

Beautiful Disaster Study Guide

Beautiful Disaster by Jamie McGuire

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



Contents

| | |
|---|--------------------|
| Beautiful Disaster Study Guide..... | 1 |
| Contents..... | 2 |
| Plot Summary..... | 3 |
| Chapter 1: Red Flag..... | 5 |
| Chapter 2: Pig & Chapter 3: Cheap Shot..... | 8 |
| Chapter 4: The Bet..... | 11 |
| Chapter 5: Parker Hayes..... | 14 |
| Chapter 6: Turning Point & Chapter 7: Nineteen..... | 16 |
| Chapter 8: Rumors..... | 19 |
| Chapter 9: Promise..... | 21 |
| Chapter 10: Poker Face..... | 23 |
| Chapter 11: Jealousy..... | 25 |
| Chapter 12: Two of a Kind..... | 27 |
| Chapter 14: Full House & Chapter 15: City of Sin..... | 29 |
| Chapter 16: Home & Chapter 17: No, Thanks..... | 32 |
| Chapter 18: The Box & Chapter 19: Hellerton..... | 35 |
| Chapter 20: Last Dance & Chapter 21: Smoke..... | 38 |
| Chapter 22: Jet Plane & Epilogue..... | 41 |
| Characters..... | 44 |
| Symbols and Symbolism..... | 49 |
| Settings..... | 51 |
| Themes and Motifs..... | 52 |
| Styles..... | 55 |
| Quotes..... | 57 |



Plot Summary

Beautiful Disaster by Jamie McGuire is a romantic novel about Abby and Travis, two young people who fall in love against all odds. After meeting, Abby and Travis quickly become friends. However, he doesn't believe in relationships, and she just wants to escape the past. Neither plan to fall in love. When they do, they must learn to overcome their fears because they know that they belong together. "Beautiful Disaster" is an inspiring love story about a couple with troubled pasts learning to trust and rely on one another in order to build a future together.

As Beautiful Disaster begins, Abby accompanies America and Shepley to a Circle fight where she meets Travis. Travis is immediately interested in becoming friends because he is intrigued by Abby. She is the only female who does not want to date him. Though Abby is repelled by Travis's reputation, she befriends him and quickly learns that many of her beliefs about him are wrong. As their friendship develops, the attraction between them is obvious, despite their attempts to disprove any romantic connection. Abby tries to pull away from Travis when their friendship begins to impact her reputation, but he will not allow it. Travis is furious when Abby begins dating Parker, one of his frat brothers, and he soon makes a bet with Abby that he will not take a hit during one of his fights, the end result being that Abby loses and has to spend a month at Travis's apartment.

When Travis overhears Abby telling America her reasons for not dating him, he is hurt and sleeps with two girls that night. He does this in spite of his insistence that he and Abby are just friends. Travis makes Abby's experience dating Parker unpleasant by continually calling her during dates and mocking Parker until she tells him not to ruin this for her. Though Parker questions Travis and Abby's friendship, Travis refuses to release Abby from the bet, admitting that he cannot stand the thought of her being with Parker. After the surprise birthday party Travis throws for Abby, during which she makes out with Parker, rumors abound that Abby slept with both Parker and Travis, and America tells Abby that the rumors that she is two-timing both guys are going around because they are true!

Travis throttles a guy who insults Abby, but Abby explains to her friend, Finch, that she cannot date Travis because he reminds her too much of her father and the past that she is desperately trying to escape. Parker decides to stop seeing Abby until her month with Travis ends; but, on the last night, Abby has sex with Travis. Travis is distraught when she leaves during the night and starts dating Parker again; however, Abby's feelings for Parker are completely eclipsed by her emotions for Travis, so when Travis admits that he is in love with her, she stops seeing Parker and becomes Travis's girlfriend. Abby and Travis fight over Travis's jealousy, but he promises to do better because he wants her to be happy.

During poker night with Travis's family, Travis learns about Abby's past and her father, but he promises her that it is not important. When Mick visits Abby for help escaping from his debt, Abby and her friends fly to Las Vegas where Abby wins most of the



money to repay Mick's debt. Travis engages in a professional fight for Benny to make up the remaining difference. Unfortunately, Benny wants Travis to continue fighting for him. Since Travis will not heed Abby's objections, she breaks up with him because she is convinced that he thinks money is more important than she is.

However, even after breaking up with Travis, Abby accompanies him to his family's Thanksgiving celebration, pretending they are still in a relationship. She is on the verge of reconciling with Travis when he notes that he is happy as long as she is happy. So, she does not tell him that she has changed her mind about breaking up. Abby suffers for a rough couple of months, catching Travis with Megan and a box of condoms. She goes with Travis to a fight where she is nearly sexually assaulted because Travis wanted to break up her dinner with Parker to prove that she belongs to him. When Travis drags a drunken Abby out of a frat party to prevent her from acting foolish, he declares his love for her, and they finally make up.

During the last Circle fight of the year, Keaton Hall burns down, and Abby and Travis narrowly escape. This event forces Abby to realize that she and Travis belong together, so she proposes to him. They visit Las Vegas again to get married. After Abby gets a tattoo of her married name, she calms Travis's fears by assuring him of her everlasting love and devotion.



Chapter 1: Red Flag

Summary

Chapter 1: Red Flag

Abby believes it is obvious she does not belong in the crowded, dirty room as she follows her best friend, America, and Shepley, America's boyfriend, through the crowd. Adam stands on a chair to welcome everyone to the Circle and to explain the rules of the fight. He introduces the challenger, Marek Young, who fights Travis "Mad Dog" Maddox who needs no introduction. Abby pushes her way through the crowd to watch Travis knock Marek out, but when the crowd pushes her around, Travis appears to save her from falling and returns her to America and Shepley who yell at her for endangering herself. America takes Abby and Kara Lin back to her dorm and her roommate, Kara Lin.

At lunch the next day, Travis sits at the end of Abby's table with two provocative blondes, one of whom argues with America until Travis chides her. At the end of lunch, Travis approaches, calling Abby "Pigeon", but when he compliments Abby, America warns him away, and he leaves after whispering in America's ear. America says Abby is in trouble because Travis wants her to come to his apartment, and when Shepley warns Abby not to fall for Travis, Abby and America both assure him that she will not. When Abby goes to class, Travis takes the seat next to her instead of sitting in front, and after he asks if he has offended her, she tells him to give up now because she is not sleeping with him. Travis insists that he just wants to hang out, promising he will not even flirt with Abby if she comes over tonight, so she agrees to think about it. After class, he follows Abby outside and asks if she has thought about it, and when he promises to stop following her if she agrees, Abby acquiesces. Abby finds America with Finch, and when she admits she agreed to hang out with Travis tonight, they exchange a look. Abby wonders if Travis sees her as a challenge or as unattractive enough to just be friends, and she is not sure which idea bothers her more. Four hours later, America picks Abby up and is astounded by her friend's homely appearance, designed to turn Travis off. At Travis and Shepley's apartment, Travis offers to help Abby with her History paper, and she is surprised when Shepley informs her that Travis is acing all of his classes. She asks why he fights, and he explains that his scholarship only covers half of his tuition so he fights to cover the difference. He learned to fight because his father had a drinking problem and he has four older brothers. When Travis compliments Abby's appearance, she objects that she is not trying to impress him, but he claims she already has because he does not usually have to beg girls to come over. He convinces Abby to accompany him to dinner on the back of his Harley, promising he will not let anything happen to her.

At dinner, Travis asks if Abby hates all men or just him, laughing when she claims it is just him. He cannot figure her out because most girls are not disgusted by him and Abby does not even try to capture his attention like others. Abby insists she does not like Travis, so he insists they have to be friends, swearing that he will not even think about



her sexually unless she wants him to. Travis tells Abby a bit about himself, including that he is studying Criminal Justice and that his mom died when he was young. A group of guys from the soccer team laughing annoys Travis, and he explains they are joking because he does not usually take girls to dinner. He asks about Abby and her friendship with America, and when he asks why she chose Eastern University, he smiles and claims that he knows what she means when she says it felt right.

Analysis

"Beautiful Disaster" begins with the narrator and protagonist, Abby Abernathy, accompanying her best friend, America, and Shepley, America's boyfriend, to an underground fighting ring, called the Circle. This is where she meets Shepley's cousin, Travis "Mad Dog" Maddox, an infamous fighter and ladies' man on the campus of Eastern University. During the fight, Abby is knocked around by the crowd, but Travis rescues her. His interest is apparent when he joins Abby's lunch table the next day and nicknames her Pigeon. His reputation is well-deserved as he flirts with two blondes throughout lunch, and Shepley warns Abby away from Travis. When Travis asks America to bring Abby to his and Shepley's apartment, America jokes about it because she is certain that Abby will not fall for him. In class, Abby rebuffs Travis's attentions, insisting that she will not sleep with him, but he good-naturedly claims that he just wants to be friends and harasses her about hanging out with him until she relents. The fact that Abby worries about whether Travis finds her unattractive indicates her interest in him, though she denies it, and their mutual attraction foreshadows the romance that sparks between them. Abby dresses shabbily before accompanying America to the apartment, intent on dissuading Travis from pursuing her, but Travis is indifferent about her appearance, even complimenting her. Abby gets to know Travis a bit more throughout the evening, such as his excellent academic career and a bit about his family. He is intrigued by her lack of desire for him since he is accustomed to girls going out of their way to capture his attention. Even a group of guys nearby laugh to see Travis out with a girl since he usually just sleeps with them and never dates them. The fact that Abby enjoys her time with Travis foreshadows their relationship.

Discussion Question 1

How does Abby meet Travis?

Discussion Question 2

Why does Shepley warn Abby away from Travis?

Discussion Question 3

Why is Travis so intrigued by Abby?



Vocabulary

Medley, escalated, encroachment, contender, diverting, detonated, engulfed, voluptuous, lingered, stipulation.



Chapter 2: Pig & Chapter 3: Cheap Shot

Summary

Chapter 2: Pig & Chapter 3: Cheap Shot

At lunch in Chapter 2, Travis tells Brazil to get out of his favorite seat, the one next to Abby, and though Abby objects to being called one of Travis's girls, Travis sitting next to her arouses curiosity because she is the only girl Travis has ever insisted on eating with. America answers Shepley's concerns by assuring him that Abby is immune to Travis's charms. Because America and Abby discuss the Biology test they have after lunch, Travis insists on helping Abby study during lunch, telling her they will have to begin earlier next time. Parker Hayes, one of Travis's fraternity brothers, greets Travis as he drops Abby off at class. Looking disappointed when Abby says that Travis is just a good tutor and friend, America decides to focus on introducing Abby to one of Shepley's friends. Over the next week, Travis helps Abby with History and tutors her in Biology, praising her when she gets the third highest test grade in her class. Rumors about Travis and Abby's relationship fade since he is not known for keeping the same girl for long, but he continues to sit with her in History, and it does not take long for Abby to realize she was wrong about him. Trying not to watch girls fawn over him, Abby wonders if Travis gets sick of it, and Shepley assures her that his cousin hates the attention. Abby is annoyed when Travis gets sidetracked from walking her to class by a girl in a short skirt, but Parker introduces himself to Abby and invites her to the frat party this weekend; Finch agrees that Parker is more Abby's speed, and Abby is flattered by the invitation.

At the dorm, America informs Abby that the two of them are staying at the boys' apartment because the hot water heater is broken, and Kara is shocked to learn that Travis has not even tried to sleep with Abby. At the apartment, a girl exits the bathroom as Abby and America arrive, and Travis tells her to leave because he has company, refusing to accept her phone number. Abby is disgusted with Travis for using the girl, but he insists she threw herself at him. He offers his bed to Abby since he only sleeps with girls on the couch, and after Abby showers, she joins Travis in his room to study, finding his condom stash when she looks for a pen. Travis promises to be on his best behavior as he joins Abby in bed. Abby is embarrassed to wake curled up with Travis in the morning, but he teases her for being so uptight; "I don't want to sleep with you, Pidge. I like you too much" (page 43), but that just makes Abby feel deficient since Travis wants to sleep with everyone. At breakfast, America and Shepley discuss the upcoming date party at the frat house, and though Travis never goes, he objects when America asks Shepley to find a date for Abby, insisting it will be fun if all four of them go. Abby agrees reluctantly.

In Chapter 3, Abby is chatting with Finch when Travis offers her a ride, and when she says she needs to grab her razor from the dorm, he jokes about her legs, causing Abby to object since everyone assumes they are sleeping together and she looks pathetic



since he still sleeps around. She suggests they should stay away from each other for a while, but Travis objects, insisting he does not want people to think less of her because of him. He invites her out to the Red Door, a local club, joking that it will not take long for people to realize they are not together after seeing his antics. At the apartment, America and Shepley decide to accompany them, but when Travis comments on Abby's excellent fake ID, she quickly changes the topic. At the club, the foursome dance and drink as girls cling to Travis, but Travis only buys drinks for Abby, insisting she is different. When Abby jokes that she is only different because she is the only girl that Travis does not want to sleep with, he objects, claiming that he does but knows she is better than that. Forcing Abby to dance with him, Travis begins kissing her neck, but she pulls away insisting he cannot get her drunk enough to sleep with him. Travis begins dancing with Megan, but when Abby introduces Travis to Ethan, an attractive guy she has been flirting with, Travis threatens Ethan. On the way to the car, Travis says he should just kiss Abby and get it over with; they spend most of their time together, but she acts like she does not want to be seen with him. Abby objects that Travis treats her like his property and had no right to chase Ethan away. Travis quickly explains that Ethan was arrested for rape last year, and though he apologizes for kissing Abby's neck, Travis claims she is beautiful and driving him crazy. At the apartment, Travis lets Abby snuggle with him; though she is confusing, he is afraid she will never ask again if he rejects her. Abby wakes tangled with Travis again and jumps out of bed. In the living room, Shepley notes that he does not know what is going on between Travis and Abby, but Travis does not let people get close, so she will have to overlook his demons. When Travis mentions Abby's upcoming birthday, she invites him to dinner with her and America. Noting that Abby is going to be late for class, Travis goes to get dressed, but when she informs him that America is giving her a ride, he shrugs and says "whatever", causing Abby to realize that he is being intentionally cool.

