

Sisters of Isis: The Summoning Study Guide

Sisters of Isis: The Summoning by Lynne Ewing

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Plot Summary

The Summoning, by Lynne Ewing, is the first book in the author's Sisters of Isis series. The novel introduces three teenage girls who are leading normal lives in present-day Washington, D.C. until they learn that they are descendants of ancient Egyptian pharaohs and they have been tasked with saving the world from the evil Cult of Anubis.

The book opens with Sudi, the novel's main character, trying to shake off an apparent dream as she finds herself waking up in her front yard. While she can dismiss the incident as a case of sleepwalking, she finds it harder to explain the brass snake she finds in her bed the following morning. Later that day, she receives an invitation she believes is from Scott, a boy she likes, but when she arrives at the designated restaurant, she finds a young man named Abdel instead. Abdel tells Sudi and two other girls, Meri and Dalila, that they are the descendants, of Egypt's divine pharaohs. Therefore, they are the only ones with the power to defeat the Cult of Anubis, which plans to destroy the bloodline of Horus and turn the universe into chaos. They dismiss Abdel's story as an elaborate joke and return to their lives, but the following day, Sudi is suddenly able to read Egyptian hieroglyphs and finds herself trapped in a museum and talking with a phantom who appears before her. When she uses an incantation on a papyrus given to her by Abdel and transforms into a bird, she contacts Meri and Dalila. She learns that they have also been experiencing similar events.

Finally accepting their destiny, the girls begin learning to use their powers, and not a moment too soon, as they are soon attacked by the jackal-headed god Anubis and narrowly escape death at the gates of eternity. Later they meet a mummy who has been sent to kill them, but falls in love with Sudi instead, and rescue Scott, who has been kidnapped by the cult and had his soul replaced with that of a demon. At the same time, they try to carry on normal lives with school, families, and boys, while forming a close bond as the Sisters of Isis.



Chapters 1 through 3

Chapters 1 through 3 Summary

Sudi, Meri and Dalila are typical teenage girls living in Washington, D.C. until they meet Abdel, a strange young man who announces that they are descendants of ancient Egyptian pharaohs. They brush off his insistence that they must defeat the Cult of Anubis until they find themselves in possession of unmistakable powers, including the ability to transform themselves into animals, and they are forced to battle the evil forces that threaten themselves and their world. The Summoning is the first book in author Lynne Ewing's Sisters of Isis series.

Trying to wake from a dream, Sudi finds herself not in her bed, but outdoors, falling down the front steps of her house in Washington, D.C. She assumes she must have been sleepwalking, but as she is going back inside, she hears a howl that sounds more human than animal. Back in her kitchen, through the window she sees a long, snouted face with pointed ears, which she dismisses until she sees the frightened reaction of her cat, Patty Pie. Sudi is upset, but thinks she must be experiencing anxiety after her recent breakup with her boyfriend, Brian. She reflects that she hadn't been crazy about Brian — actually, she has a crush on a boy named Scott — but she and Brian had become a couple until he revealed a darker side, and she falls asleep recalling the night she wishes she could forget.

When she wakes up the following morning, Sudi finds a long bronze snake in her bed. It is decorated with Egyptian symbols and when she touches it, the symbols seem to move. As she gets ready for school, she finds her younger sisters, twins Carrie and Nicole, playing with a Ouija board, and she reminds them that their mother doesn't approve of their experimentations with magic. The girls warn her that the board has predicted that something bad will happen to her, but Sudi goes to school anyway, wondering what the board's message was.

In Chapter 2, Sudi stays after school to do computer research on sleepwalking. She doesn't want to tell her mother about last night's incident because her mother will question her, and she hasn't told anyone about the night with Brian. She remembers Brian's reckless behavior, including the times he got her to drive his car while he skated behind it, holding onto a rope, and she wonders why she didn't just say no to him. Despite her doubts about him, she feels that her bond with Brian hasn't been broken yet. In the deserted hallway of her school, her friend Carter approaches and offers to give her phone number to Scott and Sudi agrees. After Carter leaves, she finds a note in her locker, urgently asking her to meet at a hotel restaurant, and she assumes that the invitation is from Scott and that Carter slipped the note into her locker.

Chapter 3 begins with Sudi arriving at the restaurant, but instead of Scott, a young man she does not know calls her name. He introduces himself as Abdel, and he is sitting with Meri, the daughter of a U.S. Senator and potential Presidential candidate, and another



girl named Dalila, whose shaved head reveals a strange tattoo. Abdel says he has been sent to the U.S. by the Hour priests, a secret society, and he tells the girls that they are descended from the divine pharaohs of ancient Egypt and that they must defend the world against the evil Cult of Anubis. It is also revealed that each girl has received a bronze snake like the one Sudi found in her bed. Saying that the cult plans to destroy the bloodline of Horus and turn the universe to chaos, Abdel gives each girl a beige scroll with incantations from the Book of Thoth, saying they are the only ones with the power to use the book and that they will need its spells to fight the cult. He also tells them that the cult could already be coming to them at night and enticing them to walk toward their members while they are sleeping, and reveals that all three girls have matching birthmarks on their heads depicting the sacred eye of Horus. Abdel says a spell over each of them, then disappears. Sudi goes to a nearby park, where she runs into Scott and his girlfriend, Michelle, but rushes home rather than talking with them.

Chapters 1 through 3 Analysis

The first three chapters of *The Summoning* provide the premise and set-up for the rest of this book and the others in the author's *Sisters of Isis* series. Sudi is immediately established as a typical teenager with annoying younger siblings, a best friend, and boy problems, setting up a stark contrast between the life she has led up to now and the life that will be forced upon her as a descendant of Egyptian pharaohs charged with saving the world from evil forces. She is also contrasted with the two other girls who are identified by Abdel. Sudi is portrayed as the most normal, middle-of-the-road girl, while Meri lives a more privileged existence as the daughter of a well-known politician who might one day be president and Dalila is a shy, somewhat strange and mysterious girl with a shaved head and tattoo that turns out to be the birthmark all three girls share.

