

THE SPARKS READERS GUIDE

1. Each of the families was given special gifts. What gifts have you been given? Have you used them to their true potential?
2. Do you think Neil is better suited to be an assassin or a socialite? Why do you think Neil wants to be an assassin so desperately? Do you have any personal experience with someone that was expected to choose a certain career or family business that may or may not have suited their personal skills or desires?
3. The Vapros, Taurlum and Celerius families have been feuding for centuries. Can you think of similar feuds that have occurred throughout history? Have there been, or could there be, solutions to end those feuds?
4. Jonathon sacrifices himself for Lilly. How did you feel during that scene? Are there other examples or symbols of sacrifice in the novel that you can recall?
5. Pay close attention to what motivates each character. What motivates Michael Taurlum? What motivates Neil? Are there good guys and bad guys in the novel that have similar motivations? For example, consider the motivations of Carlin and Neil, or Jennifer and Saewolf.
6. Rhys was one year away from having to choose between being an assassin or a socialite. Which do you think he would have chosen? Why?
7. Based on your personality, to which family do you think you would belong? [Take the quiz online](#) to see which family you would belong to.
8. Michael and Darius Taurlum are brothers. How are they similar? How are they different?
9. How do traumatic past events affect the motivations of Michael and Jennifer? Can you think of other characters that are also trying to escape their pasts?
10. Early in the novel, Lilly has lost her three brothers and her father. How has this type of devastating loss affected her behavior? Do you think her need to be perfect is linked to these events? Have you, or someone you know, experienced significant loss? If so, how did it change you and your interactions with others?
11. Reread the passage in Ch. 9 when Carlin kills Anthony
12. Do you think there is significance in the spilling of the wine? What does the wine represent? What about the fact the wine spilled over the map?
13. Jonathon disobeys Lilly and takes a grenade. Do you think there are times when it is necessary to defy orders given by authority figures for the greater good?
14. Does Jennifer's past justify how she treats Neil?
15. Jennifer is haunted by the fact that she killed Edward. Do you think her father set her up?
16. Look closely at each family crest. The Vapros has a raven and the motto is "Victory Lies Within the Ashes." What does the raven represent? What is meant by that motto? The Taurlum have a bull and the motto "Iron Flesh and Iron Will." What do these represent? The Celerius has a sword with wings and the motto is "Highest Honor." What do you think those represent?
17. Teacher's Note: Vapros is Latin for smoke, Celerius is Latin for swift and Taurlum is Latin for bull.