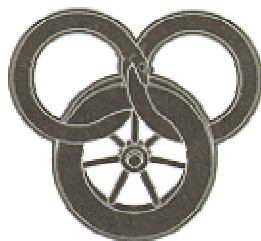

The *Wheel of Time* FAQ



“Surprising what you can dig out of books if you read long enough, isn’t it?” – Rand al’Thor

I of course have zero evidence for this, but since when has that stopped any of us? [David Wren-Hardin]

0.01 Introduction, Credits, and Contents

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- Ten Big Myths about Copyright Explained (<http://www.templetons.com/brad/copymyths.html>)

Introduction to the WOTFAQ – a word from the FAQueen

This is the *Wheel of Time* Wondrous Masterpiece of Assembled Knowledge, Theories, and Discussion (a.k.a. the Frequently Asked Questions compendium). ’Tis edited and maintained by me, **Leigh Butler**. The FAQ is based on discussion of *The Wheel of Time* series on the Usenet group `rec.arts.sf.written.robert-jordan`, as well as some personal correspondence, and a few other sources on the Web. This version of the WOTFAQ contains lots of **SPOILERS** for all books of *The Wheel of Time*, up to and including Book 10, *Crossroads of Twilight*. If you haven’t read, don’t read. There are versions of the WOTFAQ from before COT (i.e. no spoilers, but some out-dated theories), which you can find links to in the *Wheel of Time* Index (see section 0.08).

This version of the WOTFAQ (v7.0) has been updated to include information and theories from *Crossroads of Twilight*.

Standard reference format: [Book Abbreviation: Chapter Number, Chapter Name, Tor HC page number].

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Beta-testers/Proofreaders: A ton of thanks go to **Steven Cooper**, who went above and beyond the call of duty with an exhaustive proofread of the entire FAQ. You rock, Steven... A plethora of kudos also go to my crack team of nitpickers and



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Contents

Note on changes since the last version:

- Items marked (NEW) are sections which are, well, new.
- Items marked (UPDATED) are sections which include significant new information and/or discussion.
- Items marked (REVISED) are sections which contain some minor new info or discussion, but no major changes.
- The “Sources” section has been completely reorganized, with the old entries redistributed appropriately, but all sections marked “new,” “updated,” or “revised” do also contain new material.

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0.02 RJ says the FAQ is only 1/3 right. Why should I bother reading it?

RJ's standard comment on the FAQ is that it's "about one-third correct, one-third close but not quite, and one-third dead wrong" [e.g. post-ACOS signing in Charleston, South Carolina, 21 June 1996, report by **Brian Ritchie**]. If it's so incorrect, why bother reading it? **Bill Garrett** explains:

- 1) The FAQ isn't intended as a benchmark of absolute truth. It's a collection of frequently asked questions and our best answers to them, right or wrong. It's there so people with questions can find out what our answers and ideas are, all organized in one convenient place.
- 2) Of *course* the FAQ isn't 100% correct. Much of it is devoted to describing opposing viewpoints on key questions. For example, consider the "Who killed Asmodean?" entry. Numerous theories are presented, but at most one of them is correct and the rest are wrong – unless Asmodean was killed by a posse consisting of various Forsaken, Myrddraal, darkfriend Aiel, Padan Fain, and Bela.

You should read the FAQ because it will give you an idea of what has been said before by many people. Chances are, if you want to know what people think about a given theory, it's in here. Familiarizing yourself with other people's arguments will help you make your own more interesting and persuasive.



0.03 Acronyms and abbreviations used in the FAQ



Abbreviations referring to books, newsgroups, etc.

TWOT/WOT: *The Wheel of Time*

TEOTW: *The Eye of the World*

TGH: *The Great Hunt*

TDR: *The Dragon Reborn*

TSR: *The Shadow Rising*

TFOH: *The Fires of Heaven*

LOC: *Lord of Chaos*

ACOS: *A Crown of Swords*

TPOD: *The Path of Daggers*

WH: *Winter's Heart*

COT: *Crossroads of Twilight*

L:NS: *Legends: "New Spring"*

Guide: *The World of Robert Jordan's The Wheel of Time*

RAFO: "Read and Find Out." This is RJ's most common response to questions which fans ask him.

RJ: Robert Jordan

FAQ/WOTFAQ: WMAKTD, Wonderful Masterpiece of Assembled Knowledge, Theories, and Discussion (but FAQ is easier to say and makes for better puns)

rasfw: `rec.arts.sf.written`

rasfwrj: `rec.arts.sf.written.robert-jordan`

Abbreviations and jargon referring to stuff in TWOT

AM: Asha'man

AOL: Age of Legends

AS: Aes Sedai

- **SAS:** Salidar Aes Sedai (Egwene's faction)
- **TAS:** Tower Aes Sedai (Elaida's faction)

Asm/Asmo: Asmodean

BA: Black Ajah

BF: Balefire

BT: Black Tower

Dashivan'gar: Dashiva/Osan'gar

Dem: Demandred

DO: Dark One

DF: Darkfriend

DFS: Darkfriend Social

DotNM: Daughter of the Nine Moons

Eg/Egw: Egwene

El: Elayne

Finn: A/Eelfinn (Snakes and Foxes)

Finnland: the world(s?) where the Finn live

FS: Forsaken

Gars: Aran'gar and Osan'gar

Ish/Ishy: Ishamael

Mog/Moggy: Moghedien

Moi/Moir: Moiraine

MPS: Mad Passionate Sex, Mad Purple Stegosaurus, Many Purple Straws

MT: Mazrim Taim

Ny/Nyn: Nynaeve

OP: One Power

OR: Oath Rod

Randland: 1) The world where the series takes place; 2) The portion of the world shown on the Map.

Sam/Sammy: Sammael

Sem/Semi: Semirhage

SG: Shayol Ghul

SH: Shaidar Haran

SS: Siuan Sanche

TAR/T'A'R: *Tel'aran'rhiod*

TP: True Power (Dark One's Power)

TV: Tar Valon

WCs: Whitecloaks

WOs: Wise Ones

WT: White Tower

YKYBRTMRJW: You Know You've Been Reading Too Much Robert Jordan When...



0.04 What are these Jordan *Wheel of Time* books?

The Wheel of Time, by Robert Jordan: U.S. hardcover editions, from Tor Books:

- *The Eye of the World*, ISBN 0-312-85009-3
- *The Great Hunt*, ISBN 0-312-85140-5
- *The Dragon Reborn*, ISBN 0-312-85248-7
- *The Shadow Rising*, ISBN 0-312-85431-5
- *The Fires of Heaven*, ISBN 0-312-85427-7
- *Lord of Chaos*, ISBN 0-312-85428-5
- *A Crown of Swords*, ISBN 0-312-85767-5
- *The Path of Daggers*, ISBN 0-312-85769-1
- *Winter's Heart*, ISBN 0-312-86425-6
- *Crossroads of Twilight*, ISBN 0-312-86459-0

U.S. paperback editions, from Tor:

- *The Eye of the World*, ISBN 0-812-51181-6
- *The Great Hunt*, ISBN 0-812-51772-5
- *The Dragon Reborn*, ISBN 0-812-51371-1
- *The Shadow Rising*, ISBN 0-812-51373-8
- *The Fires of Heaven*, ISBN 0-812-50974-9
- *Lord of Chaos*, ISBN 0-812-51275-4
- *A Crown of Swords*, ISBN 0-812-55028-5
- *The Path of Daggers*, ISBN 0-812-55029-3
- *Winter's Heart*, ISBN 0-812-57558-X
- *Crossroads of Twilight*, ISBN 0-812-57133-9 (release date November 25, 2003)

Related Books, all from Tor:

- *The World of Robert Jordan's The Wheel of Time*, by Robert Jordan and Teresa Patterson, ISBN 0-312-86219-9
- *Legends*, ed. Robert Silverberg, ISBN 0-312-86787-5 (contains the WOT novella "New Spring," by RJ)
- *Legends 3*, ed. Robert Silverberg, ISBN 0-812-56664-5 (The hardcover *Legends* was split into three sections for the mass market paperback format. Volume 3 contains "New Spring")
- *New Spring (A Wheel of Time Prequel Novel)*, ISBN 0-765-30629-8 (a fleshed-out version of the "New Spring" novella, to be published in January 2004)

U.S. trade paperback editions, from Tor:

- *The Eye of the World*, ISBN 0-812-50048-2
- *The Great Hunt*, ISBN 0-812-50971-4
- *The Dragon Reborn*, ISBN 0-765-30511-9

In January of 2002, *The Eye of the World* was split into two volumes and republished as part of Tor's youth-oriented line of books:

- *From The Two Rivers*, ISBN 0-765-34184-0
- *To The Blight*, ISBN 0-765-34221-9

The text from the original is not abridged. FTTR has a new prologue chapter that features some of the characters a few years before the start of TEOTW; TTB includes a new glossary. Both books are illustrated.

In January of 2004, *The Great Hunt* will be similarly published as two YA mass market paperback volumes by Starscape:

- *The Hunt Begins: The Great Hunt, Volume 1*, ISBN 0-765-34843-8
- *New Threads in the Pattern: The Great Hunt, Volume 2*, ISBN 0-765-34844-6

The books are illustrated by Charles Keegan, who also did the art for the YA TEOTW books. There are no extra chapters that I'm aware of.

0.05 What should I do if I've become obsessed?

[Judy Ghirardelli]



Judy G. gives us intelligent advice on treatment of Jordan fanaticism:

1. Stop calling the nice lady at your local bookstore to harass her about when the next book will be out.
2. Lay down.
3. Stay laying down.
4. Try to not think about things like wheels, knives, spears, swords, doorways, Piglets, fire, severed hands, plucked out eyes, tattoos, leashes, calendars, irons, pincers, still images, gentle breezes, FAQs, Towers, wolves, falcons, hawks, hammers, axes, Roy, and lastly, DON'T THINK ABOUT RIVERS!
5. Now, pick up a copy of *The Tao of Pooh* and become an uncarved block.

(P.S. That will be 50 bucks...)

(P.P.S. The idea of not thinking about Roy while laying down is just a generally good practice, and might be applied to all the rest of you who won't admit you have a problem...)

0.06 What is the deal with those shoddy Tor covers that keep falling off?

[Eric Ebinger, Aaron Gray]



No, you are not alone in having the cover fall off of your paperback copy of TDR. What can you do about it? Patrick Nielsen Hayden says that you can send the book to Tor, and they will send you a new copy. You can also write a (snail-mail) letter of complaint to Tor. The address is on the inside of the books. **DO NOT SEND MEAN E-MAIL TO THE NICE TOR BOOKS MAN!!!! IT IS NOT HIS FAULT!!!** If you want to have a go at repairing them yourself, **Eric Ebinger** provides instructions:

Materials needed:

- dry sandpaper 220 grit
- Walther's Goo (available at finer model train stores everywhere)
- one or more *Wheel of Time* books, Tor edition, with loose or detached covers

Instructions:

1. If cover(s) are not yet completely detached, GENTLY and carefully detach them. A small, sharp knife may be helpful.
2. Take sandpaper and briskly sand the back of spine of the book (on the glue that failed to hold). Continue until the surface is slightly rough (don't over-sand). This should only take 10-20 seconds of sanding.
3. Lay the cover down on a flat surface with the outside DOWN. Gently sand the inside of the binding (where the spine of the book would be, if the book was still in its cover) until the wax coating is removed. Do not over-sand! The objective is to remove the wax coating so that the glue can get a grip.
4. Following directions on the package of Goo, spread glue on the binding area of the cover. Orient the book so that it's orientation matches that of the cover. Press the book binding down on the cover, lift, wait two minutes, press the book binding back down on the cover, and hold for two minutes.
5. Let dry overnight. The book should be better than new.

Aaron Gray offers a slightly simpler solution:

Ironing. You just stand the book on its edge (spine up), cover it with a towel, and iron the towel covered spine of the book. This will melt the glue underneath the cover without damaging the cover. I set my iron on high. So good luck...

0.07 Who is Robert Jordan, really? What else has he written?

"Robert Jordan" is actually a pseudonym for James Oliver Rigney, Jr., under which he has written the *Wheel of Time* fantasy series as well as several books of the "Conan" series (*Conan the Invincible*, *Conan the Unconquered*, *Conan the Magnificent*, *Conan the Victorious*, *Conan the Triumphant*, *Conan the Destroyer*, *Conan the Defender*).



Other pseudonyms which he has used are Reagan O'Neal (the "Fallon" series of historical novels), Jackson O'Reilly (*Cheyenne Raiders*, a Western), and Chang Lung (contributions to various periodicals including *Library Journal*) [Source: *Contemporary Authors*, vol. 140].

Many, if not all of the *Conan* books are still in print. Tor Books has re-released the *Fallon* books under the "Forge" imprint, with covers done by infamous fantasy artist Darrell K. Sweet.

RJ has told several people, at signings and in letters, that ~~if~~ when he completes TWOT, he plans to write another fantasy tale set in a Seanchan-like culture. The main character will be a more mature figure than Rand, and the tale involves him being shipwrecked in pseudo-Seanchan, where whatever is cast up on the shores of one's estate becomes one's property, even people. Doubtless, there'll be many changes from RJ's description to the actual story, but it gives us something to look forward to.

0.08 What other resources are out there, besides the FAQ?

With so much time in between books, we need something to occupy our time, right? Fortunately, there are many, many WOT-related web sites, newsgroups, chat rooms, mailing lists, ftp sites, fanzines, MUDs, and so forth. Since this FAQ is updated about as often as RJ puts out new books, I won't list URLs here; they'll just become outdated.

Instead, I will list one URL, for the Compleat Wheel of Time Index – the original (and still the best) index of WOT-related stuff on the Net. The site is updated much more frequently than this FAQ. The site changed hands in 2002, and is now maintained by Zeynep Dilli. The new URL is:

<http://www.ece.umd.edu/~dilli/WOT/WOTindex/>



0.09 How can I contact Robert Jordan?

RJ is not on the net.

You can send mail to RJ in care of his publisher, Tor Books. The address is given on the copyright page of the books:

Robert Jordan
c/o Tor Books
175 Fifth Ave.
New York, NY 10010

Tor forwards mail which they receive for RJ to him. They've been known to forward printed-out copies of e-mail which they've received for RJ. However, the Tor Books FAQ specifically says, "Don't send us email meant for our authors." So, you're taking your chances if you try to contact RJ that way. (You can read the Tor Books FAQ on their web site:

<http://www.tor.com/>.)



0.10 Is there a downloadable version of the FAQ?

If you would like a copy of the HTML version of the FAQ to keep on your own computer, there is a zip file you can download. This file is for personal use only. This means that you can keep the files on your personal computer and look at them whenever you want, but **you may not distribute it**. Among other things, you may not put it up on a web site. If you are interested in maintaining a mirror site for the FAQ, contact Pam Korda and Leigh Butler.

If we find bootleg copies of the FAQ on the web, we will reconsider our decision to distribute the FAQ in this way. Don't ruin things for everybody else.

The HTML version of the FAQ can be downloaded from <http://www.linuxmafia.com/jordan/COT-WOTFAQ.zip>. There is no plain text version available.



1 THE DARK SIDE

This section contains information on and discussion of the Shadow, and also the evil of Shadar Logoth.

1.1 The Forsaken – The Old Guard

This subsection contains information on and discussion of the thirteen Forsaken, in their original guises.

1.1.1 Who are the Forsaken? Where are they now?

[Mark Looi, Erica Sadun, Pam Korda, Leigh Butler]



During the AOL, many Aes Sedai turned to the Dark Side. The Guide tells us that:

... the best of them were given power and ability beyond that of others. ... Among themselves they were known as 'Those Chosen to Rule the World Forever,' or simply 'the Chosen.'

[Guide: 5, The Dark One and the Male Forsaken, 49]

In the Third Age, the term "Forsaken" is used to refer to the thirteen who were caught in the sealing of the Bore. According to the Guide [Guide: 5, The DO and the Male Forsaken, 50], those thirteen were the most powerful of the Chosen.

The thirteen Forsaken (in alphabetical order) are:

Aginor (M)

Real name: Ishar Morrad Chuain. Aliases: Osan'gar, Dashiva. Before turning to the Shadow, he was a famous biologist. He was the second most powerful of the male Forsaken. He created the various Shadowspawn, and was apparently never involved in military operations (RJ said that the guy who created the Trollocs had no combat experience [Correspondence]). Killed at the Eye of the World by drawing too much of the One Power during a confrontation with Rand [TEOTW: 51, Against the Shadow, 634-635]. He was recycled into the body of a middle-aged Borderlander by the Dark One, and called Osan'gar. Revealed to be masquerading as the Asha'man Dashiva [WH: 35, With the Choedan Kal, 645]. Killed, again, by Elza at the end of WH [ibid., 653].

Asmodean (M)

Real name: Joar Addam Nesossin [TFOH: 45, After the Storm, 516]. Alias: Jasin Natael. Before turning to the Shadow, he was a composer and musician; claimed to have joined the Shadow for the promise of eternal life, in which to practice songs and music. Thought by many to be the weakest and most cowardly of the Forsaken. Captured by Rand and shielded by Lanfear at Rhuidean [TSR: 58, The Traps of Rhuidean, 674-677]. Toast at the end of TFOH... twice! No body was found, so most people in Randland do not know he is dead, just that he has vanished. The DO is likely either unwilling or unable to recycle him, since:

...THOSE WHO BETRAY [the DO] WILL DIE THE FINAL DEATH.

The identity of his killer is unknown (see section 1.1.6).

Balthamel (M)

Real name: Eval Ramman. Aliases: Aran'gar, Halima. In the AOL, he was a historian before turning to the Dark Side. The Guide [Guide: 5, The DO and the Male Forsaken, 54] indicates that he may have run a spy network for the Shadow during the War of Power. He was notorious for being an utter lecher. Killed by the Green Man at the Eye of the World [TEOTW: 50, Meetings at the Eye, 630-631]. He has been recycled into the body of an attractive woman, and is called Aran'gar. Currently, she has infiltrated the Salidar Aes Sedai, and is acting as Egwene's masseuse.

Be'ial (M)

Real name: Duram Laddel Cham. Aliases: Netweaver, High Lord Samon of Tear. He was a lawyer in the AOL. After turning to the Shadow, he served as a general and governor. He was balefired by Moiraine in the Stone of Tear [TDR: 55, What is Written in Prophecy, 557].

Demandred (M)

Real name: Barid Bel Medar. During the AOL, played second fiddle to the Dragon until he got tired of being continually thought second-best to LTT [TFOH: 3, Pale Shadows, 76-77; LOC: Prologue, The First Message, 56-57], who he considered to be his intellectual inferior. He went over to the Shadow, where he served as a general. He hated and envied LTT intensely, and has transferred that feeling to Rand [TSR: 58, The Traps of Rhuidean, 677]. Knows how to block gateways. Current location unknown, though he is definitely involved in some manner with the Black Tower, either working through Mazrim Taim or independently (see section 1.1.5).

Graendal (F)

Real name: Kamarile Maradim Nindar. Alias: Lady Basene. **Steven Cooper** notes:

The nickname 'Maisia,' used by Sammael in ACOS, should perhaps be mentioned here. According to Thomas Howard, RJ explained it was a name commonly given to pets in the AOL (no wonder Graendal was not amused).

Before turning to the Shadow, she was a celebrated psychiatrist in the AOL [LOC: 6, Threads Woven of Shadow, 130-9], and an ascetic. In the habit of taking aristocrats and making them serve in some demeaning aspect, using enough Compulsion to fry their brains and make them useless. Currently in Arad Doman, having taken over somebody's palace, where she appears to visitors as a feeble old lady. She has one of the World's Greatest Generals, Lord Rodel Ituralde, working for her, though he doesn't know it, and has maneuvered him into an offensive against the Seanchan (see section 2.6.6). She seems to be underestimated by all the other Forsaken, besides Sammael. Was duped by Sammael, for a short time, into following him, due to his claim of being Nae'blis. She has recently been "reined in" by Moridin and his minions.

Ishamael (M)

Real name: Elan Morin Tedronai. Aliases: Ba'alzamon, Moridin. The most philosophically-minded of the Forsaken, he came up with many theories on the nature of the battle between the Creator and the DO [LOC: 6, Threads Woven of Shadow, 133]. Believed by many to be the most powerful Forsaken. Was partially or totally free during the Third Age (see section 1.1.8). Believed by the other Forsaken to be partially or totally mad. Frequent user of the "True Power." Killed by Rand in Tear [TDR: 55, What is Written in Prophecy, 570]. He has been recycled into the body of a dark, handsome young man, and calls himself Moridin. He has reassumed his pre-death position as Big Cheese in the Shadow's hierarchy, and seems to have most of the other Forsaken under his control. Has rescinded the order against killing Rand (see section 1.4.10).

Lanfear (F)

Real name: Mierin Eronaile. Aliases: Selene, Keille, Silvie, Else Grinwell (in TDR), Cyndane. She was the most powerful of the female Forsaken, and was maybe the second-strongest of all. Former lover of LTT, she believes she was rudely tossed over for Ilyena. She was not famous in the AOL [Guide: 6, The Female Forsaken and the Darkfriends], when she was a researcher into the One Power. She was one of the AS who opened the Bore, apparently unwittingly. Known for interfering in others' plans, twisting them to her advantage. Tackled by Moiraine in TFOH, and fell into Finnland. She has a new body, either from dying and being recycled, or from a wish to the Finn, and is called Cyndane (see section 1.2.4). Mindtrapped by Moridin, and apparently weaker in the OP than she was as Lanfear [WH: 35, With the Choedan Kal, 649].

Mesaana (F)

Real name: Saine Tarasind. Was rejected by the Collam Daan (a major research institution during the AOL), so instead of being a researcher, she ended up a teacher, until she found a way to Teach Them All! MUAHAHAH! She has been known to plot with Demandred and Semirhage. She had been the power behind the power behind the throne in the White Tower, running Elaida through Alviarin, until her failure to show up at the Battle of Shadar Logoth in WH earned her a... demotion. Her secret identity in the Tower is as yet unknown (see section 1.1.2).

Moghedien (F)

Real name: Lillen Moiral. Aliases: Gyldin, Marigan. During the AOL, she was a shady "investment advisor." During the War of Power, she ran a spy network. Believed to be the strongest Forsaken in *Tel'aran'rhiod*. She was captured by Nynaeve in Tanchico, but escaped [TSR: 54, Into the Palace, 631-3]. Captured by Nynaeve again in Salidar and forced to teach her and Elayne. Released by Aran'gar and summoned to Shayol Ghul, where she was severely punished, and was fitted with a mindtrap. Is now a lackey of Moridin. Current condition unknown; there is some suggestion that she may not have survived the Cleansing at the end of WH.

Rahvin (M)

Real Name: Ared Mosinel. Alias: Lord Gaebriel. Previously held Queen Morgase in thrall via Compulsion. Balefired by Rand at the end of TFOH.

Sammael (M)

Real name: Tel Janin Aellinsar. Alias: Lord Brend of Illian. During the AOL, he was an athlete. Served the DO as a general. Was given scar by LTT, hates Rand. Always wanted to be taller. He'd managed to get hold of a number of AOL goodies from stasis boxes, and some stuff from the Kin's stash in Ebou Dar. Killed by Mashadar during his battle with Rand in Shadar Logoth at the end of ACOS; this was confirmed by RJ during the CNN chat on December 12, 2000:

"Mashadar killed Sammael. Sammael is toast!"

[reported by **Erica Sadun** and **Patrick Cotrona**]

Semirhage (F)

Real name: Nemene Damendar Boann. Alias: Anath. She was a brilliant healer who took payment and pleasure in extracting extra pain from her patients; turned to the Dark Side to avoid being stilled or bound by an Oath Rod for her sadism. Has a penchant for gruesome torture. Hates Lanfear. Is very tall, with dark skin and eyes, and likes wearing black. Knows how to block open gateways. Current whereabouts: group consensus as of WH is that she is Anath, Tuon's scary retainer (see section 1.1.9). Like Mesaana, Semirhage was a no-show at the Cleansing; it is unknown whether she received a similar punishment, though the Seeker Almurat Mor does mention that Anath had "taken to seclusion" [COT: 4, The Tale of a Doll, 158].

1.1.2 Who is Mesaana in the Tower?

[Tony Zbaraschuck, Marc Zappala, Pam Korda, Leigh Butler]



In LOC, we find out that Mesaana is hiding out in the White Tower [LOC: 6, Threads Woven of Shadow, 138]. Naturally, this leads to the question of who she is pretending to be.

RJ has had a couple of things to say on the matter. He told **Tallis** at the Harvard Coop signing [January 18, 2003] that:

... there are many clues as to Mesaana's identity, enough that we should figure it out before COT. He basically said that he'd full-out reveal her in upcoming books, though: '...and if you still don't know, well, you'll find out later.'

Yeah, but we want to know now, don't we? When asked if we have actually seen Mesaana's alter ego in the Tower, RJ said yes, we have. [**Robert Mee**, Bailey's Crossroads signing, VA, January 23, 2003]

Of course, that doesn't narrow it down all that much, but it does at least mean that Mesaana is not likely to be some random servant in the Tower, or a sister we haven't been specifically introduced to.

There is some difficulty with the idea that Mesaana is posing as an already existing person that people know. None of the Forsaken (that we know of) have copied an already-prominent identity. Rather, they take a little-known or unknown identity and then promote themselves rapidly. Supplanting a well-known personality is not easy; it requires a total control of oneself, and the ability to copy the tiniest habits. This is especially true in the Tower, where Aes Sedai can doubtless read meaning in the tilt of an eyebrow or the tapping of a finger.

However, in [ACOS: Prologue, Lightnings, 41], Alviarin thinks:

She [Mesaana] must be one of the sisters; surely she was not among servants, bound to labor and sweat. But who? Too many women had been out of the Tower for years before Elaida's summons, too many had no close friends, or none at all.

Thus, Mesaana could be posing as one of the long-gone sisters, somebody who'd been gone so long that differences in personality, etc. would not seem too amiss, or one of the AS who is not known very well. (This is discussed further below.)

What other clues do we have?

1. Lip tapping.

In [ACOS: Prologue, Lightnings, 41], Alviarin notes that Mesaana taps her lip with her finger while thinking. Unfortunately, numerous Aes Sedai do this, among them Leane, Alviarin herself, Nesune [LOC: 27, Gifts, 395], Theodrin [ACOS: 11, An Oath, 210], Moiraine, and Vandene. So the lip-tapping thing is a fairly useless clue, and probably a red herring to boot.

2. Physical features.

When Mesaana's disguise is shattered by Shaidar Haran in [COT: 21, A Mark, 516], Alviarin sees:

... a blue-eyed woman ... a tantalizingly familiar woman who looked just short of her middle years.

This strongly suggests that Mesaana is pretending to be a sister that Alviarin knows.

Why? First, the fact that Alviarin finds Mesaana's face familiar at all means that it's part of her disguise (i.e. she's not walking around with a completely different face on). Secondly, note that Alviarin puts a definite age range to the Forsaken. Put these two facts together and then ask what factor could make someone's face somewhat familiar but not completely? Adding or removing the ageless look, that's what.

Mesaana's real face is not ageless, but she would have to add agelessness in order to pretend to be a sister. As we know from Siuan and Leane's escapades (and other examples as well), losing the ageless look changes your appearance sufficiently to make it difficult – but not impossible – for others to recognize you. So it appears that rather than go the whole hog, Mesaana has been opting to keep her real face and just make it ageless. There's no other reasonable explanation as to why Alviarin would only *kind of* recognize Mesaana's face.

There have been objections to this idea, mainly along the grounds that keeping anything of her real face in her disguise seems like a rather large risk to take. As long as you're going to go through the trouble of making your face ageless, why not change it completely while you're at it? [**Jim Mansfield**]

Well, for several reasons. One, it's valid to assume that the more elaborate the Illusion, the more difficult it is to create and maintain over long periods of time. The first lesson in successful undercover work is to keep things as simple as possible. Two, with the reasonable supposition that no other Forsaken besides herself are going to be wandering the Tower, why would Mesaana bother? Who besides the FS would recognize her true face? Much easier and less bother and effort to ageless-ize her real face than to make up another one. Third, there's precedent for it: Lanfear's "Selene" disguise was basically just a younger version of herself, and Egwene notes that Moggy's "Marigan" face is basically the same as her real face, except with careworn touches [LOC: 37, When Battle Begins, 489].

3. The great dress debate.

When Alviarin is groveling before Mesaana in [TPOD: 25, An Unwelcome Return, 497], she catches a glimpse of Mesaana's skirt:

Seizing the hem of Mesaana's dress, she rained kisses on it. The weave of Illusion... did not hold completely, with her frantically shifting the skirt's edge. Flickers of bronze silk with a thin border of intricately embroidered black scrollwork showed through.

The finery of Mesaana's dress cast further doubt on the possibility that she could be masquerading as a scullery maid or some such, though it's been pointed out that Mesaana could easily have deliberately changed into the silk in order to throw Alviarin off the scent or to test her loyalty [Dennis Higbee]. However, in COT she is wearing another silk dress, this time green "embroidered with elaborate bands of bronze." This second dress is more significant a clue than the first, as Jean Dufresne points out, because Alviarin had just pressed the panic button to summon Mesaana, which means that whatever Mesaana had to drop doing at a moment's notice, she was doing it in the silk dress. This again reinforces the idea that Mesaana is masquerading as someone who wears silk regularly, i.e. a sister.

The bronze color of the first dress led us to look among the Yellow or Brown Ajah for Mesaana, since Aes Sedai tend to dress in their Ajah colors (though that is only a tendency, not an absolute – Alanna, for instance, has been seen wearing blue and yellow, and she's a Green). The second dress, while green, also has bronze in it, and Rich Boyé points out that Mesaana is described as wearing "russet" in her inaugural appearance in the series [LOC: Prologue, The First Message, 55]. It's clear from Demandred's comments at that meeting that Mesaana was already ensconced in the Tower at that point, so it remains uncertain whether Mesaana's tendency to wear brownish colors is part of her disguise or just a personal predilection. In any case, it still factors in our consideration of who she might be impersonating.

4. Strength.

The last thing we should consider before moving on to specific candidates is Mesaana's strength in the Power. As a Forsaken, obviously her strength would far outstrip anyone else's in the Tower, and so must be disguised. A lot of people have used this as an argument against her pretending to be a sister, because we have had no direct evidence that you can only partially disguise your strength in the Power. Most examples of FS hiding their strength in the OP (Moggy as Gyldin/Marigan, Semirhage as Anath) have involved masking the ability completely, and indeed Mesaana does completely hide her ability when talking to Alviarin; but if Mesaana is pretending to be a sister, she clearly can't have it appear that she can't channel *at all* while walking around being her alter ego. Furthermore, Alviarin mentions that the others of the Chosen she had met let her sense their strength, how far above her they stood, and Mesaana was the only one who hid her ability completely [ACOS: Prologue, Lightnings, 41]. If Mesaana could partially hide her strength, why would she feel the need to hide her full strength when behind the Illusion? [Rajiv Mote]

Therese Wikström counters the latter point:

Sisters establish a pecking order based on strength in the Power. Hence, they know pretty well how strong any other Aes Sedai is. If Mesaana is posing as an Aes Sedai, and masking her ability to channel to a degree (say, from a 15 to an 8 on a scale from 1 to 20), she wouldn't reveal her secret identity's strength to Alviarin. If she did, Alviarin would only have to search among sisters of a certain strength.

That still does not explain, however, why Mesaana couldn't simply have chosen to appear to Alviarin showing her *full* strength. One possible explanation for this is that it is a side effect of reversing weaves (see section 2.3.18). Alviarin never senses any of Mesaana's channelling at all, which indicates she is reversing the weaves; if reversing hides the glow of someone embracing *saidar*, maybe it also hides the fact that the person can channel at all.

John Nowacki reports that RJ said, at a post-TPOD booksigning in Washington, DC, that a channeller can hide strength as well as ability to channel, but added that few people know how to do it and the AS don't even know these tricks are possible. There is also some indirect evidence of it from Lanfear, who disguised herself as Else Grinwell to move about the Tower [TDR: 24, Scouting and Discoveries, 224-225]. Else was a novice, so logically Lanfear couldn't have simply made it appear that she had *no* channelling ability, but then she certainly couldn't have her walking around radiating "Strongest Female Channeller Ever!" either.

Basically, with regard to the strength question, the evidence that Mesaana could partially hide her strength is not ironclad, but combined with RJ's say-so it'll have to do.

So who could she be?

The two main candidates for Mesaana's secret identity are Tarna Feir and Danelle.

One objection to both characters we should address at the outset is the problem of prior histories. It's pretty clear that both characters existed as "real" people in the past – Tarna for certain. There is her association with Galina, for one thing, and Pevara appears to know Tarna fairly well, commenting on her attitude toward men and when she had gained the shawl [COT: 22, One Answer, 521]. Pevara also comments that Elaida trusts Tarna, which indicates that Elaida knows her as well. As for Danelle, her insertion in Elaida's junta implies that she was a known commodity to at least a few of the conspirators. Also,

Siuan knew who Danelle was, since she was monitoring her progress in the library reconstruction project. This is commonly raised as arguments against either character being Mesaana, Alviarin's thoughts notwithstanding.

However, it's been pointed out that in such a small and tight-knit community as the Tower, creating a fictitious sister out of whole cloth would have been difficult if not impossible to accomplish. As long as we assume she's impersonating an AS, and RJ certainly seems to be steering us in that direction, then Mesaana almost *had* to choose to pretend to be an already existing sister.

But how does that square with our assumption that Mesaana must be using her own face as part of her disguise, as discussed above? The obvious answer to this is that either the sister in question had been gone so long from the Tower that no one remembered what she looked like, or (more likely) Mesaana happens to bear a significant resemblance to whomever she's pretending to be (in fact, that very well may have been how she decided who to replace in the first place).

Tarna

Tarna is the Red emissary to Salidar who interrogates/lectures Elayne and Nynaeve [LOC: 13, Under the Dust, 232] before disappearing for three books and finally resurfacing in Dorlan outside Tar Valon, citing traffic problems and weather to explain why it took her almost four months to get from Salidar to Tar Valon [COT: 22, One Answer, 524]. In [COT: 22, One Answer, 522] we learn that she has been named Elaida's Keeper in Alviarin's place.

For her:

- She has blue eyes, and is described as having an imperious, cold manner. What's more, Pevara thinks that her coldness is a change from how she remembers Tarna:

Pevara could remember a very jumpy novice, but the pale-haired woman's blue eyes were steady as stones, now. [COT: 22, One Answer, 521]

Counter-argument: She was an outcast wilder with a block as a novice; I'd be nervous a lot then, too. Maturity and self-confidence does tend to take the jumpy out of a person.

- As the new Keeper, would explain why Mesaana doesn't seem overly worried that Alviarin has lost her post.
- Chapter 13 of LOC (the one where Tarna talks to the Supergirls) has a Forsaken icon, even though no FS appear in that chapter. Tarna being Mesaana would explain this nicely, and Tarna certainly *seemed* evil in that conversation, especially since she mentions that Galina, a known BA, was her mentor.

Counter-argument: The Forsaken icon could have been there because Elayne and Nynaeve were discussing Moghedien in that chapter. [Patrick Cotrona] As for seeming evil, she's a Red wilder with a chip on her shoulder talking to a couple of runaway Accepted. The Galina association is neither here nor there; Galina *was* the head of Tarna's Ajah, after all, and if anything the information just emphasizes the problem of a previous history.

- Additionally, it could explain who was staring at Nynaeve and Theodrin out of the second story window at the end of the previous chapter.

Counter-argument: This is really thin. Even if the mysterious watcher was Tarna, it doesn't necessarily mean she's a Forsaken or even evil.

- As a wilder, Tarna is likely not to have had many friends in the Red Ajah, if Elaida's and Liandrin's opinions regarding wilders are any indication, and Seaine noted in [ACOS: 32, Sealed to the Flame, 517] that the Red Ajah firmly discourages friendships outside the Ajah.

Against her:

- Counter to her demeanor in LOC, Tarna behaves surprisingly non-evil in COT. She shows actual sympathy and courtesy to Gawyn in the Prologue, and her conversation with Pevara seems to indicate she is one of the few Tower AS with a clue. In particular, her suggestion that the Red Ajah should bond the Asha'man can be taken as a sign she is a Lightfriend.

Counter-argument: Or it could be taken as a sign that she is working for the Dark, seeing as how so many Asha'man are Darkfriends.

(Interestingly, one of the Salidar Sitters says that "Only a Darkfriend!" would propose such a thing [COT: 19, Surprises, 472]. It is left as an exercise for the reader to decide whether this is a point for or against the idea.)

- If Tarna is Mesaana, why would she have let herself get into such a transportation mess on the way back from Salidar, when she could have Travelled to the Tower instead, with enough time away to not be suspicious?

Counter-argument: Using the time to take care of other matters, perhaps? That way her alter ego has an unassailable alibi, and Mesaana's free to pop in and out of the Tower as needed.

- If Tarna is Mesaana, wouldn't Alviarin have recognized her when SH shatters Mesaana's disguise, since she just discovered that Tarna was her replacement as Keeper, and must have had the woman in the back of her mind?

Counter-argument: Actually, Elaida didn't tell Alviarin who had replaced her, only that she was out. As for just generally recognizing her, Tarna is ageless, so the same reasoning as above would apply as to why Alviarin didn't recognize her. Not to mention that having the Dark One standing in front of you (at least as far as Alviarin is concerned) is probably a tad distracting.

Danelle

Danelle is the dreamy-eyed Brown who participated in Elaida's coup in TSR. She has since been seen several times drifting aimlessly around the Tower, having been shunted to the periphery once Elaida was firmly in power.

For her:

- She also has blue eyes.
- She played a key role in unseating Siuan, and smirks at her at one point during the process.
- She is dreamy and friendless, which would have made the real Danelle easy to "replace". Alviarin specifically places Danelle among the sisters with no close friends or ties when ruminating on who Mesaana could be [ACOS: Prologue, Lightnings, 41].
- Danelle is Brown Ajah. Mesaana's tendency to wear brownish colors implies she is impersonating a Brown sister.

Counter-argument: Or it could only indicate a personal preference, as noted above.

Against her:

- If Danelle is Mesaana, her presence at the coup is bizarre: taking direct action both in the set-up and in the execution of Siuan's overthrow is very unlike the rest of what we see of Mesaana's manipulate-from-the-shadows behavior.
Counter-argument: This can be explained by supposing either that Mesaana is ballsier than she's letting on to Alviarin, or that Mesaana did not replace Danelle until after the coup.
- It's mentioned that Danelle wears wool, not silk [TFOH: Prologue, The First Sparks Fall, 13].

Conclusions

We must admit to the possibility that Mesaana is breaking with FS impersonator tradition and taking on a "real" identity. However, one thing to note about Tarna vs. Danelle is that while Tarna's prominence and visibility is going up, Danelle's has gone down.

Though it might be useful for Mesaana to put herself in as Keeper now that her lackey has been ousted, it seems like an awfully large risk to take, being so firmly in the public eye. If we suppose Mesaana is Danelle, on the other hand, we see a character who played an essential role in engineering Siuan's downfall but then quickly and quietly faded into the background once it was done. Still risky, but not nearly as much as playing Keeper Tarna.

In conclusion, both the Tarna-as-Mesaana theory and the Danelle-as-Mesaana theory have their problems, but overall it seems that Danelle is the more likely of the two.

1.1.3 Who was "Silvie"?

[Pam Korda, Joe Shaw]

"Silvie" is the name given by the old woman Egwene meets in T'A'R in [TDR: 27, *Tel'aran'rhiod*, 257-259]. All the evidence indicates that she was Lanfear.



The masquerade was most likely part of the plot to get Rand and/or Mat to go to Tear. Egwene and Nynaeve were to be Be'lal and Ish's bait to draw Rand, while Liandrin and co. were the bait to draw Egwene and Nynaeve. Of course, Rand was already on his way to Tear to stop the Forsaken's attacks through his dreams, but the girls were probably a backup in case he resisted the dreams or learned to shield them on his own. See Perrin's dream about the trap in [TDR: 43, *Shadowbrothers*, 426] which matches Egwene's dreams about "puppets" in [TDR: 37, *Fires in Cairhien*, 352-353]. Lanfear was playing along with Ish, but working towards her own goals. (Another possibility is that Lanfear sent them to mess up Be'lal and Mesaana's plan.)

The reason for ripping off Egwene's ring *ter'angreal* to throw her out of T'A'R was just her cruel streak; Lanfear knew she was a Dreamer since she had been haunting the White Tower as Else, and just wanted Egwene to go to the Heart of the Stone in T'A'R to make sure the girls decided to go there. Once she had accomplished that, why not send her out the hard way? After all, Lanfear claimed T'A'R as her domain (even though Moggy was stronger there), so there was no need for Egwene to learn too much about "her domain." Plus, her precious LTT reborn had once loved this girl; I'm sure she couldn't resist inflicting a little pain on her, especially since the fact that Egwene was bait to draw Rand to Tear meant that he still cared about her. That must have driven Lanfear bonkers.

1.1.4 Why did Sammael claim he had a truce with Rand?

[Carolyn Fusinato, John Novak, Don Harlow]



There are two possibilities:

1. Andris died in a pool of blood, delivering the message to Sammael that there would be no truce. Sammael lied to Graendal. Why would Sammael lie? All the Forsaken want to be Nae'blis. All the Forsaken think that Rand stands a chance at becoming Nae'blis if he caves to the Dark One. Therefore, all the Forsaken want Rand dead. The Dark One, on the other hand, most explicitly does *not* want Rand dead. He will punish any Forsaken who kills Rand. Therefore, all the Forsaken want to make the other Forsaken paranoid enough to bump Rand off on their own. This eliminates two contenders to the title of Nae'blis – Rand, and whichever idiot kills him.
2. Andris died in a pool of blood, delivering the message to Sammael that there *would* be a truce because someone else intervened to put Sammael off his guard while Rand readies his counter-stroke from Tear and the Plains of Maredo. Someone who knew that Sammael's emissary was meeting with Rand at that moment. Who was present? Bashere, a Saldaean named Hamad, some Aiel, and Aviendha. The evidence against this option is that Rand should have been able to feel another man channelling or have experienced goosebumps if a woman channelled, and Sammael's thoughts about manipulating Graendal [LOC: 23, To Understand a Message, 349] don't make sense if he isn't lying.

1.1.5 How do we know Demandred is not Taim?

[Leigh Butler]



Taim is not Demandred in disguise.

How do we know? Because RJ said so.

Q: "It's been said that you mentioned that Mazrim Taim is not Demandred. There seems to be some confusion on whether or not you said that."

A: "Mazrim Taim is not Demandred."

[Matthew Julius, post-COT signing, Dayton, OH, 16 January 2003]

Tim Kington concurs:

Q: "Taim is clearly not Demandred, right?"

A: (*disgusted*) "I've said that before, and it's not Taim, it's Ta-eeem."

The same response was also reported on wotmania.com, in LiveJournal's Wheel of Time community, and in several emails.

You don't really expect that to end the debate, do you?

We have multiple reports from multiple independent sources all saying the same thing; evidently RJ felt that the counter-evidence provided in WH (the double set of orders to the renegade Asha'man, Demandred's failure to recognize Flinn at the Cleansing) was sufficient to answer the question, and decided to stop beating about the bush on the subject. That effectively closes the topic as far as I am concerned.

FAQ policy has always been that the author's word is canon. If RJ says a thing is so, it's so. And with that I'm afraid the die-hard Taimandred fans will have to be satisfied.

(See section 1.5.6 and section 1.4.10 for more discussion on what Taim is up to.)

Okay, fine. If Demandred isn't Taim, then who is he, smartypants?

We don't know. There have been a lot of names bandied about as possibilities; Bashere, Masema, and the mysterious Taraboner seen in Arymilla's entourage outside Caemlyn [COT: 15, Gathering Darkness, 371] seem to be the most popular.

All of these can be debunked or contested for various reasons, but it's not necessary to do so:

Q: "Have we yet seen the alter ego Demandred presents to the Third Agers on-screen?"

A: "No." (I asked twice to make sure.)

[Michael Martin, Dayton OH signing]

So, if Demandred is disguising himself as someone, it's not someone we've met so far.

1.1.6 The Death of Asmodean (a.k.a. The Murder Mystery of DOOM)

[Karl-Johan Norén, Kevin Bartlett, Pam Korda, Leigh Butler]



[Asmodean] pulled open a small door, intending to find his way to the pantry. There should be some decent wine. One step, and he stopped, the blood draining from his face. "You? No!" The word still hung in the air when death took him.

[TFOH: 56, Glowing Embers, 682]

Note: Tons of thanks to Karl-Johan Norén and Kevin Bartlett, whose comprehensive analyses of Asmodean's death Pam plundered in order to give this section the thoroughness it deserves. Their original pages are linked from the Wheel of Time Index (see section 0.08).

Did Asmodean really die at the end of TFOH? Did Moridin ("death") take him?

Yes, he's dead. No, Moridin did not kidnap him. First of all, RJ clearly takes this series too seriously to use such a dastardly pun. Second, RJ told **Yancy Davis** at a post-TPOD signing in Northern Virginia that Asmodean is "road kill":

He also used the line, 'He's a cat that tried to cross the tracks and didn't quite make it.' Also, when I said, 'So he won't be back?' he responded, 'No, he will not be coming back.'

Third, **Aaron Bergman** asked this question at a post-TPOD book-signing in New York:

In particular, I asked whether "death" was just a pun on "Moridin." He said "Oh, god no," quite disgustedly.

Thankfully, that's the end of that theory.

General Considerations

Now that that's out of the way, let's get on to serious discussion. First, we will consider what the general requirements are for Asmodean's murderer. Second, we will round up all the usual suspects (and some unusual ones). Then, we will examine all the general requirements in detail, and see if we can draw any conclusions from them. Next, we will eliminate suspects who couldn't possibly have done it, and those who theoretically could have done it, but who probably didn't. Finally, we will examine the cases for and against the remaining suspects.

Requirements which must be satisfied by the murderer:

1. Means: be able to kill Asmo (a channeller) near-instantaneously.
2. Motive: have a motive.
3. Opportunity: be able to be in the Caemlyn palace at the time of the murder.
4. Be a person who Asmodean recognized, who he didn't expect to see, and of whom he was terrified.
5. Be able to dispose of the body.
6. Must know Asmodean's fate.
7. There must be a reason why it's kept a secret, by the author and the killer.
8. Be "obvious" from the instant he died (and we use the term loosely).

Suspects (overly-complete list):

- Aran'gar or Osan'gar
- Demandred
- Graendal
- Ishamael/Moridin
- Lanfear
- Mesaana
- Moghedien
- Moiraine
- Padan Fain
- Sammael
- Semirhage
- Shaidar Haran
- Slayer
- Taim
- some random minion of the DO (a *gholam*, Myrddraal, common DF etc.)

Now, on to discussion of particular requirements. We'll start off with the classic three requirements for solving any murder mystery: means, motive, and opportunity. Then, we'll consider other requirements for the particular "case" at hand.

Means: How was he killed?

Any good murder investigation begins with determining how the victim died. We are at a slight disadvantage, because there is no body to examine. The possible murder weapons are: channelling, a *gholam* (which, from another point of view, can also be considered a suspect), the Shadar Logoth dagger, and some purely physical means, such as a knife or sword.

What we do have is a (very short) description of his death: "the word still hung in the air when death took him." This indicates that he died very quickly. He did not get a chance to even *try* to run away or defend himself, even with the OP.

Given that, the Shadar Logoth dagger as the murder weapon poses a problem. Although once stabbed or scratched with it the victim's death is guaranteed, the victim doesn't die instantaneously. There is enough time for the stabbed one to gasp, fall to the ground, writhe around a bit, and finally die once the Mashadar-taint spreads through his body. See the scene in TFOH

where Fain kills the Accepted [TFOH: 19, Memories, 259], and the part in TGH where Mat kills the Seanchan guy [TGH: 45, Blademaster, 538]. While the latter seems to die much faster than the Accepted, he still does some writhing in agony which is not consistent with the quickness of Asmodean's death.

However, it is possible to kill extremely quickly with even a conventional dagger or knife, if you know what you are doing. A stab through the eye, for instance, or in the throat, can cause death in seconds. The problem with this, of course, is that Asmodean was a channeller. Remember, channelling is fast. Rand plucks daggers and spears out of the air in mid-flight; wouldn't Asmodean be similarly able to stop or at least deflect a knife?

Well, perhaps not. Unlike Rand, Asmodean was shielded, a shield that allowed him to channel "only a trickle." The question is whether that trickle would be enough to hold off a determined assailant who took him by surprise. Rand observed that floating a goblet across a room was about the extent of Asmodean's abilities [TFOH: 3, Pale Shadows, 73], and then later:

...wished he could see the shield Lanfear had woven. She had said it would dissipate with time, but Asmodean did not seem able to channel any more strongly now than he had the first day he was in Rand's hands. Perhaps she had lied, to give Asmodean false hope, to make Rand believe the man would grow strong enough to teach him more than he ever would. [TFOH: 52, Choices, 622]

If Asmo could barely lift a goblet, it doesn't seem likely that he would be able to stop a killing knife thrust.

This argument is somewhat contradicted, however, by yet another observation Rand makes after balefiring Rahvin and returning to the fighting outside the Caemlyn palace:

And Asmodean, sword held awkwardly and trying to look every way at once in case any Trolloc decided to turn back. Rand could sense *saidin* in him, though weakly; he did not think much of Asmodean's fighting had been with that blade. [TFOH: 55, The Threads Burn, 676]

The passage suggests that Asmodean could, in fact, defend himself with the OP. Consider, though, that Asmo's murderer took him completely by surprise, at close quarters, and was evidently someone Asmo was utterly terrified of; it's possible that even if Asmo did have the strength to fight off a non-channelling attacker, his shock could have frozen him for the critical moment needed to kill him with an ordinary weapon. (Note that this debate would not necessarily apply if Asmo's assailant was a *gholam*, since they are not only super-duper fast, but OP-resistant; however, it's unlikely that he was killed by a *gholam*, for reasons discussed below.)

So it's possible that Asmodean was killed by ordinary means. The more *plausible* murder weapon, though, is still channelling. While Asmo may or may not have been able to defend himself against conventional attack, we know he didn't stand a chance against any of the channelling suspects. The absence of a body lends more credence to the idea that the killer was a channeller, and that channelling was used in the murder (see below).

Was Asmodean balefired?

This is definitely a possibility. Certainly, any channeller who could have killed Asmo could have wanted to ensure that his thread was burned out of the Pattern.

When Demandred visits the DO in [LOC: Prologue, The First Message, 13-16], the DO lumps Asmodean in with Rahvin as having "died the final death." In Rahvin's case, this means he was balefired, and the DO cannot "step outside of time" to recycle him. Of course, there are other ways in which Asmo could have died with no possibility of recycling. For one thing, the DO may have the power to recycle Asmo, but chooses not to, because he was a traitor. Also, remember that Rand severed Asmo's link to the DO, and thus the DO might not have had the power to save Asmo's soul even if he'd wanted to.

Another point in favor of the balefire idea is the similarity between RJ's description of Asmo's death and that of Be'lal in [TDR: 55, What is Written in Prophecy, 557]:

Moiraine had not stopped or slowed while he spoke. She was no more than thirty paces from him when he moved his hand, and she raised both of hers as well.

There was an instant of surprise on the Forsaken's face, and he had time to scream, "No!" Then a bar of white fire hotter than the sun shot from the Aes Sedai's hands, a glaring rod that banished all shadows. Before it, Be'lal became a shape of shimmering motes, specks dancing in the light for less than a heartbeat, flecks consumed before his cry faded.

In particular, note the similarity between "flecks consumed before his cry faded" with "the word still hung in the air when death took him." This is certainly suggestive.

If Asmodean was killed by channelling, why didn't anybody sense it?

A common argument against the idea that Asmo was killed by channelling is that, if it was a man, Rand would have sensed the channelling, and if it was a woman, Rand or Aviendha would have sensed it. This isn't really a valid objection.

The range at which channelling can be sensed seems to depend on many different things: proximity, amount of OP being channelled, how much attention the senser is paying, the strength and experience of the senser, and any number of other variables (see section 2.3.5 for further analysis). In the case of Asmodean's death, we have many unknowns. We don't know how far he was from Rand and Avi when he died. He'd been walking through the palace, thinking about his situation, and there is no indication of how far he walked before opening that fateful door. It is entirely possible that he was too far away for the channelling to be detected by Rand and/or Aviendha, who were both distracted by other business. We don't know what form of channelling was used to kill him (if channelling it was) – balefire, fireballs, inverse healing, or something we don't know about, or how easy any of those things are to sense at a distance. There are too many unknowns and uncertainties to eliminate either half of the OP as the murder weapon.

Of course, the True Power cannot be sensed by anybody. As of WH, the only Forsaken who had permission to use the TP was Moridin, but we don't know when that prohibition went into effect, and an exception to the rule could have been made for this particular assassination anyway. So the True Power is also a possibility, though a slim one – the DO seems to be rather stingy with TP permission, and none of the Forsaken other than Ishydin seem very keen on using it.

Motive: “When I know why, I’ll know who”

The question of *why* Asmo was killed is perhaps the most complicated issue related to his death. Indeed, as the saying goes, if we knew why he was murdered, we could very likely figure out who did it. Here are the possible motives:

1. Ordered assassination from the DO, as punishment for treachery. All the Forsaken, Slayer, and the different random minions (possibly including Taim) could be acting under this scenario.
2. Enterprising person, deciding to kill Asmodean on their own accord, in accordance with some unknown (by us) plan. This requires that the murderer has gained the knowledge that Jasin Natael is really Asmodean.
3. Asmodean stumbled upon his murderer by chance, i.e. the murderer was in Caemlyn and the Palace for an entirely different reason and eliminated Asmo because he discovered him/her.
4. Ordered assassination, in order to allow Taim to show up in Caemlyn. This only works if the Minion Taim theory is true (see section 1.5.6).
5. Plot to cause confusion for Rand by killing his minions.

Note that 1, 4 and 5 can all be classified under “ordered by the DO,” and 5 could also be a special case of “personal enterprise.” Generally, 1, 2, 4, and 5 all involve premeditation, while 3 is just a crime of opportunity.

Any of the Forsaken could have acted under any of these motives. A random minion or Slayer would have been acting under orders, either from a Forsaken, or the DO. Taim could either be acting under orders or on his own, depending on which theory you buy. Fain could only have been acting under 3 or 5. We will now discuss the various motives.

Ordered assassination, as punishment for treachery

Now, it makes perfect sense that the DO and the various Forsaken would want to punish Asmodean for going over to Rand's side. However, if this was the sole motive for the murder, several things don't add up.

In general, people who betray the cause of the Shadow are killed in very visible, painful, messy ways, in order to send a message to others who might consider giving up the Dark Side. Examples of this are Amico and Joiya in TSR, and Ispan in TPOD. Asmodean's remains were not left behind as a lesson. Furthermore, he was killed quickly, with none of the gruesome torture experienced by other failures. The only way the method of the murder makes sense for it as a punishment is if it was done with balefire – more than just dying, his thread would have been burned out of the Pattern totally. This still doesn't make perfect sense, because if it was punishment why wasn't the fact that he was balefired shared with the other Forsaken, as a warning?

Timing

With this motive, we must also address the issue of timing. Why was Asmodean killed when he was? Given that Asmodean had been “on Rand's side” for at least two months when he was killed, the question of timing must be considered, at least if the murderer is one of the Forsaken. Couldn't he have been killed far earlier? It could be argued that because Asmodean hadn't spent much time in Caemlyn (less than one day) before he was murdered, the murderer wasn't working under a carefully rehearsed plan, but acting more on a sudden opportunity. However, any Forsaken who had set out to kill Asmo would have gone to Cairhien, found out about Rand's raid, and Traveled to Caemlyn. The same applies to Slayer and possibly Taim.

If Asmodean was killed as punishment, why did the DO (or somebody speaking for it) wait so long to give the order? It's possible that changing circumstances forced the DO or a Forsaken to act.

From the DO's or the Forsaken's point of view, the two big events were Lanfear's disappearance and Rahvin's death. The killing of Asmodean is likely connected with one or both of these events. Another possibility is that Asmodean was killed in order to facilitate having Taim join Rand in LOC (this is discussed separately, below). Yet another possibility is that Asmo's death heralds Moridin's resurrection.

Personal enterprise

Perhaps Asmodean was killed by somebody who had been planning it for a while, and had held off because he was a pet project of Lanfear's. When Lanfear vanished, whoever it was took the opportunity to remove him. (Problem with this: Lanfear claimed to her fellow Chosen that Asmo had gone over to Rand entirely of his own free will, not due to any scheme of hers.) Alternatively, the killer could have had some plan which required Asmodean's removal, and done so. This raises the question of why did they kill him when they did, rather than earlier? (See the discussion of timing, above.)

Accidental discovery

One possibility is that Asmo was not the specific target of the killer; he was just in the wrong place at the wrong time. Perhaps the killer was/is spying/plotting/etc. from within the court of the Dragon Reborn. Asmodean bumped into him on his way to the wine closet, recognized him, and got killed to protect his secret. Quoting from the relevant passage:

He pulled open a small door, intending to find his way to the pantry. There should be some decent wine.

Then we have, "You? No!" He was going to *look* for wine. He probably opened a door to an empty storeroom or hallway. It was *not* a wine pantry. He hadn't found it yet. If you reread the passage yourself, it seems that it may have even been an accident he ran into his killer (i.e. the killer wasn't planning on it, but since Asmodean saw him...). This motive fits well with the body being removed/destroyed. If the killing was for punishment, it would have made more sense for the body to be left, and the death widely publicized, to set an example.

So how could the body being discovered disclose something about the killer (to the other characters)? There are three possibilities:

1. The killer is part of Rand's entourage, and a dead Asmo could make people suspicious that there was a traitor in the ranks.
2. There is a hole in Rand's security, and a dead Asmo would inspire people to find it and patch it up.
3. The killer is hiding (not necessarily only from Rand – could also be from the Forsaken) and a dead body could start folks thinking the killer was active.

Tie-in to Minion Taim

We now know Taim is not Demandred in disguise (see section 1.1.5), so that is no longer a valid motive for Asmodean's murder. However, if it turns out, as WH suggests, that Taim is Demandred's minion, that could be just as good a motive as the Taimandred theory. If Taim is Dem's protégé, it's not unreasonable to assume that the other Forsaken, including Asmodean, knew who Taim was and probably even had seen him. Thus Asmo would have had to be eliminated to prevent him from betraying Taim's DF status to Rand.

One objection to this is that Demandred was not informed of the supposed plan to kill Asmodean on his lackey's behalf. However, we don't know for sure, if Taim is a DF, if he's working specifically for Demandred. Certainly, he couldn't have been originally (see section 1.5.6). Moridin could have ordered the hit and then only told Demandred (and/or Taim) about it later; Taim could even have killed Asmodean on his own initiative.

Simple plot to cause confusion

The killer may have killed Asmo as part of a plot to annoy or confuse Rand. The problem with this is that there are many better targets for a person with that motive. Why not go after somebody Rand actually cares about, like Mat, Avi, or Egwene? The only way this motive makes sense at all is if the killer knew Asmo's value to Rand as a teacher. In other words, the killer knew "Jasin Natael" was really Asmodean, and all the suspects who would know that have much better motives than causing confusion.

Opportunity

Needless to say, the murderer either was already in Caemlyn when Rand made his surprise raid, or had a way to get there at will. Furthermore, the killer must have been able to get into the Palace (and out again, with the body – see below). Now, any of the Forsaken could have done that easily, by Traveling. Minion Taim could have done the same. Shaidar Haran could have used the shadow-travel trick to get there. Slayer could have gotten to Caemlyn as easily as any of the Forsaken, via T'A'R. Moiraine could not have Traveled to Caemlyn, but it's possible that she got there via the Finn.

In Fain's case, it is known that he was in Tar Valon (some long way from Caemlyn) about 25 days before Asmo's death. It's not that likely that he could have made it in that time by conventional travel, although he could have used the Ways; there are known Waygates in both TV and Caemlyn. There is a further problem with Fain: if he'd had any actual plan to kill Asmo, he wouldn't have been in Caemlyn; he'd have been in Cairhien. The Caemlyn attack was a snap decision on Rand's part, and could not have been expected by *any* of the suspects. Thus, if the murderer went to the Caemlyn palace with the purpose of killing Asmodean, he/she must have some method of speedy traveling, such as Traveling.

“Then I saw her face...” – The recognition factor

Recognized by and terrified Asmo: again, any FS would be recognized. The extreme reaction implies it was somebody he never expected to see, like somebody he thought was dead. However, since Asmo was a weaselly coward, it's conceivable that any FS would terrify him, especially if he/she was about to kill him. However, we should ask why a FS would be walking around Rand's stronghold without a disguise. If the killer dropped his/her disguise to show Asmo who was killing him, why bother? Dramatic effect?

There is also reason to believe Asmodean would have recognized and possibly been terrified by both Slayer and Taim, though the case for them is not nearly as strong as for the Forsaken. This is discussed in greater detail further on, as is the case for Moiraine.

“Oh, I ain't got no bodeeee...” – Where is it?

No body was left behind at the murder scene. This is evidenced by the fact that nobody (except the killer, duh) seems to know he's dead. Rand certainly doesn't. He thinks Asmo ran away:

If they discovered that he had held one of the Forsaken prisoner and allowed him to escape... He would deal with Asmodean himself if the man ever turned up again. [LOC: 3, A Woman's Eyes, 92]

In TPOD, Rand still thinks Asmo's alive; he initially thinks that the attack at the end of the book is Asmodean and/or Demandred [TPOD: 29, A Cup of Sleep, 565]. From this, we can conclude that he was either killed in such a way that no recognizable remains were left, or that the body was removed in order to hide the murder.

A channeller would have had no difficulty in either destroying Asmo's remains or taking them away via gateway. To all appearances, Slayer could have easily removed the body as well, by taking it with him into T'A'R. Any of the other suspects, though, would have had more than a little difficulty walking out of the Royal Palace carrying the corpse of the Lord Dragon's gleeman.

We should ask why the body (if there was one) was removed at all. The only possible reason for the corpse to be removed would be to hide the fact that the killer was around. For many of the killers, the supposed motives would have been better served by leaving a recognizable body behind. We've seen that those who betray the Dark are generally killed in ways that serve as examples to others (e.g. Joiya and Amico in TSR, Ispan in TPOD). If the goal was simply to terrify Rand, leaving the body behind would have done a better job than removing it. The “cover-for-Minion Taim” motive does give a possible reason for removing the body – a dead Asmo might make Rand suspicious.

Knowledge of Asmo's fate

Needless to say, the person who killed him must know that he's dead. This condition can be used to eliminate quite a few suspects. Any character whose thoughts indicate that he/she thinks Asmo may still be alive can't be the killer. Likewise for any character who expresses ignorance of his fate in a situation where she/he wouldn't lie.

Secrecy: Why?

Despite RJ's comments to the contrary, it is not at all obvious who did the dirty deed. One question to ask ourselves is, “Why is RJ keeping it a secret?” The lack of action on this front in the books since TFOH pretty much demonstrates that the murder in and of itself is *not* a major plot thread, so there is no point in keeping it secret for the sake of keeping the reader in suspense. So, why *is* RJ keeping it secret?

One answer is that Asmo's killing is itself a clue to something else that was going on, which we didn't know about yet. This could be the return of Lanfear, Moiraine being alive, or the Minion Taim idea.

We are not the only ones ignorant of the culprit. All of the characters (except one, obviously) are also ignorant of whodunnit (if they're Forsaken), or of what actually happened (if they're Good Guys or rank-and-file DFs). So, whoever killed Asmo must have a reason for hiding it. After all, it's not like anybody would condemn them for punishing a traitor. For any of the Forsaken, this could be as simple as keeping the other Forsaken on their toes by causing uncertainty.

Obvious to the most casual observer: Say what?

RJ has repeatedly said that we should be able to figure out who the killer is. In fact, at a post-TPOD signing in NYC, he talked to Aaron Bergman about this:

I asked about Asmodean again. He said that yes, we should be able to figure it out the instant he died. He said that he thinks it's obvious now and we should definitely be able to figure it out by the end of [TPOD].

[Aaron Bergman, report from NYC book signing, 20 October 1998]

Well, RJ is obviously using the same definition of “obvious” that physics professors are wont to use. That is, it's obvious if you know the answer, and know which information is useful and which is irrelevant. It isn't “obvious” in the usual meaning of the word. Note that RJ:

...also claims that very, very few of the fan letters he gets are correct about [who killed Asmo].

[Post-TPOD signing, Northern Virginia, 21 November 1998, report by John Novak]

This clearly shows that RJ's idea of "obvious" and his readers' idea of "obvious" don't really mix, do they?

However, this statement by RJ is useful in eliminating possibilities. Not even RJ could stretch "being able to figure it out the instant he died" to encompass people or things we didn't know a thing about before the killing, such as Shaidar Haran, Mesaana, or *gholam*.

Note that RJ's comment implies that something in TPOD should clarify the issue. One thing applicable to the suspects was the appearance of Cyndane, which did nothing but throw more fuel on the fire in the Lanfear vs. Graendal debate (see below); the other possibility is the attack on Rand in Cairhien, which Taim ordered (this is stretching it though, since the significance of the attack was not clarified for us until WH). The comment can also be used as an argument against the likelihood of suspects like Slayer and Fain, who were largely irrelevant to events in TPOD.

Elimination of Suspects

Note: The inclusion of Slayer as a prime suspect in Asmodean's murder forces us to re-examine our conclusions about practically every suspect on the list (and a couple of characters who weren't even originally *on* the list), even some of those which had been previously considered completely eliminated. This, of course, is because we not only have to consider whether Slayer was capable of the murder, but who would have hired him to do it – a role which does not require the same criteria as being the actual killer (this is discussed below).

Therefore, we will first assess, as before, whether each of the suspects could have murdered Asmodean *personally*, and discuss their possible involvement with Slayer separately.

Which suspects can be eliminated beyond any loony shadow of a doubt?

Demandred

From [LOC: Prologue, The First Message, 15-16], we see that Demandred doesn't know what happened to Asmodean:

"Lanfear has vanished without a trace, just as Asmodean did."

Hence, Demandred didn't kill him. Dem would have no reason to lie about such a thing, and it is doubtful whether he *could* lie outright to the DO, under those circumstances (bathing in the DO's presence at Shayol Ghul).

Semirhage

In [LOC: 6, Threads Woven of Shadow, 141], Semirhage thinks to herself:

Asmodean. A traitor, and so doomed but he really had vanished...

[and later...] If the Great Lord moved her here secretly, might he not be moving Moghedien or Lanfear, or even Asmodean?

This indicates that Semirhage doesn't know that Asmodean is dead, and thus, she couldn't have killed him.

Moghedien

She was Nynaeve's prisoner in Salidar – either forkroot-drugged, or bound by the *a'dam*, when Asmo was killed. Hence, she couldn't have been in Caemlyn.

Aran'gar, Osan'gar

They weren't recycled until the beginning of LOC, and thus were busy being dead when Asmo was killed.

Which suspects can be eliminated beyond reasonable doubt?

Mesaana

Mesaana visited the Pit of Doom twice in the period between Asmodean's death and her appearance in LOC, but with the DO never appearing. If she had killed Asmodean, wouldn't she have made some sort of report to the DO, especially since the DO approved of the murder? Also, in conversation with Semirhage, she has expressed doubts about whether Asmodean is really dead [LOC: 6, Threads Woven of Shadow, 143]:

More troubling were the Chosen who had vanished. Demandred insisted they must be dead, but she [Semirhage] and Mesaana were not so sure.

She doesn't mention Asmo specifically, and so it is *possible* that she's only referring to Lanfear and Moggy. However, while it's not conclusive, it is circumstantial evidence against Mesaana being the murderer.

Furthermore, prior to LOC, we had not heard or seen a single thing about Mesaana. Thus, she fails the "obviousity" test – there is no way we could suspect her from the instant he died.

Shaidar Haran

First, there is no reason to think that Asmo would recognize the Superfade. It is a possibility that Shaidar Haran told Asmodean in his dreams that it would come after him, but that would almost require that Ishamael was resurrected as SH,

which we know not to be the case (unless you want to get really loony and say that Moridin is Shaidar Haran). We say this since Myrddraal don't dream. Second, his motive would have had to have been a directive from the DO, and the missing body is not consistent with that. He *could* have gotten to the Palace quickly, using the Fade Shadow-Travel trick, and destroyed the body using the "black fire" trick he used to burn the spear in [ACOS: 40, Spears, 637] (although he'd have no motive for destroying the body – quite the opposite). However, it doesn't seem likely that a Fade would be wandering around the Palace in broad daylight. He'd hardly be inconspicuous. Again, this suspect fails the "obvious" criterion, because we didn't even know he existed before LOC came out.

Sammael

We are given very few hints in Sammael's thoughts in LOC and ACOS, and the issue is made even muddier by the game of deception he plays with Graendal. But in [LOC: 6, Threads Woven of Shadow, 133] we have:

"Rumors! Lanfear has been aiding al'Thor since the beginning, if you [Graendal] ask me. I would have had his head in the Stone of Tear except that someone sent Myrddraal and Trollocs to save him! That was Lanfear; I am certain. I'm done with her. The next time I see her, I'll kill her! And why would he kill Asmodean? I would if I could find him, but he has gone over to al'Thor. He's teaching him!"

This is in a Sammael POV section. He is also trembling with anger, which makes it quite unlikely he's feigning ignorance of Asmo's fate. Thus, it's unlikely that Sammael did the deed.

Gholam

The only point in favor of this idea is that Asmo probably would have recognized a *gholam*, and been scared of it. However, there are more problems with this idea than there are conveniences. Firstly, it would have to have been sent by a Forsaken, which means we have to look among them anyway. Secondly, we've seen how *gholam* kill (Herid Fel), and it is way messier than the quick, clean way Asmo died. Since we didn't know about *gholam* before LOC, the *gholam*-as-killer theory fails the "obviousness" requirement. There's also the question of whether Asmo would call a *gholam* "you."

Padan Fain

The basic argument for Fain as the killer is this: He could have been in Caemlyn at the time (via the Ways, if nothing else). He would want to kill any Forsaken because they would interfere with his plans to be Rand's personal hell. However, that presupposes that Fain knew Jasin Natael was a Forsaken, which seems a very unlikely thing for Fain to know, given that he'd never seen Asmo/Natael before supposedly killing him. An alternative motive which has been proposed is that Fain killed Natael because he was trying to cause confusion and stress for Rand by disappearing a member of his retinue. However, this does not fit in with everything else we've seen of Fain's MO, which has mainly involved ingratiating himself with highly-placed people and planting the seeds of Mashadar in their minds. Plus, killing Rand's gleeman and splitting doesn't really make for much of a dastardly plot to undermine Rand's confidence. It would have been much more effective for Fain to try to kill somebody closer to Rand – one of his friends, or even one of his Maiden bodyguards. The "mistake" motive doesn't work for Fain, because we'd have to have a reason for Fain to be in the Palace, and there is zero evidence that he was doing anything in the Palace – no reference to anything of the sort in TFOH or any of the following books.

Furthermore, as we discussed in the "means" section, Fain would have had to have killed Asmo with the dagger, and that isn't consistent with the way Asmo died, or the lack of a body.

Which suspects fall into the "loony but won't go away" category?

Included by long demand. What these two theories have in common is that both present initially compelling cases, centered around enigmatic characters who seem to fascinate the readership at large, but which are ultimately deemed loony because each has one or more very large problems that cannot be sufficiently explained away to include them as primary suspects. (Technically, I suppose Lanfear fits in this category more than as a primary suspect since the information we got on her in WH, but seniority gives Lanfear-dunnit pride of place, so she stays where she is.)

Moiraine

This is a theory which has cropped up continuously since TFOH, despite the fact that the evidence in favor of it is entirely circumstantial. Nevertheless, the number of Moiraine-dunnit fans out there means it merits examination.

Moiraine knew Natael was really Asmodean, as she indicates in her letter to Rand; she also says she understands why Rand used him, but "cannot approve" of the idea. Asmodean knew her very well and was at least intimidated by, if not actually frightened of her. He certainly would have been shocked to see her in Caemlyn, since he just saw her "die" on the docks at Cairhien earlier that day. This also provides, as it does for Lanfear's case, the reason why RJ would have wanted to keep the killer a secret (to keep us in suspense about her survival). Moiraine was powerful enough a channeller to take out Asmodean (assuming she wasn't stilled), and she's already balefired another Forsaken, Bel'al. This (circumstantial) establishment of balefire as her weapon of choice would account for why there wasn't a body left behind. Finally, knowing Rand as well as she did, Moiraine could have deduced that he would go to Caemlyn to take out Rahvin, so she would know where to look for Asmo.

Of course, how she got there is another question entirely. Some people say she escaped from Finnland and has since been lurking behind the scenes doing... stuff, and one of these things might have been killing Asmo. It's pretty obvious why this theory doesn't wash. Besides the evidence we have that she is still stuck in Finnland, waiting for Thom to rescue her (see section 2.2.6), the idea of Moiraine skulking around for five books and apparently making no attempt whatsoever to contact or help Rand or the Supergirls or *anyone* is absurdly out of character. This theory also begs the question of how she managed to make sure her escape put her in Caemlyn and not, say, the Tower of Ghenjei, or any other random spot. (Remember, Moiraine did not know how to Travel.)

A less loony theory on how Moiraine could have been in Caemlyn is that she only *temporarily* got out of Finnland. The idea is that she used one of the three wishes she presumably got from the Foxes to go to Caemlyn and kill Asmodean. The problem with arguing either for or against this idea is that it is pure speculation. There is simply no concrete evidence of any kind, at this point, to tell us what happened to Moiraine after she fell through the Foxes' door; Lanfear's information from WH is hardly helpful, and can be viewed as evidence that neither she nor Moiraine got a chance to do any wishing at all, as much as the opposite. There's also nothing to tell us why, of all things she could have wished for, would Moiraine have chosen killing Asmo as a priority? Why not simply wish to get out of Finnland, like Mat did? Of course, one can come up with counters to these questions, but they are also necessarily based on nothing but conjecture.

Lastly, this theory has the same timing problem that the "Lanfear used her wish to the Finn to murder Asmo" theory does (see below). The murder took place on the same day Moiraine and Lanfear fell through the door; if Lanfear was "held" by the Finn, it seems logical to suppose Moiraine got the same treatment, thus leaving neither woman in a position to go whack Asmodean. Once again, though, this is all speculation.

Basically, there's no way to prove or disprove this idea. If Moiraine did kill Asmo, though, this is just about the only way it could have plausibly happened, and there we shall have to leave it.

The Oath question

The Third Oath states:

Never to use the One Power as a weapon except against Shadowspawn, or in the last extreme defense of her own life or that of her Warder or another Aes Sedai.

The Third Oath has often been used as an argument against Moiraine as the murderer, based on the assumptions that: (a) a Forsaken is not Shadowspawn; and (b) a shielded Asmo wandering around looking for wine hardly counts as an imminent threat to a channeller. While the second assumption is probably quite true, unfortunately there are some problems with the first.

The main support for the idea that a Forsaken is not the same thing as a Shadowspawn is Moiraine's encounter with Bel'al in TDR. She doesn't just balefire him off the cuff; first she shouts at him, gaining his attention and thus putting herself in mortal danger. So that seemed to indicate that she needed to invoke the "last extreme defense" clause of the Oath before she could use the OP on the Forsaken. Further supporting this is that she physically tackled Lanfear at the docks, rather than use the Power in an ambush.

However, various quotes elsewhere on the subject indicate that the first part of the Oath applies to Darkfriends as well as what we more traditionally think of as "Shadowspawn," such as Draghkar, Trollocs, etc. Alanna Mosvani, after describing how she felt her Warder Owein die at the hands of Whitecloaks, tells Perrin:

"Had I been there, I could have defended him, and myself, with the Power... the Children are very nearly as vile as men can be, short of Darkfriends, but they are not Darkfriends, and for that reason they are safe from the Power except in self-defense." [TSR: 31, Assurances, 347]

Rand has similar thoughts about Moiraine's inability to help him fight at the Battle of Cairhien:

He had not asked Moiraine – she could not use the One Power as a weapon against the Shaido, not unless they threatened her or he managed to convince her they were all Darkfriends...

[TFOH: 41, The Craft of Kin Tovere, 462]

If Darkfriends as well as Shadowspawn are fair game under the Third Oath, then certainly the Forsaken are. So Moiraine most likely just wanted to make sure Bel'al's attention was completely off Rand, in the first case, and reasoned that a physical attack was the last thing Lanfear would expect, in the second. Moiraine indicates in her letter that she still considers Asmodean a Forsaken:

Yet be careful of him. He is the same man now that he always was.

[TFOH, 53, Fading Words, 638]

Thus, the Third Oath cannot be used as a defense for Moiraine.

So why is this theory loony, then?

There are three main problems with the Moiraine-dunnit scenario. The first is discussed above: all the arguments presenting Moiraine as the murderer are based on nothing more concrete than supposition – theoretical conjecture about what *might have* happened to Moiraine on the other side of that door. True, this can also be said of the cases for some of the other suspects as

well, but the amount of virtually baseless speculation is especially egregious in Moiraine's case. At least for the other candidates we get to see what they do, say, and think after the murder; for Moiraine we have literally nothing.

The second problem with Moiraine is the "obvious" question. As noted above, if Moiraine did it there is a good reason for RJ to keep it a secret, but what exactly makes her intuitively "obvious"? We had just seen her "die" the same day, and even if you didn't really think she was dead you certainly might reasonably suppose that she was kind of busy. The rationale most commonly put forth for the "obvious" problem is that Moiraine had already killed two other Forsaken, Bel'al and Lanfear (well, thought to have killed, in the second case, but anyway). Moiraine is, in fact, the only other character at that point besides Rand and the Green Man to have killed any of the Forsaken on-screen. So here we have another Forsaken who is killed, and Rand didn't do it, and the Green Man certainly didn't do it. Ergo...

Unfortunately, while this reasoning may seem sound, it's not. It's a logical fallacy – a false analogy, to be exact. As **Derek Driscoll** puts it:

There's a Big Mac, a Whopper, and a Teen Burger in my house. I live with three other people. I eat the Big Mac. I eat the Whopper. The next morning, the Teen Burger is gone. By [that] 'logic', because I ate the Big Mac and the Whopper it is obvious that I also ate the Teen Burger.

In other words, the only way this reasoning works is if Moiraine is the only person who could *possibly* have committed the crime, and as the size of this section indicates, that's hardly the case.

Which brings us to the third and largest problem with Moiraine as the murderer: the question of motive.

Moiraine's motive

Moiraine is unique among all the suspects in Asmodean's murder in that she is the only Good Guy in the bunch. So, even given that the Third Oath would not be a hindrance to her, we must necessarily ask *why* did she suddenly decide, at this point and in this manner, that Asmo had to die?

- *Asmo was a Forsaken. Forsaken bad. Aes Sedai good. Therefore, Aes Sedai kill Forsaken whenever opportunity arises. End of story.*
While refreshingly simplistic, perhaps, this ignores the fact that Moiraine knew long before that day who and what Asmo was, and yet didn't kill him, because she knew Rand needed him.
- *What about the letter? She says she doesn't approve!*
The exact quote is "I cannot approve, but I understand. Perhaps it was the only way." It takes a pretty wild stretch of imagination to transform such a mild statement of disapproval into intent to kill.
- *Yeah, but she could have changed her mind later.*
Why? What made her change her mind?
- *Maybe she saw in the rings at Rhuidean that Asmo would be a danger to Rand later on.*
Moiraine said the rings showed her nothing after the docks at Cairhien.
- *Maybe she thought Asmo had outlived his usefulness.*
Conjecture. And how would Moiraine know whether Rand had learned all he could from Asmo yet? It's not like she and Rand compared notes on the subject.
- *Maybe she did it by accident, the way Mat got his wishes.*
Conjecture. And given what was going on at the time, why would she be thinking about Asmo, anyway?

Well, obviously this could go on forever, but the point is that all of the possible motives ascribed to Moiraine over the years are, again, based on conjecture, and therefore weak. And what's really damning about that is not so much the weakness of Moiraine's supposed motive, but how badly it compares to the strength of the motives for every other suspect.

It plays into the "obviousity" argument. The FS and Slayer all had extremely strong, obvious, intuitive motives for killing Asmodean. Every motive attributed to Moiraine has to play a game of logic dodgeball to get where it wants to go.

Also, one must ask, why would Moiraine do the deed in such a secretive and underhanded way? What in the manner of Asmodean's death benefited the Light more than it did the Shadow? How is generating more confusion and suspicion on Rand's part something Moiraine would want?

Mazrim Taim

Taim as a suspect on his own has not been nearly as popular as the Moiraine theory, mostly because of the prevalence of the now-debunked Taimandred theory (see section 1.1.5) and the fact that most people didn't seriously start to think that he might be working directly for the Forsaken until WH (see section 1.5.6). His case is superficially even more attractive than Moiraine's, but like Moiraine's has some rather large problems as well.

Rand notes in LOC that Taim is very strong in the OP, almost as strong as Rand himself, so he certainly had the means to kill Asmo and get rid of the body. If we assume that the Minion Taim theory is true, a few other things fall into place as well. If,

as the theory goes, Taim is working for Moridin, or Demandred, or both, it's reasonable to assume that the other Forsaken knew about him, and possibly had even seen him. So Asmo would probably have recognized Taim. Given that, there's your motive – to get rid of the one guy in Rand's entourage who could rat out Taim's DF status. RJ's motive for keeping the murder a secret would presumably be so he could play his game of silly buggers re: Taimandred.

As for opportunity, if the Minion theory is true Taim knew how to Travel. Or, as some people believe, he was in Caemlyn already. This brings us once again to the timing issue.

Taim and timing

As mentioned above, one of the most puzzling aspects of Asmo's murder has always been the timing of it: why was he murdered when he was? Well, the argument goes, if Taim is a DF and killed Asmo to hide that fact, then the timing fits perfectly. This has generally been put forward as the most compelling element of the Taim theory. To bolster it, it's often been pointed out that the scene immediately prior to Asmo's death is the one in which Bashere arrives to inform Rand that Taim has entered Andor.

However, the timing is not nearly as clear-cut as it seems. Asmo dies at the end of TFOH, and Taim appears in Caemlyn in the first chapter of LOC, so from the reader's point of view, the two events happen in quick succession. But this is not the case from the point of view of the characters. According to Steven Cooper's timeline, no less than *37 days* pass between the day Asmodean dies and the day Taim shows up in Caemlyn. That's quite a chunk of time. If Taim had snuck into Caemlyn and killed Asmo, why would he have waited almost two months before showing himself? (The counterargument here is that Taim would have wanted to allow time between the two events to avoid casting suspicion on himself; however, this is flimsy in that Rand would have no reason to think Taim knew anything about Asmo, and in fact doesn't even think Asmo is dead!)

However, it must be admitted that even with the month-plus lag, Taim does make more sense from a timing point of view than almost any of the other suspects.

So why is this theory loony, then?

Compelling as Taim's case may seem, there are two major stumbling blocks which keep him firmly in "loony" territory.

The first, of course, is the "obvious" issue. Prior to LOC, Taim did not appear as anything other than vague rumor; we had absolutely no firsthand information on him at all until after Asmo's death. This puts him in the same "non-obvious" category as Mesaana – even more so, since at least Mesaana has "being a Forsaken" going for her, and at the moment of Asmo's death there's no way we could have had suspicions that Taim was anything more than a random false Dragon run amok.

The most common item raised to refute this problem is, again, the scene with Bashere and Rand preceding Asmo's death. Taim-dunnit fans point out that Taim is mentioned as being in the area, and immediately thereafter Asmo is toast, and thus it's "intuitively obvious" Taim is the killer. One must ask, though, why Bashere's info is more "obvious" than, say, Asmo thinking about Lanfear seconds before dying, or any of the other elaborate rationales concocted to explain away this problem. And why, exactly, does knowing Taim was in the area instantly lead to the conclusion that not only was he in Andor, but actually in Caemlyn, lurking yards away from both the Dragon Reborn and a man with an army of Saldaeans who want him dead? Why would we have any concrete reason to think *at that point* that Asmodean would know him, or that he would know Asmo or need him dead?

The second big flaw in the Taim-dunnit theory is the often-overlooked fact that the case for Taim as the murderer is an unproven theory predicated *in its entirety* upon another unproven theory – namely, the "Minion Taim" idea. If the Minion Taim theory is wrong, then suddenly we have no motive and no reasonable supposition that Taim and Asmo would know each other, and the entire case falls apart. Sure, we have very strong evidence supporting the Minion Taim theory, but then again, we had strong evidence supporting the Taimandred idea, too, didn't we?

Even ignoring the "obviousness" problem with Taim, until we have proof one way or the other on the Minion idea, the case for Taim is on shaky ground and remains in the loony category.

Round up the usual suspects: the viable possibilities

Having eliminated most of the suspects, either by showing that they couldn't possibly have done it, or by showing that there are many arguments against their guilt and only slim evidence for it, we can settle down to the four most likely suspects: Graendal, Lanfear, Ishamael/Moridin, and Slayer. (Note: most of the evidence discussed centers on Graendal, Lanfear, and Slayer (and his possible employers). Moridin is included in the list mainly because we don't know enough to really eliminate him as the actual killer.)

Ishamael/Moridin

TPOD and WH make it clear that Moridin is Ishamael recycled. At this point, we don't know when he was created, and as far as we know, his first step in regaining control over the Shadow forces could have been killing Asmodean. In any case, there isn't really that much to discuss about him. He definitely satisfies means, motive, and opportunity (provided he wasn't dead at the time). He could have made himself recognized to Asmodean by using a OP disguise, although why would he bother? Body disposal wouldn't be a problem, and we have no way to know if he knows Asmo's fate (although even if he didn't kill

him, it's likely that Mr. Nae'blis knows exactly what happened to the fellow). It would make sense for it to be a secret, since Moridin's existence and identity have been unknown by us and by the other Forsaken. Obviousity is not obvious, but it's within the realm of twisted possibility (Moridin is Ishy, who has come back from the "dead" twice before, so we might suspect he did so again).

On the other hand, there is absolutely no evidence in favor of him having done it, either. Note that RJ's rejection of the "pun" theory could encompass Moridin killing Asmo, as well as kidnapping him.

Lanfear

Up until the appearance of Cyndane in TPOD, Lanfear looked like a very good suspect. The case against her is very strong. She's a channeller, so she had the means to kill him, the ability to enter and leave the Palace undetected, and a way to dispose of the body. Since Asmo had just seen her "die" earlier in the day, he would certainly have been shocked and terrified to see her strolling around the Palace.

Lanfear's motive

Lanfear also had the strongest motive to kill Asmo. Lanfear gave Asmo to Rand "to teach him," knowing that Asmo was about the worst (and hence the safest) Forsaken you could pick as a teacher. But he was also the one who she could be sure would react the way she wanted him to once she shielded him. It would seem that she wasn't too interested in giving Rand all the secrets of the AOL. More likely, she just didn't want him gentling or killing himself because of his ignorance (see her reaction when he draws *saidin* through the *sa'angreal* in TGH – though that could simply be fear for her own life). Here's Asmo's take on it:

"Do you think Lanfear really intended me to teach you everything? If she had wanted that, she would have contrived to stay close so she could link us. She wants you to live, Lews Therin, but this time she means to be stronger than you."

[TFOH: 3, Pale Shadows, 75]

When she confronted Rand at the docks, it is unlikely that she knew he had an *angreal*. Although she would certainly be hard pressed to shield him alone, it should have been no problem with an *angreal*, especially since he is untrained in her opinion, despite whatever he might have gleaned from Asmo. After she picked up the *angreal*, she attacked Rand, and he resisted. She increased her attempts to shield and hurt Rand, probably to her limit even with the *angreal*. But Rand (with his own *angreal*) held his ground. He even believed:

He could end it, finish her. He could call down lightning, or wrap her in the fire she herself had used to kill...

[TFOH: 52, Choices, 631]

If Lanfear did *not* know that he had an *angreal* (she probably didn't), then she would have taken this as a very bad sign for her. Knowing that Asmodean was still "teaching" him stuff, and that she was the one who put him there, it is very likely that it would be a *high* priority to remove him, if Rand can foil even her strongest attempts to shield him.

Furthermore, she would have blamed Asmodean's teaching for her defeat and humiliation, and thus she'd have wanted to get revenge. She's that type of gal.

She *said* she was going to kill him

In TSR, in the Stone of Tear, Lanfear comes to Rand as Selene, and reveals herself as a Forsaken. During that conversation, she proposes that Rand allow a male Forsaken to become his teacher. She continues on her old tack of seducing Rand with power (not the Power, just power), by describing how she and he will rule the world once he has knelt to the DO. She describes her entire plan in [TSR: 9, Decisions, 129]:

"Kneel to the Great Lord, and he will set you above all others. He will leave you free to reign as you will, so long as you bend knee to him only once. To acknowledge him. No more than that. He told me this. Asmodean will teach you to wield the Power without it killing you, teach you what you can do with it. Let me help you. We can destroy all the others. The Great Lord will not care. We can destroy all of them, *even Asmodean, once he has taught you all you need to know*. You and I can rule the world together under the Great Lord, forever." [emphasis added]

The relevance of this quote to the matter at hand is obvious. All along, Lanfear has been planning to kill Asmodean, after he was done teaching Rand. Obviously, after the encounter at the docks, Lanfear has every reason to believe that Asmodean has taught Rand more than enough, more than she really wanted him to. In fact, if Lanfear did kill Asmodean, then this quote means that it really *is* obvious who killed him. His fate corresponds exactly with Lanfear's plans for him.

The "You? No!" evidence, and how it points to Lanfear

It is obvious that Asmodean was indeed terrified of the person he saw. There are many people that Asmo would be afraid of, but it seems doubtful that anyone but Lanfear would elicit quite this response from Asmo. Although Asmo may have reason to be afraid of many people, we know that Lanfear is the person he fears the most:

“Even if he manages to convince the others that he has been a prisoner, they would still tear him apart, and he knows it. The weakest dog in the pack often suffers that fate. Besides, I watch his dreams on occasion. He dreams of you triumphing over the Great Lord and putting him up beside you on high. Sometimes he dreams of me.” Her smile said those dreams were pleasant for her, but not so for Asmodean.

[TFOH: 6, Gateways, 124]

Even though Asmo knows all the Forsaken would rip him to shreds given the chance, the one he has nightmares about is Lanfear.

Furthermore, just before getting whacked, Asmo was just thinking to himself about Lanfear being dead and how glad he was:

He was hardly sorry Lanfear was dead. Rahvin either, but Lanfear especially, for what she had done to him.

He would laugh when each of the others died, too, and most for the last. [TFOH: 56, Glowing Embers, 681]

Not thirty seconds after these thoughts pass through his mind, he opens the door and sees ... who? And he is shocked/terrified (big surprise). The combination of these things makes it seem likely that Lanfear was indeed the killer. (This scenario also plays into the “obvious” argument.)

“Obviousness” and secrecy

As discussed above, if any suspect can be said to be obviously the killer, from the moment he dies, it’s Lanfear. She said she’d kill him, and he was (ironically?) thinking of her right before he died. Furthermore, the fact that his killer is still a secret, five books later, makes sense if Lanfear did it. Knowing that she killed Asmo would be a dead giveaway that she was active.

The big problem

Of course, there has to be a stumbling block. With all the great evidence in favor of Lanfear, there is a correspondingly large problem with her. Namely, as far as we know, she was extremely indisposed at the time of Asmo’s death. As in trapped in another dimension.

At first we thought she was dead, and busied ourselves coming up with all manner of loony ways to get around that fact. But in WH we find out that she didn’t, in fact, die upon falling through the doorway, but instead was “held” in some way by the Finn (see section 1.2.4). We don’t know, of course, how long Lanfear was held in Finnland, but the imprisonment, her transformation into Cyndane (however that was accomplished) and subsequent mindtrapping all indicate that she didn’t exactly have a lot of free time between the battle at the docks in TFOH and the appearance of Cyndane in TPOD. Since Asmodean was killed the very *day* she fell through the doorway, it seems virtually impossible that she could have gotten to Caemlyn in time to do the deed.

Old theories die hard, though, and people have come up with new loony ways in which Lanfear could still be the murderer. The most popular is that she used one of her three wishes with the Eelfinn to get to go to Caemlyn and kill Asmo, before she died and was recycled as Cyndane (if that’s what happened). We don’t know enough about what happened to Lanfear in Finnland to rule this idea out completely, but it seems really improbable. People (or whatever) intent on imprisoning someone don’t, as a general rule, let them go traipsing about in areas over which the captors presumably have no control. Of course, we can’t know that for sure.

There are (slightly) more plausible variations on this idea, however, which pertain to Lanfear and Slayer. These will be discussed below.

Graendal

Next we have Graendal. Graendal has some evidence working for her. For one thing, she has tried to assure Sammael that Asmodean is dead, which makes her one of the only Forsaken to express a belief that Asmodean was toasted.

“You [Sammael] know as much as I do,” Graendal said blithely, pausing for a sip from her goblet. “Myself, I think Lews Therin killed them [Asmodean, Lanfear, Moghedien]. ... There are rumors out of Cairhien about Lanfear dying at Lews Therin’s hands the same day he killed Rahvin.” [LOC: 6, Threads Woven of Shadow, 133]

[Graendal:] “So many of us have died confronting him. ... And Lanfear and Asmodean, whatever you believe. Possibly Moghedien.” [LOC: 6, Threads Woven of Shadow, 134]

“Asmodean and Lanfear are dead, and I [Graendal] am sure Moghedien must be, too.” She was surprised to hear her own voice, hoarse and unsteady. [LOC: 23, To Understand a Message, 348]

On the other hand, it should be noted that Graendal expresses as much certainty about Lanfear’s demise as Asmodean’s, and she sure didn’t kill Lanfear. Her statements that Asmo must be dead could either be simple opinion, or she could have found out the same way that Demandred did – from the DO.

In fact, we know that Graendal has visited the DO:

Only she [Graendal] herself knew that she had made her own journey to Shayol Ghul and down to the lake of fire. Only she knew that the Great Lord had all but promised to name her Nae'blis.

[LOC: 6, Threads Woven of Shadow, 138]

This memory includes no mention of Shaidar Haran, and furthermore, when SH appears to Graendal in [TPOD: 12, New Alliances, 266], she is not familiar with him. Thus, we know that SH was not present when Graendal made this trip to the Pit of Doom, and therefore, this trip *might* have occurred before the Super-Fade appeared. We first saw SH at the start of LOC, so Graendal's visit could have been before Asmodean's death. The idea is that the DO may have used the reward of Nae'blis to motivate Graendal to kill Asmo.

One thing which doesn't quite fit in with this idea, though, is the bit in [TPOD: 12, New Alliances, 266] when SH talks to her. He tells her:

"The Great Lord thought you might not take [Moghedien's and Cyndane's] word, Graendal. The time when you could go your own way has passed."

This implies that Graendal *has* been going her own way, not rubbing out fellow Forsaken at the DO's order. This leaves personal initiative and accidental meeting as the only motives for her to kill Asmo.

Something fishy in Caemlyn [Jonathan Berlinghoff, Jamie Quinn]

One theory along those lines is the one where Graendal killed Asmo, not because she went to Caemlyn specifically for that purpose, but because she happened to be there already, hiding in the Palace, and Asmo stumbled upon her unexpectedly.

The chain of reasoning goes like this: We learn in the Prologue of TFOH that Lanfear, Sammael, Graendal, and Rahvin are plotting together. We get a clearer idea of what the plan is when Birgitte takes Nynaeve to spy on Moggy in T'A'R, who's spying on the other four Forsaken [TFOH: 34, A Silver Arrow, 390]:

"That has been the plan from the beginning," said a woman's melodious voice [Lanfear].

[...]

"He will concentrate on you, Sammael," the big man said in a deep voice [Rahvin]. "If need be, one close to him will die, plainly at your order. He will come for you. And while he is fixed on you alone, the three of us, linked, will take him."

"The three of us" being Rahvin, Graendal, and Lanfear. Moggy reiterates the plan to Nynaeve after being captured:

"Do you know they are drawing Rand al'Thor to attack Sammael? But when he does, he will find the others as well, waiting to trap him between them. At least he will find Graendal and Ravhin. I think Lanfear plays another game, one the others know nothing about."

[TFOH: 54, To Caemlyn, 658]

Of course, their grand scheme didn't go quite as expected. Melindhra's assassination attempt on Mat failed, Lanfear went psycho at the Cairhien docks and ended up trapped in Finnland, and Rand went to Andor and killed Rahvin instead of attacking Sammael in Illian.

What does this have to do with Graendal and Asmodean? Well, it's a question of location. At the time Rand went to Caemlyn, we know Rahvin was there, obviously. We know where Lanfear and Moggy were, and we can be 99% positive that Sammael was waiting in Illian for an attack that never came. The only conspirator whose location we *don't* know, in fact, is Graendal.

So what if Graendal was waiting with Rahvin in Caemlyn for the signal to link up and go to Illian to confront Rand? If so, she could have just run and hid during the Rand-Rahvin showdown, and could have still been lurking about the Palace hours later, waiting for a chance to make good her escape, when Asmodean happens to open the wrong door, and...

The problem with this theory is that while the idea of Graendal and Rahvin waiting together to go to Illian may seem logical and practical, that doesn't mean it was likely to happen that way. Rahvin didn't trust *any* of his co-conspirators; why would he have wanted any of them hanging out on his turf for any length of time? For that matter, Rahvin was at his home base; from what we've seen of Graendal, she seems to be pretty happy to stay entrenched in Arad Doman, so why is it more logical to suppose Graendal would be with Rahvin instead of at her own center of power? And why would any of them need to be in the same place, anyway? Clearly rapid communication between the plotters was not going to be a problem, otherwise how did they expect to know that Rand was attacking Sammael quickly enough to get there to ambush him? In fact it would have been far more logical to have all four of them waiting in Illian from the beginning, but Rahvin's presence in Caemlyn (and Lanfear's in Cairhien) indicates this was not the way the plan was laid out.

In defense of this theory, it has been suggested that there is evidence that Graendal was not just hiding in the Palace, but actually helping Rahvin out, secretly, during his fight with Rand at the end of TFOH. What is the basis for this supposition? The fish.

What fish? The fish in T'A'R which attack Rand. After Rahvin is BFed, Rand still has fish-bites which Nynaeve must Heal [TFOH: 55, The Threads Burn, 673]. Because BF erases somebody backwards, and Rahvin was erased back to before he entered T'A'R, the bites would have been un-created if Rahvin had made the fish. Thus, somebody else must have made the fish. This third party could have been Graendal.

However, this is not how balefire works in T'A'R. **Joel Gilmore** went to see RJ at a book signing in Australia [21 September 1999], and here's what he found out:

I got an answer to the Rahvin/balefire/T'A'R question – when someone is BFed, the constructs they make in T'A'R do not disappear, but instead fade away slowly over time. There are lots of weird effects associated with T'A'R and balefire, such as the way the world flickers after balefire is used. I asked him just generally about it, and then he jumped straight in, gave the answer, then used the Rand and the fish example.

So, the fish were created by Rahvin, and this support must be discarded. So while it was certainly *possible* for Graendal to have been in Caemlyn the day of the murder, there is no evidence that says she was, and the logical reasoning that puts her there is thin at best.

An alternate version of the “Graendal lurking in Caemlyn theory” is the speculation that she wasn't there when Rahvin died, but showed up later – to ascertain he was dead, to pick over the leavings, or even to kill Asmo specifically, or any combination thereof. Note that she has ventured onto Rand's turf at least once for sure, when she had sufficiently strong motivation. After Rand took Illian, she went there to remove evidence which would tie her to Sammael's schemes [TPOD: 12, New Alliances, 262].

The strongest argument in favor of Graendal, though, is that she is the only suspect without any major points against her. The only requirements which she seems to fail are 7 and 8. Namely, there is no reason for RJ to have kept it a secret for almost a decade, and there is no way Graendal is obviously the killer – the case in her favor is mostly a process of elimination over the books following TFOH.

The great chat debate

As a final note on Graendal, there seems to be a large number of people who believe that RJ has actually confirmed that Graendal killed Asmodean. The basis for this belief is the following exchange from the CNN chat on December 12, 2000:

Question from Vercingetorix: Why do you think everyone has a hard time figuring out who killed Asmodean? Graendal killed him.

Robert Jordan: I don't know why people have a hard time figuring that out. To me it seems intuitively obvious even to the most casual observer. The reason I won't tell people though is that I am enjoying watching them squirm entirely too much. It's probably bad for me.

Sorry, but no. Exciting as this may seem to the wishful thinkers in the crowd, RJ is *not* confirming here that Graendal is the killer.

First of all, if RJ had suddenly decided, after all this time, to spill the beans about Asmo's killer in a chat from the year 2000, then why has he continued to refuse to answer the question at any point since then? Secondly, reread what he is actually saying: The reason I *won't tell people...* Why is he saying he won't answer a question in the same breath he supposedly answers the question?

It's been made very clear that RJ has no intention of ever actually confirming who killed Asmodean, and it's just as clear that in the above quote he is simply ignoring **Vercingetorix's** attempt at slyness, and giving his stock answer to the actual question asked.

Slayer

Last but not least, we have Slayer. WH strongly suggests that Slayer is more or less the official hitman for the Shadow. That plus the light his POV sheds on his nature and abilities (see section 1.4.2) has made him a major candidate for Asmodean's killer, perhaps more likely than either Lanfear or Graendal. Let's examine the requirements as they apply to Slayer.

Opportunity

We now know that Slayer is able to move about T'A'R at will, in the flesh, and thus could have easily reached Caemlyn in time to do the deed, almost as quickly as any of the Forsaken.

But how did he know where to be? Like most of the other suspects, the logical place for him to look would be Cairhien. Even though he still could have gotten from Cairhien to Caemlyn quite quickly, how did he know to go there? Moving around in T'A'R gives no indication of where someone is in the real world, and it's clear from Slayer's failure thus far to track down Fain (and his mixup in Far Madding) that he doesn't have any equivalent to Amys' “need walk” to find what he's looking for. (Plus, there's no evidence that the “need walk” could find a person in the real world anyway, since only objects and wild animals are reflected in T'A'R.)

It's been suggested that Slayer may not actually have needed to find someone in the real world this time, what with Rand and Rahvin (not to mention Moggy and Nynaeve) rampaging around the T'A'R version of the Caemlyn palace and blasting the place apart a few hours before. However, this is pretty thin speculation. For one thing, Slayer can't sense channelling, and

while it's true that Rahvin and Rand were also manipulating T'A'R as well as channelling, there's no evidence that Slayer or anyone else can detect that kind of thing from a distance.

Of course, the whole question is moot if whoever hired him had simply told him where to look.

Body disposal

Slayer's mastery of the Dreamworld indicates that he would have had no trouble getting rid of the body – all he had to do was pick it up and pop back into T'A'R, and voilà. (People have quibbled about this, but really – if he can jump in and out of T'A'R with clothes and knives intact, and Egwene can travel through the Dreamworld in the flesh with a Bela-load of personal belongings [LOC: 34, Journey to Salidar, 465], then Slayer should be able to take a corpse with him into T'A'R.)

A good question to ask here, though, is why he would have done so. The “no body” aspect of the murder is a problem with all the suspects, but it seems especially out of character for Slayer, who appears to specialize in killing his victims as messily as possible, leaving his handiwork behind for others to enjoy – witness how he nailed Amico and Joiya's tongues to a door, and the brutal way he repeatedly stabs the couple he mistook for Rand and Min in WH. Asmodean's swift death and missing corpse do not match Slayer's M.O.

Of course, even shielded and weak as he was, Asmodean was still a Forsaken, and thus a much higher-risk target than your average victim. Slayer may love carnage, but there's considerable indication that he's also cautious, thorough, and intelligent – as a good assassin should be. Any halfway competent assassin would know when the need for haste outweighs personal preference. As for removing the body, again, Slayer is a contract killer. If whoever sent him to kill Asmodean also told Slayer to get rid of the body, then he would have done so. Thus the question of why Asmo's body was not left behind probably has nothing to do with Slayer's tastes and everything to do with the motives of his employer, and will be discussed further on.

Motive

Motive, then, is obvious – Slayer would have been acting under orders. To all appearances, Slayer's main purpose in life is to assassinate those who betray or fail the DO. We knew from TSR that he had been sent after Fain for skipping out on his (Fain's) mission, and WH informs us that he had been ordered to take out Amico and Joiya in the Stone as punishment for getting caught. It makes sense, then, that he should be sent to take care of Asmodean, the biggest traitor of them all.

Once again, the supposition that Asmo's death was an assassination brings up the question of timing – why kill him at that point? For Slayer, it could be that he had been looking for Asmodean for some time and that that was just when he happened to finally locate his victim (though that still doesn't answer the question of *how* he found Asmo). The only other reason that the murder could have happened when it did, if Slayer is the murderer, is because that's when his employer told him to do it. So again, the timing would have nothing to do with Slayer, and will be discussed when we get to who could have hired him.

Recognition

Slayer's thoughts in [WH: 22, Out of Thin Air, 449] indicate a fair amount of familiarity with the Forsaken. It's been argued that ergo, the Forsaken would all know Slayer as well. More importantly, the argument goes, Slayer's role as Chief Assassin for the Dark means that not only would Asmo recognize him, but he would know why Slayer was there, and be appropriately terrified.

However, that same passage from Slayer's POV also indicates that he has not, in fact, met *all* of the Forsaken:

...none of the Chosen Luc had met had ever taken such precautions as this.

There is no way to know if Asmodean was one of the FS that had met Slayer (though even if he hadn't, Asmodean could still have known who he was). There has also been a lot of contention over whether Slayer would have terrified Asmodean that much.

In short, whether Slayer fulfills the “recognition” criterion seems to depend at this point on personal opinion.

Means

The question of means is a bit more convoluted. As discussed way, way above, many people now think it is possible that Asmodean could have been killed by ordinary means rather than channelling. Slayer is not only a professional assassin and thus, presumably, good with a knife, but [WH: 22, Out of Thin Air, 448] tells us he uses daggers coated in a fast-acting poison, which further ups his chances of taking out a channeller, especially one as weak as a shielded Asmodean.

Not everyone buys this, of course. One objection is that every time (that we're aware of) that Slayer has been sent to take out a channeller, it was only in situations where channelling would not be a factor: Amico was stilled, Joiya was shielded, and Rand was in Far Madding (at the time of the attempt). The implication is that since Slayer cannot channel (see section 1.4.3), his employers know better than to send him after a channeller unless he or she is sufficiently incapacitated. While this may very well be true, it's irrelevant if Asmodean's shield was too strong to allow him to defend himself, for that would simply mean that Asmo's channelling was not a factor to Slayer, just like Amico, Joiya, and Rand in Far Madding. Thus we're back to where we started, with the question of whether Asmo could fend off a non-channeller.

One example raised to prove that Asmo could have defended himself from a conventional weapon is [LOC: 1, Lion on the Hill, 68], where Bashere, without warning, throws a dagger directly at Rand, who stops it with Air. We know Asmo could at least channel flows of Air; why couldn't he have stopped a dagger the same way Rand did?

Well, for one thing, presumably there's a difference between floating a goblet around and stopping a dagger flung with lethal force. And what if the hypothetical dagger wasn't thrown at all? Could Asmo have held an entire person immobile – a powerful and determined assailant, bent on killing him, who took him completely by surprise – with enough strength to stop that attacker from stabbing him directly?

Then again, there's still the passage mentioned earlier, in which Asmo was using the Power to defend himself from Shadowspawn [TFOH: 55, The Threads Burn, 676]. Trollocs are plenty big and powerful. Given that, it appears the only real advantage Slayer would have had over any other non-channelling attacker is surprise. However, surprise is a significant advantage; it's been demonstrated elsewhere that channelling is not a guaranteed defense against conventional ambush (cf. the assault on Demira Sedai in [LOC: 46, Beyond the Gate, 580-581], and the arrow that almost killed Rand in [TPOD: 22, Gathering Clouds, 428]).

A more generalized problem with the means issue is that all our reasoning about how Asmo could have been killed by traditional weapons is essentially retconning. We thought for four books that Asmodean couldn't have been killed except by channelling; it's only with the info we have on Slayer from WH that anyone has made a serious claim that ordinary weapons could have done the job.

Knowledge of Asmo's fate

Does Slayer know that Asmodean is dead? Well, he didn't say anything about it in the one POV we've had from him in ten books, so it's rather hard to say. Of course, that in itself presents something of a problem, since in that POV Slayer is busy gloating over the murders of Amico and Joiya:

[Luc] had especially enjoyed those two Aes Sedai in the Stone of Tear... That had been Isam, not him, but the memories were none the less prized for that. Neither of them got to kill an Aes Sedai very often.

[WH: 22, Out of Thin Air, 448]

So if Slayer is so jazzed about killing a mere Aes Sedai, wouldn't it make sense that he would be even more inclined to fondly reminisce over assassinating a Forsaken? Surely offing one of the dreaded Chosen is a bigger prize than a couple of random BA?

Secrecy and "obviousness"

If Slayer did it, why keep it a secret? This one's pretty puzzling, since revealing Slayer as the killer wouldn't have solved anything – we'd still need to figure out who sent him. One possible answer is that RJ didn't want us to know too much at that point about Slayer's more interesting abilities – but this directly contradicts RJ's assertion that the killer should have been "obvious".

This is as good a place as any to note that at least a few of the things that WH "revealed" about Slayer are really only confirmations of traits we *should* have known about from hints in TSR. The most relevant one of these is his ability to move around T'A'R in the flesh. Perrin's observations about Slayer's cold, inhuman scent, combined with Amys' warnings to Egwene about traveling in the Dreamworld in the flesh and what it does to you, should have prompted the connection between the two and led us to realize that Slayer could have gotten to Caemlyn as easily as any of the channelling suspects (see section 1.4.3 for a more detailed discussion of why we were confused).

(To be fair, there is a difference between having reason to suspect Slayer might have special abilities (and people have) and having reason to be sure he does. Prior to WH, we had reason to suspect, but no reason to say for sure that he did, and thus, no grounds for reasonably basing a theory on those suspicions.)

That said, the "obvious" criterion is still the biggest problem with the Slayer-dunnit scenario. That is to say, since almost no one seriously considered him as the culprit until WH, Slayer is clearly not obviously the killer at all.

However, we're using RJ's definition of "obvious" here, so who knows.

