

# **Luna Study Guide**

**Luna by Julie Anne Peters**

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## Plot Summary

"Luna" by Julie Anne Peters is a highly acclaimed novel about a transsexual teenager, his decision to transition, and the effects of this on his younger sister and sole confidante. When Liam confides that he wants to transition and become Luna all of the time, Regan struggles to keep his secret and help him become comfortable dressing in public, even as it negatively affects her own life and relationships. "Luna" is a touching and realistic portrayal of the challenges, triumphs and heartbreaks a young man must face in order to correct his destiny and become the girl he was born to be.

Though Luna wakes Regan in the middle of the night, dancing in her room, Regan loves Luna because she is her brother. Miserable as a boy, Liam wants to transition, but Regan is nervous about how people will see her because of her brother's differences. Regan develops a crush on her lab partner, Chris, and though she is upset when he drops the class, she is also relieved since she cannot afford to let him get too close and learn her secret. When Regan goes shopping with Luna, she is distraught by how Liam is treated when people realize he is a boy dressed in girls' clothing.

Liam covers Regan's babysitting job so that she can go on a disastrous date with Chris, but the Materas fire Regan when they come home to find Liam dressed in Mrs. Matera's negligee. Though Regan is furious with Liam for costing her her job, she cannot stay angry because of her need to protect him. Liam decides to tell his best friend, Aly, that he is really a girl, and he is distraught when Aly abandons him, though she is in love with him. Chris continues to pursue Regan, but right after she agrees to another date, Luna dresses at school, and embarrassed that Chris saw Luna, Regan rushes home, abandoning Luna to the harassments of the bully, Hoyt Doucet. While Regan feels guilty for betraying Luna in her time of need, Liam wakes Regan that night to thank her for forcing him to stand on his own.

On Liam's eighteenth birthday, Luna asks for her parents' blessing regarding her transition. Dad is appalled and insulting, while Mom walks out of the room, ignoring the situation. When Regan confronts Mom, she is furious to realize Mom has always known but never helped Liam. That afternoon, Aly visits with the intent of trying to accept Luna. Regan goes on her date with Chris but, distracted by leaving Luna home alone on her birthday, asks him to take her home early. Luna wakes Regan in the middle of the night to accompany her to the airport. She is going to Seattle to stay with Teri Lynn, a post-op transgender girl she met on line, and to begin surgical transitioning. Regan is sad because she does not want Luna to leave, but she wants her brother to be happy more than anything in the world. By leaving, Luna frees herself and also Regan who can now focus on herself instead of Liam or Luna.



# Section 1: Chapter 1 & 2

## Section 1: Chapter 1 & 2 Summary

"Luna" by Julie Anne Peters is a highly acclaimed novel about a transsexual teenager; his decision to transition; and the effects of this on his younger sister and sole confidante. When Liam confides that he wants to transition and become Luna all of the time, Regan struggles to keep his secret and help him become comfortable dressing in public, even as it negatively affects her own life and relationships. "Luna" is a touching and realistic portrayal of the challenges, triumphs and heartbreaks a young man must face in order to correct his destiny and become the girl he was born to be.

In Chapter 1, Regan wakes to a presence in her bedroom at 2:30 A.M. Wearing a flapper dress and a blonde wig, the girl announces that she has decided to be called Luna, appropriate since she is a girl who can only be seen in the moonlight. When Regan calls Luna a freak show, Luna asks if she loves her, and Regan thinks "yeah, I loved her. I couldn't help it. She was my brother" (p. 3). In Chapter 2, when Liam and Regan are children, Liam always wanted to play house, but he insisted on being the mommy and made his little sister play the daddy. When Regan wakes, she dresses and goes downstairs for breakfast to find Liam dressed in his boy role, and while Mom plans the Sorensons' wedding on her cell phone, Dad tells Liam he talked to Coach Hewitt about Liam playing on the baseball team. When Liam protests that he does not want to play baseball, Dad asks Liam to do it for him, and Liam looks like he is going to cry. After Mom and Dad leave for work, Regan asks Liam for a ride to school, rushing to the car as he backs out of the driveway, but the look on his face as he turns makes her stumble back as she recalls the joint ninth birthday party Liam had with his best friend, Alyson. Dad was upset because he found Liam's birthday list which included Barbies and a bra, but Mom claimed it was a joke. Dad worried he and Liam do not connect like father and son. As Dad swung Regan around, she saw Liam in the doorway, giving her a look of hatred. That is how he looks at her now. Wondering if it is because Dad treats her differently, Regan realizes Liam has always wanted to be the girl in their family, to be born again right, in the body of a girl.

## Section 1: Chapter 1 & 2 Analysis

The first chapter introduces the narrator, Regan, and her brother, Liam who is a transsexual that goes by the name Luna when dressed as a girl, though he only dresses late at night in Regan's room. This chapter only mentions Luna's appearance without clarifying her transsexuality, but it foreshadows the content of this novel when Regan mentions that Luna is her brother. In Chapter 2, Regan has a memory while dreaming about how Liam always wanted to be the mommy when they played house as children. Regan wakes from the dream when her alarm goes off, and wondering if playing house was her first indication that Liam was transgender, she decides there was something earlier, but she does not want to remember. At breakfast, the reader is introduced to



Regan and Liam's parents. This introduction demonstrates the way Dad pressures Liam to fill gender role expectations and the fact that Mom seems somewhat disinterested in and detached from her children. Informing her family that she has to work late, Mom asks Regan to cook dinner, but since Regan is babysitting, Liam offers to do it, causing Dad to claim it is not Liam's job and to glare at Regan. Mom notes that Regan does not seem to be sleeping and offers her sleeping pills, but Regan insists she is just worried about a couple tests she has this week. Truthfully, she is more concerned about chemistry class. When Liam glares at Regan when she attempts to get in his car, she recalls the same look of hatred when their father swung her around at his ninth birthday party. This forces her to realize that Liam is jealous of her because she is treated like a girl while he is not, despite his self-identity as a girl. He wishes he could be born again, correctly this time, in the body of a girl.



## Section 2: Chapter 3 & 4

### Section 2: Chapter 3 & 4 Summary

In Chapter 3, walking to school and remembering that ninth birthday party, the last Liam and Aly celebrated together, Regan recalls how Liam was upset because he did not get a bra, and while Dad pulled him inside for a talk, Aly laughed at him for being funny and told Regan that someday she would marry Liam and she and Regan would be sisters; however, Regan thought "I already have a sister" (p. 17). Regan wonders why her parents could not see the girl in Liam when she could. Whatever Dad said to Liam that day swallowed Lia Marie, but she did not withdraw forever. Liam pulls up to give Regan a ride in his Spyder, but passing the school despite Regan's protestations, Liam tells her he wants to kill himself. She hates when he gets like this. As they stop at Starbucks, Regan insists she needs to go to school today, but Liam tells her that he is dying inside because it is too hard to keep suppressing Luna. People cannot see the real her because Liam looks like a boy, but he wants to be Luna all the time. When Liam expresses his desire to transition, Regan lies that she understands.

In Chapter 4, Regan and Liam reach school during Liam's lunch period, so Regan rushes to class. Mr. Bruchac makes a tardy mark by her name as she slips into chemistry class. She could not skip chemistry today because they are starting labs. Regan plans to volunteer to work alone, but when a new hot guy, Chris, asks her to be his partner, she cannot believe her luck. As they begin their first lab, Regan cannot open the drawer, but as Chris bends down to look at it, it flies open, hits him in the head and knocks him off his stool. She apologizes and is glad he is not angry as he compliments her name. Bruchac reminds the class, particularly the girls, to wear safety goggles and keep their hair from the flames. Mocking their teacher, Chris holds Regan's hair over the Bunsen burner. Explaining that he transferred to play baseball since Hewitt is a legend, he asks about the school's social life, and Regan tells him it is wild since that is what Liam and Aly tell her. Chris stares at Regan, blushing when she notices. When Bruchac associates Regan's last name with Liam, she is distraught; she hates following in Liam's footsteps because they are too big for her to fill. Now, Bruchac has high expectations of her, but Regan hopes he will soon realize she is not Liam.

### Section 2: Chapter 3 & 4 Analysis

In Chapter 3, Regan hates Liam for stranding her as she walks in the freezing cold toward school, but she does not really hate him. He does not hate her either; he is just angry about his life. She knows it must be awful to be born in the wrong body, but it is not her fault that Liam was born as a boy. Regan recalls how Liam was upset when he did not get a bra for his ninth birthday, and she recalls thinking that Liam was her sister, causing her to wonder why others did not see Liam as a girl when she could at such a young age. Dad's lecture forced Liam's femininity to retreat for a while, but it eventually emerged again. When Liam picks Regan up, he laments being forced to act like a boy;



he cannot continue living this way as it depresses him and makes him suicidal. When she reiterates her need to go to school, Liam convinces her to buy her size 5 underwear at Walmart first. It irks Regan that he wears a smaller size than she does, and Liam knows it. In Chapter 4, Regan hates school because she isolates herself as her way of coping. Regan meets Chris in this chapter and tries to fight her attraction for attraction for him. She does not know how to react when he flicks her with water since she does not know how to interact with a guy. She is upset when her teacher associates her with Liam because now he will expect her to excel like her brother, but she does not believe she can fill her brother's large footprints and hopes Mr. Bruchac will soon realize she is nothing like her brother. This desire to be seen as separate from Liam replays in Regan's mind repeatedly throughout the novel for various reasons.



## Section 3: Chapter 5

### Section 3: Chapter 5 Summary

At home, the lights flick when Regan opens the basement door due to the silent alarm that Liam rigged years ago so their parents would never catch him as Luna, though their parents rarely invade their space which is unusual for parents and is why Aly usually hangs at Liam's house. Now, Liam is beating Aly in the game he is writing, so Aly asks Regan to kill him while she tends to the two girls in his office. Liam's jobs are testing video games and building PCs for people. Regan goes to her bedroom and loads the soundtrack to "Carmen", reminiscing about her sixth grade best friend, Carmen, who turned her on to opera. She recalls the slumber party they had to celebrate the end of sixth grade. Shannon Eiber came with her friends, as did Aly, though she is two years older than Regan. Regan realized Aly came to protect her property because Shannon has a crush on Liam. As they paint their fingernails, Liam agrees to let them paint his as well, causing Carmen to look at him oddly and Shannon to question if he is gay. When the girls dance, Liam joins them, and Regan is mortified as Lia Marie exposes herself, dancing and singing like a girl until Regan turns the music off and Lia morphs back into Liam. Later, Carmen asks Regan about Liam being different, but Regan cannot even tell her best friend her secret. After that night, Carmen started acting cold toward Regan, yet Regan cannot blame her since what kind of best friend keeps secrets, and Carmen moved away that summer without even saying goodbye.