Sudi is also portrayed as the most unlikely member of her family to be placed in such a strange situation. In the scene in which her younger sisters are introduced, they are using a Ouija board and it is revealed that they routinely experiment with magic, something their mother is trying to discourage. Even though she has just had a series of strange, unexplained experiences, it never occurs to Sudi to think that magic could be involved, but her discussion with her sisters foreshadows the occult activities that will soon become central to her life.

The bronze snake that each of the girls receive can be seen as symbolic in a number of ways. In various mythologies, snakes are seen as a life force and a guardian of sacred spaces, so perhaps these snakes will protect the girls from danger, but in other cases they are symbols of evil and vengefulness, so the reader must wait to see which direction the symbolism of the snake will take.

These chapters also establish Sudi's relationship with Brian, hinting at dark secrets that might be revealed to the reader in later chapters, and with Scott, the boy she should have chosen over Brian to begin with.



Chapters 4 through 6

Chapters 4 through 6 Summary

The following day, Sudi and her best friend, Sara, are on a class field trip to the Smithsonian. Sudi has told Sara about her strange meeting with Abdel and the other two girls, and Sara tells her about Horus, an Egyptian god who stood for order and battled the god Seth, who wanted to destroy the world. As they are looking at the museum's Egyptian exhibits, Sudi finds that she is somehow able to read the hieroglyphs even though she has never been able to do that before, and she thinks that perhaps Abdel somehow hypnotized her. Sudi pretends to be sick so Sara will leave without her, because she wants to stay behind to read more of the hieroglyphs. Sensing danger, Sudi starts to leave the museum, but sees that some clay burial mounds with seals bearing her name have appeared and the door has been plastered shut with clay, locking her inside the museum. She thinks someone is playing a joke on her, but when she hears a noise and turns around, she finds herself staring into a pair of pale blue eyes.

When Chapter 5 opens, Sudi realizes that the eyes are her own reflection in a display case, but as she is trying to figure out how to get out of the building, the image of a woman in Egyptian attire forms in front of her. The image is not frightening, but rather kind, and when Sudi reaches out to touch her, she finds that she is actually flesh and bone. The woman tells her a strange story about someone taking the form of a Bennubird, and she says that when Sudi is dying, she will know how to use the story, but she warns her that she must take care when she speaks the terrible words of power. The woman says that it is now safe for Sudi to leave the museum, and when Sudi closes her eyes and opens them again, the image is gone. The clay has also disappeared, but just as Sudi is deciding that she has been dreaming, she finds dirt under her fingernails.

In Chapter 6, Sudi returns home early in the morning and looks at the papyrus Abdel gave her. She reads one of the spells but nothing happens. A few minutes later, as she is taking a shower, Sudi begins repeating the spell in a mocking way and when she looks into the mirror she finds that she is turning into a bird. Leaving the bathroom, her twin sisters think a bird has gotten into the house and chase her outside, where she narrowly escapes an attack by her cat, Pie. Finding that she can fly, she goes to Entre Nous Academy, the private school Meri, Scott and others attend, to find out if strange things have been happening to Meri too. When the wind currents change, she stops flapping her wings for a moment and falls to the ground, and the fall causes her to transform back into a girl. Realizing that she is wearing only a bra and panties, she hides in a dumpster when she hears Scott and Michelle approaching, looking for the bird they saw coming into the alley.



Chapters 4 through 6 Analysis

In these chapters, Sudi is increasingly being forced to believe, at least to some extent, the story Abdel told her. At first, her life has gotten back to normal as she takes part in regular activities like a class field trip and confides in her best friend, but she is unable to explain her sudden ability to interpret Egyptian hieroglyphs. Despite her skepticism, Sudi is becoming drawn to the odd things that are happening to her, as she decides to stay longer at the museum to read more of the ancient writings. When the image of a woman appears in front of her, she is still able to explain away the experience as a dream, but for the first time, physical evidence appears in the form of the dirt that remains under her fingernails after the woman and the clay mounds have disappeared.

However, by Chapter 6, Sudi can no longer deny that something has happened to her. A normal morning — getting ready for school, arguing with her sisters over use of the bathroom — becomes anything but ordinary when feathers appear and Sudi finds herself transforming into a bird. Birds are typically seen as symbols of freedom and power, but at this point, the opposite is true. Sudi has no power over her ability to transform, her ability to fly, or her ability to communicate with her sisters and let them know what has happened to her. Rather than feeling free, she is becoming increasingly trapped by her situation, and as Chapter 6 closes, this is symbolized by the fact that she is literally trapped inside a dumpster, in danger of being found by Scott and Michelle.

This section also contains significant foreshadowing, as the phantom woman's words mean nothing to Sudi at this point, but they will become critical to her at a later point.



Chapters 7 through 9

Chapters 7 through 9 Summary

After Scott and Michelle leave, Sudi climbs out of the dumpster and is approached by a cat, which leaves, then returns followed by Meri. Meri says the cat told her Sudi needed help and says that other strange things have happened to her since the meeting with Abdel. She gets some clothes for Sudi and they agree that they should talk with Dalila.

In Chapter 8, Sudi and Meri meet with Dalila, who says that her uncle, a famous Egyptologist, assured her everything Abdel told them was true. Dalila has grown up believing she was being groomed for something special, but she thought she was destined to marry a prince, not become a warrior against evil. Her uncle has taught her about the ancient Egyptian ways, but only now does she realize he was actually training her. Sudi tells the other girls about everything that has happened to her, and Dalila accepts it as fact, mentioning that the phantom in the museum was probably the Noble Lady Shepeset, who came to protect Sudi. They decide to find Abdel and tell him they refuse to take on this role, but suddenly they hear howling. A creature begins chasing Sudi, who tries to hide but eventually is caught by a huge man wearing a white skirt and a dog mask and carrying a walking stick like the snake she found in her bed. When he picks her up, she realizes he is not wearing a mask, but actually has the head of a dog and Dalila identifies him as the jackal-headed god Anubis and says his stick is really a magic wand. They try to cast a spell, but mistakenly say the wrong name and call forth the child god Ihy rather than the protector Ipy. Anubis points the wand at Sudi and Dalila says he is going to use magic to destroy them.

