the seat of House Hornwood.

Deepwood Motte

Deepwood Motte, commanded by House Glover, lies inside the wolfswood, south of the tidal flats that form the northern coast of the Bay of Ice.

Dreadfort

East of Winterfell and situated along the Weeping Water is the ancient Dreadfort, the fortress-castle of House Bolton. It's rumored the Dreadfort contains a room where they keep the skins of their enemies on display.

Greywater Watch

The seat of House Reed, this castle sits on a floating island and is said to drift through the Neck, escaping unwanted attention.

Karhold

Home to House Karstark, this castle rises from woods east of the lowlands and south of the Bay of Seals.

Last Hearth

House Umber controls the castle named Last Hearth. Just north of the Last River, it is one of the few castles found before one reaches the Wall.

Moat Cailin

The ancient fortress of Moat Cailin is one of the North's most important strongholds, even though much of it now stands in ruins. Its importance stems from the fact that it overlooks the causeway through the Neck, one of the safest and surest routes into the North. Ages ago, a high curtain wall surrounded the site, with great basalt stones each as large as a cottage. There was once a wooden keep and twenty stone towers. Moat Cailin was built by the First Men, but the centuries and wars have not been kind, and the only structures left here are three towers in varying stages of collapse.

The main tower, called the Gatehouse Tower, remains sound and even sports a few feet of wall extending out from either side. The Drunkard's Tower rises from a bog and leans to one side, its foundation sinking in the muck. The last tower, the Children's Tower, has partially collapsed, the top a crumbling ruin. The land seems intent on reclaiming the structure, with trees growing between the stones and moss creeping up the walls.

Even in its crumbling state, Moat Cailin remains important, for the surrounding lands sport hidden dangers. Sucking pools of quicksand, poisonous snakes, lizard-lions, and biting insects infest the wetlands all around, making it a nightmare to lay siege to the fortress.

Oldcastle

South of White Harbor and east of Moat Cailin, Oldcastle is the seat of House Locke.

Torrhen's Square

West and south of Winterfell stands Torrhen's Square, a square stone keep surrounded by a thirty-foot-tall wall, with towers at each corner. This fortress is home to House Tallhart.

Widow's Watch

Perched on the edge of a long peninsula stabbing out into the narrow sea is Widow's Watch, the family castle of the major branch of House Flint.

Winterfell

The seat of House Stark, and the ancestral home to the Kings of Winter, Winterfell is among the oldest castles in all the Seven Kingdoms. According to legend, Bran the Builder constructed the ancient holdfast, making it at least eight thousand years old. While the castle has certainly spread beyond its original foundation, with new walls, new towers, and more added, Winterfell has never been conquered.

Winterfell is a grey stone labyrinth, a maze of walls and towers, of courtyards and tunnels, a sprawling fortress whose size and scope are

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unmatched anywhere in Westeros. The keep and buildings form the heart of two massive granite walls and a wide moat between them. The outer wall reaches eighty feet in height, while the inner wall stands more than a hundred feet tall, studded with watchtowers and sheltering those who walk the crenellated battlements.

The size of the fortress is staggering; it spreads out over hills and valleys, encompassing both woods and hot springs. The oldest parts of Winterfell have slanting halls, rooms that lean to one side or the other, and because the ground was not leveled when it was constructed, figuring out just what floor one is on can be a challenge. Covered bridges and walkways connect the various places in the castle, and staircases wind up hills or descend into the darkened depths in the shadows of the walls. Shapeless gargoyles brood over the inner bailey, cold sentries whose features have long since been erased by wind, rain, and snow.

Crypt

The Starks maintain the ancient tradition of interring their dead in a crypt deep beneath their fortress. At the bottom of a narrow winding staircase is a long hall flanked by granite pillars. Between each pillar is the stone likeness of a deceased Stark seated on a stone throne, their backs against the sepulchers containing their remains. Overhead, the ceiling is vaulted, supported by the columns marching down its length, far longer than Winterfell itself. Some claim the crypt is but one level of many, and beneath it are the deeper vaults that house the ancient remains of the older kings. By tradition, only the kings (and lords) are interred here; the rest are buried in the lichyard above, but Eddard Stark had his sister and brother interred here, such was his love for them.

First Keep

A squat round tower set with weathered gargoyles, it is long neglected. In recent years, the lord and lady of Winterfell have moved their quarters to the Great Keep, which is connected to the adjacent armory by a covered bridge and overlooks the practice yard through high, narrow windows.

Godswood

Winterfell's godswood reflects the dour and contemplative personality of the Starks—it is a dark and shadowy place, yet at the same time both peaceful and calming. The trees here have grown untouched for over ten thousand years and include sentinel trees, oaks, ironwoods, hawthorns, ash, and soldier pines. The heart tree, an ancient weirwood, grows beside a dark pool; its face is long and melancholy, its eyes deep and watchful. An ancient sentinel tree of Winterfell's godswood grows over the wall and overhangs the armory.

Great Keep

Most activity at Winterfell takes place in the Great Hall, located adjacent to the main castle yard. This vast hall can accommodate over five hundred guests, seated at eight long rows of trestle tables, four on either side of the central aisle, and it is warmed by a great fireplace at one end. Here, too, sits the throne of Winterfell, a cold seat of stone carved with hounds and direwolves, where the ancient Kings of Winter sat and issued judgment.

Library Tower

The Library Tower is devoted entirely to books and manuscripts, and it includes a number of important works on ancient history and warfare.

Maester Luwin's Turret

This tower houses the maester's apartments. Cluttered and messy, it is a maze of books, tables, and chairs, with shelves holding curious concoctions and rare ingredients lining the walls. Maester Luwin possesses a bronze Myrish lens, so he can examine the stars, and a number of charts and illustrations of his findings litter the room.

Pools

Across the godswood, just under the windows of the guest house, lay the pools. Fed by a hot spring deep beneath the castle, these pools steam and bubble day and night. The pools are ideal for bathing and relaxation, and they heat the castle.

Other Locations

Other locations at Winterfell include the bell tower, where the maester tends his ravens, the guard hall adjacent to the armory, the guest house beside three steaming pools across from the heart tree, and the broken tower—once the tallest in Winterfell—whose upper levels were shattered by lightning over a century ago. Today, the broken tower is home only to crows and sparrows. Winterfell also includes a guardhouse, kennels, gatehouses, stables, brew house, kitchens, servants' quarters, and many other structures, including a small sept for use by visiting southern folk. These diverse buildings are joined by a network of bridges, tunnels, and covered passages, making the place a baffling labyrinth to anyone not familiar with its layout.

Winter Town

Just outside Winterfell's walls is Winter Town, a small community of smallfolk that support the Stark family. A market square stands just outside the castle's gates, and muddy streets and neat rows of houses fashioned from logs and rough stone spread out in all directions. Most of the year, Winter Town is empty, but during the cold darkness of winter, folks drift in from across the countryside to take shelter here until the spring.

Cities, Towns, & Holdfasts

The settlements in the North are spread out across the region.

Barrowton

This town is the seat of House Dustin, and from it, the family governs their holdings in the barrowlands.

White Harbor

White Harbor is a modest-sized city of the North and serves as its principle port. House Manderly rules the city and the lands around it. From White Harbor, one can take a barge up the White Knife, almost as far as Winterfell.

The Wall

While Winterfell is impressive in terms of size and scope, it is nothing compared to the wonder of the Wall. Constructed by Bran the Builder some eight thousand years ago, the Wall is a marvel of engineering, an edifice of ice that marches from one side of Westeros to the other. The Wall stands nearly seven hundred feet tall and is wide enough at the top for a dozen armored knights to ride abreast. To the east, the Wall runs straight as a sword, and to the west, it snakes through the mountains, climbs over hills, dips into valleys, and crosses the highest peaks that march north to south.

Reaching the top of the Wall can be achieved by either ice or wooden steps set in the southern face of the Wall or by a basket hoisted up to the top by a crane. All along the top, one can find catapults, scorpions, and trebuchets, along with wooden shacks to give shelter to the men who patrol there. The Wall has no gates as such. To move beyond the Wall, one must travel through a narrow tunnel cut through the ice. These passages, where they exist, are well protected, blocked by iron bars and rigged to collapse in case of an attack.

The Castles

Manned by the Night's Watch, an ancient order of warriors and sentinels who stand guard over this mighty structure, the Watch had built nineteen great strongholds scattered across the entire length. At the height of the Watch's power, they occupied seventeen strongholds, but now, with the Watch as depleted as it is, only three house sentinels, and even they are in various states of disrepair.

Castle Black

The largest and best known of the strongholds is Castle Black; although, as with all the other forts, the term "castle" is a bit of a misnomer. In reality, the fortresses are un-walled collections of towers, keeps, barracks, stables and other structures, intended to provide safe shelter for the wall's garrison rather than hold out against besiegers. Castle Black today boasts a garrison of about six hundred men (of whom perhaps a third are fighters) and is home to the Lord Commander of the Night's Watch and his staff, including the Watch's maester, chief steward, the rangers' commander, and others. Castle Black's rookery is noteworthy for its messenger ravens, which are considered by many to be the best trained and most intelligent in Westeros.

Eastwatch-by-the-Sea

Situated at the Bay of Seals, Eastwatch has a far smaller garrison, a little more than a hundred men, and it is used mostly to receive goods and supplies for distribution to the other castles. This fortress is the only port used by the Night's Watch.

The Shadow Tower

The Shadow Tower lies to the extreme west, standing hard against the mountains where the Wall ends. Here, less than two hundred men stand guard against the wildling raiders that tumble out of the North.

Castles of the Watch

From west to east, all of the following are the castles once held and used by the Night's Watch. All but Castle Black, Eastwatch-by-the-Sea, and Shadow Tower are in ruins or are abandoned.

- **Westwatch-by-the-Bridge:** Abandoned
- **The Shadow Tower:** Garrisoned by two hundred men
- **Sentinel Stand:** Abandoned
- **Greyguard:** In ruins
- **Stonedoor:** Abandoned
- **Hoarfrost Hill:** Abandoned
- **Icemark:** Abandoned
- **The Nightfort:** One of the largest castles, and the first constructed, the Nightfort has a sinister legacy. It was abandoned early because of the dark and terrible deeds committed by the Night's King, a vile black brother who took for his wife a corpse and perpetrated terrible crimes until the Stark King and the King-beyond-the-Wall joined forces to destroy him and his abomination.
- **Deep Lake:** This castle was constructed at Good Queen Alysanne's suggestion, situated at the place where the Wall curved around the shores of a beautiful green lake. Queen Alysanne's jewels paid for the building of this now abandoned castle.
- **Queensgate:** Now abandoned, this fort was formerly called Snowgate and renamed after Good Queen Alysanne spent the night there.
- **Castle Black:** Garrisoned by six hundred men
- **Oakenshield:** Abandoned
- **Woodswatch-by-the-Pool:** Abandoned
- **Sable Hall:** Abandoned
- **Rimegate:** Abandoned
- **The Long Barrow:** Abandoned
- **The Torches:** Abandoned
- **Greenguard:** Abandoned
- **Eastwatch-by-the-Sea:** The smallest of the occupied castles, Eastwatch is garrisoned by a hundred men.

Mole Town

About a league south of Castle Black is a small village called Mole Town. At a glance, it seems a small hamlet, but it is in fact far larger, for nearly three-quarters of the community lives beneath the ground, living in warm cellars connected by a labyrinth of tunnels. The people of Mole Town support the black brothers at Castle Black, offering supplies and, occasionally, recruits, but they mostly cater to their other interests, even though each black brother is sworn to celibacy. Whores welcome these lapsed brothers, who call them buried treasure, for these women live beneath the ground with the rest of the folk of Mole Town.

HOUSE STARK

Ranking	Great
Lands	The North
Castle	Winterfell
Arms	A running grey direwolf, on an ice-white field
Motto	Winter is Coming

The lions of Lannister may pay their debts, and the hawk of House Arryn may soar as high as honor, but the direwolf of House Stark is a different sort of animal. A Stark lives for duty and dies for honor. He may ride laughing in the sunshine, joyously harvest his crops, and bask in the warmth of the long summer, but in his heart, a Stark knows even the brightest days end. Winter comes to Westeros as surely as death comes to every man. Since the most ancient of times, the family motto has been etched on the soul of every Stark, a bleak portent and a grim warning, *winter is coming.*

Lord Eddard Stark		Middle-Aged Leader
Abilities		
Agility	3	—
Animal Handling	3	—
Athletics	3	—
Awareness	3	Notice 1B
Cunning	3	Memory 1B
Endurance	4	Resilience 2B, Stamina 1B
Fighting	4	Long Blades 2B
Knowledge	3	—
Language (Common)	4	—
Persuasion	4	Convince 2B
Status	6	Breeding 1B, Reputation 2B, Stewardship 2B
Survival	3	—
Warfare	5	Command 2B, Strategy 2B
Will	4	Coordinate 1B, Dedication 2B

Attributes			
Combat Defense	9	**Intrigue Defense**	12
Health	14	**Composure**	14
Destiny Points	1		

Benefits: Blood of the First Men, Famous, Head of House, Heirloom (*Ice*), Leader of Men, Pious (Old Gods), Stubborn

Drawbacks: Honor-bound

Plate and Mail: AR 7; AP –2; Bulk 2

Ice	4D+1+2B	9 damage	Powerful, Slow, Two-handed, Unwieldy, Vicious

Eddard Stark

For a moment Eddard Stark was filled with a terrible sense of foreboding. This was his place, here in the north. He looked at the stone figures all around them, breathed deep in the chill silence of the crypt. He could feel the eyes of the dead. They were all listening, he knew. And winter was coming.

— A Game of Thrones

If ever there was a single man who embodied both the strengths and weaknesses of House Stark, it is Lord Eddard. "Ned," as his friends and loved ones call him, is a ruler who is both stern and compassionate, who follows his duty wherever it leads him, and whose oath is all but unbreakable. Eddard's first loyalty is to his family, but loyalty to the crown comes a close second, and it often places him in untenable positions. If Eddard Stark has a fatal flaw it is that he will always follow the path of honor, even if it leads him over a precipice.

History

If it were left to Eddard Stark, he would have lived out his days in the North, comfortable as a son of a great house and doing his part to see to the welfare of his family and smallfolk. Unfortunately for Eddard, he was born in a tumultuous era, and House Stark was to play a critical role in the final fall of the Targaryen dynasty.

The second son of Lord Rickard Stark and brother to heir Brandon, Eddard spent his youth as ward to Jon Arryn, living in the Eyrie with his foster-brother Robert Baratheon. Brandon was pledged in marriage to Catelyn Tully, daughter of Lord Hoster, while Brandon and Eddard's sister, Lyanna, was betrothed to young Robert Baratheon—matches that would strengthen the ties of friendship and alliance between three of Westeros' great households. Eddard was content to be the loyal younger sibling and looked forward to a pleasant life in his beloved northern lands.

All of that was ended by the rash act of Prince Rhaegar Targaryen. Infatuated with Eddard's sister Lyanna, he kidnapped her and set in motion a series of events that would end a mighty dynasty and bring woe to a continent. After the death of both his father and brother, Eddard found himself heir to House Stark, riding to war alongside Robert Baratheon, Hoster Tully, and Jon Arryn.

Custom demanded Eddard wed Catelyn, his late brother's intended, which he did, and then he left with his armies. Eddard proved Robert Baratheon's most loyal and effective ally. While Tywin Lannister and his forces sacked King's Landing and slaughtered the last of the Targaryens, Eddard helped lift the siege of Storm's End before swinging south toward the Tower of Joy in the Red Mountains of Dorne, where his sister was being held by three members of Aerys's Kingsguard.

Eddard and his companions, including Howland Reed, Lord of Greywater Watch, assaulted the Tower of Joy, facing the legendary knights Ser Oswell Whent, Ser Arthur Dayne, and Ser Gerold Hightower, Lord Commander of the Kingsguard. The fight was bloody and, in the end, futile, for Lyanna Stark perished, dying after extracting a

promise from her brother, a promise whose precise nature remains a secret, known only to Eddard and Howland Reed, the sole survivors of the battle.

After the Tower of Joy, Eddard journeyed to Starfall Keep, where he delivered Arthur Dayne's sword "Dawn" to his sister, Lady Ashara Dayne. Some claim it was during this visit Eddard's bastard son Jon Snow was conceived, but Lady Ashara cannot confirm or deny this story, for she threw herself from Starfall's battlements and into the sea soon after.

Eddard bears the scars of Robert's War in his heart and soul. He hoped to return to the simple life of the North and live out his days as Lord of Winterfell. So far, he seems to have gotten his wish, for Catelyn has proved a loyal and loving wife, giving him two strong daughters and three sons. Only the presence of Jon Snow at Winterfell disturbs the quiet life there, but Lord Eddard's sense of honor compels him to keep the boy close, treating him as a member of the family despite Catelyn's protestations.

Personality

Those who do not know Eddard Stark consider him a cold-hearted man, as stony as the Frostfangs. This face is one Ned chooses to show the world, and his tragic history more than gives him cause. Like his predecessors, Ned places a high value on honor and duty, and he forsakes his oaths only in the most extreme of circumstances. Only a threat to his family or the need for justice can convince him to turn from the path of duty, as he did when he raised the banners of the North against Mad King Aerys.

In the company of loved ones, Ned's grim demeanor softens somewhat, and the real man behind the grim façade is revealed. Like a warm summer sun that melts the ice of winter, Eddard plays with his children, happily feasts with his bannermen, regales all with songs and stories, and shows a deep and abiding love for his lady wife Catelyn. Those who love Ned Stark love him well and know he is a good man.

It is only in the matter of Lord Eddard's bastard son Jon Snow that there is tension between him and his wife. Here again is a conflict between family and honor—in fathering Jon, Ned broke faith with his wife, but at the same time, the boy is of his blood, and Ned cannot bring himself to ignore or abandon him. Such conduct is typical of lesser men, such as the bloated oaf King Robert has become, but Ned is a Stark, and he will not turn his back on his own. Accordingly, Jon Snow has been brought to Winterfell and raised as a member of the family, much to Lady Catelyn's displeasure. To her, the boy's presence is like an open wound that cannot heal, a constant reminder of Ned's act of faithlessness, but it is the one matter he refuses to discuss with her. Once more, Ned's sense of honor has cost him dearly, as it is sure to cost him in the future.

Appearance

Ned Stark presents his stern side to the world, but he offers a softer and more caring one to his family and friends. His hair is long and dark brown and his eyes grey, and his white-shot beard makes him look older than his thirty-five years. He customarily dresses austerely, in the dark colors of his house, and he rarely shows emotion to strangers.

Catelyn Stark

Catelyn had fought to keep herself strong, for Ned's sake and for this stubborn brave son of theirs. She had put despair and fear aside, as if they were garments she did not choose to wear... but now she saw that she had donned them after all.

— A Game of Thrones

As much as anyone, Catelyn Stark's life was defined by the War of the Usurper and the madness of King Aerys. Like her husband Eddard, she wishes only to remain in the peaceful fastness of the North where she can care for her family and her realm. Unfortunately for Catelyn, as for many others, the intrigues and violence of Westeros rarely stay confined to one place for very long.

History

Catelyn Stark is the eldest daughter of Lord Hoster Tully, and she spent her childhood at the great castle Riverrun with her sister, Lysa, and her father's ward, Petyr Baelish. Although the ward sought her hand, Catelyn never shared his feelings, seeing him more as a little brother than as a lover. When she came of age, her father arranged a marriage with Brandon Stark, then the heir to Winterfell. When Brandon came to Riverrun to meet with Catelyn, Petyr challenged him to a duel and lost, his life spared only by Catelyn's insistence. In any event, the life she was to have with Brandon ended abruptly when he and his allies descended

Lady Catelyn Stark	Middle-Aged Schemer	
Abilities		
Athletics	3	—
Awareness	4	Notice 2B
Cunning	3	Memory 1B
Deception	3	Act 1B, Bluff 1B
Endurance	4	—
Knowledge	3	—
Language (Common)	4	—
Persuasion	4	Bargain 2B, Charm 1B, Convince 1B
Status	6	Breeding 1B
Warfare	3	—
Will	5	—
Attributes		
Combat Defense	9	Intrigue Defense 13
Health	12	Composure 15
Destiny Points	2	
Benefits: Attractive, Eloquent		
Drawbacks: Haughty		
Dagger	2D	1 damage; Defensive +1; Off-hand +1

on King's Landing to demand justice after Prince Rhaegar stole away Lyanna, Brandon's sister. For this, Brandon was imprisoned and later executed, plunging the Seven Kingdoms into civil war.

As is the custom, Eddard Stark would wed Catelyn in his brother's stead. Pregnant with his child, she waited for him at Winterfell until he finally returned from his campaigns in the south with his bastard in his arms. Eddard's single act of faithlessness would haunt their marriage ever after, for in spite of Catelyn's protestations, Eddard raised the boy among his other children. Normally a kind and caring woman, Catelyn can barely stand the sight of the boy, whose very existence brings back painful memories and reminds her of Ned's failure as a husband. Nevertheless, Cat has truly become the Lady of Winterfell, well respected and loved by nobles and smallfolk alike.

Personality

House Tully's dedication to duty and honor is as strong as that of the Stark's, so Catelyn accepted her match with Eddard Stark with good grace. Catelyn's devotion to her new husband was tested by Jon Snow's presence, but despite this, Catelyn has come to love Ned as a husband and father. Catelyn is not so naïve as to believe war and violence will never again touch her family, but she does her best to prepare them and keep them safe.

Thanks to her upbringing in the riverlands, Catelyn is an intelligent and capable woman, with a good head for running both a household and a realm. Catelyn also has a strong grasp of politics and possesses considerable insight into what makes Westeros run. Nevertheless, Catelyn is also a fiercely protective woman and more often than not follows her heart rather than her head, especially when her family is threatened. She knows how dangerous the world can be, and she is understandably cautious about exposing her children to it.

Appearance

Catelyn is a graceful and attractive woman, even after giving birth to five children. Her hair is dark red, even as her husband grows prematurely grey, and her pale eyes and fair skin are a perfect match for the rugged beauty of the North. She dresses simply and avoids the ostentation of the court at King's Landing, preferring to wear the grey of House Stark or the blue and red of her father's household.

Robb Stark

Catelyn watched a breeze stir his auburn hair, so like her own, and wondered when her son had grown so big. Fifteen, and near as tall as she was... As she watched him, this tall young man with the new beard and the direwolf prowling at his heels, all she could see was the babe they had laid at her breast at Riverrun, so long ago.

— A Game of Thrones

Though he takes more after his mother's Tully appearance, Robb is certainly his father's son, and most feel he will make an excellent Lord of Winterfell when his time comes. Today, Robb is a serious young man who, despite the occasional emotional outburst, is nevertheless learning the wisdom and patience that is demanded of a Stark ruler.

History

Eddard and Catelyn's eldest child, Robb was born soon after the War of the Usurper. Even as a child he seemed to understand the great responsibility he bore, taking on the role of leader and confidant of his younger siblings. Robb dutifully takes on the role of elder brother. This role grew even more prominent with the arrival of Arya, Bran, and Rickon, and today he is the acknowledged leader of the Stark children, and all care for him deeply.

Personality

Even at fourteen, Robb has begun to show himself as a masterful leader and a budding diplomat with the ability to see and understand others' personalities and viewpoints and then adapt his manner to suit them. He helps curb Arya's fiery spirit without quenching it, he encourages Bran in his adventures while also counseling caution, and he even manages to steer a treacherous course between his half-brother Jon and his mother Catelyn, maintaining a close friendship with Jon and being a dutiful and loving son to his mother. These qualities are certain to come into play later when Robb finally takes his destined role as Lord of Winterfell.

Robb is also a strong fighter, trained by some of the best arms masters in the Seven Kingdoms. He is patient and methodical, and unlike peers such as Joffrey Baratheon, he refuses to allow his emotions to get the better of him in battle. Robb seems possessed of a strong military instinct and is well versed in the histories of Westeros' wars, leading most to believe he will make an excellent leader of men in combat. It is hoped the long peace of Westeros will continue, but Robb knows peace is often illusory, and with such ambitious individuals as Balon Greyjoy still scheming for power, conflict is inevitable.

Appearance

Robb is a handsome young man with his father's broad-shouldered build and his mother's auburn hair. His blue eyes are thoughtful, and his complexion is fair. In many ways, Robb embodies the best of both of his parents' houses, and he seems to bear the demeanor of a great lord, even at his relatively young age. He prefers the darker colors of House Stark, though will dress in more festive Tully livery should the occasion demand it.

Robb Stark	Young Adult Leader
Abilities	
Animal Handling 3	—
Athletics 4	—
Awareness 3	Empathy 1B, Notice 1B
Cunning 3	—
Deception 2	Act 1B
Endurance 4	Stamina 2B
Fighting 4	—
Knowledge 3	—
Language (Common) 4	—
Persuasion 3	Convince 1B
Status 5	—
Survival 3	—
Warfare 3	Command 1B, Strategy 1B
Will 3	—

Attributes			
Combat Defense	9	Intrigue Defense	11
Health	12	Composure	9
Destiny Points	2		

Benefits: Expertise (Command), Heir, Leader of Men, Magnetic, Talented (Warfare)

Drawbacks: Honor-bound

Superior Mail: AR 6; AP –2; Bulk 1

Shield	4D	2 damage	Defensive +2
Excellent Longsword	4D+1	5 damage	

Sansa Stark

...Sansa's spirits took flight. A whole day with her prince! She gazed at Joffrey worshipfully. He was so gallant, she thought. The way he had rescued her from Ser Ilyn and the Hound, why, it was almost like the songs, like the time Serwyn of the Mirror Shield saved the Princes Daeryssa from the giants, or Prince Aemon the Dragonknight championed Queen Naerys's honor against evil Ser Morgil's slanders.

— A Game of Thrones

Sansa is very much a child of summer, and as such, she may be hard pressed by the winter shadows that are sure to come. Bright, happy, and romantic, Sansa can also be petulant and unwise like any child her age. In the bloody world of Westeros, however, even a child's bad judgment can lead to disaster.

Sansa Stark	Adolescent Schemer
Abilities	
Animal Handling 3	—
Awareness 3	—
Deception 4	Act 1B
Knowledge 4	Education 1B
Language (Common) 4	—
Persuasion 4	Charm 1B
Status 5	Breeding 1B
Will 3	Dedication 1B

Attributes			
Combat Defense	7	Intrigue Defense	10
Health	6	Composure	9
Destiny Points	4		

Benefits: Charismatic (Charm), Favored of Nobles, Magnetic

Drawbacks: Naïve

Fist	2D	1 damage	Grab, Off-hand +1

History

Sansa has spent all of her eleven years in the North, learning the duties of a noble daughter and dreaming of romance in far-off realms. So far, her life has consisted of lessons from her septa, prayer in the godswood, games with her siblings, and a growing rift between her and her wilder sister, Arya. Sansa dreams of a world of knights and ogres, rescued maidens, and noble deeds, and she desperately wishes to experience the excitement of the outside world.

Personality

Like many girls her age, Sansa is enthralled by tales of romance and adventure, and she sees the world through the eyes of an innocent, blind to its ugliness and violence. She disdain's Arya's rebelliousness and Bran's recklessness, preferring instead to play the dutiful daughter and learn needlework and court dances in the hope of one day catching the eye of a dashing hero and being swept away to an enchanted castle as his bride. Her greatest dream is to be part of the court in King's Landing and to be wooed by knights in armor and noblemen on white horses.

Appearance

The consensus is that Sansa will soon be a beautiful woman. In appearance, she is more Tully than Stark, having rich auburn hair, blue eyes, and pale skin. She loves bright colors and often disdains House Stark's traditionally somber shades.

Arya Stark

...there were quicksands waiting to suck you down, and snakes watching from the trees, and lizard-lions floating half-submerged in the water, like black logs with eyes and teeth.

None of which stopped Arya, of course. One day she came back grinning her horsey grin, her hair all tangled, and her clothes covered in mud, clutching a raggedy bunch of purple and green flowers for Father. Sansa kept hoping he would tell Arya to behave herself and act like the highborn lady she was supposed to be, but he never did, he only hugged her and thanked her for the flowers. That just made her worse.

— A Game of Thrones

Known affectionately (or sometimes with considerable annoyance) as "Arya Underfoot" by the staff and servants of Winterfell, Arya Stark is a wild and free-spirited child who wants nothing to do with the world of knights and nobles that so enchants her sister Sansa. A grubby, wild-haired nine-year old, Arya is easily mistaken for a boy, and her taste for excitement and adventure seems much more like that of her brother Bran than Sansa or even Robb. Lord Eddard has been known to nearly tear his hair out over his youngest daughter's antics, but in his heart, he truly loves her and is proud of her wild and untamed nature, traits well suited to the wild and dangerous lands of the North.

History

Arya was born soon after Eddard Stark's return from the Greyjoy Rebellion, and she quickly showed herself to be an independent and strong-willed child. Whenever she could, young Arya ran off by herself and seemed more interested in playing war with boys than in the more serious and stifling womanly arts of dancing, singing, and sewing. In her nine years, she has driven both her parents and tutors, particularly the dour Septa Mordane, to distraction, and she shows no sign of changing. She is close to her brothers, especially Jon Snow, but she finds her sister Sansa to be both boring and stupid. Conflict between the two girls is an almost daily occurrence, despite Eddard and Catelyn's attempts to create a peace between them.

Personality

Arya's nurses and septa frequently complained she simply could not be persuaded to sit still, and to this day, she chafes at her lessons and the everyday requirements of her station. Her sewing is appalling, she dislikes music except for adventurous ballads and heroic songs, and she sees dancing as something fit only for stupid, courtly ladies like her sister. Eddard does his best to encourage Arya, and Catelyn is often on the verge of despairing for her future, but Arya remains a wild child with more interest in fighting and exploring than in becoming a proper noblewoman. Whenever she can, she sneaks off to explore or to socialize with her brothers. She maintains an especially close relationship with Jon Snow, a situation her mother finds deeply troubling. For entertainment, Arya loves to read or hear stories about the exploits of ancient heroes and warriors. Her favorite is the warrior-queen Nymeria, who founded the Dornish kingdom of the south.

Arya Stark		Youth
Abilities		
Agility	3	Dodge 1B, Quickness 1B
Animal Handling	3	—
Athletics	3	Run 1B
Awareness	3	—
Cunning	3	—
Deception	3	—
Endurance	3	—
Language (Common)	4	—
Status	4	—
Stealth	3	Sneak 1B
Will	4	—
Attributes		
Combat Defense	9	Intrigue Defense 10
Health	11	Composure 12
Destiny Points	4	
Benefits: Blood of the First Men, Dexterous, Expertise (Sneak)		
Fist	2D	1 damage — Grab, Off-hand +1

Appearance

Arya is more Stark than Tully, with unkempt dark hair and a long, serious face. She disdains fine clothing and rarely, if ever, dresses for court, preferring to wear rough tunics and trousers, which are more suited to exploring and mock combat with the boys.

Bran Stark

He liked how it felt, too, pulling himself up a wall stone by stone, fingers and toes digging hard into the small crevices between. He always took off his boots and went barefoot when he climbed; it made him feel as if he had four hands instead of two. He liked the deep, sweet ache it left in the muscles afterward. He liked the way the air tasted way up high, sweet and cold as a winter peach. He liked the birds: the crows in the broken tower, the tiny little sparrows that nested in cracks between the stones, the ancient owl that slept in the dusty loft above the old armory. Bran knew them all.

Most of all, he liked going places that no one else could go, and seeing the grey sprawl of Winterfell in a way that no one else ever saw it. It made the whole castle Bran's secret place.

— A Game of Thrones

The second son of the Stark brood, Bran is named for his uncle, who was in turn named for the house's great founder, Bran the Builder. He possesses an easy charm and is well liked by both the household and his siblings. He looks forward to the day when he can ride beside his brother Robb and serve House Stark as a knight or war-leader. In the meantime, he enjoys his childhood, exploring every corner of Winterfell and taking chances with his life that horrify both his mother and father.

Bran Stark		Youth
Abilities		
Agility	4	Balance 1B
Animal Handling	3	—
Athletics	3	Climb 3B
Awareness	3	—
Knowledge	3	—
Language (Common)	3	—
Status	4	—
Stealth	4	—
Attributes		
Combat Defense	10	Intrigue Defense 9
Health	6	Composure 6
Destiny Points	7	
Benefits: Dexterous, Expertise (Climb), Talented (Athletics)		
Fist	2D	1 damage — Grab, Off-hand +1

History

Bran was born seven years ago, in the warm height of summer, and has not yet known even the slightest touch of true winter. He is a smart and charming child, though at an early age he showed an almost preternatural fascination with climbing, often found clinging to trees or perched atop sheer walls. Since then, Bran's adventurous streak has grown even more ambitious, and he clambers freely along the walls and ramparts of Winterfell despite his parents' admonitions and the frequent attention of household servants and guards, who often chase after him only to have the nimble youngster elude their pursuit.

Personality

Bran is bright, easy going, and friendly. He is probably the most amiable of the children—less serious than Robb, less rebellious than Arya, more cheerful than Sansa, and less fussy than Rickon. Like the other Stark children, he is close to his half-brother Jon Snow and enjoys the company of the Stark's ward Theon Greyjoy, who has an adventurous, devil-may-care quality Bran finds appealing. He likes nothing better than to hear Old Nan's stories, and he frequently demands to hear the more frightening ones, such as tales of the Others and the Battle for the Dawn. He has begun training with weapons and seems destined, like his brother Robb, to be an excellent fighter.

For the most part, Bran is an obedient and good-natured son, save in the matter of his explorations, which he pursues despite Eddard and Catelyn's stern commands otherwise. Bran is never cruel, but he does enjoy leading household servants on merry chases across the battlements and rooftops, for he invariably escapes and his punishment is rarely severe.

Appearance

Bran favors his Tully side in appearance, having auburn hair and bright, intelligent eyes. Though Bran's features are still round and boyish, he has a strength to his demeanor that recalls both his Stark father and his Tully uncles.

Rickon Stark

After them came the children. Little Rickon first, managing the long walk with all the dignity a three-year-old could muster. Jon had to urge him on when he stopped to visit.

— A Game of Thrones

A headstrong three-year-old, Rickon is the last of Eddard and Catelyn's children.

History

At three years, Rickon is the youngest member of the family, but he is very much a Stark, nevertheless. Loved by the household and doted on by both parents and siblings, Rickon is showing himself to be a strong-willed and intelligent boy.

Personality

Young Rickon is stubborn and willful but also kind and loving, depending upon his mood. He is particularly attached to his brother Robb and Bran and his half-brother Jon Snow, all of whom dote on him endlessly. His mother Catelyn keeps a close watch on Rickon, fearful he will develop the same independent streak and take the same foolish risks as his brother Bran. She dislikes Rickon's attachment to Jon Snow but has, so far, done little to discourage it.

Appearance

Rickon is still a baby, but along with the auburn hair of a Tully, he also carries the determined mien of House Stark.

Jon Snow

Bastard of Winterfell

Whoever Jon's mother had been, Ned must have loved her fiercely, for nothing Catelyn said would persuade him to send the boy away. It was the one thing she could never forgive him. She had come to love her husband with all her heart, but she had never found it in her to love Jon. She might have overlooked a dozen bastards for Ned's sake, so long as they were out of sight. Jon was never out of sight, and as he grew, he looked more like Ned than any of the trueborn sons she bore him. Somehow that made it worse.

— A Game of Thrones

Eddard Stark's immutable sense of honor compelled him to bring Jon Snow to Winterfell and raise him as his own son. Lord Stark did this despite his wife's disdain for the child and his own dishonorable conduct in breaking his wedding vows by fathering a bastard. Though the other Stark children love Jon, he remains an outsider, and he has never felt comfortable within the walls of Winterfell.

History

The identity of Jon Snow's mother has long been the subject of intense speculation, and for his part, Eddard Stark refuses to speak on the matter, even to his own wife. Some claim Jon is the son of a commoner or camp follower Eddard bedded while on campaign. A far more romantic tale states Jon was conceived when Eddard visited Lady Ashara Dayne to return the sword of her husband Ser Arthur, who had perished in the fight at the Tower of Joy. Lady Dayne is known to have killed herself after Eddard's visit by flinging herself from the battlements of Starfall Keep, but most of the stories claim this was soon after Jon's birth.

Confusion about his true parentage is only one issue that makes Jon a lonely and confused young man. He virtually worships Lord Eddard, who treats him as warmly as he can without further enraging Cate-

lyn. When he was a child, Jon dreamed of inheriting Winterfell, and even today, with the knowledge Robb is Eddard's true heir, he would be content to stay in the great fortress and serve his father's house as a knight.

Lady Catelyn treats Jon coldly, with a distant and proper courtesy that makes it clear he is *not* a part of her family. For his part, mindful of the popular belief bastards are wicked and treacherous, Jon does his best to avoid Catelyn and not draw her ire. He continues to live in Winterfell as a member of the household, but remains a troubled young man, assailed by guilt and shame, always in the knowledge he can never truly be a Stark.

Personality

For all his personal troubles, Jon can be very pleasant, and he loves his half-siblings dearly, especially Arya, who also seems to be something of an outsider due to her wild behavior. Understandably, Jon is given to fits of gloom and moodiness, and he often goes off by himself for long periods, contemplating both the past and the future.

Jon's self-doubt and isolation have led to some favorable character traits. He is independent and self-reliant. He is loyal and keeps his word, and—possibly most important—he has become adept at communication, both spoken and unspoken. Very few men possess Jon's skill at reading another's intentions and seeing through obfuscations to know what another is truly saying. He is particularly good at seeing hidden talents in others and at diplomatically changing another's mind through subtle argument and reason rather than brute force. Many see these as qualities that might one day make Jon Snow a potent officer or knight. Unfortunately for Jon, his present life at Winterfell makes such a thing seem unlikely, as does his birth.

Appearance

Even at age fourteen, Jon Snow is more visibly a Stark than any of his siblings. He is dark, with strong and handsome features and Eddard Stark's dark eyes. He dresses in dark and unobtrusive colors matching his mood and personality.

Jon Snow	Young Adult Leader
Abilities	
Agility 3	Quickness 1B
Animal Handling 3	—
Athletics 4	—
Awareness 3	Notice 1B
Cunning 4	—
Endurance 3	Resilience 1B
Fighting 4	Long Blades 1B
Language (Common) 4	—
Marksmanship 3	Bows 1B
Persuasion 3	Convince 1B
Status 3	—
Survival 3	—
Warfare 3	—
Will 3	Dedication 1B
Attributes	
Combat Defense 11	Intrigue Defense 10
Health 9	Composure 9
Destiny Points 3	
Benefits: Blood of the First Men, Compelling, Long Blade Fighter I	
Drawbacks: Bastard Born	
Hard Leather: AR 3; AP –2	
Longsword 4D+1B	5 damage

Theon Greyjoy

Theon held his tongue, though not without a struggle. So that is the way of it, he thought. As if ten years in Winterfell could make a Stark. Lord Eddard had raised him among his own children, but Theon had never been one of them. The whole castle, from Lady Stark to the lowest kitchen scullion, knew he was hostage to his father's good behavior, and treated him accordingly. Even the bastard Jon Snow had been accorded more honor than he had.

Lord Eddard had tried to play the father from time to time, but to Theon he had always remained the man who'd brought blood and fire to Pyke and taken him from his home. As a boy, he had lived in fear of Stark's stern face and great dark sword.

— A Clash of Kings

The last surviving son of Lord Balon Greyjoy, Theon was sent to Winterfell as a hostage after Eddard and Robert Baratheon smashed the Greyjoy Rebellion nine years ago. Theon has since grown to manhood among the Starks, and although he seems to fit in well with the Northmen, he remains an outsider, his status as hostage never far from his mind. In addition, he is the sole heir to Lord Balon, and someday, he plans to become leader of the harsh ironborn, a role for which his relatively easy life at Winterfell may have left him ill prepared.

History

Balon Greyjoy's attempt to declare independence from the Seven Kingdoms and rule the Iron Islands as a separate state ended in disaster for all concerned when Stannis Baratheon smashed Balon's fleet, and the combined forces of Eddard Stark and Robert Baratheon crossed over to assault Pyke. Balon's first son Rodrik died at the walls of Seagard, and his second son Maron perished while defending Pyke. The elder Greyjoy accepted bitter defeat and bent the knee to King Robert, allowing Theon, his sole surviving son, to be taken hostage by the Starks.

Since that day, Theon has lived at Winterfell, treated with the utmost respect and kindness despite his status. He has developed a close relationship with the Stark children, especially Robb. He is known for his good humor and easygoing manner, though some have noted he seems

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THEON GREYJOY		YOUNG ADULT SCHEMER
ABILITIES		
AGILITY	3	—
ATHLETICS	3	—
CUNNING	3	—
DECEPTION	4	—
ENDURANCE	3	—
FIGHTING	3	—
LANGUAGE (COMMON)	4	—
MARKSMANSHIP	5	Bows 2B
PERSUASION	3	Charm 2B, Seduce 2B, Taunt 1B
STATUS	4	—
SURVIVAL	3	—

ATTRIBUTES			
COMBAT DEFENSE	8	INTRIGUE DEFENSE	9
HEALTH	9	COMPOSURE	6
DESTINY POINTS	1		

BENEFITS: Accurate, Charismatic (Seduce), Expertise (Bows), Magnetic, Ward

SOFT LEATHER: AR 2, AP –1

EXCELLENT LONGSWORD	3D+1	4 damage	
DAGGER	3D	1 damage	Defensive +1, Off-hand +1
HUNTING BOW	5D+2B	3 damage	Long Range, Two-handed

to have a cruel streak. For the most part, however, he is a well-liked part of the household at Winterfell.

Personality

Though he seems to be a happy and good-natured young man, the fact is Theon is a stranger in two worlds. He is a hostage to House Stark—he will never gain any authority or importance among the people who have served as his foster family, and he is an outsider who, in the view of most ironborn, at least, has never seen real battle, which makes him unlikely to garner the respect he needs to rule the Iron Isles.

As he grows older, these facts weigh heavier on Theon, though he conceals his inner conflict well, participating in hunts and other entertainments with the Starks and cultivating a cheerful, if slightly cynical, disposition. He has shown himself to be an excellent fighter and is particularly skilled with the bow. Theon is not yet fully a man by the Iron Isles' standards, and his self-doubt occasionally compels him to take unnecessary risks, sometimes at the risk of his own or others' safety.

Theon never forgets he is heir to the Iron Isles, and despite his apparent friendship with the Starks, his gaze is fixed on Pyke, the father he barely knows, and the harsh and unforgiving people whom he someday intends to lead. He is determined to perform deeds to make even the harshest and most bloodthirsty raider take notice and acknowledge him as a true ironborn.

Appearance

There is no question Theon is growing up to be a charismatic and handsome young man, a fact he often uses to his advantage when pursuing

Other Members of the Stark Household

In addition to the notable members of the house, Winterfell is home to a number of supporting characters who serve the noble family.

- **Guardsmen:** Alebelly, Alyn, Cayn, Desmond, Donnis, Hal, Harwin, Hayhead, Heward, Jacks, Lew, Porther, Quent, Shadd, Skittrick, Tomard (Fat Tom), Poxy Tym, Varly, Wayn, and Wyl.
- **Servants:** Barth, Calon (Cayn's son), Chayle (septon), Farlen (kennelmaster), Gage (cook), Gariss, Hullen (master of the horse), Joseth (stableman), Bandy and Shyra (twin daughters of Joseth), Mikken (smith and armorer), Murch, Mycah, Palla, and Turnip.

Maester Luwin		Middle-Aged Expert
Abilities		
Animal Handling	4	Train 1B
Awareness	4	Empathy 2B
Cunning	4	Logic 2B, Memory 1B
Healing	4	Diagnose 1B, Treat Injury 1B
Knowledge	5	Education 2B
Language (Common)	5	—
Language (Others)	3	—
Persuasion	3	Convince 1B
Status	4	Stewardship 1B
Thievery	3	Sleight of Hand 1B
Will	3	Dedication 1B

Attributes			
Combat Defense	7	Intrigue Defense	12
Health	3	Composure	9
Destiny Points	3		
Benefits: Cautious Diplomat, Knowledge Focus (Astronomy, History and Legends, Magic), Master of Ravens			
Drawbacks: Flaw (Athletics, Endurance, Thievery)			
Robes: AR 1			
Dagger	2D	1 damage	Defensive +1; Off-hand +1

comely peasant girls. He is dark and fine-featured, with a deep and thoughtful gaze and a trim athletic build. He frequently carries his bow and dresses in garments that often combine features of both House Stark and Greyjoy—most often dark grey or black tunics with the golden kraken of his house embroidered on the chest.

Notable Servants

House Stark is known for the skill and loyalty of its servants, who are well treated and rewarded for their service. These servants are almost considered family, and their influence on the Stark brood is almost immeasurable.

Septa Mordane

The Stark girls' instruction is in the hands of the thin and dour Septa Mordane. She is every bit the traditional septa, and in her role as tutor, she does her best to educate the girls in the womanly arts of needlepoint, dancing, music, and household management. She is proud of the dutiful Sansa, but she cannot understand Arya's wild streak, feeling even more frustrated than the young hellion's parents at her antics.

Old Nan

Among the most beloved of the household servants is the aged woman known only as Old Nan. Nurse and caretaker to the young Stark children, she remains among the servants due to the affection they feel for her, despite being almost completely blind and incapable of all but the most basic tasks. Old Nan has served the Starks for decades, first raising Brandon (she does not recall which one) and then seeing to several generations of Starks. Today she is a valued source of stories and folklore, always ready to entertain the children with fables and fantastic tales from the past—especially young Bran, who particularly enjoys her company.

Hodor		Adult
Abilities		
Animal Handling	3	—
Athletics	6	Climb 2B, Strength 4B, Throw 1B
Awareness	3	—
Endurance	5	Resilience 2B, Stamina 2B
Fighting	3	—
Will	3	—

Attributes			
Combat Defense	11	Intrigue Defense	6
Health	17	Composure	9
Destiny Points	3		
Benefits: Expertise (Strength), Tough			
Drawbacks: Flaw (Cunning, Deception, Knowledge, Language)			
Fist	3D	3 damage	Grab, Off-hand +1

Maester Luwin

The wise Maester Luwin serves as Winterfell's chamberlain and as chief healer and tutor to the Stark children. He is an extremely sensible and learned man, who knows much of Westeros and its past, and is also aware of some of the history of the magical arts, a subject he made special study of while at the Citadel. He is most often the voice of reason at Winterfell, dissuading the youngsters from unwise decisions and providing rational explanations for seemingly extraordinary events.

Hodor

Old Nan lost two sons in the War of the Usurper and a grandson to the Greyjoy Rebellion. After her two daughters married, Nan was left with only her great-grandson Hodor, a towering but simple-minded and gentle young man whom some suggest may even carry some giant blood. Though his true name is Walder, he gained his current moniker because "Hodor" is the only word he says. No one knows what "Hodor" means, but the young man utters it expressively in a manner that leaves no doubt of his current emotional state. Hodor serves as a stableboy.

Banners of the North

Like all the other great houses of Westeros, House Stark has many retainers and other lesser houses who have sworn fealty to the dire wolf. Also like the other great houses, the Stark's bannermen are a mixed lot, ranging from households with spotless honor and unquestioned loyalty to less reliable individuals who chafe at Lord Eddard's oversight and even attempt to undermine House Stark's authority. All, however, must come should Lord Eddard call his banners, though some may come more readily than others.

House Bolton

Ranking	Major
Castle	The Dreadfort
Arms	A red flayed man on a pink de sang

The houses of the North have been good and bad, noble and treacherous, but some houses live under a dark and sinister cloud, and of them, few can compare to House Bolton. In ages past, the Boltons and the Starks were sworn enemies, and they fought against the Kings of Winter in all things, as recently as the time of Bael the Bard, a famous King-beyond-the-Wall. Eventually, the Bolton host submitted to Stark rule, though it was a grudging surrender at best.

Lord Roose Bolton	Middle-Aged Fighter	
Abilities		
Agility	3	—
Athletics	3	—
Awareness	3	—
Cunning	3	—
Deception	3	Act 1B, Bluff 1B
Endurance	5	Resilience 1B
Fighting	4	—
Knowledge	3	—
Language (Common)	4	—
Persuasion	3	Bargain 2B
Status	5	Reputation 1B
Survival	3	—
Warfare	4	Command 1B, Strategy 1B
Will	4	Dedication 2B
Attributes		
Combat Defense	9	Intrigue Defense 11
Health	12	Composure 12
Destiny Points	3	
Benefits: Courteous, Head of House, Landed, Treacherous		
Drawbacks: Disturbing Habit, Flaw (Endurance)		
Plate and Mail: AR 7, AP –3, Bulk 3		
Excellent Longsword	4D+1	4 damage

House Bolton gains its fearsome reputation from their ancient practice of skinning their enemies and wearing their hides as cloaks. Some Starks even met this fate before the Boltons finally bent their knees, and rumor suggests the Boltons still pursue this grisly practice in secret, even keeping a room in their castle where these hides are on display. The Dreadfort is a place of ill omen and dark legends, and some stories go so far as to claim the fearsome Night's King was originally from House Bolton. Despite their fearsome reputation, the Boltons command a substantial number of House Stark's banners and can contribute many trained soldiers and knights to any military force.

Roose Bolton

Lord of the Dreadfort

The current Lord of House Bolton is Roose Bolton, a man sworn to the service of House Stark. Counted as one of the Stark's most loyal supporters in spite of the historical rivalry between these houses, Roose Bolton raised his banners in the War of the Usurper in support of House Stark and again during the Greyjoy Rebellion. Lord Bolton is twice a widower, his most recent wife being Lady Bethany of House Ryswell, who was lost to a fever. His only trueborn son was Domeric, who died in childhood of a bad belly. With no other heirs, it seems his bastard Ramsay Snow may be positioned to become the Bolton heir.

Roose is a quiet and calculating man, with eyes so pale they seem colorless. He is a skilled tactician and an excellent warrior. Outside of the battlefield, he comes off as a mild-mannered and courteous man, but those closest to him know of his bloodthirsty streak and his queer obsession with his health—he receives regular leechings to remove his bad blood.

Ramsay Snow, Bolton's Bastard

Cruel, calculating, and thoroughly wicked, Ramsay Snow embodies the worst traits attributed to the bastard born. He is a sly creature who keeps company with a filthy wretch named Heke (also called Reek). Although he has not been legitimized, he acts as Bolton's heir and ranges about his father's lands, acquiring a reputation for madness and brutality, traits even his father cannot abide. Ramsay is a fleshy young man with fat moist lips and long hair.

House Cassel

Ranking	Landed
Arms	Ten white wolf heads, 4-3-2-1, on a grey field with black border

The Cassels are household knights of House Stark, noted for their loyalty and dedication to the Stark family. Martyn Cassel, the former head of the family, was one of Eddard Stark's close friends who accompanied him to face the remaining Kingsguard at the Tower of Joy. It was in that bloody battle that he died.

Ser Rodrick Cassel

Training and other important duties fall to House Stark's master-at-arms Ser Rodrick Cassel, the knight and castellan of Winterfell. Old and tough, Ser Rodrick's loyalty to House Stark is absolute and utterly unbreakable, though his advancing age makes performing his many duties more strenuous with each advancing year. He remains a sturdy and powerful man, with astonishing white cheek whiskers. Rodrick was brother to Martyn Cassel and is uncle to Jory Cassel.

Rodrick has been married three times and fathered several daughters. Only Beth remains with him, and she's a little girl and playmate of the Stark children.

Jory Cassel

Ser Rodrick's nephew, Jory Cassel serves as captain of Lord Eddard's guard. His loyalty to House Stark is every bit as strong as his uncle's, and he helps supplement the boys' training while remaining a fast friend and faithful retainer, following in the steps of his father Martyn, who died fighting alongside Eddard Stark at the Tower of Joy. Jory is particularly superstitious, always watchful for omens. He's a skilled lancer and warrior, though he has never been anointed as a knight.

House Cerwyn

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Cerwyn Castle
Arms	A black battleaxe on silver
Motto	Honed and Ready

House Cerwyn is a minor house sworn to House Stark. Lord Medger Cerwyn, a mild, soft-spoken man, is head of the house, and he ever searches for a suitable husband for Lady Jonelle Cerwyn, his plump and homely maiden daughter of nearly thirty-two. Medger's heir is Cley Cerwyn, a quick-witted boy of fourteen.

House Condon

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Eagle's head between crossed tridents, red on white

House Condon is a minor house sworn to House Cerwyn. The most notable member of this house is Ser Kyle Condon, who is one of Medger's constant companions.

House Dustin

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Barrowlands
Castle	Barrowton
Arms	Two rusted longaxes with black shafts crossed, a black crown between their points on a yellow field

Lord Willam Dustin was one of Eddard Stark's companions when they rode to confront the Kingsguard at the Tower of Joy. He was known to ride a great red stallion and acquitted himself well in that famous battle, but he, along with most of Stark's other companions, perished. In the years since his death, rule of House Dustin has fallen to his widow, Lady Barbrey Dustin of House Ryswell.

House Fenn

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Three black water lilies on a violet field

House Fenn is a minor house sworn to House Stark.

House Flint of Flint's Finger

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Blazewater Bay
Castle	Flint's Finger
Arms	A grey stone hand upon a white inverted pall on paly black and grey

This branch of the Flint family has ties to the Flints of Widow's Watch and the far smaller Flint clans of the northern mountains. Their lands consist of the southern shores of Blazewater Bay. Lord Robin Flint is lord of this house and is counted as one of the Stark's more constant allies.

House Flint of Widow's Watch

Ranking	Major
Castle	Widow's Watch
Arms	A blue field strewn with whitecaps, a pair of blue eyes on a yellow chief with crested line
Motto	Ever Vigilant

The senior branch of the extended Flint family, House Flint of Widow's Watch commands a peninsula east and north of White Harbor. These Flints have ties to House Stark, having married into the family a few generations back. The current head of Widow's Watch is Lady Lyessa Flint, who is with child.

House Glover

Ranking	Major
Castle	Deepwood Motte
Arms	A silver fist on a scarlet field

House Glover has strong ties to House Stark, and the late Ethan Glover was one of Eddard Stark's companions during the War of the Usurper, and he also served as Brandon Stark's squire. Currently, Lord Galbart Glover, son of Ethan, rules their ancestral lands of Deepwood Motte, a rugged domain located north of Sea Dragon Point and on the opposite side of the wolfswood from Winterfell, near the tidal flats of the Bay of Ice. A simple wooden fortress perched on a hill, Deepwood Motte is nevertheless an important strategic location for the Starks, as it can be used to supply an army from the sea, and its remote location makes sieges difficult. Deepwood Motte's garrison is small, but the folk of the domain are tough and determined, adapted to a life in the wilds. Lord Galbart is a man steeped in the traditions of the First Men, keeping

HOUSE FLINT OF WIDOW'S WATCH

HOUSE GLOVER

HOUSE IRONSMITH

HOUSE KARSTARK

the old gods, as do the Starks. He's considered a good man, loyal and steady.

Galbart's younger brother Robett and his wife Lady Sybelle also live at Deepwood Motte. As Galbart is unwed and has no heirs, Robett stands to inherit Deepwood Motte on his brother's death. Robett is married to Lady Sybelle of House Locke. His son is Gawen Glover, a boy of two, and his wife is newly with child.

In addition, Galbart Glover has also taken Lawrence Snow, the bastard son of Lord Halys Hornwood, as his ward. A clever young man of eleven years, he's known for his keen wit and courage.

House Hornwood

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Hornwood
Arms	A brown bull moose with black antlers on orange field
Motto	Righteous in Wrath

House Hornwood holds lands east of Winterfell, along the edges of House Bolton's lands, and Lord Harys Hornwood is the head of the house. An ambitious man, he looks upon his neighbors' lands with hungry eyes, always maneuvering to gain the advantage he needs to expand his holdings. Lord Hornwood is married to Lady Donella and has one legitimate son, Daryn Hornwood, and one bastard, Lawrence Snow, who's fostered at Deepwood Motte. House Hornwood also has connections with House Tallhart, thanks to a marriage of Berena Hornwood to Leobald Tallhart.

House Ironsmith

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A black sword, upright, between four black horseshoes on a field of gold, with a grey-green border

House Ironsmith is a minor family with holdings in the North and sworn to House Stark.

House Karstark

Ranking	Major
Castle	Karhold
Arms	A white sunburst on black field
Motto	The Sun of Winter

Like many of the northern houses, House Karstark claims to have directly descended from the First Men, and they claim with pride their close ties to House Stark, having been raised to lords one thousand years ago when Karlon Stark put down a rebel lord. For his service, the King of Winter granted this cadet branch of Starks lands to the northeast of Winterfell, in the midst of a forest beyond the Last River. Eventually the so-called Karhold Starks became the Karstarks, a household quite separate from the Starks of Winterfell. They are big, fierce men with great beards and long hair, and they wear cloaks of bear, wolf, and sealskin.

Rickard Karstark

Lord Rickard Karstark is the head of House Karstark, and he has ever proven his loyalty to House Stark, raising his banners without question during the War of the Usurper. Rickard has a long beard and possesses the distinctive ferocity and wildness that characterize this ancient and storied house. Rickard's eldest son and heir is Eddard Karstark. As well, Rickard is father to two more sons, Torrhen and Harrion Karstark, each of fighting age, and an adolescent daughter named Alys.

House Lake

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Seven pommes, 2-2-2-1, green on brown

House Lake is a minor family with holdings in the North and sworn to House Stark.

House Lightfoot

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A line of white footprints in bend sinister, on a dark brown field

House Lightfoot is a minor family with holdings in the North and sworn to House Stark.

House Locke

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Oldcastle
Arms	Bronze crossed keys on a white pale on purple

HOUSE LOCKE

HOUSE MANDERLY

HOUSE MARSH

HOUSE MORMONT

House Locke is a minor family who hold lands in the North. Lord Ondrew Locke is an old man and in poor health, unable to venture far from his family's holdings. In his stead, Ser Donnel Locke sees to the family's interests in the lands. Ser Mallador Locke, another of Ondrew's sons, serves on the Night's Watch.

House Manderly

Ranking	Major
Lands	White Harbor
Castle	White Harbor
Arms	A white merman with dark green hair, beard, and tail, carrying a black trident on a blue-green field

The castle at White Harbor was built by King Jon Stark to defend against eastern sea raiders. Driven from the lands of the river Mander (which the Manderlys insist was named for them rather than the other way around), the Manderlys were granted the fortress and surrounding lands and have served as loyal bannermen to House Stark ever since. As they were from the south, the Manderlys continued to follow the faith of the Seven rather than the old gods of the North and are quite devoted to the principles of chivalry and knighthood. Today, the White Harbor region is prosperous, with considerable mercantile trade from the east and rich fishing grounds.

Lord Wyman Manderly

The Manderlys are currently led by Lord Wyman, whose vast girth derives from his great fondness for eels and is matched only by his great booming laugh. Wyman is so fat that travel is difficult, but he can manage short trips and has been known to attend Winterfell during times of trouble. House Manderly enjoys a connection to House Hornwood by way of Lady Hornwood, who is a cousin to the house of White Harbor.

Ser Wylis Manderly

Wyman's heir is his eldest son, Ser Wylis Manderly. Nearly as rotund as his father, he's fat, older, quiet, and formal. He's bald and wears a thick moustache. Although an anointed knight, he's far better attacking a trencher filled with food—as his clothing testifies—than he is at attacking his enemies. Wylis is wed to Lady Leona of House Woolfield and has two daughters, Wynafryd and Wylla, both of marriageable ages.

Other Manderlys

Wylis' brother is Ser Wendell Manderly. Also old and fat, he is as bald and as mustached as his elder brother. Ser Marlon Manderly, a cousin, serves as the commander of White Harbor's garrison. House Manderly is wealthy and powerful enough to have the service of a maester named Theomore.

House Marsh

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Ten frogs, 4-3-2-1, green on yellow

A minor family of little merit, their most notable member is Bowen Marsh, who serves on the Night's Watch.

House Mollen

Ranking	Landed
Arms	A pine tree covered in snow in a pale green pile, on white

The most well known member of House Mollen is Hallis Mollen, a muscled guardsman at Winterfell, who is favored to be second to Jory Cassel in command of the household guards.

House Mormont

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Bear Island
Arms	A black bear in a green wood
Motto	Here We Stand

Old and poor, the Mormonts are nevertheless a proud and honorable family, and they have served Stark loyally for many generations. It is said King Rodrik Stark won Bear Island from its original owners, the Woodfoots, in a wrestling match and gave it to the Mormonts. No one knows whether this story is true, but Bear Island is certainly a beautiful place, covered in ancient forests and flowering thorn bushes, its lands crisscrossed by rushing streams and creeks. The Mormont's hall is built from huge logs and is surrounded by an earthen palisade. It is sparsely populated and wild, consisting only of a few crofters and fisherfolk.

The Mormonts are a storied and celebrated house. In the past, it is said that the women were forced to defend themselves against the raiding ironmen and wildlings while their men were away fishing, and today, they are known to be as tough and fierce as she-bears. A carving at the entrance to Mormont Keep memorializes this story, depicting a woman in a bearskin, holding an axe in one hand and a suckling babe in the other.

Jeor Mormont, current Lord Commander of the Night's Watch, was Lord of Bear Island, but he surrendered his claim to his son, Jorah, to become a black brother. However, after Jorah's crimes and exile, the house fell to Maege Mormont, Jeor's sister.

Lady Maege Mormont

Maege Mormont is the current head of House Mormont and ruler of Bear Island. She attained her place when her nephew Jorah Mormont fled to the Free Cities to escape justice after he was caught selling criminals into slavery to pay for his debts. A stout grey-haired woman, stern and tough, she wears mail and carries an axe, which can be somewhat off-putting to the more delicate ladies of the North. She's stubborn, short-tempered, willful, dedicated to the old gods, and loyal to House Stark, making her and her family some of Eddard's most loyal supporters.

Maege has five daughters. Her eldest, and heir, is Dacey Mormont. At six-feet tall, lean, and muscled, she's followed in her mother's steps in terms of her fighting spirit and warrior's mien. Her sisters include Alysane, Lyra, Jorelle, and Lyanna.

Ser Jorah Mormont		Middle-Aged Fighter
Abilities		
Agility	3	—
Animal Handling	3	Ride 1B
Athletics	4	Strength 2B
Awareness	3	Notice 1B
Deception	4	Act 1B, Bluff 2B
Endurance	4	Stamina 1B
Fighting	4	Long Blades 2B
Knowledge	3	Streetwise 1B
Language (Common)	3	—
Persuasion	3	—
Survival	3	—
Warfare	3	—
Will	3	—

Attributes			
Combat Defense	9	Intrigue Defense	7
Health	12	Composure	9
Destiny Points	2		
Benefits: Long Blade Fighter I, Treacherous, Worldly			
Drawbacks: Debt, Flaw (Agility), Nemesis (Eddard Stark), Outcast			
Mail: AR 5, AP –3; Bulk 2			
Longsword	4D+2B	5 damage	
Large Shield	4D–1D	2 damage	Bulk 1, Defensive +4

Ser Jorah Mormont

Jorah inherited Bear Island when his father took the black soon after his wife, a Glover woman, died. Newly installed as lord, Jorah answered Stark's call to arms during the Greyjoy Rebellion and helped breach the walls of Pyke, where he won his knighthood and was anointed by the High Septon. To celebrate the victory, King Robert ordained that a tournament would be held outside of Lannisport and demanded that his bold warriors attend. There, Jorah fell in love with Lynesse Hightower, and he fought in the tournament to win her favor. Win he did, and he named her the Queen of Love and Beauty. Thanks to his excellence in arms and how he acquitted himself at Pyke, Jorah managed to win her hand in marriage.

Unfortunately, the marriage was not a happy one, for Lynesse was accustomed to the comforts of the south and was ill prepared for the cold and desolate north. To keep his wife happy, Jorah drained his family's coffers to buy her baubles, hire singers, and transform his meager holdings into something akin to her expectations. In the end, she was still unhappy, and his house was penniless. To pay for the treasures he felt he needed to give his wife, he did the unthinkable and sold poachers to slavers for coin. When word of his ignoble acts reached the ears of Eddard Stark, the lord of Winterfell traveled to Bear Island to dispense justice.

Jorah fled the island with his wife for Lys. He sold everything he had to maintain his wife's expected lifestyle, but it wasn't long after that he was penniless once more. With no other prospects, Jorah took service as a sellsword and lost his wife when she became the chief concubine of a powerful merchant prince named Tregar Ormollen. Since then, Jorah has drifted from master to master, and he currently serves Illyrio Mopatis in Pentos as a hired sword.

Jorah is a homely man, thick and muscled, with coarse black hair on his chest and arms and a bald head. While he is armed as a knight, his clothing and weapons are of common make, such is his destitution. Jorah despises Eddard Stark, blaming the lord for all his trouble, even while he overlooks his own hand in his exile.

House Moss

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A bend orange on vairy green and grey

A minor house in the North, they owe their allegiance to House Stark.

House Overton

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A checkered silver and gold fess on black

A minor house in the North, they owe their allegiance to House Stark.

HOUSE MOSS

HOUSE OVERTON

HOUSE RYSWELL

HOUSE TALLHART

House Poole

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A blue plate on white, with a grey tressure

A minor house in the North, they owe their allegiance to House Stark. Vayon Poole, presumably the head of the house, serves as Winterfell's steward. He has a daughter, Jeyne, who is one Sansa Stark's constant companions.

House Reed of Greywater Watch

Ranking	Major
Lands	Greywater
Castle	Greywater Watch
Arms	A black lizard-lion on grey-green

"To Winterfell we pledge the faith of Greywater. Hearth and heart and harvest we yield up to you, my lord. Our swords and spears and arrows are yours to command. Grant mercy to our weak, help to our helpless, and justice to all, and we shall never fail you. I swear it by earth and water. I swear it by bronze and iron. We swear it by ice and fire."

—The crannogmen's oath to House Stark

The crannogmen of the Neck are among the strangest of House Stark's allies, but they are also among the most valued. The rest of Westeros calls the swamp-folk "frog-eaters" or "mudmen" and sees them as hopelessly primitive rustics. Lord Eddard sees the crannogmen's value as scouts, and their bloody hit-and-run tactics have brought many a powerful foe to grief. Crannogmen and -women fight with nets, slender frog spears, and bronze knives, striking from hiding and vanishing into the swamp.

Many strange tales surround the crannogmen, for they are diminutive and claim to know some of the secrets left by the children of the forest. It is said they practice some of the ancient spells, and a few crannogmen have the greensight, the ability to see other times and places. They are, for the most part, a peaceful people who live in thatched reed huts on floating islands and fight only if they have to.

Though the crannogmen disdain nobility, knights, and the tenets of chivalry, they do have a ruling house, the Reeds of Greywater Watch. This fortress is the center of the crannogmen's realm, though no one can say for certain exactly where it is. Greywater Watch is said to drift and move, never in the same place twice, as elusive as the folk who dwell in the bogs of the Neck.

Howland Reed

Howland Reed is the Lord of Greywater Watch and is one of Eddard Stark's closest friends, being the only other companion to have survived the fight at the Tower of Joy, even going so far as to save Eddard's life from Ser Arthur Dayne, and he also cared for Lyanna Stark in her last days. After the War of the Usurper, Howland Reed retreated to Greywater Watch and has not emerged from his swamps since.

Meera Reed

Howland is wed to Jyana, and from his marriage, he has had at least two offspring, Meera and Jojen Reed. Meera is the elder of the two and is slim, almost boyish in appearance. At home in the bogs and swamps of her people, she wears sensible clothing and has mastered the frog-spear and net. She's as fearless as she is graceful, with sharp ears, keen eyes, and a steady hand.

Jojen Reed

Jojen Reed, Meera's younger brother by about two years, is a curious and serious young man. Blessed (or cursed) with the greensight, he experiences queer dreams that uncannily predict the future. He gained his gift as a little boy, when he nearly died from greywater fever. During the throes of his illness, he experienced a strange dream of a winged wolf held in chains and of a three-eyed crow chipping at the chains. He's kept the dream to himself so far, but he suspects some terrible event in the near future might reveal itself, a fact that later drives him to reveal his vision to his father.

Crannogmen

The crannogmen are the reclusive people of the Neck. Subsisting on fishing and frogging, most people suspect them of all sorts of queer acts, which is only reinforced by their unusual customs and manners. Crannogmen collect in small villages formed of reeds and thatch that sit atop floating islands in the mire.

House Ryswell

Ranking	Major
Lands	The Rills
Arms	A black horse's head, red eyes and mane, on bronze with black engrailed border

House Ryswell commands the hilly lands known as the Rills southwest of Torrhen's Square. While removed from much of the politics in the North, Eddard Stark counted Ser Mark Ryswell as one of his close companions, and he died at the fighting before the Tower of Joy. The current lord of the house is Lord Rodrik Ryswell. He married his daughter Barbrey off to House Dustin and married another daughter, Bethany, now deceased, to Roose Bolton. Lord Rodrick has a number of quarrelsome cousins who also serve as his bannermen, including Roger Ryswell, Rickard Ryswell, and Roose Ryswell.

According to legend, seventy-nine men deserted the Night's Watch and sought refuge with the then Lord Ryswell, as one of their numbers was the lord's son. Lord Ryswell rounded them up and marched them back to the Wall, where they were each sealed up inside the Wall, such was the lord's honor. In his dying days, Ryswell took the black so he could stand watch next to the son he consigned to death.

House Slate

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Pale grey, double tressure white

House Slate is a minor house with lands in the North and is sworn to House Stark.

House Stout

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Goldgrass
Arms	Chevronny russet and gold

House Stout is a minor house with lands in the North and is sworn to House Stark. Lord Harwood Stout commands his holdings from his castle, Goldgrass. Related to Harwood is Ser Wynton Stout, who serves with the Night's Watch, and Ronnel Stout, a noted warrior.

House Tallhart

Ranking	Major
Castle	Torrhen's Square
Arms	Three sentinel trees, green on brown
Motto	Proud and Free

Led by Ser Helman Tallhart, Torrhen's Square is a small domain centered on a strong fortress that rises from a lakeshore in the rugged lands south of the wolfswood and north of the barrowlands. Though relatively few in number, the Tallharts are an important ally to House Stark, as Torrhen's Square is one of few fortresses in the region, and it would form a vital bulwark against invasion or raids from the west. The ironmen are well aware of the fort's strategic importance, and it would be one of their first targets should war ever break out again.

Helman Tallhart's heir is his eldest son, Benfred Tallhart, a hefty man thick with muscle and fat. Helman also has a young daughter, Lady Eddara. Helman's younger brother and castellan is Leobald, who is wed to Lady Berena of House Hornwood, and he has two sons, Brandon and Beren, neither fully grown.

House Umber

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Bay of Seals
Castle	Last Hearth
Arms	A roaring giant with brown hair, wearing a skin, with broken silver chains, on flame red

The Umbers control the harsh land along the Bay of Seals, a place of wild hills and ancient forests of oak and pine. They are a hardy people, tempered by the rough northern climate and often called upon to help defend the Wall against wildling raiders. The Umbers' most celebrated victory was as part of the host that defeated the brothers Gendel and Gorne, who had, together, declared themselves Kings-beyond-the-Wall over three millennia ago. Today, the house has a rather fearsome reputation, and some tales claim that the Night's King was not a Bolton at all, but an Umber.

Last Hearth and its surrounding lands are ruled by the Greatjon, a man who in many ways resembles the roaring giant that is the household's sigil. Greatjon is a loud, passionate man with a taste for hunting, feasting, and brawling, and he has little respect for those who show weakness or indecisiveness. The surest way to gain Greatjon's favor is to show him strength and courage, for once the Umbers' friendship is gained they are faithful to the last.

The Greatjon's uncles include Mors and Hother. Mors, a drunken brute also called Crowfood, got his nickname when he was left for dead, and a crow pecked out his eye. It's said he snatched the crow and bit off its head. He now wears a chunk of dragonglass in the socket. Hother, named Whoresbane, serves as the castellan at Last Hearth along with Mors.

The Greatjon's heir is Smalljon Umber.

House Waterman

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Brown crossed oars on white, between a pair of blue flanches

House Waterman is a minor house with lands in the North and is sworn to House Stark.

House Wells

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Per fess - five black roundels on grey over green and white lozengy

House Wells is a minor house with lands in the North and is sworn to House Stark. Their most notable member is Ser Theodan Wells, named Ser Theodan the True. He is noted as being an extraordinarily pious man who has dedicated his life to the Faith.

HOUSE WATERMAN

HOUSE WHITEHILL

HOUSE BURLEY

HOUSE NORREY

House Whitehill

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A white pile inverted on indigo, an arch of four-pointed stars above

House Whitehill is a minor house with lands in the North and is sworn to House Stark. Like few other houses in the North, House Whitehill keeps the Faith.

House Woolfield

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Three wool stacks, white on purple, a white border

House Woolfield is a minor house with lands in the North and is sworn to House Stark.

Houses of the Mountain Clans

Although these families were raised to nobility by Stark lords, the mountain peoples do not see themselves as such, and their people do not follow the customs of the southron houses.

House Burley

Ranking	Clan
Arms	A white knife in a blue pile on white

House Burley is one of the northern clans. Burley, or Lord Burley at Winterfell, is the head of this house.

House Harclay

Ranking	Clan
Arms	Three blue moons - waxing, full, waning, on a white bend, on blue

House Harclay is one of the northern clans and holds territory in the foothills north of the wolfswood. Ronnel Harclay of the Night's Watch is related to this family.

House Knott

Ranking	Clan
Arms	A brown fret on white

House Knott is one of the northern clans and holds lands in the mountains north of the wolfswood. Knott, or Lord Knott at Winterfell, is the head of this clan.

House Liddle

Ranking	Clan
Arms	Per pale white and green, a fir tree line between, three brown pinecones on the white

Another of the northern mountain clans, House Liddle governs the highlands north of the wolfswood. Torren Liddle, "the Liddle," is the chieftain of this clan.

House Norrey

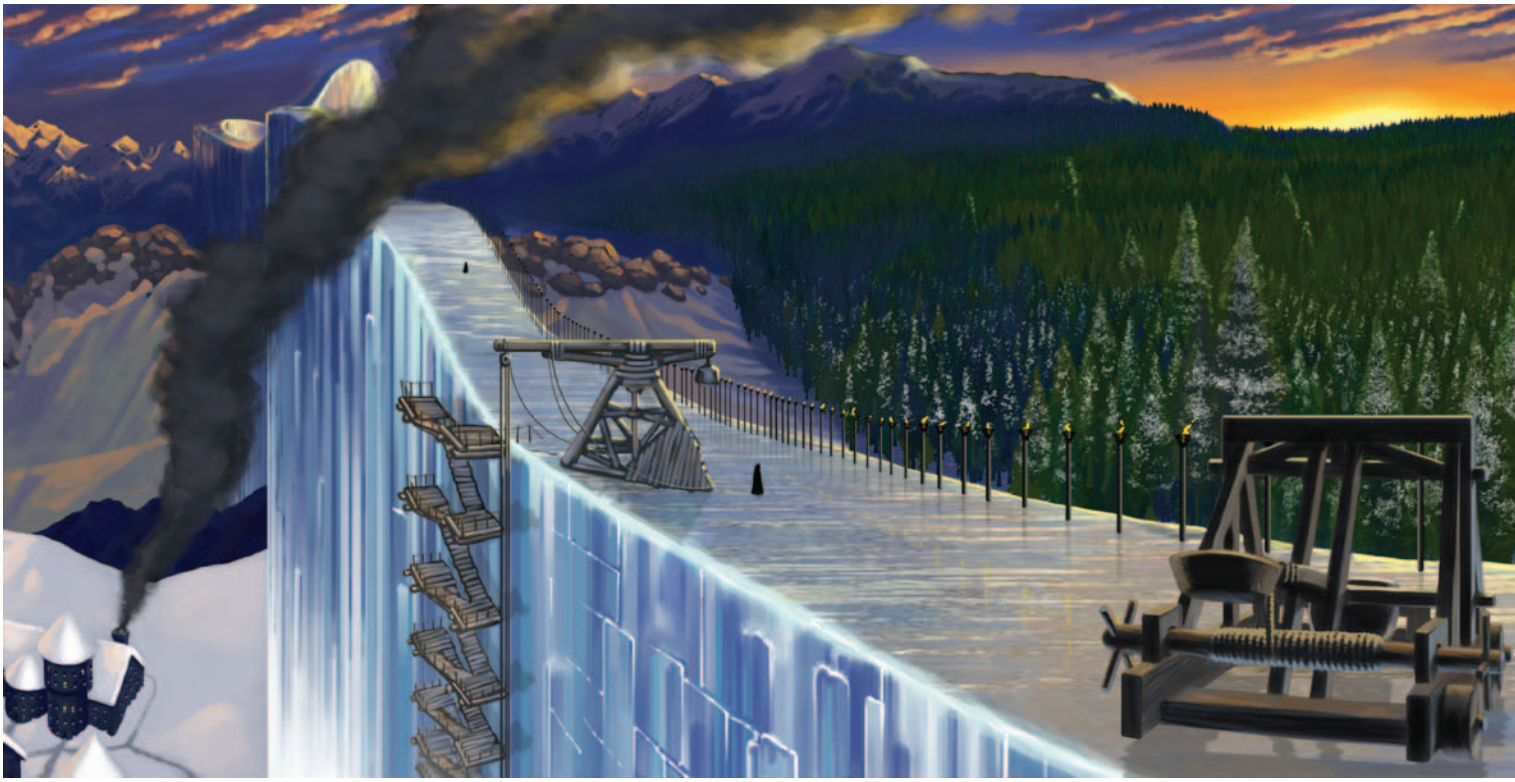
Ranking	Clan
Arms	Six green thistles, 3-2-1, on yellow

House Norrey is another minor clan of the North, with lands in the mountains north of the wolfswood. Brandon Norrey, called "the Norrey," is the clan's chief. Owen Norrey, blood relation to Brandon Norrey, has been known to spend time at Winterfell.

House Wull

Ranking	Clan
Arms	Three wooden buckets, brown on blue, with a border of grey and white checks

House Wull is one of the more significant northern clans and holds lands west of the northern mountains along the Bay of Ice. Theo Wull, also called "Buckets," was one of Eddard Stark's faithful companions during the War of the Usurper, though, presumably, he died at the Tower of Joy. Hugo Wull, also called "Big Bucket," is the current chieftain of this clan.



THE NIGHT'S WATCH

A handful of men stand guard against the coming of winter and the horrors of the Far North. They have forsaken all for their duty—lands, title, family, fortune. They are bastards, disgraced nobles, fallen knights, criminals, traitors, sons of whores, the lost, the forgotten, and the dregs of Westeros. Yet it is they, and no others, who bear steel against the night and face the creatures of nightmare. They alone hold the fate of Westeros in their hands, but they are few and with the coming of winter, their task seems all but impossible. Still, they stand a watch that will not end until death. They are alone, save for each other. They are the men of the Night's Watch.

