

Winter Fire (Witchling Series) Study Guide

Winter Fire (Witchling Series) by Lizzy Ford

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Plot Summary

Winter Fire is the third novel in the Witchling Series by Lizzy Ford. In this novel, Beck finds his counterbalance in fiery redhead Morgan, but he is unaware that she has a dark secret that could destroy all Beck has been working for since becoming the Master of Light. At the same time, Beck is battling with his ex-girlfriend. He is determined to get custody of their daughter now that he knows Dawn's identity. Winter Fire is a fitting conclusion to a unique trilogy.

Beck Turner has had a tough few weeks. First, he had to fight to prove his innocence in the death of Tonya, a young girl he dated briefly before she was found stabbed to death in an abandoned ski lodge. Second, he is embroiled in a bitter custody fight for his unborn daughter with ex-girlfriend Dawn. Third, Beck has only recently taken on the role as Master of Light, and he is still struggling to figure out all the rules and duties of his new job. Very little time has been left for Beck to date. That's unfortunate because he cannot get Morgan MacLeod off his mind.

Even as Beck tries to forget Morgan, however, Amber reminds him that he promised to be her mentor. It seems Morgan is having trouble in class, often not going or not doing the homework. Beck pulls her aside to talk about this situation, but Morgan is belligerent and unwilling to promise anything. Beck then learns that Morgan has a dislike of Christmas that appears to stem from some tragedy. It makes Beck more determined than ever to help her.

At the same time, Morgan feels drawn to Beck but dislikes his reputation as a womanizer. She vows to stay away from him until the yeti, Sam, tells her that Beck needs her help. Morgan promises to keep an eye out for Beck. For this reason, Morgan reluctantly accepts a date with Beck to go see Christmas lights. The date begins well, but it begins to go downhill when first Decker and Summer show up and then Dawn arrives.

Dawn and Beck argue as Dawn tries once again to convince Beck they would all be better off if he would just agree to marry her. Morgan senses Beck's pain in dealing with Dawn and charges to his side. Dawn is not impressed, and Beck worries that Dawn will know that he and Morgan are dating. For this reason, Beck tells Dawn that Morgan is not his type. This upsets Morgan even though she and Beck share a kiss when he takes her home.



Chapters 1-6

Summary

Chapter 1

Beck Turner has just returned to school after struggling for several weeks to prove his innocence in the death of a fellow student. Beck knows who committed the murder, but he cannot tell the police the truth because he learned it through magic. For this reason, Beck must play by the rules of the legal system. At the same time, Beck is embroiled in the middle of a custody fight for his unborn daughter with the same woman who had the student murdered and attempted twice to murder Summer, the girlfriend of Beck's brother, Decker.

To try and calm his emotions, Beck goes into the woods and speaks with Sam, the yeti who is something of a go-between for the elements and the Witchlings. Sam offers both advice and comfort to Beck.

Chapter 2

Summer runs out to the driveway to see Decker who is not allowed on the Light Campus because of the diminishing Light source underneath it. They discuss his nightly activities and decide to spend the night together at his parents' cabin. Beck comes up on them and tells them that the baby is definitely his, meaning the legal struggles will only continue.

Chapter 3

Morgan MacLeod stares at the soul stone her mother gave to her when she was younger. Morgan's uncle told her that if she wants to save her dad, she had to put the soul stone in the heart of the Light. Morgan does not understand the stone's power, and it frightens her. Morgan goes outside and runs into Beck while complaining about the Christmas tree. Beck talks to Morgan about her recent troubles in class. Morgan is not interested and assures Beck that things will get better after the holidays.

While Beck is interested in Morgan, he realizes that her brother does not support the idea. This seems like a good reason to avoid her. However, Amber, the Light Arts director, tells Beck that he promised to mentor Morgan and he is falling down on the job. If something does not change soon, Amber will have to call Morgan's parents or put her in counseling. Beck speaks to Connor about what Amber said, sparking a fight between the siblings.

Beck goes into the woods and discovers the stretch of the Light has lessened by more than a foot in just a short time. He is frustrated because he cannot find a reason for it. Beck speaks to his mother about it briefly; however, even though she is the former Mistress of darkness, she cannot figure it out either.



Chapter 4

Morgan is walking in the woods when she runs into Beck. They talk for a time about Morgan's class trouble, and he asks her to go see the Christmas lights display with him. Morgan refuses to commit. After Beck leaves, Morgan meets Sam. Sam tells Morgan that Beck needs her help Morgan promises Sam that she will do what she can. Later, Morgan meets Sonya at dinner.

