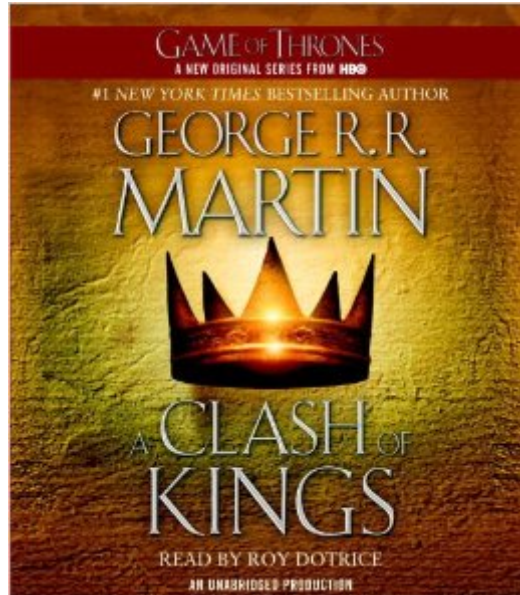


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A Clash Of Kings: A Song Of Ice And Fire: Book Two (Game Of Thrones)



Synopsis

THE BOOK BEHIND THE SECOND SEASON OF GAME OF THRONES, AN ORIGINAL SERIES NOW ON HBO. Here is the second volume in George R.R. Martin magnificent cycle of novels that includes A Game of Thrones and A Storm of Swords. As a whole, this series comprises a genuine masterpiece of modern fantasy, bringing together the best the genre has to offer. Magic, mystery, intrigue, romance, and adventure fill these pages and transport us to a world unlike any we have ever experienced. Already hailed as a classic, George R.R. Martin stunning series is destined to stand as one of the great achievements of imaginative fiction. A CLASH OF KINGSA comet the color of blood and flame cuts across the sky. Two great leaders "Lord Eddard Stark and Robert Baratheon" who hold sway over an age of enforced peace are dead, victims of royal treachery. Now, from the ancient citadel of Dragonstone to the forbidding shores of Winterfell, chaos reigns. Six factions struggle for control of a divided land and the Iron Throne of the Seven Kingdoms, preparing to stake their claims through tempest, turmoil, and war. It is a tale in which brother plots against brother and the dead rise to walk in the night. Here a princess masquerades as an orphan boy; a knight of the mind prepares a poison for a treacherous sorceress; and wild men descend from the Mountains of the Moon to ravage the countryside. Against a backdrop of incest and fratricide, alchemy and murder, victory may go to the men and women possessed of the coldest steel...and the coldest hearts. For when kings clash, the whole land trembles. From the Trade Paperback edition.

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Customer Reviews

During one of those endless nights when I just couldn't put Clash of Kings down, I wondered: "Why aren't there more books like this?" George Martin has created one of those most deeply involving and satisfying series out there. In only two books, he has crafted real characters involved in the horrors of war. Many of the reviews below accurately describe the way that Martin creates characters of grey, rather than comic book black and whites. Many of the scenes in the book fit well with dark and somber lighting. This is not your daddy's fantasy novel. Martin's characters bring a more realistic spin on knighthood and war. Cersei describes it best to young Sansa when she destroys the young girl's romantic view of knights by remarking that knights are for killing, nothing more or less. And kill they do. The battle scenes are raw and unglamorous, like the opening scene from Saving Private Ryan. It's all very realistic and gritty and heck, it makes sense: what do you really think happens when a not-so-sharp sword is swung haphazardly at another person: I've never seen it firsthand, but I'm sure it's not pretty. It may be an oxymoron to claim that a fantasy book can be realistic, but this series is: after seeing the battle scenes in Braveheart or Gladiator, I have a deeper understanding of the horrors of sword fighting in, say, the medieval times in English history. Martin's story is realistic in the sense that it doesn't gloss over the horror and pain and terror of battles and the rage of the people who fight them. Martin's series is a hardcore fantasy adventure for adults. While other authors cater predominately to a younger fantasy audience, Martin seems to write for the "college and beyond" crowd (at 31, I'm well beyond).

First off, I'm a heavy duty fan of GRRM. I've read over a 100 different fantasy authors in my time (started at 12; I'm now 32). Took about 5 years off from the genre b/c I felt it was all getting too formulaic and cliched. Typical archetype character who turns out to be the missing heir or boy wonder who saves the world against the Dark Lord. So, when I came back to fantasy at the end of 1999, I read the usual: Goodkind, Jordan, etc. and then someone told me about GRRM and man, that was the kicker! Here are the reasons to choose GRRM. I've also listed the reasons not to choose him to make it fair b/c I know there are certain personalities who won't like this series: WHY TO READ GRRM (1) YOU ARE TIRED OF FORMULAIC FANTASY: good lad beats the dark lord against impossible odds; boy is the epitome of good; he and all his friends never die even though they go through great dangers . . . the good and noble king; the beautiful princess who falls in love with the commoner boy even though their stations are drastically different . . . the dark lord is very evil and almost one sided at times . . . you get the idea. After reading this over and over, it gets old. (2) YOU ARE TIRED OF ALL THE HEROES STAYING ALIVE EVEN THOUGH THEY ARE

UNDER CONSTANT DANGER: this gets even worse where the author kills a main hero off but that person comes back later in the story. Or, a hero does die but magic brings him back. This sometimes carries to minor characters where even they may not die, but most fantasy authors like to kill them off to show that some risked the adventure and perished.(3) YOU ARE A MEDIEVAL HISTORY BUFF: this story was influenced by the WARS OF THE ROSES and THE HUNDRED YEARS WAR.

I loved Game of Thrones. Seriously, loved it. It shattered all my built up pessimism towards fantasy and kept me quite addicted in a scary way. I had to finish it at all costs. Towards the end I realized that I'd better get the rest of the series quick so when I finish the Thrones I can keep on right away. Well I did finish and I did continue on immediately with Clash of Kings. But something odd happened. As the first pages flew by in a fever of needing to know what happened next, I started to notice myself reading at a much slower pace. Eventually I started drifting ahead and accidentally skipping passages. I had to put the book down and take a break. So I did for a few days. Then I picked it up again and still found myself moving somewhat sluggishly. That is Clash of Kings ultimate curse. There are parts of this book that really drag on. Just about every character can claim more than one slow chapter in the story, and they start to add up too much in the middle. At some points you will have to will yourself through this book. Yes I know it's a 1000 pages so what did I expect, but did it have to be that long? Game of Thrones is long, but it moves at a rapid pace and tells a very tight story. There's much to trim here, or at least to substitute. Then there are little things. Like take for instance the aforementioned Kings that clash. Of the five major ones, none have their own character chapters. Granted four of them do have their actions mentioned by characters near them, but one doesn't even have that (save for a visit from another character). Another one was built up as a main character in the first book (and a bad ass one at that), and is hardly mentioned as most of his actions aren't even followed directly.

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