

Chesapeake Blue Study Guide

Chesapeake Blue by Nora Roberts

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Plot Summary

Chesapeake Blue by Nora Roberts is the fourth book in a series titled "The Chesapeake Bay Saga" that includes Sea Swept, Rising Tides, and Inner Harbor. This is a saga of the 'Quinn Brothers.' Seth Quinn is coming home. After spending an extended time in Europe, refining and expanding his craft, he was returning, having become a world-renowned artist. After five years away from home, he can hardly wait to return to the familiar warmth and love of the family that he would do anything for.

Almost immediately, he meets Dru (Drusilla) Whitcomb Banks, and before he can think about anything, he finds himself very attracted to her. It takes Seth some time to convince Dru that he isn't like the cheating loser of a fiance that she left behind in Washington, D.C., and in fact, is one of the few honest men left that are still available. He convinces her to pose for him in exchange for one of his paintings that she has fallen in love with. That leads to more time posing in exchange for framing and then yet another painting and framing joins the mix. Dru, surprising even herself, discovers that despite her best efforts, she can't help but feel the same way for Seth.

Seth brings home a dark secret, however. It is one that has the potential to tear his family apart and Seth simply won't allow it. His love for his family runs so deep that he will do anything he has to in order to keep the threat from affecting them. To that end, he pays a ransom in varying amounts to a woman he considers to be little more than a vessel and has been doing so since he was just fourteen years of age. The secret he keeps will affect those he loves regardless of his best efforts and when the whole story is revealed, Seth learns just how strong a family that binds together is. Seth finds out that the love he shares with Dru is not only a harbor for him, but it also gives him the strength to face down the enemy in his life. In a vicious attempt to ruin the life he's built for himself, his mother burns the family business, almost destroying it completely. Instead of getting the money she believes she deserves, Seth's mother is arrested. Seth does what he can to help and then takes over and installs a porch swing he bought for Dru. While they are giving it a test run, he asks her to marry him, giving her the ring that used to be his grandmother, Stella's. A single tear falls as he tells her that today is the first day of their future together.



Chapter One

Chapter One Summary

Chesapeake Blue by Nora Roberts is the fourth book in a series titled "The Chesapeake Bay Saga" that includes Sea Swept, Rising Tides and Inner Harbor. This is a saga of the 'Quinn Brothers.' Seth Quinn is coming home. After spending an extended time in Europe, refining and expanding his craft, he was returning, having become a world renowned artist. After five years away from home, he can hardly wait to return to the familiar warmth and love of the family that he would do anything for.

He considers driving into town when he first gets to St. Christopher, but wants nothing more than to be home. He pulls into the yard and walks down to the lake, just standing there for a moment and soaking up the smells and sounds that are home to him. A dark blur comes racing towards him and he drops down to greet Witless, the latest of the brainless variety of dogs that the Quinn's have always had. Seth hears a vehicle pull in and Witless streaks out to the front. Anna gives him a hard time for jumping up, and Seth can't help but make a comment. In an instant the groceries are dropped back into the car and Anna races into an embrace. They look at each other, brother and sister who are more like mother and son, and he tells her that he simply had to come home. He couldn't stay away another moment. They go inside where Anna pours them a glass of wine and gives Seth the rundown on what everyone is doing now. Anna promises to put together a large and noisy Quinn family gathering to welcome him home on the coming Sunday. It sounds perfect. Cam arrives and Seth goes out to greet him, a thousand words passing between them soundlessly. Cam pulls him into a one armed hug and Seth asks him if it's okay for him to come home for good. His room looks exactly as he left it, everything familiar. The next one home is Kevin, who immediately confirms that he is home for good and slips into an easy conversation about girls. Anna catches the tail end of it, and sends Kevin to do his homework while she and Seth look over his landscapes from Tuscany. Later, Anna finds Cam on the back porch and steps into his arms easily, turning her face into his chest, overwhelmed with emotion. He holds her, knowing the flood of emotions she is feeling. She kisses him and invites him to join her upstairs.

Chapter One Analysis

Seth could remember the first time he had crossed the Bay into Maryland's Eastern Shore as though it were yesterday, and returning now, he held it in his mind the same way. He remembered how as a kid he'd ridden with the old man - the man he would come to respect and love. He was hot headed and suspicious after a decade of alcohol, drugs and men who were all over his mother. Ray had taken him in when he was just ten, giving his daughter the only thing she understood, which is money. On the way home, Ray had made him a solemn promise that he would never have to go back to her again. He even began to believe it, but just months later, a car accident took the old



man's life. At first, Seth was sure he'd be sent back to his mother, but Ray's sons had stepped up and taken him in at Ray's request. He'd made them promise they'd look after him, and true to their word, they had, drilling into him the one fact he'd come to count on. Quinn's stick together. Now, years later, he stands in the back of the house, looking out at the water, and letting the memories of the place wash over him. Witless is the first to greet him, racing to him as though he were a stranger until he spoke to him, calling him by name. The next one to arrive is Anna, the woman he'd come to think of as his mother. She drops the groceries and throws herself into his arms when she sees him, her face filled with delight and her eyes shimmering with tears. He helps her bring the groceries in, and put them away. With a glass of wine in hand, she fills him in on all the family news. She is already planning a large Sunday gathering for the family to welcome him home. Despite his assurances that he isn't in any trouble, Anna can see that something is troubling him, and wonders what is on his mind. Cam pulls in the driveway and Seth goes out to meet him. They greet each other in the way that men who care deeply for each other do with jokes and jabs, the undercurrents filled with emotion. Seth asks if he can come home, for good this time, promising to pull his weight, and Cam assures him that the question alone is a sure sign that he's been gone much too long already. The first day of Seth's homecoming is warm and wonderful.



Chapter Two

Chapter Two Summary

Seth wakes to Cam ripping the blankets off of him and demanding his presence out back. Seth curses, knowing that there will be no going back to sleep now, despite this being the first morning he is home. Cam tells him to put some clothes on after grabbing Seth by the ankles out of bed and onto the floor. Things are the same as they had always been, he reflects as he gets dressed and heads down hoping to find a cup of coffee. Anna pours him a cup, and tells him Cam is waiting for him out back. They are all standing there when he steps out and exchange barbs and insults the way men who love each other often show deep affection. In no time, Seth finds himself being picked up and hauled towards the cold lake, kicking and complaining the whole way. Determined to maintain the family tradition, they hold fast, laughing about how far they might be able to toss him. They howl delightedly as they hurl him into the water and when he surfaces, he knows he is home. Refreshed, he drives back to Baltimore and turns in his rental car, trading it for a saber silver Jaguar convertible. He drives back to St. Christopher, cruising slowly down Market Street and reacquainting himself with the only real home he had ever known. Each shop, and every corner is filled with memories, excepting for one new place - Bud and Bloom - a new flower shop. He imagines the owner as a widow with a cat, and couldn't be further from the truth. Drusilla is beautiful, and Seth decides he will paint her before he even says hello. For now though, he breaks the ice by ordering flowers for all four of the women in his life, letting Dru help him to customize each offering to suit the woman they were intended for. She misinterprets the gifts at first, but he sets the record straight before leaving, offering to paint her.

Chapter Two Analysis

Seth groans when Cam comes in to wake him, unwilling yet to break surface. Cam takes away his pillow, and then pulls him off the bed, just as he would have at any other time in Seth's life, telling him to get up because he has something for Seth to do out back. Seth grumbles, but awake anyway, he gets dressed and heads downstairs hoping that at least there is coffee. Anticipating him, Anna puts a cup in his hand and directs him out back. When Seth opens the door and sees his brothers all standing there together, his heart catches in his throat for a moment. This is what he missed so much. This was exactly what he needed. They laugh, catching each other in bear hugs all around. Ethan's grip tightens and Seth recognizes the situation even before he sees the gleam in their eyes. He tries to talk them out of it, but this is a ritual as old as their time together, and as necessary as his homecoming. Laughing, they speculate as to how far they can collectively throw him while Seth wriggles and squirms to no avail. The water is freezing, and breaking surface Seth feels at home. Wide awake now, he decides to drive to Baltimore and return his rental, picking himself up a Jaguar convertible to replace it. He drove slowly into St. Christopher, letting the memories of the place fill him



with a sense of peace. His artist's eye catches and begins creating in his mind - drawing the myriad of moments he sees in front of him. One new shop catches his eye, and he decides to go in. Buds and Blooms is eye catching even before he enters. The displays are appealing, and the windows filled with plants and knickknacks. His mind makes up an entire story line around the proprietor, and he fully expects that she is an elderly widower who decided to retire in the place that she spent holidays with her now deceased husband. So intent is he on his imaginary store owner that the reality is quite a surprise. He decides to go in and do something special for the women in his life. Drusilla Banks steps out of the back and mentally Seth gives the owner bonus points for hiring such a lovely flower. He decides almost immediately that he will paint her, but first he needs flowers. He chats with her a bit first, and she has to remind herself not to try to hurry him along. In small towns like St. Christopher, things worked on a different kind of time and she had come with the intention of being friendly. One by one, Seth describes the women in his life, and Dru matches his descriptions to the perfect flowers. He tells her he's going to paint her and she objects, telling him that she works a great deal, and that she guards her free time jealously. He gives her a card, just in case she changes her mind. Then he begins dropping off flowers, starting with Sybill. An hour alone with her is nothing short of wonderful, and he loves listening to her get him caught up on family issues. She comments that no one in the Quinn family stands alone and Seth knows she is right. He isn't sure he can handle pulling them into the trouble he is facing.



Chapter Three

Chapter Three Summary

Dru is almost as fascinated by the fact that Seth Quinn wants to paint her as he is excited to actually do the painting. Both find themselves dwelling on the possibilities. Seth drives to the large brick barn that the Quinn's had purchased from Nancy Claremont after her husband passed away. The brothers had transformed it into a boatyard which is what it had been for the last eight years. Boats by Quinn had much of his sweat and blood as well. Filled with memories, he walked to the door noting that Aubrey Quinn's name had been added to the four that were there from the beginning, bringing a grin to his face. Aubrey spots him and races to him, throwing herself into his arms and giving him a big kiss before telling him not to ever go away again. He gives her the flowers he bought and has the satisfaction of seeing her face go all girly on him as she sees the sunflowers. She gets almost as excited about the Jaguar he is driving, and wants him to take her along to show it to Cam, whom she sure will weep when he sees it, but Seth insists that he has to go and see Grace to drop her flowers off too. Aubrey tells him it is her running around day, but offers to take them over to her. He asks her about Drusilla, and Aubrey promises to tell him all about her over a beer at Shiney's later. He meets her as promised and gets the lowdown on the family, but Seth ditches Aubrey when he sees Dru walk into the bar shortly after. Dru walks over to one of the waitresses and has a short conversation that ends as Seth approaches. They talk about the space she has for rent above her shop and asks her to show it to him, claiming that if it's suitable, he'd be interested. He tells her that he'll follow her back.

