

Royal Assassin Study Guide

Royal Assassin by Robin Hobb

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Plot Summary

Royal Assassin, by Robin Hobb, is the story of FitzChivalry the bastard grandson of King Shrewd Farseer. Fitz has been trained as an assassin and sworn his life to the Farseer line. Fitz comes to realize that he must choose his own path. The story continues through trials as Fitz's uncle Regal attempts to kill Fitz and then successfully kills King Shrewd.

As the story begins Fitz is in the mountain kingdom recovering from when his uncle, Prince Regal, attempted to poison him. Fitz uses the Skill, a mental ability to find someone no matter of the distance, and realizes he is needed at home by his grandfather King Shrewd. Fitz and his friend Burrich ride back to Buckkeep. When they return, Fitz finds that his childhood friend, Molly, has come to Buckkeep in search of him. King Shrewd is very ill and his son, king-in-waiting Verity, uses Fitz for his various talents. Fitz is a trained assassin and has a slight ability to use the Skill. Fitz also is able to use the Wit, a mental ability to communicate with animals. Using the Wit Fitz finds a wolf named Nighteyes and bonds with him as pack brothers. Using the Wit is considered dark magic and those found guilty of it are burned at the stake so Fitz tries to keep this a secret.

Verity has ships built to help protect the borders from Red Ships, Outlanders who come to raid and kill Verity's people. Even by using the Skill, Verity is unable to fully coordinate the ships in a way that makes them efficient at protecting the shores. Verity's wife, queen-in-waiting Kettricken, tells Verity that she believes she knows where to find the Elderlings, legendary beings that once rid the shores of the Red Ships. Desperate for an end to the raiding wars, Verity himself leaves in search of the Elderlings.

Not long after Verity goes on this search, Regal announces that they have received word that Verity is dead. Fitz knows this to be untrue due to his Skilling ability but can't prove it. Regal has his father killed. Fitz, with help from others loyal to Verity, are able to get Kettricken out of the castle unnoticed. Regal finds that Fitz is using the Wit and has him imprisoned. Fitz is being beaten badly by Regal's guards. Finally Fitz can't hold out any longer and waits until no one is watching to take a potion that helps him to leave his body, and he resides within Nighteyes' body.

Burrich digs up Fitz's body and calls Nighteyes to him. Fitz had been happy in Nighteyes' body but is called back to his own broken body regardless. Fitz is then faced with the problem of trying to prove his innocence of the charge of using the dark magic of Wit, but is unable to do so.



Prologue, Chapter 1-4

Prologue, Chapter 1-4 Summary

Royal Assassin, by Robin Hobb, is the story of FitzChivalry the bastard grandson of King Shrewd Farseer in the kingdom of Buckkeep. Fitz has been trained as an assassin and sworn his life to his king and the Farseer line. Fitz's life becomes complicated when he is forbidden to marry the girl he loves, when he chooses to use a magic called the Wit that is considered dark, and Shrewd's youngest son, Regal, has his father killed to take the crown.

~Prologue~ The story begins with FitzChivalry writing about the "Skill" and the "Wit." A man that possesses the Skill can reach another person's mind no matter how far away they are and communicate or even bend that person's actions. The Wit gives a person an ability to communicate with animals. The main character, Fitz, possesses both of these talents although he is not able to fully control his Skill. There is a warning with both of these gifts that if a person uses them too much that person can become overwhelmed by them. Wit is often called "beast magic" and is looked at as a dark art. Fitz is the bastard grandson of King Shrewd. There had been a girl named Molly whom Fitz liked. Fitz knew she left town with a young man. Fitz is unfit for anything in the palace since he isn't a true heir to the throne so never told her who he was. Fitz was approached by Chade, the king's secret assassin, to be trained as an assassin. No one except King Shrewd and the king-in-waiting, Veriety, know that Fitz is an assassin and Fitz has sworn his life to the throne and the king. Fitz is poisoned by the king-in-waiting's younger brother, Prince Regal. Fitz survives but is plagued with tremors. He decides he won't go back to the castle because of his weakness.

~Chapter 1~ Fitz awakens to find himself in King Shrewd's chambers and the Fool waiting on him. Fitz feels very odd but can't understand why he is back home with no memory of getting there. More confusing is the fact that the Fool, who normally is sharp tongued with Fitz is being very kind and calling him "my king." While he sits and talks to the Fool the two of them together begin to use the Skill and see Red Ships off the coast of a not-so-distant place that is being attacked. The Fool is able to help steady the images as they show children, men, and women being murdered and the attackers that are descending upon them. The visions shows a woman shielding children from the attackers but even with the Fool's added help Fitz can't steady the images enough to catch who the woman is or why she is so familiar, even though a moment before he had known her to be Molly. Fitz and King Shrewd feel each other's presence, and the king attempts to make a stronger connection with Fitz but Fitz loses his contact with the king while trying to focus on him. When Burrich arrives in Fitz' room Fitz is ready to start the journey home.

~2~ Fitz and Burrich leave the Mountain kingdom with a stablehand named Hands and head toward Buckkeep. On the way back to their home kingdom they stop in a town to stay for the night, and Burrich hears talk of how much everyone likes prince Regal and



how poorly people think of the king-in-waiting, Verity. The people are unhappy that Verity wants the people to pay taxes to defend the coast from the Red Ships that attack; he wants taxes even from the towns that don't live on the coast. Burrich knows that it will be dangerous for anyone to know who they serve or for Regal to hear that are coming home. When they get home and enter the stables, Burrich rebukes Fitz for speaking harshly to the guards as they enter and reminds him that while they were in the mountain kingdom, he was treated as a prince, but back at Buckkeep he is the bastard and nothing more.

~3~ The next morning Fitz is weak and sore but no longer fatigued. He makes his way to the tower to find that Verity has used the Skill to get Fitz to come. Verity is having many ships built so that in the spring when the Red Ships attack they will have a way to defend themselves. Fitz wants to go and look for Molly, but Verity gives him several tasks that need to be done around the castle. Fitz asks Verity about Regal and the attempt on his life as well as the plot to try and steal the crown that Fitz was able to stop. Verity explains that he could have his brother punished but that would just strengthen those that think his brother would make a better king. He also explains to Fitz that since Fritz has sworn loyalty to the crown that means loyalty to Regal as well as Verity and their father King Shrewd. Verity also states that some might someday say that Verity snatched the crown from his brother, Chivalry's, son, meaning Fitz. Fitz keeps still while Verity talks.

Verity and Fitz talk about the journey that Fitz and the others took to get back home and Verity explains that he was with him much of the way and knows how sick Fitz really is. Fitz is ashamed that Verity knows how weak he really is. Fitz goes back to his room to rest. On his way to his room he is stopped in the corridors by Lacey, the personal servant of Fitz's stepmother Patience. She takes Fitz to Patience's room. Patience had been offended when she first learned that her husband had a child before they had been married but had changed her mannerisms to him in past years since his father's death. Fitz is weak and begins to shake and spills the wine that Lacey has given him. Fitz is unable to hide his sickness fully from Patience, and she allows him to leave to his room but makes him promise to come and see her. Someone stops on the stairs to help him up and he tells the person that it is the wine he has consumed that has made him act this way. When he gets to his room the person walking him up turns out to be Molly. She is angry and yells at him that he lied to her and he wasn't a stable boy but the king's grandson. She also tells him that when her father died she had to leave town with her family and the man he saw her with was her cousin. She tells him that when she came to Buckkeep hoping for help from her friend she was thought a fool for looking for a stable boy and then she had realized he had given her nothing but lies. Fitz is too sick and fatigued to follow her as she leaves his room but at least he knows she is safe.