Analysis

In Chapter 2, Travis continues to develop his friendship with Abby, a concept that arouses much curiosity since Travis does not have female friends, but the fact that he continuously seeks Abby out indicates that he does not truly want to be just friends. Still, Travis treats their relationship as platonic, helping Abby study, and it is through Travis that Abby meets Parker Hayes, one of Travis's fraternity brothers. Shepley continues to worry that his cousin will break Abby's heart, but Abby and America both assure him that Abby is not interested. As Abby's friendship with Travis develops, she realizes that her initial assumptions about him were wrong, and though Abby does not admit it, it is obvious that her romantic feelings for him are blossoming by her irritation each time she sees him with other girls; however, she is distracted from this attraction when Parker Hayes asks her on a date, foreshadowing their relationship. When the hot water heater at Abby and America's dorm breaks, it is natural for America to stay with her boyfriend, but Travis invites Abby to stay as well. Upon arriving at the apartment, Abby is disgusted to see Travis dismiss a girl he just slept with, but he insists that the girl was the aggressor and knew that he did not want to pursue anything further. The revelation that he only sleeps with girls on the couch, not his bed, further cements his reputation of being promiscuous. Abby and Travis sleep in the same bed, but he assures her that he



only has honorable intentions because he likes her too much to sleep with her; again, this foreshadows their future relationship. When America asks Shepley to find a date for Abby, Travis's interest in Abby is seen again when he agrees to escort her to a frat party he did not plan to attend.

In Chapter 3, Abby worries about the damage her friendship with Travis is doing to her reputation, but Travis objects to staying away from each other, inviting her to a local club so people can see him flirting with other girls in front of her and accept their platonic friendship. Abby's evasion of the conversation about how she got her fake ID hints at her secret past, foreshadowing the discovery of it later. At the club, Travis flirts with other girls, as promised, but he only buys drinks for Abby because she is different. Travis's admission that he wants to sleep with Abby but knows she is better than that foreshadows his desire to actually date her, a desire he has never felt for any other girl. Abby's rebuffs his flirtation, so he dances with Megan, but when Ethan tries to talk to Abby, Travis chases him away, explaining that Ethan was accused of rape last year when Abby gets mad. Travis's need to protect Abby again indicates his feelings for her. His objection that she acts like she doesn't want to be seen with her suggests that his feelings are hurt by her apparent disinterest, while his admission that she is beautiful and driving him crazy again demonstrates his emotions for her. They cuddle in bed that night, but the next morning, Travis treats her indifferently. Though Shepley has warned Abby against his cousins many times, at this point, he warns her to overlook Travis's demons because Travis rarely lets people get close to him, again foreshadowing how differently Travis feels about Abby compared to other girls.

Discussion Question 1

How does Travis feel about all the girls fawning over him constantly?

Discussion Question 2

Recount Travis and Abby's argument when Abby arrives at his apartment just in time for him to kick out the girl he just slept with in Chapter 2.

Discussion Question 3

Why does Travis chase Ethan away from Abby at the Red Door nightclub?

Vocabulary

Anaphase, orientation, oblivious, compensate, mortified, temperamental, scampering, inevitable.



Chapter 4: The Bet

Summary

Chapter 4: The Bet

America witnesses Parker staring at Abby and reminding her about the upcoming party, and when she laughs about it at lunch, Travis looks disgusted and becomes quiet until some guys from the football team question him about his latest conquest and Abby defends him, causing Travis to yell at her. America and Shepley assure her that he has some stuff going on and is not mad at her. Travis is not at the apartment, and Abby is disturbed that she does not know what's wrong with him, but she wakes from a nap to hear Travis, America and Shepley talking about her. When America suggests that Travis ask Abby out, he insists "I don't want to date her, I just want to be around her" (page 67). Abby emerges from the bedroom, and Travis drags her back to apologize for his tantrum, claiming he does not know why she puts up with him but he does not know what he would do if she didn't. He leans toward her, but he is interrupted by a phone call from Adam announcing the next Circle. America dresses Abby in a yellow halter top and tight jeans for the fight, but Travis insists she change because he will not be able to concentrate on the fight because he will be more worried about who is ogling Abby. At the Jefferson Liberal Arts building, Travis leaves Abby with Adam, promising that Adam will keep her from getting crushed, and when she admits she is worried, Travis promises not to take a hit, claiming he normally lets his opponent hit him because it is more entertaining. He is so confident that he offers a bet; if he gets hit, he will not have sex for a month, but if he does not get hit, Abby has to spend a month at his apartment. Abby agrees to the bet, so Travis climbs into a ring and demolishes his opponent.

After the fight, he notes that Abby needs to get more clothes. When Abby asks why he wants her to stay with him, Travis responds, "I don't know. Everything's better when you're around" (page 76). He only smiles when Abby asks if his bad mood earlier was related to the fact that the boiler at the dorm is fixed and he knew she would be going home soon. Travis carries Abby into the apartment piggyback-style, and America jokes about how cheerful he looks, ruining the moment when she mentions that Abby is meeting Parker at the date party. Travis quickly decides that he is going too, causing Shepley to sulk and America orders Travis to stop driving Shepley crazy and get it over with. After America and Shepley retreat into their bedroom, Travis claims Shepley is just paranoid, but his eyes light up when Abby guesses it has to do with them. Travis claims that he wants to talk to Abby about something after he showers, but while he showers, Shepley yells at Abby who insists that she and Travis are just friends because he is a commitment-phobe and does not think about her that way. America insists that the only difference between herself and Shepley compared to Abby and Travis is the sex and tries to convince Abby to admit to having feelings for Travis, but Travis sadly tells her to forget it as he emerges from the bathroom, causing America to whisper that Abby is making a mistake. Abby sits in the living room for an hour until Travis goes out until 2 in the morning. He returns with two girls. After dismissing the girls a while later during



which Abby hears pornographic sounds coming from the living room, Travis climbs into bed with Abby. Unable to rest, Abby sleeps on the recliner, waking to America who has already packed Abby's stuff so she won't have to see Travis. Travis enters with breakfast. When he sees Abby's belongings packed, he sounds defeated as he observes that she is leaving. America rants at him, but Abby insists it is fine. It is Travis's apartment and none of her business who he brings home. A bet is a bet, so she will not leave unless Travis wants her to go. Travis apologizes for his behavior, admitting that he got angry when he overheard Abby telling America everything that is wrong with him, so he went out for a few drinks and things got out of hand. He felt sick this morning when he realized what he had done because he was sure Abby would never speak to him again. Abby apologizes for hurting his feelings and persuades him to promise that he will not drive drunk again.

Analysis

Travis's disgust at the idea of Abby going on a date with Parker reveals his jealousy and his romantic interest in Abby, but he gets angry when she defends him against some guy's mockery about his conquests. Back at the apartment, Abby is worried about Travis. Just when it seems that she may be willing to accept her interest in him, she overhears him telling America that "I don't want to date her, I just want to be around her" (page 67). When Travis apologizes for his earlier behavior and admits that he doesn't know what he would do without Abby, this indicates his feelings for her, but Abby blatantly acts oblivious. Travis's objections to the provocative outfit Abby plans to wear to the fight further his jealousy and romantic interest. He confesses that he will be too busy worrying about who is ogling her to concentrate on the fight. He shows his concern for her safety by ordering Adam to protect her, and Abby's feelings are hinted at by her fear for Travis. Entertained by her concern, Travis offers a bet, and this foreshadows the consequences of the bet. If Travis loses, he must remain abstinent for a month. However, if he wins, Abby has to stay at his apartment for the same length of time. Travis happily wins the bet, and when Abby asks why he wants her to stay, he admits that "everything's better when you're around" (page 76).

Abby and Travis return to the apartment, and their behavior is very similar to what would be expected from a couple, yet America ruins the moment by mentioning Abby's upcoming date with Parker. Travis quickly decides to go too, and America's order for him to get it over with indicates that she is aware of his interest in Abby. It seems that Travis may confess his feelings when he asks to talk to Abby after his shower, but while he showers, Abby assures Shepley that she and Travis are just friends. Unfortunately, Travis overhears the conversation and tells America and Shepley to forget it, though he may also be telling Abby to forget what he wanted to talk to her about. The fact that Travis goes out and returns home to have sex with two strange girls indicates how hurt he is by Abby's perceived rejection. In the morning, America and Travis are both certain that Abby will leave, but Abby reverts to her claim of friendship, insisting that who he sleeps with is not her business. Travis admits that he was angry when he heard Abby telling America what is wrong with him, showing his feelings for Abby, but Abby brushes



the deeper sentiment aside by apologizing for hurting him and simply evoking a promise that he will not drive drunk again.

Discussion Question 1

What are the terms of the bet Abby and Travis make before his fight in Chapter 4?

Discussion Question 2

Compare and contrast the reasons Abby and Travis give America for not dating one another in Chapter 4.

Discussion Question 3

How does Abby react when Travis returns home from the bar with two girls whom he sleeps with?

Vocabulary

Grimaced, remorse, adrenaline, wager, amplified, relentless, dissipating, indifferent, impenetrable.



Chapter 5: Parker Hayes

Summary

Chapter 5: Parker Hayes

Travis compliments Abby's dress when he picks her up, but she intends for Parker to notice her. At the party, Travis gets a drink for Abby, warning her not to drink anything that does not come from him or Shepley. After an hour passes without Parker showing up, Travis asks Abby to dance, his sadness at her refusal changing to anger when Parker joins them. Abby accompanies Parker to the balcony upstairs where they discuss school and her unusual friendship with Travis. As the party ends, Parker offers to drive Abby home, forcing her to explain the bet with Travis who objects when Abby says she is riding with Parker, even threatening to kill Parker if he touches Abby. On the drive back to Travis's apartment, Parker invites Abby to dinner, but as he kisses her goodbye on the cheek, Travis opens the door, nearly causing Abby to fall. He is furious when Parker jokingly asks if there are any humiliated girls who need a ride inside the apartment. Travis watches Abby undress and curls up against her in bed, explaining that he did not go to tonight's fight because he wanted to ensure she got home safe. He still feels bad about the other night, but when Abby assures him that she does not care, he notes that her indifference is worse than her anger. When Abby accuses him of being illogical since he told America that he does not want to date Abby, Travis claims that he does not want to ruin their relationship because he does not know how to be the type of guy that Abby deserves. When Abby says she needs to sleep since she has a date with Parker, Travis slams out of the room and sleeps on the recliner.

Abby wakes the next afternoon to find that Travis told America about her date because he is furious, and America says it is a shame that Abby and Travis cannot get on the same page. After Abby prepares for her date, Travis says she looks beautiful, a compliment that Parker repeats when he arrives. In the car, Parker admits that he was nervous about picking up the girl that Travis is in love with, insisting love is the only explanation for Travis's erratic behavior. Abby and Parker enjoy a nice Italian dinner before he takes her home since he has to study for a midterm, but he promises to call the next day to schedule another date. As Parker kisses Abby goodnight, Travis opens the door and mocks Parker's new nickname for Abby, Abs, but she points out that Pigeon is not any better. Abby tries to stay mad at Travis as he asks about her date, but he enjoys seeing her so happy and is glad she had a good time. Still, he looks annoyed when Parker calls to ask Abby out on Monday, asking if she really likes Parker, and when she tells him not to ruin this for her, Travis turns away, shaking his head.

Analysis

Travis conveys Abby to the frat party where she has a date with Parker, and for the first hour of the party, Travis acts as though he is Abby's date. His concern for her safety is



seen when he warns her against accepting drinks from anyone else. Again, it appears that Travis is ready to accept his interest in Abby when he asks her to dance, but his happiness quickly turns to anger when Parker arrives and Abby goes off on her date. Abby and Parker enjoy the company of each other, but when she tells Travis that Parker is driving her home, Travis's jealousy resurfaces as he threatens to kill Parker if he even touches Abby. While Parker is dropping Abby off, Travis interrupts their goodbye kiss, again showing his jealous side. Travis admits that he did not go to tonight's fight because he was concerned for Abby, but when he says her indifference to his behavior with the two girls a few nights earlier is worse than the anger he feared, it is obvious how deeply he cares for her, especially when he responds to Abby's accusation that he does not want to date her by admitting that he does not know how to deserve her and does not want to ruin their relationship. Despite his claims that he cannot date her, Travis is distraught to learn that Abby has another date with Parker, and the next day, America notes that it is a shame that Abby and Travis cannot work out their issues and be together. On Abby's next date with Parker, Travis's feelings are foreshadowed again when Parker admits that he believes Travis is in love with Abby. Travis taunts Abby about her dates, but his true love for her is seen in his joy at seeing her happy. He turns away when she tells him not to ruin this for her because she likes Parker, again showing his hurt feelings which are brought on by what he believes is unrequited love.

Discussion Question 1

How does Parker feel about Abby's friendship with Travis in Chapter 5?