Chapter Three Analysis

Dru takes out the sketch Seth used as a business card and looks at it again. She can't help but be intrigued by the fact that he wants to paint her, which is not to say that she has any desire to be immortalized, or to pose, to be scrutinized in the manner required to do such a thing. She recalls the article she had read about him, without mention of parents. Seth was raised by his grandfather, Ray Quinn, prior to his death, and afterward by Ray's three adopted sons and later their wives as well. Dru wonders if these are the sisters he spoke of. Still, it is hard for her to imagine him wanting to stay in St. Christopher after being dubbed the 'young master' by the Italians. Dru knew that her mother would be thrilled that her daughter had managed to interest THE Seth Quinn, and for that reason alone she won't pursue it. Still, she can't help but admit that he is attractive and appealing. At the same time, Seth is contemplating Dru, and revising his initial opinion as to who she is. He takes Aubrey's flowers to the boatyard, and she behaves like a typical girl when she sees them. They agree to meet at Smiley's later. Seth shows Cam the Jaguar before going into the bar and sitting with Aubrey. There he gets more family information, followed by a rundown of Dru and her family. Just as Aubrey finishes, Dru comes in, looking terribly out of place. She goes up to one of the waitresses, and as Seth approaches, he can get the gist of the conversation, learning

that Dru is looking to rent out some space. He follows her outside and manages to convince her to show him the space above her shop.



Chapter Four

Chapter Four Summary

Dru drives back to the shop and Seth takes her arm as he walks her to the stairs. She leaves the door open when they go in, but quickly realizes she needn't have worried. His mind is entirely somewhere else. He stands at the window, muttering to himself about light and space. He asks her if she has any objections to skylights, if he bears the cost and installation, and she can't think of any. They agree with a handshake and he promises to bring the funds necessary in the morning. The next morning, she gets up slowly, appreciating that it is Sunday morning. She has coffee, and stands at the window, admiring the view. Her thoughts turn to Seth again, and she realizes that she forgot to leave the key to the utility room for him as she promised. The issue nagged at her, preventing her from relaxing and enjoying the day, so finally she decided she just run out to Anna Quinn's and drop it off for him.

Grace thanks Seth for the flowers and holds her cheek against his, finally feeling as though the family is whole again. When Dru arrives, the number of cars in the driveway sets her back a bit. She knocks, but the music from the back yard is just loud enough that no one hears her. She decides to go around, meeting the dog first, and followed by a boy who advises her that she should probably run. Before the comment registers, she is shot in the heart with a stream of cold water. Seth apologizes several times, trying to explain, and offers her a beer, but by then Dru is livid. Anna rounds the corner just in time, and calling Seth a moron, she puts her arm around Dru and steers her inside. Dru tries to resist, but Anna herds her in a way that leaves no room for argument. She changes into a shirt Anna gives her and goes downstairs, taking in the cozy atmosphere. In the kitchen, she sees Seth and Anna standing together, love radiating from them. Grace takes her wet clothing from her while Seth apologizes again. Grace and Anna watch Seth and Dru take platters of food out back. They can tell how smitten Seth is, and mutually decide they should get to know more about her. Dru takes beer out to the men gathered around the crab pot. She asks Cam if she can come in one day and check out the work they do, and Cam's interest increases. Seth suggests they go for a sail, but she gives him a withering look and leaves him standing there. She stays much longer than she had originally intended, enjoying their company and how interlinked the family is. Seth again talks about painting her, imagining her in a long flowing skirt with a little top of some kind. Dru goes in to say goodbye to Anna, catching her and Cam in a torrid embrace. Seth catches up with her just before she manages to slip out, and tells her they'll try for a bit more intimacy for their second date. She argues with him on principle that what they had was not a date. Undeterred, he leans in and kisses her before she can defend or deflect the action. Without begin aware that she has, Dru moves into him and pulls her fingers through his hair. Interest piqued, he asks if he can come home with her, but she pulls herself together, explaining that she is not that impulsive. He backs down immediately, inviting her to dinner the next night. She refuses, admitting that she doesn't want to be interested in him, which only admits that



she is. He watches her leave, and is so engrossed in her that he doesn't see the car that pulls out behind her.

Chapter Four Analysis

Dru is partially annoyed that he'd assumed she would drop everything to go back to the shop again, but the truth is that she wants the space rented. It bothers her that it is empty. The next morning begins her favorite day. Sundays begin with a sleep in, and then the day is hers to spend as she sees fit. She stands, looking out at the water and feeling a peace that is unparalleled. Months of the same view hadn't diminished it at all, and she lived for the privacy of her gardens, and the water. Water had always held allure for her, and she'd wanted a small town atmosphere. She loved the friendliness of the locals - how they looked out for each other. It was home, in a manner that no where else in her life had ever managed to become. Seth comes to mind as she is standing there, and she remembers the key that she was supposed to leave, but neglected to do so. At first, she tries to ignore it, but soon comes to the realization that the problem will bother her until she does something about it. Dru changes out of her gardening clothes and fusses with her appearance, chastising herself for doing so at the same time. This was going to take more than twenty minutes out of her day, she realizes, but consoles herself with the option of greenhouse time later. When she gets there, however, her plans are changed.

Unable to get an answer at the front door, she'd followed the music towards the back, but before she could get there, she is soaked with a super soaker manned by Seth. Shocked, she could do little more than stand there as Seth realizes his mistake. She goes from shocked to angry when she notices that it is taking everything he has not to laugh. Anna intercepts before things get worse, and ushers Dru upstairs to get a dry shirt. Anna can tell that she is looking for an escape, and makes sure that can't happen by insisting that she stay for some dry clothes, wine and food. Dru is soaked and shivering by the time Anna gives her a dry shirt, and tells her to come down when she has changed. A simple pencil sketch catches her attention. It was obviously created by a young Seth, and her heart softens a little. The afternoon flies by as she finds herself engrossed in one conversation after another. She enjoys the atmosphere, the company and the food. When she finally sets herself to leave, she says goodbye to Anna and Cam, giving Anna the key she'd brought for Seth. He rounds the corner just in time to see her getting ready to leave, and tells her their second date will have less people chaperoning. She argues the point, but he leans in and kisses her and all of her arguments fade. She moves into him, running her fingers through his hair and losing herself in his arms for a moment. He wants to go home with her, but she resists. Her nature is not impulsive, she tells him and he immediately backs down. He promises to take things slow and she tells him to go back to his family. Seth is so swept up in her and in the kiss they'd just shared that he never notices the car that pulls out and follows her.



Chapter Five

Chapter Five Summary

For the first week that Seth rented the space above her, Dru seldom saw him. One day, after hearing him arrive, she takes a shamrock plant upstairs for him. Two skylights had already been installed, and the third would be completed that day, he tells her. She turns and her eye is caught by a painting of wild foxglove. She openly admires it, and he begs her to just stay where she is, grabbing for a piece of charcoal. He instructs her to just keep looking at the foxglove painting as he furiously sketches, offering to pay her for her time. The longer she looks at the painting, the more she likes it, and asks him how much he wants for it. He offers the painting to her if she will pose for him, promising to work around her schedule. He asks for an hour in the mornings and four hours on Sunday. She walks around and looks at the canvas he was working on and is surprised by how detailed and aloof she is in it. There is no denying how gifted he is, so she agrees, beginning the next morning. He gives her the painting, to her surprise and is about to kiss her when Cam walks in. He sees the sketch of Dru and laughs. He'd bet Phil fifty bucks that Seth would be able to get her to pose before the end of the week. After she leaves, Cam teases him mercilessly. When the skylight is in, Seth goes to the boatyard to put in a few hours as he had promised. He spends his time working oakum into seams of planking and talking to Aubrey, getting more history about Dru and the relationship that helped to make her so wary of men. Aubrey invites him to join her and Will for pizza and a movie, and Seth decides to compromise and join them for pizza. He goes back to the studio to clean up rather than going all the way home, trying to decide what the best way to invite Dru out for pizza would be. He finally decides that he should just show up at her place with a pizza and a bottle of wine, convinced that she couldn't turn him down that way.

When he enters the studio, he steps on a piece of paper and picks it up. It simply says 'Ten thousand should hold me. I'll be in touch.' He crumples it up. Gloria DeLauter is the nightmare that just keeps giving, but when it came to his mother, there was no amount that was too much to pay to get rid of her, even if it was only temporary. Unfortunately, she knew how important it was to him to keep her from the people that he loves.

Chapter Five Analysis

Though Seth is always friendly when she sees him, there is no follow through for the steamy kiss they'd shared in the first week that he is in the space upstairs. In some ways, she is relieved that she doesn't have to beat him off with a stick, but on the other hand, it irks her too. She takes a plant upstairs one day, surprising him, and herself as she realizes how the look of him in a tool belt. It fits the typical cliché and as a rule she wasn't attracted to men who were rough and untidy looking - as a rule. When she displays interest in a painting he did in Clare County, in Ireland, Seth knows he has the leverage he needs. He tells her she can have it, if she poses for him. He wants to do



her in oil, and wants her personally just as much, having thought a great deal about her over the last few days, but he understood that she had to come to him. They manage to settle on a time and place, and Seth is just positioning himself to kiss her for the second time when Cam shows up. The teasing begins right after Dru leaves, and Seth and Cam end up wrestling around. In that moment of closeness, he almost shares the secret he's been carrying, but then he changes his mind. When they are done with the skylight, Seth goes to the boatyard to put in some of the time he'd promised and is flooded with good memories as he goes in. Things hadn't changed much.

He sees that his sketches are still on the wall. Aubrey had told him that an art collector had tried to purchase them as a set recently, offering his brothers a quarter of a million dollars for them. They depicted the business from the very beginning, and revealed his growth as he progressed as an artist. Aubrey is there, and invites him out for pizza and a movie. Seth accepts the meal and on his way to the studio to change, he changes his mind. Instead, he decides to pick up a bottle of Merlot and take it and a pizza to Dru's house. He figured she'd never be able to turn him away under those circumstances, and grinning to himself, he goes in to clean up stepping on a folded piece of paper on the floor. He picks it up and opens it, already knowing that she's found him again. Wishing he had more time to think, he already knows that he'll pay Gloria DeLauter anything he has to in order to get rid of her and keep her from invading the lives of the people he loves.



