GEORGE R.R. MARTIN
A GAME OF THRONES

ALSO A NEW ORIGINAL SERIES FROM HBO

DYNAMITE
Lady Stark had been at Bran’s bed day and night for almost a fortnight. Not once did she leave the room, and so Jon had stayed away.

But now there was no more time.
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

I CAME TO SEE BRAN TO SAY GOOD-BYE.

YOU’VE SAID IT. NOW GO AWAY.

CALL THEM. YOU CAN’T STOP ME FROM SEEING HIM.

PLEASE, HE’S MY BROTHER.

WE DON’T WANT YOU HERE. SHALL I CALL THE GUARDS?

BRAN, I’M SORRY I DIDN’T COME BEFORE.

I WAS AFRAID.
I’m going north to the Wall. Uncle Benjen is waiting. We have to leave today before the snows come.

Don’t die. We’re all waiting for you to wake up. Me and Robb and the girls. Everyone.

He was my special boy. I wanted him to stay with me.

I went to the sept and prayed seven times to the seven faces of God that Ned would leave him here with me.

Sometimes prayers are answered.

It wasn’t your fault.

Jon?

It should have been you.
Jon!
Uncle Benjen is looking for you. He wanted to be gone an hour ago.

DID YOU SEE HIM?

YES.

AND MY MOTHER...

SHE WAS... VERY KIND.

THAT’S GOOD.

SO THE NEXT TIME I SEE YOU, YOU’LL BE ALL IN BLACK.

FAREWELL, SNOW.

I WILL.

AND YOU, STARK. TAKE CARE OF BRAN.
Arya?

I was afraid you were gone. They wouldn’t let me out to say goodbye.

What did you do now?

Nothing! I was packed and everything. Septa Mordane says I have to do it all over again. A proper highborn lady doesn’t throw her clothes inside her chest like old rags, she says.

And is that what you did?

Well, they’re all going to get messed up anyway. Who cares how they’re folded?

It’s just as well. I have something for you to take with you and it has to be packed very carefully.

Nymeria here guard!
A SWORD?

IT’S SO SKINNY.

SO ARE YOU. IT WON’T HACK A MAN’S HEAD OFF. BUT YOU CAN PROKE HIM FULL OF HOLES IF YOU’RE FAST ENOUGH.

I CAN BE FAST.

YOU’LL HAVE TO WORK AT IT EVERY DAY

FIRST LESSON: STICK THEM WITH THE POINTY END.

SEPTA MORSENE WILL TAKE IT AWAY.

NOT IF SHE DOESN’T KNOW YOU HAVE IT.

KING’S LANDING IS A TRUE CITY, A THOUSAND TIMES THE SIZE OF WINTERFELL. YOU’LL FIND SOMEONE TO PRACTICE WITH, UNTIL THEN, WATCH THEM RIGHT IN THE YARD, RUN, MAKE YOURSELF STRONG.

BUT WHATEVER YOU DO...

...DON’T TELL SANSAA.
I almost forgot. All the best swords have names.

Like ice, does this have a name?

Can you guess? It's your favorite thing.

I better go. I'll spend my first year on the Wall emptying chamber pots if I keep Uncle Ben waiting any longer.

Who knows? Different roads sometimes lead to the same castle.

Needle!

I wish you were coming with us.
THE SUMMONS HAD COME TO EDDARD STARK IN THE HOUR BEFORE DAWN.

ROBERT HAD SET THE PACE LEAVING THE KING'S ROAD BEHIND. WHEN THE KING FINALLY PULLED UP, THEY WERE MILES SOUTH OF THE MAIN PARTY.

GODS! IT FEELS GOOD TO RIDE. I'VE HALF A MIND TO LEAVE THEM ALL BEHIND AND KEEP GOING.

WHAT DO YOU SAY, NED? JUST YOU AND ME, TWO VAGABOND KNIGHTS ON THE KING'S ROAD. OUR SWORDS AT OUR SIDES AND THE GODS KNOW WHAT IN FRONT OF US.

MAYBE A FARMER'S DAUGHTER TO WARM OUR BEDS TONIGHT.

WOULD THAT WE COULD BUT WE HAVE DUTIES NOW. MY LORD, WE ARE NOT THE BOYS WE ONCE WERE.

YOU WERE NEVER THE BOY YOU ONCE WERE. AND YET THERE WAS THAT ONE TIME, WHAT WAS HER NAME? YOUR BASTARD'S MOTHER, I MEAN.

HER NAME WAS WYLLA AND I WOULD SOONER NOT SPEAK OF HER.
Well, I'll not press you. Have we ridden into a graveyard?

The barrows of the first men are everywhere in the north. Your grace. This land is old.

