

character guide

DEMON COPPERHEAD

Damon Fields ("Demon Copperhead"): The protagonist of the novel, which begins at his birth as a poor boy in Lee County, Virginia (Appalachia)

"Mom" Fields: Demon's single mother, a poor and drug-addicted teen

Mr. and Mrs. Peggott: an older couple who are neighbors, and often caretakers, to Demon in his childhood years

Matt Peggott ("Maggot"): Demon's closest childhood friend and the Peggotts' grandson, for whom they care while his mother is in jail

Murrell Stone ("Stoner"): Demon's stepfather, who is abusive to Demon and his mother

Emmy: Maggot's cousin, a good friend to both Demon and Maggot

June Peggott: Emmy's aunt and guardian, a nurse and a stable parental figure who is against the opioid epidemic

Miss Barks: Demon's social worker, who is overworked and underpaid

Mr. Crickson ("Creaky"): Demon's first foster parent, a struggling tobacco farmer who uses foster children for labor

Tommy Waddell ("Waddles"): Demon's friend in foster care, a genuinely good person

Sterling Ford ("Fast Forward"): Demon's friend in foster care and the high school quarterback -- a charismatic star with a dark side, including drug use

Mr. and Mrs. McCobb: Demon's chronically insolvent second foster parents, who are both abusive and neglectful

Betsy Woodall: Demon's paternal grandmother, who cares for girls and gets him into a better foster placement

Dick: Betsy's brother, a smart man who is physically handicapped

Coach Winfield: Demon's football coach and his final caretaker, who is generally well-intentioned, but struggles with alcohol addiction, grief, and an unhealthy obsession with football

Agnes ("Angus"): Coach Winfield's daughter, who is bright, competent, loving, and anti-drugs

Ryan Pyles ("U-Haul"): a "helper" of the Wilfields who takes advantage of them

Hammerhead Kelly ("Hammer"): a distant Peggott cousin by marriage and Emmy's first "real" boyfriend

Dori: Demon's drug-addicted high school girlfriend