



Book Club Notes

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The Crown

By Lynne Stringer

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About the Author



Lynne Stringer has been passionate about writing all her life, beginning with short stories in her primary school days. She began writing professionally as a journalist and was the editor of a small newspaper (later magazine) for seven years, before turning her hand to screenplay writing and novels. Lynne currently works as a professional editor and proofreader. She lives in Brisbane, Australia, with her husband and young son. *The Crown* is her second novel.

Discussion Questions

Chapter One

1. Sarah's life has changed from a relatively normal one into something completely different. What problems do you think she would have faced as she adjusted to such an enormous change in her life? How do you think you would have coped in this kind of situation?
2. Sarah is expected to choose a consort from a specific group of males and no one else. Name some people/cultural groups who have similar practices. Do you think this practice is one that should be continued or should it be abandoned? What are some grounds for abandoning it? What are some grounds from continuing it? Why do you think some cultures still embrace this practice while others find it offensive?
3. Do you agree with the way Sarah treats her suitors, such as Ardon? Should she be more understanding of the culture and customs of her planet? Why or why not?

Chapter Two

1. Sarah finds it difficult to cope with council meetings because she isn't interested in politics and meetings. Have you ever been forced to do a job you had no interest in and weren't trained for? How did you cope? What do you think Sarah needs to do to overcome this problem?
2. Residents of Verindon look askance at the miners' beliefs, but have no problem taking the precious lukis stones the miners produce from the mines. Do you think this amounts to exploitation of the miners? Why or why not? Do you think that the Verindonians would be justified in taking the lukis if they shared the miners' beliefs?
3. Do you think Keridan is being paranoid when he warns Sarah not to trust Hajitis and Jillandrina? Why do you think he advises Sarah to trust Perisina, when Sarah doesn't know her as well as the other two? Should we rely on someone else's opinion of people or should we trust our own judgement?

Chapter Three

1. Do you think Sarah feels a sense of inadequacy as she reflects on Darnell's ability to govern the people and cope in the political arena when she does not share those traits? Do you think it's possible that she could find those abilities in herself or is that impossible for her? Why or why not?
2. Do you think Sarah is justified in disliking Jillandrina just because she is jealous of her? How do you think you'd feel in this situation? What would you do to overcome this, or do you think it's unnecessary to try and overcome it?

Chapter Four

1. Do you think Keridan is justified in keeping Sarah inside for a few hours after the attack or do you think it unlikely another attack would have been attempted so soon? Why or why not?
2. Do you think Denzik is right to blame Keridan for what happened? Do you think Sarah was justified in defending him, or was she doing it simply because she's in love with him?
3. Sarah realises her attitude towards her suitors is poor because she's not even sure she'll notice if a couple of them were killed in the attack. Why does it often take death or tragedy until we notice poor attitudes? What can we do to value people in everyday life?

4. What do you think motivated Ardon to seal the Palace himself?

Chapter Five

1. Why do you think Keridan has kept his distance from Sarah even though he knew a secret passage to her soundproofed bedroom? Why do you think he tries to maintain distance between himself and Sarah at this point?
2. Do you think Sarah should be so determined to refuse the decoy? Are her reasons justified? Do you think it would be cowardly for her to accept Keridan's precautions? Why or why not?
3. Why do you think Keridan recommends Ardon to Sarah?

Chapter Six

1. Do you think it's important for Sarah to learn the Verindonian language even though the majority of the planet has learned English? What would you do in her position, and why?
2. If you had been in Sarah's position, would you have insisted in completing the ceremony immediately? Why or why not?

Chapter Seven

1. Do you think that Keridan could have done anything to prevent these attacks? Do you agree that there has to have been agent involvement? What do you think could be done to find the traitor/traitors?
2. Do you think Keridan is right to allow the other agents to come with them when he doesn't trust them enough to tell them about the secret passageway? What would you do in his place?

Chapter Eight

1. Why do you think Perisina oversteps agent boundaries by unpacking Sarah's clothes for her? What do you think made Jillandrina react that way?
2. What do you think motivates Hajitis to risk going into the Forest just to kill a grondal? Do you think he was justified in taking such a risk? Why or why not?

Chapter Nine

1. Do you think Keridan should insist on following protocols like not allowing Sarah to help with maintenance even though they're so far away from civilisation or do you think he is being over-zealous? Why or why not?
2. Why do you think Keridan is marginalising Jillandrina?
3. Why do you think Keridan risked kissing Sarah when Perisina is only around the corner, especially considering how agents feel about love and relationships with the ruling family?

