

In the Hand of the Goddess Study Guide

In the Hand of the Goddess by Tamora Pierce

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Plot Summary

This is the second book in the Song of the Lioness series centered around Alanna of Trebond.

Alanna of Trebond is disguised as a boy so that she can train to become a warrior for the kingdom of Tortall. Alanna's dream is to become a Knight of the Realm and earn her shield. Alanna is 15 when the story begins and is 18 when it ends. Alanna is the squire to Prince Jonathan of Tortall. The two are best friends and eventually become lovers. Alanna has the gift of magic and is a healer. She is also blessed by the Goddess and carries an ember-stone given to her by the Goddess. This ember-stone helps guide Alanna in dangerous circumstances.

Alanna is friends with George, the Rouge, who is considered by many to be the king of Thieves. He is aware that she is not a boy and is in love with Alanna. However, Alanna is in love with Jonathan, the prince for whom she squires. Alanna trains as a squire and goes into battle with her friends. While there she uses her healing powers to help others. She is thrust into the middle of a power play for the throne when the king's nephew, Duke Roger, tries to kill Jonathan so that he can ascend to the throne.

Alanna makes it through the Ordeal and becomes a Knight of the Realm. She is forced to reveal her identity as a girl when she fights Duke Roger after he tries to kill the queen. Alanna kills Roger, the most powerful sorcerer in the realm, and rides off to find adventure. This sets up the next book in the series.



Ch. 1: The Lady in the Forest

Ch. 1: The Lady in the Forest Summary

As the story opens, Alanna of Trebond and her mare, Moonlight, are in the darkening forest running an errand for her friend, Myles of Olau. It is raining as Alanna rides. She hates getting cold and wet, but wants to make sure the 300 year old scroll Myles asked her to get for him doesn't get wet. A spider lands on Alanna's hand and she jumps; she hates spiders. Alanna reflects on the fact that she has been disguised as a boy for three years, a fact that the other squires with whom she trains don't know. She reflects on her training, at the hands of Coram, when she was a child in Trebond. She had wanted to become a warrior maiden. Coram had told Alanna that highborn ladies, like herself, go to convent schools to become ladies, they don't become warrior maidens. Boys like her twin brother, Thom, become warriors, even though Thom would rather read about sorcery. The last of the warrior maidens died 100 years ago.

Alanna finds a dry space under some branches and lights a fire. She feels her nose twitching, a sign that there are supernatural things about to happen. She takes out her sword, Lightning, and gets ready. She is a sorceress, but isn't sure about her powers. Instead of being attacked as she fears, Alanna finds that the source of her unease is a black kitten which walks out of the woods. The kitten has purple eyes just like Alanna's. Alanna decides the cat isn't supernatural and settles in to sleep. She has a sudden sneezing fit and blinks, finding a hooded figure standing by her fire. The stranger is a woman, who asks to warm herself by Alanna's fire. The woman comments that Alanna is a squire now, but will become a knight in four years. She also calls Alanna, "my daughter." Alanna is shocked that the woman knows she is a girl. Alanna recognizes the woman as Great Mother Goddess, whose help she has called upon at different times in her life. She describes the woman's voice as hurting her ears and sounding like a pack of hounds.

The Goddess tells Alanna that she is afraid of three things she must get over: 1) Love, 2) the Ordeal, and 3) Roger, Duke of Conte. Alanna admits that she is afraid of the Ordeal of Knighthood. She had watched Prince Jonathan and other friends come out of the Ordeal as if something in them died. Jonathan still wakes up screaming from nightmares. Alanna tells the Goddess she will fail the Ordeal, making all of the years she has spent training and lying about her sex a waste. The Goddess accuses Alanna of being afraid of love and Alanna tells her she doesn't want to be like her father. A part of him died when her mother died. Alanna admits that she hates Roger, a powerful sorcerer and heir if Jonathan was dead. The Goddess gives Alanna a coal from the fire encased in crystal to wear around her neck. She tells her that Roger is just a man and the Ordeal is just magic, but it is important for Alanna to learn to love.

Alanna arrives back at the palace and resumes her life. She is known to her friends as the page, Alan. Only Jonathan knows that she isn't a boy. She is anxious to see her friends again. Jonathan, Gary and Raoul visit her in her room and meet her cat, whom



she has named Faithful. Shortly after Alanna's 15th birthday she is sitting with her friends when Duke Roger, Jonathan's older cousin, comes in. Faithful goes crazy. Faithful tries to attack Roger and Roger comments that he just came from the kennels and must smell like dogs.

Ch. 1: The Lady in the Forest Analysis

Alanna shows concern for her mare when she worries about the horse getting wet. She spends time thinking about the fact that boys know so little about girls and girls know so little about boys. She has spent the last three years disguised as a boy and thinks about how the boys she knows misjudge girls as being squeamish and scared of silly things. Alanna has magical powers, but she doesn't want to be a sorceress - she wants to be a warrior. Her brother, Thom, is also magical, but he wants to be a sorcerer and must be a warrior. Alanna is afraid when the Goddess appears; she doesn't want anything to do with the Goddess and is afraid of being one of the woman's Chosen.

Alanna has the power to heal others.

It is very convenient for the reader that Great Mother Goddess shows up in this chapter. It allows the reader to hear a summary of the book that came before this one. It also provides Alanna with a way of summarizing her past experiences and setting up her goals and motivations for this book without too much inner dialogue. The conversation between Great Mother Goddess and Alanna keeps the pacing fast. The reader finds out that Duke Roger is a powerful sorcerer and is the Heir if something happens to Prince Jonathan. Alanna hates him, because he caused Jonathan to get the Sweating Sickness in a previous book. The Sickness was only stopped because Alanna has strong magic inside of her.

When Alanna returns to the palace her friends are introduced: Prince Jonathan, Alex, Raoul and Gary. The five friends are together much of the time. They spend a great deal of time with George, King of Thieves. George carries messages for Alanna to her brother in the City of the Gods. Only Jonathan knows Alanna is a girl. The rest of them know her as Alan, a squire. Duke Roger is also introduced in this chapter. He sees Alanna's cat, Faithful, and knows there is something amiss. It isn't clear if Roger has guessed that Alan is a girl.



