



The Queen's Poisoner (The Kingfountain Series)

By Jeff Wheeler

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The Queen's Poisoner (The Kingfountain Series) By Jeff Wheeler

From *Wall Street Journal* bestselling author Jeff Wheeler.

King Severn Argentine's fearsome reputation precedes him: usurper of the throne, killer of rightful heirs, ruthless punisher of traitors. Attempting to depose him, the Duke of Kiskaddon gambles...and loses. Now the duke must atone by handing over his young son, Owen, as the king's hostage. And should his loyalty falter again, the boy will pay with his life.

Seeking allies and eluding Severn's spies, Owen learns to survive in the court of Kingfountain. But when new evidence of his father's betrayal threatens to seal his fate, Owen must win the vengeful king's favor by proving his worth—through extraordinary means. And only one person can aid his desperate cause: a mysterious woman, dwelling in secrecy, who truly wields power over life, death, and destiny.

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The Queen's Poisoner (The Kingfountain Series) By Jeff Wheeler Bibliography

- Sales Rank: #69244 in Books
- Published on: 2016-04-01
- Released on: 2016-04-01
- Original language: English
- Number of items: 1
- Dimensions: 8.25" h x 1.00" w x 5.50" l, .0 pounds
- Binding: Paperback
- 334 pages

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Richard III is near-obligatory context for reading about King Severn Argentine; readers less fond of the Bard can refer to Kylo Ren instead. Argentine is the black-garbed, duplicitous, enraged, self-absorbed usurper of the throne of Ceredigion in Wheeler's well-wrought fantasy setting. He has taken hostage eight-year-old Owen, youngest child of the Duke of Kiskaddon, as surety for the duke's good conduct. None doubt that the boy is marked for death, but Owen has well-wishers in the labyrinthine palace of Kingfountain, as well as preternatural gifts of focus and analysis. His allies include Ankarette Tryneowy, the titular poisoner in the service of the dowager queen. Wheeler (the Covenant of Muirwood series) develops Owen slowly, taking a long, deep look into a young character and his circumscribed world—an unusual move for a first book in a series. Though Wheeler works very much according to the typical blueprint for high fantasy, the emotional range and insight he convincingly portrays in his child hero make for a political drama that can entice adult and teen audiences alike.

From [Booklist](#)

This is the first title in Wheeler's projected Kingfountain series, about Owen Kiskaddon, initially the eight-year-old son of a traitorous duke being held hostage at the royal court of Ceredigion. Wheeler's Ceredigion is a close analogue of War of the Roses-era England, with the central differences being that this universe's Richard III, Severn Argentine, did not fail at his own version of Bosworth and that a mystical fountain is the central religious fixture as well as the source of magical powers for people known as the Fountainblessed. Owen tries to learn the truth about Severn as well as survive at court, relying heavily on the help of a mysterious Fountainblessed woman, the poisoner of the title. While the similar historical sources may make some readers think of Kingfountain as a kinder and gentler *Game of Thrones*, the novel handles moral ambiguity fairly well and creates a fairly nuanced and sympathetic character in its Richard III analogue. Overall, an enjoyable—if conventional—entry in its genre.

About the Author

Wall Street Journal bestselling author Jeff Wheeler took an early retirement from his career at Intel in 2014 to write full-time. He is, most importantly, a husband and father, and a devout member of his church. He is occasionally spotted roaming among the oak trees and granite boulders in the hills of California or in any number of the state's majestic redwood groves. He is the author of The Covenant of Muirwood Trilogy, The Legends of Muirwood Trilogy, the Whispers from Mirrowen Trilogy, and the Landmoor Series.

Users Review

From reader reviews:

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