

The Adoration of Jenna Fox Study Guide

The Adoration of Jenna Fox by Mary E. Pearson

(c)2015 BookRags, Inc. All rights reserved.



Contents

The Adoration of Jenna Fox Study Guide.....	1
Contents.....	2
Plot Summary.....	3
California through Remembering (pg. 3 - 28).....	4
Visitors through Plea (pg. 29 - 50).....	7
A Walk through Ethan (pg. 51 - 73).....	10
Allys through Contents (pg. 74 - 105).....	12
Choice through Lily (pg 106 - 133).....	15
Species through Telling (pg. 134 - 165).....	18
Would They Ask That of Someone Who Was Real? through Environment (pg. 166 - 197).....	21
Backup through Listening (pg. 198 - 223).....	24
The Accident through They Know (pg. 224 - 248).....	27
Leaving and Staying through Two Hundred and Sixty Years Later (pg. 249 - 265).....	30
Characters.....	32
Objects/Places.....	37
Themes.....	39
Style.....	42
Quotes.....	44
Topics for Discussion.....	46

Plot Summary

"The Adoration of Jenna Fox" is a story of how far parents will go to save their only child, and of how far a child will go to become her own person. Jenna Fox is adored by her family, but their adoration goes too far when they scientifically modify her after an accident to save her life, to the point she is barely human. Jenna struggles to discover what is it that defines a human, and therefore, what it is that defines herself as her journey for personal freedom unfolds.

"The Adoration of Jenna Fox" by Mary E. Pearson is a combination of science fiction, coming of age, and romantic elements, combined with questions of ethical and moral significance that makes the novel an important read. Jenna Fox wakes from what she is told was a year long coma to find she recalls little of her life. Over the course of time, she begins to gain some memory, but the recollections she discovers do not fit in with what she is being told. Her parents clearly adore her, but her grandmother seems aloof, and Jenna finds she can not recall having any friends or other family. As Jenna grows stronger, her demands do as well, but she finds at times she seems almost powerless over the will of her parents.

When Jenna is finally allowed to attend school, she is taken to a progressive school for children who have been scientifically altered or are otherwise different. Jenna learns she too has been modified by Blue Goo or Bio Gel, a substance that doctors use to help substitute organs and limbs when they are damaged or ill. Bio Gel can be used for nearly everything in the body, but to control the modifications of humans, the Federal Science Ethics Board limits each person to a point system, where each is only allocated one hundred points. A Bio Gel heart, for example, is worth thirty five points. Jenna learns through her grandmother, that following a severe accident, Jenna should have died. The friends in the car with her died. But Jenna's father, the inventor of Bio Gel, was able to save ten percent of her brain and was able to use Bio Gel to rebuild Jenna's body using that saved part. He uploaded brain scans of her memories into computers, and then used those scans to download the information into the new brain and body.

When Jenna learns her parents have retained backup copies of her own brain scan, as well as those of her friends, Jenna realizes she must set them free. She herself is torn, unsure if she is human or has a soul, but she does know that the backup copies are in limbo, merely waiting to die. With the help of her new friends and her grandmother, Jenna destroys the backups, leaving just her own modified body to either survive or perish as a normal person would experience. When another friend, Ally, begins to die from internal disease, Jenna's father again uses Bio Gel to recreate her, thereby violating the laws again, but saving her life. Two hundred years later, Jenna and Ally still live, educating the world about others like them. "The Adoration of Jenna Fox" shows not only the lengths parents will go to in order to save a child, but also debates the idea of what components make us human beings.



California through Remembering (pg. 3 - 28)

California through Remembering (pg. 3 - 28) Summary

In "California," Jenna Fox sits with her mother, watching a presidential speech, lamenting that she doesn't know anything of how to make proper facial expressions. She also notes that Lily, her grandmother, seems to hate her. She used to call her Nana, she learns. In "Awareness", Jenna discusses a time in blackness where she cannot see, hear, feel, touch, or taste, but is aware of darkness and silence that makes her wish to die.

In "Waking," Jenna reveals she has woken two weeks ago from a year long coma, resulting from an accident. For the first few days, her body and mind flailed uncontrollably, but settled eventually. She began to be able to walk, move, and speak over the course of a few days, with her father always near her. Lily laments that Jenna's gait is still not natural, but Jenna's parents ignore her. Jenna can remember nothing of her life, including her parents, Lily, or her past. "Time" informs readers that Jenna doesn't know some of the simplest of words, and she wonders where those words may have gone.

"Order" opens with Jenna looking up the word curious. She notes she has been working with Mother on learning the details of her life, but she has no recollections. Her mother gives her a box of videos to watch, as her parents recorded much of her life. She watches the videos in order, somewhat repulsed that there are thousands of hours of video. She learns she was the only child of three to survive pregnancy. She watches her three year old birthday party, and can't relate to the young girl in the video. Lily enters the room, and reminds her she can watch the videos out of order, suggesting she start with the last video. When she leaves, Jenna decides to watch them in order instead.

"Widening" reveals Jenna is beginning to question why those around her seem so strange, and why she has no life memories, but can recall details of the French Revolution. In "Day Sixteen", Mother leaves the house to interview workmen, as she is a home restoration specialist. Jenna cannot eat yet, and her parents claim this is because she was fed through a tube for a year. When pressed as she leaves, Mother notes they moved from Boston to California so Jenna could recover in a quiet place, but Jenna realizes she is lying.

"My Room" finds Jenna going to her room as her mother asks after an argument, almost in spite of herself. In the huge home, only a few rooms are furnished and many, Jenna has found, are locked. Her room has nothing personal within it, and no color. Out the window she sees a neighbor, as she wonders if this bare room is all there is to Jenna Fox. "A Question I Will Never Ask Mother" reveals Jenna wondering if she had friends,



as she cannot remember them. There is no evidence in the room that anyone but her family cared about her, and she wonders who Jenna was.

In "More," Jenna is still finding it difficult to walk properly, but she manages to quietly escape from Lily's watch. Lily used to be chief doctor at Boston University hospital, but quit and now, she spends time gardening. Jenna wonders why she would change so drastically. Jenna herself has never been beyond her own yard, and as she looks at the house, she wonders why, in a year, Mother and Father have not made any repairs to the run down home. Determined, Jenna walks through the woods to Mr. Clayton Bender's home, a neighbor Mother declares is odd. When they meet, Mr. Bender introduces himself to his "new neighbor", and Jenna wonders if they have really been there a year, as her family claims. As the two talk, Jenna realizes she can recount historical facts about the deadly California earthquake, the Aureus epidemic, and the second depression nearly perfectly, and she wonders why she knows this information so deeply. Mr. Bender also reveals the family moved in only two weeks ago. He tries to help Jenna feed his birds, but they appear afraid of her. As they part ways, Mr. Bender admonishes Jenna to be careful as there are some in the neighborhood who are not safe.

In "Known," Jenna is pleased to finally have a friend as she walks home. However, when she steps in the small pond, her world suddenly flips upside down, and she screams, as she feels herself drowning. She is terrified, but when shaken by Lily, she realizes she is dry, and only slightly cut where her knee scraped a rock. "Remembering" reveals Jenna's episode in the previous section was actually a memory. As she, Mother, and Lily argue at the table, Lily reveals that Jenna nearly drown as a two year old. While Mother doesn't think she could remember that, Jenna knows she has full recall of the event, and Lily talks of her nearly drowning as though it occurred to someone else. Jenna shocks them by being able to recall the flavor of snow cone Lily was purchasing when Jenna slipped away, and although Mother is pleased, Jenna realizes something is very wrong.

California through Remembering (pg. 3 - 28) Analysis

In this first section, readers meet Jenna Fox and are introduced to the mystery that surrounds this young woman. It is clear from the very beginning that something is very wrong within the Fox family. Between Jenna's clear confusion, loss of memory, and some of her very detailed memories of history, it is obvious something is not right. This feeling deepens when Mother seems so desperate for Jenna's acceptance, and when Lily's behaviors seem so standoffish. Both Father and Mother dote on Jenna, but they also seem to be keeping secrets from her. Her completely nondescript room, her colorless clothing, and her complete lack of any sign of friends or other family even furthers the idea that something is not right, as is her mother's clear lying, and Mr. Bender's certainty that the family has not lived in the house more than a few weeks.

There are also several foreshadowing moments in these sections that hint at what may be happening to Jenna. Her flailing limbs, her inability to walk properly, her lack of some simply vocabulary, while still recalling retailed historical data, foreshadows the



knowledge that her body is not hers, and parts of her memories have been uploading, providing a much clearer focus than others would have. Her ability to remember things very early in life also foreshadows some of the issues her Father didn't think of when he uploaded her brain.

This section also introduces the idea that Jenna's family may have adored their daughter a bit too much. It is clear from the thousands of hours of video that Jenna's parents obsessed over her, and also clear from Jenna's reactions that she constantly felt pressure to perform. This theme continues throughout the novel, and serves as a basis to understand why the Fox's saved their daughter illegally when she nearly died.

Lily's reactions to things also foreshadow discoveries later in the novel. Lily is clearly intelligent, and seems kind enough, but her aversion to Jenna is nearly palpable. Her comments suggest she is not only angry with the Fox family, but that Jenna is somehow not normal, and not right. These comments show Lily's aversion to whatever has occurred to Jenna, and Jenna's concern over it indicates a previous close relationship with Lily. This foreshadows knowledge of their relationship later in the novel.

The conversations with Mr. Bender not only add insight into Jenna's fears, but also foreshadow several upcoming events. His comments about when Jenna moved in, combined with his clear knowledge about her life, indicate there is more to Mr. Bender than first appears. Further, his birds' aversion to Jenna further suggest there is something unnatural about her. Finally his comments about strange neighbors foreshadows the coming of Dane in later chapters, and the ease with which Jenna communicates with him foreshadows their growing relationship in the novel.

The final scene in the novel clearly indicates the level to which there is something amiss about Jenna Fox. Her clear memory of an event that occurred to her in early childhood is strange, considering her overall lack of any memories. Additionally, Lily's comments here suggest her cut is something strange, and her tendency to speak of Jenna as though she is not there further underlines the mystery. Finally, Mother's distinct fear of Jenna leaving the house, and her immense pleasure that Jenna remembered anything show her desperation for Jenna to get well. When combined with the scene where Jenna doesn't want to go to her room, but finds her feet taking her there when Mother commands, suggest perhaps something highly strange is happening.



Visitors through Plea (pg. 29 - 50)

Visitors through Plea (pg. 29 - 50) Summary

In "Visitors," Jenna remembers her friends, Kayla and Locke, but cannot remember where they are. "Timing" reveals Jenna and Lily traveling to town together, as Lily has errands. Jenna remembers several things along the way, and she finds herself asking Lily if the family is wealthy. She admits they are, due to her father's invention of a product called Bio Gel. When she presses Lily about the neighbors, she admits they have only lived in the house a little over two weeks. Jenna realizes this is exactly how long she has been awake, and wonders how this coincidence is possible, but questions only herself, feeling she needs to be careful. This feeling returns in "Agreement" as Jenna admits she never asks about the accident, as she seems to intrinsically know she is not supposed to.

In "Inside," Jenna confronts Lily as they arrive at their destination, and Lily informs her she does not hate her, but merely doesn't "have room" for her. Lily takes her inside the mission, and Jenna is suddenly remembering her own baptism at two weeks of age, and her grandfather. When asked, Lily admits her husband died in the Aureus epidemic, and when pressed about why she left medicine, Lily clearly stiffens in anger, noting that the regulations are necessary, but there are those who feel above the law. When her husband died, and she began to see native plant populations dying out as a result of their genetically modified counterparts, she stopped being a doctor. In the mission, Father Rico and Lily discuss their passion, that of pure and unadulterated seeds of plants. When Jenna is nearly approached by a good looking young man in the courtyard, she immediately turns away, knowing Lily would disapprove, but is immediately angry with herself for doing so.

