

The Hunt Study Guide

The Hunt by Andrew Fukuda

The following sections of this BookRags Literature Study Guide is offprint from Gale's For Students Series: Presenting Analysis, Context, and Criticism on Commonly Studied Works: Introduction, Author Biography, Plot Summary, Characters, Themes, Style, Historical Context, Critical Overview, Criticism and Critical Essays, Media Adaptations, Topics for Further Study, Compare & Contrast, What Do I Read Next?, For Further Study, and Sources.

(c)1998-2002; (c)2002 by Gale. Gale is an imprint of The Gale Group, Inc., a division of Thomson Learning, Inc. Gale and Design and Thomson Learning are trademarks used herein under license.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Encyclopedia of Popular Fiction: "Social Concerns", "Thematic Overview", "Techniques", "Literary Precedents", "Key Questions", "Related Titles", "Adaptations", "Related Web Sites". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

The following sections, if they exist, are offprint from Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults: "About the Author", "Overview", "Setting", "Literary Qualities", "Social Sensitivity", "Topics for Discussion", "Ideas for Reports and Papers". (c)1994-2005, by Walton Beacham.

All other sections in this Literature Study Guide are owned and copyrighted by BookRags, Inc.



Contents

The Hunt Study Guide.....	1
Contents.....	2
Plot Summary.....	3
Pages1-5 and The Heper Lottery.....	4
The Heper Institute.....	6
Hunt Minus Four Nights.....	7
Hunt Minus Three Nights.....	9
Hunt Minus Two Nights, Pages 117-139.....	10
Hunt Minus Two Nights, Pages 140-160.....	11
Hunt Minus Two Nights, Pages 161-188.....	13
Hunt Minus One Night.....	14
The Heper Hunt.....	16
Characters.....	18
Objects/Places.....	20
Themes.....	22
Style.....	24
Quotes.....	26
Topics for Discussion.....	27



Plot Summary

The Hunt is a novel by author Andrew Fukuda, who was selected by Booklist in 2010 as a Top Ten First Novel and Editors' Choice for the Best Adult Book for Young Adults for his first novel, Crossing. The story follows the main character, Gene, as he tries to survive as the only human left living in a world full of vampires. Prior to Gene's father leaving Gene behind, because a vampire bit him, his father taught Gene all of the lessons he needs in life to survive.

As if Gene hiding in plain sight among vampires is not hard enough, Gene's number comes up in the lottery for an upcoming Heper Hunt. Gene's winning ticket whisks him off to the Heper Institute, where he trains as a vampire among other vampires to hunt down and kill the hepers that the Heper Institute has in captivity. While Gene continues to try to hide his true identity, he also forms relationships and special bonds with the Hegers that are in captivity. Since Gene has never been around other humans before, he learns that they are not the dumb and savage beasts that the vampires make hepers out to be.

Gene also learns that the girl of his dreams, Ashley June, is a heper as well. The two form an alliance to save themselves. Ashley June ends up sacrificing her own life and well-being to save Gene, so in turn Gene can save the hepers. Ultimately, Gene and the hepers arrive in a land where the vampires cannot reach them. This is when Gene learns the truth about the biggest secret of them all—that his father was a Scientist who previously worked at the Heper Insititute and left clues behind that allowed Gene to escort the hepers to safety.



Pages1-5 and The Heper Lottery

Pages1-5 and The Heper Lottery Summary

Gene's father dies from a bite on the neck. Prior to his transformation, Gene's father runs away, leaving Gene alone to fend for himself. While his father was caring for Gene, however, he was always telling Gene about the rules of disguising himself to be like everyone else so Gene would not expose himself as a human.

In class, the teacher calls on Gene to answer a question but he asks to pass. The girl Gene has a crush on, Ashley June, goes to the board to solve the equation. An announcement over the loudspeaker tells the students the Ruler is going to make a public appearance on TV at 3 a.m. The Ruler never appears in public and has only done so twice in the last 15 years. The first was to announce his marriage and the other was to announce The Hunt, where eight hepers were fattened up and then turned loose for hunting.

Gene doesn't really have friends. It's a form of self-preservation so that his so-called friends don't find out he's really a human and eat him. He sometimes eats lunch with two boys he calls Idiot and Doofus. One of them points out that Ashley June keeps looking at Gene during lunch. At swim practice, everyone is distracted by the Declaration the Ruler is making. When Gene gets goose bumps, he has to find a way to distract everyone so that they don't see the goose bumps. Gene vomits in the pool and then runs into the locker room to get dressed and warm before anyone comes in and notices.

The Ruler announces that there will be another Hunt. He also says the Hunters will be chosen by lottery, so everyone will be receiving their lottery numbers. The Director comes on TV after the Dictator to explain that they have been preparing the hepers for the Hunt for the last ten years. When Gene arrives home, he senses that someone has been on his doorstep. After everyone else is in bed for the day, Gene borrows one of his neighbor's horses to ride around and enjoy the outdoors, as he used to do with his father.

