

Falls the Shadow Study Guide

Falls the Shadow by Sharon Kay Penman

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Plot Summary

Falls the Shadow is the second novel in the medieval trilogy by Sharon Kay Penman. In this novel, Simon de Montfort talks his way into an earldom before scandalizing all of England by marrying the King's favorite sister. Simon then fights in the Holy Lands, acts as the King's Seneschal in France, and rescues his king from rebellion. In all this, Simon lives his life according to a strict chivalric code of his own making. It is this chivalric code that also causes Simon to turn against his King and fight for the rights of all people, common man and lords alike. Falls the Shadow is the story of a unique, brave man who fought for what was right even when his methods seemed wrong.

Simon de Montfort is a second son, therefore he is not eligible to inherit his father's lands and titles. However, the lands and title of Earl of Leicester were taken from Simon's father by King John. Simon goes to the current Earl of Leicester and talks him into returning the lands to Simon. This trick works and soon Simon becomes a respected lord in England despite his French birth. A few years later, Simon has several occasions to get to know Nell, the favorite sister of King Henry III. When Simon asks Nell to marry him, she refuses because she knows that her brother will never allow the marriage because Simon is not of the high birth her brother would want for her. However, Simon convinces Nell of his desire. Together Nell and Simon face Henry and convince him to agree to the marriage with a little white lie. Nell convinces Henry she is pregnant with Simon's child.

After marriage to Nell, Simon's relationship with Henry becomes strained. Henry becomes so angry when he realizes that Nell and Simon lied to him that he accuses them in front of witnesses. Later, Richard, Nell's other brother, is forced to talk Henry out of having Simon arrested. The young couple flees to France. From there, Simon joins the fight in the Holy Land, leaving Nell in Italy with their two young sons. Simon's homecoming over a year later is one of great happiness.

Having reconnected with Henry, Simon is appointed the king's seneschal in Gastony France. Simon is charged with squashing a rebellion that has broken out there. However, Henry is unhappy with Simon's methods and brings him before a court of his peers to face charges. Simon is acquitted, but this acquittal further outrages Henry. Simon agrees to leave his post if Henry will pay his expenses, as promised, but Henry refuses. Simon returns to Gastony where he continues to stop the rebellion with his own heavy handed method. Finally Henry pays off his contract and forces him out of Gastony. A short time later, Simon is offered to be seneschal in France while the King is out of the country, but Simon turns it down because he has pledged his loyalty to King Henry. In the end, Simon ends up saving Henry in Gastony from the very rebels Henry freed after running Simon out of the territory.

King Henry has reunited with his half-siblings born to his mother and given them a great number of lands and positions of power. These half-siblings have taken advantage of their position to overrun and, at times, murder the common man. Simon and many of Henry's lords recognize the danger in what is happening and encourage Henry to rid the



country of these men. Henry refuses. Simon leads an army against Henry and forces him to surrender, a surrender that leads to the Oxford Provincials, a list of demands that will force Henry to take from his siblings their lands and titles in England. Henry at first agrees to follow the Provincials, but later renounces them. When both the Pope and the King of France come down on Henry's side, Simon knows he must go to war against his King.

The war seems like an easy win for Simon because Henry is not a good battle commander. However, Edward, Henry's first born son, is. Edward manages to win a strong victory against Simon's army at Northampton. However, Simon is able to get the advantage over Henry at Lewes when Edward leaves the battle to exact revenge on a group of Londoners. Simon takes Henry captive and forces him to rule the country by the edict of the Oxford Provincials. This lasts more than a year, until Edward escapes Simon's control and leads an army against Simon. Simon is killed at Evesham. Henry regains his crown and punishes the Londoners who supported Simon, including the mayor Thomas Fitz Thomas who was so instrumental in Simon's war against Henry.



Prologue and Chapters 1-2

Prologue and Chapters 1-2 Summary

Falls the Shadow follows Here Be Dragons in Sharon Kay Penman's medieval trilogy. This novel picks up several years before the end of the previous novel, including many of the characters from the first novel. However, this novel focuses on two new characters, Simon de Montfort and Llewelyn ap Gruffydd.

In the Prologue, February 1231, Simon de Montfort, a second born son of a French man, comes to the home of the Earl of Chester to ask for the return of the earldom of Leicester taken from his family by King John. As Simon waits for the Earl of Chester, he meets Nell, the wife of the Earl of Pembroke and sister to King Henry III. When the Earl of Chester comes to meet with Simon, he finds Simon to be a brave man and agrees to give him the Earldom of Leicester.

In Chapter 1, December 1236, Llelo sneaks into his father's sleeping chamber to sneak a snack in the middle of the night. Llelo is distracted when he hears his father in the throes of a nightmare. Gruffydd wakes and is embarrassed when he realizes his son has witnessed his nightmare. Gruffydd makes Llelo promise to never tell anyone what he has seen. Llelo's brother, Owain, doubts Llelo's ability to keep this secret. A short time later, Llelo goes with his family to Aber, the palace of his grandfather, Llewelyn Fawr. Llelo spent a great deal of time with his grandfather when his father was a prisoner at Deganyw, therefore he has a strong affection for both Llewelyn and his English born wife, Joanna. Llelo feels as though he must hide this affection, however, because he knows his father does not share this affection for his own father and stepmother. Llelo slips out of the party to visit the dog his grandfather has promised to him and finds his aunt, Elen, in the arms of a man not her husband. Elen makes Llelo promise he will not tell anyone what he has seen.

Llelo spends several weeks with his grandfather and they spend this time talking about the difficult relationship between Llewelyn and his oldest son. Llelo also learns of his grandfather's hopes for the future of Wales. During this visit, Llewelyn receives news that his wife is ill. Llewelyn rushes to her side days before her death. As Joanna lies dying, she asks her husband to bury her at Llanfaes, the castle where she was held captive after her infidelity was discovered. Llewelyn agrees. After the funeral, Llewelyn announces his plans to build a Franciscan friary at Llanfaes in Joanna's honor, a gesture that only inspires outrage in Gruffydd and his wife, Senena.

In Chapter 2, April 1237, Gwladys, Llewelyn's daughter by his mistress Tangswytl, comes to visit her father only to learn he has been spending a great deal of time walking and working since Joanna's death. Llelo is with Gwladys and he happily rushes out to join his grandfather in one of these walks. However, shortly after Llelo joins his grandfather, Llewelyn suffers a stroke. Gruffydd rushes to his father's side with his wife and children. A fight breaks out between Gruffydd's wife and Llewelyn's other children.



Gruffydd and his family are asked to leave the castle. Senena attempts to force Llelo to go with them, but he refuses.

Prologue and Chapters 1-2 Analysis

In the prologue, the reader meets a new character, Simon de Montfort. Simon is a French born nobleman who has come to ask for the return of lands taken from his father under the reign of King John. This is a highly unusual circumstance and it shows the reader how brave Simon de Montfort truly is, a bravery that will come in handy for Simon many times over the course of his life.

Chapter 1 brings the reader of Here Be Dragons back to familiar characters. Llelo is Gruffydd ap Llewelyn's son, named for his popular grandfather, Llewelyn Fawr. Gruffydd, the reader will recall, is Llewelyn's oldest son, the child of his mistress Tangswyt. Gruffydd was once a captive of the English King, John, and a prisoner of his own father. These situations have caused Gruffydd to carry a dark grudge for both the English and his father's wife, Joanna, an English born woman. This anger and darkness has bleed onto Gruffydd's wife, Senena, and his eldest son, Owain. However, Llelo has spent a great deal of time in his grandfather's care and has come to see the situation from the point of view of Llewelyn Fawr and the people of Wales. Llelo is so much like his grandfather that the reader can see in him optimism for Llewelyn Fawr's Wales.

Joanna dies in the first chapter of this novel, an event that causes such grief in Llewelyn Fawr that it leads to a stroke. This stroke pains his children, but it also causes happiness and excitement in Senena because she hopes the death of Llewelyn Fawr will enable her husband to regain what she feels he has lost in his rivalry with Llewelyn and his wife, Joanna. Senena is a dark, negative woman who is poisoned more by the unfairness she sees in Llewelyn's treatment of Gruffydd than Gruffydd himself is. This woman, therefore, is in a position that could lead to a great deal of trouble for Llewelyn's heir, Davydd, and for Wales.