Maybe RJ thought the knowledge from TSR that Slayer had been sent after Fain would make the connection between that and another assassination immediately apparent. Maybe the name "Slayer" was supposed to be enough of a clue. [Young Blandford]

If Slayer did it, who *really* did it?

Ultimately, Slayer can be considered no more than the weapon that killed Asmodean. If Slayer is the culprit, we still have to answer the question of who hired him.

General considerations

As noted earlier, the requirements for being Slayer's employer are not the same as those for being the actual killer. For one thing, it seems clear that if we assume, for the sake of argument, that Slayer was obviously the killer, that does not mean his employer had to be obvious at the time as well. In other words, we cannot legitimately argue against, for example, Mesaana or

Shaidar Haran having sent Slayer to kill Asmo on the grounds that we didn't know about them at the time (though we can argue against them for other reasons).

Secondly, whoever ordered Slayer to kill Asmo could have told him to do so at any point prior to Rand's battle with Rahvin. Therefore, we cannot necessarily eliminate anyone who was incapacitated or even dead at the time of the actual murder. This means that Lanfear and Moghedien are back in the running, and that we must now add Rahvin to the list.

(It does *not*, however, mean we must include Aginor, Balthamel, or Be'lal. The 'gars were not recycled until the beginning of LOC, as pointed out above, and more importantly had been dead since TEOTW. Be'lal has been dead since the end of TDR, long before Rand had acquired Asmodean as a teacher, and ain't coming back at all.)

With regard to body disposal, as mentioned earlier, the only probable reason Slayer would have removed Asmodean's body is if his employer told him to. The only candidate that we think might have a plausible reason for removing the body is Taim (see below), but given the unknowns, we can't really use this as a reason to discount the other candidates.

Another point worth considering, again mentioned above, is that the likeliest way for Slayer to have known where to find Asmodean (barring special T'A'R-disturbance-sensing powers, which we have no evidence Slayer possesses) is for his employer to have told him Asmo was in Caemlyn. There are a limited number of people who could have known where to send him. However, since we can't be positive that Slayer didn't find Asmo on his own, this argument cannot be used to eliminate candidates either, only to argue more strongly for or against them.

Factors like means and recognition are irrelevant. Thus the considerations we are left with are motive, timing, knowledge of Asmo's fate and whereabouts, and the ability to hire Slayer in the first place.

The suspects

Any of the Forsaken (besides Be'lal and the 'gars) could have hired him, as Slayer's POV in WH makes clear. Shaidar Haran is also a possibility, as well as Taim (assuming he is a DF). Fain (for hopefully obvious reasons) could not be his employer, nor could a random minion of the DO. One last possibility, also indicated by Slayer's POV, is that he could have been hired by the Dark One himself.

The "knowledge" criterion does let us narrow down the list a bit. Demandred and Semirhage can be eliminated, as they have expressed ignorance of what happened to Asmodean. Sammael and Mesaana are very unlikely candidates for much the same reason (see above). That leaves us with Rahvin, Moghedien, Lanfear, Graendal, Moridin, Taim, Shaidar Haran, and the DO. We will consider the remaining possibilities one by one.

1. **Moghedien:** She could have set it up prior to being captured by Nynaeve, and it's been suggested that hiring an assassin fits with her basic cowardice, but it doesn't seem to make much sense otherwise. Asmodean posed no direct threat to Moggy, who generally only tended to take action when she saw a benefit for herself personally (before she was mindtrapped, anyway). Not to mention, sending someone to kill another Forsaken seems like an awfully proactive thing to do for a woman whose M.O. has always been to skulk about and hide when the shit hits the fan.
2. **Rahvin:** Like Moggy, he could have called in the hit before the battle, and his motive would have been the same as any of the Forsaken (punishment for desertion), but having Rahvin as the employer seems kind of pointless. He's dead and gone, and won't be back, so why keep it a secret all this time? Plus we had no indication that Rahvin cared enough about Asmodean's defection to go through the trouble of hiring an assassin when he had much bigger fish to fry (like planning Rand's demise, for instance). In addition to this is the fact that Rahvin was shocked to see Rand in Caemlyn, and so obviously could not have told Slayer beforehand to look for Asmo there. However, this alone is not sufficient to completely eliminate him, since again, we don't know for sure that Slayer didn't find Asmo on his own.
3. **Taim:** As noted above, Taim would have a strong motive for having Asmodean removed if we assume that the "Taim as Forsaken minion" theory is correct. The timing of the assassination would fit perfectly, and as mentioned above, it would be to his benefit not to have a body confirming that Asmo had been murdered (that might make Rand suspicious). He gains additional support as a candidate because there is a strong possibility that he is Slayer's current employer, the one who hired him to kill Rand (see section 1.4.4). Of course, the problem is that we don't know for sure whether Taim actually is a Darkfriend, or that he is the mystery employer in WH. So the case for him is mostly speculation.
4. **Shaidar Haran:** There's nothing to say that he didn't order the assassination, really, but then there's nothing to say he did, either, and the prologue of LOC seems to indicate that he had been occupied with other matters up to that point (namely, the resurrection of the 'gars). And since he is more or less the mouthpiece of the DO (or the DO's avatar), any orders he might have given Slayer can probably be considered to come directly from the DO anyway.
5. **Graendal:** As usual, there's nothing that really argues against Graendal. Motive is the usual, and the timing may have been inspired by Rahvin's death; if so, she would have known where to send Slayer. Also lending support to Graendal's case is the fact that, again, she is the only FS to express certainty that Asmo is dead, and also her thoughts about having no intention of challenging Rand – directly, that is. The only thing Graendal really has against her is that the DO, Moridin and Lanfear are overall more likely candidates.

6. **The Dark One:** Well, the DO definitely knows Asmo is dead, but then as Lord of the Grave that's kind of his job, whether he had anything (directly) to do with the murder or not. The evidence for the idea that the DO gave this order directly to Slayer is that such a thing was apparently standard procedure before the FS were released:

[Slayer's] services were always begged, except by the Great Lord himself, and more recently by the Chosen...

[WH: 22, Out of Thin Air, 449]

It seems somewhat out of character for the DO to get this directly involved in the matter, but then a renegade Forsaken is a pretty big deal, so it's not completely unreasonable to assume Asmo's assassination required his personal attention (plus Slayer's thoughts indicate the DO has done so before, as well).

7. **Moridin:** Assuming he was active by the end of TFOH, one of his first acts in his campaign of corralling the Forsaken could have reasonably been sending Slayer to off the traitorous one. The case for him is further strengthened by the fact that WH implies that Moridin is the one behind Slayer's standing order to kill Fain [WH: 13, Wonderful News, 316]. Without more specific knowledge of when exactly he was resurrected and what he was doing between that and his first on-screen appearance in ACOS, there is not much else to say about him, for or against.
8. **Lanfear:** Many people liked Lanfear for Slayer's employer, and it's still true that of all the candidates she has the strongest motive. Further strengthening her case, as **Tim Biddulph** points out, is the fact that she was the only one of the FS who knew Asmodean was shielded, and thus (presumably) weak enough for Slayer to take out safely. (Remember, she told the other FS that Asmo went over to Rand of his own free will, so as far as they knew he was still at full strength.)

However, there is a timing problem with the idea that Lanfear hired Slayer. When would she have told Slayer to kill Asmodean, and why? As discussed earlier, the thing that was most likely to have triggered her decision to kill Asmo would be Rand holding his own against her at the docks; since she mentions to Kadere that she had not been keeping tabs on Rand lately [TFOH: 52, Choices, 627], it's very unlikely that she would have made any such decision to off Asmodean before then. But if that's the case, what with all the going psycho and falling through the door and being held by the Finn, there was no time for her to send any kind of order to Slayer. One possible answer to this is that she had some kind of "kill him if you don't hear from me" standing order with Slayer [**Matt Hackell**], but it doesn't seem much like someone as arrogant as Lanfear to have set up contingencies for her possible demise. Another possibility is that Slayer actually met up with her in Finnland; remember that Perrin chased Slayer into the Tower of Ghenjei in TSR, which Birgitte said led to Finnland. This idea, though intriguing, seems kind of wonky (the Finn allowed her visitors? Did she get a phone call and a lawyer too?), but we don't know enough about what happened to Lanfear in Finnland to refute it. Another more minor problem with Lanfear hiring Slayer is that it seems rather out of character – the crazy gal we all know and love would have wanted to whack Asmo personally.

Hardly any of this is terribly conclusive, because there is very little information to work with. It seems, though, that the most likely candidate for Slayer's employer is Lanfear, despite the evidence against her.

1.1.7 Could Lanfear be good?

[Ruchira Datta, Pam Korda, Carolyn Fusinato, and Roy Navarre as the Lanfear Pin-up of the Month Club]

Lanfear presents a bit of an enigma. Many of her actions have led some people to believe that she is not 100% Evil. The argument is that she and Beidomon drilled the Bore into the DO's prison by accident, and only became Forsaken after that either due to the DO's direct action, or out of pride. Moreover, everyone would link her with all the DO's ravages that followed, thinking she released him on purpose, no matter what she did. Being an extremely proud person, it would be hard for her to admit that she had just made a colossal mistake.



Evidence

In the "Eyes of Charn" sequence [TSR: 26, The Dedicated, 303-6], Charn perceives Mierin as a good person, and maintains this belief even after she became Lanfear. Up to TFOH (see refutation), it can be claimed that she hadn't done any inarguably evil acts. She has been deceptive – but what would one expect from an Aes Sedai? She is jealous and possessive of Rand – but note that she had not done anything to harm her competition, which would probably be very easy for her to do. (She met Egwene in *Tel'aran'rhiod*, if I recall correctly, but anyway Egwene had been eliminated from the category of "competition" by this time.) She told Ishamael in TDR that she was loyal to the Dark One and no other. But in TSR, she suggested to Rand that they supplant the DO together. As for the scene at the end of TFOH, she was insane and not responsible for her actions. She dislikes being called Mierin in the extreme. This could be taken several ways. One way to take it is that she wants her former self to be disassociated from her current evil ways – she does not want to be reminded of what she once was, it is too painful.

Refutation

I have always believed that Lanfear was evil, starting way back when we first meet her as Selene in TGH. She made my skin crawl. LTT, who even the Forsaken admit was an "honest man," said that Lanfear, even when she was Mierin, loved power more than anything else. What is the DO but the ultimate temptation of power?

All of her actions in “helping” Rand have not been to further his cause against the DO, but to gain his trust and lust, so that she could control him. She does not love Rand/LTT; she wants him to be her obedient lap-dog, and to serve him up on a platter to the DO, so that she can be the most powerful of his servants. She would supplant the DO *and* the Creator in a second if she could, and then be disappointed that she wasn’t powerful enough. Having deceived Rand for so long, it would have been simple for her to deceive Charn, a follower of the Way of the Leaf. (It is obvious from looking at the Tinkers and the Ancient Aiel that Way-of-the-Leafers cannot believe that the world is a Bad Place with Bad People in it.)

But anyway, evidence in TFOH closes the case for good. I do not refer to the skinning of Kadere, torturing of Egwene and Aviendha, killing of many bystanders, and attempted killing of Rand, although that provides plenty of evidence in itself, insanity or no. I refer to Moiraine’s vision in the Rings of Rhuidean [TFOH: 53, Fading Words, 637]. If Moiraine had not jumped Lanfear, and let her have her way, Rand would be: (a) dead; or (b) Lanfear’s love-slave, with the crippled mind of LTT. These were Lanfear’s plans. They are not the plans of a good person.

Oh, and if you need further proof, recall the ecstasy with which she describes bathing in the DO’s presence at Shayol Ghul. She *likes* it.

Note that Lanfear did *not* send the Trollocs who fought Sammael’s Trollocs in TSR. They were sent by Semirhage, on order of the DO. The DO, it seems, has been giving Rand aid for some time now, probably in the hopes of eventually turning him to the Dark Side. Any “help” Lanfear has done for Rand was probably in view of this end. Taking credit for rescuing him is certainly not past her.

Carolyn F. adds, that in a letter she got from RJ, he said that Lanfear was fixated on possessing a man who never loved her. (I guess LTT was just using her for sex, eh?) Her desire for Rand is as much desire for power as for him personally. She could get her hands on the remote-control *ter’angreal* for the kick-ass *sa’angreal* and get credit for turning the Dragon Reborn over to the DO. She wants power for power’s sake, not for Rand’s sake.

Finally, Cyndane’s POV in [WH: 35, With the Choedan Kal, 649] clearly indicates she wants Rand to die. (Cyndane is Lanfear; see section 1.2.4.)

1.1.8 Was Ishamael really bound?



The widespread belief in Randland is that all thirteen Forsaken were imprisoned with the DO when the Bore was sealed by LTT and the Hundred Companions. However, this doesn’t seem to be entirely true. Ishamael appears bodily to LTT in the prologue to TEOTW. We know that he must really be there, because he cures LTT’s insanity so that he will realize what he has done. From what we know of how channelling works, he could not have done this if he was only some kind of astral projection. That scene takes place shortly after the sealing of the Bore. So, Ishy was not bound right when the DO and the other Forsaken were sealed away.

Many events throughout the Third Age bear Ishy’s fingerprints – the Trolloc Wars (the Trollocs invading Manetheren carried the banner of Ba’alzamon), the creation and continued existence of the Black Ajah, the War of the Hundred Years. Ishy claimed to have influenced Hawkwing [TEOTW: 14, The Stag and Lion, 172]. The Third Age shows a pattern of humanity being kept in a state of disarray. Whenever the people showed signs of becoming unified (Compact of Ten Nations, Hawkwing’s empire), some cataclysmic event occurred to split things up again. This worked out too well for the Shadow to be mere coincidence. Clearly, Ishy was active and in control of the Shadow’s forces for quite a bit of, if not all of, the Third Age.

Then we have the research of the post-breaking historian Aran son of Malan son of Senar (presumably an Ogier), as described in [Guide: 5, The Dark One and the Male Forsaken, 52]. This person claims that:

...there were sightings of, even encounters with, Ishamael after the Bore was sealed, in fact perhaps as much as forty years after.

The proposed theory is that:

...it may have taken some years for Ishamael to be drawn fully into the trap with the other Forsaken. ...
Ishamael might well be thrown out of the prison holding the others and drawn back again on some regular cycle.

Next there is the bit in [Guide: 12, The Reign of the High King, 114-5] about Hawkwing’s advisor Jalwin Moerad. Moerad was a mysterious, shady character who insinuated himself into Hawkwing’s court in FY 973. Moerad exhibited:

...frequent long absences, a volatile temper, and a temperament that more than one observer recorded as ‘more than half insane.’

Shortly after Moerad became a counselor (late summer FY 974), Hawkwing abruptly turned against the AS (who had previously had a very close relationship with Hawkwing). Moerad was contemptuous of AS. After Hawkwing’s death, Moerad advised the three nobles who “came the closest to seizing the whole of Hawkwing’s empire,” and all three of them met untimely deaths. Finally:

Moerad never aged from the day he first appeared to the day he vanished, abruptly, some forty years later.

The personality, the lack of aging, and the forty years business, along with Ishy's claim that he influenced Hawkwing make it clear that Moerad was Ishamael.

Finally and most tellingly, **Josh Hildreth** points out Moghedien's musings while holding Nynaeve and Elayne in thrall in Tanchico, after they tell her about the two Forsaken Rand fought in the Stone of Tear:

"So Be'lal is dead. The other sounds like Ishamael, to me. All his pride at being only half-caught, whatever the price – there was less human left in him than any of us when I saw him again; I think he half-believed he *was* the Great Lord of the Dark – all his three thousand years of machinations, and it comes to an untaught boy hunting him down."

[TSR: 46, Veils, 526]

So, it seems like Ishy was somehow "partially bound." That is, he was not completely locked away in the Dungeon Dimension with the rest of the Forsaken and the DO. He was definitely free right after the sealing of the Bore, and was most likely free at various points during the Third Age. Obviously, he was also the first of the Forsaken to be completely freed of the seals, by a long shot.

1.1.9 Why do we think that Anath is Semirhage in disguise?

[Leigh Butler, Tim Mixdorf]



In WH we meet Tuon's *Soe'feia*, or Truthspeaker, Anath. Other than having Pure Evil written all over her, what makes us think that Anath must be the long-absent Semirhage surfacing at last?

Well, probably because point for point the two women's descriptions are a spot-on match. Let's consider the points:

1. Physical traits.

[Anath:] A slender woman, she would have been tall even for a man. Her charcoal-dark face was beautiful, but her large black eyes seemed to pierce like awls.

[WH: 14, What a Veil Hides, 326]

[Semirhage:] ...unblinking dark eyes in a smooth dark face... Semirhage stood taller than most men, though so perfectly proportioned that you did not realize it until she stood over you, looking down.

[LOC: Prologue, The First Message, 56]

2. Fashion sense.

Anath: Described in Chapter 14 as wearing "unrelieved black silk." She's wearing black again when Mat meets Tuon for the first time [WH: 17, Pink Ribbons, 367]. It's pretty safe to assume it's her costume of choice.

Semirhage: From the same page of LOC as above, Graendal thinks:

Not even Demandred dared suggest to Semirhage's face that she wore black so often because Lanfear wore white.

3. Other telltale traits.

On the ship, Anath doesn't show discomfort in the cold, which time and again in WOT is a trait used to describe channellers. Anath should in no way be able to channel.

Later in Ebou Dar, Mat notices that the trademark slurring accent of the Seanchan is barely present in Anath's speech [WH: 17, Pink Ribbons, 369].

4. Sadism.

Easily the defining personality trait of both characters – not just the fact that they both enjoy giving pain, but the disturbingly solicitous manner in which the torture is administered. Tuon thinks of how Anath showed "an odd sort of tenderness" in dispensing a penance that left Tuon crying for days; the same exact phrase could be used to describe Semirhage's behavior during her torture of Cabriana Mecandes [LOC: 6, Threads Woven of Shadow, 139-141].

5. The "willful charge" comment.

Semirhage thinks to herself in LOC:

She did not like having to hurry. And to be called away from her charge; the girl was willful and obdurate, the circumstances difficult.

[LOC: 6, Threads Woven of Shadow, 141]

Fits Anath's situation to a tee. Tuon is certainly plenty stubborn.

6. Location.

During the Forsaken Coffee Hour, Demandred thinks:

...he wished Semirhage or Mesaana were present. ... But it was difficult for Semirhage to attend these meetings.

[WH: 13, Wonderful News, 313]

Being confined on a ship with a bunch of *damane* wandering about would probably make it very difficult indeed for Semi, as Anath, to Travel anywhere, even using inverted weaves.

7. Standard Forsaken M.O.

Anath was unexpectedly named to the position of Tuon's *Soe'feia* by the Empress after the untimely death of her predecessor Neferi from a fall down stairs less than two years before WH, despite the fact that Neferi already had a replacement trained for such circumstances. It's safe to say that if anyone has control over Tuon, the second most powerful noble in the Seanchan Empire, it's her Truthspeaker. How convenient.

In other words, this chain of events has a very familiar ring after reading about Be'lal in Tear, Rahvin in Andor, Sammael in Illian, Graendal in Arad Doman, Mesaana in the White Tower, Aran'gar in Salidar, and even Osan'gar (and possibly Demandred) in the Black Tower, not to mention what Ishy was running around doing in the centuries he was only partly bound (see section 1.1.8). Most of the Forsaken since being freed have busied themselves acquiring power, not by being the power, but by being the power behind the power.

And it's absurd to think that the FS would inveigle their way into all these nations' ruling councils and ignore the Seanchan, who are currently the only military force in Randland, other than Egwene's army, that can put up a decent fight against Rand's Asha'man. (Note that while Demandred had been possibly linked to the Seanchan by Sammael [LOC: 6, Threads Woven of Shadow, 135], his involvement with the Black Tower and his arrangement with Semi, as described in the Forsaken Coffee Hour section, precludes his involvement with the Seanchan.)

In sum, the similarities and the situation are so perfect that it makes no sense for Anath *not* to be Semirhage.

1.2 The Forsaken – New Kids on the Block

This subsection contains information on and discussion of characters who are or who may be Forsaken who are no longer in their original bodies.

1.2.1 Who are Aran'gar and Osan'gar?

We've been told since TEOTW that the DO is Lord of the Grave. It is about time he started acting it. In [LOC: Prologue, The First Message, 59-61], we see "Aran'gar" and "Osan'gar," two minions of the Shadow brought back from the dead and put into new bodies. Osan'gar, at least, is one of the Forsaken; when he tells SH to stop choking Aran'gar, he thinks:

The thing had to obey one of the Chosen.

[LOC: Prologue, The First Message, 60]

It is a good first approximation to assume that they are both reincarnated Forsaken, and not some random Dreadlords. So, what Forsaken are available for reincarnation (i.e. are dead)? Aginor and Balthamel, Ishamael, Asmodean, Rahvin and Be'lal, and possibly Lanfear. Well, Rahvin and Be'lal died of balefire, and their souls are beyond even the reach of the DO. Asmodean was a traitor; the DO lumps him in with Rahvin as having "died the final death" [LOC: Prologue, The First Message, 15], and anyway, RJ has confirmed repeatedly that Asmo is thoroughly dead and won't be coming back.

Both the 'gars were originally male. When Osan'gar tries to channel, he naturally reaches for *saidin*, not *saidar*. As for Aran'gar, she is extremely upset at being put into a woman's body, and Osan'gar thinks it is a "fine joke." Furthermore, in [TPOD: 16, Unexpected Absences, 333] Aran'gar thinks:

It was difficult now to really remember what life had been like as a man.

This eliminates Lanfear. The remaining candidates are Aginor, Balthamel, and Ishamael.

Since the appearance of the 'gars in LOC, we've met another recycled Forsaken, Moridin. From ample evidence in ACOS, TPOD, and WH, we know that Moridin was Ishamael (see section 1.2.3). Therefore, the 'gars must be the Toxic Twosome, Aginor and Balthamel. Now our only question is which is which.

Osan'gar thinks to himself about having helped make the Trollocs and not liking the Halfmen who were an unexpected result of that experiment. We know that Aginor was very involved in creating the various Shadowspawn, and that he was unnerved by Fades, spending lots of time trying to discover how they "fade." In fact, from the Guide, we know that Aginor was the only one of the thirteen Forsaken to have worked on creating Shadowspawn [Guide: 5, The Dark One and the Male Forsaken, 50-60]. Therefore, we can conclude that Osan'gar is Aginor.



By a process of elimination, we can immediately conclude that Aran'gar is Balthamel. We have other evidence. From TEOTW and the Guide [Guide: 5, The Dark One and the Male Forsaken, 54], we know that Balthamel enjoyed "the pleasures of the flesh." That is to say, he was a real lecher. Thus, it would be a great joke to put him in a female body. Even more interesting, Aran'gar (Halima) now has a job "kneading young girls," as **Mark Loy** puts it – something right up Balthamel's alley.

Finally, if all this wasn't convincing enough, we have a report from a post-ACOS book signing [Cincinnati, Ohio; 12 October 1996]:

Someone asked RJ about the 'gars, and mentioned that he'd seen theories that Lanfear was one of the 'gars. I was expecting a RAFO, but RJ gave the guy a disgusted look, and said that "No, Osan'gar and Aran'gar are Aginor and Balthamel." The guy said, "You're confirming this, and not hinting about it?" RJ replied (I'm paraphrasing here), "I'm confirming. After all, it's pretty obvious in the books that it's those two. After all, that's what Aginor thought was so funny; Balthamel, the lecher, was stuck in a female body." [Mike Lawson]

The recycling of Aginor and Balthamel into new bodies did not come totally out of the blue. In [TEOTW: 50, Meetings at the Eye, 628], Aginor says:

"Some of us are bound no longer. The seals weaken, Aes Sedai. Like Ishamael, we walk the world again, and soon the rest of us will come. I was too close to this world in my captivity, I and Balthamel, too close to the grinding of the Wheel, but soon the Great Lord of the Dark will be free, and *give us new flesh...*"

[emphasis added]

1.2.2 What is the deal with Halima and Egwene's headaches?

[Pam Korda, Leigh Butler]



In ACOS, Egwene comes down with a spate of nasty headaches. The only way she can manage to get rid of them is for the lovely Halima to give her a massage. Halima just happens to be one of the DO's recycled agents, Aran'gar. Coincidence? I think not.

It's one of the oldest tricks in the book – cause problems so you can win somebody's confidence by fixing them.

The evidence: Egwene's headaches started the day after Logain escaped, and the day Eg and Halima had their first conversation [ACOS: 12, A Morning of Victory, 249]. Aran'gar had been trying very hard to get rid of Logain, either to gentle him again, or to kill him. In [LOC: 52, Weaves of the Power, 651], Egwene says:

"They will gentle him, Siuan... That, or someone really will do what Delana has been hinting at. I won't allow murder!"

Delana is by now only a pawn, voicing Halima's wishes. To Halima Logain is dangerous, being the only one around who can sense her ability to channel *saidin*, or rather, her actual channelling. As soon as Logain is gone, Halima's free to make her move on Egwene.

More direct evidence that Halima is responsible for the headaches is offered in COT, when Egwene sends Halima away against her wishes in [COT: 18, A Chat with Siuan, 439]:

With remarkable timing, a dull throb began behind Egwene's eyes, an all too familiar precursor to a blinding headache...

Remarkable timing, indeed.

So, since it seems unlikely that a Forsaken with direct access to the Amyrlin Seat (or one of them, even) would settle for simply making her head hurt, the obvious question to ask is, what else is she doing? The most logical assumption to make would be that Halima is Compelling Egwene to do her bidding.

Is Halima using Compulsion on Egwene?

Yes, she is:

1. We see in WH some rather disturbing changes in Egwene's policy, most notably her 180 on the matter of the Oath Rod. Elayne and Nynaeve are certainly startled and dismayed by it, understandably so, but Egwene seems dead set on the idea. Why the Oaths particularly, if this is Halima's doing? Well, for one thing, Moridin knows that if all the Aes Sedai are released from the Oath Rod, then his Black Ajah will be released from whatever Oaths they swore to the Shadow, as well. [John Novak]

Counter-argument: The Oath Rod thing is odd, but as a ploy to create chaos and disorder among the rebel AS, it's pretty pathetic. Why only this? Why not induce Egwene to do something actually damaging in the short term, like Alviarin was forcing Elaida to do? Surely there are plenty of things Halima could dream up that wouldn't topple Egwene, but still make things worse for her faction? Besides, it *is* possible that Egwene really was influenced by Siuan's speech about the value of the Oaths, and that nothing sinister is involved.

2. ... [Aran'gar] laughed throatily. "My own charge is..." She pressed a thumb down on the edge of the chair as if pinning something and laughed again. [WH: 13, Wonderful News, 314]

Counter-argument: This is conveniently vague, and evidence from TPOD, WH, and COT strongly suggests that the "charge" Aran'gar is referring to is actually Sheriam (see section 1.5.4).

3. Practically everyone in the rebel camp despises Halima, including Sivan, who is one of the few people Egwene trusts fully. Yet Egwene seems unnaturally fond of Halima, continually making excuses for her appearance and manner, and dismisses out of hand reports of Halima's strange behavior (like breaking a man's arm, for instance [COT: 18, A Chat with Sivan, 440]). Egwene's lack of suspicion with regard to Halima seems very strange, considering that she's suspicious of just about *everyone* else.

Counter-argument: Like nobody in this series has made bad character judgments before.

No, she isn't:

1. Using Compulsion on someone is fraught with difficulties. Unless you are very good at it, you run a continual risk of permanently scrambling the subject's brain. Moggy comments on this in ACOS while running to take a potshot at Nynaeve in [ACOS: 30, The First Cup, 484]:

It was possible the innkeeper might lose the whole day, or wake somewhat slower of wits than she had been – so much in Moghedien's life would have been so much easier had she possessed a better Talent for Compulsion...

Considering how much difficulty all the other Forsaken except Graendal seem to have with it, it's reasonable to think that Halima might not have the finesse required to keep a subject under long-term control without doing damage.

Counter-argument: There is no evidence Halima sucks at Compulsion.

Rebuttal: There's no evidence that she doesn't, either.

2. Even if Halima does have sufficient skill to avoid cooking Egwene's noodle, there is still the problem of Egwene herself. **Rich Boyé** points out that (as seen with Rahvin vs. Morgase and Moggy vs. Nynaeve):

... certain people have an innate resistance to Compulsion. They may be in thrall, but the subject's subconscious instinctively seeks a way out from under the Compulsion... I have no doubt that Egwene would be one of those innately resistant people – she fought off Seanchan programming for months, recall.

Additionally, Egwene tells us in [COT: 18, A Chat with Sivan, 451] that she learned the Compulsion weave from Moggy before the latter escaped; while Halima may not be aware of this fact, it still further increases the chance that Egwene would recognize that something similar was being done to her.

Counter-argument: It doesn't help Egwene to know the weave if she can't sense the *saidin* being used to create it. And while it's reasonable to suppose that Egwene might be resistant to Compulsion, that is all it is: supposition.

3. Finally, there is the fact that Egwene simply doesn't act like someone under Compulsion. **Drew Holton** observes that Compulsion:

... really leaves you with no willpower, and also no initiative. Look at how Morgase behaved. I don't think they could keep Egwene on the Amylin Seat for long [...] if she was under Compulsion.

Nor could someone rendered "slow" expect to hold on to the top spot among AS either.

Counter-argument: Again, this hinges on the assumption that Halima doesn't have sufficient skill to Compel Egwene without leaving her a drooling mess.

The last point also assumes, of course, that Halima *wants* to keep Egwene in the power seat. But really, every indication is that this is exactly what Halima wants. **Elizabeth Cornwell** points out:

... given Halima's access to Egwene, I can't imagine that she wants Egwene to fail in her current plans. The proof of this being a negative one: that if Halima wanted to bring Egwene down, she certainly could have already done so in any number of ways. (Two possibilities: direct compulsion during the headache sessions to brainwash Egwene into seeing some other plan as better; having had Delana "reveal" to the SAS Hall that Egwene was Sivan's dupe and that the attack on Elaida was being pursued because of Sivan's influence).

John Novak adds:

Just killing her outright would have sufficed, too. I'm sure Halima could manage something that would leave no trace of foul play.

Since neither of those things have happened, we must conclude that (at least some of) Egwene's goals coincide with Halima's, at the moment. One such goal is the AS civil war. Continued conflict between the TAS and the SAS is definitely in the DO's best interest – the two groups of AS are tied up fighting each other, instead of fighting the Shadow, or aiding the Dragon Reborn. So long as the conflict between the two factions continues, the DO's interest is served. Halima's methods may change if it starts to look like Egwene's plans for reuniting the Tower are coming to fruition, but for now she's doing what Halima wants, so why risk Compulsion if you don't have to?

Well, maybe a little:

A third alternative offered by several people is that Halima is only using a very light form of Compulsion on Egwene – not enough to make her actually *do* anything, but just enough to make her like Halima and dismiss any suspicions about her.

This idea seems likely because it eliminates the problem of why Egwene isn't acting brain-fried, while also explaining her complete lack of clue when it comes to Halima's antics.

Still, this seems awfully mild. It's hard to accept that Halima is using her unfettered access to Egwene just to make Egwene like her.

So what is she doing, then?

When Egwene first appears in [TPOD: 15, Stronger Than Written Law, 308], she's waking from disturbing dreams that she can't recall, even though she's been trained to remember *all* her dreams. She also indicates this is a recent phenomenon – coinciding with her headaches, perchance? The dreams:

...left her wanting to run, to escape, never able to recall what from...

Then, in [TPOD: 16, Unexpected Absences, 332], while Halima's busy lugging the corpse of one of Egwene's maids into the woods, she is "thinking idly of tonight's dreams." Hers, or Egwene's?

Most interesting of all is events in COT. For the first time in a while, apparently, Egwene recovers from a Halima-induced headache without Halima's help, and the *immediate* result is three new prophetic dreams. Egwene even specifically thinks about how her dreams were always troubled after one of Halima's massages:

Few of her dreams were light, but these were darker than any others, and, strangely, she could never remember anything except that they were dark and troubled. [COT: 20, In the Night, 481]

Given all this, it seems likely that if Halima is not Compelling Egwene or only mildly Compelling her, then the purpose of the headaches is probably to interfere with Egwene's Dreaming ability.

One must ask, of course, how exactly Halima knows that Egwene is a Dreamer. Well, Lanfear knew, for one – she was Silvie (see section 1.1.3). Also, **Ben Goodman** reminds us that Ishamael knew as well – he saw Egwene in T'A'R [TGH: 12, Woven in the Pattern, 180], and later comments on her to Rand:

"You find odd followers," Ba'alzamon mused. "You always did. [...] The girl who tries to watch over you. A poor guardian and weak, Kinslayer. If she had a lifetime to grow, she would never grow strong enough for you to hide behind." [TGH: 15, Kinslayer, 204]

This may also explain why Anaiya was one of the two AS Halima murdered in COT – she was one of the only people in the rebel camp who truly believed Egwene was a Dreamer. When Egwene is disappointed that no one seems to be taking her Dream about the Seanchan seriously, Morvrin remarks:

"It might be different if Anaiya were alive... Anaiya had a reputation for arcane knowledge. I always thought she should have chosen Brown, myself. If she said you were a Dreamer..." [COT: 30, What the Oath Rod Can Do, 662]

David Ulaeto comments:

This implies first that the Darkside actually recognizes that Dreaming is one of the major tools of the Lightside/Pattern/Creator for guiding events/characters. And second that the Darkside actually has the intelligence to recognize this, which I never would have dreamed was the case given past performance of the Forsaken et al.

So, maybe Halima's not so useless after all.

Beldeine

One last tidbit from WH which has nothing directly to do with Egwene's headaches but is still of interest is in [WH: 35, With the Choedan Kal]. Beldeine, one of Rand's newly sworn AS, was in the circle (with Daigian and Eben Hopwil) that confronted Halima/Aran'gar. **Gabriel Wright** theorizes:

This would be Beldeine who Egwene saw as her Keeper back when she was doing her Accepted test. And who now knows what the viper next to Egwene's bosom looks like. Cue Beldeine to un-mask Halima (Aran'gar) in the not too distant future. I'm guessing Sheriam will get taken out at the same time, leaving the post of Keeper to be taken by Beldeine.

This has a possible tie-in to **Pam**'s thoughts about Sheriam being the one under Halima's thumb, rather than Egwene.

1.2.3 Who is Moridin?

Why do we think the Watcher and Wanderer are him?



Why are we sure that Moridin is Ishamael returned from the grave? [John Novak]

Evidence from ACOS

It is fairly obvious from multiple references that Moridin is a reincarnated Forsaken. He makes many references to the Age of Legends as though he were there. He has personal knowledge of the other Forsaken. His sobriquet translates to 'Death.'

Aginor and Balthamel, though reincarnated, are accounted for as Osan'gar and Aran'gar respectively. Be'lal and Rahvin were balefired, and as such are beyond the Dark One's ability to restore. Asmodean, in Robert Jordan's own words, is roadkill. Sammael, though apparently dead, did not die until well after the introduction of Moridin in the narrative. No other male Forsaken have been killed in action. (And from [TPOD: 2, Unweaving, 81], we know that Moridin is and was male, since he remarks that he would be able to use an *angreal* tuned to *saidin*.)

The Toxic Twins (Aginor and Balthamel) were recycled, and all they did to merit it was getting killed at the Eye of the World. Ishy kept the faith alive for 3000+ years, *and* kept the other Forsaken somewhat in line before he died. Surely, that merits some consideration in the "bring back from the dead" competition; Ishy was overdue for a reappearance. Ishamael had been a particularly loyal servant of the Dark One, as well as the most effective. If any of the thirteen would deserve reincarnation, it would be Ishamael, for he seemed not only to serve the Dark One, but to serve him faithfully. It is likely that Ishamael knew that the Dark One's plans were not for conquest but for total destruction, and still he served. In the AOL, he:

...called for the complete destruction of the old order – indeed, the complete destruction of everything.

[Guide: 5, The Dark One and the Male Forsaken, 51]

Moridin uses the True Power to the exclusion of the One Power. In fact, he uses it for "routine" things for which the OP would be fine: like picking up chess pieces, balefire, and Travelling. The True Power, according to Moghedien, is used only extremely rarely, even by the Forsaken. Of the original Forsaken, Ishamael is the only one who we've seen use the TP.

Both Moridin and Ishamael display strange visual effects about their eyes. Moridin has the *saa*, while Ishamael had those odd bursts of flame. It has been speculated that the flames are an advanced version of the *saa*, or that the flames were a method to disguise the *saa*.

Evidence from TPOD

- The Prologue of TPOD is particularly revealing. Moridin's blank-faced servants are identical to Ishamael's servants from the Prologue of TGH. Similarly, the chamber in which he sits contains a fire that gives no heat and consumes no logs. It has no physical means of egress. This is identical in tone to the description given of Ishamael's chambers through TEOTW and TGH.
- Also in the Prologue, while Moridin is musing over his re-creation of an historical game of *sha'rah*, it becomes extremely clear that the game is a metaphor for the struggle between the Dark One and the rest of the world, with Rand (or the Dragon) embodied in the Fisher piece. One can win either by controlling and moving the Fisher piece to a particular location, or by allowing your opponent to hold the Fisher and leaving him only legal moves which similarly result in victory for you. The style of the game parallels Ishamael's actions through the first three volumes very well, always manipulating Rand even though he was in the hands of other powers. The final method of victory is simply to be the last man standing. Moridin muses that he had only attempted that strategy once, with very painful results. This is almost certainly a metaphorical reference to his desperate assault on Rand at the end of TDR, the painful results being his own physical death.
- The final observation from the prologue of TPOD is that Moridin becomes angry as he muses over the fact that he does not understand the origins of the name or the traditional shape of the Fisher piece on the game board. He becomes angry because he regards that knowledge, likely lost from some previous turning of the Wheel, as his right. Ishamael is the only other villain to worry seriously over events from other cycles, as he asserts in the prologue of TEOTW that he and Lews Therin have fought again and again since the beginning of time. According to [Guide: 5, The Dark One and the Male Forsaken, 50], Ishamael believed:

...the war between the Shadow and the soul of Lews Therin had gone on since the Creation, an endless war between the Great Lord of the Dark and the Creator using human surrogates.

- In [TPOD: 2, Unweaving, 81], Moridin notes several modern developments of the Aes Sedai and other channellers which had been unknown and/or considered impossible in the Age of Legends. Among them, he lists the Warder bond and notes that he had known about that for a long, long time. Of all the Forsaken, only Ishamael could possibly have known about the Warder bonds for more than a few years, since only Ishamael had been active at all since the Strike at Shayol Ghul. *This piece of evidence alone proves that Moridin is Ishamael.*

Objections to the Moridin/Ishamael theory from before TPOD included the suggestion that Ishamael did not work well behind the scenes and that Ishamael might be expected to exert more influence on the remaining Forsaken. However, since we now

know the general shape of Ishamael's activities during his rare periods of activity (as hinted at throughout the series and almost spelled out in the Guide) as well as his care in creating a cell structure for the Black Ajah, it is clear that Ishamael excels at behind-the-scenes manipulations.

Furthermore, in TPOD, it becomes clear that Moridin is indeed exerting more direct control over the remaining Forsaken. In ACOS, he takes direct control of Moghedien through one mindtrap, and is known to control another. In TPOD, it is revealed that 'Cyndane' (Lanfear reincarnated) is the other mindtrap victim.

It is also clear that Moridin and Shaidar Haran are cooperating. In [ACOS: 25, Mindtrap, 417], it is Shaidar Haran who delivers Moghedien to Moridin, and Moridin who controls her mindtrap. In [TPOD: 12, New Alliances], it is Moghedien and Cyndane (both under Moridin's control) who visit Graendal to tell her to accept Moridin as Nae'blis. Shaidar Haran later appears to convince her.

So we have three Forsaken under Moridin's control, which alone is significant. Extrapolating this pattern, we also note that when Aginor and Balthamel return as Osan'gar and Aran'gar in LOC, it is Shaidar Haran who first greets them. It is not at all unlikely that they also encountered Moridin offstage sometime thereafter. If true, this would place five Forsaken directly under his control.

Evidence from WH

By WH, Moridin appears to have most or all of the remaining Forsaken leashed. Though Mesaana and Semirhage were not present at the Coffee Hour, it's clear that Mesaana, at least, has seen Cyndane. Moridin also expected Mesaana to be present, all of which implies that Mesaana was "gathered in" much the same way Graendal and, we presume, Demandred and the 'gars were. (Mesaana's encounter with Shaidar Haran in COT confirms this.)

Demandred certainly seems to think Moridin is Ishamael:

"The Great Lord is sure you are all faithful," Moridin announced, striding in as though he were the Great Lord himself. He had often seemed to believe he was, and the boy's face he wore now had not changed that.
[WH: 13, Wonderful News, 316]

Who played at being Ba'alzamon for the first three books? That's right, Ischy did.

Moridin also likes to torture rats. Who else liked to kill rats? That's right, Ischy did. [Billy Todd]

Demandred also wonders about how to make sure Moridin doesn't get a new body *the next time around*.

The Watcher and the Wanderer [Pam Korda, Paul Khangure]

In addition to Moridin's overt appearance in ACOS, there were two other appearances by mysterious men of the Dark persuasion in that book. First, we met the Watcher, i.e. the guy watching Graendal and Sammael, in [ACOS: 20, Patterns Within Patterns, 356]. Then, we met Moridin in [ACOS: 25, Mindtrap, 417]. Finally, there is the "wanderer" that Rand met in Shadar Logoth during his fight with Sammael in [ACOS: 41, A Crown of Swords, 656]. Even before TPOD, it was reasonable to assume that all three were the same person. After all, how many mysterious True Power channellers do we need? Given that neither the "Watcher" nor the "Wanderer" appear as distinct individuals in TPOD, we have even more reason to believe that both are Moridin, who is Ishamael. Let us consider the specific bits of evidence.

The Watcher

We meet the Watcher in [ACOS, 20, Patterns within Patterns, 356-358].

1. Obviously a Forsaken from the AOL. He knows about AOL technology – callboxes, Mask of Mirrors and fancloth, knows the Forsaken by name and appearance. He definitely *knew* Sammael, as opposed to knowing of him. Just a guy from the AOL is not enough; he has to be someone who interacted and got to know Sammael's strengths and weaknesses. Notice there was no fear of interfering with not just two of the Forsaken, but with a potential battle between them! Furthermore, he uses the phrase "so-called Aiel" which we have no reason to expect anybody except a relic from the AOL to use; the Forsaken are the only AOL relics in action, except Birgitte and "LTT."
2. Senses *saidin* being held by Sammael, skin prickles when Graendal channels. This indicates that he has the ability to channel *saidin*.
3. He uses the TP. Note that he does so even though he can use the OP. This indicates that he probably uses it more than your average Forsaken – he could have Traveled with the OP, but he used the TP instead. Note that by the time he left, Sam had left the vicinity, so there was no chance of him being detected.
4. He has eyebrows and eyes (i.e. he is not Shaidar Haran).
5. He has:
...expertise in many areas Sammael scorned. In some he favored, too.

6. He doesn't seem to have the same attitude as the "normal" Forsaken towards Nae'blis-ness. In [ACOS: 20, Patterns Within Patterns, 358], Sammael mentions (lies) to Graendal that he "will be Nae'blis." Graendal then stops arguing with Sam and follows him through his gateway. We then have:

The watcher smiled crookedly behind his fancloth skulker's mask. Nae'blis. That explained what had brought Graendal to heel, what had stayed her from killing Sammael. Even she would be blinded by that.

It seems as if the Watcher is *not* blinded by the "Nae'blis" carrot, unlike the "normal" Forsaken.

7. Obviously, he has an interest in what Sammael and Graendal are up to, since he is spying on them.

What can we conclude from these observations? From 1 and 2, we can conclude that the Watcher is Moridin/Ishamael, Osan'gar/Aginor, or Demandred.

Aran'gar/Balthamel is out, because she thinks of herself as "she," as indicated in [TPOD: 16, Unexpected Absences, 332-333]. The relative lack of interest in Sammael's supposed Nae'blis-hood rules Demandred out. (Recall Demandred's reaction to "WOULD YOU BE NAE'BLIS?" in the LOC Prologue.) Osan'gar/Aginor/Dashiva is pretty much ruled out as well. Not only is he depicted as a terrible skulker (and a total wuss to boot) in WH, he thinks to himself about how:

He had never been a soldier, not really. His talents, his genius, lay elsewhere. [WH: 35, With the Choedan Kal, 645]

This plus the description of Aginor's activities during the AOL (Shayol Ghul's resident mad scientist) is in direct conflict with the Watcher's thoughts about having "expertise in some [areas] Sammael favored." Aginor's only apparent realm of expertise seems to have been biology, which Sam wasn't really into.

The last, and overwhelmingly most likely, possibility is Moridin. This is indicated by the Watcher's use of the TP in a circumstance where the OP would have sufficed. Given the general attitude of the Forsaken towards the TP, it is unlikely that there are *two* such TP addicts around, and that Osan'gar is one of them. Unlike Moggy, Osan'gar didn't even consider using the True Power when he found himself shielded by Shaidar Haran. The fact that the Watcher was keeping tabs on Sammael and Graendal connect him to both the Wanderer (who interfered with Sammael and Rand's fight in SL – something he could have only done if he knew what Sammy had been up to) and Moridin. We know Moridin was watching Sammael, because he thinks about how foolish Sam's plans are in [TPOD: 2, Unweaving, 81-82], and his minions Moggy and Cyndane seem to know about Graendal's connection with Sam when they visit her in [TPOD: 12, New Alliances, 262-268]. Thus, everything points to the Watcher being Moridin.

The Wanderer

We see the Wanderer in [ACOS: 41, A Crown of Swords, 656-659].

1. Description: Big fellow. Has a deep voice. Little older than Rand. Black coat, black hair. Rand doesn't recognize him.
2. He's most likely not a Third Age person. Knows Sammael, including how Sammael thinks. He clearly knows Sam fairly well, and thus is probably from the AOL. Furthermore, he has "never been afraid of Aes Sedai." Everybody in Randland proper (i.e. not Seanchan, not Aiel, and not Sea Folk) grows up hearing stories of Aes Sedai like those the Emond's Fielders did. Such stories engender some sort of awe in the listener, yet this guy acts like AS are no problem, and has never thought otherwise. This comment is easily understandable if he's from the AOL – back then, he *was* an Aes Sedai, and modern AS are but "untrained children" to him.
3. He uses the TP instead of the OP (balefire, and disappears without Rand sensing *saidin* or *saidar*). This is a situation where using the TP instead of the OP could be dangerous – it might make Rand suspicious – and yet the Wanderer uses it. This is evidence that the Wanderer is a TP addict.
4. Even apart from his TP use, he is clearly a Minion of Darkness. He calls Rand a fool, he doesn't "care to see [Rand] die today," he doesn't "intend to carry [Rand] on [his] shoulders, or kill Sammael." He's clearly only helping Rand because it coincides with some plan of his, not because he particularly cares about Rand's well-being. He certainly doesn't like Rand; when he falls down after the crossed-streams BF incident, Rand offers him a hand, but the Wanderer refuses "with a grimace."
5. Q: There is a mystery man who helps Rand in the last chapter of ACOS... is this a new character, or have we seen him elsewhere?

RJ: Well, we've certainly seen him earlier in CROWN OF SWORDS.

[From the RJ aol.com chat, 27 June 1996]

Given that the Wanderer must be a Forsaken (#2, #3, #4), we are left with only two suspects – Demandred and Moridin. (Osan'gar is not even an outside possibility, since he is Dashiva, and Rand would have instantly recognized him.) The physical description (#1) does not match Demandred (who is not young). In fact, the description matches Moridin quite well. From [ACOS: 25, Mindtrap, 417-418]:

The speaker was a tall, broad-shouldered young man in black boots and breeches, and a flowing white shirt unlaced at the top, who watched her with startlingly blue eyes...

He has a deep voice. He has a strong chin, else he'd be worthy of Graendal's collection. He looks to be just a little older than Rand ("not many years past twenty").

The Wanderer's size, hair color, age, voice, and fashion sense all match with Moridin's, as does his TP addiction. The attention to and interference with Sammael's plans also agree with what we know Moridin (and the Watcher) have been up to. RJ's remark that the Wanderer is somebody we saw earlier in ACOS certainly works if he is Moridin. Furthermore, his remarks to Rand, which indicate that he regards Rand as a tool or a piece in a game, bring to mind Ishamael's comments to Rand in the first three books, and also Moridin's analysis of the *sha'rah* game in [TPOD: Prologue, Deceptive Appearances, 42-44]. All of this indicates that the Wanderer is Moridin.

1.2.4 Who is Cyndane, and where did she come from?

[Pam Korda, Leigh Butler, Bryan Ecker]



Cyndane is a "new" character in TPOD. She appears in [TPOD: 12, New Alliances, 262-268], when she and Moghedien visit Graendal to bring her into the fold. Of course, we must immediately ask, "Who is she, really?"

What we knew about Cyndane from TPOD:

- Her name means "last chance" in the OT.
- She is Moridin's other mindtrapped lackey, along with Moghedien. We know that she was already mindtrapped when Moggy met Moridin.
- She is not impressed or intimidated by Forsaken; Graendal is startled at her haughty attitude.
- She is short, and appears to be "striving for every inch of height."
- Graendal senses her strength in the OP, which means she channels *saidar*, and Cyndane is stronger in the Power than Graendal.

These clues and deductive reasoning led to the conclusion that Cyndane is most likely Lanfear reincarnated. This conclusion is confirmed beyond doubt in WH.

During the Forsaken Coffee Hour [WH: 13, Wonderful News, 318], Demandred thinks to himself that he had been sure Cyndane was Lanfear reincarnated because of the way she referred to Rand as "Lews Therin", just as Lanfear always had, and also because of her familiarity with the Choedan Kal and the AOL in general. His certainty, however, had been shaken when Mesaana told him Cyndane was weaker in the OP than Lanfear had been.

Demandred's doubts notwithstanding, Cyndane's POV in [WH: 35, With the Choedan Kal, 641] clinches it:

So he had found a woman to use the other access key. She would have faced the Great Lord – faced the Creator! – with him. She would have shared the power with him, let him rule the world at her side. And he had spurned her love, spurned her!

Lanfear, to Rand, from [TSR: 9, Decisions, 129]:

"You and I can rule the world together under the Great Lord, forever... Two great *sa'angreal* were made just before the end, one that you can use, one that I can. Far greater than that sword. Their power is beyond imagining. With those, we can challenge even... the Great Lord himself. Even the Creator!"

And just in case you need more proof, we have another Cyndane POV [WH: 35, With the Choedan Kal, 648-649] in which she is shocked to discover that Alivia:

...was stronger than Cyndane had been before the Aelfinn and the Eelfinn held her!

As Pam puts it, succinctly:

There is only one psycho ex-girlfriend of LTT who invited Rand to use the mega-*sa'angreal* with her to challenge the DO and the Creator, who was the strongest known woman channeller, and who spent time in Finland. Her name was Lanfear. Now it is Cyndane.

So she's Lanfear. But how did she get from Lanfear to Cyndane?

The last we saw of Lanfear, she was knocked through the doorway to Foxland by Moiraine, and the doorway melted. The big question is, what happened to her that she ended up with a new body (and a mindtrap)? Up until WH we had absolutely no idea what happened to Moiraine and Lanfear after they fell through the door. WH gives us two pieces of information – that she was "held" by the Aelfinn and the Eelfinn, and that she is weaker as Cyndane than she was as Lanfear (though still stronger than Graendal). Let's look at these two tidbits and what they tell us (or don't tell us) about what happened to Lanfear in Finland.

Held by the Finn

The word “held” implies it was against Lanfear’s will (which certainly makes sense). That, of course, immediately raises the question – how did they hold her? Why could she not defend herself against them, the way Rand did against the Aelfinn (the Snakes) in the Tear doorway? (We now know which is which; see section 2.6.3.)

The simplest answer is that she was stilled, and thus not in a position to put up a fight with the OP.

Stilled or not?

If we recall the incident in TFOH, Lanfear was drawing deeply on the bracelet *angreal* when Moiraine struck. She was probably drawing every particle of the OP she could stand through the *angreal*, and it must have been a humongous amount because she was winning against Rand and his *angreal*, when Moiraine cannoned into her and clawed away the *angreal* as the two of them fell through the doorway. Now, an *angreal* allows a person to channel a lot more of the OP than the person can channel unaided. What happens if the *angreal* is suddenly stripped away while the person is straining to draw as much OP as he/she can? [Koby Kobia]

If she wasn’t able to release the Source quickly enough, she would have been stilled at the very least.

If she was stilled, this could explain why Cyndane is weaker in the Power than Lanfear was. The only time we’ve ever seen a channeller end up weaker than they used to be was in the case of Siuan and Leane, who were stilled and then Healed by a woman. However, it doesn’t seem very likely that this is what happened to Lanfear. The only female channellers who might be willing to Heal Lanfear are Graendal, Moggy, Semirhage, or some random Black sister, and none of them know how to Heal stilling. Nynaeve didn’t make her amazing discovery until LOC, and in fact, as far as we know she’s still the only *saidar* channeller who can do it. We can be sure Nynaeve didn’t Heal Lanfear. Moiraine almost certainly wouldn’t have done it, either, even if she knew how (and even assuming she wasn’t stilled as well). Also, if Lanfear was stilled and then Healed, why did she still end up with a different body?

If Lanfear died and was resurrected by the DO in a different body, the difference in strength doesn’t seem to make a lot of sense. There isn’t any real evidence to say what effect being reincarnated into a different body has on the resurrectee’s ability to channel (i.e. is channelling strength a function of the body or of the soul?), but neither Moridin nor the ’gars remark on being weaker in the OP after their resurrection. However, that may not necessarily mean they aren’t weaker. Moridin appears to use the TP pretty much exclusively, and we have no idea how TP-strength correlates with OP-strength (apart from the need to be able to use the OP to be able to use the TP). As for the ’gars, we’ve had very little in the way of POVs from either of them, so it’s hard to say for sure. It’s worth pointing out, though, that the first time we see them in the Prologue of LOC, they’re both pretty mad about the way they’ve been resurrected. One would think that being weaker in the OP would have been included on their list of things to scream about, if such were the case.

The Foxes might be responsible for why Lanfear is weaker as Cyndane than she was in her own body; it could have been their price for restoring her ability to channel, or their price for whatever else she asked for (if she was not stilled). Obviously, this is related to the idea that the Foxes are responsible for her new body, but how these two connect or in what fashion we’re not sure. In any case, it doesn’t seem like much of a price. She’s weaker, yes, but still stronger than Graendal, which means she’s still immensely strong in the OP even by AOL standards. If the Foxes exacted OP strength as a price, why by such a piddly amount? (Maybe Lanfear was a good negotiator, unlike Mat?) Although, as **Pam** points out, it’s not necessarily all that piddly. If Lanfear = 20, and Graendal = 14, and Cyndane = 15, then Cyndane is still stronger than Graendal, but considerably weaker than Lanfear.

One other possibility is that it is the act of being held by the Finn itself that is responsible for the weakening. Moiraine thought that the Aelfinn (the Snakes) get a kind of payment for answering questions by rummaging through emotions and experiences, perhaps feeding on them. **James Huckaby** theorizes that perhaps:

...the normal exchange for items and services received from the Eelfinn is a time of enslavement or imprisonment where the Aelfinn and Eelfinn get to feed off them, and for channellers a certain amount of their channelling ability is taken or eaten as well.

Maybe Lanfear finally committed suicide to get away from them, at which point the DO resurrected her as Cyndane. Once again, we don’t know enough to say for sure. The options are too many and our lack of knowledge too crippling.

However, while it is very likely that stilling was the reason why Lanfear couldn’t fight the Eelfinn, it is not the sole possibility. We have no real evidence that the Finn are vulnerable to the Power. Rand’s encounter with the Snakes is not conclusive; he was wielding a sword of fire, and it could have been the fire that was holding them off as opposed to the OP (“Fire to blind,” etc.). It’s possible that if he had tried something else (say, binding them with flows of Air), it wouldn’t have worked. Plus, the Foxes gave Mat a medallion that melts OP flows. If they could do that for him, why not for themselves? It could even be that the Aelfinn – the Snakes – are susceptible to the OP and the Eelfinn – the Foxes – are not.

In short, we just don’t know enough about the abilities of the Finn or the properties of their dimension to draw any conclusions about how they held Lanfear. We also don’t have much idea what it means that she was apparently held by the Eelfinn *and* the Aelfinn. The quote raises more questions than it answers, really. The phrase does, however, eliminate a few possibilities concerning how and when Lanfear died – if she did actually die, that is.

It tells us, for instance, that Lanfear could not have died instantly when she and Moiraine went through the doorway. This scenario was unlikely in any case, since we know Moiraine is not dead (see section 2.2.6), but now we know for sure it's not so. In the same way, she couldn't have been killed by drawing too much of the Power, since that pretty much would have had to happen because of Moiraine's attack (i.e. immediately after falling through the door) and thus would also preclude the possibility of Lanfear being held in Foxland.

It's still possible that Moiraine killed her, but this option is even more unlikely than before. She couldn't have killed Lanfear immediately, for the same reasons as above, and given how much more powerful and skilled Lanfear was than Moiraine, if Moiraine didn't do it right away she probably couldn't have done it at all. Plus, the fact that Lanfear was held by the Finn seems to indicate that once through the door matters were more or less taken out of both women's hands.

So how could she have died?

Lanfear could have been killed by the Foxes (or the Snakes, or both). Just because they "held" her doesn't mean they couldn't also have killed her later. Mat's experience with them certainly would have been lethal if Rand hadn't known CPR. When Moiraine told Elayne, Egwene, and Nynaeve about the Snake doorway in Tear, where one can get three questions answered, she said:

"Questions touching the Shadow have dire consequences. If you asked about the Black Ajah, you might be returned dead, or come out a gibbering madwoman, if you came out at all." [TSR: 7, Doorways, 95]

It has been suggested that the Foxes might have a similar reaction to wishes "touching the Shadow." Given who Lanfear is, it's possible that anything she wished for would be connected to the Shadow.

On the other hand, there are reasons to believe that the Foxes wouldn't have killed Lanfear for being Forsaken. Firstly, we don't know that the Foxes have the same problem with the Shadow which the Snakes have. Secondly, Lanfear could have asked for personal things which didn't directly involve the Shadow, for example, having channelling ability restored if she was stilled, or having Lews Therin love her, or having Moiraine detained, or getting back to Randland. One might want to consider that Lanfear might have known as much about the doorways as Moiraine, and possibly more. The doors, like (almost) all *ter'angreal*, date from before the Breaking, and Lanfear was a OP-scientist during the AOL. It's not that unlikely that she'd be aware of the doorways and at least some of their properties, and know enough to avoid getting killed. Another question which has a bearing on this issue is whether the DO can retrieve the souls of dead Forsaken from other dimensions.

One other possibility for Lanfear's death is that she survived and escaped from Finnland, and died at some later point. This idea is sketchy in that it begs the questions of how did she manage to die, and why did it happen "off-screen." None of the primary Good Guys killed her; they'd have noticed. This leaves either assassination by somebody on the Dark Side, or an accidental death. Most of the "loose" Forsaken (i.e. those not tied to Shaidar Haran and/or Moridin, pre-WH) have expressed ignorance of Lanfear's whereabouts. This leaves a direct order from Moridin/SH/the DO, and if that was the case, why bother killing her just to get her in a mindtrap? Surely it would have been just as easy to send her to SG for the same treatment as Moggy. One could always suppose that she tripped, fell down some stairs, and broke her neck, all off-screen, but that would just be incredibly lame.

Lanfear did not die; the new body is the result of a wish

Just because Lanfear has a new look, we shouldn't immediately assume that she got it in the same way (from the DO) that the other "new" Forsaken got theirs. The TPOD Glossary entry on "Forsaken" has something a bit weird to say on the matter:

Moridin... may be yet another of the dead Forsaken brought back from the grave by the Dark One. The same possibility may exist regarding the woman calling herself Cyndane, but... speculation as to the identities of Moridin and Cyndane may prove futile until more is learned. [TPOD: Glossary, 598]

Clearly, this is RJ making fun of us, but it could also be a signal that Cyndane might not be wholly what she seems: Lanfear resurrected by the DO. (Moridin is obviously Ishamael – see section 1.2.3.)

So, what alternative is there? If she wasn't resurrected by the DO, she had to have gotten the body someplace else. The most likely source is the Foxes. We know that they grant wishes in ways which are often not quite what the wisher expected or desired (witness the restoration of Mat's memory). We also know that they demand a "price" for the granting of wishes, and will exact one of their choosing if the wisher does not negotiate one. In Mat's case, the "price" was for him to be hung from the Tree of Life when he was returned to Rhuidean. Now, while Lanfear would never voluntarily change her legendary looks, she might have wished something which unexpectedly resulted in a change of body. For example, if she was stilled after falling through the door, she certainly would have asked for her channelling ability to be restored. This could have been granted, in a twisted way, by putting her mind into a new body which could channel. Another idea is that she asked for Rand/LTT to love her, and she was put into a body which was reminiscent of the long-dead Ilyena. Of course, this idea depends on Cyndane looking like Ilyena. The only thing we know about Ilyena's looks is that she was blonde. Cyndane is also blonde, although she is described as silver-blond, while Ilyena was golden-blond. An objection to that idea is that Ilyena was the wife of a very famous, prominent Aes Sedai, and as such, her appearance would have been widely known (like,

say, Laura Bush's is today). Surely Graendal would have commented upon Cyndane's resemblance to Ilyena, if such a resemblance did indeed exist.

A few final notes

Why was she mindtrapped?

Moghedien was mindtrapped for betraying the DO by teaching those who would oppose the Shadow. What did Lanfear do to merit the same treatment? It's simple: like Moghedien, she demonstrated that she could not be relied upon to put the DO's interests over her own personal desires and needs, if a conflict arose. She offered to ally with Rand to supplant the Creator and the DO both – and her POV in WH shows she meant it. She enabled, even caused, Asmodean's defection. Essentially, she committed the same transgression as Moghedien, albeit in a less direct fashion – she helped somebody opposing the Shadow learn skills which would make him more likely to succeed. The conversion of Rand to the DO is a Shadow priority. If Rand had remained ignorant of channelling, his lack of control could have served as a powerful motivation to turn to the Dark Side. Providing a non-Shadow-controlled tutor for Rand removed that motivation. Finally, her psychotic episode at the Cairhien docks, where she tried to kill Rand, and made a general hash of things, was a clear indication that she could not be relied upon to act in the Shadow's best interests, without strong supervision.

What about the body? [John Hamby, Steven Cooper]

It has been proposed that the original owner of Cyndane's body was Cabriana Mecandes. This is the AS who was tortured by Semirhage in LOC, to get information for Halima's infiltration of the SAS. The evidence is scant, but suggestive:

From [LOC: 6, Threads Woven of Shadow, 188-190]:

A pale-haired silk-clad woman...

The woman's blue eyes bulged.

...her head flung from side to side, flailing her hair...

Cyndane is described as having "long silver hair and vivid blue eyes" [TPOD: 12, New Alliances, 262]. The blue eyes and long hair match, and silver hair and pale hair could be considered as matching also.

On the other hand, there are missing pieces in the description of Mecandes. Cyndane is unusually short, and apparently has "huge... tracts of land." (If you don't understand that last bit, proceed to your local video store and rent *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*.) Neither of these distinguishing features is noted by Semirhage.

1.2.5 Moridin's nine *sha'rah* players

In [TPOD: Prologue, Deceptive Appearances, 42-43], Moridin is playing his favorite AOL strategy game (against himself):

A complex game, *sha'rah*, ancient long before the War of Power. *Sha'rah*, *tcheran*, and *no'ri*... each had adherents... but Moridin had always favored *sha'rah*. Only nine people living even remembered the game. He had been a master of it.



This section, in particular the "nine people living" bit, could be very important, or it could mean nothing. People have interpreted that bit in two ways: (1) "Only nine people living even remembered the game [existed]." (2) "Only nine people living even remembered [how to play] the game." The former interpretation means that we can, conceivably, count off which of the Forsaken are alive, to Moridin's knowledge. The latter interpretation does not give us so much knowledge, although it still tells us a little. So, who could these "nine" be?

Since the game is unknown in the Third Age, the nine must be from the AOL. The only people around from the AOL are the Forsaken. The ones who are around who we know that Moridin knows about are: Moridin, Moghedien, Mesaana, Graendal, Semirhage, and Demandred. That's six. Add Lanfear, who is Cyndane (see section 1.2.4) and the occupant of Moridin's second mindtrap. That's seven. The Forsaken Coffee Hour in WH indicates that Moridin has known about Aran'gar and Osan'gar for a good long time – certainly since TPOD. That leaves only Sammael in doubt. (Rahvin, Be'lal, and Asmodean are permanently dead, so they are not in the counting.) Including all of the viable possibilities, the total reaches ten, which is one more than the nine enumerated by Moridin. If we cannot eliminate Sammael, then we must conclude that Moridin was referring to nine people who could play the game, and that one of the Forsaken simply wasn't into board games.

Sammael died at the end of ACOS. This makes him a good candidate for not being counted among the nine, or does it? Note that Moridin's second scene in TPOD is in [TPOD: 2, Unweaving, 81-84], where he watches Elayne and Nynaeve's party depart the Tarasin Palace via gateway. This scene occurs the same day that they use the Bowl of Winds. From [TPOD: 7, A Goatpen, 160], Perrin thinks that "more than half a week" (over five days in Randland) has passed since:

...a lace of the One Power streaking high across the sky had created quite a stir among the Aes Sedai and Wise Ones. And with Grady and Neald. ... Neald said it made him think of wind...

This description matches with that of the Bowl's action. The next day, Perrin meets Queen Alliandre, and she mentions that:
...four days ago Illian fell to the Dragon Reborn. [TPOD: 10, Changes, 228]

This matches with the timing as figured from data in ACOS: the using/finding of the Bowl occurs the day after the Festival of Birds, when Nynaeve meets and marries Lan. The Festival of Birds is six nights before the half-moon [ACOS, 29, The Festival of Birds, 454]. Rand's attack on Sammael takes place two days after his injury at the hands of Fain [ACOS: 41, A Crown of Swords, 617], and the injury took place on the day Min assures Rand that their "comforting" was mutually voluntary. This is four days before the half-moon. Thus, we can conclude that the Moridin scene in Chapter 2 to TPOD takes place two days before Sammael dies in Shadar Logoth.

There is no indication that Moridin's timeline flows backwards in TPOD between the scene in the Prologue and the scene in Chapter 2. The reasonable conclusion is that the Chapter 2 scene occurs after the Prologue scene, and thus, both occur before the fight between Rand and Sammael. This implies that Sammael was definitely alive when Moridin pondered about the nine players.

So, if Moridin meant "only nine people living even remembered the game existed," then we can only conclude that RJ did some extremely poor writing, and the scene with Moridin in the Prologue of TPOD occurs *after* the scene with Moridin in Chapter 2 of TPOD, even though there is absolutely no indication that this is the case.

One other option is that Moridin is not including himself in the nine people who remember the game, but if that were the case, it would have made more sense to say "Only nine *other* people even remembered the game."

On the other hand, if Moridin meant "Only nine people living even remembered how to play the game," then the sentence doesn't mean much.

1.3 How's That Work for the Dark?

This subsection contains information on and discussion of the nature of various things from the Dark Side (e.g. the Taint, the Black Ajah, etc.).

1.3.1 What are those black threads on the male Forsaken?

[Hawk, Pam Korda]



When Rand has battled the male Forsaken, he has sometimes seen black threads, wires, or cords running off from them. This is seen when Rand battles Ischy in [TEOTW: 51, Against the Shadow, 637-640], and Asmodean in [TSR: 58, The Traps of Rhuidean, 671-675]. So what's the deal with these strings?

The thick black threads are the Forsaken's connection to the DO. The connection with the DO is what keeps the male Forsaken from falling prey to the madness from the taint on *saidin* (see Asmodean's statements to Rand in TSR after his black "thread" was severed). Rand's thread in TEOTW was silver and thinner because it was from that pure pool of *saidin* that was the Eye of the World.

We've never seen the threads on a female Forsaken, so it is possible that the threads are themselves the protection from the taint. Perhaps they act as a kind of filter on *saidin*, or a conduit through which the DO siphons off the taint when the Forsaken draws upon the Source.

It's also been suggested that the threads are a connection for channelling the True Power. This isn't very likely. The problems with this idea are:

- The female Forsaken can use the TP, but nobody ever sees the black cords on them;
- The black cords were seen on *Asmodean*, and of all the Forsaken, Asmodean is the one who we'd least expect to use the very dangerous TP in an instance where the OP would serve just as well (Skimming); and
- From [ACOS book signing, Dunwoody, Georgia; 9 October 1996, report by **Erica Sadun**]:
Access to the TP is a matter of wanting it and the Dark One letting you. NOT black cords.

Another suggestion is that the presence or absence of the threads could be used to identify male Forsaken. Unfortunately, this is not the case. The black cords are only seen/sensed under very special circumstances. Rand has only seen them in two places – T'A'R and the in-between space used for Skimming. Note that Rand has seen male Forsaken without seeing the cords: Aginor and Balthamel at the Eye, Be'lal in the Heart of the Stone, Moridin in Shadar Logoth, and Dashiva/Osan'gar on many occasions. Furthermore, he doesn't *always* see the black threads when he's in T'A'R with a Forsaken – he never saw them on Rahvin. So, the black threads are not a reliable way to identify Forsaken under any circumstances, even those under which the threads have been seen in the past.

1.3.2 The True Power

[Paul Raj Khangure, Pam Korda]



What do we know about the “True Power”?

- It is the power of the Dark One [ACOS: 25, Mindtrap, 412].
- The ability to use it is granted specifically by the DO [ACOS: 25, Mindtrap, 419]. It may be that one must get permission each time one uses it:

The True Power was denied her [Moggy], of course – that could be drawn only with the Great Lord’s blessing. [ACOS: 25, Mindtrap, 416]
- At the moment, the only one with the DO’s permission to use the TP is Moridin:

[Demandred] himself had never touched the True Power except at need. Great need. Of course, only Moridin had that privilege now, since his... anointing. [WH: 13, Wonderful News, 317]

We can assume that the “anointing” refers to Moridin’s being named Nae’blis, but we’re not clear on when exactly that occurred.
- “What can be done with the True Power is very similar to what can be done with the One Power.” [RJ, aol.com Q and A session, 27 June 1996]
- One sign of extensive TP use is the black dots in the eyes, which Moggy calls *saa*. The dots are visible from both the outside [ACOS: 25, Mindtrap, 418] and from the inside [ACOS: 20, Patterns Within Patterns, 356]. We do not know whether the frequency at which an outside observer sees them is the same as that at which the user sees them. It seems likely that they come more frequently when one is actually using the TP, since the Watcher’s dots come faster just before he uses it to “Travel”:

The black flecks filled his eyes, a horizontal blizzard. ... To his ears, the world screamed as he used the True Power to rip a small hole and step outside the Pattern. [ACOS: 20, Patterns Within Patterns, 358]
- The TP is much more addictive than the OP.

In the long run, the True Power was far more addictive than the One Power; a strong will could hold down the desire to draw more *saidar* or *saidin*, but she [Moggy] did not believe the will existed strong enough to resist the True Power, once the *saa* appeared. [ACOS: 25, Mindtrap, 418]

It was a drug more addictive than *saidin*, more deadly than poison. [WH: 13, Wonderful News, 317]
- The TP is very dangerous, and has a high price.

The final price [for using the TP] was different, but no less terrible. [ACOS: 25, Mindtrap, 419]

There was a price, to be sure, one that grew with each use, but he [the Watcher] had always been willing to pay the price when it was necessary. [ACOS: 20, Patterns Within Patterns, 356]

We don’t know what this “price” is.
- As far as Moggy knows, only 30 or 31 people have ever been granted the use of the TP.

“Only twenty-nine others have ever been granted–” [ACOS: 25, Mindtrap, 419]

I dunno if Moggy is counting herself in the 29 (i.e. only 29 others besides Moridin), or not (only 29 others besides the people in the room).
- The Forsaken have the ability to use the TP.

...among the living, only the Chosen knew how to tap the True Power... [ACOS: 25, Mindtrap, 412]
- Even among the Forsaken:

...few were fool enough to [use the TP] except in direst need... [ACOS: 25, Mindtrap, 412]
- The TP can not “be detected except by who wielded it” [ACOS: 20, Patterns Within Patterns, 356]. This is worded vaguely, but RJ has clarified it:

“No one can tell if you’re using the True Power. Except the Dark One, of course.” [aol.com chat, 27 June 1996]
- If Moggy’s knowledge of the TP is reliable, then only people who can channel the OP can use the TP. We know this from the fact that as soon as Moggy realizes Moridin is a user of the TP, she immediately assumes that he can channel:

This Moridin had tapped into the True Power, and more than once. Much more. She knew that some men who could channel survived in this time aside from al’Thor... but she had not expected the Great Lord to allow one that particular honor. [ACOS: 25, Mindtrap, 418]

Where have we seen the True Power used, before ACOS?

The TP is not new in ACOS. We've seen it and heard of it before, always in the hands of Ishmael. In [TEOTW: Prologue, Dragonmount, xi] Ish uses it to "heal" LTT of his madness:

"I was never very skilled at Healing, and I follow a different power now. ... I fear Shai'tan's healing is different from the sort you know..." He extended his hands and the light dimmed as if a shadow had been laid across the sun.

Another hint of the TP's existence in TEOTW is Ishy's remark that LTT "called down his precious One Power..." [TEOTW: 14, The Stag and Lion, 205]. The only reason Ishy would have for referring to the OP in this dismissive way is if he had access to another type of Power altogether. In Rand's fight with Ish in [TDR: 55, What is Written in Prophecy, 570], Ishy does something at the end which, in retrospect, is almost certainly a use of the TP:

"I cannot be defeated! Aid me!" Some of the darkness shrouding him drifted into his hands, formed into a ball so black it seemed to soak up even the light of *Callandor*. Sudden triumph blazed in the flames of his eyes.

In general, a lot of the weird stuff Ishy did can probably be attributed to the TP. Whenever he was seen, he always had a "seething blackness" surrounding him, which "boiled up" when he was about to do something nasty to Rand (e.g. the fight at the end of TGH when Ish gives Rand his first unHealable wound). Ish was certainly one of the "fools" who used the TP in cases other than dire need. His lack of humanity is probably part of the "price" one pays for using the TP. His glowing eyes and mouth might be some advanced version of the *saa*.

In [TSR: 26, The Dedicated, 306], it is mentioned that Lanfear/Mierin had said she "had found a new source for the One Power," usable by both men and women. Considering that her "new source" turned out to be the DO, it is possible that this is a reference to the TP. Whether Lanfear knew that this was the DO or not is a different argument...

Wild Speculation

- The taint on *saidin* is due to the TP being mixed into *saidin* by the DO.
- The black cords seen on some of the male Forsaken are not taint-protection, but a connection to the TP. The problems with this idea are: (1) The female Forsaken have the ability to use the TP, but nobody has ever seen the cords on a woman; (2) Asmodean is one of the people the cords *were* seen on [TSR: 58, The Traps of Rhuidean, 671], and of all the Forsaken, the cowardly Asmodean is, IMO, the least likely to use the TP, given its dangers, especially for something (Skimming) that could be accomplished via the much-less-dangerous OP; and (3) From [ACOS book signing, Dunwoody, Georgia, 9 October 1996, report by **Erica Sadun**]:

Access to the TP is a matter of wanting it and the Dark One letting you. NOT black cords.

1.3.3 Are Black Ajah bound by the Oath Rod?

First, we know that BA can violate the three AS Oaths with impunity:

- They can violate the Third Oath: In [TSR: 38, 863, Hidden Faces, 438], Liandrin wishes she had the ability to kill with the Power, like Chesmal (another BA). This implies that Chesmal can, and has done so. "New Spring" makes it seem very possible that Chesmal killed a sister named Meilyn, one of Tamra Ospenya's searchers [L:NS, 669].
- They can violate the First Oath: In [TFOH: 34, A Silver Arrow, 394], Liandrin attacks the wounded Moghedien, attempting to Compel her. Moggy strikes back, and Liandrin says:

"Y-you do not understand, Great M-mistress... I only wished to help you to have the good sleep."

This was *definitely* not her intention. Her intention was to have Moggy be her obedient slave. A few pages later, Liandrin tells Moggy that she will be Moggy's "faithful dog," and in the next sentence tries to get Temaile and Chesmal to try to betray Moggy. If she meant one, the other must be a lie. In [TFOH: 19, Memories, 260], Alviarin says to Fain:

"Now answer my questions, or two corpses will be found here in the morning instead of one."

(The one being the dead Accepted.) Fain thinks to himself:

There would be two in any case, whether he answered her with suitable lies or not; she did not mean to let him live.

Obviously Fain thinks she can lie, and do you really think Alviarin meant to let him go?

- In [ACOS: 40, Spears, 626] Galina makes it clear that the BA are not bound by the Three Oaths:

She had broken free of the Three Oaths on joining the Black Ajah, replacing them with a new trinity...

So, the BA are not bound to the Three Oaths that the non-black AS swear.



However, the BA still have the ageless look and the shortened lifespan which are characteristic of people bound by the OR. They have to, in order to blend in with non-black AS. So, it is likely that the “new trinity” of Dark Oaths sworn by the BA are taken on the Oath Rod. There is further evidence for this. Galina knows that Oath Rods can be used to remove Oaths:

If [Sevanna’s “binder”] was a second Oath Rod, it could be used to remove any oath she swore now.

[TPOD: 11, Questions and an Oath, 255]

This is not general knowledge among AS (Seaine and Pevara, both high-ranking AS, had to figure that out by themselves), so we can conclude that she knows it from experience. That is, the BA are freed from the Three Oaths via the Oath Rod. It means that the BA induction involves the Tower’s OR – Galina is only familiar with the Tower’s Rod (Number 3). It’s therefore reasonable to guess that the Black Ajah Oaths are administered via Oath Rod.

So what are these Black Oaths?

Well, we don’t know for sure. But we can make reasonable guesses. The First Black Oath is almost certainly some kind of oath of servitude to the Great Lord, the same kind of oath the Forsaken have spoken of swearing. But what about the other two?

In TPOD, we have the supposition that there is some sort of Oath that the BA must take, to not betray the BA or perhaps their plans. This comes up when the golden girls can’t get Ispan to spill her guts about the BA no matter what they do [TPOD: 20, Into Andor, 399].

However, the Oath is probably more specific than “keep the Black Ajah a secret,” since BA have told outsiders that the Black Ajah exists – Liandrin for instance [TGH: 5, The Shadow in Shienar, 66]. Adeleas said that in particular she could not force Ispan to reveal the names of other Black sisters no matter what she did. So the second Oath is likely along the lines of “do not reveal the identity of any Black sister to someone not sworn to the Dark Lord,” or some such. [David Chapman]

That leaves “do not betray Black Ajah plans” as the most probable third Oath. Note Joiya Byar’s “confession” about the supposed BA plan to use Taim as a false Dragon to discredit Rand. That obviously never happened, and so it appears that Joiya lied, while her fellow prisoner, Amico, told the truth about the plan to get something in Tanchico to harm Rand. This fits well with the idea that the BA swear an Oath not to betray the Ajah. Amico, having been stilled, was released from any Oaths that she took on an Oath Rod. Thus, she could spill the beans when pressed. Joiya, however, had no such release, so had no alternative than to either lie, or to grovel, saying “I’d like to tell you, really, but I can’t!” [Laura Parkinson]

1.3.4 Are the seals connected to the Taint?

Probably not, given the last chapter of WH. Rand used the “anti-Taint” of Shadar Logoth in conjunction with the mega-*sa’angreal* (the Choedan Kal) to cleanse the taint on *saidin*. There is absolutely zero evidence that the seals played any part in the cleansing.



There is, of course, some lingering support for the idea, mostly because of Cadsuane’s doubts that *saidin* had truly been cleansed. If, as the theory went, the seals are the link that allow the DO to touch *saidin* and leak Taint into it, Rand could have just cleared off what was there, and soon more Taint will appear (somewhat like cleaning up an oil spill but not removing the pipe that’s leaking oil into the water in the first place).

However, there’s no real reason to give Cadsuane’s misgivings more weight than Flinn and Narishma’s assertion that *saidin* is clean. One would presume people who actually channel *saidin* would have more authority to judge that than a *saidar* channeller, after all.

Events in COT are somewhat ambiguous on the subject. Judging from Grady and Neald’s behavior (the Asha’man with Perrin), and Logain’s comments to Rand [COT: 24, A Strengthening Storm, 558], it seems that *saidin* is indeed cleansed. However, the only direct POV from a male channeller we have in COT is Rand, who is still experiencing dizzy spells when he tries to channel [COT: 24, A Strengthening Storm, 548]. Some people have taken this as evidence that the taint is not completely cleansed, but others think Rand’s dizzy spells are due to another source entirely (see section 2.3.16).

Herid Fel’s note (“Belief and order give strength. Have to clear rubble before you can build”), therefore, was most likely referring to his earlier discussion with Rand, in which he said that at some point the Bore had to be sealed like new (not patched with the seals the way it is now), so that the Wheel of Time can come full circle to the AOL and the breaching of the Bore again. It makes sense, then, that the seals would all have to be broken and the patch removed before Rand can heal the break in the DO’s prison like it never was.

Kelly West submits a theory along these lines:

Rand’s last question to Fel had been whether there was a reason to break the seals before TG. My feeling is that the Pattern is trying to heal the Bore naturally and that the patch is holding the Bore open, like a cork used to stop the bleeding of an open wound. That is why Taim gave the seal to Rand; the DO does not want them broken yet. During the War of Power whatever device was used to open the Bore probably also held it open, or the DO used a portion of his power to hold it. Now the reality drill is long gone, I’d imagine, and the DO would not want to waste his power when an alternate system was already in place.

Tarmon Gai'don is when the DO wants the seals broken. At that time he has the greatest chance of being freed totally. Why at this time? Because at this time the balefire will be flying at full power and the Pattern is at it's greatest chance of unravelling. You see, my theory is that the DO's prison is the Pattern itself. As long as any thread remains unbroken in the Pattern the DO cannot be completely free. (BTW, this is also why I feel Nae'blis means the last to die. The Forsaken are still threads in the Pattern.) During the AOL the DO was still bound to Shayol Ghul. The patch blocked his direct touch and he had to feed his power through Ishamael.

1.3.5 What is the deal with Black Ajah and Warders?

Can Black Ajah have Warders? Would a Warder know if his AS was Black? The answers are: yes, and depends.



We know BA can have Warders; one of the Greens from Liandrin's posse complained about having to leave her Warders behind when they fled the Tower [TSR: 38, Hidden Faces, 439]. (This may have been Asne Zeramene, who has four Warders (per WH); presumably Jeaine Caide has at least one Warder as well, but Jeaine has been MIA since Tanchico, in TSR, and we don't have any information on her Warders or lack thereof.)

So, given that BA can have Warders, we now need to ask what the deal with Black Ajah Warders is. RJ has said several things on the subject. At a post-TPOD signing in Seattle, he told **Kevin Bartlett** that the easiest thing would be to pick a Darkfriend for a Warder. This tells us that there most likely are Black Warders. At a post-TPOD signing in Pennsylvania, RJ:

...made some comments about how Warders of the BA might sometimes meet with 'accidents' so the BA can remain secret. Alternatively, BA might intentionally bond Darkfriends. [Melinda Yin]

Finally, at a post-TPOD signing in Northern Virginia, he discussed the topic. **John Novak's** synopsis:

If an Aes Sedai becomes Black Ajah, the Warder would know instantly that something was up, but wouldn't know exactly what. The Black Ajah has three choices, then – hope the Warder is a Darkfriend or amenable to being one, hide the affiliation, or arrange for an accident. Yes, this would be painful for the Aes Sedai, but it might become necessary. The process of becoming Black Ajah is evidently quite painful in its own right and thus probably involves more than just swearing new Oaths on the Rod. (I submit that this is why the Red Ajah is rife with Black Ajah – they have an easier time actively recruiting from that pool. By the same token, I claim that the Green Ajah is more pure than the others.)

Eldrith Jhondar (formerly a Brown), we discover in WH, also has a Warder, named Kennit. Kennit was the reason Eldrith, Asne, Temaile Kinderode, and Chesmal Emry were eventually forced to flee Samara, where Moghedien had sent them:

What had sparked the decision to leave was the arrival of Eldrith's Kennit in the town, sure that she was a murderer, half convinced she was Black Ajah, and determined to kill her no matter the consequences to himself. [WH: 10, A Plan Succeeds, 244]

This plus the rest of Asne's POV clears up most of our questions about the BA and Warders. We now know that BA Warders do not necessarily have to be Darkfriends, but that at least some are; one of Asne's Warders, Powl, is a DF, the other three are not. (Note that, apparently, this has not been realized by the non-Black AS. For all the talk of Black Ajah, not a single person has mentioned the possibility of Black Warders.)

We also learn (from both this and from Elayne's POV later) that the Warder bond can be masked, which explains how a BA could do her dastardly deeds while bonded to a non-DF Warder. Asne seems to have no fear that she cannot compel her three non-DF Warders into obeying her, while it's clear that Eldrith has no control over Kennit; likely this is because Asne has never let her masking slip while doing bad things, the way Eldrith did (or because Eldrith is simply not as good at compelling her Warder as Asne is).

Lastly, it appears that while BA will kill their Warders to protect their secret, they are very reluctant to do it. Asne doesn't find it surprising that Eldrith would choose to flee rather than allow Kennit to be killed and suffer the inevitable result.

There has been some indication that the Warders referred to in TSR were murdered. It's possible they were, as long as they were Jeaine's and not Asne's, but Eldrith's behavior makes it less likely to be the case. Plus, since we know that Asne's Warders were (a) left behind, (b) not all DFs, and (c) not killed, it doesn't make sense that Jeaine's would have been, whether they were Darkfriends or not.

1.4 What's Up and Who's Who in the Dark?

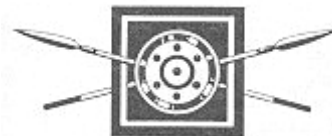
This subsection contains information on and discussion of puzzles and questions related to happenings and people which are connected to the Shadow.

1.4.01 Who ordered Melindhra, and why?

In [TFOH: 34, A Silver Arrow, 390], Nynaeve and Birgitte are eavesdropping on the Forsaken conference in *Tel'aran'rhiod*. Rahvin says:

"He [Rand] will concentrate on you [Sammael], ... If need be, one close to him will die, plainly at your order. He will come for you. And while he is fixed on you alone, the three of us, linked, will take him. What has changed to alter any of that?"

So, it seems Melindhra was ordered to kill Mat with a golden bee dagger (golden bees are the symbol of Illian, where Sammael was situated), if the need arose. Mat told her that Rand was going to Caemlyn, instead of "concentrating on Sammael," and she attacked Mat right away [TFOH: 51, News Comes to Cairhien, 617], in an attempt to return his attention to Sammael.



1.4.02 Slayer: the Luc-Isam connection

[John Novak, Leigh Butler]

Who is Isam?

Isam is Lan's blood cousin. Isam is first mentioned late in TEOTW. In [TEOTW: 47, More Tales of the Wheel, 595], Agelmar begins his tale of the history of the fall of Malkier. Briefly, it is revealed that al'Lan Mandragoran is the son of al'Akir and el'Leanna. Al'Akir had a brother, Lain Mandragoran, who was wed to Breyan. Lain and Breyan were parents to a child named Isam (see section 2.5.1 for the family tree).

Agelmar goes on to explain Breyan's jealousy and grief over her husband's death in the Blasted Lands, and her plot with Cowin Fairheart, hero and Darkfriend, to seize the throne for her son Isam. This plot failed, and Breyan fled south with her infant son Isam, and was overtaken by Trollocs. Their bodies were never recovered.

It was at this time that el'Leanna and al'Akir sent their own infant son, al'Lan, south to Fal Moran to safety. The Glossary of LOC places al'Lan's date of birth in 953 NE, and [Guide: 28, The Borderlands, 247] places both Lan's birth and the fall of Malkier in 953 NE. Since Isam was also an infant at this time, he was likely born no earlier than 951 NE. Thus we can surmise that these events took place no later than 956 NE.

Who is Luc?

Lord Luc is the brother of Tigraine, former Daughter-Heir of Andor, and thus Rand's blood uncle (see section 2.5.1 for the family tree). In [TEOTW: 34, The Last Village, 441] we learn that Luc is believed to have died in the Blight while ostensibly in training to become the First Prince of the Sword. Tigraine later vanished, before she'd properly assumed her throne.

Later, in [TSR: 34, He Who Comes With the Dawn, 392] we learn that Tigraine ran off to become a Maiden of the Spear with the Aiel at the directions of Gitara Moroso Sedai, some four years before Laman's Sin. The Glossary of TSR places the Aiel War, which began as a direct result of Laman's Sin, from 976 to 978 NE. Thus, Tigraine disappeared circa 972 NE. Tigraine joined the Aiel in the Waste, became known as Shaiel, fell in love with Janduin, and went on to conceive and bear Rand al'Thor (see section 2.4.10).

On the next page, we learn that Janduin, Rand's biological father, was killed on a venture to the Blasted Lands by a man who looked so like Shaiel (who was really Tigraine, Luc's sister) that Janduin would not raise his spear. This is almost certainly Lord Luc, and is in the third year of the Aiel War, 978 NE.

Finally, in [LOC: 16, Tellings of the Wheel, 277] we learn that Luc himself may have been sent into the Blight by Gitara Moroso Sedai. After his disappearance, a year before Tigraine's flight, or about 971 NE, rumors whispered that Gitara sent him to find fame, or fate, or the Dragon Reborn or the Last Battle. Given her connection with Tigraine's flight, it seems very likely that the rumors are true.

Thus the timeline as we know it is:

1. Luc disappears circa 971 NE.
2. Tigraine vanishes into the Aiel Waste, circa 972 NE.
3. The Aiel War rages, culminating in Rand's birth, from 976 to 978 NE.
4. Luc kills Janduin, 978 NE.



Who is Slayer?

Slayer is some form of combination of Luc and Isam, joined in a sort of split personality. While Luc and Isam seem to have separate mental existences and identities, the wolves of the Unseen World think of the construct as Slayer because of his penchant for killing wolves in that place, so the total construct is often referred to as Slayer in discussion.

The first reference tying Luc and Isam together in any way comes from the Dark Prophecy, scrawled on the walls in Fal Dara after the Trolloc raid. The relevant stanza [TGH: 7, Blood Calls Blood, 89] says:

Luc came to the Mountains of Dhoom.
Isam waited in the high passes.
The hunt is now begun. The Shadow's hounds now course, and kill.
One did live, and one did die, but both are.
The Time of Change has come.

The exact interpretation of this stanza is uncertain, but clearly, Isam survived the Trollocs as long as circa 971 NE, when Luc went north into the Blight. Curiously, Luc and Isam would have been roughly the same age, as well. There was evidently a confrontation; one died, one lived, but both still exist in some combination.

Now, the first time we encounter Luc or Isam in person, rather than as background, is in those segments of TSR set around Perrin's trip back home to the Two Rivers. The middle-aged Lord Luc who arrives in the Two Rivers, claiming to help the villagers with the Whitecloaks and Trollocs, is that same Luc. His age and coloring are correct, and Perrin muses that if he resembles anyone, it is Rand. A cousinly resemblance, no doubt. Luc is Rand's blood uncle.

In [TSR: 28, To the Tower of Ghenjei, 320-325] Perrin has several encounters in the Unseen World. One is with a man who tries to kill him, a man with a cold, inhuman scent to Perrin's nose. Hopper later identifies this dangerous creature as "Slayer" after Slayer leads Perrin on a chase to the Tower of Ghenjei. Then Birgitte appears. She identifies the Tower, connects it with the Aelfinn and the Eelfinn, and warns Perrin away from it and from Slayer.

Later, Perrin sees Slayer in the Unseen World looking much like Lan, dressed and styled in the Malkieri fashion [TSR: 42, A Missing Leaf, 476]. He muses that the man looked enough like Lan to be a brother. This is Slayer as the Isam persona.

In [TSR: 53, The Price of a Departure, 614-615] Perrin faces Slayer in the Unseen World, and shoots him with an arrow. Slayer disappears from the Unseen World, and when Perrin wakes up, learns that Lord Luc had suddenly run off as if wounded.

Here, Perrin connects the two. He notes the simultaneity of the wounds, and notes the same icy, inhuman smell from both of them. Traveling to the Unseen World in the flesh is said to cause a loss of one's humanity. Both these effects are hints that Slayer not only accesses the Unseen World, but does so in the flesh.

In [TSR: 56, Goldeneyes, 645-646] the Trollocs in the Two Rivers form a battle cry out of the name Isam. This is our first indication that though his activities may seem to be limited to the Unseen World, the Isam persona of Slayer can exert influence on the real world.

We don't see Slayer again until WH. The information we gain there, though, has led to considerable revision of our earlier assumptions about Slayer's nature, abilities, and role in the series.

The TSR encounter led us to conclude that Luc and Isam were parts of a single being, aptly named Slayer by the wolves he kills in the Unseen World. We know from Egwene's training what some of the properties of the Unseen World are. Relevant properties here include the loss of one's humanity (as in, a cold, icy, inhuman scent coming from both Luc and Isam) after repeatedly going to the Unseen World in the flesh, and the Unseen World's tendency to reflect the traveler's mental state.

Furthermore, since in TSR we only saw Luc in the real world and Isam only in *Tel'aran'rhiod*, it seemed safe to assume that Luc was the "one who lived" in the Dark Prophecy stanza, and that the dead Isam was now somehow piloting Luc's body. The logical conclusion was that Slayer could only appear as Luc in the real world and only as Isam in *Tel'aran'rhiod*. But this doesn't jibe at all with what we see in WH.

The first time we see him, he's not specifically named, but it's pretty obvious that the man spying on the Supergirls in [WH: 10, A Plan Succeeds, 240-241] is Luc:

A man was standing there watching, a man as tall as an Aielman, with dark red hair faintly streaked with white, but his high-collared blue coat would never be worn by an Aiel. ... his hard face seemed somehow familiar. ...

"Rand," Egwene said. "He could have been Rand's uncle."

Of course, Elayne thought. *If Rand had a mean uncle.*

It doesn't get much clearer than that. What's important to note is that it was *Luc* the girls see in T'A'R, not Isam.

The second time we see Slayer in WH is his assassination attempt on Rand, in [WH: 22, Out of Thin Air, 447-449]. First we see Isam, in T'A'R, studying his victims-to-be; then:

...he carefully unsheathed the two poisoned daggers and stepped out of the Unseen World into the waking. As he did, he became Luc. It seemed appropriate.

Note the last sentence. It was not *necessary* to become Luc – just appropriate. Further down the page he muses that he had been given “many gifts,” though immunity to poison or weapons was not among them. Then he steps back into T’A’R as Luc, and only switches back to Isam after talking to his mystery employer (see section 1.4.4).

Well, that blows our previous theory right out of the water. This passage demonstrates that Slayer can appear as either Luc or Isam in the Unseen World; and strongly implies (though does not state) that he can appear as Luc or Isam in the world of the flesh as well (because he was Isam when he murdered Amico and Joiya – see below).

It’s worth noting here that we only see Slayer actually switching from one man to the other in T’A’R, so it’s still reasonable to assume that even if he can choose to be either Luc or Isam in the waking world, he can only change from one to the other in the Unseen World.

It also seems clear that both Luc and Isam’s personalities have survived intact, and that Luc is just as evil as Isam. In fact, they seem to be quite the bosom buddies.

However, this new information still doesn’t cast a lot of light on how this merge of two people came to be, and in fact muddies the issue even more. If Slayer is not a case of possession, then what the hell is he? How much of Luc’s future did Gitara Moroso see when she sent Luc to his doom?

Note that when Elaida has a Foretelling about the Last Battle, the most she can get out of it is that ‘the royal line of Andor’ is involved. Perhaps Gitara’s Foretelling didn’t specify which sibling needed to be sent haring off to wherever, so she sent them both. [Mike Edenfield]

What has he done and who has he killed?

- In [WH: 22, Out of Thin Air, 448] we learn that Slayer (apparently in the Luc persona, as the scene is Luc’s viewpoint) killed a Gray Man in the White Tower; he didn’t enjoy it. This appears to be the Gray Man which attacked Egwene and Nynaeve [TDR: 15, The Gray Man, 141-145]. A Gray Man attacks the two girls and flees; they wrap him in Air, and by the time they reach him, he has a knife in his chest. The girls speculate that another Gray Man finished the work, but it was almost certainly Slayer. It may also have been Slayer who took the quarrel that the Gray Man spent, rather than Sheriam. (It’s possible that the Gray Man Slayer is thinking about in WH is the one found dead in Sheriam’s bed [TDR: 29, A Trap to Spring, 273], but as Egwene and Nynaeve’s Gray Man was found stabbed and the one in Sheriam’s bed had been found without a mark on her, the former is the more likely in terms of M.O. to be Slayer’s.)
- In [WH: 22, Out of Thin Air, 448] we also learn that Slayer, as Isam, killed the two Black Ajah in the Stone of Tear:
That had been Isam, not him, but the memories were none the less prized for that. Neither of them got to kill an Aes Sedai very often.
These are Joiya Byir and Amico Nagoyin, whose throats are cut messily and their tongues nailed to the door [TSR: 15, Tanchico or the Tower, 157].
- Throughout TSR, Slayer harasses Perrin in the Unseen World. We also learn that his first purpose in the area was to kill Fain, whom he refers to as “the renegade,” and that he had just brought enough Trollocs to keep Fain’s Whitecloaks off balance during that pursuit [TSR: 42, A Missing Leaf, 477]. Earlier, we learn that Slayer brought with him more than one Gray Man to help with that task [TSR: 31, Assurances, 356]. Slayer is apparently still under orders to kill Fain as of WH [WH: 13, Wonderful News, 316].
- [TSR: 39, A Cup of Wine, 454] shows Slayer, as Isam, attempting to kill Nynaeve as she visits the Two Rivers in the Unseen World.
- Slayer is now a major candidate for having killed Asmodean (see section 1.1.6).
- [WH: 10, A Plan Succeeds, 240-241] shows Slayer, as Luc, spying on Nynaeve and Egwene as they meet in Caemlyn in the Unseen World. Here he displays none of the skill he exhibited in TSR. He is wearing a Shienaran coat, which may imply that he is with King Easar’s army on the march (or may just be a result of Isam’s Borderlander fashion sense coming out).
- [WH: 22, Out of Thin Air, 448] shows Slayer, as Luc, killing a man and woman in Far Madding whom he believes to be Rand and Min.
- It’s possible that Slayer has something to do with creating Darkhounds (see section 1.6.4).
- For completeness, it is remotely possible that Slayer killed Adeleas and Ispan, the other remaining great unsolved mystery (see section 1.4.9).

1.4.03 Can Slayer channel?

[John Novak, Pam Korda, Leigh Butler]



Hopper says that Slayer is in T'A'R "in the flesh." Folks have taken this as evidence that Slayer can channel. There is no reason to suppose this. In fact, there are many reasons to think that he cannot channel.

Why Slayer cannot channel

First, we will consider the idea that Slayer can channel the TP, but not the OP. Moghedien believes that you have to be able to channel the OP in order to channel the TP. While she may be mistaken, there is no reason to assume so. Of the 30 people Moggy knows who were permitted to use the TP, all 30 were channellers of the OP. Why should Slayer be different?

Now, for the question of whether Slayer can channel at all. If Slayer could channel when he was in the Two Rivers, why didn't he? It would certainly have aided him in his missions to do away with Fain and Perrin. Even if we assume that he didn't because he would rather fail totally than chance anybody getting suspicious, why didn't he channel at Perrin in T'A'R [TSR: 53, The Price of a Departure, 614]? The only person to see would have been Perrin, and Perrin would have been dead. He used a bloody *arrow* to try to kill Perrin with. That was the best he could manage.

In the big battle at Emond's Field, the AS, of course, were an advantage to Perrin's side, but if Isam could channel, he could have done something to counter that advantage. He clearly didn't (of course, he'd been shot at that point, but if he could channel, he could have left, gotten somebody to heal him, and returned for the fight).

Finally, this question was answered directly by RJ at a signing. From the post-ACOS signing at Vancouver, 24 August 1996, reported by **Lara Beaton**:

Slayer: Can't channel. ... He has certain 'gifts' granted to him by the DO, but can't channel either the OP or the TP.

This information is corroborated by Slayer's POV in WH, in which he thinks about how "he could not use *Tel'aran'rhiod* the way the Chosen could..." [WH: 22, Out of Thin Air, 447], and that he had been given "many gifts" [ibid., 448]. Clearly, then, some of these gifts are his body-switching and traveling abilities in T'A'R, which are something equivalent to, but not the same as, entering T'A'R through a gateway. We don't know yet what other gifts he has been given.

In the flesh

Why all the confusion about whether Slayer travels via T'A'R in the flesh? Well, firstly because prior to WH we didn't know there was a way to enter T'A'R in the flesh without using a gateway, but also because of events in TSR. The first time Perrin sees Slayer in TSR Hopper tells him Slayer is there in the flesh, but the last time – when Perrin shot him – Slayer was evidently there in the old-fashioned way, by dreaming. How do we know this?

Well, the sequence of events goes like this: Perrin is sleeping. Perrin dreams the wolf dream, and sees Slayer (looking like Isam). He shoots Slayer with an arrow, producing a wound in the chest. Then:

Slayer faded, him and his cry together, growing misty, transparent, vanishing.

(*Not* like he stepped out of T'A'R, as he is described doing in WH, but like he woke up.) Perrin then wakes up, hears a commotion, asks what's going on, and finds out that Luc's just run off on his horse, hunched over like he's got a wound. He was *not* wounded earlier. Now, why would he have to escape from town if he was *physically* in T'A'R? He could just have run someplace else in T'A'R and exited there. Much easier, and safer. The whole scene is consistent with all the stuff we've heard before about people being wounded while dreaming in T'A'R, and having the wounds on their physical bodies.

So the issue was muddy, to say the least. The obvious question to ask here is if Slayer can step in and out of T'A'R wherever he'd like, why didn't he jump back into T'A'R from the inn after waking up, rather than riding off in the real world?

Two reasons: one, his injuries may have made him too weak to jump back into T'A'R; and two, he thought Perrin was still in T'A'R, waiting to finish him off. [**Scott Spiegelberg**]

1.4.04 Who is Slayer's mystery employer?

[John Novak, Leigh Butler]



In [WH: 22, Out of Thin Air, 448-449], Slayer, as Luc, uses poisoned daggers to kill a man and a woman, realizes they were not the ones he was after, and then steps into the Unseen World. There he meets his "patron of the moment," who tells him to wait before trying again and to say nothing about the matter. Luc thinks this is too bad, since he had been looking forward to killing "his nephew and the wench."

Clearly, this refers to Rand and Min (Luc is Rand's uncle), and just as clearly Slayer was ordered to kill Rand (secretly) at this patron's command. The question, then, is who's giving these orders?

Slayer's current master uses a strong disguise woven of the One Power which makes it absolutely impossible to see or hear him clearly enough for any identification. Slayer believes that his current master is a male, and that therefore he is a male

Forsaken, as no other man who could channel would know him, know how to contact him, or dare to command him, though he notes that none of the Forsaken he had met had ever taken such precautions.

At that point, the surviving male Forsaken are Ishamael/Moridin, Aginor/Osan'gar, Balthamel/Aran'gar, and Demandred.

(Sammael was an early favorite for the identity of Slayer's boss, but RJ's assertion that he died in ACOS means we must reject him as a candidate (see section 1.1.1), though there is an outside possibility, I suppose, that it may be a reincarnated Sammael. There is no evidence to suggest that, though, and one would presume that if Sammy had been resurrected, Moridin would know about it and be busily reining Sammael in, just like all the other FS.)

Moridin

It's unlikely that Moridin would have a motive to disguise himself so thoroughly. He's Nae'blis – who would he need to hide from? Especially since it is obviously common knowledge among the Forsaken that Moridin is already using Slayer to hunt Fain [WH: 13, Wonderful News, 316].

Demandred

Demandred, on the other hand, has both a strong motive to kill Rand (personal hatred) and a good reason to want to disguise himself – to hide what he's doing from Moridin. Slayer, on Moridin's orders, is supposed to be doing something else right now (killing Fain), and commanding him to go after Rand would obviously interfere with that task. [Fairfax McCandlish]

A point further in Demandred's favor is that he already had his own "kill Rand" plans set in motion in TPOD and WH (i.e. the Fearsome Foursome), so employing Slayer as a backup fits his M.O. In addition to this, Demandred's link with the Fab Four means he would have known where to tell Slayer to look for Rand; remember, up until Gedwyn, Torval, Rochaid, and Kisman put together all the clues Rand had left behind and followed him to Far Madding, none of the bad guys knew where Rand was.

Osan'gar

Osan'gar, as Dashiva, took part in a previous attempt to kill Rand after Rand made known his intent to cleanse the Taint in TPOD (see section 1.4.10) so he has a motive to employ Slayer (and the same reason as Demandred to disguise himself). However, Osan'gar is terrified of Moridin [WH: 35, With the Choedan Kal, 646]. It's doubtful, therefore, that he would even attempt to commandeer one of Moridin's personal lackeys and risk discovery. Plus there's no reason to think he would know where to find Rand, anyway – Kisman's POV makes it clear that Dashiva had had no further contact with the Fab Four after the TPOD attack [WH: 22, Out of Thin Air, 441].

Aran'gar

Aran'gar has no known motive, and is mentioned only because she might appear as a male in the Unseen World.

Any other candidates?

It is also possible that Slayer's current master is Mazrim Taim.

While Taim is not Demandred, he is most likely a Darkfriend (and possibly something more than that), which could plausibly provide him with knowledge of Slayer and how to contact him. His disguise would be motivated by preventing Slayer from knowing that someone other than a Forsaken is commanding him (not to mention keeping it secret from the Forsaken themselves). Taim certainly appears to be ambitious and ruthless enough to attempt such a subterfuge. Taim, like Demandred, also has his association with the renegade Asha'man in his favor (i.e. he could have known from them to tell Slayer to look in Far Madding).

Also, Slayer's comment about how non-Forsaken would not dare try to command him is too taunting. [Oleg Ozerov]

It is worth noting, though, that the chapter icon for [WH: 22, Out of Thin Air] is associated with the Forsaken (the snaky square), which suggests that Slayer's assumption is actually correct. [Jean Dufresne] But, Matt Hackell counters:

In the later books this connection has broken down far enough that it can only be corroborating evidence, not counterevidence, especially when another BIG BAD (such as Shaidar Haran, Fain, or Slayer) is in the chapter.

In conclusion, it seems that the two best candidates for Slayer's mystery employer are Demandred and Mazrim Taim.

1.4.05 Shaidar Haran, Superfade

[Pam Korda, Leigh Butler; Bryon Wasserman, J.R. Feehan, Fred Van Keuls, Ryan Ward, Drew Tipson]

What did we know about Shaidar Haran prior to COT?

1. The DO holds him in high regard. Unlike the Forsaken, he is apparently absolutely secure in his position, which seems to be something like the DO's major-domo or "spokesmyrddraal":

"When I speak, you may consider that you hear the voice of the Great Lord of the Dark. ... I am his hand in this world, Graendal. When you stand before me, you stand before him."

[TPOD: 12, New Alliances, 267]



The DO also refers to SH as “MY HAND” [ACOS: 25, Mindtrap, 414].

2. He has a considerable amount of political power in his own right; he is apparently placed above all the Forsaken except (possibly) Moridin.
3. He is fundamentally different from other Fades. Apart from size, he has abilities other Myrddraal do not (see below), and has a sense of pleasure, however twisted:

Far more cruel than Trollocs... Myrddraal were cold and dispassionate in it. Shaidar Haran often showed amusement, though.

[ACOS: 25, Mindtrap, 416]

He can tell the difference between *saidin* and *saidar* [ACOS: 40, Spears, 636].

4. In addition to the usual Fade powers, SH displayed some unusual abilities:
 - He has the ability to keep men and women, or maybe just those sworn to the Shadow, from channelling. This is from: (1) the prologue of LOC where Aran’gar and Osan’gar cannot channel (both channel *saidin*); (2) [ACOS: 25, Mindtrap, 416], where Moggy is blocked off from the OP while she is SH’s prisoner; (3) [TPOD: 12, New Alliances, 266], where he appears to Graendal, and cuts her off from the OP. While the first two examples take place at Shayol Ghul, and thus could conceivably be attributed to the DO, the Graendal scene occurs far from SG, and thus proves that the ability is SH’s.
 - He burned a spear to ash while watching the Shaido at the end of ACOS. He also seems to have created the “black globe of light” when bringing Graendal to heel in [TPOD: 12, New Alliances, 266]. These abilities may indicate that SH can use the TP (the only alternative to the OP that we’ve seen thus far).

5. He has sufficient knowledge of the world to organize Halima’s scheme in Salidar.

6. He wants to have more freedom of movement than he currently has:

A faint weakness washed along its limbs. Too long away from Shayol Ghul. That tie had to be severed somehow.

[ACOS: 40, Spears, 637]

It’s been speculated that this constraint is due to either the DO’s control, or that it is a side-effect of the DO’s imprisonment. In any case, that POV bit seemed to show that SH has some independent thought, apart from the will of the DO.

One loony theory that had been brought up is that SH is Ishamael re-incarnated, as one way to explain SH’s more unusual attributes. Ishamael’s old Trolloc nickname was Ba’alzamon, “Heart of the Dark”; while Shaidar Haran means “Hand of the Dark/Shadow.” Pretty similar, although it could very easily be a coincidence. However, all of SH’s attributes can be just as easily explained by assuming that he was specially created by the DO to have those attributes. Also, from the information we get about Moridin in ACOS, TPOD, and WH (see section 1.2.3), Moridin is indubitably Ishamael. To head off the obvious loony idea at the pass, recall that we’ve seen SH’s thoughts in [ACOS: 40, Spears, 636-637], and Moridin’s in [TPOD: Prologue, Deceptive Appearances, 42-44] and [TPOD: 2, Unweaving, 81-84], and they are clearly not the same person. (For one thing, Moridin has eyes, unlike SH.)

Another SH theory is that SH is a physical/corporeal manifestation of the DO, and this theory is strengthened considerably by events in COT.

What did we learn about SH from COT?

