



WELCOME TO THE DARKNESS

I'm thrilled you're here!

My novel *Dark Auras* is seen through the eyes of 14-year-old Maggi and her older brother Will as they learn their family's dark history, realize their potential, and face the ultimate sacrifice. As the story unfolds, we learn of an evil being lurking in the shadows, taunting them, willing to stop at nothing to obtain what's his. But by design, we rarely see the story from this predator's point of view. So who is this sinister presence that draws the siblings into a frightening paranormal world, where living with the consequences of their choices may be even worse than dying?


In the following pages, you'll learn a little more about Hraban and get a glimpse into the motivations of this 200-year-old vampire. Because, after all, he's the hero of his story, and his actions are fully justified—in his own mind.

Within these pages, you'll find:

- Hraban's backstory with exclusive character images, including his transformation from a young man in love to an immortal predator.
- One deleted chapter from Hraban's perspective, revealing hints of the calculations behind his deadly games.
- A mini quiz to determine which main character in *Dark Auras* most closely matches your personality.

Are you ready to see how love and betrayal forged a lethal predator?

Come closer and step into my dark little corner of the world...



THE EVOLUTION OF A PREDATOR



In 1830 Transylvania, nineteen-year-old Hraban had everything he wanted—heir to his family's farmlands, the admiration of fellow villagers, and, most importantly, the promise of marriage to the most beautiful girl in the village. He eagerly looked forward to when he could call Shalaye his wife. But everything changed when a Gypsy named Emerich wandered into their village. Within a few short weeks, Emerich beguiled Shalaye and stole her heart, and she abruptly ended her engagement to Hraban. Her rejection devastated him; it destroyed his hopes and the life he had envisioned. How could she choose a penniless wanderer over Hraban—a boy she'd known all her life, the son of the region's wealthiest farmer, the one who adored her and could make her happy?

Ignoring protests from Hraban's family and despite the other villagers' disapproval, Shalaye married Emerich, and they began the life that should've belonged to Hraban. Anger and resentment poisoned Hraban's broken heart. As vengeance consumed him, he decided this grievous wrong must be made right. But instead of eliminating Emerich forever, Hraban was the one left clinging to life. For days, Hraban lay unconscious as his family cared and prayed for him. It was rumored that in her desperation, his mother called upon Romani witches who used dark magic to try to save him. Unfortunately, days later, Hraban passed away.



Death, however, was kinder than love had been. In death, he exacted his revenge and claimed what should have been his all along. Now, 200 years later, he'll cement his eternal power over his obsession, and nothing—nor anyone—will stand in his way. Shalaye can only blame herself for the tragedies then and what will occur now, because had she chosen Hraban when they were human, none of this would have to be.

In the following deleted chapter, you'll see through Hraban's eyes as he stalks his prey, calculating the moves in his deadly game. You'll see his twisted pleasure and witness his obsession—a desire so consuming that even centuries of darkness couldn't extinguish it. Why were this and other chapters from Hraban's point of view removed from the final novel? Mostly, to maintain his mystery and to let his darkness lurk in the shadows of your imagination. But also, to make room for Mirela's Transylvanian story, which brings the past to light and connects it to current day. So for now, enter the mind of a monster, get a glimpse into his thoughts, and see a small slice of the story through his eyes...

Spoiler Alert: The following chapter refers to a main plot point that isn't revealed until the end of Chapter 21 in the novel. If you prefer to keep in the dark (so to speak), I recommend coming back to this deleted chapter after you've read through Chapter 22.

THE DISCERNING

He leans against the weathered brick of a large house, the glow of streetlights unable to stretch into the shadows that conceal him. Three people stand across the street in the park, their conversation as clear as if he's beside them.

So, this is Maggi, the girl destined to accomplish what a mediocre sorceress and her seventh daughter could not.

She's just a wisp of teenage innocence, ready to fulfill her "destiny" without a thought to the consequences. He likes that. Teenage girls are so eager to believe, jumping headlong into worlds they don't understand but want to be a part of just the same. It's why runaways are the easiest to lure. They want so desperately to escape whatever they find unbearable (abuse, rules, walls) that whatever he offers, they willingly embrace and happily accept. They're also rarely missed, so when he drinks them dry and buries their bodies, their deaths go unnoticed. At least until their bones are unearthed by a wild animal, identified, and then someone, somewhere, acts shocked that she's dead. Perhaps even mourns her.

