

the left hand of darkness sparknotes

the left hand of darkness sparknotes provides readers with a concise yet thorough overview of Ursula K. Le Guin's celebrated science fiction novel, "The Left Hand of Darkness." This guide covers everything from the book's plot summary and character analysis to its themes, literary style, and critical reception. Readers will gain insight into the unique world-building of the planet Gethen, the complex gender dynamics, and the philosophical ideas that shape the narrative. The article also includes a detailed table of contents for quick reference, thematic breakdowns, and essential facts that will enhance your understanding of this classic work. Whether you are a student seeking study aid, a literature enthusiast, or simply curious about this award-winning novel, this comprehensive resource is designed to provide clarity and depth. Explore key elements, analysis, and thought-provoking questions about "The Left Hand of Darkness" to enrich your reading experience and grasp its lasting impact on science fiction and literary culture.

- Plot Summary of The Left Hand of Darkness
- Main Characters and Their Roles
- Major Themes and Motifs
- Setting and World-Building
- Literary Style and Structure
- Cultural and Historical Context
- Critical Reception and Legacy
- Frequently Asked Questions

Plot Summary of The Left Hand of Darkness

"The Left Hand of Darkness" follows the journey of Genly Ai, an emissary from the Ekumen—a coalition of planets—who travels to the icy world of Gethen (also known as Winter) to persuade its inhabitants to join the interplanetary alliance. Genly's mission is complicated by the unique biology and culture of the Gethenians, who are ambisexual and can shift between male and female genders. The novel unravels as Genly forms a complex alliance with Estravan, a Gethenian politician who risks everything to aid him. Together, they embark on a perilous journey across the frozen landscape, facing political intrigue, betrayal, and the harsh environment. The narrative alternates between Genly's perspective and native Gethenian folklore, offering a multifaceted exploration of trust, identity, and survival.

Main Characters and Their Roles

Genly Ai

Genly Ai is the protagonist and the sole representative of the Ekumen on Gethen. His outsider perspective provides a lens for readers to understand Gethenian society, customs, and the challenges he faces in building diplomatic relations. Genly's character is defined by his determination, adaptability, and occasional frustration with the alien culture.

Estravan

Estravan is a prominent Gethenian politician whose loyalty and courage drive much of the novel's emotional core. Initially misunderstood by Genly, Estravan becomes his greatest ally. Estravan's complex identity, shaped by ambisexuality and political exile, is central to the exploration of gender and loyalty in the story.

Supporting Characters

- King Argaven: The ruler of Karhide, whose paranoia and suspicion influence the political climate.
- Tibe: Prime Minister of Karhide, a manipulative figure who opposes Estravan and Genly.
- Fax: A Foreteller whose philosophical insights challenge Genly's assumptions about fate and knowledge.

Each character contributes to the rich tapestry of Gethenian society and the intricate plot developments.

Major Themes and Motifs

Gender and Identity

One of the most distinctive aspects of "The Left Hand of Darkness" is its examination of gender. Gethenians are androgynous, becoming male or female only during kemmer (their sexual cycle). This fluidity challenges Genly's preconceived notions about gender roles and identity, prompting readers to reconsider the social constructs that define humanity.

Duality and Balance

The novel's title itself alludes to the theme of duality: light and darkness, male and female, self and other. Le Guin explores how opposites can coexist and complement each other, reflecting Taoist philosophies that permeate the narrative.

Alienation and Connection

Genly's journey is marked by a sense of isolation as he navigates the unfamiliar world of Gethen. The gradual development of trust and friendship with Estravan illustrates the possibility of genuine connection across cultural and biological divides.

Political Intrigue and Loyalty

- Diplomatic tension between Karhide and Orgoreyn.
- Betrayal and shifting alliances.
- Sacrifice for the greater good.

Political maneuvering underscores the personal stakes for both Genly and Estravan, driving the plot forward.

Setting and World-Building

The Planet Gethen (Winter)

Gethen, known as Winter for its frigid climate, is meticulously crafted with detailed geography, customs, and languages. The harsh environment shapes the Gethenian lifestyle, politics, and attitudes toward survival and cooperation.

Cultural Traditions

Le Guin uses festivals, folklore, and rituals to immerse readers in Gethenian society. These cultural elements enrich the story, providing context for characters' beliefs and motivations.

Literary Style and Structure

Multiple Perspectives

The novel alternates between Genly Ai's narrative and Gethenian myths, legends, and historical documents. This structure offers a layered understanding of the world and its people, blending science fiction with anthropological storytelling.

Language and Symbolism

Le Guin's prose is precise and evocative, employing symbolism to reinforce themes of duality and transformation. Her use of invented languages and terminology adds authenticity to the world-building.

Cultural and Historical Context

Influence of the 1960s

Published in 1969, "The Left Hand of Darkness" reflects contemporary debates about gender, identity, and societal norms. Le Guin's approach was groundbreaking in questioning binary gender roles and exploring alternatives through speculative fiction.

Science Fiction and Feminism

The novel is recognized for its contribution to feminist science fiction, inspiring discussions about representation and diversity in literature. Its legacy endures in academic and literary circles for its thoughtful examination of gender and power.

Critical Reception and Legacy

Awards and Honors

- Hugo Award for Best Novel (1970)
- Nebula Award for Best Novel (1969)
- Recognition as a science fiction classic

Critics have praised “The Left Hand of Darkness” for its innovative narrative, philosophical depth, and social relevance. It remains a foundational work in speculative fiction, studied by scholars and enjoyed by readers worldwide.

Lasting Impact

The novel’s themes and world-building continue to influence writers and thinkers. Its questioning of gender norms and exploration of empathy and understanding make it a timeless piece that resonates with modern audiences.

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: What is the main plot of The Left Hand of Darkness?

A: The novel centers on Genly Ai, a human ambassador who travels to the icy planet Gethen to convince its inhabitants to join an interplanetary alliance, facing political intrigue and cultural differences, especially related to gender.