In [COT: 21, A Mark, 515-518], Shaidar Haran appears in the Tower to chastise Mesaana for failing to show at the Cleansing, and in the process displays some new abilities. In addition to cutting Mesaana off from the OP and shattering her Illusion disguise, he uses something like Illusion himself:

The creature grew as it spoke, swelling in size till its head brushed the ceiling, over two spans up.

He also somehow marks Alviarin as “his”:

“You are marked as mine,” the Great Lord rasped. “Mesaana will not harm you, now. Unless I give her permission.”

It’s not exactly clear what this “mark” entails; some suggestions are a Warder-like bond or possibly some type of “black cord” connection to the DO like Rand sees on Ishy and Asmodean. **Ryan Ward** offers:

Or [it] just branded her as really important so Mesaana (and perhaps the other Forsaken) would know not to rough her up. Sort of like the mark Cain got, maybe.

Even more interesting, SH for the first time speaks as if he were the DO:

“You were summoned, and you did not come. My hand reaches far, Mesaana.”

And, referring to the Black Ajah:

“You will find who threatens my creatures here and deliver them to me.”

Perhaps most telling of all, he indicates past knowledge of Mesaana, telling her:

“You were always... overly wasteful.”

The entire scene seemed to strongly suggest that SH is the DO incarnate. Alviarin is certainly convinced of it. Not everyone else is, though.

One objection that has commonly been brought up is how can the DO be in two places at the same time, i.e. in the Pit of Doom and in Shaidar Haran? And how can the DO be imprisoned at SG if he's free to walk around as SH? It's also been pointed out that SH didn't THINK IN ALL CAPS in his POV scene, either – or when speaking to Mesaana and Alviarin, for that matter.

These objections can be addressed by being more specific about what SH could be: the *avatar* of the DO. The definition of “avatar” varies; the Hindu version (from which the word is derived) defines an avatar as “the descent of a deity to earth, and his incarnation as a man or an animal,” but a more interesting definition (for our purposes) is “a temporary manifestation or aspect of a continuing entity.” The difference between the two is subtle, but significant.

Maybe SH was a special Fade that the DO made as a receptacle for part of his consciousness. This would make him more of an extension (or maybe a familiar) of the DO, rather than the DO incarnate. Maybe the relationship is, as **Christian Neubauer** suggests, “SH is to the DO as Jesus is to God”? (Not in the father-son sense, but in the “three aspects, one divinity” kind of way.) All are variations on the same basic idea of the avatar.

But what about the above ACOS quote?

A faint weakness washed along its limbs. Too long away from Shayol Ghul. That tie had to be severed somehow.

Wouldn't that seem to indicate SH has a will independent of the DO, since he wants to escape his tie to him?

Well, not necessarily. The quote could be interpreted as the DO remarking on how great it would be if his avatar were freer to move around without having to periodically return to SG to get “recharged.” Or, alternately, maybe SH *does* have a separate consciousness, when the DO isn't using him as a vehicle; that doesn't cancel out the possibility that he is also an avatar of the DO.

Of course, SH could very well be just what he seems: the DO's spokesmyrddraal, and the whole “speaking as the DO” business is just a display put on to cow the DO's minions into obedience.

Either way, SH is pretty damn powerful, so now the logical question to ask is why isn't the DO using his Superfade/avatar/whatever he is to go do some real damage to the good guys, rather than just having him swat naughty Forsaken?

One suggestion is that since the DO himself is (we assume) non-corporeal, maybe SH is destined to be the physical embodiment of the DO that Rand actually fights at the Last Battle, and so is being saved up for that purpose. However, several people (myself included) have objected to this theory on the grounds that it is lame.

Another more intriguing notion is that perhaps SH's mysterious powers only work on the Forsaken – or more broadly, only on those sworn to the Shadow. **Peter Reid** theorizes:

...by swearing to obey/follow/whatever the 'Great Lord', the DO then is granted 'control' of that person and that person's abilities whenever he wants it... Remember that Fain can 'sniff out' a DF – this implies that there is *something* there to be sniffed. Also, recall that Ishamael was able to draw DFs directly out of their sleep into secret councils without them knowing that was possible. This would imply that he had some way of identifying them in the World of Dreams (or that place Egwene goes and sees points of light identifying sleeping people). All of this points to some sort of quasi-physical connection existing between the DO and every DF; what has been implied is that this connection grants the DO power over each DF, including the power to prevent them from sensing the True Source, etc.

So perhaps it is this connection which allows SH to do all the fancy things he does to various FS; the obvious implication being that he wouldn't be able to use anything other than the ordinary Fade tricks against someone who walks in the Light.

One big unanswered question is that of the relationship between SH and Moridin. Between the two of them, who is the boss? They seem to be working in cooperation. For example, SH breaks Moggy down prior to her delivery to Moridin, and he appears to Graendal to send her to meet Moridin. We haven't seen the two of them (Moridin and SH) interact, and in the sections from their points of view, they don't happen to think about each other, so it's hard to say who exactly is in charge.

1.4.06 Who will be the Dreadlords in the Last Battle?

Dreadlords: Those men and women who, able to channel the One Power, went over to the Shadow during the Trolloc Wars, acting as commanders of the Trolloc forces.

[TEOTW: Glossary, 662]



So, the question is, will the Shadow have similar human commanders of Trollocs for the Last Battle? If so, then who will these commanders be?

Well, Alviarin certainly seems to be up for a promotion as of COT. A very popular theory at the moment is that both she and Taim are being groomed not just to be Dreadlords, but to be new Forsaken. After all, both of them have shown more competence than some of the original Chosen.

Here are some other possibilities for the new Dreadlords:

1. **Black Ajah.**

Pro: Loads of experience in both channelling and bossing folks around.

Con: Not much battle experience, except for Reds who hunt down False Dragons, and Greens, who do that sort of thing for fun.

2. **Darkfriend *sul'dam***, with a *damane* or two as a Power source.

Pro: Battle experience.

Con: Depends upon a possibly non-loyal *damane* for Power. This could cause problems in the middle of a fight. No experience in using the OP by themselves.

3. **Runaway DF *damane*.**

Pro: Knows how to use OP in battle.

Con: No experience in commanding things, making decisions, or any sort of independent thought.

4. **Asha'man.**

Their biggest motivation to swear to the Shadow (Taint protection) is now gone, but prior to WH, the Taint was a *huge* motivator, and once you've sworn your soul to the Shadow, you're pretty much stuck, if you want to live. Any AM recruited prior to the Cleansing will probably remain DFs. Besides, lack of Taint worries didn't stop Aes Sedai from joining the Black Ajah, after all...

Pro: Specifically trained to use the OP in battle. Possibly, a recruiting agent right in the camp ("Mr. M'Hael? I'd like to join the *Black Tower*, if you know what I mean...").

Con: Some have less experience in command, and thus would make poor commanders.

5. **DF Windfinders.**

Not much to say pro or con, since we know next to nothing about the Sea Folk or Windfinders at all, unless "ability to annoy" is a point in their favor...

6. **Male Aiel channellers.**

Pro: Tradition is to go into the Blight to fight Shadowspawn until you die. Maybe some don't die, but get picked up and offered a second chance at eternal life, sans Taint.

Con: The Blight is nasty. It's doubtful even an Aiel could survive a long time there, if he was bent on fighting. Not likely that many survive long enough to get recruited or converted. Plus, nobody has ever seen these supposed Aiel Dreadlords, either in the Blight, at SG, or in Randland.

7. **Random Joe Randlander** who finds out he can channel.

Pro: Why not? Again, the biggest incentive to join – no Taint – is gone, but that only applies from the end of WH on, and any possible previous recruits are more or less stuck. If Joe is already a DF when he discovers channelling, all the more reason.

Con: With all those other great candidates, why would the Shadow bother searching the populace for the 1:10000+ men who channel?

8. **Dreadlord Search Program.**

Darkfriends are screened for the ability to channel, and then put into a Dreadlord Training Program. (Liandrin was recruited as a DF before she ever went to the Tower. She learned some channelling, too [TFOH: 18, A Hound of Darkness, 303].)

9. **Non-Channellers.**

Pro: In TGH, Bors thinks he has a chance of being a Dreadlord, even though he cannot channel.

Con: You need to be Fain or a channeller to have enough power over a Fade to command him. We already know J. Carridin never stood a chance with a Fade.

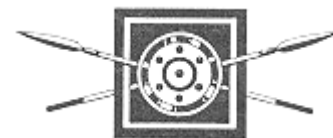
10. **No Dreadlords – the DO has something better.**

Pro: Look at that shiny new Myrddraal the DO has! Even the Forsaken are frightened by it. It can scare channellers, channellers can scare normal Fades, Fades scare Trollocs. Cut out the middlemen, and make a bunch of Super-Fades to be Dreadlords? What Lord of Evil needs humans anyway? It's not like he's going to leave them around after he wins, after all.

Con: COT indicates that Shaidar Haran is much more – and much more unique – than just the first of a new and improved breed of Fade (see section 1.4.05).

1.4.07 What's the deal with the 'Aiel' attack on Demira Sedai?

[Karl-Johan Norén, Pam Korda]



In [LOC: 46, Beyond the Gate, 580-581], Demira Eriff of the Brown Ajah, a member of the Salidar embassy, is attacked by a group of men dressed like Aiel. The attack occurs after she's been followed from her inn by the same group of "Aiel." She was going to meet an informant from the Caemlyn Palace, who does not show up at the appointed meeting place. Demira concludes that her informant had not received her message. As she turns to leave, a man on the street leers at her, and she ducks into an alley. The particular alley she goes into is deserted. A bit further along the alley, she runs into the men dressed as Aiel, who stab her with spears. She is severely injured, but not killed.

In [LOC: 46, Beyond the Gate, 584-586], we learn more about the attack. Right before Demira was attacked, a man came into the inn where the Salidar embassy was known to be quartered, and:

"...said he had seen Aiel following an Aes Sedai – he described [Demira] exactly – and saying they were going to kill her."

Demira's Warder ran with another AS to save Demira. Demira remembers that one of her attackers told her:

"Tell the other witches to stay away from the Dragon Reborn."

This message, along with the fellow at the inn, and the fact that Demira's wounds missed vital organs indicate that Demira was meant to survive, and that the attackers wanted the Salidar AS to believe that Aiel were behind the attack.

We don't know for sure who ordered the attack, but we can almost be sure that the attackers were not real Aiel. For one thing, one of the attackers is "a squat fellow with villainous eyes." From all descriptions, Aiel (especially the warriors) are tall and lean, certainly not "squat." Secondly, the Aiel do not refer to the AS as "witches," nor do they refer to Rand as "the Dragon Reborn" – that is a wetlander prophecy. Thirdly, one of her attackers is described as having "mocking black eyes." Aiel do not have black eyes. [Sheryl Smith] Aviendha mentions this specifically:

"I never saw black eyes except on a peddler until I crossed the Dragonwall."

[WH: 27, To Surprise Queens and Kings, 522]

What was the motive for the attack? We can get ideas about this from the far-reaching results: the Salidar Aes Sedai believe that Rand arranged the attack, and retaliate. The retaliation drives Rand into leaving Caemlyn for Cairhien, and sets his mind against the group of Aes Sedai most likely to help him. He turns towards the Tower Aes Sedai, who trick him, capture him, and abscond with him locked up in a box, to be rescued by Perrin, the Aiel, and Taim. The overall result is a great deal of ill-will and distrust between Rand and the SAS, Rand and the TAS, and the AS and the Aiel. It is reasonable to conclude that all or part of this was the motive for the attack. Fomenting discord among Rand's possible allies seems to be a general goal of the Shadow's agents, so any of the Forsaken could have had a motive for setting up the attack. The Tower Aes Sedai could have organized it, in order to drive Rand away from their Salidar rivals. Taim has made efforts to turn Rand against the AS on many occasions. He could have done it on his own initiative, or perhaps Demandred arranged the attack through Taim in order to drive Rand away from the SAS, and make him vulnerable to the TAS (whose kidnapping of Rand was likely instigated by Mesaana [LOC: Prologue, The First Message, 58]). This theory is attractive because Demandred and Mesaana were working together (with Semirhage; how does she fit in to this theory?) in LOC on a plan to "let the Lord of Chaos rule." That was, after all, the final result of the events triggered by the attack on Demira – chaos definitely ruled at Dumai's Wells.

Were Taim and the Asha'man behind the attack?

First, it was a very well organized and planned attack. It is done after Demira is shadowed and possibly lured (or even Compelled) into small, empty alleys. The attack is done by people meeting her. Simultaneously, a man appears bringing the message to her Warder at The Crown and Roses. The interception may mean that other people directed the "Aiel" to their position and cleared the alleys, giving 10-20 people participating, of which at least a few must know Caemlyn very well or that some channeller was part of the group. Furthermore, the attackers must have intercepted the message to Demira's informant.

There's reason to believe that Compulsion was used:

Turning away from the gate, her [Demira's] eyes chanced to meet those of a tall, lean-faced fellow in a carter's vest who was gazing at her much too admiringly. When their eyes met, he winked!

She was not going to put with that all the way back to the inn. ... She slipped into the narrow shaded gap between a cutler's shop and a tavern.

It seems like too much of a coincidence that just because some fellow leered at her, Demira chose to travel back to her inn through a deserted alley – the particular alley where the "Aiel" were waiting in ambush. The point that the ambushing team used channellers is strengthened by the fact that Demira couldn't reach *saidar*:

Frantically she reached for *saidar*, but something else pierced her side, and she was down in the dust. That remembered face was thrust into hers, black eyes mocking, growling something she ignored while she tried to reach *saidar*, tried to... Darkness closed in.

Granted, she was injured, but Moghedien was able to channel with an arrow through her chest, Rahvin while being BBQ-ed and Nynaeve while about to lose consciousness from asphyxiation.

Now, it is not certain that channeling was used in the attack, either to force Demira down the alley or shield her. However, the extremely close timing involved (the message to Demira's Warder came right before she was stabbed) indicated that she did not go down that alleyway by coincidence. The leering fellow may have had a backup plan for getting her down the alley if his antics didn't work – it just turned out that they did. As for shielding, **John Hamby** points out that Demira doesn't feel that she's blocked from the Source, just that she's having trouble embracing the Source as two spears are driven into her. Yes, Moggy could do it with an arrow; but Moggy is stronger and more skilled, and Nynaeve is Wonder Woman.

The attack is done after the embassy had met Rand three times, with no meeting on the day of the attack. This means that the attackers had either a maximum of three days of preparation or knew about the embassy before it met with Rand.

So we have the following requirements for the group who did the deed:

- include male channelers (maybe);
- must be trained in weapons;
- have an organization in or close to Caemlyn;
- refers to AS as “witches” and Rand as “the Dragon Reborn”.

By far the best candidate is Taim, either as “plain” Taim or as Minion Taim. The Asha'man fulfill every demand above, and Taim also has the political motive and chutzpah to do it. It would be strange if the Asha'man did not include people from Caemlyn (since they are based near that city), and they are being trained in the use of weapons, and they include some men who are already acquainted with weapons. Taim also knows of the embassy early because Rand tells him of it. He likely hates Aes Sedai, and is clearly interested in bringing Rand closer to him and away from all things AS. It's not much of a stretch imagining the Asha'man referring to the AS as witches either. In fact, a few days before the attack, Taim suggested arranging “accidents” for the Aes Sedai in Caemlyn [LOC: 42, The Black Tower, 545].

Other suspects

Apart from Taim, the other major suspects are the Tower Aes Sedai, the Whitecloaks, Padan Fain, and Joe Random Forsaken (i.e. not Mesaana or Demandred).

The White Tower AS (acting without influence from Mesaana) can be ruled out, because they would be hard pressed to simply reach a decision so fast. Pigeon to Elaida, Elaida decides, pigeon back, plan and do attack. Done in three days? No way. Also, the White Tower lacks people and organization in Caemlyn.

The Whitecloaks can also be ruled out. They have withdrawn their organization from Caemlyn, and their lower ranks would be more interested in killing AS than in subtle political maneuvering. Niall might try something like this, but the Niall POV scenes we get in LOC and ACOS show him concentrating on schemes involving Morgase, the fake Dragonsworn in Altara, and later, the situation in Tarabon – nothing involving Rand and his connections with the Tower.

Fain could have some motive to drive Rand towards dealing with the Mashadar-tainted Tower instead of the untainted Salidar AS. He does have access to DFs from Caemlyn, and the former Whitecloaks. But, as he thinks when he is reached by the report of the Gray Man attack on Rand, his resources are rather limited. He doesn't seem to have access to the number of followers required to pull off the attack. Furthermore, everything we've seen of Fain thus far has had him ingratiating himself to one powerful person, and corrupting them. The attack on Demira doesn't fit his style – it's too indirect.

An attack from Joe Random Forsaken is the most likely, next to Taim. As stated above, the Shadow seems to have a general strategy of creating discord between Rand and his possible allies. Furthermore, as **Bob Kluttz** points out, Demira was interested in learning about the seals on the DO's prison [LOC: 46, Beyond the Gate, 580-581]. A couple of weeks after the attack on Demira, Herid Fel is spectacularly killed for his interest in them, and later in COT, Bashere's wife and Dobraine are assaulted on the mere suspicion that they were guarding one or more of the seals [COT: Prologue, Glimmers of the Pattern, 70 & 93]. The fate of the seals is somehow critical to the Dark One's success. If this was the main motive for the attack, Demira wouldn't have been left alive. However, it could have been an additional motive for choosing Demira as a target, rather than one of the other SAS. This idea pretty much requires whichever Forsaken planned the attack to have had a strong power base in Caemlyn. The only Forsaken of which we know this to have been true is Rahvin, and he was dead by the time the Salidar embassy arrived. However, this doesn't rule out somebody having resources we don't know about.

1.4.08 Was Moghedien violated by Shaidar Haran?

Quick question, quick answer. **Chris Mullins** writes:

I asked RJ, at the Palo Alto signing, if Moggy was raped by Shaidar Haran in ACOS. His reply was, 'Yes. Amongst other things.'



1.4.09 Who killed Adeleas and Ispan?

[John S. Hamby, Craig Moe, Andrea Leistra, Leigh Butler]



This is an attempt at looking at all the facts concerning the murders of Ispan and Adeleas. Here, we present what is known and what can or cannot be concluded from these facts.

General considerations

From [TPOD: 28, Crimsonthorn, 545-547], we know that Adeleas had taken Ispan to the small hut the night before. In the morning, Kirstian comes to find Elayne. Lan has found the bodies. So, we have the time frame. It's curious that Lan is the one who found the two. Certainly Vandene as sister and fellow interrogator would have made more sense. Presumably, when Adeleas is dealing with Garenia/Zarya and then Kirstian, Vandene is taking care of Ispan.

Description of the crime scene:

Adeleas lay on her side beside an overturned stool, a cup on the rough wooden floor not far from her outstretched hand. Her eyes stared, and a pool of congealed blood spread out from the deep slash across her throat. Ispan lay on a small cot, staring at the ceiling. Lips drawn back in a rictus bared her teeth, and her bulging eyes seemed full of horror. As well they might have, since a wrist-thick wooden stake stood out from between her breasts. The hammer that had plainly been used to drive it in lay beside the cot, on the edge of a dark stain that ran back under the cot.

Then we get the description of the interior of the hut:

A second three-legged stool, a rough table holding a flickering lamp, a green teapot and a second cup, a rude stone fireplace with cold ash on the hearthstone.

From all this, it certainly seems that the tea was delivered the previous evening. The fire is out; the flickering lamp suggests the oil is running low. That a lamp is burning at all suggests that it was dark outside when the murderer arrived. Though the fact that the two windows are described as tiny might negate this, as a lamp might be needed anytime of the day. However, it seems that the scene is viewed in the light of day and not by the single lamp.

Vandene assumes or directs the line of thought to Ispan being the primary victim. This assumption is presumed because more time was taken to kill Ispan.

Nynaeve makes the assumption that whoever decided to use crimsonthorn did so because they either wanted to make sure that no one came with an antidote or that they wanted one or the other to know who was killing them.

The use of crimsonthorn does indicate two things. First, Adeleas was meant to die. Whether the murder was a hit on Ispan or whether Adeleas' death was the primary goal, a drug is used, in lethal amounts, that Adeleas with her penchant for sweet tea is particularly prone to. This implies that the murderer had prior knowledge of who was guarding Ispan. In fact, it might be that the murderer was waiting for a time when Adeleas was by herself with Ispan. This means that the murder was not spontaneous. There was a bit of planning involved.

The second thing that crimsonthorn indicates is that time was not really of the essence. The murderer took her time. It seems possible she knew no one would disturb her that night. (This is also indicated by the method used in killing Ispan: pounding a stake through the heart is not really the quickest way to kill a person.)

Speaking of the stake, the manner of Ispan's death (being staked through the chest) raises some questions. Even if one or both women were immobilized first, pounding a stake through someone is difficult – there are bones and things in the way, not to mention how messy it would be. If the killer did the job up close and personal, she would have been covered in Ispan's blood. There are three possibilities:

1. The killer could not channel, and used physical means (herbs and physical violence) to kill the victims because that was the only way.
2. The killer could channel, and used channeling to make it *look like* someone who could not did the deed.
3. (Related to #2) The killer could channel and needed to do so because he/she was physically too weak to carry out the deed in the mundane manner.

So, there is at least an even chance that the killer was a channeller, and used the OP in Ispan's murder, at least. Unfortunately, this doesn't help much, since most of the suspects (all the Kin, AS, and Windfinders in the party) can channel. [Genevieve Williams, Dave Rothgery]

Motive: why kill one or both?

Ispan failed and was captured, and that is what happens to BA who fail and are captured.

This was a precedent set down with the killings of Amico and Joiya, who were murdered by Slayer, undoubtedly under orders. But there are some pretty major differences. Amico and Joiya both actually gave out information. Amico told where Liandrin

and crew went. And Joiya told about the BA freeing Taim (although that may have been a lie). Ispan has not revealed anything important, as far as we know.

Joiya's and Amico's deaths were also incidental. Slayer took advantage of the attack on Rand and the Stone to kill them. Chances are had Rand not been attacked, the two would not have been killed when they were. There really was no risk involved. Killing Ispan and Adeleas, though, reveals that there is a DF/BA among them. The killer tipped their hand. So something must have forced them to do this.

Joiya and Amico also were on their way to the Tower. Certainly the risk of revealing anything of import ran much higher if those two actually made it there. So removing them when the chance presented itself certainly makes sense.

But if Ispan was the main target, why at that point? Why not before, if she is a threat? Also consider that if the killer is BA herself, then she would certainly know how much a threat Ispan is and how much a threat she is not. There certainly has been time before this to kill Ispan.

Also look at Katherine and Falion. Katherine is allowed to escape and live. Shiaine reflects in WH that she has the power to kill Falion (and Marillin), but it's at her discretion to do so. So death is not the automatic sentence for BA who screw up. Certainly Ispan's escape could have been managed as easily as Katherine's. After all, Katherine's escape pretty much reveals her to be BA, whereas Ispan is already known to be. Her escape certainly poses no risks to the killer that killing her did not.

So was Ispan the prime victim? Perhaps not. Adeleas could have been the one intended to die all along. Suppose whoever did it wants Adeleas dead. The killer knows Adeleas will be alone with Ispan, so takes tea laced with a poison specifically chosen for Adeleas' liking for sweet tea. Of course once Adeleas is down Ispan is killed. Regardless of being a fellow Darkfriend, the killer has revealed her identity to another. So Ispan takes a stake through the heart. The killer eliminates a witness, a possible rival and throws off the scent that Adeleas was the intended victim. Note that this line of reasoning could be applied the other way around: Adeleas could have been killed because she was a witness.

So why kill Adeleas? Well, Adeleas discovered two former novices. One is Garenia, who was in the Tower seventy years ago. She was a novice with Careane. Also seventy years ago, both Namelle sisters were present. From Joline's comment about Merilille being an instructor, it is highly likely that she too was in the Tower at the time. Kirstian, on the other hand, left the Tower three hundred years ago. It seems a bit of a stretch that she would possess any knowledge that could reveal one of the sisters to be a liar and/or BA.

One thing that seems to indicate Adeleas as the intended victim is that even if Vandene is not the killer, someone went to a bit of trouble to get rid of Adeleas. The poison was designed for her in a sense. It was her watch. And if Ispan was a threat, then surely if Vandene was not the killer she could pose a threat as well. If Ispan was the victim then both Adeleas and Vandene should be removed just in case. This strengthens the case against Vandene. More on Vandene as a suspect later.

Could a non-channeller have done the deed?

The use of poison as well as the use of physical weapons to kill the two women suggests that a non-channeller was the culprit. However, a closer examination of the facts leads to the conclusion that, while possible, it is unlikely a non-channeller could have been responsible for the murders.

We will assume for now that crimsonthorn either deadens the ability to channel, like forkroot, or (more likely) that Adeleas was so far gone under the influence of the drug by the time the murders actually occurred that channelling was impossible. (There's also the argument that even if the ability was there despite the crimsonthorn, the common belief shared by most Aes Sedai concerning the connections between channeling and gesturing would mean that once paralyzed Adeleas could not channel, since she could not move.)

Given that, the only way a non-channeller could have committed the murder is if Ispan also drank the tea, and therefore was also unable to channel. Otherwise, how would a non-channeller have been able to overpower Ispan once a drugged Adeleas's shield disappeared?

Did Ispan drink the tea?

Adeleas has a cup near her hand. Her body position and the fact she has her throat cut is a definite sign that she fell victim to the tea. But is there anything that really points to Ispan having drunk any of it?

1. Ispan is Black Ajah. It seems very improbable that Adeleas would sit down and share a cup of tea with her. (Consider the vehemence with which the other Aes Sedai in the series react to the idea of the BA.)
2. We have two cups, yes. But one fell from Adeleas' hand as she presumably fell to the floor. The second cup is on the table still. The reason this sticks out is that the hammer used on Ispan is left by the cot. Yet the cup is on the table by another stool. (Note that this can be explained by positing that the killer moved Ispan to the cot in order to stake her more easily.)

3. The effect of the crimsonthorn, as described by Nynaeve:

“A little kills pain. This much... This much kills, but slowly. Even a few sips would be enough. They might have remained conscious for hours. Not able to move, but aware.”

This suggests that Ispan did not drink any tea. Why?

Adeleas was definitely under the influence of the drug, yet Ispan's countenance clearly shows the ability to move her face and feel pain. Her eyes bulge and her lips are drawn back. If Adeleas is so far gone into the drug that all she can do is stare while her throat is being cut, how come Ispan is able to show such reaction; not just in terms of horror but to physically show it as well? (Especially since crimsonthorn is a painkiller.)

It's possible that our hypothetical non-channeller could have served the tea to Adeleas, left, waited outside the hut until after the drug took hold but before Adeleas gets to the point of losing all capacity to channel, reentered, forced Ispan to drink the tea, and then killed them both, but that's really stretching it. The timing alone is problematic; a non-channeller would not have had the ability to sense whether or not the poison had taken effect, or how long to wait before reentering the hut. For that matter it seems unlikely that a non-channeller, even one who lives in the Tower, would have a safe and secure knowledge of how effective the drug would be in deadening channelling ability.

One other difficulty with the idea that a non-channeller committed the murders is the question of noise. How much sound does a stake being driven through the heart make? And if Ispan is able to show expression might a whimper, a cry or even a scream be completely out of the question?

If we suppose the murderer was a channeller, on the other hand, all of these problems go away. It doesn't matter if Ispan drank the tea or not; shields can be woven-off and left in place. They can also be passed from one person to another. A channelling murderer could have put an eavesdropping ward around the hut to prevent any sounds escaping.

Overall, it's much more plausible that a channeller is the culprit. But just in case, here are the possible non-channelling suspects:

- **Jaem:** Perhaps the one person Adeleas might trust the most after Vandene. She probably would have accepted tea from him, and he almost certainly knew of her penchant for sweet tea as well as Vandene did. The problem, though, is while we know per WH that an Aes Sedai can be Black Ajah and her Warder(s) not be Darkfriends, there is nothing that indicates the reverse is possible – not to mention that it seems very unlikely that Jaem could have pulled it off on his own without Vandene noticing something. So if Jaem poisoned Adeleas, he could only have done so as Vandene's accomplice.
- **Pol:** As a servant of Merilille's she could also have learned about Adeleas' sweet tooth. Yet would Adeleas take tea from even her? The problems of being a non-channeller of course exist assuming Ispan did not drink the tea. Then there is the time issue. Whoever did this knew they had the time for the tea to take effect and then do the actual killings. Would a maid know that she could remain undisturbed or at least undetected? Would Pol (or any non-channeller) have had the courage to do this task among so many channellers without the ability herself? One last thing to note is that Pol is described as a “slight” woman, which casts doubt on her ability to do something like pound a wrist-thick stake through a person's breastbone.
- **Slayer:** The knowledge we gain in WH about Slayer in his capacity as assassin for the Shadow (see section 1.4.02) makes him a plausible candidate for the murders – on the surface, at least. The murders certainly have the flavor of a hit, and the brutal and grotesque method by which Ispan was murdered is typical of Slayer's M.O. The whole scene is strongly reminiscent of the assassinations of Amico and Joiya in the Stone, which we know Slayer was responsible for. In addition, Slayer has been known to use poison, and his abilities in T'A'R mean he could have gotten in and out of the hut without anyone being the wiser.

On the other hand, Slayer gloats to himself in WH over the murders of Amico and Joiya, thinking about how he didn't get to kill Aes Sedai that often; if he committed the much more recent murders of Adeleas and Ispan, why wouldn't he have fondly thought of them as well? Secondly, while it's true that Slayer does use poison in Far Madding, his use of poison seems an extra precaution, rather than a primary accessory to the murder. Not to mention, slipping poison into a pot of tea as a means of immobilizing the victim takes time. Slayer seems to prefer quick operations; it's hard to see him waiting around until Adeleas has taken the tea, drunk it, and succumbed to its effects. Of course, the biggest problem of all with Slayer as the culprit is that it hardly seems possible that Adeleas would take tea from him under any circumstances, or that he could have doctored the tea without whoever *did* serve it to her noticing.

Channelling suspects

Non-Aes Sedai

The Windfinders

None of the Windfinders could plausibly know about Adeleas' preference for sweet tea, and as Elayne herself observes:

...it was all but impossible that the Windfinders knew of an herb only found far from the sea.

[WH: 8, Sea Folk and Kin, 196]

And anyway, given the state of affairs between the Aes Sedai and the Windfinders, the fact that Adeleas trusted the killer enough to take tea from her eliminates any of these women.

The Kin

On the same page of WH as above, Elayne reflects on what Vandene found out from Ispan about the Kin – namely, that Ispan knew nothing more about them than any other Aes Sedai. The conclusion she and Vandene come to is that there are no Darkfriends among the Kin; if there were, Elayne reasons, the Black Ajah would have known everything about them. There are some flaws in this line of reasoning, though. The first is the assumption that because one BA knows nothing about the Kin, that *all* BA know nothing about them. As we have seen, the BA operates on a strictly need-to-know basis; except for Alviarin, for example, no Black sister even knows who all the other BA are. The second flaw, of course, is that Elayne only has Vandene’s word for what Ispan did and did not say; if Vandene is the killer, obviously there’s a problem with relying on her (conveniently uncorroborated) testimony.

On the other hand, events in ACOS and TPOD do tend to support Elayne and Vandene’s conclusion. None of the Kin tried to steal the *'angreal* stash found in Ebou Dar from the AS or otherwise attempt to prevent it from being found, and we know all of the Forsaken have been desperately seeking such items; the stash is the reason Moggy sent Falion and Ispan to Ebou Dar in the first place (where, it should be added, they were engaged in torturing Kinswomen for information on it). Nor did any of the Kin make an effort to stop the Bowl being used to end the DO’s endless summer.

Of course, none of the AS in Elayne’s party, except possibly Careane, tried to do those things, either, and it’s almost certain one of them is Black Ajah – see below. (Careane’s possible attempt is also discussed further on.) However, since the AS are a very hierarchical organization (and the BA follows that pattern), and since the Shadow hierarchy was rather disorganized at the time the embassy was sent (all the Forsaken scheming for themselves), some low-level BA in the Salidar embassy to Ebou Dar might not have been informed of the importance of the Bowl, and would have just followed orders to stick with the party and spy/whatever.

Regardless of whether Elayne is right or not about the lack of DFs in the Kin, though, the fact that the Aes Sedai consider the Kin to be so far beneath them, and the general poor relations between the two groups (especially in the wake of the “we are many and they are few” business) indicate that they fit the same category as the Windfinders. Nevertheless:

- **Asra:** This is the Kinswoman who originally attracted Elayne and Nynaeve’s attention in Ebou Dar. In one of the showdowns between the Kin and the AS, Asra seems almost intent on starting a riot [TPOD: 28, Crimsonthorn, 544]. The murder needn’t even have been BA-related; Asra might have been fearful/upset over Adeleas’ decree that Tower runaways among the Kin should be disciplined and forced to become Novices again [TPOD: 28, Crimsonthorn, 542]. [Bill Brooks] However, these reasons also show that there is little likelihood that Adeleas would trust Asra enough to take tea from her.
- **Reanne:** It is possible that as the head of the Kin Adeleas would trust her but the idea of Reanne killing Adeleas is rather implausible. Still, because of the tea thing, she is a more likely suspect than say Chilaes or Famelle or even most other Kin.
- **Alise:** Everyone seems to do what this woman wants. So she too is a little more likely than most other Kin.

Zarya/Garenia and Kirstian

As they are now both technically Tower novices, they should be considered separately from the Kin. Both are very strong in the One Power, and it is conceivable that Adeleas might send either of them for tea. Another possible point against Zarya is her presence in the Tower seventy years ago. Apparently some really odd things happened at about that time, something that may have inspired Zarya’s flight from the Tower and, perchance, Adeleas’ murder seventy years later, once she was rediscovered? Of course, without knowing more about exactly what went on seventy years ago, there’s nothing to say that the timing of Zarya’s escape is more than coincidence. (The same suspicion cannot be applied to Kirstian, who ran away from the Tower three hundred years ago.)

In WH, Zarya and Kirstian come to Vandene with the theory that the killer must have been either Merilille, Sareitha or Careane [WH: 8, Sea Folk and Kin, 195]. Opinion is divided on whether this is a point in favor of their innocence or of their guilt. On the one hand, if either of them was the killer, why draw attention to themselves? Why not simply keep mum? On the other hand, sometimes the best way to cover up your own guilt is to pin it on someone else.

That said, other events in WH support Zarya and Kirstian’s theory.

Is one of Elayne’s party Black Ajah?

It certainly seems so. From [WH: 10, A Plan Succeeds, 248]:

[The Black sister Marillin, to Shaiine:] “I really wouldn’t get ten feet [into the Palace]. But there’s a woman already in the Palace. She can do what you need. It may take time to make contact, though.”

A few lines later, Shaiine thinks to herself:

So. One of the sisters in the Palace was Black Ajah, was she? She would have to be Aes Sedai, not just a Darkfriend, to do what Shaiine needed.

Is Shaiine right in her assumption? Some people think not; if Marillin had meant a Black sister, why not simply *say* that instead of calling the contact “a woman”? We don’t know, though, what it is that Shaiine needs done. If the criteria Shaiine is basing her assumption on is merely that the woman needs to be able to channel, then there are lots of non-AS in the Palace that could fit the bill. It’s possible, though, that Shaiine needs something done that only an Aes Sedai could do, and that therefore her assumption is correct.

In any case, Shaiine’s thoughts are corroborated by Temaile and Eldrith’s conversation a few pages earlier:

[Temaile:] “There are only three sisters to trouble us [in the Palace], and we can dispose of them.”

[WH: 10, A Plan Succeeds, 245]

Three sisters? There are four AS with Elayne and Nynaeve at that point: Vandene, Merilille, Sareitha, and Careane. The obvious conclusion is that one of the four would not “trouble” the BA – i.e. one of the four is BA herself. [Pam Korda] It has been pointed out, however, that one of the four, Sareitha, was only raised three years ago and has not yet acquired the ageless look, and so might have mistakenly been left out of Temaile’s count.

Taken together, though, the two quotes lend strong support to the idea that one of the Aes Sedai with Elayne and Nynaeve is Black Ajah. Occam’s Razor tells us this BA is the killer; and truly, the Aes Sedai were always the most likely of the possible suspects even before the information acquired in WH.

Aes Sedai suspects

One thing we do know is that Vandene is either the killer or she was not a part of the shield when Adeleas was killed. Otherwise she would have felt something was wrong – she certainly would have noticed when Adeleas died. Of the four, Vandene still looks the most likely to be guilty. She will be considered separately below.

Careane

The weakest of the Aes Sedai. This would make the use of crimsonthorn to eliminate Adeleas pretty important. In addition to this, Careane is the only one of the four AS (that we know of) who has actually served tea to Adeleas in the past. In fact of the AS (excluding Elayne and Nynaeve), Careane is also the only sister whose strength we know in terms of comparison to the others. Careane has at least two Warders, but we know as of WH that this is not necessarily a problem (see section 1.3.5). One thing to note is that Careane is the one who does not hide her face enough and sets the Kin farm on its ear in TPOD. A bit odd, since Aes Sedai seem to be quite adept at keeping their one identifying trait under wraps. Could she have been trying to create a panic? Or was she trying to show her face to a DF among the Kin? Of course it might be that she was just stupid, but the “slip,” if it was intentional, could be construed as a devious attempt to create enough chaos that the Bowl would not be used or at least that its use would be delayed.

Sareitha

Sareitha behaves rather suspiciously in WH. She tells Elayne, obliquely, that she had followed Elayne and Aviendha when they went on their secret sojourn into the city [WH: 7, The Streets of Caemlyn, 181]. Elayne and Aviendha were accosted by street toughs and injured on that outing, yet Sareitha did nothing to help. Then again, the whole reason she was telling that story was to point out to Elayne how helpless she would have been if Aviendha had not recovered in time to fend off their attackers. Since Aviendha evidently took care of the toughs just fine, why would Sareitha have felt the need to intervene? And if she *was* doing something shady, why tell Elayne about it?

The second and much fishier thing about Sareitha in WH is her disappearance in chapter 11. Nynaeve is mightily peeved at having to take Sareitha’s turn at teaching the Windfinders, since:

... the Brown had slipped out of the Palace leaving a note about an urgent errand in the city.

[WH: 11, Ideas of Importance, 257]

This is the very next day after Marillin speaks of making contact with the “woman” in the Palace who can help Shaiine. Coincidence? (We also learn in WH, by the way, that Sareitha has one Warder, Yarman. But again, this doesn’t indicate anything one way or the other.)

Sareitha’s semi-suspicious behavior continues in COT, where she defends Hanlon (a known DF) to Elayne, despite the fact that his actions were clearly in the wrong (and everyone else despises him) [COT: 11, Talk of Debts, 299].

Merilille

As a Gray sister and head of a diplomatic mission, it’s logical to assume that Merilille was picked by the Gray Ajah to lead the Salidar delegation. And of course Delana as a Salidar Gray Sitter who is also BA may have played a major role in picking her. Of course that raises the question of why send a BA to Ebou Dar? The Shadow does know of the possible cache of *’angreal* even if the Bowl of the Winds is not yet a goal. Also notice that Tylin is rather upset with the way Merilille has handled matters until Nynaeve and Elayne show up and tell the truth. So perhaps she is sent to keep the local ruler from coming to an accommodation with the Salidar group. Certainly add an unhappy ruler to an independent nobility plus the constant threat of

Whitecloaks and you would pretty much hamper Salidar from any sort of effectiveness. On the other hand, she could just be incompetent.

In [COT: 15, What Wise Ones Know, 358], we discover that Merilille has run off with Talaan, the super-strong Windfinder-in-training who's dying to be Aes Sedai. On the one hand – how convenient. On the other, Merilille was showing some definite signs of imminent nervous breakdown at having to teach the Windfinders, and who could blame her? Though it might seem that taking off with Talaan represents a break in her bargain to teach the Windfinders for a year, Elayne knows she could have Aes-Sedaied around this by saying “I *am* teaching a Windfinder – just while running.” So her AWOL stunt is not conclusive one way or the other.

At this point, Careane and Sareitha seem to be duking it out for first place among the most “obvious” of the non-obvious suspects – the obvious, of course, being Vandene.

The prime suspect: Vandene [Andrea Leistra, Craig Moe]

Certainly, she looks guilty. She knows what Ispan has said and she knows what Ispan has not said. More importantly she had an idea of what her sister may have been thinking or been on the verge of figuring out. Furthermore, Vandene was the other person in charge of Ispan, yet it is Lan that discovers the two bodies. Exactly when was Vandene going to check up on her sister? And what about the way the shield is described when the two first question her in [TPOD: 4, A Quiet Place, 105]? Certainly Vandene could not be innocent and a part of the shielding at the same time. Yet it raises the question of the timing of the deaths if it was Vandene. Why now? Certainly if Vandene is BA she would know what if anything Ispan could reveal.

Arguments in favor of Vandene being the killer

- She isn't dead. She and Adeleas are nearly inseparable; it's asking a bit much for her to be out just when her sister and their prisoner are killed, and to stay gone for the entire time. If someone had been sent to kill Adeleas and Vandene because they learned something they shouldn't, she'd be dead now as well.

- The interrogation of Ispan proceeded in a rather unorthodox fashion.

Then another use hit [Elayne], and suddenly the silence from within was more ominous than any shrieks that ward would contain.

[TPOD: 4, A Quiet Place, 109]

This other use may simply be, as Elayne supposes, to prevent screams from being heard. However, it's also quite likely that Vandene wants to prevent anyone from hearing what really goes on because it's not what's supposed to be happening.

Adeleas and Vandene brought out Ispan between them, firmly shielded and the leather sack back over her head. She walked quite easily, and nothing visible said that anything at all had been done to her, except... Ispan kept her hands folded at her waist, never so much as trying to raise the sack for a peek, and when she was boosted into a saddle, she held out her wrists to be corded to the pommel without being told. If she was that amenable, perhaps they had learned something from her. Elayne did not want to contemplate how the learning might have been achieved.

[TPOD: 6, Threads, 137]

- She [Vandene] is unnaturally calm following Adeleas' death:

Vandene's eyes remained on her sister, calm in a face of Aes Sedai serenity.

Her voice sounded serenity itself, but small wonder if that was a mask.

Elayne gasped at the brutality, but Vandene simply nodded.

The calm of her made Elayne's skin crawl.

[After the funeral:] Vandene... appeared as serene as she had at Adeleas' graveside.

[TPOD: 28, Crimsonthorn, 546-7]

Not only does she not mourn, except for one wail after the others have left, but she isn't even surprised by the deaths.

- She had access to Adeleas and Ispan without attracting comment or notice, and could have had reason to kill them now – perhaps her identity as Black had been/was about to be revealed, or other important Black secrets would be revealed by Ispan – rather than at some other time. Vandene's comment that Adeleas wouldn't take tea from somebody she didn't trust makes sense, and anybody unusual wandering around the interrogation site at night would surely attract suspicion from Adeleas, so the killer must have been somebody she knew well. (OTOH, if Vandene is the killer, why would she point this out?)
- The difference in how Ispan and Adeleas died. Ispan was tortured brutally, while Adeleas was killed quickly. This suggests that the killer may have had some sympathy for Adeleas and not for Ispan, since it's unlikely that a random Darkfriend murderer with time on her hands would take the time to feed Adeleas the crimsonthorn tea and then merely slit her throat.
- Possible previous misdeeds: *Someone* warded that Draghkar that attacked Moiraine in TGH, at Adeleas and Vandene's place.

In defense of Vandene

Here are counter-arguments for the points against Vandene, and rebuttals:

- **Why were the inseparable sisters suddenly separated?** Remember that this is a procession towards Caemlyn, and traveling across Andor takes up most of the day. Aes Sedai have to sleep as well, and since the two obviously didn't trust anyone else with Ispan, no matter how meek she had become, it makes sense that the pair would alternate interrogation duties. Hence Vandene's absence when Adeleas complains about runaways amongst the Kin.
- **How could Vandene remain so calm?** RJ has quite a few characters retain public composure only to grieve in private. Siuan waited months to mourn the death of her Warder, and Elayne never publicly grieved for the death of her mother. Aes Sedai are famed for such composure, and it is certainly in character for Vandene, who has taken a Draghkar's attack, Elayne's usurping the Ebou Dari delegation, the Kin, a *gholam* and the Seanchan all in stride, to react similarly when faced with her sister's death. Later in WH, Vandene appears to genuinely mourn; Nynaeve admonishes her for not eating, to which she replies that she does eat, but that everything "tastes like ashes" [WH: 8, Sea Folk and Kin, 199]. Elayne later observes that Vandene has taken to wearing Adeleas's clothes [COT: 11, Talk of Debts, 293]. Her stoicism could be taken as a sign of the depth of her pain, rather than the opposite. Furthermore, as **Sandy Armstrong** points out, one could take Vandene's composure as a sign that she *didn't* kill Adeleas. If she was covering something up she'd try to make it plain to everyone else that she was extremely upset.

Rebuttal: Siuan's grieving was postponed due to her other problems: being stilled, being tortured, being a refugee with Logain for company. Elayne hasn't had confirmation that her mom is dead; she's slowly come to the realization that her mom is most likely dead over an extended period of time. Besides, Vandene could have been issued orders to kill anyone who discovered particular information, or that she was Black, so that she had to kill Adeleas even if she regretted doing so.

- **Why was she so unsurprised at seeing the bodies?** Well, first, Aes Sedai pride themselves on never showing surprise or discomfiture of any kind, no matter how shocked they may actually be. More significantly, it would have been obvious that there was no channelling going on in the hut as Vandene and the others approached it; the lack of any telltale signs that Adeleas was maintaining Ispan's shield would surely have alerted Vandene to expect the worst, even before she saw the bodies.
- **But this explains who warded the Draghkar so simply.** Of course, before TPOD we already had a simple answer: Liandrin, a known Black Ajah, who mysteriously disappeared soon after Moiraine. She's much more likely to have been behind the attack than Vandene, who had left Moiraine in the study moments earlier, with no idea she was about to go outside. Not to mention, Vandene's Warder, Jaem, would likely be a DF, too, and he helped Lan save Moiraine.
Rebuttal: That wouldn't matter much. The Draghkar could have been lying in wait on the valid assumption that Moiraine would go outside eventually. Warded, the Draghkar would not have had to fear being sensed. [**Vic Stallion**] Furthermore, it's not very likely that Liandrin could manage to trail Moiraine without Lan noticing. As for Jaem, he doesn't have to be a DF, and even if he was, circumstances would still have forced him to help. Note that Lan was conveniently off working the forms in the barn with Jaem in TGH, rather than by Moiraine's side. When Lan rushed off to save Moiraine, Jaem would have had to follow suit, or give the secret away.
- **How could she have avoided revealing her identity as Black to Adeleas for all these years?** This is exactly the sort of thing all Black sisters have to do – conceal their identity from close scrutiny for centuries. It may not always be from a biological relative, but that doesn't make it any different.
- **How could two people so close they could finish one another's sentences end up on opposite sides of an ideological spectrum?** The fact that Adeleas chose the Brown Ajah and Vandene the Green shows that, although they thought alike in a lot of ways, they didn't think alike in every way. [**Vic Stallion**]

As another defense for Vandene, **Matthew Doyle** observes:

It's noted that there are two cups of tea on the table, and automatically assumed that the second cup was for Ispan. Well, why couldn't it have been for Vandene? Assuming that this was a careful and thoroughly prepared murderer, she would have brought two cups with her just in case the second sister was there. Otherwise she would have been in a world of hurt had she dosed Adeleas as she then would have had to fight off Vandene and Ispan both.

So rather than the second cup being indicative of a plan to incapacitate Ispan before she was murdered (something which clearly didn't happen), I think it more likely that it was there as a precaution to make sure that both sisters were knocked out of the picture had they both been questioning Ispan that night.

Miscellaneous Vandene theories (of the slightly loony variety)

There may have been something up between Ispan and *both* of the Senior Twins. Clues are that both sisters participated in the behind-closed-doors "interrogation" of Ispan, which proved fruitless, and that Ispan seemed to become upset when she thought that Elayne and Nynaeve might do the interrogation, rather than Adeleas and Vandene [TPOD: 4, A Quiet Place, 107]. [**Jonathan Vaught**]

Some ideas:

- Adeleas was Black Ajah and Vandene (not Black Ajah) killed her to hide her crime.

This idea is pretty much refuted by the statement Vandene makes in [TPOD: 28, Crimsonthorn, 547]:

“Those two facts name her [Adeleas’s] killer, in a way. A Darkfriend, and one of our party.”

If Vandene is not Black Ajah, then she is bound by the First Oath and unable to lie. She automatically eliminates herself, therefore, by her own statement.

- **John Novak** offers:

My sneaking suspicion is that both Adeleas *and* Vandene were Black Ajah, but of different cells, and this is one of those grisly little ironies Jordan likes to throw in every so often – I like the image (so to speak) of Adeleas sprawled out on the floor, conscious but unable to speak, figuring out in a flash that Vandene is also Black Ajah... and being physically unable to communicate that before she got her throat slashed.

1.4.10 The “kill Rand” order and the TPOD attack

[Leigh Butler]

From [LOC: Prologue, The First Message, 58]:

[Semirhage:] “I am still waiting to hear what the Great Lord said.”

[Mesaana:] “Yes. Are we to kill al’Thor?”

[Demandred:] “...The first part of the Great Lord’s message was simple. ‘Let the Lord of Chaos rule.’”

Aside from the obvious interpretation of this command (namely, “go out and sow chaos”), it became clear over the course of LOC and ACOS that it also meant that, to this end, the DO had laid a prohibition on killing Rand. From that point until the end of TPOD, no Forsaken except Sammael made any direct attempt on Rand’s life – and Sammy’s attempt was foiled by none other than Moridin, Mr. Nae’blis himself (Moridin was the Wanderer – see section 1.2.3).

This prohibition was apparently not lifted until the Forsaken Coffee Hour in WH. Cyndane tells the FS that Rand had the Choedan Kal and planned to use them to try and cleanse *saidin*. Then:

“So it seems he must be killed after all,” Demandred said. ...

“Killed?” Moridin moved his hands as though weighing something. “If it comes to that, yes,” he said finally.

[WH: 13, Wonderful News, 318]

Seems pretty straightforward, right? Except for one thing – the attack on Rand in TPOD. If the prohibition on killing Rand wasn’t lifted until WH, then why did one Forsaken and at least two Darkfriends try to kill him in the previous book?

WH answered some of our initial questions about the TPOD attack. For one thing, Dashiva’s identity is cleared up – he was Osan’gar [WH: 35, With the Choedan Kal, 645]. For another, Gedwyn and Rochaid (and Torval and Kisman) were definitely Darkfriends, and Taim definitely ordered the attack [WH: 22, Out of Thin Air, 441]. The rest of it is not as clear-cut. What appears to have happened, from Demandred’s POV during the Coffee Hour and Kisman’s POV in [WH: 22, Out of Thin Air, 441-443], is something like this:

- Taim calls in the Fearsome Foursome and sends Gedwyn and Rochaid to Cairhien, ordering them to kill Rand. G. and R. arrive in Cairhien and blast Rand’s rooms apart. At some point during or after their initial assault, Dashiva/Osan’gar joins them, evidently with the intention of taking advantage of the situation to launch his own attack on Rand.
- G. and R. miss Rand, of course, and after wandering around for a while Rand finds them arguing with Dashiva. Dashivan’gar sees Rand, snarls, and fires something extremely lethal-looking at Rand, who blocks it by channelling some kind of super-shield around himself. He gets knocked back down the hall, and the perpetrators use the opportunity to escape. (Kisman notes in WH that Dashiva – whom he obviously never knew was Osan’gar, by the way – had disappeared after the murder attempt, so we can safely assume that he went off alone, rather than wherever Gedwyn and Rochaid took themselves off to.)
- Mere hours later, Taim shows up in Cairhien. He tells Rand (calmly) that Gedwyn, Rochaid, Torval, and Kisman have deserted. Rand tells Taim to add Dashiva to the list; the news that Dashiva participated in the attack seems to shock and anger Taim quite a bit. Then Rand sends Taim away and goes on the lam with Min.

So much for sequence of events. It’s clear that Dashiva/Osan’gar really did intend to kill Rand in Cairhien; Kisman’s POV in WH tells us that Taim did, in fact, order Gedwyn and Rochaid to do the same. What’s not clear is whether G. & R. were intended to succeed. Kisman thinks to himself that he was unsure, despite Taim’s point-blank order, that the Fab Four were actually supposed to have killed Rand in Cairhien. Taken at face value, the attack was not orchestrated very well, and Taim must have known that Gedwyn and Rochaid were no match for Rand unless they had the advantage of surprise, which they promptly lost by destroying Rand’s rooms – after he had already left them. (Dashiva’s strength is not a factor, since Taim had obviously had no idea that he would join in the attempt.)



What it all boils down to is this: Why did Taim order an assassination attempt that seemed almost designed to fail, and why did Dashiva/Osan'gar use the opportunity the attack provided to violate an order passed down by the DO himself and enforced by Moridin, of whom Osan'gar was terrified?

Why did Dashiva/Osan'gar break the "don't kill Rand" rule?

Well, maybe he didn't. Consider: why was the order revoked in the first place? Was Cyndane's information – that Rand was planning to use the Choedan Kal to cleanse the Taint – the cause of the reversal, as we have assumed so far? Or were Moridin's words at the meeting in WH merely confirmation of what had already been decided?

Recall that Dashiva/Osan'gar (and the Fearsome Foursome) found out Rand was planning to cleanse the Taint in [TPOD: 14, Message from the M'Hael, 306], long before the Coffee Hour in WH. What if this revelation was enough to decide the Forsaken that he had to be killed? It's clear from Demandred and Osan'gar's conversation at the meeting in WH that they had been searching for Rand rather desperately ever since the attack. Osan'gar even says, in reference to the failure at Cairhien:

"Simply probabilities... Next time, he will be killed or taken. Chance can't protect him forever."

[WH: 13, Wonderful News, 314]

This is before Cyndane talks about the Choedan Kal, and before Moridin says to kill Rand if necessary. Would Osan'gar have talked so openly about something that was still forbidden at that point? It doesn't seem likely, any more than it seems likely that Osan'gar would deliberately disobey the DO's order in such a public way as helping blow up half the Sun Palace.

So the evidence seems to indicate that the prohibition on killing Rand was removed prior to the TPOD attack, after Rand spilled the beans about his plan to cleanse *saidin*, and the information about the Choedan Kal from Cyndane just served as affirmation to Moridin that this was the proper course.

The only real sticking point in all this is Demandred's phrasing. **Joseph Slonimsky** points out:

He says, "So it seems he must be killed *after all*" (emphasis mine). Not "So we are supposed to continue trying to kill al'Thor" or "We are to try again" or something similar, as would seem logical if the order had already been revoked.

This is kind of puzzling, considering he had been raging a few moments before about how "those blind fools – those idiots! – failed in Cairhien." Note, though, that Demandred being pissed about it doesn't necessarily mean he had anything directly to do with the attack or even that he wanted it to succeed; it's an ambiguous statement. It could be interpreted as meaning that Gedwyn and Rochaid and Dashiva/Osan'gar were idiots for even trying it.

One possible way of explaining the "after all" phrase: maybe the order before the Forsaken Coffee Hour was something like "Capture him if you can, kill him if you have to," as Osan'gar's comment above seems to suggest, and that Demandred's question meant "So we forget about the capturing part and just kill him?"

Why did Taim order the attack?

Kisman's POV tells us Taim ordered the attack and confirms that the four Asha'man are still working for him, so there's no longer any question about that. Regardless of his allegiances, it is unlikely that Taim's order was motivated by Rand's slip about cleansing *saidin* (see section 1.5.6 for why). So, given that, what did Taim have to gain from ordering such a lame-assed assassination attempt on Rand?

Well, if you think about it, it's a win-win situation for Taim whether the attack succeeded or failed. If it succeeds, well, Rand's dead, leaving Taim free to seize power at the BT. And if it doesn't succeed, Taim gets a group of male channellers who are loyal to him, not to Rand, and whose actions Taim can disavow, plus the credibility to claim their desertion to Rand and be believed. Rand doesn't trust him at all; if Taim had simply shown up and reported that his four most trusted lackeys had deserted, Rand probably would have been immensely suspicious of the whole state of affairs. However, after the attack, Rand doesn't even question Taim's word.

1.4.11 What was up with the Forsaken at the Cleansing?

[Leigh Butler, Doug Stanley]

The Battle of Shadar Logoth was an unqualified rout for the Shadow. Cadsuane's little band of channellers not only successfully defended Rand and Nynaeve from half a dozen Forsaken, but gave the bad guys a fair ass-kicking while they were at it, killing one FS (Osan'gar) and driving off the rest. (We're not told what if any injuries the rest of the Forsaken sustained, but it seems safe to assume that at least a couple were wounded in the battle; it doesn't seem that any besides Osan'gar were actually killed.)

So what we'd like to know is this: why were the Forsaken so badly prepared for the fight that a bunch of "half-trained children" trounced them thoroughly? Why would Moridin have them all gate in willy-nilly, with no apparent plan of attack and no conventional back-up forces of any kind?

It's been suggested that Moridin caused the fiasco deliberately – that he purposefully sent in the Forsaken unprepared, either to teach them a lesson ("Now will you work together, dammit?"), to whittle down their numbers, or because for some unknown reason he actually wanted the Taint cleansed.



However, this doesn't seem very likely, especially the last suggestion. There's no possible benefit to Moridin or the Shadow in general to have the DO's greatest revenge on the world (the Taint) erased and Rand and the Asha'man able to channel free from the spectre of madness and a rotting death. It's clear from the various reactions at the Coffee Hour that cleansing the Taint is a Bad Thing for the Forsaken.

As for the idea that Moridin was deliberately reducing the Forsaken's numbers, it's doubtful that Moridin is that stupid or wasteful – there are few enough of the Forsaken left as it is. While it's true that the Forsaken have always schemed against each other as much as against the good guys, the whole point of the “reining in” of the FS Moridin's been doing since his reappearance is to get them to quit the backstabbing and start being an effective group of evildoers. Moridin doesn't need to kill anybody off; he's already in charge. In the same vein, Moridin also doesn't need to set up practical examples of why the Forsaken should work together when he can simply force them to do so.

So if Moridin didn't set them up to fail, what's the deal?

Well, probably what Moridin didn't anticipate is that the Good Guys, especially Rand, finally got a clue. After all, the Forsaken's attack would have worked if Rand had tried cleansing the Taint the way he originally planned to do it – i.e. with just himself and Nynaeve. The two of them would have been defenseless if Cadsuane and co. had not tracked Rand down and bullied him into taking them along. The only thing the FS knew was that Rand and a female channeller were there, occupied with wielding ungodly amounts of the Power, not that anyone else was with them – and since Rand made the decision to take along Cadsuane and the rest immediately before going to Shadar Logoth, the FS had no opportunity to learn of the change in plans.

Also, prior to that point, who would have thought that Aes Sedai and Asha'man would actually work together, linking to form circles? (Apparently mixed-gender circles hugely magnify the strength of the individual channellers.) How could Moridin have anticipated that Rand would let someone else use *Callandor*? Moridin also had no knowledge of Alivia, who outclasses Nynaeve, or of the impressive cache of *angreal* and *ter'angreal* Nynaeve and Cads had between them. [Dave Rothgery]

Finally, the way events fell out, the Forsaken didn't have any real way to formulate a plan. They didn't know when, where, or how Rand was going to make the attempt to cleanse the Taint; the only thing they could do was wait to detect gargantuan amounts of the Power being channelled, and go try and stop Rand from finishing the task.

Some other questions/objections:

Q: Why didn't Moridin join the others? One fancloth-covered TP channeller could have tipped the balance. [Sean T. McCulloch]

A: In [TPOD: Prologue, Deceptive Appearances, 43], Moridin recalls the disastrous result the last time he tried to confront Rand directly (i.e. he died). It's clear he's not anxious to try that again anytime soon. As for fancloth, even if anyone besides Moridin knows how to do it, it very well may require time to prepare (creating and donning a full-body suit of it), time the FS didn't have. There is also Aaron Cote's suggestion that perhaps Moridin is having the same kind of problems with channelling that Rand is (see section 2.3.16), and that's why he was a no-show.

Q: Where were Semirhage and Mesaana?

A: Mesaana was playing hooky, and got severely punished for it. We don't know yet whether Semirhage did the same (and received the same punishment), or if she was busy with something else at Moridin's orders and thus excused (see section 1.4.12).

Q: Why not gate in a horde of Trollocs, or a *gholam*, or at least some Darkfriends?

A: Again, the FS had no time to plan, much less to gather together an army of Trollocs/Darkfriends and get them to SL. Without knowing how long it would take for Rand to do the cleansing, they couldn't afford to waste the time. As for a *gholam*, assuming that a *gholam*'s OP-negating abilities prevent it from being able to use a gateway, there would have been no way to get it there. [Eric Lesch]

Q: If circles magnify strength so much, why didn't the Forsaken form one?

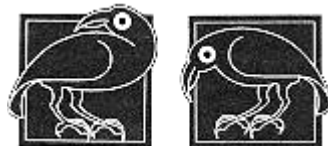
A: Doug Stanley sums it up thusly:

Forming one circle would have been quite stupid, even if they were willing to do so. It's doubtful they could withstand an attack from *Callandor* even with a circle, and with Rand's forces broken up into several widely-spaced groups, they would face multiple simultaneous attacks from different directions. The only defense, really, is to dodge such attacks, by running or gating, which is hardly feasible while linked.

1.4.12 Who will meet Rand in Ebou Dar?

[Leigh Butler]

In the epilogue of COT, Bashere comes to Rand and tells him that the Seanchan are willing to discuss a peace treaty, but only if Rand comes to meet them in person:



“The Seanchan are amenable,” Bashere replied. “Crazy as loons, but amenable. They require a meeting with you in person, though... Suroth wants you to meet someone called the Daughter of the Nine Moons.”
[COT: Epilogue, An Answer, 680]

So, since we know Tuon is wandering northern Altara with Mat, what does this mean?

Well, it's pretty easy to guess that this meeting is a trap. The question is, who's behind it and what will it entail?

We get a couple of clues about it over the course of COT, most particularly in chapter 4. Furyk Karede, the leader of Tuon's personal bodyguard, thinks to himself how Tuon had twice before engineered her own disappearance, without even letting her bodyguard know, in order to throw off her enemies [COT: 4, The Tale of a Doll, 155]. The Seeker who's been stalking Egeanin since TSR (Almurat Mor) then comes to Karede and tells him an interesting rumor:

“Supposedly, a girl with a Seandar accent has been extorting gold and jewelry from merchants here in Ebou Dar. The title Daughter of the Nine Moons was mentioned.”
[COT: 4, The Tale of a Doll, 158]

He also mentions that the descriptions of the girl are remarkably accurate, and that the rumor suddenly appeared after the battle with the Sea Folk. Suroth is apparently in a (very quiet) fury to find Tuon and Anath has “taken to seclusion.”

Both men conclude independently that the “Tuon” seen in Ebou Dar was a fake, and Karede seems to agree with Mor's theory that Suroth, in league with the White Tower (with Thom as their chief operative!), is behind the kidnapping. After the Seeker leaves, Karede decides to take a small force and leave the city to search for Tuon.

Well, Karede and Mor are probably at least half correct. It's a good bet that either Suroth, Anath/Semirhage, or both are behind the fake Tuon, though of course they had nothing to do with the real Tuon's disappearance.

Combine this information with the knowledge that Suroth is in possession of the Sad Bracelets (see section 2.3.02), and the fact that Ronde Macura (the discoverer of forkroot) is with Tuon's entourage [WH: 14, What a Veil Hides, 326], and you have a fine set-up for a trap. The idea is that Suroth and/or Semirhage are going to use this fake Tuon to meet with Rand and, at the opportune moment, slap the Sad Bracelets on him, maybe by slipping him a forkroot mickey first.

It's probable that this was the general plan from the beginning, judging from Anath and Tuon's conversation on the ship in WH. The difference is that Tuon thought the trap was for the benefit of the Seanchan rather than the Shadow (the whole “kneeling to the Crystal Throne” bit), and that now Semi is short one DotNM and has to improvise. (And by “beginning,” it's likely that means as far back as TGH, when Liandrin and Suroth were first shown to be working together, and Liandrin's Thirteen went off to hunt for the Sad Bracelets. [Bill Woolsey])

The fake Tuon could be Semirhage herself; with her alter ego Anath safely in retreat, Semi could use the Mask of Mirrors to pretend to be Tuon. The problem with this theory is that from all descriptions Semi is at least a foot taller than Tuon, which should present a few difficulties with creating a convincing Illusion disguise.

Feisal Schlee points out that it's not like Rand or anyone else in his party would know what Tuon looked like anyway, so as long as the meeting is a private audience, pretty much anyone besides Suroth herself could pretend to be Tuon. However, this does not address the fact that the fake “Tuon” in Ebou Dar apparently bears a very close resemblance to the real Tuon.

Another problem is the question of the Sad Bracelets' flaw: any man contained by them is under the holder's control, true, but eventually he also gains a measure of control over his captor, as well. It doesn't seem likely that Semi would put herself in that position, nor would she want anyone besides her minion Suroth to know that she can channel, anyway. So who would she get to wear the bracelets for her, now that Tuon is unavailable?

One possible candidate is Liandrin, who is currently a *da'covale* in Suroth's entourage [TPOD: 24, A Time for Iron, 460]. Liandrin is (as far as we know) still bound by Moggy's labyrinthine shield, but if anyone could untie it Semirhage could. Of course, it's probably a very bad idea to entrust Liandrin with control of a captive channeller of Rand's strength, but again, if anyone could ensure instant and total obedience from someone, Semi could. Another idea is that Semi could rotate the duty among various *sul'dam*. [Ben Goodman]

Other scenarios

The “Suroth and Anath set Rand up with fake Tuon” scenario is probably the most popular (and intuitive) theory for what will happen in Ebou Dar; however, it is not the only one.

For instance, **Allen Bryan** points out that in COT Mesaana is severely punished for failing to show at either the Coffee Hour or the Cleansing. Semirhage also wasn't at either event, so isn't it logical to think she merited the same kind of smackdown? If so, Anath's “retreat” could have been forced on her, meaning she might have nothing to do with the plan to kidnap Rand and the fake Tuon thing was all Suroth's doing.

Of course, Demandred's thoughts at the Coffee Hour indicate that Semi had established a history of not being able to make appointments because of the nature of her disguise. Also, Moridin's presence in Ebou Dar in TPOD points to the distinct possibility that he and Semi (and Suroth) have been working together specifically on this plan – which certainly makes sense,

as Moridin must be dying for a way to control Rand. So Semi's absence at Shadar Logoth may well have been sanctioned, unlike Mesaana's. (Also, if it's true that Semi was forced out of the picture it's just a terrible waste of a Forsaken.)

Another idea is that the Tuon Rand is going to meet really *is* the real Tuon. There is no indication in COT of how much time elapsed between Tuon and Mat's last scene (where she gives the letter of amnesty to Luca) and Bashere returning to deliver Suroth's message to Rand. For all we know two weeks or more could have gone by. Therefore, upon hearing Bashere's message, quite a few people assumed that Tuon had taken control of Mat's party in that last scene and had forced him to return her to Ebou Dar, and that they had gotten or will get there before Rand does. However, this theory is wrong, though the confusing way the Mat and Tuon scene was written makes the misinterpretation understandable.

Tuon and Mat made a deal with each other early on in COT. He promised that she would not be harmed, and that he would return her to Ebou Dar as soon as it was safe for him to do so. In return, Tuon promised that she would not attempt to escape or betray him in any way, and that she would not try to sow dissension among his allies [COT: 3, A Fan of Colors, 142].

Later, the *sul'dam* Renna stabs Egeanin and attempts to escape back to Ebou Dar, which for obvious reasons would be a disaster for Mat and co. He takes off after Renna, but before he leaves he orders Thom to pay off Luca, get everyone in their party together (including Tuon) and leave the circus behind. Then, after killing Renna, Mat returns to find that Tuon has convinced Thom to ignore Mat's orders and has given a letter granting amnesty to Luca and his circus.

This is where the confusion comes in. As **Evan "Skwid" Langlinais** puts it:

[Tuon's] promise was made conditionally on Mat's promise that he send Tuon back to the other Seanchan as soon as he could figure out a way to get away safely. But, given that he was poised to make a safe getaway from the circus, he still told his men to take Tuon with them. At him saying this, she nods [COT: 29, Something Flickers, 646]. I think it's reasonable to assume that Tuon considers their promises to one another void by that action.

So the idea is that she staged a coup of sorts, and made it so Mat had to honor his promise to return her to Ebou Dar by making it "safe" – i.e. granting everyone involved amnesty from Seanchan reprisal.

However, this ignores the last thing Tuon said to Mat:

"I did make specific mention of who is not under my protection, Toy... Can you guess whose name heads that list?" She smiled. [COT: 29, Something Flickers, 650]

What she meant by that (which was not understood by a lot of people) was that she had deliberately left Mat (and probably all his party) *out* of the grant of amnesty. Therefore, he did not have her protection, and ergo it was still not "safe" for him to return her to Ebou Dar.

Matthew Young explains further:

I don't think that it would have been 'safe' for Mat and his followers to leave Tuon with the circus, if the Seanchan forces were to catch up with the circus immediately afterwards. Tuon and Selucia would be able to lead the Seanchan forces right to Mat, and Selucia for one would not hesitate to. Therefore, I think in both Mat's and Tuon's assessment at that point in the chapter, it is not 'safe' for Mat and his party, or for the circus, really, for Mat to leave Tuon with them. I think Tuon's head nod is an indication that she agrees with Mat's assessment about the danger to his party in that situation.

So, then, she didn't usurp Mat's people by countermanding their orders, but merely convinced them that by granting amnesty to the circus folk, she lessened the urgency of their situation considerably and so it was safe to wait until Mat returned.

It makes sense, after all, because every indication is that Tuon is a willing captive. Once you realize what her cryptic question to Mat means, it becomes clear that Tuon purposefully arranged matters so that she and Mat could continue to be together. I don't think she wants to go back to Ebou Dar. Not just yet, anyway.

So, it is extremely unlikely that the "Tuon" Rand will meet in Ebou Dar will be the real one.

1.5 Black? Or not?

This subsection contains information on and discussion of whether or not various characters are Darkfriends.

1.5.1 Is Aram a Darkfriend?

There is a Tinker at the DFS at the beginning of TGH, wearing green trousers and a yellow coat. Could he be Perrin's little friend?

There is definitely something up with Aram; Egwene's dream [TFOH: 15, What Can Be Learned in Dreams, 214] indicates that Aram is going to get Perrin into trouble:

A man in a bright yellow coat... the Tinker. Every time he moved closer to Perrin it was if a chill of doom shot through everything.



This may just mean that there is something doom-filled about Aram being a Tinker with a sword. Aram is a pretty bloodthirsty dude, so it may be that he'll get Perrin in trouble somehow through his behavior.

In LOC, ACOS, and TPOD, Aram doesn't do much besides follow Perrin around. Not much evidence there.

In WH and COT, Aram shows a rather disturbing fascination with Masema [WH: 1, Leaving the Prophet, 93], and with his methods of interrogation [COT: 27, What Must Be Done, 595-597]. Perhaps this is the way he spells doom for Perrin – maybe he becomes a convert to the Prophet's cause, thinking he will help Rand, and ends up hurting Perrin instead. [Laura Parkinson] Possibly related to the Wise Ones' conviction that letting Masema live is a Bad Thing.

The above, of course, implies that Aram is not in fact a Darkfriend, merely (very) misguided.

1.5.2 Why Moiraine is not Black Ajah

One might think this was a dead issue, but people keep bringing it up.

Why would anybody think Moiraine was BA? Well, during TGH, RJ seems to be putting down clues in that direction. Namely, she was missing during the time of the DFS. Also, she was wearing her ring on a different finger than she had before (damning evidence, for sure). This was all a red herring, because since then, we have been privy to Moiraine's thoughts, which show that she walks in the Light.



1.5.3 Why Elaida is not Black Ajah

[Erica Sadun, Pam Korda]

Read the following references:

- [TSR: 1, Seeds of Shadow, 29-30]: Elaida thinks about how Rand al'Thor must be stopped from causing trouble in Andor, since Andor and its royalty are the key to defeating the DO. She believes that defeating the DO is a desirable goal.
- [TFOH: Prologue, The First Sparks Fall, 13-21] and [TFOH: 19, Memories, 260]: Elaida is pretty clearly a dupe.

Finally, from the Elaida-Alviarin interactions in LOC, ACOS, and TPOD, it is obvious that Elaida is not BA, since Alviarin has to resort to blackmail to control Elaida. If Elaida was BA, Alviarin, head of the Black Ajah, would just *tell* her what to do.



1.5.4 Sheriam: Black or Blue?

Prior to TPOD, there was little reason to really believe Sheriam was BA. There was some speculation, based mostly on the fact that Mistress of Novices would be a good position for a Black sister. Certain examples of Sheriam's behavior towards Elayne, Egwene, and Nynaeve could indicate that she is BA, but they all are explained equally well by considering that, in all these instances, she is a high-ranking Aes Sedai (either Mistress of Novices or part of the original Salidar Cabal) and Elayne, Egwene, and Nynaeve are students. Here are the examples:

- Egwene's Accepted test: she says something like "He said they could turn him to the Shadow, against his will. Can they?" [TDR: 22, The Price of the Ring, 202-203] Sheriam then tells her about the 13 Dreadlords + 13 Fades trick, but she doesn't wonder who "he" was. On the other hand, why would a Darkfriend tell Egwene about that trick, so that she'd know to watch out for it? As for "he," why should she wonder? The "people" who appear in the testing *ter'angreal* aren't even always real.
- The incident with the Gray Men in the Tower [TDR: 15, The Gray Man, 142-146]. One of them is found dead in Sheriam's bedroom, the other is found killed; we find out in WH that Slayer killed the latter (see section 1.4.02). Nynaeve points out that Sheriam never once wonders about who killed the Soulless; this establishes a possible connection between Slayer and Sheriam (though that's pretty tenuous. The Shadow tends to operate on the principle of not letting one hand know what the other hand is doing – e.g. the attack on the Stone of Tear in TSR). She acts rather suspiciously in general during that whole scene. This can be explained by saying she was just being brusque with the kids because she wanted them to keep quiet. Why should she wonder who killed him in front of the Accepted? To her, they're irresponsible runaways.
- Sheriam's also the perfect operative of the Shadow for the Tower-in-exile in Salidar. There were many suspicious things about her treatment of Elayne and Nynaeve when they arrived in Salidar. Sheriam seemed to be the most ardent about confiscating the *ter'angreal*. Again, it could very well be that she's just being Aes Sedai. Why should she let the kids keep the *ter'angreal*, or approve of them gallivanting about the glove, instead of studying like they should be? Also, note that there already is a Shadow operative in Salidar, Delana, who as a Sitter is fairly powerful herself.
- The only maid of Egwene's who wasn't killed by Halima was Chesa. Chesa was assigned by Sheriam [LOC: 36, The Amyrlin is Raised, 479]. Chesa is possibly a spy for Sheriam, or for Sheriam's master (see below).



In [TPOD: 16, Unexpected Absences, 345], however, we discover that Sheriam is definitely under somebody's thumb. In this scene, Sheriam is tortured for information by a mysterious channeller. It is clear that this is not the first time that this has happened. What can we tell from this scene?

- Sheriam's tormenter is a channeller. Sheriam is restrained, shielded, and stripped with the Power. We can't say whether this person channels *saidin* or *saidar*. One might think that Sheriam would sense a female channeller in her tent. In fact, she might have done so, but it was too late to run away:

She had only time to realize she was not alone when she was shielded...

Note that this fact disqualifies Slayer from being her tormentor, since he cannot channel (see section 1.4.03). More on the Slayer connection below.

- The tormenter is not particularly subtle in her/his use of the OP in torturing Sheriam. Sheriam is beaten:

When she was left alone at last, it was to lie curled up and whimpering from her welts...

This tells us little, but it is definitely not Semirhage's style. (Semi's torture of Cabriana in [LOC: 6, Threads Woven of Shadow, 139-143] is much more complex. Semi stimulates the pain centers of her subject's brain directly.)

- The tormenter is questioning Sheriam because he/she wants to know what Egwene was planning:

"That girl is up to something, and I want to know what."

- This has been going on for some time. The torturer says:

"You were supposed to keep me informed, Sheriam."

- Sheriam believes her predicament stems from talking to at least one of the Sitters. She wishes:

... that she had never in her life spoken to a single sister in the Hall.

So, what is going on? Either: (1) Sheriam is BA, and her tormenter is either BA or a Forsaken; (2) Sheriam is BA, and her tormenter is not somebody related to the Dark; (3) Sheriam is not BA, but her tormenter is BA or Forsaken; or (4) neither Sheriam nor her tormenter is of the Dark. This all basically boils down to two questions: (1) Who is Sheriam's torturer? (2) Does Sheriam's predicament mean she is BA?

Who is pummeling Sheriam?

Before attacking the question of specific suspects, let's address a general question: is the culprit a channeller of *saidar* or *saidin*? One argument in favor of *saidin* is that Sheriam was easily shielded and bound before she noticed anybody was in her tent. Female channellers are supposedly able to sense the presence of other female channellers. Furthermore, no one else, e.g. Egwene, noticed a lot of the OP being used in Sheriam's tent.

However, it's not really possible to eliminate *saidar*-channellers on this basis. Sheriam may have been able to sense the channeller in her tent if she'd been looking for one. However, she was not expecting her visitor. From [LOC: 27, Gifts, 389-390] we know that an AS can't always pinpoint the location of a channeller she can't see. Thus, even if Sheriam sensed the presence of another woman channeller, she may not have thought it was important, since she's surrounded by woman channellers. Since it is not at all clear she could have pinpointed the channeller's presence to her own small tent, we shouldn't be too surprised that she didn't sense her assailant, even if it was a woman. Also, the attacker may have been using the Power to disguise her ability to channel. All of the Forsaken can do this for sure, Alviarin may have learned it from Mesaana, and others may know how to do it, from some other source which we don't know about yet.

The question of somebody else detecting the flows is a greater objection. However, it is not even close to being an insurmountable obstacle. For one thing, the scene occurs late at night, so most potential witnesses would have been asleep, or at least inside their own tents. Secondly, Sheriam's assailant would have taken precautions to prevent detection – inverting and tying off the flows which shielded and bound Sheriam, for example. As for the beating itself, as **Amy Gray** points out, it is possible that:

... it doesn't take a significantly higher amount of the Power to make clubs of Air and move them around than it does to, say, move a chair with the Power or channel your lamp lit – the sort of things she might actually be doing in her tent.

Furthermore, while it is reasonable to assume that the beating was done with the Power, nothing in the scene indicates that it was actually done that way. It's quite possible that Sheriam was beaten with a stick.

Therefore, we cannot rule out all female channellers as suspects. Let us now turn to the question of particular suspects. The general categories are a Forsaken, a Black sister, or Somebody Not Affiliated with the Shadow.

Forsaken

General considerations

In general, the Forsaken have not shown a predilection for using physical torture to extract information from informants. When the informant is a Darkfriend, they tend to rely on that person's greed, their DF Oaths, and good old-fashioned fear.

When the informant is not a sworn DF, most of the Forsaken tend to use Compulsion. If the attacker was a Forsaken, it shouldn't have taken:

...a long time to convince her questioner that she had already told all she knew, that she would never hold back a word, not a whisper.

A Forsaken could have simply Compelled her to spill her guts. However, while this general consideration makes it less likely that the attacker was a Forsaken, we certainly can't rule it out. There is evidence that the attacker was a Forsaken; the method used to strip Sheriam ("Dress and shift burst away from her body like a pricked bubble") sounds similar to the method Semirhage uses in [LOC: 6, Threads Woven of Shadow, 139]:

...she wielded Fire and Wind, slicing away dress and shift...

[Semirhage] doubted [the captured Aes Sedai] could duplicate those simple feats even if she had been able to follow them.

Semirhage, at least, thinks that modern AS don't know how to do the clothes-stripping trick. Among the Forsaken, the most likely candidates for Sheriam's assailant are Semirhage, Aran'gar/Halima, and Mesaana. A slightly less likely possibility is the mystery man commanding Slayer in WH.

Semirhage

She is the only Forsaken who has shown or expressed a preference for torture over Compulsion as a way to gain information and loyalty. However, Sheriam's interrogation is a far cry from that of Cabriana Mecandes in [LOC: 6, Threads Woven of Shadow, 139-143]. Physically beating her subject seems too mundane, too unsophisticated for Semirhage. Semi has mastered the art of stimulating her subject's brain to feel pain and pleasure directly, a method much more effective than physical attack, and it doesn't leave any marks. It's unlikely that she'd stoop to beating a subject with Air, or Light forbid, a stick.

Aran'gar

For one thing, Halima is right there in the rebel camp, which gives her very easy access to Sheriam. Aran'gar as the culprit would also explain Sheriam's regrets about talking to Sitters/a Sitter. Aran'gar attached herself to Delana, a BA who is a Sitter. Delana could be the Sitter Sheriam is thinking of.

To this, **Pam** adds:

Okay, I just had a major 'duh' moment. During the Forsaken Coffee Hour, Aran'gar says:

"My own charge is..." She pressed a thumb down on the edge of the chair as if pinning something and laughed again.

[WH: 13, Wonderful News, 314]

Now, we've been assuming that she means Egwene, since she is Egwene's back-rubber, and [is] doing something to Eg to give her headaches. However, Eg really doesn't seem to be totally under anybody's thumb; she's still pretty much the same old Egwene. So, what if her charge *isn't* Egwene? What if it's Sheriam? Sheriam is definitely under somebody's thumb to the degree indicated by Aran'gar. We've got a thumb-er and a thumb-ee, why shouldn't they be matched up? And, as a bonus, we know that Aran'gar (aka Balthamel) is a major-league perv. She may not need to strip Sheriam naked and beat her up to get info, but I can sure believe ex-Balthamel would do it for the fun of it. As to why Sheriam when she has access to Egwene herself, she may mistakenly believe that Sheriam the Keeper is the real power behind the Girl Amyrlin's throne.

Of course, it's hard to believe that Halima is still under the impression that Egwene is a puppet, but she may have thought so originally, and later decided to keep Sheriam as an ace up her sleeve, so to speak. There is the fact that Halima already has Delana to get information on the Sitters and the SAS in general, but Delana has never been part of Egwene's inner circle the way Sheriam is.

There is also evidence concerning Egwene's maid Chesa which provides a connection between Sheriam and Aran'gar, but recent events argue against the idea that Chesa is working for Halima (see section 1.5.5). This doesn't discount the possibility, though, that Chesa is a spy for Sheriam, and simply doesn't know to whom Sheriam is passing her information.

Stronger evidence that Sheriam's torturer is Aran'gar shows up in COT. When the Black Tower/White Tower alliance was proposed in the Hall, Sheriam quite simply flipped out, causing a rather extraordinary scene [COT: 19, Surprises, 471]. Though her reaction could be attributed to stress combined with the general "ick" reflex AS have towards men who can channel, another way of looking at it is that Sheriam freaked because she knew that the absolute last thing Aran'gar/Halima would want is to have a bunch of *saidin* channellers wandering the rebel camp, since it would give Halima away in about five seconds flat.

Mesaana

Mesaana, who to our knowledge has never worked with Halima, but who does have a vested interest in all events concerning the Tower, is a good suspect for the torturer. She *does* need info on Egwene's plans and, since Sheriam is Egwene's Keeper, would have every reason to believe that Sheriam would be a good source of such information.

[Elizabeth Cornwell]

However, as far as we know, Mesaana has never shown any interest in the Salidar Aes Sedai; she seems to be concentrating her efforts on the Tower.

Slayer's employer, whoever he is

Included here because there is a better than even chance that he is Forsaken, though he could be Taim. The only real reason to suspect Slayer's mystery boss is because of the Gray Man incident in TDR, which seems to link Sheriam and Slayer, tenuously. But this is purely circumstantial, and not very helpful in any case, since we don't know who Slayer's boss is, though we suspect he's either Demandred or Taim (see section 1.4.04). One thing in favor of this idea is that that Dem and Taim, if they wanted information on the SAS, would certainly assume that Sheriam is the true boss and Egwene is just a figurehead, and would go for her, rather than Egwene. OTOH, the torture scene really doesn't seem like either of their styles, and Taim, at least, has never shown anything but disdain for Aes Sedai, and certainly not interest in what they're up to. As a final point, it's worth noting that Slayer has evidently done work for a number of Forsaken, and there's no reason to think that the person who sent him to kill the Gray Man in the Tower, way back in TDR, is the same person who sent him to kill Rand in WH.

Black Ajah

General considerations

The relative lack of sophistication in Sheriam's interrogation (no Compulsion or other Forsaken-style tricks) makes the Black Ajah (rather than the Forsaken) a good place to look for Sheriam's abuser. Narrowing this suspect pool is difficult, since we only know of one BA in the Salidar group – Delana. Another Black suspect is Alviarin, who can Travel, and who may have been out of the Tower when Sheriam was being beaten up. Apart from these two, the only other BA we know about are too far away from the Salidar army to be candidates. (Of course, there is the possibility that an unknown BA in the Salidar group is the culprit.)

Delana

Delana is a Sitter, which would explain Sheriam's regrets about talking to a Sitter. Delana could be interrogating Sheriam either at Aran'gar's instigation or as an independent effort. (She may be trying to gather information which would put her in good standing with Aran'gar.) A point against her is that she seems like something of a wet hen, so far as BA are concerned, and may not have it in her to torture Sheriam so brutally. **Nathan Scott**, however, notes that Sheriam arrives very late and flustered to the Hall meeting, and Delana is then the last to show up, also short of breath [COT: 19, Surprises, 460-466]:

I have a feeling that the summons... interrupted something.

(Perhaps they were *both* being chastised by Halima?)

Alviarin

Like Mesaana, Alviarin has a vested interest in keeping tabs on the SAS. If Elaida were to be deposed by the rebels, Alviarin would fall with her. Since she can Travel, we know she's not particularly weak in the OP, and thus could possibly shield Sheriam, who is also relatively strong. Torturing people for information is not beyond her – she is most likely the one who tortured the novice Sahra in [TSR: 17, Deceptions, 204-205], to gain information which led to the Tower coup. She also happily participated in the Questioning of Siuan and Leane. From Elaida, we know that Alviarin may have been out of the Tower at the time Sheriam was being attacked [TPOD: 25, An Unwelcome Return, 492], and since she can Travel, she could have easily made a trip to Salidar. One problem with Alviarin being the attacker is that it doesn't explain Sheriam's thoughts about Sitters. The only possibility which comes to mind is if Elaida's secret plan [ACOS: Prologue, Lightnings, 24-26] involves the SAS Sitters, and Alviarin knows of it. Needless to say, this is a very tenuous connection.

Non-Dark person

General considerations

The nature of the attack certainly seems to imply that a Person of the Dark was behind it. The OP was apparently used, and non-Black AS cannot use the OP as a weapon. There are loopholes, as indicated by Rand's adventures with his TAS kidnappers. However, the non-Black TAS quickly became unable to participate in Rand's torture, when they started to believe that it was torture, and not punishment. However, it is conceivable that a non-Black AS could convince herself that using the OP to torture Sheriam was not "using the OP as a weapon." An agent of Elaida's, for example, might regard Sheriam as a rebel, and thus deserving of punishment. Note that Sheriam's treatment falls within Tower custom on questioning by another Aes Sedai [TPOD: 4, A Quiet Place, 106-107]. No blood as far as we know was drawn and the prohibitions concerning dusk and dawn were also met, seemingly. People who have been suggested as non-Black attackers are Romanda and Lelaine, mostly because they are Sitters, and they have an interest in knowing what Egwene is up to. **John Hamby** points out:

Both Romanda and Lelaine are caught off-guard by the news of the Andoran and Murandian armies. I think that Sheriam mentioned something in the Hall that might have let one of the two gain power over her. What this may be is of course not known but my suspicions are that it is the knowledge of the ten spies sent without the Hall's knowing. This is the only piece of info that comes to mind that could bind Sheriam and let this person treat her as such. Also both of these two sisters are considerably older and stronger. So part of her submission could be deference as well as being blackmailed.

Lelaine

Between the two of them, there is a bit more reason to suspect Lelaine than Romanda. **Rich Boyé** points out:

The fact that Lelaine tries to be sweet and kindly all the time pretty much makes me distrust her. Something must be swimming in her depths, and I think she's prone to lashing out in private. Anyway, she is always patting Egwene and those who she deems inferior (Suan being the most notable other one), touching cheeks, stroking hair, etc... Before Sheriam's assailant lets fly with the OP, he or she strokes Sheriam's hair.

John Hamby adds:

Since Lelaine is Blue and so is Sheriam that might add another layer to the control that Sheriam's questioner has over her. Also this would fit with the part about the ten spies, as no Blues were a part of that group. So Lelaine gains much more with Sheriam under her thumb than she would in exposing a Blue agent.

All that said, at this point it looks like the front-runner for the identity of Sheriam's torturer is Halima.

Does Sheriam's predicament mean she is a Darkfriend or not?

Sheriam's situation has been taken (by different people, obviously) as an indication that (a) she is a Darkfriend; and (b) she is not a Darkfriend. Here are the arguments:

Sheriam is Black

Prior to this incident, there had already been suspicion cast on Sheriam, most especially from the Gray Men business in TDR. Darkfriends can treat one another quite badly, especially if revenge or a reversal of position is involved (for example, Shaiine's treatment of Falion and Carridin in [TPOD: 28, Crimsonthorn, 553-554]). If Sheriam is not BA, then she must be bound by the Three Oaths, and cannot lie directly. Because of this, her abuser should have been able to easily determine that she had told them all she knew. Of course, her abuser may have thought Sheriam had a poor memory, or maybe he/she just enjoys beating Sheriam up. Furthermore, Sheriam has sworn fealty to Egwene, and should be bound to it by the First Oath. Spying on Egwene surely violates this.

Sheriam is not Black

We do have one scene which strongly suggests that Sheriam is in fact unable to lie and thus is still bound by the Three Oaths. In [ACOS: 8, The Figurehead, 162-163], Sheriam is forced to tell Egwene the truth about the sisters sent back to the Tower as "ferrets." Had Sheriam not been under the Oaths, then she could have simply said, "I have no idea about those sisters leaving. If indeed any did, someone else must have sent them." But since she could not lie, and Egwene forced her not to evade or escape the oath by omission, then Sheriam had to tell Egwene about the ferrets. [Jeremy Dobbins] Of course, BA have long had to imitate being bound by the First Oath in order to avoid being caught in a lie. This may have been why Sheriam allowed the truth to be wrung out of her, especially since we must assume that at least one of the Salidar Six is not Black, and therefore if asked would contradict Sheriam's story, if she denied sending the ferrets.

Another piece of evidence in favor of Sheriam's innocence is, oddly enough, her slacking off of her duties as Egwene's Keeper. In [TPOD: 16, Unexpected Absences, 330], Egwene notes:

The post of secretary provided [Suan and Egwene] another reason to be seen talking, and Sheriam had not minded at all giving up the work.

Contrast this with Sheriam's previous behavior; she was only too happy to take care of all the paperwork [ACOS: 8, The Figurehead, 158]. Consider that the secretarial duties of being Keeper give Sheriam access to all of Egwene's doings, and all the details of what the Amyrlin is up to. Perhaps she allowed SS to take over the position of secretary to limit her own knowledge. After all, she can't report on what she doesn't know. Avoiding her responsibilities as Keeper could be her way of keeping her oath of fealty while being under the thumb of her abuser.

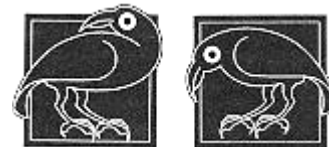
Sheriam's thoughts in the torture scene don't seem to be entirely consistent with the theory that she is BA. Consider her thought to herself along the lines of "I'll never talk to another sister." Clearly her torturer *wants* her gathering information, so the comment reflects her regret at getting into this situation in the first place, not her obedience to her controller.

If she's BA, the comment would have to indicate that, at some point, a sister, working as an evangelist for the Dark Side, got Sheriam into a conversation about the terrific feeling you get working for the Dark Lord, and, after shoving a few inspirational pamphlets at her, converted her to the cause. This doesn't, to me, really sound like the way BA would be recruited. I paint the scenario in the way I do because Sheriam's rueful comment doesn't seem to indicate a dislike for her current position within the Dark hierarchy (someday I'll be in charge and make her pay), but regret for getting sucked into the system to start with. Blabbing a blackmailable secret to the wrong gal-pal in an unguarded moment seems to fit a little better. If the secret spilling and consequent blackmail date back a while, it works to explain the Gray Man as well. [Elizabeth Cornwell]

One thing which should be noted is that Sheriam's interaction with her abuser is not typical of Darkfriends. Generally, when DFs and BA are punished by their superiors, they are given the "opportunity" to do a lot of groveling and kissing-up, instead of just getting tied up and beaten. For example, compare Liandrin and Moghedien to Sheriam and her abuser. Furthermore, if Sheriam is BA, why didn't Halima attach herself to her? She was very powerful in Salidar (arguably as powerful as, if not more so, than any Sitter) even *before* she became Keeper.

One interesting suggestion, made by several people, is that Sheriam *is* Black, but not of her own volition: maybe the reason she knows about the 13 Dreadlords + 13 Fades trick (certainly not common knowledge) is through personal experience.

1.5.5 Is Chesa a Darkfriend?



Why would anybody think Egwene's maid, Chesa, was a servant of the Shadow?

As she *appears*, Chesa is pretty dim-witted. Always chattering inanely about not eating too fast, dressing warmly, and washing behind one's ears, she's a caricature of a stupid servant. It's hard to believe that the woman is as simple-minded as she acts around Egwene. In fact, Egwene is always thinking about how great Chesa is, how "simple" and "refreshing." Would RJ be pushing this so strongly if she was *actually* a simple-minded serving woman?

First, it is very suspicious that Halima killed Meri and Selame, but not Chesa. The result of this is that Chesa now waits on Egwene 'round the clock. Meri and Selame were appointed by Romanda and Lelaine [ACOS: 8, The Figurehead, 160], and they were most likely spying on Egwene for those Sitters. The conclusion that immediately springs to mind is that Chesa is also a spy, and that Halima killed the other two maids so that Chesa's spying could be more effective. This implies that Halima (a.k.a. Aran'gar, a.k.a. Balthamel) has an interest in Chesa's spying, or works for somebody who does (Moridin or Shaidar Haran).

Furthermore, Chesa was apparently appointed to be Egwene's maid by Sheriam:

Sheriam might have chosen [Chesa], but she was the Amyrlin Seat's maid. [LOC: 36, The Amyrlin is Raised, 479]

Chesa was a gift from Sheriam. [ACOS: 10, Unseen Eyes, 186]

As we know from [TPOD: 16, Unexpected Absences, 345], Sheriam (who may be Black herself) is being controlled by somebody (probably) of the Dark persuasion. So, it is certainly conceivable that either: (1) Sheriam was ordered to choose Chesa by her controller, and Chesa reports to that mysterious person; or (2) Sheriam chose Chesa to be her own spy, and pass Chesa's info on to her controller. Either way, it fits together well.

However, there are other, less obvious ways to interpret these data. With respect to the murders, it's possible that Meri and Selame were removed to eliminate whatever (poor) information they were giving to Romanda and Lelaine. If Chesa is just a maid and not a spy, there would be no reason to kill her. As for the connection with Sheriam, there may be some confusion about that. While Egwene thinks *twice*, in different books, that Sheriam assigned Chesa to her, Anaiya may have had something to do with it, too:

... Anaiya said, "We need to let her sleep. Tomorrow is almost as important as tonight was, child."

Abruptly she laughed to herself softly. "Mother. ... We will send Chesa to help you get ready for bed." [LOC: 36, The Amyrlin is Raised, 478]

This is right after Egwene arrives in Salidar. It *sounds* as if Anaiya is the one choosing Chesa to be Egwene's maid. This can be resolved in two different ways: (1) Anaiya sent Chesa to Egwene on the first night as a temporary measure, and Sheriam decided to make it a permanent appointment; or (2) Sheriam chose Chesa before Egwene got to Salidar, and Anaiya was just suggesting that the pre-appointed servant go take care of Egwene.

One piece of evidence which contradicts the idea that Chesa is a spy for Sheriam is Egwene's scene with Sheriam in [ACOS: 8, The Figurehead, 159]. Egwene thinks:

[Sheriam] did not understand why Egwene let her maid be present at these meetings, much less let her chatter away freely.

This indicates that Sheriam has expressed disapproval of Egwene's habit of letting Chesa be present at meetings where secret stuff is being discussed. If Chesa was spying for Sheriam, Sheriam would not discourage this practice. However, this consideration doesn't rule out the possibility that Sheriam is being forced to work against Egwene, and is trying to protect Egwene by discouraging her from having Chesa around all the time.

Stronger evidence against Chesa's DF-ness shows up in COT, where Chesa shows open disdain for Halima:

"She makes me... uneasy, Mother," [Chesa] said finally. "There's something just not right about that Halima. I feel it every time she's around. It's like feeling somebody sneaking up behind me..."

[COT: 20, In the Night, 484]

Even more telling, she cooks up a potion for Egwene that dispels the effects of one of her Halima-induced headaches – evidently the first time something besides Halima's massages has worked to stop the pain – allowing Egwene to Dream again [COT: 20, In the Night, 483]. It's possible that Chesa is a DF working for Sheriam (or on her own) and doesn't know that Halima's the head honcho, but it seems really unlikely that Halima wouldn't have gotten all Darkfriends in the rebel camp under her personal control by now, or would allow one of them to work at cross-purposes against her.

1.5.6 Is Taim a Darkfriend?

Now that the "Taimandred" theory has been debunked (see section 1.1.5), we are left with one main question concerning the former false Dragon: is Taim working for the Shadow or not?



Taim's actions in TPOD and WH – in particular, the attack he ordered on Rand in Cairhien – have proven that whoever he pledges allegiance to, he certainly cannot be considered one of the “good guys.” However, this does not automatically mean he is a Darkfriend. There have been plenty of people working against Rand and his allies, with both good and bad intentions, who were/are not part of the Shadow; prime examples are Elaida and the late Pedron Niall.

Going with this idea, the “Non-Dark Taim” theory proposes that Taim is not a Darkfriend, but merely an ambitious, ruthless guy acting to gain what power he can once Rand's arrival denied him the Big Kahuna spot. Despite his obvious dislike of playing second fiddle to anyone, Taim may have originally planned to support Rand, helping him to win Tarmon Gai'don. Since Rand is expected to die in that battle, perhaps Taim thought to bide his time and take control in the aftermath – and after that, well, as Taim says, the winners write the histories. Even the attack in TPOD doesn't necessarily preclude this chain of reasoning, since it appears that actually killing Rand wasn't really Taim's primary goal in setting it up.

Then again, evidence from WH also strongly implied not only that Taim may be a Darkfriend, but one working directly for the Forsaken – specifically, Demandred or Moridin. The “Minion Taim” theory, in addition, offers compelling solutions to the contradictory evidence LOC and ACOS gave us about his character – the inconsistencies that originally led us to believe he was Demandred in disguise. (It is worth noting that if the Minion theory is true, then Taim would have had to have been instructed by Ishamael, for the most part. No other Forsaken was free early enough to have started teaching Taim, long enough ago for him to have learned all that stuff, and gotten Taint protection over so many years, etc. Although, he could well have taken up with Demandred after Ish's demise, as WH seems to suggest.)

The remainder of this section will examine Taim's actions and behavior from the last five books, and present the evidence (or counter-evidence) each incident provides for the two Taim theories.

1. Knowledge.

In LOC, Taim knows how to test for channelling ability, and picks up gateways with relative ease. He apparently teaches the Asha'man very well. Plus, Taim mentions to Bashere that he used Compulsion on two people [LOC: 2, A New Arrival, 76].

Non-Dark Taim

He's supposedly been channelling for 15 years. He had to have learned something in that time. Maybe Taim is just a fast learner, like Rand, or Nynaeve. In fact, one's ease of learning seems to be a direct function of how strong one is in the Power. (Examples: Rand, Nynaeve, Elayne, and Egwene are all fast learners, and even SS and Moiraine, who are stronger than your average bear, spent a relatively short time as novices (3 years?).) This probably has to do with the fact that, the stronger you are, the easier it is for you to see the flows required for a particular action, and thus can more readily duplicate it.

Minion Taim

But the above doesn't explain Taim's learning curve; he wouldn't have had anybody to observe and learn *from*. It's a little hard to believe that Taim figured all this out on his own, especially Compulsion. Look at how much trouble Rand had learning before he got Asmo as a proper teacher. If Taim is working for Ishy/Demandred, of course, then obviously he would have learned from the Forsaken, just as Rand did from Asmo.

2. The seal.

Minion Taim

The story about finding it in a Saldaean farmer's house is pretty fishy. Could it be that Taim gave it to Rand under orders?

Non-Dark Taim

If Taim is Demandred's servant, why would he, and the DO, give a seal to Rand (especially now that they are apparently trying to get them back)? Maybe the DO could predict that Rand/LTT would try to break the seal, but Demandred couldn't have. Taim was certainly shocked when it looked like Rand was going to smash it [LOC: 2, A New Arrival, 80-81]. It could be that Taim gave it to Rand to get him to trust him, even though that failed utterly. Taim's seal story is also somewhat backed up by Bashere's story to Perrin about a farmer in Saldaea who claimed to be the descendant of the kings of an ancient kingdom. If Taim's farmer = Bashere's farmer it would be plausible that the seal was the last item of inheritance. And who better for the farmer to give it to than the Dragon Reborn (Taim's claim before Rand declared himself)?

Counter-argument: It could be that Taim was shocked when Rand looked like he was going to break the seal because he was worried that Rand was already totally gone. It's clear that the DO had plans for Rand (though not anymore, apparently), and that the DO told Demandred something about a plan for Rand (not necessarily the *real* plan) in the “let the Lord of Chaos rule” speech, and that Demandred liked it. If Rand was too loony to perform his role, Minion Taim would be worried. As for why he gave the seal to Rand in the first place, Minion Taim would be just as interested in gaining Rand's trust as Non-Dark Taim would be, after all, and the attacks on Dobraine and Bashere in COT indicate an apparent change of plans regarding the seals that was most likely not in effect as of LOC.

3. The Taint.

Taim claims to not be affected by the Taint, after (Rand estimates) fifteen years of channelling [LOC: 2, A New Arrival, 76].

Minion Taim

This seems pretty unlikely. Consider Owyn, who was going mad after only three years of hardly ever channelling at all. Many of the Asha'man have a few screws loose after only a few months of intensive channeling. The only Taint protection we know of is linking to the DO.

Counter-argument: But if that's the case, why did Torval (who was quite definitely a Darkfriend) get so starry-eyed in TPOD, when Rand talked about cleansing the Taint [TPOD: 14, Message from the M'Hael, 306]? If DF Asha'man get immunity from the Taint, why would Torval be so excited about Rand cleansing it (and in fact, wouldn't he feel the exact opposite of excited)?

Rebuttal: Of course, there are Darkfriends and then there are Darkfriends. Taim is probably quite a bit more important to the bad guys than rank and file Asha'man like Torval. If Taim has indeed been a DF for fifteen years or more, and was instructed by Ishy, then he is certainly not your run-of-the-mill DF. It's reasonable to suppose that the DO would extend his Taint protection to Taim but draw the line at any other non-Forsaken. Or, alternately, one can imagine an Asha'man converting to the DO solely for Taint protection, and not being particularly keen on the whole 'servant of the Dark Lord' angle. No more Taint = possibility of getting free of the DO & Forsaken.

Non-Dark Taim

It's not impossible that Taim could have held off Taint madness on his own, even if unlikely. Logain, who is not a Darkfriend or Forsaken, has been channelling for about six years (minus about a year or so of being gentled), and isn't going mad [LOC: 51, The Taking, 647]. It seems likely that the ease with which one succumbs to the Taint varies widely with the person. Owyn went under in three years, Taim mentions some other guys who lasted for two years [LOC: 2, A New Arrival, 79], and Torval talks about a man who went nuts on his second day [TPOD: 14, Message from the M'Hael, 300].

(One point that has often been mentioned is that Rand sees Taim channelling, but he does not see the black cord connecting him to the DO and filtering out the Taint. However, this is *not* a valid argument. The black cords are only seen/sensed under very special circumstances. Rand has only seen them in two places – T'A'R and the in-between space used for Skimming. Rand has never seen Taim in either of those places. Note that Rand has seen male Forsaken without seeing the cords: Aginor and Balthamel at the Eye, Be'lal in the Heart of the Stone, and Dashiva/Osan'gar on numerous occasions. Thus, the fact that Rand hasn't seen the black threads on Taim shows nothing one way or the other (see section 1.3.1).)

4. Taim's age.

Rand estimates Taim's age as 35, or a few years older [LOC: 2, A New Arrival, 76]. However, Rand doesn't know about the "slowing" effect of using the OP. Elayne talks about it in ACOS:

"We *slow*, Nynaeve. Somewhere between twenty and twenty-five, we begin aging more slowly. How much depends on how strong you are, but when doesn't." [ACOS: 24, The Kin, 408]

According to RJ, a man with the spark doesn't slow until 25, usually closer to 30. [Post-TPOD Signing, New York, 20 October 1998, report by **Ryan R.**]

Thus, the only way Taim could be the age he looks is if he started channelling at an unusually late age. If he's legit, he'd have to be a wilder, and thus he must have started channelling young, at around Rand's age. Let's postulate that men slow at a rate similar to women. We know that Garenia ran away from the Tower 70 years ago, and presumably she slowed before then, or soon afterwards (in her early 20s, as is usual for women). Garenia looks like she is Nynaeve's age, around 26. That corresponds to about five years of physical aging in 70 years. So, if Taim started slowing at 30, then his actual age should be around 100 or so. Thus, the problem of Taim's age is even more extreme than it first appears.

Non-Dark Taim

Maybe Rand overestimated Taim's age; maybe he's only 30 or so, in which case he needn't have begun slowing noticeably yet.

Minion Taim

An interesting idea to consider is what happens to the aging patterns of channellers who start channelling after the age at which slowing begins. Flinn, for instance – he started channelling as an old codger, but will he now stop getting any older? It seems reasonable to suppose so. Non-Dark Taim would of necessity have to be a sparker (and thus would have had no control over when he started channelling), but if we postulate that Taim was Ishy or Demandred's protégé, it's possible that he is a "taught" channeller rather than a sparker. Thus he might not even have begun channelling until he was 35 or so, and if we're right in assuming that late starters will also slow from that point on, Taim could have been channelling for 15-plus years and still only look 35.

5. Taim's reaction to Rand's badges and awards.

Minion Taim

He's not pleased to be seen as subservient to Rand [LOC: 42, The Black Tower, 543], just like Demandred [LOC: Prologue, The First Message, 56-57].

Non-Dark Taim

It's entirely possible Taim is just plain arrogant. Nothing says the servants of the Shadow have a monopoly on excessive pride.

6. Lews Therin.

LTT often raves about Demandred, and killing him, every time Taim is around. LTT raves:

Sammael, oh, yes, but Demandred first. First of all I rid myself of him, then Sammael. [LOC: 51, The Taking, 635]

LTT and Rand know where Sammael is. But why does LTT insist on killing Demandred if he doesn't know where he is?

Minion Taim

It's clear that if this theory is the correct one, Taim has picked up a lot more than just OP training from Demandred (more on that below), which could have caused LTT to confuse the two men.

Non-Dark Taim

Or, it could be that Taim just happens to have similar character traits as Demandred, and LTT thinks Taim will betray him like Demandred did in the AOL.

Anyway, LTT wants to kill all male channellers [ACOS: 7, Pitfalls and Tripwires, 139], and furthermore, one shouldn't take anything LTT says too seriously. He's a total loon. He wants to die forever and end his suffering [LOC: 18, A Taste of Solitude, 299], but he doesn't want to die [LOC: 46, Beyond the Gate, 560]. He says "trust no one" and "the man who doesn't trust is dead" or words to that effect.

7. The epilogue to LOC

"Have I not done well, Great Lord?" [LOC: Ep, The Answer, 698]

Minion Taim

The DO's orders were to "let the Lord of Chaos rule," which seems to refer to "sowing chaos" in general, and to promoting divisiveness among the enemies of the Shadow. Demandred and Mesaana (and Semirhage) were working together on a plot in LOC to "let the Lord of Chaos rule." One of the main plot threads in LOC was the interactions of Rand with the SAS and TAS embassies. Rand ended up getting kidnapped by the TAS, and was rescued with the assistance of the Asha'man. The events of the battle to free Rand led to a great deal of mistrust and enmity among the SAS embassy, the TAS, the Aiel who follow Rand, the Shaido, and the Asha'man. The current state of affairs among Rand's allies (his Aiel, the Asha'man) and potential allies (the TAS and SAS) can only be good for the Shadow.

But where did Demandred's involvement in the plan come in? We know that Mesaana was central to setting up the situation, from her place in the WT, but the act that actually set this chain of events in motion was the attack on Demira Sedai in Caemlyn. The most likely culprit in that incident is none other than Taim (see section 1.4.07), presumably acting under Demandred's orders.

This idea is further strengthened by Sammael's speech to Graendal in [LOC: 6, Threads Woven of Shadow, 135]:

"You deliver a message to Demandred from me. Tell him I know what he is up to." Events to the south had Demandred's mark all over them. Demandred had always liked using proxies.

This quote was originally used to argue that Demandred was involved with the Seanchan invasion in Tarabon, which could alternately account for his part in the sowing of chaos. However, Demandred's thoughts in [WH: 13, Wonderful News, 313] indicate otherwise:

...he wished Semirhage or Mesaana were present. Their alliance was delicate – a simple agreement that they would not turn on one another until the others had been eliminated – yet it had held all this time.

Since we are now 99% positive that Semirhage is Anath and (up until recently) glued to the DotNM's side (see section 1.1.9), it is very unlikely that Demandred is with the Seanchan as well. Graendal's statement in that same scene that Demandred was supposed to be watching Rand makes his involvement with the Seanchan all but impossible.

Conversely, both Graendal's and Sammael's statements make perfect sense if one supposes they refer to Minion Taim.

