

The Beggar Queen Study Guide

The Beggar Queen by Lloyd Alexander

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Plot Summary

"The Beggar Queen" is the final book in the Westmark trilogy. It follows Mickle, who in previous books was almost killed as a child and sheltered from her true identity but who rose to the throne after a bloody revolution as a result of the loyalty of her followers and friends — and her own guts and ability as a leader. Mickle is unhappy with her responsibility as a queen but is trying to re-build Westmark after the war.

There are characters from Mickle's past plotting to destroy Westmark. There is Duke Conrad, the uncle to the current king of Regia, who helps bring the self-important ex leader of Westmark, Cabarrus, back to Westmark along with a huge mercenary army from Ankar, a neighboring country. Cabarrus plans to overtake Westmark and execute the queen and all the followers that he considers rebels and traitors to Regia, but who have now become the leaders in Mickle's government. Despite some hints that something is wrong, like the arrival of a killer for Cabarrus named Skeit the queen is taken unawares. Westmark falls under the leadership of Cabarrus and a new government is installed.

Mickle escapes thanks to the help of a pack of thieves that live in The Shambles, the slums of Marianstat. She continues her government in hiding, plotting a revolution to eventually throw Cabarrus out. Unfortunately there are tensions within. Theo, who Mickle loves and is betrothed to is the head of her revolutionary movement, but Theo has debts to pay to Justin who almost died in the last war because of a moment of hesitation. As Theo tries to prove himself worthy of Justin and Justin seeks a government by the people with no queen at all, Cabarrus continues searching all of Westmark for the hidden Beggar Queen and her resistance.

Justin begins marching his own army towards Marianstat. Florian, the greatest commander under Mickle has a host of ships coming to assist Mickle and the revolutionaries. Theo has shared Florian's battle plan with Justin. They cannot win without Justin's forces. To Theo's surprise, Justin demands that Theo show he has nerve and is committed to the cause of the republic. Theo arranges for various attempts at rebellion, knowing that Cabarrus will revenge his actions by killing innocent people. Justin is not satisfied and tries to march on the city before Florian gets there, knowing that it will force Theo to join him and his plans and not the other way around.

An overturned horse cart in the city sets into motion a revolution that ruins the plans of Theo, Florian and Justin. Weasel, thinking that the rebellion has begun starts making a road block with the overturned cart. The people in the street begin helping. Slowly the idea spreads through the city that a rebellion has begun. Citizens start joining in the fight using whatever weapons they can find. Theo and Justin's soldiers join the fight. But Theo and Mickle are taken prisoner and taken straight to Cabarrus.

Meanwhile, Skeit is plotting his own future. Realizing that the war is going against Cabarrus he plans to blackmail Cabarrus. He knows that Cabarrus has been stealing money. The revelation of the evidence would mean Cabarrus was put to death for

treason. In a moment of panic, Cabarrus hits Skeit over the head and stuffs him under a desk.

Skeit wakes up while Cabarrus is interrogating Mickle and Theo. Skeit kills Cabarrus and Mickle and Theo escape.

Meanwhile, Florian arrives to a city already in rebellion. Cabarrus is dead, and the city is taken by the people. Justin is among the many dead. However, Mickle reveals that she had signed the marriage certificate making her and Theo married. She then cedes the government over to the people and plans to go into exile where no one can use her name to try and destabilize the new republic.



Part I Citizen Weasel

Part I Citizen Weasel Summary and Analysis

The first part of "The Beggar Queen" follows Duke Conrad and the young King Constantine, as Conrad shares his worry about the revolutionary attitude of Westmark. The Duke Conrad is convinced that being lenient with Westmark and recognizing the "Beggar Queen," Queen Augusta, will lead to rebellion in Regia. The history of rebellion in Westmark makes Conrad think that they will continue to gain power. Further, Queen Augusta has appointed her rebel leaders as her new counselors of state. Florian, her commander in the war, is now her commander of armies. Conrad is concerned by the planned marriage between the Queen and Theo. Theo was a particularly dangerous soldier, but is a childhood friend of the Queen. The king Constantine disagrees. Constantine is a young king and does not wish to alienate his people. He wants to be a well-loved king, not a dictator. He looks on his uncle's advice as an annoyance. The king flat out refuses to be heavier handed against his citizens, leaving Conrad frustrated and fearful for the future of the kingdom. It is clear that Conrad cares for his nephew, but he does not trust him as a leader. The king is still a young boy, playing at being king. Conrad does not believe he has the guts to be a strong leader.

Conrad then conspires to kill his nephew and become king himself. Conrad is regretful. He does not relish the idea of power, nor enjoy the idea of regicide, but believes he must get rid of Constantine to save the kingdom. Conrad brings the former chief minister of Westmark, Cabarrus, and his loyal but brutal servant, Pankratz, out of exile and conspires with them to bring down the king leaving them power to take care of the problems of Westmark and its Beggar Queen. They plan to make Duke Conrad king of Regia, and Cabarrus the directorate of Westmark. They hire mercenary armies from the neighboring kingdom of Ankar, a vicious and greedy people that Conrad finds distasteful and distrustful. He asks Cabbarus if it would not be better to have soldiers who fight out of loyalty to Regia rather than mercenaries who are only in it for the money. Cabbarus knows that they do not have the man power to fight without the mercenaries. They will have Pankratz murder the king. To make sure that no one ever finds out, they also plan to kill Pankratz. This is when we see how cold blooded Cabbarus is. Where the Duke Conrad wishes to kill his nephew for political reasons, Cabbarus is willing to kill his most loyal servant to keep him quiet

Meanwhile in Westmark, Theo, the betrothed of Mickle the Beggar Queen, is unhappy with his role in the government. He is an artist and would prefer to marry Mickle and leave the government life behind. He loves Mickle and understands his role is an important one in her life, but the job of government tires him, bores him. Mickle has sent him down to the docks to draw up a plan for a better port. She knows that Westmark is broke and will not be able to afford a new port, but she makes Theo draw up plans. In this we see her understanding of Theo's need to do something useful as well as her commitment to Westmark's future. Theo is surprised to run into two people from his past — people he thought dead or gone long ago. The first is a friend, Constable Pohn. Pohn



was a man of considerable power before the rebellion that put the Beggar Queen on the throne. Theo was just a young rebel, but Pohn let Theo escape during the war instead of locking him up. Pohn is now destitute. When Theo sees someone who saved his life homeless and hungry, he is filled with remorse. This is significant in understanding Theo, who constantly feels indebted to others. He takes those debts very seriously. Theo gives Pohn a recommendation to get a job in the new government. Not long after that, Theo runs into the second person from his past. Theo sees Skeit skulking in town, disguised as a traveler. Skeit is a murderer, who once worked for Cabbarus and tried to kill Theo. Theo tries to follow Skeit but loses him in the city. Extremely upset that the man is in town, and sure that it portends something bad, Theo goes to Florian, the leader of the army and Theo's mentor. Florian is also troubled by Skeit's appearance. They know that Skeit goes where Cabbarus sends him, and though they do not realize Cabbarus is up to something in Westmark, Florian promises to find Skeit and find out why he is Marianstat. They both know that it is a bad omen that Cabbarus's man is sneaking around Westmark.

