

# BOOK & BAKE APRIL 26, 2025

## The House in the Cerulean Sea

### Characters

#### Linus Baker

- Compassionate
- Feelings of worthlessness
- Detail oriented
- Courageous

*"It was just that he felt...dimmer than others. Like he was faded in a crystal-clear world. He wasn't meant to be seen."*

- Lives in a "gray world"
- Rule follower (99.9%)
- Non-magical
- Works for DICOMY

#### Arthur Parnassus

- Runs the orphanage
- Gentle, patient
- Believes in the power of healing
- Abusive childhood
- Natural caregiver
- Former resident of the orphanage
- Magical being (phoenix)

*"A person is more than where they come from."*

#### Zoe Chapelwhite

- Undocumented magical creature
- Lives on the island
- Fiercely protective
- Mentor to Phee
- First to meet Linus

*"And since they don't understand the children, since they fear them, they hate them."*





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## Chauncy

- An Amorphous blob
- Dreams of being a bell hop

*"Just because you don't experience prejudice in your everyday doesn't stop it from existing for the rest of us."*



## Theodore

- Wyvern
- Loves shiny, brass buttons
- Capable of deep thoughts and emotion

*"Chirp! Chirp!"*



## Sal

- A shy shifter
- Changes to a pomoranian dog when nervous/anxious
- Enjoys writing

*"Sometimes, things get chipped and broken, but there's still good in them."*



## Lucy

- Short for Lucifer
- Yes, he is the son of the devil
- Has disturbing dreams

*"Humanity is so weird. If we're not laughing, we're crying or running for our lives because monsters are trying to eat us. And they don't even have to be real monsters. They could be the ones we make up in our heads."*



## Talia

- Sassy gnome
- Owns a shovel and is not afraid to use it
- Master gardener

*"I like being round; it means there's more of me to love."*



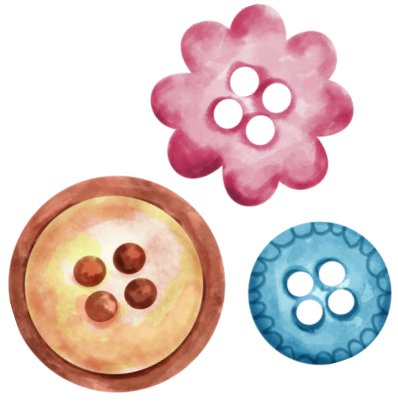
## Phee

- Forest sprite
- Mentored by Zoe

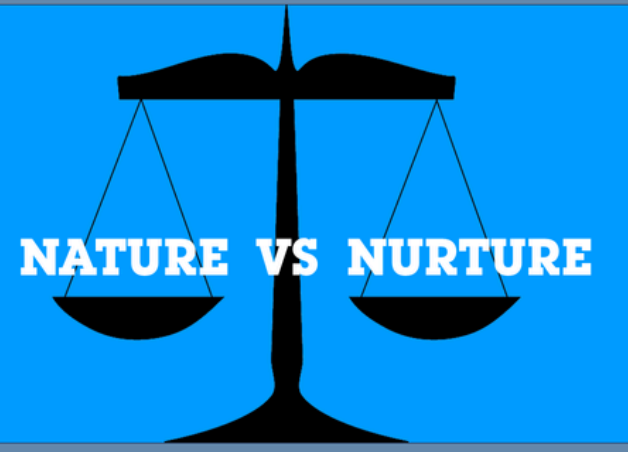
*"You have to see what's underneath it all. You have to put in the time to learn what the differences are."*



