

GIRLS *of* DARK DIVINE

Discussion Notes



Scan the QR code to hear
from author E.V. Woods

- What are your thoughts on the book's title? What feelings did it evoke before you began the book?
- Why does Emberlyn feel a responsibility to stay strong for her sisters?
- How do the descriptions of the curse throughout the book make you feel?
- Malcolm uses the curse to control the girls. Discuss how the curse can be used to explore our own bodily autonomy.
- Why do you think Malcolm has taken the girls' memories as part of the curse? What else have the girls lost?
- Emberlyn has to make a lot of difficult decisions throughout the book. Do you agree with the choices she makes? Why/why not?
- When we're first introduced to the shadow Emberlyn dances with, what did you think this is? Why does the shadow bring her comfort?
- Emberlyn is filled with rage and anger, desperate to break free. Discuss how she has been driven to this emotion.
- Rage in female characters is often something that is downplayed or hidden. How does Emberlyn's character surprise you? Is this a refreshing depiction?
- Why does Emberlyn push her sisters away?
- What are your impressions of Malcolm? Discuss how the author uses certain descriptive phrases and builds him physically to demonstrate how he wields his power.

GIRLS *of* DARK DIVINE

Discussion Notes

- When they arrive in Parlizia, Emberlyn describes it as ‘simply another stage, another prison. Another cage of light and shine she couldn’t escape from.’ Why do you think some of her sisters are able to enjoy the theatre, but Emberlyn remains numbed to the beauty?
- Talk about how the author uses the idea of the Gothic in the book, and how the setting of the theatre/s adds to this.
- ‘They smiled through watery eyes at the memories of laughter they carved a space for out of the darkness of their existence.’ Discuss the ways in which sisterhood is explored in the novel.
- Étienne tells the story of Malcolm’s first troupe of Marionettes. How does this story add to the picture of Malcolm?
- All of the girls in the troupe dreamed of being dancers, but the curse has turned their dreams to darkness. Why has Malcolm decided to use the curse in this way?
- The scene when the girls decide to kill Malcolm is very powerful. How does Emberlyn inspire the group to work together?
- ‘I’m thankful I lived a story at all.’ Emberlyn, her sisters and Étienne decide they would rather risk death than live under Malcolm any longer. What do you think of this decision? How do you think they can come to terms with this?
- How does Emberlyn’s relationship with Étienne provide her with a sense of freedom?
- ‘I think we were always meant to meet’. Emberlyn and Étienne’s relationship is brief but powerful. Do you believe in fate?
- How does Emberlyn change across the course of the novel?
- Discuss the ending. Did the characters’ journeys all end where you imagined them to?