

# **A Crown of Swords Study Guide**

## **A Crown of Swords by Robert Jordan**

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## Plot Summary

A Crown of Swords, by Robert Jordan, is the story of Rand al'Thor and his struggle to ready himself to face the Dark One. In the story, Rand must fight Dark Friends and himself in order to stay alive and sane. There are those that fight to help Rand, but for each person that joins Rand, there are more that join the Keeper's army.

Rand has escaped being in a box that Aes Sedai have put him in and now is with Min and Perrin. They are making their way to the kingdom that Rand has promised for Elayne to rule. When they reach the city, Rand finds that there is a woman that has put herself as queen. There are those that come out to speak against the queen and Rand sentences her to exile on a farm rather than death. The woman kills herself rather than live as a farmer. Rand and Perrin have a fight because Perrin fears what Rand is going to let be done to the Aes Sedai they have as prisoners, although many of them have sworn fealty to Rand. Rand sends Perrin away and Perrin leaves, although he continues to work to help Rand.

Mat, Elayne, and Nynaeve are in a city looking for an item called the Bowl of the Winds. Even though it is winter time, it is hot and the land is dying. The Bowl of the Winds holds the power to stop the Keepers dark hold on the Land. While looking for the Bowl, Elayne and Nynaeve stumble on a group of women that are called the Kin, or the Circle. These are women that can channel, and Elayne is able to convince them to join with them, which more than doubles the number of women that Egwene will have to command as the rebel Aes Sedai.

The group goes to retrieve the Bowl but is attacked by a creature that was created by the Forsaken to kill Aes Sedai. Mat is able to frighten the creature off using his medallion, but knows that the creature will come back. Mat convinces the women to take the Bowl and flee the city, but the city is attacked as they are leaving and Mat is trapped in the town when the fighting begins.

Meanwhile, Rand and several of his Ashaman get ready to go to fight Sammael, one of the Forsaken. Rand meets Sammael and defeats him. Rand is given the crown in Illian and as he picks it up to put it on, he pricks his finger on one of the swords on the crown. The crown is renamed the Crown of Swords.



# Prologue; Chapter 1-5

## Prologue; Chapter 1-5 Summary

A Crown of Swords by Robert Jordan is the continuing tale of Rand al'Thor, the Dragon Reborn, and his fight against the Dark One. Rand has to fight both those that serve the evil forces and the madness that is growing within his own skull. He is torn between sending those he loves away so that he does not hurt them and keeping them close to help save himself.

In the prologue the Amyrlin, Elaida, receives a cryptic message meaning that Galina has Rand under her control. Meanwhile, Queen Morgase is playing a game with Niall. Morgase is being kept by Niall and his men as a "guest", but in reality she is their prisoner. Morgase leaves when Omerna comes in. It is widely thought that Omerna is a spy, but only Niall knows that the true spy is his insignificant-looking secretary, Seeban Balwer. Omerna gets close to Niall and plunges a knife in the man's back, telling him that he was wrong by allowing Morgase to live since she is a witch. Valda walks in and kills Omerna and then realizes that Niall is still breathing. Valda begins to finish Niall off when another of the guards walks in. While the two men are talking, Niall has a chance to write out a note before he dies. When the two men are finished talking, Valda notices a note on the floor. He picks it up but it is too stained with blood to read it. Valda will not let Morgase be killed just yet, since he intends to use her as he accepts Niall's position.

In chapter one, Perrin is sitting with the other men after a vicious battle. Perrin's group has taken a great number of casualties but also has a large number of prisoners. The Aes Sedai that they have taken prisoner are feared by many in the camp, and some of the men believe they would be better off killing the women. Perrin believes this to be murder and knows that if it is necessary, he will fight to defend the women, although he does not like the idea of defending the Aes Sedai.

As chapter two begins, Perrin watches Rand down at the bottom of the hill as he is going through the corpses with other men. After the battle, Perrin had gone to Rand and listened to him recite 151 names of Maidens that died in the battle fighting for Rand. Perrin had listened while wondering if Rand was mad already, and hoping that Rand holds onto his sanity. When he has gone through the dead, Rand sends the Wise Ones away with the prisoners that they have to the Black Tower.

In chapter three, the group arrives in the countryside outside of Cairhien and a Maiden comes to them from the city. She tells Rand and the others that there are rumors about Rand and that many people are leaving ignoring his orders. Colavaere has claimed the crown for herself even though she knew that Rand had promised it to Elayne.

In chapter four, a small group enters the city. Rand orders there to be no killing. They find a celebration going on in honor of Colavaere being crowned. Perrin is worried about his wife and learns that she has made herself one of Colavaere's attendants.



Chapter five continues with the group entering Colavaere's courts. Perrin sees his wife, Faile, but she doesn't acknowledge Perrin. Rand confronts Colavaere and she tries to make Rand seem unfair, but soon there are people speaking out about the orders she gave to have people murdered in order to get her crown and her plans to oppose Rand. She is sentenced to death, but Rand has pity on her and has her banished to a small farm with the understanding that she will not be allowed to travel off of her farm ever again.

## Prologue; Chapter 1-5 Analysis

There is a lot of background given in the first few chapters, since this book is a continuation of a story that has been going on for some time. Most of the story has been seen from the perspective of Perrin up to this point even though he is not the main focus of the story. This point of view is useful in regards to understanding Rand and the changes that have come over him. It also helps to see the turmoil that is building. Perrin is able to speak to the wolves and has many of their gifts. This allows him to be able to hear things others cannot hear and to smell things such as a person's mood. The moods that Perrin smells when he is near Rand often leave Perrin more worried than not explaining that no one can change their moods that quickly. Perrin is torn between his feeling for Rand as his childhood friend and Rand as the Dragon Reborn. Perrin explains that he wants Rand his friend to be alright, but he needs the Dragon Reborn to be alright.

The prologue in the story reveals a lot about the way that Rand is perceived by various groups. It also shows the ulterior motives that several people may have. There are constantly games that are being played. Niall was murdered so that Valda could have his position, but it is clear that Valda does not intend to do anything differently than Niall had done. It was important to note that Valda has no intention of keeping Niall's secretary when it was the secretary that was so important and kept Niall well informed. There has been no other mention of this group at this point and it seems that Rand and the others do not realize that Morgase is their prisoner.

Faile and Perrin care deeply for each other, and her odd behavior will not be explained until the next few chapters. There are many characters in this story that work with cunning in order to achieve their goals of power and position. Faile and Perrin both are pulled into this world and are smart and able to play at many of these games. Despite this, it seems that often family and friends will be the foremost of their thoughts.



# Chapter 6-10

## Chapter 6-10 Summary

In chapter six, the great hall where Rand confronted Colavaere slowly empties. Perrin and Faile begin to make their way to their rooms. Perrin is not sure what it is that he can smell on his wife but knows that she is not entirely happy to see him despite how much he has missed her. Faile explains that she had made herself Coavaere's servant in order to get close enough to her to find out what was going on. When Perrin and Faile are in their room, she becomes outraged at Perrin for making her worry over him and eventually tells him that there is another girl that claimed that Perrin had left Faile for her. Faile is upset but Perrin is able to calm her down. He tells her that he loves her and would die without her. She makes Perrin promise to mourn her a short time and then find someone new to spend his life with. Rand comes in and asks Perrin once again to lead his armies, but Perrin refuses. Perrin tells Rand he won't allow the Aes Sedai to be hurt while they are prisoners.

Chapter seven begins with Rand sitting, feeling the saidin fill him. In his mind, Rand can hear the voice of Lewis Therin telling him to kill people and warning him not to trust anyone. The voice of Lewis Therin had been the only thing that kept Rand from going mad while he was locked in the box by the Aes Sedai. In his mind, Rand screams at Lewis and reminds Lewis that he already went mad and killed his own wife and children and countless others before he died. This silents the voice for a time. Rand receives rumors of where Mat is with Nynaeve and Elayne, but that doesn't put Mat moving very fast, and this worries Rand to some extent. Rand hopes that Mat brings Elayne to be crowned to calm down the cities that are threatening to erupt.

