

Masquerade: A Blue Bloods Novel Study Guide

Masquerade: A Blue Bloods Novel by Melissa de la Cruz

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Plot Summary

"Masquerade" by Melissa De La Cruz is a young adult novel in her Blue Bloods series. In Masquerade, Blue Blood vampire Schuyler Van Alen travels from New York to Venice, Italy, after the murder of her grandmother, to find her grandfather, Lawrence Van Alen, living in self-imposed exile. Schuyler travels with her human Conduit, Oliver, whose job it is to help Schuyler navigate the human world. In Venice, Schuyler meets her grandfather, seeking his help to defeat the Silver Bloods, the evil rivals of the Blue Bloods. But Lawrence refuses to help and Schuyler returns home.

But soon after, Lawrence returns to New York, intent on restoring the glory of the Van Alen name, and preparing the Blue Bloods for the war with the Silver Bloods he knows is coming. Lawrence becomes a guide and mentor for Schuyler, teaching her how to use her vampire talents, such as invisibility. Meanwhile, Mimi Force, daughter of Charles Force, the leader of the Blue Bloods, is jealous that her love, Jack, seems to be infatuated with Schuyler.

At school, a mysterious new boy arrives named Kingsley Martin, who seduces Mimi into using dark spells to attempt to kill Schuyler. But Mimi does not have enough hate to use the dark spells to bring back Silver Bloods from the other side, and so Kingsley must finish the job himself, during which time one of the Blue Blood wardens is killed. Schuyler uses her ability to read Mimi's memories through drinking her blood to prove Mimi is innocent, after which Kingsley Martin and his family flee. Lawrence supplants Charles as leader and Charles uses the courts to gain adoption rights over Schuyler. Lawrence explains to his granddaughter that the Martins are pawns in the hands of a Blue Blood family that is secretly harboring a Silver Blood and the search is on to determine the identity of the Silver Blood and the traitorous family.



Chapters 1-8

Chapters 1-8 Summary

Schuyler Van Alen, a fifteen-year-old Blue Blood vampire, is the last member of the New York Van Alen family, which had helped to create modern-day Manhattan. Schuyler is in Venice, Italy with her best friend Oliver Hazard-Perry. Oliver is also Schuyler's human caretaker, known as a Conduit, and has convinced his father to let them accompany him on a business trip to Europe. Two months before, Schuyler's grandmother, Cordelia, is attacked and killed by Silver Blood vampires, the enemies of the Blue Bloods. Whereas the Bluebloods are fallen angels who live by a set of ethics, Silver Bloods swear allegiance to Lucifer. The key to defeating them, Schuyler believes, rests with her missing grandfather, Lawrence, who is in Venice. Schuyler's mother, Allegra, is in a forced coma, wanting to remain that way after Schuyler's father dies.

Schuyler recounts a meeting with another Blue Blood, Charles Force, formerly Michael, an archangel, who has chosen exile on earth to help his fellows. Charles warns Schuyler against the search for her grandfather, but Schuyler goes to Venice anyways. There, she sees a woman who resembles Allegra, and dashes after her.

Madeleine "Mimi" Force and her twin brother, Jack, are preparing for the Four Hundred Ball, after their induction into the Committee, a secret group of powerful vampires that run New York. Vampires have life cycles and return in different forms, so coming out ceremonies for other Blue Bloods to recognize the same vampires in new shells is important. Charles Force, her father, owns Force News Network, the most powerful news company in the world. Each family is expected to make monetary donations to the New York Blood Bank Committee, and Mimi wonders if Schuyler is even aware of it. Mimi decides she wants an after-party -a masquerade ball- for Blue Blood teens.

Bliss Llewellyn, a Texas cheerleading vampire who attends the same school as Mimi, Jack, Oliver, and Schuyler -the Duchesne School. At school, Bliss is friends with Schuyler and Oliver. Bliss's almost-boyfriend, Dylan, has been killed by the Silver Bloods. She has nightmares of drowning, and a monstrous beast stalking her.

Schuyler continues searching the building for the woman she believes is her mother. She cannot find her. At the registration desk, the landlady explains that a professor lives there. Schuyler knows her grandfather is a professor of linguistics, and she and Oliver go up to his room and discover numerous books written by her grandfather. They realize they have found where he lives. The landlady suddenly appears, and Oliver and Schuyler leave. The landlady denies knowledge of the professor, saying he hasn't been there in two years. Schuyler finds the sudden turn-around in the landlady's attitude to be strange.

