

Blood Rites Study Guide

Blood Rites by Jim Butcher

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Plot Summary

Blood Rites by Jim Butcher, the sixth book in The Dresden Files, focuses on the battle between Harry Dresden and the Black Court vampires. The foes that Harry faces are formidable but things are complicated when Harry discovers that he has a half brother who is a member of the White Court vampires. The power of love becomes a central theme for the story as Harry is forced to face his past and realize that his future will be changed forever.

Harry Dresden is running from a group of demons that are after some sacred Tibetan dogs. Harry manages to defeat the demons and while returning them, Thomas Raith, a member of the White Court vampires, asks Harry for a favor. Harry agrees to help Thomas' friend, Genosa, with the understanding that Thomas explains his reason for helping Harry in the past.

Harry is going to meet Genosa when he is attacked by Black Court vampires. Harry realizes that Mavra is out to get him but for now he cannot do anything about it. When Harry meets Genosa, Genosa explains that women around him have been dying in odd manners and that he believes a curse is to blame. Harry agrees and they decide to put him on the set of Genosa's film to see if he can decipher who is behind the attacks and keep people safe. Harry agrees.

Harry goes to the set and it is not long before people are attacked. Harry is able to stop anyone from dying but he knows now that whatever is responsible is very deadly. Harry soon finds that Thomas and his family are somehow involved with Genosa. Thomas then reveals to Harry that they have the same mother, although Harry is reluctant to believe this.

Once Harry learns where Mavra is hiding, Harry gets his crew together for an attack. To help him, Harry calls a mercenary named Kincaid, Karrin Murphy, a police officer and friend of Harry's, and an old man named Ebenezer who raised Harry after Harry's uncle died. They go to Mavra's and are able to save the hostages and kill the vampires and human servants working there.

With the threat of Mavra gone, Harry can concentrate on the curse and soon deduces that Thomas' father, Lord Raith, is responsible for the curse with the help of Genosa's three ex-wives. Harry goes to Raith manor to save Thomas and is captured by Raith. Harry figures out that his mother was able to set a curse on Raith so that he can no longer feed. Harry tricks Raith into admitting that family is nothing to him and Raith's daughter, Lara, arrives to confront her father. Lara now knows that she is stronger than her father and takes over the House of Raith but keeps her father in his position of power.

Thomas goes home with Harry to stay. Harry feels that a lot is changing and is happy to know that he has family now.



Chapter 1-6

Chapter 1-6 Summary

As chapter one begins Harry Dresden is running through a building with monkey demons chasing him. Harry is carrying a box full of puppies. Inside the box, one of the puppies is growling and barking at the large demons. Harry is dodging the flaming monkey poop that the demons are throwing and narrowly makes it out of the building. Once outside Harry sees that the monkey demons are all compiling themselves together into one large demon. Harry yells for Thomas to start the car. The giant monkey demon is gaining on the little blue beetle, but Harry is able to level his staff at the demon and shoot it in the head. Once the demon is dead, it turns into ectoplasm goop. Harry explains to Thomas that the creatures were Chinese spirit creatures that can shapeshift. Thomas is upset that Harry took him along on this adventure but Harry tells Thomas that he knows that Thomas needs something. Thomas admits to needing a favor to pay back all the times he has helped Harry out recently. Harry accepts the offer with the understanding that Thomas comes clean with him about the reason that he has been helping Harry out. Thomas is a member of the White Court vampires and they are at war with wizards, such as Harry. Harry realizes that Thomas would not be doing anything out of the goodness of his heart. Thomas thinks the offer over and agrees to tell Harry the truth if he can help out a friend of Thomas's—Arturo Genosa, who is a movie producer who is being cursed.

In chapter two, Harry and Thomas stop to drop the box of dogs off with the Tibetan Monk that hired Harry to get them. The dogs are said to be supernatural protectors. When Harry hands over the box the monk notices that there are less dogs than what he expected but says less is better than nothing and pays Harry as he leaves. Harry and Thomas head over to see Arturo Genosa. Once outside Genosa's building, Harry stops to talk to the security guard but when the guard gets close to the window there is a growl come from under Harry's seat. As Harry reaches for the puppy, he realizes it is not a guard but a Black Court vampire at his window.

Chapter three continues with Harry and Thomas in a fight with the vampire. They are able to chase the creature off and realize the creature ran so easily because it wanted them to follow. Harry tells Thomas that a Black Court vampire named Mavra wants Harry dead. They decide to quickly go into Genosa's building before the creature returns.

In chapter four, Harry and Thomas enter the party and quickly are directed to Genosa. He tells Harry about the unfortunate accidents that have been happening to the women around him lately and Harry agrees that it must be magic causing their deaths. Harry tells Genosa how much money he will need to stand around on set and keep the people safe and Genosa quickly agrees. Harry has a cover that puts him as an errand boy so that no one will be suspicious of him.



In chapter five, Harry gets home and tells Bob about the attack by the Black Court vampires. Bob agrees to go out with Mister, Harry's cat, in order to find where the vampires are hiding so that Harry can be on the offensive rather than the defensive. Harry tells Bob about the other job he has just taken with Genosa and Bob becomes very excited. Harry is shocked and somewhat embarrassed when he realizes that he has agreed to work on an adult film set.

Chapter six begins with Mister going out with Bob hitching a ride to try and find where the Black Court vampires are hiding. Before Harry goes to Genosa's set, he stops off to see Murphy and tell her that he will need her help in fighting vampires. She tries to get some of the other police officers in on it, but Harry does not want to risk anyone that might not be able to handle themselves in a fight with vampires.

Chapter 1-6 Analysis

Thomas is an odd character that Harry has trouble figuring out. Thomas is a member of the White Court vampires. They are typically very power motivated but they enjoy playing cat and mouse games and do not want to be directly tied to anything that happens. The more subtle you can be, the better. This is the majority of the reason that Harry does not trust Thomas or his help. This is reinforced when Bob and Harry are talking about Thomas and Bob tells Harry to remember what Thomas is.

The attack from the Black Court vampires is a secondary plot in this story, although it will be an important battle. The setting for this conflict appears to have been built in previous books in the series but there is a rough explanation as to the hatred that has developed between Mavra and Harry. The differences in the vampires will be looked at more closely as the story continues.

Harry goes to see his good friend Murphy. She is the head of the Special Investigative division of the police department. She is someone that Harry trusts with his life. He would be willing to take other help to go after Mavra and the rest of her Black Court vampires, but he knows that seeing the things that Murphy has seen is not something that everyone can handle. Murphy is reluctant to get involved because she holds her oath to uphold the law very seriously. The only reason she is going is because she realizes that there are innocent lives at stake. She is strong in many ways and the friendship between her and Harry will be important to him as the story continues.

Harry honestly had not realized that Genosa's films were of the adult film variety. This causes him some embarrassment. Murphy will make fun of him, calling him a pig. Harry will find that, once he is there, many of the actors are embarrassed by what they do and not quick to let insiders too close.

Bob is another important fixture in the story. Bob is the disembodied spirit that advises Harry. Bob stays in a skull in Harry's lab and goes out in Mister's body on occasion. The dog that Harry keeps plays a very minor role but will continue to be seen through the story.