Chapter 9 begins with the street opening up and the girls falling through into a great abyss. The ground closes above them and they eventually land and are dragged through a series of gates. Dalila says they must stop before they go through the final gate or they will enter eternity and won't be able to return. They face the snake Apep, whom Dalila says will take their souls. At Dalila's suggestion, Sudi turns herself into a bird again and the other two girls grab her wings and she flies them to safety back in Washington, where she turns back into a girl. Dalila explains that the Cult of Anubis worships the god Seth and wants to turn the universe back to the chaos from which it came, and the girls agree to spend the night at Sudi's house and find Abdel the following day to tell him they want out of this situation.

Chapters 7 through 9 Analysis

The battle with the Cult of Anubis officially begins with these chapters as the three girls meet again and share the experiences they have been having since their encounter with Abdel. The reader learns more about Dalila, who is the only one of the girls with a strong background in Egyptology. While Sudi remains the book's main character, Dalila is emerging as a leader in the group because of her extensive knowledge of Egyptian



history and mythology. While Meri and Sudi are still finding it difficult to shake off their skepticism, Dalila has immediately accepted their situation as fact and is moving forward to find practical solutions to the issues they face. It is implied that her uncle has always known that Dalila had these special powers and assumed that her parents told her about it, so a simple omission has led her down the wrong path. Despite her wealth of knowledge, Dalila is almost as unprepared as the other two girls because she has been preparing herself to become a royal bride rather than a warrior, so she must shift gears and find new uses for her knowledge. She will continue to serve as a guide for Sudi and Meri as they begin to accept their new roles.

The girls are also finding out that they have a great deal to learn about using their powers. A simple mistake at a crucial moment — saying the name Ihy rather than Ipy in calling forth a god to protect them from Anubis — results in the appearance of a small, frightened child rather than a god with the ability to save them. This will be the first of many times in which their carelessness or lack of skill in using their newfound powers will result in near-disaster. However, Sudi is gaining more control over her power of transformation and in this case, the bird becomes a symbol of freedom and power.

Despite the experience they have just gone through, the girls again are shown as typical teenagers when they naively believe they can simply tell Abdel that they refuse to accept their roles as Descendants.



Chapters 10 through 12

Chapters 10 through 12 Summary

At Sudi's house the following morning, the girls are surprised to discover that Meri is able to communicate with Sudi's cat. The three of them go to Abdel's house and tell him that they refuse to accept this assignment, but he says that they are the Descendants and can't change fate. They left the restaurant before he was able to fully explain what was expected of them, but they have already accepted their destiny by using their powers of transmutation. He also tells them that they must begin training so they will be able to protect both themselves and their families. He gives them the Book of Thoth, which gives them the power to command the gods of ancient Egypt.

Chapter 11 begins three weeks later. The girls have been going to Abdel's house every day to read the Book of Thoth, but Sudi admits that she has not yet memorized any spells. She is very excited about Michelle's upcoming lavish party and insists that she is going despite Abdel's warning that the girls should not go out at night until they are better prepared. When the three girls go out for coffee, they run into Michelle, Scott, Brian and Carter. Sudi becomes hysterical and causes a scene when a bug crawls down her shirt, and Scott comes to her rescue by putting his hand down her shirt and getting it out. Brian accuses Sudi of causing a scene in order to win him back, but she denies it. Her embarrassment makes Sudi decide she doesn't want to go to the party after all, but Meri and Dalila talk her into going, saying they'll go with her. However, they insist that she must learn one spell first.

In Chapter 12, Sudi stays late at Abdel's house but the only protective spell she can find turns a demon into a small dog. She writes the incantation on one of her arms, then finds a love spell and writes it on her other arm, thinking she will use it to make Scott fall for her. When they arrive at the party, Sudi introduces Dalila and Meri to a couple of boys, but her nerves cause Meri to start turning into a cat. The girls go into a bathroom and calm her down until she returns to her normal form, and they hope that in time, they will gain control over their powers. Dalila meets Carter and the two are immediately attracted to each other. Scott and Sudi go into the woods behind Michelle's house and begin to kiss, but Sudi hears a sound and senses danger. Desperate to get Scott to go back to the house where he will be safe, she lies and tells him she is meeting Brian. After Scott leaves, a mummy appears. In the dark, Sudi is unable to tell which spell is which and mistakenly reads the love incantation, but it has no effect and the mummy lunges toward her.

Chapters 10 through 12 Analysis

By this point, the girls have no choice but to accept the roles they've been given and begin preparing by studying the Book of Thoth, and they find their situation more palatable when they realize that without their help, their families could be put in danger.



The book is supposed to serve as their guide, but they are slow to memorize the important information that will both protect them and enable them to fulfill their mission of defeating the Cult of Anubis. The book and the spells it contains symbolize the power Sudi, Meri and Dalila have been given, as all of the answers lie inside, but at this point they are unable to access their power and use it to their advantage.

The contrast between Sudi's old life and her new one is evident in Chapter 12 when she tries to learn a spell before going to Michelle's party. Rather than focusing on finding spells that can protect herself and her friends, she becomes distracted by a love spell and decides to use it on Scott later that evening. Again, her lack of control over her powers and her situation comes into play when she gets confused about which spell is which and casts a love spell on the mummy, who is a direct contrast to the good-looking, charming Scott.



Chapters 13 through 15

Chapters 13 through 15 Summary

Sudi realizes that her spell worked after all and the mummy is trying to kiss her. She begins running back to Michelle's house, but the mummy follows her. They run into Meri and Dalila and Sudi tells them what happened. As they are discussing how to handle the situation, the mummy speaks, saying he is a damned soul, and the girls realize he understands them.