Chapter Six

Chapter Six Summary

Seth sits on the dock with a fishing pole dangling in the water, trying to decide what he is going to do. A dog races over to him, wriggling until he can get under his arm and onto his lap, his tongue lapping at Seth's face enthusiastically. It takes a moment for Seth to realize that the dog in his lap is Foolish, his dog. His mind balks, remembering that he had held Foolish as he died, and joy overwhelms his temporary confusion. He wraps his arms around the dog, telling him how much he's missed him. The pole drops and a hand reaches out to catch it. She tells him that they figured Foolish would cheer him up, and it takes a moment for Seth to absorb the fact that he is talking to Stella Quinn who is also no longer in this life, and in fact, Seth had never met in person. He decides he must be dreaming. They talk for a while, Stella sad that her life was taken before she had a chance to know him, and Seth wishing the same, and worrying about Gloria. Then he wakes up in bed, his hand still holding the fishing pole in his dream. He can still feel the lingering warmth from Foolish lying on his lap. He puts aside his tormented feelings for the time being, having arranged another session with Dru for that morning. She arrives predictably on time, and they begin. He is trying to catch the laughter that lights up her face, but his comments don't always have the desired affect. He decides that since he can't get her laughing, he'll take advantage of her anger. By the time he is finished, they've discussed everything from sex to family to relationships to dating and when she looks at the canvas, she is surprised to find that he has sketched her face several times in different moods. He tells her that since it was apparent that she didn't feel like posing, he thought he would try to capture some of her other moods. He offers to frame the foxglove painting in exchange for a few more sittings, and she agrees to let him. Anna knows that something is troubling Seth, and she corners Cam in the bathroom while he is showering to talk to him about it. She's worried about him and can't quite put a finger on why. She asks Cam to talk to him.

Chapter Six Analysis

Seth dreams about Stella. It is the first dream that he has ever had that is as real as this one is. He is fishing, and Foolish joins him. It takes a moment before he realizes that is actually is Foolish, and Stella arrives soon after, commenting that there is nothing that is as comforting as the love of a good dog. She tips his glasses down and observes that he has Ray's eyes - the eyes she fell in love with. They talk for a while, and both aware of how much death has taken from them, but Stella reminds him that the only thing you can change is your future. The past should stay the past. He tells her that Gloria is back, but she already knows, and knows that he will pay her again as well. He asks her what else he could do and she tells him he'll figure it out.

When he wakes up, the feeling of having Stella and Foolish near by persists for a time. He shakes it off and gets ready for a session with Dru. It isn't as relaxed as the last one,



and though she remembers the pose, he can tell that she isn't in the mood that he is looking for. He tries to cheer her up, make her laugh, and bring that look to her face again, but she is alternating between sad and angry with their conversation, so he sketches her many moods instead. The end result surprises her. They make plans for Sunday, which is the next time she has agreed to pose for him, and he asks her if he can buy himself more time by framing the foxglove painting. She agrees and heads out to open the shop, leaving him feeling aroused, and looking forward to the next session. Anna knows that something is wrong. She sees it in his behavior, and in his lack of familial participation. She corners Cam in the bathroom and convinces him to talk to Seth, using a cooperative shower to put him in a compliant frame of mind.



Chapter Seven

Chapter Seven Summary

Feeling relaxed Cam goes downstairs and finds Seth playing video games with Jake. He interrupts them, and asks Seth to come with him. Jake wants to join them, but Cam asks him not to. Once Jake is sure that his father isn't angry with Seth, he is content to remain behind, especially with the promise of a battle royal when his father returns. Cam and Seth head out on the day boat and for a while just enjoy the peace of the water. Finally, they slow and Cam stretches out, opening a beer. He asks Seth what's wrong, and Seth gives him all the usual excuses. Cam tells him he can't go back with a lame story like that because Anna would never believe it. They cruise by Dru's place and Cam jokes about dropping him off, teasing him until he erupts in Dru's defense, answering his question as to whether or not Seth is serious about her. He is. Cam continues to probe, but Seth is unable to come clean with him about Gloria. Instead, he tells him about the dream he had about Stella. He tells Cam about Foolish, and about the conversation he and Stella had. Cam tells him that if he dreams about her again, he should ask her about zucchini bread.

When they go back inside, they find Dan in the kitchen. It is the first time Seth has seen him since returning. They sit on the porch together, catching up with Cam goes into the den to dethrone his son. They talk about Will who is working towards begin a doctor and then casually admits that he plans to ask Shelby to marry him, pulling out the ring he's bought. After dinner, they go to Shiney's and his ears are still ringing when he falls into bed at home. Cam tells Phillip that Seth spoke with their mother. He tells him about the zucchini message. Dru shows up at the shop and has an opportunity to see Seth at work. She manages to keep it together, as he comes over, hot and sweaty, and then tells him that it was Cam she came to see. She asks Cam if he can build her an eighteen foot sloop, pointing out what kind of hull and bow she is looking for using the photos on the wall as examples. Half an hour later, Ethan walks her down. He tells her that he'll have a sketch drawn up soon. When Ethan comes back in, Seth asks where Dru is and Ethan admits she just left. Seth chases her out, while Ethan and Aubrey discuss how stuck he is on her. Aubrey isn't sure that she is the right one for him.

Chapter Seven Analysis

Cam goes downstairs, feeling relaxed and happy. He rousts Seth from the game he and Jake are playing and tells him to come with him. Jake wants to join them, and his face reveals his disappointment when his father says no. Cam squats down beside him, and is suddenly overwhelmed with pride and love for his son. He tells him he loves him, embarrassing him for the moment. He repeats his statement, and then adds that when he returns, there will be a new king in the land of Quinn, bringing the cocky expression back to his son's face. Cam takes Seth out in the boat for a while, and when they've settled down out there, Cam asks Seth what's wrong. He tells him that Anna is noticing,



and when that happens, someone has to answer. He probes the way Seth feels about Dru, confirming his feelings are more than a passing fancy.

Despite the moment of honesty, Seth is still unable to come clean about Gloria. Instead, he tells her about his dream containing Stella and Foolish. Cam asks her how she looks, and seems to take the dream in stride. He later tells Ethan about it and they discuss the fact that Stella would visit Seth. Cam tells Ethan about the zucchini question, and they laugh remembering the event. Dru shows up at the boatyard, and gets an eye full of Seth working, sweating and muscled, taking her breath away. She goes up to the office and gives Ethan and Cam an outline of the sloop she wants them to build her. They promise to get Seth drawing it up for her and she looks over the chronicle of his work on the walls, admiring both the growth of the business and the artist. She heads home without saying goodbye to Seth, which has him running out to follow, revealing the depth of his attraction to her already. Ethan comments and Aubrey says she isn't sure that Drusilla is the right one for him. Ethan reminds her that what is really important is how Seth feels and Aubrey reluctantly agrees.



Chapter Eight

Chapter Eight Summary

When Seth arrives for the sitting Dru promised him, he brings her the painting he'd had framed for her and offers to hang it for her even bringing hangers with him. He'd selected a perfect frame, complimenting the flowers and foliage. They talk about the house, and Seth tells her that if she hadn't bought it, he would have. She has difficulty keeping her thoughts professional. He gives her a bag that contains a long skirt and a narrow strapped top, asking her if she has any hoop earrings. The moment is about to become much more personal when her father calls to give her the news that he and her mother are getting divorced. She sends Seth downstairs for coffee, promising not to be long. When she comes outside at last, having changed into the clothes he brought, she looks so sad that he goes to her and takes her into his arms. She gives him an overview of the family drama and he offers to cancel the sitting and take her sailing instead, but she is ready to get to work. He poses her on a picnic blanket, barefoot, and instructs her to relax as he begins sketching. He talks to her, getting her mind off what they are doing and she soon drifts off. She wakes when the music changes and is surprised to find Seth on the blanket beside her. He pulls a hamper forward and pours her a glass of wine, getting out bread, pate, cheese and pasta salad. They talk about family and when things become more intimate, she pulls away from him. She tells him that as long as he is involved with someone else, she will maintain her distance. Confused, he asks her who he is involved with and is shocked when she answers Aubrey. He insists that she couldn't be more wrong, but she is sure that he is just blind to the truth. It is enough to anger him, and he tells her that just because one man treated her badly doesn't mean that they should all be painted with the same brush. She agrees, but adds that until she is sure that she won't be the 'other woman' and she won't get any further involved.

Chapter Eight Analysis

Dru gets ready for her sitting with Seth and can't help but think of Jonah who had deceived her and made a fool out of her. She swore she would never let that happen to her again, and feels a flash of anger all over again. Seth comes, bringing the framed painting back for her and hanging it. Just as he finishes, Dru's father calls with the news that he and her mother are divorcing. Dru tries to be patient. When she dutifully asks her father if there is anything she can do for him, he suggests she drive up and spend the afternoon with him. Dru begs off, citing another commitment, and her father's mood sours. Thirty years, he complains in her ear. She apologizes and no sooner hangs up when her mother calls. After she gets off the phone, she changes into the clothes he brought and steadies herself before going outside. One look at her face is all he needs. Seth goes to her and puts his arms around her gently, ignoring the fact that she flinches. She tells him her parents are divorcing, and he is confused when she laughs afterward. She explains that her parents have threatened divorce every couple of years for as long as she can remember. She asks him how he managed to get through his childhood



without more scarring or damage, and he admits that the Quinn's saved him. It was the simple truth. She kisses him gently and admits she doesn't know what to do with him. He tells her he is nothing like the man she was engaged to, and she tenses for a minute before agreeing with him. She skims over the details with him, and the honesty of the moment turns intimate, but she stops him, telling him she isn't ready. The truth is that she believes that he and Aubrey are involved, if not physically, then emotionally for sure. Seth is too stunned to laugh, and tells her she is way off base but she is insistent. He packs up his gear angrily and she retreats to the house feeling shaken.



Chapter Nine

Chapter Nine Summary

Angrily, he loads his stuff back into the car, talking to the canvas, and telling her that he should know who he is attracted to. He admits he loves Aubrey, but he'd never so much as thought of her in that way, had he? He drives to Aubrey's house, but she isn't home. Grace asks him if something is wrong and he claims he just needs to talk to her. Grace invites him to stay for dinner, but he can't relax until this issue is settled, so he begs off. When he leaves, Grace realizes Anna is right. Something is bothering Seth. Seth drives to the baseball field where Aubrey is playing ball. When she finishes, having beaten the other team, he asks her if they can talk. She tells her ride that she is going with Seth and as she returns, he tries to see her for the first time but can't. He takes her to the boatyard and standing on the dock, he asks her if he can kiss her. Shocked, she asks if he's recently been hit on the head, and he admits that it is weird. Aubrey realizes almost right away how the events must have occurred, and pegs them. She tries not to laugh as she gives him permission to try his experiment, and when his mouth is almost on hers, she bursts out laughing. Apologizing, she pulls herself together and this time they kiss. Afterward, neither speaks for several seconds. Then, still holding each other, they burst out laughing.