Q: Who are the main characters in The Left Hand of Darkness?

A: The primary characters are Genly Ai, the ambassador from the Ekumen, and Estravan, a Gethenian politician. Supporting characters include King Argaven, Tibe, and Faxe.

Q: What makes Gethenians unique in terms of gender?

A: Gethenians are ambisexual, possessing both male and female characteristics and becoming either sex during their sexual cycle, kemmer. This challenges traditional gender norms seen on Earth.

Q: What are the central themes of the novel?

A: Major themes include gender and identity, duality and balance, alienation and connection, and political intrigue.

Q: Why is The Left Hand of Darkness considered a feminist work?

A: The novel questions binary gender roles and explores alternatives, making it a landmark in feminist science fiction literature.

Q: How does the setting of Gethen influence the story?

A: The cold, harsh climate of Gethen shapes the culture, politics, and survival strategies of its people, influencing the plot and character development.

Q: What awards has The Left Hand of Darkness won?

A: It received both the Hugo and Nebula Awards for Best Novel, cementing its status as a science fiction classic.

Q: What is the significance of the novel's title?

A: The title reflects the theme of duality—light and darkness, male and female—and the balance between opposites.

Q: How is the narrative structured?

A: The story alternates between Genly Ai's perspective and Gethenian myths, legends, and historical documents.

Q: Why is The Left Hand of Darkness still relevant today?

A: The novel's exploration of gender, empathy, and cultural understanding continues to resonate with contemporary discussions about identity and diversity.

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The Left Hand of Darkness SparkNotes: A Comprehensive Guide to Ursula K. Le Guin's Masterpiece

Are you grappling with Ursula K. Le Guin's challenging yet rewarding novel, The Left Hand of Darkness? Feeling overwhelmed by the complex themes of gender, sexuality, and societal

structures? This comprehensive guide acts as your Left Hand of Darkness SparkNotes, providing a detailed summary, insightful analysis, and key takeaways to help you fully appreciate this science fiction classic. We'll break down the plot, explore the major characters, delve into the central themes, and offer interpretations to enhance your understanding. Prepare to embark on a journey into a world unlike our own, and unlock the profound messages hidden within Le Guin's masterpiece.

Plot Summary: Navigating the Ambiguous World of Gethen

The Left Hand of Darkness follows Genly Ai, a human envoy from a technologically advanced Earth, as he arrives on the planet Gethen. Gethen is a world where its inhabitants, the Gethenians, are ambisexual – possessing neither male nor female characteristics until a period of "kemmer," a cyclical state of sexual arousal, during which they become temporarily male or female. This unique biological feature forms the bedrock of the novel's exploration of gender and identity.

Ai's mission is to negotiate Gethen's integration into the Ekumen, a galactic federation. However, he faces immense cultural and social barriers. His attempts to understand and interact with the Gethenian society are complicated by the lack of easily understood gender roles and the deeply ingrained societal norms that govern their lives. The central conflict revolves around Ai's struggle to bridge the gap between his own deeply ingrained human biases and the fundamentally different Gethenian way of life. His journey involves numerous encounters, political intrigues, and personal revelations that challenge his preconceptions and push him to confront his own identity and humanity.

Key Characters: A Deep Dive into the Inhabitants of Gethen

Genly Ai: The human envoy, representing Earth's attempts to expand the Ekumen. His journey is one of both physical and intellectual exploration, forcing him to confront his own assumptions about gender and sexuality. He acts as the reader's lens through which we experience the unique culture of Gethen.

Estraven: A powerful Gethenian official who becomes Ai's most important ally and guide. Their relationship, though initially fraught with suspicion and misunderstanding, evolves into a deep bond of trust and mutual respect. Estraven's death is a pivotal moment in the novel, highlighting the inherent risks and sacrifices involved in forging intercultural connections.

Themes: Unpacking the Profound Ideas Presented in the Novel

Gender and Sexuality: This is the most dominant theme. Le Guin's exploration of ambisexuality challenges our Earthly binary understanding of gender. By portraying a society

without rigid gender roles, the novel forces us to question the societal constructs we take for granted.

Communication and Understanding: The communication barriers between Ai and the Gethenians highlight the difficulties in understanding cultures vastly different from our own. The novel emphasizes the need for empathy, patience, and a willingness to unlearn ingrained biases.

Power and Politics: The political machinations within Gethenian society mirror the complexities of real-world politics, showcasing the struggles for power and the ethical dilemmas involved.

Human Nature and Identity: Ai's journey is also a journey of self-discovery. He confronts his own biases and preconceived notions, ultimately leading him to a deeper understanding of what it means to be human.

Ambiguity and Uncertainty: The novel consistently embraces ambiguity, reflecting the uncertainties and complexities of human interaction and intercultural exchange. This deliberate ambiguity enhances the reader's engagement and encourages critical thinking.

Interpretations and Symbolism

The Left Hand of Darkness is rich in symbolism. The ambisexuality of the Gethenians can be interpreted as a metaphor for the fluidity of human identity and the limitations of rigid categorization. The harsh, often unforgiving, Gethenian landscape can also represent the challenges and difficulties involved in bridging cultural divides. The novel invites multiple interpretations, allowing readers to engage with its themes on a personal level.

Conclusion: A Lasting Legacy of Challenging Conventions

The Left Hand of Darkness remains a powerful and relevant work of science fiction. Le Guin's insightful exploration of gender, identity, and intercultural communication continues to resonate with readers decades after its publication. Its enduring legacy lies in its ability to challenge our assumptions, provoke critical thought, and encourage a deeper understanding of human nature in all its complexity. This Left Hand of Darkness SparkNotes guide has only scratched the surface; the true depth of the novel lies in its careful reading and personal interpretation.

FAQs

1. Is The Left Hand of Darkness a difficult read? While the concepts are complex, the prose is clear.

The challenge lies more in grappling with the novel's themes than the language itself.