Chapter 7-12

Chapter 7-12 Summary

In chapter seven, Harry arrives on the scene and meets several of the actors. Eventually he is introduced to a frumpy looking woman named Joan who takes Harry around to get started working. Joan explains that Genosa went out on his own to start his own company and left a company called Silverlight. There were several actors that have come to work on the set with Genosa but they all know that they are going to be blacklisted for leaving. Joan says that Genosa is a kind man who is an idiot. While Harry is helping to set up the lighting there is a surge of energy around him. He quickly asks Joan who else is in the building and they begin running for the dressing rooms. Harry has not quite made it to the door nob when he hears a scream.

Chapter eight continues with Harry opening the door and finding two bodies lying on the floor in blood. Harry then realizes that the bodies are being electrocuted. Harry does a quick spell and the power goes out in the building. The injured woman, Giselle, has a gash across her throat and Harry gets ice to put on it to slow the bleeding but the man seems to be doing well. The ambulance arrives and says that the woman has a chance of making it.

In chapter nine, Harry decides to go back to his office to see if he can dig anything up on Silverlight studios that would be motive for ruining Genosa's films. Harry is at the door of his office when there is a gun put to the back of his head and someone tells him to go inside.

Harry does what he is told in chapter ten and finds that the person that is holding him hostage is Kincaid, a mercenary that Harry called to help him with the Black Court vampires. Harry explains his plan is to find them and kill them. Kincaid shoots Harry a number and Harry says that he does not have the money but will get it. Kincaid tells him that he will help but if Harry does not pay him then he will kill Harry. Harry asks Kincaid about being supernatural but Kincaid says he is as human as Harry is, although Harry does not believe it.

In chapter eleven, Harry is trying to get someone on the phone to talk to him regarding Silverlight but is unable to get anyone to tell him anything other than to go to their internet websites. Harry cannot handle technology without something breaking on him so he writes down the web addresses and goes over to see Murphy. Harry goes to talk to Murphy but she is in an uproar. When Harry convinces her to talk she tells him that her family is having their reunion and she does not want to go. Harry advises her not to go but she knows it will hurt her mother's feelings if she does not attend and she cannot just lie to her mom. Harry eventually tells Murphy that he has no one and she should appreciate her family, even if they do not get along. Murphy seems to hear what he says and then Harry gives her the web addresses and Murphy agrees to look into it. Once Harry has left Murphy he realizes that he still has issues with his orphan past.



Harry arrives back at the Genosa studios in chapter twelve. Genosa says that Giselle will live but the scars will be very bad. Genosa asks if he should stop shooting but Harry says he cannot answer that. Genosa decides to continue shooting but to tell the staff that if they want to quit then they are more than welcome to with no hard feelings. Harry meets Trisha, one of Genosa's ex-wives who is starring in the film. Then another woman walks in, Lara Romany. She is very attractive and it takes only a few moments before Harry realizes that she is a member of the White Court vampires.

Chapter 7-12 Analysis

Harry does not understand the feelings the crew has about Giselle's scars. He feels that it is better to live through it and have scars but the others explain that no one will want to cast her since she will be disfigured. The difference in the way that people think is important; this is one of the things that Harry will have to figure into his calculations when trying to discover the identity of who is behind the curse.

Trisha is a very hateful, vain and self absorbed person. She cannot remember Harry's name, seemingly because he is beneath her. When Lara walks in, Harry is very distracted by her presence because of the sexual vibe that the White Court vampires give off. Genosa seems to be unaffected by her. This confuses Harry and will be important. The explanation for this will be revealed later in the story.

Kincaid tells Harry that he is as human as Harry is. It is not clear what he means by that, but it is clear to Harry that Kincaid is not a typical person. This will be expounded on later in the story, but not by Kincaid.

Murphy is anxious about her family reunion. The family reunion will be important for Murphy but will not contribute to the main plot of the story regarding the vampires or the curse that Harry is working on.



Chapter 13-19

Chapter 13-19 Summary

In chapter thirteen, Harry talks to Murphy and they compare notes on what they have found on Genosa. He is an interesting character but neither of them have found anything that seems a clear motive for murder. Genosa has been interviewed by Oprah, Time, People and several other name worthy news syndicates. Harry explains that Genosa says that natural beauty and genuine desire are better than silicone and surgically altered bodies. While Harry is on the phone, someone tries to blow a poisoned dart at him.

Harry tells Murphy goodbye in chapter twelve and agrees to watch himself and goes out to the set. Joan is there and tells Harry that Genosa is not a nice man, but a nice boy and that he falls in love at the drop of a hat. Harry is walking around behind stage when he sees a hooded figure and Harry chases after him. They get into a dark alley and Harry is able to tackle the figure and finds that it is Thomas. Harry hits him in the nose and accuses Thomas of using him. Harry has his staff pointed at Thomas and asks for a reason to lower his weapon. Lara's voice is behind Harry and says that she has a reason as he hears a pair of guns click.

In chapter fifteen, Thomas tells Lara that he and Harry are just talking. When Lara realizes that her brother is consorting with Harry Dresden, she tells him that her father will kill him if he finds out. Thomas tells her that they can overthrow their father if she will side with him but she refuses and says that she loves Thomas enough not to leave him to her father to destroy.

In chapter sixteen, Lara is about to shoot Thomas and Dresden when they begin fighting. Thomas is shot in the chest but Dresden is able to avoid her fire. Harry fights Lara off with his magic but before he can get Thomas to the car, Thomas' little sister, Inari, shows up and begins screaming that Harry has hurt Thomas. Lara shows up and claims that it was all Harry's fault when suddenly members of the Black Court show up. The leader says to kill them all.

In chapter seventeen, Harry realizes looking at Inari that she does not know anything about these hideous creatures or what Lara and Thomas really are. Lara and Harry quickly make a twenty-four hour pact to be allies. Mavra uses one of the vampires to communicate with Dresden and is very happy to have several of Raith's children to kill along with Harry. The curse suddenly appears and tried to kill Inari, but Harry is able to redirect it and a frozen turkey falls out of the sky and kills one of the Black Court vampires. The battle is hard but Harry and Lara are able to kill the three Black Court vampires, although Thomas is near death and Inari is not doing well with a broken arm. Harry agrees to help her get her brother and sister to safety.



In chapter eighteen, Lara says that Thomas needs to feed in order to heal. They decide to go to Raith manor since Lara is sure that more Black Court vampires will be at Harry's house. Once there, Lara promises that Harry and Thomas have nothing more to fear from her for the night and will be safe until they leave her home. When they are carrying Inari and Thomas in the house, a man arrives and kisses Lara on the cheek. Lara tells her father that she has missed him.

As chapter nineteen begins Harry realizes that Lord Raith knows Harry without being introduced. Raith agrees to keep Lara's bargain and allow for safety while at Raith House. On the way to his room, Lara explains that Thomas will not be able to stop himself with as much as he needs to feed and he will kill Justine, Thomas' girlfriend. Harry is weakening from his wounds. Harry is about to pass out and Justine tells him to be sure and tell Thomas that she loved him and that she knew that she would die, but she could not let Thomas die if she could help him. Harry agrees as he falls asleep.

Chapter 13-19 Analysis

The view that Genosa takes on what is attractive is important to the motive of the story, although it does not make sense yet. The person that blows the poisonous dart at Harry will never be introduced into the story but their actions and the repercussions from those actions will be explained in the last chapters.