Meanwhile there is disagreement about how Westmark should be run. Florian is loyal to Mickle and is a man well respected and loved for his integrity and strength as a military leader. Originally Florian was fighting for a republic, but in order to end the war Florian chose to follow Mickle, the rightful queen. Theo also followed Mickle. IT was not a choice to give up the republic but a chance to have a good leader and stop the bloodshed that would have destroyed Westmark. Neither Florian nor Theo feel the loss of the republic as devastation. They know that it was the best thing to do politically. However, Florian's other protégé, who he calls his son is Justin. He still desires a republic and sees Theo and Florian as traitors to the cause. Justin also has a special hatred for Theo. It is not fair, and Justin is not evil, but Justin is a troubled young man. Theo feels guilty for not saving Justin from getting the scar that covers Justin's face. It was a moment of hesitation during a battle, where Theo did not kill an enemy before the enemy soldier slashed Justin in the face. But, Florian understands Justin; HE tells Theo that Justin is full of hatred, and bitterness. As a boy he was tortured by Cabbarus' men in order for them to find his father. Justin never forgave himself. His desire for the republic is a personal one. Florian is very wise and knows that Justin will probably fight against him one day. Theo is troubled by the story of Justin's history and it only makes him feel like he has that much more reason to prove himself to Justin.

Weasel is a street urchin, taken in, along with his sister Sparrow, by the underground journalist Keller. Without Keller, Weasel and Sparrow would still be living on the street. Keller educated them and cares for them as if they were his wards. Sparrow is in love with Keller. To Weasel Keller is a hero. Theo is also a hero to the young weasel. When Weasel overhears Theo's conversation with Florian, he takes it on himself to go looking for the elusive Skeit. Weasel has been trained as a journalist by Keller. Using the network of ship workers, tavern owners and thieves that Weasel has accumulated as an amateur journalist Weasel goes out looking for clues as to where Skeit may be. Theo saw Skeit leaving a tavern. Weasel goes to the tavern to poke around for clues and interrogates the tavern keeper. Knowing that the tavern owner was lying to him, Weasel decides to stake out the tavern and wait for Skeit to appear. When he does, Weasel follows him. Skeit gets into a boat and rows out towards the fingers, a group of



uninhabited islands. Stealing a boat to follow Skeit to his hideout at an abandoned lighthouse in the Fingers, Weasel decides to watch and see what Skeit is up to. Skeit sets fire to the roof of the lighthouse as a signal. Weasel tries to put Skeit under arrest, though he has no weapons. Skeit attacks him, but Weasel hits him with the oar to his boat and escapes.

The beacon that Skeit lit on the lighthouse was a signal for the Ankari to attack the city. There is chaos in the city as the Ankari attack and troops fill the streets. Theo gets caught up in the chaos while trying to reach the castle and protect Mickle. He is hit over the head on his way to the palace and falls unconscious. Meanwhile, Mickle resists arrests and tricks the soldiers to wait for her while she changes, but she climbs out the window. She runs into her general Witz and tries to rally her troops to fight back. Witz, knowing that the battle is lost, forces Mickle over the wall, getting himself killed in the process. Mickle falls right into the hands of a stranger, who gags her.



Part II The Shambles

Part II The Shambles Summary and Analysis

Cabbarus has sailed for Westmark, though Queen Augusta and King Constantine are unaware of it. The war has begun.

It is Duke Conrad's job to get rid of the King Constantine. Cabarrus' right hand man, Pankratz is supposed to do the job at Conrad's country estate. Conrad invites his unsuspecting nephew to the countryside. Constantine, thinking it is a chance for Conrad to influence him against Westmark, is not excited to go. However, when Conrad doesn't mention Westmark, the young King is relieved and enjoys himself. Knowing his nephews passion for precious stones and interesting rocks, Conrad tells him that there is a special kind of rock in gorge in the woods. Conrad insists that the king take protection, knowing that Constantine will be offended and insist on going without an escort. The king goes off alone to find the rocks. He notices that he's being followed, but assumes it is for his own protection. He calls to whoever is in the bushes to come out. He is taken off guard when Pankratz emerges and attacks him. The king is a trained fighter, so they struggle for a while, before they fall off the side of the cliff. The king is only saved because he lands on top of Pankratz. In his final moments, Pankratz begs forgiveness of the king and tells him that he did it out of duty to his commander, Cabbarus. He also tells Constantine of Conrad and Cabbarus's plot to kill him and take Westmark.

To Duke Conrad's surprise, Constantine returns from his hike and confronts his Uncle. He tells him that Pankratz is dead. Conrad reaches for a pistol, but Constantine is too fast. He disarms his uncle, and accuses him of cowardice. He pities Pankratz, realizing that Conrad had planned to kill the killer to ensure that no one ever new of the assassination plot. Conrad is terrified of dying and begs his nephew for pity. But, Constantine knows that he cannot exile Conrad, there is too much danger in having another member of royalty for dissidents to follow. Conrad has become a threat to his kingdom, as well as having committed a serious crime. Constantine shows his courage and his fairness. He will have his uncle killed, but with some honor, by a firing squad. He tells his uncle that it is not personal, but politics. Conrad is surprised by his lack of fear at dying. He asks his nephew to bury him in his garden. Constantine promises him that he will.

Returning to Westmark, we find that Theo was saved and taken to Keller's house by his old friend Las Bombas and Musket. Las Bombas and Musket were touring the province, when they stopped in Marianstat the very night that the Ankari attacked the city. Luckily, they saw Theo knocked unconscious and were able to save him and hide him before he was arrested. They do not know if Mickle is alive, or where Florian has gone. Theo wants to go out and search, but Keller and Las Bombas convince him that it is unsafe. Madame Bertha, who runs Keller's house, Weasel and Sparrow go out looking for information.



