

# **The Serpent's Shadow Study Guide**

**The Serpent's Shadow by Rick Riordan**

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# Plot Summary

The *Serpent's Shadow* is the third book in the Kane Chronicles Series by Rick Riordan. In this novel, Kane siblings, Carter and Sadie, have been directly involved in the releasing of the ancient Egyptian god Apophis and now are struggling to find a way to stop him. Apophis, the god of chaos, wants to swallow the sun and destroy the world. No one knows of anyway to stop him, but Sadie and Carter believe they have stumbled upon a secret that will do just that. As they fight to put their plan into action, Carter and Sadie find themselves not only facing their most daunting task yet, but struggling with personal turmoil as Sadie finds herself caught between two boys that she can never have, and Carter struggles with his feelings for the distant, secretive fire warrior Zia. The *Serpent's Shadow* is an exciting adventure that not only takes readers into the complicated world of Egyptian gods, but thrusts them into teenage angst on a new level that will leave them breathless and rooting for unlikely heroes.

Sadie and Carter arrive in Dallas with a small band of magicians from their nome, Brooklyn House, to stop Apophis from destroying the last of a group of scrolls that might hold the secret to stopping Apophis from destroying the world. Carter convinces the magician in charge of the Dallas museum to let them see the scroll in question, but arrive too late to stop the attack by Apophis. Carter and his band are able to stop the destruction of the museum, with the help of Sadie, but the scroll is destroyed as are the people of the local nome. However, they have saved a unique box that a mysterious figured told Sadie must be saved as it holds the answer to their problem.

Sadie, Carter, and their friends return to Brooklyn House where they investigate the box. It appears to hold nothing, but Bast, the Cat god, tells them it holds the shadow of Tut. Bast explains that shadows are a part of the soul that gods often hide to protect themselves from complete destruction. This gives both Sadie and Carter a great deal to think about as they have already come to the conclusion that the best way to stop Apophis is to cast an execration spell. A conversation with Zia, his uncle's assistant at the First Nome, and with Horus, his chosen god, makes Carter more convinced that by bottling Apophis shadow in a statue and saying the execration spell, they can rid the world of him and send him back to the Duat.

Carter tells the rest of the group that he wants to go see Thoth, the god of wisdom, to ask about his plan. However, before allowing him to go, the group insists that Carter attend a school dance with them. At the dance, a reluctant Carter goes off to dance with one of Sadie's friends while Sadie is visited by the god, Anubis, on whom she has a crush. As they talk, Anubis confirms that Sadie and Carter must find Apophis's shadow. However, before Anubis can tell Sadie all he has come to say, they are pulled apart by Anubis's grandfather, Shu, the god of wind. Shu tells Sadie that Anubis has been forbidden to see her anymore.

When Shu and Anubis leave, Sadie finds that Shu has brought a Russian magician to see her. The Russian tells Sadie about an impending attack on the First Nome by a group of magicians who have risen in revolt against their uncle, Amos, the current Chief



Lector. Sadie rushes off to take the Russian to Amos and warn him. While there, Sadie tells Amos her idea of attempting to save her friend, Bes. Sadie and Zia go to see Bes. Afterward, they meet up with Carter at the Hall of Justice where they ask their father to release a magician to them, Setne. Setne is released to them, after some negotiation, so that he can find a book of Thoth that will tell them how to find Apophis' shadow. However, Setne is something of a con man and even though he does as promised, he makes the trip difficult with his secrets and attempts at escape.

Sadie is able to restore Bes to life by using his spell in a reverse execration spell. Sadie believes that this spell will also work against Apophis. They descend on the First Nome where a battle has already begun. Zia, who has become a vessel for Ra, keeps Apophis busy while Carter and Sadie save Amos and his people from the attack. When the attack in the First Nome is over, Carter and Sadie turn their attention on Apophis where they manage to send him back to the Duat with the execration spell. However, this move also sends all the gods away as well.



# Chapters 1-4

## Chapters 1-4 Summary

This book is the third in a trilogy of novels known as the Kane Chronicles. In this novel, Carter and Sadie find themselves faced with the dilemma of how to stop Apophis, the god of Chaos, from destroying the world.

In Chapter 1, Carter, Sadie, and several magicians from their nome, Brooklyn House, descend on the Dallas Museum of Art and its connected nome. Apophis has attacked several other locations where copies of a specific scroll, The Book of Overcoming Apophis written by a magician called Setne. The Dallas Museum of Art currently is displaying a collection of King Tut artifacts and the last of these scrolls is among them. Carter convinces the leader of the nome, JD Grissom, to allow them to show him the scroll and discuss security. JD swears that his nome has the place completely secure, but Carter knows from previous attacks that all the security in the world would not be enough. As they walk into the museum, Sadie is called to by a figure in the wall who tells her they cannot save the scroll, but that there is a small gold box that she should save, that it holds the secret of saving the world. Sadie dismisses this weird visitation at first. They arrive at the scroll and just as Carter goes to take it, the attack begins.

In Chapter 2, JD leaves to protect his wife and friends at the party. Carter, Sadie, and their friends begin to battle Apophis. The scroll is lost, as was predicted by Sadie's strange visitor. Sadie manages to convince her friends to save the gold box. Carter is attacked directly by Apophis while the others battle magically animated sarcophagi and criosphinx. Sophie dips her consciousness into the Duat to gather strength and summons Ma'at, order. This move saves the museum from complete destruction, but drains Sophie so completely that she is momentarily dead. Sophie visits with her mother during this time and learns that something terrible is happening to the spirits of the dead. Sophie also speaks to Anubis, the god of the dead, who tells her he has something important to share with her but that he has been kept from visiting her. When Sadie wakes, she remembers the Texans from the local nome. Sadie and her friends rush out of the museum to discover that Apophis has completely destroyed the party that was so recently filled with dozens of magicians.