Gene rides out to the Vast, where there is a green patch of fuzz. He used to go there with his father, where they would sit back to back in shame as they ate the fruit hanging from the tree.

The night of the lottery drawing, they move the drawing up because productivity in the city has fallen. The Palace also decides to use one of the hepers to choose the lottery numbers. All of Gene's numbers are chosen. Word spreads quickly around school that he is one of the chosen ones for the Hunt. While Gene waits in the stretch carriage outside, he has to sign some official paperwork. He also learns that another student won the lottery. Ashley June steps into the stretch carriage. As Gene and Ashley June



huddle in the dark stretch carriage together, it reminds Gene of a game of spin the bottle, where Ashley June purposely stopped the bottle so she can kiss Gene.

She starts to ask him a question in the closet after they kiss. Instead, she asks him to walk her home after school since it is raining and he has an umbrella. Gene stands Ashley June up that day.

Pages1-5 and The Heper Lottery Analysis

The implication that Gene believes he is the only human left foreshadows that as the story unfolds Gene will discover that there is at least one other human being. When Gene finds this person, there is additional foreshadowing that they will form a special bond since they are the only ones of their species left.

Gene says when he dreams about the Hunt, he wakes up screaming and crying. His father used to hug him to console him, but Gene says he can still hear his mother and sister's cries. This suggests that his mother and sister were killed by vampires, possibly that they were even two of the eight hepers in the Hunt.

If the others see Gene has goose bumps, it will expose that he is a human. Then, everyone will attack and kill Gene. Announcing that the hepers were mere babies ten years ago suggests that one of the hepers in the upcoming Hunt is Gene's sister.

Gene and his father eating the forbidden fruit, apples, has religious symbolism. It represents the sins of humans that stem back to Adam and Eve. Ironically, Gene is a heper and now he is one of the chosen ones to participate in the Hunt of his fellow hepers that are now in captivity. Officials arrive at the school to escort Gene to the Heper Institute to prepare him for the Hunt.

It seems that Ashley June suspects Gene is a heper. This is the question she's about to ask him in the closet during the game of spin the bottle. Since she likes him, she doesn't want to confirm that he is a heper, which also makes Gene her mortal enemy.



The Heper Institute

The Heper Institute Summary

Five hours later, the stretch carriage pulls up in front of a government building. Gene counts the other carriages parked outside, calculating there are seven lottery winners. The officials lead them inside the building, which is drab on the outside but ornately decorated on the inside. Ashley June and Gene are escorted to chairs, where a woman in a flowery dress tells them about the Hunt and their training. The officials then escort them to their rooms.

The official escorting Gene to his room tells him they ran out of rooms for the Hunters in the main building. He escorts Gene to a separate building that is a library converted into Gene's room. The official also teaches Gene how to use binoculars in the room so he can look at hepers.

After the guard leaves, Gene uses the binoculars to look at the Heper Village. He sees the same female that chose the last lottery number drinking from a man-made pond of water.

The Heper Institute Analysis

The government building represents direct opposition. On the outside, the building is drab, gray, and has a government-building look to it. On the inside however, the rooms are ornately decorated and give off an air of opulence.

In a twist of irony, Gene is led to a room that is separate from the main building. This will help him to keep his true identity a secret. Additionally, there is a hint that the young female heper that drew the final lotto number and the same one Gene sees drinking from the pond is his sister.



Hunt Minus Four Nights

Hunt Minus Four Nights Summary

Gene falls asleep reading the welcome packet. A guard banging at his door to escort Gene to class is what wakes him up. Gene uses his pen knife to shave the stubble from his face, quickly changes his clothes to show he slept in the sleep holds and wears sunglasses to hide his bloodshot eyes—all signals that he's a human if he doesn't hide the fact.

The lecture covers the myths and truths about hepers. The lecturer also tells the group that the sole woman heper is the leader of the pack of four other male hepers. Gene feels someone staring at him, but since he cannot turn around quickly, he drops his pen so he can see who is staring at him. It's Ashley June.

While the group of Hunters is touring the facility, Gene notices that Ashley June wanders off to speak to one of the staffers. She's asking questions about the Dome where the hepers live. He tells Ashley June information he's not supposed to disclose, such as the emergency shutdown button. Gene suspects she is up to something but he doesn't quite know what it is yet.

