

# **Autumn Storm (Witchling Series) Study Guide**

**Autumn Storm (Witchling Series) by Lizzy Ford**

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# Plot Summary

Autumn Storm is the second novel in the Witchling Series by Lizzy Ford. In this novel Autumn is a young woman who has recently suffered a car accident and has no memory of her past. Autumn arrives at the Witchling school with no idea of how to participate in the classes with her damaged body and her damaged mind. When Autumn meets the Turner twins it further complicates her situation as she is drawn to both young men. When a jealous ex-girlfriend attacks Autumn to punish her for her relationship with Beck, Autumn faces the hardest test of her life. Autumn Storm is the exciting sequel to Dark Summer, a continuation of Beck and Decker's story that will leave the reader guessing until the end.

Autumn arrives at the Light Campus of Nataniel School with little idea of what to expect in the immediate future. Autumn is an orphan who was recently in car accident forcing her to spend several months in a hospital. Autumn is left with amnesia and a severe limp that makes walking a struggle. The school promises a much needed change, but Autumn is worried how she will fit in when she does not even know who she is.

Autumn goes to her first round of classes but feels clueless when it comes to discussions of magic. To make things worse, everyone around Autumn seems familiar in some way, especially Amber, the head of students, and the attractive Master of Light, Beck Turner. Autumn also begins to have flashes of what could only be memories, but they are memories that seem to belong to someone else. At times, Autumn even sees someone else's face in the mirror, a situation that makes her question her sanity.

Autumn's roommate, Dawn, is an angry, selfish girl who is in the early months of pregnancy. Autumn tries to be nice, but she is put off immediately when Dawn shows no respect for Autumn's few belongings and refuses to respect Autumn's bathroom time. Beck offers to help Autumn with Dawn, but when Autumn learns that Beck is the father of Dawn's baby, it only further complicates things.

Autumn and Beck spend time together and begin to feel drawn to one another. However, when Autumn meets Decker at a football game and later on the Light campus, there is something about him that seems so familiar. Decker, too, is attracted to Autumn. This is something that shocks Decker and leaves him feeling guilty because he recently lost his counterbalance, or soul mate, and feels as though he is betraying her with his attraction to Autumn.

After Autumn gently ends things with Beck, he begins to date another young girl who just came to the school. Dawn becomes outraged when she hears that Beck is dating again. When the girl disappears, Autumn begins seeing her spirit around the school. Eventually she convinces Beck that the girl is in danger and they need to find her. Unfortunately, when they find her, she is dead. Beck can see the girl's final moments of life through his powers as the Master of Light and they show him that Dawn and one of her friends killed the poor girl.



As Beck struggles to deal with the girl's death and Decker struggles with his feelings of guilt regarding his feelings for Autumn, Autumn finds herself in danger. Dawn and her friend lure Autumn out into the woods where they confront her about her relationship with Beck. An argument ensues and Dawn tells Autumn she is going to kill her. Dawn wants to kill Autumn so that Decker will turn on Beck. During the fight Autumn so enrages Dawn that she breaks the laws of Light magic and turns Dark. Beck shows up and helps Autumn break free of Dawn, but then Decker, who has been seduced by the Darkness and is out of control, arrives.

A fight begins between Decker and Beck. Autumn finds herself on the sidelines. Autumn knows she has to save the brothers from one another. Autumn uses her earth magic to pull Decker into the earth and help him heal. When Autumn is successful in saving both Decker and Beck, the earth magic shows her the truth about her identity. It turns out that Autumn is really Summer, Decker's counterbalance, who turned Dark in an attempt to save a pet deer. Summer has gotten a second chance and she has turned herself back to Light. Now Autumn has returned to save Decker from himself and the Darkness that his role as the Master of Dark causes to become a force he often cannot ignore.



# Chapters 1-5

## Summary

### Chapter 1

Autumn Nathaniel arrives at a parking lot in Idaho on her journey to a new school. Two other girls get off the bus with Autumn. No one seems to know for sure what is to happen next, but Autumn has an idea that someone will come get them. Not only is this instinct correct, but Autumn is surprised to realize that she knows where they will be going and what the landmarks look like. Autumn has amnesia and believes she has never been here before, but the sense of familiarity is too strong to ignore.

When they arrive at the school, the Light Campus of the Nataniel School, they are greeted by a woman named Amber who Autumn feels she has met before. Amber shows the girls to a room where she plans to do a brief orientation, but Autumn's leg, damaged from a car accident, causes her to fall behind. A young man called Beck comes up behind her and offers to help, but Autumn is determined to do everything herself. As Amber begins to explain what they do at the school, Autumn begins to have flashes of what could only be called memory. The effort of trying to remember causes her a headache and sometimes a nosebleed, however, and she tries to avoid it. After the brief orientation, Amber shows Autumn to her dorm room where she will be sharing with a girl named Dawn.

Autumn goes through the handbook for a short time before heading down to dinner. Autumn meets more of the students. When she returns to her room, Autumn finds a note from her roommate telling her the girl borrowed one of her sweaters. Frustrated and disoriented, Autumn takes a pain pill and goes to bed where she dreams of death.

### Chapter 2

Decker dreams of the day his counterbalance, Summer, fell to her death off Miner's Drop. It has been months, but Decker is still haunted by that moment. To try to distract himself Decker has been indulging in sex with as many willing partners as possible and throwing himself into his duties as the Master of Darkness.

As the new Master of Darkness, Decker has inherited the souls of all the masters before him. One of the loudest is Bartholomew the Terrible, a man who once suffered the same loss as Decker. Bartholomew wants Decker to be like he was, to embrace the Darkness and do horrible things. Decker resisted this at first, but since Summer's death has decided to accept the inevitable.

Decker visits with his father and grandfather after his nightmare. Decker is embarrassed to realize his father knows he tried to commit suicide some time ago by driving his motorcycle into a cliff, but he did not die because the magic would not allow it until either he or his twin brother produce twins of their own. Decker's grandfather, who has



lost his own wife and a daughter, gives Decker some advice he will draw on in the future: Summer is dead, but he is still alive.