2. What is the significance of the title, "The Left Hand of Darkness"? The title refers to both the ambisexual nature of the Gethenians and the darkness of human prejudice and misunderstanding.
3. Is this book suitable for young adults? While there's no explicit content, the complex themes might require a certain level of maturity for full comprehension.
4. What are the major criticisms of the book? Some critics have pointed to the potentially problematic portrayal of certain aspects of Gethenian society, and the novel's ambiguity can be frustrating for some readers.
5. Are there any similar books I should read after finishing *The Left Hand of Darkness*? Explore other works by Ursula K. Le Guin, such as *The Dispossessed* or *A Wizard of Earthsea*, or delve into other science fiction novels exploring themes of gender and identity.

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: *Heart of Darkness* ,

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: *The Book Thief* Markus Zusak, 2007-12-18 #1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER • ONE OF TIME MAGAZINE'S 100 BEST YA BOOKS OF ALL TIME The extraordinary, beloved novel about the ability of books to feed the soul even in the darkest of times. When Death has a story to tell, you listen. It is 1939. Nazi Germany. The country is holding its breath. Death has never been busier, and will become busier still. Liesel Meminger is a foster girl living outside of Munich, who scratches out a meager existence for herself by stealing when she encounters something she can't resist—books. With the help of her accordion-playing foster father, she learns to read and shares her stolen books with her neighbors during bombing raids as well as with the Jewish man hidden in her basement. In superbly crafted writing that burns with intensity, award-winning author Markus Zusak, author of *I Am the Messenger*, has given us one of the most enduring stories of our time. "The kind of book that can be life-changing." —The New York Times "Deserves a place on the same shelf with *The Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank." —USA Today DON'T MISS BRIDGE OF CLAY, MARKUS ZUSAK'S FIRST NOVEL SINCE THE BOOK THIEF.

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: *Lord of the Flies* William Golding, 2012-09-20 A plane crashes on a desert island and the only survivors, a group of schoolboys, assemble on the beach and wait to be rescued. By day they inhabit a land of bright fantastic birds and dark blue seas, but at night their dreams are haunted by the image of a terrifying beast. As the boys' delicate sense of order fades, so their childish dreams are transformed into something more primitive, and their behaviour starts to take on a murderous, savage significance. First published in 1954, *Lord of the Flies* is one of the most celebrated and widely read of modern classics. Now fully revised and updated, this educational edition includes chapter summaries, comprehension questions, discussion points, classroom activities, a biographical profile of Golding, historical context relevant to the novel and an essay on *Lord of the Flies* by William Golding entitled 'Fable'. Aimed at Key Stage 3 and 4 students, it also includes a section on literary theory for advanced or A-level students. The educational edition encourages original and independent thinking while guiding the student through the text - ideal for use in the classroom and at home.

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: *The Old Man and the Sea* Ernest Hemingway, 2022-08-01 DigiCat Publishing presents to you this special edition of *The Old Man and the Sea* by Ernest Hemingway. DigiCat Publishing considers every written word to be a legacy of humankind. Every DigiCat book has been carefully reproduced for republishing in a new modern format. The books are available in print, as well as ebooks. DigiCat hopes you will treat this work with the acknowledgment and passion it deserves as a classic of world literature.

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: *Extremely Loud & Incredibly Close* Jonathan Safran

Foer, 2005 Jonathan Safran Foer emerged as one of the most original writers of his generation with his best-selling debut novel, *Everything Is Illuminated*. Now, with humor, tenderness, and awe, he confronts the traumas of our recent history. What he discovers is solace in that most human quality, imagination. Meet Oskar Schell, an inventor, Francophile, tambourine player, Shakespearean actor, jeweler, pacifist, correspondent with Stephen Hawking and Ringo Starr. He is nine years old. And he is on an urgent, secret search through the five boroughs of New York. His mission is to find the lock that fits a mysterious key belonging to his father, who died in the World Trade Center on 9/11. An inspired innocent, Oskar is alternately endearing, exasperating, and hilarious as he careens from Central Park to Coney Island to Harlem on his search. Along the way he is always dreaming up inventions to keep those he loves safe from harm. What about a birdseed shirt to let you fly away? What if you could actually hear everyone's heartbeat? His goal is hopeful, but the past speaks a loud warning in stories of those who've lost loved ones before. As Oskar roams New York, he encounters a motley assortment of humanity who are all survivors in their own way. He befriends a 103-year-old war reporter, a tour guide who never leaves the Empire State Building, and lovers enraptured or scorned. Ultimately, Oskar ends his journey where it began, at his father's grave. But now he is accompanied by the silent stranger who has been renting the spare room of his grandmother's apartment. They are there to dig up his father's empty coffin.

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: *A Court of Wings and Ruin* Sarah J. Maas, 2018-05 Sarah J. Maas hit the New York Times SERIES list at #1 with *A Court of Wings and Ruin*!

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: *The Word for World is Forest* Ursula K. Le Guin, 2010-07-06 The award-winning masterpiece by one of today's most honored writers, Ursula K. Le Guin! *The Word for World is Forest* When the inhabitants of a peaceful world are conquered by the bloodthirsty yumens, their existence is irrevocably altered. Forced into servitude, the Athsheans find themselves at the mercy of their brutal masters. Desperation causes the Athsheans, led by Selver, to retaliate against their captors, abandoning their strictures against violence. But in defending their lives, they have endangered the very foundations of their society. For every blow against the invaders is a blow to the humanity of the Athsheans. And once the killing starts, there is no turning back. At the Publisher's request, this title is being sold without Digital Rights Management Software (DRM) applied.

