



Key Vocabulary: Waylander by David Gemmell

Vocabulary Word	Definition	Context
Waylander	The protagonist of the novel, a legendary assassin and warrior.	Waylander is a skilled and feared killer, but also a complex character with a tragic past.
Drenai	The fictional country in which the novel is set.	The Drenai are a proud people with a rich history and a warrior culture.
Nadir	A tribe of nomadic warriors who invade Drenai at the beginning of the novel.	The Nadir are fierce fighters who value honor and glory, and are led by a charismatic leader named Ulric.
Druss	A legendary Drenai warrior who appears in several of Gemmell's novels.	Druss is a towering figure who embodies the best qualities of Drenai culture, including courage, loyalty, and honor.
Skraelings	Savage, cannibalistic creatures who live in the wilderness outside of Drenai.	The Skraelings are a constant threat to travelers and settlers, and are rumored to be in league with dark powers.
Moidart	The main antagonist of the novel, a treacherous nobleman who seeks to overthrow the king of Drenai.	Moidart is a cunning and ruthless schemer who will stop at nothing to achieve his goals.
Kessa	A mysterious woman who helps Waylander in his quest.	Kessa is a healer and seer who has her own reasons for aiding Waylander, and proves to be a valuable ally.
Vardia	A city-state allied with Drenai that plays a key role in the novel.	Vardia is a wealthy and powerful city that has a long-standing rivalry with Moidart's domain.
Briochi	A master assassin and former rival of Waylander.	Briochi is a skilled and ruthless killer who has a history with Waylander, and their paths cross several times throughout the novel.

Historical and political context of the book

While "Waylander" is a work of fantasy fiction and is not set in any specific historical or political context, it is worth considering the broader historical and cultural influences that may have informed its creation.

David Gemmell was a British author who began writing in the 1980s, a decade marked by significant social, economic, and political changes in his home country. In the 1980s, the United Kingdom was led by Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, whose policies of privatization, deregulation, and austerity had a profound impact on British society. The decade was also marked by the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union, as well as by ongoing conflicts in the Middle East and other parts of the world.



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In the fantasy genre, the 1980s saw a resurgence of interest in works that emphasized heroic action, individualism, and the triumph of good over evil. This trend was in part a reaction to the pessimism and moral ambiguity that had characterized much of the genre in the preceding decade.

In this context, "Waylander" can be seen as a product of its time, offering readers a heroic and morally unambiguous tale of adventure and redemption set in a fantastical world. The novel's themes of loyalty, honor, and sacrifice are consistent with the values that many readers and writers of the time admired, and its portrayal of a dark and dangerous world threatened by powerful and malevolent forces may have resonated with readers who saw their own world as similarly fraught with danger and uncertainty.