~4~ Fitz sleeps and the next day the Fool comes into the room and tells him he should go see the king soon. As soon as the Fool leaves, Patience and Lacey come into the room to talk to him. Patience explains to him how she managed to get Molly on as one of her personal servants without anyone noticing. She tells him that he must act as though he doesn't know Molly. She then tells him that he has given his life to the king and asks what Molly would do when she finds she only gets what is left over from the



King's demands. Fitz sleeps and when he awakens the secret passage in his room is open, which he takes the corridor to the secret room where Chade resides. Chade tells Fitz that he closely resembles his father and could easily be taught to mimic his mannerisms. He warns Fitz that someone will come to him someday and offer the same observations that he looks and acts like the once king-in-waiting and that Fitz needs to be ready to ward them off.

Chade tells Fitz that Verity's wife, queen-in-waiting Kettricken, doesn't do well with the social aspects of court and charges Fitz to visit her and to keep her company and teach her to play the games and gain support for her husband against Regal. Fitz leaves Chade's quarters and heads toward town. He finds a wolf pup for sale and the cub can talk to Fitz through the Wit. Fitz buys the pup to set it free, but it is so hurt that he takes it back to a shed outside the palace so he can care for it until it is well enough to be set free. He knows he can't bond with the animal and that Burrich will be upset with him for having the animal since the Wit is looked at as dark magic, so Fitz keeps it secret.

Prologue, Chapter 1-4 Analysis

Royal Assassin by Robin Hobb is the second book in a series of three. Since this is not the first book it begins at a point where the reader is unaware of what has transpired and what relationships have been solidified in book one. This, along with phrases and words specific to the book, will seem confusing for certain points, but the author does much explaining to the reader typically in the form of Fritz's thoughts. For instance, when he is talking about Molly and the way that they grew up together, it isn't significant to the reader other than letting them know they had a very important past together. There will be a lot of narration to get the reader caught up on necessary information.

The reader will see that Fitz is caught between his own free will and the fact that he has sworn himself to his king. He holds his friendships very closely, but the reader will see there isn't anyone in whom he fully confides. He has hidden things from Molly in his past; he hides things from Burrich regarding the wolf pup, and he doesn't tell King Shrewd or Verity what is going on. The reader has seen already that Verity and Fritz communicate on a limited basis through the Skill. In coming chapters the depth of how that affects both of them will be revealed.

Fitz takes in the wolf pup even though he knows it is a bad idea. His idea is to turn him loose. The explanation was given in the prologue that anyone that practiced the Wit too much was said to have more or less become the animal they were pulled to the strongest. The reader will see as the story continues that the wolf and Fitz hold a very strong bond, and it will become difficult for Fritz to hold the wolf's thoughts out of his mind.

Kettricken hasn't had a large part in the book to this point but the reader will find her role to be increasingly important very soon. Fitz will become a type of adviser to her despite the fact that he doesn't want to. She will prove to be much stronger than anyone would know at this point. The Fool also will prove an interesting character, and the reader will



see that the Fool will often give riddles about things that haven't yet happened or that are happening. Although it is clear that these riddles are important, the reader will read them and understand only as much as the main character.

Fitz is irritated by Patience but the reader will see later on that she truly cares for Fitz and tries to help him as much as she can. Molly also will continue to have a role in the story, though the main character seldom sees her or speaks to her because he was instructed not to by Patience.



Chapter 5-8

Chapter 5-8 Summary

~5~ Fitz is in the kitchen telling Burrich of finding Molly at Buckkeep when Burrich stops him and motions for Fitz to follow. Burrich tells Fitz to quit sulking and start acting like a man. He tells Fitz to comb his hair change his clothes and act like she might be watching him. Burrich also reminds him that part of being a man is to accept the daunting task given to you and to live up to it and then some.

Fitz takes Burrich's advice in this but continues to take care of the wolf pup and somehow manages to keep hidden from Burrich the fact that he is using the Wit. Fitz keeps telling the pup that they aren't a pack but the pup disagrees. Kettricken is talking to Fitz about the fact that she is kept in the castle like a spoiled child when there is work in the kingdom to be done. Fitz listens and then he tells her that she has a very important task of gathering supporters to her king. Kettricken takes his advice and begins to honor the ladies that sit with her regularly. A few days later King Shrewd calls on Fitz to come to his chamber. When Fitz arrives, the king, who is in poor health, first tells Fitz that he must promise not to spill Regal's blood over the things that have been done. After this the king tells Fitz of a neighboring town that has a woman that is trying to take over and rallying support of those that are against the king. Fitz goes to the town and is able to poison the woman's drink while she is threatening him. They are to have a duel but before the duel the poison works, and she breaks out into boils and sores in her mouth and on the tongue that are said to be punishment for betrayed spoken vows to your companions. The woman leaves the town to die but before Fitz leaves, it is commented to him that he looks a lot like his father.

~6~ As Fitz returns to Buckkeep he finds the queen-in-waiting Kettricken and Regal are horseback riding together. Fitz is worried that she is out riding her horse with him. He realizes when he is in the stables that Verity is using the Skill to call him. Verity tells him that Forged ones, people who have become zombie like after being attacked by the Red Ships, are attacking the country side. Fitz finds it hard to believe that they are working together since they are willing to fight each other for food or anything else they want but is instructed by Verity to find out how many Forged ones are in the kingdom and do it quietly. Fitz goes back to the palace and happens to cross Molly's path. Molly has nothing to say to him as she passes and doesn't give him much more than a look but the wolf cub enters his thoughts at that moment, and Fitz can't do anything but scold the wolf as Molly passes. The wolf's name is Nighteyes.

Fitz goes to King Shrewd's chambers to tell him of all that happened on his mission. When he gets to the door the king's new servant, Wallace, won't admit Fitz until the Fool shows up and they manage to force their way in. The king leaves a side room where he has been sitting in a steam bath of herbs provided by Regal but the king says that the herbs made his headache worse and not better. Wallace is dismissed and Fitz tells the king all of what happened. The king repeats some of the things that he says and after



Fitz and the Fool leave the room the Fool tells him that the king is failing in health, but if Fitz says any information twice, it is twice as heavy on the king's mind.

Fitz begins riding out to find what he can about the Forged ones in the woods and finds Ketricken being attacked by several Forged ones. Fitz is able to help her kill off some of the creatures; when they near the castle they find hunting parties out looking for her. Verity scolds her harshly when he rides up. Fitz soon learns that Regal had intentionally lost her and when he returned to the castle he went to his room and said nothing. Burrick had realized her horse wasn't back and sounded the alarm.

~8~ The next day everyone is ready for vengeance for the attack on Ketricken but she tells them that they should take off their finery and jewels because the ones they are hunting are their brothers and sisters. She puts a sword on and rides in the front with orders that clean kills are to be made and bodies brought back. Regal is outraged at her actions and tells Verity that she is trying to steal the crown. Verity slaps Regal. After the hunt and the funeral for the Forged ones that had been countrymen Fitz gets to his room and finds Chade's secret chamber open. Chade is excited that Ketricken might make a good queen. Chade's ferret eats some of the sausages on the table and begins to puke, and they realize it has been poisoned. Fitz is worried about Molly and when he finds her room he sneaks in to make sure she is alive. She attacks him until she realizes who it is. They talk for a moment until he finally admits that he loves her. As they kiss Fitz hears the wolf pup howling outside.

Chapter 5-8 Analysis

King Shrewd is very sick, but the reader isn't sure why at this point. It seems clear that the person that is attending the king works as much for Regal as he does the king and the herbs that Regal sent make the king feel worse rather than better, but the reader has no proof at this point as to what is ailing the king.

Patience bothers Fitz at this point but he will soon find that she has sacrificed much for him and will sacrifice as much as she feels necessary. The wolf cub continues to stray into Fitz's mind, and he tries to keep it at a distance but the reader sees already that the wolf and he are beginning to bond. His reason for not wanting to bond are easily understood but it will prove to be more than he can withstand.

