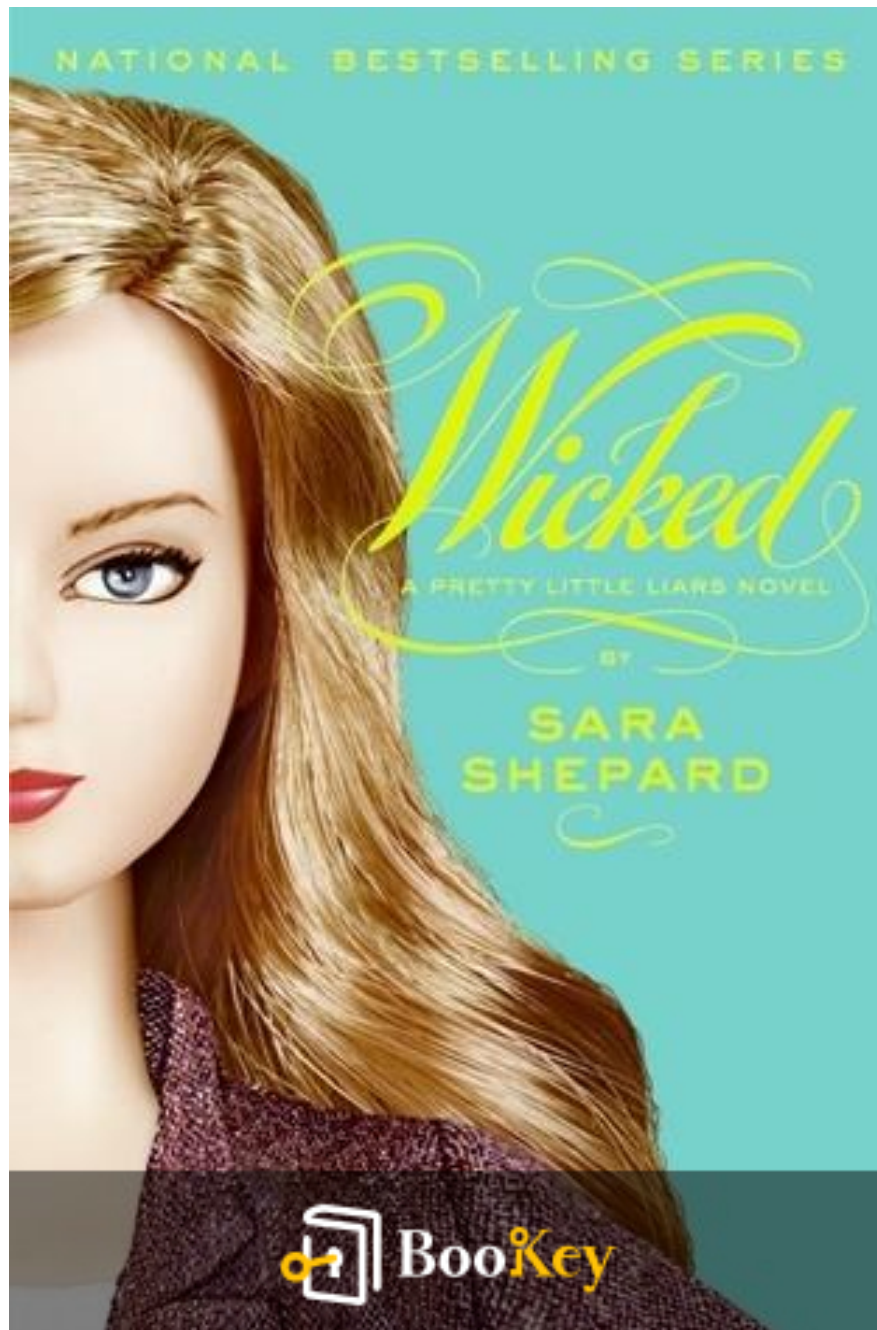


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Wicked By Sara Shepard Summary

"Secrets Unraveled: Navigating Truths in a Maze of Deception."

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About the book

In the suspense-filled world of "Wicked," where secrets lie hidden and truths can turn treacherous, Sara Shepard weaves a dark and thrilling tale that will grip any reader daring enough to open its pages. Within the seemingly perfect enclave of Rosewood, life isn't always as pristine as it appears. As the shadows of past deceptions creep closer, taking new and unpredictable turns, the quartet of unforgettable heroines—Spencer, Aria, Hanna, and Emily—find themselves ensnared in a tangled web of lies and mystery. With every page turn, the stakes get higher, as the cryptic "A" lurks, skulking in the background and threatening to unveil the devastating secrets that could shatter everything they hold dear. This is a world where perception can deceive, friendships are tested, and one wrong move could spell disaster for all. Prepare yourself for a gripping journey into the heart of deceit where "Wicked" promises to keep you questioning every notion of truth and loyalty until the very end.

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About the author

Sara Shepard is a prolific American author most celebrated for her exceptional storytelling prowess in the realm of teen fiction and mystery novels. With a Master of Fine Arts from Brooklyn College, Shepard has skilfully woven intricate tales that captivate young adult audiences, blending suspense with the complexities of adolescence. Best known for her **"Pretty Little Liars"** and **"The Lying Game"** series, she has carved a niche in contemporary literature by masterfully crafting enigmatic plots and unforgettable characters. Each narrative from her pen delivers a unique mix of intrigue and emotion, resonating with readers globally. With **Wicked**, and her various other works, Shepard's ability to capture the tumultuous yet thrilling teenage experience is nothing short of remarkable, cementing her as a cornerstone of modern young adult fiction.

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Chapter 1 Summary: 1

In the opening chapter of "Pretty Little Liars: Wicked," Emily Fields and her old friends Aria Montgomery, Spencer Hastings, and Hanna Marin sit uneasily in Spencer's opulent family media room. They are feeling the weight of their dark past and the betrayal of their deceased friend, Alison DiLaurentis. Surrounding them, a grief counselor named Marion Graves guides them through an emotionally charged ritual intended to help them let go of the haunting memories tied to Alison.

The girls have brought personal items that remind them of Alison: Emily has a change purse, Aria a sketch, Hanna a note, and Spencer a photograph and bracelet. The bracelet stirs painful recollections of "The Jenna Thing," a horrific incident involving a prank that accidentally blinded a girl named Jenna Cavanaugh. It turns out that Jenna put Alison up to it, an unsettling revelation they only learned after Alison's death.

Previously, the girls had been targeted by A, a mysterious figure who tormented them with their deepest secrets. They had initially hoped A was Alison herself, until her body was discovered buried deep in her old backyard. Eventually, they discovered A was their former peer, Mona Vanderwaal—a girl who had transformed from a geeky outcast to Hanna's confidante, using Alison's diary to sabotage their lives. Mona's reign of terror ended with her death at the Quarry, nearly claiming Spencer with her,



but it also led to Ian Thomas, Alison's secret boyfriend, being arrested for her murder.

This ritual marks an attempt to psychologically move on, especially as Ian's trial looms. The counseling sessions aim to provide closure through symbolic acts, such as chanting affirmations and now burying reminders of Alison's impact on their lives. Yet, Emily hesitates to let go, recalling Alison as her first love and best friend. The chapter paints a picture of tension as the girls wrestle with the past, hoping to find peace by discarding these tokens.

After Marion's departure, Spencer proposes to bury the trash bag of items near the barn—the last place Alison was seen alive. Despite their unease, the girls consent, sharing bittersweet goodbyes at the hole they dig together. Emily finds solace in the moment, feeling Alison's benevolent presence, even as they acknowledge the bitter taste of unresolved threats hanging like shadows over them—nothing more evident than Ian's ominous look of warning.

Ultimately, Emily plays a superstitious game for reassurance and finds a calm acceptance when nature signals tranquility. The sun setting symbolizes a new beginning, emphasizing the lingering hope that, with the accused arrested and the insidious games of A behind them, perhaps serenity awaits.



Chapter 2 Summary: 2

In "Wicked," the fifth installment of the "Pretty Little Liars" series, tension and unresolved emotions continue to strain relationships while new dynamics form.

Chapter 2: We Are Family

The chapter revolves around Hanna Marin, who is navigating the complexities of her blended family. Her mother has moved to Singapore for a new job, leaving Hanna to live with her father, his fiancée Isabel, and her soon-to-be stepsister, Kate. The chapter opens with Hanna arriving home late for a family dinner, a new tradition Isabel has instituted to foster a sense of family.

Hanna is clearly uncomfortable with this setup. Her strained relationship with Kate is evident, exacerbated by the fact that everyone seems to adore Kate. Despite Hanna's past trauma, particularly with Mona, who once tried to kill her, Kate and Isabel don't seem to acknowledge Hanna's emotional scars. Hanna finds herself reminded of Mona constantly through small tokens and memories, making it difficult to move on.

She retreats to the bathroom, feeling overwhelmed and recalling the first

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time she purged in an attempt to fit in—a reaction to family pressure and feelings of inadequacy, echoed in her current situation with Kate. Her father's obliviousness to Kate's manipulative nature adds to Hanna's frustration. Despite the family tension, Hanna is forced to mask her disdain, as her father is insistent that she welcome Kate into their lives or face consequences.