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: *Kindred* Octavia E. Butler, 2004-02-01 From the New York Times bestselling author of *Parable of the Sower* and MacArthur "Genius" Grant, Nebula, and Hugo award winner The visionary time-travel classic whose Black female hero is pulled through time to face the horrors of American slavery and explores the impacts of racism, sexism, and white supremacy then and now. "I lost an arm on my last trip home. My left arm." Dana's torment begins when she suddenly vanishes on her 26th birthday from California, 1976, and is dragged through time to antebellum Maryland to rescue a boy named Rufus, heir to a slaveowner's plantation. She soon realizes the purpose of her summons to the past: protect Rufus to ensure his assault of her Black ancestor so that she may one day be born. As she endures the traumas of slavery and the soul-crushing normalization of savagery, Dana fights to keep her autonomy and return to the present. Blazing the trail for neo-slavery narratives like Colson Whitehead's *The Underground Railroad* and Ta-Nehisi Coates's *The Water Dancer*, Butler takes one of speculative fiction's oldest tropes and infuses it with lasting depth and power. Dana not only experiences the cruelties of slavery on her skin but also grimly learns to accept it as a condition of her own existence in the present. "Where stories about American slavery are often gratuitous, reducing its horror to explicit violence and brutality, *Kindred* is controlled and precise" (New York Times). "Reading Octavia Butler taught me to dream big, and I think it's absolutely necessary that everybody have that freedom and that willingness to dream." —N. K. Jemisin Developed for television by writer/executive producer Branden Jacobs-Jenkins (*Watchmen*), executive producers also include Joe Weisberg and Joel Fields (*The Americans*, *The Patient*), and Darren Aronofsky (*The Whale*). Janicza Bravo (*Zola*) is director and an executive producer of the pilot. *Kindred* stars Mallori Johnson, Micah Stock, Ryan Kwanten, and Gayle Rankin.

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: Let Your Life Speak Parker J. Palmer, 2015-06-22

PLEASE NOTE: Some recent copies of Let Your Life Speak included printing errors. These issues have been corrected, but if you purchased a defective copy between September and December 2019, please send proof of purchase to josseybasseducation@wiley.com to receive a replacement copy. Dear Friends: I'm sorry that after 20 years of happy traveling, Let Your Life Speak hit a big pothole involving printing errors that resulted in an unreadable book. But I'm very grateful to my publisher for moving quickly to see that people who received a defective copy have a way to receive a good copy without going through the return process. We're all doing everything we can to make things right, and I'm grateful for your patience. Thank you, Parker J. Palmer With wisdom, compassion, and gentle humor, Parker J. Palmer invites us to listen to the inner teacher and follow its leadings toward a sense of meaning and purpose. Telling stories from his own life and the lives of others who have made a difference, he shares insights gained from darkness and depression as well as fulfillment and joy, illuminating a pathway toward vocation for all who seek the true calling of their lives.

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: East of Eden John Steinbeck, 2002-02-05 A

masterpiece of Biblical scope, and the magnum opus of one of America's most enduring authors, in a commemorative hardcover edition In his journal, Nobel Prize winner John Steinbeck called East of Eden the first book, and indeed it has the primordial power and simplicity of myth. Set in the rich farmland of California's Salinas Valley, this sprawling and often brutal novel follows the intertwined destinies of two families—the Trasks and the Hamiltons—whose generations helplessly reenact the fall of Adam and Eve and the poisonous rivalry of Cain and Abel. The masterpiece of Steinbeck's later years, East of Eden is a work in which Steinbeck created his most mesmerizing characters and explored his most enduring themes: the mystery of identity, the inexplicability of love, and the murderous consequences of love's absence. Adapted for the 1955 film directed by Elia Kazan introducing James Dean, and read by thousands as the book that brought Oprah's Book Club back, East of Eden has remained vitally present in American culture for over half a century.

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: An Echo in the Darkness Francine Rivers, 2002 This classic series has inspired nearly 2 million readers. Both loyal fans and new readers will want the latest edition of this beloved series. This edition includes a foreword from the publisher, a preface from Francine Rivers and discussion questions suitable for personal and group use. #2 An Echo in the Darkness: Turning away from the opulence of Rome, Marcus is led by a whispering voice from the past into a journey that could set him free from the darkness of his soul.

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: Very Far Away from Anywhere Else Ursula K. Le Guin, 2004-10-01 A slender, realistic story of a young man's coming of age, Very Far Away from Anywhere Else is one of the most inspiring novels Ursula K. Le Guin ever published. Owen is seventeen and smart. He knows what he wants to do with his life. But then he meets Natalie and he realizes he doesn't know anything much at all. "Like all Le Guin's work, Very Far Away from Anywhere Else is about the invisible structures of society and about the challenge to live honestly. On a Sunday years ago I was lucky to encounter a book that could show me the breadth our lives have—that the discovery of what leads us on is better than the goal of perfection." —Emily Schultz, Bustle "An engaging, well written novel." —New York Times

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: Ursula K. Le Guin's the Left Hand of Darkness Harold Bloom, 1987 A collection of nine critical essays on the modern social science fiction novel, arranged in chronological order of their original publication.

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: Tear Me Apart J.T. Ellison, 2018-08-28 The follow-up to her critically acclaimed Lie to Me, J.T. Ellison's Tear Me Apart is the powerful story of a mother willing to do anything to protect her daughter even as their carefully constructed world unravels around them. One moment will change their lives forever... Competitive skier Mindy Wright is a superstar in the making until a spectacular downhill crash threatens not just her racing career but her life. During surgery, doctors discover she's suffering from a severe form of leukemia, and a stem cell transplant is her only hope. But when her parents are tested, a frightening truth emerges. Mindy is not their daughter. Who knows the answers? The race to save Mindy's life means unraveling years

of lies. Was she accidentally switched at birth or is there something more sinister at play? The search for the truth will tear a family apart...and someone is going to deadly extremes to protect the family's deepest secrets. With vivid movement through time, *Tear Me Apart* examines the impact layer after layer of lies and betrayal has on two families, the secrets they guard, and the desperate fight to hide the darkness within. Don't miss *It's One of Us*, the next page-turning thriller from New York Times bestselling author J.T. Ellison!

