

The Crystal Cave Study Guide

The Crystal Cave by Mary Stewart

(c)2015 BookRags, Inc. All rights reserved.



Contents

The Crystal Cave Study Guide.....	1
Contents.....	2
Plot Summary.....	5
Prologue.....	10
Book 1, Chapter 1.....	11
Book 1, Chapter 2.....	13
Book 1, Chapter 3.....	15
Book 1, Chapter 4.....	16
Book 1, Chapter 5.....	18
Book 1, Chapter 6.....	19
Book 1, Chapter 7.....	20
Book 1, Chapter 8.....	21
Book 1, Chapter 9.....	22
Book 1, Chapter 10.....	23
Book 1, Chapter 11.....	25
Book 1, Chapter 12.....	26
Book 2, Chapter 1.....	27
Book 2, Chapter 2.....	28
Book 2, Chapter 3.....	29
Book 2, Chapter 4.....	30
Book 2, Chapter 5.....	31
Book 2, Chapter 6.....	32
Book 2, Chapter 7.....	33
Book 2, Chapter 8.....	34
Book 2, Chapter 9.....	35



[Book 2, Chapter 10..... 36](#)

[Book 2, Chapter 11..... 37](#)

[Book 2, Chapter 12..... 38](#)

[Book 3, Chapter 1..... 39](#)

[Book 3, Chapter 2..... 40](#)

[Book 3, Chapter 3..... 41](#)

[Book 3, Chapter 4..... 42](#)

[Book 3, Chapter 5..... 43](#)

[Book 3, Chapter 6..... 45](#)

[Book 3, Chapter 7..... 46](#)

[Book 3, Chapter 8..... 47](#)

[Book 3, Chapter 9..... 48](#)

[Book 3, Chapter 10..... 49](#)

[Book 3, Chapter 11..... 50](#)

[Book 3, Chapter 12..... 51](#)

[Book 4, Chapter 1..... 52](#)

[Book 4, Chapter 2..... 53](#)

[Book 4, Chapter 3..... 54](#)

[Book 4, Chapter 4..... 55](#)

[Book 4, Chapter 5..... 56](#)

[Book 4, Chapter 6..... 57](#)

[Book 4, Chapter 7..... 58](#)

[Book 4, Chapter 8..... 59](#)

[Book 4, Chapter 9..... 60](#)

[Book 4, Chapter 10..... 61](#)

[Book 5, Chapter 1..... 62](#)



[Book 5, Chapter 2..... 63](#)

[Book 5, Chapter 3..... 64](#)

[Book 5, Chapter 4..... 65](#)

[Book 5, Chapter 5..... 67](#)

[Book 5, Chapter 6..... 68](#)

[Book 5, Chapter 7..... 69](#)

[Book 5, Chapter 8..... 70](#)

[Book 5, Chapter 9..... 71](#)

[Book 5, Chapter 10..... 72](#)

[Characters..... 74](#)

[Objects/Places..... 81](#)

[Themes..... 83](#)

[Style..... 86](#)

[Quotes..... 89](#)

[Topics for Discussion..... 91](#)



Plot Summary

The Crystal Cave is a story of the life of Merlin before he became associated with King Arthur. The book begins with a Prologue, where Merlin describes being an old man reminiscing on the past. He says that some memories are clearer than others are.

He then describes a couple having a secret rendezvous at a cave. We do not know at the time that they happen to be his parents, the Lady Niniane and Prince Ambrosius.

Merlin tells us of his early life. He speaks of his childhood in South Wales in Maridunnum, when he is about six-years-old. He has learned to find safe places to hide, because he is loathed for his parentage. No one knows who his father is. His mother will not say. The King, his grandfather, hates him for being a bastard and treats him rough, while favoring his own bastard child, Dinias, who is Merlin's cousin.

Things change, when his uncle, Camlach, returns home. Camlach's brother, Dyved, has died. Some say it could be poison. Camlach tries to pretend to be Merlin's friend, at first. Merlin has received little attention from people so he follows Camlach around like a puppy. Camlach and his grand father try to persuade Lady Niniane to marry the Gorlan of Lanascoll. This would get both she and Merlin out of the way. The Lady Niniane refuses.

Merlin's grandfather, the King, is so angry at this that he storms from the hall and pushes Merlin aside. This gives Merlin a cut on the head. Merlin refuses to cry. He runs out to lie on Moravik's terrace

Camlach is pushed to a pivotal point. He finds Merlin on the terrace and tries unsuccessfully to kill him with poison apricots. Merlin innocently uses his gift, which is the ability to see the future. He sees that the fruit is black inside and doesn't eat it. He tells Camlach this. Camlach tells him to stay away from him. Merlin says this was the first time in his life that he cried.

Cerdic, who is Merlin's nurse's boyfriend, finds him in his room and tends the cut on his head. He tells Merlin that although he is named after a falcon, he should be more like a ringdove and run away from danger. He and Merlin become good friends.

Later, Camlach softens and gets Merlin a Greek tutor, named Demetrius, to prepare him for the priesthood. He thinks that sending Merlin and the Lady Niniane to the monastery would be the best thing to protect his way to the throne. This is actually good for Merlin, and he begins developing his intellect.

One day, Merlin rides out into the valley on his pony. He discovers a cave belonging to a hermit, called Galapas. He explores the cave and, while hiding from the returning hermit, discovers a crystal chamber inside. Galapas calls him out, and they begin a friendship. He becomes Galapas's pupil after that first meeting. Galapas teaches Merlin



to set bones, to read the stars and to make medicines. He also teaches him about animals and plants.

Merlin's life is complicated by his ability to see into the future. He calls it 'the sight.' His nurse, Moravik, is afraid of it. Galapas begins to talk to him about it and teaches Merlin some magic. Merlin enjoys his journeys up to visit Galapas. He learns many things.

One evening, Merlin finds out that his Grandfather is going to visit the High King Vortigern, when he comes to North Wales. Galapas has insisted that Merlin must go. Merlin gathers his courage and convinces his grandfather to take him along. Merlin rides out with the men to Segontium to see King Vortigern. They arrived at Vortigern's fort in Macsen's Tower. The men who traveled with the Merlin, the King and Camlach, spent their days hunting and nights drinking and chasing women.

Merlin didn't quite understand why he was guided to go. One day, he sees his grandfather and King Vortigern wander off along the path. He goes to follow them. His servant Cerdic tries to stop him but Merlin insists. As they walk along the trail, they see a falcon chase and capture a ringdove. Both birds crash violently to the ground. When Merlin goes to investigate the birds, he spies a cave opening. The cave was an old mine. He and Cerdic go in but find nothing of interest.

Merlin returns home to his studies. One day Merlin goes into the crystal chamber in Galapas's cave again. He has a vision about things that are actually occurring. He sees and knows that his grandfather the King is dead and that he is in danger from Camlach.

Merlin rides his pony back down the hill to the palace that night. He knows that his uncle Camlach will try to use this situation against him. He tries to figure out what to do along the way. When he returns home, he climbs the outer walls and goes into his room. He packs some things to take with him knowing that he must leave. He is angry to find his friend Cerdic murdered. Before he leaves, he builds a funeral pier for him by setting him aflame. As Merlin climbs back over the wall, some men grab him. They debate what to do with the young boy. Merlin talks to them into thinking he may be a valuable hostage. They take him with them back to a boat.

Little does Merlin know that this is his best destination. The men and Merlin cross the narrow sea to Lesser Britain. The ride is horrible for Merlin. He is violently sick the entire trip. When they arrive at their destination, the two men, Marris and Hanno, awaken him. They want to take him to Ambrosius to see if he can be used as a hostage. Ambrosius and his brother, Uther, had fled England after their brother, King Constantius, was murdered.

Merlin pretends to be too sick to move. He uses his survival instincts and escapes the ship. He believes that he can go to Ambrosius alone and offer himself for work. It is bitterly cold, and he is half-naked and starved. He hides up in a barn with animals and ends up using Uther's cloak as a blanket. While he sleeps, he has a vision of a man fighting a white bull out in the field, he gets up and runs towards this scene and



collapses. Soldiers found him. One of them is the owner of the cloak, Prince Uther. Uther wants to whip him for stealing, but Ambrosius defends him and treats him kindly.

Ambrosius and Uther have been building up an army in Lesser Britain. They plan to go back to Great Britain and defeat King Vortigern. Ambrosius is unusually nice to Merlin. He feeds and clothes him and lets him sleep in his room. Later Merlin is given fine clothing, and his own room.

Merlin is given a servant, Cadal, who becomes his friend. Ambrosius also provides him a shrewd teacher, named Belasius, who teaches him language and mathematics. Merlin is given the opportunity to learn many things, including engineering.

Merlin is forever curious. He gets tired of living close to the keep. One day he decides to go for a ride in the woods with Cadal. On that ride, he pushes his pony too hard and they have an accident. The return journey home must be slower. On the way back, he smells other horses and ventures off the trail. Cerdic tries to stop him but Merlin goes on. He travels deeper into the woods towards an island, where he hears chanting. Merlin realizes he has come upon a ritual. He is extremely drawn to the proceedings.

He watches in excitement. He hears a man scream as if in mortal danger. From the island, a robed man emerges holding something high in his hands. The others in the group circle him. The ritual ends and the people part ways. One of the robed figures comes toward Merlin, and he sees it is his teacher, Belasius. That night Merlin discovers that Belasius is also a Druid Priest. Belasius tells Merlin that he must study the Goddess with him, or he will be cursed. This too is added to Merlin's studies. While with Ambrosius, Merlin's character is further defined. Merlin becomes an intelligent and confident young man.

After a few years, Ambrosius and Uther are ready to make their move against King Vortigern. Ambrosius sends Merlin and Cadal back to Maridunnum to spy. The tone intensifies when Merlin meets his cousin Dinias back in his hometown. Dinias convinces Merlin to have dinner with him in a tavern. There, Dinias takes his fill of wine and food. He talks loudly about the past while Merlin tries to tell him to keep his voice down.

There are men listening to the conversation, and Merlin is captured by King Vortigern's men and taken to King's Fort, along with his mother, the Lady Niniane. This information is reported back to Ambrosius, who is ready for attack. Dinias is paid for Merlin's capture.

King Vortigern and his Queen Rowena are cruel and superstitious. Their priests have told King Vortigern that a sacrifice will make the walls of his fort stop sliding down. The walls have fallen in the past regardless of how the King has tried to fortify them. Merlin is chosen, because he has no father. His blood should be strong. Merlin's mother, Lady Niniane, unwittingly helps that belief by telling the King's court that Merlin was conceived with an incubus.

The King and Queen decide to kill Merlin. Merlin uses his cunning and tells them that he can show them why the walls are falling. They decide to believe him and take him to the



walls. He leads them to the old mine that his boy hood vision had led him to as a child. This is the cave he found when he followed his grandfather and King Vortigern down the path. Merlin figures that the fort's walls are weak because of the cave underneath them. He wants to buy time by having the King investigate this fact.

Vortigern's men dig in the cave but nothing is in the pit. Merlin begins to speak and try to divert their attention but has a vision and prophesizes that the Red Dragon Ambrosius will defeat the White Dragon Vortigern. This causes turmoil. Merlin and Cadal use the opportunity to escapes back to Maridunnum. When Merlin returns home, he goes to St. Peters. He speaks with his mother. While there, he notices a beautiful nun, named Keri, who he becomes attracted to. She plays coy with him but later asks him to cure her toothache.

Merlin describes how Ambrosius becomes King after many battles. Merlin sits upon a hill watching one battle in particular. When it is over, he walks amongst the dying and wounded on the battlefield. He finds a dying soldier and stabs him in the neck to ease his passing. This shows a colder, tougher Merlin. It shows he has become detached from the emotions of men. He now watches the movements of the whole like the prince that he is. It is at that moment that Merlin loses some of the humanity that was in the vulnerable bastard boy. He is no longer that child. Most of the battles are glossed over in Merlin's memory. Ambrosius and Uther are victorious in conflict.

During this turmoil, Merlin gets the vision that his mother has died back at St. Peter. He tells this to Ambrosius. Ambrosius wants Merlin to go to Ireland to bring back the Kings Stone and he wants victory over the Irish King. Taking the stones will cement his victory. He is fascinated with the dancing stones or monoliths that are found around the countryside.

Merlin goes to retrieve the stone. They win the battle but Ambrosius engineers have a hard time removing the stones. Merlin studies the situation and figures out how to do it. He states that it is not magic he uses but he doesn't disclose how the huge stones are removed and loaded on a barge. In England, Ambrosius dies following a battle. Merlin 'sees' this as it occurs in a vision but doesn't tell Uther, who will now become King.

Merlin and Uther both know that they do not share the same relationship as Ambrosius and Merlin had. Uther gives Merlin, Galapas's cave and mountain and Merlin returns there. Cadal has been there and has it fixed up for him when Merlin returns. Merlin has some peace, which he enjoys. During the time there, he runs into Keri, who is no longer a nun. She and Merlin kiss. Her mouth reflects the continuing motif in the story of a cave. Her kiss causes fear in Merlin. He pushes her away, and she laughs. Of all Merlin's skills it seems personal romance for himself is not one of them.

Merlin spends the rest of his time at the cave. One night, Ulfin, Belasius's old servant, rides up to the cave and tells Merlin that Uther needs him in London. Ulfin is now Uther's personal servant. Reluctantly, Merlin and Cadal return. When they arrive in London, they find chaos. Uther is about ready to be crowned at court, but he is in love with another noble's wife. It is Lady Ygraine, the wife of Gorlois of Cornwall. Gorlois has



been a loyal warrior to both Ambrosius and Uther. Yet, Uther is undeterred. His behavior is erratic. He and Lady Ygraine ask Merlin for his help.

Uther, Merlin and Lady Ygraine devise a plan, where Uther and she can be together one night. Merlin knows and tells them that an important child will come from this union. They agree to this dangerous liaison. The plan involves the Lady Ygraine and Gorlois going back to their home at Tintagel early and without Uther's permission. She says she is pregnant. Uther pretends to be furious and says he is going after them. The couple makes it back to Tintagel, and Gorlois and his troops go to Dimilioc to meet and fight Uther.

Instead of going to Dimilioc, Merlin and Uther betray the warrior Gorlois. Uther, Ulfin, Cadal, and Merlin go up to Tintagel. Uther pretends to be Gorlois returning to see Lady Ygraine. They manage to get into the castle, and Uther spends the night with Lady Ygraine. They do not realize that Gorlois has been killed that night in the first battle at Dimilioc. Instead, Uther and Lady Ygraine are in bed guarded by Merlin, Ulfin, and Cadal at Tintagel.

The information of Gorlois's death causes the plan to unravel. Gorlois's men race back to Tintagel to tell his wife. Gorlois's real friends encounter Merlin and the others and fight. Merlin is injured. Cadal and several men are killed.

Uther is furious. He knows he could have waited and gotten Lady Ygraine, legitimately. He tells Merlin that he is a trickster and that he doesn't want him around. Merlin tells him that the son they are going to create would not have been the same if they had waited. Uther wants no part of it.

When the child, Arthur, is born, he is given to Merlin. He will to become the King, who unites Britain in peace and stability. This has been Merlin's goal all along.



Prologue

Prologue Summary

The novel begins with Merlin speaking of his memories of his life from the time before Arthur became King. He describes the tendency of his memory to forget things of recent past in favor of those long gone. Merlin hints at his ability to create fire and discern unseen things. He recounts a dream of sorts of a couple meeting in the misty, woods outside a cave. This meeting suggests some type of danger even though Merlin does not tell us who the man and woman are.

Prologue Analysis

The author uses the opening prologue to show that this is going to be a first person accounting of Merlin's life. The novel is set to be the recollection of a somewhat tired and jaded person with a story to tell. We glean that this is King Arthur's Merlin. There is great use of imagery that sets the tone in the description of the locale.

Merlin uses the figurative language tool of simile to describe his memories. The author writes: 'Even the scenes of my childhood come back to me now sharp and high-colored and edged with brightness, like the pattern of a fruit tree against a white wall, or banners in the sunlight against a sky of storm.'

The technique of foreshadowing is used often in this novel to introduce us to a situation or character that will be of importance later in the novel. This is done in the case of the couple and the cave, which we gather we will find out more about later in the story. The mood of the book is set to have a feeling of danger or intrigue just below the surface. The tone is developed in the description of the local around the cave. Merlin introduces a bit of his character's abilities.

