

Beautiful Darkness Study Guide

Beautiful Darkness by Kami Garcia

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Plot Summary

Beautiful Darkness is the second novel in the Caster Chronicles by Kami Garcia and Margaret Stohl. In this novel, Ethan Wate and Lena Duchannes are recovering from the battle with Lena's mother in the previous novel. As things seem to be settling down, Lena begins to act strangely. Ethan is shocked to find Lena hanging out with a new guy, John Breed, and acting like her cousin, Ridley. As Ethan tries to find a way to explain Lena's behavior, he begins learning more about himself and his mother, things that are difficult to understand. In the end, however, Ethan discovers that sometimes fate knows what it's doing. Beautiful Darkness is an exciting continuation in a series that will keep fans entertained for years to come.

Ethan Wate attends Macon Ravenwood's funeral, spending much of the service trying to bolster his girlfriend, Lena Duchannes', spirits. Lena has taken her uncle's death very hard and Ethan is concerned that she has fallen into a depression she will not be able to shake. For weeks she refuses to leave the house and when she does, it is only for brief periods. However, things seem to be improving when Lena's Grandma makes her return to school.

Ethan and Lena go to the lake on the final day of school. They play and Lena seems like her old self. However, when they begin to make out, Lena accidentally hurts Ethan. This frightens Lena and she runs away, jumping onto the back of a strange boy's motorcycle as she flees Ethan. Ethan knows that Lena is only frightened that when she finally has her Claiming, she will turn evil. For this reason, he tries to seek her out and make things better.

Lena continues pushing Ethan away. One day, Lena sees Ethan having a meal with a new girl in town, Liv. Lena becomes very upset and they argue the next time they meet. Soon after, Lena joins in with the new boy in town, John Breed, and her cousin, Ridley, in pulling a magical practical joke at the county fair. Ethan becomes convinced that Ridley, a succubus, is using her powers to control Lena. However, when he, Liv, and Link track Lena down to a caster bar, he discovers that the choice is all her own.

Ethan and Lena continue arguing and things seem bleak between them. Then, when Ethan learns that Lena is going to go somewhere called the Great Barrier, he knows she is walking into trouble. For this reason, Ethan takes Link and Liv and goes after her. No one believes the Great Barrier actually exists, but Ethan's instincts take him to his Aunt Caroline's house where he discovers John and Lena were there looking for something. Ethan finds the journal and realizes that there is something in it that will show them where the Great Barrier is.

Ethan, Link, and Liv begin their journey. It is rough at first because they become lost, unable to count on either Ethan's instincts or the Arclight his mother has told him is of great importance. Fortunately, they run into Ethan's Aunt Prue who gives them maps of the caster tunnels. They follow these maps for days, running into Ridley at one point.



Ridley insists that Lena's is in trouble. Ridley has betrayed Serafine, Lena's mother, in helping Ethan. For this, Serafine takes Ridley's powers.

When Ethan and his friends finally find the Great Barrier, Ethan finally realizes what his mother was trying to tell him about Macon and the Arclight. Ethan's mother, Lila, imprisoned Macon in the Arclight to save him from death. Ethan and Liv release Macon just in time for him to help them rescue Lena. When they do rescue Lena, Ethan encourages her to claim herself to stop Serafine from harnessing the power of the Claiming moon.

When the battle is over, Ethan and Lena find their way back to one another. Link is bitten and will soon become a Blood Incubus, but Macon is teaching him how to deal with it. Macon must hide in the tunnels since the world believes he is dead, but Liv has agreed to work with him. Ridley is unhappy about the loss of her powers. For this reason, she decides to trap John Breed in the Arclight.



Before: Caster Girl and Chapters 1-9

Summary

Caster Girl. Ethan thinks about what has happened since he met Lena Duchannes. Lena thought she was cursed, but now Ethan knows they are both cursed.

Perpetual Peace. It is the day of Macon's funeral. Lena is upset and does not want to go, but, speaking to her in their special telepathy, kelting, Ethan talks her into it. Ethan escorts Amma, his housekeeper and surrogate mother, to the funeral. When they arrive at Macon's grave, they find all of Macon's family there along with many Incubuses, including an odd Incubus that has green caster eyes. It is a dangerous situation for Ethan to be around so many supernatural creatures. All Ethan can see, however, is Lena and the overwhelming grief that is tearing her apart.

Burnt Waffles. Amma, who is clearly deeply grieving her friend Macon, tells Ethan over breakfast that the psychiatrist is going to release Ethan's father from the hospital where he has been since he nearly jumped off a balcony. When Ethan leaves the house, he goes to Ravewood, Lena's home, instead of school.

Lemons and Ash. Lena consents to returning to school, but the moment she arrives the other students begin teasing her. Lena cannot handle it, so Ethan takes her home. Ethan takes her to Greenbriar where they cuddle in the grass near the small family cemetery. They talk for a while. Lena admits she is frightened about becoming a dark caster when she finally has her Claiming, just like her mother.

Falling. Ethan has trouble coaxing Lena out of her house over the next few weeks, partly because of her grief over Macon and partly because of her ever changing, ever growing powers. Ethan does convince her once, however, to go to the water tower with him. Ethan likes to hang out at the water tower because it reminds him of his mother.

The Call. A few weeks later, Ethan's father comes home. Ethan's father apologizes for his behavior in the weeks and months after his mother's death. Amma tells the family that Aunt Mercy's cat is missing. Ethan and his friend, Link, look for the cat, but have little luck. A short time later, Ethan finds a package from Marian, his mother's closet friend and the local librarian. When Ethan opens it and finds pages inside a box, he has a vision of Abraham Ravenwood.

All that Remains. Ethan hears Lena repeating the lines of a poem in his head and he knows she is in trouble. Ethan rushes to Ravenwood. Eventually Ethan finds Lena in a closet. Lena's room is covered in pictures. Lena says she took the pictures as a kind of therapy, to show everyone that she understands that Macon is dead. Ethan, however, is concerned when he realizes that Lena is no longer writing, something she has always obsessively done, and what little she has written is strange. Ethan goes home and is surprised to discover his Aunt Mercy's cat is there.