In Chapter 14, Dalila and Meri go to the house to find clothing so they can sneak the mummy out, and Sudi, feeling sad about the situation with Scott, tells the mummy the entire story of her relationship with Brian and her feelings for Scott. The girls come back with a black trench coat for the mummy to wear and they cast a spell that restores the appearance he had as a young man, but Dalila warns that it is only temporary. Sudi sneaks him into her house and promises she will find a way to get him through the gates and into eternal life. The following morning, she leaves him locked in her room, warning him not to leave. At breakfast, Sudi's mother mentions that the twins said a bird had gotten into the house and Sudi panics at the thought that her mother might poison her if she takes the form of the bird again. She resists the urge to tell her mother everything and leaves for school.

Chapter 15 begins with Sudi receiving a text from Meri saying that Abdel is not at home. Her classmates begin laughing at Sudi's disheveled appearance and Carter says everyone thinks the breakup with Brian is having a bad effect on her. He also tells her that Scott is going to ask her out again. As she is in class, Sudi sees the mummy in the hall, and the spell has worn off so he has returned to his mummified appearance. She runs into the hall, takes him aside and explains the love spell she has cast on him. Sudi hides him in the janitor's closet while she goes to get a note from the nurse allowing her to leave school, but when she returns, he is gone.

Chapters 13 through 15 Analysis

Sudi's conversation with the mummy, while it is not detailed in the book, is significant because although she has just met him, she feels comfortable with him and tells him things she has not even told her best friend. This foreshadows events to come, when it is revealed that the two have had a relationship in a previous life and that the love spell, while it might or might not have actually been effective, was not necessary because this boy was devoted to her anyway. The reader also gets further hints about the bad event that occurred between Sudi and Brian.

Much of this section, like the previous one, is devoted to scenes that take place at Michelle's party, again portraying the girls as typical teenagers. The reader learns more about Dalila, who is too shy to speak to boys until she meets the irresistible Carter, and



Meri, who has so little control over her powers of transmutation that she begins transforming into a cat when she becomes nervous about talking to an attractive boy. Dalila's unusual background comes into play again as the only dance she is experienced with is belly dancing and her social skills are very limited.

For the first time in this section, the girls' new roles begin to affect their normal, everyday lives. Sudi is unable to enjoy her time with Scott because she senses that danger is approaching, and she has become so caught up in the new aspects of her life that she forgets to perform simple grooming tasks before going to school. Her classmates are beginning to see differences in her, but attribute them to something ordinary — her breakup with Brian — because the truth of her situation would never occur to them. Sudi has also begun to separate from her family, wanting to tell her mother what has happened to her, but knowing she could never explain it satisfactorily and instinctively wanting to protect her loved ones. She also realizes that her powers could put her in danger if she takes the form of the bird and her mother kills her by mistake.



Chapters 16 through 18

Chapters 16 through 18 Summary

After several hours of looking through the city, the girls have been unable to find the mummy. Abdel arrives and tells them that the mummy was sent to distract them from something more important — the cult has kidnapped Scott. Abdel says they will let him go, but before doing that, they will replace his soul with that of an evil demon. The girls must rescue him, but Abdel warns them that if they fail, legend says they will be "condemned to live with the demons in the chaos at the edge of the universe."

In Chapter 17, Sudi has dinner with her family, but feels sad that she will never feel like a normal part of her happy family again. She finds that she is unable to eat the fried chicken her mother has prepared because she now thinks about the feelings of birds and other animals, so she tells her family that she has decided to become a vegetarian. One of her sisters gives her a letter that a man delivered to the house earlier. It is a gift certificate to the Anubis Spa, a new establishment with a reputation for being somewhat strange. After Sudi goes to her room, her father comes in to find out if she is alright and she leads him to believe that she is simply upset about her breakup with Brian. When she asks her father if he believes in magic, he says yes, because today's magic is tomorrow's technology and all technological advances were dismissed as magic initially. After he leaves, Sudi muses that what is happening to her can't be real, but the gift certificate proves that it is real.

Chapter 18 opens with the three girls going to the Anubis Spa. Dalila brings some spells and Sudi brings the snake wand. Dalila has learned that the building has underground tunnels, which she thinks will lead to a temple. After presenting their gift certificates to the receptionist, the girls slip away and make their way down the building's dark stairway. At first they think they were mistaken, but when Sudi opens the emergency exit door, she finds herself in an ancient temple. When she hears the howling of jackals, she feels she is walking toward her death.

Chapters 16 through 18 Analysis

Sudi's regular life again collides with her new one as she learns that Scott has been kidnapped and placed in danger by the Cult of Anubis. It is also revealed that the cult has established itself in a normal setting — an elegant, expensive spa, enabling its members to essentially hide in plain sight and presumably recruit new members from the spa's clientele. The author chooses a spa to provide a stark, direct contrast, as a spa is meant to be a peaceful site for rest, relaxation and rejuvenation, but in this case, it is exactly the opposite — a place filled with evil and violent death.

The changes that have already taken place in Sudi are evident during the dinner with her family. She is no longer able to eat meat because she has experienced what it is



like to be an animal herself, and something as normal as a mail delivery becomes cause for alarm. However, her conversation with her father provides reassurance that she is still part of a normal family, and her father's explanation of magic gives her a new perspective on her situation. While she still has difficulty believing that her situation is real, the gift certificate, like the dirt under her fingernails at the museum, provides tangible proof.

Upon discovering the temple under the spa, Sudi again hears the howl of a jackal, which has come up several times in the book. In Egyptian mythology, a jackal typically is a symbol of death, and more specifically recent death, so the sound indicates that death — their own or someone else's — lies ahead.



