

Entwined Study Guide

Entwined by Heather Dixon

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Plot Summary

Entwined is a novel by author Heather Dixon. The story follows the main character, Azalea, as she tries to put the pieces of her life back together after losing her mother. Azalea is the oldest of 12 girls, so she promises her mother on her deathbed that she will take care of her sisters. As the oldest, Azalea is also in line to become queen.

When Azalea discovers that the palace they live in is magic, she also learns there are secret passageways and rooms in the palace. Azalea stumbles onto a brick marked with the initials of the King that is rumored to have "magicked" the palace. She rubs her late mother's silver-threaded handkerchief on the initials and discovers a secret passageway to a silver forest. Since the girls are forbidden from dancing, which is their favorite pastime, while in mourning for their mother, they sneak away on a nightly basis to dance in the pavilion in the silver forest.

Keeper, who is the man that runs the pavilion and the silver forest, possesses magic of his own. He tells the girls they can come and dance their hearts out at the pavilion whenever they wish. Eventually, however, Keeper reveals to Azalea that he is the former King who is responsible for "magicking" the palace. The catch is that he wants to collect on the payment for allowing the girls to dance in the pavilion. The payment requires the girls to find the magic item in the palace and break it so that Keeper can be set free.

In the meantime, the girls are learning how to make it through life without a mother, and a father who is emotionally absent. As the novel unfolds, the girls learn valuable lessons in life from the dances they learn. The relationship with their father also develops into a more loving and normal relationship. In the midst of the year of mourning, the three oldest girls—Azalea, Bramble and Clover—also fall in love and get engaged to be married.



Chapter 1

Chapter 1 Summary

Azalea is dressed and ready for the Yuletide Ball, which is the Christmas Eve ball held in the palace each year. Ever since Azalea's mother has fallen ill, Azalea has been running the palace. She visits her mother, who is also pregnant with her twelfth child, before going to the ball. Azalea is concerned something is wrong because her mother's lips turn red and then white. While she is visiting, her mother gives Azalea a handkerchief with the initials BEW on it. When Azalea leaves her mother, she goes to the King to tell him he needs to send for the doctor. He tells Azalea that he has required her 10 sisters to stay in their rooms and away from the ball tonight, after an incident the previous year where they all, including Azalea, hid in the rosebush outside peeking in and ended up throwing snowballs at the man who found them. The King says he'll fetch the doctor himself. Azalea makes him promise to be back in time for the first dance.

Chapter 1 Analysis

This chapter foreshadows that this ball is Azalea's coming out. She'll be dancing with each of the men at the dance to choose one as her husband. It foreshadows her falling in love with a man who isn't acceptable for her royalty status and parliament choosing someone Azalea doesn't love for her to marry instead. It also infers that the King won't make it back for the opening dance of the ball, and that Azalea's sisters will get into trouble for interfering somehow with the ball again this year.



Chapter 2

Chapter 2 Summary

The King decides to stay with mother, so the Prime Minister has to escort Azalea into the ball. Azalea dances and has a great time. She takes a break to admire the Christmas trees lined up around the room to discover that her sisters are hiding inside the numerous trees. She spends the evening gathering and sliding food into the trees for them to eat. When she is delivering pudding to the trees, she runs into a young man who is disheveled and bleeding. It turns out to be Lord Bradford, the son of the previous Prime Minister.

During the final dance, which is the Entwine, Prime Minister Fairweller barges into the room and tells everyone it's time for them to go home. When Fairweller asks where her sisters are, she leads him to the jumble of girls sleeping in the trees. He says nothing and leaves the ballroom. Azalea joins her sisters to sleep on the ballroom floor. The next morning when they wake up, it's Christmas day. When Azalea and the girls run into Fairweller, Azalea mentions their mother and Fairweller says she died in the night.

Chapter 2 Analysis

Azalea and Lord Bradford are going to fall into a forbidden love. The look the Prime Minister gives Azalea signals that something is wrong with her mother.



Chapter 3

Chapter 3 Summary

Azalea slaps Fairweller and runs outside to try to find the King. When Azalea returns, her sister Bramble starts throwing their Christmas oranges at her for deserting them. Then, they roll a bassinet with the new baby, Lily, in it for Azalea to see. The girls curtsy together and welcome Lily to the royal family. They hear a commotion downstairs and the King comes in dirty and wearing his clothes from the previous day. He tells Mr. Pudding to keep all of the Princesses away from him while he works in the library. Azalea barges into the library to show the King the baby, but he shoves her out and locks the door behind her. Azalea joins Mr. Pudding in her mother's room for the tradition of guarding the body.

Chapter 3 Analysis

The inference is that the King is the father of all twelve girls. Strangely, they call him the King rather than father. All of the girls are named in alphabetical order because the King likes things to be in order. The King is not handling the death of his wife well and is taking it out on his children. Ironically, Azalea can see that her mother has found peace in death that she didn't have in the last two years of her life.



Chapter 4

Chapter 4 Summary

Azalea wakes the next morning with all of her sisters piled into her bed and on the floor surrounding her bed. When she takes them to their room to get ready, the trunks where their dresses are stored are empty. When Azalea asks Fairweller where the dresses are, he says they are being died for mourning. While Azalea helps the girls dress, she explains to them about the year ahead when they will have to mourn their mother.

The next day, the girls are having their meal alone, when they've always eaten as a family with the King. They hear the King down the hall and Azalea and Bramble go to talk with him. He's talking with Lord Bradford. The King says Lord Bradford is going to stop the Tower clock for mourning. The King agrees to allow Azalea to escort Lord Bradford while the King escorts Bramble back to dinner to care for her sisters. The King doesn't go to the dining room, however. He gets his coat to leave. Azalea begs him to stay, but he leaves and she escorts Lord Bradford to the tower.

When they reach the tower, Lord Bradford points out that the D'Eathe mark, the mark of the royal family, on a brick denotes where a hidden passage is. After stopping the clock, the two are walking down the tower stairs when Bramble leads her sister in an attack on Lord Bradford. Bramble mentions the King is getting ready to leave to fight in the war and that they might never see him again. Lord Bradford gives Bramble and the girls his pocket watch so they can keep time while in mourning. Bramble says they'll hold the watch for ransom until he starts the tower clock again.

Chapter 4 Analysis

Lord Bradford uses the excuse of coming to the palace on official Royal Business to give his condolences to Azalea. It seems as if Lord Bradford is as taken with Azalea as she is with him. The King is acting distant from the girls because he is having a hard time dealing with the death of his wife and their mother.