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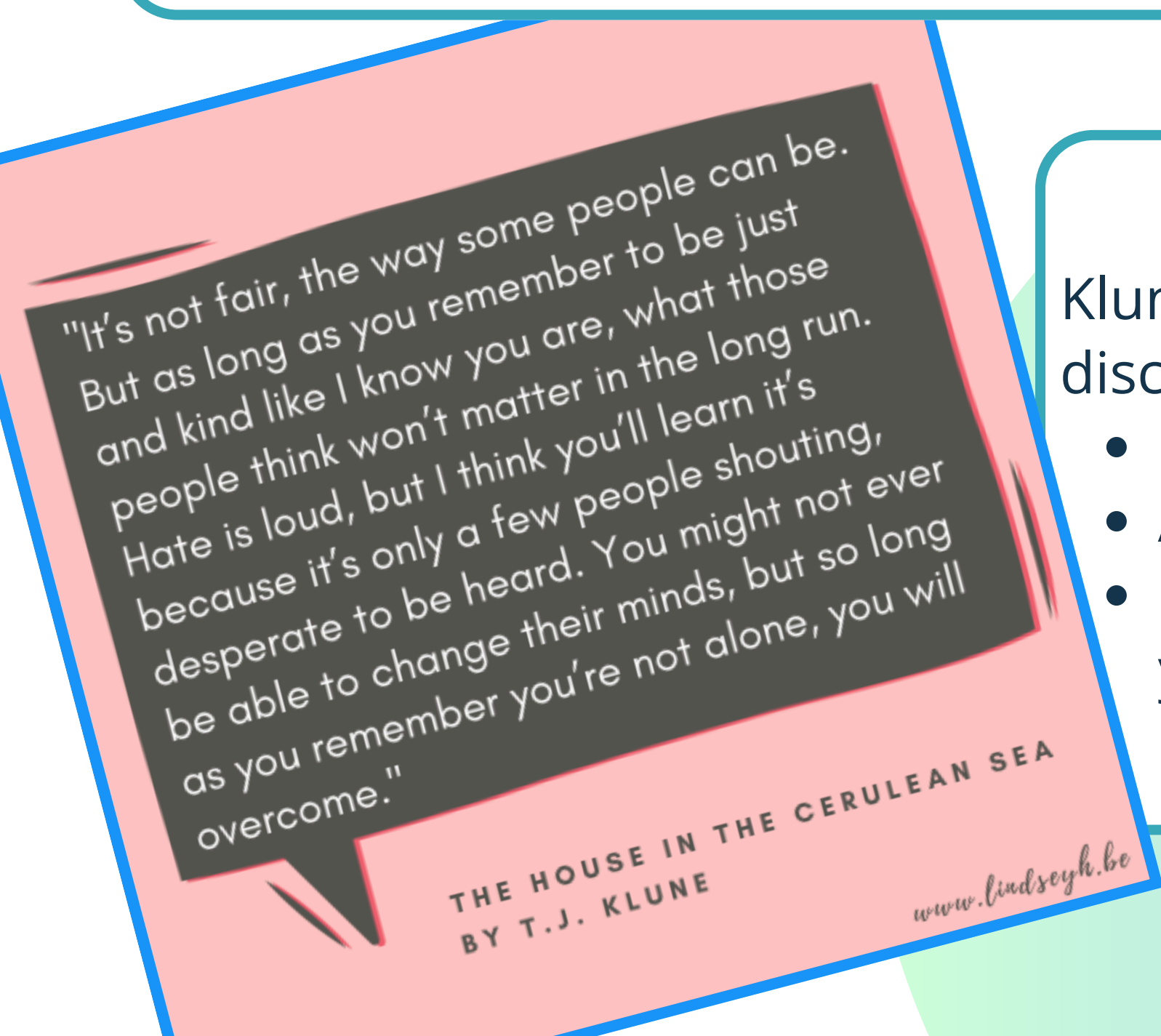
## Themes to Explore



### Nature vs. Nurture

*"Regardless of his parentage, he is a child. And I refuse to believe that a person's path is set in stone. A person is more than where they come from."* ~Arthor Parnassus

Does one behave from a place that is pre-determined and essential to that person? Or does one's behavior change, evolve, and develop based on that person's experience and resolution to live a certain kind of life or be a certain kind of person?