In "Go To Your Room,, Jenna announces she is planning to attend school. Her mother denies her, but she is adamant. Her mother calmly tells her to go to her room, and against her own will, Jenna does so, but collapses in anger and despair on the landing. She hears Lily admonishing her mother in the kitchen, asking when she will admit her mistake. Her mother, who she learns is named Claire, reminds Lily she too used medicine for her child, in that Claire was a baby born from in vitro. Lily reminds her Jenna's situation is drastically different, and explains that Jenna wants a life. She reminds Claire they saved Jenna to give her life. Claire, however, reminds Lily they have to be careful, for Jenna's sake and for others. Jenna returns to her room and remembers she didn't call her mother, she called her Claire.

In "Jenna Fox / Year Ten," Jenna admits she is aggravated by her mother, but still thinks Lily hates her. As she watches videos of her tenth year, she notices a scar on her chin in the pictures. Jenna now has no scar, and she wonders how it could have just disappeared. As time goes by in "A Glimpse", Jenna uses her netbook to learn more about Mr. Bender, but she finds when she tries to find information about Jenna Fox online, there are thousands with the same name. She gives up, and remembers Kara



and Locke and she at the Commons, skipping a lecture and feeling guilty, yet excited. Jenna wonders again what has happened to the friends she once had.

"A Curve" shows Claire is not unreasonable, as she announces Jenna will be attending the local small charter school, as she requested. Jenna is shocked, but admits she is happy about the decision. Mother also suggests she go for a walk, and Jenna is grateful, but notices as Lily crosses herself in prayer. In "Plea", Jenna again hears prayers, only these are desperate, sobbing cries to Jesus. Jenna realizes she is again in the dark place she remembers, and she is listening to the cries of Lily.

Visitors through Plea (pg. 29 - 50) Analysis

This section shows both the development of Jenna's new personality as well as reveals even more questions about what has really happened to her. Her memories of her friends, Kara and Locke, show she was loved, and the time frame of the memories is recent, indicating they were friends at the time of the accident. Combined with the dreams of the two calling to Jenna to hurry, this foreshadows the knowledge later that Kara and Locke were her friends who were killed in the accident. For now, though, these voices tend to direct Jenna's decisions, as the unconscious mind might do.

In these sections, Lily's opinions become more clear, making her easy to understand once the secret of Jenna is revealed. Lily very clearly adored her granddaughter, but, as she herself notes, she said goodbye to her eighteen months previously, following the accident. Her comments about ethics, medicine, and people being above the law foreshadow the knowledge of Jenna's parents' crimes in saving her. Additionally, her comments about plants and the disaster of the Aureus epidemic show her opinions at this stage in her life are to reject things that are not pure, or untainted by science. Combined with the knowledge that Jenna's father is the inventor of Bio Gel, one begins to see what may be happening in the novel. It becomes more clear that the Fox's used some illegal form of medicinal care to save Jenna, and Lily clearly disapproves.

Jenna's decision to stand up for herself in "Inside" with the young man in the courtyard, which readers later learn is Ethan, is countered by her inability to stand up to her mother in "Go To Your Room." This clear override of Jenna's own desires through mere words suggests something sinister is happening. It is obvious Jenna is not the only person controlling her behaviors. This fear continues as she hears Lily and her mother in the kitchen. This argument solidifies the idea that the Fox's have done something illegal, and that Jenna is somehow either a danger to herself or to others. It is surprising to hear Lily standing up for Jenna, but it is also clear Lily is beginning to care, albeit unwillingly, about the young woman.

The confusion continues when Jenna realizes in "Jenna Fox / Year Ten" that her scar has disappeared. She understands her parent's pushing of her as she watches the videos, noting she is far busier than she can imagine, and she is struck by the obvious contrast in her new life. Again, it is obvious something is amiss. However, this almost seems to be merely an incorrect feeling in "A Curve", when Claire agrees to allow Jenna



to go to school. One might be tempted to see this as a sign that Claire is merely being overprotective and is beginning to loosen up, but Lily's sign of the cross shows she, too, is worried about this change in circumstance.

Finally, Jenna's recollections from her time in the coma are beginning to solidify and show a disturbing trend. She recalls her grandmothers sobbing, praying, and crying, and it is very clear Lily is extremely upset. This is a massive difference from the present Lily, so one is left to wonder what may have happened to change their relationship so drastically.



A Walk through Ethan (pg. 51 - 73)

A Walk through Ethan (pg. 51 - 73) Summary

In "A Walk," Jenna leaves the house, and walks to Mr. Bender's, excited to be starting school. She is apprehensive, as she recalls Claire saying they had to be careful to protect others. She meets several neighbors on the way, although they all seem odd to her, and meets a young man named Dane, whom she seems attracted to. In "Persona," Jenna is happy to see Mr. Bender, but as the two talk, he admits he has found information about her. She too admits she looked him up on the internet, and knows he cannot be Clayton Bender, as Mr. Bender was nearly ninety. Clayton admits he took Bender's name when the man died thirty years previously, and with it took over his artistic life. As he notes his discoveries of her on the net, Jenna is surprised to find her hands seem foreign to her. He explains she was in an accident where she was not expected to survive. When he says "accident", Jenna finds she is unstable, almost as if on cue, but she quickly overcomes it.

In "Jenna Fox / Year Twelve," Jenna recalls flavor as she watches a video of drinking hot chocolate. She races downstairs to the cupboard, anxious to try some, as she remembers her love for it. She is thrilled as she remembers how to make it, but when Lily and Claire walk in, they are horrified, and scream to stop her. "Taste" reveals Jenna is questioning her new memories, including that of taste, as she informs readers that her chocolate had no flavor. She has no ability to taste.

At school the following day in "School," Jenna consoles her mother as she drops her off at the local charter school, a very small system concentrated on ecosystems. In "Dane", Jenna meets Mitch, the charter secretary. After paperwork, she is led to a small classroom, where she meets Ethan, the young man she saw at the mission. She also meets a young woman in leg braces named Allys, a young man named Gabriel, and Dane, the charming young man from her neighborhood. She soon learns the group dislikes Dane, and that they are all considered "freaks" by Dane. In "Ethan," Jenna conferences with Dr. Rae, the lead collaborator, and learns that while the charter school is self-paced, they all lead various subject lessons. Jenna is surprised to discover she knows detailed historical accounts, and can recite Walden word for word. Later, she offends Ethan by correcting his interpretation of the book, and she is shamed, as she wants to make friends. At lunch, however, it is Ethan who invites Jenna to join them.

A Walk through Ethan (pg. 51 - 73) Analysis

These sections further show the development of Jenna, as she slowly determines who she is and what she wants. From "A Walk", it is clear Jenna is still lacking in social skills, but also clear she is desperate for friendships. The appearance of the attractive young man in the neighborhood foreshadows the introduction of Dane later in this selection of sections as well. "Persona" reveals much about Clayton Bender, although his story



seems slightly off in terms of truthfulness. The knowledge that he left everything behind him to take on a new persona allows him to relate well to Jenna, and he seems to really understand her issues. His answers to her questions about herself, however, are clearly incomplete, foreshadowing revelations later in the novel about what and who Clayton really is.

Jenna's response to the word "accident" is frightening and again implies someone is controlling Jenna other than herself at times. She is able to push past it, but this does foreshadow knowledge later about concepts her parents "programmed" into her brain. Additionally, the knowledge Jenna was not believed to be able to survive her accident again forces the reader to question what, exactly, the Fox family did to save their daughter. This question comes again when Jenna discovers she has no taste ability in "Jenna Fox / Year Twelve" and "Taste." Although her memories are returning, her sense of normalcy continues to deteriorate.

This series of chapters also introduces a host of new characters, including Dane, Allys, Ethan, and Rae. First, however, the scene between Jenna and Claire in the car in "School" is another example of Claire's lack of strength in the novel. Jenna is able to force Claire into a weakened position merely by calling her "Claire" as she recalls doing before. This is clearly disrespectful, but it also clearly hurts Claire to a deep degree. The shame Jenna feels at this indicates she does love her mother, and her pacification of her in this scene conveys that Jenna does care deeply for her mother. On the other hand, again readers see Claire is constantly attempting to gain her daughter's love and admiration.

The school is not at all what one would expect and it is immediately obvious that this school is not a place for "normal" children. This foreshadows the knowledge later that all students have something abnormal about them. Dane, seen in Jenna's neighborhood, proves to be a charming yet somehow dangerous individual the others seem not to like. He is blunt with his comments, and seems to enjoy hurting the feelings of others. His comments about how Jenna walks are the first she hears regarding this, and she is surprised to learn she does not walk normally. Ethan, on the other hand, first seen at the monastery, seems intelligent and intense. Jenna, too, proves to be intelligent, but her ability to pull almost encyclopedia-like facts from memory, and entire books, suggests something is amiss. She and Ethan immediately have issues, but his invitation for lunch shows these characters may develop friendships.



Allys through Contents (pg. 74 - 105)

Allys through Contents (pg. 74 - 105) Summary

In "Allys," Jenna is surprised at lunch when her new friend removes her artificial leg. Jenna didn't realize she had prosthetic joints, but Allys informs her both legs, arms, and some of her organs are not real. She was repaired following a bacterial infection. Ethan and Jenna argue again briefly, but when Jenna makes a sharp comment about his "magnetic personality", the group begins laughing, and amends are made. Jenna feels happy, even as Gabriel admits they are different from other people. Dane, the others note, has something missing inside him, and is just dangerous. Jenna admits she can't remember her past, and although she is fearful of the groups reaction, they all seem empathetic, and Ethan in particular seems gentle and caring. In "Pieces," Jenna finds herself thinking that if life is made of small pieces, she may be rebuilding hers.

In 'Fine Tuning," Jenna and her mother have friendly banter about Ethan, but Lily is furious, asking why Claire is encouraging this relationship. In anger, Claire calls Lily a "dickhead," a word she learned from Ethan, and is surprised when Lily tries to hide her laughter. "Jenna Fox / Year Fourteen" finds Jenna watching herself on film, wondering why she is not as graceful or smooth as the girl one the screen. Even with practice, her movements are halting and not fluid. She marvels at her hands, which do not seem to belong to her. "The New Lily and Jenna" finds Jenna silently watching her grandmother as she drives to the mission. Jenna can see now that Lily loves Claire, and would do anything for her. She also loved Jenna once, but it is clear she is afraid of loving Jenna now. Once in the mission, Lily crosses herself and begins to leave, but Jenna stops her, noting that she remembers hearing Lily pray for her as she lay in a coma.

Jenna locates Ethan and the two begin a friendly, flirting banter. They talk as they work side by side, and as Jenna explains her grandmother's aversion to her, she finds herself highly attracted to Ethan. She also discovers she does not tire easily, but she is happy to finally be accepted and cared about. As they work, they notice a man taking photos, and assume he is a tourist. When Ethan takes Jenna home, she suddenly remembers having a car, but no license, yet she also recalls racing down the road in her car with Kara and Locke.