Chapter 5

Chapter 5 Summary

At the funeral, Fairweller asks to speak to Azalea. He tells her that their father has to go to war now instead of eating with the girls as the rules apply. Her sisters are hiding in the bushes, so they overhear the conversation. Azalea encourages them to do a mazurka step, which is a dance, and they are not allowed to dance while in mourning. The King catches them and scolds them.

While eating dinner in their rooms as punishment, the sisters tell Azalea that the King doesn't really love them. He had only done the things he did because their mother had wanted him to do them. Now that their mother is gone, they think the King doesn't want them. Azalea goes to fetch the King to prove her sisters wrong, but only finds Mr. Pudding packing the King's belongings for war. When she finds out the King left for the port, she saddles a horse and rides it there. When she sees the King, she accidentally drops his sword and puts a crack in it. The King gives her his jacket because she had forgotten to grab a cloak before she left and the cold rain is pouring down. Azalea confronts the King about not saying goodbye and then denounces him. She rides back to the palace with Fairweller.

Chapter 5 Analysis

The King is leaving without saying goodbye to the girls because he wants them to be strong in case he dies too. Since they just lost their mother, he doesn't want to get too close to them before he goes off to war.



Chapter 6

Chapter 6 Summary

Azalea wakes from the dream she has over and over again. It's of the conversation she had with her mother right before she went down to the ball on the night her mother died. Azalea checks on her bedmate, Kale, the two year old, and Lily. She goes downstairs to dance in the ballroom. When she looks up, her sisters are standing in the doorway. They join her in the dance. Mr. Pudding catches the girls dancing and Azalea sends them upstairs. Mr. Pudding locks the ballroom and tells the girls he has to write their father about dancing when they should be in mourning.

Chapter 6 Analysis

Dancing is a way for Azalea and her sisters to find some joy and solace in being orphaned by the death of their mother and the abandonment of their father. Additionally, dancing is something the girls enjoyed doing with their mother, so it makes them feel closer to her. While inside of the fireplace, Azalea sees a brick with the royal family etching on it.

Two weeks later, Azalea is woken by a clinkety-clink sound, which she discovers is the sugar tongs hopping around inside the fireplace in the room. When Azalea picks up the magic tongs, they bite her. She sees they are blackened and full of soot because of being in the fireplace. Azalea finding the brick with the etching on it foreshadows her finding one of the secret passageways Lord Bradford told her about. The secret room will provide a secret place for the girls to dance undetected by anyone in the palace.



Chapter 7

Chapter 7 Summary

Azalea remembers back to the conversation she had with Lord Bradford. He told her that to open the secret passageway she has to rub silver on it. Azalea grabs the silver tongs and pulls out her mother's handkerchief to pick up the tongs without getting bit. She notices the silver embroidered in the handkerchief. Azalea runs the real silver threads of the embroidery on the DE of the brick for several minutes before the bricks light up and an archway forms where the fireplace mantel was. When the tongs see the archway, they pull on the hem of Azalea's skirt, as if they want to go with her. Azalea agrees to take the tongs with her and then sees Bramble holding Lily standing behind her. Then the rest of her sisters appear. Bramble says the wall closed behind them so they'll have to rub the brick on the inside of the tunnel to get back out again. After descending the stairs, the girls find themselves in a forest shimmering of silver. The set up of the room looks just like the palace they live in, except it is covered in shimmering silver.

As the girls walk further into the scene, they hear music. Then, they see people dancing. The thought of magic scares Azalea and she decides it's best for them to leave. The other girls run ahead and Azalea runs after them. They pull Azalea into the bushes. They watch the dancers until they think a gentleman sees them and then they decide to leave. As they're running away, Azalea looks back and sees her sister Ivy eating food off the sweets table on the dance floor. She motions for Ivy to come but Ivy uses her nightgown as a tray to gather sweets for her sisters and walks across the dance floor. The dancers spot Ivy and start to scream. Azalea rushes her sisters toward the exit while she runs onto the dance floor, grabs Ivy and starts to run. The gentleman beckons her to stop or says he'll have to stop her himself. Then, he says he hasn't seen real people since the High King D-Eathe.

Chapter 7 Analysis

It's as if the magic sugar tongs lead Azalea to the secret room so that the girls can dance. The silver handkerchief is a symbol that Azalea's mother wanted her to find the secret rooms for the girls to enjoy, and that they can use her handkerchief to access the magical rooms.



Chapter 8

Chapter 8 Summary

The gentleman says he is undead and Azalea remembers the story about the High King capturing the souls of the dead. The gentleman conjures up cups full of tea, sets them on the water and blows them over to each of the girls. He explains that he was in the King's court. He says when he heard about the King capturing people's souls, he joined the rebellion. He says the King used his magic to make him the Keeper of the dance pavilion. Then he asks who they are. Azalea introduces each of them. Before they leave, he tells Azalea to look in her pocket, where she finds an invitation to attend a ball the following night. The next morning, the girls question whether it was a dream, but Azalea says it wasn't. Azalea confirms that they now have a place to dance. She goes to find their Christmas slippers for dancing that they had never worn because they went into mourning.

That night, the girls get ready for the ball. They go back through the fireplace into the enchanted forest and up on to the dance pavilion. The Keeper leaves them to dance. When they are done, he invites them to come back and dance when they want.

Chapter 8 Analysis

The pavilion is a place the girls can escape the realities of life. While in the real world, their mother is dead and their father is off at war, the world is theirs to dance and find joy in at the pavilion.



Chapter 9

Chapter 9 Summary

The girls spend their nights dancing at the pavilion. They drag themselves to breakfast and lessons grudgingly and sleepily. They also have to mend their dancing slippers daily, but have to do it in secret. One morning, Azalea realizes she has misplaced Lord Bradford's watch. When she returns to the pavilion, Mr. Keeper has the watch. He asks Azalea if it belongs to her special gentleman. When Azalea returns to her room, she and her sisters read that the gossip columnist writes about Azalea and a possible husband, but Azalea is interested in the war listing that includes information on Lord Bradford being safe.

Chapter 9 Analysis

The dancing is therapy for the girls for the loss of their mother and their father being away at war. The dances are teaching the girls lessons while also keeping their minds occupied. Mr. Keeper insinuates Lord Bradford will marry Azalea.



Chapter 10

Chapter 10 Summary

The war ends in triumph for the King and his regiment. In celebration, Mrs. Graybe makes cinnamon toast for the girls to eat, which is a meal they only eat on special occasions. The girls find out that Fairweller is injured in the war. Lord Teddy, who is the man that the gossip columnist says will be Azalea's future husband, comes to the place. The girls catch him taking the portrait of their mother from the portrait gallery. The princesses promise over their mother's handkerchief not to tell the King of their dancing.

