

Burnt Offerings Study Guide

Burnt Offerings by Laurell K. Hamilton

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Plot Summary

The novel BURNT OFFERINGS follows the life of Anita Blake, vampire executioner and zombie raiser as she struggles alongside her boyfriend Jean Claude, the master vampire of St. Louis, to keep the area vampires safe from a radical human organizations and themselves safe from the vampire council.

The novel begins in what seems to be a normal business day for Anita as she meets with Pete McKinnon, a fire fighter in the area. McKinnon is concerned about fires he believes are being set by someone with psychic abilities. As McKinnon is the long time friend of Sergeant Dolph Stoff, Anita's friend and co-worker on the Regional Preternatural Investigation Team, Anita agrees to see if there is anything she can do to help.

A long day ends with a relaxing dinner with Jean Claude, the Master of the City. The two plan on a romantic evening but are disrupted by the arrival of Yvette and Balthasar, bringing news that the vampire council is in the area. Jean Claude is obviously concerned, and Anita is leery. The council has come to St. Louis to cause problems, but what kind of problems remains to be seen.

The arrival of Asher, another master vampire with a history with Jean Claude, stuns the pair. Asher had been deeply involved with Jean Claude and Julianna, Asher's human servant, until she was killed as a witch at the same time Asher was forever scarred with holy water. Since that day Asher has hated Jean Claude, and the love he and Anita share is now the force that feeds him. Asher believes Jean Claude destroyed Julianna, and so all Asher lives for is to destroy Anita.

In addition to dealing with the vampire council, Anita also has to worry about the pard of wereleopards that she has left without a leader. After killing their leader Gabriel, the pard is unprotected. Guiltily, Anita claims them as her own, vowing to protect them. The leopards happily accept her protection. The conflict lies in the fact that Anita is also lupa to the werewolves. Richard, her ex-boyfriend and Ulfric or leader of the wolves, declared Anita his lupa, or female leader, when they were a couple. Even though they are no longer together Anita is still lupa until Richard replaces her.

The battle lines are drawn for Anita and her friends as they battle the council while Anita tries to help the police find the people behind crimes against vampires in the city. It takes working together with the Traveler, one of the vampire council members, to come to the bottom of the crimes against the vampires. The Traveler also realizes that Jean Claude and Anita have not committed any crimes against the council, siding with them in the end. Even Asher comes to realize that Jean Claude had not deceived him centuries ago as he had always believed.

The final mystery is solved when Warrick, a master vampire in his own right, is revealed to be the pyrokinetic that has been setting fires around the city. On the orders of Yvette, the rotting vampire that has tortured him for centuries, Warrick had been causing



destruction in the hopes of causing vampires to be non-citizens once again. While away from her master, Yvette lost her power over Warrick who gained his full power. Warrick destroys Yvette, unwilling to allow her to cause any others pain.

Anita, Jean Claude and Richard are able to resolve some of their differences and work together in order to better understand the vampire marks that they share and to learn to control them. Anita still struggles to control the spirit of Raina, the former lupa of the werewolves. However, by working together with the other members of her powerful triumvirate, Anita is sure that there will come a day when she finally has control of all aspects of her life.



Chapters 1-5

Chapters 1-5 Summary

In chapter one, Anita Blake, necromancer and vampire executioner meets with Captain Pete McKinnon about a pyrokinetic, or someone who can start fires with psychic powers. McKinnon is worried that there is one loose in St. Louis, and wants Anita to help. Anita agrees to go over the file and contact McKinnon that evening. After McKinnon leaves, Anita receives a phone call from Larry Kirkland, a vampire executioner in training. Larry needs a ride home from the hospital where he had gotten stitched up. Anita grabs her guns and heads to the hospital.

In chapter two, Anita picks up Larry who had been attacked by a woman at the hospital. Larry had been staking two vampire victims that did not want to rise from the dead, as stated in their dying wills. A member of Humans First, a group of people against vampires, grabbed one of Larry's stakes and tried to kill him when he would not stake the vampire who turned out to be a doctor at the hospital. Anita tells Larry that he needs to be more careful because she does not want to bury him. Larry agrees to try harder and be more careful. As Anita gets Larry settled into bed her pager goes off.

In chapter three, Anita receives a call for help from Stephen, a werewolf and member of her former boyfriend's pack. Stephen is calling for help because Nathaniel, a wereleopard, is at the hospital, seriously injured. Zane, another wereleopard, is there to take Nathaniel. Before Stephen can explain, Zane gets on the phone and tells Anita that Nathaniel belongs to him. Anita is angry and tells Zane she will be there. As lupa to the werewolf pack, Anita is worried about Stephen's safety.

In chapter four Anita arrives at the hospital and follows the sound of the noise to Zane who is fighting the staff. Anita shoots him twice with normal bullets that he will heal from easily, and warns him that the rest of the bullets are silver. Zane breaks down crying, thanking Anita for coming to help them. Anita realizes that when she killed Gabriel, the former leader of the wereleopard pack she had left them unprotected.

In chapter five, Irving Griswold, reporter and werewolf, visits Anita in Stephen and Nathaniel's hospital room. Anita notices that Irving is ignoring Nathaniel and wonders why. Irving tells Anita that Sylvie, who is Geri, or second in command of the wolf pack, has forbidden the wolves from helping the wereleopards. Sylvie is still angry with the wereleopards for working with Raina, the former lupa of the pack, for using the leopards to punish pack members. Because Stephen went against direct orders, he is also in danger.

Irving tells Anita that in order to keep Stephen and Nathaniel safe she must order members of the pack to protect them, and by doing so she will have to protect them from Sylvie. Anita agrees to do so and Irving gives her some names and leaves.



Chapters 1-5 Analysis

The reader is introduced to Anita Blake, the main character of the novel. Anita is a complex character, a straight forward woman who refuses to take any nonsense from anyone. Anita is a necromancer, or zombie raiser, as well as a licensed vampire executioner. Despite this, Anita is also dating Jean Claude, the Master of the City, or lead vampire of St. Louis, Missouri. Somehow, Anita manages to make things work, balancing her personal and professional lives carefully.

The complexities of Anita's life are revealed in the first few chapters. Anita meets with Captain Pete McKinnon, who hopes that Anita can help him find a pyrokinetic, or someone who can use psychic abilities to start fires. Within minutes of that meeting, Anita receives a call for help from her trainee, Larry Kirkland, who had been injured while staking vampire victims at the hospital. Anita is hard on Larry, but in reality she is shielding her concern for his safety. Anita worries about Larry being afraid to defend himself and winding up dead. This gives the reader some insight into Blake's mindset. Though she is tough on the outside, Anita does worry about those she cares for, and worries about them.

This is proven when Anita receives a call from the hospital from Stephen, a werewolf. Though Anita is no longer dating Richard Zeeman, the leader of the pack, or Ulfric, Anita is the lupa, or girlfriend of the leader, because Richard appointed her as such. Because Richard is out of town, Stephen calls Anita to help Nathaniel, a wereleopard. Anita had killed the leader of the wereleopards when Gabriel had tried to rape and kill her. Leaving the pack with no leader had left them unprotected. Anita feels obligated to help the leopards, despite the history she had with their leader.

Things become a bit convoluted and confusing as the reader is informed of the pack structure and the politics that take place within. Richard is the Ulfric, or leader. Sylvie is the Geri, or second in command. Because Richard is away, Sylvie is in charge. Sylvie hates the leopards because of their association with Raina, the former lupa to the werewolves. Raina had used the leopards to punish the wolves at times, and if it was up to Sylvie, she would kill them all. The only way that Anita can stop this is to use her rank as lupa to force Sylvie to stand down.

These facts are introduced quickly in a recap, as *Burnt Offerings* is a novel that is part of a series. The reader is given a brief overview in order to help them understand the complex nature of Anita's life and those in it.



Chapters 6-10

Chapters 6-10 Summary

In chapter six, Sergeant Dolph Storr joins Anita in the hospital room and asks her what happened. Anita tells him as much as she can, but Dolph senses that she is not being completely honest. Since Anita had started dating a vampire, Dolph has not been as open.

Kevin, Lorraine and Teddy, three werewolves, arrive to protect Stephen and Nathaniel. The trio wonder if Anita would die for them as she expects them to die for her. Without realizing it, Anita draws on Richard's power hundreds of miles away and swears herself as lupa to protect them. The wolves drop to their knees and greet Anita as one of them. Anita knows Richard is not happy and that he had sensed her in his head. Several weeks ago Anita had chosen to give her blood to save both Jean Claude and Richard, and now the three of them are bound in a powerful triangle.

In chapter seven, Anita reviews the file that Pete McKinnon had given her, then gets dressed for dinner with Jean Claude at Demiche's. After dressing, Anita joins the handsome vampire for dinner. The two negotiate over the menu deciding what Anita will eat. Jean Claude cannot enjoy a meal on his own, but because Anita is his human servant, he can taste what she eats, and the vampire gets great joy from this. Anita is happy to do this small thing for him.

In chapter eight, a couple arrive at the restaurant and Jean Claude is leery of them. Yvette is a vampire and Balthasar is the human servant to a member of the vampire council. The pair announce the arrival of the council in St. Louis to Jean Claude. Balthasar tries to intimidate Anita but is unable to do so, so Yvette and Balthasar leave with a warning.

Anita asks Jean Claude what is going on and he explains that the council is angry because months earlier, they had killed Mr. Oliver, a council member known as the Earthmover. Jean Claude should have taken Oliver's seat on the council but did not. The master explains to his human servant that the council is the stuff of nightmares. Whatever Anita had seen and experienced before was nothing compared to what the council is capable of doing. Anita wonders how much trouble they are in and Jean Claude tells her that the council will bury them if that is what they wish to do.

In chapter nine Anita and Jean Claude exit to find a man in the parking lot. The man is a vampire, Asher, who had come to deliver an invitation to meet the council. Asher and Jean Claude had been companions centuries ago along with Asher's human servant, Julianna. While Jean Claude was away, Julianna was burned to death as a witch and Asher was scarred with holy water. Asher never forgave Jean Claude and his hatred is evident. Anita shows no fear toward Asher which angers him. The scarred vampire vows to see Jean Claude feel the pain that Asher felt when Julianna was killed.