Meanwhile, in chapter eight, Egwene is in the camp with the other rebel Aes Sedai that have left the white tower. Egwene has been hiding Marigan from justice and everyone in the camp believes that Marigan is a servant of Egwene's, although she is in fact a Forsaken. Egwene has a bracelet that allows her to keep control of Marigan. When Egwene has the bracelet on she can feel whatever Marigan is feeling because of the necklace that Marigan has on. Egwene is talking with one of the sisters when suddenly she can sense that a man that can channel is touching Marigan's necklace. Egwene tries to calmly hurry to Marigan's tent but finds her gone.

Egwene meets with Sivan and Leane in chapter nine, the only two that knew of Marigan's true nature, and tell them that Marigan has escaped. Marigan's true name is Moghedien. Egwene receives a letter from one of her Aes Sedai that are close to Rand, explaining that he has been bonded to an Aes Sedai named Alanna. Egwene is fearful for Rand and wants to go and speak to him, but she knows that she is not allowed to since she is the leader of the Aes Sedai and the journey would be considered too dangerous. Egwene goes out for a walk and is approached by two women who have very recently been taken to be trained by the Aes Sedai. One of the women explains in a round-about way that she remembers when Egwene was working as a spy and was



passing herself off as an Aes Sedai when it wasn't true. At trying to be blackmailed, Egwene becomes very angry and tells the two women that they should be careful bringing charges against a sister and warns them to go back and be silent in their lessons.

In chapter ten, Egwene gets back to her tent, and instead of sleep, uses a dream state to communicate with old friends and find out news of what is going on. She also leaves a message for Nynaeve to not to come back without the bowl that Nynaeve and Elayne are looking for. Once her meeting is over in her dream state there are other dreams that begin to come to her and Egwene spends the rest of the night sorting through the dreams that she cannot completely understand.

## Chapter 6-10 Analysis

Perrin and Faile will be seen again in the story, but most of what Perrin will provide in the story is an outsider's view of Rand. There will be little that Perrin will be seen to accomplish. Perrin has a unique point of view thanks to his wolf senses that allow him to impart information that otherwise could not be known.

Mat has not been seen a great deal but he will take on a much larger role as the story continues. Rand's point of view will also be seen in the story more as the plot continues to develop. This story is number seven in the Wheel of Time series and so there are words, phrases, and characters that are not explained in great detail. Moghedien is one of the Forsaken, which is one of the most powerful Aes Sedai that serve the Dark One. Any Aes Sedai that choose to serve the Dark One are called the Black Ajah. There will be many of these character that will admit their affiliation later in the book but many more that the reader will be unsure of. Even those that seem to be good characters will be antagonists for Rand, Mat or others in the story because they don't believe what Rand is doing is the right thing.

Rand believes that Lewis Therin is truly in his head. He will question this later when one of the Aes Sedai tell him that hearing voices happens to men who can channel and is a step in becoming mad. The reality of this statement is not revealed in this story.

Egwene will be seen again in the story. The plot surrounding her will be regarding her struggle with getting the proper respect as Amyrlin rather than being a puppet to be used. This is much the same trouble that Elayne and Nynaeve will be seen to have.

Moghedien will be seen again in the story. She has a history with many of the characters, but the exact details of that history is not explained. It will be shown later in the story that there are some of the characters that she feels a need for vengeance toward.



# Chapter 11-15

## Chapter 11-15 Summary

Chapter eleven begins with Egwene being reported back to that no one saw anything near Moghedien's tent. Two of the younger Aes Sedai come in and explain to her that they didn't follow her because they like her but that they believe she is the true Amyrlin and so is the one they will follow. The two girls fall on their knees and swear loyalty to Egwene. This goes against what Aes Sedai do and Egwene cannot believe they have sworn themselves to her. Myrelle comes riding into camp and Egwene tells her and Sivan to ride with her as Lord Bryne tells Egwene there is something he needs her to come and see. Myrelle is obviously worried as they ride.

In chapter twelve, Bryne takes Egwene and the others to a band of men and tells Egwene where the men came from. There are several rumors that have come with the men, including one saying that Rand has gone to the White Tower and sworn fealty to Elaida. Egwene tells Bryne that she will send Aes Sedai to tell the men with their own mouths the truth. As Bryne leaves to talk to his men, he tells Egwene in no uncertain terms that the army is hers. Egwene is shocked but keeps herself calm and tells Sivan to lead the way. Myrelle becomes more upset and nervous and soon begins to beg for Egwene's understanding in the matter at hand and asking how it is that Egwene knew. Egwene finally tells Myrelle to lead them the rest of the way, not understanding what Myrelle is talking about, but does not let her realize this.

Soon they reach a clearing in the woods, and Egwene realizes that what Myrelle has done is to bond Lan to her. Lan was a Warder to another Aes Sedai who died. Warders don't live long when their Aes Sedai die, and Myrelle was trying to save him. Egwene is angry because Myrelle knew that Nynaeve wanted Lan for her Warder and that the two are in love. Lan is not doing well and looks ready to kill himself. Egwene goes to Lan and explains to him that Nynaeve is in danger and she wants him to go and to keep her safe. She tells him to explain to Nynaeve that Myrelle holds his bond but that she will give it to Nynaeve when they next meet. Lan eagerly gets on a horse. The other Aes Sedai try to tell Egwene it is a bad idea, but she tells them she has given him a task that he must stay alive for. Once Lan is gone, Egwene goes to the Aes Sedai that had been hiding Lan. She tells them that she will not do anything to punish them, providing they swear fealty to her. They both drop to their knees and swear fealty to her but are shocked at the request.

Chapter thirteen begins with Elayne and Nynaeve on a boat setting out to speak to some of the Sea Folk about finding the magic Bowl that they seek. The Sea Folk are not readily forthcoming with the information but eventually explain that they call it the Bowl of the Winds since it can control the weather. Nynaeve and Elayne wish to find it to destroy the hold that the Dark One has on the land.





Meanwhile, in chapter fourteen, Mat is listening to men that are reporting to him about Nynaeve and Elayne. Mat had promised to keep them safe, but they continue to evade him and refuse to tell him what it is they are doing. Mat follows a woman that he knows is a dark friend and finds she goes to Carridin's home. Mat can feel dice tumbling in his head and Mat recognizes this as a bad sign.

Chapter fifteen begins in Carridin's home as Mili Skane, though the woman goes by the name Lady Shaiine, walks in. She was one of the best assassins. Sammael shows up to question Carridin and give him and Shaiine orders. Carridin tells Sammael that he saw Mat there and asks if he should kill Mat. Sammael tells him that killing Mat may cause them to be discovered and to ignore Mat if at all possible. Sammael orders Carridin to find the objects hidden in the city that Sammael has tracked. Sammael has sent someone to deal with the Aes Sedai. He tells Carridin that he has a little longer to prevail and tells him that after that point in time he will give the task to someone else. Once Sammael is gone, Carridin tells Shaiine to hunt down Mat and kill him, despite what Sammael ordered.

## Chapter 11-15 Analysis

Sammael goes by many names and uses several different groups of people in the story. Later it will be seen that Sammael and Rand have a battle. Carridin and Shaiine will be seen again, although it will be limited. Sammael tells them that he is looking for Ter'angreal, angreal, and sa'angreal. These are all different names for magical objects, such as the Bowl of the Winds that Nynaeve and Elayne are looking for. It is not stated exactly that the two groups are looking for the same object, but it does seem to be likely at this point in the story.

Sammael says that he is sending someone to deal with the Aes Sedai. There is no more explanation about this at this point in the story. This won't be expanded on until later in the story when the Aes Sedai are attacked. It is Mat who will provide the explanation for how they were attacked.

Nynaeve and Elayne are very young and in many ways are not readily accepted as Aes Sedai. In the next few chapters, both of these women will come more into their full potential. Part of what they must learn to deal with is their emotions but also to control their anger and to use it when necessary. Although these two are very powerful, it will be shown that the fact that they don't look like Aes Sedai will be a helpful aspect, although it will cause them personal embarrassment.

The dice that Mat feels tumbling in his head seems to serve him as a warning system of some sort. It is unclear how it works or if it truly sounds like dice or if he simply associates it with the rolling of dice. Mat bought a ring at the cart while following Shaiine. It is not looked at closely until later in the story. On the ring will be a fox. Mat is seemingly symbolized by the fox, which is also on the medallion that he wears. Perrin is symbolized by the wolf and Rand is the dragon. These three characters are all linked, and although their paths diverge, it seems inevitable that they will meet again.



