

# **Evermore: The Immortals Study Guide**

**Evermore: The Immortals by Alyson Noël**

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## Plot Summary

Ever Bloom is sixteen when her family is in their car and she realizes she's forgotten a favorite sweatshirt. Her father turns around in response to her pleas and has a wreck when a deer steps out in front of their vehicle. Her parents, sister, and the family dog are all killed. Ever also dies but lingers and is revived. She lives with the guilt that the accident was her fault. Ever moves in with her paternal aunt, a wealthy attorney who is lonely and worries that she's leaving Ever alone too much.

Ever's life is forever changed by her death experience. She is able to see auras, the glow that surrounds every living person and changes color in response to health and mood. She is also psychically charged and is bombarded by the thoughts and moods of everyone around her. In her new school, she sets aside her popularity in favor of a couple of friends who are outcasts. She distances herself from others in an effort to insulate herself from their thoughts and feelings.

Then Damen Auguste becomes a new student at Bay View High School and shares a couple of classes with Ever. Ever immediately realizes he has no aura at all and is puzzled by that fact. She also soon realizes that with one touch, Damen can eliminate the overwhelming influx of thoughts and emotions from Ever's psychic ability. Damen is very handsome and Ever isn't certain she wants to become involved but soon finds herself spending a great deal of time with him. When he isn't around, she begins to seek other ways to insulate herself from the psychic input. She tries alcohol with disastrous results. She then meets a psychic who helps Ever learn to distance herself and also addresses another issue in Ever's life - the presence of her younger sister who died in the crash. With Ava's help, Ever realizes she's holding her sister in a world in which she no longer belongs. Though Ever is afraid to lose Riley yet again, she does the right thing, releasing Riley to her own future.

Ever continues to try to figure out Damen and comes to realize that Damen is the one who pulled her back when she was dead. She tells him it was unfair and that he shouldn't have made that decision for her. She slowly realizes there's a bigger connection to Damen than she understands and initially believes him to be a vampire. Damen clarifies, saying he's actually immortal and that vampires are not real. However, Damen's wife Drina is also in the picture and Drina has spent centuries following Damen and killing Ever each time Damen meets up with her. Just when it seems Drina will win again, Ever's love for Damen becomes strong enough to overpower the evil intentions of Drina. Damen tells Ever that she has to be certain she wants to live as an immortal before she chooses that for herself and the two set out for a future together.



# Chapters 1 through 4

## Chapters 1 through 4 Summary

As the story opens, Ever Bloom's best friend Haven puts her hands over Ever's eyes, daring Ever to "guess" her identity. Ever already knows because she's psychic. Haven asks what Ever is listening to on her iPod and comments that the music is very loud. Ever uses the loud music to help drown out the constant stream of noise from her psychic ability and could care less about the topics of the songs. She hides the iPod cords with hooded sweatshirts. Ever and Haven head to their classes. Ever avoids the purse Stacia Miller has put in the aisle hoping Ever would trip over it. She tries to ignore Stacia's constant stream of vile thoughts aimed at Ever.

In Chapter Two, Ever switches off her iPod seconds before the teacher, Mr. Robins, enters the classroom and introduces a new student, Damen Auguste. Ever hears the thoughts of everyone in the room so she knows without looking that Damen is gorgeous. At Mr. Robins' instruction, Damen takes a seat beside Ever. Ever can hear the other students' pity that Damen is having to sit beside the freaky girl.

By lunchtime, everyone is talking about Damen, including Haven and their friend Miles, who is openly gay. Haven is smitten and says she doesn't need Ever with her blond good looks as competition. Ever is embarrassed and turns the attention away from herself, saying Haven had better be more concerned about Miles as a potential for competition. Haven dismisses that idea, saying she's certain Damen isn't gay.

Miles always rides home with Ever and that afternoon he discovers that Damen is parked beside Ever's car. Damen has a BMW and Miles says he's going to "accidentally" bump Damen's car with the door of Ever's Miata so he'll have an excuse to talk to Damen. Ever forbids the ploy and avoids looking toward Damen. But Damen asks to borrow her copy of *Wuthering Heights* so he can catch up for class and she hands it over. When Ever looks at Damen, she's transfixed, but not because he's so handsome. Ever explains that everyone has an aura and she can see the energy that remains invisible to everyone except a few psychics. When she was in the hospital after the accident, she described the auras to a nurse which prompted a round of testing until she finally pretended to stop seeing them. But when Ever looks at Damen, she discovers he has no aura at all. Ever says the only people who have no aura at all are dead. She doesn't realize until later that she also had no idea at all of Damen's thoughts when their fingers touched as she handed him the book.

In Chapter Three, Ever arrives home and knows without going to look that her aunt, Sabine, is still at work. Sabine is Ever's father's twin sister and Ever's only surviving biological relative following the car accident. Sabine gave up her condo and purchased a house as soon as she realized she was going to have to step in as Ever's guardian. Ever's room is "tricked out" with flat screen televisions, Jacuzzi, game room, wet bar, microwave, and dishwasher. Ever says it's a teen's dream life but she would give it all



up to return to the life she had with her family. Ever says she's grateful to Sabine for her efforts and so tries to stay out of the way. She also doesn't dump all her baggage on Sabine, including the fact that she's psychic or that she talks daily with Riley, her little sister who died in the car crash.

Ever says she first encountered Riley while she was still in the hospital in her home town of Eugene, Oregon. Initially, Riley pretends she can only communicate through gestures, a fact she later thinks is funny, and shows up in Ever's clothes. Ever objects to Riley's use of her clothes and the two argue often. At one point Ever asks where their parents are and Riley shows a picture of a beautiful ocean scene. When Ever moves to Laguna Beach, California, with Sabine, she discovers the scene is actually the view from her bedroom window.

In Chapter Four, Ever says Riley helped her regain her memory and helps her appreciate her life with Sabine. The following day, Haven and Miles continue to talk about Damen. Ever assures them she doesn't like him and isn't interested. She's embarrassed when she realizes Damen heard the conversation. In class, Damen touches her hand and the constant noise from her psychic abilities comes to an abrupt halt. Ever is amazed and the situation is repeated when Damen again touches her hand, so that she knows it wasn't a fluke.

## Chapters 1 through 4 Analysis

Ever says her psychic abilities are the result of an "NDE," or near death experience. She says in her case, it wasn't a case of "near death." She'd died in a car accident along with her parents, little sister, and the family dog. She'd found herself in a wonderful place. But she'd stopped, lingering to look around, and discovered her family had vanished before being pulled back to consciousness.

Ever's first encounter with Damen is uneventful but there is a bit of foreshadowing involved. Ever, in her constant effort to maintain distance from everyone, doesn't look directly at Damen. She hides herself behind her hooded sweatshirt. When Damen asks to share her copy of *Wuthering Heights*, Ever scoots her book as far to the edge of her desk as possible and scoots herself as far away from Damen as possible, obviously trying to avoid contact. Damen's response is to laugh quietly. Ever doesn't react but she also admits she doesn't know what his laugh means.

Sabine isn't married and Ever knows she's lonely, but doesn't know why. She explains that her psychic powers are such that she can tell what has happened to a person but not necessarily why. She says she isn't certain if Sabine isn't married because she hasn't met the right guy or because she works so much she hasn't had time to try to develop a relationship but knows that having a teenage niece in the house probably isn't a positive point in Sabine's life.

Ever doesn't have to study. Answers and information come to her through her psychic abilities. When Damen returns her copy of *Wuthering Heights*, Ever tells him he can

keep it because she already knows how it ends. Damen says he already knows as well but doesn't elaborate.