Ch. 2: Duke Roger of Conte

Ch. 2: Duke Roger of Conte Summary

A delegation from Tusaine has come to Tortall to see if King Roald will go with them into war. Roald is not an empire builder, like his father, but is known as "the Peacemaker." As Jonathan's squire, Alanna is required to go to many balls and parties with him while the Tusaine delegation is at the palace. Tensions are high and the knights and squires have been asked to collect information. Dain, a knight of the Tusaine delegation, insults the Tortall knight's swordsmanship. Alanna, as Alan, fights the man with swords. The knight is offended that Jonathan wants him to fight a mere squire, but accepts the challenge. Alanna isn't nervous, but she wonders a little at the look on her friend Alex's face. They are friendly rivals, but he almost looks excited to see her fighting a battle hardened knight. Everyone gathers to watch the knight and the squire fight. Alanna's friends are worried and feel the fight may be unfair; however, Jonathan has faith in "Alan" and knows that Dain is in for a surprise.

Dain strikes Alanna in the arm and she loses. The rules of the match demand that the person who draws first blood is the winner. Dain doesn't stop; in fact, he is mad with blood lust and tries to kill Alanna. Duke Gareth, her sword teacher, tries to stop the fight but Alanna won't let him. She is angry that Dain has not complied with the rules of chivalry. She flings the sword from his hand and wins the fight. The Tusaine delegation is impressed with "Alan" and with the rest of the knights and squires. After the fight, Myles of Olau comes to her and demands to know why she didn't kill Dain. She tells him that if she killed everyone who was stupid she would never sleep.

Duke Roger decides that "Alan" is dangerous and wants to know more about the boy. He had tried to kill Jonathan in the Black City, but hadn't succeeded because of "Alan." Roger is determined to find out what type of powers Alan has. Roger reflects on Alan's sword and his cat and knows that they are powerful even if Alan doesn't know it yet. Now that Roger has seen what a great swordsman Alan is, he knows the boy is a danger to his plan to take over the throne of Tortall from Jonathan's parents. Roger wants Jonathan and his parents to die in a natural way; he doesn't want civil war in the kingdom and he doesn't want to make enemies of Gareth or Myles. Now he knows he must kill "Alan" too.

Ch. 2: Duke Roger of Conte Analysis

Everyone is offended by the rudeness of the foreign delegation, but not everyone approves of how Prince Jonathan proposes to handle the situation. Jonathan and Alanna have an inside joke in the fact that the knight will not just be beaten by a squire, but beaten by a girl squire. No one wants to see Alan fight the knight except Jonathan and, maybe, Alex. Alanna wonders if Alex wishes her ill, but it seems that he is just eager to see her skills.



Roger knows that Alanna is magical, but isn't sure what kind of magical threat she represents. He understands that she has a healing power and that he could have killed Jonathan already if not for "Alan." He is sure that Alanna doesn't know the true strength of her powers, but has been fooled by the squire's innocence before.

Alanna shows some of her values in this chapter. She tells Myles that she would not ever kill someone if she could disarm them, even if that person would have killed her. She also puts much store in the concept of chivalry and is upset when the foreign knight does not.



Ch. 3: The Prince's Squire

Ch. 3: The Prince's Squire Summary

"Alan" goes to the Dancing Dove the night before Jonathan's 19th birthday in August. George and his friends are loud and drinking. They say hello to Alanna and tell her they are toasting the prince's birthday. None of them know that George's friend Jonathan is the actual prince. George gives Alanna a letter from her brother, Thom, and a silver jeweled tunic and belt for Jonathan's birthday gift. Thom's letter reveals that he feels he is being spied upon by people from the palace. Alanna reads the letter to George, who tells her she has been being followed since she beat Dain in June. George tells Alanna that people marry in the city at her age and then he holds her hand. Alanna becomes uncomfortable and the two leave to walk back to the palace.

George walks her back to the castle, then pulls her under a tree and kisses her. He asks her to think about love before she decides not to marry.

Alanna meets Delia of Eldorne during Jonathan's birthday ball. Jonathan finds humor in putting "Alan" in an awkward situation by introducing Alanna to Delia, a very flirtatious girl. Delia has heard about Alanna defeating Dain and asks "Alan" to dance. Alanna doesn't like Delia and goes off to bed after the dance.

Alanna and the other squires are required to stay in the snowy forest for the night as part of their training for the Ordeal. Alanna wakes in the morning to find a demon bore attacking her tent. She stabs the bore, notices its red eyes and then the animal disappears. Alanna decides that someone tried to kill her using sorcery.

As the winter passes, Delia causes trouble between the friends at court. She flirts with everyone and begins sleeping with Jonathan. She uses Alan to make the others jealous. Delia's hot and cold attitude toward Jonathan causes him to accuse Alanna of flirting with Delia to make her ruse as a boy more believable. After that, Alanna hates Delia even more. The only boy not taken with Delia is Alex.

Alex and "Alan" decide to test each other with a practice sword fight. However, it turns ugly when Alex seems to have a blood lust for Alanna. He breaks her collar bone and almost kills her before Myles stops the fight.

Ch. 3: The Prince's Squire Analysis

George knows that "Alan" is a girl and he seems to be somewhat in love with her. Alanna enjoys being with George, because when she is with him she doesn't have to think about all of the other pressures in her life. George asks her if she will marry and wants her to think about falling in love. It is clear that he wants her to love him. Alanna enjoys his kiss, but is embarrassed by it.



Alanna and her cat, Faithful, have a psychic connection. Alanna can hear the cat talking to her through their minds. Faithful has a sassy disposition and tends to tell it like it is.

Alanna hates balls because they put her in an awkward situation. She isn't a boy, but has to pretend to be one. She is always uncomfortable when the other guys flirt with girls. As she dances with Delia Alanna realizes that she is jealous of the other girl's attention to Jonathan.

Alanna is excited to test her skills against Alex. He is a knight and is older than she is, but she is anxious to have a good sword match. During the competition, the look on Alex's face becomes terrifying and Alanna realizes Alex is trying to kill her. He seems truly sorry after he breaks her collar bone. Alanna reflects that he hasn't been the same since becoming Duke Roger's squire.



Ch. 4: A Cry of War

Ch. 4: A Cry of War Summary

Alanna is visiting George at the Dancing Dove. His spies have told him that King Ain of Tusaine - spurred on by Duke Hilar - has mobilized its armies and plans to attack at the Drell River. He gives her a map outlining Tusaine's troop movements. It has been almost a year since George kissed Alanna on Jonathan's birthday, but his attentions to her haven't stopped.