Readers can gather that the setting is the Dark Ages during the time before King Arthur, as it is the tale of Merlin's early life. We get a sense of some hidden conflict in the story from the way the couple interacts.



Book 1, Chapter 1

Book 1, Chapter 1 Summary

This story begins when Merlin is about six-years-old. He lives with his mother the Lady Niniane in his grandfather the King's palace. He has no father that anyone knows of and this causes considerable problems for him. The conflict is set in motion with the return home of his uncle Camlach. Camlach has returned because his brother Dyved has died under some unusual circumstances. There was talk that he could have been poisoned. Camlach seems to have come home to check on things but more apparently to make sure of the status of his inheriting the throne from his father.

Merlin is small, squirrely and an outcast, because no one knows who his father is. His mother refuses to tell that secret even after being beaten. The old King hates Merlin with a passion. His caretaker, nurse Moravik, is a strong servant woman. She is like a mother to Merlin.

Merlin enjoys being alone most of all. His grandfather's house is an old Roman structure with much of that architecture left over. Merlin finds and uses the tunnels of the abandoned heating system for his play. He enjoys hiding and roaming by himself. Sometimes he comes upon interesting tidbits of conversations while crawling under the rooms of the other inhabitants. There, he hears Camlach discussing him and his mother with his friend Alun.

Camlach appears to return as a powerful young man concerned with the best interests of all. He seems to take an interest in young Merlin. Lonely Merlin begins to follow him about as much as possible.

Book 1, Chapter 1 Analysis

The first chapter starts the plot with an exposition. It introduces Merlin and the situation of his birth. His birth is a problem for him and his family. The author uses the theme of how a man's lineage can decide his fate throughout the book.

It sets the stage for the story that is going to be told in first person by Merlin. We begin to see the strength of strong characterization by the author. Merlin, the protagonist is seen as a resourceful child intrigued with the happenings of adults. He does not fully realize the dilemma his parentage is causing.

The characters are portrayed through their dialogue. Camlach is introduced quickly in this chapter. Camlach is shown to be a strong commanding and calculating man. Merlin's mother appears to be somewhat retreating and a bit remote to him. His caretaker Moravik appears to have more strength than his mother. His grandfather the King is portrayed as cruel and angry. Alun, though a very minor character, is introduced as a confidant of Calmach's.



There is a hint of future conflict and intrigue suggested in the death of Merlin's uncle Dyved. There was some suggestion that he could have been poisoned. This sets the mood of treachery and danger. There seems to be much going on beneath the surface.

The author also begins a style technique that she will use throughout the novel of giving characters and places several names that fit with the changing history of the locales in the story. Merlin's name is Myrddin Emrys, and Merilinus. We are told that Myrddin Emrys means 'child of light belonging to the gods' and Merilinus is the Roman name for Falcon. He will be called different variations of this name in the book.

The setting of the locale is also very important in the novel. This book, though the author says it is not meant to be historically accurate, is set in the fifth century Dark Ages in England. This is a turbulent time and war, intrigue and drama abound. You begin to get a sense of this in the first chapter. This gives the mood an undercurrent of allegiances and strife that will continue the conflict through out the book.

The theme of the fate of a man being affected by his parentage or lineage is also begun here in the first chapter, with the other characters reaction to Merlin's bastard position. It is also thinly hinted at in the death of Dyved, Camlach's brother and heir to the throne, with the author speaking of 'the talk of poison.'



Book 1, Chapter 2

Book 1, Chapter 2 Summary

Merlin's grandfather's house was in South Wales in a place called Maridunum. It was on an estuary off the Tywy River. Nearby are the nunnery of St. Peter and a town later called Caer-Myrddin. His grandfather's house had many orchards surrounded by a wall. In this chapter, a guest comes to Merlin's grandfather's house.

Merlin spends time hanging out on the Garden wall of his home while his nurse Moravik sleeps. Merlin here's the shout alerting him or her that someone is coming. Even before his arrival, somehow Merlin knows it is King Gorlan of Lanascoll come to ask for his mother, the Lady Niniane's, hand. His knowledge of this information before hand frightens his nurse. Some people believe Merlin's father to be the devil and his foreknowledge made superstitious Moravik scared.

Merlin is taken to the room he shares with Moravik to get ready to meet this man. Merlin is presented to the King Gorlan in court but finds his mother has refused his hand in marriage. We are introduced to Olwen, the King's third wife, who we find that Merlin doesn't really like. She is placid and out of touch. Yet, she teaches young Merlin how to play her harp. We also get to meet Dinias, who interestingly enough is the bastard son of the king by a slave woman. The king, however, dotes on Dinias while despising Merlin.

Angry at the Lady Niniane's refusal to marry, the King storms from the court. He knocks Merlin to the floor on his way out. Merlin retreats to himself, as usual, going to Moravik's terrace, where Camlach found him. Camlach feigns concern for Merlin and invites him into his father's secret garden. Merlin goes with him.

Camlach offers Merlin some juicy apricots. Merlin promptly rejects the beautiful fruit for he says 'it's black inside.' This infuriates Camlach who in anger, tosses the fruits against the wall and tells Merlin to stay away from him.

Merlin watches a wasp drink the juice of the squashed fruit and die. He cries noting that it is the first time he remembers weeping.

Book 1, Chapter 2 Analysis

The local setting is expanded upon in this chapter. Here the author uses more than one name for locations. She continues to develop Merlin's character's ability to just know or 'see' things that others don't. We also see further plot development, as both Calmach and the old King try to convince the Lady Niniane to marry Gorlan of Lanascoll.



Camlach's cruelty and desperation of character is revealed with the poisoned fruit. He is shown to be an antagonist to Merlin in the novel. His attempt to kill the boy develops Merlin's character through person against person conflict.

The grandfather's character is exposed in his actions by his treatment of Merlin particularly in comparison to his own bastard child, Dinias. We are introduced to Olwen, who is a very minor character in the book, but defines the choices that are made in court by Merlin's grandfather's character.

Lady Niniane seems to be but a boat on a stormy sea against the manipulations against her. She does show some resilience of character in her silence on who Merlin's father really is. Person against society conflict also develops Merlin's character as all of this is played out in court.

This chapter introduces more of the novel's themes. One of these themes is that the pursuit of power can corrupt the hearts of men. This is shown in Camlach's attempt to kill Merlin, to remove him as a threat to his ascending the throne. Merlin's lack of a father is aligned with the theme that, 'the fate of a man can be decided by his lineage.' Merlin's treatment also reflects the theme that, 'good men are unfairly judged and persecuted by others.'



Book 1, Chapter 3

Book 1, Chapter 3 Summary

Cerdic, Moravik's man friend comes to Merlin's aide after finding him in Moravik's room with the cut on his face. He at first thinks it came from a fight with Dinias and offers to teach Merlin a trick or two. Later when he returns with food, he has the full story. He knows it was Merlin's own grandfather who pushed him.

Cerdic begins to prove himself a confidant of Merlin. He dresses Merlin's wound. He tells Merlin to be like a ringdove, by keeping quiet and running away. He believes this will help Merlin survive the treacherous times.

Book 1, Chapter 3 Analysis

Cerdic is introduced as a character that will have impact on Merlin in this chapter. He is shown to have his wits about him and a kindness as well. He tends to Merlin and offers him some support. This chapter serves to balance the dismal mood that is felt for Merlin's life with the other main characters. It also serves to further define Merlin in character. He seems to find peace having an adult friend.

Here it is shown that Merlin does have someone to look out after him a bit. That is a good balance after chapter two where his uncle Calmach tried to kill him. The author changes the mood from the high tension of the court to the everyday common sense and simplicity of the servants.

The author's tone when describing Merlin with the servant Cerdic is more mellow and healing. The author also brings about why she named the first book of the novel 'The Dove.' She does this by having Cerdic tell Merlin to behave as a dove for his own protection. She leaves the sense in the mood of these first chapters that Merlin is like the dove in need of protection even though he is named after the fierce falcon.



Book 1, Chapter 4

Book 1, Chapter 4 Summary

Merlin's life begins to settle down in chapter four. Calmach does not offer him favor. Yet he finds a way not to need his protection. On one of his forays under the house, he hears his cousin Dinias and some boys bragging about a sexual encounter they had witnessed between Camlach's friend Alun and a servant girl.

When Dinias approaches Merlin to bully him, Merlin tells him some words he heard. This serves to make Dinias and the other children afraid of his 'seeing ability' and to leave him alone afterwards. This time, though, it was just blackmail on Merlin's part.

Six months after the visit of Gorlan, Calmach begins to push that Merlin be taught to read and write. Calmach is relieved to see that Lady Niniane seems content not to marry and wishes to retire to the St. Peters nunnery. His only worry is Merlin and, by teaching him to read and write, he is sure Merlin will also be sent away to a monastery.

Therefore, Merlin receives a tutor. His name is Demetrius, and he is a Greek scribe from Massilia. Demetrius had drunk himself into slavery and was glad to be teaching. Demetrius continues to drink and play dice. This however gives Merlin certain amounts of free time when Demetrius falls asleep from the wine

One day in this chapter, Merlin leaves Demetrius asleep and rides up the nearby hill on his pony. He rides up the hill past a shepherd boy to find a spring and a cave. In the bush, he finds a wooden statue of a god. He goes into the cave.

Book 1, Chapter 4 Analysis

The author changes the pace in Chapter Four from the high tension of the previous chapters. Something has happened to Merlin's character. He seems more confident. Perhaps the counseling of Cerdic in Chapter Three has helped him. The author is showing Merlin to be a very dynamic character. He uses a shrewdness to defend himself against Dinias and the other children.

Camlach, feeling better about being in line from the throne and decides Merlin needs to learn to read and write. This is for Camlach's benefit but it serves to be the basis for further character development in Merlin who learns quickly. There is less conflict in this chapter.

Demetrius, Merlin's new teacher is introduced as a character foil from which more traits can be developed for Merlin's character. Merlin learns from him but, because of his drinking, is able to explore.

There is a switch of setting with Merlin being drawn through the countryside, which the author describes quite vividly. Merlin finds a cave. The cave is again a motif of the story, as it was in the prologue.



Book 1, Chapter 5

Book 1, Chapter 5 Summary

Merlin goes into the cave and begins to explore. As he moves about, a cloud of bats escapes the mouth of the cave. Merlin thinks this is a treasure cave as he explores and finds things. He discovers a mirror that looks like one his mother had.

Merlin continues to walk around the cave. It smelled of smoke and wet rocks. He finds a cup, which lets him know someone lives about. Yet he is not afraid. Merlin then finds a box along the wall with some flint on top of it.

At that moment, he hears someone approach. He becomes the ringdove and looks for a place to keep out of sight. Merlin finds a hiding place in the back of the cave. He hides in a round chamber lined with crystals. The person who returns lights a candle and hiding in the crystal chamber Merlin begins to see pictures of colors, dragons and the like. He is discovered and asked to come out of his hiding place

Book 1, Chapter 5 Analysis

Merlin's character is shown to be very inquisitive. His overpowering curiosity is another motif of the novel. He seems to have no boundaries and is not afraid of dark places. He explores the cave. The cave is a reoccurring motif in the novel. The feeling is given by Merlin's excitement that something in the cave is important to him. In this chapter, it seems to represent the unknown that Merlin is so drawn too.

Merlin's ability for 'sight' is again displayed by the visions he sees in the crystal chamber. The author's ability to portray locale is displayed here as you are drawn into the trappings of the cave. The cave is an integral setting in the book. It is repeated as a motif in the book. The mood suspenseful as we wait to see whom the cave belongs too.



Book 1, Chapter 6

Book 1, Chapter 6 Summary

Merlin comes out of the crystal cave and meets the man who called him out. The man is tall and dressed in a brown robe. The man makes sure that Merlin is unarmed when he comes out of hiding. They introduce themselves and the man whose name is Galapas offer Merlin fruit, honey cakes and sweet water.

Merlin asks Galapas if he is married and is told that he is not. Galapas is described as old, with gray hair and callused hands. Merlin saw his face as like a skull with a thin beak of a nose. Merlin wanted to know if he was a holy man. Galapas tells Merlin that he is to be his teacher. He takes Merlin to a box of books and they begin to look through them. He does become Merlin's teacher also.

Moravik now has taken over the nursery in care of Olwen's child. This leaves Merlin to more of his own time. Merlin can take a day or two off from his studies with Demetrius to wander off to study with Galapas. Camlach and his father are feeling better now that it seems Merlin was headed off to the priesthood. They focused on the rumors of attack from Less Britain.

This phase of Merlin's life continued over the next few months. Demetrius teaches him languages and geometry. Religion comes from his mother's priest. Galapas teaches him at first in stories. Then he instructs him about, herbs, medicines, animals and plants. Galapas teaches Merlin how to stop bleeding and set broken bones. Galapas also has a map from which he begins to teach Merlin as well. He teaches Merlin about the stars and their powers. Galapas helps Merlin to make a harp and, when Merlin is twelve, he begins to teach him about the crystal cave.

Book 1, Chapter 6 Analysis

This chapter is used to show the basis for much of Merlin's future knowledge. It is a period of when Merlin is left to his own accord at times when he can explore and learn from different sources.

Galapas is introduced as an important character in Merlin's life. Demetrius tends to teach Merlin the traditional subjects and Galapas exposes him to the world of healing, animals, maps and stars. All of this knowledge Merlin quickly and easily soaks up. This further defines the character of Merlin in the story and lays the groundwork for the future Merlin.

These teachings begin to round out some of Merlin's character. The novel's atmosphere or mood in this chapter is more relaxed. The author shows her excitement with what Merlin is learning in the tone of this chapter.



Book 1, Chapter 7

Book 1, Chapter 7 Summary

One day in the winter, Merlin rode up to the cave on his pony, Aster, to visit Galapas. Galapas was not there at first, and Merlin began reading on his own. When Galapas returns, Merlin asks him how he knew he would be in the cave, when he had first come there. Galapas tells Merlin that he saw him in the cave. Merlin asks to be shown how.

Galapas lights a candle and tells Merlin to take the rug off the mirror that is in the cave. He tells Merlin to go to the cleft in the cave and lie down. He is to watch only.

Galapas walks away, and Merlin sees slaves and young boys working in a cave, removing rocks and stones. He can see the brand on one of their arms. There was a man in a brown tunic looking at a tablet in the vision, as well as a foreman who tossed a silver coin into the air.

Galapas gives Merlin something to drink after the vision. Galapas tells Merlin he doesn't know the meaning of the vision but that other things are happening. He tells Merlin he must go with the King, when he leaves Maridunum.

Book 1, Chapter 7 Analysis

There is good use of imagery with this chapter as the scenes from the vision are portrayed. Here we see the motif of Merlin's ability to 'see.' It is brought more to light with his vision in the crystal cave.

The mood is intense and we can sense some future event or foreshadowing with the scene that Merlin witnesses. The setting of the cave is seen almost as a door to another world.

The mood picks up again with some action when Merlin is told that the King is leaving and that he must find a way to go with him.



Book 1, Chapter 8

Book 1, Chapter 8 Summary

Merlin goes back down the hill from the cave and Galapas. As he enters his home compound, he notes that there is increased activity. He finds that the High King Vortigern is going to Segontium and his grandfather is going to meet him.

Merlin recounts how the High King claimed the throne when King Constantius died suddenly. The dead King's younger brothers fled to their cousin Budec in Les Britain. The rumors were that the two princes, one of whom was Ambrosius, were said to have gone to Rome, and Uther said to be a mercenary in the service of the Emperor of the East. Rumors persisted that Ambrosius, King Burdec and Uther were coming to take back Greater Britain from King Vortigern and his Saxon Wife.

Merlin recounts the story of how their brother King Constantius was killed and probably poisoned before the now High King Vortigern and his Saxon Wife Rowena came into power. King Vortigern allowed the Northmen free roam over the land in his reign. Prince Ambrosius and his brother Uther had fled to Less Britain. There were stories of them returning to reclaim the throne. Merlin states it had been twenty years and this had not happened

Merlin felt a desire to go to Sergontium, even when Cerdic tried to talk him out of it. Merlin approached his grandfather the King about it in the King's bedchamber. His mother the Lady Niniane was sitting by the fire with her father. Merlin's grandfather thought him weak but Merlin stood up to him and asked to go with him. When asked of what use he could be Merlin spoke of the languages he could speak. His grandfather decides to let him go.

Book 1, Chapter 8 Analysis

Merlin's character is shown to strengthen, as he stands up to his grandfather in his demand to go to Sergontium. The plot is developed further with the intrigue of the time with the story of how Vortigern came into power.