# Chapters 5 through 8

## Chapters 5 through 8 Summary

In Chapter Five, Damen joins Haven, Miles, and Ever at their lunch table. He says he's lived in several cities and the others take it that he's a military brat. Ever spends so much energy trying to ignore Damen that she doesn't realize until after lunch they are making plans for all three to get together Friday at Ever's house. She can't find a way to refuse.

In Chapter Six, Damen approaches Ever after art class with the news that he can't go to her house after all. In the car after school, Ever shares the news with Miles. Miles says he's confused about Ever's attitude. He says he's sure she's "drop dead gorgeous" though it's difficult to tell because of the clothes she wears, and that there's a handsome guy who's interested in her but she won't react to him. Ever knows what's coming from Miles because of her psychic abilities and so isn't shocked when he asks if she's gay. She denies that and he believes she's ignoring Damen because Haven's interested. As he gets out of the car, he says he hopes Haven realizes what a good friend Ever is.

On Friday, Haven has to stay home with her little brother who's ill and Ever agrees to go out to dinner at Stonehill Tavern with Sabine. Riley says it's a very posh place, surprising Ever with her knowledge.

In Chapter Seven, Sabine and Ever head to the restaurant and Ever spends a great deal of time thinking about Riley. Ever says Riley remains a spoiled brat, just as she was in life. At the restaurant, Sabine touches Ever's hand and Ever is overwhelmed by Sabine's sadness. The emotion is so profound that Ever feels as if she's been hit in the stomach and has to excuse herself to go to the restroom. Outside, Ever is watching a scene involving a bride-to-be when Damen touches her, blocking out everything else. Damen says he's entertaining an "out of town visitor." Ever introduces Damen to Sabine who invites Damen back to their house. Damen declines and Ever notes that he's with a beautiful redhead. As he's about to leave, Damen brushes his hand along Ever's cheek and produces a red tulip from behind her ear. Ever is amazed by the sleight-of-hand and is so enamored with Damen that it's not until later she realizes the woman, who is later identified as Drina, is also without an aura. In the early hours the following morning, an image appears in Ever's room. She believes it's Riley but realizes it isn't.

In Chapter Eight, Ever realizes the image in her room was Damen and knows she must have been dreaming. In class the following week, Damen tells Ever he's emancipated and expresses sympathy over the loss of her parents. He is touching her hand at the lunch table when Haven arrives and is clearly upset at the scene. Haven has a new friend, a girl named Evangeline who is a "donor" for a group of vampires she's discovered. Haven says she follows the group around but is called a "puppy" because she doesn't let anyone feed, then adds, "Not yet." Haven says she went to a club with Evangeline called Nocturne, and the information captures Damen's attention.



## Chapters 5 through 8 Analysis

After Damen has lunch with Ever, Haven, and Miles, Ever is wondering why he's spending time with them. The three are outcasts. Ever says she'd been very popular in her school in Oregon. She says that upon her arrival at Bay View High School in California, she'd purposely sought out Haven and Miles rather than seeking a way to become ingrained in the popular crowd. Ever says she is dependent on Miles and Haven. She says their friendship makes her feel normal and is one of the good things in her life.

Ever's complete change from the popular crowd to being a member of the small outcast group seems to have several meanings. First, Ever has seen the popular crowd for what it really is. She recounts the day she was visited in the hospital by her friend and boyfriend. They'd been repulsed by the sight of her. Ever watched their auras change from concern to withdrawal. Ever's life is changed by the accident but is further changed by having been on the receiving end of this attitude. Ever notes at one point that she wasn't mean to the unpopular kids, but she also never acknowledged them. She has grown up quickly, forced to deal with the tragedy of losing her family, but is also dealing with a huge amount of guilt that colors many of her decisions.

Ever is constantly asking Riley about their parents. Riley never gives a direct answer, intimating that they're fine but never saying anything to assure Ever that's the case. It's interesting that Riley and Ever continue to fight just as they probably did when Riley was alive. They argue on the Friday Ever is going out to eat with Sabine and Ever becomes angry, noting that it must be nice for Riley to just be able to pop in and out of her life without any real responsibilities. As she thinks this, Riley says, "Mom and Dad send their love," then disappears. This infuriates Ever, which was no doubt Riley's intent. The perspective of Ever is the only one presented to the reader, meaning Riley's thoughts are not revealed. But it's later evident that Riley is struggling herself. She is stuck between Ever's world and the next and can't bring herself to leave Ever. However, she's lost in that world as well with no real purpose.

Miles has connected with someone on the Internet and says he'd demanded a photo before agreeing to a meeting. Miles is disappointed that the new friend is a liar and produces the photo which is actually a picture of Damen. Damen says he'd done some modeling in New York but had lived in New Mexico in the meantime. Ever becomes concerned because Damen looks no older than he does in the photo taken in New York.





# Chapters 9 through 13

## Chapters 9 through 13 Summary

In Chapter Nine, Ever is in art class. She notes that she does well in academics because she can touch a book and know what's in it. However, artistic talent "cannot be faked." Damen, however, is very talented. During art class, Damen touches the scar on Ever's forehead though it's hidden behind her bangs and he can't possibly know it's there.

In Chapter Ten, Ever asks Riley for help choosing a sweatshirt and she asks who it is that Ever likes. Ever denies it and is cool to Damen when they meet in the hall. At lunchtime, Damen joins a different table, obviously fitting in without a problem. In class, Damen asks Ever to pass a note to Stacia but Ever refuses. She notes that she doesn't yet know for sure what the note says though she can imagine. If she touches it, she'll know that Damen is flirting with Stacia. In art class, Damen is missing but the note is on the corner of Ever's easel. She pushes it off without directly touching it but the teacher scoops it up, points out Ever's name on the outside of it, and hands it to her. There's a tulip sketched on the note.

In Chapter Eleven, Halloween is nearing and Sabine has suggested she and Ever host a party. They've gone all out on decorations and Riley helps Ever decorate. Miles arrives with a friend named Eric from his acting class. Haven arrives with Evangeline. Ever is dressed as Marie Antoinette and is surprised when Damen arrives, uninvited, as Marie's counterpart, Count Ferson. Haven believes Ever has gone behind her back in seeking out Damen's attention and her aura changes to one of anger. Then a psychic named Ava arrives and acknowledges Riley who goes to the door with Ever.

In Chapter Twelve, Ever learns that Ava is a "fun surprise" arranged by Sabine. Ever enjoys spending some time with Damen because she can't read his thoughts. She's very happy to pretend that everything is normal and that she's a normal teenager involved in a crush. Ever notes that Damen's speech is a mix between California surfer and old English. When he asks if he's "angered you," Ever laughs at the old-fashioned term. She then invites him to kiss her.

In Chapter Thirteen, Ever and Damen are kissing when Haven walks in. Haven is obviously upset at the situation but says she's leaving with a new friend, Drina. The mention of Drina's name catches Damen's attention and he goes to the door with Haven, Ever, and Evangeline. At the door, Ever discovers Drina is the beautiful woman who'd been at the restaurant with Damen. Drina invites Ever to join them but Ever can tell Haven is hoping she won't. She says it would be rude to leave her own party and declines. Damen is also invited but he takes Ever's hand, making his choice clear. But as soon as Drina is gone, Damen says he has to leave and Ever believes it's so he can catch up with Drina. Back inside, Ever is in a position where she has to be rude or



pretend to sit for a reading by Ava. She takes a seat and Ava makes it clear she knows Ever is a psychic. She also says she believes it's time for Riley to move on.

## Chapters 9 through 13 Analysis

Ever has given up the idea of having another boyfriend because simply touching someone is such an overwhelming experience. She notes that having psychic ability sounds too good to be true but is, in fact, a problem. She says she has to constantly forgive her friends because their thoughts aren't always flattering.