The Girl of my Dreams. Ethan has a nightmare about Serafina, Lena's mother. Ethan rushes through breakfast and climbs into Link's car to go to school. Ethan hears the song, Seventeen Moons, a song he has been hearing since meeting Lena. This song often offers Ethan clues about what he needs to do and this one proves to be the same as the words have been altered. When Ethan gets to his English class, he discovers Lena is already there. One of the girls in the class says something cruel about Macon and her test suddenly bursts into flames. After the test, Ethan and Lena walk out to the parking lot together. Lena tells Ethan that her family is moving out of Gatlin. Ethan then tries to talk to her about the nightmare he had the night before, assuming she had the same dream as she usually does, but she denies it. She also refuses to kelt with him. Then they learn that someone has cut all the tires of the cars in the parking lot except Lena's car. When they see a stranger driving off on a motorcycle, Lena seems to recognize him.

The Lake. Lena and Ethan go to the lake, debating who slashed everyone's tires. As they play in the water, they begin to kiss. The kisses becomes heated and they move to the shore. Unfortunately, Lena hurts Ethan. She runs away, afraid she could really injure him. Ethan chases Lena, but she makes it difficult by knocking trees into his path. Then Lena jumps onto the back of a guy's motorcycle.

Caster Boy. Link comes to pick up Ethan. They decide to go to the local fast food restaurant to see if Lena is there. They do not see Lena, but the boy from Macon's funeral, the one who seems like an incubus, but has good caster eyes, walks in. The boy is with Ridley, Lena's cousin who was a succubus but has lost her powers. Ridley introduces the boy as John Breed. When they leave, Ethan sees that John drives the same motorcycle he saw Lena get on at the lake. Ethan and Link leave Lena's car at Ravenwood. Afterward, Ethan locks himself in his room and sulks until Amma coaxes him to eat.

Analysis

Ethan met Lena in the first novel not too long after his mother died. Ethan was in a dark place and his relationship with Lena helped pull him out of it, but it also introduced him to a supernatural world that has become an overwhelming force in his life.

Lena's uncle, Macon, died at the end of the last novel. Lena is struggling with grief and guilt over the death. Ethan stays by her side, trying to draw her out, but Lena refuses to be drawn out. At the same time, Lena was supposed to have her Claiming on her sixteenth birthday, an event that chooses which type of caster she will be, good or evil. Due to the chaos over her fight with her mother, Lena was not claimed, but she did have one eye turn green, indicating good, and one yellow, indicating evil. No one knows for sure what this means. In the meantime, Lena is struggling with powers that are growing stronger every day. Lena is frightened that she will be claimed evil, just like her mother before her.



Ethan remains somewhat on the sidelines as Lena struggles with her emotional issues. However, he remains loyal and as close to Lena as he can. That is why it is a shock to him when Lena suddenly goes running off with another guy after injuring Ethan during a make out session. This guy, a strange Incubus/caster creature is named John Breed. Ethan knows nothing about him until he meets him with Ridley, Lena's cousin. However, it is clear to the reader that this John Breed can be nothing but trouble, especially if he is the one who slashed all the tires at the high school.

Discussion Question 1

Who is Lena? Why are her eyes two different colors? What does this suggest about her supernatural nature?

Discussion Question 2

Who was Macon? How did he die? Why does his death impact Lena so deeply?

Discussion Question 3

Who is John Breed? Why does Ethan immediately dislike him? What does John Breed represent to Ethan?

Vocabulary

Shining, universe, graveyard, argue, sadness, include, picture, blurry, doused, captured, memories, version, highlighted, reminded, receipt, handled, especially, shoved, sarcastic, unwrapped, photograph, relaxed, eventually, dismissed, tightened, polished.



Chapters 10-18

Summary

Bookworm. Ethan goes to the library where Marian introduces him to Liv, her new assistant. Liv is very different from Lena, and Ethan finds himself drawn to her. Marian sets Ethan to work organizing the archives. When the cat stares at his mother's empty chair, Ethan wonders if she is there. Then he touches a book lying on the chair he has a vision of Abraham Ravenwood arguing with his brother Jonah who was trying to get him out of the house before the Federals came to burn it down. Jonah produces an Arclight, an object that can imprison his kind, a blood Incubus. Abraham drinks from Jonah's blood, killing him. Marian pulls Ethan from the vision and he tells her about it. Marian tells Ethan that Abraham is dead and he should not pursue the vision.

Beneath the Paper. Liv and Ethan make deliveries for Marian, dropping off books to people who could not visit the library. Afterward, they go to the local hangout to have something to eat. They talk, sharing each other's stories, including a discussion of Lena. Liv shows Ethan the gadget she wears on her wrist, a selenometer, a device that measures the moon's gravitational pull. As they head out to the car, Ethan spots Lena's car turning around in the parking lot.

Southern Crusty. The day of the Gatlin County Fair, Ethan helps deliver Amma's pies to the judging tables. Later, Ethan goes to hang out with Link. Liv arrives and joins them. As they are trying to decide which ride to go on first, Ethan spots Lena. Ethan goes to speak to Lena. They argue briefly about her recent behavior and her decision to make Ridley her new best friend. Then Ethan spots a drawing on Lena's wrist that he worries might be a tattoo. Liv joins them and Lena becomes angry. Ethan tries to explain who she is via kelting, but Lena refuses to believe him. Lena marches off. Ethan, Link, and Liv decide to go watch the pie judging.

Tunnel of Love. Ethan introduces Liv to his aunts as they wait for the judging to begin. Lena comes into the tent with Ridley. As the judging begins, Ethan sees that Ridley is beginning to cast. Ethan tries to get Liv out of the tent, but before he can, bugs, grubs, and maggots begin coming out of the pies. Chaos breaks out. Ethan tries to talk to Lena via kelting when he notices that she is helping cast rather than trying to stop Ridley and John Breed. Ethan and Link confront Lena outside the tent. A fight quickly breaks out between Link and John Breed. During the fight, John Breed denies being both a caster and an Incubus, leaving Ethan wondering what he really is. More important, though, Ethan is left confused when Lena goes off with Ridley and John. Ethan is worried about Lena, that Ridley and John might be controlling her. Therefore, when they decide the trio went through a caster door, they decide to find a way to follow.

