

Defiance (Courier's Daughter) Study Guide

Defiance (Courier's Daughter) by C. J. Redwine

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Contents

Defiance (Courier's Daughter) Study Guide.....	1
Contents.....	2
Plot Summary.....	3
Chapters 1-11.....	5
Chapters 12-22.....	9
Chapters 23-34.....	13
Chapters 35-46.....	17
Chapters 47-61.....	21
Chapters 62-71.....	25
Characters.....	28
Symbols and Symbolism.....	32
Settings.....	34
Themes and Motifs.....	35
Styles.....	37
Quotes.....	39



Plot Summary

Defiance by C.J. Redwine is the first in the Courier's Daughter Trilogy. Defiance is a dystopian novel set in a world controlled by strange creatures released by greedy businessmen in a world unimaginable to the survivors. Rachel, the daughter of a courier, lives in one of several city-states that rose in the destruction of the world. The world's destruction was led by a military leader who, along with the members of his squad, managed to defeat the underworld creatures. Under the guise of keeping the civilians safe, Commander Jason Chase, has imposed massive restrictions on the people of Baalboden. Women are forced to have a Protector. After the disappearance of her father, Rachel is forced to accept as her Protector Logan McEntire, her father's apprentice. This causes for Rachel a storm of emotions, particularly since she once confessed her love to Logan and was rebuffed, but Logan soon becomes her only ally as Rachel becomes determined to escape Baalboden and find her missing father.

Rachel Adams' father, a courier in the city-state of Baalboden, has not returned from his last mission to the nearby city-state of Rowansmark. At the sixty day mark, Commander Jason Chase, leader of Baalboden, declares Jared Adams dead. At the reading of his will, Rachel learns that she has been given Logan McEntire as her Protector instead of the anticipated Oliver, a family friend. Rachel is angry, not only because she does not believe her dad is dead, but because she does not want to be stuck with a Protector so close to her own age, especially a young man she once declared her love to.

Rachel reluctantly moves into Logan's cottage, saddened to leave behind the home she shared with her father. Rachel and Logan immediately clash when Rachel asks his help to find her father and he refuses. For this reason, Rachel comes up with her own plan to escape Baalboden and go into the Wasteland to find her father. Unfortunately, when Rachel attempts to cross the wall, she is captured by the Commander. As the Commander interrogates Rachel, she tells him that she often went on missions with her father. This leads the Commander to ask about a specific mission, the one before her father's last, and whether he was given a package by someone in Rowansmark. When Rachel confirms this, the Commander tells Rachel he wants the package.

Logan, who figured out Rachel's plan too late to stop her, is also captured by the Commander's guards. When Rachel makes it clear to the Commander that she knows where the Rowansmark package is, but that she must go herself to recover it, Logan insists on going with her. After some threats, the Commander agrees to Logan's demands.

After their confrontation with the Commander, Logan admits to Rachel he has been working on a plan to go search for Jared all along. Together they prepare for their trip into the Wasteland, trying to plan for every possibility, including options for escaping the guards the Commander plans to send with them. As time for their departure draws near, Rachel begins to worry about their friend, Oliver. Logan tells Oliver his plan for searching for Jared and asks him to escape the city the day before Logan and Rachel are to leave and wait for them. Oliver agrees.



The following day, Rachel is with a friend planning for the friend's Claiming ceremony. The Commander has Rachel picked up in a wagon where there is a person wrapped in a sack. As the Commander speaks to Rachel about trying to outsmart him, he stabs the person in the sack. Rachel is mortified to discover the person is Oliver. After Oliver is dead and his body taken away, the Commander tells her that he wants her to participate in the Claiming ceremony, but he wants her to ask to be a ward of the state instead of being claimed.

Rachel is in a state of shock after Oliver's death, but is eventually able to tell Logan what happened. They make a plan on how to deal with the Claiming ceremony, but when it comes time for Rachel to face down the Commander and refuse to choose to become a ward of the state, she buckles out of fear for Logan. Logan becomes enraged when the Commander hits Rachel for insubordination and a sword fight ensues. Rachel manages to calm the situation by threatening to kill herself, thereby denying the Commander the package only she knows where to find. Rachel agrees to get the package as long as Logan remains alive. The Commander agrees, but places Logan in his dungeon where he is badly beaten and left to starve.

Rachel travels with one of the Commander's couriers, Melkin, whom, it turns out, has been forced to travel with Rachel after his pregnant wife is imprisoned. Rachel and Melkin forge an uneasy alliance that comes apart when Rachel receives the package and Melkin tries to take it from her. Rachel kills Melkin, but is immediately overwhelmed with regret when she realizes he was only trying to disarm her, not kill her.

Logan manages to escape the dungeon and catches up with Rachel just in time to save her from a Rowansmark tracker. Together they forge a plan to kill the Commander. They plan to use the object from the package the Commander wanted, a flute that controls the underground monsters that destroyed the world fifty years ago. However, the creature does not respond to their controls, but instead seems to be responding to someone else. The creature begins to destroy Baalboden, leaving Logan and Rachel scrambling to save as many citizens as they can.



Chapters 1-11

Summary

Chapter 1

Rachel is angry that the Commander, Jason Chase, of Baalboden is declaring her father dead only sixty days after he left for his last mission. Jared Adams is a courier for Baalboden, tasked with taking messages, packages, and whatever else necessary between Baalboden and other city-states, most often Rowansmark. To add to Rachel's dismay, she learns during the reading of her father's will that he has chosen Logan McEntire, his apprentice, as her Protector instead of Oliver, a baker and family friend.

Chapter 2

Rachel once declared her love to Logan and he rebuffed her, a fact that has caused her to avoid him for the past two years. Now they will be forced to live together and Rachel will not be allowed to go anywhere without him. To top it off, Rachel is being forced to give up the home she shared with her father all her life. For this reason, Rachel is insubordinate toward the Commander, nearly causing her to be punished severely, but both Oliver and Logan manage to come to her rescue.

Chapter 3

Oliver takes Rachel to the home she shared with her father so she can pack her belongings. Rachel takes a few minutes to say goodbye to the only home she has ever known.

Chapter 4

The first day with Rachel in his home is uncomfortable for Logan who realizes he should have given up his home so that Rachel would not have to give up hers. Logan finally finds a way to break the tension by offering to spar with Rachel, but when she asks him to help her find her father, Logan shuts down the discussion in an attempt to keep Rachel safe.

Chapter 5

When Logan refuses to help her find her father, Rachel decides to do it alone. Rachel tells Logan she is going to spend the day with a friend, but instead she goes into the Lower Market alone, an offense that is punishable by death if she is caught.

Chapter 6

Logan is searching for a merchant who is willing to sell him acid, a component he needs for a tracking device he wants to use to find Jared, but it is also illegal in Baalboden.



Logan finally finds a merchant who seems willing to work with him, someone who clearly dislikes the Commander as much as Logan. Drake agrees to give Logan the acid in exchange for discs Logan invented that block the scanners the guards use to identify citizens by their wrist marks.

Chapter 7

Rachel realizes there are guards in the Lower Market, which is unusual. Rachel attaches herself to a stranger until she reaches Oliver's bakery tent. Oliver chastises Rachel for taking such a risk, assuming it has to do with Logan. However, Rachel tells him she has come to say goodbye before going over the wall.

Chapter 8

Logan arrives at the home of Maria Angeles to pick up Rachel only to discover she is not there. Logan immediately realizes what Rachel has done and rushes to stop her. Logan spots Rachel just as she begins to climb up the wall.

Chapter 9

Rachel is on top of the wall and preparing to climb down the other side when she is caught by Commander Chase. The Commander takes Rachel into a guard house and begins to interrogate her. The Commander clearly thinks that Rachel knows where her father is and he desperately wants to know what she knows. However, Rachel insists that she does not know where he is, she was simply hoping to track him. Rachel then brags that she often went on missions with her father, a fact that is against Baalboden law. It is then that more guards drag Logan into the rooms. As the Commander demands to know if Rachel was with Jared on his next to last mission, Logan gestures for her not to answer, but she admits she was. The Commander asks if she saw anything unusual on this mission and, despite Logan's clear gesture telling her to lie, Rachel admits she did.