The author reveals more of the setting and background of this novel in Merlin recounts the memory of the story of King Budec and the two princes. This is told as third person reminiscing.

The tone and mood of the story intensifies, as the intrigue is brought out more on the powers that move the land.



Book 1, Chapter 9

Book 1, Chapter 9 Summary

Merlin leaves Maridunum feeling excited to go with Camlach and the others. The trip takes eighteen days. It is the first time that Merlin sees the High King Vortigern, who had been in power for eighteen years. They stayed a week at Segontium, a town on the Seint River in Wales.

Merlin doesn't get to spend much time around the two Kings. The group Merlin is with spends their days hunting until dusk. They come back in the evening to eat, drink, wench or what ever else they can do. Merlin goes out every day with the hunting party.

On the eight-day, Merlin's party turns for home, and the High King Vortigern and a company of his men ride with them. They stop at a ford, and the High King and Merlin's grandfather walk off to talk. Merlin meant to follow them, even though Cerdic tried to stop him. As Merlin and Cerdic stand debating, a ringdove flies by chased by a merlin. A merlin is the name for a falcon. The two birds crash. The ringdove is killed, while the falcon is injured.

As Merlin looks at them, he notices a hidden entrance to a cave. It is an old mine. Merlin forces Cerdic to go into it with him. They walk into the tunnels, but Merlin doesn't see anything of any import. On the way back to the rest of the party, they pick up the falcon, and Merlin takes it with him. It seems quite docile.

Book 1, Chapter 9 Analysis

The setting is emphasized in this chapter. The lay of the land, the forts and the crisp coldness all set the scene that this area of Egotism to be portrayed as somewhat foreboding. Merlin's character has been shown to be increasingly curious, even to the point of recklessness at times. This is pointed out, as he follows the two Kings.

The ringdove and falcon/merlin are symbols used to describe aspects of Merlin's personality. Cerdic has instructed Merlin to be as the ringdove, cautious and running away. Now as he grows he is becoming more like the falcon of his namesake. This chapter presents these symbols as motifs for us to consider in Merlin's character.

The theme of the cave is repeated throughout this book and appears here as Merlin finds another cave. Though it seems to be of no import, the author uses it as a device of foreshadowing, where its meaning will appear later in the novel.

The mood becomes colder perhaps because of the imagery of the stone cliffs. This land is seen as hard and cold like King Vortigern and Merlin's grandfather.



Book 1, Chapter 10

Book 1, Chapter 10 Summary

The party returns home. The sky is gray, cold and leaden and so is the atmosphere at the palace. Camlach, his grandfather and the nobles huddle together in conversation, sometimes with raised voices. He passes his mother kneeling in prayers. She seems to be crying. The mood at the keep is as cold and brittle as the weather.

The falcon stays with Merlin, and he feeds him. One cold February day, Merlin goes up to see Galapas. He takes the falcon with him. Galapas compliments Merlin on setting the falcon's wing. The bird is placed on a ledge outside the cave.

Galapas feeds Merlin some stew and then listens to him talk about what is going on at his grandfather's house. Merlin tells him that the cave he and Cerdic found after following the ringdove and falcon was the same that he had seen in the vision. He also tells him that Cerdic has been listening amongst the slaves. They did not know why Camlach and his father were at odds but they did know that Camlach's men were watching Merlin. Merlin asks Galapas what it all means. Galapas doesn't know what is going on at the palace. He then tells Merlin that King Vortigern's sons, by his first wife, Pascentius, Vortimer and Karigern have split with their father. Vortimer was raising troops, and Camlach seemed to be on his side.

Merlin thinks this must be 'from the had of God.' Galapas agrees. They both agree that Merlin needs to go into the crystal cave again. This news aside, Galapas teaches Merlin some magic of which Merlin says he will not speak of. Afterwards, Galapas allowed Merlin to look into the crystal cave.

In his vision, Merlin sees Camlach riding through the streets with his men. When they hurry into the palace, they find the King, Merlin's grandfather, dead. He is lying on his bed, but you cannot tell that his neck is broken. Lady Niniane stood at the foot of the bed in Merlin's vision. Every one stared at the knife in Camlach's belt for it was covered in blood. Camlach said it was from a deer.

In the vision, Camlach asks the servant, Mabon, what has happens. The servant says that the King slipped on some oil spilled by another slave filling the lamps. Lady Niniane finishes the story saying her father was drunk at the time and fooling around with a servant girl, when he fell.

Lady Niniane asks Camlach to promise that she can go to the nunnery at St. Peters and that Merlin will be allowed to go in peace. Camlach asks the Lady Niniane if she saw these things in her crystal. She says no. He asks her more things of the future. She does not give him the answers that he wants



Merlin sees all of this in the crystals. Merlin called Galapas and told him that Cerdic has been killed and that his grandfather is dead. Galapas reminds Merlin that now Camlach is King. He gives Merlin warm wine to calm him.

Merlin realizes that Camlach means to kill him. He knows that he will be blamed in his servant spilling the oil. Merlin wonders why people fear him so. He tries to figure out what to do. Galapas tells him there is nowhere he can hide.

He tells Merlin that he cannot stay with him, because he will not be hidden there. He tells Merlin that one day the cave will be his. He kisses Merlin, as he leaves. On the way home, Merlin cries once again.

Book 1, Chapter 10 Analysis

The rising action of the plot intensifies with the complications from Merlin's vision. The author uses the motif of Merlin's 'sight' with this new vision. Through his 'sight,' Merlin sees everything as it is happening. His grandfather is dead, and Camlach is now king. The truth of Camlach's character is revealed. He is fully revealed as the antagonist, who wishes to destroy Merlin.

He has never liked Merlin and does not mean well for his safety. The Lady Niniane shows more strength of character than she has before by standing up to Camlach for herself and for her son. Even so, the mood suggests this will not save her son Merlin. Merlin's home in the past had been unsafe. Now with what he sees it appears dangerous for him.

The tone and mood both allude to suspense as Merlin begins to decide what to do with this change of events. We see that the cave a symbol or motif in the story, which has revealed so much to Merlin, cannot offer him safety.

Cerdic's death ties back into the theme that good men are unfairly judged and persecuted by others. Camlach's desire to kill Merlin fits the other theme the author uses about the fate of men being decided by their parentage or lineage. The person to person as well as person to society conflict heightens Merlin's plight.

Galapas's character reveals that though he is wise he too much live by the hand of fate. He cannot offer help to Merlin



Book 1, Chapter 11

Book 1, Chapter 11 Summary

Merlin returns to the palace in secrecy. He climbs over the orchard wall and sneaks into his room and finds the dead body of Cerdic. Cerdic is tossed unceremoniously across his pallet. He touched Cerdic's hand and found him cold already. Merlin hears men looking for him outside but they cannot see him in the darkness of the unlit room.

Merlin gathers his clothes, some brooches, a clasp, and Cerdic's dagger into a bundle. He is angry at the undignified manner of Cerdic's death. He takes an oil lamp looks down at Cerdic. Now he can see that his throat was cut. He drops the lamp and it makes a funeral fire over Cerdic's body.

Merlin leaves the fire and scrambles over the wall looking back at the fire. He jumps over the wall, where a man knocks him down. The man holds him and puts a knife to his throat. He can see that there are two men. They ask Merlin if he is a thief. Merlin is relieved to see that they are not Camlach's men.

Marric is the name of the man holding Merlin. Merlin finds this out from his partner, a weasel like man, named Hanno. They question Merlin as if he was a thief. Merlin tells them that he started the fire because his friend had been killed and he would have been killed as well. This draws their attention. Merlin tells them that it was his friend the servant who had spilled the oil that the King tripped on. They are interested that Merlin may know Camlach's plans and decide to take him with them on a boat that is waiting for them. The two men decide to take Merlin with them to their boat. Merlin wonders what the people at home will think when they find Cerdic's burned body. He wonders will they think that he is dead also. These things cross his mind as the boat drifts out onto the water away from his home.

Book 1, Chapter 11 Analysis

The plot takes another twist after the high intensity of Chapter Ten. Merlin manages to escape from the treacherous hands of Camlach and his men into the hands of two strangers. The author uses this plot twister, just as it looks like Merlin can escape. His character's interpersonal conflict continues.

The men who kidnap Merlin seem dangerous, as well. Merlin's character shows his character's survival instincts as he begins to bait the men with the fact that he may know something they could use for a profit. They take him to a boat and to a destination unknown to him. There is a sense of danger in the mood. The author shifts the setting of the novel, as Merlin pulls off in the boat.



Book 1, Chapter 12

Book 1, Chapter 12 Summary

The men and Merlin flow downstream in the boat. They ask Merlin his name. He tells them, " Myrddin Emrys." They know that he is the bastard.

Marric wants Merlin to tell if he is going to join Vortigern. Merlin lets them know that Camlach is joining Vortigern's son Vortimer. Merlin finds out that Marric and Hanno are Ambrosius's spies. They let Merlin know there's a ship waiting to take them to Less Britain. Merlin tells them that he has things that he could tell them. They take him out to a sailing ship and haul him aboard. Merlin is horribly sick from the motion of the water and they leave him on a pile of rags beneath the ship's decks. They sail and arrive at the Wild Coast.

Book 1, Chapter 12 Analysis

Merlin shows his character to be cunning. He fights for his life with words. He uses the greed of Marric and Hanno to his advantage. The author continues the interpersonal conflict of the plot for Merlin. These men have minor roles and are character foils to develop Merlin's nature.

The setting changes, as the boat moves out to water to a new location. The mood is still tense, as Merlin waits to see where he will end up. The plot continues to get more complicated and intense.



Book 2, Chapter 1

Book 2, Chapter 1 Summary

Merlin is awakened when the ship comes ashore. He has been sick the entire time. He hears Marris and Hanno debating what to do about him. Marris thinks Merlin is worth more alive while Hanno disagrees. Marris wants to see if Ambrosius will pay for the information Merlin may have. Merlin is too sick to go with them, so they leave him locked in the room below decks.

Merlin is glad that the Gods saved him from Camlach, but he knows he is not safe in the position he is in. He has to escape. He wonders if he could offer himself to Ambrosius. Merlin takes some rags and makes himself some clothing. He gathers the stale bread to take with him. He escapes out the porthole on the hawser. He lands on the cold ground with a thud.

Book 2, Chapter 1 Analysis

The tone is tense and desperate as Merlin ponders what to do. Merlin's cunning and resourcefulness of character comes full circle as he makes his escape. The characters of Hanno and Marris are shown for their greed. Marris seems to have more common sense than Hanno, who is quite shifty. If not for the more steadfast part of Marris's character, Hanno would have killed Merlin. This is what spurs Merlin into action.

The scenery is stark, with a ship in the middle of nowhere. It intensifies the emotional mood for young Merlin a lad of twelve to go through the turmoil of the past few days. The setting has changed from Merlin's familiar home in Maridunum. The ship is dank and musty where he lay being so violently ill. The author shows another complication in the plot as Merlin's predicament seems dire and uncertain.



Book 2, Chapter 2

Book 2, Chapter 2 Summary

Merlin gets up and begins running and hiding amongst the brush and rocks. He comes to a walled town. It is very cold and he looks around for places to hide. He has to be careful because of a convey of soldiers. He finds another path to a farm and decides to take it. A dog barks at him as he approaches the house. Merlin then sees a stable and skirts along to reach it. He goes in to a cattle shed to hide. He hears another man approaching. This man has an authority voice of arrogance. The man speaks irritably to the porter about putting his horse up. He leaves his horse in the shed covered with his cloak.

Merlin hears the man walk away and say something like, "And let me in the back where the father won't see me."

Book 2, Chapter 2 Analysis

Merlin's position is critical. The setting is freezing cold and soldiers are all over the place. He can't get into town and he can't stay out with out freezing to death. His character is still fighting to survive and that gives him luck. Merlin's character's has shown him as a survivor. That seems to give him options. He finds warmth from the beasts and shelter in this.

The author shows Merlin to have internal conflict as he struggles to survive. He also has person-against-nature conflict in dealing with the extreme harshness of the elements. The mood brings about tension and worry for Merlin. There is some foreshadowing with the statement that Merlin hears the man say. The author seems to mention it as if that type of information on this character will be important later.



Book 2, Chapter 3

Book 2, Chapter 3 Summary

As soon as the men walk away, Merlin comes back in the shed and snatches the cloak from the horse for warmth. He also finds and borrows the soldier's field rations. He buries himself in a pile of brushwood for warmth and falls asleep. He awakens to stillness.

Merlin looks out to notice the clouds have lifted. He sees a man going across the field towards a horse that seemed to be grazing in the pasture. The man is tall and strong. He wore an unusual pair of trousers. His hair was fair and blowing underneath the cap he wore. He also wore a cloak that let Merlin know it was not the man whose cloak was now warming him. With a start, Merlin realized that the man was not approaching his horse but a white bull.

The bull charges the man who casually stepped out of its way. The man and bull seem to dance, with the bull charging and the man flicking his cape. Finally, the man jumps on the bull's neck and grabs him by the horns. The bull lifts its neck, and the man cuts its throat.

Merlin gets up and run toward the man yelling. As he gets closer, he sees the triumphant man has not exerted any sweat. Merlin trips and falls as something hits him on the head.

Book 2, Chapter 3 Analysis

The tone of this chapter is more balanced, as Merlin seems to find what he needs to survive the night, food, warmth and shelter. Yet, the setting's imagery is surreal as well, perhaps from the wine young Merlin has drunk or from his 'sight.' The mood leaves one wondering what it is young Merlin has come upon in this bleak part of the world.

Merlin's character shows his survival skills. This is one of the motifs of the book as Merlin moves from one predicament to another and pits his wiles against whatever threatens him.



Book 2, Chapter 4

Book 2, Chapter 4 Summary

Merlin wakes, when he is kicked. He realizes soldiers who think he is a beggar surround him. The man to whom the cloak belongs is angry and wants to whip Merlin. The man is tall with reddish brown hair and a nice beard. He seems disgusted at Merlin. He tells a man named Cadal to hold him tight. A newcomer approaches and asks what is going on. The men are silent. Merlin begins to speak to him about the bull. The man is interested in the story. The other man still wants to kill Merlin he doesn't believe the story and thinks that Merlin is a spy.

Merlin tells the man that he is not a spy. Merlin says he took the cloak and food. He then describes how he saw the man kill the bull. He says there was blood all over the place, as he ran to the man who killed the bull. That is when he tripped by the standing stone. When the men shined the light towards the stone, there was nothing there but frost on the ground. Merlin was able to see the second man. He was darker and older than he at first thought. He was heavier built, as well. Merlin then realizes this was not the man he thought he had seen bull fighting.

Merlin learns that the man is actually Ambrosius. The other whom he took the cape from is Uther. Ambrosius asks Merlin if he knows his father. Merlin says that some say it is the prince of darkness. They take Merlin with them.

Book 2, Chapter 4 Analysis

The plot again is intense as the soldiers discover Merlin. Fate saves him from the whip by the appearance of Ambrosius. Merlin seems to get help right at the last moment. This is a reoccurring motif in the story. The author uses Merlin's parentage once again causes curiosity as the authors theme.

Ambrosius and Uther are introduced as characters. They have previously been talked about in stories. They both seem to have strong characters that the other men respect Uther is portrayed as more arrogant and ruthless while Ambrosius is more thoughtful and in control. The Mood is still tense, while the setting and imagery are stark.



Book 2, Chapter 5

Book 2, Chapter 5 Summary

Merlin is taken to Ambrosius's headquarters by Cadal, one of his personal servants. He is first given a bath, and then fed. Ambrosius is heir to King Budec of Less Britain. He and his brother Uther are building up troops to make the mythical attack on King Vortigern a reality.

After eating, Merlin is taken to meet Ambrosius. Ambrosius questions him about his grandfather the King, King Vortigern, Camlach and his mother Lady Niniane. Merlin tells Ambrosius about Camlach trying to kill him twice and about his grandfather's death. He speaks of Cerdic's murder as well.

Ambrosius wants to know if Lady Niniane was harmed. Merlin says she would never be harmed, and that she was most likely in St. Peter's nunnery. He tells Ambrosius he heard his mother call his father's name one night. She called him Emrys. This makes Ambrosius pause. Merlin also reveals to Ambrosius that he has the 'sight.' Exhausted, Merlin goes to sleep.