Chapter 5

Beck comes to Morgan's room and asks her again to go see the Christmas lights with him. Remembering her promise to Sam, Morgan agrees. They talk on the way and actually enjoy the company of each other. At the boardwalk, Morgan is surprised how much she enjoys the display. Morgan and Beck are getting along well until they are interrupted by the arrival of Summer and Decker. Morgan walks off with Summer so that Beck and Decker can talk.

Chapter 6

Decker suggests that Morgan might be Beck's counterbalance, but he warns him that she has been hurt by someone Dark. Decker then asks Beck if he has decided to let Decker kill Dawn. Beck refuses to ask Decker to kill her. He states that he could not live with himself if he were responsible for the death of his child's mother. Decker walks away, leaving Beck alone. Within minutes, Dawn is at his side. She is angry that he has ignored her texts even though they were told by the judge to stay away from one another. Dawn berates Beck, once again insisting that the whole situation could be solved if he would just marry her and make a family. Beck refuses. The whole time Beck keeps his cool, being careful with everything he says. However, Dawn knows how to push his buttons. As Beck becomes angry and hurt, Morgan senses his emotions and comes to his rescue, much to his chagrin.

Analysis

This novel focuses on Beck, the Master of Light and twin to the Master of Darkness. Beck has been embroiled in several legal fights lately. In the previous novel, Beck's ex-girlfriend and future mother of his daughter was responsible for the kidnapping and murder of a girl Beck dated once. Since Beck found the body, the police immediately focused on him, forcing him to have to prove his innocence in the murder of fellow student, Tonya. Dawn was also responsible for attacking Decker's girlfriend, Summer. It was her second time to do so. Beck has become convinced that Dawn is not a suitable parent to his daughter, especially since she has gone Dark causing their child to be born in some place between Light and Dark. For this reason they are also embroiled in a legal battle of which Dawn continuously ignores the boundaries established by the judge.

Beck's life is in chaos, and it is only growing worse. Beck has also just recently become the Master of Light. Due to the fact that the previous Mistress died many years ago,



Beck has no one to help him navigate the complicated process of learning all his duties and how his new magic works. To add to his problems, the source of Light magic under the Light campus is shrinking and Beck cannot figure out why. Not even his mother, the former Mistress of Dark, has an answer. This leaves Beck fighting a battle against an unknown enemy.

To add to Beck's troubles, there is a girl at the school he finds overwhelmingly attractive. Morgan MacLeod is a new student who has troubles and secrets of her own. However, Beck finds her irresistible and knows that they could have a good relationship, but he has so much going on now that he cannot start a relationship. Another reason to keep his distance from Morgan is Dawn's behavior. She killed one of his girlfriends and attempted to kill another.

Discussion Question 1

Who is Beck? What is his role in the Witchling world? How has this responsibility complicated his life?

Discussion Question 2

Who is Dawn? Why does she want to be with Beck? How does Beck feel about her?

Discussion Question 3

Who is Morgan? What is the soul stone? What is Morgan to do with the soul stone? Why?

Vocabulary

Funeral, contributed, memories, accessing, candidness, confronting, scare, Witchlings, vow, master, spite, believed, slipping, kidnap, chances, hesitation, silently, protect, despite, reminded, natural, comfortable, surrounded, curious, agitated, yearning, transform, intense, careful, distracted.



Chapters 7-11

Summary

Chapter 7

Morgan senses Beck's pain and rushes to his side where she openly confronts Dawn. Dawn accuses Beck of dating Morgan. To protect Morgan, Beck makes it clear that he does not consider Morgan his type. Morgan is wounded by this and later has trouble letting it go even as she continues to stand up for Beck against Dawn. Beck drives Dawn back to the school and tries to draw her out, but he can see that she is angry. Finally, he tells her that they cannot see one another again. However, before she goes, Beck asks for a kiss. Both are blown away by the kiss.

Chapter 8

Noah, Dawn's brother, drives her home from the boardwalk, trying to calm her after her confrontation with Beck. When Dawn arrives at her dorm, she hears a voice speaking to her. Dawn answers only to discover it is the Dark spirit of Bartholomew the Terrible, the last Master of Dark who allowed the Darkness to completely overtake him. Bartholomew wants the soul stone and promises Dawn that if she helps him get it, he will kill Beck's counterbalance to open the way for Dawn and Beck to be together. Dawn agrees, inviting Bartholomew into her.