History

The Night's Watch traces its origin back to the horrors of the Long Night and the Battle for the Dawn, in which an alliance of First Men and the children of the forest turned back the Others' onslaught. Wise leaders of the alliance, Brandon the Builder among them, took steps to ensure that neither they nor their descendants would ever be caught off-guard by an invasion from the North again. Using arcane means long lost to the southron lands, Bran the Builder raised the Wall, an imposing structure of solid ice that stretches from the Frostfangs in the west to the Bay of Seals in the east, cutting off the Lands of Always Winter from the remainder of Westeros.

The Wall was one thing, but this massive structure alone could not protect the continent and people from the threat that lay to the north. Men were needed to stand watch on the Wall. Once more, Bran and the other leaders of the alliance made a wise and considered decision—the men who garrisoned the Wall had to be independent of any kingdom, devoted only to their duty, which was to protect everything south of the Wall from the Others, the giants, and the wild human tribes cut off during the Wall's construction. The men who watched for the coming of night would need to swear an oath, forsaking all ties with their old lives, devoting themselves only to the task at hand. They would wear black and bear no sigils, and they would be called the Night's Watch. A man's past would be forgotten when he joined the Watch, and from that day he would be as a brother to all other members.

In the early days, the Night's Watch was an admirable and honored brotherhood. To take the black was considered the supreme sacrifice, and members of the Watch were welcomed from one end of Westeros to the other. To host one of the black knights of the Wall, as they were called in those days, was a singular honor, and any lord in all the many realms of Westeros would have been proud to do so. In those days, the Night's Watch maintained close relations with the children of the forest, who provided the brothers with weapons crafted of dragonglass—as obsidian was called in those days.

Time and again over the next eight millennia, the Night's Watch proved its worth, holding the Wall in both summer and winter and turning back numerous assaults by the wildlings of the North. Always, the black brothers held true to their vows, took no part in the wars of the south, and maintained their posts even as the Andals crossed the narrow sea to drive out the First Men and conquer their divided realms. The black brothers even held steady when Aegon the Conqueror and his dragons forged the Seven Kingdoms into one nation with a conflagration of dragon fire.

The land up to twenty-five leagues south of the Wall is known as Brandon's Gift, granted to the Watch by Brandon the Builder (some maesters claim it was another Brandon, but most believe it was the

original). When Queen Alysanne visited the Wall with her dragon, Silverwing, over two hundred years ago, she was so impressed by the Night's Watch's bravery and skill, she doubled the size of the gift to fifty leagues south of the Wall. This portion is today known as the New Gift; although, after two centuries, it is scarcely new.

The Night's Watch was not always perfect in its duties, however. The Lord Commander now known as Sleepy Jack stood idle while the King-beyond-the-Wall known as Raymun Redbeard scaled the Wall with an army of wildlings. Open warfare broke out between the Nightfort and Snowgate over six hundred years ago, and their masters murdered the Lord Commander when he tried to intervene. The Starks were forced to march north and bring the rebellious commanders to heel, executing both of them. Other Lord Commanders, such as Runcel Hightower, Tristan Mudd, Mad Marq Rankenfell, and Robin Hill, forgot their vows and tried to use the Night's Watch for their own personal advancement. All of these plots came to grief, a grim warning to others who would think to do the same.

Fearsome tales are told of the Night's King, a Lord Commander who took a strange pale-skinned, blue-eyed maiden to wife, declared himself king, and bound the black brothers to him with sorcery. Overthrown by an alliance of the Starks and Joramun, a legendary King-beyond-the-Wall, the Night's King was later discovered to have been sacrificing his own men to the Others. Other horrible stories surround the Nightfort, including tales of the Rat Cook, who served the Andal king a prince-and-bacon pie, and of seventy-nine faithless sentinels sealed in ice, forever facing north. Other stories include the rape and murder of young Danny Flint, of the apprentice boys who faced the thing in the night, and of the man called Mad Axe, who stalked through the courtyards and climbed the towers to butcher his black brothers in the night.

Structure

Westerosi bards sing of the bravery of the Night's Watch and the nobility of the black brothers of the Wall, and tales of their bravery resound from Skagos to Sunspear. As always, the reality is somewhat less romantic, for the Night's Watch of today is a mere shadow of its former greatness. Now, it's a haven for outcasts, criminals, oathbreakers, and traitors, and it is undermanned and often overwhelmed by its vast responsibilities.

Nevertheless, the Night's Watch carries on, providing pardons, haven, and even reward to all but the most irredeemable. Rogues they are, and outlaws, murderers, rapers, kinslayers, and sons of whores besides. But in the Night's Watch, a stableboy can stand as tall as a knight, and even a craven can discover true bravery.

Commanders

Given the egalitarian nature of the Night's Watch, its Lord Commander is simply the first among equals—with no knights, priests, nobles, or kings, the men of the Night's Watch choose their commander by popular vote, and any member regardless of age, seniority, or status is eligible to stand for the office. Lord Commanders serve for life or until they resign, and they are most often drawn from the ranks of rangers. Each of the three orders is led by its own officer, called First Ranger, First Builder, and First Steward. These officers are appointed by the Lord Commander.

Recruiting

Once, taking the black was a sign of selfless devotion to duty. There were criminals and outcasts among the black brothers, to be sure, but there

Night gathers, and now my watch begins. It shall not end until my death. I shall take no wife, hold no lands, father no children. I shall wear no crowns and win no glory. I shall live and die at my post. I am the sword in the darkness. I am the watcher on the walls. I am the fire that burns against the cold, the light that brings the dawn, the horn that wakes the sleepers, the shield that guards the realms of men. I pledge my life and honor to the Night's Watch, for this night and all nights to come.

—THE NIGHT'S WATCH OATH

were also fine and honorable men who took the black voluntarily. At worst there were many who were forced to renounce their allegiances after failed rebellions or scandal, but even these men found redemption at the Wall. Today, the Night's Watch is considered little better than punishment—suitable only for the dregs of Westeros, salvaged from dungeons by traveling recruiters. Disgraced nobles, bastards, and even the unwanted legitimate offspring of nobles are also "encouraged" to take the black, making many of today's Watch a surly and dissatisfied lot.

Training

A new recruit faces a harsh life on the Wall—and not only because of shortages and harsh conditions. The Watch's trainers are notoriously brutal, though with the Watch in decline, they can no longer be as ruthless as in the past when they mercilessly culled the weak and unfit from their ranks. After a harsh training regimen in which even the meekest and most inoffensive are forced to learn deadly fighting techniques, a recruit is finally deemed ready to join the Watch. At this point, the recruits are given a final choice—take the oath and forever turn their backs on their old lives, or they can return to Westeros and the fate that awaited them before being taken by the Watch. Unsurprisingly, most recruits choose the former and become full-fledged members of the black brotherhood. Their oath is permanent and irrevocable—any man who breaks his oath to the Night's Watch knows his life is forfeit.

Orders

Although one institution, the Watch comprises three orders, or rather, functions. These include the rangers, the builders, and the stewards. In addition, there are also the wandering crows, but they lack the structure and organization of the main groupings.

Rangers

Though all three orders are of equal importance, the rangers get the lion's share of the glory and attention in the popular imagination. These men are the point of the sword—they are scouts, explorers, spies, and warriors who venture beyond the Wall to investigate wildling activity, harvest timber and supplies, and perform rescue missions and punitive raids.

Builders

The builders play a significant, if less glamorous, role for the Watch—in addition to maintaining the increasingly decrepit fortresses and attendant structures, these brothers also keep an eye on the Wall itself, ever vigilant for cracks, weak spots, and other irregularities. Repairing the Wall is relatively simple—a combination of water and gravel can usually be used to strengthen bad areas, but in some cases, more extensive work is required. The builders also oversee the graveling of the Wall's upper surface and keep the tunnels, stairs, and elevators that provide access in good working order.

Stewards

The order of stewards is the largest of the three, and it includes those considered more capable of mundane chores than the more demanding tasks of the builders and the rangers. Make no mistake; the stewards are the backbone of the Night's Watch, providing food, clothing, communication, and other vital services. In many ways, stewards are the most versatile of the orders, for a member of this order must often know the Night's Watch from top to bottom and be ready to serve in a range of capacities, from laundryman and librarian to cook and stablehand. In addition, like all other members of the Watch, the stewards must be ready to fight at a moment's notice, and all have received at least basic combat training.

Wandering Crows

Since few men are willing to pay the price to join the Night's Watch, it falls to a select group of trustworthy men to go out into the Seven Kingdoms and round up recruits. Called the wandering crows, they drift from town to town, city to city, gathering up the wretched cast-offs, the criminals, and the dangerous, scouring dungeons and stocks, whipping posts and gibbets alike, to find capable men who might stand their turn on the Wall. In olden days, these wandering crows might have been accorded with a great deal of respect, but the nature of their work and the decadence of the south leaves many of these crows insulted, spit upon, and ignored.

Notables

The black brothers of the Wall are one of the most diverse groups in all of Westeros. Here one can find both heroes and villains, as well as every shade in between. Though it is all but impossible to describe a "typical" member of the Night's Watch, most share a number of qualities, including independence, self-reliance, and a distrust of the outside world, its petty politics, and bloody wars. Though it has become a refuge for scoundrels and rogues, the Night's Watch remains one of the few places where a man can make his own future without regard for birth or past misdeeds.

Maester Aemon

The old man touched the maester's chain that hung loosely about his thin, fleshless neck. "My father was Maekar, the First of his Name, and my brother Aegon reigned after him in my stead. My grandfather named me for Prince Aemon the Dragonknight, who was his uncle, or his father, depending on which tale you believe. Aemon, he called me..."

"Aemon... Targaryen?" Jon could scarcely believe it.

"Once," the old man said. "Once. So you see Jon, I do know... and knowing, I will not tell you stay or go. You must make that choice yourself, and live with it all the rest of your days. As I have." His voice fell to a whisper. "As I have..."

— A Game of Thrones

Possibly the oldest living man in Westeros, Maester Aemon is blind and nearly crippled. Nevertheless, he is one of the most knowledgeable and wise men in all of Westeros. He is in many ways a symbol of everything that the Night's Watch once represented, for when he took the black long ago, his past was forgotten, and he was accepted as just another black brother. Only a few brothers know that the man they call Maester Aemon was once known as Aemon Targaryen, heir to the Iron Throne.

History

Maester Aemon was born the third son of King Maekar Targaryen. As a younger brother of princes Daeron and Aerion, Aemon was unlikely to succeed to the throne and so acceded to the wishes of his grandfather, King Daeron II, and attended the Citadel, receiving his maester's chain at a very early age. Later, he served a number of nobles, finally acting as his brother Daeron's maester. In 233 AL, after both older princes had died, the Great Council offered Aemon the throne, but to the surprise of all, he refused in favor of his younger brother Aegon, known to history as King Aegon V "the Unlikely." Refusing to be drawn into the game of thrones or be used against his brother at a later date, Aemon instead chose to take the black and sever his ties to House Targaryen altogether.

Aemon has served the Watch faithfully for the last five decades, keeping his oath even when House Targaryen was torn from the throne and his own descendants ruthlessly murdered by the Usurper and his allies. Today, he remains on the Wall, content to do his duty. A few black brothers, including the Lord Commander, know his secret, but to most members of the Night's Watch he is just a frail old man who sits in his tower waiting for death to claim him.

Personality

Maester Aemon presents a picture of contentment and peace, secure in the knowledge that he has found his place and faithfully discharged his responsibilities. He is patient and wise in a way that only a man of his advanced years can be, and anyone who spends time with him will be the better for it. His world is the Wall, but that does not mean that he is unaware of events in the south—to be sure, he mourned for the death of his family, and he is aware of rumors that his great-niece Daenerys and great-nephew Viserys survived the massacre at King's Landing and escaped to the east. Though he knows that his time is ending and that

Maester Aemon		Venerable Expert
Abilities		
Animal Handling	5	Train 2B
Awareness	5	Empathy 4B
Cunning	5	Logic 3B, Decipher 2B
Deception	3	—
Healing	5	Diagnose 2B, Treat Ailment 3B, Treat Injury 4B
Language (Common)	5	—
Language (High Valyrian)	5	—
Language (Various)	3	—
Persuasion	4	Convince 1B
Status	4	Stewardship 2B
Will	4	Dedication 2B

Attributes			
Combat Defense	9	Intrigue Defense	14
Health	6	Composure	12
Destiny Points	0		

Benefits: Brother of the Night's Watch (Steward), Gifted Teacher, Knowledge Focus (Astronomy, Geography, Heraldry, History, and Legends), Maester

Drawbacks: Feeble, Impaired Sense (Sight)

his place is with his brothers, a part of him hopes that Dany will return as queen, restoring justice to an increasingly lawless continent.

Appearance

Aemon is ancient and frail, his skin wrinkled and thin as parchment. His wizened head is hairless, and he stares out with sightless, milky white eyes. He dresses plainly and relies on his attendant stewards to help him dress and move about.

Qhorin Halfhand

"Jon knew Qhorin Halfhand the instant he saw him, though they had never met... It was told that he had thrust his maimed fist into the face of the axeman so the blood spurted into his eyes, and slew him while he was blind. Since that day, the wildlings beyond the Wall had known no foe more implacable."

— A Game of Thrones

Second in command of Shadow Tower after Ser Denys Mallister, Qhorin is a legendary ranger and a feared enemy of the wildlings. He has ventured deeper into the wild than any other living man, and his knowledge of the wildlings and their ways is unequaled.

Qhorin is a hard man, devoted to a difficult way of life, as shown by his namesake right hand, missing three of its fingers, and his worn, but still serviceable, gear. If ever he had a life before the Night's Watch, his time and experiences beyond the Wall have worn it away, leaving nothing but a devoted ranger behind.

Qhorin Halfhand		Adult Expert
Abilities		
Agility	3	Quickness 1B
Athletics	4	Climb 1B, Jump 1B, Run 1B, Strength 1B
Awareness	3	Empathy 1B, Notice 2B
Deception	3	Bluff 1B
Endurance	4	Resilience 1B, Stamina 1B
Fighting	5	Long Blades 2B
Stealth	3	Sneak 2B
Survival	4	Forage 1B, Hunt 1B, Orientation 1B, Track 2B
Will	3	Dedication 1B
Attributes		
Combat Defense	10	Intrigue Defense 7
Health	13	Composure 9
Destiny Points	2	
Benefits: Brother of the Night's Watch (Ranger), Long Blade Fighter I, Long Blade Fighter II, Terrain Specialist (Forests, Mountains), Tough		
Drawbacks: Maimed (–2D Fighting with Two-handed weapons)		
Soft Leathers: AR 2, AP –1		
Longsword	5D+2B	5 damage

History

The Halfhand is a living legend, a veteran of dozens of expeditions beyond the Wall and hundreds of desperate fights with the wildlings. He speaks little of his old life, and he denies he is or ever was a lord or noble—the Watch is his life, and the brothers are now his family. Recently, he has been spending considerable time in the wilderness, investigating rumors that Mance Rayder, the King-beyond-the-Wall, is gathering an army that includes giants and mammoths.

Personality

Qhorin Halfhand is a brother in the finest tradition of the Night's Watch, and he is a sign of what the brotherhood once represented. His past is not only forgotten, it is all but nonexistent. He is stern when he needs to be, but he can also be forgiving and understands the needs of men on the Wall. He can serve as both an expert solo scout and an inspiring leader, and he is both a diplomat and a warrior. Though he is an implacable foe of the wildlings, he respects them, and they respect him. At the same time, any wildling would leap at the chance to face him and, if possible, to slay one of their greatest and most feared adversaries. Such is Qhorin's devotion, he would quickly sacrifice his own life to the cause, especially if it gave the Watch an advantage against or frustrated Mance Rayder's plans.

Appearance

Qhorin is a big man, tall and straight with long limbs and a solemn expression. Unlike most other black brothers, he goes clean-shaven, but he leaves his hair long, normally in a braid. He has worn the same gear for years, and his blacks have now faded to grey. His most notable feature is, of course, his maimed right hand that retains only thumb and forefinger, a gift from the wildlings he has since more than repaid in full.

Jeor Mormont

Lord Commander of the Night's Watch

"The Night's Watch has become an army of sullen boys and tired old men. Apart from the men at my table tonight, I have perhaps twenty who can read, and even fewer who can think, or plan, or lead. Once the Watch spent its summers building, and each Lord Commander raised the Wall higher than he found it. Now it is all we can do to stay alive."

— Jeor Mormont

The Old Bear, as he is called, is the Lord Commander of the Night's Watch. Big, burly, and gruff, he is nevertheless a highly intelligent and experienced leader, known for his tactical skill and his ability to find good, talented men among Watch recruits.

Jeor Mormont		Old Fighter
Abilities		
Animal Handling	3	Charm 1B, Train 1B
Athletics	4	—
Awareness	3	Empathy 1B
Cunning	3	Memory 1B
Endurance	4	Resilience 1B, Stamina 1B
Fighting	4	Long Blades 1B
Knowledge	4	Education 2B
Language (Common)	4	—
Persuasion	3	Intimidate 2B
Status	4	Breeding 1B
Survival	3	—
Warfare	4	Command 2B, Strategy 2B, Tactics 1B
Will	3	Dedication 2B
Attributes		
Combat Defense	8	Intrigue Defense 10
Health	10	Composure 11
Destiny Point	1	
Benefits: Animal Cohort (Raven), Brother of the Night's Watch (Steward), Heirloom (*Longclaw*), Inspiring, Leader of Men, Stubborn, Tough		
Drawbacks: Flaw (Athletics, Endurance)		
Plate and Mail: AR 7; AP –3; Bulk 3		
Longclaw	4D+1+1B	6 damage, Adaptable

History

No one knows why Lord Jeor chose to forsake his title and domain on Bear Island to serve with the Watch, but the black brothers were grateful for his presence and quickly elected him as Lord Commander. If he later had cause to regret this decision, he has never shown it, even though his son and heir Jorah fled to the Free Cities to escape Eddard Stark's punishment for selling captives into slavery. Today, the Lord Commander continues to lead the Watch without apparent concern, though he still bears his house's famous Valyrian blade *Longclaw*, which his son left behind.

Personality

Jeor busies himself with the daily duties of the Watch and remains highly respected, though some of the less honorable members of the brotherhood resent his authoritarian style of command. He is gruff and to the point, having little patience for chitchat and evasion. He selects those whom he considers the best qualified as his assistants and as commanders of the various orders with no concern for their former rank or other political matters. Most of the brothers hold Lord Commander Jeor in great esteem, though many fear his infamous temper. Of all men, he is most aware that the Night's Watch is not what it used to be, but in the finest traditions of Lord Commanders, he stays true to his oath and does his duty as its leader.

Other Night's Watch Members

The following list of men represent those known to be in service on the Wall at the time of *A Game of Thrones* and does not include those who join later in the series. *SIFRP* Narrators can use this roster of names to fill-out the supporting roles in stories or chronicles involving the Night's Watch or taking place near the Wall. This list doesn't include characters that have their own character sections, just ones that aren't covered in more detail in this book.

Castle Black

- **Rangers:** Alan of Rosby, Bannen, Bearded Ben, Bedwyck (Giant), Black Bernarr, Brown Bernarr, Black Jack Bulwer, Jarmen Buckwell, Ser Byam, Dirk, Dywen, Elron, Jafer Flowers, Deaf Dick Follard, Fornio, Ser Arnell Fossoway, Gared, Garth Greyfeather, Garth of Greenaway, Garth of Oldtown, Geoff (the Squirrel), Goady, Grubbs, Hairy Hal, Ronnel Harclay, Ketter, Lark the Sisterman, Ser Malladon Locke, Ollo Lophand, Maslyn, Matthar, Mawny, Othar, Small Paul, Rolley of Sisterton, Ser Waymar Royce, Ser Jaremy Rykker, Aethan Ryles, Thoren Smallwood, Softfoot, Tim Stone, Ser Wynton Stout, Tumberjon, Ulmer of the kingswood, Watt of Long Leg, Kedge Whiteye, Will, Ser Alladale Wynch, and Ser Ottyn Wythers.
- **Stewards:** Lord Steward Bowen Marsh, Clubfoot Karl, Ser Endrew Tarth, Red Alyn of the Rosewood, Bass, Chett, Clydas, Dornish Dilly, Easy, Hake, Old Henly, Donnel Hill, Three-Finger Hobb (chief cook), Left Hand Lew, Mully, Muttering Bill, Orphan Oss, Owen the Oaf, Sawwood, Tim Tangletongue, and Wick Whittlestick.
- **Builders:** Othell Yarwyck (First Builder), Young Henly, Kegs, Spotted Pate of Maidenpool, and Spare Boot.
- **Wandering Crows:** Conwy, Gueren, and Yoren.
- **Others:** Septon Cellador

Eastwatch-by-the-Sea

- **Commander:** Cotter Pyke
- **Rangers:** Iron Emmet
- **Stewards:** Borcas
- **Others:** Maester Harmune

Shadow Tower

- **Commander:** Ser Denys Mallister
- **Rangers:** Blane, Squire Dalbridge, Ebben, and Stonesnake
- **Stewards:** Wallace Massey
- **Others:** Maester Mullin

Donal Noye	Middle-Aged Expert	
Abilities		
Agility	2	Quickness 1B
Athletics	5	Strength 2B
Awareness	3	—
Cunning	3	—
Endurance	5	Resilience 2B, Stamina 2B
Fighting	4	—
Will	4	Dedication 1B

Attributes			
Combat Defense	10	Intrigue Defense	8
Health	15	Composure	12
Destiny Point	1		

Benefits: Bludgeon Fighter I, Brother of the Night's Watch (Steward), Trade (Smith)

Drawbacks: Maimed (Missing Arm)

Mail: AR 5; AP –3; Bulk 2

Excellent Longsword	4D+1	5 damage

Benjen Stark	Middle-Aged Expert	
Abilities		
Agility	3	—
Animal Handling	3	Ride 1B
Athletics	4	—
Awareness	3	Empathy 1B, Notice 1B
Cunning	3	—
Endurance	4	Resilience 1B, Stamina 1B
Fighting	4	Long Blades 1B
Language (Common)	4	—
Persuasion	3	—
Status	3	Reputation 2B
Stealth	4	Sneak 1B
Survival	3	Orientation 1B, Track 2B
Warfare	4	Command 2B, Strategy 1B
Will	3	Dedication 2B

Attributes			
Combat Defense	10	Intrigue Defense	9
Health	14	Composure	9
Destiny Point	1		

Benefits: Blood of the First Men, Brother of the Night's Watch (Ranger), Expertise (Track), Leader of Men, Respected

Excellent Mail: AR 5; AP –3; Bulk 1

Excellent Longsword	4D+1+1B	5 damage	
Excellent Dagger	4D+1	1 damage	Defensive +1; Off-hand +1
Hunting Bow	2D	3 damage	Long Range, Two-handed

Appearance

Jeor Mormont remains an imposing figure in spite of his age, with broad-shoulders and a stern gaze. He has lost most of his hair save for his fringe of grey-white beard, but this appearance serves only to make the Old Bear even more intimidating.

Donal Noye

Master Smith of Castle Black

Donal Noye leaned forward, into Jon's face. "Now think on this, boy. None of these others have ever had a master-at-arms until Ser Alliser. Their fathers were farmers and wagonmen and poachers, smiths and miners and oars on a trading galley. What they know of fighting they learned between decks, in the alleys of Oldtown and Lannisport, in wayside brothels and taverns on the kingsroad. They may have clacked a few sticks together before they came here, but I promise you, not one in twenty was ever rich enough to own a real sword." His look was grim. "So how do you like the taste of your victories now, Lord Snow?"

— A Game of Thrones

A single glancing axe blow transformed Donal Noye from a lord's blacksmith to a black brother when the wound festered and cost him his arm. Today he serves the Night's Watch as master smith of Castle Black, proving both his own value and the wisdom of the black brothers, who see each man for what he is and not what he once was.

History

Once, Donal Noye was blacksmith to House Baratheon and even forged the mighty warhammer Robert Baratheon used to slay Rhaegar Targaryen at the Battle of the Trident. At the siege of Storm's End, Noye was gravely wounded and lost his left arm. A one-armed blacksmith was useless to the Baratheons, but the Night's Watch has need of all men, crippled or otherwise, and his service was welcomed gratefully. At Castle Black, he continued his trade, with younger brothers learning smithing and acting as his lost hand as needed.

Personality

In his celebrated career, Donal traveled from one end of Westeros to the other, and he fought in near a hundred battles for House Baratheon. Such was Donal's strength and determination that not even the loss of his arm caused more than a brief interruption—taking no time for mourning or bitterness, he immediately took the black, soon becoming an indispensable member of the order of stewards. He is gruff and businesslike, but he has also come to know and understand the members of the Watch as few others can.

Appearance

Donal looks every bit the blacksmith, being barrel-chested and having a sizeable gut. He has a flat, broad nose, and his chin always seems to bristle with unshaven stubble. His right arm has grown even larger and more muscular since his arrival at Castle Black, and his fingers are thick and powerful looking. Donal customarily wears a black wool tunic, its empty left sleeve fastened to the shoulder with a silver longsword-shaped pin.

Benjen Stark

First Ranger

"His uncle was sharp-featured and gaunt as a mountain crag, but there was always a hint of laughter in his blue-grey eyes."

— A Game of Thrones

The First Ranger of the Night's Watch must be singularly tough and skillful. Benjen Stark, younger brother to Lord Eddard, took the black several years ago and quickly rose through the ranks, and today he is among the most respected and best-known members of the Watch.

History

The Starks have always been among the Watch's best advocates and allies, knowing the vital role the brothers play in the defense of the North. Younger members of the household who do not see the possibility of advancement sometimes take the black as a way of finding useful employment and excitement away from the day-to-day life of a minor nobleman. Benjen Stark is one such individual, and he continues to do honor to both his house and the black brothers. In his time, he has participated in numerous patrols and given the wildlings renewed reason to fear and respect the Night's Watch.

Personality

Benjen is something of a legend among the other rangers, known for his expert survival skills, deadly swordsmanship, and inspiring leadership. At first glance, he seems to be just another grim ranger of the North, but once one gets to know him, Benjen proves to be a hearty and big-hearted companion, always ready to share stories or drink by the fire. On duty, he is all business, however, and he puts his work with the Watch before all, including ties of blood and friendship.

Appearance

Benjen Stark is outwardly imposing, with the rugged appearance and demeanor that comes with being a ranger of the Night's Watch. But as Jon Snow observed, there is also a bright spark in his gaze and a friendly quality that reflects his inner good nature. As a member of the black brothers, he habitually dresses in black, but on special occasions, he may wear velvets or modest decoration of silver or grey.

Ser Alliser Thorne

Master-at-Arms of Castle Black

"You are as hopeless as any boys I have ever trained," Ser Alliser Thorne announced... "Your hands were made for manure shovels, not for swords, and if it were up to me, the lot of you would be set to herding swine... They will call you men of the Night's Watch now, but you are bigger fools than the Mummer's Monkey here if you believe that. You are boys still, green and stinking of summer, and when the winter comes you will die like flies." And with that, Ser Alliser Thorne took his leave of them.

— A Game of Thrones

Castle Black's master-at-arms is one of the most disliked and feared men in the Night's Watch. He is petty, abusive, and merciless when training recruits. Unfortunately for young members of the Watch, this type is exactly the kind of master whom they need to learn the skills and the ways of the harsh and unforgiving wilderness they call home.

History

One of the few knights to take the black in recent years, Ser Alliser comes by his attitudes honestly. A loyal knight who served the Targaryen family faithfully, he was captured after the battle on the Trident and, along with Ser Jaremy Rykker, given the choice of death or the Wall by

Ser Alliser Thorne		Middle-Aged Fighter
Abilities		
Agility	3	—
Animal Handling	2	Ride 1B
Athletics	4	—
Awareness	3	Notice 1B
Endurance	4	Resilience 2B
Fighting	5	Long Blades 2B
Language (Common)	3	—
Persuasion	3	Intimidate 3B
Status	3	Breeding 1B
Warfare	4	Command 1B, Tactics 1B
Will	4	Dedication 1B

Attributes			
Combat Defense	10	Intrigue Defense	8
Health	11	Composure	13
Destiny Points	1		
Benefits: Brother of the Night's Watch (Steward), Expertise (Intimidate), Long Blade Fighter I, Stubborn, Tough			
Drawbacks: Flaw (Endurance), Haughty			
Plate and Mail: AR 7; AP –3; Bulk 3			
Large Shield	5D–1D	2 damage	Bulk 1, Defensive +4
Excellent Longsword	5D+1+2B	5 damage	

the victorious Tywin Lannister. The two grimly took the latter. Ser Jaremy made the most of his situation and adapted well, but Alliser, given an influential position due to his experience and skill with a sword, grew even more bitter and resentful. To this day, he serves as master-at-arms, producing well-trained brothers who, in their turn, hate him for it.

Personality

Thorne is a hard man to like—he is grim, cynical, and unsympathetic to anyone's troubles save his own. He works his recruits like slaves, as if they were responsible for his exile, and is especially hard on the sons of the noble houses whom he believes betrayed him. He is particularly skilled at turning recruits against one another and turning their anger at him on their fellow recruits. He works them to the point of exhaustion, calls them derisive and hurtful names, forces them to fight, and rarely complements them, no matter how well they do. Regrettably, he also gets results, and his recruits invariably leave his tender care as ruthlessly efficient fighters.

Appearance

Ser Alliser is a compact, muscular man of fifty years. He dresses impeccably and carries the finest weapons he can find. His gaze is harsh and angry, and his face is so impassive as to be carved from stone. No recruit can ever remember seeing Ser Alliser smile.

THE FAR NORTH

The lands of the Far North are a place of myth, legend, and fear. Southerners tell tales of "snarks and grumkins," of giants and ghosts dwelling along the Frozen Shore, in the Haunted Forest, or high on the wind-swept Frostfangs, and some of these stories still contain a kernel of truth. Here dwell the wildlings, savage independent tribesmen, and here also linger the last of the giants, great brutish creatures who ride on huge wooly mammoths. It is the wildlings who present the greatest threat to the south currently, though in ages past, the mysterious race called the Others marched down behind the winds of winter and threatened all with their terrible icy touch.

Geography

The Far North is a wild and untamed land, a region virtually unchanged for thousands of years. While no true roads exist, numerous game trails, paths, and old streambeds, called "ranger's roads," are used by the Night's Watch and wildlings alike.

Antler River

One of the major rivers of the Far North, this waterway drains into the Shivering Sea to the east.

Craster's Keep

Not far from Whitetree stands the keep of Craster, a wildling man of uncertain loyalties. As far as keeps go, this place is poor, filthy, and doesn't come close to living up to its name. The main structure is a low daub-and-wattle longhouse assembled from wood, packed with dung, and covered with sod. The door is nothing more than two flaps of deer hide hanging from a low-lintel. Inside is one big open area with hanging skins to form rooms and a loft with two splintery ladders for Craster's daughter-wives. Smoke and damp hang heavy in the air, and the place reeks of soot, dung, and the many dogs Craster keeps for protection.

Outside the main hall is a great midden heap, a pigsty, and a sheepfold. The entire compound sits atop a low hill surrounded by an earthen dike. One can gain access to the inner yard through an open gate set in the muddy wall. Two poles, one mounted with a bear skull and one with a ram skull, on either side of the gate provide all the welcome a visitor is likely to get.

Fist of the First Men

This lone peak overlooks the Milkwater in the heart of the Far North. Its walls are brown, with grey stone emerging from the packed earth, and the way up is by a narrow path that winds up and around the mount. At the top is a gap wide enough for a horse that leads up to the zenith. There, a crumbling, old wall, spotted with lichen and sporting patches of green moss, surrounds the top—the only evidence to support the tales that the Fist had once stood as a hold of the First Men during the Dawn Age.

Frostfangs

The Haunted Forest marches west until it surrenders to the vast wilderness of stone and ice known as the Frostfangs. The grey mountains rise from the land and extend all the way into the Lands of Always Winter and then head south, through the Wall, and into the lands of the Seven Kingdoms almost as far as Winterfell. The Frostfangs are rightly deemed cruel, for their peaks are ever shrouded in snow and thick ice, and the wind shrieks through the higher elevations, tearing travelers clinging to the rocks to their deaths. Yet for all the dangers, the Frostfangs conceal great beauty, including mountain meadows with wildflowers that present a riot of color, icy waterfalls hanging from great heights, deep ravines, pathways and bridges of stone spanning the gaps, eagles, shadowcats, and more.

There are few routes through the mountains, and not even the most skilled rangers know them all. The Skirling Pass, which is in fact a series of long winding passes, meanders through peaks and valleys, enabling a traveler to move from one side of the range to the other without too much trouble. Like the Giant's Stair, it is populated by roving bands of wildlings and is a common hunting ground for shadowcats and eagles that fear no men.

Frozen Shore

The Frozen Shore marks the western extent of the Far North. It overlooks the Bay of Ice.

The Gorge

The Gorge is a great stretch of land situated west of the Shadow Tower, north of the Wall, northeast of the Bay of Ice, and south of the Frostfangs.

Hardhome

Situated at the edge of Storrold's Point, north of Eastwatch-by-the-Sea, Hardhome was a large community of wildlings in years past. While crude by southron standards, Hardhome was the closest thing the wildlings had to a city. It was destroyed and now sits cold and abandoned.

The Haunted Forest

The Haunted Forest is a vast wood that marches up to the Wall—when the builders don't clear it fast enough—and extends north along the eastern side of the Frostfangs until it gives way to the Lands of Always Winter. The Haunted Forest covers a rumpled land with ironwood and sentinel trees, and the climate is anything but forgiving. About a half-league north of Castle Black stands a grove of weirwood trees. It is here where those black brothers sworn to the old gods say their vows. Each of the nine trees forming the circle bears a face carved in its trunks, each staring inward with eyes red and crusted with dried sap.

Land of Always Winter

Beyond the territory inhabited by the wildling peoples is the icy north, a land trapped in ice and snow. Few have ventured this far, and no maps of it exist.

Milkwater

This river flows down from the mountains, through the rugged hills, and vanishes into the Haunted Forest, only to spill out into the sea. The Milkwater is one of the most important arteries in the Far North.

Shivering Sea

The Shivering Sea includes all the waters off the northeast coast of the lands beyond the Wall.

Thenn

One of the few large communities in the Far North, Thenn lies in a small mountain valley in the Frostfangs. The leader of this tribe is called the Magnar, who claims direct descent from the First Men, and as such, he receives the reverence and constant loyalty of the people under his protection.

Whitetree

Whitetree is one of the wildling villages found beyond the Wall. Consisting of four crumbling one-room houses constructed of un-mortared stone surrounding a sheepfold and well, each building features a sod roof and empty windows covered with ragged pieces of hide. The most important feature is the village's namesake: a massive weirwood tree, whose branches shelter the community and whose trunk is easily eight feet in diameter. Like many older weirwoods, this tree features a carving of a face in its trunk, but this one features a hollowed mouth, large enough to hold a sheep.

THE WILDLINGS

Before Bran the Builder raised the Wall, there was no division between the lands; it was simply part of the North. Little is known of the time before, but it's speculated that these lands were inhabited then as they are today, by rugged tribesmen, warriors, and nomads. They, like other peoples of the North, were close to the children of the forest and adopted many of their customs and traditions once the initial conflict between their peoples ended. Yet, after the Battle for the Dawn and the construction of the Wall, those people who survived the Long Night were left to fend for themselves, cut off from the other peoples south of the mighty barrier. Whether they stayed in the North by choice or by command, none can say, but remain they did, and in their isolation, they were spared the invasion of the Andals and, later, the Targaryen Conquest.

The isolation from the development of the Seven Kingdoms won the wildlings their independence. They remained a free people, free of nobles, kings, laws, and the conquests of ambitious men. For all their liberties, however, they lacked the protections afforded by the Seven Kingdoms and were left to attend to themselves. Furthermore, most groups never made any considerable technological advancements, and so where the black brothers fight with crossbows and iron weapons, most wildling warriors still wield weaponry forged of stone, wood, and bronze.

The wildlings evolved into small tribes, each with their own peculiarities and customs; some recognize chieftains, and others exist in a perpetual state of conflict, warring against each other and themselves. Periodically, the wildlings set aside their differences and unite behind a single leader, a figure known as King-beyond-the-Wall, though the wildlings don't often use such a title or recognize their leader as a king.

When not at war, the relations between the Night's Watch and the wildlings approach a near peace. When the more bellicose tribes withdraw to the northern reaches, the more peaceful wildlings engage in trade with the black brothers, exchange information, or even serve as guides. The Watch and the free folk have even joined forces to fight a common enemy, such as when the King-beyond-the-Wall Joramun allied with the black brothers to defeat the evil Night's King thousands of years ago. Overall, however, the Far North exists in a state of continuous low-level warfare.

Culture

In many ways, the Far North is the single bastion of real freedom in all of Westeros. Here, a man or woman is free to do as he or she pleases without obligation to a lord or a king. An individual wildling may choose whom to serve, where to live, and whom he or she will marry—the wildlings bear the self-applied name "free folk" proudly.

> *"Do you know the difference between a wildling who's a friend to the Watch and one who's not? Our enemies leave our bodies to the crows and wolves. Our friends bury us in secret graves."*
>
> —Dolorous Edd

Freedom comes with a price, however. The Far North is a hard land, and an individual has little chance of surviving alone. Most wildlings seek out membership in clans or villages and provide service to their fellows in exchange for protection and companionship. There are few oaths in the Far North, however, and an individual who does not like his clan chief or situation is free to leave and seek his fortune elsewhere. But individuals who move from clan to clan are not considered trustworthy, and such a lifestyle is quite perilous. Exceptionally tough individuals can survive alone, or in small raiding groups, but it is a difficult proposition at best, suited only to the most hardy and skilled among the free folk.

A wildling must also learn to fight, or make an alliance with those who do, for violence is an everyday reality among the free folk. If a wildling's life is not threatened by rival clans or by enemies within his clan, then it is threatened by the elements, wild animals, or the fearsome creatures of the Far North. The wildlings stick together out of necessity, though their independent nature makes coordinated efforts difficult. Only under a King-beyond-the-Wall can the wildlings act of one accord, and even then, they have had only limited success.

The wildlings are divided into numerous clans, each with its own leaders and traditions. Some hail from the distant reaches, surviving on the fringes of the Lands of Always Winter, while others live in the Haunted Forest, and others, still, live in hidden valleys in the Frostfangs and in caverns underneath. The men of the Frozen Shore ride in chariots fashioned from walrus bones that are hauled by packs of vicious dogs, while the ice-river clans are cannibals. The cave dwellers paint their faces blue, purple, and green, while the Hornfoot men have feet as hard as leather. The best known of these clans are the Thenns, who dwell in the northern reaches of the Frostfangs. The Thenns serve a lord known as the Magnar, but like other wildlings, they do so at their own pleasure, and they are free to leave and serve another as they choose. The Thenns are also better organized and armed than other wildings, fighting with bronze weapons and wearing bronze armor.

There is very little in the way of law or property rights in the lands of the free folk. A wildling takes what he can and keeps what he can defend. This practice includes family, for a wildling man is expected to take his wife from her home or clan by force, and the woman is, in turn, expected to fight him every step of the way. Though this seems both wasteful and very different from the idealized courtly love of Westeros, it establishes a male wildling's strength and determination, as well as a woman's independence and ability to defend herself.

In keeping with the spirit of wildling independence, women are welcome to take up arms and fight alongside men. Such wildling women are called spearwives and are known to be every bit as skilled and ferocious as their male counterparts.

The wildlings' freedom has a dark side as well. Without laws, the strong may do as they please, take what they want, and kill or abuse whomever they choose. The wildlings' freedom allows them to engage in unpleasant practices, such as slavery, cannibalism, and torture. Maesters and other observers in the south usually cite such practices when defending the ordered life of Westeros—only by obeying the laws of lords, kings, and divine law can men avoid turning into beasts.

Perils of the Far North

The weather and deadly terrain are not the only hazards that a traveler in the Far North must face. The wildlings themselves guard their free-

dom jealously, and anyone wearing the black faces capture and death by torture if taken. Rarely, a black brother is ransomed or traded for wildling captives; it is far more likely the unfortunate man of the Watch is turned over to a clan's women or torturers, to linger at their hands for hours or days before finally being put out of his misery. A brother who forsakes his vows and joins the wildlings may also be spared—the current King-beyond-the-Wall is one such individual.

Some wildlings possess strange abilities, many of which defy the reason and logic of the maesters and stray into the realm of the supernatural. The best known of these are the skinchangers who enter the bodies of animals, fighting enemies as a wolf or observing in the form of an eagle. Legend holds the wildlings also have powerful shamans, wood witches, and greenseers who retain some of the old secrets taught by the children of the forest and can cast ancient and deadly spells.

The dangers of the wildlings pale in comparison to the Far North's most terrifying denizens, however. Most southerners consider giants to be a myth—or at least believe the last one died centuries ago. However, the wildlings know better, for they maintain good relations with these hulking remnants of a bygone era. Giants still walk the frozen paths of the Haunted Forest and the passes of the Frostfangs, often mounted on mighty mammoths, another creature of legend that lives on in the frozen wilds. The wildlings believe Joramun, the King-beyond-the-Wall, awakened the giants from slumber by blowing upon the magical Horn of Winter.

There are other dangers as well. The Lands of Always Winter are believed to be home to the white walkers, or Others, as they are known. Not even the wildlings know who or what these ice demons are, but they fear them all the same. The Others have not been seen in centuries, but rumors have filtered through the Far North, and even the normally fearless warriors are beginning to think risking the Wall is a better end than one promised by these cruel hunters of deep winter.

King-beyond-the-Wall

The harsh conditions of the North breed strong men and women, but deprivation and starvation are never far away. The wildlings often cast jealous eyes to the south where they see a land of warmth and plenty, filled with weak-willed city dwellers and lazy peasants, ripe for conquest. Periodically, a King-beyond-the-Wall rises up and leads his folk in yet another crusade against Westeros. Time and again they batter themselves to pieces against the wall and are stopped by the doffed men of the Night's Watch.

A handful of Kings-beyond-the-Wall have come close to leading successful attacks on the lands to the south and they are still celebrated in song and story. Arson Iceaxe was one of few who tried to tunnel through the Wall itself. The black brothers discovered his tunnel, however, and sealed the unfortunate wildling inside. It is said he and his men can still be heard, digging endlessly through the ice.

The wildlings still sing songs of Bael the Bard, who often raided to the south and even left a daughter of House Stark with child. Bael's bastard son grew to manhood and eventually slew his own father, visiting a terrible curse on the Starks for kinslaying that persists to this day, or at least so say the wildlings.

Three millennia ago the brother Kings-beyond-the-Wall Gendel and Gorne led their army through a maze of tunnels under the hills north of the Wall, only to be brought to battle by the Starks, the Umbers, and

the men of the Night's Watch. The wildlings claim Gorne was slain, and Gendel led his people back to the tunnels, but they were lost without Gorne to guide them. The story goes on to say Gendel's descendants still lurk in the caves, seeking escape and devouring the flesh of anyone unfortunate enough to meet them.

Raymun Redbeard actually led his folk beyond the Wall one hundred and fifty years ago after successfully scaling the Wall under the nose of the Lord Commander still known as Sleepy Jack. Even Raymun failed, however, when he was brought to battle by Lord Willam Stark and Harmond Umber on the shores of Long Lake. Alerted to the danger,

Sleepy Jack led the black brothers south, but he arrived too late to help. Lord William had been slain, leaving House Stark to his brother Artos, who set the tardy Night's Watch to burying the dead.

Notables

The wildlings have their heroes and legends just as the folk of Westeros do. What follows are some of the better-known figures to haunt the lands north of the Wall.

Craster of Craster's Keep

The Night's Watch works to contain the wildlings, but as the black brothers dwindle, they come to depend on allies beyond the Wall to monitor developments and offer warnings when trouble brews. One such wildling ally is Craster.

History

There are all sorts of rumors about where Craster came from, but it's commonly believed he was the bastard son of a black brother who bedded a wildling woman. Beyond this, it's not certain how Craster came to be in possession of his "keep" or why he detests Mance Rayder as he does, but his malice makes him a useful, if uncertain, friend to the Watch.

Personality

This man who kneels to none is an uncertain friend to the Watch at best. He's known to be a kinslayer, a liar, a craven, a raper, and a trafficker to demons and slavers. He obeys no laws but the ones he makes, and he commits unspeakable practices, offending the gods with his wickedness. Foremost of his crimes is his penchant for taking his own daughters as his brides. It's whispered that he appeases the demons of the forest by offering them sacrifices: sheep, dogs, and even his unwanted male children.

Craster		Old Schemer
Abilities		
Athletics	5	Strength 1B
Awareness	4	Notice 2B
Cunning	3	Memory 1B
Deception	4	Bluff 2B, Cheat 2B
Endurance	4	Resilience 2B
Fighting	4	Axes 1B
Knowledge	2	Streetwise 1B
Persuasion	3	Bargain 2B, Intimidate 2B
Survival	3	—
Will	3	—
Attributes		
Combat Defense	10	Intrigue Defense 9
Health	11	Composure 9
Destiny Points	1	
Benefits: Blood of the Wildlings, Sinister, Tough, Treacherous		
Drawbacks: Disturbing Habit, Flaw (Agility, Endurance)		
Soft Leather: AR 2; AP –1		
Battleaxe	4D+1B	5 damage — Adaptable

Appearance

Craster is an old man, with a mane of grey hair going white. Though advanced in his years, he remains physically fit and powerful. He has low features, with a flat nose and a cruel, drooping mouth. He has only one ear—the other was lost to frost—and his mouth is a ruin of broken brown teeth. Craster dresses in a sheepskin jerkin and wears a patchwork cloak of furs and skins. Around one of his thick wrists is a dirty ring that reveals the glint of gold in the light.

Mance Rayder

King-Beyond-the-Wall

"The King-beyond-the-Wall looked nothing like a king, nor even much a wildling. He was of middling height, slender, sharp-faced, with shrewd brown eyes and long brown hair that had gone mostly to grey. There was no crown on his head, no gold rings on his arms, no jewels at his throne, not even a gleam of silver. He wore wool and leather, and his only garment of note was his ragged black wool cloak, its long tears patched with faded red silk."

— A Storm of Swords

Mance Rayder is the newest in a long line of men who have claimed to be the King-beyond-the-Wall. Gathering the wildling tribes in the Frostfangs, his activities have drawn the attention of the Night's Watch, who know they are too few to deal with a host of the size rumored to be mustering under Rayder's banners.

History

Born a wildling, the man who would be known as Mance Rayder was taken by the Watch and raised as one of them, distinguishing himself as a highly skilled ranger and doughty fighter. Mance's life changed when he was wounded on patrol and taken in and healed by a wildling woman. When he returned to the Wall, Mance brought with him his black cloak, mended with the red cloth. When his superiors demanded he exchange the mended cloak for one of uniform black, Mance realized true freedom lay to the north with his own people. That night, he broke his oath and slipped away, never to return as a black brother. It wasn't long before Mance's talents and natural charisma won him renown in the Far North. He took the surname "Rayder" (commonly adopted by turncoats from the Night's Watch), and he distinguished himself until he could proclaim himself King-beyond-the-Wall.

Personality

Mance Rayder is a remarkable man, possessed of both skill at arms and the charisma to unite the squabbling clans and villages of the Far North into a single, albeit chaotic, alliance. He combines sharp wits and a dip-

MANCE RAYDER		MIDDLE-AGED LEADER
ABILITIES		
AGILITY	3	—
ATHLETICS	3	—
AWARENESS	5	EMPATHY 4B, NOTICE 2B
CUNNING	4	—
DECEPTION	3	BLUFF 2B
ENDURANCE	3	—
FIGHTING	4	—
KNOWLEDGE	3	—
LANGUAGE (COMMON)	3	—
PERSUASION	3	CHARM 2B, CONVINCE 1B, INCITE 2B
STATUS	4	REPUTATION 2B
SURVIVAL	3	—
WARFARE	4	COMMAND 1B, STRATEGY 1B
WILL	4	COORDINATE 2B
ATTRIBUTES		
COMBAT DEFENSE	11	INTRIGUE DEFENSE 13
HEALTH	9	COMPOSURE 12
DESTINY POINTS	2	
BENEFITS: ADEPT NEGOTIATOR, BLOOD OF THE WILDLINGS, DANGER SENSE, FAMOUS, INSPIRING, LEADER OF MEN, MUMMER (WOOD HARP)		
DRAWBACKS: NEMESIS (NIGHT'S WATCH)		
SOFT LEATHERS: AR 2, AP –1		
LONGSWORD	4D	3 DAMAGE

lomatic manner with the strength needed to maintain the other wildlings' respect, as well as the will to overcome dissenters among the free folk. He has told the free folk he intends to see them safe to the south and leave the dangers of the North and the threat of the white walkers behind, and many wildlings take him at his word.

Appearance

Undistinguished is probably the best way to describe Mance: he is a middle-aged man with greying hair who dresses without ornamentation. His only peculiarity is his insistence on wearing his red-patched cloak. Mance's true strength of character and charisma are evident in his steady, bright-eyed gaze that can peer through to the heart of anyone he encounters.

Enemies of the Watch

In addition to Craster and Mance, a number of figures are named enemies of the Night's Watch.

- **Alfyn Crowkiller:** One of the most vicious of the wildling raiders, he's named for all the black brothers he's personally slain.
- **Harma Dogshead:** A squat keg of a woman with cheeks like slabs of white meat, she uses a dog's head for her banners, slaying one every fortnight to mount a fresh head on her pole.

- **Rattleshirt, the Lord of Bones:** Rattleshirt is another of the wildling leaders, and he has a grim and savage reputation. He wears armor assembled from the bones of humans, sheep, cows, goats, and other animals, as well as a helmet fashioned from a broken giant's skull.
- **Mag Mar Tun Doh Weg, Mag the Mighty:** An older giant with a grey pelt streaked in white, he is the leader of the giants.
- **Styr:** Styr is the Magnar of Thenn, making him leader of the Thenn tribes. He's a tall man, lean, clean-shaven, bald, and has a long nose and deep-set grey eyes. He lost both ears to frostbite. His people see him more as a god than a lord, and he claims direct descent to the First Men.
- **Tormund, "Giantsbane," "Tall-Talker," "Horn-Blower," "Breaker of Ice," "Thunderfist," "Husband to Bears," "Speaker to Gods," "Father of Hosts," "Mead King of Ruddy Hall":** Tormund is a warleader, fat, with a snow-white beard. While a great leader, he's also known to be an even greater liar.
- **Varamyr "Sixskins":** Varamyr is a skinchanger and keeps company with three wolves, a shadowcat, and a snow bear. He's a small, grey-faced, bald man, but his slight stature conceals his great power, for it's said he can wear the skin of his animal companions.
- **The Weeper:** A fleshy blond man with red and rheumy eyes, the Weeper is a vicious warrior prone to using violence as the solution to any problem. He fights with a great, curved scythe.

CHAPTER 6: THE IRON ISLANDS

The Iron Islands are a small archipelago located within Ironman's Bay off the west coast of The Neck. Here exists numerous small outcroppings and seven main isles: Great Wyk, Old Wyk, Blacktyde, Orkmont, Harlaw, Saltcliffe, and Pyke; the last of these is the seat of House Greyjoy, who rules over the islands' denizens.

Life on the islands could be called unpleasant at best: the meager amount of arable land demands the harvests be supplemented with a commensurate amount of fish in order to fend off starvation. Even the resources that are abundant enough to allow trade are of little value, consisting primarily of base metals, including the iron that gives the islands their name.

These factors would suggest the isles are utterly dependent on the mainland in order to ensure adequate sustenance and material for the people who choose to live there. The inhabitants of the Iron Islands, however, have historically taken a somewhat different view. To them, the "green landers" (as they call the continent's inhabitants) serve as a ready source for their needs, and the ironborn have been using their fleet of longships to take what they want throughout the majority of their history, whether it's food, supplies, or even slaves.

HISTORY

Like many other regions in Westeros, the Iron Islands were settled thousands of years ago by the First Men, though the reasons why they chose to remain in such an inhospitable environment have been lost to history. It is also unclear at what point the ironmen began reaving the mainland for sustenance, but it is a practice they have maintained for centuries and given up only when the strength of the green landers outweighed their own.

Initially, each of the islands had a pair of kings: a Salt King who ruled at sea and a Rock King who ruled on land. From these kings a High King was chosen to rule over the whole of the islands. King Urron Redhand put an end to the practice some five thousand years ago in a bloodily efficient manner—he slew all of the other kings and declared High Kingship was to be hereditary.

Urron's line lasted around a thousand years, but it ended when the Andals overtook the islands. Although the invaders promptly settled on the isles and began intermarrying with its inhabitants, the practice of

"The islands are stern and stony places, scant of comfort and bleak of prospect. Death is never far here, and life is mean and meager... Iron, lead, tin, those are our treasures. Small wonder the ironmen of old turned to raiding."

—THEON GREYJOY

reaving went on unabated. In fact, the ironmen conquered a great deal of the continent during this period, including the majority of the western coast and deep into the riverlands. Perhaps it was fitting then that the decline of the Iron Islands from the peak of their dominion was a result of a king who wanted to live on land.

King Harren the Black of House Hoare was a vain man who wished to have a castle within the riverlands to rival his own magnificence. His vision took over forty years to build, and Harren beggared the realm and wasted a great many lives in order to see it accomplished. When it was completed, Harrenhal was so large as to be grotesque, with five massive towers, curtain walls the size of cliffs, and a gatehouse so large it could fit the entirety of Winterfell's Great Keep.

Harren did not have long to enjoy his monstrosity. On the day he made Harrenhal his seat, he learned Aegon Targaryen had landed on Westeros. Black Harren was so hated for the way he mistreated his people during the construction of his castle that his bannermen left him in droves to fight on the side of the Targaryens. In the end, the massive walls of Harrenhal were of no protection against Aegon's weapons: his dragons. The beasts blasted the walls with fire, melting the stone and burning Harren and the rest of his line to death.

When Aegon completed his conquest, he took the riverlands from the ironmen and gave them to House Tully, who had been the first to abandon Harren's cause. He rewarded the Iron Islands for the fact that they had not supported Harren by allowing them to choose their next king—but they were to be Targaryen subjects from that point forward. The surviving lords selected Vickon Greyjoy to be their leader, and the house has ruled since that time.

Balon Greyjoy is the current occupant of the Seastone Chair, a block of oily black stone carved into the shape of a kraken used as the throne by those who rule over the isles. The ironmen took no part when Robert Baratheon overthrew the Targaryens, but Balon was quick to seize the chance to revert to the practice of raiding when he thought Robert would not have the men or the will to resist them. In this, Balon was woefully wrong, and Robert would make the islands—and the Greyjoys—pay for the error in blood. By the time Robert completed the quashing of the rebellion by bringing down the outer wall of Pyke itself, Balon's two eldest sons, Rodrik and Maron, numbered amongst the dead.

With his last son, Theon, taken hostage to safeguard the ironmen's good behavior and Robert's forces having reduced the importance of the Iron Islands to rubble, Balon found himself the head of a minor house. However, while he may have been defeated, Balon is patient. When the opportunity comes to rain terror on the mainland—and exact his revenge on those who helped defeat him—Balon will be ready.

Owning the Waves

Given their location, it should be no surprise the Iron Islands have the largest navy in Westeros. Most of this fleet is composed of small longships that dip fewer than twenty oars and carry fewer than forty men. These vessels are literally dwarfed by some of the cogs and galleys found in other Westerosi navies, likely because these longships were not designed for ship-to-ship combat. Instead, the ironmen use their boats to deploy their warriors for raids upon the mainland, so they can quickly land scores of men in a variety of locations.

Just because the ironborn may be at a disadvantage in sea combat does not make them any less willing to engage in the practice. When confronted on the open waters, the ironmen close with their enemy as quickly as possible, so as not to give them time to fire any of their deck-mounted weapons. Once close enough, the ironmen send across raiding parties to engage in hand-to-hand combat, even going so far as to ram opposing ships to gain an advantage if the opportunity presents itself.

The ironmen, especially the more pious amongst them, have a distinct advantage when fighting on the water. Many green landers fear drowning and, thus, chose to armor themselves very lightly, if at all. Iron Islanders, on the other hand, revere a god who deems drowning the most reverent way for his followers to perish; it is not uncommon to see an ironborn reaver draped in full plate, leaping from the deck of their ship to take the battle to his enemy.

But the ironmen have one tactical disadvantage: they lack cavalry units. Horses are scarce on the islands, to the point most farmers have to rely on their own muscle to till the small plots of land they possess. Those horses that do live on the islands are hardly fit for combat; indeed, some of the ironborn go so far as to consider riding a weakness, and those who indulge in the practice lesser men because of it. This lack of experience severely hampers the ironborn's ability to wage war on land. Since all of the larger mainland armies contain cavalry, the ironmen have little chance should they ever be lured into combat on an open field. Worse still, the ironmen are not trained to handle mass combat on such a scale, and they are liable to break the first time they are presented with a charging line of horses.

Of course, the ironborn are well aware of this weakness, which is why their raids are generally limited to areas with little to no fortification and within easy reach of their ships.

Geography

Though different in size and shape, the Iron Islands are similar in many respects, chief among them being that people not born to them would prefer to live elsewhere. The entire area is cold, wind-ravaged, wet, and the soil is poor. What the islands all have in abundance are rocks, from the sand and pebbles that compose the scarce shorelines to the jagged peaks of mountains that are scattered throughout the entire chain.

While the Iron Islands consist of islands both large and small, the ironborn are mainly concentrated on these seven.

Pyke

Pyke is the name of both the seat of House Greyjoy and the island it sits upon. The land on which the castle was built once jutted out from the rest of the island like a sword raised in challenge, but time and the unceasing surf have long since sent much of the rock to the bottom of Ironman's Bay, taking the majority of the keep with it.

The shore around the Greyjoy stronghold is so treacherous that there is no safe place for ships to drop anchor. Instead, boats must sail to nearby Lordsport, which is a village guarded by a keep that also serves as the home of House Botley. When the forces of Robert Baratheon came to crush the last vestiges of the Greyjoy rebellion, Lordsport was the first place on Pyke to feel the brunt of their fury. The village was put

to the torch and the keep razed to the ground. Both were eventually rebuilt, and Lord Sawane Botley chose to build his next stronghold that much stronger, selecting stone over the timber and wattle that had proven little protection against the invading forces.

There had been a sept to the Seven in Lordsport, which was destroyed along with the rest of the village. It was not rebuilt.

The other town of note on Pyke is Iron Holt, the seat of House Wynch.

Pyke Castle

Pyke is an old and proud structure that refuses to give in to the effects of time, despite the almost constant battering of the elements that surround it. The keep was built from the same grey-black stone composing the rest of the island, and in the thousands of years the keep has stood, it has become as much a part of the landscape as the jagged cliffs surrounding it.

All that remains of the original keep is spread out amongst three islands and a dozen tall stacks of rock; the rest lies within the bay, protecting the stronghold's remnants by dashing to splinters any ship not piloted by the ironborn who dares drop anchor in its vicinity.

The sea defends the majority of the castle from those who would do its inhabitants harm; a wall protects the rest. The stone shield of Pyke runs in a crescent shape from the edge of one cliff to the edge of another, with the headland that leads to the towers and keeps standing behind it. The gates providing entry are located in the center portion of the wall and include an iron portcullis to provide additional protection should the wall be attacked.

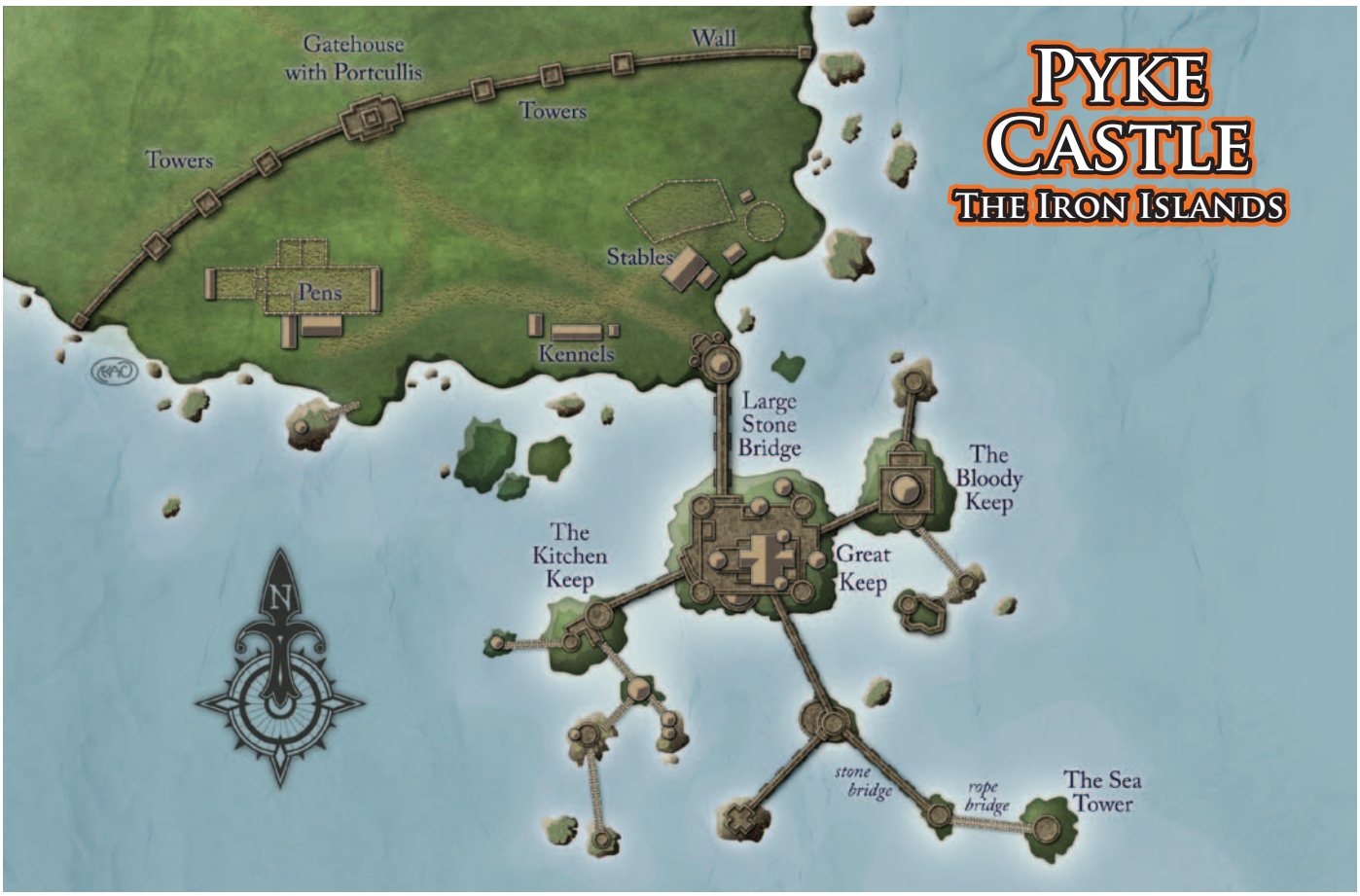
On either side of the gates are spaced three square towers; the southern-most is newly built, as the last tower that stood there collapsed when Robert Baratheon's forces breached the walls during the last days of the Greyjoy Rebellion. Beyond this wall are approximately fifty acres of headland, on which lie the outbuildings that support the castle. Here can be found the kennels, stables, and pens for the sheep and pigs. South of this area lies a large stone bridge that connects the headland to the Great Keep.

The Great Keep

The Great Keep is Pyke's largest building; its Great Hall is where the Greyjoys receive their bannermen and honored guests. The long hall can easily fit and feast over four hundred people, though "feast" is something of a misnomer, since the fare is as meager here as anywhere else on the Iron Islands. The hall also contains a dais, a place of honor for the members of House Greyjoy. On it sits the Seastone Chair, the tangible symbol of the Greyjoys' power. A covered stone walkway connects the Great Keep to the Bloody Keep.

The Bloody Keep

The Bloody Keep was originally known as the Guest Keep since it was here that visitors to Pyke were given quarters. The building acquired its name a thousand years ago, when the sons of one of the River Kings were staying there. They were slaughtered in their beds



as they slept, and pieces of their bodies were sent to their father on the mainland.

Despite its unfortunate history—and the name it earned as a result—the Bloody Keep was well suited for its purpose. The halls are large and well appointed, and the ceilings of the guest suites are high. But visitors to Pyke are few and far between, and the Keep is haltingly maintained. As a result, the sea air has had plenty of opportunity to work on the furnishings, many of which are musty or mildewed.

The Kitchen Keep

As its name implies, the Kitchen Keep houses the kitchens where food is prepared for the denizens of Pyke. For the most part, the fare is relatively modest, with goat, bread, and numerous variations of dishes that use seafood as their primary ingredients.

The Sea Tower

The Sea Tower rests on what was the point of the sword that jutted forth from the island. Now that point has itself become an island, a sheer-sided pillar that is slowly being worn away by the battering sea.

The tall, round tower is composed of contrasting colors: its base is bleached white by unceasing salt spray, its top is blackened by soot from the watchfires lit to warn longships of the shoreline, and its upper stories are blanketed green by lichen. It is connected to the rest of Pyke by a series of three bridges, which grow narrower the closer to the tower they come. The last of these is made only of rope and wood, and it sways when the wind is strong enough, which is often.

In the past, the entire Greyjoy clan lived within the snug rooms of the Sea Tower. Now, it is empty save for the head of the house and the few attendants necessary to see to his needs.

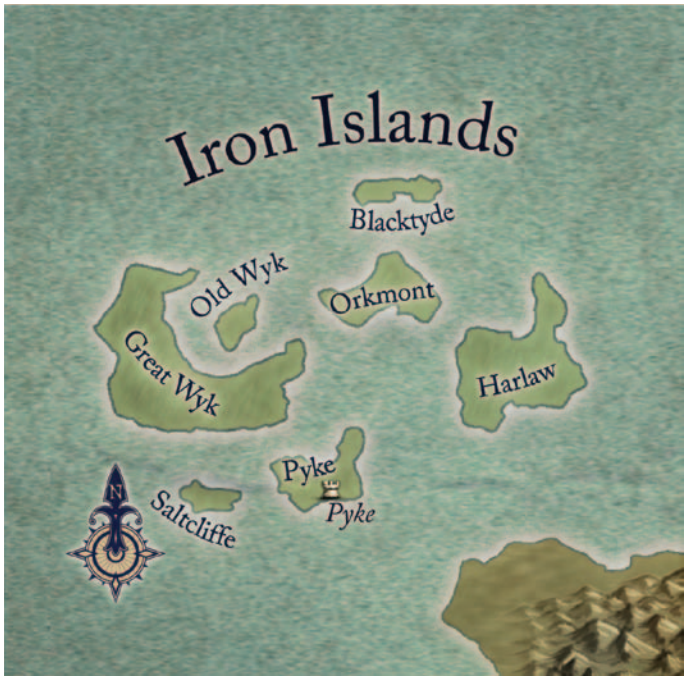
Old Wyk

Of all the Iron Islands, Old Wyk is considered the holiest, for it was there the Grey King slew the sea dragon Nagga during the Age of Heroes. The legends say the Drowned God himself turned the beast's bones into stone, and the Grey King used it as a great hall. He and his warriors feasted within it at a gigantic table shaped like a starfish as they sat on thrones carved from mother-of-pearl and warmed themselves with the remnants of Nagga's living fire.

Eventually, the Grey King's reign ended, the jealous Storm God doused Nagga's fire, and the great hall fell victim to thieves and decay. Now, thousands of years later, the only remnants of the structure are the forty-four stone ribs the size of trees jutting from the top of a hill.

The Grey King's hall is also known as the place of the Iron Islands' kingsmoots. They are often anything but democratic, as when King Urron Redhand ensured he and the children of his house would rule the islands by slaughtering all those who came to the choosing. The remnants of the hall are reached by sailing into the bay called Nagga's Cradle and climbing the nine great steps cut into the side of the hilltop.

Hills make up much of the land on Old Wyk, and cruel, black mountains reside on much of what remains. Yet, at least three houses call the island home: the Stonehouses, the Goodbrothers of Shatterstone, and the Drumms.



Great Wyk

Great Wyk is the largest of the Iron Islands, vast enough that the lands of some of the lords who call it home do not actually reach the sea. A second branch of House Goodbrother is one such example. The Great Wyk Goodbrothers make their home at Hammerhorn, a bulky keep whose stones were cut from the cliffs of the Hardstone Hills that protect its rear. It is guarded on the other sides by battlements of iron, which were likely dug from the mines that lie below its walls.

Some of the other residents of the island, especially those who follow the Drowned God, believe the reason the green landers no longer fear the Iron Islands is because lords like the Goodbrothers have chosen to turn their back on the riches of the sea in order to delve into the earth.

There are Goodbrother cousins scattered about the island at Crow Spike Keep, Corpse Lake, and Downdelving. Other houses who reside on Great Wyk include the Farwynds of Sealskin Point and the Merlyns of Pebbleton, a small town whose hovels house some several thousand people.

Harlaw

Second in size only to Great Wyk, Harlaw is distinguished from the other islands for being both the wealthiest and most densely populated. It is also the seat of House Harlaw, one of the only families that rivals the Greyjoys in strength and influence. The Harlaws have five keeps on the isle that gave them their name: Harridan Hill, ruled by Boremund the Blue; the Tower of Glimmering, the seat of Hotho Harlaw (called Hotho Humpback) sitting perched above the western coast of the island; Grey Garden, presided over by Ser Harras Harlaw; and ancient Harlaw Hall, the previous family seat that currently belongs to Sigfryd Harlaw the Silverhair.

The current seat of House Harlaw is Ten Towers, the residence of Lord Rodrik Harlaw, who is known as the Reader. Ten Towers was built

near the sea about five generations ago, making it the newest castle on the island. As its name implies, the keep is known for its most prominent features, including the Widow's Tower and the octagonal Book Tower where Lord Harlaw spends much of his time. Each of the ten towers differs in appearance from the others due to the lengthy amount of time it took for the castle to be built and the different lords who oversaw their construction.

Other houses with holdings on Harlaw are the Volmarks, Stonetrees, Kennings, and Myres. While all of the ironborn houses serve the Greyjoys, the Harlaws command these other houses in times of conflict.

Blacktyde, Orkmont, & Saltcliffe

The three remaining islands are distinguished primarily by the houses that live there. In addition to the eponymous houses that reside on each of these isles, Orkmont is the home of House Tawney, and Saltcliffe hosts House Sunderly.

The Old Way

The Old Way is the law of the waters, the law of battle, and the law of those who raid the shores of Westeros to take what they cannot make themselves. Those who follow the Old Way believe farming, fishing, and digging in the earth is labor for thralls, and the only trade necessary to learn is warfare.

The basic precept behind the Old Way is that only things wrested from someone else have value. Jewelry bought with coin is considered an indulgence for women; men who wish to adorn themselves must take the pieces from the corpses of those they have slain, which is known as "paying the iron price."

Those who follow the Old Way are expected to be fearless in battle, and ironmen have been known to fly into battle rages that make them immune to both terror and pain. The usual targets for raids are those villages and farms located near water; the ironmen believe flinging rocks at castles in order to conquer them is green lander folly, and glory is gained in battle by being able to see the face of your enemy as you slay them.

If successful in battle, the tenets of the Old Way state the victors may take all that they desire, including the men, women, and children of the conquered. Those who are fit enough to work the thin soil and dark mines of the islands—and who are judged not likely to fight for their freedom—are sent back as thralls, and the women are often taken as "salt wives." The rest are executed, though those women deemed too old or ugly may well be raped beforehand, and some of the doomed face the unfortunate fate of being forcibly drowned as an offering to the Drowned God. After that, the village is given to the torch to prevent its use by anyone else.

Since the Old Way favors those with physical strength, it is inherently slanted toward men. Polygamy is accepted practice for those who have the strength to carry away additional mates. A man born of the Iron Islands could have numerous wives: his true wife, a rock bride who was also of the isles, and any number of salt wives captured while reaving. Although ironborn women have occasionally heeded the call of the Old Way and captained their own longships, they are viewed as being more akin to men because of it. Indeed, it was often said the sea and salt air gave them the same appetites as men.

The ironmen are the only people who have ever followed the Old Way, which has placed them in conflict with the continent throughout the majority of their history. Aegon the Conqueror put an end to the practice when he burned out the Hoare line at Harrenhal, and Balon Greyjoy's unsuccessful rebellion was begun in large part to reinstitute it. But when the men of the Iron Throne defeated the men of the Iron Islands, those plans ended—even if only for the present.

The Drowned God

The North may have their old gods, and the rest of Westeros might follow the Seven, but the residents of the Iron Islands pray to the Drowned God. The Drowned God and the Old Way go hand in hand, and it is said the Drowned God created the ironborn so they could take freely from the green landers.

Like the ironmen themselves, the Drowned God is a harsh deity—and one who demands tribute. Those who insult him in the presence of an ironborn soon find themselves breathing the sea, and whenever an ironborn drowns, it is said their god was in need of a strong oarsman. The faithful who meet this fate are believed to have a place reserved for them in the sunken halls of the Drowned God, where he or she will feast at his table and have their every desire met by the mermaids who serve him. And while the Drowned God forbids the ironborn from shedding the blood of other ironborn, drowning is a legitimate way around the restriction, as it is a bloodless way of killing.

The ironborn believe the Drowned God has been in conflict for millennia with the Storm God, who resides in a hall within the clouds. It is said the ravens are creatures of the Storm God, and the sea roils in anger when the two deities are engaged in battle. Like the Drowned God, however, there are none aside from the ironborn who believe in the Storm God.

Pledging the Drowned God

Usually, all that is necessary in order to consecrate your faith to the Drowned God is to have a priest perform a ritual drowning, which simply requires a priest of the faith to give a blessing while the head of the blessing's recipient is dipped (if the recruit is a newborn) or drenched in seawater.

But there is a more dangerous form of the ritual that is reserved only for those who wish to dedicate themselves utterly to their god. To begin, the initiate walks naked into the sea, where he or she is held underwater by a priest of the Drowned God (and others, should the faith of the neophyte prove weak) until they begin to drown. As the initiate's lungs fill with water, the priest intones, *"Lord God who drowned for us, let [name of the initiate] your servant be reborn from the sea, as you were. Bless him with salt, bless him with stone, bless him with steel."* The novice is held underwater until he loses consciousness.

Once the initiate has gone limp, he is dragged ashore, where the faithful attempt to revive him. Assuming the attempt is successful, the priest then begins the final litany, stating, *"What is dead can never die."* The response from the initiate is *"But rises again, harder and stronger."*

Each of the faithful in attendance welcomes their new member into the fold with a punch and a kiss, and then the initiate is dressed in a robe of mottled blue, green, and grey and given a cudgel carved from driftwood. The attending priest completes the initiation by stating, *"You belong to the sea now, so the sea has armed you. We pray that you shall wield your cudgel fiercely, against all the enemies of our god."*

At this point, the initiate has washed away his old life and has joined the ranks of acolytes known as the drowned men. The drowned men act as emissaries for their god and assist the priests until they can perform drownings on their own.

Although rising to the ranks of the drowned men bestows some amount of prestige among the ironborn, it does not make their lives any more comfortable. In fact, the opposite is true. Drowned men are expected to use only things taken from the sea to fulfill their day-to-day needs, including shelter, food, and clothing. So it is only those who are completely unshaken in their faith in the Drowned God who choose to join his holy ranks.

Slavery in the Iron Islands

Amongst the plunder that can be rightfully taken by those ironborn who have paid the iron price are the people of the towns they have raided. The relationship the ironborn have with these captives is a complex one. While they do not consider thralls property, neither will they allow those who have not taken part in a raid to lay claim to the spoils. Furthermore, those who have been taken captive in raids are expected to be sent back to the islands (with the exception of those who are claimed as salt wives); it is considered poor form to use them as barter for gold and other goods.

Green landers who are sent to the Iron Islands can expect to live out the rest of their lives there. However, the children of thralls are considered free of the servitude their parents lived under—provided, of course, they pledge themselves to the Drowned God. Since these children have no memories of the places they lived prior to their captivity, this custom virtually ensures the new generation adopts the isles as their homeland. However, this does not afford the new citizens any measure of additional respect, as the "true" ironborn will be ever mindful of the thralls' ancestry.

Regardless of the complexities the ironborn infuse into the practice, it is slavery in all but name, with people who have been forcibly relocated from their native lands obliged to work to their deaths in one of the most relentlessly bleak regions of Westeros. And the benefits accorded the next generation seem generous until it is clear that since there are no other real options available to them (aside from a life of continued thralldom should they choose not to convert), they really have no alternatives at all.

House Greyjoy

Ranking	Major
Lands	Pyke
Castle	Pyke Castle
Arms	A golden kraken on black
Motto	We Do Not Sow

The Greyjoys have served as lords of the Iron Islands since Vickon Greyjoy was elected from among his fellow ironborn in the time of Aegon the Conqueror. Balon Greyjoy, the ironmen's current leader, is primarily responsible for the fall from prominence the isles have suffered, resulting from his ill-fated rebellion. Yet the reaver's words that compose the motto of House Greyjoy perfectly encompass the desire of Balon and his surviving brothers to, once again, bring the Old Way back to prominence.

Balon Greyjoy

"I am the Greyjoy, Lord Reaper of Pyke, King of Salt and Rock, Son of the Sea Wind, and no man gives me a crown. I pay the iron price. I will take my crown, as Urron Redhand did five thousand years ago."

—Balon Greyjoy

Balon Greyjoy is the current head of his house and the Lord of the Iron Islands, a position he inherited when his father Quellon died while reaving. Embittered by the failure of the Greyjoy Rebellion, he now rarely leaves his castle; yet, his desire for conquest runs deep.

Lord Balon Greyjoy		Old Fighter
Abilities		
Agility	4	—
Athletics	4	—
Awareness	3	—
Cunning	3	Memory 1B
Endurance	3	Stamina 1B
Fighting	4	Axes 1B, Long Blades 1B
Knowledge	3	—
Language (Common)	3	—
Persuasion	4	Incite 1B, Intimidate 2B, Taunt 1B
Status	5	—
Warfare	4	Command 1B
Will	4	Dedication 1B
Attributes		
Combat Defense	10	Intrigue Defense 11
Health	6	Composure 13
Destiny Points	0	
Benefits: Berserker, Blood of the Ironmen, Head of House, Leader of Men, Pious, Stubborn		
Drawbacks: Flaw (Agility, Endurance)		
Excellent Mail: AR 5, AP –3, Bulk 1		
Excellent Longsword	4D+1+1B	4 damage

History

Quellon Greyjoy had a total of eight children spread out amongst three wives. Of these children, only four survived into adulthood. Balon was the eldest of the surviving children when his father passed, so leadership of his house—and the Iron Islands—was his by birthright. With Balon, they received a leader who was strong in body as well as his faith in the Old Way. In his thirteenth year, he had already become an expert oarsman. At fifteen, he went on his first reaving expedition and took his first two salt wives. By the time he reached seventeen, he was captaining his own vessel.