Mimi is besieged by text messages asking to attend her masquerade party. Bliss, meanwhile, wants to believe that Dylan is still alive somehow. Mimi tells Bliss about the



party, which will be in an old synagogue downtown -the Angel Orensanz Center. Mimi and Bliss go over the list of those who are invited.

Schuyler and Oliver go to the Venice Biennale, for an art exhibition. Schuyler wonders how she will go about finding her grandfather. Schuyler speaks to a mysterious boy about artwork, and asks him if he knows of her grandfather. The boy says people shouldn't seek those who don't want to be found, and then disappears. She and Oliver begin to search for the boy, and Schuyler finds him looking slightly older. She speaks a special phrase to the boy and then passes out.

Mimi and Bliss plan to dress elegantly for the upcoming events. Each girl considers the other jealous. Mimi is taking her brother to the masquerade, because Jack really isn't her brother. Bliss does not yet have a date. Bliss blurts out that she thinks Dylan is still alive, but Mimi wants to set up Bliss with a boy named Jamie Kipp.

Schuyler regains consciousness in a room decorated in early Medieval style. She is in the Ducal Palace, in an area not open to the public. There she meets her grandfather, Lawrence, who was disguised as a boy at the art exhibit. Lawrence explains he had sensed Schuyler's arrival, and had taken the form of Allegra because he misses her. Schuyler asks her grandfather to tell her everything he knows about the Silver Bloods.

Chapters 1-8 Analysis

The reader begins navigating the novel "Masquerade" by Melissa De La Cruz with principle protagonist Schuyler Van Alen searching the streets of Venice for her grandfather, Lawrence. De La Cruz surrounds the reader with mystery from the start, mired in a search for a missing grandfather, and the struggle to determine the identity of Cordelia's killer. Indeed, the identity of the killer of Cordelia, presumed to be a Silver Blood vampire, will structure the plot of the novel, because the existence of the Silver Bloods is the mystery from which the plot and all related mysteries originate.

Indeed, Schuyler's search for her grandfather is emblematic of a larger search in her life, for grounding. Without her parents -her mother is in a coma, her grandmother is dead, her grandfather is in exile- Schuyler has no real source of unconditional support and love. She is seeking stability in her own life through her search for answers, though she is warned against such a search by Charles Force. Sometimes, answers are far more dangerous than the search for them.

De La Cruz only expands the repertoire of mystery surrounding the return of the Silver Bloods by referencing events of the past book through the character of Bliss, who is haunted by nightmares. She is undertaking her own search for answers, but the reader calls to mind the warning of Charles Force against seeking certain answers.

Mimi Force, meanwhile, prepares to throw a masquerade party, which in turn will become metaphorical for the events of the entire book: false faces and false appearances. For example, Schuyler once believed Charles Force to be evil, but in reality, he is the archangel Michael. Other false appearances will populate the book.



Chapters 9-16

Chapters 9-16 Summary

Finals week arrives at Duchesne and all the students prepare for the tests. A Red Blood named Ava Breton, a sophomore like Bliss, asks her about the masquerade party. Bliss reveals the location and the date, thinking the more present, the better. But Bliss also realizes Mimi is going to be upset.

Schuyler is packing her things. Her grandfather is not the patron or guide she was hoping him to be, but is instead a lonely, scared old man who has no interest in the Blue Bloods. Lawrence explains that the key to defeating the Silver Bloods rests with Charles and Allegra, not him. Schuyler buys a porcelain mask as a souvenir from Venice. Oliver and Schuyler return to the United States, and Schuyler prepares to attend the Four Hundred Ball. As a member of the Committee, she is required to attend.

The Four Hundred Ball is held at the Saint Regis Hotel, which is almost wholly rented out to Blue Bloods. Charles dresses for the event, and wonders if the Silver Bloods really have returned. Charles's wife, Trinity Burden Force, and Mimi, also prepare for the night, as does Jack. Jack and Mimi are meant to bond with one another. Only two vampires have ever rejected their bonds in history. Gabrielle -Allegra- forsakes Michael -Charles Van Alen Force- to marry her human familiar in a church.