In Chapter 3, Carter takes his friends home to Brooklyn House where they are greeted by Bast, the god of Cats. The younger ones go inside quickly while Carter, Sophie, and Walt fill Bast in on what has happened. They then go to the library where they investigate the box Sophie was told to save. There is nothing but darkness inside the box. Bast explains to them that it is a shadow box. It is a box that is designed to contain the soul of the dead. This one belongs to Tut. Bast explains that the shadow is one of the nine parts of the soul and that many believe the shadow must be hidden to protect the owner from total destruction. In fact, Bast tells them, it is common for gods to hide their shadows because they have been used in the past to destroy the gods. As Carter



and Sadie relate this to their struggle with Apophis, they begin to wonder if they could trap Apophis's shadow and use it to stop him.

In Chapter 4, Carter receives a call from Zia via a scrying bowl. Zia tells Carter that Sarah Jacobi, an old enemy and rebel leader against the First Nome, is accusing Carter and Sadie of crimes against magicians. Jacobi is gathering forces against the Kanés, including their uncle, Amos, who is the Chief Lector. Jacobi is also threatening an attack against the First Nome, as well as numerous other nomes all around the world. Carter is very disturbed by this information, placing more pressure on him to find a way to stop Apophis. As Carter is thinking this over, a pigeon comes into the room and begins speaking in the voice of Horus, the god that has chosen Carter as his vessel. Horus and Carter discuss the recent events and Carter asks several questions about a god's shadow, hoping to get information on how to stop Apophis. Horus, however, refuses to speak about such spells and suggests Carter talk to Thoth. Carter makes plans to visit Thoth, but before he can make the arrangements, Sadie and the others convince him to attend a school dance with them.

## Chapters 1-4 Analysis

The first few chapters of the novel reintroduces the reader to the main characters and the situation that will propel much of the plot. Sadie narrates the first two chapters before trading with her brother in the following two. The reader will notice that this trade off continues throughout the novel with each sibling taking over the reins of the narration two chapters at a time. This goes hand in hand with the author's assertion that he is writing this novel based on voice recordings made by Sadie and Carter after the events being reported ended. This allows for the narrators to make comments on the events as they tell them, even chiming in most charmingly on each other's narration, allowing the reader a little added insight into their characters and their relationship.

The reader who has read the previous two novels knows that Sadie and Carter were not raised together; that their mother died while trying to release Bast from the Duat; and that their father destroyed the Rosetta stone in a previous novel to attempt a dangerous spell that instead released the god Set. Their father is now in the Duat acting as a vessel to the god of the underworld, Osiris. Their uncle, who became vessel to Set to stop him, has become the Chief Lector, the leader of the magicians throughout the world. All of this has led to the current conflict, the fact that Apophis, the god of Chaos, has risen to the mortal world and plans to destroy it. Sadie and Carter must find a way to stop Apophis, but all their research so far tells them that Apophis is unstoppable. At the same time, they find themselves struggling with a group of magicians who should be supporting the efforts who instead are battling against them, attacking other nomes and spreading untruths about the Kane family's attempts to stop the chaos erupting at the hands of Apophis.

As Carter and Sadie struggle to find a way to stop the destruction of the world, they also find themselves struggling with common teenage conflict, albeit on a higher level. Sadie is in love with two boys. One is Walt, a magician and member of her nome, Brooklyn



House. However, Walt is a direct descendent of King Tut and suffers from the same curse that ended Tut's life at such a young age. Walt lives his life in great pain and is expected to die very soon. The other is Anubis, the young and very handsome god of death. However, Anubis has been forbidden from seeing Sadie because he is a god who has never taken a human form and she is human. At the same time, Carter is deeply in love with the fire warrior, Zia, who has become something of an assistant to his uncle, Amos. However, Carter has yet to find the courage to tell Zia the truth of his feelings for her.



# Chapters 5-8

## Chapters 5-8 Summary

In Chapter 5, Carter, Sadie, and the other magicians from Brooklyn House go to a school dance. Carter is there reluctantly, so Sadie pushes one of her mortal friends on him in an attempt to encourage him to relax and dance. Sadie then begins to mingle when she is suddenly set upon by the school bullies. As Sadie faces off with these girls, everyone is shocked when she is joined by an astoundingly handsome young man. Anubis takes Sadie to the dance floor where he attempts to speak to her about her fight with Apophis. Anubis tells Sadie they are on the right track in thinking of using Apophis's shadow against him. Anubis urges Sadie to hurry, however, as time is of the essence. Something is happening to the souls of the dead as Apophis continues to gather strength. Anubis then tells Sadie there is only one person who can teach them the magic they need, but that they need to hurry as his life is in danger. Then they are interrupted by the arrival of Shu, Anubis's grandfather, the god of wind. Shu says that it has been forbidden for Anubis and Sadie to be together. Shu changes the air pressure, knocking out all the dance attendees and takes Anubis away.

In Chapter 6, Shu has brought someone to speak with Sadie, a young Russian magician. The Russian, Leonid, has information about an impending attack on the First Nome. It is decided that Sadie will take Leonid to the First Nome while Walt and Carter travel to Thoth. Sadie uses a magic portal to transport herself and Leonid to the First Nome. When they find Amos, he and Zia are maneuvering figures on a map of the world, helping fight the attacks by Jacoby and her rebels on nomes around the world. Leonid tells Amos, Zia, and Sadie that Jacoby and her rebels are in league with Apophis and that they plan on attacking in three days on the day of the autumn equinox. This is also the day Apophis will rise. They begin to plan their defense, but first Sadie tells Amos she has an idea to restore Bes's senses. Amos tells Zia to accompany Sadie.

