

Summer Knight Study Guide

Summer Knight by Jim Butcher

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Plot Summary

Summer Knight, by Jim Butcher, is a fanciful tale of wizards and faeries, taking place in modern Chicago. Harry Dresden is a wizard, entrenched in his own misery due to a situation involving his former girlfriend, Susan Rodriguez. Several months earlier Susan had been infected by the Red Court, or local vampires. Susan left Chicago asking Harry not to follow and he had respected her request, though he has spent the majority of his time in his basement laboratory trying to find a way to save the one he loves. In the process, Harry has distanced himself from everyday life, avoiding friends, socializing, and personal hygiene.

A meeting with Billy the werewolf changes everything. Billy asks Harry to meet him to discuss magical changes that are going on in the city. Harry does, and while they are at the park there is an attempt on Harry's life. Though he is not sure exactly who is responsible, Harry believes it might be the Red Court, who have declared war on him for his actions during the issues with Susan. Also while at the park, Billy informs Harry that he has an appointment with a client that afternoon. Though Harry is at first angry, he realizes that he does need to earn a living, and decides to keep the meeting that Billy has arranged. This meeting will change Harry forever.

Mab, the Winter Queen, requests that Harry solve the mystery of who killed the Summer Knight, Ronald Reuel. The Summer Knight's power is missing and the Winter Court is suspected in the murder and theft. Harry is not interested in working for a faerie, but discovers that his godmother, Lea, has more or less sold him to Mab. Harry tells the faerie queen his will consider her offer, though the queen has more or less guaranteed that he will not have a choice.

The White Council, or the governing body of wizards, is also in town. The Council is concerned about the war that the Red Court has started, directly related to the actions of Harry several months ago. The Senior Council votes that Harry must prove his worth as a true wizard in order to avoid being handed over to the vampires. Coincidentally, The Winter Court has told the wizards that they may pass through thier lands if a request is granted. Harry realizes too late that the request is the one Mab has made of him, and that in order to save his own life and those of many others, he must find the murderer and the Summer Knight's power.

Harry's quest takes him through many trials, battling trolls, ogres and ghouls, as well as reuniting him with his first love, Elaine. The two had been separated in their teens when Elaine had helped Harry's old mentor try and turn him to dark magic. Elaine returns, explaining to Harry that she had been under a spell at the time, and would never have hurt him. Elaine is now working for the Summer Lady, Aurora, trying to find who killed Ronald Reuel and restore his power. Harry realizes that things are getting more complicated by the minute and he is forced to turn to his friend, Karrin Murphy, a Chicago police officer and head of the Special Investigation Department. Karrin helps Harry, and he helps her in return, as she has also been shutting herself off from life due to problems in the past.



The battle between good and evil escalates as the Summer Solstice approaches. Harry must find the missing power of the Summer Knight before the natural order of Summer and Winter in Nevernever are forever altered, changing life for all living things for all time. Though the natural assumption is that Winter is behind the murder and theft of power, Harry begins to realize that there are other motives behind the budding war. After meeting with Maeve, the Winter Lady, and Aurora, the Summer Lady, Harry also meets with the Summer and Winter Mothers. Small truths about each help Harry piece together the course of action that has led to the brink of war.

Aurora, the seemingly kind Summer Lady, acting in concert with members of her Court and the traitorous Knight of the Winter Court, is responsible for the death of Ronald Reuel. Hiding the magic of the knight in the changeling Lily, Aurora turns the girl to stone in order to keep the magic hidden until the Summer Solstice. Aurora is mad, tired of the constant change of power between Summer and Winter, and has orchestrated a war so that the power struggle will be ended.

Harry is able to defeat the evil Summer Lady with the help of his friends, the werewolves, Lily's changeling friends, and the Winter Lady. Aurora is dead and Lily becomes the new Summer Lady. The position of Winter Knight is offered to Harry but he refuses it, unwilling to deal with the Winter Queen unless necessary. Dresden's life is saved as he is able to fulfill the task the Winter Queen had required, which also fulfilled the test that the White Council had laid before him.

In the process, Harry realizes that his friends are truly his friends, and that though he misses Susan, and feels responsible for her dealings with the vampires, he needs to move on with life. Harry will continue to help Susan and fight evil and defeat the vampires, but he will live his own life while he is doing so.



Chapters 1-5

Chapters 1-5 Summary

Summer Knight details the life and troubles of Harry Dresden, Wizard. Harry is hired by the Winter Faerie Queen to solve the mysterious death of the Summer Knight. The death of the Summer Knight has caused the entire balance of the seasons to shift and could cause catastrophic damage to the world. It is up to Harry to find the answers, save the world, and himself in the process.

In chapter one Harry Dresden meets Billy the werewolf in Lake Meadow Park. Billy is concerned about strange things that are happening around Chicago, such as the rain of toads that is taking place at the moment. Harry explains that strange magical happenings might mean serious problems. Billy wonders if it has anything to do with the vampire wars. Harry acts oblivious, but Billy tells him that word travels and everyone knows that the vampires and the Red Court, or ruling body of vampires, have been trying to kill Harry ever since he caused problems for them last Fall.

Billy tells Harry that he and his friends are worried about him, and that it must have something to do with Susan, Harry's girlfriend, and the vampires, since Susan left town last fall. Harry tells Billy to mind his own business and gets even angrier when Billy informs him that he has made Harry an appointment with a client for that afternoon. The werewolves are worried about Harry. The wizard has been avoiding people for months, working in his basement lab, not taking care of himself. Harry shouts at Billy to mind his own business, but as he does a truck drives across the park with men in the back. The men have guns. Harry shakes his bracelet loose on his left hand and raises a shield. The men shoot but the bullets are deflected. Harry aims magic at the men, carefully, as killing someone is against the First Law of Magic. As Harry defends himself and Billy, the homeless woman that has been wandering the park pulls a shotgun, revealing that she has been in disguise. Billy changes form and attacks her as a werewolf, disarming her. Harry grabs the gun and shoots her, revealing that she is not a woman at all, but a ghoul. She flees.

In chapter two, Harry drops Billy off and sits in his car. Harry had dropped out of life after he has caused his girlfriend, Susan Rodriguez, to be in danger. Susan is a reporter for the Midwestern Arcane, and had been very interested in magic. Harry had taken her to a gathering of vampires and they had infected her. She shared their thirst now, and if she sated it, she would become a vampire. Harry had spent all his time trying to develop a vaccine to save her. Susan had turned down his marriage proposal and left town, mailing her columns in from wherever she was. Harry would not try and find her until he could cure her.

Harry drives to his office for his meeting. Inside he finds a beautiful woman, Ms. Sommerset, the client that Billy arranged. Ms. Sommerset is a bit haughty, judging Harry to be incompetent because he looks ragged. Harry begins to argue, then realizes



that something is truly off. Taking a gun from his drawer he asks the woman to put her hand on the desk. She does and he places an iron nail on the desk. The nail rolls toward the woman, and as it nears her hand she jumps back. Harry tells the woman that he does not work with faeries and tells her to leave.

Ms. Sommerset informs Harry that she is in fact Mab, queen of the Winter Court. Mab has purchased Harry's contract from his godmother. Harry is not pleased and refuses to deal with Mab. Using magic, she paralyzes Harry's hand on the desk and forces him to stab himself with his letter opener with the other. Mab tells Harry that he will work for her. A faerie cannot force someone to do something unless they have been given the power to do so. Harry knows that his godmother must have given her power to Mab.

In chapter three, Mab tells Harry that he must perform three tasks for her. He may decide which tasks to accept. Once the three tasks are complete he will be free. Harry accepts the bargain and Mab tells him of her first request. A man has been killed, Ronald Reuel. Something had been stolen from him and Mab would like it returned. Harry is not sure if he will take the case or not, but Mab tells him he will, and that he will meet his counterpart that evening. Harry wonders what Mab means and she explains; as he is working for Winter, Summer will have a representative as well. After leaving an envelope with information, Mab leaves.

In chapter four Harry drives to his apartment, then to McCormick Place Complex for the White Council meeting. Once there he meets Ebenezer McCoy, his mentor. Harry had been McCoy's apprentice when he was a sixteen-year-old orphan. Ebenezer wants Harry to meet with some members of the senior council. Harry is angered because he does not want Ebenezer to get involved in his mess. McCoy is also angry because Harry does not realize the trouble he is in.

Two senior council members arrive, Martha Liberty and Listens to Wind, or Injun Joe. The two senior council members speak to Harry and tell Ebenezer that they will vote with him. Ebenezer is dismayed when they inform him that Simon Pietrovich, the third member they were supposed to meet, had been killed by the vampires and the Red Court. Harry wonders why this is so troublesome and Martha explains. The White Council and the Merlin are going to bring charges against Harry for precipitating the war with the Red Court. Without Simon's vote, they will not be able to prevent the Merlin and the Wardens from blaming Harry for all the trouble.

In chapter five the four wizards enter the hall. Harry stays back so that Ebenezer is not tied to him for no reason. Morgan, one of the Wardens, or wizard security, stops Harry. Calling forth the Wardhounds to search Harry, Dresden realizes that Morgan hates him and wishes him dead. The Wardhounds detect the lingering magic from Mab, but it is not enough to prevent him from attending the meeting. Morgan tells Harry that he is a disgrace, and has caused the death of many good men and women. Harry ignores him and enters the meeting.



The Merlin is on a small stage with the senior council. Merlin intends to replace Simon on the senior council with a friend, but McCoy calls upon council law that there must be a vote. Within minutes Ebenezer has finagled a spot on the council.

Another senior council member speaks, stating that the Red Court has sued for peace. Harry exclaims that the vampires would do no such thing. Wizard LaFortier happily tells Harry that the vampires have declared that if the White Council were to hand Harry over to them, they would stop the war.

Chapters 1-5 Analysis

In chapters one through five, the reader is introduced to Harry Dresden, a wizard, as well as to several important characters. Backstory is also provided, giving the reader insight into the life of Harry Dresden and the things he has been through recently. Summer Knight is the fourth in a series, so the author provides enough detail from the previous novels to allow the reader to understand what is going on.

The novel opens with Harry meeting Billy the werewolf in a park. Billy is concerned with magical events that are taking place around the city, and has called on Harry to investigate. Billy seems to have an ulterior motive as well. The werewolf is concerned that Harry has shut himself off from the world since the Fall when his girlfriend Susan had left town. Billy provides a bit of backstory, and the reader becomes aware that the Red Court, or vampire council, is angry at Harry due to some problems he caused them. Harry's girlfriend had left town around the same time. The reader learns that Susan, a reporter, had been infected by vampires while out with Harry. Harry has been withdrawn from the day to day life of Chicago because he has been trying to find a cure for Susan.

Billy tells Harry that he has been to his office, straightened out his things and made an appointment for him with a client that afternoon. Harry is angry, but Billy points out that with no income Harry will lose his apartment and his office. Harry tells Billy that he does not need anyone, but the moment proves prophetic when the two men are attacked, first by the assassins for the Red Court, then by a ghoul disguised as a homeless woman. Harry and Billy manage to fend off the attack through the use of Harry's magic, showing the reader that despite his own self doubt, Harry is a powerful wizard. One source of Harry's power is the bracelet he wears on his left hand. Harry uses this bracelet against the attacker to create a shield to protect himself and Billy. Harry will use the shield at several times throughout the novel.