Molly tells Fitz that she has just wanted him to tell her that he cares for her but the reader doesn't see much interaction between the two of them. This will prove to be wise for some time since Fitz has enemies in the court. Fitz also will grow his Skill to some degree with Verity's help. Ketricken doesn't act the way she is expected to in the court but this is beginning to prove to be a help rather than a hindrance. Verity likes her enough but the reader will find later on that she will continue to feel very lonely and fight with depression over her situation. She relies heavily on herself and the reader later sees she refuses help and guards and tries to do things her way despite the problems she has already faced. The reader will also learn she has a small touch of the Wit.



Verity is showing Fitz more of the Skill and how to control it, but the reader will see that this also has its repercussions. After Fitz no longer has dreams about Molly, the wolf is able to enter his mind at night. This will be how Fitz teaches the wolf to hunt but it will also strengthen the wolf's resolve that they are a pack and that he needs to stay with Fitz. The reader will see that the wolf will follow Fitz later on in the story and speaks to him at moments that cause him to be caught off guard.



Chapter 9-12

Chapter 9-12 Summary

~9~ Fitz goes the next morning to call on Patience to tell them to be extra cautious. Fitz is surprised to find Patience warning him about Regal and others in the court. Fitz goes about his day and finds that Kettricken has decided to walk to Buckkeep town in the snow. Fitz is angry that she would go alone after the attack from the Forged ones and goes quickly after her. Kettricken goes back reluctantly with Fitz. The wolf follows Fitz to get Kettricken even though Fitz tells him to get back home.

~10~ Fitz and the wolf hunt together through the Wit at night while Fitz is sleeping. Fitz is confronted by the guard the next day and he finds that some of them have decided that the queen-in-waiting needs her own guard. They ask him to be the one that tells Verity and ask his blessing. Fitz visits the queen-in-waiting and on his way to her the Fool stops him and riddles him with things he doesn't fully understand. When the Fool begins to leave he pulls his pants down to Fritz in front of people, making Fritz think that the Fool may not be his friend after all. When Fritz gets to Kettricken's room she is meditating and he realizes she has a small bit of the Skill in her.

~11~ Fitz is determined he won't bond with the wolf, Nighteyes as his mother named him, for fear of being condemned for using the black magic of the Wit. He takes Nighteyes out hunting and once they reach a small cabin in the woods far from the castle he repels at Nighteyes with the Wit and yells at him. Nighteyes feels hurt and betrayed and runs off. Fitz begins to walk home but doesn't make it far before he is captured by four Forged ones. They attack him calling him "meat" and biting him. Fitz doesn't have a proper weapon with him and is losing the fight when Nighteyes appears and saves him. After Fitz is back at the castle Verity and Fitz discuss what they need to do to ready themselves to fight. Verity gives Fitz old scrolls that may contain information on finding others that are older and have been trained in using the Skill successfully.

~12~ Verity dwindles away using the Skill, as it eats at men that use it, trying to keep his people safe. The people know nothing but that their king is a recluse that gives orders when the ships arrive. Verity gives Kettricken a garden that had belonged to his mother and this excites her as a symbol that perhaps he can care for her. Fitz finds Molly in Patience's room and she tells him that he can't marry a serving girl. Patience tells Fitz that if he gives it time they may be able to forget each other. Fitz breaks into Molly's room and learns that it was Prince Regal that convinced Molly it would be best if she left. Molly and Fitz swear their love to each other.

Chapter 9-12 Analysis

At this point in the story it becomes clear just what Patience has done for Fritz. It wasn't clear how devoted she was to him at the beginning of the tale. Later the reader will see



again how much she cares for him when he is in trouble. She knows more than she lets on and often the reader will see her casually hinting to things of which Fitz believes she is unaware.

Kettricken wants desperately for Verity to care for her. It will be some time before he returns her feelings. The reader will see that there are problems that will occur simply from him beginning to care for her. Regal will attempt to point to Kettricken as an outsider and someone who is conspiring against the king but at this point the reader has yet to see the full hatred he has for her.

Molly tells Fitz many things at this point in the story and they continually decide that they can't be together and then that they can. The reader will see later that Molly seems to resign herself to the role that she is able to have with Fitz although it doesn't last long. She looks at things very differently than Fitz does. She appears to see his devotion to the king as a sign that he loves her less, and he believes that standing up and working for the king may be the way to keep her safe. She will appear desperate later in the story for him to run away with her. He will appear desperate for her to be away from him so that she may be safe.

Fritz begins to bond with Nighteyes and the reader will see him give in to the desires that are so strong in that area. There appears to be little Fritz doesn't give into regardless of the warnings, as Burrich will point out later in the story. The wolf will hunt with him while they track Forged ones. This will eventually start the rumors that he is using the dark magic. Fitz states at this point in the story that he doesn't regret bonding with the beast but later on it will cause him great harm.

The Fool is an interesting character but the reader doesn't understand the scope of his role in the story. At this point the reader understands that he is either very smart or knows the future. It will be some time later in the story when those questions are answered.



Chapter 13-16

Chapter 13-16 Summary

~13~ Fitz decides he will ask the king for permission to marry Molly. He talks to Verity and there asks him if he can do something for the king other than be an assassin. Verity tells Fitz that he will find a place for him on one of his ships and even if King Shrewd doesn't consent to the marriage, when Verity is king he will allow the marriage. Part of the reason that Verity is willing to let Fitz go onto the ship is so Verity has a clear Skill connection to someone aboard the ship. Verity decides that he will teach Fitz how to Skill better before the sailing season starts. Verity touches Fitz to establish a Skill connection. Fitz is unable to work his Skill abilities and the physical touch is the only way for them to connect.

Fitz goes off, with Verity in his thoughts, to hunt for Forged ones. Fitz finds three almost immediately that have killed a small girl. Fitz fights them but is losing when his wolf comes and saves him. Verity lost connection with Fitz when the fighting began and guards and Verity show up quickly to help him but find the Forged ones already dead. Nighteyes hides quickly but Burrich and the others that see the bodies know it could not have been Fitz that killed them. Burrich agrees to teach Fitz to use an axe as his weapon while Verity is teaching him to Skill. The three of them are the only ones that know that Fitz is Skilling with Verity.

~14~ The next morning the Fool tells Fitz that if he will let him rummage through scrolls that Verity gave him for answers about the Elderlings, (legendary creatures that supposedly saved the kingdom from the Red Ship raids thousands of years ago), that he will tell Verity where he comes from and why. Fitz agrees and leaves the room.

When Fitz gets to the kitchen after his axe and Skill lesson the cook tells him that some have been saying that it looked like those Forged ones were killed by an animal. This equals dark magic and people who used the Wit were killed. Fitz then goes to visit King Shrewd and finds his room filled with thick smoke. Fitz empties the coffers and opens the windows. Regal arrives and Fitz is unable to talk about his marriage to Molly.

~15~ When Fitz returns to his room the Fool is still waiting. He tells Fitz where he comes from and then tells him that the reason he came to the kingdom is because of Fitz. The Fool knows the future and tells Fitz the Forged ones and those that create them will cover the land if Fitz' family falls. Fitz's family name is Farseer and the Fool tells Fitz the name was chosen for them because of Fitz. Fitz demands that the Fool leave and that he doesn't want to hear anymore.

Fitz goes to the great hall but begins to feel oddly. He got some of the chemical on him that had been in the ashes in the Kings room and it drugged him. The next morning Fitz goes again to a lesson with Verity and Burrich. Fitz had stayed all night with Molly and had little sleep. While he closed his eyes in a weary position, Fitz suddenly sees the



future where their land is attacked by those that come only to kill. After that moment of awakening Fitz is able to block and connect with Burrich easily each time.

~16~ Fitz is put on a ship called the Rurisk. Fitz goes back to the palace every ten days and finally gets an opportunity to ask King Shrewd about Molly. The king tells Fitz that Duke Brawndy's daughter, Celerity, wants to court Fitz. For reasons of the court King Shrewd refuses to consent to Fitz marrying a servant girl and refuses to let Fitz refuse Celerity, as it would be an insult to the duke for the bastard grandson to refuse nobility.