I did not bring you out here to talk of graves or bicker about your bastard. There was a rider in the night from Lord Varys in King's Landing.

What is the source of this information?

What do you remember, Ser Jorah Mormont?

"Would that I could forget him. Ser Jorah tried to swell His coffers by selling poachers to a Tyroshi slaver. His crime dishonored the North."

He's in Pentos now and anxious for a royal pardon. So Varys makes good use of him. What do you make of his report?
DÀENERYS TARGARYEN HAD WED SOME DOTHRAKI HORSE LORD. WHAT OF IT?
SHALL WE SEND HER A WEDDING GIFT?

A KNIFE, PERHAPS, A GOOD SHARP ONE, AND A BOLD MAN TO WIELD IT.

YOUR GRACE, SHE IS HARDLY MORE THAN A CHILD.

THE MURDER OF INNOCENTS WOULD BE VILE. UNSPEAKABLE.

UNSPEAKABLE?
WHAT AERYS DID TO YOUR BROTHER BRANDON WAS UNSPEAKABLE, AND RHAESAR. HOW MANY TIMES DO YOU THINK HE RAPED YOUR SISTER?

I WILL KILL EVERY TARGARYEN I CAN GET MY HANDS ON UNTIL THEY ARE AS DEAD AS THEIR DRAGONS!

I SHOULD HAVE KILLED THEM BOTH WHEN IT WAS EASY TO GET AT THEM. BUT JON WAS AS BAD AS YOU.

AND MORE FOOL I. I LISTENED TO HIM.

JON ARRYN WAS A WISE MAN AND A GOOD HAND.

THIS KHAL DROGO HAS A HUNDRED THOUSAND MEN. DO YOU FORGET HOW MANY HOUSES Fought FOR TARGARYEN?

IF THE BESBAR KING CROSSES WITH A DOTHRAKI HORDE AT HIS BACK, THE TRAITORS WILL JOIN HIM.
HE WILL NOT CROSS, AND IF HE DOES, WE WILL THROW HIM INTO THE SEA. ONCE YOU CHOOSE A NEW WARDEN OF THE EAST...

UNLESS YOU HAVE ALREADY PROMISED THAT HONOR?

AND WHAT IF I HAVE?

IS IT JAIME LANISTER?

YES.

KINGSLAYER. HIS FATHER IS WARDEN OF THE WEST. IN TIME SER JAIME WILL SUCCEED TO THAT HONOR. NO MAN SHOULD HOLD BOTH EAST AND WEST.

HE’S MY WIFE’S TWIN, A SWORD BROTHER OF THE KINGSGUARD, AND HIS LIFE AND FORTUNE AND HONOR ARE BOUND TO MINE.

AS THEY WERE BOUND TO AERYS TARGARYEN.

SEVEN HELL, SOMEONE HAD TO KILL AERYS. IF JAIME HADN’T DONE IT, IT WOULD HAVE BEEN LEFT FOR YOU OR ME.

WE WERE NOT SWORD BROTHERS OF THE KINGSGUARD.
"Have no fear, Stark, he said to me. I was only keeping it warm for our friend Robert. It's not a very comfortable seat."

You think I should mistrust Lannister because he sat on my throne for a few moments?

He had no right to it.

Perhaps he was tired, killing kings is weary work.

And he spoke truly. It is a monstrous uncomfortable chair.

Come, let's ride. I want to feel the wind in my hair again.
They had left Winterfell on the same day as the king. The banners and the masons and the column of knights and freegers had turned south. Tyrion had turned north with Robert Stark and his nephew.

The north went on forever.

Farms and holdfasts grew scarcer and smaller as they pressed deeper into the wolfwood. Finally, there were no more rooftops to shelter under, and they were thrown back on their own resources.

Why do you read so much?

Why do I look at me and tell me what you see.

I see you, Tyrion Lannister.

You see a dwarf, snow. My legs are short and twisted, my arms are strong, but again too short. But I was born a Lannister of Casterly Rock, and things are expected of me.
MY BROTHER HAS HIS SWORD, KING ROBERT HAS HIS WARHAMMER, AND I HAVE MY MIND. AND A MIND NEEDS BOOKS IF IT’S TO KEEP ITS EDGE. THAT’S WHY I READ SO MUCH, JON SNOW.

WHAT ARE YOU READING ABOUT?

DRAGONS. WHEN I WAS YOUR AGE, I USED TO DREAM OF HAVING A DRAGON OF MY OWN.

YOU DID?

OH, YES. EVEN A STUNTED, TWISTED, UGLY LITTLE BOY CAN LOOK DOWN OVER THE WORLD WHEN HE’S SEATED ON A DRAGON’S BACK.

