

# **Dance of the Gods Study Guide**

## **Dance of the Gods by Nora Roberts**

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



# Contents

<a href="#">Dance of the Gods Study Guide.....</a>	<a href="#">1</a>
<a href="#">Contents.....</a>	<a href="#">2</a>
<a href="#">Plot Summary.....</a>	<a href="#">4</a>
<a href="#">Prologue.....</a>	<a href="#">6</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 1.....</a>	<a href="#">7</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 2.....</a>	<a href="#">9</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 3.....</a>	<a href="#">11</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 4.....</a>	<a href="#">13</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 5.....</a>	<a href="#">15</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 6.....</a>	<a href="#">17</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 7.....</a>	<a href="#">19</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 8.....</a>	<a href="#">21</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 9.....</a>	<a href="#">23</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 10.....</a>	<a href="#">25</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 11.....</a>	<a href="#">27</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 12.....</a>	<a href="#">29</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 13.....</a>	<a href="#">31</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 14.....</a>	<a href="#">32</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 15.....</a>	<a href="#">33</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 16.....</a>	<a href="#">35</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 17.....</a>	<a href="#">37</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 18.....</a>	<a href="#">39</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 19.....</a>	<a href="#">40</a>
<a href="#">Chapter 20.....</a>	<a href="#">42</a>
<a href="#">Characters.....</a>	<a href="#">44</a>



Objects/Places..... 49

Themes..... 53

Style..... 55

Quotes..... 58

Topics for Discussion..... 61



## Plot Summary

The Dance of the Gods by Nora Roberts is the second book in The Circle Trilogy that deals with the threat of a vampire war, led by Lilith, the self-proclaimed queen of the vampires, against all humanity. The book's main characters are a part of what is known as the Circle of Six, the six individuals who have been called together by the goddess Morrigan to learn how to battle the vampire threat that will destroy all the worlds. The Circle of Six is composed of a sorcerer named Hoyt from the 12th century, a modern day witch, Glenna, who are handfasted just before the story begins. The next character is Cian, who has been alive as a vampire since the 12th century, having been sired by Lilith. Cian is Hoyt's twin brother and has been called to join in the battle against his fellow vampires. From the land of Geall come the shapeshifter, Larkin, and Moira, the small, beautiful and studious scholar, who is to one day become Queen of Geall. The last member of the group is Blair, a descendant of Cian and Hoyt's youngest sister; Blair is a demon hunter from modern-day Chicago. The six have been called together to train and learn, in order to prevent the threat that will destroy the world.

The story is also a love story focused most closely on the lives of Larkin of Geall and Blair the demon hunter from Chicago. Both individuals are very strong, independent, opinionated, and as different from one another as they can possibly be. They are alternately fascinated and repelled with each other. Most of the drama is due to Blair's experience with her father, who rejected her when she was a young girl, only training her because it was expected of him, but taking no pride in her abilities and accomplishments. This causes Blair to have a horrible inferiority complex when it comes to valuing herself as a woman. Because of this, she keeps her real calling a secret from the man who wishes to marry her. On the advice of her aunt, Blair takes her fiancé with her one night to show him that there are demons in the world, and she takes care of the threat. Instead of being impressed and treasuring such a unique ability, her fiancé is repelled by her, not wishing even to have his ring back, a ring that has been on the hand of a monster. After two such traumatic events, Blair has accepted the fact that her role in life is to fight the demons of the world, but to never have a close relationship with another human being. She certainly has never experienced much family before.

Because of their close proximity, Blair comes to learn a great deal about humans and demons. She and Cian forge an uneasy truce because he is one of the demons she has dedicated her life to killing. He is also her many times removed great-uncle, whose much-loved little sister, Nola, is Blair's direct ancestor. Blair comes to admire Cian's abilities and knowledge and is interested in his motivation to fight against the vampires of the world, even though he shares their demon blood. Blair comes to enjoy female companionship with Glenna the witch and Moira, the future Queen of an imaginary fairy-tale country. Lastly, Blair finds companionship and love in the man called Larkin, a shapeshifter from the land of Geall. All the Circle of Six combine to create the family Blair has never had in her life, and her experience of it is poignant and tender.

From the time when they are all learning to work together, they find that they all have independent feelings and emotions. They all have unique talents and past experiences



and working to put them all together into some sort of a cohesive plan is the setting for numerous dramas. What they all find, however, is that when one of the six is in danger or injured, all the rest of the circle gather to protect, heal or remonstrate. Such a group is unique in that the bonds they have forged will stand the test of all sorts of challenges that they face once they reach the land of Geall.

Once they arrive in Geall, the people are skeptical and suspicious of the strangers. It takes a lot of trust and faith in order for the people to believe in the threat that endangers them and to learn to fight that threat in order to save their very world. Larkin and Blair are the most important characters in *The Dance of the Gods*; it is their relationship and subsequent romance that entrances the reader, giving the reader an emotional roller-coaster ride as Blair is ambushed and very badly injured before she really knows what sort of man Larkin is. His love and his acceptance and admiration for who she is and what she can do is the very healing remedy for all Blair's injuries.



# Prologue

## Prologue Summary

The Dance of the Gods by Nora Roberts is the second book in The Circle Trilogy that deals with the threat of a vampire war, led by Lilith the self-proclaimed Queen of the vampires against all of humanity. The book's main characters are banded together in what is known as the Circle of Six, the six individuals who have been called together by the goddess Morrigan to learn how to battle the vampire threat that will destroy all the worlds if left unresisted. The Circle of Six is comprised of a sorcerer named Hoyt from the 12th century, a modern-day witch, Glenna (Hoyt and Glenna are handfasted [engaged]) just before the story begins. The next character is Cian, who has been alive as a vampire since the 12th century, having been sired by Lilith. Cian is Hoyt's twin brother and has been called to join in the battle against the demons of his own kind. From the land of Geall come the shapeshifter, Larkin, and Moira, the small and beautiful, studious scholar who is to one day become Queen of Geall. The last member of the group is Blair, a descendant of Cian and Hoyt's youngest sister, a demon hunter from modern-day Chicago. The six have been called together to train and learn, in order to prevent the threat that will destroy the world as they all know it.

A story-teller continues a tale already started—of Hoyt, the sorcerer, who came from hundreds of years in the past and Glenna, the witch, who lives far beyond his time have come together, surpassing the bonds of time and uniting in love; they have exchanged hand-fasting vows despite their differences. Glenna and Hoyt are only two of the Circle of Six. The circle also includes the vampire, the scholar and the shifter of shapes from the world of Geall, who came through the portal called the Dance of the Gods to the land of Ireland. The last member of the Circle of Six is the warrior, demon hunter, Blair. The six members of the sacred circle have all been called together, tasked by Morrigan, who represents the Gods, to defeat Lilith, the Queen of the Vampires. The sorcerer and the witch were handfasted and that same night were victorious in a preliminary battle. They have all been given three months in which to prepare for a final confrontation in order to save the worlds, of which there are too numerous to count. The next morning, dawn breaks, quiet and gentle, rain having washed away the blood and ash left over from the battle. The morning birds sing and the branches glisten from the shower. It is for the simple, beautiful things of life that the six will fight Lilith.

## Prologue Analysis

The preface to the second book in a trilogy is a very effective way to bring a reader who is unacquainted with the first book into the story. Roberts makes use of an old man telling the tale of a battle that has obviously happened, but tells it in such a way to cause the reader to become acquainted with the character of the six chosen ones. A hint to the reader is that with the storyteller being able to tell the story, the outcome of the final battle was a good one.



# Chapter 1

## Chapter 1 Summary

The chapter opens from the point of view of Larkin, the shape-shifter reflecting on the successful victory of the battle the previous night. He is a man from the fantasy world of Geall, who has come through the portal of the Dance of the Gods to the land of Ireland. Larkin has no experience with modern-day foods and appliances and finds that he is very fond of Coke, cake with icing, and Blair, the demon warrior. Blair has a bloody red cross tattoo, which Larkin compares to the Queen of Geall as a marking of royalty. Larkin is fascinated with the woman from a world other than Geall. Blair is a fierce warrior, a demon hunter, and a woman who has been hurt very badly by men, beginning with her father, who was disappointed in her because she was a daughter blessed with the demon hunter gift rather than a son. Blair's father taught her what he was obligated to, then left on her eighteenth birthday, never to come back to her. Blair and Larkin are in the house that belongs to Cian, the vampire, which was originally Hoyt's and Cian's home in the twelfth century. Because he is a vampire, Cian has lived for centuries, and he and Hoyt are only reunited because Hoyt came from the past, through the Dance of the Gods, into the present. Blair is really not sure why Cian is fighting with them against his own kind, the vampires. She discovers that it is a very new experience actually talking to a vampire rather than simply killing it.

Blair is the expert of the six on how to fight vampires, and she is pleased to discover tiny Moira, future Queen of Geall, working weights. Moira knows that she is the weakest of the six and is working hard to overcome her physical limitations. Blair apologizes for putting Moira down; she is upset with herself because she knows personally what it feels like to be denigrated. She reminds Moira that no one else is a genius with the bow and arrow as Moira is, looking at her talents rather than her limitations. Being the morning after the battle, Blair finds herself alone in the kitchen and makes French toast for everyone. The battle the previous evening had interrupted Hoyt's and Glenna's wedding night; Cian does not arise at dawn; Moira is lifting weights, and Larkin is always somewhere in the vicinity of the kitchen if food is ready, but disappears if it is merely being prepared. He is, however, very interested in her MP3 player, marveling at the way sounds of music can come out of such a tiny device.

As they join for the breakfast Blair prepared, Glenna asks Blair how they fared the previous evening, and Blair is very blunt. She tells them that they merely survived. She is very worried because the vampires appear to be organized, and in all her experience, she has never before seen them that way. They determine that Lilith is bringing together an army. Blair finds it interesting that she is the many-times removed niece of Hoyt and the vampire, Cian. Their youngest sister, Nola, sired the first in a long line of demon hunters, and she is a distant relation to both a sorcerer and vampire. Blair does manage to give Larkin the task of doing the dishes after breakfast with his cousin, Moira. Larkin is tired of him managing to slip out of kitchen tasks.



## Chapter 1 Analysis

Roberts jumps right into where the first book stopped. The reader understands that there is a very dangerous and imminent threat against humankind in the form of Lilith, the Queen of Vampires. Blair's experience with vampires is enough for her to tell the Circle of Six that the threat is much bigger than she's ever experienced before. All the Circle of Six have been gathered together and have come willingly, with the exception of Cian. As a vampire, Cian is the unusual and unexpected participant of the sacred Circle of Six. They are to fight the Queen of Vampires, and yet they have a vampire in their very midst. Cian appears to have no true desire to join them in their battle. He has given them a place to stay to prepare for battle and even joined them the previous evening in the battle, but his interest in the entire affair is negligible. Blair is a bit of a loner, partly because of who she is. It is hard to be close to a demon hunter. Most of the reason that she holds herself aloof is because of how her father distanced himself from her, even to the extent that he does not respond to her e-mails about her concerns about an upcoming big battle with the vampire world.





# Chapter 2

## Chapter 2 Summary

Blair suggests a scouting expedition to check out Lilith's base of operations, using daylight to their advantage and going to the cliffs and caves where Lilith hides. Psychological attack and intelligence gathering is their purpose; they do not intend to go covertly. Hoyt and Glenna are to handle fire, which they can create in the palms of their hands. Cian, being a vampire, must remain behind as they are scouting during daylight hours. The point of view then changes to Cian when Hoyt wakes him up to tell him of the plan. Cian is still half-hearted about everything and really wishes that it would all end and then he could return to his world of self-imposed solitude. His memory of when he was changed is not a good one for him and it haunts him. He asks Hoyt to pick up an order of pig's blood. He has been off human blood for hundreds of years. He does care enough about his brother to warn Hoyt to return before sunset. Point of view changes again to Blair where she is filling the van with loads of weapons. Glenna tells Blair how she and Hoyt magically entered Lilith's caves and tunnels; there were thick doors closing off the rooms. She tells her of the people penned in cages, with sounds of crying and praying. Larkin proposes blocking the vampires in and Moira is horrified., reminding him that there are people in there. Larkin says that rescue is impossible. They know that they cannot blind Lilith, so they consider a transportation spell. Moira urges them to try it telling them that the people will simply die anyway. Hoyt, Glenna and Moira discuss how they might manage a transportation spell.