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: Sometimes I Lie Alice Feeney, 2018-03-13 ALICE FEENEYS NEW YORK TIMES AND INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLER "Boldly plotted, tightly knotted—a provocative true-or-false thriller that deepens and darkens to its ink-black finale. Marvelous." —AJ Finn, author of *The Woman in the Window* My name is Amber Reynolds. There are three things you should know about me: 1. I'm in a coma. 2. My husband doesn't love me anymore. 3. Sometimes I lie. Amber wakes up in a hospital. She can't move. She can't speak. She can't open her eyes. She can hear everyone around her, but they have no idea. Amber doesn't remember what happened, but she has a suspicion her husband had something to do with it. Alternating between her paralyzed present, the week before her accident, and a series of childhood diaries from twenty years ago, this brilliant psychological thriller asks: Is something really a lie if you believe it's the truth?

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: Annie John Jamaica Kincaid, 1997-06 Annie John grows from a precocious, fearless, ten-year-old living in a Caribbean paradise into a young woman who realizes she must leave Antigua to escape her mother's shadow.

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: Before We Were Strangers Renée Carlino, 2015-08-18 From the USA TODAY bestselling author of *Sweet Thing* and *Nowhere But Here* comes a love story about a Craigslist "missed connection" post that gives two people a second chance at love fifteen years after they were separated in New York City. To the Green-eyed Lovebird: We met fifteen years ago, almost to the day, when I moved my stuff into the NYU dorm room next to yours at Senior House. You called us fast friends. I like to think it was more. We lived on nothing but the excitement of finding ourselves through music (you were obsessed with Jeff Buckley), photography (I couldn't stop taking pictures of you), hanging out in Washington Square Park, and all the weird things we did to make money. I learned more about myself that year than any other. Yet, somehow, it all fell apart. We lost touch the summer after graduation when I went to South America to work for National Geographic. When I came back, you were gone. A part of me still wonders if I pushed you too hard after the wedding... I didn't see you again until a month ago. It was a Wednesday. You were rocking back on your heels, balancing on that thick yellow line that runs along the subway platform, waiting for the F train. I didn't know it was you until it was too late, and then you were gone. Again. You said my name; I saw it on your lips. I tried to will the train to stop, just so I could say hello. After seeing you, all of the youthful feelings and memories came flooding back to me, and now I've spent the better part of a month wondering what your life is like. I might be totally out of my mind, but would you like to get a drink with me and catch up on the last decade and a half? M

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: There Will Come a Darkness Katy Rose Pool, 2019-09-03 Leigh Bardugo's *Six of Crows* meets Kristin Cashore's *Graceling*, with a dash of *Winter is Coming*, in this showstopping debut YA fantasy--and recipient of FOUR starred reviews! A Morris Award Finalist for best debut young adult novel! A Kirkus Best Book of the Year! A Tor.com Best YA SFF/Horror Book of the Year! One of the most stunning debuts of the year. —Seventeen The Age of Darkness approaches. Five lives stand in its way. Who will stop it . . . or unleash it? For generations, the Seven Prophets guided humanity. Using their visions of the future, they ended wars and united nations—until the day, one hundred years ago, when the Prophets disappeared. All they left behind was one final, secret prophecy, foretelling an Age of Darkness and the birth of a new Prophet who could be the world's salvation . . . or the cause of its destruction. With chaos on the horizon, five souls are set on a collision course: A prince exiled from his kingdom. A ruthless killer known as the Pale Hand. A once-faithful leader torn between his duty and his heart. A reckless gambler with the power to find anything or anyone. And a dying girl on the verge of giving up. One of them—or all of them—could break the world. Will they be savior or destroyer? Perfect for fans of *Throne of Glass*,

Children of Blood and Bone, and An Ember in the Ashes. Praise for There Will Come a Darkness “A can’t miss debut from an exciting new talent.” –Kiersten White, New York Times bestselling author of Slayer “Even in a world filled with graces and prophets, the real magic of There Will Come a Darkness is in how Pool has crafted her heroes—messy, flawed, and so beguilingly human. I dare you not to fall madly in love with all of them.” —Laura Sebastian, New York Times bestselling author of Ash Princess * A well-crafted, surprising, and gripping start to a new trilogy. —Kirkus Reviews, STARRED review

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: The Darkness Ragnar Jónasson, 2018-10-16 Spanning the icy streets of Reykjavik, the Icelandic highlands and cold, isolated fjords, The Darkness is an atmospheric thriller from Ragnar Jónasson, one of the most exciting names in Nordic Noir. The body of a young Russian woman washes up on an Icelandic shore. After a cursory investigation, the death is declared a suicide and the case is quietly closed. Over a year later Detective Inspector Hulda Hermannsdóttir of the Reykjavík police is forced into early retirement at 64. She dreads the loneliness, and the memories of her dark past that threaten to come back to haunt her. But before she leaves she is given two weeks to solve a single cold case of her choice. She knows which one: the Russian woman whose hope for asylum ended on the dark, cold shore of an unfamiliar country. Soon Hulda discovers that another young woman vanished at the same time, and that no one is telling her the whole story. Even her colleagues in the police seem determined to put the brakes on her investigation. Meanwhile the clock is ticking. Hulda will find the killer, even if it means putting her own life in danger.

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: **The Dispossessed** Ursula K. Le Guin, 2001 A brilliant physicist attempts to salvage his planet of anarchy.

