

The Dragon Reborn Study Guide

The Dragon Reborn by Robert Jordan

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Plot Summary

Rand Al'Thor, not convinced that he is the Dragon Reborn, attempts to storm the Stone of Tear and seize Callandor, a feat prophesied to herald the arrival of the Dragon Reborn. His friends from Emond's Field all race Rand to Tear, where, in a pitched battle, the Stone of Tear falls, Rand takes Callandor, proving to himself and others that he is the Dragon Reborn, and Rand gains new support from the Aiel, the People of the Dragon.

After the battle of Falme, Moiraine takes the survivors to hide out in a pass in the mountains east of Arad Doman. She sends Verin Sedai, Nynaeve, Egwene, Elayne, and the thieftaker Hurrin to accompany Matrim Cauthon to Tar Valon, where they hope to separate him from the tainted dagger of Shadar Logoth. Rand wants to join with the fighters on the Almoth Plain, many of whom have declared support for him as the Dragon Reborn. He argues with Moiraine, who believes he will be too exposed, but Rand is also still not convinced that he is the Dragon Reborn. He has begun to dream about Callandor, the Sword That Is Not a Sword, a powerful object which is housed in the Heart of the Stone in the great fortress of the city of Tear. Prophecy says that Callandor, which is protected by an invisible force that no one has been able to penetrate or remove, can only be retrieved by the Dragon Reborn, and that the Stone of Tear, the fortress where it rests, which has never once fallen to an attack, will only fall when the Dragon Reborn comes to take Callandor.

Rand sneaks away from Moiraine and the rest of the camp, intent on going to Tear to attempt to take Callandor, believing that he will likely die in the attempt, but fearing that he will not, that he will be successful in retrieving Callandor and will be unable to deny any longer that he is the Dragon Reborn. Moiraine tells the Shienarans to wait in the pass, and takes Perrin, Lan, and Loial with her to pursue Rand, correctly guessing that his destination is Tear. She sends a reluctant Min to Tar Valon to update Siuan Sanche, the Amyrlin Seat, on what has occurred at Falme and on Rand's intention to take Callandor.

Nynaeve, Egwene, and Elayne arrive at Tar Valon with Mat, who is near death. Siuan Sanche treats the women openly as runaways, punishing them for their actions. Privately, she tells them that Liandrin Sedai, who tricked them and betrayed them to the Seanchan, returned to the Tower and staged a revolt. Liandrin and twelve other Aes Sedai stole several angreal, powerful magical objects used to enhance the One Power, and killed several Warders and Aes Sedai. Siuan says Liandrin and her conspirators are clearly Black Ajah, Aes Sedai who worship the Dark One, and she sets Nynaeve, Egwene, and Elayne the task of tracking Liandrin down. They quickly discover Liandrin made plans to head for Tear, and resolve to follow, but Elayne says that she must send a letter to her mother, Queen Morgase, telling her that Elayne intends to leave Tar Valon again. They select Mat, who is quickly recovering after being separated from the dagger and is eager to leave the White Tower, to carry the letter. On his way out of town, Mat runs into Thom Merrilin and convinces the gleeman to accompany him.

On the journey to Tear, Nynaeve, Egwene, and Elayne are rescued from brigands by an Aiel chief named Rhuarc, who says that he and those with him are searching for He Who Comes With the Dawn, the Aiel savior. Perrin, too, meets up with an Aiel, a man named Gaul, who he frees from Whitecloaks in a small town near Illian. Perrin is then joined by Faile, a young woman who is a hunter for the horn of Valere, and finds Perrin and his traveling companions intriguing. She accompanies them to Illian, where they run into the Darkhounds of the Forsaken Sammael, who is ruling the council of Illian.

All the parties converge on Tear, where a new High Lord has been dominating the government. He is actually the Forsaken named Be'Lal, and he has Liandrin and the other Black Ajah as guests in the Stone of Tear. They take Nynaeve, Egwene, and Elayne captive, as bait to trap Rand. During a pitched battle, in which an Aiel force led by Rhuarc, storms the Stone of Tear, and Mat rescues Nynaeve, Egwene, and Elayne, Rand faces off against Be'lal and Ba'alzamon. Be'lal is killed by Moiraine, and Ba'alzamon by Rand, after Rand seizes Callandor, and the inhabitants of Tear awaken to find the banner of the Dragon Reborn flying over the fortress.

Prologue

Prologue Summary

After the battle of Falme that closed the previous book, Moiraine Sedai sends Verin Sedai, Nynaeve, Egwene, Elayne, and the thieftaker Hurrin to escort Matrim Cauthon to Tar Valon, where they all hope it is not too late to separate him from the dagger of Shadar Logoth and save his life. Moiraine takes the rest, including Rand, Perrin, her warder Lan, Loial the Ogier, Min, and the remaining Shienarans, to hide out in a pass in the mountains east of Arad Doman. Though they fly the banner of the Dragon, Lews Therin Telamon, over their camp, Moiraine keeps them from joining the battle on the Almoth Plain, in Arad Doman, where many fighters, incited by the witnessing of Rand's battle with Ba'alzamon in the sky over Falme, have declared support for him as the Dragon Reborn and await his reappearance.

Pedron Niall, the leader of the Children of the Light, a radical organization whose purpose is to rout out Darkfriends, or servants of the Dark One, receives a report from Jaret Byar about the battle of Falme. Jaret shows him drawings of Rand Al'Thor fighting Ba'alzamon in the sky over the city. Byar tells Niall that the force of Whitecloaks, another name for the Children of the Light, led by Geofram Bornhald was destroyed because they were betrayed by a Darkfriend named Perrin Aybara.

Byar leaves and Jaichim Carridin, a Questioner, a man responsible for forcing people to confess that they are Darkfriends, visits. Carridin, denying the fact that the Seanchan, an invading force that had taken over Falme, were from across the Aryth Ocean, wants to track down and kill Rand and Perrin. Niall will not move against Rand until he is stronger, thereby bringing more glory to the Children when Rand is brought down, along with the Aes Sedai witches who support him. Even though Aes Sedai battled against evil in the Age of Legends, and even though the current Aes Sedai are sworn to do so as well, the Children of the Light had, over the centuries, come to regard anyone who used the One Power as a Darkfriend. Until then, Niall tells Carridin, that they must try to protect Rand.

A man named Ordeith, or Wormwood in the Old Tongue, visits Niall. He tells Niall that Rand, Perrin, and another young man named Mat Cauthon, are in league together and that they are Darkfriends.

Upon returning to his quarters, Jaichim Carridin is confronted by a Myrddraal, a creature that serves the Dark One. The Myrddraal tells him that the Dark One wants Rand dead and that Carridin must see it done. Carridin is a Darkfriend.

Prologue Analysis

The Children of the Light play almost no role in this volume in the Wheel of Time series, so the entire prologue foreshadows events that occur later on in the series, especially in

the next book, *The Shadow Rising*. Pedron Niall hopes to build up Rand, who he believes is being aided by the White Tower, the organization of woman who can channel, so that, when Rand falls, as all false Dragons do, the reputation and strength of the Tower will fall with it. But, Niall is not blind to the possibility that Rand is the true Dragon Reborn, the man prophesied to lead all enemies of the Dark One in the final battle. Because of the permanent state of paranoia that grips the Children, Niall is unwilling to voice this possibility to any, especially not Jaichim Carridin, who as an Questioner, could use such a suggestion as evidence that Niall plots to help a false Dragon, and is thus, according to the Children, a Darkfriend. Niall's unwillingness to share the idea that Rand is the Dragon Reborn with Jaichim Carridin, who, being a Darkfriend ordered to dispose of Rand, knows full well that Rand is the Dragon Reborn, is ironic.

Though it is not yet revealed explicitly, and will not be until the next book, the fact that the mysterious man Ordeith is actually Padan Fain is easily understood by the attentive reader.

Chapters 1-5

Chapters 1-5 Summary

Perrin receives and escorts a woman named Leya to Moiraine. Moiraine, Lan, Rand, Perrin, and the company of Shienarans that fought with them in the battle of Falme, have taken refuge in a mountain canyon for a full winter. As they arrive, Min, who can see visions of people's futures, whispers to Perrin that she sees a violent death in Leya's near future.

Rand walks out of the camp after arguing with Moiraine about his course of action. Rand wants to help the fighters on the Almoth Plain, who have declared themselves for him. Moiraine believes he needs to establish an army first, preferably backed by one of the large city-states. Rand's frustration leads him to temporarily lose control of saidin, the male half of the One Power, and he causes a small earthquake in the camp.

When Rand returns, he and the others hear Leya tell Moiraine about the fighting on the Almoth Plain and the arrival of 5,000 Whitecloaks in Arad Doman. The presence of the Whitecloaks further enforces Moiraine's belief that Rand should not yet move openly to help those who have declared for him.

Leya also says that there have been reports from villages about several young men, all tall and with light eyes, like Rand, being murdered by unknown assailants. Moiraine thinks the assassins are Soulless, ordinary-looking people without true souls who act as assassins for the Dark forces, and that, after Falme, the Dark One now has an accurate description of Rand, and is seeking to have him killed.

Perrin dreams of a man in black who offers him wine and tells him that three threads woven together share the same fate. He then finds himself before a mirror, geared for battle, with a helmet in the shape of a lion's head. A beautiful woman in white offers him wine and glory, but he tells her he is just a blacksmith. After that he witnesses a meeting of three distinguished men on a bridge. The men argue until an explosion occurs among them and they scatter. He then finds himself in a chamber, in which a sword of crystal hovers above the ground. He knows that the sword is called Callandor, and he attempts to reach out and touch it, but suddenly receives a warning, in the voice of a wolf, that "the Twisted Ones come."

Perrin awakes to find the camp overrun by Trollocs, half-beast half-man soldiers of the dark, the grunts of the Shadow. He fights them off, trying to defend Leya, but when she jumps on a Myrddraal's back to keep it from attacking Perrin, the Myrddraal kills her. Perrin, who can communicate with wolves, reaches out to the wolves nearby and leads them against the invaders. With the help of the wolves, they are able to drive off the dark force.

Chapters 1-5 Analysis

Rand's determination to separate himself from Moiraine and the White Tower, which was the driving force behind many of his actions in the previous book, *The Great Hunt*, again places him at odds with Moiraine. When Moiraine and Siuan Sanche, the leader of the Aes Sedai, first told Rand what they suspected, that he was the man prophesied to fight against the Dark One in the last battle, that he was the Dragon Reborn, he told them firmly that he would not be used by the White Tower. At that time, he did not believe that he was the Dragon Reborn. Now, even after having fought Ba'alzamon in the sky over Falme, he is still not convinced he is the Dragon Reborn.

Min must explain to Perrin that when she has a vision when looking at someone, if she knows with certainty what the vision means, then it is inescapable. Perrin is distressed by her vision of Leya's death and asks how they can prevent it, but Min explains that, since she knew immediately what the vision meant when she had it, it cannot be prevented. It is not always so. Sometimes when she looks at someone she sees vague symbols that she does not understand. She has discovered that these are mutable and can change.

