

# Keepers

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# Story Premise

There's a world out there that you don't know about. A world that, before now, no one knew about except us. We are the protectors of the subconscious. Protectors of human souls.

Some say that the subconscious is our real world and being awake is dreaming for us. I think it's a little of both. There are two worlds. The normal world humans control and the subconscious world where we do.

That's why we're here. To *keep* control.

# Historical Background

When Earth was created, it was the last of the planets in the universe to be inhabited by souls. Humans were a different breed. They needed a god. They needed to find the meaning of life. The Serene created humans with love. In a way, it was an experiment to see what beings without rules would be like. Free will wasn't something the other souls had. Destiny. It was always about destiny.

These other souls lived on Serendipity. It was the accidental home of the Serene. While searching for Earth, the Serene found a habitable planet they loved and decided to stay.

The souls that lived alongside the Serene were like humans and were happy with their lives for a time, but some souls on Serendipity became enraged. They didn't understand why their lives were set in stone, but humans, "pets", "lab rats", were allowed to live and do as they please.

Some of the souls on Serendipity turned against the Serene. They were so blinded by hatred for humans that a war broke out on their own planet. The souls that would become Takers lost many of their followers in this war. They couldn't win against the Serene without replenishing their numbers.

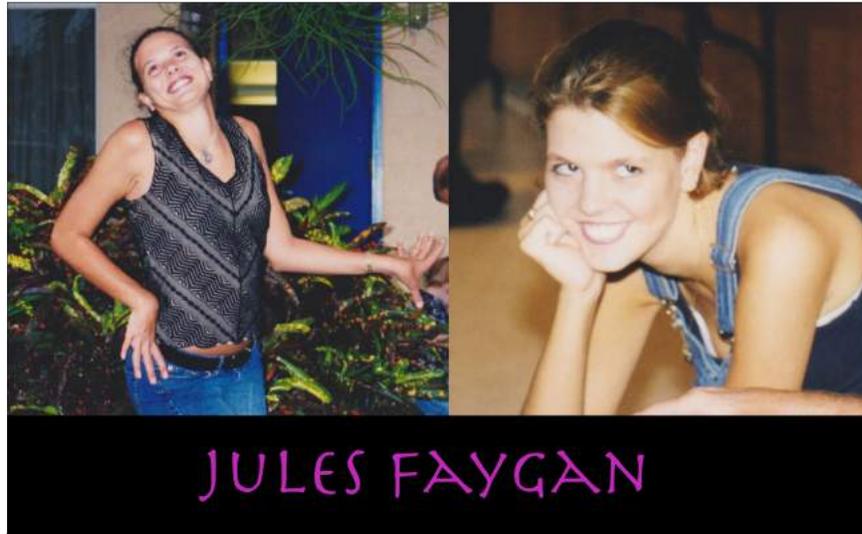
Audriana was their leader. She was powerful, tough, and smart. Audriana devised a plan to steal human souls. All the souls on Serendipity were dream walkers. They had the ability to go anywhere they wanted when they slept. She taught all of her followers how to acquire human's souls through their dreams and led them on a journey to Earth.

The Serene gained knowledge of this from Loretta. She was a seer and the Serene that came up with the idea to give humans free will instead of destiny. She saw what Audriana planned to do and, with the council's permission, created Keepers.

It was a painful process, but the souls were willing to go through it for the good of their planet and Earth. Loretta split the souls in halves or fourths, depending on how strong they were, and sent them to live on earth as human Soul Keepers. They would be born, live, and die like humans. Keepers would reincarnate, but always to the same family. The same soulmates. Keepers would be assigned a Serene to be with them throughout their lives, every life. The Serene would remember all their lives, but Keepers would not. This was their destiny. They would protect human souls each and every lifetime and the Serene would be there for anything Keepers may need.

# Main Characters

## Jules Faygan



Jules is just a normal twenty-year-old girl, living a normal life until she graduates high school. She's Irish and Native American but resembles more Native American. She's 5'10" tall and has an athletic build. Her biggest physical trait is her wavy, long brown hair that is always swinging around in a ponytail.

Jules' parents die within months of each other. Losing them is hard on her. The kind of "hard" that sends you into a depression so dark you can't see your way to the light. She walks around with a blank expression, rarely talking, and never leaving the house. Even her olive complexion looks paler from lack of sunlight.

For two years her brother, Jacob, her best friend, Serenitee, and Jacob's two best friends, Charles and Travis, do everything they can to bring her back to reality. Jules just can't seem to get out of the infinite darkness the loss of her parents has created. The "family" is worried because soon, Jules will have to be told she is a Keeper and begin training. They need her Seer abilities. She's always had visions when she sleeps and feels responsible for her parents' deaths because she couldn't stop what she saw beforehand. She's inadvertently blocked all visions since then by creating the Black Room.

A few lifetimes ago a prophecy was foretold about Jules. Loretta, High Priestess of the Serene, saw Jules and London, a Keeper and a Taker, who would fall into a forbidden love. The Keeper would be incredibly strong and mature, mentally. She would have powers that were uncommon of Keepers just as the Taker would. They would be humanity's saving grace. And there isn't any time to waste.