Balon was with his father and his brothers Euron and Victarion when his father died at sea. While they were reaving, his brother Urrigon lost half his hand playing the finger dance with their brother Aeron. Balon's stepmother, a Piper of Pinkmaiden Castle, insisted on having the maester tend to the wound. The maester succeeded in sewing on the hand but was unable to prevent infection from killing Urrigon.

When Balon returned to Pyke and heard what had happened, he promptly had the same wound inflicted on the maester and instructed his stepmother to heal him. The maester died shortly thereafter of infection, and his stepmother later died as a result of complications from giving birth to a stillborn child.

Balon deeply desires a return to the time when the Iron Islands were feared throughout Westeros, and he wishes to make the Old Way prominent once again. It was primarily for this reason he rebelled against King Robert. And while he paid a very dear price for his efforts, he remains convinced the Old Way is the only way for the ironborn.

Personality

Balon has a personality to match his people: stubborn, fearless, and quarrelsome. He is uncompromising even when it comes to his own family, and his faith in the Old Way is absolute. With his last remaining son held hostage, Balon is in check for the moment, but he has not stopped plotting a way to return his people to their former, fearsome glory.

Appearance

Although thin from birth, age has made Balon positively gaunt, a trait most notable in his face, which is as angular as if it had been cut from stone. His eyes are black and hard, and his hair, which is grey and speckled with white, reaches below the small of his back.

Lady Alannys Greyjoy

In her final years on Pyke, Lady Alannys could not sleep. She would wander the halls at night with a candle, looking for her sons.

— A Feast for Crows

Lady Alannys is the estranged wife of Balon Greyjoy, who she has not seen in some years.

History

Lady Alannys married into the Greyjoys from House Harlaw. Though her marriage to Balon was frequently stormy, she bore him four chil-

dren she loved fiercely: Rodrik, Maron, Asha, and Theon. In the wake of her husband's ill-fated rebellion, all three of her sons were taken away from her, two in battle and one as a hostage against further insurrection. Alannys was inconsolable, and she eventually retreated to Harlaw to live with her brothers and widowed sisters at Ten Towers.

Personality

Alannys is a woman whose emotions have been carved from her soul, and in their place, the weight of grief has taken root. Although she is able to communicate with those who would visit her, her conversations tend to focus on a single topic: her three sons. Although perhaps not mad in truth, it is readily apparent to those who know her that her grief will ultimately ravage the last vestiges of sanity she has been able to maintain.

Appearance

Although never considered a beauty, the last few years have done precious little for Alannys's looks. Her long hair is completely white, her eyes clouded, and her skin appears to have the thickness of parchment. Despite this, she carries herself with some semblance of pride, perhaps to represent the house into which she married or the one into which she was born.

Euron Greyjoy

Crow's Eye

"Godless? Why, Aeron, I am the godliest man ever to raise sail! You serve one god, Damphair, but I have served ten thousand. From Ib to Asshai, when men see my sails, they pray."

—Euron Greyjoy

Euron Greyjoy, known as Crow's Eye, is the next eldest of the Greyjoy brothers after Balon. He is not as accomplished a fighter as his brother Victarion, but he more than compensates with his agile mind. However, the intelligence he puts to good use in creating tactics he also uses to coerce others to acquiesce to his self-serving desires. It is the latter reason that led to his banishment from the Iron Islands about three years ago, with a penalty of death should he return. His present whereabouts, as well as the whereabouts of his crew on the *Silence,* are unknown.

History

Euron Greyjoy had long been contemptuous of anyone's authority but his own long before he took his brother Victarion's wife to bed and got her with child. Far from being apologetic about the indiscretion, Euron laughed in his brother's face, claiming his wife had come to him "wet and willing." However, he did heed Balon's banishment, and he has not been seen on the Iron Islands since. There are many rumors as to his present whereabouts: most believe he has crossed the narrow sea, some think that he sails in Asshai's waters, and a few believe he has chanced the boiling waters of Valyria's Doom.

Euron Greyjoy	Middle-Aged Schemer	
Abilities		
Agility	3	—
Athletics	3	Swim 1B
Awareness	3	Notice 1B
Cunning	5	Logic 1B
Deception	4	Bluff 2B
Endurance	3	—
Fighting	4	Long Blades 1B
Knowledge	3	—
Language (Common)	3	—
Language (Various)	3	—
Persuasion	5	Convince 3B
Status	4	—
Warfare	4	Strategy 3B
Will	3	Coordinate 1B

Attributes			
Combat Defense	8	Intrigue Defense	11
Health	9	Composure	9
Destiny Points	1		
Benefits: Cadre, Expertise (Convince), Magnetic, Worldly			
Drawbacks: Flaw (Awareness), Reviled			
Soft Leather: AR 2, AP –1			
Longsword	4D+1B	4 damage	

Euron's ship is the *Silence*, a lean, low, single-masted galley with sails colored black and a hull painted in a shade of dark red. According to rumor, the latter color choice was made to better hide the blood spilled on the ship's deck. Mounted on the ship's prow is the figure of a woman, cast from black iron, one arm stretched out to the sea. Her maker designed her for beauty, with a slender waist, shapely legs, and breasts set high and proud. Her iron hair billows back from her head, and her eyes are set in mother-of-pearl. But in keeping with the ship's name, the woman has no mouth.

Unfortunately, the same can be said of the rest of the crew, who have had their tongues torn out. The only exceptions are Euron's three bastard sons, who were born of whores. Euron has no plans to legitimize them, as he hopes to sire a true heir from a proper wife.

Personality

Euron has nothing but contempt for anyone in authority—except himself and perhaps his brother Balon. He had little regard for laws and tradition when he still called the Iron Islands home, as evidenced by his casual disregard for his younger brother's marriage vows. His attitude has likely changed little, as his word is the law aboard the *Silence*.

But while contemptuous of others, Euron is no fool. More so perhaps than any of his brothers, Euron is a shrewd planner. Victarion may have carried out the attack on the Lannister fleet during the Greyjoy Rebel-

lion, but it was Euron who conceived the plan. Unfortunately for those he encounters, Euron enjoys using his intelligence to manipulate others into doing what he desires. He can be lenient with those who challenge him—at least at first. Those who continue to defy him risk arousing his anger and find themselves regretting their transgression. His present schemes, however, are anyone's guess.

Appearance

Although second eldest amongst the current Greyjoy generation, Euron has been the most resistant to the effects of time on his looks. His face is free of wrinkles, and his black hair and dark beard are free of any traces of grey. His lips, however, have been stained the color of a blue bruise, the result of imbibing shade-of-the-evening, a brew reserved for those who dabble in magic. His right eye is also blue, and a black leather patch covers his other eye; this patch earned Euron the name Crow's Eye. What is not known is what lies behind the patch, whether it is simply an empty socket—or something else.

Victarion Greyjoy

The Drowned God had not shaped Victarion Greyjoy to fight with words at kingsmoots, nor struggle against furtive sneaking foes in endless bogs. This was why he had been put on earth, to stand steel-clad with an axe red and dripping in his hand, dealing death with every blow.

— A Feast for Crows

Victarion Greyjoy is the younger brother of Balon, the Lord Captain of the Iron Fleet, and the master of the *Iron Victory*. Although ferocious in battle, he has neither the wit nor the patience for the subtleties of politics, preferring situations that can be resolved through physical prowess and bloodshed.

History

Even though he is related to the man who sits the Seastone Chair, it's possible Victarion Greyjoy would have earned the right to command the Iron Fleet even without his blood ties. During the Greyjoy Rebellion, he led the ironborn's vessels into Lannisport and burned the Lannister fleet where it was anchored. Ultimately, however, the stag was able to skewer the kraken, as Stannis Baratheon used the Royal Fleet to smash the ironborn off the coast of Fair Isle.

Victarion has been married three times. His first wife died delivering a stillborn daughter, and his second succumbed to a pox. His third wife, however, fell prey to his brother Euron, who seduced and impregnated her. In order to maintain his honor, Victarion beat her to death with his own hands and then threw her into the sea. Only the law against killing kin kept Victarion from avenging himself upon his brother. Balon banished Euron upon pain of death for the seduction, but Victarion still struggles with the urge to inflict the same punishment upon his brother as he did his late wife, regardless of the consequences.

Personality

Victarion is a fearless warrior, shielded by both his armor and his faith. His martial prowess is known throughout the Iron Islands, and his deeds are sung about in alehouses. He prefers to meet his enemies head-on in open battle, and he cares little for politics and subterfuge. This dislike may have as much to do with the fact he simply does not have the requisite intelligence for complex plotting as it does with his preference in dealing with troubles in a direct—and final—a fashion as possible.

One of his other prized traits is his unflagging loyalty. Even though he would have slain Euron with his bare hands, his strict adherence to the laws against kinslaying stayed his hand. He follows the wishes of his brother—and anyone else who has authority over him—without question. While an admirable trait, it leaves Victarion open to manipulation; even if he is aware of it, he is unlikely to forsake his duty for his own benefit.

Appearance

Even when not in battle, Victarion Greyjoy is an imposing presence, despite his age, since he is both large and heavily muscled. But he is a truly terrifying and memorable sight in melee. He bulls into combat wearing full plate armor, even when at sea, and while the protection is sufficient to turn away almost any weapon, Victarion still has the strength to fight as one unencumbered. On the open water, he is virtually unstoppable since he is able to absorb blows with his armor while slaying those more lightly protected than him. He uses his protection—and the surprise

VICTARION GREYJOY	MIDDLE-AGED FIGHTER	
ABILITIES		
AGILITY	4	BALANCE 1B, QUICKNESS 1B
ATHLETICS	4	STRENGTH 2B
AWARENESS	3	—
CUNNING	2	MEMORY 1B
ENDURANCE	4	RESILIENCE 1B
FIGHTING	5	AXES 3B, BRAWLING 3B
STATUS	4	—
SURVIVAL	3	—
WARFARE	3	COMMAND 1B
WILL	3	—

ATTRIBUTES			
COMBAT DEFENSE	11	INTRIGUE DEFENSE	9
HEALTH	13	COMPOSURE	9
DESTINY POINT	1		

BENEFITS: ARMOR MASTERY, AXE FIGHTER I, BERSERKER, BLOOD OF THE IRONMEN, BRAWLER I, BRAWLER II, TOUGH

DRAWBACKS: FLAW (CUNNING), HAUNTED

EXCELLENT FULL PLATE: AR 11, AP –5, BULK 1

EXCELLENT BATTLEAXE	5D+1+2B	4 DAMAGE	ADAPTABLE
EXCELLENT SHIELD	5D+1	2 DAMAGE	DEFENSIVE +4

wearing it generates—to his advantage, charging into numerous foes while they are still in shock and not retreating until they have been slain or driven off.

Victarion's plate is adorned with a cloth-of-gold cloak, which identifies him as the Lord Captain. It is sewn in the shape of a kraken, with arms that almost touch the ground. His helm is similarly adorned, with the eight arms coiling around his face to meet again beneath his jaw.

AERON GREYJOY

DAMPHAIR

Aeron crept from his little shelter into the chill of the night. He stood naked, pale and gaunt and tall, and he walked naked into the black salt sea. The water was icy cold, yet he did not flinch from his god's caress. A wave smashed against his chest, staggering him. The next broke over his head. He could taste the salt on his lips and feel the god around him, and his ears rang with the glory of his song.

— A FEAST FOR CROWS

The youngest of the Greyjoy brothers, Aeron Greyjoy has eschewed life at sea so that he may serve the will of the Drowned God, a result of a near-death experience during the Greyjoy Rebellion. He now walks the isles, spreading the word of their god to both lords and thralls alike. He is known primarily by his new name, Damphair.

AERON GREYJOY	MIDDLE-AGED LEADER	
ABILITIES		
AGILITY	3	—
ATHLETICS	4	—
CUNNING	3	—
ENDURANCE	4	STAMINA 2B
FIGHTING	3	—
PERSUASION	4	CONVINCE 2B, INCITE 2B, INTIMIDATE 2B
STATUS	3	—
SURVIVAL	3	—
WARFARE	3	—
WILL	5	COORDINATE 1B, DEDICATION 3B

ATTRIBUTES			
COMBAT DEFENSE	9	INTRIGUE DEFENSE	8
HEALTH	12	COMPOSURE	18
DESTINY POINTS	2		

BENEFITS: AUTHORITY, BLOOD OF THE IRONMEN, PIOUS, STUBBORN

DRAWBACKS: HAUNTED, THREATENING

ROBES: AR 1

DRIFTWOOD CLUB	3D	3 DAMAGE	OFF-HAND +1

HISTORY

Until Balon's Rebellion, Aeron had distinguished himself primarily by the amount of wine he'd drunk rather than the blood he'd spilled, as well as how far and how strong he could piss. He once wagered his newly made longship against a herd of goats that he would be able to douse a hearthfire with his urine—and won. He christened the boat *Golden Storm* in honor of this feat, but Balon dissuaded him from mounting a ram on its prow with a more graphic monument to his accomplishment.

During his brother's rebellion, Aeron joined with Victarion and Euron in raiding the coasts and was also caught in the trap set by Stannis Baratheon off the coast of Fair Isle. It was Stannis's *Fury* that brought an end to *Golden Storm*, as the larger war galley sliced Greyjoy's ship in half.

Aeron was initially believed to be lost at sea, but he washed ashore and was discovered by local fishermen, who led him to Lannisport in chains. He spent the rest of the rebellion as a prisoner of the Lannisters, but he was later returned to the Iron Islands. He came back a changed man, however.

Aeron saw his deliverance from the sea as proof that he was following the wrong path. He viewed the event as the death of his old self and the birth of a man who would follow and spread the word of the Drowned God to all of the ironborn. Now known as the Damphair, he cast away all of his possessions and now gathers all he requires—be it food, shelter, or clothing—from the sea.

Asha Greyjoy		Adult Fighter
Abilities		
Agility	5	Balance 1B, Quickness 1B
Athletics	3	—
Awareness	3	—
Cunning	4	—
Deception	3	Act 1B
Endurance	3	—
Fighting	4	Axes 1B, Short Blade 2B
Persuasion	3	Seduce 1B
Status	3	—
Warfare	3	Command 1B
Will	3	—

Attributes			
Combat Defense	11	Intrigue Defense	10
Health	9	Composure	9
Destiny Points	2		

Benefits: Blood of the Ironmen, Dexterous, Expertise (Seduce), Short Blade Fighter I

Excellent Soft Leather: AR 2			
Excellent Battleaxe	4D+1B	3 damage	Adaptable
Excellent Dirk	4D+2B	3 damage	Off-hand +2

Personality

Prior to his transformation, Aeron was the soul of wit, making jokes, juggling, singing, dancing, and playing the pipes like a common court jester—though there was nothing humorous about the prodigious amounts he could drink. After his rebirth, however, his entire demeanor changed. Instead of the fool, he became a devout, and his devotion to the god in his watery halls is absolute. He is now a dour, humorless man who views every breath as a gift that is wasted if it is not used to extol the virtues of following the Drowned God's path.

Appearance

Damphair is tall and thin, with intense black eyes and a prominent nose. He garbs himself in robes dyed in the green, grey, and blue of the Drowned God, and he weaves seaweed into his unkempt beard and the black hair that falls unbound to his waist. A waterskin filled with seawater hangs under his arm from a strap, which he uses to bless those who desire it.

Theon Greyjoy

The last remaining son of Balon Greyjoy was taken hostage following the suppression of the kraken's uprising. He is now being raised as a ward of Eddard Stark, and further information about him can be found in **Chapter Five: The North**.

Asha Greyjoy

Theon had time for a shocked gasp before Asha snatched the axe from the air and slammed it down into the table, splitting his trencher in two and splattering his mantle with drippings. "There's my lord husband." His sister reached down inside her gown and drew a dirk from between her breasts. "And here's my sweet suckling babe."

— A Clash of Kings

Asha Greyjoy is the only daughter—and now oldest child—of Balon. She refuses to bend to the traditional gender roles of her people, and she is a captain of her own ship, the *Black Wind.* Unlike her father and uncles, who are practically humorless to a man, Asha possess a wit just as likely to disarm an opponent as her ever-present blade.

History

Originally the third child of Balon's line, and a girl at that, Asha Greyjoy's destiny appeared to have been writ from birth: she was to serve the will of the men in the family until such time that an appropriate marriage could be made for her. Asha, however, had no plans to act in the fashion expected of her gender. She has gone out of her way to establish herself as capable of doing anything a man can do.

With the death of two of her brothers and the absence of the other, Asha believes she is perfectly suited to sit the Seastone Chair when her father passes, and she pays no heed to the watery god's traditions that state otherwise.

Personality

With the possible exception of her uncle Euron, Asha may be the most cunning of the Greyjoys. She is certainly the wittiest, able to turn any verbal barb aimed in her direction back at its hurler, usually with more bite than it had previously possessed. Because her sex is viewed as a liability, Asha works twice as hard to prove otherwise, drinking, tossing axes, and reaving as well as any man. For all this, she has not forgotten her womanhood and is not afraid to combine it with her natural wit and dexterity to further her goals.

Appearance

Asha was not considered a pretty girl when she was growing up, as she was saddled with a flat chest, a plethora of pimples, and a nose better suited to a bird of prey. As she grew into her womanhood, her chest budded some, the pimples faded, and her face filled out enough to make her nose less prominent—though it is perhaps still too large for her thin face.

In many ways, Asha looks like many of the people of the islands who live their life at sea. She is lean, with long legs accustomed to the rocking of the waves, skin scoured clean by the constant sea breeze, and hands capable of gripping a rope in the midst of a gale. She keeps her black hair cropped short, which exposes an old, pink scar on her neck.

Although proficient with throwing axes, Asha always has a dirk on hand, either belted to her waist or tucked away inside her cleavage.

Notable Servants

House Greyjoy counts many servants as constant and loyal. The following represent the most notable of them.

Dagmer Cleftjaw

Pyke's master-at-arms, and the faithful right-hand man of Balon, is Dagmer, more commonly called Cleftjaw. The reason for his sobriquet is immediately obvious, as he bears a gruesome childhood scar, the remnants of a blow that shattered his jaw and front teeth and graced him with four lips instead of two. A shaggy beard does more to accentuate the scar than conceal it, since hair will not grow in it. Cleftjaw is a reaver as well as an armsman to Balon, and he captains the ship *Foamdrinker.*

Helya

Lord Balon entrusts the care of his castle to Helya, the steward of Pyke. She is an old and stooped woman who prefers to wear grey clothes that disguise any hint of her shape beneath it.

Maester Wendamyr

Even though the castle is no longer considered of particular importance, Pyke continues to be served by those who wear the collar, and Balon receives counsel from Maester Wendamyr, who also serves as a healer and the keeper of the castle ravens.

Other Characters

Each Greyjoy who captains a ship requires men and women to crew them. On Euron's *Silence,* Cragorn stands out from the rest. He is a monstrous man, shaved bald, with rings of gold, jade, and jet on his arms and a bird of prey tattooed on his chest, inked blood dripping from its talons. On Victarion's *Iron Victory,* noteworthy men include Nute the Barber, a thick man with bandy legs and lengthy arms; Ragnor Pyke, a bastard; and Wulfe One-Ear. Qarl the Maid serves on Asha's *Black Wind* as one of her trusted lieutenants. While Aeron Greyjoy may not captain a ship, he is still in command of men. Norjen and Rus are amongst the drowned men pledged to his service.

There are many and more captains among the iron fleet who primarily work their own will but ultimately serve the Seastone Chair. Those captains include such men as Bluetooth, Red Ralf Stonehouse, Ralf Kenning, and Ralf the Limper.

Banners of the Iron Islands

Here are the major families and select individuals who owe their allegiance to the person sitting the Seastone Chair.

House Blacktyde

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Blacktyde
Castle	Blacktyde Castle
Arms	Vairy, green and black

The Blacktydes are led by Lord Baelor Blacktyde, who has adopted both the styling and the Faith of the mainland, a result of having been held hostage some eight years in Oldtown. He tends to dress in the vairy of his house, which he often adorns with a pin of the seven-sided star of his adopted religion. Baelor is also the captain of the ship *Nightflyer.*

House Botley

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Lordsport on Pyke
Castle	Lordsport castle
Arms	A school of silver fish on a field of pale green

The Botleys rule Lordsport from the newly rebuilt keep that overlooks the village. They have managed to reconstruct most of what was destroyed during the final days of the Greyjoy Rebellion. The house is led by Sawane Botley, who has fathered six sons: Harren, Tristifer, Symond, Harlon, Vickon, and Bennarion.

Tristifer was among the boys brought to foster at Pyke after Balon's Rebellion, and he and Asha Greyjoy soon took an interest in each other. They were eventually discovered at their play, and Balon had Tristifer sent to Blacktyde as a ward of Lord Baelor. Tristifer still remembers Asha with fondness, though she would sooner forget the encounters had ever occurred.

HOUSE DRUMM

HOUSE GOODBROTHER

HOUSE HARLAW

HOUSE MYRE

Sawane Botley also has a brother, Germund, and two half-brothers, Sargon and Lucimore. Germund has also fathered two sons, Balon and Quellon, while Sargon is responsible for siring Wex, a mute bastard.

House Codd

Ranking	Minor
Motto	Though All Men Do Despise Us

The Codds are a proud family who have taken the low opinion their fellow ironborn hold of them and incorporated it into their motto. Left-hand Lucas and Eldred are two members of House Codd. Its warriors are known for fighting with nets.

House Drumm

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Old Wyk
Arms	A white, skeletal hand on a field of red

Dunstan Drumm, who is called the Bone Hand, the Drumm, and the Lord of Old Wyk, is both the head of his house and captain of the *Thunderer.* While still a capable fighter, he is approaching old age; however, he sometimes speaks at such length—especially when discussing the exploits of his family—that some might think him several decades from the grave. Dunstan's ancestor Hilmar Drumm acquired (by trickery, if Dunstan is to be believed) the sword *Red Rain,* which was forged of Valyrian steel and is passed from one generation of Drumms to the next. Dunstan has two sons, Denys and Donnel, who have both earned the reputation of being hardy warriors in their own right. The family has the benefit of Andrik the Unsmiling's service, oft regarded as one of the greatest warriors on the Iron Islands.

House Farwynd

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Lonely Light and Sealskin Point
Arms	Per fess - below a black sea with crested line, a black longship, outlined against a red setting sun on orange

The Farwynds are mostly located along the western shoreline of Great Wyk and the small isles within its vicinity. They are viewed as odd by their fellow ironborn, and rumors abound that the Farwynd branch living on Lonely Light—a small island some eight days sail to the northwest that is headed by Gylbert Farwynd—are actually skinchangers. Gylbert is tall and thin, and his face has a distinct melancholic cast. He has at least three sons: Gyles, Ygon, and Yohn.

Another prominent branch of the Farwynd family is the Farwynds of Sealskin Point. Triston Farwynd is the head of this house.

House Goodbrother

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Great Wyk, Old Wyk, and Orkmont
Castles	Hammerhorn, Shatterstone, Downdelving, Crow Spike Keep, and Corpse Lake
Arms	A black war horn with a band of gold, on a field of red

A large family with a number of lesser branches, House Goodbrother has a presence on most of the Islands. The main branch is the Goodbrothers of Hammerhorn, found on Great Wyk, about six leagues from the shore. The castle is a hulking structure, dark and brooding, and is fashioned from great stone blocks quarried from the cliffs behind it. Beneath its walls, one can find mines and caves, each yawning like toothless mouths.

Powerful, they posses nearly forty longships. Lord Gorold Goodbrother heads this house and has sired a trio of identical boys (Greydon, Gran, and Gormond), as well as a dozen daughters (including Gysella and Gwin). The Goodbrothers are distinguished primarily for their unique practice of wearing sashes woven of goat hair. Unusually, these Goodbrothers style themselves like the lords of the green lands and even keep the council of a maester, a slim man named Murenmure.

The other branches include the Goodbrothers of Shatterstone, headed by Norne Goodbrother on Old Wyk. The Goodbrothers of Crow Spike Keep, Corpse Lake, and Downdelving have their holdings on Orkmont, and they are considered minor lords at best.

House Harlaw

Ranking	Major
Lands	Harlaw
Castle	Ten Towers
Arms	A silver scythe on black, but many variations exist

After Greyjoy, the Harlaws are perhaps one of the most influential houses in the Iron Islands, a position solidified by the marriage of Lady Alannys to Balon Greyjoy. The head of the house is Alannys's brother

Rodrick, who is known as "The Reader." Rodrick earned his nickname due to his love of books, a habit that is viewed as somewhat unnatural for an ironborn. Rodrick lost his only two sons off Fair Isle in the trap set by Stannis Baratheon. He is currently unwed and without an heir.

The Reader makes his seat at Ten Towers, where he is served by his steward Three-Tooth, a frightful woman of considerable age who was once known as Twelve-Tooth and whose current appellation may be somewhat euphemistic.

Sea Song is the Reader's personal longship, though he uses it but rarely; he prefers to sit in the Book Tower, lost in the tomes that gave the building its name.

There are a number of Harlaw cousins spread out across the island, each of whom has created a variation of the traditional sigil of their house. Boremund the Blue, one of Rodrick's cousins and the master of Harridan Hill, places his scythe upon a field of pale blue. Hotho Humpback, the master of the Tower of Glimmering, uses the same device and field but with an embattled border. Ser Harras, who is called the Knight and carries the Valyrian steel blade *Nightfall*, rules at Grey Garden; he chose to quarter his sigil in order to display the peacock of his mother's house. Finally, Lord Rodrick's great uncle, Sigfryd Silverhair, displays two scythes counterchanged on a field divided bendwise.

House Humble

Ranking	Landed

The Humbles are considered of small account since the house originated from the descendants of thralls and salt wives. Will and Quellon are two of its members.

House Ironmaker

Ranking	Landed

Erik Ironmaker, called Erik Anvil-Breaker and Erik the Just, is the most prominent figure in his house—in both senses of the word. He was given the name of Anvil-Breaker due to the size of his preferred weapon: a long war hammer with a steel head the size of a loaf of bread. That weapon, and his ability to wield it, earned Erik a reputation as a fearsome warrior. However, he is now nearing ninety years of age and twenty stones in weight, and it is rumored his age has left him bereft of much of his former strength, to the point that he is unable to lift either his hammer or his own girth. His hair is pure white, from his head to the beard that blankets him from his cheeks to his thighs.

The Anvil-Breaker is prone to boasting that he has more heirs than he is able to count, and indeed, he has a number of both grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Numbered amongst his grandsons are Urek, Thormor, and Dagon.

House Kenning

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Harlaw
Arms	The cloudy hand of the Storm God, rendered in pale grey with yellow lightning flashing from his fingertips, presented on a field of black

House Kenning was once a bitter rival of House Harlaw, but the Kennings were eventually defeated by the Harlaws. They now serve their conquerors as vassals. Ralf Kenning is one of the prominent members of this house.

House Merlyn

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Pebbleton
Castle	Pebbleton Tower
Arms	Green, intertwined waterspouts on a field of white

House Merlyn makes rules it's demesne from a towerhouse that sits above the village of Pebbleton. Meldred Merlyn, the head of the house, is a bald, portly man who styles himself a lord and dresses the part by adorning himself in the furs and velvets more commonly seen on the mainland.

House Myre

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Harlaw
Arms	Ten black nooses, 4-3-2-1, on a field of white with a blood-red border

House Myre is a minor house with lands on the isle of Harlaw. The members of House Myre were once responsible for seeing ten men hanged in a day, a feat they saw fit to memorialize on their family device. They once thought to challenge the Harlaws for supremacy of Harlaw Island, but the attempt was quashed, and the Myres were reduced to the status of vassals as a result.

House Netley

Ranking	Landed

House Netley is a minor house of the Iron Islands, one with little prestige or influence.

House Orkwood

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Orkmont
Arms	Dark green pine trees bunched together on a field of yellow

House Orkwood is another minor house of the Iron Islands, with holdings on the isle of Orkmont.

House Saltcliffe

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Saltcliffe
Arms	A nine-headed serpent, black on silver

House Saltcliffe presumably controls the entirety of Saltcliffe, one of the smaller isles in the Iron Islands

HOUSE SPARR

HOUSE STONEHOUSE

HOUSE VOLMARK

HOUSE WYNCH

House Sharp

Ranking	Landed

Members of this house include clever Alvyn Sharp, Harmund, and his son Harrag, also known as the Sheepstealer.

House Shepherd

Ranking	Landed

House Shepherd is a house with little prestige.

House Sparr

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Great Wyk
Arms	Oak saltire on blue

The present head of this minor house is The Sparr, an old man with a hatchet face, watery eyes, and a tremulous voice. He has a single son, Steffarion.

House Stonehouse

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Old Wyk
Arms	Black brazier on a grey masonry field

The head of this house is known simply as The Stonehouse. Red Ralf Stonehouse, one of the prominent members of the family, is a warrior of some note.

House Stonetree

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Harlaw
Arms	A grey stone tree, devoid of leaves, on a black field

House Stonetree is a vassal of House Harlaw. The Stonetrees have considerable holdings, many ships, and fierce warriors, but they kneel before the scythe.

House Sunderly

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Saltcliffe
Arms	A pale pink drowned man, hair streaming upwards and fish nibbling at his limbs, floating upright on a blue-green field,

House Sunderly is one of the houses that lays claim to the small island of Saltcliffe.

House Tawney

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Orkmont
Arms	A scourge of red and black nettles on a white field

House Tawney is a minor house on Orkmont.

House Volmark

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Harlaw
Arms	A black leviathan on a sea of grey

The Volmarks are another house on Harlaw who control large parcels of land. Maron Volmark is the current head of house. Volmark has large holdings, numerous ships, and fierce warriors, but they are sworn to Harlaw.

House Weaver

Ranking	Landed

House Weaver is an insignificant house of the Iron Isles.

House Wynch

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A bloody moon on a field of purple

Lord Waldon Wynch is the head of this house, one of the stronger ones on Pyke; his seat is in the town of Iron Holt.

CHAPTER 7: THE RIVERLANDS

The riverlands form the breadbasket of the Seven Kingdoms, a rich and fertile land crisscrossed with rivers and speckled with airy forests. The region is dotted with patchwork farms and tiny villages huddled in the shelter of old hoary castles. The riverlands contain ancient histories and tragedies, for they have seen countless wars, alliances, and betrayals. The crumbling castles covered in moss and creepers remind those dwelling here of the last Kings of the Rivers and the Hills. Now, the riverlands are governed by House Tully of Riverrun, a noble and distinguished house who has controlled this territory since the days of Aegon's Conquest.

A HISTORY OF THE RIVERLANDS

Long ago, the children of the forest held the fecund valleys and verdant forests that would become the riverlands. As with the rest of Westeros, the coming of the First Men disrupted their peaceful ways and plunged the region into bloody warfare. After centuries of fighting, the two peoples gathered at the island in the heart of the lake called Gods Eye and established a peaceful accord, forever known as the Pact. As agreed, the children withdrew to their sylvan forests, while the First Men raised their kingdoms in the lands ceded by the mysterious folk. The riverlands saw the rise of the Kings of the Rivers and Hills.

At points during the thousand years that followed, various families ruled the riverlands. Many dynasties claimed these lands, including the Fishers and the Justmans, but the greatest of them were the Mudd kings, who were the last of the First Men to claim the riverlands as their own. Their time came to a tragic end with the coming of the Andals. Religious zealots armed with horses and steel, the Andals swept through the kingdoms, cutting down the weirwood trees and uprooting the forests to raise their towns and fortresses. The First Men and the surviving children of the forest fought against the invaders, but iron weapons and powerful steeds proved far stronger than dragonglass and bronze.

At this time, King Tristifer IV, the Hammer of Justice, raised his armies and met the Andal invaders. Tristifer was a wise king and talented in the business of warfare. In spite of the advantages enjoyed by the Andals, he defeated them at every engagement. He won ninety-

> *"Here lies Tristifer, the Fourth of His Name, King of the Rivers and the Hills.... He died in his hundredth battle, when seven Andal kings joined forces against him."*
>
> — Catelyn Stark

nine battles, but even his great might was not enough to staunch the flood of invaders, and at the one-hundredth battle he fell. His son, Tristifer V, was not the man his father was and proved inept and weak. The Andals crushed the resistance and ended the line of the ancient Mudd kings.

Into the vacuum left by the old kings, the Andals raised their own petty kingdoms, carving up the hills and rivers into their own territories. Their victories bought them a short-lived peace, for the riverlands would witness the depredations of countless invaders, ranging from the Storm Kings to the ironmen. In the end, both the Andals and last of the First Men were swept away when Harwyn Hardhand, a vicious ironman raider, conquered the region. He vanquished Arrec the Storm King and established his own kingdom in the green lands.

Two generations later, Harren, Harwyn's grandson, ordered the construction of a gargantuan castle, Harrenhal, as a display of their wealth and power. The task took forty years, and Harren proved a cruel and heartless overseer, working his artisans and masons to death in his eagerness to see the grotesque structure complete. He beggared his realm for his vision of greatness. Ironically, the day the last stone was laid, Aegon the Conqueror set foot at King's Landing, and began the invasion that would change the course of history.

Eventually, after he bested the armies of the Rock and of the Reach at the Field of Fire, Aegon the Conqueror turned his attention to the mighty stronghold. In his arrogance, Harren believed his castle impregnable and roused the petty lords sworn to him to come to his defense. Harren's famous wickedness betrayed him, however, and his bannermen broke with Harrenhal to join the Targaryen warlord. Even still, Harren made ready within the walls of Harrenhal, so when Aegon and his dragons finally arrived, he was prepared for a long siege. Aegon would not wait—the Conqueror simply commanded his dragons to bathe the structure in fire, melting stone and putting an end to Harren and his line.

With the riverlands secure, Aegon bequeathed the lands and holdings to one of the first lords to champion his banners: Edmyn Tully. The Tullys had never been kings, but they were known as wealthy and influential lords. The Tullys were named lords paramount of the riverlands in exchange for swearing loyalty to the Iron Throne. For nearly three centuries, House Tully was one of the Targaryens' fiercest supporters, but even their devotion had limits.

These ancient vows broke following new pacts forged with House Stark. Lord Hoster Tully arranged to wed his daughter, Catelyn, to Brandon Stark, heir to Winterfell. But when Mad King Aerys II executed Lord Rickard Stark and his son Brandon, he set events in motion that would turn Tully against Targaryen. Custom demanded that Catelyn wed Eddard Stark in place of his late brother. Eddard had already joined Robert Baratheon in declaring war on King Aerys. Lord Tully joined their uprising and his allegiance was secured with the betrothal of his second daughter, Lysa, to Lord Jon Arryn. Thus, tied to the Starks and the Arryns, the Tullys pledged their swords and banners to Robert's Rebellion, ending their centuries-old service to the Iron Throne.

Although House Tully supported House Baratheon, not all of the Baratheons' loyal houses followed suit. Several houses, including Darry, Ryger, and Goodbrook, remembered their ancient oaths and saw Tully's actions as treason. These loyalists fought for the Mad King at great cost to themselves. Those who survived the war were granted pardons by King Robert, but many lost lands and wealth, and few are trusted to this day.

GEOGRAPHY OF THE RIVERLANDS

The riverlands encompass a small region of plains, forests, hills, and endless rivers. The lands extend as far north as the Neck, at the source of the Green Fork, south to the Gods Eye, west to the Tumblestone and the Red Fork, and east up to the kingsroad. While not a large realm by any stretch, it is a place of great importance to the Seven Kingdoms and one with many great and powerful families.

Castles

The great families have castles of varying sizes throughout the riverlands. The greatest of these follow.

Acorn Hall

Acorn Hall is the seat of House Smallwood. It stands beside a brook about three days ride from High Heart.

Atranta

Atranta is the seat of one of the two great branches of House Vance.

Castle Darry

Castle Darry is the seat of House Darry. Their lands sit about a half a day south of the Trident, near Harrenhal.

Harrenhal

Harrenhal is a grim and unlucky place, a castle believed to be cursed and with good reason. Once it was the seat of kings, built by King Harren the Black beside the waters of the Gods Eye, three hundred years ago. It took forty years of backbreaking labor to raise Harrenhal in the heart of the Seven Kingdoms; her hall was the greatest known, and her towers dwarfed those of all lesser lords. To meet the needs of the epic construction, Harren and his warriors impoverished his kingdom and plundered neighboring lands for stone, timber, and workers. Thousands died in his quarries, crushed under stone, and many died falling from one of the castle's five colossal towers. Weirwoods that stood undisturbed for thousands of years were cut down for rafters, beams, and other building materials. It was finally finished on the day Aegon the Conqueror set foot on King's Landing. Harrenhal, like all the Seven Kingdoms, fell before the might of the dragons. Their fires roasted the king and his family alive in the castle, raging so hot the stones cracked and melted.

Harrenhal is believed to be haunted. A grim edifice to folly, a brooding structure filled with the restless dead, it is shrouded with the doom

that has befallen each house that has taken residence there. From the Qoherys to the Lothstons, every house that claimed Harrenhal met disaster and defeat, making the prospect of holding the fortress a foreboding one at best. However, Harrentown is a wealthy community, and the lands around it are among the richest in the riverlands. Such treasure is hard to refuse. Currently, Harrenhal is the seat of House Whent.

Harrenhal's greatness cannot be understated. Even ravaged by dragonfire, the castle still stands. Its mighty curtain walls rise beside the lake, sheer like the cliffs of a mountain. Cresting the walls are battlements equipped with wood and iron scorpions, and patrolled by the doughty soldiers sworn to House Whent. From the outside, one can only see the five huge towers that climb above the already staggering walls. While each stands, they have a queer appearance, twisted and malformed like the gnarled claws of a crone reaching up to snatch something from the sky.

The original names for the towers are long lost, but they have acquired new names based on their stories: the Tower of Dread, Widow's Tower, the Wailing Tower, the Tower of Ghosts, and Kingspyre Tower. As the towers are in poor condition, the Whents only use the bottom third of each. The Wailing Tower serves as granary and storage, and it is named for the wailing noise that sounds with the blowing of the wind. The Kingspyre Tower is where King Harren and his son died. Although the tallest and mightiest structure, it is lopsided, like a half-melted candle.

Everything about Harrenhal is magnificent in its scale. The buildings are enormous. The stables can hold a thousand horses. The godswood, which still has a weirwood tree, encompasses twenty acres of forest. And its kitchens are larger than some great halls. The castle's great hall is called the Hall of a Hundred Hearths and has over thirty fireplaces with seating for thousands.

For all its size and wealth, there's something sinister about this massive castle, aided by the endless tales bubbling up about its past. It's said Harren the Black mixed the blood of children with the original mortar. Others claim the ghosts of Harren and his kin prowl the halls. The cavernous rooms play tricks with sound, sometimes muting all noise, while at other times sound echoes all around, reverberating throughout the entire place.

Harroway

Harroway is the keep of Lord Harroway's Town and is home to House Roote. Harroway's most famous feature is the two-headed water horse, a great flat-bottomed oared boat used to cross the Trident. The town features a seven-sided sept, numerous houses, an inn, and an old stone holdfast in the center.

Oldstones

The former castle of House Mudd, the last Kings of the Rivers and the Hills, Oldstones is a jumbled ruin shattered by the Andals after the death of Tristifer IV. The ruins sit atop a hill overlooking the Blue Fork. Only the foundations of the old castle remain. Inside, amidst a maze of brambles and small trees, stands the sepulcher of Tristifer IV, an eroded edifice that bears the likeness of the man interred within. Of the original carvings, only the vague suggestion of his facial features, crown, and warhammer remain. Oldstones is not the castle's original name but rather the term used by the smallfolk, for all have forgotten what it was once called.

Pinkmaiden Castle

Pinkmaiden Castle is the seat of House Piper.

Raventree

Raventree is the seat of House Blackwood.

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Riverrun

House Tully makes its home in the great castle of Riverrun. Poised where the Tumblestone and the Red Fork meet, the castle has three sides, one facing the Tumblestone, one the Red Fork, which flows from the south, and the third overlooking a dry moat that can be filled to make the fortress all but unassailable. The sandstone walls rise sheer from the water, and the towers—placed where each of the three walls meet—provide an excellent view for leagues. Crenulations sit atop the low walls fitted with arrow loops for archers.

The ivy-covered tower overlooking the Tumblestone is the Wheel Tower. At its base is the Water Gate, so named because it is half submerged, its iron portcullis rusted red. The river's passage takes it past a waterwheel inside the tower. Most boats and river traffic coming to the castle tie up here.

Inside the walls is the three-sided keep. It contains Lord Hoster's solar, which has a stone balcony jutting out to the east like the prow of a ship. A beautiful and fragrant garden serves as a godswood. There one finds a riot of flowers, nesting birds, streams, tall redwoods, old elms, and a sad-faced weirwood at the center. Nearby is the sept. In traditional fashion, it has seven walls, fashioned from the same sandstone as the rest of the castle. Inside are painted marble statues of the Seven.

The Great Hall is set aside for large councils and has an attached private audience chamber that rises above the Great Hall. The high seat of the Tullys can be found here. In addition, Riverrun has a windowless dungeon below the Keep.

Seagard

Raised to defend the riverlands from ironmen raids, Seagard is a fortified town and castle on the western coast at the interior of the Cape of Eagles. The Booming Tower contains a great bronze bell, which is rung when ironmen reavers are sighted at sea. Seagard is the seat of House Mallister.

The Twins

Situated across a swift and deep stretch of the Green Fork are the Twins. Spanned by House Frey centuries ago, the family has grown rich on the levies gained from those crossing from one side of the river to the other. Two bridges, massive arches of smooth grey stone approach the Water Tower, which rises at the center of the river. Each bridge is large enough to accommodate two wagons side by side. Guarding each bridge is a keep, the Twins, raised to protect the crossing and their holdings. The Twins are squat and ugly formidable castles and identical in every respect. Each includes a barbican and portcullis at either bank, while the Water Tower protects the span. The Freys protect their holdings with numerous swords, scorpions, and archers.

Wayfarer's Rest

Wayfarer's Rest is the seat of one of the two great branches of House Vance.

Landmarks

As the riverlands have a long and colorful history, they are home to numerous curiosities and landmarks that hail from the Dawn Age.

Cape of Eagles

This land mass thrusts out into the sea, pointing the way to the Iron Islands.

Gods Eye

The Gods Eye is a great lake, so large one cannot see the opposite shore. It marks the southern border of the riverlands. Harrenhal overlooks its waters; the castle's reflection extends out toward the lone island, the Isle of Faces, situated at its center.

Numerous villages line the shores of the Gods Eye, including Harrentown to the north. The Gods Eye drains into a river that eventually joins the Blackwater Rush, many leagues to the south. There, a small town of white houses spreads out around the walls of a holdfast, a large sept with a shingled roof, and a towerhouse on a small rise to the west.

Hag's Mire

Hag's Mire is a swamp found in the Frey lands, near the source of the Blue Fork. Several small villages are found within it.

High Heart

A lofty hill, the High Heart was once a sacred grove to the children of the forest. The Andals despoiled it during their invasion, chopping down the weirwoods, leaving only thirty-one old stumps to stand as reminders of the trees that once grew here. Locals shun the place, claiming the ghosts of the children haunt it still. But a few claim it remains a place of magic and that it protects those who sleep here.

Inn of the Kneeling Man

According to legend, this popular inn was raised at the very spot where the last King in the North, Torrhen Stark, knelt before Aegon the Conqueror. The inn is two stories and stands over the south bank of the Red Fork where the river bends to the southeast. The main structure is built from stone, but there are also stables, a smithy, an arbor, an orchard, and a small garden. The inn also sports a dock for river traffic.

Isle of Faces

This island is where the First Men and the children of the forest achieved their lasting peace. So the gods would witness the pact, the children of the forest carved faces into the trunks of the weirwood trees that dotted the island. The order of the green men was established to attend the trees and protect the island. Outside of the Isle of Faces, weirwoods no longer grow anywhere but in the North.

The Neck

A no-man's land between the North and the riverlands, the Neck is of both realms and of neither. Currently, the deepest of the bogs are home to the crannogmen, who are ruled by Lord Howland Reed of House Reed, a sworn bannerman to Eddard Stark.

Old Crossroads Inn

The Old Crossroads Inn overlooks the point where the kingsroad crosses the high road. Masha Heddle, an old woman with a taste for sourleaf, runs the place. It's said the inn was built during the reign of King Jaehaerys, and it was here that he and Good Queen Alysanne stayed before heading on to survey the North. In their honor, the Old Crossroads was called Two Crowns and later gained the name Bellringer Inn when an innkeeper raised a bell tower. Eventually, the inn passed on to Long Jon Heddle who worked as a smith when he grew too old to fight. He constructed a new sign, a three-headed dragon of black iron that hung from a wooden post. When the wind blew, it clanked and clattered, and the place was henceforth named the Clanking Dragon. After the War of the Usurper, the metal sign was removed and the inn gained its most current name.

The Quiet Isle

This monastery stands where the Trident empties into the Bay of Crabs.

Sevenstreams

A town near where the Blue Fork of the Trident breaks down into numerous streams and brooks. It lies within the lands held by the Freys.

Stone Mill

The Stone Mill overlooks a ford across the Red Fork of the Trident.

The Trident

The Trident is the largest river in the Seven Kingdoms. It is formed from the convergence of three branches and drains the riverlands into the Bay of Crabs. Each of these branches is a separate river in its own right. The Red Fork, which begins in the mountains of the westerlands, is the southernmost branch, followed by the Blue Fork, which originates south of Seagard, and the Green Fork, which travels up to the Neck.

The Forks are used to move goods throughout the heartlands of Westeros, and one can see barges laden with grains, sheep, and other goods,

Minor Waterways

Aside from the Trident and the Tumblestone, there are countless streams, brooks, and rivers in the riverlands. These include the Darry, the Greenapple, the Maiden, the Little Willow, which flows into the Big Willow, which in turn flows into the Trident, the Rippledown Rill, and many others.

painted mummers' barges, and more floating down its length. There are few places where the Trident and its source rivers can be crossed; thus, the crossings are historically of great tactical importance to the lords of this realm.

The Ruby Ford

A crossing at a bend in the Green Fork, it's believed this is where Prince Rhaegar Targaryen was slain by Robert Baratheon.

Whispering Wood

South of the Blue Fork is a small pinched valley shrouded in forest. A small stream runs across the bottom.

Tumblestone

The Tumblestone is a river that marks the western border of the riverlands. It's a swift and wild river that crashes into the Red Fork at Riverrun.

Cities, Towns, & Holdfasts

The riverlands are divided between families of various standings, each with keeps, towers, and castles, and numerous villages.

Briarwhite

Briarwhite is one of the many holdfasts in the riverlands.

Fairmarket

Fairmarket is a modest-sized town. It is noted for having a wooden bridge that spans the Blue Fork. One finds Fairmarket about five days travel from the Whispering Wood.

Harrentown

Harrentown is a small community that stands in the shadow of Harrenhal on the northern shores of the Gods Eye.

Lambswold

Lambswold is a small village.

Maidenpool

The ancestral seat of House Mooton, it's said that Maidenpool was where Florian the Fool first spied Jonquil, catching her reflection in the waters while she bathed. From Maidenpool, one can take the Duskendale Road to the south.

Mummer's Ford

Mummer's Ford is a holdfast in the riverlands overlooking the Green Fork, upriver from the holdfast of Sherrer.

Nutten

Nutten is a small town.

Ramsford

Ramsford is a small town in the riverlands that offers crossing of the Blue Fork.

Riverbend

Riverbend is a small town.

Sallydance

Sallydance is a small village about four days ride from the Lychesters' keep. This town features a fine sept with leaded glass windows and icons of the Seven. The Mother wears costly robes, the Crone carries a gilded lantern, and the Father wears a silver crown.

Saltpans

A port on the Bay of Crabs, Saltpans sports a small castle with a tall square keep hidden behind a curtain wall.

Sherrer

Sherrer is a stone holdfast in the riverlands, situated along the Green Fork.

Stone Hedge

Stone Hedge is the keep of House Bracken. A small village surrounds it.

Stoney Sept

About a fortnight from Acorn Hall, near the Blackwater Rush and Tumbler's Falls, stands the large town of Stoney Sept. The town sports a tall wall for protection and features a fine sept on a hill for which it takes its name. Stoney Sept also has a stout holdfast that seems small for a town of this size. At the center of town is a market square with a fountain carved to resemble a leaping trout spouting water into the shallow pool. Fronting the square are a number of shops, inns, and taverns, most notable of which is the Peach, a brothel and inn of some fame.

Tumbler's Falls

Tumbler's Falls is a small town on the Blackwater Rush.

Wendish Town

Wendish Town is a timbered holdfast on the Green Fork.

Whitewalls

Whitewalls is a small town.

HOUSE TULLY

RANKING	Great
LANDS	Riverlands
CASTLE	Riverrun
ARMS	A leaping trout on a field of blue and mud red
MOTTO	Family, Duty, Honor

While never kings of the riverlands, the Tullys are an old family, tracing their lineage back to the Age of Heroes. They were chief among those river lords who deserted Harren the Black and sided with Aegon the Conqueror. For their part, Aegon raised them up as lords paramount of the riverlands and required the other lords to swear fealty to House Tully. The Tullys have ruled these lands ever since.

Currently, the head of the house is Lord Hoster Tully, but he's gripped by a vile sickness. It won't be long before the mantle of lordship passes to his son Edmure.

LORD HOSTER TULLY

Hoster Tully had always been a big man; tall and broad in his youth, portly as he grew older. Now he seemed shrunken, the muscle and meat melted off his bones.

— A GAME OF THRONES

The ailing lord of Riverrun, Lord Hoster Tully suffers a slow death in his solar, haunted by the decisions of his past, the ghosts of lost loved ones, and his concerns for the future of his house.

HISTORY

Hoster Tully came to lordship more than thirty years ago. He has proven to be a good lord, who traveled the riverlands extensively to gaze upon the waters of his home. As a young man, he wed Minisa of House Whent, and she gave him three children, Catelyn, Lysa, and Edmure. During her fourth pregnancy, which she hoped would deliver Hoster's second son, she perished, and the baby died with her. The loss of his wife consumed him and he never recovered from her death.

A number of circumstances led to Hoster's involvement in the War of the Usurper. Years ago, he opened his house to Petyr Baelish, fostering the talented boy to give him an education and an opportunity to improve his lot in the world. Baelish grew up with Catelyn and Lysa, and as he grew older, his affection for the girls grew more than playful. When Lysa became pregnant with Baelish's illegitimate child, Hoster commanded the girl to drink tansy tea, thus erasing the pregnancy and masking the shame of the act. Still, rumors would spread, and Hoster feared he would be unable to find a good match for her. Meanwhile, Hoster had already arranged a marriage between Catelyn and Brandon Stark, a match that would strengthen his own house. Of course, his plans nearly fell apart when Baelish challenged the young lord to a duel. When Petyr lost and was injured, Hoster's view darkened. He forbade Catelyn to visit him as he healed, and when Baelish was strong enough to travel, he was promptly sent back to his family.

Shortly after this, the War of the Usurper erupted. Already tied to the Starks, but unwilling to take sides in the war, it fell to Jon Arryn to negotiate for Tully's aid. Hoster agreed to commit his banners to Robert's cause in exchange for Arryn marrying Lysa. Jon Arryn was an old man already, and without heirs, so Hoster cited Lysa's terminated pregnancy as proof of her fertility. In need of the spears, Arryn agreed, and thus, House Tully betrayed the Targaryens who had raised them up and, instead, joined forces with the rebels.

Unfortunately, not all of his lords were willing to break with the Targaryens, ending years of close ties with some of his most loyal banners. Their resistance to his commands forced Hoster to crush their houses and raze their villages to ensure no other lords broke from his house. Although he was an old man then, he led his armies alongside Eddard Stark during the Battle of the Bells at Stoney Sept. They rescued Robert Baratheon and defeated the legions of King Aerys's Hand, a victory that turned the tide of the war and transformed the uprising from a group of dissatisfied lords to a full rebellion.

A decade after the War of the Usurper, Hoster fell sick with a terrible wracking illness of his abdomen. For the last two years, his health has failed, leaving him a bedridden invalid. To manage the house, he's relied on his castellan and his impulsive and reckless son, Edmure. His health grows worse with each passing day.

Personality

Hoster Tully is a good man and a dutiful lord, but he's also a man who does what he must for the survival of his house, even if his choices are unpopular. He's damaged his relationship with his brother, forcing Brynden Tully to leave Riverrun rather than marry against his will. As well, Lysa has never forgiven him for the loss of her child or for forcing her to marry a man so much her senior.

When he was stronger, Hoster could contain the grief of his losses behind the façade of a leader. But as his health fails, he is tortured by regrets and haunted by the hard decisions of his past. He has lucid moments, but mostly he exists in a semi-state of sleep, clouded by the milk of the poppy.

Appearance

Hoster Tully is a shrunken man. His fat and muscle have fled, leaving behind a ruin of flesh and bone. His hair has turned white, framing a sagging face. When he speaks, it's thin and wispy, and he complains of the crabs ripping through his guts. He is a man stricken by regrets and grief and he welcomes the mercy of death.

Catelyn Tully

Catelyn is the eldest daughter of Hoster Tully and Minisa. Originally promised to Brandon Stark, she married Eddard Stark after King Aerys II executed her betrothed. For more information on Catelyn, see **Catelyn Stark** on page 83.

Ser Edmure Tully		Adult Fighter
Abilities		
Agility	3	Strength 2B
Athletics	4	—
Endurance	4	Resilience 1B
Fighting	4	Long Blades 2B
Language (Common)	4	—
Persuasion	3	Convince 1B
Survival	4	—
Status	4	Breeding 1B
Warfare	3	Command 1B
Will	3	—

Attributes			
Combat Defense	9	Intrigue Defense	8
Health	13	Composure	9
Destiny Points	2		
Benefits: Heir, Tough			
Drawbacks: Naïve			

Excellent Plate and Mail: AR 7, AP –2, Bulk 3			
Shield	4D	2 damage	Defensive +2
Longsword	4D+1+2B	5 damage	

Lysa Tully

Lysa is the second child of Hoster Tully. She is wed to Lord Jon Arryn, the Hand of the King, and resides at King's Landing with her husband and her sole child, Robert Arryn. For information on Lysa, see page 153.

Ser Edmure Tully

"It is no disgrace to miss your shot. Edmure should hear that. The day my own lord father went downriver, Hoster missed as well."

"With his first shaft. His second found the sail."

—Ser Brynden Tully and Catelyn Stark

Edmure Tully is the third child and heir to Riverrun. Edmure resides at his family's castle, working to fill the shoes of his father with the aid of his family's advisors and friends.

History

Although Edmure is younger than Catelyn and Lysa, as Hoster's only male child, he stands to inherit Riverrun when his father passes. Edmure grew up in the shadow of his elder sisters, who helped raise him after the death of their mother. Edmure has never married, but when he was younger, a woman he fancied was bedded by a traveling singer, and he has had nothing but scorn for singers ever since.

Personality

Proving his worth to his father and his father's lords is Edmure's greatest ambition. He's wild and impulsive, overcompensating for his inadequacies. His loyalty is fierce and he's prone to going beyond what is required, sometimes with unexpected and disastrous results. Still, he strives to be worthy of his family's legacy and is earnest in his efforts.

Appearance

A stocky young man, Edmure has the common coloring found in most Tullys. He has auburn hair, which he wears shaggy, and a fiery beard. His skin is pale and he has deep blue eyes. His mouth seems made for smiles and he's a friendly and personable man.

Notable Servants

Like most castles, Riverrun is home to a myriad of guards and servants, advisors and knights, pot boys and pages. Among the guardsmen are Delp, Elwood, Enger, and Long Lew. Ser Desmond Grell is the master-at-arms, and Ser Robin Ryger is captain of the guard. Riverrun also has the service of a young septon, a man gifted with a rich and pleasant singing voice. Finally, Riverrun also has a maester of the Citadel, a man named Vyman who replaced Maester Kym when the old maester died.

Banners of the Riverlands

Many lords swear fealty to House Tully, though a good many also retain their loyalty to the exiled Targaryens and would see the line restored. Most, however, have sense enough to keep this sort of devotion hidden.

House Blackwood

Ranking	Major
Castle	Raventree Hall
Arms	A flock of ravens on scarlet surrounding a dead weirwood on a black escutcheon

House Blackwood is one of the few houses in the riverlands that can claim legitimate descent from the First Men, and for this reason, they, unlike many of the other river lords, follow the old gods and keep the old customs of their ancestors. Part of their unwavering beliefs stem from the fact that the Blackwoods claim to have once been kings of the Trident. The ancient feud between the Blackwoods and the Brackens can be traced to this era.

Over the centuries, the two houses have fought and bickered, skirmishing against one another and even breaking out into open war. Regardless of the cooler heads that sometimes come to power, something always inspires a renewal of these hostilities. For example, the feud had abated until Ser Otho Bracken, the Brute of Bracken, slew Lord Quentyn Blackwood in a tournament at King's Landing about a century ago. When Lord Bracken named his son Otho as heir on his deathbed, the Blackwoods were enraged and rekindled the hostilities that carry on to the present day.

Presently, Lord Tytos Blackwood is lord of Raventree Hall. A hard pike of a man with close-cropped, salt-and-pepper whiskers and a hooked nose, he's noted to be a skilled warrior and friend of the Starks in the North. His heir is Lucas Blackwood.

House Blanetree

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Maple leaves, green and brown, strewn on a field of yellow

House Blanetree is a minor house of the riverlands. The only notable member of this family is Lady Zhoe Blanetree, who is wed to Ser Jared Frey, the fourth son of Walder Frey.

House Bracken

Ranking	Major
Castle	Stone Hedge
Arms	A red stallion upon a golden escutcheon on brown

House Bracken is one of the oldest and most distinguished houses of the riverlands, who, according to legend, were also petty kings of the Trident though they lost their titles with the coming of the Andals. Tracing their lineage back to the Age of Heroes, they have ruled their lands with holdings along the Red Fork from Stone Hedge for as long as anyone can remember. While a chief house, they are better known for their ongoing feud with House Blackwood, a conflict that finds its origins in the Age of Heroes and has continued for thousands of years. Although the Brackens descend from the First Men, they set aside their devotion to the old gods to embrace the Faith of the Andals, an act that did nothing to contain the violence between the two houses. The tensions worsened again a century ago when Ser Otho Bracken, who had previously slain Lord Quentyn Blackwood during a tournament at King's Landing, ascended to become the next Bracken lord. The two houses once again went for each other's throats and continue to do so to this day.

House Bracken has a history of choosing the wrong side in conflicts. Most famously, they sided with the Blackfyre pretenders and hired Myrish mercenaries to support the upstart rebel. Clearly, their part in the Blackfyre Rebellion reduced their standing, but they managed to recover and have regained a place of importance in the riverlands.

Lord Jonos Bracken is the head of the house and one of Hoster Tully's oldest and most loyal bannermen. His nephew, Ser Hendry Bracken, is a warrior of some skill, and there's a Bastard of Bracken, who has gained a name for himself as well. The Brackens' master-at-arms is a man named Kurleket, who often keeps the company of two guardsmen named Lharys and Mohor.

House Charlton

Ranking	Landed
Arms	Three sprigs of mistletoe, green and red, on gold inside a green border

House Charlton is a minor house in the riverlands sworn to House Frey. Ser Andrey Charlton is one of the house's more-distinguished members. His squire is Lucas Roote, of House Roote.

House Darry

Ranking	Landed
Lands	Darry
Castle	Darry
Arms	A black plowman on brown

House Darry had long been one of the greatest houses in the riverlands. With a long history of support for House Targaryen, Darry has given many sons to the Kingsguard, including one of the greatest Lord Commanders, a hero named the Demon of Darry. While sworn to Riverrun, they had close ties to the Iron Throne and King Aerys held them in high esteem. When the War of the Usurper broke out, House Darry was caught in the middle, torn between joining House Tully and fighting for their king. They chose the latter and have since paid the price for it.

Robert's Rebellion was not kind to House Darry. Their favored son, Ser Jonothor Darry of the Kingsguard, died alongside Prince Rhaegar Targaryen on the Trident.

Another Darry, Ser Willem, was House Targaryen's master-at-arms. When Stannis Baratheon led his fleet to seize Dragonstone, it was Ser Willem who cut his way free through ranks of treacherous knights to escape the island with Viserys and the infant Daenerys. He took the young Targaryens across the narrow sea to safety in the city of Braavos.

Such loyalty did little to help the Darrys when Robert was deciding what to do with the loyalist family. After the war, Robert laid claim to most of their lands and bequeathed half of their ancestral holdings to other lords who fought on his behalf.

The Darrys now hold only modest lands and a modest castle about a half-day's ride south from the Trident, along the shores of the Darry River between the Trident and Harrenhal.

Ser Raymun Darry is the head of House Darry. He lost three elder brothers at the Trident and simmers with outrage at what was done to his once noble house. His eight-year old son, Lyman, is his only heir. Neither father nor son has much love for the Baratheon dynasty. Ser Raymun's sisters, Mariya and Jeyne, are wives of Frey scions. Mariya is wed to Merret Frey and has four children by him, and Jeyne is wed to Cleos Frey and they have two children.

House Deddings

Ranking	Minor

House Deddings is a small but wealthy house in the riverlands.

House Erenford

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A golden heron, beaked and gammed black, standing with a silver fish in its beak, all on a pink field

Another minor house of the riverlands, House Erenford is sworn to the Twins. Lady Joyeuse Erenford, a young woman of sixteen years, is the eighth and current wife of Lord Walder Frey.

House Fisher

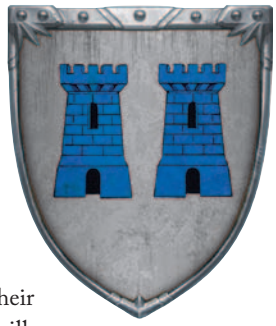
Ranking	Extinct
Arms	A crowned catfish, spotted grey, on blue field

Before the conquests of the Iron Islands and before the ascension of House Mudd, the Fishers were the Kings of the Rivers and Hills. Their reign came sometime after House Teague and before House Justman.

House Frey

Ranking	Major
Lands	The Crossing
Castle	The Twins
Arms	Two blue towers on silver-grey

House Frey has ruled the Crossing for nearly six hundred years. A relatively recent house, they came to power when they gained the lands around the Green Fork near the Neck. To secure their power they raised a great castle in the center of the river and placed bridges at either side. These wooden spans were eventually replaced with stone, and stolid twin keeps were raised to guard them. Although the Freys came from modest beginnings, their tenacity and ambition, as well as the steady flow of gold levied from those wishing to cross, have elevated them to the position of one of the most powerful houses under the Tully banner.



The Freys have always put their own concerns above those of their lords. Although sworn to Riverrun they have been anything but diligent about performing their duty. The greatest example of their reluctance came at the Battle of the Trident. The Frey armies didn't arrive until after Robert slew Rhaegar, the battle already won.

House Frey has ever worked to expand their holdings. Their lands include a number of villages including Hag's Mire and Sevenstreams. While content to push south, they have always craved the Neck and have mounted several invasions into the lands of the crannogmen in the hopes of claiming the territory for themselves.

In addition to numerous children, House Frey has the service of a number of servants including a maester named Brenett. He is a great, filthy, fat man, balding and double-chinned, and oft covered in raven droppings.

Lord Walder Frey

"Some men take their oaths more seriously than others...."

—Catelyn Stark

The Lord of the Crossing is Walder Frey, an ancient man famed for the size of his ambition, equaled only by the size of his family. A ruthless and grasping man, he connives and plots to advance his house's status in whatever way he can. He is sworn to Riverrun, but he is a reluctant ally at best, known to make excuses and delay. He earned his nickname, the Late Lord Frey, from his tardy arrival at the Battle of the Trident. Everything Lord Walder does, he does for the survival and improvement of his house. He has lived a long time making sure he's always on the winning side of every conflict, and this attitude extends to nearly every deal he makes.

It is said that Lord Walder is the only lord in Westeros who can field an army out of his breeches. He has some twenty or so sons, nearly forty grandsons, and half as many great-grandsons. Add to this plenty of daughters, granddaughters, and endless bastards and grand-bastards, many of whom are called Walder or Walda. Frey has had eight wives, outliving the previous seven and enjoying his most recent acquisition, the young daughter of House Erenford.

Lord Frey is ancient, wizened, and pink with a bald spotty head. He looks very much like a weasel. He's plagued with gout so bad that he can't stand without help and goes about his castle on a litter born by several grandsons. Lord Walder has a sharp tongue and blunt manner that makes him a chore during negotiations. His memory is long and he tends to be very prickly and even thin-skinned. Frey has little love for the Tullys, believing they have always shamed him. He had tried to marry off one of his daughters to Edmure, but he was refused, an affront Frey has not forgotten. Frey is quick to take offense, and rarely forgives insults, whether intended or not.

Extended Family

Walder Frey has an enormous family. A selection of Freys follows.

Descendants by the late Perra Frey of House Royce

Perra Frey was Walder Frey's first wife. She gave him three sons.

- **Ser Stevron Frey:** Heir to the Crossing, Stevron Frey is past sixty and has grandchildren of his own. He has grey hair and the weasel look of his father. Stevron has lost nearly all hope that his father will die and pass the rule to him, but he does his best to remain patient.

  Stevron's first wife, Lady Corenna Swann, succumbed to a wasting sickness. Corenna and Stevron had one child, Ser Ryman Frey. After Corenna's death, Stevron married again, wedding Jeyne Lydden, who later died after a fall from a horse, but not before she gave him two more children. Stevron then wed Marsella Waynwood. She died giving birth to Stevron's third son, Walton Frey.

- **Ser Ryman Frey:** Ryman is Stevron's eldest son and is next in line to inherit the Crossing. He's aging, over forty, and is known to have a bad belly. He's dull-witted, fleshy, with a broad, stupid face. He is a man with great appetites, indulging in gold, wine, food, and whores. Ryman has at least three legitimate sons, Edwyn, Black Walder, and Petyr.

- **Edwyn Frey:** Stevron's eldest grandson and Ryman's eldest son, he is a pallid man with pinched features and lank dark hair. He is known to be a cold man and a schemer. He has a chilly relationship with Black Walder, by whom he feels threatened. Edwyn is not a man of the sword, being better suited to conniving. Edwyn is married to Janyce Hunter. They have one child, Walda, a girl of near eight years.

- **Black Walder Frey:** The second son of Ser Ryman Frey, he is known to be a black-hearted villain. He is stout and wears a black beard. He is a man who does and says as he pleases and is suspected of bedding the wives of his kin, daring the other Freys to stop him. His disdain for his brother Edwyn is well known, and some suspect he might make a move to replace Edwyn as their father's heir.

- **Petyr Frey, "Petyr Pimple":** Ryman's third son, Petyr is cursed with a pimply complexion. At ten, Walder Frey married him off to Mylenda Caron, a woman three times his age, and who is a regular guest in Black Walder's bed. Petyr has one child, a young girl named Perra.

- **Aegon Frey, "Jinglebell":** The middle son of Ser Stevron Frey, he was born to Jeyne Lydden. He looks just like his grandfather but has large, vacant eyes. He's a halfwit and a fool, but the family is protective of him all the same.

- **Maegelle Frey:** Stevron's eldest daughter, she was married off to Ser Dafyn Vance.

- **Walton Frey:** Stevron's dour third son. He has a reputation for being a soldier with iron loyalty, as well as being blunt, brusque, and a simple warrior at heart. He follows orders without question.

  Walton is married to Deana Hardyng, and they have three children, Steffon "the Sweet," Walda "Fair Walda," and Bryan Frey, a squire.

Lord Walder Frey — **Venerable Schemer**

Abilities		
Awareness	5	Notice 2B
Cunning	5	Logic 1B, Memory 4B
Deception	5	Act 2B, Bluff 3B, Cheat 1B
Endurance	4	Stamina 2B
Knowledge	4	Education 1B
Language (Common)	3	—
Persuasion	4	Bargain 3B, Intimidate 1B
Status	5	Reputation 1B
Will	4	Coordinate 1B, Dedication 2B

Attributes			
Combat Defense	9	Intrigue Defense	15
Health	12	Composure	14
Destiny Points	0		

Benefits: Head of House, Stubborn, Treacherous

Drawbacks: Feeble

- **Ser Emmon Frey:** The second son of Walder Frey, he had the singular misfortune to marry Genna Lannister and has lived in terror of Lord Tywin ever since. He has a weak chin and the telltale weasel-like features of the Freys. He's small, nervous, and bald.

- **Ser Cleos Frey:** The eldest son of Emmon and Genna, Cleos Frey is loyal to House Lannister. With stringy brown locks, a weak chin, watery eyes, and the thin face of his father, he is a poor cousin to the Lannister family, having inherited none of their fabled beauty. Cleos is married to Jeyne Darry, who has born him two children, Tywin "Ty" Frey, a boy of ten, and Willem Frey, who serves as a page at Ashemark.

- **Ser Lyonel Frey:** Lyonel is the second son of Emmon and Genna. He is one of Kevan Lannister's companions. Lyonel is married to Melesa Crakehall, but they have no children as yet.

- **Tion Frey:** Emmon's third son, he's a young man who has recently found service as a squire.

- **Walder Frey, "Red Walder":** Emmon's youngest son, Red Walder serves as a page at Casterly Rock.

- **Ser Aenys Frey:** A grey, stooped, giant of a man with watery, red eyes and huge gnarled hands, he is Walder Frey's third son. His late wife was Tyana Wylde, who died in childbirth.

- **Aegon Frey, "Bloodborn":** Aenys's eldest son, he's an infamous outlaw and brigand.

- **Rhaegar Frey:** Aenys's second son, he's the widower of the late Jeyne Beesbury, who succumbed to a wasting sickness. He has three children: Robert Frey, a boy of twelve; White Walda, a girl of nine; and Jonos Frey, a boy of seven.

- **Lady Perriane Frey:** Lord Walder's eldest daughter, she's married to Leslyn Haigh.

Descendants by the late Cyrenna Frey of House Swann

Cyrenna was the second wife of Walder Frey. She bore him two children, Jared and Luceon.

- **Ser Jared Frey:** Walder Frey's fourth son, Jared, is lean, pockmarked, and balding. His late wife Alys bore him one son, Tytos Frey, and one daughter, Kyra, who is wed to Ser Garse Goodbrook.
- **Ser Tytos Frey:** Ser Tytos is the only son of Ser Jared. Tytos is married to Zhoe Blanetree, and they have two children, Zia, a maid of thirteen, and Zachery, a boy of eleven, newly sworn to the Faith and training at the Sept of Oldtown.
- **Luceon Frey:** Walder's fifth son was given to the Faith, and Luceon now serves at the Great Sept of Baelor at King's Landing.

Descendants by the late Amarei Frey of House Crakehall

Lady Amarei was Lord Frey's third wife. She bore him seven children before she died.

- **Ser Hosteen Frey:** Hosteen Frey is the sixth son of Walder Frey. He's a husky man with a square face and is said to be the strongest of Frey's brood. Hosteen is married to Bellena Hawick. They have one child, Ser Arwood Frey.
- **Ser Arwood Frey:** Arwood is Hosteen's only son. He's married to Ryella Royce and has three young children with a fourth on the way. They include Ryella, a girl of five, and a pair of twin boys, Androw and Alyn.
- **Lady Lythene Frey:** Walder's daughter, she's married to Lord Lucias Vypren.
- **Symond Frey:** As the seventh son of Walder Frey, Symond has no chance of attaining a place of merit in the house. He's married to Betharios of Braavos and the couple has three children: Alesander Frey, a gifted singer, Alyx Frey, a nubile maid of sixteen, and Bradamr, a young boy fostered on Braavos as a ward of the Braavosi merchant Oro Tendyris.
- **Ser Danwell Frey:** Danwell is Walder's eighth son. He's married to Wynafrei Whent, who has been unable to produce a child after many stillbirths and miscarriages.
- **Merrett Frey:** Walder Frey's ninth son, he considers himself unlucky, though in truth every bad turn of luck was brought on by his own failings. A big man, broad around the chest and shoulders, he's grown soft and fleshy. As a boy, he was sent off to Crakehall to serve as a page to his mother's family. Lord Sumner made him a squire along with Jaime Lannister, but soon after the Kingswood Brotherhood came to plague the kingswood. He proved wanting there, first catching pox from a camp follower, and then getting kidnapped by the White Fawn, an infamous bandit. He was ransomed, but in the next fight he took a blow to the head from a mace that broke his helm and left him insensible for a fortnight. After, he could no longer fight, such were the extent of his injuries, for even the slightest blow cause tremendous pain, and so he was released from his service.

  After he returned, Walder Frey arranged his marriage to Mariya Darry, then a good match, but the War of the Usurper changed

that as Darry's fortunes fell, and thus, he lost his status. She's given him three daughters, Amerei Frey, called Gatehouse Ami for her freeness in giving her virtues, Fat Walda, and Marissa, a maid of twelve. Mariya also gave him one son, called Little Walder.

- **Ser Geremy Frey:** The tenth son of Walder Frey. He drowned, leaving behind his wife, Carolei Waynwood; his son Sandor, a squire to Ser Donnel Waynwood; and his daughter Cynthea, a ward of Lady Anya Waynwood.
- **Ser Raymund Frey:** Raymund is the eleventh son of Walder Frey, married to Beony Beesbury. The couple have five children, and Beony is pregnant again. His eldest child is Robert, an acolyte at the Citadel in Oldtown. Next is Malwyn, an apprentice to an alchemist in Lys. He has twin daughters, Serra and Sarra, and another, younger daughter, Cersei, also called Little Bee.

Descendants by the late Alyssa Frey of House Blackwood

Lady Alyssa Frey gave Walder Frey five more children before her death.

- **Lothar Frey, "Lame Lothar":** Walder's twelfth son, he is a soft-bodied, portly man with close-set eyes, a pointed beard, and dark hair that falls to his shoulders in ringlets. A twisted leg at birth resulted in his nickname. Currently, Lothar serves as Walder's steward for he is courteous, intelligent, and every bit the schemer his father is. Lame Lothar is married to Leonella Lefford and they have three children with another on the way. Tysane is the eldest, followed by Walda and Emberlie.
- **Ser Jammos Frey:** Walder's thirteenth son, Ser Jammos is an undistinguished knight. He's married to Sallei Paege and has three children including Big Walder, and twin boys, Dickon and Mathis.
- **Ser Whalen Frey:** The fourteenth son of Walder Frey, he too is married to a Paege. His wife is Sylwa Paege, and they have two children. Hoster is a squire to Ser Damon Paege, and Merianne, or Merry, is a girl of ten.
- **Lady Morya Frey:** Morya is married to Flement Brax.
- **Tyta, "Tyta the Maid":** Tyta is another of Walder's daughters, distinguished only because she's a maid of twenty-eight years.

Descendants by the late Sarya Frey of House Whent

Lady Sarya perished before she could add to Walder's brood.

Descendants by the late Bethany Frey of House Rosby

Bethany, Walder Frey's sixth wife, bore him five children before she passed on.

- **Ser Perwyn Frey:** Perwyn is the fifteenth son of Walder Frey. He is unwed and has sired no children, and is thought to be a loyal and honorable man.
- **Ser Benfrey Frey:** The sixteenth son, he's married to his cousin, Jyanna. They have one child, Della, who is deaf. Jyanna is about ready to give birth to another child.
- **Willamen Frey:** The seventeenth son, he forged his chain and now serves as a maester to House Hunter.
- **Olyvar Frey:** Walder's eighteenth son, he's a young man of about seventeen years. He wants to be a knight and he lacks the treachery of his kin.
- **Roslin Frey:** A pretty young daughter of Walder Frey.

Descendants by the late Annara Frey of House Farring

Lady Annara was Walder's seventh wife. She bore him six children before she died.

- **Arwyn Frey:** Arwyn is a young woman of thirteen years.
- **Wendel Frey:** Walder's nineteenth son, he is a page at Seagard.
- **Colmar Frey:** The twentieth son, he has been promised to the Faith.
- **Waltyr Frey, "Tyr":** The twenty-first son, he's a boy of nine.
- **Elmar Frey:** Walder Frey's youngest and twenty-second son. He's a boy of nine. He can be friendly when he needs help, but he has a deep-rooted streak of arrogance.
- **Shirei:** Walder's youngest trueborn daughter.
- **Lady Joyeuse Erenford:** Walder Frey is finalizing his marriage to this poor frail girl of fifteen years. She's to be the eighth Lady Frey.

Known Bastards

- **Walder Rivers, "Bastard Walder":** The eldest of Lord Walder's bastards, he's a stern, grey-haired warrior with a fearsome reputation. He is given considerable authority in the Frey house.
- **Ser Aemon Rivers:** Aemon Rivers is the son of Bastard Walder. It is said he has never had anything sensible to say. His arms are quartered with his father's and his mother's, suggesting he is himself trueborn.
- **Walda Rivers:** Walda is the daughter of Bastard Walder.
- **Melwys:** Another bastard, he serves as a maester of the Citadel, presently serving at House Rosby.
- **Jeyne Rivers:** One of Walder's bastard daughters.
- **Martyn Rivers:** Martyn is another one of Walder's bastards. He's a ruddy man that scarcely resembles his brothers.
- **Ryger Rivers:** One of Lord Frey's many bastards
- **Ronel Rivers:** Yet another bastard, he serves in his father's forces.
- **Mellara Rivers:** One of Walder's bastard daughters.

House Goodbrook

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A blue wavy bend on a gold field

An old house with a distinguished history, the Goodbrooks were among those houses to break with House Tully when Riverrun declared for Robert Baratheon during the War of the Usurper. For their betrayal, House Tully savaged their lands, burning their villages and greatly reducing their holdings. The skeletons of these settlements can

be found throughout the fringes of House Goodbrook's lands. Once King's Landing fell House Goodbrook renewed their ties to Tully, but one can expect old wounds have yet to heal. Lord Lymond Goodbrook is the current head of the house and he's said to be close friends with Edmure Tully.

One of Goodbrook's greatest knights is Ser Garse Goodbrook, though his marriage to Kyra Frey makes him more of a Frey than a Goodbrook. Garse and Kyra have two young children, Walder and Jeyne.

House Grell

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Three red martlets on white bend, on a blue field

House Grell is one of the minor houses of the riverlands. Ser Desmond Grell serves Hoster Tully as his master-at-arms, and has served House Tully his whole life. An older man now, he is stout with a great belly and a red face.

House Haigh

Ranking	Landed
Arms	A black pitchfork on a golden bar sinister on russet

House Haigh is one of the minor houses sworn to Walder Frey. The head of the house is Ser Leslyn Haigh. He's married to Lady Perriane of House Frey. Lord Haigh's eldest son is Ser Harys Haigh, father to Walder. Lord Haigh's second son is Ser Donnel, called the Knight of the Riverlands, and his third son is Alyn, who serves as a squire.

House Harroway

Ranking	Extinct
Castle	Harrenhal
Arms	Per bend sinister orange and black rayonne, a castle countercharged

House Harroway was one of the houses to hold Harrenhal after Harren the Black's line was extinguished. They succeeded House Towers and were replaced, when they died out, by House Strong.

House Hawick

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Saltpans
Arms	White sea birds strewn on a blue field

House Hawick commands a small keep overlooking the town of Saltpans. They have connections to House Frey through the marriage of Bellena Hawick to Ser Hosteen Frey.