More backstory is provided when Harry arrives at his office to meet with Ms. Sommerset. Harry immediately notices that the woman is very beautiful; however, the burst of static from his doorknob had given him at least some warning about what he would be dealing with. The discovery that Ms. Sommerset is a faerie is not pleasing to Harry, as he does not like dealing with such creatures. Mab is not happy that Harry discovers her true identity before she chooses to reveal it. The Winter queen's personality presents itself as demanding and cruel, unwilling to compromise at any cost. Despite her offer to Harry to perform three tasks of his choosing, she tells him that he



will take this task, regardless of how he feels about it. More evidence that Mab had orchestrated the position that Harry is in will be presented later; however, it is clear at this point that she is unwilling to lose.

The position that Harry is in due to his trouble with the vampires becomes clear when he attends the meeting with the White Council. Morgan, a Warden, or member of the wizard security team, is extremely hostile and will prove himself to be more trouble later in the novel. His examination of Harry before he is allowed to enter the meeting gives one some insight into the type of trouble that Morgan will cause Harry.

Harry does have some wizards on his side, however. Ebenezer McCoy, Harry's mentor, has arranged for at least two allies on the senior council with Martha Liberty and Injun Joe. A third had been expected, but had been ambushed and killed by the vampires and the Red Court. McCoy manages to get himself elected to the council to protect Harry, but warns him that there will be three attempts against him. The vote of the council is the first. Harry will not realize exactly what Ebenezer means until later in the novel, and it will once again involve Morgan.

Harry's past is mentioned in regard to Ebenezer, including the fact that Harry was placed with him as an apprentice after Dresden had killed his former mentor Justin in a duel of magic. Though killing another is against the first law of magic, the council had shown leniency and placed Harry on a strict probation. Harry's past with Justin will return to haunt him later in the novel, and will give the reader more insight into the type of person that Harry is.

Harry is stunned to find that the Red Court wishes the White Council to surrender him in order to end the war. Until this point, Harry had assumed that the battle was more or less private. Harry is also concerned because it is clear that there are many on the council who would be more than willing to surrender him in order to maintain some semblance of peace.



Chapters 6-10

Chapters 6-10 Summary

In chapter six, Wizard LaFortier reiterates the Red Court's call for Harry as a prisoner to stand trial. Harry argues that as a full wizard he is entitled to an investigation. LaFortier agrees, but states that Harry was never voted in as wizard, and perhaps his cowl should be revoked. The vote moves quickly with three votes for Harry and three against. The final vote is left to the Gatekeeper who states that he will wait for the messenger to report. On cue, a man is helped into the room who reports to one of the senior council that Queen Mab will allow passage through the Winter Court if one task is performed for her. The Gatekeeper addresses Harry privately, asking if he knows what the task is. Harry realizes that he has been set up. The Gatekeeper asks the date and Harry tells him it is June eighteenth. The gatekeeper moves that if Harry can perform Mab's task he be recognized as a full wizard. Those on the senior council who are against Harry reluctantly agree.

In chapter seven the meeting of the White Council ends and Harry leaves, headed to Karrin Murphy's house. Murphy is the lieutenant of the Chicago Special Investigations department, in charge of handling all unusual things in the city. Harry knew he could count on his friend. Upon arrival Murphy seems out of sorts and makes Harry prove that he is who he says he is by not inviting him in. There are several creatures that can act like another, but cannot enter your home uninvited. Once inside Harry realizes that Murphy is not herself at all. After pressing he discovers that her ex-husband has died. In addition Karrin is suffering from nightmares over a case the two had worked the previous year. Harry tells Karrin that he too has lost his first love, Elaine. Elaine had been adopted by Harry's former teacher as well. Justin had tried to induce Harry into the dark arts, black magic, and had Elaine help him. Harry was able to escape and kill Justin, and Elaine had died as well. Murphy comes out of herself a bit and asks Harry why he is there.

Harry tells Murphy about the case that Mab has him investigating. Murphy checks the computer and they go over the reports. Harry notices that one of the officers on scene had noticed a slime near the body. Dresden thinks it might have been ectoplasm, something left over when magic is taken away. Someone could have entered the secured building, thrown Ronald Reuel down the stairs and left, using magic. Harry heads home when he sees that Karrin is asleep.

Arriving, Harry realizes there is someone in his apartment and he prepares to strike with his blasting rod, one of his tools of magic. He is stunned when he realizes it is Elaine.

In chapter eight Elaine tells Harry that she had never meant to hurt him. Elaine explains that their teacher, Justin, had placed her in a thrall, making her more or less a robot to do his will. Elaine explains that she was not sure if Harry would want to see her afterward, and had found sanctuary in the Summer Court. Elaine had built a debt and



had to pay the price by discovering who was responsible for a murder in the Summer Court. Elaine must find the truth and prove the Winter Court responsible. Harry must do the same and prove the Winter Court innocent. If Harry fails Mab will not grant passage to the wizards, and he will fail his trial. If Elaine fails she will not have paid her debt to Titania. Harry does not have any idea what to do, but suggests that they go to the White Council as the problem is too big for them to handle. Elaine is leery, but Harry almost has her convinced when Morgan arrives at his door, calling for the traitor to open up and answer some questions.

In chapter nine Elaine hides in Harry's bedroom while he lets Morgan in. Morgan antagonizes Harry, stating that he might not be working with the Red Court but that he has been compromised in some way. Morgan goes on to suggest that Harry's girlfriend Susan has been working with the Red Court, and playing Harry for a fool. Harry gets angry and knows that at that moment he could gladly kill Morgan, but realizes that this is a test. Harry suggests that there is another wizard waiting outside the open door, prepared to state that Morgan was forced to kill Harry in self defense after Dresden attacked him. Morgan is stunned by the accusation, but does not deny them. Morgan leaves and Elaine exits, telling Harry that if Morgan represents the type of people on the council she does not want to deal with them.

In chapter ten Harry dreams of Susan. The two are together happily until Harry realizes that Susan is a full vampire. He still cannot resist her, and she strikes, drinking his blood and killing him. Waking from the nightmare Harry takes a cold shower and heads to his lab in the sub-basement.

In the lab Harry awakens Bob, a spirit who is his assistant. Bob resides in a skull on a shelf in Harry's lab. Harry discusses the investigation with Bob who tells Harry that Ronald Reuel was the Summer Knight. The Knights of each court are basically the hit men for the queen. Harry and Bob discuss the situation and Harry realizes that the missing item Mab is searching for is the Summer Queen's power. The power of the knight should have gone back to the queen upon his death, but hadn't. This is why the Summer Queen believes that Mab is responsible for Ronald's death. Bob also explains to Harry that there are three queens in each court, the Queen Who Is, The Queen Who Was, and The Queen Who Will Be. Harry realizes that with Elaine still alive and all the Queens that may be involved, plus the Winter Knight, he has quite a few suspects.

Chapters 6-10 Analysis

The intricacies of dealing with the Winter Queen are revealed when the messenger arrives at the meeting of the White Council and tells the senior wizards that Queen Mab will only allow passage to the council if a task is performed for her. Harry realizes that he has been set up. Mab has arranged things so that Harry can not turn down her request, for if he does the council will strip him of his recognition as a full wizard. If Dresden is not a full wizard than the White Council will not have to worry about protocol and can simply turn him over to the Red Court.



Worried about the vote that is to take place, Harry is left with the Gatekeeper as the tie-breaker. The Gatekeeper speaks to Harry privately, asking Dresden if he is aware of the task that Queen Mab wishes to be performed. Harry knows that it is the investigation of Ronald Reuel's death and tells the Gatekeeper he does. The senior council member's question of the date seems a bit odd, but will become much more significant later in the novel.

The Gatekeeper seems fair, and addresses all of the concerns of the council members, but in the end presents a compromise. If Harry can perform the task that Queen Mab desires, he should be considered a full wizard and not be turned over to the vampires. All agree, some more reluctantly than others.

The character of Karrin Murphy is introduced to the reader. Harry and Murphy have an established relationship, one that seems deep and trusting. There are references to some magical experiences that Murphy has dealt with in the past, which cause her to not trust Harry when he first arrives. Apparently a magical being of some sort had disguised himself as Harry at some time and hurt Murphy quite badly. After Harry discusses the case of Ronald Reuel with Murphy he is reluctant to keep her involved, but realizes that bringing her into things might be what she needs to get past her issues. This demonstrates to the reader that despite Harry's sometimes surly attitude and tendency to answer all with sarcasm rather than in a straight-forward way, he is caring, and very concerned for his friend. Karrin Murphy will provide key information to Harry, as well as play an important role in the future.

After examining the police file Harry discovers that there may be evidence of foul play after all. Because of the victim's age it was assumed that he had simply fallen down the stairs. With possible ectoplasm present, Harry can assume that something magical took place at the premises, though he does not know what.

Harry reveals his past to Murphy to try and commiserate when she is upset about the death of her ex-husband. The reader is given more information about Harry's past, as well as his first love, Elaine. Harry explains to Karrin that Elaine betrayed him by working with his former teacher. The discovery of Elaine at his apartment leaves Harry stunned, as he has believed her dead for so long, and at his hand. Elaine explains that she had been under Justin's power, and would never hurt Harry. Dresden wishes to believe her but has trouble. Elaine's announcement that she is in trouble immediately quiets his doubts as Harry is nothing if not chivalrous.

The discovery that he and Elaine are working to solve the same puzzle but from different sides is perplexing at best. If Harry wishes to stay free of the Red Court he must find whatever has been stolen and prove Mab innocent. If Elaine is to repay Titania, she must prove Mab guilty. Harry's suggestion that the two are in over their heads and should take the problem to the council is understandable, but the arrival of Morgan ends any chance of that.

Morgan arrives hoping to goad Harry into attacking him so that he can kill Dresden and turn him over to the council. Though the reader is never privy to the exact problems



between Harry and Morgan, the animosity is clear. Morgan's plans are foiled because Ebenezer McCoy had warned Harry that a third test would be presented to him. Harry realizes in the nick of time that he is being set up and sends Morgan on his way.

Harry discovers how enormous his problems are when Bob the Skull tells him that Ronald Reuel was the Summer Knight. Harry realizes that the stolen item is the power of the Summer Queen, Titania. Because the Summer Court's power is missing, the Winter Court has an advantage. The loss of power and the unbalance it will cause will most likely result in war between the two courts, which will be devastating to everyone on earth.



Chapter 11-15

Chapter 11-15 Summary

In chapter eleven Harry arrives at Ronald Reuel's apartment dressed as a deliveryman, prepared to break in, but finds a large man searching the place. Harry knocks on the door and announces he has a delivery. The man tells Harry that Reuel is not home, but Harry convinces him to sign for the flowers. The man signs and Harry swiftly palms one of the papers from his bag. The man who had signed the name Grum on the slip states that he does not smell any flowers, only wizard magic. Harry blasts him with the rod but the man changes form. Grum is an ogre. The two fight and Harry is quickly overpowered, but is saved at the last minute by a voice down the hall. Grum changes back to man form and tells Harry to leave. Once outside, Harry checks the paper, which is a picture. Ronald Reuel is shown with two young women and two young men.