Egwene is having much of the same trouble that Nynaeve and Elayne are having in that there are a great number of people that do not believe that she is capable of being a full Aes Sedai. Egwene's circumstances are complicated by the fact that she is also the Amyrlin and must command a little respect from the other Aes Sedai. The two women that tried to blackmail Egwene will not be seen again in the story. Moghedien will be seen again in the story. What she will be used for it not immediately shown.



# Chapter 16-20

## Chapter 16-20 Summary

In chapter sixteen, Mat goes to the Palace to talk to Nynaeve and Elayne but does not find them. A servant girl comes to fetch Mat because Queen Tylin wishes to speak with him. While with Tylin, Mat is able to write a message out to Nynaeve and Elayne telling them about following a Dark Friend to Carridin's house. He folds up the letter and seals it using the ring he just bought. It is only then that Mat realizes that the ring has the emblem of a fox with two birds in flight. As Mat finishes his letter, Tylin advances on Mat and begins to try and kiss him. Mat is taken aback and seems unsure of what to do with no obvious escape when Tylin's son, Beslan, comes in to tell Tylin that he just killed a man in a duel without meaning to strike a mortal blow and must go pay condolences to the widow. Tylin introduces Mat, and before Mat can leave, he has unwittingly agreed to go on the town with Beslan during the upcoming festival.

Chapter seventeen continues with Mat leaving Tylin's presence. Mat returns to his room and is attacked by two men. Mat fights with the two men and is able to kill them. The men are not looked too closely at, but the owner of the Inn, Mistress Anan, tells Mat that the men came and looked over several of her rooms and turned them all down until they got the room closest to Mat's. Meanwhile, two Aes Sedai are in the city, Falion and Ispan. They are torturing a young woman for information. The woman dies and Ispan says that Moghedien will not like that they have left a body to follow. Ispan says that she believes they should have killed Nynaeve and Elayne when they first saw them, despite the fact that it might have revealed the Black Ajah sisters.

In chapter eighteen, Rand is having tea with other rulers, trying to convince them that he does not serve the Aes Sedai but that they serve him. Lewis is angry and Rand has to listen to him growl in the back of his head. An Aes Sedai comes to visit with Rand a short time later. Her name is Cadsuane. She has iron gray hair and the other Aes Sedai begin gasping and yelling at her not to kill Rand. Cadsuane does not try to harm Rand, and after a moment it is obvious that she is not going to attack him. Cadsuane says several things that anger Rand, but he is able to hold his emotions in control. She then asks Rand if he hears voices explaining that all men that Channel can hear the voices and that it is part of the madness that takes them over. Rand doesn't answer her and eventually tells her to leave. Yelling in his own mind that he is not mad and that Lewis really is the voice he hears, he orders everyone out.

Chapter nineteen follows Cadsuane as she goes with the other Aes Sedai in Rand's service to talk to them. Cadsuane asks the Aes Sedai several questions. She tells them that Elaida is overambitious and may be bad for the Tower but is still the Amyrlin seat. One of the Aes Sedai then asks Cadsuane why she has not answered Elaida's demand to come back to the Tower. This humors Cadsuane and she comments on the fact that one of them has some back bone. The Aes Sedai continued to answer the questions and give away little pieces of information while gathering nothing from Cadsuane.



Cadsuane leaves Rand's camp. She doesn't want anything upsetting him so that she can easily nudge him in the direction she wants him to go.

As chapter twenty begins, Sevenna is having her Wise Ones join to see if Rand has followed them after the battle ended. Once they realize he is not nearby, Sevenna pulls out a small box and the women use it to summon Caddar. Sevenna reports to Caddar that she does not have Rand but that she will be able to get him. Caddar has a woman with him, Maisia, who is an Aes Sedai. Sevenna is certain that the woman is being controlled by Caddar somehow. Sevenna wants the thing that will allow her to control Rand, but Caddar says he will not give it to her until she has Rand in her hands. Sevenna asks how it is that Caddar travels so quickly, and he tells her that there are traveling boxes that he can give her but they will be costly. Meanwhile, in the woods, Graendal is watching what is going on in Sevenna's camp. Graendal knows that Caddar is Sammael in disguise. Sammael is pleased as he enters the woods, explaining that Sevenna suggested what it is that Sammael wanted. Graendal decides against killing Sammael for now.

## Chapter 16-20 Analysis

Ta'veren is a word used in Wheel of Time series for those that have the capability of changing the direction of chance or circumstance. This is seen in both Mat and Rand in large amounts as the story continues. Mat is not wanted as much as Rand is, but there are those that realize that simply having Mat around changes their fortune, presumably for the good, despite the fact that there are many people who meet with disaster in Mat's company.

Mat is concerned over Tylin's behavior. He is not used to being the one that is chased. In addition to this, Tylin's son, Beslan, kills a man in a duel. Tylin and Beslan will continue to be an object of confusion for Mat as the story continues. It is not thoroughly explained, but it seems accurate to say that a large amount of the differences between Tylin's way of thinking and Mat's are the different cultures that they stem from. The way that people acted where Mat is from and the casual behavior seen in Tylin's city appears to support this theory.

Ispan and Falion are only seen briefly in the story. They won't be spoken of again until much later in the story when they attack Nynaeve and Elayne. It seems that they may be what was spoken of earlier in the story in reference to what was brought to deal with Aes Sedai. There is something much worse than Ispan and Falion that will come into play.

Cadsuane seemingly appears out of nowhere. There is no indication that she has had a role in any previous books in the series. There are none of the characters that Cadsuane comes into contact with that recognize her other than the Aes Sedai, who seem to regard her as a lost legend who was thought to be long dead. Despite this, it appears that Cadsuane is very well informed of the circumstances surrounding Rand and has an agenda that is not entirely personal. The truth of her motives will remain

uncertain. Continually, people explain that while Aes Sedai cannot lie, with the exception of those that claim the Black Ajah, they often tell half truths or mislead with their words so that the meaning that is interpreted is not the actual truth. Cadsuane appears to be fairly straightforward with what she says, and she simply does not say much to the other Aes Sedai or to Rand.

Caddar has told Sevenna that he will give them traveling boxes. The full extent of his plan with the traveling boxes will be revealed later on in the story.



# Chapter 21-25

## Chapter 21-25 Summary

In chapter twenty-one, Mat is out in the streets, where he had been attacked by beggars. They held a sack that Mat thought made it look as if they expected something very rewarding would be in Mat's pockets. The dice continue to rattle in Mat's head. Mat goes back to his room at the Inn and finds Brigitte there. Mat looks at her and realizes that she is the Brigitte of legend who is bound to be called back by the Horn of Valere. When Mat asks how she is there, she speculates that she was ripped into the world of flesh during Moghedien's struggle and saved by being bonded to Elayne. Brigitte thought Mat would know this because he was the one that blew the Horn. Brigitte and Mat go down to have a few drinks. Meanwhile Elayne and Nynaeve are in their rooms, waiting on Brigitte to return. Elayne begins to act oddly and Nynaeve realizes that Elayne is drunk, although Elayne has had nothing to drink. When Brigitte returns, Elayne realizes that she is drunk because Brigitte has gotten drunk, although no one is sure why their bond is working that way. Brigitte tells them that Mat wants a thank you for having saved them before. Nynaeve is adamant that she will not apologize.

In chapter twenty-two, Nynaeve and Elayne arrive at Mat's rooms. Nynaeve is still angry and refusing to apologize, but Elayne eventually convinces her that they may need Mat's ta'veren ability and that keeping him close is for the best. When they enter the room, Mat accepts their apology despite Nynaeve's stiffness. They tell Mat of the Bowl of the Winds. Nynaeve and Elayne convince Mat that he needs to move into the palace. Mat is unhappy at this thought despite the fact that he will be going to search for the Bowl of the Winds. As Mat agrees to go to the palace, the dice rattling in his head stops. Nynaeve and Elayne tell Mat that Tylin has taken a special interest in Mat and ask that he not offend her. Nynaeve and Elayne leave Mat, but when they are in the hallway Setalle Anan, the owner of the Inn, stops them and tells them she likes Mat and won't have them putting him in danger by pretending to be Aes Sedai. They try to argue with her, but she claims to know that they cannot be Aes Sedai, although she does see that they can channel and offers to take them to a place where they will be safe. Nynaeve tells Elayne to go along with it so they can meet these women.