Perrin's dream is filled with information about events to come. The beautiful woman in white, who talks of the glory he could have for himself, is the Forsaken Lanfear. The Forsaken are a group of Aes Sedai, male and female, from the Age of Legends, who switched allegiances and pledged themselves to the Dark One. Lanfear has already tempted Rand with the prospect of glory, and she will do the same for Mat during his recovery in the White Tower. The three men that Perrin sees meeting are former generals of the Dark One, called the Forsaken; they were bound with the Dark One in the mountain prison known as Shayol Gul. The first two are Rahvin and Be'lal, who have taken over the cities of Illian and Tear. The third is Ba'alzamon, who is actually the Forsaken known as Ishamael, and who Rand mistakenly believes is the Dark One. All three play a part in the action to come, with both Be'lal and Ba'alzamon meeting their end in the battle at the Stone of Tear.

After Leya's death, Perrin crosses the line between man and wolf. As he joins the wolves to fight against the Trollocs, he has great difficulty keeping himself from flinging down his axe and attacking with his teeth. After the battle, even stoic Lan seems taken aback by Perrin's bestial fury. Moiraine will later warn Perrin that he could lose touch with himself completely and be reduced to a permanent state of savagery.

Chapters 6-9

Chapters 6-9 Summary

The next morning, they awake to find Rand has gone, leaving a note in which he writes that the Dark One is hunting him and he doesn't want to endanger those around him. After taking a quick survey of everyone in the camp, Moiraine determines that they all have been dreaming about Callandor, the sword that cannot be touched, which is kept in the Stone of Tear, a great fortress in the coastal city of Tear, and which is prophesied to be retrievable only by the Dragon Reborn. Moiraine believes Rand's status as a powerful ta'veren, a powerful thread in the pattern of the Wheel of Time that pulls other threads toward it, makes it so he can project his dreams on those around him without knowing it. She reasons that Rand will head for Tear.

Moiraine sends Min to Tar Valon, the home city of the Aes Sedai, to update Suan Sanche, the Amyrlin Seat, leader of the Aes Sedai and co-conspirator of Moiraine, on what has occurred. Telling the Shienarans that they must remain behind, she takes Perrin, Lan, and Loial with her to track Rand to Tear. Before she leaves, Min tells Perrin that she sees new symbols in his future, including, an Aiel in a cage, a Tuatha'an with a sword, and a female falcon and hawk, both sitting on his shoulders. The Aiel are a warrior culture that live in the Wastes, a desolate region to the east of the Spine of the World. Tuatha'an, also called Tinkers, are a nomadic people, pledged to The Way of the Leaf, an extreme philosophy of nonviolence that forbids the use of any kind of violence, including any violence committed in self-defense.

They track Rand to the town of Jarra and have missed Rand by only one day, but his effect on the town is pronounced. Half the unwed women in the village decided to marry on the previous day. A man named Simion asks Moiraine to heal his brother. But, upon inspecting the man, who behaves like a wolf and has yellow eyes like Perrin, she tells Simion that she cannot help him. Moiraine warns Perrin that he, too, may suffer the same fate if he cannot keep his identity when he communes with wolves.

That night Perrin dreams of Hopper, the wolf killed by Whitecloaks while trying to defend Perrin in the first book. Hopper tells Perrin that all wolves, alive and dead, are present in the dream world, which is real for wolves, and for Perrin, and contains many dangers.

A pack of dogs race towards Rand, concealed in a tree hollow. He vaporizes them and continues on his way. He intends to go to Tear and take Callandor, to either die or prove to himself that he is indeed the Dragon Reborn.

Chapters 6-9 Analysis

Rand decides to make one last attempt to prove to himself and others that he is not the Dragon Reborn but only a simple shepherd. He is well aware that if he is not the Dragon Reborn, his attempt to storm the Stone of Tear and take Callandor will result in his



death, but he is willing to take the chance to rid himself of the crippling doubt that has plagued him since Moiraine and Siuan Sanche told him who he was. In many ways, his choice makes a great deal of sense. Most of the prophecies regarding the Dragon Reborn are vague and most will remain so even as the story unfolds. But the fall of the Stone of Tear and the taking of Callandor are the most explicit of all the prophecies, the only ones that leave little or no room for other interpretations. When Loial points out that the fall of the Stone of Tear is supposed to herald the coming of the Dragon Reborn, Moiraine tells him that it is but one sign among many, and that she is worried that Rand is attempting to do something he is supposed to attempt later when he has a great army at his disposal and when he better understands how to use the One Power.

Min's vision of Perrin's future foreshadows the entrances into the story of Faile, the falcon, and Berelain, the hawk. Gaul, who Perrin will free on the way to Tear, is the Aielman in a cage, and Gaul's subsequent debt to Perrin will lead him to help Perrin defend Emond's Field in the next volume, *The Shadow Rising*. The Tuatha'an with the sword is a reference to Aram, who Perrin meets on the way to the Eye of the World and who will also take part in the defense of Emond's Field in *The Shadow Rising*.

The events in the town of Jarra are a perfect illustration of the power of a ta'veren. The Wheel of Time is like a spinner's wheel, churning out the fabric of time with the threads of living things. Most of the threads simply play their part in whatever pattern the wheel is spinning. They work together in a part of the pattern that was likely already begun before they appeared. Ta'veren like Rand, Mat, and Perrin are different. They are threads which force the wheel to begin new patterns, and they gather other threads near them and force them to combine in new ways. Ta'veren come in degrees of power. All three of the young men from Emond's Field are powerful ta'veren, capable of significantly affecting the people around them. But, Rand, who is the most powerful ta'veren since Artur Hawkwing, a king at the end of the Age of Legends who united the world under one rule, is capable of making entire towns or even cities full of people make life-changing decisions. When Rand arrives in Jarra, every unwed woman of marrying age decides to take a husband. He also has the ability, whether intentional or not, to project his dreams on those around them, which is how Moiraine was able to determine that Rand would go to Tear and attempt to take Callandor.

The closest parallel to this ability is the concept of charisma. Charismatic people can inspire those who they come into contact with to take chances, or to demonstrate uncharacteristic levels of bravery or self-sacrifice. The difference between a ta'veren and a charismatic person is that the charisma of a ta'veren has the metaphysical ability to affect even those with whom they have limited or even no contact.

Chapters 10-14

Chapters 10-14 Summary

Nynaeve, Egwene, Elayne, Hurin and Verin Sedai approach Tar Valon, with Mat Cauthon on a litter behind them and near death. Mat's connection with the dagger of Shadar Logoth is killing him, even though it has been safely returned to his possession. They rebuff a small contingent of Whitecloaks, lead by Geofram Bornhald's son Dain Bornhald, who lead the Whitecloak forces at the Battle of Falme, and enter the city.

After Hurin leaves them for Shienar, Verin escorts them into the White Tower, the center of Tar Valon and of Aes Sedai power. In the tower, Nynaeve, Egwene, and Elayne are treated like runaways and assigned to work in the kitchens. Privately, Siuan Sanche scolds them for falling into the trap set by Liandrin Sedai, who in the previous book convinced them to follow her to Falme, where she betrayed them to the Seanchan, the invading force that had taken over the city. Seanchan believed in putting all women who could channel in captivity. Siuan Sanche tells them that while they were away, Liandrin lead a group of twelve other Aes Sedai in a revolt. They killed several Aes Sedai and warders and stole a collection of angreal, powerful objects Aes Sedai can use to enhance their power. Siuan says that these sisters must have joined the Black Ajah, the sect of Aes Sedai who serve the Dark One.

Siuan says that Nynaeve and Egwene are the only two people in the tower that she can be sure are not Black Ajah, and she secretly assigns Nynaeve and Egwene the task of tracking down the rogue Aes Sedai. Siuan then says Egwene and Elayne will be raised to Accepted, the middle rank in the Tower, one step above novice, one below full Aes Sedai. She tells them that they cannot work on this task openly because they must maintain the appearance of being punished for their actions. For this same reason, Siuan tells Nynaeve that, even though Nynaeve is now perhaps stronger than almost any Aes Sedai in the tower, Siuan cannot yet raise her to full Aes Sedai status. Siuan gives them two letters bearing her seal, which instructs anyone who reads it that the bearer is acting under the command of the Amyrlin Seat.

Verin tells Siuan about the battle of Falme and that Rand Al'Thor has declared himself the Dragon Reborn. Verin shows Siuan the Horn of Valere and tells her, to Siuan's surprise, that it was not Rand who sounded it, but Mat Cauthon, who is at present dying and needs to be quickly separated from the dagger of Shadar Logoth.

Chapters 10-14 Analysis

One of the significant sources of tension through the series is the lack of any stable, safe resting place for the main characters. From the moment they are driven from their home, Emond's Field, the main characters are driven by forces and events from location to location, finding few moments of respite. Verin cautions them that a return to the

White Tower is not a return to safety. If anything, they may be in greater danger. The last time they were in the White Tower, they were tricked and betrayed by a dangerous woman, Liandrin.

Denying the characters a place of safety allows Jordan to maintain the tension throughout the series, which with its epic scope, features a very long sequence of events that could easily grow stagnant and lose the reader.

Siuan Sanche believes that Nynaeve and Egwene are the only two people in the White Tower she can be sure are trustworthy. Their return to Tar Valon is a step into a viper pit, and it is perhaps worse for them than it is for Siuan Sanche, because while she can be sure of trusting them, they cannot be sure of trusting her.

Chapters 15-21

Chapters 15-21 Summary

Nynaeve and Egwene are returning to Egwene's quarters when someone fires a crossbow dart that barely misses Egwene. They spot the assassin and Nynaeve confines him from a distance by channeling air. They run to the spot, but find the assassin, an ordinary looking man, is dead with a dagger protruding from his chest. Sheriam Sedai, the Mistress of Novices, arrives and identifies the assassin as a Soulless, a Gray Man.

Nynaeve and Egwene rejoin Elayne and fill her in on the mission Siuan Sanche assigned to them. Nynaeve knows that the Horn of Valere will not work for anyone else but Mat unless he dies. Nynaeve, suspecting that Siuan will let Mat die so the tower can use the horn with impunity, resolves to go find Mat and attempt to heal him herself. Elaida Sedai, who spent years helping to groom Elayne for the throne of Caemlyn, upbraids Elayne for her disappearance. She tells the other two girls to confide in her about the possibly dangerous boys from their village, Rand, Mat, and Perrin.

Sheriam arrives to escort them to Mat. They follow her into the basement, where Mat is laid on a table, surrounded by Aes Sedai, with Siuan Sanche herself leading the effort. They use a powerful sa'angreal to break the connection between Mat and the dagger, but during the healing, Mat cries out in the Old Tongue, commanding them to release him and ordering soldiers to his aid. They succeed in healing Mat.

Half asleep, Mat dreams of leading an ancient battle. He awakens alone in a room and quickly reasons that he is in the White Tower. His memory of everything that occurred to him after he took the dagger out of Shadar Logoth is hazy, but he does remember sounding the Horn of Valere.

Mat is then visited by a woman in white. She tells him that she sees glory in his future, and that he cannot trust Aes Sedai. When he asks if she is a Darkfriend, she tells him that she serves no one. She leaves and Mat ponders packing up to leave. Siuan Sanche arrives. After explaining to Mat that he is linked to the horn, Siuan tells him that he may not leave Tar Valon, nor share what he knows about Rand with anyone in the tower besides Nynaeve and Egwene.