Back on the Rurisk Fitz gets orders from Verity that a watch tower is being attacked. They arrive in time to defeat the raiders and take their ship. Fitz gives Burrich his share of the spoils of the fight to save for Molly. The Rurisk has many more battles but not many victories. While encountering a Red Ship in the water the crew is paralyzed with fear. Fitz sees a white ship behind the Red Ship and a man that looks at him and points directly at Fitz. Fitz pushes him away with all the Skill he can control and the man splashes into the water. The spell is broken immediately and they are able to destroy the Red Ship. When Fitz asks where the white ship went no one else had seen it, not even Nighteyes or Verity through Fitz. Though they destroy many Red Ships, they are not making a noticeable difference, and Kettricken announces she will find a way to stop them.

Chapter 13-16 Analysis

The reader begins to see at this point the confusion that the main character endures. Fitz is almost certain Wallace and Regal are responsible for the king's condition but can't prove it. Later in the story it will be revealed the source of the king's mental and physical state but the reader won't understand that for some time.

The Fool is loyal to the king although we don't know why. The reader has found at this point that the Fool is very intelligent and knows that a good way to stay above suspicion is to appear not so friendly with Fitz. Later in the story the reader will find that the Fool becomes a target and will suffer for a time. He remains loyal to the king throughout the ordeal.

Fitz will be put in a compromising situation with Celerity, the Duke's daughter. The reader will find later on that if he is to stay loyal to Verity and to Kettricken, then he will be forced to give more attention to Celerity than he otherwise might. Molly will come to the realization that they can't be together but they will continue to see each other for some time.

Regal has his own agenda, which is become evident at this point. His true motives and reasons are not yet completely understood and will become more entangled as the plot thickens. The white ship is not explained and it is a piece of the puzzle, along with many others, that Fitz does not understand.

Fitz swore he would not bond with the wolf but the reader sees that it was not fully within his power. The Wit that gives Fitz the ability to communicate with the animal will

become something that causes him great trouble later in the book. Fitz knows it is considered a dark art and yet he continues to use it. The connection the two have is strong and keeps Fitz steadied at times. The reader will find later that the mental connection the two have will save Fitz's life at one point but later will cost him dearly.



Chapter 17-20

Chapter 17-20 Summary

~17~ Fitz doesn't go to the king's chambers unless he is called. When he is called he finds a letter to him from Celerity, Duke Brawndy's daughter at Bearn. Shrewd tells Fitz that he will write her a response back to be ready to go with the rider that evening. Fitz writes her a letter intended to make him sound like an oaf, dumb, and sickly and leaves it unsealed so that all can read it in the hopes her father will forbid her speaking of him.

Fitz goes to the market in Buckkeep and finds Molly shopping. They have lunch on the beach and he tells her of Celerity and the king's order that he and Molly may not wed. Molly leaves him in tears. Chade opens the secret passage to Fitz's chamber when Fitz returns home and they talk of Molly. Nothing makes Fitz feel any better.

~18~ Fitz goes to visit Kettricken who asks him about the Elderlings. Verity is in Fitz's mind and after listening to his wife he tells Fitz to bring her to him. Verity and Kettricken decide it is for the best that one of them use an old map they found and locate the Elderlings. They go to King Shrewd with this request, and Regal eagerly supports them leaving. Verity will leave in seven days with his wife staying behind in his stead as queen-in-waiting.

Fitz stops by Patience's room and Patience tells him that there is a very bitter herb that Molly has been taking that prevents pregnancy but can cause other problems. Fitz decides it will be better if he lets her move on with her life. The next time Fitz sees Molly he is unable to resist her and they sleep together again. While they sleep together Fitz catches glimpses of blond hair and afterward realizes he was seeing through Verity's eyes as he lay with Molly.

~19~ Verity has been gone from the palace for some time when a rider arrives from Ferry saying there has been a raid. Regal listens to the boy but says it is too late to send help and does nothing. All the methods that should have been used to get word out that the town was under attack were not used or the messages didn't make their way to Buckkeep but Fitz doesn't know why.

Verity, still in Fitz's mind, tells him to go to his map room and look for an object. When Fitz gets there he finds someone has gone through the room looking for something but Fitz doesn't know what. He finds some jewelry that belonged to Verity's mother and Fitz puts it safely away. Due to Verity's feelings for Kettricken, Fitz has begun to have feelings for her and so tries to be very formal in her presence. Kettricken tries to keep her place and stop Regal's complete undermining of her husband but is unable to do much.

~20~ Regal is able to convince his father, King Shrewd, that funds are low enough that he begins to sell off Buckkeep's best livestock to throw parties. Fitz goes to talk to



Chade and learns that the herbs that are stealing the king's mind have been made by Chade. Chade swore to the king he would not speak of it and leaves Fitz.

Duke Brawndy of Bearn arrives at Buckkeep since his town was destroyed and no help sent. Regal all but ignores them as he throws festive dinners which insults the Duke.

Someone beat the Fool for sending messages to Verity although he didn't. The fool tells Fitz that either Molly or Kettricken is pregnant but Molly denies it. Molly tells Fitz that Patience and Burrich had once been in love, but Burrich had sworn his life to his king and so couldn't marry her.

Chapter 17-20 Analysis

It isn't until this point in the book that Kettricken and Verity are able to bond to each other. While this is a good thing for both her and him it begins to pose problems for Fitz because of the connection he and Verity share. The reader will see that it appears almost as if the feelings that Verity sends through him become his own regardless of how he actually feels. Kettricken will turn out to be the one that is pregnant. The Fool isn't completely clear on his riddles to Fitz but it appears at this point that he does know the future and have some idea about what needs to be done.

In the coming chapters the reader will find it more confusing as the truth about the king's illness comes out. Learning this the reader realizes that it is not Regal who is poisoning his father. Later on the reader will find that the king himself has asked that it be done. There has also been another mention of the white ship. Whether it is the same white ship that Fitz saw while they readied themselves to fight the Red Ship or not the reader isn't told and we don't have a clear picture of the origin or purpose of either ship.

Celerity will begin to be a larger problem for Fitz as the story continues. Fitz and Molly care for each other but the reader will see how difficult it is for them to continue although Molly seems content to try. Some of the Reason for Patience taking such an interest in Molly's situation will also become apparent.

Fitz has kept many things secret from everyone at this point in the story. He has people he confides in but to everyone he holds a little back. Shortly the reader will find he has a need to open up fully to Chade. While the reader isn't told that he tells Chade about his Wit it is clear that he tells him about everything else that has happened including the connection he shares with Verity.

It appears in the next few chapters that there may be more at work trying to divide the kingdom than just Regal. The reader has been given small pieces of the puzzle but the complete picture is not yet there.



Chapter 21-24

Chapter 21-24 Summary

~21~ Regal ignores Duke Brawndy. After three days the Duke speaks to the king and is told that the attack on his realm is the Duke's problem and that they can't provide him with any aid. Kettricken takes Duke Brawndy aside and offers him a precious piece of jewelry from her home land to help rebuild his town and says it is from her and her husband Verity. Duke Brawndy tells Fitz that he approves of him and he may see Celerity. Fitz doesn't want to see the girl but fears making them angry and undoing what Kettricken has accomplished.

Fitz goes to see the king and Shrewd realizes that Verity is with Fitz. Fitz takes the king's hand and Verity and Shrewd are allowed to converse. At this point Fitz realizes that the King is in intense pain and there is a disease eating his body. The king tells Verity that Regal's spies have discovered that Duke Brawndy and Kettricken are both traitors to the crown. Verity warns his father to not trust Regal's spies without confirmation. Fitz is physically hurt by being the conversational piece, and the Fool helps him back to his room. While he lays in his bed waiting for the Fool to bring tea, two of Regal's Skill workers enter the room. One tries to kill him with his mind, but Nighteyes attacks the man's mind viciously.

