

The Game of Kings Study Guide

The Game of Kings by Dorothy Dunnett

(c)2015 BookRags, Inc. All rights reserved.



Contents

The Game of Kings Study Guide.....	1
Contents.....	2
Plot Summary.....	3
Opening Gambit.....	4
Part One, Chapter I.....	6
Part One, Chapters II and III.....	8
Part One, Chapters IV and V.....	10
Part One, Chapters VI and VII.....	12
Part Two, Chapter I.....	14
Part Two, Chapter II.....	16
Part Two, Chapter III.....	18
Part Three, Chapters I and II.....	20
Part Three, Chapter III.....	22
Part Three, Chapter IV.....	23
Part Four, Chapter I.....	25
Part Four, Chapter Two.....	27
Part Four, Chapter III.....	29
Part Four, Chapter IV.....	30
Characters.....	31
Objects/Places.....	35
Themes.....	38
Style.....	40
Quotes.....	42
Topics for Discussion.....	43



Plot Summary

The Game of Kings is the first novel in an epic series written by Dorothy Dunnett. It is set in Scotland, in 1547, the reigning period of Mary Stuart, still a child queen. The fringes of the country are fraught with outbreaks of fighting and the government is at a critical decision point, trying to weigh its relationships with France, England and Spain. The main character, Crawford of Lymond, traverses the Scottish border with England. Formally a citizen of Scotland, he was accused of treason and escaped to live as an outlaw. Despite his reputation, Francis has his strong points. He is a charismatic man, popular with women for his looks, and knowledge of romantic poetry, as well as his skill with the sword. His charisma affords him many safe havens and the danger that surrounds him only adds to his allure. His methods may seem dubious, and his morals may seem skewed, but at heart he is a son of Scotland and wants what he believes is best for his country, even if that means fighting to win it. With this as his goal, Francis enlists the help of many men, thus creating his own small army.

The mercenary soldiers are loyal to Crawford and to one another. Francis has one brother, Richard Crawford, whom he is at odds with. Richard fights for the Scottish army and is interested in bringing his brother back to face punishment for his accused crimes. Sibling rivalry also plays a part in the tension between them. The Game of Kings simultaneously traces Francis' adventures back and forth over the border as well as the push and pull of his relationship with Richard. Over the course of the book, the reader learns that Francis' motivation for all things in life is his sense of loyalty, although it isn't until the end of the book, when he risks his life to protect the queen's secret, that his character is redeemed.

Following his risk-taking on behalf of the queen, Richard views his brother differently. Richard becomes his brother's care giver and cares for the wounds he incurred. They verbally spar but learn to appreciate one another. In a complete reversal of intentions, Richard prepares to help Francis flee the country. They are intercepted and Francis is arrested and tried for treason. A few key men speak publicly on Francis' behalf. One man whom Francis had been unable to contact while still alive spoke posthumously through his confession. His letter spoke of a conspiracy against Crawford and he was found not guilty for crimes against the state.



Opening Gambit

Opening Gambit Summary

A Scotland bound maritime vessel called the Sea Catte arrived on the banks of Scotland carrying extra cargo. Below decks a man traveled back to his homeland, although he was not welcomed there. Francis Crawford, the younger of the two Crawford brothers, was whispered about by Scotland's citizens. Fortunately for him, the current state of affairs in Scotland was chaotic. England was attempting to overtake it and the general feeling was one of scheming. In this atmosphere of trepidation and secrecy, illegal import was fairly commonplace. The greatest player was named Mungo Tennant and his house had a double cellar, into which he frequently smuggled goods. To this end, he used a waterway tunnel system. Francis Crawford slipped off a rowboat and swam through the waterways and across a lake towards the city of Edinburgh. In this way he evaded the ever present guards standing watch against an English invasion. The gate at Edinburgh housed the castle home of Queen Mary, so the land guard was heaviest there but Francis had no problem gaining access from underground. Once in clean clothes he was greeted by his supporters who proceeded to brief him on the two months of activities he had missed during his exile.

While Francis Crawford was busy sneaking across the border, other individuals were engrossed in their regular lives. Off duty officers and noble men visited the ale houses at night and drowned their fears in alcohol. Sir Walter Scott of Buccleuch and Tom Erskine discussed politics and worried that an English invasion seemed likely. They feared England would be victorious. They briefly spoke of Richard Crawford's reluctance to become involved in the fighting and the search for his younger brother who was accused of treason. After eavesdropping for quite some time, Francis Crawford surprised both men, exchanged quick wit, and escaped again. Francis' next destination was Midculter castle, the home of his mother, Lady Sybilla Culter, his brother, Richard, and Richard's new bride, Mariotta. Richard was away on business, but Sybilla and Mariotta were accompanied by Lady Janet Buccleuch. Like the majority of the country, his family thought he remained out of the country and they were surprised by Francis' arrival. Far from a happy family reunion, Francis came home to plunder the castle, whose booty could support his own group's military campaign. Simultaneously, word arrived from Scotland's outposts that England's army was advancing, and the noble men were directed to fight beside the governor.

Opening Gambit Analysis

The introduction, entitled "Opening Gambit," introduces some of the main characters. Francis Crawford is revealed, by reputation, as being a bit of a womanizer. He is well schooled and courts women through poetry. He is also an excellent swordsman and his recent exile labels him as the attractive and dangerous type. Francis is physically graceful and an excellent athlete. He is, unfortunately, estranged from his family. The



political atmosphere in Scotland is described as being full of scandal and uncertainty. England and Spain are competing for an allegiance with Scotland through a marriage with Queen Mary. Additional important characters that are introduced include Richard Crawford, Lady Sybilla Culter, Mariotta, and the noble Buccleuch family.



Part One, Chapter I

Part One, Chapter I Summary

In fulfillment of Scott Buccleuch's prediction, the English forces defeated the Scottish on the field of Pinkie. Despite their loss on the battlefield, the Scottish child queen remained safe. While the noblemen with sworn alliances worked hard to regroup and rebuild, Francis Crawford and his men wanted for nothing. Their camp may have appeared rough on the outside, but the men reported to Francis voluntarily, and the camp was well stocked and filled with merriment. An anonymous man arrived at camp offering to join Crawford's group, but Francis was weary of his motive. He was barely old enough to be called a man and Francis couldn't figure out what would draw him away from the comforts of home, except for a quest for adventure. Francis was aware that his escapades often turned dangerous and also that traitors lurked everywhere.

Before admitting him to camp Francis tested him. They sparred verbally and Francis engaged him in a conversation about loyalty. He learned that the boy wanted to align himself with a leader who had clear principles. Still not entirely trusting him, the lad was kept on a short leash and Francis still sought his identity. After much jousting and through process of elimination, Francis narrowed down the field of possibilities and announced the stranger's identity as Will Scott, Buccleuch's oldest son. Rather than casting him out as his men encouraged him to do, Francis kept Will close by and watched over him. Francis intended to cross over the border into England and suggested that he and Will go under the guise of a messenger and aid sent by the Protector of England. Francis was sure that a man whom he wanted to speak with, Jonathan Crouch, was on the other side of the border. They were successful in their mission and learned that Crouch had been taken prisoner two days prior. At the evening's close Will witnessed an unfriendly exchange between Francis and his brother, Richard, that promised a challenge in the future.

Part One, Chapter I Analysis

Francis Crawford's men and their camp are explained in this chapter. The reader learns that the men are an unusual bunch. Francis had clear values when he created the group, and his vision attracted followers. Not all of the men are principled, however. Some just don't have anywhere else to go and are essentially paid soldiers. Francis does pay the men well and the camp is full of ruckus behavior. In short, they join him because they want to. One voluntary soldier is named Will Buccleuch. Will's character is an important one in the book for a number of reasons. First, his description of Francis gives the reader insight into how the man is viewed by his men and what characteristics they consider to be important. Second, Francis mentors Will and this interaction further reveals the depth of his character. Lastly, Will is torn between allegiance to Francis and allegiance to his father, the later of which should not be confused with the Scottish



government. Will's connection to his father, Wat, is a dangerous link for Francis and on multiple occasions he suffers for it.

Jonathan Crouch is also introduced in this chapter. Francis Crawford's history is complex and will slowly be unveiled throughout the book, but reference to Crouch sets the foundation for understanding his past. He seeks out Jonathan Crouch for conversation and is disappointed when they can not meet. The reader does not yet understand why this man is important to Francis but recognizes it as an urgent matter.