In Chapter 7, Carter and Walt travel in the Duat to the home of Thoth, a pyramid in Memphis. When they arrive, Thoth is under attack by Apophis's demons. Carter and Walt join in the fight. Apophis grabs Carter and shows him images of the coming chaos and tells him if he will give up Ra, he will give him and all he loves an island where they can live safely. The attack abruptly ends. Thoth takes Walt and Carter inside and they talk about the execration spell. Thoth tells them they need a book he once wrote that was stolen by the magician Setne. However, Setne is about to face sentencing by Osiris. Although Setne has escaped the destruction of his soul for thousands of years, Carter's father, who is now Osiris's vessel, has been cracking down on rebellious souls and will more than likely order his destruction.

In Chapter 8, as Carter and Walt fly home, Walt tells Carter that he has been talking to Anubis and he knows that he only has two more days to live. However, Anubis has offered him a solution, but he does not want to talk about it until he has time to discuss it with Sadie. Back at Brooklyn House, they receive a message from Sadie telling them





what Leonid had to say and what Amos has decided. They then agree to meet in the Underworld. In the meantime, Carter makes the decision to send all the members of Brooklyn House to help defend the First Nome.

## Chapters 5-8 Analysis

Even when they try to do something normal, such as going to a school dance, Carter and Sadie find their new life as Egyptian magicians interfering. Sadie is joined at the dance by the god of death, Anubis, a beautiful young man with whom she is deeply in love despite her deep affections for fellow magician Walt. Anubis has come to tell Sadie that the idea she and Carter are working on to stop Apophis is right on track. Anubis also comes with news that something dark is happening to the souls of the dead and that they need to hurry before they are all gone. The rise of chaos is having wide felt effect on everyone, both magical and mortal. It is becoming more and more tense as the Kanes fight to find a way to save the world.

The rising of Apophis has been scheduled and it appears that he has teamed up with magician enemies of the Kanes, which means that they will be fighting the battle on two sides. This complicates things and makes it so that Carter and Sadie are pretty much on their own as far as finding a way to stop Apophis goes. Not only this, but Carter makes the decision to abandon Brooklyn House in order to support the First Nome, which cannot be allowed to fall. Carter and Sadie are all in on this, giving the reader hope that their determination to stop Apophis will pay off in the end.

At the same time Sadie and Carter are trying to stop the destruction of the world, Walt is facing his own mortality as his family curse is quickly coming to a head. Walt knows he will die the day before the rise of Apophis. However, there is some hope, but the reader has no clue what hope this might be as Walt refuses to say. It has something to do with Anubis, Sadie's other crush, making the reader wonder if Anubis has found a way for Sadie to have her cake and eat it too.



# Chapters 9-12

## Chapters 9-12 Summary

In Chapter 9, Sadie and Zia go to the nursing home for gods in the Duat where Bes has been since losing part of his soul and with it his self. Upon their arrival, Zia goes into some kind of trance and damages the main reception room. Zia explains to Sadie that she has been suffering these fugue states since spending so much time with Ra. This sets Sadie worrying about Zia, but she does not have time to deal with it. Zia and Sadie visit with Bes briefly after speaking with Tawaret, the caretaker and a former girlfriend of Bes. Tawaret gives Sadie an idea of where she might find Bes's shadow.

In Chapter 10, Carter and Walt meet up with Zia and Sadie in a ship, the Egyptian Queen. Sadie is a little concerned by this choice of transportation because the captain is a demon called Bloodstained Blade. However, they make it to the Hall of Judgment without too much trouble. As they make their way inside, Walt shows an apparent new knowledge of the workings of the Underworld that cause Sadie some concern. Eventually they find the room they need and Walt gets them inside. Osiris welcomes his children with excitement, but Disturber, one of the courts judges, insists they continue with their work. Carter and his group watch as their father judges the life of a mortal man. Afterwards they talk for a few minutes, but then the next case is called. Setne enters the room and Osiris is not happy to learn that he is the reason his children have come to visit. After Carter and Sadie explain everything, Osiris reluctantly allows them to take custody of Setne.

In Chapter 11, Sadie and Walt go off in search of Bes's shadow while Carter and Zia take Setne to find the stolen Book of Thoth that has the secret to finding Apophis' shadow. On the way they are visited by Set, who tells them that he is not pure evil and Amos's desire to channel his power might not be the terrible thing they think it is. Carter disagrees. Their ship is then attacked by a giant hippo. Setne gives Carter a spell to use to fight the hippo. When Carter gives in and speaks the spell, the god of the Nile, Hapi, appears. Hapi rids them of the hippo and then gives them transport to the temple of the Apis Bull where Setne says they will find the Book of Thoth he has hidden.

In Chapter 12, they arrive in the temple of the Apis Bull. Setne takes them on a long, winding path through the temple to the place where he has hidden the Book of Thoth. Finally they come to a room with a large statue of the bull. Setne tells them he can get the book when the bull moves. Carter does not expect the bull to come to life, therefore is unprepared when it does and begins to chase he and Zia through the tunnels. They quickly become lost and are caught in a room with no escape. Carter channels Horus in an attempt to fight the bull, but the bull is too big and strong. Suddenly Zia channels Khepri, one of Ra's incarnations, and destroys the bull. Afterward, Zia is unconscious and suffering a high fever. Carter rushes her back to the ship and allows Setne to give Bloodstain Blade orders.