### Perpetuation of Prejudice

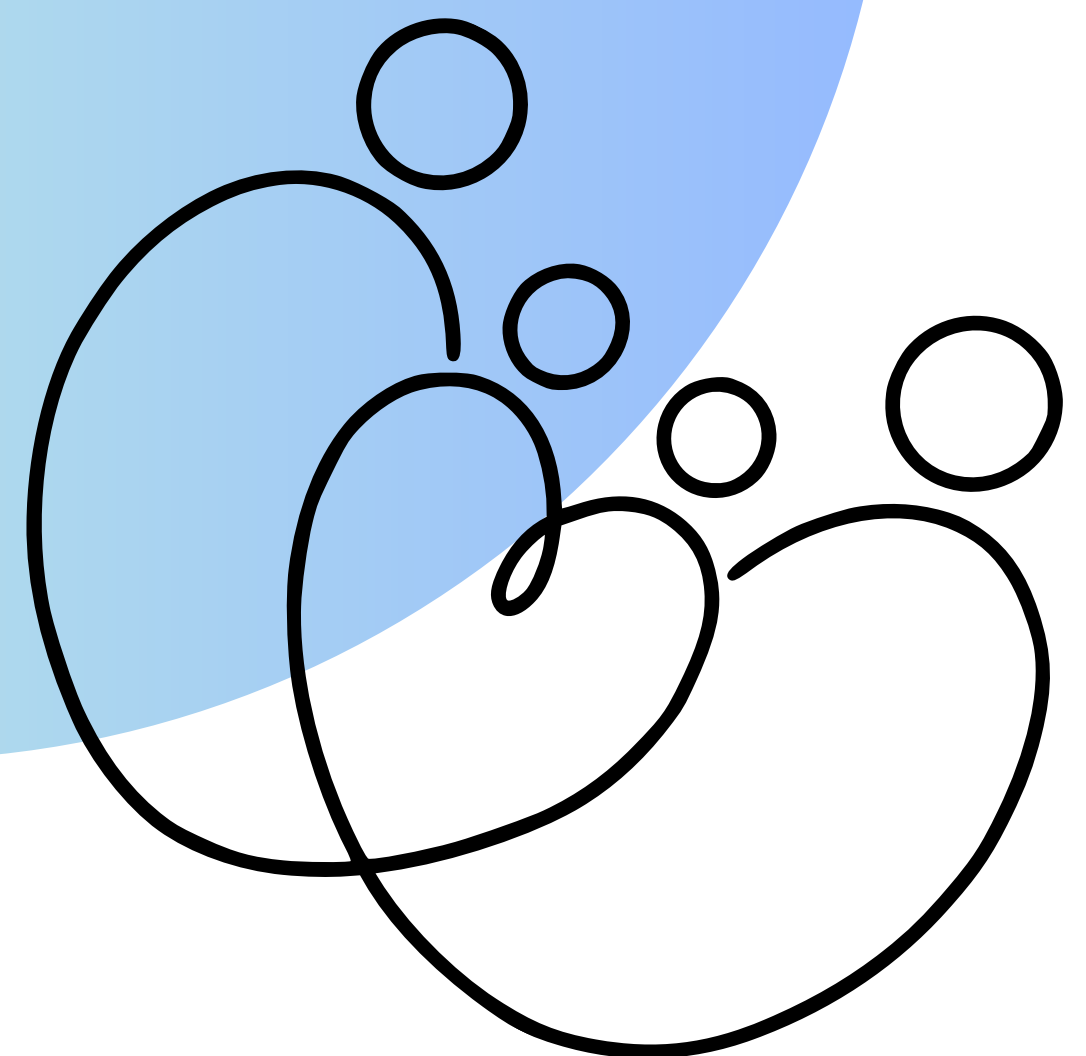
Klune developed a universe that mimics the discrimination we see in our world.