In chapter 10 Asher gives directions to Anita as they head to the meeting. Along the way Jean Claude realizes he cannot sense his people. Anita is perplexed until Jean Claude explains. Only the Traveler, Balthasar's master could keep his vampires from reaching out to him. When Anita asks about his wolves, Jean Claude knows that the Master of the Beasts, Padma, is also in St. Louis. Commenting on why the council would send two members to deal with him, Jean Claude raises the ire of Asher. Asher tells them that the vampire queen has been visiting several cities to check on the new laws and had saved St. Louis for last. The masters were not sent to deal with Jean Claude; the council only wants to be sure that Jean Claude does not want to start his own council. Because he had not taken the seat of the Earthmover, the council is worried. Jean Claude explains that the reason he did not take the seat is because he is not powerful enough to keep it. Asher laughs. Anita asks for further directions and Jean Claude tells her that they are going to the Circus of the Damned, another of Jean Claude's properties. The council has taken it over. Anita wants to know how to handle things once they arrive and Jean Claude tells her to act dominant but not foolish.

Asher tells Anita that the council does not want Jean Claude dead because he would be a martyr. He warns Anita to be careful, as Jean Claude had waited until it was safe to try and free him centuries ago. Jean Claude denies this, but Asher does not believe him.

Chapters 6-10 Analysis

The relationship between Anita and Dolph is introduced. Dolph is the sergeant in charge of the Regional Preternatural Investigation Team. Anita is a civilian that works with the unit when they need her assistance. Dolph worries about Anita and her relationship with the monsters that they investigate, especially now that she is dating the master vampire in St. Louis. Anita's relationship with Dolph has been strained since he found out she was dating Jean Claude. While telling Dolph about the situation with Nathaniel and Stephen, Anita realizes Dolph feels responsible for her in a way. If he did not call her in to work with the squad so often, perhaps she would not have become so deeply entrenched with the creatures they investigate.

Anita is forced to use her connection to Richard in order to reassure the three werewolves that she will protect them as a lupa would. The blood ties that Anita shares with Richard and Jean Claude are demonstrated when she is able to call the oath of the lupa from Richard, hundreds of miles away. Anita is also able to sense Richard's anger when he closes his mind to her. Richard is her former boyfriend, still angry over her choice of Jean Claude over him. Anita had seen Richard kill the former Ulfric, or leader of the pack, then eat him. She could not reconcile the image and had left Richard.

The reader is also given insight into Anita's relationship with Jean Claude, as well as portions of his life as a vampire. The attraction between Anita and Jean Claude is evident when the two are in the restaurant. Because Anita has three of the four marks that can be bestowed by a vampire, Jean Claude is able to taste the food that she eats. The two enjoy their meal.



Interrupted by Yvette and Balthasar, Anita gets an introduction into the vampire council and the problems that she and Jean Claude will face. After facing down the vampire and the human servant, Anita gets a small lesson in the council from Jean Claude, as well as the amount of trouble they might be in because they had killed Mr. Oliver months ago.

The arrival of Asher gives the reader some history of Jean Claude. The master of St. Louis had, centuries ago, been part of the trio which included Asher and Julianna. Jean Claude had been called away to his mother's bedside and Asher and Julianna had been taken. Julianna had been burned as a witch and Asher had been scared with holy water, destroying his beautiful face and body. Asher has never forgiven Jean Claude, believing that Jean Claude had waited until it was safe to return, sacrificing Julianna in the process. Anita realizes that Jean Claude had loved Asher and Julianna so long ago and still does. Asher wants only for Jean Claude to feel the pain he had felt losing his human servant, Julianna. If Anita can suffer so that Asher can see Jean Claude's pain, Asher will be happy.



Chapters 11-15

Chapters 11-15 Summary

In chapter 11, Anita drives to The Circus of the Damned and prepares to get more weapons. She sees Asher in the mirror of the car and comments on his amazing beauty. Asher gets angry, showing the scars on his face more closely. When Anita does not react in fear he unbuttons his shirt to show her the rest of the damage. Anita is afraid of Asher's rage but not his scars. Asher flies away in anger; he does not want pity.

In chapter 12, another vampire named Liv arrives. Liv had been invited to the territory by Jean Claude to be part of his group. Anita draws her gun on Liv who tells Anita that her new master will not let her be killed. Anita and Jean Claude both notice her reference to a new master. Liv challenges Anita to look her in the eyes, and she does. Nothing happens. Liv grows angry and states to someone that they had promised to allow her to capture Anita in her gaze. A cold breeze blows and Liv tells Anita to look again. While looking in Liv's eyes Anita is captured and has to struggle to be free. Anita angrily gets her weapons from the rear of the car and Liv argues with Jean Claude. When Anita returns to the pair, Jean Claude tells Liv that she must be punished for challenging him. The master vampire touches Liv's face and she leans into his touch. Jean Claude unceremoniously tears out her throat. Anita and Jean Claude leave Liv to heal and walk to The Circus of the Damned.

In chapter 13, Jean Claude and Anita enter to find an empty room. Opposite the entrance there is a skin nailed to the door. Anita is horrified as she realizes that the skin is that of a lycanthrope, or shapeshifter, and they had been skinned alive. Liv enters and tells Anita to guess whose skin it is, and she will tell her if she is right. Anita wants to walk away, assuming that the problems of the night will be worse, but Liv presses. Anita grows angry and shoots Liv in the knee. The cold wind blows again and Liv heals, rising to lick the skin hanging on the door. Anita shoots her in the other knee and then the other. Jean Claude tells Anita they must move on, that the Traveler will heal Liv at his own pace.

In chapter 14, Jean Claude and Anita go downstairs where everything has been dismantled. Jean Claude explains to Anita the best way to deal with the council, through diplomacy, bravado and sometimes insults. They discuss this as they arrive at the bottom of the stairs. They find Willie McCoy, a friend and relatively new vampire. Jean Claude steps back and tells Anita that this is the Traveler. Anita realizes that another vampire has taken over the body of her friend. Balthasar arrives and caresses Willie's body. Anita wonders if the Traveler likes women and he tells her no. Blake suggests that he find a body that would be more willing to be inhabited, as Willie is not homosexual. After comments suggesting that the Traveler and Balthasar have enjoyed Jean Claude's body, the Traveler and Balthasar begin to move around Anita and Jean Claude, almost taunting them.



In chapter 15, the son of the Master of Beasts arrives with Willie's girlfriend, Hannah the vampire. Fernando threatens to rape Hannah and strikes her, causing Willie to break the bonds of the Traveler. Anita threatens to shoot Fernando who tells her she would not dare. Anita denies this and Padma arrives, the Master of Beasts. Padma tells Anita that killing Fernando would result in all their deaths, but Anita reminds him that that would not bring his son back. To Fernando's distress, Padma orders her release.

The Traveler releases the shield he had over Padma's powers and they crashed over Anita like a wave, painful and all consuming.

Chapters 11-15 Analysis

Asher's personality comes more into focus as Anita looks at him and comments on his appearance. Asher is angry that Anita is not frightened of him and tries to make her look away. Anita does not and seems to see within the vampire to what lies beneath. Asher grows more angry when Jean Claude comments that he is not afraid of him either, causing Asher to remark that pity is worse. It seems that Asher is ashamed of his appearance having once been as attractive as Jean Claude. The fact that Anita still sees him as handsome, indeed beautiful, is perplexing to him.

Liv's arrival introduces a new character, the Traveler, a member of the council. Liv had been part of Jean Claude's "people" but had turned away from him, embracing the power the Traveler offered. Jean Claude does not seem afraid, knowing that no one in the council would give anything without getting something in return. He explains to Anita that Liv must have invited the council into The Circus of the Damned, angering Anita. Blake has a difficult time controlling her anger, but Jean Claude is able to convince her to do so. The power that the Traveler has is evident when Liv is able to heal so quickly after Jean Claude tears out her throat and Anita shoots her several times. Though a vampire can heal quickly, Liv recovers repeatedly due to the Traveler's assistance.

The Traveler, so called because of his ability to take the body of another vampire and use it for his own is the master of Balthasar. Taking Willie's body seems to be an effort to bother Anita and Jean Claude, as Willie is so loyal. Anita goads "Willie" about his choice in bodies, suggesting he find someone who would appreciate Balthasar more. The Traveler takes her attitude in stride, even seems to enjoy the banter. This is not the case for Padma, Master of Beasts, when he arrives to stop Anita from shooting his son, Fernando. Padma uses his power to put Anita in her place, causing her terrible pain.

While the Traveler seems to be more willing to work within the rules of the vampire council, Padma is more determined to show his strength and destroy Jean Claude. The different personalities that lie in just these two members of the council seem to project the trouble that Anita and Jean Claude will have to deal with before long.



Chapters 16-20

Chapters 16-20 Summary

In chapter 16, Jean Claude uses his strength to bring Anita back from the attack of Padma. The Traveler takes Hannah's body to Willie's dismay and tells Jean Claude that he swears the council has not come to St. Louis to kill him. To prove this he tells Jean Claude to take his life strength back from Anita. Anita is worried because Jean Claude's heart has stopped beating. He has used all his reserve to help her. Padma is angry but allows the couple to proceed. Anita does not want Jean Claude to take blood. It is too intimate an act, but he tells her to kiss him over his heart. Embarrassed, Anita does so anyway and can feel Jean Claude's strength return. They kiss, to the annoyance of Padma. The Traveler leaves Hannah, telling them he will see them later. Padma tells Jean Claude to search for his people. Jean Claude remembers Damian, a vampire for whom he had bargained. Damian is over 1000 years old but will never be master. Padma laughs, amused at Jean Claude's concern for his vampire and leaves with the wereleopards, including Elizabeth, who hates Anita. Blake can tell that she wants her dead and taunts her about her place in the pack.