Chapter 9

Beck sits with his father in the woods. Michael is a calming influence who helps Beck focus on his responsibilities. Beck connects with the earth to try and find other Witchlings who would benefit by coming to the school. Beck finds one in Arizona. The earth magic then shows him an image of the soul stone, but he does not know what it is.

Afterward, in a need to blow off some energy, Beck goes to the gym to scare up a wrestling match. Beck is surprised to find Morgan wrestling under the direction of Connor and winning her matches against male students. Connor suggests that Morgan and Beck wrestle. Beck is reluctant at first, but Morgan's stubbornness changes his mind. They wrestle, but Beck resists Morgan's attempts to use fire magic. He wins, and Morgan leaves the gym in anger.

Beck takes the opportunity to ask Connor about their home situation. Connor tells Beck that after his parents' divorce, Morgan went to live with their dad while Connor stayed with his mom. Connor and his mother believe Morgan is being beaten by her father. Connor says there is also something else, something that happened at Christmas, but he will not say what. Beck also learns that Morgan had gotten into a fight with Alexa, Dawn's friend, that day in the woods.

Chapter 10



Morgan turns in an assignment in class before they get ready to travel to the Dark campus. When they arrive, Decker is waiting to lead the tour. Decker pulls Morgan aside and promises to help her learn to control her fire. When Morgan meets Noah, she finds him nicer than his sister Dawn.

Chapter 11

Morgan goes for a walk. After taking a call from her dad, she runs into Alexa again, along with Dawn. Morgan tries to apologize for their earlier fight, but Alexa makes it clear that she has come back to hurt Morgan. This time Alexa has brought a big man with her. Morgan holds her own for a few minutes, but the man begins to get the better of her. Decker shows up and stops the fight. He calls Beck who heals Morgan's injuries and walks her back to her dorm. Adam shows up and asks Morgan to the charity dinner at Beck's request. Morgan reluctantly agrees.

Analysis

Morgan meets Dawn in a confrontation brought on by Morgan's sense of Beck's pain. It does not go well, and Beck is worried that Dawn will target Morgan as she did Tonya. For this reason, Beck lies about his attraction to Morgan and tries to end their relationship. However, they seem to be drawn to each other almost involuntarily. The more that Beck learns about Morgan, the more he wants to help her despite her stubborn refusal to let him.

Morgan goes to the Dark campus where she sees some of the things that other fire elements can do with their magic. Decker promises to help her learn to control her fire, something she has been desperately trying to do on her own. Morgan has a high level of knowledge with her magic, but there are still things she needs to learn with such a volatile magic.

Morgan has been attacked by Alexa. The reader of previous novels in this series know that Alexa is Dawn's go to girl for these types of things. Therefore, it is clear that Alexa is after Morgan in revenge for dating Beck. Morgan is confronted again. It could have turned ugly if Decker had not been aware of the trouble and come to break it up. Morgan is a proud girl. Despite her deep attraction to Beck, she struggles with his knight in shining armor act .

Discussion Question 1

Why does Dawn confront Beck at the boardwalk? What does she want? Why does Beck resist her?



Discussion Question 2

Why does Beck not want Dawn to know he is dating Morgan? How does this place Morgan in danger?

Discussion Question 3

What does Connor reveal about Morgan's home life? How is this significant to Morgan's behavior at school and her relationship with Beck?

Vocabulary

Wrinkles, ruffles, formal, decent, impressing, concerned, formal, interested, genuinely, appeared, pleased, anxious, critical, distraction, interested, charity, invited, knowledge, options, assumption, painful, nerdy, wondering, fundraiser, gangly, demanded, embarrassed, anxious.



Chapters 12-16

Summary

Chapter 12

Beck and Morgan are teamed up in an Advanced Magic class. Beck uses his earth magic to show images the earth wants her to see. Morgan gets upset when one of the images is of a tree being cut down. Morgan tells Beck that his magic heals while hers destroys and she walks away. Immediately afterward Beck gets a call from Noah. They meet in the parking lot and Noah asks Beck to drop the legal case against Dawn until the family can repair its financial woes. Beck refuses and tells Noah what Dawn did to Tonya.

Beck goes to speak with Sam. Sam gives Beck a brief history on the Darkness and the soul stone. Sam urges Beck to help Morgan pass her trial and become a Light Witchling. The Light needs a Fire Witchling.