Chapters 19 through 21

Chapters 19 through 21 Summary

The door disappears and the girls find themselves surrounded by a desert. Dalila observes that the place is more like a tomb than a temple, and says that the paintings depict the ancient Egyptian concept of hell. Sudi still doesn't want to believe the situation is real, but looking at the paintings, she becomes determined to stop the cult from bringing chaos to their world. They see a painting of Ammut, a creature with the head of a crocodile, the forelegs and body of a lion and the hindquarters of a hippopotamus, and Dalila says the creature lives in the underworld and eats the hearts of the wicked. As they walk on, they hear singing and hide behind a pillar. A priest appears, followed by a group of ordinary-looking people, including three girls from Sudi's drama club who are considered outsiders. Scott lies unconscious on a table and when Sudi climbs onto a statue to get a better look, she slips and falls. The crowd looks at her with hatred, then everyone breaks into jubilant song and prayer.

Chapter 20 begins with the three girls being led to the front. Sudi apologizes to her friends for putting them in danger. The priest calls for Sankhkara and the mummy is brought forward. Looking around the crowd, Sudi thinks she sees Brian. The priest orders the mummy to kill the girls, but when he approaches them, he whispers to Sudi that he will try to protect them. Suddenly there is loud thunder and fire, and in the confusion the girls are able to get back behind the pillar and retrieve the Book of Thoth, which Dalila hid there earlier. As the fire edges toward them, the mummy protects the girls and Dalila transforms into Ammut, which frightens the crowd and they leave, fearing that Ammut will eat their hearts. A statue of Seth crashes to the ground and the priest, knowing he must appease Seth, gathers a horde of demons into a ball and hurls it at Sudi.

In Chapter 21, the mummy steps in front of Sudi, absorbs the demons and collapses. Sudi tackles the priest and pulls an ankh and a cylindrical amulet from his neck, and she puts the ankh on the mummy's chest to keep him alive. She also removes the love spell, but he tells her that he didn't need magic because their souls have been one since the beginning of time, but fate separated them. The girls wake up Scott, telling him that he was injured playing rugby and his coach sent him to the spa for a massage. They find the door, but strong winds and a sandstorm make it difficult to open. Scott, Meri and Dalila make it through, but Sudi is left on the other side and she realizes that if the door shuts completely, she will never be able to open it.

Chapters 19 through 21 Analysis

Still reluctant to believe that her situation is real, Sudi takes the final step in accepting her destiny when she realizes that she must protect the world from the evil she sees around her. Rather than fighting her fate, she now embraces it, thus strengthening her



power. Dalila's lack of control over her power becomes an advantage, as she has previously been unable to transform into the cobra Abdel says she should be, but has only become the ugly Ammut. However, her transformation into Ammut now works to her advantage because the crowd is afraid of the creature known for eating hearts, so everyone disperses. Although they are drawn to the cult, its members realize that it is evil, thus they are afraid their hearts will be eaten. Sudi begins to realize what can happen when her classmates are ostracized by others when she sees three members of her drama club in the crowd. They have been led astray by the lure of the cult, while Sudi has been given the power to fight evil. Sudi's belief that she sees Brian in the crowd circles back to her earlier hints at his dark side and her feeling that she still has a connection to him, and the issue is left for possible exploration in a subsequent book.

In this section, Sudi also gets a glimpse into her own history as the mummy reveals that they have had a relationship in the past. He was sent to Michelle's party to kill Sudi, Meri and Dalila, but his love for Sudi protected them and her love spell was unnecessary. Although he had hoped to enter the gates of eternity, he is willing to forego that in order to protect his love, and she in turn protects him with an ankh, the ancient Egyptian symbol of life. The girls also begin to realize for the first time that their own powers are stronger than those of the priest and the cult.

The girls rescue Scott without learning whether the cult has been successful in replacing his soul, but his easy acceptance of their explanation about why he is at a spa foreshadows future events in the book's final chapters.



Chapters 22 through 24

Chapters 22 through 24 Summary

The others are able to pull Sudi through the door to safety, and when they open it, the desert is gone and they see only a subway platform. As they leave the spa, they see the high priest near the entrance, but now he is wearing a suit, and he invites them to the new teen club called The Jackal that he is opening soon. Back at home, Sudi opens the cylindrical charm she took from the priest and finds a tiny papyrus with an oath from Seth cursing anyone who harms the priest. Entering her room, Sudi finds the window open, then someone grabs her around the waist.

In Chapter 23, Sudi finds that it is Scott who has come in through the window. He says he is confused about the day's earlier events and asks Sudi if she saved him from something and she says yes, without offering further explanation. Scott begins to pressure her for sex and she realizes that the priest was successful in replacing his soul with that of a demon. She points her wand at him, but he just laughs. When her cat distracts him, Sudi is able to run outside, but she doesn't go to any neighboring houses because she doesn't want to put others in danger and realizes she must fight the demon on her own. She transforms into the bird, but Scott pulls her down and she becomes a girl again. As the chapter ends, she is trying desperately to think of a spell that will save her.

In the book's final chapter, a cat suddenly jumps onto Scott's back. It is Meri, who has been alerted by Sudi's cat. The girls tie Scott up with Meri's pantyhose, draw hieroglyphs on his chest with lipstick, and cast a spell that drives the demon from Scott's body. However, they failed to draw a protective ring around themselves, so the demon surrounds Sudi and begins to squeeze the life from her body. As she is dying, she remembers to recite the words the figure from the museum gave to her, then she transforms into the bird and is able to vanquish the demon. Scott leaves, telling Sudi that he likes her but she does some weird things. After Scott is gone, the goddess Isis appears and gives each girl a ring, telling them that they are now her sisters. Sudi transforms into the bird to fly home, knowing that this is only the first of many battles to come.