In chapter 17, Anita and Jean Claude find Damian impaled on a sword with Warrick, one of Yvette's vampires standing over him. Warrick is sorry Damian is dead, as he was a good opponent. Jean Claude states that he will call Damian as his master with the blood oath he swore. Anita states that she can still feel Damian's presence, and the two work together. The Traveler is in the air and knows what they are doing and wonders why Jean Claude has kept the powerful secret that Anita is a necromancer from the council.

Jean Claude invokes the oath and Anita places her hand over Damian's heart. Blake can feel Damian's soul trying to leave his body and fights. The sword slices her hand and her blood mingles with his. Damian awakens in a rush, confused and afraid of Anita and her power.

In chapter 18 Yvette arrives, impressed with Anita's skill. On a leash, she leads Jason, one of Jean Claude's werewolves. Yvette is angry with Warrick for protecting Anita and Jean Claude and punishes him by making him rot from within. As they watch Warrick decompose from the inside out, Yvette caresses Jason's face with her own rotting hand. Jason struggles away and Jean Claude comes to his aide, taking the leash from Yvette, showing no fear. Yvette tells Jean Claude that he has been conquered, but he tell her that she will never conquer him. Yvette tells them that Padma and the Traveler await, not realizing that the Traveler is with them in Willie's body once again. He remains silent after her comment. Jean Claude strikes Yvette, sending her tumbling across the room, reminding her that she will not conquer him.

In chapter 19, Jean Claude frees Jason and gives Anita a bandage for her bleeding hand. The Traveler offers to help her but Anita declines. The vampire realizes Anita does not like him using Willie's body and asks Anita why. She tells him that Willie is her



friend. Traveler tells Anita that she is naïve to call upon friendship to the council and that it has been a long time since anyone offered him friendship. Anita comments that he must be lonely. Traveler discusses taking another body, perhaps Damian, but Anita claims him as her friend as well. Traveler wonders how every monster can be Anita's friend, but she tells him not to doubt her. The vampire wonders what value her friends have to her and Anita says that she would kill for them. The Traveler comments that Anita would have made a good man. Offering his arm for Anita, she takes it and notices that her hand begins to bleed again, badly. The Traveler tells Anita that if she can break his bond he will let her friends go safely. Anita calls Willie, who is able to break Traveler's bond because she had raised him once before. Anita beats Traveler and he leaves as she collapses from the internal struggle.

In chapter 20 Anita awakens to Padma and Jean Claude arguing. Rafael, the Rat King is on a table in front of her, striped of his skin. Anita has found the victim of the council. Padma is angry about Traveler's promise to let Anita's people go. The Traveler is now in Hannah's body again, and he tells Padma that he will let Rafael go as he promised Anita. While they argue Anita sees Sylvie on the ground, striped and bleeding. She has been raped. Anger flows through Anita who demands to know who did it. Padma says he did and Anita pulls her weapon planning to kill Padma until Jean Claude stops her. Fernando arrives and claims he raped Sylvie, pleased with himself. Anita helps Sylvie dress and the werewolf tells Anita that she did not give up the pack. Anita promises Sylvie that she will kill anyone who hurt her. As they leave Fernando wonders why Anita is laughing. Blake tells Padma she feels very sorry because Fernando is Padma's only child.

Chapters 16-20 Analysis

The power Anita and Jean Claude share is witnessed by those present when Anita is able to help Jean Claude restore his strength without giving him blood. Anita is embarrassed at first and Padma's taunting makes her angry, but the anger allows her to do things that she would not normally do. The relationship between Anita and Padma is hostile, and the two appear to be headed toward a showdown of some sort. The added friction of Fernando, Padma's only child, will make things more difficult in the future.

Anita's strength as a necromancer, or someone who can raise the dead, is highlighted when she helps Jean Claude bring Damian back after being stabbed through the heart by Warrick. Because Anita had raised Damian once before, she has more power over him than normal, and working with Jean Claude's blood oath, the two are able to bring him back to life. The Traveler is impressed with Anita's abilities; however, Jean Claude knows that being a necromancer makes Anita that much more valuable for the council.

The different personalities of the council and those with them come into focus for the reader. The Traveler seems to be the more reasonable, if not friendly. It is he who tells Jean Claude that they are not there to kill him, despite Jean Claude's worries. Padma tends to be more concerned with shows of power, also evident in his son Fernando. Fernando is a wererat and delights in taunting Anita, as well as hurting people for the



sake of causing pain. Yvette is a rotting vampire, and though she is not on the council herself, she is there to represent her master. Yvette hates Jean Claude and his power, especially the fact that she can no longer control him.

Anita bargains with the Traveler in order to free her people and friends, much to the dismay of Padma and Fernando. Padma is not happy that Traveler has bargained for him, and Fernando is distressed to lose his playthings. Sylvie's presence changes things for Anita. Though she had been angry at the werewolf for her threat to Richard, the fact that she had been raped for refusing to give up the pack to Padma earns her respect. The violation, on the level of being a woman angers Anita who vows to kill those responsible. The council and their offspring seem to think they are immune to Anita and her ways, but Blake has the confidence in herself to know that if they manage to survive the visit from the ruling board of vampires, she will do as she says.



Chapters 21-25

Chapters 21-25 Summary

In chapter 21 Anita speaks to Rafael in the hospital for shapeshifters, then with Sylvie. Sylvie tells Anita that Padma had ordered his pet, Vivian, to rape Sylvie, but Vivian had refused because Anita was the leader of the leopards. Stephen's twin, Gregory, had refused for the same reason. Anita realizes that she had left behind two people if Vivian and Gregory were part of the group of leopards. Sylvie also tells Anita that Liv had molested her. Sylvie's partner, Gwen, wants Anita to know who to kill. Anita promises she will kill them but tells Sylvie not to challenge Richard. She is aware that he is not at his best, and until he is himself again, anyone who challenges him will have to deal with Anita.

In chapter 22 Anita calls Jean Claude who tells her that there is nothing to be done at this point about Vivian and Gregory. Jean Claude agrees to try and bargain for their release and asks Anita what she is willing to give in return. Anita tells him that she will not exchange hostages or blood, nor will she have sex with anyone. Jean Claude agrees to see what he can do but reminds Anita that without Richard, their triumvirate is not complete. Anita knows this but cannot bring herself to accept Richard's beast. She had seen him eat his predecessor and had run into Jean Claude's arms. She had not meant to break Richard's heart, but there was nothing she could do about it.

Anita's beeper goes off signaling a call from the police, and she tells Jean Claude she has to take the call, reminding him to do what he can, afraid Padma will kill Vivian because he is aware that she is part of the leopard pard.

In chapter 23 Anita meets Detective Clive Perry at Burnt Offerings, a vampire bar in St. Louis. Harry, the vampire bartender is also part owner. A woman had been bitten by a vampire at the bar and had tossed her drink in the vamp's face, then set him on fire. Detective Perry does not know if the victim will survive. Harry is worried the woman will sue and they will lose the business. Anita thinks something is wrong with the story and wants to meet with the woman. Perry tells her that Dolph has taken her to the hospital to have the bite tended, then headquarters for her story. Anita heads there.

In chapter 24, Anita goes to police headquarters to meet Dolph and the victim, Vicki Pierce. Dolph does not offer explanations to Anita, just asks her for her take on things. Pierce is reluctant at first but tells her story, playing the part of the victim to the hilt. Anita senses her lies and calls the woman out. Pierce gets angry and shows Anita the bite mark. Outside the room Anita tells Dolph that the bite is an old one; there is no way the man in the bar bit Vicki.

Dolph wonders about the wound on Anita's hand and she tells him that she had been raising a zombie for a friend. Anita knows that Dolph no longer trusts her completely



because she is dating Jean Claude and it bothers her, but there is nothing she can do about it.

In chapter 25, Anita meets up with Zane and Cherry, another wereleopard. Vivian and Gregory had not gotten out of the Circus because Padma had made sure they were unable to walk. Vivian was unconscious and they broke Gregory's legs. Anita calls Jean Claude who tells her to wait at least two hours for the vampires to be deeply asleep before she tries to save them. Anita agrees and tells Cherry and Zane that she needs a few hours sleep before she goes back, and they do not have to go if they do not want to. Zane immediately says that he will go with her.

Chapters 21-25 Analysis

Anita's sense of justice and her character are again brought into focus when she speaks with Rafael, the king of the wererats in the hospital, as well as Sylvie. Rafael is worried that Anita has done something to have him freed that will cost her directly, but she reassures him that he was simply part of the bargain and that she does consider him a friend. This appears to move Rafael more than any brave deed could. The situation with Sylvie is a bit more revealing as Anita had started the novel disliking the woman greatly for removing protection from anyone who helped one of the leopards. Anita is able to put all of that aside when Sylvie needs help, and vows revenge to those who had hurt her.

Anita also explains her threat to kill anyone who would kill Richard. Blake knows Richard is unable to care for his own wellbeing because she had left him for Jean Claude, so Blake feels responsible for him. Until he is able to take care of himself and face any challenger, she will protect him without undermining his place as leader.

Anita's relationship with Dolph and the other members of the police department are explored a bit as well. Anita seems to have the respect of the detectives in the squad and even endures some good natured teasing about her dress. The investigation into the burning of a vampire at a club seems a bit out of the ordinary and Anita follows her hunch, which seems to mirror that of Dolph, showing that the two tend to think alike. Only after breaking the "victim" from her story does Dolph's concern for Anita show, as well as the distrust that he now has for her. Neither of them are comfortable with the space that has come between them, but they have not reached a point where they can move beyond it.

The council shows its true colors when Zane and Cherry are released from the Circus of the Damned but Vivian and Gregory are not. When the details are explained to Anita she grows angry. The Traveler had negotiated with Jean Claude in seemingly good faith, but Padma had been angered at yet another concession, causing him to issue the declaration that Anita's people must walk out. He had then beaten them so they could not. Jean Claude knows that Anita will not allow this to stand, so he asks her to wait until it is safe enough to enter the club. She agrees but will play the council's card against them. She had not specified that her people be freed only if they could walk,

and they had not said that they could walk out with assistance. Anita plans to help them in any way she can in order to free them. Padma seems to be a wild card and will kill because he can and will kill those close to Anita simply to hurt her.