Alanna takes the map and information straight to Myles. Myles takes the information to King Roald. The passes leading to the Drell river valley are open and the kingdom will have little time to prepare for war. Jonathan comes back from meetings with the War Council and tells Alanna to prepare for war; they will leave in five days lead by Duke Gareth. Alanna reflects that she will see her first battle before turning sixteen.

As the troops prepare to ride for battle, Duke Gareth suffers a fall from his horse. His leg is broken and he must be replaced. Alanna has a bad feeling about the injury, because it had all been a little too neat to her way of thinking. She goes to the stable to investigate and discovers a burr hidden in the horse's blanket that hurt its back. She also discovers the saddle had been put on too loosely by someone who is new to the stables. Alanna is told that Duke Roger has taken over command in Gareth's place. She heads inside to find a visitor waiting for her.

The visitor is George. He hears her theory about Duke Gareth and helps her to realize Duke Roger would have the most to gain from the injury. George tells her to be careful of where she and Jonathan's friends are placed in battle. He also tells her that he loves her and wants to marry her. Alanna tells him that she is noble and couldn't marry him, but it doesn't make a difference because she won't marry at all. George kisses her before he leaves.

Roger reveals that he plans to put Jonathan and his men by Fort Drell. They will be out of the way and Jonathan will not be able to stay close to the battle as Gareth had planned. Myles is named as Jonathan's adviser. Roger's uncle, the king, likes this plan. Jonathan doesn't. Roger tells the commanders that they can only fight for the left bank of the river; they may not cross the river and give chase. The commanders aren't pleased, but the king agrees with Roger. They set out and arrive at the falls, their new home, twelve days later.

Ch. 4: A Cry of War Analysis

Alanna describes George's attention toward her as "stalking" and it reminds her of how Jonathan behaves toward Delia. Alanna is embarrassed that she is the recipient of such admiration and isn't sure how to deal with it. When he kisses her before she leaves for battle, Alanna enjoys the kiss. She doesn't want his affection for her to ruin their



friendship and George promises not to speak of his love for her again unless she asks. He tells her that he will wait for her to grow up and achieve her dreams.

Alanna is sickened at the thought of Duke Roger having so much power and being in command of the army. She doesn't trust him and agrees with George that he is probably behind Duke Gareth's injury. She doesn't like that Jonathan and his men have been positioned by the falls in an out-of-the-way location. They will be far from battle and anyone else.



Ch. 5: By The River Drell

Ch. 5: By The River Drell Summary

Alanna's troops arrive at camp to find things already set up by the troops who were there before them. She is grateful that she will have less to do and goes to find food. The soldiers at the fort are glad to see that so many reinforcements have shown up and wonder why the prince would be sent to their camp. Alanna is eating with a man named Thor when she is interrupted by Jem Tanner. Jem tries to pick a fight with "Alan" by accusing him of spying on the common soldiers for the prince. Alanna passes her days with the troops.

Alanna watches as her friends go away from camp and worries if they will return. After two weeks she becomes bored and seeks out the healer's tent, assisting with the injured and dying. Jonathan comes to find Alanna in the healer's tent. Faithful and Myles are afraid she will kill herself using so much energy to heal for so many long hours. Alanna snuggles up to Jonathan as they ride back to camp. Faithful makes a comment that she looks like a lovesick girl and Alanna moves out of Jonathan's embrace. The cat advises her not to show her love for the prince if she doesn't want the entire camp to know.

Alanna remembers the death and gore of the healing tent and begins to vomit. Jonathan holds her head for her and tells her he also got sick after his first battle, but no one had been there to hold his head.

Alanna goes into the woods surrounding camp to find Big Thor. Instead she finds the enemy launching a secret attack. She runs back to Jonathan, sounding a cry of alarm as she goes. The enemy plans to divide the camp. Jonathan signals for Roger using magic and rides into battle. Alanna joins the battle and kills a man for the first time. She saves Jonathan from an archer and then Roger arrives with reinforcements. The enemy retreats to the river and Alanna goes to find Big Thor and Jem Tanner who are missing.

Jem Tanner wanders into camp claiming that Thor knocked him out and went willingly with the enemy. Alanna doesn't believe him and orders him to be held. She goes to find Thor and uses the fire of her Gift from the Goddess to light her way. Her arm is wounded and she is losing blood. She finds Thor in the woods. Jem Tanner had hit him on the head and blinded him. Alanna knows there is no way to heal him with her powers and that he will die. Alanna uses her healing power to help Thor move into death, then passes out. Her last moment is seeing the Dark God come to claim her friend.

Ch. 5: By The River Drell Analysis

Alanna is using more of her Gift from the Goddess and more of her healing powers in this chapter. She is at the camp to partake in war, but it seems to be the healing and helping part of war that she is constantly pulled into. Because she doesn't use her



powers often, she becomes tired when she does. Alanna makes a friend in Big Thor. The man tries to protect her and asks for a final protection in the last scene. He asks Alanna to help him die. She has never used her powers to kill another, but it seems she is willing to use the last of her strength to bring peace to Thor. She sees the Dark God and tells him he has come for Thor. This chapter has Jonathan paying more attention to Alanna despite the fact that he has been sleeping with Delia. Jonathan is concerned that Alanna is overtaxing herself when healing. He also clearly doesn't want her on the fighting lines, but acknowledges that he can't make her stay away.



Ch. 6: Captured!

Ch. 6: Captured! Summary

Alanna wakes to find herself in a tent at camp with Jonathan by her side. He tells her that he bandaged her himself and didn't let anyone near her while she was unconscious. Faithful tells her she has been asleep for three days. Alanna tells Jonathan about Thor and Jem and then Jonathan kisses her on the lips. Myles enters the tent to find Jonathan pale faced and Alanna red faced. Alanna wonders if Myles knows she is a girl.

Alanna is ordered away from battle while she heals. She returns to the healing tent to assist, even though she is too weak to use magic. Jonathan often comes to help heal and talk to the wounded.

Alanna tires easily and is sent from the healing tent. She volunteers to assist with sentry duty and goes into the woods with another soldier. The soldier is injured, so Alanna sends him to get medical attention and to send a replacement. While she is alone, she is approached by Duke Roger who asks her if they are friends or enemies. Alanna tells him she would like to live to an old age and Roger tells her he can arrange that if they are friends. Alanna tells him that she would be his friend if he could guarantee all of her friends would also live to old age. Roger admits that he can't do that. The two agree to be "less than friends." Roger leaves and a dense, magical fog surrounds Alanna. She is hit on the head by a rock and taken away by Jem Tanner.

