

Extended Reading Guide

Angel of Eventide

by Elle Powers

CHAPTER ONE: Abide with Me

1. *Angel* means “messenger” (from the Latin *angelus* and Greek *angelos*); what message is Sea sent to give?
2. Why do you think Sea didn’t want to “kill” Ruth Wiggins?
3. Do you think Sea botched his job with Ruth?
4. The angels of *Angel of Eventide* take on the characteristics of their earthly region. How might this assimilation help in their ministry to humans?
5. Why do you think Hugh would send Sea—“the best”—for a special assignment if he is also concerned about Sea’s pride?

CHAPTER TWO: Mind the Gap

1. Why is Sea so intrigued by humans?
2. “Being alive—now that was the scary stuff” (p. 26). In what ways is life more scary than death?
3. Why might the little girl have been able to see Sea?
4. Sea, for the first time, experiences the feeling of unworthiness (p. 29). What might he have seen to cause this feeling?

CHAPTER THREE: Where Angels Fear to Tread

1. Compare/contrast this picture of angels (pp. 31–32) to contemporary, biblical, or other concepts of angels.
2. “Da’s spirit form was feminine” (p. 33). Is this the same Da introduced in chapters one and two?
3. Explore Sea’s identity and character as it relates to traditional ideas of death personified.

4. “Don’t you remember the Flood? Marrying is wrong. The product of it must be destroyed” (p. 40). What do you think the biblical Flood has to do with the passage from Genesis about the Nephilim? Who are the Nephilim?

CHAPTER FOUR: Oxford Blue

1. Describe a relationship that would make Sea so confident that this boat and everything in it are his.
2. “Silence was to be expected. He was on his own” (p. 49). Is Sea really alone?
3. Given what you know about Maren so far, describe her character.
4. Sea blames Da for the way he is because Da made him that way (p. 50). What does this tell us about Sea and his relationship with Da?

CHAPTER FIVE: On the Side of Angels

1. Why might Maren question whether or not Sea is good (p. 62)?
2. In light of Johnny’s description of his daughter’s accidents, do you think Maren flirts with death, as Sea says, or is she merely unlucky?
3. Sea wants to kill everyone but Maren—a so-called instinct. But then he is gradually charmed and regrets his homicidal tendencies. Do you like Maren’s family and friends? Which is your favorite and why?
4. How might the other two angels complicate matters for Sea?

CHAPTER SIX: What Doesn’t Kill You...

1. Why do you think Maren doesn’t have a minder?
2. Sea’s happiness seems often overtaken by misery. Why do you think he stays with Maren in spite of the pain?
3. Imagine Maren when she is older. How is she the same? How is she different?
4. Is Sea really trying to “be a man” (p. 93)? If no, what is he trying to be?

CHAPTER SEVEN: Departures

1. Why would it be important for an exiled angel to feel like he owned something? Is Maren really his

“inheritance” (p. 98)?

2. Sea is acting like an imaginary friend. What is the purpose of a child’s imaginary friend and how does he fit the profile (or not)?
3. The angel of death and the child obsessed with death make quite a pair. How do they complement each other? How do they clash?
4. How do Maren’s or Sea’s spiritual beliefs liken to or differ from your own?
5. Whom might Maren want Sea to kill?

CHAPTER EIGHT: Daughters of Men

1. In what ways is teenaged Maren the same as the little girl Maren?
2. Is she in love with Sea? Is he in love with her, or only concerned with her well-being?
3. Given her description of angelic worship on page 130, why do you think church makes Maren think of sex?
4. Do angels really have sex? What does Sea mean when he says he’s had sex?
5. What do you think is in store for Maren?

CHAPTER NINE: Rush of Wings

1. “I don’t even know if I believe in God” (p. 136), Stella says. How does her belief/unbelief change as the scene plays out?
2. “I’m not here to make you better” (p. 138), Sea says. How is that true? How is it false?
3. This chapter seems to indicate that there is some choice in dying. In what ways do we have control of how/when we die?
4. Compare and contrast Stella’s and Maren’s “kiss of death.”

CHAPTER TEN: Son of Thunder

1. What do you think Wesley means by “these types” (p. 148)?
2. Explain how Sea’s “thanksgiving” is his “letting go.”
3. Is Hadley’s way of making contracts with God a good idea? Why or why not? What contracts has Sea made?

4. Who are the three figures seen by fire and rescue (p. 154)? We only know of Sea and Wesley; who is the third?

CHAPTER ELEVEN: Any Port in a Storm

1. Maren has always seemed to think Da is out to get her. Is this true? In what ways do we act like God is out to get us?
2. “I didn’t have a future before that. It was blank” (p. 165). What might this tell us about Maren?
3. Consider Sea’s discussion of “dreadful ends” and why Da allows them. If there is a story the world is following, is it destined to end dreadfully?
4. We now have a recipe for these visions of the future (Sea + Maren + water = future). How will this knowledge change things for them?

