

# ASoIaF vs. GoT, Twelfth: In Which Cersei Screws Herself (Citations)

## Section 1: Cersei's Machinations

Pycelle had gone the color of curdled white. *At council meetings the wretched old fool cannot say enough, but now that I need a few words from him he has lost the power of speech*, the queen thought, before the old man finally came out with, “There is no need for me to examine her ... her privy parts.” His voice was a quaver. “I grieve to say ... Queen Margaery is no maiden. She has required me to make her moon tea, not once, but many times.”

The uproar that followed that was all that Cersei Lannister could ever have hoped for.

Even the royal herald beating on the floor with his staff did little to quell the noise. The queen let it wash over her for a few heartbeats, savoring the sounds of the little queen’s disgrace. When it had gone on long enough, she rose stone-faced and commanded that the gold cloaks clear the hall. *Margaery Tyrell is done*, she thought, exulting. Her white knights fell in around her as she made her exit through the king’s door behind the Iron Throne; Boros Blount, Meryn Trant, and Osmund Kettleblack, the last of the Kingsguard still remaining in the city.

Moon Boy was standing beside the door, holding his rattle in his hand and gaping at the confusion with his big round eyes. *A fool he may be, but he wears his folly honestly*. Maggy the Frog should have been in motley too, for all she knew about the morrow. Cersei prayed the old fraud was screaming down in hell. The younger queen whose coming she’d foretold was finished, and if that prophecy could fail, so could the rest. *No golden shrouds, no valonqar, I am free of your croaking malice at last*.

Martin, George R.R. (2005-11-08). *A Feast for Crows* (A Song of Ice and Fire, Book 4) (pp. 730-731). Random House Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

*Seven hells.* Cersei donned a look of hurt. “You wrong me, daughter. All I want—”

“— is your son, all for yourself. He will never have a wife that you don’t hate. And I am not your daughter, thank the gods. Leave me.”

“You are being foolish. I am only here to help you.”

“To help me to my grave. I asked for you to leave. Will you make me call my gaolers and have you dragged away, you vile, scheming, evil bitch?”

Martin, George R.R. (2005-11-08). *A Feast for Crows* (A Song of Ice and Fire, Book 4) (pp. 737-738). Random House Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

“Ser Osney shall taste of that sweet milk in the afterlife. In *The Seven-Pointed Star* it is written that all sins may be forgiven, but crimes must still be punished. Osney Kettleblack is guilty of treason and murder, and the wages of treason are death.”

*He is just a priest, he cannot do this.* “It is not for the Faith to condemn a man to death, whatever his offense.”

“Whatever his offense.” The High Septon repeated the words slowly, weighing them. “Strange to say, Your Grace, the more diligently we applied the scourge, the more Ser Osney’s offenses seemed to change. He would now have us believe that he never touched Margaery Tyrell. Is that not so, Ser Osney?”

Osney Kettleblack opened his eyes. When he saw the queen standing there before him he ran his tongue across his swollen lips, and said, “The Wall. You promised me the Wall.”

“He is mad,” said Cersei. “You have driven him mad.”

“Ser Osney,” said the High Septon, in a firm, clear voice, “did you have carnal knowledge of the queen?”

“Aye.” The chains rattled softly as Osney twisted in his shackles. “That one there. She’s the queen I fucked, the one sent me to kill the old High Septon. He never had no guards. I just come in when he was sleeping and pushed a pillow

down across his face.”

Cersei whirled, and ran.

The High Septon tried to seize her, but he was some old sparrow and she was a lioness of the Rock. She pushed him aside and burst through the door, slamming it behind her with a clang.

*The Kettleblacks, I need the Kettleblacks, I will send in Osfryd with the gold cloaks and Osmund with the Kingsguard, Osney will deny it all once they cut him free, and I'll rid myself of this High Septon just as I did the other.* The four old septas blocked her way and clutched at her with wrinkled hands. She knocked one to the floor and clawed another across the face, and gained the steps. Halfway up, she remembered Taena Merryweather. It made her stumble, panting.

*Seven save me, she prayed. Taena knows it all. If they take her too, and whip her ...*

Martin, George R.R. (2005-11-08). *A Feast for Crows* (A Song of Ice and Fire, Book 4) (pp. 740-741). Random House Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

“Osfryd Kettleblack no longer commands the City Watch. The king has removed him from office and raised the captain of the Dragon Gate in his place, a certain Humfrey Waters.”

Cersei was so tired, none of this made any sense. “Why would Tommen do that?”

“The boy is not to blame. When his council puts a decree in front of him, he signs his name and stamps it with his seal.”

“My council ... who? Who would do that? Not you?”