Chapter 13

Adam takes Morgan to the charity dinner where she meets not only Adam's parents, but Beck's as well. Morgan is distracted by Beck so she slips outside, but he follows. Beck tells her he wanted to ask her to the dinner, but he was afraid of Dawn finding out. Beck then takes Morgan to his cousin's wedding where she meets more of his family and sees him with his cousins. Beck and Morgan admit their feelings for one another despite the danger.

Chapter 14

Someone burned down the Christmas tree, and everyone thinks it was Morgan. Connor is forced to protect her from angry students. Morgan has an attack of self doubt, especially when she holds the soul stone and feels its evil for the first time. Beck comes to Morgan and offers to go with her to Amber. When Beck tells Amber that Morgan was with him all night, Amber says there will be no investigation of Morgan. Then, Amber tells Beck that Morgan's father is coming. Beck tells her about the abuse in Morgan's home and asks that her father not be allowed to visit. Morgan is packing to leave, but Beck talks her into going with him. Then, Beck finds the soul stone. Beck tries to touch it, and it freezes his magic.

Chapter 15

Amber comes to the room and finds Beck unconscious. Morgan runs and finds herself running straight into Amber and a group of Dark Witchlings. Morgan falls unconscious after she is Tasered several times.

Chapter 16



Bartholomew has grown strong in Dawn's mind. Bartholomew does not trust the people Dawn trusts, especially Alexa and Noah. Isaac, boy whom Dawn had hired to start the fire that would frame Morgan, comes. Bartholomew takes over Dawn's body and kills him. Bartholomew then wants to do the same to Noah, but Dawn manages to keep hold of her mind and stop him. However, Bartholomew is still determined, and he is strong.

Analysis

Beck learns about the soul stone and grows concerned about its ability to destroy the Light source. Therefore, when he finds it in Morgan's room, he knows immediately what it is and worries that Morgan has been lying to him all along. Despite Sam's warnings that only a Fire Witchling can touch the stone, Beck touches it and immediately falls into a coma. Morgan, who has just been accused of burning down the Christmas tree, flees only to find herself surrounded by Alexa and her henchmen.

Morgan is a frightened, stubborn young woman who has lived in a Dark household for so long that she knows no other way to survive. Beck's kindness draws her in, but she struggles with her desire to trust him. It is a difficult relationship for both of them as they have both been hurt. Beck and Morgan worry that they might place their trust in the wrong person. When the stone hurts Beck, it seems to be the last straw for Morgan.

Dawn has allowed Bartholomew the Terrible into her mind, and he is taking over. Dawn shows some depth of humanity that was not there before when Bartholomew threatens her brother, but the reader must wonder if Dawn is strong enough to fight him off indefinitely.

Discussion Question 1

What is the soul stone? What is its purpose? How does Morgan have it?

Discussion Question 2

Why does Beck believe Morgan did not burn the Christmas tree? Who burned the Christmas tree? Why does everyone assume it was Morgan?

Discussion Question 3

Why is Bartholomew inside Dawn's mind? What does he want? What is he doing?

Vocabulary

Destroy, silence, direction, heaved, hyperventilating, disgusted, retorted, managed, unwilling, demanded, recognition, furniture, screamed, surprisingly, fluttered,

unconsciousness, involuntarily, accident, concentrating, excitement, appeared, intended.



Chapters 17-21

Summary

Chapter 17

Morgan wakes in a cement encased room with Summer and Biji. Summer and Biji cannot use their magic because of the cement, but Morgan uses hers to free them of their restraints. Summer offers hope by saying the Decker can track Dark Witchlings and Beck Light. The girls search for an exit and find one. While they are trying to cross a rotted section of floor, Morgan falls and breaks her leg. Noah brings her back upstairs and tells her no one meant her harm, but he is surprised to learn that Alexa had Tasered her. Biji has gotten away. Summer and Morgan try to convince Noah that Dawn wants to kill them.

Chapter 18

Beck wakes after his mother and Decker use their fire magic to reverse the effects of the soul stone. Decker tells Beck that Morgan tried to kill him and that she is now missing, along with Alexa, Summer, and Biji. Decker and Beck cannot use their magic until they finish their rite of passage. Decker and Beck rush off to find the girls, and Connor insists on going, too. Biji calls Decker and tells him they are at one of the abandoned resorts, but she does not know which one.

Chapter 19

Biji locates the lake and begins to cross it in hopes of finding the Turner twins. Noah finds her first. Noah continues to refuse to believe Dawn wants to kill Morgan and Summer. Biji falls through the ice, but Noah saves her and builds a fire to warm her. When Biji begins to recover, she and Noah argue more about Dawn. Noah refuses to believe her no matter what she says. Finally, he leaves Biji alone, and she returns to the lake.