In chapter twelve, while driving to Ronald Reuel's funeral, Harry reflects on who wants to hide the photos that are in Reuel's apartment. Once there, Harry hears voices and listens to two men and a woman arguing about someone being missing. One of the men announces that 'the wizard' is there. The other man and the woman are unsure what to do, so they leave. Harry follows them out, but the woman strikes him, knocking him down. Harry realizes that the voices he heard belong to three of the four people in Reuel's picture. The woman kicks him and tosses him in a dumpster and the three flee. Harry lies stunned in the garbage until Billy arrives.

In chapter thirteen Harry explains to Billy that he is going to use pizza to call forth a faerie, Toot-Toot. Once Toot is in the circle Harry has drawn, Dresden will use the remainder of the pizza to bribe answers from him. Toot-Toot arrives and deems the area safe, summoning the rest of his faeries. Once Toot-Toot is trapped in the circle, Harry approaches and is surprised that the faerie seems frightened. Toot-Toot thinks that Harry has captured them to work with the Winter Queen. Once Harry explains that he only wants answers and that the faeries can have the pizza, they are happy to help.

Toot tells Harry that the magical creatures are being summoned to the Winter and Summer Courts to prepare for war. Harry asks where he can find the Winter Lady, and Toot tells him that she is in Undertown and the Summer Lady is at the top of one of the big buildings in Chicago. Since the city is full of tall buildings, Harry asks for a guide. Toot-Toot summons Elidee, an even smaller faerie, to help Harry in his quest. Elidee agrees to help Harry, communicating in flashing light. Harry offers her pizza before they leave. Billy returns, amazed at the sight of the faeries feeding on the pizza. Once Elidee is finished eating, she guides Harry and Billy toward the Winter Lady, also known as The Queen Will Be.

In chapter fourteen Elidee leads Harry and Billy to an entrance to Undertown, the city under Chicago. Harry warns Billy that there will doubtless be many creatures with the



Winter Lady and that he should avoid any bargains or deals offered. The faeries will try to entrap them if they can. Billy promises to be cautious.

A disembodied voice speaks, telling Harry and Billy that it will lead them through the labyrinth of halls they find themselves in. The two men follow the creature to a room filled with beautiful faeries dancing. A band plays, each musician playing dramatically. The lead trumpet player stands and plays a solo, continuing until he drops dead. Maeve, the Winter Lady, enters, stating that she kept her promise to the man, who had stated he would die to play so well. The beautiful Maeve greets Harry who asks her if she killed the Summer Knight. The Winter Lady tells Harry that she must pay for an answer to the question. Maeve tells Harry to sit so they can deal.

In chapter fifteen Maeve tells Harry that she will answer his question if he gives her his first born. Harry reminds the Lady that he has no children, at which point she calls forth Jen, a faerie, and offers her to Harry. He feels a pull of attraction and, fighting it, dumps ice water down his pants. Maeve is not pleased. The two are interrupted by Lloyd Slate, the Winter Knight. Maeve questions Slate as to whether his task is complete, and introduces him to Harry. Harry asks Lloyd if he kills Reuel and the knight tells him he did not, and doesn't even think he could have. As the two men talk Maeve cries out in anger and kicks Lloyd to the floor. The Winter Lady pulls a knife from the box Slate had presented to her, declaring it useless and throwing it at him. Lloyd stands and grabs the knife, charging at Maeve. The snowflake brand on the knight's neck flares and the two have a power struggle. Maeve prevails and Jen soothes the man with a syringe of liquid, his arms covered in tracks from drug use. Harry tells Billy they are leaving. Maeve tells the wizard their business is not complete, but Harry tells her she has already answered his question. The Lady had used her strength against her knight, barely controlling him. In addition, Maeve could barely control her feelings, making her compulsive. The killer of Reuel had planned carefully.

Harry and Billy find themselves in a dark hall once again, with Harry calling Elidee to his side to guide them. The two arrive in the same alley near Harry's car, but someone is in the alley with them. Billy attacks but another person grabs Harry from behind telling him to drop his amulet and call off Billy before his neck is broken.

Chapter 11-15 Analysis

The discovery of Grum the ogre at Ronald Reuel's apartment is dangerous as well as perplexing. Harry had expected to break in and look around, not to find someone already doing so. Harry is aware that the man is big and strong, but not that he is an ogre until Grum is angered. Though Harry is able to get some evidence from Grum before the two fight, he almost does not survive long enough to examine it. The only thing that prevented the ogre from killing Harry was the interruption of the neighbor stating that she had called the police. This seems like an insignificant fact, but will become significant later in the novel.



The picture shows Reuel with several young people, leaving Harry to wonder who they are and why someone would want the photo. As a wyldfae, an ogre can work for either Winter or Summer, but the quick thinking of the beast leads Harry to believe that his is more than simply muscle, that whoever Grum works for, he is a trusted underling.

Seeing three of the four people in the photo at the funeral is not very odd, but the fact that they seem afraid of him is. Harry hears one, a man called Ace, try and convince the other two present that Harry is working with the Winter Queen. This seems an innocent statement, but will also become significant later in the novel.

Toot-Toot and the pizza loving faeries provide important information to Harry and Billy. The fact that the wyldfae in Nevernever are being called to the Winter and Summer Courts means that the Queens are preparing for war. In addition, Toot tells Harry that the Winter Lady and the Summer Lady have been in Chicago since the fall. This coincides with the same period of time that Harry has been oblivious to things around him.

Maeve, the Winter Lady, is the Queen Who Will Be. Harry asks her directly if she had ordered Ronald Reuel killed, knowing that a faerie cannot lie. The Lady can evade and does so, attempting to strike a bargain with Harry. Dresden is not a fool, and tells the Lady so. Maeve is unable to take possession of Harry, as Mab already has him, having purchased him from his godmother, but she would like his first born. Harry is not foolish enough to offer such a thing, but Maeve tries magic to get Harry to submit to Jen. Harry is able to break the spell they cast with ice water on his groin.

The arrival of Lloyd Slate provides some information for Harry, some direct, and some he will decipher later. Harry now knows who the Winter Knight is, and Lloyd seems honest when he answers that he did not kill Reuel. Harry also discovers that Maeve has a quick temper, and not as much strength as she pretends, judging by the struggle she has with Lloyd. The other piece of information is the knife that Slate presented to Maeve. The Lady is angry, telling Lloyd that the knife is useless. From a distance Harry can only see that there is substance burned onto the knife. Later in the novel the knife will become an important item, one that will help Harry solve the mysteries around him.



Chapters 16-20

Chapters 16-20 Summary

The attackers are two of the three people from Ronald Reuel's funeral. The large girl with the green hair introduces herself as Meryl, and the small man as Fix. Meryl apologizes to Harry for hitting him outside the funeral home and that she and Fix have been sitting by his car waiting for him to return. Meryl and Fix want to hire Harry to find their missing friend, Lily. Meryl goes on to explain that she and her friends are changelings, half human and half fae. Meryl is half troll. The group is attached to the Winter Court, but they have not decided if they will be human or fae. Ronald Reuel had been protecting them, especially Lily, who had been being treated badly by Lloyd Slate.

Harry is torn but he feels he must help. In addition, Meryl offers to pay him three times his normal fee and he needs the money. Meryl and Fix are grateful. Harry returns to his car and sees someone sitting in it. Throwing open the door, Dresden is stunned to find a seriously injured Elaine, asking for help.

In chapter seventeen Harry wants to take Elaine to the hospital, but she begs him to take her to the Summer Lady at the Rothchild Hotel. Harry agrees reluctantly and drive there, circling around the back. A woman exits the elevator and sees them. She tells Harry to bring Elaine upstairs so that the Lady can help.

On the roof Harry finds a garden with people and creatures milling around. Standing, still holding Elaine, Harry is charged by a centaur, angry that a representative of Winter enter the Summer Lady's court. Talos, the Lord Marshal of the Summer Court, tells the centaur to stop. He introduces himself to Harry. Harry requests impatiently that Talos do something to help Elaine while they wait.

The girl from the elevator returns and offers Harry food and drink while they wait for the Lady. Looking around the garden, Harry notices several statues of Lily, the missing changeling, and comments on them. The girl asks how Harry knows her and he explains that Meryl has hired him to find her missing roommate. The girl seems concerned about Lily, who models for her when she sculpts on occasion. It is then that Harry realizes that the girl is the Summer Lady.

Harry confronts her and the girl admits that she is Aurora. Harry asks if she is going to help Elaine and he is told that it depends on him. Harry is unsure what Aurora means, and she explains that Harry is more wounded than Elaine. To demonstrate, Aurora lays her hand on Harry and he is able to let go of all of the pain and worries that he has been suffering with for so long. The pain floods back when Aurora removes her hand. Aurora asks Harry to stop helping Winter and she will be able to help him feel better for good. Harry refuses, stating he has a job to do. Aurora admires his resolve and honor.



The Summer Lady tells Harry that the Courts will go to war, as there is a shift in power. The Summer solstice is approaching and Summer must beat Winter before it loses its strength. Aurora tells Harry that if Summer does not beat Winter, the world as they know it will end. There will be perpetual Winter.

In chapter eighteen Harry leaves the hotel and calls Karrin Murphy. The two meet at a twenty-four-hour WalMart and Harry tells Karrin everything. Murphy is angry at the White Council for putting Harry in the position he is in, as well as their willingness to toss him to the Red Court if he is unable to perform the seemingly impossible task.

Karrin tells Harry that they need to focus on why Reuel was murdered and why someone tried to kill him in the park the day before. Harry had not been involved in the investigation at that point. Harry honestly doesn't think that Maeve and Mab are responsible. Aurora seems too kind. Harry has no doubt that Lloyd is capable of murder, but doesn't think that he has the capability of planning the murder and the follow through. Harry tells Murphy that he will have to go to Nevernever to see the older queens, and might have to call his godmother for assistance. As they discuss this, the lights go out in the store and a mist rolls through.

In chapter nineteen Harry tells Murphy that the mist pouring through the store is a mind fog, which is illegal according to the Laws of Magic. The two rush to the back of the store, hoping to escape before the fog gets to them. Harry makes a magic circle to keep them protected from the mist while he formulates a plan. Dresden creates a charm in order to keep Karrin safe from the mist and the two push out of the circle to escape the store. Walking past a confused looking employee, Harry's memory is jarred and he realizes in time that the woman is in fact the ghoul that had attacked him in the park the day before. The "woman" attacks Harry, drawing a gun, but Murphy charges in, disarming the girl, then shooting her when the ghoul advances on her. Grum the ogre arrives and Harry distracts him, leading him to the garden area. Grum locks him in and leaves. Harry starts piling things on top of each other in order to climb over the tall fence and is stunned when the plants grow together and come to life, lifting him by his ankle and suspending him in the air.

In chapter twenty Harry battles the plant monster, or chlorofiend, in the plant center. Dresden realizes that the creature is of faerie blood when it touches a steel shelf and burns. Harry rushes to the end of an aisle and performs a spell, creating a windstorm that topples the shelves on the creature. Rushing to the gate, Murphy finds bolt cutters and lets Harry out. The two try and figure out a way to get out of the store without getting shot by the person or creature that is covering the exits. Murphy had been shot at when she had tried to follow the ghoul outside. Harry knows they need to drive, and need to find a way to get to his car.