Chapter 10

As Logan watches Rachel admit that Jared received a package in Rowansmark that he did not bring back to Baalboden, he tries to figure out a way to save her from herself. Logan tells the Commander that he knows things about the package that Rachel does not and that he can help find it. The Commander agrees to allow Logan and Rachel to go get the package, but before he ends the interrogation, he gives them a warning.

Chapter 11

The Commander lunges his sword into the chest of a guard standing beside Rachel. Rachel is shocked by the viciousness of the act. The Commander then releases Logan and Rachel so they can prepare for their trip into the Wasteland.



Analysis

These first chapters introduce the main characters and the world in which they live. Rachel is the daughter of a courier, a man who travels between city-states in order to transport messages or packages from leader to leader. Rachel's father, Jared, has been missing since his last mission. For this reason, the leader of Rachel's city-state, Commander Jason Chase, declares Jared dead, leaving Rachel to become the ward of her father's apprentice, nineteen year old Logan McEntire. Rachel once admitted her love to Logan and was rebuffed, making this choice by her father via his will a double insult. However, Rachel is so obsessed with the idea that her father is still alive and waiting for her to come find him that she cannot dwell on such childish hurts.

Logan McEntire is an orphan who was befriended by Jared Adams and his friend Oliver after his mother was killed by the Commander for daring to go to the Lower Market without her Protector. After her death, Logan was cast into the streets. The citizens of Baalboden were afraid to have any interaction with Logan out of fear of retribution by the Commander. For this reason, Logan learned to care for himself in many ways. It is only because Jared and Oliver took him in and made him an apprentice courier that Logan has become a functioning member of the Baalboden society. However, Logan continues to harbor hatred and a need for revenge against the Commander for his actions in the death of Logan's mother.

Rachel asks Logan to help her find her father, but Logan, despite admitting he believes Jared is still alive, refuses. Logan wants to keep Rachel safe, but she sees his refusal as fear of crossing the Commander. For this reason, Rachel chooses to go on her own. Unfortunately she is caught. The reader sees in Rachel at this point a girl who is stubborn to the point where she is willing to do just about anything to get what she wants. Rachel is not logical, and she is not a planner. She acts on emotion. Logan, however, as an inventor, is very logical. Logan works things through slowly, taking everything a step at a time. It is in this way that Logan manages to come up with a plan to find Jared, but this plan is nearly ruined by Rachel impetuous attempt to leave Baalboden.

Baalboden is city-state that exists in a future time from modern days. However, fifty years before the novel begins, a greedy businessman searching in the bowels of the earth accidentally released ancient dragon like creatures, referred to as the Cursed One. These creatures breathe fire. The Cursed Ones destroyed whole cities, killing everyone they came in contact with. A squad of soldiers was sent into the earth to find these creatures homes and destroy the entrances, once again capturing them inside. The mission failed, but somehow when the soldiers returned they were able to stop the creatures from attacking. For this reason, each of these soldiers created his own city-state where they became rulers over the surviving people who chose to come live inside the safety of the city's walls. Jason Chase was the leader of this group of soldiers and he established Baalboden.



Discussion Question 1

Why is Jared Adams declared dead? Where is he? Why does Rachel believe he is still alive? What is unusual about the amount of time Commander Chase waited to declare Jared dead?

Discussion Question 2

Why is Logan McEntire made Rachel's Protector? What is a Protector? How does Rachel feel about this situation? Who did Rachel assume would be her Protector?

Discussion Question 3

Why does Rachel try to leave Baalboden? Why does she not succeed? Who stops her? For what reason?

Vocabulary

Commander, supplies, depart, turret, package, assigned, predatory, foolish, extinguish, cooperation, threaten, pallor, rage, cloak, crumples, knowledge, hardens, beneath, glistens, struggling, brute, panicked, lunges, comparison, citizens.



Chapters 12-22

Summary

Chapter 12

Logan is deeply angry with Rachel. They argue as they make their way through the city back to Logan's cottage. Rachel attempts to run away again when they reach the cottage, but Logan finally calms her when he admits that he has been working on a device to track Jared all along.

Chapter 13

Logan describes the device to Rachel, finally convincing her that they have to do this carefully, to make a plan and stick with it.

Chapter 14

Several days pass. Logan has identified one of the trackers the Commander has tasked with following Logan and Rachel and monitoring their movements. Logan needs to gather more information before leaving to find Jared, so he insists Rachel stay with Oliver for the day, something she strongly resists. After some argument, Rachel finally agrees.

Chapter 15

Oliver takes Rachel for a walk to discuss with her the birds and the bees, assuming that her conflict with Logan is based on mutual attraction. Rachel tries to deny it, but instead indulges Oliver because she can see how much pleasure the idea of her settled down with a man and children gives him. As they approach the outer wall, a sound of vibrations under the earth alerts them to an impending Cursed One attack. Oliver is knocked down by groups of people attempting to escape the creature's wrath. As Rachel attempts to get Oliver out of the way, the Commander arrives. Rachel watches the Commander knock people out of his way with his horse whip. When the Commander confronts the creature it suddenly decides to return from where it came. As the Commander walks back into the city, Rachel loudly criticizes his lack of concern for his people.

Chapter 16

Logan has just received his acid and other purchases when he sees smoke by the Lower Market. Logan quickly rushes to the area, racing across rooftops to get to Oliver's bakery. When he arrives and finds them missing, he races toward the wall. Logan finally spots Rachel. Logan helps Rachel get Oliver to safety.

Chapter 17



Rachel and Logan stay home for the next few days so that Logan can finish his invention. Rachel trains with her weapons, including a Switch. The Switch is a stick with both a blade and a weighted end. It had belonged to her father. Rachel works hard with the Switch, remembering all her father told her about fighting. Logan sees Rachel and agrees to train with her.

Chapter 18

Logan looks at the Switch and decides he should make a smaller one for Rachel. They talk then and Rachel expresses her concern for Oliver after they leave. Logan agrees they must take Oliver with them somehow. Logan then tells Rachel more about the death of his mother. Later, after Logan has finished making a smaller Switch, they work out together until they are surprised by the arrival of Oliver.

Chapter 19

Rachel and Logan invite Oliver into the cottage. Oliver tells them he has recently learned that Jared is wanted for thievery and treason by the leader of Rowansmark. This gives them all hope that Jared is still alive. As Oliver prepares to leave, Logan tells him that he wants him to escape Baalboden the next day by going to trade with the highwaymen as he normally does, but then simply walk out into the Wasteland when he is done. Logan gives him a bracelet to hide his wrist mark so that he will not be found out by the guards. Oliver agrees.

Chapter 20

Logan and Rachel will be leaving soon, so Logan wants to gather some more information. Rachel decides to spend the day with her friend, Sylphia.

Chapter 21

Rachel goes to a dress shop with Sylph, her mother, and brother for the final fitting of her Claiming dress. Sylph talks the whole time about the boy she hopes will claim her. All Rachel can think of, however, is Logan and the compliment he gave her that morning.

Chapter 22

Commander Chase arrives at the dress shop and forces Rachel to go with him. They get into a wagon where there is a body wrapped in a sack. The Commander accuses Rachel of trying to outsmart him. The Commander then stabs the body. Rachel thinks the body inside the sack is Logan, but when she finally manages to tear the sack open, she discovers Oliver. The Commander kills Oliver and then has his guards take away the body. As Rachel sits in shock, the Commander tells her she will take part in the Claiming ceremony and when Logan tries to claim her, she is to ask to become a ward of the state. Rachel will then go retrieve the package and bring it back to the Commander, or Logan will be killed.