- Magical gifts
- Appearances that differ from the human norm
- posters warn the nonmagical that magical youth and adults are something to be noticed, registered, and monitored

### Found Family

The theme of found family relates to that of nature versus nurture, as *both* allow the individual to escape or transcend their origins and past circumstances and, instead, form a meaningful group that is connected by bonds of love and trust.

Sharing the weight of trauma

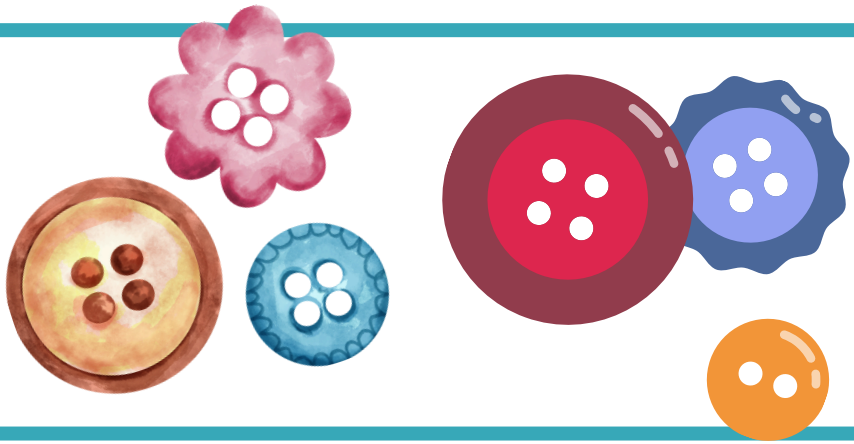




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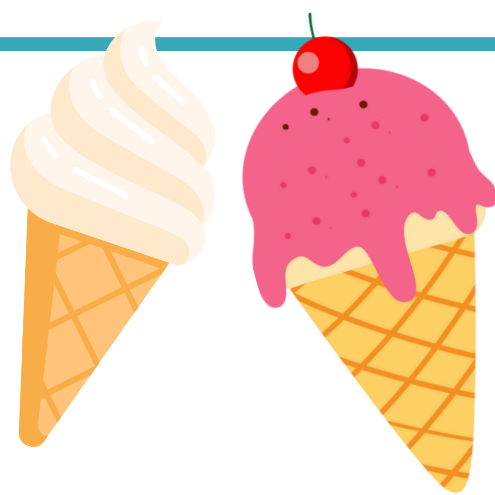
## Let's Chat

In what ways do you feel Klune's story serves as an allegory?



How do your own life experiences inform your perspective of found family?

Have you ever personally had the experience of breaking free from rules and expectations that you found limiting or nonsensical? How was your experience similar to or different from Linus's?