Egwene visits Verin Sedai, who gives her a folder containing details on the thirteen rogue Aes Sedai. Verin then tells Egwene about Tel'Arhan'Rhoid, the world of Dreams. She has learned that Egwene could possibly be the first Dreamer, an Aes Sedai who specializes in traveling in the world of Dreams, in the tower in nearly five hundred years. She gives Egwene a stone ring, a ter'angreal that will allow the wearer to enter Tel'Arhan'Rhoid.



Chapters 15-21 Analysis

The reader is as unsure of who to trust as are Nynaeve and Egwene. Every Aes Sedai in the tower is a potential deadly enemy. Sheriam's proximity to the assassin is suspicious, and stern Elaida, of the Red Ajah, the Ajah that is typically the most aggressive in gentling channeling males, is clearly fishing for information about Rand, Mat, and Perrin.

Mat, whose memories will remain clouded and full of holes for some time to come, begins to display one of his unique talents, his ability to speak the Old Tongue, as he cries out during the healing session. He has used the Old Tongue before. In the first book, *The Eye of the World*, Mat lets out an ancient Manetheren battle cry, during a pitch battle with Trollocs. Manetheren is an ancient civilization, long collapsed, which occupied the land that the Two Rivers, the region in which Emond's Field lies. Emond's Field is actually the site of the final battle, during which an overwhelming force of dark creatures put an end to the civilization of Manetheren. When Mat first used the One Tongue and the battle cry of Manetheren, Moiraine told him that the old blood was strong in Emond's Field, but Mat's access to knowledge from the past will continue to grow far beyond what Moiraine would have expected.

Despite Nynaeve's suspicions, Siuan heals Mat, allowing him to remain connected to the horn but stops short of letting him to depart. It is clear she still will attempt to keep as much control over him as possible, and, given his importance this is understandable because as critical as it is to keep some control over the sounder of the horn, it is perhaps even more critical to maintain control over Mat, who is a powerful ta'veren with special abilities of which no one, even Mat, is yet aware.

The woman in white is Lanfear, employing her peculiar form of seduction based on the enticement of glory. It is unclear how much she knows about Mat, beyond his obvious status as a strong ta'veren and beyond his relation to Rand. It is possible that she recognizes in him the many people whose memories he possesses. Mat himself knows nothing of this yet. His random exclamations in the Old Tongue will become more frequent and are only the first symptom of the return of his full memory.

The name Tel'Arhan'Rhiod appears for the first time, though several of the characters have already been in it, including Egwene, Rand, Mat, and Perrin. It is important to note that all dreams do not occur in Tel'Arhan'Rhiod. Most dreams occur in a kind of collective unconscious that is safe and less substantial than the real world. Tel'Arhan'Rhiod is a hyper-reality inside the world of dreams, a kind of focused sub-world, where the actions dreamers take can have very real, and even lethal consequences.

Chapters 22-23

Chapters 22-23 Summary

Sheriam takes Egwene to the trial she must face to be raised to Accepted. Novices who wish to become Accepted must walk through a ter'angreal containing three stone arches. Each arch will present the novice with a vision of what was, what is, and what will be. The visions test the novice's commitment to become Aes Sedai. Sheriam tells her to watch for the exit, which will appear only once in each vision.

Before Egwene goes into the ter'angreal, Alanna, one of the Aes Sedai monitoring the arches, says that there is a strange resonance in the flows of the One Power around the arch. The resonance disappears and Egwene enters. In the first vision, Rand and she are married and she is the Wisdom, or wise woman, of Emond's Field, their home town. She is forced to leave the vision of Rand and their young child when the exit appears. Once through the next arch, she finds herself in Caemlyn that has been conquered by the dark forces and is swarming with Trollocs. She finds Rand trapped under a pillar. He begs her to kill him before the Trollocs find him and force him to serve the Dark One. She tells him that she will not kill him; the arch appears and she exits. In the third vision, Egwene is Amyrlin Seat. She quickly realizes that something is wrong. She feels dizzy and her head is filled with a strange buzzing. She is deposed and is knocked unconscious. She awakens to find herself on a table with a group of Aes Sedai nearby who are discussing stilling her. Stilling is a procedure that will permanently sever an Aes Sedai's contact with saidar, the female half of the One Power. She escapes and attempts to free Rand, who is about to be gentled, a process similar to stilling, except for males. As she is attempting to free Rand the arch appears, and she is forced to abandon him and dive through it.

When she arrives back in the testing room, she finds it filled with Aes Sedai, including Suan Sanche. They had been struggling for sometime to keep the ter'angreal working, because the resonance that Alanna had felt before the ceremony began had returned. Suan tells Egwene that they feared her dead.

Chapters 22-23 Analysis

Like the chapter in the previous book, recounting Nynaeve's journey through the same ter'angreal, the chapter about Egwene's ascension to Accepted is extensive. The visions that she experiences are not prognostications; they are simply theoretical scenarios designed to make sure that becoming an Aes Sedai is something that is important enough to her for her to leave everything else behind.

After she safely returns from the final arch, the Aes Sedai in the chamber speculate on the possible causes of the resonance. Suan believe it is unlikely that any Aes Sedai there could be manipulating the ter'angreal without being seen by the others. It should



be understood that any women who can channel, if she is holding onto saidar, the female source of the One Power, can always physically see if any woman around her is using the power. She may not always understand what the woman she is viewing is doing, but she can sense something of the activity. Suan tells Egwene that it is possible for one ter'angreal to interfere with another, if they are brought into close proximity, but that precautions are taken to make sure the trial chamber is kept clear of other ter'angreal. It is then that Egwene remembers the ring that Verin gave her, a ter'angreal which allows her to enter Tel'Aran'Rhiod. Egwene does not tell Suan of the ring, but she finds herself wondering if Verin knew this would happen, and that giving her the ring was actually a surreptitious attempt on Egwene's life.

Chapters 24-26

Chapters 24-26 Summary

Siuan Sanche had told Mat that he would be voracious for days because of the energy he used up during his healing procedure. He eats everything they bring him and begins to get stronger, thinking all the while about ways that he might extricate himself from Tar Valon.

While walking the grounds, he chances upon Gawyn and Galad, who are sparring in the Warder's practice yard. Mat bets them that he can best them both at the same time, them using practice swords, him using a quarterstaff. Mat wins the bet and surprises the weapons master by inadvertently using the Old Tongue at the end of the fight.

Even before taking the ring from Verin, Egwene has been having prophetic dreams, including one about Rand reaching for a crystal sword with a net above his head, one of Perrin with a falcon on one shoulder and a hawk on the other, one of a bearded Perrin leading a pack of wolves, and one of Mat dicing with the Dark One and hanging by his neck.

A novice named Else Grimwell tells Nynaeve, Egwene, and Elayne of a storeroom containing the personal effects that the rogue Aes Sedai left behind. They sift through the material and find many objects pointing to Tear, including a map of the city, a shipping schedule and a sketch of the Heart of the Stone, the chamber where Callandor is kept. They believe the material is not random, but planted to lead them to Tear, perhaps as a trap. When they talk to Siuan later, she confirms this suspicion by telling them that Else Grimwell was sent away months ago and that all the personal effects Liandrin's group left behind were burned. Nynaeve believes, and Siuan agrees, that the only thing that they can do is go to Tear and spring the trap to catch Liandrin.

Chapters 24-26 Analysis

Mat's unexpected victory over two strong young fighters, both of whom have been in training to be Warders for nearly a year, is based on three important factors. First, and most obvious, is Mat's uncanny luck, which is supernatural in strength and related not only to his status as ta'veren, but to his ancient origin. Second, Mat is from the Two Rivers, a region that was once the center of a great empire called Manetheren. When Moiraine found Rand, Mat, and Perrin in the same town in the Two Rivers, she told them that the old Manetheren blood was strong there, and that, even though the people of the Two Rivers think of themselves as farmers, if pushed too far, they would perhaps tap into ancient abilities. Third, Mat's currently unconscious ability to access the ancient memories of many long dead warriors and generals are slowly retraining his mind, not only to speak and understand the Old Tongue, but to fight in various styles and, later on, to understand complex military situations.

The doppelganger of Else Grimwell was Lanfear, and it is clear she wants Nynaeve, Egwene and Elayne to be able to track Liandrin to Tear. It is not completely clear what her motives are. On the surface, she seems to be aiding Liandrin, by helping to provide bait for the trap for Rand. But there is also the possibility that she hopes that Nynaeve, Egwene, and Elayne can thwart Liandrin and allow Rand, who Lanfear is in love with, to succeed in taking Callandor. This will be a continuing point of tension anytime Lanfear is involved in the story. She is a Forsaken and sworn to the Dark One, but she is also in love with Lews Therin, of whom Rand is a reincarnation, and her actions will sometimes hinder Rand, and sometimes aid him. She wants him to best the other Forsaken and rule with her at his side.

Chapters 27-32

Chapters 27-32 Summary

Egwene dons the stone ring for the first time as she sleeps with Nynaeve and Elayne watching over her. She quickly finds that in Tel'Aran'Rhiod, she can channel the One Power. She travels about rather clumsily at first, visiting the dreams of both Perrin and Rand, before finding herself in the Heart of the Stone. A woman named Silvie appears and warns Egwene that it is dangerous for her to be there, because "he" might see her.

The three women decide they have no choice but to go to Tear. Anticipating that her mother, Queen Morgase of Caemlyn, would send the Andorean army against Tar Valon if she disappears again, Elayne proposes that she send a letter to Caemlyn warning her mother that she has to leave the tower again for her studies. They want to enlist Mat to carry the letter to Morgase, but Mat tells him that the guards all know his face and know he is not allowed to leave the city. They give him one of the letters that Sivan Sanche gave them, and Mat agrees to carry Elayne's missive, trusting that the letter from the Amyrlin Seat can get him out of the city.

Before leaving, Nynaeve asks Sivan Sanche what Callandor, which is often called The Sword That Is Not A Sword, really is. Sivan tells her that it is a sa'angreal, an amplifier of the one power, usable only by a man, and that it is the second strongest angreal known to exist. Even a man of moderate channeling ability could be powerful with Callandor. But with Callandor in his hands, Rand, the Dragon Reborn, could level cities.

Seeking to make some money to travel on, Mat visits a series of taverns and inns in the city. His luck, which has always been exceptional, runs wild, and he wins several pouches full of gold and silver. His night of gambling is interrupted by an assassin, another Soulless, who attempts to kill him. Mat's luck helps him best the Gray Man, and Mat stumbles into an inn called The Woman of Tanchico, where he finds Thom Merrilin entertaining in the common room.

Thom is drunk and in a reckless state, brought on by severe depression following the murder of his lover Dena in the previous book. He tells Mat that he is in Tar Valon because it is the most dangerous place for him to be, with the possible exception of Caemlyn. Thom was once the court bard in Caemlyn and had had an affair with Queen Morgase, an affair which ended badly; a return to the city could result in Thom finding himself in front of an executioner. Mat invites Thom to come with him to Caemlyn to deliver Elayne's letter. Thom accepts and the two of them board the first ship heading downriver.