A sentry brings Faithful to camp and says that Alan and two others, Micha and Keel, have been kidnapped. He is frustrated because they are under orders not to cross the river and so can't go after them. Faithful is under a sleeping spell and Jonathan realizes the kidnappers had been after Alan. Jonathan is in a panic and goes to find Roger in an attempt to see how they can get the three soldiers back.

Roger tells Jonathan that the sleep spell is a simple one and could have been cast by anyone. He tells Jonathan that the King's orders stand and they will wait to see if there is a ransom letter for Alan. Jonathan goes to tell Myles that Alanna is a girl, but Myles tells him to keep his thoughts to himself. He wants Alan to tell him his secrets in his own time. Myles and Jonathan arrange for Jonathan to lead a raid to find Alan, since he is the only person to lead the raid that won't be killed for going against the king's orders.

Roger is livid when he is informed that Jonathan and thirty others have crossed the river and set fire to the enemy camp. Myles claims he didn't know of the raid and suggests that the king won't punish his son, Jonathan. Roger cryptically alludes that Jonathan may not be punished, but the others will.

Alanna picks the locks on Micha and Keel's chains but is unable to free herself due to the magic of the chains. Duke Hiram comes to the hut where they are held with his



brother Jem Tanner, aka Duke Jemis of Tusaine. Hiram and Jemis are the King of Tusaine's brothers. Alanna taunts him while her friends escape. Hiram beats Alanna and is ready to torture her when Jonathan arrives. He takes Hiram and Jemis as hostages. His father uses them to negotiate the Drell Peace with Tusaine. The war is over by the end of August.

Ch. 6: Captured! Analysis

Alanna turns sixteen and the summer wears on. She and Jonathan continue to spend time in the healing tents. Everyone seems to be concerned for "Alan's" welfare and recovery and Alanna is ordered to stay away from active duty. She and Roger seem to come to an understanding in the woods. They admit that they can't trust each other and that they will be at cross purposes. Alanna tells Faithful that Roger has style; the cat tells her that he may have style but he is treacherous.

Jonathan is overwhelmed by panic when he realizes Alanna has been kidnapped. He tells Myles that she needs to be found and alludes to the fact that Alan is actually Alanna. It seems that Myles does know that Alan is a girl, but he doesn't outright say this.

Jonathan saves Alanna and takes King Ain of Tusaine's brothers hostage. The king of Tortall uses them to negotiate an end to the war. Jonathan's father, the king, doesn't get angry with his son for crossing the river against orders. Alanna shows her bravery when she is a hostage. She frees the others and helps them to escape even though it means she is beaten and will be tortured. She never seems to think about what might happen to her, she is only concerned with Jonathan being told about the enemy's plans. Jonathan, on the other hand, is worried about Alanna's treatment at enemy hands if they discover she is a girl.



Ch. 7: Winter Lessons

Ch. 7: Winter Lessons Summary

Alanna goes to visit the healer Mistress Cooper, George's mother. She tells the woman about Jonathan's odd behavior since returning from the war and how he is hot and cold toward her. She then asks Mistress Cooper to teach her how to dress like a girl.

Alanna returns to Mistress Cooper's house for a final fitting and is treated to getting her makeup and hair done. She looks in the mirror and is shocked by how beautiful she is. Mistress Cooper tells her that it will be hard to learn all of the manners Alanna will need to behave as a lady while at court. Alanna expresses that she is restless at the palace and needs to get away to think. She doesn't say that Jonathan kissed her again the night before. George and Jonathan come to the house to visit George's mother. They are both surprised by how beautiful Alanna looks.

A wolf called Demon Gray has been haunting the countryside killing and attacking children and the elderly. A hunting party, led by the king, is dispersed to find the wolf. Alanna finds Roger with a dead wolf he claims is Gray. As Alanna approaches, she is attacked by the real Gray. She and the animal fight until the animal is dead. As Alanna calms down from the attack, she notices an orange glow surrounding Roger and the animals. She knows that Roger's magic has an orange glow, but isn't sure why it is surrounding the animals.

Alanna experiments with her magic and realizes that her Gift leaves a purple trail of light. She realizes that Roger had been using his Gift on the wolves so that they would kill her.

In the spring Alanna celebrates her 17th birthday with her friends and leaves the party early. She doesn't want to watch Jonathan leave with Delia for the night. She goes home, dresses like a girl, and goes for a walk in the garden. Jonathan finds her and asks about a necklace she wears. It is a charm given to her by Mistress Cooper to ward off pregnancy. Jonathan begins to kiss her and unlace her bodice, but Alanna stops him. He tells her that they belong to each other. Alanna becomes scared and leaves. Alanna returns to her room thinking Jonathan has gone to see Delia. When he comes back to his room she goes to him and tells him she is scared.

Ch. 7: Winter Lessons Analysis

Alanna tells Mistress Cooper about Jonathan's jealousy toward any girl or guy with whom she speaks. She also tells her about Jonathan's kiss and how he seems to be happy with her one minute and angry with her the next. Alanna confesses that she likes pretty things and will someday need to dress like a girl. Mistress Cooper may suspect that Alanna's desire to look like a girl may have to do with Jonathan and George, but she doesn't say it.



Alanna is not comfortable in her role as a girl — not just in having to dress and act like a girl, but also in having the thoughts and feelings about Jonathan that are those of a girl toward someone she likes. Alanna is terrified to love Jonathan and wants to believe that he is only attracted to her so they can have fun, not because he loves her. She realizes that the Goddess told her she needed to learn to love and she wonders if she loves Jonathan. She knows George has feelings for her, but she doesn't spend time thinking about him like she does Jonathan. When she tells Jonathan she is scared, he tells her he is scared too.



Ch. 8: Fears

Ch. 8: Fears Summary

Alanna spends the summer learning about being a girl from Mistress Cooper, learning how to manage Trebond from Myles, and learning about love from Jonathan. It is discovered that Delia was only seeing Jonathan so that she could make Roger, whom she calls "Master," happy. She is confused that Jonathan no longer has anything to do with her. Roger tells her to keep pretending to be in love with Jonathan; he has another plan he is about to put into action.