Part One, Chapters II and III

Part One, Chapters II and III Summary

The men gathered to talk about current events. The women worried and lamented about the safety of their husbands and sons who had gone out to battle the English and not yet returned. The children and servants grew restless. One such servant to the royal family, Simon (Sym) Bogle, requested permission to leave for an hour and went fishing. He discovered a man dressed in English clothes and lying unconscious, face down in the muck. Sym dragged the man back to his mistress, Lady Christian Stewart. Christian was blind but very perceptive. She touched his face, discovered he was young, and located a wound on his neck. Sym wished to nurse the man back to health, learn his identity, and possibly ransom him back to the English, from whence Sym believed he came. When the stranger awoke he talked in circles but did not reveal the information they sought. As his health quickly improved, he continued to conceal his identity but revealed that he was an excellent musician and swordsman. When a visitor, Tom Erskine, arrived, Christian and Sym rushed the stranger out the back door through the garden and into a secret cave where he was both concealed and safe. The soldiers were back with good news. The Scottish troops had vanquished England's forces. With all of the extra people coming and going, Christian had to sneak away to visit the stranger. The closest she came to his identity was learning that he was searching for an associate named Jonathan Crouch.

Along his travels Tom Erskine had encountered Buccleuch and informed him of Will's association with Francis Crawford. The elder Buccleuch was not pleased with this bit of news. Buccleuch freely admitted that his son was arrogant and acting foolish, but he also argued that Will was intelligent and should know better. That evening, as soon as he was able, Tom Erskine left and headed out in search of Lady Christian. He did not find Christian at home, but instead found Sybilla and Mariotta, as well as Andrew (Dandy) Hunter who brought them news. Christian had traveled to Boghall House in Stirling as an aid to Queen Mary. She did see the stranger on last time before leaving and told him that Jonathan Crouch was being held prisoner by Sir George Douglas. They agreed that for both of their safety, his identity should remain secret and he departed.

Part One, Chapters II and III Analysis

The new characters of importance in this chapter are Lady Christian and Sym. Lady Christian is a blind noble woman associated with Queen Mary's court and Sym is her most trusted aid. Sym's chance encounter with the stranger in the marsh will prove fortuitous for Francis. Although he manages to keep his identity a secret, Francis will learn valuable information over the ensuing months from Lady Christian. The reader views the stranger as both evasive and adept. He chooses not share information yet is not lacking in intellect. When Christian tries to obtain information from him he uses



poetry to answer her in obtuse ways. The answers themselves are more general to life than applicable to himself. Therefore, Christian is left both impressed and intrigued. She concludes that either he is the dangerous type whose acquaintance could harm her, or he is running away from someone or something.

Chapter three in part one is full of disappointment for the characters. Wat Buccleuch first learns in this section that his son, Will, has been identified as one of Francis Crawford's men. He knew of course that his son had left home and that he was disenchanted with his family, but did not know of his destination. Will's association with Francis is, first and foremost, a dangerous connection. Secondly it poses problems for Wat by testing his loyalties. Wat recognizes his son as young, hard headed, and maybe fool hardy but still he doesn't want to see him get hurt. Lastly, Will's choices, like those of all children, reflect onto his parents. A repercussion of Will's choice to join Francis is that Wat must balance his duties as a father with his duties to his country and fellow citizens.

Mariotta, Richard's wife, reveals some of her feelings in this chapter. The first hint of Mariotta's discontent occurs in her conversations with Dandy on page 78. She vents her frustration over an absent husband. She claims that even when he is physically present he remains emotionally distant. This is an important glimpse into both her perspective and her marriage. The information revealed here becomes important with regards to Richard's relationship with Francis.



Part One, Chapters IV and V

Part One, Chapters IV and V Summary

Even though the English seemed to be retreating, Richard stayed away from home engaging in small skirmishes to ensure Scotland's status as a free country. Mariotta grew even more impatient with her new husband's absence. Sybilla and Mariotta were accompanied by Agnes Herries, a wealthy child boarding with them. Her grandfather had sent her to live at Midculter following the death of her father in the hopes that she would learn to be more like a lady. In addition to her outspokenness, she was not very good looking. Her family's wealth was in her favor and since her birth she had been engaged to the governor's son, John Hamilton. On her way to Midculter she fell off of Richard's horse and landed in the Nith River. Aside from being scared and wet she was unharmed, but her crudeness was revealed. Bringing her expeditiously to safety in the nearest home allowed Richard and Dandy to engage in a business transaction with Sir George Douglas, from whom they purchased the prisoner called Jonathan Crouch.

Will Scott reflected on his month's journey with Francis Crawford. He had been fighting with the men by day, playing cards and sleeping in their camp by night. Francis seemed to accept him yet he still kept a close watch on Will and challenged him continuously. Will showed promise, though, as a hunter and a soldier. The group as a whole was simply a gathering of men who shared little in common. The only unifying theme was their desire to fight with Francis, but each had his own reasons for doing so. The men were paid well for their services, which included battle, theft, and espionage. Francis kept them in line by both physical and emotional threat- a man who misbehaved was publicly punished. Francis exerted control over his troops and expected perfection on the battlefield, but when in camp he was amiable and the liquor flowed abundantly. Some of the stock was purchased, but much of it was a product of waging battles. In just one example, Francis overtook an English supply train, taking their food and drink provisions, the payment meant for English soldiers, as well as livestock. In the transaction Will attempted to make a name for himself by doubling back and tempting the enemy. He managed to get himself caught, taken prisoner, and tortured for a short while before Francis came to his rescue. Will correctly surmised that his time there was Francis' way of teaching him a lesson in obedience.

Part One, Chapters IV and V Analysis

Chapter four introduces Agnes Herries, a minor character, on page 87. She is described as spoiled and not well mannered. At thirteen years old she is still a child but shows no sign of impending maturation. Although she was betrothed, she was unhappy with the idea of an arranged marriage and still hoped for a romance.

The man Francis seeks, Crouch, is mentioned again in this chapter. It is Scottish law that a prisoner of war may be ransomed, bought, or traded as seen fit by the guardian.



Crouch moves closer to the Culters as Richard attempts to purchase him from Sir George Douglas, a Scottish military man.

Will's time with Francis is quite a journey. Will explores his own principles while assessing Crawford's. His opinions with regards to loyalty and hypocrisy are foremost on his mind. Will allows himself some time for reflection, but primarily he is still a restless young man trying to formulate his idea of self as well as discover his place in the world. He is a smart individual, but quickly learns that he is no match for Francis. Will took his first punishment from Francis on page 118. In that scene Francis had the presence of mind to expect Will's challenge and to allow it to play out. Although he knew that Will's arrogance would result in his capture, Crawford neither prohibited it nor rescued him quickly. Francis even told a few of his troops what he thought Will might try to do and ask them to accompany him for minimal protection. Will attempted to storm the castle, was taken captive along with his companions, and jailed. Francis left him there for a while before rescuing him. In this way, Francis taught Will a lesson about obedience without ever exchanging a word with Will. Will understood the objective and had a new appreciation for Crawford's leadership skills.



Part One, Chapters VI and VII

Part One, Chapters VI and VII Summary

Ballaggan Castle was the home of Dandy Hunter and his mother, Dame Catherine. Lady Hunter was seventy years old and not aging gracefully. She was paralyzed in her lower limbs and remained in her bedroom twenty-four hours per day. Her husband had died in battle, leaving her widowed, and her eldest son died shortly thereafter. Her life's journey left her bitter and judgmental. Dandy tries his best to please her, but his best never satisfies her. Understated jewelry is too small, and a larger piece is too gaudy. This is the way she interacts with her only remaining family, and Dandy's goodwill earns him ridicule from the most masculine of his peers.

Among the craftsmen of Scotland, one goldsmith stood out. His name was Patey Liddell, and his work was sought after. Lady Culter had commissioned him to complete a piece for her and during her time at his studio she overheard his heated conversation with Sir George Douglas. In the town center, a Papingo shoot was scheduled. The shooting of the parrot off of a high branch from a great distance demonstrated great skill with a bow and arrow. The challenge attracted many marksmen from afar and the streets swelled with visitors. Purveyors took advantage of the business opportunity and opened up shops along the streets. While the men gathered at the shooting location, the women, including Sybilla, Mariotta, and Catherine, browsed the peddlers' wares with Tom Erskine as their escort. Also present was a band of gypsies, led by Johnie Bullo, whom Sybilla hired to stage a performance at Bogle House. The women learned later that evening that when it was Richard's turn to shoot at the Papingo, an anonymous arrow shot the Papingo down. Inadvertently, it also superficially scraped Richard.

When onlookers arrived at the scene all that remained was an ornamental shooting glove. Most of the men assumed that the shooter was Francis Crawford, and being publicly beaten by his brother made Richard angry. Catherine recognized a voice in the pack of gypsies. Bullo's voice sounded like the voice of the man that had accompanied her waterlogged stranger months ago. Christian sent word to the stranger, through Bullo, about the recent changes in the whereabouts of Jonathan Crouch, whom her stranded friend had been so interested in.

