

EVERY ANORAN CHILD dreams of the day they will enter the sacred bonding hut and match with a guardian—a spiritual guide who grants magically enhanced abilities. A lucky few will bond with Advocates, who promise greatness and glory. Others will be tempted by forbidden offers from the Accursed—dangerous spirits who bring nothing but destruction and a penalty of death to any Anoran who chooses them. But when Mako discovers that the worst of these agents of chaos has returned to spread an ancient evil through the empire, he faces an unthinkable choice: Will he bond with one of the Accursed to gain the power to stop another?

Halfway across the empire, Arden has no guardian and no prospects of adventure . . . until she infiltrates an underground criminal network to rescue her missing friend. Relying on her knack for sensing the truth through even the smoothest lies, Arden finds herself at the center of a sinister conspiracy that runs much deeper than she ever imagined.

Soon Mako's and Arden's fates collide, and together they must face bandit armies, dark secrets, and untold dangers to fight an enemy who could destroy all they've ever known.

Brandon Mull is the #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of the Guardians, Fablehaven, Beyonders, and Five Kingdoms series. A kinetic thinker, Brandon enjoys bouncing balls, squeezing stress toys, and popping bubble wrap. He lives in Utah with his wife Erlyn, their eleven kids, and three mischievous cats.

Read by **George Newburn**



**Listening
Library**

Runtime: 16h. 32m. • Unabridged

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