Drina is using Haven to get close to Ever, a fact that becomes clear soon. Haven is exactly the kind of person who would fall into this trap. Haven goes to all kinds of addictive-behavior meetings. She attends meetings aimed at helping co-dependents and others, but not because she has those behaviors. Haven is actually desperate for acceptance and seems to find it in those meetings. Drina only has to pay Haven a little attention to have her full-fledged loyalty. Ever knows quite a bit about Haven's family, including that his father is not involved in business when he's away on trips and that her mother is having an affair with her personal trainer. The result is that Haven is often left alone. Later in the book, Haven is very ill but neither of her parents come home to take care of her.



# Chapters 14 through 17

## Chapters 14 through 17 Summary

In Chapter Fourteen, Ever picks up Miles for school and he demands details. She admits she and Damen kissed but says things stopped at that. Later, Ever considers that she feels a strong connection to Damen but that he might not feel the same connection to her. At lunchtime, Haven is full of stories about her time at Nocturne. Ever realizes she's no longer wearing the yellow contacts as usual but now has made her eyes blue, just like Drina's. Haven reveals that she didn't see Damen at Nocturne.

In Chapter Fifteen, Damen calls and asks if he can give Ever a ride to school but she declines. The next morning, Ever asks Riley if she wants to ride to school as she often does. Riley says she has "an appointment," but doesn't elaborate. Damen convinces Ever to skip the afternoon classes. Though she means to say no, she winds up asking how they can manage it without being caught.

In Chapter Sixteen, Damen and Ever arrive at Disneyland. Ever avoids crowds because of the psychic input but Damen provides a barrier and she enjoys the day. As Ever is driving home that evening, Haven calls. She says Evangeline is missing. Haven says no one has seen Evangeline since they were at the Nocturne on Halloween. Ever gets a sense of the scene and realizes that Drina had purposely lost Evangeline at the club. They talk about Evangeline for another minute then Haven asks why Ever wasn't at lunch. She says she and Damen went to Disneyland. Haven says Drina had also gone to Disneyland that day. Ever pulls her car over and looks in her phone for Damen's number but finds it's marked "private."

In Chapter Seventeen, Ever doesn't answer when Damen calls later that night. The next day Ever and Riley argue and Riley says she's been talking to Ava. Riley says she likes being with Ever but that it might not be the right thing. Ever is furious, says Ava is a con-artist, and that what she and Riley have is none of Ava's business. Riley disappears and Ever leaves for school. Ever arrives late to find Damen waiting. Damen doesn't go to school but promises to see her that afternoon.

During class, Ever is suddenly bereft, fighting off the grief of losing her family. She is physically ill and rushes from the room. She slams into Stacia and tears Stacia's dress. Stacia threatens to ruin Ever but in that brief moment of contact Ever has discovered some things, such as the fact that Stacia bought the "designer dress" at a department store and that she lied about a classmate, prompting that classmate's expulsion. Stacia is stunned but points out no one will believe Ever.

At lunchtime, Haven's hair is purple. She says she'd tried to dye it red like Drina's but got purple. Haven also has a tattoo on her wrist and Ever watches as the snake twists and looks directly at her. Haven's aura has turned dull gray.



## Chapters 14 through 17 Analysis

Ever is angry at Ava's words that Riley might need to move on. Her immediate reaction is to say that Riley has moved on because she's dead. But Ever really does know what Ava's talking about though she has tried not to think about it. However, after the party Ever does think about it. She hasn't really considered before whether Riley is there of her own free will. She has assumed that Riley pops in and out of Ever's life at will.

Ever hasn't revealed her psychic ability to Riley. The morning after her trip to Disneyland, Riley asks Ever why she's always so angry. The sisters argue yet again and Riley, obviously angry, yells out that she doesn't have to be "here." This is the first time Riley has been remotely serious about the subject and it seems likely it's because of Ava.



# Chapters 18 through 20

## Chapters 18 through 20 Summary

In Chapter Eighteen, Damen is waiting at Ever's house when she arrives. He says his charm and expensive car worked together to get him past the guard at the gate. Ever is a little nervous about letting Damen in the house but does. In the hall on the way to her room, Riley runs right into Ever, saying she's sorry they argued before noticing Damen. Ever doesn't acknowledge Riley and hopes she'll disappear until later. Riley doesn't take the hint and the three of them go to the game room. When Damen gets up from the couch to go get a drink, he clearly steps around Riley's legs dangling from the couch. Riley and Ever gape at each other and Riley disappears.

Ever and Damen go for a swim in Ever's pool that evening. Damen makes a remark about her bathing suit and says she should dress "like that more often." However, he then says, "you gotta do what you gotta do," which makes Ever believe for a moment that he may understand why she dresses as she does for school. He breaks that impression by saying she's obviously protecting herself from the wrath of Stacia and her crowd who would be furious if they saw how beautiful Ever really is.

In Chapter Nineteen, Haven says Evangeline has been missing for six days. The three have a huge argument with Miles pointing out that Haven is dressing and acting like Drina and Haven arguing that Drina is a better friend than either Ever or Miles. Haven says Drina accepts her for who she is without expecting her to change but Miles points out that she is changing to meet Drina's expectations. Ever notes that Haven's tattoo looks infected but she says she's fine. When Ever gets home, Damen is waiting and he takes her to the Santa Anita racetrack. Damen and Ever are seated in an exclusive dining area and Damen encourages her to make some small bets. Both bet and Damen cashes in for more than five hundred thousand dollars while Ever wins just more than a thousand. At home, he asks to come inside but Ever tells him she has homework.

In Chapter Twenty, Riley is on Ever's dresser as she's getting dressed for school. Riley has by now spent a great deal of time watching people they knew and has shared the news that Ever's former boyfriend and his new girlfriend have broken up. Bored with that, she's now watching celebrities and shares some information with Ever. Sabine stops by Ever's room to say she's been invited away for the weekend. Ever already knows that Sabine feels guilty for leaving Ever behind and that the man she's dating has exaggerated his life and still lives with his mother. Ever doesn't share that information but does assure Sabine that she'll be okay alone. When Ever and Miles arrive at school, Damen is waiting. Miles goes ahead inside and as Ever is about to enter the school gates, Damen pleads with her to skip again. Ever says she can't which prompts Damen to get on his knees. Ever laughs but just then the bell rings. Damen says it's better to be absent than tardy and she eventually gives in.



They take two cars and travel up Coast Highway to a place Damen knows. He buys milkshakes and Ever offers him a taste. He refuses and Ever thinks about the fact that Damen never seems to eat anything. Then Damen takes a long drink of her shake and kisses her. They then go walking down the beach. Damen takes her to a secluded cave and they lay on the ground together though Ever refuses to let their kisses go farther. She falls asleep and wakes to find a note indicating that Damen has gone surfing. She rushes up and down the beach but can't find him.

## Chapters 18 through 20 Analysis

When Damen and Ever are alone together the day he sees Riley on the couch, Ever asks Damen to tell her something he isn't good at. He says he can play several musical instruments, she already knows he's an excellent artist, and that he's academically talented. Damen says there's no need for her to spoil the image she has of him as such a wonderful person, but finally admits that he's not good at love. Ever is amazed at this confession, mainly because Damen is seventeen. She asks how many failed relationships there can possibly be but he doesn't answer.

Sabine says that Ever is free to have friends over while she's away for the weekend but then hesitates and asks if they need to have a "talk." It's evident that Sabine wants Ever's assurance that she knows about sex and Ever is relieved to be able to say she doesn't need to have that talk.