In "A Hundred Points," Jenna learns Allys does her community work for school through the Del Oro Ethics Task Force. Jenna knows Allys blames the medical system for her loss of limbs, as she knows that if they had curbed the use of antibiotics, the superbug wouldn't have infected her, and caused her to lose limbs. The Ethics force is Allys' way of trying to help correct the problems with the system. Allys notes that the Federal Science Ethics Board runs the office, and controls all medical procedures and new technologies to ensure ethical use. She also explains that Bio Gel is an oxygenated compound filled with learning neurochips that can help individuals grow and maintain new organs and limbs. However, Allys notes, there is a point system in place to ensure humans remain mostly human. Each person is allowed one hundred points, and



something like a limb replacement costs five or ten points. A new heart is thirty five, and with lungs and kidneys, your points are used. This, according to Allys, means the wealthy are not able to do more than the poor, and people remain human. She also points out brains are illegal, although some biodigital enhancement is possible for those with lost functioning. Ethan and Allys begin to argue as Ethan notes that intelligent people are not always right, and Jenna wonders what Ethan went through two years ago that caused him such pain.

Back at school, Jenna is surprised by Dane as she waits for Ethan. The two speak, and Jenna realizes she sees nothing but emptiness inside him. She agrees to be friends, however. He also warns her about Ethan, noting that he does not tell the truth. In "Contents", Jenna thinks again of Dane, and how appropriate the word "empty" is for him.

In "Home," Jenna finds herself beginning to remember more and more about her life, including memories when she was a baby. Jenna wanders the house, exploring, and finds a locked door that intrigues her just off her parents room. She remembers Claire hides keys under mattresses, and retrieves it, but is interrupted by Lily, who informs her that someone is outside, looking for her. Jenna is pleasantly surprised to find Ethan. After a tour of the grounds, the two talk by the pond, and Ethan admits he has spent a year in jail, as a result of beating a man nearly to death. Jenna seems not to care and they kiss, but are interrupted by Lily.

Allys through Contents (pg. 74 - 105) Analysis

These sections help to introduce one of the main themes of the novel, that of the medical ethics considerations in Jenna's world. Allys has accepted her lost limbs, but also realizes that it is because of "advancement" that her infection was untreatable. She is not bitter, but instead chooses to use her passion to help her in her work with the ethics board. Jenna realizes to some extent this has to relate to her. First, she knows at this point that her father was the inventory of Bio Gel, and one has to assume she knows that she was saved in part because of it. Allys's comments about the point system foreshadow knowledge that Jenna's corrections are far beyond the legal limit.

Jenna is beginning to grow in these sections, as well. She is delighted to have a group of people who care about her and whom she can care about, even if they are all odd in some way. Her comments about feeling a part of the group, rebuilding her life with pieces of new memory, and her ability to finally admit the accident show she is growing. Yet there are still concerns about why she is so ungraceful, when she used to be a dancer. Her ability to make Lily laugh, along with Lily's reaction when she hears Jenna say she remembers things from the coma suggest perhaps Lily is beginning to care more for Jenna, as well, but her fear of Jenna's relationship with Ethan is suggestive that something is still bothering Lily.

Dane, however, does seem a bit disturbed. His comments about the group being freaks is taken badly by the others, and their note that there is something missing in Dane



suggests his problem may be far deeper than merely bodily differences. When combined with Clayton Bender's comments about the neighborhood and the knowledge that Dane lives in Jenna's neighborhood, this causes concern. This is deepened when Dane mentions coming by to see Jenna. This foreshadows the scene later in the novel where Dane nearly attacks Jenna.

Ethan and Jenna's relationship is beginning to deepen. It is very clear that Jenna enjoys Ethan, and he, her. However, when Ethan reveals he has nearly beat someone to death, there is a high level of concern for Jenna's safety. She doesn't seem to mind, however, and her answer that sometimes there is no other choice is haunting, as one is left to wonder what she means by this. Her recollections of her car, and Kara and Locke, foreshadow the knowledge of her car accident later.

Finally, the locked room that Jenna locates is highly intriguing. Since she stole the key, this foreshadows her entry into the room later, and the slight humming sound she hears leads one to believe the room likely has something to do with her father's technology.



Choice through Lily (pg 106 - 133)

Choice through Lily (pg 106 - 133) Summary

In "Choice," Jenna reveals that her time in a coma was hell, as she could hear, but not respond,. In "Message," Jenna and Lily argue about Lily's stopping of Jenna's kissing session with Ethan. Jenna is furious, but Lily keeps pointing out it isn't right. When Jenna nearly crumbles, so hurt with not understanding, Lily leaves the room. "Mustard and Kisses" shows Jenna on her bed, wondering what to do about the situation, anguished. In "Jenna Fox / Year Sixteen", Jenna admits that what she sees on these disks is a girl under too much pressure who is constantly trying to live up to her parents' expectations. This film shows Jenna and Claire arguing as Jenna wants to quit ballet, as she is five foot nine, and too tall. Claire merely tells her there are companies who will accept her, and Jenna, frustrated, tells her to be the ballerina, as she is five seven, the perfect height. Jenna wonders why her grandmother wanted her to watch this video, but wonders if Lily hates her because of how she treated Claire prior to the accident.

In "Deep," Jenna sneaks into her mother's room, and unlocks the private door, only to find three computers. One has her name, and Jenna realizes she didn't know her middle name, Angeline, until she saw the label. Jenna wonders what is on her computer, but as she struggles to free it from the table it is bolted to, she cuts herself very deeply. When she examines the cut in her room, however, she notices it is very deep, but has hardly bled. In "Blue", she makes her way to the kitchen and there is again no pain as she falls down the stairs. She holds her hand to her mother, screaming, as she pulls apart her skin to reveal blue gel. Her mother finally reveals that she was horribly burned in the accident, and that her limbs were replaced. Jenna forces her mother to stand, and realizes they have removed two inches from her height. When forced, Lily admits that only ten percent of Jenna is really herself.

In "Pinned", Jenna lays on her bed as Claire and Lily worry over her, waiting for Father to arrive. Claire tries to explain that Jenna was burned so badly, they couldn't save her, especially when the infection started. She justifies her decision by noting any parent would save their child if they could. She admits they did her brain scan as she was near death, and used Bio Gel to save what they could, which included the central portion of the brain. Although Claire notes this is the most important piece, Jenna wonders where her memories come from. In "White", Jenna remembers Lily sprinkling her with holy water, telling her she could let go, but the gel was already in place, and Jenna had no choice but to live.

In "Father," Matthew Fox arrives and tries to explain his actions to his daughter. He is honest with her as he explains her skin is made from her DNA, but is lab skin. He explains that her body is made up of Bio Gel, and her brain was fused with Bio Gel, as well. They uploaded her brain scans to a computer to save them. This allowed them to save off her memories and all the information her knew within her brain. He explains that to save the mind, they had to upload the entire brain to a biological environment,



because if the mind stops, it cannot restart. Jenna realizes it was that environment she remembers as hell.

In "Day One / New Jenna," Father further explains that Bio Gel is filled with neural chips that help communicate signals through the brain. Jenna has five times the amount of most people, and she will continue to gain memory as the Bio Gel forms new neural passages for memory. She confronts him, knowing she is illegally built, and he agrees, but hopes the laws will change. Father also admits they moved because cold temperatures affect the shelf life of Bio Gel. As Jenna denounces their actions, calling herself a freak, Claire moves to slap her, but stops herself. Jenna leaves, asking her father angrily on the way out if he thought about the fact that she has no soul.

In "Lily," Jenna finds herself at the pond, wondering at its depths. She also wonders, as she looks at her feet and hands, if she is human, and if there is such a thing as a soul. She feels like a failure, as she knows she will never be what her parents want her to be, the old Jenna. Lily appears, noting that she doesn't know what to make of Jenna. She admits she said her goodbyes, and then her parents informed her of what they had done, and she disagreed with their decision. But now, she notes, she can see Jenna throughout the new Jenna and it confuses her. Jenna herself admits confusion over what she is.

Choice through Lily (pg 106 - 133) Analysis

These sections reveal the secret the Fox family has been trying to keep, that Jenna has been nearly entirely recreated with Bio Gel and artificial pieces, as she was not going to survive the injuries from the accident. "Choice" shows readers the hell Jenna was in during her coma, which comes into play later, when she discovers it was her own father who put her there. "Message" shows that Lily is clearly upset that Jenna is having relations with Ethan, and although she doesn't understand, it is clear to Jenna that something isn't right about the situation. Lily's comments that it "isn't right" are understood when readers learn about Jenna's condition. This shows Lily is really simply looking out for Ethan, although Jenna doesn't see that yet.

"Jenna Fox / Year Sixteen" seems mysterious, until "Blue" reveals when Jenna learns of her situation. "Jenna Fox / Year Sixteen" reveals that Jenna should be five foot nine. In "Blue," she knows when she forces her mother to stand up that two inches have been removed from her. Readers have a sickening sense here, in that it is clear Jenna's legs have been regenerated, but the question of why they are two inches shorter is frightening. Did her parents shorten them to allow her to be a professional dancer, as was discussed in "Jenna Fox / Year Sixteen?" Lily clearly knew this would trigger Jenna, as she had told her previously in the novel to watch these videos. It becomes clear, then, that Lily's motives have always been to let Jenna know her own condition.

"Deep" reveals Jenna's computer, along with her medical situation. Although it is unclear at this moment what the computer holds, this is somewhat discussed later in "Father." The discovery of Jenna's middle name is somewhat ironic, in that right before she finds



out she is mostly Bio Gel, she feels whole, after learning her name. "Deep" also leads into "Blue" where readers learn the truth about Jenna. Everything prior to this point now becomes clear. Lily's reactions to Jenna, her parent's careful way with her, her inability to walk or speak properly, and her memory loss all become clear as Jenna learns she is mostly made from synthetics. "Pinned" further explains, as Jenna learns of her burns and her infection following the accident. Claire's justifications for her actions, while somewhat flimsy, do indicate that Claire and Matthew did what they did because they loved their daughter. Jenna's memories in "White" tell of her anguish in her blackness, and help lead into "Father," where readers finally learn how Jenna was able to retain her memories. When readers learn of the brain scans, and Matthew's comments about saving the mind, it becomes clear that the computer in the room is Jenna's mind. Although it is unclear as to why they still have a copy, even Jenna realizes that her "coma" is merely memory from when her mind was left without a body.

Jenna's sharp memories become understandable, as well, in "Day One / New Jenna". When her parents uploaded her entire memory into her new system, the new system can process all the information, including the memories Jenna herself didn't know she had. Her baptism, her near death experience at two, her longing for her mother at eighteen months all become understandable when one understands what the Fox's did. However, Jenna also realizes she is where she is because her parents are hiding her, as she is illegal. She now understands the time discrepancies as to when they moved, the lies about why they moved, and their real reasons for leaving Boston. Jenna's questions to her father about a soul really force the reader to consider the origin of the soul, and the elements that make a person human. This questioning continues in "Lily" when the grandmother is finally able to explain her reactions to Jenna. Even Jenna doesn't know how she feels about herself, so she is finally able to understand Lily's aversion, and confusion. Jenna is now faced with learning to accept her new self, or rejecting it.



Species through Telling (pg. 134 - 165)

Species through Telling (pg. 134 - 165) Summary

In "Species," Jenna wonders again how long she can look at and examine herself, wondering about her identity. "Details" finds Matthew and Claire sitting with Jenna, trying to explain even further what Jenna needs to know. As they talk, Matthew points out they are doing their best, as this is a journey for them, as well, and Claire notes Jenna will only understand when she has a child. When Jenna scoffs at the idea, Claire informs her they have saved an ovary to give her that chance later. As Jenna asks why they waited so long to tell her, she does point out her new height in passing. Matthew points out their terror in losing her, but Claire notes that many people's lives and careers are at stake, and they had to be sure Jenna could keep the secret. Her father also notes that the two inch difference was based on balance, and not her ballerina skills. Jenna knows, however, there is more they are not telling her. In "Hold On," Jenna dreams of her father's anguish when she was injured.

