[Given by Connor to Peter on 9/25/2006, before Peter started his first draft.]

THEMATIC & MISCELLANEOUS NOTES — I'M AFRAID YOU'VE GOT DRAGONS

- Without the influence of the evil wizard, the biggest dragon itself — the awakened King Dragon — is only a threat the way that tornados and severe hailstorms and floods are a threat. The wizard is forcing it to do things it doesn't want to do. It would cheerfully leave men alone and go somewhere else where they aren't, if it had a say in the matter. Just right now it doesn't have a say in the matter.

- "Reginald" is Teutonic in origin, and means "a powerful leader." Pity the Prince doesn't live up to the name his father gave him.

- "Robert" is also Teutonic in origin, and means "one with bright fame." Even when trying to blend in, Robert is accidentally revealing who he actually is.

- Robert's trained dragons are strictly a secret. No one knows he has them but his mother. People would be very upset if they knew he had dragons in his house, especially ones that did things like pour him tea and comb his hair and fix the draperies and stoke the fire and such. The rest of the dragons he captures, though, he sends off to the dragon market and he hates that.

- People in this culture use dragon hide and body parts and teeth. They make things out of dragons, and even do things with the mat. So captured dragons are a commodity. And Robert hates this part of the work, but exterminating was his dad's job, he's inherited it, and *someone* has to do it...which gives us echoes of the prince and his father...a contrast between fathers and sons and doing jobs you don't want to do just because your dad did them.

- Nasty dragons requiring killing are rare and he hates that too, but it has to be done, because they will kill people.

❖ The vast majority of people hate dragons. This is the reason he can't let his little friends be known to the villagers. Dragons are not well thought of. Don't quite know if this approach can be integrated with the idea of dragon-mice being left alone for long periods of time because they aren't troublesome enough to bother the princess and her parents until it is time to impress Reginald. But something can be worked out...per Lefty: SOME PEOPLE LIKE MICE. OTHERS HATE THEM. SOME PEOPLE LIKE LIONS. BUT MOST PEOPLE FEAR THEM. SIZE MATTERS HERE. ALSO FIRE-BREATHING, AND BITE CAPABILITIES. Also DRAGONS AREN'T SUPPOSED TO BE TRAINABLE: THEY TURN ON YOU. THE WIZARD'S MAGIC MAKES HIM AN EXCEPTION. AS DOES ROBERT'S HEART.

❖ A note from David R: The Dragon Market is a serious place. To some extent it represents dark forces and currents in the culture. There is death and destruction. The dragons get sent there to be rendered...

❖ A note from David R: There's kind of an anti-war message going on here. The prince's father is trying to suit him up to fight the noble enemy, the noble fight. But actually the noble enemy doesn't want to fight. The big dragon and the bred dragons are being forced into conflict by their controller, the wizard. The hero is the pacifist who is killing dragons but doesn't like killing dragons, and will eventually unsort this picture for the audience.

❖ David R also observes that Robert is doing his dad's job, but in his mom's way.

❖ While working on the storyline, both David and Connor kept getting flashes of the dragon that Robert really is, that King Dragon soul in him, as opposed to the

human he is allowing himself to pretend to be.

❖ Wizards are very, very rare.

- Anachronism can play a major role in this. It's full of standard fantasy tropes and settings, but definitely turned on their head. There can be unions, independent contractors, lots of businessman/socialist/corporate/entrepreneur talk. You could even have a character in here who was a fast-talking medieval version of

  business consultant, doing anachronistic corporate talk in royal terms...

- Throughout the story, said directly or providing character oomph just below the surface...THE PRIZE, THE MOTIVATION, IS LOVE. ALWAYS LOVE. Even the wizard, evil as he is, is driven by the warped and twisted fragments of a past love.