Chapter Ten

1. What do you think motivates Keridan to care for Sarah himself rather than let Perisina do it?
2. Do you think that Keridan was right to allow Jillandrina to come with them when he suspected she was a traitor? Do you agree with his reasoning? What would you have done in his place?

3. Pravvit tries to excuse Sarah from being insensitive like the other members of the High Council. Do you think he's right to excuse her or should she have taken more action at the time? Is Sarah's behaviour a sign that she also does not take the miners' beliefs seriously?

Chapter Eleven

1. Do you think Hajitis is right to cut his sleep time short or is he being over-zealous? Is there any advantage in this kind of behaviour or is it counter-productive? Do you tend to cut back on sleep or relaxation time because you're too busy or feel you are indispensable?
2. Sarah discovers that some agents disobey the no-love rule. Does it surprise you that they break it? Do you think we are justified in disobeying laws when we disagree with them? Is disobedience justified in some or all cases?

Chapter Twelve

1. Do you think Sarah will be able to change the law preventing her from marrying a Vendel? How do you think she might achieve it?
2. Do you think Keridan is serious about suggesting they kill Hajitis, Pravvit and Perisina and escape together or does he have another reason for making the suggestion?
3. Keridan confesses that he abandoned the leader on his first mission. Was he justified in doing this since it was agency protocol or should he have tried to save Kleezion? How far should we go in pushing against rules and laws if we feel they are unjust?
4. Keridan suggests that the governments of Earth can be just as deadly as the agents are. Do you agree with that? How much of this kind of thing do you think our own governments indulge in? Do you think it's justified or do you think there is always a non-violent way to proceed?

Chapter Thirteen

1. What do you think motivated Ardon to come to the mine? Do you think he was really safeguarding Sarah's interests, as he claims? What else might motivate him?
2. Do you think Keridan is right to let Sarah go with them? Is there another course of action he could have taken? What would you have done?
3. Why do you think Keridan is rude to Ardon when earlier he recommended him to Sarah?
4. Do you think Sondalan was the real reason the law against the Overlord marrying an agent was introduced or is it just a symptom of a greater problem? Can you think of any ways that tensions like this can be overcome or is it impossible?
5. Sarah is shocked at the conditions the miners live in. Should she have looked into this earlier or do you think she was really too busy? Do we sometimes put off things that benefit other people because they seem unimportant? Have you seen similar things in our own society? How can we overcome them?
6. The miners seem content even though they have so little. Why do you think that is?

Chapter Fourteen

1. Do you believe Ardon's statement that he was motivated by seeing how Crazaan was making so much money or do you think there could be another reason? What other reason might there be?

Chapter Fifteen

1. Do you think Keridan saved Hajitis because Sarah asked him to or was there another reason? Do you think Sarah was right insisting that they rescue him in spite of the fact that it put the rest of them at risk? Is there any situation in which the loss of one person can be justified?
2. Do you think Ardon should have told them earlier about his assistant? What do you think made him keep quiet about it?
3. Keridan points out that the Trelles and Vipers couldn't tell that Sarah was female. Different cultures and races tend to see things in different ways. Are maintaining these differences important or should they be overcome, if possible?

Chapter Sixteen

1. It is revealed that Crazaan was not responsible for Sarah's kidnapping all those years ago. Do you have any idea who was responsible?
2. Sarah breaks with protocol and offers her agents some of the food she is given. Do you think she is right to do this or should she have accepted Letz's suggestion and let them go and get something to eat? Why do you think she insisted on letting the agents have some of her food? Do you think this behaviour will help her free the agents? Why or why not?
3. Why do you think Keridan is so disapproving of Sarah's behaviour?

Chapter Seventeen

1. Do you think Denzik is loyal to Sarah or is he sidestepping her ability? In what way might he be able to do this?
2. Do you think Sarah was right to object to Crazaan's punishment? Do you believe that capital punishment is a good thing? Would you have been upset by Crazaan's 'suicide'? Why or why not?
3. Do you think Keridan is right in refusing Sarah's offer? Do you think the two of them should have had an affair even if they married other people? Why or why not?
4. Keridan believes that their responsibilities are more important than their desire for each other. Do you agree with this? In what situations might one override the other?