After London finds her in her Black Room (a room of her own creation to protect her heart from the outside world and pain it brings), she finds out her true destiny and begins to come alive again. London's love saves her, but it would be that love and the connection they both have with his twin that will allow them to go forward and do what needs to be done.

Jules, London, and Angel (his twin) will find their own path to save their race and human souls with the knowledge and acceptance that it will end their lives.

Jules' has three powers. Expulsion (she can kill souls) is a Taker's power and is only for the most powerful beings. She is a Seer (she has visions while awake or asleep). Projection is a Keeper's power and she can show pain from her past or all the enemy's victim's pain (or both at the same time). She also has access to all of London and Angel's powers.

### **London and Angel Hawkings**



(London and Angel are twins... two of the same.)

London and Angel are twenty-four years old and are twins, brought up as Takers. At a whopping 6'7" tall and a linebacker's build, the only distinguishing factor between the two is that London has a dimple on his right cheek and Angel has one on his left. They are both Native American with long brown hair and black-brown eyes. Both are connected far more than any normal twins. They feel each other's pain. Because of this, they can't work as Takers.

London is tasked by his mother to kill Jules. She doesn't tell him why, only that it has to be done to save himself and his brothers. He spends months searching for Jules and finally finds her alone, sitting cross-legged with her head in her hands. The room is infinite and black. Something about this sad, lost, woman draws him to her. He is unable to kill her.

London asks Angel to help him understand why their mother wants Jules killed. After a few months of the twins digging for information, they find a prophecy predicting a battle between Keepers and Takers. A prophecy that will eventually lead to the brothers finding out they aren't really who they think they are. They were stolen as babies, along with their older brother, by Audriana to be raised as Takers. Audriana is the only mother they know.

London and Angel realize that their lives, as well as many others, are in danger. London has to heal Jules' heart, so they can protect their world, and the human world, from Audriana and her group of Takers. The twins soon learn that Angel is as much a part of this prophecy as London and Jules. Once they know what lies ahead, the twins work tirelessly training with Jules to be able to fight as one to win the battle against Audriana and the rest of the Takers, including Ferran, their older brother. They sacrifice their own lives to fulfill their destiny.

London has Grace, which is a Serene power. It keeps the user graceful and fast. Manifestation is a Keeper's power. It allows the user to show the past and is strictly a defensive power. Incineration is a Taker's power. It allows the user to burn the future, whatever future the user wants, into their enemy's mind. It can kill the body, but not the soul.

Angel's power is called Flitting. It allows the user to move very fast from one place to another and take people with them. However, this power causes the user's body temperature to drop exponentially and the people they touch will get a bit of frostbite. It's a Keeper's power, but is advantageous when fighting the enemy and is extremely rare.

Angel can access London's and Jules' powers.

## Audriana



Audriana is the brains and brawn behind the Takers. She was originally a Serene and is known by Keepers as "The Blonde One". Since she turned against the Serene and became a Taker, her hair is a dirty blonde color. This happened because Serene are pure and by rebelling against her kind, her features have changed. She's about 5' tall and has golden brown eyes. Her skin is fair and she's very beautiful. She speaks softly, yet ferociously.

She steals London, Angel, and Ferran from their parents when they are very young to raise them as Takers. She knows about the prophecy and wants to change it so she orders London to kill Jules, thinking that when he does, there will be no one left strong enough to kill her. Audriana is able to turn Ferran, but because of the connection between the twins, she doesn't realize that they can't be swayed. She has the Expulsion power. This kills the soul permanently. Only the strongest beings can handle this power.

# Supporting Characters

## Jacob Faygan



Jacob is Jules' older brother. He lives in Pace, FL and is twenty-three years old. He's 6' tall, athletic build, dark brown hair, and brown eyes. He's very protective of Jules.

Jacob and Serenitee are in a relationship that Jules only begins to notice after London saves her from herself. His two best friends are Charles and Travis. They don't live with them, but crash on the couches almost every night. They also "Keep" together.

He is very upset when he finds London in the Black Room with Jules, but sees that he is starting to make a difference in her so he allows him to continue to be with Jules in her dreams. Once she starts to come around and act like her old self again, Jacob tells her that she is a Keeper. He finally explains to her how and why their parents died and that a battle is coming.

Jacob gets a new power, Shadowing, with the help of London and Angel and is an integral part in distracting Ferran and indirectly defeating Audriana. Shadowing is the ability to detach the enemy's shadow to fight alongside Keepers. The shadow has the owners' power, but is loyal to the Keeper. His original power is Orbing. This is where he can, mentally, throw orbs in different directions to throw his enemies off balance. It can also light up a room, which helps with Shadowing. It's a defensive power.

## Serenitee



Serenitee is Jules' best friend, roommate, and her brother's girlfriend. She is a Serene. Jacob, Jules, Charles, and Travis are her charges. She is significantly shorter than Jules at 5'2" tall. She has white hair, fair skin, crystal blue eyes, and is twenty years old.

As a Serene, she pulls negative energy from her charges. Since Keepers don't get to reboot every night like normal humans, Serene have to help them with any sort of mental distress. It is Serenitee's job to know and decide when a Keeper's soul needs rest. If that time comes before they die by a Taker's hand, she has to schedule their death, so their soul can be taken to the White Room to be cleansed before being reborn. Serene only live as long as their charges do. Once their charges have all died, their souls are taken back to Serendipity until it's time for them to be put back on Earth again.