Over lunch, which is in the middle of the night, the Hunters start talking. One of the women tells Gene that the library was once inhabited by a scientist. A male Hunter says the scientist went mad because of how close the library is to the Dome. They say they found a pile of his clothes between the two buildings, as if the scientist went out right before sunrise, which ended up killing him. While touring the Dome, where the hepers live, the Hunters comment on how strong the odor is. Gene sneaks away around the back of the dome to clean his armpits with his spit. When he returns, they comment on how the odor is less pungent now. As they walk past the library where Gene lives, Ashley June asks him to give her a tour. She tries to get him to team up with her for the Hunt, but he says he'd rather work alone. Gene plans to break his own leg so that he can't participate in the Hunt at all. Ashley June brings up the fact that he stood her up that rainy day a few years earlier. Gene denies that he remembers the incident.

Over dinner, Gene becomes increasingly worried about his body odor. He dismisses himself from the table early so he can get away before any of them notice the odor he is emitting is human. While Gene is in the library, he notices someone has drilled a hole to monitor him. He suspects this is because of the body odor he has been emitting.

Hunt Minus Four Nights Analysis

In addition to staring at Gene because she likes him, it seems as if Ashley June also stares at Gene because she knows or suspects that he's a human. What is unclear at this point is why she doesn't turn him in to the officials or why she hasn't drunk his blood herself.



Ashley June appears to be seeking information to get to the heperts prior to the Hunt starting. She likely plans to attack them so that she can drink all of their blood herself. The other possibility is that Ashley June plans on freeing the heperts and protecting them from the other Hunters. This can explain why Ashley June has not turned Gene in as a human also.



Hunt Minus Three Nights

Hunt Minus Three Nights Summary

Gene is sitting in a lecture about the ways of hepers. They are talking about body hair and body odor. This conversation causes one of them to talk about how pungent the heper odor is in the lecture hall. Someone suggests there is a heper in the room or hiding in the building. All of them scatter, hunting the heper down.

Gene makes a big circle in the building, landing him back in the lecture hall. As he thinks about jumping out the window to his safety, the others return. Gene tells them the heper jumped out of the window. The director tells them all that they have been tricked because there is no heper. He points out that all of them are here by luck rather than chosen by merit.

A woman teacher comes into the lecture hall. She announces they will be observing a heper inside of their own territory. Gene and the others have to strap themselves in restraints so that when the heper comes out to the arena, the vampires cannot attack the heper.

One of the vampires, Gaunt Man, smuggles a knife into the arena. He uses the knife to cut off his restraints and he attacks the heper. Some of the vampires pass around the knife so they can break free and attack the heper too. When the escorts arrive, the heper is completely eaten and gone.

While in the library, Gene continues to grow thirsty and delirious from his lack of water since he arrived. He finds a journal that must belong to the scientist. All of the pages are filled from top to bottom with handwritten notes. Only one page in the middle of the journal is completely blank on both sides.

Gene decides to drink from the pond inside the dome where the hepers live. When he gets there, he starts to drink but the female heper takes him as a threat at first. When the dome starts to close, Gene tries to escape but he doesn't make it, trapping him inside the Heper Village.

Hunt Minus Three Nights Analysis

Gene continues to struggle with hiding his identity as a heper. He is continuously trying to divert the attention of the vampires away from his own body odor. In essence, Gene is surrounded by danger because he is a heper living amongst his mortal enemies.

Gene being trapped in the Heper Dome might just expose his identity finally. Now that he's missing, the escorts from the Heper Institute will look for him. When they find him inside of the Heper Village and not all of the hepers are dead from Gene killing them, they are going to realize he is not a vampire.



Hunt Minus Two Nights, Pages 117-139

Hunt Minus Two Nights, Pages 117-139 Summary

Gene does make it out of the Dome, so he's attending additional lectures on hepers and the hunt. Floral Dress, which is one of the female escorts, announces that the Dome is broken, so they are relocating the hepers. She also announces the hepers are being armed with FLUNS, which are a type of gun, to make the Hunt more interesting. She even demonstrates the power of the gun on Gaunt Man.

She also tells the group that they are having a gala with a bunch of officials coming to visit the Heper Institute. Additionally, the media is coming to the Institute to cover the gala and the Hunt festivities in general.

The Director summons Gene and Ashley June to the library. He tells them that they have been chosen by the Palace to win the Hunt. Gene is the chosen one and Ashley June is the understudy. The Director also says the winner of the Hunt is going to pen a book about the Hunt. Ashley June postulates Gene is the chosen one because he is very articulate.

The Director also claims that when he visited the Palace he could hear the cries of the hepers underground. He says he thinks there is a Heper Farm where dozens or hundreds of hepers are possibly living.

Hunt Minus Two Nights, Pages 117-139 Analysis

The inference is that the female heper inside of the Dome somehow helped Gene to escape prior to its closing. She did this by somehow jamming the Dome, which ultimately broke the Dome. It is possible that she did this because she senses that Gene is one of them, a heper, and a human.