House Justman

Ranking	Extinct
Arms	Golden scale on white, a double tressure blue

The dead house of Justman ruled the riverlands sometime after House Fisher.

House Keath

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Quarterly of nine - a white fish on grey, a golden fish hook on white

House Keath is one of the minor families of the riverlands.

House Lolliston

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Three oaken barrels on white

House Lolliston is one of the minor families of the riverlands.

House Lothston

Ranking	Extinct
Castle	Harrenhal
Arms	A black bat on per bend silver and gold

House Lothston was the last house to rule Harrenhal before it fell to House Whent. A family under a sinister cloud, the black bat of their arms is known throughout the region for being an ill-sign. Some of the misgivings associated with Lothston might stem from Manfred Lothston's betrayal of Daemon Blackfyre, which was a significant event leading to the end of the Blackfyre rebellion. It's also said Lord Lucas Lothston, last of his line, practiced dark arts in Harrenhal, and that black bats would fly out from Harrenhal to snatch up children for the cook pots of Mad Danelle, presumably the late Lady Lothston. In any event, the family died out and now their arms evoke curses and warding signs against evil.

House Lychester

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Castle Lychester
Arms	Orange and white gyronny, a black talon

House Lychester is in the twilight of its existence. Lord Lymond Lychester is an aging man with wandering wit, driven mad with grief by the loss of his sons during Robert's Rebellion. Some of his sons fought for Robert, while others served the Mad King. Since then, Lychester has withdrawn to his crumbling keep where Maester Roone cares for him in his waning days.

House Mallister

Ranking	Major
Castle	Seagard
Lands	Cape of Eagles
Arms	A silver eagle displayed on indigo
Motto	Above the Rest

Near the Cape of Eagles stands Seagard, a great castle and seat of House Mallister. This old castle was raised to protect the coast against ironmen raiders and still serves in this capacity to this day. Its great-

HOUSE GRELL

HOUSE MALLISTER

HOUSE MOOTON

HOUSE PIPER

est feature is the Booming Tower, a mighty tower equipped with a great bronze bell that's rung when longships are sighted. In three centuries, it has been rung once, when Rodrick Greyjoy descended on Seagard during the Greyjoy Rebellion. During this engagement, Lord Jason Mallister, who had acquitted himself well during the War of the Usurper, slew Rodrick beneath Seagard's walls, and threw the ironmen back to the sea. The people of Seagard have a bone-deep distrust of the ironmen and see the Greyjoys of Pyke as their greatest enemies. The castle and surrounding community are well fortified, able to resist just about any strength attack from sea.

House Mallister is sworn to the Tullys, but they have close ties to the Starks as well. In fact, Jeffory Mallister was one of Brandon Stark's companions who was executed for "plotting the murder" of Prince Rhaegar at King's Landing.

Lord Jason Mallister

The current lord of Seagard, Jason Mallister fought bravely at the Battle of the Trident, avenging his brother by slaying no less than three of Prince Rhaegar's bannermen, and later, by defeating Rodrick Greyjoy beneath the walls of Seagard. Although he is still a great warrior, a proud man who fears nothing, time is starting to catch up with him. His long brown hair is salted with white and his features are gaunt. Still, he's tall and lean, with high cheekbones and fierce, blue-grey eyes.

Patrek Mallister

Son of Lord Jason, Patrek has all the exuberance of youth. He's heir to Seagard, but he's spent the last few years sowing his wild oats, wenching, drinking, and hunting. In spite of these excesses, Patrek takes his position seriously and is nearly his father's equal in battle.

House Mooton

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Bay of Crabs
Castle	Maidenpool
Arms	A red salmon on white, a gold tressure
Motto	Wisdom and Strength

Another older house in the riverlands, House Mooton rules their lands from Maidenpool, where it's said Florian the Fool first beheld Jonquil. Legends aside, House Mooton was well known for their ties to House Targaryen and during the War of the Usurper, Ser Myles Mooton, the former squire of Prince Rhaegar Targaryen, fought for the Mad King against the Baratheon host. For his loyalty he was slain by Robert Baratheon at Stoney Sept. Maidenpool was eventually conquered and later pardoned.

Lord William Mooton is the head of the house. His daughter and heir is Eleanor Mooton.

House Mudd

Ranking	Extinct
Castle	Oldstones
Arms	A golden crown studded with emeralds on a red-brown field

House Mudd were the last Kings of the Rivers and the Hills, destroyed when the Andals finally slew the hero-king, Tristifer the Fourth. When his son came to power he proved a pale shadow of his father and the kingdom and House Mudd were lost. The only thing remaining of this once great family is Oldstones, a ruin overlooking the Blue Fork.

House Paege

Ranking	Landed
Arms	Twining red-and-white snakes on black

House Paege is a minor house sworn to Riverrun. Ser Halmon Paege is the head of the house and is supported by his extended family, Ser Damon and Ser Robert. The latter is known to be one of Edmure Tully's companions. House Paege also has ties to House Frey, having wed two daughters, Sallie and Sylwa to Frey sons.

House Piper

Ranking	Major
Castle	Pinkmaiden Castle
Arms	A dancing maiden pink in a swirl of white silk, on blue
Motto	Brave and Beautiful

The Pipers of Pinkmaiden Castle are an important and influential family in the riverlands. Their holding stands near the Red Fork, about halfway between its source and Riverrun. They are valued for the support and

HOUSE SHAWNEY

HOUSE SMALLWOOD

HOUSE WAYN

HOUSE WHENT

fealty they give to House Tully. Lord Clement Piper is the current lord of Pinkmaiden Castle, and his son, Ser Marq, is a swaggering youth known for his hot temper and recklessness, qualities Edmure Tully is known to like in a man. Lord Clement's second son is Lewys, a young squire.

House Qoherys

Ranking	Extinct
Castle	Harrenhal
Arms	A flaming saltire, red and yellow, between four white skulls, on black

After Aegon the Conqueror destroyed Harren the Black, Harrenhal and its holdings went to House Qoherys, a family that claimed Valyrian extraction and whose founder was one of Aegon's battle companions. When Qoherys died, the lands passed on to House Towers.

House Roote

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Lord Harroway's Town
Castle	Harroway Tower
Arms	A two-headed horse, brown, on a field of wavy green and dark green

House Roote was granted Lord Harroway's Town and the nearby holdings when House Harroway of Harrenhal died out. The town and its lord are both unexceptional, except for the "two-headed water horse," a great ferry that is the only way to cross the Trident here, said to date back to the days of Old King Andahar.

Aside from Lord Roote, there's a Lucas Roote, a squire to Ser Andrey Charlton.

House Ryger

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Willow Wood
Arms	A weeping willow, green on white

House Ryger is another small house sworn to House Tully, though during the War of the Usurper they remained loyal to the Targaryens. As with many other houses that fought against Robert, their fortunes waned after the war, though this has not prevented a few members from gaining positions and friendships within House Tully. Foremost of these is Ser Robin Ryger, an aging man who has spent his entire life in service to House Tully as its captain of the guard. Now a big and bald man with bushy white eyebrows, it's said he was a tenacious fighter in his day. In addition, Tristan Ryger is one of the hangers-on who surround Edmure Tully.

House Shawney

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Per fess - blue, red, green above, a white catfish on black below

House Shawney is a minor house of the riverlands.

House Smallwood

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Acorn Hall
Arms	Six brown acorns - 3-2-1, on yellow
Motto	From These Beginnings

A vassal to Lord Vance, House Smallwood is a minor house in the riverlands. They possess a great oaken keep surrounded by stone curtain walls. Their greatest achievement was the elevation of courageous Myles Smallwood to serve as Hand of the King, though it's well known that he was a failure. Lord Theomar Smallwood is the head of this house and is married to Lady Ravella Swann. They have a young daughter named Carellen, and had a son, but he died when he was just seven years old.

Thoren Smallwood, from a lesser branch, is a senior ranger in the Night's Watch.

House Strong

Ranking	Extinct
Castle	Harrenhal
Arms	A tripartite pale blue, red, and green on white

House Strong succeeded House Harroway in ruling Harrenhal and its surrounding lands. Lyonel Strong, Lord of Harrenhall and Hand of the King, wed Rhaenyra Targaryen and fathered three sons by her before dying. The Strongs were among Rhaenyra's strongest supporters during the Dance of the Dragons, and her three sons by Lord Lyonel all perished during the fighting. House Strong, like all others

to gain the accursed castle, died out, at which point House Lothston claimed the castle.

House Teague

Ranking	Extinct
Arms	A golden trident upright on black between two golden flanches

House Teague was one of the ancient lines of kings that ruled the lands of the Trident. It's believed they were lords after House Mudd, perhaps carving out their kingdom from the tatters of the one that preceded them.

House Terrick

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Per saltire purple and gold, four hawks' heads counter-charged

House Terrick is a minor house of the riverlands.

House Towers

Ranking	Extinct
Castle	Harrenhal
Arms	Five black towers on white, a double tressure red and black

House Towers had the misfortune to take over Harrenhal after House Qoherys died out. They were followed by House Harroway.

House Vance

Ranking	Major
Castle	Atranta
Arms	Quartered - a green dragon on white, a white tower on black

House Vance of Atranta is one of two major branches of the extended Vance family. The current lord of House Vance is Lord Norbert Vance, an old blind man. Many of Lord Vance's sons are knights, including: Ser Ronald, his heir and also called the Bad; Ser Hugo; Ser Ellery; and Ser Kirth. The house maester, Jon, happens to be another of Lord Norbert's sons.

House Vance

Ranking	Major
Castle	Wayfarer's Rest
Arms	Quartered - a black dragon on white, two golden eyes in a glowing ring on black

House Vance of Wayfarer's Rest is the other branch of the extended Vance family. They are a powerful house, with many smaller banners sworn to them, such as the Smallwoods. Lord Vance's son, Karyl, is a skilled warrior and commander, noted for the winestain birthmark on his face. He has three daughters, Liane, Rhialta, and Emphyria.

Ser Dafyn Vance, whose connection to either Vance branch is unclear, was married to the late Maegelle Frey who died in childbirth. He has three children: Marianne, Walder, and Patrek.

House Vypren

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A black toad on white lily pad, on green

House Vypren is a minor house of the riverlands with ties to House Frey. The head of their house is Lord Lucias Vypren who's married to Lady Lythene of House Frey. They have two children, Lady Elyana, who is married to the Wyldes, and Ser Damon Vypren, heir to the house.

House Wayn

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Four wheels countercharged on quartered blue and white

House Wayn is a minor house sworn to Riverrun. Utherydes Wayn serves as Hoster Tully's steward. He's described as a grave, gaunt, and melancholy man who has spent nearly his whole life in service to House Tully.

House Whent

Ranking	Major
Castle	Harrenhal
Arms	Nine black bats - 4-3-2, on yellow

The sixth house to claim Harrenhal, the Whents came into possession of these lands following the extinction of House Lothston. Like the houses that preceded them, the Whents are a powerful and influential family. They placed a Whent in King Aerys's Kingsguard, Ser Oswell Whent, who died fighting Eddard Stark at the Tower of Joy. Of particular interest to the events leading up to the War of the Usurper, it was Lord Whent who hosted the tournament at Harrenhal to celebrate his children; he wanted to honor his maiden daughter and show off his sons' valor. His four sons acted as her champions, but it was another whose actions would be long remembered, for it was there that Prince Rhaegar Targaryen first met Lady Lyanna Stark and named her Queen of Love and Beauty, passing over his own wife, such was his infatuation with the Stark maiden.

Other than Lady Wynafrei Whent, wed to Ser Danwell Frey, the last of the Whent line is Lady Shella Whent, who survived her husband and all of her children. She is a devoted ally of Lord Hoster Tully, and though she commands her lands alone she still has riches and arms to lend to Riverrun in times of need.

House Wode

Ranking	Landed
Arms	Three white hedgehogs on yellow
Motto	Touch Me Not

House Wode is a minor house sworn to House Whent. Ser Willis Wode is a hedge knight in service to Lady Whent.

Chapter 8: The Mountains of the Moon & The Vale of Arryn

The rocky, sky-scraping peaks of the Mountains of the Moon have long protected the Vale of Arryn and its sworn lords from the frequent conflicts of Westeros. Largely impassable, the mountains surround the Vale on three sides and create an alpine retreat where lords and smallfolk alike live without the constant threat of assault. As a result, House Arryn has ruled over a largely peaceful and prosperous land for thousands of years.

The Arryns and their vassals are safe behind their natural wall, but danger waits just outside the Bloody Gate. Lawless bands of brigands, the rebellious clans of the Mountains of the Moon, make travel through the high passes of the western slopes treacherous. Living by their own rules the mountain clans descend from their camps to pillage and murder anyone weaker than them traveling the mountain road. Even Jon Arryn, as great a lord as any have known in the Vale, rides in strength when he leaves the Bloody Gate and heads west across the Mountains of the Moon.

History

Not much is known of the Mountains of the Moon and the Vale prior to the arrival of the First Men twelve thousand years ago. Like the rest of Westeros, it was surely inhabited by giants and the children of the forest. After crossing the Arm of Dorne and spreading throughout Westeros, the First Men of the Vale were ruled by the mighty Mountain Kings. They built the Bloody Gate and the Eyrie and its

It stretched before them to the misty east, a tranquil land of rich black soil, wide slow-moving rivers, and hundreds of small lakes that shone like mirrors in the sun, protected on all sides by its sheltering peaks. Wheat and corn and barley grew in its high fields, and even in Highgarden the pumpkins were no larger nor the fruit any sweeter than here. They stood at the western end of the valley, where the high road crested the last pass and began its winding descent to the bottomlands two miles below. The Vale was narrow here, no more than a half day's ride across, and the northern mountains seemed so close that Catelyn could almost reach out and touch them. Looming over them all was the jagged peak called the Giant's Lance, a mountain that even mountains looked up to, its head lost in the icy mists three and a half miles above the valley floor. Over its massive western shoulder flowed the ghost torrent of Alyssa's Tears. Even from this distance, Catelyn could make out the shining silver thread, bright against the dark stone.

—*A Game of Thrones*

waycastles and lived comfortably as dozens of armies smashed themselves to pieces against the Vale's mighty Bloody Gate during the Age of Heroes.

The Arryns are one of the oldest and purest lines of Andal nobility in the Seven Kingdoms and trace their lineage back six thousand years to Ser Artys Arryn. Called the Winged Knight, Ser Artys was an Andal leader who crossed the sea from the hills of Andalos on the eastern continent to conquer Westeros and spread the Faith of the Seven. Ser Artys came ashore at the Fingers, near the modern day keep of House Baelish, and set about conquering the Vale. He destroyed the last remnants of the children of the forest in the Vale and, as legend has it, rode a giant falcon to the top of Giant's Lance to slay the Griffin King, leader of the First Men of the Vale and the last of the Mountain Kings. After the death of the Griffin King, the remaining First Men fled the Vale leaving it firmly in the control of the Andals. The Vale was renamed the Vale of Arryn in Ser Artys' honor. He was given the Falcon Crown and became the King of Mountain and Vale, the hereditary title of the Arryn rulers used until the arrival of the Targaryens.

Another legendary Arryn lived at about this time. Alyssa Arryn had seen her husband, her brothers, and all of her children slain during the countless battles for the conquest of the Vale. Despite the deaths of her entire family, legend has it she never once shed a tear for her loss. Upon her death, the Seven decreed Alyssa would know no rest until her weeping watered the resting place where the men she had loved were buried—the black soil of the Vale of Arryn. Alyssa's Tears is the name of the mighty torrent that spills over the shoulders of the Giant's Lance and tumbles down the tallest peak in Westeros. Though Alyssa has been dead thousands of years, not one drop of her tears has yet to reach the Vale floor far below.

The Andals of House Arryn ruled the Vale uninterrupted for nearly six thousand years. Two centuries after the Doom of Valyria left House Targaryen as the only remnant of that once great empire, the Targaryens landed on Westeros. During the conquest, the King of Mountain and Vale saw the wisdom in bending the knee and submitted to Aegon the Conqueror. Aegon named House Arryn the Lords Paramount of the Vale and Wardens of the East, a title that House Arryn has held ever since.

House Arryn largely stayed out of the affairs of the rest of Westeros. It wasn't until almost two hundred years after the Conquest of Westeros that the Lord of the Vale and Warden of the East had to call his banners for war. In 184 AL, King Aegon IV the Unworthy lay on his death bed and decreed that all of his bastards were legitimate. In 195 AL, one of Aegon IV's legitimized bastard sons, Daemon Blackfyre (named for his Valyrian sword) raised his own standard, declared himself king, and started what would be known as the Blackfyre Rebellion. The Lord of the Vale summoned his banners and rode to war on behalf of King Daeron II. The Blackfyre Rebellion ended at the Battle of Redgrass Field. Daemon Blackfyre destroyed Lord Arryn's van, but the king's forces held out long enough for Brynden "Bloodraven" Rivers and his company of archers, the Raven's Teeth, to take the Weeping Ridge, from whence they rained arrows down upon the rebels. It took seven arrows to kill Daemon and end the Blackfyre Rebellion.

Thirteen years after the end of the Rebellion, in 209 AL, spring returned to Westeros but it brought a plague known as the Great Spring Sickness. It took a heavy toll upon Westeros, even claiming King Daeron II and his two heirs, the sons of Baelor Targaryen. The Lord of the Vale closed the Bloody Gate and the ports to spare the Vale of Arryn from the plague.

In 262 AL, King Aerys II ascended to the Iron Throne. Sometime after, eight-year old Eddard Stark of Winterfell and young Robert Baratheon, heir of Storm's End, were sent to the Eyrie to foster under Jon Arryn, Lord Paramount of the Vale and Warden of the East.

In 282 AL, Prince Rhaegar Targaryen disappeared with Lyanna Stark, Eddard's sister and the betrothed of Robert Baratheon. Eddard's older brother, Brandon, heir of Winterfell, along with his squire and several companions including the nephew of Lord Jon Arryn and heir to the Vale of Arryn, Ser Elbert Arryn, rode to King's Landing to demand that Prince Rhaegar come out and die. King Aerys II, now called "the Mad King," seized them for treason and demanded the fathers of the traitors come to King's Landing at once.

The fathers dutifully arrived, led by the Lord of Winterfell, Rickard Stark. The Mad King Aerys II arrested them and murdered them with their sons. He then sent word to the Vale that Lord Jon Arryn was to hand over the heads of Eddard Stark and Robert Baratheon at once. Lord Arryn refused and joined Stark and Baratheon in revolt against the Mad King. During the Rebellion Ser Denys Arryn, called the Darling of the Vale for his gallantry in battle and Jon Arryn's newly named heir, was killed by Lord Jon Connington, Hand of the Mad King Aerys, at the Battle of the Bells. By the end of Robert's Rebellion the Targaryen line would be destroyed, Robert Baratheon would be the King of Westeros, and Jon Arryn of the Vale would be given the honor of Hand of the King.

With Lord Jon Arryn in King's Landing serving as the Hand of the King, Lord Nestor Royce, the Keeper of the Gates of the Moon, was named High Steward of the Vale. He has watched over the Vale of Arryn for fourteen years and holds this position still.

GEOGRAPHY

The region known as the Mountains of the Moon begins in the north as craggy peaks towering over a windy and island-filled bay called the Bite. The mountains range south and east from the Bite, towering over the kingsroad and the Trident as they move south and shrink to foothills in the snakewood as they move east. Before the mountains hit the Bay of Crabs, they turn east again and stretch all the way to the narrow sea. This layout creates a foreboding, natural wall behind which rests the black, rich soil of the Vale of Arryn. These hardy folk, whether they are smallfolk sworn to House Arryn or the outlaw mountain clans, live throughout four subregions within the Mountains of the Moon.

The Bite

The Bite faces the full wrath of the Shivering Sea and is not protected from seasonal winds and storms, unlike the bays further south that spill into the narrow sea. It is a cold and isolated place more likely to see rain and wind than sun and stars. The Bite nestles between the Stark lands to the north and the Fingers to the south. In it is a trio of craggy islands called the Three Sisters, and on those islands live a rugged folk known as the Sistermen.

The first island and the largest of the three, Longsister, is the seat of House Longthorpe as well as the seat of their liege, the Lord of Sunderland. House Sunderland claims all three islands as their vassal lands. House Sunderland, in turn, is sworn to House Arryn and the Lord of the Vale.

The middle island island of the Three Sisters is called Sweetsister, ruled by House Borrell. Sweetsister is the home of Breakwater Castle, the ancestral home of House Borrell, as well as the Night Lamp, a large lighthouse that helps guide trade vessels and Sistermen war galleys around Sweetsister and on to Sisterton without incident. The Lord of House Borrell is known as the Shield of Sisterton, the Master of Breakwater Castle, and the Keeper of the Night Lamp—all of these titles a reflection of Sweetsister's important role in trade and defense in the Bite.

The third and outermost island is called Littlesister and is ruled by House Torrent, another vassal house to House Sunderland.

Further east from the Three Sisters are two more islands in the Bite: Pebble, the seat of House Pryor, lies just north of the Fingers inside the bay; and the Paps, seat of House Elesham, is northeast of the Fingers out in the Shivering Sea.

The Fingers

To the east of the Bite, four boulder-strewn and bleak peninsulas jut out into the sea and form an area known as the Fingers. The Fingers are windswept and largely treeless points and peat bogs sparsely populated by hardy smallfolk. They scratch out a living in piled stone houses and herd sheep on the sparse grass of the strands. It is the nameless, ancestral home of House Baelish and the place where the Andals first set foot on Westeros.

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To the west and south of the Fingers lies the snakewood. The largest of the forests in the Vale of Arryn, the snakewood separates the dreary peninsulas of the Fingers from the Vale and stretches all the way to the base of the Mountains of the Moon to the west. It is bordered on the north and south by glacial rivers flowing down from deep within the craggy peaks and it sits astride a third, shorter river that flows from the foothills quickly east to the narrow sea.

Where the northernmost river flows into the narrow sea rests the seat of House Coldwater and their castle called Coldwater Burn. House Coldwater is a sworn vassal of the Royces of Runestone and is the northernmost major house in the Vale of Arryn.

At the point where the southernmost of the Fingers meets the snakewood lies the seat of House Lynderly. A house long associated with House Baelish, the Lynderly's make their home at Sunkenwood and guard the southern approaches into the snakewood.

Vale of Arryn

South of the snakewood begins the namesake for the entire region: the Vale of Arryn. The Vale is surrounded on all landward sides by the towering Mountains of the Moon and is a rich and verdant land. It's filled with wide, slow-moving rivers; vast fields of wheat, corn, and barley; large, tranquil lakes; and a plentiful stretch of prosperous farms that range from the Bloody Gate at the western edge of the Vale all the way east to the narrow sea and south to the Bay of Crabs.

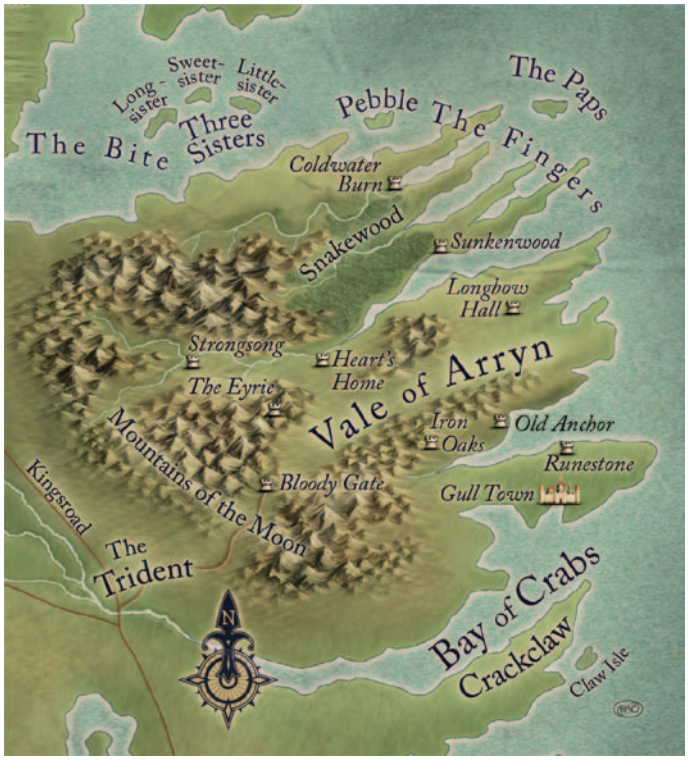
The only entrance to the Vale, a treacherous mountain pass through which the Highroad languidly runs, is protected by the imposing Bloody Gate. Built during the Age of Heroes by the First Men, the Bloody Gate has never fallen despite dozens of armies attempting to pass by. It was built at a point where the pass shrinks to a narrow defile scarcely wide enough for four men to ride abreast. Long parapets built into the very stone of the mountains to either side stand astride the gates themselves, over which an arched, covered bridge of weathered grey stone stretches between twin watchtowers clinging to the rocky slopes. The battlements, bridge, and towers are perforated excessively with murder holes and arrow slits. Upon reaching it, one must ask the Knight of the Bloody Gate for permission to enter the Vale. His customary response, *"In the name of Lord Arryn, Lord of the Eyrie, Defender of the Vale, Warden of the East, I bid you enter freely, and charge you to keep his peace,"* has been the traditional welcome to the Vale for thousands of years.

Everywhere in the Vale one can see the sheltering peaks of the Mountains of the Moon and, above them all, the breathtaking Giant's Lance, a mountain other mountains look up to. More often than not mist and clouds shroud the tip of the Giant's Lance but, when visible, it pierces the very sky. Over its massive western shoulder flows the ghostly torrent of Alyssa's Tears, visible only as a shiny silver thread from the Vale floor three and a half miles below. It is beside that thread, if one looks closely, that one can see a tiny flash of white light—the Eyrie, the ancestral seat of House Arryn.

Northwest of the Eyrie and deep within the southern river valley of the snakewood lays Strongsong, the castle of House Belmore. Follow the river east and it flows into the narrow sea just south of the snake-

wood. Across from the snakewood, at the river's mouth, is the seat of the ancient and impoverished House Corbray, fabled for its most treasured possession: the Valyrian sword *Lady Forlorn*. Further east along the coast lays Longbow Hall, the castle of House Hunter, and south along the narrow sea is Old Anchor of House Melcolm. Dotting the southern half of the Vale is the Redfort of House Redfort, Wickenden of House Waxley, Ironoaks of House Waynwood, and the ancient and noble seat of House Royce called Runestone.

At the northern tip of the Bay of Crabs along a sheltered harbor in the southeastern part of the Vale sits Gulltown. The only major city in the Vale, Gulltown is an important port and portal to the Vale. Its strategic location, just across the narrow sea from Braavos and due north of Dragonstone and Blackwater Bay, means the Vale never lacks for trade in many of the exotic goods making their way to Braavos nor fails to be a waypoint for the shipping routes between King's Landing and the North. It also means that even when the mountain passes are closed in winter, the Vale still has access to the rest of Westeros and the known world. Gulltown is the seat of House Grafton and the home of House Shett's Gull Tower. A minor wing of House Arryn also calls Gulltown home.



The Mountains of the Moon

The western slopes of the Mountains of the Moon are a very different place from the Vale of Arryn. The rocky peaks give away to craggy foothills and eventually the thicker woods of the Trident. This land is controlled by the outlaw mountain clans and is dangerous to travel in anything less than full force. During spring and summer the passes and mountain valleys are clear and generally easy to traverse, but in winter they are completely snowed in with only the Highroad accessible. The harsh conditions and the towering peaks that isolate the Vale from the rest of Westeros are simultaneously the walls behind which the Vale of Arryn thrives.

The Eyrie

And finally, up where the falcons soared, a flash of white in the moonlight. Vertigo washed over her as she stared upward at the pale towers, so far above.

— A Game of Thrones

The Eyrie, seat of House Arryn and ancient stronghold of the Kings of Mountain and Vale, is as impressive as it is impregnable. Access to the Eyrie is heavily restricted and begins at the foot of the Giant's Lance. There rests a stout castle composed of a gatehouse and square towers called the Gates of the Moon, the traditional home of the Keeper of the Gates and the current seat of Lord Nestor Royce, the High Steward of the Vale.

From the Gates, one need only look up the side of the Giant's Lance to see the three waycastles built to guard the Eyrie's solitary approach. These waycastles are called Stone, Snow, and Sky, and they are accessible only via a small, treacherous stone stair. This path is normally traversed by sure-footed mules, and visitors may require a knowledgeable guide.

It takes a full day to ascend to the Eyrie from the Gates of the Moon and the journey is not for the weak of heart. At first, pine trees and grey-green sentinels surround the path while their upper branches cloak it from wind and weather. Slowly, the path ascends Giant's Lance and climbers find themselves above the trees, winding lazily up the mountain on thin stone steps with an impossible chasm of space forming steeply beside them as they climb ever higher.

Stone

After many hours of travel climbers reach Stone, the first waycastle, a thick-walled keep with iron spikes set across the top of the walls and two fat, round towers overtopping the keep. Fresh mounts are kept here in a small stable.

Snow

Several hundred feet directly above Stone is the second waycastle called Snow. It's a winding, switch-backed path that guides climbers to Snow's gate, and the entire journey is visible from Snow's walls. Any enemy intent upon the Eyrie would have to fight for every step up from the lower waycastle, and they would have to do so with a constant rain of boulders and arrows spilling down onto them from Snow.

Snow is a much smaller fortification than Stone. It's composed of a single fortified tower with a timber keep and stable hidden behind a low wall of unmortared rock. Despite its small size, it sits nestled against the Giant's Lance in such a way as to have a commanding view of the stone stair leading up to it.

Sky

From Snow, travelers start up the steepest and most treacherous mounted part of the journey. The stair from Snow to the third and final waycastle Sky is a long series of thin switchbacks so precariously perched astride the mountain that the feeling of climbing in open space miles above the Vale floor is always prevalent. At one point, the stone stair

path stops and travelers must dismount and lead their garrons across an impossibly thin stone saddle, below which a yawning chasm opens to reveal the entirety of the Vale. Many a brave and noble knight have found themselves frozen with fear in the midst of the crossing, the wind grabbing at their cloaks and pushing them toward a tumble that would take a seeming lifetime to play out. Once across, the path angles upward, more steeply, even more of a thin stone stair now than an actual path. The path from here up has been worn smooth by countless iron-shod hooves and is a treacherous series of shallow switchbacks. Just as it seems the journey cannot end, climbers reach the third and final waycastle.

It's misleading to call Sky a castle. It's nothing more than a high, crescent-shaped wall of unmortared stone built against the side of the Giant's Lance. At this elevation, there is nearly always ice and snow, and Sky's weathered stones are more often than not rimmed with frost and dripping with long spears of ice. Beyond the unmortared stone walls is a gate. Beyond the gate is Sky, most of which is actually hidden inside the mountain itself and harbors a series of great ramps and a quarry of boulders and rocks of all sizes. This is the final defense before the Eyrie—a man-made avalanche capable of sending thousands of tons of stone crashing down around any army foolish enough to make the climb. Inside Sky there is a small stable and barracks. It's here travelers leave their mounts behind and make a choice: climb for another hour, inside a natural stone chimney with steps like ladder rungs, to reach the Eyrie's undercellar; or be winched up the side of the mountain and through the belly of the castle above in a large oak bucket used to haul food and supplies into the winch room. Often, even the bravest of souls find themselves weak with exhaustion after the strain of such a frightening journey and take this opportunity to ride up in the bucket. When viewed from Sky, the Eyrie is small enough to be covered up by one hand.

The Eyrie

The seat of House Arryn is a small castle by the standards of the great houses of Westeros. It's composed of seven slender white stone towers bunched tightly together on the shoulder of the Giant's Lance. The white towers stretch so high and sit at such a great elevation that the top of each is often hidden above the clouds. Seen from below, the Eyrie resembles a dissected beehive with its honeycomb of sky cells nestled beneath the slender white towers. Unlike most other castles in the Seven Kingdoms, the Eyrie has no need of kennels, or stables, or smithies. With such incredibly limited access to the outside world, the Eyrie really only needs to worry about its defenses and food supply. Its towers can house as many as five hundred fighting men, more than enough to defend the narrow stone stair that climbs up the Giant's Lance to the Eyrie's gates, and it contains a granary as large as that of Winterfell, giving it the ability to weather long sieges.

In between the white towers is a splendid garden, a circle of grass and blue flowers, once intended to be a godswood. Built on the stone shoulder of the Giant's Lance, the Eyrie's soil is thin and rocky, and no matter how much rich, black soil was hauled up from the Vale below, the weirwoods planted here never took hold. Instead, the Lords of the Eyrie planted grass and flowering shrubbery and put in place a variety of statuary, including a weathered statue of the fabled Alyssa Arryn standing sentinel over the entirety of the garden, weeping for all eternity.

Inside the Eyrie, the decorative, towering halls are likely to be cold and empty. With Lord Arryn and most of his household guard and retainers away at King's Landing in service to King Robert, the Eyrie's delicately carved halls lie mostly silent.

The chambers housing House Arryn are richly appointed affairs with billowy cushions, large warm canopied beds, and thick velvet curtains to block out the chill of such elevations. Huge fireplaces heat nearly every room, though they struggle to keep the Eyrie warm on the coldest nights.

The High Hall, Lord Jon's audience chamber, has high vaulted ceilings towering over an ancient, carved weirwood throne. The moon-and-falcon banners of House Arryn are displayed above the throne and many tapestries depicting the history of the Vale adorn the carved, white, stone walls.

The Moon Door & the Dungeons

The weirwood throne may be the most obvious feature in the hall, but the Moon Door is the most dangerous and intriguing. Made of heavy wood and always barred and locked tight from the inside, the Moon Door opens to six hundred feet of empty space. Those sentenced to death by the Lord of the Vale are flung through it and plunge to their deaths on the rocky stones of the valley below.

The Moon Door isn't the only exit for the condemned. House Arryn keeps the only dungeons in the seven kingdoms where the prisoners are welcome to leave anytime they chose. Known as the sky cells, each dungeon cell in the Eyrie is but five feet wide, and where a wall should be opposite the door the floor ends and the sky begins. Prisoners get plenty of fresh air by day and a grandiose view of the stars by night, but since the floor is ever so slightly sloped toward the opening, and the cold and wind of the Giant's Lance constantly tug at the imprisoned, the sky cells are anything but peaceful. Known to drive men insane, the sky cells have caused many prisoners to feel the call of the sky so intently they rush to meet it, plunging hundreds of feet to their deaths.

The Winch Room

Deep within the towers of the Eyrie, just below the kitchens, is the winch room. Six great chain winches, powered by two enormous oxen, control the large buckets and baskets used to move men and supplies to and from the Eyrie. Each of the huge, oaken buckets is big enough around to carry three men, and one, the largest, is taller than a grown man and girded with rough iron bands. The journey down is harrowing, even inside the largest bucket, as once the bucket leaves the winch room in descent there is nothing beneath it but six hundred feet of sky. Though the buckets spare one a view of the descent, the wind reminds the traveler constantly of his precarious situation as it rocks the buckets from side to side and occasionally gusts one into the rocky face of the Giant's Lance. These buckets are one of only two possible entries and exits of the Eyrie—the other is an hour's climb down the natural stone chimney in the under cellar connecting the seat of the Arryns with the final waycastle, Sky.

During the winters of Westeros, the high seat of the Arryns becomes inhospitable, far too cold and dreary for the meager staff to maintain its light and warmth, and House Arryn and their entire staff retreats down the mountain to live in the Gates of the Moon until spring. Before leaving, a member of the household butchers the winch room oxen and leaves the rest for the falcons. Whatever part of the oxen remains when the Arryns return in spring is prepared and roasted for the great spring feast. The Arryns believe a good supply of hard, frozen meat foretells a summer of plenty.

House Arryn

Ranking	Great
Lands	The Mountains of the Moon and the Vale of Arryn
Castle	Eyrie
Arms	A sky blue falcon soaring against a white moon, on sky-blue
Motto	As High As Honor

The Arryns are one of the oldest lines of Andal nobility in the Seven Kingdoms. Tracing their lineage back six thousand years to Ser Artys Arryn, the Arryns have strived to exclusively marry other Andals, making theirs one of the purest lines in the Seven Kingdoms. The strength of House Arryn is in danger, though. Despite three wives, Lord Jon only conceived a single child. Young Robert, Lord Jon Arryn's heir, is sickly and weak and may not see adulthood. Lord Jon has been unable to produce another, stronger heir with Lady Lysa Tully.

But waiting in the wings, ignorant of his stature, is young Harrold Hardyng, the ward of Lady Waynwood, a distant relative of young Robert Arryn (through his mother's line), and Robert's heir to the lordship of the Vale.

Jon Arryn

In his youth, Ned had fostered at the Eyrie, and the childless Lord Arryn had become a second father to him and his fellow ward, Robert Baratheon. When the Mad King Aerys II Targaryen had demanded their heads, the Lord of the Eyrie had raised his moon-and-falcon banners in revolt rather than give up those he had pledged to protect.

— A Game of Thrones

Jon Arryn, Lord of the Eyrie, Lord Paramount of the Vale, Warden of the East, Hand of the King to Robert Baratheon, is one of the most powerful Arryns the Vale and the Mountains of the Moon has ever known. He helped King Robert win his throne, fostered peace with Dorne, arranged Robert's marriage to Lady Cersei of House Lannister, and has run the Seven Kingdoms as Robert's Hand for over fourteen years. His powerful force of personality keeps everyone from his servants to his vassal lords loyal and his reputation for stern fairness means he wins respect from nearly everyone he meets.

History

Jon Arryn was born the eldest son of Lord Jasper Arryn, Lord of the Eyrie. Lord Jasper had two more children after Jon: a daughter, Alys Arryn, and a son, Ronnel Arryn. When Jon Arryn came of age, he was knighted and took up the duty of Keeper of the Gates of the Moon, the non-hereditary and symbolic lordship of the castle guarding the path to the Eyrie. Jon served in this role until his father's death, when he took up the mantle of Lord of the Vale and took his place on the weirwood throne in the High Hall of the Eyrie.

From a young age, Jon Arryn was betrothed to Jeyne Royce, a daughter of a very powerful family in the Vale that is vassal and ally to the Lord of the Vale. When he took Lord Jasper's place as Lord of the Vale Jon married Jeyne, making her Lady Arryn. Lady Jeyne died giving birth to their first child, who was stillborn.

Some years later, Jon Arryn married again. This time he married his cousin, a soft-spoken woman named Rowena Arryn. Before Lady Rowena could produce an heir for her husband, she died of a winter chill.

It was during this time that Lord Arryn's heir, his younger brother Ser Ronnel, would marry a daughter of House Belmore, but would later die of a bad belly one room away from his wife while she gave birth to their son, Elbert Arryn. Elbert was Lord Jon's nephew and immediately upon his birth became the heir to the seat of House Arryn.

It would be almost twenty years before Jon Arryn married again. In the interim, the childless Lord Arryn agreed to take as wards young Eddard Stark of Winterfell, and Robert Baratheon, heir to the seat of Storm's End. The years Eddard and Robert were fostered at the Eyrie were years the seat of House Arryn rang with the mirth of children at play. Lord Jon's relationship with his young wards grew strong and he became like a father to them, the result of their long years away from their own families and Lord Jon's lack of children of his own.

When Prince Rhaegar took Lyanna Stark away, Jon Arryn's heir Ser Elbert Arryn joined Brandon Stark on his journey to King's Landing to slay the Prince and demand Lyanna's return. Ser Elbert was seized along with the others for treason, and was murdered by the Mad King.

After the murders, King Aerys sent orders to Lord Jon that he kill Eddard and Robert. Rather than betray the men he'd raised from boyhood and had sworn to protect as wards, Lord Jon raised his own banners in rebellion and joined with Robert Baratheon to remove King Aerys from the Iron Throne.

In the Vale, Ser Denys Arryn became the heir to the Vale. Ser Denys had the good fortune to marry the eldest daughter of Lady Alys Arryn, Lord Jon's sister. Ser Denys himself hailed from a lesser branch of House Arryn in Gulltown that had intermarried with merchants and, as a result, had become quite wealthy. Ser Denys was a renowned jouster, handsome, gallant, and full of courtesy and was known as the Darling of the Vale.

Not all of Lord Jon's bannermen joined his rebellion, though. The chief among them was Lord Randyll Grafton of Gulltown, who encouraged all of the loyalists in the Vale to unite and aid him in barring Lord Jon and Robert Baratheon from entering his port. Robert personally led the attack on Gulltown and crushed its defenses, killing Lord Grafton in the process, and this allowed Robert to return home to summon his banners to war.

During the War of the Usurper, Ser Denys was killed at the Battle of the Bells by Lord Jon Connington, the then Hand of the King. When Ser Denys' wife heard of his death, she died of grief and their newborn son died soon after. This left Jon Arryn with no living heir to the Vale.

Lord Jon proved his ability to negotiate on behalf of Robert while raising banners for the young man's rebellion. To get Lord Hoster Tully to attach the Tully men-at-arms to Robert's cause, Lord Arryn agreed to wed Tully's youngest daughter, Lady Lysa. Although Hoster revealed that Lysa had been pregnant with a (subsequently aborted) bastard out of wedlock, Lord Jon never learned who her dalliance had been with. Lord Jon was more concerned about his wife's ability to produce an heir than any concerns he might have about her checkered past. Jon wed Lysa and became the good-brother of Eddard, who married Lysa's elder sister Catelyn on the same day.

Once the war was finished, Lord Jon agreed to become Robert's Hand. He immediately began working to set things right in the Seven Kingdoms. Since Robert's betrothed, Lyanna, had died during the war, Arryn negotiated with Lord Tywin Lannister to marry his daughter Cersei to King Robert, making a tenuous peace between House Lannister and House Baratheon into a strong alliance. This also eliminated the chance House Lannister might themselves rise and try to claim the Iron Throne. Jon also negotiated with Robert and convinced him to forgive Ser Jaime Lannister of the Kingsguard for murdering King Aerys. Eddard insisted Robert strip Jaime of his white cloak and send him to the Wall, but Robert chose to listen to Lord Arryn's council.

Arryn also traveled to Dorne to return the bones of Prince Lewyn Martell of the Kingsguard, and to meet with his nephew, Prince Doran

Martell, to answer questions about the death of the young Queen of Dorne and her children who had all perished during the sack of King's Landing. He eventually negotiated a lasting peace with Doran that stayed the hand of Prince Oberyn Martell, called the Red Viper, who was plotting to raise Dorne's spears in revolt on behalf of Viserys Targaryen, the heir to House Targaryen and, one could say, the rightful heir to the Iron Throne.

During the Greyjoy Rebellion, Lord Arryn ruled the realm in King Robert's stead as Robert and Eddard led the assault on Pyke to end Greyjoy's folly. After that war, King Robert became less and less interested in the day-to-day running of his realm and it increasingly fell to Lord Arryn to make the important decisions for the Seven Kingdoms.

Six years ago, Lord Arryn's union with Lady Lysa produced an heir. Named to honor the king his father serves, Robert Arryn is a sickly youth, weak of spirit and afflicted with a shaking sickness. Lord Arryn hopes to foster his son at Dragonstone with King Robert's younger brother Lord Stannis, but Lady Lysa fears for his health and has prevented his attempts to send Robert from King's Landing.

Four years ago, Lord Arryn took a squire named Hugh of the Vale. Hugh has been a faithful and loyal servant of Lord Jon, who looks forward to the day when he can bestow a knighthood upon the young man.

Recently, Lord Arryn has become aware of grievous truths about the children of King Robert, and fears if these truths were to come to light war between House Baratheon and House Lannister would erupt. It's known King Robert has a prodigious appetite for wine and women and has gotten several ladies of the realm pregnant with royal bastards. Lord Arryn's research into the lineage of House Baratheon revealed the dark hair of the Baratheon line is always passed to the children from a male Baratheon. Since King Robert's and Cersei's children are all golden-haired and green-eyed, Lord Jon suspects Queen Cersei has been unfaithful and, perhaps even incestuous as well. Lord Arryn is waiting for the right time to inform King Robert of his findings as this information will most likely lead to the death of Queen Cersei and the wrath of Lord Tywin Lannister—a fury that could threaten to tear the realm apart.

Personality

Lord Jon Arryn is a strong-willed, charismatic man who makes people listen when he speaks. His skills at negotiation are firmly etched in the annals of history and he has a history of creating a great sense of loyalty in his vassals and servants. He possesses much of the skill and personality that a good king should have and he's used these skills to run the realm on behalf of King Robert. Lord Jon is also a suspicious man and is quick to see when things are out of sorts and even quicker to determine how to make things right. Lord Jon is, at the very least, a man of incredible honor. His loyalty and dedication to those he's sworn to protect is fierce—fierce enough to help kill a king that dared ask him to betray his vows.

Appearance

Lord Jon is a middle-aged man of average height, with a stocky build and the typical dark eyes and hair of an Arryn of the Eyrie. His jet-black hair is worn long but meticulously trimmed and his well-coifed black beard helps fill out his jaw and sagging neck. Both his hair and beard are starting to see signs of grey. He always dresses like a lord, in black or his house colors of light blue and white.

Lord Jon Arryn		Old Leader
Abilities		
Animal Handling	3	—
Athletics	3	—
Awareness	4	Empathy 2B, Notice 2B
Cunning	4	Logic 1B, Memory 1B
Endurance	3	—
Fighting	4	—
Knowledge	5	Education 1B, Research 2B
Language (Common)	4	—
Persuasion	4	Bargain 2B, Convince 2B
Status	6	Breeding 3B, Stewardship 2B
Survival	3	—
Warfare	4	Command 1B, Strategy 1B
Will	5	Dedication 2B

Attributes			
Combat Defense	8	Intrigue Defense	14
Health	6	Composure	15
Destiny Points	0		

Benefits: Blood of the Andals (Status), Cautious Diplomat, Eloquent, Famous, Head of House, Inspiring, Leader of Men

Drawbacks: Flaw (Athletics, Endurance)

Superior Plate and Mail: AR 7, AR –2, Bulk 2

Shield	4D	1 damage	Defensive +2
Superior Longsword	4D+1	4 damage	

Lady Lysa Arryn

Lysa's policies varied with her moods, and her moods changed hourly. The shy girl she had known at Riverrun had grown into a woman who was by turns proud, fearful, cruel, dreamy, reckless, timid, stubborn, vain, and above all, inconstant.

— A Game of Thrones

Lady Lysa Arryn's life has been beset with strife and complications beyond those of most noblewomen. She's seen the man she secretly loved fall in love with her older sister, become pregnant with that same man's bastard, been forced by her father to abort the baby, been wed to an older man who is nothing like what she imagined her eventual husband to be, and birthed a weak and sickly heir to the Vale of Arryn. Because of her many travails and tragedies, her grip on reality has slipped over time, and she's becoming increasingly paranoid, fearful,…and some say mad.

History

Lady Lysa Arryn was born Lysa Tully, the second living child of Lord Hoster Tully and his wife Lady Minisa of House Whent. Minisa gave birth to four sons and two daughters, though only Lysa, her older sister Catelyn, and her younger brother Edmure survived. When Lysa was a little girl, her mother died in childbirth with her fourth son, who also died.

In her youth at Riverrun, Lysa was a slender, shy, and delicately sweet girl who wanted nothing more than to marry the man of her dreams. She idolized her older sister for her betrothal to the heir of Winterfell, Brandon Stark, and hoped to one day marry a man as noble and handsome as the young Stark heir.

During Lysa's childhood, Lord Hoster took Petyr Baelish as his ward. Petyr was heir to a small, minor vassal house of the Vale that lorded over a dreary strand of rocks in the Fingers. At once, Petyr became the fawning young boy that followed Lysa and Catelyn around and wanted nothing more than to please them. Lysa was fond of young Petyr Baelish and secretly fell in love with him, but Petyr desired Catelyn. Petyr's welcome at Riverrun ended when he challenged Brandon Stark for Catelyn's hand. Petyr was only fifteen years old and Brandon a man grown, but he wanted to fight for Catelyn's love all the same. Lysa was sick with worry over the risk Petyr was taking, and she was angry that her sister would not even give Petyr a favor, instead giving it to Brandon. The stubborn young Baelish refused to yield and forced Brandon to inflict a near fatal wound to finish the duel.

While Petyr healed, Lysa visited him. She felt sorry for young Petyr and loved him and didn't understand how her sister could be so cruel to him. She nursed him back to health and even surrendered her maidenhead to him. Once Petyr was well enough to travel, Lord Hoster sent him home. After Petyr's departure, Lysa realized she was pregnant with his child. When she told her father, he was furious that his youngest daughter was carrying the bastard of a minor house and forced her to drink tansy tea to abort the child. This experience changed the shy, innocent Tully girl into an increasingly paranoid and sad young woman, never recovering from the loss of the child and her love.

Because of her tainted past, Lysa was a difficult daughter for Lord Hoster to marry off. When Lord Jon Arryn agreed to marry her in return for Lord Tully's aid in Robert's Rebellion, it shattered Lysa's dreams of marrying a handsome young man. Instead, she was marrying an old man, someone more concerned with duty and honor and his position than her own welfare and happiness.

Lysa dutifully fulfilled her vows as wife, though, and bore Lord Arryn a son. Young Robert is six now and sickly, and Lysa fears for his health and safety at all times. She knows her husband wants to send the boy to Dragonstone to foster with Lord Stannis but has railed against his attempts to do so. Robert is her whole world and she won't be separated from him.

Lysa despises her time at court, wishing for the sounds and smells of Riverrun again, though she does spend time with Petyr Baelish, now the master of coin on King Robert's small council. She hates her life with Lord Arryn and wishes to be freed of her marriage. For now, though, she carries on in melancholic silence and spends a great deal of time raising her son.

Lady Lysa Arryn		Middle-Aged Schemer
Abilities		
Awareness	4	Notice 2B
Cunning	3	Memory 2B
Deception	5	Act 1B, Bluff 1B
Knowledge	4	—
Language (Common)	4	—
Persuasion	4	Incite 1B, Taunt 1B
Status	5	Breeding 1B
Will	4	Dedication 1B

Attributes			
Combat Defense	7	Intrigue Defense	12
Health	6	Composure	13
Destiny Points	1		
Benefits: Stubborn, Treacherous			
Drawbacks: Flaw (Athletics), Haunted			

Fist	2D	1 damage	Grab, Off-hand +1

Personality

Though she was a quiet and shy woman in her youth, Lady Lysa's life experiences have left her bitter, angry, sullen, and petulant. She's quick to lose her temper, particularly with those who disagree with her, and

longs for the life she dreamed of as a child. Her increasingly moody outbursts are beginning to show signs of her losing a grip on reality and she's becoming more and more afraid that Lord Arryn is planning to take her son from her. She will not, under any circumstances, allow that to happen.

Appearance

Lysa was once a pretty girl but her looks have been lost over the years. She has the long, auburn hair of House Tully with restless, watery blue eyes and a pinched mouth nearly always twisted in displeasure. She's thick-bodied with a shockingly pale, puffy face and a small, sharp nose. She dresses in the finest Myrish lace and adorns herself as any wealthy lady should, but her clothing choices border on the fanciful rather than the practical.

Robert Arryn

He cannot help the way he is. He was born small and sickly.

— A Feast for Crows

Robert is the only child of the union between Lord Jon Arryn and Lady Lysa. He's the heir to the Vale of Arryn.

History

Robert Arryn was born six years ago to Lord Jon and Lady Lysa. He is a sickly, whiny child who relies entirely upon his mother for comfort and nourishment. He still suckles at Lady Lysa's breast even at the age of six, and is a very difficult child to manage when he is not within sight of his mother. Young Robert is afflicted with a shaking sickness that causes frequent seizures, and is therefore under almost constant care of Maester Colemon, who leeches him often to rid the young heir of his bad blood. When Robert's shaking is bad the maester gives him a concoction to ease his pain. Because of his illness and his attachment to his mother, young Robert is stunted, emotionally and mentally. Jon Arryn seeks to foster his son with Lord Stannis at Dragonstone so he may learn to rule and outgrow his weaknesses, but Lady Lysa refuses to allow it.

Personality

Robert Arryn is a young child, but he's physically disabled and mentally stunted even for his age. He's prone to temper tantrums, most of which bring on his shaking sickness, and he sleeps tremendous amounts due to the maester's potions. When around his mother Robert can be a sweet and loving child, but once outside of his mother's sight he's a terror, insistent upon having everything his way and incapable of rationally dealing with conflict.

Appearance

Robert is a pale, sickly child of six with black hair and blue eyes that are always red and runny. He has spindly arms and legs, a soft concave chest and little belly. He is never far from one of his dolls.

Notable Servants

In addition to the family, House Arryn counts a number of devoted men and women in their service.

Ser Brynden Tully

The Blackfish

His horse and his armor were grey, but his cloak was the rippling blue-and-red of Riverrun, and a shiny black fish, wrought in gold and obsidian, pinned its folds against his shoulder.

— A Game of Thrones

The Blackfish of Riverrun is the estranged brother of Hoster Tully, and recently named Knight of the Gate in the Vale of Arryn. A distinguished knight of great skill and honor, Ser Brynden Tully represents the best House Tully can offer.

History

Brynden Tully is the younger brother of Lord Hoster, and as such, he was entitled to no lands or holdings of his own. In spite of this, Brynden

Ser Brynden Tully		Old Fighter
Abilities		
Agility	3	—
Animal Handling	3	Ride 1B
Athletics	4	Strength 1B
Awareness	3	Empathy 1B, Notice 1B
Cunning	3	—
Endurance	5	Resilience 2B, Stamina 2B
Fighting	4	Long Blades 2B, Shields 1B, Spears 1B
Knowledge	3	Education 1B
Language (Common)	3	—
Persuasion	3	—
Status	4	—
Warfare	4	Command 2B, Strategy 2B, Tactics 1B
Will	4	Dedication 1B

Attributes			
Combat Defense	8	Intrigue Defense	10
Health	15	Composure	12
Destiny Point	1		

Benefits: Anointed, Expertise (Strategy), Famous, Leader of Men, Talented (Fighting)

Drawbacks: Flaw (Agility, Athletics)

Excellent Plate and Mail: AR 7, AP –3, Bulk 2

Large Shield	4D–1D	2 damage	Bulk 1, Defensive +4
Excellent Longsword	4D+1+2B	5 damage	

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and his brother remained close through their childhood, the younger Tully supporting the elder, often acting as his voice of conscience. During the War of the Ninepenny Kings, Brynden left the riverlands with many other knights to fight for the Targaryens against the Blackfyre Pretenders. He fought alongside the likes of Ser Barristan Selmy and proved himself a great and worthy knight, gaining fame and renown throughout the Seven Kingdoms.

When he returned his relationship with Hoster became strained. Lord Hoster, ever looking out for his family's fortunes, commanded Brynden to wed. When the younger Tully refused to marry a woman his brother chose for him, the once friendly pair devolved into years of quarreling. After one particularly nasty bout, Hoster declared him the black goat of the family, to which Brynden replied that he should be the black fish. The name stuck and Brynden took the Blackfish as his personal arms.

With no reconciliation in sight, Brynden left with Lysa to take service with House Arryn, where he has served ever since. For his years and loyalty, Lord Jon Arryn has named him Knight of the Gate, a position of great honor in the Vale of Arryn.

Personality

Brynden is a good man and it was to him that Hoster's children ran with tears in their eyes or tales in their hearts. He knows his duty and firmly believes in upholding justice and the bonds of family. Even though he and his brother no longer speak, he would abandon his post in the Vale of Arryn to fight for Riverrun if ever it was in danger.

Appearance

Although fast approaching old age, Brynden Tully remains physically fit, tall and lean. The auburn hair of his youth has faded to grey and lines and wrinkles have chased away the smooth and pale features of youth. Even his voice carries the weight of his years, being hoarse and smoky. His bright blue eyes mark him as a Tully, even if they peer out from under shaggy grey eyebrows.

Maester Colemon

Maester Colemon is the Maester of House Arryn. He is counselor to Lord Jon and the healer and tutor for young Robert. Colemon has been friends for some time with Grand Maester Pycelle at King Robert's court and the elder maester sees Colemon as a son. Maester Colemon is a middle-aged man with his reddish-brown hair brushed tightly back from his scalp. He wears a meticulously kept beard and mustache and his brow is often furrowed in deep thought.

Mord

Mord is the brutal gaoler of House Arryn and is in charge of the upkeep and maintenance of the sky cells of the Eyrie. He's a large, slow-witted brute who's fond of tormenting the prisoners the Arryns see fit to fill their dungeon with. Mord's favorite pasttime is tossing a prisoner's food bowl close to the opening and hoping a rogue gust of wind will grab the prisoner and pull him to his death. Mord suffers no backtalk from those he's keeping and often rewards wit with a punch or a flick of his whip. He's seen a great number of prisoners leave the sky cells willingly and it's one of his only pleasures. Mord is a disgusting sight with brown, rotting teeth, small dark eyes, and a hideous axe scar on his left cheek.

Banners of the Vale

The following are the Houses of the Mountains of the Moon and Vale of Arryn that owe their fealty to the man who sits on the weirwood throne in the High Hall of the Eyrie.

House Baelish

Ranking	Minor
Lands	The Fingers
Arms	A field of silver mockingbirds on green

House Baelish's ancestral home is a nameless flint tower built on the smallest of the Fingers, northeast of the Vale of Arryn. A very minor house under Lord Arryn, House Baelish was founded two generations ago by a Braavosi mercenary in the service of Lord Corbray. His tower keep and lands were a reward for service from the elder Corbray. His son became a hedge knight and took the stone head of the Titan of Braavos as his sigil, though his grandson Petyr would later take a very different sigil as his own.

The Baelish holdings are small enough that it takes less than half a day to walk around them. Much of it is rock, but one of those rocks is a boulder chiseled with the seven-pointed star of the Faith, which marks

the site as one of the first places the Andals landed to wrest the Vale from the First Men.

The Baelish tower is small, and a nearby sheepfold and thatched stable are the only other permanent structures nearby. Inside the tower, an open stone stair winds its way around the wall from ground to roof, each floor large enough to house only one room. The servants sleep in the kitchen at ground level, sharing their living space with the dogs. The second floor is a modest hall and the third a decently appointed bedchamber. The tower has no windows, though it does have arrowslits embedded in the outer wall at intervals along the curve of the stair.

Above the hearth on the main floor is a broken longsword and a battered, oaken shield. Painted on that shield is the original sigil of House Baelish: a grey stone head with fiery eyes on a light green field.

The current Lord Baelish, Petyr, resides in King's Landing and serves King Robert as his master of coin. For more information on Petyr, see **Lord Petyr Baelish** on page 48.

House Belmore

Ranking	Major
Castle	Strongsong
Arms	Six silver bells on purple - 3-2-1

The ancestral castle of House Belmore is called Strongsong and lies at the confluence of two rivers deep within the Mountains of the Moon, north of the Eyrie. Lord Benedar Belmore is the current Lord of Strongsong. Ser Marwyn, a knight in service to Lord Arryn is another Belmore, as was the mother of Ser Elbert Arryn.

House Borrell

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Sweetsister
Castle	Breakwater Castle
Arms	A white spider crab on grey-green

Sweetsister is the outermost of a trio of islands in the Bite called the Three Sisters. House Borrell rules Sweetsister and is in turn sworn to House Sunderland. The current Lord of Sweetsister is Lord Godric Borrell who is also called the Shield of Sisterton, the Master of Breakwater Castle, and Keeper of the Night Lamp. The Night Lamp is a giant lighthouse that warns ships away from the rocky shoals surrounding Sweetsister and safely guides them to the port of Sisterton on Longsister.

House Coldwater

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Coldwater Burn
Arms	A blue pall with white borders on red

The ancestral castle of House Coldwater is called Coldwater Burn, which lies at the mouth of the northernmost river in the snakewood where it meets the narrow sea in the Fingers. The current Lord is Lord Royce Coldwater. The Coldwaters are sworn to the Royces of Runestone.

House Corbray

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Heart's Home
Arms	Three black ravens in flight holding three hearts, on white

House Corbray's seat is at the castle called Heart's Home, located at the mouth of the southernmost river of the snakewood where it spills into the narrow sea. Heart's Home is downriver from Strongsong and just east across the Vale from the Eyrie. Lord Lyonnel Corbray is the Lord of Heart's Home at present and lives there with his younger brothers: the famed wielder of the Valyrian sword *Lady Forlorn,* Ser Lyn, and the youngest brother Ser Lucas. The Corbrays are an ancient and impoverished house with blood relations to the Starks through a Royce daughter who married into their line and whose mother was a Stark. House Corbray originally fought against Lord Jon during the War of the Usurper but later became one of House Arryn's staunchest allies.

Ser Lyn Corbray

Ser Lyn Corbray is an infamous knight of the Vale and the younger brother of Lord Lyonnel, the Lord of Heart's Home. Ser Lyn's gallantry as a young knight so impressed his father that he gave the hereditary Valyrian sword, *Lady Forlorn,* to Lyn rather than to his heir, Lyonnel. This change in family tradition has been a point of contention between the two brothers ever since.

At the start of Robert's Rebellion, Ser Lyn fought against Lord Arryn but then switched and fought at his side on the Trident, where he slew Prince Lewyn Martell of the Kingsguard and personally led the charge that smashed the Dornish line. Ser Lyn is a dangerous and unpredictable man, hot-tempered, vain, and reckless. He is lean and

HOUSE BAELISH

HOUSE BELMORE

HOUSE BORRELL

HOUSE COLDWATER

handsome and is notoriously uninterested in the charms of women. He currently keeps a squire, a young son of House Redfort named Mychel, who will be ready for knighthood in a year or two.

House Donniger

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A red sun rising from a grey-green sea against a yellow sky

A noble house of the Vale.

House Egen

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Yellow sun, white crescent moon, and a silver star on blue chief above a white field
Motto	By Day or Night

House Egen has always served House Arryn and their arms boast that they will serve at all hours. Ser Vardis Egen has served both as Lord Jon's Captain of the Household Guard at King's Landing and as his master-at-arms at the Eyrie. Ser Vardis' House has served the Arryns for as long as there have been Arryns. Ser Vardis is a stocky older man with silver hair who follows orders without question.

House Elesham

Ranking	Minor
Lands	The Paps
Arms	Double pile inverted, stone on pink, a black mullet between

House Elesham rules the Paps, an island northeast of the Fingers in the Shivering Sea.

House Grafton

Ranking	Major
Lands	Gulltown
Arms	Burning tower in yellow, within a black pile, upon a flaming red field

The current Lord of Gulltown, Ser Gerold Grafton, inherited his post when his father, the late Lord Randyll, was slain beneath his own walls by Robert Baratheon. Lord Randyll had remained a loyalist and prevented Lord Arryn and Robert Baratheon from gaining access to the port of Gulltown during the war. Gulltown is the only large town in the Vale of Arryn and is located on a sheltered harbor on the southeastern coast of the Vale on the Bay of Crabs. It sits just across the narrow sea from Braavos and is an important trading port for vessels traveling up or down the coast. A well-known song is sung about riding to see a fair maid in Gulltown. The Graftons of Gulltown are friends with House Baelish. Ser Gerold's squire is his youngest son, Gyles.

House Hardyng

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A field of red and white diamonds

House Hardyng is a house of landed knights sworn to the Waynwoods of Ironoaks. Many famous knights have been from the Hardyng line: Ser Humfrey was a renowned tournament knight during the reign of King Daeron II, and died on behalf of the legendary Ser Duncan the Tall in a trial of seven.

The current heir of House Hardyng, Harrold, is the ward of Lady Anya Waynwood. Harrold is a great nephew of Lord Jon.

Harrold Hardyng

"When Robert dies, Harry the Heir becomes Lord Harrold, Defender of the Vale and Lord of the Eyrie. Jon Arryn's bannermen will never love me, nor our silly, shaking Robert, but they will love their Young Falcon."

— Petyr Baelish

Harrold Hardyng, the great nephew of Lord Jon Arryn and not an Arryn himself, is nonetheless the heir to the Vale of Arryn behind young Robert Arryn. Should something befall both Lord Jon and his son, then Harrold would be, by rights, Lord Harrold of the Vale.

Harrold's story is short: he was born the eldest son of a union between a landed knight of House Hardyng and a daughter of House Waynwood. He was taken in as Lady Anya Waynwood's ward at Ironoaks and was raised there. Harrold is still young but it's rumored that, despite his youth, he's already fathered a bastard.

The story about why Harrold is known as Harry the Heir is longer. It begins with Lord Jasper Arryn, Lord Jon's father. Lord Jasper begot three children: Lord Jon, Alys, and Ser Ronnel. Ser Ronnel wed a Belmore but

HOUSE GRAFTON

HOUSE HARDYING

HOUSE HUNTER

HOUSE REDFORT

died just after she gave birth to their son, Elbert. Ser Elbert became Lord Jon's heir upon his father's death, but he was murdered years later by the Mad King Aerys. Lord Jon, meantime, married two women who both died before giving him an heir, though his third wife, Lady Lysa, bore him a sickly son named Robert, the current heir to the Vale.

Alys Arryn wed Elys Waynwood, uncle to the present Lady Anya Waynwood. Alys gave her husband nine children, eight of them daughters, and then died of exhaustion. Their only son, Jasper, was kicked in the head by a horse and died when he was very young. A pox took two of the daughters not long after and scarred another so badly that she became a septa rather than suffer the embarrassment of her father trying to find a match for her. The eldest daughter of Alys and Elys married Ser Denys Arryn, the Darling of the Vale, but he died at the Battle of the Bells during the War of the Usurper and she, in turn, died with her newborn son soon after.

Another of Elys' daughters was seduced by a sellsword and Ser Elys cast her out when she bore her sellsword a bastard. After the bastard died in infancy, she joined the silent sisters in shame. Another daughter married the Lord of the Paps but proved barren, and another was on her way to the riverlands to marry a son of House Bracken when she was taken by the Burned Men while traveling the high road.

This left the youngest daughter of Ser Elys who wed a landed knight of House Hardyng and gave birth to one son, Harrold, before dying. Because of Harrold's direct relation to Lord Jon on his mother's side and because of Lord Jon's ill luck in producing heirs, if anything befalls Lord Jon and his young son Robert Harrold Hardyng, the ward of Waynwood, becomes the Lord of the Vale.

House Hersey

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Newkeep
Arms	A winged white chalice on a pink field

House Hersey is a noble house of the Vale.

House Hunter

Ranking	Major
Castle	Longbow Hall
Arms	Five silver arrows, fanned, on a brown field

The castle of House Hunter, Longbow Hall, rests near the narrow sea east of the Eyrie. The present Lord of Longbow Hall, Eon Hunter, is an old man who has held his position for sixty years. He suffers from gout, though, and is a cripple and not expected to live much longer. He has three sons: Ser Gilwood, his eldest son and heir, Ser Eustace, and Ser Harlan. Serving as maester at Longbow Hall is Maester Willamen, one of four sons of Bethany Rosby and Lord Walder Frey.

Lord Eon Hunter

Eon Hunter is the aged Lord of Longbow Hall and the Lord of House Hunter. He has been the patriarch of the house for nearly sixty years and was present at the tournament at Harrenhal during the Year of the False Spring. He is a loyal retainer of House Arryn. Lord Eon is an old man, half-crippled from his gouty legs.

House Longthorpe

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Longsister

House Longthorpe calls Longsister, the western most isle of the Three Sisters, its home. Longthorpe is a vassal of House Sunderland. Lord Rolland Longthorpe is the current head of the household.

House Lynderly

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Snakewood
Arms	Black field strewn with wriggling green serpents

The seat of House Lynderly is a castle called Sunkenwood on the coast of the narrow sea at the southern edge of the snakewood. The current Lord of the snakewood is Lord Jon Lynderly and he resides at Sunkenwood with his young son and heir, Terrance Lynderly. House Lynderly is a minor house and has some associations with House Baelish.

House Melcolm

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Old Anchor
Arms	A rusty anchor on a turquoise field beneath a yellow chief with three blue plates

House Melcolm calls home their castle Old Anchor. Old Anchor is located northeast of Ironoaks Castle along the coast of the narrow sea.

House Moore

Ranking	Landed
Arms	Three bronze spearheads on a white field with a bronze, embattled border

House Moore is a landed house of the Vale. Ser Mandon Moore, a member of King Robert's Kingsguard, is from this house.

House Pryor

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Pebble
Arms	A partial eclipse, black moon over yellow sun, on a dusty pink field

Pebble is an island north of the Fingers in the Bite and is the seat of House Pryor.

House Redfort

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Redfort
Arms	Red castle on a white field with a red, embattled border
Motto	As Strong as Stone

The ancestral castle of House Redfort, called the Redfort, is located in the southern part of the Vale of Arryn, just north of the Bay of Crabs and nestled into the foothills of the Mountains of the Moon. They are an old and noble house, and can trace their lineage to the First Men who served the Kings of Mountain and Vale before the Andals arrived. The current Lord of the Redfort is the thrice-wed Lord Horton, an old man who was once a strong and vicious opponent in battle. He has a number of sons including Ser Jasper, Ser Creighton, Ser Jon, and Mychel, who is currently squire to the famous knight Ser Lyn Corbray.

House Royce

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Gates of the Moon
Arms	A black portcullis over a white crescent moon on a purple field bordered with runes on bronze

This minor wing of House Royce currently occupies the non-hereditary seat of the Gates of the Moon, the first castle guarding the thin stone path that leads to the Eyrie. The current Keeper of the Gates of the Moon, Lord Nestor Royce, is also the High Steward of the Vale in Lord Jon Arryn's absence and has held this position for fourteen years. Lord Nestor is a cousin to Bronze Yohn Royce, the Lord of Runestone. Lord Nestor lives at the Gates of the Moon with his son, Ser Albar, and his daughter, Lady Myranda, a widow. Mya Stone, the natural daughter of King Robert, is in service to Lord Nestor as a guide and leads guests up and down the Giant's Lance to the Eyrie.

Lord Yohn Royce		Middle-Aged Warrior
Abilities		
Animal Handling	4	Ride 2B
Athletics	4	—
Cunning	3	—
Endurance	3	—
Fighting	5	Long Blades 2B, Spears 2B
Marksmanship	3	Bows 2B
Language (Common)	3	—
Status	5	Tournaments 2B
Survival	3	Hunt 2B
Warfare	4	Command 2B, Tactics 1B
Will	3	Dedication 1B

Attributes			
Combat Defense	8	**Intrigue Defense**	10
Health	11	**Composure**	9
Destiny Points	3		

Benefits: Blood of the First Men, Heirloom (Bronze Armor), Tourney Knight

Drawbacks: None

Heirloom Bronze Plate: AR 9, AP –4, Bulk 3

Superior Longsword	5D+1+2B	5 damage

Lord Nestor Royce

Lord Nestor is a cousin of Yohn Royce, the Lord of Runestone. He is currently the Keeper of the Gates of the Moon, though the post is not hereditary and doesn't bestow a true lordship to the person assigned to it. Lord Nestor is also the High Steward of the Vale, an honor he has held for the last fourteen years while Lord Jon serves as Hand of the King in King's Landing. Lord Nestor's wing of House Royce is a minor branch of the Royces of Runestone, an ancient house that descends from the First Men who once populated the Vale. Lord Nestor is a massive, barrel-chested man.

Mya Stone

Mya Stone likes to say that her father had been a goat and that her mother had been an owl. In truth, this bastard girl in service to House Royce is daughter of King Robert Baratheon. Mya leads a team of mule handlers who guide travelers to and from the Eyrie on the thin stone stair. Slim and sinewy, Mya looks as tough as the old riding leathers she wears beneath her silvery ringmail shirt. Her hair is as black as a raven's wing and is cut so short and shaggy that it looks like it's been hacked apart with a dagger. Mya's eyes are big and blue, like her father's, and her skills at guiding people along the high mountain paths are legendary. Mya is fearless and often guides much older and nobler guests of House Arryn patiently up the Giant's Lance as they cower in fear and wet their breeches.

House Royce

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Runestone
Arms	Black iron studs on a bronze field, bordered with runes
Motto	We Remember

The ancestral castle of House Royce, Runestone, sits due north of Gulltown on the coast of the narrow sea. Lord Yohn Royce is the current Lord of Runestone. He lives at the seat of House Royce with two of his sons: Ser Andar, his eldest son and heir, and Ser Robar, sometimes called Robar the Red, a valiant knight and his second son. Ser Waymar Royce, his newly knighted youngest son, lives at Castle Black and is a ranger of the Night's Watch. The master-at-arms at Runestone is a bastard named Ser Samwell Stone, also known as Strong Sam Stone.

Lord Yohn Royce

Lord Yohn Royce, called the Bronze Yohn, is the head of the Royces of Runestone, the main branch of House Royce. Lord Yohn's nickname comes from his armor, an ancient suit of bronze plate covered in the runes of the First Men. These runes are supposed to imbue the armor with the virtue of defending the wearer from harm. He is a renowned warrior and won the melee at Harrenhal in the Year of the False Spring. He also had the honor of riding against

Prince Rhaegar at the same tournament, though he lost that joust. He is a good friend of King Robert and hunts with him on occasion. At court, Bronze Yohn has a retinue of bodyguards and sworn swords to protect him. His son, Ser Waymar, has recently taken the black and, at Lord Yohn's urging, Lord Commander Mormont has made the young Royce a ranger. Bronze Yohn has a lined face, grey hair, and slate-grey eyes beneath bushy eyebrows.

House Ruthermont

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Five black starfish on a gold pale, on pean

House Ruthermont is a noble family of the Vale.

House Shett

Ranking	Landed
Castle	Gull Tower
Arms	3 golden wings, bendwise, on checkered white and black

House Shett calls Gull Tower its home near Gulltown. The head of House Shett, Ser Damon Shett, is called the Knight of Gull Tower.

House Sunderland

Ranking	Major
Lands	Three Sisters
Arms	Three women's heads, white with black hair, on blue and green undy

House Sunderland rules from Sisterton, the primary port of the Three Sisters, a trio of narrow islands in the Bite north of the Vale, and calls all Sistermen their sworn vassals. Lord Triston Sunderland is the current Lord of the Three Sisters and he is the liege lord to House Borrell, House Longthorpe, and House Torrent.

House Templeton

Ranking	Landed
Castle	Ninestars
Arms	Nine stars, one of seven points and the rest of six points, upon a gold saltire on black

House Templeton is a great knightly house of the Vale. Its head takes the hereditary title of Knight of Ninestars, a title currently held by Ser Symond Templeton. During the Blackfyre Rebellion the then Knight of Ninestars was slain in combat by Daemon Blackfyre at the battle of Redgrass Field.

House Tollett

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Grey Glen
Arms	Pile grey and black
Motto	When All is Darkest

House Tollett is currently headed by Lord Uthor Tollett, the Lord of Grey Glen. Dolorous Edd, a steward of Lord Commander Mormont of the Night's Watch, is a Tollett.

House Torrent

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Littlesister

House Torrent calls the middle isle of the Three Sisters, Littlesister, its home. House Torrent is a vassal house to House Sunderland and is currently headed by Lord Alesander Torrent.

House Upcliff

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A cresting wave, sea green on a field of black

House Upcliff is a minor family of the Vale.

House Waxley

Ranking	Landed
Castle	Wickenden
Arms	Three candles, white with red flames, within silver candleholders on a grey field bordered in black
Motto	Light in Darkness

House Waxley's seat and castle, Wickenden, lies on the northwestern coast of the Bay of Crabs, across the water from Maidenpool. The Knight of Wickenden is currently Ser Edmund Waxley.

HOUSE SHETT

HOUSE TEMPLETON

HOUSE TOLLETT

HOUSE UPCLIFF

House Waynwood

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Ironoaks Castle
Arms	A black broken wheel on a field of green

The castle of House Waynwood, Ironoaks, lies almost due east of the Bloody Gate on the coast of the narrow sea. Lady Anya Waynwood is the current head of House Waynwood and she lives at Ironoaks Castle with her eldest son and heir, Ser Morton, her youngest son Ser Donnel, and her ward, Harrold Hardyng, the heir of young Robert Arryn. The Waynwoods have long been loyal to House Arryn, and they are a house built on ceremony and tradition.

House Wydman

Ranking	Landed
Arms	Five splintered lances, three then two, striped blue and white with blue pennons, on a field of yellow, beneath a white chief bearing a red castle, a green viper, a black broken wheel, a purple unicorn and a golden lion
Motto	Right Conquers Might

House Wydman is a knightly house of the Vale. Their arms refer to a tournament in which the founder of House Wydman defeated five knights from the greatest houses of the Vale and the westerlands, including a Lannister of Casterly Rock.

The Clans

The clansmen Tyrion had brought down from their fastnesses in the Mountains of the Moon were loyal in their own fierce way, but they were proud and quarrelsome as well, prone to answer insults real or imagined with steel.

— A Clash of Kings

Even though it has been hundreds of years since the clans of the Mountains of the Moon have threatened the Vale with anything more than occasional raids, their threat to small groups of travelers along the high road and throughout the rest of the western slopes is a serious one. Even the Lord of the Eyrie fears their marauding and rides past his Bloody Gate in strength.

Culture

The mountain clans all share a common culture dramatically different from the rest of the Seven Kingdoms. They're descendants of the First Men who orginally inhabited the Vale, but were driven out by the Andals. They're an egalitarian society and believe everyone's voice should be heard in council, even the voices of their women, who are often seen raiding with the men. They're fiercely loyal to each other and attack any lord or knight daring to enter their territory without a host behind them. Clansmen have only their first name and their clan name, though they call themselves by their first name and the first name of their father. They can be a quarrelsome and proud people, quick to answer threats with steel. They are incredibly distrustful of those they call "lowland lords" as those lords have made many promises over the years and have broken nearly all of them.

The clansmen are a poor people, scraping out a meager existence off the rocky slopes of the Mountains of the Moon and raiding small villages and travelers for grain or anything else they can find. Generally, the clansmen kill anyone they raid but sometimes spare a woman they've captured if she's still young enough to bear children. They ride scrawny garrons, surefooted as goats and more suited to the rocky slopes, and wear mismatched armor, remnants of a hundred houses conquered in raids long past. There are at least three thousand warriors among the many clans and they often cooperate in raids—some clans even share close bonds. Conflicts between clans are frequent and they might demand blood money from other clans for perceived wrongs, such as the killing of a member of another clan. More often, though, they solve personal grudges through violence.

There are many clans in the Mountains of the Moon, though some are more predominant than others. Other clans, aside from those described below, include Milk Snakes, Painted Dogs, and Sons of the Mist.

Black Ears

The Black Ears are known for cutting the ears from their opponents and wearing them openly on a piece of rope strung around their necks. They try not to kill the men they take ears from as they say it's a braver thing to leave a man alive so he might come to try to win his ears back. The Moon Brothers and the Black Ears have strong bonds with one another. The Black Ears are led by a fearsome female warrior called Chella daughter of Cheyk.

Burned Men

Burned Men are a sinister clan and are feared by all other clans as well. They mortify their flesh with fire when they come of age so they might prove their courage. A Burned Man typically burns off a finger or a nipple when coming to manhood, though the truly brave might choose an ear. The most fearsome of the Burned Men might burn out one of their own eyes, and for doing this he or she would be named a red hand of the Burned Men, a sort of chieftain. The scars of the Burned Men make them terrifying to behold in the combat and their complete silence as they kill is simply unnerving. They may rattle swords or slap spears against their shields before a battle, but they do not shout. They are led by the vicious and unpredictable Timett son of Timett.