## Chapters 9-12 Analysis

Zia is behaving oddly and Sadie is concerned for her. Sadie seems to know what this behavior foreshadows, but she does not share her thoughts with the reader as she is busy trying to save the world. Later, Zia channels one of Ra's incarnations. She saves Carter and her own life, but leaves herself in a feverish state. This suggests to the reader that Zia and Ra have a connection that might prove important as the novel continues to develop.

Carter and Zia have Setne and take him to find the Book of Thoth that has the information they need, but Setne is something of a con man and he continuously sets them up for danger. This seems to foreshadow a moment when Setne will attempt to outright kill Carter and Zia. However, the information he can provide them is of great importance, therefore, his continued work with them cannot be postponed or denied. It is a difficult situation that may cause some trouble for everyone as the novel continues to develop.



# Chapters 13-16

## Chapters 13-16 Summary

In Chapter 13, Walt and Sadie travel to the Delta where they believe Bes's shadow is hidden. On the way, Walt tries to talk to Sadie about his impending death, but Sadie will not listen. She is unhappy with the idea of Walt's death. Then they are interrupted when they arrive at their destination and find the god Neith, the hunting goddess. Neith wants to hunt Sadie and Walt. However, she promises to let them live if they can survive to sundown. Sadie devises a plan in which she and Walt will run from Neith separately and when one gets caught they will call to the other psychically and the other will pull the endangered one away with the use of the shen amulet they both wear. This ploy seems to work until they become distracted by Bes's shadow.

In Chapter 14, Sadie manages to distract Neith long enough for the sun to go down. This forces Neith to concede the contest to Sadie. Neith leaves, giving Walt and Sadie the time they need to capture Bes's shadow in a wax shabti. Afterward, Walt begins to grow extremely weak. It is time for him to die. Anubis arrives and Sadie protests. Anubis and Walt begin to talk about some deal Sadie does not understand. Then Walt dies, but seconds later he returns. Sadie can see that Anubis has taken control of Walt's body. By doing this, Anubis makes it possible for Walt to continue living, but now both the boys Sadie loves are one person. This angers and confuses her. Sadie abandons Walt/Anubis.

In Chapter 15, Carter faces off with Bloodstain Blade, who has decided it is time to kill Carter. They fight. Carter tries to reach into the Duat for his weapon, but it is not there. Instead, Carter comes back with Ra's crook and flail. This confuses Carter. Just as Carter thinks he is about to meet his end, Zia appears and she vaporizes Bloodstain Blade in a ball of fire. Moments later, the ship crashes into the shore and begins to crack apart. Carter and Zia escape with the help of a falcon Zia has summoned. They share a meal on shore and then find Setne, who has been washed into the water. Setne convinces them that he should be allowed to help them hide their appearance as they begin to make their way into the Land of Demons where the shadow of Apophis is hidden. Carter and his group make their way into the Land of the Demons. Soon they come to the Sea of Chaos. The shadow is a part of this sea, rising from it, but tethered to a white obelisk on a single finger of land, the symbol of Ma'at, order.

In Chapter 16, Carter and Zia move closer to the obelisk. When they approach it, Setne gives them the Book of Thoth and instructs them to read the spell there. Zia recognizes it as a simple summoning spell. Setne then entraps the shadow in a shabti. Setne plans to use the shadow to blackmail Apophis. He is about to escape and leave Carter and Zia to the Sea of Chaos when Sadie suddenly appears. Sadie disables Setne. Things seem to calm slightly. They talk for a minute and Sadie says the spell they hope will restore Bes. Then they begin to make their way back to the safety of the beach. Nearly to safety, they discover that a small army of demons is heading their way. They prepare



to fight despite the overwhelming odds against them. However, Bes and a group of people from the retirement home arrive. Bes pulls them into his limo and delivers them to Ra's approaching boat.

## Chapters 13-16 Analysis

Sadie and Walt go in search of Bes's shadow in hopes of restoring him. However, they arrive at their destination a short time before Walt's death has been predicted to take place. Sadie does not want to think of his death, therefore she refuses to speak with Walt about it when he tries to talk to her about his plans. This causes Sadie a great deal of shock and unhappiness when Walt dies and is brought back by Anubis taking over his body. Sadie is shocked by this idea. Anubis will now have a human body and be able to walk with mortals and Walt will remain alive. However, if Anubis ever leaves Walt's body, Walt will die. It is difficult for Sadie in the fact that she is in love with both of these boys and having them in the same body confuses and frustrates her.

Carter is in love with Zia, but it appears that Zia is going through some unusual problems of her own. Zia continuously channels Ra and his former incarnations. This is complicated and suggests that Zia is Ra's human vessel as Carter is Horus's and Sadie is Isis. This could complicate things for Carter in the idea that Ra is a man and the most admired and respected leader of the Egyptian gods.

Sadie and Carter have managed to get the shadow of Apophis and now must make their way to where Apophis is expected to rise in order to use the spell against him. Using the opposite spell on Bes worked, therefore there is great hope that this one will work as well. However, it will be difficult and the group continues to be realistic when it comes to the future battle.



# Chapters 17-22

## Chapters 17-22 Summary

In Chapter 17, the group begins the trip to the First Nome. During this trip, Ra takes Zia as his new vessel. Carter is shocked by this, but the others are pleased that they will now have Ra on their side since Ra is the only one who has ever successfully beaten Apophis. When they arrive at the First Nome, they find Apophis has already risen. Ra engages Apophis while Carter and the others go into the First Nome to stop the battle raging there. They find the members of the First Nome, the few who remain, and the members of Brooklyn House in battle with Jacobi's troops. Carter and his friends join in and quickly defeat Jacobi's rebels. They then make their way into the inner chamber where Jacobi is fighting Amos. Amos is channeling Set.