Discussion Question 2

How does Travis react to Parker's initial interest in Abby?

Discussion Question 3

Why does Parker believe that Travis loves Abby?

Vocabulary

Intricate, anatomy, ambiguous, subsided, sentiment, enamored, erratically, impoverished.



Chapter 6: Turning Point & Chapter 7: Nineteen

Summary

Chapter 6: Turning Point & Chapter 7: Nineteen

In Chapter 6, Abby enjoys her dates with Parker on Monday and Wednesday, but it is hard to pay attention to him when he sits in Travis's seat on Thursday. When Parker questions why he was not invited to Abby's birthday party, America explains it was supposed to be a surprise party which Travis planned. Everyone watches as Parker holds Abby's hand, obviously thinking she is dating both Parker and Travis. Realizing the impossibility of dating Parker while living with Travis, Abby asks to be released from the bet, but Travis refuses, saying she should just stop dating Parker since she only has three weeks of the bet left, causing Abby to storm off. That night, Travis is annoyed to learn that Abby has a date with Parker again, but she thanks him for planning her party and agrees to hang out with him tomorrow. Parker invites Abby to the upcoming frat party, but she has to find out if Travis plans to take her first. After dinner, Parker and Abby make out in his car which is parked at the apartment, and Abby glances up to see America looking sympathetic while Travis's face shows his rage, allowing Abby to realize he is drunk.

Once America and Parker leave, Travis admits that he cannot stand this and feels like he will go nuts if Parker sleeps with Abby. He is astounded and relieved to learn that Abby is a virgin; she dated a future youth minister through high school. After Abby helps Travis into bed, he tries to kiss her, but she rebuffs him at first, allowing him to cuddle with her. Just as she is ready to let him undress her, he pulls away, saying he wants her but not like this. Unable to guarantee restraint if she gets in bed, Abby sleeps on the recliner, feeling frustrated that Travis showed no interest in her until she started dating someone else. In the morning, Parker knocks on the door and brings Abby's birthday gift, a beautiful bracelet which is the most elaborate gift she has ever received. When Travis wakes and complains about America letting him drink so much, she recounts the fiasco with Parker, causing him to fear Abby's anger, but she is mostly angry that he does not remember how close she came to giving him her virginity. As Travis tries to apologize, he notices Abby's new accessory and grows furious, but before he leaves, he starts remembering last night. He claims that he cannot think straight around Abby and she is turning him into a psycho, but when he asks if Abby hoped he would forget, she admits she was furious he forgot. Touching her cheek, Travis asks what they are doing, and Abby responds, "you tell me" (page 127).

In Chapter 7, Abby wonders why she bothers with Travis since she likes Parker. It is driving them both insane. She and America go shopping, and America asks if Abby has feelings for Travis, insisting the problem is that they are both scared; "I know for a fact that if you looked Travis in the eye and told him you wanted him, he would never look at



another woman again" (page 129). Abby insists that Travis is incapable of being faithful so they are better off as friends. The girls spend the day getting makeovers, and America buys Abby a new outfit for her birthday. After Travis calls because it is almost dinnertime, America drives to Brazil's house where everyone yells "happy birthday!" when Abby enters. Travis kisses her forehead and explains they rescheduled the party because Parker blew the surprise, and America whispers that Parker will arrive later. Brazil bets Abby about how many shots she can take, so she starts drinking and dancing, but Parker disapproves of the shot contest when he arrives. As they dance, he pulls her into the corner to make out, but she objects because of her many guests. Once Parker leaves, Travis announces daddy is gone so it is time to get the party started. They continue partying with Travis preventing any other guys from dancing with Abby. When she finishes her nineteenth shot at midnight, Brazil and his frat brothers pay up on their bet. Travis tells Abby that she is incredibly sexy as they dance into the wee hours of the morning.

Analysis

Though Abby enjoys dating Parker in Chapter 6, she is distracted whenever they are near Travis. Parker asks about Abby's party, ruining the surprise that Travis had planned for her. Everyone believes that Abby is dating both Parker and Travis, so realizing her situation is impossible, Abby asks Travis to release her from the bet, but he refuses, suggesting she stop dating Parker until her month ends. Since Travis is obviously hurt that Abby is dating Parker, she goes out of her way to express gratitude for her party and to make plans with her friend, but when a drunken Travis catches Abby and Parker making out in the parking lot after their date, his rage erupts and he chases Parker away. When Travis expresses his fear of Abby sleeping with Parker, he is astonished and relieved to learn that she is a virgin as she tells him a little about her high school relationship; this indicates the importance of Abby relinquishing her virginity and foreshadows that Travis will be the one who receives it. Climbing into bed with Travis, this foreshadowing is nearly fulfilled until Travis objects to taking her this way, when he is drunk. Abby's frustration that Travis did not seem interested in her until she started dating someone else again indicates that she reciprocates his feelings, though she still does not admit it, even to herself. The next day, Parker presents Abby with a beautiful bracelet for her birthday, and Travis is furious when he sees it, revealing his continuing jealousy. When Travis finally recalls last night's events, Abby admits that she was angry he forgot, showing that their near encounter was more important to her than she let on. Their relationship seems intimate as Travis asks what they are doing, but Abby defers to him for the answer. This scene reinforces America's belief that Travis and Abby want to be together but they are both too stubborn and afraid to admit it.

In Chapter 7, America confronts Abby, claiming that Abby and Travis are both afraid to be together, though they both want it. Abby responds by insisting that Travis is incapable of fidelity. The girls spend the day shopping and getting makeovers, and then America drives Abby to Brazil's where they have her birthday party that was rescheduled because of Parker ruining the surprise. Again, Travis behaves toward Abby as though they are on a date, and she engages in a shot contest, foreshadowing her



drunken stupor. When Parker arrives and pulls Abby into a corner to make out, she objects because of her many guests. However, it seems obvious that her motivation may have more to do with Travis than she is willing to admit. Once Parker leaves, Travis resumes his place next to Abby, and they dance into the morning while he prevents anyone else from coming near her.

Discussion Question 1

Why does Abby ask Travis to release her from their bet after she starts dating Parker?

Discussion Question 2

How does Travis react when he finds Abby and Parker making out in the parking lot?

Discussion Question 3

Describe Abby's 19th birthday party.

Vocabulary

Pariah, populace, deliberating, surpassed, pungent, peruse, ambitious, hypnotized, irrelevant, contrived.



Chapter 8: Rumors

Summary

Chapter 8: Rumors

The morning after her party, Abby wakes in the bathroom floor, laying against Travis who sat up with her all night. Travis wakes and informs her that America went back to the dorm because she and Shepley fought over Shepley's encouragement of Abby's excessive drinking. America arrives to pick Abby up, but Shepley rushes out to apologize, returning with the claim that his girlfriend is impossible. Abby joins America who rants about Shepley before yelling at Abby for making out with Parker at the party Travis threw for her. She points out that Travis quit fighting and whoring and goes nowhere without Abby; the reason that people say Abby is two-timing Travis and Parker is because it is true! She insists that Abby is the one that needs to change now because "Travis is what you want, and Parker is what you think you need" (page 144). Abby admits that Travis reminds her of her dad, but America insists that Travis is nothing like Mick Abernathy. When they return to the apartment, Shepley and America make up, and Travis presents his birthday gift to Abby: a puppy she names Toto which he says she can keep at the apartment as his security that she will still visit once her month ends. Crawling into bed with Abby, Travis says that taking care of her last night was the best night of his life, plus she is sweet when she drinks.

When America and Abby rush to class later, they can tell something is wrong when they see Shepley waiting outside the cafeteria door, and they quickly learn that rumors have spread that Abby slept with Parker at Brazil's and then went home with Travis. Travis is furious that people are calling Abby a slut, and when Chris Jenks questions Abby about the rumor, claiming Parker came to confront her, America explains that Parker got the wrong idea when he stopped by the apartment and found her in bed with Travis. Chris jokingly asks if Travis if he can take a shot, causing Travis to beat him up. America informs the entire table that Abby did not sleep with either guy, and then she rushes America back to the apartment where Shepley warns them against entering since Travis is embarrassed that Abby saw him lose his temper. When Abby goes to see Travis anyway, he tells her, "you need to walk away, Pidge. God knows I can't walk away from you" (page 156), but since Abby insists that they have to be friends, he admits that watching her sleep is the only peace he knows and that is what he was doing when Parker walked in, so Travis let him jump to conclusions because he wanted him to think something happened. Later, Travis apologizes for fighting Chris because he defended her for the wrong reason; he was angry that Chris wanted a shot, not because he was teasing Abby. When Abby insists she does not care because she is tired of defending their friendship to everyone, Travis asks if she listens to him at all, but he frowns when she asks what he will do when she returns to her dorm in two weeks. Asking if she trusts him, Travis pulls Abby into a cuddle, and though she does not know why, he needs her, and besides, "I couldn't have objected even if I'd wanted to. It felt right lying next to him" (page 160).



Analysis

The fact that Travis tends to Abby during the drunken stupor of hugging the toilet after her party indicates the depth of his feelings for her. America and Shepley fought during the party, but when Abby tries to negotiate a reconciliation, America yells at her for dating both Travis and Parker because she disapproves of Abby making out with Parker during the party. In contrast to her earlier advice for Abby to stay away from Travis, America now seems to encourage the relationship. During her conversation with her best friend, Abby finally confesses her real objection to Travis; he reminds her too much of the past that she is running from. Still, America insists that Travis is nothing like Mick, Abby's father. Travis buys a puppy for Abby's birthday gift, but his joke that Toto is insurance that Abby will still visit reeks of the truth more than a joke. Travis's claim that taking care of Abby was the best night of his life again reinforces his feelings for her. At school, Abby is distraught to learn that rumors have spread that she slept with both Parker and Travis the night of her party. When one guy asks for a shot at Abby next, Travis beats him up, again defending Abby's honor, but Travis tells Abby to walk away from him because he is unable to walk away from her which also shows his feelings for her. Abby refuses to walk away, deciding that she is tired of defending their friendship which shows how important Travis is to her, though she has not yet admitted it. This is reinforced when she agrees to cuddle with Travis because it feels right.

Discussion Question 1

Why do America and Shepley fight after Abby's birthday party?

Discussion Question 2

What rumors are spread about Abby, Parker and Travis after Abby's birthday party?

Discussion Question 3

After Travis beats his friend up for "wanting a shot" at Abby, what is Travis's explanation for his reaction?

Vocabulary

Horrifying, consumed, expelled, dismissively, intertwining, whimpered, coaxing, dubious, speculating.



Chapter 9: Promise

Summary

Chapter 9: Promise

Confused about Abby's relationships with Travis and Parker, Finch questions her, and when he asks about her secret, she confides that she came to Eastern University to escape her past and her father, Mick, who is renowned for gambling, drinking and having a bad temper; Travis is too familiar to what she left behind. Finch believes things will work out. Travis is in a great mood as he escorts Abby to lunch. Parker approaches and leads Abby outside to explain that he feels like he is competing with Travis for her attention and asks for a date once her time is up with Travis. When Abby tells Travis, he quips that he will need to think of a new bet before his time ends. The next two weeks pass quickly, and everyone notices the change in Travis who is happy and ignores all other girls. On Abby's last night in the apartment, Travis prepares dinner and sadly admits that he feels like he will never see Abby again. She promises that she will still visit, but as she tries to kiss his cheek, he turns so that their lips make contact. As Travis and Abby cuddle in bed, she makes a decision, though she knows it will change everything. She kisses him, and though he says it does not have to be tonight, she grabs a condom and gives her virginity to Travis. He shocks her when he notes this is "your last first kiss" (page 173) because she thought that sleeping with him would satisfy his curiosity, but now he is talking about forever. After Travis falls asleep, Abby convinces America to drive her back to the dorm, but she does not confide in her best friend. In her dorm room, Abby feels lost and alone; after a month in Travis's cramped apartment, it is the only place she wants to be. Her phone starts ringing at 8AM, and America comes to Abby's room to announce that Travis is on a rampage.

Abby calls Travis who is furious that she left without saying goodbye, and when he asks if she regrets it, she says their friendship is not going to change. She knows what he wants but cannot give it to him right now. Travis agrees to give her time to sort things out. After Abby hangs up, America yells at her, pointing out that Travis has proven he is not Mick by all the changes he made for Abby, but Abby objects that SHE is like Mick! America warns Abby that she is going to break his heart, and after Abby accepts a date with Parker, she tells America that she will keep her promise to Travis; he will not even miss her by this time tomorrow.

Analysis

Abby's past finally comes to light in Chapter 9 when she tells Finch about her father, drawing similarities between Mick and Travis. At lunch, Parker fulfills foreshadowing when he decides to wait to date Abby until she leaves Travis's apartment, and Travis's joy at the news foreshadows his means of preventing Abby from resuming her relationship with Parker. As the final two weeks of the bet pass, Abby enjoys spending



time with Travis who is much happier, a fact that can only be attributed to his feelings for Abby. On their last night, they are both sad, foreshadowing the imminent change in their relationship status, and this foreshadowing is furthered by Abby's decision to sleep with Travis, losing her virginity to him. Travis's comment about it being Abby's "last first kiss" (page 173) foreshadows his desire to spend the rest of his life with her, while Abby's confusion that sex did not satisfy his curiosity indicates that she has no intention of changing their friendship at this point. Abby promises Travis that he will not even miss her by tomorrow; however, as soon as Travis falls to sleep, Abby has America drive her to the dorm to avoid saying goodbye. Despite her eagerness to escape the apartment, she is lonely as soon as she leaves, indicating that she wants to stay with Travis.