In "Denied," Jenna's suspicions are confirmed, as she attempts to look up her accident online, and finds her parents have blocked all information about the incident. In "An Invisible Boundary", Jenna struggles in school, no longer feeling a member of the group. Ethan tries several times to draw her into class discussion, and finally angers her enough to do so, but her reaction startles him. On a break, Ethan catches up to her, asking why she is being so cold following their make out session, but Dane arrives and breaks their conversation. In class, Ethan doesn't return.

In "Greenhouse," Jenna visits Lily in the greenhouse and she remembers Lily always standing up for her, so unlike this new Lily. Lily notes that she knows Jenna has memories she shouldn't, but she also points out there are things she should know. She explains that one night, Jenna's mother and she argued, and Jenna was sent to her room, but Jenna laughed, and walked out the door. Jenna understands Lily's point, as she now doesn't seem to be able to stop going to her room when her mother commands. In "Control", Jenna pretends to be happy, while waiting for Matthew to call Claire. Once Matthew calls, Jenna begins purposefully breaking plates, and when Claire commands her to go to her room, Jenna is able to override the control. Jenna angrily confronts them, accusing them of programming her, but Matthew explains they merely implanted suggestions to help keep her safe. Matthew explains that they needed a way to quickly move her if someone discovered her, and the easiest way was to suggest she go to her room. He further explains that they have been slowly modifying her records so she can eventually be free, but at the moment, things are too dangerous. He admits they uploaded the suggestion, along with an entire three years of schoolwork, explaining why she knows her facts about certain things so well. Jenna asks her parents for the key to the closet, and sees their terror, but remembering she has stolen the key, she pretends she is asking for the key to her own closet.



In "Trust," Jenna watches another video of herself, which she enjoys as she sees on her face and her parents' faces happiness, trust, and love. In "Sanctuary", Jenna is in the church, examining the alter, when Ethan arrives. The two speak awkwardly for a moment, and then begin to kiss. Jenna, however, pushes him away, and says they need to talk. In "Telling," Jenna explains her situation to Ethan, calling herself a monster. Ethan responds by explaining that the man he nearly killed was a dealer who got his thirteen-year-old brother hooked on drugs. He explains that they called him a monster for what he did, but he knows he isn't and neither is she. As they embrace, he softly warns Jenna not to tell Ally's about her Bio Gel.

Species through Telling (pg. 134 - 165) Analysis

"Species" is short, but introduces the question again of what makes a person human. Jenna is struggling to identify with herself, but the question of what makes up a human is daunting. "Details" explains a bit more about Jenna's condition, but also clearly shows her parent's anguish at the situation. This has not been easy for anyone, and Jenna struggles between anger and guilt. The knowledge they have saved an ovary is somewhat disturbing, but does foreshadow Jenna's use of it later in the novel. The knowledge that her parents did not remove two inches to make her a better ballerina is comforting, but at the same time the ease at which they explain it leaves one to question their honesty. While it is easy to understand why they did not tell Jenna immediately of her condition, one is left to wonder when, or if, they would have ever fully explained. "Denied" further intensifies the feeling that her parents are still lying to her about pieces of the past.

"Invisible Boundary" introduces two interesting issues in the novel. First, it is obvious that Dane at the very least would like to impress Jenna, but it is also obvious that Dane is not quite right. This foreshadows his actions later in the novel when he nearly attacks Jenna. Additionally, his comments about Ethan suggest there is more to his story than he is telling Jenna. Her reactions to him are understandable, but throw a wrench into their budding relationship. Jenna's own questions about the morality of their relationship lead the reader to equally ask such questions. These questions continue in "Greenhouse", as Jenna begins to understand her parents' actions, and the reader wonders about whether such programming is moral, regardless of circumstance. It is now clear that Jenna's parents have implanted thoughts in her head, and Jenna's anger is completely justified. Yet in "Control," as her parents explain their motives, Jenna again understands their decisions. Their uploading of her schoolwork explains her vast and complete knowledge in certain areas, but her questions about the closet, and the fear they cause, show her parents are still keeping things from her.

"Trust" is another short section, but one that reveals much. Jenna enjoys watching this particular video, because in it, she sees a happy family. She sees people who trust and love and care for one another/ Jenna realizes her life with her family was not this way any longer even before the accident, but she also knows they will never be that way again. At this point, too much has happened for Jenna to ever be able to return to the

person she once was, and in watching the video, Jenna in a way is saying goodbye to her former self, seeing her as another entity.

Jenna's telling of her situation to Ethan is both revealing and concerning. Ethan understands Jenna, in a way even she doesn't comprehend, and thus, he is not at all bothered by her information. However, he does understand that if Allys were to find out, she would not be as understanding. This, combined with the knowledge of Allys' opinions on the matter, foreshadow her discovery of Jenna's secret later in the novel. Ethan's revelations about his own crime, however, show that while Ethan's actions were certainly drastic, and against the law, they were done out of love for his brother. His comments about Jenna not being a monster help the reader to see that Jenna, despite her alterations, is still a good person.



Would They Ask That of Someone Who Was Real? through Environment (pg. 166 - 197)

Would They Ask That of Someone Who Was Real? through Environment (pg. 166 - 197) Summary

In "Would They Ask That of Someone Who Was Real", Jenna questions how she is not supposed to tell anyone, when her time in darkness was so horrible. "Science Lesson" finds Jenna and the rest of the class climbing through the forest for a science lesson. Allys notes that while she isn't bitter about her condition, she does try to channel her energy into the ethics office. Allys is the leader of the lesson, and she explains that plants have been slowly modified, but that before the ethics committee, no one examined the effects of these modifications on native populations. As Allys continues, Jenna begins to confront her indirectly, confusing her. Ethan attempts to stop the confrontation, but Jenna ignores him. At the end of the lesson, Allys notes that they are standing in a dried up ravine, as a result of the introduction of species that destroyed the area. Jenna realizes now science has done much to her, to Allys, and the world.

In "Red," Jenna goes through her closet, realizing none of her clothes suit her. She also recalls a shopping trip, where she and Kara purchased a red skirt, and she finds she longs for both her old life, and her friend. In "Sliver", Jenna walks to Mr. Bender's, filled with memories and wondering if the Ethics board would care that she feels more alive now than she thinks the old Jenna ever felt. She realizes the "old Jenna" was never really her own person, but an image of her parent's desires. Once at Clayton's, Jenna asks to use his Netbook, claiming hers is broken. Jenna learns Kara and Locke were killed in the accident, and that the court records show she was believed to have been driving. Jenna realizes her parents have likely blocked this information from her memory, just as they blocked it from her Netbook, but Clayton claims he already knew. In "One Simple Thing", Jenna finds herself ripping into boxes in the garage, searching endlessly for the red skirt.

In "Another Dark Place," Jenna and Claire are in Jenna's room discussing drapes when she finally confronts Claire about blocking the accident from her memory. Claire sadly informs her they didn't, but that Jenna blocked it herself. She explains, as she holds her daughter, that she slipped into a coma when they even tried to discuss the accident at the hospital. Held close, Jenna finally tells her mother she is sorry, and her mother, too apologizes. The two lay together for hours, and Jenna finally asks for red drapes.

"Percentages" opens with Lily and Jenna in the garage, cleaning up. As the two talk, Lily reveals that she was initially going to leave the country, not wanting to participate in the Fox's deception. Lily also notes that Kara and Locke were good kids, and that the accident was not anyone's fault. Jenna explains to Lily that she hears them speaking



and remembers things she shouldn't. Lily explains that when Claire called after the accident, she relented for her daughter, and even agreed to be part of the escape plan, if they needed to move Jenna. She explains that Matthew has a friend who lined them up with the house, and, if they are discovered, Lily is to move Jenna out of the country. When asked if the old Jenna would have wanted this new life, Lily replies, asking if Jenna has decided what she is now. Until she does, Lily notes, no one can answer her questions. In "Identity", Jenna notices that the definition of the word seems isolationist, and yet identity, she believes, seems to be wrapped up in so many other people. In "The Unknowable," Jenna questions the things she may never know and wonders if ten percent of herself is enough.

"Environment" finds Jenna in her room, discovering she is grateful to be alive. She decides to finally use the key to the closet in her Mother's room, and she sees again the three computers. She realizes the other two have labels that read L Jenkins and K Manning, and she realizes they are Kara and Locke's. Wanting to know what is on them, she goes to unscrew their bases, when suddenly, she realizes these are the backup copies of the biological environment, meant to keep the mind alive. These boxes are Jenna's black hell. "Shared Thoughts" finds Jenna laying in the woods outside her house, unable to process what she has seen. She finds herself wondering which is the real Jenna, the one inside the false body or the one inside the biological computer.

Would They Ask That of Someone Who Was Real? through Environment (pg. 166 - 197) Analysis

Jenna's new secret is difficult for her to keep. In "Science Lesson," Jenna's comments make complete sense considering her condition, but it is very clear Allys is confused, and perhaps now suspicious. Allys herself is clear in this section in terms of her opinions. There can be no questions that Allys is against the overuse of medical technology, and regardless of her feelings toward Jenna, she would likely turn her in. Ethan's attempts to quiet Jenna are ignored, in part because as Jenna mentions in "Would They Ask...", her secret is too large not to tell. Jenna understands Allys' aversion to medical and scientific technological advancement, as she sees the damage it has done, but she also can see the benefits, both in herself and in Allys. Allys is not hypocritical, although it appears to be that way at first, but she does understand the delicate balance in nature, and knows there are consequences for "playing God." Allys response here, both in her questioning of Jenna and in her firm opinions, foreshadow her decision later in the novel to confront Jenna.

"Red" reveals more about Jenna, and her old life. Jenna stuck to the rules a bit in her old existence, but it was Kara who talked her into doing things outside of her comfort zone. This concept comes in later, when it is discovered that Kara talked Jenna into allowing her car to be used the night of the accident. Further, the skirt, and the memory, revealed in "Red" foreshadows Jenna's decision to look for the skirt later.



In "Sliver," Jenna brings up the focus of her point in terms of whether she is human. Jenna knows that, prior to the accident, she spent much of her time being the person others wanted her to be. She lived a life planned out for her. Now, she is living her own life, and making her own decisions. In this way, the new Jenna is more alive than ever, despite her lack of natural body parts. This begs the question again of what makes us human, and indicates that perhaps the body is not the key piece in one's life.

Jenna's learning of her friends' death in "Sliver" is not surprising, as she admits somewhere she knew. This explains why no one sent her get well notifications, and why she has not seen her friends. It is clear from the article that the parents of the children may be suing the Fox's, and that Jenna would have been prosecuted, had she not been so critically injured. This, too, is why her parents have hidden her, in that if she is well, she may be held responsible. Jenna's own feelings that she was not driving foreshadow knowledge later that she, in fact, did not kill her friends, as she wasn't driving. Her search for the skirt in "One Simple Thing" represents her desperate search for her own identity.

"Another Dark Place" represents a key point in the novel, as Jenna and her mother seem to bond. Jenna's ability to finally say she is sorry to her mother, along with her mother's equal apology, indicate that the two are growing as characters, and coming to accept the faults in one another. Jenna is finally able to face the accident, and her mother is able to accept her daughter's imperfections. When Jenna asks for red drapes she is, in effect, asking for her own decisions, and her mother is quick to give her this control, showing she is beginning to understand Jenna's need for a life. "Percentages" too shows a deepening of characters, as Lily and Jenna also begin to bond. Lily's revelation that she wanted nothing to do with this, but still participated for Claire, shows again the lengths a parent would go to in order to save their child. Lily was repulsed by what the Fox's were doing, but she still agreed to help, because she loved her daughter. Further, her comments about Matthew's friend foreshadow information later, revealing Clayton is really a friend of the Fox family. Also, her questions to Jenna about whether she believes herself to be human are poignant, in that it leads Jenna to thinking about her own identity in "Identity." Jenna is beginning to understand that although she is her own person, who she relies heavily on those around her, in that identity is tied to one's surroundings, and to the people around us.