Lara truly cares about Thomas and Inari. She tells Thomas that she would rather kill him than leave him to her father's mercy. The view that the Raith children have regarding family is critical. It will be this view that eventually causes Raith's downfall.

The White Court are allowed to go out in the sunlight and they do not have the allergies to garlic or holy water that the Black Court vampires do. The White Court vampires are much more human in their strength and speed. Compared to the Black Court, they are also much more vulnerable to wounds. Lord Raith has announced that Harry and Thomas will be safe at his home for the night since Lara has given her word to Harry. In the next few chapters, the deviousness of the White Court will be seen. The truth of why Thomas has been willing to help Harry will also be explained at this point in the story.



Chapter 20-24

Chapter 20-24 Summary

In chapter twenty, Harry wakes up and Thomas tries to talk to him. Harry tells Thomas that Justine had said that she loved him. Harry tells Thomas that he is nothing to Harry because Thomas hurt a woman that he professed to love. Harry goes to take a shower and when he comes out he finds Inari in his room, looking confused. She tries to seduce Harry but when she goes to kiss Harry, she gets blisters on her lips. Thomas comes in and sends Inari to his room to sleep. Harry realizes looking at Thomas that the reason that he dislikes Thomas so much is because he feels he is looking in a mirror, since he hurt a woman he loved just as Thomas hurt Justine. Harry is told that the reason that it hurt Inari to touch him is because the last person that Harry was with was the woman that he loved and that they cannot touch someone that is in love. They are trained to see it so that they can avoid it since it could poison them. Thomas takes Harry to a room where they can talk without being heard. Thomas shows Harry a portrait of Harry's mother and explains that it is his mother also.

Harry is angry as chapter twenty begins, claiming that Thomas is lying to him. Harry demands to soul gaze with Thomas to determine if what Thomas has told him is the truth. Thomas does not want to but agrees. In the soul gaze, Harry sees Thomas in a mirror fighting with a hideous, but beautiful monster. It is whispering something to Thomas and Thomas is screaming back at it. There is a woman there that tells Harry that Thomas is tired. Harry is shocked to find it is his mother. She tells him that she has prepared them both for this day and that they should watch out for each other. Harry's mother gives him a gift, explaining that it is insight. Harry accepts it. When he is out of the soul gaze Harry tells Thomas that their mother said that she loved them both. Thomas says he does not know what to do but Harry says he thinks that he does.

In chapter twenty-two, Harry goes back to his house and finds that someone has been trying to get past the magical wards on his apartment. Once inside Bob admits that he did not find anything regarding the Black Court vampires when he went out the day before, so Harry sends Bob and Mister out again. Harry realizes that he is angry and part of his fear and anger are coming from the fact that he has been alone for so long and now he has a brother but he could lose him.

Chapter twenty-three begins with Harry meeting up with Murphy again. Harry tells Murphy that he might have family but does not expound on it. Harry takes Murphy to go meet with Kincaid. When they get there they discuss their options for attacking Mavra. Kincaid agrees that daylight will limit vampire movement but that older vampires, like Mavra, are not hindered by the sunlight hours. After Murphy and Harry leave, Murphy hands over the reports on the other two women that were killed while in Genosa's company. Harry realizes that all the women were killed at about the same time and decides that he has time to get to Genosa before the next murder happens.



In chapter twenty-four Harry decides to put up a weak line to try and direct the magic so he can direct the curse back at whomever is directing it. While Harry is setting up his lines he is told by one of the members of the crew that Genosa is engaged again and that this will be wife number four. Harry quickly calls Murphy and she does some digging and finds that there is no prenuptial for wife number four and so the other three wives will not have the rights to their alimony. Trixie walks in holding a gun and pulls the gun out of the wall.

Chapter 20-24 Analysis

Justine is not dead, although this is not revealed yet in the story. Thomas needed to feed in order to heal. Thomas' father and his sister knew how much he cared for Justine and they made sure that she was the one he was going to feed from. Love has been introduced into the story. It is a type of weapon against the White Court vampires. Even though they cannot touch anyone who is in love, it will be shown later that they are not free from falling in love themselves. It is explained at one point in the story that both people have to feel that way for the bond to hold.

Harry has spent so much of his life alone that he is not sure how to react now that he has family. Part of him is still leery of letting Thomas too close, but the words spoken to him by his own mother have gone a long way to solidify the beginnings of a relationship for the two of them.

Earlier in the story, when Murphy was upset, it was Harry that she was willing to talk to about her concerns. When Harry needed to talk to someone, it was Murphy that he initially opens up to. The connection that these two have will continue to be seen in the story.

Harry now realizes that the women around Genosa are being killed for money, but there are other motives behind the attacks that will be shown later in the story. Despite the other motives, Harry is aware that Trixie, vindictive as she is, is not capable of pulling something off.



Chapter 25-29

Chapter 25-29 Summary

As chapter twenty-five begins Trixie is holding Harry hostage. Harry only has a limited amount of time before the curse begins.

Chapter twenty-six continues as Harry decides to attack Trixie and get the gun out of her hands rather than just let the curse kill the next person. When they grapple for the gun it goes off and the bullets fly wild, one hitting Trixie in the leg. Harry gets the gun but is too late. The curse has gone off and two of the stray bullets have hit one of the actresses, Emma, one in the chest and one in the middle of the head. Harry is outraged that Emma is dead and her children are now orphaned. Trixie is frightened, realizing what has happened, but quickly blames Harry, screaming for help before he kills her too. Harry takes off running and Joan stops Harry and then decides to let him go.

In chapter twenty-seven, Harry goes back home and Bob tells him that he managed to find where Mavra and her scourge were holding up. They have taken over a homeless shelter. Bob says that public places do not truly have thresholds and so they are easier to invade. Bob warns Harry that some of the humans have been turned mad. They will die in less than two years and usually because they go suicidal and take people with them when they go. Harry argues that they are still people but Bob assures him that they are no longer humans. An old man named Ebenezar McCoy shows up to help Harry. Ebenezar is said to be a very strong wizard and is the one that helped to raise Harry after his uncle died. Ebenezar is going to be the wheel man and agrees to help control Mavra's powers when Harry and the others go to attack her. They leave to go get Murphy.

In chapter twenty-eight, Harry and Ebenezar show up at the Murphy family reunion and quickly find Murphy. Harry is waiting for Murphy to be ready to go and Murphy's mother tells Harry that Murphy's father had been working S.I. when he was on the force and killed himself because of all the darkness he saw. Murphy's mother asks Harry to watch her daughter and Harry promises her that he will.

In chapter twenty-nine Harry, Murphy, and Ebenezar go to meet Kincaid. When they get there Ebenezar stays back until Harry can explain to Kincaid who Ebenezar is. Murphy, Harry and Kincaid change into Red Cross outfits to get quietly into the building. When Ebenezar comes up, Kincaid and Ebenezar quickly pull guns on each other.

Chapter 25-29 Analysis

Ebenezar and Kincaid know each other from the past, although Harry is not aware of this at this point in the story. There is a past here that will trouble Harry later on when he demands to hear the story.