### Chapter 3

After breakfast the next morning, Amber gives each of the girls a piece of clear quartz that is supposed to change color with their touch. Summer's does not. This confuses Amber until she sees that Autumn already has an amulet. Beck comes into the room and approaches Autumn. He can see she is in pain, so he offers to give her some healing magic to help. Amber then begins class, lecturing on the Light laws and the elemental magic. Autumn knows she is an earth and air even though most new students need time to determine their magic.

Autumn's next class is dance. Amber offers to allow her to do something else, but Autumn insists on going to watch. While watching, Autumn is surprised to have a vision of a young man who looks like Beck and the Dark haired girl from her mirror and dreams dancing. It is such an odd vision that it leaves Autumn feeling a little disoriented. Later, after the classes, Autumn walks the school property with one of the other students. She feels odd when she sees a plaque that marks a trail into the woods and is told none of the students is allowed to speak of that area. After the other students leave, Autumn returns to that area, but is stopped by Beck. Beck takes Autumn into the kitchen and they share conversation over cookies.

### Chapter 4

Autumn finally meets Dawn and her friend Sonya. Dawn sets down rules for Autumn that Dawn has already broken in regard to Autumn's things. Dawn then takes over the bathroom after chasing Autumn out after only a few minutes. Beck comes by to make sure he and Autumn are still going to the football game. Autumn chases him off so she can finish dressing. As she dresses, Autumn puzzles over her clothing, clothes she is sure she has never seen before.

At the football Autumn meets several of Beck's friends and is drawn to several of them, particularly Biji. After a time, she and Beck go to get everyone hot chocolate to warm themselves. The line is long, so Autumn goes to the restroom while Beck waits. Autumn tries to get out of the way of three unruly boys, but accidentally trips one with her cane. The boys become enraged and threaten Autumn, but she is saved by a Dark stranger. The stranger turns out to be Beck's twin brother, Decker. Decker and Beck have words before Beck takes Autumn back to safety.

### Chapter 5

Beck finds it difficult to be around Autumn because he thinks she might be Summer. Beck finds himself drawn to her, but he does not want to hurt her by saying something he should not. Beck drops Autumn off and is in deep thought when Dawn comes up on him. Beck and Dawn were once lovers, but have since separated. Dawn claims her baby is Beck's, but he finds himself doubting everything Dawn says. However, when she announces the child is a girl it makes things a little more real for Beck. Dawn wants



to get back with Beck, but he has already realized that is not a good idea and he resists her efforts. When Dawn leaves, Beck goes to his parents' cabin and speaks to his father about the situation.

Dawn wakes Autumn in the middle of the night. Dawn is in a rage because she thinks Beck is dating someone new. Autumn does not have the nerve to tell Dawn Beck's date was with her, not the other new girl, Tanya.

## Analysis

The early chapters of this novel introduce the reader to Autumn, a new girl at the Witchling academy. Autumn has suffered a terrible car accident that has lost her both with amnesia and a terrible injury to her leg. Autumn is in near constant pain as she struggles to get around on the damaged leg. Autumn is stubborn, however, and refuses any help. She does not want to appear to be weak. This attitude will help Autumn as she navigates her way through her new school.

It is important to note at this point in the narration the moments of *déjà vu* for Autumn. Autumn feels as though she has been to the school before, that she knows some of the people there. Autumn also has flashes of memory that cause her to have headaches and the occasional nose bleed. This is important to note because it seems to suggest something more than amnesia brought on from an accident. When there is magic involved, the reader must be weary. It is also significant that Autumn often sees a girl in the mirror she does not know and has never seen anywhere else.

Other important characters in this novel are the Turner twins. Beck and Decker are eighteen year old brothers, the sons of the founders of the Witchling school. Beck is the Master of Light, a Light Witchling who is responsible for all the other Light Witchlings. Decker, on the other hand, is the Master of Dark. Decker is a Dark Witchling who is responsible for punishing Dark Witchlings who break the rules of the Dark. What is significant about Decker's job is that he is often overwhelmed by the Darkness and sometimes it takes over his body. Decker cannot always control what is happening when he is overcome by Darkness. What makes this worse is that Decker is so depressed by the death of his counterbalance that he wants the Darkness to take him over so he no longer has to feel his grief. This could be a very dangerous situation since the Darkness does not have a moral compass.

Another important character introduced in these early chapters is Dawn. Dawn is Beck's former girlfriend and she is pregnant with his child. Dawn is deeply in love with Beck and she will stop at nothing to get him back. Dawn is also a very unkind person who treats other cruelly at times. This combination can only mean trouble for Beck and those around him, including Autumn.

## Discussion Question 1

What are Witchlings? What do they do? Why is there a school for these persons?



## Discussion Question 2

Who is Autumn? What happened to her? How does this affect her daily life?

## Discussion Question 3

Who is Decker? Why is he depressed? How does this affect his actions?

## Vocabulary

Warning, absorbed, suddenly, regret, messing, movements, message, uncertain, refused, deciding, register, pain, ability, magic, ransacking, groggily, secrecy, exactly, normally, imagine, Darkness, common, demanded, understand, frustrates, interesting, foundation, concern, confident, exasperation, financial, relationship.





# Chapters 6-10

## Summary

### Chapter 6

Autumn spends the next morning working out in the school's gym before going to breakfast with some of the other students. Afterward Autumn goes for a walk in the woods where she meets a yeti named Sam. Sam explains the elements to Autumn and the ways of her own elements, earth and air. Afterward Autumn returns to the dorms where Dawn once again causes drama while Autumn is trying to use the bathroom.