The queen becomes ill and it is clear she is slowly dying. Jonathan's worry keeps him away from Alanna. Alanna goes to Myles and tells him that she thinks the queen's illness is sorcery. She tells him about Roger and the wolves and other things that she suspects have been done by Roger. Myles cautions her not to threaten Roger without proof.

Alanna and her friends go skating on a frozen pond. Alex challenges her to a race and Alanna falls through the ice. She is pulled out and carried to shore. Alex, Jonathan and Faithful go to inspect the ice. The cat begins to lick the surface. Jonathan and Alex realize someone put salt on the ice in a murder attempt.

Alanna decides to send a message to Thom through George's courier. The courier is found dead and his things have been searched. Alanna decides to go to see her brother in the City of the Gods for help in person. George tells her he will go with her. George asks Alanna if she is in love with Jonathan and she tells him she doesn't know what love is.

They arrive at Thom's to find that he has become a powerful sorcerer already. Alanna asks him to come back to the palace to watch over Jonathan while she goes away. She shows him the ember-stone from the Goddess and he tests it to make sure it is really what the Goddess said. The others at Thom's cloister don't like him and are ready for him to leave for a while.

Alanna and George ride back to the palace and are attacked on the way. George is shot by an arrow. Alanna traps an attacker and finds out they had been sent to grab her and kill George. The man starts to tell her by whom he was sent and then dies. Alanna grabs her ember-stone and sees orange waves of magic surrounding the man. Alanna uses magic to help save George.

Alanna is woken up by her friends on her 18th birthday. They all have gifts for her. Myles has outfitted her horse, Jonathan gives her gold chain mail, and George gives her an opal ring. That night Alanna tells Jonathan she thinks her friends will hate her when they find out she is a girl. Jonathan tells her he loves her and she says it in return.

Ch. 8: Fears Analysis

Alanna is worried for her brother. He seems more proud than he had been as a kid. She feels that he is lonely and doesn't even know it. She is terrified when George is injured and tells him she cares for him. While she is in bed with Jonathan, they say they love each other. However, Alanna still plans to leave the palace for adventure after she passes the Ordeal. They both realize that Jonathan is bound to marry for the sake of the kingdom and not for love. He tells Alanna that he doesn't talk to her about love because he knows it scares her. She doesn't tell him she loves him until she thinks he is asleep. He is awake and tells her he knows she loves him; he had just wanted to make sure she knows it.



Ch. 9: The Ordeal

Ch. 9: The Ordeal Summary

Alanna knows that she will have to submit to a special bathing ceremony, the Sacramental Bath, before her Ordeal. Jonathan suggests she tell Gary ahead of time that she is a girl so he can consider an alternative for the bathing ceremony. Gary thinks the fact that Alan is really a girl is hilarious and he can't wait to see the look on everyone else's faces when they find out. Alanna is relieved that he isn't angry with her. Gary asks Alanna if she has picked a squire yet and she tells him she won't be choosing one because she will be leaving after her Ordeal of Knighthood. She also thinks it wouldn't be right after everyone finds out she is a girl.

Alanna is a bundle of nerves before the Ordeal and can't stop pacing George's room. He gives her brandy laced with sleeping potion and she sleeps until the Ordeal that evening.

Alanna wakes in time to prepare for the Ordeal. Jonathan and Gary escort her to the Sacramental Bath and wait for her in the other room. Jonathan worries that she won't survive the Ordeal. Gary tells him that they survived and so will she. He reminds Jonathan that the Chamber of the Ordeal can't be influenced by outside magic, so when Alanna earns her shield by winning the Ordeal no one can say she had help. The young men lead her to the Chapel of the Ordeal where she will hold vigil until she enters the Chamber in the morning. They wish her luck and leave. Alanna spends the night in thought. She enters the Chamber in the morning to be tested. Alanna is tested with cold, the souls of her dead friends and loved ones, and a giant spider. Her fears seem to come to life in the Chamber. She feels as if she is drowning, but refuses to cry out or show weakness. Finally she sees a haze of magic and realizes she must bring the vision being presented to her into focus. Alanna sees that Jonathan has died and Roger has been crowned king. She begins to cry out, but remembers she can't make a sound in the Chamber. The doors open and the Ordeal is over. She tells Jonathan she won't let it happen. He isn't sure what she means, but agrees with her as she passes out.

That evening, "Alan" is knighted by the king in a ceremony. Thom shows up and asks to be allowed to present Alan with his official knight's shield. In Alanna's room, Thom shows her that he has enchanted the shield. It has a lioness on it that will reveal itself when she reveals her true identity.

Ch. 9: The Ordeal Analysis

Alanna is afraid that her friends will turn their backs on her when they find out that she has been deceiving them for so long. Gary tells her that this may be true for some people, but that she has proven herself and they will love her as much as a girl as they do now when they think she is a boy. Alanna prepares for the Ordeal and is afraid she



won't make it out of the Chamber. Jonathan also fears for her safety in the Chamber. As Alanna is in the Chapel she begins to think about her life. She has always wanted to be a warrior, but now she is second guessing her decision to leave her friends, the palace and Jonathan. She thinks that marrying Jonathan might be a good thing, but she is still too young. She wonders if the Goddess wants her to confront Roger and wonders if Roger is really bad or if she is just jealous of him. All of Alanna's fears come back to her during the Ordeal, her final fear being Jonathan's death. She also worries that Thom has forgotten about her, but he shows up at the last minute when she is being knighted. This is the climax of Alanna's journey from squire to knight, the fulfillment of her goal from the beginning of the book.



Ch. 10: Duel of the Sorcerer

Ch. 10: Duel of the Sorcerer Summary

The second feast of the Midwinter Festival begins and the dinners are joined by the queen. She is still sick and Alanna notices a glow of orange magic about her, Roger's magic color. Alanna decides now is the time to act against Roger. While everyone is occupied, she goes to find evidence against the Duke. She goes to Roger's rooms and uses her magic to pick the lock on his door. She breaks into his back room and finds where the Duke keeps his implements of magic. In the room there is a fountain with running water. Alanna finds a wax figure of the queen in the fountain. The figure is being used to make the queen ill. There are other figures sewn into a bag. They are Alanna, Myles, Jonathan and others. Roger has used their figures in the bag to obscure their view of the magic he has been using against the queen. Faithful asks Alanna what she will do now. She tells her cat that she must act against Roger now if she and her friends are going to survive the night.