Book 2, Chapter 5 Analysis

Once again, Merlin is facing a King's heir. This time, perhaps due to his ordeal, his character is exhausted, matter of fact and unemotional. This seems to blind him to not considering why Ambrosius is kind to him. He doesn't fully seem to see that he is not being treated as a hungry beggar, or spy or hostage.

The plot takes on some suspense as it raises the curiosity as to what it is that Ambrosius wants or needs from Merlin. The mood makes you wonder why Ambrosius is so curious about Merlin. There is stark contrast in the tone as Merlin is treated differently in presence of Ambrosius as he had been back at home. The motif of his 'sight' is brought up in Merlin's conversation with Ambrosius. The mood is one of intrigue, as Ambrosius size's up Merlin.



Book 2, Chapter 6

Book 2, Chapter 6 Summary

In the following weeks, Uther leaves the compound, and Ambrosius continued to spend time with Merlin. Merlin finds out that the scene he saw with the bull pertained to Mithras, the soldier's god. It seemed Ambrosius followed him, although not always outwardly. Merlin found that he was treated more like a prince there than back with his grandfather the King.

Merlin began to explore the town. He finds that King Budec's castle is in the center. Ambrosius decides that Merlin needs a teacher. Belasius is a mathematician and an astronomer. He handles some of Ambrosius's business. He becomes Merlin's new teacher.

One day, they finish their math problems early. Belasius has to leave. Cadal comes in and says that the horses are ready. Belasius listens to this and asks them where they are going. Merlin says, "North." Belasius advises them to keep to this.

Book 2, Chapter 6 Analysis

Merlin is again showing the falcon part of his character. He is learning once more and becoming curious about what is going on. Cadal appears to become the replacement character to Cerdic, who was killed. Cadal's character has the same common sense support for Merlin, as did Cerdic. Merlin seems most comfortable, when he has a teacher and a friend servant.

Belasius' character is introduced as a teacher. His description of having a cruel mouth suggests that there is a need for caution with him. He is quite different than Galapas. He seems to have a sharp tongue and temper. Merlin learns to do his work quickly and well to get along with him.



Book 2, Chapter 7

Book 2, Chapter 7 Summary

Merlin and Cadal ride out into the forest. On the way back Merlin falls off the pony and injures his ankle. His pony Aster is lame. They began to go slowly back home with the injured pony.

Book 2, Chapter 7 Analysis

Merlin's character shows the insistence in his character to do what he wants. This has led to an accident of sorts. The 'sight' a reoccurring symbol occurs and Merlin sees the pony up ahead on the road after it ran off after the accident.

The imagery of the scenery is good and gives a sense of the wildness of the place. The author introduces more of the setting around Ambrosius's keep. It is described as being pretty well guarded and kept safe by Ambrosius's men. The tone is one of held in excitement for something Merlin senses. The mood intensifies.



Book 2, Chapter 8

Book 2, Chapter 8 Summary

It gets colder. Merlin and Cadal continue to lead the horses through the woods. Merlin feels excited like he is being led towards something. The horses start, and Merlin smells other horses. They go forward and find Ulfin, Belasius's servant, waiting in the woods. Ulfin is startled and stutters about. Cadal tells Ulfin to go and tell Belasius that Merlin's needs a horse. Ulfin refuses, because he was told not to move.

Cadal asks Ulfin if Belasius is doing, murder. At that point, they hear a horrible scream in the woods. It is cut off as if by a blow to the throat. Against Cadal's wishes, Merlin follows the sound. He feels intense excitement. He comes upon a clearing in the woods and hears singing. He limps towards the sound

Book 2, Chapter 8 Analysis

Merlin's character shows his tendency to charge headlong without thinking. He seems guided almost. Cadal's character is protective as a friend and servant though he has no sway on what Merlin will do.

Cadal shows the restraint of character that is needed as a character foil for Merlin. His role is similar to that of Cerdic previously.

The plot intensifies with suspense, as they stumble upon Belasius's servant, Ulfin, and hear the scream in the forest. Ulfin is a minor character in the novel. He is a servant and does what he is told. His fear seems to show that something horrible is going on.

Merlin's reoccurring motif is his curiosity. The author portrays that well in this chapter. The mood is intense and heavy. The author's tone holds suspense. The setting is described with great imagery. The author describes the forest and the sounds with detail.



Book 2, Chapter 9

Book 2, Chapter 9 Summary

Merlin follows the sound to an Island in the bay where he witnesses some type of ritual ceremony. He has heard the death cry of someone. He then hears the triumphant yell of the killer. He sees that person who seems to be the leader hold up something in his hands to show the others. The ceremony is shrouded in mist and Merlin strains to see it with intense excitement. He is almost startled when he notices the group break up.

Book 2, Chapter 9 Analysis

The imagery of the setting and sounds is strong and powerful. The author uses the right tone to describe this gathering. It suggests an ancient dark and forbidden ritual. Merlin's character is further developed to show his fascination with ritual and ceremony even though he doesn't know what it is and even though he can tell someone has been killed. The mood is sour and gloomy.



Book 2, Chapter 10

Book 2, Chapter 10 Summary

Belasius approaches Merlin through the trees. He begins to speak with him in a matter of fact way. He tells him that Ulfin knows not to talk. Belasius has promised that when he dies he will not be killed with him as is the custom with priests to have their servants buried with them. Belasius is wearing beautiful robes and he speaks to Merlin of the Goddess.

Belasius says the man they killed was killed for sacrilege. He says what they do is both secret and illegal. His group meets where they can. He tells Merlin he knows that he has the 'sight' and that he has use for him. He puts a curse on him and tells Merlin that he will teach him, until he can enter the sanctuary. Ulfin stuffs Belasius's bloody robe into the saddlebag of the horse he loans to Merlin. Merlin follows Belasius on the road to home. Belasius parts ways and Merlin meets Uther and his men on the way home.

Book 2, Chapter 10 Analysis

Belasius's character shows his power, as he handles the situation with control. This chapter shows how Merlin will learn some of his darker arts. Merlin's curiosity has once again led him into danger. This shows in the plot his character as person-against-fate and his interpersonal conflict with his curiosity. It almost seems as if the Gods themselves lead him along to his destination.

The author's tone and imagery are darker and heavier. The feeling portrayed in the night and mist is the unknown. The descriptions are almost surreal, as Merlin flows along with what he has gotten himself into.



Book 2, Chapter 11

Book 2, Chapter 11 Summary

Merlin has to explain to Uther where he has been. Uther doesn't believe it especially when he sees the bloody robe in the saddlebag. Uther seems to dislike Merlin. He grabs him and is stabbed by his brooch. When he looks closely, he realizes that Ambrosius has given Merlin the red dragon pin. He then stares at Merlin and his eyes widen with some sort of realization. He laughs and rides off.

Merlin goes home and cleans up with the help of Cadal. They talk about many things and Cadal lets it slip that Merlin is twice a prince. This is when Merlin realizes that Ambrosius is actually his father.

Book 2, Chapter 11 Analysis

The plot reaches a point where it has been steadily building when Merlin realizes who his real father is. It is Ambrosius. Both Merlin and Uther realize this truth in this chapter. Merlin says that even though he has the 'sight' he is sometimes human blind.

Uther's character begins to further develop some antagonistic traits toward Merlin. This is portrayed in the banter about where Merlin has been that night. It seems Uther would even do him harm, until he sees that Merlin wears Ambrosius's pin. This gives Uther the insight of who Merlin really is.

Cadal's character is shown to have a combination of traits from both Galapas and Cerdic. He bluntly and gently guides Merlin to think on certain things. Through their conversation, Merlin realizes his father is Ambrosius. Cadal is a character foil for developing Merlin's dynamic character.



Book 2, Chapter 12

Book 2, Chapter 12 Summary

Merlin goes in to talk to Ambrosius. Uther has already told him what happened. Ambrosius asks Merlin if he saw the Druids. While he is with Ambrosius, Merlin has a vision of a man and woman on a hillside. The man has a dragon brooch. Ambrosius asks Merlin if he has the sight. Merlin tells him how it works for him. Merlin admits that he knows that Ambrosius is his father.

Ambrosius tells of how he met the Lady Niniane and their time at the cave. He tells how he wanted her to come with him but she refused. He went away and she stayed in Maridunnum. Later he found she had a child but he thought it was someone else's. He actually thought Dinias was her child. Merlin explained to him that Dinias belonged to his grandfather. Merlin said that he would have chosen Ambrosius to be his father.

Ambrosius tells Merlin to learn from Belasius even though he is a priest of the old religion. Ambrosius asks Merlin to use the sight for him but Merlin can't see anything.

Book 2, Chapter 12 Analysis

The foreshadowing of the couple and the cave is brought to light. It is shown that the couple was the Lady Niniane and Prince Ambrosius. It is when Merlin is conceived. The plot reaches a plateau when Merlin learns who his father is and the way of his birth. It seems to change everything and nothing for Merlin. He knows his father will be king yet Ambrosius tells him that he, Merlin will not be King. Ambrosius seems to see the direction of Merlin's life that he will be an advisor of Kings.

Ambrosius seems to want to help Merlin fulfill that destiny and allow Merlin's power to help him. He advises Merlin to use the skills of men. This is a trait that Merlin's character will continue to develop in this novel. Ambrosius's character is seen as a cunning observer of men. He wants Merlin to learn the same.

The setting is starkly different than where Merlin grew up as much a prince there as he is with Ambrosius. The author uses descriptions to describe Merlin's talk and interaction with Ambrosius to portray that his life is vastly different.



Book 3, Chapter 1

Book 3, Chapter 1 Summary

Merlin reflects on his time in Less Britain with Ambrosius. He has been there for five years and learns from everyone while there. Belasius teaches him and even takes him to rituals. He studied with the engineers and the healing women. He attends counsel meetings with Ambrosius, soaking up everything that he can. Tremorinius is a master engineer, and he teaches Merlin about that trade. Merlin hears an old singer telling a song of 'Merlin' and he befriends him. Merlin learns what he could from this man, as well.

The fighting in Great Britain escalated, when Merlin was eighteen. Vortimer fought against his father King Vortigern and won. He was king only for a short time, when he died of poison. They said it was the work of the Saxon Queen Rowena. At any rate, Vortigern was back in power.

Merlin found that his uncle Camlach had risen to Vortimer's aide. Camlach and Vortimer's brother Katigern had been killed. King Vortigern now back in power took over Camlach's land and his children. No word was heard of Lady Niniane and the nunnery. The weather turns, and Ambrosius tells Merlin that he is sending him and Marris back to Wales to see what is going on.

Book 3, Chapter 1 Analysis

Merlin spends five years leaning and absorbing everything he can. This shows his resourceful and clever character. The author uses time lapse in the plot to quickly describe those five years. The author has Merlin use third person point of view to describe what happened with Camlach in Britain.

The plot's rising action is brought to fore with the battles and intrigues occurring in Great Britain. The changes heighten the plot to push Ambrosius and Merlin into action. It all comes full circle when Merlin is told by Ambrosius to go back home and check on what is happening there.



Book 3, Chapter 2

Book 3, Chapter 2 Summary

Merlin crosses the sea again. This time he is a distinguished gentleman. He is still sick the entire way. He and Cadal embark together in his homeland while Marris is to gather what news he can and sail back to Less Britain.

When they land, Merlin buys a broken down horse. They pass his grandfather's house on the way to Galapas's cave. It seemed little had changed. Merlin notes the distance to Galapas cave seemed shorter than before.

Book 3, Chapter 2 Analysis

Merlin's homecoming doesn't get a lot of fan fare. Merlin's returning character is portrayed to have changed in many ways since he was a boy. Merlin also sees and notes the differences in his homeland. The author portrays Merlin's grown up shift in the way he reacts to returning home

The author shows tone, setting and imagery of the town and road to Galapas to be different than when Merlin was a boy. This also shows time lapse in the novel.



Book 3, Chapter 3

Book 3, Chapter 3 Summary

Merlin and Cadal ride up the hill to Galapas's cave. When they arrive, they find burned debris outside. The cave has been ram shackled. Everything has been destroyed, except the bronze mirror. Merlin looks in at the crystal chamber and then goes back outside. He follows a couple of crows to Galapas's body. It was mostly a skeleton now. Merlin and Cadal cut up sod and put rocks over Galapas's body to bury it.

Book 3, Chapter 3 Analysis

In keeping with the somber mood, Galapas's body is found outside the ram shackled cave. The feel of this chapter seems flat without energy. The tone is anti-climatic. Merlin has lost Galapas. This is the repeat of what happened for him with Cerdic. The mood is melancholy. The setting of Galapas's cave seems empty and cold without the hermit. Merlin does show maturity in his character how he handles finding Galapas's body. He assumes control, as he and Cadal decide what to do.



Book 3, Chapter 4

Book 3, Chapter 4 Summary

Cadal and Merlin bury Galapas and have food. They talk about who could have done this to Galapas. Cadal asks Merlin if Ambrosius has a message for Lady Niniane. They go to St Peter's to speak with Lady Niniane. He requests an audience with her using the name Emrys. She says she will see him on the river walk after prayers.

Having two hours to wait in the rain, Cadal and Merlin go to Merlin's Grandfather's house. Merlin is just trying to pick the lot, when Dinias suddenly appears. Dinias says that he still lives there. He is as arrogant as usual, even though he no longer looks like a prince. Dinias and Merlin exchange a bit of gossip.

Dinias invites Merlin to go to a pub. He says there are spies around, but the people there mind their own business. On the way to the pub, Merlin gives a beggar a coin. This shocks Dinias. He says things have changed.

Book 3, Chapter 4 Analysis

The mood is heavy after finding Galapas dead. Merlin makes the quote that is a theme of the novel. Merlin says, "Vortimer, Pascentius, anyone. When a man's wise and gentle and good," "it seems that any man's hand is raised against him." Galapas could have been murdered by an outlaw for food, a herdsman for shelter, or a passing soldier for a drink of water.

Here again, another good man was judged and killed by men. The author seems intent to portray that this theme is the part of the setting in the time of the Dark Ages, when this story is told. Merlin just wants to see his mother and finish his business. The imagery is a cold and wet night, just like when Merlin left after his grandfather died. This makes the tone watchful.

Merlin is surprised to see Dinias who recognizes him. Dinias antagonistic character though older is still a bully in his arrogance. It seems that although he appears friendly to Merlin, there is the undercurrent of dislike. Merlin is also, cautious towards Dinias.



Book 3, Chapter 5

Book 3, Chapter 5 Summary

Merlin goes to the tavern with Dinias. He steps outside to speak with Cadal while the food is coming. Cadal warns Merlin that Dinias doesn't like him. Merlin feels he can get information from Dinias by asking questions on his relatives. The information is for Ambrosius. Merlin finds out that he has been presumed dead since Cerdic's body was found. It did not create a stir however. Merlin tells Dinias a lie about what has been going on with him since the night he left. Dinias has disdain for his life style of 'harping.'

Dinias in his wine begins to talk loudly. He mentions Ambrosius's name. Merlin notices that some men in the pub are beginning to pay attention. Merlin and Dinias begin to play dice. Merlin notices a black bearded man and a foxy looking man paying attention to him. Merlin tries to deflect their attention but Dinias continues talking loudly and mentions Merlin being a bastard. They keep talking. Dinias mentions Kings Fort. He says it's ill fated. It rings a bell for Merlin, but he doesn't fully remember. Dinias says that every time the walls are rebuilt there in the next morning they fall down. Merlin begins to remember when he went with his father to see King Vortigern and followed the two kings down a path.

Dinias calls Merlin his bastard cousin again as they finish the dice game. Blackbeard, who had been watching them, puts his hand on Merlin's shoulder and tells him to come with him.

Book 3, Chapter 5 Analysis

Merlin shows the development of his character to try to outwit his opponents. He however misreads Dinias in thinking that he is the same person as before who uses his brawn instead of wits. The author still portrays Dinias as an antagonistic character. In this chapter, he is a foil for the next series of events to come to Merlin. Dinias proves himself stubborn and not as easily led as Merlin thinks.

Merlin's character feels that he can outwit Dinias. This miscalculation on Merlin's part leads to the other men in the tavern eavesdropping on their conversation and their coming over to speak with him.

The dice game is used as a symbol in this chapter of the game of chance or fate that Merlin is playing with Dinias. Each question he asks has a win/loss situation to it. Merlin knows that using magic in a game of chance is risky but he does it. The encounter with Dinias proves to be risky even though he does gain some information, in particular, Kings Fort.