“Alas, I have been dismissed from the council, although for the nonce they allow me to continue my work with the eunuch’s whisperers. The realm is being ruled by Ser Harys Swyft and Grand Maester Pycelle. They have dispatched a raven to Casterly Rock, inviting your uncle to return to court and assume the regency. If he means to accept, he had best make haste. Mace Tyrell has abandoned his siege of Storm’s End and is marching back to the city with his army, and Randyll Tarly is reported on his way down from Maidenpool as well.”

“Has Lord Merryweather agreed to this?”

“Merryweather has resigned his seat on the council and fled back to Longtable with his wife, who was the first to bring us news of the ... accusations ...

against Your Grace.”

“They let Taena go.” That was the best thing she had heard since the High Sparrow had said no. Taena could have doomed her.

Martin, George R.R. (2005-11-08). *A Feast for Crows* (A Song of Ice and Fire, Book 4) (p. 744). Random House Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

This time she did laugh. It was funny, terribly funny, hideously funny.

“The gods make japes of all our hopes and plans. I have a champion no man can defeat, but I am forbidden to make use of him. I am the queen, Qyburn. My honor can only be defended by a Sworn Brother of the Kingsguard.”

“I see.” The smile died on Qyburn’s face. “Your Grace, I am at a loss. I do not know how to counsel you ...”

Even in her exhausted, frightened state, the queen knew she dare not trust her fate to a court of sparrows. Nor could she count on Ser Kevan to intervene, after the words that had passed between them at their last meeting. *It will have to be a trial by battle. There is no other way.* “Qyburn, for the love you bear me, I beg you, send a message for me. A raven if you can. A rider, if not. You must send to Riverrun, to my brother. Tell him what has happened, and write ... write ...”

“Yes, Your Grace?” She licked her lips, shivering. “Come at once. Help me. Save me. I need you now as I have never needed you before. I love you. I love you. I love you. Come at once.”

“As you command. ‘I love you’ thrice?”

“Thrice.” She had to reach him. “He will come. I know he will. He must. Jaime is my only hope.”

“My queen,” said Qyburn, “have you ... forgotten? Ser Jaime has no sword hand. If he should champion you and lose ...”

*We will leave this world together, as we once came into it.* “He will not lose. Not Jaime. Not with my life at stake.”

Martin, George R.R. (2005-11-08). *A Feast for Crows* (A Song of Ice and Fire, Book 4) (p. 745). Random House Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

*This man is implacable*, she realized once again. She gathered herself for a moment. “Mother have mercy on me, then. I have lain with men outside the bonds of marriage. I confess it.”

“Who?” The High Septon’s eyes were fixed on hers.

Cersei could hear Unella writing behind her. Her quill made a faint, soft scratching sound. “Lancel Lannister, my cousin. And Osney Kettleblack.” Both men had confessed to bedding her, it would do her no good to deny it. “His brothers too. Both of them.” She had no way of knowing what Osfryd and Osmund might say. Safer to confess too much than too little. “It does not excuse my sin, High Holiness, but I was lonely and afraid. The gods took King Robert from me, my love and my protector. I was alone, surrounded by schemers, false friends, and traitors who were conspiring at the death of my children. I did not know who to trust, so I ... I used the only means that I had to bind the Kettleblacks to me.”

Martin, George R.R. (2011-07-12). *A Dance with Dragons (A Song of Ice and Fire, Book 5)* (pp. 790-791). Random House Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

The High Sparrow was not done with her, however. “These are common sins,” he said. “The wickedness of widows is well-known, and all women are wantons at heart, given to using their wiles and their beauty to work their wills on men. There is no treason here, so long as you did not stray from your marriage bed whilst His Grace King Robert was still alive.”

“Never,” she whispered, shivering. “Never, I swear it.”

He paid that no mind. “There are other charges laid against Your Grace, crimes far more grievous than simple fornications. You admit Ser Osney Kettleblack was your lover, and Ser Osney insists that he smothered my predecessor at your behest. He further insists that he bore false witness against Queen Margaery and her cousins, telling tales of fornications, adultery, and high treason, again at your behest.”

“No,” said Cersei. “It is not true. I love Margaery as I would a daughter. And the other ... I complained of the High Septon, I admit it. He was Tyrion’s creature, weak and corrupt, a stain upon our Holy Faith. Your High Holiness knows that as well as I. It may be that Osney thought that his death would please me. If so, I bear some part of the blame ... but murder? No. Of that I am innocent. Take me to the sept and I will stand before the Father’s judgment seat and swear the truth of that.”

“In time,” said the High Septon. “You also stand accused of conspiring at

the murder of your own lord husband, our late beloved King Robert, First of His Name.”