Serene have to be able to relate to their charges which is why they are "reborn" as well. However, they aren't actually brought into the world through childbirth like Keepers are. They are just put on Earth, exactly as they were every other life, once a Keeper gets old enough to make a permanent connection with them. For Serenitee, that is when Jules is in the seventh grade and Jacob, Charles, and Travis are in the tenth grade.

She has Serene powers. Grace allows her to move gracefully and fast. Purification allows her to remove mental distress from her charges. Kinship allows her to connect with her charges. And Expunging allows her to remove the dream of any human that a Keeper and Taker have fought in, so they won't remember it.

## Charles



Charles is a big teddy bear. He's 6'4", blond hair, blue eyes, and has a muscular build that just comes naturally. He's like another big brother to Jules and fiercely protective of her as well.

He and Jacob have been friends as long as they can remember. Travis came along around the sixth grade. They are like the three musketeers. They hardly seen apart.

Charles is the "wound mender" for Jules. He babies her and takes care of her incessantly, doting on her as if she were still five years old and following them around while he and Jacob played cops and robbers. He's not a man of many words, but when he speaks, everyone listens.

He is a Visionary. This means he can put visions into his enemy's mind. It can be anything he chooses. It's a defensive power and helps distract.

## Travis



Travis is the polar opposite of Jacob and Charles. He's around Jules' height. Not quite 6' tall and has green eyes. His hair is always dyed blue, red, or some other crazy color. No one knows his real hair color. He's average build, but very muscular. He likes to work out every day.

Travis can be a bit pushy. He's the "enforcer". He and Jules duke it out a lot, metaphorically, because he doesn't trust London and Angel. He's very outspoken and can get under Jules' skin, but she loves him anyway. When he's in savior mode, he doesn't wait for Jules to react and run, he just picks her up, throws her over his shoulder and he's off. He knows that Jacob would never forgive him if anything happened to Jules on his watch.

Travis is funny and witty, loud and crazy, but deep down he's a big softie. His power is Cascading. It's defensive and simply makes his enemies continue to fall flat on their backs over and over.

## Loretta



Loretta is the High Priestess of the Serene, but she has charges as well. She's around sixteen years old at this point and has long white hair, fair skin, blue eyes, and is 5' tall. She's very soft spoken and hums a lot.

She is the Serene that foretold the prophecy. Everett is one of her charges. Loretta is the gatekeeper of the White Room as well. She helps London, Angel, and Jules by bringing them to see Everett and, later, to the White Room to show them the prophecy her way, which is by playing the vision in their minds like a movie.

## Everett



Everett is in his nineties and very short. He's bald except for a thin line of white hair that wraps around his ears and down the back of his head. He has no teeth which makes the twins and Jules think of a baby when he smiles. He's the

oldest Keeper that has ever lived. Loretta is his Serene and he was there when she had the prophetic vision.

Everett is a very happy old man. He walks with a cane, but doesn't need it. It's really just for show. He was kept alive for so long to help London, Angel, and Jules learn about what they have to do. After they see him, Loretta takes his soul to rest and be reborn again.

### **Ferran Hawkings**



Ferran is very tall at 6'5" and lanky. He looks like London and Angel, with Native American features, but he keeps his dark brown hair very short. He has the Immobilization power. This allows him to keep his opponents frozen so that they can be killed. It's a defensive power, a Keeper's power, but since he was born a Keeper there is no changing it.

Ferran is Audriana's right hand man. He goes everywhere she goes. She has kept him very close his whole life because he was older when she took the brothers and thought he would be harder to sway. He's very self-centered and boisterous. Even after finding out about his real parents, it's too late. He's already been brainwashed by Audriana and doesn't care about anything but power. Ferran knows that if Audriana was to be killed, he will be the next in line to control the Takers.

# Locations

## Jules' House

The house is located in the middle of twenty-three acres of land. It's a rustic style house. The front has dark brown cedar siding and the sides and back have tan Aden Blend bricks. The living room has the same cedar siding on the left and back wall with a fireplace made from the Aden Blend bricks. The floor is a cream/tanned colored Pompeii Shell ceramic tile.

To the right is an eat in kitchen/dining room with bay windows. There is a bar/breakfast nook that opens up the kitchen to the living room. To the right of the bar/breakfast nook is the master bedroom that is Jacob's.

To the left of the living room is a short hallway that leads to Jules' and Serenitee's room. Jules' room is straight back and Serenitee's room is the door on the right. Directly across from Serenitee's room is a bathroom.

Jules' room has a king size sleigh bed that is black. Her walls are painted a matte shade of silver/grey and has matching nightstands on each side. There are several fluffy king size pillows and lavender bedding.