Chapter 3: Aria's Art Scene Debut

Aria Montgomery experiences her own familial shifts, with her parents recently separated after Ella discovered Byron's affair. Their mother, Ella, is cautiously entering the dating scene again, much to the amusement and discomfort of Aria and her younger brother Mike.

Aria struggles with her own romantic past, notably with her former teacher Ezra Fitz. She is trying to support her mother's new endeavors while working on their healing relationship. Ella encourages Aria to attend an art opening, which she reluctantly agrees to, seeing it as an opportunity to break free from her solitude.

At the art exhibit, Aria unexpectedly encounters the art world elite, feeling out of place among people from New York City. She engages in a flirtatious conversation about a painting that leads to a humorous



misunderstanding—she criticizes a piece as resembling a nipple, only to discover the artist, Xavier Reeves, was playfully encouraging the critique without revealing his identity.

Despite the awkward moment, Aria is pleased by Xavier's reaction. Her exchange with him symbolizes Aria's tentative steps back into social engagement and hints at potential for new connections and experiences beyond her past troubles in Rosewood.

Both Hanna and Aria's chapters reveal the underlying theme of navigating personal challenges while attempting to redefine familial and personal relationships in the wake of past trauma and new beginnings.

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Chapter 3 Summary: 4

In Chapter 4 of "Pretty Little Liars: Wicked," we follow Spencer Hastings' turbulent Monday at Rosewood Day School. In her AP English class, Spencer is completing a quiz on "The Sun Also Rises," trying desperately to impress her teacher, Mrs. Stafford, amidst the cloud of scandal that hangs over her. This scandal erupted when Spencer confessed to stealing her sister Melissa's economics paper for a prestigious Golden Orchid essay competition, a confession that led to her disgrace within the school community. Prior to this, Spencer was a respected student, with accomplishments that included being a candidate for valedictorian, vice president of the student council, and editor of the yearbook. The fallout from her confession, however, sees her stripped of her roles and responsibilities, leaving her to navigate the lingering suspicion and doubt from both faculty and peers.

As Spencer is unexpectedly called to the office, she traverses the familiar hallways adorned with paper snowflakes, a nod to childhood competitions and past disappointments. Her encounter with Andrew Campbell, the current class president and former rival, brings up memories of cutthroat academic rivalry. While Andrew attempts to make pleasant small talk about their shared history and his recent trip to Greece, Spencer is too consumed by her own turmoil to engage, brushing off his attempt at camaraderie.



Upon entering the headmaster's office, Spencer is met with an unexpected and somber revelation: her grandmother has passed away. The news of Nana's death takes Spencer by surprise, despite their distant relationship marked by cold affection and formality. As her parents are present for the grim announcement, Spencer yearns for comfort, but is only met with their businesslike demeanor, a direct result of their disappointment over the Golden Orchid scandal. This chapter highlights Spencer's sense of isolation—not only at school, where her peers question her integrity, but also at home, where the support she desperately craves remains just out of reach. As her parents leave her alone to grapple with the news, Spencer is left to confront her grief and guilt, emphasizing her inner turmoil and the devastating impact of her past actions.

Section	Summary
Setting & Context	Spencer Hastings navigates a difficult day at Rosewood Day School in the wake of a scandal involving a stolen essay competition entry.
Classroom Incident	In AP English, Spencer attempts to complete a quiz on "The Sun Also Rises," seeking to prove her worth to her teacher, Mrs. Stafford, amidst the shame of plagiarizing her sister's paper.
Previous Achievements	Before the scandal, Spencer was a candidate for valedictorian, vice president of student council, and editor of the yearbook.
Social Dynamics	Spencer's peers and faculty view her with suspicion due to her confession, leading to loss of roles and trust.
Encounter with Andrew	Spencer meets Andrew Campbell, her former academic rival, who attempts a friendly conversation, but she is too distracted by her own issues to engage.



Section	Summary
Headmaster's Office	In the headmaster's office, Spencer learns of her grandmother's death, feeling conflicted due to their distant relationship.
Parental Interaction	Her parents exhibit disappointment rather than comfort over both the scandal and the passing of her grandmother, illustrating a lack of emotional support.
Emotional State	Spencer is left feel isolated, battling grief from her grandmother's death and guilt from her previous actions, underscoring her inner turmoil.



Chapter 4: 5

In the fifth chapter of "Pretty Little Liars: Wicked" titled "The Changing of the Guard," Hanna Marin navigates her way through the social dynamics of Rosewood Day after the winter break. Having recently ended her friendship with Mona—who turned out to have sinister motives—Hanna is struggling to find her social footing again. She's conscious of her appearance, flaunting a five-pound weight loss and freshly-treated auburn hair, determined to maintain her status.

As she walks down the arts hall, Hanna is aware of the attention she garners from a group of boys, boosting her confidence. However, lunch poses a dilemma. Previously, she and Mona would pass time critiquing fashion at the local café, but those days are over, and Hanna worries the school only sees her as "That Girl Whose Best Friend Tried to Kill Her."

The chapter introduces Hanna's soon-to-be stepsister, Kate, a new student at Rosewood Day. Although Kate tries to be friendly, approaching Hanna in a school uniform that mirrors Hanna's own style, Hanna is irritated by Kate's overly cheerful demeanor. Hanna tries to avoid her, but Kate is persistent, suggesting they grab coffee together.

As they head to the café, Steam, Hanna struggles with jealousy and memories of Mona. Despite her misgivings, she agrees to accompany Kate,



hoping not to appear vulnerable. At the café, they encounter Naomi Zeigler and Riley Wolfe, Hanna's longtime adversaries. The pair have taken over the table Hanna once shared with Mona and waste no time in belittling her.

While Kate connects with Naomi and Riley, Hanna feels isolated and mocked, recalling how Mona had once shut down similar rumors about her.

Hanna's new reality is underscored by her stepsister's effortless integration into the social circle of her enemies, leaving her feeling more alone than ever. The chapter explores themes of social hierarchy, betrayal, and the challenge of finding new alliances in the aftermath of a toxic friendship.

Hanna is now left to navigate Rosewood Day's treacherous social landscape without her former best friend to back her up.

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Chapter 5 Summary: 6

In Chapter 6 of "Pretty Little Liars: Wicked," Emily is dealing with a whirlwind of emotions and uncertainty. After a tiring swim practice, she retreats to her shared bedroom with her sister Carolyn, overwhelmed by the latest news on Ian Thomas's trial regarding Alison DiLaurentis's death. The trial is plagued by insufficient evidence, which complicates Emily's already challenging emotions around Ali's demise and the profound impact the case has on her life and friendships.

Despite Ian's vehement denial of killing Ali, Emily is haunted by an interview she once saw where Ian claimed someone wanted him in jail and was hiding the truth. This sense of foreboding lingers as Emily tries to find solace at home, though her appetite for her mother's famous mac and cheese is gone.

Emily's internal struggle is compounded by her strained interactions with her former girlfriend Maya, as well as the biting looks from her ex-boyfriend Ben and his friend Seth, who are clearly sour about Emily's preference for dating girls. As Emily navigates through these challenges, her mother extends an unexpected olive branch, inviting her to a church fundraiser—a stark contrast to the rejection Emily faced from her family following her coming out.



Embracing this newfound acceptance from her family, who had previously sent her away to Iowa to "cure" her homosexuality, Emily agrees to accompany her mom. At the Holy Trinity fundraiser, the church's nostalgic atmosphere takes Emily back to her childhood and memories of Ali. She's drawn into a performance by a band called Carpe Diem, which surprises her with a cover of her favorite Avril Lavigne song that deeply resonated with her during her time in Iowa.

The band's lead singer, Isaac, captures Emily's attention during the performance. His charm and shared interest in the song's lyrics create a palpable chemistry between them. When Isaac, clearly impressed by Emily's enthusiasm, approaches her for a casual date idea—an innocent sledding trip—Emily hesitates, knowing she needs to clarify her feelings towards dating guys. Yet, she agrees, feeling compelled by the moment and Isaac's genuine nature.

While grappling with this unexpected attraction to Isaac in the wake of her past relationships with girls, Emily feels a mix of anticipation and confusion about the idea of dating a boy. As she exchanges contact details with him, she ponders the complexity of her feelings, realizing that she isn't so sure about where her heart truly lies. Ultimately, it's a chapter of self-discovery, acceptance, and the relentless pursuit of normalcy amidst chaos.



Chapter 6 Summary: 7

In Chapter 7 of "Pretty Little Liars: Wicked," Spencer Hastings and her sister Melissa make their way to the Rosewood courthouse for the reading of their grandmother's will. They are accompanied by the wind as they navigate the quiet, dim courthouse halls, reminiscent of Spencer's last visit there for Ian's arraignment. Ian, Melissa's former boyfriend, is soon to face trial for the murder of Alison DiLaurentis. Spencer is set to testify against him, unearthing a flurry of emotions and memories tied to that fateful night Ali disappeared.