Chapters 27-32 Analysis

One of the first lessons Egwene will learn about Tel'Aran'Rhiod is that it is a shared experience, a single copy of existence in which travelers can encounter each other. The

difference between this and normal dreaming is important. If, for instance, two farmers have a dream about the same field, but are not in Tel'Aran'Rhiod, they will never see each other, because they are in different copies of the same location, the field. But if the farmers somehow both traveled to the field in Tel'Aran'Rhiod, they would see each other, because they would be inside the same world, the same copy of the field. The old woman named Silvie, who is likely Lanfear, warns her that it is dangerous to be in the Heart of the Stone in Tel'Aran'Rhiod because "he" might show up. too. The "he" to whom she refers is probably the Forsaken known as Be'Lal, who has taken over control of Tear in the guise of a High Lord.

Assuming that Rand is the Dragon Reborn and will be able to draw Callandor, it is Sivan Sanche's greatest fear that Liandrin will choose the moment right after the sword is freed to spring her trap. In Tel'Aran'Rhiod, Egwene briefly examines the shield, woven of the One Power, that surrounds Callandor. Prophecy says that only the Dragon Reborn can penetrate that shield, but once Rand does so, the sword can be taken away from him, and can be used to devastating effect by any of the male Forsaken.

Of the three ta'veren from Emond's Field, Perrin is the least flamboyant, which is an irony given his affinity with wolves. Mat and Rand will both roll the dice, but they do so for different reasons. Rand's occasional wildness comes not only from his contact with the taint of saidin, but because of his determination to not be controlled by his circumstances. Mat on the other hand likes to make things random around him, because in random situations, he feels more comfortable. He has always craved randomness, even as a boy when it was well known in Emond's Field that if the boys got into any shenanigans, Mat was likely the instigator. Mat will come to realize that trying to make his situations as random as possible is an act of survival for him because his supernatural luck works best the more random the situation. His behavior as a child, and even as a young man, results from Mat placing himself, purely on instinct, in the most unpredictable situations he can.

The murky past of Thom Merrill is hinted at again. It is clear that his break with Morgase was heated and probably involved her current general Gareth Bryne. The picture of Thom Merrill as the mournful drunk is a shock to the reader, who probably remembers Thom as a more mirthful character from the first book, *The Eye of the World* (Thom plays only a minor role in the second book). However, even in the first book, there was at times something reserved about Thom, and he hinted at the break between himself and Morgase early on, when he told Rand and Mat about the fate of his nephew Owyn.

Chapters 33-36

Chapters 33-36 Summary

Moiraine pushes her party hard to try to keep up with Rand. Every town they pass shows signs of Rand's passage, including a town where a long dry well has suddenly started producing water, and another town completely burned to the ground.

They arrive in the town of Remen, where an Aiel is imprisoned in a cage in the town square. The Aiel are the society of warriors, who live beyond the Spine of the World and who Moiraine and Siuan Sanche told Rand are his culture of origin. There have been several recent reports of Aiel wandering the lands in small groups, and Perrin and Mat met up with one group in the previous book. The Aiel say they are looking for He Who Comes With the Dawn, a savior who will lead them out of the Waste.

Perrin, who Min prophesied would experience a pivotal event involving an Aielman in a cage, frees the Aiel, whose name is Gaul. When a group of Whitecloaks catches Perrin in the act of freeing Gaul, he helps Gaul kill them. Upon finding out what Perrin has done, Moiraine has them depart immediately on a ship preparing to head downriver to Illian. As the boat is pulling away from the dock, a young woman who had been watching Perrin since he had arrived in town, leaps onto the ship and tells the captain that she is a hunter for the Horn of Valere and will go wherever Perrin goes. When Perrin asks her why she wants to follow him, she tells him that hunters are supposed to look for unusual people and events and that a man with yellow eyes traveling with an Ogier, and an Aes Sedai and Warder is certainly unusual. She tells them her name is Zarine Bashere, but she wishes to be called Faile, which means Falcon.

That night, Perrin again meets Hopper in the wolf dream. With Hopper's guidance, Perrin observes a conversation between Ba'alzamon and the woman in white Perrin had seen in his previous dream. They quarrel, but she eventually tells him that her devotion has not wavered. After he awakens, Perrin tells Moiraine about the dream. She tells him that he may be a Dreamer, like Egwene, and she echoes Hopper by cautioning Perrin that the dream world could be dangerous to him.

Chapters 33-36 Analysis

Two important characters are introduced. The first, Gaul, will feel himself honor bound to repay Perrin, and Gaul will play a major part in the next book, helping Perrin to lead the people of the Two Rivers against an invasion. The second character will be even more important to Perrin, as she will become his wife. Faile is obviously the falcon seen by both Min and Egwene in all of their visions involving Perrin. Though she gives Perrin her real name, Zarine Bashere, she conceals her place in the social structure of Saldaea from him, telling him that her father is a farmer, when he is in fact the Marshall-General of Saldaea and the uncle of the young queen Tenobia. She tells only Perrin her

full name, and it is likely if he would pass it on to Moiraine, the Aes Sedai, who is quite knowledgeable about the political families of all of the great empires, would recognize the name Bashere.

There is a humorous moment when Faile is first introducing herself to Perrin. After becoming a Hunter for the Horn, she decided to give herself a heroic new first name, as she did not feel that Zarine a proper name for an epic hero. She would finally settle on Faile, but she first introduces herself to him as Mandarb, which means "blade" in the Old Tongue, and which causes Perrin to laugh aloud. When she asks why the name is amusing, Perrin tells her that Mandarb is the name of Lan's horse.

Perrin witnesses an argument between Ba'alzamon and Lanfear. Ba'alzamon is clearly the more agitated of the two, and it is clear that Lanfear believes herself to be at least his equal. This is the first hint that Ba'alzamon is not the Dark One but another Forsaken who has taken on the identity of the fiery-eyed demon some mistakenly equate with the Dark One.

Chapters 37-39

Chapters 37-39 Summary

Nynaeve, Egwene, and Elayne sail downriver, heading for Tear. Their ship runs aground and, over the protests of the captain, who says the civil war in Cairhien has made the eastern shore lawless and dangerous, they decide to be put off and cover the distance to the next town on foot.

They have not gone far before several Aiel appear, all women. Aiel women who choose to lead the lives of warriors are called Maidens of the Spear. The leader of the group is named Aviendha, and she has with her Bain, Chiad, and Dailin. They recognize Nynaeve, Egwene, and Elayne as Wise Ones, the Aiel name for women who can channel, and they ask Nynaeve to heal Dailin, who has been mortally wounded by soldiers who mistook the Aiel women for brigands. Nynaeve miraculously heals Dailin.

After explaining to the Aiel that they are on an urgent mission to Tear, seeking Darkfriends, whom the Aiel call Shadowrunners, Nynaeve, Egwene, and Elayne continue toward the town. On the way they are accosted by brigands, who render them unconscious and take them captive.

Egwene and Nynaeve awake in a small room. A group of men are arguing outside. The men have found the rings that the women were wearing, marking them as Aes Sedai, and are terrified the women will awake. The leader tries to calm them by telling them he has contacted a man he knows who can deal with the women and offers a fine bounty for them as well. The man soon arrives, but, spying from the door, Egwene and Nynaeve notice that the man is a Myrddraal, and that it has brought two others of its kind with it.

Just as the women are preparing to leap out and try to take on the Myrddraal, the outer door bursts open and a group of Aiel, men and women, storm the room, their faces veiled for battle. They quickly take care of the brigands, but the three Myrddraal are more difficult to kill, and several Aiel fall in the fight. Nynaeve then, in her fury, produces a fire called Balefire, that consumes the Myrddraal.

Nynaeve is enraged to see that Dailin is one of the dead Aiel. An Aiel man named Rhuarc introduces himself and says he is a clan chief and that they are searching for He Who Comes With the Dawn. To Nynaeve's surprise, he recognizes the signet ring Lan had given her as belonging to the last of the Lord of Malkier. Apparently, Lan's story is well known among the Aiel.

Nynaeve, Egwene, and Elayne set off again for the nearby town. They decide from that moment on not to wear their Aes Sedai rings.

Chapters 37-39 Analysis

This section brings several new and important characters into the story. Nynaeve, Egwene, and Elayne will soon learn that their affinity toward Aviendha is due to their ability to sense that she can channel. Aviendha will become strongly linked to Rand, as will Rhuarc, whose appearance here foreshadows his pivotal role in the capture of the Stone of Tear at the climax of this book.

The reader will not learn until the next book the origin of the Aiel custom to veil themselves during battle. The veils they wear are black and pulled across the top of the cheekbones and over the nose, leaving the eyes open to the air. The phrase "like a black-veiled Aiel" is used in many parts of the world, including the Two Rivers, as a metaphor for behaving savagely or uncivilly. But this impression of the custom, that it results from the uncaring brutality of the Aiel warriors, is unfounded. The Aiel wear the veil to show respect for their enemies, not contempt.

The Aiel know Lan as Aan'allein, which in the Old Tongue means "one man" or "one man who is all of his people." After the fall of Malkieri, of which Lan is the last surviving Lord, Lan became obsessed with fighting the Shadow, often venturing into the Blight alone, seeking vengeance. It is this earlier time in his life before Moiraine found him and convinced him to become her Warder and fight in a more constructive way, that earned him a reputation of respect among the Aiel.

Chapters 40-44

Chapters 40-44 Summary

Mat and Thom are preparing to sleep in the barn of an inn when a woman enters pulling a small wagon. When two men arrive and try to kill the woman, Mat leaps to the rescue and renders the attackers unconscious. The woman, whose name is Aludra, is an Illuminator, a maker of fireworks, and she rewards Mat with a small cache of fireworks. She decides she must keep moving and departs, and Mat and Thom are forced to be on their way as well.

Moiraine's group arrives in Illian, and Moiraine suggests to Faile that she would do best to leave them. Faile refuses, and Moiraine makes her swear that, if she wishes to remain with them, she will do what she is told, not run away, and keep any secrets she learns to herself. Faile finds out that Perrin is ta'veren, and she hears in passing some of Min's prophecy regarding Perrin and a falcon.

The people of Illian seem downtrodden. Moiraine's group stops at an inn, where the innkeeper, an old contact of Moiraine's, tells them that the council is now controlled by a new lord named Brend, whom most Illianers knew nothing of before he took control a few months before. While eating in the common room of the inn, Perrin smells something wrong, or foul, and he is set upon by a group of Soulless. Perrin and Lan kill the Soulless, but Moiraine, against the vehement protest of Lan, decides that she alone will continue to Tear. Moiraine feels that Perrin's status as ta'veren could force events in Tear to become even more chaotic, and she wants Lan to escort him and the others back to Tar Valon.

While scouting around the inn, Lan discovers the paw print of a Darkhound, a powerful wolf that is used by the Dark One and by some of the Forsaken. Lan, disobeying Moiraine, sets off to warn her about the Darkhound that could be tracking her. Moiraine and Lan return to the inn, Lan having slain the Darkhound that was following her, and Moiraine tells them that Lord Brend is actually the Forsaken named Sammael. The Forsaken were Aes Sedai from the Age of Legends, who turned to evil and followed the Dark One. They are supposed to be imprisoned with the Dark One in Shayol Gul, but the seals around the prison have weakened and at least some of them have been able to reappear in the world, including Lanfear, who is the mysterious woman in white that haunts the three ta'veren, Rand, Perrin, and Mat.