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: **Midnight Sun** Stephenie Meyer, 2020-08-04 #1 bestselling author Stephenie Meyer makes a triumphant return to the world of Twilight with this highly anticipated companion: the iconic love story of Bella and Edward told from the vampire's point of view. When Edward Cullen and Bella Swan met in Twilight, an iconic love story was born. But until now, fans have heard only Bella's side of the story. At last, readers can experience Edward's version in the long-awaited companion novel, Midnight Sun. This unforgettable tale as told through Edward's eyes takes on a new and decidedly dark twist. Meeting Bella is both the most unnerving and intriguing event he has experienced in all his years as a vampire. As we learn more fascinating details about Edward's past and the complexity of his inner thoughts, we understand why this is the defining struggle of his life. How can he justify following his heart if it means leading Bella into danger? In Midnight Sun, Stephenie Meyer transports us back to a world that has captivated millions of readers and brings us an epic novel about the profound pleasures and devastating consequences of immortal love. An instant #1 New York Times BestsellerAn instant #1 USA Today BestsellerAn instant #1 Wall Street Journal BestsellerAn instant #1 IndieBound BestsellerApple Audiobook August Must-Listens Pick People do not want to just read Meyer's books; they want to climb inside them and live there. -- Time A literary phenomenon. -- New York Times

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: **The Way of Kings** Brandon Sanderson, 2014-03-04 A new epic fantasy series from the New York Times bestselling author chosen to complete Robert Jordan's The Wheel of Time® Series

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: The Telling Ursula K. Le Guin, 2010-10-07 The long-awaited new novel in the superb Hainish cycle 'Le Guin is a writer of phenomenal power' OBSERVER 'Her worlds have a magic sheen . . . She moulds them into dimensions we can only just sense. She is unique. She is legend' THE TIMES There have been eighty requests to send an Observer into the hinterlands of the planet Aka to study the natives. Much to everyone's surprise, the eighty-first request is granted, and Observer Suttu is sent upriver to Okzat-Ozkatz, a small city in the foothills of Rangma, to talk to the remnants in hiding of a cult practising a banned religion. On Aka, everything that was written in the old scripts has been destroyed; modern aural literature is all written to Corporation specifications. The Corporation expects Suttu to report back so the non-standardised folk stories and songs can be wiped out and the people 're-educated'. But Suttu

herself is in for an education she never imagined.

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: *Deacon King Kong* (Oprah's Book Club) James McBride, 2020-03-03 Winner of the Anisfield-Wolf Book Award for Fiction Winner of the Gotham Book Prize One of Barack Obama's Favorite Books of the Year Oprah's Book Club Pick Named one of the Top Ten Books of the Year by the New York Times, Entertainment Weekly and TIME Magazine A Washington Post Notable Novel From the author of *The Heaven & Earth Grocery Store*, the National Book Award-winning *The Good Lord Bird*, and the bestselling modern classic *The Color of Water*, comes one of the most celebrated novels of the year. In September 1969, a fumbling, cranky old church deacon known as Sportcoat shuffles into the courtyard of the Cause Houses housing project in south Brooklyn, pulls a .38 from his pocket, and, in front of everybody, shoots the project's drug dealer at point-blank range. The reasons for this desperate burst of violence and the consequences that spring from it lie at the heart of *Deacon King Kong*, James McBride's funny, moving novel and his first since his National Book Award-winning *The Good Lord Bird*. In *Deacon King Kong*, McBride brings to vivid life the people affected by the shooting: the victim, the African-American and Latinx residents who witnessed it, the white neighbors, the local cops assigned to investigate, the members of the Five Ends Baptist Church where Sportcoat was deacon, the neighborhood's Italian mobsters, and Sportcoat himself. As the story deepens, it becomes clear that the lives of the characters—caught in the tumultuous swirl of 1960s New York—overlap in unexpected ways. When the truth does emerge, McBride shows us that not all secrets are meant to be hidden, that the best way to grow is to face change without fear, and that the seeds of love lie in hope and compassion. Bringing to these pages both his masterly storytelling skills and his abiding faith in humanity, James McBride has written a novel every bit as involving as *The Good Lord Bird* and as emotionally honest as *The Color of Water*. Told with insight and wit, *Deacon King Kong* demonstrates that love and faith live in all of us.

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: *Discipline Equals Freedom* Jocko Willink, 2020-10-13 In this expanded edition of the 2017 mega-bestseller, updated with brand new sections like DO WHAT MAKES YOU HAPPY, SUGAR COATED LIES and DON'T NEGOTIATE WITH WEAKNESS, readers will discover new ways to become stronger, smarter, and healthier. Jocko Willink's methods for success were born in the SEAL Teams, where he spent most of his adult life, enlisting after high school and rising through the ranks to become the commander of the most highly decorated special operations unit of the war in Iraq. In *Discipline Equals Freedom*, the #1 New York Times bestselling coauthor of *Extreme Ownership* describes how he lives that mantra: the mental and physical disciplines he imposes on himself in order to achieve freedom in all aspects of life. Many books offer advice on how to overcome obstacles and reach your goals--but that advice often misses the most critical ingredient: discipline. Without discipline, there will be no real progress. *Discipline Equals Freedom* covers it all, including strategies and tactics for conquering weakness, procrastination, and fear, and specific physical training presented in workouts for beginner, intermediate, and advanced athletes, and even the best sleep habits and food intake recommended to optimize performance. FIND YOUR WILL, FIND YOUR DISCIPLINE--AND YOU WILL FIND YOUR FREEDOM

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: *The Once & Future King* T. H. White, 2015-10-13 The definitive modern take on the timeless tale of King Arthur and his Knights of the Round table. The legends of King Arthur date back to medieval Europe, and have become some of the dominant myths of Western culture. In *The Once & Future King*, T. H. White reinvents the story for a modern audience. The novel starts by introducing the reader to a young Arthur – just a child, and far from the King he will become – as he is raised by the wizard Merlyn, and moves on to chronicle his rise to Kingship, the affair between Guinevere and Lancelot, and the eventual destruction of the round table. The first section, released independently as *The Sword in the Stone*, was adapted into an animated film by Walt Disney Pictures. Penguin Random House Canada is proud to bring you classic works of literature in e-book form, with the highest quality production values. Find more today and rediscover books you never knew you loved.