Bliss will be attending the Four Hundred Ball with Jaime Kipp. Bliss's father, Senator Forsyth Llewellyn, gives Bliss an emerald necklace to wear, which belonged to her mother. Forsyth explains that when Lucifer fell from Heaven, a jewel fell from his crown -supposedly the emerald. Bliss is unsure what to make of her mother owning a jewel linked to the Silver Bloods. All Bliss knows about her mother is that she cycled out earlier than expected. At the Ball, Mimi touches the stone and then recoils, but doesn't explain why. Bliss wants to get rid of the emerald.

Schuyler does her best to prepare for the Four Hundred Ball. She selects her mother's cotillion gown to wear. When she arrives, the room falls silent. Everyone, including Jack Force, cannot take their eyes off Schuyler.

The Four Hundred Ball, also known as the Patrician Ball, is replete with glamor and lavish expenses, from the decorations, to the take-home gifts which consist of valuable jewelry. Bliss seeks Schuyler out to tell her about Dylan, but then is interrupted by a boy who asks Bliss to dance. Jack wonders why he has feelings for Schuyler. Finally the moment arrives where the teens come out for the rest of society to see. Mimi and Jack are really Azrael and Abbadon, the Angels of Death and Destruction, who turned their backs on Lucifer.

As the Ball winds down, invited teens prepare for Mimi's masquerade party. Schuyler receives a text invitation to the party and decides to go.



The Angel Orensanz is lit by a thousand tiny tea light candles, and Mimi is beside herself with happiness. A mysterious boy asks Bliss to dance, and Bliss believes it to be Dylan, but he then disappears into the crowd. Schuyler regrets coming to the party, full of teens who want nothing more than to get drunk. Schuyler meets up with a boy she believes is Jack, and the two kiss, and then break apart when Mimi comes looking for him. Schuyler wonders if the boy she has kissed was really Jack at all.

Chapters 9-16 Analysis

The school year gets under way as normally as it can be for the character involved in the dramatic events of the last book. Mimi is head of the school's social life; Bliss (whose name may be ironic because her existence is anything but bliss) is struggling for normalcy despite blackouts and bad dreams. Even Schuyler is inexorably drawn into events, first by having to attend the Four Hundred Ball, and later by deciding to attend Mimi's masquerade party. The symbolism of false appearances populates the party itself, as Schuyler is unaware who it is who kisses her.

Certain dynamic plot elements also begin falling into place: Jack's infatuation with Schuyler grows; a mysterious stranger asks to dance with Bliss; Schuyler's beauty becomes readily apparent; and the true identities of Jack and Mimi as minions of Lucifer who turned their backs on him, all proceed to drive the plot along.

Another important element to the plot is highlighted: the voluntary breaking of a bond between Allegra and Charles so that Allegra can marry her human familiar, the product of which union is Schuyler. Schuyler's mixed ancestry will have tremendous consequences in future chapters.



Chapters 17-24

Chapters 17-24 Summary

The winter arrives in New York City. Schuyler goes to spend Christmas Day with her mother at the hospital, as she does every year. Oliver prepares to visit Schuyler the following day, but Hattie, the Van Alen maid, calls him in a panic. Oliver rushes over to find Schuyler apparently lifeless on her bed. Oliver calls his aunt, Dr. Pat, a human who cares for Blue Bloods, who urges Oliver to bring Schuyler to her office, which he does. Dr. Pat gives her a blood transfusion, which wakes her. Dr. Pat explains to Schuyler that she was in an extended sleep, which usually occurs toward the end of cycles, when vampires grow weary of immortality. Schuyler's human DNA is fighting the vampire DNA, which in turn is fighting back. This is due to Schuyler's mixed birth.

The spring semester at Duchesne School commences. The monstrous beast in Bliss's dreams has begun saying her name. There is a new boy in school named Kingsley, whom Bliss cannot take her eyes off of.

Kingsley Martin is a Blue Blood, a junior, and as academically-brilliant as he is athletically talented. According to Mimi, Kingsley's family is well-connected and incredibly prominent. Kingsley speaks to Bliss, and tells her that it was he who had saved her from drowning. Kingsley is also carrying a leather-bound book. Bliss now suspects that Dylan is truly dead.

Lawrence Van Alen suddenly appears one day at Schuyler's home. Lawrence announces he has been a coward, and he has returned to New York to raise Schuyler, and restore the glory of the Van Alen name. Schuyler hugs him immediately. Charles, Forsyth, and other members of the Committee arrive to bring Lawrence to a hearing, because his exile has not been revoked.