They agree they are never going to do that again, and they solemnly agree to never speak of it again. Too restless, Seth almost goes back to Dru to tell her how wrong she is, but instead decides to take a giant emotional step back. Instead, he went to the studio, and continued to work on the painting from memory. Time flies and the painting almost seems to do itself. Later, fully dressed, he falls asleep. Stella asks him what he's going to call it, and suggests 'Beauty Sleeps.' She tells him that they're proud of him for being true to his talents and suggests he clean up a little. He asks her about the zucchini bread, and she tells him the story that occurred before his time. Then she warns Seth that trouble is coming, but reminds him that he is not alone, and never will be. He asks her not to go, but wakes in the morning feeling alone despite her words. A folded piece of paper slipped under the door tells him to come to Lucy's Diner on Route 13, and to bring cash.

Chapter Nine Analysis

Now, her comment works its way into his brain, and wouldn't leave him alone. He decides to settle things right away and heads for Aubrey's house. When he learns she is still at the ball field, he heads there, and is momentarily taken aback by how much the people he knew have grown, changed, and increased their familial numbers. He watches as Aubrey helps her team to win the game, trying to see her from a 'boyfriend' stand point, and failing in his efforts. Still, the idea bothers him enough that he simply can't let it go. When she is done, she is surprised to see him, and troubled by the look on his face, thinking something is wrong. He assures her that isn't the case, but needs



to talk to her privately. He takes her to the boatyard where he stands on the dock, frustrated with the way he feels, and embarrassed, he tells her that he needs to kiss her. She laughs, reminding him that he's done that a thousand times, but he clarifies his intentions. It doesn't take Aubrey long to figure out where the idea came from, and she does her level best not to laugh at how serious he is about it. She almost manages to stifle herself, but as his mouth approaches hers, she snorts out a laugh, testing Seth's patience.

Finally, she takes it seriously, and they kiss. Afterward, they pull apart and looking deep into each other eyes, they both burst out laughing. The experiment is over, and after ensuring that neither of them will ever bring it up again to anyone, they let it go. From there, he goes back to the studio, almost driving to Dru's instead, but deciding against it. He is still hurt by her lack of trust and decides instead to take a giant step back from her. Taking a page from her book, he tells himself that he needs to concentrate on home, work and family, and tries to convince himself that he doesn't have time for the complications of a relationship. He paints with abandon, finishing it without recalling a single brushstroke, lost in the world of color, tone and texture. Then he falls into bed, exhausted. Stella comes to him again, looking at the painting, and suggesting a name for it. Her presence is so real that he can smell her shampoo, and she chastises him for the condition of the studio. She tells him that Dru is a neat and orderly kind of person and that mess confuses her. Seth doesn't want to talk about Dru. He tells Stella that he's putting her on hold, and the idea amuses Stella. Seth changes the subject, asking her about the zucchini as Cam had asked him to. She laughs, saying she is dead, not forgetful. Then she tells him about the 'Bread Bowl' that the kids had with her inedible zucchini bread. She laughs, telling him the story, and adds that she wishes they'd had time together. He asks if he can call her Grandma, and she of course agrees. She also tells him that trouble is coming, but reminds him that he is never alone. He doesn't want her to leave, but wakes in the morning alone with her memory. A folded note is on the floor with instructions from Gloria as to where and when to bring her money.



Chapter Ten

Chapter Ten Summary

Aubrey works up a good head of steam thinking about what Dru is doing to Seth, and since she promised she wouldn't tell anyone, she can't go to them for advice either. Finally, she decides that Dru needs a talking to, and heads to the shop to deliver it. No one is allowed to make Seth unhappy. She marches into the shop and sees the caution in Dru's face when she sees her. When the one customer, Carla, finally leaves, Aubrey wastes no time letting Dru have it with both barrels even threatening to punch her in the nose at one point, but Dru lifts her chin defiantly, momentarily earning her respect. They go toe to toe for a few moments, each revealing inner vulnerabilities and by the time the confrontation is over, they are on the way to becoming friends. Seth sees Aubrey leave after half an hour inside. He could tell she was spoiling for confrontation but kept his distance. When she left, she looked calm so Seth ignored the whole thing and returned to planning the handover to Gloria and getting back to his life afterward.

Meanwhile, Dru and Aubrey are beginning to discover that they might have more in common than just Seth. They spend some time at Dru's, drinking wine, eating cookies and talking about men, and then order in a Chinese food dinner. Seth sits in the diner as Gloria directed, trying not to be agitated that she is late. To pass the time, he draws in his head, wishing he had a sketch pad with him. It relaxed him until she arrived. When she walks in, he can see that her lifestyle is aging her before her time. She tries to turn their meeting into a social affair, but Seth isn't having anything to do with it. He tells her to take the money and go, warning her that if she steps foot anywhere near his family, she'll pay. Her voice goes up as she becomes offended, telling him that he's nothing, but Seth can't be hurt that way by her. He leaves and she grabs the bag of money, tucking it against her and thinking to herself that this is only a down payment. She is no where near done with Seth, she decides.

Chapter Ten Analysis

When Aubrey goes to see Dru at the flower shop, it is with both guns blazing. No one is allowed to hurt her Seth. She tries to be patient while Carla finishes up, and then stops to chat about her upcoming wedding, but when Carla leaves, she is ready. She sets in on Dru, telling her to stop messing with Seth's head, and assuring her that she and Seth are close, but not intimate in a way that would be competition. Dru admits she's never had a relationship of that nature, and didn't understand it. Aubrey tells her she certainly would have understood if she'd seen them kissing the day before. She tells Dru that once the seed had been planted in his mind, it had grown like a cancer until he had to be sure. Horrified, Dru asks if Seth had any idea that what he was doing was insulting, and Aubrey admitted that he didn't so neither did she. The anger unwinds and Aubrey makes sure Dru knows that there is no competition, and is about to leave when on impulse, Dru invites her over for a drink.



Aubrey pulls into the driveway right after Dru, giving her no time to set up the way she would have liked to. Aubrey admires the inside of the house, including the cleanliness level, giving her mother's housecleaning business a plug anyway. Aubrey and Dru sit outside and Aubrey openly admires her for her perfect self presentation. She adds that she is coming on to her in any way, and Dru comments that there probably isn't any point to them having a great experiment of their own. For once, Aubrey is completely speechless, which gives Dru the best laugh she's had in some time. Aubrey decides she might just like this fussy, neat freak of a woman. She gives Dru tips on how to handle Seth, showing her the 'I'm almost crying' face. Dru is impressed and amused. They talk about Jonah, Dru finding it easy and cathartic to talk to Aubrey. They have dinner together as well, and the beginnings of a friendship appear. Seth meets with Gloria, and is surprised by how bad she looks. She tries to cover it up, but no amount of makeup is sufficient. She sits with Seth, offering him pie with his coffee, and Seth can't get away from her fast enough. He gives her the bag of money and tells her to stay away from him and his family. That comment just makes her angrier, and she spouts off as Seth leaves. Then she pulls the bag to her and knows she has enough now to tide her over until the next time. She is definitely not done with her son.



Chapters Eleven and Twelve

Chapters Eleven and Twelve Summary

Dru takes a peace offering up to Seth days later, and finds him painting with a fury that is palpable. At first, she is going to back out without disturbing her, but he turns and sees her there. He asks her opinion of the painting - a storm swept sea with a man in a boat on the edge of life. The sea is brutal and filled with hints of faces in both sky and sea. Powerful is the word that springs to mind. She admits to him that she was wrong about him and Aubrey, and apologizes. He orders them a pizza and goes to clean up while she looks through his canvases. She sees the watercolor of herself and is astounded at the way that he saw her. She begins going through the canvases and learns more about Seth in the process. One painting, done from memory of the marsh around home speaks to her and she asks him if he'll sell it to her. The pizza arrives, and as they eat, he asks her questions designed to lightheartedly decide if they are compatible. She asks about a model he painted and marvels inside that he doesn't try to lie to her about it. Then she gets up, crosses to the door, and locks it, her intentions transparent.

Seth senses her tension and slows down, savoring every bit of her until she gives herself over to the experience. He drove her up to heights of pleasure she'd never known. When they are finally united in passion and relaxing together, the need to know if she was satisfactory grows in her like a virus. Insecurity rises up in her, followed by anger that he hadn't said a word one way or the other. He can sense that there is a problem, but has no idea what it is, so he asks her point blank and she finally tells him the truth. Sensing her insecurity, he tells her the truth. The experience for him was magic. She tells him she has to go home, and though disappointed, he concedes, providing she agrees to stay with him the following night. He offers to trade the watercolor she likes so much for more painting and even agrees to frame it for her. She agrees to pose again, asking what she might be wearing, but not expecting the answer that he gave her - red rose petals. The next morning Seth goes to the boatyard, apologizing for not being there the last few days. Cam says they managed fine without him, but the tone is unmistakable. After a couple more barbs, Seth asks Cam what's wrong, and Cam lets him have it. Before either of them know it, they are pushing each other angrily and an errant comment from Cam about Dru pushes Seth over the edge. Phillip intervenes before the fists fly, stopping long enough to give Seth a piece of his mind as well. Seth is left standing out back, feeling like a heel until Cam walks back out. Then Seth apologizes and promises to make it up to him. They sort it out, like they always do and on their way back inside, Seth says Zucchini football. Cam's face drains of color. Seth tells him that Stella remembered and told him the story of the Zucchini bowl. Cam reveals the end of the story, and how Stella had gone back inside to get them another loaf to continue playing with. The memory is as clear as if it had just happened.



Chapters Eleven and Twelve Analysis

Seth uses painting as his escape and a way to normalize how he feels after his meeting with Gloria. One thing is certain. He will not take the way that he feels to his family. He will keep them out of this if it kills him. Instead, he pours himself into the canvas in front of him, painting for almost three days straight, pausing only to sleep when he was too exhausted to continue. On the third day, Dru arrives with a peace offering, and apologizes to Seth. She almost doesn't stay when she sees him there, entranced by the work he is doing, she is reluctant to disturb him, but at that moment, he turns and sees her standing there. The painting is powerful, filled with desperation, determination and in a way, hope. Finally, she admits she was wrong and tells him she is sorry, revealing the evening that she and Aubrey spent together. They share a pizza and when they are done, Dru has made a decision. She gets up and locks the door, turning back to him. For Dru, it is a calculated risk.