Unmistakable. Ethan and Link go to find Marian in the Lunae Libri, the caster library that Marian is the keeper of. With Marian, deep in the library, they find Liv.



Wayward Soul. The room they find themselves in turns out to be Macon's study below Ravewood, a room that is connected to the library. Marion, who does not seem surprised that Ethan found this place, asks Ethan some pointed questions. When she is done, she tells him that she thinks he is a Wayward, a mortal who can act as a sort of navigator for the casters. As they discuss this possibility, Liv accidentally reveals to Ethan that his mother was a Keeper, like Marian. Liv also tells them that she is a Keeper in training. Ethan wants more information, so he touches one of Macon's personal book and he immediately falls into a vision of Macon with a woman he loves, Jane. Liv shared the vision with Ethan. Afterward, Ethan, Liv, and Link decides to go find John Breed, Ridley, and Lena to try to decide what is going on with Lena.

Exile. Ethan leads the way through the caster tunnels to a door that he can feel a connection to. When they open it, they find themselves in 19th century London. They can hear caster music. As they leave the tunnels, they find themselves outside a door that has a symbol on it that means exile. Inside is a nightclub sort of place filled with all kinds of supernatural creatures. Dancing on the dance floor with John Breed is Lena.

Vexed. Ridley tells Ethan and Link to leave. Ethan insists on staying until Lena tells him to leave. A fight appears to be brewing between Ethan and John Breed when Lena finally says the words. As Ethan, Link and Liv turn to leave, Liv points out that both Lena's eyes were gold. It is then that Ethan knows that no one was controlling Lena. As they make their way back through the tunnels, they discover that the cat, Lucille, is there. A short time later, they are confronted by a Vex, a type of demon. As Ethan tries to protect Liv, he is surprised to find Amma and the greats are there, sending the Vex away. When the danger is gone, Amma yells at each of them in turn for being in the caster tunnels.

Revelations. When Ethan sleeps, he dreams of Lena. When he wakes and goes to her house, he discovers her family is about to leave town. Ethan goes to Lena's bedroom where they argue about John Breed and Liv. Lena tells Ethan that she is leaving and no one can stop her. In fact, she threatens to use her powers against him if he tries to stop her. Before leaving Ravenwood, Ethan goes into Macon's bedroom where he finds a secret entrance into his study. Ethan goes into the study where he finds the box with Macon's writings in it. He touches it and has another vision. In the vision, Ethan sees Macon give his lover, Jane, an Arclight.

Analysis

Ethan meets a new girl, an English girl who is a keeper in training. This girl is mortal and she does not come with all the baggage that Lena comes with. Ethan really likes this girl, but he is still deeply in love with Lena. However, out of anger over Lena's behavior, Ethan nearly kisses Liv. Lena knows what Ethan did and she is deeply hurt even as she continues to push him away. It is clear that Lena still loves Ethan, but she is pushing him away out of fear of hurting him. This seems to be underscored by the parallel story of Macon's love for a young mortal woman named Jane.



Lena pulls further and further away from Ethan, embracing her new friendship with John Breed and her cousin, Ridley. Ethan thinks at first that these other two are controlling Lena, as Ridley once did in the previous novel. However, it soon becomes clear that Lena is the only one controlling her actions. This makes her decision to push Ethan away, and to cause chaos at the Country Fair, even more painful for Ethan.

It is clear that something bad is going on with Lena. The reader suspects that she has decided that she was supposed to be claimed for the evil side and this is why she is pulling away from Ethan. However, the reader must wonder if something else is going on.

Ethan has learned that not only is Liv, his new mortal friend, a keeper in training, but that he is a Wayward, a mortal who is bound to a caster as their, sort of, navigator. This is a lot for Ethan to take in, but it would explain the amazing and instant connection between he and Lena.

Discussion Question 1

Where does Ethan meet Liv? Where is she from? What does he learn she has to do with the supernatural world of casters?

Discussion Question 2

Why does Lena go off with John Breed? Why does this upset Ethan? What does it suggest about her relationship with Ethan?

Discussion Question 3

What does Ethan see in the visions of Macon? How do these visions parallel Ethan's relationship with Lena? What might Macon be trying to tell Ethan?

Vocabulary

Visions, affected, possible, streaming, chandelier, confused, condemning, forcing, whisper, defenseless, contain, transformation, understand, greatest, secrets, trauma, countless, professor, librarian, inseparable, candlesticks, silhouette, carried, underneath.



Chapters 19-27

Summary

Inheritance. It is All-Souls Day. Ethan goes to his aunts' house to pick them up for the service and finds them placing stickers on their belongings to indicate who should receive which items when they die. While glancing through an old picture album, Ethan sees a picture of Ravenwood from Abraham Ravenwood's days. When Mercy sees what he is looking at, she tells him that Abraham was trouble and that he is still alive. Mercy swears she saw Abraham and Hunting behind the local church not long ago.

Keeping. The whole town seems to have shown up at the cemetery for All Soul's Day. Ethan has to wade through a group of people either feeling sorry for him because of his mother's death, or pitying him because his father is crazy. When Ethan finally gets to his mother's grave, Marian and his father are already there. Marian sets a green tomato on top of the grave since one of Lila's favorite dishes was fried green tomatoes. She then gives Ethan a box that was among his mother's collection at the library. Inside, Ethan finds the same Arclight that Macon gave Jane in his vision. It is then that Ethan realizes his mother is the Jane Macon once loved.

The Arclight. Ethan drops the Arclight and tells Marian about his latest vision. Marian admits to having known about Lila and Macon's relationship, but defends Lila's actions by insisting that Lila always loved both Macon and Ethan's father, Mitchell.