Moon Brothers

The Moon Brothers and the Black Ears have strong bonds with one another. The Moon Brothers are fierce and proud warriors and are led by Crawn son of Calor.

Stone Crows

The Stone Crows are led by their gruff clan chief, Shagga son of Dolf, who's obsessed with chopping off the manhoods of slain warriors to feed to his goats.

CHAPTER 9: THE WESTERLANDS

The westerlands are located on the western edge of Westeros, south of the Neck. The lands there are mountainous and sparsely populated. Whereas King's Landing is the heart of the Seven Kingdoms, the westerlands could be called the *purse* of Westeros. The mountains and hills there are rich with gold and, to a lesser extent, silver. And the Lords of Casterly Rock use their riches to extend their influence not only over the local nobles, but also to prop up the Seven Kingdoms as a whole, thereby making themselves all the more powerful and indispensable.

A HISTORY OF THE WESTERLANDS

Little is known of who claimed the westerlands before the coming of the Andal adventurers. Some of the oldest legends point to Lann the Clever as their founder. An adventurer and trickster during the Age of Heroes, it's said he tricked the Casterlys out of Casterly Rock and stole gold from the sun in order to brighten his hair. Whether or not the tales are true, the Lannisters and their extended family point to this hero as their progenitor, and the mischievous and often treacherous tales associated with him seem to fit the Lannisters in their present form.

About six thousand years ago, the Andals invaded Westeros and purged much of the lands of the influence and culture of the children of the forest and the First Men who were their allies. They swept across the lands, settling into the holdfasts of those who came before, cutting woods and uprooting weirwoods for their new homes. The cleansing of the First Men and the children in the westerlands was total, and little remains in history or ruin of the people that dwelt here before them. As the Andal kings forged their kingdoms in the ashes of the old, a group laid claim to the westerlands founding the Kingdom of the Rock, presumably with Casterly Rock as their seat.

From the Andal conquest onward, the Lannisters sat atop Casterly Rock and controlled all the westerlands. Until the Targaryens came, that is. As with many of the Andal Kings, the Lannisters mustered their armies to fight the new invaders. King Loren of the Rock joined with King Mern of the Reach, combining their armies into one massive host, remembered as the Host of the Two Kings. The mighty force crushed

The gold of Casterly Rock and the Golden Tooth has made [House Lannister] the wealthiest of the Great Houses.

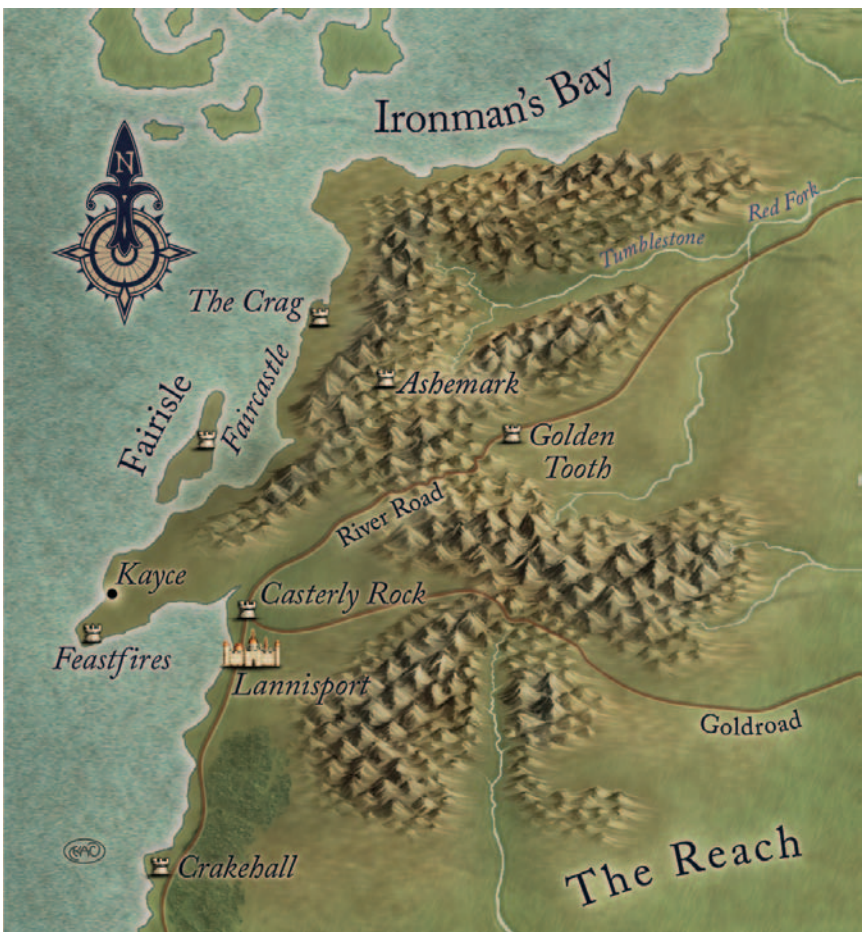
— A Game of Thrones

the Targaryen army, which was dwarfed by the forces of the Reach and westerlands. But then Aegon and his sisters unleashed all three of their dragons at the same time. The result instantly turned the tide, washing the lands with dragon fire and roasting four thousand men, including King Mern Gardener. Remembered as the Field of Fire, this engagement spelled the end of the Gardener line and the Lannister's reign as kings. King Loren bent his knee and became one of the first vassal lords to Aegon the Conqueror.

Henceforth, the Lannisters have ruled the westerlands as lords paramount and as Wardens of the West, though their larger influence has waxed and waned over the generations. The city of Lannisport has grown to be one of the largest cities on the continent, placing third behind King's Landing and Oldtown. This port city has always been a center of commerce for the region and it attracts travelers from all over the Seven Kingdoms and beyond.

Because mining has been so important to the history of the westerlands, many cities and towns have grown up around mines only to then be deserted when they stop producing ore. This has left the mountains and valleys dotted with ghost towns as nobles and their smallfolk move on to new mines and new cities. That pattern continues, but the Golden Tooth, Casterly Rock, and other major mines still produce ore enough to keep the Lannisters and their nobles wealthy and busy.

Under the recent leadership of the Lannisters, the westerlands have prospered, but this has not always been true. Although the Lannisters have made sure they stand as one of the paramount houses in the Seven Kingdoms through the vigilance and discipline of Lord Tywin Lannister, his father was deemed a weak and ineffectual lord and nearly brought ruin to House Lannister as lesser lords took advantage of his kindness and naivety. This period of decline ended with the ascent of Tywin Lannister. After destroying the most unruly houses contesting his family's primacy, all the lords of the westerlands came to heel and support House Lannister without question, thus pushing the westerlands into the fore of Westerosi politics once more. As well, Tywin had the distinction of being named Hand of the King for a time under the reign of King Aerys, and since the fall of the Targaryen Dynasty, he has successfully maneuvered his daughter to become the queen and installed a number of knights and agents loyal to Casterly Rock throughout King's Landing.



GEOGRAPHY OF THE WESTERLANDS

The westerlands lie near the upper central-western portion of the Seven Kingdoms, just below the Neck. It is west of the Trident, north of the Reach, and spreads from Lannisport on its southern edge to Ironman's Bay in the north. The goldroad and the Red Fork make for useful southern and eastern boundary lines.

The land in this area is mostly mountainous and hilly, with rich valleys and farms providing food to the rest of the westerlands, mostly nuts, berries, turnips, and similar crops as well as sheep, cattle, deer, and goats. The fisherfolk add to the westerlands' self-reliance by providing bountiful catches.

Gold mines dot the landscape of the westerlands. In addition to the mines at Golden Tooth and Casterly Rock, there are also working mines at Castamere, Nunn's Deep, and the Pendric Hills. Many of the people who've made their living working the lands of the region have been slowly moving into the cities that spring up around these mines. While there's no shortage of smallfolk to farm and fish, the work and fortunes available in the cities may eventually draw so many people it will negatively affect the westerlands as a whole. The small towns sometimes dry up when the gold does, which means that there are fewer castles and forts in the westerlands compared to the other regions of the Seven Kingdoms.

The Golden Tooth

The Golden Tooth is a small keep sitting just east of the heart of the westerlands, along the river road. It's built above rich gold mines that supply a large percentage of the wealth to the region. From its vantage point above these mines, the Golden Tooth's watchtowers overlook the river road and the rocky terrain around it. Its commanding view of the area makes it difficult for armies to approach secretly.

The fact that the Golden Tooth is situated near the river road also makes it a valuable and hotly contested

piece of land. A stronghold that controls access to the river road is a worthwhile asset to any lord and serves to protect the westerlands from any force that might invade from the east. If an enemy were to take it, that lord could control the access to the river road and attack armies as they made their way past. The current occupants work hard to ensure that doesn't happen.

Lannisport

Lannisport sits along the coast of the Sunset Sea where the river road, goldroad, and the sea road meet, just to the west and in full view of Casterly Rock. This port city is one of the major ports of the Seven Kingdoms and the largest city in the westerlands by a wide margin. Compared to other cities in Westeros it's smaller than King's Landing and Oldtown but larger than Gulltown and White Harbor. So many visitors and traders make their way here and intermingle with the local farmers, herders, and fisherfolk, it makes the city a wild mix of the familiar and the foreign that people usually only expect from a place the size of King's Landing. The wealth in the city means there are a number of skilled workers including excellent jewelers, goldsmiths, and blacksmiths.

Casterly Rock

Atop the rock overlooking the harbor of Lannisport and the Sunset Sea sits Casterly Rock. It is so named because it originally belonged to the Casterlys, who lost their holdings to Lann the Clever, according to legend. The second part of the name is drawn from the fact that the castle is literally carved out of the rock itself. It's the castle from which House Lannister rules over the westerlands.

The outside of the stronghold is impressive and intimidating. In fact, the Rock has never fallen to an invading army. The castle's natural defenses are further improved by walls and other fortifications, including watchtowers.

Inside Casterly Rock are the living quarters of the Lannisters, as well as the halls and meeting rooms that they use for all official purposes. The Golden Gallery, the Lion's Mouth, and the Hall of Heroes are all contained inside its walls. They're impressive chambers and corridors where a boy could easily entertain himself for hours, which is exactly what Tyrion and Jaime Lannister did as youngsters.

Below the stronghold are gold mines that continue to produce ore, as well as caverns that the sea roars into and out of. The bowels of Casterly

Rock are riddled with an unknown (and probably unknowable) number of tunnels and chambers created when the goldmines were first being dug. They lead throughout the rock under the castle, and most all of them lead to dead ends or open into caverns that echo with the sounds of the sea below. There may be passages that lead out of the mountain, but if there are, no one knows them.

The area immediately to the southwest of Casterly Rock is Lannisport, the largest city of the westerlands. North and west of Casterly Rock is the city of Kayce. Up the river road sits Golden Tooth, midway between Casterly Rock and Riverrun. Some distance south of the goldroad lies Silverhill, and traveling south on the sea road, one encounters Crakehall along the coast. And within three day's ride is a village named Oxcross.

Lannister Gold

The Lannisters are both famed and infamous for the gold dug from beneath Casterly Rock. No one outside of the House knows for certain the size of the Lannister fortune, only that it is considerable, so much so that Tywin Lannister is said to fill his camberpot with gold whenever he uses it.

Certainly, Tywin and his kin are willing to use the influence their gold buys them. The Lord of Casterly Rock has extended loans of millions of gold crowns to the Iron Throne, putting King Robert even more deeply in his debt. If these loans have taxed the coffers of House Lannister, then it is well hidden.

Somewhat surprising to some, despite his vast wealth, Tywin Lannister is a frugal man who saves and invests wisely. Although used to a certain luxury afforded by his status, the Lord of Casterly Rock does not indulge nearly so much as, say, the king himself, one of the reasons why he is in the position to loan the crown such large sums.

HOUSE LANNISTER

RANKING	Great
LANDS	Westerlands
CASTLE	Casterly Rock
ARMS	A roaring lion, gold on crimson
MOTTO	Hear Me Roar!

Ever since Lann the Clever took Casterly Rock from the Casterlys, the Lannisters have ruled over the westerlands, first as kings, and then after the Targaryen conquest, as lords in service to their new king. The importance and influence of the Lannisters has grown in the last quarter century since Tywin Lannister came to power and restored the house to its proper glory. This chapter covers the history of House Lannister and discusses those members not covered in other chapters.

History

The history of House Lannister is closely tied to the history of the westerlands, and so the events that unfolded in these lands almost always involved this famous family. In the eyes of many peoples of the Seven Kingdoms, there cannot be a westerlands without the Lannisters and vice versa. This has been especially magnified in recent years by the actions of Tywin Lannister, as he's worked to secure the safety and prosperity of his house, and the Lannisters stand as one of the most feared and hated families in all the Seven Kingdoms.

The Lannister family descends from the mingling of the peoples who claimed lineage to Lann the Clever and those Andal adventurers who carved new kingdoms from the old, with, presumably, a warrior or chieftain wedding the descendant of that ancient trickster. The result of this union produced an uncommon bloodline: a family noted for their canniness, ambition, and propensity for violence. These traits have helped them survive thousands of years as one of the principle houses in these lands.

The early years of House Lannister lay undocumented and buried amidst a mountain of half-truths, myths, and misdirection. It's known that at some point King Tommen II made a foolish venture to Valyria, taking with him the family sword, *Brightroar*. He never returned, and thus, the ancestral blade was forever lost. The allure of this missing weapon has lured at least one Lannister to seek it out, finding his doom instead.

Word of Aegon's arrival spread through the Seven Kingdoms like wildfire, prompting the Andal kings to mount a response. While others knelt before the might of Aegon's dragons, Loren Lannister, King of the Rock, and his ally, King Mern of the Reach, had no intention of setting aside their authority for some foreign upstart. Together, the Two Kings, as they were called, gathered a mighty force comprising some six hundred banners, five thousand mounted knights, and ten times that many freeriders and men-at-arms. Arrayed in all their splendor, they awaited Aegon and his far smaller host in a great field.

At first, the battle seemed to go the way of the defenders, for Aegon's conscripts included a menagerie of broken and defeated men, peoples who had been conquered and pressed into fighting for the Targaryen warlord. Against the numbers fielded by the Two Kings, they stood no chance, and in short order they were slaughtered, driven back beneath the savage ferocity of the warriors sworn to the Two Kings. Aegon and his sisters were not impressed. Even as their soldiers quit the field, the Targaryens unleashed their mighty dragons. For the first and only time, all three dragons were freed to vent their wrath on mankind. In horror, King Loren watched as the dragons wiped out some four thousand knights, roasted King Mern, and broke the back of his armies. Faced with annihilation, Loren did the only thing he could do: he surrendered.

Aegon was in need of useful servants, especially ones with the charisma and command to master such a large host, and so Aegon spared Loren's life and named him Lord Paramount of the westerlands. Loren aided Aegon in crushing the last resistance in the Seven Kingdoms and helped establish the dynasty that would rule for three centuries.

Over the generations that followed, the Lannisters' fortunes rose and fell, but they never waned for long. If the Lannisters were good at anything, it was taking care of themselves. Their control over Lannisport ensured they were among the wealthiest of families, making it easier to arrange favorable marriages, including cementing unions with the Baratheons, among others. Through it all, the Lannisters were checked in their growth, as were the Tullys of the riverlands, by depredations and attacks from the Iron Isles. Whenever the Iron Throne was at its weakest, it seemed the ironmen were quick to mount raids on the rich and verdant coastlines, such as in the aftermath of the Great Spring Sickness. For these reasons, the Lannisters invested their coin in ships, soldiers, and arms to increase their influence and dominance.

The lowest the Lannisters fell was reached during the rule of Lord Tytos, Tywin's father. Tytos was a weak but amiable fellow who was mocked by his own bannermen, some of whom openly defied him or borrowed gold and never paid it back. At court in King's Landing, he was responsible for the Lannisters being referred to as the toothless lions. Everything changed—the ship's course righted, when Tywin Lannister succeeded his father.

Under Tywin's leadership, House Lannister was restored to power. He crushed opposition and punished disloyalty to such an extent he became a greatly respected and feared power in the Seven Kingdoms. The ruins of Castamere and Tarbeck Hall stand as reminders to all the banners sworn to Casterly Rock of the change Tywin brought to the westerlands. By the time he was twenty, he was King Aerys's Hand, and he served in that role for two decades. During that time, he brought his pragmatic outlook to King's Landing and proved to be one of the most successful Hands in history.

Tywin would not last forever as Aerys's Hand, however. The king's growing instability and his naming of Ser Jaime Lannister, Tywin's heir and favored son, to the Sworn Brotherhood of the Kingsguard severed their ties. By taking Jaime from Tywin, Aerys foiled Tywin's

A Lannister always pays his debts.

—UNOFFICIAL WORDS OF HOUSE LANNISTER

plans to bind Lannister to the Tullys by a marriage to Lysa Tully. Tywin quit the office and returned to Casterly Rock to brood. As the climate darkened—war brewing after Rhaegar's kidnapping of Lyanna Stark—Tywin saw an opportunity to recoup his setbacks and emerge stronger for it. He bided his time, waiting to see the outcome of the war. King Aerys believed Tywin would remain loyal since he had Jaime at the Red Keep. Tywin can be extremely pragmatic, and he might well have regarded Jaime as a lost asset. Should the situation demand, Tywin would throw his lot in with rebels if it seemed they would win.

As Robert Baratheon marched on the Trident, Tywin led another force to King's Landing—but to strengthen the king's men or attack them? When word reached Tywin that Robert was victorious at the Trident, he moved his forces to the city. The gates of King's Landing were thrown open in desperate relief, and the Lannister forces were welcomed as heroes. To the horror of Aerys and the people of King's Landing, they were not saviors but invaders. The Lannister forces sacked the city and converged on the Red Keep. Meanwhile, Ser Jaime, who had learned of Aerys's intention to burn the city to the ground, slew the king's pyromancer and then murdered the king. Jaime was seated on the Iron Throne when Eddard Stark finally reached the city from the Trident.

Robert Baratheon took the throne upon Aerys's death. To ensure the Lannisters remained loyal, Robert agreed to marry Tywin's daughter, Cersei, and with her as his wife, he also gained the service of Lannister red cloaks who were almost as numerous as the city's gold cloaks. With his daughter ensconced in the Red Keep and his son a Sworn Brother of the Kingsguard, Tywin has striven to support Robert's reign, largely because of his family's investment in the current kingdom. Tywin's ambition is endless, and there can be no doubt the head of House Lannister has greater plans at work that have yet to be revealed.

Tywin Lannister

"When soldiers lack discipline, the fault lies with their lord commander."

— Lord Tywin Lannister

Tywin Lannister is the salvation, the heart, and the soul of House Lannister. His rise to power brought this old family to greater fortunes and influence than they had ever known before. A brilliant commander, excellent politician, and pragmatic ruler, Tywin Lannister looms large as one of the most powerful men in the Seven Kingdoms.

History

Not much is known of Tywin's childhood, but his early years were formative ones, shaping his mind and resolve for the life that lay ahead of him. Perhaps the most important moment for Tywin was the realization of what power meant, which was driven home when his father, Tytos, imprisoned a truculent Lord Tarbeck. Lady Tarbeck responded by taking three Lannisters captive, and she threatened to do them equal harm. Tywin counseled his father to send Tarbeck back in three pieces, but Tytos was a gentler man than that, and he caved in, further weakening his position as lord and jeopardizing the primacy of their house. This event burned away any doubts in Tywin of what it meant to rule and the responsibilities demanded of a ruler.

Once Tywin came to power, he started at once to set things right. One of the moments that defined Tywin both as a man and as a lord came when he finally had to deal with the Tarbecks of Tarbeck Hall and the Reynes of Castamere. To punish them for their disloyalty, he had every member of their houses killed. The destruction was so complete and terrible it inspired a gloomy song called *The Rains of Castamere*. Since that time, Tywin has even employed singers to perform the song to lords who seemed to be wavering or misbehaving in some way. It always does the trick. After that, all the lords and smallfolk of the Seven Kingdoms knew things had changed in House Lannister and took it seriously once more.

Tywin's ability to lead came to the attention of King Aerys, who appointed Tywin as Hand at only twenty years old. During his two decades in the role, Tywin excelled, and even now, Tywin is regarded as the reason why King Aerys was such a successful king for as long as he was. Somewhere in this period, Tywin married his cousin, Joanna Lannister, and the pair had three children: the twins Cersei and Jaime, and the dwarf Tyrion, whose birth killed Joanna. Tywin was proud of the older children, both of whom were attractive, strong, and appropriately ladylike and lordly, respectively. Tyrion, on the other hand, was a bitter disappointment. He was born a grotesque, and he was ever an ugly reminder of Joanna's death. Even so, he was a Lannister, and blood meant everything to Tywin. It wasn't until Tyrion married a crofter's daughter at the age of thirteen, drunk on wine and his first taste of sex, that Tywin wrote the boy off because he'd brought shame on the family name.

As the King's Hand, Tywin was so omnipresent and effective that people "joked" it was he and not the king who really ruled the land. In fact, King Aerys had Ser Ilyn Payne's tongue ripped out with hot pincers

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LORD TYWIN LANNISTER		OLD SCHEMER
ABILITIES		
AGILITY	3	—
ANIMAL HANDLING	3	—
ATHLETICS	4	—
AWARENESS	3	—
CUNNING	3	—
ENDURANCE	4	—
FIGHTING	4	LONG BLADES 1B
KNOWLEDGE	3	—
LANGUAGE (COMMON)	4	—
PERSUASION	5	BARGAIN 2B, CONVINCE 1B, INTIMIDATE 2B, TAUNT 1B
STATUS	5	BREEDING 2B, REPUTATION 2B, STEWARDSHIP 3B
WARFARE	5	COMMAND 3B, STRATEGY 2B
WILL	4	DEDICATION 2B

ATTRIBUTES			
COMBAT DEFENSE	10	INTRIGUE DEFENSE	11
HEALTH	9	COMPOSURE	14
DESTINY POINTS	0		

BENEFITS: AUTHORITY, BLOOD OF THE ANDALS, EXPERTISE (STRATEGY), FAMOUS, FAVORED OF NOBLES, HEAD OF HOUSE, LEADER OF MEN, STUBBORN, WEALTHY

DRAWBACKS: FLAW (ENDURANCE, FIGHTING)

EXCELLENT FULL PLATE: AR 10, AP –5, BULK 3

EXCELLENT LONGSWORD	4D+1+1B	5 DAMAGE

when he made the quip in the king's presence. Aerys had grown paranoid and believed Tywin had designs on his throne. In order to protect himself from Tywin, Aerys appointed Ser Jaime Lannister, Tywin's fifteen-year-old son, who was already a proven knight, as a member of the Kingsguard. In that position, the boy acted as both guard and hostage for the king.

Tywin disagreed with the appointment and fully understood what the king's motivations were, so he resigned his position on some pretext and returned to Casterly Rock. After leaving King's Landing, Lord Tywin brooded and plotted. When Robert's Rebellion began, Lord Tywin sat at Casterly Rock and waited. When King Aerys called him to help, he brought his men and stormed the city once Aerys opened the gates.

With Aerys dead and Robert on the throne, Tywin arranged a marriage between Cersei and Robert, cementing House Lannister as one of the most important in the Seven Kingdoms. During Robert's reign, Tywin oversaw the fortunes of the house and its business, and he even loaned the kingdom more than three million gold crowns—which made it all the more valuable to the realm.

Personality

Lord Tywin grew up fast, but unlike others who took on too much responsibility too soon, it made him stronger and more confident. Curiously, despite the fact his father was such a poor leader, Tywin took to the role naturally and was taken seriously even when he was young.

Family means the world to Lord Tywin. He wasn't an overtly loving or expressive man except perhaps with his wife, but he placed a high value on his children and his relationships with them, especially as they brought more and more honor to the family name. Conversely, when they brought shame on the family or acted counter to how Tywin thought they should behave, he could be a monster. He was especially disappointed in Tyrion. His mere existence was a black mark on the family, and his actions throughout life only brought more embarrassment to House Lannister in Tywin's eyes.

Tywin is as hard as he needs to be to get the job done, and he never does anything by halves. Coupled with his utter lack of sentimentality, he can be incredibly ruthless and cold but also highly effective. He is everything a feared leader needs to be: shrewd, cunning, courageous, and unforgiving.

Appearance

Although Lord Tywin approaches sixty, he carries himself like a man a third his age. He is tall and well muscled, with long legs, broad shoulders, and a flat stomach. He had a full head of thick golden hair, but when it started to recede, he shaved his head bald. His face is clean-shaven except for golden muttonchops. He has pale green eyes flecked with gold.

When dressed for war, Tywin wears heavy, steel plate armor enameled with dark crimson and engraved with golden scrollwork. Over this, he wears a thick, multi-layered gold cloak clasped at the shoulders by two golden lions. His helm is decorated with a golden lion roaring and raking the air. At his side, he carries a golden sword with a lion head pommel. Each lion has rubies for eyes.

Tyrion Lannister

THE IMP

"Now that's where you're wrong, Father. Why, I believe I'm you writ small."

— TYRION LANNISTER

Called the Imp, the Halfman, and worse, Tyrion Lannister is the youngest child of Lord Tywin and Lady Joanna and has the singular misfortune of being born a dwarf to a father who despises weakness, to say nothing for being blamed for the death of his mother. Due to prejudice on account of his stature and the chilly environment of his father's house, Tyrion has grown up bitter, jaded, and full of sarcastic wit.

History

Tyrion's birth set the stage for his life. His mother died due to complications—complications Tywin blamed on his son, as if Tyrion had killed his mother on purpose. As well, Tyrion's dwarfism was considered a disgrace, and Tywin never spoke in defense of his son. If he had, he might have been able to prevent the rumors from spreading that some sort of demon had been born to House Lannister, or he might have kept people from calling Tyrion "the Imp" or any number

Tyrion Lannister		Adult Schemer
Abilities		
Agility	3	Balance 1B, Quickness 1B
Awareness	4	Empathy 2B, Notice 2B
Cunning	5	Decipher 1B, Memory 1B
Deception	3	Act 1B, Bluff 2B, Cheat 1B
Knowledge	4	Education 2B, Research 2B, Streetwise 1B
Language (Common)	4	—
Persuasion	4	Bargain 2B, Convince 2B, Incite 1B, Taunt 2B
Status	4	Stewardship 2B
Stealth	3	Sneak 1B
Warfare	3	Strategy 1B
Will	5	—
Attributes		
Combat Defense	9	Intrigue Defense 13
Health	6	Composure 15
Destiny Points	3	
Benefits: Adept Negotiator, Eidetic Memory, Knowledge Focus (History and Legends), Treacherous		
Drawbacks: Dwarf, Haunted		
Excellent Dagger	2D+1	2 damage Defensive +1, Off-hand +1

of other names. But he didn't, and so Tyrion grew up as an outcast and pariah in his own home.

Tyrion's childhood was spent alone, avoiding the cruelty of his sister and the iciness of his father. Although he was left to his own devices he was close to his older brother, and the two explored the tunnels beneath Casterly Rock, where they played games and fantasized about bold knights, adventurers, and dragons. Tyrion was fascinated with dragons.

When Tyrion grew older, he and his brother were riding when they came upon a young woman being bullied on the road by a couple of thugs. Jaime drove off the bandits, and Tyrion cared for the girl. Not long after, the two were married in secret and hid out in an old country house, where Tyrion, for the first time in his thirteen years, knew peace, love, and happiness. Tragically, his father cut his marriage short. When Tywin learned of the marriage, he was enraged. He claimed the girl was a whore, and to prove it, he gave her to his guards, paying the girl a silver for each man she bedded—and he made Tyrion watch. When the last had finished the savage business, Tywin commanded that Tyrion take her and give her a gold coin because "a Lannister is worth more." The marriage annulled, Tywin hoped this lesson would teach Tyrion something about his proper place and purpose and put an end to these romantic follies.

From that moment on, Tyrion hated his father. Jaime claimed he had, in fact, set up the incident and hired the girl to please Tyrion, but this did little to assuage his guilt and self-loathing. Tyrion despised the girl for breaking his heart, his father for his cruelty, and himself for being fooled.

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Henceforth, Tyrion spent his time educating himself, dabbling with whores to slake his thirst for love, and cloistering himself away in his father's house to flee the memories haunting his nights. He read constantly, learning everything he could about the history of the Seven Kingdoms, the legends of the First Men, tales of the dragons, and every subject ever written on. He also studied people and how they related to each other. Because he lacked the physical charisma of his family, Tyrion had to learn how to manipulate or reason with people in order to get by. Anyone who took Tyrion at face value definitely underestimated him.

Now an adult, Tyrion is something of a hanger-on, a courtier, and, in the eyes of his sister, a fool. He spends some time at Casterly Rock, but he spends far more at King's Landing, where he keeps the company of his brother, the king, and the rest of the court. He's still something of an outcast, but he hides his doubts behind his cutting wit and his sharp retorts.

Personality

Tyrion appears to be a grotesque freak; however, he is by far the most human and empathetic of the Lannisters. He jokingly admits he has a weakness "for cripples and bastards and broken things." What he says in jest is true in this case. Because he knows what it's like to be reviled and outcast from society, he is able to identify and empathize with others easily. He is kind but not weak. Certainly he isn't as physically powerful as Jaime or as beautiful as Cersei, but his determination, compassion, intelligence, and courage make him more than their equals in many regards. That is especially true if he has time to think and talk his way into or out of a situation. Tyrion may not look it, but he is highly charismatic and disarming, and he uses that to his advantage.

Ser Kevan Lannister		Old Fighter
Abilities		
Agility	3	—
Animal Handling	4	Ride 1B
Athletics	4	Strength 1B
Awareness	3	Empathy 2B, Notice 1B
Cunning	3	Memory 1B
Endurance	4	Resilience 1B
Fighting	4	Long Blades 1B
Knowledge	3	Education 1B
Language (Common)	4	—
Status	4	Breeding 1B
Survival	3	—
Warfare	4	—
Will	5	—
Attributes		
Combat Defense	9	Intrigue Defense 10
Health	12	Composure 15
Destiny Points	2	
Benefits: Anointed, Dutiful, Long Blade Fighter I, Sponsor, talented (Awareness, Fighting, Will)		
Drawbacks: Flaw (Agility)		
Excellent Plate and Mail: AR 7, AP –2, Bulk 2		
Excellent Longsword	4D+1+1B	5 damage

And who are you, the proud lord said,
that I must bow so low?
Only a cat of a different coat,
that's all the truth I know.
In a coat of gold or a coat of red,
a lion still has claws,
And mine are long and sharp, my lord,
as long and sharp as yours.
And so he spoke, and so he spoke,
that lord of Castamere,
But now the rains weep o'er his hall,
with no one there to hear.
Yes now the rains weep o'er his hall,
and not a soul to hear.

Tyrion uses these same skills to overcome those who would make him a target for derision or the butt of jokes. It is common for him to be targeted by japes, but Tyrion always laughs along with the joke, and then he uses his wit to make his attacker look like a fool. He uses his disability as his armor. Because he doesn't allow his dwarfism to be a weakness, it isn't. He is wise beyond his years and a bigger man than most of those twice his size.

Appearance

Tyrion is short, with stubby legs that carry him unsteadily. His head is too large for his body, and he has a squashed forehead, jutting brow, and one green eye and one black. His hair is white-blond, and when he occasionally grows a beard, his whiskers are a mixture of blonde and black hairs.

Extended Family

House Lannister is adept at arranging strong marriages and alliances to ensure their best advantage. As well, the Lannisters have a large extended family, with a great array of strong allies and supporters who lend their personal strengths toward the survival of their house.

Ser Kevan Lannister

Kevan Lannister is the younger brother of Tywin Lannister. A portly man in his mid-fifties, he has the Lannister coloring, with a close-cropped yellow beard and receding hairline of blond, shot-through with the first hints of grey. He has always played a subordinate role to Tywin, and it's been said that Kevan never had a thought that Tywin didn't have first. This is not to say Kevan is stupid, he just recognized early on that his older brother was superior to him in almost every way. For his part, Kevan is reliable, loyal, and believes in and loves his brother. Kevan knew Tywin could be hard, but he was only that way because he had to be. He is one of Tywin's most trusted captains. Kevan is married to Dorna of House Swyft. They have four children: Lancel, twin boys Martyn and Willem, and a newborn daughter, Janie.

Other Characters

Aside from Kevan Lannister, Tywin also has a sister, Genna, who's wed to Ser Emmon Frey. His brother Tygett died from the pox, leaving behind a wife, Darlessa of House Marbrand, and one child, Tyrek Lannister. Tywin's younger brother, Gerion, was lost at sea when he sailed to ancient Valyria to recover their family's Valyrian steel greatsword, *Brightroar,* and he left behind a bastard daughter named Joy Hill.

Ser Stefford Lannister, brother to the late Lady Joanna, is not an altogether bright or inspiring cousin, but he counts himself among Tywin's retinue. He has two daughters, Cerenna and Myrielle.

Ser Daven Lannister, Ser Damion Lannister, along with his wife Lady Shiera of Crakehall, and their children Ser Lucion and Lanna,

wed to Antario Jast, are but a few of their cousins and kinsmen who support this ancient house.

Banners of the Westerlands

Like all great houses, the Lannisters enjoy the service of a wide range of noble families, each pledged to support them in times of trouble. If any of these houses harbor resentment toward House Lannister, they are wise to keep it to themselves, for they merely need to look to the ruins of House Reyne and House Tarbeck to remind them of the consequences of treason.

House Algood

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A golden wreath on blue, a gold border

House Algood is a minor house of the westerlands.

House Banefort

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Banefort
Arms	A hooded man, black on grey, within a fiery tressure

House Banefort commands their holdings from their castle, Banefort. Lord Quenten Banefort is the head of this house.

House Bettley

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Three blue beetles on gold

House Bettley is a minor house in the westerlands. One of their more notable members is Ser Jon Bettley, known as Beardless Jon.

House Brax

Ranking	Major
Castle	Hornvale
Arms	A purple unicorn on silver

House Brax has the distinction of being one of the principle houses sworn to the Lannisters. Lord Andros Brax is the current head of the house. His brother, Ser Rupert, resides at Hornvale and is one Andros' greatest knights. Ser Tytos is Andros' eldest son and heir. Ser Robert is the second son, followed by Ser Flement, who is wed to Lady Morya of House Frey. They have three children, Robert—a page at Casterly Rock, Walder, and Jon.

House Broom

Ranking	Landed
Arms	A silver helm crested with a sprig of broom on black and green checks.

Ser Benedict Broom serves the Lannisters at Casterly Rock as their master-at-arms.

House Clegane

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Three black dogs running on a field of yellow

The grandfather of Sandor and Gregor Clegane was the kennelmaster at Casterly Rock until he saved Lord Tytos Lannister from a lion. He lost a leg and three dogs in the encounter, but Tytos gave him lands and a title and took his son as squire. His sigil was created to honor the lost dogs. Ser Gregor is now the head of House Clegane. He is one of the largest men in the Seven Kingdoms and the older brother to Sandor Clegane, who serves Crown Prince Joffrey as his "Hound."

Ser Gregor Clegane

The Mountain That Rides

Ser Gregor Clegane is one of Lord Tywin's most useful servants, and the Mountain that Rides is the man Lord Tywin turns to when he needs to have something questionable taken care of without any conscience and without any chance of failure. His great size, his savagery, and his fearsome reputation make him one of the most feared knights in the Seven Kingdoms.

Unsurprisingly, Gregor's reputation for cruelty started when he was young. Gregor is said to be responsible for Sandor's horrible scars. Gregor, already a man grown, grew angry when he found Sandor playing with one of his discarded toys, so he shoved Sandor's face into a nearby brazier. In addition to scarring his brother, stories say he also killed his father, younger sister, and his first two wives. He rapes and

Ser Gregor Clegane	Adult Fighter

Abilities		
Agility	3	—
Animal Handling	3	—
Athletics	4	Strength 2B
Awareness	3	—
Endurance	6	Resilience 3B
Fighting	4	Long Blades 3B, Spears 2B
Language (Common)	3	—
Persuasion	3	Intimidate 2B
Status	4	—
Will	3	Dedication 2B

Attributes			
Combat Defense	10	Intrigue Defense	9
Health	18	Composure	9
Destiny Points	2		

Benefits: Armor Mastery, Head of House, Long Blade Fighter I, Massive, Weapon Mastery (Greatsword)

Drawbacks: Cruel Insanity, Reviled

Full Plate: AR 11, AP –3, Bulk 2

Greatsword	4D+3B	10 damage	Powerful, Slow, Vicious
Large Shield	4D	2 damage	Bulk 1, Defensive +4
War Lance	4D+1B	7 damage	Bulk 2, Impale, Mounted, Powerful, Slow, Vicious

Sandor Clegane	Adult Fighter

Abilities		
Agility	3	—
Animal Handling	3	Ride 1B
Athletics	4	Strength 1B
Awareness	3	Notice 1B
Cunning	3	—
Endurance	4	Resilience 2B
Fighting	5	Long Blades 2B, Spears 2B
Language (Common)	3	—
Persuasion	3	Intimidate 1B
Status	3	—
Will	3	—

Attributes			
Combat Defense	10	Intrigue Defense	9
Health	14	Composure	9
Destiny Points	1		

Benefits: Fury, Long Blade Fighter I, Long Blade Fighter II, Spear Fighter I, Expertise (Intimidate), Tough

Drawbacks: Furious, Marked

Plate and Mail: AR 7, AP –3, Bulk 3

Bastard Sword	5D+2B	5 damage	Adaptable
Shield	5D	2 damage	Defensive +2, Off-hand +1

murders without a second thought and enjoys that his station has made him immune from repercussions.

Gregor was with House Lannister's forces at the sack of King's Landing at the culmination of Robert's Rebellion, and it's whispered that he was the man who killed the infant Aegon, son of Crown Prince Rhaegar, by dashing his head against the wall. It's also rumored that he then raped and killed Rhaegar's wife, Elia of Dorne, with the boy's blood and brains still on his hands. While this event made Gregor infamous, it also earned him the enmity of House Martell of Dorne.

Gregor's appellation is not ironical—he stands well over seven feet tall and has massive shoulders and arms as thick as tree trunks. He wears heavy plate armor into battle, armor said to be ensorcelled with protective magic. When not at war, he lurks in his lands, committing unspeakable atrocities against his smallfolk. When in war, he's an implacable and deadly enemy, a villain who knows no limits.

Sandor Clegane

The Hound

Sandor Clegane, called the Hound, is a sworn sword of House Lannister. Disdaining knighthood for his brother's crimes, Sandor refuses to sully himself by joining an institution as corrupt and flawed as that of knighthood. Sandor is muscled like a bull, thick and powerful. His face is a horror, however, from burns he suffered when he was a child. The right side of Sandor's face is gaunt, with sharp cheekbones and a

grey eye beneath a heavy brow. He has a large, hooked nose, and thin, dark hair he brushes over to conceal his scars. The left side of his face is a scarred ruin, his ear is missing, and all the flesh around his left eye is a twisted mass of hard, black flesh pocked with craters and oozing fissures. There's even a hint of bone along the jaw where the flesh burned away completely. His agony is the handiwork of his brother, the man he hates more than any other in the world.

When Gregor became lord of this family's keep, Sandor quit his lands and took up with the Lannisters, finding a place as a sworn sword. Since then, he's served loyally and earned the nickname "the Hound" for his family's arms and for his unswerving loyalty. Sandor eventually gained a place in Robert's court as Crown Prince Joffrey's protector, who often calls him his "Dog." Sandor has no love for the boy, but he does what's asked of him. Years after the incident of his burning, he still clings to the hope of one day murdering his brother, and he fully intends to make good on this plan.

Sandor presents a gruff and sinister exterior, but inside he lacks the malice often attributed to him. The burns on his face did more than disfigure him—they burned his soul, leaving him cynical and filled with hatred.

House Crakehall

Ranking	Major
Castle	Crakehall
Arms	A black and white brindled boar on brown
Motto	None so Fierce

The Crakehall's hold rises near the sea, west of the sea road. Lord Sumner Crakehall once ruled the house and took on Jaime Lannister as his squire. Currently, Lord Roland Crakehall rules the house, and he distinguished himself by being part of the Lannister army that sacked King's Landing in the final days of Robert's Rebellion and by being one of the few who witnessed Ser Jaime Lannister's murder of Mad King Aerys.

Roland's heir is Ser Tybolt. In addition, he has two sons, Ser Lyle, called Strongboar, and Ser Merlon, his youngest son. Counted among Lord Roland's knights is his brother, Ser Burton, a knight of some fame but little strategic skill.

The Crakehalls have some ties to House Frey, having had two marriages between the houses.

House Dogget

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Per bend a white unicorn on green, a black raven on white

House Dogget is a minor house in the westerlands.

House Drox

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Three black crossbows, on gold, a black border

House Drox is a minor house in the westerlands.

House Estren

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Wyndhall
Arms	A green saltire between four red double-headed eagles on white

House Estren is a minor house in the westerlands. It is ruled by Lord Regenard Estren.

House Falwell

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A fool in red and gold motley juggling five suns on black

House Falwell is another of the minor houses with holdings in the westerlands.

House Farman

Ranking	Major
Castle	Faircastle
Motto	Three silver ships on blue, a border of crimson and gold

House Farman is one of House Lannister's bannermen and commands the Fair Isle from their keep Faircastle. Lord Sebaston Farman heads the house, and though sworn to Casterly Rock, it is a tenuous relationship held together by their fear of Lord Tywin's wrath. Lord Sebaston's sister, Jeyne, is wed to Ser Gareth Clifton.

House Ferren

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Per saltire, red and gold checks, a silver and black ferret on green

House Ferren is another of the minor houses with holdings in the westerlands.

House Garner

Ranking	Minor
Motto	Three grey owls upon white plates on green

House Garner is another of the minor houses with holdings in the westerlands.

House Greenfield

Ranking	Landed
Castle	Greenfield
Arms	A double tressure white on green

A minor house with the prestige of Ser Preston Greenfield's position in the Kingsguard, House Greenfield is a sworn banner to Casterly Rock. In addition to Ser Preston, House Greenfield also has the service of Ser Garth, a landed knight, and current head of the house.

House Hamell

Ranking	Minor
Arms	An erminois maunch on pink, an erminois border

House Hamell is a minor house in the westerlands.

House Hawthorne

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A ring of black thorns and a ring of pink flowers, interlocked, on green

House Hawthorne is a minor house in the westerlands.

House Hetherspoon

Ranking	Landed
Arms	An oak spoon within a white cartouche on orange and black lozengy

This family of landed knights is led by Ser Tybolt Hetherspoon. His only known child, Melara, drowned in a well while a ward at Casterly Rock.

House Jast

Ranking	Minor
Arms	An inverted pall between three lion's heads, yellow on black

Lord Antario Jast commands this minor house in the westerlands and is married to Lady Lanna, the daughter of Ser Damion Lannister and Shiera Crakehall.

House Kenning

Ranking	Major
Lands	Kayce
Castle	Kayce Castle
Arms	Four sunbursts countercharged on quartered orange and black

House Kenning rules the town of Kayce, neighbors to the holdings of House Prester. The current lord of the house is Terrence Kenning. He employs a household knight named Ser Kennos of Kayce, a chunky man who is short on endurance.

House Lefford

Ranking	Major
Castle	Golden Tooth
Arms	A golden inverted pile on sky blue, a yellow sun in the first

House Lefford's seat is the Golden Tooth, one of the richest gold mines in the westerlands, and it's well positioned to block traffic between the westerlands and the riverlands. Lord Leo Lefford, a sour bird, is the head of the house and a great ally to the Lannisters. He's wed to Lady Alysanne, and he has ties to House Frey through Lady Leonella, likely his sister or daughter.

House Lorch

Ranking	Landed
Arms	A black manticore on white, beneath a crimson chief with three gold coins

Ser Amory Lorch was a knight in Lord Tywin's host when it sacked King's Landing during Robert's Rebellion, and some say he was the one who stabbed to death Princess Rhaenys Targaryen, a girl of only four years. He's an unsavory man of a small house who has made a life for himself doing what no one else would do. In addition to Amory, there's also Ser Lorent, who is presumably Amory's heir.

House Lydden

Ranking	Major
Castle	Deep Den
Arms	A white badger on per pale green and brown

Lord Lewys Lydden is the leader of House Lydden and the Lord of Deep Den. They are considered one of the more powerful families in the westerlands.

House Marbrand

Ranking	Major
Castle	Ashemark
Arms	A burning tree, orange on smoke
Motto	Burning Bright

One of the major houses of the westerlands, the current lord is Damon Marbrand. His son, the copper-haired Ser Addam, is a distinguished knight, excellent swordsman, horseman, and daring commander, and he is one of House Lannister's most valued allies. Lady Darlessa Marbrand is the widow of Ser Tygett Lannister and mother to Tyrek Lannister.

House Moreland

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Per pale barry - russet and green

House Moreland is a minor house of the westerlands led by Lord Robin Moreland.

House Myatt

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A spotted tree cat, yellow and black, on mud brown

House Myatt is a minor house in the westerlands.

House Parren

Ranking	Extinct
Arms	Per saltire - burgundy and white stripes, a black lion's head on gold

A minor house in its day, it has since died out.

House Payne

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Checkered purple and white, within each square a gold coin

House Payne is a minor house in the westerlands, best known for producing Ser Ilyn Payne, who currently serves as the King's Justice. Lord Cedric Payne, a man with few loyalties to his extended family, leads the major branch of the family. In addition, a number of lesser branches struggle to find their places in the world. Podrick Payne is a young squire attached to Lord Tywin's host.

House Peckledon

Ranking	Landed
Arms	Ten mullets, 4-3-2-1, purple on yellow
Motto	Unflinching

House Peckledon is a landed family of knights in the westerlands. Of particular note is the squire, Josmyn, whose talent at battle cannot be understated though he is only fourteen.

House Plumm

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Three purple roundels on gold
Motto	Come Try Me

House Plumm is a minor house in the westerlands. The current head of the house is Lord Philip Plumm. He has three sons including Ser Dennis, Ser Peter, and Ser Harwyn, called Hardstone.

House Prester

Ranking	Major
Castle	Feastfires
Arms	A red ox on ermine
Motto	Tireless

House Prester rules their lands from their castle called Feastfires, perched on the end of a peninsula west of Casterly Rock. The head of the house is Lord Garrison Prester, and he enjoys the support of his talented cousin, Ser Forley, who's known to have a sharp tactical mind. Ser Forley is also heir to Feastfires.

House Reyne

Ranking	Extinct
Castle	Castamere
Arms	A red lion rampant reguardant with a forked tail, armed and langued gold, on silver

During the rule of Tytos Lannister, the Reynes were among the richest and most powerful houses in the westerlands. The Red Lion of Castamere led this house, along the with the Tarbecks of Tarbeck Hall, in rebellion against the Lannisters. Tywin Lannister took up the task of putting down the rebels.

The destruction of House Reyne and the circumstances of their ruin are recounted in the famous song, *The Rains of Castamere.*

House Ruttiger

Ranking	Landed
Arms	An orange bend engrailed on black

House Ruttiger is a family of landed knights in the westerlands, led by Ser Raynard Ruttiger.

House Sarsfield

Ranking	Landed
Castle	Sarsfield
Arms	A green arrow on white bend on green
Motto	True to the Mark

Another house of some strength, the most notable members are Ser Melwyn and his wife, Shierle of House Swyft.

House Serrett

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Silverhill
Arms	A peacock in his pride on cream
Motto	I Have no Rival

House Serrett is a major house with holdings south of the goldroad near one of the river Mander's tributaries.

HOUSE KENNING

HOUSE LEFFORD

HOUSE LYDDEN

HOUSE PRESTER

House Spicer

Ranking	Landed
Arms	Three pepperpots on a saffron bend, upon green and silver stripes

House Spicer comes from common roots. The founder, just two generations back, was a spice merchant who traded in saffron and pepper. His wife was a terrifying crone, who was said to be a priestess and maegi. The Spicers are landed nobility but are not quite lords, yet. The head of the family is Ser Rolph Spicer, a square-built man with a broken nose and a close-cropped grey beard. The family's cousin is Ser Samwell, a knight of little import.

Ser Rolph's sister, Lady Sybell, is wedded to Lord Gawen Westerling.

House Stackspear

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Crossed black spears on checkered silver and gold

House Stackspear is a minor house of the westerlands led by Lord Selmond Stackspear and his two sons, Ser Steffon and Ser Alyn, all ardent supporters of House Lannister.

House Swyft

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Cornfield
Arms	A blue bantam rooster on yellow
Motto	Awake! Awake!

House Swyft is an important house in the westerlands with strong ties to House Lannister. Of the Swyfts, Ser Harys is the best known, but not in a good way. A poor warrior and shameless lickspittle, he is painted as a craven by his enemies and disdained by his allies. This said, he holds his position of power by dint of the fact that he is Ser Kevan Lannister's good-father.

Other members include Ser Harys' daughter, Dorna, wife of Ser Kevan; Ser Steffon, Harys' son and heir; Joanna, another daughter; and Shierle, his youngest daughter, married to Ser Melwyn Sarsfield.

House Tarbeck

Ranking	Extinct
Castle	Tarbeck Hall
Arms	A seven-pointed star, countercharged, on gyronny silver and blue

The Tarbecks of Tarbeck hall had a checkered history even before Tywin Lannister destroyed them. During the Blackfyre Rebellion, it's said they courted both sides to ensure they were not adversely affected at the inevitable conclusion. Since they managed to escape destruction, the Tarbecks were strong following the Rebellion, and with this strength came arrogance, the catalyst for their collapse. The Tarbecks caused endless trouble for House Lannister during the time of Lords Tytos, and they eventually joined the Reynes in rebellion against the Lannisters. Tywin ruthlessly destroyed them and exterminated their lines, and now all that remains of Tarbeck Hall is an empty ruin.

House Turnberry

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Nine strawberries on a white saltire, on green and red vairy in point

House Turnberry is a minor house in the westerlands.

House Vikary

Ranking	Landed
Arms	Quarterly - A red boar's head on white, beneath a gold bend sinister, a silver lion rampant regardant with a forked tail, armed and langued gold, on red

The head of this minor house is Ser Lymond Vikary, a noted knight of some merit.

House Westerling

Ranking	Minor
Castle	The Crag
Arms	Six white seashells on sand
Motto	Honor, Not Honors

Jeyne Westerling was the wife of King Maegor and Queen of the Seven Kingdoms. The Crag, the ancestral seat of this house, sits along the western coast, and in olden days, it was well regarded. As their gold mines were exhausted, they were forced to sell off their best lands to make ends meet. Unfortunately, this has left little for the Westerlings to sustain their keep, and much of it is ruins.

Ser Elys was among the first of Tywin Lannister's knights to breach the Great Hall of the Red Keep during the sack of King's Landing. The greatest testament to their failing fortunes is the unseemly marriage of Lord Gawen to Sybell Spicer, the daughter of a minor house that descends from common tradesmen. They have four children: Ser Raynald, Jeyne, a pretty girl with chestnut curls and a shy smile, Eleyna, and Rollam.

House Yarwyck

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Two bronze halberds crossed between four red diamonds, on white

House Yarwyck is another of the minor houses in the westerlands. They have given up at least one son to the black brothers, as Othell Yarwyck, First Builder of the Night's Watch claims descent from this house.

House Yew

Ranking	Landed
Arms	A golden longbow on white between two crimson flanches

House Yew is a minor house of the westerlands. The head of this house is Ser Manfryd Yew.

Chapter 10: The Reach

The westerlands may be overflowing with gold, King's Landing may house the Iron Throne, and the Iron Islands may boast the largest fleet, but the Reach contains the most fertile lands in all of Westeros—and it is the mostly densely populated region as a result.

The Reach extends from the Blackwater Rush in the north to the Whispering Sound in the south; it is bordered to the east by the Dornish Marches and the kingswood and on the west by the Sunset Sea. The region also includes several islands, including the Shield Islands at the mouth of the Mander, and the Arbor south of the Whispering Sound.

The area is well known throughout Westeros for a number of reasons. The nobles from the region are strict adherents to the chivalric tradition, an attitude fostered by the family who rules over the Reach, House Tyrell. The Arbor is famed both on the continent and across the narrow sea for the excellence of its wines. The Citadel, where the realm's maesters train to earn their chains, can be found within Oldtown, the oldest and one of the largest cities on the continent.

It was in the fields of the Reach, and the walls surrounding Oldtown afterwards, where the reign of House Targaryen truly began.

History

The beginnings of the Reach can be traced back to Garth Gardener, one of the First Men, more commonly known as Garth Greenhand. It is said Garth's crown was fashioned of flowers and vine, and it is whispered he fathered so many children his hand was not the only green thing about him. Indeed, many of the current houses in the region can claim a bloodline back to Garth, including House Tyrell. This bloodlink has led to no small amount of grumbling amongst the houses of the Reach, for some believe the Tyrells were placed above more deserving families with stronger ties to the Gardener Kings. Of course, the houses of the Reach were in no position to make demands when the Tyrells were raised from among them.

When Aegon I led his host into the Reach he met the combined forces of two kings: King Loren Lannister and King Mern Gardener. Although Mern's and Loren's troops outnumbered the Targaryen army by almost five to one, Aegon and his sisters had the power of three

"Sansa, would you like to visit Highgarden? All the autumn flowers are in bloom just now, and there are groves and fountains, shady courtyards, marble colonnades. My lord father always keeps singers at court...and pipers and fiddlers and harpers as well. We have the best horses, and pleasure boats to sail along the Mander."

—Margaery Tyrell

dragons at their command. When the full fury of the three beasts was unleashed, the battlefield was transformed into the legendary Field of Fire, burning out the last of the Gardener line in the process. When Aegon then marched his host to Highgarden, its steward, Harlen Tyrell, surrendered the castle rather than see it and its inhabitants burned. For this, the Tyrells were given dominion over the Reach.

After the submission of Highgarden, Aegon took his host further south to Oldtown, which was still the largest city on the continent at that time. The Hightower who reigned in Oldtown opened the gates of the city on the advice of the High Septon, who perhaps noted the wisdom of the tactic after hearing of Aegon's mercy at Highgarden. Aegon entered the city unopposed and was acknowledged as the rightful King of Westeros by the High Septon, thereby legitimizing his reign. Aegon began numbering the years of his reign from the surrender of Oldtown, a system eventually adopted by the rest of the continent.

The lands and houses of the Reach also played a key part in the War of the Usurper, during which House Tyrell remained loyal to Aerys II. Lord Randyll Tarly, one of Tyrell's prominent bannermen, won an indecisive victory at the Battle of Ashford when he smashed his vanguard into Robert Baratheon's forces before the majority of the Tyrell forces could take the field. While some of the Tyrell host stayed with King Aerys during the rest of the war, most of their forces, led by Mace Tyrell, instead laid siege to Stannis Baratheon at Storm's End, an effort that lasted the majority of the war to negligible effect. Through the timely assistance of the smuggler Davos Seaworth, Stannis was able to outlast the siege, unintentionally ensuring one of the largest loyalist forces would never take the field. Mace Tyrell lifted the siege and surrendered his forces once Eddard Stark came south after the sack of King's Landing.

Far bloodier has been the Reach's history with Dorne and House Martell, with whom they have been feuding for over a thousand years. While outright war is rare, skirmishes between the two lands are frequent, especially around the area of the Dornish Marches. When Daeron I was able to conquer Dorne, he charged a member of House Tyrell with the task of ensuring their continued loyalty. The Tyrell lord moved from one Dornish castle to the next, taking advantage of the various lords and abusing their hospitality until one night he pulled the sash next to his bed to summon a Dornish wench and discovered the canopy had been rigged to spill a hundred scorpions upon his head. He was promptly stung to death and Dorne rose in revolt soon after.

Although the two regions are ostensibly at peace, conflicts do occur sporadically and relations continue to be strained. The most recent incident of note was an injury sustained by Willas Tyrell during a tourney joust against Oberyn Martell that left the heir to Highgarden with a ruined leg and his hopes of becoming a knight forever dashed. The Martells protested the injury was an unfortunate accident, but the Tyrells—with the exception of Willas himself—believe the wounding was intentional.

GEOGRAPHY

Most of the Reach is composed of flat, picturesque land that yields a bountiful harvest; there are the famed vintages that originate from the Arbor, the succulent fruits from the lowlands surrounding the Honeywine River, and the varied palette of flowers that surround Highgarden.

There are two main waterways running through the region, both of which flow toward the western side of the continent. The longer and larger of these rivers is the Mander, which originates not far to the southwest of King's Landing. The Mander traces a mostly southwest passage through the land, making its way past Bitterbridge, Longtable, and Cider Hall. Both the Blueburn and Cockleswent rivers join the Mander as it makes its leisurely way down to Highgarden. Eventually, the waterway runs into the Sunset Sea, past the four Shield Islands used to stop invaders from sailing up its mouth. Also preventing incursions into the heart of the region is the relative depth of the river; traveling any further north than Highgarden is impossible without a flat-bottomed craft.

The Honeywine, by contrast, runs a much shorter route, but is just as responsible for the wealth of sustenance the Reach provides. The two main branches forming the Honeywine begin to the southwest and southeast of Brightwater Keep, and it flows primarily south until it passes Oldtown and, from there, into Whispering Sound.

As with the main waterways of the Reach, two major roads cross the province. The roseroad is the lengthier of the two, running all the way from King's Landing, past Bitterbridge and Highgarden, before terminating at its destination in Oldtown. The other main passage is the sea road, which, true to its name, hugs the coast of the Sunset Sea as it travels south from Crakehall in the westerlands before bending southeast at Old Oak and finding its end at Highgarden.

Significant villages, cities, and other areas of interest within the Reach include the following.

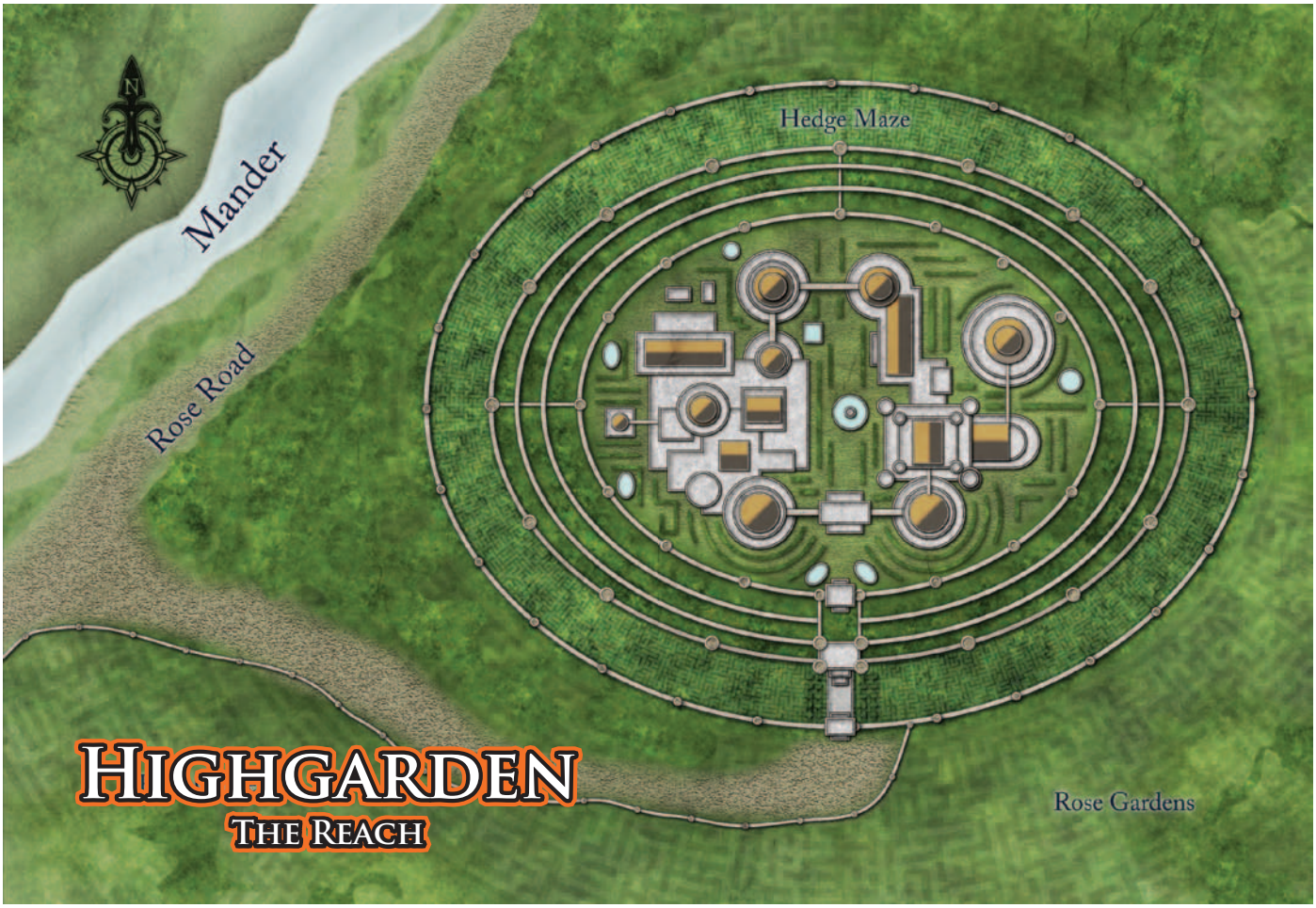
Highgarden

Highgarden Castle is the seat of House Tyrell and the point from which all power in the region radiates. The castle itself presents a striking scene, standing over the Mander and surrounded by fields sprouting the house's signature golden roses. It is an oft-repeated motif, as many of the members of the castle staff have the golden rose sewn onto the right breast of their clothes. The household guard is even more richly ornamented, with gilded halfhelms and cloaks of green edged in gold satin to go along with the blooming rose.

In addition to the abundance of the house flower, Highgarden boasts gardens and courtyards rich with still more blossoms, groves, and flowering trees. Music frequently fills the castle grounds as the Tyrells keep many musicians at court, including fiddlers, harpers, and pipers.

"Soon enough all of the power of the Reach will be marshaled—and then you may learn that some roses have steel thorns."

—Lord Rodrik Harlaw



What is not known about Highgarden is how well it might stand up against a siege, a particular concern given it is accessible both by the Mander and the roseroad. The Tyrells have never had to stage a defense of their seat since the War of the Usurper never drew near the area and the last house to hold dominion over the castle was extinguished far from home. But given the relative difficulty of penetrating that deep into the Reach, it is not a fear that keeps Mace Tyrell awake nights.

The Arbor

Lying off the southeastern corner of the Reach is the Arbor, an island known throughout Westeros—indeed, even in some places across the narrow sea—for the quality of the wine made there. Of these, there are several vintages of note, from dry fruity reds to rich whites—the most famed of the latter is known as Arbor Gold.

The Arbor is the seat of House Redwyne, one of the more powerful families within the Reach. Since water separates them from the rest of the continent, the current Lord of the Arbor, Paxter Redwyne, has ensured there are plenty of ships on hand to transport the labor of their fruits as well as to defend the island should the need arise. The Arbor fleet comprises a significant portion of the Tyrell's sea strength; in fact, the only fleets of comparable size are the royal fleet and the ships of the Iron Islands.

The main harbor for the island, and the point from which the various Arbor vintages are distributed, can be found in the town of Ryamsport. Two of the other towns of note on the island are Vinetown and Starfish Harbor.

There are also other, smaller islands littered throughout the Redwyne Straits separating the Arbor from the rest of the continent. Among these are Bastard's Cradle, Horseshoe Rock, the Isle of Pigs, Mermaid's Palace, and Stonecrab Cay.

Ashford

Ashford is a market town divided into two parts by the Cockleswent River. The town proper is on one side of the river, where it falls under the protection of Ashford Castle. The castle is in the shape of a triangle, built of stout walls topped with crenellations and towers some thirty feet tall at each point.

Across the Cockleswent is Ashford Meadow, which the townspeople use as their commons. The meadow has considerable significance to House Fossoway, for it was there Raymun Fossoway began the Green Apple branch of the family. This was when his cousin Steffon broke his word and fought on the side of Aerion Targaryen against Ser Duncan the Tall in the latter's trial by seven. Raymun chose a green apple for his device as a jibe at Steffon, who had been fond of telling his younger cousin that he was "not quite ripe."

The Targaryens also have cause to remember the Ashford tourney but for far more painful reasons. When Ser Duncan did not have enough knights to serve in his defense, Prince Baelor Breakspear, the eldest son

and heir of King Daeron II, volunteered to be his seventh. Baelor was instrumental in helping Ser Duncan win the trial but took a mortal wound and died immediately thereafter.

Oldtown

Oldtown is, as its name might suggest, the oldest city in Westeros. It was originally built by the First Men and might not have made it to the current age had its leaders chosen to defy the Andal invaders. Instead, the city opened its gates to them—a tactic that would work just as well when Aegon the Conqueror moved south with his dragons. The city was also the largest on the continent prior to Aegon's conquest, but the establishment of the Iron Throne at King's Landing resulted in it surpassing Oldtown in size. Oldtown is constructed entirely of stone, and every street—be it a primary thoroughfare or simply a shaded alley—has been built with cobblestones.

The city is located around the mouth of the Honeywine River where it empties into Whispering Sound. This fact alone is enough to make Oldtown one of the most important places in Westeros, both to the Reach and the continent as a whole. It is Westeros' preferred trading port, with ships from the Summer Isles and the Free Cities weighing anchor there.

Oldtown is a preferred port because of the ease by which ships can navigate into the sounds. The primary reason for this is the Hightower, the tallest structure in all of Westeros. The Hightower is a gigantic lighthouse that rises from the bluffs of Battle Island in the center of the city. The tower rises in a series of setbacks some eight hundred feet up to its beacon, which can be seen for miles in all directions. The rest of Oldtown was constructed around the Hightower, and it is said the city's citizens can tell what time of day it is based on where the building's shadow falls. In addition to its job guiding ships into the harbor, the lighthouse also serves as the seat for House Hightower. The Hightowers had been kings in their own right before bending the knee to the Gardeners. House Hightower rules Oldtown, and so it remains one of the more important houses within the Reach.

The city follows the Honeywine, with the various guildhalls lining the west bank. Further up the river is the Citadel, the center of the maesters, those rare individuals who have chosen a life of service for the greater good of the kingdom. The Citadel lies on both sides of the Honeywine, with numerous stone bridges connecting the two halves. Flanking the main gate are a mated pair of green marble sphinxes, and beyond them is the Scribe's Hearth, where acolytes fulfill most of the mundane tasks required by Oldtowns citizenry. This is as far as most visitors will ever enter into the maesters' realm. The maesters are led by a group of archmaesters known as the Conclave, who make decisions such as which members of their order should be assigned to certain houses or castles, who amongst the acolytes or maesters is ready to be promoted to the next rank, and so forth.

Many of the Citadel's novices and acolytes make a second home of the Quill and Tankard, an inn and brothel situated on a terraced island on the Honeywine. Patrons from every rung of the social ladder visit the Quill and Tankard to quench their thirsts for drink and baser pleasures. The timber structure is some six hundred years old, and though its upper stories now lean somewhat precipitously to the south, it has never closed its doors during that time. Many of the inn's patrons prefer to take their beverages out of doors in any event since there is an abundance of green lawns on which they can take their rest.

Before Aegon's conquest, Oldtown was the spiritual center of the Faith in Westeros, and the Starry Sept served as the seat for High Septons for a thousand years. When Aegon settled in King's Landing, the Faith followed him, and Westeros' primary religion is now governed from the Great Sept of Baelor. Yet, the Starry Sept remains an impressive sight, standing out from the surrounding structures because of the black marble used in its construction. There are a number of other septs in the city, including the Lord's Sept, the Seven Shrines near the Quill and Tankard, and the Sailor's Sept by the harbor. The city recognizes the need of the world's other faiths, and sailors from trading vessels do not have to travel far from their ships in order to find a temple to their gods. Among the temples on the wharf is a modest one to R'hllor, the Lord of Light.

The Shield Islands

The Shield Islands are a group of four islands clustered together at the mouth of the Mander where it empties into the Sunset Sea. The islands are composed of Greenshield, Greyshield, Oakenshield, and Southshield. No one house holds dominion over the isles as a whole; there is usually one prevailing house on each of the four. However, each island is expected to work in concert with the others since they lose much of their value when counted individually, but they are of great worth when banded together.

In truth, the islands themselves are of little importance agriculturally since they do not produce any goods for trade and just enough fish and foodstuffs to keep their residents fed. However, the four Shields are of tremendous worth militarily. For one, any invader who wishes to make war on the Reach from the water would have to attempt to pass by the Shields without attracting attention. This is a difficult proposition since the shores of the Shields are littered with watchtowers that are manned by old men who are constantly on the lookout for enemy forces. This unrelenting vigilance is the result of the ironborn, who view the Reach as the primary target of their longship raids.

At the first sign of a hostile fleet, or even a small number of ironmen longships, the watchers in their towers will light beacon fires, which will result in other fires being lit on every high point and warhorns sounding across the waters. The fisherfolk will drop their nets and take up arms, while their lords and knights spill from their castles. All would converge on the Shields' fleet of longships, which are kept in stone pens along the shoreline and are ready to sail out with only a moment's notice. Invading fleets hoping to penetrate the Mander do so at their peril since the ships of the Shields will not only harass them as they sail but also seal off the river's mouth to ensure any ship that attempts the return journey will sail no farther.

Highgarden counts upon the Shield Islands to supply a major portion of the Reach's sea power in times of war. The only fleet of the Reach to surpass the Shields in size is that of the Redwynes of the Arbor.

Donning the Chain

Smallfolk serve at the pleasure of their lords, knights serve for honor or coin, and all serve the Iron Throne, but maesters, or "knights of the mind" as they are sometimes called, do not serve any one man or woman; they serve the realm itself, and strive to ensure it does not descend into chaos by living with the noble houses in their castles and being constantly available to offer their wisdom.

Maesters gain their knowledge at the Citadel in Oldtown. Any man who wishes to join their ranks is welcome to do so, as there are no requirements of any sort, other than the willingness to undertake the study required and to do so within the confines of the Citadel. However, students are not paid, so in practice study is often limited to the sons of the nobility and wealthy commoners. In order to become a member of the order, novices attend lectures on a variety of subjects given by an archmaester. Once the pupil deems himself sufficiently knowledgeable about a particular area of study, he goes before an archmaester who is an expert on that subject and answers his questions. Should he prove that he possesses significant understanding of that field, he is granted a metal link and promoted to acolyte. While the process may seem simple—study a subject and know enough about it to answer questions—it is much more challenging than that. Typically, novices and acolytes alike will study for up to a year before attempting to get a link, though it is not unheard of for some acolytes acquiring more than one during that span. There is no penalty for failing the questioning other than the knowledge of the failure itself. The shame inflicted can be especially difficult on some students, who may wait years before making another attempt.

Once an acolyte has enough links to be forged into a chain that fits around his neck, he is ready to take the final steps to becoming a maester. One of these steps is a lesson delivered in the form of a vigil: for one night, the acolyte must stay within a vault with only an obsidian candle to hold off the darkness. Complicating matters is the fact that obsidian does not burn, and the edges of obsidian are so sharp that many acolytes who attempt to light them slice their hands in the attempt. The candle is meant to symbolize truth and learning, and the maesters are expected to shine the light of their education upon those who ask it of them but to do so with care, for knowledge can be a perilous tool. The experience is also meant to teach humility, for even with all that they have learned, the acolyte should recognize there are still things that remain unknown.

The last act an acolyte must undertake is to speak the vows that forever tie him to his order. A maester gives up his house name and any claims he might have had to his family's lands or wealth. Furthermore, a maester agrees to serve within the stronghold to which they are appointed until their death. He cannot have children, is sworn to a vow of celibacy, and may never take off his chain once it has been donned.

Some acolytes never earn a maester's chain. The Citadel usually allows these perpetual students to sort themselves out since some leave of their own accord and move on to other pursuits. If a failed acolyte has garnered enough knowledge of the healing arts, he may serve a village as a barber-surgeon. It is possible to be expelled from either the Citadel or the order itself, usually as a result of pursuing prohibited knowledge in such areas such as necromancy or by breaking the maester's vows once they have been made.

Archmaesters of the Citadel

A maester who has demonstrated superior knowledge in one of the Citadel's fields may be granted the rank of archmaester and be given a rod, ring, and mask composed of the metal that represents this subject. These are displayed when the archmaesters grant formal audiences, so an archmaester who has earned the three accoutrements of knowledge will often said to be "sitting below the mask."

In addition to lecturing and testing acolytes, the archmaesters meet in a group known as the Conclave. The Conclave is held in secret, behind closed doors, and is used to make determinations about events affecting the realm. The Conclave determines which of the Citadel's available maesters should be sent to a keep in need of one, who among them will serve as the seneschal for the coming year, when to send the white ravens out to the houses to inform them of a change in season, and when to inform the realm of any impending threat. The Conclave also determines which of the maesters will be elevated to the rank of Grand Maester and sent to King's Landing to give counsel to the Iron Throne. While the archmaesters are supposed to be impartial about these decisions, and to make their choice based on ability and not blood, it is not always the case.

The Citadel's current archmaesters, and the areas of knowledge they have mastered, include all of the following

Archmaester Ebrose

The recipient of the silver ring, rod, and mask. The silver link represents skill in medicine and healing. Appropriately, Ebrose also serves as the Citadel's leading healer.

Archmaester Marwyn

Marwyn earned a ring, rod, and mask crafted of Valyrian steel. Valyrian steel represents knowledge of "the higher mysteries," most often seen as magic. Earning a link in Valyrian steel is extremely rare and only one maester in a hundred possesses one. Marwyn spent eight years furthering his studies in the eastern lands, and was dubbed "Marwyn the Mage" upon his return.

Archmaester Norren

Norren sits beneath the electrum mask.

Archmaester Perestan

Perestan sits beneath the copper mask. The copper link represents expertise in history, so Perestan also serves as the Citadel's historian.

Archmaester Ryam

Yellow gold denotes knowledge in the fields of money and accounts, and Archmaester Ryam sits beneath the gold mask.

Archmaester Theobald

Theobald sits beneath the mask of lead.

Archmaester Vaellyn

Vaellyn sits beneath the bronze mask. The bronze link denotes knowledge in astronomy, so Vaellyn also serves as the Citadel's stargazer. Vaellyn has earned the title of Vinegar Vaellyn, in honor of his acidic personality.

Archmaester Walgrave

Walgrave sits beneath the black iron mask. Black iron is the link for ravenry, so Walgrave is responsible for the welfare of the rookery's denizens. His mind has steadily become enfeebled, so while he retains his title, Maester Gormon often sits beneath the mask on his behalf.

Other Characters

In addition, many other archmaesters reside at the Citadel, including Gallard, Castos, Zarabelo, Benedict, Garizon, Nymos, Cetheres, Willifer, Mollos, Harodon, Guyne, Agrivane, and Ocley.

House Tyrell

Ranking	Great
Lands	The Reach
Castle	Highgarden
Arms	A golden rose on green
Motto	Growing Strong

The Tyrells have held dominion over the Reach since Aegon the Conqueror raised them up from their status of stewards after destroying the Gardener line at the Field of Fire. The Tyrells have proven to be just rulers, and the Reach has continued to prosper under their dominion. Of course, ruling over a region that was prosperous to begin with makes the task that much simpler, as some of the Reach's other houses would likely point out. The current ruling members of House Tyrell have taken their family motto very much to heart. Not satisfied with simply the Reach, the Tyrells hope they can grow stronger by intermarrying into the other major houses.

Lord Mace Tyrell

"My son ought to take the puff fish for his sigil, if truth be told. He could put a crown on it, the way the Baratheons do their stag, mayhap that would make him happy."

—Lady Olenna Tyrell

Mace Tyrell is the head of House Tyrell and the Lord of Highgarden. He serves Robert Baratheon as his Warden of the South and is styled the Defender of the Marches and High Marshall of the Reach.

History

The current Lord of Highgarden is the eldest child and only son of the late Luthor Tyrell, who met his end by riding off a cliff while hawking. Although Mace would like to think himself a cunning field commander, in truth he has very little experience in this capacity. His bannerman Randyll Tarly handled the fighting at the Battle of Ashford during the War of the Usurper. Lord Tyrell's most notable personal battlefield achievement was enjoying sumptuous meals outside the walls of Storm's End while Stannis Baratheon's forces battled starvation.

Personality

Mace is a jovial man with a far better opinion of himself than others who know him. It is widely rumored that Lord Tyrell is merely a figurehead for the more intelligent members of his family. His mother, Lady Olenna, is viewed as a great deal more cunning, and she is surprisingly forthright in her low opinion of her son.

Lord Mace Tyrell	Middle-Aged Schemer	
Abilities		
Agility	3	—
Animal Handling	3	—
Athletics	4	—
Awareness	3	—
Cunning	3	—
Endurance	4	Resilience 1B
Fighting	3	Long Blades 1B
Language (Common)	4	—
Persuasion	4	Bargain 2B
Status	6	Breeding 2B, Stewardship 1B
Survival	4	Hunt 1B
Warfare	4	Command 1B
Will	3	—
Attributes		
Combat Defense	10	Intrigue Defense 12
Health	9	Composure 9
Destiny Points	2	
Benefits: Charismatic (Bargain), Courteous, Head of House		
Drawbacks: Flaw (Endurance)		
Excellent Full Plate: AR 10, AP −5, Bulk 3		
Superior Longsword	3D+1+1B	damage 5

It is also well known that Lord Mace is ambitious. He has designs to tie House Tyrell to the royal line via marriage, most likely to his daughter Margaery, who appears supportive of the idea.

Appearance

It is readily apparent Lord Tyrell has greatly enjoyed the fruits of his land, as his once muscular frame has become overweight. His hair is curly and brown, with flecks of grey in his shovel-pointed beard the most obvious sign of his age. Still, he is not an unattractive man despite his girth, and he has a charisma that has only been accentuated in his children.

Lady Olenna Tyrell

Queen of Thorns

Tyrion was beginning to wonder whether Lord Luthor Tyrell had ridden off that cliff intentionally.

— A Storm of Swords

Lady Olenna Tyrell is the widow of the former Lord of Highgarden, Luthor Tyrell, and mother to Mace Tyrell.

History

Lady Olenna has been unabashedly controlling her own destiny throughout her life. She is originally from House Redwyne, one of the more prominent houses who owe fealty to Highgarden. The Redwynes tried to arrange a marriage between Olenna and a member of House Targaryen, but she soon ended those plans. Instead, she married into House Tyrell and remained a prominent force within her new house after the death of Lord Luthor—much to the chagrin of practically everyone who crosses her path.