The Hunt seems to be a publicity stunt for the Palace. The Ruler and his people are trying to draw attention to his upcoming election and his rule in general. Hosting a Hunt, writing a book about the Hunt and having the media cover all of the events leading up to and during the Hunt are all pieces of a bigger plan being implemented by the Palace.



Hunt Minus Two Nights, Pages 140-160

Hunt Minus Two Nights, Pages 140-160 Summary

Ashley June goes to her room and Gene goes to the library. The tailors meet them in their respective rooms to measure them for the formal-wear they need for the Gala. When done, Ashley June comes to the library asking Gene to take her to the Gala. She begs Gene to pretend as if he likes her for the special night. He agrees to take her as his date, but realizes he has to be careful when he sees Ashley June's fangs and realizes she is a threat to his life.

Right before dawn, Gene walks Ashley June back to her room. He waits in the library for the shutters to go down. Then, he grabs some bottles and heads to the Heper Dome to get some water to drink and to bathe in their pond. He waits for the Dome to open and the walls to disappear. As he approaches the pond, Gene sees a young heper male emerge from one of the huts. When he sees Gene, he starts calling for the female heper, Sissy.

Gene is shocked that the hepers speak. When the female heper emerges, she tells the male heper not to be frightened because he is one of them. Sissy introduces each of the hepers by name to Gene. She asks what his name is and at first, he doesn't know what a name is. Then, he has a memory of his mother calling him Gene, so he introduces himself to the hepers as Gene. Gene fills the bottles with drinking water and caps them off.

The hepers give Gene a tour of their village. They show him the Umbilical, which is like a tunnel conveyor belt that delivers food and other items from the institute to the hepers. Gene realizes it is built outside of the Dome. The hepers say this is intentional so that a small vampire is never able to sneak into their village via the Umbilical.

The hepers tell Gene that recently the institute has been sending them books on warfare and weapons. Sissy also tells him that five attache cases arrived for them recently with instructions not to open them until instructed. She asks Gene if he knows what they are for but he says he doesn't. Ben, one of the boy hepers, takes Gene to see the fruit trees. The others follow.

When Epap demands Gene tell them his story, they return to the huts. Gene lies to them about everything. He tells them there are many hepers living outside of the dome. They tell him that the Scientist that used to live in the library was also a heper and that he told them he was going to break them out of the Dome and take them to safety. Gene says he replaced the Scientist and that he's going to lead them to safety too.

As the smaller hepers head out to check for food in the Umbilical, Epap and Sissy stay behind to speak with Gene. Gene continues to lie about the heper civilization living outside of the Dome. Epap says he thinks Gene is lying, but Sissy says Gene has



brought them more information in two minutes than they've been able to gather in years. She tells Gene how their parents were lured away years ago by a fruit farm and that their parents never returned. They were just children then and Ben was a baby.

Hunt Minus Two Nights, Pages 140-160 Analysis

The longing Gene feels for Ashley June, coupled with his fear of her, represents the fine line that exists between love and hate. While Gene does have strong romantic feelings for Ashley June, at the same time, they can never be together because they represent different species. In a way, Ashley June and Gene represent Romeo and Juliet. They come from different worlds—making them star-crossed lovers who can never really be together.

Now that Gene knows the hepers know that he is one of them, they will form a bond with Gene. This foreshadows Gene helping to save the lives of the hepers from the upcoming Hunt. It is possible that Gene and the other hepers will run off to a location where they can start working on growing the human race. Since Sissy is the only female heper known to be alive, it is likely that she and Gene will become a couple and work toward repopulating the planet with humans.

The Institute is sending the hepers books and weapons to prepare them for the Hunt. While Gene believes the Hegers know there is an upcoming Hunt, they do not. Gene lies to Sissy and the other hepers when he tells them that he doesn't know why the Institute is sending them books on warfare and weapons. Additionally, he lies when he says he doesn't know what is in the cases. He knows they contain the FLUNs.



Hunt Minus Two Nights, Pages 161-188

Hunt Minus Two Nights, Pages 161-188 Summary

Gene heads back toward the library as sunset approaches. He sees Beefy, one of the other Hunters, and Ashley June racing toward the Dome. Ashley June is wearing a suncloak and Beefy is slathered in suntan lotion. Gene goes after Beefy to try to stop him from getting to the hepers. Sissy fights Beefy off with some of their weapons as well. Beefy dies while trying to get inside of the Dome that is starting to close.

Gene looks for Ashley June, but only finds her suncloak on the ground. He finds her in the library. She removes her fake fangs and admits to being human. She tells Gene that she has been alone since she was seven and her parents were lured away to the promise of fruit trees. She talks about how she landed the captain of the football team as her boyfriend, killed him and then mourned him so that the other boys would leave her alone and not get close enough to smell her human scent.

Ashley June discovers that the blank page in the journal has a map on it when you hold it up to the light. Ashley June and Gene fall asleep together.