Chapter 20

Dawn has arrived, and she begins interrogating Morgan despite the fact she has a fever from her broken leg. Dawn wants to know the location of the soul stone. Convinced she has killed Beck, Morgan tells her. Noah argues with Dawn as Dawn tries to figure out what to do with Morgan and Summer. Dawn sends Noah away and gives orders that he be tied up, but he escapes. Dawn then has Morgan and Summer placed in a sarcophagus.

Chapter 21

Morgan and Summer struggle to try and get out of the sarcophagus while Summer tries sending her thoughts to Decker.



Analysis

Morgan, Summer, and Biji have been kidnapped and are being held in the basement of an abandoned ski lodge. Summer leads them out and tries to find a way to escape. They are caught, and Morgan breaks her leg. Biji gets away, but Summer and Morgan are left to the mercy of Dawn and her friends. It is a dark situation made darker by the fact that Dawn is under the control of Bartholomew.

Beck recovers, but Decker thinks that Morgan is responsible. Beck's track record with women is not good, so it is not unreasonable to think Morgan might be bad. However, Beck is determined to believe she is good, so he and Decker go after her in hopes of saving her and Summer, only they do not have their magic. The situation is made more complicated when Dawn places Summer and Morgan in a sarcophagus in the hopes of suffocating Morgan's fire magic. It is a desperate situation, and the reader begins to wonder if Dawn might win this time.

Discussion Question 1

Why does Dawn dislike Morgan? Why does she want to kill her?

Discussion Question 2

Why does Noah refuse to believe the truth about his sister? What suggests that he might start to believe?

Discussion Question 3

Why does Dawn place Summer and Morgan in a sarcophagus? What does she hope will happen?

Vocabulary

Returning, happened, remembered, focus, fault, uncertain, incredible, courage, orphan, silence, finished, murmured, orphanage, conditions, throbbing, exhausted, dangerous, disturbed, happened, fighting, instantly, familiar, hastily, gasped.



Chapters 22-26

Summary

Chapter 22

Biji is suffering from hypothermia when Noah comes back to her. Noah tells her he believes his sister is going to kill Morgan and Summer and they have to save them. Noah helps Biji cross the lake using his water magic to reach a cemetery where Noah thinks Dawn took them.

Chapter 23

Connor uses his water magic to track Biji. When they cross the river, they find the abandoned resort where Dawn had held Morgan and Summer. Beck and Decker separate, Decker to find Biji and Beck Morgan. Beck struggles to figure out what Dawn might have done with the girls. As he struggles to figure it out, he finds a mysterious text that shows Morgan and Summer in a sarcophagus. Decker is closer to the small cemetery, so Beck gives him the clue and rushes to join him.

Chapter 24

Biji and Noah are caught by Alexa. They attack Noah, but Noah gets the upper hand. Biji then rush into the cemetery and find Summer and Morgan when they see one of the sarcophagi glowing.

Chapter 25

Noah and Morgan leave the cemetery and find Decker in the woods. Morgan shows Decker the soul stone and tells him she has to get rid of it before Dawn comes back. Morgan wants to run away to protect the Light and Beck, but Decker argues that she will only hurt Beck more. Decker goes to pickup Biji and Summer then drives everyone to the lodge. As they stand outside the vehicle, Morgan drives it onto the ice. Beck goes to save Morgan, but the vehicle falls through the ice. Decker stops Beck from going into the water after Morgan. Sam calls to Decker and brings him to the woods.

Chapter 26

Noah helps Morgan out of the water with his water magic. Morgan remains determined to leave, but Noah wants her to go to a hospital. Morgan's feelings for Beck cause her to hesitate. Sam pulls Morgan to her and instructs Decker to help her leave. Sam heals Morgan's leg and sends her away. Decker promises to keep in touch and help her figure out what to do with the soul stone.



Analysis

Noah begins to believe the stories about his sister and chooses to help Biji because he likes her. Noah kills one of Dawn's people who tried to hurt him and this upsets Biji, suggesting danger in this new romance. However, they manage to rescue Summer and Morgan.

Morgan has the soul stone with her, but knows that Dawn will come after her soon to find it. For this reason, Morgan fakes her death. Sam then helps her to disappear with Decker's help. It is a sad ending, leaving Beck alone and unaware that his love is alive, but gone. It also leaves things open for another novel as there are many unresolved issues, such as Dawn's ultimate fate.