As they wait for the reading to commence, Melissa's unusually kind demeanor towards Spencer raises suspicion. The sisters' relationship has been strained, primarily due to Melissa once lying about Ian's whereabouts during Ali's disappearance. Now, news reports suggest Ian's case lacks evidence, a concern amplified by Spencer's past deception in the Golden Orchid essay contest, jeopardizing her credibility. Spencer recalls the crucial memory she's recovered: seeing Ian and Ali together the night she vanished, a critical element for the prosecution.

Under tension, Melissa confesses receiving a distressing call from Ian, who blames his trial for exacerbating his mother's illness. The revelation leaves Spencer bewildered, particularly when Melissa expresses doubt about testifying against Ian, questioning her ability to read him all those years.



Their conversation halts as other family members arrive for the meeting.

Inside the conference room, the Hastings family lawyer, Ernest Calloway, reads Nana's will. Nana bequeaths her substantial estate to Spencer's father, uncle, and Aunt Penelope—the black sheep of the family, known for her nomadic lifestyle and lack of contact. Shockingly, Nana also leaves \$2 million each to Melissa and her cousins, Smith and Jonathan, but Spencer's name is conspicuously absent.

The omission sends Spencer into a spiral of disbelief and anxiety. Her family's uncomfortable silence and her father's insistence that she wait elsewhere only heighten her distress. Feeling alienated and betrayed, Spencer storms out, desperate to escape the courthouse and the revelation that has upended her understanding of her family's dynamics.

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Chapter 7 Summary: 8

In this chapter of "Pretty Little Liars: Wicked," Aria is helping her mother, Ella, prepare for an online date. As Aria styles Ella's hair and makeup, they share a rare moment of bonding that helps both of them momentarily escape their current worries. Ella is going on a date with a man she met on Match.com, whose profile name is Wolfgang. Aria finds the situation humorous and slightly absurd, given the awkwardness of internet dating and the outlandish potential for this man to show up dressed like a famous composer.

While helping her mother, Aria is also preoccupied with thoughts of Xavier, an artist she met at a recent gallery opening. She can't quite decipher whether their interaction was flirtatious or just friendly, leaving her both hopeful and doubtful about potential romance.

In the midst of preparations, Ella selects an elegant teal dress that brings back memories of a happier time in her marriage to Byron, Aria's father, just before Aria's first sleepover with Alison DiLaurentis, and before Byron's affair with Meredith. As they reminisce, the conversation turns serious when Ella asks Aria if she has moved on from Mr. Fitz, Aria's former teacher with whom she had a controversial relationship. Aria admits to possibly meeting someone new, though she remains cautious not to spoil the budding connection she feels with Xavier.



When the doorbell rings, signaling the arrival of Ella's date, Aria is shocked to find Xavier standing there, revealing that he is the mysterious 'Wolfgang.' The revelation is unexpected for both Aria and Xavier, who shares a silent laugh at the irony. Ella, oblivious to the tension, is charmed by Xavier, seeing their meeting as a delightful coincidence.

The encounter ends with Ella's apparent interest in Xavier and Aria's internal struggle to manage her feelings. Aria echoes her mother's sentiments about the coincidence being wonderful, though privately she finds it uncomfortably strange.



Chapter 8: 9

In Chapter 9 of "Pretty Little Liars: Wicked," Emily skips part of her swim practice to meet with her friends at Spencer's house, as suggested by Marion in an effort to keep connected and talk openly with each other. While she waits outside the house, Emily receives a text from Isaac, which makes her blush as they had been exchanging messages all day, bonding over shared interests like Jimmy Eat World songs and M. Night Shyamalan movies.

Emily arrives to find Spencer, Aria, and Hanna gathered in Spencer's media room, aimlessly watching "The Hills" with the sound muted. Though unsure of how to proceed with their meeting, the girls begin to reminisce over an old photograph of Ali, their late friend, which sparks memories of a school contest called the Time Capsule game. They recall a day when Ali confidently declared she would find a hidden piece of a flag, despite Ian Thomas teasingly warning her about boasting, as someone might try to steal it from her. This conversation sends chills down their spines, as Ali's ultimately tragic fate now casts a shadow over such seemingly innocent past events.

The tension escalates when Spencer's sister, Melissa, interrupts, urging the group to turn on the news. They discover, to their horror, that Ian Thomas, who was previously arrested in connection to Ali's death, has been granted temporary bail to visit his ill mother, who is suffering from cancer. The



announcement that Ian will be under house arrest, not far from the Hastings' residence, sends a wave of fear through the friends. Ian appears on screen, vehemently insisting on his innocence and expressing his determination never to return to jail, intensifying their anxiety.

As the girls digest the unnerving news, their phones simultaneously receive a chilling text message, likely from "A," the mysterious antagonist who seems to know their every secret. The message taunts them, suggesting they haven't suffered enough for their past misdeeds and implying more torment is yet to come. This sinister implication leaves Emily and her friends anxious and apprehensive about what the future holds, as they face the renewed threat of Ian's presence in their lives and the ongoing menace of "A."

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Chapter 9 Summary: 10

In "Pretty Little Liars 5: Wicked," Chapter 10, we find the story picking up with Spencer and her friends embroiled in the ongoing drama surrounding Ian Thomas, who has recently been released from jail. They receive a threatening text that they are certain is from Ian, whose trial for Alison DiLaurentis's murder the girls are due to testify in. Officer Wilden visits them and, showing frustration at the legal system for Ian's temporary release, listens to their fears but offers a sobering perspective. He suggests that the text could be from a copycat trying to intimidate them using the media hype around their case. Despite this, the tension among the girls is palpable, knowing the dangerous extent of their past encounters with 'A,' the anonymous figure tormenting them with secrets.

Spencer's sister, Melissa, enters with her own opinions, leaving Spencer feeling disillusioned and questioning familial motives as secrets continue to unravel within her household. Spencer confronts her mother about being excluded from Nana's will, only to face dismissiveness. However, Melissa plants a seed of doubt, cryptically hinting at Spencer's potential adoption, adding layers to the mystery of Spencer's family background.

Chapter 11 shifts focus to Hanna, who is dealing with the intrusion of her stepsister, Kate, following their family's melding. Hanna, struggling with this new family dynamic, finds solace in her relationship with Lucas, who



offers her comfort and escape from the ongoing chaos. Hanna's irritation with Kate is compounded by the media attention surrounding Ian's release. Her father's new wife, Isabel, and the household rules make Hanna feel oppressed, and her animosity towards Kate festers, especially as Kate seems to effortlessly step into her life.

However, a surprising moment of vulnerability from Kate reveals that she too has faced troubles, mentioning a past relationship and its aftermath, which softens Hanna's disdain slightly. Kate, in a bid to mend their relationship, proposes they unite with Naomi and Riley, Hanna's old frenemies. Hanna contemplates this strategic social move, seeing the potential for reclaiming her own social standing. Thus, the chapter ends with Hanna's tentative decision to join forces with Kate, setting the stage for alliances that promise to shake up their social world.

These chapters delve into individual struggles with familial expectations, societal pressures, and the threat of lurking secrets. The characters are navigating complex emotional landscapes, battling external threats from 'A,' which keeps them questioning whom to trust. The narrative adeptly intertwines interpersonal drama with suspense, propelling the plot into deeper intrigue and character development.



Chapter 10 Summary: 12

In Chapter 12 of "Pretty Little Liars: Wicked," we find Aria and her younger brother Mike at Rabbit Rabbit, a bustling vegetarian restaurant that their family frequents. They're there at the request of their mother, Ella, who wants them to meet her new romantic interest, Xavier. Aria feels awkward and embarrassed, as she had misinterpreted Xavier's previous interactions to be personal interest in her. The chapter sets a mood of tension and discomfort, especially following the release of Ian from custody and the most recent threatening note from 'A,' the mysterious antagonist who secretly torments the main characters with incriminating messages and clever manipulation.

Mike and Aria exchange light-hearted sibling banter, highlighting Mike's disdain for the restaurant's lack of meat-based options and referencing an incident during a family trip to Iceland where Mike's fear of horses became apparent. Despite his grievance over vegetarian food, Mike openly bonds with Xavier over their shared dislike for Icelandic culture, particularly its cuisine and folklore.

When Ella and Xavier arrive, Ella introduces Xavier to Mike, who shows an unusual level of protectiveness over their mother's dating life. Despite the age difference between Ella and Xavier, which Mike almost confronts, the atmosphere remains cordial, even as Xavier effortlessly joins in the laughter



about Iceland.

As the dinner progresses, Aria remains quieter than usual. Struggling with mixed feelings about Xavier's sudden integration into her family's life, Xavier also appears to pay her special attention. He acknowledges Aria's artistic side—mentioning she takes after her mom—which leads to a playful drawing contest between the two. However, Xavier's sketch of Aria is unexpectedly intimate, and Aria finds it unsettling.

Aria's discomfort intensifies when she receives a series of anonymous texts featuring photos of her with Xavier, one being from an art gallery a few days ago, and another at their current dinner. The text implies a threat: 'A' has noticed the closeness between her and Xavier, further complicating her family dynamics.

In a panic, Aria abruptly leaves the restaurant, taking Xavier's drawing with her. This chapter reflects the ongoing tension between Aria's personal and family life against the looming threat of 'A's' manipulations. It underscores the precariousness of trust and the impact of misunderstandings and secrets that define the series' intrigue.



