



### THE VANISHING THRONE: Book Two

The second book in *The Falconer* Trilogy is packed with surprises and suspense. Aileana Cameron, the Falconer, disappeared through the portal that she was trying to close forever. Now she wakes up in the fae world, trapped and tortured by the evil Lonnrach. With the help of an unexpected ally, Aileana re-enters the human world, only to find everything irrevocably changed. Edinburgh has been destroyed, and the few human survivors are living in an uneasy truce with the fae, while both worlds are in danger of disappearing altogether. Aileana holds the key to saving both worlds, but in order to do so she must awaken her latent Falconer powers. And the price of doing that might be her life. Rich with imaginative detail, action, fae lore, and romance, *The Vanishing Throne* is a thrilling sequel to *The Falconer*.

*The Vanishing Throne* (Book Two)  
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Ages 14 and up • F&P Text Level Gradient: Z \* Lexile(r) Measure: HL670L

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR



ELIZABETH MAY hails from California and is currently a PhD student in social anthropology at the University of St. Andrews in Scotland. *The Falconer* Trilogy is her first series.

#### PRAISE FOR *THE FALCONER*

“A fascinating, unique world... May’s writing is exquisite and demands a close reading to take everything in. Readers will be anxious for the next installment in this planned trilogy.”

—*School Library Journal*

“Aileana is an amazing, brave hero... The writing crackles with wit, and the steampunk atmosphere and gadgets are a lively component.”

—*Booklist*

This guide was created by Dr. Rose Brock, a teacher and school librarian in Coppell, Texas. Dr. Brock holds a Ph.D. in Library Science, specializing in children’s and young adult literature.



THE FALCONER (BOOK ONE) AND THE VANISHING THRONE (BOOK TWO)

## EXPLORING *THE FALCONER* TRILOGY THROUGH DISCUSSION AND WRITING

The following questions may be utilized throughout the novels as reflective writing prompts or alternatively, they can be used as targeted questions for class discussion and reflection.

### BOOK ONE: *THE FALCONER*

1. At the beginning of *The Falconer*, Lady Aileana Kameron offers, “I’ve memorized their every accusation: Murderess. She did it. Was crouched over her mother’s body, covered in blood.” Though these comments are painful, why doesn’t Aileana do more to dispel the rumors surrounding the death of her mother and her role in her murder?
2. Though they are ladies who in many ways are products of the time in which they live, it can be argued that Aileana and her mother are also modern women. In what ways is this true?
3. Though most of what we learn is shared through her memories and flashbacks, how would you describe the relationship between Aileana and her mother? What does her mother do to educate her daughter and also to protect her? How is Aileana’s relationship with her father in stark contrast to that of the relationship she had with her mother?
4. In your opinion, why does Derrick have such contempt against Kiaran? Do you think it’s warranted?
5. As she considers her need for vengeance for the death of her mother, Aileana states, “This is what I live for now. Not the tea parties or assemblies or picnics at the Nor’ Loch, or the spine-straight, chin-up, shoulders-back polite conversation accompanied by fake smiles. Now I live for the chase, and for the kill.” How does Aileana’s statement capture the feelings of the woman she has become?
6. *The Falconer* is told in first person by Aileana; how would the story be different if someone besides she were telling it? How might the story change if Derrick, Aileana’s pixie, were sharing her story? Do you think changing the point of view would make the story better or worse? Why?



7. Based on what you learn about him from the novel, how would you describe Kiaran, Aileana's Fae mentor? Is he a likeable character? Why or why not? Why does Aileana find herself so drawn to him? Though there are many reasons not to, why does Aileana trust him to train her? In what ways does he seem so mysterious? How does his being from the Fae world put him at an advantage and disadvantage in her world?
8. Aileana states, "Time won't fix me. Time allows me to become more skillful at hiding how much I hurt inside. Time makes me a great liar. Because when it comes to grief, we all like to pretend." Do you agree with her? How do you or the people you are closest to deal with their grief?
9. In your opinion, why does Aileana choose not to confide in her best friend Catherine as a means of support and assistance? What can be inferred by her choice not to do so? Do you think her decision is wise? Why or why not?
10. Aileana's father, the Marquess of Douglas, tells her, "Duty comes first." In his mind, what are the duties that he expects his daughter to fulfill? Why do his expectations prove to be so difficult for Aileana?
11. When considering her understanding of her new role as a Falconer, she thinks, "Father may think that I play with my inventions and neglect my responsibilities, but he's wrong. This is my responsibility, my burden. I won't run away from it. I won't." What makes being the last Falconer so difficult? Do you think it's a burden you'd want? Why or why not?
12. Why is being a Seer so difficult for Gavin? Why does having the Sight make him so distrustful of all the Fae?
13. How would you characterize the relationship between Aileana and Kiaran? Do you feel that it changes over the course of the novel? If so, in what ways?
14. While considering Kiaran's past, Aileana offers, "I'm beginning to realize how much our secrets define us . . . Now our boundaries are fading, and we grasp those last few secrets we still do have, because baring one's soul is so much more difficult than pretending." What does Aileana stand to lose? From your personal experience, do you agree with her? Why is it dangerous to be transparent and honest with the people you care most about?
15. In analyzing how Kiaran sees her, Aileana states, "I am the wild creature he saw fight, kill, and survive only last night. Dresses conceal my brokenness. They cloak the savage creature that lives inside me and thrives on anger. I am a wolf in sheep's clothing." Why is it so important for Aileana that Kiaran see her as a huntress rather than as a lady? Why is it about the hunt that makes her feel like his equal?
16. When talking about herself before her mother's death, she states, "The Aileana of last year was a complete and utter ninny." Why do you think she is so critical of the girl she used to be? Besides her mother's murder, what else serves as a catalyst for her transformation to the person she becomes?