Mickle, as it turns out, was caught going over the wall of the castle by a common thief named Little Hands. But Mickle overpowers him and coerces him to take her to a hiding place. Little Hands brings her to his boss, the thief Ingo. Ingo recognizes Mickle as the queen and remembers her when she was a child, because he was friends with her caretaker, the thief Hanno. Ingo promises to help her. He wants to hide her, but Mickle plans to fight a resistance. She needs her councilors. Ingo sends some of his thieves out to get information and to find Theo. Mickle shows them a hand signal that only Theo will recognize, so that he knows they are really coming from Mickle. Theo and Mickle, who grew up together have a sign language that only they know. The thief Mumchance finds Theo in Keller's house. The others do not want Theo to, not trusting the thief Mumchance, but Theo knows the hand signal could only have come from Mickle. He follows Mumchance. The only thing that Theo knows is that Justin has escaped the city. Theo suspects that Justin had something to do with Cabarrus' attack, thinking that just as Florian has predicted, Justin has turned against them.

When the castle was taken, Mickle's Mother Caroline was very ill. She was arrested and dragged out of bed. Her doctor Torrens was arrested also. Dr. Torrens knows that Caroline will not survive long. They are left outside, where Torrens notices Caroline's health is failing fast under the strain. The soldiers put them in a carriage to be taken to the prison. Torrens, who is very loyal to Caroline, overtakes the soldier that is taking them to prison and escapes with their horse and carriage. Torrens takes Caroline out into the country where he finds a farmhouse and demands their help. The farmers are afraid, but offer help. Caroline dies in the night. Before her death, Caroline makes Torrens promise he will go find Mickle and help her. Caroline gives Dr. Torrens a ring with the royal signet. He thinks she is giving it to him as a token and refuses it. She tells him to pawn it for money so that he can find Mickle. He takes the ring.

Torrens returns to Marianstat, knowing that it is the most dangerous place he could go but determined to keep his promise to Caroline. He goes to The Shambles to pawn the ring. The pawn shop happens to be Ingo's, where Mickle is hiding in the basement, reforming her government in hiding. Ingo recognizes the royal monogram on the ring and brings Torrens to Mickle. She is overjoyed at seeing Torrens. Though heartbroken, Mickle does not show grief over the death of her mother. She knows that she must not allow that weakness to show as queen. Mickle knows she has no time for grief. Torrens advises her to go to King Constantine for help. Constantine would help Mickle, but they do not know how to escape the city without getting caught.



Part III Marianstat

Part III Marianstat Summary and Analysis

In part three some time has passed. The revolutionaries are still in hiding and Cabarrus has set up a gallows to hang people in the public square. The first of Theo's revolutionaries to get caught and hanged is Red Cockade. Theo hides in the crowd, but where Red Cockade can see him. Red Cockade mouths the word nine, because Theo has asked his followers to hold out in torture for at least eight hours, to give them time to escape. Red Cockade held out for nine hours. Theo is grateful for Red Cockade's bravery and feels responsible for his life. Theo can't risk trying to save him, so he resolves at the least to be present at his death. Red Cockade screams out long live the republic, which moves the audience in the square. They are also offended by the torture that takes place in front of them. They do not let Red Cockade die easily. Many people are sympathetic towards Theo's revolution. Cabbarus' cruelty and public display of the revolutionaries turns the city against him.

Theo is afraid of turning into his old self. He usually avoids the Shambles, where Mickle is hidden, for safety reasons. But he needs to see her. He doesn't want to be the Thestral again. He was forced by circumstance to become that bloody warrior and wants to avoid that this time around. But, he feels like he owes a death for every death that is caused by his orders. Red Cockade's death has troubled him and left him with a weight of guilt. Mickle tries to comfort him. She tells him he owes Cockade a life not a death. But he can't see it that way. She tells him he is a different man, but he knows that the cruel man he had to be in the last war is still inside him waiting to come out.

Florian has sailed to Regia and is wounded and being tended by Keller. Followers of Mickle have fled into the mountains and Theo knows that Justin must be among them. Florian sends his right hand woman, Zara, on a smugglers ship to help Theo and Mickle. Zara brings news from Regia. The king is sympathetic, but he doesn't want to be seen to directly help Mickle. Zara tells them of Conrad's failed assassination attempt and the change in Constantine's personality. Theo has been trying to find Justin, but Zara warns Theo that Justin doesn't want to be a part of Theo's revolution. Theo resolves to go out and find him. Theo is not received openly, as Zara had warned him. Justin is calling himself a general and wants to do things his own way. He tells Theo that Florian betrayed them. Theo tells Justin and discord will only serve Cabarrus. Theo tells Justin Florian's plan, to attack the city all together from different sides, but Justin will not give Theo his help until Theo proves to him that his people are ready. He wants more violence to show that the rebels in Marianstat have the nerve to fight. Theo knows that this will lead to reprisals on the innocent, but he feels he has no choice but to agree to Justin's demands. Las Bombas disapproves. He knows Justin's plans will only lead to more bloodshed and put their hidden rebels in extra danger

The thief Ace of Hearts is cheating some Ankari soldiers at a game of cards in a tavern, when he is stopped by Skeit. Skeit has a feeling that Ace of Hearts may know



something about the revolutionaries. He questions Ace of Hearts regarding the Beggar Queen and the rebels. Skeit knows that Ace of Hearts may have no link, but just in case, he threatens him, giving him an address where he can send any information he has on Mickle's whereabouts or actions. Ace of Hearts is frightened and decides not to tell Ingo what has happened. He hopes that his connection to Skeit will be insurance to him if he ever gets caught by the authorities.

Theo returns to Mickle intent on keeping his word to Justin. Mickle is surprised that he agreed to Justin's demands. He and Mickle plan many small operations to subvert the rule of Cabbarus. Many people will die in the needless small battles that Theo has planned to prove to Justin he is true to the cause. More than that, if they openly fight Cabbarus he will try to make an example of people. He will hold innocent people responsible and many people will suffer. Mickle feels she is forced to destroy her city in order to save it. Mickle thinks that Justin is testing Theo not the rebels. She tries to tell Theo that he has nothing to prove to Justin, but Theo believes that he owes Theo death, the death of Cabarrus. Theo is becoming like the man he was in the previous war, hard, cold and cruel. He tries to hide his fears from Mickle.

Mickle, Weasel and the widow of Red Cockade plan to board an Ankari ship full of weapons and set it on fire. Theo did not want Mickle to be a part of the fighting. It's too risky. But, Mickle refuses to hide in Ingo's shop while other people risk their lives. Mickle also believes that her involvement will help convince Justin that her rebels are united and strong. They take over the ship and set sail. Then, they round up the crew and make them jump overboard. The Ankari are relieved. They had thought they would be killed. Mickle, Theo and the rebels set fire to the ship and jump overboard, where Weasel is waiting for them in a rowboat. They sneak back into the city where Las Bombas waits for them in his coach. While celebrating this small victory, and hoping that it will bring Justin over to their side, Bombas tells them that Zara has shown up with a message from Florian. He has set sail from Regia. He is coming to fight Cabbarus. King Constantine is secretly supporting them with weapons and soldiers. The rebels begin to organize. Florian's exact date is in code, so that only Theo knows. He plans to send word to Justin letting him know the date. He is convinced that Justin will support them. Theo tells his rebels that they need to be ready within three weeks. Zara will be in charge of fighting in the street. Florian will land and attack from outside the city, and Justin will assist Florian. Theo doesn't tell Mickle, but he plans on being part of the front that storms the castle, so that he can kill Cabarrus or die in the attempt. For the first time, Theo feels at peace. He does not believe he will survive, but at least the guilt he has felt is lessened by his resolve to kill Cabbarus himself.