Murphy is not sure about her decision to go in like a vigilante but she is sure that if she does not do something then more people will die. She wants to call in the police but Harry convinces her that if they call in the police, it will just be more innocent people that do not know what they are doing who will be killed by forces they cannot understand. Murphy continues to feel as if she is not being true to what she feels is right. She upholds the law almost like it is a religion. The issue of her father dying in S.I. is not something Murphy is aware of. This is not mentioned again in the story but it seems that this is something that could be a point of interest if the author chose to visit it again later in the series.

Trixie is very self assured and feels that she is in charge, even though it is clear that she was left to take the blame for the death of Emma. Harry knows that it was the curse that killed Emma but the gun was used and it was Trixie that pulled the trigger. Harry is sure that when the investigation is completed, Trixie will be the one to be blamed; however, Harry knows he will be the one sitting in prison until it is completed.



Chapter 30-35

Chapter 30-35 Summary

In chapter thirty, Harry tells Kincaid and Ebenezar to get over whatever their issues are for the moment but Harry realizes that there is something here that has been kept from him. The group gets their guns together and they get ready to go into the shelter.

In chapter thirty-one, Murphy and Kincaid go into the shelter and Harry quickly follows. Murphy is holding her gun pointed at a group of people that are just standing still. Harry uses the wizards' one sight to see if any of them are dangerous and finds that one is. It begins fighting and Harry sees a bloodied, dirty angel fighting even though she is hurt. Harry realizes that it is Murphy. Harry then sees a giant demon come to help the angel fight. When the sight is gone Harry realizes that Kincaid is a very dangerous demon although he still does not know what he is. Harry tries to reassure Murphy that the man was no longer human but she tells Harry to shut up. They get ready to head down into the basement and they hear whatever is waiting in the darkness laugh at them.

In chapter thirty-two, once in the basement, they head to the area where Bob had said the hostages are being held. In a small room, chained to the wall, is a group of children. Harry and Murphy immediately begin to go to the children but Kincaid stops them, saying that there is an infrared laser hooked up to a bomb. It is finally decided that Murphy is small enough to get through to the children and disarm the bomb. Harry is listening in the darkness and can hear the human servants and hears a set of footprints without a heartbeat that he identifies as Mavra. Harry then sees that two of the human servants that step out are holding flamethrowers. They fill the cramped hallway with fire.

In chapter thirty-three, Harry uses one of his magic charms to stop the fire. It keeps the actual fire and napalm from reaching Harry but it does not stop the heat. Harry's hands begin to burn. Harry hurts but manages to keep the shield up even though his hand has begun to melt. Harry calls a shrieking wind from down the stairs and the napalm engulfs the two human servants and quickly there is nothing left to identify them as human. Murphy has the bomb disarmed but they are under attack. Harry asks her if she can hook the bomb back up. Harry and Kincaid hold the hoards off while Murphy hooks the bomb back up. The group, along with the children, get behind Harry and his magic shield. When the bomb goes off, it kills the monsters and all the rest of the Black Court servants. Mavra appears out of the wreckage and Kincaid chops her head off. The group leaves the shelter and drops the children off at a church on their way home. Harry says he only has a few hours before an Entropy curse kills him and Ebenezar says Harry is taking too much on. Harry smiles and says that if he gets killed then he will not have to pay Kincaid before Kincaid comes back to kill him.

In chapter thirty-four, Harry and Murphy are talking about Genosa. It is Raith who was in charge of Silverlight studios and so when Genosa left, he publicly defied Raith. Raith sent his daughter to deal with Genosa but Genosa cannot be touched because he is in



love. Murphy leaves to get ready to go to Raith's with Harry to find Thomas and stop Raith and Genosa's ex-wives from finishing the entropy curse. Harry and Ebenezar have some time alone and Harry demands to know what it was that Kincaid had been talking about. Ebenezar says that he does not think that Harry is ready to hear what is going to be said but Harry demands the truth.

As chapter thirty-five begins, Ebenezar explains that the White Council, the wizards' ruling council, picked one wizard to determine when the law had been perverted against them and to fix it. Ebenezar knew Kincaid because they worked together. Kincaid is a Hellhound demon who has done bad things. Ebenezar is that one wizard chosen to live outside the law as he sees fit. Harry is sickened to learn that Ebenezar taught him the value of life and magic and to obey the law and now learns that Ebenezar is licensed to kill as he sees fit. Harry had been sent to live with Ebenezar when he was little but Ebenezar now admits it was to keep an eye on Harry and kill him if Harry rebelled. When Harry asks why he did not kill him when he rebelled, Ebenezar explains that he has authority to ignore the council and because he was the one that trained Harry's mother and held onto her so tightly that she rebelled by going to Raith, leaving no way for her to get out. Harry is hurt that he was lied to and that Ebenezar had known his mother but never told him. Harry tells him to leave.

Chapter 30-35 Analysis

The reason Genosa was not influenced by Lara's presence is because he is in love. Genosa's ex-wives got in on killing the new wife because they wanted the money that he supplied in way of alimony. Raith needed to teach Genosa a lesson to get him back under his control since it seemed Genosa was standing up to Raith. The identity of Genosa's fiance still remains unknown at this point in the story.

Harry cares a great deal for Genosa but the one thing Harry has always wanted was family and to know something of his mother. When he learns that his life with Ebenezar is a lie, Harry feels betrayed.

Kincaid is a Hellhound and it is known that he is dangerous, but whatever it was that he and Ebenezar did together that went bad is not revealed. In addition to this, it appears that Harry is beginning to realize that he may have feelings for Murphy and she confides in Harry that she is interested on some level in Kincaid.

Thomas has not been seen in the story for some time. It will quickly be seen that Thomas is in trouble. The depth of how much Harry is willing to do for Thomas will be shown in the coming chapters.



Chapter 36-39

Chapter 36-39 Summary

As chapter thirty-six begins, Harry is dealing with the blow of learning the truth of Ebenezer but Harry still is able to laugh when Mister and the puppy come running through the apartment. Harry realizes that, no matter what, the evil in the world cannot kill laughter. Harry gets on the phone and calls Raith House; Inari tells Harry that one of her father's guards took Thomas and she is worried. Lara gets on the phone. Harry tells her that he wants Thomas back and he is willing to pay Lara to get him. Harry offers her Raith House and the power behind the White Court. Lara is doubtful that it will work but she is interested. Harry tells her that she can be close by to watch and that if anything goes wrong then she can stab Harry in the back and remain in her father's good graces. She tells Harry that she is intrigued with his offer and he says he will see her shortly. Murphy shows up with her bike and Harry gets on the back.

In chapter thirty-seven, Harry and Murphy arrive at the Raith home and Lara says that they can find Thomas using Justine. Harry is shocked to see that she is still alive. She is old looking in many respects now and confined to a wheel chair but she is so tuned in to Thomas that she is able to point in his direction. Lara says that Thomas is being kept in the Deeps, a cave on the family's grounds. As Murphy and Harry get ready to go to the Deeps, Murphy tells Harry that Lara will turn on them the first chance she gets. Harry tells her that Lara wants to be on the winning team and says that they need to be the winners.

Chapter thirty-eight begins with Murphy and Harry getting close to the Deeps when Raith arrives and takes them hostage. Harry tells Raith that he knows that Raith is unable to feed. Harry's mother was able to level a curse at him before she died. It was worse than death, she made Raith so that he could no longer feed, left him vulnerable. Raith admits that this is true but says that as soon as Thomas and Harry are dead, the curse will be lifted and his first meal will be Murphy.