Chapters 16-20 Analysis

Several important things happen in this section of the novel, though their importance will not be revealed until later. Harry meets Meryl and Fix in the alley near his car, and they



explain the discussion they were having in the funeral home. Their friend Lily is missing and they want Harry to try and find her. Though this seems like an aside at the moment, it will become very important as the novel draws to a conclusion. The fact that the changelings are attached to the Winter Court but were under the protection of the Summer Knight is also significant. Harry believes that this is because of Lily's trouble with the Winter Knight, but it will become a bit unclear later as to whether the Summer Knight was helping them or the Summer Lady. This issue is never clearly resolved.

Meryl and Fix are loyal, true friends, who are concerned for the missing Lily. Ace, the missing party, is also believed to be a true friend, and is simply at work, according to Meryl. However, this will turn out not to be the case later, and will also explain the attack on Harry in the park. This issue will be resolved later in the novel but for now Harry takes Meryl's word for it. The fact that the changelings have not chosen whether to remain human or give themselves over to their fae half is important as well. Though they look unlike other humans, at this point it is really only their size and manner of presentation that differentiate them from others. Meryl's green hair is an example of this. Being half troll, Meryl is larger than most women, and her green hair stands out; however, she simply appears to have dyed her hair, rather than be half fae.

The discovery of an injured Elaine in his car brings about the introduction of Harry to the Summer Lady, Aurora, as well as members of her Court, Talos and Korrick. While in the presence of the Lady, Harry notices that there are statues of Lily around the garden and comments on them. Aurora seems concerned about the disappearance of her model and friend. Harry is taken with Aurora, seeing her as a kind faerie, unlike the ones he has met before. This fact will become very important when the novel comes to a climactic end.

Aurora seems concerned for Harry's well-being, more so than for the injured Elaine. Harry's concern is always for others, though the feeling that he gets when Aurora releases him temporarily from his stress and worries brings him close to giving up everything for the momentary sense of peace that he has experienced. This is key, as Aurora is not what she seems. Her concern for Harry seems genuine at the time; however, her motives are questionable. It is important to realize that Aurora is the first "nice" person that Harry has dealt with throughout his mission, and though he continually warns others not to take things at face value, he forgets his own advice while in the Summer Court.

The reader learns that there is a war approaching between the Summer and Winter Courts. With the Summer Knight dead and his mantle of power missing, the Summer Solstice becomes a key date. The normal transition of power from Summer to Winter will be forever changed. Summer must attack Winter the night of the Solstice in order to maintain power because Winter will have complete control forever now that the Summer Queens have lost their power. This fact seems to mean that someone in the Winter Court is responsible for the death of Ronald Reuel.

The attack on Murphy and Dresden while at WalMart apparently comes out of nowhere. The fact that they are attacked by the ghoul that had been at the park is also important,



as that attack had taken place before Harry had been contacted by Mab. This means that whoever the ghoul and the ogre are working for is not tied into the mystery of Ronald Reuel's death. Though Harry is working for Mab in order to secure passage for the White Council through Winter's land, he needs to do this in order to keep himself and others safe from the Red Court. Harry's troubles with the Red Court are entangled in all that he is doing, and the attack at the store seems to be related to one of the other.



Chapters 21-25

Chapters 21-25 Summary

In chapter twenty-one Harry and Murphy exit the store and run into Grum. Murphy pretends to fall and Harry tosses gasoline on the ogre and a sterno can. Murphy quickly comes after the ogre with a chainsaw. Grum cries out in pain, and after a brief fight gives up and returns to Faerie. Murphy's knee is injured so Harry leaves her to get the car. In front he runs into the chlorofiend once again. Harry is able to ram the creature with his car and get to Murphy. The chlorofiend attacks again, grabbing Harry. Murphy is able to save Dresden by cutting the creature up with the chainsaw. Harry is able to get them in the car and escape.

In chapter twenty-two Harry and Murphy go to Billy's apartment. Murphy is taken to the hospital by Billy and some friends to have her knee checked. Meryl is there, startling Harry. The two discuss their lives and the difficulties they experience, Meryl as a changeling and Harry as a wizard. Meryl leaves and Harry thinks about the events of the evening, wondering who had sent the ogre and ghouls after him. The fact that he was attacked before Mab had contacted still bothers him.

In chapter twenty-three Harry calls his godmother, Lea, to assist him with answers. The two argue briefly about how Lea had more or less sold Harry to Mab, and their past together which has been full of strife with Harry on the receiving end of Lea's "care-taking", some of which had seemed to hurt Harry more than help him. Lea insists that she has always had Harry's best interest at heart, revealing that it was she who had interrupted Grum at Reuel's apartment when Harry was in danger, pretending to be an angry neighbor.

Lea takes Harry to the clouds, the area that the faeries call forth when they are outside of the Nevernever, and where they will go to war. In the clouds the pair find the Stone Table. Lea explains that whoever's blood is spilled on the table loses their power and whoever holds the table owns it. Lea allows Harry to see the battle that is taking place, light gathering around the table. Both courts are moving to protect the table, and this tells Harry that neither Winter or Summer know who holds the power of the Summer Knight. Harry knows that he needs to contact the White Council and tell them what is going on.

In chapter twenty-four Harry calls the White Council for help but is denied access to the senior wizards. Harry knows that Morgan wants him to fail, and though Harry tries to explain the importance of what is going on, Morgan refuses him.

Harry drives to O'Hare Airport and finds Elaine, ready to flee the area. Harry tells Elaine that he thinks the Winter Knight had attacked the previous night, explaining how Slate had returned to Maeve with a knife covered in burned blood. Because the blood had been damaged by flame, Maeve could not use it to cast a spell on Elaine. Elaine



encourages Harry to leave as she is, but he refuses, asking Elaine to help him get in touch with the Mothers. She is reluctant, but agrees. The two go outside to see a magical carriage arrive. They get in and head to the Mothers.

In chapter twenty-five the two arrive in a desolate forest and follow a raven to a secluded cabin. The cabin is guarded by a fierce unicorn. Elaine distracts the beast momentarily but it moves to attack her and Harry winds up in a battle. Elaine conjures some useless memories and sends them after the unicorn, hoping to hold it until Harry can find his answers. He heads to the cabin.

Chapters 21-25 Analysis

Things begin to move quickly, as Harry and Murphy are able to defeat Grum outside the store and escape the chlorofiend using both items from inside the WalMart and ingenuity. The question again arises, who is responsible for the attacks against Harry? Though it makes sense that the Winter Court is most likely responsible for the death of the Summer Knight, there are still some issues that bother Harry. The major issue is the attack that had taken place in the park during the rain of toads.

Harry meets with his godmother, Lea, in hopes of getting some answers to the things that puzzle him; however, he is not sure he can trust her. The two bicker about the past, until Lea finally convinces Harry that despite how things turn out, she has always had his best interest at heart.

Harry learns that in the clouds over Chicago the Winter Court and the Summer Court are preparing for war. The Stone Table is at the center of the issue. Lea explains that blood spilled on the table becomes the possession of whoever holds the table. Summer holds the table until the solstice, when it will become Winter's turn. Summer is protecting the table, while Winter is preparing to take it by force if necessary. Because Mab and Titania are preparing to battle over the Table, Harry realizes that neither is really sure who has killed Reuel and where his power rests. This at least seems to prove that the two Queens are not responsible for the murder and theft.

Harry calls on Elaine for help in meeting the Mothers. Because of her ties to the Summer Court he believes she can arrange it, and she does. Elaine does not do so without an argument, trying to convince Harry to flee the area with her. The revelation that Maeve had tried to steal her blood seems to shock her. Elaine wonders if Harry has been fooled by Maeve, and seems to push Harry into assuming that the Winter Lady is responsible for the death of Reuel, without coming out and stating the fact. Harry still does not think that Maeve has the organizational skills and patience to arrange the matter.

Some important facts to note are that the chlorofiend appears to be attached to the Winter Court, as it used frost to escape the garden center at the store, and Harry was alerted to its presence by the drastic drop in temperature before it attacked for the final



time. Because it is the Summer Knight that has been killed, this seems to provide yet more evidence that someone in the Winter Court is involved.

Elaine's arguments to Harry that they should just run away seem to be those of a friend trying to keep Harry safe, but because of their shared history and Elaine's seeming betrayal when they were younger, Harry is not sure if he can trust her yet. This does not stop him from wishing to help her, but he needs to be cautious when doing so.

A seemingly small bit of information is learned about Meryl while she speaks to Harry about her past. Meryl explains that she had been like every other child until she hit puberty, when she started to grow and get stronger. In addition, the young girl had trouble controlling her emotions. Meryl explains that when she gets angry she becomes more troll-like. Though she believes she would be happier as a troll, she feels that she needs to remain human to protect her friends. All of this is learned in a casual conversation, but will become very important as the novel moves toward its climactic end.



Chapters 26-30

Chapters 26-30 Summary

In chapter twenty-six Harry finds the Mothers in a cabin in Nevernever. Winter and Summer agree to answer Harry's questions if he can answer a question for them, and he does. They refuse to answer his question directly. After some internal reflection Harry asks his question: how does the power of the Knight change hands? The Mothers tell him that the power returns to the nearest vessel of Summer, and they choose the new knight. Harry realizes that, as Titania has already started the war with Mab because she does not know where the power is, Aurora is responsible for the death of Ronald Reuel.

The Mothers tell Harry that he needs to fix the problems, as they do not have the power to do so. Mother Winter gives Harry an untied piece of knitting, an Unraveling. He is instructed to touch the cloth to whatever needs to be undone and unravel the string. Harry wonders if it will work on Susan, changing her back to human. The Mother says that it will, but that it is for necessity. Harry leaves, apologizing if the unicorn has been harmed. The Mothers do not know what unicorn he refers to. As Harry walks, Elaine steps out of the mist with Grum, who knocks him out.

Chapter twenty-seven finds Harry waking, surrounded by Aurora, Elaine, Grum and the unicorn, as well as the Winter Knight, Lloyd Slate. Harry realizes that Grum is actually Talos, and the unicorn is Korrick. The two change back to their true forms once confronted. Harry speaks to Aurora, telling how he figured out that she is responsible for the murder of Ronald Reuel.

Aurora had used the traitorous Winter Knight to kill Reuel. The Summer Knight's power is now resting in Lily, the changeling, who Aurora had turned to stone. The Summer Lady had brought the statue of Lily to the stone table, planning to use the Unraveling from the Winter Mother to return Lily to her human form, and sacrifice her on the stone table. Reuel's power would revert to Winter permanently, and the world would be destroyed in the process. Aurora explains that she wants the constant struggle between the powers of Summer and Winter to end, that she is tired of the battles between the two Courts. Harry knows then that the Summer Lady is truly crazy.

In chapter twenty-eight Slate prepares to kill Harry, but Elaine stops him, warning Aurora that if Slate breaks the circle around Harry the wizard can curse her. Elaine suggests Aurora simply arrange his death and leave him. Harry is stunned that Elaine would betray him. Aurora arranges to drown Harry, and Elaine binds him magically so that he cannot escape. Stunned, Harry questions Elaine as she readies to leave. Elaine remarks that it is just like old times, and leaves Harry to die.

Near panic and drowning in quicksand, Harry realizes that Elaine was giving him a clue to escape. Elaine had been telling Harry that she was using the same magical binding that she had when they were younger. Harry is able to break free and save himself. The



Gatekeeper arrives, telling Harry that as far as the White Council is concerned he has fulfilled his mission and is safe from the Red Court. Harry refuses to end his involvement, intent on stopping Aurora from destroying the world as it is known. Impressed, the Gatekeeper informs Harry that he will not vote against him. He also provides Harry with an ointment to protect his eyes from the faerie glamour and a stone that will lead him to the stone table. Harry is grateful.