Part One, Chapters VI and VII Analysis

Andrew Hunter, affectionately called Dandy is explored in chapter six. Both his family structure and personal character are examined. Dandy's only remaining relative is his mother. Lady Catherine is elderly and very demanding. She is a bitter and lonely old woman. Both her husband and her eldest son died, leaving her only Dandy's companionship. Far from loving, her relationship with Dandy is a source of stress for him. Dandy is full of good intentions, but she is never pleased. Their future prospects



are not good either. Times in Scotland are rough and although Dandy is a good man, their family fortune has dwindled such that he has no immediate prospects for marriage.

Chapter seven introduces Patey Lidell. He is a minor character, but his services are woven through out the book. Patey is the area goldsmith, so he is well known by the women for their jewelery and art commissions, as well as by the men for his weapon making skills. Another minor character, Johnie Bullo, is also introduced. As the leader of a group of gypsies, he lives a roaming lifestyle and seems to have eyes and ears everywhere, which can serve as a benefit or detriment at any time depending upon one's objectives. Agnes appears again in this chapter, still complaining about her arranged marriage. She is more thoughtful this time in her approach, and the initial complaint turns into a good natured debate between Agnes, Dandy and Mariotta. Through this exchange a tenderness in Dandy is revealed. While all of this is going on in the background, the main characters, Crawford and Richard, are competing publicly for the title of best archer at the Papingo shoot.



Part Two, Chapter I

Part Two, Chapter I Summary

Richard Crawford paid a visit to Wat Buccleuch to see if he could enlist his help in securing the border. Richard had heard that Wat was sick and thought he was faking illness to avoid involvement in the strife. Buccleuch's home was just twelve miles from the Scottish border with England. Richard was correct in his assumption- Buccleuch feared direct attack from the English if he cooperated with his native Scotland, and he also feared the Scottish government if he failed to fight against the English. Additionally, since hearing of his son Will's dealings with Francis Crawford, Wat knew that if he took up arms against the English he might inadvertently hurt his own son. No one knew which side Francis was aligned with. Even if his son had seemed to pair up with the enemy, or at the very least a Scotsman with unclear allegiances, Wat couldn't bear the thought of hurting Will. Of course, he couldn't say this to his countrymen who would then accuse him of harboring the enemy. Wat's imagined illness solved many problems.

Wat was correct to worry for his son. The longer Will remained with Crawford the more impressed with him he became. Francis' battle strategies were brilliant in both plan and execution. He never seemed to tire, take ill, or be injured. His riding and swordsman skills were excellent. Additionally, when the group frequented alehouses he found that Francis was popular with women, all of whom seemed intimately familiar with him. At one such inn, the Ostrich, Crawford's group was met by the innkeeper, Molly, who gave them preferential treatment. Francis' tolerance for liquor exceeded Will's and after a night of drinking Crawford arose clearly commanding the day's orders and Will awoke with a hang-over.

As Francis made plans for the Scottish and English garrisons, they made plans for him as well. Lord Grey, commander of England's northern troops, approached Gideon Somerville with a request. Based upon location alone, Lord Grey figured it likely that Crawford would pass by Gideon's home. Upon doing so, Lord Grey wanted Gideon to pass a letter to Francis. Although he knew relatively little about the situation, it seemed unsafe to Gideon to invite a stranger into his home, especially one with a sordid reputation. Gideon was happy to serve his country on the battlefield but did not wish any battles to be fought on his own soil, where his wife, Kate, and their daughter, Phillipa, might be harmed. Despite his reluctance, Lord Grey insisted on the exchange.

Part Two, Chapter I Analysis

Much is revealed about the Buccleuch family in this chapter. Wat Buccleuch is the father of many children and his home is in a state of chaos. This appears to be the normal state of his home, however, because while a visitor finds it distracting and loud, Wat and Janet Buccleuch are accustomed to the noise and constant movement. Their home was in a vulnerable position. It was located close to the Scottish border with England making



it a frequent target for attack during restless times. Wat Buccleuch feared for his family's safety. If he fought with the Scots, he would antagonize the English who could easily retaliate. If he fought with the English, against his own country and Scotland lost the battle, Scotland would accuse him of treason. He was in a precarious position, created both by pure location as well as by Will's choices. Richard was empathetic but frustrated with Wat's inability to commit. Another character, Gideon Somerville, is introduced in chapter one of part two. Although Gideon is reluctant to become involved, he will eventually become a major player in Francis Crawford's future.



Part Two, Chapter II

Part Two, Chapter II Summary

When Richard finally returned from battle three weeks later, Mariotta found him entirely unsociable. They had been apart for so much of their few months of marriage that she now found him to be a stranger. Mariotta complained bitterly to Sybilla who rose to her son's defense. At that vulnerable time Mariotta began receiving anonymous jewels. Mariotta was still seething and feeling unappreciated. In a quiet act of rebellion she began to wear the jewels to see if Richard would notice. She hoped to obtain a reaction from him but he was oblivious. The only enjoyment in Mariotta's days was Sybilla's Philosopher's Stone experiment. Sybilla had hired the gypsy, Johnie Bullo, to turn lead into gold for her. The transmutation experiment was lengthy and expensive, so in exchange for his efforts Sybilla gave him free room and board. Bullo explained to Sybilla the laws of alchemy and the process of utilizing the Philosopher's Stone.

Mariotta was joined by Agnes in her difficulty with love. Agnes had complained bitterly about her arranged engagement, and her betrothed was not happy about it either. When Agnes started receiving anonymous poetry she became quite smitten with the man behind the words. The only problem was that they were written in Spanish and required a translator. The translator of course, was Christian, as she was the only one in the house with enough foreign language education. The writer was actually Lady Christian's stranger from the bog, and he intended that she hear the letter. It was filled with discreet inquiries for her ears as she continued to covertly gather information for him.

Gideon found himself at his home, Flaw Valleys, enjoying time with Kate and Phillipa. The governor had granted him time away from battle to ensure his presence when the mercenary arrived in search of the letter from Lord Grey. A commotion arose as all of the animals from Gideon's farm ran freely down the lane. Flaw Valleys was not singled out in its loss. Francis had arranged similar occurrences across the land as a diversion for he and his men. He hoped to draw the English and Scottish troops towards one another so that he could pass freely in the ensuing confusion. An unintended consequence was Wat Buccleuch coming into contact with his son, Will. Francis Crawford's cover was ruined, and just as they were escaping Wat called out to Will, who turned. Richard caught sight of Francis and prepared to shoot but out of fear for his son, Wat prevented his aim. The animals were returned the next day, but Will remained with Francis, and to Kate's surprise it was not Gideon who brought them home. She found a stranger in her music room awaiting Gideon's return. He announced his territorial name (Lymond) as well as his family name (Crawford). Francis obtained the letter left for him, as well as asking enough questions to satisfy his own curiosity. In addition to Gideon's own animals, Crawford added some extra heads to the flock for Gideon's troubles. Francis was not apologetic for his actions, but he did feel it courtesy to compensate Gideon. He was similarly unapologetic for his relationship with Lady Christian, who continued to spy for him. Will voiced his objection to their unconventional relationship. He viewed Francis as taking advantage of Christian. All of Crawford's other actions he



could rectify in his soul, but she was the exception. Francis and Will made peace, however, and prepared for their next adventure. Samuel Harvey would be brought north to meet with Francis as explained in the letter.

Part Two, Chapter II Analysis

Chapter two of part two finds some of the players at a point of crisis. Mariotta is frustrated and lonely. Her new husband's lack of attention and the geographical distance from her own relations leaves her vulnerable. A anonymous man begins sending her jewelry and she enjoys the attention. Although she doesn't know who they are from she assumes that the sender is Francis. Francis, accompanied by Will, spends an evening creating distractions by releasing the animals of country farms. One of the homes affected belongs to Gideon Somerville, whom Francis wished to speak with. During the raid Will briefly came into contact with his father, Wat. In that moment Will's confusion became apparent. He wanted to believe in Francis but still felt an emotional tie with his father. Additionally, Will disagreed with Crawford about the ethics of Lady Christian's involvement. The combination of these two disagreements was enough to make Will waver in his loyalty to Francis Crawford's group.



Part Two, Chapter III

Part Two, Chapter III Summary

At Christmas time Mariotta went public with the news of her pregnancy. She and Sybilla briefly visited with Lady Hunter before moving on to Bogle House for the season's festivities. While at Dandy's home Mariotta stole a moment to speak with Andrew alone. He encouraged her to tell the truth to Richard about the jewels, but Mariotta assumed that the jewelry originated from Francis and feared a family feud if she reported them. Lady Christian and Lady Herries joined Sybilla and Mariotta at Bogle House as well. Mariotta had hoped that the news of their child might make Richard more tender towards her, but when she awoke on the morning of Christmas Eve he was gone. No one could figure out where he had gone until they discovered that the archery glove found at the Papingo shoot was gone. Richard had taken that glove and left early in the morning to inquire about its craftsmanship. He hoped that the artisan who crafted it would recognize it and tell him who purchased it. He traced the artisan to Patey Lidell, who provided the materials to the St. Johnstone glover named Jamie Waugh.