Lady Olenna Tyrell	Old Schemer	
Abilities		
Awareness	4	Empathy 2B, Notice 1B
Cunning	5	Logic 1B
Deception	5	Act 2B, Bluff 3B
Knowledge	3	Education 1B
Language (Common)	4	—
Persuasion	4	Bargain 2B, Convince 2B, Incite 1B, Intimidate 1B, Taunt 1B
Status	5	Breeding 2B, Reputation 2B
Will	4	Coordinate 2B, Dedication 2B
Attributes		
Combat Defense	6	Intrigue Defense 14
Health	6	Composure 14
Destiny Points	2	
Benefits: Adept Negotiator, Charismatic (Convince), Compelling, Stubborn, Treacherous		
Drawbacks: Flaw (Agility, Athletics, Fighting)		

Personality

Better known by her nickname the "Queen of Thorns," Lady Olenna rarely shies from stating her opinion, much to the displeasure of the rest of the Tyrells who like to think of themselves as paragons of chivalry. The majority of her plentiful scorn is aimed at her son, whom she refers to as an "oaf" or many similar epithets whenever he is the subject of conversation.

Despite her age, Lady Olenna is still very sharp, and while she refuses to bow to the rules of conversational etiquette, many of her barbs are sheathed in innuendo. This ploy allows her to skate along the edge of impropriety and still claim innocence should one of her comments be interpreted in the "wrong way."

While she may disparage her son almost constantly, the two do share a common trait: advancing House Tyrell. Unlike Lord Mace, to whom subterfuge is a foreign concept, Lady Olenna is willing to use more covert means to achieve her goals.

Appearance

Lady Olenna's appearance is in stark contrast to her fearsome reputation, as she looks every inch an old woman. She is quite small, perhaps the size of a young girl. Her skin is wizened and covered in liver spots, and her hair has long turned completely white. A single look in her eyes, however, reveals she is still in full control of her facilities.

Lady Alerie Tyrell

"Mother," Lady Alerie scolded.
"Hush, Alerie, don't take that tone with me. And don't call me Mother. If I'd given birth to you, I'm sure I'd remember."

—Lady Alerie & Lady Olenna Tyrell

Lady Alerie is a Hightower by birth, the second daughter of Lord Leyton. She is the wife of Lord Mace and mother to their four children.

Personality

Those who are not disposed to like Lord Mace are usually just as critical of his wife, who is ever the soul of courtesy, perhaps overly so. If she holds as much ambition for her children as her husband does, she gives no sign.

Appearance

Lady Alerie is the epitome of a noble wife. She is quite tall and carries herself with a dignified air as befits her station. She has long, silvery hair that she usually wears in a braid held in place with jeweled rings.

Willas Tyrell

"Tell the girl the truth. The poor lad is crippled, and that's the way of it."

—Lady Olenna Tyrell

Willas Tyrell is the eldest son of Lord Mace and the heir to Highgarden. He does not often travel from his family's seat ever since he was crippled in a tourney mishap. Rather than bemoan his fate, Willas seems not to be overly bothered with his body's frailty and spends much of his time in scholarly pursuits.

History

Willas was a squire riding in his very first tourney when his life was changed forever. He was competing against Prince Oberyn Martell of Dorne, who knocked Willas from his horse with a blow to the breastplate. Unfortunately for Highgarden's heir, his foot caught in his stirrup as he fell, and he pulled his horse on top of him, crushing his leg and leaving him a cripple. That he was facing the Red Viper of Dorne has not been lost on his family, who blame Oberyn for the accident despite him sending a maester to tend to Willas's wound. This gesture did precious little to douse the animosity simmering between the two houses. For his part, Willas bears no ill will to Oberyn and has even corresponded with him on occasion.

Personality

Ever since his accident, Willas has occupied himself with scholarly studies and letters. He is regarded as both smart and good-hearted. He prefers to spend his time in solitary fashion, reading his books and conducting research into the breeding of horses.

Appearance

Willas's looks favor his Tyrell blood, though he is much leaner than his father. He keeps his face clean-shaven, his hair short, and the cane he will require for the rest of his life nearby.

Ser Garlan Tyrell

Garlan the Gallant

On the edge of the yard, a lone knight with a pair of golden roses on his shield was holding off three foes. Even as they watched, he caught one of them alongside the head, knocking him senseless. "Is that your brother?" Sansa asked.
"It is, my lady," said Ser Loras, "Garlan often trains against three men, or even four. In battle it is seldom one against one, he says, so he likes to be prepared."

—Sansa Stark & Loras Tyrell

Mace Tyrell's second son is a knight who has lived the majority of his days adhering to the chivalric code, perhaps more than anyone else in his family. He does not share his father's obvious need for advancement, and he is far less showy with his martial prowess than his younger brother Loras. Though he does not see the need to promote his own prowess, he may well be one of the most skilled swordsmen in all of Westeros. Ser Garlan occasionally uses a variation of his house sigil for his personal arms, two golden roses instead of the customary single flower, to signify his position as the second child in his house.

History

Overweight as a child, Ser Garlan was slated to be fit with an unflattering nickname like the one given to his uncle, Garth the Gross. His

Ser Garlan Tyrell		Adult Fighter
Abilities		
Agility	3	Dodge 1B
Animal Handling	3	Ride 1B
Athletics	4	—
Awareness	3	—
Endurance	4	Resilience 1B
Fighting	5	Long Blades 2B, Shields 2B, Spears 2B
Language (Common)	4	—
Persuasion	3	—
Status	4	Breeding 1B
Warfare	3	Strategy 1B
Will	3	—

Attributes			
Combat Defense	10	Intrigue Defense	9
Health	12	Composure	9
Destiny Points	2		

Benefits: Anointed, Armor Mastery, Long Blade Fighter I, Shield Mastery, Sponsor, Tourney Knight

Excellent Plate and Mail: AR 8, AP –3, Bulk 2			
Excellent Longsword	5D+1+2B	5 damage	
Shield	5D+2B	2 damage	Defensive +3

brother Willas decided to bequeath him something a bit more pleasing, though many of the first choices he provided (such as the Galling, the Gargoyle, and the Greensick) were little better. Eventually Garlan selected Gallant, and he has been known by that appellation ever since.

Garlan is married to Lady Leonette, a delicate woman of House Fossoway. He is the first of his father's children to take marriage vows, though the couple has no children at present.

Personality

He may have already possessed the seeds of a chivalrous nature at birth, but Ser Garlan has proven more than equal to his nickname. He is quite mindful of his courtesies and does not hesitate to remind others to hew to theirs, even if it is not necessarily politic to do so. If he has inherited his family's tendency for self-preservation and advancement, he has kept it well hidden.

Appearance

Ser Garlan is twenty-one and handsome, though not as pretty as his brother Loras. He bears some physical resemblance to his younger sibling, with some noticeable differences. He is taller than Loras and broader about the chest and shoulders. And while the Knight of Flowers keeps his face clean-shaven, Garlan has grown a beard, which he keeps as neatly trimmed as the hair on his head.

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Ser Loras Tyrell

The Knight of Flowers

Sansa had never seen anyone so beautiful. His plate was intricately fashioned and enameled as a bouquet of a thousand different flowers, and his snow-white stallion was draped in a blanket of red and white roses. After each victory, Ser Loras would remove his helm and ride slowly around the fence, and finally pluck a single white rose from the blanket and toss it to some fair maiden in the crowd.

— A Game of Thrones

Ser Loras Tyrell may be the last son of Lord Mace and Lady Alerie, but his reputation far outstrips his elder siblings, only partially because of his martial prowess. The Knight of Flowers, as he is usually called, is startlingly handsome, and his boyish good looks accentuated by his stylish attire make him the subject of many a young girl's fantasy. Like his brother Garlan, Loras sometimes displays a variation of the house sigil when at tourney: three golden roses instead of the customary one.

History

Although only sixteen, Ser Loras has already established himself as an accomplished warrior. He has been a knight for only a year, but he has managed to win a number of tournaments and melees despite his rela-

Ser Loras Tyrell		Young Adult Fighter
Abilities		
Agility	3	Quickness 1B
Animal Handling	4	Ride 2B
Athletics	3	—
Awareness	3	—
Endurance	4	—
Fighting	5	Long Blades 1B, Spears 2B
Language (Common)	4	—
Status	4	Breeding 1B, Tournaments 2B

Attributes			
Combat Defense	9	Intrigue Defense	9
Health	12	Composure	6
Destiny Points	2		

Benefits: Attractive, Favored of Small Folk, Spear Fighter I, Spear Fighter II, Tourney Knight, Weapon Mastery (War Lance)

Drawbacks: Naïve

Excellent Full Plate: AR 10, AP –6, Bulk 2

Excellent Longsword	5D+1+1B	4 damage	
War Lance	5D+1B	9 damage	Impale, Mounted, Powerful, Slow, Vicious
Excellent Shield	5D+1	1 damage	Defensive +2

tive youth. Loras fostered at Storm's End and served as a squire to Renly Baratheon, with whom he forged a close friendship that continues to this day, though some whisper the relationship is closer than simple friendship.

For all his prowess, the young knight has never faced combat in a life-or-death situation, and time will determine whether he will bloom in the heat of battle—or if he will wilt.

Personality

As a knight, Ser Loras is bound by the chivalric code, but sometimes his youth causes him to act other than befits his station. He is well aware of his skill in arms, perhaps even immodestly so, and invests much pride both in his ability to not only compete well in tournaments but to look memorable doing so. And even as proficient with arms as he is, he is not above using questionable tactics to gain an advantage in combat. Finally, he is as prone to the impetuousness of youth as much as anyone else his age, and he is liable to make bold promises before thinking on the consequences or to sulk when his wishes are not granted.

While Loras is ambitious, it does not seem to be as consuming as the strain running through the majority of his family. This may be because he has already achieved a great deal, or it may be he places a priority on his fame as a knight ahead of the advancement of his house. Still, he has a warm relationship with both his parents and his siblings, especially his sister Margaery, whom he hopes will marry well.

Appearance

While it is rare for a man to be labeled beautiful, no other description for Ser Loras is accurate. He has inherited the best traits of his Tyrell and Hightower ancestry, including both the raw charisma of his father and the lithe grace of his mother. His hair falls in lazy curls around his hairless face, a brown outline to match the tint of his eyes. Despite his slender frame, he is quite strong—able to couch a lance at full tilt and place it in an opponent's weak spot with tremendous accuracy.

When not in armor, Loras dresses himself in the colors of his house, usually with the golden rose sewn on his breast. When clothed in steel, the Knight of Flowers makes certain that his identity is obvious, decorating his armor with painted flora and his mount with real ones. The practice borders on the ostentatious, but the commons are enamored of the custom, and many a fair maiden dreams of the honor of accepting a rose from the young knight's blanket.

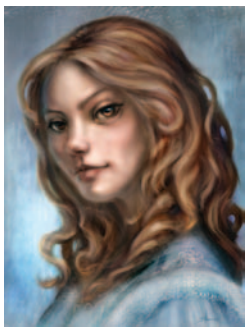
Margaery Tyrell

...[T]he girl no older than Robb, very pretty, with a doe's soft eyes and a mane of curling brown hair that fell about her shoulders in lazy ringlets. Her smile was shy and sweet.

—A Clash of Kings

Lord Mace's youngest child appears to be the culmination of her siblings' best traits: she has the intelligence of her brother Willas, the observance of courtesies from Garlan, and the good looks of Loras. She has also inherited her father's desire for advancement and the Queen of Thorn's cunning—yet her ability to keep her true intentions hidden is completely her own.

History



Despite being only fourteen years of age and having little first-hand knowledge of the world outside the Reach, Margaery has already learned of the power her family holds over the region—and their desire to procure more. Mace Tyrell would desperately love to have one of his children sitting on the Iron Throne, even if they needed to marry into the ruling family to accomplish their goal. With Robert Baratheon sitting the throne, a marriage at present seems unlikely.

Margaery has spent a great deal of time with her shrewd grandmother, Olenna, and has become her protégée. For the time being, she remains at Highgarden learning all she can about the game of thrones, so she will know exactly what moves to make when her time comes.

Personality

Margaery is aware of her family's aspirations and has no objections to using her maidenhead as a bargaining chip for the sake of advancing her family. This makes her both incredibly determined and capable of

extreme personal sacrifice. Like her father's mother, she is more than able to wound with words when she likes, but she is much better able to control her sarcasm than the Queen of Thorns (assuming, of course, that Olenna Tyrell cares at all about such things).

In fact, Margaery is much more subtle about her desires than most of her family. She is a gifted conversationalist and is capable of reading the moods of those she speaks with and putting them at ease. At times, her age betrays her and she lets loose with a too-obvious barb before she can prevent it. But for the most part, her true purposes are inscrutable, which just may make her one of the most dangerous members of her family.

Appearance

Loras and Margaery share a certain similarity in features, especially when smiling. Both are slim and beautiful, though Margaery already has the shapeliness of her sex to accentuate her alluring features. Her hair and eyes are brown, the former coiling down about her face, over her shoulders, and even down almost to her waist when completely unbound.

Margaery Tyrell		Young Adult Schemer
Abilities		
Awareness	4	Empathy 1B
Cunning	4	—
Deception	3	Act 1B, Bluff 1B
Knowledge	3	—
Language (Common)	4	—
Persuasion	5	Charm 2B, Convince 1B, Taunt 1B
Status	4	—
Will	3	—
Attributes		
Combat Defense	8	Intrigue Defense 12
Health	6	Composure 9
Destiny Points	3	
Benefits: Attractive, Charismatic (Charm), Compelling, Favored of Nobles, Favored of Smallfolk		

Sisters of Lord Mace

In addition to his mother, wife, and children, Mace Tyrell's immediate family consists of two younger sisters.

Mina Tyrell

Her mother Olenna married into House Tyrell from the Redwyne family, and Mina has done the precise opposite, marrying Paxter Redwyne, the current Lord of the Arbor. The couple has three children: Hobber, Horas, and Desmera. More details about the Redwynes can be found under their entry in the **Banners of the Reach** on page 189.

Janna Tyrell

Lady Janna is a buxom woman married to Ser Jon Fossoway, a knight of the green-apple Fossoways. The couple do not as of yet have any children, though Janna is almost as fond of her niece Margaery as she is at spreading the latest snippet of gossip.

Uncles to Mace Tyrell & Their Children

Lord Mace has four living uncles and a plethora of first cousins as well as first cousins once and twice removed. Many of them have chosen a different path—the humble life of a maester—than the powerful one that the Lord of Highgarden treads.

Garth Tyrell

The eldest blood member of the Tyrell family is better known by his nickname, Garth the Gross, given his rather hefty personage. Garth acts as the seneschal for Highgarden, making certain the castle is supplied, staffed, and efficiently run. Garth has sired two bastard children, Garse and Garret Flowers. He has acknowledged them, but the identity of their mother is not known.

Ser Moryn Tyrell

Mace's uncle Ser Moryn left Highgarden for the city of Oldtown, where he is currently the Lord Commander of the City Watch. Moryn has two sons, Luthor and Leo.

Luthor Tyrell

Luthor fathered three children with Lady Elyn Norridge: Theodore, Medwick, and Olene. Luthor is now deceased.

Ser Theodore is married to Lady Lia Serry of Southshield Island and is a father to two children, Elinor and Luthor, named for his grandfather. Luthor is training as a squire so that one day he too may become a knight. Elinor is a slender teenager with a sharp wit who is close in age to Margaery, whom she frequently visits at Highgarden. Elinor has already been promised to a young squire, Alyn of House Ambrose.

Unlike his Uncle Leo, Medwick has already earned his chain from the Citadel and is currently serving as a maester.

The youngest of the late Luthor Tyrell's children, Olene, is married to Ser Leo Blackbar of Bandallon. As yet, they have no children.

Leo Tyrell

Ser Moryn's younger son is a novice at the Citadel, where he is in training to become a maester. He has earned the nickname Leo the Lazy for his rather carefree attitude and earning the animosity of almost everyone with whom he comes into contact. Although ostensibly preparing himself for a life of service to the realm without the trappings of his station, Leo is fond of dressing in fine satins bedecked with the rose of his house, so none can forget his family nor the power they hold in the region.

If his manner of dress was not offensive enough to his fellows, Leo also derives pleasure from making obvious displays of his wealth. His acquaintances (as there are none who would actually admit to being his friend) are also continually barraged with Leo's particular brand of conversational wit, which consists primarily of insults both implied and direct. During the frequent times he is not engaged in his studies, Leo is content to spend his money on food and drink, and the better the quality and quantity of both, the better. Were it not for his social standing, chances are good that Lazy Leo might have found himself short several teeth on account of his loose tongue some time ago. Then again, Leo has had martial training and is thought to be quite able to handle himself with both a dagger and a Braavosi blade. It may just be Leo is free with his "compliments" in order to bait someone into testing those abilities with sharp steel.

Leo is in his mid-teens and of average height and weight. He is handsome, in his way, with a pale complexion and ash-blond hair that is constantly falling down across one or the other of his eyes, which are hazel and usually filled with ill intent.

Gormon Tyrell

Like other members of the Tyrell family, Gormon resides in the Citadel within Oldtown. He has already earned the maester's chain and a scholarly reputation. There is even talk he may be elected archmaester when the position again becomes available. Since he is a maester, he will take no wives and father no children, so he will be the last Tyrell on his particular branch of the tree.

Other Tyrell Cousins

As mentioned, many, mny other Tyrell cousins make up the extended household.

Normund Tyrell

Normund is another member of the Tyrell family who decided to dedicate his life to the service of the realm. He now wears the multi-metal chain and is serving as the maester at Blackcrown, the current seat of House Bulwer.

Ser Quentin Tyrell

Ser Quentin was a knight who experienced one battle too many. During the War of the Usurper, Ser Quentin was part of Mace Tyrell's host at the Battle of Ashford, where he subsequently lost his life. He left behind a wife and a child, Ser Olymer.

Ser Olymer is married to Lady Lysa Meadows of the Grassy Vale. They have two boys, Raymund and Rickard, and a daughter named Megga. Megga is a boisterous, overweight girl who has a close relationship with her cousin Margaery. She is eager for her first kiss and spends much of her time with her cousin wondering what it might be like should she ever get a chance to kiss a king.

Ser Victor Tyrell

Ser Victor was a knight during the time when Aerys II still sat the Iron Throne. The famed Smiling Knight of the outlaw band the Kingswood Brotherhood slew him. Victor's son Leo and daughter Victaria survived him.

Leo married Lady Alys Beesbury, and the couple has enjoyed a fruitful relationship. Lady Alys has given birth to two daughters, Alla and Leona, and three sons, Lyonel, Lucas, and Lorent. Alla, usually rather timid, is one of the many Tyrell girls who have a close bond with Margaery. While pretty in her own right, Alla is still overshadowed by her charismatic cousin. She has some skill with the woodharp, as well as a lovely singing voice.

Victor's daughter Victaria married Lord Jon Bulwer and bore him a daughter, Lady Alysanne. Lord Jon came down with a summer fever and later died.

Notable Servants

House Tyrell has several servants of unique talents and qualities.

Arryk & Erryk

Lady Olenna does not travel anywhere without her personal guard, a set of identical twins named Arryk and Erryk. The two are rivaled only by Gregor Clegane in terms of size, as each towers over seven feet tall, all of it muscle. Their similarities are also reflected in their facial features, with muscular jaws, bushy red moustaches, and piercing blue eyes. The Queen of Thorns has long since tired of trying to tell them apart, so she simply addresses them as Left and Right.

Butterbumps

The task of keeping the Tyrells entertained at court falls to their fool and jester Butterbumps. Although people called upon to serve as fools are almost always dwarves, Butterbumps is unusual in being a normal-sized man. However, labeling his size "normal" is something of a misnomer. While he may not be dimunuative in stature, Butterbumps is immensely fat, with a massive belly and a posterior to match. His usual costume is a suit of green and yellow feathers, topped off with a flaccid coxcomb on his head. Butterbump's primary methods of entertainment include the usual slapstick and pratfalls, some sleight-of-hand, and a selection of bawdy songs (including the well-known "The Bear and the Maiden Fair"), which he can sing or bellow either standing upright or on standing on his head.

Other Characters

A few other characters play a part in the household of Highgarden. Training new recruits and family members in the ways of combat is the responsibility of Highgarden's master-at-arms, Ser Vortimer Crane. The man who leads those men, once they have completed training and are assigned to the castle's guard, is Igon Vyrwel, their captain. Finally, the Tyrells are counseled in matters both great and small by Maester Lomys, who also serves as Highgarden's primary healer and a tutor for members of the household.

Banners of the Reach

Since the Reach is one of the most populous places in Westeros, it follows that it is also home to one of the larger collection of noble houses found in the Seven Kingdoms. Like the Tyrells, many of these houses can trace their heritage back to King Garth Greenhand—some of these claims may even be true. These claims are cause for some resentment for a small number of bannermen who believe the Tyrells benefited from their circumstances rather than having a stronger ancestral claim. That the current Lord of Highgarden is blessed with naked ambition has not done much to assuage this perceived injustice. But with the flowers still in bloom and winter a distant concern, grumblings are the only resistance to authority these houses are currently willing to offer.

House Ambrose

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A yellow field covered with red ants
Motto	Never Resting

Lord Arthur Ambrose is married to Lady Alysanne Hightower, one of the many children of Lord Leyton. Their young son, Alyn, has dedicated himself to becoming a knight and is currently working toward that goal by serving as a squire. Lord Arthur has already arranged a suitable marriage for Alyn to Elinor Tyrell, a member of one of the lesser branches of that house. Alyn is quite smitten with Elinor and works hard to earn her favor.

House Appleton

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Appleton
Arms	Quarterly - An apple tree on yellow, a grey gatehouse on white

House Appleton is a minor house of the Reach.

House Ashford

Ranking	Major
Lands	Ashford
Castle	Ashford Castle
Arms	A white sun-and-chevron on an orange field
Motto	Our Sun Shines Bright

Ashford's reputation may be larger than the town itself. It not only hosted the tourney where Baelor Targaryen met his end defending the honor of a hedge knight, but it also served as one of the early battlegrounds in the War of the Usurper—and the site of Robert Baratheon's only defeat during that campaign.

Lord Ashford stands at the ready to further the glory of his house; however, he may have some reservations about using his town in order to achieve it.

House Ball

Ranking	Extinct
Arms	Three white plates upon a chevron red on a white field

House Ball was a minor house of the Reach. House Ball supported Daemon Blackfyre during the Blackfyre Rebellion. Of particular note was a fiery knight known as Fireball. A former master-at-arms for Aegon the Unworthy who was promised a position on the Kingsguard, he grew disillusioned when he was passed over by Aegon's successor, Daeron II, and took up arms against the Targaryen king, becoming one of his worst enemies and leading to the House's downfall.

House Beesbury

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Honeyholt
Arms	Three yellow beehives on a black pale on a black and yellow paly field
Motto	Beware Our Sting

Honeyholt castle is located on the Honeywine River, south of Brightwater Keep, north of Oldtown, and about equidistant from them both.

House Beesbury is relatively minor in status and is headed by Ben Beesbury. The three women of the family have managed to somewhat improve their own lot by marrying well. Alys was wedded to Ser Leo Tyrell, from a lesser branch of that family, and bore him five children. Her sister Beony is married to Ser Raymund Frey, who was a son of Lord Walder Frey's third wife. They too have five children. Their sister Jeyne managed somewhat better—she married Rhaegar Frey, a grand-

son of Lord Walder's first wife, and bore him three children. Still, none of the three sisters has married close enough to an heir of their new houses to lend House Beesbury any additional stature.

House Blackbar

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Bandallon
Arms	A black fess on silver

The seat of House Blackbar is in Bandallon, which overlooks the Sunset Sea on one of the Reach's westernmost points. Ser Leo Blackbar is married to Olene Tyrell, a woman of one of the lesser branches of that house.

House Bridges

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A black stone bridge with three arches upon a golden chief above three blue pallets on white

House Bridges is a minor house of the Reach.

House Bulwer

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Blackcrown
Arms	A bull's skull, bone on blood
Motto	Death Before Disgrace

Blackcrown Castle and Three Towers serve as the watchtowers of Whispering Sound, with Blackcrown located on the northern shore. The current head of House Bulwer is Lady Alysanne, who inherited the seat when her father, Lord Jon, died of a summer fever. Alysanne's mother is Victaria Tyrell, a distant cousin of Lord Mace.

There is also a Jack Bulwer, called Black Jack. He's a member of the Night's Watch.

House Bushy

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A green fess embattled on white

House Bushy is a minor house of the Reach

House Caswell

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Bitterbridge
Arms	A yellow centaur with a longbow on a field of white

The seat of House Caswell, Bitterbridge, sits next to the titular bridge at the point where the roseroad crosses the Mander. It is a relatively modest affair, made of stone and timber and barely tall enough to be called a tower. Its great hall is called that more out of courtesy than as a true measure of its stature.

Lord Caswell is a wispy young man, and while he endeavors to present Bitterbridge as a fine location for knights to perform acts of chivalry, in truth, he is more of a summer noble and not yet prepared for the harsh realities of combat.

House Chester

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Greenshield
Castle	Greenshield Castle
Arms	A green hand on a gold escutcheon on a green field, a border of red rayonne

Lord Moribald Chester is the current Lord of Greenshield, one of the four Shield Islands that guard the mouth of the Mander.

House Cockshaw

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Three feathers, red, white, and gold, on black

House Cockshaw is a minor house in the Reach

House Conklyn

Ranking	Minor

House Conklyn is a minor house of the Reach.

House Cordwayner

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Hammerhal
Arms	Black boots on a field of green and gold diamonds

House Cordwayner is a minor house of the Reach.

House Costayne

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Three Towers
Arms	A silver chalice on black and a black rose on yellow, presented on a quartered field

Three Towers castle is on the south shore of Whispering Sound, comprising one half of the watchtowers guarding that waterway. The current lord is Tommen Costayne, who is the Lord of the Three Towers. The most famous member of the house is Ser Tom Costayne, known as Long Tom, who served as a member of the Kingsguard for sixty years. Unfortunately, few now remember him.

House Crane

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Red Lake
Arms	A flight of golden cranes, in a V shape, on a field of pale blue

Many of the members of the Crane family will be found in other houses. Two of the Cranes have married into House Florent, Melara Crane

HOUSE BLACKBAR

HOUSE BULWER

HOUSE COCKSHAW

HOUSE CUY

to Alester, and Ser Rycherd Crane to Alester's sister Rylene. Ser Parmen serves as the master-at-arms at Highgarden. Other Cranes include Ser Vortimer, and Lady Meredyth, called Merry—a plump, animated woman. She is one of the passel of ladies who occasionally attend Lady Margaery.

Red Lake is the only lake of significant size within the Reach and is situated not far from the forest that surrounds Crakehall in the western portion of the region.

House Cuy

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Sunhouse
Castle	Sunflower Hall
Arms	Six yellow flowers on blue

Sunflower Hall is a keep located within the village of Sunhouse, which is situated at the south end of the Reach next to the Summer Sea. Ser Emmon Cuy is one of the best-known members of this house. Lord Branston Cuy is lord of this house.

House Dunn

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Per pale black and pink, a countercharged two-headed pelican

House Dunn is a minor house of the Reach.

House Durwell

Motto	Minor

House Durwell is a minor house of the Reach, with holdings near those of Osgrey and Webber. They have a dire reputation for being thieves.

House Florent

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Brightwater Keep
Arms	A red fox in a circle of blue flowers on ermine

Of all the houses within the Reach, the Florents are one of the only families that strive to outdo the Tyrells when attempting to better their station through marriage. Of course, the Florents have a bit higher to climb since Mace Tyrell has dominion over the Reach, and Lord Alester Florent's domain doesn't extend far beyond his castle walls. This is none too pleasing to the Florents, whose blood ties to the extinct House Gardener are stronger than the Tyrells, a fact they will recite with little prompting to any who appear interested.

The Florents of Brightwater Keep

Lord Alester Florent is a tall, slender man who is approaching his elder years, which is evident in his silver shade of grey hair. He keeps his beard trimmed to a point, wears a suit of red-gold armor with lapis-colored flowers inlaid within the breastplate, and carries himself with an air of royalty far above his actual standing. He is married to Melara Crane, and the couple has three grown children: Alekyne, Melessa, and Rhea. Melessa is married to Lord Randyll Tarly, and Rhea is the fourth wife of Leyton Hightower. Alekyne, their only son and heir to Brightwater Keep, is as of yet unmarried.

Next in age to Alester is his brother, Ser Axell, a short and muscular man with a broad chest, thick arms, bowed legs, and hair sprouting noticeably from his prominent ears. Axell serves as the castellan for Dragonstone while its lord, Stannis Baratheon, is away at King's Landing serving on his brother's small council. Axell is unmarried and has no children.

After Axell comes Ser Ryam, who served until he perished from a fall from his horse. Ryam was father to three children: a daughter, Selyse, and two sons, Imry and Erren. Selyse is married to Stannis Baratheon, with whom she has started a family. Both Imry and Erren are currently unmarried and childless.

The penultimate Florent of Alester's generation is Colin. Of his three children, his daughter Delena is probably the most notorious of the lot. During the wedding of her cousin Selyse to Stannis Baratheon, King Robert took her maidenhead on his brother's marriage bed and fathered a child. Since she was a maiden at the time of their coupling, Robert chose to acknowledge the bastard, making Edric Storm the only one of Robert's prodigious baseborn progeny to receive the honor. Delena has since married Ser Hosman of House Norcross. Colin's son Omer earned his Oldtown chains and is now serving as the maester for Old Oak. Colin's other son and heir apparent, Merrell, is currently serving as a squire at the Arbor.

Alester's youngest sibling, and only sister, Rylene, is married to Ser Rycherd of the Red Lake Cranes.

The seat of House Florent is Brightwater Keep, which is located in the southern portion of the Reach near the source of the Honeywine River.

House Footly

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Tumbleton
Arms	A field of silver caltrops on black
Motto	Tread Lightly Here

The village of Tumbleton lies very close to both the source of the Mander and the kingswood. House Footly is a minor house in the Reach.

House Fossoway of Cider Hall

Ranking	Major
Castle	Cider Hall
Arms	A red apple on gold
Motto	A Taste of Glory

The elder branch of House Fossoway makes its seat at Cider Hall, a keep located near the junction of the Cockleswent and Mander rivers. They are known throughout the realm as the red-apple Fossoways in order to distinguish them from the younger branch at New Barrel.

Some of the knighted men from the red-apple Fossoways who serve Highgarden include Ser Tanton, Ser Byran, and Ser Edwyd.

House Fossoway of New Barrel

Ranking	Minor
Castle	New Barrel
Arms	A green apple on a field of gold

Although the green-apple Fossoways were founded due to the lack of chivalry shown to Ser Duncan the Tall during the tournament at Ashford Meadow in the reign of King Daeron II, the enmity between the two branches did not last. Their relationship now more resembles a sibling rivalry than a bitter one.

Ser Jon Fossoway is the notable personage of the green-apple branch, an amiable man with a fondness for jests. Ser Jon is wed to Lady Janna Tyrell, sister to Lord Mace. Lady Jeyne Fossoway is married to Ser Gunthor Hightower.

House Gardener

Ranking	Extinct
Lands	The Reach
Castle	Highgarden
Arms	A green hand on white

The Gardeners were a house claiming lineage to the First Men, specifically Garth Greenhand. The last Gardener was King Mern, who perished along with four thousand knights in a conflagration of dragonfire at the Field of Fire during Aegon's Conquest.

House Graceford

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Holyhall
Arms	The Mother's face upon white pale wavy dividing a brown field
Motto	Work Her Will

Lady Alyce Graceford, an elegant woman with pale skin, is a good friend to Margaery Tyrell, which makes her one of the more recognized members of her house.

House Graves

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Green and white gyronny, a double-headed eagle counter-charged, gold beak and talons

House Graves is one of the minor houses of the Reach.

House Grimm

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Greyshield
Castle	Greyshield Castle
Arms	An iron escutcheon with silver studs on a grey-green field strewn with longships proper

Lord Guthor Grimm is the Lord of Greyshield and is charged with guarding the Mander with the lords of the other Shield Islands. Greyshield is one of the four islands north of the mouth of the Mander.

House Fossoway of Cider Hall

House Gardener

House Hastwick

House Hightower

House Hastwyck

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Barry olive and ivory
Motto	None so Dutiful

House Hastwyck is one of the minor houses of the Reach.

House Hewett

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Oakenshield
Castle	Oakenshield Castle
Arms	An oaken escutcheon studded with iron, a field bendy of undulating blue and white

Lord Humfrey Hewett rules over the isle of Oakenshield and is tasked with providing the ships and crews to do their part in watching the Mander's mouth. His castle is small but sturdy, with thick walls built to withstand sieges and oaken doors studded with iron that mimic the house's sigil. Oakenshield sits above the harbor of Lord Hewett's Town.

Lord Humfrey has a number of children with his wife, as well as a bastard daughter, Falia Flowers, who is in her mid-teens. While Falia shows signs of blossoming into a true beauty, she has been treated with naught but contempt by her father. She is made to wait tables for her trueborn half-siblings and is then sent to eat her own meal with the servants.

Another Hewett is Ser Glendon of the Night's Watch, who serves at Eastwatch-by-the-Sea.

House Hightower

Ranking	Major
Lands	Oldtown
Castle	Hightower
Arms	A white tower crowned with flames on smoke grey
Motto	We Light the Way

The Hightower of Oldtown is the central point from which the rest of the city grew, and serves as both a beacon to incoming ships and as the ancestral seat to House Hightower. The family is as old and proud as the building they live in, dating all the way back to the time of the First Men. The Hightowers were kings in their own right, but they eventually chose to bend the knee to the Kings of the Reach rather than battle for supremacy. This is not unusual for the house, as they generally prefer to deal in trade goods instead of cold steel, and pledging fealty to the lords of the Reach has not prevented them from continuing their commerce.

In addition to being instrumental in making Oldtown a center of trade, the Hightowers were also responsible for making the city known for its learning and religious tolerance, for it was due to their initiative that the Citadel was established and the Starry Sept and numerous smaller temples to other faiths were allowed to flourish. Since they are known for eschewing combat, it is little surprise the Hightowers are themselves enamored of both learning and the Faith, though there have been some family members who have dabbled in the knightly arts.

While the size of their dominion has shrunk with the passage of time, the history of Westeros is littered with the names of Hightowers who have left their indelible mark in both good and bad ways. Ser Otto Hightower was once Hand to a Targaryen king; while he was a learned man, he is remembered as one of the worst Hands the realm has ever known. More recently, Ser Gerold Hightower, known as the White Bull, served as the Lord Commander of the Kingsguard for Aerys II. He, along with two of his Sworn Brothers, were sent to the Tower of Joy to defend Lyanna Stark, who had been ensconced there by Prince Rhaegar Targaryen. All three White Swords were slain when Eddard Stark and his companions came to reclaim her.

Lord Leyton is the nephew of the White Bull and the current Lord of the High Tower. His other official titles are Voice of Oldtown, Lord of the Port, Defender of the Citadel, and Beacon of the South. In the city proper, he is more commonly known as the Old Man of Oldtown. He has been married four times, the latest to Lady Rhea, formerly of House Florent. He has not descended from his tower in almost a decade and is rarely seen by anyone outside his own family.

Leyton's heir is Ser Baelor, who has wealth and good looks to accompany his good-natured reputation. Some years ago, he was considered a possible match for Elia Martell, but his bowels betrayed him with a noticeable gastric release. Afterwards, Prince Doran, who was accompanying his sister, took to calling him Baelor Breakwind, and the chemistry between the two was shattered. He is now known as Baelor Brightsmile and is happily married to Rhonda of House Rowan.

With some exceptions, most of Lord Leyton's eleven children have married and are in the process of starting families of their own. Of these, his daughter Alerie has made the most powerful match, as she is now a member of House Tyrell, and her son Willas stands as the heir to Highgarden and the Reach. Leyton's daughter Denyse is married to Ser Desmond Redwyne of the Arbor, Leyla is married to Ser Jon Cupps, and his son Ser Gunthor married Jeyne Fossoway of the green-apple branch. His other children, Malora "the Mad Maid," Ser Garth "Greysteel," and Ser Humfrey are the only children not to be yet married.

The wealth of the house has occasionally worked against them. When Lynesse Hightower, Leyton's eighth child, married Ser Jorah Mormont, the Lord of Bear Island in the North, she expected to maintain the lifestyle to which she had grown accustomed, though her new house was humbly appointed at best. Her husband tried to accommodate her, but he eventually had to resort to selling poachers into slavery in order to pay for her expenses. When he was discovered, he was exiled to Lys. Lynesse followed her husband but was even unhappier in Lys than she had been on Bear Island, and she eventually left Ser Jorah in order to become a concubine for Tregar Ormollen, one of the city's merchant princes.

House Hunt

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A brown deer, bound and slung on a pole, on white

House Hunt is a minor house in the Reach, likely sworn to Horn Hill. Ser Hyle Hunt, a knight of some talent, is a sworn sword of Lord Randyll Tarly. Hyle's cousin, Ser Alyn, also serves the Huntsman.

House Hutcheson

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Two red bendlets on gold, a red hand below pointing to a red sun above

House Hutcheson is a minor house of the Reach.

House Inchfield

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A bend sinister, checked black and white, on pale grey

House Inchfield is a minor house of the Reach. Ser Lucas Inchfield was once a suitor to Brienne of Tarth.

House Kidwell

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Ivy Hall
Arms	Pale green ivy bendy on black masonry

House Kidwell is a minor house that rules their holdings from Ivy Hall in the Reach.

House Leygood

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Three black thunderbolts on orange

House Leygood is a minor house in the Reach.

House Lowther

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A silver dolphin on a blue-green field

House Lowther is a minor house of the Reach.

House Lyberr

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Per bend sinister - a grey cat's face on black, a brown jug on white

House Lyberr is a minor house of the Reach.

House Meadows

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Grassy Vale
Arms	A border of flowers of many colors and varieties on green

Lord Elwood Meadows serves as the second to the castellan of Storm's End, Ser Cortnay Penrose. Lady Lysa Meadows is married to Lord Olymer Tyrell, one of Mace's numerous cousins.

Grassy Vale is located near the source of the Blue Bym River, relatively close to the kingswood.

House Merryweather

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Longtable
Arms	A golden horn of plenty spilling out apples, carrots, plums, onions, leeks, turnips, and fruits of many colors on a white field bordered in gold
Motto	Behold Our Bounty

The current Lord of Longtable, Orton Merryweather, is still trying to rebuild the strength—and wealth—of his house that was lost two generations ago. His grandfather had the misfortune to serve as one of the Hands of Mad King Aerys and was stripped of his lands and exiled for his trouble. When Robert Baratheon gained the throne, he restored House Merryweather's lands, but the damage to the vitality of the family had already been done. The prior Lord of Longtable had died penniless in Myr. Lord Orton met his future wife, Lady Taena, while in exile and brought her back to Westeros when his lands were restored, and she soon bore him a son, Russell.

Of the possible ways to describe Lord Orton, "handsome" is not included on the list. His face is hampered both by a bulbous nose and a blotchy complexion, and his hair is a loud shade of reddish-orange that is not assisted by its unkempt condition. His Myrish wife, on the other hand, more than makes up for her husband's lack of charisma. She has the olive skin of her people, black hair, dark eyes, long legs, full breasts—and the willingness to use them all in order to restore dignity to her new house.

The Merryweathers seat is situated where the Blue Bym and Mander rivers meet.

House Middlebury

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Quarterly, a black saltire on yellow, green and white diamonds

House Middlebury is a noble house of the Reach.

House Mullendore

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Uplands
Arms	Butterflies of orange and black, spread on a field of white

Lord Martyn is the current head of house. Another known Mullendore is Ser Mark. Their seat of Uplands is located within the Dornish Marches in the vicinity of Oldtown.

House Norcross

Ranking	Landed
Arms	A cross embattled, black on white

Ser Hosman is a knight in the service of House Florent and is married to Delena Florent. The couple has two sons: Alester, who is named in honor of Delena's uncle; and Renly, in recognition of the kindness

that Renly Baratheon has done in looking after Delena's other son, Edric Storm, Robert's acknowledged bastard who lives with his uncle at Storm's End. Also serving the family is a knight named Ser Bayard Norcross, though it's not certain about the degree of connection he has to Hosman.

House Norridge

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A flight of flaming arrows rising bendwise on a blue field

House Norridge is a noble house in the Reach. They have ties to House Tyrell through the marriage of Lady Elyn Norridge to Luthor Tyrell.

House Oakheart

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Old Oak
Arms	Three green oak leaves on gold
Motto	Our Roots Go Deep

House Oakheart is one of the noble families that claims descent from Garth Greenhand. Their family is greatly esteemed as their ancestor, Ser Olyvar Oakheart, called the Green Oak, was a Sworn Brother in the Kingsguard of Daeron I and died during the conquest of Dorne at his king's side. Now another member of the house has joined those esteemed ranks. Ser Arys is part of the brotherhood sworn to protect King Robert Baratheon. Although they have placed two sons in the Kingsguard, it is known they did not take sides in the first Blackfyre Rebellion.

Tiny and delicate Lady Arwyn rules Old Oak. She has several sons, the youngest of whom is Ser Arys. Their castle lies on the sea road near the Sunset Sea, closer to the westerlands than Highgarden.

House Oldflowers

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Ten white hands on green, 4-3-2-1, beneath a red bend sinister

House Oldflowers is a minor house of the Reach.

House Orme

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Per fess - three golden harps on black, gold and silver bendy sinister

House Orme is one of the minor houses of the Reach.

House Osgrey

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Standfast
Arms	A lion, checkered green and gold, on white

Once a great and noble house, having held the title of Marshall of the Northmarch for a thousand years, House Osgrey began their decline after the Field of Fire, dwindling and dying out in the Reach. During the reign of Maegor the Cruel, Lord Ormond Osgrey spoke out against Maegor's suppression of the Stars and Swords, only to have his lands and Castle Coldmoat ripped from him and given to the Webbers. The situation only worsened when the Osgreys fought for Daemon Blackfyre. After the war, they lost all of their remaining lands, and Lord Eustace lost all his sons in battle. Eustace was consigned to live out his days in the crumbling tower of Standfast. Teetering on the brink of disaster, the Osgreys were spared annihilation when Eustace Osgrey wed the Red Widow of Webber, thus restoring him to his family's lands and strengthening his house, if for a time.

House Peake

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Three black castles on a field of orange

The current head of House Peake, Lord Titus, is married to Margot Lannister, a cousin to Lord Tywin. House Peake fought for Daemon Blackfyre during the first Blackfyre Rebellion.

House Pommingham

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A red pomegranate on white, a double tressure red

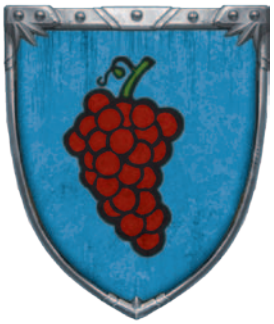
House Pommingham is one of the minor houses of the Reach.

House Lowther

House Norcross

House Oakheart

House Osgrey



HOUSE REDWYNE

HOUSE ROWAN

HOUSE SERRY

HOUSE TARLY

House Redding

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A golden flagon on burgundy, a border of gold and white checks

House Redding is a minor house of the Reach.

House Redwyne

Ranking	Major
Lands	The Arbor
Arms	A burgundy grape cluster on blue

The Redwynes of the Arbor possess some of the most desirable land in the entire realm, due to the rich soil and the crops of grapes that grow there. Both the red wines and the white (in particular a variety known as Arbor gold) of the Arbor are renowned as far away as Qarth. But of far greater importance than these fine vintages are the hundreds of ships at the Redwyne's disposal. This fleet makes the house of vital importance to the Reach.

Paxter Redwyne is the current head of his house and the Lord of the Arbor. He is a thin, stoop-shouldered man who would have long ago been bald but for the clumps of red hair around the sides of his head. He is married to Mina Tyrell, the sister of the Lord of Highgarden. The couple has three children: a set of twin boys named Ser Horas and Ser Hobber, often mocked as Horror and Slobber, and a lone daughter, Desmera.

There are two other Redwyne clusters of note in addition to the one centered on Lord Paxter. Ser Desmond is married to one of the Hightower daughters, Denyse. The two have a son, Denys, who is serving as a squire. Finally, Bethany Redwyne became a Rowan when she married the current Lord of Goldengrove.

Lady Olenna Tyrell, the Queen of Thorns, is a Redwyne by birth.

House Rhysling

Ranking	Extinct
Arms	An oaken door banded with iron, in a grey stone doorway, on black masonry

This minor house died out sometime durng the years since the reign of King Daeron II.

House Risley

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A black knight on a black rearing horse on white, bearing a golden lance and a white shield, upon which is seen the same scene in miniature

House Risley is one of the minor houses of the Reach.

House Rowan

Ranking	Major
Castle	Goldengrove
Arms	A golden tree on silver

Lord Mathis Rowan, a stout man with an elaborate fashion sense, is Lord of Goldengrove. He's known to be sensible and prudent, and most of his peers favor him. He is father to three daughters with his wife Bethany of House Redwyne. Their seat is located in the northern section of the Reach, near the border of the westerlands. The Rowans claim they can trace their lineage to Garth Greenhand, giving them a claim to Highgarden, though, for now, they are content to let the Tyrells rule the Reach.

House Roxton

Ranking	Minor
Castle	The Ring
Arms	A saltire of interlocked golden rings, upon a sky blue field

House Roxton is a minor house of the Reach.

House Serry

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Southshield
Castle	Southshield Castle
Arms	A white rose upon a red escutcheon upon white, a red embattled border

The ruler of the southernmost of the Shield Islands is Lord Osbert Serry. His son, Ser Talbert, is heir to Southshield. Like many of the other houses, Lia Serry has married into the Tyrell family, to Lord Mace's cousin Theodore.

House Shermer

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Smithyton
Castle	Smithyton Castle
Arms	A field of copper nails on blue, a copper border rayonne

House Shermer rules their modest holdings from a castle in Smithyton.

House Sloane

Ranking	Minor
Motto	Per pale, white stars strewn on indigo, an orange sun on yellow

House Sloane is one of the minor houses of the Reach.

House Stackhouse

Ranking	Minor

House Stackhouse is a minor house of the Reach.

House Tarly

Ranking	Major
Castle	Horn Hill
Arms	A striding red huntsman on a field of green
Motto	First in Battle

Some of the houses of the Reach have power, some wealth, and a limited number have both, but only Lord Randyll Tarly has *Heartsbane,* a greatsword forged of Valyrian steel that has been passed down through his family for centuries. Lord Tarly is known throughout the realm not only for his Valyrian steel blade, but also because of his success in wielding it, most notably during the Battle of Ashford during the War of the Usurper. It is because of both his ferocity in battle and his tactical knowledge that Lord Randyll has served in Mace Tyrell's vanguard whenever Highgarden has had cause to call its banners.

Lord Randyll is lean and fit, with a short, wiry beard that almost compensates for his balding pate. He is a hard man who speaks bluntly as a matter of course, is outright disdainful of those he believes below his notice, and is generally intolerant to any viewpoint that does not match his own. Unfortunately, this attitude also holds true for his family—in particular his eldest child.

Horn Hill is located due south of Highgarden, between the roseroad and the Dornish Marches. The strong keep has been the home of the Tarlys for a thousand years. The land in the area is rich and the game plentiful, which probably served as the inspiration for the Tarly's striding huntsman sigil.

Samwell Tarly

Tarly's first son Samwell, born of his wife Melessa of Florent, has proved a failure in his father's eyes in just about every sense imaginable. Instead of learning to handle weapons, Sam preferred books; instead of being physically fit, Sam was overweight; instead of boiled leather, Sam preferred soft fabrics. But perhaps the worst sin Lord Randyll's son committed was being born a craven. This disposition earned Sam his father's lifelong en-

Samwell Tarly	Young Adult Expert	
Abilities		
Agility	1	—
Athletics	1	—
Awareness	3	—
Cunning	3	—
Fighting	1	—
Knowledge	3	Education 1B
Language (Common)	3	—
Status	4	—
Will	1	—

Attributes			
Combat Defense	5	Intrigue Defense	10
Health	3	Composure	3
Destiny Points	7		
Benefits: None			
Drawbacks: Craven, Flaw (Endurance), Inept			
Soft Leather Armor: AR 2, AP –1, Bulk 0			
Longsword	1D	2 damage	

HOUSE VARNER

HOUSE WEBBER

HOUSE WESTBROOK

HOUSE WYTHERS

mity. Lady Melessa bore Randyll three more children, but all of them were daughters, and Lord Tarly would certainly not tolerate a woman as the head of the house. Then Melessa finally gave birth to another son, Dickon, and Sam was free from his father's disgust—for a time. When Sam reached his fifteenth birthday and it was clear that his second son would be everything his first was not, Lord Randyll gave Sam a choice: either take the black and renounce his family name, or suffer an "unfortunate accident" during a hunting excursion on the morrow. Samwell chose the Wall and now makes his preparations to journey to the North.

House Uffering

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Oak and iron paly, beneath a white chief with seven green hands

House Uffering is one of the minor houses of the Reach.

House Varner

Ranking	Major
Arms	A white weasel on ermine

One of the greater houses of the Reach, House Varner is led by Lord Steffon, a man known for his endurance and resolve.

House Vyrwel

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Darkdell
Arms	A silver wyvern within a red double tressure on sable

Igon Vyrwel currently serves as the captain of the guard at Highgarden.

House Webber

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Coldmoat
Arms	A white and red spider on a silver web over black

House Webber gained their titles and lands from Maegor the Cruel, giving them the castle and lands torn from the Osgreys when Lord Osgrey dared speak out against the king. For years, tensions ran hot between the impoverished Osgrey house and the Webbers, but eventually the two lines mingled, and a peace was achieved when Lord Eustace Osgrey wed the Red Widow, Lady Rohanne Webber.

House Westbrook

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Two green bars gemel on gold

House Westbrook is a minor house of the Reach.

House Willum

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Three silver longswords crossed on black beneath a dragon's skeleton on a white chief

House Willum is a minor house of the Reach, under the rule of Lord Willum. He has two sons, Josua and Elyas.

House Woodwright

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A red pall on a field of oak

House Woodwright is a minor house of the Reach.

House Wythers

Ranking	Landed
Arms	A grey squirrel on a white field with a red border.

Ser William Wythers serves as one of the household guards for the Tyrells. A Wythers also serves on the Wall, Ser Ottyn, an elderly ranger.

House Yelshire

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Barry green and gold, a black battering ram with a gold head on a black chief

House Yelshire is a minor house of the Reach.

Chapter 11: The Stormlands

South of the crownlands, east of the Reach, and north of Dorne stretch the verdant forests and windswept shore of the stormlands. Once home to the violent and tempestuous Storm Kings, it is now the demesne of House Baratheon, with all banners sworn to Lord Renly Baratheon at Storm's End. Men of the stormlands trace their lineage back to a king willing to fight the gods, and willful enough to win doing so. It has hillsides dotted with storm-tossed castles, shorelines filled with ship-breaking rock, and forests thick with wild animals. It was the first line of defense against the Dornishmen for centuries of fighting, and its Marcher Lords still settle more arguments with sharp swords than flowery debate. It is a hard land, from which come hard people.

This chapter details the tempestuous history of the stormlands, from the time of the Storm Kings, to their conquest by Orys Baratheon, the ancestor of King Robert Baratheon. It looks at the king's current relations who hold the stormlands and Storm's End for House Baratheon, including Robert's younger brother, and Edric, the king's only acknowledged bastard.

History

King Durran I, also known as Durran Godsgrief, founded the kingdom of the Storm Kings. A legendary figure from the Age of Heroes, King Durran supposedly won the love of Elenei, daughter to the god of the sea and the goddess of the wind. Her divine parents forbade their love, but Durran and Elenei wed despite them. The gods' wrath was terrible to behold, destroying Durran's keep on his wedding night, killing all his family and guests. Enraged, Durran declared war on the gods, who replied by hammering his kingdom with massive storms. Each time King Durran built a castle to face the sea the gods destroyed it.

Fighting the gods was considered folly, and Duran's lords and smallfolk counseled him to build further from the sea. King Durran refused and demanded that larger and more powerful fortifications be built to replace each stronghold lost. Durran's priests begged him to send Elenei back into the sea, to lessen the gods' rage, but Durran refused

The sky was the same, and the sea. The same salt smell was in the air, and the water chuckling against the hull was just as he remembered it. A thousand flickering campfires burned around the castle, as the fires of the Tyrells and Redwynes had sixteen years before.

— A Clash of Kings

and built seven castles, one after another, daring the elements to strike them down. Though six were lost to wave and thundercloud, the seventh stood fast in even the mightiest of storms.

Legends disagree on exactly how Durran discovered the secret of engineering an indestructible fortress. Some claim he recruited the aid of the children of the forest. Others believe he was aided by a young boy wise beyond all builders—the boy who would grow up to become Brandon the Builder. All agree once Durran proved he could raise a castle the gods of sea and wind couldn't bring low, the war was ended. Though massive storms and foul weather remained common throughout the stormlands, none were again as terrible as the early years of Durran's reign. Having overcome the fury of weather itself, King Durran was named the first Storm King, a title carried on for centuries through his family line.

When Aegon the Conqueror set his sights on the stormlands, he left its acquisition to Orys Baratheon, one of his most accomplished generals as well as his bastard half-brother. Argilac the Arrogant, last of the Storm Kings, left the impregnable Storm's End to face Orys' forces in open battle and was defeated. Orys was given control of the stormlands by Aegon and chose to marry Argilac's daughter to legitimize his control of the region. Though retaining the Baratheon name, Orys adopted the sigil and motto of his wife's Storm King ancestry.

The Baratheon family remained close to the conquering Targaryens for several generations, often producing royal bastards (given the surname Storm) and occasionally intermarrying as well. Rhaelle, the daughter of Aegon the Unlikely, married into the Baratheon line, thus giving them a weak link to the Iron Throne. When Robert Baratheon led a successful rebellion against the Mad King, this tenuous claim was held up as legal vindication of Robert's ascension to the throne. He handed Storm's End to his youngest brother, Renly, and Dragonstone to their middle sibling, Stannis.

GEOGRAPHY

The stormlands are located south of King's Landing and the Sea of Dorne, bordered on the west by the lands of the Reach and on the east by the expanse of the narrow sea. It is a land of harsh mountains, verdant forests, stony shores, and the Dornish Marches. The Marches were a regular battleground between the stormlands, the Reach, and Dorne for centuries, changing hands more than once until Dorne became part of the Seven Kingdoms. A few islands, including Tarth and Estermont, are also considered part of the stormlands, though any isles further east are counted as part of the chain of islands known as the Stepstones. Most people of Westeros think primarily of the imposing Storm's End and the dangerous Shipbreaker Bay when they hear of the stormlands, but the area is significantly larger and more varied than one castle.

All the shores from King's Landing to Wyl are rough and unwelcoming, lined with jagged rocks and sharp outcroppings. They are passable in clear weather, but they become deadly during the many incidents of rough winds. A ship can break up on the rocks within sight of a safe harbor or even be smashed while at dock. Ships coming across the narrow sea avoid much of the stormlands' coastlines, though Massey's Hook can serve as a shelter for ships headed to King's Landing. When not churned by squalls, the seas along the stormlands can be amazingly clear and blue. The waters around Tarth are particularly famed for their clear blue color, earning Tarth the name "Sapphire Island."

There are no major cities in the stormlands. This is largely a cultural phenomenon, as many of the regions (the rainwood and kingswood in particular) are certainly fertile enough to support larger populations. However, the long martial traditions of the stormlands discourage the building of large, undefended cities, places that would be easy targets for invaders. A large castle such as Bronzegate is a good example of the settlement development of the stormlands. Several small towns lie within a few days travel, supporting the fortress. In times of war the smallfolk of these smaller settlements can retreat to Bronzegate, finding safety within its walls. Even if a lord lacks room for all his people, a series of small towns make a much more difficult target for an attacker to fully conquer, especially as any assault against one town may result in the castle's forces sallying out to strike at an invader in a different location.

The majority of the stormlands is rough wilderness, even within just a few days travel of "civilization". The people of this land are avid huntsmen as a result. Despite this familiarity with wilderness survival, banditry is no more common here than in any other land; the brigands have fewer places to settle in to escape bad weather, and there are fewer caravans passing through offering fat pickings.

The Dornish Marches are less rough, with no real shores to speak of and few mountains, and the Marches experience fewer storms than lands to their east. However, regular warfare over centuries gives the people of these lands a similar character to their mountain- and forest-dwelling brethren, and they remain less densely populated than many lands further north.

Also within the stormlands lie the ruins of Summerhall, a Targaryen stronghold destroyed by fire in 259 AC, the same night Prince Rhaegar

Targaryen was born. Built near the borders of the stormlands, the Reach, and Dorne, the castle was a major retreat for the Targaryen kings. While the direct heir was titled "Prince of Dragonstone," a younger son could be named "Prince of Summerhall."

Storm's End

The mighty fortress called Storm's End has stood for centuries, facing the terrible weather of Shipbreaker Bay with little wear to show for it. It is the best known of all strongholds in the stormlands, serving as the seat of House Baratheon and before that the royal home of the Storm Kings. Legend claims it was built to withstand the fury of gods, and certainly, no mortal force has ever proven effective. The age of the castle is hinted at by the still-standing weirwood at the center of its godswood, though like all southern godswoods, it is more a place of leisure than of worship in current times.

Spells are rumored to have been worked into the walls of Storm's End, preventing any magic from being used against it. While the nature and even names of these spells are long lost (as with most magic in Westeros), legends say the enchantments will remain in full force for as long as the walls of Storm's End remain intact. These arcane defenses do nothing to prevent evil magic from being worked within the walls, however, nor do they help its lord once he has left the confines of the castle. That said, a lord within the walls of Storm's End has every reason to think himself safe and secure. In the long history of the fortress, stretching back thousands of years, Storm's End has never fallen to siege, taken damage from storm, or been overthrown in battle. An inspection of its construction of the castle makes it easy to see why this is the case.

The Outer Wall

Storm's End is surrounded by a massive outer wall one hundred feet high, composed of inner and outer layers of massive stone blocks and an inner core of sand and smaller, rough-hewn rock. The wall is no less than forty feet thick at any point (making the gate through it into more akin to a tunnel), and it is a massive eighty feet thick on its entire seaward side facing Shipbreaker Bay. This wall is a curved and reinforced masterwork of stonemasonry, smooth and unbroken by arrow slits, secondary gates or towers. Even after centuries of tempests and battles, the outer wall lacks even cracks that the lashing winds of the maritime storms can enter. From within the wall, the thunderous sound of waves breaking on the rocks below Storm's End is barely audible.

The Courtyard

The outer curtain wall surrounds a large courtyard of stone and numerous stairways that allow access to the outer wall. The wall protects this area from the winds and sea spray, and it lessens the fury of storms for those within. Guards must walk the top of the unbroken wall to patrol for nearby enemies, as there is no other vantage point. This can prove a weakness for a an opponent cunning enough to exploit it—on a cold night, the guards hug close to the wall's torches and blind themselves from seeing subtle shapes near the base of the wall or the nearby sea. Unlike most castles, very little of the courtyard area is used for outbuildings, though tourneys and arms practice is often held there. Stables and kitchens are kept within the yard, and open areas are designated for practice and archery.

The Central Tower

All the other functions and storage of the stronghold are kept within its vast cylindrical central tower—the only stone structure within the outer wall. The massive tower is large enough for all the castle's needed barracks, stables, storage, kitchens, lord's residence, feast halls, and smithies. The top of the tower is crested with huge battlements, giving it the appearance of an upraised fist from a distance.

Like many castles, the defenses of Storm's End do not limit themselves to simply keeping foes out. Even within the curtain wall, the vast central tower is riddled with secret passages and easily defensible hallways. The Baratheon family has had little need of these precautions, as the castle has never fallen, so many of the defenses have been forgotten over the generations. Others are known only to a few people raised within Storm's End, discovered during childhood romps through the thick walls.

A Defensible Position

Reaching such a point in a conflict would cost an enemy considerably, however. The lands around Storm's End are alternating fields and large stretches of rocky terrain. If razed, the fields would leave little forage, and the rocky terrain is too rough to use for cover, leaving an attacker exposed to siege weapons mounted on the castle's wall. There are small copses of trees from which lumber can be cut, allowing besieging forces to construct towers and ladders, but the rough land around the base of the castle would make placing such devices while under defensive fire a bloody proposition.

Assault from the sea is even more impractical, as the castle sits one hundred and fifty feet above the waves, and the walls rise sheer from the natural cliffs. The shores are rocky and dangerous for ships in rough weather. A tunnel within the cliff leads to a cavern under Storm's End, large enough for ships to take port within. Because the path is lined with rocks, it can only be traversed at high tide, though even then jagged outcroppings make it a difficult passage. Even this cavern is well protected, as fingers of rock form natural battlements, and torches can be set to allow defenders to see while blinding potential attackers. Murder holes line the roof of the cavern, and a mighty portcullis can cut the cave dock off from the sea. The portcullis slides to the bottom of the seaway and has bars tight enough only water can pass through it.

The Heart of the Stormlands

Because it is considered impregnable, is the home of House Baratheon, and no major cities exist within the stormlands, Storm's End also serves as the cultural center of the region. Tournaments held periodically at the castle are the most important events for local lords, and having children fostered there is considered a great honor. While there is little call for fairs or other refined entertainments, traveling minstrels are not unwelcome, and the lords of Storm's End often hire expert fools to help relieve boredom on long stormy nights. Such pageantry is simple and mean compared to the shows one can find in King's Landing, but it is often valued all the more for the stark environment in which it is performed.

HOUSE BARATHEON OF THE STORMLANDS

RANKING	Great
LANDS	Stormlands
CASTLE	Storm's End
ARMS	A crowned black stag on a golden field
MOTTO	Ours is the Fury

The Baratheons have ruled over the stormlands since Orys Baratheon killed the last Storm King and took his lands, daughter, motto, and titles. While much of the rest of the Seven Kingdoms came to know a time of peace, the stormlands continued to fight against the Dornishmen, both defending their own lands and seeking to take those of Dornish nobles. Though the land has never been a greatly prosperous one, the strong military traditions and fortifications of the stormlands made it difficult for any to take what wealth it did have. As a result, the Baratheons came to be very proud of their newly forged heritage.

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As with any family, the Baratheons vary in temperament, but they have a general tendency toward extremes of emotion and behavior. They are raised to proudly hold what is theirs, from lands to opinions, and defend it. Wrongs are not easily forgotten, friends are valued so long as they prove loyal, and disagreements are often taken seriously even when meant in jest. Those familiar with the family know the signs of the famous Baratheon wrath, but to others, their anger often seems capricious and unpredictable.

LORD RENLY BARATHEON

"Those swords are sworn to Renly. They love my charming young brother, as they once loved Robert... and as they have never loved me."

— STANNIS BARATHEON

Young, handsome, and ambitious, Renly Baratheon is the third son of the Baratheon family and stood to inherit little. However, his good looks, charismatic manner, and the love of his brother catapulted him to become Lord of Storm's End, even though by rights the titles and lands should have fallen to his brother Stannis. His position and stature have only grown, and truly, Renly's star is in ascent. One can only wonder how high it will climb before he falls.

HISTORY

Renly Baratheon was born the youngest of three sturdy, healthy boys. His early life was filled with preparation to serve as a knight and possibly a councilor to either of his brothers but not to rule a great house of his own. Though such things were possible, it was unlikely that a third son would come to inherit Storm's End. Of course, once Robert raised banners against the Mad King, the fate of many young nobles changed.

Just a child during Robert's Rebellion, Renly had little to do beyond voicing his support for his brother's claim to the throne. He spent his childhood clamoring for attention, pretending to be a knight, or the king, or the god of storms. While Robert fought on the Trident and Stannis held Storm's End from siege by the forces of Lord Mace Tyrell, Renly was kept safe and secure to ensure he was not taken hostage. Though not involved in the fighting, Renly never forgot the power of the Tyrell house and concluded the Reach was one key to taking and keeping King's Landing.

Though Storm's End rightfully belonged to Stannis Baratheon once Robert became king, Robert sent Stannis to take Dragonstone, which was still loyal to the Targaryens at that point. Once he finished the difficult task of taking the stronghold, Stannis was displeased to discover the King Robert had named him Lord of Dragonstone. Robert needed a strong ruler to control what had been a holdout of the Mad King's loyalists, and Stannis was much more suited for this role than Renly was. This meant Renly came to be Lord of Storm's End without having done anything of true note during the war. This has driven a wedge between Renly and Stannis, a rift in their relationship which has yet to be mended.

In addition to being made Lord of Storm's End, Renly was appointed to the king's small council, serving as Robert's master of laws.

Using this position and his control of the stormlands, Renly forged a political alliance with Ser Loras Tyrell, youngest son of the lord who besieged Storm's End during the Rebellion. Concerned about the growing power of the Lannisters, and seeing Robert's cold and stormy marriage to Queen Cersei, Renly is scheming to replace Cersei with Margaery Tyrell as the king's wife. Such a union would combine the power of the Reach and the stormlands to support and secure King's Landing for all time, and pry off the grasping fingers of the Lannisters.

Personality

Renly has managed to combine King Robert's easy likability with a willingness to do the work of rulership and play the game of thrones. He is renowned for being well dressed and having a strong sense of fashion and pageantry. Many of his more somber peers, including his brother Stannis, feel he lacks a level of seriousness appropriate to a high lord, but those taken into his confidences are quickly won over. His lack of martial accomplishments and colorful style make him an easy target for insults that suggest he is unmanly, but such mocking has never been taken up by the smallfolk.

Renly enjoys tournaments and hunting but isn't driven by the passion for food, drink, or wenching, as Robert came to be. Renly is too headstrong and too willing to see things only from his point of view, but he might mature with age if given a chance. His love of spectacles and his desire to be the center of attention colors his life. Furthermore, his easy inheritance of Storm's End prevented him from learning great gains usually have great costs.

Appearance

Lord Renly is as tall as his eldest brother, though not so stoutly built. He always appears amused, with an easy laugh and bright eyes that seem to change color from green to blue depending on his mood (and the lighting). He keeps his body trim and his thick, jet-black hair long but always neatly combed. He prefers to be clean-shaven.

Lord Renly Baratheon		Adult Schemer
Abilities		
Animal Handling	3	Ride 1B
Athletics	3	—
Awareness	4	Notice 2B
Cunning	3	—
Deception	4	Act 2B, Bluff 1B
Endurance	3	—
Fighting	3	—
Language (Common)	4	—
Persuasion	5	Bargain 1B, Charm 2B, Convince 1B, Incite 2B, Taunt 2B
Status	5	Breeding 1B, Reputation 2B
Survival	3	Hunt 1B
Will	3	—
Attributes		
Combat Defense	9	Intrigue Defense 12
Health	9	Composure 9
Destiny Points	1	
Benefits: Adept Negotiator, Attractive, Charismatic (Convince), Compelling, Head of House, Magnetic		
Superior Full Plate: AR 10, AP –5, Bulk 2		
Longsword	3D	4 damage
Shield	3D	1 damage Defensive +2

Edric Storm

"I am Edric Storm, King Robert's son."

—Edric Storm

The only acknowledged bastard of King Robert, Edric Storm is the spitting image of his father and idolizes the man who shows him only a passing interest.

History

Edric Storm is far from King Robert's only bastard, but he is the only child the King has claimed as his offspring born out of wedlock. This is likely because Edric's mother, Delena Florent, was nobly born. Popular rumor claims Edric was conceived on the night of Stannis's wedding to Selyse Florent, and it occurred on Stannis's wedding bed.

Edric was raised at Storm's End by the castle's castellan, Ser Cortnay Penrose. King Robert visited Edric every year, though never for long. He would play war with the boy and train with him once he was old enough. Robert saw much of himself in Edric, and having acknowledged him, was able to appease some of his dislike of the limitations of rule by sending Edric gifts and imagining the boy was his trueborn heir. Not a complete fool, however, Robert never brought Edric to King's Landing, nor ever hinted the boy might someday rule.

Personality

Edric is a confident, friendly youth with a strong sense of right and wrong. He has the boldness of his father's line, as well as his love of all things martial. Despite his age, he is outspoken and sure of himself, qualities that might mature into either confidence or arrogance. Only time and experience will tell.

Appearance

Edric takes after his father, with a broad frame, rapidly increasing stature, and coal black hair. He has remarkably large ears, a sign of his Florent blood.

Notable Servants

Renly has the support of loyal servants who served the house long before he gained the seat of Storm's End.

Ser Cortnay Penrose

Castellan of Storm's End

"The castle is strongly garrisoned and well provisioned, Ser Cortnay Penrose is a seasoned commander, and the trebuchet has not been built that could breach the walls of Storm's End. Let Lord Stannis have his siege."

—Lord Mathis Rowan

As master of laws in the king's small council, Lord Renly Baratheon is rarely at Storm's End and entrusts its day-to-day operations to his castellan, Ser Cortnay Penrose.

History

Son of Lord Penrose of Parchments, Ser Cortnay was fostered at Storm's End and, thus, watched Renly Baratheon grow up. Cortnay was older than Renly and took some part in Robert's Rebellion. In time, he became Renly's friend and was trusted and respected by Renly and Robert both. When Renly was given Storm's End, Ser Cortnay became Renly's chief aid in running the castle, and when the lord was called away, Ser Cortnay was chosen as castellan. In addition to his duties, Ser Cortnay was also entrusted with the protection of Edric Storm.

Personality

Ser Cortnay is a man of great honor, taking his duty to his lord and those under his protection very seriously. He is steady and hard to anger, never giving insult when it is not required. He is also cunning, willing to use harsh language or subterfuge to gain his ends, if doing so is not dishonorable.

Appearance

Ser Cortnay is a bald man reaching the end of his prime, though still muscled enough to be a respected and able combatant. He has a short, pointed beard of thick reddish-brown hair.

Banners of the Stormlands

More houses in the stormlands have a high degree of military tradition than do many other regions of Westeros, owning largely to years of fighting with Dornishmen in antiquity, and conflicts with bandits in the wild forests, plains, and mountains even to the modern era. The houses also sometimes come into conflict with one another, a tradition the Baratheons have allowed as long as such conflicts never break into open warfare or threaten the security of the stormlands.

Of course, minor skirmishes with brigands are not the same as war. Many young men of the stormlands welcome opportunities to earn glory and fame in war, but few understand the true cost of such conflict. They are prepared for the planning and execution of single battles, but not the grind of years-long sieges, the horror of ravaged lands, or the emotional impact of marching from one bloody battle to the next, with no victory feasts or comfortable soft beds to prepare them for their next conquest. Many have the personal steel of character to adjust to the hardships of true war, but some will crack in the tempering of such long-term strife.

House Bolling

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Vairy orange and blue, upon a black canton, a golden stag beneath an orange bend sinister

House Bolling is a minor house of the stormlands. Their arms suggest illegitimate descent from a Baratheon sire.

House Buckler

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Bronzegate
Arms	Three brass buckles on blue

Lord Buckler rules Bronzegate, a castle on the kingsroad northwest of Storm's End.

House Cafferen

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Fawnton
Arms	Two white fawns counter salient on green

When Robert Baratheon called his banners to war during his rebellion, Lord Cafferen refused to join the Usurper. He remained loyal to King Aerys and worked to capture Robert and deliver him to the Mad King. Lord Cafferen marched to Summerhall to join forces with Lord Grandison and Lord Fell. Robert raced there ahead of them and defeated each in turn as they arrived. He captured Lord Cafferen and Lord Grandison and returned them to Storm's End. Stannis advised Robert to throw them into the dungeons, but Robert managed to befriend them. Lord Cafferen later died at Ashford Castle, killed by Randyll Tarly while fighting for Robert. It's said his head was sent to King Aerys.

House Caron

Ranking	Major
Castle	Nightsong
Arms	A field of black nightingales on yellow
Motto	No Song So Sweet

House Caron is an old and powerful family ruling from their hereditary seat of Nightsong, a castle located in the center of the Dornish Marches,

HOUSE BUCKLER

HOUSE CARON

HOUSE DONDARRION

HOUSE ESTERMONT

north of the Prince's Pass. The Lord of Nightsong is also titled Lord of the Marches and is given the defense of the Marches against Dornish invasion, though the position is less critical since Dorne joined the Seven Kingdoms. Nightsong is the westernmost castle of the stormlands, making it a natural target for any attack coming from Dorne or the Reach.

The current lord of Nightsong is Bryce Caron, who gained the house when his father, mother, and all his sisters succumbed to a terrible chill. Bryce is a great friend of Renly Baratheon and is one of his most loyal allies.

Lord Bryce has a half-brother by his father, Ser Rolland Storm, the Bastard of Nightsong. An extremely devout follower of the Warrior, he breaks with his brother in terms of his loyalties, seeing the true lord of Storm's End in Stannis Baratheon.

House Connington

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Griffin's Roost
Arms	Two griffins combatant countercharged on red and white

House Connington was at one time a wealthy and powerful noble house of the stormlands, seated in Griffin's Roost. They had close ties to the Targaryen royal line, including many prestigious appointments over the centuries, such as Hand of the King or Lord Commander of the Kingsguard. Lord Jon Connington was a noted warrior and a close friend of Prince Rhaegar, being approximately of an age with him. During Robert's Rebellion, Lord Jon was named the King's Hand when the previous Hand was unable to defeat the rebels. When Lord Jon suffered a major defeat at Stoney Sept he was stripped of his lands and titles and sent into exile in the Free Cities (where he is believed to have died).

In response to this measure, the remaining Conningtons swore their service to Robert and fought with him to overthrow the Mad King. When Robert was crowned, he returned Griffin's Roost to the family to reward their service to him, but he did not restore their noble title. Much of the family's lands and rights were given to others who had served more faithfully (or joined earlier) in the rebellion. As a result, the remaining Conningtons feel no great loyalty to either the lost Targaryen line or the Baratheons.

The family is so diminished they are little more than landed knights. The Knight of Griffin's Roost is Lord Ronnet Connington, called Red Ronnet.

House Dondarrion

Ranking	Major
Castle	Blackhaven
Arms	Forked purple lightning on a black field speckled with four-pointed stars

House Dondarrion was established by one of the Storm Kings as a reward to a vassal. The first Lord Dondarrion carried a warning of a Dornish invasion to the Storm King during a stormy night. Two Dornish warriors attacked him, and he fell from his horse and broke his sword. He believed himself to be doomed, but then a forked bolt of purple lightning killed the two Dornishmen. Dondarrion was able to bring word of the invading army and enabled the Storm King to win a great victory. The bolt has been the sigil of the house since the day the Storm King ennobled the first of the line.

The seat of House Dondarrion is Blackhaven, a forbidding mountain fortress located to control the middle of the Boneway Pass through the Red Mountains. It also covers the mountains from any invasion from the Marches. As brigands and criminals often try to hide in the Red Mountains, there is a long history of the lords of Dondarrion riding out to track down the more notable and dangerous of these outlaws. Even when the rest of the stormlands are enjoying relative peace, there is likely to be fighting of this type for the men of the Dondarrion line.

The current lord of Blackhaven is Beric Dondarrion, an able warrior and trusted agent of the king and the law. Lord Beric is married to Lady Allyria of House Dayne, though they have no children.

House Errol

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Haystack Hall
Arms	A yellow haystack on orange

House Errol is a minor house of the stormlands. Lady Shyra Errol commands her household from Haystack Hall.

House Estermont

Ranking	Major
Castle	Greenstone
Arms	A dark green sea turtle on sea green

House Estermont is seated in Greenstone, a small castle on the isle of Estermont. There are close family ties between them and House Baratheon. Cassana Estermont was taken as wife by Steffon Baratheon, and was mother to Robert, Stannis, and Renly. The Baratheon children often spent time at Greenstone and played with the children there (and learned more adult games, when Robert returned there after becoming king).

Cassana's ancient brother, Eldon Estermont, remains Lord of Greenstone. Stannis counts Ser Lomas Estermont and his son Ser Andrew as part of his entourage at Dragonstone and King's Landing. Before becoming a knight, Andrew served Stannis as his squire. Other members of the family include Ser Aemon, cousin to Eldron, and Aemon's son, Ser Alyn.

House Fell

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Felwood
Arms	Per fess, a white crescent moon in the first on black above a green field, a spruce tree line between

House Fell was one of the houses that broke with Storm's End during Robert's Rebellion. Lord Fell, on orders from the Iron Throne, traveled to Summerhall to muster his forces to besiege Storm's End. But when he arrived, he found Robert waiting. Fell was slain in single combat with Robert. His son, called Silveraxe, was taken prisoner and was eventually won over by the brash lord. House Fell has been a close ally to the Baratheons ever since. The current head of the house is Lord Harwood Fell, who has close ties to Stannis.

House Gower

Ranking	Landed
Arms	Nine yellow trefoils on a black cross on ermine

Ser Gerald Gower is a landed knight with loyalties to Stannis Baratheon. He's a broad, bluff man with blond hair, and is said to be a skilled warrior.

House Grandison

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Grandview
Arms	A black lion sleeping on a yellow field
Motto	Rouse Me Not

House Grandison is an old but minor house of the stormlands, with their singular distinction of having one of their own, Ser Harlan Grandison, serving on the Kingsguard. In fact, it was this knight whom Jaime Lannister replaced after he died in his sleep.

In the early part of Robert's Rebellion, Lord Grandison joined the lords Fell and Cafferen's plot to besiege Storm's End and defeat Robert. But Robert was waiting at Summerhall and defeated Lord Grandison when he arrived. Lord Grandison was captured and then quickly won over by the charismatic warrior. Lord Grandison fought for Robert but died a year after he took a wound at the Trident.

House Hasty

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A white bend cottised on purple

House Hasty is a minor house in the stormlands. They are best known for Ser Bonifer Hasty, called Bonifer the Good for his piety. Ser Bonifer leads the Holy Hundred, a well-trained and handsome cavalry.

House Herston

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A yellow rooster's head with red comb, within a white escutcheon, on red

House Herston is a minor house of the stormlands.

House Horpe

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Per chevron engrailed grey and bone, three deaths head moths countercharged

House Horpe is a minor house in the stormlands. Ser Richard Horpe is a sworn sword to Stannis Baratheon.

House Kellington

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A black book bound in bronze, locked, upon a pale blue field

House Kellington is a minor house of the stormlands.

HOUSE GOWER

HOUSE HASTY

HOUSE MORRIGAN

HOUSE PENROSE

House Lonmouth

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Quartered of six - red lips strewn on yellow, yellow skulls strewn on black
Motto	The Choice is Yours

House Lonmouth is a minor house, remembered for Ser Richard Lonmouth, who was squire and ally to Prince Rhaegar Targaryen. His fate during the war and after is unknown.

House Mertyn

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Mistwood
Arms	A white great horned owl on grey

House Mertyn is a minor house of the stormlands, with holdings on Cape Wrath.

House Morrigen

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Crow's Nest
Arms	A black crow in flight on storm-green

House Morrigen is seated in Crow's Nest, located in the mountains west of the rainwood. It serves to guard the route between the Marches and the rest of the stormlands. The House has a long and noble history of service to the Baratheons, and the Storm Kings before them. Lord Lester Morrigen is nominally sworn to Storm's End, though he entertains old loyalties to Stannis Baratheon. In addition, Ser Guyard Morrigen is a famous southron knight and faithful ally to Lord Renly.