### Section 3: Chapter 5 Analysis

In Chapter 5, Regan mentions Liam's caution in preventing his parents from discovering Luna, and she also discusses his jobs, testing video games and building PCs. She escapes to her room to listen to an opera soundtrack, recalling her sixth grade slumber party when Lia Marie, Liam's former female identity, revealed herself. The girls mocked Liam, causing Regan to withdraw into isolation after the party. She also loses her best friend, Carmen, because she cannot confide her secrets since they actually belong to Liam. Carmen was not Regan's first friend. She had lots of friends when she was younger, before friendships got complicated and came with expectations.





## Section 4: Chapter 6 & 7

### Section 4: Chapter 6 & 7 Summary

In Chapter 6, Regan goes to the Materas' house to babysit. After Elise and David leave, Cody shows Regan his G. I. Joe and Mirelle sets up her Barbies, making Regan think they fit gender expectations. People accept others as long as they move along their own gender scale, but Liam was born off both scales; he is a girl, but his body betrays him. Though he is good at pretending to be a boy, he is jealous of girls who are what he wants to be but never can. That night, Luna wakes Regan from a happy dream where she is singing at the Met to ask her opinion of his outfit for everyday wear. Luna poses and preens, something she can do for hours. Liam shattered his own mirror because he hates the way he looks, but Luna cannot seem to get enough of herself. Regan tells Luna that she is beautiful and looks like a regular girl, causing Luna to smile because she would give anything to live as a plain, ordinary girl.

In Chapter 7, Regan is not interested as Mom chatters about a new account she hopes to land, but Liam is girl-gawking, memorizing how girls talk, move and gesture. Liam compliments Mom's dress and Dad's hair; he is talking more than usual, revealing too much Luna which unnerves Regan. Liam also tells Dad that he talked to Coach Hewitt and will start a weight training program next week. Outside, Regan asks why Liam is acting weird, and he explains he is testing the waters. On the way to school, she asks what is up with Mom. She is all amped up on pills and her job, focusing on making other people happy but no longer worried about her own family's happiness. Liam defends Mom, claiming she just wants to be fulfilled and is reshaping her own destiny. He wonders what his destiny will be, and when Regan expresses the sentiment that one cannot change their destiny, Liam argues because that means he will never be fulfilled and he will not be able to follow his heart.

### Section 4: Chapter 6 & 7 Analysis

In Chapter 6, Regan babysits for the Materas; Elise and David are the parents she wishes she had, and babysitting for them is her only escape from home and school. As she watches the children play with their toys, she thinks about how they fit gender role expectations, unlike Liam. Regan finds gender expectations too confusing and wonders "why couldn't people just be accepted for who they were" (p. 51). When Luna visits Regan that night, Regan thinks of the differences between Liam and Luna. Liam hates his appearance and is insecure, but Luna is in love with herself. Regan makes Luna happy with the best possible compliment she can give her, that she looks like an ordinary girl, which is Luna's greatest desire. In Chapter 7, Liam girl-gawks at Mom, trying to memorize the way girls move as part of his education for his transition. Since Mom will be doing a lot of work on the Rosenberg wedding, she expects Regan to take over for her in the evenings, again showing Mom's disinterest in her family. Regan is unnerved as Liam is overly talkative and reveals too much of Luna during breakfast, but



when she questions him about it, he insists he is testing the waters. When Regan questions Mom's detachment from her family, Liam defends Mom because she is simply trying to reshape her destiny. He associates with Mom since he also hopes he will be able to change his destiny; else, he will never be able to follow his heart by becoming Luna all of the time.



## Section 5: Chapter 8 & 9

### Section 5: Chapter 8 & 9 Summary

In Chapter 8, Regan notices how handsome Chris is as he jokes with her about wearing her goggles, and this makes her remember Mom noting how handsome Dad was when Regan was younger. Regan finds it difficult to concentrate on the experiment with Chris so close, and she nearly drops the thermometer as Shannon Eiber approaches to flirt with Chris and invite him to a rave on Saturday night in Genesee. Snapping back to reality, Regan realizes that Chris is too cool for her. At home, Liam is closed into his bedroom, listening to Dana International, and the music forces Regan to recall when she heard it and entered Liam's room to find an empty prescription bottle. She begged him to throw up, but he did not take them. He pleaded for her to help him, but she flushed the pills down the toilet and gave him her new nightgown. Now, Regan is relieved when Liam opens the door to reveal his stark, impersonal room. He is excited to show Regan the research he has done on transgendered people throughout history and the testimonials of transgenders in transition. He explains that Sex Reassignment Surgery is all that he has ever wanted, but Regan has never allowed herself to think about what transitioning means. As her brain screams at her not to desert him, Liam asks if she understands, and Regan lies again.

In Chapter 9, Regan cannot laugh at Chris's jokes in chemistry class because the world feels wrong today. Trying to relax, she thinks it is good that she has no chance with Chris because then he will never have to know. During their experiment, Regan drops sulfuric acid on her arm, screaming in pain. After Mr. Bruchac washes it and applies cream, Chris kisses Regan's palm, and she nearly dies, cradling her arm for the rest of the day to cherish the feel of his lips on her skin. As Regan dreams about Chris that night, she wakes to Luna crying because Dad made her tryout for baseball. She needs to transition now, no matter the cost, and she begs Regan to help her start slow by dressing in public. Panicking at Luna's happiness at the idea of feeling comfortable in public, Regan suggests going to the mall on the other side of town where no one will recognize Liam, and Luna is ecstatic because she has always dreamed of going shopping with her sister. They decide to go on Saturday night which will give Regan time to prepare, and she assures herself it will not be bad; no one will take notice of two girls shopping. The next day, Mr. Bruchac summons Regan to the front of the class and asks her to show the class her arm as an example of the consequences of spilling acid. As he lectures them, she shows her arm and admits it hurt, but when she quips about his lecture, Mr. Bruchac gives the class a quiz. After class, Chris invites Regan to the rave on Saturday night, but she cannot disappoint Luna because the shopping trip means too much to her, so she explains she is going shopping with her sister. Chris looks disappointed as he walks away, and cursing Liam, Regan kicks the wall.



## Section 5: Chapter 8 & 9 Analysis

In Chapter 8, Regan tries to fight her attraction to Chris, reminding herself that he is too cool for her when Shannon Eiber flirts with him. At home, the sound of Liam listening to Dana International makes Regan recall his suicide attempt and his request for Regan to help him end his life. She watches him closely after that and believes that having the freedom to dress in her room has helped him a lot. Liam's room is empty of anything personal. Since he cannot live as Luna, he does not have much to indicate who he is, refusing to fully live the lie of being a boy. Regan is relieved to find Liam happy about his research on transgender girls, but when he talks about his desire for a Sex Reassignment Surgery, she has to force herself not to betray him since she is appalled by the idea. In Chapter 9, Regan believes it is good that she has no chance with Chris since she cannot let him get too close for fear of revealing Luna; however, Chris' reaction to Regan burning her arm indicates she is incorrect in her assumption about his feelings for her. That night, Luna tells Regan that she needs to transition now and wants to start by dressing in public. She asks Regan because she trusts her sister with her life. Though Regan is uncomfortable with the idea, she agrees and assures herself it will be alright. The next day, Regan is embarrassed when Mr. Bruchac summons her to the front of the class to discuss her acid burn, but Chris tries to defend her by claiming he dropped the acid, which is a lie. After class, Chris asks Regan on a date and seems disappointed when Regan refuses because she promised to go shopping with Luna on Saturday night. This is the first of many instances where readers see Regan putting Liam's feelings and desires above her own.



## Section 6: Chapter 10 & 11

### Section 6: Chapter 10 & 11 Summary

In Chapter 10, Chris is not in chemistry class the next day, and when Bruchac hands back the quizzes, Regan feels guilty that Chris scored 0% since they would not have had the quiz if she had not spilled acid on herself. Saturday is a busy day at the Materas, and Liam is agitated that she does not get home until nearly 7 P.M. since they planned to leave by 6 P.M. Liam and Regan rush to West Meadows Mall which is nearly empty due to the weather, but Liam freezes after he parks, insisting he cannot do it. Regan attempts to encourage him, and he tells her about Teri Lynn, a transsexual girl he met online. The first time that Teri tried to pass, a little girl recognized her as a man wearing a dress, but though she was traumatized, Teri Lynn could not go back. Regan tells Liam that he can do this, and an expression of determination and resolve sets on his face as he gets out of the car.

In Chapter 11, Regan stands guard outside the girls' bathroom while Liam transforms into Luna, assuring her that she looks ordinary when she emerges. Luna panics when they encounter an appliance salesman, but he does not even give them a second look, so Luna is ecstatic that she passed and even more so when no one reads her as they walk through the mall. They look at the display in the Gap, but Luna is afraid to go inside until Regan encourages her. When the saleslady looks at Luna and backs away, Luna shrinks inside, so Regan pulls her out of the store, but Luna, not ready to leave yet, rushes into a music store without Regan there to protect her. Racing to catch up, Regan finds a group of guys harassing Luna and calling her gay slurs. Regan remembers how Liam used to argue aloud with himself that he is not gay, he is a girl. As the boys follow Luna and Regan, Regan tells a security guard the boys are stalking them, and he scares them away. Luna is shaken and seems like she is about to disembodify, so Regan takes her hand and tells her that she is sorry, pondering what else she could say.