Alone after Dawn and her friends leave, Autumn tries to figure out why the school seems so familiar but things that should be familiar, like snow, are not. Autumn goes for another walk in the woods, this time following the path to Miner's Drop. She runs into Decker there. They talk for a few minutes before Beck shows up and encourages Autumn to return to the school. The boys argue over Autumn despite the fact that neither really has a claim to her. The argument is really about everything but Autumn. Afterward, Beck takes Autumn back to the school.

### Chapter 7

Autumn wakes early in the morning to the sound of a voice. When she looks out the window, Autumn can see the girl from the mirror standing in the yard beckoning to her. Autumn follows the girl to Miner's Drop where she sees her lying dead at the bottom. After the image fades, Decker speaks. Decker explains to Autumn what he does as the Master of Darkness. In turn Autumn talks about her accident. Later Decker carries Autumn back to the school where he promises her that if she ever needs help with her pain, both he and Beck will be there for her. Decker kisses her before he leaves, leaving Autumn not only confused by her strong emotions, but also by some memories that threaten to break through the barrier in her mind.

### Chapter 8

Decker returns to his own dorm, confused by the way Autumn felt in his arms. She felt like Summer, but Summer is dead. So Decker buries his emotions by having sex with Dawn's friend, Alexa. Later Decker is called out to deal with some Witchlings who have just turned Dark. When Decker arrives, he sees that there are several Light Witchlings there as well. Decker does not want to hurt them, but the Darkness overtakes him. He kills all but one. When Decker returns to his room he is surprised to find both Alexa and Dawn there in his bed. Afterward Decker returns to Miner's Drop to grieve for Summer. Beck arrives and tries to convince Decker what happened that day is not his fault, but Decker will not hear it.

### Chapter 9



Beck is frustrated to see his brother's hurt and grief. He is also upset about what Decker did to the Light Witchlings. It is Beck's job to protect them, not harm them. What really worries Beck the most is Autumn. Beck goes to sit with her and realizes she is in a great deal of pain. For this reason, Beck pulls her into his arms and allows her to sleep on his body, so his earth magic will enter her body to help calm the pain. Decker arrives and sees what is happening. Decker is jealous and becomes angry, but he cannot deny that Beck is making Autumn much more comfortable.

When Decker leaves, Beck wonders if maybe it would be better to keep Autumn away from Decker. Beck goes into the woods to talk to Sam. Beck talks about a deal he made to bring Summer back but that he is now worried that the deal might have been a mistake. Beck wanted to bring Summer back to save Decker, but he now he is afraid that Decker is not salvageable. Sam tries to console Beck but also stresses that the deal is made and he must live up to his end of it.

## Chapter 10

Dawn is still on a rampage against Beck, convinced that he is seeing Tanya. Sonja tries to be nice to Autumn, but her attempts are overshadowed by Dawn's anger. Biji comes by and shows Autumn a small jewelry box that seems very familiar to Autumn. When Biji gives Autumn two stones from the box Autumn again feels a sense of possession. Biji then tells Autumn how Decker pushed his girlfriend, Summer, off of Miner's Drop. This explains a lot to Autumn about Decker. As they talk Biji admits that she sees Summer sometimes. In fact she can see her at that moment. This surprises Autumn because the person Biji points out is the girl from the mirror Autumn has been seeing since she woke from her coma. Biji says it's the air magic communicating to them. Biji walks Autumn down to Miner's Drop, telling Autumn that she does not know for sure what happened the night Summer died, but she is sure that Dawn and Alexa were involved.

## Analysis

As Autumn tries to find her way in the school she finds herself caught between the Turner twins again and again. It is a difficult situation because Decker is so caught up in the Darkness of his position that he scares Autumn. However, it somehow does not feel right to be with Beck. The two boys are fighting over Autumn as well, each trying to protect her from the other. Decker is doubly struggling with his feelings for Autumn because he had thought Summer was the only person he would ever love, but when he touches Autumn he feels the same things he felt with Summer. Decker does not understand this, but the reader does.

Beck made a deal with Sam after Summer's death to bring her back to take her test again. Beck promised to give up his soul if Summer fails. Beck did this out of the hope that Summer would be able to save Decker from the Darkness. If Summer could do this, she would not only save Decker, but she might stop the deterioration of the Light and keep the Darkness under control. Unfortunately, it seems by Decker's recent actions that it might be too late to save him from the Darkness.



It is also important to note at this point Biji's claim that Dawn and Alexa had something to do with events leading up to Summer's death. No one doubts it was Decker who made Summer fall that day, but some believe that Dawn and Alexa followed Summer out into the woods and did something to cause Summer to turn Dark. At the same time, it is important that the reader notes that Biji also sees Summer. The girl Autumn has been seeing Summer since she woke up from her coma. This seems to connect back to Beck's assertion that Autumn is Summer.

## Discussion Question 1

Why does Beck's magic make Autumn's pain feel better? Why does Beck want to help Autumn? Does he?

## Discussion Question 2

Why does Decker feel guilty about his feelings for Autumn? Should he?

## Discussion Question 3

Why does Biji think Dawn and Alexa had something to do with Summer's death? Who killed Summer? Why would Dawn want to hurt Summer?

## Vocabulary

Confused, listened, appeared, skinny, toned, adamant, realized, attention, epic, surprised, affectionate, interested, previous, storming, waiting, glared, grimaced, jealous, ideal, sense, accept, fortunate, failed, trial, whispered, nursed, clearing, intensity, seated, fawn, forbidden, plaque, elements, promise, unsettled, stillness.



# Chapters 11-14

## Summary

### Chapter 11

The next morning Autumn learns that Beck is going out with Tanya. Autumn is a little disappointed, but she still cannot get Decker out of her head. Later, Amber tells Autumn that Biji will be tutoring her with air magic. After a lecture on the different magics, Biji takes Autumn into the woods and begins to show her some of the things she can do with her air magic. Biji then encourages Autumn to make a snowman with her air magic. When everyone leaves for their double date, Autumn decides to go for a walk without her cane. Autumn makes it to the end of the drive, but becomes very tired on the way back. Decker shows up and encourages Autumn until she makes it all the way back.