*Lancel*, Cersei thought. “Robert was killed by a boar. Do they say I am a skinchanger now? A warg? Am I accused of killing Joffrey too, my own sweet son, my firstborn?”

“No. Just your husband. Do you deny it?”

“I deny it. I do. Before gods and men, I deny it.”

He nodded. “Last of all, and worst of all, there are some who say your children were not fathered by King Robert, that they are bastards born of incest and adultery.”

“Stannis says that,” Cersei said at once. “A lie, a lie, a palpable lie. Stannis wants the Iron Throne for himself, but his brother’s children stand in his way, so he must needs claim that they are not his brother’s. That filthy letter ... there is no shred of truth to it. I deny it.”

The High Septon placed both hands flat upon the table and pushed himself to his feet. “Good. Lord Stannis has turned from the truth of the Seven to worship a red demon, and his false faith has no place in these Seven Kingdoms.”

That was almost reassuring. Cersei nodded.

“Even so,” His High Holiness went on, “these are terrible charges, and the realm must know the truth of them. If Your Grace has told it true, no doubt a trial will prove your innocence.”

*A trial, still.* “I have confessed—”

“— to certain sins, aye. Others you deny. Your trial will separate the truths from the falsehoods. I shall ask the Seven to forgive the sins you have confessed and pray that you be found innocent of these other accusations.”

Martin, George R.R. (2011-07-12). *A Dance with Dragons (A Song of Ice and Fire, Book 5)* (pp. 792-793). Random House Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

“Thank you for coming,” the queen said.

Her uncle frowned. “You should sit. There are things that I must needs tell you—”

She did not want to sit. “You are still angry with me. I hear it in your voice. Forgive me, Uncle. It was wrong of me to throw my wine at you, but—”

“You think I care about a cup of wine? Lancel is my *son*, Cersei. Your own cousin. If I am angry with you, that is the cause. You should have looked after him, guided him, found him a likely girl of good family. Instead you—”

“I know. I know.” *Lancel wanted me more than I ever wanted him. He still does, I will wager.* “I was alone, weak. Please. Uncle. Oh, Uncle. It is so good to see your face, your sweet sweet face. I have done wicked things, I know, but I could not bear for you to hate me.” She threw her arms around him, kissed his cheek. “Forgive me. Forgive me.”

Martin, George R.R. (2011-07-12). *A Dance with Dragons (A Song of Ice and Fire, Book 5)* (pp. 794-795). Random House Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

The whole governance of the realm was being handed to her enemies, Queen Margaery’s kith and kin. “Margaery stands accused as well. Her and those cousins of hers. How is it that the sparrows freed her and not me?”

“Randyll Tarly insisted. He was the first to reach King’s Landing when this storm broke, and he brought his army with him. The Tyrell girls will still be tried, but the case against them is weak, His High Holiness admits. All of the men named as the queen’s lovers have denied the accusation or recanted, save for your maimed singer, who appears to be half-mad. So the High Septon handed the girls over to Tarly’s custody and Lord Randyll swore a holy oath to deliver them for trial when the time comes.”

“And her accusers?” the queen demanded. “Who holds them?”

“Osney Kettleblack and the Blue Bard are here, beneath the sept. The Redwyne twins have been declared innocent, and Hamish the Harper has died. The rest are in the dungeons under the Red Keep, in the charge of your man Qyburn.”

Martin, George R.R. (2011-07-12). *A Dance with Dragons (A Song of Ice and Fire, Book 5)* (pp. 796-797). Random House Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

## Section 2: Jaime's Estrangement

*Sleeping with the Mother and the Maiden, when he has a warm wife just through that door?* Jaime did not know whether to laugh or weep. *Maybe he is praying for his cock to harden.* In King's Landing it had been rumored that Lancel's wounds had left him incapable. Still, he ought to have sense enough to try. His cousin's hold on his new lands would not be secure until he fathered a son on his half-Darry wife. Jaime had begun to rue the impulse that had brought him here.

Martin, George R.R. (2005-11-08). *A Feast for Crows (A Song of Ice and Fire, Book 4)* (p. 505). Random House Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

*Fasting? He is an even bigger fool than I suspected.* His cousin should be busy fathering a little weasel-faced heir on his widow instead of starving himself to death. He wondered what Ser Kevan might have had to say about his son's new fervor. Could that be the reason for his uncle's abrupt departure?

Martin, George R.R. (2005-11-08). *A Feast for Crows (A Song of Ice and Fire, Book 4)* (p. 507). Random House Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

"Our lives are candle flames, says The Seven-Pointed Star. Any errant puff of wind can snuff us out. Death is never far in this world, and seven hells await sinners who do not repent their sins. Pray with me, Jaime."