Travis throws a tantrum when he wakes to find Abby gone, but she calls him and calms him down, admitting that she knows what he wants but cannot give it to him, causing Travis to think she needs time. America is furious that Abby slept with Travis and left him after all he has done to prove his loyalty to her, but when she reiterates that Travis is not like Mick, Abby insists that she is like her father, clarifying the misconception that Travis is at fault. America's fear that Abby will break Travis's heart foreshadows the truth of the claim, especially when Abby accepts a date with Parker.

Discussion Question 1

Why does Parker opt not to date Abby anymore until her month with Travis ends?

Discussion Question 2

On Abby's last night at Travis's apartment, what does she do that will "change everything"?

Discussion Question 3

How does Travis react when he wakes to find Abby gone?

Vocabulary

Hereditary, stigma, endearment, instigated, optimistic, adjacent, inexplicably, intimacy, faltering, intensified.



Chapter 10: Poker Face

Summary

Chapter 10: Poker Face

When Abby's contrivances to avoid Travis finally fail, he asks if they are going to pretend the other night never happened, but after Parker interrupts to confirm his date with Abby, Travis grows furious, asking if he is not good enough. Abby questions when sex became so important to Travis, and he responds, "since it was with you" (page 187)! Realizing Abby's intent, Travis claims he will prove to her that he only wants her by continuing to avoid other women. Abby's dinner date at Parker's new apartment is less exciting than before, and she is uncomfortable making out with him. Travis calls to invite her to go bowling tomorrow night, refusing to hang up until she agrees. Abby feels nothing as she kisses Parker, so she makes him take her home after scheduling a date for Wednesday, but when he asks her to a date party at the frat house and she says Travis already asked her, Parker objects that she is just supposed to be Travis's friend and date parties are meant for couples. Refusing to cancel on Travis, Abby encourages Parker to find another date.

Back at the dorm, Abby admits to America that the date did not go as well as hoped, and America roots for Travis, though Abby believes it goes against everything she wants to get involved with him. Because he misses her, Travis stops by and convinces Abby to go for a ride on his Harley, and as he drops her off, she tells him that he is important to her, and he notes that she confuses him; he has never had a girl sleep with him in hopes that he would leave her alone. Travis asks about Abby's date with Parker for his peace of mind, admitting that the way he feels about her is crazy and it is obvious to everyone except her. Travis tells Abby that he loves her, preventing her from continuing to feign ignorance. Abby admits that she did not sleep with Parker, but when Travis kisses her and asks her to tell Parker she cannot see him anymore, she objects that she cannot be with Travis either! Travis cannot believe the one girl he wants does not want him, and when Abby explains her objections to becoming involved with the problems she left behind, he promises to change, swearing he will do anything for her. All thoughts of being with Parker vanish, and Abby knows it is because of her feelings for Travis, so she calls Parker to cancel their date because "I'm... pretty sure I'm in love with Travis" (page 195). Ecstatic, Travis convinces Abby to return to his apartment, but when they enter, Shepley starts to yell at him for bringing a girl home when he's in love, trailing off when he sees Abby. In Travis's room, Abby reaches for a condom to learn that Travis got rid of them because she would not be with him, but they engage in coitus anyway after Abby calculates her cycle and determines they are good. Before going to sleep, Travis asks Abby not to leave this time because he wants to wake up next to her, and feeling guilty that he has to ask, Abby promises that she is not going anywhere.



Analysis

When Travis finally catches up with Abby, he is furious when Parker interrupts to confirm his date with Abby. Travis admits that Abby is special to him and decides to continue his celibate lifestyle to prove to her that he has changed, foreshadowing Abby's imminent decision to relent on her refusal to date Travis. Abby goes on her date with Parker, but it is not the same. She knows that her feelings for Travis have eclipsed her interest in Parker. When Abby admits to America that the date did not go as well as expected, America quickly gets to the heart of the problem by noting how happy Abby looks when Travis calls her. Since he misses Abby, Travis convinces her to hang out for a while, but before he drops her off, he admits that he loves her, preventing her from feigning ignorance any longer. He is relieved when Abby admits that she did not sleep with Parker; yet, when he asks her to stop seeing Parker, Abby insists that she cannot be with Travis. As Travis swears to do whatever it takes to deserve Abby and to make her happy, she finally accepts her feelings for Travis, calling Parker to cancel their date because she is in love with Travis. This admission fulfills foreshadowing as Abby and Travis finally become a couple. Back at the apartment, Shepley's immediate lecture at Travis for bringing a girl home is cut short when he sees Abby, indicating that Shepley is aware of his cousin's love for Abby. The fact that Travis got rid of his condoms indicates the depth of his commitment to Abby, and she feels guilty that he has to ask her to stay the entire night because she is the reason he has become insecure. Abby's promise that she is not going anywhere foreshadows the seriousness of their relationship.

Discussion Question 1

What does Travis say when Abby points out sex has never been a big deal for him before?

Discussion Question 2

How does Abby feel about Parker when they resume dating?

Discussion Question 3

What does Abby do when Travis admits that he loves her?

Vocabulary

Consequences, constitutes, immaculate, hypocrite, contrived, patronizing, imbedded, deflated.



Chapter 11: Jealousy

Summary

Chapter 11: Jealousy

When Abby wakes in Travis's arms, he tells her he loves her and swears to make her happy. Megan calls his phone, and he tells her not to call anymore because he is with Abby now. Though Abby claims to trust him, Travis would not blame her for making him earn it. At school and lunch, Travis seems proud to hold Abby's hand, and their simple display of affection generates a lot of stares and murmurs. Travis looks as happy and peaceful as Abby has ever seen him, and everything feels right, but when Chris jokingly asks if Abby finally gave it up, she lets Travis teach Chris some manners. After Travis forces Chris to apologize, Chris makes another wisecrack, so Travis beats him up and threatens to break his jaw if he even looks at Abby again. As Abby follows Travis outside, he explains that he lost his temper because Chris said every guy wants a chance at her since she landed the unattainable Travis Maddox. Abby calms him down by reminding him that she only wants him, but when Parker pulls Abby aside to warn her that Travis is bad news and will get bored and hurt her now that he has her, Travis threatens Parker as well, promising Abby that Parker is wrong and he will prove it. Travis takes his promise seriously, studiously avoiding all other girls.

At a Halloween Party at the Red, Travis is loyal to his promise, but he chases off any guy who comes near Abby. He is furious that she lets one guy buy her a drink. Abby objects to Travis's jealousy, reminding him that she has done nothing wrong, but when a guy grabs her arm as she tells Finch that she is leaving, Travis infuriates Abby by punching him and nearly hitting her. At the apartment, Travis begs for forgiveness, but red flags go up so she has America drive her back to the dorm, though she cannot sleep. In the morning, Travis arrives to apologize; he acts crazy when it comes to Abby, but he does not want to screw this up. He has never wanted a girlfriend before, but he will figure it out. Abby reminds him that he needs to trust her too because she is not going to leave him for someone else. She tells him she loves him; but, when she refuses to return to the apartment because she cannot live with him, he tries to think of another bet.

Analysis

In the morning, Travis reiterates his promise to make Abby happy, foreshadowing his extensive attempts to keep the promise. His loyalty is demonstrated when he tells Megan not to call him anymore, and his love is apparent by his overall happiness and his pride in holding Abby's hand at school. Abby's admission that being with Travis feels right foreshadows their eventual marriage. When Chris makes another joke about Abby being promiscuous, Travis reacts by beating him up yet again, but Travis apologizes to Abby for his jealousy, though this is a recurring problem as indicated by the chapter's



title. Parker's decision to warn Abby about Travis foreshadows Abby telling him off when he does not back off. Travis reacts by reaffirming his commitment, and he is true to his word, studiously avoiding all flirtatious girls. However, his jealousy resurfaces at the Halloween party when guys try to flirt with Abby, and Travis even hits one of them. Abby is furious so she goes back to the dorm, but after Travis apologizes in the morning, Abby forgives him, emphasizing that she needs him to trust her as she trusts him. Travis's desire for Abby to stay at the apartment again foreshadows their marriage, but Abby resists taking such a step so soon, foreshadowing their tumultuous relationship as she tries to avoid commitment while Travis is already fully committed.

Discussion Question 1

How does Travis teach Chris some manners in Chapter 11?

Discussion Question 2

What does Parker warn Abby about in Chapter 11?

Discussion Question 3

Why do Abby and Travis fight at the Halloween party?

Vocabulary

Caressing, leisurely, generated, scandal, winced, revolted, unattainable, interlocking, uncanny, frothy, resignation.



Chapter 12: Two of a Kind

Summary

Chapter 12: Two of a Kind

When Travis expresses his amazement that "the most beautiful woman at Eastern is my girlfriend. That's insanity" (page 223), Abby asks why her, and he admits that he has been interested since they first met because she saw him for who he is, rather than just seeing his reputation. Travis invites her to poker night at his dad's house, assuring her that they will love her. At Jim Maddox's house, Travis introduces Abby to his dad and his four brothers, Trenton, Taylor, Tyler and Thomas. When Abby objects to playing poker, the guys offer to teach her, but she beats them all easily, laughing when they ask if she has played before. When Thomas connects Abby's name to Mick Abernathy, one of the best poker players to ever live, the Maddoxes realize she is Lucky Thirteen, Mick's daughter who supposedly stole his luck on her thirteenth birthday. After they leave, Travis is thrilled by the knowledge and persuades Abby to admit that she did not believe she would win their bet. Abby objects when he calls her Lucky Thirteen because that was the nickname the newspapers gave her, and her father hated her after that; she needs to be just Abby, not Mick's daughter! Travis assures Abby that the past does not matter because he just wants her, and he promises to keep her secret. When Parker greets Abby in class, Travis tells her that Parker is spreading a rumor that she still calls him because she is unhappy with Travis, so after class, Abby confronts Parker. Parker does not believe that Travis has changed or that he loves Abby, suggesting she is just a shiny new toy that is not so shiny anymore. Abby slaps Parker, but before Travis can attack him, Parker says he gets it; Travis and Abby are made for each other. Travis is proud of Abby, and when she pulls him into the Physics lab to ravish him, he admits, "I'm not sure what I ever did without you, but I don't ever want to find out. You're everything I've ever wanted, Pigeon" (page 241).

Analysis

Travis admits to Abby that he has always been interested in her since they met, refuting his earlier claims that he did not want to date her, and fulfilling foreshadowing, he moves their relationship forward by convincing her to meet his family. During the poker game at Jim Maddox's house, Abby beats Travis and his brothers at poker, but when one of the brothers connects her last name to Mick, the truth of Abby's past finally is revealed as they recognize her as Lucky Thirteen, Mick's infamous daughter who supposedly stole his luck on her thirteenth birthday. The fact that Travis finally learns about Mick and Abby's past foreshadows the reappearance of Mick in Abby's life. Travis is excited by the news, but Abby objects to being called Lucky Thirteen, explaining that those rumors caused her father to resent her. Travis insists that Abby is the only thing that is important, again demonstrating his love for her. When Abby learns that Parker has spread a rumor that she is unhappy with Travis and plans to leave him for Parker,



foreshadowing is fulfilled as Abby confronts Parker and slaps him for his insults, finally forcing Parker to leave her alone. Travis is amazed by his girlfriend, and his admission that she is all he has ever wanted foreshadows their marriage.

Discussion Question 1

At the beginning of Chapter 12, why does Travis say he's had a thing for Abby since they met?

Discussion Question 2

During the poker game at Travis's dad's house, what secrets about Abby's past are revealed?

Discussion Question 3

Why does Parker say that Travis and Abby are made for each other at the end of Chapter 12?

Vocabulary

Replenish, pretenses, rummaged, impish, consecutive, dwindled, annihilated, humiliation.



Chapter 14: Full House & Chapter 15: City of Sin

Summary

Chapter 14: Full House & Chapter 15: City of Sin

Returning to the apartment after shopping with America in Chapter 14, Abby learns that Travis bought a new couch so she does not have to deal with the location of his many conquests. She freaks out when he shows her his two new tattoos: Pigeon on his wrist and a Hebrew quote on his ribs that means "I belong to my beloved, and my beloved is mine" (page 246). Overwhelmed, Abby feels like Travis's feelings have amplified since he learned about Mick, but he insists it has nothing to do with her father and promises that everything is the same; it is all about them alone. On Friday, Travis objects to Abby's sexy new dress because it is so revealing, but she reminds him that she will be going home with him. At the frat house, Lexie, one of Travis's past flings, is upset about his new tattoo, but Abby brags about it. As Travis and Abby dance, he says she is the one thing he got right, what he has been waiting for. A couple girls make rude comments, including Parker's date, but Travis is just happy Parker moved on; however, when he says his tattoo will do until he gets a ring on Abby's finger in five years, Abby tells him to slow down, assuring him that she sees him in his future when he starts to panic. Seeing the peace return to Travis's eyes, Abby realizes he did not know fear until they met, and because she is the only variable in his life that he cannot control, she has become his weakness, just like she is to Mick. America interrupts to tell Abby that Mick called her parents who told him where Abby is, and though Travis insists he will not let Mick near Abby, America says that Mick always finds a way. They leave the party only to find Mick outside, and he refuses to leave Abby alone because he needs her help; he owes \$25,000 to Benny by Monday. Furious, Abby tells him that she only has \$11,000, but Mick insists she can double that by Monday, so Abby agrees to help this time if Mick promises to leave her alone after this. As Abby heads to the car, America tells Travis and Shepley to pack because they are going to Las Vegas.