In chapter twenty-three, Nynaeve, Elayne, and Anan are heading out of town. Anan stops at every Inn on the way to ensure that Elayne and Nynaeve cannot come back to town pretending to be Aes Sedai any more. When they reach their destination, Elayne and Elayne are introduced to Reanne and another couple of women that can channel. Reanne begins a line of questioning designed to figure out if Elayne and Nynaeve had ever been in the White Tower. Elayne continues to grow angry listening to the accusations in the questioning. Elayne finally tells Reanne that they are Aes Sedai, about Egwene, the Bowl of the Winds that they are looking for and asks for their help. Reanne tells them that they are to leave and she will give them a full day to get out of the city before she goes to the Aes Sedai and tells them about Nynaeve and Elayne pretending to be Aes Sedai.



In chapter twenty-four, Reanne watches Nynaeve and Elayne go. Reanne is frightened that the Tower will learn of the Circle's existence and stop them from helping girls that have left the Tower. Reanne feels sure that she must do something and tells the others of what they are going to do. Meanwhile, Nynaeve and Elayne discuss the fact that Reanne and the others know something. They are attacked on the way back to the palace, but Nynaeve is able to stop the attack and heal Elayne of her wounds. Elayne and Nynaeve are unsure of who attacked them, but know that they will be able to have the Bowl of the Winds in a short time whether by Mat's help or the Circle's.

As chapter twenty-five begins, Moghedien is sleeping. She is pulled into the pit of doom after the a'dam necklace is removed. Moghedien is forced to crawl on her belly through a tunnel that closes just after she is through. The Great Lord accuses Moghedien of failing him and teaching those that oppose him. She begs for her life and he tells her that she still may serve, but not as she did. Moghedien is sent somewhere by one of The Great Lord's servants. When she opens her eyes, she is in front of a man. The man says he is Moridin, which translates to Death. Moghedien begins to order Moridin around when he suddenly reaches into his shirt and pulls out an object that he is wearing. She realizes it is her cour'souvra. She instantly uses a term in reference to him which means that he owns her. Moridin laughs and says that there is no need for that, but Moghedien knows that she is owned.

## Chapter 21-25 Analysis

Cour'souvra is a crystal that traps a person's soul. This allows Moghedien to be always within Moridin's grasp no matter where she goes. It is seen that whenever Moridin touches the cour'souvra, Moghedien can feel it as if she is physically being touched.

Reanne is certain that Nynaeve and Elayne are not Aes Sedai because of the way that they hold themselves and their obvious youth. As the story continues, it will seem that it almost becomes an obsession with Elayne to have these women and the other Aes Sedai recognize her as her as the Aes Sedai that she is. Mat is ta'veren, and so changes the fate of those around him. It seems that it was a one in a million chance that Anan would have said something to both Elayne and Nynaeve about pretending to be Aes Sedai, since doing so earned such a severe punishment. It isn't until later that the two women reflect on this and realize that Mat did lead them in the direction of the Bowl of the Winds almost immediately.

It is unsure why Nynaeve and Elayne are at odds with Mat throughout most of the story. It could be that they know each other well enough from growing up together in the same village that they are simply not respectful of each other. Part of the rift between the two sides is largely attributed to the fact that Mat is male and the other two are female. It seems that there may be more to it than that, but while it is obvious in the story, it is not focused on in regard to what it stems from.

Moghedien is now a captive to another person. While she is begging for mercy, she doesn't fully expect to find it. Moghedien is cruel and has ideas of vengeance that will be



seen later in the story. There is a lot that is not explained about Moridin other than Moghedien is frightened of him and he is a servant of the Dark One.

Elayne and Nynaeve know that the White Tower doesn't want women channeling outside of the White Tower. Elayne hopes that there is a large number of women that make up the Circle, but there is a story here behind the Circle that is not yet been shown. This will surprise both those in the Circle as well as Elayne and Nynaeve.





# Chapter 26-30

## Chapter 26-30 Summary

In chapter twenty-six, Queen Morgase is in her tent when her few faithful servants come in and tell her that there is something that has landed on the hills off in the distance that looked like giant bats, but one could see men getting off of them. Suddenly there are explosions all around and Morgase knows that the blasts are coming from people that can channel. Morgase and the others stay in her tent while the battle continues.

Suddenly, there are strange soldiers that come into her tent and order Morgase to come with them. They take her to a tent and introduce her to High Lady Suroth, who leads Those Who Come Before. Lady Suroth tells Morgase that she wants to have Morgase's throne. Suroth has one of her dancers perform for Morgase and Morgase realizes the woman prisoner is the ruler of one of the kingdoms that Suroth has already conquered. Suroth says she will give Morgase time to think over what she wants to do. When Morgase returns to her tent, she tells those in her tent that she gives her kingdom over to Elayne so that Suroth cannot take it from her. Morgase is thinking of killing herself when Sebban Balwer, Niall's spy, comes in and says that he has worked out a way to sneak them out of the camp. The soldiers in the camp are letting traders come and go as they please. When someone asked if they were worried about people finding out about the soldiers, they only laughed. The soldiers said to let people know because there was nothing they could do about it.

Chapter twenty-seven begins with Perrin leaving Rand's camp. Perrin replays the scene in his mind where he had argued with Rand over the treatment of the Aes Sedai. Rand had used the one power to throw Perrin across the room. Rand told Perrin to get out of the city and that he never wanted to see him again. Perrin tells some of his friends goodbye as he and Faile leave, but there are many that gather together to come with him as he goes. As they leave, some of the ones that can channel open a doorway to Ghealdan. Perrin says they are going to find a man who has named himself the Prophet of the Lord Dragon, and who is trying to frighten people into serving Rand.

Chapter twenty-eight begins with Mat moving into the palace. When Mat is in his room, Tylin comes in and corners him there. Mat tries to protest, but Tylin only laughs. Mat spouts several reasons why she shouldn't be doing what she is doing and finally Mat claims to be betrothed to a girl that he loves back home, but Tylin laughs harder than before at this claim. There is a knock on the door, and Mat screams for the person to come in. Mat goes out with Nynaeve and Elayne for a time. When Mat returns, he finds a note from Tylin regarding dinner. Mat decides he will not go to dinner and finds that he is not allowed anything to eat unless he eats with Tylin. On the third day in the palace, Mat awakens and the dice are rolling in his head once again.

Chapter twenty-nine begins with Mat trying to go out with Olver, but Tylin stops him and has one of her servants take Olver out. Tylin pulls a knife and manages to get Mat into bed with her. When Mat is able to leave, he finds Beslan waiting for him downstairs with



the others because Mat had said they could spend the festival time together. Mat is reluctant, but Beslan cannot be talked out of going with Mat and the others. The group has been out only a short period of time when Mat and the others are attacked by a group of beggars. They are able to kill a good deal of them and are finally able to get away. They go to a tavern, and Mat is having a drink when Beslan suddenly tells Mat he thinks Mat will be good for his mother. Mat is shocked that Beslan knows what is going on and isn't angry about it. Beslan explains that his mother has been a widow for some time and he only wants to see her happy. Mat leaves, feeling confused and embarrassed.

Meanwhile, in chapter thirty, Elayne is meeting with the other Aes Sedai that are at the palace. The other Aes Sedai are very angry that Elayne has spoken to the Circle about the Bowl of the Winds. Elayne is angry that they knew about the Bowl of the Winds and didn't say anything to her about it. They also tell her that the Tower knows about the Circle. Elayne is even angrier and takes charge of the women, telling them that she is on a mission from the Amyrlin seat and so they are to do what she orders. When she gets done with them, they all are obeying Elayne's every command. They then explain that the Tower knew about the women that could channel in this town and allowed them to remain because it was easy for the Tower to find most of their runaway girls. They let the Circle believe it was hidden so they did not disband. When it is obvious that Elayne is giving the orders and that it is still shocking her, one of the Aes Sedai explains that once someone's position has been proven in authority they tend to follow for the most part even if they do grumble about it. Meanwhile, elsewhere in the city, Moghedien has arrived to do a job. She veers from her path and goes to the top of a building and uses balefire to destroy a ship and then runs away, hoping she can be forgiven. Moghedien intends to make Flaion and Ispan crawl.