Analysis

The differences between Rachel and Logan's personalities come out in the aftermath of their confrontation with the Commander. However, Logan is able to draw Rachel in, to show her that a careful plan is better than acting on emotion. It is also clear that in the aftermath of their confrontation with the Commander, Logan and Rachel have grown closer to one another. The reader previously knew about Rachel's feelings for Logan, but now it is clear that Logan feels the same for her. This might have something to do with why Jared chose to make Logan Rachel's Protector instead of Oliver. Perhaps, Jared saw that this young couple needed a push to find one another.

As they plan their trip into the Wasteland, Rachel and Logan both become aware that they cannot leave Oliver behind. If Rachel and Logan are successful in escaping the Commander's guards and disappearing into the Wasteland, the Commander will take out his anger on Oliver. For this reason, they arrange for Oliver to escape the city ahead of them. Unfortunately, the Commander is not only watching Rachel and Logan, he is watching Oliver. Oliver is caught and killed in front of Rachel in an attempt to show her that she cannot outsmart the Commander. Not only that, but the Commander is changing the rules, preventing Logan from going into the Wasteland with Rachel. The reader must wonder if this will cause Rachel to be hurt when she runs on emotion rather than logic.

Discussion Question 1

How was Logan's mother killed? For what reason? How did this impact the way in which Logan has made decisions about his own future? How does this connect Logan to the Commander?

Discussion Question 2

What attacks the city wall while Oliver and Rachel are walking nearby? Is this a normal occurrence? What stops the creature in its attack? How? How might this have an impact on the unfolding plot?

Discussion Question 3

Why does the Commander kill Oliver? How does Rachel respond to this event? Is this the intended response? What does this suggest about Rachel and Logan's plan to escape into the Wasteland?

Vocabulary

Crimson, severed, tracker, ceremony, claim, eligible, glistening, haul, shudders, instead, decades, obscuring, mingling, undone, slices, malice, disloyal, instincts, ethics, grotesque, mirth, quality, loyalty, crumple, ignore, escape, attraction, dilutes, scorches, delight, assistance, custom, scorches, promise, gestures, trembling.



Chapters 23-34

Summary

Chapter 23

Rachel is in shock as one of the Commander's men helps her change into an outfit exactly like her own, only minus the evidence of Oliver's death. Rachel is then returned to the dress shop.

Chapter 24

Logan trades with a merchant named Monty for more information on Jared, but does not learn anything new. Logan then runs into a young boy who gives him a message from Mrs. Angeles asking him to come to the dress shop.

Chapter 25

Logan arrives at the dress shop to find Rachel in shock. No one can seem to get through to her and learn what has happened. However, when Sylph tells Logan that the Commander took her away for a short time, Logan assumes the worst. When Logan begins to walk her home, he worries about her ability to make it, so he hails a wagon. Rachel balks and runs when the wagon approaches. For this reason, Logan continues to lead Rachel home. They are approached by a couple of men wanting money. Logan begins to deal with it, but then Rachel flies into a rage and screams until the men leave.

Chapter 26

Safely at home, Rachel washes to rid herself of the remaining traces of Oliver's blood. Rachel still cannot make herself speak, to tell Logan the horror of what she saw. Logan tells Rachel that a package given to them by the Commander's guard includes a dress and instructions for Rachel to take part in the Claiming ceremony even though she will not be of age for a few more months. Logan then admonishes Rachel for acting rashly when the men in the alley attempted to rob them.

Chapter 27

The following morning, Rachel is finally able to tell Logan everything that happened the day before, including her sense of guilt for not stopping the Commander from killing Oliver. Rachel also tells Logan the Commander's plan to have Rachel refuse Logan when he claims her and ask to be a ward of the state.

Chapter 28

As Rachel prepares for the Claiming ceremony, Logan packs their bags. They plan to make a run for it during the celebration after the ceremony. When Rachel appears in the



dress the Commander has chosen for her, Logan finds it difficult to concentrate. Logan gives Rachel the tracking device he created to find Jared, a small device that looks like a bracelet. Logan then gives Rachel a necklace that belonged to his mother along with a promise that he will always be there for her.

Chapter 29

As Rachel and Logan walk to the ceremony, they hide their bags in some bushes in an alleyway. At the ceremony, Logan tries to imagine which man will try to claim Rachel and what his reaction will be.

Chapter 30

The ceremony begins. Rachel grows nervous as her turn approaches. When it is her time, Rachel and Logan step up and proceed as they should. A man named Peter Carmine claims Rachel, much to the Commander's surprise. Both Rachel and Logan accept the match. The Commander, however, is clearly not happy with this break from his plan. Going outside of protocol, the Commander demands to know if Rachel really wants to be claimed. After using physical force on Rachel and unspoken threats toward Logan, Rachel relents and says what she knows the Commander wants her to say. She says that she wants to be a ward of the state. Despite Rachel's compliance, the Commander becomes enraged and hits her, fueling Logan's wrath.

Chapter 31

Chaos breaks out as Logan attacks the Commander with his sword. Logan is quickly surrounded by the twelve members of the Commander's Brute Squad. Logan fights valiantly, but is outnumbered. Rachel tries to help him, but is knocked from the stage. As the Brute Squad manages to get control of the situation, the Commander begins to pronounce a death sentence on Logan. Rachel jumps in the way and threatens to kill herself, thereby depriving the Commander of the package he so desperately wants, unless he guarantees Logan's safety. The Commander reluctantly agrees, but he has Logan placed in his dungeons until Rachel returns with the package.

Chapter 32

Logan is taken to the dungeon where he is chained in a cell. The Commander and several guards come to visit him. Logan incites a fight with the Commander in which he uses his chains to attempt to kill the Commander. When the guards knock Logan away, the Commander orders the chains removed. The Commander then orders Logan beaten and starved.

Chapter 33

Rachel begins her journey into the Wasteland the following morning in the company of the Commander's tracker, Melkin. They draw their weapons as they enter the Wasteland and proceed with caution. Several times they think they hear the sounds of someone following them, but never find anything. When they stop for lunch, a



discussion turns into an argument. Moments later, a Cursed One bursts from underground.

Chapter 34

Rachel and Melkin climb into the trees to escape the Cursed One. As the creature moves below them, breathing fire on the trees, they move from treetop to treetop. Rachel is nearly caught when the creature smells the bag of food Melkin left in the tree below her. Rachel jumps into Melkin's tree, nearly falls, but is caught by Melkin. Together they manage to move to the trees closer to the river and jump in.

Analysis

Oliver has been like a surrogate parent to both Logan and Rachel. Therefore, his death is a blow that almost tears Rachel apart. Rachel is the more emotional of the pair, therefore she reacts more emotionally. Rachel nearly kills two would-be muggers on the walk home after the horror of witnessing Oliver's death. This not only shows the reader how she tends to act with her emotions, but it also foreshadows a time when she will again react with emotion after a tragedy and do something she will later regret. Logan, on the other hand, is the more logical of the pair. Logan takes this information and formulates a plan in an attempt to outsmart the Commander and get them out of danger.

The Commander wants Rachel to become a ward of the state so that he can separate her and Logan. The Commander must know that when Logan and Rachel go into the Wasteland to find the package, they have no intention of coming back. For this reason, the Commander has orchestrated a public scene that will sever Logan's responsibility for Rachel and allow the Commander to send Rachel into the Wasteland without Logan. It does not go as planned because Rachel and Logan know what the Commander wants and they try to outsmart him. However, they do not expect the Commander to break his own rules of etiquette and encourage Rachel to refuse a claim. When he does, it is Logan who reacts emotionally and Rachel who is the logical one in a reversal of roles. Rachel's actions work, however, convincing the Commander that he will not get what he wants unless he guarantees Logan's life. In the end, however, Rachel ends up going into the Wasteland alone despite Logan's attempts to avoid this.