Discussion Question 1

Why does Noah change his mind about Dawn? What does Biji have to do with this change of heart?

Discussion Question 2

Why does Morgan believe Dawn will come back? What does she plan to do about it?

Discussion Question 3

Why does Sam help Morgan and Decker? What is his purpose? What will it mean for Beck?

Vocabulary

Matter, protect, trembled, possessions, accepted, amulet, possibility, written, protect, gentleness, secret, exhaustion, restored, protect, resistance, clenching, creature, familiar, situation, warranted, demanded, otherwise, pretend, recognize, frostbite, slightest, appealing, immersing, frigid.



Characters

Beck Turner

Beck is the Master of Light. Beck is embroiled in a huge mess as the novel begins, from being a suspect in a murder case to his attempts to gain legal custody of his unborn child to trying to heal the last heart of Light. On top of all of this, Beck has fallen in love with an unusual, stubborn girl at a time when he has no room in his life for a relationship.

Decker Turner

Decker is the Master of Dark. Decker's job is to keep an eye on the Dark Witchlings and punish those who break the laws of Darkness. Decker once nearly went totally Dark, but finding his counterbalance has helped heal him. Now Decker is intent on helping his brother find love, but when it seems that Morgan is as bad of news as Dawn was, Decker argues against the relationship until he realizes that Morgan has only Beck's best interests at heart. In the end, Decker helps Morgan run away. However, he only helps because it is in the best interest of everyone.

Morgan MacLeod

Morgan MacLeod is a Fire Witchling who is stuck between Light and Dark because both her parents are Dark. Morgan has been abused by her uncle and is determined to survive on her own, planning to run away when she turns eighteen. However, Morgan has a soul stone her mother gave to her that she is supposed to place in the Light source. Morgan has not attempted to do this, but it has attracted the attention of Bartholomew the Terrible who uses Dawn to get it. After her ordeal, Morgan realizes what a danger the stone is and she runs away to protect both the Light and Beck from the stone.

Connor MacCloud

Connor MacCloud is Morgan's overprotective brother. Connor is aware that Morgan has suffered abuse at home, assuming it is their father. However, it is their uncle who has been beating Morgan. For this reason, Connor goes above and beyond to protect Morgan from the boys at school. However, he relents with Beck because he is the Master of Light and seems a good fit for Morgan. When Morgan disappears, Connor insists on helping to find her, nearly killing himself trying to use his magic to reach her in time.



Summer

Summer is Decker's counterbalance, his soul mate. Summer is kidnapped with Morgan. Dawn tries to kill her for the third time. Summer keeps Morgan focused while they are locked inside a tomb waiting for rescue.

Biji

Biji is a friend of Summer's. When Morgan is kidnapped by Alexa, Biji and Summer are accidentally caught up in the drama. Biji manages to get away, but she is lost and cannot figure out her whereabouts. Then her phone dies. Noah finds her and convinces her that he can be trusted. Biji does not believe him at first, but then she comes around. Noah and Biji share a kiss. When Biji sees Noah kill a boy, she begins to doubt his nature.

Noah

Noah is Dawn's brother. Noah is a kind, gentle young man who believes his sister is innocent. Noah is told repeatedly all the things Dawn has done to people, including the kidnapping and murder of Tonya. Noah refuses to believe it until Dawn orders that he be tied up and stopped from preventing the murders of Summer and Morgan. Noah finally comes to his senses and helps rescue the two girls. He also tries to help Morgan hide the soul stone.

Dawn

Dawn is Beck's ex-girlfriend and the future mother of his daughter. Beck has been struggling with Dawn for months in an attempt to create a safe life for his daughter. Dawn, however, is determined to marry Beck so that she might have access to his family's great fortune. Dawn will stop at nothing to get Beck, including murdering her romantic rivals. It is this goal to win Beck that causes Dawn to allow Bartholomew into her mind. Bartholomew is a former Master of Dark who is on a quest to build up the Darkness so that it destroys the light. To this end, Bartholomew uses Dawn to help him find the soul stone. Fortunately, Morgan is able to outsmart both Bartholomew and Dawn and run away with the stone.

Alexa

Alexa is Dawn's friend. Alexa is the Dark Witchling who killed Tonya at Dawn's request and attempted to kill Summer twice. Alexa is a cold, dangerous person who will stop at nothing to please Dawn and to win Decker's affection. In the end, however, Decker is put into a position where he must kill Alexa for her actions.