Chapters 3-5

Chapters 3-5 Summary

In Chapter 3, May 1237, Gruffydd comes to Mon to visit his father. Llelo is afraid he will force him to return home with him, but Gruffydd agrees to allow the child to remain with Llewelyn longer. Gruffydd is happy to see his father walking again, and tells him so, but the bitterness between them is too strong to overcome at this point. That same day, Elen learns that her husband, John the Scot, has become ill. Elen and her maternal aunt, Nell, travel to Darnhall to care for John. John suffers from the spotted fever, therefore many of the servants are afraid to enter his rooms. However, upon the arrival of Simon de Montfort, the Earl of Leicester, the servants begin behaving properly once more. With Nell's help, Elen cares for her husband daily until he finally dies. Upon his death, Elen is overcome with grief, convinced that he has died because she wished him dead many times to allow her the freedom to marry her lover, Robert de Quincy. A month after John's death, Elen tells her father and brother that she intends to marry Robert de Quincy immediately, ignoring their warnings of the social disgrace she will suffer with a wedding so soon after her husband's death.

In Chapter 4, October 1237, Nell and Simon de Montfort have begun to correspond. When Simon arranges to visit Nell at Odiham, one of her estates, Nell is warned by her servant that she has taken a vow of chastity and this visit could endanger that. The servant proves correct when Simon gets Nell alone and expresses his passion for her. Nell tells Simon how to find her bedchamber. Simon waits impatiently until he can join her, but when he does, Nell refuses to become intimate with him. Nell is convinced that Simon wants to make her his mistress and she cannot do that morally. Simon, however, convinces Nell that his intention is to marry her. This dampens Nell's resolve until she realizes that her brother would never allow her to marry a simple Earl. Nell again argues with Simon, but he finally convinces her that they will prevail. A short time later, Nell and Simon visit King Henry, Nell's brother. Henry refuses to give permission for Nell and Simon to marry until Nell tells him she is pregnant with Simon's child. Only then does Henry agree, although deeply unhappy with the situation.

In Chapter 5, July 1238, Llewelyn is playing chess with his good friend Ednyved when Gruffydd arrives with the news that his wife has given birth to a son, Davydd. When Gruffydd shares his news with his brother, Davydd, he cannot help but point out the lack of children in Davydd's own marriage, causing Davydd's wife to leave the room in shame.

At Kenilworth castle, Simon waits as his wife gives birth to their first child. Simon attempts to wait as all husbands are expected to do, but finds he cannot. Simon bursts into the room just after Nell gives birth to a son. Nell proudly shows Simon their son, Simon. However, Simon insists that they change the baby's name to Henry, in honor of King Henry who allowed their marriage to take place.



At Ystrad Fflur, the Welsh Princes come to pay homage to Davydd as Llewelyn Fawr's heir. When it is time for Gruffydd to pay homage, he refuses. Davydd takes away most of Gruffydd's lands in punishment, a decision that Llewelyn Fawr upholds.

Chapters 3-5 Analysis

As Llewelyn recovers from his stroke, his daughter suffers through the loss of her husband. Readers of the previous novel will recall that Elen never wanted this marriage, that she does not love her husband, and that she has a lover. Therefore it is no surprise to the reader that Elen immediately arranges to marry her lover, Robert de Quincy. However, the social disgrace this marriage will cause Elen causes Llewelyn concern, especially since it is to take place so close in time to her husband's death. However, Elen is a stubborn child and there is little Llewelyn can do to stop her.

Nell and Simon become lovers. However, Nell has taken a vow of chastity. Not only this, but Nell is the sister of a king, a position that makes any potential marriages for her a political act. Nell knows her brother would never allow her to marry an Earl if it would be political advantageous for him to marry her to a prince or king of a foreign country. For this reason, Nell lies to her brother, convincing him that she is already pregnant with Simon's child. This situation would cause much more disgrace for the king of England than a bad marriage, therefore he agrees to the marriage. However, the reader is left wondering what will happen when the king learns that the pregnancy is a lie.

Tensions continue to rise between Gruffydd, Davydd, and Llewelyn. Gruffydd continues to be angry with his father for making Davydd his only heir, which leads to a great rift between the two brothers. However, Gruffydd's continued rebellions do little to sway Llewelyn from his convictions. In fact, they more than likely add to Llewelyn's resolve.



Chapters 6-10

Chapters 6-10 Summary

In Chapter 6, August 1239, Simon and Nell prepare to attend Queen Eleanor's churching. However, when they arrive they learn that Henry is angry with Simon because of a debt he owes to the heirs of the Earl of Chester in his deal for the Earldom of Leicester. When Simon confronts Henry, Henry becomes very angry and accuses Simon of lying to win permission to wed Nell. Henry throws Nell and Simon out of the church. Later that night, Simon and Nell learn that Henry had wanted Simon arrested, but Richard, Henry and Nell's brother, talked him out of it. Richard recommends, however, that Nell and Simon quickly leave England.

In Chapter 7, March 1240, Gruffydd welcomes another son, Rhodri, to his family. A short time later, Gruffydd learns that his father is dying at Aberconwy Abbey. Gruffydd refuses to go to his father, but gives Llelo permission to go. Llewelyn dies with all but three of his children at his side.

In Chapter 8, April 1240, Simon returns to Henry's court and is shocked to find Henry acting as though nothing ever happened between them. Elen travels to Gloucester where she joins her brother Davydd. Elen learns that Gruffydd has raised an army and plans to fight for what he sees as his birthright, Gwynedd. Davydd has come to England to make peace with the English so that he might concentrate on the rebellion Gruffydd is raising.

In Chapter 9, September 1240, Owain accompanies Gruffydd as they enter Cricieth Castle for the meeting with Davydd to discuss a truce. As the men argue, Owain drinks a large amount of mead. In a few minutes, Owain is so drunk he must lie down. Soon after, Gruffydd also becomes sleepy. It is then that Gruffydd realizes that Davydd has drugged him and his son in order to take them prisoner. Llelo comes to see Davydd and asks if he too is to be imprisoned. Davydd tells Llelo he is free to go. When Ednyved asks why, Davydd tells him that he does not believe he can have a child and that Llelo would be an ideal heir.

In Chapter 10, August 1241, Senena goes to England to ask King Henry to help her rescue her husband and son. Llelo goes to England with Senena and spends some time with his aunt Gwladys who is also in town. Back at the castle, Llelo overhears some men talking in the garden about their deal with Senena, which includes leaving all three of Senena's youngest children as hostages to the king. Llelo steals food and runs away.

Chapters 6-10 Analysis

Simon is disgraced in front of witnesses when the king accuses him of not paying his debts and lying about his reasons for marrying Nell. This causes Simon to have to go into exile in fear of what King Henry might do next. However, Henry simply forgets about



the whole ordeal and welcomes Simon back into his circle. This shows the reader how finicky Henry is and how easily he changes his opinions. This will be important later when Simon and Henry find themselves at odds once again.

Llewelyn dies, giving Gruffydd the opening he has been waiting for for many years. Gruffydd immediately declares war against his brother, Davydd, causing Davydd to have to make peace with England in order to focus on Gruffydd. In the end, Davydd imprisons Gruffydd, causing Senena to turn to the last man Gruffydd would want her to turn to, the king of England. Gruffydd deeply dislikes and distrusts the English, therefore Senena's choice is a dangerous one both for her husband and for her marriage.



Chapters 11-14

Chapters 11-14 Summary

In Chapter 11, August 1241, on August 29, Davydd is forced to surrender to King Henry after a brief series of battles. King Henry treats Davydd kindly, aware of how ashamed Davydd feels after losing all his father fought to gain. As part of the surrender, Davydd is forced to give several of his castles to England. Also part of the deal, Davydd is to surrender Gruffydd and Owain to the king as hostages. When King Henry announces his intentions with Gruffydd, Senena accuses the king of going back on their deal.