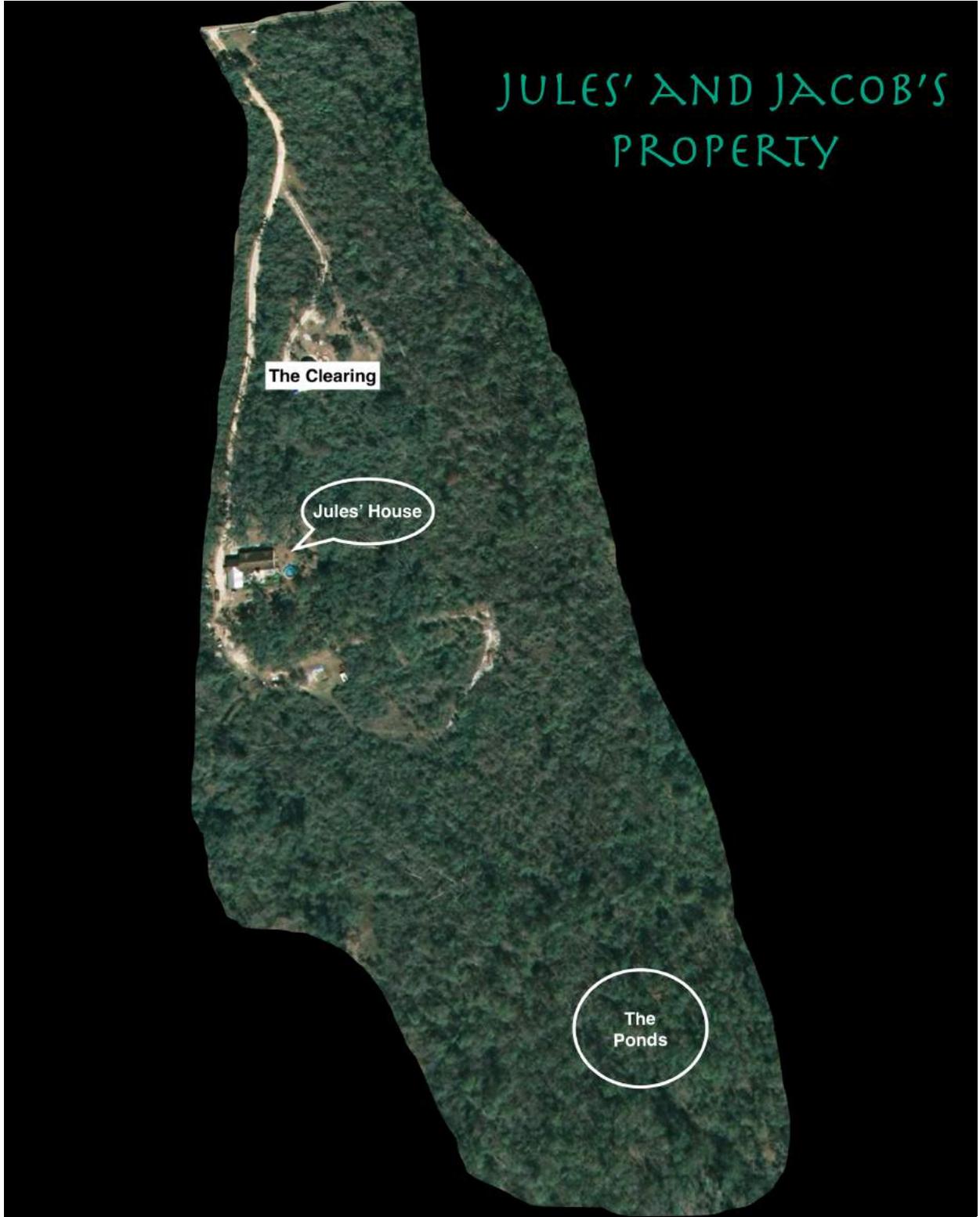


# JULES' AND JACOB'S PROPERTY

The Clearing

Jules' House

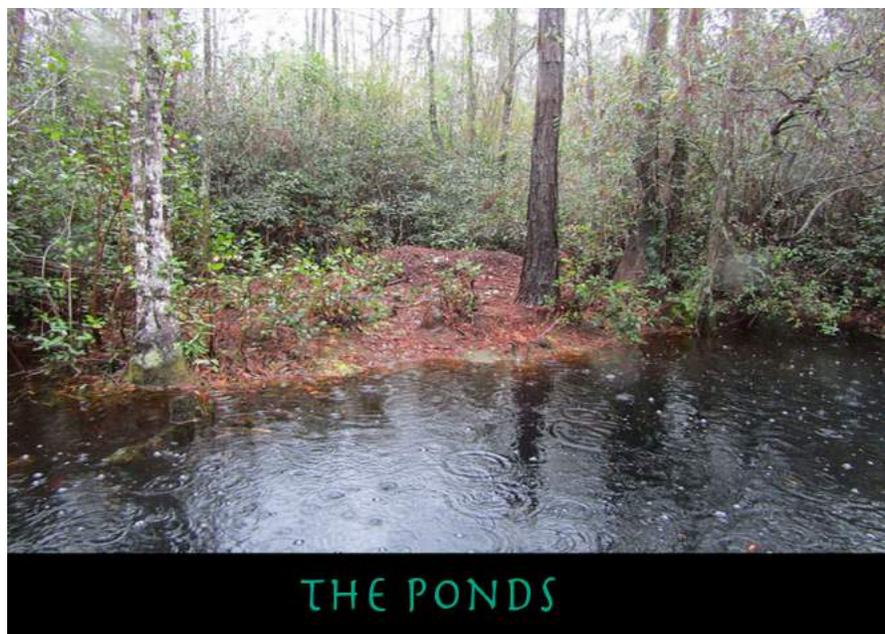
The  
Ponds



## The Ponds

The ponds are in the back-right of the property. There are four small ponds and three mounds. Two of the ponds are about fifteen feet by seven feet and the other two are about ten feet by six feet. They have black water. Black to the point that if you stick your hand six inches under the water, you can't see it. The mounds are zigzagged between all three ponds.