### Chapter 12

Decker suddenly seems overcome with the Darkness. Autumn takes his face in her hands and the Darkness recedes. Autumn knows she should be afraid of Decker, but somehow she is not. Instead, Autumn finds herself drawn to Decker more and more. Decker, too, is drawn to Autumn, once again surprised by how her touch makes him respond much as Summer's did. Later, Decker takes more souls and buries himself in Alexa. Alexa told him something during the night Decker does not recall.

### Chapter 13

Autumn wakes to Dawn's screams. Dawn leaves the room, but Autumn discovers that Tanya's form is in the room much the way Summer hangs around. This confuses Autumn because she does not know why Tanya's image would come to her. Later Tanya fails to show up to class. Biji thinks that something bad has happened, but everyone else seems to be assuming Tanya went home and failed to tell anyone.

Autumn goes into the woods and speaks to Sam again. Sam tries to help Autumn figure out how to deal with her feelings for the Turner twins. Beck finds Autumn in the woods and takes her to his parents' cabin. Beck is concerned about a sudden snowstorm that just hit. For this reason, Beck leaves Autumn in the care of his father and grandfather. When Beck's mother, Rania, Rania seems shocked to find Autumn in the house, and her recognition of Autumn does not fail to register with her husband, Michael.

### Chapter 14

Autumn wakes the next morning to find Tanya again in her room. Tanya points to something in the distance, but Autumn does not know what it is. Beck tells Autumn that the school is closed for the day because of the snow storm and asks her to remain at the cabin a little longer. Decker stops by and seems jealous that Beck brought Autumn home. Autumn spends the morning watching movies alone in the media room. When



there is a knock on the door and no one seems to be answering it, Autumn does. It is Alexa looking for Beck or Decker. When Autumn returns to school the following day, Dawn is clearly aware of where Autumn has been and is angry. Dawn warns Autumn to stay away from Beck because Dawn plans to marry him. Later, Decker comes to Autumn to say goodbye, telling her he plans to give himself over to the Darkness. Autumn has a feeling she has failed him in some way.

## Analysis

Tanya and Beck begin dating, making it clear to Autumn that Beck no longer is interested in her. Autumn is jealous at first, but then realizes that her feelings for Decker, no matter how little she understands them, are much deeper than her affection for Beck. At the same time, it only seems safer for Autumn to stay away from Beck since her roommate is clearly insanely jealous and will make more trouble for Autumn than she has so far if she gets involved with Beck.

Tanya disappears a day after going on a date with Beck. No one seems to know where she went, but no one is all that upset. It is close to the holidays and it is possible Tanya went home without telling anyone. Autumn has begun to see Tanya's form, just like she has been seeing Summer's since she woke from her coma. The reader knows that Summer is dead. Perhaps Tanya is showing up because she is also dead. However, Autumn does not think about this. She just thinks that her air magic is trying to tell her something.

Decker has reached a place where he believes he can no longer fight the Darkness. It shows the depth of Decker's feelings for Autumn when he shows up to say goodbye to her. Autumn feels that she has failed Decker in some way, but she is unaware of how she failed him. This seems to be the strongest evidence thus far that Autumn is Summer.

## Discussion Question 1

Who is Biji? Why does she befriend Autumn? How does this friendship benefit Autumn?

## Discussion Question 2

Who is Tanya? Why does Autumn see Tanya in her bedroom? Why does she think this is happening?

## Discussion Question 3

Why does Decker say goodbye to Autumn? Where is he going? What does it say about their relationship that Decker says goodbye to Autumn?



## Vocabulary

Concern, distress, eased, subside, panic, belonged, circled, aware, tremor, effort, emotional, studied, eliminating, features, resist, released, hopeless, connection, admitted, decision, flushed, resolution, access, penetrated, kidnapped, panicking, experienced, inhuman, restrained, irregular, pierced, cheerful, scooted, descended.



# Chapters 15-20

## Summary

### Chapter 15

Beck comes across Decker and Autumn. Beck and Decker argue before Beck takes Autumn back to his parents' cabin. Autumn and Beck talk about Decker. Autumn says that she does not think she wants to be with anyone but Decker. Beck understands. Then Autumn tells Beck about seeing Tanya. Beck asks Autumn to help him find Tanya. Together they drive to the place where Tanya pointed a few mornings before. When they arrive at an empty lodge, Beck goes inside alone. Beck finds Tanya's body tied to a chair. She has been stabbed. When Beck touches Tanya's amulet he can see her final moments. Dawn yelling at Tanya, accusing her of stealing Beck, Alexa stabbing her. Then Sonya calls and tells Beck that Dawn has been acting weird and she thinks Dawn might have hurt Tanya. Beck then calls his parents. His mother instructs him to take Tanya's soul. Beck's parents send Beck to take Autumn home before he goes to break the news to Tanya's parents.

### Chapter 16

In the middle of the night Dawn comes and forces Autumn to go with her to the woods. They go to the clearing in the woods where Dawn confesses she and Alexa injured Summer's fawn to force her to break the rules of the Light. Dawn then tells Autumn that she has to kill her to keep her from coming between her and Beck. Dawn will not do the killing, but Alexa will. Autumn gets Dawn and Alexa talking, causing tension between them. Then Autumn baits Dawn by criticizing her dream of marrying Beck. Dawn and Alexa attack Autumn, but Autumn uses magic to protect herself. Dawn becomes so frustrated that she uses her own magic to hurt Autumn, breaking a rule of Light that causes Dawn to become Dark. Autumn hopes that Decker will show up quickly to punish Dawn so that he might also save Autumn.

The fight continues until both Autumn and Dawn are injured. Decker arrives, but the Darkness has possession of his body. Beck arrives shortly thereafter to protect both Dawn and Autumn. The two brothers begin to fight. Autumn could flee, but she refuses to leave without Dawn.