Chapters 26-30

Chapters 26-30 Summary

In chapter 26 Richard arrives to speak with Anita. He is angry, still hurt over her turning to Jean Claude after he had turned into a werewolf and had killed and eaten Marcus and Raina. Anita had wanted him to kill them to save himself, but could not get over him changing shape and eating them. Richard tells Anita that he is there to help her, that Jean Claude had know he was coming. Anita is not happy, and Richard tells Anita that she should know that she cannot trust the vampire.

In chapter 27 Anita, Richard, Zane and Cherry drive to the Circus. Anita is not happy that Richard has forced Cherry to come with them, but Richard says he is Ulfric, or pack leader, and Cherry had left pack members behind, which is against pack law. The two argue and Anita tells Richard that he will do no one any good if he does not stop hating himself and his beast. The group arrives and Richard allows Cherry to stay in the car. Zane tells Cherry that Anita will keep them all safe. Anita hopes that this is true.

In chapter 28 the group meets Jamil, Richard's enforcer at the Circus. Anita and Richard argue some more, but Anita finally has had enough and tells Richard that they will save those in the building. If he wishes to continue being angry, he can do it later. Richard agrees, realizing he had left business unattended for too long and wonders if he had been paying more attention if Sylvie would not have been raped. Anita tells him that the council would have come, regardless of how powerful Richard had been.

In chapter 29 Anita and her group are met by Captain Thomas Carswell, a British man, and Gideon, a shapeshifter. The two ask Anita for her weapon and she surrenders it reluctantly. Thomas is someone's human servant, but Anita is not sure what Gideon is. Anita realizes that they are stalling them and rushes into a tent where Fernando has just finished raping Vivian. Before Anita can do more than draw her knives Richard attacks, trying to kill Fernando. Anita tries to stop him, and Thomas tells her to open herself to Richard's beast so that she can help control him. Gideon steps in until Anita can figure out how to do so.

Anita feels Richard's power crash over her, as well as his internal feelings about his beast and his struggle for control. Anita tells him that he can embrace his beast, that it is not evil, that darkness cannot stop light. The two are unable to stay apart, and kiss, sharing passion. Richard wonders what they will do, but Anita tells him they need to worry about why they are here before they can work out their personal situation.

Fernando is unconscious, but Thomas tells Anita they should leave before he awakens. Fernando is in charge during the day. The group make splints for Gregory's legs which have begun to heal backwards, and help Vivian. Thomas checks on Fernando, but seems to dislike him as much as Anita. The group leaves the building after Anita thanks Thomas for his help.



In chapter 30, the group arrives at Anita's house. Vivian passes out and Cherry helps carry her into the house. A butterfly seems to beckon Anita and she follows it to the woods, amazed to find Warrick outside during the day. The vampire is rotting but claims that he is walking in God's power, drawing from his strength. Warrick has come to warn Anita that Padma means to see them dead, and Yvette's master wants them all dead as well. The council does not really believe that Jean Claude would take the empty seat, but fears his power in this country. Warrick can tell Anita no more, as Yvette has bound him to keep her secrets. The vampire asks Anita to show him her cross and she does. Warrick is pleased as the cross does not blind him. He believes God has forgiven him for his deeds and he will not be punished in hell.

Chapters 26-30 Analysis

The relationship between Anita and Richard is brought into focus for the reader. The two had been in love but Anita had run away from Richard after he had changed form and eaten the former pack leader, Ulfric. Anita turning to Jean Claude had broken Richard's heart and made it that much more difficult for him to embrace his internal beast. Richard seems to be deliberately cruel to Anita, trying to antagonize her into a fight, perhaps because fighting with her is less painful than trying not to love her. Richard tells Anita that he hates her, but she knows this is not true. As members of Jean Claude's triumvirate, Anita can sense Richard's feelings, though she wonders if things would be easier if they could hate one another.

The relationship is tested quickly when Anita and Richard arrive at the Circus to save Gregory and Vivian. The sight of Fernando raping Vivian enrages Richard, and Anita must take his beast within her to prevent him from killing Fernando. For the first time Anita realizes how conflicted Richard really is about the wolf within him. When Anita tells Richard that his fear of darkness taking over his life will not come true, he is relieved to the point of gratitude. Someone finally understands how he feels and how he struggles with the beast within. The fact that Anita has seen that struggle is also important, for perhaps with a deeper understanding she can one day accept him for who and what he is. The passion they share is evident to all, proving they still care deeply for one another, despite the problems they face in the future.

The mystery of Warrick being able to walk outside in the daylight is perplexing, but more will be revealed to the reader later. Warrick believes that he is being forgiven by God for the sins of his past, something Anita would like to believe is true as it appears to make the vampire so pleased. The news he brings is not really a shock to Anita, but she still wonders why he would come all this way to deliver it. Warrick tells Anita that he sees her as a noble person, one who will always care for those who cannot care for themselves. This is honorable in his eyes, and it seems that Warrick has not been in the presence of much honor over the past few centuries.



Chapters 31-35

Chapters 31-35 Summary

In chapter 31 Anita's friend Ronnie arrives with her boyfriend Louie, a wererat. The two of them have been out of town and Anita tells them to go inside so she can update them. Anita goes to her room to get a change of clothes and argues with Richard once again. In the kitchen Anita finds Jamil telling Ronnie and Louie about the events. Louie tells Anita that if she can help Richard with embracing his beast that she should continue to see him. Richard enters and continues to be antagonistic toward Anita. The two argue to the point that Anita winds up in tears, hurt by the cutting remarks that Richard makes.

In chapter 32 the doorbell rings when a man arrives with flowers, purportedly from Jean Claude. Flowers are not unusual but Anita knows something is wrong when she sees yellow roses. Jamil confirms quietly that the man has a gun and is tracking Anita with the weapon. The group moves in but it is Ronnie who shoots first after the man refuses to drop his gun. More shots are exchanged and Zane is wounded as well. The man is killed when Ronnie's second shot hits him in the head.

In chapter 33 Cherry reacts and rushes to help Zane until an ambulance can arrive. Richard had been in the shower and arrives in a towel to see what is going on. Anita stares at his body openly, wishing things had been different between them. All agree that they do not know who the man is. Ronnie returns from being sick and tells Anita that if she had had sex with Richard when they had been dating things would have been different. Ronnie knows Anita feels sex is a commitment and that sleeping with Richard would have taken Jean Claude out of the picture. Anita knows that she cannot choose between either man.

In chapter 34 Anita receives a call from Dolph, worried that she is alright. The sergeant tells Anita that vampire businesses all over the city are being attacked by arsonists. Dolph informs her that Stephen and Nathaniel are safe, though someone had tried to attack them as well. Also, Pete McKinnon would like Anita to help him at The Church of Eternal Life, a vampire church. Anita tells Dolph she will go to the hospital and then the church. Anita realizes that the date is an anniversary of The Day of Cleansing, a day in history where European countries had united and burned vampires and their followers centuries ago. Dolph is happy for the information. Pete also calls and tell Anita that the basement of the church is filled with water from fighting the fire. Malcolm, the church leader, and master vampire, is missing, presumably in the basement. The fire department needs to know if Malcolm is safe and can be left untouched until dark. Anita agrees to help if she can.

In chapter 35 Anita consoles a worried Ronnie who is upset about having killed the mystery man. It occurs to Anita that both times Ronnie has killed, she has done so in defense of Anita. Richard wants to know what is going on and Anita tells him. Richard is



angry that his pack is in danger but Anita reminds him that if he goes to the hospital his secret will become public. Richard tells Anita that if she had not made the pack guard Stephen and Nathaniel they would not be in trouble. Anita tells him that without the pack, Stephen and Nathaniel would be dead.

Chapters 31-35 Analysis

More characters and conflict are introduced with the arrival of Ronnie Sims, Anita's best friend, and Louie, a wererat who is Richard's best friend. Louie is torn when they are informed what has been going on. As Richard's friend, Louie no longer likes Anita because Anita had hurt Richard. However, Anita's ability to help Richard gain control of his anger and his beast is something that will only help. Rather than breaking all ties with Anita as Louie first suggested, he now believes that some contact should remain between the two. In addition, Anita saved the life of Rafael the king of the rats, and for that Louie has to respect her as well.

The conflict with Ronnie is personal as well. Ronnie does not approve of Anita's relationship with Jean Claude, a fact that is clearly evident when Ronnie tells Anita that if she had simply had sex with Richard before Jean Claude things would be different. Anita believes sex is a commitment, and Ronnie knows this. Anita's friend realizes how much internal conflict Blake suffers when Anita tells her that Jean Claude can never replace Richard in her heart, but that Richard cannot replace Jean Claude either.

The mystery of the shooter is resolved when Dolph calls and tells Anita that vampire businesses and the people associated with them are under attack all over the city. Anita realizes that it is the anniversary of The Day of Cleansing, or The Inferno, to the vampires. Centuries ago Europe had banded together to attack vampires and their supporters. It seems that some group has decided it was a good idea and tried to do it again. The fact that shapeshifters are under attack as well only adds to the problem.

Anita is called to help the fire department, reintroducing Pete McKinnon. The fire department faces the problem of trying to save vampires during the day. McKinnon hopes Anita will be able to determine if the vampires in the basement of The Church of Eternal Life will be safe until dark. Anita agrees to try, wondering if her powers are strong enough to help them. The reader is left to wonder exactly how much Anita is capable of, and if her powers are only limited because she believes them to be.



