

# The Eyes of the Dragon Study Guide

## The Eyes of the Dragon by Stephen King

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## Plot Summary

*The Eyes of the Dragon* is a tale of chivalry and heroes that could easily fit with the tales of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. The novel follows the story of Flagg, the King's magician, and his plan to bring ruin to the kingdom of Delain. Flagg kills the King and frames his heir, Peter, with the murder. After Peter is put in jail, Flagg runs the kingdom behind the new, weak king, Thomas. However, Flagg has underestimated Peter's determination to clear his name and save his kingdom. *The Eyes of the Dragon* is a tale of deceit and honor that will surprise and please even the most dedicated King fan.

Roland is a good king even though he is not the smartest man around. Roland surrounds himself with great advisers, including his magician, a man named Flagg. Flagg has been a part of the kingdom since before Roland became king and Roland's mother ruled. However, Roland's mother never trusted Flagg, and Roland has not trusted Flagg completely. When Roland marries late in life, this trust becomes even more strained because Roland's wife becomes his most trusted adviser.

Roland, who is a great hunter, kills a dragon one afternoon and afterward conceives with his wife the child that will become his heir, Peter. A few years later, with the help of a potion from Flagg, Roland and his wife conceive their second child. However, Sasha, Roland's wife, dies in childbirth. The kingdom falls into mourning at this tragic death, a death that would prove to be even more tragic if anyone learned that Flagg, unhappy with Sasha's influence over her husband, had paid the midwife to inflict a mortal wound to Sasha during the delivery.

Years pass as both boys grow and mature. Peter is the spitting image of his mother, tall, graceful, and highly intelligent. Thomas is more like his father, short, chubby with a bowlegged walk, and slow when it comes to learning. Thomas is an expert with the bow and arrow, like his father, but this small accomplishment does nothing to diminish the light that shines every time his brother walks into a room. Thomas finds himself often pushed aside, unnoticed. Thomas' closest friend becomes Flagg, who often shows up when Thomas is at his lowest to attempt to cheer him up by showing him many of the secret passageways hidden inside the castle. One of the secret places Flagg shows Thomas is a room with peep holes through which Thomas can watch his father in his sitting room through the eyes of the dragon he killed years before.

When Peter is seventeen, Flagg hatches a plan to rid himself of both Roland and Peter. Flagg poisons Roland with a deadly sand that causes its victims to burn from the inside out. Flagg then takes the remaining few grains of sand and places them in Peter's room in order to make it seem that Peter killed his father. Soon Peter is taken to the prison at the top of the Needle and Thomas is made king with Flagg as his closest adviser.

Immediately Peter begins to plan his escape. Peter enlists the help of the very person who put him in prison and arranges to have a napkin brought with each of his meals, as well as access to his mother's dollhouse. Using the tiny loom in the dollhouse, Peter



makes a rope out of threads he took from the napkins. Peter takes five years to make a rope long enough to try his escape, but by the time he is ready, people close to him have discovered evidence that Peter is innocent. On the same night Flagg discovers Peter's escape plan, he leaves his prison and faces Flagg in his father's sitting room, the same room in which Flagg gave Roland the poison that eventually killed him. While they argue, Thomas makes his presence known and reveals what he knows about Flagg's murderous plan. Thomas then fires his father's beloved arrow into Flagg's eye, watching along with Peter and their friends as Flagg disappears.



# Chapter 1

## Chapter 1 Summary

*The Eyes of the Dragon* is a tale of chivalry and heroes that could easily fit with the tales of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. The novel follows the story of Flagg, the King's magician, and his plan to bring ruin to the kingdom of Delain. Flagg kills the King and frames the king's heir, Peter, with the murder. After Peter is put in jail, Flagg runs the kingdom behind the new, weak king, Thomas. However, Flagg has underestimated Peter's determination to clear his name and save his kingdom. *The Eyes of the Dragon* is a tale of deceit and honor that will surprise and please even the most dedicated Stephen King fan.

In the kingdom of Delain there is a king with two sons. The king of Delain is very old and does not expect to live long, so the people of the kingdom have turned their eyes and their gossip to Peter, the king's oldest son. However, there is a man who is planning to rid the kingdom of both the king and his son in order to make the second child king.

## Chapter 1 Analysis

This chapter simply gives the reader a brief outline of the plot of the novel. The king is old and has two sons, one destined to be king and the other not. The people have already accepted the eldest son as their king because of the current king's advanced age. However, there is a man, the antagonist, who intends to make certain it is the second child rather than the first who is made king. This foreshadows the entire novel as the reader wonders if the antagonist will succeed.



## Chapters 2 - 5

### Chapters 2 - 5 Summary

Roland, the king of Delain, is very old. Roland came to the crown late in life because his mother was a stubborn woman, who was determined to never die. However, she did die in a very bizarre accident. The queen was surprised by a loud noise while chewing on a lemon and choked on the lemon. Shortly after her death when Roland is made king, his advisers, including Flagg, the magician, recommend he get married. Roland marries Sasha, a woman much younger than Roland. Roland marries not for love but because she was a good candidate to be queen. Roland is awkward around women and has no desire to create children with a woman. However, Flagg helps Roland with this last problem by giving him a potion.

Sasha is a much beloved queen; whereas, Roland is a tolerated king. Sasha created many public programs to help the people of the kingdom, and Roland took her opinions to heart regarding public policies. Flagg is not bothered by Sasha's popularity at first, however, because he still has the king's ear the majority of the time. Roland learns to love his wife for her kindness and her gentle ways. However, Roland never learns to enjoy intimate encounters with Sasha and continues to use Flagg's potions, except on the night Peter is conceived four years into the marriage. On that day, Roland is out hunting with a group of men when they come across a dragon, something that has become rare in Delain. Roland acts before anyone else and kills the dragon with his arrow, Foe-Hammer. When the dragon is dead, Roland eats its heart, which is traditional in a dragon kill. That night, fueled by his success on the hunting fields and perhaps by the dragon's heart, Roland goes to Sasha and is intimate with her without the aid of Flagg's potion. Roland did not stop using Flagg's potion, however, because he wanted to make Sasha happy. Four years later there is a great blizzard and Flagg makes Roland a double strength potion. There is a party that same night, and Roland is very drunk when he goes to Sasha. Roland is rough and violent in his affections, causing Sasha great pain. Roland swears to never use the potion again. Nine months after this night, Sasha gives birth to their second child, Thomas, and dies in childbirth, the true circumstances of which only Flagg and the midwife know.

### Chapters 2 - 5 Analysis

Roland is introduced as an old and rather slow man, who knows little about being king and even less about being a husband. Roland appears to be a kind man, however, and is good to his people. Flagg is introduced as an adviser that Roland trusts, despite the fact that his mother did not appear to trust him. Finally, Sasha is introduced as the young wife of Roland. Sasha is mentioned only in passing in this novel, but her introduction foreshadows a deeper discussion of her character later in the novel. It is also mentioned that Flagg gives Roland potions to help him with sexual arousal,





suggesting a time when this potion will or will not help Roland create his two children with Sasha.

Sasha is presented as a kind, generous woman who intends, through her role as queen, to make life better for the people living in the kingdom. Sasha is not Roland's primary adviser; Flagg is. However, the narrator hints that this may change later in the development of the plot, foreshadowing a time when Flagg will want to get Sasha out of the way. The killing of the dragon is important to the development of the plot because it suggests a time later in the novel when the dragon itself will play an important role. The death of the dragon and Roland's subsequent sexual involvement with his wife is also important because it results in the conception and birth of his first child, Peter. The circumstances of Peter's conception are important because it begins to outline Peter's personality and how the strength of his personality will influence the rest of the novel's plot development. The fact that his father ate the heart of a dragon the day he was conceived suggests that Peter will be a strong and powerful man when he grows older, signifying a time later in the novel when the reader will see if this foreshadowing of Peter's character will prove to be true.

The contrast between Thomas and Peter's conception is clear. Peter is conceived with great passion; whereas, Thomas is conceived with pain and violence. This should suggest to the reader a great difference in the personalities of these two brothers as well as the circumstances of their lives later in the development of the plot. In a small way, the writer introduces the theme of sibling rivalry as the narrator is already making comparisons between the two brothers and suggesting one is better than the other. The end of the chapter also foretells Sasha's death and suggests that it is not an accident, foreshadowing a time when the narrator will reveal the true circumstances surrounding this beloved queen's death.



# Chapter 6

## Chapter 6 Summary

Peter is very young when his mother dies but remembers one night with her very clearly. That night there is a feast, which Peter attends with his parents. Sasha is not allowed to sit close to her son, so she prepares him before the dinner. Afterwards, Sasha takes Peter to his room to prepare him for bed and compliments him on everything he has done well. Sasha also points out to Peter that he did not use his napkin. Peter did not use his napkin because the others at the table did not either, including the king. Sasha tells Peter that although no one else used their napkins, he should because she wants him to grow up with better manners than those that his father and his court display. Then Sasha explains to Peter that all men have the capacity to either be gods or dogs and that she wants for her son to grow up to be a god. Peter promises to always use his napkin.

## Chapter 6 Analysis

This lesson that Sasha has taught Peter is important for several reasons. First, it shows Sasha's influence on her son, an influence that should not seem unusual but is if the reader considers that Peter is surrounded by many servants, governesses, and nannies every day, all of whom attempt to teach him to be a good king. Second, the idea that Peter should be instructed to use a napkin in a kingdom where napkins are not routinely used is important as it shows the difference between Peter and those around him, including his own father. Peter will be classier than others, more polite and less barbaric. Finally, the mention of these napkins foreshadows a time later in the novel when napkins will play an important role in Peter's life, making the difference for him between freedom and death.



## Chapters 7 - 8

### Chapters 7 - 8 Summary

Before their wedding, Roland learned that Sasha had an old dollhouse from her childhood that she was afraid she would miss when she became married. Roland had another dollhouse created for her, a most incredible dollhouse with miniature appliances that really worked. Roland presented this dollhouse to Sasha on their wedding day hoping the dollhouse would help her feel at home and help her forget her old dollhouse. Sasha was delighted with the dollhouse, but she rarely played with it because she had simply grown too old for children's toys. Peter, even though he had thousands of toys, discovers the dollhouse and plays with it often. After Sasha's death, Flagg suggests to Roland that it is not appropriate for a young boy to play with a girl's toy. Roland thinks about this situation for some time before making a decision. Sasha has made Roland a better king by breaking his dependence on Flagg a small amount and making him capable of going against Flagg's advice.

### Chapters 7 - 8 Analysis

In a flashback of sorts, the writer tells of a dollhouse that Roland had made for his wife before their wedding in order to make her feel better about leaving her childhood home. Although Sasha loves the little house, she does not play with it very often. Not only does this delve into more of Roland's character, showing him as a kind and considerate man, who wanted to make his new bride happy, but it gives insight into Sasha's character, showing her as a mature woman even at such a young age. The dollhouse also foreshadows a time later in the development of the plot when this it will become important once more.

There are two important points in chapter eight. First is that Peter likes to play with his mother's dollhouse. This is important because it suggests a time later in the novel when Peter will ask for his mother's dollhouse once again. Second, when Roland refuses to follow Flagg's advice regarding the dollhouse outright, it proves that Roland no longer depends on Flagg for advice, as he might have done had Sasha never come into his life. It also sets up a situation that will cause Flagg trouble. Flagg wants total control over the king and clearly he does not have it now. This predicts a time when Flagg will do something about this situation.



## Chapter 9 - 10

### Chapter 9 - 10 Summary

Flagg had attempted to kill Sasha at one point when Flagg took the poison of a deadly spider and put it in a glass of brandy intended for Sasha to drink. This was in retaliation for when Sasha interfered in the death sentence of two men, who had deserted their military posts. However, Flagg changed his mind because he knew Roland would know Sasha was poisoned and do everything he could to find the murderer, thus Flagg knew he would be caught.

### Chapter 9 - 10 Analysis

In a flashback it is revealed Flagg attempted to kill Sasha. This suggests that Flagg will try again and that he will be successful, foretelling a chapter later in the novel when the narrator will tell the reader how Flagg got away with murder. This aborted murder attempt also suggests that Flagg intends to gain control of the kingdom one way or another. The reader probably realizes by now that Flagg will make an attempt to do just this. Flagg did not kill Sasha because he knew Roland would find out who had done it, and Flagg does not want to be removed from his place in castle. The main reason Flagg wants Sasha out of the way is so that he can control the king. This foreshadows a time when Flagg will find another way to kill Sasha without getting caught.



# Chapter 11

## Chapter 11 Summary

Roland watches Peter play with the dollhouse and realizes he is using it as a tool to make up fantasies that are clearly male in nature. Roland refuses to take the dollhouse away from his son, despite the fact that Flagg makes it clear that he does not agree. However, Flagg is not upset because this seems like a minor thing to him.

