

# RELIC MASTER

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The Dark City

ISBN: 978-0-8037-3673-3  
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The Lost Heiress

ISBN: 978-0-8037-3674-0  
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The Hidden Coronet

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The Margrave

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## BOOK 1: THE DARK CITY

### Discussion Questions:

- What are the cromlechs and what role do they play in the story?
- Who is Alberic? What is ironic about his anger over the stolen gold?
- Who are the Makers and what has happened to their world?
- Why is Galen determined to visit Tasceron, despite his understanding of the impending danger of visiting the “Wounded City”?
- Who is the Crow and what role does he/she play in the story?
- Who is Carys Arrin and why is she intent on pursuing Galen and Raffi? Why does she come to Galen’s rescue at the end? What does she learn about her own identity and the trustworthiness of the Watch?
- What is the House of Trees and what does it symbolize?
- The following passage opens Chapter 11: “Once you believe, you are lost. Anything you see or hear can be twisted against you.” Explain the significance of this passage to the chapter. How might the Watch use this concept as mind control?
- Galen can no longer dream. Raffi, however, does. Explain the significance of his dreams in the story. What role do they play in the world of a Keeper?
- Who is Kest and what role did he play in the destruction of Galen and Raffi’s world? Compare and contrast him to other historical or fictional characters.
- In what way does the story end on a cliffhanger? What problem or topic might appear in the second volume of this series?

### Questions for Further Discussion:

- Identify several relics in the text. What modern-day devices do they resemble? What word clues help you arrive at your interpretation?
- The character of Carys Arrin is introduced through her journal writing. Events are often told through the eye of a third-person narrator and then first-person through Carys’ journal writing. How do these two viewpoints aid the reader in understanding the story? How do the two opposing viewpoints compliment one another?
- Does Carys change by the end of the story? Support your response with examples from the text.
- What spiritual elements do you see in the story and how do they move the story forward? Note the passage opening Chapter 13: “Even across the dark, even across the loss, even across the emptiness, soul will speak to soul.”



## BOOK 2: THE LOST HEIRESS

### Discussion Questions:

- What is the summoning of the Flainsdeath? How does this scene set up or contribute to the storyline?
- Describe the Unfinished Lands. What mood do the Unfinished Lands create? Identify words and passages that contribute to the mood.
- How might gold be called the Sekoi’s Achilles’ heel? What is the Great Hoard?
- What does Carys find in the Tower of Song? Who is Harnor and what secret does he keep? How does he help Carys?
- Why do Galen and Raffi search for the lost heiress?
- One might describe the journey taken by Galen and Raffi as a quest or pilgrimage. Identify physical, emotional and spiritual challenges that Raffi and Galen experience.
- Who is Tallis and what special powers does she possess? How does she assist Galen, Raffi and the Sekoi?
- Contrast the Unfinished Lands with Sarres. How has Sarres remained unscathed, protected from the Watch?
- What are The Ordeals? How does Raffi violate The Ordeals and what peril does he experience as a result of his lack of good judgement? Is his mistake in line with his character? Explain.

(continued...)



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(Questions for Book 2: The Lost Heiress, continued...)

- How does Carys reunite with Galen and Raffi? Why do they need her?
- What is the Watchhouse and how are children treated? Why are children here?
- Why is Braylwin interested in the Interrex?
- Carys and Raffi are trapped in the Watchhouse when they attempt to steal the lost heiress. How does Galen come to their aid?

## Questions for Further Discussion:

- Carys is a watchspy, and it is difficult at times to know whose side she is on. By the end of the story, however, the reader clearly knows she has turned against the Watch and supports the Order. What events in the story alter Carys' perceptions of the Watch?
- Kest is one of the Makers and, yet, he creates beasts that destroy the world. With what fictional or historical characters can he be compared? How?
- Raffi describes Galen as dark and untouchable. Do you agree with this description? Use examples in the story to support or refute Raffi's description.
- The narrator describes the Unfinished Lands as "the wreckage of a world." Find other examples of exemplary word choice. What meaning do they add to the story?
- What role does greed play in the story? What comparisons can you make with other stories that have greed as a theme?



