

The Crimson Crown Study Guide

The Crimson Crown by Cinda Williams Chima

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Plot Summary

The Crimson Crown is the fourth novel in the Seven Realms Series by Cinda Williams Chima. In this novel, Raisa has taken the throne of the Gray Wolf Queen and Han has become a member of the Wizard Council. Raisa is under pressure to marry, which she has conceded will be for political reasons and not romantic ones. However, she is unaware that Han is doing all that he can to find a way in which to make a marriage between them acceptable to both the clans and the Flatlanders. As Han fights to get what he wants most, Raisa, he finds himself struggling against foes who might prove much more powerful than he. The Crimson Crown is a tense-filled conclusion to the Seven Realms Series that will leave readers more than satisfied.

Raisa has become the Gray Wolf Queen. Her family and her enemies are all anxious to see who she will choose as her husband. Raisa has already turned down several offers, including marriage to the king of Arden, a neighboring territory. Now Raisa finds herself faced with a proposal from childhood friend, Nightwalker, but unable to accept even though she knows it is a marriage her father strongly champions. Instead, Raisa finds herself still longing for Han and wishing there was a way in which it would be acceptable for her to marry a wizard.

Han has been appointed to the Wizard Council as Raisa's representative. However, Han knows he has enemies on the council and uses all caution when he travels to attend his first meeting. At this meeting, there is discussion about murders of wizards that have been taking place in Ragmarket, Han's childhood home. Gaven Bayar, the High Wizard, practically comes out and accuses Han of committing these murders. At the same time, the council decides to postpone the election of a new High Wizard.

Han speaks to Raisa and tells her that he has begun investigating the murders on his own. At this same meeting, Raisa asks Han to run for High Wizard. Raisa needs someone she can trust to be High Wizard to help her try to unite the wizards and the clans. Han agrees. To this end, Han attempts to make an uneasy alliance with Fiona Bayar by agreeing to help her kill Raisa in exchange for Fiona convincing one of the members of the council, Adam Gryphon, to vote for Han as High Wizard. This conversation however is overheard and the evidence of this conversation is presented to Raisa. Raisa does not believe it, but this discovery leads to more evidence pointing at Han as responsible for the murders.

Raisa and Han meet in secret. Han tells Raisa the truth about his uneasy alliance with Fiona. At this point, Han has been elected High Wizard, but he is wanted for murder. For this reason, Han has decided to find the wizard arsenal, something that is thought to be a legend, but which Han's ancestor Crow claims he can help him find. Han is successful in finding the arsenal, but is caught in the tunnels under Gray Lady by the Bayars. Han is taken captive and tortured as Gaven Bayar tries to force him to reveal where the arsenal is.



As Han is kept prisoner, a rebellion breaks out in Fellsmarch. Raisa is captive in her castle as her rogue general waits for the Arden army to join his attack on the castle. Micah Bayar finds his way into the castle and tells Raisa that Han is dead. Micah then convinces Raisa to promise to marry him if he can raise an army of clansmen and wizard to help free Fellsmarch. However, Han manages to break free of the Bayars, killing Gaven, and he leads the rescue of Fellsmarch.

In the aftermath of the siege on her castle, Raisa receives a note from Han that tells her has identified the killer of the wizards in Ragsmarket. Raisa goes to meet him only to discover it is a trick by Nightwalker. Nightwalker has been killing wizards and making it appear that Han was responsible. Nightwalker also admits to killing Raisa's mother and tells her he plans to kill her as well. Raisa manages to escape with the help of Night Bird, Nightwalker's lover. A short time later, Raisa and Han are married.



Chapters 1-6

Chapters 1-6 Summary

In Chapter 1, the Demonai are attending a feast. Raisa, the Gray Wolf Queen, is in attendance as is her bodyguard, Han Alister. At the feast, Raisa's father, Averill, announces that he has chosen Nightwalker as his successor. This upsets several at the table, including Night Bird who has been Nightwalker's bed partner in the past. Raisa also knows it is an attempt on her father's part to facilitate a marriage between her and Nightwalker. Later there is dancer and Raisa finds herself having a wonderful time. When the clan decides to do the battle dance, Hanalea's Triumph, Han volunteers for the unwanted role of the Demon King.

In Chapter 2, as they dance together, Raisa finds herself drawn to Han and the memory of their past kisses. Han asks Raisa to marry him, but she thinks it is part of the role he is playing. Afterward, Han disappears. Raisa finds herself alone with Nightwalker. Nightwalker asks Raisa to go to the river with him. Once there, Nightwalker asks Raisa to marry him. Raisa refuses because she does not love Nightwalker and she is afraid that his intentions are more political than romantic. Although Raisa knows she will more than likely have to marry to political advantage, she does not want that marriage to be with Nightwalker. When Raisa returns to her rooms, she finds a message under her pillow warning her to stay away from Nightwalker.

In Chapter 3, Han wakes in his rooms at the castle to a message from Dean Abelard. Han goes to meet her. Abelard tells Han that she wants to be elected High Wizard at the next Wizard Council meeting. Abelard wants Han to vote for her. Abelard also has the support of another member of the council, Lord de Villiers. Abelard knows if she does not stand, that Gaven Bayar will see to it that his son, Micah, is made the High Wizard. Micah is also rumored to be courting the queen, therefore Abelard is worried that the Bayars will gain too much power if Micah also becomes High Wizard.

In Chapter 4, Han goes to Aediion, a mystical place only wizards can visit, to see his friend Crow, or Alger Waterlow. Han tells Crow that they are direct descendants. Crow says that is impossible since the Bayars killed him before he had any children. However, Han has learned that Crow's wife, Hanalea, was pregnant with twins when Crow was killed. Those twins, Alister and Alyssa. Alyssa grew to become the Gray Wolf Queen and all the queens after her are her direct descendants. Alister was gifted, like his father, and sent away. It was believed that his bloodline had died out. However, Han has learned from Hanalea's second husband, Lucas Fraser, that he is a direct descendant of Alister. Crow is shocked by this news, but believes Han. Han then tells Crow that he is on the Wizard Council and needs a safe way to get to his first meeting. Crow tells him about tunnels that run under Gray Lady, the mountain where the meetings are held.

In Chapter 5, Han and his friend, Hayden Fire Dancer, ride out to Marisa Pines, the small clan settlement where Dancer's mother, Willo, is the matriarch. As they approach



Marisa Pines, they hear horses rushing up behind them. It turns out to be a group of wizards with two small clan children. When Demonai warriors come up behind the wizards, Han and Dancer move into the path to stop the wizards. Two wizards are killed immediately and another goes over the side of the gulch with one of the children. Han goes after the child while the Demonai kill the remaining wizard and take the last child from him. The children are under an immobilization charm. Han releases the uninjured child from the charm, but leaves the other protected while they transport her to Willo for healing. After tending to the wounded child, Willo brings Han and Dancer into the Matriarch Lodge. Willo has a story she would like to share with Han.

In Chapter 6, Willo tells Han how she was on Hanalea one afternoon with a group of others to pick berries. Willo remained behind after the others went back to the village to enjoy the sunshine in solitude. Willo was joined by a young, pale boy who seemed fascinated by her beauty. The boy told Willo he was a trader and he asked her to look at an object to see if it would sell in the markets of her village. The boy gave Willo a ring. When Willo slipped the ring onto her finger, at the boy's urging, she became immobile. The boy raped her and then ran away as people from Willo's village came looking for her. Months later, Willo gave birth to Dancer. Willo still has the ring. She shows it to Han who quickly recognizes the design as one similar to the falcon design on Gaven Bayar's amulet. All three want to reveal this information to the public. Han suggests they do it at a Wizard Council meeting. However, they argue about who should be present at this meeting.