Rachel is sent into the Wasteland with Melkin, the best tracker in Baalboden besides Jared. Melkin is a quiet, intense man, but he seems to be a kind man with a good sense of morals. When Rachel is in danger of being killed by the Cursed One, Melkin risks his own safety to save her. Rachel does not know what to think of Melkin. The reader knows that Melkin has been blackmailed into going into the Wasteland with Rachel and bringing back the package by the arrest of his pregnant wife. Rachel, however, does not know this yet, so she is not sure if Melkin is someone she can trust. It is a complicated situation that suggests trouble for both Rachel and Melkin.



Discussion Question 1

What is a Claiming ceremony? Why is Rachel ordered to take part in this ceremony? What traditionally happens during this ceremony?

Discussion Question 2

Why does Logan tell Rachel to accept the claim of any man who makes a claim? How does this go against the Commander's orders? How might this help them escape into the Wasteland to find Jared?

Discussion Question 3

Why does Rachel threaten to take her own life? What purpose does it serve? Does it work? What is the direct result?

Vocabulary

Surface, snatching, increase, embers, wake, absolute, cursed, coughing, focus, slithers, obliterating, controlled, efforts, unnaturally, purchase, explodes, snout, beside, sightless, monstrous, pointless, radar, deafening, balance, reaches, rumble, understated, rumbles, topic, conversation, irritation.



Chapters 35-46

Summary

Chapter 35

Logan wakes, badly injured from his beating. Slowly he begins to move because he needs his cloak. Sometime later, a girl comes into the cell and slips Logan a small package of food. The girl also offers him water that she has laced with medicine to help his developing fever.

Chapter 36

Melkin pulls Rachel from the river. When she recovers from her near drowning, she and Melkin discover that they have floated several miles out of their way, adding more time to the trip. As they begin to walk again, Melkin takes Rachel's pack, but she becomes nervous because it contains all her weapons. Rachel insists on taking the weapons.

Chapter 37

Rachel and Melkin stop in an abandoned building for the night. Rachel insists on going hunting for food on her own. Rachel kills a boar. Melkin helps carry it back to their camp where he cuts it up and begins to cook it. As they talk, Melkin tells Rachel that the Commander arrested his pregnant wife to ensure he would return with the package.

Chapter 38

Logan feels better in a few hours, but he continues to pretend to be badly injured so as not to rouse any suspicion among the guards or nearby prisoners who might be spies. This includes Melkin's wife who is in the nearest cell to Logan's. The woman, Eloise, whispers to Logan that Melkin needs to be stopped because he is not a killer. Then the girl of the day before returns again. This time she slips Logan a packet of medicine for the pain. When he asks why she is helping him, she tells Logan that a rebellion is brewing and many think he will be its leader.

Chapter 39

A week has passed for Rachel. As she and Melkin walk toward Rowansmark, Rachel has lots of time to think. Rachel realizes she is in love with Logan. One afternoon when Rachel and Melkin stop on the trail to eat, Rachel finds a ribbon with her mother's initials on it. It gives her hope that her father is alive.

Chapter 40

Melkin becomes suspicious when he sees the ribbon, but Rachel manages to calm him. Rachel hears noises in the woods that make her think someone is nearby, but Melkin is



distracted. Melkin insists that Rachel tell him if she thinks the Commander will keep his word and release Eloise when he gets the package. Unaware of the importance of her answer, Rachel lies and tells him yes.

Chapter 41

Logan is concerned about how much time is passing. He knows he needs to go after Rachel, but he needs some information first. For this reason, he is almost happy when the Commander comes to see him again. However, Logan is unable to goad the Commander into telling him what he needs to know. He is, however, able to convince Eloise to tell him after the Commander leaves. Eloise tells Logan that Melkin is supposed to light a torch in an old tree outside the gates to Baalboden when he returns with the package.

Chapter 42

Rachel and Melkin reach the first of Jared's safe houses. It is a two story home that has survived despite the encroaching wilderness. Rachel lets them in and Melkin quickly searches the house. From an attic window, Melkin spots two men who have been following them, Baalboden soldiers. While Rachel prepares a meal, Melkin goes out to deal with the soldiers. When Melkin does not return, Rachel goes in search of him. Rachel realizes someone is tracking her, and she plans to turn the tables on him. But, Melkin pulls her out of the way. It turns out they have also been followed by a Rowansmark tracker who had intended to kidnap and torture Rachel for information on the package. Rachel and Melkin wait for the tracker to leave then quickly pack up and leave themselves.

Chapter 43

Logan uses hidden explosives on his cloak to blow a hole in the back of his cell. Logan runs through the city, avoiding the direction he assumes the guards will think he will go. Logan goes to an abandoned building where he has been hiding supplies. Logan quickly changes clothes and grabs a pack prepared for this possibility. Logan then goes to the wall and digs under with a machine he invented before escaping into the Wasteland.

Chapter 44

Rachel and Melkin are five days out from the safe house. Neither has slept a full night since, as they share guard duty at night. Rachel is optimistic, however, because the tracker Logan gave her indicates that each day brings her closer to her father. As they approach the second safe house, Rachel becomes aware of a young tree girl following them, but she seems harmless so Rachel does not tell Melkin. They reach the place where the house should be, but Rachel is shocked to find it has burned to the ground. Off to the side is a fresh mound of earth. The tree girl and a boy say her name. They tell her that her father died a hero.

Chapter 45



Logan takes shortcuts through highwaymen territory, reaching the first safe house in three days. When he finds the dead guards and the half uneaten meal in the kitchen, he worries that he might be too late. Logan also finds traces of a Rowansmark tracker, increasing his fear.

Chapter 46.

Rachel is in a state of shock as she lies on top of her father's grave. Rachel's determination to kill the Commander increases until it is nearly an obsession.

Analysis

Logan is in the dungeon, badly beaten and struggling to figure out what to do next. Rachel is out in the Wasteland with a man she does not know if she can trust even though he has now saved her life twice. Rachel and Logan are in an unwinnable situation, but the reader still roots for them, hoping that their smarts and their deep feelings for one another will be able to help them.

Rachel proves herself to be a strong woman and a well-trained warrior. She and Melkin continue their way through the Wasteland. Rachel kills a boar. She also recognizes the sounds of someone tracking them before Melkin, and she manages to find evidence of her father among the millions of trees in the Wasteland. Still, Rachel continues to be very emotional, and she often acts before thinking. Therefore, when she learns her father is dead, the reader expects one of two things of Rachel, either she will fall apart and be unable to continue the journey or she will become so intent on revenge against the Commander that she will act without a plan. The reader can only hope that Logan finds her before she does something she will regret.

Logan, on the other hand, is badly injured, but he finds help in an unexpected place. A woman who comes to water the prisoners slips Logan food and medication. The woman tells Logan that a rebellion against the Commander is brewing and they think that he will be their leader. This is news to Logan who always thought that most of the citizens of Baalboden were oblivious to his existence. At the same time, Logan is forming a plan and prepares to escape the dungeon to go find Rachel despite the apparent overwhelming odds. The reader must remember Logan is an inventor and has been planning on escaping for many years, since his mother's murder almost, and that he is prepared for such a situation. The only concern is that he will be able to get to Rachel in time.

Discussion Question 1

Why does Melkin say he agreed to go into the Wasteland with Rachel? What does this imply about his character? What does it suggest about his intentions toward Rachel?



Discussion Question 2

Why is a Rowansmark tracker after Rachel? What does he want? How will he attempt to get what he wants?

Discussion Question 3

How does Logan escape from the dungeon? How does he get out of Baalboden? Why did he not do this before?

Vocabulary

Resolve, shattered, grave, absolute, unyielding, strangers, scorched, imagine, retrieves, important, decent, medicine, distinguish, suggests, continued, assassin, compromise, additional, refuses, contend, reality, examine, handiwork, precision, professional, ramifications, churning, insurance, idly, relinquish.



Chapters 47-61

Summary

Chapter 47

Logan succumbs to exhaustion and climbs into a tree to rest.