## Chapter 11 Analysis

Roland defies Flagg for the first time in deciding not to take the dollhouse from Peter. Roland has finally shown that he need not rely on Flagg for everything, proving that Sasha has broken Roland's trust in Flagg somewhat. This is important because it proves that Flagg does not have absolute control over Roland despite his desire to have that control. This predicts a time when Flagg will look to another king in order to gain control of the kingdom, thus foreshadowing the removal of Roland and Peter from the throne.

# Chapter 12

## Chapter 12 Summary

Several years before Sasha's death, the midwife comes to Flagg for help with her sick son. Flagg offers to cure the young man, but asks in exchange that the midwife do him a favor at the time of his asking. The midwife agrees. The day Sasha goes into labor with Thomas, the midwife is called, and Flagg asks for the favor she owes him. The midwife helps Sasha through the labor. However, at the moment of birth, the midwife inflicts a knife wound that causes Sasha to bleed to death, making it appear as though she has died from the birth.

## Chapter 12 Analysis

The narrator has finally revealed the truth behind Sasha's death that had been hinted at throughout the first part of the book. Flagg has killed her by enlisting the help of the midwife. Earlier in time, the midwife asked Flagg to save her child; in exchange she takes Sasha's life in a manner which will not look suspicious to anyone. Flagg has gotten Sasha out of his way, so he may control Roland better. However, as the reader already knows, Flagg cannot control Roland as much as Flagg had hoped and must look to the future for a better candidate, suggesting a time when Flagg will kill again.



# Chapter 13

## Chapter 13 Summary

Many years pass and Flagg watches the boys grow. Flagg comes to realize he is afraid of Peter. Peter resembles his mother and grows into an intelligent young man. Peter also becomes friends with a young man outside of his position, named Ben Staad. The two boys meet at a picnic when they are teamed together for the three-legged race. Ben is nervous racing with the prince, but Peter behaves like an average boy, even taking responsibility when they fall and lose part of their lead. The two boys, despite the surprise and wonder of the adults around them, become great friends and remain so most of their lives.

## Chapter 13 Analysis

Peter has begun to grow into a fine young man, making friends with a boy whose station in life is clearly below Peter's. Peter does not worry about class, and this is important to his character, proving that his mother's desire to have her son grow up into a well-mannered boy has begun to come true. The friendship between Peter and Ben Staad is important as well because it foreshadows Ben's role in the overall development in the plot and the idea that Ben will play an important role in Flagg's plot to rid himself of Peter and Roland.



# Chapter 14

## Chapter 14 Summary

Peter is passing the stables one day when he is nine and finds the head groom about to kill a horse for a broken leg. Peter tells him to stop and learns that the horse is sure to die a bad death if he is not put down now. Peter refuses to believe this and makes the head groom promise he will not kill the horse until he can return with the veterinarian. When the vet comes, he tells the head groom that the leg will heal, but he should kill the horse anyway because there is a good chance he will never walk right again, making him useless. Peter refuses to believe this and tells the head groom that Peter will care for the horse. The head groom reluctantly agrees. Peter is punished when he tells his father the story, but his father supports his decision anyway. The horse heals well and becomes Peter's private mount.

## Chapter 14 Analysis

Peter has become a strong, responsible young man with the same kind heart that made his mother so deeply loved throughout the kingdom. Peter proves he is reliable and responsible in managing to care for a horse without missing any treatments, except for the rare occasion he has Ben stand in for him. Peter's character traits are clearly outlined here. Peter does not appear to be the kind of person who would use an adviser like Flagg, and this reduces the chances that Flagg will be able to control Peter when he becomes king. This foreshadows a time when Flagg will decide he must rid the kingdom of Peter.





# Chapter 15

## Chapter 15 Summary

Thomas has grown to be the spitting image of his father. Thomas is short and bowlegged, and he has the same trouble with his school work that his father once had. Thomas is not a good boy, but the narrator makes it clear that Thomas is not a bad boy either. Thomas is a confused and jealous young boy, convinced everyone in the kingdom loves Peter more, and that they all blame him for his mother's death.

## Chapter 15 Analysis

Thomas is introduced in more detail. Thomas is the opposite of his brother, more like his father than his mother, causing comparisons to be drawn and for Thomas to feel as though he comes up short. This situation begins to illustrate the theme of sibling rivalry as the narrator describes Thomas's feelings toward his brother because of these comparisons. It should also be noted that Thomas feels as though people blame him for the death of his mother, drawing on the theme of guilt and shame. Thomas feels guilty for something he had nothing to do with, making his relationship with Flagg rather ironic, which will be explored in later chapters.



# Chapter 16

## Chapter 16 Summary

Once when he was seven, Thomas spent an entire afternoon carving a boat for his father in remembrance of a day when Roland took his son to sail miniature boats. Thomas hopes the boat will make his father proud of him. However, Thomas presents the boat to his father on the same day Peter has done a particularly good job with his bowmanship. Roland is praising Peter when Thomas comes into the room. After Thomas presents him with the boat, Roland attempts to be gracious regarding the boat, but he is so excited by Peter's accomplishment his enthusiasm overshadows Thomas's efforts. The next day, so saddened by his father's lack of enthusiasm for his gift, Thomas stones a dog to death. No one sees Thomas, except Flagg, who sees it as a sign that Thomas will work well in his future plans.

## Chapter 16 Analysis

In a flashback, the narrator recalls a day when Thomas makes a gift for his father in order to please him, but unfortunately picks a day when Peter has done something impressive with his bow and arrow. Roland is so proud of Peter he cannot see how desperate Thomas is for his affection. Thomas stones a dog to death, wishing it were Peter. This illustrates the theme of sibling rivalry in greater detail, showing how Roland prefers one son over the other and does not try hard to hide his feelings. This also begins to show the hatred and resentment that is building inside of Thomas, a hatred that Flagg intends to use in order to bring ruin to the kingdom of Delain.



# Chapter 17

## Chapter 17 Summary

Flagg has been in Delain for more than seventy years, yet he looks only about ten years older, causing people to begin to whisper about his lack of aging. Flagg knows he must leave Delain soon, but it has taken a long time to find a monarch susceptible to his influence, so that he can bring ruin to the small kingdom of Delain. This is not the first time Flagg has come to Delain. The time before he had been known as Bill Hinch, the King's Lord High Executioner. Mothers still tell their children stories of Bill Hinch to scare them into behaving properly. Before that he was adviser to the king and queen, helping to orchestrate a great war between Delain and Andua. There were many times before that as well. The narrator does not know what Flagg is, but knows he wants only to destroy Delain. When Delain rebuilds and becomes strong again, Flagg will return and start all over again.

## Chapter 17 Analysis

This presents Flagg as a immortal being bent on destruction. Flagg has been in Delain before, a fact that will prove to be very important in the development of the plot and Peter's discovery of who Flagg truly is. Flagg's motives are also revealed. Flagg wants to cause war between Delain and one of the many kingdoms surrounding it, or to cause the people to battle against the king. This is important for the reader to know because it reveals why it is so necessary for Flagg to get Roland under his power, and, when that has failed, to remove both Roland and Peter from the throne.



# Chapters 18 - 20

## Chapters 18 - 20 Summary

Roland's mother was a strong, good-hearted woman, so Flagg was unable to bend her to his will. However, Roland's mother allowed Flagg to become one of her advisers, allowing him to build his status in the kingdom. Flagg thought he could control Roland better and did find himself moving faster toward his goal. His goal is to cause such a revolt against the monarchy that it would plunge Delain into darkness for thousands of years. Peter is a strong, intelligent young man, who stands firmly in Flagg's way. Flagg could see that Peter was not the type of person who would rely on him as an adviser and Flagg feels threatened by Peter's presence. Flagg wants to kill Peter, but is forced to protect Peter in order to protect himself from suspicion should something happen to Peter. Flagg plots a way to get rid of both Peter and Roland. Flagg has a poison he hidden in a special box in his drawer. The poison is called Dragon Sand from a distant desert, Grenh. It will make the person who has ingested or breathed it feel wonderful for a few days and then cause them to burn from the inside out. Flagg decides to give the poison to Roland in a glass of wine. Peter has gotten into the habit of taking his father a glass of wine, so the people will be easily fooled into thinking the poison was in the glass Peter offered.

## Chapters 18 - 20 Analysis

Now the reader can clearly see what Flagg's plans are for Delain. Flagg wants to cause a revolt of the people against the monarchy, causing the kingdom to fall into darkness. This foreshadows the actions he will take to make sure it happens the way he wants it too. Flagg wants Peter dead, but because of Roland's deep affection for his son, Flagg finds himself in the ironic position of having to protect the boy so that suspicion would not fall on Flagg's head should Peter die accidentally. This frustrates Flagg until he thinks of another plot late one night. Now Flagg can get rid of Peter. The storyteller does not say how, however, so the reader must wait for the plan to be revealed in the next few chapters.



## Chapter 21 - 23

### Chapter 21 - 23 Summary

Flagg takes the poison out of its special box on the night he has decided to execute his plan, goes into the hallway to hyperventilate, so he will not accidentally breathe in any of the sand, and begins his preparations. Flagg dissolves all but a few grains of the poison into a glass of wine, and takes the knife and tweezers he has used and dumps them into a sewer grate. Flagg returns to his rooms and waits an hour before taking the glass to Roland. Roland is grateful for Flagg bringing him another glass of wine. Although Flagg cannot make himself invisible because this even the best magicians cannot do so, Flagg does make himself dim, so the servants he passes in the hall don't see him. However, Thomas has seen him.

### Chapter 21 - 23 Analysis

Flagg has prepared the poison for Roland, careful not to breathe in any of the poison himself since his own death would surely ruin all his plans. From Flagg's careful preparations, the reader can clearly see just how deadly the poison is. Now the reader must wonder how Flagg will set up Peter, foreshadowing these coming events. This presents the reader with a classic bit of irony. Roland is grateful Flagg has brought him a glass of wine. The wine, however, is the instrument of Roland's death. Flagg has made himself dim in order to keep the many people within the castle walls from seeing him go to Roland on this night. Flagg wants the people to believe that Peter is the only visitor Roland has had on this night. However, Thomas sees him, foreshadowing an explanation in the next chapter on how Thomas was able to see Flagg despite his being dim.



# Chapter 24

## Chapter 24 Summary

Peter has offered to help Thomas make gifts together for their father, but Thomas has always refused and found later that Roland was much appreciative of Peter's gifts. Peter even offered to have Thomas join him when he began to take a glass of wine to his father every night, but Thomas again refused. Thomas was angry that the Chief Vintner had caught him attempting to steal a bottle of wine the day before, and that Peter expected him to help pay for a bottle even though all the wine technically belongs to their father.

## Chapter 24 Analysis

Thomas has begun to separate himself from his father and brother due to his feelings of inadequacy; thus, Thomas chooses not to be involved in the delivery of the wine each night to his father's sitting room. This touches again on the theme of sibling rivalry, as Thomas suffers in silence because of his perceived lack of love coming from both his father and brother. This non-participation in the nightly wine ritual saved Thomas from being implicated in the death of his father, but it also put Peter in a position to be easily accused.



# Chapters 25 - 29

## Chapters 25 - 29 Summary

Flagg has befriended Thomas, going to him whenever he sensed that Thomas needed a friend. Flagg once showed Thomas some secret hiding places throughout the castle, including treasure taken from the Anduan pirates and a tower full of bats. During these excursions, Flagg undermined Thomas's confidence and built his mistrust in his brother by telling him how everything in the castle would be Peter's, not his. During one of these excursions Flagg takes Thomas to a secret room where he can watch Roland in his sitting room through the eyes of Niner, the dragon Roland killed the night Peter was conceived. Thomas is excited by this because he likes the idea of watching his father without Roland being aware. Flagg makes Thomas promise that he will never tell anyone about this place or come here often. Thomas began going to the secret room often, finding the more he watched his father, the more he became aware of how human his father was rather than the king he had always seen him as. Thomas prefers to watch his father when he was alone rather than at times when others were in the room with him. Thomas likes to spy on his father.

Several months before Flagg brings Roland the poison wine, Thomas has trouble sleeping and goes to the secret room. While there Thomas witnesses his very drunk father yelling at the many animal heads mounted on the walls. Then Roland turns to the head of Niner and begins to demand why it watches him. In his fear, Thomas believes his father can see him and is speaking to him, not the dragon. Thomas has no way of knowing his father is screaming these words in the throes of a bad dream. For weeks he is haunted by the sight of his father screaming at him and begins to avoid his father. Peter tells Thomas that their father believes Thomas is angry at their father. Thomas has tea with his father, swearing to his father he is fine and promising himself he will never go back to the secret room. However, this promise is one he will break.