WHENEVER I STARTED A FIRE, I USED TO STARE AT THE FLAMES FOR HOURS, PRETENDING THEY WERE DRAGONFIRE.

SOMETIMES I’D IMAGINE MY FATHER BURNING, AT OTHER TIMES MY SISTER.

DON’T LOOK AT ME THAT WAY, YOU’VE DREAMED THE SAME.

NO! I WOULDN’T...
NEVER? WELL, I'M CERTAIN LADY STARK TREATS YOU AS ONE OF HER OWN, AND YOUR BROTHER ROBB, HE'S ALWAYS BEEN KIND.

AND WHY NOT? HE GETS WINTERFELL AND YOU GET THE WALL.

THE NIGHT'S WATCH IS A NOBLE CALLING.

YOU'RE TOO SMART TO BELIEVE THAT. THE NIGHT'S WATCH IS A MIDDLE HEAP FOR ALL THE MISFITS IN THE REALM.

I'VE SEEN YOU LOOKING AT YOREN AND HIS BOYS. POACHERS, DARPERS, THIEVES, AND BASTARDS LIKE YOU WIND UP ON THE WALL WATCHING FOR GRUMKINS AND SNARKS.

THE GOOD PART IS THERE ARE NO GRUMKINS AND SNARKS. THE BAD PART IS YOU FREEZE YOUR BOLLS OFF, BUT SINCE YOU'RE NOT ALLOWED TO BREED.

STOP IT!
LOOK HERE, SNOW, I--

HELP ME.

ASK ME NICELY.

I SHOULD BE VERY GRATEFUL FOR YOUR KIND ASSISTANCE, JON.
Why did he attack me?

Maybe he thought you were a grumkin.

I suppose I do rather look like a grumkin.

It's true, isn't it?

What you said about the Night's Watch. It's true.

If that's what it is. That's what it is.

That's good. Bastard. Most men would rather deny a hard truth than face it.

Most men, but not you.

No, not me. I seldom dream of dragons anymore.

There are no dragons.
MY LADY, LORD EDDARD IS EIGHT DAYS SICK. THIS YEAR, THE ROYAL VISIT COST US.

I KNOW WHAT IT COST. TAKE THE BOOKS AWAY. THE STEWARD WILL ATTEND TO IT.

WE HAVE NO STEWARD. MY LADY. ROOLE WENT SOUTH WITH LORD EDDARD.

BESIDES THE STEWARD, WE NEED A CAPTAIN OF THE GUARDS TO FILL JORY'S PLACE. A NEW MASTER OF HORSE.

A MASTER OF HORSE?

DO YOU THINK I CARE WHAT HAPPENS IN THE STABLES? I WOULD GLADLY BUTCHER EVERY HORSE IN WINTERFELL IF IT WOULD OPEN BRAN'S EYES.

DO YOU UNDERSTAND THAT?

Y-YES MY LADY. WHEN I RODE SOUTH...
I MUST, MY LADY, BUT THE APPOINTMENTS—

I’LL MAKE THE APPOINTMENTS.

I HAVE PREPARED A LIST OF THOSE WE MIGHT WISH TO CONSIDER.

WE’LL TALK ABOUT THEM TOMORROW. LEAVE US NOW.

MOTHER, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

HOW CAN YOU ASK THAT? I’M TAKING CARE OF YOUR BROTHER. I’M TAKING CARE OF BRAN.

RICKON NEEDS YOU. HE’S TOO YOUNG TO UNDERSTAND WHAT’S HAPPENING. HE FOLLOW’S ME AROUND CLUTCHING MY LEG AND CRYING.

IS THAT WHAT YOU CALL IT? HE’S NOT GOING TO DIE, MOTHER. MAESTER LUWIN SAYS THE TIME OF GREATEST DANGER HAS PASSED.

AND YOU HAVE OTHER CHILDREN.
I need you. I'm trying, but I can't... I can't do it all by myself.

I can't leave him. Not when any moment could be his last. I have to be with him if...

Close the window. Bran needs to stay warm.

He needs to hear them sing.

"Shaggydog and Greywind. You can tell their voices apart if you listen close."

Make them stop!

I can't stand it. Make them stop!

Kill them all if you have to. Only make them stop!
DON'T BE AFRAID, MOTHER. THEY WOULD NEVER HURT HIM.

PLEASE, REST. YOU'VE HARDLY SLEPT AT ALL.

I CAN'T WHAT IF HE DIES WHILE I'M ASLEEP? I CAN'T...

OH GODS, CLOSE THE WINDOW!

I WILL, IF YOU PROMISE TO SLEEP.

WAIT. THE DOGS ARE BARKING TOO. THEY'VE NEVER DONE...