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: *The Female Man* Joanna Russ, 2018-05-08 Four alternate selves from radically different realities come together in this “dazzling” and “trailblazing work” (The Washington Post). Widely acknowledged as Joanna Russ’s masterpiece, *The Female Man* is the suspenseful, surprising, darkly witty, and boldly subversive chronicle of what happens when Jeannine, Janet, Joanna, and Jael—all living in parallel worlds—meet. Librarian Jeannine is waiting for marriage in a past where the Depression never ended, Janet lives on a utopian Earth with an all-female population, Joanna is a feminist in the 1970s, and Jael is a warrior with claws and teeth on an Earth where male and female societies are at war with each other. When the four women begin traveling to one another’s worlds, their preconceptions on gender and identity are forever challenged. With “palpable anger . . . leavened by wit and humor” (The New York Times), Russ both employs and upends genre conventions to deliver a wickedly satiric and exhilarating version of when worlds collide and women get woke. This ebook includes the Nebula Award-winning bonus short story “When It Changed,” set in the world of *The Female Man*.

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: *The Love Hypothesis* Ali Hazelwood, 2021-09-14 The Instant New York Times Bestseller and TikTok Sensation! As seen on THE VIEW! A BuzzFeed Best Summer Read of 2021 When a fake relationship between scientists meets the irresistible force of attraction, it throws one woman's carefully calculated theories on love into chaos. As a third-year Ph.D. candidate, Olive Smith doesn't believe in lasting romantic relationships--but her best friend does, and that's what got her into this situation. Convincing Anh that Olive is dating and well on her way to a happily ever after was always going to take more than hand-wavy Jedi mind tricks: Scientists require proof. So, like any self-respecting biologist, Olive panics and kisses the first man she sees. That man is none other than Adam Carlsen, a young hotshot professor--and well-known ass. Which is why Olive is positively floored when Stanford's reigning lab tyrant agrees to keep her charade a secret and be her fake boyfriend. But when a big science conference goes haywire, putting Olive's career on the Bunsen burner, Adam surprises her again with his unyielding support and even more unyielding...six-pack abs. Suddenly their little experiment feels dangerously close to combustion. And Olive discovers that the only thing more complicated than a hypothesis on love is putting her own heart under the microscope.

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: *My First Summer in the Sierra* John Muir, 1911 John Muir, a young Scottish immigrant, had not yet become a famed conservationist when he first trekked into the foothills of the Sierra Nevada, not long after the Civil War. He was so captivated by what he saw that he decided to devote his life to the glorification and preservation of this magnificent wilderness. *My First Summer in the Sierra*, whose heart is the diary Muir kept while tending sheep in Yosemite country, enticed thousands of Americans to visit this magical place, and resounds with Muir's regard for the divine, enduring, unwasteable wealth of the natural world. A classic of environmental literature, *My First Summer in the Sierra* continues to inspire readers to seek out such places for themselves and make them their own.

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: *The Lathe of Heaven* Ursula K. Le Guin, 2022-07-19 With a new introduction by Kelly Link, the Locus Award-winning science fiction novel by legendary author Ursula K. Le Guin, set in a world where one man’s dreams rewrite the future. During a time racked by war and environmental catastrophe, George Orr discovers his dreams alter reality. George is compelled to receive treatment from Dr. William Haber, an ambitious sleep psychiatrist who quickly grasps the immense power George holds. After becoming adept at manipulating George’s dreams to reshape the world, Haber seeks the same power for himself. George—with some surprising help—must resist Haber’s attempts, which threaten to destroy reality itself. A classic of the science fiction genre, *The Lathe of Heaven* is prescient in its exploration of the moral risks when overwhelming power is coupled with techno-utopianism.

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: *One Was Lost* Natalie D. Richards, 2016-10-04 From Natalie D. Richards, the New York Times bestselling author of teen suspense books, comes a pulse-pounding thriller about a group of teenagers being hunted through the woods, perfect for fans of Natasha Preston and Karen McManus. While on a mandatory hike in the woods, a flash flood cuts

off Sera and three classmates from their group with no way to call for help. But they're not as alone as they thought... Someone is stalking them through the woods—drugging them, stealing their supplies, and inking words onto their skin. Damaged. Deceptive. Dangerous. Darling. Are they labels? A warning? As their hunter grows bolder, Sera must find the truth before the killer finds them. The perfect pick for buyers looking for: Mystery books for teens Scary books for teens Edge-of-your-seat reads Praise for Natalie D. Richards: As addictive as it is unpredictable. Natalie will keep you second guessing until the nail-biting end.—NATASHA PRESTON, New York Times bestselling author of *The Cabin on My Secret to Tell* Brimming with suspense and intrigue.—MEGAN MIRANDA, New York Times bestselling author of *All the Missing Girls on My Secret to Tell* Also by Natalie D. Richards: *Five Total Strangers Six Months Later Gone Too Far One Was Lost We All Fall Down What You Hide*

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: *Blindsight* Peter Watts, 2006-10-03 Hugo and Shirley Jackson award-winning Peter Watts stands on the cutting edge of hard SF with his acclaimed novel, *Blindsight* Two months since the stars fell... Two months of silence, while a world held its breath. Now some half-derelict space probe, sparking fitfully past Neptune's orbit, hears a whisper from the edge of the solar system: a faint signal sweeping the cosmos like a lighthouse beam. Whatever's out there isn't talking to us. It's talking to some distant star, perhaps. Or perhaps to something closer, something en route. So who do you send to force introductions with unknown and unknowable alien intellect that doesn't wish to be met? You send a linguist with multiple personalities, her brain surgically partitioned into separate, sentient processing cores. You send a biologist so radically interfaced with machinery that he sees x-rays and tastes ultrasound. You send a pacifist warrior in the faint hope she won't be needed. You send a monster to command them all, an extinct hominid predator once called vampire, recalled from the grave with the voodoo of recombinant genetics and the blood of sociopaths. And you send a synthesist—an informational topologist with half his mind gone—as an interface between here and there. Pray they can be trusted with the fate of a world. They may be more alien than the thing they've been sent to find. At the Publisher's request, this title is being sold without Digital Rights Management Software (DRM) applied.