Chapters 22 through 24 Analysis

As the first book in a series, *The Summoning's* final chapters wrap up some aspects of the plot while leaving other things open to be explored in future books. The ease with which Scott accepted the girls' explanation about the spa now helps them realize that he has been possessed by a demon after all, and the abnormal appears to be normal again when the temple and desert disappear and the door now leads only to a subway station. Although the girls have survived their first challenges, it is clear that the appearance of normality is only an illusion, because the cult is still operating and



becoming more of a threat than ever. Not only is the spa still there, but the priest is also expanding the cult's operations and posing a further threat by opening a club through which he presumably will draw more teens into his cult. Scott is safe for the moment, but his confusion over the strange things that have happened to him will almost certainly lead to further investigation, and the status of his relationship with Sudi is left up in the air. The girls are becoming more comfortable with their powers — for example, Sudi and Meri can now transform at will — but still have difficulty controlling them, as evidenced by their failure to take steps to protect themselves from the demon before they drive it from Scott's body. Sudi's experience at the museum comes back around when, as the phantom predicted, she needs to use the strange incantation when she was dying. The connections between the girls' lives as normal teenagers and their new lives as Descendants is again highlighted as they use trappings from their everyday lives — pantyhose and lipstick — to help them in their new role of casting out demons.



Characters

Sudi

Sudi, the book's main character, is a teenage girl who lives in Washington, D.C. with her parents and younger twin sisters. She is a normal teen, consumed by friends, clothes, parties and boy problems, and she finds her sisters' fascination with magic to be a silly waste of time. She recently broke up with her boyfriend, Brian, when he began dating another girl, but she is not especially upset about it because she actually prefers a boy named Scott and she was disturbed by Brian's dark side and reckless behavior.

Sudi's normal life changes forever when she meets a young man named Abdel, who informs her that she is descended from ancient Egyptian pharaohs and, along with two other girls who are also Descendants, she must prevent the evil Cult of Anubis from turning the world into chaos. While she finds the story unbelievable and assumes it is a joke or the premise for a reality TV show, she soon undergoes a series of strange events, finds that she has the ability to transform herself into a bird, and learns to use spells and incantations to ward off danger. Sudi gradually accepts her newfound powers and although she is sad to think that her life has changed forever, she feels an obligation to protect her family and her world from the evil forces that are trying to destroy them and she learns that she possesses more power than she ever dreamed possible.

Meri

Meri is the daughter of a United States Senator who is a likely Presidential candidate. As such, she attends an exclusive private school and has bodyguards who follow her everywhere, partly for her protection and partly to make sure she does not do anything to embarrass her mother and ruin her ambitions.

Meri is shocked when she is summoned to meet Abdel, who tells her that she is descended from ancient Egyptian pharaohs and must use her powers to fight the evil forces that are trying to destroy the world, but like Sudi and Dalila, she is forced to believe when she experiences a series of strange events. Among other things, she has the power of transmutation, which enables her to transform herself into a cat and communicate with other cats.

Having led a very protected life, Meri has had no experience with boys and has not even been kissed yet. In fact, her experience is so limited that when she tries to flirt with a boy at a party, her nerves cause her to begin transforming, putting an end to any opportunity to pursue a relationship.



Dalila

Dalila is a teenage girl who has lived with her uncle, a well-known Egyptologist, since her parents were killed during an excavation some years earlier. Her uncle has taught her a great deal about Egyptian history, culture and mythology, but she has always assumed that he was simply sharing his passion with her. In fact, she has always known she was being groomed for something special, but she thought she was destined to marry a prince until she learns from Abdel that her destiny actually is to fight the evil Cult of Anubis. This is a major disappointment and despite her extensive knowledge of Egyptian mythology, she feels completely unprepared for this particular role.

However, of the three girls, Dalila is the first to accept and embrace their destiny. She is quick to learn new spells and incantations, and her knowledge is invaluable in helping the others understand and interpret the events they experience.

Her physical appearance also sets Dalila apart from her fellow Descendants, as she has a shaved head that clearly shows the sacred eye of Horus birthmark that all three girls share.

Abdel

Abdel is a stange young man who informs Sudi, Meri and Dalila about their roles as descendants of ancient Egyptian pharaohs. He belongs to a secret society called the Hour priests and continues to guide the girls as they learn to use their powers.

Scott

Scott is a teenage boy who has recently moved to Washington, D.C. from California, where he was rumored to be involved in drugs. Sudi has a crush on him and he is interested in her as well. Scott is kidnapped by the Cult of Anubis, who replace his soul with that of a demon until Sudi, Meri and Dalila rescue him.

Brian

Brian is the ex-boyfriend of Sudi. The pair broke up when he began seeing another girl. He has a dark side that is never fully explained, and is convinced that many of Sudi's strange actions are an effort to win him back.

Carrie and Nicole

Carrie and Nicole are Sudi's younger sisters. They are twins and their fascination with the occult foreshadows Sudi's upcoming use of magic to fight the Cult of Anubis.



Carter

Carter is Sudi's close friend. He is a good-looking heartbreaker who becomes attracted to Dalila when they meet at a party.

Michelle

Michelle is Scott's jealous girlfriend who was also Sudi's best friend when they were children. She hosts a party that becomes central to the plot.

Sara

Sara is Sudi's best friend.

Isis

Isis is an Egyptian goddess who gave the Book of Thoth to the Hour priests. She protects Meri, Sudi and Dalila and declares them to be her sister.

Seth

Seth is an evil god who leads the Cult of Anubis and wants to turn the world to chaos.

Sankhkara

The Cult of Anubis sends a mummy named Sankhkara to kill Sudi, Meri and Dalila, but he is revealed to be someone to whom Sudi was connected in a previous life and since he is in love with her, he protects her from harm.



Objects/Places

Washington, D.C.

Washington, D.C. is the city where the book's characters live and the setting for the book.

Lincoln High School

Lincoln High School is the school attended by Sudi, Sara and a few of the other characters.

Entre Nous

Entre Nous is an exclusive private high school attended by Meri, Scott, and Michelle.

The Book of Thoth

The Book of Thoth is a series of papyrus scrolls containing the spells and incantations that give Sudi, Meri and Dalila their powers.

Apotropaic Wand

Each of the three girls receive a brass wand in the shape of a snake, decorated with Egyptian symbols that begin to move when a demon approaches.

Sacred Eye of Horus

The Sacred Eye of Horus is an Egyptian symbol of the god Horus. Each of the three girls has the symbol on her head as a birthmark.