They flee Illian immediately, with a pack of Darkhounds on their trail. The hounds are relentless, and Moiraine is forced to destroy them with Balefire, an act she is worried will be noticed by Sammael. During the flight, Faile learns that Rand is the Dragon Reborn and that someone named Mat Cauthon has already sounded the Horn of Valere and that it is being kept in Tar Valon.

Chapters 40-44 Analysis

When Faile refuses to leave the group, Moiraine offers her an all-or-nothing proposition. Not only does she demand that Faile keep the group's secrets and do what she is told, she tells Faile that, should she choose now to remain with them, she is obliged to stay until Moiraine allows her to leave.

Those around her often find Moiraine cold and calculating. She is, after all, from a noble Cairhien family, and in Cairhien the nobles jostle with each other in what they call Daes Dae'mar, the Great Game, a cutthroat social war for power and wealth. Moiraine sometimes seems to be playing Daes Dae'mar with the whole world, not for power or wealth, but for the success of her mission against the Shadow. It is at these times that the Emond's Fielders, especially Rand, Nynaeve, and Perrin are most at odds with her. She seems willing to sacrifice almost anything to make sure that Rand is there to fight the last battle, but those around her are incorrect in thinking that her calculations are done coldly. It is clear that Moiraine is quite conscious of the prices that must be paid, even by herself, and that her ability to persevere in a manner that seems from the outside to be unfeeling, is simply due to her strength of will.

Perrin surprises both Lan and Moiraine by being able to smell the approach of the Gray Men. Both Aes Sedai and Warders are able to sense almost all kinds of Shadowspawn when they are in close proximity, but Grey Men are an exception, and Perrin's ability to receive some kind of forewarning of their arrival is clearly a wolf ability that he has developed.

Chapters 45-47

Chapters 45-47 Summary

Mat and Thom arrive in Caemlyn, and Mat makes his first attempt to deliver Elayne's letter but is rebuffed at the gates of the castle by guards loyal to Lord Gaebril, a new adviser to Queen Morgase. Mat returns to the inn called the Queen's Blessing, where Thom is playing a game of stones with the innkeeper Master Gill. Gill tells Mat that any mention of Tar Valon in the castle will likely earn him a cell, as Morgase's attitude toward the White Tower has changed because of the previous disappearance of Elayne and because of her new adviser, Gaebril.

Mat returns to the castle, sneaking in through the garden where Rand met Elayne in the first book. While prowling through the castle, he overhears Lord Gaebril ordering a confidante to make sure Elayne meets with an accident on the way to Tear. A guard named Tallanvor apprehends Mat, but when Mat tells him about the letter he carries, Tallanvor takes Mat to see Morgase. Mat delivers the letter, telling her that he was a farmer who was visiting his sister in Tar Valon when Elayne entrusted it to him. He then returns to the Queen's Blessing and tells Thom and Gill that Lord Gaebril, who Morgase appears to be in love with, wants Elayne dead. Mat and Thom decide to set off for Tear on the fastest ship they can find.

Chapters 45-47 Analysis

The reader learns about the placement of another of the Forsaken in a place of power. Though his name is not mentioned specifically, Lord Gaebril is the Forsaken known as Rahvin, and like Sammael in Illian and Be'Lal in Tear, he is doing his best to spread dissension. Rahvin is a tall, handsome man whose ability to bewitch women, in this case Queen Morgase, is based not only on his physical appearance but also on his exceptional ability to manipulate the minds of others using the One Power. In this way, he is like Moghedien, another of the Forsaken, who also prefers to manipulate affairs behind the scene, rather than engage in open warfare.

Few episodes illustrate Mat's exceptional luck than his second trip to the castle, where he manages to sneak into the royal garden, dodge one patrol after another, overhear a crucial conversation, and find perhaps the only guard in the castle who would hear him through and not only allow him to deliver the letter, but walk out of the castle without a scratch on him. Tallanvor, the young guard-lieutenant who finds Mat and escorts him to Morgase, will play a major role later on in the series.

Thom finds himself once again leaving Caemlyn to rescue a young person dear to his heart, in this case, Elayne, who was a young child when Thom was the court bard in Caemlyn.

Chapters 48-50

Chapters 48-50 Summary

Nynaeve, Egwene, and Elayne arrive in Tear. Nynaeve believes the inns will be watched and seeks out a Wisdom, a wise woman who heals people of afflictions. They meet a woman named Mother Guenna, who takes them in after Nynaeve impresses her with medicinal knowledge. They tell her they are looking for a group of woman who have stolen from them and done violence. Mother Guenna introduces them to a thief-taker named Juilin Sandar, a man who, like Hurin of Shienar, specializes in tracking down those who have committed violence.

Egwene uses her ring again and visits the Heart of the Stone in Tel'Aran'Rhiod, where she finds a circle of women, the Black Ajah, waiting for her. Liandrin looks up at her and smiles before Egwene awakens, and Egwene tells Nynaeve and Elayne that she believes that Liandrin knows that they are in Tear.

Mat and Thom arrive in Tear and begin searching inns and taverns looking for the man who Lord Gaebriel sent to track Elayne. They find the man dicing in a tavern and winning with loaded dice against anyone who plays against him. Mat bets against the man beats him with the loaded dice. He then tells the man, whose name is Comar, to leave Tear and that if he tries to harm Elayne, Mat would kill him. Comar attacks Mat and the two of them grapple before Comar falls over a table and breaks his neck. Comar tells Mat before he dies that he is not the only ones hunting the girls.

Moiraine's group arrives in Tear, finding the inhabitants in the grip of the same depression that held the people of Illian. While Moiraine and Lan scout the city, Perrin goes into a nearby smithy, where he finds work helping the master fill orders. The Master tells Perrin he is exceptionally skilled and gives Perrin a large hammer for his work. Moiraine and Lan return to the inn with the news that a new High Lord named Samon has been controlling the actions of the other High Lords and is the defacto ruler of Tear. He also just happens to be another of the Forsaken, a man named Be'lal.

Chapters 48-50 Analysis

These chapters illustrate a familiar pattern that Jordan uses in most of the books of the series. The characters, who have remained scattered in small clumps throughout the book, quickly converge on the same location for the climax. Their sudden proximity to one another greatly increases the tension in the storyline and allows Jordan to end the book in a flurry of action. He used this same technique to great effect in the previous book as well. These chapters should then be thought of as staging chapters, where the characters who will play a part in the finale move into play.

The members of the Black Ajah are using stolen ter'angreal similar to Egwene's ring to stake out the Heart of the Stone in Tel'Aran'Rhiod. Having arrived in Tear, Nynaeve,

Egwene, and Elayne immediately take up the task of locating Liandrin and the other rogue Aes Sedai, but it seems obvious that they have no plan for what to do if they can find their quarry.

Rand has been all but absent throughout the journey to Tear, but Moiraine is certain he is in the city, as she hears rumors that many of the citizens are having Rand's dream about Callandor.

While it is true that the Wheel of Time series has hundreds of characters and a variety of separate storylines, it cannot be denied that Rand is the principle protagonist. It is therefore odd that Jordan would hide Rand for almost an entire book.

Chapters 51-53

Chapters 51-53 Summary

Juillian Sandar quickly finds out that Liandrin and the other Aes Sedai are staying inside the Stone of Tear, as guests of the High Lord Samon. Nynaeve and Elayne return to Mother Guenna's after scouting the city and are ambushed by Liandrian, Rianna, Amico, and Joiya, who have already subdued Egwene. They are all taken prisoner, and as she is leading them away, Liandrin says that they were able to coerce Sandar into revealing his employer's whereabouts.

Thom has been coughing since Mat and he arrived in Tear, and Mat finally goes looking for a remedy for the old gleeman. They are directed to the house of Mother Guenna who gives Thom a concoction to help his cough. Mat spies Nynaeve, Egwene, and Elayne's horses outside the old woman's home and learns from her the fate of the girls. Mat leaves a hacking Thom to Mother Guenna's care and sets off with a vague notion of freeing the girls from the Stone of Tear.

Moiraine, who knows Rand has arrived in Tear, tells Perrin she wants him to take Loial and Faile and head to Tar Valon, while she and Lan attempt to intercept or aid Rand. Faile, who has wandered into Moiraine's room, is bewitched by a statuette of a small hedgehog, which traps her in the world of dreams, Tel'Aran'Rhiod. Moiraine says the statuette was probably left as a trap for her and warns Perrin that Faile may be beyond help. Her body will soon die if she cannot be rescued. Moiraine and Lan leave for the Stone, but Perrin will not abandon Faile. He tells Loial to guard them, and then steps into the room, letting the statuette put him to sleep so he can rescue Faile. Once in the dream world, Perrin meets up with Hopper, who agrees to help him hunt for Faile.

Chapters 51-53 Analysis

It seems obvious that the coercion Liandrin used on Juilin was likely the same torture she used on Rand in the dungeon at Fal Dara. Despite having to be tortured to reveal the whereabouts of Nynaeve, Egwene, and Elayne, Juilin feels compelled to make amends for the betrayal, and, like the Aiel Gaul, his sense of honor will drive him to play a role in the fight against the Shadow. His ability, along with that of Hurin, is not just mental, but physical. They feel immortality, its presence sickens them, and, in a way, they are both simply trying to take care of themselves physically by removing a toxin from their environment.

Moiraine shows she is capable of sacrificing Faile to make sure Rand survives. When Faile falls into the trap meant for Moiraine, the Aes Sedai says she has no time to attempt a rescue, and Perrin should not either but should proceed to Tar Valon. Again, this seems a cold, unfeeling position to take, but Moiraine is simply weighing the importance of Rand and Perrin versus that of Faile. If Rand is killed, or fails, the whole

world will fall into Shadow. There is a fallacy in this kind of measured reasoning. Moiraine cannot know what part Faile will eventually play, and Perrin, perhaps because of his status as ta'veren shifts the weight of individual events far too much for Moiraine to be sure of anything.

Chapters 54-56

Chapters 54-56 Summary

While on the rooftops near the Stone of Tear, Mat is ambushed by Aiel, led by Rhurc, who say they believe that He Who Comes With the Dawn is in the city and that Aiel prophecy says that his coming will be heralded by the fall of the Stone, which has never before been successfully stormed. They let Mat go when he promises them that he does not intend to give them away. Juilin Sandar then arrives and, after finding out that Mat is a friend of Nynaeve, Egwene, and Elayne, tells Mat that he is eager to help him free the women, to atone for his, albeit forced, betrayal of them to Liandrin. Mat uses the fireworks that Aludra gave him to blow a hole in the side of the fortress, and Juilin and he leap through and fight off several guards. Juilin wonders why their way in was so easily, but after spotting Aiel fighting in the passageways, and a person he thinks might be Rand running through a hallway, Mat guesses that the guards have their hands full elsewhere. Mat and Juilin set off for the prison.

Egwene attempts to free Nynaeve, Elayne, and herself by journeying to the Stone in Tel'Aran'Rhiod. She makes her way down to the prisons and sees that the figure of Amico is flashing in and out of the dream world outside their cell. She is guarding them in the waking world, but is nodding off. Egwene uses the One Power to cut off Amico's ability to channel, and forces the door, but when Egwene awakens, she finds that the door is still intact. Mat and Juilin arrive and open the door, freeing the girls, who tell them that they cannot flee the Stone yet, because they must attempt to capture the rest of the Black Ajah.