Blair finds out from Larkin that the country of Geall looks a lot like Ireland. Larkin is a farmer and a horse breeder at home. He worries about what his father is thinking because his father knows nothing of the Dance of the Gods. Blair suggests that Larkin's father might simply forgive Larkin for leaving without a word if he manages to save the world. Larkin also explains his expertise with a sword because they prepare for games in Geall. The sheer number of men and women in Geall who are capable with a sword is good news to Blair because they can become warriors against the vampire threat once they arrive at Geall.

Blair and Larkin both know that if they have the opportunity, they must seal the vampires into the cliffs, despite the human casualties. While the magic trio discuss their transportation spell, Blair and Larkin spend the time waiting engaged in small talk, an exercise foreign to Blair. She relates the time she was eighteen and bitten by a vampire. She tries to explain the very horrible pain she experienced. She killed both the fresh vampire and his sire. The difficult thing was that she had thought she was in love with the boy she had to kill. Larkin understands her emotional pain. Blair realizes that she had forgotten what it is like to have someone understand. The lesson she learned from the experience; however, is that not everyone cannot be saved.

They scale the cliffs by hand from the beach. Larkin and Moira are more skilled than Blair had expected. Hoyt leads them to where he and Cian had fought so many



centuries before after Cian had been sired by Lilith. They discover a façade, a false, conjured barrio, proving Lilith's strength or the strength of someone on her side. They decide to cast a spell of their own etching the word TREMBLE into the rock and a figure resembling Lilith with a stake through the heart. The three magic ones realize that they cannot effect their transportation spell from the beach, so Glenna, Hoyt and Moira go back up the cliffs, leaving Larkin and Blair to guard down below. They do not believe any vampires will emerge in the daylight. Blair and Larkin argue about going in to try to save even a few people; Larkin is in favor of the plan, Blair against it.

Blair and Larkin continue talking about their past as they wait. Blair tells Larkin that she was four years old when she realized she was gifted while watching her older brother train with their father. She had wanted to get her father's attention, and she demonstrated a move that her father had been spending hours with her brother trying to perfect it. Larkin thought that Blair's father would have been very pleased that his daughter was the gifted one. He is shocked to hear that Blair's father was angry that it was his daughter who had been so gifted. He is very sorry that Sean Murphy's lack of vision still hurt Blair so much. Mick went to live with their mother; Sean Murphy got Blair, but he didn't want her.

## Chapter 2 Analysis

Because of her experience and training, Blair has taken the role of leader of the group. She suggests a daylight visit to Lilith's lair to see what they can discover about her assembled vampire troops. All believe that they will be safe because their scouting mission takes place during the daylight hours. Cian remains behind; as a vampire, he cannot be out in the daylight, but he does ask Hoyt to get him some pig's blood as he had stopped drinking human blood hundreds of years ago. This is an interesting clue into Cian's motivation for being one of the Circle of Six.

There is symbolism in the way the group is divided in this encounter. The three magical entities join forces to see if they can save any of the humans Lilith has taken down into her caves. Cian must remain home. This puts Blair and Larkin together to stand guard. The book, *The Dance of the Gods*, is the second book in a trilogy. Each book deals with two of the Circle of Six, and this book explores the natures and impulses of Larkin and Blair. It is obvious that they are becoming attracted to one another, something that Blair had thought impossible to feel again, but there is no doubt about it. She realizes that she is becoming attracted to Larkin. Blair has learned to live with solitude and rejection, putting all of her feelings and aggressions into the one thing she has learned to do well—killing vampires. Larkin is the first man to recognize the value in her abilities, and his shock at how her father responded to her success allows both the reader and Blair to relax for Blair because his reaction is one of admiration and approval. The reader understands that Larkin is attracted to this strong and beautiful demon hunter.



# Chapter 3

## Chapter 3 Summary

Hoyt, Glenna and Moira cast a circle atop the cliff over where Lilith and her vampires are hiding in the caves and tunnels below. Hoyt and Glenna are the two strongest in their magic, but they have Moira join them to add her untested magical strength to theirs. Together they visualize the cages of people stacked in the caves and can actually feel their terror. They see a woman with dead eyes being taken at Lilith's command. Lilith's female vampire lover, Lora, wishes for a diversion. The man in the next cage is angry and fighting, and the three magic ones focus all their energies on him because he still has the strength to fight and survive.

On the beach down below, guarding the possible entrance to the lair, Blair and Larkin wait and talk to become better acquainted. Blair wishes she had a pair of sunglasses with an MP3 player built into the frame, and Larkin continues to marvel at the wonders of Blair's world. When the ground rumbles, Blair and Larkin wonder if the spell is breaking down, and they worry that the magical trio atop the cliff might be in danger. Blair talks Larkin into becoming a hawk, so he can quickly fly up to the top of the cliff to see what is happening. Blair convinces Larkin she will be safe. Blair insists that he will only be gone for a very short time. Larkin agrees, but soon after he flies off as a hawk, the caves open and demons spew out, even though the sun is still shining. They are non-vampires, or half-vampires. Blair fights; Larkin returns and uses a bear claw rather than a hand to fight. More and more demons spill out of the cave; an unnatural darkness descends, and even the fire from Blair's sword blade does not keep them in check. Larkin changes again; this time to Blair's astonishment, he becomes a dragon. He carries Blair to the top of the cliff where they see Hoyt, Glenna and Moira lying on the ground. They have only fallen due to the power of their magic. Larkin changes yet again; this time he becomes a horse, and Blair assists both Glenna and Moira onto his back, then all race back to the van. Despite their success in getting five of Lilith's prisoners out, they all despair over the others that they were not able to save.

They discuss the nature of the demons Larkin and Blair were fighting, and Blair gives Larkin a very hard time for coming back to rescue her. It is a new experience fighting with someone who cares about her safety. Larkin cannot understand Blair's confusion; in his mind this is the only way to behave. His only concern is getting some food. Every time he changes shape, his metabolism uses up fuel and he becomes extremely hungry afterward. Blair finds that working with a team is difficult. She is concerned that the effort to create magic is simply too much; Hoyt, Glenna and Moira experience nausea, headaches and nosebleeds. Larkin defends his attachment to Moira, something Blair does not understand. She has had no experience with love. Larkin declares that he has feelings for Blair, which she rejects. He insists and makes a pass at Blair. She stops resisting and actually accepts his kisses. Larkin then compares her strength and courage of a faerie queen and tells her that she is a fascinating woman.



## Chapter 3 Analysis

Blair and Larkin are getting to know one another, Larkin because he wishes to, Blair only because she does not want to appear rude. In her mind, however, she feels that it is just so much easier working alone. Blair is not used to getting to know people. She has spent so much of her life alone that she does not quite know how to deal with Larkin and his genuine interest in her. She is used to being in charge and finds it easy to command Larkin to fly to the top of the cliff to see how the three are doing. After he is gone, Blair is attacked; she puts her skills to full use but is shocked when Larkin returns to fight beside her and then turns into a beautiful dragon in order to fly her to safety. Blair finds herself watching Larkin's eyes as he changes and discovers they change first. She is interested in Larkin despite her words to the contrary, but all her experiences in life have been painful and negative, so she does not believe Larkin is going to be any different than any other man in her life.



# Chapter 4

## Chapter 4 Summary

Chapter Four opens with Blair and Glenna talking about their encounter. Glenna wishes desperately that they could have transported more of Lilith's captives from her cages to the hospital. But Blair argues with her that they had expended most of their energy; even Glenna admits that she thought they had lost Moira because the magic was simply too strong. Blair admits to Glenna that she thought she and Larkin were outnumbered and in trouble. She shares her feelings about Larkin's beauty as a dragon. On her way upstairs to her room, Blair encounters Cian and reflexively reaches for her stake. They both accept her action as natural; he is a vampire and she a vampire hunter. Blair asks Cian why he did not target his family as so many vampires tend to do. Cian brushes off her question but does tell her she is safe from him because she is descended from his youngest sister, Nola, and he once loved Nola very much. When Cian gets to the kitchen, Glenna asks him to take a cup of tea to Moira, who Cian finds sleeping in the library. Cian is unsure what to do and intends to leave the tea beside her, until Moira thrashes about in the throes of a terrible nightmare. Cian wakes her and still half asleep, Moira goes after him with her stake, which he deflects easily. Moira is desolate, fearing her weakness puts Hoyt and Glenna at risk. While she slept, Lilith came to Moira in a dream promising not to drink her, that she is too small. Cian refutes that. He tells Moira that vampires are liars.

Upstairs, alone in her room, Blair drinks the tea Glenna brewed. Blair hates being alone but knows no other way. The two men she loved the most, her father and her fiancé, both left her. Her father rejected her because she received the gift rather than her brother. Her father left Blair on her eighteenth birthday never to return to their home again. Jeremy left her because she felt she had to reveal to him exactly what she is, and he rejected that, calling her unnatural and a monster. As Blair is reliving her unhappy thoughts, a voice comes into her head, a voice that offers understanding, compassion and comfort. The voice tells her that all she has to do is to open the window and let in this creature of compassion. Before Blair can open the window, she is tackled from behind and sent sprawling on the floor.

## Chapter 4 Analysis

When Glenna tells Blair that the heart of a champion can be tender, Blair believes that Glenna is warning her about Larkin and to be careful with his heart. She pretends confusion when Glenna says she is referring to Blair's heart, not Larkin's. Blair's conversation with Cian is also enlightening, especially when she asks Cian why he did not target his family once he became a vampire as so many new vampires do. This is the reader's first clue that Cian is not a typical vampire. Blair's experiences of rejection continue to plague her and her ability to consider herself to really be part of a team. She finds herself upstairs in her room, alone, and when the voice that offers understanding

and compassion tells her to open the window, she is so desolate that she turns toward the window. Something from behind sends her sprawling, a nice cliff-hanger ending causing the reader to move quickly to the next chapter.



# Chapter 5

## Chapter 5 Summary

Lilith's lover, Lora, is the vampire at the window tempting Blair to open the window, and she screams in frustration because Larkin enters Blair's room before Blair can invite the vampire into the house. Without an invitation, vampires cannot enter a home. Larkin finds Blair in a sort of sleepwalking trance, under some sort of spell that allows the vampire to get into her brain. Blair is alarmed; this is something new that she's never experienced. Larkin comforts her and offers to carry her downstairs where the rest are having dinner. Blair knows it is imperative that they discuss this new weapon the vampires are using. As they all discuss the occurrence, they add Glenna's dream experience and Moira's experience earlier that day to Blair's most recent encounter and realize that the vampires are not capable of that kind of magic. Lilith must have someone under her control who is a witch or a sorcerer. While Glenna blames herself for failing to think of protecting everyone in their sleep from psychological attack, the rest continue to discuss the experiences and what they mean. Larkin points out that the psychological attacks occur not merely when they are sleeping, but when they are exhausted or otherwise compromised as Blair and Moira were that day after their experience at Lilith's hideout. Larkin continues to speculate that whoever Lilith has on her payroll really is not that strong, that the magic that Hoyt, Glenna, and Moira possess is easily as strong.

Blair and Larkin make a supply run to the town of Ennis. Blair would have preferred to go alone, but Larkin insists on joining her, disappointed that she refuses to teach him how to drive. Larkin continues to quiz Blair about her world, particularly about Chicago and is surprised that the people of Chicago fail to see the danger of the vampire threat, especially when Blair tells him that they prefer not to know. Larkin treats their trip to town like a date, almost as if he is courting Blair. He manages to talk her into a couple éclairs, a dozen cupcakes and a visit to the local pub. At the pub Blair accuses Larkin of turning on the charm to the waitress and other women, something he does not deny, but Larkin becomes angry at Blair for her putting herself down all the time. He tells her that he does not lie. When he tells her she is magnificent, he means it. He believes her to be wonderful for being a demon hunter and any man who cannot see her worth is the one at fault, not Blair.