"Environment" reveals the secret the Fox family is still attempting to maintain. Jenna's discovery of her and her friends' computers at first seems curious, but when Jenna puts them together with her father's words, she realizes the computers are backup copies of the mind Matthew so meticulously explained. Jenna realizes these backup copies are sitting in the dark, silent, miserable hell that Jenna remembers, and she realizes her friends are there, as well. "Shared Thoughts" shows that Jenna must determine how to proceed, as it is clear even to her that the concept of herself as an identity relies on whether she can tolerate the idea of the backup. If the identity maintained in the biological computer system is Jenna Fox, then the human Jenna is merely a replicate and as she lay there, she knows she must come to a decision.



Backup through Listening (pg. 198 - 223)

Backup through Listening (pg. 198 - 223) Summary

In "Backup," Jenna confronts her mother and father about the backup systems in the closet. Although Matthew seems calm about it, Jenna is furious, reminding him those entities are not living in a dreamworld, they are living in a black nightmare that she can very vividly remember. Matthew points out the needed the backups, in case something went wrong, and Jenna is forced to ask what can happen. He explains that her body could reject the Bio Gel, but they don't think this is the case. Lily pours Jenna a glass on wine, much to Matthews displeasure, but Claire overrides him, allowing it. Claire admits the backups of Kara and Locke were her idea, as she hoped to save them. When the police report came back that Jenna was driving, however, the parents refused them access, and they died. They can never be brought back, as there is no DNA to build from. Claire and Matthew finally reveal they are keeping the backups as witnesses, in case charges are ever filed against Jenna. When Jenna notes that everyone has to die at some point, Matthew, raising his wine glass, declares this is no longer true. In "Tossing," Jenna admits she is torn between needing to free the minds, and needing to be safe.

In "Viewpoint," Jenna's class watches a congressional hearing, but Jenna pays little attention. Rae explains that a bill has come before Congress that would remove the Federal Ethics Board, and put the physician and patient back in charge of all medical decisions. Allys agitatedly points out how, if the Ethics Board had been in place earlier, she would not be in her condition, but Mitch points out that there is an argument that the Ethics Board also impedes life saving measures. As Allys talks about the large companies lobbying for it, including Fox Biosystems, Jenna notices the click of an idea in her, and knows she now realizes the truth. At lunch, Allys confronts Jenna, noting that she should have guessed before. Allys admits that Jenna Fox would be highly illegal, if she is the daughter of Matthew Fox and Jenna neither confirms or denies. Allys, looking pale and ill, leaves without another word.

In "Maybe," Ethan and Jenna are behind the market, and Ethan fears Allys will tell. As the two talk, Jenna admits she is not afraid of Allys, but instead of her own feelings and emotions, afraid she will never be enough, afraid she will not be as special as her parents want her to be. Ethan stresses that they need to talk to Allys soon, regardless. In "Sliding," however, it is clear this is difficult, as Allys does not appear to school. Jenna continues to hear Locke and Kara in her head.

In "Match," Jenna is in the woods behind the house when Dane approaches, grabbing her. She tries to refuse his advances, but when he continues, clearly enjoying her pain, she grabs his groin. Even when he twists her wrist, she squeezes harder, bringing him to his knees. At that moment, Clayton Bender approaches, swinging a golf club, and he and Jenna leave Dane behind. When Clayton admonishes her for going out alone, she confronts him, knowing he is Edward, his father's friend who helped hide them. He



admits he sought out Matthew to reconnect with his past life, and the two talked occasionally. When Matthew called for help, he couldn't refuse. Jenna notes that although Dane is dangerous, he is at least legal, but Clayton reminds her that Dane may be legal on paper, but he isn't where it matters most, inside. The two take a walk in the garden, and Clayton lends her his jacket, so his birds will come to her. Jenna realizes then that identity is very reliant on others.

In "Listening," Jenna hears Kara and Locke begging to be set free, and wakes, screaming. She knows she has heard them screaming, and realizes she now remembers the accident.

Backup through Listening (pg. 198 - 223) Analysis

"Backup" introduces another argument into the question of what makes a human, as Jenna argues about the backups of herself and her friends. Jenna knows, personally, that those systems are capable of self awareness. If they are self-aware, Jenna is suggesting, then they are not simply entities in a dreamworld. Matthew and Claire's need for them extends only to their daughter, but they do not understand that those entities realize they exist, and cannot break free, or die. They are left in limbo, but an aware limbo. Although their original intentions, to save Kara and Locke, were good, their end desire now is merely to keep them as witnesses. Again, they are only able to see to the point of their daughter, but Jenna is able to see beyond herself. This foreshadows her decision later to let them go. Lily, in this section, shows a surprising support of Jenna, as she gives her wine, and continues to play the role of instigator. It is clear Lily is beginning to love Jenna again, despite her original concerns, and their closeness is allowing her to help Jenna, as she did previously. This foreshadows her help later, when Jenna frees the backups.

"Viewpoint" is a turning point in the novel, as Allys becomes aware of Jenna's condition. Jenna is fully aware of those around her, in ways most humans are not, and she can see clearly the moment Allys becomes aware. The confrontation is not bitter, but it is clear that Allys is not happy about the situation. Her own friend, in her mind, is a violation of nature, and of all the things she holds important. Allys is not a bad person, but she does have very high moral and ethical standards, and to her, Jenna's condition is a representation of all that is wrong in the medical field. Those "wrongs" are why Allys is in the condition she is, and judging from her ill appearance, Allys is not healthy. This foreshadows not only her telling of Jenna's condition, but also of her illness, and near death later in the novel. The same is true when in "Sliding," it is revealed that Allys is very ill, as she does not return to school.

In "Maybe," Jenna is finally able to reveal her fears to someone, something she has been unable to do for many years. Jenna fears her feelings for Ethan, as she knows she is not completely human, but also knows she loves him. She fears the future, the past, but most importantly, Jenna fears being less than perfect, less than her family wishes her to be. Her lack of fear for Allys shows she has come to accept the difficulties in terms of her illegal condition, but what Jenna is still unable to accept is her own



imperfections. Ethan's continued concern, however, indicates he knows Allys and her intentions, and foreshadows her revelations of Jenna's condition to others later.

"Match" is the culmination of the scenes throughout the novel with Dane. Jenna has called Dane a sociopath before, and his actions here show him to be just that. His desire for Jenna alights him in a way that nothing else can. The idea of hurting something excites him, and it becomes clear that Dane is the menace in the neighborhood Clayton keeps talking about. Jenna, however, knows she is more than capable against others, as she has almost unlimited pain tolerance and stamina. Her actions do prove she is stronger and more capable than she would be without augmentation, but at the same time, this is what allows her to save herself. Clayton too shows himself to be Jenna's friend, as he has followed her, knowing she is in danger. This noble friendship, however, is questioned when Jenna reveals Clayton is really Edward, a friend of Matthews, but through his explanations it is clear he is doing what is in her best interests, not just as her friend, but also because he knows what it is like to leave a life behind. Clayton proves to be a true friend, and Jenna is finally able to accept herself, in part because of Clayton's assistance. She is able to see that she is whole and complete, not only because of her memories, but because of those around her. She understands that who she is directly relates to who she loves, and who loves her in return. This helps her to realize, in "Listening," that she needs to free her friends and helps her to remember the accident.



The Accident through They Know (pg. 224 - 248)

The Accident through They Know (pg. 224 - 248) Summary

In "The Accident," Jenna remembers the accident in detail, knowing she has been the one blocking the memory. She, Locke, and Kara went to a party, using Jenna's car, which she wasn't supposed to drive. However, Kara had been driving. Once at the party, they were uncomfortable, and when a fight broke out, they hurried out, driving too fast. Kara accidentally drove the car off a hill, then over a cliff. Jenna can remember them screaming, and the sounds of their bodies hitting the ground. She knows that, for the months she lay in limbo, the sounds she heard were the sounds of her friends dying. In "Self-Preservation," Jenna thinks to herself she may want to keep the backups, now that she knows she wasn't driving.

In "The Last Disc," Jenna finds a disc still in the camera, and realizes this is the disk Lily wanted her to see. In "Recital", Jenna recalls her final recital, as she danced unwillingly, despising the act. She spoke to Lily, noting her desire to dance her own way. Lily, always supportive, had told Jenna to do as she pleased. Jenna, however, is unable to disappoint, and completes her dance. In "Pieces", Jenna realizes she has spent her life filling the holes for others, leaving nothing for herself.

In "The Beach," Lily, Claire, and Jenna go to the beach, against Jenna's will. When pressed, however, Jenna is unable to tell Lily what she wants, and Lily notes this has always been the case, in that Jenna could never stand up for her own desires, and yet still resented others for asking her to please them. Jenna is angry, claiming her parents were the ones who wanted her to be perfect. Claire, noticing an argument, runs over, and Lily coaxes Jenna to tell her mother what she wants. Jenna starts by claiming she wants a red skirt, and eventually is finally able to explain that she needs to be a whole person, without backups. Claire, stonefaced, agrees to getting Jenna a red skirt, and walks away. In "Calculations," on the way home, Jenna wonders how far any of them are willing to go. She remembers her mother in the hospital, painfully trying to smile in strength for her daughter, while all the while Jenna was screaming in her head to be allowed to die. She knows now Claire will never let her go. In "Grasping", Jenna finds she is beginning to understand the meaning of forever.

In "Moving," Jenna sees her father speaking with someone, and strains to hear them. She recognizes the man as the tourist from the mission, and Matthew admits he is the security specialist. He has been called in to move the backups, as they are no longer safe. As Jenna waits for Ethan to pick her up to go see Allys, she contemplates that she will have to destroy the backups tonight yet she also knows her parents will never let her. Suddenly, Lily is there, offering to help her. She promises they will talk tonight, as Ethan arrives.



In "They Know," Ethan realizes Jenna is shaking uncontrollably, but she stops when he caresses her. When they arrive, Allys mother comes to the door, hollow and weary, although she seems to marvel at Jenna. Ethan and Jenna are allowed to see Allys, and as her father takes them to the room, Jenna can smell death, and remembers the smell from the accident. As her parents discuss that her entire body is shutting down, and to transplant organs would put her over the point limit, her father breaks down, and Jenna is reminded of her own father in the hospital. Allys is awake, but clearly dying. Allys pulls Jenna close and whispers to her, before falling asleep. As they leave, Jenna explains to Ethan that Allys has already told her parents, and told them to report her.

The Accident through They Know (pg. 224 - 248) Analysis

"The Accident" explains the final secret in the novel, the one Jenna has been repressing throughout the book. Jenna realizes she is not completely responsible for the death of her friends, but she also knows she definitely played a role. Although Kara was driving, Jenna knows she had many opportunities to stop the events from occurring and she did not. In fact, she believes, she acted out on purpose, to disobey her parents, allowing them to let her fall from the pedestal she despised. The screams she has heard in her head were the screams of her friends as they perished, and she now understands the voices in her head. This prompts her in "Self-Preservation" to momentarily believe she can keep the backups as protection against prosecution, now that she knows she wasn't driving.