In Chapter 12, September 1241, Elen, now married to Rob de Quincy, is expecting her first child. As she and her husband celebrate, Llelo arrives at the White Ladies Priory where Elen is staying. Llelo tells of his difficult journey after running away from his mother a month before. At the same time, Gruffydd and Owain have been taken to the Tower of London. Senena has taken up residence nearby to be near both her husband and children, two of whom are still hostages of the English crown. Gruffydd continues to be angry with his wife for turning to the enemy for help. A month later, Davydd comes to London to pay homage to King Henry. As part of the deal, Davydd has been forced to agree that if he has no heirs, Gwynedd is to pass to the English crown.

In Chapter 13, February 1242, Nell is in Sicily with her two young sons awaiting Simon's return from the Holy Land. Everyone Simon went on crusade with has already returned, therefore Nell is concerned for her husband's life. At the same time, Nell's sister, who was married to Frederick II, has died in seclusion. This adds to Nell's grief. However, while picnicking on the beach, Nell is beyond happiness when Simon returns to the family.

In Chapter 14, June 1242, Henry has gone to war with France, a war that is highly unpopular and expensive. Many believe Henry has gone to war to satisfy his mother, Isabella de Lusignan. Nell and Simon travel to France and meet with Nell's de Lusignan family. Simon fights with Henry in his army, but is appalled by how badly Henry leads his army. Simon attempts to change his battle plan, but Henry refuses. Finally Simon agrees to go to the French King to ask for a truce. Before Simon can go see the king, Henry's men get into a battle that is badly lost. Simon becomes angry with Henry and calls his king a fool in front of his men. A few days later, Isabella and her husband, Hugh de Lusignan, pledge homage to the French King. Henry continues to fight his war with Simon at his side, coming to a truce in April of the following year, leaving both himself and his barons in debt for the cost of the war.

Chapters 11-14 Analysis

Davydd has only recently taken over his father's lands and titles, yet he has found himself battling both his brother and the English. Davydd wins the fight over Gruffydd



with deception, but loses his fight with the English. As part of his truce with King Henry, Davydd loses key castles in Wales. However, Gruffydd is the biggest loser when he is transferred to King Henry's custody instead of being released as his wife had planned. King Henry, like his father before him, has gone back on a deal with the Welsh. Now Gruffydd is once again a prisoner of an English King, not unlike his experiences as a young man when he was a hostage of King John. This causes a rift between Gruffydd and his wife and leaves the reader wondering what could possibly happen next.

When Simon returns from the Holy Land, he joins King Henry in an unpopular war against France. King Henry has gone to war against France because his mother's second husband is unhappy with their treatment there. This is important because it introduces the de Lusignans into Henry's life, a family who will cause him untold trouble in the future. This is also important because it shows the reader how susceptible Henry is to the suggests of others, especially people he needs something from, such as the love of his mother. This war is unpopular and is handled badly, leaving Simon frustrated enough to call his king a fool in front of witnesses. When it is finally over, King Henry and Simon are both left deeply in debt. This episode shows the differences in battlefield ability between King Henry and Simon, a difference that is clearly overwhelming.



Chapters 15-18

Chapters 15-18 Summary

In Chapter 15, February 1244, Senena brings Gruffydd and Owain a sleeping draught to knock out the guard so they might attempt to escape. The plan is for Gruffydd and Owain to climb out of the tunnel with a rope made from their bedding and escape on a boat Senena has arranged for. However, as Gruffydd is climbing down the rope, the knots give way and he falls to his death. A few months later, Senena has encouraged her husband's supporters to rise up against Davydd to secure Gruffydd's part of Gwynedd for her sons. As Davydd discusses this with Ednyved, Llewelyn arrives. Davydd shares with Llewelyn his plan to fight Senena and her supporters, as well as his other enemies, which includes gaining the Pope's assistance. Llewelyn agrees to help.

In Chapter 16, September 1245, Wales and England have been at war for a year. Simon returns to join Henry's army. Soon after, the Welsh attack the English supply ship. After forcing the Welsh to retreat, the English begin to attack the nearby abbey of Aberconwy, the site of Llewelyn Fawr's tomb. Simon attempts to stop the looters, but finds it nearly impossible. Shortly after this, the Welsh return to the battlefield and offer a defense that Simon cannot help but admire. In the end, the English lose most of their supplies, including much needed food. A month later, Simon advises the king to abandon Wales and he reluctantly agrees.

In Chapter 17, January 1216, Llewelyn takes his first lover, Melangell. While he is alone with Melangell, Llewelyn receives word that Davydd has taken ill. Llewelyn rushes to Davydd's side only to find that his illness is fatal. As soon as Davydd dies, Owain returns to Wales to stake a claim to Gwynedd. However, Llewelyn tells him that he has been named Davydd's heir and that it would be best for Wales if they do not fight.

In Chapter 18, April 1247, Llewelyn and Owain travel to Woodstock to face the terms of their surrender to King Henry. When they arrive, they run into Senena who tells them the king has ordered that his hostages, Davydd and Rhodri, be present at the surrender. When Llewelyn arrives in the great hall, he finds Nell and Simon there, making the experience slightly less humiliating. At the same time, King Henry asks Simon to be his seneschal at Gasgony, his lands in France.

Chapters 15-18 Analysis

Gruffydd has died attempting to escape the Tower of London. This ends a sad and wasted life. The reader hopes that this means that life will be made easier for Davydd and Wales, but quickly realize that Gruffydd has left behind a bitter and angry wife. Senena attempts to build a rebellion against Davydd only to have her middle son, Llewelyn, join Davydd's side. England invades Wales, hoping for another quick victory, but the loss of their supply ship leaves them devastated and forced to surrender.



However, a short time later Davydd dies an early death and leaves Llewelyn his title. This leads to another invasion by King Henry that is quickly won by the English. Llewelyn has stopped his own brother from fighting against him, but has lost most of the lands that his grandfather fought so hard to unite.

Simon once again finds Henry lacking on the battlefield, but he continues to fight at his side because he has pledged his loyalty to King Henry. Now King Henry wants Simon to become his seneschal in Gasgony and stop a rebellion taking place there. Simon once again agrees, because he feels he owes the King his loyalty, but the reader wonders to what this will lead.



Chapters 19-22

Chapters 19-22 Summary

In Chapter 19, January 1251, Henry is having such financial trouble that he cannot celebrate Epiphany as lavishly as he normally would. Simon has come to Westminster to defend accusations against him that he has treated the lords of Gascony unfairly. The argument becomes heated, but Henry insists that Simon continue as his seneschal in Gascony. Simon returns to Gascony and is involved in an assault on Castillon Castle when he learns of the illness of his only daughter, Joanna. By the time Simon returns home he discovered that Joanna has died of whooping cough.

In Chapter 20, April 1252, Simon continues to hear that complaints have been made against him to Henry. Finally Simon is called to England where he is placed on trial in front of Henry and his council of barons. The lords of Gascony testify to times when Simon arrested them without trial, when Simon confiscated their lands, and other such events. Others, however, testify that Simon has only done what is necessary to stop the lords from rebelling against the English crown. In the end, Simon is found innocent by Henry's barons, much to Henry's outrage. Simon again offers to quit his post if Henry will pay his debts, but Henry refuses. Simon returns to Gascony with his two eldest sons. Eventually Henry agrees to pay off Simon's contract and his debt. However, Simon continues to refuse to return to England.

In Chapter 21, October 1253, Simon turns down a chance to be seneschal to the French King and instead agrees to return to Gascony to help Henry fight the lords' rebellion. Nell returns to England to be with Elen as she struggles with her fourth pregnancy. Llewelyn joins her at Elen's side. Unfortunately, Elen miscarries her child. A short time later, Elen contracts an infection from the miscarriage and dies. Llewelyn helps Nell take charge of the household and see to Elen's orphaned children.

In Chapter 22, June 1255, Owain and Davydd, Llewelyn's brothers, are invading Gwynedd in the hopes of forcing Llewelyn to split his lands between his brothers equally as decreed by Welsh law. When Llewelyn's army meets Owain's the first time, Llewelyn defeats them. Owain is imprisoned and Llewelyn meets with Davydd, then imprisons him until he can see the importance of uniting Wales, not dividing it. Llewelyn stops at Aberconwy Abbey to visit the tomb of his grandfather and finds Senena waiting for him there. Senena wants Llewelyn to free Owain and give equal lands to all his brothers. When Llewelyn refuses, Senena strikes him and walks away.