Chapters 1-6 Analysis

The author begins her novel with the assumption that the reader will have already read the prior three novels. For this reason, the author does not explain certain important facts, such as the fact that wizards must have amulets to focus and use their powers or that the Naeming laws restrict interaction between wizards and clan members, as well as wizards and the Gray Wolf Queen, making it impossible for the star-crossed lovers, Raisa and Han, to marry. It is important for the reader to understand this basic fact. Raisa and Han love one another, but by law they cannot be married because Raisa is the Gray Wolf Queen and Han is a wizard. Despite this fact, Han is determined to find a way to marry Raisa. Han wants a committed relationship with Raisa, not to be her elicited lover. Raisa, however, is unaware of Han's desires and believes that she will have to make an unhappy marriage for political reasons. Raisa takes her role as queen very seriously and will do what it takes to keep her kingdom happy and intact.

Han is part of the Wizard Council, a group of wizards who work with the queen to help rule the Fells. However, the wizards have little power over the queendom and are feared by many of the clans who populate the Fells because of the stories of a past wizard, the Demon King, who supposedly seduced the unwilling Hanalea and tried to take over her kingdom. In truth, the Demon King is Alger Waterlow, Han's friend and many great grandfather. Alger and his friend, Lucus Fraser, claim that things did not happen quite the way history tells it, but at this point the reader and Han do not know the real truth about the Demon King and the warrior queen, Hanalea.



Han has enemies on the Wizard Council. The current High Wizard, Gaven Bayar, and his children Fiona and Micah, are part of one of the oldest wizard families in the Fells. Gaven is very ambitious and he wants his family to one day take over the queendom. To this end, Gaven wants his son to marry Raisa. Gaven also wants his son to replace him as the High Wizard. Han is determined to stop Micah from becoming High Wizard, and to this end he has agreed to back Dean Abelard. However, Han has the idea that it would be better for all concerned if he were made High Wizard. When Han learns that Gaven Bayar is the father of his good friend, Dancer, he plans to use this information against Bayar. However, it is unclear to the reader at this point if Han will be successful in this endeavor or if it will even benefit his cause. Gaven is a powerful man who has many friends. It is clear that Han is up against an immovable force and that any move he makes could be his last.



Chapters 7-12

Chapters 7-12 Summary

In Chapter 7, Han and Dancer make their way to Gray Lady alone the following morning. They travel around the far side of the mountain where Crow told Han he would find an entrance to the tunnels. They have to leave their horses behind and walk a large portion of the way. When they find the tunnels, Han is able to navigate into the mountain to the opening of the tunnel that will lead to the Wizard Council meeting hall. Han must leave Dancer behind because he has Bayar blood and the last magical seal on the door blocks him from entering.

In Chapter 8, Raisa surveys her troops with her general, Klemath. Raisa is unhappy with how slowly Klemath has replaced the mercenary troops, the stripers, with regular troops. When Raisa expresses her displeasure, Klemath tells Raisa it would be detrimental for her to replace him. Despite this, Raisa speaks with her advisers about a replacement. Amon, the head of the blueguard, recommends Char Dunedain, a former colonel in the army who was now a sergeant in the guard. Raisa meets Dunedain and likes her instantly. Raisa has Amon arrange to have Dunedain transferred to the castle keep.

In Chapter 9, Han walks through the tunnels, removing magical barriers from time to time, until he finally reaches the hot spring Crow told him would disguise the entrance to the hall. Han finds himself in a cellar. Han quickly changes his clothes and slips out of the cellar into the main floors of the hall. Looking for a place to clean up, Han accidentally finds himself in Fiona Bayar's rooms. Fiona is shocked to see Han, but then sees it as an opportunity. Fiona tells Han that she wants to be queen. Fiona tells Han if he will kill Raisa and her sister, Mellony, she will make him one of her consorts. Han objects to the idea, but hides that from Fiona in an attempt to learn more of her plan. However, when they argue over the consort idea, Han accidentally lets it slip that he is of royal lineage.

In Chapter 10, Han arrived at the meeting ten minutes early, but discovered that the meeting had already begun. Gaven Bayar had assumed Han would not be arriving. For this reason, most at the meeting were surprised when Han walked in. As the meeting resumes, Gaven Bayar tells everyone that council member Lord de Villiers was killed the day before on the road to Marisa Pines. Han admits to being there and tells everyone the details of the killings. Bayar blames the whole situation on the fact that the Demonai have made it nearly impossible for young wizards to get flash.

Bayar brings up the murders of wizards that have been taking place in and around Ragsmarket. Bayar has the gall to practically accuse Han of the murders. It is suggested, however, that these murders are motivated by a desire to steal flash. Gaven Bayar then suggests they select a new High Wizard to work with the queen. However, it is quickly suggested that they wait until the new member of the council, Lord de Villiers



daughter, Mordra, can attend the meeting. This is agreed by a majority and the vote is postponed.

After the meeting, Micah Bayar stops Han and warns him not to harm Raisa. Han leaves the same way he came, but he cannot find Dancer where he left him. When he finally finds him, Dancer tells him he has been using the earth to try to track his movements using the clan earth magic.

In Chapter 11, Raisa is playing a game with one of her bodyguards, Caterina 'Cat' Tyburn when they are interrupted by the sound of Han returning to his rooms. Raisa sends Cat and her maid, Magret, away. Raisa calls Han to her room. He is dressed in filthy clothing. He quickly changes and then joins Raisa in her chambers. Han tells Raisa he has been walking in Ragsmarket in the hopes that the killer will come after him, helping him solve the crimes. This upsets Raisa, but he is determined to learn who the killer is. They then talk about the Wizard Council meeting. Raisa tells Han that she wants him to stand for High Wizard. Han asks if he should use any tactics necessary and she agrees with her silence. In exchange, Han makes Raisa agree to appoint Dancer as the queen's representative on the council. Raisa agrees, writing it down for Han. Later, they kiss, but Han refuses to do more.

In Chapter 12, Raisa speaks with her father about the murders in Ragsmarket. Averill denies that the Demonai have had anything to do with it. Averill suggests, as Gaven Bayar did before him, that Han might be responsible. Raisa rises to Han's defense. She then questions the alliance the Demonai have made with Han Alister. Averill refuses to discuss it, but tells her he believes it to be under control. They then discuss Raisa's future and her father again pushes her to marry Nightwalker. Raisa retires to her rooms after this meeting. Alone with Cat, Raisa asks her about the murders, but Cat is evasive and leaves Raisa with the impression she is hiding something. Micah's arrival interrupts Raisa's talk with Cat. Micah tells Raisa he believes he will be made High Wizard at the next meeting of the Wizard Council. Micah says he wants this role so he can protect Raisa. Micah also suggests that Raisa remove Han as her bodyguard, but Raisa refuses.

Chapters 7-12 Analysis

Han attends his first Wizard Council meeting. When he arrives, it seems pretty clear that Gaven Bayar did not intend for him to make it. This seems like a single win that Han can put in his own column. However, it is small victory when Bayar openly accuses him of murder in the meeting. It also seems like something of a waste of time when the High Wizard vote is postponed due to the death of Lord de Villiers. This proves to be a blessing in disguise, though, when Raisa later tells Han she wants him to stand for High Wizard. Han has already decided he would like to do so, but is afraid he would not get the votes. Now he has more motivation to find a way to get the votes. If Han can become High Wizard, he will be working closely with Raisa and they might, together, be able to change peoples' minds about wizards. Perhaps this would eventually lead to giving them the right to be married.