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: *Girl in Pieces* Kathleen Glasgow, 2018-04-10 #1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER A haunting, beautiful, and necessary book.—Nicola Yoon, #1 New York Times bestselling author of *Everything, Everything* Charlotte Davis is in pieces. At seventeen she's already lost more than most people do in a lifetime. But she's learned how to forget. The broken glass washes away the sorrow until there is nothing but calm. You don't have to think about your father and the river. Your best friend, who is gone forever. Or your mother, who has nothing left to give you. Every new scar hardens Charlie's heart just a little more, yet it still hurts so much. It hurts enough to not care anymore, which is sometimes what has to happen before you can find your way back from the edge. A deeply moving portrait of a girl in a world that owes her nothing, and has taken so much, and the journey she undergoes to put herself back together. Kathleen Glasgow's debut is heartbreakingly real and unflinchingly honest. It's a story you won't be able to look away from. And don't miss Kathleen Glasgow's novels *You'd Be Home Now* and *How to Make Friends with the Dark*, both raw and powerful stories of life.

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: *Rules for a Knight* Ethan Hawke, 2015-11-10 An unforgettable fable about a father's journey and a timeless guide to life's many questions—from Ethan Hawke, four-time Academy Award nominee, twice for writing and twice for acting. A knight, fearing he may not return from battle, writes a letter to his children in an attempt to leave a record of all he knows. In a series of ruminations on solitude, humility, forgiveness, honesty, courage, grace, pride, and patience, he draws on the ancient teachings of Eastern and Western philosophy, and on the great spiritual and political writings of our time. His intent: to give his children a compass for a journey they will have to make alone, a short guide to what gives life meaning and beauty.

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: *Tender Morsels* Margo Lanagan, 2008-10-14 *Tender Morsels* is a dark and vivid story, set in two worlds and worrying at the border between them. Liga

lives modestly in her own personal heaven, a world given to her in exchange for her earthly life. Her two daughters grow up in this soft place, protected from the violence that once harmed their mother. But the real world cannot be denied forever—magicked men and wild bears break down the borders of Liga's refuge. Now, having known Heaven, how will these three women survive in a world where beauty and brutality lie side by side?

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: Death in Her Hands Ottessa Moshfegh, 2020-08-27
'This is a story about what might happen when a woman takes charge... A glorious visceral mystery' The Times While on her daily walk with her dog in the woods near her home, Vesta comes across a chilling handwritten note. Her name was Magda. Nobody will ever know who killed her. It wasn't me. Here is her dead body. Shaky even on her best days, Vesta is also alone, and new to the area, having moved here after the death of her husband. Her brooding about the note grows quickly into a full-blown obsession: who was Magda and how did she meet her fate? From the Booker-shortlisted author of Eileen comes this razor-sharp, chilling and darkly hilarious novel about the stories we tell ourselves and how we strive to obscure the truth. _____ PRAISE FOR DEATH IN HER HANDS: 'Routinely hailed as one of the most exciting young American authors working today' Guardian 'A new kind of murder mystery' New Yorker 'Dark, devious' Observer 'A fine line between shocking realism and the absurd' New Statesman 'A brilliant off-kilter detective story' Evening Standard 'A beautiful novel' Sunday Times

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: The Darkness Outside Us Eliot Schrefer, 2021-06-01
They Both Die at the End meets The Loneliest Girl in the Universe in this mind-bending sci-fi mystery and tender love story about two boys aboard a spaceship sent on a rescue mission, from two-time National Book Award finalist Eliot Schrefer. Stonewall Honor Award winner! Two boys, alone in space. Sworn enemies sent on the same rescue mission. Ambrose wakes up on the Coordinated Endeavor with no memory of a launch. There's more that doesn't add up: evidence indicates strangers have been on board, the ship's operating system is voiced by his mother, and his handsome, brooding shipmate has barricaded himself away. But nothing will stop Ambrose from making his mission succeed—not when he's rescuing his own sister. In order to survive the ship's secrets, Ambrose and Kodiak will need to work together and learn to trust each other . . . especially once they discover what they are truly up against. Love might be the only way to survive. * Chicago Public Library's Best of the Best Books of the Year * A Booklist Editor's Choice of the Year * A BCCB Blue Ribbon Book of the Year * A YALSA Best Fiction for Young Adults & Amazing Audiobooks for Young Adults Book of the Year *

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: Between the World and Me Sparknotes Literature Guide Sparknotes, 2020-10-06 Created by Harvard students for students everywhere, SparkNotes give you just what you need to succeed in school: Complete Plot Summary and Analysis Key Facts About the Work Analysis of Major Characters Themes, Motifs, and Symbols Explanation of Important Quotations Author's Historical Context Suggested Essay Topics 25-Question Review Quiz Between the World and Me features explanations of key themes, motifs, and symbols including: the facade of the American dream; the destruction of the black body; violence; dreamers; the yard; Paris. It also includes detailed analysis of these important characters: Ta-Nehisi Coates; Samori Coates; Dr. Mable Jones; Kenyatta Matthews.

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas Ursula K. Le Guin, 2017-02-14 "Ursula Le Guin is more than just a writer of adult fantasy and science fiction . . . she is a philosopher; an explorer in the landscapes of the mind." – Cincinnati Enquirer The recipient of numerous literary prizes, including the National Book Award, the Kafka Award, and the Pushcart Prize, Ursula K. Le Guin is renowned for her spare, elegant prose, rich characterization, and diverse worlds. The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas is a short story originally published in the collection The Wind's Twelve Quarters.

the left hand of darkness sparknotes: Rocannon's World Ursula K. Le Guin, 2015-10-01
'She is unique. She is legend' THE TIMES 'Ursula Le Guin is a chemist of the heart' David Mitchell, author of CLOUD ATLAS 'A tour de force' EVENING STANDARD Earth-scientist Rocannon has been

leading an ethnological survey on a remote world populated by three native races: the cavern-dwelling Gdemiar, the elvish Fiia, and the warrior clan, Liuar. But when the technologically primitive planet is suddenly invaded by a fleet of ships from the stars, rebels against the League of All Worlds, Rocannon is the only survey member left alive. Marooned among alien peoples, he leads the battle to free this newly discovered world - and finds that legends grow around him as he fights.

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