

BOOK CLUB DISCUSSION GUIDE

The Dreamweavers

A science fiction short story by C.R. Lang

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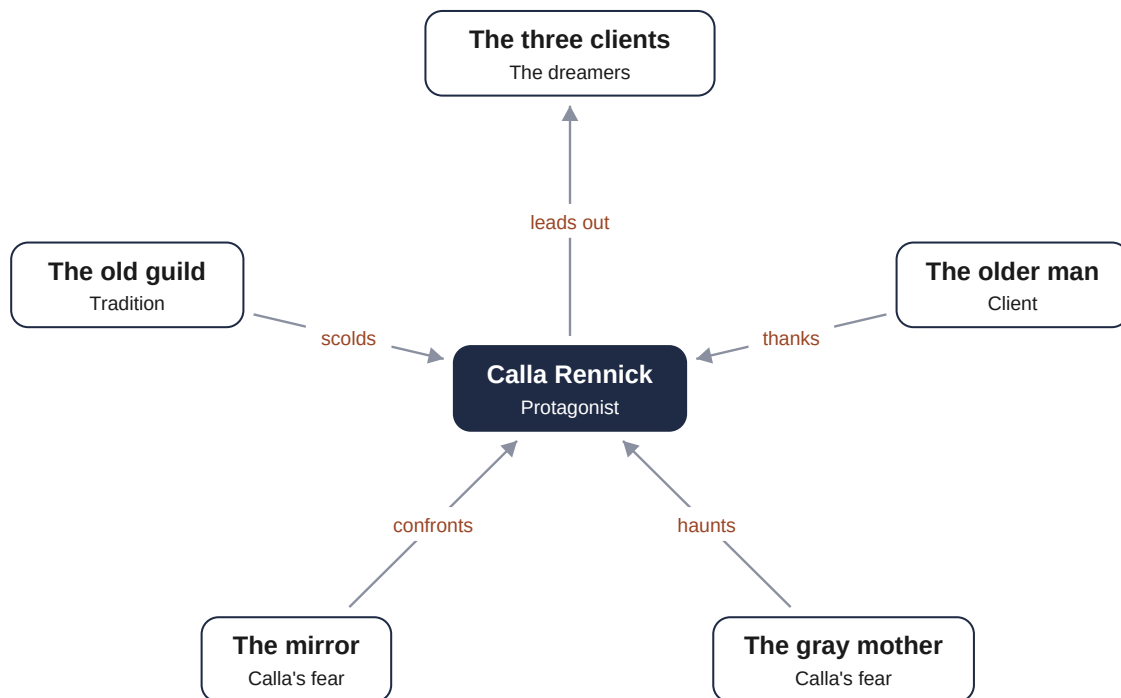
About the story

In a city where dreams are commissioned like art, a weaver who helps people face their fears breaks the one rule that keeps her safe and falls asleep inside her own dream with three clients trapped in the dark.

This guide assumes everyone has finished the story, so it discusses the ending.

Character map

The main character is in the dark box. Arrows show who acts on whom.



Who's who

Calla Rennick (Protagonist). A weaver of confrontation dreams. Builds the door for others but has never walked through.

The three clients (The dreamers). A small group who share a fear of the dark.

The older man (Client). Came to conquer a lifelong terror of darkness. 'It was like someone was afraid with me.'

The gray mother (Calla's fear). Shadows in her mother's shape, saying 'you were never enough.'

The mirror (Calla's fear). Shows her as she fears she is: never brave herself.

The old guild (Tradition). Enforces the rule that a weaver never dreams her own dreams.

Themes to look for

Facing fear. ‘You don’t have to defeat it. You only have to look at it, and keep walking.’

The helper who needs help. Calla teaches courage she has never practiced herself.

Shared vulnerability. ‘I’m scared too. Walk with me.’

Rules and wisdom. The rule kept her safe, and breaking it on purpose changes her whole profession.

Discussion questions

- 1 Calla ‘constructed the door, and the dreamer chose whether to open it.’ What does that say about how she sees her job?
- 2 The rule exists to keep weavers safe. What else might it protect them from?
- 3 Calla’s fears turn out not to be about the dark. Why do you think the house filled with her mother, her failures and the mirror?
- 4 ‘I only build the door. I never walk through.’ How does this line sum up Calla’s life?
- 5 Calla doesn’t defeat her fears. She looks at them and names them. Why does that work?
- 6 Why is ‘I’m scared too’ more powerful than reassurance would have been?
- 7 Afterward, Calla breaks the rule on purpose. Was the guild right to scold her?
- 8 If a weaver could build you a confrontation dream, what door would you want to face?

Craft corner

For writers in the group: two ways to look at how the story is built.

Character arc. Compare Calla in the first section and the last. What exactly has changed?

Symbolism. Doors and the silver thread recur throughout. What does each one stand for?

Try this together

Each person writes, privately, one fear in the form Calla uses: ‘Yes. I’m afraid that... I’m here anyway.’ No one has to share. Then talk about what it felt like to write the second half.

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