In Chapter 15, Abby will not let Travis accompany her to the casino floor because she needs to concentrate if she is going to win \$14,000 in one weekend. Trying to comfort Abby, America reminds her that she does not owe Mick, but Abby cannot let Benny kill her father if she can help. Using a fake ID since she cannot play at the casino, Abby chooses a poker table, winning \$2700 in an hour, but Jesse Viveros, her ex-boyfriend, finds her scamming his place and asks for her ID. Abby explains the situation with Mick, so Jesse agrees to let her play until midnight if she agrees to go to dinner with him tomorrow. Travis sees Abby talking to Jesse and is not pleased with the situation, but he leaves her alone to make money. By midnight, Abby is still short \$5000, even after her friends contribute their winnings, and since Jesse cannot allow her more time, she goes to ask Benny for an extension. At Benny's building, only Travis is allowed to accompany Abby inside, but after she explains that she still needs to get some money together,



Benny decides that he should teach Mick a lesson since Mick informed him that Abby is accepting responsibility for his debt; however, Travis explains that he will not allow anyone to harm Abby, and after Travis beats up Benny's two security guards, Benny offers to forgive Mick's remaining debt if Travis fights in place of one of his guys tomorrow, so Travis readily agrees. Though Abby cannot think of a better alternative, she worries about how Las Vegas is changing Travis. Abby joins Jesse for dinner the next night, but when he starts talking about them getting back together, Abby quickly tells him that she loves Travis and rushes off to her beloved's fight.

Analysis

Travis's decision to replace his couch shows his desire to move beyond his past where he had sex with random girls, while his new tattoos symbolize his devotion to Abby and his belief that she is "the one". Abby fears that his newly found devotion is related to his recent discovery of her father's identity, but he promises that it is not related. Though Abby is overwhelmed by these displays, she quickly becomes proud of the tattoos when girls at the frat party see them; however, when Travis alludes to putting a ring on Abby's finger in the future, she becomes stressed again at how quickly he is moving, but this also foreshadows their eventual marriage. The realization that she is the only thing that causes Travis fear contributes to a major theme of the novel as well as allowing her to draw another comparison between Travis and Mick as she believes that she is their weakness. America's announcement that Mick contacted her parents to ask about Abby foreshadows Mick's imminent arrival, and foreshadowing concerning Mick is soon fulfilled when Abby leaves the party to find Mick in the parking lot. Mick's explanation that he needs help to repay his \$25,000 debt to Benny foreshadows Abby's inability to refuse to aid her father, and America telling the boys to pack for Las Vegas foreshadows their trip to Sin City. In Chapter 15, foreshadowing is fulfilled as Abby, America, Travis and Shepley travel to Las Vegas to raise the money Mick owes Benny, but due to her reputation as Lucky Thirteen, Abby is forbidden from gambling in the casino, so she is forced to strike a deal with her ex-boyfriend, Jesse, causing Travis to become jealous when he sees them talking. At the end of the night, with her friends' help, Abby is still short \$5000, so she visits Benny to request an extension. True to the insinuations that Benny is a mobster, Benny refuses to give Abby more time, and when he threatens her safety as a means of teaching Mick a lesson, Travis defends his girlfriend, fighting off two of Benny's bodyguards. Intrigued, Benny allows Travis to earn the remainder of Mick's debt by fighting for him; this foreshadows Benny's interest in Travis and his offer to pay Travis to fight for him. Despite her qualms, Abby makes sure to attend Travis's fight to support her beloved boyfriend.

Discussion Question 1

Why does Abby freak out about Travis's new tattoos in Chapter 14?



Discussion Question 2

Why does Mick visit his daughter in Chapter 14?

Discussion Question 3

How does Benny let Travis earn the remaining \$5000 that Mick owes?

Vocabulary

Scrutinizing, bodice, indecisive, radiating, withdrawal, gruesome, compressed, amplified, errant, precise.



Chapter 16: Home & Chapter 17: No, Thanks

Summary

Chapter 16: Home & Chapter 17: No, Thanks

Though Travis wins the fight in Chapter 16, Abby is disgusted to see him walk out with Benny's hand on his shoulder, and at the hotel, Travis informs Abby that Benny has offered to let him fight in Las Vegas once a month at six figure paychecks. When Abby objects because she does not trust Benny, Travis insists he will quit after a year, insisting she will forgive him after seeing the benefits of so much money. Abby is afraid, yet she has to believe that Travis loves her more than money and Benny's fake promises, so she agrees to make Thanksgiving dinner for the Maddoxes when Travis asks; however, as Travis continues talking about how good this fighting will be when they arrive at the apartment, Abby realizes he has made his decision, blaming herself for taking him to Las Vegas. America understands when Abby asks her to take her to the dorm, even letting Abby stay in her room to avoid Travis when he realizes she is not coming back. Seeing Abby leaving in tears, Travis yells for her not to do this and follows them to the dorm, sitting behind Abby's room all night. Abby skips class the next day and learns that Travis tore up the History room, but he gets even angrier when America says it is his fault for agreeing to work for Benny. America helps Abby avoid Travis all week as she waits for him to calm down enough to accept her decision. On Friday night, Travis finally finds Abby and tells her that he turned Benny down, but she will not forgive him because he is obsessed with owning her. Rebuffing his apology and his kiss, Abby rushes to the bathroom in tears because Travis has proved that she comes second to money, just like with Mick.

In Chapter 17, life begins to return to normal after a few weeks. Parker, hearing about the break-up, apologizes to Abby for his previous behavior. After class, Travis asks Abby to still come to his family's Thanksgiving dinner because he is not ready to tell his family that he lost Abby, and Abby agrees as long as he promises it is not a scheme to get back together. America tells her she does not have to keep saving Travis, but Abby believes it is the right thing to do. At Jim's house, Travis and Abby take the guestroom, but he agrees to sleep on the floor. The Maddox men are grateful to Abby for cooking, but Jim notices the tension between her and Travis and asks her to be patient because she is the only woman Travis has loved since his mother died. Abby knew this would be hard, but she did not realize her heart would break all over again. When Abby retires for the evening, Travis's brothers tease him, but Jim chides them for talking about their sister like that, causing Abby to lament the fact that she is losing them, the only family that has welcomed her in years. As Travis makes a pallet on the floor, he sadly notes this is their last night together, and when he says he loves Abby, she admits that she still loves him too. He asks to hold her since it is their last night together, and although she knows it is a bad idea, Abby permits it. Travis understands why she cannot give him



another chance; he never convinced himself that he was good enough for her, but Abby insists they are just not good for each other.

When it snows in the morning, Travis sadly notes that Abby will not be here for Christmas, but he dismisses her objections when he kisses her, insisting he will kiss her a lot today since this is all he has left with her. Even though she knows it will be harder later, Abby allows it because she came here to pretend, plus she does not want to reject him. Their kiss deepens into more, and lying with him, Abby releases her negative feelings, realizing she loves Travis and does not want to live without him. She wants to tell him and end his suffering so they can spend the day celebrating, but he mistakes her intentions and leads her to the kitchen where they make dinner. Travis's smile fades when Jim says Abby is a part of their family now and is welcome at all holiday celebrations, so she knows she has to tell him soon. After dinner, Travis apologizes again for Las Vegas, insisting he has changed, but since he cannot seem to do right by Abby, he will be content as long as they are friends because he wants her to be happy. Pained, Abby does not tell him she has changed her mind because it is unfair to hang on just when he lets go. Travis takes Abby back to the dorm, and though his face is sad, the torment is gone because the weekend gave him closure. He thanks Abby for coming with him, and for the first time since they met, he walks away from her without looking back.

Analysis

Abby's unease at seeing Benny and Travis so close in Chapter 16 foreshadows the problems that Benny instigates between Abby and Travis. Travis gets so excited about the prospect of making money to take care of Abby that he does not really listen to her objections, but despite her fears, Abby believes that Travis loves her more than money so she agrees to accompany him to his family's house to celebrate Thanksgiving, foreshadowing the events of this holiday. Still, Travis continues to disregard Abby's protests about working for Benny to the point that Abby leaves him. Consistent with his earlier behavior, Travis goes on a rampage after Abby leaves him, but even after he refuses Benny's offer, Abby will not take Travis back because she believes that he is obsessed with owning her, a key theme in many of their fights which foreshadows Abby's eventual acceptance of belonging to Travis. Again, Abby compares Travis to Mick as she believes that she comes second to money with both of them.

Parker shows that he is still interested in Abby in Chapter 17 when he apologizes for his earlier behavior, and though Abby and Travis are no longer together, she still accompanies him to Thanksgiving dinner once he promises that it is not a scheme to convince her to forgive him. At Jim Maddox's house, Abby and Travis pretend that they are still together, but Jim can tell that something is wrong and encourages Abby to be patient with his son. Abby's heartache through the event foreshadows her realization that she loves Travis despite their problems, but when this foreshadowing is finally fulfilled and she is ready to forgive him, Travis seems to finally accept their break up, so she decides not to tell him that she wants him back since he has finally let go of her. The final scene of this chapter seems to indicate that Travis is moving on from Abby, but



this is in direct opposition to everything that the reader has learned about Travis thus far in the novel, foreshadowing the truth of his feelings.

Discussion Question 1

How does Abby react when Travis admits his plans to continue fighting for Benny?

Discussion Question 2

Describe Thanksgiving at the Maddox house.

Discussion Question 3

At the end of Chapter 17, why doesn't Abby tell Travis that she has changed her mind about their break-up?

Vocabulary

Tinged, ecstatic, incredulous, gullible, expendable, conflicted, intoxicated, temptations, complied, meandered.



Chapter 18: The Box & Chapter 19: Hellerton

Summary

Chapter 18: The Box & Chapter 19: Hellerton

In Chapter 18, Abby is grateful that finals keep her preoccupied, and she spends Christmas break with America. Though Travis says he wants to be friends, he does not call Abby, and he seems content with their platonic relationship, even as he ignores other girls. America notes the irony that Travis seems fine when Abby is so miserably, but Abby does not want to discuss it. Because Shepley wants to take America to the Valentine's Day party at the frat house and she will not go without Abby, Finch offers to escort Abby to the party. Parker invites Abby to dinner, but she already has plans with Finch. When Abby accompanies America to the apartment to retrieve her birth control, only because America promises that Travis is out with Trent, the strange feeling changes when Travis enters with Megan and a box of condoms, and when Abby says she is glad he is bad to his old self, he grabs her, demanding to know why she is mad when she broke his heart; he does not want Megan, but he wanted to forget his unhappiness for one night. America slaps him, and when Shepley pulls her away, they fight about him taking Travis's side, ending when America breaks up with Shepley. Abby knows she does not have a right to be angry, but it still hurts. America avoids Shepley who tells Abby that he wishes that she and Travis would work things out because they destroy the world when they are unhappy, and his continuous efforts to apologize to America are made in vain. The weekend before Valentine's Day, Abby, America and Finch go dancing, but every guy who comes near them miraculously vanishes. Abby finally notices that Shepley and Travis are behind the disappearances, but Shepley begs her not to tell America; he loves her and cannot let other guys approach her. As America finally talks to Shepley, Travis asks Abby to dance, reminding her that they are supposed to be friends when she refuses, but Abby insists that friendship is obviously impossible since she cannot see him with other girls and he will not even let her dance with other guys. Travis claims he still loves her but is silent when Abby asks if he loved her when he bought condoms with Megan. Seeing America making out with Shepley, Finch tells Abby that he guesses they are going to the Valentine's Day party after all.

In Chapter 19, Abby spends more time with Finch as America makes up on lost time with Shepley, and when Abby agrees to go out with Parker as friends, they have a good time, but at the pizza restaurant where they eat, it becomes awkward when Travis and Shepley enter. Before they leave, Travis approaches Abby's table to tell her that he really wants her to come to his rematch fight against Brady Hoffman in forty-five minutes, so Abby apologizes to Parker and leaves because she has to be there for her best friend. It feels like nothing has changed as Travis takes her hand. At the fight, Travis orders Abby to stay with Shepley so he can concentrate without worrying about her safety, but Abby cannot shake her ominous feeling even as she kisses Travis for



good luck. As the fight begins, the crowd pulls Abby away from Shepley, and she winds up next to Ethan, the guy from the bar with sexual assault charges. Meanwhile, she notices that Travis is losing because he is so intent on locating her in the crowd, but when she tries to walk away, Ethan grabs her just as Travis sees her. Travis starts fighting against the crowd as Abby yells at Ethan to get off her, but when Ethan tries to kiss her, she knees him in the groin just as Shepley arrives to save her and punch Ethan several times. Outside, Abby insists she is alright, and after Travis joins them, he pounds the guy who prevented him from reaching Abby. Shepley sees Ethan on the other side of the building, and Travis flies after him, beating him within an inch of his life. Abby, Shepley and Travis flee when the police arrive, and Travis carries Abby to his room, kneeling in front of her and apologizing for his failure to reach her. He begs her to stay the night, blaming himself since he made her leave Parker because he wanted to prove that she was still his. Crying that she let Travis mark her as his territory, Abby claims she hates him and kicks him out of his room, and America enters to hold her best friend as she cries.