Richard went to St. Johnstone's and found the glove's creator drunk in a local alehouse. After a dunk in the cold river he was sober and ready to speak. When asked about the man who ordered the gloves, Richard was told that the man who ordered them never gave his name, just placed a deposit and took only one glove, leaving the name of the man who would fetch the second glove and pay for the pair. The name given was Richard's own, and he knew in that moment that his brother Francis had predicted his every move. By the time his objectives were met, it was late in the evening. Richard sought shelter at a nearby castle and planned to leave at dawn for the return trip home to Mariotta. Instead he was awoken by the sounds of armed men and duty called him back into battle again. Concerned for her son's safety Sybilla asked the goldsmith where Richard had gone. While there she confronted him about the jewelry and suggested that he stop aiding whoever was sending Mariotta such extravagant gifts. Lord Maxwell surprises Lady Herries at the Christmas party. She knew him only through his letters, but he arrives in person carrying a single rose. Maxwell has a business agenda, too. He meets with Francis Crawford in the countryside and informs him that Lady Margaret, the Countess of Lennox, is coming north to attempt to repair crumbling loyalties among the English.

Part Two, Chapter III Analysis

Richard was pleased by Mariotta's pregnancy. He was extra protective in his decision making with regards to her, but his emotional distance still remained. The gifts of jewelry continued to arrive which further complicated matters. On the morning of Christmas Eve the household awoke to find Richard gone. Now that Richard was home from the battlefield he decided to pursue the archery glove abandoned at the Papingo shoot. He left no indication of where he was going, why, or for how long which was worrisome.



Sybilla correctly surmised Richard's destination but Mariotta was severely disappointed. She felt that he had chosen to continue the feud with his brother instead of spending the holiday with her. His business took longer than even he expected and her bitterness festered. Richard's mood did not improve, either. His adventure taught him the extent of Francis' premeditation. Francis had known that Richard would trace the glove and be required to pay for it when he arrived. The confidence displayed by Francis in that exchange was akin to a slap in Richard's face. Richard felt that he was always one step behind Francis. This was especially painful because Richard viewed Francis as an undeserving traitor.



Part Three, Chapters I and II

Part Three, Chapters I and II Summary

As they rode north, Will wondered about the flash of emotion he saw flicker across Francis' face when he learned that the countess was coming. He was curious but didn't ask. Will figured everyone was entitled to his own secrets. Will was secretly planning to meet with his father but he hadn't told Crawford. When Will and his father finally did meet, it was hardly paternal. Wat tried to convince Will to come home but his thoughts were jumbled and his reasoning obscured by emotion. Will was not impressed and said so. He offended his father who threw a poor punch, but Will had learned much over the last few months. To Wat's amazement, Will quickly trapped his father. Although he was capable of hurting him, Will extended him a hand and pulled him up, offering some sort of a truce. Wat began to recount all of Francis' crimes. Will was listening until he realized that Scottish troops were encircling them, whereby Will assumed his father had set a trap for him. In fact it wasn't Wat, but Richard, who had created the trap in hopes that Will would lead him back to Francis. Richard learned about Wat and Will's secret meeting from Wat's wife, Janet, who disagreed with him on how to handle the situation with Will.

The Queen became sick again that winter. Her fever was unrelenting and her skin was swollen and blistered. Sybilla and Christian were called in to care for her. Tom Erskine escorted them in their travels before heading onwards to the city of Carlisle. Tom asked Christian for her hand in marriage but she declined. She was fond of him, but afraid that her lack of sight as well as her general needs would be a detriment to him. She was a lady of the court, and despite her blindness, she was a positive presence there and her help was needed by the Queen. She went so far as to say that if she were to marry, Tom would be the man, but the timing wasn't right.

Mariotta had become increasingly frustrated with the state of her life. The battles in which Richard fought were so frequent, the policies so confusing, and she had so little control over all of it. She asked him to let go of his search for Richard and to focus more on their life together. In her desperation she vindictively told him about the gifts of jewelry. Her tone implied that there was more substance to the relationship than in truth there was. Richard responded with disbelief, then anger, then accused her of sleeping with Francis and even of carrying another man's child. Richard threatened to hunt his brother down and kill him, and then he abruptly left Mariotta. Mariotta packed to go home but never made it that far. She took shelter at a passing tower in the throes of a miscarriage. She had hoped that Francis would come to her rescue but he was away on an errand. His men did find her, however, and call for a doctor. When Francis finally did return, their reunion was not what she had hoped for. She fled yet again, this time taking refuge at the convent.

The Scotsmen united and fought back the Englishmen but it was not without casualties. Many men were lost and the Countess was taken hostage. Francis' men were holding



her captive but unharmed. Crawford was planning to ask for the Countess' son in exchange for her safe return; the child could then be exchanged for Samuel Harvey, whom Francis remained interested in. The Countess knew that Francis was wrongly accused and it pleased him to hear it, but still he needed Samuel Harvey as indisputable proof. An alternative way of obtaining Samuel Harvey was to trade Will Scott for him. Word spread that this was a possibility and Wat teamed up with Richard to retrieve both Will and Francis- each man for his own reasons.

Part Three, Chapters I and II Analysis

Chapter one of part three is a short chapter but full of soul searching for Will. He fights with both Francis and his father yet can't seem to decide the proper place for himself. The decision is made for him, at least for the time being, when Scottish forces nearly overtake him. Will mistakes the event as a double play by his father, which only exasperates his inner confusion.

Sickness and war abound in chapter two of part three. The queen experiences a high fever which incapacitates her. Many of her extended family members are drawn to court to help her, including Sybilla and Lady Christian. The court was concerned about her health and what it meant for the political future of Scotland. In Mariotta's haste to leave Richard she finds herself alone and experiences a miscarriage. She hopes that Francis will take her in but realizes that all of her assumptions were wrong. After allowing some time for healing she heads out again, this time setting the convent as her destination. Francis' only regret is that his brother wrongfully associates him with Mariotta's marital dissatisfaction.

Up to this point, much of Francis Crawford's past has been hinted at or revealed indirectly through the conversations of others. For the first time Francis explains his situation clearly on page 304. Francis says "...like many other gentleman in trouble, I was misunderstood in my youth. A situation which I thought could be retrieved by one person. Unfortunately I didn't know this fellow's name; only his station, and this left the field open for three people- Jonathan Crouch, Gideon Somerville and Samuel Harvey." From this statement the reader finally understands why Francis searches perpetually for these men, and also why he needs to find all three of them.



Part Three, Chapter III

Part Three, Chapter III Summary

Nearly three weeks later Richard set off for home. He intended to apologize to Mariotta but didn't find her. He assumed that she accompanied Sybilla to Dumbarton and so he changed direction. At Dumbarton he found his mother and an obstinate queen child, but not his wife. Sybilla confronted him and drew his attention to his own faults, namely his painful preoccupation with hunting down his brother. When he learned that Mariotta had ended up (again) with Francis he feigned disinterest in her, stating that she was nothing to him. In the Spring Lady Herries was married to Master John Maxwell. Their marriage was a happy occasion, and Maxwell confessed that they had been brought together by a third party. Tom Erskine was also hoping for love. Again he asked for Christian's hand in marriage and this time she accepted.

Part Three, Chapter III Analysis

Chapter three of part three is dedicated to romantic relationships. Richard wanted to reconcile with Mariotta and went looking for her. Unfortunately, before he found her he heard that her chosen location was with Francis. This information changed his attitude toward her. One could infer that he was truly hurting but masked his true feelings. While he projected disinterest in Mariotta, his anger toward Francis increased. Sybilla recognized her son's foolish behaviors and told him that the difficulties in his marriage were of his own making. She reminded him that he couldn't blame everything that goes wrong in life on his brother. Sybilla urged him to let go of his anger and give up the search. Lady Herries and Lady Christian fared better. Agnes married Maxwell, fulfilling her assertion that she would not participate in an arranged marriage. Lady Christian accepted Tom Erskine's marriage proposal.



Part Three, Chapter IV

Part Three, Chapter IV Summary

Gideon was well liked by England's noble men. They confided easily in him, but he was more of a listener than a speaker. He took in all they had to say about politics and then formed his own opinion. On one such occasion he found himself the audience of Margaret Lennox, who had at one point been intimately involved with Francis. Between her description and his own recollections of the stranger, he concluded that the man who had stolen and returned his farm animals was named Francis Crawford and that he was the leader of an unconventional group. Francis met his match when he sent a message to both Wat Buccleuch and Sir Douglas and forged Will's signature. Francis expected to steal Samuel Harvey away from the bunch, but they overtook him. He was bound and awaited his return to Scotland. Lord Grey planned to turn him into the authorities. Gideon was put on watch, and while he harbored ill feelings towards Crawford for stealing his property, he had to admit that the man was an interesting fellow. Even while captured and bound, his personality was nothing but resilient. While the English camped out, the Scottish, acting on information that they thought originated from Will, encircled the English. In the chaos of battle Francis managed to escape. Gideon was injured in the battle and Francis rescued him, but when Gideon awoke his hands and feet were tied in a complete role reversal. Francis began to think of exchanging Gideon for the prisoner Harvey, but Gideon was uncooperative. To prove his good intentions, Francis let him go free and asked only that he arrange a meeting between Harvey and himself. As Gideon rode away he contemplated what to do next.

