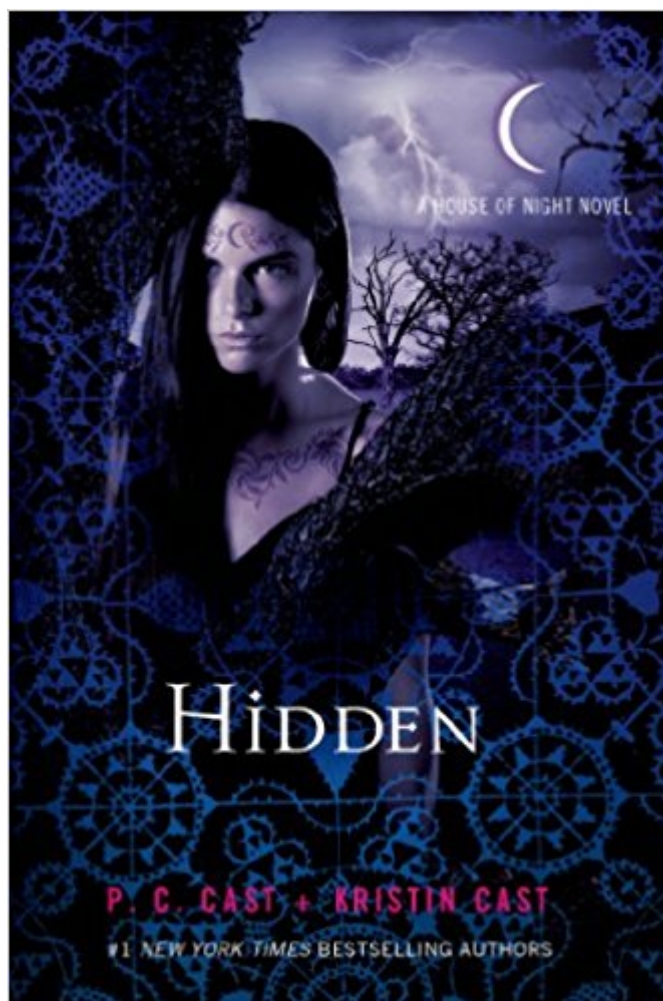


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Hidden: A House Of Night Novel (House Of Night Novels)



Synopsis

In *Hidden* by P.C. Cast and Kristin Cast, Zoey at last has what she wanted: the truth is out. Neferet's evil has been exposed, and the High Council is no longer on her side—so why is she far from done wreaking havoc in the vampyre world? First a mysterious fire ravages the stables, then, Neferet makes a devastating move that will test them all. With the seeds of distrust sown, everyone must band together—but that's proving to be more difficult than ever before. The twins are barely speaking and the House of Night's former enemy, Kalona, has now become their warrior, pushing their trust to the limit. To top it off, Zoey is pretty darn sure she might be losing her mind—she saw something when she looked at Aurox through the Seer Stone that she can hardly explain to herself, let alone her friends. Is it possible that Heath has come back in a different form? Is that why Zoey's so intrigued by Aurox, when it's so obvious he's dangerous? And who would believe her if she told them? Zoey knows that following her instinct about Aurox might be just what they need to defeat evil . . . but if she's wrong, it could cause the destruction of those closest to her. With the tension at a breaking point and friendships on the line, can the nerd herd come together to stop Neferet before it's too late?

Book Information

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Age Range: 12 - 18 years

Grade Level: 7 - 12

Customer Reviews

#1 New York Times and USA Today bestselling author P.C. CAST is an award-winning fantasy and paranormal romance writer, as well as an experienced speaker and teacher. Her novels have been awarded YALSA Quick Picks for Reluctant Young Adult Readers, and have received the prestigious Oklahoma Book Award. KRISTIN CAST is a New York Times and USA Today bestselling author who teams with her mother to write the House of Night series.