Non-Dark Taim

It is not absolutely certain that Taim was the one behind the attack on Demira. And even if he was, Taim has always been interested in sowing discord between Rand and the AS (to keep Rand dependent on him), and any actions of his toward that end can easily be applied to either the Minion theory or the Non-Dark theory. It's possible (though unlikely) that the attack was merely fortuitous for Demandred and Mesaana's plan.

8. Taim kills the Gray Man.

Minion Taim

If he hadn't, Rand might have gotten information out of it. Alternatively, it could've been a set-up: Taim ordered the Gray Man, and killed him to "prove" his loyalty to Rand. Or, Demandred ordered the Gray Man, and had Taim kill him for the same reason. Or, somebody else sent it, and Taim killed it because it didn't suit his plans to have Rand dead at the time.

Non-Dark Taim

It's doubtful Rand could get much information from a Gray Man. The Gray Men have no souls – they're basically walking killing machines. They probably have some sort of self-destruct mechanism, too. **Jared Samet** remarks:

If I were designing a perfect assassin, I'd set him up so that he could never point the finger at me... Besides, the Gray Man could only tell Rand anything damaging to Taim if Demandred had sent him (possible I suppose, but why can't Demandred do it himself if that's what the DO wants?) A Gray Man with a story implicating Sammael or some other Forsaken (easy enough for a channeller to set up) could help Taim more than a dead one.

As for how conveniently Taim showed up, recall that strange and oddly convenient things happen around Rand all the time.

9. Taim's remark on "these so-called Aiel" [LOC: 11, Lessons and Teachers, 215]

Minion Taim

Only somebody from the AOL would have cause to call the modern Aiel "so-called." The only other person to use this (exact same) phrase is Moridin, né Ishamael [ACOS: 20, Patterns Within Patterns, 356]. Taim could have picked up the phrase as the Forsaken's protégé. It's not hard to imagine Taim trying to emulate his Forsaken teachers as much as possible, even unconsciously.

Non-Dark Taim

This is the hardest piece of evidence to explain away. People have suggested rationalizations, though. For example, if Taim knew the Old Tongue, he might be simply saying that he doubts the Aiel are truly "dedicated" to Rand. Another possible explanation is that, if Taim is about 35, then he was alive for the Aiel War, although possibly too young to go east to fight. He probably heard tales about Aiel – ten feet tall, breathing fire, etc. Here he sees some in Caemlyn peacefully patrolling the streets. Not what an average wetlander would expect of Savages From the Waste.

Counter-argument: As to the first suggestion, it hardly seems in character for Taim to be making puns in the Old Tongue. As for the second, even if the Aiel Taim meets aren't the monsters he's heard about, they are undeniably Aiel. Nobody else in Randland regards them as "so-called."

10. Smile.

In the prologue, it is said that Demandred never smiles [LOC: Prologue, The First Message, 15; 58]. Taim doesn't either – at the end of LOC, before "Kneel, or you will be knelt," Rand observes:

His expression was as close to a smile as he had ever seen it.

[LOC: 55, Dumai's Wells, 695]

Non-Dark Taim

Once again, it could just be that Taim and Demandred have similar personalities.

Minion Taim

Or that Taim imitates his teacher.

11. Min's viewing of an invisible man holding a knife to Rand's throat.

Non-Dark Taim/Minion Taim

Does it matter? Either way, Taim is not to be trusted.

12. Taim's behavior.

Minion Taim

Bill Garrett points out Taim's "challenge/submit" behavior. He'll argue with Rand about something, telling him it has to be done another way, then suddenly he'll agree and say, "As my Lord Dragon commands." This could be Taim trying to do things his way, but suddenly remembering Demandred's orders to do what Rand says (or at least to not go directly against him). And Taim sometimes disobeys Rand and frequently does things Rand doesn't expect.

Non-Dark Taim

How is this different from the way the Tairen lords behaved? Or the Andoran nobility? Or Davram Bashere? Hell, even the Aiel tend to do this. Everybody tries to convince Rand to do things their way, but when you get right down to it, he's going to do as he damn well pleases, and all you can say is, "As my Lord Dragon commands."

13. Another slip of the tongue.

When Rand shows Taim how to make a gateway, he calls it a "gateway." A little further in the same chapter, Taim says:

"You can Travel, but you don't know how to test for the talent."

How does Taim know that a gateway = Traveling? Rand didn't mention anything about "Traveling," only "gateways."

Non-Dark Taim

Maybe Taim heard the term described during his 15 years as a channeller, and added 2 and 2 to make 4.

Minion Taim

He learned it, and the proper name for it, from his Forsaken teachers.

14. Sammael and Graendal in conversation.

In [ACOS: 20, Patterns Within Patterns, 355], Sammael and Graendal are discussing their comrades. Sammael says:

“I didn’t arrange [Rand’s] kidnapping. ... Mesaana had a hand in it, though. Maybe Demandred and Semirhage as well, despite how it ended...”

Minion Taim

Note the “despite” – there is a strong implication here that Sem and Dem somehow had a hand in the conclusion of the Rand-kidnapping episode, i.e. in his rescue. Who was instrumental in the rescue? Perrin and the Two Riversians, the wolves, the Mayeners, the Aiel – and Taim and the Asha’man. If Sammael knew that Taim is working for Demandred, his quote could be interpreted as a comment on how Demandred arranged the kidnapping despite the fact that his lackey Taim showed up to rescue Rand.

Non-Dark Taim

A totally different spin can be put on the passage. As **Mark Loy** explains:

To paraphrase... ‘I didn’t arrange Rand’s kidnapping... Mesaana had a hand in arranging Rand’s kidnapping... Maybe Dem and Sem had a hand in arranging Rand’s kidnapping as well, despite how the kidnapping ended.’

This interpretation means that they might have had a hand in arranging the kidnapping (in the planning) despite the fact that it ended all messed up.

15. Yet another slip of the tongue.

Taim has taken to calling himself “the M’Hael,” which means “leader” in the Old Tongue, and giving OT designations to his lieutenants. Taim knows an awful lot about the Old Tongue for a modern-day Randlander.

Non-Dark Taim

Well, maybe he does know the Old Tongue. Maybe he was a scholar or something before he became a false Dragon. Of course, that is pure speculation.

Minion Taim

Or, once again, he could have picked this up from Ishy or Demandred, as his student.

16. The Black Tower.

Taim has pretty much built the Black Tower on his own. Rand has made little effort to be involved in it, and has left the recruiting, training, and testing of Asha’man to Taim. Taim, in turn, has done a fine job – in just a few months (between LOC and TPOD) he’s created an unconventional military force which can take on anybody in Randland, including Aes Sedai and Seanchan. Just a handful of Asha’man have proven to be the decisive factor in many battles, some of them against opponents with channelling capability.

So, we must ask ourselves, if Taim is so efficient at turning out combat channellers, why didn’t he do it when *he* was claiming to be the Dragon Reborn? He claims to have tried training other men to channel [LOC: 2, A New Arrival, 79], so the thought must have occurred to him. Granted, since he lacked Rand’s *ta’veeren*-power to attract recruits, he would have had a much smaller force than the 500 or so now at the BT. However, given that two or three percent of people can learn to channel [Guide: 2, The One Power and the True Source, 18], and that Taim’s army of followers was of a “normal” Randland size (on the order of a couple thousand), he should have been able to get at least 10-20 men who could have been useful. Even ten male channellers is nothing to sneeze at, and yet Taim the false Dragon had no channelling followers.

Minion Taim

If Taim was under the Forsaken’s thumb all this time, there could be a number of good reasons why he didn’t build his own Black Tower – the most obvious being that Ishy/Demandred wouldn’t let him.

Non-Dark Taim

There are other possible reasons Taim didn’t train any other channellers. Perhaps he didn’t have time. Perhaps he was worried that they’d turn against him. Perhaps when he saw his first experiments in training go mad in two years or so [LOC: 2, A New Arrival, 79], he gave the idea up.

Counter-argument: As for time, he supposedly spent 15 years or so as a channeller before declaring himself the Dragon. He didn’t seem to be in any big hurry. Taim isn’t the sort of guy to worry about most of his subordinate channellers betraying him – he’s shown himself to be a master at inspiring admiration and loyalty in his troops; he’s got a regular cult of personality among the Asha’man. As for the ones he didn’t feel he could trust, he’s not the sort of guy to be shy about killing them outright. As for the madness, he is known to be a totally ruthless fellow. He’d have no problem using his followers for the year or two they had of sanity and then killing them.

17. The renegade Asha’man.

A quick list of Gedwyn, Rochaid, Kisman, and Torval’s curriculum vitae in TPOD:

- They set up the Illianer rebels to attempt to assassinate Rand, supposedly at the instigation of Aes Sedai.
- Torval tried to make Rand suspicious of Egwene's army which was, at the time, marching towards Caemlyn and the BT.
- Possibly, Gedwyn tried to subvert or cause problems with High Lord Weiramon.
- Taim set them up as "deserters" who tried to kill Rand (see section 1.4.10).

Originally, none of this pointed one way or the other. Both Minion Taim and Non-Dark Taim would be interested in exacerbating the tensions between Rand and the Aes Sedai, for reasons already discussed. Similarly, either Non-Dark Taim or Minion Taim would benefit from having a force of channellers who worked independently of the BT, and whose loyalty he could count upon, and whose actions he wouldn't have to justify to Rand.

However, Kisman's POV in WH changed matters:

"Kill him," the M'Hael had ordered, before sending them to Cairhien, but he had been as displeased that they were found out as that they had failed. Far Madding was to be their last chance; he had made that as plain as polished brass. Dashiva had simply vanished. Kisman did not know whether he had run or the M'Hael had killed him, and he did not care.

"Kill him," Demandred had commanded later, but he had added that it would be better they died than let themselves be discovered again. By anyone, even the M'Hael, as if he did not know of Taim's order.

And later still, Moridin had said, "Kill him if you must, but above all, bring everything in his possession to me. That will redeem your previous transgressions." [WH: 22, Out of Thin Air, 441-442]

Besides positively confirming that Taim was behind the attack in Cairhien, this quote also established that the renegade Asha'man were definitely all Darkfriends, and working in some capacity for both Taim and Demandred. (It's unclear from the quote whether they were collectively also reporting to Moridin, or just Kisman was, or whether Moridin's visit was a once-off deal, or what.)

Minion Taim

Why would four powerful DF Asha'man listen to Taim unless he was also a DF? What are the odds that Non-Dark Taim's orders would be virtually identical to a Forsaken's? Plus, it's clear that Kisman expected Demandred to know of Taim's order; this only makes sense if Taim is also a Darkfriend – a Darkfriend working directly for Demandred, in fact. [Pam Korda]

Non-Dark Taim

As to the latter point, an alternative interpretation is that Kisman simply expects Demandred to be very well-informed about Black Tower politics and policies, as though there were a spy in the camps. [John Novak] For the former, Taim wanting Rand dead doesn't necessarily mean he's working for the Dark. Plenty of other people who aren't Darkfriends have tried to get rid of Rand, or plotted to. It could be that Kisman et al are only following Taim's orders because they happen to coincide with Demandred's.

Counter-argument: Possible, maybe, but unlikely. The Fearsome Foursome have been glued to Taim from the get-go.

18. The TPOD attack and cleansing the Taint.

After showing Taim the farm and testing Flinn in LOC, Rand and Taim have the following very interesting exchange, as Rand grouches about all the things he has to accomplish:

[Rand:] "And cleanse *saidin*, so men don't have to fear going mad, and the world doesn't have to fear men channelling. I'll..."

...
 "Cleanse *saidin*," Taim said softly. "I think that would take more power than you can imagine." His eyes lidded thoughtfully. "I have heard of things called *sa'angreal*. Do you have one you think you could actually—" [LOC: 3, A Woman's Eyes, 91]

The significance of this quote is obvious. It means that Taim knew about Rand's intention to cleanse *saidin* long before Rand's slip in TPOD – he knew, in fact, from almost the moment the prohibition about killing Rand was put into place!

So, what does this mean?

Non-Dark Taim

Well, one way of looking at it is that the passage is evidence that Taim is not Demandred's minion. Follow the bouncy ball...

The FS, including and especially Demandred, know that the DO has forbidden anyone from killing Rand, as of the Prologue of LOC. Taim finds out almost immediately afterwards that Rand is planning to cleanse the Taint, but nothing happens. (Well, a lot happens, but certainly the "don't kill" order is not changed.)

Then, in TPOD, Rand talks about cleansing *saidin* again – to Taim's lackey Torval, but much more importantly, to Dashiva, a.k.a. Osan'gar. With the result that Osan'gar tries to kill Rand at the end of the book.

True, Osan'gar merely joined in with an attempt on Rand's life already in motion, instigated by Taim, but what the above quote strongly suggests is that Taim's attack on Rand at the end of TPOD *could not* have been motivated by Rand's plan to cleanse the Taint. If it was, he would have tried to kill Rand two books earlier.

Osan'gar joining the attack, on the other hand, almost *had* to be motivated by that knowledge – and given what a wuss he was it's impossible to imagine he didn't have permission to do so from Moridin. He took advantage of Taim's conveniently timed assassination attempt to try and kill Rand.

The very strong implication here is that the FS in general didn't find out about Rand's plan to cleanse *saidin* until Osan'gar did, in TPOD. The obvious conclusion to draw, then, is that Taim could not be the Forsaken's minion, since Taim has apparently known for ages what the FS didn't discover until TPOD. The attack in Cairhien, then, was all on Taim's own initiative and had nothing to do with cleansing the taint.

This incidentally would explain perfectly why Taim was so shocked that Osan'gar joined in on the assassination attempt. If the attack was entirely motivated by Taim's own political self-interest, he would have had no idea what induced Dashiva to join in.

Minion Taim

A couple of things. First, Taim seems perfectly capable of being Moridin/Demandred's lackey and yet still playing his own game as well; **Will Frank** suggests, for instance, that if Taim swore allegiance to the Shadow so he could avoid going mad, he might not tell his boss about what Rand said in hopes that Rand might actually accomplish the Cleansing. Of course, later when Osan'gar also found out about Rand's plan, he had no choice but to go along with the decision to kill him.

Or, secondly, it's also possible that Taim simply didn't take Rand's boast seriously at that point.

1.5.7 Who is not a Darkfriend?

There are several characters who we know cannot be Darkfriends. We know because Jordan has shown us their thoughts when they are thinking about their motivations, their opinions towards the Shadow and the DO, or something similarly indicative. These people are: Rand, Mat, Perrin, Egwene, Nynaeve, Min, Elayne, Elaida [ACOS: Prologue, Lightnings, 16-17], Moiraine, Morgase, Thom [TSR: 17, Deceptions, 191-196], Egeanin, Bayle Domon [TGH: 9, Leavetakings, 134-138], Pedron Niall [ACOS: Prologue, Lightnings, 47], Dain [TSR: 1, Seeds of Shadow, 32] and Geofram Bornhald, Suan Sanche, Gawyn [TSR: Prologue, Lightnings, 50-54], Lan [just about all of "New Spring"], Queen Ethenielle [TPOD: Prologue, Deceptive Appearances, 17], Aviendha [TPOD: 1, To Keep the Bargain, 58-59], Toveine Gazal [TPOD: 26, The Extra Bit, 513], and Cadsuane [WH: 35, With the Choedan Kal, 655 (not to mention most of the rest of the chapter)].



There is a second group of characters who we know are not Black. This is the group of Aes Sedai who swore on the Oath Rod to not lie, and then said, "I am not Black Ajah/a Darkfriend." This group is: Seaine Herimon, Pevara, Zerah (one of the Salidar agents), Saerin, Yukiri, and Doesine (Tower Sitters) [TPOD: 26, The Extra Bit, 504-513]. Later, the self-appointed Black Ajah hunters co-opted other Salidar "ferrets" and gave them the same treatment as Zerah. These are: Meidani, Celestin, Annharid, and Bernaile Gelbarn [COT: Prologue, Glimmers of the Pattern, 39-48].

A third group who we know are not DFs is the group of AS Elaida sent to attack the Black Tower. Alviarin believed the plan was foolish, and made sure no BA went on the mission. This includes Toveine Gazal (Red) and seven other AS: Jenare and Lemai (also Red) [TPOD: 26, The Extra Bit, 512-514], Akoure (Gray), Desandre (Yellow), and Carniele (probably Yellow – Logain made her Heal Toveine), Ayako (White), and Gabrelle (Brown, and the other AS bonded to Logain) [WH: Prologue, Snow, 58-71].

Alviarin also notes in [TPOD: 25, An Unwelcome Return, 498] that of the Ajah Heads in the Tower, only Galina had been Black. These are: Serancha Colvine (Gray), Ferane Neheran (White), Suana Dragand (Yellow), Adelorna Bastine (Green), and Jesse Bilal (Brown). (It's not yet been said who if anyone replaced Galina as the Head of the Red Ajah.)

1.5.8 Who is a Darkfriend?

Black Ajah

Led by: Alviarin Freidhen (White)

Liandrin's Thirteen:

- Liandrin (Red)
- Amico Nagoyin[†] (Yellow)
- Chesmal Emry (Yellow)
- Asne Zeramene (Green)
- Jeaine Caide (Green)
- Ispan Shefar[†] (Blue)
- Berylla Naron (Blue)



- Falion Bhoda (White)
- Rianna Andomeran (White)
- Joiya Byir[†] (Gray)
- Temaile Kinderode (Gray)
- Eldrith Jhondar (Brown)
- Marillin Gemalphin (Brown)

In the Tower:

- Atuan Larisett (Yellow)
- Talene Minly (Green)

With the rebels:

- Delana Mosalaine (Gray)

Elsewhere:

- Elza Penfell (Green); in Tear with Rand.
- Fera (White); in Cairhien.
- Galina Casban (Red); with the Shaido.
- Katerine Alruddin (Red); in Dorlan outside of Tar Valon.

Miscellaneous:

- Jarna Malari[†] (Gray) (Alviarin's predecessor, killed by Ishy)
- Merean Redhill[†] (Blue) (killed by Moiraine in L:NS)

Darkfriend Asha'man

So far, the only ones we know for sure are DFs are the four "renegade" Asha'man: Peral Torval, Charl Gedwyn, Raefar Kisman, and Manel Rochaid, all of whom are dead as of WH. There are up to thirty Asha'man receiving "special training" from Taim, according to Logain [COT: 24, A Strengthening Storm, 557], but we can't yet know for sure if all or even any of these are definitely Darkfriends.

Darkfriends

Note: This list is not exhaustive; I've deliberately left out rank and file DFs who have only made token appearances before getting killed off or disappearing for good. Instead I'm limiting it to recurring characters or those who had a significant impact on the plot. (Or, to put it another way, characters the average reader might actually remember.)

- Padan Fain
- Paitr Conel[†]
- Howal Gode[†]
- Barathanes Damodred[†]
- Hadnan Kadere[†]
- Lord Ingtar[†]
- Isendre[†]
- Jaichim Carridin[†]
- Melindhra[†]
- Mili Skane, a.k.a. Lady Shaiine Avarhin
- Daved Hanlon, a.k.a. Doilin Mellar
- Old Cully
- High Lady Suroth

[†] *deceased*

1.6 Ghoulies and Ghosties and Long-Leggedy Beasties

This subsection contains information on and discussion of the nature of various Shadowspawn – creatures of the Dark One.

1.6.1 Where do Trollocs and Myrddraal come from?

[Pam Korda]

(Sources: A letter from RJ in which I foolishly asked whether Trollocs breed, or whether they're grown in a big vat at Shayol Ghul; and various "monster-of-the-day lessons" sprinkled throughout the books.)



- The original source was a mixing of human and animal genes in an attempt to produce the “perfect soldier,” as envisioned by somebody (Aginor) who’d never seen actual combat.
- There are female Trollocs, but we don’t want to know more than that.
- Where Myrddraal come from: occasionally, a Trolloc offspring is a genetic throwback in the direction of the original human stock, but not all the way back, and twisted. Thus, eyeless but with super vision, very strong (but not as strong as a Trolloc), and the shadow-traveling ability.
- Myrddraal take their “pleasures” with human females, who suffer horribly from the experience; it drives them mad, if they survive at all.

Of course, the diapers of baby Myrddraal don’t wave in the wind. :)

1.6.2 Fifty ways to kill a *gholam*

[Pam Korda, Leigh Butler]



The *gholam* seems to be the hardest-to-kill monster RJ has introduced thus far. What, exactly, is it? We have information on it from Birgitte, who has some memories of the War of Power [ACOS: 40, Promises to Keep, 606-607], from Elayne, Mat, etc.’s encounter with one in [ACOS: 39, Six Stories, 598-600], from the short *gholam* POV scene in [TPOD: 2, Unweaving, 84-85], and from Mat’s second duel with it in [WH: 16, An Unexpected Encounter, 353-355].

Gholam were created by Aginor [LOC: 23, To Understand a Message, 347] for the express purpose of killing channellers, although they’re pretty handy at killing non-channellers, as well. The OP can’t touch them; the effect of channelling at a *gholam* is exactly the same as channelling at a person wearing Mat’s foxy medallion (i.e. the flows break apart on contact). Furthermore, they are immune to conventional weapons, too: nobody is able to harm the one who Mat fights with swords, etc., and the *gholam* itself thinks:

...it had never encountered anything that could harm it. Until that man with the medallion.

[TPOD: 2, Unweaving, 84]

They can sense the ability to channel at a distance of about 50 paces, and they can detect use of the OP at greater distances (it felt the channelling at the Kin’s farm in TPOD). They look like normal human beings on the outside. Inside is another matter. They have no bones, and can squeeze under a door, and are very strong, and very quick. Only six were ever made; three have a masculine outward appearance, three feminine. They appear to be at least as intelligent as Fades (Mat chats with the one he fights in Ebou Dar), and they are living things, not some sort of machine. (Mat surmises (actually, Birgitte surmises) that the one they met was “kept alive” since the Breaking in a stasis box.)

They feed on blood; the Ebou Dar *gholam* refers to its victims as “those I harvest” [WH: 16, An Unexpected Encounter, 355]. There is some way to control a *gholam*, and force it to do one’s bidding. The Ebou Dar *gholam* thinks:

The one who commanded it wanted [Mat] dead ... for the time being, it was constrained. For its entire existence it had been compelled to obey one or another human, but its mind held the concept of not being constrained.

[TPOD: 2, Unweaving, 84-85]

There is some contention over the nature of the *gholam*’s exact physical makeup. Most people subscribe to the “liquid *gholam*” theory (à la the T-1000 in *Terminator 2: Judgment Day*). RJ’s choice of words in various descriptions of the *gholam* seems to suggest this (“Fluid as quicksilver”, “flowed aside like water”, etc.). It’s not specifically said, but there is the intimation that the knife wounds Mat gave the *gholam* in ACOS closed up instantly; they didn’t bleed, at least. The *gholam* do seem to be more limited than the T-1000, in that they apparently can’t assume any form, only liquid form and their humanoid form. (If not, why specify that three are male-shaped, and three are female-shaped?) Stemming from this theory is the assumption that a *gholam* would be able to reattach a severed body part or parts.

Not everyone buys this theory, though. The description we have only says that the *gholam* have no bones, not that they have no internal organs or support structure at all; as Ben Elgin points out:

Mice can collapse their skulls and ribcage... Cartilage explains the traversal just as well.

There is also no real reason to assume that the *gholam* can reattach a severed body part, other than that the T-1000 could.

Where have we seen *gholam*? We’ve seen two for certain, namely the one in Ebou Dar, and the one that killed poor Herid Fel in Cairhien at the end of LOC. There is one previous possible *gholam* encounter, which took place “off-screen.” This is the killing of Lord Barathanes in TGH. Barathanes was clearly killed at Ishy’s instigation because he helped the renegade DF, Padan Fain, get away with the Horn of Valere. Barathanes died in a very similar fashion to Fel, i.e. he was ripped limb-from-limb. Furthermore, this took place in the *same* building as Fel’s demise. Again, this may or may not be a *gholam*-induced death, but it is worth mentioning as a possibility.

How can you hurt/kill/dispose of a *gholam*?

The only thing we know for certain that can injure a *gholam* is Mat's foxy medallion. When Mat smacks the Ebou Dar *gholam* with it in [ACOS: 38, Six Stories, 598], the *gholam* is burned:

The medallion fell across the man's cheek. The man screamed. Smoke rose around the edges of the foxhead, and a sizzle like bacon frying. ... A raw red brand marked where the foxhead had fallen.

Later in WH, Mat burns the *gholam* several more times with the medallion. What we do not know is *why* the medallion hurt the *gholam*. There are two possibilities:

It's the magic, stupid

Both the medallion and the *gholam* have the unusual property that they somehow neutralize flows of the OP. (Note that the actual mechanism employed by each may be different.) It is possible that some kind of adverse reaction occurred when the medallion came into contact with the *gholam*'s body. While the medallion didn't get characteristically cold, it did seemingly get hot.

It is difficult to be more precise, because we don't know how either the medallion or the *gholam* actually work. Perhaps it is because the *gholam* are made with/are held together with/have some connection with the OP, and the medallion negates the OP. Or, perhaps it's a "like charges repel" sort of deal. Or, maybe the *gholam* is a kind of "living *ter'angreal*," and the effect is due to an adverse reaction between similar *ter'angreal*, as described in [TDR: 23, Sealed, 217]. If it is the case that the magic is the key, then a *gholam* could probably be killed by prolonged contact with some weapon/*ter'angreal* made to copy the medallion's effect.

An argument against the theory that the medallion's ability to negate flows is the key, is that then the *gholam* probably would have been hurt by contact with Mat himself, and not just the foxhead. [James Huckaby] Then again, maybe not. As stated above, we don't really know how the medallion works. It was pointed out that when Mat was wrestling the *gholam*, the foxhead fell out of Mat's "open" shirt:

Struggling for air, he [Mat] pushed himself up, foxhead dangling from his open shirt. [ACOS: 38, Six Stories, 597]

So, if the medallion works only when it is in contact with the wearer, then Mat may not have been in contact with it when he touched the *gholam*. [Jason Wilson] Of course, this objection does not apply to the idea that the reaction was due to the "similar *ter'angreal* interference" effect.

You've got the silver

The medallion is made out of silver [TSR: 26, The Dedicated, 306-307], and this is the key to its anti-*gholam* capabilities. The argument for silver is more of an argument against the medallion's magical properties, combined with some cross-pollination from werewolf and vampire legends. It is not likely that the foxhead works because it is destroying flows, because the foxhead doesn't get cold after damaging the *gholam*, it just has "the cool of silver" [ACOS: 38, Six Stories, 598]. Loony idea: when the *gholam*-stuff and silver come into contact, there is a chemical reaction. This reaction is exothermic – the heat is produced by the reaction, not by the medallion.

An argument against this theory is that it seems kind of silly. Why would the Forsaken make such specific, deadly anti-AS assassins if they have such a common, easily exploitable Achilles' heel? Why would the Forsaken be so wary of them that they limited their number to six? [Tim Yoon]

"Oh, no! A *gholam*'s chasing us!" "How much money do you have on you?"

[Aaron Bergman]

The former question can be rationalized by saying that the Forsaken counted on the fact that people wouldn't think to use silver on something the OP can't stop. This idea does *not* explain the objection that if it was so easily defeated if you knew the key, the Forsaken wouldn't have been so wary of it that they only made six. Furthermore, the *gholam* thinks to itself [TPOD: 2, Unweaving, 84] that "it had never encountered anything that could harm it" until it met the medallion. In all of its existence it never encountered a common metal like silver? Unlikely.

Got any more bright ideas?

Many. Here are some of the more popular ideas for how to get rid of a *gholam*:

Indirect effects of the OP

The *gholam*'s material breaks up OP flows just like Mat's medallion, making it immune to the OP. Like the wearer of the foxhead, it is likely that this immunity doesn't extend to indirect effects. One could try dropping something heavy on it, or zapping it with lightning, or something like that. Doubtless, it is immune to some of these (considering its oozy nature, I doubt dropping a safe on it would have much permanent effect), but something might work. Balefire probably won't work; it is very likely a direct effect.

The T-1000 effect

Melt it. If one channelled enough heat into it, or dropped it into a volcano, it might lose all molecular cohesion. Furthermore, we know it is vulnerable to heat: the heat generated when the medallion touches it cooks its "flesh" (I use the term loosely).

One of These Days, I'm Going to Cut You Into Little Pieces

While stabbing a *gholam* doesn't hurt it, it may be that if you dismember it, and separate its pieces far enough (perhaps by the judicious use of gateways), it won't be able to reassemble itself (if it can, in fact, do this). Then again, maybe it would. An alternate version of this idea which might be workable is to get the *gholam* to chase you through a gateway and then close it while the *gholam*'s going through, slicing it in half. [Kay-Arne Hansen] (Or maybe that would just result in two half-size *gholam*?) Although, using a gateway to cut it (like Graendal's poor servant in [LOC: 6, Threads Woven of Shadow, 137]) probably wouldn't work – the edges of the gateway are made of Power, and so the gate would dissolve upon touching the *gholam*.

All Blowed Up

It's been suggested that Mat could pulverize the *gholam* with his presumed imminent discovery of gunpowder [C. Matt Detzel] (which is really just a more effective version of cutting it up).

You'll Never Eat Lunch in This Town Again

If the thing feeds on blood, apparently human, if you put it far enough away from anything, shouldn't it starve?

[Alisa Marshall]

More fun with gateways: variations on a theme

Opinion is rather split on whether a *gholam* would be able to go through a Power-made gate or not, but that hasn't stopped people from playing with the idea.

- Just Get Rid Of It: Open a gateway to somewhere really far away where there aren't any people, knock the *gholam* through (throw a big rock at it, or something), and close the gateway. Voilà. It's not dead, but it's definitely not going to bother you for a good long while.
- Out of this World: Open a gateway to the Skimming place, shove the *gholam* through, and close the gateway. According to Egwene, the chances of ever opening into that bit of Skimming Space are very low, so chances are the *gholam* will be permanently Lost in Space.
- Far from the Madding Crowd [Laura Parkinson]: Open a gateway to the *stedding*-ness of Far Madding and send the *gholam* through. The idea is that a *stedding* would have the same effect on a *gholam* that Mat's medallion does. If you can use a Well in Far Madding, it's not too unreasonable to think that you can open a gateway to it from outside. On the other hand, **Pam** counters:
...since you can use a Well in FM, that means that the OP works there, it's just that a channeller can't connect to the Source from there. So, I think that a *gholam* would do just fine in Far Madding. (I don't think that it relies on constant connection to the OP for its existence. Otherwise, one way to kill it would be to "shield" it from the OP like one does with channellers.)
- Elemental, My Dear Watson: Open a gateway to the middle of a volcano, or the bottom of the ocean. (Problem: how to keep the water/lava from coming through and killing the channeller too. Solution: open the gateway *over* the water or lava and let the *gholam* fall.)
- Get Away From Her, You Bitch! (the *Aliens* solution): Open a gateway to the vacuum of space and let the *gholam* get sucked through. (This one's quite silly – not only do you have the problem of how to prevent the channeller from getting sucked through as well, but as far as we know Third Age Randlanders don't know jack about the concept of space. But it's a fun idea.)

1.6.3 What's up with the ghosts?

[Leigh Butler, Jonathan Berlinghoff]

Where have we seen ghosts?

- [COT: Prologue, Glimmers of the Pattern, 87]:
...a palace serving woman came running into the room with her skirts gathered almost to her knees. "Lord Dobraine's been murdered!" the serving woman squealed. "We will all be killed in our beds! My own eyes have seen the dead walking, old Maringil himself, and my mam says spirits will kill you if there has been a murder done!"
Maringil was one of the Cairhien nobles Colavaere had murdered in her bid for the Sun Throne in LOC. Possibly this is just hysteria, but all things considered, probably not.
- [COT: 10, A Blazing Beacon, 269-270]: Elayne's maid Elsie spots Lady Nelein, Lord Aedmun's deceased grandmother, in a hallway. Elsie shrieks, Elayne embraces *saidar* and whirls around, but the spirit is gone by the time Elayne can look around the corner to see if anything is there.
- [COT: 26, In So Habor, 584]: While Perrin and co. are finding weevils in the barley sacks someone again shrieks outside, and Kireyin and Seonid see a man walk through a wall.



[Seonid, to Perrin:] “The dead are walking in So Habor. Lord Cowlin fled the town for fear of his wife’s spirit. It seems there was doubt as to how she died. Hardly a man or woman in the town has not seen someone dead, and a good many have seen more than one.”

- [COT: 29, Something Flickers, 633-634]: Mat is walking with Tuon and Selucia and sees a crowd of people on the road to the town:

Staring straight ahead, they moved so purposefully they seemed not to see anyone in front of them. Tuon and Selucia see nothing. The people disappear after a few moments as well, and Mat thinks that he doesn’t remember any of them breathing mist in the cold.

Have we seen them anywhere before COT?

It seems so. We may have seen one as far back as TEOTW, when Ishy/Ba’alzamon shows Rand the vision of Kari al’Thor [TEOTW: 51, Against the Shadow, 639]. The scene’s a little long, but worth quoting in its entirety:

Egwene and Nynaeve blurred, became wafting mist, dissipated. Kari al’Thor still stood there, her eyes big with fear.

“She, at least,” Ba’alzamon said, “is mine to do with as I will.”

Rand shook his head. “I deny you.” He had to force the words out. “She is dead, and safe from you in the Light.”

His mother’s lips trembled. Tears trickled down her cheeks; each one burned him like acid. “The Lord of the Grave is stronger than he once was, my son,” she said. “His reach is longer. The Father of Lies has a honeyed tongue for unwary souls. My son. My only, darling son. I would spare you if I could, but he is my master, now, his whim, the law of my existence. I can but obey him, and grovel for his favor. Only you can free me. Please, my son. Please help me. Help me. Help me! PLEASE!”

The wail ripped out of her as barefaced Fades, pale and eyeless, closed round. Her clothes ripped away in their bloodless hands, hands that wielded pincers and clamps and things that stung and burned and whipped against her naked flesh. Her scream would not end.

Rand’s scream echoed hers. The void boiled in his mind. His sword was in his hand. Not the heron-mark blade, but a blade of light, a blade of the Light. Even as he raised it, a fiery white bolt shot from the point, as if the blade itself had reached out. It touched the nearest Fade, and blinding canescence filled the chamber, shining through the Halfmen like a candle through paper, burning through them, blinding his eyes to the scene.

From the midst of the brilliance, he heard a whisper. “Thank you, my son. The Light. The blessed Light.”

It has long been argued over whether this Kari was real or an Illusion created by Ishy, but **Alan Ellingson** points out that in that scene:

Kari never tells/asks Rand to join Ba’alzamon. She only asks him to help her. Ba’alzamon might have limited what she couldn’t say but he [evidently] couldn’t force her to say anything. Remember in Rand’s dreams in TDR the people he trusted tried to kill him? Why wasn’t Kari like that? Why couldn’t Ba’alzamon make her say something more... appealing to Rand? Second, she refers to him as ‘Lord of the Grave’ and more importantly ‘Father of *Lies*’. Yes, have your chief witness call you a ‘Father of Lies’ in front of the guy you are trying to convince to join you. Third, her last words are ‘The Light. The blessed Light.’ Why would Ba’alzamon make her say that if she were an illusion he created?

But wait – there’s more! We originally thought that the image of Gedwyn and Torval coming up the stairs of the inn in Far Madding, minutes after Rand had found them dead [WH: 33, Blue Carp Street, 615-616] was an illusion created by Fain, but that really doesn’t make any sense when you think about it. Gedwyn and Torval aren’t shown brandishing swords, or doing anything that might be considered a diversionary tactic, which presumably would be Fain’s purpose in creating them; they’re just walking up the stairs with their cloaks over their arms, arguing. After Rand slashes at them with his sword, they disappear. In light of events in COT, it’s probably safe to assume that Fain had nothing to do with the apparition, and that Gedwyn and Torval were ghosts. [**Steven Cooper**]

So it seems that the ghost phenomenon was at least obliquely foreshadowed prior to COT.

So what’s this all about, then?

Various explanations for the ghost phenomenon have been suggested: that the ghosts were caused by “bubbles of evil,” or as a side effect of the Cleansing, maybe. Neither of these work, though. Even leaving aside the Gedwyn and Torval apparition, the incident with the servant in Cairhien and Elayne’s maid in Andor both happen before the Cleansing even starts. As for the “bubble of evil” idea, the apparitions aren’t consistent with how the bubbles behave. The bubbles of evil are out to kill people and cause harm. The spirits haven’t harmed anyone (except maybe by scaring them to death) and they just disappear at random without having done anything of note.

General consensus, then, is that the ghosts, along with the increase in vermin and decay seen in COT, indicate that the Lord of the Grave is finally free enough to start living up to his name.

But does it make sense to have ghosts in WOT, where reincarnation is the norm? Ghosts generally only show up where there is an afterlife for them to be ghosts *in*; a rebirth set-up doesn't seem to allow for that. Even the Heroes of the Horn aren't ghosts in the sense that the apparitions in COT are; they just get to hang out in T'A'R in between incarnations. Mordeth was a ghost, of sorts, but he was a special case.

Several people have suggested that perhaps the ghosts are all former Darkfriends, and that's why they seem to be exempt from the normal Randland cycle of rebirth – because the DO has control of their souls, alive or dead. It's possible; Gedwyn and Torval were DFs, and while we have no evidence either Maringil or Lady Nelein was a DF, Elayne's maid Elsie described Nelein as a horrible old harridan, and Maringil certainly wasn't the nicest guy ever. Even Kari's ghost talks of being led astray by the DO's "honeyed tongue."

Another idea is that the ghosts are people who have died by violence. [Paul Lints] That would also fit Gedwyn, Torval, and Maringil, and Seonid tells Perrin that Lord Cowlin's wife died under suspicious circumstances. However, that does not fit Kari, who died of a fever. (We don't know how Nelein died.) Possibly, it's a combination of the two.

Anything else interesting?

Jason Denzel points out that practically every time dead people are seen, it's at a crossroads, and at twilight (for slightly broad values of both terms). Elayne's maid sees Lady Nelein at the junction of two crossing corridors, at dawn. So Habor, where ghosts are rife, is itself a crossroad over the river, and the incident with the man walking through the wall happens at dusk. The sun is rising when Mat takes Tuon shopping and sees the apparitions, though here only a road is mentioned, no crossing. It's not said where exactly the Cairhien servant saw Maringil in the prologue, but it's reasonable to assume that it was probably also in a corridor, and it was in the morning. It's not ironclad, but it's definitely a pattern.

1.6.4 What's up with Darkhounds? Who are the big pack in COT hunting?

[Leigh Butler, Rajiv Mote]



What do we know about Darkhounds?

From [TDR: 43, Shadowbrothers, 423-426] and [TDR: 44, Hunted, 432-433]:

- They are extremely difficult to kill, and Lan claims it is impossible to outrun them once they have your scent.
- They leave footprints in stone, but not on soil. Their tracks are accompanied by a sulphurous stench.
- They don't like rain, and "a good thunderstorm can stop them completely."
- Hopper calls them "Shadowbrothers."

From [TFOH: 6, Gateways, 113-115]:

- ...black dogs, darker than night and big as ponies...
- Swords cannot kill them; the ones Rand "killed" just melted and reformed.
- ...they would not stop until you faced and defeated them or put running water between you.
- Their saliva is highly poisonous, and a single drop on the skin is enough to kill.
- Crossroads were supposed to be particularly dangerous places to meet them, and the time just after sunset or just before sunrise.
- They usually travel in packs of ten or twelve.

From [COT: 6, The Scent of a Dream, 194] and [COT: 8, Whirlpools of Color, 225]:

- Just before sunrise was one of the worst times to meet the Wild Hunt... At least there was no crossroads nearby, no graveyard, but the only hearthstones to touch lay back in Brytan...
- ...putting running water between you and Darkhounds would stop them supposedly. But then, so would facing them, supposedly, and he had seen the results of that.
- [Elyas, to Perrin:] "They were wolves, once. The souls of wolves, anyway, caught and twisted by the Shadow. That was the core used to make Darkhounds, Shadowbrothers. I think that's why the wolves have to be at the Last Battle. Or maybe Darkhounds were made because wolves will be there, to fight them. ... A hundred wolves could die trying to kill one Shadowbrother. Worse, if they fail, the Darkhound can eat the souls of those that aren't quite dead yet, and in a year or so, there'd be a new pack of Shadowbrothers that didn't remember ever being wolves. I hope they don't remember, anyway."
- Perrin wants to know if they can also eat the soul of a Wolfbrother, a man who can talk to wolves, but Elyas doesn't know.

Elyas's information about how the Shadow goes about collecting wolf souls to make Darkhounds seems to imply that only a Darkhound can do it, but several people have pointed out a different connection between wolves and Darkhounds: Slayer.

His favorite hobby is killing wolves in T'A'R, after all – that's where he got his nickname. And then there is the Dark Prophecy that appears in [TGH: 7, Blood Calls Blood, 89]:

Luc came to the Mountains of Dhoom.
Isam waited in the high passes.
The hunt is now begun. The Shadow's hounds now course, and kill.
One did live, and one did die, but both are.
The Time of Change has come.

The first and last two lines of the stanza are concerned solely with Slayer, but why else would that middle line about Darkhounds be in there unless there was a connection of some kind? It's been suggested, therefore, that Slayer may also participate in wolf-soul collecting. (Looney theory: Slayer is the Shadow's equivalent of a Wolfbrother.)

Then again, there are a couple of problems with this theory. For one thing, Slayer is not immune to poison [WH: 22, Out of Thin Air, 448], which would seem to be a problem when dealing with Darkhounds. For another, if Slayer can make Darkhounds, why doesn't he ever have any with him? Wouldn't they come in handy? There's also the question of whether you could collect a wolf's soul in T'A'R, which is where Slayer does his wolf-killin'. Hopper tells Perrin that when wolves die in the Dreamworld, they die for good [TSR: 28, To the Tower of Ghenjei, 323], which seems to preclude the possibility of being "harvested" to be a Darkhound.

What about the big pack of Darkhounds in COT?

The pack that circled Perrin's camp is huge – about fifty Hounds – and Masuri (who studied Darkhounds) tells Perrin that she's never heard of such a large pack. Masuri has a couple of other observations as well:

"There is always a feel of urgency about Darkhounds' trails, but it varies according to a number of factors... This one has an intense admixture of... I suppose you would call it impatience. That really isn't strong enough, by far – as well call a stabwound a pinprick – but it will do. I would say their hunt has been going on for some time, and their prey is eluding them somehow."

[COT: 7, Blacksmith's Puzzle, 209]

So, who could they be hunting?

Well, obviously it's not Perrin, since they passed him right by. It's also probably not the Whitecloaks, because they seem to have passed that camp by, too; the nasty and suddenly-cut-off stench Valda smells [COT: Prologue, Glimmers of the Pattern, 27] could well have been a gateway opening from the Blight to send the Darkhounds through. This makes sense because Perrin observes that the Darkhounds were traveling from north to south, and the Whitecloaks' camp was north of Perrin's at that point.

So, presumably they're looking for someone south of Perrin. Suggested candidates are Mat, Jain Farstrider (a.k.a. Noal), or Fain (who could be in the south by now for all we know, and has proven himself quite good at eluding those who seek him). **Tom York** suggests Semirhage is calling on them to locate Tuon for her, but this is contradicted by Masuri's assertion that the Darkhounds have been hunting their prey for a long time (though "some time" could mean anything from days to months, really). Another possibility is Rand, who is now in Tear; since he had spent quite some time bouncing all over the place using gateways, that probably would be quite frustrating to a pack hunting him.

1.7 Shadar Logoth, Mashadar, and Fain

This subsection contains information on and discussion of the "other evil" in Randland, that connected to Shadar Logoth.

1.7.1 More of the Fain

Padan Fain was a Lugard peddler, who moonlighted as a Friend of the Dark. When it came time for the Dragon to be reborn, Fain was taken to Shayol Ghul and made into the Dark One's Hound, to search out the Dragon Reborn. He followed the boys to Shadar Logoth and had a run-in with Mordeth. Mordeth tried to devour Fain's soul, but couldn't, because of the hold the DO had on him. So Fain became part Mordeth, part renegade minion of the DO. This is basically what the books tell us.



What is he up to now? Basically, playing the part of picador to Rand's bull, popping up all over the place, poking, prodding, inflaming, and generally causing trouble.

He went to the Fortress of the Light and the White Tower to sow seeds of dissension, and make sure Pedron Niall and Elaida would never join Rand. He instigated a failed assassination of Rand by his ex-WCs in Caemlyn. He might also have been

responsible for the attack on the Brown AS in Caemlyn which ended up driving a rift between Rand and the Salidar AS, and sending him into the hands of Elaida's AS in Cairhien, but this could just as easily have been part of some Forsaken's plot, or a plot by the Tower AS and the Shaido to alienate the Salidar AS from Rand (see section 1.4.07).

In ACOS, Fain appeared in the company of Toram Riatin (a Cairhienin rebel), calling himself "Jeraal Mordeth," and gave Rand his second unHealable wound. He may or may not have been responsible for the evil people-eating fog that appeared in the rebel camp as well (though it was more likely another "bubble of evil").

Finally, in WH, Fain kills off Kisman, Torval, and Gedwyn in Far Madding, to keep them from getting to Rand before he does. We originally thought that the bizarre appearance of the recently dead Torval and Gedwyn walking up the stairs at the inn [WH: 33, Blue Carp Street, 615] was further evidence of Fain's powers; however, it's been suggested that this was actually an early occurrence of the ghost phenomenon seen in COT (see section 1.6.3).

As far as we know, Fain still has his pet Fade.

Is Fain the Dark One's avatar?

Roy Navarre and **Tony Z.** came up with a loony theory that Fain is actually the avatar of the DO. **Roy** says:

First, if you check the glossary, you will see that the DO is described as the source of all evil. Hence Mashadar must flow from the DO or the glossary is wrong. (Note that that last option *has* been known to happen.) Next, myself and Tony Z presented detailed evidence suggesting that Fain is the avatar of the DO. With each broken seal, Fain gets stronger. Thus, the DO has been in our midst all this time but we just didn't know it. At first only a trace of him in Fain, but growing stronger and stronger until now his presence in Fain seems unmistakable.

Eric Ebinger counters:

Fain no longer exists. Padan Fain was summoned to Shayol Ghul, was broken and reformed into a bloodhound for the DO, as part of which he was imprinted by the DO. This happened twice at Shayol Ghul and once in a dream. Padan Fain/DO bloodhound went to Shadar Logoth and fell prey to Mordeth. Normally, Mordeth would just destroy the existing "soul/personality", but Padan Fain's having been "remade" by the DO seems to have changed things sufficiently so that there was a slow gradual merging of all of the different personalities (Fain/Mordeth/DO's imprint). The most accurate term for the combination is the name that he took: Ordeith. Over time, the Mordeth portion has gained more and more control over the gestalt. The DO's imprint has given Ordeith the unreasoning hatred of Rand, Perrin, and Mat. There doesn't seem to be much of anything of Padan Fain left. As the Mordeth fragment has gained more complete control of the gestalt, Ordeith has increased in power. The seeming relationship between the breaking of the Seals and Ordeith's power is due only to the fact that as time passes Ordeith gets stronger and as time passes the Seals break. The same relationship is evident with Rand, Perrin, Mat, Elayne, Egwene, Aviendha and Nynaeve.

Note that Fain is now calling himself "Mordeth," which suggests that the Mordeth part is dominating, which makes it very unlikely that Fain is the DO's avatar.

Furthermore, as **John Novak** states:

If Fain is now an embodiment of the Dark One, why in hell was Slayer hunting him down as a renegade in TSR? Does the Dark One *like* being hunted by his own servants?

Finally, it's pretty apparent that if anybody in these books is the Dark One's avatar, it's Shaidar Haran (see section 1.4.05).

Will the destruction of Shadar Logoth affect Fain's powers?

Some people have suggested that the Mordeth aspect of Fain (which, as we have noted, now seems to be the most dominant part of him) will be weakened or even killed as a result of Rand blowing up Shadar Logoth.

This doesn't seem likely, though. For one thing, the wound Fain gave Rand with the SL dagger is still there, unchanged [WH: 35, With the Choedan Kal, 655; COT: 24, A Strengthening Storm, 546]. **Ben Goodman** points out:

Mordeth more or less brought Shadar Logoth into being. His binding with Fain made him independent from it although he could draw power from things connected to it like the dagger. The dagger itself can be seen as a part of Shadar Logoth that survived. It was the evil rather than the location that gave Fain and the dagger their power. I don't think that there were invisible cords linking Fain and the dagger to Shadar Logoth so that when its evil is consumed by the Taint, their evil is consumed too.

It's possible that Rand's wound from the dagger cannot be Healed until the dagger itself (and possibly Fain along with it) is destroyed. [**Maccabeus Epimanes**] Since the wound from the dagger is still the same, it seems safe to assume both the dagger and Mordeth/Fain are (relatively) unaffected by SL's destruction.

1.7.2 Mordeth, Mashadar and Machin Shin

Mordeth

Mordeth was the councillor whose evil brought Aridhol to its doom. As far as we know, he was an actual person at the time of the Trolloc Wars. He was the power behind the throne of Balwen, and led Aridhol to the policy of:



“...the victory of the Light is all. ...while their deeds abandoned the Light.” [TEOTW: 19, Shadow’s Waiting, 244]

When the city was consumed by its own evil, only Mordeth remained, bound to Shadar Logoth. One supposes that at some point he died, leaving his spirit to haunt the ruins. Mordeth’s way out was to convince someone:

“...to accompany him to the walls, to the boundary of Mashadar’s power, [where he was] able to consume the soul of that person.” [ibid.]

That person was Fain, and it didn’t quite work out that way, due to the DO’s influence on Fain. Anyway, Mordeth no longer haunts Shadar Logoth, he is inside Fain, merged with him.

Mashadar

Like Mordeth, Mashadar is connected with Shadar Logoth. However, Mordeth and Mashadar are *not* the same. Mordeth is/was a sentient being, an individual. Mashadar is some sort of physical manifestation of the evil nature of the city:

“No enemy had come to Aridhol but Aridhol. Suspicion and hate had given birth to something that fed on that which created it, something locked in the bedrock on which the city stood. Mashadar waits still, hungering.” [TEOTW: 19, Shadow’s Waiting, 244]

In particular, Mashadar is a slightly glowing fog.

“Mashadar. Unseeing, unthinking, moving through the city as aimlessly as a worm burrows through the earth. If it touches you, you will die.” [TEOTW: 20, Dust on the Wind, 249]

It is not sentient. It just moves around and kills whatever it touches, in a rather painful fashion, if Liah’s reaction to being touched by it in [ACOS: 41, A Crown of Swords, 660] is any indication. Mashadar, or something similar to it, may have existed prior to the Trolloc Wars. In [TEOTW: 50, Meetings at the Eye, 628], Aginor refers to the Shadar Mandarb, or the taint on it, as:

“An old thing, an old friend, an old enemy.”

RJ said that Mashadar appeared after everybody in Aridhol had killed one another. [ACOS book signing: Vancouver, 24 August 1996; report by [Lara Beaton](#)]

Machin Shin

The Black Wind of the Ways. It is a part of the “Darkening of the Ways”:

“About a thousand years ago, during what you humans call the War of the Hundred Years, the Ways began to change. ...they grew dank and dim... some who came out had gone mad, raving about *Machin Shin*, the Black Wind.” [TEOTW: 43, Decisions and Apparitions, 545]

People who run into the Black Wind end up mad, or a mindless husk like the Ogier in [TGH: 36, Among the Elders, 435]. After TEOTW, *Machin Shin* gained a new feature: it somehow seeks out Rand. Whenever Rand tries to use the Ways, *Machin Shin* is found at the Waygate he is using. Note that this *only* happens to Rand. When Liandrin, etc. use the ways in TGH, and when Perrin does in TSR, they do not find the Black Wind waiting for them at the Waygate. This new effect is probably somehow due to its encounter with Fain in TEOTW. It seems to have picked up Fain’s drive to seek out Rand. Note that it is probably *not* under Fain’s control; Fain wanted Rand to follow him to Falme, but *Machin Shin* prevented him from doing so.

Where did the Black Wind come from? Nobody really knows. Moiraine makes some speculation in [TEOTW: 45, What Follows in Shadow, 576]:

“Something left from the Time of Madness, perhaps. ... Or even from the War of the Shadow, the War of Power. Something hiding in the Ways so long it can no longer get out. No one, not even among the Ogier, knows how far the Ways run, or how deep. It could even be something of the Ways themselves. As Loial said, the Ways are living things, and all living things have parasites. Perhaps even a creature of the corruption itself, something born of the decay. Something that hates life and light.”

Some people believe that Mashadar and *Machin Shin* are somehow connected, that Mashadar somehow got into the Ways through the Shadar Logoth Waygate and then became the Black Wind. This is very unlikely, for the following reasons:

- Mashadar dates from the Trolloc Wars, *Machin Shin* from the Hundred Years’ War. That is about a thousand years’ difference. Thus, the time scale does not agree.
- Mashadar is a slow-moving glowing fog that kills everything it touches. *Machin Shin* is a *black*, howling wind that eats your soul, but doesn’t kill your body. So, there is no similarity of appearance, or effect.
- If Mashadar could get *into* the Ways from Shadar Logoth, logic says it could get *out* of the Ways at some other point, and spread itself across Randland. This clearly hasn’t happened.

1.7.3 Is Mordeth a *gholam*?

[Leigh Butler, Steven Hillage]



Mat seems to think so. In WH, Noal and Mat watch the Ebou Dar *gholam* escape:

The creature stuck its hands into a hole left by a missing brick... Hands followed arms, and then the *gholam*'s head went into the hole. ... The *gholam*'s chest slithered through, its legs, and it was gone. Through an opening maybe the size of Mat's two hands.

[Noal comments that he's never seen anything like that before.]

"I have," Mat said hollowly. "In Shadar Logoth." Sometimes bits of his own memory he thought lost floated up out of nowhere, and that one had just surfaced, watching the *gholam*.

[WH: 16, An Unexpected Encounter, 355]

Here's the bit Mat is thinking of:

As Mordeth dove through the air, he stretched out and thinned, like a tendril of smoke. As thin as a finger he struck a crack in the wall tiles and vanished into it.

[TEOTW: 19, Shadow's Waiting, 240]

However, despite Mat's certainty and the similarity of the two descriptions, it doesn't seem possible that Mordeth is a *gholam*. There are lots of reasons why it's unlikely. If Mordeth is a *gholam*, how did he eat? It's not like people waltzed into SL on a regular basis, ripe for "harvesting." *Gholam* are physical beings – why didn't Mordeth have a shadow? And for that matter, how could a corporeal thing like a *gholam* have merged with Fain? Possession by a spirit is one thing, but how could a *gholam*-body merge with Fain's body? And why would it want to? Why hasn't the Ebou Dar *gholam* tried Mordeth's swelling-to-huge-proportions illusion that he did in TEOTW (to try and trap the boys in the treasure room)? [Nevin Aiken] If Mordeth was a *gholam*, why couldn't he leave SL? Moiraine states, also in TEOTW, that no denizen of SL, including Mordeth, can cross her ward lines, but can't *gholam* melt OP flows with ease?

Additionally, the descriptions above are similar but not identical. Mordeth's evokes a smoky or misty image, while the *gholam* in WH (and in all other descriptions we've had), gives a far more liquid-like impression.

All these problems make the idea unlikely, but the reason why it's pretty much impossible is this: we know *gholam* were created by Aginor as a tool of the Dark One. If we posit that Mordeth is a *gholam*, then how do we reconcile this with the statement that SL evil did not come from the Dark One, but from the suspicion and hate of the people of Aridhol, who had been poisoned by Mordeth?

Mordeth, and Aridhol itself, are just as opposed to the Dark One as the forces of Light are, just in a bad way. Thus supposing that Mordeth is a *gholam* – a weapon of the Dark One – makes no sense.

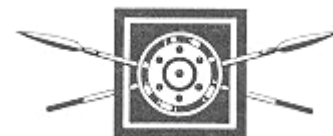
1.7.4 What was up with Liah in Shadar Logoth?

How did Liah manage to stay alive in Shadar Logoth from the time she got lost in LOC to the end of ACOS? RJ says:

She became absorbed into the city. She was left there and she is, after all, an Aiel, one of the people better at surviving under harsh circumstances than anyone else in the world. And also her corruption by Shadar Logoth gave her *some* protection.

[America Online chat session, 27 June 1996]

What happened to Liah was probably akin to what happened to Mat when he carried the Shadar Mandarb in TEOTW. Her behavior (attacking all comers) supports this belief. I guess that being bonded to Shadar Logoth must give one some protection from Mashadar, although obviously not enough, since it got her in the end.



2 THINGS NOT NECESSARILY OF THE DARK

This section contains information on and discussion of people, places, things, and questions which are not necessarily connected with the Shadow.

2.1 The Ta'veren

This subsection contains information on and discussion of questions relating to Rand, Mat, and Perrin.

2.1.1 What's up with Mat's ring?

In [ACOS: 14, White Plumes, 280] Mat acquires a signet ring, by pure "luck." The ring is gold with a dark oval carved stone, and is in the "long style"; the stone is as long as the joint of Mat's finger [ACOS: 14, White Plumes, 279]. Here is a description of the carving:



Inside a border of large crescents, a running fox seemed to have startled two birds into flight.

[ACOS: 16, A Touch on the Cheek, 300]

We get a more specific description in WH:

...a running fox and two ravens in flight, all surrounded by crescent moons...

[WH: 17, Pink Ribbons, 371]

The fact that Mat was "forced" into buying the ring by his luck made us suspect that the ring would play some important role in his future. Most people thought that this role would have something to do with the Seanchan (and the DotNM) even before we knew for sure that the birds were ravens and the crescents were moons. (Ravens are an Imperial sigil to the Seanchan [WH: 18, An Offer, 387].) **Jason Kraftcheck** observes:

Ravens for Seanchan, moons for the Daughter of the Nine Moons, and Tylin later refers to Mat as a fox [WH: 31, What the Aelfinn Said, 582].

When Tuon and Mat meet for the first time in WH, she inspects him closely and seems to pay special attention to his ring [WH: 17, Pink Ribbons, 371]. It is immediately after examining the signet that Tuon offers to buy Mat from Tylin, and later she demands to know why he isn't wearing it [COT: 3, A Fan of Colors, 140]. Coincidence?

Of course, what exactly the ring signifies to Tuon is yet to be seen. The ring could be related to whatever fate the *damane* Lidya foretold for Tuon (see section 4.3). Perhaps the ring was part of the fortune (though it could as easily have been Mat's *ashanderei*, which Tuon shows even more interest in than the ring, or Mat himself, or all three).

2.1.2 Is there a connection between Mat's luck and the stolen dice *ter'angreal*?

[Erica Sadun]



Could Mat's phenomenal luck come from the dice *ter'angreal* described in [TDR: 25, Questions, 237-238]? Not bloody likely. Here's why:

- The dice *ter'angreal* was stolen by the Black sisters.
- It is made up of *six*, not five, dice stuck together.
- You must be able to channel to use it.
- Mat says he has *always* been lucky. This is referred to even before he got the dagger, and went to Tar Valon to be Healed of it. The dagger may have influenced his natural luck, or forced him into his *ta'veren*-hood.
- Mat can win at dice with you using *your* dice.

Note, though, that the dice *ter'angreal* could probably be used to counteract the probability-twisting effect of *ta'veren*, e.g. Mat's luck.

2.1.3 Is Mat still linked to the Horn?

In [TDR: 12, The Amyrlin Seat, 118], Verin and SS are discussing Mat and the Horn of Valere. Verin says:

"So long as Mat lives, the Horn of Valere is no more than a horn to anyone else. If he dies, of course, another can sound and forge a new link between man and Horn."



Later, SS tells Mat:

"For anyone else, it is only a horn – so long as you live."

[TDR: 20, Visitations, 182]

From [TSR: 15, Into the Doorway, 177]:

[Snaky answers to “What fate?”:] “To die, and live again, and live once more a part of what was!”

There are two possible incidents in which Mat could be said to have “died and lived again.” The first is in Rhuidean [TSR: 26, The Dedicated, 306-307], when the Foxes hang him from the Tree of Life and Rand resuscitates him. The second time is at the end of TFOH, when Mat gets blasted by Rahvin’s lightning in Rand’s attack on Caemlyn. He is “brought back to life” when Rand BF’s Rahvin [TFOH: 55, The Threads Burn, 676]. So, given that Mat did die, is he still linked to the Horn?

If the Caemlyn incident is the only time Mat “died and lived again,” then he is probably still linked to the Horn, due to the way BF works: Mat gets toasted, the link to the Horn breaks. Rand BF’s Rahvin, making Mat not-having-died, and thereby unmaking the destruction of the link to the Horn. If the Rhuidean incident counts as Mat having died and lived again, then the question of his being linked to the Horn is still up in the air – does restoring him to life restore the link?

It turns out, though, that the latter question is a moot point, because RJ has clarified the matter. **Bill Garrett’s** report of RJ’s appearance at Balticon 30 (April 1996) mentions:

(Jordan noted that Mat’s death by lightning and subsequent undoing of his death when Rand balefired Rahvin, fulfills a prophecy about living, dying, and then living again.)

Tim Kington reports that, when asked how long Mat had hung from the Tree of Life in Rhuidean, RJ replied, “Long enough to be *almost* dead” (emphasis added). [Post-COT signing, Dayton, OH, 16 January 2003]

So, it is the Caemlyn incident and not the Rhuidean one that fulfills the prophecy. Given that and the reasoning above, it seems that yes, Mat is still linked to the Horn.

2.1.4 When was Rand’s Power Acquisition Fever Syndrome?

[Erica Sadun]

1. *OP Use*: Cleansing Bela [TEOTW: 11, The Road to Taren Ferry, 125].
Reaction: Baerlon encounter with the Children of the Light [TEOTW: 15, Strangers and Friends, 186-190].
Time: Seven days.
2. *OP Use*: Hitting Trolloc with the boom of Domon’s boat [TEOTW: 20, Dust on the Wind, 258-259].
Reaction: Mast/trapeze stunt on Bayle Domon’s boat [TEOTW: 24, Flight Down the Arinelle, 301-303].
Time: Four days.
3. *OP Use*: Calling lightning to escape the inn in Four Kings [TEOTW: 32, Four Kings in Shadow, 407].
Reaction: Fever/chills at the inn in Market Sheran [TEOTW: 33, The Dark Waits, 423-426].
Time: Two days.
4. *OP Use*: At the Eye of the World.
Reaction: Forgetfulness, others?
Time: Nearly instantaneous.



2.1.5 What’s up with Mat and his memories?

[Don Harlow, Joe Shaw, Pam Korda, Leigh Butler]

When Mat went into the Red Door of Rhuidean, he asked for the holes in his memory to be filled [TSR: 24, Rhuidean, 281]. He ended up with more than he bargained for. The holes were filled with “historical” memories, memories from people who lived between the time of the Trolloc Wars and the time of Hawkwing. In every memory, he is a military man, and most of his memories are of fighting and battles:

Slices of other men’s lives packed his head now, thousands of them, sometimes only a few hours, sometimes years altogether though in patches, memories of courts and combats stretching for well over a thousand years, from long before the Trolloc Wars to the final battle of Artur Hawkwing’s rise. All his now, or they might as well be.

[LOC: 5, A Different Dance, 113]

Where did they come from?

There were essentially two theories offered for this:

- The memories are the memories of Mat’s own past lives, i.e. Mat is one of the heroes that the Pattern spins out every so often, and he is remembering his previous incarnations. This seems to be supported by the way the Snakes address Mat when he asks his questions. They talk to him as if to some sort of archetypal figure:

“Go to Rhuidean, son of battles! Go to Rhuidean, trickster! Go, gambler! Go!”



- Mat's memories are not actually those of his own past lives, but when he asked the Foxes to fill the holes in his mind, they just put in random memories of various battle commanders through the ages.

Johannes Rydh reports that RJ answered this question in a post-WH Dromen & Demonen chat:

RJ: Mat's memories are *not* from his ancestors. He said [he wanted] to have the holes in his head filled but he did not specify exactly what he wanted them filled with and so he received scraps and bits and pieces of memories stolen from other men.

He explained the idea more fully in the interview included in the online version of COT's Prologue:

Q: Are all of Mat's memories from his past lives?

RJ: No, Mat's "old" memories are not from his past lives at all. The "sickness" he got from the Shadar Logoth dagger resulted in holes in his memory. He found whole stretches of his life that seemed to be missing. When he passed through the "doorframe" *ter'angreal* in Rhuidean, one of the things he said – not knowing that the rules here were different than in the other *ter'angreal* he had used – was that he wanted the holes in his memory filled up, meaning that he wanted to recover his own memories. In this place, however, it was not a matter of asking questions and receiving answers, but of striking bargains for *what you want*. What he received for that particular demand was memories gathered by the people on that side of the *ter'angreal*, memories from many men, all long dead, from many cultures. And since not everyone passing by has the nerve to journey through a *ter'angreal* to some other world, the memories he received were those of adventurers and soldiers and men of daring.

This corresponds with Cyndane's thought in WH about being held by the Aelfinn *and* the Eelfinn, which implied that there must be some sort of connection between the Snaky place and the Foxy place. According to Moiraine in TSR, the AS who studied the Snake door in Tear said that the Snakes (the Aelfinn) feed on experiences and emotions – memories, in other words [TSR: 15, Into the Doorway, 179].

The Fox doorway may have been stuck in Rhuidean since the Breaking, but the Snake doorway was easily accessible and in regular use in Mayene and elsewhere during most of that time until the Tairens squirreled it away three hundred years ago [TSR: 6, Doorways, 95-96]. It's not unreasonable to suppose (and in fact it may even have been stated somewhere) that the Firsts of Mayene would let anyone who wanted to risk it go through the doorway. Thus, the Foxes probably got the memories they gave Mat from the Snakes, who got them from the kind of guys willing to step through a mysterious doorway to another dimension just for the hell of it.

So that makes sense, at least as far as it goes. However, it does not explain why Mat had historical flashbacks of a military nature *before* he went to Rhuidean. (Consider the scene in TDR where he is Healed in the Tower [TDR: 19, Awakening, 167-168].) The COT interview also seems to contradict a statement RJ made to **John Hamby** at a post-TPOD signing:

Gender/soul rebirth, he said, is best illustrated by Mat and Birgitte.

So what's the deal?

The easiest (and most charitable) way to explain this discrepancy is to assume that it is not a discrepancy at all – that in fact, both theories are correct. In other words, Mat got *most* of his memories from the Foxes, who got them from the Snakes, who got them from other men, but Mat's pre-Rhuidean historical memories came from memories of earlier lives.

This is supported by the fact that Mat's pre-Rhuidean memories seem to concern Manetheren exclusively, while his later memories are from all over the place. Also recall Moiraine's talk of the "Old Blood" coming through in the descendants of Manetheren in TEOTW. Mat's Old Blood/racial memory tendencies could explain why the Snakes addressed him so ("Go to Rhuidean, son of battles!"). The Snakes' sending him to Rhuidean – where they may very well have known exactly what their Foxy buddies would smush into Mat's head – may simply have been a recognition of that archetype, maybe their way of fulfilling it or bringing it to its full potential.

Who was Mat in Manetheren, then? Was he Aemon?

There has been a lot of speculation that Mat is the reincarnation of an ancient king of Manetheren. However, there is nothing that really supports this theory. Though he does form the Band of the Red Hand near the end of TFOH, which was supposedly a band of heroes who went down defending Aemon himself, this suggests more that he was a guardian or advisor to the king than a king himself.

This was emphasized earlier on, in TSR. When Jasin Natael is singing a song about a battle at a river and how the enemy of Manetheren had mercy on the defeated Manetherenites, because they were so brave, etc., Mat remembers himself, as the king's advisor, being killed by that foe's treachery; and then he remembers himself, somebody else, seeing that foe, older and grayer, being killed in another battle somewhere else [TSR: 37, Imre Stand, 424-425].

So it's very doubtful that Mat was Aemon, or any other king of Manetheren.

Miscellaneous questions

How did the Foxes get memories of people dying?

Mat comments in [COT: 3, A Fan of Colors, 141] that he hates remembering dying, and some people have wondered how the Foxes/Snakes got a memory from someone that clearly had to date from *after* that person had gone through the doorway *ter'angreal*.

As **Jamie Bowden** explains, however, time cannot be linear for the Finn, because otherwise they wouldn't be able to answer questions about your future. So clearly they get to rummage through your whole life, past and future, in one visit.

Does Mat have memories of being two people at once?

There is no mention of Mat having memories of being two different people at the same time. A common misconception is that the sequence of memories described above in [TSR: 37, Imre Stand, 424-425] indicates that Mat has memories of being two different people in the same battle. This is not the case! What is actually going on is that these are two different guys, at different times. In the earlier memory, Mat is an advisor to a king, and is killed through the treachery of the enemy. In the later memory, Mat recalls seeing that same enemy, then *older and grayer*, die in another battle someplace else. There is enough time between the two incidents for the enemy to age considerably, and thus obviously could not have taken place in the same battle.

2.1.6 Is LTT for real, or is Rand insane? Where did LTT go in ACOS?

[Carolyn Fusinato, Pam Korda, Leigh Butler]



So, Rand is hearing voices. Is Lews Therin a real entity, or is he a product of Rand's taint-maddened imagination?

What is the cause of the "LTT problem"?

Option 1: Two minds are better than one

One idea is that two minds inhabit Rand's body: Rand and LTT. This seems to be supported by Min's vision of [ACOS: 33, A Bath, 526] in which Rand and another man touched and merged into one another. Rand certainly takes it that way (which should alert the cynical reader to the distinct possibility that this is probably the *wrong* interpretation...). This theory implies that Rand is relatively sane still and his problems can be attributed to stress, paranoia, fear and another mind trying to take him over and that Lews is completely insane.

However, it doesn't make much sense for LTT to be talking to Rand. If we look at the other people who have lived past lives, we don't see this happening. Mat's memories, whether from other people or of his past life/lives (his pre-Rhuidean memories) are integrated into his own personality. Same with Birgitte – she doesn't talk to "Maerion," she says she was once *called* Maerion. Furthermore, Birgitte specifically mentions the fact that in all her incarnations prior to the current one, she never knew she was Birgitte reborn – or anyone reborn – until after she'd died. Clearly, then, none of her previous incarnations were in the habit of talking to later ones. [Karl-Johan Norén]

Rebirth happens often to important souls. That is the way the Pattern works. If everybody who was reborn had the voice of their last incarnation nattering at them, reborn people would be widely known, but not as heroes – as deranged lunatics. As Rand's case shows, it's hard to be sane when there's a dead person in your head claiming he owns your body! So, LTT's presence cannot be a simple consequence of Rand being a reborn person.

If LTT *is* a separate entity, it could imply that Rand is just some poor sod who happened to be born into the same body that LTT was reborn into, and that not Rand, but LTT is the actual Dragon Reborn. OTOH, it was *Rand* who pulled the Sword that Ain't, not LTT; he hadn't even shown up then.

We have two cases in which we definitely know that two entities coexist in one body: the Slayer combination of Luc and Isam, and the Fain-Mordeth combo. Fain and Mordeth are melding into a single entity over time. We don't know what the hell is up with Luc and Isam. Neither of these two cases, though, have anything to do with rebirth.

The "LTT is real" theory also neglects to explain the fact that there is no manifestation of LTT prior to Rand channelling, and that the "LTT problem" has gotten worse over time. Furthermore, LTT wasn't crazy when he died. Ishamael had healed him with the TP, in order to torment him. However, the LTT in Rand's head is definitely loony.

Another argument against this, proposed by **Joseph Rosenfeld**, is that, if the Dragon has been reborn over and over through all time (as claimed by Ish and others), there must have been *other* "dragons" before LTT. Why, then, is only Lews Therin Telamon Kinslayer, the Age of Legends version of the Dragon, inhabiting Rand's head? Why not a whole committee?

Counter to this, also suggested by **Mr. Rosenfeld**: maybe LTT is the easiest to access because he was the most recent. If Rand tried really hard, he could maybe contact the 1st Age Dragon, and the previous 7th Age one, etc. And maybe he has (see section 2.1.7), though RJ's recent comments seem to suggest against this (see below).

Option 2: It's the Taint, stupid!

Another alternative is that the LTT personality is the manifestation of Rand's encroaching insanity.

...everybody has been telling him he is Lews Therin reborn, so he starts perceiving Lews Therin is in his head. Not only that, but he finds the voice responds to him. Now he's trying to carry on conversations with this voice. It all seems logical to us, but then it seems logical (sort of) to Rand, as well. I found myself thinking he should tell somebody he

was hearing a voice in his head. When I thought how absurd this sounded, it struck me that I had been fooled into thinking Rand was still completely sane. [James Beavens]

Then, there is also:

He raised the point that Rand's creeping insanity may manifest in much more subtle ways than the people of Randland expect... [from **Emmet O'Brien's** account of Jordan's talk at Trinity College in Dublin in 1993]

This theory is supported by Cadsuane's statement that:

"...some men who can channel begin to hear voices. ... It is part of the madness. Voices conversing with them, telling them what to do." [ACOS: 18, As the Plow Breaks the Earth, 331]

On the other hand, this doesn't take into account that "LTT" knows things that Rand could never have known on his own – stuff about the AOL, the Forsaken, channelling, etc. In WH, we discover that Rand is getting more than memories and mannerisms from LTT:

Suddenly [Rand] knew he did not have to describe Kisman and the others. He could draw them so well that anyone would recognize the faces. Except, he had never been able to draw in his life. Lews Therin could, though. [WH: 22, Out of Thin Air, 447]

Option 1½: A little bit of both

Both the "rebirth" explanation and the "taint" explanation have points in their favor. Both theories have problems, too. The rebirth theory explains why Rand knows things, via LTT, which he couldn't possibly have known on his own – things about channelling techniques, about the Forsaken, and about life in the AOL. However, the voice cannot be solely due to rebirth, because other reborn people don't have the problem, and Rand has presumably been LTT Reborn all his life, and he's only started hearing voices recently. The Taint theory, on the other hand, explains how Rand's LTT problem correlates with Rand's channelling, and has gotten worse as Rand has channelled more and more. Not to mention, hearing voices is generally considered a sign of mental illness, and Rand channels so much that he should be affected by the Taint in some way.

It seems likely that the LTT voice is due partially to the Taint, and partially to the fact that Rand is LTT reborn. The big question is, *how* are the two factors combining to produce the LTT effect? One possibility is that the memories and knowledge expressed by LTT are some sort of past-life leakage, real effects of being somebody Reborn, but the actual LTT personality is not a separate entity, but something Rand's subconscious constructed, in an effort to push away his own encroaching insanity.

Jean Dufresne expands on this theory, postulating that Rand uses the LTT personality as an outlet for his suppressed emotions:

LTT's voice constantly expresses sadness, laughter, fear, anger – precisely the emotions that Rand tries to avoid making contact with and needs to relearn.

Consider the following passage from [WH: 25, Bonds, 481]:

In his room at The Counsel's Head, Rand sat on the bed with his legs folded and his back against the wall, playing the silver-mounted flute Thom Merrill had given him so long ago. ... The tune was called 'Lament for the Long Night', and he had never heard it before in his life. Lews Therin had, though. It was like the skill at drawing. Rand thought that should frighten him, or make him angry, but he simply sat and played, while Lews Therin wept.

Another possibility is that the Taint has a special effect on some reborn people. Perhaps the Taint breaks down barriers in one's mind between the present life and past lives/a past life, and causes the past to intrude upon the present's mind, until the past personality actually takes over.

RJ's recent comments seem to support the "half-and-half" theory. From [New York Barnes and Noble signing, 7 January 2003]:

Q: The question is, with Rand and LTT, do they have 1 soul or 2 souls in the body?

A: They have 1 soul with 2 personalities. The reincarnation of souls does not mean reincarnation of personalities. The personality develops with each reincarnation of the soul. This is the cosmology that I [cobbled] together.

Though this statement can be interpreted in a couple of different ways, it does appear to put paid to the "LTT is a real, separate soul in Rand's head" theory, at least.

Option 3: From the loony bin

It has been suggested that LTT and Rand are actually talking to each other across time. This is fueled by the fact that LTT sometimes seems to regard Rand as being a voice in his head and not the other way around.

However, this is pretty clearly wrong. First, let's not forget that LTT is insane, and any observations he makes are automatically highly suspect. Second, if the real-life LTT were talking to Rand across time it would have to be before the Kinslaying incident, since LTT dies very soon afterward, but the LTT in Rand's head moans and groans about killing Ilyena and the rest of his family constantly. Third, and most importantly, the LTT voice is aware of what's going on around Rand (like being stuffed in a box, for example), while Rand has no awareness of anything happening separately to LTT. It's pretty obvious that Rand is the "real" one. [**Binh Vo**]

Option 4: From the super-loony bin

(This is way out in left field, IMO, but some people do believe it, so I'll mention it.) There *is* a voice in Rand's head, but it is *not* LTT, or Rand being crazy. Rather, it is the result of some skullduggery on the part of the Shadow to infiltrate Rand's brain. Variations on this theme have been Mesaana (disproved by her actual appearance in LOC), Ishamael, and maybe others.

Where did LTT go in ACOS?

As soon as Cadsuane mentions hearing voices, in [ACOS: 18, *As the Plow Breaks the Earth*, 331], "LTT" stops talking to Rand. One thing to note is that Cadsuane channelled while making that statement. The obvious thing she did was fetching the teapot to her, but it is possible that she used the channelling of the teapot to disguise something else she did. Furthermore, the voice reappeared in TPOD. So, we're left with the questions of why did LTT go away? Was it something Cadsuane did? Did he go away of his own volition (was he in hiding)? Did Rand subconsciously suppress him? Why did he come back? Also, what do his disappearance and reappearance signify?

It is interesting to note that this scene marks one of the few times since LTT appeared that Rand truly loses his temper. If **Jean's** theory is correct, and the LTT personality is an outlet for Rand's emotions, Rand's outburst could have been the cause of LTT's disappearance, rather than anything Cadsuane did. Once he started expressing his own feelings, rather than feeding them into LTT, the LTT personality retreated. However, after that episode Rand went back to suppressing everything, and LTT eventually reappeared.

Perhaps once Cadsuane teaches Rand "laughter and tears" again, the LTT personality, having lost its purpose, will disappear entirely.

2.1.7 The Third Man

[Leigh Butler, Shawn Hurley]



From [TPOD: 21, *Answering the Summons*, 408]:

Since his reappearance inside Rand's head, Lews Therin seldom went silent unless forced. The man seemed madder than ever most of the time, and usually angrier as well. Stronger sometimes, too. That voice invaded Rand's dreams, and when he saw himself in a dream, it was not always himself at all that he saw. It was not always Lews Therin, either, the face he had come to recognize as Lews Therin's. Sometimes it was blurred, yet vaguely familiar, and Lews Therin seemed startled by it, too. That was an indication how far the man's madness went. Or maybe his own.

Then, in [WH: Prologue, *Snow*, 80]:

I thought I could build, Lews Therin murmured in his head. *I was wrong. We are not builders, not you, or I, or the other one. We are destroyers. Destroyers.*

And in [WH: 22, *Out of Thin Air*, 436-437]:

You destroyed them already, Lews Therin whispered in his head. *Now you have someone else to destroy, and not beforetime. How many will we three kill before the end, I wonder.*

So what's this all about? Who is this "other one"? What significance does he have? There are two basic theories about the identity of LTT's "other one."

1. He's another Dragon

Rand is the Third Age incarnation of the Dragon. LTT is the Age of Legends version. So why couldn't this third guy be a Dragon from yet another age, either the one before LTT or the one after Rand (the Fourth Age Dragon)? As **Oren Eini** points out, there is circumstantial support for this as early as LOC, when LTT mutters:

Where are all the dead? ... Why will they not be silent?

[LOC: 16, *Tellings of the Wheel*, 273]

Rand takes it as a joke, but perhaps LTT meant it.

One idea is that the voice in Rand's head (LTT) is experiencing a voice in his own head (the Dragon before LTT). This is supported by the fact that LTT seems to know who he is, which implies communication of some kind, while so far Rand has not had any direct contact with him (that we know of).

One problem with this is that it resurrects the question of why are only these particular two Dragons in Rand's head, and not all of them? Once again, though, the counter to the latter is the idea that proximity along the timeline is an influencing factor in who Rand (and LTT) can "hear." Maybe more Dragons will appear as time goes on...

Of course, the biggest problem with this theory is that it seems to require that the "LTT is real" theory is correct, which has been mostly disproven thanks to RJ's statement that Rand has one soul with two personalities. However, that statement is still ambiguous enough that the idea cannot be discarded entirely.

But assuming that the “third Dragon” idea may not be correct, what other options do we have?

2. He is Amalgamation Man

Several people have argued that Rand and LTT (either the person or the persona) may be slowly merging into one entity over time, and the “leakage” of memories, mannerisms, and skills from LTT is evidence of this process. The idea is that the third man will be the end result of this merging, comprising traits of both Rand and LTT, but not truly either man.

Rand’s musings in COT seem to support this theory:

The Creator had made the world and then left humankind to make of it what they would, a heaven or the Pit of Doom by their choosing. The Creator had made many worlds, watched each flower and die, and gone on to make endless worlds beyond. A gardener did not weep for each blossom that fell.

For an instant, he thought those must have been Lews Therin’s reflections. He had never gone on that way about the Creator or anything else that he recalled. But he could feel Lews Therin nodding in approval, a man listening to someone else. Still, it was not the kind of thing he would have considered before Lews Therin. How much space remained between them? [COT: 24, A Strengthening Storm, 558]

This theory has additional support from Min’s viewing in ACOS about Rand and another man merging into one. It also has an advantage over the “third Dragon” idea because it works whether you believe LTT is real or a Taint-induced delusion of Rand’s (i.e. whether the merge of the two is physical or psychological).

One difficulty with applying Min’s viewing to this theory, though, is that after she talks about the merging, she goes on to say that either Rand or the other man he’s merging with dies. Wouldn’t this seem to imply that one “wins” and the other doesn’t, rather than the two becoming halves of a separate whole? There doesn’t seem to be any room for a third person in that viewing. Of course, the wording is so vague it’s impossible to state that with any certainty.

More significantly, one of the items that support the first theory contradict this one: the fact that LTT seems to know the third man, and more specifically, is conscious of him as a separate entity from both Rand and himself. Rand himself observes that quality of separateness in his dreams (and notes LTT is startled by it). That passage from TPOD makes a point, in fact, of distinguishing the face Rand sees from either his own or LTT’s, which would seem to argue against any kind of merging. Concurrent with this objection is a timing problem, since obviously this proposed merging of Rand and LTT into a third person hasn’t taken place yet, and LTT’s comments imply that the third is present here and now (“How many will we three kill...”).

A more meta-aesthetic objection to the amalgamation theory is that it doesn’t seem to sit right. Rand, after all, is the central character in the WOT universe; it’s not kosher to essentially kill off your hero/messiah figure halfway through the series and replace him with some amorphous guy in his head, of whom we knew absolutely zilch about until the *eighth book*, fer chrissakes.

Other, loonier theories

It’s been suggested that the third person is actually someone else entirely, and has nothing to do with the Rand/LTT/Dragon shenanigans. The most popular candidate is Alanna, based on her being in his head already.

This doesn’t wash, however, because LTT mentions the “other one” once in the WH Prologue, while Rand was still only bonded to Alanna, and then again in Chapter 22, which is long after Rand was bonded by Elayne, Aviendha, and Min. So if LTT’s including people Rand is bonded to, wouldn’t that quote have been “How many will we *six* kill before the end”? [Simon Cullen] There’s also the question of why LTT would regard Alanna as a “destroyer” on a level comparable to Rand and himself, when clearly she’s nothing of the kind.

The other nominees are Moridin/Ishy, Taim, Mat, Perrin, Logain, Fain/Mordeth, and God knows who else. All of these are pretty clearly contradicted by Rand’s dream in TPOD, since Rand is dreaming about himself. That strongly indicates that whoever or whatever the third person is, it is something going on with Rand internally. [Steve Cook]

One last and even wackier theory is that Rand will eventually make like a bad *Star Trek* episode and split into three separate people – Rand, LTT, and our mysterious third. Though this one strikes me as patently absurd, it’s worth mentioning just for the nice mythological parallel (and Women solution) **James Huckaby** drew from it:

Can you say “Three in one person, blessed trinity”? Rand is Brahma, Shiva, and Vishnu. Lews Therin is Brahma, the creator. He created the Randland of the Third Age by sealing away the Dark One poorly and giving him the opportunity to taint the One Power. The Rand persona is Vishnu the preserver. He is working to keep everything that is good about his world alive. Our third personality is Shiva the destroyer. It must be the inherent Dragon persona that makes every Dragon so feared. I think Min goes with Rand, Elayne with LTT, Aviendha with Shiva. Aviendha’s hard-core and Shiva is hard-core. They would both take the laser up to eleven.

The mythology angle could also fit in with the “third Dragon” theory, although not as well as with the amalgamation idea.

Is the third man also the face in the color swirls?

No. As far as we know, the colors are simply *Ta’veren* Telepathy in Technicolor™ [Allen Bryan], and have nothing to do with Rand’s personality problems.

2.1.8 What's the deal with Mat and bells?

[Leigh Butler]

[WH: 15, In Need of a Bellfounder, 333]:

"I will set you the puzzle, since you are so clever, no?" [Aludra] said... "You tell me what use I might have for a bellfounder, and I will tell you all of my secrets."

So what does Aludra want Mat to find a bellfounder for?

To make cannon, though he doesn't know that yet. **Gabriel Wright** explains:

Early cannon used a very short barrel, kind of like a bell (although not flared). Basically it was a large chunk of bronze with a bore to put your cannon ball and a small hole at the rear to set the powder charge off. The bellmaker is the person who can cast such an item.

Later, while on his shopping trip with Tuon and Selucia, Mat spots Aludra talking to a salt merchant, and wonders what on earth she would need with salt [COT: 29, Something Flickers, 637]. Saltpeter (potassium nitrate, also called rock salt) is the primary ingredient of gunpowder, along with charcoal and sulphur. This may constitute something of a mis-step on RJ's part, though, because saltpeter is not the same thing as true salt (sodium chloride); they do not form under similar geological conditions, nor are they usually mined together. [**Basil Halhed**]



2.2 The Rest of the Characters

This subsection contains information on and discussion of questions relating to characters who are not Rand, Mat, or Perrin.

2.2.1 Can Thom channel?

[Arthur Bernard Byrne, Pam Korda, Leigh Butler]

Here are the reasons why some people think Thom can channel: (1) The mysterious blue flash in Whitebridge/random burns after the Fade fight in TEOTW. (2) His comment that he "could have done something" for Owyn. (3) In [TFOH: 9, A Signal, 145] Nynaeve says "she could not channel any more than Thom." This is taken to be "ironic foreshadowing." (4) The White Ajah hypothesis that channelling has a genetic link, and that Thom has at least one relative who can channel (Owyn).

Objections: (1) The blue flash is something that occurs when Fadeblade meets OP-forged blade. This would imply that Thom's daggers were OP-made, which seems kind of strange (see section 2.3.04), but doesn't indicate anything about his ability to channel. As for the fires, it seems likely that there was some sort of riot after the fight, which is why people didn't want to talk about it. (2) The "something" comment is just wishful thinking. (3) If Thom was a channeller, he would have to have the "spark inborn," since until recently, nobody was teaching men to channel. Thus, he'd have started channelling at about 20, à la Rand. Even if he had a block, like Nynaeve, he would have channelled quite a bit in the 30 or so years since then, more than enough for him to be showing signs of madness and the rotting disease.

As for (4), it's true that we have seen evidence that channelling is an inherited trait. Elayne is related to both Morgase (who can channel even if only a tiny bit) and Moiraine, through Taringail (Thom is not Elayne's father; see section 2.5.4). Adeleas and Vandene are sisters. In TPOD, we meet three Windfinders who are all related; Caire and Tebreille are sisters, and Talaan is Caire's daughter [TPOD: 5, The Breaking Storm, 120]. However, this makes Thom's chances of being a channeller only slightly better, since we can come up with ten times as many examples of non-channellers related to channellers. Galad, Luc, Tigraine, and Janduin are all related to Rand, and none of them can/could channel. Aviendha has a sister who cannot channel, while Mat has a sister (Bode) who can. Elayne's brother Gawyn cannot channel, Egwene's parents cannot channel, and so forth.

In any case, nothing that we have seen of Thom's thoughts or actions gives any indication of him being able to channel.

From a signing in Seattle, **Edward "potato" Liu** tells us:

Now, regarding Thom, RJ said a man will not go mad or get sick if he never channelled. Thus, he agreed that a male channeller who could be taught to channel (as opposed to having the inborn ability) and has never channelled would not die from the taint. BUT, when I asked him if he ever intended to make people think that Thom could channel, he said no. I brought up the hereditary point (i.e. Owyn) but he said just because your parents have a particular gene doesn't mean you'll receive that particular gene. Also he made a point that Owyn was his nephew so therefore not necessarily very similar gene-wise. When I pressed him again on it, he said (I'm quoting) "There is no way in hell Thom can channel." All he offered for explanations is that Thom is a "mysterious man."

Enough said.





2.2.2 What was up with Gawyn during the Tower coup?

It's been suggested that he was involuntarily bonded to a Black or to a Forsaken. His eyes were glazed and he was not necessarily in control of himself [TSR: 47, The Truth of a Viewing, 539-541]. Alviarin says with some confidence that:

"Gawyn will be brought under control."

[TFOH: Prologue, The First Sparks Fall, 17]

OTOH, it is perfectly reasonable to assume that he was in full control of his faculties during the coup. By that time, he had developed a good and solid hatred for SS, due to Elayne and Egwene's mysterious disappearance. Furthermore, in his POV scenes in LOC and ACOS, he never thinks anything that would give the idea that he's bonded to anything. Plus, he agrees to be Egwene's Warder; he couldn't do that if he was already bonded. (Since he'd trained with the Warders, it's not reasonable to think that he wouldn't know a Warder bond when he felt one.)

From his behavior in LOC, it seems pretty apparent that he acted under his own will during the coup, motivated by grief and anxiety over Elayne and Egwene. He develops a similar fierce hatred for Rand due to the rumors that Rand killed Morgase.

2.2.3 Who was the old geezer on the barrel watching Carridin's palace in Ebou Dar?



Quite a few mysterious characters were introduced in ACOS. One of these was the old man watching Carridin's palace in Ebou Dar. What do we know about him?

- He's old, and quite worse-for-wear:

A scrawny, white-haired fellow lounging nearby in the shade. Mat looked at him questioningly, and he grinned, showing gaps in his teeth. His stooped shoulders and sad weathered face did not fit his fine gray coat. Despite a bit of lace at his neck, he was the very picture of hard times.

[ACOS: 14, White Plumes, 282]

- He can't remember parts of his past:

His head felt... peculiar... sometimes. Most often when he thought of what he could not remember.

[ACOS: 17, The Triumph of Logic, 318]

- He's got a lot of knowledge about local DF activity – he knows about "Carridin's pretty little killer," and about the two BA in town [ACOS: 17: The Triumph of Logic, 319].

- He used to be a fighter of some kind, and he's still proficient with knives:

His hands no longer possessed the strength or flexibility for swordwork, but the two long knives he had carried for well over thirty years had surprised more than one swordsman.

[ACOS: 17: The Triumph of Logic, 319]

- He's working on some kind of deadline:

He did not have much time left, but it was all he did have.

[ACOS: 17: The Triumph of Logic, 319]

In [WH: 16, An Unexpected Encounter, 355-356], Mat meets Noal Charin, whose description rings a few bells:

...a stoop-shouldered, white haired old man with a large hooked nose planted in the middle of a sad face...

He was sliding a very long dagger into a sheath beneath his coat... he laughed mirthlessly, showing gaps in his teeth.

Mat thinks that his (weathered) face looks familiar, but cannot place him, and notes that his hands look like they've healed wrong after being broken.

It's pretty obvious that Noal is the geezer on the barrel; the similarities between each description are too striking for them not to be the same person. So the real question is, who is Noal Charin?

An overly-complete list of possibilities:

1. **Jain Farstrider:** By far the most popular (and likely) candidate; see section 2.4.4, the Jain section.
2. **Graendal's Old Man:** In [TFOH: Prologue, The First Sparks Fall, 26], when Graendal gates in to the Forsaken tea party, a "rumpled old man" can be seen in the room whence she came. Perhaps Noal was spying on Carridin (Sammael's flunky, at that point) for Graendal. His memory trouble could be explained by Graendal's usual use of unsubtle Compulsion. This, of course, doesn't preclude him from being Jain Farstrider as well. This possibility is further strengthened by Noal's claim that he has been to Shara; in an elaborate attempt to hoodwink Sammael, Graendal tells him about going to Shara to acquire her newest pets [LOC: 6, Threads Woven of Shadow, 136]. Coincidence? (On the other hand, Ituralde's POV in COT's Prologue makes it far more likely that Graendal's Old Man is Alsalam, the King of Arad Doman.)

3. It's unlikely, but Noal could be somebody associated with Carridin's late family – he might just be some old family retainer or even a relative who escaped the Myrddraal and came looking for Carridin to exact vengeance for what he had done to the family. How he found out that Carridin is responsible is another question. (Maybe he looked for the only surviving family member.) However, Noal doesn't appear to be in a very vengeful mood, and there are far more interesting and non-random people for him to be.
4. **Geofram Bornhald:** If Geofram survived the battle at Falme, he could certainly have sustained such injuries to make him be in as bad a shape as the old man in question. Furthermore, he'd have reason to be paying attention to Carridin, considering the way their relationship stood when they parted in TGH. OTOH, the old man seems to have been unable to handle a sword for 30 years. Bornhald doesn't fit that description, nor does the physical description we get of him in [TEOTW: 30, Children of Shadow, 374] match Noal's description: gray-haired, rather than white, grandfatherly, and with "a kindly face, bluff and dignified." Furthermore, what we see of Noal's personality is nothing like Bornhald's character.
5. **Old Cully:** One of the local DFs is a murderous old beggar named Old Cully, and it's been suggested that this Old Cully and the barrel man are one and the same. This is not possible. Carridin knows Old Cully by sight, yet when he sees the barrel man in [ACOS: 15, Insects, 286] standing next to Mat, he doesn't recognize him. Another reason why the barrel man can't be Old Cully: Carridin describes Old Cully as having one eye and no teeth [ACOS: 15, Insects, 284]. But when Mat sees Noal in [ACOS: 14, White Plumes, 282]: "...he grinned, showing gaps in his teeth." There is no mention of him missing an eye, either.
6. **Elyas Machera:** Also not possible, unless he's capable of being in both Ghealdan with Perrin and in Ebou Dar with Mat at the same time.

2.2.4 What's the deal with Setalle Anan?

Is she "the one who is no longer"?

[Dylan F. Alexander, Elizabeth Cornwell, Michael Werle, Pam Korda, John S. Hamby, Leigh Butler]



"The key to finding the bowl is to find the one who is no longer." [LOC: 19, Matters of Toh, 312]

Well, they found the bowl. "The one who is no longer" is still a mystery. So we should be saying, "the key to finding the one who is no longer is to find the bowl."

Considering the whole Bowl plotline in ACOS, if we look for one single person who was key to finding the Bowl, a likely candidate is Setalle Anan, the innkeeper of The Wandering Woman. Elayne and Nynaeve's meeting with her set off the chain of events that led to finding the Bowl. (Anan introduced them to the Kin, who they got Mat to spy on, and when Mat followed one of them, she led him to the six-storied building where the Kin's stash of *'angreal* was.)

What the Kin say about Anan

1. Reanne is apologizing to Anan:

The Anan woman and Reanne Corly entered the sitting room, and Nynaeve blinked in surprise. From the exchange, she had expected someone younger than Setalle Anan, but Reanne had hair more gray. ... Why would the older woman humble herself so to the younger, and why would the younger allow it, however halfheartedly? [ACOS: 23, Next Door to a Weaver, 393]

From this, we see that Anan is no ordinary innkeeper. The Kin kiss up to AS, but they're pretty arrogant to everybody else. Yet, they defer to Anan. True, she has something on them (knowing they are non-Tower channellers), but that's not enough to treat her as some sort of superior. Note that Reanne has even less apparent reason to defer to Anan than it first appears to Ny, since Reanne is actually around 400 years old, and Anan is, to all appearances, 50 or 60ish, and the Kin defer to one another on the basis of age [TPOD: 1, To Keep the Bargain, 58].

2. In [ACOS: 23, Next Door to a Weaver, 395] Setalle eyes the newly arrived Garenia who looks to be in her early twenties and sees a strong resemblance to Zarya Alkaese. Then Setalle says that when she last saw Zarya, she was younger than Garenia is now. (Setalle clearly assumes Garenia is as old as she looks; not as old as we later know Garenia to be.) Garenia places herself seventy years in the past with:

"Setalle!" Garenia exclaimed as soon as the innkeeper was gone. "That was Setalle Anan? How did she-? Light of Heaven! Even after seventy years, the Tower would-"

Garenia is upset; after all, someone came awfully close to identifying her as Zarya Alkaese.

3. Garenia is carrying on:

"What of this Setalle Anan, then? Those girls know about the Circle. The Anan woman must have told them, though how she knows ... She's an innkeeper, and she must be taught to guard her tongue!" Berowin gasped, wide-eyed with shock, and dropped into a chair so hard she nearly bounced.

“Remember who she is, Garenia,” Reanne said sharply. “If Setalle had betrayed us, we would be crawling to Tar Valon, begging forgiveness the whole way. ... She has kept the few secrets she knows from gratitude, and I doubt that has faded. She would have died in her first childbirth if the Kin had not helped her. What she knows comes from careless tongues... and the owners of those tongues were punished more than twenty years ago.” Still, she wished there was some way she could bring herself to ask Setalle to be more circumspect. [ACOS: 24, The Kin, 404-5]

So, at the same time, Anan is regarded as an innkeeper who must be taught to guard her tongue, who knows few secrets, and also somebody who they don’t dare offend, even to ask to be more circumspect. From the “crawling to Tar Valon” remark, we have evidence that Anan has the ability to betray the Kin to Tar Valon, or at least the Kin perceive her as having that ability. In this passage, it’s possible that Reanne is reminding Garenia that Setalle is a former Aes Sedai. Garenia no doubt has heard of the former sister making a new life for herself, but only by her new name. Garenia seems to want to know who Setalle was before she took the name Setalle.

Elayne believes Anan has some connection with the White Tower

After Anan tells Nynaeve and Elayne that they can’t be AS because Elayne is too young-looking, Elayne thinks:

Slowed. Slowing. How did an innkeeper in Ebou Dar know those words? Maybe Setalle Anan had gone to the Tower as a girl, though she would not have remained long, since she clearly could not channel. Elayne would have known even if her ability had been as small as her own mother’s. [ACOS: 22, Small Sacrifices, 383]

Elayne talking to Nynaeve:

“I think she went to the Tower once; she knows things she couldn’t, otherwise.”

[ACOS: 23, Next Door to a Weaver, 390]

Is Setalle Anan an ex-Aes Sedai?

This is very likely. What evidence is there?

1. A burned out or stilled AS would fit the “one who is no longer” description – “no longer Aes Sedai.” If Anan is an ex-Aes Sedai, she’s probably burned out, because novices are required to learn the names of officially stilled women, and Elayne doesn’t recognize hers. Furthermore, it is clear that the AS are not keeping tabs on Anan, and we know that AS tend to avoid sisters who are severed accidentally. AS who are stilled for some crime, on the other hand, are often kept around the Tower to serve as examples.
2. The Kin kiss up to her to an extent not seen except around real AS, although not quite that bad.
3. Anan’s attitude and behavior:
 - She’s not at all unsettled by being held by the Power [ACOS: 22, Small Sacrifices, 383].
 - As Elayne thinks, Anan knows far too much about AS, and throws around AS terms far too naturally for her to have had no contact with AS.
 - “Why would the older woman humble herself so to the younger, and why would the younger allow it, however halfheartedly?” Especially since Reanne, at 400 or so, is much older than Anan. This is true even if Anan was AS, since the longest known lifespan of a modern AS is around 300 years. This deference would make sense if Reanne knew Anan had been AS.
4. Anan is not native to Ebou Dar (“Her hazel eyes had never been born in Ebou Dar”). Note that this is far from conclusive; after all, Ebou Dar is a pretty cosmopolitan city. It’s mentioned here because it is brought up quite a bit.
5. We know that the AS are fond of forcibly matching up burned out women with brand-new spouses, in the hopes that a husband and family will give her something to live for beyond the OP.
6. The Garenia evidence. When Anan meets Garenia, she says:

“Your name is Garenia? You look very much like someone I met once. Zarya Alkaese.”

[ACOS: 23, Next Door to a Weaver, 395]

Garenia puts her off by saying that Zarya Alkaese was her great-aunt, but we find out in [TPOD: 28, Crimsonthorn, 542] that Garenia is Zarya Alkaese herself, and ran away from the Tower seventy years ago. Setalle Anan has only “a touch of gray in her hair” [ACOS: 22, Small Sacrifices, 381], so if she were a normal person, she couldn’t possibly be ninety or more years old. Thus, we must conclude that Anan must have channelled at some point in her past, because she “slowed” at some point – there is no way she looks the hundred years old or so she that would be if she met Zarya when she was “younger than you [Garenia] are now” [ACOS: 23, Next Door to a Weaver, 395]. (Garenia looks “no older than Nynaeve.”)

If we put together the fact that Anan met Garenia when she was still Zarya (i.e. before she ran away from the Tower), Garenia’s fears that Anan could turn her in [ACOS: 23, Next door to a Weaver, 395], Elayne’s analysis that Anan must have studied at the Tower for at least a little time, and the fact that Anan currently has zero channelling ability, we can put together the following picture:

Anan was at the Tower 70 years ago when Garenia/Zarya was a novice. If Anan was only a failed Novice or Accepted, as Elayne supposes, then Garenia would not fear that she'd turn her in, and Reanne would not be so deferential to her, so Anan must have been Aes Sedai. Something happened to burn her out, and she completely lost the ability to channel. She moved to Ebou Dar and got married. This must have been 20 years ago or more, since Anan has grown children.

It has been suggested that Anan is Martine Janata, the AS Vandene mentions when she warns Elayne about the dangers of fooling around with *ter'angreal*:

"She was the last sister to really make a business of studying *ter'angreal*... She did it for forty years, almost from the time she reached the shawl. ... Then one day, Martine's maid found her unconscious on the floor of her sitting room. Burned out. ... That was more than twenty-five years ago. ... She vanished once she was well enough to slip out of the Tower." [TPOD: 2, Unweaving, 75-76]

The timing makes this possible, as explained by **John Hamby**:

- Setalle gave birth to her first child more than twenty years ago [ACOS: 24, The Kin, 405].
- Martine Janata was raised to the shawl over sixty-five years ago.
- She was burnt out over twenty-five years ago and left the Tower.
- Garenia, a.k.a. Zarya Alkaese, ran away from the Tower seventy years ago [TPOD: 28, Crimsonthorn, 542].

So Martine was made a sister well over sixty-five years ago. Garenia ran away seventy years ago. Setalle recognized Garenia as Zarya though she certainly never considered Garenia to be Zarya. Also it is a bit too pat that we get the story of one such sister that provides us with a chronology that fits the criteria to be Setalle Anan.

Setalle in WH

Events in WH add further confirmation to the idea that Setalle used to be Aes Sedai. She is hellbent on making sure any Aes Sedai still in Ebou Dar escape the clutches of the Seanchan, for one thing, enough that Mat mentally comments on it:

Certainly he would like to see the *damane* freed, but why should it matter this much to her?

[WH: 29, Another Plan, 553]

More significant is her exchange with Joline in the same chapter, dressing her down and calling her "Green" (Joline's Ajah), and Joline's reaction:

"Have we met somewhere before? Sometimes, when I cannot see your face, your voice sounds familiar."

[ibid., 556]

The *sul'dam* test

Setalle also seemed to think that she has a better chance than the average woman to be a *sul'dam* (however wrong she turned out to be). **Pam** observes:

Setalle's certainty, mistaken though it was, about the *a'dam* is further evidence that she's that burned-out Aes Sedai who used to study *ter'angreal*, Martine Janata. If she had some understanding of how *ter'angreal* work, she could have reasoned out what the *a'dam* does (creates a kind of one-way link), and thus she could have ideas about the type of person required to be a *sul'dam*.

The fact that she failed the *sul'dam* test is interesting, but it's not certain what it signifies. Joline's reaction to the test with Setalle (pain, convulsions) is the same as every other time we've seen a collared *damane* try to move with a non-channeller wearing the bracelet (or with no one wearing the bracelet). This would seem to suggest that Setalle is a "normal" – that she can't channel and never could. The mass of hints in ACOS, TPOD, and WH that she used to be an Aes Sedai, though, contradicts that conclusion. A more fitting proposal is that burnt out channellers wearing the bracelet have the same effect on the collared *damane* as non-channellers do.

The only other incident we have to compare this to is when a then-stilled Siuan and Leane tried on Moghedien's bracelet in Salidar [LOC: Prologue, The First Message, 18-19]. Moggy had no ill reaction. It's been suggested that when compared to the Joline/Setalle incident in WH, this indicates that there is a difference between stilled channellers and burnt out channellers, and that it might further indicate that a burnt out channeller like Setalle could not be Healed like Siuan and Leane were.

However, we cannot say this for sure, because the comparison is flawed. First, Moggy did not try to move while Siuan and Leane were wearing the bracelet; nothing happened to Joline with Setalle wearing the bracelet until she tried to move. Secondly, the *a'dam* that held Moggy was not a Seanchan *a'dam*, but a copy made by Elayne, one that had significant alterations from the original design. The most obvious is that there was no leash connecting collar and bracelet, but more important is that Elayne's version apparently allowed Moggy much more freedom of movement than is allowed with a Seanchan *a'dam*. There are frequent references in LOC to Elayne, Nynaeve, and later Egwene carrying the bracelet around in a pouch or hanging it on a peg, rather than wearing it, while at the same time Moggy is off doing chores. If Moggy had been wearing a Seanchan *a'dam* when Siuan and Leane tried on the bracelet, we might have seen quite a different reaction (if Moggy had tried to move, that is).

The only other thing worth noting is that while Siuan and Leane couldn't touch the Source through Moggy or make her feel physical sensations, they did experience Mog's emotions. There is no indication in WH whether Setalle feels anything similar with Joline, but since the scene was from Mat's POV, that doesn't prove much one way or the other.

2.2.5 Where is Gaidal Cain now?

[Pam Korda, Leigh Butler, Jeff Dougan]



In [TFOH: 14, Meetings, 194], Birgitte tells Nynaeve that Gaidal Cain hadn't been around in T'A'R for some time, and that she suspects that he's been "spun out." Since we never see him in T'A'R after that point, it is reasonable to suppose that that is the case. Min's viewing of Birgitte in WH seems to confirm this idea:

Strangely, some [images] were connected to an ugly man who was older than she, and others to an ugly man who was much younger, yet somehow Min knew they were the same man. [WH: 12, A Lily in Winter, 297]

So, of course, speculation has been rife as to where and who he is. Some suggestions are (in order of ascending age):

- Somebody's unborn kid (e.g. Faile, Aviendha, Elayne).
- A baby.
- Mat's lil' buddy Olver.
- Pulled out of *Tel'aran'rhiod* bodily and an adult.
- Mat.
- Uno.

Well, Aviendha's not pregnant (see section 2.5.6), and there is zero evidence that Faile is, either. Elayne is preggers as of WH, but it's quite a stretch to suppose that one of her children is Gaidal when he disappeared four books earlier (not to mention supposing that any kid with Rand and Elayne for parents could end up Gaidal-ugly).

Is Olver Gaidal reborn?

No, he's not.

The theory that Olver, the little boy Mat takes under his wing in LOC, is the reincarnation of Gaidal Cain was very popular for a long time, despite the problems with it. There *were* facts supporting the argument: Olver didn't like Birgitte when he first met her, but they have grown very affectionate towards each other, for instance. Also, Olver is very ugly. These are both "trademarks" of the Birgitte-Gaidal relationship, as described in [TSR: 52, Need, 598].

However, in spite of the similarities, there was also a big problem with the idea of Olver being Gaidal Cain. Olver is now about ten years old [WH: 18, An Offer, 375]. Gaidal was last seen in T'A'R at the end of TSR. That was, presumably, before GC was spun out. Thus, only a year or less had passed between GC's "spinning out" and Olver's appearance as a grown boy. That appearance by Gaidal is not the only one he makes during Olver's lifetime. He appears numerous times in T'A'R, as well as appearing with the other Heroes at Falme. This is a big discrepancy.

Many explanations were proposed to explain this, but none of them were really consistent with the other information we have about the Heroes of the Horn and T'A'R. And anyway, RJ made the question moot at a post-COT signing in Dayton, OH

[report by **Tim Kington**]:

Q: Is Olver Gaidal Cain?

RJ: No. I didn't really think that this would last as long as it has. The timing is wrong. He has another reason for being there besides being a red herring, though.

Q: He's too old.

RJ: Yes. Time in T'A'R and the real world run at different rates, but it never runs backwards. You may spend an hour in T'A'R, and a day has passed when you get back, or you may spend a day, and an hour has passed when you get back, but you'll never go in on Tuesday and come back on Monday.

Q: Is the difference in time constant?

RJ: No. It's fairly random. Sometimes fast, sometimes slow, sometimes the same as real time.

Q: It's different for different people, then?

RJ: Yes. Unless they're together in T'A'R. Then the same amount of time passes for them, obviously.

The last three answers put paid to the most commonly proposed idea to explain the timing problem, the "Time Runs Differently" theory. This was based on a comment Birgitte makes in [TFOH: 14, Meetings, 194], where she tells Nynaeve that time runs differently for the Heroes in T'A'R than it does for living people in the real world:

"Time [in T'A'R] is not like time in the waking world. I met you here last ten days gone, as it seems to me, and Elayne only a day before. What was it for you?"

[Nynaeve:] "Four days and three..."

[Birgitte:] "The flow of time here can shift in larger ways, too. It might be months before I am born again, or days. Here, for me. In the waking world it could be years yet before my birth."

People used this idea that "time runs differently" to sweep the timing problem under the rug, but even before RJ's confirmation, there was no indication that time ever runs *backwards* in T'A'R, as it would have had to do in order for Gaidal to have been reborn as Olver.

People have still tried to defend the idea by bringing up the quote by Birgitte in [TFOH: 36, A New Name, 407]:

“Gaidal is out there, somewhere, an infant, or even a young boy.”