In chapter twenty-nine Harry prepares to stop Aurora, packing a bag and meeting Billy and the wolves. Meryl and Fix are with the wolves and Harry tells them all that they need to follow his lead and listen to his orders. They all agree. Harry draws the stone and they follow it as it leads them to Burnham Harbor. Along the way Harry explains to the wolves, Meryl and Fix, how Aurora has been using Lily as the vessel to hold the Summer Knight's power and plans on killing her on the Stone Table, releasing the power to the Winter Court, which would probably cause an ice age.

At the lake Harry applies the ointment the Gatekeeper had given him to all of the wolves, Meryl, Fix and himself, to protect them from faerie glamour. The wolves sense something and disperse. Harry, Meryl and Fix are quickly under fire, and Meryl is hit. The Tigress, the ghoulish assassin that had been tracking Harry, is there, but the Alphas circle around, taking her down. Meryl has been grazed and Fix stays with her while a wolf leads Harry to Ace. Meryl's friend is responsible for hiring the Tigress. The vampires had told Ace they would protect the changelings from Slate if he handed over Harry. Meryl is angry, and to Harry it seems that her voice is lower, more trollish in her anger. Meryl tells Ace to leave and the stone in Harry's hand signals up. A magical staircase appears, and the group climbs it to the clouds.

In chapter thirty the group climbs into the clouds where hundreds of faerie creatures prepared for battle. A knight greets Harry who tells him that he needs to speak to Queen Mab. The knight leads them to her. Harry tells Mab that Aurora is responsible for the theft of Ronald Reuel's mantle of power. Harry tells Mab that he can prove it if he can reach the Stone Table before midnight. Mab tells Harry to follow the river to the Stone Table. He does, watching the faeries battle around him. Once there, Harry and his friends charge to the water, trying their best to avoid any of the conflict along the way.

Chapters 26-30 Analysis

Harry Dresden's meeting with the Mothers of Summer and Winter is extremely revealing, finally bringing the culprit to light. Though Winter and Summer are not straightforward, they clearly wish to help Harry, and guide him through the seeming procedure to obtain answers in Nevernever. It seems that direct questions do not receive answers, and all questions need to be earned. Dresden has less trouble dealing with the Mothers than he had with Maeve and Mab, and shortly the two lead him down the path he has taken, giving him the clues he needs to piece the puzzle together for himself.



After stopping to think about why Reuel was murdered, and how that murder took place, Harry realizes that the person he seeks is actually Aurora, the Summer Lady. Mother Winter supplies him with the Unraveling, which will allow Harry to undo what Aurora has done. Harry selfishly thinks of saving Susan from the Red Court, but even subconsciously he knows that he will not betray those that are counting on him. The Mothers have also judged him worthy, which is why they help him at all. Harry leaves, worried about the unicorn and Elaine, but the Mothers do not seem to know about the creature that had been guarding their home, and before he reaches Elaine, Harry knows that he has been betrayed again.

Harry is not surprised to run into Aurora and Elaine, together. He has also realized that the unicorn is actually Korrick, and that Grum is Talos. Dresden is not surprised by the assistance of Lloyd Slate either, though the crossover by the Winter Knight to Summer seems odd. This can be explained by the fact that the Knights of the Courts are mortal, and chosen by the Court. Slate, being human, would not feel any pull toward either Court, and his explanation to Harry about his desire for the power of both Knights fits his personality.

Aurora is clearly mad, which is demonstrated while she explains her reasoning for killing Reuel and taking his power, and placing it in Lily until she can reach the Stone Table on the Summer Solstice. Aurora sees nothing wrong with destroying the world as it exists to stop the constant change of seasons when the Summer and Winter Court exchange power. The fact that she has hidden her plot and her personality for so long proves that she has fooled all. Aurora confirms to Harry that the Lloyd Slate had killed Ronald Reuel, entering his building from the Nevernever with assistance from Elaine. The moisture on Reuel's clothing had been the meeting of Summer's heat and Winter's cool. The power was then placed with Lily, who Aurora turned to stone. The Summer Lady will place the statue of Lily on the Stone Table, use the Unraveling to change her back from stone, and then kill her, pouring her blood onto the Table. This will unite the powers of Summer and Winter, creating havoc in the world, destroying life as all know it.

Elaine explains to Harry that Aurora had fooled her as well with her kind nature and disposition, but when the time came the Summer Lady proved to be more manipulative than Mab and Maeve combined. Aurora demanded that Elaine work with her to defeat Harry and retain the Summer Knight's mantle of power as payment for her sanctuary after the problems with Justin when Elaine was younger. It also appears to the reader that Elaine still feels some sense of loyalty toward Aurora, even though the Summer Lady intends to kill Harry. Elaine does redeem herself by arranging Harry's method of death. Though she cannot help him directly without being harmed herself, Elaine binds Harry magically, and comments to Dresden that it seems just like old times. Harry realizes in time that Elaine was referring to the binding she had placed him in and is able to free himself before drowning in Aurora's magic.

The arrival of the Gatekeeper in Nevernever is somewhat surprising, as the White Council is not supposed to interfere in the task that has been set before Harry. The Gatekeeper explains that Harry has completed his task as far as the Council is concerned, Dresden has been able to prove that Queen Mab had not killed Reuel, and



the wizards will be able to pass through Winter's lands during the war with the Red Court. Harry is pleased that his task is complete, but is not willing to give up without trying to stop Aurora from destroying the world. The Gatekeeper is pleased, telling Harry that he has earned his vote with the Council to maintain his status as full wizard. Gatekeeper provides Harry with some assistance in his struggle, a way to find the Stone Table and an ointment to prevent faerie glamour from stopping him, and wishes him good luck in his battle.

Harry calls his friends to his aide and they all arrive to help. Harry feels a bit overwhelmed because he wants volunteers only, and the knowledge that all the wolves as well as Meryl and Fix are there willingly touches him. While preparing for the battle ahead another mystery is solved, that of the ghoul assassin, known as the Tigress, and who she works for. At the harbor the wolves corner Ace, the missing friend of Meryl and Fix, after the changeling had fired at Harry, striking Meryl by mistake. Ace had hired the ghoul after going to the vampires in the hope of gaining protection from the Winter Knight, Slade. Though the changeling had meant well, he had asked for aide from the wrong side. The vampires are more interested in killing Harry than in helping anyone. Fortunately the wolves are able to stop the ghoul and the party heads to the battlefield in the clouds.

Arriving on the scene, Harry is able to locate Mab and give her the news that Aurora is responsible for the battle that is raging around them. Mab is stunned, yet she seems to know that Lloyd Slate is a traitor and is now helping Summer. There is some irony in the battle; if Aurora had approached Winter about giving them the power to stop the ever-changing seasons, Mab would have gladly accepted it, and there would be no need for the destruction taking place in the clouds, or for the possible destruction of the earth. Unfortunately the nature of the Winter and Summer Courts makes a compromise seem highly unlikely.

Harry tells Mab that the only chance to change the course of events is to get to the Stone Table before Aurora can act. Mab proves herself to be a fair person despite the way she has come across, and the Queen tells Harry how to get to the Table, wishing him well.



Chapters 31-34

Chapters 31-34 Summary

In chapter thirty-one Harry and the wolves advance toward the Stone Table. Near the table the group is confronted with Slate on horseback. Aurora is shocked that Harry is still alive and laughs when he tells her that Mab and Titania will not allow her plan to continue. The Summer lady orders her army to kill Harry and leaves. Around the group Summer's faeries and the Winter Knight charge as Harry loudly proclaims that he doesn't believe in faeries.

In chapter thirty-two Talos attacks and Meryl takes his sword, her anger at the Lord Marshal's betrayal of Lily evident. The changeling is wounded when Lloyd Slate attacks from behind. Harry calls the fury of the storm around him and lashes out at the Winter Knight. Talos charges and Harry is forced to face him. Talos disables Harry easily but Harry pulls a gun and shoots him. Slate gets involved again and Harry is saved by an angry Fix, furious at Slate wounding Meryl. The battle wavers and Harry and his group appear to be losing when the waters of the river part, revealing Maeve and her army. Winter Lady had waited until the battle was near the end, as she dislikes a fair fight. The Summer Lady creates a magical hedge around the hill to prevent any from coming closer to her. Harry is torn between rushing the hill or helping his friends who are fighting around him. As he decides, another rider approaches with a spear, preparing to strike him.

In chapter thirty-three Harry discovers the rider is Elaine, who has attacked to make it seem as if Harry is injured and keep Aurora from harming him. Elaine wants to leave but Harry refuses. Elaine tells him that there is no way through the hedge as its thorns are poisonous and will kill any who tries. Harry tells Elaine to help him but she is unsure if she can. Though Elaine has already betrayed Aurora to help Harry, Dresden knows that Elaine might betray him again as well.

Elaine does help him and Harry dashes to the Table as Aurora begins to use the Unraveling. Harry strikes the Summer Lady from behind before Aurora can kill Lily. Angry, Aurora strikes out at Harry and orders Talos to kill him. The Lord Marshal approaches but a loud roar stops all in their tracks. Meryl has chosen, and charges through the hedge in her troll form, taking Talos down before she dies, saving her friend.

Aurora grabs Lily once again and drags her to the Table but Harry disarms her. Aurora laughs, telling Harry that she will kill Lily with her bare hands. Harry opens the bag he has carried the entire time and the Summer Lady is swarmed by Toot-Toot and his army of pixies as they rise out, armed with box cutters made of steel. The combination of the mass of pixies and the steel blades is too much for Aurora. Harry prevents her from dying on the table and sending her power to Winter. Aurora dies slowly, trying to explain to Harry that she only wanted to end the constant pain and change of the seasons.



In chapter thirty-four Mab tells Harry that he has pleased her and offers him the role of the Winter Knight. Harry refuses, leaving Slate to deal with Mab and Maeve until they choose to end his misery. Mab reminds Harry that she will call on him in the future to complete two more tasks.

The next thing Harry knows he is back in his apartment, in his bed, with Billy there watching over him. The apartment is cleaner than it has been in months. Billy tells Harry that Meryl is dead but that her message to Harry is that she had made her choice and was not unhappy. Billy invites Harry over for pizza and while the wizard dresses, visitors arrive: Lily and Fix, the new Summer Lady and Summer Knight. Lily had chosen to keep the power and Titania had promised to show her how to deal with it. Lily thanks Harry for saving her, though he tries to brush it off. Lily tells him that he had done what he had because he has a good heart, not because he had been paid.

Elaine arrives after everyone leaves, and tells Harry that she is no longer beholden to Summer. Harry's first love is moving on with her life, perhaps returning to school. Elaine comments that it is obvious judging by the items around the apartment that Harry is in love with Susan and suggests that the wizard stop feeling sorry for himself. Elaine tells Harry that by feeling sorry for himself he is doing Susan a disservice. The two say goodbye and Elaine leaves.

Harry arrives at Billy's apartment for pizza. The wizard thanks the Alphas and the group settles down to play a role-playing game and enjoy the fact that because of them the world will not end. Most people will never know of the battle that had taken place in the clouds, but Harry and his friends had fought evil and won.