Hunt Minus Two Nights, Pages 161-188 Analysis

Ashley June and Gene have been living parallel lives. They are both orphans who were adamantly trained by their parents as to how to hide their humanness so that they could survive in a world full of vampires. Now that they have each other and know the truth about each other, they are better suited to find a solution to saving themselves and the other hepers.

There is some foreshadowing that Gene and Ashley June formulate a plan. The plan will allow them to infiltrate the vampire society from the inside. This will give them an advantage so that they can help the hepers escape to freedom. Ashley June and Gene can escape after the hepers and then they can live the life together that the two of them have always dreamed of having.



Hunt Minus One Night

Hunt Minus One Night Summary

Nobody seems to notice that Beefy is missing at first. When they do realize, they just think he must have melted in the sun while trying to get to the hepers. While they search for him, however, they cancel the rest of the lectures for the hunters. Gaunt Man tries to team up with Gene and Ashley June, but Gene says that they are just going to work together.

At night, Ashley June and Gene dress for the gala. Gene remembers when he and his father burned the picture albums and journals after his mother and sister disappeared. He likens the red from the fire flames that night with the first time he saw Ashley June and her red hair. It takes them an hour to get from the library into the banquet hall because the media keep stopping them along the way to ask questions.

Gene and Ashley June fake eat and dance at the gala. A reporter warns Gene to be careful of Ashley June. He also says that the entire Hunt is some kind of a setup. When Ashley June and Gene return to the library, Gene suggest that they try to help the hepers. He tells Ashley June that they are normal, not the animals the Institute wants them to think the hepers are. She says there isn't anything they can do to help them and Ashley June and Gene fall asleep in each other's arms.

Gene runs into Ashley June the following morning. They go into the Umbilical to find the note. Ashley June tells Gene it is up to him whether they take the note or leave it. Gene opts to leave it. They separate to go to their respective rooms. When Gene returns to the library, he finds the rest of the hunters are sleeping there, including the Director. The Director tells him the Hunt starts from here because they locked down the institute so other Hunters can't join in.

One by one, the Hunters wake up. They start to go after Gene. Gene escapes into the sunlight where the vampires cannot chase him. Gaunt Man yells out that they will get him when the Hunt begins. Gene goes to Ashley June to tell her that he's been found out.

Ashley June tries to convince Gene that they should live inside of the Dome because it will always protect them. They agree to separate and meet up in the Dome later that day or the following day. Gene is in the Control Center when he sees on the monitor that the vampires are waking, screaming and howling. Suddenly, the vampires start banging on the door, trying to knock it down.

Gene watches on one of the monitors, where he sees Ashley June in the kitchen. She uses a knife to cut the palm of her hand to make it bleed. The vampires stop trying to break down the door to get to Gene and start to chase Ashley June. She lures them into the Introduction area, where she locks herself in. She yells at Gene to run.



As Gene starts to run, he can hear the vampires coming back toward him. The one he calls Phys Ed is a yellow spongy mess from running around in the sunlight. Phys Ed tries to grab for Gene's ankle, but Gene kicks at Phys Ed. Gene runs out of the building and into the sunlight to get away from the herd. Gene makes it to the Heper Village inside the Dome but it is empty.

Gene realizes that he had seen Ashley June on the monitor writing a note and placing it into the Umbilical. He goes to retrieve the note. The note urges Gene to bring the hepers back and then to come save her. Gene goes to the stable to retrieve a horse. Gene hooks the carriage to the horse and gets inside the carriage with the Scientist's journal. Gene stops at the mud huts to retrieve the hepers' clothes and then he drives the horse and carriage away.

Hunt Minus One Night Analysis

Every move seems to be a very calculated one. It is as if they all know that Gene is a human. Everything from the lottery to choose Hunters to the vampires sleeping in the library during the day of the Hunt is a plan to trap Gene. Once they trap Gene, then they are able to hunt him.

It seems as if Ashley June sends gene to the Control Center to trap him so that the rest of the vampires can attack him. Then, it seems as if Ashley June sacrifices her own life, or at least puts her own life in jeopardy, in order to save Gene's life.



The Heper Hunt

The Heper Hunt Summary

Gene uses the map in the journal to drive the horse and carriage in the right direction. Then, Gene spots the hepers. Gene explains to them that the note about the Dome being broken is a lie. He tells them about the Hunt and urges them to get in the carriage so he can take them back to the safety of the Dome.

Epap doubts what Gene is saying is true. Sissy and the others believe Gene. As Gene drives the hepers back to the Dome, the Hunt starts. Gene and Epap get into a scuffle and they start to debate leaving Gene and trying to get away on their own. Gene ends up talking them into staying together to fight off the vampires, saying that he has a plan.