Kings Fort is another example of foreshadowing. Merlin vaguely remembers a scene from the past with the two Kings. We know that it will come up again in the plot of the

book. Cadal again plays the character role of Cerdic or Merlin's common sense. Merlin's character as in the past chooses to ignore it.



Book 3, Chapter 6

Book 3, Chapter 6 Summary

Merlin tries to talk his way out of dealing with Blackbeard, the man that has been listening to he and Dinias. His bluff is called when a man in the crowd recognizes him. He tells the crowd he knows that Merlin is Myrddin Emrys and he is the old King's grandson. Merlin admits he is Lady Niniane's son. Blackbeard wants to know Merlin's father. Merlin says he doesn't know. Blackbeard tells Merlin that the King wants to see him.

Dinias ask what King Vortigern wants Merlin for. Blackbeard tells him it is not his business. He gives Dinias a reward for leading them to Merlin. The men ask about Lady Niniane. They want to talk to her too.

Merlin and the men leave. Dinias follows them out on to the street. Blackbeard tosses a bag of money to Dinias. Merlin can see the look on Dinias's face, as he picks up the coin bag even without looking.

Book 3, Chapter 6 Analysis

The plot intensifies, as Merlin is caught in a trap. It appears as though Dinias has set him up. Merlin's game of chance has ended in a betrayal of sorts. Merlin uses the phrase often that men of the 'sight' are often human blind. He means that although he can see future events, the true intents of men can sometimes elude him.

One theme that comes up in this chapter is that the pursuit of power can corrupt the hearts of men. This is shown in how Dinias seems to betray Merlin. The other reoccurring theme has to do with a man's lineage or parentage. Once again, Merlin is a pawn of his paternity. It is leading his character in the plot to a certain destination. This shows Merlin's character dealing with person-against-fate and person against society conflict.

Dinias is definitely shown to be antagonistic to Merlin when he picks up the coins. The author alludes to the treachery, when she writes about Merlin seeing the look in Dinias's eyes, when he picks up the coins.

The mood of the novel at this point is tense with the gathering of people in the tavern watching each other. The author's tone shows that these are dangerous times. The plot has slowly been moving Merlin to a meeting with Vortigern, and this chapter sets that up with intensity.



Book 3, Chapter 7

Book 3, Chapter 7 Summary

It takes six days to reach Kings Fort and King Vortigern. Lady Niniane has been brought along, as well. She is treated well. Merlin notices that she is pale and has put on weight. He feels she has lost her power, her gift of 'sight.'

King Vortigern and his Saxon Queen Rowena see Merlin and Lady Niniane in a crowded hall at his hold out at Kings Fort. The King is also attended by several priests and holy men. King Vortigern asks Lady Niniane to present her son. She introduces Merlin. The King and his entourage are very interested in Merlin's parentage. After much talk, Lady Niniane tells the King she will tell him the truth if the crowd goes. She makes eye contact to try and let Merlin know she will not mention Ambrosius. Merlin doesn't quite understand the message.

Book 3, Chapter 7 Analysis

The plot intensifies as Merlin and his mother stand in front of the powerful King Vortigern and his wife. Dialogue plays a heavy part in this chapter as words about Merlin's father are traded. The suspense in the plot is held because the King does not make it obvious why he wants to know.

Merlin again starts to try to use the survival skills of his character. Lady Niniane's character starts to show her hidden diversity. In the past, she has been shown as a static character that doesn't change much. Her character here appears more rounded. In this chapter, we see that she has kept much of her character, guile and wisdom hidden perhaps for survival just like Merlin.

The King and Queen are seen as power brokers backed by priests. The setting of King Vortigern's court is dark and tense. The author uses good imagery and dialogue to set the tone that this is a nasty place. The mood is ominous. The theme that power corrupts the hearts of men again appears here in this chapter.



Book 3, Chapter 8

Book 3, Chapter 8 Summary

Lady Niniane shows no fear and in a calm voice tells a silky story of Merlin being conceived by a spirit or incubus. The talk had been that he is the son of the devil. At the end of her story, she asks that she and Merlin go back to their houses of religion.

Queen Rowena asks one of the priests, whose name was Maugan, if such a thing was possible. He said that it was. The other priests believe it as well. Vortigern's guards became afraid of Merlin. Merlin could see that the news excites King Vortigern for some reason.

The King says he has use for Merlin and that Lady Niniane is free to go. She steps down. She and Merlin exchange coded words. Lady Niniane seems to understand that Merlin knows who his real father is. Merlin feels confident that the superstitious Vortigern wants him for his knowledge and not anything else. He begins to think how he can tell them why the walls of the King Fort keep coming down.

Book 3, Chapter 8 Analysis

Lady Niniane shows the full development of her character. Merlin understands why she has hidden his true parentage. She shows her ability to be a royal lady as she holds them spell bound with her story. Her character changes from static to round.

Merlin's character sees his mother's true power in how she has protected him and Ambrosius and how it seems she has saved him this time. She leaves feeling that she has accomplished this.

Merlin's character shows his fast thinking as he negotiates the changing tone of the court. The author's tone again shows the setting of Vortigern's court has a mood of dark, negativity. She uses much of the dialogue to convey the hidden danger there.



Book 3, Chapter 9

Book 3, Chapter 9 Summary

Merlin is stunned to find out that King Vortigern and his priests wish to kill him. They think that blood will stop the walls of the fort from falling. They believe that Merlin is not human but of spirit so his blood is powerful. Merlin tells him that he has been trained as a magician and that his are fools. To save himself Merlin tells King Vortigern why his walls fall down.

Book 3, Chapter 9 Analysis

Merlin's character shows his ability to think on his feet in dire situations. He again used the survival skills he always uses. He exploits the fear and suppression of the court against them. The setting, tone and mood of this chapter are dark and suspenseful.

The author uses the theme of a man's parentage deciding his fate and that the pursuit of power corrupts the hearts of men. The author portrays King Vortigern's court basically as evil and immoral



Book 3, Chapter 10

Book 3, Chapter 10 Summary

Merlin is taken down to the walls, which are collapsing again. He leads the King and priests to the old mine adit that he found long ago with Cerdic. He knows as an engineer why the walls are falling but they want magic. He knows he has to give them what they want to save himself. They find the cave entrance and go in. Nothing appears obvious as he shows them the cave. Merlin tells the King he needs to find out what's buried there. Then he has a vision.

Book 3, Chapter 10 Analysis

The mood, tone and setting are tense, dangerous and dark. Merlin uses the wiles of his character to further heighten the suspense. His character is dealing with interpersonal conflict as he tries to figure out how to save himself. The author also shows his character dealing with person-against-person conflict as Merlin seeks to outwit King Vortigern and there's person-against-society conflict as he fights the priests of the King's court.

This cave was foreshadowed in Book One when Merlin had a vision in the crystal cave with Galapas and when he and Cerdic found it on his grandfather's to visit King Vortigern when he was a boy.

The author uses the reoccurring motif of Merlin's 'sight' again. It takes over for him when he has a vision. The cave is also a reoccurring motif in the novel. It seems to represent various facets of humanity. In this case, the author seems to be showing the darker hidden part of humanity in the dark, wet cave.



Book 3, Chapter 11

Book 3, Chapter 11 Summary

Merlin wakes up in bed with Cadal standing beside him. Cadal tells him that King Votigern's court is afraid of him after his vision. Merlin doesn't remember this vision. Cadal tells him that Berric, the torch bearer, has told him about it. He says Merlin spoke of eagles, lions, dragons and such. Merlin finds out that the Kings men had been draining the conduit. Merlin is being called the Kings Prophet and he decides to play the part.

Book 3, Chapter 11 Analysis

Merlin's character has survived the conflict again. He is tended by Cadal with common sense and loyalty just as Cerdic has attended him in the past. In Merlin's life, it is shown that his servants are the faithful ones, and those in the court are treacherous. Merlin's character's ability has the gift of 'sight.' That motif is presented here again.

The author's setting of Merlin waking up in the bed attended by his servant balances the high suspense of the previous chapter. The tone and mood of the novel calms back down a little. There is still a sense of inevitability, as Merlin knows he must face King Votigern and explain the empty cave.



Book 3, Chapter 12

Book 3, Chapter 12 Summary

Merlin goes to wait with Vortigern as the diggers continue to shovel. Nothing is found. The King asks Merlin the meaning. Merlin starts to speak and fate aids him by loosing the Kings flag and throwing it to the mud. It is a white dragon flag. Merlin jumps on the falling flag as a sigh. He speaks of it being down just as a falling star flashes by. Merlin uses the star as an omen. Everyone becomes afraid. In the confusion, Merlin walks away.

Merlin and Cadal take their leave. On the way down the mountain, they meet some more of Ambrosius's men and join forces with them, as they all leave King Vortigern's fort.

Book 3, Chapter 12 Analysis

Merlin's character is shown to have some tie with luck or the gods as the flag and star follow his lead. It is the positive side of the person-against-fate conflict shown in the novel. It helps that the people are revealed to be very superstitious.

This sets the mood for this chapter of fear, superstition and power. The author's tone seems to suggest that this is the way the people of the Dark ages behave during this period. King Vortigern's character is portrayed as being part of this era. He is the King, but superstition, omens and priests rule him. Merlin's character plays this up in the plot.

The author in Book One has foreshadowed the setting of the men digging in the cave when Merlin has a vision of it in the crystal cave. King Vortigern is a powerful King in the novel, but his antagonistic character's negativity is a foil for Merlin. Merlin is able to use his fear and superstition against him. It proves to change the balance of power and shift the rising action of the novel.

This chapter is a pivotal shift in the novel, as the comet signals Ambrosius's rise to power and the falling flag King Vortigern's decline.



Book 4, Chapter 1

Book 4, Chapter 1 Summary

Merlin tells the story of Ambrosius rise to be King of Britain. Ambrosius landed at Totnes in Devon. Many Britons joined his army. Eldad, a bishop, gave him support. Ambrosius and his men fought hard and met up with King Vortigern at a place called Doward.

Doward was a place that was hard to attack. King Vortigern and his Saxon Queen brutally cut off the hands of one of Ambrosius's messengers. Vortigern and the Queen refused to surrender. Ambrosius burned them out in a siege after they refused to surrender. That was the end of King Vortigern and his witch Queen.

Book 4, Chapter 1 Analysis

The author allows Merlin to tell the story of Ambrosius's rise to power in a third person time lapse way. Merlin minimizes the battles as if there is no question of Ambrosius being King. Merlin says this is the way the chronicles have recorded it. He is just repeating a history story here.

The author minimizes and condenses much of Ambrosius's rise to power. It is as if this part of the novel doesn't directly involve Merlin so it is told as a story. The settings are of Britain and the locations where men came together in battle.

The author's tone is a straightforward recording of history. She portrays the horrible tone of war more directly in the story of the messengers hands been cut off. This gives the sharp, cruel mood of war.

King Vortigern's death shifts a point in the plot, as he has been the cause of tension in the rising action to this point in the novel. His easy demise is anticlimactic after all the conflict that has occurred on his behalf. It is told here as history.



Book 4, Chapter 2

Book 4, Chapter 2 Summary

Merlin returns to his home in Maridunnum. His mother and her party are ahead of him and his troops. He and his troops had a clash against twenty men in Bremias. They then continue on towards St Peters.

When Merlin arrives home, he meets Dinias, who apologizes. Merlin dismisses it. Dinias invites Merlin back to his grandfather's house. There they eat. Merlin recounts that Dinias later joins Ambrosius and dies from battle wounds. As Merlin sleeps in Camlach's old room, he sees that his prophecy of the white dragon falling and the red dragon winning has come true.

Book 4, Chapter 2 Analysis

The setting and imagery returns to Merlin's home. The author illustrates that Merlin is a rounded character by showing that he is entirely different than when the novel began.

Dinias character is also shown to not just be a static character foil to Merlin. Dinias in this chapter is revealed to have developed remorse and honor. This is shown by Merlin's third person telling of his future with Ambrosius. .



Book 4, Chapter 3

Book 4, Chapter 3 Summary

Merlin goes to the nunnery to see his mother. She is sick. He goes by to visit and talk with her and she makes progress. A young nun named Keri catches Merlin's eye. He tries to see her or talk with her.

Keri is pretty and aloof to Merlin. Just when he is leaving, she has a small conversation with him. She asks him to help her with a toothache. Merlin is stunned and says that he cannot do anything about it. He responds to like a man.

Book 4, Chapter 3 Analysis

The plot is calmer as Merlin visits his mother in St. Peter. The setting of the monastery is peaceful. The author's tone portrays the austere coolness of the nunnery. The mood is more somber.

Merlin's character continues to show dynamic roundness of development. He is more grown up and manly with his mother. He continues his attraction with Keri. He is shy when she flirts with him about her toothache. Merlin has grown and learned a lot but it is shown he has little interaction with women outside his mother and his nurse Moravik when he was younger. He has his first attraction to a woman, in the young nun Keri.

Keri is shown to be a character foil to Merlin to portray his naivety with women.



Book 4, Chapter 4

Book 4, Chapter 4 Summary

Merlin speaks of the continuing advance of Ambrosius. King Vortigern had been taken at Doward. Ambrosius continued across Britain attacking the Saxons. He made a move against one of Vortigern's allies a fierce Saxon warrior, called Hengist.

Ambrosius caught up with Hengist in the second week of May. It was very hot. They meet at a place called Maesbeli. The Saxons had waited to try to ambush Ambrosius and his men. In the end, they were caught in their own trap.

Merlin and his servant, Cadal, watched the great battle at Maesbeli. Hengist and Ambrosius came together in a great clash. Merlin watches Ambrosius on the field. This was near Cona's fort or Kaeconan. One of the generals helping Ambrosius is the gray beard Gorlois, lord of Tintagel.

Ambrosius won the battle. One of his men, Eldol, Duke of Gloucester dragged Hengist from his horse. While Merlin sat watching the battle, he knew that his mother had died back at St. Peters.

Book 4, Chapter 4 Analysis

Merlin's character shows that he has no mind for being a warrior as he watches the battle in this chapter. The author uses her figurative language technique of giving the locations several names as different people in this chapter call them. The battle location was called Conan's Fort, Kaerconan or Conisburgh.

The setting of this chapter with the battle is dramatic but somewhat anticlimactic because it is known Ambrosius will win. We know this from the foreshadowing of Merlin's when at Kings Fort with his visions. The author uses superb imagery to show the clash of Ambrosius and the Saxon army.



Book 4, Chapter 5

Book 4, Chapter 5 Summary

After the battle, Merlin makes his way down hill through the carnage. He stops and looks at a dying man and aids his death by stabbing him in the neck. Hengist, the big blond Saxon is killed. Ambrosius's men burn his dead soldiers in a fire, as is their Pagan tradition.

Amongst all the death and carnage, Merlin has sensed the death of his mother. He goes in amongst the wounded and helps to tend them. He and Ambrosius talk, and he tells Ambrosius that his mother has died.

Ambrosius tells Merlin that the men call him a prophet. He says that Merlin is Ambrosius's prophet. Merlin tells him that he would be of better use as an engineer.

Uther approaches Merlin in a rare good mood and teases him about his own fortune. They trade quips over Uther and his ability to get women.

Book 4, Chapter 5 Analysis

Merlin's character seems to be taking on the emotional detachment of manhood or of seeing too much. He watches the battle and death and then stabs a man to ease his passing seemingly without much thought. He comments on his mother's death with little emotion.

This chapter's setting, tone and mood are dark with battle and death yet Merlin is shown to be aloof to it. The imagery of the battles and death are vivid.

The author uses the motif of 'the sight' again as Merlin is made aware of his mother's death miles away in St. Peter. Ambrosius's character shows his respect for Merlin feeling that he predicted his win. Even Uther's character is more lighthearted with Merlin than usual.



Book 4, Chapter 6

Book 4, Chapter 6 Summary

Merlin goes to York, one of the first cities that Ambrosius rebuilds. Merlin attends a ritual of Mithras with Ambrosius. Merlin keeps the vow of secrecy and doesn't reveal what he cannot of the rituals. Merlin mentions Ambrosius's crowning only lightly and says he spent two years with the King. Merlin decides to go with Ambrosius's troop to Caerleon.

Book 4, Chapter 6 Analysis

This chapter is done more in Merlin's memoir style. He chooses to gloss over certain things. For instance, he says that he was with Ambrosius for two years after he was crowned. However, he doesn't go into the details of it. The author uses the technique of time lapse to skip over to other times. Merlin's character seems to hone in on the human dramas and not the every day passage of the King's business. Merlin notes that after all this time, Ambrosius appears older.