Chapters 36-40

Chapters 36-40 Summary

In chapter 36, Anita goes to the hospital to see to the leopards. Lorraine had saved the life of a police officer when a man had attacked, and she had killed him. The police are leery, specifically Detective Padgett. Padgett is a psychic, though he does not advertise it. Lycanthropes, or shapeshifters, make him uncomfortable. Anita convinces Padgett to let Lorraine go, as she had not committed a crime. In the hospital room Anita meets with the group as well as Stephen and Nathaniel. Stephen is able to leave the hospital, but Nathaniel cannot be moved yet. The leopard suggests that Anita can heal him by giving her blood, the others tell her that Raina had healed them with sex. Anita is appalled and refuses. Nathaniel seems heartbroken. Anita agrees to try skin to skin contact, as Kevin tells her that Raina ended everything in sex, but that didn't make it necessary.

In chapter 37 Anita is unsure what to do for Nathaniel, but Stephen suggests simply touching at first, trying to help her. Gradually Anita relaxes and when she does, she realizes that she knows what to do. Anita pushes the power she senses deep within Nathaniel and can feel him heal beneath her. Anita realizes she is channeling Raina, the former lupa, because she has memories of sex with Nathaniel. When he is healed, she can barely keep from screaming.

In chapter 38 Anita speaks with Kevin, Teddy and Lorraine, as well as Stephen and Nathaniel. The wolves realize that they may have called Raina, remembering her healing those in the pack that needed it. Because the pack had devoured Raina after Anita killed her, her memories are theirs. Anita sends the group to her house, including Nathaniel, who seems to believe Anita is his master. Nathaniel appears willing to do whatever will make Anita happy, which makes her uncomfortable.

In chapter 39 Dolph calls Anita to meet him and Pete McKinnon at a new location; a halfway house for church members. The guardian of the young vampires has been injured, and there is no one to there to make sure the vampires have survived a fire and if they will be safe to transport if they are. Anita agrees to try but really has no idea what can be done. On the way to the location Anita gets a call from Larry. Larry is in pain and needs a ride, unable to drive anymore due to the injuries he had received previously.

In chapter 40 Anita picks up Larry and they discuss the problems they had faced that day. Larry is amazed at all Anita has dealt with, and feels as if he has failed in his duties. Anita tells Larry that he has been doing well and can only learn from experience. Larry suggests that Anita raise the zombie of someone with experience in the problems she has, but Anita refuses to raise someone for information alone; the dead should rest. Larry feels the same and Anita comments that he is a good man.



Chapters 36-40 Analysis

The difficulties Anita faces being lupa to the werewolves and protector of the leopards is highlighted for the reader. At the hospital Anita is forced to defend the werewolves because Lorraine had killed a man, even though that man had been attempting to kill the police officer that had been assigned to protect Stephen and Nathaniel. Anita points out to the detective that if Lorraine had been a human she would not be in custody. Padgett's fear of the shapeshifters is evident and he has to force himself to see Anita's point. Padgett is more afraid of the unknown than most because as a psychic he can sense more than the average human. By commenting that he had not applied for Dolph's squad because he is not a freak, Padgett may have done more harm than good, offending Anita.

In the room, Anita chooses to do what she must to heal Nathaniel. At first Anita believes that as lupa she may be able to help the leopard, but once the ritual is in motion, she realizes she is channeling Raina. Anita had killed Raina, and the pack had eaten her. As such, all of Raina's memories are part of the pack. Though Anita had not tried to call Raina, the wolves had, remembering how Raina would heal those that were injured, ending her ritual in sex. This explains to Anita why she had such difficulty controlling herself when she had straddled Nathaniel. Blake had been experiencing memories or times the former lupa had spent with the leopard.

Anita is concerned over the connection she has forged with Raina but is more concerned with the seeming connection that Nathaniel feels for her. The leopard seeks direction, telling Anita that he will do whatever she asks of him. Anita realizes Nathaniel would be more than happy as her slave, something she does not want. Nathaniel seems a lost soul, needing direction, and he is happy that Anita is dominant and hopes she will control him.

Anita's softer side is showcased when she deals with Larry Kirkland again. Larry's injuries are bothering him to the point that he needs to call for help. Anita realizes that though Larry is younger and more inexperienced than she, he may be more mature. Anita knows that she would never call for help until it was almost too late. Larry is pleased when Anita tells him that he is doing his job well despite his reservations. Anita is happy that Larry is learning, but still worries over him, almost a mother figure.



Chapter 41-45

Chapter 41-45 Summary

In chapter 41 Anita and Larry arrive at the scene and are met by Detective Tammy Reynolds, a witch and Larry's girlfriend. Anita leaves Larry with Tammy and finds Dolph and Pete, along with the fire department commander, Captain Fulton. The authorities want Anita to determine if the vampires in the basement are alive and if they can be saved, as the floor of the structure may collapse due to the fire. Fulton is not happy about dealing with vamps as his wife and daughter were taken by vampires, but he will do his job.

In chapter 42 Anita speaks with Caroline, the human assistant for the halfway house. Caroline is frightened, worried that the vampires will waken early and out of control. Caroline informs Anita that since the council has arrived the vampires have been waking before sundown and have been hungry for blood to the point of losing control. Anita wonders if she can appeal to the council to help, as the situation seems to be related to their arrival.

In chapter 43 Jean Claude is amazed at Anita's bravado. The Master of the City tells Anita that the vampires may be acting in strange ways due to the proximity of the council. In addition, if the council is drawing power from lesser vampires rather than feeding on humans, the lesser vamps would wake earlier than usual, essentially starving, needing to feed and unable to control themselves. Anita wants to ask the Traveler for help, but Jean Claude makes her promise not to give anything in return. Perhaps Anita's approach can be enough to get help, though Jean Claude doubts that the council will care about justice.

In chapter 44 Anita calls the Circus and leaves a message, then receives a return phone call from the Traveler. Anita presents the problems the vampires are having and asks Traveler to help. The vampire seems unwilling and grows angry when Anita suggests that if the council does not take care of its people than they are no more than parasites. Anita reminds Traveler that if the vampires want to be legal citizens they also have responsibilities to the human citizens. Traveler promises he will consider all that Anita has said. Dolph reminds Anita that monsters cannot be counted on, only people can.

In chapter 45 Anita prepares to enter the water filled basement with two firemen, Lieutenant Wren and Corporal Tucker, as well as Detective Reynolds. Dressed in hazmat suits, Anita is a bit claustrophobic. Wren leads the group into the house testing the floor until he arrives at the stairs. Anita takes the lead on the stairs, weapon drawn, hoping that as they descend, she will not need to use her gun.



Chapter 41-45 Analysis

Things begin to come to a head in regards to the vampire problems in St. Louis. Anita is called to the scene of another fire, set by an at this time unknown assailant. Upon arrival, Anita speaks with Caroline, the human assistant for the church. The new vampires that sleep in the basement of the halfway house have been waking before sundown, hungry almost to the point of frenzy. Caroline is scared, frightened for the first time in her two years in the church. After speaking to Jean Claude, Anita discovers that the council may inadvertently be causing the problems with the vampires. The council is not feeding while they are in Jean Claude's territory, but they may be drawing power from the lesser vampires in the area, making them more hungry when they awaken, even causing them to waken early. Anita's suggestion that the council might help solve this problem amazes Jean Claude. The Master of the City knows that the council does not really have a care for the vampires they control, other than to control them. As long as Anita does not promise anything in return, he can see no problem with her speaking to them, appealing to their power over the vampires in the city.

The Traveler seems to be more willing to deal with Anita than any other member of the council, as if he respects her. Anita calls on the Traveler's sense of justice to protect the vampires that are being harmed in the attacks throughout the city. Traveler is a bit standoffish but also seems to understand the point Anita is trying to make. Though vampires have been around for centuries, by accepting legal status they must also accept responsibility for their actions. Anita essentially tells the Traveler he cannot have things both ways. Either he must help the police or he must relinquish status as a legal citizen.

Working with the fire department is a new experience for Anita, but one that she takes on willingly, despite her claustrophobic nature. The reader is able to develop more insight into the type of person that is Anita Blake—strong, loyal, and willing to be first into the line of fire if she is able to protect someone else. Despite Dolph's reservations about Anita's character since she started dating Jean Claude, it seems that when it comes down to it, Anita has more character than most.



Chapters 46-50

Chapters 46-50 Summary

In chapter 46, Anita descends into the basement with Wren, Tucker and Reynolds. The water is high and only a few caskets are visible. Wren and Tucker are able to get the vampire in the first casket into a body bag for safe removal, though Wren steps into Anita's line of fire at one point. The next casket is more difficult as the vampire is larger. The vampire suddenly awakens, biting Wren. Within seconds all are under attack and Anita is shooting vampires as they attack her and others. Anita passes out as she fires into the face of yet another vampire.

In chapter 47, Anita awakens to find herself in the hospital with Larry at her bedside. Larry tells her that Tammy and Wren had survived the attack because the Traveler had taken possession of the vampires and stopped them from killing. Corporal Tucker had not been so lucky. Larry also tells her that Human's First had taken responsibility for the firebombing of vampire businesses. Dolph arrives and tells Anita that Harry the owner of Burnt Offerings had been dating Vicki Pierce and was involved in the burning of the vampire there. Harry thought it would be odd if his business was not attacked. Harry is now on the run, but Dolph does not want Anita to tell Jean Claude yet; he wants the police to have a chance to find him first.

In chapter 48, Pete McKinnon tells Anita that there have been fires in the other cities the council has visited with the exception of Boston. Anita is suspicious and asks Jean Claude about it, but he can see no reason the council would do such a thing. The two dress and get ready for their evening with the council and are kissing when Richard interrupts, obviously angry. Anita asks Jean Claude if the council will still try and kill them, even though they had gotten good publicity working with the police at the fire scene. Jean Claude does not know, but worries because he has known them for so long.

In chapter 49, Anita, Richard, Jean Claude, Jason and Rafael arrive at the Circus. Padma enters with Thomas and Gideon. Yvette arrives with Warrick and the Traveler arrives with Balthasar. The first test is announced. Asher wants blood from Anita. Blake balks, but Jean Claude tells her there is nothing to be done. The Master of the City tells Anita that Asher will try to force her. If Anita were to make the drinking more seduction, Asher might refuse.