The mounds are red with compacted dead pine straw and leaves but are comfortable to lie on. It's quiet, except for the blurping noises that come from any of the four given ponds when one of the fish comes to the surface. There are trees everywhere. Mostly Pine trees, but some small Oak and a lot of bushes like ferns, weeds, and other small foliage. On the mounds are only pine trees.



## **The Black Room**

The Black Room is Jules' protection from everyone, including her brother, in her dreams. It stemmed from her depression after losing her parents. It's a place she can go (in her subconscious/dream world) when she's sad. The room makes her very hard to find.

She created it to protect herself, but inadvertently created a safe place that does not allow the battle (at the end) to reach human minds. At the time she created it, she didn't know she was a Keeper.

It's infinitely black. There are no walls and no ceiling that can be seen. It's used for the final battle and is a space that can handle all the powers from both Keepers and Takers.

# Additional World Information

## Powers

Takers have offensive powers. They use them against Keepers when they are in dreams attempting to steal human souls. If a Keeper tries to stop them, Takers will use their offensive powers to wound (not kill) Keepers. There is one power that can only be contained by the strongest beings. This is Expulsion and is the only power that can kill the soul.

Keepers have defensive powers. Their powers are only used to distract or immobilize Takers while in dreams. Some powers may have a bit of an offensive touch, but it's not significant enough to actually be offensive.

The Serene have general powers. They aren't offensive or defensive. All Serene have Grace, Purification, Kinship, the ability to Expunge (when a fight breaks out between a Keeper and a Taker in a human's dream, the Serene remove the memory of that dream which is why humans don't remember all of them). Serene are also Seers.

These powers are all mental powers. They don't need to move or use actual weapons.

All Keeper families, friends, and Serene can speak to each other in their minds. Takers can't do this. Once they turned, that was the only power that was taken away from them and can't be undone.

## Moving Through Dreams

All three have the ability to move through dreams. They do this by focusing on a certain place and "moving" to it. It's like flipping through channels on a television. It's very fast and if one isn't used to it, it can disorient them a bit.

When Keepers are working, they move through human dreams until they find one with a Taker in it. They can tell because the dream is very dark, and fear radiates from it. Keepers can tell, mostly, from feeling the human's emotions. They have to, mentally, put the brakes on and walk into the dream. That's when they save the human soul and then send in the Serene to Expunge the dream.

## Their World

The Keeper/Taker/Serene world is a fully functioning world within the human world. They live on Earth like normal humans. Keepers are born into the same family every lifetime, but do not remember their past lives.

Takers are created by Audriana. When a human soul is stolen, she creates a body and puts the soul in it. Because humans are used to free will, they aren't

opposed to being Takers and are willing to work for her. However, this is a very one-sided view because the human souls don't realize the bigger picture. Their powers aren't known until the soul is put in the body. The power depends on how strong the soul is and will manifest on its own.

Serene remember every life they've lived and have the same charges every time. They have a place called "The Library of the Serene" and everything that has ever been done by all three beings is documented here: prophecies, histories, powers, everything...

# Synopsis

Jules Faygan lives in the small town of Pace, Florida with her older brother, Jacob, and her best friend Serenitee. Up until this one life changing night, the only thing abnormal about Jules is her dreams. She sees the future.

After her parents die, suddenly and inexplicably, Jules' whole concrete world turns to quicksand in a matter of minutes. This causes her to spiral downward, depressed and heartbroken, but will also give her the strength she needs for what's to come.

Jules always had more control over her dreams than most people and creates a place to escape from all her troubles. The Black Room. It's an infinitely black room she can go to in her dreams. A place so dark that she can't tell where the walls or ceiling end and the floor begins. Alone one night in her Black Room, a stranger shows up that will change everything she ever knew about herself, her family, and her friends. His name is London and he is about to become her most important ally and her soulmate.

London is sent to kill Jules by his mother, Audriana. However, she is difficult to locate since she is so protected by the Black Room. Once he finds her, he immediately feels her heart wrenching sadness. London feels something else as well. Something he's never felt before. Love.

That love and her sadness prompts London, with the help of his twin brother, Angel, to find out why their mother wants to kill Jules. During their search, they find bits of information about a prophecy foretold by Loretta, the High Priestess of the Serene. He immediately knows he is part of it and will fight against his own world with Angel and Jules at his side.

London returns to the Black Room and slowly gets Jules to trust him. She finally speaks after almost two months of only sitting with her head in her hands. Then London drops the bomb. He tells her she is a Keeper and is bound to protect human souls from Takers. London is a Taker, but has never been able to follow through with his end of the deal for one reason... He has a conscience.