Raisa is receiving pressure from various sources to marry. Raisa knows that any marriage she makes will more than likely be politically motivated rather than romantically. However, Raisa's heart remains with Han even though she is not clear on where his heart lies. Raisa resists the idea of marrying Nightwalker, but she is also faced with the possibility of making a marriage to Micah Bayar. This marriage could potentially unite the wizards and clans. However, Raisa does not seem any more inclined to marry Micah than Nightwalker. Micah, on the other hand, clearly loves Raisa. This leaves the reader wondering what will happen should Raisa refuse Micah.

Raisa has many responsibilities in her job as queen. One of these is to raise an army capable of protecting the Fells from outside enemies. Some of the other territories around the Fells are ruled by leaders who would like to see the reign of the Gray Wolf Queen end. One of these is the kind of Arden, Montaigne, who was humiliated when Raisa refused his proposal of marriage. The reader must remember this as Raisa struggles to replace her current general.



Chapters 13-18

Chapters 13-18 Summary

In Chapter 13, Han meets with Crow and tells him about the Wizard Council meeting. Han tells Crow about Willo's claims of Gaven Bayar's attack on her. Crow finds this story to be highly believable, but he worries that it will not help Han win the High Wizard position. Crow recommends Han make a show of power, even offering to tell him where the wizard arsenal is. Han rejects the idea, but would like to know where the arsenal is. However, Crow wants to speak with Lucus Fraser first. Han initially refuses.

In Chapter 14, it is late at night. Amon comes to see Raisa. There has been another murder in Ragsmarket. Amon takes Raisa to see the bodies, to ask if she can identify writing left on the bodies. Raisa recognizes it as the symbol for Han's former street gang, but does not tell Amon. Raisa then recognizes an amulet found under the bodies. Raisa takes it from Amon, telling him she plans to ask Dancer if he recognizes it. Amon then tells Raisa that some of his guards found a man near the bodies, but he ran. Later, other guards picked up the man and they believe it to be Han. Raisa refuses to believe Han would be involved in the murders. Amon recommends that Raisa remove Han as her bodyguard, but she insists she would be safer with him near.

In Chapter 15, Han meets with Fiona Bayar in Ragsmarket. Han had one of his men bring her there. Han tells Fiona that he will go along with her plan, but only if she will convince Adam Gryphon to vote for him when he stands as High Wizard. Han also has Fiona agree to allow him to do what it takes to take her father and brother down.

In Chapter 16, Han visits Dancer at his clubhouse where Dancer has a workshop for his flash making. Han asks Dancer to give him a new talisman because he lost his last one. Han also tells Dancer that he has asked Raisa to replace him on the council with Dancer should he become High Wizard. Dancer is resistant at first, but finally agrees. Han then goes to see Dean Abelard. Han tells Abelard that he plans to stand for High Wizard and that he wants her support. Abelard agrees, but only if the vote takes place before Mordra de Villiers arrives.

In Chapter 17, Han goes to Gray Lady for his second meeting of the Wizard Council with Willo and Dancer in tow. Han has Willo and Dancer wait in the cellar until he feels the right moment has come for their arrival at the meeting. As the meeting begins, Gaven Bayar pushes a motion to deal with the killer of wizards in Ragsmarket. Both Han and Micah fight it for their own reasons, but the measure passes. Bayar promises to deal with it personally. Then the vote for High Wizard comes up again. Bayar nominates his son, Micah. Abelard, with some hesitation, nominates Han. There is some chaos at the point so Bayar calls for a recess. During the recess, Han goes to Aediion to summon Dancer, but does not see him there. Han returns to the meeting and is shocked when not only does Abelard vote for him, but Adam Gryphon does as well despite the fact that Fiona never spoke to him.



In Chapter 18, after some debate, the matter of the High Wizard vote is settled. Willo and Dancer arrive just after Han announces that Dancer is to replace him on the council. Bayar recognizes both and is outraged, trying to stop what he knows is coming. However, he is unsuccessful. Willo tells her story to the council. When she is done, Bayar claims she cannot prove any of it. It is then that Willo pulls out the ring Bayar left behind when he raped her. After the meeting, fearful of retaliation on Bayar's part, Dancer arranges to ride down the mountain with Willo and Dancer on horses borrowed from Abelard.

Chapters 13-18 Analysis

Han arranges for the votes he needs to win High Wizard, but to do so he must agree to the murder plot Fiona Bayar has conjured against Raisa and Mellony. Although Han has no intention of following through on the deal, it seems like a bad idea for him to even pretend as the reader is aware of eavesdroppers and the tricks of the Bayars.

Han miraculously wins the High Wizard vote, even though Fiona failed to do her part, but it does not seem to make a difference. Gaven Bayar remains in control of the council despite everything. However, when Willo and Dancer arrive and make their accusations, it is clear that the council believes them. The only question is, what kind of fallout will it have for the Bayars? Han continues to question the impact he has made, as evidence by his desire to leave the area as quickly as possible.

Even as Han is having success with the Wizard Council, he continues to struggle to remove himself from his past. Raisa learns that two more wizards have been killed and there is overwhelming evidence that Han is responsible. Raisa refuses to believe it, but others do believe it. Raisa has already been surrounded by people insisting Han represents trouble for her, therefore it should not be a huge step for them to believe Han guilty. It is a test of her feelings for Raisa to see how much evidence she can ignore until she begins to believe Han is guilty herself.



Chapters 19-25

Chapters 19-25 Summary

In Chapter 19, Raisa is at a dance recital with her sister, Mellony, and several members of her guard. As the recital ends and they proceed to return to the castle, they become aware of the heaviness of smoke in the air. Soon it becomes obvious that fires are burning in Ragsmarket. This is not unusual, therefore there is no concern at first. However, when even Cat cannot get them around the flames, they begin to worry. Raisa orders that they drive back to the Southbridge Temple so that they can see into Ragsmarket and locate the fire. When they do, they realize all of Ragsmarket is on fire. Raisa and Amon quickly begin organizing those around them to protect the children and fight the fire.

In Chapter 20, Han separates from Dancer and Willo at Marisa Pines and continues on to Ragsmarket. Han is shocked to find his hometown on fire. Han runs into a group of soldiers trying to lead survivors out of the city, but they cannot find a way through the flames. Han directs them into Market Temple. Once everyone is inside, Han lays a charm over the building to protect those inside from the fire. Han then makes his way through the flames to Southbridge and Raisa. Han finds Raisa in Southbridge Temple. Han warns Raisa that this might be the work of Gaven Bayar. They kiss, but are interrupted by Speaker Jemson. Han then goes to join the work crew in trying to stop the fire. As the fire grows dangerously close to the bridge, Can and Dancer arrive.

In Chapter 21, Dancer uses his earth magic to turn the wind. A rainstorm is blown in that kills the last of the flame. Han rushes back to Market Temple and discovers that all the people he left there are still alive and well. Han worries that he saved them for nothing, but they are all overwhelmingly thankful.

In Chapter 22, Micah offers Raisa a ride back to the castle in his carriage. On the way, he stops the carriage at Pilfer Alley and shows Raisa that Han's hideout still stands. This is meant to be an accusation against Han, but Raisa quickly dismisses it. Han would never burn his hometown.

In Chapter 23, Han goes to visit Crow and tells him he wants to find the arsenal. Han knows that he is being blamed for the murders in Ragsmarket and that he might now be blamed for the fire. Han knows he needs the arsenal to protect himself and possibly to bring the different factions together. However, in order to learn the location of the arsenal, Crow wants Han to allow him to possess him so he can speak to Lucas Fraser. Crow has changed his mind, however. Instead, he wants Han to bring Lucas to Aediion.