## Chapter 26-30 Analysis

Morgase is Elayne's mother. Elayne receives a message saying her mother is alive and offers to take her to her mother. Elayne assumes this is a trap since she believes her mother to be dead. Morgase will not be seen again in the story. It is unclear what Balwer's motives are. Much about Suroth and her men is also unknown, but it is clear that she is very cold and calculating. It may be fear or perhaps desperation, but it did seem for a moment that Morgase would have been willing to take her own life rather than let Suroth make a slave of her and take the lands by force.

Perrin is also another of the characters that will not be seen again. Rand sent Perrin away and their fight seemed to be genuine, but Perrin isn't just going into hiding. He is still working to help Rand in what way he can. It is not explained if Rand knows of Perrin's plans or not, and there is no mention of this expedition again in the story.

Mat had been certain that Beslan might have been angry enough to kill him once he discovered that Mat and Tylin were sleeping together, but Beslan seems to find it obvious and common. This further upsets Mat. It could be that Mat would have been more at ease with the situation if Mat had needed to calm Beslan down rather than



Beslan taking the view of it that he did. Nynaeve and Elayne continually tell Mat that he needs to watch himself when he is with Tylin because they worry that Mat will not behave like a gentleman. Mat is embarrassed of the situation and so doesn't want anyone to know that he is not in control of what is happening between him and Tylin. This will not be able to be kept a secret for long.

Moghedien is seen only for a moment here, but her actions will be expanded on in the next few chapters. It is seen that Moghedien is not very well thought out and is in fact very impulsive. There is no indication of what exactly Moridin has sent her to do, but it is clear that she intends to whatever he says and hopes to gain her freedom from him in some way.



# Chapter 31-35

## Chapter 31-35 Summary

In chapter thirty-one, Nynaeve is on a boat heading out to meet with the Sea Folk when she suddenly feels sadir and there is an explosion. Nynaeve is suddenly trapped in her compartment as the boat sinks. Nynaeve is able to channel enough to burst the hull that has her trapped. She cannot make it to the surface, but as she begins to lose consciousness, she is grabbed and dragged out of the water by Lan. Nynaeve is both surprised and very happy to see Lan. He tells her that he has been bonded to Myrelle and is loaned to Nynaeve until she finds a Warder of her own. Nynaeve is angry because she loves Lan and has waited for him, but he tells her that since his last Aes Sedai died, he has less than a year to live. Nynaeve thinks quickly and announces that since Lan is loaned to her until she finds a Warder, that she has found a Warder and it will be Lan. Lan tries to argue, but Nynaeve refuses to let him argue with her and announces that they will be married that day.

Meanwhile, Elayne has gone with the other Aes Sedai to talk to Reanne and the other women of the Circle. Reanne and the others are shocked at the fact that Elayne is not only an Aes Sedai but that she seems to be leading them and also by the fact that the Tower knows of her group's existence. Elayne tells Reanne that the Amyrlin wants every woman that can channel to help to fight. In return, the women will be given the opportunity to become Aes Sedai. Many of the women begin to weep. Reanne tells them that there is a little less than two thousand women that would want to join. Elayne and the others are amazed at this large number since there are nearly twice as many of the Circle women as there are Aes Sedai. Reanne tells them where she believes the Bowl of the Winds is being kept.

Chapter thirty-two begins with Elaida having a dream. She wakes to Alviarin announcing one of the Aes Sedai that was supposed to bring Rand back in the box. Elaida listens to the story of the attack and the Aes Sedai being stilled before sending the woman away. When she is gone, Alviarin confronts Elaida and tells her that she will do exactly what Alviarin tells her to or else she will make sure the hall finds out about Elaida's secret plans. Alviarin tells Elaida to search two rooms belonging to the Brown Ajah and confiscate any contraband. Elaida realizes that this will put the various Ajah's against each other but knows that she is trapped by Alviarin and must do as she is told. The next day, Elaida does as she is told and then goes to Seaine's room. Elaida tells her that she wants her to investigate treason and Seaine realizes she has been asked to look for members of the Black Ajah.

Rand is thinking over the situation with Perrin when chapter thirty-three begins. Rand is worrying about whether or not he is in fact crazy when Min comes in. Rand tries to apologize for what he has done to her and Min becomes angry and says that she slept with Rand and it was her choice and tells him that she loves him. She tells him that he cannot be crazy because he is so worried about being crazy and crazy people don't



concern themselves with whether or not they are insane. Rand gets ready to go and see the Sea Folk and ask for their help.

Chapter thirty-four begins with Rand traveling to see the Sea Folk. They try to negotiate to him but they unwittingly promise to serve him before they are able to get anything out of Rand. Rand leaves the Aes Sedai to negotiate while he and Min go to see the Rebels that Rand wants to have join him.

In chapter thirty-five, Rand and Min travel alone on foot and meet Lady Caraline Damodred. She realizes who Rand is, but when her friend, Darlin Sisnera, appears, she introduces Rand as her cousin Tomas and his wife. On the way back to Caraline's camp, Darlin talks about how much he hates Rand and how they are waiting for Rand to attack. When Rand asks why Darlin doesn't take a ship back to his homeland, he tells Rand that he wants to marry Caraline and cannot abandon her. Once they are in the camp, there are several Aes Sedai there. Cadsuane is one of the Aes Sedai. She comes up to talk to Rand but does not reveal his true identity. Rand is asked to have a sword fight as sport and Rand agrees.

## Chapter 31-35 Analysis

It is unclear why Cadsuane is not willing to expose Rand's true identity, but in the following chapters it is shown that she is willing to do whatever it takes to protect Rand. Darlin has heard horrible things about Rand and wants no part of him, yet he too will do his part in protecting him in the coming chapters.

Min loves Rand and it is easy to see that Rand loves her as well. He wants to send her far away from himself because he truly believes it is the only way to keep her from being hurt. The fact that he is Lewis reborn seems to make him certain he will make the same choices that Lewis did, such as killing his own wife and children. There is little known of Lewis other than what Rand knows of him so there is no objective view of Lewis that is given, only what is seen from the voices that Rand hears.

Reanne is not a member of the Aes Sedai, but it is clear that she wants to be one more than she wants anything else. She holds the girls with her under very strict laws, just as the Aes Sedai. The fact that there are so many is unbelievable for Elayne and the others. Since there is another book in the series, the full extent of the Circle, or Kin as it is also called, is not shown. Reanne, however, seems more than certain that all of the women will want an opportunity to go and try to become Aes Sedai.



# Chapter 36-41

## Chapter 36-41 Summary

In chapter thirty-six, the sword fight lasts only a moment when suddenly the entire camp is attacked. A thick fog descends on everyone and people's screams can be heard from all directions. Rand, Caraline, Min and Darlin are surrounded by the Aes Sedai, who tell Rand that they will handle whatever the swords cannot. They begin to travel to get out of the fog and find many horses and people that have been torn to shreds. Rand channels to kill a creature forming from the fog and Darlin realizes who Rand is. A Dark Friend steps out of the fog and throws a knife at Rand. The knife only slices down Rand's side, leaving a shallow scar, but Rand drops immediately. The Aes Sedai try to heal him, but one of them explains that the wound is like infected, but with evil and not infection. Cadsuane has Darlin carry Rand while they continue to travel. They reach the end of the fog and find a wagon. While they travel back to Rand's camp, Min explains to Cadsuane what happened when Rand was put in the box by the Aes Sedai. When they reach the camp, all of those that can channel assist in trying to heal Rand. Min climbs into bed with Rand and holds him as he lays unconscious.