Chapters 19-22 Analysis

Simon loses his only daughter to a common childhood illness while continuing to attempt to rid Gascony of rebels in a heavy handed way. King Henry finally has enough of Simon's ways and puts him on trial, but Simon is eventually acquitted. This makes



Henry very angry with Simon, but Simon holds out until Henry agrees to pay off his debts as he promised to do when Simon agreed to the job. A short time later, Henry calls Simon back to help him fight the rebellion in Gascony, showing the reader once more how inept Henry can be.

Elen de Quincey dies, causing Llewelyn great pain as she was his favorite aunt. This death also shows the reader how precarious life was in this setting. At the same time, Llewelyn faces a rebellion from his brothers, Owain and Davydd. Llewelyn imprisons Owain because he knows Owain, like his father, will never stop. However, Llewelyn imprisons Davydd in hopes that the younger man will one day come to see how important it is to keep Wales united.



Chapters 23-26

Chapters 23-26 Summary

In Chapter 23, September 1256, Nell and Richard attempt to convince Guy de Lusignan, oldest of the de Lusignan siblings, to encourage his other siblings to rein in their behavior. The de Lusignans have been given lands and power by Henry and they use it to steal and kill, never to be punished by their brother, King Henry. This is causing great concern among Henry's barons, but no one can convince him to change. In Wales, Llewelyn agrees to free Davydd and give him some lands of his own.

In Chapter 24, April 1258, Edward meets with his cousins, Harry and Bran de Montfort and Hal Planategenet. Edward tells his cousins of trouble brewing with Henry's barons. Edward then says that a group of barons are meeting that night, headed by Simon. A short time later, Henry meets with his unhappy barons at Oxford. A set of guidelines are written that will change the way Henry governs England. In these guidelines, the Oxford Provisions, there is to be a twenty-four member council who will oversee the government as well as an increase in the number of times the Parliament meets. The Oxford Provisions also insist that Henry remove all foreign born lords from his circle, a demand directed at Henry's de Lusignan siblings.

In Chapter 25, June 1259, while visiting France, word gets around that Nell de Montfort refuses to turn over some of her castles as dictated in a pending treaty between France and England. Nell's reason for doing this is because her brother did not get her all she was owed in her dower. This causes some embarrassment for Simon, but in the end Nell is paid as part of the treaty and she relents. A short time later, Prince Edward joins Simon's fight to force his father to abide by the Oxford Provisions. This causes Henry great distress, but a discussion between Richard and Edward helps smooth the tension. This leads to Edward taking up his father's fight against Simon. Simon chooses then to remain in France.

In Chapter 26, April 1263, the Welsh watch closely the struggles in England. Edward makes plans to invade Wales and is joined by Davydd, who hopes to free Owain. However, Edward is forced to return to England, forcing Davydd to go into exile in England as well.

Chapters 23-26 Analysis

Things begin to change between Simon and Henry. While there has always been tension between these two, mostly because of Simon's conviction that Henry is a poor leader, the tension has grown with Henry's refusal to punish his half-siblings for all the wrong they have committed against the church and the common man. This leads to Simon standing up against Henry and forcing him to agree to the Oxford Provisions. However, Henry immediately turns around and refuses to follow these guidelines. The



Oxford Provisions would have taken control out of Henry's hands and he could not allow that to happen. Very quickly many people find themselves forced to pick sides. At first, Edward finds himself on Simon's side, but quickly returns to his father's side when he learns his father thought he wanted to steal the crown out from under him. At the same time, Davydd defects from Llewelyn's camp to Edward's, perpetuating the same struggle that has been going on in Wales for decades.



Chapters 27-31

Chapters 27-31 Summary

In Chapter 27, June 1263, Simon builds an army and begins fighting those who refuse to abide by the Oxford Provisions. Henry locks himself into the Tower of London out of fear of Simon's invading army. Henry wants to raise an army to fight Simon, but he is out of money and cannot get anyone to loan him more because he never pays it back. Edward takes matters into his own hands and robs a local Templar temple. In another part of London, a group of Henry's supporters meet Thomas Fitz Thomas, a strong supporter of Simon's. At the Tower of London, Henry fights with his wife, throwing her out of the Tower. As the Queen makes her way over the river, she is attacked by a group of commoners unhappy with the king. Thomas Fitz Thomas, as mayor of London, comes to her rescue. Later, Simon's army reaches London there is a great amount of fanfare for them. Simon arrives at the Tower of London where King Henry is forced into submission.

In Chapter 28, October 1263, Simon finds men deserting his cause, making him worry for the future. The Parliament struggles with deciding what powers King Henry should have. While Simon's army is outside of London, Henry's supporters lock the gate in the up position as Edward leads an army toward Simon. Just as Simon is convinced they will die, the Londoners overtake the bridge and lower it for Simon's army.

In Chapter 29, December 1263, King Louis of France has agreed to mediate between Simon de Montfort and King Henry. On the way to France, however, Simon suffers a bad fall from his horse. Simon is laid up with a badly broken leg during the mediation process. Simon's sons return home from the mediation with the news that King Louis has ruled in Henry's favor. This forces Simon's hand.

In Chapter 30, March 1264, Edward is trapped in Gloucester Castle, but he asks Harry de Montfort to give him a truce for a week. Harry agrees based on his friendship with Edward, but later learns that Edward took advantage of him and attacked several of Simon's supporters strongholds. A riot in London a short time later sparks the first battle between Simon's army and Edward's. Edward attacks Simon's army where they are hold up at Northampton. Edward gets entry into the city through a priory wall where a monk sympathetic to their cause weakened the wall. Bran de Montfort fights bravely, but is captured by Edward's army. Bran's life is saved Davydd who reminds the knights that Edward does not want his de Montfort cousins harmed. Bran is taken captive and held by Edward.

In Chapter 31, May 1264, the war between Simon and Henry appears to be going Henry's way in May. While in London, where he has many supporters, Simon is approached by a Jewish man asking that he punish the lord who led an attack on the Jewry during the London riots. Simon is unable to agree to punish this man, a knight in



his army whose services will be needed, but asks his men to escort the Jewish men home.

Chapters 27-31 Analysis

Simon builds an army and begins fighting all who resist the Oxford Provisions. King Henry has already sought a way to keep from following the Provisions out of fear of losing his power as king, but the Pope's edict has little effect on the Provisions' supporters. Then King Henry turns to the King of France who, in fear for his own powers, rules in Henry's favor. This forces Simon's hand. Simon cannot allow the King of England to run their country into the ground because of his sense of loyalty to family and his inability to stand up for what is right. For this reason, Simon goes to war against the King, but quickly loses an important first battle.

As Simon is fighting his war against the King of England, the Jews of London find themselves persecuted in the riots of London and every time the town becomes frightened about the future. Jews are considered infidels by all Christians, including Simon. Therefore, when the Jews come to Simon and ask him to punish those responsible for the deaths and destruction in their section of the city, Simon cannot. However, Simon shows his good heart in allowing his men to escort the Jews home after he speaks with them. Simon is a good man who is looking out for everyone, including the infidels.



Chapters 32-36

Chapters 32-36 Summary

In Chapter 32, May 1264, Simon and his army are outside of Lewes where Henry is holed up with his army. Simon looks over the area and prepares his battle strategy, assigning areas to each of his knights. As Simon plans a strategy with his men, he receives letters from Henry, Richard, and Edward refusing his attempts at a truce. After reading them, Simon and his knights renounce their pledge of fidelity to King Henry. Simon's army marches at night and begins the attack at dawn. A group of London commoners are the first to attack. However, they meet with strong resistance and immediately begin to fall back. Edward and his knights follow the Londoners into the woods, leaving the battlefield. Simon's other knights begin their attack, quickly pinning Henry's army inside the city. When Simon realizes that Edward will not be coming back, he throws his entire force on the city, quickly defeating the army and locking Henry in the church. When Edward recognizes his mistake, he returns to Lewes and joins his father in the church.