Dru is nervous and can't tell him that the reason is because she's lost her confidence. They take each other to heights previously undiscovered and afterward they lay together quietly. For Seth, this is almost his favorite part of the experience, but he senses a change come over her. He asks her what's wrong, and she admits in a round about way she is angry that he hasn't said anything about what they just experienced. Her insecurities as a result of her former boyfriend have made their way into Seth's bed, and he says so. She apologizes and he assures her that their unions was magical. She doesn't stay the night, unwilling to do so without at least a change of clothing, but she makes a date with him for the following night. Seth goes to the boatyard after she leaves, bringing donuts for his brothers but the reception he gets is less than stellar. First Cam makes veiled comments about his lack of contributions and participation, and when he makes slightly derogatory comments about Dru and the time he is spending with her, Seth loses his temper and calls Cam out. Cam is happy to take him on, thereby excising some of the anger and frustration he feels, but Phillip steps in and stops them. He lights into Seth as well, and then walks away with Cam, leaving Seth to think about it for a few minutes. Finally, Cam goes back to him and having thought it through, Seth begins to apologize immediately. Apology accepted, they talk about Dru and Seth's attachment and then to change the subject, Seth says 'zucchini football' to Cam who blanches. Seth tells him about his most recent visit with Stella, and Cam tells him the rest of the football story which included the fact that Stella had brought the second loaf out to finish the game.



Chapters Thirteen and Fourteen

Chapters Thirteen and Fourteen Summary

Seth goes to work on the sketch of Dru's boat and Dru goes to work. The bell on the door jingles and a woman comes in who makes Dru wonder if she is about to be robbed. Then she tells Dru she looks familiar and gives her a story that hinges on this woman being friends with her mother. Will McLean enters the store, and Gloria leaves as soon as she can, taking a dozen carnations with her. Will asks her if the woman was hassling her, telling Dru she didn't feel right. Dru agreed, telling him about her outrageous claim that she knew Dru's mother Katherine. No one called her Kathy. The name Harrow rings a bell, but Will is too tired to place it promising to return if and when he does. Dru later calls her mother, just to be sure she isn't wrong about the woman, and her mother confirms not knowing her. After a few moments of tradition conversation, her mother tells her she has a wonderful surprise - they're going to Paris. All Dru has to do is go home and pack. Seth walks in mid argument, and Dru introduces him to her mother. After a brief conversation, she is able to bundle her mother back into the Mercedes, telling her to go to Paris and they'd talk when she returned. She tells him Will was in to buy flowers for Aubrey, saving him from the woman who came in earlier. When she describes her, Seth becomes agitated, and without explaining, makes her promise to call him the next time she comes in.

As soon as Dru goes to work, Seth heads out to see Will, insisting on waking him, although his roommate, Dan argues with him at first. Will is angry at first but something about Seth's demeanor has him awake soon enough and two minutes later they've confirmed her identity. When he leaves Will's, he begins an earnest search for her in every fleabag hotel he can find. He finally finds the place she was staying in, but she'd checked out that morning. He tells himself she's gone and goes back to his studio to set it up for the next sitting as though Dru was in agreement. It takes a while to convince her, but finally he gets her onto the bed amongst the rose petals, promising her if she is still uncomfortable in an hour, he'll let her off the hook. He painted until she had to move, stiff from holding the pose so long, having long past the hour promised. She gets up and looks at what he's done, marveling again at how he interprets what he sees when he looks at her. Something comes over her, and suddenly they are coiled with need, and get into the bed with the rose petals. After making love, he asks her to pose for just another hour, and with a little instruction toward emotion, he paints until he is done. Then they finally admit out loud that they love each other.

Chapters Thirteen and Fourteen Analysis

Dru looked forward to having her own boat, and putting in the time and energy required to have her. The boat was her personal reward for having managed to put together her business successfully. She wonders where she and Seth are headed, wishing she had a woman to tell that she was falling in love. The door opens and she puts herself in work



mode, turning to greet her new customer. The woman looks out of place in her shop, strikingly so, and Dru chastises herself for being a snob. The woman claims to know Dru's mother and babbles along, but the more she talks, the more Dru realizes that her initial instincts were right on target. Will comes in, interrupting the woman who leaves soon afterward. Will wants flowers that will outdo what Seth had picked up for Aubrey. Dru takes him into the back while she puts them together, and they talk about Seth and his brother's upcoming wedding. Will asks her if the woman in the shop when he came in had been bothering her, and Dru tells him about the lie she'd been spinning about knowing her mother. After Will leaves, Dru calls her mother to confirm her suspicions. The conversation is predictable - her mother asking her if she'll come home for the weekend, or join them in the Hamptons. Dru feels irritated and frustrated by the time she gets off the phone with her. Shortly before closing, Katherine walks into her shop. Seth rescues her mid argument, and with relief, she introduces them and then sends her mother on her way. She goes back in to Seth and apologizes for using him to get out of an uncomfortable situation, telling him about the rest of her day as well, and when he hears about Gloria, he becomes agitated. Dru doesn't understand why but agrees to call him immediately if she ever returns.

Seth lays awake most of the night, despite the comfort of Dru in his arms. He goes to Will's the next morning, waking him despite Dan's protests, and they soon confirm her identity. Dan understands right away that Gloria is here for her slice of Seth's life and Seth reluctantly admits he's been paying her for years. When he leaves them, he searches for her in earnest. He realizes that when he finds her, he will have to play down his relationship with Dru in an effort to keep her safe. He finally finds the place, and learns she is already gone. Hoping that really is the case, he heads home to prepare for his sitting with Dru. As he paints her, a change happens between them, and she realizes that she is his, in every sense of the word. She loves him in a way that she has never loved anyone or anything before and by the time he is finished with the canvas, they are ready to admit it to each other.



Chapters Fifteen and Sixteen

Chapters Fifteen and Sixteen Summary

Anna goes through the house like a tornado, giving Seth a hard time for the single hours notice she'd been given that Dru was coming to dinner. She puts Seth to work and sends Cam up to shower and shave. Jake and Kevin are given instructions as well and when Seth needs Anna to explain why this dinner is important, he brings her to tears. When Dru shows up, she offers to help, but Anna suggests that she just enjoy her time with Seth. At the dinner table, the boys are themselves, and Dru admits she's always wanted brothers. The conversation is easy and comfortable, and watching it all, Cam knows that Seth is done for. Later, Seth follows her home, warning her that Grace and Sybill will expect her to attend their homes also. Panicking suddenly, Dru realizes she will have to reciprocate. She warns him that her family won't be so accepting simply because she loves him. Days and then weeks pass without sign or word from Gloria, and Seth begins to feel safe. Dru had agreed to bring Seth to one of her parent's Washington galas and as he is getting ready to go, Seth admits to Cam that he wants to marry her. He is smiling when he leaves the house, but that changes to panic when he sees the note on the seat of his car telling him to be at Miller's Bar in St. Michael's the following night at ten.

He orders himself to relax and she promises that they'll only stay for a couple of hours. She apologizes for having succumbed to the pressure from her parents that led to them attending this party, and Seth tries to ease her mind, while trying not to think of his own mother. Seth is extremely good at wrangling in financial circles, impressing Dru with how smooth he is. She takes him over to meet her grandfather, the Senator. He is well informed and pegs Seth with question after question which once again, he fields smoothly. Meeting Jonah and his new girlfriend Angela is an experience where Seth's tact slips slightly and Dru asks for a moment alone on the terrace. Before he can find somewhere to hide, Katherine is on him. Angela follows Dru outside and apologizes to her. By the time they finally get back to Dru's, Seth is wrung out. She asks him to stay and he steps inside, telling her he needs her. He takes her hard and fast, and she lets him. Then he carries her upstairs, fulfilling a long time fantasy of hers. He tells her about Stella, and his recent conversations with her, and later he talks to Stella once again. They talk about Gloria and she tells him it is time for him to pitch her aside. Seth doesn't believe she'll go away and stay away, but Stella reminds him that, just like his grandfather, he is a stubborn man who likes to handle things on his own.

Chapters Fifteen and Sixteen Analysis

Seth can't understand why having invited Dru over for dinner is such a big deal. When Anna insists that though he's brought home girls before, he's never brought home a woman he is in love with, Seth is amazed that she already knows. She tells him it is easy to see because she loves him and wants him to be happy. They have dinner and



when Seth takes her home, she tries to explain that his family is very different from hers. Where his family welcomed her simply because he asked them to, in her family, acceptance won't be so easy. In fact, it is likely that he will be questioned, analyzed, studied and investigated discretely. The only concern Seth has is what will happen if they don't for some reason approve of him, and she assures him that she makes up her own heart and mind. He knew how the seven deadly sins could ruin lives. No word from Gloria lulls him into a false sense of security, and that bubble pops on the night that Dru and Seth are going to a Washington gala to meet her side of the family. As Seth gets into his car to pick up Dru, he sees her note on the seat telling him to meet her the following evening.

It's hard for Seth to unwind and settle the knot in his stomach when he picks Dru up, knowing she is already tense enough about the evening. He does his best to be charming, intelligent, well-spoken, and educated, and pulls it off without a hitch until he is introduced to Jonah and Angela. Then, he takes it upon himself to tell him the truth before they walk away. Dru steps outside for some air and while Katherine corners Seth inside, Angela corners Dru outside. She tries to apologize, wanting to clear the air between them before she and Jonah get married. By the time they get back to Dru's that evening, Seth has had enough. She asks him to stay, and is surprised to see yet another side of Seth. This side of him is filled with needs that are selfish, hands that are demanding, and a body that is insistent and single minded. She meets his every level, surprising even herself when he tears her dress off and takes her right there on the floor. Afterward, he carries her upstairs. She asks him to tell her something about himself that she doesn't know, and on impulse, he tells her about his recent conversations with Stella, admitting that he isn't entirely sure that they are dreams. She clarifies that he feels that way now, not while asleep, and the idea is intriguing. Stella comes to him again that night, chastising him for allowing her to make a victim out of him. He swears he won't drag Dru into it, but Stella insists that she isn't looking for a martyr. Then, telling him he is as stubborn as his grandfather, she abruptly leaves.