Gene is alone. He uses the spear Sissy gave him to cut the palm of his hand. Five Hunters appear, including the Director and Frilly Dress. As the vampires talk with Gene about what they are going to do to him, the hepers use their FLUNs from high on a cliff to shoot the vampires. The hepers throw one of the guns down to Gene so he can help.

The hepers come down off the cliffs without their FLUNs, but Sissy uses the spear knives as weapons to kill some of the remaining vampires. Only the Director is left. He points out that someone has lifted the lockdown on the Institute and they can all hear the rest of the vampires making their way to where they are.

Gene and the other hepers flee. They are heading toward the river, where they believe there is a boat, according to the Scientist's journal and map. They reach the river but don't see a boat. It starts to rain. They drive on until Sissy spots the boat. The vampires are gaining on them. The hepers get onto the boat and start to push it away when Gene throws himself into the water to swim, so that the vampires chase him and the hepers can get away. Gene makes it to the boat and Sissy pulls him aboard.

As the hepers sail down the river, each night the vampires return along the banks snarling and howling. Each day before sunrise, they leave. This continues for several days until they reach the land the Scientist has on his map. Gene and the others know they won't see the vampires again. When Gene looks at the journal and the picture of the Scientist, he sees a picture of his father.

The Heper Hunt Analysis

Gene's father spent his entire life teaching Gene how to survive as a heper in a world full of vampires. Ironically, Gene's father is the man whom the hepers know as the Scientist. Not only did the Scientist teach Gene how to survive, but the Scientist also left the information in writing so that the other hepers could survive too.

The presumption is that now Gene and the hepers can live the rest of their lives in peace. The Scientist, Gene's father, has led them to a land where they can live freely, safely and securely. Additionally, the hepers can work on repopulating the Earth so that they can regenerate the human race.



Characters

Gene

Gene is a teenage boy in high school. He is also a human being living among vampires. In fact, Gene believes he is the only human being left, with the exception of the humans that are in captivity at the Heper Institute.

Gene is in love with Ashley June. Since Gene thinks Ashley June is a vampire, he also thinks that they can never have a relationship. Gene is very intelligent. He is a good student and has just as much street sense and common sense as he is book smart.

Gene is always shaving all of his body hair. He also has to shower a lot in order to keep the vampires from smelling his body odor and scent that reveals Gene is a human. He also seems to be a very compassionate person because Gene risks his life to save the lives of the Hepers that are living at the Heper Institute and that are supposed to be part of the Heper Hunt.

Ashley June

Ashley June is a high school student who attends school with Gene. She is very pretty and popular. Ashley June has long red hair and bright blue eyes.

Ashley June had been dating the high school football star. When he dies tragically, she vows to never love anyone again. Gene, however, is in love with Ashley June. At the Heper Institute, Ashley June confesses to Gene that she is human also. She also confesses that she is the one who killed her boyfriend because she had been using it as a cover to hide the fact that she is human.

Ashley June ends up putting her own life in danger to save Gene's life. She does this so Gene can go on to save the lives of the Hepers.

Ruler

The Ruler is the official in charge of the vampires. It seems as if the Ruler is an official position in the government that is equivalent to the United States President. The Ruler is the official that establishes the Heper Hunt.

Director

The Director is the Ruler's right-hand man. He is also the one in charge of the Heper Hunt. The Director helps to teach the lessons at the Heper Institute. When the Director finds out Gene is a human, he joins in the Hunt to try to kill Gene and the other Hepers.



Reporter

The Reporter is a journalist or paparazzi attending the big gala leading up to the Heper Hunt. The Reporter is the one that tips Gene off to the fact that the Heper Hunt is not what it seems to be. The Reporter also warns Gene against Ashley June, telling Gene that she isn't what she seems to be either.

Flowery Dress

Flowery Dress is one of the female vampires working at the Heper Institute. She assists the Director in hosting lessons. Flowery Dress also partakes in the hunt for Gene and the other Hepers.

Sissy

Sissy is the only female Heper living in captivity. Sissy is also the head or leader of the Hepers that are living in captivity. Gene and Sissy form a special bond, so Sissy comes to trust Gene. Her direction to the other Hepers to listen to Gene is what leads them all to safety.

David

David is one of the younger Hepers living in captivity. David is about ten or 11 years old.

Ben

Ben is another one of the child Hepers living in captivity. He is ten or 11 years old. Ben is the one that takes Gene to the fruit trees.

Epap

Epap is the older male heper living in captivity. Epap is suspicious of Gene. He demands Gene tell them what he's doing there and how he's survived living with the vampires for so long. Epap never truly comes to trust Gene.



Objects/Places

Heper Institute

The Heper Institute is an educational institute in the novel. At the Heper Institute, the vampires have a group of hepers in captivity. The vampires study the Hepers to learn about their culture and the way the Hepers do things. They use this information to help instruct and provide guidance to the vampires that are part of the Heper Hunt.