The “young boy” bit is taken to mean that Birgitte thinks that time *can* run backwards, and that a nine-year-old could be GC. In addition, in [TPOD: 1, To Keep the Bargain, 47] Aviendha comments that:

Birgitte worried about [Olver] even more than [Aviendha], but Birgitte’s breast held a strangely soft heart for small boys, especially ugly ones.

This has been taken to imply that Birgitte is looking for GC, and continues to believe that GC could be a small boy.

However, this is still inconsistent with the fact that, in every other instance, time increases monotonically for Birgitte and everyone else in T’A’R. The first “small boy” comment can be explained by the fact that the pace of time does vary in T’A’R, and thus, that Birgitte, upon awaking in the real world, had no idea how much time has passed (in the waking world) since Gaidal was spun out. For all she knew, it could have been several years. However, by the beginning of TPOD, she must have learned how much time had passed in the real world. So, why is she looking at ugly children? She mourns her loss of Gaidal. It’s not very incredible to think that she has a soft heart for that which reminds her of him. Furthermore, she may be deluding herself out of hope that Gaidal isn’t quite so young as logic says he must be.

So who is Gaidal, then?

RJ’s assertion that Olver is not Gaidal and the reason why (the timing discrepancy) means that by the same logic, any other possible candidates as old or older than Olver are also automatically eliminated. Thus, neither Mat nor Uno (the next two most popular characters suggested) can be Gaidal.

One suggestion is that perhaps Gaidal has not been spun out, after all. **Daniel Bartlett** explains:

What if he wasn’t [spun out]? Moggy promised Birgitte to ‘weep alone for as long as the Wheel turns.’ What if she delivered on that promise and GC isn’t around simply because Moggy got him? Would this explain everything, and Birgitte’s looking out for all those little boys simply be wishful thinking?

A variation on this idea is that Moggy didn’t kill him, but pulled him out of T’A’R as an adult the same way she did to Birgitte.

The problem with these ideas is Min’s vision in WH of Birgitte being linked to an ugly, younger man who is also an ugly, older man. That can only be referring to the current incarnation of Gaidal Cain as a youngster, and also clearly indicates that Gaidal is alive. Additionally, it seems unlikely that Moggy could have done anything to Gaidal anyway, since Gaidal was not only already gone from T’A’R when Moggy and Birgitte had their showdown, but it’s explained that Birgitte was only vulnerable to Moggy because she “violated the precepts,” as Gaidal Cain put it, by helping Nynaeve and Elayne. Gaidal did not show any inclination to put himself in a similar situation – he disapproved of Birgitte involving herself in the affairs of the living [TSR: 52, Need, 598-599].

Thus we are left to conclude that Gaidal is currently a random infant or toddler out there somewhere, and that he is unlikely to be able to play a role in Tarmon Gai’don. Which naturally has led people to wonder *why*, if the Wheel spins out the Heroes when they are needed, did events fall out this way? **Therese Wikström** offers:

Because he’d be needed *after* the Last Battle? Remember: ‘The great battle done, but the world not done with battle.’

2.2.6 How do we know that Moiraine is not dead?

[Pam Korda, Leigh Butler, Timothy Itnyre]

In [LOC: Glossary, 710], it says:

Moiraine Damodred: ... She vanished into a *ter’angreal* in Cairhien while battling Lanfear, apparently killing both herself and the Forsaken.

That “apparently” definitely left the question open.

WH tells us that Lanfear was “held” by the Snakes and the Foxes, either before or during her transformation into Cyndane. Though becoming Cyndane could have involved Lanfear’s death at some later point (see section 1.2.4), the “held” statement indicates that Lanfear could not have died immediately after falling through the twisted door with Moiraine in TFOH. In other words, the act of falling through the door was not an automatically fatal experience (though it doesn’t preclude the possibility that Moiraine died later).

One piece of evidence which points to her possible death is the breaking of her bond with Lan. However, we know from [TPOD: Prologue, Deceptive Appearances, 28] that:

...being stilled snapped [an AS’s bond to her Warder] as surely as death. One of Irgain’s two apparently had fallen over dead from the shock, and the other had died trying to kill thousands of Aiel without making any effort to escape.

(Irgain is one of the AS stilled when Rand escaped from the box in LOC; Flinn Healed her of stilling in WH.)



This quote shows that stilling an AS has the same effect on her Warder as her death. Thus, Lan's reaction only indicates that his bond was "snapped," by death, stilling, or something else.

Besides stilling, the breaking of Lan's bond could conceivably have been caused by the shutting off of the Red Door into Finnland. When Moiraine chastises Rand and Mat for using the Tear doorway in [TSR: 15, Into the Doorway, 178-9], she says:

"One of you would have been bad enough, but two *ta'veren* at once – you might have torn the connection entirely and been trapped there."

If one substitutes "channelling combatants" for "*ta'veren*," one has a description of what happened when Moiraine and Lanfear went through the door. The "tearing" of the connection between the two universes may have torn the connection between Moiraine and Lan, as well.

Of course, the above is either circumstantial evidence of or conjecture about Moiraine's survival. The real evidence that convinces us Moiraine is alive is the various visions that imply that she will return.

These are: Egwene's vision [TFOH: 15, What Can Be Learned in Dreams, 214] of Thom pulling Moiraine's blue jewel out of a fire, and Min's comment in [ACOS: 35, Into the Woods, 543] that Rand would fail without "a woman who was dead and gone," which almost certainly refers to Moiraine, and her comment in [ACOS: 35, Into the Woods, 546] that "Moiraine was the only viewing of hers that had ever failed." She must have had one or more viewings about Moiraine that were not fulfilled, and since *we* know that Min is never wrong, then Moiraine will almost certainly return at some point.

Furthermore, she has a "small shred of hope" before attacking Lanfear, so there *is* hope for her future. This "small shred" is probably a glimpse that Moiraine got of her future from a source other than the Rhuidean rings, either from the Red Door in Tear, or more likely, from a vision of Min's (probably the one that predicted Moiraine's marriage to Thom – see section 2.5.3).

Several people, though, have wondered why, if Moiraine had a prophecy or a Min vision indicating she will survive the battle with Lanfear, did she behave as if her death were a *fait accompli*, and make arrangements accordingly?

The answer is, she's human, and humans have doubt, especially when it comes to our own mortality.

The rings of Rhuidean showed Moiraine a lot of stuff, and then nothing after the scene at the docks. All the WOs said that the rings show a person's entire life (or possible lives). In between going through the rings and the showdown at the docks, Moiraine had firsthand experience of the predictive power of the rings. So, she had no reason to believe that she wouldn't end when the events she saw in the rings did.

If Min did have a vision involving Moiraine and Thom, that probably would not have been enough to completely convince Moiraine. Min's talent isn't thoroughly understood, even by Min. She sees lots of things she can't interpret. Given the later, highly convincing, evidence from the Rhuidean rings that she was going to die, it's reasonable to suppose that Moiraine wouldn't have thought that Min's vision, whatever it was, had not meant what Min thought it did, or that it was false. After all, it wasn't like Moiraine was able to check back with Min after her trip to Rhuidean. And note that not even Min herself is convinced that her visions are infallible.

So, she arranges her affairs in the expectation that she's going to croak. However, there is still something which makes her think that she just might somehow survive. It's not enough for her to *tell* anybody, but it's enough to give her a little bit of hope.

Which raises another question: If she didn't die, then why didn't the rings show anything post-Foxland?

Possibly the rings don't work across dimensions. Remember, they work by showing many possible futures for the person who goes into them – the possible results of future decisions, etc. If the rings can't see what Moiraine does/is going to do while she's in Finnland, they can't extrapolate to any later point, after she returns. Another possibility is that the rings are somehow linked to the viewer's channelling ability, and thus couldn't see past a point where she is severed (assuming Moiraine was stilled when she fell through the doorway, of course).

A loony theory debunked

In [WH: 14, What a Veil Hides, 324] we are introduced to Tuon's *damane*, one of whom is a former Aes Sedai, now called Mylen. She is described as tiny (shorter than Tuon) and pale in coloring, and "half-dead with shock and fear" when Tuon bought her.

An awful lot of people immediately leaped to the conclusion that Mylen was Moiraine, based on this description. This idea, though, is completely false.

From [WH: 19, Three Women, 403]:

[Teslyn, to Mat:] "The others do be... changed." Teslyn's mouth tightened. "Guisin and Mylen – I did know her as Sheraine Caminelle, but she do answer only to Mylen, now – those two would betray us."

Teslyn knows who Mylen is (i.e. not Moiraine), and there's no reason in the world to suppose she's mistaken.

2.2.7 Verin – Black, Brown, or Purple?

[Erica Sadun, Pam Korda, Leigh Butler; contributions from Sean Hillyard, Mike Lemons, Judy Ghirardelli, Emma Pease, Keith Casner, David Ulaeto, Chris Wilson, Matthew Zimmer]



Throughout the series, Verin Mathwin has demonstrated more than her fair share of suspicious behavior. Clearly, Something is Up with her. Is she Black Ajah? The evidence, especially from TPOD and WH, indicates that she is not, but there are a lot of Verin-related questions we still don't have the answers to.

1. Verinism: In TGH, Verin tells the boys that Moiraine sent her to look after them:

“Moiraine Sedai sent me, Lord Ingтар,” Verin announced with a satisfied smile. “She thought you might need me.”

[TGH: 14, Wolfbrother, 195]

Moiraine later says that she did *not* send Verin:

“I did not send Verin.” Moiraine frowned. “She did that on her own.” [TGH: 49, What was Meant To Be, 572]

It is pretty obvious that Moiraine is not BA, so that implies that Verin lied, and hence must be BA.

Explanation: Verin could have been tricked by somebody masquerading as Moiraine. Or, perhaps she managed to find an interpretation of her words that could be taken as the truth. (Moiraine wanted somebody to watch over you guys, but she couldn't be here...) Now, *maybe* Verin is using some sneaky thought process to get around the Oath:

“Moiraine Sedai sent me, Lord Ingтар,” Verin announced with a satisfied smile (recalling how satisfying the beer and pizza Moiraine had sent her for had been, and also how satisfying it had been to come up with a literally true statement which would preclude any questions from Rand, et al). [Edward Measure]

In [TPOD: Prologue, Deceptive Appearances, 39-41], we learn that Verin has worked out a subtle form of Compulsion which conveniently leaves the victim forgetful of their “session” with Verin. Perhaps Verin compelled Moiraine to send her. “Moiraine Sedai sent me (because I made her), Lord Ingтар.” [Tony Evans]

At a signing in Atlanta, RJ said that this discrepancy is not a mis-step.

2. Verinism: Verin does not give Corianin's notes to Egwene along with the dream ring [TDR: 21, A World of Dreams, 187]. Maybe she wanted Egwene to get killed, or caught by some Forsaken?

Explanation: Four reasons that Verin wouldn't want to show the manuscript to Egwene: (1) Verin is afraid that Egwene would not continue if she knew how dangerous it is. (2) Verin is afraid that Egwene would not continue if she knew who or what must be sacrificed. (3) The very nature of prophecy requires that it be vague or kept secret. (4) Maybe Verin was afraid that *Egwene* was a Darkfriend. Also, note that she *considered* giving the notes to Egwene, but decided not to. If she was withholding the notes for a nefarious purpose, she wouldn't have even considered it.

3. Verinism: Her suspicious behavior in the Two Rivers: (a) Misleads Perrin as to why she and Alanna are there [TSR: 31, Assurances, 345-346]. (b) Tells Perrin not to trust Alanna, perhaps laying a false trail [TSR: 33, A New Weave in the Pattern, 373]? (c) She also knows Luc is the missing Lord Luc, Tigraine's brother who disappeared in the Blight. She knows he is mentioned in the Dark Prophecy, yet she does not warn anyone about him, or tell them who he is?

Explanation: (a) and (b) are typical Aes Sedai behavior. Furthermore, since Alanna had recently lost a Warder, Verin may have been worried that she would try to bond Perrin, as she later did to Rand. As for (c)...

4. Verinism: Only three characters have referred to Perrin's choice of hammer or axe: Ishamael, Lanfear and Verin. This puts Verin in very suspicious company.

Explanation: Verin is Brown Ajah, and thus is likely to know all sorts of obscure things. Perhaps there is a prophecy involving blacksmiths, hammers, and axes; the appearance in COT of a verse referring to Mat in *The Karaethon Cycle* lends credence to this idea. (Also note that the above statement is somewhat false: Egwene also knows about the hammer/axe choice. She dreamed it.)

5. Verinism: She was observed in deep conversation with Barthanes, a known Darkfriend, at the party in [TGH: 33, A Message from the Dark, 397]. When Hurin approached them, Verin waved him away. Perhaps they were discussing “business matters?”

Explanation: No, they were just talking about the weather/politics/etc. and Verin didn't want some Shienaran servant butting into her conversation; it wouldn't look right and might make Barthanes suspicious.

6. Verinism: In [TFOH: 53, Fading Words, 638] Moiraine tells Rand in her last letter not to trust Alviarin, who is definitely a Darkfriend, and Verin. Additionally, Siuan mentions that Verin never told her about giving Egwene a *ter'angreal*.

Explanation: The former is just an exercise in contrasts. Moiraine is saying: “Don't trust *anybody*. You are rightly suspicious of Alviarin, but you should be equally suspicious of those you think you can trust, like Verin.” As for the latter, why should she tell SS?

7. Verinism: The Draghkar attack on Moiraine [TGH: 22, Watchers, 278-279] was executed at least with Aes Sedai help (the warding on them so they couldn't be sensed). Moiraine seemed to think that pretty much everyone in the Tower had

forgotten about these old hermit Aes Sedai. However, we do know one individual old enough to remember them who could have ordered the attack – Verin.

Explanation: This is totally wimpy speculation, and wouldn't even be here, except that somebody might bring it up again. Liandrin (known BA) could have easily followed Moiraine there, and one of the sisters may be BA (see section 1.4.9).

8. Verinism (Verin and the Art of Stedding Channeling): In [TGH: 29, Among the Elders, 435], she inspects an Ogier who lost his mind to *Machin Shin* in the Ways. For all intents and purposes, it looks like she's Delving him with the OP. However, she is in a *stedding*, where touching the OP is impossible. What's more, nobody thinks this is weird!

Explanation: At a post-ACOS signing [Vancouver, 24 August 1996], RJ told **Lara Beaton** that:

...we're going to find out something in the next few books about people without souls and characteristics of them. (He started out saying that we're going to find out something significant about Verin, then stopped.)

After Perrin's too-long sojourn in the wolf dream in WH, we learn that Aes Sedai are apparently familiar with these characteristics. Berelain, to Perrin:

"You slept like a man already dead. [Annoura] said you almost felt like someone who had lost his soul, cold no matter how many blankets were piled on you. I felt it, as well, when I touched you."

[WH: 5, Flags, 145]

So evidently, anyone who knows what they're looking for can tell when the soul is gone from a body, and Verin's examination of the Ogier in the *stedding* didn't have to involve channeling at all.

Verin could also have used a Well, per WH. Though a rather ex post facto solution to the discrepancy (and superfluous, given the above about soulless bodies), we now know that channelling is possible in a *stedding*. We have no evidence, however, that Verin actually possesses a Well, though if she did it would be interesting to speculate on how that relates to her arrest warrant in Far Madding...

9. Verinism: When Rand is fighting Lord Turak at the end of TGH, he is afraid to use *saidin*, because:

If he touched *saidin*, and if he could not stop himself channeling, [the *damane*] would know, *Verin had told him*. Know and wonder. [emphasis added]

[TGH: 45, Blademaster, 539]

What's more, earlier on Verin tells Rand:

"The only way I could help you would be if I channeled the Power, and that would be no help at all if I brought those down on you. Even if they were not close enough to see, one might well feel a woman – or a man, for that matter – channeling, if care was not taken to keep the Power channeled small."

[TGH: 44, Five Will Ride Forth, 523]

So did Verin conveniently forget that female channellers – which would include all *damane* – cannot detect either *saidin* or men who can channel it?

Explanation: Verin has always known that there were *ter'angreal* that could detect both men and women channelling. She's from Far Madding, after all (as is Cadsuane, who additionally has a portable version of the Far Madding *saidin* detector). So it's not unreasonable for Verin to suppose that the mysterious Seanchan, who have come up with a way to chain channellers like dogs, could have also come up with a *saidin/saidar* detector like her native city did. Thus telling Rand that they might be able to sense him channelling was just erring on the side of caution.

Alternative Verin speculations

Something-in-those-Notes theory

We know Verin had access to Corianin Nedeal's notes. There is something in those notes that Verin doesn't want anybody to know about, something so potentially dangerous that she'd consider destroying the notes and all the knowledge contained therein.

Theory: What if, in those notes, Corianin Nedeal describes how she discovered how to break the Three Oaths in T'A'R? That would certainly explain why Verin wouldn't want Egwene to have the notes, especially after her speech at the start of TDR about how important the Oaths are. This would also explain how she managed to lie about Moiraine sending her.

Problem: Verin's mental self-justifications in [TPOD: Prologue, Deceptive Appearances, 41] seem to indicate that she is bound by the First Oath (see below). There is also absolutely no indication that Oaths can be removed by any method other the Oath Rod itself or stilling.

Then again, who knows what eldritch knowledge is contained in the notes? Who knows what Verin saw when she tried out the *ter'angreal* to go to T'A'R? This could explain all sorts of Verinisms.

Verin = Corianin theory

Theory: Verin is Corianin Nedeal herself, and is thus very, very, old. That is how she got her hands on the ring *ter'angreal*.

Problem: In [TDR: 21, A World of Dreams, 191], Verin is thinking on Nedeal's notes, and thinks of Nedeal in the third person. One doesn't usually refer to oneself in the third person. Another problem (which is also present in related Very Old Verin theories

is that if there was a 400+ year-old Aes Sedai lurking around the Tower, surely somebody would have noticed by now. Furthermore, Verin is probably not older than 300 years (see below), and thus cannot be Corianin.

Second Foundation Ajah theory (a.k.a. Purple Ajah theory)

Theory: Verin is a member of a secret society whose members preserve ancient knowledge for humanity's need at the Last Battle. The existence of the BA shows that it is possible for a secret group to exist in the Tower – if there is a group dedicated to evil, why not a group dedicated to good?

Problem: There have always been rumors of the BA. Nothing can be kept secret for centuries in a place with so many people in it, and so much scheming as the White Tower. And yet, we've never heard any hint of this secret group.

Very Old Verin theory

Theory: Verin is very, very old, and pre-dates the lying Oath, and is thus not bound to it. This theory has been proposed as part of various Second Foundation Ajah theories, Corianin Nedeal theories, as well as independently.

Problem: Verin would have to be 1000+ years old. We have seen no evidence, even in the AOL, that *anybody* lives that long, without help from the DO. Plus, wouldn't anybody notice that Verin had outlived dozens of Amyrlin Seats? Furthermore, the upper bound on Verin's age (see below) is ~300. This is not old enough for her to date from a pre-OR time.

How old is Verin?

Many pet theories hinge upon this question. From [LOC: 11, Lessons and Teachers, 207], we know that Verin has been working on some plan for about 70 years. This sets a lower bound on Verin's age. The only other possible clue is [LOC: 43, The Crown of Roses, 549]. Merana Sedai is considering the pecking order among the AS in Caemlyn:

Merana had been Aes Sedai ten years the day the midwife laid Alanna at her mother's breast. ... Verin was the problem. ... Five years as novice for each, six as Accepted; that was one thing every Aes Sedai knew about every other if she knew nothing else. The difference was that Verin was older, maybe almost as much older than she as she was older than Alanna.

We know that the Tower doesn't take women much older than Nynaeve for Novices, and an average novice starts at about the age Elayne and Egwene did (17-18).

For the Very Old Verin folks, let's say both Merana and Verin started late – 24 (Nynaeve was an exception, they only took her because she was so strong). So if Alanna is about 70 (in [TPOD: 12, New Alliances, 276], Cadsuane thinks that Alanna has “worn the shawl almost forty years”), Merana is 24 + 11 years training + 10 years as full AS = 45 years older than Alanna, that is, 115 years old. If Verin is as much older than Merana as Merana is older than Alanna, then Verin is 115 + 45 = 160 years old. So if Merana is right about how much older Verin is than she, Verin should be around 160. There is, of course, quite a bit of leeway in our guess of Alanna and Merana's ages, so Verin could conceivably be nearly 200.

More than once, Cadsuane Melaidhrin is described as “the oldest Aes Sedai.” In [ACOS: Glossary, 671], it says she is “thought to have been born around 705 NE,” which would make her around 300 years old. She's also the most powerful AS apart from Elayne, Egwene, and Nynaeve, which means she will have gotten the maximum life-prolonging benefit from channelling. In spite of this, she is at the end of her life [ACOS: 19, Diamonds and Stars, 347], so it is reasonable to believe that AS who are bound by the Oath Rod don't get much older than Cadsuane. If the glossary is to be believed, that is about 300 years. By implication, this puts an upper bound on Verin's age. (Assuming that the ageless look is caused by the Oath Rod – Verin is ageless.)

Is Verin bound by the Oath Rod?

The evidence in ACOS and TPOD tells us that the ageless look is caused by being bound by the Oath Rod (see section 2.3.3). Without a doubt, Verin has the ageless look [TGH: 7, Blood Calls Blood, 87]. The conclusion is, then, that Verin is bound by the Oath Rod.

Furthermore, in [aol.com chat, 27 June 1996], RJ just about said straight out that Verin has held the Oath Rod. Somebody asked if it was true if he'd said that Verin had *not* held it, and if so then did Cadsuane also avoid it. His answer:

No, I did not say that Verin had never held the Oath Rod. Cadsuane has also held the Oath Rod.

Cadsuane has *also* held it, implying that Verin has, as well.

Note that this only means that Verin has taken at least one Oath on the Rod; it's possible she's not bound by all three. Maybe she discovered that the Oath Rod could be used to release oaths taken on one [ACOS: 40, Spears, 631], although TPOD seems to indicate that she is still bound by the First Oath, at least.

Why we think Verin is not Black Ajah

In the Prologue of TPOD, we get a scene which is from Verin's point of view. At several points in that section, Verin uses clever thought processes and tricks of the tongue to avoid telling untruths. This is consistent with what one would expect of an AS bound by the First Oath.

Now, any intelligent BA would get into the habit of following the Oath as a matter of course, because being caught lying could lead to the discovery of the BA. However, consider the bit in [TPOD: Prologue, Deceptive Appearances, 41], when Beldeine comes out of the Compulsion-trance. She asks Verin if she fainted. Verin replies:

“The heat is very bad. I have felt lightheaded myself once or twice today.”

Then, in her own mind, she thinks that her own lightheadedness was:

...from weariness, not heat. Handling that much of *saidar* took it out of you.

If Verin is not bound by the first Oath, she should not have needed to justify that misleading statement *to herself*. It's not something that anybody could ever have found out about, and is utterly trivial, besides. On the other hand, it might simply be a habit, especially if she turned BA after having been AS for a long time. However, Verin's self-justifications do seem to indicate that she is bound by the First Oath, and is not Black Ajah (just very dark Brown).

In the showdown at the end of WH, Verin has a brief POV in which she watches Graendal move through the trees and thinks to herself that:

A captive Forsaken might prove very useful.

[WH: 35, With the Choedan Kal, 646]

Forsaken, not Chosen. Of course, it has been pointed out that this is not conclusive, as several BA have at one point or another used the term “Forsaken.” For example:

Rianna shook her head worriedly. “It makes troubling sense. Our orders from the Tower were clear, yet it is also clear that Carridin has others. I can only postulate dissension among the Forsaken.” [TSR: 38, Hidden Faces, 439]

The term is used by Jeaine, Asne, and Liandrin as well. [Kjell Stahl, Johan Gustafsson]

However, consider what Verin actually said. Would a BA want to capture a Forsaken? Especially in that situation, where any captives would undoubtedly have fallen under either Cadsuane's or Rand's control? Wouldn't a BA have at least some worry or fear about having to answer to Ishydin or the DO for doing such a thing? The only emotion Verin displays about the notion is curiosity!

(DO's advocate: there have been instances of BA plotting to take down Forsaken. Liandrin, with Moghedien. Alviarin with Mesaana. Still, Liandrin and Alviarin wanted to kill Moggy and Mesaana, to gain power for themselves, not capture them and hand them over to the good guys.)

Another interesting bit in WH's last chapter is Elza's POV. Elza was one of the AS captured at Dumai's Wells who later swore fealty to Rand. Her POV in [WH: 35, With the Choedan Kal, 652-653], besides revealing that she is BA, makes it clear that she was one of those subjected to Verin's ad hoc Compulsion treatment. And the overriding conviction Verin gave her? That the Dragon Reborn must live till Tarmon Gai'don. Thus, it seems obvious that Rand's survival is Verin's objective as well.

Is there a connection between Cadsuane and Verin?

Both Verin and Cadsuane are from Far Madding (Verin: [TPOD: Prologue, Deceptive Appearances, 42]; Cadsuane: [TPOD: 12, New Alliances, 273], and RJ said at a post-TPOD signing [LA, 22 October 1998, report by **Pam Basham**] that they were from Far Madding). This raises immediate suspicions of some sort of Far Madding Secret Society. However, in [TPOD: Prologue, Deceptive Appearances, 30], Verin thinks about Cadsuane:

What was Cadsuane after? ... Cadsuane herself was a legend, and even the believable parts of the legend made her very dangerous indeed. Dangerous and unpredictable.

This indicates that Verin doesn't know Cadsuane very well, and is wary of her. It seems unlikely that Verin and Cadsuane are in cahoots, or have been in the past.

Especially since Verin seriously considers drugging or even poisoning her [WH: 25, Bonds, 495]. The vial that Verin slips away is a sleeping potion given to her by Sorilea, who specifically warned her that more than a few drops of it can kill [WH: 13, Wonderful News, 304]. The fact that she does not is yet another point against Verin being Black. Cadsuane is talking about how to get Rand to Tarmon Gai'don alive (and laughing, and crying). Verin then thinks:

It was good to be sure of Cadsuane at last.

Since Cadsuane's statements indicate she is not BA, and Verin *doesn't* drug her, the incident reinforces the notion that Verin has the same goals (i.e. Verin is not Black either).

2.2.8 Can Tuon channel?

Why do we think Tuon can channel? When we first meet her in WH, we learn that she has tested to be a *sul'dam*, obviously successfully, since she:

...found as much enjoyment in training *damane* as in training horses. [WH: 14, What a Veil Hides, 325]

(Ick.)



As we know from numerous scenes from TGH on, *sul'dam* can channel. The difference between them and the *damane* is that *damane* are women like Egwene, who are born with the spark, and will channel whether they try to or not, whereas *sul'dam* are women who can be taught, but would never touch the Source on their own without instruction. So Tuon can be taught to channel – and thanks to Egeanin's revelations in [COT: 29, Something Flickers, 644], now she knows it, too.

2.3 The Power and Power-Related Objects

This subsection contains information on and discussion of questions about channelling, dreamwalking, the OP, and OP-related objects.

2.3.01 What's up with the male-female *a'dam* link where they both die screaming?



In [TGH: 40, *Damane*, 484], Egwene's *sul'dam* describes how the Empress will sometimes make a man wear the bracelet of the *a'dam* connected to a *damane*. Sometimes nothing happens, and sometimes “both die, screaming.” We see something similar happen in [TFOH: 32, *A Short Spear*, 370] when Rand tries to free the *damane* in Seanchan. A third example is in [ACOS: 8, *The Figurehead*, 164], when Aran'gar frees Moggy from the *a'dam* while Egwene is wearing the bracelet:

A sudden stab of pain through that pocket of sensations in the back of her head. ... Had she felt it directly, it would have been numbing. As it was, her eyes bulged in shock. A man who could channel was touching the necklace around Moghedien's neck; this was one link no man could be brought into.

What's happening here? Well, it seems as if the men who are affected by the *a'dam* are those who can channel, or maybe who have the ability to learn. According to Elayne's study of the *a'dam*, it works by creating an uneven link between channellers, in which the bracelet holder has complete control. So possible explanations for the “die screaming” effect are:

1. A male and a female are linked, with the man in control. A female must control such a link due to the nature of the OP. So the *a'dam* link is backwards, which could have a bad effect.
2. Possibly, they find themselves each touching the wrong half of the Source, and cannot stand to do this, and consequently experience immense pain and have their pitiful lives snuffed out by the overbearing power of the wrong half of the OP pouring through their frail bodies. (Note that this suggestion is seemingly contradicted by events at the end of WH, which had several examples of men handling *saidar* and women handling *saidin* while linked in mixed-gender circles.)
3. Putting a male in the *a'dam* link somehow creates a “short circuit” in the One Power, frying both participants in the link unless they break it pronto.

2.3.02 The “Sad Bracelets”/male *a'dam*

[Luke Mankin, Pam Korda, Leigh Butler]



Descriptions of the item:

- ...a necklace and two bracelets of jointed black metal... [TSR: 52, *Need*, 600]
- ...dull black collar and bracelets... ...wide jointed collar... [TSR: 54, *Into the Palace*, 628]
- [Moghedien:] “[The bracelets are] not metal, but a form of *cuendillar*. ... Put the collar on a man who channels, and a woman wearing the bracelets can make him do whatever she wishes, true, but it will not stop him from going mad, and there is a flow the other way, too. Eventually he will begin to be able to control you, too... Or two women can each wear one bracelet, if you have someone you trust enough; that slows the seepage considerably, I understand, but it also lessens your control... Eventually, you will find yourselves in a struggle for control with him, each of you needing him to remove your bracelet as surely as he needs you to remove the collar.” [TSR: 54, *Into the Palace*, 630]
- [Moghedien:] “The collar and bracelets were made after I was [bound in the Bore]...” [TSR: 54, *Into the Palace*, 630]
- Egeanin touched the collar, pushed the bracelets away from the collar. ... “It is not an *a'dam*,” the Seanchan woman said. “That is made of a silvery metal, and all of one piece.” [TSR: 55, *Into the Deep*, 638]

Where are the bracelets now?

Egeanin and Bayle were sent off in TSR to dump the bracelets and collar into the ocean, near the Aile Somera. But of course, they ran smack into Suroth and were forced to turn them over to her [WH: 21, *A Matter of Property*, 422].

And who is right there next to the DF Suroth in Ebou Dar? None other than Anath, a.k.a. Semirhage (see section 1.1.9). An interesting thing to note is something Anath says to Tuon in [WH: 14, What a Veil Hides, 329], in reference to the Dragon Reborn:

“You must be careful,” Anath purred. “You must not let him learn how dangerous you are to him until it is too late for him to escape.”

Putting two and two together, there’s an obvious conclusion to be drawn: Anath as good as has the Sad Bracelets in her possession, and controls Tuon (or did at that point, anyway). Tuon is *sul’dam*-trained (see section 2.2.8). Ergo, the threat she represents to Rand is that she could use the bracelets on him, perhaps to force him to kneel to the Crystal Throne as Seanchan prophecy apparently foretells (see section 4.5).

It’s not a guarantee that Anath knew about the bracelets at that point – this conversation took place on the ship, before they made landfall and met up with Suroth – but it’s perfectly possible that Anath had been in contact with Suroth beforehand and knew she had the bracelets in her possession. The interesting thing, if the bracelets are what Anath was referring to, is that evidently Tuon knows about them as well (she showed no puzzlement or surprise at Anath’s statement).

And indeed, events in COT do point to a plan to use the Sad Bracelets on Rand, as suggested above (see section 1.4.12).

2.3.03 Effects of the Oath Rod: binding, agelessness, and death

[Daniel Rouk, Burr Rutledge, Andrea Leistra, Pam Korda, Leigh Butler]



Binding

In the AOL, there were multiple “Oath Rods.” They were apparently fairly common devices used to discipline criminals who could channel. The Forsaken refer to them as a type of “binder”; according to Sammael [ACOS: 40, Spears, 631], Oath Rods only work on channellers, and the one he gives to Sevanna only works on female channellers. There are other types of binding devices, such as “binding chairs” that work on anybody.

One of the first references to “binding” is in [LOC: 6, Threads Woven of Shadow, 136]. Graendal is showing off her Sharans. While discussing the Sharan channellers, Sammael asks her if they “bind themselves like criminals.” Sammael thinks he’s revealing something Graendal didn’t know, but she thinks about how she found out about the AS use of the Oath Rod from Mesaana [LOC: 6, Threads Woven of Shadow, 138]. We later find out Mesaana is in the White Tower. The only “binding” that we know about that occurs in the White Tower is the bonds willingly taken by Aes Sedai via the Oath Rod.

Next scene [LOC: 6, Threads Woven of Shadow, 139-143]: Semirhage is torturing the Aes Sedai, and thinking on how she was “wronged” because the Age of Legends Servants didn’t understand why she gave a little pain with her healing. After all, nobody complained when they owed their life to her. She recollects that she was given two choices, to be severed, or to accept binding. The actual quote is:

...to be bound never to know her pleasures again, and with that binding be able to see the end of life approach...

This illustrates that “binding” is in fact as Sammael said, something done to criminals.

In [Guide: 3, The Age of Legends, 37], we learn about the criminal justice system in the AOL:

When the perpetrators of violent acts were caught, they were not sent to prison. Rather, they were constrained... against repeat offenses. This binding made it impossible for the criminal ever to repeat his crime.

In [Guide: 5, The Dark One and the Male Forsaken, 54], we also find out that this binding was done with the OP. Describing Balthamel, né Eval Ramman, it says:

More than once he supposedly came very close to being bound with the Power against doing violence.

Next, we have [ACOS: 40, Spears, 630-631], in which Sammael gives Sevanna an OR, which he probably got from the Ebou Dar stash. He explains how it works:

“You might call it an Oath Rod,” Caddar said... “It only came into my hands yesterday, and I immediately thought of you.” ... “All you need do is have your Aes Sedai... or any woman who can channel, hold the rod and speak whatever promises you wish while someone channels a little Spirit into the number. The marks on the end of the rod?” ...

[Sevanna:] “It only works on women?”

“Women who can channel, Sevanna,” Caddar said...

Finally, in WH we are introduced to the “Chair of Remorse,” a *ter’angreal* in the Tower that is used to punish criminals:

...to experience carefully selected consequences of their crimes.

[WH: Prologue, Snow, 17]

Though it doesn’t seem as though the Chair is used for any actual binding, the fact that it can be used on non-channellers and channellers alike brings Sammael’s mention of “binding chairs” strongly to mind, and Seaine doesn’t know if the manner in which modern AS use it is anything like what it was used for in the AOL.

We learn a few other things about the OR and binding:

1. It can be used to remove Oaths, according to Sammael [ACOS: 40, Spears, 631], and from Pevara and Seaine's experiments described in [TPOD: 26, The Extra Bit, 503]. It makes sense that there should be some way to remove the Oaths, since it was a method of punishing criminals. If the criminal was later proven innocent, or truly reformed, one would want the OR binding removed, considering its unhealthy effects (see below).
2. It is harder to bind non-channellers than to bind channellers [ACOS: 40, Spears, 631]. This implies that the OR's binding mechanism involves the bound individual's channelling ability.
3. The OR is *not* a "Rod of Dominion." The way the Nine Rods of Dominion were mentioned in the TEOTW Prologue, they were something special. The OR, OTOH, is referred to as a "binder," lower-case. Nothing special. Furthermore, in TPOD, we find out what Sammael meant by "the number" in [ACOS: 40, Spears, 630-631] – the Oath Rods are numbered. The Tower's Rod is number three, while Sevanna's Rod is number one hundred and eleven [TPOD: 11, Questions and an Oath, 253]. So, it seems like there are way more than nine Oath Rods.

Agelessness

The question is: is the "ageless" look attributed to Aes Sedai in the Third Age something unique to them, or is this appearance attained by all channellers? If it is only found in modern AS, then it seems likely that the look is caused by the Oath Rod – one of the only major differences between the current Aes Sedai and other channellers.

What is the ageless look? It is *not* mere youthfulness. People looking at AS with the look are unable to put any age at all to them. Here is evidence:

- In [TDR: 3, News from the Plain, 23] Perrin describes Moiraine:
She was a slender, dark-haired woman no taller than his shoulder, and pretty, with the ageless quality of all Aes Sedai who had worked with the One Power for a time. He could not put any age at all to her...
- In [LOC: Prologue, The First Message, 25-26], Elayne describes Janya Sedai and Anaiya Sedai:
Janya Sedai was quite neat, every short dark hair tidy around the ageless face that marked Aes Sedai who had worked long with the Power.
"You are making great strides, Elayne," Anaiya said calmly. The bluff-faced woman was always calm. Motherly was the word to describe her, and comforting usually, though Aes Sedai features made putting an age to her impossible.
- In [ACOS: 1, High Chasaline, 60] Perrin describes the TAS who were captured, discounting the ones who were stilled:
The others looked ageless, of course, maybe in their twenties, maybe in their forties, changing from one glance to the next, always uncertain. That was what their faces said, though several showed gray in their hair.
From this, we know that if an observer can put a definite age to a channeller, then the channeller *does not* have the ageless look.

The ageless look takes some time to manifest itself after a woman is raised to full Aes Sedai:

- Elaida's spy in Caemlyn is:
"A Red sister... Newly raised, so she can easily pass for other than Aes Sedai." She meant that the woman had not yet taken on the agelessness... [TFOH: Prologue, The First Sparks Fall, 16]
- In [ACOS: 24, The Kin, 408], Elayne says:
"I don't think anyone has ever reached that [the ageless look] until they've worn the shawl at least a year or two, sometimes five or more."

Now, let us look at the descriptions of all other channellers, to see that they do *not* have the ageless look.

A look at non-Aes Sedai channellers

Aiel Wise Ones

- Perrin describing the WOs after rescuing Rand:
Every Wise One who had come here from Cairhien was able to channel, though none had the ageless look. [ACOS: 1, High Chasaline, 64]
Amys is one of these WOs – she appears in [ACOS: 2, The Butcher's Yard, 80].
- Sevanna, describing Graendal, lets slip what is perhaps the most glaring evidence that the ageless look is actually different from what the Wise Ones have:

As dark of face and hair as he [Sammael], and beautiful enough to tighten Sevanna's mouth, she wore red silk, cut to expose even more of her bosom than Someryn showed. ... Right then, she did not care whether the woman could move mountains or barely light a candle. She must be Aes Sedai. She did not have the face, yet some Sevanna had seen did not. [ACOS: 20, Patterns Within Patterns, 353]

(She's probably thinking about Egwene, who was masquerading as AS.) If the WOs had the same ageless look as Aes Sedai, Sevanna would not think of "the face" as an identifying feature of AS.

- In [TSR: 23, Beyond the Stone, 262], we have a description of Melaine from Egwene's point of view, before she knows that Melaine can channel.

The last of the four, a handsome woman with golden-red hair, no more than ten or fifteen years older than Egwene, hesitated.

Note that Egwene puts a definite age to her.

- Egwene, describing Amys:

Suddenly Amys's youthfully smooth features beneath that white hair leaped out at her for what they were, something very close to Aes Sedai agelessness. [TSR: 23, Beyond the Stone, 262]

Amys was white-haired, too... but she did not look old. She and Melaine could both channel – not many Wise Ones could – and she had something of the look of the Aes Sedai agelessness about her. [TFOH: 5, Among the Wise Ones, 99]

Note that Amys is *close* to ageless, has *something* of the look, but *not* the exact same look.

- In [TGH: 28, A New Thread in the Pattern, 345], Urien meets Ingтар's party, and says to Verin:

"No, Wise One. But you have the look of those who have made the journey to Rhuidean and survived. The years do not touch the Wise Ones in the same way as other women."

This seems to tell us that the WOs *do* have the ageless look. However, the huge quantity of contradictory quotes, especially Perrin's and Sevanna's above, leads us to believe that either RJ changed his mind, or Urien was mistaken, or Urien only meant that Verin doesn't look as old as her grey hair would indicate.

Sea Folk Windfinders

- Elayne and Nynaeve do not recognize Jorin, the Windfinder of *Wavedancer*, as a channeller until Elayne actually *sees* her channel [TSR: 20, Winds Rising, 233]. If she had the distinctive ageless look, they'd have noted it immediately. This is not merely a case of Jorin being young; she is not. Her sister Coine has:

...gray touches in her black hair and fine wrinkles at the corners of her... eyes. ... It was a surprise that the two were sisters. Elayne could see the resemblance, but Jorin looked much younger.

[TSR: 19, The *Wavedancer*, 217]

Furthermore, Jorin has children older than Elayne [TSR: 20, Winds Rising, 234].

- The Windfinders Rand meets in [ACOS: 34, *Ta'veren*, 535-536] look young, not ageless:

Harine did a lot of the talking, and so did a young, pretty woman in green brocade with eight earrings altogether, but the pair in plain silk put in occasional comments. ... Harine turned so calmly there might never have been any hasty conference. "This is Shalon din Togara Morning Tide, Windfinder to Clan Shodein," she said with a small bow toward the woman in green brocade, "and this is Derah din Delaan Rising Wave..."

[Derah] made a small bow toward the fourth woman, in yellow. "This is Taval din Chanai Nine Gulls, Windfinder of *White Spray*." Only three rings hung from each of Taval's ears, fine like those of the Sailmistress. She looked younger than Shalon, no older than himself.

Seanchan *damane* and *sul'dam*

- In [TGH: 40, *Damane*, 477] Egwene sees Renna, her new *sul'dam*:

With long, dark hair and big brown eyes, she was pretty, and perhaps as much as ten years older than Nynaeve.

Note she can put a specific age to Renna.

- In [TGH: 40, *Damane*, 482], a *damane* is described:

One of the other *sul'dam* snorted loudly; she was linked to a pretty dark-haired woman in her middle years who kept her eyes on her hands.

Again, we have a specific age.

- [WH: 11, Ideas of Importance, 264] describes the former *damane* Alivia as having:

...fine lines at the corners of her blue eyes and threads of white in her golden yellow hair.

And a telling quote from Cyndane's POV at the end of the book:

With *saidar* in her, Cyndane could see the faint lines at the corners of the woman's eyes. Not one of those who called themselves Aes Sedai, then. [WH: 35, With the Choedan Kal, 648]

Alivia is not ageless.

Forsaken and other old-time Aes Sedai

- AOL Aes Sedai don't seem to have had the look, although we have little evidence one way or the other. (Plus, aging was weird in the AOL. Jonai [TSR: 26, The Dedicated, 300] is 63 years old and considers himself young.) Jonai doesn't mention his Aes Sedai having an "ageless" look, but he doesn't mention her lack of it, either. He says she "looked younger than he." None of the Forsaken are "ageless."
- Many years after the Breaking, when Rhuidean is built, the Aes Sedai with the Jenn Aiel are described as "ageless" [TSR: 25, The Road to the Spear, 284]. While one of these AS has the same name as one of the AOL AS we see in TSR, it is not the same person. At a post-POD book signing in Dayton, RJ was asked, "Was the Aes Sedai who initiated the Pact of Rhuidean from the Age of Legends?" RJ's answer:

(Pause) "No." (Pause) "No, she was not from the Age of Legends."

[Michael Martin]

When was the OR first put into use? The first of the Three Oaths to be put into effect, the Second Oath against making weapons with the Power, was adopted after the War of Power [TGH: 1, The Flame of Tar Valon, 5; Guide: 24, The White Tower, 213]. However, Sheriam's statement in [TGH: 23, The Testing, 282] implies that the Oath Rod itself wasn't put into use until after the Trolloc Wars. Needless to say, this point needs clarification.

Stilled Aes Sedai

- After being stilled, Siuan and Leane look like young women again, not "ageless" [TSR: 47, The Truth of a Viewing, 535]. They look different enough that it is hard to recognize them. When they get the OP back, they don't get the ageless look back, either. In [LOC: 44, The Color of Trust, 556], Mat sees SS after she has been Healed by Nynaeve:

He gave her a shallow bow and walked quickly to where a pretty blue-eyed young woman was tapping her foot to the music. She had a sweet mouth, just right for kissing, and he bloody well wanted to enjoy himself.

- The BA stilled in Tear (Amico) looks different:
Amico looked young, perhaps younger than her years, but it was not quite the agelessness of Aes Sedai who had worked years with the One Power. "You have sharp eyes, Aviendha, but I don't know if this has anything to do with stilling. It must, though, I suppose. I don't know what else could cause it." [TSR: 5, Questioners, 84]
- The TAS stilled by Rand at Dumai's Wells also look young, as opposed to ageless [ACOS: 1, High Chasaline, 60].

Students in the Tower and the Kin

As noted above, no AS gets the ageless look until after they've been raised to full AS [ACOS: 24, The Kin, 408]. This is not a matter of time spent channelling, or of strength in the OP, but of passing a certain point – being raised.

- Elayne mentions an Accepted who is older than 40 (and thus has been channelling a *long* time, at least as long as some of the younger sisters) and looks *young* – Nynaeve's age, not ageless [ACOS: 24, The Kin, 408].
- In [ACOS: 31, *Mashiara*, 497], Elayne and the AS meet the Knitting Circle:
Most wore Ebou Dari dresses, though only one possessed the olive skin; most had lines on their faces and at least a touch of gray; and every last woman of them could channel to one degree or another. No AS has a lined face; it's part of being ageless.
- In [ACOS: 23, Next Door to a Weaver, 393], Ny meets Reanne Corly:
From the exchange, she had expected someone younger than Setalle Anan, but Reanne had hair more gray than not and a face full of what might have been smile lines...
Again, Reanne is old-looking.
- It can't be put any clearer than this:
There had to be a reason why the Kin looked neither ageless nor anything near the ages they claimed.

[TPOD: 3, A Pleasant Ride, 94]

Physical effects of the Oath Rod

In L:NS and TPOD, we get ample evidence that swearing on an Oath Rod produces a physical effect – some kind of “tightening” of the skin:

- [L:NS, 653]: Moiraine, a newly-raised Aes Sedai, thinks:
The Three Oaths still made her skin feel too tight.
- [L:NS, 662-663]: Merean is describing how Moiraine and SS were punished for putting mice in Elaida’s bed the night before they were raised:
“I doubt any other women have been raised Aes Sedai while still too tender to sit from their last visit to the Mistress of Novices. Once the Three Oaths tightened on them, they needed cushions a week.”
- [TPOD: 11, Questions and an Oath, 256]: Galina takes an Oath on Sevanna’s OR, after being tortured by the Shaido WOs:
Galina felt the oath settle on her, as if she suddenly wore a garment that covered her far too tightly from her scalp to the soles of her feet. ...it suddenly seemed as if the burning of her skin was being pressed deep into her flesh...
- [TPOD: 26, The Extra Bit, 504]: Seaine reswears the Three Oaths:
Seaine retook the Oaths in turn, each producing a slight momentary pressure everywhere from her scalp to the soles of her feet. In truth, the pressure was difficult to detect at all, with her skin still feeling too tight from retaking the Oath against speaking a lie.

This “tightening of the skin” could be what causes the ageless look, kind of like a permanent face-lift.

Conclusions on the ageless look

- The ageless look is not the result of anything the AS experience until the actual raising ceremony. The Kin are made up of women who trained in the Tower, who flunked out or ran away at various points in their training. This includes women who have passed the Accepted test, and even women who made it through various parts of the AS test [ACOS: 24, The Kin, 405-406]. None of them are ageless.
- The ageless look is not the result of strength in the OP. The Kin contain women who are fairly strong channellers:
Of course, Reanne could channel – she had expected that; hoped for it, anyway – but she had not expected the strength. Reanne was not as strong as Elayne, or even Nicola – burn that wretched girl! – but she easily equaled Sheriam, say, or Kwamesa or Kiruna. [ACOS: 23, Next Door to a Weaver, 394]
So do the WOs and the Windfinders. Alivia is stronger in the OP than Nynaeve, and doesn’t have the ageless look. The strongest channellers of all, the Forsaken, definitely do not have the ageless look.
- The agelessness is not the result of the total amount of OP channelled. The obvious example of this is the Forsaken. Certain members of the Kin are very old (Reanne Corly is older than 400), and must have channelled as much in their lifetime as any of the younger AS. The same applies to Alivia, who was collared at 13 or 14 years of age, and has been a *damane* for 400 years [WH: 8, Sea Folk and Kin, 205].
- Here is the part where Elayne starts putting it all together: After talking about the 40+ Accepted who looks 26, she says:
“We *slow*, Nynaeve. Somewhere between twenty and twenty-five, we begin aging more slowly. How much depends on how strong we are, but when doesn’t. Any woman who can channel does it. Takima said she thought it was the beginning of achieving the ageless look, though I don’t think anyone has ever reached that until they’ve worn the shawl at *least* a year or two, sometimes five or more. Think. You *know* any sister with gray hair is *old*, even if you aren’t supposed to mention it. So if Reanne slowed, and she must have, how old is she?” [ACOS: 24, The Kin, 408]

Nobody in all of Randland has the ageless look besides AS raised in the White Tower. Thus, there must be something done to them in the raising ceremony which brings about the ageless look. The only such thing of which we know is swearing on the Oath Rod. Given the evidence that we have, it must be the OR which causes agelessness. The only other possibility is that there is something else done in the raising ceremony which we don’t know about and which causes the agelessness. Any such thing would have to involve the woman’s channelling ability, in order to explain why the agelessness vanishes when a person is stilled. There may indeed be other items used in the AS-raising ceremony besides the Oath Rod, as indicated by this quote:

Romanda wanted to use gateways to remove the Oath Rod and certain other items... from the Tower so they could make true Aes Sedai in Salidar while depriving Elaida of the ability. [LOC: 39, Possibilities, 513]

These items may be used in the AS *test*, as opposed to the actual final ceremony, though.

Miscellaneous notes

Stilling and the Oaths

When an AS is severed from the Source (i.e. stilled), she loses the ageless look, and is freed from the Oaths. This, combined with the fact that the OR only works on channellers, implies that the OR somehow works by tapping into the AS's own channelling ability, causing the binding and the agelessness.

Egwene's Accepted test

In one of Egwene's three experiences in the *ter'angreal* used in the test to be raised Accepted, she is the Amyrlin Seat. She looks in a mirror, and sees that she has the ageless look [TDR: 22, The Price of the Ring, 203]. A few pages later, she says that she has not sworn on the Oath Rod. If she never held the OR, then why does she look ageless? **Richard Boyé** explains this nicely:

The reason is that the *ter'angreal* weaves illusions and testings from what the subject knows, expects, and fears. How else would it know that Nynaeve wants to marry Lan or that her mother's name was Elnore? Egwene saw herself with the ageless look because from her knowledge and point of view, she was supposed to.

Note that in that same vision, Egwene's Keeper, Beldeine, was stilled, but she still had the ageless look. In the real world, we know that stilling removes the look. However, at that point in time, Egwene didn't know that.

Death

A final effect of the OR is that it seems to shorten the lifespan of channellers bound by it. It seems to work this way: use of the OP increases one's lifespan by a great deal. The more you channel, the better the anagathic effect. Being bound by the OR decreases one's lifespan, or perhaps lessens the anti-aging benefits of channelling. In any case, the net effect is that OR-bound channellers live longer than non-channellers, but not as long as channellers who are *not* bound by the OR.

Evidence that Oathbound channellers don't live as long as nonbound ones:

- Cadsuane Melaidhrin is most likely the oldest living AS, at around 295 years old [ACOS: Glossary, 671]. She considers herself to be very old, expecting to die RSN:
Over two hundred and seventy years had passed since she last encountered a task she could not perform. Any day now might be her last, but young al'Thor would be a fitting end to it all.
[ACOS: 19, Diamonds and Stars, 347]
- Elayne to Reanne Corly:
"...apparently no Aes Sedai since the Breaking has lived as long as any of you in the Knitting Circle claim. ... In your own case, not by over a hundred years."
[ACOS: 37, A Note from the Palace, 577]
Reanne Corly is 411.

From these quotes, we can conclude that the maximum lifespan of modern AS is around 300 years.

Ages of other channellers:

- The above quote also tells us that the Kin live at least 25% longer than AS. Since Reanne Corly is hardly on her last legs, Kin probably outlive AS by an even greater amount. We learn in [WH: 10, A Plan Succeeds, 238] that there is another Kinswoman who's almost six hundred years old.
- In [LOC: 15, A Pile of Sand, 262], we have a reference to an Aiel WO who died at age 300 of a snake bite, but still looked young. Since she looked young, she probably still had a good bit of her natural lifespan ahead of her. So, from this, we know that WOs at least have the *potential* to live longer than 300 years, i.e. longer than AS. In practice, they probably don't live that long (the WO telling the story of the 300-year-old WO regards it as a legend, and possibly exaggerated), due to the harsh conditions in the Three-Fold Land.
- The Forsaken are all way old, and were even before they got locked up in the Bore.
- The former Seanchan *damane* Alivia is approximately 414 years old, as noted above.

From the evidence that we have, modern-day AS have a shorter maximum lifespan than other channellers. As with the ageless look, there must be something done in the AS-raising ceremony which causes this. The only such thing of which we are aware is being bound by the OR. Again, there is a possibility that there is some other thing in the ceremony which we don't know about, and which causes this effect. However, there is less chance of this being the case with the shorter lifespan than with the ageless look.

This is because we have independent evidence from Semirhage. In [LOC: 6, Threads Woven of Shadow, 139-143] Semirhage is thinking about how the AOL AS wanted to "bind" her to put an end to her medical malpractice. The actual quote is:

...to be bound never to know her pleasures again, and with that binding be able to see the end of life approach...

Now, we know that "binding" of channellers (especially female channellers) was done with an OR. Semirhage seems to be thinking that the binding would cut her life short.

Elayne and Nynaeve have certainly come to the same conclusion. Nynaeve and Elayne's reactions to Egwene's announcement that she will swear the Oaths on the OR as soon as they get the Tower back are worth quoting in their entirety:

"That's madness!" Nynaeve burst out... "You know what it does; the Kin are proof! How many Aes Sedai live past three hundred? Or reach it? And don't tell me I shouldn't talk about age. That's a ridiculous custom, and you know it. Egwene, Reanne was called Eldest because she was the oldest Kinswoman in Ebou Dar. The oldest anywhere is a woman called Aloisia Nemosni, an oil merchant in Tear. Egwene, she's nearly six... hundred... years... old! When the Hall hears that, I'll wager they'll be ready to put the Oath Rod on a shelf."

"The Light knows three hundred years is a long time," Elayne put in, "but I can't say I'm happy myself at the prospect of perhaps cutting my life in half, Egwene." [WH: 10, A Plan Succeeds, 238]

It doesn't get much clearer than that.

Removing the Oaths

Speaking of that scene, what about Egwene's plan on how to get around the age limitation while still having AS swear the Oaths? Will that actually work?

Egwene's idea is that AS raised to the shawl will swear on the OR as usual, and that when they get close to the upper-age limit on sworn AS of 300, they could be released from the OR and sent to live with the Kin for, presumably, another 300 years or so.

The question, of course, is whether the OR actually makes one age faster, or simply dictates a cutting-off point. Cadsuane, for example, seems to have aged about as much as Reanne – but Reanne is better than a century older. This would seem to argue that the OR makes you age faster, and that removing the Oaths from, say, a 250-year-old AS would not actually help her live past 300.

However, as **Amy Gray** points out, when Sivan and Leane were stilled, they lost a good twenty years in appearance. All the evidence indicates that the age they look now is the age they would have looked if they had aged (and slowed) naturally (if, say, they had been WOs or Windfinders). We can safely conclude that their rejuvenation was a result of having the Oaths removed. The implication, then, is that Egwene's plan should actually work, and a released AS would revert to whatever age she would have had if she had never been bound.

As a last tidbit for thought, Elayne raises the interesting question of what would happen in reverse – if someone already over the age limit imposed by the OR then swears on it. Hmm...

Conclusions

The primary effect of the OR is to compel obedience to oaths sworn on it. It probably does this by tapping into the oathbound channeller's own channelling ability in some unknown way. (We know this because the binding to the oaths vanishes when the oathbound woman is severed.) It has some secondary effects, in particular: (1) it shortens the lifespan of the bound channeller; and (2) it probably causes the bound channeller to develop the "ageless look" unique to modern AS. It is unknown if these secondary effects are deliberate (i.e. a kind of death sentence and a way of marking criminals, respectively) or if they are an inherent side-effect of the binding mechanism.

2.3.04 How do One-Power-forged blades work?

[Pam Korda]

I asked RJ about Aes Sedai-forged weapons, like Lan's sword that never needs sharpening: was the Power just used in the manufacturing process, to change the structure of the steel to make it extra-strong, or was a flow of the Power somehow incorporated into the steel?

"The Power was used in blending the metals (and other materials...) and altering the structure. There is no source of the Power in these weapons, nor do they draw on the Power like *angreal*..." [from RJ letter, April 1995]

In the same letter, RJ said that when a Fadeblade strikes Power-wrought metal, the reaction produces blue sparks. This implies that Fadeblades are Power-wrought metal, as when we see the two Fades dueling during the fight in the Stone in [TSR: 10, The Stone Stands, 135]. It also implies that Thom Merrill had Power-wrought daggers during the incident in Whitebridge [TEOTW: 26, Whitebridge, 318], which has always struck most people as rather odd. RJ addressed this question in the post-WH Dromen & Demonen chat:

Q: If a Fade's blade will not produce lightning except against other Thakandar-wrought blades, and Power-wrought blades, why do Thom's daggers produce it when he attacks the Fade at Whitebridge?

RJ: Thom's daggers did not produce the effect. It was produced before Thom reached the Fade.

Steven Cooper remarks:

Having checked [the passage], RJ is not quite right in saying the effect was produced before Thom reached the Fade – first Thom crashes into the Fade, then: "The air in the square flashed an eye-searing blue." However, it certainly seems from this response that RJ never intended to give the impression that Thom had OP-wrought daggers.



2.3.05 What is the range on sensing other channelers?



A channeller can sense another channeller, under various conditions:

1. A female can sense another female, even if neither of them are holding the Source at the time. This is a skill which takes some time to learn. If one is really good, it is not necessary to see the other woman in order to know she is there. For example, one of the Tower AS senses Egwene in the throne room in Cairhien, even though she was invisible. In addition, a female can tell when another is embracing the Source, by a great glow surrounding the channeller. Of course, female channellers can sense active female channeling, as well as the presence of other female channellers.
2. Females cannot naturally sense male channelling. It may be that they can do so by using the OP somehow, although Moggy's "technique" of [LOC: 8, The Storm Gathers, 178] was simply a trick.
3. Male channellers can sense female channelling, by a prickling feeling on the skin. There is a finite range on this. We can get some sense of the range from [TFOH: 15, What Can be Learned in Dreams, 213] where Moiraine is using the OP to eavesdrop on Rand and Asmo. Moiraine's tent is said to be "not far" from Rand's, let's guess around 20 meters. Note that the amount of channelling going on is probably very small; a bigger flow would probably increase the detection range.
4. Male channellers can sense male channelling, as well as other men holding the Source [LOC: 3, A Woman's Eyes, 92]. The sensing is not as obvious as when females sense other females. It is likely that it is more difficult for men to sense other men channeling at a distance. In [TFOH: 3, Pale Shadows, 75], Rand thinks:

Women who could channel saw a glow surrounding another woman who had embraced *saidar* and felt her channelling clearly, but he never saw anything around Asmodean, and felt little.

This is with Asmo in the same room. However, there seems to be some confusion of exactly how far the range on male-male sensing is. Here are some examples:

- [TFOH: 55, The Threads Burn, 664]: When Rand is running around trying to balefire the hell out of Rahvin, even though Rahvin is holding *saidin*, Rand can't feel where he is.
- [TFOH: 55, The Threads Burn, 662]: Rand recalls Asmo describing trying to locate another man channelling as "like trying to find a lion in high grass" (i.e. very difficult).
- [TFOH: 22, Birdcalls by Night, 287]: After a Draghkar attack on Rand's camp, Asmodean tells him that he had sensed the Draghkar, but had not done anything about it, since he thought Rand could deal with it, which he did. Rand replies:
"Well for you that you didn't," Rand cut him off, sitting cross-legged in the dark. "If I had felt you full of *saidin* out there tonight, I might have killed you."

The other man's laugh was shaky. "I thought of that, too."

This little snippet of conversation seems fairly clear. Rand obviously felt capable of sensing Asmo from as far away as Rand was from Asmo during the fight, and Asmodean also thought it was possible.

- [LOC: 42, The Black Tower, 545]: Rand says to Taim:
"If I feel a man channel in Caemlyn... and don't think you can stay far enough from the Palace that I won't feel it and be safe."

(Note: Rand may just be bluffing, here. Or it might just be something along the lines of "If I hear you use that sort of language in this house, young man, I'll wash your mouth out with soap!")

- [TFOH: 44, The Lesser Sadness, 495]: Rand was able to sense lightning from Sammael (he thinks it is Sammael, at least) during the battle of Cairhien.

5. For both men and women, the ability to sense channeling seems to depend on the strength of the particular flow being channeled. For men, this is implied by Asmodean when he talks to Rand about blocking Aviendha's gateway to Seanchan:

"I felt your weave – anybody within a mile could have felt it – I never saw anything like it – I didn't know that anyone but Demandred could block a gateway that was closing." [TFOH: 32, A Short Spear, 374]

For women, the dependence is implied by Elayne, Nynaeve, and Sareitha's detection of the Seanchan channelling in Ebou Dar at [TPOD: 5, The Breaking Storm, 129] – Elayne thinks:

Sareitha was not strong enough to sense *saidar* being wielded at that distance... She was not strong enough. Unless someone was using as much as they had on this hilltop.

This quote shows that, for females at least, the ability to sense flows depends on both the strength of the flow and the strength of the woman doing the sensing. This may also be the case for men.

2.3.06 Can you make horizontal gateways?

[From the aol.com Q-and-A session with RJ, 27 June 1996]:

Q: Can gateways be created at non-right angles to the ground? If not, why not? If yes, why haven't we seen them?

RJ: They can be, and you haven't seen it because there's been no need to do it. And also some of the people who can make gateways don't know how to do it.



2.3.07 How does balefire work?

"When anything is destroyed with balefire, it ceases to exist *before* the moment of its destruction, like a thread that burns away from where the flame touched it. The greater the power of the balefire, the further back in time it ceases to exist. The strongest I [Moiraine] can manage will remove only a few seconds from the Pattern... For as far back as you destroy [something], whatever it did during that time *no longer happened*. Only the memories remain, for those who saw or experienced it."

[TFOH: 6, Gateways, 119]



That pretty much explains it. Something that is BFed is erased backwards in time; the amount of erasing depends on the amount of Power put into the BF. Rand, at full power, with an *angreal*, managed to erase Rahvin back about half an hour. Note that balefire does *not* erase every single action the victim performed in his life. When Rahvin was BFed, Morgase did not become un-Compelled, sitting back in the Caemlyn palace. If Lanfear were balefired, the Bore would not cease to exist, since it was created over 3000 years ago, and I doubt that the capacity for creating that strong a beam of BF exists. (Plus, if it *was* done, the poor Pattern would probably unravel completely; see below.)

If person A balefires person B, and then person C balefires person A, does person B come back to life?

This one has cropped up time and again over the years, but RJ appears to have contradicted himself over the answer.

For instance, **William Carew** reported that RJ said, at a Brisbane signing in 1999, that if the balefire from Person C was strong enough, then yes, Person B would come back to life.

But, contrariwise, **Paul Ward** received a letter from RJ (dated March 2000) in which he stated:

"The balefire weave exists wholly or partly outside time, which removes it from its own effect."

– which implies the opposite.

When a person is balefired, can he be reborn?

The description of balefire leaves us one important question: does "burning one's thread from the Pattern" mean that one's soul is destroyed forever, and one can never be reborn? **John Novak** finally got an answer for this from RJ at a post-TPOD book-signing [Northern Virginia, 21 November 1998]:

Balefire: I'm right (this was my question). What this means is, if someone is balefired, the Dark One can't reincarnate them. But they *can* be spun back out into the Wheel as normal. Balefire is *not* the eternal death of the soul. He also made a comment to the effect that even in the absence of balefire, there may be circumstances where the Dark One cannot bring someone back.

If this is the case, then why is BF so bad? It must be a question of scale. If lots of BF is used on many targets, as it was during the War of Power, the Pattern will become quite ragged and begin to unravel, like an old pair of jeans. If large quantities of BF are used, then there will be obvious problems with causality, as there were in the aftermath of Rahvin's death. Thus, it's not a good idea to use strong BF, and it's not wise for many people to use it regularly. **John Walter Biles** explains:

The Pattern unravels permanently because in a war of mass destruction with balefire, you can yank threads out of the Pattern faster than they can be replaced. Yeah, they can *eventually* be reborn, but unless the total population of all of creation is static, then they won't be reborn instantly. More importantly, it screws up causality. That's why the Pattern can unravel; it's not that you run out of threads, it is that if you nuke an entire city, every consequence of every action by everyone in the entire city is suddenly undone back to point X. Given the amount of balefire nuking a city takes, you can make quite a mess. Do enough damage to the Pattern faster than it can repair itself, and it still comes apart.

So if a balefired person can be reborn, why can't the DO recycle a Forsaken that's been killed by balefire?

The real question being asked here is: what is the difference between the soul of a Forsaken killed by ordinary means and the soul of one killed by balefire? **Timothy Itnyre** explains:

The only difference is that the Forsaken killed by balefire dies in the past; at the moment of contact with the balefire, they are already dead and their soul has gone on to wherever souls go when you're dead. In a normal death, the Forsaken's soul departs at the moment of death. The only difference then is the timing of the soul's departure. This

would indicate that the Dark One's inability to resurrect balefired souls has to do with the timing rather than actual physical properties of balefire. In LOC, the Dark One laments his inability to resurrect Rahvin:

RAHVIN DEAD IN HIS PRIDE. HE SERVED WELL, YET EVEN I CANNOT SAVE HIM FROM
BALEFIRE. EVEN I CANNOT STEP OUTSIDE OF TIME.

[LOC: Prologue, The First Message, 15]

The crucial clue is in the last line where the Dark One says that he cannot step outside of time. The Dark One must claim the Forsaken's soul before it goes off to the afterlife; in the case of a balefire victim, the Dark One would have to go into the past to get the soul. Since the Dark One cannot step outside of time, he cannot save those souls. Therefore, balefire prevents the Dark One from claiming souls.

Why doesn't somebody just balefire the Dark One back to before where the taint was created?

Read the previous paragraphs about what BF does, and why it is dangerous to use. Now, supposing that (1) the DO has a corporeal body which could *be* balefired, and (2) enough BF could be produced to zap the DO back 3500 years (neither of which is at all certain), consider what would happen to the poor Pattern of All Creation if one of the prime movers in its weaving was BFed. The end of the world would probably happen for sure, then.

Remember that the DO is the source of the whole history of the Third Age. Everything everybody has done for the past 3500 or so years has been affected in some way by the DO. Why is Joe al'Schmoe of the Two Rivers a farmer in a forgotten province of Andor, and not a citizen of one of the most powerful, strongest nations in Randland? It's because Manetheren was destroyed in the Trolloc Wars, which were initiated by Ishamael, who was the DO's right-hand-man throughout the Third Age.

Another point (via G.G. Kay's *Fionavar Tapestry*) is that maybe the DO doesn't even *have* a thread to balefire. After all, the DO's prison exists "outside the Pattern." Perhaps the DO itself does, too. (*Note*: the no-body/no-thread argument applies to "why doesn't somebody BF the DO?" no matter if you try to BF him back 3500 years or 3 seconds. The "Pattern" argument does, as well – if there is no DO, what happens the next time the Wheel comes around to the AOL/Third Age again?)

2.3.08 What is the difference between Skimming and Traveling?

[Pam Korda, John Novak]



Skimming requires knowledge of destination and Traveling requires knowledge of origin [TFOH: 6, Gateways, 121]. For example, Aviendha Travels to Seanchan which she obviously doesn't know a thing about, but she knew the bathroom real well.

Skimming is what Rand does in [TSR: 58, The Traps of Rhuidean, 670-671] to chase Asmodean to Rhuidean, and in [TFOH: 54, To Caemlyn, 645-646] to bring the Aiel strike force to Caemlyn. It apparently works by creating a tunnel through some other space from the point you are at to the point where you want to go. Going through this tunnel takes a finite amount of time, and one person can chase another through it, as Rand chased Asmodean. Egwene learns from Moggy that Skimming (as opposed to Travelling) is:

...a way to journey from a place you did not know well to one you did.

[ACOS: 9, A Pair of Silverpike, 175]

The above "chasing" thing contradicts something Egwene says about it in [ACOS: 12, A Morning of Victory, 241]:

If two sisters wove gateways on the same spot only moments apart, aiming to Skim to the same place, they would not see one another, not unless it was *exactly* the same spot, with the weaves *exactly* identical.

So, either this is a difference between men's Skimming and women's, or Rand managed to exactly duplicate Asmo's weave, or RJ messed up. The Skimming place has some similarity to T'A'R, and may *be* a part of T'A'R [ACOS: 12, A Morning of Victory, 240].

Traveling is a far simpler, far more direct, far quicker means of transport. Traveling opens a "gate" from one physical point to another. Men do this by boring a hole in the Pattern, so to speak, while women do this by making the Pattern in both locations identical [LOC, 37, When Battle Begins, 491]. Moghedien and Rand are of the opinion that using the wrong method would be catastrophically bad. Stepping through the gate, one instantly changes location. Asmodean tells Rand that, unlike Skimming, Traveling requires only knowledge of the starting point [TFOH: 6, Gateways, 121].

Now, it's been suggested that what the Third Age Randlanders call "Traveling" is not the same thing as the old-time, AOL Traveling. The only evidence to support this theory is the manner in which Ish manifests himself in the TEOTW Prologue. He kind of shimmered and appeared – no mention of a "gate" or a doorway. We've not seen anybody else do this, though; all of the other Forsaken use the standard gate method.

It is possible to do a Traveling-like thing with the TP, by "stepping outside the Pattern," as the Watcher (a.k.a. Ishy) does in [ACOS: 20, Patterns Within Patterns, 358]. At a Brisbane signing in 1999, RJ confirmed that Ishy's strange gateway in the TEOTW Prologue is due to his use of the TP. [William Carew]

2.3.09 What do Dreamers and Dreamwalkers do?

[Emma Pease]



- Entering T'A'R: We know that regular people can do this, though they are not usually aware that they are doing so. At times the Forsaken seem to pull people into T'A'R (the dreams the boys have in TEOTW for instance). Also Dem thinks when he sees Elayne in T'A'R (LOC) that she has a *ter'angreal* of the sort used in the AOL to teach students how to enter T'A'R. My guess is this skill can be taught to any AS and perhaps to anyone.
- Entering other people's dreams: This is what Egwene does with Gawyn's dream and it's also the skill the Wise Ones use to pass messages around. This does seem to be specific to 'Dreamers.'
- Foreseeing via dreams: This can also be done by Wolfbrothers.

2.3.10 How does Mat's medallion work?

[Pam Korda, Leigh Butler, Mike Edenfield]



When Elayne tries to use the Power on Mat in [LOC: 38, A Sudden Chill, 504], she describes the effect as:

"The flows just... vanished."

It seems that the medallion works by dissolving or destroying Power flows. At Balticon 30 (April 1996), RJ said that the medallion only works on direct weavings of the Power (both *saidin* and *saidar*) against the wearer. Evidence that the medallion protects against *saidin* comes from [LOC: 44, The Color of Trust, 554]: Halima/Aran'gar channels at Mat and the medallion activates. Halima, being a male soul recycled into a woman's body, channels *saidin*.

Indirect effects of the Power, such as picking up a rock with Air and throwing it, or lightning (lightning was mentioned by RJ as a specific example), are not blocked. Thus, the failure of the medallion to protect against the lightning strike at the end of TFOH can be explained. Rand's belief that the medallion didn't protect Mat from a man's channelling was in error.

Given all that, there has been some debate over whether the medallion would protect Mat from the effects of the Seanchan Crystal Throne. The throne is supposed to be a *ter'angreal* that inspires awe and reverence in anyone who comes before it [Guide: 17, Seanchan, 160]. This raises some separate questions, such as exactly how a *ter'angreal* could "channel" without someone activating it, but the relevant thing to wonder is: is the power of the Throne a direct or indirect effect of the OP? If the former, that implies Mat's medallion would shield him from the Throne; if the latter, the medallion may not be able to protect him from it.

An interesting case to consider is the Mirror of Mists disguise that Lanfear was wearing as Keille in the Waste. Mat had his medallion on the whole time, yet he couldn't see through the disguise any more than anyone else. However, as **Owen Pope** points out, there is a difference in that the Crystal Throne seems to affect someone's thoughts *directly*, something like Compulsion, while the Mirror of Mists is probably just an alteration of the environment immediately around the person wearing the disguise (perhaps if Mat had tried to hug Keille, or something...)

So it seems that as long as the "awe" weaves have to touch Mat directly to mess with him, the medallion would protect him from the effects of the Crystal Throne. (Of course, since RJ has said that the action will never actually go to Seanchan, this may be a moot point, but it's interesting to consider.)

2.3.11 What are "involuntary rings"?

In [TPOD: 2, Unweaving, 82], Moridin is waxing wroth on things which the Third Agers can do which were not known in the AOL:



A way to Heal being severed. ... Involuntary rings. Those Warders and the bond they shared with their Aes Sedai. ... whenever he thought he had the measure of them, these *primitives* revealed some new skill, did something that no one in his own Age had dreamed of.

Quite a few people have expressed confusion over what "involuntary rings" are; here is an explanation. A "ring" is a way of referring to a group of linked channellers (such a group has been more commonly called a "circle"). In [TPOD: 2, Unweaving, 83], Moridin wonders about the repercussions of Nynaeve's group using the weather *ter'angreal* in "a ring"; the implication being that he's wondering what would happen if they used it in a circle. Thus, an "involuntary ring" refers to channellers being linked against their will. We've seen this done, and know the device which makes it possible – the *a'dam*. The mention of involuntary rings is a reference to the *damane*, who are linked to the *sul'dam* involuntarily.

2.3.12 What caused the One Power weirdness in Ebou Dar?

[John Novak]



At various points through TPOD, we are hit in the face with the fact that something other than the taint on *saidin* is wrong with the One Power in general. It is described by both male and female channellers in roughly the same terms, and is widespread enough to cover a radius of hundreds, if not thousands, of miles. When mentioned, the effect of this weirdness is to make the One Power difficult and dangerous, unpredictable, and very hard to control.

This effect began showing up during and after the flight of Elayne, Nynaeve, and their band from the Kin's farm. Two momentous events involving the One Power occurred at the farm. First, the Bowl of the Winds was used to return the weather to its normal patterns. Second, Elayne attempted a dangerous unraveling of her gateway with disastrous and incendiary results.

It was the first of these events (the weather weave) which caused the weirdness, not the disastrous unraveling. Reasons are as follows:

1. Timing. Even though the two events occur very close together in both time and narrative, the weirdness of the One Power is clearly evident *immediately* after the weather weave, but before the unraveling. In fact, the weirdness shows up while Elayne is weaving the gateway, which is clearly prior to her later unweaving [TPOD: 6, Threads, 139].
The weirdness affects not only *saidar*, but *saidin* as well. In [TPOD: 24, A Time for Iron, 469], Dashiva describes a similar weirdness. It is important to note that he uses almost the exact same words as Elayne does – a weave that does not want to form, then forms quickly and violently. It is the *same* effect.
2. By definition, Elayne's weaving and unweaving of the gateway does not involve *saidin*, and it is difficult to see how a *saidar*-only weave could affect *saidin* so profoundly. However, the Bowl of the Winds incorporated *saidin* into its weaves as well. Elayne notes this in [TPOD: 5, The Breaking Storm, 127]. Perrin's Asha'man see a weave of *saidin* flashing across the sky as well, in [TPOD: 7, A Goatpen, 160]. This same phenomenon was witnessed by the WOs with Perrin as a weave of *saidar*.
3. If Elayne's unweaving had been the cause, why did it only affect the OP on the Ebou Dar side of the gateway? There is no weirdness when Nynaeve Heals Elayne and Aviendha at the opposite terminus of the gate. [Aaron Bourque]
4. It is known that the Windfinders have a very different style of weaving *saidar* than anyone else, a style that involves thick, rope-like strands of Power. This style of weaving, and their unprecedented personal control over the weather, was unknown in the Age of Legends, when the Bowl of the Winds was created. Furthermore, the Bowl of the Winds was designed to control only a small region's weather, not the weather of an entire continent or an entire world [TPOD: 2, Unweaving, 83]. It seems plausible that such a massive over-stressing and over-use of a *ter'angreal*, which may create permanent standing weaves over an entire continent, might foul things up on a global scale.
5. Jordan said so. At a post-TPOD signing in northern Virginia [21 November 1998], Jordan confirmed outright in plain language that the Bowl, not the unweaving, was the cause of the One Power weirdness, and that it was a case of oversteering a *ter'angreal*. From John Novak's report:

He went into a relatively detailed explanation to the effect that the Bowl was stressed far, far beyond its original design parameters because of the advanced knowledge of the Windfinders. It was affecting a global pattern, when it was designed for only a small region. Men helping would not have changed anything, and the effects linger most strongly near Ebou Dar, but also along the "spokes" which radiated from that place.

By WH, the weirdness around Ebou Dar has pretty much worn off; none of the *damane*, Teslyn, or Joline make any comment about *saidar* acting strangely.

2.3.13 Is Cadsuane's hair-thingy a *ter'angreal*?

[Leigh Butler, Adrienne Huston]



Cadsuane Melaidhrin sports a hair-ornament the likes of which we've not seen anywhere else in Randland:

An iron-gray bun decorated with small dangling golden fish and birds, stars and moons.

[TPOD: 27, The Bargain, 536]

This thing is mentioned in just about every scene in which Cadsuane appears. Various incidents in TPOD led us to believe it may be an *angreal* or *ter'angreal*, and in WH and COT we find out we were right:

- The one that looks "a little like a shriek" is an *angreal* [WH: 35, With the Choedan Kal, 642].
- The hummingbird is a Well, which can hold a reservoir of the OP to allow channelling in a *stedding* [WH: 34, The Hummingbird's Secret, 626].
- When Cadsuane is interrogating Alanna about her bond with Rand, Alanna attempts to channel, and:

[Cadsuane] made no move to embrace the Source herself. One of her dangling hair ornaments, intertwined golden crescents, was cool at her temple.

[TPOD: 12, New Alliances, 275]

This sounds awfully like what Mat's medallion does when someone's channelling near (but not at) him. It's not known whether Cads's crescents only detect the flows, or if it can actually melt them like Mat's medallion as well. It's also not known whether the crescents are only concerned with *saidar*, but it seems logical to think so, because she has other ornaments that deal with *saidin*.

- COT introduces another ornament, an eight-pointed star, that vibrates in the presence of men who can channel – the more men, the harder it vibrates [COT: 23, Ornaments, 533].
- The function of the swallow was a bit confusing at first. [WH: 35, With the Choedan Kal, 642] tells us that it can detect the OP being channelled and the direction it is coming from, though not how far away or whether *saidin* or *saidar*. However, several people have logically wondered why, then, did it ignore the colossal amount of both *saidin* and *saidar* being wielded by Rand and Nynaeve ten feet away, in favor of picking out the much weaker and more distant weaves produced by the attacking Forsaken?

RJ clarified this in the interview from the online version of the COT Prologue:

Cadsuane's *ter'angreal* was made during the Breaking of the World, at a time when men and women no longer linked, or at least very rarely, since male channelers were going mad at a rate of knots. What the maker was particularly interested in detecting was men channeling, but a man channeling in combination with a woman was, by definition, safe, because no woman was going to link with a man unless she knew absolutely that he was sane and not going to go over the edge of insanity while they were linked. Thus, *saidin* and *saidar* being worked in combination could be ignored, and in fact would be a distraction, since this was and is a warning device. Cadsuane's *ter'angreal* won't point to the two halves of the Power being wielded in combination.

It's still a little confusing as to why a warning device for mad male channellers would also detect *saidar*. After all, as a female channeller Cadsuane is a perfectly good *saidar* detector all by herself [Mark Brimicombe], but oh well.

We also learn in COT that there are three ornaments – two fish and a moon – which Cadsuane does not know the function of [COT: 23, Ornaments, 532].

Where did Cadsuane get them from?

In WH, Cadsuane reflects on where she learned her most important life lessons:

[Nynaeve] had not been put through the lessons that what must be endured, could be endured. In truth, Cadsuane sympathized with her. Somewhat. It was a lesson not everyone could learn in the Tower. She herself, full of pride in her new shawl and her own strength, had been taught by a near toothless wilder at a farm in the heart of the Black Hills. [WH: 34, The Hummingbird's Secret, 624]

Then in COT, we have:

A pity she herself had not come to the shawl fifty years later than she had... But fifty years would have meant that Norla died in her little house in the Black Hills before Cadsuane Melaidhrin ever went to the White Tower. That would have altered a great deal of history. For one thing, it would have been unlikely that she would be in anything approaching her present circumstances. [COT: 23, Ornaments, 534]

A few pages later she mentions how she had "begun earning" her ornaments all those years ago in the Black Hills [COT: 23, Ornaments, 536].

So it seems Cads got her ornaments from this wilder, Norla. How Norla got them is anyone's guess.

2.3.14 The seven seals: status report

Where we found the seals, and their current state (broken or not):

1. Found in the Eye of the World with the Horn of Valere and the Dragon banner, broken.
2. Bayle Domon had one, intact, which he'd bought from a Saldaean antiques salesman. It was taken by Turak; Moiraine found it after the fight at Falme, and it was broken by then.
3. Turak had one in his *cuendillar* collection. Moiraine found it along with (2). Also broken.
4. Moiraine found one in the Stone of Tear's Great Holding, intact.
5. She found another one in Rhuidean, and made a scratch.
6. Nynaeve found one in the Panarch's Museum in Tanchico, accidentally broken on the way to Salidar.
7. Mazrim Taim gave the last one to Rand, saying it was found in a farmhouse in Saldaea. It is still intact.

So three seals are still intact (4, 5, and 7), although they are very, very weak. The intact ones are all in Rand's possession (or the possession of people on Rand's side). Also worth noting is that Rand is not aware of the seal Nynaeve found, or that it is broken already [COT: 24, A Strengthening Storm, 558-559].



In the Prologue of COT, Davram Bashere's wife Deira and Lord Dobraine are attacked, separately, in two apparent robbery attempts. We are not told what exactly the would-be thieves were looking for, but on discovering Dobraine, Loial blurts out:

"This is very bad! If there were more than two, Karldin, if they found-!" [COT: Prologue, Glimmers of the Pattern, 93]

It's been speculated that Bashere and Dobraine were targeted in the belief or hope that they were guarding the seals still in Rand's possession.

Why now is not known, nor why Taim (almost certainly a Darkfriend) gave one to Rand in LOC if the Shadow was only going to want them back later. It's also not clear whether Bashere or Dobraine ever had the seals in the first place.

2.3.15 What's the deal with Healing stilling/gentling?

[Leigh Butler]



In [LOC: 29, Fire and Spirit, 418] Nynaeve makes OP history by Healing Logain of being gentled. A few minutes later, she Heals Sivan and Leane of stilling as well. What was interesting is that Logain had apparently been returned to full strength, while Sivan and Leane ended up much weaker in the Power than they had been before their stilling:

[Leane:] "I went by Logain's house. Six sisters are maintaining his shield, the same as when he was captured. He tried to break free when he found out we knew he had been Healed, and they said if only five had been holding the shield, he might have. So he's as strong as he ever was, or close enough to make no difference. I'm not. Neither is Sivan."

[LOC: 30, To Heal Again, 429]

Why? First, we should note that "stilling" and "gentling" are just gender-differentiated names for the same process; in the AOL it was called "severing," and the term was applied to both sexes [Guide: 2, The One Power and the True Source, 21; LOC: Prologue, The First Message, 17]. There is no evidence that there is any difference in the method of cutting either gender off from the OP.

That said, there are two main theories for why the disparity with Logain and Sivan/Leane occurred:

1. Women and men both use all five aspects of the OP – Air, Water, Fire, Earth, and Spirit – but in general men are far stronger in using Fire and Earth, while women are usually more adept at Water and Air (both are equal in using Spirit) [TSR: 7, Playing With Fire, 108]. Nynaeve used Fire and Spirit to heal Logain, then used the same for Sivan and Leane. So the idea is that if Nynaeve had used Air and Water to Heal the latter, they would have been returned to full strength also. It's worth pointing out, though, that from the 'Yellows' conversation after Nynaeve Heals Sivan and Leane, one of the reasons no one had discovered how to Heal stilling before Nynaeve is that she uses all five aspects of the OP to Heal, while traditional Healing only used Air, Water and Spirit. One would think, then, that if stilling could be Healed with Air and Water, the AS would have discovered it long ago.
2. Nynaeve, a *saidar* channeller, Healed a *saidin* channeller to full strength but two *saidar* channellers to half-strength or less. Later, in [WH: 13, Wonderful News, 310], Corele tells Cadsuane that Damer Flinn, a *saidin* channeller, has Healed Irgain (an AS Rand stilled at Dumai's Wells in LOC):

"Cadsuane, it's as if she'd never been... [stilled]."

So, apparently Irgain was returned to full strength. The obvious conclusion to draw here is that for a stilled woman to be restored to full strength, she has to be Healed by *saidin* (a man), and for a gentled man to be restored to full strength, he has to be Healed by *saidar* (a woman).

Of the two theories, the second seems the most likely.

2.3.16 Cleansing the Taint and what came of it

[Leigh Butler, Karan Mehra, Nathan Scott]



The Cleansing

A lot of people were confused about the taint-cleansing at the end of WH. How exactly did that whole thing work? Well, first it should be pointed out that a lot of the confusion stemmed from people trying to understand the cleansing in terms of physics. This ain't physics; it's magic, and therefore by its very nature not inclined to accommodate our idea of How Things Work.

That said, channelling is still a (mostly) internally consistent system of cause and effect, so we can use physics to construct analogies for what happened, in lieu of strictly literal explanations. We'll all just have to live with the fact that the analogy will not be perfect.

Rand's thoughts sum up the basis for the prevailing theory/analogy:

The male and female halves of the True Source were alike and unlike, attracting and repelling, fighting against each other even as they worked together to drive the Wheel of Time. The taint on the male half had

its opposite twin, too. The wound given him by Ishamael throbbed in time with the taint, while the other, from Fain's blade, beat counterpoint in time with the evil that had killed Aridhol.

[WH: 35, With the Choedan Kal, 637]

Rand, using untainted *saidar*, formed a hollow tube, with one end touching the male half of the True Source and the other end touching Shadar Logoth. The weave did not form as he expected it to, but it worked as he intended.

He forced *saidin* through the pipe of *saidar*, pumping the tainted Power into Shadar Logoth. He did not, as some people thought, send all of *saidin* through SL, because that's impossible. What he seems to have done is pump *saidin* through the conduit until he felt the taint layered on top of it shift, and begin flowing into SL of its own accord, forming that huge black dome. Then he just had to hang on until all the taint went through into SL, and then collapse the conduit.

Basically it was a siphoning effect. **Evan "Skwid" Langlinais** explains:

The taint being the evil of the DO, and SL being an evil which was created to fight the DO's evil, the two attract one another like opposite magnetic polarities, and cancel one another out in the end. To get some of the taint into SL, Rand had to channel an immense amount of *saidin*, but this was still miniscule compared to the infinite quantity of *saidin* contained in the True Source. Once a sufficient quantity of taint was dumped into SL, SL consumed it at a rate greater than that which Rand was dumping *saidin* into SL, and the taint was pulled along like it was being siphoned off the top.

This theory assumes two things:

1. The two evils were attracted to each other, but once in contact they destroyed one another, kind of like matter and antimatter.
2. The taint was cohesive, so that once some of the taint began flowing into SL, the rest was drawn along behind.

The second item is not really in dispute, since to all appearances that's exactly how the taint behaved. However, there have been objections to the first, contending that there is no evidence that the taint and the SL evil would be actually attracted to each other.

Well, there are three reasons to think that the taint and the SL evil are attracted to each other. First, we saw examples, in TEOTW and elsewhere, that Mashadar did attack Trollocs and other Shadowspawn much more aggressively than it did ordinary humans. When Rand was being chased by Trollocs through SL in TEOTW, the tendrils of Mashadar only drifted toward Rand when he charged past, but when the Trollocs tried the same, the tendrils:

...swung uncertainly for a moment, then struck like vipers.

[TEOTW: 20, Dust on the Wind, 251]

It stands to reason that the evil of SL would make the distinction, since creations of the DO are the original and (still) paramount target of Aridhol's hatred. It's not such a big leap to suggest that it would similarly be attracted to the taint, another creation of the DO.

Second, while in Caemlyn during TEOTW, Moiraine tells the gang that the SL dagger (which Mat was carrying at the time) would attract creatures of the Shadow to them [TEOTW: 41, Old Friends and New Threats, 529].

And third, Rand's thoughts comparing the relationship of DO evil/SL evil to that of *saidin/saidar* explicitly indicate that they behave the same way. He specifically says "attracting and repelling." Since his plan appears to have worked just fine, there's no reason to think he was wrong.

If the taint is cleansed, why is Rand still getting dizzy when he channels?

Rand appears only briefly in COT, but that chapter makes clear that he is still experiencing dizziness and double vision whenever he wields *saidin* [COT: 24, A Strengthening Storm, 548]. So what's up with that? Assuming that the taint really has been cleansed, Rand's problems must come from some other source.

The dizziness problem didn't show up as a recurring affliction until TPOD. At the time it was thought that maybe it had something to do with the OP weirdness around Ebou Dar (see section 2.3.12), but the problem was both present before the Bowl was used, in ACOS, and has persisted since the phenomenon subsided (not to mention happening when Rand was nowhere near Ebou Dar, as well). So while the weirdness in Ebou Dar certainly didn't help Rand's condition, it could not have been the cause of it.

In [ACOS: 41, A Crown of Swords, 656-657], Rand is helped in his battle against Sammael in Shadar Logoth by a mysterious channeller (the Wanderer). When the two of them are threatened by Mashadar, both Rand and the Wanderer balefire the fog:

[Rand's] free hand rose, and balefire shot upward, a bar of liquid white fire slicing across the wave sinking toward them. Dimly he was aware of another bar of pale solid fire rising from the other man's hand that was not clasping his, a bar slashing the opposite way from his. The two touched.

Head ringing like a struck gong, Rand convulsed, *saidin* and the Void shattering. Everything was doubled in his eyes, the balconies, the chunks of stone lying about the floor. There seemed to be a pair of the other man overlapping one another, each clutching his head between two hands.

Since the Wanderer was Moridin (see section 1.2.3) and Rand didn't sense the use of *saidin* at all, Moridin's balefire had to have been created using the True Power. Since this is also the first time Rand experiences double vision while wielding *saidin*, it's logical to conclude that crossing the streams is Bad, and that this event is the source of Rand's dizziness problem.

It's not clear at this point why exactly the incident had this effect on Rand, but it's probably due either to an adverse reaction between the OP and TP, or to some bad paradoxical mojo caused by balefire trying to act upon other balefire.

Mike Edenfield expands on the latter idea:

The crossing of the balefire weaves is not the cause of Rand's problems, it's just the catalyst. The real cause was having an uber-strong weave balefired out of existence... This would basically undo the weave back in time up to several minutes, from historical balefire usage. It makes perfect sense, now that I think about it, for that effect to make *saidin* 'waver'... you are still channeling the balefire but suddenly you weren't really channeling it before now so how can you 'still' be channeling a weave that you never began, etc. I can see how that'd seriously screw things up.

It's also not clear whether Moridin has been similarly affected or not. It's not mentioned in either of Moridin's POVs in TPOD, nor does Demandred notice him having any obvious trouble in WH, but this is not conclusive. **Aaron Cote** suggests that perhaps Moridin *is* having problems, and that's why he didn't show up to help the other Forsaken at Shadar Logoth at the end of WH.

2.3.17 Is *saidar* failing?

[Leigh Butler, Jeffrey Yu]



In COT, strange things seem to be happening to *saidar*. Egwene notes that the rebel camp's food is rotting and weevils are appearing in the rebels' grain supply even though Keepings had been woven to prevent such things:

It was as though *saidar* itself was failing.

[COT: 17, Secrets, 418]

Later, Alviarin smugly observes that there are rats in the Tower:

The Great Lord's eyes riddled the Tower, now, though no one seemed to have noticed that the wardings had failed. She did not think it was anything Mesaana had done; the wards simply no longer worked as they were supposed to. There were... gaps.

[COT: 21, A Mark, 501-502]

So, what's the cause for this failure of *saidar*? One possibility that immediately leaps to mind is that perhaps the Cleansing was responsible for it.

Did the Cleansing weaken *saidar*?

The general theory goes: the Cleansing "overstressed" the One Power, sort of the same way using the Bowl did in Ebou Dar, only even more so since so much more Power was used in the Cleansing, and that's why *saidar* is failing.

Tim Bruening and others speculate that this may be the beginning of the end of channelling altogether. After all, if Randland is a future – or past – Earth, then use of the OP *has* to disappear at some point. It has often been theorized that the disappearance of the OP will be what marks the end of the Third Age.

However, there are a couple of problems with this theory. For instance, if the Cleansing is to blame, why does it only seem to be affecting *saidar* and not *saidin*? Is it affecting *saidin*? The only POV we get from a *saidin* channeller in COT is Rand's, which isn't very helpful in determining whether *saidin* has been affected similarly or not, since Rand is having his own separate problems with channelling (see section 2.3.16). You'd think, though, that the various Asha'man who appear in COT would have made some mention of it or at least seem concerned or upset, if something was wrong with *saidin*, but they seem uniformly just cheerful that it is clean. **Donald Harlow** points out that, far from indicating failure, Jur Grady's gateways are getting *bigger* [COT: 8, Whirlpools of Color, 229] (though that's probably more an indication of an increase in Grady's personal strength than anything else).

A possible way to explain why only *saidar* seems affected: it was only the female access key that melted.

Be that as it may, the second and far greater difficulty with the idea that the Cleansing weakened *saidar* is that the weakening and gaps are isolated incidents. There are numerous examples of AS, Windfinders, etc. using *saidar* in COT for any number of activities without noting that *saidar* is weaker.

(A variation on this idea is that the Taint was not actually destroyed, but merely diluted and spread between the two halves of the Power, so now *saidar* is slightly tainted and that's why it's acting weird. However, this seems really unlikely. Rand and all of the Asha'man seem certain the Taint is completely gone, and while their judgment on the matter may be suspect, it seems impossible that *saidar* channellers would fail to notice if *saidar* had become tainted. And besides, the taint never weakened *saidin*, only made it feel icky.)

So, if it wasn't the Cleansing, what's causing it then?

Ryan Ward theorizes that the Black Ajah is responsible for the failed wards, but if so it seems odd that Alviarin is not aware of this ploy. Plus it seems like a rather random thing for the BA to do.

The first thing to note is that these isolated instances of *saidar* failing all seem to be concerned with one thing: vermin. Weevils in the grain, rats in the Tower. In addition to those specific wards failing, **Eric Fulton** tells us that there was an earlier reference to rats in the Tower, in [WH: Prologue, Snow, 15]. It's part of a theme: Karede notes the increase of rats in Ebou Dar [COT: 4, The Tale of a Doll, 154], Perrin has adventures with weevils in So Habor, and Elayne is told that her stores of food are rotting at unnatural rates [WH: 8, Sea Folk and Kin, 191].

Putting all this together, **Drew Holton** offers:

Actually, I don't think that *saidar* itself is weakening per se, I think it's the latest sneaky blow of the Dastardly DO. The general thrust seems to be an increasing rise in vermin and decay in general, and probably neither *saidar* nor *saidin* will stop it. We basically have a rise in rats, weevils and food rotting here. Well, the DO has tried to starve Randland with perpetual winter and summer; now he's rotting the food supply directly.

2.3.18 What's the difference between inverting and reversing?

Inverting a weave is hiding it once it has been finished and tied off, so that even another channeller cannot tell it is there. Rand learned this weave from Asmodean, and used it on a number of occasions, most notably to put traps around *Callandor* and to hide the access *ter'angreal* for the Choedan Kal. The Supergirls also learned it from Moggy.



Reversing a weave, on the other hand, is hiding the weave *as it is being woven*, so your opponent cannot tell you are in the act of channelling, or even that you are holding the Power. It's first mentioned in WH: Cyndane, Graendal and Demandred all use reversed webs during the Battle of Shadar Logoth. Verin observes Graendal using it:

Using the full strength of her circle, [Verin] wove her shield, and watched aghast as it rebounded. The woman was already embracing *saidar*, though no light shone around her, and she was immensely strong!

[WH: 35, With the Choedan Kal, 646-647]

As far as we know, only the Forsaken know about reversing, so far.

2.3.19 What's the deal with bonding and Compulsion? Can the Warder bond be released?

[Jeff Dougan, Leigh Butler, Duncan Macdonald]



What is bonding?

Bonding is a psychic link of sorts between a channeller and another person, forged by the One Power. The weave for forming the bond is made entirely of Spirit [TFOH: 35, Ripped Away, 400], and it was unknown in the Age of Legends. There is no apparent limit to either the number of people one channeller can bond, or to the number of channellers one person can be bound to. The bond can be partially or completely masked by the channeller, but not by the bondee.

What are the effects/benefits of the bond?

In the "traditional" Aes Sedai/Warder bond, the AS and her Warder(s) can sense the direction and approximate distance to each other. There's also some degree of attunement to the other's emotional state, and each will know the moment and manner of the other's death no matter how far the distance that separates them.

Warders receive several benefits from the bond: the ability to survive wounds that would kill an ordinary man, and to recover from the same more quickly than would seem possible, even without being Healed. In addition, their overall stamina is greatly increased, and they can go for very long periods of time without food, water, or rest. Early glossaries indicate the ability to sense Shadowspawn or the Dark One's taint, although this ability is not mentioned in more recent glossaries. On the downside, a Warder whose AS is killed rarely survives her death for long; he not only loses the will to live, but usually seeks death in fruitless attempts to avenge his AS.

We've never been told specifically what if anything the AS gets out of the bond, besides a fanatically devoted protector. In any case, we do know that the effects of losing the bond are much less devastating on the AS than on her Warder or Warders; since she apparently receives fewer disadvantages from the bond than her Warder, perhaps it's logical to assume she also gets less advantages, as well. The various glossaries only say that what the Aes Sedai gets out of the bond is "a closely held secret."

The last and most interesting aspect of the bond is the "obedience" aspect: it is possible for an AS to coerce her Warder to obey her wishes, apparently without his knowledge that he is being coerced. This will be discussed further below.

How many types of bonds have we seen?

A bunch, by now:

- The “traditional” Warder bond, in which a female channeller bonds a male non-channeller;
- The “Elayne” version, in which a female channeller bonds a female non-channeller;
- The “wife” bond, in which a male channeller bonds a female non-channeller;
- The “extra bit” version, in which a male channeller bonds a female channeller;
- The “Asha’Warder” bond, in which a female channeller bonds a male channeller; and
- The “Sibling” bond, in which two people (of any combination of gender and channeling ability) are bonded as fraternal twins by a third-party channeler.

The inclusion of the last is probably rather controversial, as it is not really a “standard” bonding or any variant thereof, but it is the sister-bond ceremony that allows Elayne to figure out how to create the three-way bond with herself, Aviendha, and Min to Rand. Which, we should mention, includes a case of a female non-channeler bonding a male channeler. And since that’s not quite crazy enough by itself, for fun one can additionally toss in the question of how Elayne’s separate bond with Birgitte, Rand’s separate bond with Alanna, and Elayne and Aviendha’s sister-bond with each other factor in to the three-way bond. (In the interests of sanity, though, the tangled mess that is Rand’s bonding situation will be mostly ignored unless and until it becomes an issue.)

How do they differ from each other?

Elayne used the same bond as used for traditional Warder bonds on Birgitte; the difference seems to be that the emotional awareness is heightened to the point that each woman’s mental state echoes from one to the other and back. There is also some physical resonance; Elayne mentions that she and Birgitte “mirror” each other so much that even their menstruation cycles are in sync [WH: Prologue, Snow, 27]. Birgitte theorizes this is because they are “too much alike,” being of the same gender. But in general, other than intensified effects there doesn’t seem to be any difference between Elayne’s bond and the traditional Warder bond. As far as we know, Elayne has never tried to force Birgitte to obey her through the bond, possibly because she doesn’t know such a thing can be done.

Jur Grady tells Perrin a little bit about how the “wife” bond works, mentioning he can tell that his wife’s knee hurts, and that she’s missing him [ACOS: 27, To Be Alone, 444]. We don’t have much more specific information than that, but since the effects seem to be basically the same as with the AS/Warder bond, it can probably be assumed that the Warder bond and the wife bond are the same, or near enough as to make no difference (just as while the way a woman Travels and the way a man Travels are different in execution, the result is the same).

The one exception to this seems to be the “obedience” aspect, which unlike the Warder bond, doesn’t seem to be present in the wife bond unless it is specifically added; the Asha’man call it “the extra bit,” and so far have only used it to bond Toveine’s fifty AS that were to attack the Black Tower. This is discussed further below.

And what about the Asha’Warders? The three surviving Asha’man whose loyalty to Rand is (probably) beyond question have all been bonded as Warders by Aes Sedai in Cadsuane’s posse. As far as we can tell, these three obey their Aes Sedai as unhesitatingly as any Warders, while Alanna couldn’t control Rand at all. What’s going on here?

That whole situation seems rather bizarre. Cadsuane indicated that none of the Asha’man were forced into the bonding, and none of them seem to be under duress, but bond-compelling could remedy the latter, so it probably doesn’t count for much. COT indicates that the rules over who is in charge seem to be changing for Merise and the rest [COT: 23, Ornaments, 537-538], but if they were/are not being compelled in some way, what would have been their motivation for accepting such a fundamentally unequal partnership in the first place?

Rich Boyé theorizes that perhaps the Warder bond provides some protection from the Taint (which may be irrelevant now, but certainly wasn’t at the time), and this is why the Asha’man accepted the idea:

It also strikes me as connected to the fact that it is Cadsuane’s loyal coterie that bonds them, and that Cadsuane has a history of assisting channeling men (resist the taint and help gentled men live longer), so originally Eben, Damer and Jahar were happy to accept the bond.

Although, the (backhanded) explanation we got for the whole state of affairs is that Flinn et al were afraid to go back to the BT, since Taim had branded them as traitors, and Rand was nowhere to be found at the time, so Cadsuane took advantage of the situation. After all, Cadsuane has shown herself to be a consummate manipulator, managing to hit just the right notes with, among others, Rand, Alanna, and the First Counsel of Far Madding. It is entirely possible that the Asha’Warders are not being compelled, but are instead just being manipulated by their Aes Sedai. Narishma, at least, appears to be treating his bonding like the honor that almost any other man would take it to be. Perhaps the fierce loyalty most if not all Warders show toward their AS is actually another effect of the bond, and not merely training and/or cultural.

What is Compulsion?

Compulsion is exactly what it sounds like: a weave that forces the one upon whom it is being used to do whatever the channeller wants them to do. Modern AS only knew that the weave existed in the AOL, and only recently has anyone besides

the Forsaken learned how to actually use it. We get a specific description of the weave during Nynaeve and Moggy's showdown in Tanchico:

She staggered under the whiplash recoil, like a physical blow, and the Forsaken struck with a complex weave of Spirit streaked by Water and Air. Nynaeve had no idea what it meant to do; frantically she tried to cut it as she had seen the other woman do, with a keen-edged weave of Spirit. For a heartbeat she felt love, devotion, worship for the magnificent woman who would deign to allow her... [TSR: 54, Into the Palace, 628]

This is the same emotional state Moggy inspires in Nynaeve and Elayne when she first meets them in Tanchico, and Compels them to tell her what they were doing in the city. It's not initially clear whether the Compulsion weave has to be re-applied every time (as is implied by Moggy with the Wondergirls in TSR), or whether there are ways to weave Compulsion so that it becomes essentially permanent (as seems to be the case with Graendal's pets), but Rahvin ruminates that:

...repeated use of Compulsion made obedience easier even when it was not in use.

[TFOH: Prologue, The First Sparks Fall, 24]

So, the permanence of the weave entirely depends on how often and how heavily it is used on the subject.

Is there any defense against Compulsion? Yes, but it seems to require that the would-be victim be able to channel. The obvious defense is not to get Compelled in the first place, by cutting the weave before it falls into place. Sammael appears to believe that holding the Source provides some degree of protection all by itself:

[Graendal] used Compulsion so often like a hammer that one might forget that she could wield the weaker forms of it with a great delicacy, twisting a mind's path so subtly that even the closest examination might miss every trace of her. In fact, she might have been the best at that who ever lived.

[Sammael] let the gateway vanish but held on to *saidin*; those tricks did not work on someone wrapped in the Source.

[LOC: 6, Threads Woven of Shadow, 132]

So given all that, of course, the big question is:

Is the "obedience" aspect of the bond the same thing as Compulsion?

Certainly the Aes Sedai don't think so. They consider the use of Compulsion to be abhorrent, and would be horrified at the suggestion. Nevertheless, there's quite a bit of evidence in favor of the idea.

It was established early on that the Warder bond could be used to force the Gaidin to do something he wouldn't normally choose to do, when Lan tells Moiraine angrily that she has never once needed to use the bond to force him [TGH: 22, Watchers, 284]. Then there is the incident much later with Lan and Myrelle:

"Be quiet," Myrelle hissed [to Nisao]. In a louder voice, she called, "Come to me." The horse did not move. A wolfhound mourning his dead mistress did not come to a new mistress willingly. Delicately she wove Spirit and touched the part of him that contained her bond; it had to be delicate, or he would be aware of it, and only the Creator knew what sort of explosion might result. "Come to me."

This time the horse came forward.

[LOC: 52, Weaves of the Power 652]

Eric Means sums up the arguments in favor of the theory that bond obedience and Compulsion are the same thing:

1. Bond-compelling uses Spirit. Compulsion is primarily Spirit.
2. Holding the Power is considered – by an AOL-trained channeler who should know – to be protection against Compulsion. When Alanna tries to control Rand immediately after bonding him, she cannot. At the time, Rand was holding *saidin* [LOC: 10, A Saying in the Borderlands, 204].
3. Bond-compulsion is clearly capable of forcing someone to do something they very strongly do not want to do, in such a way that they may not even be aware of being forced. Obviously Compulsion can have the same effect.

In fact, the only glaringly obvious difference between bond-compelling and Compulsion seems to be that bond-compelling only works on whoever the channeller is bound to, while Compulsion works on anyone. (Perhaps this accounts for the two extra elements in Moggy's weave, where Myrelle only used Spirit.)

What's most interesting, though, is that the Asha'man seem to have discovered a way to make bond-compelling automatic. There is no evidence that Logain was actively manipulating his bond with either Toveine or Gabrelle when he gave them the permanent orders (not to run away, not to channel without permission, etc. [TPOD: 26, The Extra Bit, 516]), nor that he has had to do so when providing any additional orders. It seems that as long as the "extra bit" is incorporated in the bond when first formed, no additional channelling on the Asha'man's part is necessary. Also interesting is that apparently holding the Power is not helpful in resisting the extra bit, unlike Rand's experiences with Alanna (we know the bonded AS are allowed to channel at least on occasion – Logain made one of them Heal Toveine after the others were beating on her). If they could break away from the Compulsion aspect of the Asha'man bond while holding *saidar* they wouldn't be allowed to channel at all.

The bond-compelling used in the Asha'man bond, then, is different from whatever method the AS bond uses to compel Warders to obey. Perhaps because the AM bond "extra bit" was likely designed to be able to handle the possibility of a channelling bondee in the first place, while the AS bond isn't?

People have used this and a few other minor differences to quibble over whether bond-compelling and AOL-style Compulsion are the same thing, but again, in the end it's a question of results. Both bond-compelling and Compulsion accomplish the same essential thing – making someone do something you want them to do whether they want to or not. So does the difference in method really matter, from an ethical point of view?

Can the Warder bond be released?

This is a debate of long standing, and has yet to be satisfactorily resolved one way or the other. **Oleg Ozerov** observes:

I've been left with an impression that this issue is intentionally clouded (by RJ for us, by AS for Warders and others). That is, an impression is created that the Bond cannot be released. Yet, we have no statement that the Bond absolutely cannot be released [or] dissipated.

All true, and so this question has been batted back and forth for years now. While we have no definitive consensus on which answer is correct on this issue, in the interests of avoiding the flagellation of deceased equines I give you the major arguments for and against the idea.

For

1. **Oleg Ozerov** further offers:

It may be that the dissipation is possible but, as with many other things, no AS remembers how to do it, or it is just one of those Things That Just Aren't Done. After all, the Bond is just a weave of some sort. There should be a way to undo it. It may be difficult, dangerous, or even lethal, but there should be a way.

Counter-argument: **Johan Poppe** disagrees:

The Warder bond is not simply a weave; there is no permanent presence of *saidar* in it. (If there was, other channelers should be able to see a bond, and Elayne's bond to Birgitte would have been discovered.) There is no weave to 'let go' or unravel. So, the logic of 'it's just a weave, so there should be a way to undo it' is not really convincing.

Rebuttal: It's still possible, though, that it can be undone and the AS just don't know how. It's been well-established that AS don't know nearly as much about channelling as they think they do.

2. [TGH: 22, Watchers, 285]: Moiraine muses to herself about Lan falling in love with Nynaeve:

Moiraine wondered when he would ask her to release him from his bond. And what she would do when he did.

Why wonder about this if it isn't possible?

Counter-argument: She could have been wondering about how she was going to dodge the question if he asked, because she knows that the bonds are irreversible, and this information is always kept from the Warder, to avoid psychological damage. More than one AS has reflected on whether the Warders ever really understood what it was they were agreeing to when they consented to the bond.

3. [WH: 25, Bonds, 488]: Rand thinks to himself about how Lan had told him the Warder bond could be released, and demands it of Alanna, who refuses – not because she can't, but because she won't.

Counter-argument: Both Rand's demand and Alanna's refusal are made in the context of passing the bond to another – Lan had told Rand about his bond being passed to Myrelle, and Alanna tells Rand she won't "release him" to anyone unless she knows the new bond-holder can handle him properly. The scene in general makes both Rand and Alanna's use of the word "release" extremely ambiguous.

Rebuttal: But, Alanna's statement doesn't even make sense in that context. Rand's other bond-holder(s) already have a bond with Rand – what are they going to do with Alanna's? It's not the same situation as with Lan, Moiraine, and Myrelle; doesn't it seem logical to suppose that somewhere in there, either one bond or the other has to be eliminated?