Perrin is roaming the Stone of Tear in the dream world, having, with Hopper's help, tracked Faile there. He finds Faile several times, freeing her from chains, cages, and other traps. But each time he frees her, she disappears, and Hopper says that Perrin has freed an image, and not the real Faile. At last they find the real Faile, in the form of a falcon chained to a perch. The chain is locked with a small hedgehog, which Perrin breaks, and he and Faile awaken back at the inn.

Rand makes his way through all the fighting to the Heart of the Stone and is standing beneath Callandor, which hovers off the ground, held by invisible forces weaved with the One Power, when a High Lord walks out of the shadows and bids him to take the sword. The man identifies himself as Be'lal, and invites Rand, who he calls Lews Therin, to take the sword, so that Be'lal may then take it from him. They fight each other with swords wrought from the One Power, but Be'lal is besting Rand when the chamber is invaded by Aiel, fighting against the defenders of the stone. Be'lal tells Rand that if he does not take Callandor, Be'lal will kill him. Moiraine steps out of the fighting and, before he can defend himself, uses Balefire to destroy Be'lal.

Moiraine tells Rand that he will have to take Callandor, since he is here and the Stone is falling to the Aiel. Moiraine is engulfed in lightning and flung against a wall by

Ba'alzamon, who appears out of thin air as the figure in black that had previously taunted Rand in dreams. Ba'alzamon attempts to kill Rand, but Rand dives for Callandor and secures it, opening himself up to the One Power, which surges through him greater than ever before. He turns to fight, and Ba'alzamon flees, making a door in the air. Rand copies him, making a door and stepping through it in pursuit. Ba'alzamon casts obstacles in Rand's path, but Rand removes them with the One Power, with little idea of how he is doing so. Eventually, he corners Ba'alzamon in the Heart of the Stone again. Ba'alzamon attempts to conjure a ball of darkness, but Rand severs it and plunges Callandor into Ba'alzamon's heart. The defenders see Rand with Callandor and stop resisting the Aiel. They kneel to him, proclaiming him the Dragon Reborn.

Tairens awaken the next morning from dreams of the Dragon Reborn fighting in the Stone of Tear, to find the banner of Lews Therin Telamon flying over the fortress. Moiraine shows Rand and the others another seal of Cuendillar, or Heartstone, which is suppose to seal the Dark One and the Forsaken in Shayol Gul. This seal, unlike the previous ones they have found, is intact, indicating that they have perhaps won a small victory against the Dark One.

Rand says that the Dark One, Shaitan, is dead, that he saw the body of the man he stabbed. Moiraine says the fact that the body is that of a man, proves that it was not the Dark One and suggests perhaps that people were wrong to equate Ba'alzamon with Shaitan. She theorizes that Ba'alzamon might have been one of the other Forsaken, perhaps Ishamael. Nynaeve tells Moiraine that she intends to keep pursuing Liandrin, who escaped along with most of the other Black Ajah. They managed to catch Amico and Joiya.

Mat recalls the prophecy saying that the Stone of Tear will only fall when the People of the Dragon join the Dragon Reborn. He asks Moiraine if that makes all of them the People of the Dragon, but Rhuarc tells them what only Aiel chiefs are told, that the ancient and secret name of the Aiel is People of the Dragon.

Berelain, the Queen of Mayene, who was visiting Tear, arrives with a message for Rand. She said she was given the message by a beautiful and commanding woman. The message is from Lanfear, and in it she tells Rand that he will always belong to her.

Chapters 54-56 Analysis

Juilin first purposes a ruse. He will take Mat in through a side door that he uses to bring in criminals. Mat agrees to try this but then, almost instinctively, decides to use the fireworks to blow a hole in the side of the Stone and leap through. Mat is beginning to understand that his luck works best when he can make the situation as random as possible.

Egwene learns that some actions work in Tel'Aran'Rhiod and some do not. Her attack on Amico because it was done with the One Power on a person, has an effect in the real world. In fact, Egwene's attack was overzealous, and instead of temporarily

shielding Amico from the One Power, she stilled the woman. The lock that Egwene breaks in Tel'Aran'Rhiod is unaffected in the real world. Actions performed on inanimate objects in Tel'Aran'Rhiod have no effect in the real world.

Perrin's frantic search for Faile is driven by something stronger than the desire to rescue a comrade. In the short time that he has known her, he has already developed strong feelings for the woman who will become his wife. In Tel'Aran'Rhiod, Hopper treats Perrin like a headstrong apprentice, but it is clear that in the real world, Perrin's status among wolves is beyond that of a pack leader.

Moiraine's aid proves critical. Be'lal would have killed Rand had she not stepped in, and she might take this as verification of her belief that Rand was attempting to do something for which he was not ready. But the concept of fate is complex and allows for another interpretation. Rand is a powerful ta'veren, who alters the paths of everyone he meets, and it is possible that, just as he was fated to take Callandor, he was also fated to pull Moiraine along with him, so she could be at exactly the right place and time to save him.

The specifics of how Rand battles the traps that Ba'alzamon places between them are as mysterious to the reader as they are to Rand. When he is confronted with fire, he quenches it; when he is confronted with earth, he moves it; when he is confronted with air, he fills it. Leaving the reader in the dark about how Rand is manipulating the One Power is a clever way to link the reader to Rand.

The final chapter sets up some of the major plot points of the next book, including Nynaeve's and Elayne's journey to Tanchico in search of Liandrin, and Rand's journey to the Waste to declare himself as He Who Comes With the Dawn to the rest of the Aiel.

Rand is once again fooled into believing he has struck the final blow against the Dark One, and this makes three times in a row that he has mistaken a battle for the war. He will be more suspicious in the future.

The Forsaken are now less four members, Be'Lal and Ishamael in the battle of Tear, and Aginor and Balthamel, who were killed at the Eye of the World, in the first book.

Berelain makes her first appearance. She is the hawk sitting on Perrin's other shoulder in the visions of his future shared by Min and Egwene. It is clear that Faile and Berelain will contend with each other over Perrin.

Characters

Rand Al'Thor

One of three ta'veren found by Moiraine Sedai in the town of Emond's Field, in the Two Rivers, Rand is a male who can channel the One Power. When Moiraine finds Rand, he and two other boys from his village, Mat Cauthon and Perrin Ay'bara, are all being hunted by dark forces lead by Ba'alzamon. Moiraine escorts them to Shadar Logoth, where he and Mat become separated from the rest. Rand and Mat proceed to Caemlyn where Rand meets Elayne Trakand before being found again by Moiraine. They learn of a plot to rob the Eye of the World, a magical vault holding important treasures from the Age of Legends, most notably the Horn of Valere, which will be used in the final battle against the Dark One. At the Eye of the World, Rand contends with two Forsaken, Aginor and Balthamel, before winning his first battle against Ba'alzamon and securing the contents of the Eye.

While waiting at Fal Dara along the border to the Blight, Rand meets with Sivan Sanche, the Amyrlin Seat and leader of the Aes Sedai. She and Moiraine tell him that he is the man spoken of in prophecies regarding the last battle. He is Lews Therin Telamon, the Dragon, reborn. Lews Therin was the most powerful male Aes Sedai from the Age of Legends. Rand refuses to believe them, though he acknowledges that he can channel the One Power. After the Horn of Valere is stolen from Fal Dara, Rand leads his friends in a mission to retrieve it, which brings them to the city of Falme on the western coast, where a mysterious invading army from across the sea, known as the Seanchan, occupies the city. Rand again contends with Ba'alzamon in the skies above Falme and, though Rand is seriously wounded in the effort, manages again to best Ba'alzamon.

Though he was born in the Two Rivers, Rand is of Aiel origin, and is tall and redheaded, like many other Aiel. He has gray eyes and a warrior's build.

Matrim Cauthon

Mat is the second powerful ta'veren found in Emond's Field by Moiraine Sedai. After he takes the dagger of Mordeth out of Shadar Logoth, Mat begins to be consumed by its evil. When the dagger is stolen along with the Horn of Valere by Padan Fain, Moiraine tells him that he is tied to the dagger, and that he must retrieve it so that Aes Sedai may properly separate him from it. If he does not recover the dagger in time, he will die. He sets off with Rand, in pursuit of the dagger and the horn. At Falme, after successfully stealing both the dagger and the horn out of the possession of the Seanchan Lord Suroth, Mat sounds the Horn of Valere to call heroes from the Age of Legend to their aid in the battle against the Seanchan.

Mat is a gambler and a trickster, but he is not a scoundrel, and he possesses a strong sense of honor. He is skinny and tall for a Two Rivers man, though he is still a hand shorter than Rand. Mat has several talents, some of which are still emerging. One is his exceptional luck, which can at times run into the supernatural.

Perrin Ay'bara

Perrin is the third ta'veren found by Moiraine in Emond's Field. Along with Rand and Mat, Perrin leaves Emond's Field with Moiraine after the battle of Bel Tine. Perrin and Egwene Al'Vere become separated from the rest of the party at Shadar Logoth, and travel through the woods toward Caemlyn in the company of a man named Elias Machera, a former Warder, who has a unique ability to communicate with wolves. He notices the ability in Perrin, and, after his first exposure to the wolf society, Perrin's eyes turn gold. Perrin and Egwene are captured by Children of the Light. Perrin kills several of the Children in an attempt to help a dying wolf named Hopper. For his crimes, Dain Bornhald, the leader of the band of Children, tells Perrin he will be taken to Amadicia, the stronghold of the Children, and be put on trial as a Darkfriend. Perrin and Egwene are rescued by Moiraine, Lan, and Nynaeve, and they all proceed together to Caemlyn, where they are reunited with Rand and Mat.

After the confrontation at the Eye of the World and the theft of the Horn of Valere and the dagger of Shadar Logoth from Fal Dara, Perrin agrees to help Rand track down the dagger and save Mat's life. After Rand becomes separated from the rest, Perrin uses his new wolf abilities to track Rand, and at the same time learns that the wolves have given him the name Young Bull, because of the shape of the half-moon axe he wielded while attempting to save Hopper.

Before his adventures began, Perrin was the apprentice to the blacksmith in Emond's Field, and he is built for the task. He is taller than Mat, shorter than Rand, but thickly-muscled and powerful. As a young man, Perrin learned to move slowly and gently because his size always jeopardized those around him.

Nynaeve Al'Meara

Nynaeve was the Wisdom, or Wise Woman, of Emond's Field. After the battle of Bel Tine, Rand, Mat, Perrin, and Egwene left with Moiraine Sedai, and Nynaeve followed in pursuit, intent on stopping the Aes Sedai from stealing the young of Emond's Field and getting them into trouble. After she catches up with them at Baerlon and is made to understand that they are being pursued by the Shadow and cannot return to Emond's Field, she tells Moiraine that she will go along with them to make sure that the Aes Sedai did them no harm.

Along the way to the Eye of the World, Nynaeve begins to win the affections of Moiraine's warder, Lan. She also learns that her prodigious abilities as Wisdom of Emond's Field, including her ability to predict the weather and to perform remarkable acts of healing, are due to the fact that she has been inadvertently channeling the One

Power. Nynaeve wants less to do with Aes Sedai than Rand, and when Suan Sanche tells her she must come to Tar Valon to be trained because she could be the most powerful Aes Sedai in a thousand years, she goes along solely on the pretext of keeping an eye on Egwene.