Sam

Sam is a yeti who lives in the woods. Sam is something of a go-between for the elements and the Witchlings, often offering advice and information to help both Decker and Beck. Sam's job is to make sure the balance of Light and Dark remains, so he has been concentrating on helping Beck fix the Light source under the school. Unfortunately neither knows what is causing the problem until it is nearly too late. At the end, however, Sam is able to send Morgan away to help remove the problem despite the fact that she is Beck's counterbalance.



Symbols and Symbolism

Soul Stone

The soul stone is a stone that was once used to hold the souls of the Dark Witchlings. This particular stone is rare. It could be used to destroy the Light.

Amulet

All Witchlings wear amulets that hold their souls. Morgan is embarrassed by her amulet because it remains clear where everyone else's takes on a specific color.

Christmas Tree

Morgan dislikes Christmas because of something bad that happened to her. Morgan threatens to burn down the Christmas tree at the school several times. So, she is blamed when someone finally does it.

Crowbar

Noah kills one of Dawn's people with a crowbar after the boy attacks him.

Crystal Paperweight

Bartholomew uses a crystal weight to kill Isaac, one of Dawn's people, to keep him from revealing his role in burning the Christmas tree on the Light campus.

Taser

Morgan is Tasered when Alexa comes for a third time to kidnap Morgan and take her to Dawn.

Earth Visions

Beck shares with Morgan visions given to him by the earth magic. These visions upset her, however, because of the destructive nature of her magic.

Flames

Morgan produces small blue flames that make those who hold them feel good.



Stick

Morgan attends a traditional Indian wedding with Beck. During this ceremony, some of Beck's relatives try to get Morgan to throw a stick to see if she and Beck are meant to be. Morgan burns it instead.

Black SUV

Morgan fakes her death by driving a black SUV into the lake. Noah protects her with his water magic.



Settings

Nataniel School

Most of the novel takes place on the Light campus of the Nataniel School for Witchlings. This is a lovely school situated in the mountains. The school is designed to help teach Witchlings how to use their magic.

Abandoned Ski Lodge

Dawn has Morgan, Summer, and Biji taken to an abandoned ski lodge so that she can interrogate Morgan and then kill them. Biji escapes, but Dawn manages to lock Summer and Morgan in a sarcophagus in an attempt to suffocate them.

Woods

Sam, the yeti, lives in the woods. Decker and Beck often go to Sam to learn more about their powers and duties as well as to have someone to share the burdens of their roles as Masters of Dark and Light.



Themes and Motifs

Soul Mates

In the previous novels of this series, the author has introduced the idea that the master of Dark has a counterbalance, or soul mate, who is meant to be his mate. This person has a calming effect on the pain that is brought on by the work the Master of Darkness must do. The one time a Master of Dark lost his counterbalance, he went crazy and allowed the Darkness to take him over. This man, Bartholomew the Terrible, still exists as a soul who can enter the bodies of witchlings. Bartholomew still wants to grow the Darkness and destroy the Light.

It has never been discussed whether or not the Master of Light has a similar counterbalance. There has not been a Master of Light in a generation, so no one ever thought to investigate the possibility. However, as this novel begins, Beck meets a young redhead he cannot get out of his mind. This girl, who is named Morgan, is a Fire Witchling, the kind of element that would be a perfect balance to Beck's light. This girl is also someone he is deeply attracted to, a girl he cannot get out of his mind. Beck is clearly in love, supporting the idea that Morgan is his counterbalance. For this reason, having a soul mate is a theme of the novel.

Dark versus Light

Dark and Light have found a way to co-exist in the world despite the differing qualities each displays. In the past, there have been both Masters of Dark and Masters of Light who have been able to control their elements well enough to balance them. However, Darkness has grown in recent generations, in part because Beck's mother struggled with the Darkness and Decker lost control of it for several months when he first became the master. Now the source of Light has dwindled to one source and that is also beginning to die. Beck must find a way to grow it even as he helps Decker control the Darkness.

Darkness does not really have to be as bad as it seems. Many Dark Witchlings are not bad people. They often use their magic for good. However, there are some who enjoy using their magic in evil ways. It is these Witchlings that Decker is forced to watch closely, but even he cannot be aware of them all, such as Bartholomew who jumped from his mind to Dawn's. It is a difficult struggle, a delicate balance, and it is a major theme of the novel.

Jealousy versus True Love

Dawn believes she loves Beck. Dawn believes that Beck and she are meant to be together. Dawn is driven more by Beck's money, but she becomes enraged anytime



Beck appears to be interested in another girl. For this reason, Beck is afraid to date even when he meets his counterbalance.