In chapter thirty-nine, they reach the Deeps. Murphy is resisting Raith but she is not capable of resisting him. Harry wants to come to her rescue but realizes that she has to rescue herself now because it is her strength of will that is under attack. Harry knows that the best thing to say and do now is nothing.

Chapter 36-39 Analysis

Harry has a plan at this point in time, although most of it is being kept under wraps. There is a lot at stake that is not being revealed. In the last few chapters there is a lot that is explained and many of the main plots in the story will coalesce into a conclusion.

Raith has been using his strength to keep everyone under his control for centuries. Since Harry's mother leveled her curse at him, he has been unable to do anything. He



has had to coast on the past fear that he caused people, knowing that if he was challenged he had no way to fight any longer. Harry was able to deduct that this was a fate worse than death for Raith.

Justine is not dead. This will be important for the survival of Thomas later on in the story. He loved her so much that he has a great deal of guilt over her death. Unfortunately she is also not well and is now confined to a wheelchair. There is no real explanation given as to how much Justine could recover but from the way that she is spoken of and treated, it seems to be inferred that she will remain in the wheelchair and have limited abilities for the rest of her life.



Chapter 40-42

Chapter 40-42 Summary

In chapter forty, Harry and Murphy are lead into the Deeps. Harry is very shocked at the state that the cave is in. It is highly decorated and looks very comfortable. There is modern lighting, pillows and rugs everywhere. Raith introduces Harry to his assistants, Madge, Genosa's first wife, and Trixie, Genosa's third wife. Thomas is chained to the floor in the middle of the cave. When Thomas asks where wife number two is, Raith says that she was too eager to help and blew the blow dart at Harry. Madge announces that she sacrificed her as punishment. Trixie begins screaming that she helped and then screams at Raith. Madge takes her hand and says a word over Trixie. Trixie suddenly writhes on the floor unable to breath. Raith picks Trixie up and throws her over the edge of the cliff in the Deeps. Trixie is unable to scream as she falls to her death. Raith leaves for a moment and Harry asks Murphy if she is alright. She calls Harry "Mr. Dresden" and tells him to leave her alone. Harry then begins to aggravate the bodyguard that is watching him. Madge has started the ritual and cannot stop the chant unless she desires a backlash of power. While Harry has the bodyguard distracted, Murphy attacks and they are able to overpower the guard and then dispose of the body. Harry tells Murphy that if she had not called him Mr. Dresden, he would have thought that Raith had gotten to her. Murphy tries to get Harry to interrupt Madge in her ritual but he says that if they do that then everything blows up. They decide to wait until Raith gets back and try to save Thomas. When Raith comes back, Murphy has Raith's attention and Harry hits him with the shackles that Harry is pretending to still be shackled with. Murphy then shoots Raith. Raith quickly turns out the lights in the cave. Murphy calls to Harry and asks if Raith can see in the dark. Harry tells her that he will tell her in a minute.

In chapter forty-one, Raith says that he can see in the dark and did not realize that Harry was not predictable. Harry offers Raith life if he lets Thomas and Genosa go and hands over Madge. Raith counters the offer by telling Harry that if Harry does not run away then Raith will not kill Murphy, but will keep her. The cave gets quiet as Madge finishes her incantation and calls forth He Who Walks Behind. Harry knows He Who Walks Behind and knows that it is the creature that demons fear. Harry calls for Murphy to run but she darts into the magic circle and knocks Madge down and tries the keys on Thomas while Madge is down. Raith appears in the circle to finish killing Thomas but Harry takes the keys and uses magic to throw them into Raith's face. Once Raith is down due to the wounds to his eyes, Thomas is able to take the keys and free himself. Once Thomas is free a swirling cloud begins to gather around Madge. Madge is taken by the cloud and spines begin to tear her apart from the inside out. Thomas is about to leave when Raith appears from behind him and breaks his neck. Harry watches as Thomas falls to the ground and Raith heals himself. Harry screams that Thomas was his only family. Raith tells Harry that family is useless and utterly insignificant. When Harry points out that Raith's children do not feel that way, Raith explains that he has instilled this love in them because it makes his children easier to control. At this point in



time the lights in the cave come on and Lara appears. She comes up to her father and tells her father that they are going to renegotiate their relationship. She warns Harry to get his friend and her brother out of there or else they may not be able to leave once Lara begins. As they leave Madge's body sits up and a voice tells Harry that he has returned and he remembers Harry and they have unfinished business. Then the body deflates. Once outside Harry finds that Thomas is still alive and Harry tells Thomas that Justine is still alive.

In chapter forty-two, Harry wakes up to the pain in his badly burned hand. Thomas is there and tells him thank you. Thomas then asks that Harry go with him to see Lara and Justine to which Harry agrees. Harry goes to see a specialist about his hand. Harry is advised to consider amputation. He is told that the amount of use he is going to get out of the now charred hand is going to be minimal and a prosthesis would be more useful to him. Harry does not need to consider this and says no thanks; the hand is his and he will keep it.

Later Harry goes to the airport to meet Joan and Genosa who are very happily married now, even with Genosa flat broke due to the disaster during the filming. Genosa hands over the money to Harry, explaining that he helped a lot of people, even if he could not save Emma. Harry wants to turn the money down but he has only a couple of days to get Kincaid's money together before Kincaid decides to kill him. One of the guys from Genosa's film is there and tells Harry that he is the father of Emma's kids and has decided to take the kids in rather than let them go to foster care, and is going to quit the adult film business. Genosa asks who was behind the attacks but Harry knows it would hurt Genosa to know it was his ex-wives who were behind the attacks, so Harry lies and says they may never know.

Thomas and Harry go to visit Lara. Lara welcomes them in, but explains that they cannot come back here. She is now in charge but her father still has to look like he is in charge and his hatred of Thomas is well known. Lara promises to care for Justine and protect her from those that would hurt her. Thomas goes to say goodbye to Justine. When he comes back there are blisters on his lips. Lara says that is most likely the last time that he and Justine will be together and that is why they are not to get close to their food. Lara and Harry both know things about each other that could be detrimental, that Harry and Thomas are brothers and that Lara is ruling Raith manor. They agree to a truce, explaining that they will warn each other if they are going to start a war.

When Harry and Thomas arrive back at Harry's apartment, Harry calls Kincaid to tell him he needs more time to get the money together. Kincaid tells him that the money has already arrived and asks Harry not to call him again unless he has another job. Kincaid then warns Harry that Mavra went down too easily. When Harry says it had to be her because she was wearing the same outfit she had on last time, Harry suddenly realizes that it was all a set up and that Mavra is not truly dead. When Harry gets off the phone Thomas admits that he paid the bill for Harry and Thomas now has no money left. Harry tells Thomas to consider it rent and says that Thomas can stay there while he gets back on his feet. Harry knows that things are going to change. He has a family, and even a dog.



Chapter 40-42 Analysis

Genosa is an adult film director but he has a very tender heart. It is Joan, the frumpy woman, that Genosa was in love with. Trixie had felt certain it could not be Joan and was picking the women that she felt were beautiful enough to be her competition. The one woman that was a threat was one of the few women safe from the curse.