Justin takes almost a week to contact. He has left his hiding place and is moving his men slowly towards the city. He sends word to Theo that his efforts were insufficient. Justin is marching to the city, when Theo and Mickle had planned for him to meet Florian at the coast. Their plans are ruined. Justin hopes to arrive at the city before Florian, so that he can take power. Justin was one of the few people who knew exactly when Florian will arrive. Zara and Theo are very angry at the betrayal. They both try to storm out and kill Justin themselves, but Mickle stops them. She knows that they will have to join Justin. They cannot fight Cabarrus without Justin's troops. But Justin



demanded that Mickle and Theo hand over power to him and Mickle refuses to bow to Justin's demands. He sends Zara and Theo out to gather their own commanders and plan a new attack. Theo and Zara are stopped in a routine road block. Zara realizes that she has a pistol in her jacket. It's too late. The Ankari soldiers try to arrest her. Theo pretends that Zara is his lover, but Zara baits them until they kill her. She didn't want to be taken alive. Theo is then arrested and taken to prison.



Part IV Florian's Child

Part IV Florian's Child Summary and Analysis

The authorities have forgotten about Keller. The army thinks the police are watching him. The police think that the army is watching him, and the Ankari mercenaries don't care where the journalist is hiding. But, despite having evaded prison, Keller is still depressed that he has lost his newspaper, until Weasel and Sparrow, who are devoted to him, tell him they have found a way to keep printing the paper. Weasel made contact with one of the printers in the government paper, who used to work for Keller. Sparrow has been writing and Weasel takes it to the press at night and distributes it during the day. Thanks to Sparrow and Weasel, the revolutionaries have a way to get news out to the people. Old Kasperl is well read by everyone, even the soldiers, and Keller is a household name. Cabbarus tries to find out whose printing the paper, but no one suspects that it is being printed by the government's own printing press.

When Keller finds out that Theo has been taken captive, he has a plan. Having been arrested before and broken out, Keller knows how to get Theo out, but only if he gets himself arrested first. Keller is prone to sickness and is weak man, but he goes to the Shambles to meet with Mickle and tell her his plan. Mickle and Las Bombas don't like the idea, but Keller is determined and Mickle has no other plans.

Meanwhile Ace of Hearts is arrested for cheating a man in the street. The soldiers don't really want to take him in. They plan on holding him for a little while then letting him go, but Ace of Hearts panics. He starts telling them about Skeit. He threatens the soldiers that they will be in trouble if they arrest him. The soldiers don't want to be involved, but they know that they have to pass on the Ace of Heart's information or they could get in trouble. They take him to jail and plan on holding him until they find out if the address he gave them is valid.

When Keller approached the same soldiers and offers himself for arrest, they really don't want to arrest him. Keller and his underground newspaper are very popular among the people. The soldiers take Keller and put him in a cell with Ace of Hearts, but they also send word to Keller's house. They think that Keller is drunk and hope to get Keller home safe before the castle finds out that they have him. Keller realizes that his plan is not going to work. While in the cell with Ace of Hearts, Keller tells him not to rat on the rebels. He tells him that as soon as they get his information, the government will either kill him or lock him up in the dungeons for life. Keller is very sick and falls asleep. Ace of Hearts hangs himself in the cell. Sparrow comes for Keller but it is too late, he dies in her arms. She tells him that she is love with him.

When they hear that Keller is dead, Mickle and Las Bombas decide they have to break Theo out of prison themselves. Mickle is worried about Sparrow and Weasel. She knows they must be grieving. She sends the thief Mumchance to try and find them. Mickle and Bombas plan to forge papers for Theo's release. Mickle plans on delivering



them herself. Bombas doesn't want to go. He is afraid, but he will not let Mickle go alone. Bombas tell her that he needs time to make a good forgery. She reminds him that the revolution will begin as soon as Florian lands. Bombas thinks they have a week. Mickle tells him that they only have two days. Las Bombas forges a transfer letter. He will drive into the prison and retrieve Theo, while Mickle and Red Cockade wait at the doors to help if anything goes wrong.

But on the way they run into a riot. An overturned horse cart had started it. Weasel, devastated by the news of Keller's death had gone out into the city. When he saw the overturned horse cart he started building a barricade. Other people began helping, soon the city was joining in the effort. The barricade grew. It was a work of art. More and more people were joining to fight. Across the city, news of the barricade was being told. Rumors of revolution were spreading. The city was ready for a rebellion.

Meanwhile in the prison cell, Theo has been tortured. He wakes up in a lot of pain, and is sick from it. He was tortured for hours and confessed. But everything he told them was a lie. He knows that when they realize this they will come and torture him again. He will have to hold out longer through the torture so that they will believe it is true. Theo remembers how Red Cockade held out for nine hours, and his gratitude and respect for the dead man increase. Then, the jailer comes in with water. It is Theo's friend Pohn. When Theo gave Pohn recommendation to work in the government they had given him a job working in the prison. This is the second time in Theo's life that Pohn has let him escape. Theo leads the prisoners out of the prison, calling them all to fight. Pohn is killed as they escape. Theo runs into Mickle and Las Bombas, who were on their way to rescue him. They try to get Theo to safety but there is fighting all around them. They run into Weasel's barricade and join the fight. War has begun before any of them had planned. They send word to the other leaders of the revolution that the fight has begun early.

The fight at the barricade is going. It last all night. At dawn, Justin and Mickle see that the army has brought cannon to tear it down. They know that the barricade will not withstand a cannon attack. Though word was sent to the other rebels to bring guns and joining the barricade no one comes. The townspeople are fighting with kitchen knives and axes and a handful of guns. Bombas wants to run, but Mickle and Theo know that there only chance is to sabotage the cannon. They will blow it up. At the same time, Justin arrives in the city with his soldiers. Justin is wounded. He tells Theo that he wanted to give the people a republic. Theo tells him that there will be a republic. Justin dies. Then, Theo and Mickle are captured by the army. The commander, Zeller, recognizes them and takes them straight to prison, to meet with Cabarrus.