Meanwhile, in chapter thirty-seven, Elayne is getting ready to go and get the Bowl with the other Aes Sedai. Mat tells her that as soon as they have the Bowl that they are all going to leave. The women try to argue that they need to use the Bowl before they leave, but Mat does not listen to their arguments. Lan tells Mat of Maghedien and her attack on Nynaeve. Mat cannot believe that Nynaeve wanted to keep this from him. Lan explains that she didn't want to worry anyone and she is certain that Moghedien is gone but Lan is not sure of this at all. This further convinces Mat that they must go as soon as they find the Bowl.

As chapter thirty-eight begins, Mat is on the boat and Elayne comes to him to talk to him about his bothering Tylin. Mat becomes furious and tells Elayne roughly what has been going on and how Tylin won't leave him alone, starves him when he refuses to see her, and her inappropriate behavior. Mat is embarrassed that she knows, but Elayne says that she understands. Mat offers Elayne the medallion he is wearing for protection since Moghedien is back. Elayne refuses, saying she won't wear it as long as Nynaeve and Aviendha don't have one to wear, and she gives it back to Mat. When they reach the city, they have no incidents on the way to the building where the Bowl is kept, but Mat sends a group to the back door just in case. Mat, Nynaeve, Lan, and Elayne go in through the front door and Elayne goes upstairs with a few others to retrieve the bowl. Nynaeve is ready to go up after Elayne when Ispan and Falion come in. Nynaeve tells everyone that they are Dark Friends, that they are Black Ajah, and that they have her shielded from her power. The fighting soon begins and Mat goes upstairs to get Elayne. When he gets up there, he finds a man that is killing one of the Aes Sedai that had been with Elayne, and Elayne lays still on the floor. Mat stabs the man several times but the blade comes back clean. Mat's medallion touches the man's face and the man screams



in pain and mysteriously leaves. They are able to get the Bowl of the Winds and have one of the Black Ajah sisters captive and have defeated the rest that remained.

In chapter thirty-nine, Mat takes control of the group of women, realizing he is the only man there, and is able to convince them that they are leaving that instant. Reanne tells them of a farm where she believes they will be safe and can work with the bowl. Mat goes to get his things and the young boy Olver when he is told the boy went out. Mat goes out to look for him and finds the city is suddenly under attack. Mat has time to wonder what happened to his luck when the dice stop rolling and he is crushed by brick and timber.

Chapter forty begins with Alviarin in a camp with Sevenna and her warriors. Caddar arrives and gives them the traveling boxes that he calls 'nar'baha'. Sevenna is very excited about this, but Caddar warns that they can only be used once about every three days and only by men. Sammael leaves, and once gone, throws away the last of the boxes he holds, laughing at the fact that the word he had used for the boxes meant 'fool'. He knows that they will only know the truth of his lie when it is too late. In the shadows, a Myrddraal watches Sammael, debating when it would kill him.

In chapter forty-one, Rand is dreaming, and when he wakes up, Cadsuane explains to him what has happened. Rand orders everyone but the men and Min out of the room. They go to talk and Rand opens a door to travel and Min agrees to hold off the Aes Sedai from looking for him for as long as she can. Rand and the others meet with Bashere at his camp as they ready for battle. There is suddenly an attack and Rand goes off to kill Sammael. The battle is harsh, and in the end, Sammael is standing where rubble falls and Rand is left to believe he must be dead. With the battle over, Rand is approached by the men that had served King Mattin and explain that the king is gone and they believe he was murdered. They hand Rand the crown and ask him to be king. Rand holds the crown and is stabbed by one of the swords on the crown as he puts it on his head. The crown is renamed the Crown of Swords.

## Chapter 36-41 Analysis

Mat is unnerved by Tylin's behavior, but it is seen in the last of the book that he seems to realize that he is honestly going to miss her when he goes. There is no indication if they will meet again and there is no clear answer about what happened to Mat when the timbers and bricks fell on him. The dice tumbling in his head could be a warning system for him, but it doesn't seem to help him avoid trouble or to make the right decisions, only to know when it is approaching.

The character that attacked Mat and the others while trying to get the Bowl of the Winds appears to Moridin. When Mat tries follow him, all he found was a mirror. There is no indication of how the mirror is important, but since there was a mirror also at Carridin's home, it seems that it may be significant that it was spoken of.



The reason that Sammael tricked Sevensa's men into going through the portal and closing off with just enough time to make sure all of his men got through is unclear. It is clear that Sammael is most likely in just as much danger as anyone else is, since the Myrdraal is following him.

Sammael is thought to be dead, but no one has seen the body. It is entirely possible that he will show back up in another book in the series. There are also hints that other characters, thought to be dead, will show up in later books.

There were a lot of characters that were only mentioned briefly in the book that seem to be capable of taking on much larger roles if the author deemed it necessary. There are a few characters that it seems that could not die, such as Mat, but they often seem to be in situations that could leave them dead.

There is a piece of the prophecy at the end of the book that explains that refers to the wearer of the crown of swords. It says that he thinks he is the one who turns the Wheel of Time, but that he may learn the truth too late. It seems to indicate that Rand will have to learn he does not hold as much power as he seems to believe he does. It remains unclear what role Cadsuane plays in the story.





# Characters

## Rand al'Thor

This character is the main focus of the Wheel of Time series. Rand is what has been spoken of in ancient prophecies as the Dragon Reborn. It is said that the Dragon Reborn will do battle with the Dark One and save the world. There are various groups that want to find and capture Rand, and each has their own reasons for doing this. There are groups that want to capture Rand so that they can stop him from defeating the Dark One since they serve the Dark One. One group wants to capture Rand because they do not believe he is the Dragon Reborn and believe him to be evil himself. There is even a woman that tries to capture Rand so that she can have him as her husband and assert herself to a more powerful position.

Rand is a man that can channel. This is dangerous because men that can channel often go mad because of the power. Rand struggles within himself with the situations that he faces and many of his friends worry about his sanity. Rand is kind and desires a simple life but knows that there is much at stake.

Rand sends away Perrin. It may be that Rand was honestly that angry with Perrin when they had their argument, but it may be that Rand planned some of what he did so that Perrin would not try to stay. Rand is comforted by Min. Rand is in love with three different women and this seems to trouble him, but Min is not worried about it.

Rand is hurt at one point in the story when he is cut by a dagger thrown by Fain. The cut is not deep but gives Rand a kind of infection that is full of evil rather than pus. Rand is healed with the combined efforts of those that channel that are in his camp.

## Mat Cauthon

Mat is a ta'veren, like Rand and Perrin. He has promised Rand that he would keep Egwene, Elayne, and Nynaeve safe. Egwene sends him off with Elayne and Nynaeve to hunt for an object called the Bowl of the Winds. Mat does not respect the role of the Aes Sedai and is very irritated with how they treat people. Mat is one of the few characters that does not stutter or shrink under the gaze of an Aes Sedai.

Mat wears a medallion that protects him from the effects of anyone that can channel. Mat is known as a lady's man and enjoys drinking and gambling. The warning system that helps Mat to know when something is going to happen is that he hears dice rolling in his head. This seems to cause him some anxiety at times, and he often feels anxiety when they stop, since he is never certain why they begin or why they stop.

Mat is loyal and brave, but it is seen that he often has a different ideas on what is proper, especially compared to what Nynaeve, Elayne and the other Aes Sedai believe. The second time that the dice are rolling, Mat is in the city looking for Olver when the



dice suddenly stop. Mat has only a moment to realize that the dice have stopped when he sees timbers and bricks falling on him while the city is under attack.

## Min Farshaw

Min travels with Rand. There are several men that either look at Min or comment on her beauty. She is in love with Rand, and Rand loves her. She tells Rand that she doesn't care that he also loves two other women. Min refuses to leave Rand when he tells her that he wants her to go for her own safety.

Min can read what is in people's futures. She has trouble reading around Aes Sedai, presumably because of their capability to channel, but she can read Rand's. Min tells Rand most of what she sees, but there are some things that she doesn't tell him. She does not tell Rand that she sees that without a particular person Rand will fail, in part because Min knows that this person is dead.

## Elayne Trakand

Elayne is an Aes Sedai, although very young for one. She is accused of being an impostor by Reanne. Elayne is also the daughter of the queen, Morgase. Elayne is to be Queen in a short period of time, but she is off finding the Bowl of the Winds, unknown to Rand. Elayne is one of the women who Rand is in love with.