Chapter 48

Quinn, the tree boy, coaxes Rachel off her father's grave so that she might eat.

Chapter 49

Logan wakes, upset that he slept longer than he planned.

Chapter 50

At dinner, Quinn gives Rachel the package that has caused so much turmoil. Despite his warnings, Rachel opens it. Inside is a small object that resembles a flute. When Rachel asks what it does, Quinn refuses to say, but his sister, Willow, tells Rachel that it can control the Cursed One.

Chapter 51

As Logan continues to travel to the second safe house, he comes across a Rowansmark soldier. Logan is forced to kill the soldier, leaving him in danger since he knows there must be a whole battalion nearby. Logan covers up his tracks and steals the man's boots. Doing this, Logan is able to move around the battalion and hide in the trees as they discover the body and begin searching for him.

Chapter 52

Rachel and Melkin argue over the package. Melkin wants to give it to the Commander, but Rachel wants to use it to kill the Commander.

Chapter 53

Logan finds a tree where he is well hidden from searchers on the ground. Logan then uses a piece of Rowansmark technology he once traded for to cloak himself.

Chapter 54

Rachel lies down to sleep next to her father's grave. In the middle of the night, Melkin approaches Rachel. Rachel knows he wants the device. Rachel pulls her knife to protect herself and the package. They begin to fight. Rachel ends up stabbing him in the



chest. Melkin tells Rachel he meant her no harm, he just wanted the package. After he dies, Rachel realizes she killed an innocent man.

Chapter 55

Logan listens to the battalion searching the trees beneath him. When they are gone, he continues to wait because he knows they will have left someone behind to watch for him.

Chapter 56

Rachel is overwhelmed with guilt. Quinn convinces her that what is done is done and they must move on. Instead, Rachel insists on digging a grave for Melkin. When it is done, Rachel prepares to leave. Quinn and Willow insist on going with her.

Chapter 57

Logan travels for several days tree-leaping to avoid the Rowansmark military. Logan is surprised when he comes across Rachel and a strange companion. He is also concerned when he realizes the Rowansmark tracker is close behind her, but she is making a great deal of noise. As the tracker comes into Logan's view, he jumps down on him.

Chapter 58

As Logan fights with the Rowansmark tracker, someone kills the man with an arrow through the head. Rachel and her companion return.

Chapter 59

As Rachel absorbs the fact that Logan is there, a sound begins to emit from the tracker's body. They run just before the body explodes. Quinn and Willow begin to worry that the sound of the bomb will draw a Cursed One to them. Logan, however, is injured and cannot climb into a tree. As they argue what to do, they realize the Cursed One is not coming. However, the sound of the explosion draws the Rowansmark military. As Quinn and Logan argue about what to do next, Rachel slams Melkin's stick into the ground. Seconds later, the sounds of the approaching Cursed One forces them into movement. Unfortunately, that movement is directly toward the approaching battalion.

Chapter 60

Rachel shoves the package into Logan's hands and tells him he can use it to save them all. Logan has no idea about what the package is or what it contains, and Rachel's quick explanation does little to help.

Chapter 61



With some experimenting, Logan discovers that by pressing a specific configuration of the three buttons on the device will direct the creature and holding the bottom button will send it away. In this way, Logan is able to both decimate the Rowansmark military and save himself and his friends.

Analysis

Rachel has discovered that her father has died. Devastated, Rachel can barely function. However, Quinn, the tree boy who has befriended Rachel, convinces her that she cannot shut down because it is not what her father wanted. Quinn then gives to Rachel the package that the Commander wants so desperately. When Rachel learns what is inside, a device that can control the Cursed One, she suddenly realizes what all the fuss has been about. With the ability to control the Cursed One, the Commander could destroy anyone, or any place, he wants. This means the Commander could destroy Rowansmark if he decides that city-state is no longer beneficial to him. It is a very dangerous tool, one Jared meant for Logan to destroy. Instead, Rachel sees it as an opportunity to kill the Commander. Once again, Rachel is acting out of emotion instead of logic. She pays for this later when Melkin tries to take the device from him and she kills him despite the fact that he never really meant her any harm. Melkin simply wanted to save his wife.

As Rachel struggles with the knowledge of her father's death, Logan struggles to reach her. Logan must outsmart an entire battalion of Rowansmark military and a Rowansmark tracker who is also a trained assassin. Logan is still injured and he struggles with pain and a lack of sleep as he rushes to Rachel's side, making it clear to the reader how Logan feels about Rachel even before he realizes it. Rachel is all that Logan has left, but that is not the only reason he is chasing after her. Rachel is the one girl Logan feels he cannot live without, but it will not be until later when Logan finally realizes this.

Logan uses the device to control the Cursed One and it works surprisingly well. However, it is clearly a dangerous device, depending on who has it. Logan uses it to destroy an entire military battalion, showing the reader what it must have been like when the creatures first surfaced and began attacking the populated areas of the world. If someone like Commander Jason Chase were to get such a device, the results could be more than devastating because they would be intentional.

Discussion Question 1

What package does Quinn give to Rachel? For what reason? What does she find inside? What does she plan to do with it?



Discussion Question 2

Why does Melkin try to take the package from Rachel? Is he successful? Why does Rachel respond in the way in which she does?

Discussion Question 3

How does Logan control the Cursed One? What does he make the Cursed One do? Why?

Vocabulary

Device, ebbing, misery, surviving, hesitates, vibrations, reasonable, antagonize, remaining, screaming, disintegrate, comrades, fiercely, except, simultaneously, explodes, creature, desperately, widen, absolute, symbols, straight, overtake, illogical, violently, consumes, contain, safety.



Chapters 62-71

Summary

Chapter 62

Logan and his group move on slowly to accommodate Logan's broken rib. They stay in a cabin that night. As Logan sleeps, Rachel attends to some of his wounds, including re-bandaging the burn on his neck.

Chapter 63

As they walk, Rachel makes Logan take Melkin's stick. Logan wants to know what happened to Melkin, but Rachel refuses to tell him. Eventually, however, Rachel tells him, expressing her guilt. Rachel also tells Logan about her father's death. Logan then takes Rachel into the lake they have come to and washes blood from her hands. Logan then tries to talk to Rachel about his feelings for her, but she is still struggling emotionally and has trouble returning his sentiments. Eventually, she is able to open up and allow hope into her heart by expressing her love to him.

Chapter 64

Logan and the others make their way slowly back to Baalboden. One night, Logan asks Quinn and Willow to give him and Rachel a little time alone.

Chapter 65

Rachel continues to obsess with revenge against the Commander. She speaks with Quinn during the night who tells her that he understands her need. Quinn, it turns out, was banished from his village of tree people for an act of revenge. Quinn's only regret is that Willow was banished as well.

Chapter 66

When they arrive in the outskirts of Baalboden, Quinn refuses to go any further, unhappy with the idea of living on the ground. Logan encourages them to return to the Wasteland, but instead they choose to remain in the area for a while. Logan and Rachel then turn their attention to their plan to kill the Commander.

Chapter 67

At dawn the following morning, Logan goes to the old oak tree and sets a torch on fire to signal the Commander. Several hours pass before the Commander and the remaining members of his Brute Squad make their way out of the city walls. A moment later Logan finds himself surrounded. A verbal argument begins between Logan and the Commander. Logan summons the Cursed One with Melkin's stick. When it comes,



Rachel controls it with the device. However, when the Cursed One approaches the Commander, the Commander reveals a necklace that appears to defend him and the Cursed One will not hurt him. Logan decides to attack the Commander from behind.

Chapter 68

As Logan is about to kill the Commander from behind, the Cursed One suddenly turns and begins to attack Baalboden. The Commander rushes after it. Rachel tries to control the creature, but fails. Rachel and Logan chase after the creature, going into town through the hole under the wall the creature created rather than through the gate. Rachel gives the device to Logan to see if he can stop the creature, but he cannot. It appears someone else is controlling it. For this reason, Logan decides all they can do is try to save as many people as possible. There is no clear way out of the city, so Logan decides they must blow a hole in the wall. Logan calls for people to gather supplies so that he can build a bomb.