House Musgood

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Quarterly - A golden pavilion on blue, a green laurel crown on white

House Musgood is a minor house of the stormlands.

House Peasebury

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Poddingfield
Arms	A pea pod burst open, green on white, bordered by three rows of green peas

House Peasebury is a minor house of the stormlands.

House Penrose

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Parchments
Arms	White crossed quills on russet
Motto	Set Down Our Deeds

House Penrose has a long history of close ties to Storm's End and has proven to be a constant supporter of the Baratheons. In fact, Ser Cortnay was fostered at Storm's End (see **Ser Cortnay Penrose** on page 204). The current lord is known as Old Penrose, and he's a courteous though sickly and failing man.

House Rogers

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Amberly
Arms	Nine unicorns around a maze, silver on black

House Rogers is a minor house of the stormlands.

House Seaworth

Ranking	Landed
Lands	Cape Wrath
Arms	A black ship, an onion proper on its sail, on pale grey

House Seaworth is a young house, founded shortly after the siege of Storm's End was survived in large part by the smuggler Davos' heroic effort. Since he was raised up as a knight, Ser Davos has become one of Stannis's most constant and loyal supporters, and it's to him Stannis turns when in need of advice.

Ser Davos Seaworth

The Onion Knight

Davos Seaworth is as unlikely a knight as they come. A man of low birth, born in wretched Flea Bottom of King's Landing, Davos' life was one of hardship and want. He eventually found service on the *Cobblecat* under the command of the Blind Bastard, a Tyroshi smuggler and pirate whose real name was Ror Uhoris. During his time as part of the crew Davos sailed the waters all around Westeros until his master lost his head after selling weapons and armor to the wildlings.

After his time with the *Cobblecat*, Davos made his own way and secured his own ship, the *Black Betha*. He became one of the most famous smugglers to sail the narrow sea, likely coming into conflict with Stannis Baratheon time and again. During the War of the Usurper, Davos took it upon himself to smuggle onions and other foodstuffs into Storm's End during the Redwyne and Tyrell siege of the castle. It wasn't much, but it was enough to allow Stannis and his men to survive until Eddard Stark arrived to break the siege.

For Davos' invaluable service, Stannis rewarded the smuggler with choice lands on Cape Wrath, a small keep, and the title of knight. However, Stannis insisted Davos pay for his years of law breaking, which meant losing the first joint of each finger on his left hand. Davos consented on the condition that Stannis wield the knife himself. Davos named himself Seaworth and he has served as a true servant of Lord Stannis ever since.

Ser Davos Seaworth	Middle-Aged Expert	
Abilities		
Agility	3	—
Athletics	4	Swim 2B
Awareness	5	Empathy 2B, Notice 1B
Cunning	4	—
Deception	3	Bluff 2B
Endurance	4	—
Fighting	3	—
Persuasion	3	Convince 2B
Status	3	—
Stealth	4	Sneak 2B
Survival	3	Orientation 1B
Will	4	Dedication 2B
Attributes		
Combat Defense	12	Intrigue Defense 12
Health	12	Composure 12
Destiny Points	2	
Benefits: Expertise (Convince), Danger Sense, Landed, Sponsor, Trade (Smuggler)		
Drawbacks: Flaw (Agility), Ignoble		
Mail: AR 5, AP –3, Bulk 2		
Longsword	3D	5 damage

Davos is married to a woman named Marya, the daughter of a carpenter who attends their small keep on Cape Wrath. She's given Davos seven children: Dale, captain of the *Wraith,* Allard, captain of the *Lady Marya,* Maric, oarmaster of the *Fury,* Matthos, Davos' second on the *Black Betha,* Devan, who is squire to Lord Stannis, and Stannis and Steffon, young boys both at Cape Wrath.

House Selmy

Ranking	Landed
Castle	Harvest Hall
Arms	Three stalks of yellow wheat on brown

House Selmy is seated in Harvest Hall, a minor castle located on the eastern edge of the Reach. Harvest Hall is surrounded by arable land, and it produces significantly more crops than most strongholds in the stormlands. It is otherwise unremarkable, though certainly a sturdy fortress.

The best-known member of this house is Ser Barristan Selmy the Bold, Lord Commander of the Kingsguard. For more information on this storied knight, see **Lord Commander of the Kingsguard, Ser Barristan Selmy** on page 51.

House Staedmon

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Broad Arch
Arms	A black dagger piercing a red heart on white de sang within an undulating border

Lord Alesander Staedmon, called Pennylover, rules this minor house of the stormlands.

House Swann

Ranking	Major
Castle	Stonehelm
Arms	Battling swans black and white, with beaks and feet of gold, on per pale white and black

Next to House Baratheon, House Swann is probably the most powerful and influential family in the stormlands. They rule from Stonehelm, a castle situated on Cape Wrath and built to oversee a major river route inland to the stormlands, and have governed these lands for as long as any can remember. Their wealth and power makes even the Baratheons consider a situation carefully before angering the Swann family.

The head of the house is Lord Gulian Swann, a man in his later years of life. Having survived one rebellion, he has no intention of committing more lives to future wars and is content to live out his days behind the walls of his castle. Gulian has two sons: his first and heir is Donnel, while his second—and far more respected son—is Ser Balon. Ser Balon is a skilled warrior, an expert with the lance, mace, and bow.

Lady Ravella, wife of Lord Smallwood of Acorn Hall, is also a Swann.

House Seaworth

House Selmy

House Swann

House Tarth

House Swygert

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A white scroll with gold knobs on purple, a white tressure
Motto	Truth Conquers

House Swygert is a minor house in the stormlands.

House Tarth

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Tarth
Castle	Evenfall Hall
Arms	Quartered - yellow suns and white crescents on rose and azure

House Tarth is seated in Evenfall Hall, on the island of Tarth. Also known as the Sapphire Island, waters of clear, deep blue surround Tarth. The island itself is among the most beautiful places in the stormlands. Though mountainous, it has numerous clear waterfalls running into surprisingly cold streams, high meadows, and deep vales. Though the land is not rich in ore or gemstones, it has resources aplenty to support its native population.

Lord Selwyn of Tarth, also titled the Evenstar, is the head of House Tarth. He is a fair and even-handed man who has been beset by tragedy. His only son died at a young age, as did two of his three daughters. His remaining daughter, Brienne of Tarth, is an uncomely, manly maiden bent on a martial life rather than a marital one. Lord Selwyn kept good relationships with the Baratheon line, having sent his daughter to foster at Storm's End.

Brienne of Tarth

The Maid of Tarth

"Brienne the Beauty they name her...though not to her face, lest they be called upon to defend those words with their bodies."

— Ser Colen

A woman who refuses to accept the roles others wish to force on her, Brienne of Tarth chose a martial life fighting not just her lord's sworn foes, but all of Westerosi society.

History

Brienne of Tarth, the Maid of Tarth, and mockingly called the Beauty of Tarth, was born the eldest daughter of Lord Selwyn. She had a single older brother, Galladon, who drowned when she was eight, and two younger sisters—both of whom died as young children. This makes her the only offspring of Lord Selwyn, a fact that naturally encouraged him to find a suitable match for her. Given her mannish appearance and attitude, however, the task was a difficult one. Her father successfully found three men willing to betroth her, though the first two fell through. The last, Ser Humfrey Wagstaff, warned her he would insist she act womanly once they were wed. Though only sixteen, Brienne replied she would only accept such a demand from a man who could beat her in combat. In the effort, Ser Humfrey ended up with three broken bones and a broken betrothal. Her father never tried again.

Lord Selwyn is considering sending Brienne to Storm's End in the hopes she either might find an appropriate man to her liking on her own, or learn to be more gentle when exposed to the more courtly ladies of the castle. Brienne is amenable to the task, hoping to find ways to test or hone her talents at swordplay with true knights of the realm and perhaps prove to the world that she is as good as any knight.

Personality

Brienne is simple, loyal, and determined, but also headstrong and judgmental. She views the world in black and white terms and does not forgive those she sees as having failed in their duty or lost their honor. This belief is in part because her own road has been hard, and she has been forced to make many difficult choices. Brienne values those who keep their word and loyalty above those who are useful to her at the moment—she is willing to accept that others may have different views from her but only if they keep to their philosophies in all circumstances. She has no use for situational oaths or pragmatic decisions, expecting everything to be as straight and unwavering as she is herself.

Brienne of Tarth		Adult Fighter
Abilities		
Agility	4	Dodge 1B, Quickness 2B
Animal Handling	3	Ride 1B
Athletics	5	Strength 2B
Awareness	3	Notice 1B
Endurance	4	Resilience 2B
Fighting	4	Brawling 1B, Long Blades 2B, Shields 1B, Spears 1B
Language (Common)	3	—
Status	3	—
Will	4	Dedication 3B

Attributes			
Combat Defense	12	Intrigue Defense	8
Health	14	Composure	15
Destiny Point	1		

Benefits: Armor Mastery, Brawler I, Long Blade Fighter I, Stubborn, Tough

Drawbacks: Flaw (Persuasion)

Plate and Mail: AR 8, AP –3, Bulk 2

Longsword	4D+2B	6 damage	
Heavy Shield	4D	3 damage	Bulk 1, Defensive +4

HOUSE TOYNE

HOUSE TUDBURY

HOUSE WAGSTAFF

HOUSE WYLDE

Appearance

Brienne has never been an attractive woman. She is tall and thick, with none of the grace favored in women in Westeros. Her movements are precise and swift but not smooth or soft. Her hair is the color and texture of dirty straw, her face covered in freckles, and her mouth too wide and swollen, filled with uneven teeth. To add to her unfortunate collection of features are the marks of a life of battle—a nose too-oft broken and scars on her arms. Though rarely noted, her eyes are large, deep clear blue orbs of great beauty, though set in her face they lose much of their charm.

House Toyne

Ranking	Extinct
Arms	A winged heart, black on gold, within a black bordure embattled
Motto	Fly High, Fly Far

House Toyne's fall was spectacular. The seeds of their destruction were sown when Ser Terrence Toyne, a member of the Kingsguard, was accused of and executed for a tryst with a mistress of King Aegon IV. Enraged, Terrence's brothers attempted to assassinate Aegon the Unworthy. They failed, killing only Aemon the Dragonknight. For their treason, their house was destroyed. About a generation later, a descendant of the house named Simon Toyne formed the Kingswood Brotherhood and caused no shortage of trouble for the Targaryens. Their depredations lasted until Ser Barristan Selmy slew the Toyne ringleader in single combat.

House Trant

Ranking	Major
Castle	Gallowsgrey
Arms	A hanged man, black on blue
Motto	So End Our Foes

House Trant is a house in the stormlands and had the honor of sending one of their sons, Ser Meryn, to join the Kingsguard.

House Tudbury

Ranking	Minor
Arms	A brown tortoise within a yellow lozenge on green

House Tudbury is a minor house of the stormlands.

House Wagstaff

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Five yellow mascles on green

House Wagstaff is a minor house of the stormlands. Brienne of Tarth was betrothed to Ser Humfrey Wagstaff, but the engagement dissolved when she beat him badly in combat.

House Wensington

Ranking	Minor
Arms	Two golden trumpets crossed on blue, a gold chief with three black stags
Motto	Sound the Charge

House Wensington is a minor house of the stormlands.

House Wylde

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Rainwood
Castle	Rain House
Arms	A blue-green maelstrom on gold

House Wylde is a minor house of the stormlands, with holdings in the rainwood. They are distinguished by Ser Willem Wylde, who served on the Kingsguard during the reign of King Daeron II.

Another Wylde, Ser Gawen, was the master-at-arms at Storm's End during the War of the Usurper. Ser Gawen tried to escape the siege and was captured, later dying in his cell.

Other Wyldes include Ser Gladden; Lady Tyana, married to Aenys Frey; and Ser Jon, married to Lady Elyana of Vypren who have one child, Rickard, a boy of three.

CHAPTER 12: DORNE

Dorne is a land like no other. A part of the Seven Kingdoms like the North and the Reach and the rest, its folk are technically bound to the Iron Throne, but it is an alliance forged of war and conquest, steeped in the blood of thousands. More than any other region of Westeros, Dorne is a fusion of cultures and peoples, an unusual mingling of First Men, folk of the Free Cities, and the Rhoynar into one more or less cohesive society of fiercely independent folk. While pledged to Robert Baratheon and the Targaryen kings before him, the Dornishmen have never proved the most constant of subjects. The isolation provided by the Dornish Marches and the unforgiving climate have enabled this diverse and intoxicating land to retain its cultural peculiarities independent of the influence of the noble houses and social expectations of those lands beyond their borders. Dorne is unique in its character and people, and travelers would do well to remember this before venturing recklessly into foreign lands.

HISTORY

Like the rest of Westeros, Dorne is no stranger to violence, and its lands have been shaped by countless skirmishes and wars between themselves and their neighbors. The earliest settlers into Dorne were the First Men, having crossed the land bridge that bound the realms across the narrow sea to Westeros. The first Dornishmen likely carved out their settlements along the coasts to escape the unforgiving heat of the sun on its interior, or settled along the rare and sluggish rivers flowing out to the sea. Armed with bronze weapons and horses, they battled the children of the forest and cut down their weirwoods, wherever they found them.

Stories say the children tried to halt the flood of First Men by working powerful magics from the Children's Tower in Moat Cailin, far to the north. The magic shattered the land bridge, forming what would be called the Broken Arm of Dorne and the Stepstones, but it was akin to bracing a leaky dam with one's fingers. It could not stop the arrival of the First Men, let alone push them back.

Eventually, a peace between the First Men and the children was struck throughout Westeros, and the early kingdoms flourished. As the First Men carved out their domains, the distance between those who settled here and their northern kin widened in more ways than just leagues. The Dornishmen splintered into dozens of petty kingdoms and warring factions, each vying for dominance. While their conflicts raged

"Ours is a harsh land, and poor, yet not without its beauties [...]. We Dornish are a hot-blooded people, quick to anger and slow to forgive."

—Prince Doran Martell

in the south, the Andals invaded the continent far to the north. And once again, wars wracked the kingdoms of the First Men.

Roughly a thousand years before Aegon the Conqueror set foot at King's Landing, the last major migration came to Westeros. The Rhoynar were a people from the eastern continent, beyond the Broken Arm and the Stepstones, who lived along the Rhoyne River from which they drew their name. The Rhoynar were an ancient empire, but it would not survive the ascension of the Freehold of Valyria.

Although the cities of the Rhoynar fell to the Valyrians, their queen proved to be their savior. Queen Nymeria is often remembered as a "warrior-queen," but in truth, she was more a shrewd and inspirational leader than a military fighter. Legends say Nymeria ordered her people aboard ten thousand ships, and told them to sail west to find a new land across the narrow sea.

The Rhoynar crossed the narrow sea and made landfall at ancient Dorne. Nymeria burned the fleet so they would not give in to homesickness and try to return to their lost land. Nymeria led her people—many of whom were women and children—and tried to find a place for them in this new realm.

Queen Nymeria forged an alliance with Lord Mors Martell through marriage, and the pair immediately set out to unify the squabbling kingdoms under a single banner. They succeeded, and thus, House Martell established as the ruling family of Dorne, with Mors taking the title of Prince after the Rhoynish fashion. The Dornishmen accepted the refugees for they could not stand against the combined might of Mors and Nymeria. In time, Dorne would adopt many of the beliefs, customs, and values of the Rhoynish.

The Dornishmen lived in their own fashion, but there were bloody skirmishes and terrible wars with the Reach and the stormlands for a thousand years. Kings of the Reach occasionally attempted to invade across the Dornish Marches, but every foreign army was destroyed due to the fortitude of the Dornish and—more often than not—the blistering sun and the merciless desert.

Dorne maintained its independence until the time of Aegon the Conqueror. As the Targaryen forged his new dynasty, the Dornishmen watched the Andal kings fall and the last King of Winter kneel. When Aegon turned south, he found Dorne to be the one land he could not conquer. Whereas other kings and lords had taken to the field against Aegon, or clustered in castles, the Dornishmen scattered. Dragons burned the northerners in the plains and in their castles of stone, but these peoples would not be lured into open battle, nor pen themselves in fortresses that could be turned into ovens. Instead, they turned to ambush and raids, striking quickly and then slipping back into the desert or through the mountain passes, where even the dragons could not find them. In time, Aegon pulled away from Dorne.

It was an uneasy peace, for the Dornishmen knew conquest was ever in the veins of the Targaryens. Their fears bore fruit when King Daeron I, the Boy King, led an enormous host south over one hundred and fifty years after Aegon abandoned Dorne. Daeron managed to do what his ancestor could not: he conquered the fierce people and crushed them beneath his heel, though the cost was tremendous. Forty thousand soldiers gave their lives for Daeron's dream. The Boy King could not hold it, however. And when his loyal governor, a Tyrell lord, was murdered, the entire territory rose up in arms, slaughtering the Targaryen warriors and driving them out of their lands.

It wasn't until the noble sacrifice of King Baelor the Blessed, brother to Daeron I, that Dorne finally surrendered to the Targaryen kings. Baelor walked the Boneway barefoot, rescued his cousin, Aemon the Dragonknight, from a viper pit and was bitten countless times. His noble sacrifice and his great piety set the stage for Dorne's joining the Seven Kingdoms, which was finally achieved when Daeron II, the Conciliator, wed Princess Myriah Martell. Their marriage secured a lasting peace, and the marriage of Daeron II's sister to Prince Maron Martell cemented the treaty.

In the years that followed, Dorne upheld the peace, and the raids into the Dornish Marches slowed and even halted at times, though not completely. When called for help, the Dornishmen aided the Iron Throne in their struggles against the last of the Blackfyre Pretenders, fighting in the War of the Ninepenny Kings and lending ships and soldiers against the threat to the Targaryen line. Their loyalty, however, would be scarcely remembered in the dark years to come.

Since the marriage pacts that first bound Dorne to the Seven Kingdoms, the Targaryens often wed Dornish princesses. When Prince Rhaegar came of age, King Aerys passed over the young Cersei Lannister offered by an ambitious Tywin Lannister and, instead, wed his son to Princess Elia, sister to Prince Doran Martell. Although he did his duty, fathering two children on his wife, Rhaegar fell in love with Lyanna Stark, and his error in judgment precipitated the war that would end the Targaryen line as kings of Westeros and also claim the life of Princess Elia and her children in the sack of King's Landing.

When word reached Sunspear of Elia's death, Prince Oberyn tried to raise Dorne for the now-exiled Prince Viserys, but Lord Jon Arryn came south within the year on a mission for the newly crowned King Robert Baratheon. Arryn answered all he could about Elia's death—what happened during those private meetings between Prince Martell and Lord Arryn remains something of a mystery, but when Jon Arryn left, all talk of war was ended. Still, old grudges—especially in Dorne—die hard, and many are looking for an excuse for bloodshed.

CULTURE, CUSTOMS, & SOCIETY

Although Dorne remains part of the Seven Kingdoms, it is in many ways a separate nation, a people divided by heritage and beliefs that have evolved apart from those upheld in the lands of their neighbors. Their cuisine—which is frightfully hot—their architecture, their belief in equal primogeniture, and even their appearance set them apart. The Dornish even give special status to their paramours, granting them privileges unmatched by their peers in other parts of the Seven Kingdoms.

The Dornishmen eschew the heavy armors and mail used by the northerners, favoring loose cloth or enameled armor and round metal shields. In place of the straight-bladed longswords, Dornishmen fight with short throwing spears and double-curved bows. Their horses, the fabled sand steeds, are prized for their speed and endurance, being able to run day and night and day again without tiring.

Daeron I was the first to observe there are three distinct ethnicities in Dorne. The first are the salty Dornishmen who live along the coasts. These people are lithe and dark, with olive skin and black hair, usually worn long. The second are the sandy Dornishmen who live in the des-

erts and in the long river valleys, who are darker, permanently tanned by the sun. The third are the stony Dornishmen who live in strongholds in the heights of the Red Mountains that form the border between Dorne and the lands north. The salty Dornishmen have the most Rhoynish blood, while the stony Dornishmen have the least, with fair skin that burns easily or is spotted with freckles. There's a fourth group, called the orphans, but they are fewer and are almost exclusive to the Greenblood River along which they pole their flat-bottomed boats.

As for religion, the Dornishmen largely keep the Faith of the Seven. Although untouched by the Andal invaders (or only lightly so), the gods of the Rhoynish fell out of favor in the face of the more influential Andal faith, so septs and septons can be found in most castles and keeps throughout Dorne.

GEOGRAPHY

Dorne is the southernmost realm of the Seven Kingdoms, separated from the rest of Westeros by the rugged Red Mountains that tumble down to the Dornish Marches to the northwest and the Sea of Dorne to the north. Travel through the mountains can be achieved by one of two major routes: the Prince's Pass or the Boneway. Other routes may exist, but none are as safe or as traveled. The Prince's Pass leads to the Reach, while the Boneway exits the mountains by Summerhall.

As the land slopes down and away from the western mountains it becomes hotter, with vast stretches of empty deserts punctuated by tiny oases with villages huddled around them. Rising from the dunes are stretches of badlands, small ranges of broken hills, such as the Ghost Hills fronting the Sea of Dorne. The rest is a barren expanse of swirling dust and sand, both red and white, extreme heat, and scarce water. At night, it's even worse, as temperatures plunge well below freezing.

Aside from oases, Dorne does have a few rivers. The Greenblood River is one of the largest, meeting the sea not far from the Lemonwood, the hold of House Dalt. Further inland, the river splits into its sources, the Scourge and the Vaith, the latter named for the house that controls its waters. To the west, the Brimstone River flows past Hellholt, the grim castle ruled by House Uller.

SUNSPEAR & THE SHADOW CITY

Perched on the southern edge of the Broken Arm—the remnant of that ancient land bridge the First Men crossed—is Sunspear, the ancestral seat of House Martell. Named for the joining of the Rhoynish Sun to the Martell Spear, it stands as a testament to the power of House Martell and its authority in these lands.

The first thing one sees when drawing near Sunspear is three mighty towers. The greatest is the Spear Tower. A massive tower of stone, it thrusts up from the surrounding community, stretching one hundred and fifty feet tall, and is capped with a thirty-foot-tall spear.

Next is the Tower of the Sun. As impressive as the Sunspear, it features a golden dome overtop a ring of leaded glass, each stained different colors to catch the sunlight as it marches through the sky. The light shines diamonds of every color and hue imaginable onto the marble floor of the great round chamber that stands at the top. Inside this massive room is a dais on which two chairs stand, one adorned with the Martell spear and the other with the sun of the Rhoynar.

The last tower is the Sandship, a great dun-colored monstrosity that looks somewhat like a petrified ship, and once the Sandship comes into view, the rest of the city soon follows. Sunspear is a city wrought of straw and mud, and the air stinks of dung, smoke, dust, and sweat. On a small outcropping of stone and sand surrounded by the sea stands the ancient seat of House Martell at the eastern end,

while the western end is shrouded in shadows cast by Sunspear's steep walls.

Sunspear is a walled city, protected by three cunningly erected walls that encircle one another. Entry to the city is by means of the Threefold Gate—the main portal breached by the road connecting the city to the Water Gardens. This entrance marks the only place where the gates of the three walls protecting the city line up to allow straight passage into the city, leading all the way up to the Old Palace. Otherwise, one must navigate the complex maze of alleys and twisting streets to arrive at the next gate.

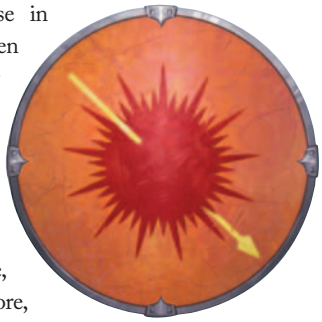
Beyond the castle walls lies the shadow city, a vast sprawl of mud and straw hovels, shops, taverns, pillow houses, estates, and more. By Westerosi standards, the shadow city is not much larger than a town, but it is the largest city in all of Dorne. It clogs the space between each of the walls, with the poorer folk consigned to the outer ring, and the inner being slightly improved but still smelling of seaweed, tar, and rot.

The Water Gardens

The Water Gardens are less than two hundred years old, built by Prince Maron as a gift to his Targaryen bride. They stand two or three leagues west from Sunspear and can be reached within a day. The road to the Water Gardens passes along the sea, through a reddish-brown landscape spotted with rocks and twisted trees until the traveler arrives at a breathtaking palace spread out across the beach. The hardship of Dorne vanishes in the beautiful serenity of pink marble tiles, fragrant flowers, and laughter of children. The Water Gardens is a palace of pools, orchards, and calm used by the Martells to escape the burdens of rule.

House Martell

Ranking	Great
Lands	Dorne
Castle	Sunspear
Arms	A red sun pierced by a golden spear on orange
Motto	Unbowed, Unbent, Unbroken



House Martell is the greatest house in Dorne, and until they joined the Seven Kingdoms through treaty, this ancient family ruled the deserts and mountains and all its people. Prior to the arrival of the Rhoynar, Martell was one of many petty kings that had carved up Dorne, but with the added strength of ten thousand shiploads of people, including craftsmen, warriors, and more, Martell rose in power and esteem, joining with the warrior queen Nymeria to become rulers. The union of their peoples saw the Martells abandon many of their older customs in favor of those of the Rhoynar. Specifically, they began to call themselves princes instead of kings, and their lands and title passed down to the eldest child and not just the eldest male. By binding themselves to the Seven Kingdoms, House Martell averted years of bloodshed, but the murders of Elia and her children have seeded the lands with unrest, especially within their own house.

Prince Doran Martell

"Silence is a prince's friend [...]. Words are like arrows, Arianne. Once loosed, you cannot call them back."

— Prince Doran Martell

Doran Martell is Prince of Sunspear and ruler of House Martell. A man of peace, he is sick of death and war and sorrow. Doran has retreated from the world to find solace in the Water Gardens, leaving the suffering of the world to those who want it.

History

Doran was groomed to inherit Sunspear and all its responsibilities, but he was ill-prepared for the chain of events that led him to his sorry predicament. Like his brother, Doran deeply loved their sister, Elia, and he was saddened to see her go to King's Landing, though he had little reason to suspect she was in danger. When war erupted in the north, after Rhaegar abandoned his wife to steal away Lyanna Stark, the Martells wanted no part in the coming war. If they had had their way, they would have taken Elia out of danger and washed their hands of the conflict. But King Aerys forced their hands, issuing sinister reminders that he held Lewyn's daughter and that she might come to harm if Dorne didn't lend aid to his defense.

Drawn into a war they never wanted, a war that ultimately culminated with Elia's murder, Doran ascended to his family's seat in the thick of the confusion and violence that swirled around the aftermath of the sack of King's Landing. His father gone, it fell to Doran to raise the

Prince Doran Martell		Old Schemer
Abilities		
Awareness	4	Notice 2B
Cunning	5	Logic 3B, Memory 2B
Deception	3	—
Knowledge	5	Education 3B, Research 2B
Language (Common)	4	—
Persuasion	4	Bargain 2B, Convince 1B
Status	6	Breeding 3B, Reputation 3B, Stewardship 1B
Warfare	4	Strategy 2B
Will	4	Concentration 2B, Dedication 2B
Attributes		
Combat Defense	8	Intrigue Defense 15
Health	6	Composure 14
Destiny Point	1	
Benefits: Adept Negotiator, Head of House, Stubborn, Worldly		
Drawbacks: Feeble		

banners and declare war on behalf of the exiled Prince Viserys, as his brother Oberyn wanted, or to swallow the lies and half-truths of King's Landing to avoid more bloodshed. Knowing war would be hopeless, Doran quashed all talk of battle and strove to establish a peace between the new King Robert and his own unruly and temperamental land.

Added to this is his estrangement with his wife Mellario, whom he had met while traveling the Free Cities. He brought her back to Dorne as his wife, infatuated with her exotic appearance. Not long after the sack of King's Landing, though, he fostered their son Quentyn with Yronwood. Enraged at what she saw as selling his own flesh, they grew apart, and Mellario returned to her family in Norvos.

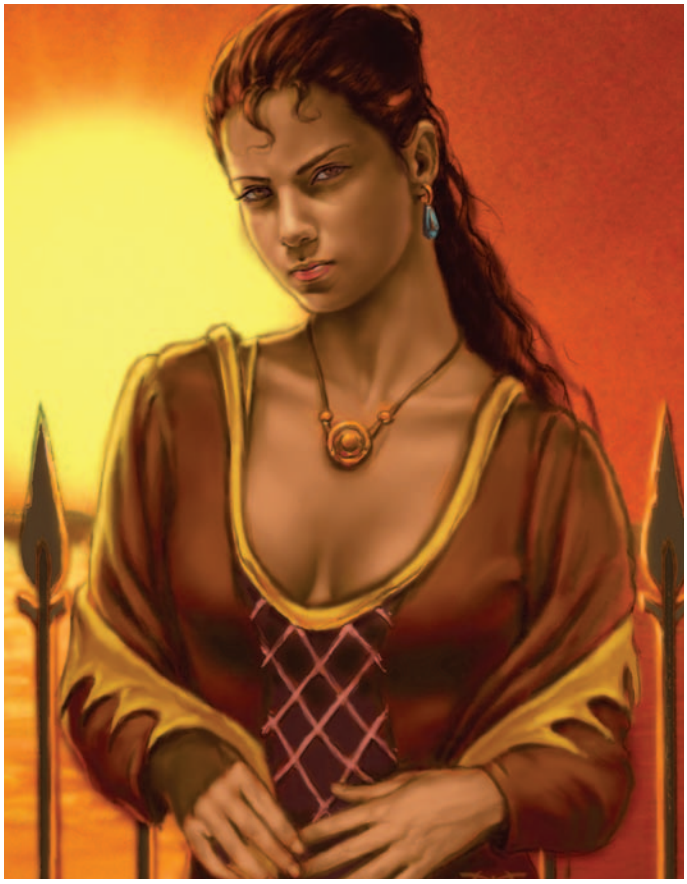
Doran has never recovered from the loss of his sister or the separation from his wife. Now, just fifty years old, he's feeling the onset of gout. Rather than face the strain of ruling from Sunspear, he left the city to his daughter and heir Arianne and reigns from the Water Gardens in the hopes of rejuvenating his spirit and his health.

Personality

Doran is familiar with what impulsive action brings and has taken his life lessons to heart. He's a cautious man who carefully considers his options, much to the frustrations of his daughters who see him as being indecisive and even afraid to take action. In truth, Doran is brilliant, tactically minded, and not given to taking risks, making him the exact opposite of his brother Oberyn. He has plans, deep and convoluted, but he chooses not to share them until he is ready.

Appearance

Aging before his time, life has been hard on his body, and his legs and feet have begun to swell. He conceals his gout with silks and long robes, but it's clear he suffers with each step.



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Princess Arianne Martell

"You do not know my father. I have been disappointing him since I first arrived in this world without a cock."

—Arianne Martell

Arianne Martell is the eldest daughter of Prince Doran Martell and, by Dornish custom, is heir to Sunspear. While she presents the face of the dutiful daughter to the world, she is a cunning schemer and dangerous force in the aristocracy of her lands.

History

As Doran Martell's eldest child, Arianne is his heir in name, but her father's actions suggest otherwise. For one, to secure her place as the head of House Martell, any marriage she would entertain would have to mirror her own standing. But Arianne soon learned, by her father's maneuverings, that he had other plans, including marriage pacts that would carry her from Sunspear and thus pass her over and give the seat to Doran's second born, Quentyn. The proverbial last straw was when she discovered a letter she believed was addressed to Quentyn, suggesting that he would rule after his father. This knowledge, while devastating, hardened her resolve, and if her father would pass her over, he would find doing so difficult.

Princess Arianne Martell		Adult Schemer
Abilities		
Agility	3	—
Athletics	3	—
Awareness	4	—
Cunning	3	—
Deception	4	—
Endurance	3	—
Knowledge	3	Education 1B, Streetwise 1B
Language (Common)	4	—
Persuasion	4	Bargain 1B, Charm 2B, Convince 2B, Incite 1B, Seduce 3B
Status	5	Breeding 1B
Will	4	—
Attributes		
Combat Defense	10	Intrigue Defense 12
Health	9	Composure 12
Destiny Points	2	
Benefits: Adept Negotiator, Attractive, Charismatic (Seduce), Connections (Shadow City), Heir, Treacherous		
Dagger	2D	1 damage — Defensive +1, Off-hand +1

Personality

Whether there is truth to her beliefs that her father would have preferred a son instead of a daughter is uncertain, but Arianne believes it, and this knowledge has defined her life. Instead of crippling her with doubts, however, it has made her fiercely independent and tears away any reservations about using the full extent of her resources to get what she wants, including using her physical treasures to seduce and dominate her lovers. She is calculating and clever, a devious player of politics, using lust and love as her weapons and twisting information to suit her ends.

The wedge created by Doran's perceived intentions aside, Arianne is equally distraught by her father's methods of rule. She sees him as a weak prince, a ruler who would rather appease his rivals or think to inaction, rather than respond to affronts made to their family. The years under his rule, in Arianne's eyes, have made Dorne weak, and his inaction shames them all. Arianne believes that her father's withdrawal to the Water Gardens will possibly give her a chance to prove herself. But as Doran has also given more responsibility to a number of his lesser servants, including his steward and castellan, will Arianne find the influence and power she seeks over Sunspear, or will she feel impotent to take action on behalf of her people?

Appearance

Arianne is a striking woman, fully grown, and the object of desire for many suitors. She has long black hair that falls in ringlets to the middle of her back. She is short, just a bit taller than five feet, having inherited her diminutive size from her Norvoshi mother. When attending to matters of politics, she conceals her lush and curvaceous body with flowing silks, jewels, and other ostentatious displays of wealth.

Prince Oberyn Martell

The Red Viper

"The Red Viper of Dorne went where he would."

—Obara Sand

The younger brother of Prince Doran Martell, Prince Oberyn is one of the most infamous members of the Martell family. Known for his underhanded tactics—he's called the Red Viper for his penchant for coating his weapons with poisons—and his rash and unpredictable manner, he's a wild card in the Seven Kingdoms, and wherever he goes trouble seems to follow.

History

Oberyn Martell has a fearsome reputation. His indiscretions and trysts, dubious honor in battle, and impetuous nature combine to make him one of the most infamous figures to emerge from Dorne in recent memory. As a boy, he was adventurous and capricious, free from the responsibilities of rule since his elder brother Doran would inherit. Rather than outgrowing the exuberances of childhood, he embraced them, and his wild nature has stayed with him throughout his adult life.

While there are many exploits attributed to Oberyn in his youth, one of the most notorious events was when he was found with Lord Yronwood's paramour. The Yronwood lord was a massive warrior, well known for his skill in battle and for his terrible temper. Yronwood called out Oberyn to fight a duel to the first blood. Both men were cut, and the duel satisfied, but while Oberyn healed, Yronwood did not. His injury festered until he eventually succumbed to the toxins that coursed through his body. It was said Oberyn fought with a poisoned blade that day, hence the moniker the Red Viper.

After, Oberyn left Dorne to explore the Free Cities. There he dabbled in the dark arts, learning the secrets of poisoning and far more, only to return to the Seven Kingdoms to study at the Citadel. He stayed there long enough to forge six links of a maester's chain, and then he moved on again. He fought in the Disputed Lands, rode with a mercenary company for a time, and had many exploits of love, battles, wars, and more.

Some years ago, Oberyn faced young Willas Tyrell in a joust, which resulted in a tragic accident that left the boy maimed when his foot caught in his stirrup. Even though the Red Viper sent his own maester to attend to Willas, people whispered that the accident was intentional. Forever after, the Tyrells have nursed a deep and abiding hatred for Oberyn.

Personality

According to Oberyn, a septon once claimed that he was proof of the gods' goodness, for if they were cruel the Red Viper might have been born before his brother Doran and been heir to Sunspear. Oberyn can be cruel or fickle, but above all, he is vicious. He is like an unbroken stallion, a free spirit that goes and does what he pleases. He cleaves to

PRINCE OBERYN MARTELL		MIDDLE-AGED ROGUE
ABILITIES		
AGILITY	5	ACROBATICS 1B, DODGE 1B, QUICKNESS 2B
ANIMAL HANDLING	3	—
ATHLETICS	4	JUMP 1B
AWARENESS	3	—
CUNNING	3	—
DECEPTION	4	CHEAT 2B
ENDURANCE	3	RESILIENCE 2B
FIGHTING	4	SHIELDS 1B, SPEARS 2B
LANGUAGE (COMMON)	4	—
LANGUAGE (VARIOUS)	3	—
PERSUASION	4	INCITE 2B, SEDUCE 2B, TAUNT 2B
STATUS	4	—
WARFARE	3	—
WILL	4	—

ATTRIBUTES			
COMBAT DEFENSE	14	INTRIGUE DEFENSE	10
HEALTH	9	COMPOSURE	12
DESTINY POINTS	0		

BENEFITS: BLOOD OF THE RHOYNAR, FAST, MAGNETIC, SHIELD MASTERY I, SPEAR FIGHTER I, SPEAR FIGHTER II, WEAPON MASTERY (SPEAR), WORLDLY

DRAWBACKS: IGNOBLE

SUPERIOR SCALE ARMOR: AR 6, AR –2, BULK 1

EXCELLENT SHORT SPEAR	4D+1+2B	5 DAMAGE	FAST; VARIOUS POISONS
BUCKLER	4D+1B	2 DAMAGE	DEFENSIVE +2, OFF-HAND +1

his own principles, seeing life and living in ways few others can match or even understand. If there's one constant to this mercurial man, it's his hatred of House Lannister and his thirst for revenge for the death of his beloved sister. The Red Viper has bided his time, but the season for caution is long past and now he plots to exact the price for her death.

Appearance

The Red Viper is a tall and slim man approaching his middle years. He moves with a liquid grace, with fluid movements suggesting an uncanny ease and perfect familiarity with his body. His features are melancholy, with lines wrought by the loss of his beloved sister, Elia. He has thin arched eyebrows above large black eyes, a narrow pointed nose, and black hair streaked with silver, which is receding, emphasizing his sharp widow's peak.

The Sandsnakes

In Oberyn's travels, he fathered numerous bastards but never produced a son. He has eight daughters, called the sand snakes, each as wild and

unpredictable as their father. The Red Viper's current paramour is the beautiful natural daughter of Lord Harmen Uller, a black-haired woman named Ellaria Sand.

Obara Sand

Obara is the eldest of Oberyn's brood. A tall, long-legged, big-boned woman filled with brimming anger, she's in her middle twenties, though her age has done little to temper her wildness. She always rides stallions and is said to be able to break any horse—and any man. She's not attractive, her eyes too close and her hair too common, but she's fierce and strong. Obara has a special hatred of Oldtown, where she was born, and she hungers to burn the city to ash. Obara favors the whip.

Nymeria Sand

Nymeria Sand, also known as Lady Nym, is the daughter of a lady of Volantis. Younger than Obara by three years, she's a slender woman, with black hair held back in a tight braid. Like her father, she has a sharp widow's peak and also has his eyes. She's a great beauty, with high cheekbones, full lips, and pale skin. Nymeria hides razor-sharp blades all over her person and has a bloodthirsty streak she conceals beneath her regal bearing.

Tyene Sand

Oberyn's third daughter is two years younger than Nymeria and in her early twenties. She's the daughter of a septa and has an innocent air about her. She has golden hair, deep blue eyes, and a gentle voice. Although she seems almost ethereal, she is in truth a merciless poisoner who kills without thinking so frequently that even Prince Doran is unnerved when she touches him.

Other Sand Snakes

Also included among the sand snakes is Sarella, the daughter of a trader and new captain of the *Feathered Kiss*. Oberyn's other daughters are Elia, named for his lost sister, Obella, Dorea, and Loreza, all of whom are daughters by his current paramour, Ellaria.

Other Family

In addition to the key members of House Martell, there are other notable family members who have parts to play in the unfolding plans of Dorne.

Quentyn Martell

The eldest son of Doran Martell but not his heir according to Dornish tradition, Quentyn was fostered with Lord Anders Yronwood of Yronwood. This fostering created the rift between Doran and his wife that ultimately led to her return to Norvos. Quentyn has remained in Yronwood throughout much of his life, and despite correspondences with his father, he has come to see Lord Anders as more of a father. Quentyn served as a page and is now a squire nearing knighthood.

Trystane Martell

The younger son of Doran Martell, Trystane is a boy of ten. He has olive skin and straight black hair. Deemed a clever youth, he is likely to be married to a girl of one of the great houses to create a strong political alliance.

Notable Servants

Like all the great houses, the Martells employ several servants and allies for counsel, protection, and companionship. What follows are the best known.

Areo Hotah

Doran Martell's constant companion, his captain of the guards, and most zealous protector is a strange man from Norvos named Areo Hotah. In his youth, Areo's family gave him up to the bearded priests of Norvos when they could no longer afford to feed another mouth. The priests taught him how to fight and how to defend his charge. When he was ready, he spoke the vows that would wed him to his longaxe, a great weapon with a shaft carved from mountain ash. It was his duty to keep the blade sharp, to sleep with it. "Simple vows for simple men," the priests said, "Serve. Obey. Protect."

When Doran traveled to the Free Cities and fell in love with his wife to be, he also gained the service of Areo Hotah, who was sworn to protect his mistress. In the years that followed, his service went to Doran, even after his original charge withdrew to the city of her birth. Hotah is a simple man, with great skill in battle, but he is haunted by the memories of his past and the life he was condemned to lead.

Areo Hotah is broad-shouldered, with a shock of white hair on his head, and his hairy body is covered in scars. His voice is a thick, bass grumble, contaminated by the tongue of his people but understandable enough. His most distinctive feature is the brand of the axe the bearded priests burned on his chest when he took his vows. Although it has healed, it still itches from time to time, reminding him of the gravity of his service.

Maester Caleotte

A short man and bald as an egg, Maester Caleotte attends Doran Martell and does his best to alleviate the pain of his master's gout. Caleotte has been with Doran since before the prince was married and had previously served Doran's mother, suggesting he is advancing in his years, though it his hard to tell for his smooth, fat face. Caleotte is meek but clever, and he is a serviceable ally of the family.

Others

House Martell's seneschal at Sunspear is old and blind Ricasso, while its castellan is Ser Manfrey Martell, likely a cousin. Ser Gascoyne of the Greenblood is charged with protecting young Trystane, while a veritable army of servants maintains the household while Doran withdraws to the Water Gardens.

Banners of Dorne

The following houses have pledged their fealty to Sunspear.

House Allyrion

Ranking	Major
Castle	Godsgrace
Arms	A golden hand on gyronny red and black
Motto	No Foe May Pass

Godsgrace castle is situated near where the rivers Scourge and Vaith meet. Lady Delonne is head of the house. Her only child, Ser Ryon, is her heir. Ser Ryon also has but a single child, the natural-born Ser Daemon Sand, known as the Bastard of Godsgrace. Ser Daemon is quite enamored of Prince Doran's daughter and heir Arianne Martell, and he once went so far as to ask for her hand in marriage. His illegitimacy, however, made such a match impossible.

House Blackmont

Ranking	Major
Castle	Blackmont
Arms	A black vulture with a pink infant in its claws on yellow

The eponymous seat of House Blackmont sits near the point where the two rivers flowing south from the Dornish Marches meet to form the greater Torentine. The current Lady of Blackmont is Lady Larra. She has borne two children, a daughter and heir, Jynessa, and a son, Perros, a squire. The Blackmonts have a history of being an unruly house, mounting endless raids into the Dornish Marches as well as attacks against their neighboring houses. They are considered one of the great houses of Dorne.

House Dalt

Ranking	Landed
Castle	Lemonwood
Motto	Lemons strewn on purple

The current head of House Dalt is Ser Dezial, known as the Knight of Lemonwood. His younger brother and heir is Ser Andrey. Andrey, called Drey by his friends, is a close confidante of Arianne Martell. As landed knights, they remain a powerful house. Ser Dezial is one of Prince Oberyn's companions.

Lemonwood castle lies just south of where the Greenblood River empties into the narrow sea.

House Dayne of Starfall

Ranking	Major
Castle	Starfall
Arms	A white sword and falling star crossed on lilac

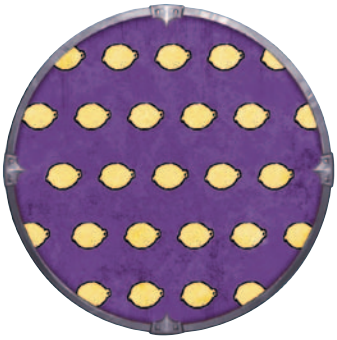
Of all the houses sworn to the Martells, few are as storied as the Daynes—and perhaps none as burdened by recent loss.

The seat of House Dayne is Starfall Castle, which lies on the Torentine where it pours into the Summer Sea. The Daynes possess *Dawn,* a greatsword as pale as milkglass that legend tells was forged from the heart of a fallen star thousands of years ago. Both blade and star are depicted on the house's arms. Unlike other storied weapons, *Dawn* does not simply pass from one head of the house to the next. Instead, only those members of the family who have proven themselves worthy are permitted to wield the weapon. These men are known as Swords of the Morning.

The last Sword of the Morning was Ser Arthur Dayne, one of the most famed and feared members of Aerys II Targaryen's Kingsguard. When the outlaw Kingswood Brotherhood became a serious threat to the safety of the smallfolk, Ser Arthur was one of the men sent to put an end to them. During a battle that ultimately broke the brigand band, the Sword of the Morning clashed with the Smiling Knight, a fierce fighter considered insane. Such was the strength of *Dawn*, the Smiling Knight's own sword was rendered useless. When Ser Arthur halted his attack to allow the Smiling Knight to fetch another weapon, his opponent quipped it was the Kingsguard's blade he wanted. Ser Arthur assured him that he would have it and then gave him every inch.

Ser Arthur was a close friend of Prince Rhaegar Targaryen and was sent to the Tower of Joy with Ser Oswell Whent and Lord Commander Gerold Hightower to guard Lyanna Stark at the outbreak of Robert's Rebellion. When the rebellion succeeded, Eddard Stark came south with six companions to reclaim his sister. The Kingsguard refused to surrender their charge, even though a new king was now seated on the Iron Throne. A melee ensued, and the Sword of the Morning did not live to see another one. Of the men who fought, only Stark and his compatriot Howland Reed survived.

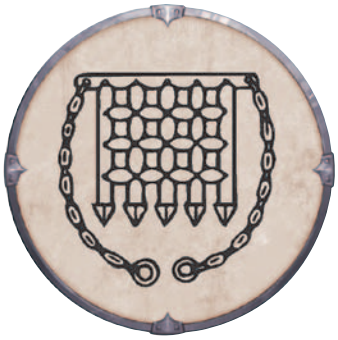
HOUSE ALLYRION



HOUSE DALT

HOUSE DAYNE

HOUSE FOWLER



HOUSE JORDAYNE HOUSE MANWOODY HOUSE QORGYLE HOUSE YRONWOOD

Eddard Stark then traveled to Starfall to return *Dawn* to the Daynes. Soon after learning of his death, Ser Arthur's sister Ashara leapt to her death from the Palestone Sword, one of the towers of Starfall. Her body was never recovered.

Although it was widely believed Ashara killed herself out of grief for her brother, her sister and others offered a different story. One suggested Ashara met and fell in love with Eddard Stark at Harrenhal during the year of the false spring, and she threw herself from the tower because of the pain of a broken heart and a stolen son.

Allyria is sister to Ashara and Ser Arthur and is betrothed to the Lord of Blackhaven, Beric Dondarrion. Lady Allyria's nephew, Edric, is serving as Lord Beric's squire. Although he has not yet reached his teen years, Edric is the current Lord of Starfall. Like many of the other members of House Dayne, he has pale blonde hair and blue eyes so dark they may well be purple.

No new Sword of the Morning has been named since Ser Arthur's death.

House Dayne of High Hermitage

Ranking	Minor
Castle	High Hermitage

The most well-known member of this cadet branch of House Dayne is the current Knight of High Hermitage, Ser Gerold, called Darkstar. Ser Gerold is a charismatic man with traits similar to the Daynes in Starfall in some respects: his eyes are a dark purple, and his shoulder-length hair is silver with a prominent black streak. But unlike the other Daynes, Darkstar also has a streak of cruelty and anger just as black as the one that marks his head. He is an accomplished fighter, and he is unafraid to test his skill on anyone at any time.

High Hermitage is situated on the Torentine between Blackmont and Starfall.

House Fowler

Ranking	Major
Castle	Skyreach
Arms	A blue hawk on silver
Motto	Let Me Soar

Skyreach is located near Prince's Pass, and the head of the house also inherits the title of Warden of the Prince's Pass. Lord Franklyn Fowler, called the Old Hawk, is the current Lord of Skyreach and Warden. His only children are twin daughters, Jeyne—considered the first—and Jennelyn.

House Gargalen

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Salt Shore
Arms	A red cockatrice holding a black snake in its beak on gold

Lord Tremond is the current head of House Gargalen, whose seat is located on the Summer Sea coastline almost due south from Godsgrace.

House Jordayne

Ranking	Major
Castle	The Tor
Arms	A golden quill on checkered dark and light green
Motto	Let It Be Written

The Tor lies on the edge of the Sea of Dorne, where visitors can witness the tug of the surf as it endlessly braids itself into the strand. The current head of House Jordayne is Lord Trebor; his daughter Myria is his sole child and heir.

House Ladybright

Ranking	Minor

Lady Alyse Ladybright currently serves Prince Doran as his lord treasurer.

House Manwoody

Ranking	Major
Castle	Kingsgrave
Arms	A white skull crowned with gold on black

The seat of House Manwoody earned its name when the founding member of the house slew a King of the Reach in the distant past, a deed also commemorated on the family arms. The castle lies approximately halfway through the Prince's Pass.

Lord Dagos Manwoody is the head of his house. He has two sons, Mors, his heir, and Dickon, as well as a brother, Ser Myles.

House Qorgyle

Ranking	Major
Castle	Sandstone
Arms	Three black scorpions on red

Sandstone is located in the southwest portion of Dorne's desert, not far from the mountains. Lord Commander of the Night's Watch Jeor Mormont's immediate predecessor was a Qorgyle.

Lord Quentyn is Lord of Sandstone at present. He is father to two sons, Ser Gulian, his heir, and Ser Arron.

House Santagar

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Spottswood
Arms	Per bend sinister blue and white, a spotted leopard with golden axe

The Santagars are a family who were granted status and lands for past service. The current Knight of Spottswood is Ser Symon Santagar. His daughter and heir is Sylva Santagar, a woman in her early twenties who is known as Spotted Sylva on account of her abundant freckles.

Also of note is Ser Aron Santagar, who currently serves the Iron Throne as the master-at-arms for the Red Keep at King's Landing.

House Toland

Ranking	Major
Castle	Ghost Hill
Arms	A green dragon biting its tail on gold

The dragon inscribed on the Tolands' arms is meant to signify that time is an everlasting cycle, with no end or beginning. Their castle resides in the northeastern section of Dorne, near the Broken Arm. Nymella Toland is the current Lady of Ghost Hill.

House Uller

Ranking	Major
Castle	Hellholt
Arms	Rayonne yellow over crimson

Hellholt Castle earned its name from a past incident when a set of unwelcome visitors were locked in the keep's great hall and burned to death. Their arms were also inspired by this incident, with the yellow and crimson colors depicted *rayonne* to mimic the deadly flames. This may also be the reason behind the saying that "half the Ullers are half-mad, and the other half are worse."

Harmen Uller is the current Lord of Hellholt; he has a brother, Ser Ulwyck. Harmen's natural-born daughter is Ellaria Sand, the paramour of Prince Oberyn Martell. Ellaria has borne the prince half of his bastard brood of Sand Snakes: Elia, Obella, Dorea, and Loreza.

Hellholt is located, aptly, near the source of the Brimstone River in Dorne's desert region.

House Vaith

Ranking	Minor
Castle	Red Dunes
Arms	Three black leopards standing on a yellow pile on orange

Lord Daeron is the head of House Vaith. Vaith castle sits near the source of the river of the same name.

House Wyl

Ranking	Minor
Lands	Boneway
Castle	Boneway Castle
Arms	A black adder biting a heel on yellow

Appropriately, the Wyl stronghold, Boneway Castle, lies near the halfway point of the Boneway.

House Yronwood

Ranking	Major
Castle	Yronwood
Arms	A black portcullis grill over sand
Motto	We Guard the Way

The Yronwoods are one of the older houses in Dorne, having existed prior to Nymeria's landing when they were minor kings in their own right. They fought against the Rhoynar and the houses that supported them, an effort that was ultimately unsuccessful. Because of this, the Yronwoods and Martells, who fought with Nymeria to unite Dorne, have often found themselves on the opposite sides of a cause. For instance, the Yronwoods sided with Bittersteel three times during the Blackfyre Rebellion.

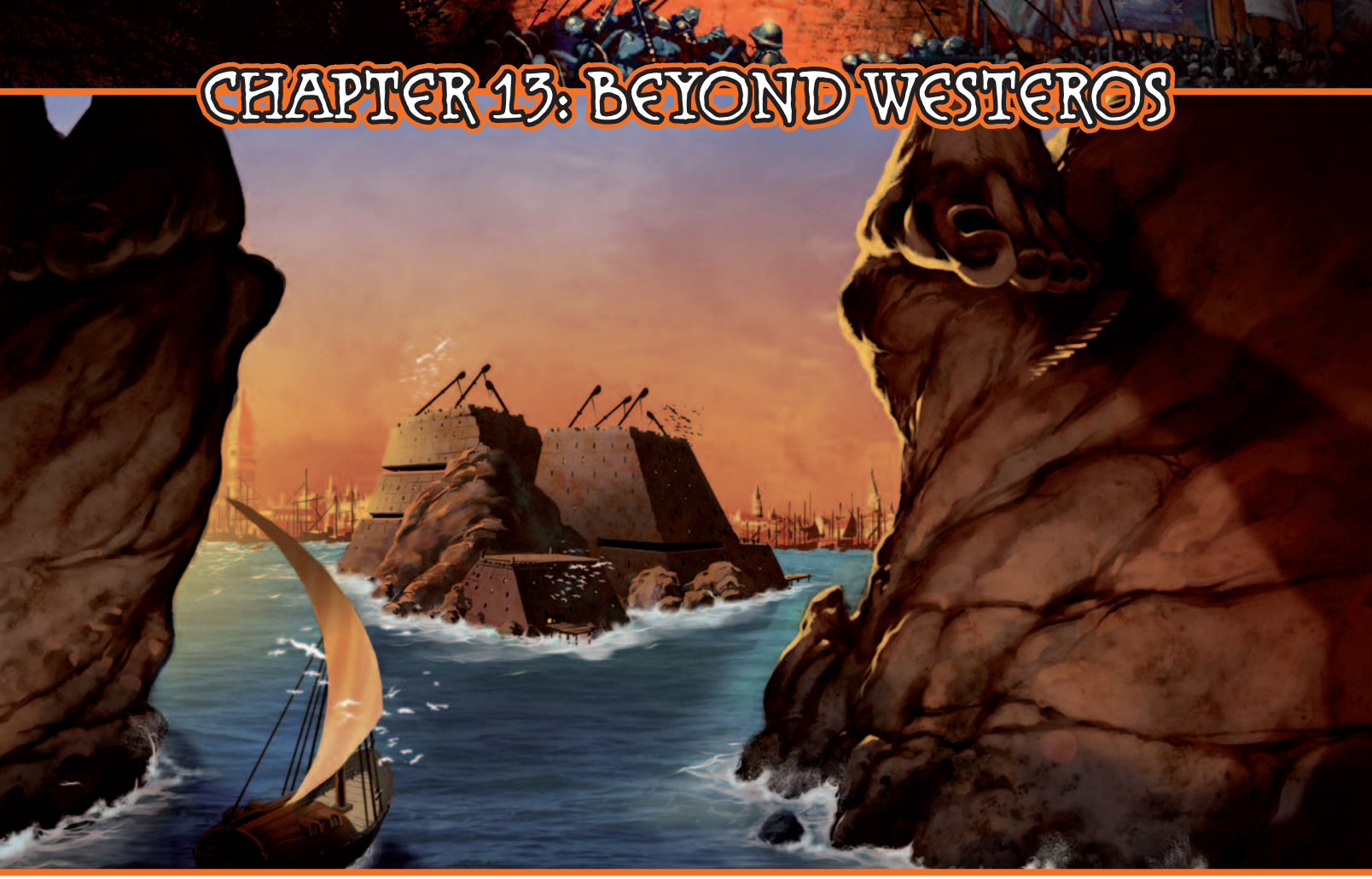
Relations between the Yronwoods and the Martells were most certainly not improved when a young Prince Oberyn was caught *in flagrante* with the Lord of Yronwood's paramour. They worsened when Lord Yronwood dueled Prince Oberyn to first blood and then died of ostensibly minor wounds. Dark rumors suggest Oberyn's weapon was poisoned.

Time, however, has done much to cool the tensions between the two houses. Prince Doran sent his son Quentyn to foster at Yronwood at an early age, where he served as a page and then as squire. When it came time to take his vows, Quentyn chose to be knighted by the Lord of Yronwood.

This reconciliation certainly has not extended to other houses within the region. The Yronwoods maintain a rivalry with House Fowler that extends back to the time of the Rhoynar conquest, when the Fowlers chose to support the Martells.

The current Lord of Yronwood is Lord Anders. In addition to his familial title, he is also known as the Bloodroyal (most likely a reference to the house's heritage prior to Nymeria's landing) and the Warden of the Stone Way. The latter title refers to the Yronwood's duty to protect Dorne from invaders traveling down the Boneway, a responsibility the house is uniquely qualified to fulfill since Yronwood Castle sits at the southern end of that route. Lord Anders has a son, Ser Cletus, easily distinguishable by his lazy eye.

CHAPTER 13: BEYOND WESTEROS



The First Men came from eastern lands, though exactly which lands are no longer known. After them came the Andals, inspired to leave their homelands by their faith in the Seven, though little of this religion remains in the east. Finally, the influence of the Valyrian Freehold extended from the far east to take the island of Dragonstone, and after the Doom of Valyria the Targaryen family conquered all the Seven Kingdoms.

As any student of history can see, the lands of Westeros are eventually affected by the events of the east. Even though few lords of the Seven Kingdoms realize it, what happens in the east often is of great importance to the west. Here, then, is a brief overview of the lands beyond Westeros.

GEOGRAPHY

The Seven Kingdoms are called Westeros, or the lands of the west, to the older lands of the Summer Sea and Red Wastes. Though there is little known to be to the north or west of Westeros, lands can be found to its east and south. The largest of these is the eastern continent of the Free Cities and Slaver's Bay. Travel to this land is generally accomplished by way of the Stepstones, a long line of islands from off the coast of Dorne to the Free Cities. Though no one nation controls the Stepstones, they are the key to great trade power and wealth, and the Seven Kingdoms and Free Cities often vie for their sovereignty. According to legend, these islands were once part of a long finger of land across which the First men came to Westeros from the east. The children of the forest used their power to break this land bridge to prevent more First Men from crossing, and for thousands of years this was the case.

While people of the Seven Kingdoms think of the Free Cities as "the east," there are, in fact, lands much further east than those. From the mysterious Vaes Dothrak in the vast grasslands, to the Ghiscari cities of Slaver's Bay and the cities of the Jade Sea, many lands are further from the Free Cities than those are from Westeros. At the far eastern edge are lands known mostly in myth and legend, Asshai and the Shadow Lands.

Other island nations exist as well. To the south of the Seven Kingdoms are the lands of the Summer Isles. North of the Free Cities lies Ib with its whaler-traders who sail from the Port of Ibben. Though minor lands with little impact on the struggles of Westeros, these are places characters may have visited or may even be their original home. The very fact that little is

There, where Denyo pointed, a line of stony ridges rose sudden from sea, their steep slopes covered with soldier pines and black spruce. But dead ahead, the sea had broken through, and there above the open water the Titan towered, with his eyes blazing and his long green hair blowing in the wind.

—A Feast for Crows

known of them makes them open slates for GMs and players to add their own elements to a game set in the world of *A Song of Ice and Fire*.

THE FREE CITIES

East from Dorne and Storm's End is a long chain of islands that cross the narrow sea. Known as the Stepstones, these islands form the easiest route from Westeros to the Free Cities and the eastern continent. By traveling from island to island, a ship can cross the sea without ever being more than a few days from land, allowing vessels to put in for water and other supplies regularly, which makes it safer and cheaper to cross the narrow sea here than at any other point. It also encourages trade between Westeros and the Free Cities, which control the eastern end of the chain.

The Free Cities are strange by Westerosi standards, as each is a nation unto itself. Though the cities may act together when facing a grave threat (such as a massive Dothraki *khalasar*, or perhaps a Westerosi army from across the sea), they are just as likely to take sides against one another. Though their laws and cultures are similar, they have no loyalty to each other, and a man marked a criminal in one may still live life as a hero in another. Certainly, no lawmaker of the Free Cities will concern himself with whatever crimes a man might have committed in Westeros, which makes it a popular destination for those fleeing the justice of the Seven Kingdoms.

Such refugees often come to regret their choice of haven, however. The Free Cities are as fiercely independent within their own walls as they are in state affairs. Those with money and power are respected and treated well, but those without are considered the rightful prey of anyone who can take advantage of them. A man can make a living as a sellsword, jester, assassin, or merchant in the Free Cities, but those who fail to do so are likely to find themselves enslaved or forced into service of the rich.

The first of the cities to be established was Old Volantis, the last Braavos, founded by the moonsingers who had fled the dragons of Valyria, centuries before the Doom. Thus, the Free Cities acknowledge no empire or prior rulers, having escaped their ancestral masters and later the destruction that took them. To be in control of their own destinies is important to the people of these cities, and they expect others to show the same strength of character and determination. To be kind is acceptable, if unusual; to require the kindness of others is to show weakness.

Braavos

Braavos is the wealthiest and most powerful of the Free Cities, located near the center of the Stepstones, north of the unclaimed islands of that chain. It is spread across not one island but dozens—if not a hundred or more—all connected by bridges, canals, and walkways. Trees and wood are rare and almost always used to build ships, making Braavos a city of stone architecture and granite monuments. It has its own language, common throughout the rest of the Free Cities as well, and it uses a bastardized version of Valyrian for trade with foreigners. It is a city where life is lived fullest but is known to be cheap. Many Braavosi know the High Valyrian saying *valar morghulis,* "all men must die."

The ruler of Braavos is known as the Sealord, and it is from the sea the city's power and wealth flows. Braavos captains sail their purple-hulled ships to ports further than any other dare and bring the trade and wealth of a dozen unknown lands back to their home. The city is awash in pepperwines, strange creatures for menageries, and ancient relics of lost Valyria. Flat-bottomed barges of foods, arts, and treasures from around the world are poled through waterways, between great stone statues and homes with peaked, rock roofs to warehouses, where merchant princes accumulate wealth that would shock many Westerosi noble houses. Such is the wealth of Braavos that it is fecund with moneylenders, happy to give coin to a sailor or a king, as long as a good rate of return is promised. And since assassins and poisons are common within the city, borrowers know it is unwise to default on such promises.

Much of the city's economic power comes from its role as the link between the Seven Kingdoms and the rest of the known world, and even those who have never seen its canals have heard something of it. Its main harbor is watched over by the Titan of Braavos, a massive stone statue so tall ships can sail between its legs. With eyes lit like great bonfires, the Titan can be seen at a great distance. It is a source of many legends, including claims that in times of war it wades into the sea to destroy the city's enemies. Though most likely a child's tale, the Titan is replete with arrowslits and murder-holes facing out to sea, with wide arcs of fire encompassing those ships that must sail under it. Foreigners are often told that maidens of noble houses must be sacrificed to the fires of the Titan periodically, a claim Braavosi make with a straight face. Certainly, the grinding bellow the Titan makes when ships approach lends weight to its legend, as well as serving as a practical warning to the city.

To protect its sea superiority and defend it from any who might threaten that position, the main harbor of Braavos is protected by the Arsenal, a seaborne fortress and shipyard found just beyond the Titan. Mounted with dozens of catapults and scorpions, the Arsenal is also lined with docks and boathouses as well as building quays. It is said the Arsenal can produce a new war galley every day, allowing it to replace any losses it would suffer in battle.

Although it has no knights or peasant levies, Braavos is far from undefended. It can raise a standing army of professional sellswords any time one is needed, and every noble and major merchant has a house guard, though such guards sometimes grow soft from their lack of fighting. Unsullied eunuch warriors are common, as are eunuch servants of all types. Most famously, the bravos of Braavos are lightly armed swordsmen who fight with light, thrusting weapons and take a side-on fighting stance unfamiliar to the knights of the western "Sunset Kingdoms" across the sea.

Indeed, the skills of the various fighting men of Braavos are a point of great pride within the city. Bravos often teach those with the coin to buy lessons, and some have schools of fighting styles with a constant line of soldiers, young nobles, and foreign adventurers seeking to gain entry. Known as water dancers, daggermen, or velvet blades, these skilled fencers fight among themselves for glory, fame, or money. They also gather in fighting companies, common throughout the Free Cities. Among the best-known companies are the Stormcrows, Second Sons, and Gallant Men. Each takes any able to prove their worth and numbers around five hundred able-bodied warriors for hire. Among the warriors native to Braavos, the greatest achievement is to be named First Sword of the Sealord, a position of such importance it is immediately filled if the First Sword is killed or goes missing.

Although masters of practical matters of coin and blade, the Braavosi do not ignore spiritual concerns. Indeed, all gods are honored and welcome in Braavos, which even includes the Sept-beyond-the-Sea. Most gods are given temples on an island in the center of the city, where they may follow

their own tenants as long as they do not put the people or wealth of Braavos at risk. Of particular popularity is the Father of Waters, whose temple is rebuilt every year as a mark of his constant change and renewal.

Of course, in Braavos matters of religion often mix with the practical. There exists the Temple of the Many-Faced God, where it is possible to contact the assassins known as the Faceless Men. Killers for hire, the Faceless Men demand great prices, the equivalent of the salary of a full company of fighting men to kill a merchant, many times that for a king or princess. The Faceless Men seem able to change their appearance, making them experts at entering places unobserved and their capture afterward very difficult. The Temple also grants a quiet death to those who seek it, allowing the worn or ill to die with painless dignity rather than starve or suffer some terrible deadly affliction. This option is not seen as cowardly by the Braavosi, who take their independent spirit to the extreme of respecting those who choose their own manner of death.

Lorath

Northwest of Braavos, Lorath rules a chain of three islands in the Shivering Sea, one much larger than the other two. The city of Lorth is situated on the western end of the largest island. Its ruler, the Archon, grants lands to powerful merchants who employ large retinues of guards and fighting companies, making the prospect of taking the city, let alone holding it, very unpleasant for any invader.

The city has extensive textile mills as well, producing some of the finest velvets ever seen. These are often traded for steel weapons, which in turn are taken to trade along the Shivering Sea for furs, ivory, and obsidian. These materials are then traded for the raw materials needed to make more velvet, creating a constant cycle of trade and wealth. Men from Lorath often dress in extremely expensive clothes, and the common perception is that they are likely to be poets and merchants. The main weapon of Lorath is coin, as they hire expert warriors and assassins when they have a need to kill.

Lys

Lys is sometimes referred to as the Perfumed Sister. It is located on a set of islands close to the eastern continent, south of Tyrosh, close to the Disputed Lands, over which it often fights skirmishes and small wars.

Love, beauty, and art are highly valued in Lys, as are the performers who specialize in them. A married man may have an acknowledged concubine, whose skill and beauty are considered to compliment his wife, rather than reflect poorly on her. Many merchant princes patronize artists, performers, and sculptors, paying them to create works to display in their homes or show to the public as proof of their wealth.

This love of an ornate aesthetic permeates most aspects of Lysene life. They are renowned for their gorgeous tapestries, sweet red and white wines, and delicate, exotic perfumes. They enjoy rich foods that seem exotic to the palates of foreigners, and great chefs compete to create new dishes favored by wealthy patrons. Their extensive pleasure houses are a common destination for any visiting dignitary or prince. They even have their own goddess of love, whose name is not spoken of to outsiders but whose beauty is supposedly unmatched in all the heavens. The Lord of Light, also known as R'hllor and the God of Flame and Shadow, also has a temple in the city.

Though as rich in sellswords and bravos as any Free City, Lys is most famous for its healers and alchemists. Though often employed to develop new scents for perfumed nobles, these experts in herbs and elements can also create subtle, complex poisons often kept in hollow rings or crystallized to handle safely until dissolved in a liquid. Luckily, they are also skilled in brewing cures for their own toxins, though not every poison has an antidote.

With a large, wealthy population all striving to prove they are craftsmen and artistes, Lys has an amazingly high slave population. Slaves are used for labor too harsh for Lysene hands, trained to act as guards and soldiers, and even posed for various performances. As such, most slave ships bring their cargoes to Lys first, allowing the wealthiest patrons to buy the cream of their crops. This practice creates a vibrant, active market in the slave trade, which is one of the greatest sources of Lys' income.

Myr

Myr handles its affairs with subtlety and long, complex plots beyond the understanding of their enemies. This tendency earns them a reputation as secretive and manipulative, which the Myrmen cultivate as an asset in their dealings with outsiders.

Myrmen are renowned for their ability to do work in fine details. Myrish lace, ranging in color from the light grey of an ocean mist to the deep blue of the sky and even black, are used to decorate cuffs and collars around the world. Myrish carpets are similarly detailed and valued, with needlework forming complex patterns in bold colors, or even depicting some famous battle or event. Carving is also a high art in Myr, with sculptures from other lands fetching high prices, and local artists producing wooden screens carved into figures, flowers, and flowing curves. Painting in Myr tends toward the extremely detailed, with lockets and small tokens being painted in a bright, vivid style.

Thus, trade in Myr is rarely about raw materials but rather about craftsmanship and knowledge. Their magisters pay handsomely for any lost bits of Valyrian lore, and their artists and craftsmen often purchase items from far-off lands to examine how they are constructed or created. This collection of knowledge allows the Myrmen to built devices beyond the skill of most outsiders, including fine lens works and mechanical crossbows able to fire three bolts at once. Though most citizens of the Free Cities do not trust the Myrmen, no trader-captain sails without a Myrish Eye for far seeing.

Norvos

Norvos is a northern city, further from the sea than most of the Free Cities. It is a land of rolling hills and terraced farms, surrounded by small villages that support the larger city. Called Great Norvos by its citizens, this city is divided into the High City up on the tallest hill in the region, and the Low City located at the base of the hill by the river. A High Magister and a council of religious protectors rule it.

Norvos does not have the same fighting traditions of other Free Cities. However, it is home to an order of bearded priests who are militant. The bearded priests tend to favor the longaxe. Though some join this priesthood willingly, most of their number are unwanted sons sold to the order before they come of age by poor Norvoshi families. By sixteen, these children take vows that "wed" them to their axes and are branded

with an axe-mark across their chest. These priests wear heavy hair caps, leather tunics, and iron caps into battle.

Norvos is well known for its well-crafted tapestries (perfect for warming walls against a chill air), *nahsa* (a drink of fermented goat's milk), terraced farms, stucco walls, and an annual festival that features bears dancing down a path known as the Sinner's Steps.

Pentos

Pentos is located around a bay on the eastern continent, well north of the Stepstones. It is a city where wealth equals power, and where rich magisters rule through bribery, threats, and influence. Wealth can overcome nearly any failing, and even lawbreakers can walk about freely if they have the money to buy forgiveness. The poor and wretched are considered inconsequential. As a result, while there are laws forbidding slavery, many bronze-collared servants of the magisters are slaves, and none dare make issue of this fact.

Spice traders control the square brick towers of Pentos. They comb their forked beards with scented oils and send trade ships with carved figureheads to far-off lands to trade for saffron and peppers. The wealth of Pentos is concentrated among a few powerful citizens, leaving the rest of the city to struggle constantly to serve these elite. Many become performers and may train as singers or tumblers for generations, perfecting their art to an amazing degree and coming to be in demand for celebrations far from Pentos.

Magister Illyrio Mopatis

Illyrio is an enormously wealthy and well-connected merchant from the Free City of Pentos. He trades in all manner of goods, from spices and gemstones, to dragonbone and almost anything else of value. He is as fat as he is wealthy. His hair is yellow, which he wears long, and he keeps a forked beard. He owns extensive lands and buildings in Pentos, as well as many ships. He also owns slaves in a city that forbids them, proving he has the means and influence to flaunt the law.

When Robert's Rebellion drove the last Targaryens, Viserys and Daenerys, into hiding, Illyrio provided them with a home and great comforts. He manipulated Viserys into promising Daenerys in marriage to Khal Drogo, a powerful Dothraki chief. Illyrio's wedding gift to Daenerys was three dragon eggs, a gift that was to prove more valuable than he could possibly have guessed.

Ser Jorah Mormont

Ser Jorah Mormont currently serves Magister Illyrio as a sworn sword, but he too has an interest in the Targaryen heirs, for he secretly works for the Spider in King's Landing and sends reports to the Iron Throne in the hopes of gaining a pardon and permission to return to his family's lands. Further information about Ser Jorah may be found in **Chapter 5: The North** on page 96.

Qohor

Qohor is located in the center of the Forest of Qohor, between Norvos and the Dothraki sea of endless grasslands. It is the land of the Black Goat, an old god worshipped only in Qohor, and of master smiths and craftsmen.

The Forest of Qohor is a wild place of gigantic, gold-leafed elms the size of city gates and of spotted great cats. Though these beasts know not to attack large parties of humans, a smaller group can run afoul of a hungry spotted tiger. The forest provides much of the lumber used by eastern Free Cities for their keels and masts, as well as good fodder to trade to the Dothraki when they come off their mighty sea of grass. The forest is vast and takes roughly two weeks to cross by horse.

The guards of Qohor are exclusively Unsullied, each of whom carries a spear from which a braid of human hair hangs. These affectations commemorate the battle of the Three Thousand, when a group of Unsullied held against twenty thousand Dothraki more than four centuries ago. After the Dothraki *khal* and his sons were killed, the new *khal* rode his remaining forces by the gates of Qohor, and each cut free their braid and threw it to the ground.

The smiths of Qohor are among the most skilled in the world. They have an art of infusing color directly into the steel they make, allowing amazing decorations on weapons and armor that still act as deadly, functional tools of war. The edge of a Qohor weapon is keener than those forged elsewhere, though it must be sharpened like any common sword. It is even rumored the master smiths of Qohor can re-forge broken Valyrian steel.

Tyrosh

Tyrosh is set on one of the Stepstones, just off the coast of the Disputed Lands. The ruler of Tyrosh is the Archon, who is selected from the scions of all noble houses when the old Archon dies. Such elections are often bought with bribes and threats, which are considered both

legal and appropriate—if a scion cannot buy an election, how can he be expected to rule a city?

The Tyroshi have a reputation for greed that is not entirely undeserved. They constantly fight to gain control of the Stepstones and Disputed Lands, often posturing and making threats to their neighbors to gain tactical advantages. Indeed, appearance is very important in Tyrosh. Armors are often colored, with helms shaped like wild beasts or mythical creatures. The Tyroshi wear their beards forked and mustaches pointed, and their hair is dyed bright, shocking colors.

Nearly any vice or commodity can be bought legally in Tyrosh, including slaves and mercenary sellswords in great numbers. When their wars go well, the markets of Tyrosh are full of wonders from around the world. When their wars go poorly, merchants prefer to make port in Braavos, and the Tyrosh markets diminish until a new offensive is undertaken.

Volantis

Volantis is a bustling bazaar city, ruled by three Triarchs, elected annually by the city's old nobility and wealthy merchants. Because of the relative proximity to Slaver's Bay, there is a thriving slave market in Volantis. Local slaves are always tattooed on the face, which prevents them from escaping on the constant flow of ships. Such tattoos are often designed to reveal the slaves' role—fools are tattooed in motley, fighting slaves with weapons and scenes of battle, and pleasure slaves in delicate, curling patterns. Tattooing elsewhere is common among other levels of Volantis culture. Sellswords often tattoo their hands, neck, and arms, while craftsmen may mark their chests or backs.

The Dothraki Sea

East of the Free Cities, through the Forest of Qohor, lies a broken range of mountains riddled with passes. Beyond these mountains lies the Dothraki sea—a vast, flat grassland, home to the Dothraki. Full of packs of wild dogs, herds of free-ranging horses, and grasses that often grow taller than a man's head, the Dothraki sea is as harsh and difficult to navigate as the salt seas encountered by most other cultures. The Dothraki sea is so immense it can support more than two dozen *khalasars,* each riding its own circuits and taking what is needed from the land as they go.

In addition to endless fields of grasses, the Dothraki sea contains large regions of sand. Indeed, sand is more prevalent than water and is used for cleaning by the Dothraki. Even so, the plains are far from lifeless; wild corn and other seeds grow in large enough numbers they can be gathered for the *khalasar* or taken as a gift. Rivers run through the lands, though they are often shallow and shift with the seasons. And of course, a single massive mountain, the Mother of Mountains, rises from the center of the Dothraki sea, at the city of Vaes Dothrak.

The Dothraki

The Dothraki are nomadic warriors who range across the Dothraki sea in hordes known as *khalasars*. They are a large people, with copper skin, dark almond eyes, and black hair. No Dothraki is fat or weak, for only the strong may continue to live with the *khalasar*. They have their own language and rarely bother to learn any other. If communication with others is needful, slaves can be found to translate the Dothraki's words into lesser languages.

Each *khalasar* is ruled by a *khal*, a mighty warrior who rules over his people much as the great lords of Westeros rule over their cities. A powerful enough *khal* has several *kos* (captains) under his command, who have their own *khas* (warriors) assigned to their command. Every *khal* also has a trusted guard of bloodriders, who go everywhere with him, even unto death. If a *khal* marries, and not all do, his wife becomes the *khaleesi*, an honored and trusted woman but not a ruler within the *khalasar*.

The Dothraki are a people of the outdoors, with no desire to live in cities or even in tents if there is no need. Should a feast hall or meeting place be needed, it can be woven from the tall grass of the sea in less than a day, and some sandsilk tents are kept to prevent sand from getting into valued possessions, but the construction of permanent buildings is unknown to the Dothraki. While they once dug dwellings in the ground and covered them with grass roofs, they have not done so in centuries. The Dothraki believe everything important in a man's life should happen under the open sky. They have no desire for privacy and think nothing of mating in full sight of others, especially during an evening's entertainment.

The hair of a Dothraki shows his accomplishments and honor. When a Dothraki first does something of note, he is permitted to braid his hair and attach a small bell. With each victory he earns, his hair is once more adorned. The braid is never cut unless the Dothraki is defeated, in which case it is shorn at the base. If one Dothraki defeats another, he may take the bells of his foe's braid, but the shorn hair is not kept. There is no dishonor in killing another Dothraki as long as it is done in open combat. At major celebrations, Dothraki may fight over women, position, or insult, and it is considered normal for a few to die.

The Dothraki are raiders, taking what they need from those they cross. They eschew armor as craven but otherwise fight with cunning and ingenuity. After a battle, mercy men slay the wounded Dothraki who will never ride again, and girls with baskets gather spent arrows that they may be reused. They do not respect foot soldiers, except the Unsullied who once defeated the westward expansion of Dothraki conquest. It is because of the Unsullied the Dothraki never raid the cities of the Slaver's Bay, though they are also convenient places for the Dothraki to sell slaves taken in raids.