"The Last Disc" and "Recital" explain who Jenna truly was, and readers are able to understand more of Jenna's previous personality. Jenna wanted desperately to break free from her parents love, adoration, and pressure, but it was clear she felt she couldn't. Lily attempted, as always, to help her do as she pleased, but in the end, Jenna couldn't find the strength to disappoint those who adored her. As she explains in "Pieces", Jenna has spent her life trying to make everyone else happy, regardless of how she felt. This new discovery foreshadows her decision to do what she needs to do in later chapters.

"The Beach" is the beginning of this transition, as Jenna is finally able to tell Lily and her mother what she knows she has to do. Lily understands this is highly difficult for Jenna, and she knows her granddaughter enough to coax the information from her. Her explanations of Jenna's problems standing up for herself reiterate what readers have seen through the novel, that Jenna is unable to accept her imperfections. Claire, too, cannot accept Jenna for who she is, and instead of supporting her daughter, she merely ignores the issue. This is typical of Claire, as she is so focused on what she wants and needs, she refuses to see beyond that. Her desires for her daughter matter more than her daughter's own choices. Jenna sees how hard this is for her mother in "Painful", and she knows her mother has been heroically strong for her sake, but she also understands that her mother cannot let her go. She is incapable of imagining life without her, and she cannot allow anything in the way that might jeopardize her miracle. "Grasping" shows that Jenna understands now the consequences of her mother's



unrelenting adoration. Forever, to Claire, really means incessantly, without limits, and Jenna knows this means she will never give up the backups. This foreshadows Jenna's decision to take matters into her own hands. For her part, Claire is not a bad person, but she is entirely wrapped in her daughter's existence. Without her, Claire believes, she herself cannot exist.

"Moving" shows just how desperate Jenna's family truly is to keep her safe. Knowing she wants to pull the backups, Matthew is having his security expert, who has constantly stalked Jenna throughout the novel, move the backups, out of Jenna's reach. From his comments, it becomes clear that Matthew is as dependent on his daughter as Claire, in that again, he cannot see his life without her. She is, as he says "everything", and he will do anything to save her, regardless of how she feels. Jenna's response, a desperation, is understandable, as she knows she has no chance of destroying the computers. She knows she will never be free while they exist, and her desperation is clear. When Lily arrives, she confirms what that she has begun to accept Jenna as her granddaughter again, despite her reservations. As before, she is willing to defy her own daughter to help Jenna, because she knows Jenna is trapped, without options. Lily is able to see that Jenna has a right to be free, even if she doesn't agree with her modifications. Lily shows herself to be able to love, without needing to control. Whereas Matthew and Claire's love is smothering and nearly painful, Lily's is open and unconditional.

"They Know" shows the lengths to which people will go for their ethical standards. Allys' parents are clearly upset, as their daughter is dying. Jenna watches them in pain, and knows this is how her own parents felt. This reaction from the parents, along with their near fascination with Jenna, foreshadow their request for help from the Fox's as Allys dies. The tearful explanation by Allys' father of the point system dilemma also foreshadows their decision to ask for help, but also introduces again the ethical question of the point system. Without the system, these individuals could save their daughter's life. Instead, they are forced to allow her die, and her death is, in part, due to that same medical system. So, ironically, the advancements of technology and the overuse of antibiotics caused the problems, but because of the ethics board, those same tools cannot be used to fix the results. The question of morality and ethics here, determining by a point system who lives or dies, is no more pressing than the ethical and moral question of saving lives using technology that essentially allows humans to "play God" or overpower nature.

Allys' decision to tell her parents and to have them report Jenna, isn't surprising, but it does show how far people will go for their beliefs. Allys likes Jenna, but her existence goes against everything Allys believes. In the end, Allys was unable to overlook her own ethical considerations in order to save her friend. This foreshadows, however, her parents' decision to use this information not to harm Jenna, but to save Allys' life.



Leaving and Staying through Two Hundred and Sixty Years Later (pg. 249 - 265)

Leaving and Staying through Two Hundred and Sixty Years Later (pg. 249 - 265) Summary

In "Leaving and Staying," Jenna contemplates running away with Ethan to escape police, but knows she must stay and face what is coming. In "A Plan," Jenna wakes at 4 am, a plan in place with Lily. She begins screaming at the appointed time, and when her parents rush in, she slips out while Lily locks the door. Jenna runs to the closet and frees the six-inch cubes that represent the backup copies of herself and her friends. Sobbing, she debates what to do. Knowing she has to destroy the backups, Jenna carries them to the pond, and one by one throws them in as her parents watch. Lily arrives, and after a loving embrace, Jenna returns inside, where she finds her mother crumpled on the stairs. Jenna explains that she had to release them, for her own sake, and when Father arrives, she explains that there are risks even he doesn't understand. As a family, the three embrace one another, and when Lily arrives, it is clear Claire forgives her. Suddenly, however, there is a knock at the door, and everyone is surprised when Allys' parents walk in. They beg for the Fox's to help save their daughter, and Matthew and Claire lead them in to the study. When Jenna notes Allys wouldn't approve, Lily reminds her that time and perspective can change minds. In "Baptism", Jenna revels in the feeling of being alive, and vulnerable, as she goes to meet Ethan at the mission. As Lily places holy water on her forehead, she notes that some things are meant to be believed, not necessarily known. Lily has changed, Jenna notes, as has she.

In "Two Hundred and Sixty Years Later," Jenna is sitting in Mr. Bender's yard. He has long since perished as has everyone else Jenna cared about, except Allys. Their Bio Gel is still functioning, far beyond what was expected. Although laws have changed to allow such modifications as theirs, the Bio Gel has been altered so natural life spans are expected. Jenna married Ethan and had many good years with him before his death. Many years later, she created her daughter, Kayla. Jenna finally understands her mother and father's decisions, as she too knows she will soon move to Boston, to attempt to shorten her own life, not wanting Kayla to die before her. She marvels at the birds in the yard, and how a few mere ounces can be so powerful.



Leaving and Staying through Two Hundred and Sixty Years Later (pg. 249 - 265) Analysis

"Leaving and Staying," although short, reveals much about Jenna's growth in the novel. Jenna knows the future is frightening, that her past is shameful, in that Jenna never fought enough to do what she wanted, and the result was her friends' death. However, she also knows that she cannot leave those who have done so much to give her this new life, and cannot leave without freeing her friends. She knows Lily now loves her, and she also knows that, if her backup remains, she can never be whole, can never be complete.

In "A Plan," readers see the culmination of Lily and Jenna's planning, and can see that Lily is taking a huge risk. Willing to do anything to help Jenna be free, she is part of a plan that not only betrays Claire and Matthew, but essentially makes Jenna mortal. Jenna knows this as well, but she is finally able to admit that she has to do this, both for the friends she loves and for the new Jenna she desires to be. For the first time, Jenna is able to stand up, even believing she will soon be caught by authorities, and even knowing the future is bleak, she still destroys her copy. Her explanation to her parents shows she is willing to take the risk, because she knows that she couldn't live with keeping them in their hell, merely for her safety. Their embrace shows they are coming together as a family, and when Claire forgives Lily, the family is again complete.

When Allys' parents arrive, it is clear what they are asking for. As foreshadowed, they used the information from Allys not to harm Jenna, but to save their daughter. Again, as Jenna notes, the cycle continues. Although Jenna questions whether Allys would approve, it is Lily who surprisingly points out that Allys may change her mind, when she finds herself still alive. When perspective changes, it is possible Allys may see things differently, as Lily herself has. In "Baptism", Jenna knows now she loves her new life, and is grateful for it, even if it is not standard, and Lily understands she too has learned to accept the new Jenna.

The ending of the novel, in "Two Hundred Sixty Year Later", ties up the loose ends. The revelation that Allys survived is not surprising, nor is the idea that she came to accept her new life. Ethan and Jenna's relationship is touching, considering their strong relationship throughout the novel, and the knowledge that Jenna used her ovary to produce Kayla is fitting. Jenna is finally able to understand fully her parents' positions on things, as she herself now feels the same for her own daughter. Laws, as Lily predicted, have changed, showing that over time, humans can accept new technology, but there are considerations that should be made, as Jenna's long life and youthful appearance point out. Her closing comments about a few ounces being so powerful reveal that in her case, the ten percent of her brain that survived is enough. She has used that small percentage to build not only her own life, but to help the world understand that people like her are whole and complete and human.



Characters

Jenna Fox

Jenna Fox is the primary character in the novel. As a young woman, Jenna has been adored by her parents since her birth and treated nearly as a doll. She is placed on a pedestal, and spends much of her life afraid to fall. When she and her friends are in a deadly car accident, her father, a brilliant scientist, saves her life through the illegal use of Bio Gel, a substance that can regenerate cells, tissues, nerves, etc from living tissue. He creates backups of her memories, and keeps her alive within a biological backup system until her body is complete. Once it is, he and his family move to California where they can remain undetected from authorities, and where Jenna can recover.

Jenna awakens in her new body without any memories. Over time, many of these return, but do not mesh with the story her family is telling her. When they finally admit what they have done, Jenna is faced with the question of whether or not she can see herself as human, and can accept what she is. She begins to take a stand against her parents, and finds herself slowly over the course of the novel. She realizes that to be free, she has to destroy the backup copies of herself and her friends, and in doing so, she is able to forgive herself for the accident that claimed her friends' lives.

Jenna is a strong person in the novel, although it takes time for her to find herself. She represents a class of individuals in the book who are different, but who are still able to make memories, form opinions, and exist normally. Jenna forces the reader to question what makes a human being whole, and what characteristics define us as people. In the end, it is Jenna who is able to define herself for others, and as she and Allys fight for the right to use science to live, the standards of ethics and morals that exist begin to change.

Lily

Lily is Claire's mother, and therefore Jenna's grandmother. Prior to Jenna's accident, Lily and Jenna are close, and Jenna often goes to Nana instead of her parents for advice. Lily is a strong character, having been a doctor in her previous career, even becoming chief of internal medicine at Boston University. However, she gave up practicing medicine when the plague hit, killing her husband. Lily's ethics have shifted over her lifetime. As a physician, Lily cared about advancement and medical technology. However, when the plague killed her husband, and once she realized the plague was, in part, due to the overuse of antibiotics and "advancements", Lily quit medicine, and began gardening. Her gardening is done to help preserve the native species of plants, so they are not genetically modified and lost to the world.

Thus, when the Fox family uses Bio Gel to save Jenna, Lily is very much against it. She is wary of the new girl, and does not see her as a human being at the beginning of the



novel. It is clear she is torn, in that she loved her granddaughter, but she is unable to see this new creature as her relation. It is only when the new Jenna begins to gain a personality all her own, and when Lily is able to see Jenna as a person that she is able to accept her. She helps Jenna destroy the backup copies of herself, because she understands that this new Jenna needs to be her own person. Over time, Lily is able to admit that with advancement comes a change of opinion and of ethical consideration, and that she herself can look beyond the alterations to finally see her granddaughter, although she knows this person is not the same as the old Jenna. Lily is able to accept the new Jenna as a new person, but also accept her as her granddaughter, however she may have changed.

Claire Fox

Claire Fox is the mother of Jenna Fox. As a mother, Claire adores and almost idolizes her daughter. Having miscarried two previous babies, Claire cherishes each second with Jenna, crushing her under the weight of expectations and love. Claire is in no way a bad mother, but merely one who doesn't understand the pressure she places on her daughter. When Jenna is in a critical accident, Claire can not allow her to die, and so she and her husband break every law imaginable to take back up copies of Jenna's memory, save the ten percent of her they can, and build a new body using the Bio Gel her husband invented. The end result is a new Jenna, with Jenna's own memories. However, these memories are much stronger and more complete, and her knowledge is advanced, due to the uploading of scholastic information, as well as memories. All this was done by Claire not to hurt or harm her daughter, but to save her. Claire is an intelligent woman, with a career of her own, but it is very clear she defers much to her husband. Claire almost seems overly needy in the novel, as she seeks out her daughter's approval, along with the approval of her mother and husband. Claire is kind, but is not a strong female character in the book.