CHAPTER ONE

Lenobia's sleep was so restless that the familiar dream took on a sense of reality that overstepped the ethereal realm of subconscious outlets and fantasies and became, from the beginning, all too heartbreakingly real. It began with a memory. Decades, and then centuries fell away leaving Lenobia young and naïve again, and in the cargo hold of the ship that had carried her from France to America from one world to another. It was during that journey that Lenobia had met Martin, the man who should have been her Mate for his entire life. Instead he had died too young and had taken her love to the grave with him. In her dream Lenobia could feel the gentle roll of the ship and smell the scent of horse and hay, sea and fish and Martin. Always Martin. He was standing before her, gazing down at her through eyes that were olive and amber and worried. She had just told him she loved him. "It is impossible." The dream memory replayed in her mind as Martin reached out, took her hand, and lifted it gently. He raised his own arm until the two were side by side. "You see the difference, you?" The dreaming Lenobia made a small, wordless exclamation of pain. The sound of his voice! That distinct Creole accent deep, sensual, unique. It was the bittersweet sound of his voice and its beautiful accent that had kept Lenobia away from New Orleans for more than two hundred years. "No," the young Lenobia had answered his question as she gazed down at their arms one brown, one white where they pressed together. "All I see is you." Still deeply asleep, Lenobia, Horse Mistress of the Tulsa House of Night, moved restlessly, as if her body was attempting to force her mind to awaken. But this night her mind did not obey. This night dreams and what might have been ruled. The sequence of memories shifted and changed to another scene, still in the cargo hold of the same ship, still with Martin, but days later. He was handing her a long string of leather tied to a small pouch dyed a deep sapphire blue. Martin put it around her neck saying, "This gris-gris protect you, cherie." In the space of a heartbeat the memory wavered and time fast-forwarded a century. An older, wiser, more cynical Lenobia was cradling the crumbling leather pouch in her hands as it split and spilled its contents thirteen things, just as Martin had told her but most of them had become unrecognizable during the century she'd worn the charm. Lenobia

remembered a faint scent of juniper, the smooth feel of the clay pebble before it turned to dust, and the tiny dove's feather that had crumbled between her fingers. But most of all Lenobia remembered the fleeting rush of joy she'd felt when, in the midst of the disintegrating remnants of Martin's love and protection, she'd discovered something that time hadn't been able to ravage. It had been a heart-shaped emerald, surrounded by tiny diamonds, set in gold. "Your mother's heart • your heart • my heart," Lenobia had whispered as she'd slipped it over the knuckle of her ring finger. "I still miss you, Martin. I've never forgotten. I vowed it. And then the dream memories rewound again, taking Lenobia back to Martin, only this time they weren't at sea finding one another in the cargo hold and falling in love. This memory was dark and terrible. Even dreaming, Lenobia knew the place and the date: New Orleans, March 21, 1788, not long after sunset. The stables had exploded in fire and Martin had saved her, carrying her from the flames. "Oh, no! Martin! No!" Lenobia had screamed at him then, now she whimpered, struggling to awaken before she had to relive the horrible end of the memory. She didn't wake. Instead she heard her only love repeat the words that had broken her heart two hundred years before, feeling it again as if the wound were raw and fresh. "Too late, cherie. This world too late for us. I see you again, though. My love for you don't end here. My love for you, it never ends. I'll find you again, cherie. That I vow." As Martin captured the evil human who had tried to enslave her, and then walked back into the flaming stables with him, saving Lenobia's life, the Horse Mistress was finally able to wake herself with a wrenching sob. She sat up in bed, and with a trembling hand brushed her sweat-soaked hair from her face. Lenobia's first waking thought was for her mare. Through the psychic connection they shared, she could feel that Mujaji was agitated, almost panicked. "Shhh, my beauty. Go back to sleep. I am well," Lenobia spoke aloud, sending soothing feelings to the black mare with whom she had a special bond. Feeling guilty for upsetting Mujaji, she bowed her head and cradled her hand, twisting the emerald ring around and around her finger. "Stop being so foolish," Lenobia told herself firmly. "It was just a dream. I am safe. I am not back there. What happened then cannot hurt me more than it already has," Lenobia lied to herself. I can be hurt again. If Martin has come back • really come back • my heart can be hurt again. Another sob tried to escape from Lenobia, but she pressed her lips together and forced her emotions under control. He might not be Martin, she told herself firmly, logically. Travis Foster, the new human hired by Neferet to assist her in the stables, was simply a handsome distraction • him and his big, beautiful Percheron mare.