The men continued to prepare for another set of battles. Winter turned to Spring and the women grew lonely. Christian Stewart was staying with the Maxwells. Sybilla's only company was Mariotta, who, upon Sybilla's insistence, had finally returned to Midculter from the convent. They continued to be entertained by Johnie Bullo's ongoing alchemy experiment. When not busy with the alchemy experiment Johnie worked as a spy for Francis, delivering messages back and forth for a fee.

Part Three, Chapter IV Analysis

Gideon's thought process is prominent in this chapter. The chapter begins with Gideon in a state of anger towards Francis. He had heard the treason accusations and personally witnessed Francis Crawford's antics with regards to his own farm. But, like many others, he remained intrigued by the man. Francis' charismatic personality is undeniable. Francis further ingratiates himself to Gideon by saving Gideon when a fight breaks out around them. Of course, Francis did take the opportunity to free himself, but he did not sacrifice Gideon even though he had the opportunity. This act showed Gideon that Francis was not an inherently evil person and helped to explain his own positive feelings toward Francis. Gideon was left to rectify his feelings toward the man.

Francis requested that he arrange a meeting on his behalf, but then he politely left Gideon alone to make his own decision.



Part Four, Chapter I

Part Four, Chapter I Summary

Francis Crawford knew that his time on the run was coming to an end. Ultimately, his desire to chase down Samuel Harvey was stronger than his fear of death. Either he would find Harvey and Harvey would tell the truth about Crawford's past, thus redeeming him, or Francis would die trying. He was a thoughtful leader and did not want his men to be harmed simply to protect him. Fighting to advance one's country was admirable, but dragging your friends down with you was not. With this in mind, Francis talked of disbanding his group. The rumor grew and his men became disquieted. Many of the men had willingly joined Crawford because they enjoyed the adventure or because they had no where else to go, but Will Scott was different. He had joined Francis' group on the basis of his own principles. He imagined the group to be perpetual and had not thought about what he would do should it end. Facing his father and Scotland's army was not a pleasant thought, especially if they should try to label him as a traitor.

Francis distributed payment among his men for their services and sent them each away. All that remained were Will Scott, Francis, and Francis' next in command, Turkey Matt. Their portion of gold lay elsewhere. The three set out to retrieve each one's share but they were ambushed. In an effort to clear his own name, Will had sent word to his father's troop about Francis' whereabouts. Francis, Matt and Will took cover in the rubbles of a burned down convent cellar. It did not go unnoticed that this place was the very same cellar in which Crawford's sister and her fellow nuns had perished. Will had made arrangements with his father's group. If Francis did not surface and surrender himself within ten minutes the army would blow up the cellar, with all three men still inside. An underground passage leading away from the convent existed but neither man was unable to use it because it was blocked by boxes. A physical battle ensued between Will and Francis. Will was beaten badly, but Francis was injured, too. Will had managed to knife him in the shoulder, although not fatally as he had hoped. Rendered unable to fight, both Turkey Matt and Francis were captured by Andrew Hunter and his Scottish troops. Turkey tried to escape but was killed in the process.

Dandy and Will brought Crawford to Threave and imprisoned him there while they waited for reinforcements. Along the way Francis Crawford was met by the jeers of the crowd who labeled him a murderer and traitor. The spectacle drew Lady Christian's attention. She still didn't know his true identity, but recognized his voice, and argued that the crowd must be mistaken. Because her position at court made her influential, and also because she was a woman with an impediment that no one wished to upset, Francis was unchained and moved. He was kept in the cellar prison, but was treated gentler. After fighting with his son, Buccleuch had Will thrown into the prison as well. During an evening of heated banter Will learns that Francis had never intended to sell him as a prisoner, that he did not knowingly murder the nuns in the convent, and that Francis had not been dealing with both governments like he was accused. Additionally,



Crawford would have preferred that Lady Christian not see him that day. He worried that her involvement would stain her reputation. That night when Lady Herries realized that Will was in the prison with a known traitor, and that his only crime was offending his father, she opened the trap door to let him out. Neither she nor Will cared to latch the trap door after Will emerged. Both Francis and Lady Christian vanished in the night. Lady Herries insisted that she told Will to lock it behind him, so the blame fell upon him.

Francis used his newfound freedom to visit with Gideon Somerville. After much thought Gideon decided to arrange a meeting with Samuel Harvey on behalf of Crawford. He figured he'd give the man a chance to redeem himself, if possible. The alternative was no worse than the current state of affairs. Unfortunately, because Francis had been imprisoned the night before he missed Harvey's visit and the man had already moved on. When he arrived at Gideon's farm he was exhausted and soaking wet from having traveled through the dawning hours on foot. Gideon offered him clean clothes and a place to rest. Later, they discussed politics and learned that although they call opposite sides of the border home, they both want essentially the same things. Gideon agrees to let Francis stay at Flaw Valleys until Harvey's convoy returns in a few weeks time, although he is not sure why he feels empathy for the man. While out on business Gideon learns that Harvey had been caught in a scuffle, was shot in the leg and is close to death.

Part Four, Chapter I Analysis

Francis knew that he would either be vindicated or killed. Either way, there was no longer any purpose in keeping his unit together. For the sake of their safety he sent them all away with reasonable payment. Francis looked forward to addressing Harvey but Will had other plans. Will signaled his father, whose troop came to capture Francis. Sybilla and Mariotta worried as word trickled in of Crawford's capture. The extended time required for communication meant that news was late coming and often inaccurate. In addition to worrying about Francis, Richard's time away from home lengthened and was another cause for concern. Sybilla listened to Mariotta as she vented her feelings about both brothers. She oscillates between love, hate, fantasy and disappointment. She is as unsure of her own heart as she is of Richard's. Mariotta said many unkind things but she spoke out of pain and Sybilla recognized where it was coming from. The women knew that Francis was captured, but they did not know that he had since then escaped. Will played the part of a remorseful scapegoat. Although he was not the one responsible for releasing Francis, Will didn't contest the accusation because he felt badly for his involvement in Crawford's arrest. Once free, Francis fled to Gideon's home to await the scheduled meeting.

Part Four, Chapter Two

Part Four, Chapter Two Summary

Kate was displeased with having an extra person to care for, but, like Gideon, she developed a tender spot for Francis. Kate tried to outwit Crawford but found him too guarded and quick. Although her family was unwillingly dragged into his affairs, she discovered that he meant them no ill will. She learned to enjoy his company. He was as skilled on musical instruments as he was in poetry and sword fights. Gideon returned as quickly as he could to inform Francis of the state of Samuel Harvey's health. While Gideon could not accompany Crawford on his journey, he offered him food and the use of a horse from his stable. Francis set off in search of George Douglas, whom he thought he could convince to bring Samuel Harvey nearer. As he left, Gideon and Kate were in agreement about his intelligence and misunderstood nature. When Francis found Douglas he was disappointed to find out that Samuel Harvey had died. He also learned that Lady Christian was being held prisoner, and the only acceptable exchange was his own arrest. While prisoner, Christian had spent considerable time with the ailing Samuel Harvey. Now that Harvey had died Francis had no reasonable expectation for clearing his name. He viewed Christian as an innocent pawn in his scheme and undeserving of misfortune, so he prepared to surrender himself in her place.

Following their chat in the prison, Will felt remorseful for having tricked Francis. He searched for him in the countryside, Crawford's last known location. He returned empty handed, much to Richard's displeasure. After having sought his brother for so long, and having come so close, he did not find it amusing that Crawford had managed to escape. Wat tried to recover Richard's good graces but reminding Richard that it was Will who insisted Mariotta have medical care and a safe resting place when they found her alone and in the midst of a miscarriage. Richard was unmoved by the argument.

Parliament agreed that the young Queen should be sent to France as soon as possible. She would be schooled there and eventually marry the King of France. Of their choices, France and England, the Scottish parliament preferred France because the two countries shared a common religion, and also because France had come to them in the form of an alliance, not by military force. Their alternative, England, had tried repeatedly to overtake and rule Scotland. Unfortunately a spy was found within the castle walls. He was aware of Parliament's secret plan for sending the Queen out of the country and had shared the information with a cohort. Tom Erskine and Richard Crawford were sent to bring back the second spy.