Chapter 11 Summary: 13

Pretty Little Liars 5 - Wicked

Chapter 13: Strange Chemistry on Chemistry Hill

On a chilly Wednesday night, Emily is found engaging in a snow tube race at Chemistry Hill with Isaac, a charming boy new in her life. The race is playful, marked by teasing banter, as Isaac jokingly cheats to win. Emily's heart flutters seeing Isaac, especially with his playful demeanor and cute winter attire that contrasts his usual emo-rock style. As they discuss family, Isaac reveals his lonely childhood as an only child, contrasting Emily's bustling family life with siblings who were not thrilled by her sexuality.

Emily's internal struggle surfaces as she wonders about her feelings for Isaac, considering her complex emotions after dating Maya, a girl whose relationship caused friction within her family. As Isaac goes to retrieve his snow tube, Emily notices Officer Wilden in a nearby parking lot, appearing tense while on a call. Her unease grows when she receives a concerning call from Aria about mysterious texts and sightings, hinting at a lurking presence watching them.



Emily's introspection is interrupted when Isaac returns, their flirtation culminating in an unexpected kiss. Despite the chaos around her, Emily finds a moment of peace, even if briefly disrupted by another cryptic text from "A" that questions her choices and offers a veiled threat—hinting at hidden truths and consequences.

Chapter 14: Viva La Hanna!

Later the same evening, Hanna is at Rive Gauche, a chic bistro in the King James Mall. The setting is nostalgic, bringing back memories of simpler times with her former best friend, Mona. Hanna, in her stylish outfit, arrives with Kate, her soon-to-be stepsister, for an unplanned confrontation with her old frenemies, Naomi and Riley.

Kate employs a strategic, yet awkward "if you can't beat 'em, join 'em" plan, encouraging Hanna to reconcile with Naomi and Riley despite their toxic past. Hanna reluctantly apologizes, recalling past grievances born from an allegiance to their mutual friend, Ali, who inexplicably shunned Naomi and Riley.

As the girls truce over fashion magazines and potential shopping plans, Hanna's trepidation about betrayal surfaces. However, Naomi and Riley's kind reception surprises Hanna, and they exchange friendly banter about



fashion and upcoming social events, easing years of animosity.

Hanna's delight doesn't last long, as she receives a chilling text from "A." The message ominously warns her to remember past incidents, specifically alluding to Hanna's accident and threatening further harm if secrets are divulged. Despite the threat, Hanna dismisses it, focusing on her newfound camaraderie—seeking comfort in the familiar thrill of friendship and fashion, while suppressing the ongoing menace of "A."

In both chapters, the plot intricately weaves Emily and Hanna's personal quests for acceptance and normalcy amidst the chaos and danger lingering in the shadows. It highlights their struggles with identity, relationships, and the constant threat posed by "A," revealing deeper vulnerabilities in the characters' lives.

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Chapter 12: 15

In Chapter 15 of "Pretty Little Liars: Wicked," Spencer Hastings is at the Rosewood Public Library with Andrew Campbell, struggling to focus on their AP Economics study session. Andrew tries to help Spencer understand the Federal Reserve's influence on the economy, but Spencer is distracted by various personal dilemmas swirling in her mind. Her focus is far from economics—she's preoccupied with the recent mysterious A note, her sister Melissa's suspicions about her adoption, and an upcoming trial for Ian Thomas.

Spencer is feeling the pressure from her past indiscretion of plagiarizing an econ paper. If she fails to get an A this semester, Rosewood Day will remove her from the class. Her parents refuse to pay for a tutor, and her credit cards are still frozen, forcing her to seek Andrew's help. Despite her distractions, Spencer acknowledges Andrew's eagerness to assist her, reminiscing about a past incident where she had inadvertently hurt his feelings.

Amidst the stress, Spencer reveals a personal turmoil to Andrew: her mother discarded an application to Yale's pre-college summer program without even showing it to her. Moreover, she wasn't included in her grandmother's will, which explicitly mentioned "natural-born grandchildren," suggesting Spencer might be adopted. Melissa had once speculated about Spencer's adoption, given a childhood comment by a cousin and their mother's



peculiar reaction to a game about secret sisters. Spencer can't help but feel an estrangement from her family, pondering the possibility her parents favor Melissa because she might not be their biological daughter.

Andrew, listening intently, suggests a website that helps adoptees find their

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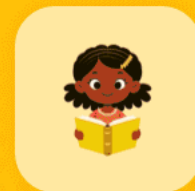
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Chapter 13 Summary: 16

In this chapter of **Pretty Little Liars: Wicked**, Aria encounters an unexpected situation during her morning routine. As Aria descends the stairs, the familiar aroma of organic coffee, a rare indulgence her mother Ella allows herself, draws her to the kitchen. There, she discovers Xavier, her mother's new boyfriend, sitting at the table with her brother Mike. Xavier is wearing one of Ella's plaid pajama pants and drinking from Byron's favorite mug. Feeling self-conscious in her pajamas, Aria contemplates the awkwardness of Xavier's presence, as she's caught between past feelings for him and his new role in her mother's life.

After Mike, Aria's brother, rushes out to meet Noel, Aria is left alone with Xavier. The silence is only broken when Xavier apologizes for an incident the previous night, expressing his awareness of how uncomfortable the situation must be for Aria. Aria reflects silently on these complications, considering whether to disclose the photos A sent of her and Xavier to her mother Ella. However, she decides against it, not wanting to exacerbate the fragile state of her family life.

Xavier offers to give Aria a ride to school, which she accepts to avoid a tedious bus ride. During their drive, Xavier opens up about his own experiences with his mother dating after divorce, attempting to bond over mutual experience. He shares his interest in baking, a hobby he used as a



calming mechanism, revealing his past life as a somewhat misunderstood teenager obsessed with culinary art.

This prompts Aria to reminisce about her own experiences of feeling out of place before joining Alison's friend group. In fifth grade, cliques formed, leaving Aria stranded between social groups, uncertain of where she belonged. Taking comfort in her artistic hobby, she silently nurtured a crush on Alison's older brother Jason. Her loneliness subsided when she became friends with Alison.

As they arrive at Rosewood Day, Xavier acknowledges the feeling of being misunderstood is part of being an artist, offering Aria a sense of uncommon camaraderie. Aria appreciates his words, and as she heads into school, an unsettling giggle in her ear leaves her unnerved. Jenna Cavanaugh, a blind but captivating figure, passes by, and Aria feels a chill that's unrelated to the cold weather, hinting at the underlying tension and mystery surrounding her life in Rosewood.

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Chapter 14 Summary: 17

In Chapter 17 of "Pretty Little Liars: Wicked," titled "Oh, the Sacrifices to Be Popular," we find Hanna Marin deeply entrenched in her high school's social hierarchy, enjoying the newfound status that comes with being part of the popular group. Hanna sits with her friends Kate, Naomi, and Riley at the best table in the school cafeteria. Together, they engage in typical teenage gossip, critiquing appearances and speculating about the authenticity of designer bags. It's the morning before school, and the girls are plotting their fashion strategies for the upcoming charity benefit at Spencer's house.

Despite her seemingly secure social standing, the chapter highlights Hanna's internal conflict. She encounters Spencer, who urgently pulls her aside to reveal that she received another threatening note, suggesting Ian is behind a series of ominous messages. Spencer's paranoia is palpable, but Hanna, remembering a warning from Detective Wilden, dismisses the idea, convinced it's merely a copycat trying to grab their attention. Hanna refocuses on maintaining her image, resisting the urge to allow "A" to manipulate her and revisiting her own unsettling note experience.

Returning to her clique, Hanna participates in pre-party planning with her friends, contemplating fashion choices and potential dates for Kate, effectively masking any underlying anxiety about the mysterious threats. Their discussions reveal the competitive and often superficial nature of their



social dynamics.

Complicated relationships simmer in Hanna's world, particularly with Lucas, her tentative love interest, who confronts her about her abrupt shift in alliances. Hanna, once critical of Kate, now reconciles with her, mainly to ease tensions at home. Lucas, feeling sidelined, raises concerns, but Hanna brushes him off, prioritizing popularity and belonging over budding romance.

As the chapter closes, Hanna receives a text from Lucas, reminding her of their plans, which she bluntly cancels. She pushes aside any guilt, reinvigorated by her association with the elite crowd, determined to uphold her persona as Hanna Marin, the quintessential "it" girl of Rosewood.

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Chapter 15 Summary: 18

In this chapter of **Pretty Little Liars: Wicked**, titled "A Jury of One," we find Spencer Hastings alone at her dinner table, feeling neglected by her family. Her sister Melissa is out with friends, and her parents have left the house without much acknowledgment of Spencer. As she sifts through the mail, she receives a catalogue from Fenniworth College—a small institution willing to entertain her application primarily due to her family's wealth. Amidst this familial tension, Spencer's mind is occupied with the mysterious A, who has been sending threatening notes to her and her friends. Despite Spencer's attempts to get help from Officer Wilden, he dismisses her concerns, which adds to her frustration.