The night Flagg brings Roland that poison, Thomas arrives in the secret room just before Peter rushes off to meet with a young lady in whom he has become interested. For almost an hour Thomas watches his father sit alone before he lets someone into the room. At first Thomas cannot see who it is but then realizes it is Flagg. Thomas watches Flagg offer Roland a glass of wine and watches Roland drink it, all the while feeling as though there is something wrong with the wine but powerless to do anything about it. Thomas returns to his rooms and has a fever by morning. When he finally recovers he finds that he has become king.

## Chapters 25 - 29 Analysis

Flagg has befriended Thomas in order to grow closer to him, so that when his plan to rid the kingdom of both Roland and Peter succeeds, Thomas will rely on him as an adviser. Flagg also begins to ingrain in Thomas the unfairness of his being the second child,



increasing Thomas's feelings of anger and jealousy toward his brother, and putting Thomas in the proper frame of mind to allow Peter to be accused of regicide. Thomas has made a friend in Flagg even though he is still somewhat afraid of the magician. Thomas goes willingly with him to the secret room where he can spy on his father and finds the secrets of the whole thing very exciting. This foreshadows several later times when what Thomas sees through the eyes of Niner will become very important to the overall plot of the novel.

Thomas has broken his promise to Flagg and began to go to the secret room quite often. By going to this room, Thomas begins to see his father as a human with failings. This is important because Thomas had believed he hated his father, but in reality he does not. This predicts a time later in the development of the plot when Thomas's feelings toward his father will prove to be important. Thomas sees his father yelling at Niner and believes that Roland can see Thomas and is yelling at him. Thomas feels guilty, touching on the theme of guilt and shame, and decides he will never return to this room. However, Thomas will not keep this promise as foreshadowed by the parting words of the chapter. This episode is also important because it shows Thomas having terrible nightmares from the experience; this episode will come back to haunt Thomas later in the novel.

Flagg brings Roland the glass of wine and Thomas watches, sensing something wrong with the wine but powerless to do anything about it. This is important because it suggests a time when Thomas will have to make a choice about whether to tell someone what he has seen or to keep the information to himself. Thomas is so upset by the whole episode that he becomes ill, missing the entire drama that takes place in the wake of Roland's death and finding himself king.





# Chapter 30

## Chapter 30 Summary

Flagg returns to his rooms and waits an hour before preparing the poison once more, this time for a mouse. Then Flagg takes the remaining poison in a packet that he shredded partly to make it look as though the mouse had been at it and puts it in a box with Peter's name on it that he once stole from Peter when he was a small boy. Flagg puts both the mouse and the box in a hiding place in Peter's room of which most all of the servants know.

## Chapter 30 Analysis

The reader finally sees how Flagg intends to blame the death of Roland on Peter. The mouse is supposed to have eaten the poison and will die of it, revealing somehow that Peter possesses the poison that killed his father. The only question that remains, foreshadowing the following few chapters, is how the poison will be discovered.



## Chapter 31 - 32

### Chapter 31 - 32 Summary

For three days Roland seems healthier and more vital than ever. Then after dinner one night, Roland gets a bad case of indigestion and begins to smoke at the mouth. Peter is the first to go to his side, and Flagg is pleased with this. Roland says dragon and says no more. Roland begins to emit so much heat that he catches his bed on fire. At midnight Roland dies as green fire shoots from his body. Someone immediately says murder and Flagg is pleased.

### Chapter 31 - 32 Analysis

Roland begins to grow ill and the first person to his aid is Peter, a fact that pleases Flagg because the people will remember this action and see it as guilt later when accusations begin to flow. Flagg has gotten what he wants in Roland's death. Everyone begins to cry murder at the moment of Roland's death, playing right into Flagg's hands. The plan is going smoothly thus far, foreshadowing a dark time ahead for Peter.



## Chapter 33

### Chapter 33 Summary

The court physician agrees with the diagnosis of murder, and Flagg organizes a search of the castle for the possible criminal, searching all rooms but the princes' rooms. Thomas is unaware of what is going on due to his illness, which has gotten worrisome. People felt sorry for Peter, thinking only of his loss, but Flagg knows that as soon as the contents of his secret compartment are revealed, the tide will turn. Flagg is expecting this to happen soon.

### Chapter 33 Analysis

Flagg is playing his part perfectly, keeping suspicion off of himself by organizing a search for the guilty party. Peter, in the meantime, has the sympathy of everyone in the kingdom and is not a candidate for guilt at the moment, but Flagg hopes this will change.



# Chapters 34 - 36

## Chapters 34 - 36 Summary

Peter has two butlers who care for his needs, Brandon and his son Dennis. Dennis comes to Peter's rooms early in the morning to start the fire and prepare for breakfast. Dennis likes Peter and has only angered Peter once when he forgot to put a napkin on his lunch tray. On the morning of Roland's death, Dennis reluctantly went to work as always. Dennis enters Peter's rooms and finds smoke pouring from the bookshelf. Dennis opens the secret compartment and finds a dead, smoking mouse. Dennis pats the fire out with his hand and takes what he has found in an ash bucket back to his home.

Dennis refuses to talk to his mother and waits for his father to return. Brandon returns home and goes into Dennis's room to find out what the boy is so concerned about. After Dennis tells his story, Brandon and Dennis leave the house without telling Dennis's mother where they are going. Construction on the dais where the coronation will take place has begun, but stops an hour before the coronation should have taken place. The royal guard is ordered to take off their ceremonial uniforms in favor of battle dress, causing many rumors to circulate through the kingdom. Soon everyone learns that Peter has been arrested for regicide.

Through a flashback, the reader is allowed to watch as Dennis tells his father what he has found and asks if the mouse died the same way Roland did. Brandon examines the evidence and knows that this is the same poison that killed the king, sure Peter had nothing to do with it, but unable to sit on the evidence. Brandon thinks long and hard on the situation before deciding they must go to the Judge-General. Dennis is not happy, but agrees.

## Chapters 34 - 36 Analysis

Dennis is a loyal servant to Peter, arriving in his rooms the morning of Roland's death despite the fact that he knows Peter will not be there. Dennis finds the mouse when it begins to burn as Roland did. Dennis is a loyal servant, so he does what is right and takes the evidence home with him, something that Flagg has counted on. This makes the reader wonder what Dennis will do with the evidence next and how it will affect Peter's future. Brandon and Dennis clearly do what is right and the coronation plans stop. Soon rumors fly through the kingdom. The word that Peter has been arrested is met with surprise and fear, causing turmoil in the small kingdom, and foreshadowing a dark time for Delain and its people. Chapter thirty-six is a flashback that shows what happened when Dennis told his father what he had found. Dennis does not want to turn on Peter but believes they must reveal the truth because they are loyal and trustworthy servants. This begins the process that will put Peter in jail, suggesting the plot for the rest of the novel and Dennis's part in the whole ordeal.



# Chapters 37 - 40

## Chapters 37 - 40 Summary

At first the Judge-General does not believe in Peter's guilt, but when he confronts Peter with the evidence and Peter bursts into tears, the Judge-General thinks it seems that Peter is feeling guilty about something. Faced with Peter's tears, the Judge-General decides to investigate further, delaying the preparations for the coronation. Anders Peyna opens the box with Peter's name on it. Peter has denied owning the box until he remembers losing it as a child. Flagg is called to examine the poison. While waiting for Flagg, Anders Peyna asks Peter why he denied having the box, but all Peter can think of is how much he loved his father and how crazy it is that they can think he killed him. Flagg comes into the room, making a great show of testing the poison and showing how it can eat through obsidian, the hardest known rock in Delain at the time. Flagg identifies it as Dragon Sand, confessing that he once had some, but it was stolen from his rooms. Flagg then neutralizes the poison with water, telling the guards in order to protect themselves from the poison they should throw it into the middle of the lake.

## Chapters 37 - 40 Analysis

Important here is the fact that the Judge-General, Anders Peyna, assigns guilt to Peter because he burst into tears. The reader, however, must remember that Peter is only seventeen and has just lost his father. Anders Peyna does not take this into account and decides to continue investigating based on these tears. This is a decision that will come back to haunt Anders Peyna and perhaps suggests a time later in the novel when Anders Peyna will change his mind about Peter. Everything is happening just as Flagg has hoped, down to Peter denying the box with his name engraved on it. Then, in a twist of irony, Anders Peyna calls Flagg himself to identify the poison that he himself administered to Roland. Peter is clearly in shock and unable to defend himself properly at this time, making him look even more guilty to Anders Peyna. Flagg plays his role perfectly in the conviction of Peter by putting on a great demonstration of the poison's ability to kill. It is ironic to call Flagg as a witness, since he is the murderer himself. Flagg greatly enjoys his role and exaggerates the power of the poison to fuel the fear in the room in order to guarantee Peter will be convicted.



# Chapters 41 - 45

## Chapters 41 - 45 Summary

A meeting takes place in the royal court of Delain at the base of the Needle, a tower, which at the top holds a suite of two rooms to house royal prisoners. Anders Peyna oversees the meeting that is convened in order to decide if Peter should stand trial. However, Anders Peyna has already decided that Peter is guilty, and everyone in the room knows it. Flagg watches the meeting. Peyna informs Peter that he is already king even though they have not had an official ceremony. This makes the proceedings difficult because a king cannot be tried for murder, but the murder took place before Peter was king. Peyna asks Peter to set aside the crown so they can fairly decide his guilt or innocence. Peyna says that if Peter is not tried, he will always live under a cloud of suspicion. Peter agrees to set aside his crown, but insists that Peyna not preside over his trial because he will be the acting monarch for the duration of the trial. The meeting did not last long, and Peter is taken back to his rooms. A guard brings his dinner and then spits in it to show his conviction that Peter is guilty. Peter commands him to bring him another dinner, which the guard eventually agrees to do, becoming doubtful of Peter's guilt due to his commanding attitude. Peter cannot eat, however, because he is convinced that everyone believes in his guilt. There is a trial, and Peter is found guilty. After the verdict is announced the audience applauds and attempts to get at Peter, spitting at him as he is led to the stairs that will take him to his prison at the top of the Needle.

## Chapters 41 - 45 Analysis

Peter puts aside his crown to prove his innocence instead of living the rest of his life under the cloud of suspicion, playing right into Flagg's hands. Flagg had not thought of this possibility and becomes afraid Peter will become king despite all his work, but is pleased when Peter decides to face his trial. Peter's choice is one of honor, despite the fact he faces a possible conviction. The attitude of the guard foreshadows the hurdles Peter will face in the future either should he be convicted or had he not set aside his crown. Peter is sure that everyone believes him guilty and will be convicted; however, Peter faces it with the same strength and character that he has shown throughout the novel. Peter is found guilty, creating an important turning point in the novel. Peter is convicted, and the people have completely turned their backs on him, foreshadowing a difficult time for Peter to attempt to clear his name, should he try.



# Chapters 46 - 49

## Chapters 46 - 49 Summary

Thomas has been so ill that he does not know what is happening until Flagg comes to prepare him for his coronation. Thomas does not want to be king and fights the idea, but Flagg will not allow him. Flagg assures him that he will be okay and then implies that he, Flagg, is leaving to protect himself from the possibility of suspicion due to his closeness to Peter. Thomas begs Flagg to remain and be his top adviser; Flagg agrees. Thomas is sick the night before he is to be crowned, so Flagg gives him a potion to get him through the coronation. Flagg notices how like his father Thomas is, and Flagg is excited at the bright future he sees ahead of the two of them.

The coronation goes well. Thomas is uncomfortable with the attention at first, but quickly realizes how good it can be to be a king and begins to enjoy it. Thomas is glad to finally be the one everyone loves, not Peter. The first night he is king, Thomas has a nightmare that is a memory of the night he saw his father yell at Niner and thought he was yelling at him. However, the dream changes as his father accuses Thomas of allowing Flagg to kill him. Thomas wakes frightened but decides that the knowledge of Flagg's deed is something he can live with. Flagg has no idea that Thomas saw him give Roland the poison, and if Flagg had known, he would have been frightened because Flagg believes Thomas can keep a secret from no one.

## Chapters 46 - 49 Analysis

Thomas plays right into Flagg's hands by agreeing to allow Flagg to be his top adviser, perfectly finishing the plan that Flagg has designed. Thomas will be king, though due to his fear, the reader must assume he will be a weak king. Flagg will be his top adviser, causing all the pain and despair he could want, foreshadowing trouble for Delain in the development of the plot. Flagg is excited about the future, which is an ominous emotion knowing that Flagg does not have the best interests of Delain at heart. Thomas is made king and finds that he likes the attention it brings him. This touches again on the theme of sibling rivalry as Thomas thinks of his brother and is glad that it is he, not Peter, who is king.

Thomas has a nightmare in which his guilt regarding the death of his father comes to the surface of his subconscious mind. Not only does this touch on the theme of guilt and shame, but it reveals a struggle Thomas will experience between whether to reveal the knowledge of Flagg's deed or to fulfill his desire to be what he always admired in his brother. Finally, the last chapter simply informs the reader that Flagg does not know Thomas's secret, showing that Flagg does not know everything that goes on around him. This also suggests a time when Thomas will not be able to keep this secret to himself.