~22~ The next day Fitz is summoned to Chade's room. He tells Chade everything, including his connection with Verity, so that Chade may help in revealing what is really going on.

Later Burrich arrives and is wounded. Burrich is surprised that no one knew they were coming. Verity had sent messages back through those that work the Skill in the castle to let them know what happened. He demands to see the king and reports that king-in-waiting Verity and his travelers were attacked by men that wore no colors but were organized. Those that were injured, including Burrick, were sent back to Buckkeep with a message entrusted to one of the men. Along the way the men were attacked and all were killed except Burrick and the message stolen. King Shrewd listens carefully but drowsily and doesn't respond fully. Fitz takes Burrich back to his room to tend to his wounded leg.

~23~ Kettricken receives messages from Duke Brawndy at Bearns for some time but eventually they stop and the rumors that are heard tell that the land runs red with blood. Other towns are attacked and Regal ignores them all. Fitz is talking with Burrich and Burrich asks about Kettricken. Burrich decides that he will stand guard outside her door since she is pregnant.

Fitz goes to his room and finds Skill workers there that had attacked him a few days ago. They had been looking for something in his room but he is unsure what. Fitz goes out to go to Town and is denied permission to leave the palace. While arguing with the



guard Molly runs up and has been attacked by two masked men who searched her for something and warned her that aiding the bastard would put her own life in danger as a traitor.

~24~ Regal sells food from storage, animals, and furniture from the palace for his parties. Fitz goes to bed one night and wakes to Chade shaking him violently and telling him that Red Ships are attacking Neatbay, a town next to Buckkeep. Chade sends Fitz to tell the king. When Fitz enters Regal has him attacked by guards, but the king has command of his senses for a moment while he listens to Fitz. Chade had sent a code message to his brother through Fitz. King Shrewd sends ships and warriors to the town to aid them. Kettricken goes along.

Burrich saddles to go with them and travels with Fitz. Nighteyes gets next to them and Burrich is called "heart of the pack" by Nighteyes as the other dogs called him. When they reach the town they fight the Red Ship warriors and are surprised that they seem to go after Kettricken even though she has no way of being identified. While they rejoice in their victory someone calls Fitz "Wolf Man." Burrich warns Fitz again against using the Wit but to no avail.

Chapter 21-24 Analysis

The reader sees at this point in the story that Nighteyes wasn't able to be kept a secret. If it had been possible that Nighteyes knew that he would be putting Fitz in danger to stay with him he might have felt differently about staying with Fitz. The reader isn't told that the wolf understands this concept or that Fitz ever tried to relate it to him.

Molly is angry with Fitz and it is clear to see why. Although she loves him, he is beginning to see that being with her is not only frowned upon but is dangerous for her. To an extent it appears that Fitz has cared for himself and his feelings more than he has cared for those around him. The reader will see in the following chapters that he continues to have trouble with the boundaries that he should respect.

Burrich and Patience had loved each other but were never able to be together. It appears at one point in the story that Patience may have been angry over this decision but at this point in the story it appears that Burrich may have been right. Fitz might be able to leave the service of the king if the king were Verity but he is unable to fully keep his promise to his king and give Molly anything in return. Even if Fitz were not a king's man, he uses the Wit which puts his life in danger and would likewise put Molly's in danger also.

Although Kettricken is doing a good job at securing support for her husband it will prove to not be enough. Regal will be able to gain control of the crown. The king will ultimately die due to those that are Skill workers and are loyal to Regal. The reader will see again that Fitz is continually interested in fulfilling his own desires and Fitz will kill the person who murders the king. There will be many things in the story that the reader will be left wondering about since this is the second part in a three part series. Fitz sees the white

ship again but once again no one that he is with sees the ship. This is one more question that Fitz is curious about.

The gift that Kettricken gave to Duke Brawndy was never said to be a secret but it is hinted at that Regal never knew of the gift. Regal tried to get Kettricken to stay when she volunteered to go fight with the others. It appears that instead of keeping her safe he intended to make sure she was murdered in their absence.



Chapter 25-28

Chapter 25-28 Summary

~25~ Kettricken and the others are riding back to Buckkeep rejoicing over their victory when they are halted in the road by a rider from Regal. The riders give Kettricken a letter that announces king-in-waiting Verity has died on the way to find the ancient beings for whom he was in searching. Fitz is unable to find Verity's thoughts within his own thoughts and fears that it may be true. Burrich and Fitz decide that they will go to King Shrewd and have him Skill through Fitz to see if they can get an answer from Verity later. When they return to the palace Regal makes crude comments publicly regarding Kettricken and announces that he will take her and his ailing father far from Buckkeep where they will be safe.

~26~ When Fitz and Burrich reach King Shrewd's room the Fool tries to stop them from using the king to skill for fear it will kill him but the king is anxious as well and the Fool is unable to stop them. Verity is alive but can't say much before Fitz is beginning to have trouble with the king drawing power from him during the Skilling. The king is weak but alive. Once back in his room Fitz finds the secret door open to Chade's room where they plan an escape for the king and Kettricken. Fitz goes to see Kettricken later and learns she has fallen down the stairs. He checks the stairs and finds that there had been a trap set for her. Fitz is visited a short time later by the Fool who has been badly beaten again. The Fool has been warned that Fitz and Burrich are going to take Shrewd, and the Fool, due to his loyalty, declares he will betray every secret Fitz has if they don't take him with his king.

~27~ To get Regal and his servant out of King Shrewd's bedroom for a moment while Chade checks on him and relays the plan to Shrewd, Kettricken pretends that the fall down the steps hurt her a great deal and that she fears for her child's life. Patience sends for chicken blood and Fitz waits hidden for Regal and his servant to pass by. Fitz manages to blow poison in the face of the one remaining guard, and Chade slips into the king's chamber. Regal has the doors cut down with an axe but can find only that the guard has had some type of attack and is now dead. Molly finds Fitz and tells him that she cares for him but that he doesn't care for her and leaves him. Chade has made a plan for Burrich is to take Kettricken and King Shrewd to the mountain kingdom that Kettricken came from before Regal's coronation ceremony.

~28~ Fitz goes to Verity's room and is thinking of him when suddenly he has skilled Verity. He is talking to Verity of all that has happened when Verity warns him that someone is listening. Outside the door Fitz finds Justin, a Skill worker of Regal's, sitting stunned from being mentally repelled. He calls Fitz a bastard and tells him that they knew that Verity was alive but there is no one that will believe Fitz. Fitz goes to his room but is called to Duke Brawndy of Bearn's room. Duke Brawndy tells Fitz that there are several other Dukes that want to follow Fitz and not Regal and will rally to him. Fitz is as vague as he can be and has to turn down the hand of the Duke's daughter claiming fear



for her safety. Later Chade is angry with Fitz for not refusing Brawndy more clearly since they are sworn to the king even if it is Regal, but Fitz thinks it better not to make an open enemy of Brawndy yet. Fitz tells Chade that when they are ready to abandon the castle they will be lead by a wolf to the passing place. Chade says nothing against this to Fitz's surprise. The Fool has been persuaded not to travel with them but to wait a few days and follow.

Chapter 25-28 Analysis

The reader is beginning to see at this point the real differences in Fitz and Molly. Molly wants a normal life with Fitz, and Fitz is unable to give her that. It appears that he knows that he can't give her what she wants but he doesn't want to let her go because of how much he wants her. It continually seems to come back to what Fitz wants. Even after Molly tells him that she has found someone else and that she doesn't want Fitz in her life anymore the reader will see he still tries to find ways to convince himself he will be able to win her back. Fitz will continue to think intensely of Molly but she will not appear again in the story other than in Fitz's dreams.