In Chapter 33, May 1264, when Henry finally surrenders, Simon gives him the terms of surrender which are nothing more than what is written in the Oxford Provisions. Edward is taken to Dover castle as Simon's prisoner. When Simon returns to London with King Henry, he is greeted with great fanfare. Simon sends for the Jews and asks them to leave the Tower of London with the understanding that he will make it unlawful for any citizen to harm a Jew.

In Chapter 34, November 1264, Simon finds himself forced to squash many rebellions after his victory at Lewes. At Dover, Edward makes an attempt to escape, but Bran squashes it by threatening to throw him over the wall on a mangonel. At Christmas, Simon throws a huge party at Kenilworth and allows both Henry and Edward to attend. While there is some tension, there is also a great amount of celebration going on.

In Chapter 35, March 1265, during Parliament sessions, Simon has a falling out with the Earl of Gloucester, his strongest supporter in his war against Henry. While they publicly make up, tension remains between them. A short time later, with Gloucester's help, Edward escapes from Simon's custody. Simon, although disappointed, is not surprised.

In Chapter 36, Simon goes to visit Llewelyn in Wales to ask for his help against Edward. Llewelyn agrees and presents his terms, all of which Simon agrees to. Simon then offers his daughter, Ellen, as a bride to Llewelyn. Llewelyn quickly agrees. While in Wales, Simon's path back to England is blocked when Edward's army burns the bridges. Simon finds himself forced to wait for backup from his son, Bran.



Chapters 32-36 Analysis

Simon finally takes both Henry and Edward prisoner, ending his war. Simon forces Henry to agree to the Oxford Provisions and then returns to London where he oversees the government. Henry remains Simon's prisoner and goes everywhere Simon goes. Edward receives a lighter sentence, allowed to receive visitors and to participate in certain activities. This leads to a situation in which Edward is able to escape. The reader knows that Edward is a strong battlefield leader, therefore his release and subsequent building of an army spells danger for Simon.

Simon makes alliances with Llewelyn, the Prince of Wales. At the same time, Simon gives his daughter to Llewelyn in marriage, his only daughter, a fact that proves how much Simon trusts and likes Llewelyn. The future seems very bright for Simon and his family, despite the tension with Edward, leaving the reader waiting for the other shoe to drop.



Chapters 37-40

Chapters 37-40 Summary

In Chapter 37, July 1265, Sir John d'Eywill arrives at Kenilworth to find Bran has his army outside the castle walls so that they might enjoy the cool of the river. D'Eywill tries to talk Bran into moving his army into the safety of the castle and to rush his rendezvous with his father, but Bran prefers to enjoy the cool of the river and the company of the local harlots. Bran is unaware that Edward has a spy in his camp and will soon learn of vulnerability of Bran's army. At dawn the following morning, Bran's army is attacked and devastated, losing many of their men and most of their horses. Edward also takes their banners.

In Chapter 38, August 1265, Simon is able to get back into England in Edward's absence. On a march to Kenilworth to meet up with Bran, King Henry insists on stopping at Evesham so that he can have a meal and attend mass. Simon agrees. As the men enjoy some time off, they see an army flying Bran's colors coming their way. However, when it is too late to flee, they realize the army is Edward's. Simon knows that their escape is nearly impossible, but gives his men some hope with the idea that if they all attack at one spot they might be able to force their way through. Unfortunately this plan does not work and most of Simon's army is slaughtered, including Simon himself. At the same time, Bran rushes to meet his father and warn him, but arrives too late.

In Chapter 39, August 1265, Nell learns several days later of the death of her husband. Nell is devastated, especially when she learns of the mutilation Simon's body suffered after his death and how Edward had his body moved out of consecrated land. However, Nell also learns that Simon's grave and the creek where he died have been visited by those who believe Simon to be a saint. Nell also learns that her son, Guy, survived the battle where his father and brother, Harry, did not.

In Chapter 40, August 1265, Llewelyn is devastated by Simon's death and saddened that he must end his betrothal to Ellen. Nell is forced to surrender Dover Castle to Edward. When they meet, Edward promises to take care of her servants and to allow she and Ellen to go into exile in France. Edward also gives Nell a letter from a Bishop from Evesham and a ring Simon meant for her to have. A short time later, Henry makes his son Edmund the Earl of Leicester.

Chapters 37-40 Analysis

Bran's army is large and could have put up a good fight against Edward. However, as Bran has always done, he places pleasure before business and allows his men to relax with harlots and the river outside of Kenilworth, leaving them vulnerable to Edward's army. If not for this, Bran could have reached his father and allowed for a strong fight



against Edward. Instead, Simon finds himself surrounded in a difficult to defend town. Simon is killed in part because his son failed him.

Simon's death ends the fight for equality in London, allowing Henry to regain his throne and all his power, leaving England once more at his whim. At the same time, Simon's entire family, those who survived Evesham, are forced into exile. It is a difficult situation for everyone. Ironically, Edward grieves over the death of his cousin Harry even though he is responsible for what happened to him.



Chapters 41-42 and Afterward

Chapters 41-42 and Afterward Summary

In Chapter 41, January 1266, Edward fights the holdouts at Kenilworth, but finds it an expensive, difficult battle. Nell and Ellen settle at a convent in France. They are living a much more modest life than before, but find the French King and Queen gracious. Nell often speaks to Simon in the church and is doing just that when Guy surprises her with a visit. Bran is there as well, finally able to face his family after his mistake at Kenilworth.

In Chapter 42, September 1267, Kenilworth finally surrenders and the Dictum of Kenilworth is written, effectively wiping out the Oxford Provisions. Llewelyn meets with Henry at Montgomery. There Llewelyn has a discussion with Edward about Simon's widow and children that seems to foreshadow the struggle to come between these two men.

In the Afterward, most of the bishops who supported Simon are sent into exile. Thomas Fitz Thomas is imprisoned, but released in 1269. Simon's body was reinterred in the High Alter of the Abbey at Evesham. The Abbey is destroyed by King Henry VIII, but a monument to Simon is placed on the location of the Abbey in 1965.

Chapters 41-42 and Afterward Analysis

Simon's final supporters are forced to surrender, officially ending Simon's rebellion. Nell is sent into exile where she finds little peace, but is reunited with her emotionally destroyed children. It is a difficult time and the reader cannot help but wonder what might have happened had Simon succeeded in his brave uprising against an inept king.

In the afterward, the author hints to the continuing story in her next book, promising the reader more information on Nell and her family, as well as Llewelyn, the Prince of Wales.



Characters

Simon de Montfort, Earl of Leicester

Simon de Montfort is a second son who under French laws did not inherit his father's lands. Simon, determined to become a landed lord, talked the Earl of Chester into returning to him the Earldom of Leicester that was taken from his father by King John. Thanks to Simon's bravery, he is given the earldom he asked for. A short time later, Simon marries Nell, the sister of Henry III, under false pretenses. This leads to a falling out between Simon and King Henry that last several months.

Simon is a brave soldier who takes his household knights to fight in the Holy Land during the crusades. Afterward, Simon is assigned to be King Henry's seneschal in France in a territory belonging to Henry's son, Edward. Simon is to squash a rebellion going on there among King Henry's lords. Simon uses many tactics that offend the lords of the area, including jailing without a trial several lords. This causes Henry to place Simon on trial for his actions. Simon is ultimately acquitted of these charges, causing Henry to become very unhappy with Simon. A short time later, Henry agrees to pay Simon off to get him out of Gascony.

Simon becomes concerned about the number of his foreign born siblings Henry has given power and lands to. Simon dislikes the behavior of these siblings and Henry's clear inability to punish or end the behavior of these siblings. As a result, Simon leads an army against Henry, forcing him to agree to riding his government of these siblings in a treaty. However, Henry refuses to abide by the treaty and manages to get the Pope and the French King to take his side. This forces Simon to declare war on his king.