# Chapters 51 - 53

## Chapters 51 - 53 Summary

Peter saw the coronation from a window in his prison at the top of the Needle. While the celebration continues below him, Peter refuses his dinner and then prepares for bed. Peter follows the same routine for the next week, not eating and simply staring out the window when he is not sleeping. On the eighth day, Peter calls for the Chief Warder, Beson, and makes demands like a king. Peter figured out a way to escape the Needle and has decided how to proceed. Peter knows that Flagg must be the true murderer and knows he must escape in order to prove this. Peter has not yet figured out how he is going to prove Flagg's guilt but has decided he must live to see justice done. Peter makes a speech to Beson as though he is still king and Beson his servant. Beson listens and then puts Peter in his place by explaining in crude terms that he is now a prisoner. Beson takes a metal cylinder out of his pocket and prepares to punch Peter. Peter fights back and soon Beson is beaten unconscious on Peter's floor. The fight ends with Peter suffering a cut on his cheek that will scar him for life, and Beson calling him king before losing consciousness.

## Chapters 51 - 53 Analysis

Peter is clearly depressed the first week he is in prison, refusing to eat or engage in any kind of activity. This is to be expected but is contrary to the character of the person the reader has come to know in the early part of the novel. Therefore, it is no surprise when Peter calls for the Warder and issues demands. This foreshadows a confrontation between these two and a significant development within the plot of the novel as Peter makes a decision as to how he will handle his imprisonment.

Peter has made a decision to live and to fight, which fits perfectly with the character elements that have been demonstrated over the early part of the novel. Peter is a strong character, not one to allow an injustice to go unaddressed. Peter has decided on a course of action and this predicts the development of the plot in which Peter will begin to execute his chosen course of action. Peter is still king in his heart, and he attempts to make that clear to Beson. However, Beson has been Warder in the Needle for many years and has cared for many noblemen, so he is used to this attitude. What Beson is not used to is a prisoner who will fight back. Peter proves he is still the rightful king by fighting for his rights. This foreshadows the next chapter in which Beson is forced to give Peter what he wants.





## Chapters 54 - 55

### Chapters 54 - 55 Summary

When Beson finally wakes several hours later, Peter tells him that he wants Beson to deliver a note to Anders Peyna and wait for an answer. Beson is not happy with this, since Peter is the brother of the king and Peyna is the Judge-General, a person Beson does not want to anger. Then Peter asks Beson how much it will take for Beson to provide special privileges for Peter. Peter writes a note to Peyna and asks for help, careful to make it seem as though he is simply asking for additional comforts.

### Chapters 54 - 55 Analysis

In an ironic twist, Peter is turning to the same person for help who put Peter in prison in the first place. Peter wants to send a note to Peyna and then pay Beson for special privileges through Peyna, but what these privileges might be, the reader does not yet know. The reader is not curious to learn if Peyna will help Peter. Peter writes a note to Peyna, again a seemingly ironic twist, asking for his help but careful not to give away that Peter intends to escape. Again the narrator does not tell the reader what these few things are that Peter wants, foreshadowing a later chapter in which these items will be revealed.



# Chapters 56 - 59

## Chapters 56 - 59 Summary

Beson goes to Peyna's house after dark, but the butler does not recognize him because of the beating Peter has given him. The butler, Arlen, reluctantly agrees to inform Peyna of Beson's presence but does not allow Beson into the house. Arlen informs Peyna of his visitor, even though Peyna has a policy against visitors so late at night. Peyna agrees to take the letter when Peter's name is mentioned, and has Arlen escort Beson into the kitchen to wait his answer. Peyna briefly thinks of throwing the letter in the fire but decides to give in to his curiosity and read the letter. In the letter Peter announces that he has decided to live. Peter writes also that he wants Peyna to finance a payment to Beson for special privileges and to make the payment through his friend, Ben Staad, in order to protect Peyna from public scrutiny. Peter does not tell Peyna what privileges he would like in exchange for the money, but adds that he did not kill his father. Peyna writes a response to the letter and gives this, as well as some money, to Arlen to give to Beson.

## Chapters 56 - 59 Analysis

Beson has done as promised and taken the note to Peyna. The reader is left to wonder at Peyna's reaction to the note. Will he read it and help or simply throw it away? Peyna has decided to read the letter, so perhaps along with him the reader will learn what it is Peter wants. However, the reader must note the irony of Peyna's decision and wonder if perhaps Peyna has vacillated about Peter's guilty, foreshadowing later developments in the plot when Peyna will be faced with the choice of whether or not to help Peter again. Peter's letter asks for money from Peyna but does not reveal his reason for the request, which is most likely in order to keep Peyna from guessing Peter has decided to escape. Peter also again asserts he did not kill his father, making Peyna hesitate in his resolve to disregard the note, and again causing the reader to wonder if Peyna doubts Peter's guilt. Peyna is so impressed with Peter's letter that he sends a response and pays Beson to take it to Peter.



# Chapter 60 - 61

## Chapter 60 - 61 Summary

Beson takes Peyna's note to Peter the next morning after having spent the money on drink. Peyna's note agrees to make the payments to Beson, but he first wants to know what privileges Peter wants. Peter writes a reply and again has Beson deliver the note. Peter tells Peyna that he wants a napkin with each of his meals, which is no surprise, since everyone in the kingdom knows about Peter's desire to fulfill his mother's instructions in manners. Peter also wants his mother's dollhouse, which Peyna puts down to nostalgia. Peyna is puzzled by the dollhouse request, but thinks it is acceptable so long as all sharp objects are removed first.

## Chapter 60 - 61 Analysis

Peyna has decided to help Peter, which is a surprise after he worked so hard to put Peter in jail. However, always the careful lawman, he wants to know what Peter wants. Peter is not surprised at being questioned, but is happy with Peyna's decision. Peter's requests are finally revealed, but the reader may still be confused, just like Peyna, why Peter would want these particular things. This foreshadows a later chapter in which the narrator will explain these requests in more detail.



# Chapters 62 - 64

## Chapters 62 - 64 Summary

The Staad family had always been unlucky, but with Ben's friendship with Peter, things appeared to be turning around. However, after Peter's imprisonment things begin to change again, and Mr. Staad refuses to allow anyone to mention Peter's name in their home. Mr. Staad got into a fight the night of the coronation over his son's relationship with Peter and is now afraid for his wife and children. Ben is coming home from selling some cows at auction when he runs into a group of men who are aware of his friendship with Peter and attempt to beat him for it. Ben fights back and does well, later swearing to his father that he will fight any man who dares to speak ill of Peter. Two weeks after Thomas has been crowned, a soldier comes to the Staad house and orders Ben to go with him to the home of Anders Peyna. Ben's parents are frightened, but Ben goes willingly, willing to do anything for Peter's good name.

## Chapters 62 - 64 Analysis

The Staad's are a good family who have always had bad luck. Now that Peter is in jail, his best friend, Ben, is being held in contempt because of Ben's friendship with Peter. Mr. Staad is worried for his son and this foreshadows a time when this worry may prove to be a reasonable fear. This also should make the reader wonder if Ben will help Peter and Peyna the way Peter hopes. Ben will, confessing his loyalty to Peter despite being faced with a soldier wanting to take him to Anders Peyna's, a move that his parents assume means jail time. Ben is not afraid, proving his strength and loyalty, foreshadowing a time when these character traits will be important.



# Chapters 65 - 68

## Chapters 65 - 68 Summary

Anders Peyna gives Ben instructions Peyna wants Ben to follow to provide the napkins and dollhouse Peter has requested. Peyna gives Ben money to pay Beson and Dennis for preparing the napkins, as well as a woman Peyna will pay to remove the royal crest from the napkins. Ben refuses to take any money for himself, however. Peyna warns Ben to be careful, since Peter no longer has many loyal friends in the kingdom. Ben agrees, though he insists he is willing to fight them all. Ben then asks Peyna if he still believes Peter guilty but never gets an answer. Two days later the first of the napkins are taken to the Needle from an unknown storeroom. The existence of this storeroom may have changed things had Peter been aware of it earlier. A woman removes the crests from the napkins at the door of the storeroom. The napkins, smelling of mildew, are taken to the Needle by Dennis himself. There are rumors that Peyna will not be Judge-General much longer. A napkin is delivered with Peter's meal the next morning among laughter and teasing from the lesser warders. Peter smiled for the first time in weeks.

## Chapters 65 - 68 Analysis

Anders Peyna gives Ben instructions on how to carry out Peter's wishes and Ben agrees to carry them out, although there is the possibility of his being harmed if anyone should find out what Ben is doing. Ben also refuses payment, which again underscores his loyalty and his strength of character. When Ben asks Peyna if he thinks Peter guilty, Peyna does not answer, foreshadowing a time when Peyna will make his opinions known. The narrator tells the reader that there is something special about the place where the napkins have been kept, and knowledge of this place could have changed things had Peter known about the place, foreshadowing a time when the narrator will reveal the significance of these statements. The idea that Peyna will lose his job soon leaves the reader curious as to what this will mean for Peter. The arrival of the first napkin makes Peter happy, which causes the reader to wonder why, except the connection to his mother. This suggests a specific reason for the napkins that will be revealed later in another chapter.



## Chapter 69 - 70

### Chapter 69 - 70 Summary

A week or so later, two boys carry the dollhouse to Peter. When they arrive in Peter's prison, Peter finds that one of the boys is Ben. Ben has wanted to see Peter if only to let him know by Ben's presence that Ben still believes in Peter. Ben and Dennis have become friendly through the course of preparing the dollhouse and the napkins. Ben leaves Peter a note in the dollhouse that expresses this loyalty from both him and Dennis. Peter is glad for the information but afraid for Ben. Peter eats the note to protect Ben from being caught. The narrator now reveals that Peter has asked for both the napkins and the dollhouse because he intends to make a rope from threads taken from the napkins using the loom inside the dollhouse.

### Chapter 69 - 70 Analysis

Peter receives the dollhouse, and also learns that Ben and Dennis are still on his side. This is very important because it suggests a time when Peter will need help from the outside world, and these two people will be there to help him. Also important here is the friendship blooming between Dennis and Ben, which could have an impact on their decisions later in the novel to help Peter. Peter intends to make a rope using the loom and threads in the napkins, foreshadowing his escape later in the novel.



# Chapters 71 - 73

## Chapters 71 - 73 Summary

Peter spends five years at the top of the Needle. Several times in the winter, he becomes deathly ill, and it seems he might die, but he recovers. During one such illness, Peter sees his father and is promised he will have justice someday. Peter works on the rope during the majority of his time, taking as few as five threads from the napkins so the theft will not be noticed. Peter is concerned with the thinness of the rope, so he tests it several times and finds that it will hold his weight. Peter is excited by this development. Peter needs to find a better place to hide his rope, so when he finds some loose stones in the floor, he removes them. Peter explores inside the hole and discovers a locket and a note. The note says that it is from a man convicted of killing his wife, but this man knew the true killer was a man named Flagg. Peter is shocked because the note is more than four hundred years old and is written by a king he has heard about, Valera. Now Peter has an idea of the true nature of Flagg. At first Peter thinks of having Beson take the note to Peyna, but knows it can be discredited. Peter has heard of the discord in the kingdom and the high taxes that Thomas has passed. Peter decides to keep the note and locket and prove Flagg's guilt in his case alone.

## Chapters 71 - 73 Analysis

Peter sees his father in a fever-induced delirium and learns that he will have justice someday, which gives him hope and keeps him fighting. Peter works hard on the rope, careful not to make his theft of the threads obvious. Peter tests the rope, aware that the thinness could cause it to break and kill him from the fall. However, the rope appears to hold, and Peter is optimistic about his escape. Peter finds a note more than four hundred years old written by a man in a similar position as him and this man claims that Flagg is the true killer, revealing to Peter for the first time that Flagg is much older than suspected and perhaps much more evil, clearly touching on the theme of good and evil for the first time. Peter is afraid but more determined than ever to prove who Flagg really is. Peter knows now what it is that Flagg wants and he is more determined than ever to stop him, foreshadowing a time later in the development of the plot when he will attempt to do just that.



# Chapter 74

## Chapter 74 Summary

Peter works hard while in the Needle, improving his physical health for his escape. Brandon dies the third year Peter is there, making Dennis promise he will do anything he can to help Peter before he dies. In the fourth year, the Staads lose their farm and disappear along with many other farmers who have been forced out of the kingdom due to high taxes. Peter is beginning to worry and has begun to take more threads from the napkins each week.

