

THE
FIRST
GIRL
CHILD

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THE FIRST GIRL CHILD

Bayr of Saylok, bastard son of a powerful and jealous chieftain, is haunted by the curse once leveled by his dying mother. Bartered, abandoned, and rarely loved, she plagued the land with her words: From this day forward, there will be no daughters in Saylok.

Raised among the Keepers at Temple Hill, Bayr is gifted with inhuman strength. But he's also blessed with an all-too-human heart that beats with one purpose: to protect Alba, the first girl child born in nearly two decades and the salvation for a country at risk.

Now the fate of Saylok lies with Alba and Bayr, whose bond grows deeper with every whisper of coming chaos. Charged with battling the enemies of their people, both within and without, Bayr is fueled further by the love of a girl who has defied the scourge of Saylok.

What Bayr and Alba don't know is that they each threaten the king, a greedy man who built his throne on lies, murder, and betrayal. There is only one way to defend their land from the corruption that has overtaken it. By breaking the curse, they could defeat the king...but they could also destroy themselves.



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Genre: Historical, Fantasy, Romance
Recommended for ages: +16



ATTENTION

**THIS DOCUMENT INCLUDES SPECIFICS YOU MIGHT WANT TO AVOID
UNTIL YOU HAVE FINISHED READING THE BOOK.**

BOOK CLUB KIT – THE FIRST GIRL CHILD
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CHARACTERS

Do you think the characters were realistically portrayed? Describe these character's personalities.

Which character do you relate to most?

Who did you like the least? Why?

Did a specific character remind you of someone you know?

How does the way the characters see themselves, differ from how others see them? How do you see the various characters?

What did you think about Bayr and Alba's relationship? What about Dagmar and Ghost?

Were there any moments where you disagreed with the choices of any of the characters? What would you have done differently?

How does loss shape the personalities of certain characters?

What is motivating the actions of the characters in the story?

What past influences are shaping the actions of the characters in the story?

Which of the character's customs were interesting to you? Did you find anything strange?

Do the main characters change by the end of this novel? Do they grow or mature? What events trigger such changes?

How does the way the characters see themselves, differ from how others see them? How do you see the various characters?

What were the dynamics of "power" between the characters? How did that play a factor in their interactions?

QUOTES

Discuss the following quotes.

“I have nothing but love, and my love will not shelter. My love will not save, or clothe, or feed. My love will only harm.”

“We draw the attention of the fates when our fear grows too loud. The fates are cruel, and they will reward you with what you fear most.”

“I’ve come to believe home is not a place. Home is inside of us. Home is the people we love. Home is what we strive for.”

Were there any particular quotes that stood out to you? Which ones and why?

STRUCTURE, WRITING & GENERAL DISCUSSION

What did you think of the overall structure of the novel?

Were you engaged immediately?

How did the world-building enhance the story? Did the kingdom of Saylok seem realistic?

What did you think about the time-line and point of view? How did you feel reading it?

Which emotions conveyed the story?

Did the story keep you interested?

Would you say this is a plot-driven book or does the story unfold slowly with a focus on character development?

Were you surprised by the plot? Or did you find it predictable?

How credible did the author make the setting and dialogue?

What scene did you find was the most pivotal for the book? How do you think the story would have changed had that scene not taken place?

What scene resonated most with you personally in either a positive or negative way?

Did certain parts of the novel make you uncomfortable?

Were there any scenes that made you laugh?

What is the significance of the title? Did you recognize it in the book?

Would you have given the book a different title? If yes, what is your title?

What surprised you the most about the book?

What did you learn about this time period from reading the book?

Based on the prologue, did you expect the ending or were you surprised?

Did you think the ending was appropriate?

How would you have liked to have seen the ending go?

Have any of YOUR views or thoughts changed after reading this book?

What do you think about the cover of this book? Would you change it? How?

Has this book changed you, broadened your perspective?

What did you learn from, take away from, or get out of this book? Did your opinion of the book change as you read it? How?

Discussion questions by chapter

Prologue

Which character traits do you immediately notice in Desdemona and Dagmar? Do you have any predictions for the story?

Chapter 1

Dagmar is caught between who he is supposed to be and who he really is. Have you felt this way or known someone close to you who has experienced this?

What is the significance of Desdemona's rune? How does this scene set up the story?

Chapter 2

Bayr's fate was determined by Ivo, were you nervous during this scene?

Dagmar is not meant to be a father, yet we see him embracing the role. How does the responsibility change his life? What are some of the unique challenges he faces?

Chapter 3

What do you think about the process of choosing a new king for Saylok? Do you think Ivo made a wise choice? What problems do you foresee, if any?