### Section 6: Chapter 10 & 11 Analysis

In Chapter 10, Regan blames herself for Chris scoring 0% on the chemistry quiz because they would never have been given the quiz if she had not spilled acid on herself. His absence foreshadows Chris dropping the class. On Saturday, Regan arrives home late from the Materas' house, and as Liam rushes her to leave, Dad tries to make them stay home because it is snowing. Regan lies that they are going to the Y, but since Dad wants to join him, Liam insists he needs to do this alone. He asks if Dad understands, and Dad agrees without having any clue what he is supposed to understand. When Regan and Liam reach the mall, Liam is struck with fear at the idea of dressing in public, but with Regan's encouragement and the recollection of Teri Lynn's traumatic but life-changing first appearance in public, Liam becomes determined and exits the car. In Chapter 11, Luna dresses in the restroom, and when she emerges,



she worries about people reading her. Regan repositions her collar over her Adam's apple and assures Luna that she will only stand out because she is more attractive than most Genetic Girls. Regan tries to reassure and protect Luna as they shop, but she is outraged by the way the Gap saleslady and a group of guys gawk at Luna, causing Luna to shrink inside herself. Luna is shaken by the whole fiasco, and all Regan can do is apologize; Regan is distraught by how her sister was treated.



## Section 7: Chapter 12 & 13

### Section 7: Chapter 12 & 13 Summary

In Chapter 12, Dad grounds Regan and Liam for staying out so late and impounds Liam's beloved Mitsubishi Spyder convertible. Liam relinquishes the keys without a fight, obviously regretting going to the mall. By Monday, he is back to his hollow self, and Regan hopes he is over this transition phase. As Regan babysits for the Materas, she cannot stop thinking about Saturday night. Liam has not mentioned it, and Luna has resumed her safe, midnight forays in Regan's bedroom. Regan cannot forget it because she cannot bare for her brother to be viewed as a freak; no one deserves that for simply being who they are. She has always kept his secret, and she will always keep him safe. The next day in chemistry, Bruchac tells Regan that Chris dropped the class, so she convinces him to let her work alone. At breakfast on Wednesday, Dad is upset because Coach Hewitt told him that Liam has not shown up for practice, and after Liam rushes out the door, Dad asks Regan what he did to turn his son against him, but when she explains he expects things, Dad insists he just wants Liam to be a normal, happy child. At school, Liam asks Regan if they can go shopping Saturday afternoon because Luna has to emerge in daylight eventually, and though she wonders why he cannot give up, the longing resonates from him, so she agrees. Liam asks if Dad is disappointed in him, and when Regan quips that Dad worries Liam does not idolize him, he says Dad is his hero and he feels like he spends his whole life trying to prove it.

In Chapter 13, Regan recalls going to Grandpa O'Neill's funeral. As Uncle Phil eulogizes, Grandma tells Mom about how her husband beat their sons, but they all worshipped him. Regan remembers Grandpa threatening Liam with his fist and Dad forbidding his father to touch his son. Liam stares at Dad, transfixed. Another time, Dad confronted Mr. Doucet when Hoyt Doucet was harassing Liam, and then he drove Liam to and from school for the rest of the year to avoid Hoyt. Though Liam works hard to earn Dad's respect, he wants to be like Mom, not Dad, but if Dad is his hero, Regan does not understand why her brother is so afraid of him. On Saturday afternoon, Liam and Regan head downtown for lunch, and Liam produces an Out of Order sign to hang on the girls' bathroom, asking Regan to guard the door while he changes. As Luna takes forever, Chris greets Regan and apologizes for bailing on her in chemistry, but he needs to sustain a C average to play baseball. He admits his original plan was to use Regan to pass the class, but he likes her too much to use her. Chris' friend honks the horn, and Regan suggests he should leave, realizing Luna has been in the bathroom for forty minutes. Chris suggests catching up with Regan later, but she insists he should leave now, and when he walks away looking odd, she realizes that he thinks she is waiting for a guy since the girls' bathroom is out of order. She tries to call him back, but the car squeals out of the lot at the same moment Luna emerges from the restroom. Liam is ecstatic on the way home that no one read him; a few people noticed, but Luna did not notice them. Wondering if this is what Liam meant about the cost of transitioning, Regan cannot bare it because it is costing him his dignity.



## Section 7: Chapter 12 & 13 Analysis

In Chapter 12, Liam is so upset by his trip to the mall that he does not even object when Dad grounds him and confiscates his car keys. When he returns to his normal, hollow self by Monday, Regan hopes he has forgotten the whole idea of transitioning. After school, Aly is in the basement watching Judge Judy, and Regan sees the three of them in the show: Liam wants to be Luna all the time, Aly wants to be with Liam, and Regan does not want anything because "dreams only set you up for disappointment" (p. 98). She fears one or all of them is going to take a fall. Though Liam does not mention their shopping trip, Regan cannot stop thinking about it. She is absolutely devastated by how unfairly he was treated, and she promises that she will always protect him. After Dad and Liam fight about Liam's refusal to play baseball, Dad asks Regan what he did to alienate his son. When she tells Dad that he expects too much of Liam, he asks if he expects too much of Regan also, but it is the rest of the world that expects too much of her. Despite the previous shopping disaster, Liam wants to go again, so Regan agrees though she does not understand why he cannot just give up. Regan tells Liam that Dad worries they do not idolize him enough, but Liam surprises her by insisting Dad is his hero. In Chapter 13, Regan recalls learning about how Grandpa O'Neill abused her father and his brothers. She also remembers Dad protecting Liam from Grandpa and Hoyt Doucet, realizing why Dad is Liam's hero, though she does not understand why Liam is afraid of Dad. On Saturday afternoon, Regan runs into Chris while waiting for Liam to transform into Luna, but when she hurries him away for fear he will see Luna, he misconstrues it to believe she is waiting for a guy. Luna and Regan wander around downtown after lunch. Luna is bolder this time, and Regan feels exposed as she notices people's stares. It is bizarre because it seems like Luna knows what is happening but does not care, yet Liam's life is all about caring what people see when they look at him, worrying people will see a girl in boy's clothes. Liam is ecstatic on the way home, insisting no one read him, and Regan is upset that the cost of transitioning seems to be her brother's dignity.





## Section 8: Chapter 14 & 15

### Section 8: Chapter 14 & 15 Summary

In Chapter 14, that night, Regan thinks that she made Chris feel rejected and she needs to explain to him that it was about her brother as always. The next day, Regan waits in the gym to talk to Chris, but when she sees him, she chickens out and rushes home to find Dad in the basement, in Liam's room. Dad asks Regan if Liam is gay, accusing her of lying when she says no. He asks if Liam dates or if he even likes girls, and Regan wishes she could explain that Liam likes boys, but that does not make him gay because Dad has two daughters. Dad is satisfied, seeing what he wants to see, but Regan's heart aches because Liam will never be able to tell Dad about Luna. When Liam gets home at 10:30 P.M., he is excited to show Regan a picture of a nerdy guy and another picture of a beautiful girl; this is Teri Lynn. There is no resemblance between the two photographs, but Regan notes that the confidence is what makes the difference, like when Liam transitions into Luna.

In Chapter 15, Elise Matera calls in the morning to ask Regan to babysit on Saturday night, and when Dad mentions remodeling the basement, Liam objects that he and Regan like it the way it is. On the way to school, Liam asks if Dad opened his treasure chest and seems annoyed when Regan assures him she got there in time. Regan forgot her lunch money, causing her to remember when Mom used to pack their lunches until she got into a fight with Dad that all she does it cook, clean and take care of the kids. Mom was trapped like Liam, but she was looking for escape outside while he escapes within himself. Aly loans Regan money for lunch and asks her to remind Liam about her art project on Saturday. Aly also asks Regan to hint to Liam that she really wants to go to prom. He has been distant lately, and Aly worries there is someone else. Regan assures her there is no one else.

### Section 8: Chapter 14 & 15 Analysis

In Chapter 14, Regan feels that Liam is sucking the life out of her, and she wants to explain to Chris that her rejection is not about him; it is about her duty to Liam. After being too scared to confront Chris, Regan skips school and goes home to find Dad poking around in Liam's room. Dad questions her about Liam's treasure chest and his jobs before asking if Liam is gay. Regan cannot explain that Dad has two daughters, and she aches for Liam that he will never be able to tell Dad about Luna. When Liam shows Regan pictures of Teri Lynn before and after his surgery, she is struck by the difference in confidence between the two pictures, and it reminds her of the contrast between Liam and Luna. It hurts Regan that Luna has to hide in a shell because she is a good person. Remembering all the times that Liam protected her as children, Regan realizes she has forgotten all the times he was there for her because he is so needy now. She hopes he will finally be happy after his transition. Thinking of Chris, Regan cries, asking why she had to meet him now. In Chapter 15, Liam seems annoyed that



Dad did not open his treasure chest, almost as though he wants Dad to discover Luna. Thinking about how Mom used to feel trapped as a housewife, Regan realizes Mom sought escape outside of their home while Liam seeks escape inside himself. Aly asks Regan about Liam's distance lately, worried he is interested in another girl. Aly says she does not know what she would do without Regan, which is the same thing Elise said to her this morning. Anyone else would feel honored to be so trusted, so Regan wonders why she just feels used.



## Section 9: Chapter 16 & 17

### Section 9: Chapter 16 & 17 Summary

In Chapter 16, Chris approaches Regan to ask if the guy who drops her off is her boyfriend, and after she laughingly tells him it is her brother, he asks her to the underground rave on Saturday night. Though she is scheduled to babysit, she promises to find someone to cover her, thinking it is crazy to go out with him because she cannot get too close. At home, Luna is waiting in her room to tell her that Teri Lynn is coming to town on Monday for a business conference so they are meeting for dinner. She wants to go shopping on Saturday, but when Regan confides about her schedule conflict with her job and her date, Luna volunteers to fill in. Knowing Elise will not agree, Regan suggests Liam come after the Materas leave, promising to be back before they return.

In Chapter 17, Regan is eager for David and Elise to leave, and as she prepares to put the kids to bed, Liam knocks on the door and Cody flies to answer it. He tells Cody he is the tooth fairy so Cody cannot tell anyone he was here. As Regan gives Liam instructions, he promises everything will be fine, and though she is nervous when Chris arrives, Liam tells her to have a good time. Chris recognizes Liam from tryouts and asks Regan if she had to bribe her brother to babysit. Regan jokes that she sold her soul but it will be worth it. She is embarrassed when she slips on ice, falling down the stairs and dragging Chris with her. His heat is high in his car to prevent it from dying, but when Regan cracks the window, it sinks into the door frame. Chris hands her his CD book which she drops, and then she proceeds to bust her head on the dashboard trying to retrieve the CDs. Neither of them laughs when Regan notes this is not going well. Chris stops at his house to grab a change of clothes, warning Regan that his mom's boyfriend is a jerk. Chris runs outside with his mom's boyfriend chasing him, and they drive downtown where Chris quickly changes in Taco Bell. Regan tells herself that the worst must be over now.