In Chapter 18, a short fight takes place, but as Carter and his group arrives, Jacobi is able to take Amos hostage. An argument begins, but the magicians hesitate to come to Set's defense because of his evil past. Walt/Anubis arrives. Walt/Anubis kills Jacobi for attempting to hurt Sadie. Carter then makes a speech to encourage the others to help in the fight against Apophis. Kwai, Jacobi's lieutenant, kills himself to call down a spell of destruction on the First Nome. Sadie is able to counteract it by creating a spell of Ma'at as she did in the Dallas Art Museum. They then turn their attention to the battle raging outside.

In Chapter 19, Carter summons the gods to join the fight. They all agree, though some reluctantly. Back on the ground, they begin the fight. Carter and Sadie fight hard to get around to Apophis's face where they must cast the spell. As they battle, Apophis manages to get ahold of Ra. Apophis eats Ra as he has always planned to do. Carter thinks of giving up, but they continue to fight. Finally they are in position to say the spell.

In Chapter 20, as the spell begins to work, Apophis tells them that they have made a mistake, that by sending away chaos they are also sending away the gods. When it is all over, Apophis is gone, but so are all the gods. Setne has disappeared, but everyone else seems to be whole and healthy. The magicians return to the First Nome where Carter is made pharaoh. Carter is humbled by this appointment and quickly tells the assembled group that he plans on returning to Brooklyn House and his education and trusts Amos to rule faithfully in his stead. Carter and Sadie then visit their parents in the Hall of Judgment. A few weeks later, Zia visits and tells Carter she has decided to become a student at Brooklyn House and be a typical teenager.

In Chapter 21, while all is working out for Carter, Sadie has no idea what has become of Walt. However, a conversation with her mother makes Sadie believe she will see him again. Sadie and Carter then visit Bes at the retirement home where they find him content to settle down with Tawaret.



In Chapter 22, Walt is waiting for Sadie at Brooklyn House. Sadie has decided she can accept him as is and he makes it clear she is the only one he wants to be with.

## Chapters 17-22 Analysis

Carter and Sadie arrive at the battle with their friends. Things go quickly. Walt/Anubis manage to kill Jacobi while her second, Kwai, kills himself in order to cast a spell to take down the First Nome. Sadie is able to counteract this. Then they all battle Apophis. Even though Apophis swallows Ra as he has been wanting to do and as it was written he would, Carter and Sadie are able to stop him and restore Ma'at. In the end, they have won. However, now that Apophis and danger has gone, so have the gods.

Carter becomes the group leader and gets the girl when Zia decides to begin attending Brooklyn House. Walt and Anubis follow suit and Sadie finds herself with both the boys that she loves and free of any complaints. Everything seems to have settled properly and everyone is happy. However, there are hints about other magic being afoot, and Setne has disappeared, suggesting to the reader another set of books with connections to this series.



# Characters

## Carter Kane

Carter Kane is the teenage leader of Brooklyn House. Carter is the son of an Egyptian magician who has become the vessel of Osiris. After much adventure and trouble, Carter finds himself in charge of a group of young magicians and left with the responsibility of finding a way to stop Apophis, the god of Chaos, from destroying the world. Carter worries about his abilities as leader because of many things that have happened to cause Carter to doubt himself, including the total destruction of the Dallas Nome.

Carter is a typical teenager who has to deal with atypical things. Carter is in love with a beautiful young woman who just happens to be the human vessel for Ra. Carter is trying to save the world from total destruction while his father is Osiris, the god of the Underworld, has chosen to remove himself from the mortal world to continue being a vessel to Osiris. Carter's mother has died, though her spirit lives on in the Underworld and his uncle is the Chief Lector, leader of the First Nome and the magicians.

Carter has a strong character and he wants to do what is right. His doubts about his own leadership do not get in the way of his ability to lead. Carter thinks quick on his feet and is able to save not only himself, but the world when he figures out how to stop Apophis.

## Sadie Kane

Sadie Kane is Carter's sister. Sadie was raised in London by her grandparents. For this reason, Sadie and Carter were not raised together and do not know one another very well until their father accidentally raises Set and sets in motion the actions that have brought about Apophis's rising.

Sadie is in love with two boys, the god of death, Anubis, and Walt, a fellow magician at Brooklyn House. Sadie struggles with her feelings for these young men, made more difficult as Walt struggles with a curse that leaves him in great pain and the knowledge that he will die young and Anubis is banned from seeing her by the other gods. What should be typical teen crushes have become something more, something that Sadie struggles with every day as Walt comes closer and closer to the moment of death.

Sadie is a strong magician. She works hard to find a solution to Apophis's chaos with her brother. It is Sadie that realizes that if they can destroy Apophis with his shadow, they can restore with a shadow as well. With this idea, Sadie is able to restore her friend Bes to the world of the living after he lost part of his soul and with it his identity. Sadie also proves herself to be something of a hero when she twice manages to cast a spell of Ma'at, order, to save the people who matter most to her.





In the end, both Sadie and Carter get what they have always wanted. They restore Ma'at to the world and they get the people they love. Not only this, but their family is somewhat restored, though in the odd way that they have become accustomed to in the past year.