Chapters 31-34 Analysis

Harry and his friends are able to make it through the battle with the surprising assistance of Mab. Though the Winter Queen has seems unfair and callous, it appears that this is simply her persona because she is attached to Winter. Reflecting, Maeve also seems to be this way, but she reveals herself otherwise when the Winter Lady helps Harry and the wolves when they are about to be overwhelmed by the Summer army. The reader can assume that as the queens of Winter age they become less dramatic, as Maeve appears the worst as the youngest, Mab seems to be more calm and calculating, and the Winter Mother appears to be above the strife that her descendants deal in.

Harry struggles internally often throughout the novel, torn between saving himself or helping others. This is evident when the wolves are fighting with him. Harry wants to stop Aurora, but does not wish for any others to be hurt in the process. Harry's anger is hardly more evident than when Meryl is attacked from behind by the Winter Knight, Lloyd Slate. Harry calls upon all of his magical strength and the fury of the battle raging around him in order to strike Slate. This is an important fact, as if Harry had killed Slate it would have been in direct conflict with the rules of the White Council. This



demonstrates to the reader that Harry is selfless, much more concerned about others than himself.

Aurora's madness is also finally evident as she struggles to maintain control of the situation and complete her plan; to kill Lily on the Stone Table and pass her power onto the Winter Court. Aurora's madness is complete, as she had not considered conspiring with Mab in order to pass the power to Winter and stop the constant cycle of seasons that seems to bother her so. The reader might have thought that the Mab they had read of earlier would have jumped at the opportunity; however, it is revealed finally that though the Winter Court has been portrayed as evil, they appear to be more than fair. Between Mab's assistance to Harry even after he has completed her task, and Maeve's assistance in the battle against Summer, it is clear that Winter is in this case the more reasonable of the two.

The battles that take place in the clouds above Chicago are clearly between good and evil, though it seems that Aurora is the only evil present. The conflict between Meryl and Talos prove this, as the Lord Marshal reveals that he has no desire to harm the changeling, but instead tells Meryl that he simply must do what the Summer Lady tells him to.

Meryl makes her own sacrifice, choosing to become a troll to save Lily. Though Meryl had been trying to stay away from the Winter Court, and had been considering staying human, she sacrifices herself in order to save her friend. Throughout the novel there is a constant sense of self sacrifice, and Meryl epitomizes it once again.

By the end of the novel, Harry has not only discovered who killed the Summer Knight, but why. By doing so he has completed the task set before him by Queen Mab, and secured safe passage for the wizards during the war with the Red Court. In addition, it seems that Harry has also saved himself, breaking free from the depression that has been pulling at him since his girlfriend was infected by the vampires. Now able to move forward, Harry realizes that he was of no use to Susan or himself trying to find a way to save her in the state he was in. Returning to living life, Harry discovers that he can be happy and still work toward his goals.



Characters

Harry Dresden

Harry Dresden is the main character in the novel *Summer Knight* by Jim Butcher. Dresden is a recurring character in a series of novels by Butcher. In *Summer Knight*, Harry is despondent over the loss of his girlfriend, Susan Rodriguez, to the Red Court, or vampires. Dresden has been spending all of his time alone in his basement laboratory, trying to find some way to save Susan, as he feels responsible for the "infection" by the vampires. His friends are concerned, and they try to help, which leads Harry to become involved with Mab, the Winter Queen and the battle that will take place in the novel for power between Summer and Winter.

Harry meets Mab when she arrives at his office as a client. The Winter Queen offers Harry a deal; perform three tasks and be free of the faerie hold on him. Harry is reluctant, but ends up taking the job that Mab offers in order to save himself from being handed over to the Red Court. The opposition to Harry is evenly balanced against the support, and he needs to prove his worthiness as a wizard in order to stay safe.

Harry investigates the death of Ronald Reuel and the theft of the Summer Knight's power, interviewing the different queens and ladies of the Winter and Summer Courts. Though Harry is confused at the outset, with help from his friends he is able to discover the guilty party, Aurora, and destroy her before she can destroy the world. Throughout the novel, Harry is honest and trustworthy, acting with chivalry and understanding toward all. It seems that Harry's personality suits his choice in career as a wizard.

Mab

Mab is the Winter Queen of the faerie world, Nevernever. Mab appears at Harry Dresden's office in the persona of Ms. Summerset, a beautiful woman who wishes to hire Harry. Harry realizes that there is something not quite right about the woman and quickly discovers that Mab is of the faerie persuasion, though no faeries like to be referred to as such. Mab has more or less purchased Harry from his faerie godmother, and promises Harry that he will be free of the faerie if he performs three tasks. The Winter Queen also promises Harry that he can choose the tasks he takes, but also manages to ensure that Dresden take the tasks she wants him to.

Mab hires Harry to find out who killed Ronald Reuel, the Summer Knight, and who now holds his power. Because Mab is the Winter Queen, many assume that she is responsible for the murder. Mab seems more than capable of murder. The Winter Queen appears to be cruel, willing to do whatever it takes in order to accomplish her goals. However, as the novel progresses, Harry explains to his associates that this is simply the nature of the Queen, that Winter is the colder of the seasons.



Mab appears callous, but in the end she is true to her word, allowing the wizards passage through Winter when Harry completes the task set before him. Mab also offers Harry the position of Winter Knight when Lloyd Slate is proven a traitor, as the queen is impressed with Harry's ethics and caring. Harry refuses, and Mab accepts his refusal, not expecting anymore than Harry had agreed to.

Elaine

Elaine is Harry Dresden's first love. The two had been adopted by the same wizard, Justin, when they were children, and had been raised by him until they were around sixteen years old. At the time Harry and Elaine were in love, or as in love as sixteen year olds could be, until Justin tried to use Elaine to get Harry into black magic. Harry is able to escape from Justin, killing him in a duel. Harry has believed that Elaine was killed at the same time, but in reality she has been living in the Summer Court, under the protection of Aurora.

Harry and Elaine are reunited when Harry finds her in his apartment. Elaine is the emissary of the Summer Court, while Harry is investigating the death of Ronald Reuel for the Winter Court of faerie. Harry immediately accepts Elaine's explanation of the events of their past, and agrees to help her with her current problems. Though Harry accepts Elaine without question, he soon finds out that Elaine is once again working against him. Elaine professes that she is once again unwilling to hurt Harry, but is forced to against her will. This is questionable to the reader at first, but when events turn against Harry later in the novel, Elaine manages to find a way to help him.

Elaine seems to be a caring person, but of weak character, able to let others lead her rather than make decisions of her own. However, when matters turn to life and death, Elaine manages to stand on her own and act in a manner that is unselfish.

Ebenezar McCoy

A wizard, Ebenezar McCoy had been Harry Dresden's mentor after Harry killed his former teacher in a magical duel. McCoy took Harry in, teaching him not just magic but also patience, something that Harry still needs to work on at times.

Ebenezar McCoy worries about Harry, and attends a meeting of the White Council in Chicago because Harry is the topic of the meeting. Knowing that Harry is in danger from the Council because of the war with the Red Court, Ebenezar manages to get elected to the senior council, thus saving Harry from being handed over to the Red Court. Ebenezer also warns Harry that there will be more problems ahead, so when the wizard Morgan arrives and tries to goad Harry into a fight, Harry is prepared and does not react.

Ebenezer is a good man, concerned for Harry, and it is clear he looks on Harry as a son. Though he is aware of the pain that Harry suffers because Susan has been infected by the vampires, McCoy know that Harry needs to move past that in order to



save himself. With some background work, Ebenezer is able to convince several members of the senior council to vote to keep Harry safe, and allow him to complete Mab's task and save himself.

Martha 'Matty' Liberty

A member of the senior council, Martha Liberty sides with Ebenezer McCoy and Harry.

Listens to Wind/Injun Joe

A member of the senior council, Injun Joe sides with Harry in the vote that would hand him over to the Red Court.

Morgan

A wizard and member of the wizard security guard, Morgan does not like Harry and would love to see him turned over to the Red Court. Morgan tries to goad Harry into attacking him so that he can kill him in self defense, but Ebenezer's warning stops Harry in time. Throughout the novel, Morgan tries his best to keep Harry from completing his task, even forbidding Harry to warn the White Council of the danger that approaches.

Susan Rodriguez

Harry Dresden's girlfriend, Susan is a reporter for the Midwestern Arcane. Susan is one of the few people willing to accept magic as a real thing, and had been very interested in the things Harry did. Susan had been attacked by vampires and infected with their blood lust one evening while with Harry. If Susan drinks blood and sates her thirst she will become a vampire. Harry had asked Susan to marry him, but she refused, leaving town and asking Harry not to follow. The only way that Harry knows that Susan is alright is because her articles still appear in the newspaper.

Though Susan appears in the novel only in Harry's dreams, she is an important character because her issues have caused Harry to withdraw from life for a length of time. Harry has been busy searching for a cure for Susan rather than paying attention to goings on in the world of magic.

Billy

Billy the werewolf is a young man who looks to Harry as a mentor of sorts. Billy works with Harry while Dresden tries to find out who killed Ronald Reuel. During the final battle at the Stone Table, Billy and the Alphas help to protect Harry while he tries to reach Aurora and prevent her from killing Lily.



Maeve

The Winter Lady, Maeve is the youngest queen in the Winter Court. Maeve is headstrong and wild, keeping court in Undertown, the city below Chicago. Harry visits her with Billy to try and determine if she is responsible for the death of the Summer Knight but her manner quickly leads Harry to believe she has nothing to do with the murder.

While in Undertown with Maeve, Harry meets the Winter Knight, Lloyd Slate, and witnesses the strange relationship between the Knight and Maeve. This short meeting gives Harry some idea into the way the Winter Court operates.

Aurora

The Summer Lady, Aurora appears upon first glance to be a kind young woman who strives to live a peaceful existence among the battling seasons. Harry discovers, however, that Aurora is in fact the mastermind behind the murder of Ronald Reuel and that she has placed the mantle of power that had belonged to the knight in Lily, a changeling, then turned her to stone. Aurora is intent on stopping the ever changing seasons, and intends to release Summer's power into the Stone Table after midnight on the Summer Solstice. Doing so will forever alter the power balance and Winter will be the stronger season, throwing the earth into a perpetual ice age. Aurora is clearly insane and Harry struggles to stop her before the world for all is ruined.

Aurora is beaten at the Stone Table by Harry Dresden and his army of pixies lead by Toot-Toot. The steel of the blades in the box cutters and the sheer number of the small faeries is enough to beat the young queen who dies not understanding why no one understands her reasoning.

Meryl

A changeling, whose mother is human and father a troll, Meryl is attached to the Winter Court.

Fix

A changeling and friend of Meryl and Lily, Fix helps Harry in the final battle at the Stone Table. When Meryl is injured Fix attacks Lloyd Slate with a steel wrench from his tool box, beating the knight back from Harry and allowing him to reach Lily in time. Fix becomes the new Summer Knight when the battle is finished.



Ace

Another changeling, Ace goes to the Red Court for help to protect himself and his friends from Lloyd Slate, the Winter Knight. Though Ace means well, the Red Court requires payment, and that payment is the life of Harry Dresden. Ace helps the Red Court's assassin, the Tigress, find Harry, but injures Meryl in the process.