CHAPTER TWELVE: Thin Places

1. Do you know of any “thin places”? Have you been to any?
2. There seems to be a theme of acceptance in *Angel of Eventide*. Discuss these instances of “giving up” or “letting go” and their opposites (insistence, holding onto) as they occur in the book. How do each turn out?
3. Sea learns that Da did not abandon him during his sojourn. Give evidence from the text that confirms this.
4. In light of this intimate chat between Da and Sea, do you think Sea rebelled when he refused to go back with Hugh?
5. Sea seems to like reasons. He wants his experiences to be significant, justifiable. From Da we learn that even the meaningless has meaning. Perhaps we don’t always know the meaning, but how can believing in a design for life help us endure the seemingly pointless and random, particularly painful, experiences?
6. Think about the definition of *offering*. It is something being given, offered up. If that is the case, then the offering is being given for someone or to someone. How does this definition enhance the meaning of Da’s “offering” (p. 177) for Sea?

CHAPTER THIRTEEN: The Wild Rover

1. Who is “Himself” (p. 187 and 188)?

2. Maren appeals to Ronan's calling by asking for his help. But it would seem that not all angels are here to help humans. What is Ronan's job, as you understand it?
3. How do the elements—wind and rain—play a part in Sea and Maren's story?
4. What makes Maren go out to the very edge of the cliff? Does she have a death wish, or is she being controlled by something beyond herself?
5. Sea is physically altered when he meets Maren at the Cliffs of Moher. What do you think is different about Maren, if anything?

CHAPTER FOURTEEN: The Snug

1. Why would an angel find enjoyment in things: food, clothes, etc.?
2. How would the story have been different if the no-touching rule had not been in effect? How did it work in their favor? How did it not?
3. If not a husband/lover, what does Maren want from Sea? What commitment can one expect from an angel?
4. Besides her hair color, what would make Maren think her family are not telling the whole truth about her parentage?

CHAPTER FIFTEEN: Lost Boys

1. Why would one who cannot feel emotion be obsessed with counting/numbers?
2. Do you believe that we choose to be born? If yes, how would that influence one's impulse to commit suicide?
3. The narrative asserts that each one of our choices affects everything else (i.e., the butterfly effect). How does this phenomenon work within the subject of suicide?
4. Why would Sea forgive Wesley so quickly? Do you think Wesley got off easy?
5. How, in their respective ways, are Sea and Wesley lost?

CHAPTER SIXTEEN: Galway Girl

1. How are Alistair and Leith like Sea and Maren? How are they different?
2. "That old guilt crept back in—how he had touched her without touching her for years" (p. 237). How had Sea "touched her without touching her?"

3. Sea alternately feels shame and release. Alistair's seduction of Leith makes him feel guilty, but then that night he sleeps nude with Maren. All at once he feels ashamed again. Then, the guilt seems to fade away. Why does Sea's self-reproach come and go? How do his black-and-white views complicate his situation?
4. What does Maren mean when she says she wishes she were invisible (p. 240)? Have you ever wished that? When?

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN: The Devil to Pay

1. Explore Sea and Maren's discussion of Lucifer's fall and Da's plan to win back the world (pp. 244-46).
2. This hurling match sets a precedent in Sea and Maren's relationship. Can you predict how?
3. We now know that Hugh is Maren's literature professor, Dr. McKeogh. He seems to be keeping tabs on her. What do you think he's up to?

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN: Bloodied but Unbowed

1. Is Sea really pursuing Mac with Maren's best interests in mind?
2. Ever since the hurling match, Sea is even more interested in reading the news reports as a way of interpreting the activity of the Army. Why would he choose to keep this information from Maren? Why doesn't she tell him about Dr. McKeogh? How are the secrets they keep indicative of how they interact?
3. Describe the way needy humans have sway over Sea.
4. In a previous chapter, Maren likens Sea to Peter Pan. How is that so, especially in this chapter?

CHAPTER NINETEEN: This Mortal Coil

1. Why might Maren be weepy, confused, and nauseous?
2. Sea and Parker are concerned about the advance of angelic and demonic forces, but not enough to remove their charges from the land. Yet Da has said to be ready. What do you foresee?
3. Can Wesley be trusted?
4. How has terrorism become more of a focus today when we travel or gather in public places? What do we do differently as a result?

CHAPTER TWENTY: Dying a Death

1. What is this “song of the world” Maren is hearing? Do you think the angels can hear it too?
2. If Maren compares herself to Anne Boleyn, who are the other characters in the analogy? Is there a Henry? An executioner?
3. “Now the story was collective. It belonged to the world . . . and it bonded them” (p. 290). How does tragedy unite us?
4. Johnny had seen Sea before and not known who he was. Explain why he would recognize “Death when he saw him” (p. 293) in the tunnel.
5. Does being with Sea really mean death for Maren?

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE: Coram Deo

1. Who is Da incarnate in your opinion?
2. *Deus ex machina* means “God in the machine.” It is a plot device used in Greek tragedies, in which a deity arrives on the scene to save the day. (It is highly criticized in modern art, even when the “god” is not so distinguishable.) Did Da resolve the conflict by showing up in person? How has Da been a part of everything that happens in the story? What is he up to in his scenes?
3. Look back at chapter three, when the narrative first brings up the Nephilim. According to Hugh, the Flood came to destroy the Nephilim. If indeed these are the children of angels, take some time to consider these “mighty men of old.” If not the children of angels, what else could they be? Is there still evidence of the Nephilim today?
4. In *Angel of Eventide*, nature comes against what is not right. It’s water that wants to destroy Maren, not Da. Is this something you can accept—that nature is fallen and abides by twisted laws. Why or why not?
5. What happens to Maren in the very end?