Han stops to see Adam Gryphon out of curiosity as to why Gryphon voted for him when he seemed to be a pawn of the Bayars'. Gryphon reveals to Han that he has been in love with Mordra de Villiers for several years, but neither her father nor his parents would allow the match. Now that her father and his parents are dead, there is nothing



keeping them apart, and no reason for Gryphon to marry Fiona. Gryphon tells Han that he felt Han would be more interesting as High Wizard than Micah.

In Chapter 24, Han visits Lucas Fraser at his cabin. Lucas is not happy to learn that Alger Waterlow wants to see him, but he reluctantly agrees. When Crow confronts Lucas, Lucas agrees to tell him the truth about the past if Crow will agree to remove the spell that has allowed Lucas to be immortal. Crow agrees. Lucas immediately tells Crow that Hanalea did not betray him. Lucas did.

In Chapter 25, Lucas tells both Crow and Han that he was jealous of Crow because he had been in love with Hanalea since he was a young child. When he learned of Crow's relationship with her, it was too late to admit his feelings. However, his resentment toward Crow grew until he finally betrayed him. First Crow told the Bayars that Crow and Hanalea were seeing each other, prompting the Bayars to lock Hanalea in her rooms. However, Crow had a tunnel into her rooms and was able to escape with her. They eloped. Then Lucas led a group of men into the tunnels of Grey Lady and hid them while he asked Crow to give him immortality. Shortly afterward, Crow was taken by the guards and tortured by the Bayars to tell them where he hid the armory. Rather than tell them, Crow left his human body behind and hid inside his amulet. The Bayars caused the Breaking in an attempt to break the amulet and get Crow out. Later, Lucas married Hanalea, but he betrayed her as well when he told the people that her twins were Crow's. Hanalea fought to keep her children, but was finally forced to give up Alister because of his gifts. After Lucas finished telling his story, Han took him back to the real world where Crow spoke the words to remove the charm. Lucas turned to dust and disappeared.

Chapters 19-25 Analysis

A fire destroys much of Ragsmarket. It is clear to Han that this is the work of Gaven Bayar and Gaven's attempt to rid the area of the murderer who had been killing wizard. It also seems to be an attempt to frame Han for another crime because Han's own buildings are not destroyed. However, it is also an opportunity for Dancer to show what he can do by combining his high magic with earth magic. It is an amazing show of power that has great potential should the people of the Fells stop to understand it.

Raisa is forced to face evidence against Han once more. Once more Raisa refuses to accept it because of her love for Han. The reader must wonder, however, how much more Raisa can face and still see Han as innocent.

Han takes Lucas to Crow and together they learn the truth about the past. It turns out that the Demon King did not seduce Hanalea or kidnap and torture her as the old stories say. Hanalea did not even turn on her lover as he has believed for a thousand years. In truth, it was all the work of the Bayar family and Lucas himself. Lucas betrayed Crow over and over again, leading to his death. Lucas also betrayed Hanalea, causing her children to be separated, leaving her with only the daughter who would begin the Gray Wolf Queen lineage. This is why few knew about Alister or the possibility that he had

descendants among the Fell people. If more knew this truth, it might change relations between wizards and the people of the Fell.



Chapters 26-32

Chapters 26-32 Summary

In Chapter 26, Raisa admits to Cat how she feels about Han. Cat tells Raisa that she thinks the reason Han has turned from her on several occasions is because he does not want to be second best. As they talk, Amon arrives and interrupts their conversation. Amon has Flinn, a member of Han's crew, with him. Amon has Cat sent from the room and has Flinn tell Raisa his story. Flinn claims that Han has been killing the wizard. When Han had Flinn bring Fiona to Ragsmarket, he thought Han planned to kill her too. Instead, Flinn overheard Han plotting with Fiona to kill Raisa. Amon sends Flinn out of the room when he has finished his story. Amon tells Raisa that he has spoken to the Bayars and they back Flinn's story. Raisa, however, refuses to believe Han to be guilty of either the murders or trying to kill her. Raisa suggests they speak to Cat, but when they go to get her, she is gone.

In Chapter 27, Raisa goes to visit her Demonai relatives in hopes of finding some answers from them. Raisa demands to know why they entered into a deal with Han to destroy the Bayars. They refuse to give Raisa the answers she wants. However, they do tell Raisa that Han is of her bloodline. This shocks and confuses Raisa as she wonders why Han never told her. Instead, they try to force Nightwalker on her again and urge her to spend time in their camp.

In Chapter 28, Han remained at Lucas's cabin long enough to deal with his possessions. Han then returns to Marisa Pine with Dancer and Lucas's dog, Dog. While there, Cat arrives and tells Han all she overheard in Raisa's bed chambers the night Amon visited her with Flinn. Han realizes he must return to the castle and speak with Raisa himself.

In Chapter 29, Raisa is having trouble sleeping, so she goes up on the roof to Hanalea's garden through the secret tunnel. Raisa is surprised when she finds Han there. Han tells Raisa that he will no longer keep secrets from her. Han tells Raisa everything he has done and not done in regards to the murders and the fire. Han then tells Raisa he plans to find the wizard armory. Finally, Han tells Raisa that he wants to marry her and the become betrothed.

In Chapter 30, Han goes to Aediion to see Crow and to learn the location of the arsenal. Crow tells Han he cannot fully recall all the charms he placed on the path to the armory and is afraid Han might be killed. For this reason, Crow insists on going along as a sort of mental passenger in Han's head. Han agrees. Crow leads Han to the opening of the tunnel under Hanalea and across the Vale to Gray Lady underground. They encounter many magical barriers, but Crow remembers how to disable each as they come to them. However, Crow had forgotten about the room full of songbirds, birds that have the ability to put a victim to sleep with their song and then they eat the victim. Crow advises Han not to wake the birds, but if he does, to sing loudly. Han does this, but when he forgets



the lyrics of the song, he begins to listen to the birds. Han quickly begins to slip into a euphoric sleep until Crow possess his body and moves him out of the chamber.

In Chapter 31, not far from the chamber of the songbirds, Crow leads Han to the Armory of the Gifted Kings. Inside Han is shocked to find so much flash jewelry that he could arm a whole army of wizards, or sell it for millions. Crow directs Han to a case that contains the Crimson Crown, the crown the Gifted Kings once wore. This piece will be easily recognizable and Han can use it to prove he has found the armory. From the armory, Crow directs Han to Gray Lady where they will exit. However, before they can escape the tunnels, they are ambushed by the Bayars. Gaven Bayar finds the Crimson Crown and decides to take Han prisoner to torture him into telling where the arsenal is.

In Chapter 32, Raisa is so happy about her betrothal to Han that she cannot hide it. Mellony finally guesses, so Raisa has to tell her the truth. It turns out Mellony is in love with Micah and is greatly relieved to learn Raisa is not. After this talk, Raisa has a scheduled meeting with Klemath to tell him she is replacing him as general. However, on the walk to the meeting, Cat becomes aware of a large army of stripers outside the castle. As they decide what to do, General Klemath comes out of the meeting room and tries to kill Raisa. Raisa manages to escape. Raisa and her small guard managed to chase Klemath out of the castle and keep his army outside the gates, but they are now trapped in the castle.