The Dome

The Dome is a special structure at the Heper Institute where the Hepers live in captivity. The Dome is set on autopilot so the walls of the Dome go down during the daytime and go back up again during the night. The Dome is what protects the Hepers from attack by the vampires.

The Umbilical

The Umbilical is a conveyor belt that connects the Heper Institute to the Dome. The vampires send food, supplies, and messages from the Heper Institute to the Hepers using the Umbilical. The Umbilical is set outside of the Dome so that the vampires cannot breach the Umbilical to attack the Hepers.

FLUNs

FLUNs are a special type of gun. The guns shoot electric waves that can impair someone. The vampires supply the Hepers with the FLUNs as a way to make the Heper Hunt more interesting. Gene and the Hepers end up using the FLUNs to fight off and escape from the vampires.

Vast

The Vast is the name of the open land surrounding the town where Gene and the others live. They go through the Vast to get to Heper Institute for the Heper Hunt. Gene also rides out into the Vast during the daytime when all of the other vampires are asleep. Gene likes to ride in the Vast to enjoy nature.

River

The river is a point in the Scientist's map. Gene and the Hepers believe if they can make it to the river that they can escape the vampires. Since vampires do not swim,



once the Hepers get to the river, they do manage to use the waterway as a deterrent to escape the vampires.

Boat

Gene and the Hepers look for a boat when they reach the river. They spend several nights on the boat offshore so the vampires cannot get to them. The Hepers ultimately use the boat to go down the river to a new land where they can live away from the vampires.

Suncloak

A suncloak is a protective robe that the vampires use. The suncloak covers the skin of the vampires to protect them from the sun when the vampires need to move about during the daytime.

Journal

The journal belongs to the Scientist that once lived in the library at the Heper Institute. Gene finds and reads the journal. Gene uses the information to lead the Hepers to safety.

Map

The map is what appears to be a blank page inside of the Scientist's journal. In the sunlight, the Hepers and Gene can see the map. This is the map that helps guide them to get away from the vampires and find a land where they can live in safety and peace.



Themes

Good versus Evil

The primary plot throughout the entire novel is that of good versus evil. Biblical symbolism can be found throughout the book, such as when the vampires lure the Hepers away with the promise of fruit trees, which is biblical symbolism of the Garden of Eden. Additionally, Gene has an inner struggle with good versus evil. As another human being, Ashley June also has an inner struggle with choosing between right and wrong, while doing what she has to do in order to stay alive.

Gene struggles with the good and evil of saving the lives of the Hepers, which can also cost Gene his own life. He also struggles with his romantic feelings for Ashley June because he thinks their love is forbidden since he thinks Ashley June is a vampire. The Hepers are in a constant struggle against their enemies, the vampires. The Hepers seem to be clueless to the fact that their lives are in constant danger, and that the vampires are only outfitting them with food, shelter and clothes to make the Hepers suitable prey for the Heper Hunt.

It turns out that Ashley June is also in a constant struggle to choose between good and evil. She admits to Gene that she started dating her boyfriend and then killed him all to hide her identity as a human. While Ashley June's motives are questionable for most of the novel, in the end, it is clear that she cares for Gene because Ashley June puts her own life at risk to save Gene, so he in turn can the lives of the Hepers.

Mental States

Another primary theme in the novel is the mind or mental state of the vampires, especially when they sense the smell of Heper and during the Heper Hunt that turns out to be a hunt for Gene. Primarily, the focus falls on whether or not Gene can keep a stable mental capacity while trying to live as a human being among a planet full of vampires. Gene is literally living with the enemy and it sometimes takes a toll on his mental state, making him paranoid about whether or not he is clean enough, has shaved well enough, and suppresses any human-like behaviors that can give away his true identity.

Even Ashley June seems to have her own mental problems. She faces similar mental games as Gene. She too from a young age has been living on her own without her parents. She too has had to hide her identity as a human and do whatever it takes to protect herself, including murdering her vampire boyfriend.

Even the Scientist's mental state is in question. This is because he once worked for the vampires, but at some point left the Heper Institute. When he left, however, he went on to have a family. The vampires and the Hepers in captivity seem to think the Scientist died. He must have struggled with the fact that as a human, he worked for the vampires,



putting the Hepers in danger. This can be what caused the Scientist to create the journal and the map, which is what ultimately saves Gene and the other Hepers' lives.

Friendship/Relationships

Friendships and relationships are a third major theme that runs throughout the novel. First, there is the line that separates the classes of the Hepers and the vampires. Second, it is even the class of relationships that exist in the ranks of the vampires. Ashley June seems to have a demeanor where she gets along with most of the vampires, but she also forms closer relationships and trusts some people more than others, such as Gene. Even Gene struggles with his feelings for Ashley June because he thinks Ashley June is a vampire.

