

INITIATE

by

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DEFENSE COMMITTEE AND FINAL READING APPROVALS

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The following individuals read and discussed the thesis submitted by student Becca Anderson, and they evaluated their presentation and response to questions during the final oral examination. They found that the student passed the final oral examination.

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The final reading approval of the thesis was granted by Mitchell Wieland, M.F.A., Chair of the Supervisory Committee. The thesis was approved by the Graduate College.

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ABSTRACT

After the sudden death of her father, sixteen-year-old Cal Townsend is sent to live with her estranged maternal grandmother on one of Wisconsin's Apostle Islands. She soon learns that she is descended from a long line of practicing witches.

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CREATIVE THESIS SUMMARY

After the sudden death of her father, sixteen-year-old Cal Townsend is sent to live with her estranged maternal grandmother, Gran. Gran lives on Madeline Island, one of the 22 remote Apostle Islands in Lake Superior off of Wisconsin's northernmost shore, where she runs a tourist store.

Cal soon learns that she is descended from a long line of practicing witches. This includes Cal's mother, who went missing two weeks after Cal was born. Cal convinces Gran to initiate her into witchcraft.

For reasons unexplained, Gran refuses to teach Cal any practical magic, keeping her lessons on training wheels. Eventually, desperate for answers, Cal snaps. She steals Gran's spellbook, sails to one of the far Apostles, and attempts to summon her father's ghost. She fails. Instead of her dad, Cal raises something else: a writhing mass of shadows that moves through the dark, speaks in a hundred voices, and demands to know her name.

Initiate is a coming-of-age story about grief, family, and witches. This thesis represents the first section of the novel.