The Smithsonian Institute

The Smithsonian Institute is a large grouping of museums in Washington, D.C. that includes an Egyptian exhibit in which Sudi becomes trapped.

Anubis Spa

The Anubis Spa is an expensive, elegant spa in Washington that is a front for the evil Cult of Anubis.

Ouija Board

Early in the novel, Sudi's sisters play with a Ouija board and although they don't reveal the message, they tell Sudi the board has predicted that something bad will happen to her.

Sky Terrace

The Sky Terrace is the restaurant at which Sudi, Meri and Dalila meet Ahmet for the first time.



Themes

Unlikely Friendships

Sudi, Meri and Dalila are three girls who do not know each other until they meet through Abdel and although their fates are forever tied together, they would not be likely to be friends under other circumstances. While all three are of similar age and live in Washington, D.C. their backgrounds are vastly different. Meri is the daughter of a Senator who plans to run for President. She has drivers who take her from place to place and bodyguards who go everywhere with her. She attends an exclusive private school while Sudi goes to public school and Dalila is taught by her uncle. Sudi has long blonde hair while Meri is tomboyish and Dalila shaves her head and wears unusual clothing. Sudi has had an apparently serious boyfriend and looks forward to losing her virginity while Meri has never been kissed and Dalila is too shy to even speak to boys. Dalila has been school in Egyptian mythology and is quick to believe what Abdel tells them, but the ancient ways are a mystery to Sudi and Dalila, and they accept their destinies only with great difficulty.

Shortly after they meet, Sudi muses to herself that she is unhappy to be tied to these unusual girls and laments the fact that she will inevitably drift apart from her best friend Sara, but at the end of the book, all three girls have formed a close bond because of their common destiny and are thrilled when Isis pronounces them sisters — something none of them could have predicted after their first meeting.

Mythology and the Occult

Ancient Egyptian mythology and the occult are themes that are woven throughout the novel and are the basis for its premise and plot. The reader's initial clues come in the book's first chapters when Sudi's sisters are revealed to be interested in magic, a concept she rejects outright until strange things begin happening to her. However, she discovers her gift for transmutation before she even knows what it means, and before long she and the other two Descendants are using incantations to ward off evil and even casting love spells.

A wide variety of mythological characters figure prominently throughout the book, including Horus, the god who stood for order, Seth, who wanted to destroy the world, Isis, the mother of Horus and goddess of nature and magic, and Anubis, the god with the head of a jackal. Mythology quickly becomes accepted as fact, and readers who are familiar with Egyptian history will recognize figures like Ammut, who eats the souls of the wicked, and items such as the ankh, the ancient Egyptian symbol of life.



Nothing Is What It Seems To Be

Nothing is what it appears to be in *The Summoning*. Three seemingly-ordinary teenage girls are actually the descendants of ancient Egyptian pharaohs who are destined to fight evil forces and save the world. An elegant, expensive day spa contains an Egyptian temple where black magic takes place, and in moments the temple suddenly becomes an ordinary subway station. The spa's manager is a high priest of the Cult of Anubis, and a frightening mummy contains the soul of a young man who has been connected to and in love with Sudi from the beginning of time. Handsome and charming Scott has the soul of a demon, and a bronze walking stick becomes a magic wand that vibrates when a demon approaches. Sudi's friends think Brian has broken her heart, but in truth, she is relieved that she is no longer with him. Even Dalila's destiny, which she thought she understood clearly, turns out to be something completely different; rather than marrying into royalty, she is fated to fight off ancient evil forces.

Style

Point of View

The point of view of *The Summoning* is the third-person perspective. The narrator is reliable, but not omniscient, as only the perspective of the book's main character, Sudi, is followed. Every scene in the novel includes her, and while the reader is privy to her private thoughts and feelings, the other characters' thoughts are revealed only through the passages in which they have dialogue or their reactions are noted. For example, at the end of Chapter 18, the reader is told that the howl of jackals were, to Sudi, "sweet sounds that awakened an odd longing, and a keen awareness that she was walking toward her death," but the narrator provides no such information about the thoughts of Meri, Dalila, or other characters.

The book contains an appropriate balance of exposition and dialogue, is written in the past tense, and appears to cover a period of about a month in the lives of the characters.

Setting

The Summoning is set in Washington, D.C. in the present day. The initial scenes take place at Sudi's house, followed by scenes at her school and the restaurant at which she meets Meri, Dalila and Abdel. Other significant locations include the Smithsonian Institute, the Anubis Spa, Entre Nous school, the home of Michelle and its grounds, Abdel's house, and various streets and monuments throughout Washington.

When the characters go down the stairs at the Anubis Spa, they enter a world that appears to be either a leap back in time or a different dimension, as a door opens into a desert temple or tomb. However, after they go back through the door and reopen it, the setting is an ordinary subway station.

Language and Meaning

The language used in *The Summoning* is modern-day English written specifically to appeal to teen or 'tween audiences. The language is straightforward and easy to read, but the book includes a number of complex words designed to challenge young readers to enlarge their vocabularies.

However, the most challenging aspect of the book is the great number of Egyptian names and references to ancient mythological characters, events, stories, and concepts. This can be confusing at times, as the author covers a large amount of information with which the average reader will not be familiar. Some mythological characters are mentioned only once and do not factor into the plot, while others

reappear and are important to the story, making it somewhat difficult for the reader to keep track.

Structure

The Summoning is comprised of 24 chapters of varying length, although the later chapters tend to be shorter than many of the earlier ones. The chapters are untitled.

The plot is a complicated one that requires the reader to completely suspend belief and enter a world of mythology and magic. The novel follows the adventures of three present-day teenage girls who learn that they are descended from ancient Egyptian pharaohs and thus have been given powers to help them fight evil. Just as Sudi, Meri, and Dalila are forced to accept and embrace their destiny, the reader is asked to accept that mummies come back to life, incantations can turn people into animals, and phantom mythological figures can appear and disappear at will.