Jump. Ethan has a nightmare about falling out of a boat with Lena. When he wakes, he can see Lena and John standing in an alley somewhere in his mirror. As he watches, John and Lena talk about going to the Great Barrier and how things will be different when they get there. Ridley joins them and the vision recedes. Ethan thinks over everything he knows, realizing that the Arclight must mean something important. Ethan goes to Marian's to ask for help and runs into Liv, who is studying the sky through a telescope. When Ethan tells Liv what he saw, she tells him that the Great Barrier is a myth, that no one knows if it really exists. Then Ethan tells Liv about the song he has been hearing and she tells him it has to do with a claiming moon. This suggests that Lena is about to have her Claiming. Ethan decides to go after Lena and asks Liv to go along.

Outer Doors. Ethan and Liv get Link out of summer school and then go to the local hangout to discuss the situation. They go out to the country fairgrounds where they believe there is an outer door into the caster tunnels because that was where Lena, John, and Ridley disappeared. As they walk the grounds, the Arclight begins glowing. Link gets the door open once they find it. They go through the tunnels, following the Arclight to a specific place. When they walk through the streets on the other side of the door they choose, the Arclight goes out but Ethan recognizes the city of Savannah.



Through the Looking Glass. Ethan directs his group to his Aunt Caroline's house. When they arrive, they find Lena's aunt, Del, out front. Aunt Del tells Ethan she can find Lena. Ethan speaks to his Aunt Caroline and learns that someone recently broke into her house. Ethan takes a look around and has a vision of Lena, John, and Ridley searching for something in the house, then a vision of Aunt Caroline bringing boxes into the attic, and then a vision of his mother hiding a journal. Ethan finds the journal and discovers a letter that it is a warning to Macon about Abraham, dated just a month before his mother died. There is also a Ravenwood family tree with some of the names marked off. Ethan runs into a room for a few minutes and finds himself eavesdropping on a conversation between Lena and John. Liv finds Ethan and tries to reassure him.

Bonaventure. After some rest, Ethan, Link, Liv, and Lucille walk to the Bonaventure Cemetery outside of town. They follow the glowing Arclight into a grove of moss covered oaks. As they try to decide what to do next, Amma and Arelia, Macon's mother, and another woman arrive. The other woman is Lena's great-aunt, Twyla. Amma and Twyla perform a ritual that allows Ethan to see his mother. Lila tells Ethan that he is Macon's only hope, but he has to hurry.

Scars. Amma tells Ethan the truth about what happened the night he met Serafina. Not only that, but how she and Lena brought him back with the Book of Moons. However, in order for them to bring him back, someone else had to die. That person was Macon. Ethan realizes that this is what has caused Lena to be filled with so much guilt. Then he touches the Arclight and has a vision of Macon. Ethan sees Macon receive the Arclight from his own mother. He also sees Arelia show him how to use it.

Down Below. Ethan continues to struggle to find an answer to everything he has been told as he, Liv, and Link make their way back to the outer door. As they walk through the tunnels, they get lost. For this reason, they decide to simply go south where the star they had been following was. After several hours, they hear the sound of someone in trouble. Ethan is surprised to find it is his Aunt Prue and her nurse, Thelma. Aunt Prue tells them that her father mapped the tunnels and she has continued his work. Aunt Prue gives them maps to help them find their way.

Analysis

Ethan has a number of shocks in this group of chapters. Ethan learns that his mother was in love with Macon in her youth. Ethan at first feels betrayed by his mother, but slowly comes to accept that she loved both his father and Macon. Ethan also begins to realize that his mother is trying to help him. When Amma and Twyla conjure his mother in the graveyard, she tells him that he must help Macon. Ethan is still angry at Macon at this point, but he knows that a lot of what has gone wrong with Lena is balanced on her feeling of guilt in causing Macon's death by saving Ethan. For this reason, Ethan wants to help Macon, but he has yet to figure out exactly how he is supposed to do that.

Ethan also learns that he died the night of the fight with Serafina. Amma and Lena lied to him about what happened that night, but now he learns the complete truth. He also



learns that Lena chose him over Macon by making a deal with the Book of Moons. It is a difficult truth for Ethan to handle, but it explains a great many things to him about Lena. It also reinforces to him how much Lena loves him.

Ethan is determined to save Lena. No matter what happens, he has not given up on Lena even though he feels that maybe he did for a minute or two. For this reason, Ethan has gone on a journey with Link and Liv to find the Great Barrier, a mythical place that Ethan believes Lena has gone to. Ethan does not know where it might be, only the myth that Liv helps him with. However, he has a connection to Lena that seems to help him sense where she is. He also gets help in the form of his Aunt Prue, a woman he is surprised to learn inherited the responsibility of mapping the caster tunnels. It seems that Ethan and his mother are not the only ones who are part of the caster world.

Discussion Question 1

What is All Souls Day? What is it like for Ethan to walk through a cemetery filled with his neighbors and friends?

Discussion Question 2

What truth does Ethan learn about his mother? How does this make him feel? Why?

Discussion Question 3

Why is Lena going to the Great Barrier? Why does Ethan want to find her? What does he hope to do?

Vocabulary

Correspond, interrupted, pathway, notebook, actually, particular, sleeveless, nonsense, visions, unbelievable, remember, charting, architectural, different, fortunately, draftswoman, apologetic, ultimate, etiquette, problem, pointed, affectionately.



Chapters 28-36

Summary

Bad Girl. As Ethan and his friends continue walking through the tunnels, they hear music. Suddenly, they are face-to-face with Hunting Ravenwood, Macon's brother. Hunting has brought his pack, a bunch of Blood Incubuses. Before they can attack Ethan and his friends, Ridley appears and stops them. Ridley tells Ethan and his friends she wants them to go with her, but they are not sure they can trust her. Ridley tells them that Lena is walking into trouble, that Serafina and Abraham are trying to pull the Seventeen Moon out of time.

Consequences. Ethan and his friends are walking through a forest when Ethan notices that the Arclight is acting oddly again. As they discuss it, a sudden noise alerts them that something, or someone, is uprooting the trees around them. Ethan calls out to Lena in his mind and she warns him to get away. Serafine suddenly appears. She verbally attacks Ethan, implying that she killed his mother. Serafine then turns her attention to Ridley for betraying Abraham and Serafine. Serafine takes Ridley's powers and disappears.