Nynaeve is a beautiful woman with long dark hair that she wears in a thick braid, a braid which she will tug on mercilessly when she is agitated. Despite her position as Wisdom, she is only a few years older than Rand, Mat, Perrin and Egwene.

Egwene Al'Vere

Egwene is the daughter of the mayor of Emond's Field. While in Emond's Field looking for Rand, Mat, and Perrin, Moiraine meets Egwene and realizes that she can channel the One Power. She offers to take Egwene to Tar Valon to train as an Aes Sedai. Egwene and Rand have been sweethearts for several years before Moiraine's arrival, but Rand's fate will push the two of them apart, and push Egwene toward Tar Valon. While in Tar Valon, after the battle at the Eye of the World, Egwene begins to have prophetic dreams. Alanna Sedai, an Aes Sedai of the Blue Ajah, says that Egwene might be a Dreamer, an Aes Sedai who specializes in interpreting and even traveling in the realm of Dreams. After arriving at the White Tower, the home of Aes Sedai in Tar Valon, Egwene befriends Elayne Trakand, the daughter-heir of Andor, who can also channel the One Power and who is in Tar Valon to train as a novice. Their training is cut short, when, having been convinced to travel to Falme to help Rand by an Aes Sedai named Liandrin, they are betrayed to the Seanchan by Liandrin. Egwene is taken prisoner, and the Seanchan use a collar called an a'dam to control her and force her to channel for them. Egwene is rescued by Nynaeve, Elayne, and Min.

Egwene, like Nynaeve, has the dark hair and dark eyes typical of Two Rivers women, but she is slightly shorter than the Wisdom.

Moiraine Damodred

Moiraine, an Aes Sedai of the Blue Ajah, is involved with Suan Sanche in a conspiracy to do what they can to allow Rand, the Dragon Reborn, to fight the final battle. She is from a powerful family in Cairhien, and is related to Cairhien's previous king, who cut down the Avendesora in Cairhien and started the Aiel War.

Lan, al'Lan Mandragorn

Lan is Moiraine's warder, bound to her by the One Power and sworn to protect her. He is also the last surviving lord of the kingdom of Malkieri, a kingdom in the north which was swallowed by the Blight when Lan was a child.



Min, Elmindreda

Min is a young woman, found by Moiraine, with the ability to see aspects of the future of anyone she looks at. She first meets Rand in Baerlon, and from that moment on, her fate is tied to his.

Elayne Trakand

Elayne is the daughter heir of Queen Morgase of Andor and friend to Egwene, Nynaeve, and Min. Moiraine meets Rand in Caemlyn when he is on his way to the Eye of the World, and she quickly falls in love with him. She is sent by her mother to Tar Valon to learn to channel the One Power.

Loial

Loial is an Ogier, a powerful species of non-human, most around nine feet tall, who seclude themselves in wilderness spots called Steddings, where the One Power cannot be wielded. Loial meets Rand in Caemlyn and decides to travel with him to see what it is like to travel with a ta'veren.

Verin Sedai

Verin is an Aes Sedai of the Brown Ajah. After she correctly guesses that Rand is the Dragon Reborn and that Siuan and Moiraine are allowing him to fulfill the prophecies of the Dragon, Siuan and Moiraine are forced to include Verin in the conspiracy.

the Forsaken, the Chosen

The Forsaken are a group of powerful Aes Sedai, male and female, who joined forces with the Dark One in the Age of Legends. They were bound with him at Shayol Gul, but with the seals of the prison weakened, they are once again let loose upon the world. They refer to themselves as the Chosen.

Lanfear

A powerful and beautiful member of the Forsaken, Lanfear was the lover of Lews Therin Telamon during the Age of Legends, and she is naturally drawn to Rand, who is Lews Therin reborn.



Ba'alzamon, Ishamael

Ishamael is a powerful Aes Sedai from the Age of Legends who became a member of the Forsaken. He has been driven half mad by his imprisonment and now goes by the name Ba'alzamon.

Sammael

Sammael is a cunning and violent member of the Forsaken. After being released from captivity, he took up a position of power as a council member in the city of Illian.

Be'Lal

A powerful Aes Sedai and a master swordsman, Be'lal took over control of the city of Tear after escaping his imprisonment. He is masquerading as the High Lord Samon.

Rah'vin

A handsome, cunning Aes Sedai, Rah'vin always enjoyed manipulating women. After his escape from Shayol Gul, he seduces Queen Morgase and entices her to dismiss her General Gareth Bryne, and install Rah'vin in his place.

Thom Merrilin

Thom is a gleeman, a kind of bard, that is present at the battle of Bel Tine, and begins the journey with Moiraine Sedai, Rand, Mat, Perrin, and Egwene, in hopes of keeping the children free of the machinations of the White Tower.

Aviendha

A Maiden of the Spear, the women warriors of the Aiel, Aviendha will soon find that she must give up the spear and learn to use the One Power. Her fate is strongly tied to Rand.

Rhuarc

Rhuarc is the clan chief of the Taardad Aiel, who helps Rand capture the Stone of Tear.



Siuan Sanche, the Amyrlin Seat

Siuan is the Amyrlin Seat, the leader of the Aes Sedai, and co-conspirator with Moiraine Sedai. She was born to a poor family of fishermen in Tear, and her colorful language is indicative of her culture.

Faile, Zarine Bashere

The daughter of Davram Bashere, the Marshall-General of Saldaea, and uncle to Queen Tenobia, Faile ran away from her pedestrian duties at home to become a hunter for the horn in the Great Hunt in Tear. She meets Perrin, who is on the way to Tear, and decides that his circumstances are compelling and might lead her to the horn.

Juilin Sandar

A thief-catcher in the city of Tear, Juilin, under torture, betrays Nynaeve, Egwene, and Elayne to Liandrin. He attempts to make up for this dishonor by helping Mat storm the Stone of Tear and rescue them.

Objects/Places

The Horn of Valere

A powerful, magical object, said to belong to Artur Hawkwing, a king from the Age of Legends. The horn is suppose to be sounded in the last battle, to call an army of long dead heroes to fight for the sounder.

The Dagger of Shadar Logoth

A dagger from Shadar Logoth, a city that has fallen under the taint of an ancient evil.

The banner of Lews Therin Telamon

The battle banner of the Dragon, Lews Therin Telamon, from the Age of Legends, which was found in the Eye of the World at the end of the first book.

Angreal, Sa'angreal, Ter'angreal

Any one of a number of ancient objects designed for use with the One Power. An angreal will magnify the power of a channeling Aes Sedai, allowing him or her to perform tasks with greater amounts of the One Power. A ter'angreal is an object that, when channeled into, will produce a specific effect. Egwene's ring, which will take the wearer into Tel'Aran'Rhiod, is an example of a ter'angreal. Sa'angreal are like angreal, just much more powerful.

Callandor, the Sword That Is Not a Sword

Callandor is a powerful sa'angreal from the Age of Legends that resides in the Stone of Tear. Legend has it that Callandor can only be drawn by the Dragon Reborn.

Balefire

A substance produced with the One Power that has the effect of burning a thread out of the pattern of the Wheel of Time. If the power used is small, the thread will only be burned in one spot, resulting in death. But if too much power is used, Balefire can burn a thread out of the pattern completely, causing everything that the target ever affected to change. Because its consequences can be so dire, producing Balefire is banned by Aes Sedai.

Themes

Manipulation

Since finding Rand, Mat, Perrin, Nynaeve and Egwene in Emond's Field, Moiraine has withheld information and exposed them to only bits and pieces of her knowledge and her mission. By the time he was standing before Siuan Sanche at Fal Dara, Rand was already suspicious of Moiraine's motives, and by the time the Stone of Tear falls he has decided he cannot trust her. Moiraine has perhaps been right to withhold some of the knowledge from Rand, but there is no doubt that the deceptions have created an air of mistrust between them, and if Rand is convinced of anything, it is that he needs to get away from Moiraine and the White Tower.

Nynaeve's attitude toward the Aes Sedai who she at first believed to have abducted four younger Emond's Fielders, is still brimming with hatred. She will hold the misconception that, if Moiraine had simply not come to Emond's Field, they would have been able to live normal happy lives, for some time still. There is no doubt that Moiraine's brusque, circumspect manner and her tendency toward riddles have done little to correct this misperception.

This practice of shielding the details of a war, even from those who must act in it, is reminiscent of the relationship between political intrigue and popular politics. The politician will say that a way must be found for safety, pride, patriotism, or any number of other reasons, while at the same time concealing many of the details and the subtle nuances that have created the situation. It is thought that the mass will not understand the intricacies of policy.

Moiraine's policy of withholding does have its advantages. When she first takes them under her wing, the Emond's Fielders are inexperienced and reckless, especially with information. If she had told them everything at the beginning, there is no telling what they would have let slip when surrounded by dangerous ears. In many ways, Moiraine is just a warm up for the Forsaken, who will conceal information from Rand as well as from each other, while supposedly all serving the same master.

Honor

The concept of honoring a promise comes up several times in *The Dragon Reborn*. This chivalrous theme is common in fantasy, where knights and kings, men and women of honor, aid each other against powerful forces, where the consequences of failure are almost always dire. Aes Sedai themselves are supposed to honor promises, in that the oaths they take when they become Aes Sedai demand that they never tell falsehoods. This means that if they tell someone that they will do something they must or break their oath.



Gawyn and Galad promised Queen Morgase that they would look after Elayne while they were all at the White Tower. When Elayne returns to the White Tower from the battle of Falme, her brothers are stern with her, demanding to know where she has been and telling her that she is not to leave again without informing them. Part of this stems from the fact that they care greatly for their sister, but they also do not want to break their promise to their mother.

When Faile refuses to part with them in Illian, Moiraine makes Faile give an oath to keep their secrets and not to leave them unless given permission. She makes Faile swear as a Hunter of the Horn. Apparently, part of the code involving participation in the Great Hunt says that contenders may not be false to each other or others.

Mat promises Elayne that he will carry her letter to Queen Morgase even though it places him at great personal risk. After being rebuffed by guards at the gate, he daringly enters the castle by subterfuge, possibly risking execution, all in the name of keeping his word to Elayne.

Fate, prophecy

A common motif in the fantasy genre is the fulfillment by central characters of ancient prophecies. Prophecy plays a major role in the Wheel of Time series, in which many ancient sources, some more complete than others, and some in conflict with each other, tell about the final battle and the return of the Dragon.

Moiraine and Siuan make Rand aware of the prophecies regarding Callandor, but Rand will not do a careful study of all of the prophecies concerning him until after the Stone has fallen. Fed up with being chased by the Shadow and manipulated by the White Tower, an exhausted Rand decides to put an end to it and sets off to fulfill one of the best known and clearest prophecies regarding the Dragon Reborn.

But Rand is not the only one driven by prophesy. Moiraine's search for Rand was aided by a prophecy made during the Aiel Wars, that the Dragon Reborn would be born to a Maiden of the Spear on the slopes of the Dragonmount, though he would not be raised Aiel. The Aiel, too, are being guided by both prophecy and visions. Their search for He Who Comes With the Dawn has brought them over the Dragonwall, and their presence is crucial. They rescue Nynaeve, Egwene, and Elayne from brigands, and they aid Rand by creating a distraction so he may slip into the Heart of the Stone and take Callandor, at the same time fulfilling the prophecy that the fall of the Stone will herald the arrival of He Who Comes with the Dawn.