Ashley June starts out being undercover as a vampire, even though she is human. Once Ashley June reveals herself as a human to Gene, their relationship quickly turns into a romance, even in the face of danger. In reality, Gene knows that his life is at stake if he lets his guard down. It is likely the desire to survive and to do the right thing by saving the lives of the Hepers that propels Gene to win out over the vampires.

Style

Point of View

The novel is written in the first person point of view, from the perspective of the primary character, Gene. The novel swings back and forth between the present and the past. The present represents the time the characters are living in a world full of vampires, where the humans are extinct, except for the humans in captivity. The past represents the time in history leading up to the extinction of the humans.

The point of view of this novel is intimate, allowing a reader to connect closely with the main character, Gene. The book written in this manner allows the reader to get inside Gene's head, thoughts and inner struggles. The reader cares what happens to the narrator. The point of view also allows the author to inject his own opinions into the narration and to expand on the events taking place around the other characters and the occurrences taking place.

Setting

The novel is set in a world where there are no longer humans living, but a world that is run by vampires. The specific century or time-frame is never stated. While the novel seems to be in a future century, some old world traits, such as using horses and carriages are still in place. The main characters are involved in the preparation for the Hunt, which is a special group of vampires chosen to hunt down and kill the Heper that are in captivity.

The setting of this novel works well with the plot. At first, the reader is not aware that the main character is the only living human left on Earth, living among a planet full of vampires. As events unfold, the Heper Hunt is a constant part of the plot, the lives of the characters and even the outcome of the novel.

Language and Meaning

The language of this novel is relatively simple and easy to read. The author, however, interjects some made-up words and concepts to fit into the setting of the novel. The language is modern and descriptive enough that it helps to explain the situations. This creates scenarios that are detailed enough for the reader to truly understand.

Structure

The novel is divided into eight chapters. The length of each chapter ranges from five pages to 80 pages long. The chapters tell the story primarily in exposition and in some

dialogue. The narrator injects his own voice and thoughts throughout the book, providing her opinions and feelings of the events unfolding in the novel.

The novel contains one main plot and several subplots. The main plot is the struggle of human beings in choosing between good and evil. One subplot is the mental state of mind of each of the characters. Another subplot is the relationships that the characters form amongst each other.



Quotes

"You're alone now, my son."
Pages 1-5, p. 3

"Are you..."
The Heper Lottery, p. 39

"What am I supposed to be looking at?"
The Heper Institute, p. 49

"Avoid anything that'll draw attention."
Hunt Minus Four Nights, p. 80

"I smell heper all over you."
Hunt Minus Three Nights, p. 104

"The Palace needs someone who is well-spoken, thoughtful, restrained, detail-oriented. And with him, you've got all that."
Hunt Minus Two Nights, p. 134

"The Scientist. He will get you out."
Hunt Minus Two Nights, Pages 140-160, p. 155

"The page that reveals a map when you hold it up to the sunbeam?"
Hunt Minus Two Nights, Pages 161-188, p. 184

"You need to watch out. She's not who you think she is."
Hunt Minus One Night, p. 207

"It's my father."
The Heper Hunt, p. 293



Topics for Discussion

Who is the true Gene? How do you think he has been able to hide successfully as a human among all of the vampires? Do you believe the vampires do not know that Gene is a human? What do you think happens to Gene after he escorts the hepers to safety?

Who is the true Ashley June? Why has she chosen not to tell Gene that she too is a human until after they are studying for the Hunt at the Heper Institute? Did you suspect Ashley June was a human, or did you believe that she was trying to trap Gene because she knew he was human? Does Ashley June have a split personality, with one personality being good and the other evil?

Discuss the relationship between Gene and Ashley June. Are they friends, foes, lovers or somewhere in between? Is there true competition in their relationship? How does Gene feel about Ashley June? How does Ashley June feel about Gene? How do Gene's feelings change after he discovers Ashley June is a human too? What does Gene do about it? What happens to Ashley June? Do you think Gene returns to save her?

Who is the Scientist? Is he a human or a vampire? Why do you think Gene's father kept his identity from Gene? What role does the Scientist play in the novel, which you discover at the end?

Why does the Heper Institute keep the hepers in captivity? Do you think the hepers are the only ones that recognize that Gene is human also? Why do you think the reporter tries to warn Gene about the real motive for the Hunt? Do you think the Hunt was all planned to take down Gene along with the other hepers?

Discuss the Heper Hunt. What impact does it have on the characters of the novel? How does it motivate them and how does it derail their lives?

What do you think happens to Gene and the other hepers after the novel? Do you think the vampires continue to try to find and kill the hepers? Is Ashley June safe or in danger in captivity?