No One Special. They spend the night in the forest. Before Ethan sleeps, he reads through Lena's journal that Ridley had given him. When he goes to sleep, Lena comes to him. Lena declares her love and kisses him, but then they burst into flames. Ethan tries to tell Lena everything is okay, but the flames never stop.

Common Thread. As they begin walking, Ethan sees a conversation between John and Lena in which Lena tries to convince John to go help Ethan and his friends, but John refuses. When he returns to reality, Ethan realizes that it is Lucille who allows him to see Lena. Liv then tells him they have reached the end of Aunt Prue's maps and can go no further. However, Ethan is able to figure out that the Great Barrier is in a place between the mortal world and the caster world. This is how Lila found the Great Barrier and how Ethan finds it, as well, with a piece of vellum in his mother's journal.

No One's Son. They find the door to the Great Barrier. After they walk through, Ethan has a vision of Macon beginning the Transformation. They make their way across a rickety bridge and Ethan has another vision. In this one, Lila and Macon meet for the first time since they ended their romance. Lila tells Macon Abraham is alive. Suddenly Abraham arrives. Abraham threatens Lila. Macon tells her to run as he and Abraham fight.

Sea Change. Ethan comes to the end of the bridge and follows Lucille into the clouds beyond.

Out of the Light. Ethan finds Lena's necklace, telling him they have found her. Unfortunately, they run into Hunting and his pack. Liv wants to turn back, but Ethan



refuses. Ethan takes the Arclight out of his pocket and it is glowing green again. Ethan realizes why. He holds it up, rubs it between his fingers, and lets go. The Arclight hangs in the air. Ethan reads part of an incantation he found in his mother's journal. Liv finishes the incantation. Suddenly Macon is released from the Arclight.

Flesh and Blood. Macon's eyes are green, implying that he is no longer an Incubus but a good caster. Macon tells them, however, that he can still feel darkness in him, suggesting the Transition is not over yet. Macon tells Ethan that it was Lila who locked him in the Arclight to save his life. Ethan then has a vision and sees what happened that night. Macon then encourages Ethan to lead them to Lena.

Army of One. Ethan and his friends get Macon caught up on everything that has been going on. They gather near the cave where Serafine has set up her headquarters, discussing what to do. Macon admits to being too weak to be much help. For this reason, they are pleased when Leah Ravenwood, a succubus, suddenly arrives. Macon hesitates to trust Leah, but they have little option.

Analysis

Ridley joins Ethan and his friends, which surprises them all because she appeared to be working with Serafine. However, since she knows where Lena is, they feel they have no choice but to let her join them. Ridley's truthfulness is revealed, however, when Serafine arrives and accuses her of betrayal. Serafine takes Ridley's powers, taking away her identity. This leaves Ridley lost and frightened.

Ethan continues to struggle with the messages his mother has left for him and what he should do next. Ethan sees Lena from time to time and continues to have visions of Macon. All of these eventually adds up until Ethan finally figures out what he is supposed to do. Ethan realizes that Macon is trapped in the Arclight and that his mother left part of the incantation to release him in her journal. Ethan says the words, but knows that only Liv can finish it. Liv, however, is not supposed to actually participate in the lives of the casters. By choosing to help Ethan, and Macon, Liv makes it impossible for her to ever become a Keeper.

Macon is released and appears to be a good caster, but is sure that he is not finished with the Transition. This leaves in question what Macon will be when all is said and done. Perhaps by being saved from death he has become something completely different in the caster world.

Ethan and his friends gear up to fight Serafine and her army of Vexes and Incubuses. It appears to be a difficult fight, but Ethan knows he could not walk away as long as Lena is stuck inside. For this reason, Ethan is determined to go even if he has to go alone. However, his friends are loyal to him and they have his back no matter the odds.



Discussion Question 1

Why does Ethan hesitate to follow Ridley? What changes his mind? Why?

Discussion Question 2

How does Ethan find the Great Barrier? How did his mother find it? Why is this important?

Discussion Question 3

How does Ethan discover that Macon is inside the Arclight? How does he release him? What penalty will Liv pay for helping him?

Vocabulary

Motley, character, comprehend, conversation, reminded, reservations, illusionist, mindless, according, advantage, fluttered, succubus, fluttered, blowing, incredible, possess, stomachache, unfortunately, incarceration, weakened.



Chapters 37-43

Summary

Dark Fire. Leah takes care of the Blood Incubuses at the entrance of the cave with her cat, Bade, making it clear for Ethan and the others to move inside. They make their way deep inside and come up to where Serafina and her army are calling the Claiming moon. Lena is unconscious in John's lap. Ridley worries that this means Lena has already been claimed. Amma arrives with Twyla, Arelia, and Gramma. Amma and her friends call the Elders to help.

Seventeen Moons. The Blood Incubuses move to attack Ethan and his friends, but Macon throws up some sort of light that encloses them. Ethan runs to Lena and tries to wake her. Lena fights Ethan, still filled with guilt and afraid of becoming evil. Ethan tells her what his mother told him and that she should claim herself. Lena does and the Claiming moon disappears.

Darkness and Light. Abraham shows up. Macon stands up to him. Macon and Abraham spar with words for a moment, then Abraham shows Macon that he has the Book of Moons, then disappears. Lena, thrilled to see her uncle, rushes into his arms. Macon then explains to Lena that by Claiming herself, she has upset the Order of Things as well as the curse levied on their family generations ago.

The Way Back Home. After returning home, Lena and Ethan patch up their broken relationship. Ethan also returns to Lena his mother's ring, one she lost but he found on his desk when he arrived home.

New Blood. Ethan and Lena are sleeping when the sound of Lucille hissing wakes Ethan. Link has come into the room. Link tells Ethan that he was bitten during all the fighting in the Great Barrier. Link is turning into a Blood Incubus. Link worries about hiding the truth from his ultra-religious mother.