Prophecy will continue to play a major role throughout the epic.

Style

Point of View

The entire series is told in third person. A change in the point of view is often announced by a new chapter, but not always. The five central characters, Rand, Mat, Perrin, Nynaeve, and Egwene, dominate the point of view of the series, but Jordan will employ other points of view at times, including those of antagonists. In this volume, he spends almost no time with Rand, and the book is dominated by Perrin and Egwene. The series is epic in size and encompasses hundreds of characters, but there are central characters whose points of view Jordan goes out of his way to avoid. A good example of this is Moiraine Sedai, whose point of view Jordan used only several times in all of the first four books.

Setting

The characters are on the move for most of the book, converging on the city of Tear from both the west and the north. Nynaeve, Egwene, and Elayne return to Tar Valon, a city on an island in the river Erinin, north of the great city of Caemlyn. Tar Valon is an orderly city, composed mainly of citizens who serve the White Tower, the majestic structure at its center, built by Ogier in the Age of Legends and home to Aes Sedai. The city is connected to the surrounding shore by towering bridges, built with the One Power during the Age of legends. The bridges are an example of the feats that male and female Aes Sedai are capable of when combining their work, an ability that was stifled by the taint the Dark One left on saidin, the male half of the One Power. The bridges are similar to those that compose the Ways and were used several times in the first and second novels.

The City of Caemlyn, to the south, where Mat and Thom journey to carry Elayne's letter to her mother Queen Morgase, is an immense city, surrounded by a fifty-foot high, sloping wall, and holding at its center, the royal palace and gardens, which are surrounded by their own wall.

Tear, where the climax of the book takes place, is a port town built on the mouth of the river Erinin, many leagues to the south of Tar Valon and Caemlyn. It is an excessively muggy city, and its inhabitants wear loose, billowy blouses and pantaloons. The streets are thick with mud and citizens strap small platforms to their shoes to get about. The Stone of Tear is a domed fortress the size of a small mountain, constructed with the One Power.

Language and Meaning

His writing is simple and straightforward, the language never straying beyond early secondary school level. The character development and the pace of the plot are both

quite strong and compel the reader from section to section. The characters are alive and believable, and Jordan spends a good deal of time describing their emotional states, though it should be said that in these segments he suffers from a rather distracting tendency to over-italicize.

The series is driven by plot and emotion, not by the intricacy of the environment, and Jordan is far better at winding together complicated storylines than he is at writing in elaborate detail. Despite the size of the books and of the entire series itself, the writing is direct and economical, sticking to the details of the story, not the details of the environment. His most indulgent sections are the emotional, internal monologues, but even here the writing is raw and direct, almost completely devoid of any metaphoric complications. Starting with the next book, he will shed this tendency toward directness and begin to add more description and more complex language to the books.

Structure

The chapters are not broken up by scene, but are instead used to heighten the tension or suspense of whatever is occurring. There are over fifty chapters, each rather short. This brevity allows him to jump around from perspective to perspective, further increasing the tension of the story.

This is one book in a series of over ten; therefore, there are quite a few subplots running through the story, and even more details injected into the story that will only become understandable later.

The action is divided into two different threads, Moiraine and Perrin's long trek in pursuit of Rand, and Nynaeve, Egwene, and Elayne's time at the White Tower and subsequent journey to Tear. Both of the threads tie off in Tear; this convergence helps to heighten the tension and increase the pace at the end of the book. Jordan does not tell the full tale of each thread all at once, but jumps back and forth between them, which is a typical style for the fantasy genre.

Quotes

"'You will not have many chances,' the man said behind him in a hard voice. 'Three threads woven together share one another's doom. When one is cut, all are. Fate can kill you, if it does not do worse.'"

Ba'alzamon to Perrin (p. 67)

"'A world of dreams?' he said disbelievingly.

Moiraine gave him a sharp look...'The way wolves talk to one another, the way they talk to you, is in some way connect to this world of dreams.'"

Moiraine to Perrin, (p. 123)

"Without a word she guided them around the man, but his shouts followed after. 'My name is Dain Bornhald! Remember it, Darkfriends! I will make you fear my name! Remember my name!'"

Dain Bornhald to Verin, Nynaeve, Egwene, and Elayne, (p.143)

"'You are the only two in the Tower I can be absolutely sure are not Black Ajah.'"

Siuan Sanche to Nynaeve and Egwene, (p. 178)

"Her smile hid secrets. 'Just remember that there is another choice. You need not be a puppet for the White Tower or prey for Ba'alzamon's Darkfriends. The world is more complex than you can imagine. Do as these Aes Sedai wish for the present, but remember your choices.'"

Selene (Lanfear) to Mat, (p. 226)

"'You mean me to blow it for you. When the Last Battle comes, you mean me to call heroes back from the grave to fight the Dark One for you. Blood and bloody ashes!'

'Would you prefer the alternative?'"

Siuan Sanche and Mat, (p. 233)

"'I did not want you to be brought forward tonight. Not because I feared what happened; no one could foresee that. But because of what you are. A wilder...You have vast potential, else you would never have survived in there tonight, but potential changes nothing. I do not believe you will ever be part of the White Tower, not the way the rest of us are, no matter on which finger you wear your ring.'"

Elaida Sedai to Egwene, (p. 268)

"Those Aes Sedai will be waiting for the guards to bring me back. When I do not return by morning, then they'll start a search. Not too frantic at first, because they'll think I have gone to ground somewhere in the city. By the time they realize I haven't, this rabbit will be a long way downriver from the hounds."

Mat to himself, (p. 342)

"'You're a long way from home, Gaul. Why are you here?'

'We search,' Gaul said slowly, 'We look for He Who Comes With the Dawn.'



Perrin had heard that name before, under circumstances that made him sure who it meant. Light, it always comes back to Rand. I am tied to him like a mean horse for shoeing."

Gaul and Perrin, (p. 395)

"Except that now the Wise Ones say he is to be found here, beyond the Dragonwall.

"Blood of our blood mixed with the old blood, raised by an ancient blood not ours." I do not understand it, but the Wise Ones spoke in such a way as to leave no doubts."

Aviendha talking about He Who Comes With the Dawn, (p. 443)

"You are ta'veren?' Zarine said disbelievingly. Her gaze ran over his sturdy country clothes and settled on his yellow eyes. 'Well, perhaps. Whatever you are, she threatens you as easily as she does me. Who is Min? What does she mean, I will perch on your shoulder?'"

Faile to Perrin, (p. 482)

"Now you bring Fetches into it,' Zarine muttered. 'Gray Men. Fetches, Darkhounds. You had better lead me to the Horn of Valere, farmboy. What other surprises do you have waiting for me?'"

Faile to Perrin (p. 502)

"Hold this for me, Master Gill,' Mat said, and tossed him the wash-leather purse.

'What's this, lad? Coin?'

'Stakes. Gaebril doesn't know it, but he and I have a wager.' The cat jumped down as Mat picked up the wooden dice cup and spun the dice out on the table. Five sixes. 'And I always win.'"

Mat to Master Gill, owner of the Queen's Blessing, (p. 550)

"Once your time as bait is done, you will tell us everything. You will want to. They say you will be very strong one day, but I will make sure you will always obey me, even before the Great Master Be'lal works his plans for you."

Liandrin to Nynaeve, (p. 611)

"Perrin nodded, and looked through the door again. It has to work. I don't care if Min warned me against her or not! With a snarl he leaped toward Faile, stretching out his hand. He thought he touched her ankle before he was gone."

Perrin enters Tel'Aran'Rhiod to rescue Faile, (p.628)

"Just be glad you were so lucky,' Sandar said unsteadily, 'or this one would have killed us both before we saw him. I know the door is here somewhere. Are you coming? Or do you mean to wait for another High Lord to appear?'

'Lead on,' Mat stepped over the unconscious High Lord. 'I am no bloody hero.'"

Juilin and Mat during the battle of the Stone of Tear, (p. 647)

"Take it! Take Callandor! Three thousand years, while I lay imprisoned, it has waited there. For you. One of the most powerful sa'angreal we ever made. Take it, and defend yourself, if you can!'"

Be'lal to Rand, (p. 649)



"As Ba'alzomon put forth his hand, Rand pushed himself up, threw himself desperately toward Callandor, still glittering and flashing in midair. He did not know whether he could reach it, or touch it if he did, but he was sure it was his only chance."

p. 652

"'My poor Perrin,' she said softly. 'My poor blacksmith. You are hurt so badly.'

With an effort that cost more pain, he turned his head. This was the private dining room in the Star, and near one leg of the table lay a wooden carving of a hedgehog, broken in half.

'Faile,' he whispered to her. 'My falcon.'"

Faile and Perrin, after her rescue, (p. 662)

"He raised Callandor above his head. Silver lightning crackled from the blade, jagged streaks arching toward the great dome above. 'Stop!' he shouted. The fighting ceased; men stared at him in wonder, over black veils, from beneath the rims of round helmets. 'I am Rand al'Thor!' he called, so his voice rang through the chamber. 'I am the Dragon Reborn!' Callandor shone in his grasp.

One by one, veiled men and helmeted, they knelt to him, crying. 'The Dragon is Reborn! The Dragon is Reborn!'"

p. 666

Topics for Discussion

Explain the concept of fate. How does fate relate to Rand's situation? Are his actions fated to have the consequences that they do? Are they fated to see him to the Last Battle, or is Moiraine right to believe that he is not fated to arrive there, but must make the correct choices in order to be alive to fight in the last battle?

Perrin and Faile's relationship seems to begin from a point of antagonism. How can contrast at the beginning of a relationship strength it?

Lanfear is obsessed with Rand, who as the Dragon Reborn, is tied to her former lover Lews Therin Telamon. In what way does her obsession cause her to behave differently than the other Forsaken? Could Rand use these differences to manipulate Lanfear?

The world of the Wheel of Time contains many elements of balance. Aes Sedai can be either male or female, and while individuals vary, men are not in general stronger or weaker than women. Women use air and water well, while men use fire and earth well, and both sexes use Spirit. The concept of balance in power and especially in metaphysics is common in myth and in the fantasy genre. Give some other examples.

Does Jordan's avoidance of Rand's point of view throughout most of this book hurt the work? Does it help? Does he spend too much time with Perrin and Egwene? How does it increase the tension to avoid the perspectives of characters like Moiraine?

Both Siuan Sanche and Moiraine hold back bits of knowledge from those that they seek to help or manipulate. Is this wise? How might this practice aid in the fight against the Shadow? Does the benefits it brings offset the resentment and distrust it inevitably brings?

When Caemlyn decides to stop the flow of refugees from Cairhien, Nynaeve and Egwene question Morgase's compassion. Elayne then tells them that a leader often has to make tough decisions to insure the best results for the whole, but which can seem cruel from more limited perspectives. Is this true? When does this occur in real life?

Discuss the way a ta'veren can affect the pattern that is spun out on the Wheel of Time.

Producing Balefire is a banned act by all Aes Sedai, going back into the Age of Legends. Is there a weapon in real life that is thought so destructive and dangerous that most believe it should be banned? Discuss possible parallels.