Cabarrus has set up office in the prison's old torture chamber. He feels comfortable there. Skeit sends word to him that he has news. Cabbarus doesn't have any interest in seeing Skeit. He has been sent word that Theo and Mickle are captured. Skeit tries to extort money from Cabarrus. Skeit has evidence that Cabarrus has been stealing money from the government. Skeit knows that Cabarrus is going to lose, and he wants money to get himself out of harm's way. Cabarrus loses his mind at the thought of his



crimes being exposed. He attacks Skeit and kills him. He shoves him under the desk when the soldiers bring him Mickle and Theo.

When Mickle and Theo are brought before Cabarrus they are both fighting the terror they have had for this man all their lives. It was Cabarrus who threw the young Mickle down into the Vespera from a hatch in the torture room that they are standing in. They master their fear. Cabarrus offers them a ceasefire. Mickle is about to accept it on the condition that Theo is let free immediately. She knows that Cabarrus won't keep his word, but she also knows that her first priority is to get Theo out of there. Theo has his own plans. He wants to be the one to kill Cabbarus. Then, Skeit wakes up. Cabarrus had thought he was dead. Skeit throws a knife into Cabarrus' chest, killing him. Then falls over and dies. Mickle remembers the torture chamber. She had paved over the hatch that leads to the river. Now her and Theo pry the floor open and jump into the same chamber where Mickle was thrown, into the Vespera. They wake up where the river has carried them, far down river from the town, with no idea what is happening in the city. All they know is that Cabbarus is finally defeated.

Meanwhile, the fighting continues in Marianstat. The people have risen up. Justin, Theo, Florian and Mickle are all out of the way. Weasel and Sparrow blow up the gates to the palace. Las Bombas, Red Cockade's widow and the other rebels continue the battle in the streets. Florian arrives to a city in rebellion. When Mickle and Theo get back to the city, the rebellion is won.

Mickle reveals that Florian is actually in line to the throne after herself, but neither Mickle nor Florian wants to take the throne. Mickle realizes that her presence in the city will only lead to more fighting. She sets up an election and gives up her throne. Florian wants a republic, so he never tells anyone his true identity as royalty. Mickle and Theo are married. She had signed their marriage certificate in secret. They go off together in exile, finally free from the troubles in Westmark.



Characters

Cabarrus

Cabarrus is the former chief minister of Westmark. He is power hungry and cruel. Mickle and Theo remember him well; when they were younger he was the figure of their nightmares. He thinks of Mickle as a revolutionary that should be punished for betraying the throne. Cabarrus knew Mickle's identity as heir to the throne before she did. He tried to kill her when she was still a child by throwing her into the Vespera, the river that runs by the city of Marianstat. Cabbarus was exiled after the war, but Duke Conrad brings him back in a plan to overtake Westmark and make it serve the throne of Regia instead of being independent. Cabarrus is a dangerous man. He thinks of himself as dutiful and loyal to the country, but he is willing to be cruel and dishonest to get his power. WE find out at the end of the book that Cabbarus' claim that he is only loyal to the throne is in question. Skeit, whose job it is to know other peoples secrets, finds out that Cabbarus has been embezzling lots of money from the country. When confronted with his own crimes, Cabbarus tries to kill Skeit by bashing his head in. Theo feels that it is his duty to kill Cabbarus, but it is Skeit who finally kills Cabbarus by stabbing him in the chest.

Mickle, the Beggar Queen, Augusta,

Mickle was almost killed by Cabarrus as a little girl by being thrown into the river to drown. She did not know her true identity for many years, but came to power in the revolution. Her father was a good king, the last good king of Westmark. Mickle is caught in a political world that she really does feel like she belongs to. Having grown up as an orphan and raised by a thief, Mickle feels most comfortable in the poorer sections of town and with the lower class people of the realm. Mickle is very loyal to the less prestigious people under her rule. She believes in the people and only took power because she felt she was obligated. Mickle does not want to rule, but is a good leader. Many people love her and are loyal to her. She knows that many people like Justin, want a republic and see her royalty as an insult to the people. They want to elect their own leaders, and Mickle would rather it be that way too. She only took power to end the war. In the end she hands the power of Westmark over the people, forming a republic. She exiles herself in order to ensure that those who want power don't try and use her name to cause more war. She is betrothed to Theo and signs a marriage certificate herself to ensure that they are married legally. After giving up the throne, Mickle and Theo go off into exile together, finally free of the fate and responsibility of Westmark.

Theo, the Thestral

Theo is Mickle's closes friend and her betrothed. He is an artist, who was drawn into the war and found he was a good soldier. He was called the Thestral, because he became a brutal and intense fighter. But he wants to put that all behind him and live in peace.



The coming of Cabarrus and the need for more fighting forces him to become a soldier again, and the bloodshed weighs on his conscious. Theo is a very loyal man. He feels the need to protect Mickle, but he also has a deep desire to rid his conscious of the bloodshed that he has taken part in. He has convinced himself that he can only do this by killing Cabbarus, who Theo feels is responsible for the war and the oppression of everyone he knows. But, the more people that are killed, the more Theo feels beholden to revenge them. He feels like he is turning into a monster and cannot even confide in Mickle. His own death does not matter to him. HE will risk everything to bring Cabbarus down. Theo is a foil for Justin, who blames Theo for the loss of the republic. Justin's condescension bothers Theo, and often causes him to act rashly. In the end, Justin betrays Theo, and Theo has to examine all that he has done to try and prove himself to Justin, all the death and war for a man who never cared for him. The end of the book is a happy story for Theo. He finds out he is married to Mickle, who he loves more than himself. When she exiles herself, Theo goes with her and they finally put the war, and Westmark, behind them.

Florian

Florian is the true leader of Westmark, which is why he is taken out of the story early on. In the revolution that brought Mickle to the throne, Florian was irreplaceable, but now Mickle, Theo and Justin must prove their own abilities. Without Florian Mickle would never have been able to become queen and they would have lost the last war. Florian represents the wisdom and ability of age, but in *The Beggar Queen*, it is the young people who must take responsibility and make decisions. Florian is injured when Cabbarus takes over the throne. He goes to Regia to find troops to help Mickle take back Westmark and bring down Cabbarus. Mickle and Theo are left to rule the resistance without Florian's advice and authority. It is also significant that Florian and his troops come too late. The revolution starts without him, whereas the last revolution was led by him. Florian is a humble man and understands that Theo and Justin need to become men in their own right. Florian is also an heir to the throne after Mickle, which is a secret that only Mickle finds out. But, Florian believes in a free country, a republic and refuses to let anyone know his ancestry. When Mickle steps aside and organizes an election, Florian also refuses his right to rule.