Sunrise. Ethan, Link, Lena, and Ridley bury the Arclight in Mason's empty grave. Liv is no longer a Keeper in training, but has decided to work with Mason in his study. Mason is forced to remain in the tunnels under Ravenwood since the world thinks he is dead. Link is adjusting to his new life.

Siren's Tears. Raven, still grieving over the loss of her powers, traps John Breed in the Arclight.

Analysis

Ethan and his friends enter the cave where they are joined by Amma and her group of supernaturals. They feel confident at this point they can win. There is a brief fight, but then Macon somehow traps most of the Blood Incubuses behind a bright light. Ethan



convinces Lena to Claim herself rather than wait for the curse to do it for her. When Lena does, the Claiming moon goes away and, with it, Serafine's excess power. They have won once again, but no one knows at this point what the cost will be.

Ethan and Lena find their way back to one another, if it was ever gone. They never gave up on one another and probably never will. It is a relationship that is more than teen love, but a spiritual thing destined by fate.

Link, Ethan's best friend, has been bitten, most likely by John Breed. No one still understands for sure what John Breed is, but it is clear that Link is becoming a Blood Incubus. This will change Link forever, bringing him into the world of the casters in a way that even Ethan does not know. This will change things, leaving the reader anxious to see what happens next.

Discussion Question 1

How does the fact that Lena has claimed herself change things both in the Order of Things and within the curse? Is this a good thing?

Discussion Question 2

How has Link become a Blood Incubus? How will it change his life? What is his biggest concern?

Discussion Question 3

What is the Arclight? Who does Ridley get trap inside of it? Why?

Vocabulary

Decision, penalty, endless, powerless, mascara, accounting, remembered, crumbling, bolted, painted, electric, emotions, fumes, reeking, beyond, spheres, familiar, different, crypts, existed, listening, weeping, tangled, pierce, fissures, shoveled.



Characters

Ethan Wate

Ethan Wate was a normal, all-American boy just a few months ago. However, after meeting Lena Duchannes, Ethan has found himself dumped into a world he never knew existed. Lena is part of a family of supernatural beings, casters and Incubuses. Lena herself is supposed to have been Claimed as either a good or evil caster on her birthday, but interference from her mother stopped her Claiming.

Ethan is deeply in love with Lena even though they have only known one another a short time. For this reason, Ethan tries to help Lena through the death of her uncle and the uncertainty of her future. However, when outside forces come between them, Ethan finds himself chasing Lena across the caster world to a place that is not even supposed to exist.

As the novel develops, Ethan learns a great many things about himself and his family. Ethan always thought he had a very normal, boring family. However, he learns that his mother was a Keeper, a mortal who observes the caster world, and that he might be a Wayward, a mortal who helps a caster find their way. Not only this, but Ethan finds himself entering a world he never knew existed in order to save the girl he loves.

Lena Duchannes

Lena Duchannes is the daughter of an evil caster. Lena has grown up with her uncle, Macon, because her father died in a fire and her mother disappeared. Lena's family is cursed because of a deal an ancestor made with the Book of Moons that failed. For this reason, the caster members of the family cannot choose if they become good or evil, that choice is made for them. Lena's mother became evil and Lena worried that on her sixteenth birthday, she would too. However, Lena did not become Claimed on her birthday because of the interference of her mother.

Lena is four months past her birthday and beginning to fear that she will be Claimed evil like her mother. Lena's powers are developing, and fire, her mother's power, is one of them. This, mixed with the guilt over her uncle's death, has left Lena in a dark depression. Ethan tries to pull her out of it, but Lena turns to her cousin, Ridley, and John Breed, because they can better understand what she is going through. In the end, Lena trusts John, but this turns out to be a mistake because he is working with Serafine and Abraham to use Lena to harness the power of the Claiming moon. Ethan rescues Lena, but she is forced to claim herself in order to stop her mother and Abraham.



Link

Link is Ethan's best friend. Link is a human who has no connection with the caster world except through Ethan. However, Link is a good friend to Ethan so he goes where Ethan goes. It is because of his loyalty to Ethan that Link finds himself in a fight with Blood Incubus and gets bitten. Link quickly begins to transition into a Blood Incubus, but with Macon's help, learns how to harness his changing body.

John Breed

John Breed is a mysterious figure in this book. John is a Blood Incubus, but he has green eyes. The eyes suggest that John is also a good caster. These contrasts in one person have never been seen before, so many wonder what he really is and where he came from. This question is not answered in this novel.

As Lena spirals into a dark depression, John befriends her. Lena and John begin running off together, causing a rift between Lena and Ethan. It is John who talks Lena into going to the Great Barrier, assuring her that going there will fix all her problems. Lena agrees, unaware that John is leading her into a plot by Serafine and Abraham to harness the Claiming moon and use it to increase their powers.

Ridley

Ridley is Lena's cousin. Ridley is a succubus who betrayed Lena and Ethan in the previous novel. It appears that Ridley is heading down the same road again in this novel. However, Ridley proves everyone wrong when she saves Ethan and his friends from Hunter and his Blood pack in order to save Lena. For betraying Serafine, however, Ridley loses her powers when Serafine steals them from her. Ridley does not know who she is without her powers, so she decides to trap John Breed in the Arclight to force him to help her.

Macon Ravenwood

Macon Ravenwood is Lena's uncle. Macon became a Blood Incubus when he was a teenager. Although Blood Incubuses are evil, Macon found a way to control his urges and remain good. When Lena saved Ethan's life with the Book of Moons, the payment was another life - Macon's. Lena spends much of the book feeling deep guilt about Macon's death. However, Ethan later figures out that Macon is actually trapped in an Arclight, thanks to his mother. Ethan and Liv are able to release Macon, who returns to the world no longer a Blood Incubus, but a caster. Although Macon's eyes are green, he worries that his Transformation is not complete because he can still feel evil inside himself.