Chapter 69

The explosion to open a way out of the city catches the attention of the Cursed One. Logan uses the remaining homemade bombs to toss at the creature. When this opens a vulnerable spot on the creature, Rachel rushes forward to kill it with her knife.

Chapter 70

Convinced that Rachel has been killed, Logan rushes the creature. As he does, however, he sees that Rachel is still alive. He throws several more bombs at it, but before they can do more damage, the creature returns to the earth.

Chapter 71

Rachel and Logan join the other survivors of the Cursed One's attack. Many blame Logan and move on toward other city-states, but many believe Logan saved them. These people gather around Logan as their leader. The Commander has disappeared, but Rachel has not given up her desire to get revenge on him.

Analysis

Logan and Rachel solidify their relationship, making confessions that are long in coming. This suggests a future together that will be bright, if only they can survive their current situation. It is this situation, however, that leaves Logan and Rachel struggling to define what their future might be.

Logan and Rachel have made a plan to kill the Commander by controlling the Cursed One. However, they do not count on the fact that the Commander clearly has some kind of talisman that keeps the creature from hurting him. They also do not count on the creature breaching the walls of Baalboden and killing hundreds of their friends and neighbors. It seems that there is another device that overrules theirs, something that



manages to force the creature into town despite the fact that it has never invaded a city-state before.

When all is said and done, Logan and Rachel have not done what they set out to do. They have also destroyed everything they have ever known and must begin again. They are left without the protection of Baalboden and wanted by the people of Rowansmark because of the theft of the device. Their future is once again precarious, but the reader can see strength of character that is sure to get them through anything.

Discussion Question 1

Why do Logan and Rachel decide to return to Baalboden? What do they plan to do there? Why?

Discussion Question 2

Why does Quinn refuse to go into Baalboden with Logan and Rachel? What is different about the village where Quinn and Willow grew up? How has that shaped their personalities?

Discussion Question 3

Why does the Cursed One invade Baalboden? Why can Rachel not stop it? What do Logan and Rachel do to protect the people of Baalboden?

Vocabulary

Trickle, wreckage, survivors, hellish, result, warned, wanted, silence, shivers, defeat, combat, suffered, texture, consume, organize, ceremony, unprecedented, dungeon, asylum, flame, recognize, grateful, suffocating, disaster, vivid, controlling, matters, memoires, devastation, justice, sacrifice, destroy, surrounded, drowning, wreckage.



Characters

Rachel Adams

Rachel Adams is a sixteen year old girl when the novel begins. Rachel is the daughter of a courier. Rachel's father has taught her how to defend herself. Rachel's father has also tried to teach her to be as smart as she is tough, but this is something Rachel struggles to do. Although Rachel is very smart, she often struggles with her emotions, often acting when she should step back and think things through.

After her father is declared dead, Rachel attempts to leave the city in order to find him. Rachel is caught and nearly destroys the plan Logan was working on to find Jared. Later, after seeing Oliver killed in front of her, Rachel nearly kills two would-be muggers for no cause. Finally, after learning of her father's death, Rachel kills Melkin, a tracker traveling with her who only wanted to secure the package her father hid from the Commander so that he might save his pregnant wife.

Rachel is a very emotional character. Rachel acts often before thinking things through. Logan is a perfect balance to Rachel, often using logic where she uses emotion. However, it is this emotion that gets Rachel and Logan into trouble multiple times throughout the novel.

Logan McEntire

Logan was once an orphan abandoned to the streets of Baalboden. Logan's father died when he was very young. His mother was refused a second Claiming ceremony. Instead, she was given the Commander as her protector. For this reason, Logan's mother was dependent on the Commander whenever she wanted to leave the house for things as simple as buying food. The Commander often left Logan's mother alone for weeks at a time, leaving her to starve with her small child. Desperate, Logan's mother once took the risk to go to the Lower Market alone. Logan's mother was caught and whipped in the public square where she died of her wounds. Logan was then cast into the street where people refused to help him out of fear of the Commander's wrath.

Oliver and Jared were once friends of Logan's mother. For this reason, they take an interest in Logan. Jared arranges for Logan to become his apprentice. When Jared disappears, Logan is made Rachel's Protector. At first this is an awkward arrangement because Rachel once confessed her love for Logan, an overture that he gently rebuffed. As time passes and Logan finds himself and Rachel working together for a common goal, he realizes that his feelings for her go much deeper than he ever realized.

Logan is an intelligent young man who has survived all these years on his wits. Logan is an inventor and he has created many devices that those in Baalboden use every day. It is with this logical mind that Logan plans a way to outsmart the Commander and find Jared. When this fails, Logan and Rachel put their efforts into finding a way to kill the



Commander for all he has taken from them. This fails as well, but Logan becomes something of a leader to the people of Baalboden he has helped to save.

Oliver

Oliver is a baker in Baalboden. Oliver is a friend of Jared's. Whenever Jared has to leave the city-state on a mission, he leaves Rachel in Oliver's care. At the same time, Oliver was once a friend to Logan's mother. When Logan was a small child, Oliver would bring food to Logan's mother because she was unable to go out without her Protector. Oliver was ill on the day that Logan's mother took a chance to go to the Lower Market to get food.

Oliver considers himself Rachel's grandfather. For this reason, Rachel assumed Jared would make Oliver her Protector upon his death and is surprised when Jared chose Logan instead. Oliver remains a friend to both Logan and Rachel, attempting to help them smooth over their differences at the beginning of their Protectorship. For this reason, Rachel and Logan realize that they cannot leave Oliver behind when they run away, so they arrange for him to leave before them. Unfortunately, Oliver is caught. The Commander kills Oliver in front of Rachel to teach her a lesson.

Commander Jason Chase

Commander Jason Chase is the founder and leader of Baalboden. The Commander founded the city-state nearly fifty years before after a group of dragon-like creatures, called Cursed Ones, decimated most of the world's population. The Commander was a leader of a military squad that went into the bowels of the earth to trap the creatures in their lair. The mission failed, but when the squad returned, each member was somehow able to stop the creatures from attacking. For this reason, each member of the squad established a city-state inside of which the creatures have never attacked.

After declaring Jared Adams dead and making Logan McEntire Rachel's Protector, the Commander places a group of his elite guard, the Brute Squad, on constant surveillance of Rachel and Logan. It is because of this that the Commander manages to catch Rachel attempting to escape the city to search for her father. During an interrogation, the Commander convinces Rachel to go into the Wasteland to recover a package he believes her father received from someone in Rowansmark. Later, however, the Commander catches Rachel's friend Oliver while he is attempting to flee the city. The Commander kills Oliver and tells Rachel to ask to become a ward of the state so that he can send her into the Wasteland without Logan.

The Commander is a cruel man who will stop at nothing to get what he wants. Due to the fact that he has some kind of talisman that keeps the Cursed One from attacking him, the Commander believes himself to be extremely powerful. This sense of power has gone to his head. Rachel and Logan are determined to kill him for all he has done to their family, but the Commander manages to escape at the end of the book.



Jared Adams

Jared Adams is Rachel's father. Jared is a courier, or tracker, in Baalboden. It is Jared's job to travel in the Wasteland between city-states in order to carry messages and packages. As the novel begins, Jared has been missing for sixty days. The Commander of Baalboden declares him dead. However, Rachel and Logan later learn that Jared is still alive, but he is wanted by both Baalboden and a nearby city-state, Rowansmark, because he is believed to have a package given to him covertly by someone in Rowansmark. Both the leader of Rowansmark and the Commander of Baalboden want the package. Rachel and Logan jump at the chance to get the package because they hope that they will find Jared, too. However, when Rachel gets to where she believes she will find her father, she learns that he died in a Cursed One attack.