When Ever thinks about the fact that Damen seems to never eat anything, he takes a big drink of her milkshake. Ever doesn't realize it but this is evidence that Damen is also psychic.

There's an interesting conversation between Damen and Ever on the beach one day when they skip school. Damen says that Ever is beautiful and he doesn't understand why she feels the need to hide herself in the baggy sweatshirts. Ever believes Damen would have liked her better as the person she was before the accident but doesn't yet know that Damen has known her for centuries.



# Chapters 21 through 23

## Chapters 21 through 23 Summary

In Chapter Twenty-one, Ever is back home. Riley asks what she's going to do with her free weekend. She points out that it's a teen's dream to have the house to herself without a chaperone. Riley brings up the subject of Ava, saying she believes Ava may have some answers about some of her questions. Ever counters, asking what Riley thinks and hoping that Riley isn't going to leave her. Their conversation is interrupted by Haven's arrival with the news that Evangeline is dead. Damen arrives, still in his wetsuit. He says he rushed from the beach as soon as he realized Ever was gone. Damen questions Haven about her tattoo and she says Drina has given her salve to help it heal. Damen asks to see it but Haven says it's at home and pulls away, saying she's headed to Drina's house. While Damen is hosing off his wetsuit, Ever considers that she might have missed him on the beach.

In Chapter Twenty-two, Ever invites Damen to spend the night. He stays just long enough for Ever to fall asleep but is back the next morning with muffins for breakfast. They spend the day by the pool and Damen cooks a meal for them. He stays that night but leaves the next morning, saying he has things to do. Ever pleads with him to stay but he insists. She suggests she go with him but he says he's not going to let her be around while he's doing laundry. Ever asks what he'll do if she just follows and he warns her not to.

After Damen is gone, Ever tries to call Haven again. She's already left several messages but Haven hasn't returned the calls. Ever thinks about the situation for awhile then decides she wants Riley's help. Having never before tried to call Riley to her, Ever goes to her room and tries to think how to go about it. She calls for Riley to "give a sign" she can hear and the stereo suddenly blasts out a Kelly Clarkson song Riley likes. Riley is amused at Ever's efforts to contact her. Riley already knows what Ever wants and says that Ever isn't the only person who can read minds - a piece of information she gathered from Ava. Ever suggests Riley might break into the school office to check Damen's records for a home address but Riley says she's already followed Damen to his home on Newport Coast. Riley says the house is completely devoid of furniture, is something of a mansion, and is in a gated community. Ever says she's going to Damen's house and asks Riley to go along but Riley refuses, saying she's convinced Damen can see her. Riley says she can only read Ever's mind when Ever is trying to communicate with her but apologizes for having been so mean to Ever, saying she understands more now that she knows Ever is overwhelmed by the psychic abilities. As Riley leaves, she warns that she might not be around for awhile but promises to be back. She's obviously upset about something and her smile is forced though she promises Ever she isn't leaving.

In Chapter Twenty-three, Ever arrives at Damen's house and has second thoughts, realizing that following him home seems psychotic. He doesn't answer the door and she



goes to the back, finds an open window and enters. She realizes Riley's assessment was correct and is amazed at the rooms that are empty with the exception of a television and recliner. She finds another room that is filled with paintings and other items. There are several paintings of Damen and a plaque on one includes the words, "Damen Auguste as painted by Pablo Picasso in 1902." A copy of *Wuthering Heights* is signed by Emily Bronte "for Damen Auguste."

In another room, Ever finds Haven, bloodied and near death with Damen hovering over her. Ever tries to fight him off. He finally grabs Ever and says, "I had hoped I wouldn't have to do this."

## Chapters 21 through 23 Analysis

While Riley is talking about the fact that having the house to herself without a chaperone is every teenager's dream, Ever suddenly considers the possibility that that's behind Riley's presence. Riley had apparently been constantly looking forward to the "double digits" when she herself would become a teenager. Ever says that Riley might be living that dream vicariously through Ever's life. An important part of Ever's thoughts on this topic is that she believes she robbed Riley of the opportunity to become a teenager herself.

Damen will later admit that he'd found Evangeline but had been too late to save her. That's why he left Ever at the beach.

Ever says there are a series of events that seem to be related though she can't imagine how. She points to Evangeline's death, Haven's friendship with Drina when Damen knows Drina, and Haven's infected tattoo. She points out all three to Damen, looking for answers. Damen says he heard about the discovery of Evangeline's body on the radio while he was driving over from the beach. He says Haven's tattoo does seem to be infected but that infections sometimes happen. He says Haven is seeking attention and Drina fills that need, meaning Haven is no longer hung up on seeking Damen's attention and there's no one standing between Ever and Damen. Ever wants to focus on all those individual issues but can think of little other than Damen when he's standing so near her.





# Chapters 24 through 26

## Chapters 24 through 26 Summary

In Chapter Twenty-four, Sabine wakes Ever on Monday morning, warning her she's going to be late for school. Ever can't remember much that happened over the weekend. At school, Damen says he hopes Ever had as much fun as he and she nods though she can remember almost nothing. Haven is absent from school. Miles says he's heard from her and she's sick. That night Ever senses a presence in her room but is sure it isn't Riley. She dreams about running in a canyon and knows she's running away from Damen.

In Chapter Twenty-five, Haven returns to school and Ever rushes to her, relieved that she's alright though she's pale. She says she had a terrible bout of a virus that included some wild dreams. Haven also reveals that Drina has left for New York. Haven says she hopes the others don't catch the virus because some of her dreams were filled with blood and gore. At the sound of the word "blood," Ever faints. Haven believes this to be the first sign of the virus and Damen insists on taking her home.

They arrive at Damen's house which is luxuriously furnished and includes a framed photo of Ever in a peach colored hooded sweatshirt she doesn't remember having. Ever doesn't recognize anything or remember being there before. Damen insists she was at his house the previous Sunday after they'd spent the day surfing at the beach. He says Ever's wetsuit is upstairs. Damen touches the scar on Ever's forehead but she pushes him away, saying she doesn't want him to get sick. Damen says he never gets sick, another in a long list of Damen's strengths. Ever suddenly stands and demands to be taken home.

In Chapter Twenty-six, Ever arrives at home and cries when Riley fails to appear. When Sabine arrives, Ever is on her bed. Ever says she isn't sick but can't express her grief. Sabine crawls into bed with her and Ever realizes there's some healing in allowing their grief to mingle. She wishes she'd allowed this contact earlier. That night, Sabine makes dinner then gives Ever a peach-colored hooded sweatshirt, the one Ever had been wearing in the photo at Damen's house. Sabine says she'd borrowed it right after Ever moved in and had forgotten it in the trunk of her car all this time. Ever realizes the photo was taken before she even met Damen.

When Ever arrives at school the next day, Damen tries to talk to her. He's behind her while they're outside but when she arrives in the classroom he's already there. When she refuses to talk to him, he says she should remember that she's "asked for it" and she watches as everyone in the class slumps onto their desks, soundly asleep. Damen says she can't escape him and insists they talk. He reveals that he can read her mind. She accuses him of lying to her and points out the photo he has of her, taken before they met. He says she also has secrets such as the fact that she hangs out with her dead sister.



Ever remembers the scene in which Damen is hovering over Haven's bloodied body and accuses him of being a vampire. He says there's no such thing as vampires but that he's immortal. He says the tattoo Haven got was killing her and he was sucking the infection from her body. Damen then reveals that he was with Ever when she died and that he was the one who brought her back. Ever is crushed. She says he had no right to make that decision. She asks why he didn't save her entire family. He says they'd already gone ahead but she'd lingered and he took that as a sign she wanted to live. Ever says she never wants to see him again. Damen pleads with her not to say it unless she means it. She closes her eyes and rocks with her head in her hands. She stops talking knowing he can read her thoughts. She says she wants him to leave her alone and never return. When she opens her eyes, she's surrounded by thousands of red tulips and doesn't have to look to know that Damen is gone.