Amma

Amma is the Wate family housekeeper and a surrogate mother to Ethan. Amma is also a strong seer who can see into the future. Amma comes to Ethan's rescue several times in this novel. Once Amma tells Ethan about the book of Moons and his death at the hands of Serafine to help him understand why Lena is struggling and how to save her. Another time Amma comes to Ethan's rescue when a Vex attacks him and his friends in a caster tunnel. Finally, Amma and her spirits help Ethan and his friends when they go into a cave in the Great Barrier to save Lena. Amma is clearly a loving woman who thinks nothing of placing her life in danger for her ward.

Lila Jane Evers Wate

Lila Jane Evers Wate is Ethan's mother. Lila died a little over a year ago in an accident. Ethan knew his mother as a kind, scholarly woman who worked in the archives of the local library. What Ethan does not know is that his mother was a Keeper, like Marian. Ethan also does not know that his mother once was in love with Macon Ravenwood. This relationship ended when Macon began his Transformation into a Blood Incubus. However, Lila continues to love Macon. For this reason, when Macon is destined to die because of the deal Lena makes with the Book of Moons to save Ethan, Lila traps him in an Arclight to save his life. Lila now uses music and a brief meeting conjured by Twyla to tell Ethan how to save both Macon and Lena.

Serafine

Serafine is Lena's mother. Serafine is a dark, evil caster who works with Abraham to find a way to rule the mortal world. In the previous book, Serafine killed Ethan, leading Lena and Amma to use the Book of Moons to bring him back, causing Macon's death. In this book, Serafine takes Ridley's powers for helping Ethan. Serafine is trying to harness the Claiming moon. To do that, she has lured Lena, who still has not been claimed despite the fact her sixteenth birthday has passed, to the Great Barrier. Serafine then uses Lena's need to be Claimed to summon the Claiming moon. However, when Lena claims herself, the Claiming moon goes away, stopping Serafine's antics. Unfortunately, Lena continues to have powers similar to her mother's and still fears she will one day be as evil as her mother.

Twyla

Twyla is a great aunt of Lena's. Twyla is a dead woman who can come back to the earth to conjure spirits for people to speak to them. Twyla helps Ethan speak to his mother in Savannah so that Lila can tell him to help Macon. Twyla later comes to Ethan's aid when he and his friends enter the cave in the Great Barrier where Serafine is trying to harness the power of the Claiming moon.



Symbols and Symbolism

Lena's Necklace

Ethan finds Lena's necklace in the Great Barrier, confirming for him that she is there.

Lila's Ring

Ethan gave Lena his mother's ring when they first became intimate. Lena loses the ring, but Ethan finds it on his desk when everything is said and done, implying his mother returned it to him.

Maps

Aunt Prue gives Ethan and his friends maps of the caster tunnels to help them find the Great Barrier.

Lila's Journal

Ethan finds his mother's journal in the home of his aunt, showing him the way to the Great Barrier and giving him the information he needs to save Macon.

Lena's Journal

Ridley gives Ethan Lena's journal to help them find her.

Jekyll and Hyde

Lena hides her journal in the cover of the book, Jekyll and Hyde.

Box of Papers

Marian has a box filled with papers that once belonged to Macon. When Ethan touches these papers, he has visions of Macon in the past.

Book of Moons

Book of Moons is a book of spells. Lena used it after Serafine killed Ethan in order to bring him back. At the end of this novel, Abraham shows Macon that he has the book.



Arclight

Marian gives Ethan an Arclight, a round object that Marian says was Lila's most precious belonging. Ethan later realizes that his mother has trapped Macon inside to save his life.

Shadowing Song

Ethan finds himself always hearing a particular song on his iPod and in Link's car. Liv tells him this is a shadowing song, an attempt by a spirit to communicate.



Settings

Gatlin, Georgia

The novel is set in the small town of Gatlin, Georgia in modern times. Gatlin is such a small town that everyone knows everyone else. This causes it to be impossible for the teenagers in this town to do anything without their loved ones finding out immediately. Ethan used to dream about leaving Gatlin, but since meeting Lena he is fairly content to stay.

Ravenwood

Ravenwood is Macon's family home. Ravenwood is a large estate that is similar to the old plantations of the pre-Civil War south. Ravenwood is part of the caster world and actually has a magic door in Macon's room that goes down into his study in the tunnels.

Greenbriar

Greenbriar is another ancestral home of Lena's family. Greenbriar is the scene of the first use by a member of Lena's family to use the Book of Moon's to bring a lover back to life. This attempt failed and led to the curse on Lena's family that keeps the casters from being able to choose to be good or evil. This house burned down centuries ago.

Great Barrier

The Great Barrier is a place on the seam between the mortal world and the caster world. This is where Serafine has chosen to attempt to harness the power of the Claiming moon.

Caster Tunnels

Caster Tunnels are tunnels that run beneath the mortal world and allow casters to move quickly between locations both in the mortal world and the caster world.



Themes and Motifs

Love

In this novel, love is a theme of the plot because it is a strong motivating force for many of the main characters. For Ethan, love of Lena is what causes him to go to the Great Barrier to fight Incubuses in order to save her even though she has asked him over and over to leave her alone. Ethan knows that Lena loves him and that she would never push him away if she did not think he was in danger, and that is what motivates him to save her.

For Lena, love motivates her on two levels. With her uncle, Lena finds herself falling into a dark depression after his death because she not only misses him, but she feels responsible for his death. If not for Lena choosing to use the Book of Moons to bring Ethan back, an act which in its self is an act of love, Macon might not have died. At the same time, Lena worries that she is about to turn evil and she does not want Ethan to be hurt by that fact. For that reason, she pushes Ethan away, trying to keep him where he will be safe from her and her uncontrollable powers.

For Lila, love motivates her to protect a man she once loved. Lila and Macon were once lovers, but ended their affair when he made the transition into a Blood Incubus. Despite falling in love with another man and having a family, Lila continues to love Macon. Therefore, when Macon is sentenced to die to balance the life restored by the Book of Moons, Lila imprisons Macon in the Arclight.

Love can be an amazing motivator. In this novel, almost all the actions by all the characters are motivated by love. For this reason, love is a theme of the novel.