Chapters 26-32 Analysis

Raisa learns about more allegations that are being made against Han. Now it appears that Han wants to kill Raisa and take over the crown. These allegations come from someone close to Han and makes it seem irrefutable, but Raisa still refuses to believe. Raisa loves Han and cannot believe he would want to do her any harm. It is this belief that keeps Raisa going. However, when she visits her family and learns that Han is of the same royal bloodline as she, and that he has known it for some time, she is angry and frightened by the list of secrets and lies she can now see Han has told her. It is a difficult time for Raisa, but to her credit she never really stops believing in Han. Therefore, when he comes to her and tells her the truth, she easily accepts his explanations. They become betrothed, but it still remains illegal for a wizard to marry the Gray Wolf Queen. For this reason, Han has even greater reason to find the arsenal and bring the people of the Fell together.

Han and Crow go in search of the arsenal and find it where it has been hidden for more than a thousand years. It seems to be a victory in Han's fight for what he wants. However, it also appears that he is repeating history when he is taken prisoner by the Bayars. Gaven Bayars recognizes the Crimson Crown Han has taken from the arsenal and he decides to torture Han to find it. This same thing once happened to Crow, leading to his imprisonment in his amulet for a thousand years. The reader must worry what might happen to Han at this point. The reader must also worry about Raisa as her castle comes under siege by her disgruntled general.



Chapters 33-41

Chapters 33-41 Summary

In Chapter 33, Han wakes after an interminable amount of time being tortured. No permanent damage has been done, but Han suffers burns and blisters to his skin as well as several broken fingers. The worse of the torture took place while Crow possessed Han's body, but his future continues to look bleak. Now Han finds himself in a simple cell. Flinn is there too, mortally injured and clearly dying. Han speaks to him, but there is little they can do to comfort one another.

In Chapter 34, Raisa meets with Klemath and learns that he has teamed up with Montaigne, the king of Arden. An army from Arden is on its way to the Fells.

In Chapter 35, Fiona comes to see Han, bringing with her food and water. Fiona tells Han about the war and the great need for the arsenal to save Raisa and the rest of the people of the Fells. Han does not believe her, but agrees to show her where the arsenal is if she will give him his amulet back. Fiona tries to use the amulet while it is pressed between both their bodies, but she is burned when Crow reenters the amulet.

In Chapter 36, Dancer is back in Marisa Pines when word of the coming Arden army reaches them. The camp is quickly packed up and the people moved. Dancer is caught by his cousin, Night Bird, attempting to use his magic. She seems surprisingly open to the use of magic to help them and agrees to watch over Dancer as he attempts to reach Han in Aediion. Instead of finding Han, Dancer finds Crow. Crow tells Dancer what has happened to Han and suggests a way they can rescue him.

In Chapter 37, Raisa's people rise well to the protection of the castle. Raisa insists, as well, in taking her own shifts on the walls.

In Chapter 38, Micah, who had been at the castle, returns home to learn that his father has found the arsenal and Han Alister is dead. Micah's father wants to keep the wizards on Gray Lady, keeping them safe from the advancing army in light of rumors that they have been burning wizards. Micah convinces his father that they need to save Raisa in order to take power in the Fells.

In Chapter 39, Raisa has a meeting with her leaders and learns the Arden army continues to advance and should arrive in the city in a matter of days. Requests for help sent to Gray Lady have been ignored. Raisa refuses to consider surrender or to leave the castle. Micah arrives. Raisa is devastated when he announces Han's death at the hands of his.

In Chapter 40, Micah claims his father killed Han in self-defense. He then shows the group flash taken from Han's body. Raisa cannot deny this proof. Raisa runs to her room where she collapses in grief. Days later, Raisa is suffering from a fever when



Montaigne's army arrives in Fellsmarsh. Amon arrives to speak to her, but Raisa insists on finding her dagger first.

In Chapter 41, Amon brings in all of Raisa's supporters in the castle and convinces her that she has taken the reigns of a new generation of Fells people who want to be united despite their differences.

Chapters 33-41 Analysis

Han is tortured and tricked in an attempt to get him to tell where the arsenal. The invasion of Arden soldiers increases the need to find the arsenal for the Bayars. However, Han shows his true colors by continuing to keep the information to himself. Crow has also been helpful, baring Han's consciousness from being aware of the torture taking place on his body. However, the reader must wonder how much longer Han can withstand this treatment. In fact, when Micah arrives and his father tells him Han is dead, the reader must wonder if this could be true. After all, wizards are good with poisons and Han ate and drank things Fiona brought him.

Raisa believes that Han is dead when Micah tells her this. For this reason, she falls into a depression and begins to think she is fighting a losing battle. However, Raisa's closest advisors convince her that she has already brought together people who traditionally have not gotten along and that if she could it on a small scale, what is to stop her from doing it on a larger scale. Hence, Raisa recommits herself to the struggle against the Arden army despite the overwhelming odds.



Chapters 42-49

Chapters 42-49 Summary

In Chapter 42, Fiona and her father come to Han and insist that he show them where the arsenal is. They put Han's amulet around his neck, but his hands are chained and he cannot touch the amulet without permission. Han leads them into the tunnels and tries to think of a way to get away, but the Bayars have made every plan Han has difficult to implement. When Han walks past the turnoff to the armory, Gaven Bayar seems to know he is misdirecting them and has Han turn back. Han leads them into a room that is filled with some kind of fog that he does not recall from his previous visit. As they enter, Han hears a noise and moments later Fiona falls from a Demonai arrow. Gaven Bayar kills the Demonai and turns on Han. Han tries to get him to go with Fiona, but Bayar refuses. They begin a battle of magic. Han gets the upper hand at first, but Bayar manages to disappear in the fog. Han continues to be the stronger fighter, but Bayar manages to get Han's amulet from him. Han is too weak to fight Bayar without magic. As he struggles to find a way to end the fight, Dancer appears in the fog. However, Bayar cuts him in half with magic. Han is grief stricken.

In Chapter 43, Micah finds Raisa in Hanalea's garden on the castle roof. Micah tells Raisa that he will gather an army from the clans and the wizards if she will return to his home with him and marry him. Raisa resists the idea, even though the man she wanted to marry is dead. Instead, Raisa tells Micah to gather his army first, then she will marry him. Micah agrees. They exchange rings.

In Chapter 44, Han knows he must get his amulet back, but that the only way to get it is over Bayar's dead body. For this reason, Han leads Bayar to the room filled with songbirds and watches as they kill Bayar. Han returns to the foggy room and finds Dancer still alive, cradling Night Bird's body. Han learns that Dancer had created an illusion of himself to trick Bayar. Han touches Night Bird and realizes she has been hit with an immobilization spell and he reverses it. Dancer tells Han about the Arden army and returns Crow to his amulet.

In Chapter 45, Han goes to the Bayar home in search of the Crimson Crown. As he searches, Han overhears Micah and his mother discussing Micah's impending marriage to Raisa. Han steals the crown and leaves.

In Chapter 46, Raisa visits with Mellony and tells her of her betrothal to Micah. Mellony is angry and grief stricken by the news.

In Chapter 47, Han meets Dancer and Night Bird at Lucas' cabin. Together they go to meet with the Demonai leaders. Han tells them that they can either agree to join up with the wizards to fight the Arden army or Han would give the contents of the arsenal to the wizards and let them do as they wished. The Demonai reluctantly agreed to work with the wizards.



In Chapter 48, Han calls a meeting of the Wizard Council in Gaven Bayar's name. When he arrives, he learns that Micah has told the others he is dead. Instead, Han walks in and tells the wizards he has found the arsenal and that he wants them to fight the Arden army alongside the clans. There is much protest, especially from the Bayar supporters, but they eventually agree.

