

STARTERS

Readers Guide

SURVIVAL IS JUST THE BEGINNING.

“Fans of *The Hunger Games* will love it.”

—Kami Garcia, *New York Times* bestselling coauthor of the *Beautiful Creatures* novels

LISSA PRICE



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QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

- Why does Callie begin her story by saying, “Enders gave me the creeps”? (p. 1) What image comes to your mind when she talks about walking into a “body bank”?
- Why does Callie return to Prime Destinations after she has decided not to take part in their program?
- Why are young people not allowed to vote or to work in this society? Discuss how this policy affects the youth. Why does Prime Destinations call the money their subjects receive a stipend?
- What is Callie’s reaction to her first two rentals? How would you feel about your body being used in this way? What is the significance of the scar she finds on her arm after the second rental?
- Describe Callie’s feelings when she wakes up in Club Rune. What is the importance of her first meeting with Madison and with Blake? What is her initial reaction to the voice she hears in her head?

PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Starters takes place in a future society. Name other stories you have read that take place in the future. Make a chart of the challenges that face young people in each of those futuristic societies. Make a list of character traits of the individuals in each story who question authority. What do they have in common?

- How does Callie react to the drawing Michael made of her that she finds in her clothing? Why did he draw her looking ethereal? How does Callie feel about Michael at this point? Why is she attracted to Blake?
- Who are Helena Winterhill and Rhiannon Huffington? What reasons do they each have for renting a younger body? What are Helena’s reasons for warning Callie not to return to Prime Destinations? How does Callie react to the voice in her head?
- What is the connection between Helena and her friend Lauren? How does Lauren recognize Helena in Callie’s body?
- How does Callie learn about Helena’s plans to assassinate someone? How does she feel when she returns to her own consciousness with a gun in her hands? Why does Callie believe she can alter Helena’s plans?
- Why does Callie go along with Briona, Raj, and Lee? What does she learn about the Enders’ experiences with body renting from this excursion?

- When Helena offers Callie more money and a permanent home if she follows her plans, why does Callie say, “I hated even considering it”? (p. 168)
- What changes Callie’s mind about Helena’s conspiracy theory? When does she begin to believe what Helena has told her about the real purpose of Prime Destinations? What makes her feel closer to Helena?
- What is the significance of Callie’s trip to the orphanage and her meeting with Sara?
- Describe the different reactions that Callie and Madison have to the announcement of Prime Destination’s new program for permanent possession of young bodies. (pp. 208–209)
- How does Callie know that Helena is gone? Why do they try to kill Callie by running her down? Why can’t the body bank take over control of Callie after Helena is killed?
- Why does Callie go to see Redmond? In what way does he help her to stay alive?
- Describe Callie’s reaction when she sees Michael on the street and then realizes he

- has been “rented.” Discuss her comment: “I never thought about how wrong this was when I signed up for it.” (p. 236) Is it easier to see that something is wrong when it involves someone you care about?
- Why does Callie shoot the Senator? What effect does the shooting have on Blake? What does Callie feel when she discovers who Blake really was throughout the time they spent together? Did the Old Man (in Blake’s body) seek out Callie because he suspected Helena of conspiracy?
- How is Callie able to become the center of a rebellion against the work of Prime Destinations? List the character traits that make it possible for Callie to survive everything she must do in this story.
- Just as Callie feels safe again, she hears another voice in her head, the voice of the Old Man. What does the voice mean when it says, “Give a man a mask, and he’ll tell you the truth”? (p. 330) Why do you think he has always hidden behind a mask? Why does he want Callie to join him?

ABOUT THE BOOK

STARTERS

In a futuristic world, our society is divided into Starters and Enders, the young and the old. Everyone between the ages of 20 and 60 has been wiped out by vicious germ warfare before they could be inoculated. The young who are not “claimed” by grandparents or guardians are either put in institutions or are on the run, living hand-to-mouth. Callie, along with her little brother, Tyler, and her friend Michael, are desperately trying to stay alive, squatting in

abandoned office buildings and eating whatever scraps they can find. Attempting to earn enough money for a stable home, Callie contracts with a shady organization to allow her body to be “rented” by an Ender . . . but she stumbles into a maze of politics, power, and intrigue when she discovers she can share thoughts with her renter and that the “body bank” is more sinister than she first believed.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

POST-READING ACTIVITY

In the very last chapter, Callie senses the voice of her father in her head repeating the phrase she last heard from him—"When hawks cry, time to fly."

What do you think this means? Write the first chapter of a sequel to this story based on what you know of the society and the characters of Callie, Tyler, Michael, and the Old Man.



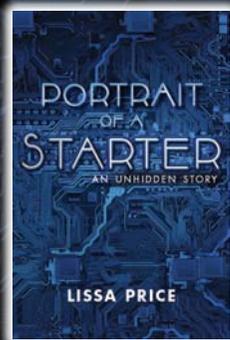
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available in July and October 2012.

Discussion Guide prepared by Connie Rackman, youth literature consultant, adjunct professor of children's and young adult literature, and editor of the 8th, 9th, and 10th books in the H. W. Wilson Junior Authors and Illustrators series.

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