Kingsley, at Mimi's behest, uses mind-control, the glom, to control the actions of a student freshman. Jack is enraged and confronts Kingsley and Mimi over it, calling the stunt cruel and petty. Kingsley retorts this his family made the Forces, and leaves.

In chemistry, students are forced to switch partners at the behest of their new teacher. Schuyler and Kingsley become partners. As they work, Schuyler wonders if Oliver or Kingsley was the boy who kissed her at the masquerade. But then she thinks about how much she really likes Jack.

That night, Lawrence has still not returned from his hearing. When he does, he explains he has run some errands, including to the bank. Lawrence reveals to Schuyler that their accounts are in fine order, contrasting what her grandmother had said about them being broke. Lawrence has also had lunch with his old friends, including Cushing Carondolet, who fills Lawrence in on what Charles has been up to during his absence. Lawrence also reveals that he has met with the Conclave, the highest leadership of the vampire



coven. The Conclave has shunned the Carondolets because Cushing insisted on a White Vote -a vote of no confidence- in Charles's leadership. Lawrence and Cordelia -Schuyler's grandmother- suspected that a member of the Conclave was harboring a Silver Blood, and so separated to continue the investigation. But Lawrence has discovered nothing.

Lawrence also reveals there is nothing the Conclave could do about his return, since his exile was self-imposed. Lawrence has even regained his seat on the Conclave so long as he promises not to question the coven's leadership. Lawrence reveals that Charles -Schuyler's uncle- wants to adopt Schuyler. When Allegra rejected Charles, Charles did all he could to destroy the Van Alens, including taking a new name. But Lawrence says he won't let it happen.

Bliss goes to Chic Magazine to see about a photo shoot as a model. Her career is taking off. Schuyler is also called for the potential job. Bliss explains she and Kingsley have been hanging out with each other a lot. Chantal, the booking editor, meets them to take photos, during which time Schuyler passes out. Bliss and Schuyler confide to one another that each of them have had blackout episodes. On their way out, they see Jack on his way in.

Chapters 17-24 Analysis

Over Christmas break, Schuyler's mixed ancestry begins haunting her, as she begins to suffer from blackouts. It is explained that her human DNA and vampire DNA are at war with each other inside her -a life-threatening condition that if not corrected, will indeed kill her. At the same time Schuyler is dealing with her blood condition, Bliss's nightmares are becoming more prevalent and more terrifying, serving as an omen to both Bliss and the reader of impending danger.

Just as things look bleakest for Schuyler, Lawrence arrives on the scene, determined to restore glory and honor to the Van Alen family name. He reveals that the family fortune is actually intact, and has learned more about the politics of the governing vampire body, with Charles at the helm. At the same time, Schuyler and Bliss confess to one another their blackout episodes, which comforts both of them in the understanding that they are not alone.

Additionally, Jack's infatuation with Schuyler continues, continuing to spell imminent danger for Schuyler, for the reader already knows how vindictive Mimi is.



Chapters 25-32

Chapters 25-32 Summary

As the Van Alen mansion is remodeled, Schuyler is instructed by Lawrence on vampiric techniques, such as mind-control. The newest vampires have not been taught these methods by the Committee. Lawrence is remedying the situation with his granddaughter. He instructs her on invisibility techniques, as well as how to use her photographic memory. The Silver Bloods, Lawrence explains, place no value on learning, so the use of history is important.

While seeking books in the Repository, Schuyler runs into Jack, who is studying. They talk about Kafka's book, "The Trial", and discuss law and love. Mimi, meanwhile, has also been hanging out with Kingsley. She finds in Kingsley a common desire -to use power. Both believe the Committee is too cautious about using power. In the Repository waiting for Kingsley, Mimi interrupts Jack and Schuyler. Kingsley brings a book to Mimi, full of forbidden spells, and talks about how the Silver Bloods used to be the Blue Bloods' slaves before they rebelled, went to war, and were hunted out of existence. But Kingsley says there is a way to bring them back, to make them do whatever he and Mimi want. Mimi begins reading the book.

Schuyler dreams of her mother warning her, but about what, she doesn't know. Lawrence brings Schuyler with him to the Adventurer's Club, for globetrotting vampires and a select few humans. She confesses her blackout condition to her grandfather, who tells her it may be nothing to worry about. He also informs her the judge has agreed to hear Charles's petition for adoption in a month.