In Chapter 49, Han brings in the clan leaders and they begin, after some debate, to hammer out a plan of attack. Afterward, Micah confronts Han about his father and sister, but Han refuses to answer because he needs Micah to work with him for the next few days.

Chapters 42-49 Analysis

The Bayars bring Han out of his cell in hopes that he will help them find the arsenal. Instead, they are ambushed by Dancer and Night Bird. Fiona is killed, but Han finds himself in combat with Gaven Bayar for a significant amount of time before he is able to get the better of him and end his life. Han has finally gotten what he wanted, the death of his mortal enemy and revenge for his mother and sister's deaths, but he does not feel the satisfaction he thought he might. This again shows the reader the depth of Han's character.

Raisa, on the other hand, has decided that Han is dead and her priority now should be her queendom. For that reason, she has agreed to marry Micah if he can save them from the Arden army. This is a trick that the reader is unclear how Micah intended to pull off. However, there is no reason for the reader to find out because Han arrives, back from the dead, to take control. Han does what Raisa has been trying to do for months, he unites the wizards and the clans for a single cause. They all agree to fight to save the Fells from Arden. However, the alliances are tenuous, leaving the reader curious how long it will last.



Chapters 50-59 and Epilogue

Chapters 50-59 and Epilogue Summary

In Chapter 50, Amon and Nightwalker continue to try to talk Raisa into leaving the castle when she gets word that one of Klemath's sons is in the dungeon asking to see her. Raisa goes to see him and learns that the Arden commander, Karn, has her sister. Raisa immediately agrees to surrender herself in order to save Mellony. Raisa then goes to Mellony's rooms to verify that she is missing.

In Chapter 51, Han visits Crow and learns of a tunnel that leads directly to the Queen's bed chambers. Han decides this is how he will lead a group of wizards and Demonai into the castle so that they can warn them of the coming attack. Han also plans to use it to get Raisa out of danger.

In Chapter 52, Raisa dresses in her armor to meet Commander Karn. Amon and Nightwalker again try to talk her out of going to the meeting, but she refuses. They go to the Market Temple where the meeting is set. When they reach the church, however, they find that Karn has placed Mellony on a fire pyre, prepared to burn her to death.

In Chapter 53, Micah is unhappy with Han's sudden change in plans even though the tunnel he has led them down leads directly to where he said it would. When they arrive in the castle, Han is disappointed to find Raisa is nowhere to be found. They consider delaying their attack, but it is nearly dawn and they must go forward.

In Chapter 54, Han and his group begin to lay the groundwork for the invasion. Han and several Demonai go among the troops, killing some and lying charms on the doors of tents to curse others. When they are ready, the wizards left in the castle keep begin sending down spells that wake the Arden soldiers and frighten them. Soon there is chaos everywhere. Han spots Gray Wolves and this tells him that Raisa is in danger. Dancer gives Han a ring that helps him find Raisa at Market Temple.

In Chapter 55, as Raisa confronts Karn, her archers come in through the ceiling and begin to fire. Chaos breaks out. Raisa sees the priest about to drop the torch as Mellony's feet and she tries to stop him, but is too late. Raisa is unable to free Mellony because she is tied with magical ropes. Amon tries to help, but Karn lights another wall of fire that traps Mellony and Raisa. Han arrives and keeps the flames back, but he is too low on flash to stop them completely. Micah arrives and saves Mellony. When he returns, Han insists he take Raisa away. Raisa tries to make Micah return for Han. He initially refuses, but finally does. Dancer then comes into the church and brings a flood of water to put out the flames. Raisa rescues Han from the water.

In Chapter 56, the city has been freed of the invaders, but skirmishes still are taking place in the mountains. Karn escaped as did Klemath. Han continues to lead the fight. One night he comes home to his tent and finds Raisa waiting for him. They talk and she



tells him that she thought him dead, but that she broke the engagement to Micah and still considers herself betrothed to Han.

In Chapter 57, Raisa tells Amon of her betrothal to Han. Amon cautions Raisa, but she is insistent. Later, Raisa and Han tell her father and the other leaders of the Demonai. They are not pleased. It is then revealed that Elena had given Han an amulet that was cursed with a spell that would kill him if he tried to cast a spell against a Demonai. However, Han gave this amulet to Dancer and he figured out the secret and changed it.

In Chapter 58, Raisa and her friends begin to plan a small, simple wedding. One night, while Han and Dancer are on their way to Gray Lady, Raisa receives a note from Han asking her to come to his warehouse. Raisa rushes off with Cat, but instead of Han they find themselves confronted by Nightwalker. After disabling Cat, Nightwalker comes after Raisa. Nightwalker admits to killing Raisa's mother and to the wizard killings in Ragsmarket. Now Nightwalker wants to kill Raisa and make it appear that Han did it. Raisa manages to resist him, but she is injured and Nightwalker seems about to get the better of her when Night Bird comes to Raisa's defense. Night Bird kills Nightwalker with her arrows, but Nightwalker also killed Night Bird with a knife to the throat.

In Chapter 59, Raisa and Han are married in a very simple ceremony in Hanalea's garden.

In the Epilogue, with Dancer's help, Han is able to reunite Crow and Hanalea in Aediion.

Chapters 50-59 and Epilogue Analysis

Despite knowing that Micah and Raisa are engaged, Han continues to fight not only to save Fallsmarch, but to save Raisa. This shows the reader how deep his love for her is and how desperately he wants her to live and be happy, even if it means being with someone else. This shows a great amount of maturity and depth of character in Han.

Raisa has refused to leave the castle or to surrender. However, now that her sister is being held hostage by the enemy, she has decided to do just that. The reader believes this, but soon realizes that Raisa has a plan to save her sister and herself at the same time. This plan backfires, however, when the enemy tries to burn her sister to death. Raisa quickly finds her own life in danger as she tries to save her sister. Han once again comes to her rescue, but it might not be enough. Raisa finds herself saving Han this time when Dancer brings water into the temple to squelch the fire threatening all their lives.

Han and Raisa reunite and soon are planning a controversial wedding. They have finally brought together the clans and the wizards. It is a tenuous connection, but the reader has enough hope to believe that it will be a lasting one. This is especially true when it is revealed to have been a Demonai who was killing wizards, not a wizard. The reader is left with a great deal of hope for the people of the Falls at the end of this novel.



Characters

Raisa, Gray Wolf Queen

Raisa is the Gray Wolf Queen. Raisa comes from a long succession of female queens who have ruled the Fells, beginning with Hanalea, the warrior queen who fought her own people to save her own children. Raisa is in love with a wizard, but due to local law, she cannot marry him. For this reason, Raisa finds herself looking forward to a political marriage that will serve more to unite her people rather than provide for her happiness and love.

Raisa is young, only seventeen, but she is a strong woman who knows what she wants for her people. Raisa wants to unite the people of the Fells in a way they have not been since Hanalea's time. This is part of the reason Raisa knows she must make a good marriage. However, she would like to unite her people in a way that does not require she give up her own happiness. Raisa places her hopes in her beloved, Han Alister, a street thief turned wizard. Raisa proves herself to be a strong queen and in the end does unite her people in a way even she could not have predicted.

Han Alister

Han Alister is a wizard who once lived on the streets of Ragsmarket. Han was a street thief who ran a gang of criminals. However, he came to learn that he was a wizard and was sent to school to learn how to use his natural gifts. This allowed Han to meet a beautiful young woman with whom he quickly fell in love named Rebecca. Han would later learn that this woman was really Raisa, the princess-heir to the Gray Wolf queendom.