King Constantine

Constantine is a young king, just learning to be a great leader. Always at odds with his Uncle Conrad, Constantine shows a hesitancy to be an overbearing ruler, which Conrad thinks is weak and will result in rebellion. When we are introduced to Constantine, he seems very young and inexperienced. His ability as a ruler has not been tested. He spends his time in his royal bath that looks like a shoe and in fencing lessons. IN all, Constantine is very content with how things are in his kingdom and feels that peace between Regia and Westmark is better than power. Constantine has to face the great matters of his rule when his Uncle Conrad tries to have him assassinated. Conrad begs his nephew to spare him humiliation. But, Constantine shows he has more courage that



the Duke thought, he has his uncle executed by a firing squad, in private rather than broadcast his uncle's treachery across the kingdom.

Duke Conrad

Duke Conrad is concerned for the state of the kingdom of Regia. He funds Cabarrus, and betrays his king and nephew in the hopes that it will be better for the kingdom at large. In this way, Conrad sets the whole story into motion. When his nephew tells him that he will be put to death, Conrad realizes that his nephew might be a great king after all.

Pankratz

Pankratz is the brutal follower of Cabarrus. Pankratz is a murderer and is chosen as the would be assassin of King Constantine, but he dies in the attempt, after begging the king's forgiveness and exposing Duke Conrad's plan to assume the throne and overthrow the Beggar Queen of Westmark.

Ingo

Ingo is the king of thieves in the Shambles neighborhood of Marianstat. Ingo recognizes Mickle as the queen when she escapes from the castle. Mickle hides out in Ingo's basement. It becomes the headquarters of her government. Ingo was a friend of Hanno, who took Mickle in and raised her when she was orphaned as a little girl. Ingo uses his contacts in the underworld to get information and help Mickle in her plans to take back the government from Cabarrus.

Ace of Hearts

Ace of Hearts is an intriguing character. He is a thief and is only out for himself. But, the Ace of Hearts is not a bad man. He is loyal to Ingo and takes part in the anti-Cabbarus movement, when Mickle goes into hiding. When trying to rob a group of Ankari soldiers, the Ace of Hearts gets the attention of Skeit. Skeit has a hunch that Ace of Hearts may know something about the revolutionaries and Mickle. Skeit threatens Ace of Hearts. He tells him that he has the power to put Ace of Hearts in prison for the rest of his life with no questions asked. Ace of Hearts has a phobia about being locked up. At first, he plans to tell Ingo about Skeit threatening him, and giving Ingo the address that Skeit left with him. But, he decides against it. Ace of Hearts doesn't understand politics and honestly thinks that his connection to Skeit might save him in a bad situation. He considers passing information on Mickle and the revolutionaries, but he doesn't. He only keeps Skeit's address, thinking it will keep him out of prison. When he is eventually captured, he panics and tries to sell Mickle out, but Keller is in jail with him, and tells him that he will be killed or imprisoned either way. Ace of Hearts hangs himself in desperation.



Little Hands

Little Hands is a thief who tries to rob Mickle when she escapes the castle. He doesn't realize who she is. She overtakes him and demands that he take her to his leader, Ingo.

Hanno

Hanno was a thief, well respected in the underworld of thieves and robbers. Hanno took Mickle in and raised her as his own. He taught her to steal and survive. It is out of respect to Hanno's memory that Ingo helps the Beggar Queen when Cabarrus is looking for her.

Madam Bertha

Madame Bertha runs Keller's house in Fish Market Square. She never plays an important role in the plot, but Bertha is very important as one of those loyal to Mickle. When Cabarrus takes power, Bertha keeps Keller hidden and takes care of him in his bouts of sickness. Madam Bertha also helps raise the water rats, Weasel and Sparrow.

Zara

Zara is Florian's most loyal follower. She escapes with him to Regia when Cabarrus takes over Westmark, and acts as his ambassador to Mickle and Theo. She was an excellent soldier and has taken over a leadership role in the post-revolutionary Westmark. Zara has a sharp eye for other people's motives. She understands Justin and the reasons he is so angry. She knows what he plans to do also. Zara is very brave. Instead of being taken prisoner she bates the Ankari soldiers who capture her, until one of them shoots her.

Justin

Justin was a soldier in the revolution that led to Mickle being named queen. But Justin did not want a continuation of the monarchy. He wanted a republic of the people. Justin is a bitter, disappointed man. He sees Theo and Florian as traitors for having helped Mickle to the throne. He has a particular grudge against Theo because Theo hesitated before killing a man that was going to kill Justin. Justin has a jagged scar on his face from the attack as a reminder of Theo's hesitation. Justin was tortured as a little boy until he gave away the whereabouts of his father. In the former books of the series, Justin is one of Florian's protégées. In this book, Florian steps back and Justin and Theo have to prove their worth.



The Water Rats: Weasel and Sparrow

Weasel and Sparrow are street orphans. There were amateur thieves until Keller took them in and taught them about newspaper printing. The influence of Keller changed their fate. Sparrow becomes a great editor and falls in love with Keller. Sparrow never tells Keller that she loves him, but Mickle knows. Weasel uses his contacts in the cities lower classes to root out stories for Keller. Weasel enjoys being a journalist and takes pride in his profession. Weasel and Sparrow worship Keller and his death leaves them feeling empty and rootless. For Sparrow, the loss of Keller is the loss of the lover of her life. For Weasel, losing Keller means losing his mentor and hero. But the influence of Keller, Theo and Mickle is significant. Mickle represents Marianstat's past. As the next in line in the monarchy she represents Westmark's history, whereas Sparrow and Weasel represent the future of the republic, of a government by the people. Like the region, Sparrow and Weasel have been victims of the constant war. They lost their parents and the surrogate parent that took them in and gave them a future. Now they have to make a life on their own, just like Westmark.

Keller

Keller is an intellectual. He is very proper and has frequent fevers that keep him in bed for weeks. His newspaper *Old Kasperl* satirizes the government and is shut down by Cabarrus. But, Sparrow and Weasel find a way to keep Keller's newspaper going in secret. Keller is wanted by the police but is hidden by Madame Bertha. Keller attempts to get himself arrested in a plan to break Theo out of prison, but he dies in the attempt.

Count Las Bombas

Las Bombas is a count and a friend to Mickle, Florian, Keller and Theo. He is a very fat, very intelligent man. He was traveling to Marianstat to visit but gets caught up in the war with Cabarrus. He is an excellent forger and is extremely loyal to Mickle. Bombas takes part in many of the efforts by Theo and Mickle to take down Cabarrus. In the final battle for Marianstat, Bombas and Musket fight to bring the republic to Westmark.

Musket

Musket is a red headed dwarf. He never speaks, but he is the Count Las Bombas loyal companion. He has stilts built to disguise himself when Cabarrus realizes that Musket and Las Bombas are helping the resistance.