Although Fitz is selfish in some respects the reader sees him willing to make a decision to save those he cares about from Regal by forfeiting his life before Regal can force lies about them that will end their lives. Many of the characters, Molly, Patience, Duke Brawndy, and others, will not realize at this point what has happened. Since this is a part two in the series the reader will not be left with all the answers regarding the long term happenings to these characters after Fitz is gone.

Fitz is beginning to walk a thin line between traitor and loyalty. The thing the reader has to remember is that Fitz hasn't sworn a loyalty to just one person. Fitz's loyalty was sworn to the king and the Farseer line. Chade will be his steady rock on this point. The reader will see in the last few chapters how important Chade has been and will be to Fitz.

Nighteyes has had a seemingly small role in the story other than the fact that the Wit that combines them is enough to get Fitz killed. The reader will soon see just how important it is that Fitz has the wolf. Had Fitz not bonded with Nighteyes, it is very possible that he would have not been able to get free of Regal at all.

When Brawndy comes to Fitz and offers to support him if he wants to rule Buckkeep, Fitz suddenly realizes that what Chade and Shrewd had warned him about was true. He has but moments to decide. The reader saw that when this was first suggested to Fitz he acted like he understood it, but when the situation comes into play it becomes obvious that he has put no thought into what to "say" to end the situation swiftly. The main characters have a narrow road to walk since they are sworn to Regal in a sense just as much as they are to Verity despite the fact that Regal is a murderer and plots to take the throne.

The reader isn't fully aware at this point who is on Regal's side. Although the reader knows that Regal has someone who is helping him to try and murder people, the name of the person hasn't been divulged at this point. In the next few chapters that person will be named but not many of the characters realize who it is.



Chapter 29-33, Epilogue

Chapter 29-33, Epilogue Summary

~29~ Fitz and the Fool are in King Shrewd's room when the king tells them that he is too tired to escape and will die quietly in his bed. He asks to say goodbye to Verity and so draws on the Skill strength from Fitz. While he is saying goodbye to Verity Fitz realizes that the reason the king has been so weak is that two of Regal's Skill workers have been draining him to kill the king. Fitz gives the Fool to Chade and tells him to take him to safety and Fitz goes to kill the two Skill workers. Fitz is forced to kill them in front of everyone and is taken to the dungeon.

~30~ Fitz awakens in the dungeon and has been beaten a little. Patience is able to sneak him in two small apples and she tells him that he is to be put to death, but the Dukes are fighting Regal because of the accusations. Prince Regal and several Dukes come to visit Fitz and the Dukes strike a deal that if it can be proved that Fitz has been guilty of using the Wit that they will burn him at the stake but if he is found innocent then he will be allowed to stay and rule at Buckkeep. Prince Regal agrees reluctantly, but Fitz realizes that Regal will ensure he is dead before any trial can be held. Fitz later hears Chade through the stone wall but is unable to make out his words. He is concerned that Chade is still there and not with Kettricken. Verity and Fitz connect later through the skill and they talk of what has happened. Verity says he can't come back. Everyone with him fled or was killed and he is badly injured but knows he is close to finding help from the Elderlings. Regal shows Fitz a small girl that has come forth to tell of how she found Fitz laying in a battlefield sleeping with a wolf. Regal also tells him that the young maid that had been serving Kettricken had been Regal's assassin and spy. She was so young and innocent that Fitz never thought of it being her. Regal says that Kettricken didn't leave with a horse or warm clothing but says nothing else.

~31~ Nighteyes talks to Fitz and tells him that when Burrich came to him with the others they went a different way than the one they had planned. Nighteyes knows that they were talking fast but doesn't know what happened. The strongest of Regal's Skill workers, Will, comes to Fitz's cell door and tries to pry into Fitz's mind but is unable. He walks away but soon men come to beat Fitz while Will works on his mind. If Will can get into Fitz's mind he can make him confess any lie he wishes. Fitz makes the choice to protect his mind and not his body and is soon passed out from the pain. Later back in Fitz's cell, Burrich arrives drunk and pays the guards to see Fitz but is screaming what a traitor the boy is. He spits on Fitz and repeats to him that he should just lie down and die. After Burrich is gone Fitz realizes that there had been something in the spit and picks it up finding that it contains a potion.

~32~ Nighteyes tells Fitz that he must leave his body behind and come with him in his body. Fitz has done this before but is afraid to do it. Before Fitz can fully let go, they return for him and take him to be beaten again. Will is still unable to break his concentration and Regal informs Fitz that he will force him to betray everyone that



opposes Regal and he will hang Molly, Patience, the Dukes that defied him and everyone else that Fitz cares for as traitors to the crown. Fitz is able to get close enough to Will to put poison in his face. It wakens him enough that Fitz is no longer attacked mentally. Fitz begins to have a seizure and Regal has Fritz taken away. When Fitz gets to his cell, he takes what Burrich had given him and goes to Nighteyes.

~33~ Nighteyes and Fitz hunt together and are one. After a time Burrich finds Nighteyes and is able to call him. He manages to get Fitz's consciousness back into his body despite the fact that Fitz's body has been buried for some time.

~Epilogue~ Burrich and Chade had made a potion that would only look like death but not be death and Patience had claimed the body so that it wouldn't be burned. Fitz can't see anyone he cares about ever again because it would confirm that he practiced black magic Wit and his body is beaten and sore and useless but he is alive.

Chapter 29-33, Epilogue Analysis

There were many conflicts that started in the first book and were carried over into this one and many that were left unresolved until the next book. There were times in the book that Regal's skill workers were looking for something in Verity's room and even looked on Molly for the item, although the reader never finds out what that was. Burrich had warned Fitz about using the Wit but the reader sees that Burrich never truly gave up on Fitz. Chade likewise was there to help retrieve Fitz's body and call it back from Nighteyes.

The reader isn't told who Molly goes off with or what became of her but it is clear after Fitz has told her that he is an assassin that their relationship is over and Fitz's return from the grave further solidifies the fact that she is lost to him. Patience likewise will have to live with the fact that Fitz died. It seems she tried to become his mother as much she could and she would have to bury his body just like she buried her husbands. We are not told what happened to Kettricken and the Fool but it is clear that Burrich and Chade got them out safely with Nighteyes leading them along to the edge of the palace.

The reader sees at this point in the story just how afraid people were of the Wit. The only ones that were able to take Fitz's Wit secret were those to whom he was closest. It is unclear if they accepted the Wit because of their love for Fitz or if they accepted it because they were in a dire situation. Chade and Verity both tell Fitz that they need to use every skill at their disposal in regards to his Wit. Burrich is the only one that seems to honestly think it is wrong but continues to hold Fitz close to him. Burrich is the one that tells Fitz to go into Nighteyes' body. It appears that a large part of the reason that Burrich was willing to accept Fitz's dark secret is because Burrich himself had the Wit. It is possible that the fact that Burrich raised Fitz after the death of Fitz's father played a role in Burrich's willingness to ignore Fitz's Wit use.

After the death of King Shrewd, Fitz realizes that he had been trying to save his king from a traitorous prince. It isn't until the king was using him and the Skill to say goodbye

to Verity that he takes a moment to realize the man was betrayed by a son. This is another moment in the book that the reader will see Fitz realizing he had been thinking of himself as much as he was thinking of his king.



Characters

FitzChivalry Farseer

FitzChivalry, often referred to as Fitz or bastard, is the main character in Assassin's Quest. Fitz is the bastard grandson of King Shrewd. Fitz is fifteen when the story begins and the reader watches him mature in many ways. Fitz has sworn his life to his king at a very young age. Fitz, like many members of his family, have the gift of the Skill. The Skill is an ability that lets a person touch other people's minds no matter how far away they are. Fitz isn't able to control his Skill but the king-in-waiting Verity, King Shrewd's son and Fitz's uncle, is able to use Fitz because of Fitz's ability. Fitz also has the gift of the Wit. The Wit gives Fitz the ability to talk to animals. It is considered a dark magic and Fritz's close friends that know he has the ability warn him against using it.