Chapter 4

We are beginning to see the effects of Desdemona's curse. Can you imagine a world without girl children being born for seven years?

What do you think of Banruud's plan to lie about the child?

Chapter 5

Banruud's lies multiply - what do you think of this character? What do you think the results of his deception will be?

Chapter 6

What does Ivo mean when he tells Dagmar, “You will stay, brother. You have avoided your duty long enough.”?

Bayr’s fate of becoming king is postponed. How do you feel about this decision?

Chapter 7

Why does Banruud hate Bayr even when he desires to protect his “daughter”?

How was Ghost able to affect the parade?

Chapter 8

Can you imagine how Ghost feels as she realizes she has nothing to give Alba except someone else as a mother? Discuss.

Dagmar acknowledges he always seems to be drawn to the desperate and discarded. Do you know anyone like this or maybe you have experiences like this yourself? Why do you think certain people have this gift?

Chapter 9

Ghost feels more pain from Dagmar’s kindness than she thinks she would from cruelty. Why do you think this is?

Why does Ivo tell Dagmar he mustn’t love Ghost?

Chapter 10

Ghost says, “There is no such thing as safety...” Do you agree or is this only true for some? Is safety always an illusion?

Chapter 11

What does the loss of the queen mean for Alba and Bayr?

Chapter 12

Banruud sets a precedent by gathering female children to break Saylok's curse. Do you think his plan will work? What might be a consequence of this action?

Chapter 13

There is an endless power struggle between Banruud and Ivo - how do you foresee it playing out?

Do you think the keepers will be able to keep the girls safe?

Chapter 14

What do you think of the keepers' lifestyles as Dagmar describes their customs to Ghost?

Dagmar realizes the potential of falling for Ghost. How would this development effect his life?

Chapter 15

The keepers, Ghost, the girls, and Bayr make an unconventional group. What connects them?

Chapter 16

What are your thoughts as Dagmar and Ghost discuss their feelings and the obstacles between them?

Bayr learns more about where he comes from when he meets his grandfather. What are you thinking during this reunion?

Chapter 17

Banruud discovers Bayr's true identity, then enacts vengeance. Why do you think he does this?

Chapter 18

How does Bayr's weakness of speech help him as a person?

For what reasons is Bayr reluctant to leave the temple? Do you predict a transformation? Of what sort?

Chapter 19

Discuss Alba and Ghost's conversation. Do you think she will eventually tell Alba the truth?

Do you agree with Ghost, "Comfort is not love."?

Chapter 20

Bayr embarks on a life he doesn't want, but he chooses it just the same. Why do you think he makes this decision?

What are some of the ways Dred is able to make amends for the mistakes he made with Desdemona and Dagmar through his relationship with Bayr?

Chapter 21

What do you think of Alba's boundary-defying discussion with Dagmar? Do you see her goals coming to fruition? How?

Did you catch the irony of the temple being home to mostly daughters, while Saylok itself is still in a drought? Discuss.

Chapter 22

What do you think Ivo meant when he said, "Death rides on his heels, the son returns, but night will follow," in regards to Bayr's return?

Chapter 23

We see Bayr's reverence for the women in this chapter. Where do you think that comes from, considering he grew up without a mother or mother-figure?

What do you think about Bayr and Alba's reunion?

Chapter 24

Bayr and Alba struggle with the changes they both have faced over time. Do you think it would be difficult to reconcile the child you knew with the adult in front of you?

Discuss the declarations of love and the kiss.

Chapter 25

Tensions are high in this chapter and everyone is forced to practice restraint. What were your immediate thoughts of King Gudrun?

What do you think will happen to Ghost now that Banruud has noticed her presence?

Chapter 26

Years of deception are uncovered -- will the keepers be able to rid Saylok of Banruud? Or will Banruud be successful in ruining Saylok?

What is the significance of Bayr cutting his braid?

Chapter 27

Dagmar is filled with regret, but could he have possibly change the outcome of the situation Saylok finds itself in?

How are you feeling as Dagmar admits his forbidden love?

Chapter 28

What power do you suspect Ivo's final runes have? How did you feel during this scene?

Chapter 29

Why do you think it was so easy for Alba to accept Ghost's confession?

Does the wedding mean anything or will Alba be trapped?

Chapter 30

Discuss the raging battle.

Chapter 31

Do you feel the anguish as everyone counts their losses? Which one affects you the most?

What are your thoughts as the new precedent is set with the keepers and new highest keeper?

Epilogue

What do you think the future will hold for Bayr, Alba, and their family?

Discuss the visiting wolf.

Saylok