In chapter 50, Anita reverses the tables on Asher, kissing him and caressing the scars on his body. Asher sees acceptance in her eyes, something that no one has given him for centuries, and refuses to drink. Padma is angry, but there is nothing to be done.

Yvette wants to rot on Jason while she drinks from him, but Anita will not allow torture. Richard offers himself in Jason's place, but Yvette wants Jason's fear. Anita goes with Jason, who will allow Yvette to drink, but not rot on him. Anita summons the munin,



Raina's spirit, and sends the power of the pack to Jason. That power pushes Yvette causing her to bleed from the face. Yvette is finished for the night.

Chapters 46-50 Analysis

Tragedy unfolds as Anita descends into the basement of the halfway house with Reynolds and the fire fighters. Though Anita had warned them all, it seems that true vampires are beyond their understanding. The vampires attack and Anita does what she can to stop anyone from dying. When Anita awakens in the hospital and is told that the Traveler had stepped in after all and prevented two people from being killed, she is surprised. It seems the Traveler does have a moral compass that guides him, despite being a council member. The reader gets another view of Anita Blake. Though she regrets the loss of life, she has come to a point in her life where she must move on. The deaths bother her, but there is nothing that can be done about it after the fact.

Dolph's arrival with the news that Human's First was behind the attacks on the vampires brings more insight into their relationship. Though Anita is aware Dolph is having a hard time trusting Anita now that she is dating Jean Claude, she is stunned when she discovers that Dolph believes she would kill at Jean Claude's order. Anita denies this but understands that only time may be able to salvage the trust Dolph once had in her.

The battle at the Circus begins and it is through thought that Anita and her group of shapeshifters and vampires are able to win. The thought of giving blood to a vampire is something that bothers Anita very much, but by seducing Asher rather than rebuffing him, she is able to prevent it. In addition, Anita is able to give Asher acceptance, and the vampire finally realizes that he has not been abandoned because of the marks he bears. Jean Claude is thankful to Anita as well, because the love she showed Asher was a reflection of the love that Jean Claude has for him, and Asher was able to sense that as well.

Anita once again summons the munin, or spirit of Raina, when Jason is forced to allow Yvette to feed from him. The werewolf's fear is enormous and Anita comforts him with the scent of the pack. Yvette angers Anita, and Raina is there, striking back at the vampire. While Yvette feeds, Anita can sense the memories of sex between Raina and Jason. Richard is astonished, apologizing to Anita for not realizing how devastating the munin could be.



Chapters 51-53

Chapters 51-53 Summary

In chapter 51, Padma calls to Richard and tries to draw his beast while he drinks Richard's blood. Richard fights and Anita again steps in, concentrating the power of the triumvirate when she touches Richard. Padma gets angry and grabs Anita to call her beast. Anita is not a shapeshifter, but the power of Padma calls to Raina. Anita can feel Raina struggling to break free and she pushes the power into Padma, almost breaking him. Padma is terrified, and Anita calls on his Hindu religion, wondering what he will do to live so as not to pay for his sins. Padma sacrifices Liv the vampire and his son Fernando to Anita. Fernando rages, but his father will not even look at him, sorrowful yet satisfied that he will live.

In chapter 52 Yvette comes forward, demanding that Jean Claude face charges of treason for trying to start a new vampire council. Traveler is disgusted with Yvette's plan. Yvette is not a master vampire and cannot take over St. Louis, but she wants Asher to challenge Jean Claude. Asher refuses; to duel Jean Claude when he is weak from trying to help Anita would be dishonorable. Yvette calls to Warrick and tells those assembled that Warrick had been a knight of God and can draw fire. Anita realizes that Warrick is the pyrokinetic that had been starting the fires in the city. Yvette tells all that she ordered Warrick to set the stadium full of people on fire that night. When Warrick tells Yvette that he did not do as she asked, she is angry and tries to make him rot, but she no longer has the power. Warrick is a master vampire now. Warrick will not do as Yvette asks, but refuses to let her treat another the way she has treated him. Warrick sets Yvette on fire, folding her in his arms, and while she screams he peacefully dies, willing to let God decide his fate.

In chapter 53, Anita is still dating Jean Claude, but cannot bring herself to sleep in his bed once he "dies" when the sun rises. Blake and Richard are spending more time with Jean Claude so the three of them can better learn how to use the marks they share. Anita has put Nathaniel up in an apartment. The leopard believes that he is Anita's "pet." This is something she is not ready to deal with just yet. Fernando and Liv are handed over to Sylvie. Aside from some pieces she has kept for souvenirs, they are gone forever. Asher has stayed in St. Louis where he is among friends. Anita has suggested he get in touch with a plastic surgeon to heal his scars. Asher is hopeful that one day he will once again be beautiful.

Chapters 51-53 Analysis

The power of Raina's munin is more deeply explored when Padma attempts to draw out Richard's beast. Anita is able to help Richard through the marks of the triumvirate, but Padma is angry and wants to draw Anita's beast instead. Anita is not worried at first, knowing there is no beast within her as she is not a shapeshifter. Unfortunately, Padma



is able to summon Raina because she had been with Anita only moments before. Jean Claude attempts to help but Padma strikes out, injuring the vampire. Anita's anger feeds Raina and Padma is unable to defeat them. Anita knows Raina's spirit would gladly kill Padma, but Anita uses his fear of death to carry out her promise to Sylvie. Padma gladly hands over Liv and his son, Fernando, in exchange for his life. Fernando is horrified that Padma had more love for himself than his son.

The contest is over and the council is satisfied; however, Yvette steps forward claiming treason on Jean Claude's part. Padma and the Traveler do not believe Jean Claude is a traitor; however, Padma is willing to let Yvette make the claim. If Jean Claude is replaced as master, Fernando will not die. Surprisingly Asher refuses to challenge Jean Claude, declaring it dishonorable. It seems Asher has finally realized that Jean Claude did not leave him centuries before and sees at last that the Master of St. Louis still loves him as he always has.

It is finally revealed that Yvette never planned to have Jean Claude's seat or city; she only wanted to destroy the chance of vampires being legal. Yvette's plan of using Warrick to do this does not work. Warrick, away from Yvette's master for so long, has finally gained his full strength as a master vampire himself. Yvette is no longer able to make Warrick rot and has no control over him at all. The fact that Warrick is the pyrokinetic that has been starting the fires is news to all. Most vampires shy from flames, and the ability is very rare. Warrick is sure God has forgiven his sins, and he will rest in peace, giving his life to be sure Yvette can no longer torture and torment another.

The novel ends pleasantly enough, with Richard, Anita and Jean Claude working together as a team, though Richard still has issues with Anita and Jean Claude dating. Anita has taken care of the promises she made, trying her best to be lupa to the wolves and queen to the leopards. Anita Blake's sense of justice has been evident throughout the novel and remains until the end.



Characters

Anita Blake

Anita Blake is the main character in the novel *BURNT OFFERINGS* by Laurel K. Hamilton. Anita is a necromancer, or someone who is able to raise the dead, as well as a licensed vampire executioner. Anita is a strong woman, though small in size, with a deep sense of justice and honesty. Blake is the third in a powerful triumvirate; the other two members are her current boyfriend, Jean Claude, the Master of the City, or head vampire, and her ex-boyfriend, Richard Zeeman, the Ulfric, or head werewolf, of the local pack.

Anita becomes involved in several matters in the novel, the most serious being the arrival of the vampire council. The council has come to St. Louis to question Jean Claude about the death of one of their members, the Earthmover. Because Jean Claude had killed the Earthmover, the vampire is expected to take his seat on the council. Anita struggles with Jean Claude to keep the council from harming them, using her wits to keep them from being killed.

Anita is also the lupa, or lead female, of the local wolf pack. She was named to this position when she was dating Richard and will keep the position until she is replaced. In addition, Anita takes on the added responsibility of queen of the local wereleopard pack. Because Anita had killed their former leader, the leopards are without protection and direction. Anita vows to protect them.

Anita also works with the police on the Regional Preternatural Investigation Team, headed by Sergeant Dolph Storr. Anita works with the police investigating crimes that involve the monsters that live among the humans in St. Louis. Anita is obviously torn between her duties to the police as a law-abiding citizen, and her friends, most of which appear to be monsters.

Jean-Claude

Jean Claude is the Master of the City in St. Louis, Missouri. Jean Claude believes himself to be in love with his girlfriend, Anita Blake, who also happens to be a vampire executioner. The two make an odd couple, and the added fact that Anita's ex-boyfriend is the third person in a powerful triumvirate only makes things more difficult at times.

Though the head vampire in the area, Jean Claude is still subject to the rules that govern vampires. These rules are overseen by the vampire council. The council arrives in St. Louis to question Jean Claude about the death of a council member, the Earthmover. Jean Claude and Anita had killed the powerful vampire, and Jean Claude should rightfully have taken his seat on the council. Knowing he is not powerful enough to hold a seat on the council, Jean Claude did not claim it. The council now questions



whether the vampire has plans to start his own sub-council in the United States, undermining them.

Jean Claude works with Anita to keep the vampires in the area safe and keep the council from harming them. In doing so Jean Claude proves once again that even though he is a vampire, he still has the ability to be truthful and just. His love for Anita seems genuine and they are happy together. The only thing that stands in their way is the fact that Jean Claude is essentially dead, rising only at night, and "dying" when the sun rises.

Richard Zeeman

Richard Zeeman is the Ulfric, or leader of the local werewolf pack in St. Louis, Missouri. He is also a junior high teacher and is forced to keep his identity as a werewolf a secret in order to preserve his job. Richard is the third member of a powerful triumvirate with his ex-girlfriend, Anita Blake, and her current love, Jean Claude, the Master of the City, or lead vampire. Richard is very angry at Anita for rejecting him for Jean Claude. Anita could not handle Richard changing into a werewolf, killing, and then eating the former leader of the pack.

Richard is forced to come to the aide of Jean Claude and Anita when the vampire council arrives in St. Louis. Richard realizes when he arrives that he has been neglecting his duties to his pack when he arrives and finds the pack in turmoil, led by his second in command, Sylvie.