## Chapters 24 through 26 Analysis

Ever is adding up a series of clues about Damen when she's at his house after having fainted at school. He cooks like a five-star chef, is a talented artist, never studies but knows the answers to all the questions at school, has lived in several major cities, has been a model, doesn't work but is emancipated and rich, and then he tells her he never gets sick. Added to this is the fact that Damen has a photo of Ever wearing a shirt she doesn't even remember owning. Ever apparently comes up with the realization that she should be afraid of Damen and demands to be taken home.

When Damen tries to touch Ever's scar, she pushes him away. She says she doesn't want him to get sick but that scar is really a means of punishment and a reminder to herself of the wreck that took her parents and sister from her. Ever remembers the surgeon who said he could fix the scar after the cut had healed, but Ever refused to have that done. An interesting point is that it's hidden under her bangs so doesn't really affect how she looks though she seems to think it's important to her appearance.



# Chapters 27 and 28

## Chapters 27 and 28 Summary

In Chapter Twenty-seven, Ever announces to Haven and Miles that she and Damen broke up and that he's gone. Miles and Haven invite Ever to the Winter Fantasy that weekend and she accepts though she's so uncomfortable in crowds. Ever steps away from Miles and Haven to look at purses but is so overwhelmed by the onslaught of thoughts and emotions she doesn't even try to bargain with the woman, though she knows the woman is willing. Ever then encounters a beautiful purple aura and looks more closely to realize it's Ava. Ever by then has a headache and Ava says she understands Ever's pain. She says she can help but Ever counters, saying she and Riley were fine before Ava's arrival in their lives. Ever then turns and walks away though she wants desperately to find relief for her pain.

Ever rejoins Miles and Haven who have bought food for her. Haven has alcohol and spikes Ever's soda. Ever doesn't like the taste but soon realizes that the alcohol dulls her senses to the point that the psychic onslaught is also dulled. Haven's phone rings and Ever knows immediately that it's Drina. Haven steps away from the table and Miles and Ever discuss Haven's infatuation with Drina. Miles says it seems as if Drina is trying to turn Haven into a worshipper and that it doesn't seem healthy. Haven returns to the table and says she's been invited to a party but refuses to say where, saying it's private and Drina doesn't want anyone to crash it. Haven then says that Drina saw Damen in New York. Ever asks why Haven would share that information and Haven says Drina wanted Ever to know.

In Chapter Twenty-eight, the three go back toward town but stop to refill Haven's flask. They drink on the beach until they're all drunk. The following morning, Ever reaches for a bottle of vodka and drinks, dulling her senses again. When she picks up Miles, he immediately comments on her change of attire. She's no longer hiding behind the iPod and the hooded sweatshirts. She sees Stacia talking about her but can't hear the thoughts. Later, Ever takes a long drink out of a water bottle filled with vodka. She looks up to find Stacia has taken a picture of her drinking. Ever says it's only a water bottle but Stacia says she's not the first teen drinker to hide her vodka in a water bottle. Stacia threatens to take the photo to school officials. Ever and Stacia wind up in the restroom together and finish the bottle of alcohol. Both are drunk but later in the day Ever discovers that Stacia has gone home "sick" and has sent the photo to school officials. Miles realizes Ever is drunk and takes her keys. As it turns out, he drives Ever's car home and Ever gets a ride with Sabine who was called to pick her up. Ever would have been expelled but Sabine argues on her behalf, pointing out the pain Ever has been through with the deaths of her parents and sister, so the punishment is lessened to a three-week suspension.

Ever revels in the idea of three weeks without school and the opportunity to stay drunk enough to keep her senses dulled. Sabine hides the alcohol but Ever knows where the



leftovers from the Halloween party have been pushed aside and forgotten. She begins drinking again as soon as possible and says it brings her to a happier life in which she sees only what she's "supposed to see."

## Chapters 27 and 28 Analysis

Ever and Miles discuss Haven's obsession with Drina for the first time when they are at the Winter Festival and Drina calls. Miles says it seems as if Drina is encouraging Haven to be a miniature version of Drina. They are discussing how unhealthy Haven's attitude is when Haven returns to the table and asks what they're talking about. Miles says he was just telling Ever that it's unhealthy for her to leave the bathroom without washing her hands. Though it's a manufactured conversation and not true, Ever blushes. This seems somewhat out of character to the way Ever tries to be, acting as if she doesn't care what others think of her.

Haven doesn't seem to think it's strange that Drina would want Ever to know Drina saw Damen in New York. In fact, Haven's feelings are still hurt over the situation and she may very well be glad to see Ever's feelings hurt as well.

Sabine suggests that Ever might need grief counseling after she's suspended from school but Ever says she doesn't. Sabine is immediately looking for a way to ensure that Ever doesn't keep drinking but Ever is equally determined to drink. While Ever briefly considers telling Sabine the real reason she's drinking, she knows Sabine would never accept Ever's psychic abilities.



# Chapters 29 through 32

## Chapters 29 through 32 Summary

In Chapter Twenty-nine, Ever puts on a show of being sober for Sabine then rushes back to her bottle of liquor the moment Sabine is out of the house. She naps and wakes to find a feather on her bed like the one Damen had taken from her Halloween costume. She also finds a painting drawn by Damen and left in the back of Ever's car since his departure. The picture is of a woman in a canyon. Ever knows Damen has been in her room. Without knowing why, she dresses, gets the keys from Sabine's hiding place, and drives to a hiking trail. She's there when Miles calls. Miles says he's figured out where Haven has gone - to a gathering in a canyon - and that he's gone after her. Ever says she's nearing that place herself though she doesn't elaborate on how she knows. She predicts she'll find Miles and Haven in a short time. Just then her phone is jerked away and she's confronted by Drina.

In Chapter Thirty, Drina says she and Damen are married and they've had centuries together but their happiness keeps being interrupted by Ever's appearance. She reveals that she's killed Ever in various forms for years. They are soon fighting and Ever is determined not to give up. Ever is battered and bloody when she calls up the memory of the last moments with her father. Their eyes had met in the rearview mirror and they'd shared a look. All of a sudden, Ever's body is healed. She doesn't know why but knows she has to act quickly and rushes at Drina.

In Chapter Thirty-one, Ever suddenly finds herself face-to-face with Damen in a wonderful meadow. Damen assures her she's safe in a place called Summerland. He challenges her to close her eyes and imagine something. She imagines a huge elephant and opens her eyes to find one charging them. With another thought the elephant transforms into a butterfly. Ever gradually begins to accept Damen's news that they are both immortal. He says love heals which is why she was able to heal her body during her fight with Drina. Damen says Drina lied when she said he was in New York but didn't lie when she said she'd killed Ever over and over again.

Damen says Ever now has a choice. She can live as an immortal or cross over. He says she could have chosen to simply die in the canyon but didn't. Damen then says it's time for him to leave. He says Ever will have to accept their lives as immortals if she decides she wants to be with him.

In Chapter Thirty-two, Miles says he never found Drina in the canyon and wonders why he never encountered Ever. She says she went back home. Sabine learns the truth about the man who had lied about his life. Riley returns and says she'd been trying to reach Ever for days but hadn't been able to get through the haze. Riley is becoming more translucent, a fact that worries Ever. Riley leaves Ava's card and tells Ever she doesn't have much time.