4. [TPOD: 10, Changes, 223]: Elyas specifically tells Perrin that:

"Most Aes Sedai will free a man who really wants to go."

Counter-argument: Again, the AS have obviously been rather vague about this issue, to their Warders as well as to everyone else. Elyas could be wrong. **Stefan Gelow** also points out that the full quote is:

"Most Aes Sedai will free a man who really wants to go – most will – and anyway, she can track you down however far you run if she decides to hunt."

So, despite freeing a Warder who really wants to go, if the sister would decide to hunt him down, she can track him down wherever he goes. Which only would be possible if the bond is really still there.

Rebuttal: It seems bizarre to suppose that an AS would let a guy bonded to her just waltz off into the wild blue yonder and maybe get himself killed, leaving her to suffer the consequences with no benefits of having had a Warder at her side. Another way to phrase it could just as easily be something like: "There's no point in running away from your AS because she can track you down wherever you go – and besides, most AS will release you if you really want to go."

5. In reference to the above three points: here we have three bonded men, none of whom are particularly stupid, who all believe the same thing – that the bond can be released. Even if you dismiss Rand’s information as coming by proxy, is it reasonable to suppose that Lan and Elyas – and, by extension, all other Warders – are that gullible? That in all these centuries of AS bonding Warders, not one would-be Warder ever asked, flat-out, whether there was a way out?

Counter-argument: You can’t have it both ways. If you posit that the AS may be wrong about bonding, then you must allow that the Warders can also be just as wrong.

Against

1. Elyas was a Warder before he ran off to be a Wolfbrother. That was probably around twenty years ago, and yet his Aes Sedai (Rina) has never released the bond, only masked it.

Counter-argument: Maybe she can’t release the bond without having Elyas physically present. Or, the Aes Sedai have been trained to think that physical contact was required. Learning something one way tends to stick in their heads and can be tricky to overcome (cf. flinging a fireball without a throwing gesture). [Rich Boyé] Or, she could release it but refuses to on general principle, either because she doesn’t want to lose the only link to such an interesting specimen or out of sheer pique that he ran off without permission.

2. [TFOH: 36, A New Name, 409]: When Elayne tells Birgitte she bonded her, Birgitte tells her the story of an Accepted who bonded a Warder before being raised to the shawl. She was caught and punished, but the interesting thing is, she was made to pass the bond to a full AS, instead of releasing the guy.

Counter-argument: This doesn’t have to have anything to do with whether the bond can be released or not. What better punishment for the Accepted, than to see the guy she wanted go to someone else?

3. Also, when Elayne tells Birgitte that she had bonded her, there is absolutely no mention of a release. If the bond cannot be released, Elayne’s actions were extremely unethical.

Counter-argument: Clearly both Elayne and Birgitte considered the consequences of the bonding (whatever they believe those to be) preferable to letting Birgitte die. And anyway, the lack of mention of a release goes both ways; Birgitte has never given any indication that she *wanted* to get out of the bond.

4. If the bond can be released, why haven’t we ever seen it done? In particular, consider the scene with Rand and Alanna in WH. Alanna says that she had thought of being free of the bond, that she wanted to be free. She wanted it enough that she tried to pass the bond to someone else. But she never thought of simply getting rid of it. **Stephen Ferguson** remarks:

I can’t recall a passage where anyone promises to release a bond that doesn’t mention someone else then holding the bond.

Counter-argument: As well ask why (up until recently) we didn’t see someone Heal stilling or use the Traveling weave. And once again, Alanna’s behavior regarding the bond only indicates what *she* thinks is possible and not possible.

2.4 Days of Yore

This subsection contains information on and discussion of questions about things in the past, from the Age of Legends to the Aiel War.

2.4.01 Who was Beidomon?

Beidomon was a male channeller in the AOL who worked with Mierin (a.k.a. Lanfear) to create the Bore. The question is, was he somebody important to the story, or was he just some poor grad student?



We know that he wasn’t one of the male Forsaken. In the Guide, we learn all of their original names, and what they did before turning to the Dark Side. None of them were named “Beidomon,” and none of them did the kind of research into the One Power that Lanfear did (see section 1.1.1).

It has been suggested that LTT was Beidomon, based on the fact that he and Mierin were lovers at one point, and upon a few scanty quotes. One of these is from [TEOTW: Prologue, Dragonmount, xv]:

...him who brought the Shadow... they named Dragon.

The other is [TEOTW: 4, The Gleeman, 44]:

“I will tell you of the end of the Age of Legends, of the Dragon, and of his attempt to free the Dark One into the world of men.”

However, this idea does not hold water. For one thing, LTT was named “Lews Therin Telamon,” not “Beidomon.” Secondly, we know from [Guide: 6, The Female Forsaken and the Darkfriends, 62] that LTT dumped Mierin “some years before the drilling of

the Bore.” Thirdly, LTT was a politician/bureaucrat, the leader of the Hall of Servants, not a researcher [Guide: 3, The Age of Legends, 31]. Furthermore, the bits about him that brought the Shadow being named Dragon are from the late Third Age and the Fourth Ages, long after true details were confused and forgotten.

The best guess we can make, based on the scanty evidence we have, is that Beidomon was just some guy who was part of Mierin’s research group, who assisted her in the actual drilling. The Guide [Guide: 6, The Female Forsaken and the Darkfriends, 63] tells us that Mierin was:

...fortunate to be one of the few to survive the backlash that destroyed the Sharom and most of the Collam Daan.

In other words, there were few survivors of that catastrophe, and it is likely that Beidomon, whoever he was, died then and there.

2.4.02 Did LTT balefire himself?

[Emmet O’Brien, Pam Korda]

No. He died by OD’ing on the One Power. RJ said so at the talk he gave in Dublin in November 1993.



2.4.03 The Green Man, the Aiel, and the Song

[Erica Sadun, Pam Korda, Teri Pettit, Aaron Bergman]



Who is the Green Man?

He is Someshta, the last of the Nym, a type of creature which was made of vegetable matter. He is described first in [TEOTW: 49, The Dark One Stirs, 621]. However we find out exactly who he is in the fourth book:

A stir at the end of the field told him one of the Nym was approaching. The great form, head and shoulders and chest taller than any Ogier, stepped out onto the seeded ground, and Coumin did not have to see to know he left footprints filled with sprouting things. It was Someshta, surrounded by clouds of butterflies, white and yellow and blue... Each field would have its Nym, now... the Nym were older than anyone.

Some said the Nym never died, not so long as plants grew...

[TSR: 26, The Dedicated, 303]

Many years later, during the Breaking, we see him again, this time with the characteristic fissure in his face. He is being set to the task of guarding the Eye of the World, the Horn, the dragon banner and one of the seals [TSR: 26, The Dedicated, 300-301].

Who were the Aiel?

The Aiel (formerly the Da’shain Aiel) were the ‘Dedicated’ who worked for the Ancient Aes Sedai. The group was hereditary and had features of light skin, gray or blue eyes and mostly reddish or blond hair. All Aiel could be identified by their particular hair style which was cut short with a tail hanging in the back. They were dedicated to a life of non-violence, following the ‘Way of the Leaf.’ Some male Aiel worked with the Ogier and the Nym in planting as they had the gift of the ‘Voice,’ the seed singing (this may not be limited to Aiel; in the TEOTW Prologue, LTT asks Elan Morin if he has the Voice). Although the Ogier continue to have ‘tree singers,’ the Voice seems to be a talent that has disappeared. When the Aiel did their work in the fields, they wore light gray and brown ‘working clothes’ (*cadin’sor*). The clothes, the hair style and the avoidance of the use of weaponry which cannot be used for other purposes than killing people remains today, but the talent of the Voice is currently unknown.

What is the Song?

The Tinkers, an early offshoot of the Aiel, decided to give up their duty of hiding ‘*angreal*’ and instead dedicate their lives to re-finding the safety and peace of their past [TSR: 26, The Dedicated, 296]. They believe this will come about through finding the “growing song,” described in [TSR: 26, The Dedicated, 303]:

The Ogier began it, as was fitting, standing to sing, great bass rumbles like the earth singing. The Aiel rose, men’s voices lifting in their own song, even the deepest at a higher pitch than the Ogier’s. Yet the songs braided together, and Someshta took those threads and wove them into his dance... The song caught him up, and he almost felt that it was himself, not the sounds he made that Someshta wove into the soil and around the seeds.

The Song is not to be confused with the Ogier Tree-Songs. The Ogier songs may be the Ogier part of the growing ceremony described above, or they may be something similar, but different in purpose.

For the Tinkers, “the Song” has become more than just the human part of the AOL growing ceremony. The Tinkers’ legendary song is something that will bring back the peaceful lifestyle known by the Dashain Aiel during the Age of Legends.

Teri Pettit explains:

The Tuatha’an began their search looking for a safe haven where they could return to a way of life in which Aiel singing together worked wonders. That eventually got distorted into a life of perpetual travel searching for “the Song,” as if there were just one, and it was something a single traveler could know.

So, when we say “Will the Tinkers find the Song?” we really mean, “Will the Tinkers rediscover the AOL growing ceremony, plus the talent of the Voice, and be able to recreate the peaceful existence of their ancestors, the Da’shain Aiel?”

If the Song will be found, who will find it?

The primary contenders are Aram, Perrin and Rand. Aram’s stated life goal had been to find the Song until he took up the sword in defense of Emond’s Field and became ‘Lost’ to his people. To find the Song would reinstate him and justify his choice of giving up the peaceful Way of the Leaf. Perrin on the other hand keeps getting faced with the choice of axe or hammer: that is, the choice of creation or destruction, war or peace, way-of-the-warrior or way-of-the-leaf. Furthermore, Perrin is a contender to find the Song because of Min’s viewing of Perrin standing among the flowering trees. Rand, and probably some of the Aiel clan chiefs, have actually *heard* the Song in the glass columns of Rhuidean.

Further evidence that Rand will find the Song:

...ages past and will be in ages to come. *Let the Prince of the Morning sing to the land that green things will grow and the valleys give forth lambs.* [emphasis added] [TEOTW: Prologue, Dragonmount, xv]

It is entirely possible that the Song is lost forever (or at least until the AOL comes around again). **Aaron Bergman** explains:

In the Breaking that followed the sealing of the Bore, the Da’shain were scattered. Some ended up at Rhuidean with the caravans. Some broke off, eventually becoming the Tinkers. Anyways, during those times when mountains moved around when they were bored and food and water were scarce, the memory of the singing survived. This grew to become linked with the memory of the peace of the Age of Legends. This easily progressed to the idea that if they could discover this ephemeral “Song,” the Age of Legends would come anew. I think one of the themes buried in these novels is that the past is dead. You can’t hope to regain the past. Rand can’t go back to the Two Rivers and become a shepherd. The Age of Legends is dead, it will not return for a very long time; certainly not in the next (Fourth) Age. The Tuatha’an are seeking to regain the past. The “Song” is a remnant of the past. Thus, the Song will not be found.

There is no Song that will recreate the Age of Legends, for it is past.

2.4.04 Jain Farstrider: Where is he now?

[Pam Korda, Leigh Butler, Craig Moe]



First, what do we know about Jain?

- In [Guide: 15, The World after the Breaking, 147], we have something about the last time Jain was seen alive:
No one knows if anything lies north of the Blasted Lands other than the frozen ice of the northern ocean. Jain Farstrider was said to have willingly traveled there; however, whatever knowledge he gained was lost when he vanished within its trackless depths.
- From [TEOTW: Glossary, 663]:
Farstrider, Jain: A hero of the northern lands who journeyed to many lands and had many adventures; the author of several books, as well as being the subject of books and stories. He vanished in 981 NE, after returning from a trip into the Great Blight which some said had taken him all the way to Shayol Ghul.
- From [TEOTW: 47, More Tales of the Wheel, 594-595]: Lord Agelmar is telling the story of the fall of Malkier:
“When Cowin Fairheart’s treachery was revealed and he was taken by young Jain Charin – already called Jain Farstrider...”

Malkier fell a little less than 50 years before TEOTW (say 45-50 years), according to Agelmar. At the time, Jain was a young man, say between 17 and 20. Thus, at the start of TEOTW, Jain would be 62-70 years old – pretty long in the tooth.

- From [TEOTW: 51, Against the Shadow, 638]:
[Ba’alzamon, to Rand:] “Jain Farstrider, a hero... whom I painted like a fool and sent to the Ogier thinking he was free of me.”
This must refer to Loial’s story in [TEOTW: 42, Remembrance of Dreams, 532] about the man who came to Stedding Shangtai shortly after the Aiel War, on the verge of death, but then vanished again after recovering:
“He said the Dark One intended to blind the Eye of the World, and slay the Great Serpent, kill time itself.”

The Guide notwithstanding, then, the Ogier in Stedding Shangtai were apparently the last people to see Jain Farstrider alive before he vanished for good – until now, perhaps.

WH finally gives us a non-loony candidate for Jain’s identity: Noal Charin. Noal fits what we know of Jain to a “T.” He’s the right age, he’s widely-traveled (or at least seems to be), he has the same last name as Jain, and he’s good at telling stories of his travels. Furthermore, he is interested in Darkfriends, matching up with Jain F.’s association with the Shadow.

People have objected to this, on the grounds that it’s rather contrived to think Jain Farstrider would attempt to hide himself by only changing his first name and not his last. It’s also been suggested that Noal might be a relative of Jain, perhaps a brother, and not Jain himself.

Note, however, that Jain was probably mind-fucked pretty well by Ishy twenty years ago. If Noal is the barrel man from ACOS, as seems clear (see section 2.2.3), we know that he's got some memory problems (and if he is additionally Graendal's old man, her attentions undoubtedly would not have helped his mental state either). The name change might not be deliberate. Maybe Noal is Jain's middle name, or a random name he took because he couldn't remember his real first name.

As for the "relative of Jain" idea, we've been anticipating Jain's appearance for years. It'd be supremely lame to have his brother/uncle/nephew turn up in his place.

It seems pretty clear that Noal is Jain, but just in case, here are the (mostly loony) alternate possibilities that have been proposed:

1. *Elyas Machera*: Both Elyas and Jain are Borderlanders, and Elyas is pretty old. However, this is unlikely for several reasons. For one thing, there is no mention of Jain ever having been a Warder, and we know that Elyas was one. Secondly, there is lots of evidence that Ishy messed with Jain's brain quite a bit. Elyas is a Wolfbrother, which seems to offer some protection against that sort of thing, and if Elyas was touched by the DO, it's likely that the wolves would reject him.
2. *Tam al'Thor*: Not very likely, since the ages don't match. (I would put Tam at 50, tops, probably younger. He's definitely not older than 60.) Plus, RJ has said that Tam spent his time away from the Two Rivers in Illian, which precludes his running around the Borderlands and the Blight. At a signing in Atlanta, RJ said that Tam and Rand were originally the same character – a soldier come home to a small town. This pretty much precludes his being Farstrider, no?
3. *Bayle Domon*, because he seems to be very well-traveled. However, the ages match even less than for Tam. Plus, Bayle definitely do be an Illianer. We've had Bayle POVs, and there is no indication that he is anybody other than who he seems – a very unfortunate ship captain.
4. *Graendal's old man in wrinkled coat*. (This might also be the Domani king she displaced, or Noal Charin as well.)

2.4.05 The Old Tongue and the New Tongue

RJ on how he invented the Old Tongue:

The words come partly from Gaelic, Russian, Arabic, Chinese, Japanese. The grammar and syntax I believe I invented myself, although it's possible that another language uses the same. Of course, just as with English, I have deliberately put in some very illogical inconsistencies. [America Online chat, 27 June 1996]



Why doesn't the Old Tongue bear any relation to the New Tongue spoken by Rand and co.?

It probably does, but RJ has kindly "translated" the New Tongue into English so that we can read the books and he can make lots of money. :) Old Tongue phrases are not "translated" in order to add "flavor" to the story. Think of Tolkien, who *did* create entire languages. Even he didn't write *The Lord of the Rings* in Elvish or some other Middle-Earth language.

Is there an Old Tongue dictionary?

There are several on the Web. The first, and one of the most complete (which many unethical people have plagiarised) is *The Compleat Old Tongue*, compiled by Aaron Bergman, Andrea Leistra, Don Harlow, "Mark," and "BAClubb." It can be found at <http://www.princeton.edu/~abergman/jordan/cot.html>.

Why do all the characters speak the same language?

At the East of the Sun con, held in Sweden 16-18 June, 1995, RJ explained the concept of the unified language. He said there had been a single language in use all over the world (the Old Tongue), and the writing and printing of books continued throughout the Breaking, albeit to a very limited extent. The written word introduced a very large conserving factor in the language-change mechanism. [report by **Karl-Johan Norén**]

Chad Orzel gives a further explanation of why we shouldn't expect a lot of language drift:

1. Point the first: three thousand years ago, we have the AOL. At this point, it's pretty safe to assume that everybody speaks the same language.
2. Then, we have the Breaking. People scatter, keeping what little knowledge they can intact. Chaos reigns. Whatever is settled upon at the end of the Breaking will henceforth be called "the Old Tongue." Presumably, the Old Tongue is spoken primarily on the main continent. We have no idea what happens in other areas of the globe (Seanchan and Shara), but this doesn't really matter, as we've never heard a Sharan talk, and the Seanchan are the product of an invasion from Randland proper.
3. Languages drift for a while, but it doesn't matter how much, as Artur Hawkwing pops up, and conquers everybody. A new lingua franca is established, which shall be called the New Tongue, or "English" as Jordan has translated the whole thing anyway. Presumably whatever they speak has clear roots tracing it to the Old Tongue. Hawkwing conquers the entire main continent, some of Shara, has dealings with the Aiel, and his descendents conquer (and become) Seanchan. Again, everybody speaks the same language, with a few quirks here and there.
4. Almost a thousand years pass, and languages drift. Now, just *how far* can we reasonably expect them to drift? For convenience, let's look at modern Europe, or at least those parts of Europe which formed the core of the Roman Empire. This gives Spanish, French, and Italian, plus a handful of others which I'll ignore completely. It's been fifteen hundred years or so since Rome fell, how different are these three? And what are the sources of the differences

between them and Latin? Not that much. If one knows Italian, one can puzzle out a lot of Spanish, if the Spanish-speaker talks slowly, and vice versa. All four languages have many similar words. Now, consider what we've had happening in Europe in those fifteen hundred years: Most of Europe was at one time or another overrun by those pesky Germanic types, and Spain got invaded by Moors. We've had Russian-type languages pushed in from the East, Scandinavian from the North, and I-don't-know-what from the South.

Now, look at Randland. Who's going to invade? Hawkwing basically conquered the world, so there's no one who *can* bring another language in from outside. And even if there were such an incursion, the language being brought in would *still* be pretty close to the Old Tongue, since everybody spoke the same language back in the AoL. And what do we have? We have a good number of funny accents, the Seanchan slur everything, to the degree that Our Heroes have trouble understanding them, the Aiel have a number of odd words for things not found in the wetlands, Bayle Domon do be using odd verb forms, and the Taraboners, they put the words in the wrong order, yes? Is this really that unrealistic? Given the utter lack of invasion from outside, or even the possibility of same, I don't find it hard to swallow the relative uniformity of language in Randland.

2.4.06 Who or what was (the) Tamyrlin?

In [TEOTW: Prologue, Dragonmount, xi], Ishy visits LTT after he kills his family:

Elan Morin grimaced. "Look at you," he said scornfully. "Once you stood first among the Servants. Once you wore the Ring of Tamyrlin, and sat in the High Seat. Once you summoned the Nine Rods of Dominion. Now look at you!"

Scott Mocklin tells us that the new glossary in *To the Blight* (vol. 2 of the YA version of TEOTW) has the following entry:

Ring of Tamyrlin (TAHM-ehrlin): A legendary ring, believed mythical by most people, worn by the leader of the Aes Sedai during the Age of Legends. Stories about the Ring of Tamyrlin include that it was an *angreal* or *sa'angreal* or *ter'angreal* of immense power. It supposedly was named after the first person to learn how to tap into the Source and channel the One Power, and in some tales, was actually made by that man or woman. Despite what many Aes Sedai say, no one knows whether it was a man or a woman who first learned to channel. Some believe that the present title of Amyrlin is a corruption of Tamyrlin.

Which pretty much matches previous speculation about the word's origin.



2.4.07 What did Ogier do of old?

[Windsor Williams, Pam Korda]

Basically, I'm wondering about the role of the Ogier in pre-Breaking society. From what we know in general, the *stedding* did exist during the period, but the Ogier were not bound to them by the Longing as they are at the time of the series. So it seems reasonable to assume that they were fairly common everywhere, although most common in and around the *stedding*.

We know they were involved with the seed singing (as per the "through the eyes of Coumin" scene [TSR: 26, The Dedicated, 302-5]), but what other roles did they have? Some clues exist:

- Ogier soldiers – from the Coumin sequence, right at the beginning [TSR: 26, The Dedicated, 302]:

He could see the next field, lined the same way, beyond the soldiers with their shocklances sitting atop armored jo-cars. A hoverfly buzzed overhead in its patrol, a deadly black metal wasp containing two men. He was sixteen, and the women had decided his voice was finally deep enough to join in the seed singing. The soldiers fascinated him, men and Ogier, the way a colorful poisonous snake might. They *killed*.

The "men and Ogier" phrase seems to imply that there were Ogier soldiers as well as humans.

- Ogier as police or enforcers – again, from the Coumin sequence [TSR: 26, The Dedicated, 304]:

Abruptly something struck Coumin in the mouth and his legs buckled; he was pushing himself to his knees before he realized he was down. A hand put to his mouth came away bloody. He looked up to find an angry-faced townsman standing over him, nursing a fist. "Why did you do that?" he asked.

The townsman spat at him. "The Forsaken are dead. Dead, do you hear? Lanfear will not protect you anymore. We will root out all of you who served the Forsaken while pretending to be on our side, and treat the lot of you as we treated that crazy old man."

A woman was tugging at the man's arm. "Come away, Toma. Come away, and hold your foolish tongue! Do you want the Ogier to come for you?" Suddenly wary, the man let her pull him away into the crowd.



“Do you want the Ogier to come for you?” and the man’s response argue that the Ogier were enforcers of peace/police of some sort, and effective ones as well. I’m guessing that they would come for him for the killing of Charn (“that crazy old man”), but maybe it’s his statements, instead?

I hadn’t thought of Ogier in terms of soldiers or police before, but these passages caught my eye while re-reading the series. We’ve been told at one point or another that old tales refer to Ogier as bad opponents, who rarely get angry but are very dangerous when they do. Watching Loial’s anger over the destruction of the Ogier grove in Tear, Perrin remembers an old saying:

“To anger the Ogier and pull the mountains down on your head.” Everyone took its meaning as to try to do something that was impossible. Perrin thought maybe the meaning had changed with the years. Maybe in the beginning, it had been, “Anger the Ogier, and you pull the mountains down on your head.” Difficult to do, but deadly if accomplished. [TSR: 18, Into the Ways, 211]

From the Guide, TPOD, and WH, we know that Ogier in Seanchan are not all as peaceful as those in Randland:

- Ogier make up a portion of the Deathwatch, although they are the only ones not property, and are considered incredibly fierce and more deadly than their human counterparts. The Ogier of the Deathwatch are grim in demeanor and action compared to their brothers and sisters across the ocean. [Guide: 17, Seanchan, 161]
- Many Deathwatch Guards went without coat or shirt whenever possible to display [their raven tattoos]. The humans, anyway. Ogier Gardeners were not marked or owned, but that was between them and the Empress. [TPOD: 23, Fog of War, Storm of Battle, 443]

This implies that the “Gardeners” are members of the Deathwatch Guard, despite the odd name.

- The Glossary entry for the Deathwatch Guards says:

Deathwatch Guards, the: The elite military formation of the Seanchan Empire, including both humans and Ogier. [TPOD: Glossary, 596]

- We get a description of the Ogier Deathwatch guards in [WH: 14, What a Veil Hides, 325] and again in [WH: 18, An Offer, 377] that bears out the Guide description above (grim, forbidding, and not to be crossed), as well as confirming that Ogier Deathwatch guards are called Gardeners.

The fact that the Seanchan Ogier participate in warfare indicates that the Ogier may have a history of being fighters which the Ogier of Randland proper have lost.

Finally, it is possible that Ogier fought in battle during the Trolloc Wars. When Rand meets Loial for the first time, he tells Loial that he is from the Two Rivers, which used to be Manetheren [TEOTW: 36, Web of the Pattern, 465]. Loial replies, referring to the destruction of Manetheren:

“There was a very fine grove there. Your pain sings in my heart, Rand al’Thor. We could not come in time.”

The implication is, of course, that the Ogier could have helped in the battle if they *had* come in time.

2.4.08 Were there Ajahs in the Age of Legends?

In short, no. The Ajahs as we know them did not exist during the AOL. The Guide tells us:

...the organization of Aes Sedai in the Age of Legends, or perhaps their manner of functioning, [was as] “a vast sea of *ajah*... all constantly shrinking, growing, dividing, combining, melting away only to be reborn in some new guise and begin the process once more.”

[Guide: 9, Formation of the White Tower, 90]

We are also told that the term “ajah” meant “an informal and temporary group of people gathered together for a common purpose or goal, or by a common set of beliefs.” In other words, the AOL Aes Sedai did not consist of fixed groups, each dedicated to a different purpose, but rather formed factions based on the issues at hand. In fact, many of the AOL Aes Sedai were not “dedicated” Aes Sedai, i.e. people whose career was to *be* Aes Sedai, but:

...followed vocations which had little or nothing to do with the One Power or being Aes Sedai. When it was necessary to form a circle to perform some task, these Aes Sedai could be summoned... by the Hall of the Servants. [Guide: 3, The Age of Legends, 30]

The Ajahs of the present-day AS have their roots in the founding of the White Tower. In short, during and after the Breaking, there were many autonomous groups of channellers. Eventually, some of these groups joined together to form the modern Aes Sedai. The Ajah setup derives from the goals and principles of the various autonomous groups who founded the Tower

[Guide: 9, Formation of the White Tower, 91-92].

However, one can speculate that the colors of the Ajahs were probably representative of something in the AOL or a previous Age, because the Ajah colors are the colors surrounding the Portal Stones.



2.4.09 Was the Sharom the Dark One's prison?



No. Demandred's analysis [LOC: Prologue, The First Message, 15] implies that the DO is imprisoned *outside* the world/Pattern, in some sort of "Dungeon Dimension." The Bore is a kind of thinning of the universe, a weakness in the space-time continuum, by which the DO can reach out of the Dungeon Dimension to affect/enter the Real World.

From the RJ Online Q-and-A session on Compuserve [19 October 1994], RJ says:

"The Sharom and the Collam Daan are a university/research center."

The Guide expands on this, saying:

The Sharom was one of the classic examples of functional beauty. It might seem impractical to suspend a building high in the air, especially a scientific research facility that required its visitors to use an airborne transport or the One Power...

[Guide: 3, The Age of Legends, 34]

So, the Sharom was some sort of HEP (High-Energy Power) research facility, and its only connection with the DO's prison is that Mierin and Beidomon created the Bore inside it.

2.4.10 Tigraine = Shaiel: an analysis

[Ruchira Datta]



It is a certainty that Tigraine was Rand's mother, Shaiel.

Tigraine was the Daughter-Heir of Andor, and was married to Taringail Damodred. They had a son, Galad. Tigraine and her brother Luc were sent to Tar Valon, in the usual tradition of the royalty of Andor. Tigraine vanished mysteriously from Tar Valon, never to be heard from again [TEOTW: 34, The Last Village, 441-2].

In [TSR: 34, He Who Comes With the Dawn, 392-3], we learn about Rand's mother, Shaiel. Her tale corresponds marvelously with Tigraine's. Add to this the fact that many people comment on how Rand looks like the royal family of Andor (Lord Barthanos [TGH: 32, Dangerous Words, 392], and many Andoran nobles [LOC: 26, Connecting Lines, 380]), the description of Luc [TSR: 33, A New Weave in the Pattern, 368]), and there you have it.

In LOC at one point in Caemlyn, Rand finally learns about Tigraine's story and is very upset until he figures out that he is not actually directly related to Elayne. Thus, he has placed himself in the family tree (see section 2.5.1) even if no one else has.

Yes, this means that Galad is Rand's half-brother.

2.4.11 What was the "vileness" after the Aiel War?

[Richard Boyé]



The "vileness," as termed by Cadsuane, after the Aiel War probably refers to a number of things. For starters, there was the sudden death of the Amyrlin, Tamra Ospenya, and a rash of deaths among the Aes Sedai, including several prominent, high-ranking ones, most under mysterious circumstances. Meanwhile, below the surface, several other things were occurring, most of which are very troubling. There was a sudden increase in deaths among men and boys who seemed "lucky." Also, a number of channeling men were gentled by the Red Ajah illegally, on the spot, and not within Tar Valon as prescribed by Tower law.

This unsettled period in Tower politics seemed to end when the three Red Sitters in the Hall were summarily exiled, and the reasons for their removals were "Sealed to the Flame," which in effect classified the whole affair as for the Amyrlin's eyes only (although "Sealed to the Flame" can also involve the Amyrlin swearing a sister into her confidence, as Elaida did when she recruited Seaine to seek out the Black Ajah). All in all, it was a messy, upsetting time among the Aes Sedai, and all the above-described events seemed to be related.

Most of the links between the events were given out in various places throughout the series, but *Legends*: "New Spring" finally nailed down some of the events. This is now what seems to be the sequence of events:

Tamra Ospenya, the Amyrlin during the Aiel War, was murdered by Jarna Malari, a publicly Gray sister, in an effort to learn what Tamra knew about the Second Coming [ACOS: Prologue, Lightnings, 42]. Jarna was the leader of the Black Ajah at the time. Tamra was the Amyrlin who was present when Gitara Moroso had her Foretelling about the Rebirth.

Tamra was canny enough to know that there was some Black Ajah activity afoot and swore Suan and Moiraine to secrecy. From L:NS, we learn that Tamra really wasn't stupid enough to just send two newly-raised Accepted (Moiraine and Suan) out to find the Dragon Reborn. She had very carefully and surreptitiously called in and sent out a group of Searchers, most of whom were later killed by the Black Ajah. It is still unclear whether Cadsuane was among the Searchers, but it's quite

possible she was. The ones that Siuan and Moiraine were aware of were: Aisha, Kerene Nagashi, Valera, Ludice and Meilyn Arganya [L:NS, 668]. (Side note: Cadsuane gave Kerene and Meilyn as examples of the strongest in the Tower.)

From her interrogation of Tamra before killing her, Jarna learned something about the Second Coming, but misinterpreted it, and didn't realize that he had just been born. Possibly she construed what she had learned as the Dragon Reborn was ready to announce himself, or maybe she just learned that he was alive, but had no idea of his age. It's unlikely, therefore, that any of the Searchers chosen by Tamra belonged to the Black Ajah, because then the Black sisters would have known the same details Moiraine did (i.e. the Dragon was a baby, born during the final battle of the Aiel War, on Dragonmount). They were searching blindly.

In any event, the race to find the Dragon had begun, and the Black Ajah unleashed a campaign of murder to get to him first, killing anyone, man or boy, rumored to be "lucky," on the assumption that any man who seemed lucky might be channeling, since luckiness is an outward signal of unconscious channeling [L:NS, 712].

However, while that was going on, and for a while afterwards, the Red Ajah was running a second front of the campaign. Later on, Jarna Malari became Keeper to Tamra's successor, Sierin Vayu (the Gray with more than a touch of Red in her). Jarna, still leading the Black Ajah, implemented a program of search and destroy. She directed Galina Casban, who led the Red Ajah, to use her Red minions to seek out any man that could channel and gentle him on the spot. It might have been the work of a selected cadre of Red sisters who wouldn't balk at this flagrant violation of Tower law. We know it is illegal to gentle a man "extra-judiciously," away from Tower [ACOS: Prologue, Lightnings, 22]. By doing this, Jarna began a process that would circumvent the Tower's "Dragon-finding process," which was to bring every channeling man to the Tower, where they would put him to some sort of inquest to determine if he was the Dragon Reborn, and then gentle him. One assumes that they would not have gentled the Dragon Reborn once they actually found him.

One of the victims of this 'search and destroy' directive was Thom's nephew Owyn. Presumably, Owyn is among the gentled men who do not appear in the Tower records Elaida and Alviarin are discussing in ACOS. Elaida and Alviarin later discuss that merely knowing that there are channeling men who do not appear in the records is dangerous. The danger likely stems from the notion that because they are not listed means that you would only know from personal knowledge, which would suggest some involvement. Elaida's comments seem to imply that she participated in at least one of those missions [ACOS: Prologue, Lightnings, 22], and Toveine confirms this [TPOD: 26, The Extra Bit, 513].

Meanwhile, all hell breaks loose. Ishamael puts Jarna Malari to death in a derelict *ter'angreal* for messing with the program. We know that Ishy had notions of finding the nascent Dragon Reborn intact so that he could turn him to the Dark Side of the Force. What Jarna had done was severely reduce the odds of that happening, so it seems that he killed her for acting as a loose cannon. It is likely that this is what ended the campaign of murder by the Black Ajah, but the Reds' illegal search and destroy mission continued [ACOS: Prologue, Lightnings, 42].

Two years later Sierin Vayu died. Ishamael clamped down on the Great Council of the Black Ajah to determine that none of them had anything to do with Sierin's death. It is possible that she gave some sort of tacit approval toward the 'search and destroy' sorties (she was pro-Red) and the Red Ajah had a hand in killing her to silence her. It is also a very real possibility that Sierin Vayu herself was Black Ajah.

Alviarin seems to think that the Reds did have a hand in her death, and disavowed any Black participation [ACOS: Prologue, Lightnings, 42]. In WH, we learn that Chesmal Emry, one of Liandrin's original coven of Black Ajah, is very proud of the fact that she induced the Red Ajah into murdering Sierin, which is interesting because this somewhat contradicts Alviarin, since the Black Ajah did have something to do with the death, but didn't actually do the deed themselves [WH: 10, A Plan Succeeds, 242]. However, as **John Hamby** suggests, if Sierin was Black, then Galina could have used the Reds to silence her, to protect Black Ajah secrecy.

Whoever was responsible, it was to no avail. The secret came out, and the Red Sitters in the Hall were exiled. Perhaps the rest of the Hall assumed that they had also exiled the Red Generalissima, because many Ajah heads also hold Seats in the Hall, or it is possible that they realized that they could never learn who really led the Red Ajah, and enacted their justice on the high-ranking Reds they had at hand. Thus they exiled Toveine, Tsutama and Lirene, but left Galina untouched. We don't know at this time whether the "Red purge" occurred under Sierin Vayu, or the Blue sister, Marith Jaen, who succeeded her.

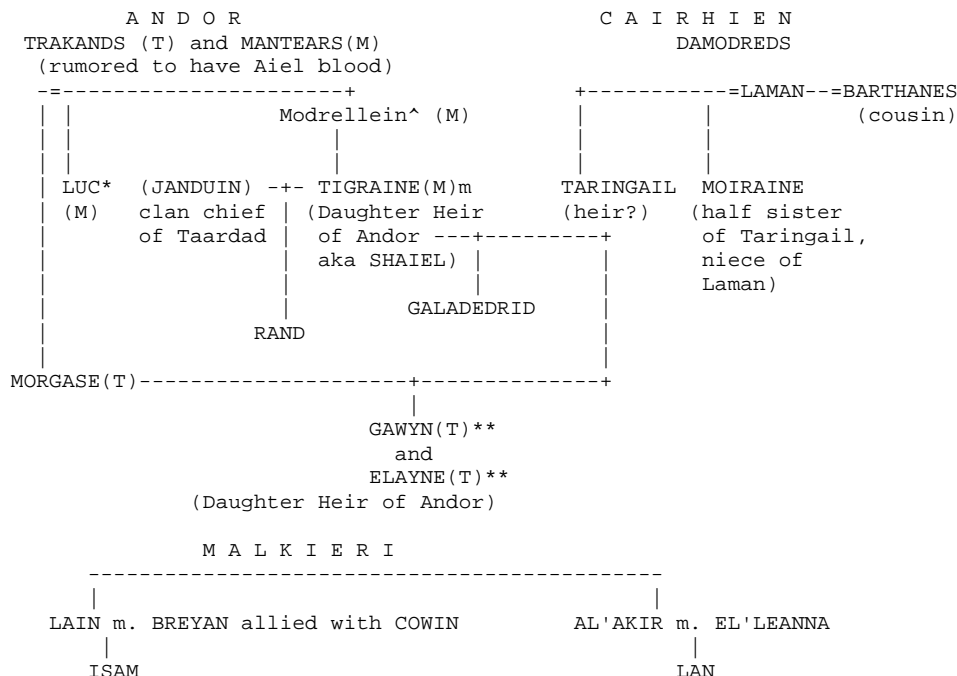
There is a slight quibble regarding the timing of the exile of the Red Sitters. We see from Toveine's POV in TPOD that she recalls her exile on a farm as lasting "twenty years" [TPOD: 26, The Extra Bit, 513], but that doesn't wash with the rest of the continuity, since we know that Owyn at least was gentled only fifteen years ago [TSR: 17, Deceptions, 195]. If Toveine and her fellow Sitters were exiled twenty years ago, that places their exile immediately after the War and probably even before Moiraine and Siuan learned of the BA murder campaign. This doesn't make sense, because if the murder campaign was the reason for their exile, it seems difficult to believe that they would have gotten off with mere exile. Furthermore, in ACOS, Elaida mentions that all three Sitters went into exile fifteen years ago, which fits more squarely into the timeline [ACOS: Prologue, Lightnings, 21]. It's likely that Toveine was just exaggerating or rounding off to the nearest decade (or RJ slipped up).

2.5 True Love and Families

This subsection contains information on and discussion of questions relating to romantic and filial relationships.

2.5.1 Who's who in the families?

[family trees by Erica FAQ-Dowager Sadun]



* Merges with Isam, son of Breyan, to form Slayer (see section 1.4.02).

** Speculated to be bastard of Thom Merrill, the Gray Fox, but probably is not (see section 2.5.4).

= Exact links unknown, we just know they're related.

^ Also seen as "Mordrellen"; supposedly later editions of TFOH and LOC have been changed to the latter spelling.

2.5.2 Who is Juilin's honey?

[Michael Gonzalez, Pam Korda]



Juilin Sandar: A thief-catcher from Tear. A man in love with perhaps the very last woman he would ever have thought he could be. [ACOS: Glossary, 675]

So, who is it? People have suggested an Aes Sedai, Nynaeve, Birgitte, etc. However, there is only one idea backed by any demonstration of tender feelings on Juilin's part: ex-Panarch Amathera of Tarabon. We know from [ACOS: 14, White Plumes, 273], as well as other places, that Juilin does not like nobles, so a high noble of some sort might seem to be the last person he would think he'd fall in love with.

How about some quotes?

- "Tarabon must be terrible now for a woman not used to taking care of herself," Juilin murmured. [ACOS: 14, White Plumes, 274]
- Going back to the group's trip away from Tarabon [TFOH: 9, A Signal, 146], we have:
[Nynaeve:] "Amathera was difficult, but I do not wish her any harm. Do you?"
[Juilin:] "A pretty woman, especially in one of those Taraboner serving girl's dresses, with a pretty smile. I thought she..." [shuts up when Elayne shoots him a dirty look].

This is all confirmed in WH. Juilin convinced Thera/Amathera to run away with Mat and co., and she joined their party in [WH: 31, What the Aelfinn Said, 586].

2.5.3 Why do we think that Thom will marry Moiraine?



Moiraine says she knows the face of the man she will marry better than Elayne/Egwene/Nynaeve know their future husbands [TSR: 6, Doorways, 90-1]. This could mean that she will never wed, but it could mean that she really does know who she will end up marrying. Support for the latter case is that, according to Elayne, Moiraine had some passion in her voice when she mentioned a husband, despite her attempts to then brush it off. After going through the Tear twisted doorway, she immediately tells Thom that he will live through the next set of adventures. This is not the only example of Moiraine being so sure of Thom's fate; while the party is traveling through the Ways in TEOTW, Moiraine implies that Min saw something about Thom which makes her think that Thom was not killed by the Fade [TEOTW: 45, What Follows in Shadow, 568]. She certainly seems to have some sort of knowledge of Thom's future. Thom keeps referring to Moiraine as a good-looking woman with more and more sincerity as time progresses and he discovers he no longer loves Morgase.

Possible scenario: How would she know who it was? Being Aes Sedai she'd likely have a lot of chances, but here's a guess. When Min describes how her viewings work her standard example is this: I see two people who have never met and know they will marry – and of course she had both Thom and Moiraine in front of her in Baerlon. So, this would also be the reason why: (1) Moiraine was so sure Thom hadn't been killed by a Fade, despite Rand's and Mat's protestations; and (2) why she tells Thom:

“I will see you again. You will survive Tarabon.”

[TSR: 17, Deceptions, 195]

At this point, she is absolutely certain that she will see Thom again. This is before she goes to Rhuidean and goes through the rings that show possible futures. When she did that, she saw nothing beyond the point where she tackled Lanfear through the twisted doorway. She thus decided that Min (or whatever oracle led her to think she would see Thom again) had been wrong. [Sean Hillyard] Note that, right before tackling Lanfear, Moiraine suppresses a “small bubble of hope,” which she feels, even though she is sure she's about to die [TFOH: 52, Choices, 632].

Add to all this speculation Egwene's Dream of Thom pulling Moiraine's blue head jewel out of a fire (i.e. Thom rescuing Moiraine from durance vile in Finnland). Nothing sparks a romance (in stories, at any rate) like a rescue.

2.5.4 Is Thom the father of Elayne or Gawyn?



Why would we think that Thom is Elayne or Gawyn's father?

Elayne denies that Galad is her brother. Thom was around at the right time. Thom clearly had something to do with Taringail's disappearance. Thom was Morgase's lover. In [TFOH: 19, Memories, 252], Morgase thinks about Taringail, and how the only good to come of the marriage were “two beautiful children.” This could be Elayne and Gawyn, or she could mean Galad (adopted) and Gawyn.

Why is this idea wrong?

Evidence from the Glossary:

Damodred, Prince Taringail: A Royal Prince of Cairhien, he married Tigraine and *fathered* Galadedrid.

When Tigraine disappeared and was declared dead, he married Morgase and *fathered* Elayne and Gawyn.

[emphasis added]

[TEOTW: Glossary, 661]

In [TSR: 17, Deceptions, 194], Moiraine says Thom was:

“Morgase's lover for a time, *after Taringail died.*” [emphasis added]

Here, Moiraine is trying to impress Thom with how much she knows. She wouldn't include a detail she had any doubt about. To be wrong about something in such a situation would indicate faulty research, and Moiraine would not risk showing any gap in her knowledge. If she had any doubt at all, she wouldn't have mentioned the timing of events. Plus, Thom didn't say or think anything to contradict Moiraine's statement.

If Morgase had been having an affair with Thom while still married to Taringail, it is very unlikely that she would have been able to keep it entirely under wraps; surely some rumor would have been around, especially in Cairhien. However, we see no evidence of such a rumor existing. Specifically, in [LOC: 50, Thorns, 628] when Rand mentions to some Cairhienin that he means to have Elayne rule Cairhien, the Cairhienin think she'd be a good choice, due to her descent from her father Taringail Damodred. If Morgase was unfaithful, surely there would have been some doubt as to Elayne's right to the throne of Cairhien.

At a post-ACOS signing [Dunwoody, GA, 9 October 1996], RJ strongly denied that Thom was Elayne or Gawyn's father:

“Thom is exactly who he says he is.”

2.5.5 Kari al'Thor: what do we know about her?

[J.R. Feehan, Anthony Padilla]



- Tam met Kari sometime before the end of the Aiel War (ref. Tam's ranting in the woods).
- Kari is from Caemlyn [TGH: 8, The Dragon Reborn, 105].
- Kari did not give birth to Rand [TEOTW: 6, The Westwood, 73 (and other references, too numerous to note)].
- Kari had red hair [TEOTW: 16, The Wisdom, 202].
- Kari, supposedly, had gray eyes which Rand was supposed to have inherited [TEOTW: 1, An Empty Road, 2]. **Rienk Tychon** suggests that she may actually not have had grey eyes, but that Tam just told him that – not likely, since he was delirious at the time, and Tam should certainly know the color of his wife's eyes. "Kari" has dark eyes in Ishy's vision at the end of TEOTW. This might indicate that the "Kari" in the vision wasn't real; however, this passage has been corrected in later printings of TEOTW to give the vision Kari gray eyes also.
- Kari died when Rand was young, perhaps from a disease that made her "waste away" or something. (There are no refs to a wasting sickness in TEOTW or TGH, and I don't think there are any refs in other books, but I leave this in in case I find one.)
- Kari didn't approve of Tam's sword [TEOTW: 5, Winternight, 56].

All Rand can remember of her was her smile and her hands. Nynaeve said it was obvious that she loved Rand, and that she was very nice. Even still, she was only in the Two Rivers for a few years, if all Rand can remember is her smile. She probably had known Tam for quite a while, while he was in Andor. At any rate, their relationship went on long enough for him to say in his fever dream that she "always said you wanted to have children." That "always" would imply that her and Tam didn't get hitched after like a month-long romance, and that maybe they'd been married a while before they found Rand, and maybe tried to have kids of their own, to no avail, which would have taken a while to find out.

At a book signing, RJ is reported to have said that we'll find out a little more about Kari later.

Loony Kari theories

People have thought that Kari was Tigraine (somehow still alive after dying on the slopes of Dragonmount), or an Aiel Wise One looking after Shaiel's kid (which cannot be because Moiraine said that Kari's from Caemlyn), or an Aes Sedai who'd been stilled (someone said she was wasting away and that's why she died and Tam was her Warder, etc. Wouldn't the White Tower have gotten to Emond's Field faster if Kari had been one?), or a Tinker, or she was related to some Caemlyn noble we know (don't know why exactly, but she does have red hair, and the Caemlyn nobles also have red hair).

2.5.6 Is Aviendha pregnant?

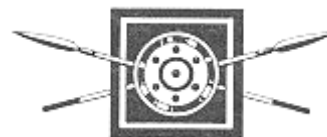
Not a chance. There are two reasons why:

1. Nynaeve Delved Aviendha at the beginning of TPOD, after Elayne almost blew them up with unraveling her gateway from the Kin's farm [TPOD: 20, Into Andor, 390]. From [WH: 11, Ideas of Importance, 274], we see that Delving is a very thorough examination. If Aviendha had been pregnant, she would have been about four months along at that point, and there's no way Nynaeve wouldn't have detected it – that's a big physiological change, even if the woman isn't showing it externally. And it's absurd to think Nynaeve would detect such a life-changing condition and decide not to tell Aviendha about it. Therefore, if Avi was pregnant, she'd know.
2. And that's why the sister-bonding ceremony in WH's Prologue is proof that Avi is not pregnant. Monaelle explains that Melaine is not present at the ceremony because:

"...the babes she carries would be part of the bond between you and Aviendha, if the weaves brushed them. If they survived, that is; the unborn are not strong enough for this." [WH: Prologue, Snow, 48]

Aviendha would not have participated in the ceremony if she were pregnant.

We do know, however, that Aviendha *will* be pregnant in the future (see section 4.2).



2.5.7 What's the deal with Seanchan marriage customs?

"She is my wife," [Mat] said softly...

"What?" Egeanin squeaked, her head whipping toward him so fast that her tail of hair swung around to slap her face. He would not have thought she *could* squeak. "You cannot say that! You *must* not say that!"

"Why not?" he demanded. The Aelfinn always gave true answers. Always. "She is my wife. Your bloody Daughter of the Nine Moons is my wife!"

[WH: 31, What the Aelfinn Said, 588]



Egeanin doesn't say "What? WTF are you talking about?"; she says, "You *must* not say that." So we wondered, post-WH, if there was some special significance to him saying that. **Amy Gray** suggested:

What if Seanchan marriage customs are such that all you have to do to be married is say it three times? If this is the case, they're already married! The more I think about it, the more I like the idea. I think this is my new pet loony theory.

Well, not quite, but damn close for a loony theory:

[Egeanin:] "You can't think she'll complete the ceremony, can you? You can't be that big a fool."

[Mat:] "What ceremony? What are you talking about?"

"You named her your wife three times that night in Ebou Dar," she said slowly. "You really don't know? A woman says three times that a man is her husband, and he says three times she's his wife, and they're married. There are blessings involved, usually, but it's saying it in front of witnesses that makes it a marriage."

[COT: 28, A Cluster of Rosebuds, 625]

Heh.

2.6 What's up? (Non-Dark section)

This subsection contains information on and discussion of questions and puzzles related to people and happenings which don't (necessarily) touch directly upon the Shadow.

2.6.1 What is the deal with *Callandor*? Who will use it?

The "Into the Heart" prophecy (see section 4.5) suggested that maybe somebody besides Rand would remove *Callandor* from the Stone:

Who draws it out shall follow after...

In TPOD this did happen, although not in a very dramatic fashion. Narishma went to Tear to retrieve the Sword That Ain't for Rand. Bo-ring. Fortunately for our active imaginations, we got lots of new fodder for *Callandor* theories.

What's the deal with the "flaw"?

In [TPOD: 27, The Bargain, 539-540], Cadsuane tells Rand about a flaw in *Callandor*, which she claims to have discovered in some moldy documents in the Tower Library:

"It is flawed, lacking the buffer that makes other *sa'angreal* safe to use. And it apparently magnifies the taint, inducing wildness of the mind. So long as a man is using it, anyway. The only safe way for you to use The Sword That Is Not a Sword, the only way to use it without the risk of killing yourself, or trying to do the Light alone knows what insanity, is linked with two women, and one of them guiding the flows."

This not only explains the mess Rand made of things at the end of the Ebou Dar campaign (which was compounded by the Ebou Dar Power Anomaly), but also the megalomania displayed by Rand during and after the attack in the Stone in [TSR: 10, The Stone Stands, 136-138]. What insanity? As **John Rowat** points out:

He went a little nutso, thought he could raise the dead, and it took him an hour or so to realize that he could just fry all the bad guys at once.

Also, it explains a statement by SS in [TDR: 29, A Trap to Spring, 276] in which she refers to a woman wielding *Callandor*. In particular, she's talking to Nynaeve, and says:

"With *Callandor* in your hands, child, you could level a city at one blow."

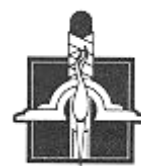
Previously, that seemed really silly, since *Callandor* was, as far as we knew, a male-only *sa'angreal*. However, Cadsuane's statement indicates that *Callandor* can at least be used by a circle of two women and one man, with a woman controlling the flows (and thus, effectively, wielding the Sword That Ain't). Given that SS has made the Dragon Reborn her life's work, it is reasonable to suppose that she may have discovered and read the same moldy documents as Cadsuane.

Now we must ask, why was the thing flawed in the first place? **John Novak** gives us some ideas:

Given that it was made in the shape of a sword and seems to have no other real purpose than as a weapon, I think it is safe to say that it was created either during or after the War of Power. In either of these cases, it was probably the result of one serious-assed QRC (Quick Response Contract). That alone will increase the probability that things aren't exactly up to specifications. Further, if it was made after the war, then by definition it was made after the Taint was created by the Dark One. I would hazard a guess that men are needed to make a male-oriented *angreal* or *sa'angreal*, so there's another potential reason for it to be screwed up. Hell, for all we know, that was the last attempt ever made at creating a male (*sa'angreal*).

Who will use *Callandor*?

Looks like Jahar Narishma gets the honors for that one as well. He uses *Callandor* during the Cleansing in the final chapter of WH. So it appears that he "follows after" as well as "draws it out."



This may well be the fulfillment of Egwene's dream of a dark young man holding something glowing in [ACOS: 10, Unseen Eyes, 203], though the vague wording means we can't be certain.

2.6.2 The severed hand

The "severed hand" controversy centers around several of Min's visions. For Elayne, she has seen: a severed hand, not hers [TGH: 24, New Friends and Old Enemies, 305]; and a red-hot iron and an axe [TGH: 43, A Plan, 511]. For Rand, we have: a bloody hand and a white-hot iron [TEOTW: 15, Strangers and Friends, 181]. Here are the ideas:



1. Elayne gets captured and leashed by the Seanchan. Rand, or somebody else, is somehow forced to wear the bracelet (recall that little Seanchan game [TGH: 40, *Damane*, 484]?). Somebody then chops off Rand's hand (with an axe) to save the two of them. The wound is then cauterized with a hot iron that happens to be lying around. [Judy G., Arthur Bernard Byrne, John Novak]
2. **Joe Shaw** has suggested: during Rand's battle with Ba'alzamon at the end of TGH, we have:
Rand screamed as he felt [Ba'alzamon's staff] pierce his side, burning like a white-hot poker.
At the same time, he gets a second heron branded onto his hand [TGH: 47, The Grave Is No Bar To My Call, 564]. I still think this was the fulfillment of Min's viewing about Rand, and that Elayne's similar viewing is completely unrelated.
3. In [TFOH: 16, An Unexpected Offer, 224] we learned that the punishment for stealing in Amadicia is: first offense – branding (with a red-hot iron?); second offense – right hand chopped off. Scenario: somebody Elayne knows gets accused of stealing in Amadicia (Morgase? Galad? Lini?) and is branded. The person gets into more trouble, and has their hand chopped off. Rand has nothing to do with it. His bloody hand is something else. Problem with this theory is that Amadicia is now under Seanchan control, and old Amadician laws probably don't apply any more.
4. Galad's hand gets chopped for having stolen the boat in Samara from the loony Prophet (according to the Prophet's new law, thieves get their hands chopped). Problem: I see this having more to do with Nynaeve than with Elayne, since she was the one who told both Galad and the Prophet to get a boat for them. [Judy G.]

RJ said, at a signing, that he deliberately made Rand like Tew, the Norse god of strife, who lost a hand.

2.6.3 Who are the Aelfinn and Eelfinn?

[Erica Sadun, Sean Hillyard, Pam Korda, Leigh Butler]

The Aelfinn and Eelfinn (henceforth referred to as "the Finn") are strange tricky critters who live in other dimensions. They are also known as the Snakes and Foxes, because of their appearances, and have long-standing tricky relationships with humans: giving gifts and answers... at a price.



Most of what we know about the Finn is from TSR. There is also a little bit in the Guide, and scant but telling information is gained in WH.

What we know from the Tear doorway [TSR: 6, Doorways, 95; TSR: 15, Into the Doorway, 174-180]

- There seems to be some kind of agreement concerning the use of the door. Anyone may enter who does not bring sources of light (lamps, torches), iron, or instruments of music. The snakes will then answer three questions which pertain to the future of the asker.
"Frivolous questions are punished, it seems, but it also seems what may be serious for one can be frivolous coming from another. Most importantly, questions touching the Shadow have dire consequences."
What sort of consequences? Moiraine mentions death and madness.
- How do they provide true answers? Moiraine speculates:
"That world is... folded... in strange ways. ... It may be that that allows them to read the thread of a human life, read the various ways it may yet be woven into the Pattern."
This explanation seems to fit with what the snakes said while Mat was in there.
- What do the snakes get out of it? According to Moiraine:
"Sensations, emotions, experiences. They rummage through them; you can feel them doing it, making your skin crawl. Perhaps they feed on them in some manner. The Aes Sedai who studied this *ter'angreal*... spoke of a strong desire to bathe afterward."

- The presence of two *ta'veren* placed some sort of strain on the place, causing it to almost fall apart.
- As can be surmised from their questions upon entering, the snakes don't like fire. Rand uses a fire-sword to keep them off him:

"The sword kept them back; they wouldn't even look at it. Shied away. Hid their eyes."
- The space the snakes live in is very weird, indeed. Moiraine, Mat, and Rand all enter and exit it through the twisty door around the same time, but they don't see any sign of one another while inside.

What we know from the Rhuidean doorway [TSR: 24, Rhuidean, 278-282; TSR: 26, The Dedicated, 306-307]

- The foxes also speak of a treaty in using the doorway. The spear Mat gets from them also mentions treaties and agreements:

'Thus is our treaty written; thus is agreement made.
Thought is the arrow of time; memory never fades.
What was asked is given. The price is paid.'
- Again, no iron or musical instruments, or ways to make light.
- Instead of answering three questions, the foxes grant three wishes.
- Again, there is the prickling of the skin as memories are rummaged through. However, for the foxes this does not seem to be payment enough for their services. Apparently a 'price' has to be negotiated before 'agreements' are made. Mat lucks out (of course) and asks for a way out as one of his agreements (it seems extremely likely that he would still be there without that), but they still exact a price out of him, and an unpleasant one, from what we can infer of it.

What we know from Birgitte's talk with Perrin [TSR: 28, To the Tower of Ghenjei, 323-324]

- The Tower of Ghenjei is a route to the realms of the Finn. (The Tower is a large, metallic tower with no doors which is located in Andor. Perrin chases Slayer to it in T'A'R in [TSR: 28, To the Tower of Ghenjei, 322], and it is seen from Bayle Domon's boat in [TEOTW: 24, Flight Down the Arinelle, 299-300].) It is:

"...hard enough to leave in the world of men. Here [in T'A'R] it is all but impossible."
- The way to "beat" the snakes and foxes is to break the rules.

"Courage to strengthen, fire to blind, music to daze, iron to bind."
- The Finn:

"...are not evil the way the Shadow is evil, yet they are so different from humankind they might as well be. They are not to be trusted..."

From the Guide [Guide: 3, The Age of Legends, 33]

- The answers received [from the snakes] are always true, though not easily understood.
- The requests are always granted, though not always as intended by the petitioner.

What we know from Mat's POV [WH: 31, What the Aelfinn Said, 588] **and Cyndane's POV** [WH: 35, With the Choedan Kal, 649]

- Chapter 31's title says it – we finally know that the Aelfinn are the Snakes and the Eelfinn are the Foxes (we've only been wondering since Book 4...). Of course, we're not really sure how Mat knows this. Either it's fairly common knowledge and Moiraine and Birgitte just neglected to mention it, or (more likely) Mat got the information from one or more of the memories in his head.
- Cyndane, a.k.a. Lanfear, says that she was "held" by the Aelfinn *and* the Eelfinn. It's always seemed logical that the Snakes and the Foxes were connected, but this statement is the first real indication that they coexist and work together in some fashion.

Cyndane's info, in particular, has sparked speculation on how exactly this coexistence works. Perhaps the game of Snakes and Foxes that Mat and Olver play may yield a clue as to how Aelfinnland and Eelfinnland are linked.

From [LOC: 33, Courage to Strengthen, 456], the game board is described as:

...a piece of red cloth with the web of lines drawn in black ink, and arrows showing which lines allowed movement only one way and which both.

Sketchy, but the phrase "the web of lines" implies that the pattern may be like an actual web – straight spokes overlaid with either concentric circles or a spiral.

Interesting, since the architecture of the Snakes' domain is described as all curves and spirals [TSR: 15, Into the Doorway, 174-176], and everything in Foxland is sharp straight angles and polygons; the most often recurring shape in the Foxy architecture is an eight-pointed star [TSR: 24, Rhuidean, 279-281]. Perhaps something like the spokes of a web with the circles taken away?

Given all this, **Gabriel Wright** theorizes that perhaps the game played in the real world actually accurately depicts Finnland; the Aelfinn (Snakes) live in the spiral part of the web, while the Eelfinn (Foxes) live on the spokes. Separate, but linked. There's definitely a certain elegance to the idea.

Mr. Wright also observes that there may be a link between the "snaring" purpose of the snake and fox tokens in the game and Birgitte's warning to Perrin about entering Finnland through the Tower of Ghenjei. Perhaps people coming in illegitimately (i.e. not through the twisted doorways) free the Finn from their age-old treaty, making the intruders fair game for capture?

As additional food for thought on the composition of Finnland: there are windows to whatever passes for outside in Finnland in the Snaky place (which is where Mat sees the three curved silvery spires over and over). However, the only openings in Foxland are to the inside, showing the chamber Mat entered from over and over again.

In that vein, **Paul Ward** received a letter from RJ in March 2000 in which RJ said (answering a question about why the Fox doorway melted in TFOH):

"When Moiraine and Lanfear went through the *ter'angreal*, it burned in part because both were channeling, and the world on the other side of the doorway has a radically different set of natural laws. The odd optical effects witnessed in that other world are not artificially produced artifacts."

Interesting. It does make a certain amount of sense, as **John Novak** points out, that Finnland must have:

...a radically different geometry, which is definitely sufficient to produce the optical effects seen, [and that this would also] screw up what seems to be a geometrically based system of magic – weaves must almost certainly depend on geometry, from the way they're described.

This does raise the question of how Rand managed to not only channel in Snakeland, but actually step from one world to another while holding the weave. Without knowing more about how exactly the physics of Finnland differs from Randland's, the best explanation anyone can come up with to explain this is that at that point in the series, Rand hadn't had any real training in wielding the OP; he was doing everything by instinct. So he did what felt right in the real world, and did what felt right in Finnland. As for stepping from one reality to another... One other suggestion is that perhaps the fact that Rand was wielding Fire had something to do with why the Finnland physics didn't screw him up, since they are vulnerable to fire.

And on that note, isn't it remarkable that Aludra – and her matches – are now travelling with Mat and Thom? Just in time for a rescue, perhaps? [**Erica Sadun**]

2.6.4 Where do the Aes Sedai get their money?

The Aes Sedai, both collectively and individually, never seem to lack for funds. Where do they get the money? Here are some ideas:

- Private income (e.g. Moiraine's estates in Cairhien).
- Income from property owned by the Tower and/or the Ajahs.
- Tar Valon straddles the crossroads of some of the major trade routes on the continent. The Tower likely collects docking fees, tariffs, etc.
- Gifts from various nobles/merchants for services (e.g. Healing) and as bribes.
- Donations from various governments who support the Tower (e.g. Borderlands, Andor).
- Tar Valon is probably a main banking center for Randland: the AS have incentive for having one and the very stable government helps it to be formed, and Tar Valon coins are seen commonly around Randland.
- The Tower probably taxes the residents of Tar Valon and the surrounding villages.



2.6.5 Who's who in the Halls of the Tower? What's the mystery about the "too-young" Sitters? (Or: Is this Seat taken?)

[Rich Boyé, Pam Korda, John S. Hamby, Karl-Johan Norén]

In [TPOD: 16, Unexpected Absences, 341], Siuan tells Egwene about a pattern she has noticed about the Salidar Hall:

"Aside from Romanda and Moria, the Sitters chosen in Salidar are... they're too young. ... Escaralde is the oldest, and I'm sure she isn't much past seventy. ... It isn't often the Hall has held more than one Sitter under a hundred, and here we have nine! ... When a woman is raised too young, there's a reason. ... This time, there were more than enough sisters of proper age to choose from, and I can't see five Ajahs deadlocking on all of them. There is a pattern, and I mean to pick it out."



Egwene doesn't believe that there is anything suspicious going on. However, SS has been described several times as being very good at noticing patterns and solving puzzles. From [TPOD: 16, Unexpected Absences, 340]:

Siuana had shown herself very skilled at detecting patterns where others saw only a jumble.

In [L:NS, 666], Moiraine thinks:

There were too many questions, and not an answer to be found. She wished Siuana were there; Siuana was very good at puzzles, and nothing shook her.

So, since SS is so smart, we shouldn't follow Egwene's suit by dismissing Siuana's ideas out of hand.

Then in COT, we find out that bizarre things are also going on in the Tower Hall. As Seaine puts it to Yukiri:

"Five Ajahs had to choose new Sitters after women they had in the Hall joined the rebels. ... Each of those Ajahs chose a woman as Sitter who wasn't the... logical... choice." [COT: Prologue, Glimmers of the Pattern, 51]

Also by COT, we gain enough information to enumerate virtually complete lists of the Sitters in each of the Halls of the Tower, in both Tar Valon and among the rebels, and further, which of those were originally Sitters in the pre-schism Hall under Siuana Sanche. This section examines this logistical nightmare of data to answer the following questions:

- Why are the new Sitters raised in Salidar "too young"?
- Why are the new Sitters raised in Tar Valon "unusual"?
- What the heck is going on with the various votes in the rebel Hall?

Who's who among the Sitters

In [COT: Prologue, Glimmers of the Pattern, 51], we learn that six of the original Sitters in Siuana's Hall fled when they were not informed of the vote to depose Siuana (Seaine Herimon is the only Sitter not included in the vote to remain in Elaida's Tower). This tally does not include the three Blue Sitters, so in actuality, nine Sitters fled Elaida's ascension. All the Red Sitters stayed. We'll call the Ajahs which are neither Red nor Blue "unaligned." Each of the unaligned Ajahs lost at least one Sitter; the Browns lost two.

The six unaligned Sitters that fled were Magla Daronos (Yellow), Saroiya (White), Varilin (Gray), Faiselle (Green) and Janya Frende and Takima (both Brown). Keep these six in mind. We'll discuss them later.

Roster of the Hall under Siuana (and who voted to depose Siuana)

<i>Pre-schism Hall</i>		<i>Voted to depose Siuana?</i>	<i>Fled to Salidar?</i>
Red	Teslyn Baradon	Yes	No
	Pevara	Yes	No
	Elaida a'Roihan	Yes	No
Blue	Lelaine Akashi	No	Yes
	Lyrelle	No	Yes
	(unknown) ¹	No	Yes
Yellow	Doesine	Yes	No
	Magla Daronos	No	Yes
	Sedore	Yes	No
White	Seaine Herimon	No	No
	Saroiya	No	Yes
	Velina	Yes	No
Brown	Saerin Asnobar	Yes	No
	Janya Frende	No	Yes
	Takima	No	Yes
Green	Talene Minly	Yes	No
	Faiselle	No	Yes
	Rubinde	Yes	No
Gray	Yukiri	Yes	No
	Varilin	No	Yes
	(unknown) ²	Yes	No

¹ The identity of the third Blue Sitter has yet to be divulged; speculation is that it may have been Cabriana Mecandes (the sister Semirhage tortured in LOC).

² The identity of the third Gray Sitter is also still unrevealed.

The rebel Hall

With what was established in earlier books along with the new information in COT, we can now completely name the entire rebel Hall and state which are pre-schism Sitters and which are the “unusually young” ones.

The rebel Brown Sitters are Takima and Janya Frende, both of whom sat in Tar Valon, and a newly chosen Sitter, Escaralde. Escaralde is apparently too young for the position, and thus piques Siuan’s interest. We’re not sure who leads the rebel Browns.

The rebel Green Sitters are Malind, Samalin and Faiselle. In COT we are able to definitively pin down Faiselle as the pre-schism Green Sitter who fled. Samalin and Malind were chosen in Salidar and are also mysteriously young, Malind being the youngest of all the Sitters. We knew that one of the Tower Green Sitters fled and caused a vacancy in their Hall (now filled by Rina), but were unable to sort out which of the three in Salidar she was until now. We also learnt in COT that the Greens style their leader “Captain-General,” a post filled among the rebels by Myrelle Berengari, a very young Aes Sedai.

The rebel Yellow Sitters are Magla Daronos, who sat in Tar Valon, plus two raised in Salidar: Romanda Cassin, who needs no introduction, and Salita Toranes who is noted as being unusually young. It seems that in addition to being a Sitter for the Yellow, Romanda almost certainly leads the Yellows in Salidar, in the position called the “First Weaver.”

The rebel White Sitters are Saroiya, who sat in Tar Valon, and two newly chosen ones, Aledrin and Berana. Both Aledrin and Berana are too young for the position as per Siuan. Again, we don’t know who leads the rebel Whites; the position is called the “First Reasoner.”

The Grays are represented in the rebel Hall by Varilin, who sat in Tar Valon, along with Delana Mosalaine and Kwamesa, both of whom were raised in Salidar. Kwamesa is specifically noted by Siuan as unusually young for the job. The Gray Ajah styles its leader “Head Clerk,” but the identity of the Head Clerk among the rebels is unknown at this time.

The Blue delegation is comprised of Lelaine Akashi, and Lyrelle, who sat in the Tower Hall, and Moria Karentanis, who was chosen in Salidar. Moria is not unusually young for a Sitter. The leader of the Blues is unknown. It was very likely Anaiya, but we are not certain. We do know that Anaiya was given a great degree of respect by the Blues, but it could just be that she was well-liked. However, Maigan literally appears out of the woodwork after an eight-book absence when Anaiya is killed to assume the latter’s place on Egwene’s council. It’s also noted that Myrelle and she do not get along; perhaps Maigan is a “real Ajah head” and treats Myrelle with disrespect, and Myrelle, being a hot-tempered Altaran, gives attitude back. It’s also worth noting that both Maigan and Anaiya were in Fal Dara when Siuan dropped in on Lord Agelmar way back in TGH.

Current roster of the rebel Hall

<i>Rebel Hall</i>		<i>Sat in Tar Valon?</i>	<i>Too young?</i>
Blue	Lelaine Akashi	Yes	No
	Lyrelle	Yes	No
	Moria	No ¹	No
Yellow	Romanda Cassin	No	No
	Magla Daronos	Yes	No
	Salita Toranes	No	Yes
White	Saroiya	Yes	No
	Berana	No	Yes
	Aledrin	No	Yes
Brown	Escaralde	No	Yes
	Janya Frende	Yes	No
	Takima	Yes	No
Green	Faiselle	Yes	No
	Malind	No	Yes
	Samalin	No	Yes
Gray	Delana	No	Yes
	Varilin	Yes	No
	Kwamesa	No	Yes

¹ Still wondering what happened to the third Blue Sitter...

With me so far? Good. It gets worse.

The Hall in Tar Valon

We learned from the hallway conversation between Yukiri and Seaine in [COT: Prologue, Glimmers of the Pattern, 48-52] that Seaine has picked up on a parallel mystery in Tar Valon. In Tar Valon, the Sitters who were elected to fill the vacancies in the wake of Siuan’s removal are all odd or unusual in some manner.

As stated above, each “unaligned” Ajah in the Tower had to replace at least one Sitter because of the rebellion (the Browns had to replace two). They have all picked a woman who would not normally be chosen.

The White Ajah in the Tower is led by Ferane Neheran, who installed herself as a new Sitter to replace Saroiya, who fled to Salidar. Ferane is odd because she recently resigned her chair only to take it up again very quickly, as commented upon by Seaine. Ferane and Seaine are both in the Tar Valon Hall for the White. The third is Velina. (As an aside, I think we can now be fairly certain that Alviarin was *not* a Sitter when she helped overthrow Suan.)

The Yellow Ajah in the Tower is led by Suana Dragand, and Suana now represents them in the Hall. This is very odd indeed since their Ajah leader, their First Weaver, sits in the Hall, and she also had a very lengthy tenure as a Sitter in the past. Apparently, that’s “just not done.” Suana filled the vacancy caused when Magla Daronos fled to Salidar. So, in the Tower Hall are Doesine (a Black Ajah hunter), Suana, and Sedore.

The Tower Browns are led by Jesse Bilal, who sits at the head of the “Brown Council.” The Browns put two new Sitters in the Hall because both Takima and Janya Frende fled to Salidar. The two new Sitters are Shevan and Juilaine Madome. Juilaine is another odd choice, for she is too young, and was apparently selected with the direct intervention of Jesse Bilal. Saerin Asnobar, the de facto leader of the Black Ajah hunters, is the third Brown Sitter in the Tower.

The Tower Greens are led by Adelorna, their “Captain-General.” Adelorna is not a Sitter. They had to replace a Sitter who also fled to Salidar, who we (finally) learned in COT was Faiselle. Adelorna personally installed Rina, despite a previous policy of nominations by member sisters, and selection among the pool of candidates by the Captain-General. They also had a vacancy caused when Joline Maza was exiled to Ebou Dar so it seems to be the same vacancy, first filled by Joline as an act of defiance, then by Rina. Rubinde is apparently a long-standing (-sitting?) Sitter, so the Tower Green delegation is now made of Talene (a Black Ajah), Rubinde and Rina.

The Grays are led by Serancha, whom they style “Head Clerk.” They had to replace Varilin who fled to Salidar. According to Yukiri, Andaya’s selection was unorthodox. Serancha apparently chose a young woman, Andaya, who was also part of Elaida’s initial junta, and did not subject her to discussion and secret ballot as is usual. So the three Gray Sitters are Yukiri (a Black Ajah hunter), Andaya, and the third is still unknown.

The Reds did not have to replace any rebel, but they did have to replace Elaida and Teslyn, since Elaida exiled the latter as a demonstration of her independence. The Red Tower delegation is now Pevara (a Black Ajah hunter), Duhara and Javindhra, who was also a member of Elaida’s junta. It is unknown if Duhara is uncharacteristically young. The Reds *were* led by Galina Casban, but it is unknown if she has been replaced since her capture.

Current roster of the Hall in Tar Valon

<i>Tar Valon Hall</i>		<i>Pre-schism Sitter</i>	<i>Odd choice?</i>
Red	Pevara	Yes	No
	Duhara	No	? ¹
	Javindhra	No	? ¹
Yellow	Doesine	Yes	No
	Suana Dragand	No	Yes
	Sedore	Yes	No
White	Seaine Herimon	Yes	No
	Ferane Neheran	No	Yes
	Velina	Yes	No
Brown	Saerin Asnobar	Yes	No
	Juilaine Madome	No	Yes
	Shevan	No	No
Green	Talene Minly	Yes	No
	Rina	No	Yes
	Rubinde	Yes	No
Gray	Yukiri	Yes	No
	Andaya	No	Yes
	(unknown)	Yes	No

¹ Unknown, but probably not.

Okay. Now that’s all laid out with charts and everything.

What’s up with the voting in the rebel Hall?

Now, as we saw in COT, the rebel Hall was embroiled in some highly controversial issues:

1. Negotiate with Elaida?
2. Rapprochement with the Black Tower?

In [COT: 16, The Subject of Negotiations, 404] we learn that Varilin, Takima, Magla, Faiselle and Saroiya all endorse negotiations with Elaida, which Egwene allows as a means of avoiding bloodshed.

Later, in [COT: 19, Surprises, 471-473] when Moria, Escaralde and Malind (three new Sitters who are “too young”) propose sending an embassy to the Black Tower, Varilin, Takima, Magla, Faiselle and Saroiya all react with horror, and refuse to stand for the measure. Hmm.

Now, let’s all reflect on the War Vote [TPOD: 19, The Law, 382-389], in which a vote was held to declare war on Elaida a’Roihan. Of the eighteen Sitters present, six opposed the declaration of war. They were Romanda, who is something of an anomaly across the board, and... Varilin, Takima, Magla, Faiselle and Saroiya. Yes, the same five Sitters who opposed approaching the Black Tower, and who favor negotiating with Elaida’s Tower.

Now, this is where RJ’s puzzle is supposed to come together. These five Sitters all fled Tar Valon, along with Janya Frende (the other Brown Sitter who wasn’t informed of the vote to depose Suan), and all three Blue Sitters. Based upon Yukiri and Seaine’s discussion, of the six Sitters who were chosen to replace them in Tar Valon, five, I repeat five, are odd choices (with only Shevan noted as an appropriate candidate).

Meanwhile, those same five Sitters who fled Tar Valon have made efforts to attempt to hinder the rebellion, tried to make peace with Elaida, and tried to stop the embassy to the Black Tower. Why?

On the flip side of the “unusual replacement Sitter” enigma in the Tower, the Hall that was convened in Salidar contains *eight* unusual choices, eight women who are too young for the job (Romanda is the ninth Sitter to round out the full eighteen – more on Romanda later): Samalin and Malind of the Green, Aledrin and Berana of the White, Salita of the Yellow, Escaralde of the Brown, Delana and Kwamesa for the Gray.

Looking at it with all the odd selections, it seems like some people went out of their way to structure both Halls so that they can be pieced back together by shunting off all of the replacement Sitters without trampling established layers of tradition and seniority. Looking at it this way, reunification of the Halls seems like it can be quite painless. It’s as if some people got together and said, “If both halves come together, a new Hall would need to be convened. Who would sit in it?”

For example, the Greens have three “appropriate” Sitters of the six total (three for each Hall) – Faiselle (rebel), Rubinde (Tar Valon) and Talene (Tar Valon) (well, she’s a Black sister, but not everyone knows that yet) and three odd ones, who in this case are all noted as too young – Rina (Tar Valon), Malind (rebel), and Samalin (rebel). If one was intending to put the halves back together, all three young ones could be demoted without ruffling too many feathers.

This trend is noticeable in the other Ajahs as well. Of the six total White Sitters, three are appropriate – Velina (Tar Valon), Seaine (Tar Valon) and Saroiya (rebel) – and three are not: two are too young (Aledrin and Berana, both rebels), with Ferane Neheran, the “odd choice,” essentially holding Saroiya’s seat for her in Tar Valon.

Likewise, the Yellows have three standard, normal Sitters – Sedore (Tar Valon), Magla (rebel) and Doesine (Tar Valon) – and three odd ones: Suana Dragand (just stepped down, only to come back) holding Magla’s seat for her, and two unexpected ones in Salidar (Salita and Romanda – I’ll get to Romanda, keep reading). We know that both Ferane and Suana headed both of their Ajahs *before* the schism.

The Grays are similar; Serancha installed an unusually young woman, Andaya, to effectively fill Varilin’s seat while the rebels placed two “too young” Sitters, Delana and Kwamesa, around Varilin in Salidar. The three “normal” Sitters are Varilin (rebel), Yukiri (Tar Valon), and the unnamed Gray who voted to depose Suan and remained in Tar Valon.

The Browns are somewhat different, having *four* appropriate Sitters (in the total six) – they have Saerin (Tar Valon), Takima (rebel), and Janya (rebel), plus Shevan (Tar Valon), whom everyone agrees is an appropriate choice (not too young!). However, it’s noted that Shevan was being groomed to succeed Saerin, who was the longest-serving Sitter in the Tower. It’s possible that she is thinking of retirement. So, if we had to reconvene a new Brown delegation, it seems that it would be Takima, Saerin and Janya, or if Saerin were to retire, Takima, Janya and Shevan.

But there’s something odd about Janya Frende. Of the six pre-schism “non-aligned” Sitters that ended up in Salidar, she doesn’t seem to vote with the bloc of Takima, Faiselle, Varilin, Magla and Saroiya. It’s almost as if she’s not following along, or not in on some conspiracy.

I know you’re all thinking, “what conspiracy?” Well, there are those who think that RJ has been laying the groundwork for some vast over-arching subplot – that the Ajah Heads (“unaligned” Ajah Heads, that is) have orchestrated the selection of both Halls in the wake of the schism, perhaps even directing those five to go find the rebellion and prevent it from gathering a full head of steam. If one delves a little deeper into the tedium of internal Salidar politics, we can see that Magla, Saroiya and Varilin ally themselves with Romanda, and Takima and Faiselle ally with Lelaine, and spend their days trying to stifle action by the rebels by playing one faction against the other. Also, despite being in Lelaine’s camp, both Takima and Faiselle defy her by opposing the declaration of war.

It’s been proposed that they are following orders to make sure that any initiative in the rebel Hall gets stymied. It’s also worth noting that Janya “goes her own way,” and votes in contradiction to the other five “exiled” Sitters.

If that turns out to be the case, then perhaps Janya is not following directions, and might just be following her own conscience, and therefore might be due for some punishment. If that's the case, then Shevan (the "appropriate" replacement Sitter in Tar Valon), can neatly take her place.

What about Romanda?

And some of you are thinking, "Hey, what about Romanda? She's appropriate as a Sitter too!" Yes, that's true; Romanda throws this grand scheme off, unless one considers that the Powers That Be (if they be orchestrating things) couldn't have planned on Romanda coming out of retirement and joining the rebels. In that sense, Romanda is also an "odd choice," or at least an "unexpected choice."

Previous attempts at deciphering the mystery of the "too young" Sitters among the rebels dealt with their youth as being the key – perhaps they were designed to prevent either Lelaine or Romanda from gaining a clear advantage, or perhaps they were chosen for their youth and less traditional views, and would be eager to embrace new policies for a new Tower. The underlying assumption behind these ideas is that it was the Salidar Six (the six Aes Sedai who initially grasped power in Salidar – Sheriam, Anaiya, Beonin, Carlinya, Myrelle and Morvrin) who engineered the selection of the "young Sitters."

However, since we have the parallel conundrum of the weird Sitters in Tar Valon, the idea that the Salidar Six are behind it seems unlikely. It seems to go higher up in the Aes Sedai hierarchy. The fact that the Salidar Six had no Yellow member was also problematic. With no Yellow, who would have engineered the selection of Salita Toranes, the "too young" rebel Sitter?

Now, the dissent

How can any of this be? In all fairness, it is quite a stretch that the "unaligned" Ajah Heads have been orchestrating things so masterfully.

1. *Did the five obstructionist Sitters in Salidar (Takima, Faiselle, Varilin, Magla and Saroiya) receive orders to go join the rebels?*

Recall, that all five were not informed by Elaida's supporters of the impending vote to depose Siuan. Are we to believe that, like Seaine, they could have swallowed their umbrage at being plotted around, behind their backs, and remained in Elaida's Tower anyway, but for secret Ajah orders to go find the rebels, join them and thwart them?

This also assumes that the Ajah Heads actually expected a full-fledged revolt when Elaida took control, and they'd even need to send loyal Sitters to infiltrate the rebels, wherever they are. There wasn't really enough time to think strategically about this issue. As we saw in TSR, Elaida's coup was done suddenly and with great bloodshed and shock. Little time to conceive a clever plan of infiltration.

2. *Perhaps the five obstructionist Sitters fled, in good conscience, Elaida's coup, and only later made contact with their Ajah Heads in Tar Valon?*

This makes a tad more sense when one considers the timetable. Perhaps, they all ended up with the rebels, saw a movement fomenting, became concerned and reached out to their superiors in the White Tower for directions, and only then received orders to thwart the rebellion. This also makes more sense if one considers that even the five obstructionist Sitters stood for Egwene during the vote on her ascension. If they had orders from the start to stymie the rebels, why assist in raising a rival Amyrlin? Perhaps those orders came later.

However, this assumes a lot of communication back and forth, all of which has apparently gone unnoticed by everyone else like Siuan, or Sheriam, or Janya.

3. *What about Elaida's "moles"? She did say they would be extremely disheartening to the rebels when revealed.*

Yes, Elaida's moles. They haven't been forgotten. Elaida crowed to Alviarin that she had moles among the rebels who, when they revealed themselves, would shatter their resolve. Suppose that these obstructionist five have been acting for Elaida all along? Maybe they were even informed of the vote to remove Siuan, but told not to attend, so they could later insinuate themselves among the rebels (who might have been expected) with lessened suspicion.

Well, one could certainly admire the intricacy and forethought of such a plan, but it still doesn't explain why they'd stand for Egwene or how Elaida, who is shown to be quite the clueless one, could pull it off.

4. *What if the obstructionist five are Black Ajah, with even more convoluted instructions?*

Well, if Takima, Faiselle, Varilin, Magla and Saroiya were all Black Ajah, that would certainly explain the inconsistencies of their actions, but how does this theory square with the fact that Delana, a confirmed Black sister, vomits or gasps whenever Egwene secures a victory in the Hall? Is she just a complete "wet hen" as evil-doing sorceresses go, and the other five are just more steely and reserved? (Although, they do all react with varying degrees of distress at the proposal to ally with the Black Tower.)

As close to a conclusion as we can reach at this point

Both Halls have chosen replacement Sitters who are unorthodox for a host of reasons. Five of the Sitters who joined the rebels seem to be acting as a bloc to slow the rebellion down and even effect a peaceful reconciliation with the Tower, and each of those five seem to have a woman holding their seats in the Hall of the Tower for them who can be seen as a 'placeholder.'

It seems that the “unaligned” Ajah Heads in Tar Valon, all of whom are pre-schism (Suana for Yellow, Ferane for White, Adelorna for Green, Jesse for Brown and Serancha for Gray), actively chose to replace the Sitters who fled in ways that defy custom and expectation. Likewise, the “unaligned” Sitters chosen in Salidar (but for Romanda) are atypically young for the position. Whatever the goals of the Ajah Heads are, we still lack the information to state what they are, but the trends are converging towards *something*.

In [COT: Prologue, Glimmers of the Pattern, 52], we see that Yukiri is incredulous at Seaine’s suggestion that the Ajah Heads were conspiring over who should go into the Hall, which seems to be typical RJ foreshadowing. The Ajah Heads *are* conspiring. Their handiwork is everywhere. But we simply have no way of discovering what their goal is.

2.6.6 Military roundup: situation report

[Leigh Butler; contributors: Allen Bryan, Rich Boyé, Jean Dufresne, Kjell Stahl]



Armies, armies everywhere, and it’s probably getting a little confusing, no? This section gives a rundown on the military who, what, and where as of COT.

The list is organized roughly by geography (except for Rand’s armies, which are all over the place). Numbers are given where I’ve been able to find them.

1. Rand’s forces

Cairhien

Mixed Aiel, Cairhienin, Tairens; numbers uncertain. In [TFOH: 42, Before the Arrow, 470-471], according to Mat, the seven clans with Rand had almost double Couladin’s one hundred and sixty thousand spears (or, a little over three hundred thousand). After the battle, the four undecided clans, whose numbers equaled the Shaido’s, joined Rand, bringing the tally up to almost half a million, minus losses. So conservatively figure Rand had about four hundred thousand Aiel after defeating the Shaido, plus however many Tairens and Cairhienin he didn’t send to Illian. He lost a good chunk of the Aiel after Dumai’s Wells (at least a few thousand threw down their weapons and ran off, thinking Rand had abandoned them [ACOS: 3, Hill of the Golden Dawn, 96]). Other than the clans Rand sent to deal with the Shaido in ACOS, and those he took with him to Illian, Rand’s Cairhien forces have been sitting outside the city since TFOH.

Andor

Rand took around six thousand Aiel with him to Caemlyn [TFOH: 54, To Caemlyn, 644], and was joined in LOC by Davram Bashere and his nine thousand Saldaean horse, since reduced to a little over eight thousand after the campaigns in Illian [COT: Prologue, Glimmers of the Pattern, 68]. There were fifteen thousand of the Legion of the Dragon before Rand took them and the Saldaeans to Illian in [ACOS: 41, A Crown of Swords, 647]; the Legion probably has been growing steadily since then, thanks to Taim’s aggressive recruiting program, and may by now be more than double the ACOS number. The Aiel in Caemlyn, led by Bael, were roused from the city by Elayne’s arrival, and have joined Bashere’s men outside Caemlyn; they have had sporadic communication with Elayne, who has asked them not to interfere in the siege. Bashere then took a hundred Saldaeans with him to join Rand in Tear [COT: 24, A Strengthening Storm, 546].

Illian

Before engaging the Seanchan in TPOD, Rand dismantled most of the huge army he had built up in Illian and sent them back to Cairhien and/or Andor. After the Seanchan campaign stalled, Rand pulled most of the rest out as well, except the Illianers themselves, but now Gregorin (Rand’s steward in Illian) is reported to be mustering forces to meet the approaching second Seanchan attempt at Illian [COT: 18, A Chat with Siuan, 449].

Tear

Darlin has taken over as Rand’s steward in Tear, joined by High Lord Astoril and the other Lords left in the city still loyal to Rand [COT: 23, Ornaments, 528]. Currently besieged in the Stone by the Haddon Mirk rebels.

Rand is in Tear as well, holed up at a minor Lord’s manor, where he was joined by Bashere, Logain, and Loial; he sent the three of them to negotiate a truce with the Seanchan [COT: 24, A Strengthening Storm, 559]. Bashere came back with the answer:

“The Seanchan are amenable... They require a meeting with you in person, though... Suroth wants you to meet someone called the Daughter of the Nine Moons.” [COT: Epilogue, An Answer, 680]

(See section 1.4.12.)

Kinslayer’s Dagger

In [ACOS: 18, As the Plow Breaks the Earth, 323], Rand sent a large force of Aiel (four clans, or probably about 150,000 spears) to Kinslayer’s Dagger to deal with the Shaido. Of course, the Shaido disappeared before they could get there, and we’ve heard nothing of Rand’s Aiel since; it may probably be presumed that after finding nothing there, they returned to Cairhien.

Sea Folk

Included here because technically they are part of Rand's forces, according to the bargain Merana and Rafela struck with Harine, even if he has yet to use them. They're also the only group in Randland with naval capabilities anywhere close to the Seanchan. The Windfinder *damane* Mat freed in WH staged what was essentially a huge prison-break in Ebou Dar, freeing large numbers of Sea Folk but also killing hundreds of Seanchan and Atha'an Miere alike in a massive OP battle, leaving the Seanchan navy in Ebou Dar in a shambles [COT: 1, Time to Be Gone, 99]. The Wavemistresses are gathering in Illian's harbor to elect a new Mistress of the Ships [COT: 12, A Bargain, 312], according to Zaida, but Harine (who Min foretold would be Mistress of the Ships) and her entourage have gone to Tear, which is crowded to bursting with Sea Folk [COT: 23, Ornaments, 528].

Asha'man

Taim reported a total of 448 channellers on the rolls as of [TPOD: 14, Message from the M'Hael, 298], and that three to four more men joined every day. (Torval says that there were 51 burned out/destroyed in the same amount of time.) By the Prologue of WH, 22 days later, Toveine counts 500 Asha'man; if she's right, then Taim was actually boasting only slightly about the rate of increase. The end of COT is approximately 45 days after the WH Prologue, which means the BT could have 600 or more channellers by now (plus 50 AS Warders). Logain Ablar took "over half a dozen" Asha'man and eight AS Warders and went with Bashere to Cairhien and then Tear to join Rand, without Taim's knowledge (Taim thinks Logain is going on a recruiting trip) [COT: Prologue, Glimmers of the Pattern, 36]. Logain tells Rand that the Asha'man receiving "special training" from Taim number twenty to thirty, and incidentally are all the Asha'man except Logain who wear the Dragon pin [COT: 24, A Strengthening Storm, 557]. Evidently, none of the Asha'man really believe that Rand was responsible for cleansing the taint from *saidin*.

2. Rebels in Haddon Mirk

Tairens who actively rebelled against Rand's takeover in Tear in TSR. While in Far Madding, Rand hears a rumor that the Stone of Tear is under siege [WH: 32, A Portion of Wisdom, 593], and the Windfinders with Elayne confirm that Darlin is besieged by nobles who want the Dragon Reborn out of Tear [COT: 12, A Bargain, 306]. In [WH: 25, Bonds, 491], Rand dispatched Alanna, Rafela, Merana, Bera, and Faeldrin to Haddon Mirk to negotiate an end to the rebellion; Merana has been seen going to a meeting with High Lord Tedosian and High Lady Estanda [COT: 18, A Chat with Siuan, 450].

3. Arad Doman

Chaos, indeed. General Rodel Ituralde's POV in COT's Prologue tells us that Graendal has been having him chase his tail for months, delivering senseless and contradictory troop deployments in King Alsalam's name (making Alsalam the most likely candidate for the identity of Graendal's old man). Before being co-opted by Moridin, Graendal sent one last false order to Ituralde, making it look like the Shadow was desperate to stop it [TPOD: 12, New Alliances, 261], which commanded him to strike at the Seanchan forces massing along Arad Doman's southern border in Almoth Plain. She may not, perhaps, have anticipated that Ituralde would obey by offering truce to the Dragonsworn and free Taraboners he had previously been fighting, or that he plans to fight the Seanchan by infiltrating their Taraboner conscripts and goading them north into a trap [COT: Prologue, Glimmers of the Pattern, 24-27].

4. The Seanchan

Other than all of Rand's forces combined, the Seanchan are the largest military force in Randland – and the only army besides the rebel AS that can mount a decent defense against Rand's Asha'man (*sul'dam* and *damane*). Exact numbers unknown, but including conscripts from Tarabon, Altara, and Amadicia easily fall in the hundreds of thousands. The Seanchan also possess the only true navy in Randland proper – and the only air force! They control most of the southwestern coast from Tarabon to Ebou Dar, including most (but not all) of Amadicia.

They are currently readying (or at least rumored to be readying) to mount offensives on several fronts:

- A second attempt east against Illian.
- A move against Arad Doman in the northwest.
- A Lord Yulan is planning an imminent attack against Tar Valon [COT: 4, The Tale of a Doll, 156], of which absolutely nothing is known except that the distance involved means they must be using *to'raken* fliers in some capacity. Egwene sees one (most likely, though she thinks it is a bat) flying over Tar Valon immediately before she is captured [COT: 30, What the Oath Rod Can Do, 677]. **Matthew Julius** suggests that the loudly bruted-about attack on Illian is merely a front for the Tar Valon offensive.
- Tallanvor informs Perrin of a force of fifteen thousand soldiers, mostly Taraboners, plus at least a dozen *damane*, sent north to deal with the Shaido [COT: 27, What Must Be Done, 601-602].
- Banner-General Furyk Karede of the Deathwatch Guard has taken a hundred soldiers, twenty Ogier Gardeners, and six *damane* (including the former Aes Sedai Mylen) to hunt for Tuon [COT: 4, The Tale of a Doll, 166].

Mat hears rumors from several sources that Suroth has concluded an alliance with an unknown party that will "give her access to many lands"; Bethamin merely called it "someone powerful," but Juilin heard it was "some king" [COT: 28, A Cluster of Rosebuds, 612-613]. This could not refer to the possible truce Rand is seeking with the Seanchan, since Mat hears about the alliance at least a week before Rand even sends Bashere and Logain to negotiate. The rumor may refer to Masema (though

he's not a king, and one wonders what "many lands" he thinks he has), based on the letter he has from Suroth (see below). Other possibilities are Darlin (also not a king, but we know he will be), or Roedran of Murandy. Another possibility, given Suroth's DF status, is that "someone powerful" refers to Moridin or some other agent of the Shadow.

5. La Resistance

Anti-Seanchan partisans in Ebou Dar and possibly elsewhere (Mat hears about small armed groups all over Altara), planning to fight the invaders from within. Led in Ebou Dar by Prince – now King – Beslan. It's not clear how they weathered the OP battle following Mat's escape from Ebou Dar, nor what effect Beslan's coronation will have on his participation.

6. Perrin's forces

A ragtag mixture of Mayeners, Aiel Maidens (and Gaul), Duopotamians, Ghealdanin, six Wise Ones, three Aes Sedai, two Asha'man, and a partridge in a pear tree. Perrin tallies up the numbers at around two thousand [WH: 6, The Scent of Madness, 166]. Currently still trying to rescue Faile. After a wild-geese chase through Amadicia and into Altara, Perrin tracked the Shaido to the walled town of Malden, and is now camped within easy gating distance, approximately forty miles away.

7. Dragonsworn

Though there are plenty of random bandits running around calling themselves Dragonsworn, here I'm referring to the followers of the Prophet. The numbers range between ten and twelve thousand men [COT: 5, The Forging of a Hammer, 178] and though they are nominally in an uneasy alliance with Perrin's army, Faile and co. discovered right before getting captured that Masema is actually in cahoots with the Seanchan. Perrin himself discovers Masema's treachery about half a month later [COT: 6, The Scent of a Dream, 200], along with a very useful document: a *carte blanche* signed by High Lady Suroth, charging the bearer with free will and unlimited command in the name of the Empress. To add to the fun, both Masuri and Annoura Sedai have been sneaking off from Perrin's camp to meet with Masema, for purposes as yet unknown.

8. Shaido

According to Faile and Elyas' information, there are ten septs of the Shaido gathered in Malden with Sevanna, which means ten thousand spears and about seventy thousand people total [COT: 8, Whirlpools of Color, 220; COT: 9, Traps, 241]. Faile says there are about 400 Wise Ones in the camp; since Sevanna took all who could channel with her when the Shaido split up [ACOS: 40, Spears, 636], and Marline told Perrin that there were less than five hundred WOs who could channel total in the Shaido clan [COT: 8, Whirlpools of Color, 234], that means that probably pretty much every Wise One in Malden can channel. And of course, according to Therava there are about seventy-six more septs still "scattered on the wind," from Almoth Plain to Illian and possibly beyond, so that means the total number of Shaido spears still around is about 86,000, or slightly more than half their original numbers. Sevanna is of the opinion that in two or three more weeks, ten more septs will join her in Malden [COT: 9, Traps, 263].

9. Children of the Light

Balwer reported to Perrin that the Whitecloaks, led by Eamon Valda, took most of their numbers north from Amador before the city fell to the Seanchan [TPOD: 9, Tangles, 207]. They are still in northern Amadicia as of COT, numbering over nine thousand cavalry [COT: Prologue, Glimmers of the Pattern, 28]. Last we saw, Asunawa was trying to convince Valda to move them east into Altara, but Valda seemed less than enthused at the idea.

10. The Band of the Red Hand

Ten thousand soldiers as of [TPOD: 18, A Peculiar Calling, 369], according to Egwene. Led by Talmanes of House Delovinde in Mat's absence. Last seen in Murandy, serving as mercenaries to King Roedran while waiting for Mat to reappear.

11. Murandian army

A joke, mostly. Numbers unknown but surely negligible. Roedran hopes to bolster them with the Band in an effort to maintain his sovereignty.

12. Dyelin loyalist army

Led by Lady Aemlyn of House Renshar, Lady Arathelle of House Carand, and Lord Pelivar of House Coelan. They were camped in northern Murandy with various minor Murandian nobles tacked on, but have now split up and moved back into Andor two hundred miles or so south of Caemlyn, leaving the Murandians behind [COT: 14, What Wise Ones Know, 349-350]. Dyelin hopes they are simply returning to their respective estates, pointing out that without the Murandians they are no match for Arymilla's army, but Elayne is grimly convinced they are coming to Caemlyn to completely screw up the whole situation by declaring for Dyelin:

The last time the great Houses split evenly among three claimants for the Lion Throne had been nearly five hundred years ago, and seven years of open war followed before a queen was crowned. The original claimants were all dead by that point.

13. Arymilla Marne's army

Currently besieging Caemlyn, consisting of the unlikely combination of Elenia Sarand and Naeen Arawn's supporters' forces, who were forcibly co-opted by Arymilla and the loopy Nasin Caeren. Norry estimated their numbers at anywhere from twenty

to thirty thousand men [WH: 27, To Surprise Kings and Queens, 531], and that actually seems to have been a little conservative, based on Bashere's observation that they have divided themselves into eight camps of about five thousand each in order to surround the city [COT: Prologue, Glimmers of the Pattern, 61]. There is a possibility that Arymilla is being influenced by an agent of the Shadow in some way, in the person of a mysterious and cruel "Taraboner" calling himself Jaq Lounalt [COT: 15, Gathering Darkness, 371].

14. Elayne's army

The original Queen's Guard was pretty well gutted by Rahvin; Elayne, in deciding to reconstitute the Queen's Guard, shocked Dyelin by decreeing that they be a massive, national standing army, as large as ten houses put together [WH: Prologue, Snow, 29]. No nation in the series has a national standing army, owing allegiance solely to the state. (In fact, as a historical side-note, the decision to fashion a standing national army has always been the death knell for the feudal system.) Elayne also commanded recruitment of Hunters of the Horn and mercenaries to flesh this army out.

So much for what she has decreed; what she's gotten so far are thirty companies of mostly mercenaries [COT: 12, A Bargain, 306], three thousand armymen from the four Very Junior Nobles [COT: 13, High Seats, 331], two hundred and five more fairly useless retainers from minor Houses loyal to Trakand [COT: 10, A Blazing Beacon, 277], and at least thirty-two women for her personal bodyguard [WH: 26, Expectation, 503]. She anticipates the arrival of her own house retainers (and Gawyn) once they learn she is alive and in Caemlyn, but evidently they still haven't arrived. I'm not clear on how many troops constitute a "company," but at a guess I'd say no more than a hundred or so men each. In any case, it's safe to assume Elayne doesn't have anywhere near Arymilla's numbers. She does have nine Windfinders left after the others went to Illian [COT: 12, A Bargain, 318], the Kin, three Aes Sedai, and the *sul'dam* and *damane*; all told, there are about a hundred and fifty women who can channel in the Palace [COT: 11, Talk of Debts, 285].

15. The Kin

Not technically an army, true, but one thousand seven hundred and eighty-three channellers [ACOS: 31, *Mashiara*, 500], minus losses, is nothing to sneeze at, however untrained in battle they might be. Reanne, the Knitting Circle, and what Kin were at the farm in TPOD are in Caemlyn with Elayne (over a hundred, according to Hanlon [COT: 15, Gathering Darkness, 377]), and the rest are scattered all over the place; Nynaeve and Reanne sent eighteen of those in Caemlyn to Altara and Tarabon and Amadicia via gateways, to try and find any of the Kin still in Seanchan-controlled territory [WH: 8, Sea Folk and Kin, 201]. Gathering them all up and joining them with the AS will likely be a fine mess.

16. The Borderland Treaty Organization (BoTO)

By Merilille's estimate, around two hundred thousand soldiers [WH: 26, Expectation, 511], plus thirteen unaffiliated Aes Sedai and one of the world's great generals (Agelmar Jagad). Elayne has asked them to move into Andor and play decoy, which they are doing, but very slowly. They claim to have moved south to meet with Rand and discuss his neglect of the Blight border, but their true motives are uncertain:

"Further south," Easar added, "it may be well to have thirteen Aes Sedai with us."

[TPOD: Prologue, Deceptive Appearances, 23]

Elayne gave them the mistaken impression that Rand is in Murandy.

17. The Blight Border

It's uncertain just how many soldiers the BoTO left behind them when they marched south. Ethenielle is of the opinion that what she's left can guard the Blight "short of the Trolloc Wars coming again," but her companion Alesune evidently disagrees [TPOD: Prologue, Deceptive Appearances, 20]. Even if Ethenielle is correct, though, a second Trolloc War may be exactly what the Borderlands will have to face.

18. Shadowspawn/DO's forces

The Blight's been quiescent for months, which makes it a good bet that something major is brewing; we're way overdue for Trollocs and Myrddraal to reenter the picture, not to mention the BoTO haring off south means there hasn't been a better time to launch a Shadow offensive against the Borderlands since the Breaking. The Forsaken, with the possible exception of Semirhage, appear to be all firmly under Moridin's thumb as of WH, and ready to act in concert.

19. The rebel Aes Sedai

Over thirty thousand soldiers as of [TPOD: 15, Stronger Than Written Law, 318], plus around 300 full Aes Sedai [ACOS: Prologue, Lightnings, 24], a fair posse of Warders, twenty-one Accepted [COT: 17, Secrets, 420], and 987 novices [COT: 16, The Subject of Negotiations, 399]. Led by one of Randland's greatest generals, Gareth Bryne, they are currently besieging Tar Valon, but initially unsuccessfully, since they could not block the harbors. After setting up fruitless negotiations as a front, Egwene executed a plan to block the harbors by turning the chain gate across each into unmovable *cuendillar*, during which she was betrayed and captured (see section 2.6.8). Egwene finished her chain in Northharbor; it is unknown if Leane completed transforming the chain in Southharbor or not.

20. The Tower Aes Sedai

Bryne tells Egwene in [TPOD: 15, Stronger Than Written Law, 318] that Elaida has ordered the Tower Guard increased to fifty thousand men, though it is unknown whether she actually accomplished that goal. It's also not clear if the Tower Guard serves as the only armed force in Tar Valon (not counting the Warders) or if the city has a separate militia. Add to that around 200 or so Aes Sedai, after losses at Dumai's Wells (27 sisters) and the Black Tower (Toveine's 50). Though the Tower is divided by internal dissent and a brewing Black Ajah purge, Elaida now (presumably) has the leader of the rebels in her possession, which could give her a distinct advantage (or might have, were the Tower not about to be attacked by the Seanchan).

21. The Younglings

A small but elite fighting force led by Gawyn Trakand. Their numbers were reduced to less than 200 men after Dumai's Wells [ACOS: Prologue, Lightnings, 52]. They had escorted the twelve TAS who escaped Dumai's Wells back to Tar Valon, but were then refused entrance to the city by the bridge guards [ACOS: 32, Sealed to the Flame, 506]. They have since been wintering in the village of Dorlan, outside Tar Valon, and their numbers have swelled to over three hundred men [COT: Prologue, Glimmers of the Pattern, 54]. Gawyn has evidently not received his sister's summons to Caemlyn, since he is unsure where Elayne is until Tarna tells him she's with the rebels (which are now between him and Tar Valon). Despite this, he tells the AS Narenwhin that he is still loyal to Elaida.

2.6.7 What did Toveine's note say?

[Donald Crankshaw, Patrick Cotrona, Leigh Butler]



In [COT: 22, One Answer, 525-526], Pevara (a Red Sitter in the Tower, and one of the Black Ajah hunters) shows Tarna (Elaida's new Keeper, and possibly Mesaana in disguise – see section 1.1.2) a note from Toveine (one of Logain's AS Warders) that had come via one of the Red agents in Cairhien.

(Why Cairhien? This confused a few people. Remember that in the Prologue of COT, Logain's party went first to Cairhien, then to Rand in Tear. So Toveine must have given the note to a Red agent in Cairhien while she was there.)

We're not told what's in the note, only Pevara and Tarna's reaction to it:

"This changes nothing," [Tarna] said flatly. Coldly. "It only makes what I suggest more urgent."

"On the contrary," Pevara sighed. "That changes everything. It changes the whole world."

The thing that Tarna had just suggested was that Red sisters must bond all the Asha'man as Warders, in order to "handle" them [COT: 22, One Answer, 524-525]. So, in light of that, what news could the note have held? The three most likely possibilities are:

- That someone had found a way to Heal gentling and/or stilling.
- That the Asha'man had bonded Aes Sedai as Warders.
- That the taint on *saidin* was cleansed.

All of these possibilities have obvious relevance to the topic at hand, and all three could be considered of monumental, "world-changing" importance to the Tower AS. It's possible, of course, that Toveine's note mentioned all three events, but the note seemed to be very brief, so for the hell of it we will just assume it only related one piece of information.

The first thing to remember is that due to Logain's "extra bit" bonding of Toveine, she almost certainly could not have sent the note without his permission. That makes it less likely that she wrote about AM bonding AS, since Logain probably has enough sense to see how badly that would sit with the White Tower.

The second is that Logain and co. were at Cairhien while the Cleansing was happening. Although finding out that Flinn had Healed Irgain et al of stilling would be big news, surely the Asha'man all claiming that *saidin* was clean would trump it in importance.

The last thing to recall is Toveine's avowed purpose: to bring down Elaida (a goal which I'm sure wouldn't bother Logain either). So Toveine would have wanted to send whichever piece of information was most likely to put a serious crimp in Elaida's style.

Given that, it's most likely that the note talked about the third option, the Cleansing. Seeing as the absence of the taint means that the entire *raison d'être* of the Red Ajah is suddenly gone, it certainly would hit Elaida where it hurts, especially since she just tried to wipe out the Black Tower at a stroke. There's also no reason to think Logain wouldn't have wanted that news spread far and wide.

As to why Tarna would still insist that it changed nothing, **Bill Woolsey** suggests:

...while it does 'change everything' in a sense, I'm not sure that the Reds wouldn't think that the Asha'man need to be bound as Warders anyway. Great, they won't go mad, but they will no doubt cause trouble like most men unless properly controlled by women. Just like no independent group of channelling women are permitted by the WT, no independent group of channelling men can be allowed.

2.6.8 Who betrayed Egwene?

[Leigh Butler, Drew Holton]



The big cliffhanger of COT leaves us with several questions, but the central one is this: who ratted out Egwene's Sooper Sekrit Plan?

There are several possibilities, both for who the traitor was on the rebel AS side and who captured Egwene (and probably Leane too) on the Tower AS side (obviously, each influences the other).

There are also a couple of significant events preceding the operation that probably have something to do with the betrayal. One is the death of Kairen Stang [COT: 30, What the Oath Rod Can Do, 652], who was supposed to be Leane's counterpart in the undertaking. Another is Nicola Treehill's disappearance. Yet another is the unexplained absence of Faolain.

One thing to note at the outset: Egwene's captors are surprised at her identity. Some people have taken this to mean that the capture itself was unplanned, and the AS who captured her were just guarding the wall or something – i.e. there was no betrayal. However, this is highly improbable. The use of forkroot means that the ambush was almost certainly planned, rather than being merely fortuitous – as **Ben Goodman** points out, forkroot has to be brewed into a tea, which is kind of difficult to carry around “just in case.” The precision of the abduction and the lack of a general alarm also suggest that they were forewarned of the plan. It's very unlikely Egwene's captors were there by happenstance; their surprise merely indicates that neither the traitor nor her collaborators on the other side knew about Egwene's last-minute decision to replace Bode.

Who knew about the plan?

Unfortunately, a whole lot of people. Egwene had informed the Hall of the scheme [COT: 30, What the Oath Rod Can Do, 666], so that means that not only did Romanda, Lelaine, Sheriam and the rest of the Sitters know about it, but so did Halima, via Delana (and also possibly Sheriam's torturer, if he/she isn't Halima or a Sitter to begin with).

Siuana, Leane, Bode, and Kairen Stang (before she died) also knew, obviously, since they were key players in the plot. Gareth Bryne was in on it [COT: 30, What the Oath Rod Can Do, 664], as was Theodrin; presumably the mysteriously-absent Faolain was aware of the plan as well, though we can't know that for sure.

There is also a possibility that Nicola (and Areina) knew.

Which of these could be the traitor(s)?

A few of these people can be eliminated outright as suspects. Kairen, being dead and all, can be safely rejected. There's no way Siuana was responsible. Gareth Bryne, Leane and Bode are all extremely unlikely culprits as well. Let's look at the remaining suspects.

1. Nicola: She certainly seems to have been set up to look like she did it. Besides being a malcontent and a known blackmailer, she ran away from the rebel camp three or four days before Egwene's capture, which would have given her plenty of time to get to the Tower and spill the beans about the plan. As to how she would know about the plan, Nicola has a history of ferreting out information she has no business knowing. It's also possible she learned about it through a Foretelling:

[Tiana, to Egwene:] “Ever since we found out she has the Foretelling, she's been Foretelling two or three times a day, to hear her tell it. ...battles with the Seanchan or the Asha'man, *an Amyrlin imprisoned...*” [emphasis added]

[COT: 17, Secrets, 431]

It's been pointed out that Nicola doesn't remember what she Foretells, but Areina or her “family” were clearly telling her everything she said while tranced out, so that's no obstacle. Indeed that brings up another suspicious connection: Sheriam fiercely lobbies Egwene to let Nicola's “cousins” off the hook for covering up her escape. This could be just because Sheriam's own beatings have left her super-sensitive (so to speak) on the issue of corporeal punishment, but another way to look at it is that she is worried about what they might reveal under duress about either Nicola's escape or her other Foretellings, or both. [Patrick Cotrona]

Of course, it could also be that Nicola *did* run away to the Tower, but had nothing to do with the betrayal. She may have guessed what her “Amyrlin imprisoned” prophecy meant and simply decided to pick the winning side before it all went down. She could even have gone to the Tower in order to *help* Egwene, unlikely as that may seem.