### Chapter 17

Sam summons Michael and Rania to the woods, but they are only allowed to watch. This is torture for Rania who does not want to see her boys tear one another apart. She has schemed and maneuvered to avoid this moment, but it has come just the same.

### Chapter 18



As Autumn attempts to move Dawn from harm, she sees that the fight between Beck and Decker is growing out of control. Beck is unconscious and Decker is advancing on him. Autumn and Biji use their air magic to keep the boys apart, but it is only enraging Decker. Decker turns on Autumn, threatening to kill her when she grows weak. Instead, Autumn asks the earth magic to heal Decker. Suddenly a hole opens in the ground, and Decker is buried in the earth.

#### Chapter 19

Decker comes to awareness under the ground. He can feel the warm earth magic, but he can also hear Bartholomew telling him that his oblivion is almost there. Decker sees Summer's death, the accident that has made him feel guilty for so long. Decker also sees himself beating Beck. When Decker sees Autumn choose to save him over herself, Beck, and Dawn, he is overwhelmed. Decker realizes he must fight the Darkness or it will take Autumn and his family, just as it did Summer.

#### Chapter 20

When Decker returns, Autumn is relieved to see he has returned to himself. Autumn instructs Decker to take both Dawn and Beck to the hospital. Afterward, Autumn collapses from exhaustion and the pain of her wounds.

## Analysis

Tanya is found dead. Beck knows how she died because her soul shows it to him when he touches her amulet. It was a difficult death and Beck is filled with regret that by dating her he placed her in danger. Beck is also frightened because now he knows what Dawn is capable of and she is carrying his child. It is a difficult moment, one that Beck struggles to deal with. Without the help of his often impersonal mother and his compassionate father, Beck might not have handled it as well as he did.

Dawn believed that Tanya was Beck's new love, but when she learns that Autumn was at his parents' cabin, she becomes obsessed with the idea that Beck is in love with Autumn. For this reason, Dawn drags Autumn into the woods, confesses what she did to both Summer and Tanya, then informs Autumn she is going to kill her. However, Autumn is stronger than Summer and Tanya. She manages to fight Dawn off until Dawn goes into such a rage that she goes Dark by using her magic. This is devastating for Beck because Dawn is pregnant with his child and Dawn's magical state will affect the child.

Beck and Decker show up. Decker is consumed by the Darkness, so he is not fully conscious of what is going on. A fight between the brothers begins. Autumn realizes that Decker will kill Beck and she cannot allow that to happen. Autumn stands up to Decker even as he threatens to kill her. Using her magic, Autumn traps Decker in the earth and asks her magic to heal him. The earth shows Decker what has happened, and he realizes that the Darkness will eventually kill everyone he loves. Decker fights back. For the moment, the Darkness is pushed back.





## Discussion Question 1

Why did Dawn have Alexa kill Tanya? Why did Dawn want Tanya killed? What purpose does it serve?

## Discussion Question 2

Why does Dawn take Autumn into the woods? What is revealed about Summer during this episode? What does the truth reveal to Autumn about Summer and Decker?

## Discussion Question 3

Why does Autumn fight to save Decker even when Decker is the source of the danger? How does Autumn save Decker?

## Vocabulary

Slumped, familiar, remembered, blackness, amber, meant, approached, unconscious, forest, determine, audible, internal, silently, driveway, returned, silent, pleading, desperation, important, instead, present, defeated, exhausted, straightened, forest, involuntarily, intensity, vision, hypothermia, shallow, whispered, escape.



# Chapters 21-24

## Summary

### Chapter 21

As Autumn lies unconscious her elements begin to break down the barrier of her memories. Autumn sees Tarzan and Summer. Summer is the air while Tarzan is the earth. Summer tells Autumn that she passed her second trial. The elements show Autumn Summer's final hours, how she went Dark and then fell from Miner's Drop. Autumn also sees Beck making a deal with Sam, his soul for Summer's second chance. Autumn is Summer, returned by the elements to have a second chance to pass her trial. Summer is the first to successfully come back from going Dark.

Summer wakes in the hospital with Beck and Rania at her side. Summer remembers them. She also realizes that she has returned to her natural form. Rania explains how she cast a spell to make Summer look like Autumn and that she will remove it. Rania then tells Summer that she has a long road ahead of her with Decker. Rania is convinced, however, that Summer is strong enough to face it.

### Chapter 22

Decker sleeps a long time after the fight in the woods. His dreams are varied and center mostly around Autumn and Summer. When Decker and Beck face one another for the first time since the fight, Decker is surprised that Beck is not more angry than he seems to be. Then, Beck takes Decker to the hospital and reveals Autumn's true form. Decker is shocked and angry. Beck explains everything, and Decker becomes ashamed of himself and worried that Summer will not want him after the way he was with Autumn.

### Chapter 23

Michael Turner picks Summer up at the hospital to drive her back to school. Summer is happy to be healed and back to herself, but she is also nervous about how everyone at school will react. Michael tries to reassure her. At the same time, Michael tells Summer that he and his wife have decided to become Summer's guardians until she turns eighteen as long as she promises to be careful in her relationship with Decker. Michael then takes Summer to the school so that she can speak to Decker. First, Summer seeks out Sam. Summer thanks Sam for giving her a second chance. Then, Summer finds Decker. For a minute it looks like Decker will walk away. However, Summer tells him she wants to begin their relationship again. She wants to take things slowly this time. Decker quickly agrees.

### Chapter 24

Beck goes to pick up some new students at the parking lot. Among them are a brother and sister who are neither Light nor Dark. This confuses Beck, especially since he is



drawn to the redheaded beauty. When they arrive at the school, Beck leaves the new students outside to collect their things while he goes in to find Amber. On his way, Beck runs into Dawn. Morgan overhears and expresses some negative feelings for Dawn. Beck really likes Morgan. However, her brother Connor has made it clear to stay away from her. For this reason, Beck tries to push Morgan away, even as Amber assigns him to be her mentor.