Fritz's father died many years ago. Fitz lives in the palace; he is loyal and serves the king-in-waiting Verity but the younger son, Prince Regal, has tried more than once to kill Fritz and once came close to succeeding. Fritz spreads himself thin between trying to serve the king and remain loyal and following his own heart regarding a woman that he loves and on top of that, a wolf that he bonds with through the Wit. While Fitz is a good person and tries to care for those around him it becomes obvious through the story that he is also very young and has wants and desires that he has a hard time resisting.

Prince Regal Farseer

Prince Regal is not often seen in the first few chapters of the book although he is spoken of often. The main character, Fitz, has been poisoned by Regal in the conclusion of the last book and is spending time recovering and thinking a lot of Regal. Regal is the youngest son of King Shrewd and wants to take the throne from his brother Verity, who is king-in-waiting. Regal doesn't concern himself with the kingdom and spends most of his time throwing parties. The kingdom is being raided by Red Ships and Regal announces that it will be up to the people to defend themselves. While it is clear to a few that Regal doesn't care for anyone past himself Regal is very charming and does a good job of securing supporters.

Verity is desperate to save the people from the Red Ships and so takes a journey to look for a legendary people, the Elderlings. While he is gone Regal is able to use that time to finally take over the crown. Regal doesn't possess the Skill the way his brother does. Regal is heavy handed and quick to kill any that get in his way. He hates Fitz and thinks at the end of the book that he has successfully killed Fritz.



King Shrewd Farseer

King Shrewd is Fitz's grandfather, although Fritz is never allowed to call him grandfather. When Fritz was a small boy he was given a home by King Shrewd and swore to serve him.

Verity Farseer

Verity is King Shrewd's middle son and Fritz's uncle. Verity has the Skill ability and uses it to help keep away Red Ships even though the Skill eats away at him. Verity will leave the kingdom in search of a people that are recorded in their legend as having saved their country from the Red Ship many years ago.

Kettricken

Kettricken is the queen-in-waiting, wife of Verity. She comes from the Mountain Kingdom and acts much more defiant and capable than what most of the people are used to in their queen. Kettricken is very young but proves very strong and truthful to a fault.

The Fool

The Fool is a loyal servant to King Shrewd. He is an odd looking man who reveals to Fritz that he, the Fool, has come because he can see the future and knows that Fritz is the key to saving the people.

Molly

Molly grew up with Fritz when he was a young boy, not realizing he was the grandson of the king. She comes to the palace to be a servant and she and Fitz end up as lovers, though they are forbidden to marry. Molly will eventually be forced to leave Fitz because he refuses to turn his back on his king.

Burrich

Burrich helped to raise Fitz. Burrich is the stable master and has the gift of Wit himself although he has managed to refuse the urge to use it his whole life. Burrich is a true, loyal friend to Fitz.



Patience

Patience is Fitz's step-mother. She has come back to the palace to live despite the fact that she hates it because she is worried about Fritz. She is bothersome to Fitz oftentimes but sincerely cares for him.

Chade

Chade is the bastard brother of King Shrewd and a trained assassin that lives in a secret chamber in the castle. Few people know of his existence. He has taught Fitz how to be an assassin.

Celerity

The daughter of Duke Brawndy. She wishes to court Fitz, although Fitz cares nothing for her. Fitz will be forced to be polite to her because Verity and Kettricken need her father's support.



Objects/Places

Nighteyes

Nighteyes is the wolf that Fitz saves when he sees him in the market place in a cage. Despite Fitz's desire to keep the wolf at a distance they soon bond and Nighteyes saves Fitz's life more than once.

Buckkeep

The town in which Fitz was raised. Most of the story will take place in this town that faces the sea.

Elderlings

The mythical beings that Verity leaves the kingdom to find. Legend says that they are the only ones that can rid their shores of the Red Ships that come to destroy them.

Forged Ones

When the Red Ships attack they take prisoners. The people are left alive but all emotions are taken from them. They are not dumb creatures but are willing to do anything to get food or clothing or anything they desire. They are ruthless and kill a small girl to eat her. It is not known how they are made into Forged ones, but they can't be changed back.

Red Ships

Red Ships carry the warriors that come to raid King Shrewd's lands. The Red Ships are a sign to all that something terrible is going to happen.

Opal Jeweled Bracelet

Kettricken owned a very expensive Opal jeweled bracelet that she gives to Duke Brawndy to help rebuild his kingdom when Prince Regal had refused to help them.

Scrolls

Verity gives Fitz many different scrolls to read in the hopes the scrolls will reveal something about Elderlings or others that have the use of the Skill to help in defeating the Red Ships.



Deadroot

The poison given to Fitz by Prince Regal. It leaves him susceptible to uncontrollable shaking when he is fatigued.

Raspberry Leaf Tea

Raspberry tea leaf is the concoction that Ketricken takes to battle morning sickness from her pregnancy.

Stipple-leaf

Stipple-leaf is the extremely bitter herb that Molly takes to ensure that she doesn't become pregnant by Fitz. If taken too long, it can make a woman sick.



Themes

Loyalty

Loyalty is an ever-present theme in *Royal Assassin*. Everyone in the story has sworn themselves to someone in some fashion. There are moments when loyalty begins to be difficult to understand. Fitz, Burrich, and Chade have sworn loyalty to not only the current king, but the Farseer line. This means that they are just as much sworn to Regal as they are Shrewd and Verity. There are those that are sworn to Regal and so are willing to kill the king or spy for Regal.

The loyalty in the story often causes as much confusion for the characters as it does solve a problem. Fitz knows what Regal has done but King Shrewd forces Fitz to swear he won't hurt Regal. Regal is one of the few characters in the story that isn't loyal to anyone but himself. Molly and Fitz swear themselves to each other but time will prove that Fitz stretches himself too thin for Molly and she leaves. Even after she leaves, the reader will see that Fitz still cares about her and spends a lot of time mourning the fact that he has lost her due to his own actions. One of the strongest loyalties in the book is one that is never sworn. The bond between Nighteyes and Fitz. They never swear anything to each other; Nighteyes simply explains that they are pack and brothers. Nighteyes will never betray that loyalty—which is telling, seeing as that an animal is more capable of remaining true than most humans.

The Desire for Power

The desire for power comes into play with most often with the characters that are evil to some extent. Prince Regal wants power so badly that he is willing to kill his own father and everyone in his family so no one will be able to oppose him as ruler of Buckkeep. King Shrewd doesn't want to fight for power because of his illness and perhaps partly because it is his son that is trying to take the crown. Verity doesn't seem much interested in power at all apart from the fact that he wants to save his people, but it is power he is seeking regardless, but for noble reasons.

The other plots for power come into focus when a person looks at the Skill workers that are sworn to Regal. The Skill workers can feed off other people's Skill and take power in that respect. It is seen that Will, the strongest of Regal's Skill workers, wants to have Fitz to himself so he can feed off him. It is the Skill workers feeding off King Shrewd that kills him. It isn't known what they are doing until Shrewd is dead.

The Red Ships are maned by Outlanders. These people come to raid the coastal kingdoms and kill people but seem to have no desire other than to cause fear and to kill and take what they can. While this is never described as power their actions can clearly be attributed as a desire to have power over the people they attack.



Self-Searching

When the story begins Fitz is just fifteen years old. It follows him from a time when he is very young to the point that he has found a woman to love and begins to have aspirations for his future that don't fall in line with the life that Fitz has already sworn to his king. If Fitz were a normal boy growing up it would be enough to cause issues as seen in many books, but Fitz is the bastard grandson of the king. To add to this is the fact that Fitz can Skill, but only slightly. He feels that this has some place in his life but finds that he is unable to control this ability. The ability that he does have control over is Wit. The problem is that Wit is something that is looked at as a dark art and anyone found taking part in it is usually put to death.

