



INTRODUCTION

I pledge my life and honor to the Night's Watch, for this night and all the nights to come.

—THE OATH OF THE NIGHT'S WATCH

It thrums beneath the rumble and chatter and whispering sounds of life in Westeros, repeating itself over and over again, so low that you must listen carefully to make out the words: “*Winter is Coming.*” Those who grow up with it have heard it for so long that it has become simply background noise, barely noticeable, sounds without meaning. It provides the rhythm of their lives, but it might as well be inaudible, coming from a place so far away, beyond the sight or reach of most of Westeros—the North, where men go to forget and be forgotten.

What began as a legacy that the sons of kings were proud to embrace has become a dying tradition, fueled by stubbornness as much as the will of the king. The Wall of ice raised by Bran the Builder to keep back the monsters without has stood through time, even though the host of men who guard it dwindle with each passing year. Underneath it all, though, the land has not forgotten. *Winter is Coming*, it says, and the cold and ice and those that live beyond the ken of the Iron Throne will not scruple to send warning of their coming. The Wall and the Watch remember, and throughout the long night of neglect and need have stood their post, ready and waiting. When the drum sounds clear, the Watch will hold the line—or fall trying.

ABOUT THIS BOOK

The Houses of Westeros are the primary participants in the Game of Thrones. It is tempting to think that the setting begins and ends with them, with the great houses or the bannermen thereof. There are other forces in Westeros, however, whether they play their own game, hoping to be the power behind the Iron Throne, or refusing to take part in any game whatsoever. The Night's Watch adopts the latter philosophy.

This book focuses on the Night's Watch, the Wall, the Gift, and the lands and people beyond the Wall. It is particularly well suited to campaigns that are less politically oriented. If your group is more interested in exploring untamed wilderness, or potentially dealing with supernatural threats than in the interplay of houses, then the Wall and the lands beyond it will be of interest to you.

The Watch is an unusually egalitarian organization for Westeros. Men of any background can rise to become valued members of the Watch, even Lord Commander. While true meritocracies have never existed, the Night's Watch is as close to one as Westeros has ever had. This allows for a much greater variety of backgrounds and a much more direct purpose for character groups than other chronicles in *A Song of Ice and Fire Roleplaying* might easily provide. Between its military structure, the difficulties of mixing such widely varying social classes and value systems as its members bring with them, and the pain and joy of exile without truly leaving home, the Night's Watch is an excellent source of drama and intrigue for characters while providing a closely knit playing experience and a somewhat more traditional fantasy setting for players.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER 1: THE WATCH describes the life of the Sworn Brothers of the Night's Watch. It looks at the things that drive men to take the Black, what their training looks like upon arrival, the fates of those who desert the Wall and betray their Oath, as well as a look at the History of the Night's Watch.

This chapter also provides rules for creating Sworn Brothers of the Night's Watch, and a modification of the House Creation rules for establishing House Resource traits for each of the castles along the Wall, treating each as their own House.

CHAPTER 2: THE WALL & THE GIFT covers the lands ceded to the Night's Watch: the Wall itself, as well as the castles built along its frigid length. This chapter also includes descriptions of the characters of the Night's Watch, and a look at the lands of the Gift. Finally, this chapter ends with a selection of Rangings, single-page encounters that range from simple scouting missions to full military undertakings by the Night's Watch.

CHAPTER 3: BEYOND THE WALL examines life among the Free People north of the Wall. It describes the tribal life of the wildlings and a look at the many tribes themselves. This chapter covers the geography of the Far North, as well.

Rules for creating wildling characters, and using the House Creation rules to create wildling tribes can be found here, along with a handful of plot hooks and storylines for chronicles in which the protagonists are of the Free Folk.

CHAPTER 4: LORDS OF THE LONG NIGHT describes the Others, those mysterious creatures of white mist and black death who only now begin to stir from their ages-long sleep. This section describes some Others from oral tradition and folklore, describing creatures whose stories are still told as children's fairy tales in the North—but which may have a foundation in a terrifying truth. The chapter ends with a selection of single-page encounters with the Others and their horrific servitors.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

Night's Watch is a sourcebook for the Wall, the Watch, and the lands and people beyond. It includes information on Watch characters and campaigns as well as on the history and challenges of the Watch. The free folk and the lands beyond the wall are likewise examined and expanded, including character creation information for the free folk to let your players take on *SIFRP* from a wildling perspective.

In addition to human issues, the geography of the Wall and the lands beyond are presented in more detail, allowing you to flesh out the locations that really bring a Watch or free folk chronicle to life. This includes information about and stats for some of the creatures that live beyond the Wall as well, including a number of types of Others, their legends surviving far beyond living memory.