Lady Lennox and her escorts soon learned that Lady Christian had obtained special papers from Samuel Harvey. Disliking Francis for their past involvement, Lady Lennox was not interested in having his reputation restored. Instead she wanted to obtain the information Francis was seeking and that she suspected Christian now possessed. Christian's friend and bodyguard, Sym, tried to protect her by riding away from Lady Lennox's escort, but was shot in the process. The sound frightened Christian's horse



who began galloping fast and Christian, without the gift of sight, was unable to control it. The horse crashed and Christian fell to her death. Just before dying she babbled on about Harvey's death bed confession.

Gideon, Kate, Crawford were mourning Christian when Tom and Richard finally tracked them down. Tom Erskine was distraught over the death of Christian. As was Scottish custom, Richard chose to challenge Francis to a sword fight rather than bring him back to be tried in a court of law. It was difficult for Richard to seriously fight him because Francis refused to engage in the challenge. He dodged Richard's attempts, but would not yield his own sword with intent. The fight ended without a victory. Erskine reminded Richard that they still needed to remedy the issue of the man who was on his way to England to sell the Queen's secret. The spy, Acheson, had already arrived in the city and taken audience with the court. Richard was unwilling to leave Francis behind so he joined them. To stop Acheson from revealing the Queen's secret, Francis used a single arrow to pierce Acheson's heart. By using his only arrow, he had no defense against the English guard, whose marksmen hit its intended target.

Part Four, Chapter Two Analysis

Like her husband, Kate saw something unusual in Francis Crawford. She had trouble understanding how someone with an extensive education and musical talents could be the barbarian people accused him of being. While he recuperated in her home, she glimpsed the many facets of his personality. When Gideon brought the news about Harvey's wound, Francis prepared himself to leave immediately. Douglas, whom he thought might be of help, was instead the bearer of bad news. After learning that Harvey was dead and Christian was being held prisoner, Francis decided to surrender. When Lady Christian was injured and brought to Gideon's home to die, Francis' interactions with her were incredibly tender. Kate saw this as further reason to accept him as a friend instead of foe. After Christian was killed by Lady Lennox's archer there remained no reason to surrender. Richard insisted, however, that Francis fight in hand to hand combat or return to be tried in the court. Francis was unwilling to fight against Richard but perfectly willing to fight for the Scottish queen.



Part Four, Chapter III

Part Four, Chapter III Summary

Francis was injured and bleeding badly. Erskine was confident that he would die, and indicated that the Scotsmen should all go home. The Queen's secret was safe and therefore their work was done. Richard was unwilling to leave without certainty. He wanted his brother to be tried and found guilty in a court of law, or at the very least fight him in hand to hand combat. He nursed him back to relative health in the wilderness. During their time together Francis told Richard about Mariotta and his ignorance of her needs. He also told Richard that he was not responsible for the jewelry, although Francis understood that Mariotta thought he was the sender. Richard asked Francis about Patey Lidell's involvement, to which Francis responded that Patey only did what he was told. Richard brought up Lady Christian's death as well as the loss of their sister, Eloise. Richard worked to strengthen Francis body while beating down his soul. Then when Francis tried to commit suicide Richard stopped him. When he discovered that Francis had reached his lowest point Richard began talking about their childhood, just to keep him engaged in life. At some point over their weeks in the wilderness Richard began to see Francis differently. He still detested many of Francis' activities, but Richard saw that Francis had his own code of conduct and good intentions. Richard decided that if Francis could be made well again he would help him cross over the country's border into obscurity rather than bringing him back to Edinburgh for trial. To his dismay, they were discovered and Francis was arrested for treason. Francis was taken to prison and Richard returned to Mariotta.

At Midculter Johnie Bullo prepared the final stages of his alchemy experiment. He filled the room with smoke and then demonstrated the transmutation of lead into gold. Sybilla was not impressed and called him out as the actor that he was. She knew he had no real magic to offer her. In addition, he was stealing her jewelry and taking advantage of their family.

Part Four, Chapter III Analysis

Francis Crawford's heroics nearly killed him. Tom Erskine was content to leave him behind to die. Richard thought that death was too simple and wanted Francis to face a greater punishment. Therefore, he washed and dressed each of Francis' wounds and nursed him back to health. Over the course of their time together Richard's view of Francis greatly improved. He was determined to free his brother but the Scottish government did not agree. Francis was captured and sent to prison. In the fulfillment of Sybilla's prior statement that Francis was the only one who could send Richard back to Mariotta, Richard did return.



Part Four, Chapter IV

Part Four, Chapter IV Summary

Francis had been summoned to trial twice before but had evaded the law. He now appeared before the court to stand trial for his accused crime of treason. To expedite the process, the parliament held an assize, where they gathered and examined evidence prior to the trial date. At the assize, Francis seemed to talk in circles and untangle the mess in which he found himself. He was able to cast enough doubt to make himself less guilty in the eyes of the court. Some charges were dismissed but the treason charge remained. The cure for the treason charge was Samuel Harvey's confession. Will wanted to help Francis and found his opportunity when he learned that Samuel Harvey's cousin, Sir Thomas Palmer, was nearby. After a card game that lasted all day and extended into the evening, Will won the final round and claimed Harvey's confession as his prize.

Sybilla had figured out that Dandy was the anonymous sender of jewelry. He had hoped that Mariotta would fall in love with him, but once she attributed the jewelry to Francis, Dandy decided instead to frame Crawford. Not only did he try to create a wedge in her marriage, he was also the shooter at the Papingo contest. In the past year he had also tried to poison Richard on one occasion and tried to drown him on another. Sybilla had obtained some of Dandy's important papers and was furnishing them as proof. She suggested that he write a confession and then leave the country. She was generously giving him a two day head start before she would make his confession public. Sybilla made sure that Andrew's mother, Lady Catherine, was well cared for in her son's absence. The confessions from both Harvey and Dandy helped with the accusations against Francis. The charge of treason was dismissed and Francis was freed. Sybilla rejoiced in their reunion.

Part Four, Chapter IV Analysis

Chapter four of part four ties up the loose ends of the story. It opens by depicting the state of Scotland during the time of Queen Mary. By doing so, the author reminds us that it was a time of death and desperation. The people were passionate. Francis experienced their passion, in both good and not so good ways. His assize began as merely a formality, but the parliament soon learned that he was an exceptional man. In a last minute turn of events, Will comes through for Francis and defends him in the best way possible. He provides the court with a recently discovered copy of Samuel Harvey's confession. Also of added benefit to Francis' case is a confession signed by Dandy, with Sybilla's encouragement. She concluded that Dandy, not Francis, was Mariotta's mystery suitor as well as the mysterious archer from the Papingo shoot. Mother, son, and brother are reunited.



Characters

Francis Crawford of Lymond

Francis Crawford of Lymond is the main character. His first name is Francis, his surname is Crawford, and his territorial name is Lymond. Francis is often referred to in the book as simply Lymond. Francis is one of two brothers. His older brother is named Richard and they harbor a deep animosity toward one another. Their father and younger sister, Eloise, passed away. Their mother, Lady Sybilla Culter, survives them. Francis creates and leads his own troop of mercenary soldiers. They traverse the Scottish border with England, engaging in skirmishes without any clear allegiances. Formally a citizen of Scotland, he was accused of treason and, failing to appear in court for his accused crimes, he escaped to live as an outlaw. Despite his reputation, Crawford has his strong points. He is a charismatic man, popular with women for his looks and knowledge of romantic poetry, as well as his skill with the sword. The danger that surrounds him only adds to his allure. His methods may seem dubious, and his morals may seem skewed, but at heart he is a son of Scotland and wants what he believes is best for his country, even if that means fighting to win it. Over the course of the book, the reader learns that Crawford's motivation for all things in life is his sense of loyalty, although it isn't until the end of the book, when he risks his life to protect the queen's secret, that his character is redeemed.

Richard Crawford

Richard Crawford is the eldest of the two Crawford brothers. His mother is Lady Sybilla and his brother is the outlaw named Francis Crawford. As the oldest son, Richard holds the title of third baron Culter. He resides in Midculter castle along with his wife, Mariotta, and his mother. Richard and Francis have a very complicated relationship. Richard fails to see Francis motivations yet his actions always seem to bring disaster. For example, the raid on the convent, which resulted in the death of their younger sister, Eloise. In addition, Richard must feel some frustration by his constant association with a man who has been labeled a traitor by the government of Scotland. Richard is a wonderful swordsman, technically better than Francis, yet Francis' reputation always precedes Richard. The animosity between Richard and Francis comes to a climax when Richard mistakenly thinks Francis has become involved with his wife. Richard promises to kill Francis or bring him back for trial in a manner such that he wished he were dead. Despite this vow, during their time together the two are reminded of the good traits they each possess. By the end of the book the brothers make peace with one another. Richard also reunites with Mariotta.