## Chapters 29 through 32 Analysis

When Ever shows up in the beautiful meadow, she believes the place is familiar but can't remember why. Damen says it's that meadow where she lingered when she and her family died. He says her body was at the car but it was at that meadow where he found her soul and brought her back to life. He says that it wasn't until she called him selfish that he realized he had been selfish in taking that act. He says he brought her back more for himself than for her and that he simply couldn't stand the thought of losing her again.

Damen says his father was an alchemist and came up with the theory that all things could be reduced to a single element. His father died before perfecting the idea but Damen continued the work and solved the puzzle. The immortality came by drinking a concoction Damen invented. He and Drina had been wards of the state and Damen shared the secret with her so they were both immortal. They eventually married. Damen says that he changed over time, learning to use his time to better the world while Drina became obsessed with material things. When Ever suggests he should divorce her, Damen points out their marriage certificate is hundreds of years old.



# Chapters 33 through 38

## Chapters 33 through 38 Summary

In Chapter Thirty-three, Ever arrives at Ava's house. Ava reveals that Riley actually stopped before crossing the bridge and returned to Ever. She says that decision means Riley now has no choice but to remain with Ever unless Ever gives Riley her blessing to move on. Ava teaches Ever to insulate herself from the psychic abilities. Though Ava pleads with Ever, Ever refuses to learn to undo the block. Ava's final comment is that Ever's said good-bye to "the wrong person."

In Chapter Thirty-four, Ever spends time around town with Miles and Haven, enjoying the release from the psychic onslaught. Riley appears but says she's had to ramp up the energy in order to reach Ever through the shield she's learned to create. On Valentine's Day, Ever receives a lollipop with a message from Damen.

In Chapter Thirty-five, Ever rushes home intending to show Riley her lollipop. She's suddenly struck by Riley's presence and asks why Riley's here. Riley says she was initially following her parents because that's what she was expected to do but then realized Ever wasn't with them and turned back. She says she's stuck now because she couldn't stand the thought of leaving Ever. Riley says she's seen their parents and that they're happy though they wish Ever didn't feel guilty about the wreck. Ever says she doesn't want Riley to leave but feels she's already done enough damage to Riley's life without robbing her of the chance for an afterlife as well. She says it's time for Riley to move on. Riley says their mother had predicted Ever would grow up someday and "do the right thing." Riley says Ever won't be able to see her anymore but that she will also know Riley's nearby.

In Chapter Thirty-six, Ever grieves for Riley's absence. She reaches for Damen's lollipop but finds it's morphed into a red tulip. She quickly looks up the meanings of flowers and finds tulips to be undying love while white roses - the flower Damen produced for Stacia on several occasions - is a sign of a heart that knows no love. Ever wants Damen but realizes she's waited too long.

In Chapter Thirty-seven, Ever goes to the kitchen for ice cream and finds Drina. Drina reveals that she's been hunting down Ever repeatedly for six-hundred years. She then reveals that she'd sent that deer into the path of Ever's family's vehicle, knowing Ever's dad would dodge and wreck. Drina tells Ever she should simply give up her life and join her family.

In Chapter Thirty-eight, Ever is relieved of her guilt over her parents' deaths and that gives her power she never had before. In the fight, Ever suddenly realizes she's going to lose but then strikes out and Drina falls. Damen is then in the room as Drina ages and disappears. He says Ever's love and Drina's hatred combined to become Drina's



demise. Damen warns again that joining him means she'll never cross the bridge to join her family. Ever says she loves him and he says he has always loved her.

## Chapters 33 through 38 Analysis

When Ever kills Drina, she's very surprised. Damen realizes Ever found Drina's most vulnerable spot at a vulnerable moment. He says the body has four chakras and that the fourth, the heart, is "the center of unconditional love and compassion." Ever struck Drina in that spot at exactly the right moment. But Ever doesn't understand. She says that Drina was immortal, meaning there has to be something more to her death than just striking at her heart. She suggests that Drina's head might have been cut off but Damen says Ever has been reading too much fiction, and assures her it doesn't work like that.

Ever is concerned about Damen's love for her because she fears he's built up their connection to be more than it actually is. She realizes theirs is the ultimate case of "boy losing girl" because it's happened countless times through the centuries. Ever fears that Damen has been interested in the quest but will become bored with her now that he has her for his own.

The story is the first of a series and it ends with an open-ended question aimed at enticing the reader to the next in the series.





# Characters

## Ever Bloom

Ever Bloom is the sixteen-year-old narrator of the story. Ever was in the car with her parents and sister when a deer jumped in front of them, causing an accident that kills the entire family. Ever would also have died except that she lingered and was revived. Ever's life after the crash is vastly different. Taken in by her aunt - her only biological relative - Ever has all the possessions money can buy. But she also has a strong psychic ability. She avoids touch because the emotions, thoughts, and memories of others wash over her even at the most casual touch. She can also see the auras of others which gives her a great deal of information about people. The impressions are so overpowering that Ever has developed the habit of wearing sweatshirts with hoods to hide the fact that she's listening to hard rock music in an effort to drown out the thoughts of others. An important part of Ever's life after the crash is her ability to see and interact with her younger sister, though Riley is dead. Ever's focus in life changes after the accident. She had been a cheerleader and very popular in her school in Washington prior to the accident. Following the move to California, Ever makes sure she connects with two of the outcasts of her new school, apparently in an effort to completely avoid the popular groups. She's a very pretty girl but hides that behind her lack of makeup and her choice in clothing. Ever struggles greatly with the idea that she's to blame for the accident because she pleaded with her father to return home to get a favorite article of clothing, putting them in the place where a deer jumped in front of the vehicle.

## Damen Auguste

Damen Auguste is an immortal who has followed Ever through centuries of lifetimes, always loving her but always losing her to death at the hands of his wife, Drina. Damen is wealthy by virtue of his centuries of life and his psychic abilities. Damen is apparently tied to Drina by a marriage that occurred centuries earlier. However, he has ceased to love her because she has become completely evil, corrupted by the power of being immortal. Damen enrolls himself in school in order to be near Ever. He is immediately the center of attention for most of the students, especially the girls. Damen performs what everyone takes to be sleight-of-hand, producing flowers for Ever and another girl, Stacia, though he always produces tulips for Ever and white roses for Stacia. It takes time for Ever to realize Damen is making a subtle statement through his choice of flowers. Damen is very handsome and says that he's been legally declared an emancipated teen by the courts. He is very smart and knows the answers to anything asked in class, apparently without studying. When he asks Ever to cut class with him one day, he pleads with her not to make him go back to class. The plea makes Ever laugh initially but she later realizes it's because he's so bored. Damen is able to cut through the psychic chatter that keeps Ever constantly on edge, providing a quiet, serene place for her just by his touch. This both frightens and appeals to her.



## Riley Bloom

Ever's younger sister, Riley died in the car accident that also claimed the lives of their parents. When Ever lingers in the moments after her death, she loses sight of Riley and their parents, and believes they've gone on to the other side. However, Riley actually realizes that Ever has stopped and so turns back at the last moment. That decision means Riley is stuck in the present. Riley spends a great deal of time wandering around, watching former acquaintances and even celebrities. She connects with another psychic and when Ever releases her, Riley joins their parents.

## Drina Auguste

Damen's wife, Drina Auguste has followed Ever through centuries of time, always putting herself in a position to kill Ever before she can become strong through Damen's love. Drina is evil and seeks to destroy whatever threatens her happiness. She sees Ever as a threat to her happiness without realizing that she's lost Damen's love regardless of whether Ever is in the picture.