Melkin

Melkin is a tracker who works for the Commander. Melkin is part of the team that keeps Rachel and Logan under constant surveillance after Jared is declared dead. Due to the fact that he was Jared's apprentice, Logan is aware of who Melkin is. After the Claiming ceremony, Melkin is assigned to go with Rachel into the Wasteland to find the package given to Jared by someone in Rowansmark. Rachel later learns that Melkin has been blackmailed into this trip by the fact that his wife has been imprisoned by the Commander. Melkin is desperate to get the package so that he might save his life. When he tries to take the package from Rachel, she kills him.

Quinn

Quinn is a young man, about Logan's age, who was exiled from his tree village for committing murder. Quinn lives in the trees near the safe house Jared had near Rowansmark. It is because of this that Quinn and his sister Willow became friends with Jared. When the Cursed One attacked, Jared gave his own life to save Willow and Quinn. For this reason, Quinn sticks beside Rachel even after she tells him he is free to leave her. In the end, it becomes clear that Quinn has fallen in love with Rachel and remains near her for this reason despite the fact that she and Logan are clearly a couple.

Willow

Willow is Quinn's sister. When Quinn was exiled from his tree village for murder, Willow chose to go with him. Willow is about Rachel's age. Willow is young and naive, often too alert in regard to the things around her. Willow has no filter when it comes to saying what is on her mind, a fact that occasionally causes her trouble.



Eloise

Eloise is Melkin's pregnant wife. Eloise was arrested for leverage against Melkin. The Commander wants Melkin to go into the Wasteland with Rachel and bring back the package that Jared hid there, but Melkin is resistant. In order to gain his cooperation, the Commander arrested his wife. In the dungeon, Eloise asks Logan to escape and stop her husband from killing Rachel. Eloise does not believe her husband is a killer. She thinks that if he is forced to kill for her release it will change him. Eloise loves her husband deeply, suggesting trouble in a subsequent novel when she learns how Rachel killed him.

The Girl

The girl is a young woman who comes into the prison to water the prisoners. This girl is young and kind. She gives Logan food and medication even though she could be killed if she were caught going against the Commander's order. It is from this girl that Logan learns there is a growing rebellion in Baalboden and that these people believe that Logan might one day be their leader. It is also because of this girl that Logan is able to recover well enough from his injuries to escape and reach Rachel in the Wasteland.



Symbols and Symbolism

Package

Jared received a package on his next to last mission from a mysterious person in Rowansmark. Somehow the Commander has learned of this package. He wants Rachel to retrieve it for him from the Wasteland. When Rachel finally finds the mysterious package, she discovers that it contains a flute like thing that can control the Cursed One.

Sticky Buns

Oliver is a baker. Sticky buns are Rachel's favorite from Oliver's kitchen.

Wrist Marks

All citizens of Baalboden are given wrist marks which identify them. Guards use a device called Identidiscs to identify people in a given area by their marks or to determine if any citizens remain outside the walls of the city past curfew. Logan has created several devices that can block individual wrist marks or groups of wrist marks from the Identidiscs.

Claiming Ceremony Dress

When the Commander decides Rachel will take part in the Claiming ceremony even though she will not be of age for three more months, he sends a dress home with her for the ceremony. The dress is form fitting, and it causes Logan some discomfort when he first sees her in it.

Tracker Bracelet

Logan makes Rachel a bracelet that will begin to glow when it comes within a certain distance of Jared.

Rachel's Necklace

Logan gives to Rachel a necklace that once belonged to his mother. The necklace's shape and the dark stone on it symbolize eternity and faithfulness. Logan tells Rachel this is his promise to always be there for her.



Commander's Necklace

Commander Jason Chase has a necklace that somehow stops the Cursed One from attacking.

Melkin's Stick

Melkin has a stick that he carries as a weapon. The stick turns out to have the power to call the Cursed One when slammed against the earth because it causes a sonic boom.

Cloak

Logan has a cloak that includes buttons with a small amount of explosives on them. Logan uses this cloak and its buttons to escape from the dungeon where the Commander has kept him since the Claiming ceremony.

Switch

Logan has created a weapon for Jared that he calls the switch. This weapon is a stick that is weighted on one end and has a retractable knife on the other. Logan makes one for Rachel as they prepare to go into the Wasteland to search for Jared.

Bow and Arrow

Rachel is proficient with the bow and arrow and chooses to take one with her into the Wasteland when she goes in search of her father and the mysterious package he hid there.

Knife

Rachel has been trained by her father to use a knife in hand to hand combat. Rachel carries the knife with her throughout most of the novel, but only uses it once: when she kills Melkin.



Settings

Baalboden

Baalboden is a city-state founded by Commander Jason Chase. Within the walls of the city-state citizens are protected from the Cursed Ones, the creatures whose release from the earth fifty years before caused the mass destruction of modern society. Baalboden is a dystopian society, a society where the Commander has imposed so many rules on his citizens that many live in fear. Logan's mother was beaten to death simply because she went alone to the Lower Market to buy her child some food. Talk of a rebellion has begun in secrecy, and Logan has somehow become a candidate to lead.

Rowansmark

Rowansmark is another city-state not far from Baalboden. Due to the fact that Rowansmark is so close to Baalboden, it has become Baalboden's primary trade partner. It is here that Jared received a package that he did not deliver to the Commander of Baalboden. It is this package that has spurred Jared's disappearance and Rachel's assignment to find the package.

Wasteland

The Wasteland is the land outside of the few city-states that exist for the survivors of the Cursed Ones. Rachel and Melkin travel into the Wasteland in order to find the package Rachel's father hid there from the Commander. Later Logan escapes into the Wasteland to find Rachel and protect her from Melkin.

Dungeon

Logan is locked in the dungeon in Baalboden after the Claiming ceremony because he attacked the Commander for hitting Rachel, but Rachel has promised to kill herself if Logan is killed. The Commander has Logan beaten and starved while in the dungeon. Despite this, Logan manages to escape the dungeon using explosives hidden on his cloak.



Themes and Motifs

Dystopian Society

This novel begins fifty years in the future, but a catastrophic event has caused society to slide backward in technology. Fifty years ago a businessman searching for a new source of renewable energy accidentally released dragon-like creatures from the bowels of the earth. These creatures could breathe fire, and they killed most people living in cities and outlying areas. A squadron of soldiers went into the earth to seal these creatures in their lairs, but failed. However, when they returned to the surface they somehow had the ability to stop these creatures from attacking. For this reason, each member of the squadron created their own city-states to protect survivors from the creatures known as Cursed Ones.

In Baalboden, where the novel begins, the founder and commander, Jason Chase, is a cruel man who has created rules that are oppressive toward women. The Commander has created a system of Protectors who are men who can be a woman's father, guardian, or husband. This Protector must be with the woman at all times when she is outside of the home. This creates a situation in which women who do not have a Protector, or an inefficient Protector, to suffer from an inability to take care of their basic needs, such as buying food. It is this sort of situation that caused Logan's mother to be punished and killed.

Rebellion is beginning to form in Baalboden. However, the two main characters are fairly oblivious to this until they are forced into a battle with the Commander. The Commander wants something from them, and he is willing to do anything to get it, including killing their friend Oliver and threatening to kill the two of them if they do not do as he says. This forces them into a situation where they become leaders of the rebellion.

Trust

Rachel has been raised by her father since her mother's death. As a courier, Rachel's father, Jared, is knowledgeable in self-defense techniques that he teaches to his daughter. Jared also knows things about the society in which they live that others do not. For this reason, Jared prepares his daughter for a future where she might have to care for herself in difficult times. Jared does all this despite the laws against it in the city-state where he and Rachel reside.