### Section 9: Chapter 16 & 17 Analysis

In Chapter 16, language abandons Regan when Chris greets her, and after they crack their heads together trying to pick up the book she drops, Chris tells her that he has been waiting for her. He finds Regan mysterious and has asked around, but no one seems to know anything about her. He also followed her to find out if she is going with anyone, and he asks if the guy who drops her off is her boyfriend. Laughing, Regan explains that is her brother, and Chris asks her to an underground rave on Saturday night. Regan accepts the date, hoping to find someone who can cover her babysitting job for the Materas that night. When Regan asks Aly to babysit for her, Aly reminds her that she is banned from the Materas, leaving Regan hopeless. Regan feels guilty when she falls asleep while babysitting on Thursday night. When Liam asks Regan to go shopping again on Saturday, she tells him about her conflict with her date and job, so he offers to fill in. She agrees, planning for him to arrive after the Materas leave and to be



gone before they return. Since she also reminds Liam of Aly's art project on Saturday, Luna suggests shopping on Sunday. While Regan is nervous about the idea of Luna babysitting for the Materas, she has never felt so hopeful about herself and her future, and she figures what could possibly go wrong in one night. In Chapter 17, Regan is nervous as she leaves the Materas' children with Liam, but he assures her that everything will be fine. She is also anxious about her date, and her brother tells her to have a good time. Regan's date with Chris begins disastrously with her dragging him down the stairs, breaking his car window and busting her head on his dashboard. After he changes out of his clothes, ruined by their fall, Regan relaxes, assuring herself the worst must be over. It will be clear sailing from here; the problem is that all of her dreams died at the end of sixth grade.



## Section 10: Chapter 18 & 19

### Section 10: Chapter 18 & 19 Summary

In Chapter 18, Chris and Regan finally reach the rave, and taking her hand, he leads her toward the building. Chris asks Regan to dance and is relieved when she informs him that she does not dance. They go outside where Chris puts his arm around Regan, and they joke and flirt before turning the subject to their families. They also discuss their dreams. As Chris leans in to kiss Regan, police sirens cause them to panic. Regan panics more when she realizes it is already 10:50 P.M. and she is going to be late getting back to the Materas' house. As they rush back to Chris's car, Regan loses her shoe and realizes she forgot her purse, and when she mentions that she needed to be back by 11:00 P.M., Chris speeds, getting pulled over and ticketed. As Regan tries to figure out if they had a good time, Chris apologizes for the bad date. As they pull up to the Materas' house, Regan notes there are lights on inside. She rushes inside, looking back to see Chris hunched over his hood, but she cannot tell if he is mad or crying. Noticing that the front door is open a crack, Regan prays that the Materas stayed out late.

In Chapter 19, Liam's voice begs David not to hurt him as David demands he take it off. Regan rushes into David and Elise's bedroom to find David holding a knife as Luna strips out of a white negligee. David is shocked when Regan tells him it is only her brother, and Regan looks at Luna in disbelief; how could she? Liam undresses and runs, leaving Regan to apologize and explain she called her brother for a bit because she had an emergency. She promises it will not happen again, but David tells her she is no longer welcome in their house and her brother needs help. Ignoring the money he throws at her, Regan runs out of the house. She is enraged as she bursts into Liam's room and yells at him for causing her to lose her job. She tells Liam that he is pathetic, she hates him and she wishes he were never born. Liam's face looks horrified as Regan slams her door. On Sunday morning, Regan feels sick because she is sure Chris hates her and Liam always worries about what he wants, not the normal life that she desires. She ignores Liam's apologies throughout the day, telling him she does not claim him as a brother or sister. When Liam asks about their shopping trip, Regan tells him to get his stuff out of her room because he is ruining her life, and she suggests he go shopping alone. At 1:53 A.M., Regan wakes to no indication of Luna, but she hears Liam sobbing in his room. She begins to weaken, but his tears will never go away; he is right that he does not fit, and there is nothing she can do to make him right.

### Section 10: Chapter 18 & 19 Analysis

In Chapter 18, once Chris and Regan reach their destination, Regan gives into her feelings, wanting to live dangerously for one night. As they drink soda on the edge of the dance floor, Shannon approaches to ask Chris to dance, and she looks shocked when he tells her that he is with Regan. Regan and Chris enjoy themselves, talking and



flirting, but as he leans in to kiss her, police sirens send them running. Realizing how late it is, Regan fears she will not get back to Liam before the Materas return home, foreshadowing the disastrous results of her tardiness. Chris speeds to get her there, but he is ticketed by a police officer. Chris apologizes for the bad date, but Regan must rush inside the house because the lights are on. She notices Chris leaned over his car hood but does not know if he is angry or sad about their ruined date. In Chapter 19, foreshadowing is fulfilled when Regan enters the Materas' house to find David threatening Liam with a knife because Liam is wearing Elise's negligee. She is distraught that Liam would do this to her, and despite her explanations, the Materas dismiss her from their services. Regan is furious at Liam for making her lose her job and tells him she wishes he were never born. The next morning, she is sure Chris must hate her because she keeps hurting him. She also hates Liam because it is always about what he wants, never about what she wants. Regan just wants a normal life. She knows she should have been responsible about her job, but she refuses to take the blame, deciding she will never forgive Liam. Regan refuses to listen to Liam's apologies and tells him to go shopping alone. She hears him crying that night but refuses to weaken because there is nothing she can do to help him.



## Section 11: Chapter 20 & 21

### Section 11: Chapter 20 & 21 Summary

In Chapter 20, Elise calls during breakfast on Monday to talk to Mom, but Mom only tells Regan to do laundry and dishes after school when she hangs up; Regan finds it surreal that nothing else happens, but Liam looks like he is going to cry. As Regan walks to school, Liam begs to give her a ride, but Regan refuses to listen to his apology. She says it is not just about the job. He does not realize how much she has sacrificed for him. Liam tells her that he went shopping alone yesterday, but they called security because he wanted to try a dress on. He invites her to join him for dinner with Teri Lynn, and Regan makes Liam laugh when she jokes that they need to talk about trannie things. When Regan sees Chris talking to Shannon in the hallway, she locks herself in the bathroom to wait to stop wanting him so much. At home, she finds a box with all of Liam's A and A+ chemistry papers, and though she would not cheat to save her soul, she will to salvage her GPA. Luna still wears a skirt and blouse when she sneaks downstairs at 11 P.M. She is crying because it was so incredible; Teri Lynn is living her dream, and it is wonderful to know that it is possible, that she is possible. Liam returns in the morning, but he seems more comfortable in his body. At school, Liam accosts Regan to tell her that he plans to tell Aly about Luna after school. As she rushes after him, Chris tries to talk to her, but she is too busy trying to save her brother from himself again. Regan insists that Liam cannot tell Aly, but he protests he must. He wants Regan there for moral support but will understand if she does not want to be there. Regan would prefer to be on any other planet when Liam tells Aly the truth about himself.

In Chapter 21, Regan hopes Liam has come to his senses when she returns home to find him playing a video game with Aly, but he tells Aly he has wanted to tell her something for a long time before announcing he is a girl. Not explaining himself well, he looks at Regan, pleading for help, and Regan specifies that Liam is transgender. Because Aly thinks they are joking, Liam suggests showing her Luna because he wants her to know who he really is. Aly is shocked because she thought Liam was gay but figured he could change. While Luna dresses, Regan explains that Liam feels he was born wrong because his brain is female, though his body is male. As Luna emerges, Aly asks when Liam told Regan. Regan remembers leaving for the school carnival with her parents, but Liam stayed behind to go with Aly. Mom forgot the cakes, so she sends Regan inside to retrieve them. Hearing someone singing in her parents' room, Regan finds a beautiful girl singing, and she wants to laugh when Liam turns around, but she squelches the urge because the terror on his face tells her this is not a joke. He begs her not to tell Mom and Dad, or anyone. Promising, Regan asks who he is, and Liam tells her that he is Lia Marie; he is a girl.



## Section 11: Chapter 20 & 21 Analysis

In Chapter 20, Regan does not understand Mom's indifference when Elise phones about her dismissal from her job, but Liam seems upset by the lack of discussion about his behavior. Dad asks about Regan's date, insisting it is encouraging to see predictable behavior out of one of his children. Regan again refuses Liam's apology, feeling he is selfish and does not realize all she has sacrificed for him. When he tells her about his shopping trip alone, she jokes with him and cannot stay mad because she is so agitated by how he was treated. Regan is distraught when she sees Chris talking to Shannon, and she attempts to stop wanting him so much. When Luna returns from dinner with Teri Lynn, she is happy to know her existence is possible, and this foreshadows her continued transitioning. The next day, Liam seems happier, and though Regan is happy for him, she worries he is going to do something dangerous again. After he leaves for the senior breakfast, Mom asks if Regan knows what Liam wants for his eighteenth birthday next Saturday, and Regan considers telling them he wants to be a girl but says she does not know instead. At school, Liam tells Regan that he plans to tell Aly about Luna, and ignoring Chris, she haunts her brother, insisting he cannot do this. Liam feels it is imperative, and though he wants Regan to be there for moral support, he promises that he will understand if she does not want to be there. In Chapter 21, Regan ignores her desire to be elsewhere when Liam tells Aly about Luna and goes home to offer her brother moral support. Aly seems to think Liam is joking when he tells her that he is a girl, and when he goes to change into Luna, Regan tries to clarify the matter. She explains how hard the boy role is for him. When Aly asks if Liam is a cross-dresser, Regan insists he is not; he just wants Aly to see what he sees on the inside. She reminds Aly of her ninth birthday party, sure Aly must have seen the girl inside Liam. When Aly asks when Liam told Regan about Luna, Regan remembers walking in on Lia Marie for the first time, and how he made her promise not to tell anyone he is a girl.