## Analysis

Autumn learns from her elements that she is really Summer. Beck had made a deal with Sam to bring Summer back from the Dark. She would be allowed to take on her trial again. No one has ever come back from the Dark before, and it seemed like a losing proposition. But, at the same time, Beck felt it was the best thing he could do to save Decker. After the deal was struck, Rania enchanted Summer so that she would look like Autumn. Then, no one would know her and could not help her. The trial was especially hard because of Autumn's injuries, but Summer managed to pass easily.

After Decker learns the truth about Autumn/Summer, he is ashamed for the way he felt about Autumn and is afraid Summer will not want to be with him. Summer, too, is worried that Decker will no longer want to be with her. However, they are both afraid for silly reasons and quickly overcome their fears to reunite and grow closer than they have ever been.

As Decker and Summer finally find happiness, Beck finds himself embroiled in a legal fight with Dawn. There is little Beck can do to stop Dawn because of the child she is carrying, so he must put up with her anger, her attempts to trap him into a relationship, and the legal process of establishing guardianship of the child when it is born. It is a difficult situation, a bad time for Beck to fall in love. However, when he meets Morgan, Beck is instantly drawn to her. With this, the author sets the groundwork for the next book in the series.

## Discussion Question 1

How did Beck arrange for Summer to have a second chance? Why?

## Discussion Question 2

How does Decker react to learning that Summer has been alive all this time? Is he happy? Did he secretly suspect the truth?

## Discussion Question 3

Who is Morgan? Why is Beck attracted to her? What is different about Morgan? Where might this relationship lead?

## Vocabulary

Carried, frustration, silence, supposed, lawyers, legitimacy, concern, dedication, protecting, instructors, muttered, normally, overprotective, reminded, concentrate, attention, especially, perfume, amber, resisted, combination, abandoned, attracted, reminder, features, response, strangers, elfin, delicate, aura, meters, decreasing.



# Characters

## Autumn Nathaniel

Autumn is an orphan from Idaho who recently suffered a hit and run car accident that has left her with amnesia and with a severely damaged leg. Autumn struggles at the school from the moment she arrives, in part because of the difficulties of the situation, but in part from memories that seem just out of reach. Autumn feels as though she has been at the school before, that she knows Amber, Beck, and Bijji. Not only this, but Autumn sees a girl in the mirror sometimes, a girl she has never met.

Autumn learns of the tragedy of Summer's death as she becomes entangled with both Beck and Decker. Autumn finds herself drawn to Decker in a way she has never felt before. It is as though they are meant to be together, but Decker keeps pulling away. In the end Autumn feels as though her purpose is to save Decker. When Decker and Beck come to blows, Autumn chooses Decker, and she asks the earth to heal his pain. Decker finally sees what would happen if he were to give himself up to the Darkness, so he chooses to stop.

After Autumn successfully saves Decker from the Darkness, she is shown the truth about herself by her elements. Autumn is really Summer. Summer was hidden in Autumn's body by Rania so that Summer can retake her trial without the knowledge of her own identity and previous events. Summer has won. She has become Light again, the first to do so. Summer also wins Decker back.

## Beck Turner

Beck Turner is Decker's twin. Beck is the Master of Light, the first in more than a generation. It is Beck's job to protect the Light Witchlings and the Light source on the campus of the Witchling school. Beck is struggling with his role because it did not come with an instruction booklet and he is still learning all the powers that come with his job. As part of his role, Beck made a deal with Sam, the yeti who works as a kind of go between for the Witchlings and the elements, to bring Summer back from the dead and to give her a second chance to take her trial. Beck believes Summer is the only one who can save Decker. However, as Summer struggles with her trial, Beck begins to wonder if Decker is beyond saving.

## Decker Turner

Decker Turner is Beck's twin. Upon turning eighteen, Decker became the Master of Darkness. This role forces Decker to welcome into his mind the previous masters, voices who often encourage him to do things that go against his moral compass. Decker also must take the lives of those Dark witchlings who break the laws of the Dark. It is a difficult job that often leaves Decker struggling to keep the Darkness at bay. After



Summer's death, however, Decker welcomes the Darkness and hopes to allow it to consume him someday so he does not have to deal with the pain of his role as the Master of Darkness.

## Michael Turner

Michael Turner is Beck and Decker's father. Michael is an earth element, so he is often calm and quiet. Michael is the voice of reason in the Turner family, often talking his boys out of doing crazy things and helping them sort out the trouble in their lives. Michael's main purpose in the family is to keep the Darkness from overwhelming Rania. Michael can do this because he is her match, her counterbalance, her soul mate.

## Rania Turner

Rania Turner is Decker and Beck's mother. Rania was once the Mistress of Darkness. In this role, Rania did many things she is not proud of, one of which was when she killed her own twin sister. In part, because of Rania's reign as the Mistress of Darkness without the counterbalance of the Mistress of Light, the source of Light under the Light Campus is dwindling. Now Decker has taken over as Master of Dark, but his grief over Summer is causing him to allow a free reign to the Darkness, leading to more damage. Rania can see where Decker is headed, and she wants to stop it. To do this, Rania helps Beck bring back Summer and watches as the plan she put into place begins to unfold, frustrated she can do nothing to save either of her sons.

## Dawn

Dawn is a beautiful blond girl who once worked as a professional model. Beck and Dawn dated for a time. Dawn is now pregnant, and she claims the child is Beck's. Dawn wants to reconnect with Beck, hoping to become a family with him. Beck is resistant, however, because Dawn can often be cruel. As Beck continues to fend off Dawn's attempts to reconcile, Dawn becomes obsessed with him, determined to keep all other girls from him. Dawn kidnaps Tonya, a new girl at the school who went on a single date with Beck, and has her friend Alexa kill her to keep her from Beck. Later, Dawn tries to do the same to Autumn. Autumn, however, saves Dawn to protect Beck's baby, leaving it open for Dawn to come after Beck and his ladies again.