As the evening progresses, Spencer is surrounded by reminders of her exclusion from family matters, such as the preparations for a fundraiser and watching the housekeeper, Candace, clean up while glued to **America's Next Top Model**. Her attention shifts abruptly to a breaking news report on the television about the Alison DiLaurentis murder trial. The report reveals that Ian Thomas, charged with Alison's murder, has been released on bail, claiming his innocence. This news unsettles Spencer, bringing back memories of Alison and the insecurities and tensions that rose from their friendship.

Determined to clear her head, Spencer steps outside into the chilly night,



where her solitude is interrupted by Ian himself, who appears unexpectedly. Ian is trying to communicate something important, claiming he has evidence that could prove his innocence. Although Spencer accuses him of murdering Ali and of sending threatening notes, Ian denies all the accusations and insists there might be more to the story than she knows. He cryptically mentions seeing "two blondes" in the woods on the night Ali disappeared, suggesting that it might be relevant to the case. Despite his claims, Spencer remains resolute in her belief that Ian is guilty.

After Ian leaves, Spencer receives another chilling text from the mysterious "A," threatening her safety and indicating that whoever is behind the messages may be targeting her for exposing secrets. Spencer is left in fear and frustration, questioning Ian's involvement with A and the truth behind Alison's fate. The chapter concludes with Spencer confronting the eerie silence of the night, a reminder of the ever-present danger looming over her life.



Chapter 16: 19

In this chapter from "Pretty Little Liars: Wicked," Emily Fields is grappling with her sexual identity and the evolving dynamics in her social world. After swimming practice, she contemplates her outfit in the mirror, feeling uncertain about her appearance and trying to navigate how she presents herself. Emily is heading to dinner at China Rose with a boy named Isaac, which is a significant shift given her previous relationships with girls.

The paradox of Emily's feelings is apparent as she confides to her sister Carolyn about the dinner, maintaining to her family that Isaac is just a friend. This internal conflict reflects Emily's struggle with her identity, especially after a perplexing kiss with Isaac. Her confusion is compounded by teasing at school and her own uncertainty about her sexuality—whether she's straight, bisexual, or just confused.

At the dinner, Emily is tense. She recalls fond and puzzling memories involving her old friend, Ali, at a nearby bowling alley. These memories include cryptic conversations with Ali about other friends and events from the past, leaving Emily with lingering doubts about Ali's honesty.

As Emily arrives at the restaurant, she is nervously greeted by Isaac, who charms her with his open conversation about astrology. Despite Isaac's warmth, Emily cannot escape her thoughts about previous relationships,



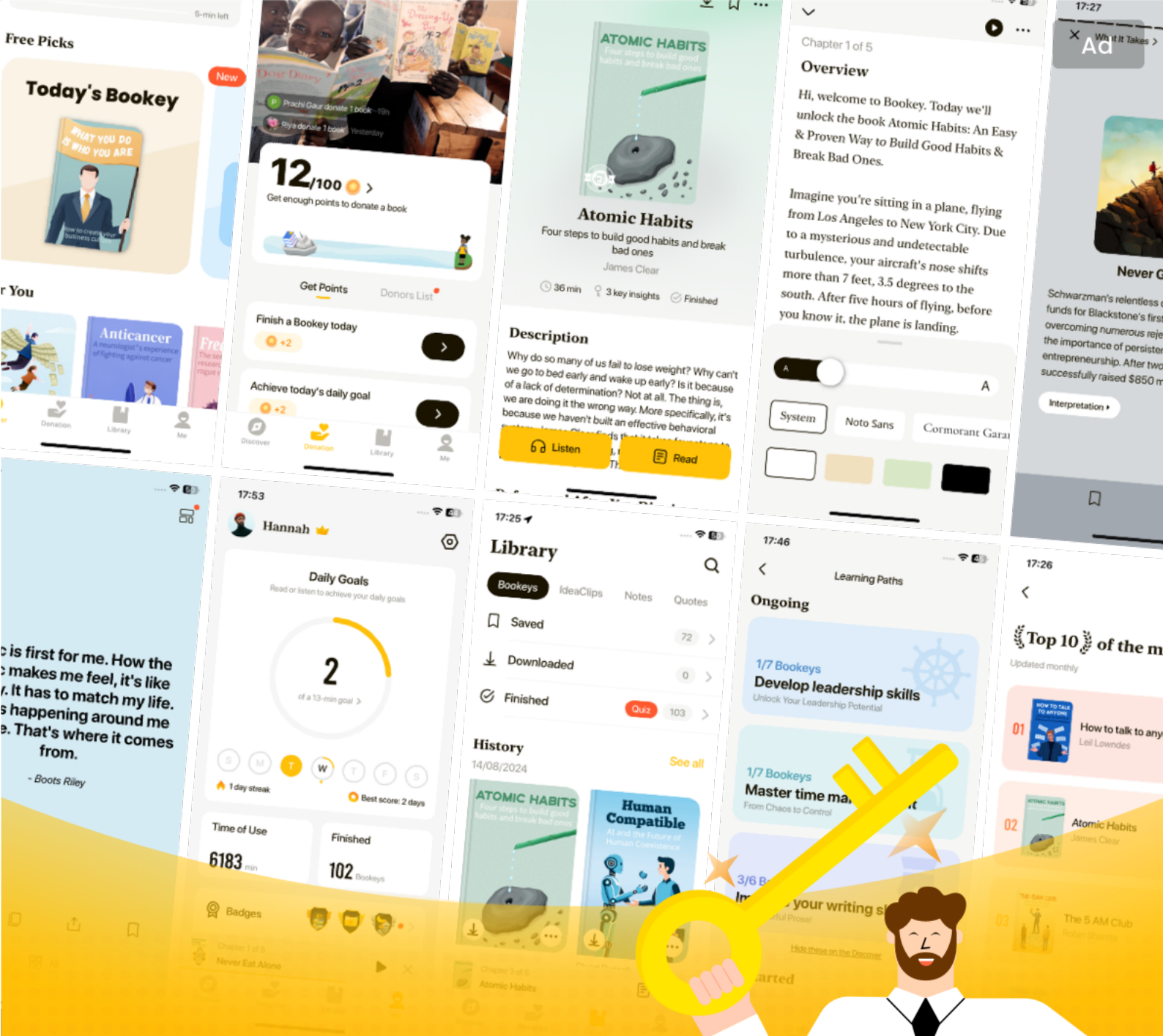
particularly with Maya, another girl from her school with whom she had a complicated history.

The dinner is interrupted when Maya unexpectedly shows up, clearly recognizing the romantic nature of Emily's meeting with Isaac. Maya's

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Chapter 17 Summary: 20

In Chapter 20 of "Pretty Little Liars" Book 5, titled "Wicked," Aria is navigating a complicated family landscape and her emotions are running high. The chapter opens with Aria sitting stiffly on the couch next to her brother Mike, who is distractedly creating a new Mii character on the Wii that their father, Byron, gifted him, possibly to make amends for his infidelity and the resulting broken family. Mike seems to have adjusted to their parents' divorce, unlike Aria, who is internally struggling with the changes. He briefly mentions Noel Kahn, highlighting past romantic tensions between Noel and Aria.

The narrative is set against the backdrop of an impending murder trial related to Alison DiLaurentis's murder, adding tension to Aria's inner and outer world. On the news, Jenna Cavanaugh, a significant character in the series known for her past connection with the Liars, is shown being interviewed. Meanwhile, Ian Thomas's mugshot and a scene of Ali's burial site compounds the ongoing drama, emphasizing the gravity of the trial that Aria is set to testify in.

Xavier, a new character involved with Aria's mother, Ella, enters the scene. He is without electricity at home due to a storm and has been allowed to stay at Aria's house. He presents himself as friendly and supportive, offering to keep Aria company and make dinner. Despite her reservations, Aria allows



him to stay. They share a light-hearted moment reminiscing about Iceland, a fond place from Aria's past, showcasing some common ground between them.

However, the atmosphere shifts drastically when Xavier suddenly kisses Aria without her consent. This abrupt and unwelcome act leaves Aria shocked, confused, and deeply uncomfortable, disrupting her sense of safety. Her instinct is to flee, reflecting her overwhelming discomfort and violation of trust.

As Aria escapes to her room, she receives a chilling text from the mysterious tormentor known as "A," heightening the suspense and reminding her that she is being watched. This text is a reminder of the external pressures and unresolved mysteries that hover over Aria and her friends, tying back into the central tension of the series.



Chapter 18 Summary: 21

In Chapter 21 of "Pretty Little Liars: Wicked," Spencer Hastings finds herself in a puzzling and surreal experience. As she navigates the aftermath of a particularly vivid dream, the tension surrounding Ian's trial crescendos. In her dream, Spencer encounters two versions of Alison DiLaurentis, her manipulative and charismatic childhood friend, who hints at a secret Spencer has seemingly overlooked. This eerie vision suggests she once discarded crucial information possibly related to the Time Capsule game—a long-standing school tradition at Rosewood Day, involving hidden pieces with significant messages.

The dream sets an ominous tone, as Ian—Spencer's older sister Melissa's boyfriend and a key suspect in Alison's murder—lurks in the periphery, appearing more sinister than ever. Past and present blur as Ian's presence haunts the characters, echoing his dangerous influence.