## Chapter 5 Analysis

Because she is so used to being alone, Blair still continues to seek her own company. She found, to her complete dismay, that the magic the vampires have procured is able to reach her in her very lonely and isolated place. Fortunately for her and for the world, Larkin is right at hand; he's attracted to Blair and cares for her. Larkin prevents Blair from being entranced into opening her window to the vampire. This last attack alerts the Circle of Six that they need to be more vigilant in their magical efforts to block the



vampires' ability to get into their heads. Glenna feels that she has let the team down for not thinking of it in the first place, but they all know that they have been so busy with their skirmishes that she needs to be easier on herself. They also realize that the vampire psychological attacks only occur when they are tired and worn out. While it is a frightening incidence, they realize that their magic is still far greater. Later Larkin takes the opportunity to tag along on Blair's trip to town for supplies and turns it into a date of sorts. Blair is often irritated during the trip, but she is also reluctantly appreciative of the way Larkin looks at her. For many years she has considered herself a freak. The way Larkin sees her is a revelation to her and she is not quite sure how to handle it.





# Chapter 6

## Chapter 6 Summary

Blair and Larkin discuss attacking Lilith in daylight with flaming arrows, but Blair is concerned about the attention that it will draw. She knows that she is the only one who could do it, all the others are too emotionally programmed to try to save the innocents. She and Larkin argue about it. Blair believes herself to be hard, but Larkin sees Blair being a demon hunter and warrior as a gift and a duty. He also tells her that she is choosing to become hardened. She does believe that partnerships between two people can be forged, but only if both know all the dark secrets of each other and completely accept them for what they are. She has never had that experience. Cian enters after Larkin leaves and claims much experience between humans and wonders why Blair and Larkin are fighting and not becoming friends or lovers. He compares himself to Blair and tells her that the two of them have seen more death than the other four will ever see. After her training with Cian, Blair enters her room to find Morrigan there to counsel her. Morrigan tells her the final battle will be held in the Valley of Silence in Geall, not in the caves of Kerry, putting to waste her idea of attacking Lilith in her caves. Blair is weary and asks Morrigan when it will ever end, and the answer deflates her. According to Morrigan, it will never end, but if the six do not stop Lilith now, then worlds will be destroyed and there will be suffering and death beyond anyone's imagining. She does tell Blair that the Circle of Six has the power to stop Lilith and win. Blair expresses a wish that she could just walk away from her calling, especially when she realizes just how alone she is. She sees herself dead on the battlefield in her vision but does not ask Morrigan if that really is her fate. Morrigan tells Blair that one week from today they will all go to through the Dance of the Gods portal to the imaginary land of Geall. If the Circle of Six fail to go through the portal at that time, the world as they know it will cease to exist. Blair has a vision of darkness, screams and blood, all the while, Morrigan's words are telling her that she really is not alone. When Blair opens her eyes, Larkin is holding her, afraid that she has been invaded in the mind again by the vampires. He holds her and tells her is wooing her, a concept Blair rejects.

The Circle of Six gather for Blair to tell them of her message from Morrigan. Moira and Hoyt each have a key from Morrigan to get through the stone circle. Their concern is for Cian to get through, as they have no way of knowing whether it will be daylight when they arrive in Geall, or whether as a vampire he can even get through the sacred portal. Moira fears bringing the vampire battle to her people, but Larkin reminds her that the danger is already there. After all, the vampires killed her mother, the former Queen of Geall. They discuss how they will raise an army in Geall and train them for battle. They discuss having Larkin do a secret invasion of Lilith's lair, with Larkin changing shape to see if they can find the vampire portal for Cian and to get a feeling for whether Lilith is moving troops and weapons yet. Blair gives Larkin a kiss for good luck and hope, which he returns enthusiastically. Moira witnesses the passionate parting and now knows of their feelings for each other.



## Chapter 6 Analysis

Blair feels that she, alone, realizes what might have to happen in order to win the battle against the vampires. Blair tells herself that is why she always works alone—no one else can see how she must live and survive, no one else understands. But Cian talks to her and acknowledges that he has lived far too long not to know the danger the world faces and what must be done in order to stop Lilith. His words give Blair some comfort, as does Larkin's belief that Blair is not hard but strong and decisive. It is no mistake that Morrigan chooses to come to Blair to give her word that they will move to Geall in one week. Blair is the obvious leader in the war against Lilith and has the experience to do what needs to be done. Perhaps her hardness is a necessary trait in order to be victorious. According to Morrigan, Blair has a choice...they all do. While this is somewhat hard for Blair to accept, she realizes that Morrigan is right, and that no matter what, she will not turn away from this difficult task. It seems that while they all have a choice, none of them intend to walk away from this task, even Cian, who is not even sure that he can get to Geall. Larkin is willing to take the risk of invading Lilith's lair in disguise in order to find out if there is a way for Cian to travel to Geall. Not one of the Circle of Six seems unwilling to do their duty. This is good because once they get to Geall, Blair points out that they will have to train hundreds of Moira's people how to fight against vampires, not an easy task.



# Chapter 7

## Chapter 7 Summary

As a hawk, Larkin sets off for Lilith's hideout to see what he learn. As Larkin circles over the house, he sees the vampire's van. A side job only, but Larkin lands, changes into a unicorn and punctures the tires of the van, since Blair had told him the function of the tires. He continues on his flight as a hawk and uses the solitude to think about Blair. She is such a mix of hard and soft, of strength and openness. She is a mystery to him, but he finds it very appealing. Approaching Lilith's lair, Larkin is initially alarmed because he sees a woman and a boy on the beach in the moonlight and fears for their safety until he sees that the woman is Lilith, and the boy is her vampire son, Davey. Davey was only six when Lilith changed him into a vampire. He will forever be six and a vampire. Larkin hears Davey complain that there is no sport in just killing a caged human. Lilith promises him more freedom when they get to Geall. To appease Davey, Lilith promises to release two captives, so he can chase them through the caves before he feeds on them.

Larkin changes into a rat so he can dart inside the cave with Lilith and Davey when they re-enter the hideout. Inside, Larkin sees vampires swarming all over the walls and ceilings of the caves. Lilith takes Davey to the cages of humans, and Davey states that he wishes to look into their eyes to see if there is enough fight left in them to make his game fun. Lilith is delighted with his discernment. Blair's warning of how Larkin would feel did not make it any easier for him to witness the extent of the suffering of the humans in the caves. He watches as Davey chooses a man and a woman who still have fight left in them. Larkin watches in horror wishing he could do something. He decides he will come back after he accomplishes his objective. He follows Lilith to where she is meeting Lora and the wizard. On the way, Larkin sees training areas where the vampires practice battle techniques, both hand to hand and with weapons.

In the meeting with the wizard, Midir, Lilith tells the wizard how unhappy she is with his inability to prevent the Circle of Six from removing some of her captives. She threatens to let Lora have him if he fails her again. Midir reveals that he sought Lilith out to give her the portal between the two worlds so that she can rule both worlds. Midir has served Lilith for 200 years and his magic is what masks her caves from the human eye, and it is he who created the portal between her world and Geall. It is also Midir's spell that allowed them to diminish Blair's will and almost have her open the window inviting Lora into the house. Larkin discovers that the vampires plan to move to Geall in two weeks. Midir does manage to please the vampire queen with a small mirror that actually shows her reflection. Lilith is in ecstasy over this gift.

Knowing that nothing more will be discovered with Lilith, Larkin moves along and finds the weapons room where there are weapons enough for a thousand. Lilith is indeed raising and arming an army. Knowing that all the weapons will otherwise be taken to Gell, Larkin destroys them by lighting them on fire. He then frees about twenty humans,



hoping to give them a chance at survival after giving swift instructions to cut the vampires' heads off in order to kill them. Despite the usage of energy, Larkin then turns into a wolf and comes upon Davey eating the man he'd hunted and killed. One of Lilith's soldiers is there, too, and notices something wrong with the wolf he thought was Lilith's. Larkin attacks the vampire soldier, but is deflected, and Davey attacks Larkin's back, biting him with his baby vampire teeth. The pain of the bite is unspeakable. Knowing his energy reserves to be very low, Larkin turns into a mouse, escapes the cave and hides behind a rock as the sun begins to rise.

## Chapter 7 Analysis

Larkin's ability to change shapes is demonstrated repeatedly in this chapter. It gives the Circle of Six the ability to actually see inside Lilith's hideout and discover exactly what is going on there and to determine what her plans are. Larkin is completely successful in his endeavor, though he takes risks he was told not to take by Blair when he chooses to free the captive humans and then in attacking the vampire soldier on his way out of the cave. Because of his disregarding his orders, Larkin is bitten on his back by a vampire. His desire to free the captives and do as much as he possibly can may have compromised the entire enterprise because he has now been bitten by a vampire.

What the reader does discover is just how twisted the vampire psyche is in the scene with Davey, a beautiful, blond six-year-old boy, who has the bloodthirsty desires of a full-grown vampire. Because he is Lilith's chosen one, he is given full rein and allowed to play with the captives prior to killing and eating them. It is apparently a game to the vampires, making it even more repulsive to Larkin as a human.



# Chapter 8

## Chapter 8 Summary

The remaining Circle of Six wait at the house for Larkin to return from his mission. Morning has come and Larkin's continued absence is alarming. As they wait, Cian again wonders aloud why Blair finds it so hard to admit that she cares for Larkin. Blair finds her job of being the one to stay at home and wait to be the most difficult one she has ever had. She asks Cian what Lilith will do to Larkin and the answer chills her. Cian tells her in graphic detail of how she would torture and torment Larkin; her methods so painful that no human can withstand it. Blair then realizes that Lilith would likely send Larkin back as a vampire, just as she did with Cian's friend, King. They had had to kill King and that is the main reason Cian fights with the rest of the Circle of Six. They discover the disabled van, and Hoyt and Blair track down the vampires. At first Blair prolongs the fight with the vampires in an attempt to calm her nerves, but realizing the torment she is inflicting, she cleanly kills the vampires. Hoyt reassures Blair that Larkin is clever and that Blair should not worry. Blair discovers that worry is a foreign emotion for her, and she does not know how to manage it.

Larkin barely makes it home; he hears Blair's voice in his head and that is what he uses to keep going. Blair discovers that he has been bitten by a vampire. Cian makes Larkin some toast and juice to give him a little bit of strength, but denies him the large meal he craves. The bite must be cleaned and the pain will be torturous. Larkin can eat afterward. Blair and Cian know the risk of leaving the bite untended. Glenna offers to help with the pain, and Moira begs Blair to find some other way. Blair has to grit her teeth and be the strong one. Leaving the bite untended will leave Larkin susceptible to vampire control. Tending the bite means hurting Larkin almost beyond his ability to endure. With all five working on Larkin, Blair administers holy water to the bite, while the other four hold Larkin down as he screams in pain.

Blair steels herself to do what is necessary, persisting until the water runs from the wound clear. Then she runs to her room to hide her reaction from all the others of what she just had to do. Of all of them, Moira is the one who follows and comforts Blair like a mother to a child, telling Blair how courageous she was to do what had to be done. Moira admits she might not have had the courage or strength to help Larkin. Blair laments how caring for someone hurts and that she is not worthy of Larkin. Moira tells Blair that Larkin might have some say in the matter; it is not all up to Blair.

Afterwards, Larkin eats a huge meal to regain his strength, then tells the others everything he discovered in the caves. He also admits that he took chances when he should not have done so, but defends his actions, telling the rest they would have wanted to do the same. After dinner he asks Blair to come to his room with him, just to lie with him as he sleeps. He tells her it was her words that gave him the strength to return.