Alanna asks Thom, Jonathan and Gary to join her in front of the king's table. She confesses to the king that she has broken into a man's room and knows that what she did is wrong. She then lays the dolls and veil on the table so that everyone can see what she found in the rooms. People are shocked and angered by the images on the table. Alanna then accuses Roger of trying to kill the queen and casting a spell to veil others so they don't see what is going on. Roger tries to turn the blame onto Alanna and accuses "Alan" of trying to murder the queen. He claims that if Jonathan was king "Alan" would be the most powerful knight in the realm. Myles points out that if Jonathan is dead Roger will become king. Roger accuses Myles of lying to help Alan and then challenges Alan do a duel saying the young knight will lose because the gods know he is lying. The king rules that they will meet in the Great Throne Room in an hour to duel.

Alanna returns to her room to prepare and is followed by Jonathan, Myles, Thom and Coram. George's spies tell him what has happened and he also arrives. Jonathan wants to know why Alanna has never mentioned her suspicions of Roger before. She tells him she did, but he thought she was silly. She says she wanted to have more proof before accusing him. She tells the men that she is ashamed that she was fooled by Roger's veil over their vision. Alanna confesses to Myles that she is a girl and he tells her he has known for years. The time has come and they go to the Great Throne Room. Jonathan asks to be left alone with Alanna. She tells him she is sorry for his cousin's treachery. Jonathan tells her he loves her and to be careful. Her hands still raw from the Ordeal, Alanna begins to sword fight with Roger. She knows she could be killed, but takes satisfaction in the fact that now suspicion has been cast on Roger. Alanna can no longer tell which hand Roger has his sword in and realizes he has cast an illusion spell over himself. She takes out her ember-stone and can see clearly again. Roger is waiting for her to tire and slices her shoulder. Alanna thrusts back cutting the duke. He thrusts again cutting her from collarbone to waist and cutting through the corset she uses to bind her breasts. Roger drops his sword when he realizes she is a girl and the king calls



a halt to the duel. Alanna ducks behind a curtain to put her shirt back together and her brother explains to the crowd that "Alan" is really his sister. They traded places years ago so she could be a warrior and he could become a sorcerer.

The king angrily questions everyone to find out who knew of Alanna's deception. As the scene unfolds, Roger attacks. Alanna unleashes her rage and fights back. Roger calls his magic to kill the king and Jonathan. Alanna fights through the magic and kills Roger. Everyone is in shock. She has killed her greatest enemy, the king's nephew and the most powerful sorcerer in the Eastern Lands.

Ch. 10: Duel of the Sorcerer Analysis

This is the climax of the main plot and many of the small subplots of the text. Alanna proves herself as a warrior and as a friend. She is exposed as a girl and her motivation for becoming "Alan" is told to the court by her brother. Alanna and Roger finally face each other in battle and everyone is certain that Alanna will lose. She shows how powerful she is when she fights through his magic and wins. She also shows how powerful her love for the king, queen and her friends is when she finds the inner strength to save them from Roger's attempted attack.



Epilogue

Epilogue Summary

Alanna and Coram are getting ready to ride south for some time away from Court. Alanna's friends have all come to say goodbye. Raoul tells her that he isn't sure how to think about the knight, Sir Alanna. She tells him she is the same as Alan, just without the secret. George tells her to be careful and that he sends his love with her. Jonathan kisses her fiercely and makes her promise to return. Alanna and Coram ride off to find adventure.

Epilogue Analysis

Alanna needs some time alone to sort out all of the things that have recently happened. She wants to have adventure, but swears that she will write and that she will come home. She doesn't want to stay away from her friends for long. She just needs time to think.



Characters

Alanna of Trebond

Alanna of Trebond is a young girl of noble birth who is a 15 year-old squire when the story begins and an 18 year-old knight when the story ends. Alanna has the Gift of healing, but she has no desire to become a sorceress. She wants to be a knight. Alanna hides her true sex from everyone but her prince, Jonathan, and her friend, George. Alanna has a twin brother who studies magic in the City of the Gods. Alanna is a brave warrior and a kind person. She believes in the Code of Chivalry and has been chosen by the Great Mother Goddess to fulfill a destiny that has yet to be revealed. Alanna is known to everyone as a boy named Alan.

Thom of Trebond

Thom of Trebond is a powerful sorcerer and Alanna's twin brother. The two traded places so that he could go on to study magic and she could become a warrior. Thom loves his sister, but has become harder and more removed since the death of their father. Thom is disliked by his peers for his great skill and is cocky about his abilities. He has passed his Master tests at a young age and is isolated because of his skill and personality.

Prince Jonathan of Tortall

Prince Jonathan of Tortall is a knight who is four years older than Alanna. He shares Alanna's secret and has chosen her to be his squire so that he can watch over her and help her to keep her secret. Jonathan is a brave warrior and a good friend to Alanna. He is in love with Alanna and the two eventually become lovers. Jonathan also has the Gift of magic and encourages Alanna to achieve her dream of becoming a warrior.

King Roald, The Peacemaker

King Roald is known as The Peacemaker. He only sends his knights into battle with Tusaine as a last resort and brokers a peace negotiation with him at the first opportunity. Roald is a kind king and a kind father. He is surprised that his nephew has been conspiring against him and admits he would not have allowed Alanna to become a knight if he had known she was a girl.

Myles of Olau

Myles of Olau is the king's adviser and Alan's mentor. He has known for many years that Alan is not a boy, but wants Alan to tell him the truth when s/he is ready. Myles



conspires with Jonathan to save Alanna when she is kidnapped by the Duke of Tusaine during the war. He is also the first to give Jonathan and Alanna advice when they seek it.

George Cooper, The Rouge

George Cooper is also known as the King of Thieves. He owns a tavern called the Dancing Dove and knows everything that is happening in the kingdom. He has many spies who are loyal to him. He is in love with Alanna and wants to marry her. He is not shy about telling her how he feels. George makes sure that Alanna's messages to her brother are delivered and rides as her escort when she goes to find Thom in the City of the Gods.

Duke Roger of Conte

Duke Roger of Conte is Jonathan's older cousin and heir to the throne if something should happen to the prince. Roger is the most powerful sorcerer in the Realm and doesn't hesitate to use magic as he attempts to kill "Alan," the Prince and the Queen. Roger leads the army against Tusaine and seems to be the model commander and Duke. He casts a veiling spell over the Court so that no one can see that he is trying to kill the royal family and steal the throne.