Caroline

Caroline is Mickle's mother. She is very sick, but is taken from her bed by soldiers when Cabarrus takes over the castle. She is assisted in escaping by her loyal doctor Torrens,



but the journey is too much for her. She dies with Torren by her side in a small farm house outside of the city. She makes Torrens promise that he will help her daughter Mickle escape from Cabarrus. She gives him her ring with the royal signet to sell.

Torrens

Torrens is an advisor to the queen and the doctor who treats the queen's mother, Caroline. Torrens manages to overtake the coachmen on the way to prison and escapes with Caroline into the countryside. Torrens takes Caroline's ring with the royal signet to pawn for money. The pawn broker is Ingo. Ingo recognizes the royal signet and brings Torrens to Mickle. He immediately helps in the revolution, advising Mickle.

Mitz

Mitz is Mickle's most trusted general. When the castle is attacked, Mitz forces Mickle to run away instead of fight. He dies trying to push her over the walls of the castle.

Pohn

Pohn is a figure from Theo's past. When Theo was in danger of being arrested, Pohn was a constable and helped Theo escape. At the beginning of the book, Theo finds Pohn, destitute and homeless. Theo gets Pohn a job in the castle. When Theo is later arrested again, Pohn finds him in the dungeons and helps him escape again. Pohn dies trying to get Theo out.



Objects/Places

Regia

Regia is the biggest Kingdom in the land. Under the King Constantine, Regia has recognized the legitimacy of the throne of Westmark. There are tensions in Regia as to whether the King Constantine is a hard enough ruler to keep people from toppling the monarchy. King Constantine is a young and untested king, but his uncles attempt to take Regia from him changes him. He promises to be a strong and fair king of Regia.

Westmark

Westmark is a neighboring country to Regia. It has been a place of war and bloodshed for many years. It has recently found peace under the restored monarchy of the Queen Augusta, the Beggar Queen. King Constantine approves of queen Augusta's rule of Westmark and recognizes its sovereignty. Augusta's father was king before, but Westmark was taken over by Cabarrus in an earlier book, only to be retaken by Florian, Theo, Justin and the Beggar Queen. In the "Beggar Queen," Cabarrus comes back to Westmark and the Queen goes into hiding. The people of Westmark want a republic, and in the end of the book they fight to get it.

Marianstat

Marianstat is the capitol city of Westmark. The castle is in Marianstat. Mickle's father was ruler there before Cabbarus, and the Beggar Queen led her government from there until the evil Cabarrus attacks the city and takes control for himself. Marianstat is a symbol for the people of Westmark, who are caught up in the politics of war. Marianstat is not only the capitol, but it is the heart of the people. The people of Marianstat rebel after witnessing the cruelty of Cabarrus. It is significant that Theo, Justin, Mickle and Florian all have plans to overthrow Cabbarus, but it is the people's rebellion that saves the city in the end. For that reason, Mickle gives Marianstat, and Westmark, back to the people, forming a republic.

The Shambles

The Shambles is a poor neighborhood in the north of the city of Marianstat. The thieves, homeless and the poor live in meager circumstances in The Shambles. The Queen hides out in the Shambles after Cabarrus takes over the government. The Shambles is full of revolutionaries that help the queen plan to overthrow Cabbarus's government. To Mickle, the Shambles reminds her of her upbringing in similar neighborhoods, working as a petty thief. The shambles becomes her haven. It represents the lowest of society, the working classes who are often the victims of political changes, but rarely benefit



from them. It is a reflection of the kind of person Mickle is, as well as how the common people view her, that her revolution is hidden in the Shambles.

Fish Market Square

Fish Market Square is where Keller, the journalist lives with Madame Bertha, Weasel and Sparrow. Keller runs his newspaper out of his house there. Theo also keeps a room there to escape the life in the palace, where he does not feel comfortable. The Queen also sneaks away from the palace to spend time incognito in Fish Market Square, where she can be comfortable. Florian also has his headquarter in Fish Market Square, before Cabarrus takes the city. Keller and Theo hide there from the government.

Vespera

The Vespera is the river that runs next to Marianstat. The river plays a crucial role in the plot of the novel. The Vespera is where enemies come from, when the Ankari ships attack the city, as well as where rescue comes from, when Florian sails for Marianstat from Regia. The Vespera is also very important to Mickle. When Cabarrus tried to drown her in the river when she was a little girl, the river carried her to safety. She feels very connected to the river. When Mickle and Theo must escape from Cabbarus's torture chamber, they escape through a same trap door that falls into the river. It is the same trap door that Cabbarus threw the young Mickle through to drown. Once again, the Vespera carries Theo and Mickle far out of the city, away from the battle in Marianstat.

The Fingers

The Fingers are deserted islands in the Vespera. They are a haven for smugglers and thieves. Skeit hides in the abandoned lighthouse in the fingers. He lights the light house on fire to give signal to the Ankari sailors to attack the city. The Gingers are also where Mickle and Theo end up when they escape into the river, and it carries them to safety far from the city.

Old Kasperl

Old Kasperl is the name of Keller's newspaper. It was a way of communicating during the revolution. Keller loves his newspaper more than anything else. When Cabarrus comes to power he has Old Kasperl closed down and the printing press confiscated. But weasel and Sparrow find a supporter in the offices of the government's official newspaper and are able to continue printing Old Kasperl right under the government's nose. The printing of Old Kasperl gives voice to the rebels and helps Mickle and Theo rally support among the people against Cabarrus.



Dorning

Dorning is the far off country where Theo comes from. Theo often thinks of Dorning, of the people and the life he left behind. Dorning represents the past, peace and childhood, one that Theo was separated from through war and bloodshed. It also represents his hope for a future. If he ever escapes the war in Westmark, Theo wants to return someday. Theo finally gets the chance when Mickle has to go into exile for her own safety and for the good of the future of Westmark.

Florian's army greatcoat

Florian was a great soldier and his people were very loyal to him. He always wears his army great coat even though it is the coat of an ordinary soldier not a great general. That humility is why people love him. His coat is a symbol of his solidarity with his troops. The coat is so well know that Keller makes a joke in Old Kasperl that the people would follow Florian's army coat to battle, even if Florian wasn't in it.



Themes

War

The most obvious and important theme in "The Beggar Queen" is the damage caused by war. No matter how much good is done in a rebellion, war always tears people apart and causes death and suffering. The country of Marianstat is barely recovering from a war and is vulnerable, which is why it was so easy for Cabarrus to take it for himself. War also creates a climate of bravery and cowardice, but the cowards are not completely to blame. Everyone is just trying to survive. The character Ace of Hands is a good example of someone caught between different sides. He doesn't benefit from either side being in power and really doesn't care who wins the war, but he is still caught up in the battle for power.