## Chapter 8 Analysis

Blair is discovering just how painful loving someone can be. Up to this point in her life, she has only been responsible for herself, not having to worry about anyone else. Waiting for Larkin to return causes her to explore feelings she is not used to having, and they are feelings she is not sure she likes. Blair is learning that when you become part of another person's life, you give up a little of your own independence, and she is not sure she likes that feeling. However, she cannot just relinquish what she feels for Larkin. The longer she waits for Larkin to return, the more agitated she becomes. It is apparent to all the rest of the team that she and Larkin care for one another, but Blair is really fighting the feeling. The pain she feels when he returns and discovers that he has been bitten is almost more than she can bear. She and Cian know what must be done, and she alone knows just how much it is going to hurt the man for whom she has come to care. Making her job worse is Moira asking Blair if there is not some other way to help Larkin without hurting him. Blair must steel herself to do what is right, despite what others might want. She recognizes that this is the strength in her that the others see; it is the strength that she prizes, but she also finds that she hates always being the strong one.



# Chapter 9

## Chapter 9 Summary

Larkin awakens to find Blair has left his room. He is still very sore but recovering. Larkin finds Blair working out in the training room and admires how smoothly she moves. When she realizes he is there, she distances herself, affecting interest only in his physical condition. Larkin closes the physical distance and kisses her. Blair responds physically, but then stops him saying that the feelings they have for each other are too complicated. Larkin says they are only as complicated as they make them. Blair disagrees. Larkin argues that he knows she is first a demon hunter, then as a soft person with feelings. He can see that she has been hurt in the past and is protecting herself. Blair does not like the fact that she is not in control in a relationship.

Larkin and Blair go for a walk outside and talk about the future, how Cian has given the family home to Hoyt and Glenna. Blair admires Cian for his generosity and ponders why he is so different from any other vampire she has ever known. They marvel at the beauty of both worlds, at love and caring, and Blair suddenly realizes she has come to believe in miracles. Because of love, caring and compassion, they are sure to win. Larkin tells Blair of the people caged in Lilith's cave, how the strong helped the weak, how they wanted vengeance once they were released. He continues by saying that bad times bring out either the best or the worst in people; Larkin is counting on the best.

The time has come for strategizing and projecting how many in Geall can be counted on to fight and where they will have the best strategic advantage. As the discussion progresses, distinct differences become apparent. Moira and Larkin are determined to protect and defend as many of their people as they can. Blair and Cian, knowing the enemy most intimately, argue that they will be wasting supplies, time and resources—that a better option would be to burn the outlying settlements down so Lilith has no place for a base camp. Larkin and Blair go head to head over the issue, their earlier romantic feelings all but forgotten. Blair can sense Larkin withdrawing from her, and she tells herself it was to be expected; this is, after all, her experience with men. Moira sees the discord and challenges Larkin to confront Blair.

## Chapter 9 Analysis

Blair and Larkin have very strong feelings for each other; they also have very strong feelings about fighting vampires. Blair feels strongly about being in charge and being independent. Larkin feels very strongly about the people of his country and how they must save as many as possible. He finds Blair's hardness when it comes to the consideration of people to be difficult to accept. Blair is hurt by Larkin's rejection because of their different beliefs, but feels she can expect nothing else. No man has ever found her worthy of sticking around, and Larkin can be no different. Larkin's feelings for Blair are colored by his loyalty to his country and countrymen. Because he



does not have the same experience Blair does with vampires, he does not see the wisdom of her suggestions. He feels that she simply does not care about people and that is the only reason why she has suggested burning down the settlements.





# Chapter 10

## Chapter 10 Summary

Larkin enters Blair's room without permission, both knowing a fight is brewing. They argue; Blair because she believes Larkin is repulsed by what she is. Larkin admits he expected the plan to burn the outlying villages to come from Cian. Blair interprets that as Larkin classifying her as a monster. They begin to fight physically, but it quickly changes to strong sexual desire and they make wild, passionate love. Blair enjoys the sex, but is puzzled by Larkin, by how he can be so angry with her and still feel affection for her. He asks where she is hiding, accusing her of withdrawing whenever she feels emotionally threatened. Larkin persists, reaching a place inside Blair she did not know existed, and this confuses her.

Blair and Glenna plan what to take to Geall, Blair believing in a minimalist approach. Glenna, however, insists on bringing her arsenal of magic and library. Glenna gives Blair a letter to give to Glenna's parents in case Glenna does not come out of the battle alive. Glenna wants them to know what happened to her. Blair promises she will give it back to Glenna on November first, the day after the battle. Blair is saddened when she thinks that she has no one who will miss her if she somehow does not manage to survive the upcoming battle.

On her way to her room, Blair hears music coming from the training room. Thinking it is Larkin playing with her MP3 player, she goes to investigate. In the training room Blair sees Lora, the French vampire, appear to come through the mirrors on the walls of their room where they train to exterminate vampires. Blair knows Lora is just an illusion, but sends a wooden stake through Lora's illusion to be sure. It is another attempt on Lora's part to break Blair's will. Her coup de grace is that Lora has captured Blair's former fiancé, Jeremy. After tormenting Blair and forcing her to beg for Jeremy's life, she kills Jeremy right in front of Blair. While a part of Blair's brain knows it is only an illusion, the other part that is supposed to protect the innocent rages within her, and Blair begins to scream and cannot stop.

## Chapter 10 Analysis

Larkin and Blair are both very passionate people and their relationship is volatile and passionate. While Blair is an absolute black and white thinker, Larkin teaches her that compromise is possible—that they can have passionate disagreements and still really care for one another. This is really uncharted territory for Blair and she is afraid of what caring for someone could do to her. When Lora appears, torments Blair, and then murders Jeremy in an illusion in front of her, Blair finds that she cares very much, and not because she still loves Jeremy, but because she is to protect all like him, especially people like Jeremy because he did not believe in the demons she was destined to kill. Lora kills Jeremy because she believes that it will weaken Blair. Lora, as an example of



a vampire, shows that they are not as complex a thinker as human beings are; they are driven by their own basic needs and emotions. What vampires do not have is very likely what will be their downfall.



# Chapter 11

## Chapter 11 Summary

Blair is in hysterics, attacking the floor repeatedly with the wooden stake. Larkin tries to lift her from the floor and she bloodies his lip. Cian steps in and slaps her, which infuriates Larkin. Hoyt attempts to restrain Larkin, who uses his head to butt Hoyt's jaw. Moira is the one who ends the wild madness. She gets Blair to tell them what happened, all the while assuring Blair that only the Circle of Six are in the house. Blair says Lora was in Boston and had killed Jeremy. She begs Cian to have his friends check on Jeremy. Immediately, Blair contacts her aunt to establish precautions; her aunt will understand. She knows it will be too difficult for the vampires to hurt those who are protected.

Furious, Blair goes outside and attacks the few vampires who are posted as guards. After she kills three, she returns to the house where Larkin is angry with her for putting herself at risk, as are the rest of the group. Blair is acting out her anger and frustration. When Cian confirms that Jeremy really is dead, Blair blames herself. Larkin says it was Lora who killed Jeremy, not Blair, emphasizing that Blair's response is exactly what the vampires want.

Blair comes to Larkin that night and they toast Jeremy's death with whiskey. Larkin is very patient and gentle with Blair, knowing she has suffered a great shock and loss. He knows she had once loved Jeremy. Blair tells Larkin everything about her past with her father and Jeremy. Her story helps Larkin to fully appreciate Blair's defenses, the chip on her shoulder and the intense pain she is feeling. She has been betrayed by two men she truly loved. Larkin promises he will not betray her.

Turning their thoughts to their imminent departure to Geall, their true concern is for Cian, who cannot breach the portal, being a demon. They worry, but still make plans to do what needs to be done. They trust the gods. The Circle of Six begin to move their supplies to the Dance of the Gods, knowing it will take more than one trip. They can feel they are watched and know that Lilith will be told that they are on the move.

## Chapter 11 Analysis

Tensions are high in both camps. Lora and Lilith must really fear Blair, otherwise they would not have tried to mess with her mentally. Blair is hit very hard by Jeremy's death, but perhaps she is grieving over the lost opportunity to have some kind of a normal life. She thought she had it with Jeremy until he found out what she was. Because being a demon-hunter defines her, Blair works to erect a barrier against any other emotional injury, especially when it comes to men. Larkin has a very difficult job ahead of him if he truly loves Blair; she will not lower her barricades easily.



Blair realizes just how much easier and efficient it is to go after the helpless; that is what hurts humans. Vampires do not care. Vampires are easily replaced, while humanity is much more complex and precious. Their very complexity makes them a danger to the vampires, and while the vampires have some understanding and remembering of what it is to be human, they have forgotten the very essence of being human and that is what makes vampires demons.



# Chapter 12

## Chapter 12 Summary

Cian is doubtful that the cloak Hoyt and Glenna have created will truly protect him from the sun; however, they have no time to test its effectiveness before they are due to go through the Dance of the Gods. Glenna implores Cian to wear it, and for her he agrees to try. They are out of time; they know the journey to the Dance of the Gods will be dangerous, which prepares them. Lilith is sure to know that they are on the move, alerted by their previous trip for supplies; Lilith attacks them before they gain the safety within the spell of the Stonehenge-like stones. They are only mildly injured in the attack, and Larkin's change to a dragon form carries Moira and Blair to the portal just as Hoyt and Glenna arrive on Vlad, which is Cian's stallion. They wait for Cian to arrive, knowing that the Circle of Six should be intact before they go through. Hoyt holds out his hand to Cian, but standing outside of the circle, Cian can feel the stones of the Dance repel him. Hoyt, knowing they must go now, holds up his key and the earth rumbles. Moira holds her key up and just as their world begins to shift, she reaches out and grabs Cian's hand and pulls him into the circle.

The whirlwind of tornado force ends, and all six find themselves unharmed in Geall, and as luck has it, for Cian's comfort, it is dark. Eager to reach the castle, the Circle of Six head directly there; Cian and Moira on Vlad, Glenna, Hoyt and Blair on Larkin as a dragon. Geall has the appearance of a fairly tale there are no cars or electric lights. The view of the castle absolutely takes Blair's breath away. Larkin and Moira are welcomed with great warmth and affection. The rest of the Circle of Six are introduced. Larkin's reunion with his father is emotional and intense. Blair can see Larkin's resemblance to his father. Moira's reunion with Prince Riddock is even more heartfelt and emotional. Moira and Larkin had left Geall right after Moira's mother had been killed by the vampires, so her reunion with her mother's brother is fraught with emotions both joyous and sorrowful.

Riddock, Larkin's father, is suspicious of Cian, but agrees to trust Larkin's word that he is a demon on their side. He does caution all of them that even though he accepts Cian's presence, it may be hard for the people of Geall to accept. They remind Riddock that most of the people of Geall will do as the ruling Prince indicates, and Riddock agrees to accept Cian. Blair is very impressed with the castle and her room, but she does notice the lack of indoor plumbing, something she wonders if she can handle. Larkin comes to her and they spend her first night in Geall together in a castle.

## Chapter 12 Analysis

The Circle of Six make it through the Dance of the Gods portal with little difficulty; even Cian is brought through. Cian being able to come through the Dance of the Gods is an indication that his demon being is not as evil as most vampires. There is the sense of no



return. Their path is now laid out before them, and the gods have seen to it that the six who are to try to save the world are now where they need to be. The battle with the vampires lies ahead; their work not yet done, but they have just overcome a great obstacle. All six are in Geall, Cian including. Foreshadowing is indicated with how Riddock accepts Cian and how the others who are not from Geall are introduced. There is a bit of suspicion and concern, but because Larkin and Moira vouch for them, Riddock accepts them at face value. Now that they are in Geall, much of Blair's resistance to Larkin seems to be subsiding; she accepts him into her room the first night readily, even hungrily.



# Chapter 13

## Chapter 13 Summary

Waking up next to Larkin makes Blair think of what life could be like if things were different. Blair knows that what she feels for Larkin is more than a fleeting physical relationship. She also knows that Lord Larkin belongs to Geall, and when the battle is over, Blair will return to her own world. Larkin has a position in Geall, and Blair knows that she has a duty as a demon hunter. Blair realizes that they could possibly be in love. It is such a miracle for Blair to have a man love her knowing everything there is to know about her. She knows that when they part, it will be mutual, no regrets on either side.