## Chapter 74 Analysis

Peter has learned that things are not good in his kingdom and in his fear has begun to increase the number of threads he takes from the napkins despite his fear of being caught. This foreshadows a time when Peter's plan might be revealed. Also of importance is evidence of Flagg's evil works, touching on the theme of good versus evil, and the fact that the Staads have moved on, taking Ben with them.



# Chapter 75

## Chapter 75 Summary

Peter need not have worried about discovery, however, because shortly after Valera went to the Needle, a crazy king named Alan took over and brought darkness on Delain. However, he did not rule long, and his daughter Kyla, came to the crown with the intention of improving the lot of the people. Kyla had hundreds of people make napkins in order to give them work. These napkins were stored in a storeroom and largely forgotten until Dennis began to prepare them for Peter. When Peter finished using one, they were thrown away; therefore, no one ever noticed the missing threads.

## Chapter 75 Analysis

The narrator gives a flashback, explaining the importance of the storeroom where the napkins are kept, as he had promised in an earlier chapter, showing that Peter has no reason to fear being caught. In fact, it is possible Peter could have finished his rope in half the time had he known this, displaying a certain amount of irony.



# Chapters 76 - 80

## Chapters 76 - 80 Summary

Dennis is now Thomas' butler and was afraid of him at first, but feels mostly ignored now. Thomas would often drink himself into a deep slumber and would insist Dennis stay with him. Dennis is sleeping in Thomas' room with him when he realizes that Thomas has gotten up. Dennis follows. This is happening because Thomas has been having trouble sleeping, and Flagg is not there to give him a sleep potion. Flagg is off looking for the exiled families. Dennis follows Thomas down a quiet corridor and through a secret door in the wall, suddenly afraid. Fifty miles away, Flagg cries out in his sleep. Dennis follows Thomas through the secret door and thinks Thomas is asleep until he hears him cry to someone not to drink the wine.

## Chapters 76 - 80 Analysis

Dennis is Thomas's butler now, suggesting that Dennis could learn something about Thomas's secret. Thomas is having trouble sleeping and therefore drinks himself asleep, also foreshadowing the possibility of Thomas unconsciously revealing his secret. Dennis follows Thomas as he sleepwalks. Thomas has trouble sleeping, touching on the theme of guilt and shame because it is most likely Thomas's shame over his secret that keeps him awake. Flagg is gone, an important element here because he cannot know what is about to be revealed. Dennis follows Thomas to the secret room as the reader well knows, foreshadowing the possibility that Dennis will learn Thomas's secret. Flagg has a nightmare, suggesting he might subconsciously suspect what is about to happen, foreshadowing his reaction to this revelation. Dennis hears Thomas speak in his sleep, warning someone not to drink the wine, coming very close to revealing his secret, foreshadowing the possibility that he will reveal the rest of the truth.



# Chapters 81 - 88

## Chapters 81 - 88 Summary

Dennis arrives at Peyna's farm house two days later. Peyna has retired from the being Judge-General and subsequently lost his house, so now he lives on a distant farm. Peyna does not want to speak to Dennis until he learns why Dennis is there . Dennis is very cold from the long walk, so Peyna orders Arlen to bring him a blanket that he knows will have to be taken from Arlen's own bed, since they have few blankets. Peyna also orders the last of the tea be made. Peyna asks Dennis about his mother and criticizes him for walking so far. Dennis reveals that he did not want his destination known. Dennis tells Peyna about following Thomas to the secret room and that Thomas accused Flagg of murder there. Dennis says that the next morning Thomas remembered nothing. Dennis returned to the secret room and saw that the peep holes looked into Roland's sitting room.

Peyna sends Dennis to sleep in the attic and promises to talk more in the morning. Peyna shares a glass of wine with Arlen after announcing that they will be joining the exiles in the morning. Peyna cannot sleep because he is struggling with the decision he must make regarding his future actions. This may suggest that Payna may aid Peter in escaping, since now Peyna wonders if Peter has had a plan to escape all these years. Peyna tells Dennis he must go back to the castle, but he must not be seen going inside. Peyna then outlines a plan for Dennis asking many questions as he does. Peyna tells him he will go to the exiles and send Ben back to meet Dennis at the farmhouse. Peyna and Arlen go toward where they believe the exiles to be, stopping to find a guide at another farmhouse. This guide, Naomi, takes them to the exiles, where they find Ben.

## Chapters 81 - 88 Analysis

Dennis has gone to Peyna, who is no longer the Judge-General, suggesting he has something important to tell him. This foreshadows the next few chapters in which Dennis will reveal his purpose for the visit. Peyna's generosity in providing tea and warmth for Dennis reveals his own poor state of finances, demonstrating to the reader how hard things have become not only for Peyna but for all of Delain under Thomas's reign. Dennis explains he walked because he did not want anyone to know where he was going, suggesting that this visit is private and foreshadowing that Dennis has learned Thomas's secret. Now Peyna knows the truth, too, and does not send Dennis away, but suggests that Payna may aid Peter's cause, foreshadowing the next few chapters when Peyna decides what to do with this news. Peyna has decided to leave his new home, which suggests he believes himself to be in danger now, foreshadowing the possibility that he will help Dennis in order to help Peter. Peyna is struggling with his conscious, still not sure what he will do, but clearly leaning on the side of helping Peter, foreshadowing a possible plan. Peyna has come up with a plan to help Peter but does not reveal it to anyone except Dennis. Neither does the reader yet know of the plan.



Clearly Peyna no longer feels Peter is guilty and wants to help. Peyna moves out of the story and introduces a new character, Naomi, who is a guide. Ben is found once more and this foreshadows his part in Dennis' plan to help Peter.



# Chapter 89

## Chapter 89 Summary

Peter has been having bad dreams and is afraid that time is getting short for him to escape. Peter can see that a storm is coming and decides to escape under cover of the snowfall hoping that if his rope does not hold, a dusting of snow on the ground will cushion his fall.

## Chapter 89 Analysis

Peter is having nightmares and is afraid his time is coming to a close, so he has decided to escape before his rope is long enough. This foreshadows not only Peter's attempt at escape, but his possible death from a fall.



## Chapters 90 - 93

### Chapters 90 - 93 Summary

Dennis has found an empty farmhouse not too far from the castle to hole up for several days, as instructed, before returning to the castle. There is no food except a few vegetables, but Dennis manages to eat them in order to stay strong for his mission. Dennis spends his time at the empty house writing a note that Peyna instructed him to write. On Saturday, Dennis takes an old pair of snowshoes he found and makes his way to the castle wall. Dennis thinks of Flagg's name, which wakes Flagg in the night, but Flagg is ill and goes back to sleep. Dennis is frightened because he can sense he woke Flagg and swears not to think of his name again. Dennis walks through the King's Preserves and toward the castle wall. Dennis is afraid of being caught and is very cautious. Dennis walks across the frozen moat to a place where he knows there is a sewer pipe and crawls up the pipe. From there Dennis is able to enter the castle. There are no rats in the sewer, but Dennis is not suspicious, but the narrator reveals this is because of the Dragon Sand Flagg threw into the sewer five years before. Dennis sneaks through the corridors, once nearly getting caught by a drunken guard. Dennis finally arrives at the storeroom where the napkins are prepared for Peter. Dennis attaches the note he has written to the third napkin in the stack as instructed and then makes a bed of napkins in the storeroom.

### Chapters 90 - 93 Analysis

Dennis stays at an empty farmhouse, suggesting there is a reason why he must wait before going to the castle, foreshadowing the revelation of the plan in more detail. Dennis begins to walk to the castle and he thinks Flagg's name, causing Flagg to wake. This suggests that Flagg is something other than human and touches on the theme of good versus evil. Flagg is also ill, and this is important because it could work in favor of his enemies. Dennis has made it into the castle through the sewer pipe. Dennis could have been killed had he come from another direction because of the Dragon Sand that Flagg threw in the sewer five years before, again touching on the theme of good versus evil, implying that good is meant to prevail. The drunken guard reveals another layer to the corruption that Flagg has rained down on the castle, since there never would have been drinking on duty when Roland was king. Then Dennis puts a note on a napkin meant for Peter revealing to the reader that Dennis and Peyna do intend to help Peter,.



# Chapters 94 - 98

## Chapters 94 - 98 Summary

Ben and Naomi are making their way to Peyna's farmhouse with Naomi's sled and dogs. Naomi reveals to Ben that she has been having the same nightmare that he has been having regarding Flagg. They both feel that time is growing short and they must hurry. Peter uses his napkin at breakfast. A blizzard is coming, and everyone in Delain is preparing. Ben and Naomi reach the farmhouse sooner than expected, but once there, Ben is anxious to continue on to find Dennis rather than wait as he was instructed to do. Naomi suggests they use her dog Frisky to track Dennis. Frisky can see smells as bright colors, and she is excited to follow Dennis's scent.

## Chapters 94 - 98 Analysis

The reader learns that others, besides Peter, are having nightmares and feel that time is growing short, suggesting a supernatural piece to this drama. It also foreshadows possible danger, touching on the theme of good versus evil, since Flagg is clearly the source of everyone's fear. A blizzard is coming, offering a possible cover to Peter's escape. Ben is concerned that time has gotten short, and he and Naomi decide to use the dog to track Dennis, foreshadowing their trip and the possibility of them finding Dennis in time to help Peter. Frisky is excited to follow Dennis, suggesting she will have little trouble finding him.



## Chapter 99 - 101

### Chapter 99 - 101 Summary

Peter is thinking about his intended escape that night when he finds the note from Dennis. Dennis tells Peter that he knows he has a plan of escape and if he can help, he wants to. Dennis asks for a response to be thrown through the window. Peter is excited to have someone's support. Peter wants to respond to the note but has no paper or ink. Peter decides to use Valera's note and to use his own blood as ink.

### Chapter 99 - 101 Analysis

As foreshadowed in previous chapters, Peter has found the note Dennis wrote him. Dennis and Peyna have pledged to help Peter, finally proving once and for all that they no longer believe Peter to be guilty. This is important to the next few chapters as Peter makes his decision about escaping. Peter has support now and intends to stop Flagg. Peter writes a note for Dennis.





# Chapter 102

## Chapter 102 Summary

Dennis waits in the cold and dark for Peter to throw a note to him. Finally he sees Peter throw the note, but Dennis cannot find it in the snow. Dennis hears his father's voice in his ear telling him to slow down. Finally Dennis finds the note stuck in a locket. Dennis goes back to the storeroom before he reads the note. Peter tells him he has a plan of escape, but he is afraid he will fall to his death when he attempts it. Peter promises to put off his attempt to the next night and he would appreciate it if Dennis could help.

## Chapter 102 Analysis

Dennis hears his father's voice, touching again on the supernatural overtures that continue to enter into this story. Dennis finds the note wrapped in the locket, foreshadowing a time later when the locket will be important to the story. In the note, Peter tells him how he will escape and when, asking for help in case he falls.



# Chapters 103 - 108

## Chapters 103 - 108 Summary

Ben and Naomi have found Dennis's hiding place in the abandoned house, but find nothing there that will help them. They continue on over the fields toward the castle, wondering all the while how Dennis got into the castle if he did. Ben and Naomi reach the moat, but Ben makes them wait until continuing. After the snow begins to fall, Ben okays their continuation, even though Frisky and Naomi are both concerned Frisky will lose the scent in the snow. However, the snow gives them cover from the guards. They follow Frisky across the moat, unaware that the ice is thin close to the wall until Frisky falls in. Ben pulls Frisky out, and they retreat, trying to decide what to do next when Frisky suddenly jumps toward the middle of the wall. Dennis is asleep in the storeroom when he has a nightmare and wakes to someone standing over him. Dennis is afraid Flagg has found him until Ben and Naomi reveal themselves. Ben and Naomi tell Dennis how they found him, and Dennis tells them how he saw Thomas in the secret room. It is early and they decide they must all sleep until it is time to go to Peter. Dennis requests some food and is given some.

## Chapters 103 - 108 Analysis

Ben and Naomi are hot on Dennis' trail, but they do not know how Dennis got into the castle, suggesting that finding a route inside will be difficult. Ben and Naomi reach the moat and are on the ice, but they do not know everything that Dennis knew, which is why Frisky falls in. Ben saves Frisky, but they almost consider moving on when Frisky jumps toward the wall, which is where Dennis had entered the castle. Dennis is having the same nightmares as everyone else, again touching on the supernatural elements of the novel. Dennis, Ben, Naomi, and Frisky decide to sleep in order to be ready for the night's adventures. Dennis is finally given some food. This is important because it foreshadows their role in Peter's escape.