Book 4, Chapter 7

Book 4, Chapter 7 Summary

Merlin goes towards Caerleon. He stops at the Giants Dance or Dance of the Hanging Stones. This seems to be Stone Henge. Merlin investigates the stones and feels a chill. Merlin goes to Caerleon and sees his old friend, the engineer Tremorinus, who shows him plans of new building projects.

Merlin then goes to St. Peters to see if he can get word on his mother's passing. He also went to ask about the girl Keri. She however had left the nunnery. He climbs the hill to Galapas's cave. There he finds that Cadal has restored order. His books and things are there, and he sleeps well the first night there.

Book 4, Chapter 7 Analysis

This is a slower chapter with Merlin returning home. He returns again to the motif of the cave, when he meets Cadal at the cave that once belonged to Galapas. This time the symbolism represents a place to rest and regroup. Merlin's character has a sense of tiredness and a need to rest. He is again intrigued to see the girl Keri, but cannot find her.

The author's mood reflects tiredness for all Merlin has witnessed. The tone and setting suggest the need for respite. Galapas's cave is alive again for renewal for Merlin and Cadal.



Book 4, Chapter 8

Book 4, Chapter 8 Summary

Merlin begins to enjoy his homecoming. It is spring. He reads, makes medicines, plays music and walks around the countryside. On one of these walks, he comes across Keri from the nunnery. He asks her if she left she said yes, because it was like a cage. She intoxicates him. He grabs her breast and she bites him on the mouth, and they tumble to the ground. As they lie kissing, suddenly Merlin cannot stand it. It feels as if her mouth is a cave sucking him in.

Keri feels like a dying man holding him, so he pushes her away. Keri who was not so much like a nun anymore cannot understand that. She seems to look down on him. Keri tells Merlin that she never had the toothache. She lied when she told him he cured her. She asked Merlin for money, and he tosses her a coin. She laughs at him.

Book 4, Chapter 8 Analysis

Merlin's character enjoys peace and quiet of the cave and countryside. The author uses good imagery to describe the setting of the countryside around the cave.

When Keri's character returns she is revealed to have another side. She is not the innocent nun but a woman of the world. Merlin is shown the illusion and it startles him. Merlin's character has had little interaction with women on the romantic level. This is an interesting point that the author leaves out of his character. It frustrates his character and is shown in the interpersonal conflict Merlin has with Keri.

Merlin cannot be with her. It is not shown if it is chastity or an issue of Merlin's sight. Merlin describes Keri's mouth as a cave when she is kissing him. Though we are not sure why, Merlin is afraid of it here. It appears to represent death to him.



Book 4, Chapter 9

Book 4, Chapter 9 Summary

In June, Ambrosius goes to Caerleon and calls Merlin to him. Ambrosius wants Merlin to go to fort Killare in Ireland and help Tremorinius devise a way to bring it down. Merlin leaves Ambrosius and catches a glimpse of Keri going into Uther's room. Uther is a known womanizer.

Ambrosius speaks to Merlin about the magic at Killare. There is a King, called Gilloman, there. This King is bound with Pascentius, Ambrosius's enemy. The King wanted war. Ambrosius would not be content to wait for Gilloman, and the Saxons to join against him. He sends Uther to attack Gilloman's stronghold.

His strong hold was Killare. It was thought of as a holy place with standing stones that give it power. Ambrosius asks Merlin to take the stones down. Merlin says he can. Ambrosius also speak again about the Giants Dance stones. Merlin says he will rebuild the Giants Dance stones for Ambrosius. While he is thinking on that Merlin has a prophecy that Ambrosius thinks is about him as King. He thinks Merlin has prophesized immortality for him when in fact Merlin has seen his death.

Book 4, Chapter 9 Analysis

Merlin's character appears detached in the action. He sees without much reaction Keri, the girl from the woods and nunnery going to Uther's room. He walks away and goes to Ambrosius. He tells Ambrosius that he can build him a Giant's Dance of standing stone. The motif of the 'sight' appears again as Merlin 'sees' the death of the King.

The author shows Merlin's character to be more detached as he 'sees' his father's death. The setting of this chapter is like history repeating itself as Ambrosius again prepares for battle, this time with Ireland. The mood is almost weary and melancholy. The authors tone sharp and somewhat harsh.



Book 4, Chapter 10

Book 4, Chapter 10 Summary

Merlin goes to Killare. Gilloman flees, when Uther and his men arrive. It was an easy battle for him. Tremorinus the engineer has a go at the Black Stone of Killare. No one can figure out how to bring it down.

Merlin somehow figures out how to dig it up. He describes the feat as engineering and not magic, though he says it is recounted as magic. He takes this stone that Ambrosius want. Uther was there, too, trying to figure out how to dig the stone out and return it to Britain. He could not do it. Merlin takes the stone and travels back with it.

Merlin returns to Caerleon and learns Ambrosius went into battle at Carlisle and won. He returned to Winchester and takes ill. Some said it was poison. Ambrosius dies. Merlin returns with the stones and creates a Giants Dance of stones at Amesbury for the dead Kings memorial. The King's brother, Uther Pendragon, is crowned King.

Book 4, Chapter 10 Analysis

Merlin's character is starting to seem a little jaded as he goes about his business. Uther as usual is still somewhat antagonistic with Merlin. The Giants stones seem to have the symbolism of Kings. When they are knocked down a King dies. When they stand one is crowned.

The setting of Ireland is given imagery that is starker than Britain. The stones seem to hold a foreboding mood. The author's tone is matter of fact in describing these events. Ambrosius's death and Uther's crowning is described like a paragraph in history. This chapter sets rising action in the plot as the novel is moved towards its inevitable conclusion.



Book 5, Chapter 1

Book 5, Chapter 1 Summary

When Ambrosius passed, another falling star is seen. At first, things seemed bad for Uther. Old enemies rose again. Saxons joined with the Iris Gilloman, who had fled Killare to fight against Uther. Pascentius and Octa attacked, as well. Gorlois, who had fought so well for Ambrosius, helped Uther win against Octa.

Book 5, Chapter 1 Analysis

Merlin tells this chapter as a time lapsed chronicle of the history of Uther's early kingship. Merlin tells part of it in third person dramatic point of view. This chapter lays out the work Uther must do to take control of what Ambrosius had won. He seems to do just that. Merlin takes care of the Giants Dance stone for Ambrosius.

Uther's character continues to develop as a warrior. We do not see much of Uther's character other than being a great warrior and womanizer.



Book 5, Chapter 2

Book 5, Chapter 2 Summary

Uther rides out the Giants Dance stones to see Merlin. Uther is upset that Merlin knew that his brother Ambrosius was dying and did not tell him. Merlin is matter fact telling him that letting him know what have gained nothing. Uther tells him that he can't serve him as he served Ambrosius. He says that he wants none of Merlin's prophecies. Merlin is fine with it. He tells Uther he is going home to Maridunnum. Merlin shows Uther the math of the stone during the eclipse. Merlin let's Uther know that if he needs him he will be available.

Book 5, Chapter 2 Analysis

Merlin's character seems tired. He finds it easy to detach from Uther. Uther's character is arrogant and dismissive except on the math of what Merlin has done with the stones. This part of the novel is anti-climatic. The author's tone with Uther's rise to power is not dismissive but not as powerful as Ambrosius's chronicles.

Uther's character doesn't seem to respect Merlin as his father did. There is a sense of conflict between the characters. The cave as a motif this time represents payment for Merlin's work.



Book 5, Chapter 3

Book 5, Chapter 3 Summary

Merlin returns to his cave in the hill now called Bryn Myrddin. Merlin's accomplishments have been turned to song and stories and he is well known. Merlin settles back into Galapas's cave, which is now his.

People leave food and offerings outside the cave for him and Cadal. Merlin gives them medicines in return. Uther wastes no time calling Merlin back to London. Uther's messenger is none other than Ulfin, Belasius's former slave.

Ulfin says that Belasius has died of fever and that Uther has taken him into his service. Merlin reluctantly agrees to return. They leave for London where Merlin finds out that Uther has many nobles gathered around him. Rumor has it that Uther has woman trouble. It is with the Duchess of Cornwall, Gorlois's wife. Uther is madly in love with her and revealing that fact in court in front of everyone.

People were saying that Uther was crazy to go after Gorlois's wife, because the man had helped put Ambrosius and him in power.

Book 5, Chapter 3 Analysis

The peaceful mood of Merlin being at home is broken by a request for him to go to London by Uther. Merlin keeps his word and begins the journey. Ulfin's character is re-introduced. He seems tight-lipped about what took place with Belasius, and how he ended up with Uther. His character is older but still performing loyally as a servant. In this regard, Ulfin's character is a bit of a stereotype of the obedient servant.

The mood of the story had an undercurrent of intrigue about this. It seems even more interesting when the stories come up of Uther being bewitched by a woman. The plot intensifies with stories of Uther's actions.



Book 5, Chapter 4

Book 5, Chapter 4 Summary

Merlin goes to Uther in London. Merlin meets him in words. Uther looks different. His eyes are sunken in his head, and he is overly restless. Uther asks Merlin to help him safely be with Gorlios's wife. Merlin says he cannot make anyone love another. Uther says he has seen him do things.

While they are talking, Merlin has a vision of two dragons moving together. Uther tells Merlin he will do anything. Merlin tells Uther that when he comes together with the lady they make a child. Uther says he will do what he can.

Merlin makes a sleeping potion for Uther. He then calls Gorlois with his fire and he comes. Gorlois asks Merlin to get the King to let he and his wife go back home. He also asks Merlin to go and see his wife that night because she is sick. Merlin also wishes to speak with her. Merlin agrees to see her.

Book 5, Chapter 4 Analysis

The setting switches to London and the court. The author's tone speaks of trouble brewing with Uther's seeming bewitchment over another man's wife. The mood is tenuous.

Merlin's character has grown, and he matches wits and words with Uther. Uther's character shows a different side. He is less flat and becomes a bit more dynamic with his seeming weakness over this woman. His actions however speak of the theme of power corrupting a man's heart. This theme has been seen in each of the Kings except Ambrosius. Here Uther who easily gets any woman he wants now has to have a married woman. This is all so the wife of the man Gorlois who has been important in Uther's and Ambrosius's rise to power.

Uther's character seems bewitched and out of balance. His usual precision and power is warped. The motif of 'the sight' is shown, when Merlin sees two dragons merge in flame, and this seems to be the omen he needs to respond to.

Merlin's dynamic character seems to show another side, when he is ready to betray his friend Gorlois as well. This is the first time that the theme of power corrupting the heart effects Merlin. He seems not to think of it as a problem however.

It is as if Merlin thinks only about visions and this child that will come through Uther and Gorlois's wife. The plot flows with each character playing-person -against fate. Each person in this chapter seems to play a part in the increasing plot. They dance without thought of the outcome.



The author has brought each character to rising action or resolution. It is not a battle but the creation of this child from the union of Uther and Gorlois's wife. Her tone sends people speedily playing their parts.



Book 5, Chapter 5

Book 5, Chapter 5 Summary

Gorlios's wife is the Lady Ygraine. She is well guarded. Merlin goes to her chamber. She had pretended to be ill to get Merlin to come. She wants Uther, as well. Merlin tests her with words to see where she stands and tells her that he will help. He tells her that she must tell her husband she is pregnant.

Merlin tells her to leave with Gorlios and his men to go back to Cornwall on the day of King Uther's crowning. He says he will explain it to Uther, and Uther will pretend rage. She says Gorlois will take her to Tintagel, where the nobles of his family are born. Then, he will go to face Uther at Dimilioc. Merlin tells Ygraine that he will use magic to bring her and Uther together to speak in peace.

Book 5, Chapter 5 Analysis

The Lady Ygraine's character is introduced. She is a strong, determined woman, who is in love with Uther. She wants him on her terms, where she or her husband or country will not be dishonored. She feels Merlin can do this.

Merlin shows a part of his character to be involved with this intrigue. He seems not to see anything wrong with the deception. This is a new facet of Merlin's character. His father, Ambrosius, had taught him to use each man by their skills. Merlin is revealing that he can indeed do this.

This is a different aspect of Merlin's character. In the past, he has lied to save himself. Here, he seems to be creating lies for the benefit of others. The mood of this chapter is of deception and betrayal. Instead of the heavy battles in the past for land, country or King, The action here is for the sake of a secret tryst. The falling action of this chapter is a bit hollow in the self-serving actions of the characters.



Book 5, Chapter 6

Book 5, Chapter 6 Summary

Lady Ygraine and her husband leave for Cornwall. Merlin tells Uther of the plans. Merlin informs him the outcome again is to be a child. Uther is to go after Gorlios. Merlin's plan is to disguise himself, Uther and Ulfen as Gorlois and his servants and have them ride into Tintagel, while Gorlios is at Dimilioc waiting for Uther.

Merlin disguises himself as Brithael, Gorlios's friend. Merlin, Uther and the others sneak into the castle at Tintagel. Cadal waits on the path for them. Merlin tells Cadal of the true King that will be born from the night's activities. This is all that seems to matter to him.

Book 5, Chapter 6 Analysis

Merlin's character is led to complete this mad task to create the child he sees will be a great King. This has been the goal all along. It is shown to be all that matters to him. The plot increases with tension and drama. There is a feeling that the task is impossible but Merlin continues. The author's tone shows the other people to be pawns in a game of chess.

The setting is the dark and dangerous Cornish coast. The author portrays tension and peril in the imagery and dialogue. Cadal, Uther, the Lady Ygraine, Gorlois all play out their roles. Each of their character's conflict is person against fate at this point. The theme of a man's parentage will decide his fate even plays out in the child that is yet to be born.

Each character merges with the theme that power can corrupt the hearts of men. They all know that it is wrong to betray Gorlois on the whims of Uther and Lady Ygraine, yet each character folds to Uther's desire.



Book 5, Chapter 7

Book 5, Chapter 7 Summary

Merlin, Uther and Ulfín go into Tintagel in disguise. The road is dangerous wet and dark. The guards think it is Gorlois, and Uther goes into Ygraine's room. They take Tintagel in this game of betrayal.

Book 5, Chapter 7 Analysis

Merlin and Uther have achieved their goal. This chapter plays on the setting of the wild Cornish coast's perilous route. They undertake this risky venture for King Uther. The mood is dark and edgy. The author's tone betrays the hidden dangers of this action. It seemed quite easy. Yet, there is subtle tension in the mood.



Book 5, Chapter 8

Book 5, Chapter 8 Summary

Merlin, Ulfín and Jordan wait the storm out, while Uther is with Ygraine. Merlin continues to play his role of Brithael in disguise. He is anxious and wired. as he waits for this night's frolic to end.

While he waits by the fire, Merlin has a vision of Marcia, Ygraine's servant, bringing a baby downstairs. She puts the baby into Merlin's arms. As the vision ends, Merlin looks out at the night, and the clouds part. He looks up at the Lady Ygraine's window. The light is out. He knows that the couple now sleeps.

Book 5, Chapter 8 Analysis

The imagery of the setting is dark and strewn with tension. The minor characters of Ralf, Jordan and Ulfín play their stereotypical roles of loyal servants obeying to the point of madness. The two play out with their characters the person against fate conflict.

The motif of 'the sight' appears again, as Merlin has another of his visions. It is about the baby he wants. His character is impatient and restless. The symbolism of the storm outside is matching the storm going on within Merlin and within each of the other characters. They each are undergoing interpersonal conflict. The storm clears, and he looks up at Ygraine's room to see that she and Uther's lights are out. The issue of a child being conceived has been resolved.



Book 5, Chapter 9

Book 5, Chapter 9 Summary

In this chapter, the real Brithael comes back to tell the lady Ygraine that Gorlois is dead. Gorlois had attacked the King's camp at Dimilioc that fateful night. He had been killed early on. Brithael rides back with Jordan to tell the Lady Ygraine, and he was attacked by Cadal on the path. He bursts into the room with Ralf and Merlin to see if anything is wrong.

Merlin admits to himself that he betrayed Gorlois, as he battles Brithael. As they fight Ulfyn comes down the steps and Merlin tells him to tell Uther that Gorlois is dead. Merlin is pretty badly beat up. His hand is crushed. At the last minute, he lashes out with his sword and gets Brithael in an artery. He manages to kill Brithael.