Spencer awakens from the dream, rattled, in her bedroom, confronted by the reality of the day ahead: Ian's trial is beginning. Despite her apprehensions, Spencer resolves to testify truthfully about what she witnessed the night Alison disappeared, even though Melissa, absorbed in her own thoughts, remains supportive yet distant.

As Spencer prepares for the trial, she reunites with her close-knit group of



friends—Aria, Hanna, and Emily—at their old secret meeting spot by the elementary school swings. Shared anxiety about facing Ian and the hope of achieving justice for Alison weigh heavily on them. Each girl has experienced unsettling dreams about Alison, signaling connections and clues to Alison’s mysterious death.

Their conversation touches upon the sketchy history between Alison and Ian, drawing from fragmented memories and rumors. Spencer is uneasy as she recalls a past rivalry with Alison over Ian’s attention, compounded by insights from former classmates who viewed Ian as inappropriate.

The chapter climaxes with a collective resolve among Spencer and her friends to find missing evidence or truths that can definitively link Ian to Alison’s murder. Despite the trial looming, Spencer’s internal conflict deepens, shadowed by Ian’s manipulative scheming and the specter of a new, threatening “A” figure.

As the hours drag toward the trial, Spencer wrestles with fear and determination, yearning for Ian’s conviction and the end of the psychological torment. Her resolve is tempered by unease, as the clarity of the truth seems tantalizingly out of reach, yet essential for their peace and safety.



Chapter 19 Summary: 22

In Chapter 22 of "Pretty Little Liars 5: Wicked," titled "Déjà Vu All Over Again," Hanna Marin finds herself caught between her desire for popularity and her loyalty to her boyfriend, Lucas. The chapter opens at Rosewood Day School, where Hanna is interacting with Kate, Naomi, and Riley—three girls who epitomize the social elite of the school. As discussions veer towards boys, particularly Eric Kahn and the captivating Mason Byers, Hanna feels the sting of exclusion when her friends don't offer to support her at Ian's trial, a significant event in her life.

Feeling neglected, Hanna is further distracted when Lucas approaches her earnestly. He wants to support Hanna at the trial, yet his offer only irritates her. Despite having rekindled their relationship after Mona's death, Hanna is conflicted. Her past with Lucas brought her genuine happiness, but a deeper, almost insatiable need to reclaim her crown as Rosewood Day's most popular girl keeps gnawing at her.

Hanna reflects on her past, considering how integral her status has always been to her identity, from her childhood idolization of fashion magazines to her strategic alignment with Alison (Ali) DiLaurentis, a former friend and social influencer. Memories of Ali and more recent betrayal by Mona, who pretended to be a friend only to mock her behind her back, haunt Hanna.



After experiencing an unsettling flashback that melds Kate's present camaraderie with the past hurt from Mona's betrayal, Hanna seeks solace in the girls' bathroom. There, she contemplates her fractured social world, staring into the mirror and reinforcing her self-worth. Just then, a disturbing text from an unknown figure, dubbed "Nouveau A," arrives on her BlackBerry, taunting her vulnerabilities and secret struggles.

Striking back, Hanna texts a defiant reply, only to receive an ominous response filled with intimate knowledge of her life. The new "A" not only knows about Hanna's personal battles with bulimia and her strained relationship with her father but also drudges up her complicated friendship with Mona. The chapter closes with Hanna feeling exposed and threatened by a mysterious figure who seems bent on upending her life.

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Chapter 20: 23

In the novel "Pretty Little Liars: Wicked," Chapter 23, Aria encounters a chaotic scene at the Rosewood courthouse as Ian's trial garners widespread media attention. Reporters, camera crews, and protestors with differing agendas crowd the steps, creating a circus-like atmosphere. Aria is overwhelmed, not only by the frenzy but also by the personal turmoil involving her mother's boyfriend, Xavier, who had complicated their relationship by kissing her inappropriately the night before.

Inside the courthouse, the anxiety rises as Aria and her friends—Spencer, Hanna, and Emily—navigate the tension of attending the trial. They observe familiar faces, such as the DiLaurentis family, whose daughter Ali is at the center of the murder case. Jason DiLaurentis, Ali's brother, seems to pay particular attention to Aria, fueling her unease.

The courtroom buzzes with whispered conversations, and it becomes apparent that Ian, the defendant accused of murdering Ali, is missing from the proceedings. Aria and her friends discuss receiving threatening notes from an anonymous presence known only as "A," reflecting their ongoing fear of being targeted.

As the trial is delayed due to Ian's absence, tension heightens. Ian's father enters, delivering the shocking news to the judge that Ian has vanished from



under police surveillance. The revelation sends a shockwave through the courtroom, leaving Aria and her friends reeling with disbelief and fear. The judge calls a recess, and the scene ends with Spencer confessing to the others that she has a troubling secret about Ian, suggesting deeper complications in the already tangled web of mystery and danger surrounding the girls.

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Chapter 21 Summary: 24

In Chapter 24 of "Pretty Little Liars: Wicked," we follow Hanna as she takes a run through the secluded Stockbridge Trail on a tense Friday evening. Despite the danger due to Ian Thomas allegedly being on the loose, Hanna feels compelled to run and clear her mind from the unsettling notes from the mysterious "A." These notes have started to plague Hanna, making her question if this new "A" could be Ian or someone else entirely, and whether "A" knows Kate's potential schemes against her.

Hanna reflects on her past friendship—or rather, rivalry—with Mona. Initially, Mona had approached Hanna with compliments when they were in eighth grade, during a time when Hanna needed a new best friend after Ali's disappearance. However, Hanna realizes Mona may have only been using her, planning her downfall all along. Mona, acting as the original "A," had skillfully manipulated and tormented Hanna, from cutting her off from old friends like Naomi and Riley to suggesting they shoplift for thrills. Mona had leveraged her insider access to humiliate Hanna further, demonstrating a venomous betrayal under the guise of friendship.

As Hanna runs, she recalls incidents like Mona sending her a child-sized dress for a birthday party, knowingly setting her up for embarrassment, and orchestrating an awkward family dinner by tipping off Hanna's stepmother, Isabel, and stepsister, Kate, about Hanna's whereabouts. Hanna grapples



with the idea that Mona could not have known about Hanna's dinner plans unless Kate was involved. This realization sparks the disturbing notion that Kate might have been conspiring with Mona against her all along.

Hanna's paranoia grows as she imagines that her recent closeness with Kate or bond with Naomi and Riley could all be part of a grand scheme to ruin her life. The fear culminates when, after a rabbit startles her on the trail, she wonders if she's falling prey to another manipulation by the new "A." However, Hanna recalls a moment when Kate let slip a vulnerability about a past relationship, which gives her some reassurance and doubts about Kate's intentions.

Returning home, Hanna finds her house quiet and empty, wondering where everyone—including Kate—might be. When she overhears Kate on the phone, Hanna's anxiety heightens; Kate's conversation and laughter remind Hanna of the plotting discussions she used to have with Mona, suggesting that Kate might be planning something devious.

Hanna's previous fears flood back as she realizes that Kate might indeed be orchestrating a plot against her, similar to the cruel games Mona used to play. The chapter concludes with Hanna's unsettling suspicion that an elaborate scheme is in the works, potentially threatening her newly formed relationship with Kate and rekindling the worried belief that her troubles with "A" might never truly vanish.



Chapter 22 Summary: 25

In Chapter 25 of "Pretty Little Liars: Wicked," the tension in Rosewood is palpable as Emily and her boyfriend, Isaac, arrive at the Hastings family's lavish party. The event is surrounded by heightened security due to the ongoing search for Ian, who has been missing since his trial for the murder of Alison DiLaurentis. The Rosewood Police Department is on high alert, and guests are required to present identification due to safety concerns. Despite attempts at maintaining a veneer of normalcy, there is an unmistakable undercurrent of fear and distrust.

Emily, deeply unsettled by Ian's unresolved presence and the secrecy surrounding the ominous "A" notes, tries to reassure herself while navigating the social dynamics at the party. Her relationship with Isaac is new and precarious, and she's constantly reminded of her past with Alison and Maya, her previous romantic interest. The party is populated by familiar faces from Rosewood Day, including Spencer, one of Emily's old friends, who appears tense and preoccupied, adding to Emily's unease.

As they mingle with guests, Emily encounters uncomfortable moments with Noel Kahn and James Freed, who make subtly confrontational comments about her and Isaac. She seeks refuge away from the prying eyes in a more subdued corner of the party but struggles with the weight of her concealed truths. In an emotional moment, Emily retreats to the privacy of a powder



room, where she grapples with the pressure of revealing her true self to Isaac. When Isaac follows her in, concerned by her behavior, she decides to finally disclose her past with Maya and the complexity of her feelings about her sexuality.

In a courageous and revealing conversation, Emily confesses her past relationships and the internal struggle with her identity. Her honesty about her experiences with Ali, Maya, and Trista is raw and unfiltered. She admits to not fully understanding her sexuality, leaving Isaac to process the revelation. Isaac, rather than recoiling, responds with acceptance and reassurance, offering Emily a lifeline at the end of a tumultuous emotional journey.