Once breakfast is over they must make plans because Lilith is not far behind the Circle of Six. Riddock and Larkin have sent word out to have people move to safety, rather than trying to protect isolated pockets of people. Blair sets up a list of what needs to be accomplished but knows she is on unfamiliar ground; Riddock is in charge. He doubts their ability to lead and with the Circle of Six, they debate the reasons behind the battle that must be fought on Geallian soil. Riddock claims his men are loyal and trained. Blair bluntly says that they are not trained well enough. Riddock finally asks the Circle of Six to prepare his people for the upcoming battle, but Riddock will continue to rule.

At the gaming area, Blair asks Glenna to teach the women. Blair recognizes her own hardness and that it can be off putting to the women; Glenna is much more diplomatic. While Larkin addresses the crowd, Blair looks for the man she intends to battle as a display of the abilities of the Circle of Six against the trained men of the kingdom. Blair settles on Niall, who does not believe the women who stand in the circle are warriors. Blair takes him three times in a row, making him a believer. By convincing Niall, Blair now has the attention of the entire crowd, but not necessarily their belief.

## Chapter 13 Analysis

Blair still sees the world in black and white. She is already re-establishing her boundaries. She is convinced that they will triumph over Lilith but that her chance of living happily ever after is remote. Part of her is sad because she believes that Larkin actually does love her, something she thought would never happen. She also knows her duty and so plans that for the next few weeks, she will have time with Larkin, and she will be true to her birthright doing what she does best—training the people of Geall to become vampire killers. Blair is compartmentalizing her feelings, readying to protect herself against any sort of harm or injury. She knows that leaving Larkin will hurt, so she is taking a proactive stance, acknowledging that she will enjoy the time she has with Larkin in Geall and do her job to the best of her ability. After the war is over, she knows she must return to her world and that Larkin belongs to Geall.



# Chapter 14

## Chapter 14 Summary

Moira approaches Blair; they need to capture a vampire or two in order to demonstrate how they fight. Until the people of Geall see such a demonstration, they will not understand nor believe what is being asked of them. Blair volunteers and Cian and Larkin join her. Larkin knows the territory, and Cian and Blair are best suited for the demon hunt. As they ride into the night they speculate on who the vampires are and why Moira's mother was the first victim. It appears that the vampires were sent by Lilith and are trying to lie low, indicating that they somehow displeased Lilith. They made a mistake. They were supposed to have killed Moira, not her mother. Because they killed the wrong person, Lilith will be displeased, so they choose to remain in Geall, feeding as necessary. The three vampire hunters come across a gypsy caravan that has the smell of death all over it. Opening the door, Blair is ready for the newly-born, fourteen-year-old female vampire. Larkin kills her. Larkin is sick to think that the vampires killed the father and the girl's brother, leaving the girl and her mother alive long enough to satisfy their sexual appetites. They likely changed the girl into a vampire so that they could continue to use her sexually.

In order to capture the vampires when they return to the caravan, Blair proposes to walk her horse to act as bait. Larkin is vehemently opposed to the plan. She convinces Larkin that they need to take the vampires alive and the only way to do that is to take them by surprise.

## Chapter 14 Analysis

Moira is demonstrating her leadership abilities in realizing that the only way her people will be willing to train appropriately is for them to see just what the threat truly is. She hates to ask Larkin, Blair and Cian to go out and capture a vampire or two but realizes she has no choice. In order to protect the people of Geall, she must put her new friends in jeopardy. In the same vein, Blair, Larkin and Cian know they must hunt the vampires and bring them back for Moira. Without the demonstration, the people of Geall will fight valiantly, but in vain. In order to effectively battle the threat of Lilith, sacrifices must be made.





# Chapter 15

## Chapter 15 Summary

Blair waits in the darkness for the vampires to come back. While she waits she thinks it strange how she feels lonely now when only a few short weeks ago she was perfectly content working alone. If her father had been involved in the activities of the Circle of Six, Blair knew he would never have consented to work with Cian; that either her father or Cian or both would be dead by now. Blair realizes that she can do her job effectively and still have feelings.

The vampires return and Blair plays her role as bait very well; the vampires are delighted to find a lone woman at night. Then Blair attacks and Larkin and Cian join her. After a short battle, they have their two captured vampires. Larkin wishes to stay and bury the dead family, but Blair insists that they must return now, the dawn is approaching. Reluctantly, Larkin agrees. Blair promises to return with him to help him bury the slain family. They ride back to the castle, hurrying as the dawn is approaching and Cian, and their two captives must be sheltered from even the very first rays of the sun or they will turn to ash.

Larkin challenges Blair, remarking that she feels the time taken to go back and bury the dead is a waste, and truthfully that is what Blair thinks. However she also recognizes the need for Larkin to complete the task and has promised to return with him. She is one to keep her word. Larkin changes to a dragon, saying that flying will get them there much faster. While riding on Larkin's golden back, Blair marvels again at her feelings for the man who can change into a dragon.

## Chapter 15 Analysis

In exploring her allegiance to the vampire demon of their group, Blair realizes that her black and white, right and wrong view from her father has expanded. In fact, it is likely that this is what prompted the gods to choose her rather than her father. Blair's very absolute view of the world has been undergoing changes. She knew when she first met Cian that he was a vampire and she hunts vampires. She also knew he was her ancestor and you are supposed to love family. Her experience with her father has hurt Blair, but it has not made her bitter and hard. She still has the capacity to give people a chance, just as she gave Cian a chance to get to know him, and now she trusts him with her life. The reader should see that Blair's character is undergoing a tremendous change from the seemingly hard woman who kept her feelings to herself, to the warm, compassionate and very skilled woman Blair has become at this point in the story. Blair's sorrow that there is not enough time for her and Larkin to explore their newly-blossoming love is exquisite. Here she has finally found a man she can love and who loves her in return without restriction. She is still realistic enough to see that she must return to the world without the man she loves.

"There simply were no allegiances in demon hunting, not to her father's mind. It was you and the enemy. Black and white, live and die." Page 353, Chapter 15.



# Chapter 16

## Chapter 16 Summary

After burying the slain family, Larkin changes to a dragon once more, and this time Blair falls asleep on his back. She has been without sleep for two days and is exhausted. The sound of a roar awakens her and she finds that they are flying over Faerie Falls, the place Larkin promised to take her for a picnic. He apologizes that it is not a picnic, but he merely wants some time alone with Blair in a place where death and the threat of a vampire invasion cannot encroach. Larkin thanks Blair for being who she is and for helping him with the distasteful chore of grave digging. He tells her that no other woman aside from his cousin, Moira, would have done that for him. Now Blair is positive that she is in love with Larkin.

Glenna and Hoyt are having a very difficult time training the men and women of Geall to battle vampires. The people of the peaceful village simply do not believe that the threat is really that dangerous. They see it as more of a game. That night, when Moira calls all the citizens of Geall to see the captured vampires, the atmosphere is one of excitement. It more resembles a carnival than a demonstration of danger.

Knowing her people must believe in the danger and in her, Moira takes only Blair into her confidence, that the future Queen will be the one to fight the vampire captives in the arena. Larkin is infuriated because he wishes to protect his cousin. Blair understands and restrains him. Moira battles the first vampire while he tells her how they had mistakenly killed her mother. At first the audience only sees a chained man released from his chains, but his overpowering need to feed cause his eyes to turn red, his fangs to glisten, and his movements to become supernatural. Moira battles him well and finally kills him with a sword, severing his head from his body.

Despite being injured in her bout with the first vampire, Moira orders the release of the second, bigger vampire. Suddenly, an arrow through the heart ends the second vampire's life. Moira thinks that Blair has betrayed her, but it is Cian who holds the bow. He ends the demonstration.

## Chapter 16 Analysis

Blair and Larkin have been dancing around the idea of love in their relationship. Now Blair knows she loves a man who loves her back and accepts her totally. Her joy is diminished by the knowledge that she cannot have a life with Lord Larkin. A relationship, for Blair, has been something she has sought all her life, and it has eluded her at every corner. Initially she had tried to prevent feeling what she does for Larkin, but the emotions became too powerful for her to control. Giving in to them has given Blair a wonderful, romantic interlude with Larkin, and she has found that he does accept her for exactly who she is. Unfortunately, they are both called to their duty, to their birthright.



Like Blair, Moira knows her life to be one of duty to her people. As the future Queen of Geall, she knows that unless she is proven, her people can have no faith in her. That is exactly why Moira staged the demonstration the way she did with the details known only to herself and Blair. She knows Larkin and Riddock and the rest would try to talk her out of it, but she also knows that the only way her people will truly follow her is to put herself in their shoes, to prove to them that she is not afraid to do what she is asking them to do.



# Chapter 17

## Chapter 17 Summary

Moira is infuriated with Cian and leaving Larkin to address the people of Geall in the arena, she storms after Cian. She remonstrates him, telling him that he had no right to kill the second vampire. Cian's anger is even colder. He proves, by touching Moira's injured side that she was in no condition to take on the second vampire. Their encounter ends with a very angry and passionate kiss, witnessed by Glenna, who tells Blair. The three women of the Circle of Six have become very close, and Blair and Glenna are concerned for inexperienced Moira kissing a vampire. Like Blair, Moira puts aside her personal feelings; she is to be Queen and must lead her people.

The demonstration changes the mind of the women of Geall. Dervil, one woman who had previously defied Glenna's attempts to teach them to battle vampires apologizes to Glenna and promises better behavior at the next day's training. Despite the rain and mud, the women train tirelessly, and at the conclusion, muddy and bruised, Blair heads back to the castle only to run into two women, Deidre and Sinann. Deidre is Larkin's mother, and Sinann his very pregnant sister. Blair is very uncomfortable talking to the mother of the man with whom she is sleeping. Deidre has a different feeling. She admires Blair and acknowledges that while they cannot fight as warriors, she realizes that there is much they can do to prepare and she promises her support. Blair knows what a testament this is to her and to the position Larkin's family holds in the kingdom.

Later Blair and Larkin set out for a reconnaissance mission of the battlefield prior to the battle. Larkin chooses to travel as a golden dragon with Blair on his back again. On their way Larkin flies through rain, clouds and toward a rainbow where they meet many other flying dragons of every imaginable, jeweled color. Blair, as a woman, is enchanted; as a warrior she wonders if the real dragons can be taught to carry riders for aerial warfare. She breathes in the perfume of a flower Larkin has just given her as they walk toward the battlefield, a testament to the strange dichotomy of the life they are living right now.

## Chapter 17 Analysis

Moira verbally attacks Cian, seeing his interference as a defiance against her wishes, and actually goes so far as to challenge him that he could not stand by and watch while one of his own kind tormented and destroyed. Cian does not deny it. Perhaps this is Cian's way of demonstrating his loyalty to Moira and her people, his very willingness to kill his own kind in order to save Moira from a foolish decision. He proves he knows where she is injured and as a vampire would know exactly where to strike. His anger leads him to kiss the future Queen of Geall, leaving both of them shocked and distracted.



This chapter also explores the seemingly contradictory nature of women. First there is Moira who is struggling to figure out how best to be Queen for her people and at the same time experiences her first truly passionate kiss, which happens to be with a vampire. She must put her personal feelings aside for the good of her people, but the reader can see she is drawn to Cian, and yet is still afraid of him. Blair, too, is waging an internal battle wishing she could have a life with Larkin, yet knowing that her duty to the world has a stronger pull.



# Chapter 18

## Chapter 18 Summary

Larkin and Blair encounter travelers, heading to safety at the word from Geall's royal family. Blair is impressed with such a demonstration of faith. Continuing their journey to evaluate the battlefield, they both can feel the evil of the place, almost oozing out of the ground. Blair tells Larkin that she has seen this place in her dreams for as long as she can remember. She does not want to die here and wonders if she has seen her own death in her dreams or if she just fears dying in such a desolate place. Almost as if in answer, the goddess Morrigan appears before them both and shares her gratitude with them, telling them that victory is possible.