Analysis

In Chapter 18, Abby's need to stay preoccupied indicates exactly how saddened she is by her break up with Travis, while the fact that he continues to ignore other girls indicates that he is still in love with her as well. Parker reveals his continued interest in Abby when he invites her to dinner, but she spends most of her spare time with Finch, not surprising since Finch, as a gay man, is less threatening than other men who may want more from her than she is able to give. When Abby accompanies America to the apartment, she shows her own jealous tendencies by her reaction to Travis entering with Megan and a box of condoms. At this point, Travis admits that he is heartbroken over Abby, but in her fury, Abby cannot accept his apologies, and when Shepley points out that she has no right to be upset, this leads to a fight between him and America who is furious at him for taking his cousin's side. Still, Abby knows that Shepley is correct and she does not have the right to be angry. At the club, the weekend before Valentine's Day, Shepley and Travis cause every guy that comes near America and Abby to disappear, pulling them away and threatening. Shepley's explanation that he loves America and cannot let anyone else near her obviously parallels Travis's reasoning, but while America makes up with Shepley, Abby is simply furious and cannot see beyond that, even when Travis claims that he still loves her. His admission that he still loves Abby foreshadows their imminent reconciliation. In the next chapter, this foreshadowing is furthered when Travis demonstrates his jealousy by interrupting Abby's dinner with Parker in order to convince her to accompany him to his fight.

Showing his concern for Abby's safety, Travis leaves her with Shepley who is ordered to watch over her, but the crowd shifts and Abby is relocated next to Ethan, the guy that Travis chased away during their first trip to the club, and when he grabs her, Shepley punches Ethan even as Abby knees him in the groin. The fact that Travis witnesses this catastrophe foreshadows his violent reaction, especially in consideration of how easily his jealousy turns to violence where Abby is concerned, and this is quickly fulfilled when Travis beats Ethan severely. As Travis apologizes, he admits that he asked Abby to



leave her dinner with Parker because he wanted to prove that she is still his, but Abby reacts to this in typical fashion by throwing a fit that he is trying to mark her as his territory, so she leaves his apartment in tears yet again, paralleling her many similar reactions earlier in the novel.

Discussion Question 1

How does Abby react in Chapter 18 when Travis enters his apartment with Megan and a box of condoms?

Discussion Question 2

Why does America break up with Shepley in Chapter 18?

Discussion Question 3

How does Travis react when Ethan corners Abby at his fight in Chapter 19?

Vocabulary

Impervious, platonic, syllabi, flippant, postponement, insufferable, feign, condone, maneuvered, subdue.



Chapter 20: Last Dance & Chapter 21: Smoke

Summary

Chapter 20: Last Dance & Chapter 21: Smoke

After America takes Abby back to the dorm in Chapter 20, Abby has never felt so alone; she believed that she was important to Travis, but he just wants to own her and she does not belong to anyone. Though she does not feel like celebrating, America assures her that Travis will not be at the date party, but he shows up anyway because he knows Abby will be there. He compliments her and tries to say that he wanted her at the fight because she is his good luck charm, his everything, not just to prove she is his. Abby admits it would be easier if she could hate him, causing Travis to ask if she is angry because of what he did or because she cannot hate him, so she shoves him aside and starts taking shots. When the song that Abby and Travis danced to at her birthday party plays, Brad asks her to dance, but Travis insists this is their song; claiming they don't have a song, Abby dances with Brad, so Travis loudly makes a toast "to douchebags! And to girls that break your heart. And to the absolute fucking horror of losing your best friend because you were stupid enough to fall in love with her" (page 363). Travis threatens Brad until Brad flees, but still refusing to dance with Travis, Abby dances dirty with one of his frat brothers until Travis throws her over his shoulder and carries her off the floor, refusing to let her embarrass herself over him. Back at the apartment, Travis tells Abby that he loves her and is tired of this, so she is not going anywhere until she sobers up and they figure this out. Abby objects that he cannot tell her what to do because she does not belong to him, but when Travis yells that he belongs to her, Abby kisses him because she cannot think of a reason not to. Before Travis will sleep with Abby, he needs to know they are back together and she is his, so she admits, "I've been yours since the second we met" (page 368). She promises that she will love him forever, and he is finally satisfied; however, Abby wakes to Travis watching her because he could not sleep. Though she doesn't know what is wrong, she tells him that they will get through it, but Travis needs to confirm that she is not leaving because he thought she would be mad at him for dragging her here. When Abby admits that she was ready to reconcile on Thanksgiving but was too proud to admit it, Travis is furious that his misery has been unnecessarily prolonged, but Abby apologizes and promises to never do it again.

In Chapter 21, Spring Break quickly approaches, and life returns to normal. Travis is anxious for the last fight of the year to ensure his financial stability over the summer, and when Adam finally calls him, he refuses to go without Abby, despite her fear that she will distract him. He determines to invite Trent to watch after her during the fight so that he can concentrate, and he is relieved when Trent agrees. Abby has a bad feeling as the Circle gathers at Keaton Hall, and after she follows Travis and Trent through a window, she tells Travis that she has a bad feeling about this place, but he assures her



that it will be fine. Abby's unease grows as the fight commences, but though Travis's opponent does quite well, Travis eventually gets the advantage and wins; however, as the crowd roars, Abby notices liquid dripping from a lantern, and she shows Trent as it falls and a sheet nearby bursts into flames. Yelling that he will catch up, Travis tries to reach them as Trent pulls Abby away, but when Trent insists on following the crowd in the wrong direction, Abby rushes to the room where they entered the building, only to find that the window is too high for her to reach. As she yells for help, Travis appears and promises to get them out, breaking the window and pulling Abby to safety. Outside, they cannot find Trent, and Travis fears "he didn't get out" (page 392), falling to his knees and crying. When there is still no sign of Trent after an hour of bodies being removed, Travis, blaming himself, starts to dial his father's phone number.

Analysis

In Chapter 20, Abby is distraught at the realization that Travis wants to own her, and her insistence that she belongs to no one serves as a foil to her feelings in the penultimate chapter when she finally accepts that she belongs to Travis. This theme of belonging to one another recurs throughout the novel following the beginning of their romantic relationship. Travis attends the Valentine's Day party because he knows Abby will be there, but of course, they get into an argument and Abby gets drunk. When Abby refuses to dance with Travis, he bitterly toasts to girls breaking hearts and losing his best friend because he was stupid enough to fall in love with her. Despite his anger and pain, Travis prevents Abby from making a fool of herself in her drunken stupor, an attempt that indicates the extent of her hurt as well. Travis insists on taking her home, and the theme of belonging reappears when he responds to her claim that she does not belong to him by proudly declaring that he belongs to her. Abby and Travis are reunited, fulfilling foreshadowing, and Travis is furious to learn that the past months of suffering since Thanksgiving were unnecessary since Abby was ready to forgive him then. Her promise that she will never leave him again foreshadows their marriage. Travis again shows how important Abby is by insisting that she accompany him to the final Circle fight of the year, and he even persuades his brother to watch her. Abby's bad feelings about the event foreshadow the fire which sparks and catches hold of the building. Abby is separated from Trent. When she is stuck in the basement room where she cannot reach the window, Travis arrives to save her. Still, they cannot find Trent, and they fear that he died in the fire.

Discussion Question 1

Describe Travis's toast in Chapter 20.

Discussion Question 2

How do Travis and Abby make up in Chapter 20?



Discussion Question 3

What happens at Travis's last fight of the year at Keaton Hall?

Vocabulary

Breached, acutely, contorted, inevitable, protesting, enveloped, synonymous, doused, retaliate, fretted.



Chapter 22: Jet Plane & Epilogue

Summary

Chapter 22: Jet Plane & Epilogue

Before Travis hits send in Chapter 22, Trent calls him, and Travis and Abby rush to Morgan dorms where they are relieved that Trent is alive. When Abby notes that Travis saved her life, he admits that he came back for her because he could not leave her, but she knew he would come. Thinking of the horrors she just witnessed, Abby is glad that she belongs to Travis because she could never feel so safe after such a tragedy if she did not, and that is when she knows without a doubt, despite the consequences or what anyone else thinks. Her confession is interrupted as America and Shepley call to make sure they are alive, and after they assure their friends of their safety, Travis admits that he does not get scared often, but he was terrified when he saw Abby in the basement, across the flames, so he came back to find her; even though he did not know if they would make it, he knew he wanted to be with her because "the only thing I'm afraid of is a life without you" (page 400). He has not felt such peace since his mother died, and he knew he needed Abby since the moment they met. She agrees, "nothing makes sense unless we're together" (page 400). Looking at him and knowing this is permanent, Abby asks how Travis feels about returning to Las Vegas for a night, and he is confused until she asks him to marry her. Travis immediately calls the airlines and schedules a flight, hesitantly saying that this is the real deal and she will be Mrs. Maddox after tomorrow. Travis is ecstatic when Abby does not balk, and when she jokes for him to remember this after 50 years of getting beat at poker, he tells her "I don't regret a single second with you, Pidge, and I never will" (page 403). When Abby says they can worry about rings later, Travis tells her not to freak out, but he already took care of that. Presenting her with a ring, he explains that he bought it a while ago because he knew it belonged on Abby's finger. He is amazed as Abby allows him to place it on her finger, and when he admits he thought it would be at least five years before he felt this way, Abby confesses "I wanted it as much as you did. I've just got a hell of a poker face" (page 406).

As Travis holds Abby's hand tightly in the Epilogue, she assures him that she has made her decision and is fine, but just then, America calls to yell at her for getting married without her best friend, threatening to never forgive Abby. Travis continues being nervous, and Griffin, the tattoo artist, laughs that Travis has so many tattoos and is still so nervous about his girl getting one. Now that they are married, Abby wanted something. America resumes yelling at Abby for marrying so young, but Abby insists that it is not so crazy; they love each other and have practically lived together all year. After Abby hangs up, Travis admits that this is much worse than getting his own tattoos, but when Griffin finishes, Abby is pleased with her new tattoo which reads "Mrs. Maddox". Unable to believe that Abby is really his wife, Travis says he will continue calling her by her married name until it sinks in. Abby enjoys the peaceful look in his eyes. He has been waiting to call her his wife since they met, and he plans to abuse the



privilege. Travis is annoyed when airport security makes them remove their rings, and though he is relieved when the symbol of the marriage is restored, he cannot shake the feeling that he will realize this is all just a dream when they get home. Abby insists that he has nothing to worry about because she is his, and when he fears she will get sick of him, she says that she is sick of him now, but she still married him and is willing to bet her firstborn child that she will love him forever. Looking peaceful again, Travis claims that Abby cannot be that sure, but she simply raises her eyebrows and asks "wanna bet" (page 416)?

Analysis

Travis and Abby's fears for Trent's safety prove unfounded when he calls them. Abby's admission that she knew Travis would find her in the basement shows how much she relies on and trusts him, foreshadowing her proposal. This is further foreshadowed by her narration in which she admits that she now knows without a doubt and does not care what anyone else thinks. Travis's love for Abby is apparent as he describes his fear when he could not find her, and Abby's admission that "nothing makes sense unless we're together" (page 400) foreshadows her proposal which is quickly fulfilled when she suggests returning to Las Vegas to get married. Travis is overjoyed and proves this by immediately scheduling their trip. His eagerness to marry Abby is reinforced by the fact that he already bought a ring, and Abby finally admits that she wanted this as much as Travis. Foreshadowing is fulfilled in the Epilogue as Mr. and Mrs. Maddox sit at a tattoo parlor. Paralleling Travis's earlier marks of their relationship, Abby has her married name tattooed onto her. In keeping with her decision not to care what anyone else thinks about her and Travis, Abby is indifferent to America's fury. Travis's peace at the knowledge of their marriage reemphasizes his devotion to Abby, and though he is afraid that she will change her mind, Abby assures him of her everlasting love, showing that she has finally accepted that they are meant to be and hopefully foreshadowing a happy future between the novel's two protagonists.

Discussion Question 1

In Chapter 22, Travis admits to what fear?

Discussion Question 2

Why does Abby suggest returning to Las Vegas in Chapter 22? How does Travis react?

Discussion Question 3

Why is America mad at Abby in the Epilogue?

Vocabulary

Smoldering, recounting, unqualified, detonate, tarnished, immaculate, bewilderment, prying.



Characters

Abby Abernathy

Abby Abernathy is the main character, narrator and protagonist of "Beautiful Disaster". She is an eighteen-year-old college freshman, and she turns nineteen during the first half of the book. When Abby accompanies America and Shepley to a Circle fight, she meets Travis who is immediately interested in becoming friends because he is intrigued by Abby, the only female who does not want to date him. Though Abby is repelled by Travis's reputation, she befriends him and quickly learns that many of her beliefs about him are wrong. As their friendship develops, the attraction between them is obvious, despite their attempts to disprove any romantic connection. Abby tries to pull away from Travis when their friendship begins to impact her reputation, but he will not allow it. Travis is furious when Abby begins dating Parker, one of his frat brothers, and he soon makes a bet with Abby that he will not take a hit during one of his fights, the end result being that Abby loses and has to spend a month at Travis's apartment. When Travis overhears Abby telling America her reasons for not dating him, he is hurt and sleeps with two girls that night, regardless of his insistence that he and Abby are just friends. Travis makes Abby's experience dating Parker unpleasant by continually calling her during dates and mocking Parker until she tells him not to ruin this for her. Though Parker questions Travis and Abby's friendship, Travis refuses to release Abby from the bet, admitting that he cannot stand the thought of her being with Parker. After the surprise birthday party Travis throws for Abby, during which she makes out with Parker, rumors abound that Abby slept with both Parker and Travis, and America tells Abby that the rumors that she is two-timing both guys are going around because they are true!