Chapter Seventeen

Chapter Seventeen Summary

The bar Gloria has chosen is a dive, suiting her personality. He orders a beer in the bottle to be safe. When Gloria comes in, she flirts suggestively with some of the losers in the bar as she makes her way to where Seth is sitting. She orders a G and T and lights a cigarette. Seth gives her five minutes, asking her what she wants. Lately, she tells him, a place on the beach in Daytona perhaps. She talks about the Quinn family with disgust and disdain, and then applauds him for landing the rich Drusilla Whitcomb Banks. She wants a million dollars. She promises to make his life even more miserable otherwise, painting a picture for him of the kind of story she'd tell if she had to. She wants ten thousand dollars as a good faith gesture the following evening. Seth leaves her sitting there, and heads back to the studio to drink himself into oblivion. He had already made up his mind what he was going to do, and now he just had to find a way to live with it. The phone rings and he ignores it again. Dru is getting worried. She tries to reach Seth after Aubrey calls looking for him, but without success. Finally, she drives into town and when she bursts into his studio, her relief is beyond description. This soon turns to anger as she realizes he is drinking, and asks him why he is needlessly worrying his family. He lies to her, hurting her on purpose but beyond being able to stop. She turns to go, but he can't let her leave. He simply can't bear to be without her. Without embellishing, he tells her everything from the abuse to the interference by Gloria's johns. When she's heard it all, she can see the solution as clear as day, and suggests they call Anna first. Seth is reluctant, but not for long, especially after Dru insists that she isn't looking for a self-sacrificing white knight. It sounded so similar to a martyr that he had to smile and holds out his hand for the phone.

Chapter Seventeen Analysis

The bar is a dive and Seth orders a beer in a bottle, nursing it slowly as he waits. The place reminds him of the scores of places that she dragged him to when he was a child. She'd pick up a john to gain cash for drugs and alcohol, and on good nights, there would be food. On bad nights, he learned to hide to avoid the beatings or other unwelcome attention from the men she brings home. This time, Gloria surpasses herself. She tells Seth she want a million dollars, with ten thousand up front, or she will go to the press and sing a tale that will have the world tearing up. She continues to prattle on, and Seth grabs her hard by the wrist, and warns her that if she goes near Dru or his family, she'll get much worse than being knocked on her ass the way Sybill had done years previously. She tells him that with one lump payment, she'll disappear from his life forever.

He knows that the only way to keep Dru safe is to stay away from her, so he hardens his heart and does what he can to insult and offend her. Angry and disappointed, she tells him she loves him, but that she'll deal with it and turns to leave. He realizes he is



losing her and begs her to stay, apologizing over and over again. She begs him to tell her what is wrong and he finally does, beginning with the fact that everything he said to her since she walked in was a lie. He tells her the whole truth, and listening to it breaks her heart. She can hardly think about the pain he has suffered in life. One thing is certain. She has no intention of allowing it to continue, and she knows that the rest of the Quinn family will feel the same way.



Chapters Eighteen and Nineteen

Chapters Eighteen and Nineteen Summary

The family assembles, alarmed but quiet, waiting for Seth to tell them what's going on. He tells them he met with Gloria, and apologizes for not telling them sooner. He admits it isn't the first time, and furious, Cam insists that it will be the last. When Cam learns she's been coming around since Seth was fourteen, he is filled with the kind of rage Dru has never seen before. Ethan is outwardly calm, but his eyes tell another story. It gets worse when Seth admits he's been paying her all along. Anna asks him if that's why he went to Europe and he admits it was part of the reason. He describes how she threatened to involve Dru's family with claims of a sex scandal and Dru sits back to listen as ideas take shape, contributing where she can and becoming more a part of the family with each moment. They eat and then everyone sleeps briefly. Dru goes to work in the morning and Cam takes Seth for a walk. He tells him the truth about life - his and theirs, and how the slate is equal as he gave them as much as they gave him. Then Cam pushes him in the lake, and feels better. That evening, the men decide to deal with Gloria themselves, but the women follow, refusing to be left at home. Confronted, Gloria is furious, and with no cards left to play, she promises to make them all pay and storms out after she learns she isn't getting another nickel.

The annual fourth of July picnic at the Quinn's is loaded with people as usual. It is an Independence Day he will never forget. Stella, sitting beside him, tells him they've been doing this since before he was born. He sketches, listening to her, and realizes suddenly that she won't be back. She tells him she loves him, and ask him to make a good life for himself and his girl. Dru comes over and sits down, and he tells her he loves her. She looks at his sketch and asks him who posed for him, but Seth tells her she's already left. While they are waiting for the fireworks to start, Gloria looks for revenge. Taking gasoline from her trunk, she splashes it around the building. She throws two Molotov cocktails - one going in a window, and leaves as the blaze catches. Seth hears raised voices and Cam races towards them telling them the boat yard is on fire. Two kids saw her leave, and when the fire is out, they get the news that Gloria was picked up in a bar five miles out of town. They assess the damage, and do what they can. Seth sleeps and then takes the porch swing he bought Dru over to her place. He sets it up and asks her if she is going to marry him and have his children. A single tear spills when he gives her the ring that was his grandmothers. Their future starts now, he tells her.

Chapters Eighteen and Nineteen Analysis

The Quinn family assembles in the kitchen like always, and sit quietly until Seth begins to talk. He tells them that she's seen Gloria. Cam is immediately hostile and when Seth admits it has been happening for years, Cam is not the only one who is angry. None of them can understand why he didn't tell anyone. He tries to explain but the men aren't



listening. They ask questions, and Seth tells them all he can, feeling the weight as it comes off his shoulders, shared with the family he loves. They quickly settle in to deciding how to handle her, with everyone contributing suggestions including Dru. Seth takes her face in his hands and tells her he loves her in front of his family. They eat breakfast and sleep for a short time before Dru gets up and goes to work. Cam takes Seth for a walk and tells him that he isn't really mad anymore. He does want to clear up the sense Seth has that the whole family sacrificed to make his life work. He tells him that the street runs both ways. If it hadn't been for Seth, wives wouldn't have been met and married, children wouldn't have been had, and so much more. Then Cam puts him in the lake, feeling much better after. That night, leaving the women behind, the men go to confront Gloria. Seth sits by himself at the bar, and when she comes in, he begins talking. He talks about their past, and Gloria's incessant extortion, and she fully admits that she has and always will expect to gain from this relationship. Then Seth informs her that he has been recording her, and she is not going to get a single cent from him again. She begins to rage, and tries to incite a fight between Seth and some of the patrons in the bar, but when his brothers enter to even the odds, the fight ends before it starts and Gloria loses her composure. Then the women arrive and Gloria is all but sputtering in rage. She storms out promising to make them pay.

Seth and Dru are part of the large fourth of July gathering. He sits off to one side, sketching quietly when he realizes that Stella is sitting beside him. He tells her he thought he'd chased her off, and she laughs. She looks around at her extended family, marveling at how they've grown, and aged. She tells Seth that he should forget the past and look to a future with his beautiful girlfriend. Seth asks her if she's leaving, and she admits she is, telling him she loves him. Dru walks over and sits beside him, amazed by the sketch in his hands. Seth tells her the model is already gone, and then picks her up for a traditional Quinn family dunking. Anna helps her to dry off, and while they wait for the firework show, Gloria is exacting her revenge. Drunk and irrational, she soaks the outside of the boatyard building in gasoline. Then she lights and throws a Molotov cocktail in through the window. By the time the fire is noticed by two passing kids shortly after. They call it in and the Quinn family races to try to save as much as they can. The main floor is mostly done in as are the sketches that were the company's pride and joy. Seth vows to redo them, and exhausted, heads home to sleep. That evening, Seth takes the porch swing he purchased over to Dru's and sets it up. He tells her they arrested Gloria, and the insurance company will cover the losses. He comments that when she gets out, she will undoubtedly be back and that it is a lot for someone else to take on, even though he can accept it. She counters with a familial drama of her own, claiming it's a lot for someone to take on as well. They sit on the swing and he asks Dru if she is going to marry him and she admits that it is her intention. Children are as well, and he asks her to grow old with him there in the house by the water. A tear spills as he brings out the ring that was his grandmother's. Overwhelmed, she lays her head on his shoulder. The future starts now.



Characters

Seth Quinn

Seth came to the Maryland Coast for the first time when he was ten. Ray had asked him if he wanted to go with him, and feeling as though he'd finally gotten lucky, he agrees. As they get close to home, they stop for food and Seth works up the courage to ask why Ray is taking him home. Ray says simply because he needs a place, and Seth doesn't believe him. He says it's something he and his wife Stella did, but she died some time ago. Still waiting for the catch, he asks what he's going to have to do when they arrive, but Ray just says live. He laughs.

Seth grew from a lanky and gawky boy into a tall young man at six feet one inch tall, with a wiry build. He has hair that is the color of bronzed brown, darkened from the sandy-colored hair of his childhood, and now tied back in a small pony tail. The first ten years of Seth's life were brutal. He lived them in fear, suffering neglect and abuse that no ten-year-old boy should ever see. The mother that was so abusive to him as a child, now is trying her influence over him again to extort money in exchange for her distance. It is a fair deal as far as Seth is concerned. All he wants is for her to go far, far away. He never told the Quinn brothers or anyone else that Gloria had come to St. Chris - the first time was when he was fourteen. She had only gotten a few hundred the first time, but then she'd come back - again and again until he finally ran to Europe.

Having recently been featured in a piece in the Smithsonian magazine who refer to him as 'the young American artist who's seducing Europe', Seth becomes the object of his mother's extortion again. Seth studied in Paris, Florence, painted in Ireland and Scotland, and had even stood on the cliffs in Cornwall, but all he wants to do is go home. Since his mother followed him to Europe, it seems senseless for him to avoid home any longer, so he returns.

Seth is a sensitive man who takes life and family seriously. He stands up for his friends and those that he loves, ready to take on the world on their behalf.

Dru (Drusilla) Whitcomb Banks

Dru is the new proprietor of the flower shop called the 'Bud and Bloom'. Dru has hair that is true black that she wears cuts short to frame her face. She is tall and slim, with a small nose and eyes the shape of almonds and the color of green moss with an amber nimbus around the pupil. She has a wide, full mouth tinted a deep rose and her chin has a slight cleft.

Dru is from D.C. She came to St. Christopher's a year earlier, checking out retail space. Part of a fortune 500 company, her family is synonymous with money and Whitcomb Technologies is not Dru's only claim to familial fame. Her father is Senator James P Whitcomb - one of those Whitcombs. The Senator's daughter married Proctor Banks of



Banks and Shelby Communications, making them even richer combined. Dru had come to St. Christopher's to find a suitable building. She bought the building on Market Street when it came up, and then bought herself a house on Oyster Inlet.