Beck and Morgan find true love in one another. Not only are their elements compatible, there is a basic attraction that draws them to one another. When they are together it is like nothing else in the world matters. Beck has never considered that he might find love and settle down, but now that he has met Morgan, he has no trouble believing it. However, Dawn becomes an unmovable obstacle. Dawn is one of those who believes that if she cannot have what she wants, no one should. In the end, Dawn nearly destroys Beck's love out of greed and jealousy, making jealousy versus true love a theme of the novel.

Styles

Point of View

The point of view of this novel is third person omniscient. The author uses the main two characters of the novel as the narrators as well as several supporting characters. The author moves between the minds of her characters after careful breaks that alerts the reader to a change.

The point of view of this novel works well with the plot because it allows the reader to get to know the main characters, but it also allows the reader to see things happening within the plot that is important to the development of the plot. The third person point of view is less intimate than the first person, but the omniscient quality allows the author to tell a more rounded story than the restrictive first person. For this reason, this point of view works with this novel.

Language and Meaning

The language of this novel is simple English. The author uses the kind of language one would expect of young adults who have, or have not, had a higher education. Most of the characters in this novel are of high school age, therefore the language is simple enough to reflect this age and maturity level.

The language of this novel works with the novel because it stays authentic to both the characters and the intended audience. The novel does not contain a lot of foreign words, but does include some made up words that work with the genre of the novel. The author does this to create a more believable world and it works well with the plot.

Structure

The novel is divided into twenty-six chapters. The chapters vary in length, some quite long while others are fairly short. The story is told in a linear format with few flashbacks. The story is told both in narration and dialogue, giving the reader scenes rather than telling a story.

The novel contains one main plot and several subplots. The main plot follows the developing relationship between Morgan and Beck despite its many complications. One subplot follows Dawn's quest to win Beck back and her possession by Bartholomew. Another subplot follows the purpose of the soul stone and Bartholomew's attempts to steal it. All the plots come to a satisfying conclusion at the end of the novel.



Quotes

It was his first night back at the school after three weeks of hell: lawyers, police, grieving parents, and disappearing Light.

-- Beck (Chapter 1 paragraph 2)

Importance: This quote shows how hard Beck's life has been recently.

You want your daddy to live, put the soul stone in the heart of the Light.

-- Morgan (Chapter 3 paragraph 1)

Importance: This is the reason Morgan has brought the soul stone to the school and why she was finally allowed to attend. Morgan has no intention of doing so, however.

Not really. I'm not a fan of Christmas.

-- Morgan (Chapter 5 paragraph 4)

Importance: This begins Morgan's hints of something bad that happened at Christmas, but it is a mystery that is not really revealed.

Pain. Not hers, but it was strong.

-- Morgan (Chapter 7 paragraph 2)

Importance: This shows Morgan's sensitivity to pain.

I can help you, it said.

-- Dawn (Chapter 8 paragraph 2)

Importance: This is the beginning of Dawn's experiences with Bartholomew.

It didn't look much like a star, but she couldn't yet manipulate the fire magick into shapes.

-- Morgan (Chapter 10 paragraph 10)

Importance: This shows Morgan is talented, but she still has some things to learn.

Better, what would it feel like, being with someone who really could handle the mess that was her life?

-- Morgan (Chapter 13 paragraph 9)

Importance: This shows Morgan's feelings toward the idea of finding love.

With the soul stone, we can wipe out Light. Permanently.

-- Bartholomew (Chapter 16 paragraph 1)

Importance: This shows Bartholomew's motive in using Dawn to get the soul stone.



Focused only on getting away, she wasn't even sure which way she'd come from.
-- Biji (Chapter 19 paragraph 4)

Importance: This expresses Biji's frustration at not being able to help Summer and Morgan.

Summer was reminded of Decker, the night she barely saved him from darkness.
-- Summer (Chapter 21 paragraph 1)

Importance: Summer's thoughts turn to Decker even as she fights for her life, showing the depth of their love.

Why Noah didn't turn her in, she didn't know, but it was clear he was still working for his sister.
-- Biji (Chapter 24 paragraph 4)

Importance: This shows how quickly trust runs out in a new relationship.

The amulet was a reminder of how much she didn't fit in with the witchlings and how lucky Beck was to not have her in his life, which one day he would come to realize.
-- Morgan (Chapter 26 paragraph 16)

Importance: This shows Morgan's frustration with her own in-betweenness and her fears that she will one day hurt Beck.