Elayne eventually takes control of the Aes Sedai and she goes to convince the Kin, also called the Circle, to come and join the rebel Aes Sedai and that they will all have a chance to try again to be Aes Sedai.

## Nynaeve al'Meara

Nynaeve is an Aes Sedai who is also very young. She can only channel when she is angry for the first part of the book. It is only after she is attacked by Moghedien and Lan saves her that Nynaeve is able to break her block and can channel at will rather than when she is only angry. Nynaeve is very harsh with Mat and the two do not get along on any respects.

Nynaeve is in love with Lan. When he arrives and tells her that he is to be her Warder until she finds one of her own, she announces that he will be her warder and that they are going to be married.

## Perrin Aybara

Perrin is a ta'veren. He is traveling with Rand in the beginning of the story, but soon he and Rand have a fight and Rand sends him away. Perrin intends to go and continue to work to help Rand despite their harsh words.



Perrin is a blacksmith, although he has the capability of communicating with wolves, a fact that he keeps secret from as many people as he can. Perrin is a loyal friend and through much of the story spends his time worrying about either his wife or Rand.

## **Egwene al'Vere**

Egwene is very young and is the Amyrlin that has been raised to lead the rebels. The former Amyrlin, Siuan, is helping Egwene learn what she can in secret. Egwene is the one that sent Elayne and Nynaeve off to find the Bowl of the Winds. Egwene has Moghedien captive in her camp when someone comes and frees her. Egwene is uncertain of herself and is worried that she is going to be just a figure head for those that want to run the Amyrlin seat but soon begins to show more strength than it was known she had and take control. There are several of the Aes Sedai that swear fealty to Egwene, a feat that has never been done before to the Amyrlin.

## **Sammael**

Sammael is one of the primary antagonists in A Crown of Swords. He is one of the Forsaken that are fighting to help the Dark One defeat Rand. Sammael and Rand have a battle at the end of the story and Sammael is presumably killed. It is Sammael that gives boxes to Sevanna claiming that she can travel with them. This is a lie and Sammael is able to cut her off from many of her men this way.

## **Elaida do Avriny a'Roihan**

Elaida is the Amyrlin at the White Tower. She is known for her angry outbursts. Elaida has visions and has seen in one of those visions that she will triumph, and her visions are never wrong. Elaida is trapped by Alviarin into pitting the houses of the Tower against each other. Elaida gives a secret mission to one of the Aes Sedai in the White Tower to find any who might be members of the Black Ajah.

## **Cadsuane**

Cadsuane is an Aes Sedai that shows up mysteriously. The other Aes Sedai seem to defer to her. Cadsuane does not reveal what her intentions are but does say that she will not hurt Rand more than she has too. She goes out of her way to help Rand, but Min is still concerned over Cadsuane's motives.



# Objects/Places

## Bowl of the Winds

The item that Nynaeve and Elayne were sent to look for. It is said that this item might be the key to breaking the Dark One's hold over the Land. They are able to retrieve this item at the end of the story.

## Silver Foxhead Medallion

This is the medallion that Mat wears everywhere he goes; he even bathes with it on. The medallion prevents the effects of channeling on Mat. He offers it to Elayne at one point in the story, in order to keep her safe, but she refuses unless she could give one to both Nynaeve and Elayne's Warder. The medallion is the only thing that seems to have an effect when fighting the gholam.

## Crown of Swords

This previously had been called the Laurel Crown of Illian. When Rand picks it up he pricks his finger on one of the swords on the crown and it is renamed. It is given to Rand after defeating Sammael.

## Kin

This is the name given to the group of women that are Wilders or have left the Tower. They are also called the Circle or the Knitting Circle. There are almost two thousand of these women.

## White Tower

Where the Aes Sedai live. It is here that Elaine lives and many of the Black Ajah are working in secret.

## Black Ajah

This is a group that was thought to be a myth for many years. These are members of the Aes Sedai that have decided to swear fealty to the Dark One. They are no longer bound by the oaths that the Aes Sedai are bound to and can lie. If you are caught in a lie, it is implied that you are a servant of the Dark One.



## Travel Boxes

Sammael gives small boxes to Sevensa and her people, claiming that they can help them to travel anywhere they want to go. The boxes are fake and Sammael has used them to trick Sevensa, but they do not figure this out until it is too late. As a further laugh to his joke, the word that Sammael uses for these boxes means Fool.

## Dark Friend

A word used for any that serve the Dark One. It is a Dark Friend that cuts Rand with a knife, nearly killing him.

## Warder

A warrior bonded to an Aes Sedai. It is said that if the Aes Sedai dies, then the Warder will also die. A Warder can sense what their Aes Sedai is feeling, and the reverse is also true.

## Ta'veren

A person whom the Wheel of Time weaves itself around. Mat, Perrin, and Rand are all three ta'veren. Many, such as Beslam, and Tylin, seem to associate having a ta'veren around as having a good luck charm around.



# Themes

## The Importance of Friendship

Friendship is seen throughout *A Crown of Swords*. This may be due largely to the fact that Perrin, Mat, Rand, Elayne, and Nynaeve were all childhood friends. Perrin and Rand are the first place that this is seen. Perrin's point of view shows the bond between Rand and Perrin. Perrin realizes that Rand is the one that is supposed to keep the world safe from the Keeper, but Perrin is also concerned for his friend. At one point in the story, Perrin realizes that he is wishing for his friend to be alright, but he needs for the Dragon Reborn to be alright. Perrin realizes that he has a need for Rand other than their friendship, but it is the friendship that Perrin focuses on. When Rand sends Perrin away, Perrin does not simply leave, but goes off to help Rand on a different front. Rand has dreams at night in which he kills Perrin. These nightmares frighten him.

Rand is terrified that he is truly going mad. If it was not for the constant companionship that Min provides, it seems possible that Rand might have gone mad. Rand also worries for his friends but feels that their main threat will be coming from him. Min refuses to go when Rand tries to send her away.

Egwene is all alone in the camp that she is in as the new Amyrlin to the rebels that left the tower. The two girls that are there to help her are the only support she feels she has in many ways. They help to make her strong.

Elayne and Nynaeve are very close, and in ways they are also close to Mat. Mat offers Elayne his medallion in order to try and keep Elayne safe. Elayne, however, refuses, because she wants her friends to be safe as well and can't wear the medallion knowing that they have nothing.

## The Importance of Promises

Promises are seen throughout the story. Two of the younger Aes Sedai swear fealty to Egwene and then Egwene later has two others swear their fealty to her as well. This is noteworthy because the Aes Sedai do not swear fealty to the Amyrlin seat and because, unless they are Black Ajah, they cannot lie.

Mat has promised to keep Elayne and Nynaeve safe. This promise is hard for him to keep because they are working against him in many ways. Despite the fact that they seem to almost want him gone, he refuses to leave because he gave his word to both Rand and to Egwene.

Min also gives her promise to keep Rand safe. It is unclear how she is going to do this. Min does not have power like the Aes Sedai or Rand, but she is determined and loves Rand.



There are other promises seen in the story, such as the promises that the various people make to serve the keeper. Many of these promises are made with greed in mind, since the people are trying to obtain power, status, or immortality.

Another important promise that is seen in the story is the promises that involve Lan. He is on the verge of killing himself since his last Aes Sedai died. When Lan promises to go and keep Nynaeve safe, it is a promise worth him staying alive for and one that he can find purpose in. It is unclear how long this promise will be capable of keeping him alive. Nynaeve weds Lan when they are together and she seems certain that she can help to heal him. Lan's promises to Nynaeve are very important, but they fight against the will to live that he has lost.

## Good Versus Evil

Good versus evil is a very clear theme in the story. Those that serve a force for good refer to the one that they serve as the Light or the Creator. The evil force that is in play in the story is called the Dark One, or the Keeper. There are a few characters in the book that hide what they are behind different names so that they are not seen as servants of evil, such as Carridin, who is an Inquisitor of the Light, or Alviarin, who is Black Ajah, but is at the Tower of Light.

Rand is fighting for good, against the evil forces seen in the story, but there are many that seem uncertain of him. There are characters in the story, such as Darlin, that do not want anything to do with Rand because of the tales that they have heard, and they believe Rand to be evil. It is almost as hard for Rand to fight the rumors as it is for him to fight those that serve the Dark One.

