

Game of Thrones Season 6 Finale Recap

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"The Winds of Winter"

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Here's how this recap works: We're gonna use the ever-so-fertile grounds that are GoT to explore the biggest conflicts of interest issues that arise each week and compare them with NYC's conflicts of interest rules. What we'll be highlighting in each recap is the most egregious or novel ways in which the shady and powerful folks that populate the world of Game of Thrones put their personal interests above their public duties and responsibilities.

SPOILER ALERT: someone always dies!!

I'm satisfied. Arya's back in Westeros, striking names off her list. And, she learned to bake. Jon is the new King of the North. Also, he's Lyanna Stark's son, not Ned's (assuming this isn't a Cersei/Jaime situation), and potentially a Targaryen. Sansa's gotta make a choice: family or Little Finger. I want it to be family – so that's what I'm going with. And Cersei has stepped out from the shadow of others' power (her father's, brother's, husband's, sons') and taken it for herself. Cersei of House Lannister is sitting on the Iron Throne – making her the first outright Queen of the Seven Kingdoms. I guess the Mother of Dragons will just have to settle for second place.

Cersei has sat herself on the throne in the most spectacular way: she used the Mad King's reserved wildfire (the green stuff Tyrion didn't use) to eviscerate all her enemies in King's Landing. The High Sparrow and his militant minions are gone (not so unhappy about that one). Margaery, Loras, and Mace are gone, leaving Lady Olenna alone and without an heir. Uncle Kevin and Cousin Lancel are gone. Maester Pycelle, he's gone. I feel way more sorry for the kids who killed him than I do the Grand Maester. Tommen killed himself. Watching his mother's masterpiece was too much for him. And, Septa Unella – well...

Even though I knew this event was coming, it was amazing to watch. This is a major problem for Queen (no need for the suffix Regent or Mother anymore) Cersei. Besides possibly causing her to lose the love of her life/brother, Jaime, and making her the direct target of Queen Daenerys, the King of the North, Lady Olenna, and the Sand Snakes, blowing up the Citadel was a serious conflict of interest.

Now, I am well aware that, unlike here in New York City, the Realm does not possess a sitting body to regulate ethical abuses by Crown officials or employees. But, let's suppose it did. In that case, Cersei's pyrotechnics would qualify as both a **Misuse of Crown Resources** and a **Misuse of her Crown Position** as Queen Mother. (TBH, even if the Seven Kingdoms did have its very own COIB, it would probably be seven hells of a lot more loose with what it means by misuse of resources and position – the high-ups in the Seven Kingdoms take a lot of personal advantages from the resources they have access to and the positions almost none of them deserve, in ways that NYC high-ups would never be allowed to do. But

even in the loosey-goosey conflicts of interest atmosphere of Game of Thrones, some things would still be off limits.)

And for Cersei, her wildfire bombing would be one of those things.

Cersei's not having this trial nonsense. She has already humiliated herself for the Sparrow, taking that long Walk of Shame. The Sparrow got Tommen to do away with Trial by Combat, depriving Cersei, and us, of the pleasure of watching the Mountain take out another one of the Faith Militants. Here's the most important point: Cersei doesn't think she has anything to stand trial for. So, she decides she won't. And, as a way of questioning the legitimacy of the court, she burns the whole institution to the ground, people and all. I'm reminded of an Assistant District Attorney in NYC that misused her position to interfere with a trial against her husband. A cop gave the ADA's husband a traffic ticket and a bit of a hassle (apparently, he wasn't a fan of ADAs). To "bust the cop's chops" the ADA decided to issue a false grand jury summons to this particular police officer - for a case the cop had no involvement in and that was scheduled at the same time as her husband's traffic court case, making the cop unable to testify at the husband's traffic hearing. Not an exact one-to-one (no explosions on the ADA's part), but the same principle is at issue - namely that both Cersei and the ADA misused their positions to protect themselves (or husband) from official sanctions. Here, Cersei takes it one step further, by destroying the institution that is attempting to sanction her. The only reason either Cersei or the ADA could do what they did (Cersei: blew up the Citadel and everyone in it; ADA: issued a false summons) is because of the positions that they held. New York City employees are never allowed to use their City positions for any kind of private gain. I would imagine that even in the Seven Kingdoms using one's Crown position for a personal gain that goes directly against the Crown would not be OK. But, it's Westeros and Cersei is Queen - she'll make the rules until someone takes the throne from her (which will certainly happen).

With the **Misuse of Crown Resources**, that wildfire she used belonged to the Crown, even if the Crown didn't know it existed. So, the Crown probably wouldn't have allowed her to use the wildfire to blow up most of the Crown's court, including the Crown's wife, otherwise called a private political gain. In NYC, City employees can never use City resources for private business or political activities.

Those people that she blew up, most of them were her subordinates - not Margaery, the High Sparrow and his star scared followers, or Uncle Kevin, mind you - but most everyone else would fall below the title of Queen Mother. And, by blowing up her subordinates, she **Misused Crown Resources** in another way because subordinates are Crown resources and she can't destroy Crown resources for personal gain.