Time is crucial, and Jules has to wake up and snap out of her depression. Still skeptical, she goes to Jacob and Serenitee for answers. Everything London told her is true and it has already begun. Takers were on the cusp of ruling the Earth and only she and the twins will be able to stop them. This prophecy will not only change Jules' life, but the twins' as well.

London and Angel come to Jules in the waking world. London teaches her everything she needs to know about being a Keeper. During her first job in the dream world, they find out that she is packing more than just a Seer's power and so is he.

Serenitee takes the twins and Jules to learn more about their powers and the prophecy. They soon realize that London and Angel, along with their older brother, were stolen from their parents at a very young age. They were brought

up by Audriana, having known about the prophecy, to stop any chance Keepers have of winning the battle. The twins weren't able to be swayed because of their connection to each other. However, Ferran, their older brother craved power and through the years fully embraced his Taker abilities.

Jules and London were prophesized to have three powers. A Keeper's power, a Taker's power, and a Serene's power. Angel only has a Keeper's power, which is a very rare one. After much research and even more practice, London, Angel, and Jules learn there is a decision that has to be made. It will mean accepting a fate that none of them want in this life but will create a world far better than the one they live in now. Most importantly, it will save humans.

They are shown three possible futures. The trio understands what needs to be done and accepts their fate. The option they choose turns them into Serene. Jules realizes that she's not the only one that can access London's powers now. He can use hers and Angel can tap into both Jules' and London's.

The battle begins, and the trio fight as one. Audriana arrives and just before Jules kills her, she uses her power to mortally wound all three of them. Audriana dies, but Jules, London, and Angel are already too close to death.

Jules is carried to London by her brother and Angel crawls next to them. She apologizes for leaving Jacob so soon after they've lost their parents, explaining it was the only way to kill Audriana. They take their last breaths knowing Jacob and her friends are safe. The world is safe.

Willingly sacrificing themselves for the cause allows them to be reborn, remembering everything. Every life, every sacrifice, every memory, but with all the knowledge and none of the pain. They will be reincarnated as a new species of Serene. Quiescent Warriors waiting in the wings with the power to fight whatever comes next.

## Excerpt

I couldn't wait to just *be* with him. To look him in the eyes and relish that instant of calming warmth amidst chaos, knowing that the lifetime of wearing plate armor, guard up, head down is a thing of the past... that our souls can spin patterns that defy logic while holding explanation just far enough out of reach so wonder can always prevail. I would stay for him. It was my turn to make a sacrifice. Even if it would get me killed in the process.

I'd lived my life for everyone else for so long. We spent our lives saving human souls as Keepers. Nothing we ever did was for ourselves. It's the reason we were created. From the beginning of time, we spent each and every life protecting humans. No one ever protected us. Now we were in the midst of a war. Takers were killing off our kind. I didn't realize how important a role I would play when this all began. But as I came closer to fading from this life to the next, I found myself wishing I'd spent more time loving the important ones.

I lived with my brother, Jacob. He was also a Keeper. My best friend, Serenitee, was a Serene. The Serene helped us process our emotions. They were with the same Keepers in every lifetime. Serenitee gave us wisdom and strength, while helping us relax and keep our heads together. This would normally be done while sleeping, but we worked while we were dreaming. Charles and Travis were my brother's best friends and crashed on our couch more often than not. I was the little sister that the guys thought they needed to protect. I loved them all, but they could get on my nerves a bit.

Keepers existed to move through dreams searching for Takers. Up until recently, Takers only stole human souls to replenish their numbers. Now they were killing Keepers and they were coming after me.

Serenitee and Jacob had been researching the history of our kind. None of us knew why I had more powers than I'd had in my previous lives. They had gone all over the subconscious creation looking answers. I was foreseen along with the love of my life, London, and his brother Angel to stop the Takers completely. London and Angel, along with their older brother, Ferran, were stolen from their parents as children. They were Keepers, but the top bitch queen of the Takers, Audriana, took them and raised them as her own. Ferran was the only one to stay with her. London and Angel were twins and were mentally connected. They hated taking souls because they felt each other's pain. They didn't understand it because they didn't know they were actually Keepers.

Audriana sent London to kill me and that's when he found me in my black room. I created this after my parents died. I would go there in my sleep and hide or cry or just sit there. I didn't realize I wasn't healing myself, only making the pain worse.

In that black room, there were no walls or ceiling. It was black as far as the eye could see. I sat with my head in my hands feeling as empty as this room and my heart just as cold and dark. This beautiful man would sit by me every night. No words were said in the beginning. He just sat there radiating strength and love. He was like the sun shining on the dark side of the moon. One day I decided to speak.

"Hi," I said. "I'm Jules."

"I know who you are," London said. "I was sent to find you months ago."

"By whom?"

"My mother, but you probably know her as Audriana."

My jaw dropped, and I stood up in one quick pop, ready for a fight.

London held his hands up in surrender and said, "Wait, I'm not going to hurt you. If I wanted to, I'd have done it a long time ago. You haven't exactly had your guard up here other than making this ridiculously hard to find. I'm impressed."

I gathered my composure but kept alert. "Then why the hell are you here?"

"To keep you protected," he said. "When I found you that first night and saw the state you were in, I just couldn't kill you. You were so sad and broken, but so beautiful. You were everything that was good in this world."