After Jared disappears, Rachel finds herself alone with only one person she can trust. Oliver is a baker who has been like a grandfather to Rachel. However, Rachel cannot share with Oliver her determination to find her father because she does not want to get him in trouble since he cannot follow her into the Wasteland at his age. For this reason,



Rachel attempts to place her trust in Logan McEntire, her father's apprentice and her new Protector. However, he is rebuffed in his attempts to protect her.

Rachel struggles to find someone she can trust. The Commander catches her in her first attempt to escape, leaving her with no choice but to trust Logan. This is difficult at first despite Rachel's lingering feelings of affection for him. In the end, however, Rachel finds there is no one she can trust but Logan. When Rachel attempts to trust other people, it almost always ends badly and this inability to trust causes Rachel to kill the one person who might have stood between her and her plan to kill the Commander. Trust is an important thing for Rachel, learning who she can trust and who she cannot, making it a theme of the novel.

Secrets

Secrets are kept by nearly everyone in this novel. The Commander has the biggest secret, the secret of how he has managed for fifty years to keep the Cursed Ones from attacking the city-state of Baalboden. No one knows how he does it, but Logan and Rachel observe him showing the creature a necklace he wears constantly around his neck and the creature reacting to it. However, the explanation as to what this necklace is is never resolved in this novel of the series.

Logan has secrets as well. Logan is an inventor and he often invents things that are illegal in Baalboden that he then uses to trade for other items that are illegal. Logan dislikes the Commander for what he did to Logan's mother, punishing her for simply trying to provide her child with food. For this reason, Logan has planned to run away from Baalboden since he was old enough to begin hoping. This, too, is a secret. Finally, Logan has feelings for Rachel. Logan has never really believed himself capable of having a family, a future, because he is an outcast after having been abandoned to the streets of Baalboden by the Commander after his mother's death. For this reason, when Logan falls in love with Rachel it is a secret, from himself as well as those around him.

Rachel has secrets as well. Rachel believes her father is alive and she plans to go find him, but she cannot tell anyone because leaving the city-state is illegal. Rachel schemes to escape the city's walls, but she is caught. Later, she schemes with Logan to run away, but this plan too is disrupted. All of Rachel's secrets do not seem to be that secretive. Rachel tends to wear her heart on her sleeve. For Rachel, the theme of secrets seems to impact her more in terms of other people's secrets rather than her own.



Styles

Point of View

The novel is written in the first person point of view. The narrators of this novel are both Rachel and Logan. The author begins each chapter with the name of the narrator so that the reader is not confused as to who is telling the story at that point. By using two narrators, the author allows the reader to see and know things that are important to the plot but may be unknown to one or the other of the narrators.

The first person point of view is a very intimate point of view that draws the reader deeply into the mind and emotions of the character who acts as narrator. In using this point of view, the author develops a very close relationship between reader and narrators, creating a situation in which the reader is invested in what happens to the narrators. For this reason, the point of view of this novel works well with the plot because it keeps the reader drawn into the events taking place in the plot.

Language and Meaning

The novel is written in simple English. The intended audience of this novel is young adults, therefore much of the novel, including dialogue and narration, is geared toward that age group. As the novel is set in a future that developed after an event like an apocalypse, some terms used might be unfamiliar to the reader. However, the author carefully explains these words within the narration.

The language of this novel is simple and easy to understand. The author does not use a great deal of sophisticated language, nor does she use made up words or terms that might not be recognized by the intended audience. The author is true to her characters and her audience by using language that could understandably be used by characters in this situation and is easily understood by young adults.

Structure

The novel is divided into seventy-one chapters. Each chapter is fairly short and begins with a short heading that tells the reader which of the two narrators is narrating this particular chapter. The novel is written in dialogue and narration, telling a fully rounded story.

The novel has one main plot and several subplots. The main plot focuses on Rachel Adams and Logan McEntire as they attempt to find a way to escape Baalboden to find Rachel's father, Jared. One subplot follows the developing romance between Logan and Rachel. Another subplot follows the growing hatred developing between Rachel and Logan and the leader of their city-state, Commander Jason Chase. Another subplot follows the discovery of and the use of a package Rachel's father hid from the

Commander. All the plots come to a fascinating conclusion at the end of the novel, leaving room for more novels in the series.



Quotes

He isn't coming home.

-- Rachel (Chapter 1 paragraph 2)

Importance: This is one of the first lines in the novel. This sets the stage as Rachel attends the reading of her father's will after the Commander has him declared dead.

Now the morning light feels harsh against my eyes, and my brain feels incapable of even the most rudimentary exercise in logic. Twelve hours into my role as her Protector and I'm sure of one thing: Moving Rachel into my little brick-and-mortar cottage wasn't one of my better ideas.

-- Logan (Chapter 4 paragraph 4)

Importance: This quote does not only show some of Logan's personality and his need to be able to think logically, but it also shows his frustration and guilt in the first hours acting as Rachel's Protector.

What would Logan do?

-- Rachel (Chapter 7 paragraph 12)

Importance: This quote shows that despite her determination not to care about Logan, Rachel has come to rely on him through their previous friendship and their new roles as Protector and ward.

I can't remember how to move.

-- Rachel (Chapter 11 paragraph 3)

Importance: This quote shows Rachel's first experience with shock after watching the Commander kill one of his own guards. This is also the first incident of true violence in Rachel's life, but it foreshadows that there are more to come.

Lashing its serpentlike tail, the beast crushes two of the citizens running toward the gate, but its attention is on the horde of highwaymen and citizens in front of it. Horror trembles through me as the creature opens its mouth and strafes the closet wagons and people with fire.

-- Rachel (Chapter 15 paragraph 42)

Importance: This is Rachel's first experience with the Cursed One, the creatures released from the bowels of the earth by a business man looking for a new source of renewable fuel fifty years ago that caused the destruction of an entire society.

Do you know what happens to girls in Baalboden who cross the Commander, Rachel? Do you?' My voice cracks. 'They die. He kills them. He'll kill you if he finds out what we're planning.

-- Logan (Chapter 18 paragraph 10)



Importance: This quote not only shows the cruelty of the Commander, but it also illustrates the differences in the personalities of Logan and Rachel. Logan thinks logically while Rachel reacts with emotion.

I scoot as far away from him as I can without touching the puddle of Oliver's blood seeping slowly into the floorboards. When he ignores me, I wrap my arms around my knees and try not to let the agonized wailing I hear inside my head leave my lips.
-- Rachel (Chapter 23 paragraph 2)

Importance: This is Rachel's reaction to having just seen her surrogate grandfather killed in front of her. Rachel is a very emotional character. Having something so horrible happen to her sends her into a kind of shock.

Fear for Rachel is a constant hum in the background of my thoughts, but I can't give in to it.
-- Logan (Chapter 32 paragraph 10)

Importance: These are Logan's thoughts as he is trapped in the dungeon after the confrontation with the Commander at the Claiming ceremony.

Something in me has awakened and responds only to Logan.
-- Rachel (Chapter 39 paragraph 8)

Importance: This quote marks the moment Rachel realizes she is in love with Logan. She no longer has a childhood crush on Logan. She feels a womanly love for him.

But I'm not gone. I'm still here-miles from home, surrounded by scorched earth and strangers, facedown on my father's grave.
-- Rachel (Chapter 46 paragraph 8)

Importance: Rachel has just discovered her father's death and is just beginning to deal with it in the company of strangers.

He's mine. For Oliver. For Jared. For Rachel. For my mother. For the citizens of Baalboden who crave change.
-- Logan (Chapter 68 paragraph 5)

Importance: These are Logan's thoughts as he sneaks up behind the Commander and prepares to kill him.

The city burns for three days. Most of its citizens never make it out. The ones who do are divided between worshiping the ground Logan and I walk on for rescuing them, and blaming us for bringing disaster upon everyone by rebelling against the Commander's protection.
-- Rachel (Chapter 71 paragraph 1)

Importance: This suggests what the future holds for Rachel and Logan as they prepare to face the aftermath of the Cursed One's attack and the missing Commander.