Book 5, Chapter 9 Analysis

The plot climaxes with Merlin reaching his ultimate goal of having Uther create a child with Ygraine. This has been the riveting goal of the story. The cost is high as Merlin is discovered and must fight for his life. Merlin's character is no warrior and he uses his survival skills to stay alive. The reality of what he has done seems to hit him with the news of Gorlois's death. Merlin admits he has betrayed the dead man.

The author's theme that power can corrupt the hearts of men is shown here as Merlin realizes what he has done. This chapter also shows the theme that good men are unfairly judged and persecuted by others. Gorlois has done his best to support Merlin, Ambrosius, and Uther, but both Merlin and Uther betray him. He dies because of their choices.

The author shows the irony in the vivid imagery of this chapter. Merlin has been persecuted his entire life for his birth. Here his decision to betray Gorlois stands out like a flame. The tone and mood of this chapter is both brutal and intense in the reality of what is happening.



Book 5, Chapter 10

Book 5, Chapter 10 Summary

Merlin painfully makes his way down the hill where he finds Cadal dying. Uther and Ulfin come down behind him. Uther asks if Cadal is dead. Merlin says he is. He says Jordan and Brithael are dead, as well. Uther asks Merlin if he knew this would happen. Merlin says no. Uther is mad, because he feels this could have been avoided. With Gorlis dead, he could have claimed the Lady Ygraine without challenge, and the others lives would have been spared

Uther's love fever is gone, and he is arrogant and angry. Merlin says the right child would not have been born, if they had waited. Uther tells Merlin he had no power except tricks. Uther informs Merlin that he can have the land he promised, but he wants nothing more to do with him.

Cadal speaks, as he is not dead yet. Merlin tells Cadal that a child will be born whom Ygraine will give to him to raise. Merlin promises to teach him what he has learned from Galapas, Cadal, Belasius and Ambrosius. This man will one day be King of all Britain. Cadal dies, and Merlin pushes him in the sea. The novel ends with Merlin looking out at the sky. The storm is over. A star hangs in the sky. Merlin says this is the young sun.

Book 5, Chapter 10 Analysis

The author has reached her objective in the conclusion and resolution of the novel in this chapter. The author's goal has been to describe how King Author comes about and how Merlin becomes his priest, and teacher.

The stark imagery of setting of the dying Cadal on the cliffs is intense. The mood is harsh but final. Merlin's character is sure of what he has done. His sacrifice is complete as he pushes Cadal in to the ocean.

Merlin's transformation as a character throughout the novel is complete. He began as a young innocent boy, a pawn of powerful men's lust for power. The novel ends with him a powerful man in a sense lusting for power not for himself but for the child that will be born. His character is dynamic and fully rounded.

The bitter ending touches on the author's theme of how the pursuit of power can corrupt the hearts of men. It is not shown if Merlin's heart is corrupt but this chapter shows some of his actions are.

Uther shows himself to be the antagonist to Merlin's character. His energy is needed and used by Merlin to create a child that will be King of all Britain. Cadal, like Cerdic and Galapas has sacrificed himself to this end. Each of those characters served as foils for Merlin to learn from and utilize so that he can accomplish his goal. The story has an

open ending for the novel. Yet, the story of King Author is known and available for readers to discover.



Characters

Merlin

Merlin is the famed wizard from the King Arthur stories. This book is about his life before he and Arthur came together. Merlin is about six-years-old, when the story begins. He is an illusive, inquisitive child, spurned because his mother Lady Niniane would not reveal his true father. He starts out hiding in the labyrinth of the palace that belongs to the King. The King is cruel to him, because he is a bastard. Merlin's parentage is a big part of the story.

Merlin, at first, seemingly has no father. Then, he finds out that his father is Ambrosius. King Vortigern tries to sacrifice him because his father is the devil. He draws to him in the end the bastard son of King Uther who he will raise to be the King of all Britain. Merlin's life story here is the pursuit of that end. It is the journey to the tryst between King Uther and Lady Ygraine that Merlin knows will create the King Arthur.

The story is about Merlin studying with teachers like Galapas, Ambrosius, Tremorinus, Belasius and Cadal to learn to be a man, a priest, a healer, a prophet and a prince among other things. All that combines to create the man that will be the future Merlin, the man who walked with King Arthur.

Galapas

One day, Merlin wanders out on the hillside and finds a cave. He goes in and explores. This is where the crystal cave is, as well. This is Galapas's cave. Galapas finds him and becomes his teacher. He teaches Merlin about healing, medicines, animals, maps, the stars and magic. They become friends and Galapas tells Merlin the cave will be his.

He allows Merlin to use the crystal chamber. In it, Merlin sees the adit, where King Vortigern will build his fort. He also sees the scene as it happens of his grandfather's death and Camlach's anger.

Galapas is the element that puts Merlin on his path to power. The simple hermit becomes Merlin's confidant, friend and even father figure. His cave continued to be a home for Merlin throughout his lifetime.

Camlach

Camlach is Merlin's uncle. He is Lady Niniane's brother. He is an antagonist to Merlin. He is a big blonde man who is calculating and shrewd. Camlach returns home after the death of his brother Dyved. In the beginning, he pretends to support Merlin. He clearly becomes the antagonist in the story when he tries to give Merlin poisoned fruit. He is determined to have his father's throne. Lady Niniane is a threat if she were to marry a



noble. He feels Merlin could also interfere with his plans. Though it is not stated, it seems Camlach may know that Merlin's father is actually Ambrosius. Camlach's break comes when his father falls and breaks his neck. He somehow blames Merlin because it was his servant Cerdic who spilled the oil the old King slipped in.

Camlach causes Merlin's character to shift in different ways. At first with his support, Merlin felt happy that he was there for him. When Camlach tried to kill him, he was sad and disappointed. He was wary, but it seemed he somehow had some assurance that Camlach could not do too much. Perhaps it was because of his mother. However, when the King died, and Merlin saw it in a vision, he knew he was not safe around him and that he must leave. He was angered at Camlach because of the death of Cerdic. Camlach's anger pushed Merlin to run away right to Ambrosius, which is right where he needed to be. In that light, Camlach was a good antagonist.

The King, Merlin's Grandfather

Merlin's grandfather is a King in South Wales. His palace is in Maridunnum. The King hates Merlin, because he is a bastard. Camlach has come home to his father the king to see the status of the throne for him. Merlin takes the King's anger and cruelty as matter of fact. It serves to give him strength of character. The King slips and falls breaking his neck. This chain of events sends Merlin off where he connects with his real father Prince Ambrosius.

The Lady Niniane

Lady Niniane is Merlin's mother. She is gentle and attractive. She is somewhat aloof with Merlin. Her big secret is who his father really is. She allows people to think Merlin is the spawn of the devil rather than they know it is really Ambrosius. She is somewhat detached to her son, which allows him time with his nurse, servant and later Galapas. This attachment allows Merlin to develop his survival skills and to learn from others what he will need for his future.

Lady Niniane is taken to King Vortigern with Merlin when he is eighteen. She tells the tale, in court, that he was the child of an incubus. She tells it so convincingly that they believe it. Lady Niniane desires to be a nun and she goes in to St. Peters. She dies there without seeing Ambrosius again. Her character has poise and royal bearing with sense of detachment. Her gift of 'sight' comes to Merlin. This gift he uses many times.

Dinias

Dinias is a minor character. He starts out as an antagonist of Merlin's when he was young. Both he and Merlin were bastards. Dinias was a red haired bully and the son of the King by a servant woman. The King gave him favor and he used it. In the beginning, Merlin avoided Dinias. However, he soon learned that he was afraid of the sight and used it against him. He mostly avoided Merlin, until he returned at the age of eighteen.



It was because of Dinias's loud talk that King Vortigern's men realized who Merlin was and took him to the King. Dinias got some coins for that. Later, he denied to Merlin that he had set it up. He went to fight with Ambrosius and died of wounds from battle.

Cerdic

Merlin's grandfather gave him a nasty push that left a cut on him. He was angry, because Lady Niniane refused to marry Gorlan of Lanascoll. Cerdic was Moravik's boyfriend and sometimes slept in the room with her and Merlin. He finds Merlin in the room after the incident and tends the wound. He tells Merlin to be like the ringdove and keep quiet and run away. After that point, he becomes Merlin's attendant. Cerdic watches over Merlin, as he comes and goes over the valley. He is the one blamed for spilling the oil that Camlach's father tripped in. Camlach had him killed and used the incident to go after Merlin. Merlin's character changes, when Cerdic becomes his ally and tends his wounds. He becomes more confident.

Moravik

Moravik was Merlin's Nurse, while he was at the palace in South Wales. She was a strong woman and kept him out of trouble. She was at times more a parent than Lady Niniane. Merlin slept in her room. When Olwen had her child, Moravik moved into the nursery with that child.

Demetrius

It is Camlach's desire to put Merlin in the priesthood that draws Demetrius into Merlin's life as a teacher. Demetrius is glad to have the job, because his vices of drink and gambling had gotten him in trouble. Those same vices allowed Merlin to split his lessons with both Demetrius for the math and languages and Galapas for the more wondrous things.

Olwen

Queen Olwen is described as being placid. Her music and note playing is good, and she teaches Merlin his notes. Neither Merlin nor Lady Niniane likes her, although it is never explained why. She is Lady Niniane's father's third wife.

Gorlan of Lanascoll

Gorlan's arrival changes things for Merlin. Merlin reveals to Moravik his ability to use foresight by telling her who he was. Gorlan comes to Maridunnum to ask for Lady Niniane's hand. She refuses. This causes the King to push Merlin, and Camlach to try and kill him. Gorlan is a minor character, but his appearance helps to develop the plot.



Aurelius Ambrosius

The Red Dragon Ambrosius and his cousin went to his cousin King Budec after Vortigern killed his brother Constantius. His men kidnap/rescue Merlin and bring him to Less Britain. There, Merlin grows and learns that Ambrosius is his real father. He is finally treated with respect.

Ambrosius is a brilliant general and manager of men. He prepares his army to one day attack Britain and take it back from King Vortigern. He says he uses each man in his way. This is a trait that Merlin adopts and begins use people. They both do it in a way that on the surface it fits the times.

Merlin sees that Ambrosius will be King in a vision, and it brings turmoil to Vortigern's camp. Ambrosius gives Merlin legitimate power and knowledge. Through him, Merlin learns high rituals and engineering, among other things. Ambrosius does become King of Britain and still looks after Merlin. He dies after a battle and is replaced by his brother, Uther.

Uther

Uther is a strikingly handsome warrior captain. He is the brother of Ambrosius and, together, they work to retake Britain. He never seems to like Merlin and resents him even when he realizes that Ambrosius is Merlin's Father. Uther is a womanizer and raises Merlin's ire by taking the willing Keri to his bed.

Uther is a loyal fighter for Ambrosius and stays the cause. He is the captain whose cloak Merlin hides in when he first reaches Ambrosius's hold. Somehow, he usually has scorn for Merlin.

When Ambrosius dies, Uther becomes King. When he is to be crowned, he is overcome by feelings for Lady Ygraine. She is the wife of his loyal supporter Gorlois. Undeterred he, Merlin and the lovely lady devise a plan where they can be together for one night. This fated night leads to disaster for Merlin's man Cadal, Gorlois and others. However, out of their union Arthur is born. This was Merlin's goal all along.

Uther's primal energy is the balance for Ambrosius's more calculated logic. Merlin pulls from both. Uther's character heightens the tone of the plot.

King Vortigern

Vortigern was the King of Great Britain during much of Merlin's life. He was a ruthless strong ruler who had taken the throne after King Constantius was murdered. He ruled with his witch wife the Saxon Rowena. He was a large man with a big face and thick black hair that was turning gray. He is one of the chief antagonists in this story by his rule and by his action in the plot of history. His fight to hold on to the throne with the use



of Saxon mercenaries had backfired against him. It is because of him and his rule that much strife continued through out Greater and Lesser Britain.

The King is the antagonist that forces a lot of change in the lives of the characters. It is said and shown that he is brutal and ruthless. He commits murder even within his own family for power, and even his own sons turn against him. He is a superstitious and fear-based man as evidenced in the belief that Merlin's blood sacrifice will stop the walls of Kings Fort from crumbling.

The King is the White Dragon and Ambrosius is the Red Dragon whom Merlin prophesizes will destroy him. King Vortigern's rule is one of the reason Merlin wants a King who can unite Britain in Peace. Thus, King Vortigern brings about King Arthur.

Queen Rowena

Queen Rowena is a minor character in the novel, but the Saxon Witch Queen to King Vortigern's is quite vile. Her character believes the priest when they say Merlin is the child of the devil. She is also said to have been the one to poison Ambrosius's brother Constantius.

Cadal

Cadal is Ambrosius's servant, who became assigned to Merlin. He was red faced with black hair. He met Merlin when Ambrosius brought him home after finding him in the stables. He becomes Merlin's confidant and servant. He is a major character in regards to his relationship with Merlin. He tries to keep Merlin out of trouble but finds him headstrong at times. Cadal sees through Dinias when they go to Merlin's hometown to spy on King Vortigern. He makes sure the message gets through to Ambrosius on Merlin's capture.

Cadal rides out from Kings Fort when Merlin's White and Red Dragon vision throws the place in turmoil. He returns and sets up Galapas's cave for Merlin and tends him there. He is fiercely loyal to Merlin and is one of the characters that are like a father to him. Cadal follows Merlin in the folly of Ygraine and Uther and is killed. Even in his dying

Breath, he believed in Merlin's vision.

Belasius

Belasius was Merlin's teacher, while he was with Ambrosius. He was half Gallo-Roman and half Sicilian. He was olive skinned with a cruel mouth. Later Merlin finds out that he is a Druid Priest. Merlin eventually learns about that part of his teachings as well.



Ulfin

Ulfin was Belasius's timid servant during the period when he taught Merlin. He later would serve Ambrosius.

Tremorinus

Merlin learns a lot from Tremorinus, the engineer who was working for Ambrosius. He taught Merlin during his stay in Les Britain, and they worked together, rebuilding projects for Ambrosius in Great Britain.

Gorlois

Gorlois is a big, burley warrior, who helps Ambrosius and Uther in many battles. His skills help bring Ambrosius the crown. When Ambrosius dies, he helps King Uther. To repay him Uther falls in love with Gorlois's wife, the Lady Ygraine. Uther pursues her in front of the entire court. Gorlois is a loyal man and wants to leave the court and take his wife with him. Merlin helps Uther to betray him by disguising Uther as Gorlois for a tryst with the Lady Ygraine, which he knows, will produce a child. Gorlois instead went to Dimilioc to fight Uther, who he thought was there, and was killed. His men, returning to tell the Lady Ygraine that Gorlois is dead, do battle with Cadal and Merlin. Cadal is killed.

Lady Ygraine

Ygraine is the young wife of Gorlois, whom Uther falls madly in love with. She hides it, but secretly, she is also in love with him. She and Merlin devise a plot where she and Uther can have a night together. She is the mother of King Arthur.

Marric

Marric is a minor character, yet he is the catalyst for Merlin getting away from Camlach after the King dies. He and Hanno are spies for Ambrosius. They catch Merlin fleeing the palace and think he is a thief. When they find out that he is, they decide to take him to Lesser Britain to Ambrosius.

Marric's gruff, dangerous character is shrewd and he sees the value of a 'live' Merlin. This causes the movements that help Merlin meet his destiny. He lived to continue to spy for Ambrosius and to take the message back to him that Merlin and Lady Niniane were taken by King Vortigern's men.

Hanno

Merlin described Hanno as a weasel. Indeed, it was his sulky, corrupt character. He was partner with Marric in capture of Merlin and taking to Lesser Britain. He is a minor character except in that his presence changes the tide for Merlin.

Alun

When Camlach comes to Maridunnum, Alun is his confidant with whom he discusses things. Merlin comes upon them while crawling under the house. Her hears them talking about him. Alun is a very minor character.



Objects/Places

Maridunum

Maridunum is the place in South Wales where Merlin was born.

South Wales

South Wales is the town the Welsh call Caer-yn-ar-Von. The Romans built it on the Seint River. A hundred years later, King Vortigern rebuilt it.

Great Britain

Great Britain is the country that is now known as England. It is where Merlin lived with his grandfather and over which the battles were fought.

Less Britain

Less Britain is the land across the English Channel or Narrow Sea. It is where Ambrosius, Uther and King Budec prepared for an attack on Great Britain and King Vortigern.