Will Scott of Kincurd

Will Scott is the oldest son of Sir Walter Scott of Buccleuch and his wife, Janet Beaton. Will leaves home against his father's wishes and joins Francis Crawford's group. He is attracted to Francis' sense of loyalty and seeming straight-forwardness. Francis does not play the political game popular with others nor does he practice hypocrisy. He states his intentions and follows through without wavering. Will finds these traits to be admirable in a leader and lacking in Scotland's armed forces. Francis becomes Will's mentor. Will's character is an important one in the book for a number of reasons. First, his description of Francis gives the reader insight into how the man is viewed by his men and what characteristics they consider to be important. Second, Francis mentors Will and this interaction further reveals the depth of his character. Lastly, Will is torn between allegiance to Francis and allegiance to his father, the later of which should not be confused with the Scottish government. Will's connection to his father, Wat, is a dangerous link for Francis and on multiple occasions he suffers for it.

Mariotta

Richard's wife is named Mariotta. The reader learns that her family lives far away and that she came to Midculter specifically to marry Richard. At times she is lonely and regrets her choice in marriage. Mariotta is of the opinion that Richard is emotionally distant and uninterested in her. When Mariotta does find herself pregnant she experiences a miscarriage and loses their baby boy. Richard's lack of interest leaves her craving attention. She fantasizes about Richard's dark and dangerous brother, Francis. When Mariotta receives jewels from an anonymous stranger she mistakenly believes they are from Francis, but they were actually sent by Dandy Hunter. Her only companions are her mother and law, Lady Sybilla, and a young teenager of the court, Lady Agnes.

Sybilla

Lady Sybilla is the mother of Francis and Richard Crawford. She is a cunning woman. Lady Sybilla practices a demure exterior for the pleasure of the court but she is far from unintelligent. She listens and watches. The result is that she seems to always know what happens at court, both officially and behind the scenes. When Mariotta complains about her lack of control over her own life, Sybilla suggests that Mariotta adopt a similar strategy. Sybilla was known to occasionally manipulate a situation or person. Sybilla schemes to return Francis' reputation, but does so subtly, as fits her status as a lady. She is ultimately responsible for Dandy Hunter's confession and disappearance. In her spare time Lady Sybilla is interested in alchemy.



Andrew

Sir Andrew Hunter is known throughout the book as Dandy. Dandy is single and his only relative is his elderly mother whose health is declining. In her desperation Mariotta confides in dandy about her loneliness. Dandy begins sending her gifts of jewelry, but when Mariotta mistook the sender for another man Dandy switches his tactic. Dandy is known by his peers for being very sensitive, but the opposite can also be true. When he was unable to win Mariotta easily Dandy began framing other people in an effort to break-up Mariotta's marriage. Ultimately Sybilla convinces him to leave Scotland.

Dame Catherine Hunter

Dame Catherine Hunter is Dandy's mother. She can best be described as testy. Dame Catherine would snap at someone continuously during their visit but then be sad when they departed due to her behavior. She is partially paralyzed and is bed ridden.

Jonathan Crouch

Jonathan Crouch is one of three men Francis Crawford seeks. Crawford believes that one or all three of the men have the power to revive his reputation and return him to his Scottish birth right. Jonathan Crouch dies before Francis reaches him, but he makes a statement that is witnessed by a priest and carried by a lady.

Somerville family

The Somerville family consists of Gideon Somerville, his wife Kate, and their daughter Philippa. The Somerville family are instrumental in Francis Crawford's adventures. Their first encounter with him is not a positive one- he releases all of their animals and lets them run free. However they learn that he is a man of many talents and eventually they help him to escape.

Lady Christian Stewart and Sym Bogle

Lady Christian Stewart is a blind woman who serves as an assistant to the court. After much reluctance on her part she becomes engaged to Thomas Erskine. Lady Christian's assistant is named Sym Bogle. Sym finds a water logged and unconscious stranger in the marsh one day. He drags the man back to the estate, where Christian first encounters him. Her blindness prevents her from recognizing Francis Crawford as the man accused of treason. Christian and Sym unknowingly become entangled in Francis Crawford's adventures. Christian's willingness to obtain sensitive information for Francis ultimately helps him to recover his reputation. Unfortunately, Lady Christian and Sym both die in a horse riding accident.



Lady Agnes Herries

Lady Agnes Herries is described as spoiled and not well mannered. Following the death of her father, her grandfather sends her to live at Midculter hoping that Sybilla can teach her some refinement. At thirteen years old she is still a child but shows no sign of impending maturation. Although she was betrothed to Governor Hamilton's son, she was unhappy with the idea of an arranged marriage and still hoped for a romance. Lady Herries eventually marries John Maxwell.

John Maxwell

John Maxwell is a Scottish nobleman. He is aware of Agnes Herries' betrothal, but sends her romantic letters and steals her affection. The two eventually get married.

Thomas Erskine

Thomas Erskine is a soldier for the Scottish forces. He is often teamed with Richard Crawford in assignments for the government. Tom is engaged to Lady Christian when she tragically dies.

Mary Queen of Scots

At the time of the book, 1547, Mary Queen of Scotland was just four years old. The government is busy deciding what path for her future would gain the best national stability. Her mother is Mary of Guise, the widow of King James V, and is known as the Dowager, or widowed, Queen of Scotland.

Johnnie Bullo

Johnnie Bullo is a roving gypsy. He will gladly accept payment for almost any assignment and readily works for Francis Crawford, although they are not true friends. Johnnie Bullo accepts payment from Sybilla to conduct an alchemy experiment. It is just a hoax and she reveals it as such.



Objects/Places

Scotland

Scotland is the home to the majority of the characters. It is the primary geographical setting for the book.

England

England is a neighboring country to Scotland. England's government wishes to align itself with Scotland through marriage. If this is not possible it plans to annex Scotland through war. They share a large border which is perpetually experiencing skirmishes.

France

France is also interested in an alliance with Scotland. Unlike England, France has never tried to dominate Scotland by force. France and Scotland share a common religion which is a major point in favor of Scotland's alliance with France (as opposed to an alliance with England).

Spain

Spain is a minor player with regards to the eruption of war on Scottish soil, however they do have a fleet of ships waiting just off of the coast for much of the book.

Edinburgh Castle

Home of Queen Mary. Edinburgh Castle is heavily guarded against invasion. It is also the home of many of Scotland's government officials. For this reason, Crawford is taken back to Edinburgh to stand trial and for his preliminary assize.

Midculter Castle

Midculter Castle is the home of Richard and Mariotta Culter, as well as Richard's mother, Lady Sybilla.

Branxholm Castle

Home of Buccleuch family. Wat and Janet Buccleuch lived here with all of their children, including Will before he left home to join Crawford's camp.



Ballaggan Castle

Ballaggan Castle was the home of Dandy Hunter and his mother, Dame Catherine.

Sea-Catte

A Scotland bound maritime vessel called the Sea Catte arrived on the banks of Scotland secretly carrying Francis Crawford.

Ostrich

The Ostrich was the name of an ale house frequented by Crawford and his men. The proprietor was a woman named Molly.

Crawford's Camp

Crawford's camp was a military camp unlike any other. It was well stocked with supplies and when not active in battle Crawford's men enjoyed the camaraderie of camp.

Papingo Shoot

The Papingo shoot was an archery challenge that attracted participants from far away.

Flaw Valleys

Flaw Valleys is the home and farmland of the Somerville family. Gideon Somerville lives here with his wife, Kate, and their daughter Phillipa.

Bogle House

Bogle House is an alternate home for the Scottish royal family. They travel to Bogle House for special celebrations, such as the Christmas season.

St. Johnstone

St. Johnstone is the city where the glover lives. When Richard is attempting to track down the owner of the mysterious glove from the Papingo shoot he goes to St. Johnstone.



Nith River

Lady Agnes Herries fell into the Nith River.

Convent

In one of Francis Crawford's raids a convent is burned to the ground. Multiple women were inside, including his younger sister, Eloise. The ruins of the convent are also the stage for Francis' final capture by the Scottish troops.

Sword

The sword fight is a symbol of nobility in Scotland at the time of this book. Children of nobility are taught not just languages and politics, but also hand to hand combat. Therefore, skill with a sword is a matter of great pride.



Themes

Loyalty

Loyalty is an important theme in Dorothy Dunnett's novel. One could even say that loyalty is the driving factor in the main character's actions. Francis Crawford is loyal to everyone and everything he holds dear. He believes in the goodness of the country of Scotland. Even when the government turned its back on him Francis continued to fight covertly for it. Similarly, he loves his family. Francis' separation from his family was forced by his exile, not chosen willingly. His mother continued to try to recover his reputation during his exile and right up until the day his freedom was declared. Francis' brother, Richard, was also fiercely loyal. Unfortunately, Richard was not capable of flexibility, so he viewed things as always being definitive. Richard was unable to consider Francis as anything other than guilty of the crimes levied against him. As a loyal citizen of Scotland, he was fulfilling his obligation to the country. When he was finally forced to reconsider his view of Francis, his revelation came slowly. However, once his view changed, he was willing to risk his own freedom to see his brother safely across the border.