After the goddess leaves, Larkin and Blair move on, investigating the river blessed by a holy man. Larkin fills a water bag with the water and Blair tests the vampire blood she brought with her. She is delighted to see it boil. The river is just one of the many traps that have been set for the vampires. Then the two come across a family traveling to safety, but the man has suffered a broken leg, the wagon a broken axle, and their horse has run off. The man is Niall's brother, the man Blair had fought as an example when they first came to Geall. The only way for the family to be taken to safety before dark is on Larkin's back, again with him as a golden dragon. He is unwilling to leave Blair alone, but knows that the family must be transported. Once they leave, Blair continues their exploration mission, finding a trap that had worked. There is no sign of the vampires, but a scatter of weapons and a dead horse indicate that the trap was successful. This is a sure sign that Lilith is already in Geall. Suddenly, the ground opens and black clouds cover the sky. Blair has walked into a counter-trap set by the vampires.

## Chapter 18 Analysis

As the time of the final battle approaches, Blair and Larkin are given more and more evidence that they will win. The faith of the people who desire to live and are willing to do whatever it takes stand with them. Faith is another weapon against the vampire threat. They also get it straight from Morrigan that they have every chance of winning. Morrigan promises them that they would not have been tasked with the chore if it were impossible. Blair knows it will still be a battle, but she is finally feeling some optimism. But then she lets her guard down. After Larkin leaves to fly the stranded family to safety, she explores a sprung trap and walks into one set by Lilith's army.



# Chapter 19

## Chapter 19 Summary

Alone and under attack, Blair fights for her life. She takes out two vampires before they are fully emerged from the ground, but there are still eight tough, seasoned vampire soldiers. She fights with all her might, skill and will. She loses the use of her left arm, loses her wooden stake and her crosses in the mayhem. Every time she falls, she is back up and after her attackers until there are only three left. At that point Blair is hurt badly and without weapons. She can only hope that Larkin can take care of the remaining three when he returns. Then, through her blurred vision, Blair sees Lora, the French vampire. She had ordered the soldiers to spare Blair's life so that can sire Blair. She has been attracted to Blair from the very first time they met. Blair is frantic, considering impaling herself on the spikes of the death trap rather than be changed into a vampire. Suddenly she remembers one last weapon. As Blair verbally spars with Lora, she takes her water bag out as if taking a drink, then throws the holy water in the bag onto Lora, burning the skin of the vampire's face and throat.

The three remaining vampires fall on Blair and even though she is nearly done she still grabs a tree branch to use as a weapon. At this point, Larkin returns and in his fear and anger destroys the remaining vampires all the while cursing himself for leaving Blair. When the danger is over he sees she is badly injured. He knows he needs to relocate her shoulder, which he does and causes her to faint from the pain. As a dragon, he cradles her in his claws and flies back to the castle and help as fast as he has ever flown.

Back at the castle the remaining members of the Circle of Six work together to counteract the spell of darkness that is making the sky black. Cian even agrees to join them outside by wearing his protective cloak. Moira says words that since Cian is willing to risk so much, it will protect him. Magic, black and white, battles in the sky while Blair hangs on to life. The moment Larkin lands; they all rush to assist, taking Blair inside and seeing to her wounds. Larkin is sick with regret and fear. He never should have left her alone so close to that evil place. He feels he will never forgive himself for putting her in such danger. Glenna's healing magic works on Blair, but Larkin refuses to leave her side.

## Chapter 19 Analysis

All of Blair's life has been spent preparing for this, the showdown against the demons. She is caught in their trap, alone, the way she used to like to work. She discovers that the problem is bigger than she. For the first time in her life she realizes how necessary it is to ask for help. She thinks first of Larkin, and while she has concern for his safety, she knows that he is capable of taking out the rest of the vampires. Back at the castle, the rest of the circle work on Blair in a frenzy because she is one of them. They are all so



completely connected to one another that to do anything differently is unimaginable. For the first time in her life, Blair has found love and a family, which makes it all worth fighting for.



# Chapter 20

## Chapter 20 Summary

Blair swims in and out of consciousness; medicines are poured down her throat, and she is awakened as soon as she falls asleep because of her concussion. All the while, Larkin refuses to leave her side. Blair finally awakens without the confusion of the concussion and overwhelming pain to find only Larkin in her room. Irritated at the constant rehashing of her beating at the hands of the vampires, Blair asks Larkin when he first knew he could change shapes. When he was a young boy, Larkin wanted a puppy but was denied. In his youthful petulance he could think of nothing else and suddenly he turned into a puppy. Apparently, shapeshifting runs in the family and his grandmother taught Larkin how to use his gift.

Blair knows everything there is to know about Larkin, the man she loves and so the pain of rejecting him is even more bitter than her physical injuries. Before Blair can tell him they must part when it is all over, Larkin tells her how much he will miss Geall when he leaves to join Blair in continuing her fight against the vampires in the 21st century. Larkin proclaims his love for Blair in beautiful, compelling love language, first in Gaelic and then in English. He tells Blair that now having found her he cannot possibly let her go. Blair is overwhelmed at being loved so completely; it is not an emotion she has ever experienced before. It is just this sort of human emotion that will help them conquer the vampire threat.

She and Larkin write with fire the words "Bright blessings on Geall and all humankind. We are the future." (Page 489, Chapter 20) into the sky over Geall as a message to all, human and vampire alike. The will of humanity will prevail because of love and compassion.

## Chapter 20 Analysis

All through the book, the reader has been given clues as to Larkin's character. He is a strong and passionate man, who falls in love with life in the 21st century—he falls in love with a 21st century woman—a strong warrior but very emotionally fragile. He wants to learn to drive. He loves Coke. And he loves hot, hot showers. Lastly, he loves Blair with an emotion more powerful than any feeling he has ever had in his life. He knows for a fact that he cannot live without Blair. It is his love, his acceptance of who she is and his understanding of her calling in life that makes him so different from any man Blair has ever met. All these qualities make him the perfect man for Blair, a man who accepts her strengths, knows her faults and loves her in spite of them. His devotion to Blair is never more evident than in the final chapter of the book where he refuses to leave the room where Blair lies unconscious after her solitary battle with the vampires. He is unable to forgive himself for leaving her alone in a dangerous situation. He knows he will have to do it again, but he does not have to like it. That is what makes Larkin

different and so perfect for Blair. The two of them have forged a powerful partnership that will be very difficult to destroy.



# Characters

## Larkin Riddock

Larkin Riddock - Shapeshifter, one of the six. He comes from the imaginary land of Geall to the 21st century to find those who will join him in his battle against the vampire plague that threatens his land. He adapts to life in the 21st century very well, learning to love Coke, hot water, the wonders of an MP3 player and cars. Larkin is a member of the royal family in Geall, but knows he is not to be the ruler of Geall; that role will fall to his cousin, Moira. Larkin is the man who can change shapes and has had the ability from the time he was a child. His abilities allow him to fly as a hawk to get an aerial view if needed, scamper as a rat or a mouse to learn the secrets of Lilith's cave, use the claw of a bear or become a wolf when fighting vampires; his most glorious change is that of a golden dragon. He uses the dragon shape once in Ireland but is told there are no dragons in Ireland so he should not draw attention by changing into a dragon. Larkin finds love in a woman from the 21st century, Blair, who is a demon hunter. She is a woman of great strength and skill but has been badly hurt emotionally. Larkin is very attracted to Blair, and they battle ferociously, almost on a daily basis, as their love continues to grow. Larkin is the only man who is able to see Blair for who she truly is so falls in love with the demon hunter from the future world. When she is grievously injured battle in Geall fighting vampires, he believes he will die from the grief of it and the role he plays in her being badly injured. Larkin is intense and persistent. He is a man who simply never gives up. He does not give up in a fight, and he will not give up his quest to have Blair as his wife.

## Blair Murphy

Blair Nola Bridgit Murphy - Blair is the 21st century demon hunter, who is the last to join the Circle of Six. She alone has the knowledge necessary to train an army to kill the vampires. Blair's father expected her brother to be the one gifted with the ability to be a demon hunter, and his disappointment that it was his daughter rather than his son was evident throughout Blair's life. His duty to his daughter was to teach her how to hunt demons, but he never liked the fact that she was female; on her eighteenth birthday, he left their home never to return. Blair learns very early on to be a solitary hunter. She once tried to have a relationship with a man, becoming engaged to him, but when he found out what she was, all he could see was some sort of monster in the body of the woman he thought he had loved. Ever since, Blair has kept her heart very well insulated from the world, carrying around a sort of shield around her, almost preferring to spend time hunting demons than interacting with humans. Her experience in the Circle of Six is a new one for her. Within that Circle, she learns what it is to love and be loved, to have a friend and be a friend, to actually have a family of sorts. Blair's tough exterior is beaten over and over again, until finally her heart is exposed to the one man who knows her like no other, to the one she can love in return and not fear reprisal. Blair's love for Larkin is what keeps her going long after her skills run out.



## Hoyt MacCionnaugh

Hoyt MacCionnaugh is a strong sorcerer from the 12th century, who travels through the Dance of the Gods to the 21st century to find his twin brother, Cian, who was transformed into a vampire. Hoyt has very strong magical abilities and has just become handfasted to a 21st century witch named Glenna. Hoyt brings his sense of family and loyalty to the Circle of Six and is absolutely focused on the purpose of their group. He is a strong and trained soldier and a gifted speaker. He is able to handle even Prince Riddock when they arrive in Geall and convince the Prince to trust the Circle of Six. Hoyt loves his wife, Glenna, passionately and has much to live for.

## Cian MacCionnaugh

Cian MacCionnaugh, Lord of Oiche had been transformed into a vampire and has lived over nine hundred years as such. He was sired by Lilith and tried to kill Hoyt the night he was "reborn." At the time of the story, Cian has learned to live as a successful businessman in New York City but has strong feelings for his family home, which he purchased and is where much of the story takes place in Ireland. He has feelings for family, despite his apparent disdain for such feelings. Cian has given up drinking human blood and has not killed a human in hundreds of years. His abilities are very valuable to the Circle of Six because he alone knows vampires, because he is one. What makes him so unusual is that he is willing to side with the humans in the fight against Lilith, the Queen of the vampires. Cian shows a number of human traits and characteristics, but keeps most of them hidden. They come to the forefront when Blair is so badly injured in battle with the vampires, and when he is willing to risk using the sun cloak in order to stop Lilith's dark magic at the end of the book.

## Glenna Ward

Glenna Ward the witch of the "Circle of six," lived in modern-day Manhattan prior to joining forces to fight the vampire threat. She has fallen in love with Hoyt, the sorcerer from the 12th century, and they have learned to combine their magic to create very powerful magic. She is a skilled healer and has a finger on the emotional pulse of the rest of the Circle of Six. She is a beautiful, red-headed witch, who has a sense of style that makes Blair jealous. She has trained as a warrior and is willing to go into battle for the worlds that have humans populating them.

## Moira

Moira, is the scholar of the Circle of Six, a princess of Geall and destined to become Queen of Geall. Moira is the smallest of the group, and yet in some ways the strongest. She knows that in order to be a true leader, she must prove herself to her people. She is willing to get into the arena with a vampire to show just how dangerous the vampire threat is to her people and to prove to them that their traditional fighting skills are



inadequate for the new threat. Moira is strong, beautiful and innocent. Her only love was Larkin, her cousin, for whom she has only familial feelings. There is a point where there is a attraction between Moira, the future Queen of Geall and Cian, the vampire demon in their midst. Moira must led her people and has to put her feelings for Cian on the back burner.

## **Sean Murphy**

Sean Murphy, Blair's father, who reluctantly trained Blair as a demon hunter. He had wished for his son to have been given the gift, not his daughter. He trained his daughter and provided for her until she was eighteen, but on that day, he left home and keeps very little communication open between father and daughter.

## **Mick Murphy**

Mick Murphy, Blair's older brother, who had been trained for a number of years by her father to be a demon hunter before their father discovered that Mick had not been given the gift. Mick was greatly relieved to have been spared such a burden.

## **Morrigan**

Morrigan - the goddess who has called each of the Circle of Six to come together to save the world from domination from the Queen of Vampires, Lilith. She appears from time to time to guide the Circle of Six, but gives them only cryptic messages.