Narrow Sea

The Narrow Sea is the waterway that Merlin crosses to reach Less Britain, in Gallia. It separates Less Britain from Great Britain and Ambrosius from King Vortigern.

The Palace

The Palace is the home of Merlin's grandfather the King, where he grew up in his early years.

St. Peters

St. Peters is the nunnery, where Merlin's mother, the Lady Niniane, goes for sanctuary.



The Cave

The cave is a reoccurring symbol in the book. It represents a place of power, vision, magic and learning. It is also the cave of Galapas, the hermit who becomes Merlin's teacher and friend.

Falcon

The falcon appears as a real bird that Merlin heals. It is also what his name means.

The Ringdove

The Ringdove is the bird that Cerdic tells Merlin to be like when he is young. He tells Merlin to keep quiet and run away when danger is around like the bird.

The Prince of Darkness

Merlin was said to have been conceived by the 'Prince of Darkness,' otherwise known as the Devil. This caused people to fear and respect Merlin.

The Wolf

The wolf represents a lean cunning and calculating mind. This is what Ambrosius was like while in Less Britain building his arm and what Merlin learned to be like.

The Red Dragon

The Red Dragon was the banner of Ambrosius. It became his battle banner. It also represented a falling star.

The White Dragon

The White Dragon was the banner of King Vortigern. Merlin saw it destroyed in a vision.

Druids

The Druids were members of a religious sect. They worshipped in the old way of the Goddess, which was becoming outlawed. Belasius taught Merlin in the way of the Druids.



Themes

Good Men Are Unfairly Judged and Persecuted

The setting of this book portrays the dark times of the land. Men took no thought at murdering their own kin or anyone else. Merlin's uncle, Camlach, planned to kill him, in Book One, Chapter Two. Camlach's thought an innocent child blocked his path to the throne. Merlin, unfairly judged, was dispensable to him. Merlin for most of his early years was mistreated for being a bastard. The author presents the theme that good men are unfairly judged and persecuted by others.

This theme is seen throughout the book. It is used through interpersonal conflict to develop the protagonist, Merlin's character. Camlach's men murdered Merlin's servant and friend Cerdic, a good man. He was killed for spilling the oil that caused the King's death. This death began to create the dynamic character development of Merlin. He began to long for justice in the one King who could unite Britain and end the fighting. Mary Stewart shows this main concept to be what will bring about the future King. The theme of men being judged and persecuted gives birth to the idea of the one uniting King of Britain.

Merlin fled to Lesser Britain to escape Camlach. There he connected with Ambrosius and Uther. These men left Great Britain when their Brother Constantius was killed. Here the theme is shown again in that these brothers were betrayed, one murdered and the other two banished. Merlin is judged in the beginning by Uther but he is redeemed by Ambrosius who he later found out was his father.

Merlin returned from Lesser Britain and found his teacher Galapas dead. He reflected on the author's explicit theme in the following quote from Book Three, Chapter four, page 255. "Vortimer, Pascentius, anyone. When a man's wise and gentle and good." I added bitterly. 'It seems to me that any man's hand is against him. Galapas could have been murdered by an outlaw for food or a herdsman for shelter, or a passing soldier for a drink of water.'

King Vortigern, his wife and priests later in the book, judges Merlin. They believed blood sacrifice would stop the walls of Vortigern's Fort from falling. They believed this because Lady Niniane Merlin's mother said he was born of the devil. Nevertheless, Merlin is persecuted, once again. Each time this happens, the conflict rounds out Merlin's character.

The mood and tone of the story further develop the author's theme. The lives of the servants, both in their duty to their lords and in their fights on the battlefield, are put into play with this theme. Cadal, Merlin's servant, a good man, dies at the end of the book doing Merlin's bidding. His death leads to the open ending of the book with the theme still in the air.



The Pursuit of Power Can Corrupt

The author's work takes place during the dark ages. This was a brutal and harsh period of history. A prevailing theme in the book is the savagery and cruelty that humans can have towards each other. Here Merlin begins to see the tragedy around him in the plight of men.

The pursuit and corruption of power is one of the prevailing themes of the book. In the first chapter we find that Merlin's uncle Dyved has died. There was talk of poison. Camlach has returned home to verify his status to the throne. He fears that Lady Niniane and Merlin could stand in his way and plots to block them. In that pursuit he plans to lock his sister away, plots to kill Merlin and works to send him to the monastery. He does all this for the power of the throne.

In *The Crystal Cave* we see not only what people will do to get or keep power but also what they will do when they believe they have the power to get away with it. Merlin's grandfather is King but cruel to him in his belief that Merlin has no father. This theme is seen in person-against-person conflict with Merlin and the antagonist of the first chapter Camlach. It is also seen as in person-against society-conflict for Merlin, which begins to shape his character.

The theme is shown with the minor character of Hanno who wants to kill Merlin after kidnapping him. Merlin then connects with both the powerful Ambrosius and Uther. Ambrosius tempers his power while Uther is somewhat cruel with it. Merlin finds a way to balance with them both.

Belasius is one of Merlin's teachers in the book and he uses his power as a Druid Priest to kill and sacrifice a man and to force Merlin to become a part of his rituals. Merlin's character begins to take advantage of these circumstances and learn as much as he can from all that comes his way. This appears to be an adaptation of his character to deal with this theme. Merlin also deals King Vortigern's power mad superstitions with the walls of Kings Fort. This continues to round out Merlin's character to think fast on his feet.

In the end Uther became King and felt he has the right to take another man's wife. This led to an interesting character development for Merlin. It seemed he began to feel the same power that he could do what he wanted and get away with it. He helped Uther to accomplish his goal to spend the night with Lady Ygraine. That escapade cost the life of several men and the lost of Uther's respect if any ways there. The cruelest loss was that of Merlin's friend Cadal. The novel closed with Merlin believing he had done the right thing for power.

Fate of a Man Decided by His Lineage

The fact that Merlin is considered a bastard and his father is unknown is touched on many times in this novel. The fact that Merlin doesn't know who his father is and is



treated poorly is one of the major developers of his early character. His birth is a problem for his grandfather the King, even though he favors Dinias, who is his bastard child from a slave. This theme shows Dinias as a character foil to Merlin. They both have similar parentage but different characters.

Merlin's uncle Dyved is killed because of his lineage. This brings Camlach home to further test this theme. Camlach though he is heir to the throne is not secure. He tries to kill Merlin. Merlin's birth gives him the blessing of two teachers in his early life, Galapas and Demetrius. It leads to a second attempt on his life by Camlach. Thereafter he runs away.

In Lesser Brittany, the men of Ambrosius discover him. This by coincidence is Merlin's father. Ambrosius is heir to the throne and this changes Merlin's life yet again. He is now really treated like a prince. He has teachers and learns engineering, math and languages. He grows into an intelligent man worthy of his station in life.

The lineage of men is also a factor in the battles and wars that wage around Greater and Lesser Britain. Vortimer and Pascentius fight their father King Vortigern for the throne. The brothers Ambrosius and Uther are banished when their brother is killed for the throne.

Merlin's assumed spiritual parentage rumor causes Lord Vortigern and his priests to try and sacrifice him. Merlin's issues dealing with his parentage and seeing the nobles and Kings fight over it makes him want to have a stable Great Britain. This pushes him to bring about King Arthur.

Style

Point of View

Mary Stewart's *The Crystal Cave* is told in both first person and third person point of view. It is the life of Merlin from when he was a child until King Arthur was conceived. It is a masterful process of mixing the character Merlin's personal first hand memories with his great story telling abilities.

It is a first hand account, which Merlin delivers with the impact of having been there. The author does a good job with this. In some places in the stories, where Merlin wasn't there he uses the third person point of view. A good example of the third person point of view is in Book Four, Chapter One, The Red Dragon. In Chapter One Merlin tells of Ambrosius's exploits as from a story.

Merlin seems to use the third person perspective when there is a lot of history. The first person view has more action and heart.

Setting

This novel was written about the period of history in Fifth Century called the Dark Ages. It was a time of war, strife and conflict amongst the various peoples that lived in Less Britain now France, Great Britain, Ireland, Wales and Germany. The Nobles vied for power. Murders of Kings were common place and allegiance switched easily.

Merlin grew up during this time, with intrigues in his own home. His grandfather a King hates him for being a bastard. His uncle Camlach wants his father's throne. This scenario is repeated over each country. There is no wonder Merlin had a desire to find a way to bring peace.

The country is beautiful and wild. The author using great imagery and tone to set the scene for the beauty of the land that is there. She makes great emphasis on the misty wetness of the rain. The crags and barren forlornness of some of the crags is described as Merlin rides about.

Language and Meaning

This novel is written about a period of history when there were many dialects and languages in the local community. Ms. Stewart does not attempt to use dialects in the dialogue structure, which makes the story read very easily. She does attempt to show the different names of places using what they may have been called by different people.

The Welsh call the nearby river Tobius on military maps and the Tywy. This is what Merlin calls it. Another example is Kings Fort, also known as Dinias Brenin.



Merlin's name is also given different explanations as well. He states to Camlach in Book One, Chapter One that his name is Myrddin Emrys. He says he is called Merlinus, which is the Roman name for the Falcon or corwalch. Merlinus is further shortened to Merlin.

The naming structure used by the author to set the tone of the locales in the novel. It reflects the history and cultures of Great Britain, Wales and Ireland. The local names themselves, such as Mardunnum, Caer-Myrddin and Sergontium, help capture the feel of the period and the country.

The author uses metaphor in the book to show character attributes. Cerdic uses the following quote from Book One, Chapter Three, page 35: "They used to say in my country, the ring-dove has many enemies, because her flesh is sweet and her eggs are good to eat. Nevertheless, she lives and she prospers, because she runs away. The Lady Niniane may have called you her little falcon, but you're not a falcon yet, young Merlin. You're only a dove. Remember that. Live by keeping quiet. And by running away. Mark my words." Merlin in the novel is compared to both the dove and the falcon, which he is named after.

Ms. Stewart also uses metaphor in the naming of the chapters. Merlin introduces the book in the exposition in the Prologue. The Prologue is called 'The Prince of Darkness,' which is a metaphor for the Ambrosius who is Merlin's real father. Book One and Book Two are named 'The Dove,' and the 'Falcon' terms for young Merlin. Book Three entitled, 'The Wolf.' describes Ambrosius as he awaits his return to Great Britain to fight for the throne. Merlin also embodies some of the wolf's traits. 'The Red Dragon,' is the heir to the throne and King Ambrosius. 'The Coming of the Bear,' is about the coming of King Arthur, who is the Bear.

Structure

The Crystal Cave is a great book with a lot of structure. It has a Prologue, which allows us to see that the book is about Merlin's memories. The novel is further divided into Books of which there are five. Each Book has about ten or twelve chapters. There is also the Author's note, Acknowledgement and Legend of Merlin at the end. There are Five hundred and twenty-one pages in the book.

The structure of the book helps to define the character Merlin's development. Merlin is younger and more vulnerable in Book One. Ms. Stewart entitles Book One 'The Dove.' Merlin begins to claim his power in Book Two called, 'The Falcon.' By Book Three, Merlin is becoming like his father 'The Wolf.'

The author's information and notes are useful. The data helps us see that Ms. Stewart's process and background. She includes the more known story of Merlin as well. She also acknowledges that she had no intention for the book to be historically accurate.

The author also includes several maps of Greater and Lesser Britain. This is very helpful as some of the present day names are different but we are able to see the historical locations of which the author is writing.



Quotes

"Emrys? Child of light, belonging to the gods...? That hardly seems the name for a demon's whelp." Book One, Chapter 1, pg. 7

"I don't want it. It's black inside. Look you can see right though." Book One, Chapter 2, pg. 29

"They used to say in my country, the ring-dove has many enemies, because her flesh is sweet and her eggs are good to eat. But she lives and she prospers, because she runs away. The Lady Niniane may have called you her little falcon, but you're not a falcon, yet, young Merlin. You're only a dove. Remember that. Live by keeping quiet, and by running away. Mark my words."

"The gods only go with you, Cerdic, if you put yourself in their path." Book One, Chapter 8, pg. 72

"Bring him along, one of you. Uther, you may as well give him your cloak again before he dies in front of your eyes." Book Two, Chapter 4, pg. 150

"Now think of your grandfather's nobles, How many will be loyal to Camlach? Their names? How many men? And of his allies, who? Their numbers...their fighting power...?" Book Two, Chapter 5, pg. 162

"You are going to pay for this night's work, Merlin Emrys, in coin that will content her. The Goddess is going to hunt you down, as she does all men who spy on her mystery-but not to destroy you. Oh, no; not Actacon, my apt little scholar, but Endymion. She will take you into her embrace. In other words, you are going to study until I can take you with me to the sanctuary, and present you there." Book Two, Chapter 10, pg. 201

"It is true, then, this Sight of yours. I have been so sure, and now - now, beyond all doubt, it is true. I thought it was, that first night by the standing stone, but that could have been anything - a dream, a boy's story, a lucky guess to wine my interest. But this... I was right about you." Book Two, Chapter 12 pg. 220 and 221

"Vortimer, Pascentius, anyone. When a man's wise and gentle and good, I added bitterly, 'it sees to me that any man's every man's hand is against him. Galapas could have been murdered by an outlaw for food, or a herdsman for shelter, or a passing soldier for drink of water.'" Book Three, Chapter 4, pg. 255

"Watch, your step, I would Merlin. Your cousin, did say: Proper daisy he is, and no mistake. He doesn't like you." Book Three, Chapter 5, pg. 265

"So all through that winter he came to me. And he came at night. I was never alone in my chamber, but he came through doors and windows and walls, and lay with me. I never saw him again, but heard his voice and felt his body. Then in summer, when I was heavy with child, he left me." Book Three, Chapter 8, pg. 295



"Enough. Enough to know that these men are fools and charlatans. Very well, Vortigern. Take me up to the crag and bring your knives with you, you and your soothsayers. Show me this fortress, these cracking walls, and see if I cannot tell you better than they, why our fort will not stand. 'No man's child!'" Book Three, Chapter 9, pg. 304

"This is the magic, King Vortigern, that lies beneath your tower. This is why your walls cracked as fast as they could build them. Which so your soothsayers could have showed you what I show you now?" Book Three, Chapter 10, pg. 315

"Some day they may kill me,' I said. 'But not today. Open the door.'" Book Three, Chapter 12, pg. 326

"Don't be afraid for me, Mother. Whatever god uses me, I am content to be his voice and instrument. I go where he sends me. And when he is finished with me he will take me back." Book Four, Chapter 3, pg. 358

"He will go to his own gods with army around him, in the manner of his people." Book Four, Chapter 5, pg. 372

"She died just after you'd left. I suppose they told you all about it?" Book Four, Chapter 8, pg. 399

"Indeed. This is it. I am not content to wait here in Britain while Ireland and Germany gather their forces and then come together on both our coasts like a summer storm, and meeting Britain to overwhelm the North. Britain lies between them now, and she can divide them before ever they combine to attack." Book Four, Chapter 9, pg. 408

"By the gods, Merlin, it was not for you to judge whether to speak or not! You are not King. You should have told me." Book Five, Chapter 2, pg. 434

"She's sick, that's why, and I'd have you come and see her, if you will. When her women told her you were herein London, she begged me to send for you. I can tell you, I was thankful when I heard you'd come. There's not many men I'd trust just now, and that's God's truth. But I'd trust you." Book Five, Chapter 4, pg. 459

"Open up, Felix, and let us get in out of this, for pity's sake. The Duke had a fall from his horse this morning and his bandage is soaking. There are just the four of us here. Make haste." Book Five, Chapter 7, pg. 483

"A legitimate child,' he said swiftly. 'Not a bastard such as we have made between us tonight. By the head of Mithras, do you truly think my name and hers can withstand this night's work? Even if we marry within the week, you know what men will say. That I am Gorlois's murderer. And there man who will go on believing that she was in truth pregnant by him as she told them and that the child is his.'" Book Five, Chapter 10, pg. 502

Topics for Discussion

Discuss to what degree do you feel Merlin's parentage had to do wanting to unite Britain.

Describe what factors caused Uther to be so entranced with Gorlois's wife Ygraine.

Discuss what factors contribute to the warring and infighting in Greater and Lesser Britain?

What attributes made Merlin a remarkable character? List some examples.

What different aspects did Galapas, Ambrosius, Cerdic, Belasius and Cadal each give to Merlin?

Why was Ambrosius so effective as a leader?

Discuss the affectivity of the author's technique of combining first and third perspective in this novel.