Loyalty

Loyalty is very important in "The Beggar Queen." The main characters are always tested in their loyalty. The heroes of the story stay loyal and overcome the conflicts of their loyalty, whereas the antagonists are the ones who fail in their loyalty or whose loyalty leads them to evil actions. Theo and Mickle are loyal to one another because they love each other. Their loyalty is never in question. It is the one of the good things that keeps them going through the atrocities of war. Some of the characters who are supposed to be evil or bad are given added depth when their actions are an act of loyalty. The most loyal figure in the book is actually Pankratz who is supposed to be a bad person.

Betrayal

The theme of betrayal works with themes of loyalty. It is the opposite of loyalty and the characters are often in conflict, trying to stay loyal to their beliefs and their loved ones in a very confusing time of war. Justin is a character who feels he has been betrayed because those who shared his belief in a republic, Florian and Theo, have supported the monarchy. Though their actions were out of a desire for peace and stability, to Justin they are traitors to the cause. This sense of betrayal causes Justin to betray them in turn, by not supporting their efforts to overthrow Cabarrus. Justin uses their weakness to try and take power for himself. The only character whose betrayal is out of pure self-interest is Skeit. Skeit, who has worked for Cabarrus from the beginning, tries to bribe him when he realizes that Cabarrus is losing power. To Skeit it is not an act of betrayal, because he is always out for his own interests. He does not think in terms of loyalty or betrayal. The code that Skeit lives by embraces betrayal or loyalty as it serves his own needs.

Duty

The different characters are all responding to a sense of duty. Justin feels he is duty bound to fight for the republic. His sense of duty is surpassed only by his desire for revenge against Theo and Mickle. His hatred is so strong that he disguises it with duty. He tells himself he is doing what is right for the country. But the duty of different characters is always in conflict. This is an important aspect of the theme of duty, which is that it is not about good vs. evil. There is sometimes no good way, but there are evil behaviors that can hide behind duty. Even Cabarrus convinces himself that his actions are good because he does them out of a sense of duty. The book explores how duty can cause people to betray, lie and kill. The character Pankratz is symbolic of the difficult nature of duty and honor. When Pankratz attempts to kill King Constantine, he uses his final breath to beg forgiveness, telling the king he was only trying to do his duty. Mickle and Theo are both unhappy being in government, but they continue out of a sense of duty to Westmark and to each other.



Style

Point of View

Lloyd Alexander uses different points of view to move the plot forward and to show the reader what is going on in different places at the same time. With a large cast of characters, showing what different characters think of the same situations broadens the conflict of interests going on in the story. An example of this is when Duke Conrad takes his nephew, the King Constantine, to his country estate. Duke Conrad is planning to have the King assassinated, but the King thinks that the Duke is honorable in his intentions. Alexander also chooses the main characters for his point of view. This makes the reader feel closer to the most important characters. It makes the reader see the other characters through the eyes of the various major characters.

Setting

Setting is very important in "The Beggar Queen." Most of the story takes place in the capitol of Westmark, Marianstat. The different classes in this world live in different parts of the city and the manners of the characters change according to setting. Mickle is called the Queen when she is in the castle but is called Mickle or Augusta in Keller's house and in The Shambles. We also get to see the way the poor people live in the city. This is important because eventually the people rise up in rebellion, completely on their own. The docks and shipyards are a place for thieves and strangers. It is there that Theo sees Skeit for the first time, and it is there that Weasel goes to get information. The Shambles are full of dangerous people, but the Queen feels comfortable and safe there, because those people are more honest than the people at court, who always have political reasons for their actions.

Language and Meaning

Lloyd Alexander's prose is full of action. He gives description to his characters quickly and directly. He offers insight into the characters thinking, but he also does this quickly. The bulk of the passages are action. For that reason, a lot of action takes place in the relatively short book. By leaving out extra description, Alexander has room to flesh out more of what is going on in different parts of the city simultaneously.

Structure

The story of the novel is a continuation of the other two books of the series. It is a plot driven narrative. The novel is separated into four parts, that each develops a different aspect of the plot. The plot is fairly straightforward. The story begins by setting up the way things are in Westmark and then follows how the actions of different characters, assassination and bad government lead up to rebellion. The first section is all

preambles to the rest of the story. We are introduced to the main characters, given hints that something is going on in Westmark and let into the plot by Cabarrus. The second and third sections show the Beggar Queen in hiding. In the final section, the war is taken over by the common people and our main characters are carried along on a tide that they didn't create. The different sections also serve to show time passing and show that the environment changes, too.



Quotes

"A lie, for Weasel, was a mirror. It reflected truth turned the other way round. Perceiving what was false, he was in a position to discover what was true."

Chapter 4, pg. 30

"Weasel had spun himself a spider web: not of gossamer threads but of dockers, longshoremen, and port loungers."

Chapter 4, pg. 31

"Struggling in his bonds, with a voice that range above the racket of drums, he shouted for what did not exist and had never existed: 'Long live the republic!'"

Ch. 12, pg. 105

"An uncle's heart suffered its own special pangs. Having made up his mind, he could now afford the luxury of regret."

Ch. 1, p.g.11

"Whether he was a fool or not, Constantine had truly become a king"

Ch. 6, pg. 37

"Assassination attempts can age one rapidly"

Ch. 13, pg. 109

"She hoarded her tears in a private chamber of her mind; she could not afford to waste them."

Ch. 10, pg. 81

"He had tried to forget the war. Justin apparently was still fighting it."

Ch. 3, pg. 23

"My fledgling has grown. He has his own wings. He wants to try them"

Ch. 3, pg. 23

"You're a bug on a pin. My advice, then: Whatever happens say nothing at all. Don't breathe a word."

Ch. 18, pg. 167

"She stored away her own grief over Keller; tears were commonplace these days, but a luxury for a queen."

Ch. 19, pg. 169

"The police and military had combed the city without success, finding only a wall of silence. There must be, Skeit knew, a chink in that wall. A loose stone, however small."

Ch. 14, pg. 122



Topics for Discussion

Why does Theo feel the need to prove himself to Justin? How does he go about doing it?

What does Justin want for Westmark?

What does King Constantine do that makes Duke Conrad say he has become a real king?

Why does Duke Conrad try to kill his own nephew?

What does Theo most want for himself and Mickle? Does he get it by the end of the book?

Why does Mickle fear Cabarrus so much?

Who was Thestral, and why was he called that?

What does Cabarrus think of himself? Of Mickle? Of Theo? How do the character's opinions of themselves differ from how other people view them?

A sense of duty is present in many of the characters. Is there a conflict between the different characters idea of what is right and wrong?

Does Pankratz's attempt to kill the king make him a good man if he was doing his duty?