2. Sheriam: It seems like she could only be the traitor if she is Black Ajah, since the First Oath should otherwise prevent her from breaking her oath of fealty to Egwene so blatantly. Possibly, though, she could have had the information forced out of her by her tormentor, without knowing what he/she was going to do with it. If her torturer is Halima, though (as seems likely – see section 1.5.4), Sheriam being involved in the betrayal would be redundant. Also see the possible Nicola connection, above.
3. Lelaine: After having been so respectful for so long (if reluctantly) since the War Vote, the thinly-veiled contempt Lelaine displays for Egwene at their meeting in COT is rather startling. She also makes an ominously ambiguous comment that seems very close to an open threat:

“The White Tower makes mistakes upon occasion. It is impossible to live or move without making mistakes. But we live and we go on, and if we sometimes need to conceal our mistakes, whenever possible, we rectify them. Even when it is painful.” [COT: 30, What the Oath Rod Can Do, 672]

4. Romanda: Romanda was infuriated by Egwene’s revelation about the Kin, the Oath Rod, and her idea that Aes Sedai nearing the lifespan limit imposed by the OR could unswear the Oaths and retire into the Kin:
“When I was a little girl, I dreamed of becoming Aes Sedai. From the day I reached the White Tower, I tried to live as an Aes Sedai. I have lived as Aes Sedai, and I will die as Aes Sedai. This cannot be allowed!” [COT: 30, What the Oath Rod Can Do, 668]
5. Faolain: Faolain going MIA, together with her Red sympathies and her general bad attitude, certainly throws some suspicion her way. On the other hand, her absence could also add to the case for Lelaine. Faolain was supposed to be watching the Sitter; her disappearance could indicate that Lelaine got her out of the way (or, alternately, that she was collaborating with Lelaine).
6. Theodrin: Not much of a case for her, other than Egwene musing that she might be getting intentionally careless about watching Romanda (but then, who wouldn’t hate that job?), and **Rich Boyé**’s conviction that Theodrin is way too nice to be a good guy. But it is a possibility.
7. Delana/Halima: The strongest evidence in her favor is that Halima murdered Kairen Stang the night before the plan was to go into effect, thus eliminating one of the strongest *cuendillar* makers in the rebel camp and forcing Egwene to fall back on a half-trained novice as backup. (It evidently didn’t occur to her that Egwene would decide to take over from Bode, though, since about the only good thing about Egwene’s capture is that it takes her out from under Halima’s eye.)
Halima would definitely have wanted the plan to fail and keep the two factions deadlocked, but in a strange way that counts as evidence against her – the capture of any rebel AS, especially two who know how to Travel and make *cuendillar*, gives a distinct advantage to the Tower faction. Halima’s interest is in keeping the conflict at a stalemate. Wouldn’t a more efficient way of thwarting the plan while still giving no advantage to either side be to kill Leane and Bode, too? Why only Kairen?
8. Random Sitter: As noted, all the Sitters knew about the plan, and any one of them could have decided to turn traitor, though it’s true that most of them would not have made a move without Lelaine or Romanda’s say-so. Several people have suggested that the betrayal could be tied in with the still-unsolved Sitter/Ajah Head mystery that extends to both sides of the conflict (see section 2.6.5).

Who are her captors?

Obviously, who captured her will depend on who betrayed her, though that doesn’t end up narrowing things down a whole lot. BA involvement would indicate that Delana and/or Halima is the traitor. Nicola, Theodrin, and Faolain would have gone to Elaida, most likely (assuming each would have acted alone). Lelaine, Romanda, and the other Sitters besides Delana could either have gone to Elaida, or possibly to the Ajah Head/Sitter conspirators (if such a faction really exists).

Does the method of the capture itself shed any light on who’s responsible? Well, that’s a subject of some debate.

She had just time to realise that someone had embraced the Source not far away, above her on the wall, then something struck the boat, struck her, and she was aware of cold water enveloping her, filling her nose, her mouth. Darkness. [COT: 30, What the Oath Rod Can Do, 677]

The passage makes it sound like Egwene’s captors used the OP not only to sink/destroy the boat, but also to strike Egwene herself. It’s been argued that this is proof that Egwene’s assailants had to be Black Ajah, since the Third Oath prevents non-Black AS from using the OP as a weapon.

It’s not quite as clear-cut as that, though. There’s no reason to doubt that the AS on the wall used the OP to sink the boat, but the phrase “struck her” is ambiguous. Egwene is very disoriented at that point, and the second she feels something hit her she realizes she is in the water. So what “struck her” could have been her body hitting the water.

But even so, **Sebastian Redl** argues, an attack on the boat constitutes using the OP as a weapon:

Remember the passage earlier in the book where Egwene and Bryne watch the ships going to the harbor. Egwene then thinks that a sister could probably not even make herself form the weaves to sink ship because of the mere possibility that the crew might drown [COT: 16, The Subject of Negotiations, 393]. There was a possibility that Egwene would drown too.

Jeff Taylor counters:

This is not really Black Ajah evidence. Aes Sedai seem to take a very narrow view on the Third Oath. As long as the attempt was not to kill her outright, an AS can use the Power to attack her without it qualifying as being ‘used as a weapon.’ If the Aes Sedai just wanted to sink the boat, they probably could do it, as long as they didn’t ‘intend’ to kill anyone.

It's also worth pointing out that the possibility of Egwene drowning, close to the wall, with a bunch of AS standing by to fish her out of the drink, was much more remote than the possibility that multiple panicking sailors on a ship sinking far out in the middle of the river would drown.

And any interpretation of the Third Oath that allows for locking someone in a box and beating them repeatedly is probably loose enough to allow for sinking a boat under someone, as long as you have every intention of rescuing them.

The forkroot is similarly inconclusive. Every AS in the Tower, BA or otherwise, knows about the drug by now, and AS queasiness about its existence is not reason enough to suppose they would refuse to use such a surefire and energy-efficient method of containing a renegade channeller.

Can Egwene escape by Dreaming?

Not bodily, no. Unless you're Slayer, entering T'A'R physically requires channelling, as demonstrated by Egwene's trip to Salidar [LOC: 34, Journey to Salidar, 465] and Rand on several occasions. As long as she's prevented from channelling via forkroot or shielding, Egwene will not be able to escape into T'A'R.

Yeah, but she doesn't need to channel to enter T'A'R the regular way, does she? So she could go find Elayne or Aviendha or someone in their sleep and raise the alarm, right?

This was the subject of some debate, but **Peter Reid** observes:

What everyone who's arguing this point is missing is the fact that it appears that when one is loaded up with forkroot, one cannot Dream. Recall that when Nynaeve captures Moghedien, she feeds her forkroot in T'A'R, which not only takes away her ability to channel, but also causes her to have to leave T'A'R. I think it's said that forkroot puts you into too deep a sleep to be able to enter T'A'R.

So the whole point is moot. As long as Egwene is being fed forkroot, she won't be able to channel or to Dream. If they decide to stop the forkroot and shield her the traditional way, then she should be able to return to Dreaming.

2.7 Absurd Trivia and Generalities

This subsection contains information on and discussion of matters which don't really fit anywhere else.

2.7.1 How does one sniff, anyway? What about snorting?

[Erica Sadun, John Novak]

Erica explains to us about sniffing:

In Jordan's *Wheel of Time* universe, women sniff and men (and Siuan Sanche) snort. While a sniff, read "inhale," can express disdain, the outward snuff/hmph is more popular an expression. For correct sniffing posture, turn your head towards the left shoulder, but not quite. A sixty degree angle is ideal. The posture indicates that one is removing one's nose from an offensive area. A single sniff will suffice and may be augmented with a very modest synchronized shrugging motion. Follow up with a look at the offender and an optional lift of both eyebrows. These steps comprise the "sniff." The snuff or hmph is produced by a small vocalization at the back of the throat, enunciated through the nose and usually is modified by a slight raising of the chin. This is distinct from the "snort" which is a guttural, pig-like sound caused by inhalation through the nose. The mouth must be opened slightly to enable this effect unlike the sniff and the snuff. (Go ahead. Try it with your mouth closed). The [snort] when written, should occupy its own line, be followed by a blank line and then the text following it should be limited to sixty character lines.

Novak gives us a manly perspective on snorting:

[Sniffing] is distinct from the *snort* sound, characteristic of male derision. The *snort* is a sharp inhalation of air through the nose, so powerful that it causes the back of the throat to constrict and produce a rough, audible sound. It is not unlike the sound produced before prodigious expectoration. The mouth should not open during this gesture, but a one-sided sneer is a recommended option. The *snort* when written should occupy its own line, be followed by one line of whitespace, and followed by text formatted to sixty characters or less. (Really, if you open your mouth during a *snort* you just look stooped.)

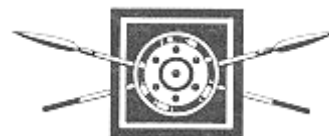


2.7.2 How tall is everyone?

Heights given in English feet:

Info from a post-LOC book signing [reported by **Erica Sadun**]:

- Rand: 6'5" to 6'6"
- Perrin: 6'2"
- Mat: 5'11"
- Aviendha: 5'8" to 5'9"
- Elayne 5'6"



- Nynaeve: 5'4"
- Egwene: 5'2"
- Moiraine: 5'0" to 5'2"

Info from another post-LOC book signing [reported by **Greg Gruber**]:

- Rand: 6'6"
- Moiraine: 5'3"
- Egwene: 5'5"
- Nynaeve: 5'5"
- Aviendha: 5'10"

Info from yet another book signing [December 2000, reported by **Bruce Garner**]:

- Rand: 6'5 or 6'6" and 235 lbs
- Perrin: 6'1.5" and around 235 to 240 lbs
- Mat: 6' and 180 lbs

2.7.3 How old is everyone?

[Steven Cooper, Courtenay Footman, John Hamby, Sean Hillyard, Pam Korda, John Novak, Katrina Werpetinski]



Aram: "About" the same age as Perrin [TEOTW: 25, The Traveling People, 311].

Aviendha: Almost twenty in [TPOD: 1, To Keep the Bargain, 50], which occurs early in 1000 NE, so she was born in 979-980 NE.

Berelain: At most a year older than Rand [TSR: 2, Whirlpools in the Pattern, 57].

Cadsuane: "Thought to have been born around 705 NE" [ACOS: Glossary, 671].

Elayne is eighteen in [LOC: 48, Leaning on the Knife, 602]. This is at the turning of the century, placing her date of birth close to Egwene's in mid to late 981.

Egwene is two years younger than Rand [TEOTW: 3, The Peddler, 35], so she was born mid-981. She's also listed as eighteen in [ACOS: 8, The Figurehead, 157].

Ewin Finngar: Born 984 NE [TEOTW: 2, Strangers, 19].

Faile: Of an age with Ewin Finngar [LOC: Prologue, The First Message, 35].

Galahad: Born prior to 972 NE [TEOTW: Glossary, 668] (probably a year at most since he is described as an infant when Tigraine left).

Gawyn: 22 or 23 in 999 NE [LOC: Prologue, The First Message, 40], he is listed as being a few years past twenty. The earliest he could have been born is 975 NE which would make him 25 – a little older than a 'few years.'

Isam: Was a child when Malkier fell, so he is a few years older than Lan, say born 945-950 NE.

Lan: Born 953 NE [LOC: Glossary, 709].

Logain: Born 972 NE [ACOS: Glossary, 676].

Loial: Born 908 NE [TEOTW: 36, Web of the Pattern, 461].

Mat is the same age as Rand; born 978 NE [TEOTW: 8, A Place of Safety, 94].

Min: 'Almost' Nynaeve's age [LOC: Prologue, The First Message, 28].

Moiraine: Born 956 NE [LOC: Glossary, 710].

Nynaeve is twenty-six at the end of 999 NE, so she was born 973 NE [LOC: 48, Leaning on the Knife, 602]. She looks to be a few years younger, due to slowing.

Perrin is the same age as Rand; born 978 NE [TEOTW: 8, A Place of Safety, 94].

Rand was born in 978 NE [TGH: 8, The Dragon Reborn, 109].

Siu'an Sanche: She was raised Amyrlin at age 30 [LOC: 35, In the Hall of the Sitters, 471], in 988 NE [Guide: 24, The White Tower, 216]. Thus she was born in 958 NE.

Taim: looks at least 15 years older than Rand, so thus looks about 35 [LOC: 2, A New Arrival, 76]. Note that, due to slowing, he is probably older than that. (At a post-TPOD signing in New York [20 October 1998, report by **Ryan R.**], RJ said that a man with the spark wouldn't slow until 25, usually closer to thirty. Thus, if Rand's assessment of Taim's apparent age is accurate, the only way Taim could be the age he looks is if he started channelling at an unusually late age.)

2.7.4 Is there religion in Randland?

[Erica Sadun]



“By the Light and my hope of salvation and rebirth, I swear to serve you in whatever way you require for as long as you require, or may the Creator’s face turn from me forever and darkness consume my soul.”

[TFOH: 1, Fanning The Sparks, 39]

The answer is yes, but not much. It is pretty secular. It may be closer to many pagan religions or in some cases to Judaism rather than Christianity. However, like Christianity, there is a dualism between the Light (goodness) and the Creator (God) who are often spoken of separately and together. Like Judaism, burials are as simple as possible to encourage return to the earth [TGH: 10, The Hunt Begins, 151]. Like the religions of old merry England, the maypole is a fertility ritual [TEOTW: 1, An Empty Road, 8-9]. Like Catholicism, children are taught catechism [TEOTW: 1, An Empty Road, 12]. Wisdoms act as priestesses, in some respects. Like Judaism, marriage is a public announcement to the community [TSR: 53, The Price of a Departure, 618].

This does not even begin to touch on the religious aspects of the Aes Sedai. They have novices (like nuns), they are considered to be “servants of all” and the rituals of acceptance and joining the sisterhood are rigid with many religious overtones. They are expected to serve the Light and the will of the Creator when they join the Aes Sedai. They are almost Buddhist in certain ways: in particular the view of the time serpent, the wheel of time and the age lace. The Children of Light are another quasi-religious organization, in this case a religious organization in turmoil with inappropriate goals and methods. Finally, we have the Tinkers, a religious cult more or less who follow the early Christian/Calvinist ‘Way of the Leaf’, a cross between pacifism and acceptance of fate [TEOTW: 27, Shelter from the Storm, 346]. [Erica]

OTOH, in Randland, the Creator *is*. The DO *is*. No one disbelieves in their existence; they are *there*. They are far more concrete and present in everyday life than our God(s) is/are in our lives. If you cross the Blight to Shayol Ghul, you will find a mountain with a hole in its side and evil leaking out. Thus, many of the rituals and other trappings of *organized* religion are unnecessary in Randland. Just because we don’t see worship going on very often doesn’t mean it’s not being done. Scratch a Randlander, and you’ll find a quite religious person 9 times out of 10, would be my guess. There just isn’t quite the need to formalize it the way we do, except on occasions which, by their nature, are already formal... i.e. funerals, weddings, harvest, etc. Just my humble opinion. [Jocelyn]

Randlanders pray to the Creator for favors, such as relief from the drought [LOC: Prologue, The First Message, 36].

RJ’s take on it, from a Compuserve chat, July 1996:

This is a world where what might be called the proofs of religion are self-evident all the time. It seemed to me there was no necessity for the trappings of religion which by and large are to reinforce us in our faith... and to convince others... If your beliefs are made concrete and manifest around you at any given time there is not the need for that.

2.7.5 Iconography (What are them icons?)














I have come here to lick chapter icons and kick ass. And I’m all out of chapter icons. [Joe “Uno” Shaw]













The astute reader may have noticed that the little pictures at the beginning of each chapter are not randomly chosen. Rather, there are loose correlations between the icons and what happens/who we see in the chapter. Note that the correlations are not perfect, and the icons change meaning throughout the course of the series.





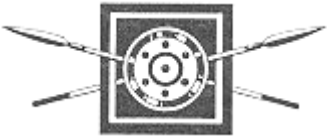







The *very* astute reader may have noticed that the FAQ follows suit, using the various icons from the series to head up the different sections. However, note that some of the icons from the books have been adapted to different purposes in the FAQ, and a few of the icons in the FAQ have been randomly chosen.

Here is a table of the various icons, in order of appearance in the series, descriptions, and what they seem to symbolize. Things labeled “FAQ” are meanings the icons have in the FAQ, but not in the books.

Icon	Description and Meaning
	<u>Serpent and Wheel</u> : Aes Sedai; the Wheel of Time; <i>ta’veren</i> ; the Pattern.
	<u>Ravens</u> : Darkfriends, other minions of the DO, or Seanchan.

	<p><u>Dragon's Fang</u>: Early books: Darkfriends, other minions of the DO, or Rand. Later books: Rand, Asha'man, <i>saidin</i>.</p>
	<p><u>Harp</u>: Thom Merrilin.</p>
	<p><u>Leafless tree at night</u>: Travelling through woods/at night. FAQ: Ishamael; Moridin.</p>
	<p><u>Heron-mark sword hilt</u>: Rand; blademasters.</p>
	<p><u>Wooden staff</u>: Moiraine. FAQ: Salidar/rebel Aes Sedai.</p>
	<p><u>Flame of Tar Valon</u>: Aes Sedai; <i>saidar</i>.</p>
	<p><u>Sunburst</u>: Whitecloaks.</p>
	<p><u>Leaves on a vine</u>: Nynaeve; Tinkers; Ogier; Loial; Waygates; Green Man.</p>
	<p><u>Horned skull, trident and a paw</u>: Trollocs.</p>
	<p><u>Wolf</u>: Wolfbrother; Perrin.</p>
	<p><u>Lion rampant</u>: Andor; Elayne.</p>

	<p><u>Gnarled, withered tree</u>: The Blight. FAQ: Shaidar Haran; ghosts.</p>
	<p><u>Ruby-and-snake-hilted dagger</u>: Shadar Logoth dagger; Mat; Padan Fain.</p>
	<p><u>Horn</u>: Horn of Valere.</p>
	<p><u>Portal Stone</u>: Portal Stones. FAQ: Traveling; gateways.</p>
	<p><u>Rising sun</u>: Cairhien.</p>
	<p><u>Insect-like, horned helmet</u>: Seanchan.</p>
	<p><u>Large leaf</u>: Waygates; Ogier; Wise women; Tinkers; Nynaeve. (Seems to be a replacement for the leaves on a vine from TEOTW.)</p>
	<p><u>Tree with lots of leaves</u>: stedding; Ogier; Loial.</p>
	<p><u>A'dam</u>: Damane.</p>
	<p><u>Female silhouettes (one black, one white)</u>: Black Ajah; the hunt for them.</p>
	<p><u>Dice (five)</u>: Mat. Note the five sixes... Yahtzee!! [Joe Shaw]</p>
	<p><u>Crescent moon and stars</u>: Lanfear. This one is really noteworthy. This icon appears when we meet the peddlers (a.k.a. Lanfear and Asmodean) in the Waste. Had I realized it was Lanfear's icon, I would have realized then that one of them was Lanfear disguised. Also the same when she appears to the girls as Else. [Judy G.]</p>

	<i><u>Dream ring:</u> Tel'aran'rhiod.</i>
	<i><u>Waves:</u> A journey over water. FAQ: Ebou Dar.</i>
	<i><u>Dragon:</u> Rand.</i>
	<i><u>Eight-pointed star and gulls:</u> Sea Folk.</i>
	<i><u>Two spears and a shield:</u> Aiel.</i>
	<i><u>Bull with garland of roses:</u> Gareth Bryne (the sign of House Bryne is a bull with a garland of roses around its neck).</i>
	<i><u>Elephant:</u> Valan Luca's circus.</i>
	<i><u>Full Aes Sedai symbol of old:</u> Rand, the Dragon Reborn ("under this sign will he conquer"). FAQ: The One Power.</i>
	<i><u>Snaky square:</u> Forsaken.</i>
	<i><u>Falcon:</u> Faile.</i>
	<i><u>Sword crossed with fouled anchor:</u> Egeanin; Bayle Domon.</i>
	<i><u>Flag with hand, oval, and sword:</u> Far Madding.</i>

2.7.6 Missteps (Errors along the way)

Note: Typographical errors are, in general, not listed. There are too many of them, and they are often corrected in later editions.



General

Rob Bauer points out that the length of a week for TEOTW and TGH does not match with that used in later books. **Steven Cooper** confirms the discrepancy:

Basically, what we know boils down to this:

1. TEOTW and TGH are clearly written with our standard calendar of 7-day weeks and 30/31-day months in mind. The clearest indication of this is when Moiraine is talking to Nynaeve in [TEOTW: 21, Listen to the Wind, 264]:

“You felt nothing special at the time, but a week or ten days later you had your first reaction to touching the True Source.”

The phrases ‘a week’ and ‘ten days’ must obviously refer to different lengths of time here.

Also, Egwene and Nynaeve spend thirteen weeks training in the Tower before Liandrin lures them away [TGH: 38, Practice, 452]. Since they started training just after Sunday (the summer solstice), it makes sense for her to refer to “the first chill of approaching autumn” later in the chapter. If RJ was using a 10-day week in this book (i.e. 130 days of training compared to 91), they would be right in the middle of autumn here.

There are plenty of other indicators in the first two books that RJ started the series using our standard calendar – these are just the most obvious. It’s impossible to construct a consistent timeline for these two books if the later 10-day week is assumed.

2. LOC and books after it are equally clearly written with the 10-day week, 28-day month calendar being used.

This calendar is specified explicitly in the Glossaries of LOC, ACOS and COT. All of the references to weeks and months from LOC onwards fit this new calendar – for example, Myrelle’s answer when Egwene asks her how many days she has had Lan:

“Only two weeks,” Myrelle replied. “Today is the twentieth.” [ACOS: 12, A Morning of Victory, 237]

3. Therefore, somewhere between writing TDR and LOC, RJ changed his mind about the calendar for some reason.

TDR has so few indications of how much time elapses between events that even to construct a timeline at all is a very speculative exercise (it’s by far the hardest book in the series to do this for).

From Chapter 2 of TSR onwards there’s enough information to construct an accurate timeline, but neither TSR nor TFOH enable us to tell whether RJ was using the old or the new calendar – whenever “weeks” and “months” are mentioned, they’re used in a vague rather than an exact sense.

I’d say it’s most likely that the notion of a different calendar for Randland occurred to RJ during the writing of LOC. Hence the sudden appearance of a glossary entry for the calendar in that book.

•

The Eye of the World

In TEOTW, Thom teaches Mat and Rand to juggle. By the time they reach Caemlyn, Mat can perform “six ball circles.”

Which **David Mortman** interprets as a six-ball shower, and says:

No way. You could probably count the number of people in the world today who can shower six balls to a performance standard on the fingers of one hand. Assuming there are any. I’ve only twice seen a five ball shower done well. It’s certainly not something somebody could learn in a few weeks.

Rachel Collier, however, disagrees:

A six-ball shower isn’t actually that uncommon. My ex-boyfriend was a serious (professional) juggler, and has juggled nine (I saw him – it certainly wasn’t graceful, but there were nine), which he says could possibly win him a world record if he could get in more than four full juggles which is the current record. Apparently eight is pretty rare, but seven is more common and six just takes a little skill and some practice. I agree with you though, that many of Thom’s juggling feats are awfully farfetched – given that nine is the very top number anyone has juggled now, when RJ mentions 10 and up to 14, I think, it’s unbelievable – do you suppose RJ doesn’t know anything about juggling, or is he just making Thom an even cooler guy by making it such a mind-boggling feat?

•

In [TEOTW: 13, Choices, 190], Thom is telling Rand about the Heart of the Stone:

“None but the Great Lords of Tear can enter there, and they never speak of what lies inside.”

In reply, Rand asks:

“Is the Dragon supposed to be a Great Lord of Tear?”

Everywhere else in the series, the rulers of Tear are referred to as “High Lords.” [Steven Cooper]

•

What about those Warders in Caemlyn around Logain in TEOTW [TEOTW: 42, Remembrance of Dreams, 535]? Didn't Moiraine say that they were all Red sisters? Reds don't have Warders!

RJ's answer, as reported by **Tony Z.**: Moiraine never mentioned the sisters escorting Logain (not all of whom were Red). The ones with Logain weren't in Caemlyn at the time (evidently they stayed with the army, which stayed outside the city). Moiraine was referring to those that *were* in Caemlyn.

•

In [TEOTW: 51, Against the Shadow, 639] Ba'alzamon/Ishy shows Rand a vision of his foster mother, Kari, in which she is described as "dark-eyed and beautiful." But Tam told Rand Kari had grey eyes.

This was used to argue that the "Kari" in the vision was not the real Kari, but an Illusion conjured by Ishy. However, the color of Kari's eyes in the vision has been corrected to grey in later printings of TEOTW, so apparently it was merely a misstep, rather than a subtle clue.

•

The Great Hunt

Ba'alzamon's goals:

"But this time I will destroy you to your very soul, destroy you utterly and forever."

[TGH: 47, The Grave Is No Bar To My Call, 563]

Maybe he forgot:

"Fool! You will destroy yourself!"

[TGH: 41, Disagreements, 497]

– where he stopped Rand from burning himself out. Ba'alzamon is either forgetful, confused, or trying to appear so.

[Morgan Donald Scott]

•

Why does Moiraine wear her great serpent ring on her left hand in [TEOTW: 2, Strangers, 22-3] and [TDR: 3, News from the Plain, 26] and on her right hand in [TGH: 4, Summoned, 39]? I can think of four possible reasons:

1. A cunning plan by Jordan to make us believe sweet, innocent Moiraine was at the Darkfriend social.
2. Moiraine has an evil, identical twin sister who wears her ring on the other hand.
3. It's Moiraine's ring and she can wear it on whatever hand she damn well pleases.
4. None of the above.

[Damien Cole]

•

When Rand returns Thom's harp and flute to the gleeman in Cairhien, Thom grumbles:

"You could at least have kept it [the harp] in tune."

[TGH: 26, Discord, 323]

For travel, harps (and many other stringed instruments) are *always* detuned – the tension on the strings is reduced to prevent string wear and possible snapping. [Erica Sadun]

Note: In later printings, this has been corrected, with Thom saying:

"At least you weren't fool enough to try keeping it tuned."

•

On pointless tasks:

Lan sat under a tree sharpening his sword; the Warder gave Rand a careful look, then a nod.

[TGH: 49, What Was Meant To Be, 574]

Jim Shaw wonders why he was doing that, since he told Rand that sharpening is unnecessary for Power-forged weapons:

"Blades that will not shatter or break, and never lose their edge. I've seen men sharpening them – playing at sharpening, as it were – but only because they could not believe a sword did not need it after use. All they ever did was wear away their oilstones."

[TGH: 1, The Flame of Tar Valon, 5]

(It's clear from Rand and Lan's conversation further down the page that Lan's sword is Power-forged as well as Rand's.)

•

The Dragon Reborn

In [TDR: 6, The Hunt Begins, 63], the beginning at-camp scene, Perrin tells Min that he loves her like a sister – and that he has no sisters of his own. In [TSR: 29, Homecoming, 333], his two sisters and his brother are killed. [Erica Sadun]

Note: This has reportedly been corrected in later printings of TDR.

•

In [TDR: 41, A Hunter's Oath, 388], Perrin is remembering a confrontation between Moiraine and Zarine:

Once she learned the girl thought they would lead her to the Horn of Valere... then her cold blue stare had taken on a quality that made him feel he had been packed in a barrel of snow...

Which left me wondering: whose cold blue stare? Both Moiraine and Zarine have dark eyes. [Aline Thompson]

The quote continues:

The Aes Sedai said nothing, but she stared too often and too hard for any comfort...

– implying that it refers to Moiraine. [Joe Shaw]

[TEOTW: 2, Strangers, 22], [TGH: 4, Summoned, 38], [TDR: 6, The Hunt Begins, 55], [TSR: 3, Reflection, 71] and [TFOH: 2, Rhuidean, 68] all describe Moiraine as having “dark eyes,” and [TDR: 33, Within the Weave, 319], [TDR: 35, The Falcon, 333], and [TSR: 2, Whirlpools in the Pattern, 40] describe Faile as having “dark, tilted eyes.”

Note: This has also reportedly been corrected in later printings of TDR.

•

Metallurgy mistake: maybe others have noted this metallurgy mistake; as an engineer this bugged me. In TDR, when Perrin takes a day at the smithy, he notes the three quenching media:

As soon as he had made the hot-cut, he tossed the glowing metal into the salted quenching barrel. Unsalted gave a harder quench, for the hardest metal, while the oil gave the softest, for good knives.

[TDR: 50, The Hammer, 506]

Wrong. In order of resultant hardness, it goes oil, water, salt water, with salt water yielding the hardest blade because of best heat transfer and higher boiling point than plain water. Oil is softer because of slower heat transfer but is commonly used for cutlery because it causes less thermal stresses and a tougher blade (won't break from shock). Salt water quench is definitely a harder quench than fresh water. It's due to the higher boiling point of salt water precluding the formation of an insulating vapor layer over the steel which slows heat transfer from the steel to the water. [John Palmer, Don Harlow]

•

Hey, what's the scoop with Shadowman steel? First, Thom Merrill runs into a Fade and it left him “a little present of a stiff leg.” Then after the fight where the Aiel come to the rescue of the girls:

“Shadowman steel kills,” Aviendha said, “it does not wound.”

[TDR: 39, Threads in the Pattern, 382]

Finally, Rand's thought while fighting a Fade:

That black metal could make wounds that festered, almost as hard to heal as the one that ached in his side now.

[TSR: 10, The Stone Stands, 132]

Is there something that I'm missing, like it just kills Aiel, or does this qualify as a Jordan mis-step?

[Dash Wendrzyk]

The obvious explanation is that the Fade did not stick Thom with its sword; the Fade just smacked him one, instead. [Pam]

•

The Shadow Rising

There's an error right at the beginning of TSR. The standard opening paragraph has “a wind rose in the Caralain Grass,” and then in the next paragraph we have:

North and west the wind blew... North and west... to the Shining Walls... Tar Valon.

However, a glance at the map will show that to get from the Caralain Grass to Tar Valon, the wind should be going north and east.

[Steven Cooper]

•

Guillaume Bergeron wonders what happened to the dream *ter'angreal* in Tanchico. When leaving Tear to go to Tanchico, Elayne and Nynaeve keep all of the T'A'R *ter'angreal* they had gotten from Joiya and Amico, since Egwene doesn't need them. They bring them along on all their travels through TSR and TFOH, and subsequently to Salidar, where Elayne ends up copying them for the Salidar Posse in LOC.

However, in Tanchico, Moghedien pays the girls a visit [TSR: 46, Veils, 525-526]. She starts off by Compelling them, then asks them to empty their pouches. She then asks if they have *ter'*, *sa'* or *angreal*s in their rooms. Elayne clearly thinks of the ring that's fastened on a leather cord around her neck, and dismisses it, since it is not what Moggy asked. *But*, they still have the other two, which should have been in their rooms. It's even said in that scene that Elayne and Nynaeve told Moggy about the *ter'angreal* they had stolen. So if they weren't in the Supergirls' rooms, where were they?

•

[TSR: 47, The Truth of a Viewing, 531]: During the Tower coup, Siuan's Warder gets killed. She doesn't notice until she sees his dead body. [Michael Hanneman] This cannot be because she was shielded, because in LOC, Cabriana and her Warder are being tortured by Semirhage in different rooms. Cabriana is shielded, but she still feels it when her Warder dies.

[Lars Kremers]

This has been the subject of extensive discussion here. The consensus has come down to three possibilities: (1) Jordan screwed up. (2) Being shielded interferes with the bond. IMHO, this last is refuted because Jordan gives a different explanation: (3) Siuan was distracted by other things going on at that moment. In [LOC: 30, To Heal Again, 427], Siuan thinks:

Alric, her Warder. Her dead Warder, murdered when Elaida deposed her. She could lie – the Three Oaths were still gone – but some part of her bond to Alric, a bond flesh to flesh and mind to mind, had been resurrected. The pain of his death, the pain first masked by the shock of what Elaida intended and then buried by stilling, that pain filled her to the brim.

It seems to me that there is no choice but to accept this statement. Whether one believes that Jordan meant this all the time, or that this is just an after-the-fact rationalization of a mistake, seems to me to be a matter of personal opinion.

[Courtenay Footman]

•

The Fires of Heaven

Something very strange happened between 10 and 20 years ago. In [TGH: 4, Summoned, 49] the Amyrlin says to Moiraine:

“I am the fifth in a row raised to the Amyrlin Seat from the Blue.”

Two pages earlier, we learn that Suan Sanche has been Amyrlin for ten years. In [TFOH: 15, What Can Be Learned in Dreams, 214], Moiraine says to Egwene:

“In a few months it will be twenty-one years since we began the search for the Dragon Reborn. Sieren Vayu was raised to Amyrlin shortly after, a Gray with more than a touch of Red in her.” [Courtenay Footman]

This has been admitted by RJ as an error:

“The correct sequence is: Kirin Nelway (Brown) 922-950 NE; Noane Mosadim (Blue) 950-973 NE; Tamra Ospenya (Blue), 973-979 NE; Sieren Vayu (Gray), 979-984 NE; Marith Jaen (Blue), 984-988 NE; Suan Sanche (blue), raised 988 NE. The correction is being made in the body of TGH and in the glossary.” [Carolyn F., I think]

The quick succession of Amyrlins prior to SS is discussed in further detail in ACOS.

•

This is *not* actually an error, but is left here to prevent people from continually bringing it up. It’s been pointed out multiple times that in [TFOH: 6, Gateways, 122], Rand is looking at the keys and thinking that the female one is at Cairhien, and the male one no one knows where, even though we know that the male Choedan Kal *sa’angreal* is buried near Cairhien, and the female on Tremalking. However, this is **not** what Rand is thinking. The actual quote is:

The female figure could do the same for a woman, joining her to the female *equivalent* of the great statue he hoped was still almost completely buried in Cairhien. [emphasis added]

•

In [TFOH: 36, A New Name, 409], Birgitte tells Elayne:

“You saved my life, Daughter-Heir of Andor. I will keep your secret and serve you as Warder.”

But later in [TFOH: 47, The Price of a Ship, 550], Birgitte verbally scolds Elayne for telling Cerandin she was heir to a throne, and doesn’t believe it until Nynaeve makes an offhand comment in [TFOH: 49, To Boannda, 570].

Note: By the 5th edition hardcover, Birgitte’s statement was changed to:

“You saved my life, Elayne. I will keep your secret and serve you as Warder.” [Steven Hillage]

•

Rand balefires Rahvin, erasing his actions, etc. However, none of Rand’s injuries, all sustained at the hands of Rahvin, disappear – they were instead Healed by Nynaeve afterwards [TFOH: 55, The Threads Burn, 672-3]. [Sean Hillyard]

Note: **Joel Gilmore** went to see RJ at a book signing in Australia [21 September 1999], where RJ told him, in specific reference to the battle with Rahvin, that when someone is BFed, the constructs they make in T’A’R do not disappear, but instead fade away slowly over time.

•

Lord of Chaos

In previous glossaries, it says that the AS cannot sense in what direction her Warder is. In LOC, Alanna does just that. What gives? **Edward Liu** says that, at a signing, RJ said that the ability is not exact, but something like they can only sense distance (and, I guess, direction) in that the feeling of the other person becomes stronger or weaker. **Tony Z.** said RJ said the Glossaries are in error, and that there are references in other books to AS sensing the direction of their Warders.

In [TPOD: 2, Unweavings, 67], Elayne:

...sensed Birgitte somewhere off to her left, roughly southwest she thought... Careane, part of a protective circle gathered around Sareitha and the bowl, cocked her head almost as if listening, apparently her Cieryl was to the southeast.

Also, in [TFOH: 36, A New Name, 408], it mentions that Birgitte can sense the direction of Elayne (so the other way round):

“I can... feel you. I think I could close my eyes and point to you a mile away.”

[Daniel Rose]

Joe thinks RJ changed his mind, to put it charitably.

•

In [TFOH: 52, Choices, 624], when Moiraine hands Rand two letters, just before the Big Scene at the docks, their (the letters’) seals are described as having the imprint of Moiraine’s great serpent ring. Later on, in [LOC: 40, Unexpected Laughter, 516], when Thom receives his letter from Moiraine, the seal is now some sort of wide-spreading tree topped with a crown. [A.M. Gabutero]

•

In the LOC Glossary, under linking, it says that in mixed circles less than 13, a man must control the flow, and that there must be more women than men in circles greater than two [TFOH: 34, A Silver Arrow, 390]. However, in TFOH Nynaeve overhears Lanfear, Graendal, Sammael, and Rahvin discussing their plan against Rand. In particular Sammael is to tempt Rand into attacking and the other three would link to overwhelm him. [Emma Pease]

At a signing, RJ said that the LOC glossary entry is wrong. It is certainly different in the ACOS entry: 43 vs 34, and the numbers where men can equal or exceed women are changed. Still doesn’t explain the TFOH gaffe. [John Novak]

•

A Crown of Swords

We encounter more closely two of Liandrin’s 13 in this book, Falion Bhoda and Ispan Shefar, and learn Falion was White and Ispan Blue. We also have a mention that Rianna was also White (which had been mentioned in earlier books). However, Joiya Byir was *also* White which means we now have three former Whites among Liandrin’s 13, yet we are told that two and only two of each Ajah except Red went with Liandrin. What gives? First, could it be a simple typo? I don’t think so as both Falion and Joiya acted as I would expect Whites and because Rianna is mentioned several times as being White. Second, could it be a Jordan error? Possible, but I would think it a fairly major blunder as I would hope he would have who is who in Liandrin’s group clearly marked from the beginning. Third, could it be deliberate? If so, this means either Verin is mistaken about who was from which Ajah and I can’t see Verin making this mistake, or she deliberately gave the girls misinformation.

[Emma Pease]

Note: In later printings of TSR Joiya is transformed from a “cold White” to a “characteristic cool Gray.”

No doubt RJ wanted her as a White personality, but when it came out in the FAQ he had three, he went “Oh shit. Now which one did I kill off already so I can change her to something else?” At any rate, the suspicions connecting this with Verin ought to be erased, since it’s been retroactively corrected. [Michelle Haines]

•

There is an inconsistency in ACOS regarding Colavaere’s coronation. In [ACOS: 4, Into Cairhien, 117], Dobraine says:

“The ninth sunset after her coronation already. She wasted no time.”

However, in [ACOS: 5, A Broken Crown, 125], Colavaere says:

“Nine days ago at sunrise I was crowned Queen of Cairhien.”

This is a contradiction because the first statement includes the current day as one of the nine, while the second doesn’t.

[Steven Cooper]

•

In [ACOS: 13, The Bowl of the Winds, 263], Aviendha introduces herself as “Aviendha of the Nine Valleys sept of the Taardad Aiel.” She’s previously been from the Bitter Water sept, from when we first meet her [TDR: 38, Maidens of the Spear, 361] onwards. Now here’s the interesting bit. The Maiden that Nynaeve Heals in [TDR: 38, Maidens of the Spear, 368] (Dailin) is first referred to as being from Aviendha’s sept and clan; i.e. the Bitter Water Taardad. Later, she’s referred to as being from the Nine Valleys sept. So what gives? Two errors that are fortuitously similar, or a particularly odd attempt at retconning an old error? [Andrea Leistra]

Note: This error has reportedly been corrected in later printings to give Aviendha’s sept consistently as the Nine Valleys sept.

•

The Path of Daggers

The chronology of the Seanchan attack on Ebou Dar is inconsistent between ACOS and TPOD. In ACOS, the finding of the Bowl, the Seanchan invasion, and the wall falling on Mat take place on the day after the Festival of Birds. In TPOD, chapters 1-6 are described as taking place two days after the Festival. Since these events must clearly all take place on the same day, one of the books is wrong. From other evidence, it’s clear that TPOD is the one that’s in error. [Steven Cooper]

•

Winter’s Heart

In [WH: 12, A Lily in Winter, 297], Min meets Birgitte and recognizes her:

“You’re Birgitte Silverbow!” Min breathed... “I saw you at Falme!”

Her recognition is confirmed by her second sight, which shows thousands of auras and images around Birgitte, that Min was certain “indicated more adventures than a woman could have in one lifetime.” The problem is, Min met Birgitte prior to this,

when Nynaeve and Elayne brought Birgitte with them to Salidar [TFOH: 50, To Teach and Learn, 590]. What's more, Min discusses Birgitte with Elayne before she leaves for Caemlyn:

"Does she really *believe* she's Birgitte out of the legends? I mean, the bow and the braid – every tale mentions those, even if the bow isn't silver – and I can't think she was born with the name."

[LOC: Prologue, The First Message, 30]

RJ answered this question in the online COT Prologue interview:

Q: In *Winter's Heart*, Min doesn't recognize Birgitte, but they were in Salidar at the same time. What is the story there?

RJ: No story at all. In Salidar, Min knew Birgitte as a adventurer, you might say, but not until Caemlyn did she realize that Birgitte was, in fact, BIRGITTE BY GOD SILVERBOW!

Although, if that's the case, why didn't Min see thousands of images and auras the first time she met Birgitte? One possible rationalization is that Birgitte hadn't been a Warder for very long when Min saw her in Salidar; maybe the host of images that accrue around AS and Warders hadn't appeared yet for Birgitte.

•

In [WH: 32, A Portion of Wisdom, 602], Nynaeve is telling Rand about her *ter'angreal*. As she is telling him about the Well she actually demonstrates its use by channeling a flow of Air to touch his face. One would expect the guards to raze the inn to the ground after that, but nothing happens. Perhaps the detection part of the *ter'angreal* doesn't work with that small an amount of the Power? [Kjell Stahl]

•

While in Far Madding, Rand tells Alanna to send Rafela, Merana, Bera and Kiruna to negotiate with the Haddon Mirk rebels in Tear, thinking:

Those were the four besides Alanna whom Min said he could trust.

[WH: 25, Bonds, 491]

However, **Michael McCarthy** points out that it was Faeldrin, *not* Kiruna, who was one of the five AS Min told Rand were "in your hand" [ACOS: 34, *Ta'veren*, 534].

Note: **Bob Kluttz** reports that this error was corrected in the paperback edition of WH, with Rand sending Faeldrin instead of Kiruna.

•

Dame Not-Appearing-In-This-Battle: What happened to Erian Boroleos at the end of WH? She was in Cadsuane's Company when they went to Far Madding [WH: 23, To Lose the Sun, 452]. She went with Rand to Shadar Logoth; in [WH: 35, With the Choedan Kal, 630], Rand tallies up the members of his party, noting:

...Verin and the other five Aes Sedai who had sworn to him, and the four who were Cadsuane's companions.

The "other five" are Elza Penfel, Nesune Bihara, Beldeine Nyram, Sarene Nemdahl, and Erian Boroleos. Cad's Cadre is Daigian Moseneillin, Corele Hovian, Merise, and Kumira (who do not seem to have last names). But Erian apparently takes no part in the battle at Shadar Logoth. [Sydo Zandstra]

RJ acknowledges the error in the COT Prologue interview:

Q: Was Erian Boroleos meant to disappear during the battle at Shadar Logoth or was that a mistake?

RJ: Erian Boroleos was not meant to disappear. In my notes, she is placed guarding those with Cadsuane who cannot channel and not too pleased about it (there are reasons why she was chosen out for this, which I won't go into here), and there is even a note (under CHECKS AND CORRECTIONS, a category I use to make sure that I haven't blinked at the wrong time) to make sure of mentioning her in passing. It didn't happen, for which, mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa. I was so certain that I had done it, that I didn't find out I hadn't until the paperback came out, but a correction will be made.

•

Crossroads of Twilight

While ruminating about Galad's behavior in Samara, Elayne thinks to herself:

Galad fancied Nynaeve, or had for a time – it was hard to imagine he still felt that way, with him a Whitecloak, the Light only knew where and doing what – but the truth was, he had started that war to rescue his sister.

[COT: 12, A Bargain, 307]

However, it was *Egwene* Galad fancied; he respected Nynaeve, but there is never any indication that he was interested in her romantically. What's more, Elayne knew this: she told Egwene that Gawyn liked her (Egwene), but that he would never pursue a girl that Galad had shown an interest in. [Peter Reid]

•

Jim Mansfield has thoughts on weevils and the winnowing thereof:

Winnowing has two meanings: its original meaning, to remove chaff from grain by the use of air currents (i.e. throwing up of the chaff/grain mixture in the wind and letting the wind carry away the lighter chaff), and its

metaphorical meaning, to separate the good from the bad. In a Boolean sense, it can mean 1) OR 2) ... but not 1) AND 2)!

Grain weevils are small, but not nearly as small or light as chaff (wheat husks). The bugs are 3-4 mm long, which makes them about as big as wheat grains and probably just as heavy. 'Winnowing' out grain weevils from grain would not work using the same method one uses for removing chaff from wheat. Also, as grain weevils are interior feeders, they are not likely to be dislodged from the grain kernels by a simple throwing up in the air.

2.7.7 When Rand and Mat are travelling to Caemlyn in TEOTW, why does the scene with the scarves happen twice?

[Steven Cooper]



In TEOTW, after Mat and Rand split off from Thom in Whitebridge, they travel to Caemlyn alone. During that journey, there are two scenes which are exactly the same, even with almost the same wording. These two passages are [TEOTW: 31, Play for Your Supper, 382] and [TEOTW: 33, The Dark Waits, 416]. In both descriptions, the farmer asks Rand and Mat who they are running from. Then he says something about wanting to help them, but he can't because he might get in trouble for helping strangers. He feels bad, and offers them two woollen scarves, which he pulls from his pocket. He explains that he knows it isn't much, but they are his sons' scarves, and that's all he feels he can give them safely. He wishes them luck.

Is this an error? What's going on here?

It's a flashback scene, although not a particularly well-executed one, judging from the amount of confusion it's generated. The confusion comes partly from the fact that Jordan doesn't do anything special to mark the flashback as such (e.g. using an italic font, like Mat's flashback of Mili Skane in ACOS) – subtle changes of verb tense are the only clues. Also, that whole sequence from chapter 31 to chapter 34 contains not only a long flashback, but another flashback nested inside the first one.

Hopefully, the following table will clarify what's going on. I've arranged the events of these chapters into their proper, chronological order. In the left-hand column are indications of the days passing. Sometimes it's not possible to say exactly how many days Rand and Mat spend in travelling from place to place, hence the use of A0, B0, C0, etc. to mark different sections of the timeline. The numbers in the second column represent the order in which Jordan presents the events in the text. Chapter 31 begins with Rand and Mat travelling down the Caemlyn Road on day D3, before flashing back to the start of the journey from Whitebridge. So, scroll down to event number 1 near the bottom of the table, and just follow the numbers.

Day	Ord.	Event
A0	6	For a long time after leaving Whitebridge, Rand would suddenly find himself staring back down the road behind them... Hope faded as the days passed. [TEOTW: 31, Play for Your Supper, 383]
	7	The first village after Whitebridge looked so much like Emond's Field... [TEOTW: 31, Play for Your Supper, 384]
	8	Night fell before they found a spot by moonlight... [TEOTW: 31, Play for Your Supper, 385]
	9	That was not the only night they spent with just their cloaks to protect them... not the only meal they made from nothing but cold water. [TEOTW: 31, Play for Your Supper, 385]
<i>[An unknown amount of time elapses here, but the quote from p.387 given below tells us there must be at least three days between A0 and B0.]</i>		
	10	[One afternoon, Rand argues with Mat over selling the dagger.] [TEOTW: 31, Play for Your Supper, 385]
	11	Farms did provide some meals and a few nights out of the cold. [TEOTW: 31, Play for Your Supper, 386]
	12	Sometimes Mat tried his hand at stealing eggs, and once he attempted to milk a cow left unattended... [TEOTW: 31, Play for Your Supper, 386]
B0	13	[Rand and Mat do some more farm work, but the farmer changes his mind about letting them stay the night, and they are sent on their way with some food.] [TEOTW: 31, Play for Your Supper, 387]
	14	Three days earlier, while they were still working, they'd had the dogs set on them. [TEOTW: 31, Play for Your Supper, 387]
<i>[More days of travelling.]</i>		
C0	15	[They arrive at Grinwell's farm. After supper, Rand plays the flute and Mat juggles. They stay the night.] [TEOTW: 31, Play for Your Supper, 388]
	16	...whenever a farmer allowed them to stay, he always played one tune on the flute after supper. [TEOTW: 31, Play for Your Supper, 389]
C1	17	[They arrive at Arien at dusk, where they play at the inn.] [TEOTW: 31, Play for Your Supper, 390]
C2	18	[They get a ride from Arien in Eazil Forney's cart.] [TEOTW: 31, Play for Your Supper, 391]
	19	That became the way of their travelling... [TEOTW: 31, Play for Your Supper, 391]
<i>[More travelling. At least two days, probably three, between C2 and D0.]</i>		

D0	20	Rand began to think their problems were over till they reached Caemlyn. But then they came to Four Kings. [TEOTW: 31, Play for Your Supper, 391]
	21	Chapter 32 starts here. [They arrive at Four Kings in the evening. A storm begins. They play at The Dancing Cartman. They notice a rich-looking man watching them (Howal Gode, a Whitebridge merchant). After the customers leave, they are approached by Gode, a Darkfriend. Lightning strikes the inn, killing Gode. They escape into the night, with Mat temporarily blinded.] [TEOTW: 32, Four Kings in Shadow, 392-408] [Chapter 33 begins with Rand and Mat travelling down the Caemlyn Road in Hyam Kinch's cart on day D3 (see event 22 below), before flashing back to the aftermath of the events at Four Kings.]
	24	[They shelter under bushes from the storm. Rand dreams – he encounters the dead Gode and Ba'alzamon. Ba'alzamon tells Rand the Eye of the World will never serve him.] [TEOTW: 33, The Dark Waits, 414]
D1	25	[The rain stops. They avoid a village around midday. Afterwards, Alpert Mull gives them a ride, and two scarves. They reach Market Sheran at dusk, and stay at Rulan Allwine's inn.] [TEOTW: 33, The Dark Waits, 415-418]
D2	26	[At breakfast, they encounter Paitr, a young Darkfriend. At evening, they arrive at another small village. At the inn (The Queen's Man) Rand falls ill (reaction to channelling two days ago), so they stay in the stable.] [TEOTW: 33, The Dark Waits, 418-424]
D3	27	[At dawn, a female Darkfriend [Mili Skane] tries to kill them. They escape, and Hyam Kinch gives them a ride.] [TEOTW: 33, The Dark Waits, 427-430] [Chapter 33 ends here. Chapter 34 starts after Rand and Mat have already left Kinch and are passing through Carysford.]
	22	Chapter 33 starts here. [Rand and Mat are travelling along the Caemlyn Road in Hyam Kinch's cart. Mat's eyes are much better, Rand is recovering quickly from being sick. They leave the cart at the turn-off to Kinch's farm. The next village is Carysford.] [TEOTW: 33, The Dark Waits, 409-413]
	23	The rain had continued through the night they had staggered away from The Dancing Cartman... [At this point, the flashback to day D0 starts.] [TEOTW: 33, The Dark Waits, 413]
	1	Chapter 31 starts here. [Rand and Mat are on the Caemlyn Road. They see a dust trail and hide through a hole in the hedge from a group of merchants' guards.] [TEOTW: 31, Play for Your Supper, 382-383]
	2	A farmer had given [the scarf] to him... [remembering the events of two days before -- see event 25 above.] [TEOTW: 31, Play for Your Supper, 382]
	3	The list of kindnesses he had made in his mind in the days since Whitebridge had been a short one... [TEOTW: 31, Play for Your Supper, 382]
	4	Once already, cutting a hole through a hedge had almost given them away. [TEOTW: 31, Play for Your Supper, 383]
	5	It had not begun like this, their journey down the Caemlyn Road. [TEOTW: 31, Play for Your Supper, 383] [At this point, the flashback to day A0 begins.]
	28	Chapter 34 starts here. [They pass through Carysford after dark, and sleep in a haystack.] [TEOTW: 34, The Last Village, 431-433]
	29	[They join the line of travellers on the Caemlyn Road. They walk through several villages. At evening, they see a Fade talking to Raimun Holdwin (innkeeper) outside the Goose and Crown, and Almen Bunt gives them a ride through the night to Caemlyn.] [TEOTW: 34, The Last Village, 433-440]

As you can see, chapters 33, 31 and 34 (in that order!) all start on the same day, and both 31 and 33 end chronologically before they begin. I always have to smile when I read Jordan's smartass comment at the start of chapter 34:

[Rand] wondered if his whole sense of time was getting skewed. [TEOTW: 34, The Last Village, 431]

Whatever Rand is feeling, the reader's sense of time should definitely be tied into a knot by this point.



3 TRIVIAL PURSUITS: References, Sources, Allusions and Parallels

This section contains information on and discussion of legends and myths which RJ may have used as source material and works which share similarities with TWOT.

"There are elements from Norse, Chinese, Japanese, and American Indian mythologies, to name just a few. I think it adds resonance to the story, although I've taken great care not to follow the older material in any slavish way. Occasionally, I will add in details here or there, and then discover that I have done something that is absolutely authentic to the myth I was working from."

[Waldenbooks' zine *Hailing Frequencies*]

3.01 Judeo-Christian and Biblical parallels

Asmodean

Asmodeus, a demon described in the Old Testament book of Tobit, which is included only in the Catholic and Eastern Orthodox canon of scriptures (you won't find it in Jewish or Protestant Bibles; it's considered apocrypha in those circles). In the book of Tobit, Sara had been married seven times, but Asmodeus had slain all of them before they could consummate their marriage (Tobit 3:7-8). Sara eventually married Tobias, the son of Tobit, who was able to banish Asmodeus by burning the heart and liver of a special fish given to him by the angel Raphael in their bedchamber (Tobit 6:16-17, 8:2-3). Asmodeus fled to Egypt, where Raphael caught up with him and bound him up.

[Rafael Sevilla]



Ba'alzamon

Ba'al, Baelzebub, or Ba'al Shamin (literally, "the lord of the heavens," an appellation of Ba'al). Baelzebub, Lord of the Flies, was an ancient Canaanite fertility deity that competed with worship of Yahweh in Old Testament times. Later became a euphemism for the devil from the time of Christ on (see Matthew 10:24, 12:24-27, Mark 3:22, and Luke 11:15-18) from its similarity to the Aramaic word *beeldebaba* ("enemy"), and from the fact that many ancient pagan gods were demonized in Christian times anyway. [Rafael Sevilla]

Be'lal

Belial literally means "worthless" in Hebrew; "sons of Belial" is used throughout the Bible to denote evil men. Eventually becomes the name of a demon in Medieval times. [Rafael Sevilla]

Belial was often noted as commanding legions, and has been referred to as the general of Hell. Be'lal was one of the noted generals of the Shadow. [John Novak]

Christ imagery

There are tons of Christ/Savior parallels in Rand's character (although this savior is going to do major damage before defeating the DO), but here are a few of the highlights:

- Rebirth/dying and rising again: "To live, you must die."
- The blood of the lamb versus Rand's blood on the rocks of Shayol Ghul.
- Stigmata (see below).
- In [TSR: 19, *The Wavedancer*, 220-221] one of the Sea Folk mentions part of the Jendai Prophecy:
"The White Tower shall be broken by his name, and Aes Sedai shall kneel to wash his feet and dry them with their hair."
Mary Magdalene washed Jesus' feet and then dried them with her hair as a sign of respect and service. [Zareh Amirian]
- Jesus showed the same reluctance toward, then acceptance of his fate: "Lord, take this cup from my lips."

Ishmael

In Genesis, Abraham's eldest son (to an Egyptian serving girl, Hagar) was called Ishmael. Apparently Abraham's wife took a disliking to young Ishmael and pressured Big Abe into exiling Ish and Hagar into the desert. The name literally means "God has heard," because God is said to have heard of mother and son's plight at Sarah's hand. Jordan seems to have a taste for irony, methinks, as Ishmael is called the Betrayer of Hope! The whole quote about "every hand raised against him" is interesting, and in full:

You are now with child and you will have a son. You shall name him Ishmael, for the Lord has heard of your misery. He will be a wild donkey of a man, his hand will be against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he will live in hostility towards all of his brothers. (Genesis 16:11-12)

As a side note, Ishmael is said to be the ancestor of the present-day Arabs and other peoples who now dwell in the lands around Israel.

Jehannah

Gehennah, a place of fire and torment. Literally, “place of torment.” A valley near Jerusalem where Solomon, king of Israel, built “a high place,” or place of worship, for the gods Chemosh and Moloch. The valley came to be regarded as a place of abomination because some of the Israelites sacrificed their children to Moloch there. In a later period it was made a refuse dump and perpetual fires were maintained there to prevent pestilence. Thus, in the New Testament, Gehennah became synonymous with hell. *[Encyclopedia Mythica]*

In the novels, Jehannah is a poorly run city, filled with mobs and low-class sorts.

Lews Therin/Lord of the Morning

Lucifer, the “morning star.” The literal translation of Lucifer is “bringer of light.” **[Matthew Forrester]**

Lothair Mantelar (founder of the Children of the Light)

Martin Luther?

Masema

Saul/Paul; goes from being anti-Rand to rabidly pro-Rand. Also, John the Baptist; the “voice crying out in the wilderness” proclaiming the coming of the savior and all that.

I actually came across a reference to a demon named Mastema, which seems to have been an apocryphal name for Satan – Satan in the sense of Chief Accuser, rather than corruptor. **[John Novak]**

Bill Kte’pi notes that Mastema appears in the Book of Jubilees as the head of the demons. Apparently he is involved with testing Abraham. Jubilees is part of the *Pseudepigrapha* (Greek, “things falsely ascribed”), a collection of early Jewish and some Jewish-Christian writings composed between c.200 BC and c.AD. 200, not found in the Bible or rabbinic writings.

M’Hael

Michael the Archangel who was Lucifer’s chief opponent. The derivation of Michael is “Mikha’el” from the Hebrew meaning “who is like God.” **[Michael Schmidt]** Michael was the great prince of all angels and leader of the celestial armies.

[Encyclopedia Mythica]

Amnon Wenger adds that the Hebrew word “m’nahael” means “principal” or “person in charge.”

Paaren Disen

Paradise.

Sammael

A member of Lucifer’s host, often incorrectly identified as another name for Lucifer himself. **Jeremy Yoskowitz** tells us that “Samael” is an earlier name for Uriel, the angel of death from the *Kabbalah*. Some versions of the Lilith legend name Sammael as her husband (after Adam spurned her), and general of the army of demonspawn they birthed together. Their goal was to replace Eve’s children with Lilith’s.

Seven seals

The seven seals of Revelations.

Shayol Ghul

Sheol: Hebrew for ‘hell’; Ghul: *gol* or *gul*, Arabic for ‘demon.’

Stigmata

There are five stigmatic signs recognized by the Catholic Church:

1. The bleeding of the hands or wrists.
2. The wound in the side from sword or spear.
3. The welts from whipping.
4. The bleeding from the forehead (crown of thorns).
5. The bleeding of the feet.

(Note on #1: There used to be much discussion among historical theologians as to whether the nails would have been driven through the hands or the wrists, since modern medicine tells us the structure of the hands isn’t strong enough to keep a human body nailed to anything. Since the 1970s, the generally accepted idea has been that Jesus was nailed to the cross through the wrists, but the bleeding of the hands is still considered canon stigmata.)

Now compare to Rand:

1. Both his hands and wrists have been marked (herons and dragons). The wounds from the marking have been healed (and are not bleeding continually as with classic Catholic stigmata), yet they remain visible at any time.

2. Rand's unhealing wound in the side is a clear reference to the Fisher King. However, the Fisher King's wound is often identified with that which Jesus Christ received while he was being crucified (see section 3.06), so Rand's wound can also be considered to fulfill the second stigmata.
3. The regular beatings Rand received while a captive of the Tower AS in LOC probably qualify.
4. Well, duh – the Crown of Swords.
5. What about wounds in the feet? **Luke Weigel** suggests the following passage:

...hundreds of red filaments burned down through the ceiling... One stabbed through the heel of his boot, through his heel, and he heard himself cry out as he fell. Not his pain, in side or foot. Not his.

[ACOS: 41, A Crown of Swords, 651]

Tarmon Gai'don

Armageddon.

Twelve tribes

Compare the twelve tribes of Israel and the twelve clans of the Aiel. In fact, there is a thirteenth "clan," the Jenn. This "clan" is credited with building Rhuidean – the holy place (temple if you will) of the Aiel. The Israelites also had a people charged with taking care of the Ark of the Covenant as well as the religious ceremonies within the temple (especially within the Holy of Holies) and those people were the Levites. A tribe not counted among the twelve, so in effect a thirteenth tribe also.

Craig Levin points out that the Levites *are* counted in the twelve tribes. It's just that Joseph's descendants split into two tribes later on, and the Levites don't get land; it is their job (theoretically) to care for the Lord's Temple and other altars across Israel. Which is even better, since there was the Jenn/Aiel split, and the Jenn's job was to take care of Rhuidean/the temple.

Virgin birth

In LOC, some of the rumors about Rand say that he was born of a woman touched by no man [LOC: 2, A New Arrival, 78].

Wormwood

When Padan Fain shows up to visit Pedron Niall in the prologue of TDR, he calls himself "Ordeith," which Niall notes is Old Tongue for "wormwood." Revelations tells us that come Armageddon, a great star would fall from heaven: "And the name of the star is called wormwood: and the third part of the waters became wormwood; and many men died of the waters because they were made bitter." (Revelations 8:11) [**William Stewart**]

Wormwood is mentioned several times elsewhere in the Bible as well, always in the sense of making things bitter or poisonous. This one's my favorite:

Ye who turn judgment to wormwood, and leave off righteousness in the earth, Seek him that maketh the seven stars and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night: that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth: The LORD is his name: That strengtheneth the spoiled against the strong, so that the spoiled shall come against the fortress. (Amos 5:7-9) [**Ben Goodman**]

Rituals and phrases

"Peace be on you always," Elyas replied, "and on all the People." He hesitated, then added, "I will find the song, or another will find the song, but the song will be sung, this year or in a year to come. As it once was so shall it be again, world without end." ...

"Peace be on you," Elyas said.

"And on you," Raen said sadly.

[TEOTW: 27, Shelter from the Storm, 346]

The Catholic prayer called the Glory Be goes: "Glory be to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen." The latter quotes are reminiscent of the closing of a Catholic Mass, where the priest pronounces "Peace be with you" and the people respond "And also with you." [**J. Vessey**]

"**Phoenix**" adds that the phrase "Peace be on you" and the response "and on your spirit" is found in Eastern Orthodoxy (Orthodox Christianity) before the reading of the Gospel. (The Catholic version is "The Lord be with you".)

•

At Easter mass this past spring, I saw an adult baptized for the first time in the Catholic faith. They get the person to kneel, pour water over their head, and say something like "Now you are sealed." I don't recall the exact words, but "sealed" was in it for sure and I recall thinking Jordan must be Catholic. Sounds a lot like becoming Accepted to me. [**Judy G.**]

More Biblical quotes

In [TGH: 26, Discord, 326] we have the prophecy:

Twice dawns the day when his blood is shed. Once for mourning, once for birth.

This is very similar to the darkening of the sun when Christ is crucified:

And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst. (Luke 23: 44-45) [**Pam Korda**]

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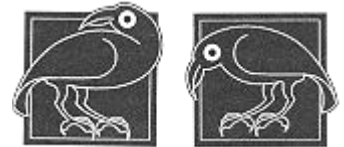
Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the world. No I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. I came to set sons against their fathers, daughters against their mothers. ... a man's worst enemies will be the members of his own family. (Matthew 10:34-36)

Compare [TFOH: Trailer Prophecy]:

And what was once did come again – in fire and in storm splitting all in twain. For his peace... was the peace... of the sword. [**Zach Simpson**]

3.02 Norse mythology

[Greg Wheatley, Chad Orzel, Jonathan Vessey, Erica Sadun, Pam Korda, Karl-Johan Norén, Fred Van Keuls]



This is just a quick overview. For a more Thor-ough discussion of Norse parallels in TWOT, see Karl-Johan's page on the subject. There is a link to it from the *Wheel of Time* Index (see section 0.08).

Mat and Odin

Mat has many of the attributes of Odin – wide-brimmed hat, a spear with ravens drawn on it which refers to “Thought” and “Memory” (the names of Odin's ravens) and will in the future almost certainly lose an eye. Also, Odin agreed to be hung from Yggdrasill in order to gain wisdom and power – a definite parallel to Mat being hung from the Tree o' Life in Rhuidean.

Heimdall's horn

Heimdall's job was to guard the Rainbow bridge into Asgard against the Giants. During the Last Battle (Ragnarok), he was to blow the horn Gjall to signal the arrayed gods and dead heroes that it was time to fight; cf. the Horn of Valere. Granted, there are differences – the Heroes are bound to the Horn and not to a specific cause, and they live in T'A'R rather than the afterlife as such (where they'd fight all day, cutting each other to pieces, then get healed at day's end. Always got a kick out of that – sounds like a real heavenly afterlife to me), but the concept of dead heroes waiting around for the final battle stays the same.

Rand and Tyr

Tyr was a Norse god of war and of justice. This is a parallel with Rand bringing strife to Randland, and with his concurrent attempts to rule justly and by the rule of law. (Note: Tyr is not connected to legality as a maker of peace or a bringer to justice, but more as the embodiment of laws as power, of the fight that is fought in court instead on the battlefield. The god of justice in the Norse pantheon is Forsete, of which next to nothing is known. [**Karl-Johan Norén**]) Tyr's arm was snarled off by the monstrous wolf Fenrir (Perrin?) when the gods chained him. (The gods thus defeated one of their greatest enemies, at the loss of one of their greatest assets, Tyr's right (fighting) hand.) If this parallel is valid, then this could be evidence that Rand will lose his hand – RJ said at a signing in Atlanta that he deliberately made Mat like Odin and Rand like Tyr. Furthermore, Tyr offered to put his hand in Fenrir's mouth as an assurance that the chains would be removed. Hence, it was a willing sacrifice. This may be analogous to Rand sacrificing his life or body parts at Tarmon Gai'don (or before).

Perrin and Thor

Even though Perrin does not share any attribute with Thor other than his strength, his beard and the hammer, their roles and personalities are remarkably similar. Both are mostly connected to the common men, both have a good head but are slow to use it, and both are terrible in their anger, though Thor is much [quicker to lose] to it than Perrin. Perrin's hammer is a symbol for peace and building, but this trait is also present in Thor and Mjolnir, even though it is not readily present in the myths. [**Karl-Johan Norén**]

Tuon and Freyja

Tuon's personal sigil is “an ancient war-cart being driven by two lions.” The Titaness Rhea, wife of Chronus and mother of Zeus, was described as driving a chariot being driven by lions. **Karl-Johan Norén** mentions that the Norse goddess Freyja was also known to drive a war-cart driven by cats, and further was said to have been a lover of Odin. There are attributes of Odin, mostly the fact that he traded an eye to gain wisdom and insight, which are found in Mat, so this meshes nicely with Tuon filling the Freyja role. Additionally, Freyja was known to have a fondness for jewelry (one of her names was Menglöd – “fond of necklaces”); Tuon is always described as adorned with gems and jewelry. Lastly, both Rhea and Freyja were fertility goddesses, and as such were linked to the moon and its cycle. Tuon's title “Daughter of the Nine Moons” can be interpreted as referring to the nine months of pregnancy, as well as matching, generally, the symbolic tie between a woman's fertility and the moon.

3.03 Greek and Roman mythology



Birgitte

- In conversation, she mentions the names Mathena (Athena/Artemis) and Zheres (Tiresias? Orion?) [TFOH: 47, The Price of a Ship, 540]. The goddess Artemis turned the hunter Orion into a stag so he would be killed by his dogs, after he saw her bathing. Athena was also surprised by Tiresias while bathing, but she blinded him and gave him the gift of second sight in return.
- The silver bow seems to have come straight out of Greek mythology. Artemis had a silver bow, to match her brother Apollo's golden one.
- When Birgitte is created a Lady by Elayne, and invested with patent of nobility and an estate of her own, the surname she chooses is "Trahelion," which suggests a link to Helios, the sun god who became syncretized with Apollo, who was the god of archery.
- Birgitte's sudden emergence into this world, nude and fully formed, is reminiscent of the birth of Aphrodite, who emerged from the sea foam near Cyprus unclothed and bodacious. Also, Aphrodite's husband was the lame and unattractive god Hephaestus; Birgitte is linked to the ugly swordsman, Gaidal Cain.

Cyndane

Cynthia, a poetic name for Artemis, the Greek moon goddess, who also was identified with Selena (see below). [Rich Boyé]

The *Illiad*

Aginor

In book 21 [of the *Illiad*], a character named Agenor attacks Achilles, and is defeated. Not much is said about him (Agenor) other than that he is "blameless and powerful," and knew that Achilles was stronger than he was. He attacked anyway, figuring that while Achilles was much more combat-capable, Agenor had the gods on his side, not to mention the fact that even the powerful make mistakes. In a few minutes, Achilles defeats Agenor, and Apollo surrounds the loser "in a thick mist," and transports him back to Troy. Some interesting parallels between this and TEOTW's final battle: each Aginor knew that his opponent was more powerful. Both were full of pride. Both attacked anyway. [Mike O'Malley]

Illian

Ilion, a.k.a. Troy.

Telamon

Another character in the *Illiad* who we might recognize is Aias (Roman: Ajax), one of the most powerful and respected warriors of the Greek army. Because there was another, unrelated warrior with the same name, Aias was also known by his father's name, Telamon. [Peter Smalley]

When Achilles' armor was passed on to Odysseus, Ajax went mad and killed himself out of jealousy. However, I came across an interesting footnote to a Shakespearean reference to Ajax which indicates that in his madness, Ajax also slew an entire herd of sheep after mistaking them for the enemy. This bit of info ties the name in nicely with ol' Lews Therin, I think. [Jon Wheeler]

Jamie McKinney adds that a "telamon" is defined in the dictionary as a male caryatid, a supporting pillar in the shape of a man, from the Greek for "bearer" or "supporter."

Jupiter's women

Several of the moons of Jupiter are named for his mistresses. Among them were:

- Callisto, a follower of Artemis and sworn *maiden*.
- Europa, a princess kidnapped by Zeus, an act leaving her brother uprooted from his land and obligations.
- Io, a girl who had premonitions of Zeus's love for her.

These match up nicely with Aviendha, Elayne and Min. [Johan Gustafsson]

Kore

Tuon, the Daughter of the Nine Moons, has as one of her names, "Kore." Kore was an ancient name for Persephone, the goddess of spring, who was abducted by Hades, and later they married. At the end of WH, Mat abducts Tuon, and they are destined to marry as well. [Rich Boyé]

Also, the name "Kore" literally means "daughter" or "maiden." [Encyclopedia Mythica]

Moiraine

Moirae or Moirai, the three Fates of Greek mythology. The name means "parts" or "allotted portions," and their job was to assign to every person his or her destiny, and direct their steps along the path from birth to death; their dictates could only be circumvented with great difficulty. Homer personified them as one goddess, Moira. [Jennifer Myak, Leigh Butler]

And as long as we're talking about the Fates, isn't it interesting that Min was raised by three women she calls her "aunts," though we never find out if they are actually related to her, who didn't seem at all fazed by her ability to see the fates of others? [Alan Ellingson, Matthew Hunter]

Oedipus

Doomed king of Thebes who killed his father and married his mother. When he discovered what he had done, he blinded himself and exiled himself from his city. He led the life of a blind beggar until he died near Athens (*Oedipus Rex* and *Oedipus at Colonus*, by Sophocles). Possible connection to the vision of Rand as a blind beggar.

Orpheus

A great musician whose wife, Eurydice, was killed on their wedding night by a snake. Orpheus traveled to the kingdom of Hades to try to get her back, and his music so moved the King and Queen of the underworld that he was allowed to take her back, provided that he leave, and not look back at her until he had reached the surface. He couldn't control himself, so he looked, and she went back to Hades. Orpheus ended up getting ripped to shreds by the Maenads, a tribe of ferocious women, during a Bacchanale. Possibly a connection to Thom rescuing Moiraine from the Finn. [D. Sohl]

(Hopefully, Thom will fare better than Orpheus!)

People of the Dragon

The end prophecy from TSR runs:

And when the blood was sprinkled on ground where nothing could grow, the Children of the Dragon did spring up, the People of the Dragon, armed to dance with death. And he did call them forth from the wasted land, and they did shake the world with battle.

This is a direct reference to the legend of Jason and the Argonauts – one of the tasks Aeëtes had Jason do in order to gain the Golden Fleece was sow the earth with dragon's teeth, which then sprang up into an army of warriors. It is interesting to note that the way Jason defeated them was to hit one with a rock and turn them all against each other, and they ripped one another to pieces... [Leigh Butler]

Selene

Selena, a Greek goddess of the moon (hence the icon), merged in Artemis and Hecate. She loved a youth named Endymion, and put him into a deep sleep so that he would not be conscious of her caresses.

Soe'feia

Sophia, the Greek word for wisdom. The Greeks personified wisdom as a woman, as did the Hebrews. [Maccabeus Epimanes]

3.04 Celtic references

Aelfinn/Eelfinn

The Elves/Faerie/Sidhe of Celtic mythology. The Sidhe were vulnerable to iron ("iron to bind"), and liked music ("music to daze"). There were two subgroups of Faeries, as Matthew Hunter elaborates:

The Seelie and Unseelie courts, of which one the Seelie were comparatively "nice" and honorable, although tricksters and inhumanly magical, while the Unseelie were essentially their evil counterparts – delighting in tormenting and the kind of pranks that have nasty consequences. The spelling is phonetic, and the real spelling is somewhat different... I think 'Seighlie' is closer but still not right.

In [TSR: 6, Doorways, 95]:

Elayne's first thought was for the children's tale *Bili Under the Hill*, but only because of the three answers.

Compare to various tales of common humans visiting some Sidhe under a hill, and having various mystical experiences.

Aes Sedai

In Celtic myth, there are beings known as the Sidhe (pronounced 'shee'), which literally means "people of the (fairy) hills." It is the Gaelic name for the fairies in both Ireland and the Highlands of Scotland. Specifically, the Aes Sidhe were 'the people of the hills,' collective name for the old Irish gods who dwell in hills. According to the *Encyclopedia Mythica*, they "still live as invisible beings... In a just battle, they will fight beside mortals. When they fight, they go armed with lances of blue flame and shields of pure white." [Scott Dwiggin]

Bel Tine

Beltane, a Druidic holiday.

Birgitte

Brigit/Brigid, Celtic goddess of fire, poetry, smithery, and/or healing.



Portal Stones

Evocative of the famous cairns and “standing stones” that dot the British Isles. **Dustin Clayton** notes:

The cairns were believed to be plexuses [in-between places] of a sort, except that they were plexuses to another world, better known to some as the Fairy World or Otherworld. The legends of cairns are that if you were to walk around a cairn three times in a ‘sunwise circle’ you will find an entrance to the cairn, especially when it was sunrise or sunset. The cairns themselves weren’t passageways to other worlds, but were meant to be warning signs to the unwary that strange powers rested at these places, and those who didn’t understand them might be caught in them.

“Rhiannon at the Tower”

Rhiannon from Welsh mythology. The closest connection between her and a tower that I could find is the following from the story of Manawyddan: Manawyddan, his wife Rhiannon, her son Pryderi, and his wife Kicva were out hunting. They came upon a mysterious castle. Their hounds ran into the castle, and didn’t come out. Pryderi went in after them, and saw a large gold bowl. He touched the bowl, and became frozen. After a while, Rhiannon went in to look for him, got similarly stuck, and then the castle disappeared. (They finally got released.)

Tam Lin

[L:NS] notes that Tam’s full name is “Tamlin al’Thor.” Tam Lin was an Irish knight stolen away by the elf queen and forced to guard her kingdom, until the love of a mortal woman brought him back to our world. [**Alex Bertran**]

Tel’aran’rhiod

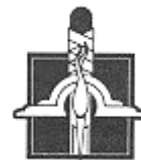
In Celtic myth the Goddess has three aspects, the Maiden, the Mother, and the Crone. The names of the aspects change from myth to myth, but in some versions the Mother aspect is called Arianrhod. “Arian” means “silver,” while “rhod” is “wheel” or “circle.” Arianrhod appears in the *Mabinogian* as the sister of Gwydion (or his wife, or both), and is associated with the moon, fertility, the stars, the aurora borealis, and time. [**Kathy Putnam, Sonja Pieper**]

Tuatha’an

Tuatha De Danann, “People of the Goddess Danu.” A magical race of beings who were supposed to have inhabited Ireland at the time of the arrival of the Milesians (i.e. humans).

Wild Hunt

Wild Hunt, of Celtic legend. The Wild Hunt is a supernatural force that sweeps across the land at night. The actual object of the Hunt varies from place to place. In some areas it searches for anything that might be unfortunate enough to be in its path. Others say it hunts evildoers. The leader of the Hunt also varies. In Celtic Britain it is usually led by Cernunnos, the horned god. In Wales it is led by Gwyn ap Nudd, and sometimes Bran. After the Anglo-Saxons had settled in England, Cernunnos became Herne the Hunter. The Wild Hunt also appears in Teutonic myth, its leader being Woden or Odin. [*Encyclopedia Mythica*]



3.05 Arthurian legend

Arthurian names

- Amyrlin: Merlin/Myrddin, Arthur’s chief advisor/magician, etc.
- Moiraine: Morgaine/Morgan Le Fay.
- Morgase: Morgause.
- Tigraine: Ygraine, King Arthur’s mother, seduced by Uther Pendragon with Merlin’s aid.
- Egwene al’Vere: Guenever/Guinevere.
- Artur Paendrag: Arthur Pendragon.
- Callandor: Excalibur, the sword in the stone.
- Galad: Galahad the Pure.
- Gawyn: Gawain.
- Green Man: Green Knight or Green Man
- Sa’angreal: San Greal (Holy Grail). An alternate spelling, *sang real*, translates to “holy or royal blood.” [**Robert Mee**]
- Nynaeve: Nyneve/Vivian, who was Merlin’s lover and cause of his imprisonment in the enchanted cave in Cornwall.
- Perrin: Perceval?
- Merrilin: Merlin again (advisor to a Queen).
- Lan: Lancelot?
- Damodred/Demandred: Mordred? Mordred was Arthur’s bastard son by his aunt Morgawse, and his slayer.

- Elayne: Elayne/Elaine: the first Elayne is sister to Queens Morgawse and Ygraine (King Arthur's mother). Another version of Arthurian legends (not Malory) asserts that she is one of the three women in Arthur's funeral boat to Avalon... The second Elaine is Sir Galahad's mother, by Sir Launcelot.
- Luthair Paendrag: Uther Pendragon (now Artur's son, instead of his father).
- Tar Valon: Avalon.
- Caemlyn: Camlaan (where Arthur fought his final battle against Mordred) or Camelot.
- Elyas, Aram, Demandred, Bors: All the same as or similar to names of Arthurian knights.

Min's vision of Rand's funeral bier

In the Arthurian legend (or at least the version I've read) Arthur is severely wounded and on his deathbed. Bedivere witnesses his being taken away on a funeral boat and ferried to Avalon to await the time when he is needed again. The only others on the ship are three women: (1) Arthur's half-sister Morgan Le Fay (the sorceress); (2) the Queen of North Galys; (3) the Queen of the Waste Land. It is doubtful that RJ means for Rand's women to mirror Arthur exactly. It is probable that the women will be Elayne, Min, and Aviendha. Add to this the visions in LOC involving three women and (probably) Rand on a boat.

The Green Man

Both in the Arthurian version, where Sir Gawain encounters the Green Man, and the much earlier Irish myths where Cuchulain encounters a nameless entity that by the description is obviously the Green Man, the story follows the same pattern: hero makes deal with Green Man to show how brave he is, hero cuts Green Man's head off, Green Man reappears three nights later to finish the deal by cutting hero's head off, hero goes honourably to his destiny, Green Man stays his hand at the last conceivable instant and compliments hero on bravery. [Emmet O'Brien]

The Fisher King

A king in the legend of Perceval who had an unhealable wound corresponding to the woes of his land; cf. Rand's side wound which is not Healable, the ACOS header prophecy, and the "Fisher" figure in Moridin's favorite game. For a more thorough discussion of the Fisher King, see section 3.06.

3.06 The Fisher King

The Fisher King legend appears in TWOT in several guises, the first and most obvious being the unhealable wound in Rand's side which he received from Ishamael's staff in [TGH: 47, The Grave Is No Bar to My Call, 564]. Then, we have the header prophecy from ACOS:

There can be no health in us, nor any good thing grow, for the land is one with the Dragon Reborn, and he one with the land.

Finally, we have the "Fisher" piece in Moridin's *sha'rah* game [TPOD: Prologue, Deceptive Appearances, 44]:

The Fisher was always worked as a man, a bandage blinding his eyes and one hand pressed to his side, a few drops of blood dripping through his fingers. The reasons, like the source of the name, were lost in the mist of time.

Lost to Moridin, maybe, but not to us!

Steve Deffeyes tells us:

The story of the Fisher King has origins dating back to Celtic times. Originally it is the tale of a king who was stabbed through both thighs, or sometimes it is the side, with a spear thus causing his lands to fall to waste. There's something about early customs forbidding the rule of a blemished king but the true origins of the story are lost, which suits our WOT parallel just fine. Chretien de Troyes introduced it to the Arthurian cycle and everyone from Malory to T.S. Eliot has used it. He has been called King Pelles, Parlan, Bron and Anfortas among others. Sir Balin dealt him the Dolorous Stroke, wounding him with the same spear that stabbed Jesus. He could not ride or hunt due to his never-healing wound and took up fishing. Sir Perceval visited him while on the grail quest and saw the procession of the grail, bleeding lance, candelabra and silver platter but was a new and shy knight and failed to ask the critical question that would have cured the king. Later when Sir Galahad achieved the grail he anointed the king's wounds with the blood of the lance and he was cured.

Here are some additional details from **John Johnson**:

The Fisher King is the guardian of the Holy Grail. (In some of the earliest legends, this was known as the San Greal.) The Holy Grail was originally brought over from Israel by Joseph of Arimathea, and contained some of Jesus' blood. This explained the magical abilities of the Grail. Legends conflict as to whether his wounding was a result of pride or some other sin. He was directly tied to the land. The land could not be healthy as long as the Fisher King was wounded. He was a powerful magician; some people regarded him as being evil, others good. (Those legends which regard him as being evil cast him as the archetype of Satan.)



Some legends seem to cast the Fisher King as the archetype of mankind, with the wound being the Original Sin, while others show the Fisher King as being symbolic of Christ, with the wound being a representation of his suffering on the cross, or, in some cases, the evil of mankind. This is further confused by the title that Chretien de Troyes gives him. In medieval French it is “Roi des Pecheurs,” which can be translated either The King of Fishers, or the King of Sinners, both of which could apply to Jesus Christ.

The quest of the Grail Knights was to seek out the Grail King, and ask him the Grail Question. When they did this, they were then able to heal the King, and thus heal the land. The legends have various knights succeeding to various degrees. Launcelot was able to see it from a distance, both Perceval and Galad were able to answer the Question. Some legends have Bors de Ganis also achieving the Quest with Perceval and Galad, but while they stayed behind, Bors returned to the world to explain what had happened.

Associated with the Arthurian legend of the Fisher King are four objects, the Hallows (there were other Hallows, but these four were most directly involved in the Arthurian legends), that were essential to heal the Maimed King. These were sacred objects, capable of great power. They were:

1. *The Sword*: This sword was said to have great power. Whoever wielded it could call down lightning and fire from heaven. This is linked to the Sword that Arthur pulled from the stone, and in modern times is represented as the Sword of State. Rand pulled *Callandor* from the Stone, and used it to call lightning and fire on the Trollocs.
2. *The Cauldron*: This provided food and life to those who were able to possess it. It is described as a wide, but shallow dish. I think that the Randland equivalent is the Bowl of the Winds, which is described in nearly the same terms. The modern equivalent is the Ampula of Holy Oil.
3. *The Spear*: The Spear was unbeatable in battle, and was directly linked to the healing of the Maimed King. Some legends say that this spear was the very one that pierced the side of Jesus Christ. The Randland equivalent could be the Seanchan scepter, or it could be Mat’s spear.
4. *The Crown*: This was the symbol of the king’s power. The Crown of Swords is its equivalent in Randland. When the throne room in Illian was destroyed, the Crown of Swords was sitting on the throne. The throne was completely destroyed, but the crown was intact, which indicates that it has an important role to play.

All of these were directly linked to the Maimed King’s sovereignty, and to the idea of power. When Rand goes into beggar-mode, he will lose his power, and these will be necessary to restore him.

3.07 Dragon legends

[Randy Cerveny]



Taken from *Man, Myth and Magic* (volume 5, pages 693-4):

The most striking of these is that the dragon in China is not, as in the West, a representative or symbol of the powers of evil. On the contrary, according to the old Chinese Book of Rites, the dragon as the chief of all scaly animals is one of the four benevolent spiritual animals. This reflects the general principle stated by Jung that ‘every psychological extreme secretly contains its own opposite,’ which is expressed in Chinese thought through the classical doctrine of Yang and Yin. That this principle underlies the dragon’s transformation into a beneficent being is confirmed by Wang Fu’s statement that the dragon’s scales number 117, of which 81 are imbued with Yang and 36 with Yin, because the dragon is partly a preserver and partly a destroyer. Yang is also the male element and, as its representative, the dragon also became at an early period a symbol of the Emperor, and appeared on the Chinese flag. During the Manchu dynasty, the dragon was held in especial esteem, and everything used by the Emperor was described in terms of it: there was the dragon throne, dragon bed and so on.

Although Chinese dragons appeared at favorable moments to presage periods of prosperity, and had been known to emit foam which had supernatural powers of fertilization, they could also, when offended or disturbed, cause a drought by gathering up all the water of a district in baskets, or they could eclipse the sun. To propitiate them, the Chinese flew dragon kites, especially at the mumming parade in the New Year.

The parallels with Rand and LTT are obvious.

3.08 Asian influences

“Death is lighter than a feather, duty heavier than a mountain”

According to **John Pickett**, the quote is an excerpt taken directly from the First Precept of the Imperial Rescript to Soldiers and Sailors, written in 1883 during the Meiji Period of Japanese history.

David Vogt adds that it was also a popular proverb among Japanese suicide troops during the late stages of combat of the Second World War.



Jearom

The greatest swordsman who ever lived, who suffered his only defeat at the hands of a farmer armed with a quarterstaff. **Erin O'Toole** suggests that RJ's inspiration for that was Miyamoto Musashi, the *kensai* (sword saint) of Japan. In the novel *Musashi* by Eiji Yokohawa, his bout with the farmer is prominently featured, though it is not known if such a duel ever really happened.

In an interesting cross-reference, **Ho-Sheng Hsiao** notes that Musashi wrote a book a few weeks before he died called *Go Rin No Sho*, or "A Book of Five Rings." It is divided into the Ground Book, The Water Book, The Fire Book, The Wind Book, and The Book of the Void.

Ji'e'toh

Bushido, literally the "Way of the Warrior." *Bushi* means "Warrior" and *Do* "the Way." Bushido was the Code, the Way of life of the Samurai. The code of the Bushido was summarized by five main requirements:

- (a) Fidelity – towards master (lord) and Fatherland, respect towards parents, brothers and sisters.
- (b) Politeness (*reigi*) – respect and love, modesty and correct etiquette (formality).
- (c) Virility – valour, courage and bravery, self-control, patience and endurance, readiness to fight.
- (d) Truthfulness/Veracity (*Makoto*) – sincerity and straightforwardness, sense of honour and justice.
- (e) Simplicity – simplicity and purity.

[David Chapman]

From **Scott Bateman**:

There is another concept in Japanese culture called *On* and *Giri* which more closely reflects *ji'e'toh* as used in the books. *On* translates as: favour, obligation, debt of gratitude. *Giri* translates as: duty, sense of duty, honor, decency, courtesy, debt of gratitude, social obligation. In Japanese, when you feel someone has done something that puts you in their debt, you say "on wo ukete iru" or "I have *On*." This fits nicely with "I have *toh*." Additional points to note:

1. Bushido was a code for warriors (the samurai), while *On* and *Giri* applies to everyone in Japan. *Everyone* among the Aiel lives by *ji'e'toh*, not just the warriors.
2. The Aiel have difficulty explaining the concept to anyone not Aiel because it is not something they think about. RJ says that to *be* Aiel is to follow *ji'e'toh*. When asked, people in Japan struggled to explain to me the concept of *On* and *Giri*. It's a principle of how one should act in relation to society that is only expected of other Japanese and which they understand intuitively. I was never expected to understand it but I scored major points by living by it when I could.

Stones

The game of Stones is based on the Asian game Go.

Sword forms

It's research (books, not doing), and the forms come from Japanese sword fighting and some European fencing, before the advent of well-designed and well-made guns made swords obsolete. [Matthew Hunter at a signing, also mentioned by others]

Tony Ho believes that the sword forms:

...more closely resemble Chinese Wu Shu fighting forms than Japanese sword forms. The Budoken (Japanese sword fighting) makes use of "forms," but does not name these forms. Wu Shu fighting, be it weapon or weaponless, associates each movement with a poetic title such as: "Mountain Crushing Overhead," "Old Ox Charging Forward," and even "Swallows Taking Flight," which is also a sword movement.

Tower of Ghenjei

There is a Japanese novel called *The Tale of Genji*. It is generally considered the first piece of work which qualifies as a novel, as the genre is defined today. Note the name's similarity to the Tower of Ghenjei in WOT. It was written by Lady Murasaki Shikibu in the early 10th century, during the Heian Period of Japanese history. [Jeff Han]

Yin-Yang symbol

The ancient sign of the Aes Sedai. Taoist tradition holds that Yin represents everything that is feminine, dark, withdrawn, receptive and passive, and of movement down and in; Yang represents the masculine, bright, forceful and expansive, and movement out and up. RJ's version inverts the colors of the genders, but the symbolism of opposite forces in balance carries across unmistakably in the *saidar/saidin* dynamic:

[RJ] also spoke for quite some time on the splitting of the One Power into male and female halves, and on the disharmony produced when they don't work together... This came across as one of the core elements in the origin of WOT. (Re: Yin/Yang – leaving out the little dots in the symbol is an intentional representation of the lack of harmony between male/female Power in Randland.)

[Emmet O'Brien, Dublin talk, November 1993]

3.09 Shadowspawn

Draghkar

Dracula, both for the name and for the physical description and proclivities (bat-like, drains the life from its victims, etc.).



Gholam

Golem from Jewish folklore. According to Gershon Scholem in “The Idea of the Golem,” the Golem (pronounced goy-lehm), dates back to the *Kabbalah*, the ancient book of Jewish mysticism. The most famous legend dates back to 16th century Prague, to a famous rabbi, Rabbi Loew, but it is a bastardization of an earlier, far more appropriate (from a TWOT perspective) story of a Rabbi Elias in Poland, who shaped clay into a man-shape (very biblical), and then inscribed, in Hebrew, EMETH, which means TRUTH, on its forehead, granting it life. The Golem did menial tasks and the like for Elias, but the longer it lived, it grew in size and consequently in strength. When the Golem grew to an awesome size, Elias felt threatened by it, and attempted to destroy it by erasing the first letter (aleph) in EMETH, changing it to METH, Hebrew for DEATH. Elias succeeded, but was subsequently killed by the collapse of the creature into a big pile of clay. There are dozens of variants of the golem legend. In the Loew story, the golem collapsed, but did not kill Loew. Loew buried the remains in the attic of his ancient synagogue, where they remain to this day, and make for an unusual tourist attraction. Additional stories tell of the golem growing in both strength and lustiness, which added a whole new dimension of trouble to be caused. [Stewart S. Bushman]

Jumara

The *Arabian Nights*’ “Tale of the Three Sharpers” makes mention of a creature called a “jamusah,” the mythical offspring of a bull and a mare, or an ass and a cow. In French, this is called variously a “jumart,” “gimere,” or “jumarre,” depending on the region, and is derived from the Latin “Chimaera.” [Fred Van Keuls, Leigh Butler]

Myrddraal

Merlin’s original Welsh name, “Myrddin,” + *draug* (Norse undead)?

Trolloc

Troll + orc. The Trolloc tribes seem to have been named after various mythological creatures:

- *Ahf’frait* = Afrit
- *Al’ghol* = Ghoul
- *Bhan’sheen* = Banshee
- *Dha’vol* = Devil
- *Dhai’món* = Demon
- *Dhjin’nen* = Djinn
- *Ghar’gael* = Gargoyle
- *Ghob’hlin* = Goblin
- *Gho’hlem* = Golem
- *Ghraem’lan* = Gremlin
- *Ko’bal* = Kobold
- *Kno’món* = Gnome

3.10 Miscellaneous references

Aes Sedai

“Siddhi” is a Sanskrit term which describes the side effects of achieving enlightenment through yoga. Among these are invisibility, astral projection, ability to make life-saving medicines, control over the world of spirits and demons, and “the life essence that preserves youth.” [Ho-Sheng Hsiao]



Anath

Anath was a Canaanite deity, a war goddess, a goddess who was believed to be insatiable in her lusts. She was also linked to Baal (Bhaal) as his sister and consort. Her lust for blood and/or sex was legendary. Bhaal was one of the Canaanite pantheon that the Hebrews had such a good time demonizing. However, the Canaanites worshiped Baal by sacrificing children to him, so he didn’t need much vilifying anyway. [Rich Boyé]

Asha’mán

Jimmy Sjöberg and others have pointed out that there are many similarities between the Asha’mán and the Nazi SS. SS stands for *Schutzstaffel* (Guardian Group) and was originally created to protect Hitler. Asha’mán means Guardians, and one of their functions is (nominally) to protect Rand. Both organizations use black as their color. The leader of the Asha’mán is called “M’Hael,” which is “leader” in the Old Tongue. The leader of the SS was the “Führer,” which is “leader” in German. There were 12 officer and 9 enlisted ranks in the *Waffen-SS*; of these, 5 officer and 1 enlisted rank(s) contained the two words *Sturm* (storm) and *Führer* (e.g. *Sturmabannführer*, *Obersturmführer*, *Sturmscharführer*). This is also seen within the Asha’mán in the *Tsorovan’m’hael* (Gedwyn’s title, from [TPOD: 21, Answering the Summons, 407]). Julius T. Thiele observes:

The SS was organised into 12 main departments with the according department heads. Outranking all of these was the *Reichsführer SS* (in this case Himmler). Reading this, I was put in mind of a constellation consisting of Taim + 12 of his trusted lieutenants, which represents a convenient number for applying the classic ‘convert-to-Darkfriend’ method.

The name itself, “Asha’man,” may be a play on “shaman.”

Crossroads

Crossroads are a constant in many mythologies as places of spiritual significance, usually as places where the dead/apparitions/spirits are likely to appear, and some cultures like the Romans thought them unlucky and tried to ward off misfortune by strategically placing shrines at them. Some of the myths of the British Isles also reflect a view that the dead are often seen at crossroads and such. Often with spectral hounds. **[Rich Boyé]**

Eamon Valda

The current leader of the Whitecloaks may have gotten his name from Eamon de Valera, an Irish statesman (1882-1975) who was variously president of Sinn Féin, Daíl Éireann, and Ireland itself during his political career (in between bouts of imprisonment and exile). **[Steven Cooper]**

Gareth Bryne

[TPOD notes that] Gareth Bryne’s horse is named Traveler. Robert E. Lee’s favourite horse during the War between the States was Traveler. Bryne is considered the greatest general of the age; Robert E. Lee received similar accolades. Bryne’s habit of examining the ground over which he is riding is also similar to one attributed by some contemporary writers to Lee. **[Goetz Von Berlichingen]**

Graendal

Grendel from *Beowulf*.

Heroes of the Horn

[ACOS: 21, Swovan Night, 362]

Mikel of the Pure Heart: The Archangel Michael?

Shivan the Hunter, Calian:

He was said to herald the end of Ages, the destruction of what had been and the birth of what was to be, he and his sister Calian, called the Chooser, who rode red-masked at his side.

Two Hindu deities: Shiva the Destroyer and Kali, goddess of death.

Amaresu, with the Sword of the Sun: Amaterasu, ancient Japanese goddess of the sun, from whom the Japanese royal family claims descent.

Otarin: “Oscar instead of Otarin” [TGH: 47, The Grave Is No Bar To My Call, 559] could refer to an Irish folk hero, and member of the Fianna. He is either the son or the grandson of Fionn McCool (varies in different stories), whose mother was a nature spirit who took the form of a stag. He was allegedly the greatest of heroes, who held back the forces of hell themselves at one point, thanks to a boon he was once granted of a strap on his flail that would never break. **[Ciaran Conliffe]**

Heron

The phoenix legend appears in many mythologies; in most it is depicted as an eagle-like bird with brilliant scarlet and gold plumage, and its self-immolation and rise from its own ashes is symbolic of immortality, rebirth, the cycle of the seasons, and the sun, which always sets only to rise again. The Christians associated it with the Resurrection; in Egyptian mythology the phoenix was closely associated with Ra, the sun god. What is interesting is the Islamic version of the phoenix legend, in which it is described as a large heron that was originally created perfect, but became a plague that had to be destroyed.

[Encyclopedia Britannica]

Illuminators

A secret closed society whose technology is going to change the world, causing many deaths, etc., are Jordan’s precursors to the modern Illuminati mythos. **[Mike Hoyer, originally credited to Jeff Smith]**

Laman Damodred

The Book of Mormon makes mention of a character named Laman, brother of the prophet Nephi, who was stubborn and rebellious and refused to eat from the Tree of Life.

Lanfear

French *l’enfer*, the word for Hell.

Maerion

One of Birgitte’s names in a past life. Maid Marion?

Mandragoran

Lan’s last name is very close to “mandragora,” which is the plural of “mandrake.” Mandrake is a plant of the nightshade family, and its forked, fleshy root was thought to resemble/represent a man. Cf. the Aiel’s name for Lan, *Aan’allein* (“one man”). **[Megan Aguiar]**

Mayene

Mayenne (1573, D F): for Charles de Lorraine-Guise, FP. Passed to Gonzaga 1621. Sold 1658 to La Porte-Mazarin. The title of duke remained by special clause in the letters patent, and became extinct in 1738. Essentially, Mayenne was a small, royal land-grant from the French Crown, that was near the Riviera. [Richard Boyé]

Mesaana

Possibly from Messalina, the notorious third wife of Tiberius Claudius Drusus Nero Germanicus, Emperor of Rome. **Jose Abrigo** observes that there was actually an ancient city called Messana, whose civil war was the catalyst for the First Punic War between Rome and Carthage.

Millennarianism

Well, our world didn't end in 2000 or 2001, but the belief that it would is a recurring and powerful superstition that crops up at the turn of every century or millennium. The year in Randland used to be roughly concurrent with our own, but has fallen behind over the last few books. The Feast of Lights that scandalized Perrin so much in LOC marks the last day of 999 NE, and approximately 96 days have passed between then and the end of COT, so Randland's date is still fairly early 1000 NE.

[Don Harlow, Leigh Butler]

Nae'blis

Iblis, another name for the devil in Muslim circles. Iblis, formerly called Azazel, was a jinn when captured by angels and carried off as their prisoner. He grew up among them and became an archangel. He was cast down when refusing to prostrate before the man Adam. Since he has roamed the earth, his domain, seeking to capture the souls of men. [Encyclopedia Mythica]

Neferi

Nefertiti or Nefretete, c.1372-1350 BC, queen of ancient Egypt; wife of Ikhnaton (XVIII dynasty) and aunt of Tutankhamen.

Ogier rhyme

The lines of the Ogier rhyme recalled by one of the Sea Folk ("Here comes an Aelfinn to steal all your bread / Here comes an Ogier to chop off your head") are similar to the last two lines of "The Bells of St Clements." The lyrics are:

"Oranges and lemons," say the bells of St Clements
"You owe me five farthings," say the bells of St Martin's
"When will you pay me," say the bells of Old Bailey
"When I am rich," say the bells of Shoreditch
"When will that be?" say the bells of Stepney
"I'm sure I don't know," says the great bell of Bow

Here comes a candle to light you to bed
And here comes a chopper to chop off your head.

[David Chapman, Young Blandford]

Olver

Oliver Twist?

Perun

Pre-Christian Slavonic (Balkan) god of thunder. His sacred animal was the bull. A war god, Perun's weapons were the axe, the hammer, or "thunder arrows," all of which symbolize thunder and lightning. [Rich Boyé]

In Croatian mythology, Perun's second name is Porin, and he is the oldest son of the prime deity Svarog, the creator of the universe. [Josip Cvetkovic]

He was a god of defensive warfare and was depicted with a big blonde beard.

[Fred Van Keuls]

Those are his attributes as they had already drifted away from his original role, following the Norse influence on the Slavic peoples. Originally, he also had a strong agricultural component mixed with the rest. Which makes him even closer to Perrin than Thor is.

[Jean Dufresne]

Rahvin

The raven, harbinger of evil. Or, Ravana/Ravan, a demon in Hindu mythology who abducts Sita, Rama's wife, in the *Ramayana* (cf. Morgase and Sita: both queens, both fall under the power of a demon/Forsaken, in both cases there are doubts by other characters about whether they were willing or no). [Emma Pease]

Saldaea

Chaldaea, region of the Assyrian and Babylonian empires.

Sammael

Napoleon? Sammael is described as a great general. He is short. Illian's symbol is nine golden bees; Napoleon's symbol was a golden bee.

Semirhage

Legendary Assyrian queen mentioned by Herodotus, wife and successor to Ninus, mythical founder of Nineveh. Noted for being so excessively lustful and depraved she even legalized incest within her realm. Dante Alighieri puts her in the Second Circle of Hell with those who committed the sin of lust.

Seven Ages

“**Caliban**” suggests that the choice of seven Ages for the Wheel of Time may be a nod to Jacques’ famous speech in Shakespeare’s *As You Like It* (Act II, Scene 7):

All the world’s a stage,
And all the men and women merely players;
They have their exits and their entrances,
And one man in his time plays many parts,
His acts being seven ages.

Shai... (well you *know* who this is...)

Satan. **Will Baird** notes that Shai... is the Arabic name for Satan literally. **Jay Wiggins** adds:

In popular Shiism, the Shai... is regarded as a pathetic figure, appealing to God for things humans are acquiring (mosques, prophets) that he wants for himself, i.e. someone inextricably linked to the trivial trappings of material goods and ignorant of the deeper, more spiritual side of existence.

Tamyrin

Tamerlane, a.k.a. Timur (1336-1405), a Mongol conqueror who ravaged most of Southwest Asia. Though given to atrocities like mass slaughter, his positive achievements were the encouragement of art, literature, and science – and “the construction of vast public works.” Choedan Kal-sized, maybe... [**Pam Korda**]

Tel’aran’rhiod

Kyle Matthews notes that the word *telaraña* means “spiderweb” in Spanish, bringing to mind Moghedien (a.k.a. the Spider) and her proficiency in the Dreamworld.

Time of Illusions

One of the core concepts of Hindu belief is the idea of *maya*, or Illusion. *Maya* is the belief that everything you see in this world is illusion, a product of your own failed interpretations and self-delusions. The soul, or *atma*, must break through the karmic cycle of actions and reactions and recognize its existence as a spirit separate from the trappings of the world and the flesh before *maya* or illusion falls away.

Concurrent with this belief is the concept of *samsara*, which represents the fragmentary, constantly changing aspect of the illusory material world. **Marcel Parent** proposes that RJ borrows from this philosophy to create a “Time of Illusions” in TWOT:

...the idea that there is a continual, endless waning and waxing of *samsara* (the cycle of birth and death) so that you get a period of great creation, production, creativity, happiness and civilization [the Second Age] followed by a period of decay, destruction, corruption, and immorality [the Third Age or Age of Illusions]... When the Time of Illusions comes to an end, a new Age will arise.

John Novak observes:

“Age of Illusions” or “World of Illusions” is a very Gnostic catchphrase, about as much so as “Trinity” is Christian. In the Gnostic tradition, everyone leads their lives in an illusion, or in a dream, or as drugged, or some similar metaphor, until they are Enlightened from without. Then they wake up, see the world for the prison that it really is, and hopefully the next time they die, they escape the world rather than being dragged deeper into it.

Truthspeaker

The Jesuit faith was historically led by an elected general, who was flanked by an “admonisher” whose duty was to constantly and truthfully criticise the leader. Similar “devil’s advocate” roles were taken by harlequins, jesters, fools and bards, depending on the society, who often veiled their criticisms behind songs and/or humorous stories but could be all the more biting for that. [**Jean Dufresne**, **Steven Hillage**]

Wolfbrother

A moosh of various myths from Europe, Native Americans, and Australian Aborigines. [America OnLine chat, October 1994]

3.11 On similarities between *The Wheel of Time* and other SF (including *Dune*)

[Michael Nielsen, Pam Korda]

People frequently point out similarities between Jordan and other authors. A common example is to point out parallels between Frank Herbert’s *Dune* series and *The Wheel of Time* – similarities between Rand and Paul Atreides, for example.



First, note that in a series as large and complex as *The Wheel of Time* (or *Dune*), parallels with such an enormous variety of literature can be found that pointing out parallels (particularly if they are common to many sources) can be fairly pointless. In the interest of avoiding endless “RJ ripped off author X”/“Author X ripped off RJ” arguments, we present the following:

1. Many of the similarities between Jordan and other authors can be explained on the basis of the use of common source materials. Certain motifs, themes, etc. have a very long and rich history in literature. For example, messiah figures (such as Rand) and powerful mystical/priesthood castes (such as the Aes Sedai) have appeared in an enormous number of literary and historical guises over periods of thousands of years.
2. Jordan is not copying or “ripping off” other authors, as has sometimes been stated on the group. Using common source materials does not imply copying: he transforms and embellishes old ideas from a diverse range of sources (which he has freely acknowledged), and sometimes innovates. The way all these different elements relate is unique to Jordan, since no other author uses the same range of elements.

The only direct influence we know Jordan has acknowledged is Tolkien:

The only deliberate connection between WOT and any other modern fantasy was giving the first 100-odd pages of TEOTW a *Lord of the Rings*-esque flavor, to start people off in familiar territory.

[from Dublin talk, November 1993, report by **Emmet O'Brien**]

For example, Rand losing a hand doesn't mean that RJ got the idea from Tolkien (Frodo and Beren both lose parts of their hand), or George Lucas, or S.R. Donaldson, any more than Lucas or Donaldson copied from Tolkien. Rather, all four authors most likely got the idea from the Norse god Tew.

3. While there are similarities, there are also great differences. Paul Atreides and Rand may both be messiah figures, but they are remarkably different in a multitude of ways, many of them crucial to the story.

Dune similarities

Many parallels between *Dune* and *The Wheel of Time* have been noted. Some of the more important similarities include:

- *Rand/Paul Atreides*: Messiah figure from the outside leading great rising of desert warriors (Aiel/Fremen) in fulfillment of prophecy. Has powers usually only available to women. There are also similarities in the way we see both characters develop: a young, rather naive and powerless adolescent changes into an extraordinary leader with great powers. Note that this is a fairly common archetype in SF and other literature.
- *Aes Sedai/Bene Gesserit*: Powerful, secretive and manipulative female caste with extraordinary powers, sometimes known as witches. Both go through intensive training and painful rites of passage. Somewhat similar internal power structures and mindsets. Similar remarks may also be made about the Aiel Wise Ones, the Kin, and several other groups in RandLand.
- *Foretelling the future/dreaming*: Appears in various guises in both books.
- *Aiel/Fremen*: Kick-ass desert warriors who ally themselves with the messiah figure. The strong similarity makes perfect sense once one knows that Herbert's real-world sources for the Fremen were the Israelites and Zulu (or maybe Native Americans? I lost the relevant article), and RJ's sources for the Aiel are the Zulu and Native Americans.
- Some common words are used: “Shaitin” and “Mahdi” are two examples. “Shaitin” derives from an Arabic word which in turn is derived from a Hebrew (and Arabic) word, meaning “satan.” My dictionary tells me that a “Mahdi” is “any of a number of Muslim messiahs expected to convert all of mankind to Islam,” and that the word is of Arabic origins. Obviously this is a usage that can easily be adapted to both TWOT and *Dune*.

Tolkien references

- The Nine Rings Inn [TGH: 21, The Nine Rings, 258].
- Elayne's thought about the Snaky folk:

Elayne's first thought was for the children's tale *Bili Under the Hill*, but only because of the three answers.

[TSR: 6, Doorways, 95]

This may be a reference to Bilbo Baggins in *The Hobbit*, playing the riddle game underground with Gollum.

- The name Andor is noted in *The Silmarillion* as the “original” name for Númenor, and means “Land of Gift.”
- Karldin, the Asha'man traveling with Loial, uses “Mr. Underhill” as a pseudonym.

Yeah, 'cause, like, the Asha'man is so *short* compared to Loial. Hah. Hah. Hah. [**John Novak**]

3.12 Is Randland a future Earth?

[Erica Sadun, Pam Korda]

The characters in the books are the source of many of our myths and legends and we are the source of many of theirs. You can look two ways along a wheel. [**RJ**, America Online chat, 28 June 1996]



Time is a wheel. If you look in one direction, you are looking at the past. If you just turn around and look in the other direction, you are looking at the future. The books are set in our future and in our past, depending on which way you look... [RJ, America Online conference, 20 October 1994]

Here are some possible references to our world:

[TEOTW: 4, The Gleeman, 43]:

- John Glenn:

“Tell us about Lenn,” Egwene called. “How he flew to the moon in the belly of an eagle made of fire. Tell about his daughter Salya walking among the stars.”

(Eagle has landed.../Lenn may be a merger of LEM (lunar module) and Glenn.)

- Salya: Sally Ride? Or Salyut, the space station. [Douglas Cole]
- Moscow, ICBMs: Mosk the Giant, with his Lance of Fire that could reach around the world.
- America: Merk, the other giant.
- Queen Elizabeth: Alsbet, Queen of All. (Remains of British Empire/Commonwealth?)
- Mother Theresa: Materese the Healer, Mother of the Wondrous Ind.
- Anne Landers: Anla, the Wise Counselor?