## **Lilith**

Lilith - the female vampire Queen who is trying to take over humankind; she is the actual leader of the war against humanity. She is Cian's sire, transforming him into a vampire in the 12th century.

## **Lora**

Lora - A French female vampire who is Lilith's lover. She can take on a beautiful human form that fools members of the Circle of Six a couple of times causing untold harm.

## **Davey**

Davey - Lilith's "son," a six-year-old child vampire that Lilith sired and calls her son.



## **Midir**

Midir - The wizard who has joined forces with Lilith. He is capable of getting into the minds of the Circle of Six when they are weakened and able to bring down false darkness in an attempt to assist Lilith.

## **Nola MacCionnaugh**

Nola MacCionnaugh - Hoyt's and Cian's youngest sister, from whom the demon-hunter line arose.

## **Vlad**

Vlad - Cian's stallion

## **Oran**

Oran - Prince Riddock's youngest son, Larkin's younger brother.

## **Prince Riddock**

Prince Riddock - Larkin's father and acting ruler of Geall. He is Moira's maternal uncle, brother to the former Queen of Geall. He is suspicious of the Circle of Six but allows them to teach the Geallians to learn to battle vampires.

## **Deirdre Riddock**

Deirdre Riddock - Larkin's mother, who supports Blair as a female warrior and as the woman her son loves.

## **Sinann**

Sinann - Larkin's married, pregnant sister, mother to two small children

## **Phelan**

Phelan - husband to Sinann and Larkin's brother-in-law.



## **Niall**

Niall - guard at the Castle Geall, the one who is the loser in the competition against Blair in her demonstration of the skills necessary to battle vampires.

## **Conn**

Conn - Larkin's childhood puppy, the one he got after he became a shape-shifter due to his intense desire to have a puppy.

## **Ceara**

Ceara - A village woman and attendant to Moira, one of her ladies who becomes a warrior.

## **Eogan**

Eogan - Ceara's husband and warrior who goes into battle with his wife.

## **Isleen**

Isleen - a servant to Moira at Castle Geall

## **Dervil**

Dervil - village woman, Moira's lady, resists Blair's instruction in warfare at first until she is made to understand just how necessary it will be for all to be prepared.

## **Jeremy Hilton**

Jeremy Hilton - Blair's ex-fiance, who broke off the engagement once he realized that Blair was really a demon hunter. Lilith used Jeremy to try to force Blair to stop battling the vampires, and when it did not work, she killed Jeremy.





## Objects/Places

### Dance of the Gods

Dance of the Gods - Where the "Circle of six" can pass from the real world through to the fantasy world of Geall.

### Geall

Geall - Gaelic for Promise, the city/state from which Moira and Larkin come, and where Moira is to become Queen.

### Circle of Six

Circle of Six - the six members called together by the Gods, tasked with the job of preventing the vampire threat led by Lilith, Queen of the Vampires, of taking over humankind. Hoyt - sorcerer, Glenna - witch, Moira - scholar, Cian - the one who was lost, Larkin - shape changer, and Blair - demon hunter, make up the powerful Circle of Six.

### Valley of Silence

Valley of Silence - Ciunas (Gaelic for silence). The great battle between the vampires and humans is to take place in the Valley of Ciunas.

### Samhain

Samhain - Celtic festival for the end of summer.

### Manhattan

Manhattan - the city in New York where Cian McKenna and Glenna Ward lived.

### Faerie Falls

Faerie Falls - the place where Larkin takes Blair for a few moments of peace before the coming battle.



## **Cliffs of Mohr**

Cliffs of Mohr - the name for the forts and ancient ruins in Southern Ireland on a cliff by Hag's Head.

## **Claddaugh**

A Celtic symbol that can stand for love, friendship or loyalty.

## **The Burren**

An area of Ireland that has caves and underground streams.

## **braes**

Trousers worn by the people of Geall.

## **Bridget's Well**

A cemetery in County Clare, Ireland named after St. Bridget.

## **Cian and Hoyt's home**

Originally built during the 12th century, where Cian and Hoyt grew up;, Cian bought it over the centuries and currently where the "Circle of six" train.

## **Vampyre/Vampire**

Vampyre/vampire - nonhuman creatures who feed off humans, sometimes killing them, sometimes choosing to sire another vampire.

## **Chicago**

Where Blair lived prior to coming to Ireland.

## **MP3 Player**

A device used for playing music, intensely intriguing to Larkin.



## **Pig's blood**

Cian's drink of choice now that he has sworn off human blood.

## **Demon hunter**

A skill usually passed down through a family. Blair's family is one such family, descended from Nola MacCionnaugh.

## **Tremble**

The word "The Circle" carved with magic into the rocks above Lilith's lair to irritate her.

## **Galway**

Gaillimh in Irish - across the water from Lilith's lair.

## **Shop Street**

A place in Galway which is artistic, with galleries and upscale shopping areas.

## **Hawk**

The shape Larkin takes to check on three of the "Circle of six" on the cliff above Lilith's lair.

## **Lilith's Lair**

The caves and underground passages that Lilith has chosen to use as a home base on the coast of Ireland.

## **Wooden Stake**

The weapon that can kill a vampire if it pierces the heart.

## **Morrigan's Cross**

A cross from the goddess Morrigan that protects the wearer to some extent from a vampire attack.



## **Dragon**

The shape Larkin takes to transport Blair from a dangerous vampire attack. Common in Geall, unheard of in Ireland.

## **Horse**

The third shape that Larkin takes to transport Glenna and Moira to the house.

## **False Dusk**

The premature onset of evening caused by a spell cast by Midir to block out the sun to allow the vampires to attack during normal daylight hours.

## **Boston**

Where Blair lived prior to Chicago and where she and Jeremy broke up.



# Themes

## **Who You are Will Always be with You.**

Blair, Larkin and Cian especially demonstrate this trait. Regardless of how long one lives, or how far away one travels, what makes up one's personality and psyche will continue to be a constant companion. In order to be comfortable with oneself, it is critical to accept oneself.

Blair is the most obvious example. Her father rejected her when she was very young but knew he was responsible for training her, so he kept his promise to train her until the day she turned eighteen. On Blair's eighteenth birthday, Sean Murphy walked out of their home and became as distant a father as he possibly could. Even when Blair tried to contact him to tell him of the upcoming vampire attack on the world, he did not respond to her e-mail. Her only real contact with him comes through her brother. Blair then fell in love with Jeremy, who thought he was in love with her also. After six months together, Blair decides that Jeremy must know exactly who and what she is, so takes him out with her one night. After witnessing exactly what a demon hunter does, Jeremy is disgusted and revolted. He cannot believe they had been sleeping together for six months when all the while she hid this atrocious secret from him. Because of these two rejections, Blair has chosen a life void of human company and companionship. It is only because she has been called by Morrigan to join the Circle of Six and their war against the vampires that she has become part of their group. She tries to keep herself isolated but really does crave companionship, both male and female. She and Glenna become very close friends, and she and Larkin become lovers. Blair thought that because of who she is and what she is called to do she could never be close to anyone. She has discovered that she does not have to change who she is; she simply needed to find people who are able to appreciate her.

## **Values Held for a Lifetime are not Always Correct.**

Larkin has feelings for Blair, who rejects him repeatedly. He sees something in Blair that he has never seen in a woman before, and he has no intention of being put off by Blair's resistance to romantic involvement. He persists in his attempt to win her over. Larkin has a persistent trait in his character that is evident even when he is at battle. In fact, it is this characteristic that Blair really sees in him, that his opponent will simply drop in fatigue because Larkin simply will not give up. Blair is very attracted to this man, this shapeshifter. Her problem is that she has learned throughout her life that men will disappoint her. A solitary lifestyle is all that can be possible for someone who is a demon hunter. As time passes, Blair learns that her father's ways are likely not the best; that his black and white view of life would have made the situation with the Circle of Six and Cian impossible and likely why she, rather than her father, was called by Morrigan to fight the battle. Cian has learned to live among humans, but has avoided learning to care for them; it is too hard to watch friend after friend die of old age when one lives



forever. After meeting Moira, Cian is no longer able to totally keep those feelings and emotions under control, though he continues to try.

Consider the feelings of the people of Geall. They have lived their way of life for centuries and to have strangers from a strange land come to their country and tell them they must learn a new way to fight is an insult. Initially, they all resist the efforts of the Circle of Six until they are shown through a demonstration that puts the life of their future Queen at risk just how dangerous their point of view can be.

## **A Common goal Unites Disparate Individuals**

The Circle of Six is the most unusual and unexpected group of people and demon one could expect together. Yet, they all have the same goal, even Cian, who IS a vampire. Cian does not believe that Lilith's desire to conquer the world of humans is a good idea. Cian has learned to live in the world of humans and finds that he likes it. Hoyt has left his home in the 12th century to travel all the way to the 21st century in order to find his twin, Cian, and fight the battle as requested by Morrigan. He and Glenna, a modern-day witch find they are soul mates and become handfasted the night before the first real battle with the vampires. They are both magically talented and work together to protect the rest of their circle. Cian is a vampire. He is also Hoyt's twin brother, and Blair's many times removed great uncle. He is a demon and he is family. He is repeatedly put in danger because of his vampire blood, and yet he stands by the Circle of Six, supporting them, providing for them, and ultimately traveling through the Dance of the Gods with them, proving his loyalty to humanity rather than to the vampire nation. Larkin and Blair are another pair who have very little in common except the fear of vampires conquering the world. Larkin is a man who likes women and has great admiration for Blair from the very beginning of the story. Blair, on the other hand, finds him to be appealing physically but has no wish to become emotionally entangled with him. She has suffered too much in that regard. Yet, as they approach the date of the final battle between vampire and human, they all combine their talents and abilities, put aside their differences and work together to conquer.



# Style

## Point of View

Point of view is limited, and at times, omniscient third-person, moving between the two main characters of this second book of the trilogy, Larkin and Blair. Roberts makes full use of both of the the third person points of view, but she also uses free rein with the omniscient aspect when describing character's physical traits with no mirror or anyone else looking at them.

The Dance of the Gods is told in the form of omniscient third person narration, or involved author narration, where the point of view moves easily and seamlessly from one character to the next. The majority of the story is told from Blair's perspective, then secondly from Larkin's perspective. The author then allows the other four of the Circle of Six to have their thoughts and feelings revealed to the reader. In addition, the reader is allowed to see and hear the vampire queen's thoughts and words without one of the six major characters being present. It is vital to the movement of the story for such shifts in perspective in order to obtain a complete and clear understanding of the story. All perspectives are true and reliable and used to move the story forward.

Most of the story is told in the form of dialogue between two or more characters, usually within the Circle of Six. From time to time there are bits of exposition and description that allow the reader to take a break from the very fast pace of the story. The story moves through the course of approximately one month as they prepare for the final showdown. Each book of the trilogy tells the story of one of the three months the Circle of Six have been given to prepare. The viewpoint moves easily from one character to another, necessary when the most major characters are asleep or unconscious.

## Setting

The setting of The Dance of the Gods originates in an unknown time and place with a story-teller relating the story of the Circle of Six to a group of children in the prologue.

Chapter one moves the story to modern day County Kerry, Ireland, where Cian has renovated the 12th century family home of the MacCionnaugh family. That family home used to be his and Hoyt's home when they both lived in the 12th century, before Cian was changed by Lilith into a vampire. There is reference to the American cities of New York, Boston and New York, but none of the story of the Dance of the Gods actually takes place in those cities.

Much of the story in Ireland takes place inside the house because of the threat of vampires, especially after dark. The reader will notice that anytime there is darkness, there is an element of fear that mimics the traditional fears of humankind starting in childhood. The episodes of threat and danger occur either after dark or when an



unnatural darkness falls. Darkness is always associated with the threat of evil in the Dance of the Gods.

There is a scene in the caves below ground where Lilith has her hideout, where she is building and training her army of vampires, and where she also keeps humans in cages to use for feeding and for sport. The reader is allowed inside the caves when Larkin changes into a rat in order to enter unseen. The use of a rat in a cave of vampires is especially amusing to the reader, equating those who live underground and on human blood to be less than appealing, on the level of the disgusting rodent, the rat.