This chapter is significant as it showcases Emily's growth from hiding her true self to embracing honesty and vulnerability. Her decision to share her story with Isaac marks a turning point in her character's narrative, as she confronts her fears and finds unexpected support from someone she cares about. The chapter underscores themes of acceptance, the search for identity, and the courage it takes to be true to oneself amidst an atmosphere fraught with danger and mystery. Emily's resolve signifies a break from the past and sets the stage for her to face the challenges ahead, both of a personal and a more sinister nature, with newfound conviction.



Critical Thinking

Key Point: Honesty and Vulnerability Lead to Growth

Critical Interpretation: In Chapter 22 of "Pretty Little Liars: Wicked," the pinnacle of Emily's pivotal moment is her brave decision to reveal her true self to Isaac. She candidly shares her past and her internal struggle with her identity, unmasking her genuine emotions and experiences. In life, this moment teaches us that embracing honesty and vulnerability with those around us can be remarkably empowering. By being open about our past experiences and unpolished truths, we can establish deeper connections with others who, like Isaac, might respond with understanding and acceptance. This courageous act of self-revelation can create a wave of personal growth, allowing us to emerge from the shadows of fear and doubts. In the journey of discovering and accepting our true selves, holding such courage can lead to moments of liberation and transformation, much like it does for Emily.

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Chapter 23 Summary: 26

In Chapter 26 of "Pretty Little Liars: Wicked," we find Spencer Hastings at a party hosted by her family, where old acquaintances like the Pembrokes make an appearance, highlighting the social customs and eccentricities of Rosewood's local elite. Despite the festive atmosphere, Spencer is internally conflicted about her family's disregard for her following Ian's disappearance and the plagiarism scandal that led to her disinheritance. Spencer's reluctance to inform Detective Wilden about Ian's secret visit stems from her fear of additional backlash, as she's already burdened by guilt and regrets.

During the party, Spencer's encounter with Mrs. Kahn, who inquires about petit fours, triggers feelings of exclusion as Spencer's mother dismisses her offer of assistance, prompting Spencer to rebel by confronting her parents. Her outspoken act, an uncharacteristic move for her, leaves her feeling isolated, further amplifying her belief that her family disdains her.

Amidst the chaos of the party and her own whirlwind emotions, Spencer finds solace with Andrew Campbell, a classmate who unexpectedly becomes her confidant. Andrew listens as Spencer confesses her struggles with the Golden Orchid competition and reveals that her parents were complicit in hiding her plagiarism. Andrew reassures her that she did the right thing by owning up to her actions, encouraging her to embrace her integrity.



As the narrative unfolds, Spencer receives a potential breakthrough: an email suggests that someone in the "I Love U" database matches her personal birth information. This revelation reignites Spencer's hope of uncovering the truth about her past. Her elation crescendos with Andrew's tender gesture, a kiss that momentarily lifts her spirits, although Spencer is still caught in a web of self-doubt. Andrew's genuine affection cuts through Spencer's insecurities, as he affirms his admiration for her resilience and intelligence.

The chapter closes on a mysterious note when Spencer recalls a cryptic message from a dream involving Alison, urging her to reconsider something she discarded—a symbolic trash bag filled with remnants connected to Alison. Believing that this might be critical, Spencer feels compelled to investigate further, asking Andrew to alert Officer Wilden if she's gone for too long. Her sudden exit from the party hallows a sense of urgency and determination, as Spencer grasps at the possibility of solving the mysteries that have haunted her, following the threads left behind by Alison's enigmatic presence.



Chapter 24: 27

In Chapter 27 of "Pretty Little Liars: Wicked," Hanna Marin arrives at the Hastings' upscale party with Lucas, who is covering the event for the Rosewood Day newspaper. The room is buzzing with lively music from a string quartet and later a jazz band. Guests are clinking glasses filled with Scotch, gin and tonics, and red wine, underscoring the uneasy tension surrounding the town's latest scandal involving Ian's disappearance. The air in Rosewood has shifted drastically since Ali vanished, where previously, the biggest scandal was a neighbor's tax audit.

As they enter, Mrs. Hastings, visibly frazzled, directs Hanna and Lucas towards the library, where the younger attendees are gathered. Here, Hanna faces her stepsister, Kate, along with her entourage, Naomi and Riley. Suspicious of Kate's intentions, Hanna is reminded of the previous influence of Mona, a once close friend and former nemesis, and suspects that Kate's efforts to befriend her are disingenuous—a classic case of "fake-friending." This term refers to seemingly earnest friendships that are in fact strategic, designed to gather secrets for later betrayal.

Lucas advises Hanna against paranoia, reminding her not everyone is out to harm her, but his reassurance falls flat on Hanna, who remains distrustful. A tension hangs between Hanna and Lucas with Hanna feeling condescended to, a situation not dissimilar from the aftermath of Mona's manipulations.



Steeling herself, Hanna mingles with Kate and her cohort. Their exchange is superficially friendly, but Hanna's mind churns with the possibility of underlying deceit. Kate muses over old and snide memories, hinting at Hanna's past insecurities. The conversation drifts toward typical party chatter, yet Hanna is keenly aware of the potential barbs lurking beneath Kate's 'innocent' remarks.

When cornered by a joking comment about her stepsisterhood, Hanna erupts by revealing a fabricated rumor that Kate has herpes, turning the group's attention from admiration to revulsion. The revelation alienates Kate, who flees the library in embarrassment as whispers of doubt and judgment circulate the room. Hanna achieves her aim, yet instead of triumph, she feels unexpected remorse as the exhilaration of revenge turns sour.

This betrayal center stage results in a confrontation with Lucas, who witnessed Hanna's actions. He chastises her for her calculating outburst, expressing disappointment at her regression into shallow conflicts of popularity. Hanna, internally battling regret, tries in vain to explain her actions or mend the rift with Lucas, who remains resolute in his disillusionment, leaving her isolated among her peers.

As the chapter closes, Hanna is left grappling with the emptiness of her victory, realizing how far she strayed from her old self, longing for a



simpler, less scrutinized existence. The encounter serves as a pivotal moment of introspection, marking a separation between Hanna's desire for popularity and genuine connection, with Lucas's departure emphasizing the emotional toll of her vindictive scheme.

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Chapter 25 Summary: 28

Pretty Little Liars 5 - Wicked: Chapter 28 Summary

In this chapter, Aria Montgomery finds herself at a high-society benefit held at the Hastings' estate, feeling out of place amidst her affluent peers.

Surrounded by opulent portraits and luxury-clad guests, Aria reflects on the peculiarities of wealth, particularly while examining an old family portrait of Spencer Hastings' ancestor.

Aria attends the event at Spencer's insistence, intended as a show of support due to the recent unsettling events involving Ian's disappearance. However, she feels alienated both by her former friends' distance and the thought of interacting with her drunk ex-boyfriend, Noel, along with his friends. Aria's brother, Mike, introduces her to his seemingly normal girlfriend, Savannah, which surprises Aria given Mike's typical dating history.

The situation becomes tenser when Aria notices Xavier at the event. Xavier, who is dating Aria's mother, Ella, holds a problematic past with Aria after an inappropriate incident. Mike questions Aria's hostility towards Xavier, unaware of the undercurrents of tension between them.

Feeling uncomfortable, Aria retreats to Spencer's bedroom to gather herself.



This room holds sentimental value, drawing Aria back to memories of when she and her friends were closer, anchored by a photograph of the group. Her recollection touches on past insecurities, particularly involving secrets with Alison, a friend who had a profound influence over them.

Xavier follows Aria into the bedroom, igniting a confrontation. His approach is manipulative, accusing Aria of sending him mixed signals and dismissing her discomfort. Xavier insists that Aria's failure to report his previous misconduct implies consent. Aria vehemently denies his accusations and firmly rebukes his advances, demanding he stay away from both her and her mother.

Despite Aria's refusal, Xavier maintains a threatening stance, suggesting that any reports from her side could be easily twisted against her, thereby reinforcing his manipulative grip. Feeling trapped, Aria resolves to seek refuge elsewhere, considering moving to her father Byron's house, despite the discomfort of reconciling with her father's partner, Meredith.

This chapter emphasizes Aria's internal struggle and the external pressures she faces, highlighting the complicated dynamics of power and manipulation, all set against the backdrop of wealthy social gatherings and fractured friendships.



Chapter 26 Summary: 29

In Chapter 29 of "Pretty Little Liars: Wicked," titled "The Whole, Pathetic Truth," Spencer Hastings is at a critical juncture. The chapter unfolds during a tense evening at her family's benefit event, where Detective Wilden is present. Spencer, determined and resourceful, takes advantage of her knowledge of the house's secret exits to slip away unnoticed into the backyard. Equipped with a flashlight and rain gear, she is on a mission to uncover a buried bag of secret items linked to her missing friend, Alison "Ali" DiLaurentis.

The backdrop is a mysterious, moonless night—a setting that revives Spencer's old memories. As she navigates her yard, she brings readers into her conflicted past, reflecting on a sleepover during seventh grade, where her relationship with Ali reached a boiling point. It was on this foggy night that Spencer remembered having a physical altercation with Ali, which left Ali injured. Spencer grapples with guilt and questions about why the police never thoroughly investigated the area where Ali might have gotten hurt.