Matthew Fox

Matthew Fox is Jenna's Fox's father. A world renowned scientist, Matthew Fox is the inventor of Bio Gel. Having started his own biotech company, he then sold it and made millions of dollars. In combination with Bio Gel, the Fox family is extremely wealthy. Matthew Fox adores his daughter, and would do anything to save her, which include breaking nearly every ethics law on the books concerning his invention. Bio Gel is oxygenated gel filled with neurochips that work like human neurons, only faster. They learn and specialize, therefore allowing them to help grow new organs, limbs, and any other body part. Matthew's invention is important, but also highly regulated. It is because of these regulations that Matthew is forced to go outside the law, and use his money and connections to build his backup copies of Jenna's brain, and a new body. Matthew is not a bad person, but his ethical views differ from many in the novel. As a scientist, he thinks little of the "soul", and thus to him, Jenna is as human as the next person. His ethics revolve around saving lives, and he cares little for the means employed to save them. For Matthew, as a father, the end justifies the means.



Ethan

Ethan is Jenna's love interest in the novel. As a student at the charter school, Ethan is intelligent, but is considered a danger, as he nearly beat a man to death in the past. Jenna learns as she gets closer to him, however, that Ethan's reasons for beating the man were not as simple as just anger. A dealer gave his thirteen year old brother HCP, a drug, and his brother was immediately hooked. Furious, Ethan sought out and found the dealer, and beat him beyond unconsciousness with a bat. Ethan knows he is not a monster, but he is certainly a danger. Ethan helps Jenna to see that although she is certainly different, she is not a freak, and she is still human, regardless of what others think. Ethan also helps Jenna accept herself. At the end of the novel, readers learn that Ethan and Jenna were married for his entire life, and that following his death, she used his sperm and her egg to produce a child, Kayla.

Allys

Allys is the only female friend of Jenna's in the novel, as she is the only other female student at the charter school. Allys is augmented, like Jenna, although her alterations are considerably less. Due to a severe bacterial infection that modern antibiotics failed to cure, Allys lost all her limbs and some of her internal organs. As a result, she has been fitted with prosthetic limbs, and Bio Gel has been used to help repair her internal issues. Allys is a kind girl, but is also highly educated in ethics, and is against the massive use of Bio Gel. She strongly supports the Federal Science Ethics Board, and their goal to ensure humans are not overly modified. Once Allys realizes Jenna is who she is, Jenna and Ethan fear Allys will expose her. However, Allys becomes severely ill, and begins to die. Allys does tell her parents of Jenna, however, and once Allys is beyond being able to object, her parents go to Matthew Fox, and ask for his help to rebuild Allys. In the end, Allys too is nearly entirely augmented with Bio Gel, and she and Jenna live together for over two hundred years. Allys represents the ethical standard in the novel, but her character also shows that as the world changes, opinions and ethics too must change.

Gabriel

Gabriel is a student at the charter school where Jenna attends classes. Gabriel is not genetically modified or augmented, but merely has a severe anxiety disorder that makes the smaller classes of a charter school more suitable. Gabriel is talented at problem solving and logic, and he is subtle enough to fly under the radar through most of the novel. Although not a primary character, Gabriel represents those in the novel who, while not modified, are still different from the rest of the world. Individuals like Gabriel have their own sets of issues, and these characters raise the question of why those like Jenna should be treated any more differently than others in the novel who are "different" from the norm.



Dane

Dane is a student at the charter school where Jenna attends classes. Dane also happens to live in Jenna's neighborhood. He is seemingly charming, but quickly, Jenna notices there is something not quite right about Dane. Over the course of the novel, Jenna realizes Dane is a sociopath, having little ability to connect with others, or care for others in any way. Jenna describes him as empty, and throughout the novel, he proves he is simply incapable of emotion or attachment. It is clear he is attracted to Jenna, but instead of being able to connect with her, he seems to try to coerce her. When that fails to work, he forces himself on her. Thankfully, she is saved by Clayton Bender, but this altercation shows Dane is a dangerous individual. When Jenna notes that, although he is dangerous, he is at least legal, Clayton reminds her that although he is legal on paper, he isn't morally sound.

Dr. Rae

Dr. Rae is an instructor at the charter school Jenna begins to attend once she awakens. Rae is a progressive instructor, preferring to see her students as colleagues, rather than as inferior individuals. Rae encourages her students to not only learn, but to teach the others, as well, thereby allowing the students to share their strengths and work together on their weaknesses. Although a minor character in the novel, Rae does represent an adult in the novel who believes the students are capable of being productive, even in spite, or perhaps because of, their special needs.

Clayton Bender / Edward

Clayton Bender is the first person outside of her immediate family that Jenna meets following her awakening from her "coma". Clayton is a neighbor, living in a house just a few blocks from Jenna's. Clayton appears to be a kind and gentle man, although he is also a bit eccentric. He builds art from nature, and has many birds on his property. Jenna is thrilled to know someone outside her own home, and over time, she and Clayton develop a friendly relationship. Over time, however, Jenna realizes Clayton is really her father's friend, Edward, who has agreed to help hide and protect Jenna from the authorities. Despite his secrecy, Clayton does understand Jenna, and plays the role of friend, as he encourages her and helps guide her.

Kara and Locke

Kara and Locke are two friends of Jenna's in Boston. These friends are with her the night of the accident, and Kara is driving, although Jenna doesn't realize this for many months. Unfortunately, Kara and Locke are critically injured during the accident, and they die at the hospital in the next few days. Kara and Locke's brains are scanned prior to their death, however, and Jenna's parents retain the backups, in case they need them

in the future. Jenna, knowing the dark hell they are in, destroys the backups, setting them free.

Kayla Fox

Kayla Fox is the daughter of Jenna Fox and Ethan, who becomes Jenna's husband in the novel. Not having the reproductive system necessary to conceive naturally, Jenna's eggs were preserved for her by her parents prior to her augmentations. Jenna uses sperm from Ethan and her own eggs to produce Kayla long after Ethan's death.



Objects/Places

Bio Gel

Bio Gel is oxygenated gel filled with neurochips that helps the body to rebuild organs, limbs, tissue, and nerves.

Point System

The point system is the system by which the government regulates how much of a person is made of Bio gel, or is artificial.

Federal Science Ethics Board

The Federal Science Ethics Board is the government entity that regulates the use of technology in human bodies, and in research.

Boston, MA

Boston, MA is where Jenna Fox recalls growing up as a child.

California

California is where Jenna Fox was moved following her illegal surgeries.

The Pons

The pons is the small portion of Jenna's brain her father was able to save. This is also called the butterfly.

Walden

"Walden" is a book by Thoreau that Jenna has memorized, as a result of her parent's uploading several years of school information into her brain.

Backup

The backup is the copy of a brain scan Jenna's parents retained of Jenna and of her friends following the accident. This backup copy is retained in a biological environment,



so that the copy can be used to recreate the person following any problem with the new body.

Aureus Epidemic

The Aureus epidemic was a massive epidemic that spread through the world, killing millions. The strain was blamed on overuse of antibiotics.

World Seed Preservation Organization

The World Seed Preservation Organization is a group dedicated to preserving the original seeds of plants, without any genetic modification.



Themes

What makes a human? / Search for Self

One of the primary themes within the novel is the search for self, combined with the question of what makes up a human being. In the story, Jenna is recreated, using technology, from a mere ten percent of her brain. Her memories are uploaded to a biological backup computer, so to speak, which is then loaded into the new Jenna. When she learns this, Jenna begins to question whether she is now considered a human being. She begins to question what percentage is acceptable, and whether a soul can exist within a lab created environment, such as the one she has been given. She knows things she should not, as a result of her upload, and sees and behaves in ways unique to many human beings. On the other hand, Jenna is able to feel emotion, pain, fear, sorrow, and pity, is able to move freely, speak, think, and make new memories and new opinions. She questions whether these qualities are enough to classify herself as human, or normal. Jenna determines that, for her, the ability to do everything humans can, along with her ability to choose her own destiny, makes her whole. She finds peace, finally able to accept herself perhaps not as the old Jenna, but as a new person in her own right.

Her grandmother, too, questions these same things. Lily at first sees Jenna as a lab creation, and nearly as an abomination against God. Lily believes that scientists have gone too far, and that in recreating Jenna, her parents have essentially played God, only to mimic the original Jenna. She does not see Jenna as a person, but merely as a created copy. Over time, however, Lily is able to see that the new Jenna, although certainly different, is able to make her own judgements and opinions, and has desires and rights, just as everyone else. Lily comes to accept that while Jenna may not be the old Jenna, she is a person in her own right.

Jenna, however, is not the only person struggling for identity in the novel. Jenna's friend Ethan, as well, searches for his identity. Having committed a horrible crime, Ethan is often seen by many as a monster and yet, he feels normal. Having acted in anger and in defense of his brother, Ethan knows he is not a killer or violent, but that he merely fought for what he believed in. Ethan sees himself no more a monster than he sees Jenna, but to others, he may be worse. Conversely, Dane, the sociopathic young adult in Jenna's class, never seeks himself, as he needs no identity. Dane cares nothing for the outside world, and as a result, does not need to identify with it. He accepts himself as he is, whereas almost all others in society reject him.

The book attempts to force the reader to identify what it means to be a human by rejecting the common definition, and using medical ethics to redefine "human". The question really asks the reader what qualities make up a human being, and which qualities define us. Questions of whether thoughts, feelings, emotions, memories, skin, blood, or tissue make up a person is central to the concepts presented in Jenna's life as she struggles to define these terms. Her own guilt drives her to "kill" the backup copies



of her friends, and this alone seems to define Jenna as human. Her ability to feel guilt, sorrow, and pain over her friend's state shows she is capable of human emotion, but this question further leads to whether, in getting rid of the backups, Jenna is essentially committing murder as she rids the world of the central memories of two individuals.

Parental Protection

Another primary theme in the novel is the length to which a parent will go, not only to preserve their child's life, but also simply to show a child adoration. The title of the novel, "The Adoration of Jenna Fox", is appropriate, in that the novel revolves around the relationship between Jenna and her parents throughout her childhood. Jenna's parents tried twice to have a child prior to giving birth to her, and Jenna has always felt tremendous pressure to live up to their very high standards. Several times in the novel, she comments that she feels she is taking on the expectations of three children. From birth, her parents videotape nearly her every move. They place her on a pedestal, and Jenna is constantly fearful of letting her parents down. She does as they ask, speaks as expected, and lives within the rules set for her.

When Jenna is critically injured in an accident, her parents are unable to accept her death. They go through several illegal measures to recreate her body, using Bio Gel, and they inadvertently cause Jenna horrific suffering as she lay in a "coma." In reality, her brain is uploaded to a biological holding center, where Jenna is able to recall living in blackness, begging to die. After she is given a new body, her parents whisk her away to California, and give up nearly everything to protect her existence. When she expresses a need to set her backups and those of her friends, free, her parents again are unable to handle the idea that Jenna could perish. Throughout the novel, each step they make is done to preserve their daughter, at any cost. It is only when Jenna is much older, and has her own child, that she is perhaps able to somewhat understand her parents' decision. She has her own child and knows she would do anything not to outlive her.

Jenna's parents are not the only ones who go through great lengths to save their child. When Allys begins to deteriorate, her parents go to the Fox's for help, realizing what they have done for, and to, Jenna to save her. This is done even with the knowledge that Allys would deeply disapprove of the situation. At this point in their grief, Allys' wishes become null as their own pain over losing their daughter outweighs all other considerations.