"If I do, will you eat a bowl of porridge?" When his coz did not answer, Jaime sighed. "You should be sleeping with your wife, not with the Maid. You need a son with Darry blood if you want to keep this castle."

"A pile of cold stones. I never asked for it. I never wanted it. I only wanted ..." Lancel shuddered. "Seven save me, but I wanted to be you."

Jaime had to laugh. "Better me than Blessed Baelor. Darry needs a lion, coz. So does your little Frey. She gets moist between the legs every time someone mentions Hardstone. If she hasn't bedded him yet, she will soon."

"If she loves him, I wish them joy of one another."

Martin, George R.R. (2005-11-08). *A Feast for Crows (A Song of Ice and Fire, Book 4)* (p. 514). Random House Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

Jaime put his hand on his cousin's shoulder. "What do you know of sin, coz? I killed my king."

"The brave man slays with a sword, the craven with a wineskin. We are both kingslayers, ser."

"Robert was no true king. Some might even say that a stag is a lion's natural prey." Jaime could feel the bones beneath his cousin's skin ... and something else as well. Lancel was wearing a hair shirt underneath his tunic. "What else did you do, to require so much atonement? Tell me."

His cousin bowed his head, tears running down his cheeks. Those tears were all the answer Jaime needed.

"You killed the king," he said, "then you fucked the queen."

"I never ..."

"... lay with my sweet sister?" *Say it. Say it!*

"Never spilled my seed in ... in her ..."

"... cunt?" suggested Jaime.

"... womb," Lancel finished. "It is not treason unless you finish inside. I gave her comfort, after the king died. You were a captive, your father was in the field, and your brother ... she was afraid of him, and with good reason. He made me betray her."

"Did he?" Lancel and Ser Osmund and how many more? Was the part about Moon Boy just a gibe? "Did you force her?"

"No! I loved her. I wanted to protect her."

*You wanted to be me.* His phantom fingers itched. The day his sister had come to White Sword Tower to beg him to renounce his vows, she had laughed after he refused her and boasted of having lied to him a thousand times. Jaime had taken that for a clumsy attempt to hurt him as he'd hurt her. *It may have been the only true thing that she ever said to me.*

"Do not think ill of the queen," Lancel pleaded. "All flesh is weak, Jaime. No harm came of our sin. No ... no bastard."

"No. Bastards are seldom made upon the belly." He wondered what his

cousin would say if he were to confess his own sins, the three treasons Cersei had named Joffrey, Tommen, and Myrcella.

Martin, George R.R. (2005-11-08). *A Feast for Crows* (A Song of Ice and Fire, Book 4) (pp. 515-516). Random House Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

Wine had become a part of their nightly ritual. Ser Ilyn made the perfect drinking companion. He never interrupted, never disagreed, never complained or asked for favors or told long pointless stories. All he did was drink and listen. “I should have the tongues removed from all my friends,” said Jaime as he filled their cups, “and from my kin as well. A silent Cersei would be sweet. Though I’d miss her tongue when we kissed.” He drank. The wine was a deep red, sweet and heavy. It warmed him going down. “I can’t remember when we first began to kiss. It was innocent at first. Until it wasn’t.” He finished the wine and set his cup aside. “Tyrion once told me that most whores will not kiss you. They’ll fuck you blind, he said, but you’ll never feel their lips on yours. Do you think my sister kisses Kettleblack?”

Martin, George R.R. (2005-11-08). *A Feast for Crows* (A Song of Ice and Fire, Book 4) (p. 754). Random House Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

It was Riverrun’s old maester, with a message clutched in his lined and wrinkled hand. Vyman’s face was as pale as the new-fallen snow.

“I know,” Jaime said, “there has been a white raven from the Citadel. Winter has come.”

“No, my lord. The bird was from King’s Landing. I took the liberty ... I did not know ...” He held the letter out.

Jaime read it in the window seat, bathed in the light of that cold white morning. Qyburn’s words were terse and to the point, Cersei’s fevered and fervent. *Come at once, she said. Help me. Save me. I need you now as I have never needed you before. I love you. I love you. I love you. Come at once.*

Vyman was hovering by the door, waiting, and Jaime sensed that Peck was watching too.

“Does my lord wish to answer?” the maester asked, after a long silence.

A snowflake landed on the letter. As it melted, the ink began to blur. Jaime

rolled the parchment up again, as tight as one hand would allow, and handed it to Peck. “No,” he said. “Put this in the fire.”

Martin, George R.R. (2005-11-08). *A Feast for Crows* (A Song of Ice and Fire, Book 4) (pp. 760-761). Random House Publishing Group. Kindle Edition.

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