“Which is probably exactly what Neferet intended when she hired him,” Lenobia muttered. “To distract me. And his Percheron is just an odd coincidence.” Lenobia closed her eyes and blocked the memories that lifted from her past, and then repeated aloud, “Travis might not be Martin reincarnated. I know my reaction to him is unusually strong, but it has been a long time since I have taken a lover. You have never taken a human lover • you vowed not to, her conscience reminded her. “So it’s simply past time I took a vampyre lover, even if briefly. And that type of distraction will be good for me.” Lenobia tried to busy her imagination with considering and then rejecting a list of handsome Son of Erebus Warriors, her mind’s eye not seeing their strong, muscular bodies, but instead envisioning whisky brown eyes tinged with familiar olive green and a ready smile. “No!” She would not think of it. She would not think of him. But what if Travis could really hold Martin’s soul? Lenobia’s errant mind whispered enticingly. He gave his word he would find me again. Perhaps he has. “And then what?” Lenobia stood and began to pace restlessly. “I know all too well the fragility of humans. They are too easily killed, and today the world is even more dangerous than it was in 1788. My love ended in heartbreak and flame once. Once was too much.” Lenobia stopped and put her face in her hands as her heart knew the truth, and pumped it through her body and soul, becoming reality. “I am a coward. If Travis is not Martin I do not want to open myself to him • to take a chance on loving another human. And if he is Martin returned to me, I cannot bear the inevitable, that I will lose him again.” Lenobia sat heavily in the old rocking chair she’d placed beside her bedroom window. She liked to read there, and if she couldn’t sleep her window faced east so she could watch the rising of the sun and look out at the grounds beside the stables. Though Lenobia appreciated the irony, she couldn’t help but enjoy the morning light. Vampyre or not, at her core she would eternally be a girl who loved mornings and horses and a tall, cappuccino skinned human who had died long ago when he had been far too young. Her shoulders slumped. She hadn’t thought of Martin so often in decades. His renewed memory was a double-edged sword • on one side she loved recalling his smile, his scent, his touch. On the other his memory also evoked the void his absence had left. For more than two hundred years Lenobia had grieved for a lost possibility • a wasted life. “Our future was burned away from us. Destroyed by flames of hatred and obsession and evil.” Lenobia shook her head and wiped her eyes. She must regain control over her emotions. Evil was still burning a swath through Light and goodness. She drew in a deep, centering breath and turned her thoughts to a subject that never failed to calm her, no matter how chaotic the

world around her had become horses, in particular. Feeling calmer now, Lenobia reached out again with that extra special part of her spirit that Nyx had touched, and gifted with an affinity for horses, the day sixteen-year-old Lenobia had been Marked. She found her mare easily, and instantly felt guilty at the mirrored agitation she sensed in Mujaji. "Shhh," Lenobia soothed again, repeating aloud the reassurance she was sending through her bond with the mare. "I am only being foolish and self-indulgent. It will pass, I give you my vow, sweet one." Lenobia focused a tide of warmth and love on her night-colored mare, and, as always, Mujaji regained her own calm. Lenobia closed her eyes and released a long breath. She could envision her mare, black and beautiful as the night, finally settling down, cocking a back leg, and falling into a dreamless sleep. The Horse Mistress concentrated on her mare, shutting out the turmoil that the young cowboy's arrival at her stables had caused within her. Tomorrow, she promised herself sleepily, tomorrow I will make it clear to Travis that we will never be more than employer and employee. The color of his eyes and the wa... --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

CRITIQUE/NO SPOILERS : I haven't read the novel yet however the millisecond downloads to my iPad continue to thrill! I recommend the series to not just fantasy readers but also for the curious mix of world heritages, history and contemporary youth issues hidden beneath the action and dialogue. Additionally if your core values are sensitive to pre-teen and teen morals, there are several areas of concern in this series for you TO SERIOUS CONSIDER BY PRE-READING. My daughter, now 22, was never subject to censure as an individual due to her early mental maturity and our close discussions of all things taboo. These books are written at their core for younger readers by their very nature and are extended over too many books for the overall content. With that said, some of the content contains very well described events with rich skill, also an attraction for me and giving me the interest to read another take on vampirism.