He'll enjoy doing the same to this girl. This Maggi, who looks remarkably like the Shalaye he once knew—hopeful, innocent—when Shalaye was human and had a soul.

Her brother, however, is clearly not as naive and trusting as the little sister he's destined to protect. Nor is he strong, courageous, or worthy of a legacy. Even he sees the absurdity of it. However, Will is losing his skepticism, allowing the implausible to chip away his steadfastness. He's starting to believe, whether he wants to or not.

But no matter.

Will can embrace his legacy, the spell, his "destiny," and still, none of it will matter. A human is never a match for a vampire. With or without a medium's spell. With or without Emerich's trinket.

He watches Shalaye slip away from the two humans and disappear into the night. He's

tempted to follow her, confront her, capture her, whisk her away to someplace dark and secluded. Make love to her. Pledge once again his allegiance into eternity.

But it will mean nothing to her, like it meant nothing in their past. Her heart is dead to him because it was Emerich she always wanted—in life and in death.

So why does she still long for life, for the return of her soul, even with Emerich long dead? She can never be with him again, at least not in life. But then, perhaps she believes that with her soul back, her eternity will unite with Emerich's in the human fantasy called heaven.

But he will not allow her the satisfaction of reaching her ultimate desire. He'll destroy her last spark of hope, watch her collapse in despair and cry out in agony as she watches her precious Maggi and Will die a painful death, along with her last chance to be human.

He smiles inside the shadows.

She will then have no choice but to accept her fate and return to him, where she always belonged. Where she will stay forever.

Whether she wants to or not.

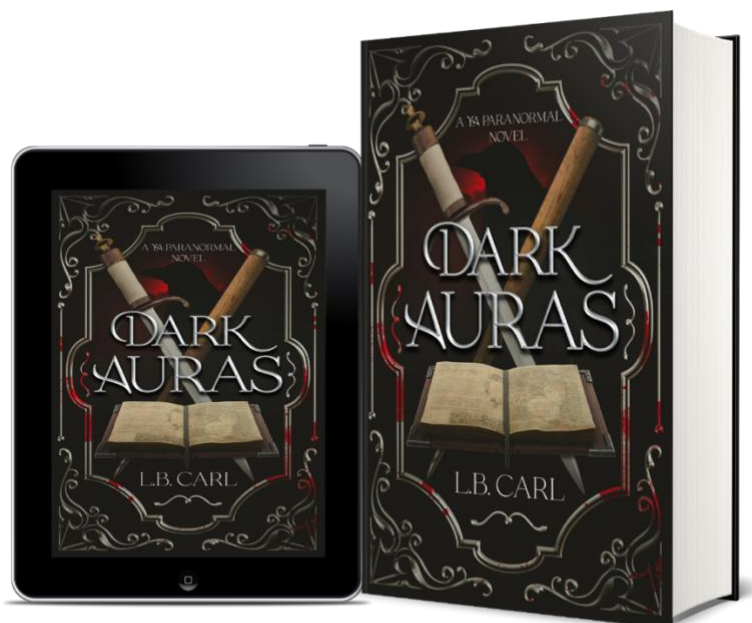
A shadow shifts in the darkness...

In Chapter 22, "The Revealing," Will and Maggi stand at the threshold of their destiny, unaware of the predator lurking just beyond the streetlights. While they grapple with their newfound understanding, Hraban watches from the shadows, his centuries-old vengeance about to destroy their awakening legacy.

Now, when you read Chapter 22 through Maggi's eyes, you'll know that Hraban watches, savoring the perfect moment for vengeance...and perverse gratification.

Now that you've glimpsed Hraban's ruthless nature through his own eyes, discover how Will and Maggi's destiny puts them directly in the crosshairs of his centuries-old vendetta.

Available on Amazon.