Richard is forced to come to terms with himself and his inner beast with the help of Anita and Jean Claude. Though there is still some animosity between the three, Richard comes to realize that without Anita and Jean Claude and the power they share, he will never be a successful Ulfric, and his pack will suffer because of it.

Sylvie

The second in command of the local werewolf pack, Sylvie is raped by members of the vampire council because she refuses to give the pack to the vampires. Though there is animosity between Anita and Sylvie, Anita comes to her aide, promising that the monsters that had treated Sylvie so cruelly will be killed.

Raina

The former lupa of the werewolf pack, Raina is dead, but her spirit, or munin, lives, manifesting itself through Anita when she calls for aide for the pack.



Nathaniel

A wereleopard, Nathaniel is injured when he is sent out as a prostitute by Zane, another leopard. It is because of Nathaniel's injuries that Anita realizes she has left the leopard unprotected and takes on the added responsibility of leader to the leopards.

Stephen

A werewolf, Stephen calls Anita when Nathaniel is injured. Stephen defies Sylvie's orders to stay away from the leopards, effectively leaving himself unprotected. Because of this, Anita is forced to use her role as lupa to the pack to order other wolves to protect Stephen and Nathaniel while they recover in the hospital.

Jason

A werewolf, Jason is part of Richard's pack but also works for Jean Claude. Jason is more than willing to allow Jean Claude to feed from him but becomes terrified when Yvette, the rotting vampire wishes to do the same.

Irving Griswold

A werewolf and newspaper reporter, it is Irving who reveals the plight between the werewolves and wereleopards to Anita.

Larry Kirkland

A necromancer and vampire executioner in training, Larry looks to Anita as a mentor, but also as a friend. Anita likes Larry, who brings out the more caring side of Anita.

Sergeant Rudolph Storr

The head of the Regional Preternatural Investigation Team, Dolph is Anita's co-worker and sometime mentor. The two have been experiencing conflict since Anita started dating Jean Claude, the Master of the City.

Captain Pete McKinnon

A fire fighter and friend of Dolph, Pete comes to Anita for help in finding the pyrokinetic that is setting fires in St. Louis.



Zane

A wereleopard, Zane has tried to step into the shoes of the former pard leader but has not been able to do so. Zane happily hands over control of the pard to Anita, thankful that she will now keep them safe.

Gabriel

The former leader of the wereleopards, Gabriel was killed by Anita.

Kevin

A werewolf called by Anita to protect Stephen and Nathaniel.

Teddy

A werewolf called by Anita to protect Stephen and Nathaniel.

Lorraine

The third werewolf called by Anita to protect Stephen and Nathaniel.

Cherry

A wereleopard that had been held by the vampire council in the Circus of the Damned.

Willie McCoy

A vampire belonging to Jean Claude and a friend to Anita, Willie is used by the Traveler so the council member can interact with others.

Hannah

A vampire and Willie's girlfriend, Hannah's body is also used by the Traveler when needed.

The Traveler

A member of the vampire council, the Traveler takes possession of other vampire's bodies to use as his own. The Traveler is a fierce opponent but seems to be fair when



dealing with others. Anita calls on the help of the Traveler when the vampires in the area begin acting strangely due to the council's influence.

Padma

The Master of Beasts and a vampire council member, Padma is a cruel vampire. Padma believes in torture and does not think that Anita and Jean Claude can survive their meeting with the council. The table are turned when Anita uses the spirit of Raina to defeat Padma and forces him to give up his only child to save himself.

Fernando

A wererat and son of Padma, the Master of Beasts, Fernando is responsible for the rape of Sylvie among other vile deeds. Anita wishes to kill him but holds off, unwilling to anger the council. In the end, Padma hands his son over in order to save his own life.

Yvette

A vampire, Yvette is able to rot at will and make other vampires rot as well.

Balthasar

The human servant of the Traveler, as well as his lover.

Warrick

A master vampire who has had his powers held in check by Yvette. Warrick's power grows while they are away from Yvette's master. Warrick is able to find his true strength and deny Yvette, killing her and himself so no others will suffer because of her.

Damian

A vampire who belongs to Jean Claude, Damian is killed by Warrick, but Anita is able to raise him from the dead.

Vivian

A wereleopard, Vivian is raped and beaten by Padma and his son Fernando. Anita is able to free her by negotiating with the council.



Gregory

A werewolf held by the council and twin brother to Stephen.

Tammy Reynolds

A detective with the police department and a witch, Tammy is dating Larry Kirkland.

Vicki Pierce

A member of Human's First, Vicki sets a vampire on fire in Burnt Offerings. Vicki had set up the attack with the help of her boyfriend, Harry, the vampire bartender and owner of the club.

Harry

The vampire owner and bartender at Burnt Offerings, Harry helps his girlfriend Vicki set up an attack on a vampire in his club. Harry was worried that things would look odd if his club was the only one not attacked by Human's First.



Objects/Places

Guilty Pleasures

A strip club owned and operated by Jean Claude, Anita's boyfriend. Stephen and Nathaniel are strippers at the club.

Regional Preternatural Investigation Team

Known as RPIT, the unit is made up of officers who investigate preternatural crimes. Sergeant Dolph Storr is the commander of the unit. Anita is a civilian who assists the unit when needed.

St. Louis University Hospital

The hospital where Nathaniel is dropped off after he is almost killed, and the scene of the confrontation between Anita and Zane.

Demiche's

The restaurant where Jean Claude meets Anita for dinner, and where the two encounter Asher for the first time.

Circus of the Damned

Another business owned by Jean Claude, as well as his residence and the residence of many of his people. When the vampire council arrives in St. Louis, they are invited into the Circus by Liv, a vampire that had been invited into the territory by Jean Claude. The council takes over the premises.

Burnt Offerings

A club/restaurant owned by Harry, a vampire. Burnt Offerings is the sight of an attack on a vampire set up by Vicky Pierce and Human's First.

Humans First

A radical organization whose goal is to eradicate vampires.



Munin

The spirit of a werewolf that lives on once the pack has eaten the wolf. Anita is able to summon the munin of Raina, the former lupa of the pack, but Anita can not control her.

Lupa

The female leader of the wolf pack, usually the girlfriend or wife of the Ulfric. Anita is the pack lupa despite the fact that she and Richard are no longer together; Anita will remain lupa until Richard replaces her.

Ulfric

The male leader of the werewolves. The Ulfric can only be replaced when challenged and a fight to the death takes place. Richard is the Ulfric of the local werewolf pack.



Themes

Love Triangle

The love triangle, or menage a trois, is an important theme that runs through the novel *BURNT OFFERINGS*, by Laurell K. Hamilton.

The relationship between Jean Claude, Anita and Richard is an atypical menage a trois, or love triangle because normally the parties involved would be willing and comfortable in the relationship. In this case, Richard and Anita are bound to Jean Claude because of the vampire marks he has bestowed on them when they allowed him to drink their blood. Richard had given his blood to Jean Claude willingly, and because of this the wolves are Jean Claude's beasts to call. Anita had given her blood to Jean Claude and Richard in order to save the lives of the men for whom she cared. By giving her blood to Jean Claude, Anita is now tied to him as his human servant. Because Richard is also tied to the vampire, the three now form a powerful triumvirate.

The love triangle aspect comes into play because Anita is now dating Jean Claude, the master vampire. Anita had broken off her relationship with Richard after she had seen him change into a werewolf and then kill and devour the former leader of the pack. There is a great deal of animosity between Richard and the other two parties, particularly Anita.

A more classic love triangle is revealed in the case of Jean Claude and Asher, and Asher's human servant, Julianna. The two vampires and the human had lived together happily centuries ago until Julianna was killed as a witch, and Asher had been hideously maimed with holy water. The triangle had been broken, but the love that Jean Claude had for Asher and Julianna had never died. When Asher returns to his life, Jean Claude is relieved when the second master vampire finally realizes that their link is as strong as it once was.

Conflict

The central conflict in *BURNT OFFERINGS* is the battle between Jean Claude and the vampire council. Conflict, an actual or perceived opposition of interests or values, arises when the council is led to believe Jean Claude has refused a seat on the council because he wishes to create his own council in the United States. Though he and Anita try and work things out without violence, the vampire council has survived for centuries doing what they want, and only an orchestrated effort is able to save Anita and those for whom she cares.

Several smaller conflicts take place within the novel, including Anita's struggle with her mentor and friend, Dolph Storr. The conflict between the two causes stress for Anita on and off the job, as she has looked up to Dolph for many years and continues to do so. Anita's personal choices have caused Dolph to question her, setting up an internal



conflict for Anita. Though Blake has long ago decided that her life is hers and she will choose how she lives it, she still resents feeling as if she is letting Dolph down.

Rage

Rage, or extreme anger, is central in the novel *BURNT OFFERINGS*, by Laurell K. Hamilton. The main character, Anita Blake often responds to situations in anger, reacting in defense of others, many times with no thought to her own safety or consequences. It is rage, however, that fuels Anita at the most pivotal parts of the novel. Rage, by definition is a mental state of extreme anger, which usually lasts until situation that has caused the rage itself has ended or the person experiencing the rage is incapacitated. In the case of Anita Blake, her rage is provoked by situations that she feels are extremely cruel or unfair, such as the rape of Sylvie, or the skinning of Rafael. Her truest moment of rage takes place when Richard and Jean Claude are in danger at the hands of Padma, the Master of Beasts.

Anita is able to summon the munin, or spirit of Raina, the former pack lupa in order to help those she loves. Though Anita cannot fully control the munin, she is aware that in order to escape the spirit, some type of ritual helps. Lacking that, sex or violence seem to satisfy the munin of Raina. In the case of Padma, Anita is more than happy to supply the violence that the munin craves, and it seems that Anita and Raina share the rage that builds within, able to push the energy of that rage into Padma, incapacitating him and defeating the master vampire.



Style

Point of View

The novel *BURNT OFFERINGS*, by Laurel K. Hamilton is written in the first person from the point of view of Anita Blake, the main character. This is very helpful to the reader, as it gives one important insight into the deep and private thoughts and feelings of Anita. The novel is based in modern times, but involves situations of fantasy, such as vampires and werewolves, and the reader is able to better understand human dealing with such creatures through the eyes of Anita Blake.