Lily

A changeling, Lily is a sometimes model, who has posed in the past for Aurora in the gardens on the rooftop of the hotel. Harry sees several statues of Lily around the garden but does not think anything of it. Later, the reader learns that Aurora has placed the mantle of power from Ronald Reuel within Lily and turned her to stone to keep the power from returning to the queen. It is Aurora's intention to sacrifice Lily on the Stone Table, pouring the power of the Summer Knight into Winter, thus destroying the balance of the season and ending the constant change of power that seems to have driven her mad.

Lily is freed when Harry kills Aurora, and the changeling becomes the new Summer Lady, choosing Fix as her Summer Knight.

Talos/Grum

The Lord Marshal of the Summer Court of Aurora, Talos at first appears to be a fair person, stopping Korrick from attacking Harry when he enters the gardens seeking the help of Aurora for the injured Elaine. It turns out, however, that Talos is an ogre, and able to change form at will. Harry first runs into Grum at the apartment of Ronald Reuel, while the ogre is searching the apartment and removing evidence of the changelings. This meeting takes place before Harry meets Aurora in the garden on the rooftop, giving the reader insight into how much Aurora knows about Harry, though she at first pretends that she is unaware of him.

Talos does redeem himself a bit later in the novel during the battle at the Stone Table, trying to reason with Meryl rather than fight her. Meryl refuses to back down while trying to save Lily, but Talos makes it clear that he must do as the Summer Lady requests. In the end, Talos is killed by Meryl after she changes into a troll, choosing to do so in order to save Lily.

Korrick

A centaur in the Summer Court of Aurora, Korrick also disguises himself as the evil unicorn outside the home of the Winter and Summer Mothers. Korrick is loyal to Aurora, the Summer Lady.



Toot-Toot

A pixie like faerie, Toot-Toot is the leader of a band of pixies that love pizza. Harry lures them to him with pizza to gather information about the Summer and Winter courts while he is trying to complete Mab's task. Toot-Toot and his tiny warriors help Harry, and in the end, kill Aurora with steel box cutters at the Stone Table.

Titania

The Summer Queen, who is forced to prepare and battle Mab for power since the Summer Knight has been murdered.

Summer Mother

The mother of the Summer Queen, Summer Mother helps Harry when he arrives in Nevernever, seaching for answers about who killed Ronald Reuel.

Winter Mother

The oldest queen in the Court of Winter, Winter Mother provides Harry with answers when he is trying to find out who killed Ronald Reuel. Winter Mother also provides Harry with the Unraveling, which Harry can use to reverse any spell. Though Harry considers using the Unraveling to save Susan, the Mother knows that he will use it to save Lilly and stop Aurora's evil plot.

Ronald Reuel

The Summer Knight, Ronald Reuel is murdered and the power that he possesses is stolen. Harry Dresden investigates Reuel's death, discovering that Aurora, the Summer Lady, has arranged the knight's death in order to upset the balance of nature.

Lloyd Slate

The Winter Knight, Slate serves the Winter Court, but in reality works for Aurora, the Summer Lady. Slate kills Ronald Reuel for Aurora, in exchange for power. Slate is revealed a traitor and Mab, the Winter Queen, with Maeve, the Winter Lady, seem intent on making him suffer for this act for a very long time.

Bob

Bob is the spirit assistant that helps Harry in his basement laboratory. Bob inhabits a human skull that sits on a shelf when communicating with Harry.



Objects/Places

White Council

The council of wizards that regulate and rule all other wizards.

Red Court

The ruling group that governs the actions of the vampires.

McCormick Place Complex

The auditorium in Chicago where the White Council rents a theater to hold their meeting.

Hog Hollow, Missouri

The location of Ebenezer McCoy's farm, where Harry acted as his apprentice when he was sixteen.

Lake Meadow Park

The park in Chicago where Harry and Billy the werewolf are when they are attacked by a team of assassins and are rained on by toads, signaling a significant change in the magical forces of the area.

Undertown

A city under Chicago, called Undertown because it is the original city, but beneath the ground. Harry explains it to Billy, stating that the city of Chicago is basically swampland, and the city is constantly sinking. As a result, the city has another city underneath it. When the original city sank another was built on top of it. The Winter Lady, Maeve, has taken up residence in Undertown.

Nevernever

The place where faeries live, as well as other magical creatures, and the sight of the battle between the Winter and Summer Court.



Unraveling

A piece of knitting, not tied off. An Unraveling can undo something if it touched to something and the strings are untied. Mother Winter gives Harry the Unraveling in order to undo the damage that Aurora has created by killing the Summer Knight.

Rothchild Hotel

The hotel where Aurora has set up her base of operation, where Harry takes Elaine after she is attacked.

Chlorofiend

The creature that attacks Harry and Karrin Murphy in the garden center at Walmart.



Themes

Power

Power is an integral part of the *Summer Knight*. The main plot of the novel follows Harry Dresden as he searches for the killer of the Summer Knight, Ronald Reuel, at the request of the Winter Queen, Mab. Mab tells Harry that something has been stolen, and that he will know what it is when he discovers it. Through investigation, Harry realizes that the missing thing is in fact the mantle of power of the Summer Knight.

The power of the Summer and Winter Knight, the enforcers of the Winter and Summer Courts, is bestowed on them by the queens of the Courts. This power is handed over to the appointed individual, a mortal, because the rules of the faerie beings prohibit them from killing those they deal with. By giving the power to a mortal, the queens have found a way around the rule.

In *Summer Knight*, the struggle for power is not for the power itself, but for ownership of power. The Winter Court is suspected of the murder of Reuel and the theft of his power because they would benefit from the power most. As the Summer Solstice approaches and Winter readies to return to power, Summer will begin to recede in strength. The reality of the murder and theft is that the Summer Lady, Aurora, has arranged Reuel's death and theft of power. Hiding Summer's power until the opportune moment, Aurora plans to relinquish it to Winter, thus ending the power struggles that take place in the Winter and Summer Courts each year.

In the case of this novel, power is corrupting; however, it is not someone looking for more power that causes the almost catastrophic events, but someone unwilling to deal with the constant power struggles and the difficulties they cause.

First Love

The first love of Harry Dresden plays an important role in the novel, *Summer Knight*. Dresden's past comes into play while he is trying to express his sympathy and concern for his friend Murphy, whose ex-husband dies. Harry explains to Karrin that he too has experienced the loss of first love, Elaine, a young wizard that was being raised with him by Justin, their step-father and mentor. Though Harry had been betrayed by Elaine and he had been forced to strike out against her, this does not dull the pain that Harry had experienced at the time. Harry believes that he is responsible for the death of Elaine, and this pain is greater for him than the pain of her betrayal.

Harry comes to find that Elaine had not been killed, but has been in hiding for many years. Elaine explains that she had never meant to hurt Harry, but had been forced against her will by Justin to work against her young love. The explanation suits Harry who immediately becomes protector to Elaine again.



The strength of first love is evident again when Elaine betrays Harry once again. Though Elaine is working with Aurora, the Summer Lady tries to keep Harry from learning the truth about her plans to merge power with Winter, Elaine saves Harry's life, in addition to turning on Aurora and providing assistance to Harry as the battle draws to a climactic end.

Though the two young lovers had been torn apart by circumstances beyond their control and by poor choices, in the end the first love they had experienced as young teens had forged a bond that in the end could not be broken.

Good versus Evil

The classic theme of good versus evil is explored throughout the novel *Summer Knight*. The twist that takes place within the novel is that there seems to be a constant question as to which parties are good, and which evil. The line between the two is very thin, and often crossed.

Harry Dresden is hired by the Winter Queen to find out who murdered Ronald Reuel and where the power of the Summer Knight is. At the outset of the novel it appears that Mab is evil, acting only for her own interests and with little regard for Harry or anyone else. Harry explains the personality of the Winter Queen at one point as cold. Dresden seems to accept the fact that since the season of Winter is cold and unforgiving, that the Queen of the Winter Court would be the same. Mab initially tries to hire Harry to work for her but when the wizard is unwilling to deal with her on her terms, Mab has no problem arranging things so that Harry is forced to do her bidding. This leads the reader to believe that Mab is a callous, uncaring faerie, with no concern for anyone. However, Mab proves to be reasonable and willing to work with others when the battle between Winter and Summer takes place. The Winter Queen is also true to her word in regards to the bargain that she strikes with Harry at the outset of the novel.

The seemingly polar opposite of Mab, Aurora seems to be a caring faerie, one who is more concerned with the welfare of others than herself, and taking care of those around her. This personality fits with the warmer season of Summer if the reader follows the same line of thought as Harry Dresden. The reality is that Aurora is the more evil of the Winter and Summer queens. Though Aurora feels that her actions are for good reason, the reality is that the Summer Lady arranges a murder and plans another in order to reach her needs. When considering the actions of the two Courts, it seems that Aurora is the more evil of those dealing with Harry.



Style

Point of View

Summer Knight is a novel that follows the events that surround the life of Harry Dresden, a wizard, who lives in Chicago. The novel is written in the first person, from the point of view of Harry Dresden. This point of view allows the reader insight into the thoughts and feelings of Dresden as the novel progresses. This is significant not only for the sake of the plot, but also so the reader can follow the emotional changes in Dresden.

The novel is written in mostly equal parts of descriptive passages and exposition on the part of Harry Dresden, as well as dialogue. The reader is easily led through the novel, with key points of the plot revealed periodically so that the novel is enjoyable to read. There are many twists and turns, but because the reader is seeing things from the Dresden's point of view the story is easily followed.

Setting

Summer Knight takes place in modern day Chicago. Harry Dresden lives in the city, as well as keeps an office there. Several locations in the city are visited in the city, from convention centers to harbors, while Harry conducts his investigation into the death of Ronald Reuel. For most of the novel Harry Dresden travels within the city itself, visiting different areas while searching for the killer or killers. At one point Harry visits Undertown, the city that lies below Chicago. The Winter Lady, Maeve, has set up her home base in a series of buildings and tunnels that lie beneath the city, remnants of cities past. According to Harry, Undertown exists because the city sinks over the years, and a new city is simply built on top of the old. Harry explains to Billy the werewolf that Undertown is not inhabited by mostly faerie creatures.

Nevernever is also visited in the novel. Nevernever is the land of faerie creatures, be they pixies, trolls, ogres, centaurs or other magical being. The land is ruled by the queens of the seasons, Winter Mother, Winter Queen and Winter Lady with Summer Mother, Summer Queen and Summer Lady. The land of Nevernever is where the battle at the Stone Table takes place. The Stone Table is the location where Aurora, the Summer Lady, plans to spill Lilly's blood and forever alter the world.

Language and Meaning

The language of Summer Knight by is modern, as the novel takes place in Chicago, present time. As the novel is written from the point of view of Harry Dresden, the main character, this allows the reader to follow the plot easily. Though there are some terms involved that refer the magical world that Harry Dresden inhabits, they are explained clearly and within the context of the novel.



The language also differentiates between characters of the novel. Dresden deals with many people of different persuasions, including wizards and faeries. The wizards speak in Latin while conducting any official meeting. This differentiates the importance of the events that take place while Harry is on trial at the meeting of the White Council. In addition, Dresden deals with many creatures and people that are faeries. The faeries tend to speak in a more formal tone than others, allowing the reader to easily tell the difference between those who reside in the "real" world, as opposed to those who reside in Nevernever.

Structure

Summer Knight is a novel by Jim Butcher that is broken down into thirty-four different chapters. The chapters vary in length from three pages to more than fifteen. Each chapter follows through with a course of action, allowing the reader to easily follow. The shorter chapters tend to tie one part of the book to another, making transitions in the novel easier to follow for the reader.