I sat back down but kept my distance. There's no telling what he would do since he was Audriana's son. The only thing I could think to do was keep him talking. I needed to find out as much about Audriana's plan as I could.

"Why would she want to kill me?" I asked.

"She sees you as a threat. You're different than other Keepers. She wouldn't tell me anything, just that you needed to die."

"But I'm just one person. I'm nothing special."

"Well *she* thinks you are. She's terrified of you."

I woke up to my alarm screaming at me. It had been going off for a while, I guess, because when I opened my eyes, Jacob was standing next to my bed and reaching to silence it.

"What did you see?" Jacob asked.

"I saw a guy. London. He was sent by Audriana to kill me."

"I see he didn't get the chance."

"No, but he could have. He didn't want to. He found me in the black room. I don't know how. It took you a whole month of tapping into my subconscious before you found me and you're my blood."

Jacob smiled and ripped the covers off me. "Come with me. We've found something."

I followed my brother into the living room and cuddled up under my mom's favorite fleece blanket. I always had it when there was a serious conversation coming. It was like having a piece of her there with me.

The powers I had were different from other Keepers. They'd just recently begun to show.

"You didn't have these powers in your past lives," Serenitee said. "You only had Projection. Premonitions and Expulsion are new, and Expulsion is a Taker's power."

Projection was this nifty, little trick I had where I could make my opponent feel their victims' pain, or mine. I could take it one step further. I could combine a lifetime of pain from every victim, or myself, and project that as well. It was a defensive power. I could use it long enough to distract him or her so that I could save the human and hide them from the Taker.

"Expulsion doesn't just kill Keepers, but also Takers. This is not an easy thing to do and there are very few Takers that actually have the ability to handle it. It doesn't just kill the opponent for one life, Expulsion kills the soul," Serenitee said.

"That's one that you haven't quite tapped into yet, right?" asked Jacob.

"Yup. It feels too dark. It scares me," I said.

"Well, you're going to need to get past that, Jules. It, along with a few other borrowed powers, will save us all," Serenitee said.

"What borrowed powers?" I asked.

"We'll talk about that later," she said. "I've spoken to another Serene. Not just any other Serene, the High Priestess. One of her charges has been kept on earth longer than any other Keeper in history. Everett is old. Walking with a cane and no teeth *old*. He was there when Loretta saw your future. *Our* future. We need to go speak to them, but you need to get London and his twin here first."

"Whoa, now, Serenitee. You didn't tell me that part," Jacob said. "What if they try to kill us? What if they try to kill Jules?"

"They won't. I think London has already proven he can't kill Jules. His brother won't be able to do it either. This involves both of them as well. Trust me."

Serenitee grabbed Jacob's hand and squeezed. The way they looked at each other for that split second told a tale as old as the earth. Love.

"Wait," I glanced back and forth from Jacob to Serenitee. "What's going on between you two?"

Jacob snatched his hand from Serenitee's and looked away.

"Nothing. What are you talking about?" he asked.

It was a rhetorical question. He knew I had just seen the beginning of something huge between them. I let it go because there was an elephant in the room the size of Asia and it had to be dealt with. Audriana had to be dealt with.

"What do I do?" I asked.

"Lie down and concentrate. You don't need to be fully asleep," Serenitee said. She put pillows on the opposite side of the couch and patted them gently. "Come on. We don't have much time."

I complied and pulled my mom's blanket up to my nose and smelled it as I closed my eyes. "Hi mom."

"Close your eyes and concentrate on your breathing. Deep breaths in and out. Listen to your heartbeat. Search for him. Focus on finding London. Look

at the images in your mind. It's sort of like you're having a premonition, but you're going to send one to him."

"Huh?" I asked. "How am I – "

"Shhh. Don't talk. Just do what I say."

I focused on him. His body was tall and muscled. He had long brown hair. I was enamored by all of his Native American glory.

"You have him?" Serenitee asked.

I nodded my head.

"Show him where you are. Show him how to get here. He'll know what to do, but make sure you show his twin being here, too."

I did as I was told and then I was jolted awake. I sat straight up almost hyperventilating. I couldn't see my brother and Serenitee. I was having my own premonition.

It was Audriana. She was running, and her long dirty blond hair was blowing behind her. There was a formidable scream coming from her mouth. She'd figured out the twins were gone. Then a man, almost as tall as London and with the same skin tone, Ferran maybe, was running to catch up with her. He was fierce and had fire in his eyes. He was no Keeper. Ferran was power hungry. He craved the kill.

All these emotions exhausted me. When I opened my eyes, I was standing up on my toes. I'd balled my fists up so hard blood was dripping from my palms because I'd dug my fingernails into them.

"I... she knows," I said and promptly passed out.

When I opened my eyes, I was in my black room. Ferran knelt down beside me and stroked his fingers through my hair. When he spoke, his voice was soft like a lullaby. It was comforting, and I wanted to let go of all the fear, but I knew that would be his advantage. Maybe that's why Audriana used him. People were drawn to him without even understanding why or being able to stop it. He would be her shepherd, gathering as many sheep as the already growing flock would allow.

"They'll be here soon," he said and gently patted my cheek.