Schuyler and Bliss get the Chic photo job after two Russian models are unable to make the engagement due to expired visas. Jack is also there. Schuyler confesses to him that she truly does believe the Silver Bloods are back. Bliss goes for a walk on the beach with the photo assistant, Morgan, whom she kisses, and bites.

Mimi can't understand why Jack is slowly withdrawing from her, but knows Schuyler is the source of it. Mimi knows she has to destroy Schuyler.

Bliss wakes Schuyler up and brings her down the beach, explaining what happened with Morgan the night before. Morgan, she is worried, may be dead. They go and get Jack, who reveals that Bliss has given the Sacred Kiss, marking Morgan as her own. It is a special experience for both of them, and it will mean something to each of them, naturally drawing them toward one another, making Morgan Bliss's familiar.

Valentine's Day rolls around, and Oliver and Schuyler get each other roses. Bliss receives roses from Kingsley and Morgan, and yet she feels she is also betraying Dylan's memory. Schuyler also receives a bouquet of two hundred white roses, from an



unknown person, presumably Jack. Mimi walks by Schuyler, pretends to trip, and catches a piece of Schuyler's hair in her hands.

Schuyler continues to master mind-control. Oliver also begins to learn the ability to block mind-control. At school the next day, Schuyler almost passes out, and Jack catches her as she falls. Jack brings her home. Lawrence reveals to Schuyler she needs to take a human familiar to keep her strength up. As Jack leaves, Oliver shows up, worried about his friend.

Chapters 25-32 Analysis

Lawrence begins serving as a guide and mentor to Schuyler, instructing her in the techniques of vampirism. Lawrence realizes how utterly unprepared the newest generation of vampires will be to combat the Silver Bloods when the time arises, and he makes sure to see to it that his granddaughter will in fact be prepared.

Mimi becomes fully aware of the potential love between Jack and Schuyler, and Mimi is also aware of what has happened to Allegra. Mimi absolutely refuses to become the same way, and falls in league with Kingsley, who urges her to experiment with dark spells to become more powerful. The mysterious arrival of Kingsley, not to mention his insistence on dark spells, should prove as a warning for Mimi, but her emotions are clouding her judgment. Mimi ultimately decides she has to not just win Jack's heart, but to destroy Schuyler.

The mystery around the Silver Bloods continues to deepen, and the reader suspects that Kingsley probably has something to do with them; however, the reader also recalls Schuyler's rush to judgment about Charles Force, so a final verdict on Kingsley cannot be reasonably passed. Intuition, however, falls against Kingsley, meaning the reader comes away with an uneasy feeling about the mysterious kid.



Chapters 33-40

Chapters 33-40 Summary

Mimi is preparing to exact her revenge on Schuyler. She uses the forbidden spells book to create a violet flame, but Charles walks in on her. Mimi excuses her behavior as mere curiosity. Charles takes the book and leaves, and Mimi calls Kingsley. She asks him if it possible to bring a Silver Blood back.

Kingsley presses Bliss to reveal the identity of the other male who had sent her roses. Bliss tries what Kingsley suggest to rid her dreams of the monstrous beast, by self-mutilation. There are red bruises all over her arms.

Oliver consents to being Schuyler's human familiar, but just before the Sacred Kiss, he refuses her, telling her that she is not herself.

Mimi returns to the Repository to seek out the same book her father had returned. She and Kingsley begin reading a spell to bring a Silver Blood back. Meanwhile, Schuyler seeks out Oliver in the Repository to ask for forgiveness. She runs into Bliss in the reception area, who is waiting for Kingsley. Schuyler goes to talk to Jack, who is near a fire, reading. Mimi spills her blood as a sacrifice, and an explosion shatters the library floor.

Schuyler is stunned by the explosion, and finds Jack under a reading table. She helps him up. Mimi arrives and throws herself at Jack, asking if he is alright. The three of them find Oliver, help an injured human librarian, and then find Bliss, gravely injured, who is bleeding from two puncture wounds in her neck. Charles and Forsyth arrive, wielding silver swords. Priscilla Dupont, Chief Warden at the Coven headquarters nearby, is dead.