Travis throttles a guy who insults Abby, but Abby explains to her friend, Finch, that she cannot date Travis because he reminds her too much of her father and the past that she is desperately trying to escape. Parker decides to stop seeing Abby until her month with Travis ends, but on the last night, Abby has sex with Travis, and he is distraught when she leaves during the night and starts dating Parker again; however, Abby's feelings for Parker are completely eclipsed by her emotions for Travis, so when Travis admits that he is in love with her, she stops seeing Parker and becomes Travis's girlfriend. Abby and Travis fight over Travis's jealousy, but he promises to do better because he wants her to be happy. During poker night with Travis's family, he learns about Abby's past and her father, but he promises her that it is not important. When Mick visits Abby for help escaping from his debt, Abby and her friends fly to Las Vegas where Abby wins most of the money to repay Mick's debt, and Travis engages in a professional fight for Benny to make up the remaining difference. Unfortunately, Benny wants Travis to continue fighting for him, but since Travis will not heed Abby's objections, she breaks up with him because she is convinced that he thinks money is more important than she is. Still, Abby accompanies Travis to his family's Thanksgiving celebration, pretending they are still in a relationship, but just when she is ready to reconcile, Travis notes that he is happy as long as she is, so she does not tell him that she changed her mind. Abby suffers for a rough couple of months, catching Travis with Megan and a box of condoms



and accompanying Travis to a fight where she is nearly sexually assaulted because Travis wanted to break up her dinner with Parker to prove that she belongs to him. When Travis drags a drunken Abby out of a frat party to prevent her from acting foolish, he declares his love for her, and they finally make up. During the last Circle fight of the year, Keaton Hall burns down, and Abby and Travis narrowly escape. This event forces Abby to realize how important it is that she belongs to Travis, so she proposes to him. They visit Las Vegas again to get married, and after Abby gets a tattoo of her married name, she calms Travis's fears by assuring him of her everlasting love and devotion.

Travis Maddox

Travis Maddox, one of the main characters, becomes Abby's best friend and love interest. He participates in an underground fight club called the Circle, and this is where he first meets Abby who is repelled by his reputation. Travis is intrigued since most women are attracted to him and practically throw themselves at him. As their friendship develops, the attraction between them is obvious, despite their attempts to disprove any romantic connection. Abby tries to pull away from Travis when their friendship begins to impact her reputation, but he will not allow it. Travis is furious when Abby begins dating Parker, one of his frat brothers, and he soon makes a bet with Abby that he will not take a hit during one of his fights, the end result being that Abby loses and has to spend a month at Travis's apartment. When Travis overhears Abby telling America her reasons for not dating him, he is hurt and sleeps with two girls that night, regardless of his insistence that he and Abby are just friends. Travis makes Abby's experience dating Parker unpleasant by continually calling her during dates and mocking Parker until she tells him not to ruin this for her. Though Parker questions Travis and Abby's friendship, Travis refuses to release Abby from the bet, admitting that he cannot stand the thought of her being with Parker. Travis throttles a guy who insults Abby, but Abby explains to her friend, Finch, that she cannot date Travis because he reminds her too much of her father and the past that she is desperately trying to escape. Parker decides to stop seeing Abby until her month with Travis ends, but on the last night, Abby has sex with Travis, and he is distraught when she leaves during the night and starts dating Parker again; however, Abby's feelings for Parker are completely eclipsed by her emotions for Travis, so when Travis admits that he is in love with her, she stops seeing Parker and becomes Travis's girlfriend. Abby and Travis fight over Travis's jealousy, but he promises to do better because he wants her to be happy.

During poker night with Travis's family, he learns about Abby's past and her father, but he promises her that it is not important. When Mick visits Abby for help escaping from his debt, Abby and her friends fly to Las Vegas where Abby wins most of the money to repay Mick's debt, and Travis engages in a professional fight for Benny to make up the remaining difference. Unfortunately, Benny wants Travis to continue fighting for him, but since Travis will not heed Abby's objections, she breaks up with him because she is convinced that he thinks money is more important than she is. Still, Abby accompanies Travis to his family's Thanksgiving celebration, pretending they are still in a relationship, but just when she is ready to reconcile, Travis notes that he is happy as long as she is, so she does not tell him that she changed her mind. Abby suffers for a rough couple of



months, catching Travis with Megan and a box of condoms and accompanying Travis to a fight where she is nearly sexually assaulted because Travis wanted to break up her dinner with Parker to prove that she belongs to him. When Travis drags a drunken Abby out of a frat party to prevent her from acting foolish, he declares his love for her, and they finally make up. During the last Circle fight of the year, Keaton Hall burns down, and Abby and Travis narrowly escape. This event forces Abby to realize how important it is that she belongs to Travis, so she proposes to him. They visit Las Vegas again to get married, and after Abby gets a tattoo of her married name, she calms Travis's fears by assuring him of her everlasting love and devotion.

Parker Hayes

Parker Hayes is one of Travis's fraternity brothers who dates Abby for a while, making Travis extremely jealous, until Abby realizes that she is in love with Travis. Parker tries to warn her about Travis, which causes Travis to threaten him. When Parker spreads rumors that Abby is unhappy with Travis and plans to leave him for Parker, Abby slaps him for his impertinence.

America Mason

America Mason is Abby's best friend and the girlfriend of Shepley, Travis's cousin. America and Shepley frequently hang out with Travis and Abby.

Shepley

Shepley is Travis's cousin and America's boyfriend. He and America frequently hang out with Travis and Abby, though he initially tries to warn Abby away from Travis because he fears his cousin will hurt her and ruin his relationship with America.

Mick Abernathy

Mick Abernathy is Abby's father and a legendary poker player. He is the main reason that Abby is trying to leave her past behind. He blames her for stealing his luck on her thirteenth birthday. Mick visits Abby to ask for help because he owes Benny, a mobster, \$25,000. Abby agrees; but, Mick tells Benny that Abby has assumed responsibility for the debt, putting her safety in jeopardy when she is unable to earn the full amount. This leads to Travis fighting for Benny to save Abby.

Finch

Finch is Abby's homosexual friend who accompanies her and America to several parties and nightclubs. He comforts her during her break up with Travis.



Benny

Benny is a mobster in Las Vegas that Mick owes money. When Abby is unable to earn the full amount of Mick's debt, Benny threatens her safety at first, but then he allows Travis to fight professionally to earn the remainder of the debt. He offers Travis a job fighting for him. This leads to Abby breaking up with Travis when he refuses to decline the offer.

Jesse Viveros

Jesse Viveros is Abby's ex-boyfriend from high school who runs the casino where she earns money to repay Mick's debt to Benny. Though she is banned from Las Vegas casinos, Jesse gives her a few hours to play in exchange for accompanying him to dinner, a bargain that makes Travis jealous. Jesse wants Abby to give him another chance, but she is in love with Travis; so, she hurries through dinner and rushes to Travis's fight.

Trenton Maddox

Trenton Maddox is Travis's brother and the only one he trusts to keep Abby safe during the last Circle fight of the year, but Trent and Abby are separated during the fire at Keaton Hall. Travis rescues Abby but fears his brother is dead. Luckily, Trent survives.

Jim Maddox

Jim Maddox is Travis's father who welcomes Abby to their family and tells her that she is the first woman that Travis has loved since his mother died when he was a young child.

Megan

Megan is one of Travis's persistent hook up partners. He tells her to stop calling him once he and Abby start dating; however, after Travis and Abby break up, Abby finds Travis and Megan in his apartment and starts a fight with Travis.

Brazil

Brazil is one of Travis's fraternity brothers. Travis beats him up for making derogatory comments about Abby.

Kara Lin

Kara Lin is Abby's unpleasant roommate.



Symbols and Symbolism

The Circle

The Circle is the fight club that Travis is part of, and Abby first meets Travis at one of these fights. This symbolizes the beginning of their relationship, while his behavior at subsequent fights indicates his concern and love for Abby as he tries to protect her.

Travis's New Tattoos

After Travis and Abby finally begin dating, Travis gets two new tattoos: one with Abby's nickname and another is a quote about belonging to his beloved. These symbolize his love for Abby and his belief that their relationship is permanent.

Toto

Travis buys Abby a dog, Toto, for her birthday. Toto symbolizes Travis's desire to keep Abby as he admits that buying Toto is part of his scheme to ensure she still visits once their month ends.

The Bet

Abby is forced to stay at Travis's apartment for a month when she loses a bet about whether he will be hit. Later, she admits that she did not expect to win the bet, and this symbolizes her romantic interest in Travis, even when she is unwilling to admit it.

Lucky Thirteen

Lucky Thirteen is Abby's nickname in the press because Mick lost his luck on her thirteenth birthday and she gained it. The nickname symbolizes the past that Abby is desperately trying to escape.

Abby's Birthday Party

Travis plans a surprise party for Abby's nineteenth birthday, and in addition to symbolizing his feelings for her, it also leads Abby to realize she has to choose between Travis and Parker due to the rumors that start about her two-timing them.



Travis's Harley

Travis's mode of transportation is a Harley motorcycle, and this symbolizes and reinforces his reputation.

Abby's Tattoo

After marrying Travis, Abby gets a tattoo of her married name. This symbolizes that she belongs to Travis.

Travis's Couch

Once Travis and Abby officially begin dating, Travis replaces the couch where he had sex with random girls in the past. This symbolizes his desire to make Abby happy and his willingness to change for her.

Las Vegas

During Abby and Travis's first trip to Las Vegas, Benny offers Travis a job fighting for him, and Travis's refusal to reject the offer leads to their break-up, symbolizing Abby's desire to escape her past. The fact that they eventually return to Las Vegas to get married perhaps symbolizes Abby's acceptance of who she is.



Settings

Eastern University

Eastern University is the main setting of this novel, where Abby and her friends attend college. Abby chose Eastern because it is far from her home and the past that she so desperately wants to escape.

Sig Tau Frat House

Sig Tau Frat House is the home of the fraternity to which Travis, Shepley and Parker belong. Abby and America accompany the guys to various parties at the frat house.

Travis and Shepley's Apartment

Abby and America spend much time at Travis and Shepley's apartment, and Abby is forced to live there for a month after losing a bet to Travis. This is where the love between Travis and Abby first begins to develop.

Morgan Dorms

Abby and America both have rooms at the Morgan Dorms, though they spend more time at the apartment.

Keaton Hall

The last Circle fight of the year is held at Keaton Hall, but Abby's bad feeling is justified when the hall catches fire and burns down. Abby, Travis and Trent barely escape, and many others die in the fire.

Las Vegas

Abby, America, Travis and Shepley visit Las Vegas to win money to repay Mick's debt to Benny, but when Travis fights for Benny to earn the last \$5000, his insistence on accepting Benny's offer to continue fighting for him causes Abby to break up with Travis for several months. After the fire at Keaton Hall, Abby realizes that she and Travis are forever, so she asks him to return to Las Vegas where they are married.



Themes and Motifs

Jealousy

Jealousy plays such a predominant role in this novel that Chapter 11 is even titled after this particular theme. While some examples of jealousy are quite explicit, others are more implicit, so it is not until later in the novel that most readers will recognize these instances of jealousy. In the second chapter, Abby's reaction to Travis kicking a girl he just had sex with out of his apartment could be construed as jealousy, but Travis chasing Ethan away from Abby in the next chapter is definitive jealousy. Travis also becomes jealous when Abby starts dating Parker, leading to suggesting the bet that forces Abby to stay at his apartment for a month. He continually interrupts Abby's dates and mocks Parker, and when he catches them making out in the parking lot, he has a total conniption. Travis is happy when Parker leaves Abby's birthday party, and he does not explain when Parker finds Abby in Travis's bed the next morning. Because of all this, Parker decides to stop seeing Abby until her month with Travis ends.

On Abby's last night with Travis, they engage in coitus, leading Travis to comment that this is her last first kiss, foreshadowing his desire to date exclusively. When Abby resumes dating Parker, Travis objects and admits that he loves her, so Abby stops seeing Parker and becomes Travis's girlfriend, but this does not resolve his jealousy. Travis fights his fraternity brother, Chris, for "wanting a shot" at Abby, and he also hits a guy at the club for touching Abby after they fight because she allowed another guy to buy her a drink. Travis reacts poorly to the rumors Parker spreads that Abby is unhappy with Travis and plans to leave him for Parker, and he gets jealous in Las Vegas when he sees Abby talking to Jesse, her ex-boyfriend. After Abby and America break up with their boyfriends, Travis and Shepley chase guys away from them at the club during the weekend before Valentine's Day. Catching Abby at dinner with Parker, Travis convinces her to accompany him to his fight because he wants to prove that she belongs to him, but he feels guilty when Ethan tries to assault her, leading to Abby's anger that Travis wants to mark her as his territory. He also gets jealous when Abby refuses to dance with him and dances provocatively with his fraternity brothers, so he forces her to return to the apartment with him where they make up. Eventually, they get married, and Abby comforts Travis's insecurities by promising her everlasting love.

Fear

Fear plays a large role in "Beautiful Disaster" as it is the prevailing reason behind the delay in Travis and Abby beginning to date, and it also causes many problems after they get together. When Abby and Travis first meet, Shepley warns her against falling for him out of fear that Travis will hurt Abby and ruin Shepley's relationship with America, and after Abby befriends Travis, she wants to end their friendship because she fears the damage it is doing to her reputation. Abby's fear for Travis before a fight leads to the bet that forces her to spend a month at his apartment, and Travis fears that Abby will never



forgive him for bringing two girls home to sleep with, though he decides that her indifference is actually worse than her anger. Talking to America, Travis admits that his reluctance to date Abby is related to his fear that dating will ruin their friendship. Once Abby begins dating Parker, Travis fears that she will sleep with him, and he also fears that his behavior will alienate his best friend. America sums it all up when she accuses Abby and Travis of being too afraid to admit that they love each other, though it is obvious to everyone else. Abby finally admits that her aversion to dating Travis is due to him reminding her of her father, Mick, and her fear that dating Travis will cause her to revert to former habits of her past which she desperately tries to escape.