The story is told through an equal mix of dialogue and descriptive passages, which helps move the plot and subplots along at a quick yet understandable pace. The reader is able to understand the motivations behind the acts of the character, whether they be human or monster, because of the explanations provided by the main character, Anita Blake.

Setting

The novel is set entirely in St. Louis, Missouri. Several locations in the area are visited, most of which involve business directly related to vampires in the area. The Master of the City, Jean Claude, is the head vampire in the area, and one of his businesses is Circus of the Damned. It is at the Circus where the confrontations with the vampire council take place.

Other places are visited throughout the novel, such as Anita's house on the outskirts of town, where the wolves, leopards, and vampires take refuge until the Circus is once again available for them to use. Most of Jean Claude's people live at the Circus and are not safe while the council resides at the Circus.

Several crimes against vampires take place throughout the novel, and these locations are visited as well. The most notable is *Burnt Offerings*, the bar owned by a vampire named Harry. Not only the title of the book, *Burnt Offerings* is the setting where a staged vampire attack takes place, one that allows the police to trace the other attacks back to Human's First, the organization trying to eradicate vampires from St. Louis.

Language and Meaning

The language in *BURNT OFFERINGS* is modern and fast paced, allowing the reader to easily follow the storyline and the action that takes place. Though most of the character speak in a modern English, some of the vampires speak in a more formal manner, distinguishing themselves because they are centuries old.



The novel is fantasy, containing werewolves and vampires, as well as fairies and other creatures, but is written as if these creatures actually exist in modern times. Anita's career as a necromancer, or a person who raises the dead, as well as her secondary position of vampire executioner are explained in such a way that the reader can easily accept that such things are necessary. BURNT OFFERINGS takes place over a relatively short period of time; the author keeps the narration and dialogue moving at a fairly fast pace so that the reader does not get confused with and mired in the many details.

Structure

The novel BURNT OFFERINGS is a novel that is divided into 53 numbered chapters that vary in length from five pages to twenty. Each chapter either deals directly with an important aspect of the novel or helps the reader better understand events that have taken place through more detailed description.

The main plot of the novel is the threat the vampire council poses to Jean Claude, the Master of the City, and those creatures and people that he considers his. This plot is woven throughout the entire novel, with a few subplots interspersed periodically.

One of the subplots of the novel is the strained relationship that exists between Anita Blake and Richard Zeeman. Though the two had been romantically linked, Richard is very angry at Anita for leaving him and choosing Jean Claude. Despite the animosity, Richard and Anita are forced to deal with each other in order to help Jean Claude, the third in their triangle of power. While the battle with the vampire council takes place, Anita is also working with the police to help the city's vampires. The proximity of the council has caused fluctuations of power within the vampire population. Some vampires are rising before dark, and most wake almost starved. This situation puts the public at risk, forcing the police to become involved to keep all citizens, human or monster, safe.



Quotes

"My second emergency room in less than two hours. It was a red-letter day even for me. Good news was that none of the injuries were mine. Bad news was that that might change. Alpha or not, Zane was a shapeshifter. They were able to bench-press medium-size elephants. I was not going to arm-wrestle him. Not only would I lose, but he'd probably pull the arm out of my socket and at it. Most lycanthropes liked to try and pass for human. I wasn't sure Zane sweated little details like that."

Chapter 4, pg 19

"I didn't know what to say. Denying that I was going to be their leader seemed a bad idea with bodies littering the area. If I refused his offer, he might get nasty again and I'd have to kill him. I realized suddenly with something like a physical jolt that I didn't want to kill him. Was it the tears? Maybe. But it was more than that. It was the fact that I'd killed their alpha, their protector, and never given a thought what that might do to the rest of the wereleopards. It had never occurred to me that there was no second in command, no one to fill Gabriel's place. I certainly couldn't be their alpha. I didn't turn furry once a month. But if it would keep Zane from tearing up any more doctors, I could play along for a while.

By the time the cops arrived, Zane was healed. He'd curled around Nataniel's unconscious body like it was a teddy bear, still crying. He stroked Nathaniel's hair and muttered over and over, "She'll keep us safe. She'll keep us safe. She'll keep us safe." I think the 'she' was me, and I was in way over my head."

Chapter 4, pgs 22-23

"I suddenly had the words, words I couldn't have known. 'I am lupa, I am the all-mother, I am your guardian, your refuge, your peace. I will stand with you against all harm. Your enemies are my enemies. I share blood and flesh with you. We are lukoi, we are pack.' The warmth cut off abruptly. I staggered. Only Teddy's hand kept me from falling to the floor. 'Are you alright?' he asked in a voice as deep and impressive as the rest of him. I nodded. 'I'm fine, I'm fine.' As soon as I could, I stepped back. Richard had felt the pull hundreds of miles away, and he'd cut me off. he'd slammed the door shut without knowing what I was doing, or why. A rush of rage danced down inside my head like a silent scream. He was so angry.

We were both bound to Jean Claude. I was his human servant and Richard was his wolf. it was a painful intimacy."

Chapter 6, pg. 43

"I stepped between them. I took a step forward. Asher was either going to have to step back or we'd be touching. he stepped back, staring down at me as if I'd just appeared. he'd forgotten me for just a second.

'Love isn't the most expensive emotion, Asher,' I said. I took another step forward, and he retreated another step. 'Hate is. Because hate will eat you up inside and destroy you, long before it kills you.'

'Very philosophical,' he said.

'Philosophy's great,' I said. 'But remember this: don't ever threaten us again. Because if



you do, I'll kill you. Because I don't give a fuck about your tortured past. Now, shall we go?'

Asher stared at me for a few heartbeats. 'By all means, I cannot wait to introduce you to the council.'

He meant it to be ominous, and it was. I didn't want to go and meet the bogeymen of vampirekind, but we were going. One thing I'd learned about master vampires. You can run, but not far enough. You can even hide, but not forever. Eventually they catch you. And master vampires don't like to be kept waiting."

Chapter 9, pg. 68

"He yelled, 'Why don't I see in her eyes what I see in everyone's eyes?'

'You don't see horror in my eyes, mon ami,' Jean Claude said.

'No,' Asher said, 'I see worse. I see pity!' He opened the car door without turning around. I would have said he fell out of the car, but that isn't true. He floated upward before he could touch the ground. There was a backwash of wind that swept over me like a storm, and he was gone."

Chapter 11, pg 78

"We walked toward the Circus. The coat billowed behind me like a cape. The Uzi bounced lightly against my back. I'd added one extra thing from the glove compartment. A long silver chain with a cross on it. I'd gotten longer chains when I started dating Jean Claude. The shorter ones spilled out of my clothing at awkward moments. I was loaded for bear, uh, vampire, and ready to go kill something."

Chapter 12, pg. 88

"Do it,' I said. I had to trust him. Trust him not to hurt me. Trust him not to do something awful or embarrassing. I realized that I didn't trust him. That no matter how much I loved his body, I knew he was other. I knew that what he thought of as okay was not necessarily okay at all."

Chapter 16, pg. 115

"Damien slumped suddenly. His body began to quiet. I began to lose the sense of his pulse, the taste of his heart. It slid slowly away and I let it go. But I was almost sure I could have held it. I could have kept the feel and rush of his body. I could have made it rise and fall to my touch. I was almost sure.

I ran my hand through his thick red hair and knew temptation, and it was only slightly tinged with sex. I raised my still bleeding hand where I could see it. It wasn't much of a cut; two, three stitches and I'd be fine. It hurt, but not enough. I ran the still bleeding hand through his hair. The thickness of his hair slid across the open wound, abrading it. The pain was suddenly sharper, aching and nauseating. Enough pain to bring me back to myself.

Damien stared up at me, afraid. Afraid of me."

Chapter 17, pgs 127-128

"Come to me, Willie, Rise to my voice, my hand, my blood. Rise and answer me. Willie McCoy, come now!' I watched Willie spill into those eyes like water filling a cup. I felt the Traveler forced out. I thrust him out, shoved him away, and slammed a door that I hadn't



known I had in my head. In Willie's body. I forced the Traveler out, and he spun shrieking into the darkness."

Chapter 19, pg 139

"I was finally reduced to shrugging. If I hadn't been having sex with a vampire out of wedlock, I'd have had some moral high ground to stand on. As it was, I had nothing to fight back with. I'd been virtuous for so long, but when I lost it, I lost it big time. From celibacy to fucking the undead. If I'd still been Catholic, it would have been enough to get me excommunicated. Of course, being an Animator was enough to get me excommunicated. Lucky for me I was as Protestant."

Chapter 33, pg 247

"I wanted to take away the hurt I saw in his eyes. I wanted to hold him in my arms until the pain eased. I realized in that moment that it wasn't me. It was Jean Claude. He wanted to hold heal Asher's pain. He wanted to take away that awful emptiness. I looked at Asher through a film of emotions that I'd never had for him, a patina of nostalgia for better nights, of love and joy and warm bodies in the cold darkness."

Chapter 50, pg. 361

"Richard is right. I can't give myself completely to Jean Claude. I can't let him fee. I can't truly share a bed. He is, no matter how lovely, the walking dead. I keep shying away from anything that reminds me too strongly of that fact, like blood-drinking and low body temperatures. Jean Claude certainly has the keys to my libido, but my heart....Can a walking corpse hold the keys to my heart? No. Yes. Maybe. How the hell should I know?"

Chapter 53, pg. 392



Topics for Discussion

Why does Pete McKinnon want Anita's help? What is a pyrokinetic? Who is the pyrokinetic?

What reason does the council give for coming to St. Louis?

Why does Asher hate Jean Claude?

Why does Anita feel responsible for the wereleopards?

Why is Anita able to summon the spirit of Raina?

How does Anita defeat Padma? What sacrifice does Padma make to live?

What is Yvette's reason for challenging Jean Claude? What is the truth behind her reason?