Secrets

Secrets is a theme of the novel because there are many secrets that were once kept from Ethan that have to be revealed in order for him to do what he needs to do to save Lena. Ethan's mother was a Keeper, a mortal who watched the caster world and reported on it. This was something Ethan never knew about his mother. However, Ethan learns the truth when he learns that he might also be a Wayward, a mortal who helps the caster he is bound to find their way.

As the plot continues developing, Ethan begins having visions of Macon with a woman named Jane, a woman he loved deeply. Ethan wonders who this woman might be, but never imagines it is his own mother until the proof is right in front of him. Ethan is angry, afraid that this means his mother never really loved his father or him. It is a secret Lila meant to keep in the grave, but one that has to come out when Ethan realizes that Lila trapped Macon in the Arclight to save his life.



Ethan also learns that he died the night he battled Serafine on Lena's sixteenth birthday. Ethan also discovers that this is why Macon had to die and why Lena is so overwhelmed with grief. Revealing all these secrets to Ethan, the people around him give him the tools he needs to save Lena. However, they also give him insight to the mother he once thought he knew, but realizes he never really did.

Power

Power is an important theme in this novel because it is the motivating factor that causes Serafine to come after her own daughter. Serafine wants power, lots and lots of power. She once tried to influence her daughter's Claiming in order to gain power, so it should not surprise the reader that Serafine is once again trying to use her daughter to harness the power of the Claiming moon.

Serafine is an evil woman who thinks of no one before herself. Serafine wants to be the most powerful caster, someone who can rule both the caster and mortal worlds. This makes Serafine very dangerous. Ethan battles her a second time, victorious this time. However, the reader suspects that Serafine will return. It is for Serafine that power is a theme of this novel.



Styles

Point of View

This novel is written in the first person point of view. Ethan is the narrating character. The reader sees the entire story, except for one small scene, from Ethan's point of view. Ethan tells his story as it unfolds, taking the reader along as he struggles to understand Lena's sudden distance and he fights to save her.

The point of view of this novel allows for a close, intimate relationship between the reader and the main character. This point of view is restrictive in some ways. The narrating character is a young man who has only recently learned of the existence of the caster world, therefore the reader is learning about this world alongside Ethan. At the same time, the reader is not overwhelmed with information and is able to make sense of this new, exciting world as Ethan does. For this reason, the point of view works well with the plot and the main character.

Language and Meaning

The language of this novel is simple English. The novel is written from the point of view of a teenager, for other teenagers; therefore, the language is simple and filled with some basic slang. The language is not complicated, making it ideal for its intended audience, young adults.

The language of this novel works well with the plot because it is authentic to the main characters. The plot includes some words that have been made up, or altered, to fit the genre of the story. However, these words are clearly defined in the text and are not difficult for the reader to comprehend.

Structure

The novel is divided into a prologue and forty-three chapters. The chapters are all fairly short. The story is told in a linear fashion with few flashbacks that do not take place in Ethan's visions. The novel is written in both narration and dialogue, giving the reader a full story, rather than just telling a tale.

The novel has one main plot and several subplots. The main plot follows Ethan as he attempts to save his girlfriend, Lena. One of the subplots follows the relationship between Macon and Lila, and Ethan's attempts to save Macon. Another subplot follows the relationship between Lena and John, as well as the relationship between Ethan and Liv. All the plots come to a satisfying conclusion at the end of the novel.



Quotes

It was our curse now.

-- Ethan (Before paragraph 10)

Importance: This is Ethan talking about the curse that afflicts the young casters in Lena's family and expressing how it has now become something they must now share.

That was Macon's funeral.

-- Ethan (Perpetual Peace paragraph 2)

Importance: Macon, Lena's uncle, died in the previous novel. Macon's death has a profound influence on Lena's actions in this novel, making the funeral the important first scene of the novel.

Which was even worse than knowing.

-- Ethan (The Call paragraph 2)

Importance: Ethan thinks that sometimes not knowing something is worse than knowing something, especially when it is related to the curse that controls Lena's future.

I don't want you to leave. I want things to be like they were.

-- Ethan (The Lake paragraph 17)

Importance: Ethan has just learned that Lena is planning to leave town during the summer. Ethan does not think that running away will help Lena recover from her uncle's death.

When the tips of my fingers touched the door, it swung open as if my skin was somehow the genetic recognition, the key that opened the door.

-- Ethan (Exile paragraph 24)

Importance: Ethan opens a door in the caster tunnels and it surprises him even though he has just been told he is likely a Wayward.

In the darkness, I could see her eyelids lift and the golden glow--the eyes of the curse. The eyes of a Dark Caster.

-- Ethan (Revelations paragraph 11)

Importance: This part of a dream Ethan has about Lena. Lena thinks she might become a Dark Caster and has begun to behave as though it has happened.

But this one little detail mattered.

-- Ethan (The Arlight paragraph 3)

Importance: Ethan has just realized his mother is the Jane in the visions he has had of



Macon. This means that his mother loved Macon before his father, and possibly only loved Macon, not Ethan or his father.

Never underestimate the power of the British accent. Watch and learn.

-- Liv (Outer Doors paragraph 7)

Importance: Liv says this as she convinces Ethan to allow her to trick the school into letting Link leave early. This quote shows Liv's more playful side.

I had died.

-- Ethan (Scars paragraph 23)

Importance: This is Ethan's first reaction to learning the truth of his encounter with Serafine on Lena's birthday.

The Arclight seemed more than broken.

-- Ethan (Consequences paragraph 4)

Importance: Ethan and his friends had been using the glow of the Arclight to help them choose their path, but now the light seemed to come and go at random.

Claim yourself. Non one has to show you the way. You know your own way.

-- Ethan (Seventeen Moons paragraph 80)

Importance: This is Ethan's advice to Lena. By claiming herself, Lena makes the Claiming moon disappear, stopping Serafine. However, Lena has also left herself both good and evil.

Do you think you'll ever be able to forgive me?

-- Lena (The Way Back Home paragraph 11)

Importance: These are Lena's words to Ethan in the aftermath of all that has happened in the past few weeks.