Chapter 10 Analysis

The King surviving the war indicates that a new life will start for him and the girls from this point on. Lord Teddy taking their mother's portrait foreshadows that Lord Teddy will have a professional portrait painted of their mother because they didn't have the money to have a professional painter paint one before she died. The girls promising to keep their dancing secret from the King infers that they will end up having to tell the King about Keeper and the pavilion at some point.



Chapter 11

Chapter 11 Summary

The King arrives home. When the girls see him, they realize that his hand is injured, but it wasn't an injury listed in the paper. The King finds out that the girls have been dancing even though they are not supposed to be because they are in mourning. When he asks for them to reveal where they've been dancing, he finds out that they swore on silver—the silver thread of their mother's handkerchief—not to tell him. The King throws their dancing slippers into the fire and grounds the girls to their room.

Chapter 11 Analysis

The King realizes that the secrets he and their mother have been keeping from the princesses are starting to unravel. While he tries to stop the girls from doing what he has forbidden them to do—dance—he also knows that they are growing up and will find a way to do it.



Chapter 12

Chapter 12 Summary

That night, the girls go down into the silver forest pavilion in their boots. They dance until their feet are sore, chafed, and irritated. The next night none of the girls feel like dancing but they do it anyway. Azalea ends up twisting her ankle. The following day, the girls are with the tutor when the King brings in a stack of invitations for Azalea.

Chapter 12 Analysis

When Azalea mentions never being able to repay the Keeper for allowing them to dance there, the Keeper says he's sure he can think of something. This implies that the girls will pay for the ability to dance. It is ironic that Azalea receives a stack of invitations to attend balls when she isn't permitted to dance while in mourning. The King finds out the girls have been dancing again because of the blisters and chafing on their feet. The girls say they're dancing because it reminds them of their mother. Later that night, a basket of new dance slippers is delivered to the girls along with their dinner. The note is from the King and he tells them he doesn't want to hear anything about dancing or their mother.



Chapter 13

Chapter 13 Summary

The girls learn that each night their slippers are mended and then returned to them the following morning. This is the same arrangement that was in place prior to their mother dying. Sundays are the only day of the week the girls are allowed to enjoy being outside. That night at dinner, the King requires the girls to eat with him and their guests, which are Fairweller and Lord Bradford. While they eat, Fairweller and the King try to convince Lord Bradford that he should run for politics. Bramble, the second oldest of the sisters, is writing notes to Lord Bradford on napkins trying to get him to turn the tower clock back on and then leave the country. When Bramble asks to be excused, the King demands the girls go to the library. Azalea waits by his horse for Lord Bradford to leave. She apologizes for the behavior of her sisters and tries to give him his watch. He won't take it and says he has kept her handkerchief since the ball. He calls her Bramble, which is the sister right below her in age, as he leaves. When Azalea looks at the handkerchief, she realizes it has Bramble's initials.

Chapter 13 Analysis

Lord Bradford mistakes Azalea for Bramble. While Azalea vows to set him straight when and if she sees him again, this foreshadows Lord Bradford calling for Bramble's hand in marriage when he is really in love with Azalea.



Chapter 14

Chapter 14 Summary

Keeper invites Azalea to dance a dance with him. He also tells the girls a scary story. Azalea leaves the watch behind in the pavilion and when she goes back to retrieve it, she realizes that Keeper has been gathering various items that belong to the girls. The Keeper tells Azalea that there is a magic item in the palace they have to find and destroy in order to free him. Azalea thinks it might be the tea set Keeper is talking about because it's missing. Clover admits to destroying the tea set, but the girls search the palace for the tongs that escaped and followed Azalea to the silver forest. During the search, Azalea comes across the King's sword that she cracked earlier in the year. The King puts a riddle in the newspaper to marry off Azalea for anyone who can tell him the secret place where the princesses dance.

Chapter 14 Analysis

The truth about why the Keeper allows the girls to dance on the pavilion comes out. While he made it seem as if the girls had a place they could dance and be free, Keeper really has an ulterior motive. He wants the girls to help free him from the silver forest, which looks like heaven to the girls but is really the Keeper's prison.



Chapter 15

Chapter 15 Summary

Mr. Hyette arrives three days after the raffle hits the paper. He mistakes Clover for Azalea, and the future queen. When he realizes that Azalea is the future queen, his face shows disappointment. Mr. Hyette tells Azalea that Clover is the prettiest and her father had to place an ad for suitors. The King overhears what Mr. Hyette says and he asks Mr. Hyette to leave so he can talk to Azalea alone. The girls go to dance on the stones in the lily pond and Mr. Hyette spies on them. The girls tell the King and the King throws him out.

Chapter 15 Analysis

Azalea is the strongest one of her sisters. She is the one who has to step up and take care of her sisters—when her mom was ill and now that their mom is dead. While she is strong, Azalea also has a little bit of low self-esteem because she isn't sure if men want to marry her because of her or because she is the future queen. When Mr. Hyette puts Azalea down, it pushes her insecurities up a notch.



Chapter 16

Chapter 16 Summary

Mr. Hyyette sails away the same evening that the King catches him speaking to Azalea in an ill manner. The girls continue to look for the tea set. They also make a list of the "kingly Qualities" for which Azalea should be looking in the suitors who come calling for her. Mr. Oswald arrives. He's a writer and he stays at the palace for three days before departing. The third guy to answer the ad in the paper is Mr. Penbrook. He talks a lot and the girls leave Azalea alone with him while they search for the sugar tongs. Several weeks later, a total of eight gentlemen have come and gone. The girls tease Azalea about marrying the Keeper and they find out that Fairweller knows about the secret passageways in the palace. Viscount Duquette and Fairweller also try to answer the riddle in the paper.

Chapter 16 Analysis

The girls and the King are falling back into the ritual of having dinner together. Ironically, Fairweller is one of the gentlemen who tries to answer the riddle, even though the King promised Azalea she wouldn't have to marry anyone she didn't want to marry.



Chapter 17

Chapter 17 Summary

The King is being more attentive to the girls. They're excited because they only have three weeks left of the one-year mourning period. Azalea is teaching the girls a dance on the pavilion when Keeper cuts in and accuses Azalea of not looking for the magic item. Lord Howley follows Azalea near the stream while she looks for the tongs. He is another one of the suitors trying to answer the riddle. When Azalea sends him away, she loses her balance and falls into the stream. Lord Bradford comes to save her.

Chapter 17 Analysis

Lord Bradford seems to appear whenever Azalea is in trouble. His constant presence foreshadows that he too will try to solve the riddle. Ironically, he already knows about the secret passageways in the palace and how to open them, so he should know exactly where the secret dancing place of the girls is.