•

[TEOTW: 24, Flight Down the Arinelle, 300]: Bayle Domon mentions:

“A mountain hollowed into a bowl, and in its center, a silver spike a hundred spans high, and any who comes within a mile of it, dies.”

This could possibly be a big radio telescope, or maybe the Age of Legends equivalent.

•

[TGH: 47, The Grave Is No Bar to My Call, 559]:

Michael instead of Mikel. Patrick instead of Paedrig. Oscar instead of Otarin.

St. Michael and St. Patrick? I don't know of a St. Oscar.

Peter McDermott offers:

The Archbishop Oscar Romero, assassinated in 1980, is a candidate for beatification and canonization. It's a stretch but perhaps there's a connection.

•

[TGH: 49, What Was Meant To Be, 574]: Loial is reading *To Sail Beyond the Sunset* – a reference to Tennyson's poem *Ulysses*.

•

[TSR: 11, What Lies Hidden, 146-7]: In Tanchico Museum at the Panarch's Palace:

- Stylized three-pointed triangle (reeking of greed and pride) – Mercedes Benz logo.
- Skeletons of giraffe and elephant.

•

[TSR: 24, Rhuidean, 277]: Ghoetam under the Tree of Life – Gautama Buddha.

3.13 The Aiel, Native Americans, and the Zulu

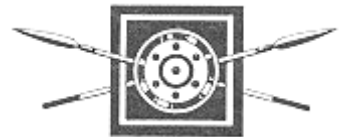
[contributed by msteakley@utsi.com, whose real name I never got]

“Little tiger who hunts the northern pass” writes:

In reviewing the theories on the Aiel and who they represent, I have not found any references to any other cultures other than the thirteen tribes of Israel. At first glance I would also have agreed with this theory if I had not been initiated into Native American culture, and in particular the philosophies and history of the plains Indian tribes.

In reviewing their histories I have come across many similar tales in various tribes where the people were either forced to move to a new home or, for some unknown reason, chose to make the move of their own accord. The most notable would be the forced move of the Cherokee. This tribe could very easily pass for the peaceful Aiel who were forced to move to the hot dry lands of the Aiel waste, a very fitting analogy for Oklahoma. However, due to the fact that they never became a serious threat in later years I have to discount them unless the Aiel are considered a blend of various tribes.

The two most notable tribes which I have encountered to date would be the Cheyenne and the Kiowa. Both tribes have tales which tell of their people moving from their ancestral home in search of a new home. There is a line in the Cheyenne tale



which specifically says ‘where every hand was raised against us.’ This line I also believe was used by the Aiel in describing their migration. The Cheyenne were also made up of thirteen clans according to the original histories I have encountered about them. Having been an integral part of the Algonquin society of the northeastern tribes they were also a peaceful people until after their move to the northern plains. Their encroachment into other tribes’ territories and the resulting wars is the most probable reason they became an extremely efficient warrior society. The Kiowa also have a tale of their movement from somewhere in the northwest area of the United States where they had to fight all the way to their current home, which I believe is in the Oklahoma territory, ending up with fewer than 300 people in the tribe. They also became an efficient warrior society due to their move and the expansion of the European colonists in later years.

The rituals of the Aiel are also distinctly Native American. The sweat baths taken by the Wise Ones and other Aiel are a definitive ritual of Plains Indian culture. (It may also be a part of other native American cultures but I have only been involved with the plains Indians and the Crow tribe to be specific.) The sweat lodge was described rather well by RJ, so I will not go into detail, but I know of no Israelite tales of sweat ceremonies or baths. The other ritual most notably used is the vision quest. This entails the seeker of the vision going out into the wilderness, stripping down to the bare flesh, and fasting for three to four days until a vision (hallucination from lack of food) is seen. In some tribes a ‘sponsor’ goes along as well to let the rest of the tribe know what is happening. This, of course, sounds just like Rand and Mat’s trip into Rhuidean where they journey into the unknown without food or water, Rand has his ‘vision’ of his ancestors (another typical Indian philosophy), and they return three days later. I am not surprised if no one else had caught this, having been on a vision quest I did not catch this until I read it a second time and I was still unsure of it being one.

The thing that surprised me the most is the fact that no one has, to my knowledge, mentioned the fact that the Aiel warrior societies all sound distinctly Native American. I can understand about the clan names, two of which sound Japanese to me, but with names like Thunder Walkers, Brothers of the Eagle, Mountain Dancers, and Stone Dogs, I was surprised the connection had not been brought up before (to my knowledge). Being a Crazy Dog of the Crow Indian Nation I was pleased to note the connection between Stone Dogs and my own warrior society. Of course, Crazy Dogs drive a stake into the ground and tie their left leg to it in order to show they have no fear while protecting the tribe. I have yet to see an Aiel do that.

There were also tribe in the Northeast where each clan had a central meeting house. They also had a female as the leader of the clan. In order to gain entrance to the house permission was granted by her, like the Aiel House Mistress. (**Leo Tokarski** adds:

Also, in some Native American cultures, only women were allowed to own land.)

One last note: the more observant will have realized that the plains Indians were masters of the horse. But, if you could run as fast as one too, why bother? (**Michelle Levine** counters:

There is no problem with the lack of horses... there were no horses in North America prior to colonization.)

Eddie Bell mentions that the Sioux had a form of first-sister/brother acceptance – basically, if you decided that someone was honorable, you could adopt them into the family as a brother or sister. The Sioux’s method of counting coup also bears remarkable similarities to *ji’e’toh*.

Tony Z. adds:

The thing with spear/shield, and then the Aiel battle tactics that Lan describes to Rand, for instance, are pretty much lifted from the Zulus.

3.14 Real nations’ influence on Randland

[Richard Boyé, Sam McGee, Pam Korda, Trent Goulding, Linda Antonson]

Obviously, the various countries and nations of Randland draw some of their characteristics from real-world nations and cultures (both current and historical). Here’s a list of Randland countries and real-world countries which may have influenced them. The ones labeled [**RJ**] are ones which have been stated/confirmed by RJ. The rest are just reasonable speculations.

Aes Sedai

Aes Sedai organization is based on the way convents were organized between 1000 and 1800 AD. [**RJ**]

Also, the Aes Sedai seem to have an “ecclesiastical” hierarchy, with the Hall of the Tower and the Amyrlin Seat being similar in nature to the College of Cardinals and the Pope. The current split in the Tower and election of two Amyrlins is similar to the Great Schism of the Roman Catholic Church (1378-1415), when two Popes claimed authority over the Church. [**Robert Dahm**]

Aiel

Cheyenne, Apache, Zulu, Bedouin, Japanese, Berbers. [**RJ**] See section 3.13.

Altara

Italy; a loose confederacy of semi-autonomous regions beneath a weak monarch. The capital city contains elements of a much, much older city (cf. Rome) complete with large public hippodromes (race tracks), the diet is heavily into seafoods and cheeses,



the culture is outdoorsy and seems evocative of Mediterranean life. The people are dark-haired, dark-eyed and have “olive” complexions, which also suggests Southern Europeans. The makeup of the capital city Ebou Dar, with its strong guilds, use of both canals and streets, and frequent and uninhibited public celebrations, is reminiscent of Venice.

Amadicia

The fashions (gathers of ringlets, deep shady bonnets, bows on the women, high crowned hats and long coats for the men) seem vaguely suggestive of the Commonwealth period of England, when the Puritans held sway. This also meshes with the notion that Amadicia is a quasi-theocracy, as they are essentially ruled by a military order of “monks” who seem to encourage a, well, puritanical and pious lifestyle among the populace. They also like to throw accusations of witchery everywhere, not at all unlike the Puritans who moved to North America.

Andor

England, or perhaps Great Britain in a looser sense. The honorable queendom evokes Elizabethan England specifically with its “Cult of the Queen.” A few of the names of the noble houses seem to be lifted from Welsh mythology, specifically in the *Mabinogion* (e.g. House Arawn). The names of the current royal family are deeply steeped in Arthuriana (e.g. Morgase [Morgause], Elayne [Elaine], Gawyn [Gawain]).

Arad Doman

Arabic cultures as well as Iran specifically (strictly speaking, Iranians are not Arabs); firstly, the word “arab” is almost present in the name “Arad Doman.” Some of the characters’ last names seem Arabic in theme (e.g. Sharif, Eriff, Zeffar), as well as some of their first names (e.g. Alsalam, Rashad). The capital city is Bandar Eban, a great port. In Iran, one of their larger maritime cities is Bandar Ebbas. Further, in Arad Doman one can find the Terhana Library, one of the three greatest in the world. Tehran, capital of modern-day Iran, was a famed center of Islamic learning. However, the lacquered sticks, *sursa*, used as eating implements are chopsticks by any other name, and common throughout Asia.

Arafel

Arafel seems to be similar to Saldaea in that it seems to evoke certain peoples of the Black Sea and Asia Minor region. The horse culture of these peoples is alluded to by the fact that Arafellin are said “to love their horses like children.” Also, the capital city of Arafel is Shol Arbela. Arbela was a regional capital of the Persians, a place of military historical significance (Alexander defeated the Persian Emperor, Darius III, there). Also, the name might be an allusion to Amrafel, who was the king of “Shinar,” which was a biblical name for the lands ruled by Babylon. See Saldaea.

Cairhien

France, with a dash of Japan. The noblewomen’s fashions seem to be somewhat reminiscent of the clothing from the eighteenth century; high curled coiffures, full wide skirts and ruffs of lace. The Court of Louis XIV was called the Court of the Sun King. Cairhienin symbology is all about the sun, i.e. Sun Palace, Sun Throne. Furthermore, the prevalence of *Daes Dae’mar* calls to mind the lethal intrigues at the Court of Versailles (Affair of the Poisons, anyone?). The officers and noblemen wear *con* on their backs, small pennants attached to a short staff, which were also seen in feudal Japan. Japan is the “Land of the Rising Sun,” Cairhien is the “Hill of the Golden Dawn,” and its symbol is a rising sun.

Illian

Illian has something of a “Greek-Mediterranean” feel to it. Some of the names certainly follow a Hellenic pattern (e.g. Stepaneos). The King of Illian wears the “Laurel Crown,” an allusion to the crowns of laurels awarded at the ancient Olympic Games. “Illian” itself is a take-off on “Ilium,” a name for Troy during the Classical Age. Lastly, the Illianer Companions seems to be a reference to the Macedonian *hetairoi* (meaning ‘companions’ in Greek), which were a prestigious order of mounted warriors that served the ruling house. Any decent scholar of military history such as RJ would know about the *hetairoi*. The bees on the flag seem to evoke the bees that were common in the heraldry of Napoleonic France.

Land of Madmen

Australia?

Malkier

Tibet, Nepal. A country of spectacular natural beauty nestled high in the mountains. The *ki’san* (dots) painted in the center of the brows of the women could either be an allusion to the Hindu practice, or to some representations of the Buddha; an overall thematic feel reminiscent of the countries near the Himalayas. **John Stopford** adds:

Malkier and Tibet have both disappeared under an evil empire that swallowed them up without reason, leaving behind one last leader as a touchstone for the kingdom itself.

Mayene

Cities of the Hanseatic League; Venice; Genoa. [RJ]

Also, many of the Mayener names seem to carry a French flavor (e.g. Bertain Gallenne), and “Mayene” itself seems to be a take-off on “Mayenne,” an extinct French estate.

Saldaea

...a number of Middle Eastern cultures and several cultures in countries surrounding the Black Sea. [RJ]

This is most directly recognizable in the “horse-culture” of Saldaea, which is evocative of many nomadic peoples of the Asian steppes. The name itself is similar to “Chaldaea,” a section of the Assyrian and Babylonian empires. Place names are suggestive. Davram Bashere is “Lord of Bashere, Tyr and Sidona.” Bashir was a place in Central Asia, and Tyre and Sidon were cities in modern-day Lebanon, Tyre being the place of origin of “Tyrean purple.” More flavorings come in their first names, such as “Tenobia,” which is similar to “Zenobia,” a historical queen of the ancient kingdom of Palmyra, which was in the region. Physically, Saldaeans can be seen to resemble the Mongols, excepting the red-haired, green-eyed rarities like Sheriam.

Sea Folk

A combination of allusions. The people were initially described much as sub-Saharan Africans (tight, curly hair, dark skin tones), but later versions have them with long, straight black hair, which coupled with the dark complexions, silk garments and the medallions on chains attached to noserings seems to evoke India more than anything else. The intricately knotted sashes used to connote rank and station resemble Japanese *obi* (kimono sashes).

Seanchan

Imperial China, Imperial Japan, Persian Empire, Ottoman and Byzantine Empire. [RJ]

The lacquer-work of the Seanchan seems to be inspired by the Far East; the Emperor/Empress that is too magnificent for commoners to gaze upon is a concept borrowed from Japan. The phrase “Ever Victorious Army” was actually in use in Japan during one point of its history. Persian Empire: the Crystal Throne that inspires awe is a direct allusion to a Persian epic story. Ancient Egypt: pleated linen clothing, the tonsured heads, the patterns on Suroth’s gown (symbols within cartouche-like ovals) which could be visualized as resembling hieroglyphics. WH provides even more cultural flavorings, including Greek names (Tuon’s middle name is “Kore” [an ancient name for the Greek goddess Persephone] and Selucia [Selucid kingdom]), and Egyptian names (Neferi [Nefertiti]).

Shara

Africa in a macro-sense. The name “Shara” seems similar to “Sahara,” and another name for Shara, “Kigali,” is an actual place in Africa (capital of Rwanda). Furthermore, the two Sharans we have met were described as “African” in appearance, with tight, curly hair and dark skins. The silk production, “Silk Path” (Silk Road), and closed port cities are allusions, however, to Imperial China.

Shienar

Japan; the restrained, formal aesthetic, the communal genderless bathing rooms, the *haiku*-type poetry recited by Lan, the topknots of the warriors. Also, a dollop of medieval feudal Europe, notably the castle towns and the mounted warriors in full plate armor (knights by any other name), and the idealized courtesy and respect toward women (chivalry). Continuing a theme in the names for the Borderland nations, the name “Shienar” seems to be an allusion to “Shinar,” a biblical name for Babylon.

Tarabon

Arabic cultures. The word “arab” is contained in the name “Tarabon,” the veils seem to be reminiscent of certain Arabic societies, although in Tarabon they are unisex. The flattened cylindrical hats worn by the men are essentially the same type of hat as a ‘fez,’ popular in North African Arabic countries. The architecture has a Middle Eastern flavor: minarets and peaked domes, pointed arches.

Tear

Spain (nobility); the names of some of the High Lords have a distinct Iberian flavor (e.g. Estanda, Carlomin, Rosana) as do the names of some of their houses (e.g. House Saniago [Santiago]), their fashions seem to be reminiscent of Renaissance Spain (full skirted gowns with wide lace ruffs, puffy sleeved coats, oiled beards and moustaches). The armor and military équipage of the Tairen Defenders of the Stone are described as sounding very similar to the military équipage of the Spanish Conquistadores, notably the crested, rimmed helmets. The lower classes, on the other hand, seem to be very Asian in feel; some of the names (e.g. Juilin, Siuan, Huan), and some of their clothing: flattened conical straw hats, ties instead of buttons, wooden platforms for the feet as well as the usage of bamboo. But also some of the lower class members’ names seem very Spanish as well (e.g. Sanche [Sanchez], Mecandes [Mecandez]).

Two Rivers

As part of Andor, the Duopotamians are fittingly modeled after the auld English country folk, presenting the fabled (and not all that accurate) picture of the joys of simple rural society. The use of longbows is a clear reference to the famous English bowmen that whupped French ass in the 14th century (and each others’ ass in the next, but anyway).

RJ has said in interviews, “I live in the Two Rivers – check a map!” Charleston, South Carolina (RJ’s hometown) nestles in the fork of the Cooper and Ashley rivers. [Michael Brown]

Whitecloaks

Teutonic Knights. [RJ]

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In March 2000, **Paul Ward** received a letter from RJ in which he listed what some of the regional accents of Randland sound like:

- Two Rivers – Irish/English
- Illianers – Dutch
- Aiel – somewhat Slavic
- Tairen – Spanish
- Domani – Indian
- Saldaean – Egyptian/North African
- Seanchan – Texas

“Y’all bow down to the Empress, y’hear?” [Johan Gustafsson]



4 A READER'S GUIDE TO PROPHECY

Everything you wanted to know about the future, but were afraid to ask.

This section lists all the prophecies and visions we have seen in TWOT. After each prophecy, there is some discussion of what it means/may mean.

4.1 Egwene's dreams

From *The Great Hunt*

[TGH: 12, Woven in the Pattern, 180]

...she saw Rand sleeping on the ground, wrapped in a cloak. A woman had been standing over him, looking down. Her face was in shadow, but her eyes seemed to shine like the moon, and Egwene had known she was evil. Then there was a flash of light, and they were gone. Both of them. And behind it all, almost like another thing altogether, was the feel of danger, as if a trap was just beginning to snap shut on an unsuspecting lamb, a trap with many jaws.

Fulfilled. This is where Lanfear takes Rand and co. into the Portal Stone world in an attempt to bring Rand under her control.



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From *The Dragon Reborn* (UPDATED)

[TDR: 25, Questions, 233-4]

She had dreamed of Seanchan, too, of women in dresses with lightning bolts woven on their breasts, collaring a long line of women who wore Great Serpent rings, forcing them to call lightning against the White Tower.¹ That had started her awake in a cold sweat, but that had to be just a nightmare, too. And the dream about Whitecloaks binding her father's hands.²

1. This seems to indicate that the Seanchan will capture a number of AS and/or Accepted and use them to attack the Tower. Though the Seanchan have caught a few AS thus far, the dream seems to imply something on a larger scale, perhaps in the prophesied upcoming battle with the Seanchan and the White Tower (see below).
2. Fulfilled. Master al'Vere was powerless to act against the Whitecloaks in the Two Rivers until Perrin came along.

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[TDR: 25, Questions, 234]

There had been a dream of Rand, reaching for a sword that seemed to be made of crystal, never seeing the fine net dropping over him.¹ And one of him kneeling in a chamber where a parched wind blew dust across the floor, and creatures like the one on the Dragon banner, but much smaller, floated on the wind, and settled into his skin.² There had been a dream of him walking down into a great hole in a black mountain, a hole filled with a reddish glare as from vast fires below,³ and even a dream of him confronting Seanchan.⁴

1. Fulfilled. The sword is *Callandor*, and the net is the trap Be'lal set.
2. Fulfilled. This is Rand being marked the *Car'a'carn* in Rhuidean.
3. Not fulfilled. By the description, the mountain is Shayol Ghul.
4. Possibly fulfilled. He confronted some Seanchan in TFOH after he and Avi MPS'd, and waged a campaign against them in TPOD. He is on his way to negotiate a peace treaty with them now, but there is good indication that that's going to go horribly wrong (see section 1.4.12).

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[TDR: 25, Questions, 234]

Perrin with a falcon on his shoulder, and Perrin with a hawk. Only the hawk held a leash in her talons – Egwene was somehow convinced both the hawk and falcon were female – and the hawk was trying to fasten it around Perrin's neck.¹ ... And that dream of Perrin – with a beard! – leading a huge pack of wolves that stretched as far as the eye could see.² ... Mat, placing his own left eye on a balance scale.³ Mat, hanging by his neck from a tree limb.⁴ There had been a dream of Mat and Seanchan, too, but she was willing to dismiss that as a nightmare.⁵ ... Just like the one about Mat speaking the Old Tongue.⁶

1. The hawk and the falcon are Berelain and Faile, respectively. It's interesting that the hawk is the one with the leash; one would think that Faile is the one who has "leashed" Perrin. Berelain's tacit declaration of war on Perrin in WH may be the beginning of her attempt to "leash" him, but she seems to change her mind in COT (or maybe it's a case of more flies with honey...)
2. At least partially fulfilled. Perrin has a beard, and he led wolves at Dumai's Wells, but that was probably not the last time.
3. Not fulfilled. The most likely interpretation is that Mat will sacrifice his eye. This meshes with some of Min's visions, and the "half the light of the world" prophecy.

4. Fulfilled. This happened at Rhuidean.
5. Probably not fulfilled. None of Mat's interaction with the Seanchan thus far has been particularly nightmarish, though his courtship of Tuon has been pretty surreal. The nightmare quality of the dream may have to do with Anath, a.k.a. Semirhage, who's likely to be pretty pissed about Mat abducting her "willful charge."
6. Fulfilled many times over. Mat talks Old Tongue all the time.



[TDR: 37, Fires in Cairhien, 352-3]

She had dreamed of Perrin with a wolf, and with a falcon, and a hawk – and the hawk and falcon fighting –¹ of Perrin running from someone deadly,² and Perrin stepping willingly over the edge of a towering cliff while saying, "It must be done. I must learn to fly before I reach the bottom."³ There had been one dream of an Aiel, and she thought that had to do with Perrin, too, but she was not sure.⁴ And a dream of Min, springing a steel trap but somehow walking through it without so much as seeing it.⁵ ... Mat with dice spinning 'round him...⁶ of Mat being followed by a man who was not there... or maybe more than one, but in some way there was no one there...⁷ Mat riding desperately toward something unseen in the distance that he had to reach,⁸ and Mat with a woman who seemed to be tossing fireworks about. An Illuminator, she assumed, but that made no more sense than anything else.⁹

Men and women breaking out of a cage, then putting on crowns.¹⁰ A woman playing with puppets, and another dream where the strings on puppets led to the hands of larger puppets, and their strings led to still greater puppets, on and on until the last strings vanished into unimaginable heights.¹¹ ... Whitecloaks ravaging the Two Rivers.¹²

1. This is the Faile and Berelain thing again. Perrin and the wolf could be the general "wolfbrother" thing, or maybe Egwene actually caught a glimpse of Perrin running with Hopper in T'A'R.
2. This is very vague; it could be referring to Slayer.
3. This is very vague, and could refer to any number of issues Perrin is facing, from him mastering his wolfbrotherhood, to being a leader, or taking part in the Last Battle. It could be related to the dream Egwene had about him and Aram hacking their way towards an unseen cliff.
4. Probably refers to Perrin's freeing of Gaul from the cage in TDR.
5. Fulfilled. This refers to the Tower coup: her return to the Tower started Elaida getting suspicious of what SS was up to, which led to the coup. Min never realized what was coming, yet she got out of the Tower unscathed.
6. Refers to Mat's general luck and *ta'veren*-hood.
7. Fulfilled. Mat was stalked by Gray Men in Tar Valon.
8. Fulfilled. Refers to Mat racing to save Elayne, Egwene, and Nynaeve in Tear.
9. Maybe fulfilled. In TDR, Mat meets the rogue Illuminator Aludra, whence he gets the fireworks with which he busts into the Stone of Tear. He meets up with her again in Ebou Dar in WH.
10. Fulfilled. The Forsaken have broken out of SG and have taken up places of power in the world.
11. This is probably just symbolic of the various degrees of manipulation and plotting going on.
12. Fulfilled and dealt with.



[TDR: 48, Following the Craft, 468-9]

Nightmares of a Whitecloak putting Master Luhhan in the middle of a huge, toothed trap for bait.¹ Why should Perrin have a falcon on his shoulder, and what was important about him choosing between that axe he wore now and a blacksmith's hammer?² What did it mean that Mat was dicing with the Dark One, and why did he keep shouting "I am coming!" and why did she think in the dream that he was shouting at her?³ And Rand. He had been sneaking through utter darkness toward *Callandor*, while all around him six men and five women walked, some hunting him and some ignoring him, some trying to guide him toward the shining crystal sword and some trying to stop him from reaching it, appearing not to know where he was, or only to see him in flashes. One of the men had eyes of flame, and he wanted Rand dead with a desperation she could nearly taste.⁴ ... Rand in that dry, dusty chamber again, with those small creatures settling into his skin.⁵ Rand confronting a horde of Seanchan.⁶ Rand confronting her, and the women with her, and one of *them* was a Seanchan.⁷

1. Fulfilled. The WCs used the Luhhans and Cauthons as bait to catch Perrin.
2. The falcon is Faile. As for the hammer and axe, Perrin's axe vs. hammer choice seems to be a choice between war and peace, the life of a leader and that of a simple blacksmith. As of COT, he seems to have chosen the hammer, but I doubt getting rid of the axe is going to be that easy.

3. Fulfilled. This refers to Mat's "bet" with Gaebriel/Rahvin that he'd save Elayne, Egwene, and Nynaeve from the assassin.
4. Fulfilled. The men and women are the Forsaken who weren't dead at the time. Fire-eyes is Ishy, and it is interesting that he wants Rand dead in this dream. Maybe this is a combination between the state of the game as it is when Egwene has the dream (Rand looking for *Callandor*) and a prophecy of later in TDR, when Ishamael for once actually decides that Rand needs to be killed?
5. Again, Rhuidean.
6. Has occurred, in TFOH and TPOD, but there may be more to come.
7. Hasn't occurred yet. This is likely connected to Egwene's dream in COT about the Seanchan woman with a sword (see below).

From *The Shadow Rising*

[TSR: 11, What Lies Hidden, 145]

Rand as tall as a mountain, walking through cities, crushing buildings beneath his feet, with screaming people like ants fleeing from him.¹ Rand in chains, and it was he who was screaming.² Rand building a wall with him on one side and her on the other, her and Elayne and others she could not make out. "It has to be done," he was saying as he piled up stones. "I'll not let you stop me now."³ ...Aiel fighting each other, killing each other, even throwing away their weapons and running as if they had gone mad.⁴ Mat wrestling with a Seanchan woman who tied an invisible leash to him.⁵ A wolf – she was sure it was Perrin, though – fighting a man whose face kept changing.⁶ Galad wrapping himself in white as though putting on his own shroud,⁷ and Gawyn with eyes full of pain and hatred.⁸ Her mother weeping.⁹

1. This has not been literally fulfilled (Rand hasn't done much city-crushing), but if the dream is symbolic, it is in progress, and refers to the strife Rand leaves in his wake.
2. Possibly fulfilled; this could refer to his capture and torture by the Tower AS.
3. This is in the process of being fulfilled. Rand is deliberately isolating himself from his friends and allies, and becoming increasingly paranoid about not trusting anybody, though he regained some common sense in WH.
4. Fulfilled. This is the aftermath of Rand's revelation of the Aiel's history.
5. Mostly fulfilled. Mat literally wrestled with Tuon during his escape attempt from Ebou Dar. The invisible leash probably refers to their impending marriage.
6. Fulfilled; refers to Perrin fighting Slayer.
7. At least partially fulfilled. The white clearly refers to Galad's joining the WCs. If the shroud bit is prophecy, and not just metaphor, it seems as if Galad will die as a result of his joining up.
8. Certainly fulfilled in one respect or another. Possibly refers to the Tower coup, or thinking Rand killed Morgase, or just his generally psychotic state.
9. This could be anything, really. The Two Rivers residents have had lots of reasons to weep of late, and doubtless will have more in the future.

From *The Fires of Heaven* (REVISED)

[TFOH: 15, What Can Be Learned in Dreams, 214]

Rand sitting down in a chair, and somehow she knew that the chair's owner would be murderously angry at having her chair taken;¹ ... Perrin, lounging with Faile on his lap, kissing her while she played with the short-cut beard that he wore in the dream. Behind them two banners waved, a red wolf's head and a crimson eagle. A man in a bright yellow coat stood near to Perrin's shoulder, a sword strapped to his back; in some way she knew that he was a Tinker, though no Tinker would ever touch a sword. And every bit of it except the beard seemed important. The banners, Faile kissing Perrin, even the Tinker. Every time he moved closer to Perrin it was if a chill of doom shot through everything.² ... Mat throwing dice with blood streaming down his face, the wide brim of his hat pulled down low so she could not see his wound,³ while Thom Merrill put his hand into a fire to draw out the small blue stone that now dangled on Moiraine's forehead.⁴ Or a dream of a storm, great dark clouds rolling without wind or rain while forked lightning bolts, every one identical, rent the earth.⁵

1. This one's been the subject of some debate. Many people think this has already been fulfilled. After Rand takes Caemlyn at the end of TFOH, he briefly sits down on the Lion Throne, noting that it is uncomfortably small [TFOH: 56, Glowing Embers, 680]. The rightful "owner" of the Lion Throne at that time was Morgase (she didn't abdicate to Elayne until LOC), and she was angered enough by Rand's takeover to do some seriously stupid things (like seek aid from the Whitecloaks). Some, however, do not think this has been fulfilled yet. Another possibility is that it refers to the Crystal Throne of the Seanchan; the owner could either be Tuon or her mother, the current Empress. A less likely idea is that it refers to the Amyrlin Seat.

2. Partially fulfilled. Perrin is set up with Faile, has Aram as a bodyguard, has the wolf banner, and the Manetheren banner, but we haven't seen any doom related to Aram, though his unhealthy fascination with Masema may lead to something bad for Perrin.
3. Not fulfilled. The blood could be another reference to Mat losing an eye.
4. Not fulfilled. This is evidence that Thom will rescue Moiraine from durance vile in Finnland.
5. This is kind of vague. It sounds like a general OP battle, perhaps the Battle of Cairhien, or Rand's psychotic episode with *Callandor* on the Seanchan campaign in TPOD. It is also similar to Fain's description of Shayol Ghul.

From *Lord of Chaos* (UPDATED)

[LOC: 15, A Pile of Sand, 258]

Twice, right atop one another, she dreamed of taking [Gawyn] by the shoulders and trying to turn him to face the other way against his will. Once he brushed her hands away roughly; the other time she was somehow stronger than he. The two blended together hazily.¹ In another [Gawyn] began swinging a door closed on her, and she knew if that narrowing gap of light vanished, she was dead.²

1. Not fulfilled. Will Egwene convince Gawyn to join her on the side of the rebels, or will he cling to his loyalty to Elaida? Related to Min's viewing of Gawyn kneeling to Egwene or breaking her neck.
2. Not fulfilled. Again, this must be related to Min's viewing of Gawyn kneeling to Egwene or killing her – Gawyn has the power to destroy Egwene, if he chooses not to join her. Or rescue her, possibly, given events in COT.

[LOC: 15, A Pile of Sand, 258]

Perrin came and stood before her, a wolf lying at his feet, a hawk and a falcon perched on his shoulders glaring at each other over his head. Seemingly unaware of them, he kept trying to throw away that axe of his until finally he ran, the axe floating through the air chasing him.¹ Again Perrin; he turned away from a Tinker and ran, faster and faster though she called for him to come back.²

1. Well, the wolf is obvious, and the birds are Berelain and Faile. He literally threw the axe away from him after torturing the Aielman for information on Faile [COT: 27, What Must Be Done, 599]. He leaves it behind, but it's doubtful Perrin is done with the axe just yet, judging from the "chasing after" part.

We have yet to decide for sure what the axe symbolizes in general. Maybe it's the lordly life Faile has planned for him, and the fighting inherent therein. On a broader scale, the hammer symbolizes creation, the axe destruction. Perrin doesn't like it, but it is currently his duty to destroy and then rebuild. The axe following him could mean that, since he is *ta'veren*, he can't run away from his duty.

2. The Tinker could be Aram, in light of the "doom" vision from TFOH, possibly related to Aram's fascination with the Prophet. Perrin and Aram's relationship doesn't seem to have degenerated so far, so likely this hasn't been fulfilled. It's been suggested that Aram represents the exact opposite of what Perrin wants. Perrin wants to give up fighting for a peaceful life. Aram gave up the Way of the Leaf to become a soldier.

[LOC: 15, A Pile of Sand, 258]

Mat spoke words she almost understood – the Old Tongue, she thought – and two ravens alighted on his shoulders, claws sinking through his coat into the flesh beneath.¹ He seemed no more aware of them that Perrin had been of the hawk and the falcon, yet the defiance passed across his face, and then grim acceptance.² In another a woman, face shrouded in shadow, beckoned him toward great danger; Egwene did not know what, only that it was monstrous.³

1. In light of other visions, this probably has to do with the Daughter of the Nine Moons and the Seanchan. Raven tattoos on the shoulders mean "property of the Seanchan Empress." It's also been suggested that these ravens could represent Mat's raven-engraved *ashanderei*. It's worth noting Tuon's interest in Mat's spear, and the carvings on it, in WH, and her comments about making him a "cupbearer" – *da'covale*, in other words – in COT.
2. Probably fulfilled, if it refers to his situation with Tuon. Mat's spent most of the books fiercely resisting the idea that he had to marry the DotNM, but when actually confronted with her, he no longer denied the inevitability of it (quite the opposite, in fact). Or alternately, maybe the ravens refer to his spear, which he got on his trip to A/Eelfinnland, where he also became a battle-master, which he first fought, and has now accepted?
3. Not fulfilled, maybe. The woman could be Semirhage as Anath, though she doesn't seem to be beckoning him toward anything. Tuon is another possibility; **Jeff Dougan** suggests that the "shrouded in shadow" line could refer to the veil that keeps Tuon's true identity from being spoken.

[LOC: 15, A Pile of Sand, 258]

Several concerned Rand, not all bad, but all odd. Elayne, forcing him to his knees with one hand.¹ Elayne and Min and Aviendha, sitting in a silent circle around him, each in turn reaching out to lay a hand on him.² Him walking toward a burning mountain, something crunching beneath his boots. She stirred and whimpered; the crunching things were the seals on the Dark One's prison, shattering with his every step.³

1. Not fulfilled, and seemingly contradicted by events in WH – Elayne bonded him as a Warder, but did not force him to do it, nor did she demand anything from him re: the throne of Andor. Maybe the forcing part comes later?
2. Fulfilled. This is the triple Warder-bonding ceremony in WH.
3. Not fulfilled. The mountain must be Shayol Ghul. The breaking of the Seals – does it have something to do with LTT wanting to break them, and Fel's note? It seems likely that Rand will deliberately break the seals at some point.

From *A Crown of Swords* (UPDATED)

[ACOS: 10, Unseen Eyes, 195]

...that she [Egwene] would bond him [Gawyn], she knew from interpreting her dreams...

Not fulfilled.

[ACOS: 10, Unseen Eyes, 201]

On bare feet, Gawyn walked [toward her] across a floor of broken glass, shards breaking at every slow step. ...she could see the trail of blood left by his slashed feet.

Partially fulfilled? This seems to indicate that before Gawyn can join Egwene, he must go through a great deal of pain and difficulty.

[ACOS: 10, Unseen Eyes, 202]

...a man riding on a black stallion. Gawyn. Then she was standing in the road in front of him, and he reined in. Not because he saw her... but the road that had been straight now forked right where she stood, running over tall hills so no one could see what lay beyond. She knew, though. Down one fork was his violent death, down the other, a long life and a death in bed. On one path, he would marry her, on the other, not. She knew what lay ahead, but not which way led to which. Suddenly he did see her, or seemed to, and smiled, and turned his horse along one of the forks...

This is pretty self-explanatory – Gawyn's possible futures. Pick one of each: quick, violent death or long life, marriage or not. Which combination is the necessary one for Egwene to live and win him over to her side, and which results in him destroying her (see previous dreams and Min visions)? Not fulfilled.

[ACOS: 10, Unseen Eyes, 202]

She stood before an immense wall, clawing at it, trying to tear it down with her bare hands. It was not made of brick or stone, but countless thousands of discs, each half white and half black, the ancient symbol of the Aes Sedai, like the seven seals that had once held the Dark One's prison shut. ...the wall stood strong however she beat at it. She could not tear it down. Maybe it was the symbol that was important. Maybe it was the AS she was trying to tear down, the White Tower. Maybe...

This could be related to Egwene's dream of Rand building a wall between himself and all his friends and loved ones. Note that the wall is made of the emblem of Rand's forces. A more interesting possibility is that it refers to the *cuendillar* chain she created in COT. While not technically a "wall," the chain certainly serves the same purpose, and like the seals is made of heartstone. It's possible, after all, that Egwene's actions will destroy the White Tower rather than reunite it.

[ACOS: 10, Unseen Eyes, 202]

Mat sat on a night-shrouded hilltop, watching a grand Illuminator's display of fireworks, and suddenly his hand shot up, seized one of those bursting lights in the sky. Arrows of fire flashed from his clenched fist, and a sense of dread filled her. Men would die because of this. The world would change.

Not fulfilled. This indicates that Mat will find a way to use gunpowder as a weapon. Recall his use of fireworks to blow a hole in the Stone of Tear in TDR, and his reunion with the Illuminator Aludra in WH, who currently appears to be working out how to make cannon (see section 2.1.8).

[ACOS: 10, Unseen Eyes, 202]

Straps at waist and shoulder held her tightly to the block, and the headsman's axe descended, but she knew that somewhere someone was running, and if they ran fast enough, the axe would stop.

On its way to being fulfilled, looks like. Egwene is betrayed and captured at the end of COT, by either Elaida's people or the Black Ajah (see section 2.6.8). Clearly, she won't be able to get herself out of this one without help. This could possibly be the thing where Gawyn will either save her or destroy her. Other possibilities are Nicola (who probably Foretold Egwene's capture), the mysterious Seanchan swordswoman, or even Sheriam (cf. the golden halo vision Min had of her).

[ACOS: 10, Unseen Eyes, 202]

Logain, laughing, stepped across something on the ground and mounted a black stone; when she looked down, she thought it was Rand's body he had stepped over, laid out on a funeral bier with his hands crossed at his breast, but when she touched his face, it broke apart like a paper puppet.

Not fulfilled. This is possibly related to Min's vision of Logain's future glory. Another dead Rand (cf. Min's vision in TEOTW), but maybe a fake. It has been suggested that the stone is the Black Tower "speaking stone," the rock that Taim and Rand stand on when addressing the Asha'man. This vision may indicate that Rand will somehow fake his death, and Logain will take over his position of power, or get the credit for defeating the DO. Logain is now with Rand's party, which could put him in a good position to take charge if something happens to Rand in Ebou Dar.

[ACOS: 10, Unseen Eyes, 203]

A golden hawk stretched out its wing and touched her, and she and the hawk were tied together somehow; all she knew was that the hawk was female.

The golden hawk is the symbol of Mayene. The female hawk has symbolised Berelain in many other Egwene-dreams. This indicates that Berelain and Egwene will be connected in some way. Of course, if Egwene marries Gawyn and Berelain marries Galad, they'll be in-laws! [John Seehafer] Alternatively, the hawk could refer to a Seanchan noblewoman, possibly Tuon (the golden hawk is the symbol of the Seanchan Blood), or the swordswoman Egwene dreams about in COT. Either way, not fulfilled.

[ACOS: 10, Unseen Eyes, 203]

A man lay dying in a narrow bed, and it was important that he not die, yet outside a funeral pyre was being built, and voices raised songs of joy and sadness.

Absolutely no clue on this one.

[ACOS: 10, Unseen Eyes, 203]

A dark young man held an object in his hand that shone so brightly she could not see what it was.

Possibly fulfilled. Jahar Narishma – a dark young man – wielded *Callandor* during the Cleansing battle at the end of WH. The wording is vague enough that we can't say for sure, though.

From The Path of Daggers

[TPOD: 15, Stronger than Written Law, 308]

Rand, wearing different masks, until suddenly one of those false faces was no longer a mask, but him.¹ Perrin and a Tinker, frenziedly hacking their way through brambles with axe and sword, unaware of the cliff that lay just ahead. And the brambles screamed with human voices they did not hear.² Mat, weighing two Aes Sedai on a huge set of balance scales, and on his decision depended... She could not say what; something vast; the world, perhaps.³ ... Recently, all of her dreams about Mat were pale and full of pain, like shadows cast by nightmares, almost as though Mat himself were not quite real.⁴

1. Could refer to LTT and the "third" man introduced in TPOD and WH, especially if the third man is another Dragon. Perhaps more will show up? Alternatively, it could refer to how Rand acts in wildly different ways, plays different roles, with different people. This could be Rand trying to be the ever-hardening Dragon Reborn/dictator on one hand and the man who can maintain calm in the middle of combat, off three Forsaken with political skill, and then return home in time to be a loving husband. Maybe one of his roles will become the "real" him.
2. The Tinker is Aram. The frenzied hacking could refer to Perrin's current rush to rescue Faile. The various signs of impending doom could imply that they'll be so focused on saving her that they'll be oblivious to other factors or situations which will cause them and/or somebody else big trouble and/or pain. Possibly, Perrin will, perhaps at the urging of Aram, make a huge sacrifice of life, maybe his group of soldiers, and that it will turn out to be a bad decision, or Masema's forces will do something similar and Perrin will do nothing to stop it, maybe due to interference from Aram on Masema's behalf. Alternately could refer to Perrin cutting off the Aielman's hand, being willing to torture someone for information. Probably related to the vision of Aram and doom, and to the one of Perrin jumping off a cliff and saying he has to learn to fly before hitting bottom.

3. This may refer to Mat's dilemma in WH about rescuing Teslyn and Edesina from the Seanchan. What the "something vast" could be is unclear, but it could be related to the *sul'dam* he uses in the rescue, and Egeanin's thoughts about how their little secret could destroy the Seanchan empire. Another possibility is that it refers to the results of his rescue, which was the devastating OP battle in Ebou Dar. The imagery of the dream is similar to the one about Mat's eye on a balance scale, which suggests a connection between the two.
4. Refers to the severe injuries Mat took from the wall collapsing on him in ACOS, and his long convalescence.

From *Crossroads of Twilight* (NEW)

[COT: 20, In the Night, 492-3]

Mat stood on a village green, playing at bowls. ...he was sharp and clear, dressed in a fine green coat and that wide-brimmed black hat... Rubbing the ball between his hands, he took a short run and casually rolled it across the smooth grass. All nine pins fell, scattered as if they had been kicked. Mat turned and picked up another ball, and the pins were back upright. No, there was a fresh set of pins. The old still lay where they had fallen. He hurled the ball again, a lazy underhanded bowl. And Egwene wanted to scream. The pins were not turned pieces of wood. They were men... and there were more new pins, new men, standing in orderly formation among the men lying sprawled on the ground as if dead. No, they were dead. Unconcerned, Mat bowled.

... Every one of those human pins had represented thousands of men. Of that she *was* certain. And an Illuminator was part of it. ... Still, it was only a possible future.

Different symbolism, same meaning as before – Mat and Aludra, cannon, etc. The interesting thing is Mat's apparent unconcern, and that this is another "maybe" prophecy.

[COT: 20, In the Night, 493-4]

She was struggling up a narrow, rocky path along the face of a towering cliff. Clouds surrounded her, hiding the ground below and the crest above, yet she knew that both were very far away. ...

Abruptly, the ledge dropped away from under her with the crack of crumbling stone, and she caught frantically at the cliff, fingers scrabbling to find a hold. ...

Suddenly a woman appeared, clambering down the sheer side of the cliff out of the clouds, making her way as deftly as if she were walking down stairs. There was a sword strapped to her back. Her face wavered, never settling clearly, but the sword seemed as solid as the stone. The woman reached Egwene's level and held out one hand. "We can reach the top together," she said in a familiar drawling accent.

As Egwene herself notes, obviously related to her dream about a Seanchan being among the women "with her" in TDR, and also possibly related to her dream about the female golden hawk in ACOS. So far, the only significant Seanchan female character we've seen who is normally armed is Egeanin. However, Tuon does mention in passing in her POV in WH that she is trained in "suitable weapons," which for all we know may include swordsmanship. Perhaps she would carry a sword if she were going about unveiled as the DotNM instead of merely the "High Lady Tuon." [Rich Boyé] John Hamby adds that Arthur Hawkwing had a sword named Justice [Guide: 12, The Reign of the High King, 109]; it's reasonable to suppose that the sword is part of the Seanchan Imperial regalia.

It's interesting that the dream seems to suggest that it is the *sword* that's important, rather than the woman, but it's not clear what that signifies. Possibly, the swordswoman is symbolic of the Seanchan empire/army as a whole (which is led by a woman) coming to Egwene's rescue, rather than being a specific character. It is likely that the Seanchan are going to be involved in Tar Valon happenings real soon now.

[COT: 20, In the Night, 495]

[Egwene climbs up on top of a spire.] A small white plinth stood centered in that circle, supporting an oil-lamp made of clear glass. The flame on that lamp burned bright and steady, without flickering. It was white too.

Suddenly a pair of birds flashed out of the mist, two ravens black as night. Streaking across the spire-top, they struck the lamp and flew on without so much as a pause. The lamp spun and wobbled, dancing around atop the plinth, flinging off droplets of oil. Some of those drops caught fire in midair and vanished. Others fell around the short column, each supporting a tiny, flickering white flame. And the lamp continued to wobble on the edge of falling.

No need to guess on this one – Egwene knows exactly what it means: the Seanchan will attack the White Tower, an attack that will "shake the Aes Sedai to their core and threaten the Tower itself." To further reinforce this, just before she is captured Egwene sees what she first thinks is a Dragkar but then dismisses as a bat flying across the moon [COT: 30, What the Oath Rod Can Do, 677]. Sounds like a Seanchan scout flying a *to'roken* to me.

4.2 Min's viewings



From *The Eye of the World* (REVISED)

[TEOTW: 15, Strangers and Friends, 181]

[*Lan*: seven ruined towers; a babe in a cradle holding a sword]

These refer to his Malkieri heritage (Lord of the Seven Towers), and being sworn as a babe by his parents to the fight against the Shadow.

[*Thom*: a man – not him – juggling fire; the White Tower]

Either of these could refer to his channelling nephew Owyn, who seems to have been caught up in the “vileness” after the Aiel war. The Tower could also represent future involvement with Aes Sedai.

[*Mat*: a red eagle, an eye on a balance scale, a dagger with a ruby, a horn, a laughing face]

The eagle is related to his past life/lives as a Manetheren general. The eye is another reference to him having to sacrifice his eye at some point, in order to achieve total Odin-hood, and to produce some greater good. Compare to the “half the light of the world” prophecy, and Egwene’s dream of the exact same image. The dagger is the Shadar Logoth dagger which Mat was involved with for so long. The horn is the Horn of Valere, which Mat blew in TGH. As for the laughing face, it doesn’t seem to refer to anything specific Mat’s done so far, although he is a bit of a trickster, or to any other prophecies.

[*Rand*: a sword that isn’t a sword, a golden crown of laurel leaves, a beggar’s staff, him pouring water on sand, three woman standing over a funeral bier with him on it, a bloody hand and a white hot iron, and black rocks wet with blood]

The Sword That Ain’t is *Callandor*. The crown is the Crown of Illian, achieved in ACOS. The beggar’s staff vision is probably related to Perrin’s vision of Rand dressed as a beggar. Pouring water on sand probably refers to Rand making it rain at Rhuidean. The three women over his funeral bier are probably his three chicks – Min, Aviendha, and Elayne. No idea about the bloody hand and hot iron, although there is a similar vision for Elayne in TGH. (A suggestion that has nothing to do with Elayne relates Rand’s self-inflicted hand wound when Liah is lost in Shadar Logoth in LOC (the bloody hand) to the balefire he used on her at the end of COS (the “white-hot iron” is Min’s description of balefire, since she doesn’t know what it actually is).) The bloody black rocks are probably the rocks of Shayol Ghul; this seems to tie in with “his blood on the rocks of Shayol Ghul” from *The Karaethon Cycle*.

[*Perrin*: wolf, broken crown, trees flowering all around him]

The wolf refers to his wolfbrotherhood. The “broken crown” has to do with his marriage to Faile. The Saldaean crown is called the Broken Crown [COT: Prologue, Glimmers of the Pattern, 67], and Faile is second in line for the throne after her father. The meaning of the flowering trees is unclear; it has been suggested that they refer to Loial singing to the trees over Perrin’s family’s grave, or that Perrin will find the Song.

[TEOTW: 16, The Wisdom, 195]

[The number of sparks increased when Nynaeve joined the party.]

Obviously, Nynaeve is an important part of the group who will fight the Shadow.

From *The Great Hunt* (REVISED)

[TGH: 24, New Friends and Old Enemies, 305]

[*Elayne*:] “She [Min] said I’d have to share my husband with two other women, and I’d never put up with that.”

[Also, the Rose Crown of Andor, and a severed hand (not hers).]

The crown is the Crown of Andor, which Elayne claimed in TPOD. For the severed hand, see the following Elayne viewing.

[*Egwene*: a white flame]

Refers to Egwene becoming Amyrlin Seat.

[TGH: 43, A Plan, 511]

[*Nynaeve*: man’s ring of heavy gold]

This is Lan’s ring. The vision could symbolize Nynaeve’s love connection with our favorite Warder, or it could refer to some particular instance, yet to come, in which she’ll need the ring for some specific purpose.

[*Elayne*: a red-hot iron and an axe]

The severed hand from above, the red-hot iron, and the axe may be related to the bloody hand and white-hot iron Min saw around Rand (see section 2.6.2).

From *The Dragon Reborn*

[TDR: 6, The Hunt Begins, 62-3]

[*Perrin*: an Aiel in a cage, a Tinker with a sword, a female falcon and a female hawk on his shoulders, a darkness swirling around him]

The caged Aiel is Gaul, who Perrin freed. The Tinker is Aram. The hawk and the falcon are Berelain and Faile, respectively. The swirling darkness is vague. Possibly, it just means that the Shadow was chasing him, or maybe more specific – there are Darkfriends near to him? Maybe this is the same darkness Min sees around Rand and Perrin, with the fireflies/sparks?

•

From *The Shadow Rising*

[TSR: 1, Seeds of Shadow, 16-23]

[*Random Aes Sedai in White Tower*: a silver collar, similar to, or actually, a *damane*'s. Also lots of death and suffering, bones, etc.]

The bones, death, etc. probably refer to the Tower's current strife (the coup, etc.). The collar vision agrees with others which show that at least some AS will be captured by the Seanchan.

•

[TSR: 1, Seeds of Shadow, 21]

[*Gawyn*: his face a bloody mask; a heron marked sword, his or threatening; his banner with a field of green rather than white]

The blood is exactly how he looked after the coup. The meaning of the heron sword is uncertain. I guess Gawyn could be a blademaker. "Threatening" could refer to fighting Hammar and Coulin in the Tower coup. The banner is that of the Younglings, whom Gawyn commands.

•

[TSR: 17, Deceptions, 198]

[*Logain*: a halo of gold and blue, signifying glory to come]

This may have to do with being him being un-gentled, but there is probably more to this than that. Suggestions include the "Rand fakes death and Logain takes credit" theory (see Egwene's dream), the "Logain uses *Callandor*" theory (now partially discredited by events in TPOD and WH), and the "Logain takes care of Taim" theory.

•

[TSR: 47, The Truth of a Viewing, 544]

[*Gawyn*: either breaking Egwene's neck or kneeling to her]

The either/or vision about Egwene is similar to several of Egwene's dreams which imply that Gawyn will either get over his psychosis and go along with Egwene, or that he'll end up destroying her, maybe killing her.

•

From *The Fires of Heaven* (REVISED)

[TFOH: 26, Sallie Daera, 317]

[*Sheriam*:] Rays of silver and blue flashed about her fiery hair, and a soft golden light; Min could not say what it meant.

Could this have something to do with her being Keeper? Could it be related to Logain's gold and blue aura?

•

[TFOH: 26, Sallie Daera, 317]

[*Carlinya*:] ...an image of a raven floating beside her dark hair; more a drawing of the bird than the bird itself. She thought it was a tattoo...

Carlinya is one of Sheriam's faction with the rebels. The raven tattoo indicates that a person is "property" of the Seanchan empress.

•

[TFOH: 26, Sallie Daera, 320]

[*Edesina*:] ...a silvery collar suddenly appeared, snug around the woman's neck, and as suddenly seemed to shatter. Min shivered. She did not like viewings connected to the Seanchan. At least Edesina would escape somehow.

Fulfilled. Edesina was captured and collared by the Seanchan, and ended up in Ebou Dar. Mat freed her (and Teslyn) in WH.

•

[TFOH: 28, Trapped, 343]

[*Siu'an Sanche/Gareth Bryne*:] "When Bryne came in, I had a viewing. An aura, and a bull ripping roses from around its neck... All I know is this. If he stays close to you [Siu'an], you live. If he gets too far away, for too long, you are going to die. Both of you."

The bull ripping off the roses indicates Gareth Bryne severing his ties to Andor and Morgase (the crest of House Bryne is a bull with a wreath of roses, which symbolize the Rose Crown, around its neck). We have not yet seen a situation where Siuan's or Bryne's life depends on having the other one around.

[TFOH: 50, To Teach, and Learn, 592]

[*Faolain*:] "A nasty woman," Min murmured, squinting after Faolain... "You'd think, if there was any justice, she would have an unpleasant future ahead of her."

By implication, Faolain has a good future. This perhaps will come of her swearing fealty to Egwene. It also indicates that her disappearance in COT doesn't mean she's dead.

[TFOH: 50, To Teach, and Learn, 598-9]

[*Marigan, Nicola, and Areina*:] "Those three you brought with are trouble, and that is a viewing. ... I only caught glimpses of aura, and just out of the corner of my eye. Never when I was looking right at them, where I might have made something out."

Marigan was Moggy, which certainly was trouble. Nicola and Areina have been causing plenty of problems themselves – they tried to blackmail Egwene, and succeeded in blackmailing Myrelle. Their escape from the rebels in COT may be tied in with Egwene's betrayal (see section 2.6.8).

[TFOH: 50, To Teach, and Learn, 598-9]

[*Rand, Elayne, Min, Aviendha*:] Elayne leaped off the cliff. "Min, you had a viewing about Rand and me, didn't you?" ...

"Yes." It was a wary word.

"You saw that we were going to fall in love."

"Not exactly. I saw you'd fall in love with him. I don't know what he feels for you, only that he's tied to you some way."

... "And you saw there would be someone else. Someone I'd have to... share... him with."

"Two," Min said hoarsely. "Two others. And... And I'm one."

... "Who is the third?" she asked quietly.

"I don't know," Min mumbled. "Only that she has a temper. Not Nynaeve, thank the Light."

Fulfilled, more or less. Elayne, Min, and Aviendha (the third one, with a temper) are all in love with Rand, and he with them.

From *Lord of Chaos* (REVISED)

[LOC: 41, A Threat, 527]

[*Rand*:] Countless thousands of sparkling lights, like stars or fireflies, rushed into a great blackness, trying to fill it up, rushed in and were swallowed. There seemed to be more lights than she had ever seen before, but the darkness swallowed them at a greater rate, too. And there was something else, something new, an aura of yellow and brown and purple that made her stomach clench.

The sparks and darkness seem to be a continuous indication of the status of the fight against the Shadow. They're first mentioned when we meet Min in TEOTW. The nasty bruise-colored aura could indicate Rand's (physical and psychological) injury during his captivity by the Tower AS, or it could indicate that he was growing more and more susceptible to the Taint.

[LOC: 41, A Threat, 532]

[*Rand*:] "I saw an aura around you [Rand] in the throne room. Aes Sedai are going to hurt you. Women who can channel, anyway. It was all confused; I'm not sure about the Aes Sedai part. But it might happen more than once."

Injury at the hands of channelling women has happened once – Rand's captivity by the Tower AS. It is possible that he'll be hurt by channelling women again, although not necessarily more AS – after all, they've had their turn. The most likely groups seem to be Sevanne's Wise Ones, the Black Ajah, and the Seanchan. Other possibilities are the Sea Folk, the Sharans, the Salidar AS, and some Forsaken.

[LOC: 41, A Threat, 534]

[*Melaine*: will bear twin daughters]

Melaine is currently pregnant.

[LOC: 46, Beyond the Gate, 578-9]

[Rand and Perrin:] "When you two were together, I saw those fireflies and the darkness stronger than ever. ... But with two of you in the same room, the fireflies were holding their own instead of being eaten faster than they can swarm, the way they do when you're alone. ... Twice he's going to have to be there, or you [Rand]... If he's not, something bad will happen to you... Very bad."

[Rand:] "Then I'll just have to keep him around."

[Min:] "I don't know that that will be enough... It *will* happen if he is not there, but nothing I saw said it won't because he is. It will be very bad, Rand."

The sparks indicate the odds in the fight vs. the Shadow. Clearly, Rand doesn't stand a chance without Perrin. The first time Rand needed Perrin was probably the capture by the Tower AS. The second hasn't happened, so Perrin better hurry up in Altara.

[LOC: 49, The Mirror of Mists, 616] (*possible viewing*)

[Rand:] "Trust me, Min. I won't hurt you. I will cut off my arm before I hurt you." She was silent, and he finally looked round to find her peering at him with a strange expression.

"That's very nice to hear, sheepherder." Her voice was as odd as her face.

This may or may not be a real viewing. However, it seems like she saw something related to what he'd just said. Maybe he'll cut off his arm (or lose a hand!), or hurt her somehow.

[LOC: 50, Thorns, 626]

[*Miscellaneous nobles:*] Maringil... was going to die by poison. Colavaere... would die by hanging. Meilan... would die by the knife. ... Aracome and Maraconn and Gueyam were all going to die too, bloody deaths, in battle.

Colavaere killed Maringil and Meilan, or had them killed, and then hung herself when her plan to seize the Sun Throne was foiled. Aracome died battling the Seanchan in TPOD. Maraconn and Gueyam haven't been mentioned since that battle, so presumably they're still alive for now (thanks to **David Forbes** for the correction).

[LOC: 50, Thorns, 628]

[Berelain:] "...a man in white who will make her fall head over heels."

Who is it? The only groups of people who regularly wear white are WCs and *gai'shain*. It seems most likely that this mysterious man is Galad – there's a certain symmetry to the Most Beautiful Woman and the Most Beautiful Man getting together. Not to mention, Berelain is in Ghealdan at the end of TPOD and in WH, and thus in prime geographic condition to meet some handsome Whitecloaks.

From A Crown of Swords

[ACOS: 2, The Butcher's Yard, 88]

[*Whole bunch o' folks:*] "Taim has blood in his past and blood in his future, but you could guess that. He's a dangerous man. They [the Asha'man] seem to be gathering images like Aes Sedai. ... The problem is, what I can see is all blurry. ... Kiruna and that lot have all sorts of things around them, but they stay so close together that it all... jumbles together. ... It's even muddier with the [Tower AS] prisoners. ... I keep feeling there is something important, if I could only pick it out. You need to know."

This is pretty vague. There is something important that Rand must know about Taim, or the Asha'man, or the Aes Sedai sworn to Rand, or the Tower AS prisoners.

[ACOS: 33, A Bath, 526]

[Rand:] "I saw you and another man. I couldn't make out either face, but I knew one was you. You touched, and seemed to merge into one another, and... one of you dies, and one doesn't."

Rand takes this to mean that LTT is a real presence in his mind. That seems too easy, and Min seems doubtful about that interpretation. It could also have something to do with the "other one" LTT begins talking about in WH (see section 2.1.7).

[ACOS: 34, *Ta'veren*, 534]

[*Merana, Alanna, Bera, Faeldrin, Rafela:*] "They will keep their word... I just saw these five in your hand."

Those five will keep their oath of fealty to Rand. Note that Verin and Kiruna are not part of this group.

[ACOS: 35, Into the Woods, 543]

[*Rand*:] ...he would almost certainly fail without a woman who was dead and gone...

The most likely person for this to be referring to is Moiraine, who everybody thinks is dead.

•

[ACOS: 35, Into the Woods, 546]

[*Moiraine*:] ...it was not as if she had really expected Moiraine to turn up alive. Moiraine was the only viewing of hers that had ever failed.

Obviously Min had some viewing of Moiraine which had not been fulfilled by the time Moiraine took a header through the Red Door. We know Min is never wrong, and thus, Moiraine will be back!

•

[ACOS: 35, Into the Woods, 549]

[*Darlin and Caraline*: Caraline Damodred and High Lord Darlin will get married.]

This has not occurred, but he is courting her.

[*Darlin*:] To her eyes a crown suddenly appeared on Darlin's head, a simple golden circlet with a slightly curved sword lying on its side above his brows. The king's crown he would wear one day, though of what country, she could not say. Tear had High Lords instead of a king.

Somebody suggested that this may be a stripped-down version of the Illianer Crown of Swords, but it is more likely a crown that we haven't seen before, or of a new country. In WH, Rand sends Darlin to become his steward in Tear; perhaps that will end up turning Tear from an oligarchy to a monarchy, with Darlin as the first king.

•

[ACOS: 41, A Crown of Swords, 642]

[*Cadsuane*:] "It's Cadsuane. She is going to teach you something, you and the Asha'man. All the Asha'man, I mean. It's something you have to learn, but I don't know what it is, except that none of you will like learning it from her. You aren't going to like it at all."

Judging from her conversations with Sorilea in TPOD and with Verin in WH, Cadsuane is going to teach Rand and the Asha'man "laughter and tears" – in other words, that they are human, and not killing machines. In the same vein, she speaks of showing Rand the difference between being hard and being strong, which is much the same thing.

•

From *The Path of Daggers*

[TPOD: 29, A Cup of Sleep, 560-562]

(The four Tower Aes Sedai prisoners who were compelled by Verin:)

[*Beldeine*:] ...she was going to bond an Asha'man as a Warder!

[*Sarene*:] ...a tempestuous love affair, of all things!

[*Nesune*:] One red-and-green aura spoke of honors, and fame. A huge building appeared above her head and vanished. A library she would found.

[*Elza*: no specific viewing]

[*Sorilea*:] She had never seen anything really useful around that white-haired harriidan.

[*All four, plus Sorilea*:] ...suddenly an aura flashed, blue and yellow tinged with green, encompassing them all. And Min knew its meaning... "They will serve you, each in her fashion, Rand..." *Sorilea* would serve him? Suddenly Min wondered exactly what "in her fashion" meant.

This is all either trivial, self-explanatory, or both.

•

From *Winter's Heart*

[WH: 12, A Lily in Winter, 294-295]

[*Elayne*:] "She'll get with child from this. Two of them; a boy and a girl; both healthy and strong."

[*Aviendha*:] Aviendha would have Rand's babies too. Four of them at once! Something was odd about that, though. The babies would be healthy, but still something odd.

That's some seed Rand's got there, apparently... It seems doubtful that Avi's actually going to have quadruplets, not if they're going to be healthy – Randland medical technology isn't up to that challenge. Various interpretations on the "something odd" with the four babies have been offered. Maybe all three of them are having twins, and Min screwed up interpreting the vision because she can't see things about herself. Or the vision means that *Rand* is having four babies, two from Elayne and two

from Avi, and Min's vision was distorted by the sister-bond. Or that Min is (or will be) pregnant with twins and Avi isn't, and the Warder-bond will mean that Avi will experience the birthing-pains of the other two, or something.

[WH: 12, A Lily in Winter, 296-297]

[*Birgitte*:] Auras danced around her and images flickered, more than Min had ever seen around anyone, thousands it seemed, cascading over one another... she was certain they indicated more adventures than a woman could have in one lifetime. Strangely, some were connected to an ugly man who was older than she, and others to an ugly man who was much younger, yet somehow Min knew they were the same man.

The second part of the vision obviously refers to Gaidal Cain (see section 2.2.5). As for the first part, Birgitte asserts more than once that she is no longer Birgitte Silverbow but just an ordinary gal. This vision seems to contradict that.

[WH: 25, Bonds, 483]

[*Alivia*:] "Rand, I like Alivia. ... But she is going to kill you."
"You said she was going to help me die... Those were your words."

Clearly related to the various prophecies and visions concerning Rand's death and the general ambiguity surrounding that event. Perhaps Alivia will be involved in helping Rand fake his death, rather than actually killing him.

From *Crossroads of Twilight* (NEW)

[COT: 24, A Strengthening Storm, 547]

[*Bashere*:] "And there's something... dark... in the images I saw around Lord Davram. If he turns against you, or dies..."

Pretty vague, but it's always been speculated that Perrin and Faile will end up ruling Saldaea at some point. Of course, for that to happen both Tenobia and Bashere have to die.

4.3 Miscellaneous prophecies

From *The Eye of the World*

The prophecy of the Horn of Valere [TEOTW: 26, Whitebridge, 327]

"In the last, lorn fight
'gainst the fall of long night,
the mountains stand guard,
and the dead shall be ward,
for the grave is no bar to my call."

Translation: the Heroes of the Horn will fight against the Shadow at the Last Battle.

Foretelling by Elaida [TEOTW: 40, The Web Tightens, 514]

"This I Foretell... and swear under the Light that I can say no clearer. From this day Andor marches toward pain and division. The Shadow has yet to darken to its blackest, and I cannot see if the Light will come after. Where the world has wept one tear, it will weep thousands. ... This, too, I Foretell. Pain and division come to the whole world, and this man [Rand] stands at the heart of it."

It's all pretty much occurred as she said.

[TEOTW: Glossary, 662-3]

Dragon Reborn: ...the prophecies say the Dragon Reborn will bring a new Breaking to the world...

Fulfillment in progress. He hasn't broken it much literally, but he is doing so in a figurative sense.

Far Dareis Mai: ...it is prophesied that a child born of a Maiden will unite the clans and return to the Aiel to [*sic*] the greatness they knew during the Age of Legends.

Rand was born of a Maiden, has united the clans (besides the Shaido), and the "greatness of the AOL" is coming to pass – the Aiel are very famous in the lands Rand holds.



From *The Dragon Reborn* (NEW)

Egwene's Accepted Test [TDR: 22, The Price of the Ring, 196-212]

Note: This is not straight prophecy. The Acceptatron™ [David Chapman] *ter'angreal* seems to be a blend of the rings of Rhuidean, or what the Portal Stone did to Rand and co. on their trip to Falme in TGH (shows myriad possible futures), and memories taken from the testee's own mind, their own fears and hopes and so forth. In other words, some elements are "real," others are totally made up, and some are a mix of the two. For instance, Nynaeve's test put her back in a Two Rivers where a horrible woman named Malena had become Wisdom and was poisoning people, which Perrin's storyline later shows never actually happened, but a completely random bit of information from another part of her test (that her AS advisor as Queen of Malkier was named Sharina) turns out to have a basis in fact – Nynaeve is floored to learn a "novice" named Sharina Melloy is with the rebel camp [WH: 10, A Plan Succeeds, 237-238].

The Sharina thing could be just a huge coincidence (though Nynaeve doesn't think so), but Egwene's test gets put here in the prophecy section because hers was additionally an anomaly. The dream ring *ter'angreal* was in the room when Egwene did her test, resonating with the Acceptatron, and as a result her made-up scenarios seemed to be a lot closer to prophecy than Nynaeve's were. Certainly it provided her with true information that she could not possibly have known or guessed independently – that a channeller can be forcibly turned to the Shadow, for example.

So, what happened during Egwene's Accepted test? She sees herself married to Rand with a daughter, in the ruins of the Caemlyn Palace with a half-mad Rand begging her to kill him, and as the Amyrlin Seat (more on that one in a second).

Well, the first one obviously never happened and never will; it was strictly a "might-have-been" kind of thing. The Caemlyn Palace scene might be a little closer to some possible future event, but it's not likely to play out exactly that way, since Rand has cleansed the taint from *saidin*. The third one, however, is worth examining in detail. (Note that each scenario in Egwene's test is more prophetic than the last, as the resonance with the dream ring *ter'angreal* gets worse, so logically the last one is the closest to reality, though still distorted.)

Here are the relevant bits from the third scenario, and which are true, which are false or distorted, and which might not have happened yet:

- Egwene as the Amyrlin Seat: true, and fulfilled.
- Egwene as AS/Amyrlin without having held the Oath Rod: true, and fulfilled. It should be noted that she also sees herself as ageless, which she cannot be unless she *has* sworn on the OR (see section 2.3.03). This is an example of Egwene's own expectations and preconceptions influencing the test.
- Beldeine as Egwene's Keeper: not currently true, but possibly true in the future (see **Gabriel Wright's** theory at the end of section 1.2.2).
- ...something called the Great Purge.
Almost certainly true, and refers to the upcoming Black Ajah purge brewing in the Tower.
- Rand in chains and being gentled in the Tower: maybe an averted possible future – Rand was *almost* taken back to the Tower as a prisoner in LOC – or possibly contains elements of something still to come; the second half of Min's vision (about women who can channel hurting Rand) has yet to be fulfilled.
- Being captured by Elaida: true, and probably fulfilled as of the end of COT (unless it's the BA who have Egwene).
- The 13 + 13 trick being used on Egwene: this one is uncertain; it may be prophecy, or Egwene may have unconsciously incorporated it into the scene after Sheriam explained it to her. Of course, Sheriam only explained it to her because the Rand from the previous Caemlyn scene had told Egwene about it, so... Possibly the fulfillment of Egwene's later dreams about having her head on a chopping block, or the one about Gawyn swinging a door shut on her.
- A Red/Black sister named Gyldan, "Elaida's closest confidante": has never appeared anywhere other than the test, so she is probably completely imaginary (though you never know; Beldeine showed up eventually).
- Elaida as Black Ajah: though Elaida certainly is Egwene's "bitterest enemy," this is false (see section 1.5.3).
- Elaida usurping the Amyrlin Seat: true and fulfilled.
- "Light," she muttered, "there's no other way short of starting a war inside the White Tower. And I may do that anyway."

Yep.

•

From *The Shadow Rising* (REVISED)

Elaida's first Foretelling [TSR: 1, Seeds of Shadow, 29]

The very first thing Elaida had ever Foretold, while still an Accepted – and had known enough even then to keep to herself – was that the Royal line of Andor would be the key to defeating the Dark One in the Last Battle. She had attached herself to Morgase as soon as it was clear Morgase would succeed to the throne...

Elaida interpreted this Foretelling as meaning that somebody from Morgase's line would be crucial to defeating the DO. However, since the timing of the Foretelling is not certain, it may refer to the previous Royal line of Andor, Mordrellen's line. Rand, of course, is Mordrellen's grandson, through Tigraine, and Rand is certainly key to defeating the DO. If Elaida's interpretation is correct, the Foretelling could refer to Elayne and/or Gawyn.

•

The Aelfinn's answers to Mat's third question (What is the fate which he must go to Rhuidean to meet?)

[TSR: 15, Into the Doorway, 177]

"To marry the Daughter of the Nine Moons!"

"To die and live again, and live once more a part of what was!"

"To give up half the light of the world to save the world!"

Well, he's half-married to the Daughter. He's died and lived again, and the memories he got from the Foxes count as "living once more a part of what was." In light of other prophecies, "give up half the light of the world" probably refers to sacrificing an eyeball.

•

Jendai Prophecy of the Coramoor [TSR: 19, The Wavedancer, 220-221]

"He can wield the One Power... and he holds the Sword That Cannot Be Touched. The Aiel have come over the Dragonwall to his call... The Stone of Tear has fallen, and war breaks over the nations of the land.

Those who once ruled have returned, and been driven back for the first time. ... 'The White Tower shall be broken by his name, and Aes Sedai shall kneel to wash his feet and dry them with their hair.'"

All of this has happened except for the icky foot-washing bit. Perhaps that's just a figurative way of saying "Aes Sedai will serve him"? Note that foot-washing occurs during the Amyrlin-raising ceremony.

•

Wise One Dream (Moiraine, Melaine, and Seana in conversation on Chaendaer) [TSR: 23, Beyond the Stone, 270]

"We did not see Egwene or Mat Cauthon at all. It was no more than an even chance that the young man who calls himself Rand al'Thor would come. If he did not, it was certain that he would die, and the Aiel too. Yet he has come, and if he survives Rhuidean, some of the Aiel at least will survive. This we know. If you [Moiraine] had not come, he would have died. If *Aan'allein* had not come, you would have died. If you did not go through the rings -"

Translation: If Rand hadn't gone to Rhuidean, and gained the Aiel Instant Army, he would have died, and the Aiel would have died out, too. Since Rand survived Rhuidean, some portion of the Aiel will survive. If Moiraine hadn't gone, then Rand would have been killed by Lanfear at the Cairhien docks. There was no on-screen moment where Lan saved Moiraine, but maybe it happened during one of the Shadowspawn attacks. What would have happened if Moiraine hadn't gone through the rings?

•

Prophecy of Rhuidean [TSR: 25, The Road to the Spear, 285-286]

"The stone that never falls will fall to announce his coming. Of the blood, but not raised by the blood, he will come from Rhuidean at dawn, and tie you together with bonds you cannot break. He will take you back and he will destroy you."

Rand is of Aiel blood, but not raised by the Aiel. He came from Rhuidean at dawn. I'm uncertain what the "bonds you cannot break" are, maybe the bonds of history. He "took them back," revealing their history, and he is in the process of destroying them. There has already been a split between the Aiel who follow Rand and those that don't, and the latter are fraying apart. There are also those who succumb to the "bleakness." Finally, there are all the Aiel who are getting killed in battle.

•

Mat's wishes to the Foxes [TSR: 24, Rhuidean, 281-282]

[Holes in memory filled; a way to be free of Aes Sedai and the Power; away and back to Rhuidean]

He got all three, although not exactly in the way he expected.

•

From The Fires of Heaven

Elaida in conversation [TFOH: Prologue, The First Sparks Fall, 20]

"Or do any of you believe he [Rand] will go willingly to his prophesied death to save the world?"

Prophecy at least appears to say that Rand will die.

•

From *Lord of Chaos* (UPDATED)

Nicola's Foretelling [LOC: 14, Dreams and Nightmares, 255]

"The lion sword, the dedicated spear, she who sees beyond. Three on the boat, and he who is dead yet lives. The great battle done, but the world not done with battle. The land divided by the return, and the guardians balance out the servants. The future teeters on the edge of a blade."

The sword, spear, and seeress are clearly Elayne, Aviendha, and Min. Are they the "three on the boat"? Probably, and the wording ties in with the King Arthur funereal imagery of one of Min's visions, and the WOs' boat dream. The "he who is dead yet lives" bit refers to Rand, echoing the answer he got from the Snakes ("to live, you must die"). The "great battle" line could refer to the Last Battle, perhaps saying that even after TG, the struggle between the Light and Shadow continues, or that there will be more fighting afterwards, or maybe there'll be a big battle *before* TG. The land divided by the return refers to the Seanchan invasion (Randland is rapidly becoming divided into Rand-controlled areas and Seanchan-controlled areas). The guardians and the servants are the Asha'man and the Aes Sedai. The last line is just metaphorical melodramatics – this war is crucial, duh.

•

Wise Ones Dreams [LOC: 19, Matters of Toh, 312]

"Melaine and Bair dreamed of you [Rand] on a boat with three women whose faces they could not see and a scale tilting first one way and then the other. Melaine and Amys dreamed of a man standing by your side with a dagger to your throat, but you did not see him. Bair and Amys dreamed of you cutting the wetlands in two with a sword. All three had this dream, which makes it especially significant. Rain, coming from a bowl. There are snares and pitfalls around the bowl. If the right hands pick it up, they will find a treasure perhaps as great as the bowl. If the wrong hands, the world is doomed. The key to finding the bowl is to find the one who is no longer."

The women in the boat echo the boat imagery from Nicola's foretelling, and are probably Elayne, Min, and Aviendha. The scale indicates that everything seems up in the air now. Rand might win, the Shadow might, who knows? The unseen man with a dagger clearly means that there is a big threat to Rand right under his nose, which he is not seeing. This could be Taim. Some people have suggested that it should be taken more literally, and that the unseen guy is a Gray Man. Furthermore, it could be Dashiva, who Rand trusted more than Taim and who turned out to be Osan'gar.

The cutting of the wetlands could indicate how Randland is polarizing into pro- and anti-Dragon factions, or it could refer to Rand's semi-successful campaign against the Seanchan in Ebou Dar. He halted their advance into his territory, but he failed to remove them from most of the territory they already controlled. This would tie in with Nicola's Foretelling of "the land divided by the return."

The rain from a bowl, of course, is the Bowl of the Winds. The "treasure" may be the stockpile of OP objects of which the Bowl was part; note that while the good guys got a lot of those things, Sammael's raiding party may have gotten away with a few things as well, such as the Oath Rod he gave to Sevanna. Obviously it would have been a bad thing if either Sammael or Moridin (who sent Moggy to find the stash) had gotten their hands on all of the booty.

Rich Boyé alternately suggests that the "treasure" referred to is actually the Kin; certainly a thousand channellers in "the wrong hands" (in this case, the Seanchan, most likely) would be very bad.

The key to finding the one who is no longer is to find the bowl. The single person most instrumental in finding the bowl was Setalle Anan – she led Elayne and Nynaeve to the Kin, who eventually led them and Mat to the bowl. So, the question is "no longer what?" Evidence suggests the answer is "no longer Aes Sedai" (see section 2.2.4).

•

Rand's three questions to the Aelfinn (the Snakes) [LOC: 26, Connecting Lines, 373]

He [Rand] knew he had a chance to live, if a seemingly impossible one. *If you would live, you must die...*

Rand thinks about the Aelfinn's answer again in [WH: 25, Bonds, 483]:

He had been told by those he had to believe. To live, you must die.

The only other specific information we have about Rand's encounter with the Finn is his comment to Mat that the Snakes never mentioned Rhuidean to him [TSR: 24, Rhuidean, 274]. So we're never told explicitly what the questions are, but over the course of the books since TSR they can be logically deduced:

Q: How do I cleanse *saidin*?

A: [Something about the Choedan Kal, perhaps, or Shadar Logoth, or both.]

Q: How do I survive [or is there a way for me to survive] Tarmon Gai'don?

A: "To live, you must die."

Q: Should I go home to the Two Rivers [to protect it from Fain]?

A: [Apparently, “No.”]

The second answer has a number of possible meanings. Maybe it means “if you would live future lives, you must die (physically) in this one” (cf. LTT’s wanting to die for good, never be spun out again [LOC: 18, A Taste of Solitude, 299]). Or, Rand will die, but will get resurrected. Or, one of Rand and LTT will die and one will not. Or, Rand will seemingly die, but won’t really.

•

From *A Crown of Swords*

Elaida’s Foretelling #2 [ACOS: Prologue, Lightnings, 26]

“The White Tower will be whole again, except for remnants cast out and scorned, whole and stronger than ever. Rand al’Thor will face the Amyrlin Seat and know her anger. The Black Tower will be rent in blood and fire, and sisters will walk its grounds.”

One of the AS factions will be triumphant, eventually. Either Elaida or Egwene is going to get pissed at Rand. (That’s not surprising, the way he’s treated the AS.) It’s probably Egwene, since Elaida has a definite air of doom about her. This “know her anger” could tie in with Egwene’s dream about confronting Rand. The Asha’men will either undergo a split (followers of Taim and followers of Logain/Rand?), or will be destroyed (depending on how one defines “rend”). There are currently sisters walking the grounds of the Black Tower – the members of Elaida’s task force who have been captured and bonded.

•

Jendai Prophecy, Part 2 [ACOS: 34, Ta’veeren, 538]

[Rand:] “That is what the Jendai Prophecy says. The Sea Folk will serve the Coramoor.”

[Harine:] “The Jendai prophecy says you will bring us to glory, and all the sea of the world will be ours. As we give to you, you must give to us.”

Self-explanatory.

•

From *Winter’s Heart* (NEW)

[WH: 14, What a Veil Hides, 327]

In the chapter where we first meet her, Tuon regrets having punished Lidya, one of her *damane*, for “reading her fortune,” and thinks to herself:

Only luck had kept anyone from overhearing Lidya’s cryptic words. Everyone knew that *damane* could foretell the future, and if any of the Blood had heard, they would all have been chattering behind their hands about her fate.

Whatever that fortune was, it seems to have upset Tuon a great deal. So what could Lidya have told her?

Judging from Tuon’s subsequent behavior for the rest of WH, it seemed most likely that Lidya’s fortune had something to do with Mat. Why else would she show such interest in him? Remember, the first time she meets him [WH: 17, Pink Ribbons, 367], he’s covered in mud and throwing a tantrum (or starting to, anyway) – certainly not the most stellar of first impressions – and he’s Tylin’s common-born boytoy, to boot.

What’s in that resumé to make Tuon, the heir to the Seanchan Empire, feel the need to follow Mat around and spy on him? And then declare, when she discovers he’s leaving, that she “cannot allow that” [WH: 31, What the Aelfinn Said, 584]? And then smile when Mat announces that he’s kidnapping her (after proclaiming her his wife, no less) [ibid., 588-590]?

Of course, she could be smiling because she’s considering all the not-so-nice things that will happen to him for kidnapping the Daughter of the Nine Moons. But she seemed to be actually enjoying herself while fighting him a few moments before. And then there’s the unusual amount of interest she shows in his ring and *ashanderei*. Perhaps Tuon’s fortune mentioned them in some way; note, it’s after Tuon examines his ring at their first meeting that she offers to buy him, and later she seems upset that he’s not wearing it [COT: 3, A Fan of Colors, 140].

We get a big clue about Lidya’s prophecy in that same scene, when Tuon asks Mat if he remembers Hawkwing’s face – which, of course, he does. Though I suppose this could be, as **Ryan Ward** suggests:

...just some crazy-ass Seanchan thing. Y’know, ‘Do you remember what Hawkwing’s face looked like?’ could be something like ‘Have you ever danced with the devil in the pale moonlight?’

– but it’s really doubtful it’s just a coincidence, even given that Mat is *ta’veeren*. So maybe part of Lidya’s prophecy said that Tuon would marry a man who remembers Hawkwing’s face.

There’s also some indirect evidence that part of Tuon’s fortune had to do with Tuon’s ability to channel. When Egeanin reveals to Mat (and Tuon, and everyone else in the room) that *sul’dam* can channel, Tuon’s reaction is remarkably stoic; her face is “a dark mask, unreadable” [COT: 29, Something Flickers, 644]. As **Brian Cuocci** comments:

The very idea should have been so shocking, or at least surprising, that even [one of] the Blood couldn't control her face perfectly. Assuming RJ did this on purpose, Tuon must have already known or suspected that she could channel. The obvious guess is that this is one of the predictions made by her fortune-telling *damane*... That'd surely be scandalous enough for Tuon to get mad and have her punished.

•

From *Crossroads of Twilight* (NEW)

Nicola's Foretelling #2 [COT: 17, Secrets, 431]

[Janya, to Egwene:] "Ever since we found out she has the Foretelling, she's been Foretelling two or three times a day, to hear her tell it. ...battles with the Seanchan or the Asha'man, an Amyrlin imprisoned, the Dragon Reborn doing nine impossible things, visions that might be Tarmon Gai'don or a bilious stomach..."

Well, we have numerous indications that a battle between the Tower and Seanchan is imminent; the battle with Asha'man is interesting, indicating that perhaps the proposed treaty with the Black Tower will blow up in everyone's faces. The "Amyrlin imprisoned" part occurred at the end of COT, when Egwene was betrayed and captured [COT: 30, What the Oath Rod Can Do, 677-678]. The part about the Dragon Reborn and Tarmon Gai'don is too vague to tell us anything useful.

4.4 The Dark Prophecy

[TGH: 7, Blood Calls Blood, 89]

This may not be actual prophecy. See Verin's commentary [TGH: 7, Blood Calls Blood, 90]. Some parts may be prophetic, and others may just be Shadow propaganda. It is a source of information, though, so here it is.



Daughter of the Night, she walks again.
The ancient war, she yet fights.
Her new lover she seeks, who shall serve her and die, yet serve still.
Who shall stand against her coming?
The Shining Walls shall kneel.
Blood feeds blood.
Blood calls blood.
Blood is, and blood was, and blood shall ever be.

The Daughter of the Night is Lanfear, and she was indeed free at the time this was written, and she was still fighting the ancient war (i.e. still working for the DO). If "her new lover" is supposed to be Rand, that line has definitely not been fulfilled. He might die, but it is very doubtful at this point that he will serve her. "Shining Walls" is a reference to Tar Valon, and thus the Aes Sedai. To whom are they supposed to kneel – Lanfear? Rand? Egwene? The Seanchan?

The man who channels stands alone.
He gives his friends for sacrifice.
Two roads before him, one to death beyond dying, one to life eternal.
Which will he choose? Which will he choose?
What hand shelters? What hand slays?
Blood feeds blood.
Blood calls blood.
Blood is, and blood was, and blood shall ever be.

Likely, "the man who channels" is Rand. The bit about giving his friends for sacrifice is interesting; Rand has been trying to isolate himself, and focusing on using people as tools. By doing so, he may be playing into the Shadow's hands. The two roads probably refer to joining with or fighting against the Shadow. Which one leads to eternal life, which to eternal death? The Chosen servants of the Shadow are granted immortality. The last four questions seem to indicate that all is in a state of confusion, which it is.

Luc came to the Mountains of Dhoom.
Isam waited in the high passes.
The hunt is now begun. The Shadow's hounds now course, and kill.
One did live, and one did die, but both are.
The Time of Change has come.
Blood feeds blood.
Blood calls blood.
Blood is, and blood was, and blood shall ever be.

This gives us a bit of history, and is our first clue as to the identity of Slayer. Luc (Tigraine's brother) was sent into the Blight by Gitara Moroso. Isam (Lan's cousin) vanished when his mother's party was run down by Trollocs when Malkier fell. (Isam's mama was one of the people who betrayed Malkier.) Apparently, Isam and Luc were melded together in some fashion, creating the person Perrin knows as Slayer. The stanza also suggests a connection between Slayer and the Wild Hunt (see section 1.6.4).

The Watchers wait on Toman Head.
The seed of the Hammer burns the ancient tree.
Death shall sow, and summer burn, before the Great Lord comes.
Death shall reap, and bodies fail, before the Great Lord comes.
Again the seed slays ancient wrong, before the Great Lord comes.
Now the Great Lord comes.
Now the Great Lord comes.
Blood feeds blood.
Blood calls blood.
Blood is, and blood was, and blood shall ever be.
Now the Great Lord comes.

This stanza deals with the Seanchan invasion. The "ancient tree" refers to Tarabon, whose symbol is a tree (supposedly a branch of the Tree of Life). The "seed of the Hammer" are the Seanchan, who claim to be Luthair Paendrag's descendants (Luthair was also known as the Hammer). Thus, the Seanchan have invaded Tarabon. The bit about "summer burn" most likely refers to the recent spate of DO-induced hot weather in Randland. The "bodies fail" bit doesn't seem to have come to pass yet; it's been suggested that there will be a plague of some sort. I have no idea what "ancient wrong" the Seanchan (the seed) are supposed to slay before the Great Lord comes. Perhaps it will be apparent when it happens.

[TEOTW: 32, Four Kings in Shadow, 434]

Another possible Dark Prophecy, courtesy of Howal Gode:

"It is written that when he [the Dark One] awakes, the new Dreadlords will be there to praise him."

4.5 *The Karaethon Cycle*

From *The Eye of the World*

Thom in conversation [TEOTW: 13, Choices, 158-159]

"One of the Prophecies says that the Stone of Tear will never fall until the People of the Dragon come to the Stone. Another says the Stone will never fall till the Sword that Cannot Be Touched is wielded by the Dragon's hand."

This has been fulfilled. The People of the Dragon are the Aiel, who attacked the Stone of Tear the night Rand broke in and took *Callandor*.



From *The Great Hunt*

[TGH: Header Prophecy]

And it shall come to pass that what men made shall be shattered, and the Shadow shall lie across the Pattern of the Age, and the DO shall once more lay his hand upon the world of man. Women shall weep and men quail as the nations of the earth are rent like rotting cloth. Neither shall anything stand nor abide...

Yet one shall be born to face the Shadow... and there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth at his rebirth. In sackcloth and ashes shall he clothe the people, and he shall break the world again by his coming, tearing apart all ties that bind. Like the unfettered dawn shall he blind us, and burn us, yet shall the Dragon Reborn confront the Shadow at the Last Battle, and his blood shall give us the Light. Let tears flow, O ye people of the world. Weep for your salvation.

This is pretty general stuff. Great upheavals will come to the world when the time for the Last Battle nears, yadda yadda. This is all obviously happening right now; Rand is "breaking the world" figuratively, by causing all sorts of social unrest. "His blood shall give us the Light (at the Last Battle)" is reminiscent of Min's viewing of "black rocks, wet with blood," and of the "Twice dawns the day" prophecy, below.

Vandene talking to Moiraine [TGH: 22, Watchers, 275]

"Five ride forth, and four return. Above the watchers shall he proclaim himself, bannered cross the sky in fire..."

This has been fulfilled; it refers to the events at Falme at the end of TGH. The five who rode forth were Ingтар, Hurin, Rand, Mat, and Perrin. Rand proclaimed himself the DR after the battle at Falme, where he and Ish fought in the sky.

•
Thom to Rand [TGH: 26, Discord, 325-6; TSR: 9, Decisions, 126]

“Twice and twice shall he be marked,
twice to live, and twice to die,
Once the heron to set his path.
Twice the heron, to name him true.
Once the Dragon, for remembrance lost.
Twice the Dragon, for the price he must pay.”

The Dragon will be marked in four ways, with two herons and two dragons. He got the first heron in the Portal Stone world. The second heron was received at Falme, when he named himself the Dragon Reborn. The two dragons were received at Rhuidean; the “remembrance lost” refers to the lost history of the Aiel. The significance of the second dragon (“the price he must pay”) has not been revealed.

•
Thom to Rand [TGH: 26, Discord, 326]

“Twice dawns the day when his blood is shed.
Once for mourning, once for birth.
Red on black, the Dragon’s blood stains the rock of Shayol Ghul.
In the Pit of Doom shall his blood free men from the Shadow.”

“Twice dawns the day” may indicate that there will be an eclipse when Rand’s blood is shed. Compare this to the greeting from the the Amyrlin ceremony when Siuan Sanche arrives in Fal Dara in [TGH: 2, The Welcome, 17]:

“Against what do we guard?”
“The shadow at noon.”

The second line may indicate that Rand will die and be resurrected, or maybe just that he will die, and the world will be reborn. The fragment ends with yet another reference to Rand’s blood being necessary to defeat the DO.

•
From *The Dragon Reborn*

[TDR: Header Prophecy]

And his paths shall be many, and who shall know his name, for he shall be born among us many times, in many guises, as he has been and ever will be, time without end. His coming shall be like the sharp edge of the plow, turning our lives in furrows from out of the places where we lie in our silence. The breaker of bonds; the forger of chains. The maker of futures; the unshaper of destiny.

Again, pretty general stuff. Rand is breaking bonds, etc.

•
Moiraine in conversation [TDR: 6, The Hunt Begins, 57]

“He has yet to break the nations, or shatter the world. ... What does it mean that he ‘shall slay his people with the sword of peace, and destroy them with the leaf’? What does it mean that he ‘shall bind the nine moons to serve him’? ... There are others. What ‘wound of madness and cutting of hope’ has he healed? What chains has he broken, and who put into chains?”

The breaking of nations is well underway. The bit about slaying his people with the sword of peace, etc. refers to the Aiel – by revealing the peaceful past of the Aiel, he changed them forever, and set them on the road to the destruction from which only a ‘remnant of a remnant’ will survive. “Nine moons” is a reference to Tuon, and so this indicates that she or the Seanchan in general will eventually come under Rand’s control. I don’t know what the “wound of madness” is, although it may refer to the Taint, which Rand cleansed at the end of WH. The breaking of chains could refer to many things, e.g. the chains binding people to the Shadow (Ingтар, Asmo, Tear, Andor). It’s also been suggested that this refers to the possibility of Rand freeing the Seanchan *damane* and other slaves. Rand has put people in figurative chains, as well – Asmodean, the Dragonsworn AS, all the nations he is conquering.

•
[TDR: 41, Threads in the Pattern, 373]

““On the slopes of Dragonmount shall he be born, born of a maiden wedded to no man.””

Shaiel, a.k.a. Tigraine, a.k.a. Rand’s birth mum, was a Maiden of the Spear, who do not wed. (Technically, maybe she was wedded to Taringail, but I guess running off into the Aiel Waste counted as a divorce.)

From *The Shadow Rising*

[TSR: 3, Reflection, 71]

“His blood on the rocks of Shayol Ghul, washing away the Shadow, sacrifice for man’s salvation.”

Yet another reference to blood on the rocks.

[TSR: 6, Doorways, 93]

“Power of the Shadow made human flesh,
wakened to turmoil, strife and ruin.
The Reborn One, marked and bleeding,
dances the sword in dreams and mist,
chains the Shadowsworn to his will,
from the city, lost and forsaken,
leads the spears to war once more,
breaks the spears and makes them see,
truth long hidden in the ancient dream.”

The “Power of the Shadow made human flesh” could refer to any number of things – the Forsaken, Fain, Slayer, or the bubble of evil at the start of TSR. “Dances the sword in dreams and mist” could be a reference to the mirror incident in the Stone in TSR. Rand has chained the Shadowsworn, in the person of Asmodean. He leads the Aiel spears to war, and has also revealed the truth of Aiel history, which has resulted in many Aiel breaking their spears and running off bonkers.

[TSR: 21, Into the Heart, 244]

“Into the heart he thrusts his sword,
into the heart, to hold their hearts.
Who draws it out shall follow after,
What hand can grasp that fearful blade?”

Rand stuck the Sword Which is Not (*Callandor*) into the floor of the Heart of the Stone, partly as a reminder to the lords of Tear that he was the ruler of their country. The last two lines seem to indicate that somebody other than Rand will remove *Callandor* from the Stone. Indeed, this happened; Narishma fetched it for Rand in TPOD. Since he also used the Sword That Ain’t in the Battle of Shadar Logoth in WH, Narishma may have a larger part to play re: *Callandor* and “following after.”

From *The Fires of Heaven*

[TFOH: Header Prophecy]

With his coming are the dread fires born again. The hills burn, and the land turns sere. The tides of men run out, and the hours dwindle. The wall is pierced, and the veil of parting raised. Storms rumble beyond the horizon, and the fires of heaven purge the earth. There is no salvation without destruction, no hope this side of death.

The drying and burning are surely a reference to the drought and hot weather which was going on in Randland until the Bowl of the Winds was used. The piercing of the wall, and the raising of the veil may refer to the DO breaking loose, or alternately that the dead are now walking in Randland. That phrase calls to mind a phrase from the Bible. This is discussed more thoroughly in section 3.

From *Lord of Chaos*

[LOC: Trailer Prophecy]

The unstained tower breaks and bends knee to the forgotten sign.
The seas rage, and stormclouds gather unseen.
Beyond the horizon, hidden fires swell, and serpents nestle in the bosom.
What was exalted is cast down; what was cast down is raised up.
Order burns to clear his path.

The first sentence is fulfilled: the Tower is broken, and some AS have knelt and sworn fealty to Rand (whose sign is the “forgotten” ancient AS symbol). The second sentence indicates that all is not well. Something is rotten in Randland. People are not what they seem. The serpents in the bosom could be Taim and Halima, among others. The last sentence indicates the uncertain nature of the world. It could be referring to the AS and male channellers specifically, but there is more casting down and raising up than that going on.

From *A Crown of Swords*

[ACOS: Header Prophecy]

There can be no health in us, nor any good thing grow, for the land is one with the Dragon Reborn, and he one with the land. Soul of fire, heart of stone, in pride he conquers, forcing the proud to yield. He calls upon the mountains to kneel, and the seas to give way, and the very skies to bow. Pray that the heart of stone remembers tears, and the soul of fire, love.

This is a clear reference to Rand's increasing self-isolation, hubris, etc. as well as Cadsuane's determination to teach Rand laughter and tears. Also note the 'Dragon is one with the land' stuff matches the Fisher King legend/reference (see section 3.06).

[ACOS: 34, *Ta'veren*, 533-4]

...the Prophecies said he [Rand] would bind together the people of every land – “The north shall he tie to the east, and the west shall be bound to the south,” it said...

Rand's interpretation: all the world will follow him. Alternative interpretation: Rand will hold the north and east; the Seanchan will hold the west and south. This seems more likely, at least for the present. It also agrees with Nicola's Foretelling (“the land divided by the return”).

[ACOS: Trailer Prophecy]

Master of the lightnings, rider on the storm,
wearer of a crown of swords, spinner-out of fate.
Who thinks he turns the Wheel of Time,
may learn the truth too late.

Similar in tone and meaning to the ACOS header prophecy, indicating that Rand's pride may cause some big trouble.

From *Winter's Heart*

[WH: Header Prophecy]

The seals that hold back night shall weaken,
and in the heart of winter shall winter's heart be born
amid the wailing of lamentations and the gnashing of teeth,
for winter's heart shall ride a black horse,
and the name of it is Death.

First line is self-explanatory; the rest is fairly ominous, since Rand refers to himself as having “winter's heart” more than once. For example:

He was too weak for what had to be done. He needed to drink in winter, till he made winter's heart seem Sunday noon.

[WH: 25, Bonds, 483]

(Recall that “Sunday” in Randland is an annual holiday, taking place at the height of summer.)

[WH: 14, What a Veil Hides, 328-329]

[Tuon:] “I must find a way to make contact with the Dragon Reborn as soon as possible. He must kneel before the Crystal Throne before Tarmon Gai'don, or all is lost.” The Prophecies of the Dragon said so, clearly.

Moiraine might be surprised to hear that, since as noted above, in [TDR: 6, The Hunt Begins, 57], Moiraine mentions that one of the Prophecies of the Dragon is that the Dragon Reborn “shall bind the nine moons to serve him,” which implies the exact opposite of what the Seanchan version evidently says. The question is, which version is correct?

The Seanchan version of the Prophecies was actually mentioned prior to WH; Captain-General Kennar Miraj, the (now deceased) commander of the Seanchan forces that confronted Rand in TPOD, reflected on them:

The Prophecies of the Dragon had been known in Seanchan even before Luthair Paendrag began the Consolidation. In corrupted form, it was said, much different from the pure version Luthair Paendrag brought. Miraj had seen several volumes of *The Karaethon Cycle* printed in these lands, and they were corrupted too – not one mentioned him serving the Crystal Throne! – but the Prophecies held men's minds and hearts still.

[TPOD: 24, A Time for Iron, 461]

So apparently at least some of the Seanchan suspect that their version is not the correct one. Miraj's opinions about the Randland versions notwithstanding, it seems more likely overall that the Seanchan version is the only one altered from the original, whether accidentally or purposefully. (Purposefully, perhaps, because the Seanchan version obviously mentions the

Crystal Throne by name, and as far as we know no one in Randland proper has ever heard of it; so why would it appear in a Randland-based prophecy? [Sarah Coit])

It's also possible, of course, that both versions are correct. Prophecies, as we've seen, rarely turn out to mean exactly what anyone thinks they do. For all we know Rand could kneel before the Throne right before he blows it up, or something. Another interesting idea is that "binding the nine moons to serve him" could refer to the Sad Bracelets and the struggle for control between the man and the woman/women holding him in them that Moggy talks about; perhaps Tuon could make Rand kneel to the Crystal Throne because of the Sad Bracelets, but would end up being controlled by Rand.

From *Crossroads of Twilight* (NEW)

[COT: Header Prophecy]

And it shall come to pass, in the days when the Dark Hunt rides, when the right hand falters and the left hand strays, that mankind shall come to the Crossroads of Twilight and all that is, all that was, and all that will be shall balance on the point of a sword, while the winds of the Shadow grow.

The Dark Hunt refers to Darkhounds, of course, maybe specifically to the large fifty-plus pack currently on the move in COT. The right and left hand could just be symbolic hooah – everyone on Rand's side kind of floundering around, etc. – but it's been suggested that it could refer specifically to Mat and Perrin, who do seem to be doing some faltering and straying, respectively. (Osan'gar and Aran'gar got their names from left-hand and right-hand daggers, the only other such reference in the series, but it's pretty clear that the "hands" in question belong to the Light, so the 'gars don't really fit.) Crossroads: a turning point, a choice to be made; an in-between place, a place of danger, especially in twilight (in between day and night, light turning to darkness). The rest is self-explanatory.

Noal in conversation [COT: 28, A Cluster of Rosebuds, 616]

"Fortune rides like the sun on high
with the fox that makes the ravens fly.
Luck his soul, the lightning his eye,
He snatches the moons from out of the sky."

Something of a landmark, since it's the first time we learn that the Prophecies of the Dragon talk about anyone specifically other than Rand. Obviously, this refers to Mat: fortune, luck, him as the fox, making the Seanchan – the ravens – fly (freeing the Windfinders and the chaos that followed, as well as being a description of his ring), snatching the Daughter of the Nine Moons, etc. The "lightning his eye" line could mean a couple of things – a reference to gunpowder, perhaps, or just his quickness with a knife (good hand-eye coordination, you know). Possibly related in some way to the other prophecies concerning Mat's eye.

(So, does Perrin get a mention?)

4.6 Perrin's dreams

From *The Dragon Reborn*

[TDR: 43, Shadowbrothers, 425]

Mat, rattling a dice cup. His opponent stared at Mat with eyes of fire. Mat did not seem to see the man, but Perrin knew him.

"Mat!" he shouted. "It's Ba'alzamon. Light, Mat, you're dicing with Ba'alzamon!"

This is likely referring to Mat's "bet" with Rhavin/Gaebriel in TDR.

[TDR: 43, Shadowbrothers, 426]

Egwene and Nynaeve and Elayne stood looking at a huge metal cage, with a raised door held on a heavy spring. They stepped in and reached up together to loose the catch. The barred door snapped down behind them. A woman with her hair all in braids laughed at them, and another woman all in white laughed at her.

This refers to Elayne, Egwene, and Nynaeve's Tairen adventures. Braid-woman is Liandrin, white-clad-woman is Lanfear.

From *The Shadow Rising*

[TSR: 28, To the Tower of Ghenjei, 320-1]

Rand stood amid swirling stormwinds, laughing wildly, even madly, arms upraised, and on the winds rode [dragons];¹ hidden eyes watched Rand, and there was no telling whether he knew it.² ... Nynaeve and Elayne stalking cautiously through a demented landscape of twisted, shadowed buildings, hunting some



dangerous beast.³ ... Mat, standing where a road forked ahead of him. He flipped a coin, started down one branch, and suddenly was wearing a wide-brimmed hat and walking with a staff bearing a short sword blade.⁴ ...Egwene and a woman with long white hair were staring at him in surprise while behind them the White Tower crumbled stone by stone.⁵

1. Not fulfilled, unless this is some sort of reference to Rhuidean. The Seanchan *raken* and *to'raken* are both dragon-esque animals.
2. This is possibly general – all the people watching Rand, e.g. Forsaken, Wise Ones, AS, etc. or it may be something more specific that we do not know about.
3. This refers to Elayne and Nynaeve going to Tanchico to hunt down the BA. Compare this description to the way Tanchico looks to Egwene in T'A'R.
4. Fulfilled – Mat flipped a coin at the Portal Stone, to get to Rhuidean, which led to him getting the hat and *ashanderei*.
5. The woman is Amys. This bit is probably not prophetic, but a chance meeting in T'A'R (thus the surprised look). The crumbling of the Tower has been fulfilled, at least partly – it is broken, but will it be destroyed even further?

•

[TSR: 53, The Price of a Departure, 612]

Egwene stood among a crowd of women, fear in her eyes; slowly the women knelt around her. Nynaeve was one of them, and he believed he saw Elayne's red-gold hair.¹ That window faded and was replaced. Mat stood naked and bound, snarling; an odd spear with a black shaft had been thrust across his back behind his elbows, and a silver medallion, a foxhead, hung on his chest.² Mat vanished, and it was Rand. Perrin thought it was Rand. He wore rags and a rough cloak, and a bandage covered his eyes.³

1. This has been fulfilled; Egwene has become Amyrlin of the Salidar AS.
2. Unknown. This may be the incident in Finnland that got him hung, or maybe something yet to come.
3. Not fulfilled. Note that this resonates with Min's viewing of a beggar's staff around Rand. The bandaged eyes are reminiscent of the bandaged eyes of the "Fisher" figure in Moridin's *sha'rah* game.

4.7 Fourth Age histories

Are these things written in the Fourth Age, being the Age after the books, or are they from the previous Fourth Age (i.e. *six* Ages ago)? Are they really prophecy? I think they are supposed to be histories of Rand's Age, written during the Age which will start with the end of the last book. Thus, they are not prophetic in the technical sense – they are supposedly written after the fact – but they *are* prophetic to us, because we don't yet know the end of the story.



From *The Eye of the World*

[TEOTW: Prologue, Dragonmount, xv]

And it came to pass in those days, as it had come before and would come again, that the Dark lay heavy on the land and weighed down the hearts of men, and the green things failed, and hope died. And men cried out to the Creator, saying, O Light of the Heavens, Light of the World, let the Promised One be born of the mountain, according to the prophecies, as he was in ages past and will be in ages to come. Let the Prince of the Morning sing to the land that green things will grow and the valleys give forth lambs. Let the arm of the Lord of the Dawn shelter us from the Dark, and the great sword of justice defend us. Let the Dragon ride again on the winds of time.

– from *Charal Drianaan te Calamon, The Cycle of the Dragon*. Author unknown, the Fourth Age.

The "Dark laying heavy on the land" and the failing of plants refer to the two bouts of (Shadow-caused) bad weather we've had in the series thus far, which have caused crops to get messed up: the super-long winter in TEOTW, and the recent hot spell. The reference about singing and fertility could mean that the Song will be found, but it could just as well be meant figuratively.

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From *The Dragon Reborn*

[TDR: Tailer Prophecy]

And it was written that no hand but his should wield the Sword held in the Stone, but he did draw it out, like fire in his hand, and his glory did burn the world. Thus did it begin. Thus do we sing his Rebirth. Thus do we sing the beginning.

– from *Do'in Toldara te, Songs of the Last Age, Quarto Nine: The Legend of the Dragon*. Composed by Boanne, Songmistress at Taralan, the Fourth Age.

Fulfilled – Rand took out the Sword in the Stone.

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From *The Shadow Rising*

[TSR: Trailer Prophecy]

And when the blood was sprinkled on ground where nothing could grow, the Children of the Dragon did spring up, the People of the Dragon, armed to dance with death. And he did call them forth from the wasted land, and they did shake the world with battle.

– from *The Wheel of Time* by Sulamein so Bhagad, Chief Historian at the Court of the Sun, the Fourth Age.

Fulfilled – Rand brought the Aiel out of the Waste to do battle.

•

From *The Fires of Heaven*

[TFOH: Trailer Prophecy]

And the Glory of the Light did shine upon him.

And the Peace of the Light did he give men.

Binding nations to him. Making one of many.

Yet the shards of hearts did give wounds.

And what was once did come again

– in fire and in storm

splitting all in twain.

For his peace...

– for his peace...

...was the peace...

...was the peace...

...of the sword.

And the Glory of the Light did shine upon him.

– from “Glory of the Dragon,” composed by Meane sol Ahell, the Fourth Age.

General prophecy. Not too informative.

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From *Lord of Chaos*

[LOC: Header Prophecy]

The lions sing and the hills take flight.

The moon by day, and the sun by night.

Blind woman, deaf man, jackdaw fool.

Let the Lord of Chaos rule.

– chant from a children’s game heard in Great Aravalon, the Fourth Age.

Your guess is as good as mine as to whether this is actually prophecy/historical or not.

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From *Crossroads of Twilight* (NEW)

[COT: Trailer Prophecy]

We rode on the winds of the rising storm,

We ran to the sounds of the thunder.

We danced among the lightning bolts,

and tore the world asunder.

– Anonymous fragment of a poem believed written near the end of the previous Age, known by some as the Third Age. Sometimes attributed to the Dragon Reborn.

Technically I suppose this shouldn’t be in the “Fourth Age” section since it was written in the Third Age, but this fit best, as it is written from a historical perspective rather than a prophetic one. Seems to be a reference to the Asha’mán, or maybe all channellers, and the prophesied Second Breaking of the world. If referring specifically to the Asha’mán, could be related to Elaida’s Foretelling of the Black Tower rent in fire and blood.



This section contains information on and discussion of matters which relate to publishing and buying the WOT books.

99.1 When is the next book going to be out?

When will Book 11 be published?

It's much too early to know that yet, but we can estimate. COT was published in January of 2003, and there is generally a two-year gap between books, so it's likely that Book 11 will not be published until early 2005.

It is not known whether the publication of *New Spring* (*A Wheel of Time Prequel Novel*) (see the next section) will end up pushing back the release of Book 11.



99.2 What is "the Guide"? What is "New Spring"? What are these "Young Adult" volumes?

The Guide

The World of Robert Jordan's The Wheel of Time, more commonly known as "the Guide," is a "companion book" to TWOT which Tor published in November 1997. It is by Robert Jordan and Teresa Patterson, and is basically a compilation of background and setting material for TWOT. It contains information about "the world's geography, history, and sociology" [Guide: Preface, 9]. A lot of the information is stuff which we already know from the series proper. There is also new information about topics like the AOL, the founding of the White Tower, Artur Hawkwing, and the Seanchan. The book contains artwork from the books (icons, maps, and cover art), and some new art (which is generally considered to be less than stellar). **John Novak** adds:

The Guide's framing device (or conceit) is that it is a history written by someone from within *The Wheel of Time*. Hence the first pages claiming that documents are copies of copies, etc. As such, some readers do not consider the material canon.

"New Spring"

"New Spring" is a 79-page novella which RJ wrote for the Tor anthology *Legends*, published in early 1998. "New Spring" tells the story of how Lan and Moiraine met, and the beginning of Moiraine's search for the Dragon Reborn. It is set shortly after the Aiel War. IMO, it's pretty good. *Legends* itself is a collection of "new stories by the best-known and most accomplished modern creators of fantasy fiction, each one set in the special universe... that made that writer famous" [*Legends*, introduction by Robert Silverberg]. The other writers featured in the volume are: Stephen King (*Dark Tower*), Terry Pratchett (*Discworld*), Terry Goodkind (*The Sword of Truth*), Orson Scott Card (*Tales of Alvin Maker*), Robert Silverberg (*Majipoor*), Ursula K. Le Guin (*Earthsea*), Tad Williams (*Memory, Sorrow and Thorn*), George R.R. Martin (*A Song of Ice and Fire*), Anne McCaffrey (*Pern*), and Raymond E. Feist (*Riftwar*).

Additionally, the fleshed-out version of the novella, *New Spring* (*A Wheel of Time Prequel Novel*), is due to be published soon. Amazon lists the release date as January 2004.

The YA books

From the Two Rivers and *To the Blight*

From the Two Rivers and *To the Blight* are a YA version of TEOTW, split into two volumes and published in January of 2002. The text is essentially unchanged from the original, except for the addition of a prologue chapter (featuring the characters in their younger years, before the start of the series) to FTTR and a new glossary at the end of TTB. Both books are illustrated.

The Hunt Begins: The Great Hunt, Vol. 1 and *New Threads in the Pattern: The Great Hunt, Vol. 2*

Same thing, next book (though different publisher, and there does not appear to be any supplemental material added). Release date is January 2004.

The ISBNs of all these books are given in section 0.04.