## Walt

Walt is a young magician at Brooklyn House. Walt is descendant from King Tut and he suffers from the same curse that caused Tut's death at such a young age. Walt will die young. He is already suffering the pains of the curse. As the novel progresses, the reader learns that Walt knows exactly when he will die and that Anubis has made a deal with him. Walt wants to discuss the deal with Sadie, but the right time never comes and he does not before his death actually happens. Walt becomes a vessel for Anubis upon his death. This allows Walt to continue living despite the curse, but it causes a confusing situation for Sadie as both the boys she loves become one being. However, it also allows Walt a future that he never would have had without Anubis.

## Anubis

Anubis is the god of funerals and death. Anubis is a young god, often called the child god by other gods. Anubis appears to be a very handsome young man when he appears to Sadie. This causes Sadie to fall head over heels for him despite her growing affection for Walt. Anubis has never taken a human vessel, therefore his feelings for Sadie cause a great deal of tension among the gods who finally forbid him to see Sadie. In the end, however, Anubis finds a way around all of it when he talks Walt into allowing him to use his body as a vessel upon Walt's death. Unfortunately, this deal means that Walt and Anubis will be stuck with one another indefinitely because if Anubis leaves Walt's body, Walt will die. It also causes a great deal of confusion for Sadie who loves them both, but eventually learns to accept them both in one body.

## Zia

Zia is a fire magician. Zia has worked with Carter and Sadie in the past and currently works as a type of assistant to their uncle, Amos. Zia has a connection to Ra that is not fully explained at the beginning of the novel, but becomes clear as the novel continues. Although Zia is a magician and has never really thought about the idea of serving as a vessel for a guide, she soon discovers that she is Ra's vessel. Ra has lost some of his mind in the time he has been away from the mortal world and through the spell to bring him back. For this reason, he cannot fully explain things to Zia when it comes time for the transfer of mental power. However, Zia welcomes Ra and becomes him just in time to help the fight against Apophis. When the fight is over and the gods are gone, Zia is free to live a normal life. She chooses Brooklyn House and Carter.



## Amos

Amos is Carter and Sadie's uncle. Amos was the leader of Brooklyn House, but became the Chief Lector at the First Nome in a previous book in the trilogy. In this book, Carter and Sadie go to Amos when they learn that the First Nome will be attacked. Amos does all he can to fight this attack, but he soon realizes his only chance of survival is to channel Set, the god of evil. This seems a bad choice, but Amos works hard to keep Set under control and eventually shows everyone that he has it under control. Unfortunately, others do not believe it, and it seems trouble might brew in the future for Amos, especially if he chooses to channel Set again.

## Apophis

Apophis is the god of chaos. Apophis appears as a serpent in the mortal world. Apophis wants to swallow the sun, or Ra who is the god of the sun. This will lead to utter chaos in the mortal world and allow Apophis to destroy the mortal world and rule it for himself. Carter and Sadie spend most of the novel trying to find a way to stop him. In the end, Apophis does swallow Ra, but Carter and Sadie are able to use a spell that sends him back to the Duat and end his reign of chaos. This also sends the gods away, however, leaving the mortals to care for themselves in the future.

## Setne

Setne is a magician from ancient times who is more of a con artist than a benevolent being. Setne made a living stealing things, including books of spells and other artifacts that would allow him to control the gods. Setne wanted to become a god himself. Now Setne is the only one who knows how to find Apophis's shadow in order to stop him. For this reason, Carter and Sadie convince their father to release Setne to their care. Setne lives up to his reputation as a con man on many occasions when he sets Carter and Zia up for death not once but three times. However, Carter and the others are able to control Setne until the chaos of the battle against Apophis allows Setne to disappear. The author implies that Setne will appear in another of his novels at the end of this one.

## Bes

Bes is the god of dwarfs. Bes is an ugly man who uses his ugliness as a weapon against his enemies. In a previous novel, Bes became somewhat catatonic when a part of his soul was taken in a card game. Sadie, who was close to Bes, often visits him in the retirement home for gods that he is now living in. However, she has never stopped looking for a way to restore his soul. When she learns about shadows, she decides to try a reverse of the spell they want to use on Apophis to try to reverse Bes's condition. It works and Bes comes to help Carter and Sadie with the fight against Apophis.

## **Bast**

Bast is the god of cats. Bast is something of a guardian to Carter and the others at Brooklyn House. It is from Bast that Carter and Sadie learn about the importance of the shadow to the soul of a god, giving them the idea of how to stop Apophis. Bast also fights alongside Carter and the others when Apophis rises.



# Objects/Places

## Shabti

Sadie and Walt use a wax shabti or small statue that looks like Bes, to hold the shadow of Bes in an attempt to restore his soul. Later, Carter and Zia do the same with a similar shabti to capture the soul of Apophis.

## Falcon Amulet

Zia uses a falcon amulet to save she and Carter from their damaged ship. With magic, Zia is able to turn the amulet into a real falcon.

## Book of Thoth

The Book of Thoth is a scroll written by the god of knowledge, Thoth. Setne has stolen this scroll in order to use it to control the gods, but he died before he could make much use of the information in it. However, Setne is able to use this book to help Carter and Zia find Apophis's shadow.

## Ra's Crooks and Flail

While fighting Bloodstained Blade, Carter reaches into the Duat for a weapon and comes up with the crook and flail. Carter initially thinks this is a mistake because of the chaos of Apophis's rising, but later discovers that it is because he is destined to become the next pharaoh and lead the people who believe in the ancient Egyptian ways.

## Duat

The Duat is another reality within the reality of mortals where magicians, gods, and other immortal creatures live. As magicians and vessels of the gods, Carter, Sadie, and their friends can travel in and out of the Duat.

## Land of the Demons

Land of the Demons is a place in the underworld. In this land exists the Sea of Chaos and it is here that Carter and Zia find Apophis's shadow.