Chapter 18

Chapter 18 Summary

The week before Christmas, it snows. The King takes each of the girls on a ride on his horse on the palace grounds. The girls have even begun to start calling him Pap instead of the King. The girls find a brooch that belonged to their mother but they end up losing it. Azalea confronts the Keeper about stealing the brooch, as he has done with some of their other belongings. Azalea threatens not to come back to the pavilion in the silver forest and Keeper tries to keep her from leaving. While Keeper is holding Azalea in the silver forest, Azalea sees her mother among the dancers. Keeper confirms that he is the King who steals souls and warns Azalea that she has until Christmas to find and destroy the magic object.

Chapter 18 Analysis

Keeper is trying to lure Azalea in by making her mother appear. It seems as if Keeper has stolen their mother's brooch. Having the item allows him to use magic to create a persona that looks like the person to whom the object belongs in the first place. Keeper is playing on Azalea's emotions in order to get what he wants, which is his freedom.



Chapter 19

Chapter 19 Summary

Azalea finds herself back in her room. She tends to her torn dress and cut from the dancers on the pavilion. She takes the tongs out of her pocket, realizing the Keeper, the High King, had the tongs the entire time. Azalea concludes it is the King's sword that is the magical item that was broken earlier in the year. She doesn't know how the magic works though so she doesn't know how to destroy it in the five day deadline she has before Christmas. She hears a noise coming from the broom closet and finds Lord Teddie in there, who is there for the riddle. The other girls come around the corner and Lord Teddie entertains them.

In their room later, Azalea shows the girls the bent tongs. Azalea goes to the kitchen to try to find the tongs some sugar cubes when she runs into the King. The King confronts Azalea about them losing their mother's brooch. Azalea takes the King to show him the tongs. He asks where the rest of the tea set is and Clover tells her story. The King says they need to unmagic the tongs. He leaves the room and brings back the sword. When he touches the sword to the tongs, the tongs lose their luster. He slips the tongs into his pocket and reads the girls a story like their mother used to do.

Azalea plans to use the sword to unmagic the secret passageway. Azalea goes to the portrait gallery to remove the sword from its case. She rubs it against the initials on the inside of the fireplace. She holds her silver handkerchief to the initials and the bricks become very hot. Azalea finds the King in his office sleeping. When she wakes him, he sees the sword in her hand and she asks him if they can mend the crack. When she asks how the sword is magic, the King tells her to follow him because it is time she knows the truth.

Chapter 19 Analysis

Azalea now knows that the magic object is not the tongs from the tea set. The King's actions with the sword confirms that the sword is magic. Now that Azalea is in line to become queen, the king feels it's necessary to share certain information with her.



Chapter 20

Chapter 20 Summary

The King takes Azalea to the portrait gallery. He tells her about the magic of swearing on silver, which is an oath that the Kings and parliament make over the sword. The sword only holds magic for those who swear on it and is just a simple sword to everyone else. Azalea also learns that King Harold the First went crazy when he turned the throne over to his son. King Harold the First always thought that the High King would come back to kill him. Azalea finds out that the High King was determined to kill the Captain General, which is the title of her father, the King. Azalea has a fit when she hears this and has to be taken to her room. The following day is Clover's 15th birthday, which is her coming of age birthday. The girls are having dinner with the King, who has forgotten it's Clover's coming of age. When he finds out and asks Clover what she wants, she asks for a Christmas tree.

Chapter 20 Analysis

Azalea realizes that since the Keeper is the High King that his goal is to kill her father, the current King and Captain General. The fit Azalea has is an anxiety attack. The relationship the King has with his daughters is transforming. He has been an absent father in many ways over the course of their lives. Now, especially since their mother is gone, the King is starting to take a more active role in the lives of the girls.



Chapter 21

Chapter 21 Summary

The girls, the King and Lord Teddie all set to making Christmas tree decorations in the library. Azalea leaves the girls and runs upstairs to enter the magical forest. The Keeper asks what has kept the girls from dancing the past few nights. He also mentions he hates the King because he is the Wentworth General. Azalea starts to ask about her mother when the Keeper tells her to bring her sisters back to dance and not to miss another night. Azalea remembers her mother as she was the night she dies, but on the pavilion, her mother's mouth is sewn shut. The next morning, Azalea goes to visit her mother's grave. Lord Bradford walks into the graveyard. Bradford asks Azalea to come to his shop nearby to warm up and drink some hot tea. When Bradford sees the mismatched slippers on Azalea's feet as they sit in the clock shop, he realizes it is true that the princesses dance. Fairweller rides up to the shop on his white horse and Azalea and Bradford both scurry to hide in the closet. He is there to pick up a lady's watch he ordered. Bradford says something that reminds Azalea that he thinks she is Bramble. Azalea tells Bradford that he would make a good king, but he says it would be ghastly. Bradford asks to call on Azalea, who he thinks is Bramble, after the mourning period ends. Azalea says she has to go before telling him her true identity.

Bradford drives Azalea home. He thinks he didn't approach "Bramble" properly about courting, but she says it is the circumstances. Bradford asks if the circumstances are the Keeper. He admits to overhearing her when she was talking to her mother in the cemetery. Bradford asks if it has anything to do with magic. Azalea flees as he calls after her. She yells back telling him that she's Azalea, not Bramble.

Azalea finds the King, Lord Teddie and her sisters enjoying breakfast. When Bramble hears that Teddie's ship sails that day, she throws her breakfast at Teddie. As Azalea is trying to comfort Bramble in another room, Clover's Christmas tree is delivered. Azalea notices Clover is missing so she goes to the garden to fetch her. On the way, she sees Fairweller's horse tied to the gazebo. Azalea spies and sees that the lady Fairweller is dancing with and planning an elopement with her sister Clover.

Chapter 21 Analysis

The Keeper is using a veiled threat to get Azalea to bring her sisters back to dance on the pavilion. Azalea visits her mother's grave to try to draw answers out of her mother's spirit. Lord Bradford arrives to visit the gravestone of his dead father. Azalea realizes the feelings she continues to have for Bradford as they are pressed together in the closet. Azalea is hiding from Fairweller because she isn't supposed to be out during mourning. Azalea assumes the lady's watch is an engagement gift. When she mentions the name of the woman it must be for, Bradford smiles. What Azalea doesn't realize is that the watch is for her, Azalea. Azalea starts to struggle with the realization that she loves



Bradford, but that she doesn't have the freedom to choose her own husband, that parliament makes the decision for her.

Teddie is in love with Bramble and Bramble is in love with Teddie. Since he's leaving, Bramble lashes out at him so that he'll leave and she won't have to show her true feelings for him.