Raith does not die but he has to continue under the curse that Harry's mother inflicted on him. This may be a fate worse than death for Raith. Lara is a member of the White Court vampires and proves that she is willing to control the White Court from behind the scenes. Raith had taught his children to love each other. He had instilled in them that family was extremely important. If it was not for how much he had driven this home, Lara might not have been as angry when she discovered that he did not care for her.

Thomas is never allowed to be with Justine again since the last time that they were together they were in love. This protects Justine but she is not truly free even now, since she is confined to a wheelchair.

There is more talk of He Who Walks Behind. This is an interesting development in the story but will obviously be left for another book. There is a small piece of flesh on Harry's hand that is not burned. It is in the shape of the Fallen angel's name that Harry has trapped. There is no concrete explanation for this but it seems that it could be significant later in the series.



Characters

Harry Dresden

Harry Dresden is the main protagonist in the story. Harry is a wizard who works in the private sector but also does consultant work for the Special Investigative division of the police force. Harry is an orphan who has no memories of his mother. His friend, Murphy, does not get along well with her family and Dresden reminds her that having a family to argue with is better than having nothing. Harry has been helped in the past by a member of the White Court vampires named Thomas. Thomas asks Dresden to help him protect a friend who works in the adult film business. Harry agrees, with the understanding that he will be told the truth about why Thomas has been helping Harry when the two should be at war. When it comes time for Harry to learn the truth, he discovers that Thomas is in fact his half brother. Thomas and Harry soul gaze, which should allow Harry to know if Thomas is trying to lie or not; instead, Harry discovers that his mother left a message for him within Thomas. Harry is able to talk to his mother and she tells him that she loves him and tells Harry to help Thomas. This changes things for Harry because he has been alone for so long. The thought of having someone and being capable of losing them is extremely frightening to Harry and he will spend a great deal of time in the book learning to cope with these new emotions. Harry also begins having feelings for Murphy although these feelings will not be a central theme in the story.

Harry is very sarcastic and whenever he is frightened or upset he often retorts with a wise comment, even when it is clear he is in mortal danger. Harry is injured during a fight with some of the Black Court vampires in the story. His hand is badly burned. When Harry goes to talk to a specialist, the doctor tells him that it is very possible that it would be more practical for Harry to simply let the hand go since a prosthesis will prove to be more useful. Harry refuses this offer explaining that, useless or not, the hand is his hand.

Harry is a very loyal character that is willing to put himself in very real danger without a concrete plan if he believes that it is the right thing to do. He does not pay much attention to many laws since they were not made to control the dark side of life that the rest of the world believes is fiction. Despite his cynical attitude and comments, Harry firmly believes there is right and wrong and takes it upon himself to try and right the things that he feels are wrong; he often sees the best in people.

Lt. Karrin Murphy

Karrin Murphy, often referred to as Murphy, is described as small and rather attractive with blond hair, but she is extremely tough and does not want to be treated like she is weaker than the others that she is around. She is the head of the S.I. division of the police force. Although she was put there as a punishment, Murphy has excelled and



instills confidence and loyalty in the men that follow her. Murphy does not get along well with her family and is complaining to Dresden about it; however, she has a pang of guilt when she realizes that she is complaining about family when Dresden does not have anyone. Murphy's family is seen at a family picnic and Murphy's little sister is engaged to Murphy's ex-husband. This infuriates Murphy, but her mother reminds her that she did not want to start a family and her sister does.

Murphy has a very strong sense of the law and believes in it, but her faith in the law has become weaker since she has learned of all the dark things that exist in the world. Murphy agrees to go with Dresden to attack the Black Court vampires because they are killing people. Murphy knows that there is no way to stop the vampires within the confines of the law but she is tormented by the thought that she is going to become a vigilante. When Harry is using his Sight in the story, Murphy looks like an avenging angel that is badly bruised and battered.

Thomas Raith

Thomas Raith is a member of the White Court vampires. In the past he has helped Harry out on several different occasions. In the beginning of the book, Thomas is riding in a car with Harry so that they can talk, even though the wizards and the White Court vampires should be at war. Thomas tells Harry that he has a friend in the adult filming business that has a curse on him and Thomas wants Harry to help him. Harry agrees but makes Thomas promise to tell him the truth of why he has been helping him; Thomas agrees, reluctantly.

When the time comes, Thomas shows Harry a portrait of his mother. Thomas and Harry share the same mother, although Harry is defiant about the possibility until he soul gazes with Thomas and is able to speak with his mother through a spell she left with Thomas.

Thomas is in love with a young woman named Justine and believes that he accidentally kills her while weakened and needing to feed. Justine is not dead but is in a wheel chair. Thomas goes to live with Harry at the end of the story. Thomas constantly has to fight against his hunger, wanting to not be a monster, but having no way to stay alive without feeding on human emotions as White Court vampires do.

Lara Raith

Lara Raith is Thomas's older sister. She is very manipulative and cunning. She agrees to help Harry get close to her brother. Harry sets her father up, getting him to admit to not caring for any of his family at all. Lara attacks when her father is weak and lets Harry and her brother go free. Lara and Harry both know things about each other that would prove detrimental. They call a truce, understanding that they are not friends and do not trust each other. They agree that if one of them is going to break the truce there will be fair notice given that they are no longer neutral.



Lord Raith

Lord Raith is the father of Thomas and Lara Raith and the leader of the White Court vampires. Lord Raith killed Harry's mother when she gave birth to him, but she was able to put a death curse on Raith before she died. It did not kill Raith but made him so he could not feed. Lord Raith has slowly been weakening since her death curse was set but no one has realized and so he has been able to keep his seat. When Lord Raith admits to not caring about any of his family and using their affection for each other to his own gain, Lara Raith takes over and explains that she will allow Raith to continue to look like he is in charge while she runs things as punishment.

Jared Kincaid

Harry hires Kincaid as a mercenary to help him kill the Black Court vampires that are after him. Harry realizes Kincaid is not human but it is not until his old mentor explains it that Harry realizes that Kincaid is a Hellhound. Kincaid has little use for the law and votes to blow everyone up when they find the Black Court vampires. When the children are set free, it is unclear if he agrees with the decision to save the hostages.

Mavra

Mavra is a very old and very powerful member of the Black Court vampires. She is trying to kill Harry, so Harry decides to find her and kill her first. Mavra not only is a powerful vampire but it is quickly discovered that she is also capable of very powerful magic. Mavra is thought to be killed by Kincaid when they attack the shelter that the vampires are staying in, but Kincaid tells Harry later that it was much too easy and he does not believe it was Mavra that they killed.

Justine

Justine is the girlfriend of Thomas Raith. Justine gives herself to save Thomas, knowing that it will most likely kill her. Justine does not die but is bound to a wheelchair and not completely coherent after the feeding; it appears she will be in this situation permanently. Justine and Thomas were in love and, because of that love, Thomas will never again be able to touch Justine without hurting himself.

Inari Raith

Inari is the little sister of Thomas Raith. She has not yet reached the age of feeding and has not been told about her family and what they are. Inari is told, thanks to Harry and Thomas, and chooses a different life for herself, since love will stop the need to feed, although it will leave her fully human.



Ebenazar McCoy

Ebenazar McCoy is the wizard that took Harry in to live with him after Harry's uncle died. Harry had thought the man had very strict rules on right and wrong but is told by Kincaid that Ebenazar was called Blackstaff McCoy and given sanction by the White Council to break the law where he saw fit in order to stop those that were outside the law. Harry also learns that it was Ebenazar that trained his mother. Harry feels betrayed and lied to and eventually tells Ebenazar to get out and never come back.