MOTHER, STAY HERE. I'LL COME BACK AS SOON AS THE FIRE'S OUT.

FIRE!

THE LIBRARY TOWER'S ON FIRE.
YOU WEREN'T SPOSED TO BE HERE.

NO ONE WAS SPOSED TO BE HERE.

IT'S A MERCY HE'S DEAD ALREADY.

NO.

NO.

YOU CAN'T.
YOU WEREN'T S'POSED TO BE HERE.
THEY WRAPPED HER IN WARM BLANKETS AND LED CATELYN BACK TO THE GREAT KEEP TO HER OWN CHAMBERS. OLD NAN BATHED HER AND MAESTER LUIVIN DRESSED HER WOUNDS. FINALLY, SHE CLOSED HER EYES. WHEN SHE OPENED THEM AGAIN, THEY TOLD HER SHE HAD SLEPT FOR FOUR DAYS.

THAT WAS THE WAY THEY FOUND THEM WHEN ROBB AND MAESTER LUWIN AND HIR ROOK BURST IN WITH HALF THE GUARDS OF WINTERFELL.
ROBB ARRIVED BEFORE HER FOOD. SER RODRIK CASSYL AND THEON GREYJOY WITH HIM.

WHO WAS HE?

NO ONE KNOWS HIS NAME. MY LADY, HE WAS NO MAN OF WINTERFELL.

IT WAS NO GREAT TRICK TO HIDE FROM THE STABLEBOYS. HODOR MAY HAVE SEEN HIM. THERE’S TALK HE’S BEEN ACTING QUEER, BUT SIMPLE AS HE IS...

WE FOUND WHERE HE SLEPT. HE HAD NINETY SILVER STAGS IN A BAG UNDER THE STRAW.

IT’S GOOD TO KNOW MY SON’S LIFE WAS NOT SOLD CHEAPLY.

WHY WOULD ANYONE WANT TO KILL BRAN?

IF YOU ARE TO RULE IN THE NORTH, YOU MUST THINK THESE THINGS THROUGH, ROBB.

WHY WOULD ANYONE WANT TO KILL A SLEEPING CHILD?

SOMEONE IS AFRAID BRAN MIGHT WAKE UP. AFRAID OF SOMETHING HE KNOWS.
The blade is Valyrian steel, the hilt Drasongbone. A weapon like this has no business being in the hands of such a man. Someone gave it to him.

Very good. We must keep Bran safe. If there was one killer, there could be others.

Put one man in the sickroom, night and day. One outside the door, two at the bottom of the stairs. No one sees Bran without my warrant or my mother’s.

Yes, my lord.

And let his wolf stay in the room with him.

Lady Stark? Did you chance to notice the dagger the killer used?

Circumstances did not allow me to examine it closely. I can vouch for its edge, why do you ask?
What I am about to tell you must not leave this room. I want your oaths on that.

Ned and my girls have ridden into deadly danger, and a word in the wrong ears could mean their lives.

Lord Eddard is like a second father to me. I do swear.

You have my oath.

Robb?

Of course, mother.

My sister Lysa believes the Lannisters murdered her husband, Lord Arryn, hand of the king, and Jaime Lannister did not join the hunt the day that Bran fell.

I do not think Bran fell from that tower. I think he was thrown.

We must have proof. This is the queen's brother we mean to accuse. She will not take it kindly.

Your proof is in the dagger. A fine blade like that will not have gone unnoticed.

Someone must go to Kings Landing.

No. Your place is here. There must always be a Stark at Winterfell.

I will. I must go myself.
Efl
CAN
BE
A
PERILOUS
PLACE
FOR
A
WOMAN
ALONE.

WHAT ABOUT BRAN? YOU
CAN'T MEAN TO
LEAVE HIM.

I HAVE DONE
EVERYTHING
I CAN FOR
BRAN.

AND AS YOU
REMINDED ME.
I HAVE OTHER
CHILDREN TO
THINK OF
NOW.

MY LADY, LET
ME ACCOMPANY
YOU. THE KINGSSROAD
CAN BE A PERILOUS
PLACE FOR A WOMAN
ALONE.

I WELCOME
YOUR COMPANY,
SER RODRICK. BUT
WE WILL NOT BE
TAKING THE
KINGSSROAD.
WE WILL
FOLLOW THE
WHITE KNIFE
DOWN TO THE
SEA AND HIRE A
SHIP AT WHITE
HARBOR.

STRONG
HORSES AND SWIFT
WINDS WILL BRING US
TO KING'S LANDING
AHEAD OF NED AND
THE LANNISTERS.

AND THEN, SHE
THOUGHT WE
SHALL SEE WHAT
WE SHALL SEE...

TO BE CONTINUED