Dru leaves a failed relationship behind in Washington, looking for a fresh start after discovering that her fiancé was sleeping with someone else. After a much publicized break up, Dru needs a fresh start. She needs to be somewhere that she isn't on display all the time, and can live her own life away from the constant influence of her wealthy family. St. Christopher is a breath of fresh air. She tries hard not to, but despite her best efforts, she falls in love with the artist who is so obviously in love with her.

Cameron Quinn

Tall, and built like a sprinter, Cam's hair is beginning to turn silver in places. Fifty years of age, he can still come across looking like a tough guy. He has eyes that are a smoky gray and though actually Seth's brother, he has been more like a father to Seth for many years. Cameron took Seth in when his father died, having promised to look after him. He does his best, and when he marries, his wife takes over, becoming the mother Seth never had. Cameron is a steadfast and loyal man with a talent for boat building. He is as honest as the day is long, and takes great pride in his family, and his children, willing to do anything for them.

When Seth returns home from Europe, he is welcomed with open arms. His moodiness does not go unnoticed, and Anna asks Cam to dig into it, which he does but unsuccessfully. Seth finally comes clean about the fact that his mother has been extorting money from him for many years. Now, push comes to shove, and Cam and the rest of the Quinn family band together to put an end to Gloria's reign of terror.

Anna Spinelli Quinn

Cam's wife, Anna is actually Seth's sister, but he had always considered her more as a mother. She has dark hair that is a curling mass and deep brown eyes. Anna is beautiful. She is intelligent and sexy, and has a heart with depth that is beyond description. Anna is a perfect match for Cameron. She is strong at heart, and has a depth of spirit that Seth has come to deeply love and appreciate. Seth loves her without reservation.

Anna is a great cook who is able to handle any crowd and any situation. She takes care to extend a warm welcome to the woman that Seth becomes involved with, putting his happiness above all. It is part of the overall acceptance of the Quinn family for the choices that the others make.



Ethan Quinn

Ethan is a waterman, and handy with almost anything. His wife's name is Grace. Ethan and Grace have two daughters and one son. Their daughter Emily belongs to the American Ballet Company and is going to New York to pursue her dancing career at the end of August. Their daughter Aubrey works at the boat yard with the Quinn brothers all and is as good as any of them. Their son Deke is a quiet and intelligent young man who is happiest when he is sailing.

Ethan is a man who has himself under control. Though he may become angry, his eyes are the only indication that anything is wrong. Instead, he is calmly logical, and works his way to the best solution possible.

Grace Quinn

Grace is old-fashioned and warm. She has a simple way about her that is sweet, but without being too full of syrup. She has a tough spine, strong and reliable. Married to Ethan, they have two daughters - Emily and Aubrey, and one son, Deke.

Grace is the first woman that Seth both loved and trusted.

Phillip Quinn

Boat business's promotions and marketing guru, Phil left a lucrative job with an ad firm in Baltimore fourteen years earlier to come home and work in the family business. He has eyes that match his hair of tawny gold.

Phillip likes architecture that has classic clean lines whether that applies to the boats that he helps build or the large Victorian house that he and his wife Sybill bought and recently furnished. Sybill is a writer working on a book that examines the "evolution of community in cyberspace". Together, they have one son and one daughter. Their daughter, Fiona, is fourteen and her biggest concerns center on shopping and boys. Bram, their son, is madly in love with someone named Chloe - this week.

Sybill Quinn

Wife to Phillip, Sybill is an intellectual. She is chic and sophisticated while still managing to be practical, and has a soft and emotional center. Simple and elegant, she is a trained sociologist as well as being a successful author. Sybill grew up in the same house as Seth's mother, Gloria, and the serenity she has now was hard fought for.



Aubrey Quinn

Aubrey is tough and loyal. She is still young and full of fun, with fresh ideas and a quick mind. Aubrey has hair the color of burnt honey and green eyes. Aubrey is the first person in the world that Seth ever loved unconditionally. Their relationship is one of trust and friendship. They are closer than brother and sister and would step up to protect each other.

Will McLean

One of Seth's boyhood friends, Will is now seeing his little sister Aubrey socially, and working as an intern at St. Christopher General.

Stella Quinn

Stella has a head of red curls, streaked with silver and dark green eyes. Though dead more than twenty years, Seth has seen many photos of her over the years.

Kevin Quinn

Cam and Anna's son, Kevin has only recently gotten his driver's license. Kevin has dark curly hair like his mother, and large Italian eyes that the girls would be crazy about. Kevin is playing Tony in West Side Story - a Jet who is killed in the play. He is sixteen years old and his major interest now is girls.

Jake Quinn

Cam and Anna's son, Jake plays softball and likes video games. He is competitive and cheeky, confident in his demeanor.

Ray Quinn

Ray talked to kids - not at them, but to them. He listened to them as well. He has a head of white hair and a face that is wrinkled and wide. He has extremely blue eyes which is a family trait. He has a voice that is large but a demeanor that keeps it soft and calm. His wife Stella predeceased him before he took on Seth Quinn as the latest in the series of boys rescued by the Quinn family. Ray is a big man with

Watermen

Name given to the men who harvest blue crab in Chesapeake Bay, Maryland.



Witless

Cam and Anna's dog,

Foolish

Seth's dog when he was a boy, Foolish often slept in his bed with him.

Gloria DeLauter

Before Ray met Stella, he had a brief affair with a woman named Barbara Harrow. Unknown to Ray at the time, Gloria was a product of that affair. Years later she tracks Ray down, using blackmail and extortion to obtain money from him. Later, she essentially sells her son to Ray, but sadly Ray dies before he can tell his grandson or his adopted sons about the connection. Gloria isn't yet fifty, but her lifestyle had aged her. She was one step beyond thin, to the point where bones are pressing against her throat, and her hip bones stick out like blades in the tight pants she favors. She has hair that is beached blond to almost white in color and wears it cut short and spiked. The style only further reveals how thin she has become. Her face is etched deep with lines around her eyes and mouth and her application of makeup didn't help.

Gloria was raised in an upper class family with all of the advantages and benefits that come along with it. Unfortunately, she consistently sought the lowest common denominator in her life. Her entire existence revolved around her own self indulgences.

Nigel

Chesapeake Bay retriever that belongs to Grace and Ethan and their children.

Katherine Whitcomb Banks

Katherine Whitcomb Banks is Dru's mother. She is part of the wealthy elite, and enjoys a life of pampered excellence. She is in an on again off again relationship with her husband, using their distance as leverage on Dru to garner her sympathy. They are convind

Jonah Stuben

Formerly Dru's fiance, Jonah is the person who undermines her confidence to such a degree that she has difficulty even becoming intimate with someone else. When he dares to continue to undermine her business efforts, Seth loses some of his diplomatic aplomb and gives him a small dish of reality on Dru's behalf. He later tells Dru that it is



Cam's influence that had him talking to Jonah in that manner and Phil's influence that stopped him short of hitting Jonah.

Angela Downey

Jonah's new girlfriend, and the person that he was sleeping the while planning to marry Dru. She approaches Dru at a gala the her mother talks her into bringing Seth to, and apologizes to her for the sequence of events and how they played out. She also mentions that Jonah has never looked at her the way Seth looks at Dru.

Dan McLean

Will's brother and part of the threesome friendship since school days.



Objects/Places

St. Christopher

This is the town that the Quinn family lives in on the Eastern Maryland Coast. The town is a tourist town, swelling in population over the summer months and dropping again to locals when the weather turns.

Quinn Brothers Boat Building

This is the business run by the brothers Quinn.

Bud and Bloom

This is the new flower shop that has opened up in St. Christopher, run entirely by Drusilla Whitcomb Banks. It has festive pots hanging on either side of the door, and the window contains plants and what nots.

Jaguar Convertible

Saber silver in color, this is the car Seth buys for himself after returning the rental to Baltimore.

Shiney's Pub

Another homecoming for Seth is Shiney's Pub. With live music that could be considered the worst in Maryland, and leggy waitresses, Shiney's Pub forever appeared to need a good hosing down and out.

Blue Crab

This is the name of the baseball team that Aubrey plays on.

Bread Bowl

This is the name that Cam, Ethan and Phil called the game of touch football they had with Stella's inedible zucchini bread.



Washington D.C.

This is where Dru's family is and where they would like her to return to.

Earring

This is the item Dru felt digging in her back as she is in bed with her fiancé, Jonah, who admits to sleeping with someone else when confronted.

Beauty Sleeps

This is the name that Stella suggests and Seth adopts for the watercolor he does of Dru in the picnic setting.

Baseball

This is the game played by Aubrey when Seth tracks her down to establish what their relationship is after Dru plants some ridiculous notions in his head.

Fourth of July

This is the annual family gathering for the Quinn's that is a huge come-one and come-all event.

Miller's Bar, St. Michaels

This is where Gloria insists Seth meet her after leaving a note that simply says, "We'll talk."

Classic

This is the style of tux that Phillip helps Seth select for the first Washington gala event that Dru invites him to.

Mortal Kombat

This is the game that Jake plays with Seth. Cam promises to defeat Jake playing this game later.



Themes

Love Conquers All

In *Chesapeake Blue*, Nora Roberts embodies this theme several times. It begins when Seth comes home after an extended stay in Europe. Love brings him home to the only family he has ever known and they accept his return with welcoming and open arms. Their love for him is enough to conquer the insecurities that creep in when he least expects it, and the steady and unfailing strength of that love for him and from him to them is enough to keep most demons at bay.

When Seth meets Dru for the first time, he is aware of something in her that he can't quite put a finger on, but knows that he wants and needs to spend time with her. What starts as simple attraction blossoms into a love that has such strength that neither one of them is willing to acknowledge it at first. When even Seth's family can see that Dru means more than just companionship to Seth, they make extra effort to get to know her and to accept her into their lives.

Stella conquers the boundary between life and death to come to Seth when he is in pain, and to give him advice where both Gloria and Dru are concerned. Her advice is steadfast - to talk to family and let them help.

Gloria has no idea what love is. She is a selfish woman who abused drugs and alcohol for as long as Seth can remember. She used, abused and neglected Seth for the first ten years of his life, giving him little more than a passing thought as she drank and drugged herself into oblivion. It is Seth's love for his family that keeps him from telling them that he's been paying her off for years to keep her from ruining the only thing in his life that he cares about.