## Biji

Biji is an air Witchling. Biji was Summer's best friend. Biji befriends Autumn in part because Amber has assigned Biji to be Autumn's mentor and in part because Beck befriended Autumn. Biji proves to be a good source of information on the air element for Autumn. In the end, Biji is present when Dawn and Alexa try to kill Autumn and she proves to be somewhat helpful in saving Autumn.



## Summer

Summer was the heroine of the first book of this series, but she died after she turned Dark and accidentally fell from Miner's Drop. Decker and Summer were soul mates, a counterbalance to one another, so Decker grieves for her constantly. Summer was the only person who could help calm the Darkness in Decker. In the end, however, the reader learns that Beck made a deal with Sam to bring Summer back and give her a second chance to pass her trial. Suffering amnesia and stuck in a broken body, Summer manages to just that, becoming the first person to return from Darkness.

## Alexa

Alexa is a friend of Dawn's. Alexa is a Dark Witchling who is often a companion of Decker's. Due to the fact that Alexa is already Dark, Dawn often has her do her dirty work. This includes having Alexa kill Summer's fawn, stab Tanya, and help kill Autumn. Alexa proves to have something of a conscience, however, as the reader suspects she tried to go to Decker with the murder of Tonya.

## Tonya

Tonya is a new student who comes to the Light Campus at the same time as Autumn. Tonya develops a crush on Beck the first time she sets eyes on him. After a time, Beck is drawn to Tonya as well, and they go out on a single date. A few days later, Beck finds Tonya stabbed to death in an abandoned ski lodge. Beck's ex-girlfriend kidnapped Tonya and had Alexa kill her.



# Symbols and Symbolism

## Amulet

All the Witchlings wear an amulet around their necks that contains a portion of their soul. Autumn arrives at the school with an amulet already, but most of the students do not receive the amulet until their first days at school.

## Crepes

Beck and Decker's grandfather is famous for making crepes for breakfast.

## Handbook

Autumn gets a handbook when she first arrives at the school that explains the basics of the elements and the magic.

## Memorial Plaque

There is a memorial plaque on a tree that sits before the path that leads to Miner's Drop. Autumn never reads the plaque, but it is implied that it is to Summer who died when she fell from Miner's Drop.

## Sweaters

Dawn likes Autumn's sweaters and often borrows them without asking.

## Jewelry Box

Autumn continuously thinks of a jewelry box that she thinks belongs to her. However, she cannot remember ever seeing it. Then, when Biji shows Autumn a small wooden box, Autumn recognizes it as her own even though Biji tells her it belonged to Summer.

## Stones

Biji gives Autumn two stones that belonged to Summer that are supposed to help her.

## Cane

Due to her car accident, Autumn is forced to walk with a cane.





## Scars

Autumn and Beck's grandfather have a scar contest in which they compare scars to see who has suffered the most. Beck's grandfather says Autumn is the first to match his scars.

## Knife

Dawn and Alexa attempt to kill Autumn with a knife.



# Settings

## Nataniel School

Most of the novel is set on the Light Campus of the Nataniel School for Witchlings. This school is designed to teach Witchlings to identify their elements and to learn to master them. Autumn arrives at this school and has a feeling of familiarity, as though she has been there before when she knows that is impossible. The school was founded by the Turners, and they continue to shoulder most of the budget.

## Turner Cabin

Michael and Rania Turner live in a cabin near the school with Rania's father. Beck and Decker both visit the cabin often to ask advice of their parents, especially Michael whose earth magic makes him a calming influence.

## Woods

Many of the characters spend a lot of time in the woods beside the Light Campus. This is where the yeti Sam lives and where the earth and air Witchlings can commune best with their elements. This is also where Summer turned Dark in an attempt to save her fawn and where Dawn and Alexa try to kill Autumn.

## Miner's Drop

Miner's Drop is where Summer fell to her death. Many believe that Decker intentionally pushed Summer to her death because she had turned Dark. However, Decker accidentally pushed her as he reached out to save her.

## Abandoned Ski Lodge

Dawn and Alexa kidnapped Tonya and took her to an abandoned ski lodge to torture her. Alexa stabbed Tonya repeatedly, killing her. Beck finds Tonya here a few days later after Autumn tells him that she has seen Tonya's spirit pointing to the place.



# Themes and Motifs

## Dark versus Light

The main theme of this novel is Dark versus Light. There are two types of elemental magic, that inspired by and which feeds Light magic and that inspired by and fed by Darkness. Most Witchlings are born in the Light, but as they learn to use their magic they must pass a trial. If they fail the trial, or break one of the Light magic rules, they will turn Dark. There are also rules for Dark Witchlings. When they fail to follow the rules, they are killed by the Master of Darkness.

The battle between Light and Dark is not as intense in this novel as it might be. The Masters of Light and Dark are twin brothers, best friends once who do not wish to battle one another. However, the nature of their roles makes them natural adversaries. Beck, the Master of Light, tries to keep things civil with his brother, working with him instead of against him. Unfortunately, Decker is losing the battle with Darkness personally, allowing it to take control of him and lose his moral compass.

The struggle between Light and Dark in this novel is more like sibling rivalry. Beck loves Decker and wants him to be happy, but he cannot allow him to use his power as the Master of Darkness to kill the innocent. This leads to an eventual confrontation, not unlike the one that took place between their mother and Aunt Nora. This time, however, Rania is determined that her children will not destroy one another as she did her own sister. This is why Rania brought back Summer and why she stands on the sidelines hoping all her plans have worked.

## Soul Mates

In the Witchling culture, each Master of Darkness has a counterbalance, a soul mate, who helps to take away the pain that comes with the Darkness. For Decker, this counterbalance was Summer, but Summer died. Only one other Master of Darkness ever lost his counterbalance. That man, Bartholomew the Terrible, went insane and became a cruel and demanding master. Bartholomew wants Decker to do the same.