## Sabine

Ever's paternal aunt, Sabine is Ever's father's twin. Sabine is not married and has a successful law practice. She tries to fill the role of parent in Ever's life but struggles, not knowing if she's doing the right things for Ever. As soon as she's to take on the role of Ever's guardian, she sells her condo and buys a large house. Ever's room is a teenager's dream, including flat screen televisions, wet bar, game room, and many other amenities. Despite providing for Ever in this way, Sabine worries that she leaves Ever on her own too often.

## Haven

One of Ever's two best friends, Haven is an outcast who seems to embrace the Goth lifestyle but who actually sees the clothing and actions as a way to get the attention she desperately craves. Haven's parents are largely absent and Haven becomes responsible for her younger brother when he is ill. Haven's quest for attention almost costs her her life when she connects with Damen's evil wife.

## Miles

One of Ever's two best friends, Miles is gay and an outcast at school. Miles is probably more secure in his lifestyle than the third member of Ever's trio, Haven. Miles apparently struggles with his father's inability to accept his lifestyle and describes the painful days spent trying to watch or participate in athletics at his father's insistence.



## Stacia

A student at the school Ever attends, Stacia is popular and ruthless. Stacia discovers Ever drinking at school and takes a photo of it. Though she shares the remainder of the liquor with Ever, she also sends the photo to school officials, prompting Ever's suspension. Stacia believes herself to be the focus of Damen's attention but he's actually using her to become closer to Ever.

## Evangeline

Haven's new friend, Evangeline attends a party at Nocturne with Haven and Drina on Halloween night and then disappears. Evangeline is later found dead.

## Ava

A psychic hired by Sabine as a fun diversion at a Halloween party, Ava is a true psychic who immediately sees Riley and recognizes Ever as a psychic. Ava prompts Ever to realize she needs to allow Riley to cross over. Though Ever is initially angry at Ava's interference, she eventually realizes Ava is right. Ava also helps Ever create a shield around herself to provide some insulation against the constant chatter of those around her.



# Objects/Places

## Wuthering Heights

Wuthering Heights is the book Ever's class is reading on the day Damen joins the class.

## Bay View

Ever attends Bay View High School in California.

## Nocturne

A club where Drina spends time, Nocturne is where Haven goes after Ever's Halloween party and where Haven's friend is last seen before her death.

## Disneyland

Damen and Ever go to Disneyland one day when they cut class.

## Newport Coast

Damen lives in Newport Coast.

## Pinecone Lake Cheerleading Camp sweatshirt

Ever begs her father to go back for her Pinecone Lake Cheerleading Camp sweatshirt when the family has the fatal car crash.

## Eugene, Oregon

Ever lives with her family in Eugene, Oregon prior to the crash that kills her parents and little sister.

## Laguna Beach, California

Laguna Beach, California is where Ever moves to live with her aunt, Sabine.



## **Stonehill Tavern**

Ever goes to dinner at Stonehill Tavern with Sabine and sees Damen for the first time with Drina.

## **Santa Anna**

Damen takes Ever to the Santa Anna racetrack .

## **Summerland**

Damen and Ever meet at Summerland after Ever's fight with Drina in the canyon.



# Themes

## The will to live

Damen is the one who saves Ever when she dies with her parents. Ever's soul is already about to cross over the bridge to the other side when she stops to look around. She's enthralled by the landscape and the lingering gives Damen time to find her, returning her to the living. Ever feels that her lingering was the result of stupidity and laziness but Damen says it was the act of a person who wants to live. Ever never comes to accept that as an explanation though it seems reasonable, especially considering how hard she later fights to escape Drina's efforts to kill her. Ever and Drina meet in the canyon and Ever quickly gives up the idea that she might escape Drina's wrath. She begins to hope that the end will come quickly so that she doesn't have to suffer before she dies. However, when it seems she will die, she begins to fight back and refuses to die without giving everything she has to survive. Her will to live is closely intertwined with another theme of the story - the power of love. Without that, her will to live might not have been enough to save her. But Ever is able to heal herself which is a testament of her will to live. Ever repeats this later when Drina confronts her in the kitchen. Though it seems Drina is impossibly strong, Ever fights with everything she has.

## The power of love

The power of love is an important theme to this book because it's that power that draws Ever and Damen together time after time across the centuries of Damen's life. This power means that Damen is able to find Ever each time she is reincarnated. However, the power of hate - while not as strong - is also powerful enough for Drina to find and destroy Ever each time she is reincarnated until this final showdown. The power of love becomes even more important as Ever twice faces Drina in a fight for her life. Ever pulls from her love for her family and finds she is able to heal her body of its wounds. She is instantly more powerful as well. The first time this happens she escapes Drina by going to Summerland. The second time she is able to completely destroy Drina. Ever doesn't understand what happens until Damen explains it. He points to the seven chakras of the body and says that Drina's heart has become corrupted by the years of greed and selfishness. The fourth chakra, the heart, becomes weaker as Drina's hatred grows. It's a combination of Ever's growing love for Damen and Drina's hatred that join to cause Drina's demise.

Another important example of the power of love is seen in Riley's presence. Riley dies along with Ever and their parents. Ever lingers and Riley, realizing Ever isn't with them, returns in an effort to find her. Ever is returned to the living but Riley is unable to do so. Riley's love for Ever, though hidden behind their sibling rivalry, is the reason she doesn't cross the bridge with her parents. However, Ever's love for Riley is the reason Riley



remains. Though they argue, Ever's love for Riley is so strong that she is able to face the grief of losing Riley again and releases Riley to join their parents.

## **The need for acceptance**

Acceptance is an important part of the life of a teenager and the characters of this story are no different. The theme is seen most strongly in Haven. Haven is basically ignored at home. Her parents are seldom interested or involved in her life which prompted her decision to begin dressing in the matter of the Goth. Even that got her little attention. In an effort to make up for it, Haven goes to addictive behavior meetings. Though she doesn't have these addictive behaviors, she seems to get the acceptance she craves from others at these meetings. It's through contacts at these meetings that Haven meets Drina and almost dies. To a lesser degree, Miles seems to need acceptance from his family who don't seem to accept that he's gay. He laughs about his father's efforts to mold Miles into an athlete but there seems to be an undertone of hurt that Miles doesn't fully express. Ever's decision to make friends with Haven and Miles comes from her own experience as a member of the popular crowd. When Ever was banged up in the accident, the two people she'd considered her closest friends were horrified by her condition and distanced themselves from her. Ever's decision to become friends with Haven and Miles seems to be an effort to keep that kind of rejection from happening again.



# Style

## Point of View

The story is written in first person from the completely limited perspective of Ever Bloom. The reader is teased with several instances of foreshadowing because of Ever's thoughts. For example, from early in the story it's evident that Ever believes the accident that killed her parents and little sister is her fault. She's so convinced of this that she presents the idea as fact. The reader doesn't learn until very late in the book that Ever's guilt stems from the fact that she'd asked her father to turn around in order to retrieve a favorite sweatshirt she'd left behind. Ever believes that if she hadn't caused them to turn around, the family would have continued their journey without encountering the deer and without having a wreck. Ironically, Ever continues to carry that guilt until she discovers that Drina had sent the deer into the path of the car. The first person perspective is not less limited than usual in some respects because of Ever's psychic abilities. She is able to discern the thoughts and emotions of others and relays some of those to the reader. This is seen when Miles asks Ever if she's gay. Ever sees the conversation coming before the words are spoken. It's seen more clearly when Miles wants to confront Haven about her infatuation with Drina. Ever senses Miles' thoughts and knows that he's about to express the same worries she's harboring about Haven's relationship with Drina. Ever silently urges Miles to do so but he doesn't. Miles' concerns would normally have not been revealed to the reader unless he spoke them aloud.