Scientific Ethical Responsibility / Medical Ethics

Another major theme in the novel is the role of ethics in scientific and medical development. On one side in the novel, there are individuals such as the Fox family who are deeply rooted in the scientific and medical advancement technology can bring to the human race. They recognize the technological advancements as benefits to society, able to help parents avoid the grief of losing a child, helping to save lives, even to



rebuild them from nearly nothing. On the other hand, there are those such as Lily, who question the ethics of such procedures, not merely from a technological standpoint, but from a religious and ethical standpoint. They see such actions as "playing God", so to speak, or advancing the human condition far beyond its intended reach. Lily questions whether the rebuilt Jenna is even human, and certainly whether a creature like Jenna has a soul. Allys, too, questions the ethics of creating "lab rats" from humans or creatures who have little human qualities left within them. At the same time, individuals such as Jenna prove that they are alive, in that they think, make new decisions, new memories, and new opinions, even if they are based in a non-human body. The book really forces the reader to question their ethical consideration of how far medical science should be allowed to take human experimentation, and human augmentation. In the book, organizations such as the Federal Science Ethics board are developed to help regulate the ethical behaviors of doctors but, as in reality, the wealthy and powerful, such as the Fox's, are able to go beyond regulations. Their issue really comes down to whether it is ethical to break the law in order to save a life, provided one sees the new Jenna as "a life."

This question of scientific responsibility stems beyond Jenna, however. In the book, there has been mass destruction as a result of medical "enhancement," in that overuse of antibiotics has resulted in worldwide pandemics, killing millions. The tampering of science to "improve" horticulture has resulted in the complete loss of natural species. Lily and others in the novel question whether this is progress or whether such side effects really show the result of unethical practices.



Style

Point of View

"The Adoration of Jenna Fox" is written in the first-person point of view, which is absolutely vital to the novel. Throughout the book, there are colored pages that represent the thought stream of Jenna, as though she is speaking entirely to herself. These passages convey not only Jenna's thoughts, but her extreme emotions, her inner fears, and her deepest concerns about her new condition, and the world around her. In addition, the non-colored pages reflect Jenna's new world, as it unfolds around her. Understanding how this new Jenna sees the world is vital to the story, in that the novel really is about Jenna discovering herself for the first time, and learning about how she sees the world, when given her circumstances. Without the first-person view, this coming of age theme would be impossible. Similarly, how the new Jenna views the world is vital to unfolding the story, as she learns of her parent's actions, and feels the consequences of their decisions. The first-person view is reliable, in that without it, one would be completely lost to how Jenna's view of the world changes throughout the course of the novel. The story is told through a combination of descriptions, as seen through Jenna's eyes, and conversations, which is important to understanding how others view the new Jenna. While it is important to see how Jenna views herself, it is equally important to see how others view her, since the ethical considerations of her conditions are one of the major themes in the novel. Without the views of others, this reflection would be lost.

Setting

The novel is set almost entirely in a smaller town in California. Much of the novel takes place in the large Cotswold cottage of the Fox family, where Claire Fox is busy much of the time restoring the old property. Having been damaged in the earthquakes, the property is in need of dire repair, but having previously restored brownstones in Boston, this is no challenge for Claire. However, the large expanse is odd for Jenna, as she clearly recalls living in Boston for much of her life. This sudden transition seems odd, and continues to seem so as she discovers much of the house is void of familiar furniture or clothing or personal items. The large house seems not to fit this small family and as Jenna finds more rooms with hidden items, such as computer backups of herself and her old friends, this house seems almost more a prison than a home.

The story also continues beyond the walls of Jenna's home. Jenna spends some time in her neighborhood, which appears wealthy and slightly older. In addition, Jenna attends school at a local charter school, a small rundown office space. Across from the school is a local food market where the young adults gather daily for lunch and conversation.



Language and Meaning

The language of the novel tends to shift between simple and easy to read versus short and choppy. The areas of the novel that focus on Jenna's life are easy to read, as they are told from Jenna's own point of view. She does not speak formally, but instead with the ease of a teenage girl. Other areas of the novel, those that are short and choppy, represent Jenna's own stream of consciousness. These sections read almost like poetry, as they are not always complete sentences, but are prose like in their beauty and elegance. This adds depth to the novel, as Jenna's thoughts develop over the course of the novel from simple to the more robust at the end of the novel. These help to really convey Jenna's character in a way that is difficult to do without displaying these inner thoughts.

At times, the language of the novel does get a bit scientific, as much of the novel is centered around the augmentations made to Jenna and to others in the novel. Jenna's father, as well as Allys, speak in depth about these augmentations, and the scientific basis for them. These are important to the novel as they do help the reader understand the ethical issues in the novel, but they can be a bit slower. In general, however, the novel is easy to understand and simple to read.

Structure

The novel is comprised of many small chapters, some of which are merely a short paragraph in length and some of which are three to four pages. Each chapter is named, and reflects something occurring within that section, foreshadowing at least fragments of the information in the chapter. The chapters are very short, and the novel is fast-paced.

The plot of the novel is highly complex, with a host of themes that are important to the novel. The primary focus is Jenna Fox, a young woman injured in an accident as a teenager. Her father, a world renowned scientist, uses illegal measures to reconstruct a body for his daughter, using brain scans to preserve his daughter's memories, which he then loads into the body. In total, Jenna's new form only consists of ten percent of her previous existence. Jenna and her family struggle through the novel to adapt, and Jenna herself struggles to decide if she is even human. As she remembers more of her life, Jenna realizes her family is, and always has been, incapable of letting her go. When she learns they have retained a backup copy of her memories, Jenna realizes she has to destroy them in order to become her own person.

The pace of the novel is rapid with a blend of description and dialogue. It is an easy read, as it is constructed from the view of a teenage girl, but it is also highly engrossing. The controversial topics presented make the novel ideal for discussion.



Quotes

"Someone named me Jenna Fox. That's what they tell me. But I am more than a name. More than they tell me. More than the facts and statistics they fill me with. More than the video clips they make me watch. More. But I'm not sure what" (California, p. 3).

"Smooth. Practiced. I can hear it in the singsong of her voice. In some ways', it's almost reasonable, but I can see the holes. Having a quiet place is not as important as being close to doctors. But I nod. There is something about her eyes" (Day Sixteen, p. 14).

"After I spent over a year in a coma, how could they have predicted exactly when I would wake up and then move to California precisely at that time? Was it only coincidence? Or did they decide when I would wake up? Why would they keep me in a coma so long? Why would they steal a year and a half of my life?" (Timing, p. 32).

"Somewhere along the line, we took a giant step backward. When I was a child, there were only a handful of vaccines; now there's a vaccine for nearly everything because we've engineered ourselves right into a corner. That's progress?" (Inside, p. 36).

"Isn't that what all of life is anyway? Shards. Bits. Moments. Am I less because I have fewer, or do the few I have mean more? Am I just as full as anyone else? Enough? Pieces" (Pieces, p. 80).

"Paris. Not bad for a fourteenth birthday. "Hurry, Dad," I call. But I don't fuss too much. Jenna is so used to every move being recorded at this point that she seems to have surrendered herself to the adoration of Jenna Fox" (Jenna Fox / Year Fourteen, p. 83).

"And by restricting how much can be replaced or enhanced, the FSEB knows you are more human than lab creation. We don't want a lot of half human lab pets crawling all around the world, do we?" (A Hundred Points, p. 96).

"I was treasured. Adored. Smothered with hopes. I was everything three babies could have been. I danced as hard as I could. Studied as hard. Played as hard. Practiced as hard. I pushed to be everything they dreamed I could be" (Jenna Fox / Year Sixteen, p. 109).

"Ten percent. Ten percent of your brain. That's all they could save. They should have let you die" (Blue, p. 117).

"Does that make you an authority on everything? What about a soul, Father? When you were so busy implementing all your neural chips, did you think about that? Did you snip my soul from my old body, too? Where did you put it? Show me! Where? Where in all this groundbreaking technology did you insert my soul?" (Day One / New Jenna, p. 129).



"I close my eyes, pressing my ear to her chest again. Hearing the sounds, the pulse of Claire, the world of my beginnings, the time when there was no doubt I had a soul" (Another Dark Place, p. 183).

"Sometimes a person gets tired of being fixed all the time. Where every little problem becomes a project. Where every shortcoming needs to be addressed. They eventually have to share with someone. My someone was Lily" (Percentages, p. 186).

"And I'm afraid that Claire and Matthew Fox will discover that the new, improved Jenna doesn't add up to the three babies at all and never did and everything they risked was for nothing. Because when all is said and done, I am not special at all. Those are the kind of things I am afraid of" (Maybe, p. 213).

"And for all those months, in the dark place where I waited to be reborn, not knowing if I would ever see light again, between my own voiceless cries and pleading, those were the sounds I heard over and over again, the hellish sounds of Kara and Locke dying" (The Accident, 227).

"I have never seen my own father sob. But now the soft breaths of this man cut through me, weaken me, and I fear I may fall to my knees. These are sounds I have heard before. The sounds of a grown man crying when there is nothing left to do. The sounds of my father" (They Know, pg. 245).

"One small changed family doesn't calculate into a world that has been spinning for a billion years. But one small change makes the world spin differently in a billion ways for one family" (A Plan, p. 256).

"Faith and science, I have learned, are two sides of the same coin, separated by an expanse so small, but wide enough that one side can't see the other. They don't even know they're connected" (Two Hundred and Sixty Years Later, p. 263).



Topics for Discussion

Throughout the novel, there are pages that appear in gray, as opposed to white. Why are these pages different from the others? What do they signify? How do they differ in content from the rest of the story? Why do you think the author chose to include these pages? Are they effective? Why or why not?

Jenna finds out eventually that she is nearly entirely made from Bio Gel, and that in reality, only ten percent of her original body survived the accident. After reading the book, and knowing what you know about Jenna, how would you feel if you were Jenna? Would you want to have been lab created, or would you rather have died in the accident, as you would have had your father not been who he was? Why do you feel this way? How does this compare to the way Jenna feels by the end of the novel?

In the book, there is a limit to how much body reconstruction is allowed. Do you think, if such reconstructions were possible, that these limitations are necessary? Why or why not? Do you think people should be allowed to alter themselves in whatever way they see fit, or do you think these limits help protect society? Explain your answer in detail.

In the novel, Lily points out that simply because science can do things, does not mean it should. Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Do you think there is a line, where, if crossed, scientists begin playing God, so to speak, or do you feel any and all modifications to human body is justified in the quest for better health care, and "advancement"? What, in your opinion, should be permitted? What types of modifications should not be permitted? Why?

One of the primary themes in the novel is the concept of the human soul. Jenna and Lily both question how much of a person is required to make he or she a human. Do you think, in the novel, Jenna is a human? Why or why not? Do you think she has a soul? Why or why not? What defines a human? What defines a soul?

Jenna's parents broke several laws, and many would argue ethical and moral law and well to save their "daughter". First, do you feel they really saved Jenna? Why or why not? In saving her backups, were they really protecting her? Why or why not? Throughout her life, Jenna felt suffocated by her parents. Do you think it is possible to adore children too much? Why or why not? Do you think what Jenna's parents did was right or wrong? Why? Would you have saved her or allowed her to die? Why?

Explain why Jenna felt she had to destroy the back up copies of herself and her friends. Do you think she had a right to destroy them? Why? Do you see them as being alive? In what way? If they were alive, does that mean Jenna is a murderer? If they were not alive, what does that make the biologically altered Jenna?