Chapter 22

Chapter 22 Summary

Azalea confronts Fairweller and Clover, whom she catches embracing and kissing in one of the palace gardens. Fairweller leaves and Azalea talks with Clover about her feelings for Fairweller. Azalea goes to spend time with the King and Azalea suggests that they have a ball so that Clover can meet gentlemen. The King, however, talks about not lifting the mourning when the year is up, which would prohibit them from having a ball. Azalea decides she wants to talk with the King about the girls dancing at night, but when she tries to do so she faints. When Azalea wakes up, she finds that Lord Bradford has come to the palace to try to answer the riddle. Azalea convinces the King to let Bradford stay for Christmas because he doesn't have a family of his own with whom to spend it. That night when the girls get ready to go to the pavilion to dance, they have an uneasy feeling. They end up going and Azalea dances the waltz with Keeper. She requests more time from Keeper but he denies them any more time to find and destroy the magic item.

Chapter 22 Analysis

Lord Bradford is showing his desire to marry Azalea by responding to the ad to solve the riddle. Azalea is feeling the pressure from Keeper to find the magic item in the palace because she feels it is the only way to keep her mother's soul safe.



Chapter 23

Chapter 23 Summary

Because Lord Bradford is at the palace, Azalea dresses and prepares herself for breakfast. After breakfast, the girls are showing Lord Bradford around the palace when they come to the portrait gallery where Azalea is. He dances in the portrait gallery with each of the princesses. While dancing, they bump into the case holding the King's sword and the sword falls after the case breaks. Back in the girl's room, for the second night in a row, someone knocks on their door, but when they go to answer there isn't anybody there. When the girls dance at the pavilion that night, Keeper invites them all to attend a ball the following night.

Chapter 23 Analysis

The invisible knocker suggests that magic is at work in the palace. Keeper inviting the girls to attend a ball suggests that he is up to something evil.



Chapter 24

Chapter 24 Summary

Azalea's wrists are throbbing from the sash Keeper uses when he makes her dance with him. Lord Bradford comes into Azalea's room and admits to following her into the silver forest. Bradford had retrieved his watch from Keeper while he had been in the silver forest. He admits that he did it by wearing a wraith cloak, which makes him invisible. Azalea admits everything to Bradford. They decide to admit everything to the King the following morning. In the morning, Azalea finds the King talking with a man. The King shows Azalea the letter the man delivered, which is from Lord Teddie, asking for Bramble's hand in marriage. The King says Lord Teddie has been so persistent that he said yes. Azalea is angry with the King, so she jumps on his horse and announces she's going to take his sword to be repaired. While riding across the bridge, she falls off the horse and the sword tumbles into the water below.

Chapter 24 Analysis

The sword continues to be a central part of the plot. This indicates that the sword is magical. It also insinuates that the sword is the magic object holding Keeper hostage. Now that Azalea has lost the sword, what will happen to Keeper is unknown.



Chapter 25

Chapter 25 Summary

Azalea manages to get back on the horse and trot back to the palace. Mr. Pudding sees her ride up and ushers her into the palace to get dry and warm. When Azalea wakes in a feverish state, she finds a note from Bramble saying they've gone to ball in the silver forest without her. She rushes through the fireplace and down the staircase. When she gets downstairs, Azalea finds her mother crumpled on the floor. Azalea takes her mother up the stairs and rubs the handkerchief on the brick for the mantle to open. Her mother starts to cry so Azalea wipes the tears with the handkerchief, but it causes her mother's skin to melt like candle wax. Azalea burns the handkerchief on one of the hot coals from the fireplace. As they get to the top step, the threads in her mother's lips fade and her mother can speak again. Azalea's mother tells her to watch her step and Azalea tumbles down the stairs. When Azalea looks up, she sees her mother tossing ornaments into the air and making them twirl and swirl. Her mother descends the stairs and when Azalea looks into her eyes, she recognizes the eyes of the Keeper.

Azalea asks for her sisters. He says they aren't dead yet, but tells Azalea a fairy tale. The tale says the sisters are in the palace mirrors and will die. The fairy tale also says Azalea will die in the room where they are, curled up in a dry little ball. Azalea struggles with Keeper. When her mother's brooch falls off of her mother, her mother's appearance fades and he becomes Keeper again. He says this is why he keeps things, because a little piece of the person is in their things. Keeper pushes Azalea into the dance crowd and disappears. Azalea tries to go after him but is stuck without any silver to open the secret passageway. The dancers keep clawing at Azalea as she tries to get away and she falls. When she wakes up, she is standing in her mother's room in her ballgown.

This time, Azalea's mother makes her promise to take care of her sisters and her father as she presses the silver handkerchief into Azalea's hand. When Azalea wakes from the dream with her mother, the dancers are backing away from her and she once again has her mother's handkerchief in her hand. Azalea springs up the stairs to save her family.

Chapter 25 Analysis

Keeper has been using magic to create illusions for the girls the entire time. He has helped them through the grief of losing their mother, but now he wants to collect on their debt to him. He intends on taking their lives as payment. Once he gets back into the palace, he plans to remagic it and kill the Captain General, the King.

Azalea's mother uses magic to pull Azalea into the dream. This time, she changes the dream enough to get Azalea to promise to take care of both her sisters and her father. Azalea's mother also uses the magic dream to give Azalea the silver handkerchief she needs to open the mantel and get back into the palace to stop the Keeper.



Chapter 26

Chapter 26 Summary

When Azalea reaches their room, the palace is decorated as it was when the High King was in power. Multiple cupids shoot arrows at Azalea. She heads toward the ballroom because it's the only room in the palace with multiple mirrors. As Azalea walks through the portrait gallery, her ancestors follow her with their blood red eyes. A candlestick holder walks toward Azalea on legs and then goes to hide when the chandelier starts walking down the hall toward Azalea. Azalea jumps inside of the fireplace and fights off the chandelier attack with the fireplace poker. As she gets away, the rug crushes the chandelier. The candlestick follows Azalea to the ballroom. When she looks into the first mirror, she sees her sister Delphinium staring back at her and crying. As she looks into each mirror, she finds each of her sisters. Azalea tries to warm her sisters by rubbing the handkerchief on the mirror. Keeper appears and makes her stop. He throws her to the floor and demands to know where her father is. Azalea tells Keeper he is in the graveyard because it is the year anniversary of her mother's death. Keeper calls Jessamine from the mirror and sends her into the graveyard to find the King.

Keeper throws Azalea into the curtains and the cords wrap around her already sore wrists. Jessamine returns to the ballroom alone telling Keeper the King says that if he hurts them that he will box the Keeper's ears. As Keeper kneels to hurt Jessamine, something boxes him in the ears.

Chapter 26 Analysis

Upon Keeper's return to the palace, he has infused magic into everything once again. Azalea's assumption that Keeper cannot leave the palace is correct, which is why he sends Jessamine to bring the King from the graveyard into the palace for him. Lord Bradford must be wearing his wraith cloak again and attacking Keeper in an effort to save Azalea and the rest of the princesses.