When you have good authors, great characters and an excellent understanding of your readers then having a successful book is not difficult. House of Night continues to be an excellent series involving us with the great array of fascinating people that walk its pages, and capturing our attention as the fight against Darkness continues. The characters grow and change coming into their own but I must confess that as good as this is I feel it is close to the time to finish the series or perhaps grow them up a little more, a difficult feat as it is young adult fiction. The events are now becoming borderline stereotyped and my desire for the next book is still there but the impatience of the past is no longer

present. In all though, a great book and worth the reading. Long live Zoe!!!!

There's nothing better than a series that keeps you on your toes. This installment in the HON Series is no different. I blew through it in no time and loved every minute of it. When Neferet seems to have lost everything, she takes matters into her own hands. Zoey and her friends are in a bind and must get help from even those they don't trust. There's only so much Zoey can take and the Seer Stone is becoming a pain. Seeking the truth yet not knowing who to turn to when she believes she sees her ex-boyfriend from HS, it's all Zoey can take when it comes to the men in her life. While her heart wants to believe one thing her head is telling her it cannot be real. There's a light at the end of the tunnel for everyone and Neferet had it coming when she kidnapped someone beloved by all of Zoey's friends. It's one thing to take away a family member that's already blew you off, it's quite another to threaten someone as close to Zoey as her grandma. Absolutely loved this installment to the series! Moving on to Neferet's Curse.

Addicted to the series. Always a good read. I love me some supernatural. I do like the author's style of writing, which feels natural and compatible to the way we talk and think. Good character development. Love the fact that the author references modern icons, movies and events. Story lines are interesting and filled with drama and edge of your seat excitement and anticipation. I do love to hate the villain and this one is evil. Only negatives are ones that waste good story space and time, such as, the repetitive descriptions of past events and characteristics of people and then the romantic events or inner insecurity issues can definitely use some editing as it can, in places, be blah blah blah....tedious and over descriptive for what is needed. I usually just skip over these sections and get back to what's really happening with the story. There are also some typos here and there that bug me on rare occasion because I wish I could just fix them myself! Oh, and though the length of these books are typical, I would love if some authors would just make books that are seriously think again, like 500 pages or more! Other than that. I highly recommend this series. You won't regret it.

So these last two installments, Destined and Hidden were disappointing they didn't have the thrills and twists as books 4 - 8 did. And I liked having the dark feel to them that these other books had but these last two felt as if I were again reading Marked and Betrayed. The only parts that gave me chills were Neferet's scenes but I'm getting tired of the whole Neferet thing the Cast's have to do something new cause this is getting boring and a little predictable I was also upset because the

Cast's really didn't throw any new storyline at my favorite couple, Stevie Rae and Rephaim. And Stark is one of my favorite characters but it's kinda hard to because he's in love with Zoey. So the only character that helped me make it to the end of these two books especially this one was Kalona. And are you serious they brought Heath back. Do they not understand that really no one liked him so why is he back? I guess he was just one of those characters that no one likes except the authors. I mean don't get me wrong he is a nice and sweet guy but boy is he an idiot and that's what makes people not like him. The only thing that was a twist in Destined was what happened to Dragon. This book really was just a book to make money out of. The only thing that was interesting was what was going on with Kalona. This book really didn't do anything to change the storyline. They just brought back the stupid boy drama and Kalona is now on the right path and fighting for Light instead of Darkness, only thing was the sucky timing that he got excepted back, because he had to save Sylvia but was unable to because he could not get rid of Darkness. And Erin is taking the wrong path. And after all this stupid drama I'm done with this series you won't catch me buying any other books from this series, but hey the jokes on me because I brought 10 of these dam things. I have never given up on a series but I had to on this one. I don't care what happens to the characters, I just don't anymore, enough is enough. I don't care if there's just two more books left they are milking this series for as much as they can get. And now while I put these books in the attic the Cast's are laughing while throwing and swimming in hundred doller bills. Plot Zoey has finally exposed Neferet's evil to the High Council and they are no longer on her side. But she's far from done creating havoc. Everyone must stand together if they wanna defeat Neferet but that's proving to be hard because the twins are are barely speaking and Kalona has become their warrior, pushing their trust to the limit. To top it off Zoey believes that when she looked throw the seer stone at Aurox that she saw Heath.

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