Should a *khal* lose the respect of his *khalasar*, he loses command. If he has an heir, or *khalakka*, who is able to ride, the *khal* goes to die so he may be burned with honor. If the *khalakka* is too young to ride, the *kos* fight among themselves to take control of the *khalasar*. Once a new *khal* is selected, the *khalakka* is slain, so he may never rise to be a rival. No woman had ever ruled a *khalasar*.

Bloodriders

A *khal* has a group of trusted friends, companions, guards, and avengers known as his bloodriders. The bloodriders are in many ways part of the *khal* himself, able to share that which is his (save his horse) and carrying his honor. To sit beneath a bloodrider at a feast is a great honor. The bloodriders and their *khal* call one another "blood of my blood," and this speaks of a bond closer than family or knight to his lord.

Only the *khal* may select his bloodriders, and he chooses those he trusts above all others. A *khal* must enjoy his bloodriders' company, but he must also believe they will place his life above all else. When

The Dosh Khaleen

When a *khaleesi* survives her *khal*, it is the duty of the *khal's* bloodriders to take her safely to Vaes Dothrak, to join the *dosh khaleen*. The *dosh khaleen* are the true rulers of the Dothraki, for even the mightiest of *khal*s obey their decrees and listen to their wisdom. Within the walls of Vaes Dothrak and the shadow of the Mother of Mountains, the *dosh khaleen*'s laws are absolute. Their prophecies drive the Dothraki, and it is at their word the city of Vaes Dothrak is constantly expanded. Gifts are brought to them whenever a *khalasar* or trading caravan comes to Vaes Dothrak, freeing them from having to struggle for food or items of comfort. It is expected the *dosh khaleen* will one day declare a *khal* of *khal*s, the Stallion who Mounts the World, and he will guide the Dothraki to conquer the world.

he wishes to ask a man to become one of his own, the *khal* speaks the words "I ask your oath that you will live and die as blood of my blood, riding at my side to keep me safe from harm." The man replies simply, "blood of my blood," and is a bloodrider from that moment on.

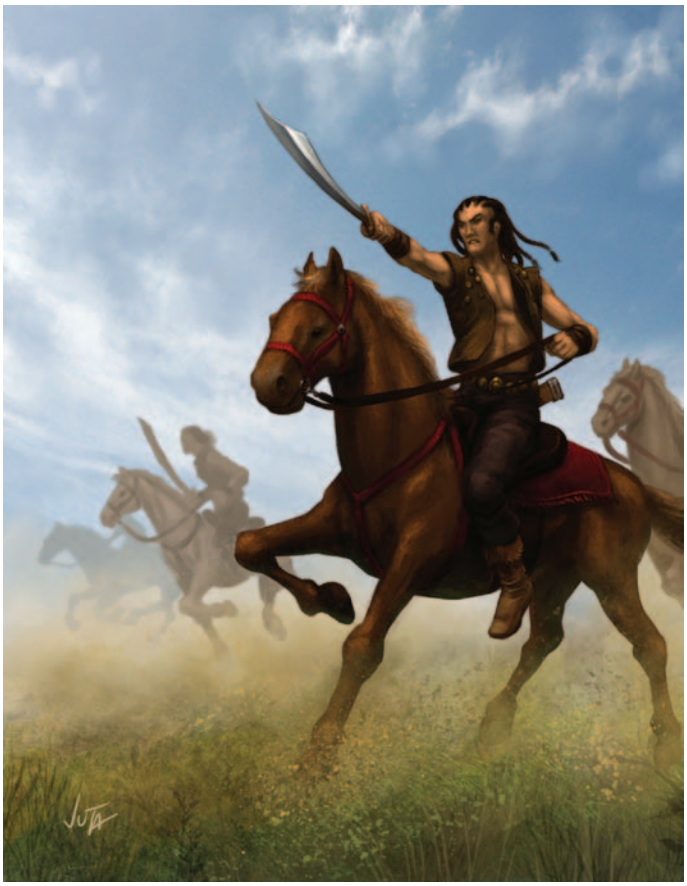
Though the bloodriders are utterly loyal to their *khal*, there are things he cannot ask of them. A *khaleesi* is not allowed to command the bloodriders, who refuse any command she gives. But she does have her own guard, her *khas,* who are loyal to her alone. Should a *khal* die before his bloodriders, they survive him only as long as needed to avenge him. Once done, the last service the bloodriders must perform is to escort the *khaleesi* to Vaes Dothrak, and then they are to join their *khal* in death. As a result, a bloodrider can never succeed a *khal* as heir.

The Horse

The horse is the most important element of Dothraki culture, and one cannot understand them without understanding that. The Dothraki believe in a horse god, and the horse forms the basis of their way of life. A man who cannot ride is not a man and is to be left behind to die at the hands of the wild dog packs that follow every *khalasar*. A child that dies before it can ride does not go to the night lands but is instead reborn so he may ride again. A *khal* may share his tent, goods, and even his wife with his bloodriders but never his horse. When a *khal* dies, his horse is slain and placed on his funeral pyre to carry him into the night lands. The one thing the Dothraki fear is the salt ocean, which they call the Poison Water, as no horse can drink it. Though not expected to ride to war, even a *khaleesi* must ride a horse that honors the power and status of her *khal*.

Their mastery of riding is unmatched by any Westerosi knight. They use saddles that are smaller and flatter, giving them great maneuverability but requiring tremendous skill to use. Their basic unit of war is mounted archery, and they are experts at hitting targets at full gallop with their short, curved bows. They spend much of their lives in the saddle, able to sleep and even make love while riding a horse. A Dothraki's walk has a swagger that comes from growing up riding a horse.

The Dothraki use all parts of their horses. Horsemeat is the preferred food of the Dothraki, and mare's milk a common drink. Older horses are used to pull carts only for the very old, the very young, the sick, and



mothers within days of birth. Horsehides are used for leather, and for the leggings common to all Dothraki in the plains. Though the horse has a position of great importance and respect among the Dothraki, they are not sentimental about their beasts. Horses are not named, and those that cannot serve are eaten and turned into items of use for the *khalasar*.

Vaes Dothrak

At the center of the Dothraki sea sits a single, great purple mountain, the Mother of Mountains. Built around it is Vaes Dothrak, the only city of the Dothraki. This city is the center of the Dothraki culture, a place where all *khalasar*s are one and the shedding of blood is forbidden. It is home to the *dosh khaleen* (see **Sidebar: The *Dosh Khaleen***) and site of the eventual prophesied gathering of all Dothraki.

As one approaches Vaes Dothrak, the giant bronze Horse Gate is the first obvious sign, with the Mother of Mountains centered perfectly within it. Though the archway reaches a hundred feet into the air, it connects to no walls and one could simply walk around it. Vaes Dothrak is a city without walls. Passing through the Horse Gate brings one down the godsway, where statues and holy symbols from a hundred different religions line a path, showing the vast range and power of the Dothraki's conquests.

The godsway ends at the Western Market. Surrounded by animal pens and drinking halls, this maze of stalls and tents of woven grass holds merchants from the Free Cities and the Seven Kingdoms come to trade, often more with each other than the Dothraki. Across the city rests the Eastern Market, with caravans from Yi Ti, Asshai, the Shadow Lands, and lands around the Jade Sea. As it is forbidden to draw a blade

or shed blood within Vaes Dothrak, many of these caravans have massive, slave guards trained to grapple and strangle any thief or assailant to obey the Dothraki laws.

The rest of the city is a mish-mash of bizarre building styles. Because legend says one day all Dothraki will come to live in Vaes Dothrak, it must constantly be expanded to make room for all the people of all the *khalasars*. As the Dothraki do not themselves build such structures, their slaves are given all this construction work. Taken from different places in the world, the slaves build such structures as they know. Thus, the wide lanes and hedgerows of Vaes Dothrak are filled with wooden towers, halls of dried grass, log homes with no roofs, earthen pyramids, and stone buildings and carved pavilions. None are inhabited, and not all are maintained. As the years pass, the Dothraki continue to expand their empty city, where only the *dosh khaleen* dwell permanently.

Many of the statues and artworks of the godsway are defaced, broken, or belong to cultures and peoples long since forgotten, even by their Dothraki conquerors. Only their broken, blind, and mute gods remain as testament to their existence.

LHAZAR

South of the Dothraki sea, but still far from the cities of Slaver's Bay, are the Lhazareen, called *haesh rakhi* or Lamb Men by the Dothraki. A bronze-skinned people with almond eyes, the Lhazareen worship a great Shepherd and believe all humanity is of one flock. They are not warlike by nature, tending to their herds and caring for their own needs. Their location, far from most major cities, helps keep them safe from those who would enslave such a group simply for the profit of selling them. Of course, this does not prevent the mighty Dothraki from preying upon them, but the horselords know to take only what meat and slaves the Lhazar can spare, to ensure they will remain available to be raided upon another year.

Though mostly peaceful, some Lhazareen practice blood magic and can cast rituals with steep prices. These people keep their true nature secret from other Lhazareen, often posing as priestesses of the Great Shepherd, but they truly communicate with darker, shadowed powers.

THE SUMMER ISLES

Far to the south of the Seven Kingdoms are the Summer Islands. A place of fair ebon-skinned people who value beauty, love, and skill, the Summer Islands rarely go to war, as they are too far from other nations to make them an attractive target, nor do they yearn to conquer others. Ruled by princes and queens of summer, the people of these lands believe summer itself flows through their veins, and even in deep winter their lands are warm and pleasant.

Trade to the Summer Isles is light, and as a result, their goods are expensive. Tall swan-ships sometimes travel to King's Landing or Dorne, bringing blond woods, sweet wines, and skilled dancers in feathered costumes. Indeed, feathers are common for the dress of the Summer Islanders, and they have birds of many bright colors that are valued as pets and gifts. People of the Islands tend to be open about themselves and their desires. Indeed, they believe desire is given to them by the gods, so they may worship the gods with their acts. Young nobles often spend a few years in well-respected brothels to honor the gods after they come of age.

THE PORT OF IBBEN

Well east of the Westerosi lands of Winterfell and days of hard travel by sea to the north of the Free Cities lie six cold islands in the Shivering Sea, north of Essos and well east of Lorath and Braavos. One is large and heavily populated, the other five quite small. Together they make up the nation of Ib. The large island is Ibben, home of the Port of Ibben.

The Ibbenese hunt whales in large, round-bottomed ships they cover in tar. They leave their leathers covered in hair and make shields from the hide of some shaggy creature. As the Isle of Ib is locked in endless winter, the Ibbenese have adapted to a life of constant cold, and they care nothing for the question of when spring may come. They are a simple, isolated people with little interest in the world beyond their own frigid seas.

QARTH

Qarth is a mighty and ancient city in the distant east, beyond the Red Wastes, on the shores of the Jade Sea. Its position makes it the gateway between the lands of the Free Cities and Slaver's Bay, and more eastern lands such as Asshai, the Shadow Lands, and Yi Ti. Having been at the crucial point for centuries, Qarth has used its fantastic wealth to build a city of wonders and marvels so great, legend claims travelers often put out their eyes upon seeing it, as no city will ever compare. Its streets are lined with bronze statues, its fountains carved to form the shapes of fantastic creatures, and its thoroughfares lined with arches of bronze decorated in precious stones.

The rulers of Qarth are the Pureborn, descendents of the original settlers of the city's naturally sheltered harbor. Seated in the Hall of the Thousand Thrones, all matters of civic importance are decided by all the Pureborn together. They command the civic guard, the largest armed force within Qarth, which patrols the three walls of the city. The Pureborn also control the ships patrolling the straights of Qarth, fighting off pirates and demanding taxes from any ship sailing their waters. The Pureborn gather great wealth but use much of it to run the city. As a result, they almost never loan money to others or undertake any endeavor that does not directly increase the city's power and wealth—or line their own pockets of course.

The three walls of Qarth have not been used for defense in centuries, but they still stand, representing the power of the city. The outmost wall is a thirty-foot tall mural of red sandstone showing thousands of animals both local and foreign. The second wall stands ten feet higher and is simple granite, on which scenes of war have been carved. The final black marble inner wall is fifty-feet tall and etched with explicit depictions of sexual acts. Patrolling these walls are guards in scaled copper armor with bestial faces and silk and fine cloth under their armor, showing the wealth of even the warriors of the city.

Beyond the Pureborn, two other groups wield power within Qarth. The three great merchant houses, the Ancient Guild of Spicers, the Tourmaline Brotherhood, and the Thirteen all struggle for political and financial dominance over one another and the Pureborn. Each guild

commands close to a thousand merchant ships, dealing in bronze, fish, silk, amber, tiger skins, onyx, saffron, pepper, wine, bales of sourleaf, and slaves. A merchant's house may be the size of an entire modest town, with multiple gardens, marble bathing pools, scrying towers, marble floors, silk curtained doorways, and plush cushions for guests to sit upon while slaves see to their every need.

The people of Qarth are inscrutable to outsiders. While vicious, the Qartheen are also polite, even as they plan to kill their enemies. They cry easily and often, seeing it as a civilized behavior. They separate their massive enclosed bazaar with goods from around the world from their black market of stolen items sold along the docks. On a couple's wedding day, though husband and wife retain their own possessions, each may ask of the other a boon that may not be refused. Even their assassins guild, called the Sorrowful Men, are respectful, as each whispers, "I am so sorry," to a victim before taking a life.

At one time, a third power vied for control of the city, the blue-lipped Warlocks of Qarth. Their mighty House of the Undying is long since a grey stone ruin, neither repaired nor expanded upon. Though legend speaks of the mighty power of the Warlocks, they have done little in the past century. Even so, though many enter the Warlock's Palace of Dust, none leave again.

THE GHISCARI CITIES

Located around the vast Slaver's Bay, north of the Gulf of Grief and the Summer Sea, the Ghiscari cities of Astapor, Meereen, and Yunkai are the descendents of Old Ghis. An empire older than Old Valyria, Old Ghis was utterly destroyed by Valyria's dragons. Its walls were brought down, its streets torn apart, and its people scattered. Although the Ghiscari cities trace their roots back to Old Ghis, they are in fact mongrels of a dozen races and peoples driven together by the empire and its fall. They no longer even speak Ghis, instead using a bastardized form of High Valyrian (though they still retain their own written form of glyphs). Even their old gods were lost, and the history of their defeat leaves all Ghiscari lusting for the power of dragons of their own.

The ruling class of the Ghiscari cities survives only because of their slave-driven economy. The wrapped cloth of the Good Masters must be held in place with one hand when they walk, and their women veil their faces to keep the stinging dust of the streets from their delicate eyes. The ruling class does not work and is waited on hand and foot. Slaves do all skilled crafting, physical labor, and fighting. The Ghiscari glorious step pyramids are built and maintained by hoards of slaves, and it is said their blood stains the bricks red.

Slaves are trained to work, pit-fight, or act as bed slaves. Most slaves are cheap, many costing less than a decent sword or a good camel. The Good Masters have been training slaves for generations and are experts at breaking a new slave's will to rebuild him to serve a specific duty.

Most famous of all the Ghiscari slaves are the Unsullied, who are not allowed a name of their own. Eunuchs trained to fight and die at their master's command, the Unsullied see themselves as tools, to be honed or broken as their owners please. They know no fear, hope, or aspirations of their own, making them perfectly disciplined soldiers. It takes ten years to train an Unsullied, and unlike other slaves, they are expensive, costing more than any mere beast of burden.

ASSHAI & THE SHADOW LANDS

Even as the Free Cities and the Dothraki sea seem far and foreign to the people of Westeros, so do the lands of Asshai and the Shadow seem distant and bizarre to the people of the eastern continent. To reach them requires either a long sea voyage across the Summer Sea, the Straits of Qarth and the Jade Sea, or a nearly impossible land passage through the Dothraki sea and then far to the south through a wasteland.

The Asshai are known to produce dragonglass and amber, though their method of doing so is unknown. They are great scholars of an ancient culture, gathering lore about magic and dragons from times long past. Ancient books of the Asshai also tell of the coming of Azor Ahai, a prophesied return of R'hllor as the Warrior of Light. Also called the Prince that was Promised and Son of Fire, Azor Ahai is said to bear a flaming sword named *Lightbringer,* the Red Sword of Heroes, and to raise dragons of stone.

The Dothraki say those from the Shadow Lands are the spawn of true shadow, and those who claim such nationality wear red lacquer masks that hide their features and cover their arms, legs, and chests with tattoos. Despite this superstition and strangeness, ships from many ports come to Asshai and the Shadow Lands regularly, for the opportunity to trade in such exotic and rare materials is too great for some merchant-traders to resist.

CHAPTER 14: EXPLORING WESTEROS

Westeros is a big place with a long history and a cast of thousands. With all the circumstances leading up to the events of the first novel and then the War of the Five Kings, Narrators may find it daunting to run chronicles in this setting. This chapter serves to guide you through the process of using the material in this book, and it is full of specific hints and tips to help you bring Westeros to life. The chapter is in four sections.

The first two sections concern the look and feel of Westeros. The look gives hints on how to make the scenery look like Westeros and make the players feel that they are acting in Westeros, not a generic pseudo-medieval world. The feel is concerned with the themes and motifs of the books and ways in which you can incorporate them into your game. *A Song of Ice and Fire* is not about heroes who kill dragons and rescue princesses—it is much more complex, often epic in scope, and regularly much darker than that. This section covers specific points you can incorporate into your games and practical problems you should be aware of.

The third section looks at ways to deal with player characters' actions that undermine the plot of the novels. The novels cover so much of Westeros and encompass so many characters that it becomes hard to isolate player actions. Even if you did, it would likely mean avoiding the most distinctive places and characters, which are the very things that drew the players to the setting in the first place. There are ways to minimize this problem, and they are discussed here.

Finally, there are a number of concrete suggestions for adventures and campaign structures, both to spark your imagination and to provide some concrete examples of the principles discussed earlier.

THE LOOK

The first task is to make your chronicle look like *A Song of Ice and Fire* campaign, not a generic pseudo-medieval fantasy campaign or, indeed, a historical medieval campaign. Westeros is, in general terms, a lot like western medieval Europe. Magic is limited and generally subtle, and there are no living dragons. A generic Westerosi village looks roughly the same as a generic medieval village (with the exception that farmers in Westeros grow maize). This means there are two main legs on which your attempts to create the right impression should stand. The first is avoiding details that do not feel medieval, and the second is using specific details from the novels. This section discusses specific ways to do both of these.

"They were looking for a girl, but they thought she was a boy. She'd be a boy, then."

—Arya Stark, *A Game of Thrones*

Food

The biggest problem for food in a medieval setting is preservation. Food goes bad and can do so very quickly in some cases. The best way to preserve meat is to not kill it, so noble houses eat as soon as possible after slaughtering the animals. Grains keep better when not prepared, so bread is baked and porridge made as needed. If it is necessary to preserve foodstuffs, such as sea fish, salting, smoking, and drying are the main methods. Thus, if the location is far from the sea, any sea fish will be salted or smoked. In most cases, food is prepared very shortly before eating, though dried foods are the main exception to this rule—dried meat, hard biscuits, and the like. Dry foods are much slower to rot.

The best way to give food flavor in a game is to have it be from somewhere specific. Many people praise Arbor Gold as the finest wine in the world, but others favor Dornish wine, dry and strong. Summerwine is a sweet drink, largely from the Arbor and riverlands. This can easily be extended by reasonable extrapolation. A noble in the North might seek to impress his guests by serving olives from Dorne, while one in the riverlands might have a meal where every course is obviously imported from a distance, just to emphasize the extent of his wealth. Most food is sourced locally, but if a meal is important enough to the plot to be worth describing, it is probably worth mentioning where the dishes come from. This could even have further significance—the first hints that a northern house has close links to the south could be the presence of several Dornish imports in the feasts that they offer. On the other hand, the fact that a lord limits a whole feast to local fare could hint at financial difficulties; he has no cash with which to buy at the market, and so he must rely on the products of his lands.

Material Goods

The basic rule for material goods is that everything is individually handcrafted. Even castles are built by hand—there are just a lot of hands involved. Electricity has not been harnessed, and anything that relies on chemistry more complex than burning, like wildfire, is at least partially magical. Obviously, there are no plastics, or other artificial fibers. There is no clockwork on Westeros, though there may to be to the east. Myrish technology appears to be rather more advanced, including telescopes and mirrors of silvered glass, as opposed to polished silver.

If you do not have any training in engineering, then a good rule of thumb is that if it is handcrafted and you know how it works, it is a reasonable item to include in the world. This does not mean that you know how to make it—you might have no idea how to make gold leaf, but you know how it works because it just sits there and reflects light. Note the technology available in Westeros does not correspond to any period of real-world history: there are telescopes but no gunpowder, but gunpowder was historically in general use for over a century before the telescope was invented. Thus, while histories of technology may be useful for inspiration, there is no reason to worry about details.

As with food, the best way to tie products to the Seven Kingdoms is to say where they were made or who made them. As everything is handcrafted, skilled craftsmen get a reputation, and the origin of an item could become important for many reasons. It might be a piece of evidence in a crime, or something offered as a gift that should not be in the hands of the giver. While many craftsmen are independent, others serve a particular lord, which means that work can often be traced back to whoever initially commissioned it. If the item is expensive, the craftsman almost certainly remembers who bought it, though he may not want to say. If the craftsman is in service to a certain lord and yet did work for another party, he may not want to divulge his involvement unless he had his lord's explicit permission.

Transport

Travel and transport are slow, uncomfortable, and expensive. Carts and wagons are slower than a walking man, unless the road is very good, but they can carry much more than a horse. Very good roads are a rarity in Westeros. Most are little more than mud tracks or game trails. On the other hand, outside a town they are rarely rutted because they are so wide that the few carts that use them do not constantly cover the same ground. Wheelhouses, large enclosed carriages, are used by traveling noblewomen of the greatest status, but they are ponderously slow.

Water travel can be reasonably quick, and a boat can carry far more goods than any land vehicle. Thus, most trade goes by water, and it is not uncommon to buy passage on a ship or boat. Of course, unless you are very wealthy, you can only go to wherever the boat is going. If you want to get from King's Landing to Braavos, it's not a problem, but getting from Storm's End to White Harbor is likely to involve at least one intermediate stop. Travel on a river is significantly faster going downstream, but most riverboats tie up at night, as navigation in the dark is too dangerous. Sea-going ships often keep up their speeds night and day, and this makes them faster even when their speed at any one moment is not particularly high.

There are no organized transportation networks. Instead, every leg of a journey must be negotiated individually, which can delay things a great deal. Even a lone man walking may deem it wise to find a group with which to travel in many areas, and groups may deem it wise not to pick up unknown strangers.

Because travel is difficult, it makes a good obstacle in stories. Storms, bandits, and damaged bridges or flooded fords can drive them out of their way. A storm can drive a sailing vessel a very long way from its intended destination, dropping the characters in the location you want for the next story. On the other hand, a simple broken bridge can force the characters to pass near a particular town, entangling them in further plot points.

Forcing the characters to travel is also good because a lot of the viewpoint characters in *A Song of Ice and Fire* travel a great deal, so it captures the feel of the books. It takes the characters to more locations in Westeros and makes it more plausible they could meet a large number of the characters. You do not need to send them from the North to Dorne, or vice versa, but setting the entire campaign in a single castle makes it harder to capture the feel of the setting than, perhaps, it needs to be.

Organizations

The most important feature of organizations is that they are all on a human scale. They have, at most, a few hundred members, not thousands. If an organization is larger, it is made up of a number of smaller groups, and the loyalty of the members is primarily to the smaller group. An army is the prime example of a larger group—it is made up of units fol-

lowing particular nobles, and the followers of a given lord are more loyal to him than to the leader of the army as a whole. The Night's Watch is fundamentally divided between the garrisoned castles, and each garrison is of this scale.

This means there are very few organizations that span the whole of Westeros. Indeed, the maesters of the Citadel and the septons of the Faith are probably the only two, and in the case of the maesters, once an acolyte forges his chain he's bound to attend some noble in a far-flung castle with little contact with his order. The Faith, however, is far larger. There are thousands of septons, and they are all ultimately loyal to the High Septon and the Faith as a whole.

There are many types of organizations. Merchants and craftsmen form guilds, outlaws form bands, mercenaries form companies, nobles form marriage alliances and join houses, and plotters form secret societies. Many diverse groups are mentioned in the books, and characters can encounter members of them. While an encounter with a Faceless Man is likely to go badly for the characters unless they can form an alliance to deal with this threat, conflict with the Bloody Mummers might be on more equal terms. And not every encounter should be combat oriented. The characters can seek advice from maesters, befriend merchants, or deal with the Alchemists' Guild.

One advantage of using an organization mentioned in the books is that none are given a full membership list, so there are clearly other members. This means the characters can have a definite Seven Kingdoms experience because they are talking to a maester wearing his chain, without either having to ignore things that they know from the books or worry about what will happen if they betray him and leave him to rot.

Businesses

Much like organizations, businesses tend to be small scale. A craftsman runs a single workshop and sells his products from a room at the front of his workplace. He most likely lives upstairs, and his apprentice sleeps under the workbench. A wealthy merchant might own warehouses and shops in two or more towns, at the ends of his trade routes, but middling merchants only own their premises in one town, if that. Rented premises are very common, but again, landlords with land in multiple towns are rare outside the nobility. It is common for businesses to pass from parent to child; father to son is most common, but the other combinations are not unusual enough to be worthy of comment. If a business does not pass to a child, it almost invariably passes to a former apprentice. Children are often apprenticed to their parents and, thus, score on both counts. In the absence of a child or apprentice, the business dies with the trader. There are very few companies with some sort of existence beyond the particular members, and most of those are mercenary companies. Things are a little different on the eastern continent, but even there family businesses are the rule, not the exception.

The businesses mentioned by name in the novels are almost all taverns or brothels because these are centers of travel and waypoints for those journeying long distances. Taverns and brothels are often good places for intrigue, business, and assassination. Taverns and brothels are, helpfully, good places for people to meet and stories to start, and it would be a shame to have the characters visit King's Landing without paying their respects at Chataya's.

Places

One of the two best ways to make your game look like the novels is to take it to the places that are important in the novels. That means the specific locations: not just a large castle but Winterfell or Harrenhal; not just a city but King's Landing or Oldtown. The places themselves are described elsewhere in this book, and you can take further details from the novels if you need them. This section discusses the practical aspects of including places in your game—getting the characters there and making them feel that they are in the location.

In some cases, you can base the characters in one of the books' locations. If you are playing the Starks, for example, you are naturally based at Winterfell. However, playing characters from the books is normally not a good idea, as the game can easily slide into arguments about whether it is out of character for Arya to actually crack Sansa over the head and drop her down the well, as opposed to just fantasizing about it. Rather, the characters are likely to be members of a minor house that is either your own creation or a very minor feature of the books, and their home base will therefore also be your own. Thus, you have to move the characters around to take them to established locations. As mentioned above, travel is a major feature of the books and, thus, a good thing to include. However, you need to give them reasons to travel. These fall into two classes. The first arises from the background and gives the characters a reason to travel to the place where a story will start. The second arises from particular stories and gives the characters a reason to travel to the next location. These categories are not absolutely distinct, but they are still useful. Essentially, the reasons in the first class exist as soon as you decide to run a game in Westeros, while those in the second need to be set up specifically for your chronicle.

There are a number of reasons falling into the first class. The first, and most common, is the need for bannermen to occasionally attend on their lords. Thus, it is a good idea to attach the characters to a house with a well-described seat; the Starks, the Arryns, and the Tullys are all strong possibilities, but Stannis Baratheon, Balon Greyjoy, and even Renly Baratheon should not be neglected. From this perspective, it is best to avoid attaching the characters directly to the king because all nobles have an occasional need to travel to the royal court in King's Landing. If their immediate liege is some lesser lord, the characters have ready-made reasons to travel to two locations.

The second, almost as common as the first, is the existence of alliances of blood, marriage, and friendship between the noble houses in an area. Nobles visit their friends, just as anyone else. Of course, in the Seven Kingdoms, there are likely to be deeper and murkier motives as well, but it is still a good reason to travel somewhere. So you should give the characters links to other noble houses with seats that are at least named and, ideally, described in passing. These links can also take the characters out of their own area. The Seven Kingdoms are united, and it is not impossible for a house in the North to be related by marriage to one in the stormlands—or for it to seek such an alliance.

As mentioned in **Chapter Two: Westeros Culture**, tournaments are very popular entertainment with the nobility, and a large tournament can draw participants from across Westeros. A Dornishman would probably need an additional reason to travel to a tournament at Winterfell, but a simple desire to participate could take him as far as Riverrun without stretching plausibility.

While a noble's duty to his liege requires him to attend his lord, it might also require him to go elsewhere, serving his lord's will. The liege lord tells the characters to go somewhere, and go they must. It might even be phrased as a request, but it is still impossible to refuse. Westeros is not in a state of open war (yet), so these duties are normally diplomatic, which is helpful. It tends to make for better stories if the characters have the opportunity to talk before any fighting starts. Diplomacy does frequently go wrong, of course. Such a situation could take the characters almost anywhere, even beyond Westeros. It is true that the great houses are unlikely to send noble bannermen to Astapor, but it is possible.

Finally, as mentioned earlier, travel is not a fast, reliable process on Westeros. Once the characters are on the road, they are committed to visiting other places in between, and difficulties on the journey might send them a long way from their intended route. You could easily start a campaign with the characters being sent to Astapor, and then run the whole thing without leaving Westeros, as the characters get caught up in events on their journey.

Most of these reasons can be overused. This is easiest with difficulties of travel. Players quickly become skeptical if they always encounter storms, ruined bridges, and dangerous bandits. Similarly, while tournaments are common, they are not happening all the time. On the other hand, if your campaign covers a significant amount of time, the characters would naturally be required to visit their liege on a number of occasions, and it would be natural for them to pay a number of visits to their friends. The plausibility of their being sent on missions for their liege depends on how well they do the first time; a striking success could well lead to them being called upon again and again, while a notable failure should make them very suspicious of any subsequent requests. The best thing to do, then, is to mix and match them, and mix in reasons specific to a single story.

That brings us to the second class of reasons. The most obvious way that a story can send the characters to a particular place is by requiring them to speak to a named person, who happens to be found there. This could be the need to speak to a maester at the Citadel, or a maester elsewhere renowned for his expertise. It could be a desire to find a bride from a particular family, or even a particular noble daughter. There may have been an insult, or misunderstanding, that may lead to war if not mended with personal contact, and the insulted party is hardly going to take the initiative and travel to meet the characters. This reason is a very good one, as it can be combined with introducing a character from the novels, and it also makes it clear what the characters should do when they arrive at their destination.

The other obvious type of reason is the quest for a particular object. In Westeros, this object is unlikely to be a ring that can control the world and much more likely to be a family heirloom, such as a blade of Valyrian steel that has been lost or stolen. This type of quest can also work the other way around—the characters might have the object and need to know where, or who, it came from. The first bit of the trail takes them to a location, where they need to ask questions. A variation on this is when the characters need to visit a particular place. They may be searching for the children of the forest, for example, or simply wish to pray at a particular sept.

Finally, the events of the story might make it imperative that the characters leave their current location. Maybe a scheme fell apart, or they were betrayed by their former allies. In this case, the characters do not initially care where they are going, which makes it easy to guide them to where you want them to go.

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Once you have the characters at a location, you have to make them feel like they are somewhere in the books. Simply saying, "You arrive in Winterfell" is an important part of this, but it is not enough. If the place just feels like a generic castle after they get there, the fact that you (metaphorically) painted "Winterfell" on the walls will not help. Description can help with this, but it is very easy to overdo it. Most players do not want to sit and listen to your detailed word portrait of a great castle—they want to play. A short build-up is likely to be most effective. Describe the most striking features of the location, and finish by naming it. Then, get on with playing.

The trick is to make play include distinctive features of the location. For example, Winterfell is warmed by natural hot springs, which are piped through the walls. If these springs are a central part of the events, then the action is clearly happening at Winterfell, not elsewhere. This does not mean describing the springs. It means having an important object dropped into them, or an important fight happen around and within them.

This, in fact, makes your job easier because you only need to pick one feature, rather than trying to extract a comprehensive and correct description from the novels. (And it should be noted Martin is deliberately vague on floor plans and the like, so the task is likely impossible.) The secret tunnels in the Red Keep can be the setting for part of a story without needing a full map, and while the characters are in the tunnels, you do not need to worry about what the Tower of the Hand looks like.

It is important to pick a detail that your players will remember from the books, and for that, you must know your players. Most readers are likely to remember the tunnels in the Red Keep or the hot springs at Winterfell, but they may not remember the details of where Arya ran to before she found herself in those tunnels. Of course, your players may know the entire series by heart, in which case you can rely on details as subtle as you desire.

On a return visit to the same location, you should make another feature central. So, the story of the second visit to Winterfell might hinge on the double walls, or the poor state of repair of the Old Keep. Therefore, you should choose somewhere central to the novels when picking somewhere the characters will visit repeatedly; the more action that happens there, the more details there are to build into a story. If you always use the same detail, players will start wondering whether there are any actual buildings in the Red Keep, or whether it is all tunnels.

Locations mentioned in passing are perfectly adequate for a single visit. The Mormonts are from Bear Island, which is wooded and crossed by streams. That is enough detail for one story. Something happens in the woods, which requires crossing the streams, and the fact that it is an island can confine people while there is a storm. For repeat visits, you would have to develop the location beyond its description in the books, however, so unless you particularly want to do so, it is best to write such locations in as one-off trips.

This focus on details also helps to stop locations blurring into one another. If the story involved a fight around a hot spring, the players will be able to remember where it took place. "We fought him by the hot springs, so we must have met him at Winterfell." When the players react to the reappearance of an old foe like this, you know that you have brought the locations of Westeros to life.

People

Finally comes the most important point. The novels are built around their characters, and for players to feel they are in Westeros, their characters must meet those characters. They should not just get to see Jaime Lannister from a distance, either. They should have chances to talk to him, face him in a tourney, and even become friendly. This might lead to problems where the events of the game make events in the novels impossible, but you should not avoid those issues by keeping your player characters away from Martin's. This topic is important, and a later section discusses ways to deal with such complications. This section, however, is concerned with ways to incorporate major characters into your game.

The most important thing to remember is that the player characters are the central characters in your game. The characters from the books should be significant supporting characters, but they must not overshadow the player characters. The conflicts at the heart of your adventures should be resolved by the player characters, not by Tyrion Lannister. On the other hand, the characters from the books should be important in the adventures, not just background color.

The easiest role is patron, and the most obvious kind of patron is liege lord. Nobles have very good reasons to talk to their lord—and equally good reasons to do as they are told. Powerful lords like Eddard Stark also have good reasons not to micromanage their bannermen. Simply, too much is going on for them to give detailed instructions on everything. Thus, the patron sets a task and certain conditions on achieving it, and he expects a report afterwards. For the player characters, gaining the patron's favor is important, so the final report is a significant part of the adventure, particularly if they were less than completely successful in their task or violated the conditions.

While liege lords are the most obvious patrons, they are not the only possibilities. Powerful figures are often restricted by their positions and may need things done that violate those restrictions. Ser Barristan Selmy might need agents who can deal with the underworld of King's Landing, and Lord Tywin Lannister always needs more dupes.

A related role is reward. A friendly encounter with a major character from the books is a suitable reward for a successful adventure, which makes the personal encounter more significant because it is clear not just anyone is so honored. After the initial meeting, the character can move to a new role: patron and contact are both obvious possibilities, but given the complexities of Westerosi politics, a secret enemy is certainly not impossible.

For this to work, the encounter must be one that is not available to just anyone. For most high nobles, any private audience that goes beyond banal pleasantries falls into this category. Other characters may provide more or less discrete rewards, however. Being intimate with Alayaya is easy for anyone with money; getting her to confess the preferences of her regular clients, on the other hand, is not. And that is information that could be very useful in the politics of King's Landing.

To give the players a sense of the importance of the reward it is a good idea to have an encounter in which they do not get the sort of audience they would like. You can even build this up over time for the

least accessible figures. For example, the first time the characters arrive in King's Landing, they have to crowd into the audience chamber with everyone else. After a success, they are escorted in first, into a good location. The next time, their names are announced, and the king acknowledges their presence. And so it continues until they are called to a private audience with the king in the middle of the night.

The characters from the books can also serve as contacts who supply information to the player characters and guide them towards the next step of the adventure. Knowing whom to ask is an important skill, and none of the established characters knows everything, save perhaps Varys. So it is relatively easy to make the information provided useful, and the encounter important, without taking the possibility for action away from the player characters.

It is often a good idea to avoid using established characters as the primary rivals or enemies of the player characters. However, they can become allies as long as they have good reasons not to provide too much concrete help. One obvious way is to have the ally be distant. Tyrion Lannister might be a close ally, but if the player characters hold lands along the Wall, he will not be in a position to take direct action in most adventures. Another possibility is for him to be busy, or have overriding duties. Grand Maester Pycelle has many duties for the king and, thus, cannot afford to spend a lot of time helping the characters, no matter how much he likes them, while Benjen Stark cannot leave the Wall for very long. Finally, the ally might have a lot of power—but of a type that is not very relevant to the main concerns of the characters. The characters can be Howland Reed's most favored friends, and he still can't help them much in the politics of the court at King's Landing. If they ever need to run to the Neck, however, they will find safe haven.

Allies have to help the characters sometimes, or they are hardly allies. There are two main ways to make sure that this aid does not displace the characters from center stage. First, make the characters earn the alliance through play. If they have fought for it, the support they receive is due to their actions, not just due to you pulling their fat out of the fire. If past betrayals can come back to haunt them, then it's only fair for past loyalties to come back to save them, at least on occasion. Second, the aid should not resolve the whole adventure. Rather, it should resolve a major obstacle, leaving tasks that are within the characters' capabilities.

The major characters can also be background scenery—characters who appear in one scene and then pass out of the game again. This approach can be over-done, for example, if the characters meet a different noble family every night as they travel down the kingsroad, but it can also be neglected. If the characters are at court in King's Landing, they *should* bump into the Kingsguard, Varys, Petyr Baelish, and Jon Arryn at various times. If they never quite manage to meet them, that itself becomes strained.

Whatever role the book characters play, you need to introduce them. In some cases, this introduction will be set up in the game's background. The characters' liege lord, for example, is normally fixed before play begins. As play progresses, the connections between the nobility of Westeros will naturally draw other characters in. If the characters are sworn to the Starks, it is natural for them to deal with the Tullys, the Arryns, and the king himself. That, in turn, draws in the Lannisters, Littlefinger, and anyone else in King's Landing. Similarly, a maester is already linked to the other maesters around him, and back to the Citadel. These connections do not feel forced.

On the other hand, you can probably get away with a chance encounter once in a campaign. A storm forces the characters to take shelter in the same inn as Ser Jaime Lannister, who is very vague about why he is not at court. They are visiting their liege when the Tyrells unexpectedly turn up, and they are seated next to Lady Olenna at the obligatory feast. They bump into Littlefinger at Chataya's. Done once, this can be very effective, demonstrating that the course of history is not governed by the plans of lords and ladies. Done repeatedly, it kills suspension of disbelief.

Of course, once you have introduced the characters and given them a role, you have to play them. Have them act in a way consistent with their personality as portrayed in the novels. A kind-hearted, forgiving Cersei will put the players instantly on their guard, and if she *doesn't* have a vile plot requiring her to dissemble, the players are likely to be very disappointed. While this book gives thumbnail portraits of the major characters, you will also need to rely on what you have gathered from the novels.

The trick mentioned for places works well for people as well. In a particular story, have one of the character's notable foibles drive her behavior. Cersei's concern for Joffrey, Catelyn's dislike for Jon, Brienne's infatuation with Renly. These can all be the main motivation for a particular action. As the character recurs, you should use other aspects of her personality, so she gradually becomes more rounded. Even Martin does this: Jaime is a much more rounded figure by the end of *A Feast for Crows* than he is at the beginning of *A Game of Thrones.*

It is important to remember your Cersei will not be the same as Martin's. You are showing her in different situations—and before the events of the novels have taken place. The players should also accept your portrayal and not complain about inconsistencies with a couple of sentences buried deep in one of the novels. This is a game, not a thesis on *A Song of Ice and Fire.* Fidelity to the books is important exactly to the extent it enhances the fun of the game for all concerned. Beyond that, more fidelity is a bad thing.

If the thought of playing an NPC makes you stressed, you are trying to be too accurate. If the players constantly forget which character they are talking to, you are not being accurate enough. In between, you are probably doing fine.

THE FEEL

The look of your game is only half the story. You probably also want your game to feel like the novels. This is not, in fact, essential—if you want to play slapstick and farce in Westeros, then go ahead. Just make sure the players are aware, in advance, you intend your game to bear very little resemblance to the books. In most cases, however, people want to roleplay in Westeros in order to feel as though they are participating in Martin's world, and the feel is a very important part of that world.

The one-word summary of the atmosphere of *A Song of Ice and Fire* is "dark." Bad things happen to good people. Bad things happen to bad people, too, which is helpful for the plot because good people are very thin on the ground. Tyrion Lannister is arguably the most admirable character in the novels. Martin has said, and demonstrated, none of his characters are safe; any of them could die. And the death need not be heroic.

So, even if your players say they want to play in such a world, it is a good idea to talk through what that means in advance. You must talk about the possibility of character death. To be really true to the books, at least one player character should die in each chronicle arc, and at the very least, you should do nothing to save them if they get themselves in trouble. Striking player characters down in circumstances they cannot reasonably predict or avoid would also be true to the books but should probably be avoided in games. However, your players may not be happy with the idea of their characters dying due to unnecessary misunderstandings, and you should respect that. There are plenty of ways to capture the feel of the books even without that element.

The rest of this section discusses more concrete aspects of the feel of Westeros and ways to incorporate those aspects into your games. You shouldn't feel that you need to use every aspect in your campaign, and you certainly don't need to draw them all into every session. If a session exemplifies two or three of these points, the feel will be there.

Murky Morals

Westeros is not a world of black and white. There are no paragons of virtue and no black-hearted villains with absolutely no redeeming features. Admittedly, there are characters who come quite close to being utter villains, but there are no characters without significant moral flaws. Even the characters who come closest to being villains often act for reasons that can be admired. They might act to support justice or out of love for someone. Their lack of concern for the effects of their actions on everyone else means they are still villainous, however. On the other side, the more heroic characters sometimes commit murder out of petty spite.

This complexity should be reflected in the characters you and the players create. The player characters are likely, in most cases, to be on the more heroic side of the balance. If so, the player should think in some detail about what makes the character heroic. Is it loyalty to his family? Religious faith? A deep-seated sense of compassion? At least two elements should be driving his virtue. The player should also think about what could make the character act in an apparently evil way. A threat to his family? Blasphemy? Deliberate cruelty? Finally, give him a trivial virtue and a trivial vice, something like "kind to dogs" or "drinks too much," something that does not drive his whole character but which could drive a single critical decision.

Some players might want to design characters on the other side of the balance. In this case, you can simply invert the balance between forces driving the character to evil and to good. Maybe the character hates another noble house and enjoys humiliating people. Or perhaps, he wants to gather personal power and be treated as an equal by those who have power already. Or he might love another person so much that he would sacrifice anyone, even himself if absolutely necessary, for their sake.

When designing Narrator characters, you do not need to go into as much detail because they might only be destined for a single scene. Recurring characters should be given this attention, however. In particular, you should consider making the main antagonist of the campaign heroic but with strong reasons to oppose the player characters. Sitting down and working out their differences is not possible, which makes the player characters' actions somewhat dubious.

You should also bear this point in mind in scenario design. One reason for requiring characters to have at least two motives driving their virtue or vice is that you can then design adventures that put these in conflict. What happens when honor and family pull in different directions? There should not be a right answer, though there may be wrong ones. The best available choices should have significant downsides. A similar technique is to create situations in which the morally right decision is not prudentially right. It might not be honorable to poison your enemy at a banquet, but failing to do so might have truly disastrous consequences, such as him poisoning your family, instead. If the characters are basically villainous, then put them in situations where the morally right choice is prudentially better, and if they curb their irrational hatred of another family, they will do a lot better. Being purely good or purely evil should be a poor strategy for success.

Family

Families are very important in Westeros. This does not mean that everyone lives in a happy family—though the Starks come close—before everything starts. Rather, it means that everyone's relations with their relatives matter. Family matters, and intra-family relations are passionate.

More than that, family members are expected to be loyal to one another and to support one another, even if they do not like their siblings or parents. This expectation is often fulfilled—families do work together, and members do not betray one another. Even if they fight among themselves, they quickly unite against outsiders.

One benefit of this feature is that it provides an easy way to get the player characters to work together; just make them all members of one family. There might be tensions within the group, but there is a strong reason for them to stay together. It also provides useful hooks to draw the characters into adventures—they have a duty to support their family, and failing to do so has its own consequences. From a different perspective, if the main antagonist is a close relative of one or more player characters, there are strong social pressures limiting just how directly the characters can attack one another, which can broaden the range of possible stories.

Finally, this expectation can collapse under extreme provocation, and when it does, it is generally quite spectacular. Therefore, this can be a good way to give more impact to the climactic events of a campaign.

The concrete uses of this feature are two-fold. First, all player characters should have defined families and relationships with them. Second, these relationships should sometimes be used to drive adventures. This does not rule out characters who are the last survivors of a noble house otherwise wiped out, but such characters should have strong feelings about their dead relatives and what should be done to those responsible.

Tangled Pasts

Characters in the novels have pasts with important events that both tie them to other characters and to the history of Westeros. There are two ways to handle this, and it is generally best to use both, as using either alone has disadvantages.

The first method is defining the history of the characters when they are created. The advantages of this are obvious, in that most characters know what has happened to them. However, doing it in full detail can take a long time and removes a certain level of flexibility from the development of the game. The ideal, then, is to describe the general

outline of the character's history: two or three important events and at least two periods where he could have done significant things that had no immediate impact. He might have been fostered in a distant area, from which he could have traveled, for example, or spent a period of time as a squire to a hedge knight. These can even overlap. An important event in the history of a female character, defined at character creation, might be the three years she spent serving as a squire, disguised as a boy. That leaves space for specific things to happen during those three years.

In the last thirty years, Westeros has seen the War of the Ninepenny Kings, Robert's Rebellion, and the Greyjoy Rebellion. Older characters could have been personally involved in all of them, and all but the very youngest should have been personally affected by the last two. History does not pass people by in Westeros. At the very least, a family member should have been captured and imprisoned for several years before being ransomed.

While designing the character's history, both you and the player should concentrate on events that can drive adventures and establish tense relationships with other characters. Relationships can be tense but positive—two characters who fought together against the Greyjoy Rebellion, saving each others' lives many times, are likely to be fiercely loyal to each other even if one or the other is prone to foolish decisions. Characters may have former lovers or have harbored unrequited love for someone significant. They might have even killed someone important to another family.

At this point, you want to make sure that past events link all of the player characters together, and link them to the characters you intend to use as antagonists. If you have a nexus or two that ties most of the player characters to their opponents, that is all to the good. For example, most of the player characters might have fought in one particular battle, where they banded together, broke through the enemy lines, and killed the lord before being captured. Then, they were exchanged for the lord's son and heir captured by their own side, who now passionately hates them for killing his father. This history should also set up the initial relationship between the player characters and their liege and establish the other nobles with whom they are friendly. Ideally, you should know what the first story arc involves at this point, and make sure that the necessary links are established.

The second method is creating history as you need it, which is why it is a good idea to leave space in the characters' backgrounds. The characters may or may not be aware of these details. For example, a male character in his thirties could have a teenage bastard who turns up suddenly in a later story. However, the characters should generally know their own pasts, which means that you need to cooperate with them when you want to introduce the event. Talk to the players involved, and come to an agreement over what happened in one of the blanks in their history. Then, in the next session, or maybe a little later, that bit of history comes back to haunt them.

Secrets

Characters in the novels have secrets. Giving concrete examples would spoil the novels for those who have not read them yet, but those who have read them can no doubt bring several to mind quite easily. These secrets often shape their lives, driving them to do things that seem unreasonable to many of those around them. Since they cannot explain the

real reason for their actions, misunderstandings proliferate. Sometimes the characters act to keep their secrets concealed. At other times, they act because of what they know.

It is a good idea if most player characters have a secret. Having one character in the group with no secret is not a problem, particularly if everyone else is wondering what they are hiding. This secret should be significant, in that it would cause significant complications if uncovered and drive the character towards certain actions.

Suppose one of the characters is a girl disguised as a boy. In itself, this is not really enough: the complications are likely to be minor and short-lived. However, she must be a particular girl disguised as a particular boy. She could be a shopkeeper's daughter who killed the son of a lord after he raped her, and now the knight that boy served (another player character) is helping to keep up the pretense that she *is* that boy…well, that has a lot of potential. Similarly, the simple fact one character fathered a bastard is unlikely to cause problems. But if the mother was the sister of the main antagonist, or his own sister, then there is rather more potential for drama.

Secrets can involve a single player character, or they can link two or more. The point of secrets is the characters know they have their own secrets, so the involved characters should generally know. There are possible exceptions, however. One player character's secret may be that he killed another character's father during a botched battle in the Greyjoy Rebellion, when they were supposed to be on the same side. This works best if the other character blames the antagonists and has sworn vengeance on their whole family.

This raises a meta-game consideration. The secrets of the various player characters may or may not be known to the other players, regardless of what their characters know. Both choices are viable playing styles, but it is best to get everyone to agree in advance. The advantage of keeping secrets from the players is that they can then enjoy being surprised when the secret is revealed. The advantage of everyone knowing what is going on is that the players can work together to give the secret a central place in the story.

It is important to plan for the secret to be discovered at some point in the game because, otherwise, you waste much of its potential. However, this does mean that you need to be a little careful—some secrets could bring the whole game crashing down if they were revealed. Sometimes this only becomes apparent after a few sessions. In that case, change the secret. No one knows what it is yet, so altering it to avoid ruining everything is perfectly legitimate. Then, have it come out, so that you don't need to change it again.

Schemes

Another feature of the novels is the existence of elaborate plots, spun by any number of characters. Again, it is impossible to give examples without spoiling the novels, but if you have read them, you know where they are. Plotters are not necessarily good at it; there are some masters, but there are also characters who get very much out of their depth.

One way to incorporate this is to have the Narrator characters catch the player characters up in their schemes. This is a good idea, but it does have problems. The main one is that, if the plotter is good, the player characters might never find out that there was a scheme, which means the players will also probably never know. This rather defeats the object of the exercise. Thus, when you create a scheme to enmesh the players, you should plan for the player characters to discover it, learn who was behind it, and dismantle it. This process should require action on the part of the player characters because a scheme that simply falls apart because the plotter is incompetent does not create a sense of achievement.

However, it is far better to incorporate plots by having the player characters create them. If they are the conspirators, they can enjoy the deception even if no one else ever discovers what is going on. You have two responsibilities here. The first is simple: encourage the players to come up with elaborate plots to trap their enemies.

The second is a little more difficult. You should allow such plots to work without making it completely trivial. There are a number of elements to this. First, you should allow Narrator characters to be deceived. You know what the players' plot is; your characters do not. Unless the character has been consistently portrayed as highly suspicious, err on the side of gullibility. Because you know the story being spun is false, you are likely to judge it less plausible than it actually is.

Second, provide ways for the player characters to get their hooks into other characters, so the plots can get started. These should be made fairly obvious because, in general, the player characters do not know they should be looking for them. Of course, if they do go looking for blackmail material on a particular character, it probably exists.

Finally, be generous in your assessment of whether a plot works. Players will not generally continue using a strategy that fails, and all plots are complex enough for failure to be plausible. Thus, to encourage this feature of the books, you should allow the players to be consistently lucky, in that random chance does not bring their plots down. Of course, failures in play by the characters can and should lead to the plot failing, and bad designs cannot be allowed to work, but a solid, interesting, morally ambiguous plot should be given the random luck it needs to be a success.

Betrayal

Betrayal is a major feature of the books. Indeed, there are few major plot points that do not turn on a betrayal of some sort, and the characters who have not, by the end of *A Feast for Crows,* been betrayed by someone can be counted on the fingers of one hand. Thus, betrayal should be an important feature of your games as well.

However, betrayal needs to be handled carefully. Having a character betrayed is something that can easily spill over into real-world hurt feelings, and capturing the mood in a game is not worth that. This is most likely when the traitor is also a player character, but it can happen when Narrator characters prove to be treacherous as well. This topic is, therefore, good to discuss with the players before you start. You might need to lay down ground rules as to which characters will not betray the player characters. Perhaps their liege will not stoop to treachery. This does not mean the liege is omniscient, so sometimes he will not tell them important information because he does not know it. Similarly, his plans might go wrong, leaving the characters in trouble. However, he will never deliberately set the characters up to fail or lie to them about his purposes. If the players want a trustworthy contact, you should choose an appropriate character from the novels. For example, if they want a liege who will never betray them, they should be sworn to the Starks, not the Lannisters.

Even if the players are happy to be part of a more "realistic" game, where they might be betrayed by any Narrator character, you should give careful thought to forbidding betrayal of one player character by another. Because even if the players are willing to sink to such Machiavellian depths, if the characters do not trust one another, it becomes very difficult to get the group to stay together, which causes very real practical problems in running the game. If you do want to allow occasional schemes and betrayals—because it really does fit the world very well—then you could try ruling that betrayal of a player character must not be premeditated, and the traitor must quickly come to regret the betrayal and work to, somehow, restore the situation. Thus, a character captured and tortured, or one seduced and made drunk, might betray the others, but he should soon start planning to make things right again.

Player characters betraying Narrator characters cause no problems, of course, other than possibly forcing you to think very quickly as a major scheme comes tumbling down. Narrator characters betraying each other are no problem at all, as you can control both sides. Such betrayals should be a major feature of the game, particularly if you feel that you have to restrict the amount of treason directed at the player characters.

Cruelty

Many inhabitants of Westeros are cruel, taking active steps to cause pain and suffering to others. Even the more heroic characters often have a cruel streak, though it may only surface under pressure. Accordingly, it should be a part of your game, but it needs to be handled carefully. Cruel characters quickly lose sympathy, so if a character is portrayed as cruel, he is likely to be perceived as a villain. Still, a character with no cruelty at all is probably too good for the world of Westeros.

Spontaneous cruelty against someone who has done the character a great wrong generally causes little loss of sympathy. If a hero, on catching the men who burned down his home with his family still inside, roasts them all slowly in an iron pot, well, that's cruel, but it is understandable. It makes the hero somewhat tarnished, but it does not stop him from being heroic, overall. If, on the other hand, he spends weeks and months constructing a plot to make them suffer, then he is less sympathetic. The more time a character spends planning to hurt someone, the more repellent the cruelty becomes. The same applies if the hero roasts the men who were actually responsible along with all the other members of their band, including the women and children following the camp. The more widely the cruelty spreads, the more heinous. Finally, there is a question of proportionality. Roasting someone alive for laughing at your new tunic is unspeakable cruelty, no matter how spontaneous or narrowly focused it is.

Thus, the most repellent characters are those who are casually cruel, planning to hurt someone, picking a victim at random, and doing it just because it amuses them. There are such characters in Westeros, but you are strongly advised to make them villains. Player characters, and allies, should restrict their cruelty to spontaneous, and focused, responses to outrages.

In portraying acts of cruelty, it is best to follow Martin's style. He is explicit but not graphic. That is, he tells the reader exactly what is going on, but he does not describe it in gory detail. "He nailed her hand to the table and sawed her fingers off one by one," is at the borderline of being graphic; any more detail should be avoided. On the other hand, "He did really bad things to her," might be too vague for the setting. The characters should know what happened.

You should also keep an eye on the amount of cruelty in your games. It is a significant feature of the books but not a constant one. If used too often, it loses its impact and can make the game deeply unpleasant to play in. Every incident of cruelty should be a significant moment in the development of the story in the game; use nicer bits of Westerosi culture for background color.

Vengeance

Vengeance is a powerful motivator for people in Westeros. The Targaryen dynasty was brought down in revenge for the abduction of Lyanna Stark, as well as for the murder of the rebels and their fathers. Vengeance is a simple element to include in a roleplaying game, with no unusual risks or complications. Heroes and villains can both engage in it, and players rarely object to their characters being the targets of vengeance by others, particularly if it is justified.

It is, therefore, a good idea to have at least one character in a game driven by vengeance. Fortunately, the players are likely to ensure such is the case, putting some great wrong into their characters' histories and swearing vengeance against those responsible. If they don't, you can suggest it. If they absolutely refuse to have any reason for vengeance in their backgrounds, see if part of their background could give other characters reason for vengeance. If the player characters have been in any battles, such manipulation is easy to manage.

You should also pay attention to opportunities to seek vengeance that arise in play. The antagonists should try to do bad things to the player characters and their families, and if they succeed, the player characters have a reason for vengeance. The reverse is also true; many successes by the player characters simply plant the seeds of revenge.

The problem with cycles of vengeance is that they tend to grow and become more violent, finally dragging a whole continent into a civil war. Fortunately for us, this problem only afflicts the people who live there. From the perspective of a game, it creates many more opportunities for exciting play.

Sex

Sex, and sexual desire, are very important drives for a number of characters in the novels. While it is less prominent than vengeance or betrayal, a game that ignores sex entirely is not really true to the feel of the books. As with cruelty, try to avoid being too graphic.

Sex is generally called a mature topic. However, to be honest, if your group can handle cruelty, betrayal, and vengeance within a game, they are mature enough to handle sex without suffering any psychological damage. *A Song of Ice and Fire* is not a series of children's books, and if you want to play the game with children, you should be planning to change the tone wholesale, not just cut the sex.

The real problem with sex is it is notoriously difficult to include effectively in a roleplaying game. First, there are the embarrassing problems of trying to play out a seduction scene between two characters when the players have no interest in each other (and the even greater embarrassment problems when they do). Second, there is the problem that it is very difficult to properly roleplay lust. Lust is an immensely strong human drive. It makes people do amazingly stupid things. However, no matter now many times you are told that the woman facing your character is extremely attractive and clearly willing, it is easy to hold on to the knowledge that sleeping with her would be an idiotic move.

Fortunately, in most cases the sex can be moved off stage. As in the books, the relationship is what is important. Although the relationship may be sexual, the actual act of sex is not a significant plot element. Thus, you can finesse most of the problems by establishing there are sexual relationships between characters, but keep those bits of the relationship off stage. Thus, you might indicate that two player characters are lovers. That relationship then complicates other offers of marriage and makes it important one not be caught in a brothel, but neither sex nor seduction need happen onscreen.

Of course, if your players are happy to play out seduction scenes and to let their characters' desires get the better of their judgment, then you can include those scenes in the game.

Tarnished Victories

The characters of *A Song of Ice and Fire* never get everything they want. They win battles, even wars, but they always lose something important in the process. It might be physical, so they defeat their enemies but also destroy the castle so they cannot hold it. It might also be psychological; they lose their honor or the trust of those around them. There are no pure victories, and it is common for victories to be pyrrhic.

This is a *very* difficult topic for a roleplaying game. Traditionally, the player characters in a roleplaying game have succeeded, at least in most cases, and the Narrator has been warned against constantly setting them up to fail. There is no reason, in principle, why players cannot enjoy playing a character doomed to fail, but most players identify with their characters to some extent and, thus, enjoy their successes and regret their failures.

The first step in implementing this feature, then, is making it clear to the players that their characters will never have a pure success, and if they do not like that idea, they should probably look at playing in a different setting. Many dark games do allow the player characters to triumph fully, even if they make it difficult, so the simple fact that *A Song of Ice and Fire* is dark does not guarantee this.

The second step comes in story design. It is vital to avoid binary success/fail adventures, and different levels of success and failure must exist. Utter failure, with everyone dead, should generally be possible, as discussed earlier, but there should be degrees of success, as well. In particular, you should come up with at least two potential problems for a victory, and design the adventure so the player characters can win with both problems, or with only one, but not with neither. Ideally, competent characters should be able to choose to avoid one of the problems, and they may or may not realize this guarantees them the other. If they do realize, they must choose between them, making for excellent roleplaying. Most importantly, it leaves the players in control of their characters' destiny. They might not be able to make things perfect, but they can choose what goes wrong.

For example, the characters are allied to one house and opposed by another, which is a little larger. The enemy house is about to attack them because it believes the allies are too strong. The characters know their allies are actually a lot weaker. If they betray their allies, they can attack

the enemies while they are distracted, but if they keep their allies' secret, they must face a stronger force alone, which guarantees death and destruction at their homes even if they can fend off the attack. Of course, if they mess up the betrayal, they could end up facing both their former enemies and former allies at once.

The third step comes in linking adventures. The problems with a victory should never just be simple tragedies. Rather, they should set up and help to drive future adventures in the campaign. The books do include simple random tragedies, but players are generally more forgiving if you avoid meaningless disaster. It is particularly good if the problem with the victory is something that someone, whether the player characters or their opponents, can seek vengeance for.

Children

Although *A Song of Ice and Fire* is not aimed at children, a significant number of the viewpoint characters are children or adolescents. This means that young player characters would be highly appropriate to the feel of the books. However, you should think very, very carefully before going down this route.

First, children are hard for adults to portray accurately. Martin has admitted Bran's chapters are the hardest of the books to write because of the need to take an eight-year-old's point of view. He has the chance to write and rewrite, which is denied people in a roleplaying game. There is no way around this; you simply have to judge whether you are up to the challenge.

Second, children get no special treatment. Vengeance, betrayal, cruelty, and sex all target the young characters as much as the older ones. Many people would be very uncomfortable with playing in a game in which children were explicitly tortured or engaged in sex, even if the graphic details were omitted. If any members of your group could not cope with a thirteen-year-old enjoying a consensual sexual relationship, or a ten-year-old being kidnapped and beaten, then you should avoid young player characters.

Third, children have no history. A ten-year-old just has not lived long enough to establish links to many people, making it harder to tie them into the campaign. In this case, there are ways around it. Children have parents and siblings, and those ties can be used to link them to other peoples' secrets, at least. The practice of fosterage can create broader links and rivalries from a very early age. If you are happy with the first two problems, then some thought can minimize the impact of this one. However, it will be difficult to do this if more than one of the player characters (two if you have a large group) are young.

None of these problems are insurmountable, and they are all easier for characters Jon Snow's age (fourteen) or older. However, you do need to think about how you are going to handle them before allowing young player characters into your game.

On the upside, *A Song of Ice and Fire Roleplaying* is designed to accommodate younger characters with the Destiny system. Children have more Destiny Points because of their greater unformed potential, which they can use to help survive the challenges adults use their superior experience and abilities to overcome. Certainly some of the child characters of the novels manage to survive against all odds, moving towards their own destinies. Young characters in your own chronicle can do the same.

Changing the Plot

There is a problem with running RPGs based on novels (or films) that needs to be confronted head-on. What if the player characters do something that derails the plot of the novels? They are then no longer playing in the world of the novels because some of the most important events are not happening. In some ways, Westeros is more forgiving than many worlds in this respect. The Seven Kingdoms are, it soon becomes obvious, rotten to the core and just waiting for some spark to tip them into civil war. There is nothing the characters can realistically do to prevent that war from happening, and if the war happens, the factions are going to fall in a way resembling those in the novels. In addition, there is no one central task that defines the world that, to be faithful to the novels, has to be performed by an NPC; no ring that needs dropped into a volcano. So you can have the player characters do things without making them feel like bit players, and without completely derailing the novels.

In other ways, however, Westeros is a lot less forgiving. There are very few corners where interactions with the nobility do not risk changing things so the events portrayed in the novels could not realistically happen as described. True, if you set the campaign in Dorne, you're fine until the events of *A Storm of Swords*, but then Dorne becomes a significant setting for the novels as well, and you have to deal with it.

This problem is intensified by the need to have the player characters interact with central characters from the novels. At the very least, important characters from the books are going to have allies and enemies who do not feature in the official storyline.

The most important part of tackling this problem is to recognize in advance that it exists and to decide, as a group, how you want to handle it.

The group may decide that they just want to play in the world of *A Song of Ice and Fire.* In fact, they'd quite like to play in a campaign where they try to prevent the civil war, perhaps by having a player character succeed Jon Arryn as the Hand of the King, thus leaving Ned Stark in the North. In this case, you do not have a problem. The players want everything to turn out differently, so even if they almost certainly cannot stop the war, they are not going to be upset if the war plays out in a very different way from the original version.

However, your group may also want to play through the events of the novels. This is entirely reasonable; there are some very dramatic moments in the books, and the desire to play a character who is there is understandable. There are a number of possible approaches to this. The easiest is to start the campaign just before that event. That is, run time forward from the default starting date, and begin your campaign during the war. The player characters might not begin with a close relationship to any of the main novel characters, but they have an ideal chance to finish that way.

Still, having mentioned the easy ways out, it is best to consider the hardest case because it is also a perfectly sensible way to play the game, and the techniques useful in it can also be used in easier cases. The hardest case is one in which the characters start some time before war breaks out, want to interact with characters from the novels, and still want to participate in many of the events in the novels.

It is important to realize it is impossible to have the events play out exactly as they do in the novels. Apart from anything else, if the player

characters are involved, and not merely spectators, they must be able to have an impact on the course of events, so even if the final result is the same as in the books, the chain of events getting there will be different. The best you can aim for is having a recognizable event play out with some differences.

First, you and the players must recognize there are some characters who cannot die before the novels start. Some characters cannot be replaced and still have things go on as before. If Cersei is assassinated, no one can take her place, not even if Robert remarries. However, not all significant characters fall into this group. Old Walder Frey plays a very important role, but the role could be played by his heir. Even some of the viewpoint characters are replaceable, with only minor differences to their role in the story.

This should be reflected in your planning for adventures. The player characters are unlikely to wake up one morning and suddenly decide to assassinate the queen unless the adventure leads in that direction. So you should not design adventures that lead in that direction. Rivalries with characters who must survive should not be life-or-death rivalries; they should be political, at worst. The books can survive the player characters making nasty remarks about Cersei in private, after all. The best way to manage this is to pick a central life-or-death rival who *can* die and keep other characters peripheral. Doing so does not require you to divide the whole cast into "dispensable" and "indispensable," merely to find one or two characters in the former category. A similar consideration applies to allies of the characters; if the ally can be drawn into danger, make sure that they are replaceable.

Another issue concerns the characters' allies. If you play a political game, the characters might, by the time the novels start, be very strong candidates for the position of the Hand of the King. Robert will still go to his old friend Ned first, but the existence of the characters' faction will change the balance of the subsequent politics quite substantially. Again, the solution is to keep the campaign away from the center. If the characters have risen to be the most influential bannermen of the Starks, things will shift but only slightly. The characters are likely to be sent into a number of the events of the novels, which is all to the good, but they will not be able to change whether most events happen.

As mentioned above, secrets are a major feature of the novels. Player characters who learn those secrets early could cause problems for the plot. Again, you can design adventures that are not likely to uncover those secrets. However, in this case, you can plan adventures that let the characters uncover the secret, but leave them in no position to do anything about it. They do not have enough evidence or political support to bring it into the open. Once the war starts, such a predicament is likely to make them very useful to one or more factions, however, so it should be handled with caution. They can also tell their allies what they know, and their allies will take them seriously, so if your characters are friendly with Tyrion, it is probably best for them not to learn certain secrets.

To summarize, then, you should design the whole campaign so the sensible outcomes do not derail the plot of the books. Since we are assuming this is what the players also want, they will play along. If it is entirely realistic for their characters not to cause trouble, they won't go out of their way to spoil things. This method involves setting events on the periphery of politics, whether geographical or social. Intrigues

among minor courtiers in King's Landing are just as far from changing things as power struggles in the riverlands. Choose a primary who can be defeated without causing problems and close allies who can safely die. If a character needs to be protected, make the connection more distant.

Finally, in many cases, you have considerable discretion in deciding on the wider impact of the characters' acts. If you want to preserve the plot of the novels, you can choose an impact that supports the novels. While the Boltons of the Dreadfort *could* abandon the Starks in response to the rise of other bannermen, they are not forced to, and if you want to preserve the events of the novels, they had better not. If the players want you to keep the plot on track, then writing adventures to avoid events that would *obviously* derail it will make them more forgiving if their actions do not happen to have possible consequences that would cause problems.

STORIES & CHRONICLES

This section gives you some concrete ideas for stories and chronicles set in Westeros. They are only ideas, not ready-to-run, and thus, they serve in large part as examples of how to implement the general ideas given above.

Story Hooks

These suggestions are primarily aimed at single stories, but some could also be expanded into chronicles.

Court

The characters are sent to King's Landing on a very specific mission—they need to get a particular concession from the king, something not inherently difficult to obtain if they can get a proper hearing from the king himself. However, other courtiers, particularly rivals of the characters, know seeing the king almost guarantees success, so they do their best to keep the characters running in circles and away from the throne.

Diplomacy

The characters' liege sends them, and another of his bannermen, to negotiate a relatively minor issue with a major lord. The other lord wants to handle the matter personally, but it is not important enough to justify two great lords meeting, so he has agreed to deal with ambassadors. The negotiations should be fairly easy; several solutions would be acceptable to both sides. The problem is the other bannerman has a past entanglement with the player characters and is interested in making them look foolish. If the negotiations failed, and it looked like the player characters' fault, he would be pleased. He is trying to feed them false information and get them involved in compromising activities. If he can convince them the great lord is plotting to kill them, that would be ideal.

Feast

The characters attend a feast with many courses and dancing. They are required to be polite to the people around them. One takes an immediate romantic interest in a player character, an interest of which his or her family would not approve. Another wants to goad the characters into insulting him, so he can demand a duel (to first blood, he isn't interested in potentially dying), and make them look foolish. Still another drinks too much and makes comments that could cause a lot of trouble if the characters do not smooth things over. The characters can make friends or enemies over the course of a single day, and everything they do is very public.

Kidnap

One of the characters has developed a romantic relationship with a Narrator character, but marriage is impossible, most likely because of prior arrangements but also, perhaps, because of the hostility between their families. The characters decide (if necessary, under prompting from the Narrator character) they have to be together, and the woman runs away to join the man. The woman's family treats this as kidnap. If the player character is the woman, the other player characters have to resolve the situation without denying it is kidnap because their family would be greatly shamed. If the player character is the man, all the player characters have to deal with the "rescuers." The couple does not want to be broken up, so just handing the woman over is not really an option. This is something of a no-win situation; success means avoiding things going horribly wrong.

Marriage

The characters have to negotiate a marriage alliance, either for themselves or for a close relative. There are a number of sensible candidates from other noble families, but none are perfect. Ideally, the character to be married should have a lover, consummated or not, who would be a politically difficult choice as a partner. The characters must be very tactful in their negotiations because breaking off a marriage after one side thinks it is arranged is a grave insult and can make long-lasting enemies. There is no right ending to this adventure. The characters just choose which groups to turn into allies, and which to turn into enemies and, of course, whether to make the person at the center of events happy or not.

Poison

The characters host some visitors and provide a feast. One of the visitors collapses and dies of poison. The hosts are the obvious suspects and must find the real criminal and solid evidence to avoid facing a lasting enmity. The amount of time they have to do this, and the strength of evidence they need, depends on their previous relationship with the guests; it is easier to convince friends of your innocence. On the other hand, the characters have a lot more to lose if the victims were previously friendly. The poisoner could be an enemy of the guests who just decided to implicate the player characters, another member of the visiting family, or an enemy of the characters trying to blacken their reputation.

Raiders

Wildlings from beyond the Wall or ironmen from the Iron Islands arrive in the characters' lands, raiding and burning villages. The characters must catch and defeat them before they can get away with their booty. This requires swift and decisive action, and the characters cannot assemble overwhelming force quickly enough. They must plan well and are likely to lose a number of loyal retainers even if they succeed.

Servant

A new servant is hired at the characters' home. She is the sister of a raider who was killed in a previous adventure and is here to get revenge. She is not a skilled plotter, but she is not stupid, and she tries to stage accidents, in the hope of eventually burning the whole castle down. If there is enough of a distraction, she tries to kill the character who killed her brother with a hidden dagger.

Tournament

The characters attend a tournament and participate. Their main rival arrives, but soon after he withdraws from all the events on grounds of illness. He stays in his pavilion, and the story is he hopes to be able to participate before the end. In reality, he wants to see the characters humiliated, and he devotes his efforts to sabotaging their chances. The fact he is not participating makes it harder to demonstrate that he is cheating and gives him much more time in which to do so.

War

The characters go to war, in a fairly small way. They might be sending an expedition to support the Night's Watch against the wildlings, or tensions with another noble family might have finally got out of hand. In the latter case, both sides need to fight it out without bringing the attention of their lords down on them. So the actual war cannot go beyond a single battle, after which they will publicly apologize and make "peace," with one side in a stronger position. The biggest problem for the characters is one of their allies plans to sell them out. They might be able to find the traitor early, in which case they might just be relatively weak in the battle, or they might have to deal with him changing sides once battle has been joined, putting them in a very dangerous position.

Chronicles

While the previous section concerned single stories, this section deals with concepts for whole chronicles—groups of related stories. They are designed to happen in the period before the events of the books get started, so the background is one of relative peace across the Seven Kingdoms. The scope of the campaigns is also finite, so you can finish them before the books get going. Following that plan allows the players to get comfortable with their characters and get the characters established in Westeros before they get involved in the great events of the novels. Thus, the campaigns are also designed to not disrupt the plot of the novels excessively.

Reclaiming the Birthright

The characters have been deprived of their birthright by another minor house, and they must fight to get it back. The birthright in question must be something of great importance, and the obvious candidate is land. The other house has claimed the ancestral seat of the player characters' family and pushed the player characters onto a small fraction of their former territory. However, the characters could have retained most of their land, or even expanded in area, but lost control of a castle with great historical importance. The lost birthright could also be an inherited item, but it would have to be something like a sword of Valyrian steel.

It is probably best if the player characters were deprived of the birthright fairly. If they have lost a lot of land, a recent ancestor might have been a criminal and lost the lands as just punishment. Alternatively, he might have been spendthrift and sold it. An item or single holding might have been transferred as part of a marriage allowance the characters now regret, making the characters' position morally ambiguous. On the other hand, there should be some problem with the transfer, or the characters seem like clear villains. A real-world example: the Elgin marbles were taken from the Parthenon and exported to England with the permission of the government of Greece at the time. However, at that point, Greece was ruled by the Turks. Thus, both the Greeks and the English can claim to be the rightful owners.

The conflict cannot be solved through simple violence because the initial legal situation is against the player characters. Even if they can take their birthright by force, other nobles will compel them to give it

back, and they may lose what little they have left (if not actually losing their lives). This predicament is obvious to the characters and should be made clear to the players.

The campaign relies on the player characters taking the initiative—the people who hold their birthright are happy with the status quo, after all. They can undermine the rivals' hold on their birthright in a number of ways. They can pursue legal channels, which could involve bribery, intimidation, and the improvement of evidence. They can undermine the rivals' position, making them look like traitors, weakening them through raids blamed on someone else, or faking evidence that makes them look like aggressors. They can also try simply provoking their rivals into starting a war, so that the characters might be allowed to keep any gains.

No matter how things are set up, the final contest is almost certain to be military, as the rivals will not give up something so valuable without a fight.

A Father's Blessing

The player characters are all siblings, and their father is the lord. However, he thinks the player characters are all unreliable failures, and he puts all his hopes and trust in their brother. Their brother is a nasty piece of work, though their father does not see it; the brother is too clever to present his father with incontrovertible evidence. Some of the player characters' failures may be genuine, but others may have been constructed by their scheming brother.

The player characters are at risk of being disinherited, so they must expose their brother for the villain that he is *and* convince their father that they are trustworthy. The brother, meanwhile, is using his influence to make life difficult for them while feigning love and support in front of father. If the characters move openly against their brother, they will look the treacherous ones. On the other hand, if the player characters cannot do something to convince their father that they are competent, they are unlikely to benefit even if they do unmask their brother.

This campaign is inherently tangled because the main rival is part of the family. An added complication is the fact that only one player character can be made the heir, which might divide the player characters if they come close to success. However, you can affect the tone by changing the character of the brother. At one extreme, he might be a bastard, barely known to the characters' father—and thoroughly evil and treacherous. This puts the player characters in the right. At the other extreme, he might just be very ambitious, dislike the player characters because they used to pick on him, and not have lied about any of their mistakes; he just put the worst possible light on things. In this case, the player characters might even be able to reconcile with their brother, though the events of the campaign are likely to make that difficult.

A good way to end this campaign is for the characters' father to die, and the heir take over the holding. If the heir is the brother, the player characters are out on their ears, just in time to get involved in a war. If the heir is a player character, he becomes a bannerman, just in time to get involved in a war.

Wildlings

This campaign concept is a simple one. The characters hold land in the North, near the Wall, and suffer from wildling raids. Adventures would involve fighting off raiders, tracking them back across the Wall, trying to destroy their encampments, and possibly stumbling on to the scale of Mance Rayder's plans. The characters are closely involved with the Night's Watch, but even though they are on the same side, relations are tense, for they are also using the same resources. The characters may also encounter wights and the Others, as long as they do not have clear proof or lots of witnesses. As long as wights and monsters beyond the Wall can be dismissed as stories, the plot of the novels can unfold.

Since the characters are in the North, they are bannermen to the Starks. Their problems with wildlings keep them away from Winterfell most of the time, but building a good relationship with Eddard Stark, and possibly with his children, would set them up for involvement in the coming great events. As Eddard takes his responsibilities seriously, he might well come in person to help the characters against a particularly large raiding band, and Benjen Stark, as First Ranger, would also be expected to have some contact with them.

As long as the player characters are not able to kill Mance Rayder, or other named wildlings, this campaign is unlikely to disrupt the books. There are numerous wildlings north of the Wall, after all.

Blood for Blood

The characters' home did not fare well in one of the recent wars. The castle was sacked and largely destroyed, family members were killed and possibly raped, and the smallfolk pillaged. The characters were on the winning side, however, so they got their lands back, in ruins. But the people responsible for sacking it were not punished nearly so severely. They continue to enjoy the prosperity of their lands and holding.

This campaign is about vengeance. The characters, at least to start with, want to see their enemies dead and their castle cast down. The problem is the king, and most of the high nobles, want the last war to be over, and do not look kindly on families who stir up trouble again. Thus, the player characters must rely on schemes that hide their involvement, or that trap their enemies into offending enough people that they can be attacked with impunity. In the classic style, the characters do not want their enemies to perish at anyone else's hands, so they aim simply to keep everyone else out of the argument.

To complicate matters, have a significant member of the enemy family be genuinely repentant, making efforts to compensate the player characters and rebuild good relations. Of course, he (or she) is not willing to sell his own family out, but he is willing to make real sacrifices because he thinks his family really was wrong. The player characters will doubtless assume some devious plot. To make things complex in a different way, it *could* actually be a devious plot.

The campaign ends with either successful vengeance or, much less probably, with peace between the families. Vengeance begets vengeance, of course, and the characters' enemies will have the advantage that the outbreak of civil war allows them to act much more directly.

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