Fitz doesn't go looking for a reason to use the Wit but isn't able to turn away from it and winds up bonded to a wolf pup. Fitz will spend a large portion of the book trying to hide this from others and making sure that those he cares about don't find out that he has been using the Wit. The Fool also tells Fitz that Fitz is a catalyst and a turning point for history. This forces Fitz to constantly take another look at his actions but unfortunately, it is usually only after he has acted that he takes time to think it through.



Style

Point of View

The story is written in first person from the view of the main character, FitzChivalry. It is written in past tense with a limited point of view from everyone except the main character. The reader knows everything that Fitz is feeling. Since the main character is able to Skill out to people, meaning connect with them telepathically, it is possible for the reader to see what other people are thinking at times but it is always what they are feeling at the moment that Fitz connects with them.

The point of view in the story also gives the reader the ability to have information on background that pertains to the events taking place in the story. Fitz explains in the front of the book about Skill and Wit and that the Wit is looked at as a dark magic. The reader is also able to have explanations about the relationships between the characters in the book. Without these insights, the reader would have a great deal of difficulty understanding this book without having read the first one. There is a lot of information that has to be understood in the first few chapters, but the point of view is helpful and the book is easily read.

Setting

Royal Assassin takes place primarily in the fictional kingdom of Buckkeep. The seasons and the landscape seem to mimic real life which makes it easy to understand. There are stables and ships that float on the sea. The main difference in the setting of the story and the reality of this world is that the characters in the book often have powers of some type. The powers that a person will read about are the Skill, the Wit, and the Fool has the capability of seeing the future and manipulating it. While the Fool says that there are some that have the skill of manipulating and knowing the future it seems that Fitz is unaware of that power.

The setting in the story makes it easily imagined. The reader won't have to wonder what a horse looks like since the author chose to keep the animals within the earth's reality. While the setting is rather ordinary in most respects the author does a good job of giving a detailed description of the landscape and the way of life of the inhabitants, both people and animals of this world. The realistic setting adds to the amazing feats that the characters accomplish and the dark forces they fight against.

Language and Meaning

The language in the story is different at different times in the story depending upon who is speaking. Burrich and Fitz have their own way of speaking to each other and it shows the reader how much they are used to each other. It is a very friendly tone. They take on a different tone when they are talking to King Shrewd. Fitz also talks differently to an



extent when he is talking to his teacher, Chade. The reader sees that the language will change to suite the situation. Kettricken, though straightforward and to the point, is very formal in her speaking. This seems to be more to ensure the fact that she is looked at as a capable queen rather than because she herself is formal.

There are two situations in the book that have language moments all their own. When Fitz is Skilling the conversations are in italics—there is very little that can be hidden between two people Skilling. These moments are shown in the dialog and often between Fitz and Nighteyes the reader will see that there are feelings that are not truly expressed in words. The Fool is also another example of language that is very unique. The fool has the ability to see pieces of the future but he constantly speaks in rhymes that seem to confuse the characters and frustrate rather than give answers. The reader is able to see later on the importance of the words that the Fool speaks but it appears confusing to the characters.

Structure

"Royal Assassin" is the second book in "The Farseer" trilogy. The book is 676 pages long with thirty-three chapters. These chapters vary in length with some as short as five pages. The reason for the chapters' varied length can be attributed to the author's choice of events to signify the end of a chapter rather than the number of pages it spans. There are also short passages at the beginning of each chapter that pertain to the chapter in some form. Some are nothing more than short poems or folklore, but others are history facts that Fitz recalls for the reader. These will all prove to be helpful in the reading.

At the beginning of the book the reader will find a Prelude that gives the reader information that connects the first book in the Farseer trilogy to Royal Assassin. The author repeats this again at the end of the book by putting a Epilogue that gives an explanation as to the events that happened in between book two and the next book. There is also a small passage in the back of the book that gives a small piece of the third book so the reader will have an idea of what is to come. The book is easily read and understood with all the information given. There are moments when things and feelings are overly described, but it all connects the story very well.



Quotes

"One trained in the Skill is able to reach out to another's mind, no matter how distant, and know what he is thinking. Those who are strongly Skilled can influence that thinking, or have converse with that person." Prologue: Page 1

"Fitz, nothing has changed. You're still a royal bastard, and Prince Regal still regards you as an obstacle." Chapter 2: Page 38

"To Burrich, the Wit that sometimes left me open to the minds of animals was a perversion, a disgusting weakness that no true man indulged."
Chapter 5: Page 102

"The Red Ships have taken the hearts of the Forged ones, and left their bodies to stalk us. Nonetheless, those we put down today are of the Six Duchies. Our own." Chapter 8: Page 157

"If you are weak,' he had threatened us, 'if you lack focus and discipline, if you are indulgent and inclined to pleasure, you will not master the Skill. Rather, the Skill will master you.'" Chapter 11: Page 220-221

"I knew an instant of dizzying terror. More than half beast...It wasn't so long ago or far away that folk with the Wit were burned alive." Chapter 14: Page 286

"And suddenly we meshed. I saw to the horizons of our future. We were a country besieged by a ravenous enemy who came to us only to kill and maim." Chapter 15: Page 313

"From the corner of my eyes, I had a glimpse of the Fool. There was fear in his colorless eyes, fear as I had never seen there before. And he was looking, not at Regal, but at me." Chapter 20: Page 408

"Beast man!' Justin hissed. 'You wallow in the filthiest of magics.'" Chapter 23: Page 478

"But lately even small actions of mine seem to take on consequences like a pebble in a landslide." Chapter 26: Page 547

"How long can you share minds with one who scratches and licks himself, who will roll in carrion, who goes mad when a female is in season, who thinks no further than his next meal, before you accept his values as your own? Then what will you be?" Chapter 28: Page 581

"Good-bye, boy,' he said gruffly, and stooped to kiss me on the forehead. It was farewell. He didn't expect to see me alive again. That made two of us." Chapter 29: Page 617



"Regal had invented for me something worse than merely dying. I could go to my death a self-proclaimed coward and traitor as well." Chapter 31: Page 646

"Leave that body for his one. It didn't work very well anyway. Stuck in a cage. No point to keeping it. No point to being a man at all." Chapter 32: Page 668

"Yet even now, when the pain presses most heavily and none of the herbs can turn its deep ache, when I consider the body that entraps my spirit, I recall my days as a Wolf, and know them not as a few but as a season of living. There is a comfort in their recalling, as well as a temptation." Epilogue: Page 675



Topics for Discussion

Describe the loyalty and honor that forces Fitz, Burrich, Chade and the others to realize that they must serve Regal even if he is not a good king. What seems to be the turning point for Burrich and Chade when they begin to openly resist Regal despite the fact that he is now king?

Explain the complex relationship that Molly and Fitz have. Do you think Fitz should have given her up or given up his king? Explain.

Molly claims to hate being lied to but in the end Fitz says it is the truth that broke what so many of his lies held together. Would Molly have been able to handle all the truths that Fitz carried if he had told her the truth from the first regarding being an assassin and using the Wit? Explain your answer.

Burrich tells Fitz that the Wit is a perversion of man and doesn't want Fitz to use it around him. Explain why Burrich was willing to use it to help save Fitz.

The Fool is a very interesting character. List the qualities that the author has given to the Fool that make him more effective as a significant character. What actions of the Fool, if any, do you find contradicting when the fact that he can see the future is taken into consideration? Explain.

The reader sees much of Regal's intentions and desires even though the reader is not able to read his thoughts. What can you deduct about the kind of King he will become? Explain.

After Fitz is put back into his body by Burrich and Chade the reader sees Fitz come to the realization that he can't go see anyone he cared about because it would confirm the dark magic of which he had been accused. Were there any others in Fitz's life that might have been capable of accepting his true nature? Explain why some of the other characters would or would not have been able to understand his using the Wit.