## Chapter 109 - 113

### Chapter 109 - 113 Summary

The storm is a record one, but no snow is on the plaza because the wind has blown it all off the cobblestones. Everyone in the kingdom goes to bed early this night because the excitement of the storm has left them exhausted. Thomas has trouble sleeping, and Dennis is not there to keep him company because he is said to be ill. Thomas sleepwalks again and goes to the secret room. At eleven that night, the tower on the Church of the Great Gods falls and passes unnoticed to most people, but wakes Flagg. Flagg has felt uneasy ever since returning from his search for the exiles and finding nothing. Flagg does not know what is wrong, but still feels uneasy. Flagg has been having a nightmare in which his eye is injured. Flagg is upset by this and tonight he has awoken with Peter's name on his lips. Flagg gets his magic crystal and demands it show him Peter. The crystal shows him Peter with his mother the night she told him to always use his napkin and later when Peter is playing with the dollhouse. Finally the crystal shows him Peter attempting to escape with a thin rope. Flagg decides he must stop Peter and takes a weapon to the Needle.

### Chapter 109 - 113 Analysis

The lack of snow on the cobblestones below the Needle could mean no protection for Peter should he fall, suggesting his possible death or injury. In the theme of guilt and shame, again Thomas once more sleepwalks to the room where he saw Flagg give his father poison. Thomas' guilt is rising and may signal another revelation. The fall of a tower has awakened Flagg, symbolizing the fall of his power over the king and the people of Delain. Flagg feels uneasy and this touches once more on the supernatural elements within the novel signifying Flagg intuitively that Peter and his friends are plotting against him but cannot see the true facts for some reason.

Flagg suspects Peter will escape and decides he must kill him. This foreshadows the next few chapters as Peter attempts to escape with Flagg coming up the stairs to stop him, touching on the theme of good versus evil in a much clearer representation than before.



## Chapters 114 - 118

### Chapters 114 - 118 Summary

Flagg reaches one side of the tower at the same time Ben, Naomi, Frisky, and Dennis reach the other. Peter hears Flagg and knows he must hurry, but he is frightened as he makes his preparations. Flagg kills the Lesser Warder for being too slow when the Lesser Warder opens the door and begins the walk up the long staircase, yelling to Peter. Peter has trouble making a knot in his fright. A quarter of the way up the staircase, Flagg threatens at Peter.

### Chapters 114 - 118 Analysis

Danger is foreshadowed as Flagg reaches the Needle at the same time as Peter's friends. Peter is now aware of the danger. Flagg is on his way, building suspense and the terrible death that awaits Peter, one way or the other. More suspense is built as Peter struggles to get out the window quickly enough. Suspense continues to build as Flagg draws closer.



# Chapter 119

## Chapter 119 Summary

Thomas wakes in the secret room and is frightened. Thomas realizes where he is and feels a need to go into his father's sitting room perhaps to apologize.

## Chapter 119 Analysis

Thomas wakes in the secret room and realizes why he is there. Thomas feels deep remorse for keeping his secret, once again touching on the theme of guilt and shame and perhaps foreshadowing a change in Thomas's own symbolic prison.



# Chapter 120 - 134

## Chapter 120 - 134 Summary

Flagg calls up to Peter again, now halfway there. Ben encourages Naomi and Dennis to work faster with the cart they have brought with them to the Plaza. Flagg calls up the stairs once more.

Peter has the rope knotted and slips out the window. Flagg calls once more from three quarters up the steps. Ben, Naomi, and Dennis watch Peter come down toward them. Flagg is almost there. Peter is making his way down but does not know his rope is about to break. Dennis, Ben, and Naomi see Peter could fall. Flagg enters Peter's room and is upset at first that Peter has slipped out the window, but becomes happy when he looks at the rope. Peter thinks of how thirsty he is as he continues to go down the rope. Peter sees Flagg above him and freezes. Ben, Naomi, and Dennis feel useless as they watch. Flagg hears them and calls to them. Flagg saw the thinness of Peter's rope and where it had begun to break and decided to let it break naturally. Peter falls into the cart his friends have brought. Dennis, Ben, and Naomi have filled the cart with napkins and Peter has fallen uninjured. They begin to run as Flagg screams for Peter's death.

## Chapter 120 - 134 Analysis

Flagg is making good progress, again showing the possibility of his getting to Peter's room before Peter can get out the window. Ben, Naomi, and Dennis are preparing a cart, foreshadowing the idea that they have thought of a way to catch Peter should he fall. Again the narrator builds suspense by reminding the reader that Flagg is coming quickly. Peter is finally out the window, but will it be soon enough? Once again the narrator reveals how close Flagg is and builds suspense.



## Chapters 135 - 138

### Chapters 135 - 138 Summary

Peter and his friends get to the West Gate where they run into a group of guards, one of whom is not drunk which is unusual in this time. Peter convinces him that he is the rightful king and should be allowed to pass. The man allows him to pass. Flagg runs toward the castle toward Roland's apartments. Peter asks Dennis for the locket, which he threw down with the note. Dennis gives it to him, and they go to Roland's apartments where Peter intends to get Foe-Hammer, his father's arrow. Thomas is in Roland's sitting room, wearing Roland's robe and holding Foe-Hammer.

### Chapters 135 - 138 Analysis

Peter is allowed into the castle, proving that not everyone believes him to be guilty any longer, suggesting his possible return to the crown. Flagg runs after Peter, predicting a confrontation between these two characters in the ultimate illustration of the theme good versus evil. Peter takes the locket and goes to his father's rooms for Foe-Hammer. Thomas' presence in the same room where both Flagg and Peter are heading foreshadows his role in the upcoming confrontation.



## Chapter 139

### Chapter 139 Summary

Peter rushes into his father's sitting room and looks for Foe-Hammer, but it is gone. Flagg arrives and tries to enter but the door is locked. Flagg beats the door open and threatens to kill Peter. Peter confronts Flagg with Valera's locket and accuses him of murder. Flagg admits to killing Roland but says there is nothing any one can do about it because he intends to kill everyone in the room. No one has noticed Thomas until he announces that he knows the truth.

### Chapter 139 Analysis

The theme of good versus evil is evident in this as Peter confronts Flagg with the truth and learns that he was correct all along. However, Flagg believes he has the upper hand until Thomas admits to seeing Flagg murder his father, ruining all of Flagg's plans.





# Chapters 140 - 141

## Chapters 140 - 141 Summary

Peter turns to Thomas with the locket still hanging from his hand when Thomas fires Foe-Hammer at Flagg. Flagg has been shot in the eye not only with the arrow, but with the locket that Peter had been holding. Flagg screams and then disappears right before their eyes. Thomas apologizes to Peter, expecting anger and getting affection instead.

## Chapters 140 - 141 Analysis

Thomas fires the arrow at Flagg in a turn of irony since Thomas is the weak one that Flagg has taken advantage of all this time. Flagg is gone, but perhaps not dead. Peter and Thomas make up, ending the theme of sibling rivalry once and for all.



# Chapter 142

## Chapter 142 Summary

When all is said and done, Thomas says he wants to hunt for Flagg and kill him, feeling responsible for his bad deeds, although Flagg will not be able to live safely in Delain after all he has done. Dennis will go with Thomas. Peter becomes the great king everyone has known he would be, and Ben marries Naomi.

## Chapter 142 Analysis

The book ends with Thomas's decision to try to find Flagg, foreshadowing a possible new story in another novel. Peter becomes a good king and Ben marries, giving the reader the proverbial happily ever after ending.



# Characters

## Peter

Peter is the eldest son of King Roland. Peter was conceived on the night that Roland killed a dragon and ate its heart. Peter is much loved by both his parents, especially his mother. Peter's mother does not condone the barbaric nature of the royal court and attempts to raise her son with manners, including making sure he uses his napkin at meals, even though the King does not. After his mother's death, Peter remains close to her by playing with her dollhouse. Peter and his father also remain close. Peter is the favorite child of the King, favored above Thomas who is so much like Roland that Roland cannot feel affection for the child.

Peter grows into a strong-willed young man who once stood up to the head groom to stop the killing of a horse who had broken its leg. Flagg is unhappy with this behavior in the young prince because he fears that Peter will continue to be strong and opinionated when he becomes king and difficult to influence and control. Flagg plots to get rid of Peter so that Thomas will be crowned king. Flagg knows he can control Thomas. Flagg poisons Roland and makes it look as though Peter did it. Peter is convicted and put into the suite of rooms at the top of the Needle. Peter does not give up, however. Peter knows that Flagg has killed his father and hatches a plan to escape from his prison in order to prove it. Over five long years, Peter makes a rope that he hopes will take him to the ground safely. However, the rope breaks halfway down the tower. Peter is rescued by his friends, however, and manages to face Flagg.

## Thomas

Thomas is the second child of Roland and Sasha. Thomas is a lot like his father. Thomas is short and round, has trouble learning, and loves to hunt. Thomas is the complete opposite of his brother, and, because of this, he does not get the attention he should from his father. Roland adores Peter because he is everything Roland is not. Roland largely ignores Thomas because he is just like Roland. Thomas is often alone and sad. Flagg befriends Thomas, showing him secret rooms in the castle and peep holes that look into the King's sitting room.

Thomas sees Flagg give Roland wine on the night that Roland is poisoned. Thomas becomes convinced that Flagg has poisoned his father. Thomas falls ill, unable to tell anyone what he has seen until his father has already died. Thomas is then made King after his brother is convicted of regicide. Thomas continues to be silent about what he has witnessed because now he is the center of attention, finally getting the adoration he has lacked his entire life. However, Thomas is a bad king, and he allows Flagg to implement taxes and laws that cause bitterness and unhappiness to burn through his kingdom. Thomas also becomes so wrapped up in his guilt and shame in his silence that he begins to have trouble sleeping and begins to sleepwalk. During one of these



sleepwalking episodes, Dennis, a servant, follows Thomas and hears him confess to seeing Flagg poison his father. As a result, Dennis enlists the help of several other people, and they rescue Peter from the Needle. Later, Thomas is in attendance when Peter confronts Flagg and Thomas shoots an arrow in Flagg's eye.

## Ben Staad

Ben Staad is the son of distant nobility. Peter meets Ben at a picnic, and the two become close friends, even though Ben Staad is not the kind of friend a prince would normally have. Ben and Peter are inseparable throughout their childhoods. When Peter is arrested and convicted of regicide, Ben becomes an outcast and a target for bullies, who are unhappy with Peter's alleged actions. Ben puts up with the fights and the insults, however, until his family loses their farm and are forced to flee Delain. Later, however, Ben gets word that Peter is innocent and he returns to Delain to aid in his rescue. Ben travels with a young woman, Naomi, and traces Dennis's path to the castle in order to find Dennis and learn the plan for helping Peter. When Ben learns that Peter has a means of escape, he arranges for himself, Dennis, and Naomi to be present. Ben thinks of a cushion of napkins to catch Peter should he fall during his escape, and this saves Peter's life. Ben helps Peter return to the castle where he confronts Flagg. Later, Ben and Naomi marry.

## Naomi

Naomi is a young woman who helps Anders Peyna find the exiled nobility who are planning a rebellion against Delain and King Thomas. Naomi then takes Ben back to Anders Peyna's house, where he is supposed to wait for word from Dennis. However, Ben does not want to wait, so with the help of her dog, Naomi guides Ben down the same path that Dennis followed until they gain entrance into the castle and find Dennis. From there, Naomi and Ben learn that Peter has a means of escape and they go to the Needle to help him in any way they can. Naomi is also with Peter, Ben, and Dennis when Peter confronts Flagg in his father's sitting room. Naomi is a strong young woman, who is stubborn and determined. Naomi falls in love with Ben and the narrator reveals that they get married at a later date.

## Dennis

Dennis is the son of a butler who works inside the castle. From a young age Dennis became his father's helper, bringing meals to Peter and helping him in any way he could. Dennis is very loyal and cares deeply for Peter. However, when Dennis sees smoke coming from a secret hiding place in Peter's shelves, he does not hesitate to find the source of the fire. Unbeknownst to Dennis, what he finds is evidence planted by Flagg that implicates Peter in the murder of his father. Dennis takes the evidence to his father, who encourages his son to take the evidence to the authorities. The direct result of these actions is Peter's conviction for regicide. Dennis is heartbroken by this turn of



events. Several years later, Dennis has become Thomas' butler. One night, Dennis follows Thomas while he is sleepwalking and finds himself in the secret room where Thomas once spied on his father through the eyes of a dragon. Here Thomas confesses to having seen Flagg bring his father a glass of wine the night he was poisoned. Dennis takes this information to Anders Peyna, who helps Dennis devise a plan to save Peter. Dennis helps Peter escape and later volunteers to accompany Thomas as he begins an adventure searching for Flagg.

## Anders Peyna

Anders Peyna is the Judge General of Delain. Anders Peyna is a good man who has served at his post for many years and does not want to believe that Peter is guilty. However, when Anders Peyna confronts Peter with the evidence, and Peter begins to cry, Anders Peyna cannot help believing the boy is guilty. Anders Peyna rushes Peter through a short trial and convicts him, sentencing him to life imprisonment in the suite of rooms at the top of the Needle. However, shortly after Peter is convicted, Peter sends Anders Peyna a note asking for his help, and Anders Peyna pledges his help. Shortly after this, Flagg forces Anders Peyna to resign from his job and loses his house. Several years later, Anders Peyna learns from Dennis that there is evidence that Peter is innocent. Anders Peyna comes up with a plan to help Peter, and then Peyna flees the area, hiding with other exiles who are plotting a rebellion against Flagg.