As Decker struggles with his grief over Summer, he begins to listen to Bartholomew's demands that he give himself over to the Darkness. Decker is soon convinced that this is the only way to escape the pain of Summer's death. However, when Decker finds himself attracted to Autumn, he begins to wonder if it is possible to have two counterbalances. It never occurs to Decker that Autumn and Summer are one in the same until the proof is handed to him by his brother.

Decker needs Summer because she keeps him from allowing the Darkness to take over and helps him remain focused on the moral side of his work. Without Summer, Decker would be lost to the Darkness. It is this simple fact that makes soul mates a theme of the novel.



## Responsibility

Beck has only just recently become the Master of Light. It is a difficult job with a great many responsibilities that Beck finds daunting. There is no manual that tells him everything he needs to do, he has to figure it out as he goes along. Beck feels as though he is failing, first with the death of Summer and later when Decker kills several Light Witchlings.

Decker, too, has only risen to his job as the Master of Darkness. It is a terrible job that forces Decker to act as judge, jury, and executioner. The pain of what he does is sometimes so overwhelming that he cannot handle it. The responsibility is such a heavy burden that Decker welcomes the Darkness and the oblivion that comes with surrendering to it.

Responsibility is not always an easy thing. Both of the Turner twins have discovered this, and they struggle under the weight of it. However, they both keep fighting and keep trying to do the right things. It is this that makes responsibility a theme of the novel.



# Styles

## Point of View

The novel is written in the third person point of view. The author uses several narrators, including the three main characters and several of the minor characters. The author does not use a consistent pattern in her choice of who will narrate, instead moving unpredictably from character to character to show elements of her story that seem vital to the plot.

The point of view of this novel works with the plot because it allows the reader to have an intimate view of each of the three main characters. The reader can understand better the motives of each of these characters when they can see the inner workings of their thoughts. The author also uses some minor characters in her story to show elements that might not be available to the reader otherwise, but might be important to the development of the plot.

## Language and Meaning

The language of this novel is simple English. The author uses some language that is unique to her novel in order to express the special elements of the genre. The novel is intended for young adults, therefore much of the language is simple enough so that even the youngest readers will not have trouble understanding it.

The language of this novel works with the plot because it uses strange words to help bring the world of magic that is the center of the plot to life. The author also uses the language of the novel to bring her characters to life, to make them seem more realistic to the reader. The language, while a bit too simplistic at times, works well with the plot.

## Structure

The novel is written in twenty-four chapters. It is told in both narration and dialogue, showing a story rather than telling it. The plot takes place in a linear fashion with a few bits of back story to better explain the events taking place.

The novel contains one main plot and several subplots. The main plot follows Autumn Nathaniel as she arrives at the school for Witchlings and tries to fit in while struggling with amnesia and a badly injured leg. A subplot follows Decker Turner and his struggle with grief after losing his counterbalance, Summer. Another subplot follows Dawn's attempts to make Beck return to her and be a family with her unborn child. All the plots come to a satisfying conclusion at the end of the novel.



## Quotes

After eight weeks in the hospital and another month in physical therapy, she was tired of people asking if she needed help.

-- Autumn (Chapter 1 paragraph 11)

**Importance:** This describes Autumn's attitude toward her injured leg.

Without Summer, Darkness was all that truly soothed his misery.

-- Decker (Chapter 2 paragraph 11)

**Importance:** This explains why Decker has decided to surrender to the Darkness rather than continuing to fight it.

Steeling herself, she wiped the mirror down. The pretty girl with long, dark hair—who looked nothing like her!—was there.

-- Autumn (Chapter 4 paragraph 19)

**Importance:** This quote shows how Autumn reacts each time she sees Summer staring at her from the mirror.

Magick, she reminded herself. It was everywhere.

-- Autumn (Chapter 6 paragraph 36)

**Importance:** This quote shows Autumn's struggle to adjust to the use of magic.

The ocean. The brief image in her mind brought with it a headache.

-- Autumn (Chapter 6 paragraph 145)

**Importance:** This quote illustrates what happens when Autumn tries too hard to remember things, especially things that go against what she knows of her past.

The voices in his head were at a scream that threatened to drive him to the ground.

-- Decker (Chapter 8 paragraph 1)

**Importance:** This quote illustrates the voices that Decker inherited when he became the Master of Darkness and how it affects him emotionally.

Lately, Decker sensed the ancient Dark Master—the last who'd surrendered to the Darkness—didn't like Autumn at all.

-- Decker (Chapter 12 paragraph 4)

**Importance:** Decker does not believe Bartholomew likes Autumn, the first clue that Autumn has the power to keep Decker from surrendering to the Darkness.



Orion. Scorpio. Why did she know them?  
-- Autumn (Chapter 14 paragraph 2)

**Importance:** Autumn slept in Decker's room, and a part of her recognizes it from the time she spent with him when she was Summer. This shows that the connection between Summer and Decker is so strong that it stretches across the mental block that keeps Autumn from the truth.

She wasn't certain what emotions were hers anymore, but she hurt so badly for him.  
-- Autumn (Chapter 16 paragraph 25)

**Importance:** This quote shows the growing bond between Autumn and Decker, so close she can feel his emotions.

If things went as badly as she expected, she'd be headed down the same path as Decker, once Michael left her for destroying the lives of their kids.  
-- Rania (Chapter 17 paragraph 12)

**Importance:** This quote not only reveals that Rania put into motion most of what has led to Decker and Beck's monumental fight, but that she fears she was wrong and it will end with Beck's death.

He was rested, unlike the weeks in which he relied on valium to knock him out.  
-- Decker (Chapter 22 paragraph 2)

**Importance:** This quote shows the difference after Autumn asked the earth to heal Decker of his pain.

He still wasn't able to understand exactly how to juggle his duty—which put him at odds with what Decker was—and his friendship with his brother.  
-- Beck (Chapter 24 paragraph 6)

**Importance:** This quote illustrates the struggle that still exists for Decker and Beck as they learn the ropes of their new roles.