## **Hall of Judgment**

The Hall of Judgment is a place in the Duat where Osiris judges the worthiness of dead souls to either enter the afterlife or have their souls devoured by Ammit.

## **Brooklyn House**

Brooklyn House is a nome of magicians who practice Egyptian magic. Carter's uncle, Amos, once ran this house and has left Carter in charge.

## **The First Nome**

The First Nome is the first nome of magicians formed to train and practice Egyptian magic. Amos is the Chief Lector, in charge of the First Nome and magicians throughout the world who follow Egyptian beliefs.

## **Dallas Museum of Art**

The novel begins at the Dallas Museum of Art where there is on display in a collection of King Tut artifacts the final remaining Book of Overcoming Apophis written by Setne.



# Themes

## Ancient Egyptian Gods

Carter and Sadie Kane discovered in an earlier novel of this series that their family is directly related to ancient Egyptian gods and as a result are able to use the magic that stems from this ancient history. Carter and Sadie did not know each other well because they were raised separately after their mother's death. However, they have been forced to come together to stop the chaos their father has released on the world with his magic use.

Carter has discovered that he is a vessel for the god of war, Horus. Carter of the channels Horus' powers, becoming an avatar of Horus, that allows him to use these powers to fight evil. However, this power is nearly useless against the god of chaos, Apophis, who has been released from the depths of the Duat and begun to rise into the mortal world, intent on destroying the mortal world. For this reason, Carter must use his intelligence and other powers to find a way to stop Apophis.

Sadie has discovered that she is the vessel of Isis, the wife of Osiris and mother of Horus. Sadie often uses Isis's powers to move through both the mortal world and the Duat. Due to their connection to one another, Sadie and Isis are intimately aware of one another. For this reason, Sadie becomes deeply annoyed when Isis tries to keep Sadie and the god of death, Anubis, away from one another. It is a strange relationship, almost parent and child, that leaves Sadie struggling even as she must use her own magical powers and intelligence to help stop Apophis from destroying the mortal world.

## Family Relationships

Carter and Sadie's parents have both embraced the magic of ancient Egypt and become more than mortals. Sadie's mother died when she and Carter were still young, but their father continued to live. However, in becoming Osiris's vessel, their father made the decision to remain living in the Underworld so that he might be close to his deceased wife. This leaves Carter and Sadie basically on their own, but able to visit their parents from time to time in visits to the Underworld.

Carter and Sadie have an uncle, Amos, with whom they lived at Brooklyn House. However, their uncle became the Chief Lector at the First Nome, leaving Carter and Sadie on their own. In fact, Carter has become leader of Brooklyn House, in charge of all the initiates who have come there to hone their magical skills.

Despite being on their own, away from their biological family, Carter and Sadie have created something of a family among the initiates at Brooklyn House. Carter feels like a big brother to the little kids whose parents have entrusted him with the care of their children as they learn magic. As magicians, friends and gods, Carter and Sadie have



created their own family, making family an important theme of this novel on multiple levels.

## Coming of Age

Carter and Sadie find themselves fighting to save the world in this novel. Apophis, the god of chaos, is rising and threatening to eat Ra and destroy the mortal world. Carter and Sadie are struggling to stop this while trying to live something of a normal life.

Carter is in love. Zia is a fire warrior, a young magician who is working closely with Ra and Amos at the First Nome. Carter spent a great deal of time with Zia in earlier novels and he cannot get her out of his mind. However, developing a romance at this point in his life is difficult as he struggles with his new role as leader of Brooklyn House as well as trying to stop Apophis. Therefore, when Zia becomes a vessel to the sun god, Ra, Carter is thrown for a loop that most normal teenagers do not have to face. It is a difficult time for Carter, especially when he is made leader over all the Egyptian magicians, but Carter deals with it with grace and strength, finally winning the girl and the power of leader.

Sadie is in love with two boys. Walt is a mortal magician whose family curse has him dying in great pain. Anubis is the son of Set, the god of death who has never possessed a mortal or had the experiences of older gods. Both are handsome, kind, and caring, both perfect boyfriend material. Therefore, when the boys become one upon the moment of Walt's death, one would think it would be the perfect solution to Sadie's problem, but it only makes it more difficult for Sadie to separate her feelings for each boy. In the end, Sadie decides she can love them both as one. Not a normal situation for a more than normal teen. In the end, like Carter, Sadie proves herself to have grown into a mature young woman who can make the right choices without the guidance of gods or parents.

# Style

## Point of View

The novel is written in the first-person point of view. There are two narrators, Carter and Sadie. The novel is written from taped interviews with these two characters, taking turns in telling a story in which each played a starring role. Sadie takes the first two chapters, then Carter takes two, then Sadie and so on. It is a unique way to tell a story in the first person point of view, but the author handles it well and it works well within the plot.

The point of view allows for each character to tell the story from a unique point of view. Sadie talks about things she saw and witnessed, as well as things that matter greatly to her, such as her relationship with Walt and Anubis. On the other hand, Carter is able to tell the story as he sees it as well as things only he knows about, such as his relationship with Zia. At the same time, each character is able, and often does, comment on the other character's commentary throughout the novel, injecting into the plot some playfulness as well as insight into this unique brother-sister relationship. For this reason, this point of view works well with the overall plot.

## Setting

The novel is set all over the world and in the Underworld. The novel begins in Dallas, Texas, moves to Brooklyn, New York, and then moves again. The characters travel to Memphis, Tennessee and then to Egypt. The novel also moves around in the Underworld and the Duat, a place that exists just under the reality of the mortal world where gods and magicians, as well as other immortal creatures exist.