Gary, Raoul, Alex

Gary, Raoul and Alex are Jonathan's fellow knights and friends. They are also friends of "Alan." Alanna and Alex have a friendly rivalry since he is Duke Roger's knight. Gary is also Jonathan's cousin. None of the friends know that Alan is really Alanna until the end of the book.

Duke Gareth

Duke Gareth is Gary's father and the queen's brother. He is in command of the troops until he is injured, thanks to Roger's magic, before battle. Roger takes over the Duke's command and leads Jonathan and the others on the field.

Faithful

Faithful is the name of Alanna's familiar. Faithful is a cat with the same violet color eyes as Alanna. Alanna and Faithful are able to communicate telepathically. Faithful protects Alanna and warns her when danger is coming. They are friends and the cat gives Alanna advice. Faithful is always at Alanna's side and rides in a special cup on Alanna's saddle.



Delia of Eldorne

Delia of Eldorne is working for Duke Roger. She becomes Jonathan's lover and causes him much turmoil. Eventually Jonathan throws her over for Alanna.

Big Thor

Big Thor is Alanna's friend on the battle front. The larger man tries to protect the small "Alan" when he can. Thor is betrayed by Jem Tanner and his eyes are taken out by the other man. Thor asks Alanna to use her healing powers to help him die. She uses them and then directs the Dark God to Thor's body when the spirit comes to collect him.

Jem Tanner

Jem Tanner is really Duke Jemis of Tusaine, King Ain's brother. He poses as a member of King Roald's army so he can spy. He and his brother kidnap Alanna, presumably at the request of Duke Roger, and hold her captive.

Mistress Cooper

Mistress Cooper is George's mother. She is a healer and has given Alanna a charm to ward off pregnancy. Mistress Cooper helps Alanna learn to dress and act as a proper lady.



Objects/Places

Tortall

Tortall is the kingdom ruled by King Roald and his family. It borders Tusaine and eventually goes to war with the neighboring kingdom.

Tusaine

Tusaine is the kingdom next to Tortall. The Tusaine delegation comes to Tortall to see if King Roald is too weak to stop them from taking over land. They determine that he is and they launch an attack to take land across the river from Tortall. The Dukes of Tusaine are taken hostage by Jonathan and are ransomed back to Tusaine's King Ain, which enables Roald to end the war and live up to his name as The Peacemaker.

Moonlight

Moonlight is the name of Alanna's faithful horse.

Lightening

Lightening is the name of Alanna's sword which she uses to defeat Duke Roger.

Great Mother Goddess

The Great Mother Goddess is one of the kingdom's gods. She has a special interest in Alanna and appears to her at the beginning of the story, giving her an ember-stone from the fire to wear for protection. The Goddess gives Alanna a warning about Duke Roger and tells her that she must learn to love. The Goddess had appeared to Alanna as a little girl and seems to have an as yet unknown future in store for Alanna.

Ordeal of Knighthood

The Ordeal of Knighthood is what squires prepare for in order to be knighted. Alanna had watched Jonathan go through the Ordeal and had seen how much it changed him. She is afraid of the Ordeal and is not sure she will be able to survive whatever is inside the Chamber of the Ordeal. Alanna spends much of the book preparing for the Ordeal. She makes it through, but not until after the Ordeal tests every fear and weakness she has ever had.



Ember-stone

The ember-stone is given to Alanna by the Great Mother Goddess when they meet in the woods on Alanna's way to Tortall. The stone enables Alanna to see when magic is used and to determine that Duke Roger's magic is responsible for the bad things that seem to keep happening in the kingdom.

City of the Gods

The City of the Gods is where the cloisters are located. Sorcerers study at the cloisters until they become Masters. Thom has been in the City of the Gods since Alanna left to become a squire. Thom has become the youngest Master and others in the city will be happy to see him leave. They have never seen someone as powerful as Thom before. Alanna doesn't like the City and considers it barren and depressing.

The Dancing Dove

The Dancing Dove is the name of the bar owned by George Cooper. It is the gathering place for the thieves and the prince's men. Owning the Dancing Dove allows George to know what is happening throughout the kingdom.

Chamber of the Ordeal

The Chamber of the Ordeal is what Alanna must survive to become a knight. She enters the Chamber shortly after her 18th birthday. The Chamber presents Alanna with her worst fears: spiders, the feeling of helplessness, and the impending death of Jonathan. She makes it out of the Chamber, but her energy is spent. Alanna uses the information she receives in the Chamber to uncover Duke Roger's treachery.



Themes

Code of Chivalry

Alanna and her fellow squires and knights all adhere to the Code of Chivalry, which is a code that governs the behavior of honorable men.

When Alanna is kidnapped by Dukes Jemis and Hiram of Tusaine, she sees that they do not follow the Code of Chivalry. Even their own knights balk at being asked to fight the war in a less than honorable way. The Dukes break the Code when they kidnap Alanna and other squires and then want to torture them for information.

Alanna and her friends try to always tell the truth and to show kindness and compassion to others. This is apparent when they work in the healer's tent during the battle. Even Prince Jonathan goes into the healer tents and heals the wounded.

Gary is given the task of initiating squires before the Ordeal. He and Jonathan tell Alanna what is expected of her as a Knight of the Realm and how she is expected to behave based on the Code of Chivalry.

Rivalry for the Throne

The central plot of *In the Hand of the Goddess* revolves around the people who would like to take over the throne and lands of Tortall. King Roald of Tortall is known as The Peacemaker. He has spent his reign making peace where his father made war. Prince Jonathan, a believer in the Code of Chivalry, also believes that it is better to make peace than to make war. This attitude toward power causes many to underestimate the strength of the king and his son.

Duke Roger of Conte, the king's nephew, is the most powerful sorcerer in the Eastern Realm. He is handsome and charming and he is the last person anyone thinks will try to take the throne — everyone except Alanna. Roger uses his magical abilities to cause a string of mishaps that put him in positions of power. His goal is to kill the king and Jonathan so that he can ascend to the throne of Tortall.

King Ain of Tusaine and his brothers, Dukes Jemis and Hiram, wish to expand their territory into Tortall. They wage war against King Roald in an attempt to take land and - if they are successful - the throne of Tortall.