Francis Crawford's loyalty attracted like minded individuals. Will Buccleuch joined Francis' group because he believed in Francis' principles of loyalty and non-hypocrisy. Will shared these ideals and was proud to be associated with Francis. His view only changed when he mistakenly thought that Francis was selling him to the enemy. When Will realized his error, he returned to Francis' side. Another friend of Francis' was Gideon Somerville. Although their relationship began oddly, Gideon learned to appreciate Francis. He and his wife, Kate, defended his character and befriended him.

Love

The Game of Kings was filled with references to love. Francis was not in love with any single woman, although he did enjoy the company of many. His love for his family and country was strong. Francis was committed to the betterment of Scotland, which in turn would benefit his family. His only predicament with regards to family was concerning his sister in law, Mariotta. Francis was very clear about where he stood, but Mariotta wished for something more. Her search for love was based in her loneliness. Although she was married to Francis' brother, Richard, he gave her very little attention and she felt under appreciated. For his part, Richard was in love with his wife, even though he was not demonstrative. The idea that Mariotta could be involved with another man was so painful to Richard simply because he cared so deeply for her. Francis' only other family member, Sybilla, held a fierce love for her adventurous son. She continuously worked for his benefit.

Other examples of love include the budding romances between Agnes Herries and John Maxwell as well as the engagement of Tom Erskine and Lady Christian Stewart. Lady



Herries spent considerable time lamenting over the prospect of her arranged marriage. She could not abide by it and she dreaded the prospect. She hoped for a romantic love despite her betrothed status. When John Maxwell began courting her she accepted his overtures readily. Lady Christian was afraid of marriage in such an unstable time period, yet she cared for Tom Erskine and could find no reason to continually decline his marriage proposals. It was unfortunate that she passed away prior to their wedding day.

War

War permeated Dorothy Dunnett's novel "The Game of Kings." The year was 1547, a difficult time in Scotland's history. To ensure Scotland's stability, parliament explored different possibilities and alliances. One possibility was alliance with France, another was alliance with England. In both cases Scotland essentially had to promise the queen in marriage. Parliament was not inclined to align itself with England. For many years England had attempted to annex Scotland. Its military interest in Scotland had resulted in numerous battles along the border and many casualties. The main characters were subjected to this atmosphere. Battles abounded, injury and death were frequent, and alliances were based in strategy. Friends chose alliances based on the proximity of their home to the country's border. Espionage and smuggling were commonplace. Times were so desperate that the loyalty of some men could be bought. Danger was not in shortage. Medicine was not yet well established and advancements such as antibiotics were not discovered for many more centuries. Women lost their husbands and loved ones to the war. If they came home, and the women were fortunate enough to find themselves pregnant, they often died in childbirth. Of the women who survived, many of their infants did not. Starvation was a daily threat. The war affected every aspect of life in Scotland in the year 1547.

Style

Point of View

Dorothy Dunnett's "The Game of Kings" is written from the third person point of view. None of the characters speak directly to the reader; instead they are spoken about and pronouns are heavily used. This form of writing leaves the reader less emotionally attached to the characters. However, because there are so many characters in this book, I don't think that it could have effectively been written any other way. The author's purpose in writing the Lymond Chronicles, and in particular the first book, The Game of Kings, was to write a fictional account of a heroic character. By using the third person point of view Dorothy Dunnett is able to create multiple layers of the characters' personalities. This occurs not just through events in the book, but also through how each character reports their perspective. For example, how Mariotta discusses with Sybilla her feelings towards Richard, or how Will reflects on Francis Crawford's conduct.

Setting

The Game of Kings is set mostly in Scotland at a very difficult time in the nation's history. In 1547 Mary Stuart is a queen, but she is also just a four year old child. Her mother, Mary of Guise, is the widowed queen of King James V. She rules with input from parliament on her daughter's behalf, but the future of Scotland rests with the child. To ensure the country's stability, parliament explores different possibilities and alliances. One possibility is alliance with France, another is alliance with England. In both cases Scotland essentially has to promise the child away in marriage. The decision made will be a long term commitment of good faith. Parliament is not inclined to engage in such an alliance with England for two main reasons. First, the two countries practice different religions which would be a great source of friction for the people. Secondly, England has been trying to annex Scotland for many years. Its military interest in Scotland has resulted in numerous battles along the border and many casualties. It is in this atmosphere that the characters' lives unfold. Battles abound, injury and death are frequent, and alliances are strategic. All men are suspicious of one another and the main character is accused of treason. Espionage and smuggling are commonplace, dangerous past times. Scotland can be compared to a chess board, with the various characters as its playing pieces and the castles its game board.

Language and Meaning

The language of The Game of Kings was very challenging. The novel was partially written in a version of old English that the reader may find very difficult. Each chapter introduction as well as the dialogue of its many characters is written in an outdated mode of speech. It helps to read these areas phonetically. For example, the first sentence in the chapter introduction for chapter two of part two is written as follows:



"The third pawne... ought to be figured as a clerk... yf they wryte otherwyse than they ought to doe may ensewe moche harme and damage to the comyn." When read phonetically the sentence takes on the following meaning: The third pawn ought to be figured as a clerk, if they [were to do] otherwise than [what] they ought to do, [it] may ensue much harm and damage to the common [man]. If unfamiliar with this form of writing, the reader must consciously work through these areas. Lord Grey's lisp is especially difficult to read. Not only is the language outdated and written in a dialect, but he has a lisp which is conveyed phonetically as well. When he speaks the author replaces nearly each "s" sound with a "th" blend to reflect his particular speech. Sir becomes thir, English becomes Englith, and disappeared becomes dithappeared, etc. The author writes this way so that the reader can literally hear the characters' speaking. The method is effective but takes quite a while to become accustomed to.

Another important aspect of language was the use of titles. "Dowager" is the title given to every Scottish matronly widow. Sybilla's husband had died so she became known as the Dowager Culter. This is important to know because it would be a mistake to identify the Dowager Culter as a different woman than Lady Culter, when in fact they are one in the same. Another differentiation of title is important. The main character is Francis Crawford of Lymond. Francis is his first name, Crawford is his last, and Lymond is the name of his castle and associated territory. For most of the book he is referred to as Lymond, although this can be confusing. It is easy to confuse his last name as Lymond, and then forget that he and Richard are both brothers sharing the Crawford name.

Structure

This book is the first in a series of six novels collectively known as the Lymond Chronicles. This single book, *The Game of Kings*, is divided into a prelude of sorts called *Opening Gambit* and four additional lengthy parts. Each part is further subdivided into chapters, some of which have multiple, smaller sections. In its paperback form the book is five hundred and forty-three pages long.



Quotes

"Waiting for him in Edinburgh they wondered briefly, without concern, how he proposed to penetrate a walled city to reach them." page 11

"Europe, poised delicately over a brand-new board, waited for the opening gambit." page 31

"She shut the door, smiling, and left him to think it over." page 66

"He had a new ambition: in this penumbral region to cast a shadow bigger, grander and more devastating than Lymond's." page 96

"But nobody heeded him, for just then the leading wain rolled in bovine panic off the road and sank two wheels up to the axle in mud." page 105

"Violence in nature is one thing, " said Christian, "but among civilized mankind, what excuse is there?" page 156

"The proposition was ludicrous: at any other time he would have dealt with it promptly and sharply." page 219

"You are the only person with a shaky interest in ethics and the emotional stability of a quince seed in a cup of lukewarm water." page 254

"And in the coming encounter she had a queer feeling that the Dowager would be more vulnerable than her son." page 289

"It was not his fault that he was too late." page 328

"The horse, already overexcited, entered a glory of self-induced fright and, the reins swaying against its knees, took the bit between its teeth." page 399

"The cost to both men was a growing tiredness, magnified by the long chase and by the emotional battle upstairs." page 416

"He spoke without embarrassment of such episodes in his life, but with discretion." page 459

"In other words, Parliament is busy with weightier matters than treason. " page 496

"Dismiss the ruthless plotting, the devious schemes for battle, and gain which we have heard about this afternoon- he is simple and vulnerable." page 519

"I hope that we are choosing wisdom as well as pride, and a long peace as well as a quick harbour." page 543



Topics for Discussion

Describe the geographic setting of the novel.

The novel is set at a pivotal era in the history of Europe. Describe the politics of the region.

Compare and contrast the Crawford brothers.

The women of the story appear demure but are strong in their own right. Please extrapolate on this idea.

What attracted Will Scott to Francis Crawford's group of followers?

Francis Crawford was both loved and despised. How do you explain this dichotomy?

What is alchemy and what part does it play in the novel?

List and briefly describe the members of Francis Crawford's family.

In what way is Christian's impediment also her biggest asset?

Midculter, Edinburgh, and the convent were the locations of important scenes. Choose two of the three and describe their significance.