## Section 12: Chapter 22

### Section 12: Chapter 22 Summary

Luna asks to finish their game as she emerges. Just as Regan thinks Aly will be alright with this, Aly makes an excuse about her mother needing milk and rushes out. Regan follows, begging Aly not to do this because Luna needs her. Aly is distraught that Regan did not tell her because she thought they were friends. The next day, Regan wonders if she betrayed Aly, but she cannot forget the look on Luna's face when Aly deserted her. When Regan finds a card in her locker, she assumes it is a hate card from Aly and refuses to open it. Putting Liam's paper in her chemistry lab book, Regan thinks he would be the coolest brother/sister in the world if he was not ruining her life. Finally opening the card, Regan is surprised to find a note from Chris apologizing for being a jerk and asking for a chance to apologize in person before sixth period. He retrieved her purse also, and Regan is struck by his thoughtfulness. It is sixth period now, so Regan rushes to the gym to meet Chris. They both apologize and argue about whose fault their disastrous date was. He leads her to the theater prop room where he left her purse, and they flirt and play until Chris emerges in a blonde wig and flapper dress. Feeling dizzy, Regan has to get out of there, but she tells Chris it is her, not him. Chris asks if she even likes him, and when she agrees, he asks to start over, asking her out. She agrees to the date, though she is anxious she will mess things up. The bell rings, and Chris rushes to practice. As Regan thinks excitedly that Chris likes her, she hears and sees Hoyt Doucet harassing Luna. As her peers giggle, Luna catches her eye just as Chris appears with Regan's purse. His jaw goes slack when he sees Luna, and Regan pulls him outside to give him Liam's chemistry papers for next year before running away from the need to put distance between herself and the school, Luna and Chris. As Chris asks when a good time to call is, Regan thinks it is never a good time.

### Section 12: Chapter 22 Analysis

Aly rushes out shortly after Luna emerges and Luna is distraught by her abandonment. Aly accuses Regan of betraying her by not telling her about Luna, and Regan worries that she did betray Aly. Maybe she could have hinted to Aly about Luna, but she does not understand why Aly did not see it herself. Liam should have told Aly instead of relying on Regan to do so. When Regan gets a note from Chris asking to apologize in person, she meets him, and they flirt and play in the theater prop room; however, when he emerges in a blonde wig and flapper dress, Regan needs to escape the reminder of Luna. Chris pursues her, asking her on another date. There is definitely chemistry between them, with the potential for more, and though Regan wants this so bad, she worries if she should. Regan agrees, but when she returns to the hallway, she finds Hoyt harassing Luna. She is furious that Luna appeared in school, but her anger turns to embarrassment when Chris appears. She pulls him outside to give him Liam's chemistry papers before fleeing. She runs home, sure her chances with Chris are ruined.



## Section 13: Chapter 23

### Section 13: Chapter 23 Summary

Regan is furious that Luna showed up at school because now people will always associate her with Liam/Luna and will think she is different too, but she does not want to be different; she wants to be accepted for who she is, just like Luna does. Luna has to realize her transition does not only affect her. Though Regan feels that her brother betrayed and humiliated her, the voice in her head asks who betrayed who, chiding her for abandoning Luna when she needed Regan the most. Regan weeps for herself, for Luna, and "for a world that wouldn't let her be" (p. 211). Regan wakes to Luna bouncing on her bed, thanking her. Liam apologizes for putting her in that position, but he did not think she would be there after school. He says he is selfish and depends on his little sister too much. When Regan asks why he had to dress at school, he says he needed to test himself, to know if he has the self-confidence and will to do it every day. Liam is sorry for embarrassing Regan, but he does not want to live if he cannot transition. Regan finally gets it; she needs to change and see Luna as a real person. Liam tells her that she helped him by forcing him to stand on his own since he had to do it eventually, but Regan hates that he has to go through this alone. On her way to lunch at school, Regan is accosted by Aly who asks her to give Liam his birthday present, expensive cologne, and also provides the receipt so he can exchange it if he likes. Regan needs to say one thing to Aly; she tells her that Liam is the same person, but he happens to be happier as a girl. Aly argues she is not a lesbian and stalks away, so Regan yells after her "if you really loved him, it wouldn't matter" (p. 215). Regan is shocked when Chris calls that night. She avoided him all day for fear he would look at her differently or see Liam as a freak. When she tells him she left school to buy her brother's birthday present, she waits for a joke, but Chris simply tells her that his mom's rehearsal dinner is on Friday and asks to reschedule their date for Saturday. He seems relieved when Regan agrees, but he is not as happy and relieved as she is. They laugh and joke for two hours but never mention Liam because it is not the right time. Regan knows it will never be the right time, but she wants to pretend it will never matter for as long as possible.

### Section 13: Chapter 23 Analysis

At home, Regan feels like Luna betrayed her by showing up at school, but realizing she abandoned Luna in her time of need, she fears she betrayed her sister. Regan feels guilty and cowardly because she abandoned Luna at her most vulnerable, even though she had promised to always keep her safe. She is ashamed that she is weak and gave into fear, allowing her nonexistent reputation to be more important than defending her brother against attack. Regan is scared of Liam's transition, but she knows nothing will change if she keeps rescuing Luna. It hurts her that when Luna saw that Regan was not there for her, she knows she is totally alone in the world. Crying and apologizing, Regan loves her brother, but she hates this transition. Liam thanks Regan for forcing him to



stand on his own as Luna, but she hates that he must go through this transition on his own. When he shows her his bruises from Hoyt, she offers to help him cover it with makeup, determined that though Luna may have to survive the transition, she is not alone in the world. As Liam helps Regan braid her hair the next morning, he assures her he will not dress again. It is enough to know he is able to do it. When he teases her about Chris, she shuts the door in his face. Aly asks Regan to give Liam his birthday present from her, and Regan chides Aly for abandoning Liam; he is still the same person and his gender would not matter if Aly really loved him. Regan considers exchanging the cologne for Passion, Luna's favorite perfume, and telling Liam that Aly is coming around, but that will only hurt him more when he learns the truth. Regan is surprised that Chris does not allude to Liam or Luna when he calls that night to flirt and schedule their next date. She knows it will never be the right time to discuss her brother/sister, but she wants to pretend that it does not matter for as long as possible, sure that Chris will despise her for her brother being transgender.



## Section 14: Chapter 24 & 25

### Section 14: Chapter 24 & 25 Summary

In Chapter 24, Regan leaves Liam's birthday present, a tiny box, on his treasure chest since he is in the shower when she gets up on Saturday morning, along with a card addressed to "Luna-tic". Mom is discussing the wedding she is planning over the phone when Luna enters and starts singing happy birthday to herself. Knowing this is the next step in her transition, Regan swallows her panic for Luna's sake. Luna looks strong, defiant and absolutely terrified. Mom ignores Luna as Dad asks if this is a joke. Luna explains she is transsexual and wants Mom and Dad's blessing to change her name to Luna, explaining this is who she has always been. She explains that she was supposed to be a girl. Mom leaves the room without acknowledging the situation. When Luna tries to leave for his appointment with a manicurist, Dad tells him not to bother coming back. Apologizing for disappointing Dad by not being the son he wanted, Luna runs downstairs. After telling Dad that she hates him, Regan walks into her parents' room and throws Mom's phone into the wall, emphasizing how important this is and that Luna needs her. Mom hysterically claims she cannot deal with this today. Regan remembers when she was younger and Liam tried to pull his penis off, arguing with Mom that he was not a young man. Realizing Mom has always known, Regan wonders why she was not there for him. Suddenly struck that Mom never asked about her pills when Liam tried to commit suicide and Regan flushed the pills down the toilet, Regan backs out of the room; Mom left them out on purpose. Mom is a monster.

In Chapter 25, Regan decides she cannot leave Luna alone like this on her birthday, but Luna insists she will be upset if Regan cancels her date with Chris because of her. Aly arrives, looking determined, and sits down to finish her video game with Luna. She does not know how long it will take for her to accept this, though. Later, at the movies with Chris, Regan thinks of her conversation with Luna after Aly left when Luna said she has to finish this. She seems moody and uncommunicative, though Regan expected her to be happy about Aly's acceptance. Noting that Regan is distracted, Chris pulls her outside and offers to talk about it. Telling him she is not ready to talk about it, Regan asks to go home, stressing that it is not him but family stuff. Chris offers to call her tomorrow about next weekend, and Regan agrees, certain he is a masochist if he still wants to see her. Everything is rearranged in the basement, but Regan is relieved to see Liam sleeping in his room.

### Section 14: Chapter 24 & 25 Analysis

In Chapter 24, Luna comes downstairs on her eighteenth birthday to ask Mom and Dad for their blessing concerning his transition. Mom ignores the whole situation, walking out of the room on her cell phone. Dad erupts, forbidding Liam to leave the house dressed as a girl. Luna is devastated as she apologizes for being such a disappointment and runs downstairs. Regan hates Dad for the way he treats Luna, and she accosts Mom for



ignoring the situation. Mom claims she cannot deal with this right now, and as Regan remembers an instance from her childhood when Liam begged Mom to remove his penis, she realizes Mom has always known that Liam was really a girl. She does not understand why Mom was not there for Liam. She could have made his life easier by raising him as a girl, but of course, she was scared of Dad's reaction. She should have told Dad so he would not have made Liam feel like a failure as a son. Realizing Mom never questioned the disappearance of her pills that Liam stole for his suicide attempt, Regan suspects her Mom left them out on purpose and begins to fear that her mother is a monster, willing to kill her son because he is actually her daughter. In Chapter 25, Regan decides to cancel her date with Chris, not wanting to leave Luna alone on her birthday because she is so depressed, but Luna insists she will be angry if Regan cancels her date on her behalf. Aly visits, and though she does not know how long it will take for her to accept Luna, her presence shows that she is willing to try. She criticizes Luna's outfit, hoping she is not taking fashion advice from Regan. This indicates Aly's attempt to accept Luna and continue treating her best friend the way she always has, despite her recent discovery about his gender. Feeling hopeful, Regan loves Aly more than she ever has, like a sister. Regan is distracted on her date by thoughts of Liam, but when Chris offers to talk about it, she is afraid to open herself to ridicule, though she wants to discuss it with him. Asking him to take her home, she is angry that she is with a special guy who wants her but all she can think about is leaving her brother alone on his birthday with how he is feeling. Regan is relieved to find Liam snoring in his bed, but she feels bruised and beaten as she lays on her bed and closes her eyes.