Intriguingly, an earlier conversation with Ian Thomas further complicates her thoughts. Ian had suggested that the police might be ignoring something important. Spencer has believed Ian killed Ali to prevent her from exposing their secret relationship. Yet, Ian's claim about a hidden truth haunts her. Could there be more to this mystery than meets the eye?



Spencer's quest at the barn leads her to dig up the truth—a trash bag containing remnants of their shared past. She finds a string bracelet, Emily's old purse, an innocuous evaluation form made by Ali, and, importantly, a drawing by Aria. The sketch, depicting a scene from their school days, reveals an ecstatic Ali with a seemingly infatuated Ian in the background. This image sends Spencer spiraling into doubt about the true nature of Ali and Ian's relationship.

The narrative heightens when Spencer receives an urgent e-mail from someone impersonating Ian, urging her to meet at the spot in the woods "where she died." In a state of urgency and skepticism, Spencer deliberates, recalling details of her last interaction with Ali from that tumultuous night. As her memories blur between certainty and suggestion, she starts questioning who might truly be behind these cryptic messages if not Ian.

Framed against the eerie night and her internal struggles, the chapter stitches together themes of buried secrets and the relentless quest for the truth. Spencer's determination to uncover the truth about Ali's disappearance propels her into deeper danger and mystery, rekindling questions about trust, memory, and the invisible puppeteer pulling strings in their lives.



Critical Thinking

Key Point: Pursuit of Truth Despite Fear

Critical Interpretation: Spencer Hastings exemplifies the courage to pursue the truth even when confronted with danger and uncertainty. In life, your journey might lead you to face intimidating shadows and confusing crossroads, much like Spencer's enigmatic mission to uncover hidden truths about her friend Ali's disappearance. You might find that the pathway to clarity is lined with buried secrets and conflicting memories. But as you navigate the fog of uncertainty and grapple with fear, remember Spencer's tenacity. By daring to dig deeper and question the narratives that surround you, you can uncover surprising insights and step closer to understanding the mysterious tapestry of your life. This pursuit, while daunting, ultimately builds resilience and clarity, paving the way for personal growth and enlightenment.

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Chapter 27 Summary: 30

In Chapter 30 of "Pretty Little Liars: Wicked," Hanna Marin is frantically searching for Lucas at the Hastings' residence during a party but finds no trace of him. Her search interrupts a heated discussion between Mr. Hastings and Principal Appleton and follows her through various areas of the house—inside the kitchen and media room—yet still no Lucas. Desperate, Hanna tries calling Lucas, leaving a voicemail pleading for the chance to explain her actions related to the mysterious notes from "A."

As Hanna reflects, she feels haunted by her past with Mona, who was revealed to be "A." This spurs painful memories of their friendship, the Time Capsule game they played, and the piece of the flag they found together. However, her thoughts are interrupted by the arrival of her father and her stepsister, Kate. Her father confronts Hanna about the rumor she spread that Kate has herpes, which Hanna insists she was misled into believing because of a conversation she overheard.

Kate expertly deflects Hanna's accusations, claiming that Hanna misunderstood her practicing lines for a school play, implying Hanna acted based on incomplete information. Mr. Marin, siding with Kate, decides to punish Hanna severely, grounding her and restricting her social interactions to only Kate, effectively isolating her.



Despite Hanna's protests, her father insists on harsh penalties, suggesting the close bond they once shared has dissolved since he remarried. Hanna's disbelief intensifies when she realizes Kate is lying about her so-called "rehearsal," as Ophelia's lines from Hamlet don't match what Hanna heard. Kate's deceit is evident, but Hanna's punishment remains unchanged, leaving her feeling trapped and maliciously outmaneuvered.

As Kate exits with a triumphant wink, she denies having herpes, deepening Hanna's humiliation and misstep. The chapter closes on Hanna's realization of Kate's cunning schemes and the repercussions they unleash on her life.

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Chapter 28: 31

In Chapter 31 of "Pretty Little Liars: Wicked," tension runs high as Emily attends a social gathering with her boyfriend, Isaac. While mingling, Emily overhears some former classmates gossiping about creepy behaviors of Ian, a former friend. Ian is a central figure in their past, known for his dark history and connection to Alison's mysterious death. The unsettling conversations leave Emily uneasy, especially given the ongoing investigation into Ian's suspicious activities.

Officer Wilden, a character whose past is intertwined with the girls', approaches Emily. Despite his transformation from a troubled youth to a seemingly responsible officer, Emily can't shake her unease around him. He informs her that Spencer, one of the members of their tight-knit group, is missing. While trying to reassure Wilden and themselves that Spencer is just somewhere in the house, Emily recalls how Ian, post-arraignment, seemed to still hold a menacing presence.

Wilden confides to Emily that he's skeptical about Ian being behind the threatening notes they've been receiving. This contradicts the friend's assumption that Ian is tormenting them from afar. It dawns on Emily that Spencer never revealed Ian's recent encounter with her to Wilden. Now, doubts begin to cloud her mind: What if the new threats aren't from Ian after all? Unsettling memories of Ian's trial surface, adding to her paranoia.



While grappling with these thoughts, Emily, Aria, and Hanna receive chilling text messages from the elusive "A." The message suggests that one of them will face consequences for their actions and ominously hints at Spencer's potential fate. In a panic, the girls rush to the window, as directed

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Chapter 29 Summary: 32

In this intense chapter from "Pretty Little Liars: Wicked," Hanna, Aria, and Emily are in a state of panic and urgency as they navigate through a dark, ominous night. The trio has just exited a house and is racing through a cold, wet backyard, heading towards a barn. They're concerned about their friend Spencer, who they believe has been lured out alone by a figure they suspect might be Ian or the mysterious "A." This individual has been tormenting them with secrets and threats, possibly drawn from their past involving Alison, their friend who was thought to be dead.

As the girls run, the terrain proves challenging. Hanna, clad in high heels, struggles with the slippery ground, and the atmosphere is thick with anxiety. Emily, overwhelmed with concern, questions how Spencer could have fallen into such a trap. Aria—a bit more composed—shushes them, wary of being overheard. The location is fraught with tension; the barn looms ahead, marked by the previously unearthed spot where Alison's body had been found, and beyond it, the woods stretch as a dark, foreboding path.

Once in the woods, they face more difficulties. The canopy of leaves creates an oppressive enclosure, and jagged branches injure them as they press onward. Despite the physical pain and uncertainty, they are drawn forward by the sound of a distant whimpering, a potential indication of Spencer in trouble or another trap laid by Ian or A.



Midway, Hanna stumbles, injures her arm, and hesitates to slow down. Urging Aria and Emily to continue without her, she tries to gather herself in the chilly, hostile environment. The fear of what might be lurking escalates, and Hanna begins to second-guess their decision to embark on this rescue without police support.

As Aria and Emily disappear from view, Hanna finds herself alone and vulnerable. The night is eerily silent save for nature's noises, underscoring the magnitude of their peril. Suddenly, she is startled by the sound of footsteps approaching through the trees. Fearing that Ian might be upon her, she is paralyzed with dread.

To Hanna's astonishment, the figure that emerges doesn't seem to be Ian, nor does it resemble Aria or Emily. The person is cloaked, with features obscured, reminiscent of the Grim Reaper. Yet, rather than attacking, this mysterious figure simply signals for silence. Hanna watches, frozen in place, as they retreat back into the shadows as quietly as they had appeared, leaving her shaken and questioning the reality of what she has just witnessed.

This chapter amplifies the suspense of the series, highlighting the constant danger and psychological games the girls must endure from A and their foes, while emphasizing the bond and courage they need to face these threats.



Chapter 30 Summary: 33

In Chapter 33 of "Pretty Little Liars: Wicked," the tension and mystery escalate dramatically. Aria finds herself running through the woods, haunted by unsettling noises and distant memories. The woods serve as a backdrop to a significant event from her past involving her old friend, Ali. Aria recalls an incident with Jason, Ali's brother, who she caught with a piece of the Time Capsule flag—something Ali claimed was already stolen from her. This memory is thick with implications and unanswered questions, leaving Aria unsure of its significance in her relationship with Jason.

As Aria reflects on these memories, she is abruptly brought back to the present by the arrival of her friends, Hanna and Emily, who have also been drawn into the woods by mysterious circumstances. They come across Spencer, who is visibly shaken and covered in mud. Spencer's discovery of Ian's lifeless body, pale and icy in death, shocks them all. Ian had disappeared right before his court trial, causing suspicion and fear among the group. His body is marked with signs of violence, adding a horrifying layer to the scene.

The girls' shock is compounded when their phones begin to ring in unison—a menacing reminder of their tormentor lurking in the shadows. Aria receives a cryptic text message stating, "He had to go," indicating someone has orchestrated Ian's fate. This chilling message ties back to the



consistent threat that has been following the girls, hinting that their mysterious adversary knows more than they could have imagined.

In this chapter, the juxtaposition between Aria's past interactions and the harrowing present underscores the complex web of secrets and relationships that the girls must navigate, intensifying the suspense and foreshadowing further twists in their story.

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