## Frisky

Frisky is one of Naomi's sled dogs. Frisky is a very energetic dog who has a good sense of smell. Naomi and Ben use Frisky to track Dennis after they arrive at Anders Peyna's house and find it empty. Frisky leads Ben and Naomi to a house where Dennis stayed for a few days and then to the moat around the castle. From there, Frisky alone is able to find how Dennis got into the castle without anyone seeing him through a sewer pipe. Frisky is the only reason Ben and Naomi manage to find Dennis, making Frisky very important to the story.

## Roland

Roland is king at the beginning of the book. Roland is a slow-witted man, who would rather hunt all day than run a kingdom. Roland is also a man who does not take much pleasure in the company of women. When it becomes clear that Roland must marry, he is unhappy at the idea of having to have marital relations with his new wife. Roland depends on Flagg to give him a potion that will help him feel aroused with his wife. Later, Roland becomes dependent on Flagg when making decisions regarding the kingdom. After the death of his wife, Roland becomes very close to his older son, Peter, partly due to his resemblance to his mother. Roland does not become close to his second child, Thomas, causing a deep resentment in Thomas and a degree of sibling



rivalry between the boys. When Roland is murdered, Thomas knows the true murderer but refuses to tell, so Peter is convicted of Roland's death.

## Sasha

Sasha is Roland's wife. Sasha is a young woman when she marries Roland. Sasha is kind and unassuming, taking an interest in her husband's kingdom from the beginning of their marriage. Sasha loves her son Peter deeply and tries to create in him a king she can be proud of instead of the barbaric type of king her husband is. Sasha teaches Peter to use a napkin at every meal, a fact that will come back later to be of great help to Peter. Sasha also attempts to advise her husband in the daily work of running the kingdom, encouraging him not to listen to Flagg too much. Flagg observes Sasha's influence over Roland and comes to dislike her. Flagg considers poisoning Sasha but finally decides the best way for Sasha to die is in childbirth. Flagg arranges for the midwife to cut Sasha during childbirth and allow her to bleed to death during the birth of Thomas.

## Flagg

Flagg is the court magician. Flagg has been in Delain since Roland's mother was queen. Flagg has been waiting for a time when he can influence a weak king and cause mayhem and war. Flagg wants to use Roland for this purpose, but Sasha causes too much interference, and he is unable to control Roland as much as he would like. However, Flagg sees in Thomas an unhappy and gullible little boy, who would be easily manipulated as king. Flagg arranges to murder Roland and make it look as though Peter has done it in order to get rid of them both and make Thomas king. When Thomas is king, Flagg uses him to cause unrest among the kingdom, raising taxes and generally making people unhappy. Flagg's plans are coming together well when Dennis finds Thomas sleepwalking and hears his confession of having seen Flagg poison his father. Dennis uses this information to help Peter escape the Needle. Peter confronts Flagg and Thomas confesses once more, finally shooting an arrow into Flagg's eye. Flagg disappears and Thomas spends the rest of his life searching for him.



## Objects/Places

### Niner

Niner is the name of the dragon Roland killed the night he and his wife conceived Peter. It is through the mounted head of Niner that Thomas witnesses his father's murder.

### The Secret Room

The castle at Delain has many secret passages and secret rooms. One of these secret rooms looks into King Roland's sitting room through the glass eyes of the head of Niner, the dragon Roland once killed.

### Foe-Hammer

Foe-Hammer is the name of Roland's arrow that he used to kill Niner, the dragon. Foe-Hammer is later the arrow that Thomas fires into Flagg's eye.

### Dragon Sand

Dragon Sand is the name of the poison Flagg uses to kill Roland and to make Peter look responsible.

### The Dollhouse

Sasha had a dollhouse before her marriage, which she was afraid she would miss. Roland, hearing this news, has a newer, better dollhouse built for his wife. Peter plays with this dollhouse as a child and when he is in the Needle, he requests that it be brought to him.

### Napkins

Peter was taught by his mother as a child to always use a napkin at his meals. Peter requests napkins be brought to him with each meal while in the Needle. Peter takes threads from these napkins in order to weave a rope out of them for his escape.

### Miniature Loom

Inside the dollhouse there are many miniature objects that work just like their larger counterparts. Peter uses the loom inside the dollhouse to make a rope in order to escape.



## **Leven Valera's Note**

Peter finds a note from a legendary king, who was convicted of poisoning his wife. This note claims that Flagg was the real murderer even though the murder took place hundreds of years before Peter's time. Peter uses this note to send a note of his own to Dennis informing him of his intended escape.

## **Eleanor Valera's Locket**

Peter finds a heart shaped locket with Leven Valera's note that once belonged to Valera's wife, Eleanor. Peter is holding this locket when Thomas fires an arrow at Flagg, causing the heart to be snagged by the arrow and forced into Flagg's eye.

## **Magic Crystal**

Flagg uses a magic crystal to learn of Peter's attempted escape.

## **Sewer Pipe**

Dennis and later Ben, Frisky, and Naomi use a sewer pipe to gain secret entry into the castle.

## **The Needle**

The Needle is a large tower in the middle of the village square where prisoners are tried and imprisoned. Peter is imprisoned at the top of the tower after his conviction for patricide.

## **Delain**

Delain is the name of the kingdom in which the story takes place.





## Social Sensitivity

In *The Eyes of the Dragon King* portrays the tense relationship between brothers. Peter and Thomas, sibling rivals, become disillusioned through maturation, and they compete for their father's attention and love. Thomas, the younger, less-talented son, also learns through his spying that being an adult does not ensure perfect behavior; instead, he discovers that adults don public and private masks. In his treatment of Flagg and Judge General Peyna, King builds upon the theme of spying and introduces the related theme of blindness in those who exercise power.

The ignorance of those who exercise power is also one of King's concerns.

Both boys are groomed for the kingship by different adults to serve different ends. Peter is warned by his mother that a king can easily harm anyone by his behavior, but she fails to warn him of the danger of being overthrown.

Thomas learns of this danger directly when his advisor, Flagg, tells him to raise taxes. This brings the kingdom to near-revolt. The interplay of conflicting advisors, the people's fear of the king, and the king's powers to tax, execute, or reward creates the political tension that surrounds the plot.

## Techniques

King's handling of point of view is distinctive in this novel. The story is told by a colloquial, first person narrator who tells the story from a thirdperson, omniscient perspective: that of the storyteller. This storyteller takes pains to distinguish his role from that of the historian; he gives personal asides, alludes to certain "familiar" events in the future, and encourages the reader to notice Flagg's evil, Thomas' deception and ultimate courage, and Peter's goodness. The narrator's storytelling technique engages the reader by means of open-ended chapters and leading questions, much in the manner of an oral presentation. The storyteller also challenges his audience to either judge or withhold judgment of the characters. This familiar, engaging tone requires the attention and interaction of the listener. *The Eyes of the Dragon* is not a fairy tale for children, but an oral performance for both children and adults.

The text itself consists of almost a hundred and fifty short chapters. The first thirty present the main characters through humorous and seemingly incidental events. This lengthy build up forecasts main elements of the major action: Peter's betrayal, Flagg's deceit, and Thomas' cowardice. The novel's conclusion rights all the wrongs, in the manner typical of traditional fairy tales. But King's style adds tremendous tension to the traditional ending through the revelation of Flagg's horribly demonic nature and the heroic and surprising salvation of Peter. The story remains open, anticipating a sequel. Both paperback and trade editions of *The Eyes of the Dragon* contain illustrations by David Palladini.



# Themes

## Themes

King continues to explore the nature of evil, particularly as expressed in human ambition and power. In the course of this narrative King gives a general definition of human evil. Sasha, the queen, teaches Peter that "god" spelled backwards is "dog," demonstrating that people have a godlike side to them, which is civilized, powerful and good, and a doglike side, which is uncivilized, often silly, and apt to hurt others. Genuine evil is usually not done by accident or by the foolish.

King then proceeds to delineate the types of human evil. Thomas, in spite of his cowardice and weak leadership, is not truly evil — as the narrative voice challenges the readers to conclude. It is made explicitly clear however, that Flagg is evil. True human evil, then, is not defined by acts committed out of fear or compulsion by another, but only by those acts committed by a malicious will.

## Good versus Evil

This novel includes the classic theme of good versus evil, as Peter fights Flagg for control over his kingdom. Flagg is a dark and evil presence in the kingdom. This is not the first time Flagg has come to Delain. Flagg recalls having been in Delain many times, each time spending many decades attempting to orchestrate wars and pestilence. Flagg has been in Delain for more than forty years this time and has had difficulty manipulating King Roland and his mother before him. With the birth of Peter and Thomas, Flagg sees the potential in manipulating young Thomas to gain his ultimate goal. However, Peter is the oldest and must be removed first. Flagg comes up with a plan to murder King Roland and frame Peter, thus removing both the old king and his heir with one act. Flagg's plan goes perfectly; however, Flagg underestimates the power of good.

Peter watches from his tower prison as Thomas, with Flagg as his adviser, institutes massive taxes that cause many of the people of Delain to flee their homes. Peter feels helpless despite the fact that he has come up with a clever plan to escape. However, Peter does not know if his plan will end in freedom or death and is afraid that when he is free, he will not be able to find a sympathetic person to help shelter him until he can prove Flagg's evil intentions. What Peter does not know is that most of the nobles in Delain, including the man who helped put him in his prison, have come to believe in his innocence. The harder Peter works at his escape plan, the weaker Flagg becomes, until finally Flagg discovers Peter's plans and attempts to stop him once and for all. However, as is customary in such a battle between good and evil, Peter prevails and Flagg disappears to places unknown.



Flagg is revealed to not be human, suggesting perhaps he is a demon. Flagg represents evil in everything he does, from attempting to kill Sasha, the Queen, to his manipulations of a young, insecure boy, to the murder of a king. Flagg wants nothing but pain and disaster for the people of Delain, planning for many years to orchestrate a war that will decimate the kingdom for years to come. Peter, on the other hand, has always been a gentle, pure-of-heart, young man. Peter is strong, opinionated, and unafraid. Peter is exactly the kind of king Delain needs to keep someone like Flagg from sending it into destruction. Flagg knows this, which is why he feels it necessary to remove Peter. Flagg's one mistake is not making sure Peter died like his father before him.

## Sibling Rivalry

Sibling rivalry plays an important role in this novel because it is a situation that leads to Thomas's betrayal of his brother. Peter is a strong, talented young man, who looks like his mother instead of the unattractive qualities of his father, which Peter's brother, Thomas, resembles. Peter is clearly his father's favorite, and Thomas can see this when he is around either his father or Peter. Thomas' birth resulted in the death of his mother, and because of this, Thomas feels that no one in the castle has ever truly loved him because they loved and miss his mother so much.

Thomas is clumsy where Peter is agile. Thomas is slow to learn where Peter gets good grades. Thomas feels that in every comparison, he comes in second under Peter. Thomas does not feel loved by his father; therefore, when Flagg shows Thomas a secret room from where he can watch his father in secret, Thomas goes there often in order to feel some sort of connection with his father. One night his father yells at the dragon head, and Thomas begins to have nightmares so stops going to the secret room for a time. When Thomas decides to go back to the secret room, it happens to be the same night that Flagg brings his father the poison that will end Roland's life. Thomas does not tell anyone of this, however, because he is glad to see Peter gone. Thomas is finally the king, someone important, someone people notice. Thomas is happy to finally have all the attention he never got while living in Peter's shadow.

Sibling rivalry is not always fighting between siblings, and it is not in this novel. Instead, Thomas suffers in silence until he realizes that his silence is hurting not only Peter, the kingdom, and everyone living in the kingdom, but it is also hurting himself. Thomas finally tells the truth, and helps Peter stop Flagg. Thomas then spends the rest of his life hunting for Flagg, sure that he is not dead and determined to stop him from hurting anyone ever again. Thomas is not a bad boy and Peter and his father were not bad in their treatment of him. Sometimes a family dynamic simply causes jealousy in its very nature, as happens in this novel, and there can be some sad results.



## Guilt and Shame

Guilt and shame play an important role in this novel for several reasons. First, it is guilt and shame that motivate Roland to keep Flagg around. Roland is not a smart man, never has been, and the strain of being king has always been difficult for him. Roland begins to rely on Flagg more and more during his reign, unable to make decisions himself regarding many of the affairs of the kingdom. Roland is ashamed of his inability to handle his kingdom himself and this shame adds to his need to rely on Flagg, putting Flagg in a position to kill Roland and move him out of his way. Roland also comes to rely on Flagg for another embarrassing reason. Roland has trouble feeling sexually aroused around his wife and needs Flagg to provide for him a potion that will allow him to satisfy his role as husband. It is this potion that allows Roland to aid in the conception of his second child, Thomas, a birth that will lead to the death of his beloved wife, Sasha.