## Section 15: Chapter 26

### Section 15: Chapter 26 Summary

Luna wakes Regan at 4:30 A.M. because she needs her to come with her. Regan begins to panic when they arrive at the airport and Luna retrieves suitcases from the trunk. The security guard forces Luna to change into Liam before boarding the plane because she does not match her license. He tells Regan that he is going to Seattle to stay with Teri Lynn, and on Monday, he will see a therapist about a Sex Reassignment Surgery. Regan objects that she cannot deal with this, but noting it has been a burden on her too, Liam says he is doing this as much for her as for himself. Regan does not want Liam to leave, but he cannot stay or he and Dad will end up hating each other. He hopes Dad will come around, but he needs to do this now. She begs him to take her too because she does not know what she will do without him, but Liam tells her to be happy. Liam confesses that he has always been jealous of his beautiful baby sister because she is the girl he has always wanted to be. When his flight is called, he gives Regan the keys to his Spyder and tells her this is not good-bye; it is his rebirth because he is starting his life over as Luna. He promises he will always be there for Regan, and they hug as though their lives depended on it. As Liam passes through security, he turns and blows Regan a kiss which lifts her up as the weight of the world dissolves and she feels herself grow. Watching Liam walk away proudly, Regan realizes he freed them both, and she is proud to be Luna's sister and friend. She feels hollow as she realizes she will never see her brother again, but her inner voice assures her that it is alright because he is happy, and Regan wants Liam to be happy more than anything in the world. She knows a part of him will never leave her: "His strength. His courage. The essence of who he was as a person" (p. 248). Running to the door, an exit and an entrance, Regan says good-bye to Liam and hello to Regan.

### Section 15: Chapter 26 Analysis

Luna wakes Regan in the middle of the night to take a ride with her. As they leave the house, Regan notes that Luna looks amazing, and Luna loves the gold half-moon earrings her sister got her for her birthday. Regan wants to talk about Mom and Dad but does not know how because they failed as parents. When they approach the airport, this foreshadows Luna's decision to leave home. When security forces Luna to change back into Liam to match his license, Liam removes the bra and wig but not the eyeliner because it took forty-five minutes to get it right. Liam tells Regan that he is going to Seattle to stay with Teri Lynn and begin his Sex Reassignment Surgery, fulfilling the earlier foreshadowing as they approached the airport. Regan is distraught that her brother is leaving her. When he mentions that he will need his own prescription for estrogen, Regan realizes he has been stealing Mom's estrogen and asks if Mom has always known. Liam confesses that Mom caught him in her negligee and heels when he was ten years old and forbid him to tell Regan or Dad. She has always known, but she could not deal with it. Regan wonders if she jumped to the wrong conclusion about



Mom. Liam talks about the surgical procedures he plans to have, and when Regan questions him about school, he says he has enough credits to graduate but it is not the right time for college; Luna needs time for herself now. When Regan accuses Liam of being selfish by leaving her, he insists that he is doing this for her too. Liam tells Regan that this is not Mom and Dad's fault. Wanting to talk about something cheery, Liam asks about Chris, advising Regan to throw out her clothes and start over. She needs color in her wardrobe and she should just be herself. Liam admits he has always been jealous of his baby sister, and when his flight is called, he promises to stay in touch with Regan. Watching him walk away confidently, Regan is proud of her sister and realizes she freed them both by leaving. Regan now has the chance to focus on herself and be happy without constantly worrying about Liam/Luna. Though she will miss her brother, she knows he will be happier now, and she wants that more than anything in the world. Regan leaves the airport, bidding her brother goodbye and greeting herself; now, she will finally be able to live her own life.



# Characters

## Regan O'Neill

Regan O'Neill is the narrator and one of the main characters in "Luna." She is Liam's sixteen-year-old, younger sister and the only person who knows about Luna when the novel opens. The novel focuses on Regan learning to accept Liam's plan to transition. Though Luna wakes Regan in the middle of the night, dancing in her room, Regan loves Luna because she is her brother. Miserable as a boy, Liam wants to transition, but Regan is nervous about how people will see her because of her brother's differences. Regan develops a crush on her lab partner, Chris, and though she is upset when he drops the class, she is also relieved since she cannot afford to let him get too close and learn her secret. When Regan goes shopping with Luna, she is distraught by how Liam is treated when people realize he is a boy dressed in girls' clothing.

Liam covers Regan's babysitting job so that she can go on a disastrous date with Chris, but the Materas fire Regan when they come home to find Liam dressed in Mrs. Matera's negligee. Though Regan is furious with Liam for costing her her job, she cannot stay angry because of her need to protect him. Liam decides to tell his best friend, Aly, that he is really a girl, and he is distraught when Aly abandons him, though she is in love with him. Chris continues to pursue Regan, but right after she agrees to another date, Luna dresses at school, and embarrassed that Chris saw Luna, Regan rushes home, abandoning Luna to the harassments of the bully, Hoyt Doucet. While Regan feels guilty for betraying Luna in her time of need, Liam wakes Regan that night to thank her for forcing him to stand on his own.

On Liam's eighteenth birthday, Luna asks for her parents' blessing regarding her transition. Dad is appalled and insulting, while Mom walks out of the room, ignoring the situation. When Regan confronts Mom, she is furious to realize Mom has always known but never helped Liam. That afternoon, Aly visits with the intent of trying to accept Luna. Regan goes on her date with Chris but, distracted by leaving Luna home alone on her birthday, asks him to take her home early. Luna wakes Regan in the middle of the night to accompany her to the airport. She is going to Seattle to stay with Teri Lynn, a post-op transgender girl she met on line, and to begin surgical transitioning. Regan is sad because she does not want Luna to leave, but she wants her brother to be happy more than anything in the world. By leaving, Luna frees herself and also Regan who can now focus on herself instead of Liam/Luna.

## Liam O'Neill

Liam O'Neill, also known as Luna and previously known as Lia Marie, is one of the main characters in this novel. He is Regan's older brother, and he is transgender, a girl born in a boy's body. Because of his belief that he was meant to be a girl, Liam wants to transition by having Sex Reassignment Surgery to become Luna all of the time. Though





Luna wakes Regan in the middle of the night, dancing in her room, Regan loves Luna because she is her brother. Miserable as a boy, Liam wants to transition, but Regan is nervous about how people will see her because of her brother's differences. Regan develops a crush on her lab partner, Chris, and though she is upset when he drops the class, she is also relieved since she cannot afford to let him get too close and learn her secret. When Regan goes shopping with Luna, she is distraught by how Liam is treated when people realize he is a boy dressed in girls' clothing.

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## **Jack O'Neill**

Jack O'Neill is Regan and Liam's father. He pressures Liam to be the son he has always wanted. He fears that his children do not idolize him enough, even though he is Liam's hero. Jack also worries that he does not have a proper father-son connection with Liam. When Luna reveals herself to her parents, Jack furiously forbids Liam to leave the house dressed as a girl.

## **Patrice O'Neill**

Patrice O'Neill is Regan and Liam's mother. She is very intent on her work, rarely paying attention to her family. Patrice has known Liam is a girl since he was quite young, but she is unable to handle it.



## Chris Garazzo

Chris Garazzo is the new guy in school who offers to be Regan's chemistry partner until he drops the class. He takes Regan on a horrendous date to a rave, and despite the disasters they face on their first date, he continues to pursue Regan. Chris finally convinces Regan to go on another date with him shortly before he sees Luna. Regan is mortified that Chris sees Luna, but Chris does not mention it. When he takes her to the movies, he offers to listen to her family problems, but Regan is not ready to talk about it yet. Chris plans to take Regan to his mother's wedding and reception the weekend after Liam leaves for Seattle.

## Alyson

Alyson, AKA Aly, is Liam's best friend since childhood who is in love with Liam. Aly is devastated when she learns that Liam is a girl because she is not a lesbian, and she abandons him after he reveals Luna. On Liam's birthday, Aly visits, stating she does not know how long it will take for her to accept Luna because it is hard, but the fact that she sits and plays a video game with Liam indicates that she is willing to accept the fact that he is a girl.

## Teri Lynn

Teri Lynn is a transsexual girl that Liam meets online. When she comes to town for business, Liam meets her for dinner and enjoys himself immensely because Teri Lynn is living Luna's dream and it is wonderful to know that Luna is possible. On the day after his eighteenth birthday, Liam leaves his home to go to Seattle to stay with Teri Lynn and to begin transition surgeries.

## Materas

The Materas, David and Elise, are the family that Regan babysits for. After allowing Liam to cover for her so she could go on a date with Chris, Regan is distraught that she is fired when the Materas return home to find Liam dressed in Elise Materna's negligee.

## Mr. Bruchac

Mr. Bruchac is the sexist chemistry teacher who expects Regan to be like Liam when he learns they are brother and sister.



## **Shannon Eiber**

Shannon Eiber is a popular, bossy girl who mocked Liam at Regan's sixth grade slumber party for being gay. She is interested in Chris, and when he asks her about Regan, Shannon tells him that Regan is snobby.

## **Hoyt Doucet**

Hoyt Doucet is a bully who picks on Liam in middle school for being gay. When Luna dresses at school, Hoyt harasses her and beats on her for her supposed homosexuality.

## **Carmen**

Carmen was Regan's best friend in the sixth grade, but she grew cold after the slumber party where Lia Marie revealed herself because best friends do not keep secrets. She moved away without even saying goodbye to Regan.



# Objects/Places

## O'Neills' House

The O'Neills' house is Regan and Liam's home where they live in tension with their parents because of Liam's secret life as Luna. Regan is never comfortable at home or school.

## Materas' Home

Regan babysits at the Materas' home, and this is where she feels most comfortable, escaping her family, school and Liam. She is distraught when she loses her job after the Materas return home to find Liam dressed in Mrs. Matera's negligee while he is covering for Regan so she can go on a date with Chris.

## Basement

The basement at the O'Neills' house is Regan and Liam's domain. Though their parents rarely invade their space, Liam installed a silent alarm. Liam's room is stark and impersonal since he cannot live his life as a girl like he wishes, and Luna often dresses in Regan's room in the middle of the night.

## Liam's Treasure Chest

Liam keeps a treasure chest in his bedroom where he stores all of Luna's belongings so his parents will not find them.

## Mall

Luna's first public appearance is at the mall across town where no one will recognize her as Liam. She and Regan go shopping together, but Luna is distraught by the look of disgust she receives from a saleslady at the Gap and when she is harassed by a group of boys. Regan is furious and believes that her brother does not deserve such treatment simply for trying to be who he is on the inside.