Chapter 27

Chapter 27 Summary

As the Keeper starts to fight with the invisible figure, Keeper is able to pull the cloak off. It reveals the King. Keeper throws the King into the drapes next to Azalea and the cords wrap around his wrists too. Suddenly, the King gets loose and attacks Keeper. Fairweller and Mr. Pudding ride in on their horses to save the girls. Several other horsemen are with them. Lord Teddie is one of the men. Lord Bradford is there too. The King calls for the handkerchief. He wraps it around a fire poker and smashes each of the mirrors to free the girls.

They realize the Keeper and the cloak are gone, so they set out to search for him. When the twins and the King notice Clover in Fairweller's arms, the King punches Fairweller in the face. The King calls for Fairweller's resignation as the Prime Minister. The gentlemen lead the ladies to the library, which hasn't been touched by magic. Azalea runs back into the ballroom to retrieve her handkerchief when the cloaked Keeper attacks her. Azalea manages to get away with the cloak, but the Keeper disappears.

Chapter 27 Analysis

The girls have started referring to the King as their father. They are starting to see him as more of a part of their life than he has ever been before. The King too realizes that he needs to have a better relationship with his daughters. Additionally, the men who love two of his daughters help the King to save all of the girls from freezing to death in the magical mirrors set by the Keeper.



Chapter 28

Chapter 28 Summary

Azalea, wearing the cloak, walks into the library. She sees everyone is safe, including the King. She also sees herself standing behind one of the sofas talking to Lord Bradford. The Azalea that is really Keeper holds a pistol to her own chest. Bradford tries to coax the Keeper Azalea into putting the pistol down because the regiment soldiers are on their way to protect them. The King tries to take the gun away from the Keeper Azalea. Azalea lunges to attack the image of herself and drops the cloak in the process. Both Azaleas try to prove their true identity. As the King realizes who the Azalea Keeper is, Keeper sprints out of the room and everyone chases after him. They chase him into the Clock Tower. Keeper Azalea smashes the clock glass with a shovel. The King comes up and holds the pistol to Keeper Azalea, but he convinces him not to shoot. Keeper Azalea grabs the gun and shoots the King in the chest. Keeper Azalea transforms into the Keeper and gets away. Azalea runs to the King's side and her sisters come up and join her—begging Papa not to die. Something warm runs through Azalea's body as she holds the King's hand and he wakes up.

Chapter 28 Analysis

Keeper is dressed as Azalea so he can attack the King. The transformation from thinking of the King as just the King is made. The girls now think of him as their father. It is magic that Azalea feels as the warm sensation inside of her. It's magic that saves the King's life.



Chapter 29

Chapter 29 Summary

When Azalea wakes, she is in a bed and it is two days later. Her sisters are jumping around her. Azalea finds out they are in Fairweller's home until the King finds the sword and unmagic the palace. The servants draw a bath for Azalea, while the girls tell their story and Azalea tells them her story. Then, the servants bring in dresses for the girls to choose from made out of every color in the rainbow. The girls decide to remain wearing black and remain in mourning as a gift to Papa. The King comes in to find that the girls have closed all of the drapes and hung cloths over all of the paintings to represent mourning.

The girls tell Azalea Papa was shot in the waistcoat button, while the King and Azalea give each other a knowing look. The King dumps the hilt of the sword out of his satchel, saying they dragged the river for it. He assures Azalea it can be mended. When the girls tell the King their gift to him is to stay in mourning, he lifts the mourning. The King and regiment fix the palace, the sword is mended and sworn over by parliament.

The girls visit the palace while it is undergoing renovations. They find a newly painted portrait of their mother in the portrait gallery that looks just like her. Lord Teddie enters the gallery and says he had their family painter paint it as a gift for the girls. Lord Teddie confesses his love for Bramble and Bramble leaps into his arms. Lord Teddie and Bramble are allowed to spend some chaperoned time together before his ship sails. Later, Fairweller calls on the King, who has a discussion with Fairweller and Clover. Clover thanks her father and then he insists Azalea introduce Clover to gentleman from their own party before she turns 17.

Chapter 29 Analysis

Azalea and the King know that it is the magic inside of Azalea that saved his life. It seems the King has given his permission for Clover and Fairweller to marry if they still love each other when Clover turns 17.



Chapter 30

Chapter 30 Summary

For the next two days, all Clover and Bramble do is talk about their loves and write them letters. Azalea stomps off in a huff. The King takes Azalea to the storage room at the top of the stairs that once led down to the silver forest. He gives Azalea her mother's brooch. He then tells her that Bradford is waiting in the ballroom for her and that he has been completing his parliamentary papers. On the walk to the ballroom, the King tells Azalea she has to propose because her status is higher than Bradford's. When she gets to the ballroom, she asks Bradford to propose to her and then they dance. The girls come in so they can dance a welcome to the family dance, but they don't start until the King joins them in the circle.

Chapter 30 Analysis

Everything is now as it should be. The three oldest princesses are engaged to be married and in love. Most importantly, the relationship the girls have with their father is alive and well.



Characters

Azalea

Azalea is the oldest of the princesses. Her father is the King. As the oldest, Azalea is the next in line to become queen. She is of age, so she will be seeking a husband soon, who will become the future King. The night of the ball, Azalea visits her mother who is pregnant and very ill. Her mother gives her a handkerchief that includes her mother's initials that are sewn with real silver thread. Azalea promises her mother that she will take care of her sisters, which comes to be known as "swearing on silver."

Azalea meets Lord Bradford and starts to fall for him. After their mother dies, Azalea does keep her promise and takes care of her sisters. With information Lord Bradford gives to Azalea, she stumbles on a secret passageway that leads to a magical silver forest. Azalea's sisters follow her into the forest so they can secretly dance.

By the end of the novel, Azalea helps to transform the relationship she and her sisters have with their father, the King. She also becomes engaged to Lord Bradford so that the couple will become the future King and Queen.

Bramble

Bramble is the second oldest of the princesses. While Azalea is mild-mannered and abides by the rules, Bramble is the rebel of the group. Bramble leads the rest of her sisters to hide in the Christmas trees at the ball, so they can spy on the ball guests, including their sister Azalea.

When Lord Bradford is commissioned by the King to stop the tower clock, Bramble assembles her sisters, except Azalea, to launch a potato attack on him. Bramble also holds Lord Bradford's pocket watch for ransom up until the time he restarts the clock on the tower.

Bramble ends up falling in love with one of the suitors who comes to the palace responding to the ad, Lord Teddie. Even though Bramble is mean to Lord Teddie when he is in the palace, she really loves him. By the end of the novel, the two are engaged to be married.