In an effort to deflect suspicion from himself, Duke Roger tries to implicate "Alan" in a plot to kill the king and queen. Roger claims that if Jonathan is on the throne, then Alan will become the most powerful knight in the realm.



Search for Identity

The search for identity is a central theme of *In the Hand of the Goddess*. Alanna spends the entirety of the book trying to determine who she is. She must decide if she desires to love and be loved. She must determine what it means to be a knight. She must also understand how to dress and act as a lady of the Court. Alanna feels that she is destined to be a female knight, but she also knows that she has been called to practice magic no matter how much she tries to deny her magical ability.

Thom seems to be at the end of his journey for identity. He seems to be comfortable in his role as the youngest Master sorcerer, even though Alanna senses that he is lonely. Thom doesn't seem to notice that he is alone and he enjoys his role as an academic and magician.

Duke Roger is very sure of himself and is secure in his magical ability. Yet, he desires to be king, something he was not born to do. In his quest to become who he wishes to be, he turns to evil and treachery.

Style

Point of View

In the Hand of the Goddess is written in the third person limited point of view. The narrator of the story tells Alanna's tale and her thoughts. Alanna's telepathic communications with Faithful are also recorded. The reader is not aware of the inner thoughts of other characters, although there are many times that the reader is privy to scenes which happen when Alanna is not present. The characters of Jonathan, George and Myles use dialogue and discussion to inform the reader about their inner thoughts and feelings.

Setting

In the Hand of the Goddess is set in the magical kingdom of Tortall and its surrounding areas. The majority of the book takes place within the palace, although some of the book takes place in the Drell River military encampment. The world of In the Hand of the Goddess is similar to that of Medieval Europe. There are no "modern" amenities or devices. Alanna's world is one of magic and mystery where communications are sent via spells and crystals. Many pivotal scenes, such as Alanna's talk with the Goddess and her confrontation with the Gray Wolf, take place in the woods surrounding Tortall.

Language and Meaning

Much of the language of the novel is used to set up the magical world that is the setting of the story. The language is easy for younger readers to understand. The author uses many terms of art that are familiar from European history, knights and the Middle Ages. Much of the flavor of the battle, the Court and the army comes from the descriptive words used to identify implements of war. Other language is that of the magical world created for the book. These words pertain to spells and rituals which are part of the land of Tortall and its neighbors.

Structure

In the Hand of the Goddess is the second book of the Song of the Lioness series. The book takes place immediately after the first volume and sets up the third installment in the epilogue.

There are ten titled chapters in the book and an epilogue which serves as the resolution and the set up for the next book.

In the Hand of the Goddess:



Chapter 1: The Lady in the Forest

Chapter 2: Duke Roger of Conte

Chapter 3: The Prince's Squire

Chapter 4: A Cry of War

Chapter 5: By the River Drell

Chapter 6: Captured!

Chapter 7: Winter Lessons

Chapter 8: Fears

Chapter 9: The Ordeal

Chapter 10: To Duel the Sorcerer

Epilogue.



Quotes

"They'd said she was behaving like a girl, not knowing she was a girl."
Chapter 1, p. 3

"Don't be pert. And do be careful."
Chapter 2, p. 33

"She loved the laws of chivalry, and this Tusaine barbarian had just broken them."
Chapter 2, p. 37

"George just let her be who she was."
Chapter 3, p. 51

"Some women like to break up men's friendships. If I were you, I'd keep that in mind."
Chapter 3, p. 58

"If she had ever had a good opinion of war, it vanished that afternoon."
Chapter 5, p. 94

"Alanna pressed her good hand to Thor's forehead, her gift lighting the clearing with a deep violet fire."
Chapter 5, p. 112

"You're about to tell me why Alan of all people should not be left among the enemies for very long."
Chapter 6, p. 125

"I am serious, in my way."
Chapter 8, p. 193

"She even forgot her fear; the only important thing now was to stay alive."
Chapter 9, p. 209

"Cold, being helpless against death, spiders, drowning; the Chamber made her live vividly with everything she most feared."
Chapter 9, p. 211



Topics for Discussion

Why does Alanna deny her Gift as a healer? What does it mean to her if she is a healer and not a knight? Can she be both? Why or why not?

What is the relationship between Alanna and Jonathan?

- 1) How do they feel about each other at the beginning of the book?
- 2) How do they feel about each other at the end of the book?
- 3) What does Alanna fear the most about her relationship with Jonathan?
- 4) Why does it seem impossible for Jonathan and Alanna to have a lasting future together?

What is the relationship between Alanna and George?

- 1) How does George feel about Alanna? How do you know this?
- 2) How does Alanna feel about George?
- 3) What happens that causes Alanna to confront her feelings about George?
- 4) How does Alanna feel when she is with George? Is this love? Why or why not?

Alanna spends so much time trying to fit in as Alan that she doesn't know how to be Alanna. She goes to see Mistress Cooper to be tutored in how to act like a lady of Court and how to dress like a girl. What motivates Alanna to want to be more feminine? How does her change into a more feminine Alanna change her life?

Big Thor is Alanna's friend and protector while she is at the army encampment at the Drell River. When she finds him in the woods, he is in bad shape. He has lost a lot of blood and his eyes have been gouged out. Alanna knows he is on the verge of death. Her friend asks her to help him rest.

What does Alanna do for Thor? How does she use her power to help him find rest? Who does she see before she passes out in the woods?

The Ordeal of Knighthood is dreaded by Alanna through most of the book. She is terrified of what she will find in the Chamber.

- 1) What happens to Alanna in the Chamber?
- 2) What ordeals does she have to face?
- 3) Why does she have to face the things she does? Does everyone face the same thing?



4) How does Alanna's Ordeal help her to uncover Duke Roger's treachery?

The Great Mother Goddess and the Dark God both reveal themselves to Alanna. The Great Mother Goddess gives Alanna an ember-stone and gives her advice. What is the significance of Alanna's ability to see and communicate with the gods? What might this say about Alanna's Gift? What might it imply about her future?

Alanna and Alex have a competitive relationship. There are times when Alanna isn't sure if Alex is truly her friend, or if he is her enemy, especially now that he is one of Duke Roger's knights.

1) What happens to Alex when he and Alanna fence together?

2) Who stops their sword play?

3) Why might Alex have behaved the way he did?

4) What may happen as the series moves forward?