## Taco Bell

Liam takes Regan to lunch at Taco Bell before they go shopping downtown, and while he is changing into Luna in the restroom, Regan runs into Chris. Unfortunately, he thinks she is waiting for a guy because the girls' bathroom has an out-of-order sign hanging from it and she hurries him away for fear he will see Luna.



## School

Regan hates school where she has made herself invisible as a defense mechanism to deal with Liam's secrets. She meets Chris in chemistry class. Regan is embarrassed when Luna dresses at school, but she feels guilty for abandoning him.

## Liam's Spyder

Liam drives a Mitsubishi Spyder convertible which upsets Dad who purchased a VW to restore with his son. Dad confiscates the Spyder after Liam and Regan's trip to the mall because they stay out so late. When Liam goes to Seattle, he gives the Spyder to Regan.

## Seattle

Liam leaves home for Seattle at the end of the novel. He is going to stay with Teri Lynn and begin his transition surgeries.

## Rave

Chris takes Regan to a rave for their first date. There are several disasters on the way there, and though they enjoy flirting instead of dancing, they are forced to flee when the police arrive. In the process, Regan forgets her purse and loses her shoes. Chris gets a speeding ticket trying to get Regan back to the Materas' house before they get home, but he fails and Regan is fired when the Materas find Liam dressed in Mrs. Matera's negligee.



# Themes

## Acceptance

One of the most important themes in "Luna" is the concept of acceptance. Liam's greatest desire is to be accepted for the person he is inside, a girl named Luna. Regan accepts Luna and loves her because she is her brother. Even as a child, Regan knew that she had a sister. Liam is jealous of Regan because he wants to be the girl in their family since he feels like a girl inside, though he physically looks like a boy. He wants to be Luna all of the time, and rather than desiring to be beautiful, he simply wants to be seen as a regular girl. When Liam is oddly talkative at breakfast one morning, Regan notes that he is acting like Luna, and when she questions him about his behavior, he explains that he is testing the waters. Regan tries not to abandon Liam when he talks about his plans to undergo a Sex Reassignment Surgery, and she encourages Luna on their shopping trip at the mall. She is devastated by the way people treat Liam during their trip to the mall, and despite her fury over losing her job at the Materas, she is hurt that David Matera says Liam needs help. Liam is ecstatic after meeting Teri Lynn because now he knows that being Luna all of the time is possible. Aly is unable to accept Luna when Liam first reveals his feminine side, but she tries to accept Luna because of her love for Liam.

Like Luna, Regan wants to be loved and accepted for who she is. Unlike Luna, Regan does not know who she is because she has spent so much of her life catering to her brother and protecting him. She is happy but disbelieving when she learns that Chris likes her. Despite their disastrous first date, Chris continues to pursue Regan, even after seeing Luna, and she feels special that a guy wants her. After abandoning Luna to the less than tender mercies of Hoyt Doucet, Regan weeps for a world that will not let Luna be. She also realizes she must see Luna as a real person after Liam tells her that he would rather die than continue to live as a boy. When Liam leaves for Seattle, Regan is sad because she will miss her brother, but she knows he will be happier. In leaving, Liam allows himself to go somewhere where he will be accepted. He also frees Regan to live her own life, garnering acceptance from her peers without her brother's secret hindering her social interactions.

## Liam's Differences

A large portion of this novel focuses on Liam's differences. Obviously, the most significant difference is the fact that he is transgender: Liam is a girl born in a boy's body. A lot of Regan's memories are about instances where she realized her brother is different. One of the early memories is about how Liam always wanted to play house when they were growing up, and he insisted on being the mommy, making Regan be the daddy. While swimming with Regan and a female neighbor, Liam tried to remove his penis and insisted he was not a young man. On his ninth birthday, he asked for Barbies and a bra. At Regan's sixth grade slumber party, Liam allowed the girls to paint his nails,



and when he danced with them, he revealed Lia Marie, his former female alter ego, by dancing and singing like a girl. Regan first met Lia Marie when she was ten years old and accidentally walked in on Liam dressed in their mother's negligee, singing.

As a seventeen-year-old, Liam hates the idea of playing baseball, though his father tries to force him to join the team. He wants to reshape his destiny and become Luna full-time. He begins his transition by asking Regan to accompany Luna on her first public outing, to the mall. Dad wants Liam to be normal and happy, and when he asks Regan if his son is gay, she wants to explain to him that Liam likes boys, but he is not gay because he is a girl inside. Liam is excited when he meets Teri Lynn because she is living his dream; now, he knows that living life as Luna is a possibility. Regan is fired from her babysitting job when the Materas come home to find Liam dressed in Elise's negligee, and Regan is mortified when Luna appears at school and Chris sees her. On his eighteenth birthday, Liam presents Luna to his parents, asking for their blessing regarding his transition. Mom ignores the situation because she cannot handle it, but Dad is furious. Liam finally decides to go to Seattle to stay with Teri Lynn and begin the Sex Reassignment Surgeries that will allow him to be Luna all of the time.

## Selfishness

One recurring theme in "Luna" is selfishness. Liam and Regan both accuse the other of selfishness, but in reality, they are both somewhat selfish in their desires to be loved and accepted for who they are without regard to the other. Liam demonstrates selfishness more frequently, but his extreme circumstances provide an excuse, though inadequate, for his behavior. Liam ignores Regan's need to go to school in order to complain about his desire to be Luna full-time. Luna constantly wakes Regan in the middle of the night for her opinion of outfits without regard to Regan's need to sleep. Lia Marie embarrasses Regan by revealing herself at Regan's sixth grade slumber party, and when Liam decides to commit suicide, he asks Regan to help because he is unable to kill himself. He is agitated when Regan comes home late from babysitting for the Materas, causing them to leave late on their first planned shopping trip to the mall. He also gets Regan fired when he covers for her at the Materas so she can go on a date with Chris because the Materas come home to find him dressed in Mrs. Matera's negligee.

Though Regan is often selfless in regards to her brother, keeping his secret though it means isolating herself and refusing Chris the first time he asks her out because she had promised to go shopping with Luna, she becomes more selfish after losing her job. While she was irresponsible concerning her job, Regan still blames Liam for being fired. She feels he only worries about himself and does not realize all the sacrifices she makes for him. When Luna dresses at school, Regan abandons him to Hoyt Doucet's bullying because she is embarrassed that Chris sees Luna. Other examples of selfishness can be seen in the fact that Dad wants Liam to be a normal boy and does not care that Liam is transgender. Mom knows that Liam is a girl, but she makes him feel ashamed by telling him to hide it from Dad because she cannot handle it. Regan does not want Liam to leave, but he is doing it for both of them, finally showing that he is

not completely selfish. By leaving, he can live as Luna and be happy. It also allows Regan to live her own life without having to protect her brother all of the time.





# Style

## Point of View

The point of view in "Luna" is first person and limited. This is proven by the fact that the narrator knows her own thoughts and feelings as well as what she observes or is told; however, she is not privy to others' thoughts and emotions unless they decide to share willingly. The narrator is Regan, a sixteen-year-old girl whose brother is transgender and wants to undergo surgery to become a female full-time. The point of view is mostly reliable in regards to what Regan sees and knows, but there are circumstances where her observations prove to be inaccurate. The point of view in this novel is important as it focuses on Regan's struggle to accept Liam's plan to transition and the difficulties she faces keeping his secret. The novel also focuses on how Liam being transgender and his decision to transition affects both Liam/Luna and Regan.

The novel contains a fairly equal distribution of exposition and dialogue. This is useful to the portrayal of the narrative as it allows the focus to remain largely on Regan's thoughts and memories concerning Liam's transition. The dialogue is also helpful as it shows Regan's relationship with Liam, an important aspect of the novel, as well as her interactions with others, demonstrating the ways that Liam's transsexuality has affected his sister and her ability to form bonds with their peers. The viewpoint of this novel is told solely through the eyes of Regan.

## Setting

This novel is set in the real world, in modern-day America. The characters are primarily American teenagers, with Liam being transgender, a girl born in a boy's body. His sister, Regan, spends the novel struggling to accept Liam's decision to transition into Luna permanently and to keep his secret. The O'Neills' house is Regan and Liam's home where they live in tension with their parents because of Liam's secret life as Luna. Regan is never comfortable at home or school. Regan babysits at the Materas' home, and this is where she feels most comfortable, escaping her family, school and Liam. She is distraught when she loses her job after the Materas return home to find Liam dressed in Mrs. Matera's negligee while he is covering for Regan so she can go on a date with Chris. The basement at the O'Neills' house is Regan and Liam's domain. Though their parents rarely invade their space, Liam installed a silent alarm. Liam's room is stark and impersonal since he cannot live his life as a girl like he wishes, and Luna often dresses in Regan's room in the middle of the night.

Luna's first public appearance is at the mall across town where no one will recognize her as Liam. She and Regan go shopping together, but Luna is distraught by the look of disgust she receives from a saleslady at the Gap and when she is harassed by a group of boys. Regan is furious; her brother does not deserve such treatment simply for trying to be who he is on the inside. Liam takes Regan to lunch at Taco Bell before they go



shopping downtown. While he is changing into Luna in the restroom, Regan runs into Chris. Unfortunately, he thinks she is waiting for a guy because the girls' bathroom has an out-of-order sign hanging from it and she hurries him away for fear he will see Luna. Regan hates school where she has made herself invisible as a defense mechanism to deal with Liam's secrets. She meets Chris in chemistry class. Regan is embarrassed when Luna dresses at school, but she feels guilty for abandoning him. Liam leaves home for Seattle at the end of the novel. He is going to stay with Teri Lynn and begin his transition surgeries. Chris takes Regan to a rave for their first date. There are several disasters on the way there, and though they enjoy flirting instead of dancing, they are forced to flee when the police arrive. In the process, Regan forgets her purse and loses her shoes. Chris gets a speeding ticket trying to get Regan back to the Materas' house before they get home, but he fails and Regan is fired when the Materas find Liam dressed in Mrs. Matera's negligee.