Guilt and shame also play a role in Dennis' motivations for helping rescue Peter. Dennis is the one who finds the dead mouse and the remnants of poison in Peter's room, leading to Peter's trial and conviction in the death of his father. Dennis never recovers from the guilt of being the prime reason why his master went to prison, and it is this guilt that motivates him to help Peter in his escape plan. Not only this, but it is also a loyalty to Peter and the belief that Dennis himself had been misled by the evidence. Thomas, too, has guilt and shame to blame for his sleepwalking and creating a situation in which Dennis discovers the truth behind Roland's death. Thomas is haunted by what he saw the night Flagg poisoned his father and begins to have trouble sleeping, often sleepwalking late at night. Later, it is this same guilt and shame that cause Thomas to be in Roland's sitting room when Peter goes there to confront Flagg. Thomas fires an arrow at Flagg after confessing what he witnessed that fateful night, causing Flagg to disappear. Later, Thomas decides to travel the countryside in an attempt to find and stop Flagg, so Flagg can never hurt anyone else, a decision that is motivated not only by his guilt and shame, but the realization that he can never make his home in Delain again.

# Style

## Point of View

The point of view of this novel is first person omniscient. The author moves from character to character, always knowing what each character is thinking or knowing and able to move in time with absolute knowledge of both the past, present, and future of each of his characters. The author in this novel also uses the authorial voice in which he speaks for himself throughout the novel, creating another character in himself as the narrator. The author often interrupts the narration in order to make some comment that either clarifies or further explains the current action, using the authorial voice technique in order to further enhance the story and to also give it the feel as if the reader is sitting in a medieval court listening to a story for entertainment, as well as educational value.

This point of view works not only because it gives the reader access to the thoughts and actions of all the main characters, as well as a few minor characters, but because the authorial voice also adds to the medieval feel of the story, enhancing the setting and overall emotion of the novel. Stephen King wrote this novel with his daughter in mind, who was most likely a child at the time, and King gives the impression that it was originally meant as a type of bedtime story. The way the author presents the story, using his own voice in the character of a narrator, gives the story not only a medieval, quaint feel, but it also gives the reader an almost fantastic impression that the story could be true in some odd way. This is important because a few of the characters within the novel, including Flagg, will appear in several of Stephen King's later novels, including *The Stand*.

## Setting

The novel is set in the kingdom of Delain, a kingdom that existed when dragons still existed and kings ruled the land. Delain is a small kingdom that is surrounded by farms and open air markets. Within Delain is the castle in which the some of the main characters reside, including Roland, Peter, Thomas, and Flagg. This castle is large and old, filled with many hidden passageways and rooms that no one, not even Flagg, can possibly know. Within one of these hidden rooms are small peep holes that look into Roland's sitting room. Flagg shows Thomas these peep holes one night and weeks later, Thomas witnesses Flagg presenting Roland with the poison that will eventually kill him.

Also in Delain is a tall tower at the top of which is a suite of two rooms. In these rooms it is traditional to hold prisoners of noble birth after they are convicted of a crime. Peter is taken to the Needle after he is wrongly convicted of the murder of his father, Roland. Outside the walls of the castle there are many farms. One of these farms belongs to Anders Peyna, the man who was responsible for Peter's conviction. Anders has moved to this farm after Flagg evicted Peyna from his grand house inside the castle walls. It is



on this farm that Dennis comes to tell Anders that Peter did not kill Roland, his evidence being a scene where Dennis heard Thomas confess to having witnessed Flagg offer the poison to Roland.

The setting of this novel is primarily medieval scenery that only adds to the sense of chivalry and King Arthur type adventure. Stephen King has done a marvelous job sticking to his time period when describing his scenery without making the setting a driving force within the novel. Rather than being a character in the story, the setting simply enhances the overall feel of the book, providing a backdrop but allowing the characters to drive the story. The setting works due to these reasons.

## Language and Meaning

Despite being a novel set in a medieval type setting, the language in this novel is simple English, the type one would expect in a modern novel. Stephen King does not attempt to write his dialogue in Old English, nor does he attempt to sanctify the story with large words and formal speech. However, Stephen King does use unfamiliar words throughout the novel, such as goshawk in order to describe the rank of an officer in the royal guard. These words add to the foreign feel of the novel, suggesting to the reader, as the authorial voice also suggests, that the setting is not in the past but that Delain exists in a world altogether different from earth.

Stephen King's use of language in this novel is simple, making it a novel that is easy to read for readers of all ages. The language also enhances the story, especially with the use of unusual words that add to the overall feel of the book, although leaving the reader with unanswered questions at the end of the novel as to where the novel takes place and what will happen next. This is an important question to leave the reader with, since some of the characters of this novel will appear again in other novels that Stephen King later publishes.

## Structure

*The Eyes of the Dragon* is written in many, short chapters, many of these chapters consisting of as little as a paragraph. There are one hundred and forty-two chapters in the novel, even though it consists of less than four hundred pages. Each chapter follows only one point of view at a time, moving from character to character or consisting of straight narration from the narrator. This technique of using many, short chapters gives the illusion of moving the story along at a fast pace, but in reality the story tends to move slowly in the first half of the book.

The story line consists of one main plot with few subplots. The main plot follows Flagg's plan to ruin Delain and send it into massive wars. Within this plot is Flagg's attempted murder of Sasha, the murder of Roland, and the framing of Peter for Roland's death. One of the subplots follows the birth and early years of Thomas, Peter's younger brother, and Flagg's attempts to befriend the young boy by showing him secret rooms throughout the castle. Another subplot follows the story of Dennis, a young

servant, who will be both Peter's accuser and rescuer. Finally there is a subplot that follows the adventures of Peter's friend, Ben, and his new acquaintance, Naomi. The plot is simple and the subplots fit into it so nicely that the reader is scarcely aware that there is more than one story happening within the novel.





## Quotes

"Once, in a kingdom called Delain, there was a king with two sons." Chapter 1, pg. 7

"Peter, a little boy who would someday be King, had dozens of toys—no, if I am to tell you the truth, he had thousands of toys. He had hundreds of lead soldiers with which he fought great battles, and dozens of play horses. He had games and balls and marbles. He had stilts that made him five feet high. He had a magical spring-stick on which he could bounce, and all the drawing paper he wanted, in a time when paper was extremely hard to make and only wealthy people could afford to have it.

But of all the toys in the castle, the one he loved the best was his mother's dollhouse."

Chapter 8, pg. 26

"Now let many long years pass, all in a twinkling—one of the great things about tales is how fast time may pass when not much of note is happening." Chapter 13, pg. 39

"Roland...Sasha...Peter...Thomas. Now there is only one more we must speak of, isn't there? Now there is only the shadowy fifth. The time has come to speak of Flagg, as dreadful as that may be." Chapter 17, pg. 60

"Of all the weapons used to commit regicide—the murder of a King—none has been as frequently used as poison." Chapter 20, pg. 69

"In Delain there were only three stages of being: childhood, half-manhood or -womanhood, and adulthood. These 'half-years' lasted from fourteen to eighteen." Chapter 34, pg. 117

"By now I am sure you have guessed Peter's plan of escape, because you know a good deal more than Peyna did when he read Peter's requests." Chapter 70, pg. 221

"Fifty miles away, rolled into five blankets against the bitter cold and the roaring wind, Flagg cried out in his sleep at the precise moment Dennis followed the King into the secret passageway. On a knoll not far distant, wolves howled in unison with that cry. The soldier nearest Flagg on the left died instantly of a heart attack, dreaming that a great lion had come to gobble him up. The soldier on Flagg's right woke up in the morning to discover he was blind."

Chapter 79, pg. 250

"Dennis let out a long, shaky sigh. His legs felt weak. He would try—oh, with all his heart he would try—to think of the magician no more. But as the night came on and the moon with its ghostly fairy-ring rose in the sky, that was a thing easier resolved upon that done."

Chapter 91, pg. 280



"Although most humans don't know it, scents are like colors to dogs. Faint scents have faint colors, like pastels washed out by time. Clear scents have clear colors." Chapter 98, pg. 298

"The unfortunate Lesser Warder who finally answered Flagg's summons lived less than four seconds after drawing the third bolt on the Warder's Door." Chapter 116, pg. 347

"Flagg had seen the thinness of Peter's rope, its whiteness—and in a trice he understood everything, from beginning to end—the napkins and the dollhouse as well. Peter's means of escape had been under his nose the whole time, and he had very nearly missed it. But...he saw something else as well. Little pops of fiver where the strands were giving way, some fifteen feet down the taut length of the rope." Chapter 132, pg. 359

"Ah, well—perhaps he did and perhaps he didn't, but I rather think he did, you know. All I can tell you is that Ben and Naomi were eventually married, that Peter ruled long and well, and that Thomas and Dennis had many and strange adventures, and that they did see Flagg again, and confronted him.

But now the hour is late, and all of that is another tale, for another day." Chapter 142, pg. 380



## Topics for Discussion

Discuss character motivations. Why does Flagg want to bring ruin to Delain? Why does Thomas not tell anyone he saw Flagg in Roland's rooms? How are these two acts related? How are they different?

Why does Flagg want to kill Sasha? Why does Flagg not poison Sasha? Do you think the potion Flagg gave Roland the night Thomas was conceived has anything to do with Thomas' personality, the way people treat him, or his own unhappiness?

Why does Flagg want Peter out of his way? What is it about Peter that threatens Flagg? Do you think Flagg's dislike of Peter goes deeper than his inability to manipulate Peter into causing war? Do you think Flagg is afraid of Peter?

Discuss Roland. Is Roland a good king? Why or why not? Is Roland a good father? Why does Roland treat Thomas differently than Peter? Why does Roland admire Peter so much? Does it have anything to do with the boys' physical appearances? Does Thomas deserve the treatment he gets from his father?

Why does Anders Peyna convict Peter so quickly? What does Peter's tears have to do with Anders Peyna's quick assumption of guilt? How do you think Peter should have reacted? Do you think his tears were inappropriate? Would you have cried?

Why does Anders Peyna help Peter before he has proof of his innocence? Do you think Anders Peyna knew from the beginning that Peter could not be guilty? Is that why Anders Peyna is so easily convinced of Peter's innocence when Dennis tells him about the confession he heard Thomas make?

Where does Flagg go when Thomas shoots him with the arrow? What do you think Flagg was? Why did he not grow older? Do you think Flagg was a demon? Do you think Thomas is capable of killing Flagg should he find him?

## Literary Precedents

The novel draws heavily and selfconsciously from traditional fairy tales, and from the folkloric art of storytelling. Unlike common misconceptions of this once popular performance art, fairy tales were intended for both children and adult audiences. This is especially true of *The Eyes of the Dragon*, which addresses the ambivalence of marriage, the desire to please parents, and the need for love. The fairy-tale tone is augmented by the medieval setting, the depiction of Arthurian courage, a conscious use of suspense, and allusions to various legends.

The book is also another instance of authors writing books for their own children. King's daughter, Naomi, read one of his books and decided she did not like horror novels. King dedicated the book to Naomi and to fellow horror writer Peter Straub's son, Ben; both of them are also characters in the novel.

## Related Titles

In his adventures beyond horror and into the realm of fantasy, King has shaped a new world which is not only carefully connected through each novel, but which is also connected to the contemporary world.

For readers of *The Stand*, a novel of world destruction and re-creation set in the contemporary United States, the demonic character of Randall Flagg is a familiar one. While he is four-hundred-years old in *The Eyes of the Dragon*, his intentions and plans are the same.

King also connects the fantasy world of *Delain* to the world of the *Dark Tower* series and Roland the Gunslinger. In *The Drawing of the Three*, Roland remembers running into Flagg, and wonders if Thomas and Dennis know they are chasing a demon. King hints that the world of the *Dark Tower* is a far-future portrayal of our own world.



# Copyright Information

## Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults

Editor - Kirk H. Beetz, Ph.D.

Library of Congress  
Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults

Includes bibliographical references.

Summary: A multi-volume compilation of analytical essays on and study activities for fiction, nonfiction, and biographies written for young adults.

Includes a short biography for the author of each analyzed work.

1. Young adults—Books and reading. 2. Young adult literature—History and criticism. 3.

Young adult literature—Bio-bibliography. 4. Biography—Bio-bibliography.

[1. Literature—History and criticism. 2. Literature—Bio-bibliography]

I. Beetz, Kirk H., 1952

Z1037.A1G85 1994 028.1'62 94-18048 ISBN 0-933833-32-6

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Printed in the United States of America First Printing, November 1994