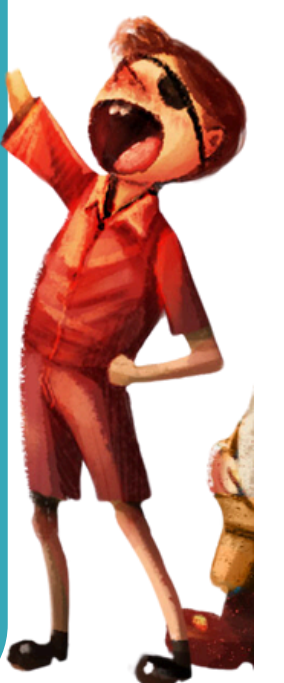
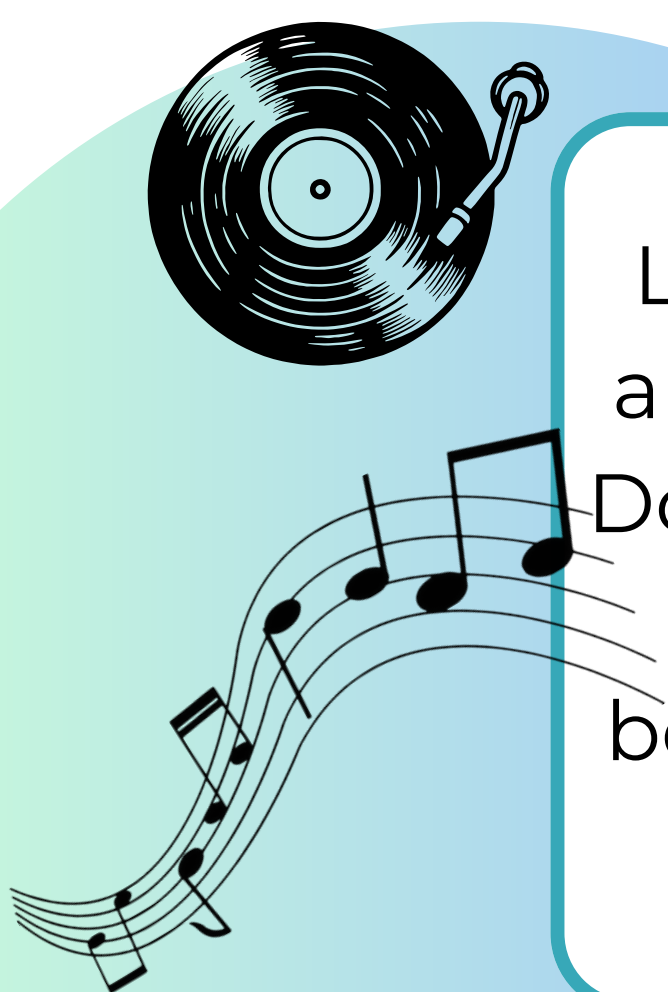


What does Linus's transition from a rule-following government employee to a compassionate advocate say about personal responsibility versus professional duty?

Chauncey's aspiration to be a bellhop challenges both societal expectations and self-imposed limitations. In considering your own experiences or observations, how do perceptions of innate capability affect one's ambitions and achievements?



Lucy's character teeters between being an "antichrist" and just a regular child under Arthur's loving guidance. Do you think people like Lucy are bound by their nature, or is nurturing a stronger force in shaping who they become? How would your stance change if Lucy's story took place in our world and not in a magical one?

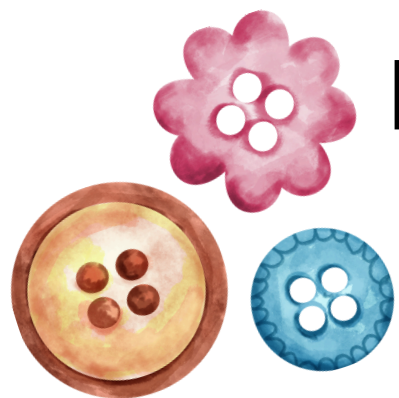




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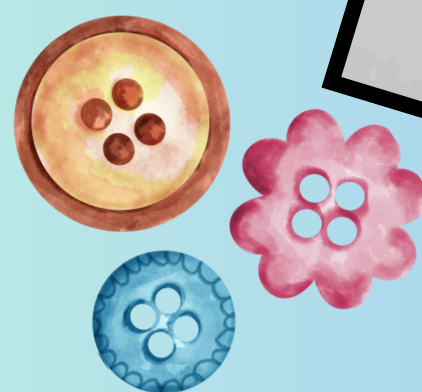
## Let's Chat

What made you chuckle?



Regarding Linus's mousepad: Do you have something in your personal space that you keep handy to remind you of happy times? What is it?

What did you think of the way the novel portrayed governmental agencies through its portrayal of DICOMY? Does this seem like a fair criticism of real-world government? Why or why not?



"A home isn't always the house we live in. It's also the people we choose to surround ourselves with. You may not live on the island, but you can't tell me it's not your home. Your bubble, Mr. Baker. It's been popped. Why would you allow it to grow around you again?"



What effect does the humanizing the idea of the antichrist have on the story? What effect does it have on you, the reader? What questions do his personality, nightmares, fears, and traumas raise?