Han has been appointed Raisa's bodyguard and her representative on the Wizard Council. No one trusts Han because of his past and continually try to convince Raisa to remove him from his post. However, Raisa trusts Han explicitly, believing in him even as others try to convince her that he is a murderer and that he burned the only home he has ever known.

In the end, Han finds himself facing some of the same obstacles as his ancestor, the Demon King. However, Han overcomes these obstacles with intelligence and perseverance, winning Raisa in the end despite everything.

Hayden Fire Dancer

Dancer is Han's oldest friend. Dancer was conceived when his mother was raped by a wizard. Dancer's mother never told anyone the truth about the rape, hoping her son would not be gifted. However, Dancer is gifted, possessing both the high magic of the



wizards and the earth magic of the clans. Dancer is able to use these two gifts together to influence the weather and water. Dancer does this to save his friends and family.

Caterina 'Cat' Tyburn

Cat once ran in Han's street crew. Now Cat is a bodyguard to Queen Raisa. Raisa and Cat become good friends in their time together. However, Cat remains fiercely loyal to Han and refuses to admit to Raisa when she believes that Han might be committing the crimes in Ragsmarket or might have been set up by the real killer. Cat warns Han when it looks like the evidence against him has become overwhelming. Rather than drive Han and Raisa apart, this act allows Han to finally be completely truthful to Raisa. They grow closer and become committed to each other.

Averill

Averill Lightfoot is the leader of the Demonai and Raisa's father. Averill is a traditional guy who believes in the tales of the Demon King. Averill believes that Raisa should marry a Demonai to promote union between the clans and the people of the Fells. However, Raisa would rather marry a wizard and unite that faction as well. Averill has always been a good father to Raisa and an honorable man, but is distrust of the wizards runs very deep. Although Averill has enlisted Han's help in getting revenge against the Bayars, he does not trust him. It comes out at the end of the novel that the amulet the Demonais gave to Han would cause his death if he cast spells against Demonai. However, Han traded that amulet with Dancer who discovered the spell and changed it.

Nightwalker

Nightwalker is a Demonai warrior with whom Raisa grew up. Nightwalker proposes to Raisa at the beginning of the novel, but she quickly turns him down. Someone warns her against him and Raisa thinks it is Han, but the reader comes to suspect it was Night Bird, his occasional lover. At the end of the novel, the reader learns that Nightwalker is the person who has been killing the wizards in Ragsmarket, making it look as though Han was the real criminal. Nightwalker did this in part because of his hatred of wizards and in part because of his hatred of Han. Nightwalker also killed Raisa's mother, the previous queen.

Micah Bayar

Micah Bayar is the son of Gaven Bayar. Micah is a member of the wizard council. Micah has been courting Raisa for a time in hopes of convincing her of the benefits of a marriage between them. However, Raisa is in love with Han and has no intention of marrying Micah. When Raisa comes to believe that Han is dead, she agrees to marry Micah, but only if he can stop the siege on her castle. This is a long shot, but it is enough to convince Han that Raisa has given up on him until he later learns he truth.



Gaven Bayar

Gaven Bayar is the High Wizard and the patriarch of the Bayar family. The Bayar family has a long and rich history in the Fells. They are responsible for the death of the Demon King, though they changed the story to make themselves the heroes rather than allowing the truth be told, that they caused the Breaking by trying to remove the Demon King from his amulet.

Gaven Bayar wants to take control of the Fells. Bayar once seduced Raisa's mother and ran the queendom through her, but Raisa's mother has died. Bayar hopes to control Raisa by marrying her to his son, but this fails as well. Bayar is shown to be a liar and hypocrite when it is revealed that he broke one of the biggest rules of the wizard community, that wizards are not to have relations with clans people. Bayar is proven to be the father of Dancer.

Gaven Bayar takes Han prisoner when he discovers that Han has found the arsenal. Han is tortured, but eventually is able to escape and lead Bayar to his death.

Adam Gryphon

Adam Gryphon was once Han's teacher at Oden's Ford and is now a member of the Wizard Council. Han is shocked when Gryphon votes for him for High Wizard, helping Han win the election. Eventually Han learns that Gryphon has been secretly in love with Mordra de Villiers for years, but hid this love because his parents and her father did not approve. With the death of his parents in the Ragsmarket murders and her father, Gryphon and Mordra are finally able to go public with their relationship. It is in part this situation that allowed Gryphon to vote for han at the council.

Night Bird

Night Bird is a Demonai warrior. Night Bird has been Nightwalker's lover for some time and has often allowed him to shape her opinions. However, in recent months Night Bird has begun to think for herself. This change allows Night Bird to support Dancer's use of magic despite Demonai prejudice against wizards. In the end, Night Bird kills Nightwalker when he tries to kill Raisa. However, Nightwalker manages to mortally wound Night Bird before he dies.



Objects/Places

Amulets

Wizards use special jewelry, flash, often amulets, to help them focus and use their High Magic. Han's amulet has double serpents on it.

Talisman

Han wears a talisman that Dancer made for him for protection. Han loses this talisman and it is later found under the dead bodies of two wizards in Ragsmarket.

Demonai

Demonai are the warrior clan of the Fells. Raisa's father is leader of the Demonai.

Tunnels

There are multiple tunnels dug under Gray Lady, Hanalea, and the Vale that Alger Waterlow dug to move around the area undetected. Han uses these tunnels to move around safely and to secretly enter the castle during the siege.

Gray Lady

Gray Lady is a mountain in the Fells where the meetings of the Wizard Council traditionally take place.

Hanalea

Hanalea is the name of one of the first Gray Wolf Queen who was called the Warrior Queen. It is also the name of a mountain in the Fells.

The Vale

The Vale is a valley between Hanalea and Gray Lady where Fellsmarch sits.

Fellsmarch

Fellsmarch is the city where the castle of the Gray Wolf Queen is.



Ragsmarket

Ragsmarket is the name of a section of Fellsmarch where Han grew up. Ragsmarket burns in this novel.

Southbridge

Southbridge is the section of Fellsmarch that sits on the southern edge of the river.



Themes

True Love

Raisa and Han fell in love while at school, before they each knew the other's identity. For a time they found themselves at odds against one another due to the lies, but their love could not be denied. Now Raisa is the Gray Wolf Queen. There are rules that state that the Gray Wolf Queen cannot marry a wizard. This means Raisa may not marry Han. However, this does not change Raisa's love for Han or his determination to find a way they might be together.

Han spends a lot of the book trying to raise his role in society so that he might marry Raisa while dodging allegations of murder and trying to take over the throne. Han is desperate to find a way to marry Raisa, so desperate that he hides the truth from Raisa until she is nearly convinced that he is a killer. It is not until Han comes to her with the truth that Raisa learns her faith in him was well placed despite what all her family and friends have to say about Han.

In the end, it takes a war to unite the people of the Vale and allow for Han and Raisa to marry. It may seem drastic, but it unites the people and that is what Raisa and Han wanted more than anything. Hence, true love is a theme of the novel as the reader gets to see their favorite romantic couple finally marry.

Ambition

Many of the people in this book are ambitious. Gaven Bayar is probably the most ambitious of them all. Gaven Bayar wants the Gray Wolf throne. Just like his ancestors, Gaven Bayar is willing to do just about anything to get what he wants. This includes seducing Marianna, the previous Gray Wolf Queen, and urging his own son to marry the current queen, Raisa.

In previous books, Bayar has been responsible for murder and mayhem in the Fells, some of which left Han stronger for the pain it caused him. Han has dreamed for years of destroying Gaven Bayar. This need only grows when he learns that the Bayar family is responsible for many of the bad things that have befallen the Fells in the past thousand years, including the Breaking that broke apart the Seven Realms.