Arturo Genosa

Arturo is the adult film producer that Harry agrees to help. Arturo has women around him dying although Harry does not know why. It is not until Harry learns that Arturo is engaged to be married that Harry realizes it is Arturo's ex-wives behind the murders. One of the ex-wives is sacrificed during one of the rituals by another of the ex-wives and a second wife is killed by Lord Raith. Lord Raith is responsible for teaching the women. Arturo never learns the truth since those around him believe he would think himself responsible.



Objects/Places

Mouse

Mouse is the dog that Harry inadvertently gets stuck with after saving a group of puppies from demons for a group of monks. The dog can sense darkness in people and reacts to vampires before Harry realizes that they are there.

Blue Beetle

The Blue Beetle is Harry's car. Harry has a foul affect on most modern appliances and gadgets. The Blue Beetle is old enough that it does not act funny around Harry. The inside of the car is demolished, thanks to an attack from moth demons.

Bob

Bob is a disembodied spirit that lives at Harry's apartment inside a skull. Bob goes out to gather information for Harry regarding the placement of the Black Court vampires by hitching a ride on Mister, Harry's cat. Bob has been around for thousands of years and is a wealth of knowledge for Harry.

Mister

Mister is Harry's cat. When Harry gets home, Mister often tries to knock him down while going inside.

Entropy Curse

An Entropy Curse is the type of curse that has been laid on Genosa. It happens at roughly the same time because it is a ritual curse. It is this curse that is killing the women around Genosa.

Red Cross

Kincaid, Harry and Murphy dress up as members of the Red Cross when they go into the shelter to attack the Black Court vampires. The outfits that they are wearing do not fool some of the people there and they run away scared.



White Court Vampires

White Court vampires feed off of human emotions, most often though sex. Harry refers to them as succubi. It is explained that when they turn on the charm, there is no way for a person to resist, even if you want to. These vampires look more human and can walk around in sunlight and do not have the obvious flaws that the other vampires have, although they are not as strong and take longer to heal.

Black Court Vampires

Mavra is a member of the Black Court. These vampires are nearly destroyed after Stoker writes his Dracula book. The only Black Court vampires that survive are the very strong and very smart ones. It is the Black Court vampires that attack Harry in the book; Harry takes Kincaid and Murphy to go and stop them.

Special Investigations

S. I. is the division of the police department that deals with weird and unusual cases. Murphy was placed in it as punishment but Murphy has excelled and made a respected name for herself even here. Murphy's mother tells Harry that S. I. was also where Murphy's father worked and that those that worked that division were called Black Cats.

The Deeps

When Thomas is taken by his father to be a sacrifice for the next ritual, Harry follows them to the Deeps. The Deeps is a massive cave on the estate belonging to Lord Raith. It is here that the ex-wives of Genosa have been conducting their rituals and where each of them dies. It is also here that Lara forces her will on her father and takes over the White Court.



Themes

Family

The theme of family is introduced in the story through Karrin Murphy. Murphy is worried about an upcoming family reunion. She does not want to go and is desperate to get out of it. Despite her desire to be able to shirk off the responsibility of going she knows that she has to go in order to spare her mother's feelings. She tells Harry about her concerns and tells Harry that she would not expect him to understand. Murphy is immediately sorry about the remark since Harry is an orphan without any family. He does not have any memories of his mother since she died shortly after he was born. After Harry leaves Murphy, he realizes that he still has unresolved issues regarding his orphan status.

Another place that family is seen as a theme is in the Raith family. Lord Raith raises his family to believe that family is very important. He reveals later that he does not care anything about family and teaching them to care about each other is simply a way to control them. Upon learning this, his daughter Lara takes control of the Raith household while her father remains as a figurehead.

Harry has no family but discovers during the story that Thomas Raith is his half brother. This changes a great many things for Harry. He realizes that he has been alone for so long that the thought of having someone suddenly complicates his life. He now worries about Thomas a great deal. When Thomas is taken hostage by Lord Raith, Harry quickly goes to the rescue and is even willing to put Murphy in danger in order to save Thomas. Although they are only half brothers, the fact that they are family counts a great deal for both Harry and Thomas.

Desire for Power

The desire for power is a theme that is seen on both a large and small scale in the story. Harry is initially hired to find out who is responsible for the attacks on the women around Genosa. The initial motive for the attacks is unknown but eventually Harry discovers that one of the main reasons that Genosa has been targeted is because he has challenged Lord Raith's authority. In order to regain the power that Lord Raith has lost when Genosa left to start his own business, Raith is willing to hire Genosa's three ex-wives to help him destroy Genosa's spirit. It does not gain Raith anything if Genosa is killed, but stopping his new movie attempts will gain Raith more power.

Amongst the White Court Vampires, there is a great need for power. They go about it in rather subtle ways but they do not do anything unless the actions help them gain an upper hand in some respect. This is one of the main reasons that Harry is so leery of Thomas's unsolicited help. The desire for power is what allows Harry to manipulate Lara and Lord Raith to the point that he overthrows Lord Raith.



Morals

Morals are very important in the story. For Harry Dresden, it is obvious that the morals that he adheres to go along with the sense of right and wrong that he has developed. He believes that women and children should not be mistreated. When he sees children being held as hostages by the Black Court vampires, he becomes outraged. He realizes that the vampires are monsters but it is still more than he can tolerate. We see Harry's outrage again when Emma is killed. Not only is she a woman, but Harry cannot stop himself from thinking about the children that she was raising on her own. He knows that now those children are orphans and this sickens him as much as anything else.

While Harry's morals are not written down and are capable of changing, to some degree, based on the situation, Murphy's morals are much more strict. She has placed a great deal of faith and belief in the law that she has sworn to uphold. While she is a very black and white kind of person in regards to the law, it is clear that Murphy cannot in good conscience sit back and watch people get hurt because her hands are tied by the law. Murphy makes her decision and seems willing to stand by it, but the fact that she is going against what she feels is right in the eyes of the law bothers her greatly. This is seen when Harry uses his one sight and sees Murphy looking like a tattered and beaten angel, though still full of fire and capable of fighting.

Even the vampires in the story have a code of morals that they adhere to although much more devious and with many gray areas. Lara gives Harry her word that he will be safe in their house. However, while there, Lord Raith sends his daughter in to Harry, believing she will inadvertently kill Harry. Conveniently for Raith, in this way Lara's word would not be broken but Harry would still be killed. Despite this example, the vampires say much that can be taken as true; they hold themselves to a very high standard in regard to their formal actions.

Style

Point of View

The story is written from a first person point of view via the main protagonist, Harry Dresden. The view is limited to what Harry can interpret but often there is a lot of information given about the state of mind of other characters or their emotions, based on Harry's interpretation. There are times when Harry cannot read people accurately, but even then the confusion and his initial thoughts are noted to give some indication as to what the character is thinking or feeling.

This point of view is very helpful since this is not the first book in the series. The main character often explains the reason that things are happening or the reason that he, or other characters, are reacting the way that they are. There is a lot of reminiscing by the main character.