## Language and Meaning

The language used in "Luna" is quite casual and informal. The sentences and syntax is fairly proper without being overly complex. This style of writing is beneficial since the novel was written for teenagers and young adults. The language is appropriate as it mimics how they speak, allowing readers to associate with the characters in the novel. This association is important as it inspires empathy for the situation in which Regan and Liam find themselves. The familiarity of the language is also useful because it encourages readers to feel like they are listening to a peer confide in them.

The language utilized in this novel tends to characterize the characters, modern American teenagers, as well as the society in which they live. The novel contains a fairly equal distribution of exposition and dialogue. This is useful to the portrayal of the narrative as it allows the focus to remain largely on Regan's thoughts and memories concerning Liam's transition. The dialogue is also helpful as it shows Regan's relationship with Liam, an important aspect of the novel, as well as her interactions with others, demonstrating the ways that Liam's transsexuality has affected his sister and her ability to form bonds with their peers. The language aids the writing style because it makes readers comfortable and encourages their understanding of a difficult, often unapproachable topic since the characters seem like one of them. Overall, the novel is easy to read and the style of language inspires empathy for the characters' plight.

## Structure

"Luna" consists of two hundred, forty-eight pages which are divided into twenty-six chapters, averaging about ten pages in length. The chapters are numbered, not titled, and they are quite detailed, though they are fairly short. Each chapter covers a period of a day or two, and the whole book encompasses approximately a month. "Luna" by Julie Anne Peters is a highly acclaimed novel about a transsexual teenager, his decision to transition and the effects of this on his younger sister and sole confidante. When Liam confides that he wants to transition and become Luna all of the time, Regan struggles to



keep his secret and help him become comfortable dressing in public, even as it negatively affects her own life and relationships. "Luna" is a touching and realistic portrayal of the challenges, triumphs, and heartbreaks a young man must face in order to correct his destiny and become the girl he was born to be.

The novel is slow-paced due to Regan's continual flashbacks to her childhood, as well as excessive details about Liam's outfits and Regan's feelings about every aspect of each situation. Linguistically, the novel is easy to read; however, the heartrending subject matter as Liam becomes Luna and Regan struggles to accept her sister makes it a more challenging read. The story is linear with frequent flashbacks to Regan and Liam's childhood, as Regan recalls events that signaled Liam is a girl. Overall, the novel is very enjoyable, inspiring acceptance and understanding of a very difficult topic.



## Quotes

"Yeah, I loved her. I couldn't help it. She was my brother" (Chapter 1, p. 3).

"It struck me like a hammer to the head. Well, duh, Regan. That's exactly what he wanted. It's what he's always wanted. If Liam could wish for one thing in the world, one birthday present, he would ask to be born again. Born right, in the body of a girl" (Chapter 2, p. 14).

"I'm strangling her. She's not the one I want to eliminate. All this suppressing and holding her down, keeping her caged, perpetuating this fraud, this sham. I can't do it anymore. I can't. It won't go away. No matter how much I wish, or pray, she's always with me. She is me. I am her. I want to be her. I want to be Luna" (Chapter 3, p. 20-21).

"What's with your brother? Is he like, on drugs? He's different, though, isn't he? Come on, Re. You can tell me. I'm your best friend...I don't have any secrets from you" (Chapter 5, p. 46).

"What if you happened to be born off both scales, between scales, like Liam? Then you were just a freak. I know that's how Liam felt. He told me once there was no place for him in the world, that he didn't fit anywhere. He really was off the scale. Boy by day, girl by night. Except, he was a girl all the time, inside. It was hardwired into his brain, he said, the way intelligence or memory is. His body didn't reflect his inner image. His body betrayed him. The way people viewed Liam, as a boy, meant he had to play to their expectations. Dress the part. Act the role. And Liam was good at it, expert. He'd had all those years of practice. It had to be horrible, though, day after day after day, seeing all around him what he wanted so desperately to be and never could" (Chapter 6, p. 51).

"If that's true, Re, then I'll never be fulfilled... I won't be able to follow my heart" (Chapter 7, p. 60-61).

"Why did this shock me? Because I never allowed myself to go there. Transition. Is that what it meant? An actual, physical transition? A sex change operation?... Don't desert him, my brain screamed. Don't do this. Don't let him down. Don't let him know" (Chapter 8, p. 71).

"No, this meant too much to Luna. To Liam. He'd been waiting his whole life to go shopping with me" (Chapter 9, p. 81).

"You can do this. You can" (Chapter 10, p. 87).

"Where does he go, Re? He goes somewhere. In his head. I don't know. He gets so...lost." (Chapter 11, p. 93).

"What did each of us long for? Liam, of course, longed to be free. To be Luna; to be loved and accepted for the person she was inside. Good luck. Aly? She longed to be with Liam. She wanted him to be something he never could be. A boy. The man of her



dreams. Good luck. Me? I had no dreams. No longings. Dreams only set you up for disappointment. Plus, you had to have a life to have dreams of a better life. I saw Liam and Aly and me, peering deeper into our futures. This terrible sense of foreboding seeped up through my core. One of us, or all of us, was going to take a fall." (Chapter 12, p. 98).

"Liam worked so hard to please Dad, to earn his respect. Liam was right; it'd never be enough. The weird thing was, Liam didn't emulate Dad; he didn't want to be like him. He wanted to be Mom. If Dad was Liam's hero, why was he so scared of him?" (Chapter 13, p. 109).

"Teri Lynn's other face. Her false face. It wasn't the difference between the male and female that struck me so much as the change in demeanor, the attitude, the confidence. Teri Lynn, the male, seemed to be another person altogether. A dead person, the way Liam appeared sometimes. Sad, vacant. The other Teri Lynn, the real one, had blossomed and sprung to life. The way Liam broke free when he morphed into Luna." Regan, Chapter 14, page 126

"He seems distracted lately, even more than usual. Like he's withdrawing from me, from everyone. Keeping his distance. I don't know. He's done this before, but now it's...it's different. Like he's involved with someone else?" (Chapter 15, p. 138).

"Know what I'd really like, Re? What I'd love is to go to prom as me. In my own dress. Get my hair and nails done. Rent a limo. Rent a date" (Chapter 16, p. 147).

"If you take me back now, you might still get out of this alive" (Chapter 17, p. 156).

"They don't seem all that happy together. Sometimes I wonder how they even got together. I wonder if they should've gotten divorced...I think they felt stuck with each other. Then they got stuck with us. They wasted their lives, both of them. I don't think the American dream quite lived up to their expectations. They seem... disillusioned. Like they're just going through the motions, you know?" (Chapter 18, p. 165).

"Liam! I don't give a shit. I needed that job. I loved the Materas. They were, like, family. I loved that job. It's the only thing I had that was mine. Mine. It was the only place I had to go to get away from you...Get out of my face. Get out of my life. I hate you. I hate what you are. I wish you'd never been born" (Chapter 19, p. 171).

"I felt myself weakening. It hurt my heart to hear him cry. But his tears were eternal; they'd never go away. He'd said it himself: he was wrong. He didn't fit. And there was nothing I could do- nothing anyone could do- to make him right" (Chapter 19, p.175).

"Actually, it's sort of encouraging to see a little predictable behavior out of one of you" (Chapter 20, p. 178).

"It was just...Teri Lynn is living my dream... I mean, it's so fantastic. To know it can happen, that it's possible. That I'm possible" (Chapter 20, p. 184).



"My name is Luna. I want you to know me. The real me" (Chapter 21, p. 190).

"I know this is hard to understand. It's even harder to explain, but Liam feels like a girl. He is a girl, really. Problem is, she's a girl who was born with a boy's body. I don't know how it happens, or why. Luna says it's hard-wired into her brain to be female. It's who she knows she is, same way you and I know. It's instinctive. Natural... It's horrible because you want to be this person you are in here and here. But you can't because you don't look the way you should. You look like a guy. And that's what people expect you to be. Every day you have to put on this act, play a role, and the only time you can ever be free is when you're alone, when nobody's watching and you can let yourself go. In your world, your private world, you can present yourself the way you want the world to see you and treat you" (Chapter 21, p. 191-192).

"Do I like you? No, I don't like you. I don't think about you every moment of every day. I never relive the way it felt to have your hand holding mine, to be so close to you I could smell you, feel the warmth of you, breathe the air you breathe. I don't remember your arm around me, making me feel safe, special, wanted" (Chapter 22, p. 205).

"She had to be aware, though, that this transition affected not only her. There were consequences for everyone in her life. For me. It hurt me to see people staring at her, pointing at her, laughing at her. What if they laughed at me? Or made jokes. She'd be the butt of people's jokes. I would. What if Chris laughed at me? What if he looked at me differently now?" (Chapter 23, p. 209).

"I'm always in here crying on your shoulder, asking your advice, taking up your time. It isn't fair to you. All these years, I haven't been fair to you. I've been so self-centered, so self-absorbed. I haven't taken your feelings into consideration. I've leaned on you too hard. Depended on you too much" (Chapter 23, p. 212).

"I'd like to change my name to Luna, with your blessing. And yours, Mom. It's the name I've chosen to represent the person I truly am... This is who I am. This is who I've always been" (Chapter 24, p. 221).

"I don't know how long it's going to take me to be okay with this. It's hard. You know?" (Chapter 25, p. 230).

"I take it all back. Everything. I didn't mean any of those things I said to you. You can use my room whenever you want. You can dress at school. I don't care. I don't want you to go. I don't want you to leave." Regan, Chapter 26, page 242

"You're my baby sister, Regan. My beautiful baby sister. I've always been so jealous of you... Don't you know, you're the girl I always wanted to be" (Luna, Chapter 26, p. 245-246).

"Don't say good-bye. This isn't good-bye. It's hello. I think of it as a new beginning because that's what it is for me. A rebirth. I'm starting my life over. The next time we meet, you won't even know me" (Chapter 26, p. 247).



"I wanted that. More than anything in the world, I wanted my brother to be happy. A part of him would never leave me. His strength. His courage. The essence of who he was as a person" (Chapter 26, p. 248).



## Topics for Discussion

Compare and contrast Liam and Luna.

How does Liam's transsexuality affect Regan?

Why does Regan feel invisible?

What does Regan's childhood memories indicate about Liam, and how do others deal with these events?

How does Regan feel about her brother throughout this novel?

Why does Regan lose her job?

Why does Liam plan to have a Sex Reassignment Surgery? How does Regan feel about his transitioning?

How does Luna free herself and Regan?