Simon fights the king in several battles, finally getting the advantage of the English king and taking him captive. Simon rules England through King Henry for more than a year, attempting to implement all the things set out in the Oxford Provisions. Edward, at this same time, is a prisoner of Simon's. However, when Edward escapes, he builds an army and begins fighting Simon. This war eventually leads to a confrontation at Evesham where Simon is killed by Edward's lords, his body mutilated before a portion is finally allowed to be buried. The people of England begin visiting the place where Simon died, taking samples of water from the area in the belief that it will heal the sick.

King Henry III

King Henry III became king of England at the age of nine when his father, King John, died. King Henry is a weak man who is not a strong leader. Henry often allows people to walk all over him, unable to engage in confrontation. Henry feels as though Simon, a man who was once a good friend to him, takes advantage of him. When Simon tells Henry that Nell, his beloved sister, is pregnant with his child, Henry quickly agrees for them to be married. However, when Henry learns the truth about this marriage, he is



angry and he throws both Simon and Nell out of his inner circle. Not only this, but Henry threatens to have Simon arrested. However, months later, Henry accepts Simon at his court as though nothing has ever happened. This will be a common situation in the relationship between Henry and Simon.

King Henry was separated from his mother at the age of nine when his mother remarried and moved to France. As an adult, King Henry reunites with his mother and his nine half-siblings. Henry embraces these siblings, offering all the male siblings property and power in his realm. Unfortunately, these siblings take advantage of King Henry and run amuck all over England. Many of King Henry's lords become concerned about this situation and go to extremes to try to force Henry to rid his council of these foreign born siblings. However, Henry rejects all their attempts, even his promise to conform to the Oxford Provisions.

Simon declares war on King Henry after he has the Pope overrule the Oxford Provisions and the French King come down on King Henry's side of the debate during a mediation. This war begins badly for Simon when Prince Edward leads an army against Simon's son Bran at Northampton. However, Simon is able to get the better of Henry and Edward at Lewes. Henry becomes Simon's prisoner and he rules by Simon's command until Edward manages to rescue his father at Evesham. Henry then takes revenge on all those who fought against him and returns his siblings to their places in his council.

Prince Edward

Prince Edward is King Henry's first born son. Prince Edward grows up with Simon de Montfort's sons. Therefore when Simon declares war against King Henry, Prince Edward finds himself fighting against some of his closest friends. Edward proves to both be a genius at planning battles and at manipulating his enemy. Edward tricks Harry and Bran de Montfort into releasing him after the initial battle and later takes advantage of an ally to overrun Northampton and take Bran captive. However, Prince Edward allows his personal feelings to overshadow his common sense on the battlefield when he faces Simon's army at Lewes. Edward leaves the battlefield to chase down a group of London commoners in revenge for an attack on his mother. This leaves King Henry vulnerable and Simon takes advantage of the situation, taking the king captive.

Prince Edward is taken captive at Lewes as well and becomes a prisoner of Simon's. This captivity lasts more than a year. However, when Prince Edward begins receiving privileges, he takes advantage of the situation and escapes with a man who was once Simon's partner. Edward builds an army and proves himself a genius at battle when he attacks Bran's army and then tricks Simon into thinking his army is Bran's as they approach him at Evesham. Simon is killed in this battle along with his son Harry, Prince Edward's closest childhood friend.

Prince Edward is so angry at Simon for his actions, Prince Edward forces the monks at the abbey where Simon is buried to move his body to unconsecrated ground. Edward's



anger builds against Simon even after death when he learns of the people who are convinced Simon is a saint and they begin visiting his grave.

Eleanor 'Nell' de Montfort, Countess of Liecester

Eleanor, aka Nell, de Montfort is Simon de Montfort's wife. Nell was married as a child to the Earl of Pembroke, but her first husband died early in their marriage. Nell is entitled to a third of her husband's estate, but her brother, King Henry, handled the negotiations of her estate and he failed to make sure she got what she deserved. This causes Nell to struggle financially.

Nell meets Simon de Montfort the first time when she is still married to her first husband. They meet again when John the Scot dies. This leads to a correspondence relationship that quickly becomes an intimate relationship. When Simon expresses a wish to marry Nell, she is happy, but knows her brother would never allow it. For this reason, Nell lies to her brother and tells him she is pregnant. This comes back to haunt Nell later when Henry bans her and her husband from his court.

Nell is a strong woman who must live alone when her husband goes off on his various battles. Nell becomes mother to four boys and two girls, one of whom dies. Nell supports her husband in all he chooses to do, even when he declares war on her brother because she believes in his chivalry code. When Simon dies, Nell is left devastated by the loss of her soul mate. Later, Nell finds herself in exile, living a life that is drastically reduced from the life she had before. However, Nell has her children around her and finds happiness in that.

Llewelyn ap Gruffydd

Llewelyn ap Gruffydd is only a child in the beginning of the novel. Llewelyn is the child of Gruffydd, Llewelyn Fawr's son. Gruffydd has feuded with his father since learning that Llewelyn Fawr would be leaving his lands and title to his younger son, Davydd. This feud has caused a hatred of Llewelyn Fawr and his wife Joanna that has infected all of Gruffydd's family. However, Llewelyn has lived with his grandfather for many years because of Gruffydd's imprisonment at Dangwy, one of Llewelyn Fawr's castles. This has caused a close relationship between Llewelyn and his grandfather.

As Llewelyn grows up, he finds himself on the outs with his own father as he continues to embrace his grandfather's philosophy on life. However, when Davydd, Llewelyn Fawr's heir, imprisons his father and brother, Llewelyn finds himself forced to defend his family. In the end, however, Llewelyn chooses the side of Wales. Llewelyn is made Davydd's heir and becomes Prince of Wales. As Prince of Wales, Llewelyn brings Wales together in a way even his grandfather never did.



Llewelyn Fawr

Llewelyn Fawr is the first man to unite Wales and to accept homage of all the other princes of Wales. Llewelyn Fawr is greatly respected by all his people and his enemies for his ability to bring a divided Wales together and hold her strong against England. As this novel begins, however, Llewelyn Fawr has come to the end of his life. A few years after the death of his wife, Llewelyn Fawr dies of a heart attack, leaving his beloved country and all the work he has done to unite her in danger. Llewelyn has left his lands and his title to his son, Davydd, despite the laws that say all Welsh sons should inherit equally. This leads to civil war after his death between his son Davydd and Gruffydd and his sons.

Gruffydd ap Llewelyn

Gruffydd ap Llewelyn is the son of Llewelyn Fawr. Gruffydd was unhappy when his father married a French-Norman woman, Joanna. This unhappiness grew when Joanna gave her husband a son, Davydd. Then Gruffydd was taken as hostage by Joanna's father, King John of England. For several years Gruffydd was held hostage and witnessed the deaths of all the other Welsh hostages, many of whom were young children. This led to a lifelong hatred of the English. Later, after a confrontation with Joanna, Llewelyn Fawr was forced to imprison his son in one of his castles.

Gruffydd begins this novel still nursing a hatred against his father and his decision to make Davydd his sole heir. Gruffydd feels that his father should give him and Davydd his lands and titles equally as it is normally done in Wales. However, Llewelyn does not want to separate Wales once more and he overlooks Gruffydd because of his hatred of England. The hatred Gruffydd feels against his family infects Gruffydd's wife and oldest child, Owain. This causes a fire that burns so deep that Gruffydd finds himself in civil war against his brother, Davydd, within months of his father's death. This leads to Gruffydd being taken prisoner by Davydd, and later becoming a prisoner of the king of England. When Gruffydd attempts to escape from the Tower of London, he falls to his death.

Davydd ap Llewelyn

Davydd ap Llewelyn is Llewelyn Fawr's only legitimate son. Davydd was named Llewelyn's sole heir when he was only a teenager and he has lived most of his life in the expectation of being Prince of Wales. In fact, Davydd is the first man ever called Prince of Wales. When Llewelyn Fawr dies, Davydd is forced to make peace with England in order to focus on a civil war with his brother Gruffydd. To keep Gruffydd from tearing Wales apart, Davydd tricks him into a meeting and then drugs him to take him prisoner. Gruffydd's wife uses the king of England to get back at Davydd, so when he is forced into surrendering, Davydd gives Gruffydd to the English King, making him a prisoner of England once again. A short time later, Davydd dies of cancer without an heir to take his place as Prince of Wales.