I was bait and had no energy. Forcing the premonition on London and immediately getting one myself, had taken a lot out of me. I heard a low roar behind me and Ferran went rigid. I was scooped up and flying through the air in someone's arms. He threw me to Jacob and turned around to help London.

"Take her away from here, Jacob. We'll follow. Just go now," London said.

I wriggled down from Jacob, but with the combined strength of Charles and Travis, I didn't have the energy to keep from being dragged away.

"Take me back," I said.

Jacob didn't respond. Then Charles bear-hugged me and the room started flipping. He was taking us out of there. When we move from dream to dream it's like changing the channels on the television really fast. You learn to deal with it after a while, but without my strength I wasn't able to stop the vertigo, so I closed my eyes.

“Open your eyes, Jules,” Jacob said.

I didn't move. I wasn't even sure I was breathing.

“Sweetie,” Serenitee said. “It's okay. Open your eyes.” She was using her Purification power and draining some of the mental distress from me.

I felt large muscled arms wrap around my back and legs. They picked me up and put me on someone's lap. I opened my eyes and saw London. He was smiling at me and I noticed he had a dimple on the left side of his cheek.

“Hi,” he said.

“Hi,” I said and then buried my head in his chest.

“You three take a minute. Then we have to go,” Jacob said.

“Three?” I asked. I'd completely forgotten about London's brother.

“Jules, Angel. Angel, Jules,” London said.

Angel smiled that big beautiful smile just like his twin, but not exactly. The dimple was on the right side of Angel's face. How odd.

“We need to go,” London said. “Your brother and Serenitee are taking us to meet Loretta and Everett. They can help us.”

“What happened with Ferran?” I asked.

“We got away. He didn't think we would kill him. Once he realized that, we had just enough time to get out before all hell broke loose.”

When I stood up, my body felt like it was going to break. I was mentally and physically taxed.

“Whoa. Well, I guess now is as good a time as any,” I said and wobbled, grabbing doors and walls to keep my balance as we went to find Jacob.

Jacob and Serenitee were sitting on the couch talking when we walked into the living room. Serenitee caught my eyes and smiled.

“You ready to go?” She asked.

“Ready as we'll ever be,” I said.

“Sit down and get comfortable. They're waiting for us.”

We all picked a spot and relaxed. As I closed my eyes, I listened to my breathing. When I couldn't hear that anymore, I listened to my heartbeat. Then I was asleep. Serenitee was guiding us to answers and we all held on for the ride. When I opened my eyes, we were standing in a room I'd never seen.

The room had paneled wood on the walls and hardwood floors that creaked a little when we walked. There were old chairs that had wooden arms and soft, fluffy seats and backs, all different patterns than the next. Sitting next to a fireplace was a beautiful young girl and a really old man with no teeth and a big grin.

“Sit, sit,” he said. “We have much to discuss.”

Loretta and Everett exuded love and care. They were very easy to be around, but that may have been because there were two Serene in the room.

Loretta started to speak, and she sounded like a little girl. She didn't look a day over sixteen. The Serene started their lives over when their charges died, so I was probably pretty dead on about her age.

"Jules, you're connected to London because of fate. London, you are connected to Angel because of the bone between identical twins. It forms a never-ending triangle between the three of you. It's also what will save all of our lives," Loretta said.

"But how do we do that?" I asked.

Everett cleared his throat and sat up straight.

"There were worries that Audriana was trying to steal souls. She was rooting up a plan to get a few of ours. Of course, everyone went into overdrive to keep it from happening, but you know fate. It does what it wants whether we want it to or not. That's when she got you two and your older brother," he said pointing to London and Angel. "We were thinking she'd try to get souls that hadn't been reborn yet and put them in a taker's body, but we were wrong. She knew it would be a hell of a lot easier to just steal all of you."

"But didn't she know who she was stealing?" London asked.

"Yes and no," Everett said. "By the time you two were old enough to display your powers, she thought you would be loyal to her. What she didn't count on was the connection between twins." His toothless grin was gone.

"So how do we prepare for this?" I asked. "How do we save everyone without losing each other in the process?"

Everyone was quiet, and the old man was a little uncomfortable in his fluffy chair. Leaning from his left hip to his right and uncrossing his legs, he put his short, arthritic finger to his temple and closed his eyes for a minute.

"I think the decision is already made. You just have to accept it," he said.

London and I looked at each other, not sure what to say next. I knew what would have to happen. We would have to sacrifice ourselves to save our world. It was one hell of a weight to put on someone's shoulders, but luckily, I had two strong men to share the load. We said our goodbyes and closed our eyes to jump back to our subconscious and go back home. When we opened them again we were in my black room.

"What the hell are we doing here?" Jacob asked.

Everyone looked at me curiously.

"I didn't do it," I said.

"I did," a voice said from the dense darkness.

Ferran came into view with Audriana following right behind him.

"Well, hello there," Audriana said.

I looked at my brother. There was fear and rage in his eyes. That bitch killed our parents and he wanted revenge.

I wanted to go somewhere safe, away from all of this, but there was no escaping it. We could go as far away as the other side of the world, but our minds would always come with us and that's where the war really was. So, we would fight. We'd fight for the beginning of the end and then for a new beginning. It was the way our world worked. One door closes, another opens. Death was never really death, only rebirth. A fresh start. And we were about to dive in head first.

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