Mother

Mother is married to the King and is the mother of all of the princesses. She is pregnant with her last daughter at the beginning of the novel. Mother dies after giving birth to the child, which is a girl she names Lily. Mother loved to dance and she always taught the girls different dance steps and dances when she was alive and before she fell ill.



King

The King is the father of the princesses. He is not very involved in the girls' lives while their mother is alive. He goes away to war right after his wife dies. When he returns to the palace after the war, he forms a relationship with his daughters that he has never had before.

The King prefers regiment and order. Because of this, the princesses are named in alphabetical order. Azalea being the first, Bramble the second, Clover the third, and so and so forth. The King also prefers that he and his daughters take meals at the same time each day and all together.

Lord Bradford

Lord Bradford is the son of the former Prime Minister. He meets Azalea the night of the ball. After their mother dies, the King calls upon Lord Bradford to stop the clock in the tower during the mourning period. His appearance is always somewhat mussed—with his hair out of place and dirt on his clothes.

Lord Bradford is the one who reveals to Azalea that there are secret passageways in the palace. He also tells her the rumor is that rubbing silver on the initials of the bricks in the palace is what opens these secret passageways. By the end of the novel, Lord Bradford has professed his love for Azalea and Azalea has professed her love for him and they get engaged.

Keeper

Keeper is the man the girls meet when they step into the silver forest and onto the pavilion. He invites the girls to come and dance at the pavilion whenever they want. As the novel unfolds, Keeper reveals his true identity to Azalea. Keeper is the former King who steals the souls of the people who die. Keeper also has magical powers. One of his powers is to transform himself into other people by drawing from a possession that belongs to the person.

Fairweller

Fairweller is the current Prime Minister. He is the King's right hand throughout the novel, and even accompanies the King to war. Fairweller is injured during the war but is able to recover. Fairweller starts a secret love affair with Clover, and Azalea catches the two kissing and embracing in one of the palace gardens. When the King finds out, he calls for Fairweller's resignation. By the end of the novel, however, Clover and Fairweller are engaged to be married.



Lord Teddie

Lord Teddie is goofy and likes to play and have fun with the princesses. When he first comes to the palace, he comes to tote away the portrait of their mother. When the girls catch him stealing the portrait, they are angry with him and he departs. Lord Teddie returns responding to the ad in the paper. After spending time with the princesses, Lord Teddie starts to write letters to the King asking for Bramble's hand in marriage. By the end of the novel, Lord Teddie and Bramble are in love and engaged to be married.

Mrs. Graybe

Mrs. Graybe is the palace housekeeper. She is the one responsible for taking care of the princesses. When the war ends, Mrs. Graybe makes cinnamon toast for the girls as a form of celebration.

Clover

Clover is the third of the princesses. She is also the most beautiful girl of all of the princesses. During the year in mourning, Clover comes of age but the King forgets it is Clover's birthday. Clover also has a nervous stutter. When Clover falls in love with Fairweller, however, she loses her stutter and starts to speak normally.

Ivy

Ivy is four years old. She is also one of the princesses. Ivy has an obsession with food. It is Ivy going for the food table on the pavilion in the silver forest that exposes the presence of the princesses to the Keeper in the first place.

Lily

Lily is the youngest of the princesses. She is the baby with whom Mother is pregnant and gives birth to right before she dies. By the end of the novel, Lily is walking.



Objects/Places

Sugar Tongs

The sugar tongs are magical. They were left behind by the previous King. Now, Azalea and her sisters use the tongs to put sugar cubes in their coffee, tea and other drinks. The tongs snap shut when one of the girls tries to put too many sugar cubes in her drink.

Handkerchief

The last night Azalea visits her mother before her mother dies, Mother gives Azalea her handkerchief. The handkerchief is embroidered with her mother's initials. The thread used for the initials is made of real silver. The silver in the handkerchief is what Azalea uses to open the secret passageway in the palace that leads to the silver forest.

Silver Forest

The silver forest is in the secret passageway the girls find below the palace. It is set up just like the grounds and the palace, but it is made of silver. The silver is a symbol of the magic that the silver forest holds. It is where the girls descend each night to dance.

Pavilion

The pavilion is the dance floor inside of the silver forest. It is where the girls go to dance each night.

Fireplace

The big fireplace is in the girls' bedroom. The fireplace is so large that Azalea can stand up inside of it. It is inside the fireplace where Azalea realizes there is a brick with the D'Eathe initials. When she rubs her mother's silver-threaded handkerchief on the initials, it opens the secret passageway to the silver forest and the pavilion.

Portrait Gallery

The portrait gallery is a room in the palace. It is where the portraits of all of the royal relatives are. This is the room in the palace where the girls catch Lord Teddie taking their mother's portrait. It is also the room where the King encases his sword.



Pocket Watch

Lord Bradford gives the princesses his pocket watch so they can tell time while they are in mourning. Bramble tells Lord Bradford that they will not return the watch to him until he restarts the clock in the tower. Keeper takes the watch from the girls and Bradford uses the wraith cloak to become invisible so he can retrieve his watch from Keeper.

Clock Tower

The clock tower is one of the favorite items of Mother. When she dies, the King orders Lord Bradford to stop the clock during the mourning period of one year. When the Keeper transforms himself into Azalea, Keeper and the real Azalea have a fight in the clock tower, which leads to the Azalea Keeper smashing the glass in the clock and breaking it.

Sword

The sword is the King's sword. It is a sword that is passed down from King to King. The King reveals to Azalea that the sword is magic. It is made of silver and the King and each member of parliament swears over the sword when they come into power. Azalea drops the sword and puts a crack in it right before the King rides off to war. She also loses it in the river, but the King retrieves it.

Dancing Slippers

Azalea retrieves the dancing slippers that were Christmas gifts for the princesses. The girls never receive the gifts because of their mother's death. The girls use the slippers to dance in the pavilion each night. They have to mend the slippers because they wear them out from dancing all night on a daily basis. It is these slippers that the King throws into the fireplace when he discovers the princesses have been secretly dancing during the mourning period.



Themes

Relationships

One of the primary themes running through the novel is relationships. The novel reveals that even the individuals who make up a family have different relationships among the family members. For example, Azalea and her mother have a closer relationship than the other princesses have with their mother. Azalea and her father, however, have a unique relationship of their own.

Friendship is another type of relationship the novel tackles. While the princesses are first and foremost sisters, they are also friends. They look out for each other and try to do what is right for each of them. In several cases, men are friends with the princesses or the royal family, but these relationships often transform into romantic ones, as is the case with Azalea and Lord Bradford, Fairweller and Clover, and Bramble and Lord Teddie.