Thomas Fitz Thomas

Thomas Fitz Thomas is the mayor of London at the time Simon wages war against King Henry III. Thomas Fitz Thomas is a common man who fully supports Simon's side of the war. Thomas Fitz Thomas rallies the people of London behind Simon, giving him not only strong support, but also offering him soldiers from among the London common people. This support will come back to haunt Thomas Fitz Thomas after Simon's death. Thomas Fitz Thomas is arrested and jailed for many years after Simon's death in revenge for the support he gave Simon.

Bran de Montfort

Bran de Montfort is Simon's second son, his namesake. Bran is a typical young man, enjoys drinking and carousing. This leads to Bran's downfall. After making a brave show at Northampton, Bran is given the leadership of an army. While Simon is in Wales, Bran is supposed to be raising an army to meet him and battle against Edward. Unfortunately, Bran decides to take a few days rest at his father's castle, Kenilworth, but he allows his men to camp outside the castle gates near the river. Edward learns about this and attacks Bran's army, killing or running off the majority of the men. By the time Bran is able to gather up his remaining army, he arrives at Evesham too late to save his father.

Harry de Montfort

Harry de Montfort is Simon's oldest child. Harry is close friends to Prince Edward as a child and young man because the two were born within months of one another. However, as Simon begins his conflict with Henry, the two young men find themselves on opposite sides of the issue. Edward is a brilliant battle commander, but he is also a brilliant manipulator. In one of the first battles of Simon's war against Henry, Harry gets the better of Edward. However, instead of taking him prisoner, Harry allows Edward to leave. Edward quickly turn around and sacks several of Simon's castles. This causes Harry to mistrust Edward and places a wedge in their relationship that will remain until Edward becomes a prisoner of Simon's. Harry and Edward become friends once more, but this friendship will end when Edward's army attacks Simon at Evesham, taking both Simon and Harry's lives.

Elen de Quincy

Elen de Quincy is the daughter of Llewelyn Fawr and Joanna. Elen makes an unhappy marriage to John the Scot, a marriage that is advantageous to Wales at the time. Elen is so unhappy in her marriage that she begins an affair with Robert de Quincy. This affair lasts for many years until Elen's husband dies of the spotted fever. Elen then brings scandal on herself and her family when she marries Rob within months of her husband's

death. Elen will go on to give her husband three children, only to die of an affection after she miscarries a fourth child.



Objects/Places

Cross Ring

Before his final battle with Edward, Simon gives a ring he was given in the Holy Land to a bishop to be sent to his wife upon his death. Nell takes this ring and wears it around her neck.

Mead

Mead is a popular alcoholic drink in Wales during this time period.

Wimple

Women in this time period wear a wimple over their heads in a show of modesty.

Oxford Provisions

The Oxford Provisions were a list of laws that forced King Henry to allow a council of twenty-four barons, twelve picked by him and twelve by the barons, to help govern the country. The Oxford Provisions also forced King Henry to remove all foreign-born men from his government. King Henry refused to follow the Oxford Provisions and this led to war between him and Simon de Montfort.

The Tower of London

The Tower of London is an island outside the city of London where the king has both a residence that is fully secure and a prison for high born prisoners. During the war between Simon and Henry, the Jews take refuge at the Tower to protect them from rioting Londoners.

Aber

Aber is one of Llewelyn Fawr's estates. Aber is his favorite and where he spent most of his time when in Gwynedd.

Kenilworth

Kenilworth is a castle in west England that belongs to Simon de Montfort. Kenilworth sits beside a river and Simon has modified the river to become a natural barrier against



enemy armies. It is at Kenilworth that Bran's army is defeated because they are outside the walls of the castle.

Odiham

Odiham is the castle belonging to Nell where she and Simon become engaged.

Gwynedd

Gwynedd is the westernmost section of Wales. Gwynedd was ruled by Llewelyn Fawr's grandfather and uncles and is the section of Wales where Llewelyn began his reign as a prince of Wales.

Lewes

Lewes is a village in southern England where Simon's army defeated Henry's army and where Simon takes both Henry and Edward prisoner.

Evesham

Evesham is a small village in central England, surrounded on two sides by a river, where Simon and his army battle Edward's larger army. Simon is killed at Evesham and buried in the abbey there.

Leicester

Leicester is a small village in central England. Simon is the Earl of Leicester. After Simon's death, Henry gives the Earldom of Leicester to his son, Edmund.

Dover

Dover is a seaport where Nell and her children stay during the final battles of war between Edward and Simon.



Themes

Monarchy versus Democracy

King Henry III, like his father and grandfather, is the monarch of England. Henry has the power to run the country in any way he sees fit. However, when Henry become reunited with his mother and his French-born half siblings, Henry's people become upset by the way he allows these siblings to have massive amounts of power and refuses to reign them in. Henry has never been a strong king, always too easily persuaded to the desires of the people around him. However, with his siblings things have gotten so out of control that his barons begin to worry about the future of England. Not only are these siblings of Henry's killing and stealing at will without Henry's interference, but the crown is in deep debt.

Simon and other barons rise up against Henry and force him to agree to the Oxford Provisions. These provisions allow for a council of twenty-four barons to govern the country along with the parliament. Henry balks at the provisions. At first agreeing to the terms, Henry quickly sees how limited these provisions make his power. Henry asks the Pope to intercede, and like with his father, the Pope overrules the provisions. When the barons refuse to accept the Pope's decision, Simon and Henry agree to allow the French King to mediate. When the French King comes down on Henry's side, clearly afraid to limit the powers of any king, Simon declares war on Henry.

Simon and Henry battle against one another for more than a year. In the end, Simon is able to capture Henry and his son, Edward. When this happens, the only thing Simon asks for are the things set out in the Provisions. For a year or more Simon forces Henry to follow the Provisions while keeping him captive with the hope that Henry will eventually see his mistakes and become a better king. Instead, Henry continues to resist Simon and the Provisions. When Edward escapes Simon's control, he raises an army and eventually frees his father. When Henry is free, he overthrows the Oxford Provisions and punishes the people who supported Simon with jail and other such oppression.

Code of Chivalry

Simon is a knight before he becomes Earl of Leicester. As a knight, Simon has learned a code of chivalry that is common to the men who came before Simon. However, Simon has changed this code of chivalry to his own beliefs. Any code of chivalry forces a man to act with respect toward women and others of his own rank or higher. This respect includes not only polite attitudes, but it governs everything about a man's behavior. A knight cannot turn his back on his king, cannot lie, and he cannot go against the rules of his church. Simon increases these rules.



Simon's code of chivalry does not only include those of his rank or higher, but also includes those below him. Unlike his peers who believe that the common man is of no consequence and does not deserve respect, Simon often goes out of his way to make sure the needs of the common man is met. By enforcing the Oxford Provisions, Simon is making sure that the common man benefits by his government, not just the high born. In fact, it was crimes against the common man that led to Simon seeking the Oxford Provisions in the first place.

Simon is also a Christian in a time when Christianity is the only accepted form of religion. For this reason, Simon sees Jews as infidels who need to be converted to Christianity. According to this belief, Simon is not expected to care about the fate of Jews. However, when a Jew comes to Simon asking for help, Simon does all he can to protect these men, with the exception of punishing the man they blame for a raid on their village. This event shows the reader more than anything else how different Simon's code of chivalry was.

Family Feuds

There are multiple family feuds in this novel. As a matter of fact, the entire novel is about one large family feud. King Henry is the older brother of Nell de Montfort. This makes Simon de Montfort his brother-in-law. Therefore, when Simon and Henry go to war against one another over the Oxford Provisions, it is a family feud that began because of Henry's loyalty to a family he knew little about until he was a grown man.

The most obvious family feud in this novel, however, involves the Welsh. When Llewelyn Fawr dies, he leaves his only legitimate son his title and lands. This causes his older, illegitimate son, Gruffydd, to feel as though he has been cheated out of what should naturally have been his under Welsh law. For this reason, Gruffydd begins a civil war against his brother, Davydd. Davydd tricks Gruffydd and takes him as a prisoner. This causes Gruffydd's son, who might naturally have been on Davydd's side, to rebel against his uncle Davydd. In the end, however, Davydd does not have an heir and he leaves his title and lands to Llewelyn. Due to the fact that Llewelyn believes in his grandfather's vision for Wales, he becomes a strong leader of Wales, keeping it in tact despite his own brother's claims on the land after their father, Gruffydd's, death.