## BOOK 3: THE HIDDEN CORONET

## Discussion Questions:

- Why do Galen and Raffi connect with Majella Claxton? What surprise do they find when they arrive at her house?
- Why does Galen not tell Solon the Crow has risen early in the story? Did he use sound judgment by not doing so? Explain.
- What is the Coronet and why is it important that Galen and Raffi find it?
- Why does Galen insist on traveling to the observatory?
- What does Carys learn in the Drowned Palace?
- How does Galen change as the plot moves forward? What accounts for this change? Why does he threaten to burn the apse?
- Is the Sekoi loyal to Galen and Raffi or to the Great Hoard? Explain.
- How are Carys and Marco alike? How are they different?
- Is Carys friend or foe? Support your answer with examples from the story.
- In what way is Marco an ironic character?
- How is the power of the Coronet harnessed in the end? What does this example of teamwork say about mankind?
- Galen and Raffi are tricked by Solon. Explain.
- Like Galen and Raffi, the Sekoi race knows the planet is changing. What attitude do they have toward this change? How will they be impacted?
- Does the Sekoi make himself an outcast among his own people? Explain.

## Questions for Further Discussion:

- Is this story fantasy or science fiction? Explain.
- Are the Sekoi treated as an inferior group on Anara by the Watch? By the Order? Explain.
- The story has several shocking twists. Identify one such twist and explain how it carries the plot forward. What foreshadowing, if any, or groundwork did the author lay to prepare the reader for this surprise?



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## BOOK 4: THE MARGRAVE

### Discussion Questions:

- Why does Galen seek revenge on the Margrave? What is the purpose in setting up the sense-grid and preparing Raffi for a Deep Journey?
- What is the Wall and describe its purpose. What irony exists in the building of the Wall?
- Who is Alys Varro and what role does she play in the story?
- Why does the Margrave want Raffi? What clues speak to a connection between Raffi and the Margrave?
- Why does the warlord, Alberic, aid Galen? In what way might he be called comic relief?
- Galen warns Alberic that he is to treat the prisoners well and give them mercy. Why does Galen insist on this kindness? What message does this treatment convey about the treatment of real-world prisoners of war?
- Who is Silas and why does he deceive Raffi? Is Silas a traitor? Why or why not?
- Raffi enters the Room of Mirrors. What does he see here and how does this experience foreshadow the rest of the story?
- How does Galen change in the story? What does he learn about himself and his relationship with Raffi?
- How does the author create sympathy for the Margrave?

### Questions for Further Discussion:

- The author sets up an interesting perspective on the destruction of the planet. On one hand, the Order argues that the Margrave and the Watch are accountable for the decaying world; on the other hand, the Margrave argues the Makers corrupted an entire ecology and could not stop it. Which position seems most plausible? How might this story relate to our care and abuse of our own planet?
- What message(s) does the story send about the importance of working together to solve complex problems, whether problems are global or closer to home?
- In what ways might this story be read as an allegory?



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Born in Newport, Wales, Catherine Fisher earned a degree in English from the University of Wales and has taught creative writing at the University of Glamorgan and worked as a primary school teacher and archaeologist. She is an acclaimed poet and novelist who has won much critical acclaim for her work. Her futuristic novel, *Incarceron*, won the Mythopoeic Society of American's Children's Fiction Award and was a *New York Times* bestseller, as was its sequel, *Sapphique*. *The Oracle*, the first volume in the Oracle trilogy, was shortlisted for the Whitbread Children's Books prize, and *The Snow-Walker's Son* was shortlisted for the W. H. Smith Award. Her work reflects her fascination for myth and history and her remarkable sense of imagination. She conducts workshops for teachers, librarians and lives in Newport, Gwent. She has written approximately twenty novels, and her work has been translated into more than a dozen languages.