At Schuyler's house, Schuyler tells Oliver she believes the attack was the result of Silver Bloods. Lawrence returns home from a meeting of the Conclave. Lawrence asks Schuyler what she knows of the Croatan, an ancient danger that destroyed the Roanoke colony four hundred years before. Lawrence also shows them a file folder, a case Priscilla was working on about Maggie Stanford, a Blue Blood corrupted by the Silver Bloods in the 1870s. Attacks on Blue Bloods stop for the next century and-a-half, until Aggie Carondolet is killed the year before. as well as four other Blue Bloods. They believe Lucifer has returned. Lawrence intends to challenge Charles's leadership, and call for the White Vote.

Bliss regains consciousness very slowly. Charles believes Bliss has been corrupted; Forsyth believes otherwise. Charles insists that Bliss will have to be tested. Forsyth realizes someone has been helping the Silver Bloods, else they could not have thrived. Forsyth also examines Bliss's neck, which has healed, meaning Croatan poison has not corrupted her. Nan Cutler, a high-ranking Warden, visits Bliss to conduct tests. She



checks the back of Bliss's neck, and smiles and leaves. Bliss is not corrupted. Bliss realizes that perhaps Kingsley's long hair might be hiding something on his neck.

Bliss calls Schuyler, whose mind is preoccupied with the Silver Bloods and the imminent White Vote. Bliss wants Schuyler and Oliver to check up on Kingsley. They discover Kingsley was present at each of the places murders had occurred. Schuyler presents her evidence to Lawrence, who barely pays attention.

Chapters 33-40 Analysis

Mimi plunges into dark magic in order to destroy Schuyler, her emotions swirling at wanting to preserve the bond between herself, and Jack. Even after Charles's intervention, the lure of the dark spells, the ecstasy that comes with unbridled power, and her desire to get rid of Schuyler, Mimi is compelled to seek out Kingsley and the dark spells book once more.

After a failed attempt at gaining Oliver as her human familiar, the paths of all major characters cross at the Repository, during which time a Silver Blood Croatan is called out, presumably by Mimi, which grievously injures Bliss and kills Priscilla Dupont. The mystery expands even further and the reader now has all the evidence to convict Kingsley of being a Silver Blood ally. This evidence is even furthered by the investigation Schuyler and Oliver do into Kingsley's background.

The mystery continues to deepen: Kingsley and his ilk have apparently become bold enough to attempt a direct assault on a place considered by safe by the Blue Bloods. The implication is now that there is no safe place and the politics of the vampire coven are now in flux.



Chapters 41-48

Chapters 41-48 Summary

A hearing on the Repository incident is convened. Kingsley is called, and explains he is an undercover agent investigating murders and suspects, including Bliss, Mimi, and Schuyler. Kingsley counts off Bliss and Schuyler as offenders, but then says Mimi wanted to destroy Schuyler. Charles Force is then called in for questioning. Charles recalls walking in on Mimi trying out a spell. Mimi is convicted, and Jack knows Mimi is innocent. The only thing Mimi can do to save herself is to submit to an ancient blood ritual, one only Allegra Van Alen is capable of performing.

Schuyler cannot believe that Mimi wanted to destroy her. Lawrence reveals that Kingsley is a Silver Blood by birth only, but that his allegiance is to the Blue Bloods. Lawrence reveals that he has doubts about the Martin family, however. Jack attempts to convince Schuyler that Mimi isn't evil, but Schuyler is not convinced.

Lawrence notices a newspaper clipping from the 1870s has been burned, except for the date. Schuyler and Lawrence talk about Jack being drawn to her, as he has been to others in the past -though his fidelity is never broken. Lawrence again impresses upon her the fact that she needs to take a human familiar. Oliver returns at Lawrence's behest, who goes out for the evening to the club. Oliver doesn't want anything bad to happen to Schuyler. Schuyler feeds on Oliver, and learns all of his memories and feelings in the process -including that Oliver is in love with her. When Oliver wakes later to leave, they kiss, and Schuyler believes her actions have been a mistake.

Lawrence visits his daughter Allegra. Charles arrives with flowers, and Lawrence blames Charles for Allegra's coma. Charles had saved her life, and believes one day she will wake out of love for him, but Lawrence disagrees, saying she will never love him as she had before. Gabrielle -Allegra- had left Heaven to bring hope and salvation to the fallen. Michael -Charles- had followed, for he could not bear to be separated. Earlier, Lawrence had been installed as head of the Conclave, the new Regis. Lawrence knows a war is coming, and knows that the Blue Bloods must be prepared. Lawrence also reveals that Schuyler holds the key to salvation for the Blue Bloods, because a prophecy foretells that one of Allegra's two daughters will defeat the Silver Bloods.