Many of the evil characters in the story, such as Moghedien, Sammael, and Alviarin, are all shown from both the first person point of view and the third person point of view. This allows the reader to see how evil they truly are, but also to see how well they are able to hide when it is necessary. Elaida does not realize that Alviarin is a member of the Black Ajah. Sevens does not realize that Sammael is evil and Moghedien had been in Egwene's camp for a considerable amount of time without being realized as one of the Forsaken.

Another aspect of Good Versus Evil that is seen is within Rand. Rand is fighting Lewis Therin in his mind. It seems that Lewis wants nothing more than to kill and destroy almost everyone. Lewis killed his own wife and children when he went mad and Rand reminds him of this. The arguing that goes on within Rand's mind seems to indicate that there is something dark that lurks within Rand.



# Style

## Point of View

The point of view in the story is told in the third person point of view. The point of view will change throughout the story. Some of the characters will have less than a page with the point of view coming from them, while others seem to have several chapters in a row. Both antagonists and protagonists will have their point of view shown in the story. The main characters that will have their point of view used will be Rand, Perrin, Mat, Elayne, Nynaeve, and Egwene. These characters are all fighting the same battle from different fronts and so there will be a wide picture drawn to understand how they are, or are not, working together. It is also useful in understanding events that are being foreshadowed.

The point of view in the story is somewhat limited to the character whose point of view is being shown. There are various ways that the author works around this. When Perrin is the character who is giving the point of view in the story, he also gives the information he gathers using his wolf senses. Perrin can smell what other people are feeling. He can smell fear, confusion, hate and so on. While it might be speculating for other characters to interpret what someone is feeling, it becomes very concrete and objective when it comes from Perrin, since it is something he can identify with some certainty.

## Setting

The setting in the story takes place in a fictional land in which people are capable of magic. There are creatures that are fictional as well. Many aspects of the book are easily understood, such as the concepts of kings and queens and travel by horses. There are also concepts that the author has to spend time explaining, such as the cultures and why some actions are not acceptable, and the basic ideas behind channeling.

In the book there are a great many places that the various characters travel to. Many of the characters can travel by magic, so they can be in many different places within a few moments. There is also the dream world that is described that Egwene uses to try and communicate with the Wise Ones and with Nynaeve and Elayne.

The settings in the story do not spend a great deal of time on the physical landscape as much as the details of the people that are there. The various types of people found often explain a great deal about the setting itself, such as soldiers, how many hungry beggars are in the streets, the way that the people are dressed.





## Language and Meaning

The language in the story is written in a straightforward style that is easily understood. There may be some words that are not easily recognized. Some of this is due to the level that the story is written on and the words are not words used on a daily basis by most, but part of this is because the author has created a whole world, and terminology for the characters in his book.

In the story the terms Dark Friend, Aes Sedai, ta'veren, channeling, and stilling, are all phrases that the average person knows and interprets them easily and correctly. Many of these terms have to be explained by the author in order to understand what is going on in the story.

There are different characters that have different accents or speech patterns when they are speaking. This helps to understand what background or culture they are from, and sometimes the intelligence level as well. Queen Tylin is an example of a character that seems to speak differently around different groups of people. She calls Mat duckling and speaks with innuendos when writing him letters or when she has him cornered, but she does not speak that way to Elayne and Nynaeve and seems to be much more regal and refined when speaking with them.

The language used in the story often shows a change in the character, such as when Moghedien realizes the position she is in with Moridin. Moghedien goes from speaking in a arrogant way to calling him her master.

## Structure

The story consists of 885 pages. There is additional information after the end of the story, including a short entry from the Prophecies of the Dragon, which takes up half a page. The book continues and gives a glossary to help the reader identify words, phrases, and characters that are found in the book. There are an additional twenty-four pages in the glossary of the book. The glossary also gives dates in which particular events happened.

The book is divided into forty-one chapters. Each chapter is given a name that has some relevance to what is going to happen in this chapter. The chapter titles are not particularly foreshadowing, since they are often only one or two words and could point to various things, but they do give the reader a vague idea of what might be expected, and after the chapter is read the title often seems obvious as the choice.

The prologue in the story focuses on several of the characters in the story, but none of them are the main protagonists. The prologue sets up a great deal of information and gives a basic idea of what is happening and what the other groups are planning while our main characters set to work. The story also has a table of contents and several maps of the land that let the relationship of Mat, Perrin, Egwene, and Rand to each other be known.



## Quotes

"From the little he had picked up, stilling an Aes Seai amounted to a killing that just took a few years for the corpse to lie down."

Chap. 1, High Chasaline, p. 69

"There had been nothing for it but to settle on his heels and listen to Rand recite all one hundred and fifty-one names in a voice like pain stretched to breaking, listen and hope Rand was holding on to sanity."

Chap. 2, The Butcher's Yard, p. 81

"That was how the Pattern worked; everyone died and was reborn, again and again as the Wheel turned, forever without end."

Chap. 7, Pitfalls and Tripwires: p. 167

"That was a side effect of being stilled, though not many had known it; Siuan could hardly walk a step without sisters staring at her, the once Amyrlin Seat, deposed and cut off from saidar, then Healed and restored to at least some ability, when everyone knew that was impossible."

Chap. 8, The Figurehead, p. 191

"He touched the foxhead medallion hanging under his shirt to make sure it was there, though he never took it off, even to bathe."

Chap. 14, White Plumes, p. 343

"Once, long ago, I saw three Myrddraal make a man give them his wife and his daughters one by one, then beg them to cut off his right leg, then the left, then his arms, and burn out his eyes."

Chap. 15, Insects, p. 364

"The Chosen were vastly stronger, infinitely more knowledgeable, and quite possibly they had already received the reward of immortality, but by all evidence they schemed and fought each other as hard as two Murandians with one blanket."

Chap. 17, The Triumph of Logic, p. 401

"We are a contentious lot in many ways, we Aes Sedai, each jealous of her place and prerogatives, but when someone is placed above us or stands above us, we tend to follow her fairly meekly for the most part."

Chap. 30, The First Cup, pp. 616-17

"If any sister wrote that she did one thing when we can prove she did another, then we have found a Darkfriend."

Chap. 32, Sealed to the Flame, p. 663



"'This,' Samitsu said in a lecturing tone, lightly touching the scar, 'seems like a cyst, but full of evil instead of pus.'"

Chap. 36, Blades, p. 725

"She was not sure how she went on—except that she had to—or how she kept from bursting into tears—except that she was not going to break down again when Rand needed her—but somehow she continued through the confinement and the beating without a tremor in her voice, right to Kiruna and the rest kneeling to swear fealty."

Chap. 36, Blades, p. 731

"In his experience, old memories or new, there were only two times a woman admitted she was wrong: when she wanted something, and when it snowed at midsummer."

Chap. 38, Six Stories, p. 753

"The Laurel Crown of Illian had been given a new name. The Crown of Swords."

Chap. 41, A Crown of Swords, p.855



## Topics for Discussion

Describe Rand's character. Do you see Rand change any over the course of the story? Explain your answer and give examples to show how he does or does not change.

Lan and Nynaeve care for each other. Do you believe that Nynaeve will be able to help Lan? Why or why not? Do you think he will die within a year as he has predicted?

Speculate on the reasons that Moridin did not want Moghedien to call him by a title that a servant would use? Why does he tell her to call him Moridin? Do you think Moridin is more or less dangerous than the Myrddraal? Explain.

Describe the importance of the dice rolling in Mat's head. Speculate on the reasons that they started and stopped when they did. What else could have been used for Mat other than the rolling dice?

Do you think that Rand is hearing voices or that Lewis is truly in Rand's mind? Explain your answer and what this means for the main character.

What do you believe that Cadsuane's motives are? Do you think that she truly wants to help Rand? Why or why not?

What was the significance of the letter that Niall wrote as he lay dying in the prologue? Speculate on what it is he wrote.

Do you believe that Mat will be with Nynaeve and Elayne when they leave the city? Why or why not? If not does this mean that Mat has failed in his promise to protect them? Why or why not?