There is a lot of dialogue but there are many chapters that focus on the character's interpretation of the scenery or his own inner thoughts. The main character's thoughts and intentions often become clear before the character himself realizes the importance of them. It is seen that the main character has specific reactions when around Murphy. It is clear that he is developing feelings for her although he never states this in the story and seems to try and keep himself from admitting such things.

Setting

The story takes place in a modern day setting in Chicago. The only difference between the world of Harry Dresden and reality is the existence of magic and the elements that might go along with magic, such as wizards, vampires, magical curses and so on. Harry is the only wizard advertised in the yellow pages. While there are those in the magical world that seem to take Harry very seriously, it is clear that the average person on the streets does not believe in magic and finds Harry to be somewhat of a joke.

The story takes place in a variety of settings, such as Harry's apartment, Genosa's production studio, and Raith House as well as various other places. Each place is unique and Harry describes whatever is deemed important, such as how the place is decorated or what feeling the place gives off. The exception is Harry's apartment, which is given a much more extensive description since it is where Harry continues to return. While his home is not a place where the majority of the story, or even important scenes, take place, it will be where the story ends. The setting at Harry's apartment lends more information about the main character.



Language and Meaning

The language in the story is straightforward and very easily understood. The main character in the story, Harry Dresden, is telling the story from his point of view. This character is very sarcastic and quick witted, so many of the descriptions in the story are humorous, even when the characters are faced with peril. There are words and phrases in the story that may not be quickly understood because of the magical element that the character has to explain. Entropy curses, Black Court and White Court vampires, Hellhounds and various other phrases are explained throughout the story via dialogue with other characters or inner discussions that the main character has with himself.

There are times when the language in the story will indicate something important has happened but the main character does not explain what has happened until the next chapter or until he is speaking with another character. An example of this is seen when Harry gets Murphy to go with him to find Thomas in chapter thirty-six. Harry calls Lara and has a long conversation with her, giving her instructions, and then asks Murphy if she is ready for another fight. He never elaborates on what they are going to do and even in the next chapter much of what is going on is kept secret. Harry does not reveal the rest of his plan until he has all but defeated Lord Raith and forced Raith to admit that he is unable to feed, thanks to Harry's mother.

Structure

Blood Rites is the sixth book in the Harry Dresden files and consists of three hundred and seventy-two pages. It is broken down into forty-two chapters. The chapters vary in length, being roughly ten pages each. The chapters are numbered with a space between them, but there is not a large separation between the chapters. There generally is not a lot of time between each chapter or event in the story. There are times when the main character passes out, but even then it is explained that only a very short period of time has passed.

The main character in the story is a wizard and often uses magical words and phrases to do battle or aid him in his adventures. These words are put into italics. There are also times that there are incomplete sentences used by the main character in his descriptions or thoughts that are used to create humor around subjects. This is seen in chapter eleven when Harry is talking about trying to find someone to talk to him on the phone in regards to Genosa's case. The people keep telling him to go online. Harry cannot look on the internet since he cannot be around high tech equipment. Harry ends the excerpt with the phrase "Stupid Internet." The structure of the story makes the story flow easily and it is easily understood.



Quotes

"The thing I'd locked up under the circle had been quiet since the night I had sealed it into a spirit-prison, but when it came to entombing a fallen angel, I was pretty sure that there was no such thing as too much caution." (Chapter 5, p. 35)

"Better to have the magical arsenal and not need it, than to not have it and get killed to death." (Chapter 7, p. 51)

"It's an incredibly complex system of interweaving energy that influences good old Mother Earth around us, but it all boils down to a fairly simple concept: Shit happens." (Chapter 9, p. 71)

"Every time I thought I had gotten through my orphan baggage, something like this came up." (Chapter 11, p. 88)

"I'd managed to survive the beatings thanks to good luck, determined friends, and an evil faerie godmother, but I figured that sooner or later my luck would run out, and I'd find myself alone, in danger, and at the limits of my endurance." (Chapter 17, p. 125)

"We started down the first flight of stairs together, while whatever waited in the darkness below us laughed again." (Chapter 31, p. 263)

"One wizard, and only one, was given the freedom to choose when the Laws had been perverted, and turned as weapons against us." (Chapter 35, p. 296)

"I am not yet sure if you are truly that formidable or simply a vast and mighty fool, but for the time being I am finding you an extremely exciting man." (Chapter 36, p. 307)

"Mom said she arranged it so that you would suffer. And since the night you killed her, you haven't been able to feed." (Chapter 38, p. 327)

"Even if I did ride in on a white horse to save her, it would mean only that she would be forced to question her own strength and integrity thereafter, and that would be nothing more than a slow death of her self-reliance and strength of will." (Chapter 39, p. 331)

"Had she broken her chant, shouted a warning to the bodyguard, or moved outside the circle it would have disrupted the ritual—and that kind of thing can draw some awfully lethal feedback for showing disrespect to whatever power is behind the ritual. She was as trapped as I was." (Chapter 40, p. 339)

"But given the extent of the burns and the nerve damage you might seriously consider amputation and the use of a prosthesis." (Chapter 42, p. 359)

"What he didn't know was that the unharmed flesh was in the shape of a sigil in angelic script—the name of one of the Fallen angels." (Chapter 42, p. 370)



Topics for Discussion

- 1) How does the main character act as a stereotypical orphan would? In what ways is he atypical?
 - 2) Does Harry seem to change after he learns that Thomas is his half brother? Explain.
 - 3) Would Harry have accepted the fact that Thomas was his half brother without his mother's message? Why or why not?
- 1) What role does Murphy play in the story for Harry?
 - 2) Was it necessary for Harry to see Murphy as the bruised and bleeding angel? Explain.
 - 3) Is there any indication that Murphy cares for Harry in the same capacity that he cares for her? Explain.
- 1) Which aspects of the book do you feel will be likely to be seen again in other books in the Dresden Files? Explain.
 - 2) If you had not read previous books in the series, was the storyline confusing? Why or why not?
 - 3) If you had to pick one character from Blood Rites to write a story about, other than Harry Dresden, which character would it be and why?
- 1) Did you find the Black Court vampires or the White Court vampires to be more of a threat to Harry? Explain.
 - 2) What did it reveal about the White Court vampires to see Thomas fighting with his Hunger while Harry and he were soul gazing?
 - 3) Do you believe that Mavra was killed by Kincaid and Harry? Explain.
- 1) What major character flaw would you say Harry has? Explain how it is seen in the story and in what way it hinders him.
 - 2) Is Harry Dresden a believable character?
 - 3) Is Harry a character that is easy to identify with? Why or why not?
- 1) Explain the significance of Murphy's anxiety regarding her family reunion.
 - 2) Would you side with Murphy or her mother in regards to Murphy's sister marrying Murphy's ex-husband? Explain.



3) Does Murphy hear what Harry is trying to tell her when he is explaining that she should not take her family for granted, even if they do not get along? Why or why not?

1) Is it significant that Murphy's father was also a member of the S.I. division of the police?

2) Do you think that Black Cats is an appropriate name for the members of S.I.? Why or why not?

3) Do you believe Murphy's father and his role as an S.I. investigator will have a larger role later in the series? Why?

1) Why do you think that the author chose to leave Justine alive rather than have her die after Thomas fed on her?

2) Do you think that killing her would have been less or more painful for Thomas? Explain.