The plot of the novel is fairly straightforward, as Harry Dresden is "hired" by the Winter Queen, Mab, to find the killer of the Summer Knight and his mantle of power. There is reference to the previous experiences of Dresden. Though this book is one in a series written by Jim Butcher, the description of previous events is clear enough for the reader to easily follow the plot without having read the earlier novels.

The novel moves quickly, carrying the reader with action from the outset. One is drawn into the novel, and though there are many twists to the plot, the first person narrative allows the reader to easily keep up with the pace. The novel is an enjoyable easy-read, leaving the reader attached to the characters and wanting more.



Quotes

"I felt the surge of magic that Billy used then—sharp, precise, focused. There was no sense of ritual in what he did, no show gathering of power building to release. He blurred as he moved, and between one breath and the next, Billy-the-naked was gone and Billy-the-Wolf slammed into the assailant, a dark-furred best the size of a Great Dane, fangs slashing at the hand that gripped the forward stock of the shotgun." Chap. 1, p. 9

"I walked past the elevator on my way to the stairs. There was a sign on it that said it was under repair. The elevator hadn't ever been quite the same since a giant scorpion had torn into one of the cars and someone had thrown the elevator up to the top of its chute with a torrent of wind in order to smash the big bug against the roof. The resulting fall sent the car plummeting all the way back to the ground floor and wreaked havoc with the building in general, raising everyone's rents.

Or that's what I heard, anyway. Don't look at me like that. It could have been someone else. Okay, maybe not the orthodontist on four, or the psychiatrist on six. Probably not the insurance office on seven, or the accountant on nine either. Maybe not the lawyers on the top floor. Maybe. But it isn't always me when something goes catastrophically wrong.

Anyway, no one can prove anything." Chap. 2, pp. 16-17

"Mab placed her gloved hand on my wounded one, and a sudden spike of sheer, vicious cold shot up through the injury like a frozen scalpel before lancing up my arm, straight toward my heart. It took my breath, and I felt my heart skip a beat, two, before it labored into rhythm again. I gasped and swayed, and only leaning against the door kept me from falling down completely.

'Dammit,' I muttered, trying to keep my voice down. 'We had a deal.'

'I agreed not to punish you for refusing me, wizard. I agreed not to punish or harass you by proxy.' Mab smiled. 'I did that just for spite.'" Chap. 3, p. 33

"I was working for the queen of wicked fairies—well, Queen of Winter, of the Unseelie faeries, at any rate. The Unseelie weren't universally vicious and evil, any more than the Seelie, the Summer fae, were all kind and wise. They were much like the season for which they had been named—cold, beautiful, pitiless and entirely without remorse. Only a fool would willingly associate with them." Chap. 4, p. 35

"I felt the anger hot in my belly, and I tightened the muscles of my jaw. But I made an effort to keep my voice even. Ebenezar had been more than my teacher. He'd been my mentor at a time when I hadn't had anything else left to me. He'd helped me when a lot of other people wanted to kick me while I was down—or, more accurately, decapitate me while I was down. I owed him my life in more than one sense." Chap. 4, p. 41

"'What was her name?'

It hurt to think the name, much less say it. But if it helped me get through to Murphy, I couldn't afford to be touchy. 'Elaine. We were...both of us were orphans. We got



adopted by the same man when we were ten.'

Murphy blinked and looked up at me. 'She was your sister?'

'I don't have any relatives. We were both adopted by the same guy, that's all. We lived together, drove one another nuts, hit puberty together. Do the math.'

She nodded. 'How long were you together?'

'Oh. Until we were sixteen.'

'What happened? How did she...'

I shrugged. 'My adoptive father tried to get me into black magic. Human Sacrifice.'

Murphy frowned. 'He was a wizard?'

I nodded. 'Strong one. So was she.'

'Didn't he try to get Elaine too?'

'Did get her,' I said. 'She was helping him.'

'What happened?' she asked quietly.

I tried to keep my voice even and calm, but I wasn't sure how well I managed it. 'I ran away. He sent a demon after me. I beat it, then went back to save Elaine. She hit me with a binding spell when I wasn't looking, and he tried a spell that would break into my head. Make me do what he wanted. I slipped out of the spell Elaine had on me and took on Justin. I got lucky. He lost. Everything burned.'

Murphy swallowed. 'What happened to Elaine?'

'Burned,' I said quietly, my throat tightening. 'She's dead.' Chap. 7, pp. 87-88

"Lights, orange and nebulous, kindled deep in the shadows of the skull's eye sockets. The skull quivered a little bit on its shelf and then stretched its toothy mouth open in an approximation of a yawn. 'So was the kid right? Was there some portent-type action going on?'

'Rain of toads,' I said.

'Real ones?'

'Yeah.'

'Ouch,' said Bob the skull. Bob wasn't really a skull. The skull was just a vessel for the spirit of intellect that resided inside and helped me keep track of the constantly evolving metaphysical laws that govern the use of magic. But 'Bob the Skull' is a lot easier to say than 'Bob the Spirit of Intellect and Lab Assistant.'" Chap. 10, pp. 120-121

"Every intelligent being has a Name, a specific series of spoken sounds linked to its very being. If a practitioner knows the Name of something, knows it in every nuance and detail of pronunciation, then he can use that Name to open a magical conduit to that being. That's how demons get summoned to the mortal world. Call something's Name and you make contact with it—and if you're a wizard, that means that you can exercise power over it, no matter where in the world it is.

Controlling an inhuman being via its Name is a shady area of magic, only one step removed from taking over the will of another mortal. According to the White Council's Seven Laws of Magic, that's a capital crime—and they make zero-tolerance policies look positively lenient.

Given how much the Council loves me, I'm a tad paranoid about breaking any of the Laws of Magic, so while I was calling the faerie's Name, I put only the tiniest trickle of compulsion into it, just enough to make him curious about what might be down this



particular alley. I whispered the faerie's Name and stood in the shadows, waiting." Chap. 13, pp. 146-147

"Depends on who's talking. The Sidhe crowd thinks you're an interesting mortal pet of Mab's. The vampire wanna-be crowd thinks you're some kind of psychotic vigilante with a penchant for vengeance and mayhem. Sort of a one-man Spanish Inquisition. Most of the magical crowd thinks you're distant, dangerous, but smart and honorable. Crooks think you're a hit man for the outfit, or maybe one of the families back East. Straights think you're a fraud trying to bilk people out of their hard won cash, except Larry Fowler, who probably wants you on the show again." Chap. 22, p. 251

"I stared at her in frustration for a minute and then scowled. 'What have you done for me lately?'

Lea closed her eyes for a moment, then opened her mouth and spoke. Her voice came out aged and querulous. 'What's all that racket! I have already called the police, I have! You fruits get out of our hall or they'll lock you away!'

I blinked. 'Reuel's apartment. That was you?'

'Obviously, child. And at the market, earlier this eve.' She lifted her hand in the air, made an intricate motion with long, pale fingers, and opened her mouth again, as if singing a note of music. Instead, the sound of police sirens emerged, somewhat muted and indistinguishable from the real thing.

I shook my head. 'I don't get it.'

She moved her fingers again, and the sirens blended into another silver-sweet laugh, her expression amused, almost fond. 'I am sure you do not, poppet.' She offered her hand again. 'Come. Time is pressing.' Chap. 23, pp. 262-263

"The Nevernever is a big place. In fact, it's the biggest place. The Nevernever is what the wizards call the entirety of the realm of spirit. It isn't a physical place, with geography and weather patterns and so on. It's a shadow world, a magical realm, and its substance is as mutable as thought. It has a lot of names, like the Other Side and the Next World, and it contains within it just about any kind of spirit realm you can imagine, somewhere. Heaven, Hell, Olympus, Elysium, Tartarus, Gehenna—you name it, and it's in the Nevernever somewhere. In theory, at any rate." Chap. 26, p. 289

"You knew that if you bound up the Summer Knight's mantle, Mother Winter would provide an Unraveling to free it and restore the balance. You waited for her to give it to me. Now you're going to take it and the statue of Lily. You're going to take her to the Stone Table during the battle. You'll kill her on the table after midnight. The Summer Knight's power will go to Winter permanently. You want to destroy the balance of power in Faerie. I don't know why." Chap. 27, p. 303

"The pale rider took off her helmet and flashed me a brilliant, girlish smile. It was Maeve, the Winter Lady, her green eyes bright with bloodlust, dreadlocks bound close to her head. She almost idly licked blood from her sword, as another Summer warrior fell to one knee, his back to the water, sword raised desperately against the riders confronting him.



The waters surged again, and pale, lovely arms reached out, wrapping around his throat from behind. I caught a glimpse of golden eyes and a green-toothed smile, and then the warrior's scream was cut off as he was dragged under the surface. The Summer warriors retreated, swift and in concert. The rest of the mounted Winter warriors set out in pursuit.

'Your godmother sends her greeting,' Maeve called to me. 'I'd have acted sooner, but it would have been a fair fight, and I avoid them.' Chap. 32, pp. 352-353

"Then a basso bellow shook the hilltop and froze even Aurora for a second. The wall of thorns shook and quivered, and something massive bellowed again and tore through it, into the open. The troll was huge, and green, and hideous, and strong. It wielded an axe in one hand like a plastic picnic knife and was covered in swelling welts, poisoned wounds, and its own dark-green blood. It had a horrible wound in its side, ichor flowing openly from it. It was dragging itself along despite the wounds, but it was dying. And it was Meryl. She'd Chosen.

I could only stare as I recognized her features, inside the insane fury of the troll's face.

It reached for Talos, and the Lord Marshal of Summer whirled, his bright sword taking off one of the troll's hands. She got the other one on his leg, though, and dragged him beneath her even as she fell, the weight of her pinning him down, crushing him to the ground with a choked, gurgling cry of rage and triumph." Chap. 33, p. 361

"She looked up and said, 'Stop feeling sorry for yourself, Harry.'

I blinked and said, 'What?'

She gestured at my apartment. 'You were living in a sewer, Harry. I understand that there's something you're blaming yourself for. I'm just guessing at the details, but it's pretty clear you were driving yourself into the ground because of it. Get over it. You aren't going to do her any good as a living mildew collection. Stop thinking about how bad you feel—because if she cares about you at all, it would tear her up to see you like I saw you a few days ago.'" Chap. 34, p. 370

"She closed her eyes tightly. 'I'm scared. So scared I'm sick.'

'You'll get through it.'

'What if I don't?'

I squeezed her fingers. 'Then I will personally make fun of you every day for the rest of your life.' I said. 'I will call you a sissy girl in front of everyone you know, tie frilly aprons on your car, and lurk in the parking lot at CPD and whistle and tell you shake it, baby. Every. Single. Day.'" Chap. 19, p. 219



Topics for Discussion

What task does Mab want Harry to undertake? What has been stolen?

Who was Ronald Reuel? What was his role in the Summer Court?

What choice does Meryl have to make? What is her final choice? Why does she make it?

Who is Elaine? What is her history with Harry? Do you think that Elaine is truthful?

Who is Aurora? What does she hope to accomplish? Why?

Where does the power of the Summer Knight wind up?

Discuss the changes that Harry Dresden goes through within the novel. How is he different at the conclusion of the novel? Why?