Though Abby repeatedly insists that dating Travis goes against all she believes in, she finally overcomes her fear and begins dating him after he confesses that he is in love with her. Travis fears Abby will believe he is unfaithful, so he goes out of his way to prove that he is indifferent to other girls, even though he acts out in jealousy due to his fear that Abby will realize she is too good for him and leave him for someone else. Abby worries that Travis will treat her differently when he learns that Mick, a famous poker player, is her father, but he assures her that he only wants her. Abby also fears the commitment that is implicitly expressed by Travis's new tattoos, but realizing that he never knew fear before they met, she hates being his weakness. Travis fights for Benny out of fear for Abby's safety, yet when he wants to continue working for Benny, Abby fears that money is more important to Travis than she is, so she breaks up with him. Travis worries for Abby when Ethan attacks her at a Circle fight, but his confession of jealousy over seeing her with Parker invokes her anger that he tried to mark her as his territory. During the fight at Keaton Hall, Abby worries about Travis, but when the hall catches fire, Travis fears for the safety of Abby and Trent. Afterwards, Travis tells Abby that he came back for her, admitting "the only thing I'm afraid of is a life without you" (page 400). Once they are finally married, Travis fears that it is all a dream or that Abby will get sick of him, but she assures him of her undying love and devotion.

Abby's Treatment by Travis

From their first encounter, Travis makes it very clear that Abby is unlike any other girl he has ever met, and the way that he treats her is unique as a result, serving as evidence of his romantic interest in Abby. Though Travis is renowned at Eastern University for his reputation as a ladies' man, he insists that he does not want to sleep with Abby, only to be friends because she is different from other girls in her lack of attraction to him. While he has sex with girls on his couch, Travis allows Abby to sleep in bed with him in an innocent, friendly way because he likes her too much to have sex with her. In fact, he just wants to be around Abby, but when he overhears her explaining why she cannot date him, he is offended and sleeps with two girls that night. Though he continues to insist that he does not want to ruin their friendship by having sex, Travis uncharacteristically attends a fraternity date party because he knows Abby will be there, and he plans a surprise party for her nineteenth birthday. Accusing Abby of two-timing Travis and Parker, America tells her best friend that she is certain that Travis would never even look at another girl if he thought Abby wanted him, pointing out how much he has changed for the better since meeting Abby.



As Abby's month with Travis nears its end, Travis buys her a puppy to ensure that she will continue to visit him, and he tells her to walk away from him because he cannot walk away from her, again indicating his growing feelings for her. Travis is distraught at the idea that Abby may sleep with Parker, and after Travis and Abby sleep together, he admits that it is important because it was with her. He also admits that he loves her, causing her to stop seeing Parker. Travis is very jealous of Abby because he never wanted a girlfriend before, and she is the first girl he introduces to his family, telling her that she is all he has ever wanted. He gets tattoos memorializing their relationship and even replaces the couch where he had sex with so many girls in the past. Travis is distraught when Abby breaks up with him because he refuses to reject Benny's job offer, but he rejects the offer anyway, and eventually, he walks away from Abby romantically because he wants her to be happy. Even after their break up, Travis makes Megan leave his apartment when Abby is upset to see them enter together, and he accuses Abby of breaking his heart. While they are broken up, Travis chases any guys away from Abby, and he pulls her away from dinner with Parker to prove that she belongs to him. When she dances provocatively with his fraternity brothers at a party, Travis bitterly toasts to girls that break hearts and the horror of losing his best friend because he was stupid enough to fall in love with her. He takes her home where they make up. During the fire at Keaton Hall, Travis risks his own life to ensure that Abby escaped, and he admits that the only thing he is afraid of is losing her since being with her affords him the first peace he has experienced since his mother died when he was a child. Travis is overjoyed when Abby proposes, and the fact that he already has a ring proves how different she is from every girl he has ever known. Though Travis is unnaturally confident, he fears that Abby will get sick of him and leave, even after their marriage. She comforts him by assuring him of her never-ending love and devotion.



Styles

Point of View

"Beautiful Disaster" is written from the perspective of a first-person narrator, Abby Abernathy, the main character and protagonist of the novel. Abby's point of view is limited, proven by the fact that she can only share the things that she experiences, feels, witnesses or that someone else tells her. As a narrator, Abby is generally reliable, though her observations are based on her own perceptions which, at times, might be subjectively related to her own feelings. An example would be her reaction to Travis bringing two girls home. While he looks promiscuous from her perspective, he is actually reacting to the insults he overheard which offended him. Abby's perspective as narrator benefits the story as a whole because it keeps the focus on the developing relationship between Abby and Travis, as well as the reasons behind her hesitation in pursuing this relationship.

The distribution of exposition and dialogue is fairly equal in this novel which is effective in allowing a combination of Abby's thoughts, feelings, and words which are often contradictory. It also serves to enhance the narrative's foreshadowing since Abby's feelings for Travis are fairly obvious in her thoughts but not in her words since she combats her attraction. Simultaneously, the actions and events that transpire indicate Travis's love for Abby even when his words object to this truth. The novel is told solely through Abby's viewpoint with no detours.

Language and Meaning

The language used in this novel is very casual and informal. Modern vernacular is used, including frequent vulgarity which seems realistic given the age and generation of the characters. This conformity and realism makes the characters and the narrative itself seem familiar to the target audience of young adults, and in turn, this promotes empathy and understanding from the readers who will be able to associate with the characters and their struggles. The language used aids comprehension by establishing the characters as familiar to the readers.

The language used characterizes the individual characters who are all American college students, and additionally, it sheds light on their pasts and their upbringing. The distribution of exposition and dialogue is fairly equal in this novel which is effective in allowing a combination of Abby's thoughts, feelings and words which are often contradictory. It also serves to enhance the narrative's foreshadowing since Abby's feelings for Travis are fairly obvious in her thoughts but not in her words since she combats her attraction. Simultaneously, the actions and events that transpire indicate Travis's love for Abby even when his words object to this truth. The familiarity of the language aids the writing style, and overall, "Beautiful Disaster" is easy to read as the



vernacular used makes it seem as though the reader is listening to a friend's tale of romance.

Structure

This novel is comprised of 418 pages, divided into 21 chapters plus an Epilogue. There is no thirteenth chapter as the chapters skip from 12 to 14, likely due to Abby's aversion to her nickname Lucky Thirteen. The chapters range from 12 to 25 pages in length, averaging around 19 pages each. Each chapter is titled according to the contents within it. The chapters tend to be fairly long and quite detailed, though some portions serve to summarize longer periods of inactivity and calm. The novel spans over the course of a school year, but the chapters vary from detailing a short, specific amount of time to summarizing longer periods.

"Beautiful Disaster" by Jamie McGuire is a romantic novel about two young people who fall in love against all odds. When they meet, Abby and Travis become friends; he doesn't believe in relationships, and she just wants to escape the past that Travis reminds her of. Neither plan to fall in love, but when they do, they must learn to overcome their fears because they know that they belong together. "Beautiful Disaster" is an inspiring love story about a couple with troubled pasts learning to trust and rely on one another in order to build a future together. The novel's pace is fairly slow, but it is easy to read due to the familiar language used and the fact that the characters are easy to empathize with. The narrative is linear with minimal details about Abby and Travis's past which serve to show the root of their problems with committing to one another. Overall, the novel is very entertaining and romantic, making it enjoyable for most modern readers.



Quotes

I'm saying that I was honest with her. She's an adult, it was consensual... she was a little too eager about it, if you want to know the truth. You act like I committed a crime. Women usually justify their actions with whatever they make up in their heads. She didn't tell me up front that she expected a relationship any more than I told her I expected sex with no strings. How is it any different?

-- Travis (Chapter 2: Pig paragraph 144 & 146)

Importance: Travis's justification of the unimportance of sex serves as a foil to his view of sex with Abby.

I don't want to sleep with you, Pidge. I like you too much.

-- Travis (Chapter 2: Pig paragraph 202)

Importance: This quote serves as the first evidence of Travis's feelings for Abby as he admits that she is too good to sleep with.

Oh my God! People probably think we're together and you're shamelessly continuing your... lifestyle. I must look pathetic! I don't think I should stay with you anymore. We should just stay away from each other in general for a while.

-- Abby (Chapter 3: Cheap Shot paragraph 23)

Importance: This quote shows Abby's desire to pull away from Travis due to the damage their friendship is doing to her reputation, but Travis's refusal to accept this demonstrates how important Abby has become to him.

First of all... I have standards. I've never been with an ugly woman. Ever. Second of all, I wanted to sleep with you. I thought about throwing you over my couch fifty different ways, but I haven't because I don't see you that way anymore. It's not that I'm not attracted to you, I just think you're better than that... I can't think of a single guy I know that's good enough for you.

-- Travis (Chapter 3: Cheap Shot paragraph 84 & 86)

Importance: Travis's sneering claim that no one is good enough for Abby indicates his jealousy, while his explanation of why he has not slept with her shows the development of his romantic feelings toward her.

I don't want to date her; I just want to be around her. She's... different.

-- Travis (Chapter 4: The Bet paragraph 44)

Importance: Travis's explanation of his attraction to Abby and his claim that she is different foreshadows their relationship.

Travis and I aren't together. We are just friends. You heard him earlier... he's not interested in me that way... It doesn't matter. It'll never happen. He told me he doesn't



see me like that, anyway. Besides, he's a total commitment phobe, I'd be hard pressed to find a girlfriend outside of you that he hasn't slept with, and I can't keep up with his mood swings.

-- Abby (Chapter 4: The Bet paragraph 210 & 214)

Importance: The fact that Abby blames her lack of interest in Travis on him for not seeing her like that indicates that she is interested in him but fears being rejected.

It's just unusual for Travis. He doesn't befriend women. He tends to make enemies of them more often than not... People just don't understand your relationship. You have to admit, it's a bit ambiguous.

-- Parker (Chapter 5: Parker Hayes paragraph 44 & 46)

Importance: Parker's quote here, in conversation with Abby, shows his jealousy of Travis and reinforces how strange it is for Travis to befriend a female that he does not plan to sleep with.

As worried as I was that you'd never speak to me again... I think it's worse that you're indifferent.

-- Travis (Chapter 5: Parker Hayes paragraph 112)

Importance: By admitting his aversion to Abby's indifference, Travis effectively admits his feelings for her here.

You need to walk away, Pidge. God knows I can't walk away from you... It doesn't matter how hard I try. You're going to hate me when it's all said and done.

-- Travis (Chapter 8: Rumors paragraph 194 & 196)

Importance: The fact that Travis tries to warn Abby away from him because he believes he will hurt her serves as evidence of his love. He loves her enough to let her go.

I had Mick Abernathy for a father... A mess. The gambling, the drinking, the bad temper... it's hereditary in my family. America and I came here so I could start fresh, without the stigma of being the daughter of a drunken has-been... I get here and walk face-first into Travis. It's all too familiar.

-- Abby (Chapter 9: Promise paragraph 23, 27, 31 & 33)

Importance: Abby finally explains the reasons she cannot date Travis. Her reasons include the violence, gambling, and temper rages which remind her too much of her father, Mick.

You knew I'd find out about you and Parker, and you thought I'd just... what? Get over you? Do you not trust me, or am I just not good enough?

-- Travis (Chapter 10: Poker Face paragraph 26)

Importance: This quote proves that Travis loves Abby since he still wants her after they have sex, and her rejection even causes him to doubt himself.



I don't think you realize what you're getting yourself into. Travis is bad news, Abby. Everyone knows it. No one is talking about how great it is that you've turned him around... they're all waiting for him to do what he does best. I don't know what he's told you, but you have no clue what kind of person he is. Do you know how many humiliated girls I've taken home from parties after they've spent a few hours alone in a room with him? He's going to hurt you.

-- Parker (Chapter 11: Jealousy paragraph 112)

Importance: Parker's warning against Travis reiterates Travis's earlier reputation, while Abby's blatant disregard of the warning indicates the depth of her love for Travis since she is no longer so afraid.

I don't want anything bought with that money, Travis. I don't want anything to do with Benny or Vegas or anything that goes along with it.

-- Abby (Chapter 16: Home paragraph 84)

Importance: True to her aversion to the past, Abby pleads with Travis to reject Benny's offer, and this foreshadows their break up when Travis refuses to listen.

You have to be patient with him. Travis doesn't remember much about it, but he was close to his mom, and after we lost her he was never the same. I thought he'd grow out of it, you know, with him being so young. It was hard on all of us, but Trav... he quit trying to love people after that. I was surprised that he brought you here. The way he acts around you, the way he looks at you... I knew you were somethin' special.

-- Jim Maddox (Chapter 17: No, Thanks paragraph 113)

Importance: In this quote, Jim acknowledges that Abby and Travis are fighting and encourages her to be patient with his son since she is the first woman Travis has loved since his mother died when he was a child. This indicates exactly how important Abby is to Travis.

WELL, I BELONG TO YOU!

-- Travis (Chapter 20: Last Dance paragraph 112)

Importance: When Abby objects to Travis's ownership, he again proves that she is the one who is afraid of commitments when he proudly yells that he belongs to her.