The setting of this novel is diverse in its movement all over the United States and Egypt. The author also includes many magical locations for the characters to visit, such as the retirement home for elderly gods who can no longer care for themselves. The author uses a great deal of imagination as well as historical fact to create the settings of this novel. The reader feels as though they can actually see and visit these wonderful locations, filled with both humor and danger. For this reason, the settings of this novel work well with the plot.

## Language and Meaning

The novel is written in simple English. The main characters are American and English teenagers and they speak in the language common to children of their age and background. The author also includes many symbols of ancient hieroglyphics, as this is a common result of the magic these characters use. This includes words that readers might not be familiar with, but are quickly and clearly explained in the novel.



The language of this novel is authentic to the characters and the settings of the novel. There is little use of slang or other confusing phrases or words used in the novel that is not quickly explained in the text of the novel. Hence, the language of this novel works well with the plot of the novel.

## **Structure**

The novel is written in twenty-two chapters. Each chapter is narrated by one or the other of the main characters, Carter and Sadie Kane. The chapters have a title that is inspired by dialogue or actions that take place in the chapter. Each chapter is fairly short.

The novel contains one main plot and multiple subplots. The main plot follows Carter and Sadie Kane as they attempt to stop the god of chaos, Apophis, from destroying the world. One subplot follows Sadie's struggles in her affections for both Walt and Anubis. Another subplot follows Carter's relationship with Zia. Yet another subplot follows the exploits of Setne as Carter and Zia use him to help them find Apophis's shadow. All the plot come to a satisfying conclusion at the end of the novel.



## Quotes

"I you're listening to this, congratulations! You survived Doomsday" (Chapter 1, p. 10).

"It's not easy finding a place to stash a griffin, especially when he's pulling a boat" (Chapter 3, p. 32).

"Honestly, he drones on and on about his plans for the Apocalypse, but he makes no plans at all for the school dance. My brother's priorities are severely skewed" (Chapter 5, p. 60).

"He threw glowing hieroglyphs like grenades, causing iridescent explosions all around him" (Chapter 7, p. 87).

"I'd become quite an expert at visiting the godly nursing home—which was a sad statement on my life" (Chapter 9, p. 110).

"Sadie and Walt go off looking for a friendly shadow, while Zia and I escort a psychotic murderous ghost to his heavily trapped stash of forbidden magic. Gee, who got the better end of that deal" (Chapter 11, p. 143).

"Being surprised by a giant crocodile in the Nile is something you usually want to avoid, but Philip was a welcome sight" (Chapter 13, p. 171).

"Where Walt lay, I saw a different person, like a superimposed image...a young man lying weak and pale, in a gold neckband and black Egyptian kilt, with familiar brown eyes and a sad smile. Deeper still, I saw the glowing gray radiance of a god, the jackal-headed form of Anubis" (Chapter 14, p. 191).

"Here's some free advice: Don't walk toward Chaos" (Chapter 16, p. 207).

"Actually, being offered kingship of the universe (or supreme command over gods and magicians, or whatever) pretty much had me shaking in my shoes" (Chapter 19, p. 243).

"If a person cast no shadow at all, he couldn't be alive. His existence became meaningless. Execrating Apophis by destroying his shadow would cut his connection to the mortal world completely. He'd never be able to rise again" (Chapter 20, p. 253).

"But for now, I plan on enjoying my life, annoying my brother as much as possible, and making Walt into a proper boyfriend while keeping the other girls away from him—most likely with a flamethrower. My work is never done" (Chapter 22, p. 277).



## Topics for Discussion

Who is Carter Kane? Why is he in charge of Brooklyn House? How does he feel about this? What happens when Carter takes a group of magicians to Dallas to save the finally copy of the Book of Overcoming Apophis? How does Carter feel about this outcome? How does it overshadow his decisions for the rest of the novel? Is this a good or bad thing?

Who is Sadie Kane? Where did she grow up? Why has she gone to Dallas? What does Sadie save during Apophis's attack at the museum? Why? Who told her to save it? What does Sadie hope it will tell her? What spell does Sadie invoke to stop the destruction of the Dallas Museum of Art? What happens to Sadie afterward? Who does she see?

Who is Walt? Why is he in terrible pain? What is the expected result of this condition? Is there any way to stop it? Why or why not? How does Sadie feel about Walt? What does Walt tell Carter might be done to stop his dying? How does Carter feel about this? Who does Walt want to speak to about this plan before agreeing to it? Why?

Who is Apophis? Why is he trying to destroy the world? Why do Carter and Sadie want to stop him? What does Apophis promise Carter if he hands over Ra? Why? Does Carter consider the deal? Why or why not? What does Carter want to do to stop Apophis? Will it work? What must be done?

Who is Ra? Why is Ra important to the fight against Apophis? What does Carter hope he will do? What is wrong with Ra? How did this happen? How might he be cured? What if they cannot bring Ra back before Apophis rises? Who has been spending a great deal of time with Ra? What does this suggest about Ra's future?

Who is Setne? Why do Carter and Sadie save him from the judgment of Osiris? What do they hope Setne will do for them? Why does Osiris fear that Setne will escape? What danger does Setne pose to Carter, Sadie, and others? Why does Osiris finally agree to allow Carter to take Setne? What trouble does Setne represent for Carter? Why does Setne agree to help Carter?

Who is Jacobi? Why does she blame Carter and Sadie for everything that has happened recently in the lives of Egyptian magicians? Why does she not trust Amos? Why does Jacobi decide to help Apophis rise and destroy the world? What is the result of this partnership? What happens to Jacobi in the end? Was it justified by her actions?