In this time period, it was often common for family members to take arms against one another. In this novel, all the feuds that take place are between family members in one way or another. Due to this, in the end each family member has to live with the guilt and grief of their fight against someone they loved. Edward, even though he believes his fight against Simon was justified, is deeply grieved by the death of his cousin, Harry. This is but one example of the pain these family feuds caused the people in this novel.

Style

Point of View

The point of view of this novel is the third-person omniscient. The novel includes so many different characters and such a scope of time that the author uses multiple characters to narrate her novel. The narrating point of view changes multiple times in each chapter, presenting important events in history from the eyes of many different characters who were important to those events. The author also condenses some events into short sections in which she explains important events to the reader through the authorial voice.

The point of view of this novel is a complicated thing because of the scope of the plot. However, the author handles it well, showing the story through the eyes of her very real characters. The author brings these characters to life by showing possible thought processes that took place in real events in history. The author also helps the reader keep up with the complicated events of history by offering some clarity through the voice of the author. The author handles the narration of her novel well with this point of view and her own comments, giving the reader a strong narrative that is easy to understand.

Setting

The novel is set in Wales, France, and England in the mid 1200s. The novel begins in Wales, where the majority of the previous novel, *Here Be Dragons*, took place. The novel then shifts to England where the main characters, Simon and Nell de Montfort, live. This is an England ruled by Henry III, a weak king who rules by whim. The novel also has many scenes in France, a country that was ruled by King Louis IX at the time.

The setting of this novel is of extreme importance because the novel is a historical novel that draws on real people and events. In this novel, the majority of the novel takes place in an England ruled by King Henry III. King Henry is a weak ruler who is a slightly better ruler than he is a battle commander. King Henry allows his half-siblings to run wild in England, killing and stealing from the common people and the Church. When King Henry refuses to do anything to stop this behavior, his barons rise against him, leading to the Second Barons War.

The novel also takes place in Wales after the death of Llewelyn Fawr. Wales has always been a country ruled by many princes, each one with his own ideas of what is important for Wales. Llewelyn Fawr brought Wales together under one leader. Llewelyn's son, Davydd, and his grandson attempt to keep this tradition up, but both struggle against a country filled with people still living under the old laws. The history becomes a setting in the novel, making the two interchangeable.



Language and Meaning

The language of this novel is English. The language tends to be more formal than a modern best seller, but is not so formal that the reader cannot understand it. In the dialogue, the author often uses grammar and phrases that were commonly used in the time period in which the novel is set, but the language is used in such a way that it does not become an impediment to the understanding of the novel, but is used in a slightly modernized fashion that makes the reader feel as though they are seeing a part of history take place, but reading it in a language that is easily understood.

The language of the novel is authentic to the time period because the author often uses words or phrases that were common in the time period in which the novel is set. The author also uses words of items and food that were in common use in the time period. These words might not be easily recognized by modern readers, but the author often explains these words in the text, helping the reader to get a complete understanding of the time period and the lifestyle in which these people lived.

Structure

The novel is divided into forty-two chapters with a prologue and an afterward. Each chapter is numbered, but also has a subtitle that allows the reader to know where and when the events in the chapter take place. The chapters each are divided into different sections, breaks in the paragraphs allowing the reader to know when a scene changes. The novel is told both in exposition and dialogue, providing the reader with scenes that tell the story, but also with sections in which the events of history are told to the reader to clarify specific moments of history.

The novel contains many plots. The two main plots cover the events in Wales before and after the death of Llewelyn Fawr as well as the struggle between Simon de Montfort and King Henry III. There are also a large number of subplots. One of these follows the rivalry between Davydd ap Llewelyn and his brother, Gruffydd. Another follows the relationship between Simon de Montfort and his wife, Nell. Others follow some of the minor characters who appear in both this novel and the previous novel, *Here Be Dragons*. Two of these characters are the daughters of Llewelyn Fawr.



Quotes

"Bury me at Llanfaes....Because....I was so happy there. You came to me, forgave me"
(Chapter 1, pg. 26.)

"Llewelyn knew he had been luckier than most men, for he'd sired eight children, buried but one-Tegwarded" (Chapter 2, pg. 31.)

"It was with a sense of foreboding that Mabel de Druual watched her lady read Simon de Montfort's letter" (Chapter 4, pg. 65.)

"Eleanor had been anticipating the churching for weeks. But the ceremony was utterly overshadowed by Henry's shocking public quarrel with his sister and her husband"
(Chapter 6, pg. 102.)

"Davydd prepared to do battle as his people had always done" (Chapter 11, pg. 148.)

"Henry's war was not popular with his English barons" (Chapter 14, pg. 181.)

"He landed at Portsmouth on October 9, a staggering 350,000 marks in debt, and demanded a victory procession into London. His English subjects were not amused"
(Chapter 14, pg. 203.)

"And all the men turned their eyes toward France, wondering how long it would be before Simon de Montfort returned to England" (Chapter 25, pg. 344.)

"'Beloved,' he wrote, 'we have won'" (Chapter 27, pg. 372.)

"'He is not a fox you've run to earth, Sir John. He is the King of England, and we can spare his dignity.' Simon's smile was suddenly grim. 'What else does he have?'"
(Chapter 32, pg. 458.)

"Some of the more squeamish soldiers backed away, those who did not believe in mutilating the dead. De Mautravers was soon splattered with Simon's blood, and the little spring turned crimson. The rain was coming down in torrents now; the storm had broken at last" (Chapter 38, pg. 520.)

"'In Nomine Dei Patris et Filii et Spiritus Sancti,' Llewelyn said softly. 'May you rest in peace, Simon'" (Chapter 42, pg. 575.)



Topics for Discussion

Who is Llewelyn Fawr? What has he done to unite Wales? Why does the death of his wife hit him so hard? What is an apoplectic seizure? Why does Llewelyn take a lover if the death of his wife hurt him so much? Why does Llewelyn take religious vows in the final days of his life? Why does Llewelyn's son refuse to come to his death bed? Where is Llewelyn buried? Why?

Who is Llelo? Why does he struggle to get along with his family? To whom is Llelo closest to? Why does Llelo's mother threaten to disown him? Does she? Why does Llelo run away from his family while in England? To whom does he run? For what reason? Why does Llelo come to odds with his Uncle Davydd? How does Llelo become his uncle's sole heir? What does Llelo become? For what reason?

Who is Gruffydd ap Llewelyn? Why does Gruffydd feel as though his lack of a title and lands at the death of his father is unfair under Welsh law? How does Gruffydd attempt to change this situation? How does Gruffydd's wife, Senena, attempt to help her husband? What is the result of this? How is Gruffydd killed? What impact does this have on his family?

Who is Simon de Montfort? How does he come to be Earl of Leicester? Whom does Simon marry? Under what circumstances? How does Simon lose the favor of King Henry the first time? Why is Simon charged for maltreatment of the nobles of Gascony? How does Simon finally get Henry to release him from his job in Gascony? What job does Simon refuse in order to aid Henry in Gascony?

Who are the de Lusignans? Why does Henry take them in and give them so much power? Why does Henry refuse to rein them in? What does this lead to? Why does Simon become involved in this situation? To what end? Why does Henry balk at Simon's interference? Does Henry have a right to disagree? What did the Pope think? What did the French King think?

Why does Simon go to war against King Henry? How does this mesh with Simon's religious beliefs? What does Simon want as a result of the war? What happens when Simon takes Henry captive? What does Henry do? What does Edward do as a direct result of his father's capture? In what way does Simon change the way the king governs England? Is this change good or bad?

How does Simon's death come about? How does this affect the English King? What does the King do after Simon's death? Does Simon become a saint? What do the people of England do at Simon's grave? For what reason? Why does Edward insist that Simon not be buried in consecrated ground? Is this reasonable or revenge? What happens to Simon's family? For what reason? Who feels the most guilt for Simon's death? Why?