The story then moves from the modern-day world of Ireland to the imaginary world of Geall, a place that looks much like modern-day Ireland, but without cars, electricity, power, telephones, computers and indoor plumbing. While they characters deal with the eccentricities of living without their usual modern conveniences, the world of Geall is one of peace and beauty, of hope and tranquility. There is a place very special to Larkin, Faerie Falls, where he takes Blair when he wants a short interlude where there is only love, acceptance, peace, harmony and no threat of death. Larkin also shows Blair another setting that is as enchanting as the idea of the fairy tale world of Geall, and that is when Larkin flies through the air as a golden dragon with Blair on his back. He flies through the rainclouds, the mist and the rainbow to join a group of other dragons of a dazzling array of jewel-tone colors. Anytime there is color and light, there is contentment, happiness and hope for a future.

The only time there is danger in Geall is when Blair and Larkin travel to the Valley of Silence where the great battle will be held, and there is a permeating sense of evil that overpowers all who stand on that ground. It is in this place that Blair is attacked by the vampires and nearly loses her life. Larkin rescues her from this unholy place and takes her back to the fairytale castle where she recovers and discovers true love.

## Language and Meaning

The language of the Dance of the Gods is modern, fast-paced and very familiar, until Larkin, a man from the imaginary world of Geall, wishes to know what an MP3 player is, or Coke, or even what the word "cool" means. Having a character in the story who is unfamiliar with the modern-day slang of the 21st century creates a number of humorous situations both for characters in the story as well as for the reader. It draws attention to just how much communication is done with words; when the meaning of words change over time, it usually is not too noticeable, but when you have people from hundreds of years apart, then the language differences become noticeable and enjoyable.

The author is very skilled in the language of point of view changes. Many mainstream novels will have a change in perspective marked by a new chapter, or some kind of indicator within a chapter. Roberts uses her gift and skill to have the point of view move from character to character in the same scene and even sometimes within the same paragraph. There is no difficulty for the reader in following who is speaking or thinking,





and the overall effect is to give the reader a more complete understanding of the motivations of all the characters involved in the story.

## Structure

The Dance of the Gods is structured as a mainstream novel, beginning with a prologue that introduces the reader to a story already begun. The Dance of the Gods is a complete story and is the second book of a bigger story told by the entire trilogy of the Circle Trilogy. The prologue is mandatory to establish a drama already begun between the humans and Lilith, the vampire Queen, in Book One of the Trilogy, *Morrigan's Cross*. There are six major characters of the book who populate the entire trilogy. The Dance of the Gods focuses on two of the major characters; Blair, the demon hunter of the 21st century, and Larkin, the shapeshifter, from the ancient, imaginary world of Geall, a land much like Ireland, where there are castles, dragons and vampires.

The book progresses chronologically from the day after a major skirmish with the vampires in Ireland to the day after Blair is very nearly killed in a vampire ambush. The major, final battle is mentioned throughout the Dance of the Gods; it is that for which they have all come together and for which they prepare. However, the final confrontation is saved for the third book in the trilogy, *The Valley of Silence*.

The Dance of the Gods moves from the Prologue through Chapter Twenty, further detailing the events the Circle of Six must experience to prepare for the final confrontation between humans and vampires. It is also a love story between Blair and Larkin, exploring how difficult it is to allow love into a life complicated by past hurts and desertions and present and future threat of vampire domination of all worlds. The story is one of love and triumph over fear, loss and pain.



## Quotes

"Now it wasn't just the duty and tradition that had been passed down through her blood for damn near a millennium. Now it was a fight to save humankind. She was here, with this strange little band—two of which, vampire and sorcerer, turned out to be her ancestors—to fight the mother of all battles." Page 23, Chapter 1.

"She stiffened when Larkin put an arm around her shoulders, but when she would have shifted away he tightened his grip in the comfort of a one-armed hug. 'I don't know your father or your brother, but I do know I'd rather be here with you than either of them. You fight like an avenging angel. And you smell good.'" Page 63, Chapter 2.

"He changed, but it wasn't a hawk that stood beside her. The dragon's gold wings spread, and as it reared back, its tail sliced down the first that came out of the caves. She didn't think, just leaped on its back, locking her legs around its serpentine body. She sliced out to the left, hacking at one that charged. Then she was rising up, streaming through the gloom and the mist. And she couldn't help it, couldn't stop it. She let out a wild cry of sheer delight, throwing back her head as she stabbed the swords into the sky. And set them both to flame." Page 75, Chapter 3

"Blair? Sometimes the heart of a champion is tender." Page 92, Chapter 4.

"He drank again, nodding when she only stared at him. 'Well, that put the cork back in you right enough. Magnificent,' he repeated. 'In face and form, in your heart and your mind. Magnificent because of what you do every day, and have done for years, since you were all but a babe. I've never known another like you, and never will. I'm telling you that if a man looks at you and doesn't see what a wonder you are, it's his vision that's at fault, and not a bit of you.'" Page 134, Chapter 5.

"'It's going to involve a lot of training,' Blair pointed out. 'And it's going to be more complicated than what we've been doing. We're just six. We'd better be able to pull together hundreds, and it's not just putting a stake in their hands, it's teaching them how to kill vampires.'" Page 151, Chapter 6.

"He remembered the feel of her legs locking around him as they rose up into the air. The way she'd laughed. He'd never known another like her, warrior and woman, with such strength and vulnerability. A ready fist and a tender heart." Page 160, Chapter 7.

"He did scream. And his body arched up, bucked. The wound itself seemed to boil, and she let the viscous liquid that bubbled out run as she continued, ruthlessly, to douse it with water." Page 197-198, Chapter 8.

"'Oh, bollocks. You think I can't disagree with you, and passionately, come to that, and care for you? Respect you, admire you, even knowing inside my heart you're wrong about the thing we're arguing over? The same, I wager as inside yours you believe I'm wrong. I'm not,' he said with the barest hint of a smile, 'but that's another matter. If



everyone has to believe the same, if there's never any passionate differences, how do people come together in your world?" Page 240, Chapter 9.

"You're no fun are you? But one day we'll have fun, you and I.' She floated close running her tongue over fangs before she smiled. 'I have so many plans for you. Men have let you down, haven't they? Poor Blair. Withheld their love, and you crying out for it inside.'" Page 250, Chapter 10.

"So it's your fault, is it? Your fault that you cared enough to share what you are with him. To show him not only that there are monsters in the world, but that you're strong enough, courageous enough to fight them? Your fault that he wasn't man enough to see the wonder of you?" Page 270, Chapter 11.

"Uncle.' Moira laid a hand over Riddock's. 'I would be dead if not for him. But beyond that, he stood with us within the Dance of the Gods, traveled her by their hands. Chosen by them. Will you question their will?" Page 296, Chapter 12.

"May I speak?' Hoyt got to his feet, waited until Riddock nodded. 'Morrigan herself has sent us here, just as she sent two Geallians to Ireland, to us, so that we would gather into the first circle. We who have come here have left our worlds and our families, and have pledged our lives to fight this pestilence that comes to Geall.'" Page 314, Chapter 13.

"I'm not. I'm sick in my heart, but I'm not angry with you. Or you,' he said to Cian. 'I don't know why it should be this way inside me. I saw what was in the caves back in Ireland. I know how they kill, how they breed. But knowing they made a monster of that girl only so they could use her between, it makes my heart sick.'" Page 347, Chapter 14.

"I have no intention of starving them.' Moira came in. She wore riding gear now, with a feminine flare, in forest green. 'And neither will they be fed. They've had enough Geallian blood, animal and human. My uncle and I will ride out shortly, to rally the people and spread the word. As many as can manage will come here by sundown. And when the sun has set, what is in the cellars will be shown to them. Then destroyed.'" Page 367, Chapter 15

"Vampires are not born. They aren't conceived, they don't grow inside a womb. They're made. Made from humans. A bite from a vampire, if not fatal, infects. Some that are infected become half-vampires, slaves to them. Others are drained almost to the point of death, the very edge of life. Then they're fed the blood of their sire, and they die only to rise again. Not as a human, but as a vampire. Your child, your mother, your lover can be turned like this. They won't be your child, your mother, your lover anymore. They'll be a demon, like these, with the blood lust that drives them to feed, to kill, to destroy.'" Page 389, Chapter 16.

"She lost her breath, literally felt it whiz out of her lungs as beautiful winged beasts soared beside her, in front of her, behind. In more colors than the rainbow, she realized, with their emeralds and rubies and sapphires. She felt Larkin's body ripple as he



answered their call, and grinned like a fool when he turned his head and fixed a laughing gold eye on her." Page 416, Chapter 17.

"She stepped back, the laughter gone. In its place was a sorrow and a kind of steely strength. 'What is coming must come. There will be pain, and blood and loss. There is no life without its price. The shadows will fall, dark upon dark, and demons rise from it. A sword flames through it, and a crown shines. Magic beats like a heart, and what was lost can be regained if that heart is willing. Give these words to all the circle, and remember them. For it is not the will of gods that will win the day, but the will of humankind.'" Page 431, Chapter 18.

"Everything's a weapon. I tossed as much as I could into her face. Hit her, too. Face, down the throat. I heard her screaming when she ran off. But that was it for me, pretty much all I had left. Good thing you came." Page 463, Chapter 19

"I said you're my breath, and my pulse, my heart, my voice. I said, I'll love you even when all of them stop. I'll love you, and only you, until all the worlds are ended. So you'll marry me, Blair. And I'll go where you go, and fight beside you. We'll live together, and love together, and make a family." Page 485, Chapter 20.



## Topics for Discussion

How does Blair's experience with men, specifically her father and Jeremy affect her ability to function as a demon hunter. Explain.

Describe all six individuals in the Circle of Six, who they are, their strengths, weaknesses, and why such a group is brought together?

Is Blair's hardness necessary? Could she be effective without it? Why?/Why not?

How did Larkin get around Blair's defenses? Why do you believe this worked?

Why does Cian seem to be an unusual vampire? Why do you think he left his family alone? Why is he fighting Lilith? Give specific examples from the text.

Discuss how a weak member of the group, specifically Moira, can add greatly to the strength of the group overall.

Discuss Blair's inability to forge personal relationships. Are her reasons justified? What reasons can you find in the text to support your answers?

Do you believe that the Circle of Six really has a choice in the matter of battling Lilith? Explain your position.

If Larkin had not stopped Blair from opening the window to Lora, what do you believe would have happened? Why? Explain your answers, supporting them from the text. Does your position support the characters true nature?

Discuss your reaction to Midir. He is a powerful wizard. Why did he join forces with Lilith? Did he expect more power? Did he receive it? How does Lilith treat Midir?

How does the fact that Larkin and Blair begin a personal relationship affect the strength of the Circle of Six? Do you believe that this sort of distraction jeopardizes their mission? Why or why not?

What difference could that have made to Blair if her father had been more accepting of the fact that it was his daughter who received the gift of being a demon-hunter Blair? To the world? Why?

Do you feel that the reaction of the people of Geall to their mandatory training was justified? What could the Circle of Six have done differently to solicit their more immediate cooperation?

Why do you believe that Lilith chose this time and place for her confrontation with humans? Explain.



What difficulties do you think that Lilith's son experiences due to his young age when he was changed into a vampire? Give examples of the difficulties and how they can possibly be overcome.

Why do you think Lora targets Blair specifically in trying to woo her over to the side of the vampires? What is it in Blair that she sees? Is she envious or is she attracted to Blair's strengths?

Could Glenna have approached the women of Geall differently when she begins to train them to be warriors? What did she do right? What did she do wrong?

Discuss how Blair trains the men of Geall. Do they like being taught by a woman? What is their society like in terms of equality for women? Why is Larkin so ready to embrace a woman from the 21st century? Is this typical of all the men of Geall?

What is Moira's motivation in proving to her people that she can kill a vampire? Why did Cian interfere? Was he justified? Why or why not? Were her methods effective?