#### BOOK TWO: *THE VANISHING THRONE*

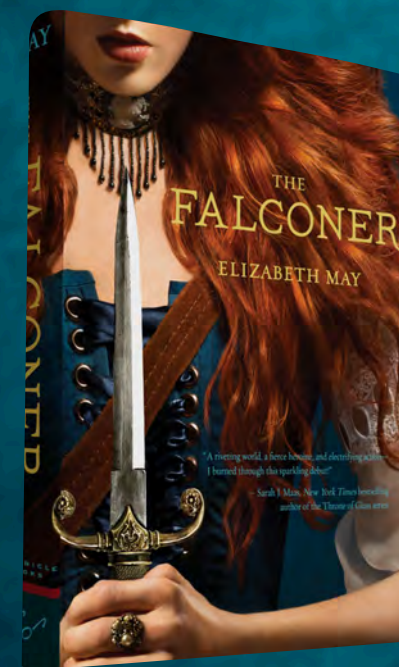
17. The most difficult battle Aileana faces is not against a Fae, but against herself. Discuss how this idea appears in the novels.
18. The fae realm is characterized by glass, black stone, and metal. How does this depiction overturn a more traditional depiction of a fairy world? What does the fae realm in *The Vanishing Throne* tell you about the faeries who inhabit it?

CONTINUED →

19. Aithinne and Aileana share similar experiences at the hands of Lonnrach. Compare and contrast their responses to the trauma that Lonnrach inflicts. How do each of them survive?
20. Aithinne offers to help Aileana forget the torture she suffers at the hands of Lonnrach. Why do you think Aileana refuses this offer? How might these memories, however difficult, be essential to Aileana?
21. Aileana and Aithinne are compelled by their desire for revenge against Lonnrach. In what ways is their desire for revenge useful? In what ways can it be harmful?
22. Research the history of the Scottish tartan, and design your own Kameron family plaid.
23. Compare the landscape of Scotland in *The Vanishing Throne* to that of *The Falconer*. What has changed, and what does the landscape signify about the new world order?
24. As a Falconer, Aileana is gifted with unique supernatural powers that set her apart from the other human characters. Yet it can be argued that her greatest power derives from her humanity. Discuss, using details from both books.
25. In *The Vanishing Throne*, Daniel, a Seer, tells Aileana that she is "the girl whose gift is chaos...Death is her burden. Wherever she goes, it follows. They say she can either save the world or end it." What evidence is there that this is both true and false, as prophecies in literature often are?
26. What does Aileana discover about herself in *The Vanishing Throne*? How does her character change?
27. Spoiler alert! Why is it necessary for Aileana to die at the end of *The Vanishing Throne*? Where do you think her journey will take her next in the conclusion of this trilogy?

Correlates to CCSS. R.L. 7-10.1, W. 7-10.1, 7-10.2, 7-10.3.

#### ABOUT THE BOOKS



#### *THE FALCONER*: Book One

Edinburgh, 1844. Beautiful Aileana Kameron only looks the part of an aristocratic young lady. In fact, she's spent the year since her mother died developing her ability to sense the presence of Sithichean, a faery race bent on slaughtering humans. She has a secret mission: to destroy the faery who murdered her mother. But when she learns she's a Falconer, the last in a line of female warriors and the sole hope of preventing a powerful faery population from massacring all of humanity, her quest for revenge gets a whole lot more complicated. The first volume of a trilogy from an exciting new voice in young adult fantasy, this electrifying thriller blends romance and action with steampunk technology and Scottish lore in a deliciously addictive read.

#### *The Falconer* (Book One)

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