"Although this novel targets YA, the author engages all age demographics. The characters and plot are well-developed, keeping you continually rapt; this is a satisfying read. I will be watching the author's rise with subsequent books. Lois Lawry-esque career ahead!"

"What a great book to read. I couldn't put it down. I can't wait to read more from this author. I recommend this book."

"I read hundreds of books a year and this is easily in my top five. The author hit it out of the park!"



Now, let's have some fun! Turn the page and discover which *Dark Auras* character shares your personality!



WHO ARE YOU MOST LIKE? A MINI QUIZ



Take this quiz to discover which *Dark Auras* character most closely matches your personality. Choose the answer that best reflects how you'd respond in each situation.

1. During a family conflict, what's your typical approach?
 - a) Try to mediate and keep everyone calm, even if it means suppressing your own feelings.
 - b) Observe from a distance while analyzing everyone's motivations.
 - c) Express your emotions and try to make others understand your perspective.
 - d) Take control of the situation and protect those you care about, even if it means being confrontational.
2. What drives you most in pursuing your goals?
 - a) The desire to maintain harmony and ensure everyone's comfort.
 - b) The need to understand everything and uncover hidden truths.
 - c) The hope of becoming your authentic self and finding deeper meaning.
 - d) The determination to maintain control and right perceived wrongs.
3. When faced with a difficult truth about yourself, how do you react?
 - a) Try to adjust quietly without drawing attention to yourself.
 - b) Withdraw to process it alone while researching similar experiences.
 - c) Feel it deeply and express your emotions through creative outlets.
 - d) Challenge it head-on and defend your position.
4. What's your biggest fear in relationships?
 - a) Failing to meet others' expectations and causing discord.
 - b) Being truly known and having to be vulnerable.
 - c) Losing the possibility of a meaningful connection forever.
 - d) Having someone you care about reject or betray you.
5. During the holiday season, how do you typically spend your time?
 - a) Making sure everyone else is happy and comfortable.
 - b) Finding a quiet corner to observe and reflect.
 - c) Creating meaningful moments and traditions.
 - d) Taking charge of events to ensure everything goes according to plan.

6. If you discovered you had supernatural abilities, what would be your first reaction?
- a) Wonder how this might affect your family and loved ones.
 - b) Research everything you can about your new abilities.
 - c) Explore how these abilities connect to your personal destiny.
 - d) Consider how to use these powers to achieve your goals.

Scoring:

Count which letter you chose most often. Your dominant letter reveals your character match!

Mostly “a’s”

You’re most like Will – Enneagram Type 9: The Peacemaker

You’re a natural mediator who values harmony and stability. Like Will, you’re protective of your loved ones and take your responsibilities seriously, sometimes at the cost of your own needs.



Mostly “b’s”

You’re most like Maggi – Enneagram Type 5: The Investigator

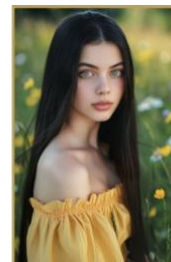
You’re analytical and perceptive, preferring to understand the world through careful observation. Like Maggi, you’re drawn to mysteries and value your independence.



Mostly “c’s”

You’re most like Shalaye – Enneagram Type 4: The Individualist

You’re deeply emotional and driven by authenticity. Like Shalaye, you seek meaningful connections and aren’t afraid to hope for redemption, even in dark times.



Mostly “d’s”

You’re most like Hraban – Enneagram Type 8: The Challenger

You’re strong-willed and determined, with a powerful drive to control your environment. Like Hraban, you pursue your goals with unwavering focus and protect what you consider yours.



After reading *Dark Auras* and getting to know the characters, let me know if you think you still most closely align with your character match!

MY BOOKS

If you love exploring other genres, please check out my 1970s coming-of-age series and my sci-fi romantasy!



Find out more at [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com/LB-Carl) or lbcarl.com.

Thank you so much for your interest in *Dark Auras* and for taking a little trip into the darkness with Hraban.

Please connect with me! I'm most active on **Instagram** (@lbcarlauthor) and post updates there (sort of) regularly, so please give me a follow. I'd love to hear from you!

**Thank you for exploring the dark side with me,
and thank you again for all your support!**

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