## Setting

The majority of the story is set in Laguna Beach, California, in modern times. There are several flashbacks that occur in Eugene, Oregon. Both places are real and lend a level of believability to the story. There are several distinct settings within those cities. Ever's house and Bay View High School are among those. Ever's house is described with a reasonable amount of detail. Ever notes from the beginning that Sabine hired a designer to "trick out" her bedroom. She has a suite of rooms that includes a bedroom and game room. She has two flat screen televisions, one in the bedroom and one in the game room. She has a wet bar, mini-fridge and dishwasher along with a Jacuzzi. The rooms and the house are the settings for a great deal of the action of the story. The high school is not described to the same level. While there are descriptive passages that give the reader a good look at the house, the descriptions about the high school are intertwined into the narrative. For example, Ever asks why Damen sat with them at lunch and Miles explains that he'd wanted to sit in the shade. Haven laughs and remarks on the "hideous fiberglass table." On several occasions, Ever notes that she has to pass Stacia's desk on the way to her own in English class. While the descriptions are not complete, the descriptions are sufficient for the reader to come up with a mental image of the high school. There are several minor settings in the story. The beach where Ever and Damen go when they skip school, Disneyland, and a canyon are among those. Though Ever never goes to Nocturne, it becomes a minor setting





because of Haven's time there and Evangeline's disappearance from there. Another minor setting is Summerland. This is a magical place where Ever and Damen go after Ever's fight with Drina.

## Language and Meaning

The story is written in an informal tone with a fairly fast pace. The action moves quickly without becoming bogged down in detail. The reader with an average vocabulary will probably encounter no more than a few unfamiliar words. The tone is one of fear and guilt though with undertones of hope and love. Because the story is presented in first person, the reader is led to believe that Ever is responsible for the accident that killed her entire family. The reader is left with that impression until the end of the story when Ever reveals this guilt is because she'd pleaded with her father to turn around. There is some misdirection included as a major part of the story line. For example, Ever is astonished by Damen's lack of an aura and she soon realizes he is able to block out the physic onslaught that keeps her on edge. She doesn't understand either situation but notes that every living person has an aura. She also notes that he doesn't eat and that he seems to see Riley. This all seems to point to his being a vampire, a misdirection that's increased by Ever's discovery of the room with all Damen's treasures that seem to indicate he's lived for centuries. The misdirection is furthered when Ever finds Damen hovering over Haven's bloodied and near-lifeless body. Damen's immortality is explained only in vague terms. The author doesn't get caught up in the technical aspects of the explanation and the reader is asked to take a great deal on faith without questioning deeply. Another aspect of the story that really isn't explained is Riley's manifestation. Riley is able to pop in and out of the scene and is able to walk through doors. She seems to be able to travel anywhere without effort or time. However, she's solid. She is able to use a television remote and helps Ever decorate for the Halloween party. Again, the reader is asked to accept these without explanation.

## Structure

The story is divided into thirty-eight chapters of varying lengths. Chapter Thirty-seven, for example, is only five pages in length and Chapter Thirty-six is only three. Chapter Thirty-one is more than twenty pages. Many of the chapters are around six to twelve pages. The chapters are titled only by number, providing no clue as to what's coming in that chapter. Some of the chapters seem to end with an effort to keep the reader moving on to the next chapter. For example, Chapter Fourteen comes to a close with Ever's comment that English class on a particular day is "flower free" because Damen isn't there. Chapter Fifteen opens with Damen calling Ever. In other cases, the chapters end at natural breaking points. Chapter Eighteen ends with Damen leaving Ever's house and Sabine arriving at home. Chapter Nineteen begins with Ever's arrival at school the following day. The story is divided between dialogue and narrative. Both are believable and acceptable to the story line. The tense is an interesting mix. The majority of the book is written in present tense though there are flashbacks presented in past tense. Chapter Twenty-two begins with Ever's memories of having spent an evening with



Damen, Miles and his friend Eric. Those paragraphs are written in past tense. The tense changes abruptly when Ever notes that Damen didn't take her up on the offer to spend the night, which is written in past tense, but "shows upon my doorstep" the next morning, which is back to present tense. There are a few other instances of this tense swap and though they don't always make complete sense they are also not overly distracting from the story line.



## Quotes

"How could it possibly make me feel better to confirm what I already knew - that not only was I solely responsible for what happened to my family, but also that I was stupid enough, selfish enough, lazy enough to loiter, dawdle and procrastinate myself right out of eternity?"

Chapter 3, Page 19

"Besides, it's not like I'm all that datable in my current voice-hearing, aura-seeing, baggy-sweatshirt-wearing condition."

Chapter 4, Page 24

"If I thought his voice was amazing with the way it envelopes me in silence, if I thought his touch was incredible with the way it awakens my skin, well, the way he kisses is otherworldly."

Chapter 13, Page 82

"He's so sleek, so sophisticated, so sexy, so smooth - it's hard to imagine him trolling a place where Mickey Mouse rules."

Chapter 16, Page 103

"And you turn it into this major ordeal. Jeez, sit down, find your happy place, and chillax already, would you?"

Chapter 19, Page 133

"I mean, what kind of psycho girlfriend am I? Who in their right mind would even think of enlisting their dead little sister to help spy on their boyfriend?"

Chapter 23, Page 174

"He shakes his head, then looks at me and says, 'Well, for that matter, I was also a good friend of Leonardo da Vinci, Botticelli, Francis Bacon, Albert Einstein, and John, Paul, George, and Ringo.' He pauses, seeing the blank look on my face and groaning when he says, 'Christ, Ever, the Beatles!'"

Chapter 26, Page 201

"Because saying good-bye to Damen, my gorgeous, creepy, quite possibly evil, immortal boyfriend, was harder than I'll ever admit. But not getting to say good-bye to Riley is more than I can possibly bear."

Chapter 27, Page 208

"And even though Stacia and Honor are whispering back and forth, scowling at my clothes, my shoes, my hair, even the makeup I wear on my face, I just shrug it off and mind my own business. Because while I'm sure they're not saying anything remotely kind, the fact that I no longer have access to the actual words makes a whole world of difference."

Chapter 28, Page 220



"I'm saying hello to a normal life and good-bye to immortality, Damen, Summerland, psychic phenomenon, and everything else that goes with it. Ever since the accident, all I wanted was to be normal again."

Chapter 33, Page 274

"I head downstairs, in search of some ice cream, knowing a rich and creamy Haagen-Dazs Band-Aid can't possibly heal my broken heart, though it just might help soothe it."

Chapter 37, Page 290

"And I would've come sooner, but I needed to know you were truly ready and not just lonely after saying good-bye to Riley."

Chapter 38, Page 300



## Topics for Discussion

Who is Ever? What is her life like prior to the accident that leaves her an orphan? What is her life like after?

Who is Damen Auguste? How does he become involved with Ever? Why does he become involved with Ever? What are some of his abilities and talents? How did he develop these abilities and talents? What about these abilities frightens Ever?

Who are Ever's best friends? Why are these two people her friends? Describe each. What is Ever's relationship with each? What are the strengths of each? What are their weaknesses?

Who is Riley Bloom? What is her relationship to Ever? What is her role in the story? How does she help Ever? What is Riley's fate?

Who is Sabine? What are her strengths as an individual? What are her strengths as Ever's guardian? What are her weaknesses in both roles? What is Sabine's reaction when Ever gets in trouble?

Who is Drina? What is her role in Ever's life? What is her role in Damen's life? What is her role in Haven's life? What causes her demise?

What is the role of immortality in the book? What are the costs of immortality? How does this theme impact the story? What other themes are important to the story?