Romantic relationships are also tackled in the novel. Azalea gradually falls in love with Lord Bradford, although she tries to fight it at several points as the novel unfolds. Clover experiences her first romantic relationship when she falls in love with Prime Minister Fairwell. Finally, Bramble too realizes what love is when she meets and falls for Lord Teddie. Each girl experiences her first boyfriend or romantic relationship. Each of these relationships leads to engagements as well.

Coming of Age

One of the primary themes that run throughout the novel is growing up and coming of age, even against adversity, such as the death of a mother and war. Azalea struggles with the fact that her coming of age includes searching for a husband in the wake of the death of her mother. Azalea deals with the responsibilities in life of caring for her sisters in a motherly and fatherly role because their mother is dead and their father is away at war.

Azalea, Bramble and Clover all face the rite of passage of having her first boyfriend. Along with having her first boyfriend, each girl experiences engagement and impending marriage. Azalea especially struggles with her feelings about herself as a person and how she feels about becoming the future queen, while choosing the right companion as the future king.

Family

Family is the central theme throughout the entire novel. This is because the storyline is about the lives of this particular family. While every family has their trials and tribulations, Azalea's family has its own family dynamics that are the same and that are

different from those of other families. In the end though, they are a family and they will get through it together, one way or the other.

Style

Point of View

The novel is written from the third person point of view, from the perspective of author and narrator of the novel. The novel swings back and forth between the present and the past. The present represents the time after the death of Mother. The past represents the time leading up to the death of Mother.

The point of view of this novel is intimate, allowing a reader to connect closely with the main character, Princess Azalea. The book written in this manner allows the reader to get inside Azalea's head, thoughts and inner struggles. The reader cares what happens to the narrator. The point of view also allows the author to inject her own opinions into the narration and to expand on the events taking place around the other characters and the occurrences taking place.

Setting

The novel is set primarily in the palace where the princesses live. The main characters are involved in the aftermath of their mother's death. Azalea is constantly trying to take care of her sisters, teach them the lessons that their mother would want them to learn and keep them happy.

The setting of this novel works well with the plot. At first, the reader is not aware that the palace is magical and holds secret passageways. However, as events unfold, the magic is a constant part of the plot, the lives of the characters and even the outcome of the novel.

Language and Meaning

The language of this novel is relatively simple and easy to read. The author, however, interjects some old-fashioned words to fit into the setting of the novel. The language seems to be from an English setting and that of a previous century, such as the 16th or 17th century, which is when the novel is set. The language is descriptive enough that it helps to explain the situations and is detailed enough for the reader to truly understand.

Structure

The novel is divided into 30 chapters. Each chapter ranges from five pages to 30 pages long. The chapters tell the story primarily in exposition and some dialogue. The narrator injects her own voice and thoughts throughout the book, providing her opinions and feelings of the events unfolding in the novel.



The novel contains one main plot and several subplots. The main plot is that of human relationships—friendship and romantic. One subplot is the coming of age of the characters, primarily Princess Azalea. Another subplot is family relationships.



Quotes

"A lady always needs a handkerchief."

Chap. 1, p. 11

"I said, your mother is dead. She died last night."

Chap. 2, p. 21

"Mother n-named her. It's Lily."

Chap. 3, p. 23

"Stop the tower! What? Sir, you can't. Mother loved it!"

Chap. 4, p. 32

"He swore an oath."

Chap. 5, p. 39

"We made an agreement. No talking about the King."

Chap. 6, p. 48

"But I'm glad the passage stayed open for you. Is it still?"

Chap. 7, p. 54

"D'Eathe."

Chap. 8, p. 61

"Go on. They're old enough now."

Chap. 9, p. 69

"Yes. Your family is very interesting."

Chap. 10, p. 77



"Time is a bit hard to keep without the tower."
Chap. 11, p. 85

"I'm sure I can think of something."
Chap. 12, p. 91

"There will be no secrets in this household."
Chap. 13, p. 98

"Do you know the Entwine?"
Chap. 14, p. 104

"So your father had to advertise for suitors."
Chap. 15, p. 118

"Also, from what I've heard, Miss Clover does not care for the match."
Chap. 16, p. 132

"It's less than a month away now."
Chap. 17, p. 133

"That's Mother's! All her things aren't locked up!"
Chap. 18, p. 143

"Come along. It is time you knew."
Chap. 19, p. 161

"It's her coming-of."
Chap. 20, p. 168

"Weddings are meant to be with family."
Chap. 21, p. 183

"He wants me to elope."
Chap. 22, p. 186



"It's like dancing with a top."
Chap. 23, p. 197

"Miss Azalea, I followed you."
Chap. 24, p. 204

"Mind your step."
Chap. 25, p. 214

"Where is your father?"
Chap. 26, p. 225

"He can't leave the palace. The handkerchief won't let him."
Chap. 27, p. 231

"Papa!"
Chap. 28, p. 243

"It's just until the King finds the sword and can unmagic the palace."
Chap. 29, p. 244

"Dance with us?"
Chap. 30, p. 259

Topics for Discussion

Who is the true Princess Azalea? Do you think she has to grow up before her time? When Azalea realizes Bradford thinks she is Bramble, why doesn't she tell him the truth? When Azalea confesses her true identity to Bradford, does she do it out of a feeling of desperation or love for him? What does Azalea ultimately realize about her relationship with her father?

Discuss the relationship between Azalea and Bradford. Are they friends, foes or somewhere in between? Is there true competition in their relationship? How does Azalea feel about Bradford? How does Bradford feel about Azalea? How do Azalea's feelings change? What does she do about it? What happens to Bradford?

Discuss the relationship between Clover and Fairweller. Are they friends, foes or somewhere in between? Is there true competition in their relationship? How does Clover feel about Fairweller? How does Fairweller feel about Clover? How do Clover's feelings change? What does she do about it? What happens to Fairweller?

Discuss the relationship between Bramble and Lord Teddie. Are they friends, foes or somewhere in between? Is there true competition in their relationship? How does Bramble feel about Lord Teddie? How does Lord Teddie feel about Bramble? How do Bramble's feelings change? What does she do about it? What happens to Lord Teddie?

Discuss the relationship between Azalea and Keeper. Are they friends, foes or somewhere in between? Is there true competition in their relationship? How does Azalea feel about Keeper? How does Keeper feel about Azalea? How do Azalea's feelings change? What does she do about it? What happens to Keeper?

Who is Keeper? Is he a tortured soul or simply a normal King? Why do you think Keeper allows the girls to dance at the pavilion? What role does Keeper play in Azalea, the princesses and the King bonding?

Discuss the magic in the novel. What impact does the magic have on the characters of the novel? How does it motivate them and how does it derail their lives?