In every aspect of this story, from Gloria's interference to Seth's love for Dru to Dru's insecurities with Seth are all affected by love and are set free in love's embrace. Love truly conquers all.

Family Values

In this story, Gloria DeLauter (aka Gloria Harrow) has no idea what family values are. She uses her son when she can and ignores him when she can't. Finally, having used him as a lure for men who like little boys, or neglected him when his presence was an inconvenience. Finally, in a final act of heartlessness, she sells him to his grandfather, Ray Quinn. Ray is a kind-hearted man who's heart goes out to ten-year-old Seth. He pays his daughter to take Seth off her hands and takes him home to Chesapeake Bay. There, he tells Seth that all that is expected of him is that he live his life. Other than a few chores, and school, which he is expected to attend, his time will largely be his own. Ray promises to teach him how to sail, and how to be part of a family. When Ray dies in a car accident just a short time later, he asks his three adopted sons to look after Seth,



and having been raised by Ray, with a strong sense of family and a lot of love, they never question the request. Instead, they rearrange their lives to make him a part of them, later including him with their wives and children until he is as much a part of their lives as they are to each other. All of this occurs before they learn that Seth and Ray have a blood connection. It is these family values, instilled in Ray's three adopted sons, and then into Seth that enable him to pursue the gifts he has, and learn to love and respect the family he has become a part of.

Money Isn't Everything

When Ray first gives Gloria money to take Seth away from her, he shares an important lesson with Seth that follows him through his life. Money isn't everything. He takes Seth home and shows him a life unlike anything he's ever known and gives him a taste of what love is for the first time in his young life. As time goes by, and Gloria returns again and again to milk the cow, Ray simply continues to pay her, recognizing it as the easiest way to keep her away from Seth. When Ray dies, Gloria approaches his sons, trying to continue the cash cow that she's become dependent on, Stella steps up and makes no mistake when she sends Gloria on her way, telling her never to return. That lasts until Seth is fourteen years of age. Then she recognizes his attachment to the Quinn family, and begins to milk him directly. First it is only small amounts, but as Seth's reputation as an artist grows, so do her demands. Seth, recognizing what his grandfather did years earlier, pays her to keep her from interfering with his family, or ruining what he has. Seth knows that money isn't everything. In fact, compared to the love of his family, money is nothing. He happily pays her so that she keeps her distance.



Style

Point of View

Chesapeake Blue by Nora Roberts is written entirely in the first-person perspective, alternating between the two main characters - Seth Quinn and Drusilla Whitcomb Banks. While Seth and his life are the main focus throughout the story, Drusilla quickly gains ground as she becomes the love interest entangled in Seth's life. Both characters are dealing with familial stresses and pressures - Seth with his mother who has spent years blackmailing him for money to leave him and his family alone; and Dru with her parents who believe that she should move back to Washington, D.C., and involve herself in the financial and social circles in which they travel. Neither Seth nor Dru are willing to capitulate. Seth's mother Gloria uses her presence as a way to supplement her income, knowing that Seth's efforts as an artist are paying off financially. He is willing to give her almost anything in order to keep her away from those that he loves, and has been paying her since he was just fourteen years old. Dru's parents use emotional blackmail to maintain a hold over her, regularly telling her they are getting a divorce to elicit her emotional support, and teaming up to blackmail her into spending more time with them.

Setting

Chesapeake Blue is set almost entirely in Chesapeake Bay where the Quinn family has made their home. Chesapeake Bay is where Seth Quinn learns about family and about the security and love that family can bring. Taken from his mother by his grandfather, Seth is suspicious and leery at first, but his grandfather, Ray Quinn soon has him settling in, and learning to become part of a family unit. Before the transformation is complete, Ray is killed in a car accident but asks his three adopted sons to take over in his stead before he dies. They take Seth into their homes and lives, and he flourishes. The brothers open a boat building business which quickly gains a reputation as one of the best in the country, and Seth earns his keep there as well. Seth returns to Chesapeake Bay, having left to escape Gloria's constant demands for money and threats to interfere with his family. When she tracks him down in Europe as well, he knows he may as well go home. He doesn't have much time there before she tracks him down once again, and this time she is going for all of the marbles. She wants enough to set her up for life.

Seth spends a great deal of time going back and forth between his studio space above the flower shop that Dru owns, and Anna and Cam's house where he lives for now. He takes one trip to Washington with Dru to meet her parents at a social gala. Gloria flits in and out of his life until his family stands with him, and they say goodbye to her once and for all.



Language and Meaning

Chesapeake Blue is written in straightforward English with little variations or embellishments. There is a certain emphasis put on painting in a variety of mediums, and Nora Roberts manages to convey not only the different mediums used from charcoal to watercolor to oil based paints, but also Seth's use of light, shadow, emotion and focal points used by the artist to create paintings that leap from the surface of the canvas, provoking emotional and aesthetic responses from those who see them. There is also a certain amount of space given to Dru's flower shop and her use of different flowers combined to create masterpieces in her own right. The artist in Seth sees and appreciates Dru's use of color, texture, and smell to encourage emotional responses. Lastly, but not without merit is the way Nora Roberts brings the boat building business into the mix. She deftly takes the reader lightly through different kinds of boats and their accessories and usages, leaving the reader with the impression that all who exist between the pages of this story are artists in their own right in one fashion or another. A story that is spilling over with creativity combined with greed and selfishness that is overcome by familial strength and unity.

Structure

Chesapeake Blue by Nora Roberts is three hundred and sixty eight pages in length divided into nineteen chapters labeled simply one through nineteen. Each chapter is between eleven and twenty two pages in length, with most around twelve or thirteen pages. Chapter one deals with Seth's homecoming after a long time away. It reveals the strength of the love they feel for him, and he feels for them, and their ready acceptance of him. Chapter two introduces the love interest for the main character Seth, Dru, who owns and operates the Buds and Blooms flower shop. Chapter three gives a bit of background into Seth's life and how he came to be with the Quinn family in Chesapeake Bay. Chapter four has Seth renting the space above Dru's shop to use as a studio and five brings his mother, Gloria, and her affect on him into focus. Chapter six gives the reader an introduction to Stella - Seth's grandmother, who passed away before her husband brought Seth home, and reveals the depth of Anna's concern for Seth, knowing something is bothering him and enlisting her husband Cam to find out what it is. Chapter seven has Cam and Seth out for a sail while Cam probes in an effort to get information for Anna. Chapters eight and nine have Dru posing for Seth officially for the first time. He brings a picnic setup. She accuses him of having unresolved feelings for his sister Aubrey. He tracks Aubrey down and they experiment to rule the possibility out. Chapter ten has Aubrey confronting Dru for upsetting 'her Seth', and they begin a friendship. Seth hides out in his studio after meeting with Gloria and giving her ten thousand dollars to go away. He paints until he can excise Gloria from his mind. In chapter eleven, Dru apologizes for her mistake with Aubrey, and finally begins to give herself over to Seth. In chapter twelve, she sleeps with him for the first time, and tries to overcome a lack of confidence instilled on her by her last boyfriend. Chapter twelve has Seth returning to the family fold for the first time in days, and being met with angry responses from those he has neglected of late. Gloria goes into to flower shop to check



Dru out. Stella continues to nudge Seth into the direction of family, suggesting he enlist them to put an end to Gloria's demands. The last few chapters reveal the strength of family, and Dru's acceptance into it, as well as Gloria's official removal from it.



Quotes

"Quinn's always come back to the roost" (Chapter 1, p. 19).

"The masterpiece should appear as the flower to the painter - perfect in its bud as in its bloom" (Chapter 2, p. 31).

"You got me a girl present" (Chapter 3, p. 45).

"Our boy's going to be spending a hell of a lot of money on flowers for the next little while" (Chapter 4, p. 82).

"I bet Phil Seth here could talk yo into posing before the week was up" (Chapter 5, p. 98).

"We figured Foolish would cheer you up" (Chapter 6, p. 108).

"Dying's damned inconvenient, let me tell you" (Chapter 6, p. 109).

"So are you going to tell me what's keeping you up at night, or do I have to pry that out of you, too" (Chapter 7, p. 131).

"And if you've got some insane notion that me being with you is somehow cheating on Aubrey, you can forget it" (Chapter 8, p. 147).

"Being true to what you have and what you are, that's what makes the difference" (Chapter 9, p. 158).

"Then I suppose there's no point in us having a big experiment of our own" (Chapter 10, p. 189).

"Take two aspirin and go far, far away" (Chapter 14, p. 250).

"Stubborn to the point of stupid" (Chapter 16, p. 303).

"Understand this: You go near my family or Dru, you go around anyone who matters to me, and you'll find out exactly what I'm capable of" (Chapter 17, p. 430).

"Somebody really smart told me you've got to look ahead" (Chapter 19, p. 500).



Topics for Discussion

Why does Seth Quinn originally go to Europe? Where in Europe does he go? What kind of a reception does he get there? What nickname does he earn before he returns? What makes him decide it is time to return to Chesapeake Bay?

What kind of an artist is Seth? With what medium does he appear to be most comfortable? What kinds of subjects is he most interested in painting? How many different mediums does he use in this story, and what are they?

How many times does Seth convince Dru to pose for him? How does he set each canvas up? How does he display his subject matter in each case? How does he manage to put her in the right frame of mind to pose? What does he do when she is not really in the mood to pose and he senses he won't get her there?

Who is the biggest problem in Seth's life? Why is this person such a problem? What does this person want from Seth? How long has this been going on in his life? Who was similarly affected before Seth himself was approached and how? Who put an end to it once? What does it take to accomplish that again?

What is the most difficult part of Dru's relationship with her parents? What kind of leverage do they use on her with seeming regularity until Dru finally seems emotionally immune to it? What do they resort to next? How successful is this approach and why?

What is the single largest issue that Dru has with becoming involved with Seth? When does she reveal this to him? What does he do about it? What is the outcome? Who tells Dru that this actually happened and why?

Who is the biggest influence in Seth's life as a young man? Why? What does Seth learn from this person? How do these influences continue even when he is no longer around?

Who does Seth finally get to meet, despite the fact that this person is no longer around? What story does Cam ask her to relate to Seth when he learns that Seth has spoken with her? How does Cam respond when Seth tells him her answer? Why?

How does Seth deal with the final request from his mother? What is that request? What good faith gesture does she want? What does she get instead?

How does the Quinn family respond when they learn of the issue that Seth has been facing alone? How does Seth feel after telling them? What do they decide to do? What does Dru contribute? How does Gloria take the news?

What is Gloria's final revenge? How does it affect the Quinn family? How will it affect her? Where do the police find her? How does Seth respond to her arrest?