The book is the first in a series, prompting the author to drop hints designed to entice readers to follow the characters through the rest of the series. For example, Sudi makes several references to something disturbing that occurred during her relationship with Brian, but we never learn what happened and are left to assume it will be revealed in a later book. The plot of *The Summoning* wraps up to some extent in the end. Scott is rescued, but the Cult of Anubis lives to fight another day, leaving room for additional books to follow.



Quotes

Then Brian had revealed a darker side, and everything about their relationship had changed. What had made her go back for more? She drifted off, her mind replaying the memory of the night she wanted to forget.

Page 7

In spite of being in a closed elevator, wind blew into Sudi's nostrils and filled her lungs. Her chest heaved, trying to catch a breath not tainted with the smell of tombs.

Page 39

Sudi clenched the strap on her backpack, trying to stop a sudden sense of falling. If she could read the ancient writing, then was it possible that the other things Abdel had told her were also true?

Page 48

"And how am I supposed to use this story?" Sudi challenged, not expecting the phantom to answer her.

"As you are dying, you will know," the woman said. "But still, you must take care when you speak the terrible words of power."

Page 59

Sudi edged back against the wall and wondered why she didn't have the courage to tell Meri everything. But she couldn't tell her what had happened when she didn't believe it yet herself.

Page 77

Warm rain splattered their faces, but they didn't run for shelter. They stayed in the downpour, staring at each other. Sudi pressed her lips together, feeling a sudden overwhelming sadness. Her future was going to be far different from the one she had planned.

Page 85

He glanced up, and the firelight made his eyes glint. "No one can change your fate, not even the gods. You must stand against evil and protect the world. You are the Descendants of the great kings of Egypt."

Page 121

"You've made a terrible mistake," Dalila said. "There's a division between the dead and the living, and those who live are not supposed to meddle with those in the underworld. The cult broke that rule, and now you have, too."

Page 159

Abdel looked at each of them before answering. "Legend says that all Descendants who fail are condemned to live with the demons in the chaos at the edge of the universe."

Page 185



"Today's magic is tomorrow's technology," he explained. "We use things once considered magic every day. When Marconi told his friends that he had invented a way to send messages through the air without wires, they took him to see a psychiatrist, because they didn't believe such a thing was possible. But Marconi invented the radio, and now we send pictures through the air. We all watch TV, and that's a kind of magic, so why couldn't there be more? There has to be."

Page 191

Then, from far away, came the haunting howl of jackals, sweet sounds that awakened an odd longing, and a keen awareness that she was walking toward her death.

Page 202

Sudi forced herself to look at the paintings again. The misery she saw made her resolute. She was determined to stop the cult, but her determination wavered as a niggling little voice asked her how. She knew no incantations except for one love spell, and turning into a bird wasn't going to scare any of the creatures depicted in these scenes.

Page 208

Sudi continued watching, and then at the end of the line, she saw the three girls from her drama club who skulked about the hallways at Lincoln High. Dressed in transparent linen gowns, they danced with sinuous grace, so unlike the shyness they showed at school. Sudi wondered if the cult leaders had deceived them, or did they know they were devoting their lives to bringing chaos to the world? Sudi felt guilty that she hadn't done more to defend the girls when other kids made fun of them. Maybe one word of kindness could have made a difference in their lives.

Page 211

But then she caught another familiar face. She looked again, uncertain. Had she seen Brian? Was he part of the cult? Her stomach knotted. Maybe that was her strange connection to him.

Page 217

"You can throw my body to the dogs," Sankhkara responded defiantly. "I'll gladly suffer the fate of the damned. It was worth knowing the love I felt when I looked into your eyes again."

Page 220

The thick blackness spun toward Sudi. The demons imprisoned within it squirmed and thrashed, writhing over and around each other, trying to be the first to attack. She stood defenseless, watching death hurtling toward her, and forgot to breathe. She had failed her parents, her sisters, and her friends, but mostly she had failed herself.

Page 229

A sudden, frightening thought came to her. She and her friends had rescued Scott, but they hadn't bothered to find out whether a demon had already taken possession of



Scott's body.
Page 246

Lights came on in the surrounding houses, and behind her, a door opened. But she did not turn back. The safety within the homes was an illusion, and she knew that if she went inside, instead of finding sanctuary, she would only bring death to the families who lived there.

Page 248

She pitied the demon, an emotion she had not expected to feel, and suddenly she wished she had spoken other words. Maybe she could have released him from his enslavement to Seth. She understood the reason the woman had used the word "terrible" to describe the words of power.

Page 258

Feathers grew from her fingers, hands, and skin, fanning into wings. She ran down the street, until the wind caught her and lifted her above the trees. She soared, half girl, half bird, pure goddess, toward the rising moon, enjoying the enchantment of this night. They had been victorious, but she knew that this was only the first of many battles.

Page 263



Topics for Discussion

Why does Dalila find it easier to accept what Abdel tells the girls than Meri and Sudi do? How has her background prepared her for her destiny as a Descendant? In what ways is she more prepared than the other two girls? In what ways is she less prepared?

Sudi, Meri and Dalila have not met before Abdel invites them to the restaurant. If they met under other circumstances — at school, for example — do you think they would have become friends? Why or why not?

Sudi and Meri are able to transform into the animals to which they are connected, but although Abdel says that Dalila should transform into a cobra, she is unable to do so. Why do you think she has more difficulty with transmutation than the other two girls? What is the significance of the fact that she transforms into Ammut instead?

Discuss Sudi's relationship with the mummy. Why do you think she confides her most intimate secrets to him even though they have just met? Why does he not kill her as he was sent to do? Do you think the love spell worked?

Why do you think the author chose a spa as the location for the Cult of Anubis' operations? What makes it an appropriate place for the cult? Why is it an unlikely base of operations?

When the girls rescue Scott from the cult, why don't they check to find out whether the priest has been successful in removing his soul? What are the first clues that he now has the soul of a demon? Why does it take Sudi so long to realize what has happened?

How does Sudi's talk with her father help her accept her destiny as a Descendant?