Han, however, is just as ambitious. Han has set his sights on the Gray Wolf Queen and he is determined to marry her no matter what it takes. Han fights to become a respected wizard on the Wizard council, even becoming the High Wizard. However, none of this changes his past and he continues to fight off accusations of murder and mayhem.

In the end, these two ambitious men come head to head and Han is the only survivor.

Uniting the People

Raisa's goal as queen is to unite her queendom. Since the time of the Demon King and Hanalea, the different factions of the Fells have been torn apart. The wizards do not trust the clans and the clans do not trust the wizards. For this reasons there are many laws each side must follow that continue to keep these groups separated. Raisa wants to change this.

Han is a wizard, Raisa a mixed blood child of the clans and the royal blood of the Gray Wolf line. Their marriage is an impossibility in a world where these people are not meant to intermarry. However, as Raisa finds her queendom under siege by outside forces, she manages to bring her people together in such a way that past hurts begin to fade and new relationships are allowed to develop. In the end, Raisa unites her queendom.

Style

Point of View

The novel is written in the third-person and omniscient point of view. The author uses multiple characters to tell her story. The story begins in the voice of Raisa, the newly crowned Gray Wolf Queen. As the novel progresses, the narrator switches to Han Alister, Raisa's body guard and Wizard Council representative. The novel continues, moving back and forth from these two characters. The author also adds Dancer and Micah Bayar as narrators where necessary.

The point of view of this novel works well with the plot. The author tells the majority of her story through the eyes of her two main characters. However, when things happen that are outside the knowledge of these two characters, she uses other characters to tell their stories and revealing to readers important events in the novel that neither main character could possibly be aware of. In this way, the author tells a well-rounded story while still developing a close relationship between her readers and her characters.

Setting

The novel is set in the fictional world of the Fell. In this world, the people live between two large mountains in a place called the Vale or with the clans in the mountains. The area is ruled over by one queen, the Gray Wolf Queen. In this world, wizards are natural born magicians who use magic jewelry called flash to focus and use their powers. However, a difficult time between a much beloved queen and her much hated wizard lover has caused lasting tensions between the people of the Fells, especially the clans and the wizards.

The setting of this novel is richly drawn and creates a world in which the characters find themselves in battles against one another for reasons even they do not fully understand. The setting makes the reader think of a medieval version of Ireland or Scotland, a place filled with clans who each believe their own version of things and dislike one another for reasons that are not always clear, even to those involved. It is the perfect setting for her plot.

Language and Meaning

The language of the novel is filled with words that seem common, but they have been altered to have new meanings and purpose to the characters in the novel. It is a simple language that even the youngest audience should have little trouble with. It is a language that is used with the genre of the novel in mind, filling the reader with wonderful images of a world that is long gone.



The language of the novel works well with the plot because it is a simple language that is filled with imagery that allows the author to bring her fictional world to life with great enthusiasm. The novel is written for young adults and the language reflects this by keeping itself simple even as it describes wonderful things that the reader can almost imagine coming to life before them.

Structure

The novel contains fifty-nine chapters and an epilogue. The novel is told in a linear style, telling the story with a simple beginning, middle and end. The novel is written in both narration and dialogue, showing a story rather than telling it. The author works well with her novel's structure to tell a beautiful story of love and ambition.

The novel contains two main plots and several subplots. The first main plot follows Raisa as she rules over a divided queendom and tries to reunite her people. The other main plot follows Han as he struggles to avoid arrest while trying to find a way to unite the people so that he might be allowed to marry Raisa. One subplot follows Han's attempts to destroy Gaven Bayar with the help of his friend Dancer and his mother, Willo. Another subplot follows the relationship between Raisa and Cat Tyburn. All the plots come to a satisfying conclusion at the end of the novel.



Quotes

"Wizards had been forbidden in the Spirit Mountains for a thousand years" (Chapter 1, p. 7).

"To remember that Rebecca was alive, not dead, but transformed into someone else - someone unattainable." (Chapter 3, p. 2).

"Wounds like this fester if they are not opened and drained. If I had spoken up, perhaps Marianna's death could have been avoided" (Chapter 5, p. 46).

"Once, a nearly transparent cobweb of magic stretched across the corridor, and Han barely managed to skid to a stop in time. That particular barrier had not been in his notes" (Chapter 9, p. 68).

"A thousand unspoken words flowed between them" (Chapter 11, p. 96).

"She was in love with Han Alister, and it just might cost her her life" (Chapter 14, p. 120).

"'You were never wrong about Hanalea,' Lucius said. 'And she never betrayed you. I did'" (Chapter 24, p. 199).

"Raisa looked up, and all she saw were implacable, unforgiving clan faces staring back at her. They will do it, she thought. They will do it and they will tell themselves they are doing it for love of me" (Chapter 27, p. 227).

"'The thief?' Lord Bayar cocked his head, as if surprised at the question. 'He's dead, of course'" (Chapter 38, p. 307).

"Somehow, he'd always known that it would end in a street fight—and that was a game he could play and win" (Chapter 42, p. 336).

"He'd never expected to be going to temple at eighteen—and he was barely that, having just had his birthday. But then, for most of his life he hadn't expected to live to be eighteen. Looking at it that way, he was marrying late in life" (Chapter 59, p. 438).

"Sometimes a dream is enough" (Epilogue, p. 446).



Topics for Discussion

Who is Raisa? What is the Gray Wolf Queen? How does Raisa feel about fulfilling this role? Why is she resistant to a marriage with Nightwalker? Why would a marriage to Nightwalker be beneficial to the queendom? What does Raisa think about her marriage prospects? Why does she feel this way?

Who is Han? Why do many not trust him? What is his past like? What is Han's current role in Raisa's life? What is Han's role on the Wizard Council? Why is Han convinced that Bayar will kill him as he travels to his first Wizard Council? How does Han learn about the tunnels under Gray Lady? How does he use them to his advantage?

Who is Crow? What is his relationship to Han? Why is Crow stuck in Aedion or Han's amulet? What happened to Crow? How does Crow help Han? Has this always been the nature of their relationship? Why does Han trust Crow? What is possession? Why does Han balk at the idea of Crow possessing him? Why would Crow possess him?

Who is Gaven Bayar? Why does Bayar want his son to be High Wizard? Why does Bayar want his son to marry Raisa? What is it that Bayar wants? What is he willing to do to get what he wants? Why has Bayar made Han his enemy? What is behind their animosity toward one another? What does Han think of the fact that Bayar is his best friend's father? Does this change anything about the way Han feels toward Bayar?

Who is Cat? What is her role in Raisa's life? Why are they good friends? Should they be? What does Raisa's family think of Han and Cat? Who is Cat's lover? How does this impact her relationship with Han? What role does Cat play in the siege of the castle? How does Cat help to save Mellony from the Arden commander? What does the reader think Cat's future holds for her?

Who is Klemath? Why does Klemath not like Raisa's desired changes to the army? Why does Klemath threaten Raisa when she promises to replace him? How does Klemath react on the day Raisa goes to tell him he has been replaced? Should Raisa have foreseen these events? What is Klemath's eventual goal? Does he achieve it? Explain.

Who is the Demon King? What is the story of his past? Why did the Demon King's fate lead to the separation of the different factions in the Fells? Is he really guilty of all these actions? How does Han initially feel about being a descendent of the Demon King? How does Raisa feel when she learns the truth? Will the truth about the past change the future? Explain.