Mimi's execution is pending. Jack says he will never let Mimi run out of time. Lawrence believes that Schuyler may have inherited her mother's ability to perform the ancient blood ritual of telling blood memory from false memory by drinking the blood of the accused. The risk is that Schuyler may become corrupted herself, give in to temptation, and kill Mimi, and then would become an Abomination herself. Schuyler consents to trying the ritual.

Mimi's trial commences at the Ducal Palace. The Elders agree to a blood test. From Mimi's memories, Schuyler is able to determine that Mimi cannot summon the hatred for



the ceremony to be performed the night of the Repository attack. Mimi had become disoriented, which meant that she was unable to recall any clear memories of the night. Kingsley himself had finished the ritual. Schuyler is able to resist the temptation of consuming Mimi, and reports her findings to the Conclave.

Mimi, found innocent, is released. Lawrence is therefore able to prove the guilt of the Martin family, which has fled. Yet there is another family still harboring the Silver Blood that must be discovered. Schuyler asks her grandfather if anyone knows what happened to Maggie Stanford, but her grandfather does not know. Jack thanks Schuyler. But the victory is bittersweet: Charles has won custody of Schuyler.

Bliss, healthy once more, is discharged from Dr. Pat's. While cleaning out a closet, Bliss finds a photo of her father and Allegra Van Alen. Suddenly, Dylan jumps through her window, still alive after all this time. He says he knows who the Silver Blood is.

Chapters 41-48 Analysis

There is dramatic fallout from the Repository incident. Mimi is accused of conspiring with the Silver Bloods to use dark magic to destroy the Blue Bloods; and Kingsley, in a sniveling, scheming turn, accuses Mimi of being a traitor. Schuyler is able to use her inherited talents in order to clear Mimi, and turn the pages on Kingsley, who disappears quickly thereafter.

Just as mystery has begun the book, mystery concludes the book. Schuyler is no closer to discovering who the Silver Blood is being harbored by; and the Martins have disappeared. Dylan's reappearance also proves to be a jarring mystery, and the book closes with many other questions also left unanswered. As triumphal as Mimi's acquittal is, the news that Schuyler has been adopted by Charles is disheartening.



Characters

Schuyler Van Alen

Schuyler Van Alen is the principle protagonist and main character in the novel "Masquerade" by Melissa De La Cruz. At fifteen, she is a sophomore at the prestigious Duchesne School, is a Blue Blood vampire, and has a deep admiration for art. Schuyler is best friends with Oliver Hazard-Perry, who later becomes her human familiar. Schuyler is intelligent, resourceful, and beautiful.

Schuyler seeks out her grandfather, Lawrence, in Venice Italy, and he later returns to New York to become her guide and mentor. Under Lawrence's tutelage, Schuyler becomes a more power vampire, learning all of the talents and techniques of vampirism. Schuyler and Lawrence know that the Silver Bloods have returned, and must prepare for the war with them that is coming.

Schuyler is the child of a human familiar and Allegra. The angel Gabrielle, broke Allegra's bond with Michael the Archangel, Charles Force so that Allegra could marry Schuyler's father. Schuyler has mixed blood and desperate needs a human familiar to survive. This is a role filled by Oliver out of love. Schuyler has also inherited her mother's ability to drink the blood of other vampires, thereby being able to see their memories and thoughts. Schuyler uses this ability to clear Mimi in court and save her life.

In the end, Schuyler is legally forced into adoption by Charles Force, who is seeking to end the Van Alen family for Gabrielle's rejection of him.

Oliver Hazard Perry

Oliver Hazard Perry is the best friend and human Conduit of Schuyler Van Alen. He is in love with her, and takes care of her. The two frequently hang out and travel around together. When Oliver discovers that Schuyler needs a human familiar, he volunteers twice to do so, backing out the first time because he doesn't believe Schuyler is being forthright.

Mimi Force

Mimi Force is the teenage daughter of Charles Force. She is pretty, fashion-oriented, vindictive, and rebellious. She is in reality Azrael, the Angel of Death, whose bond is the angel Abbadon, in the form of her brother Jack. They have both turned their backs on Lucifer, having done so centuries before. When Mimi suspects Jack is falling for Schuyler, Mimi works with Kingsley to use dark spells to exact revenge, but her lack of real hatred causes the spell to fail, meaning Kingsley must finish it. Mimi is accused of



being a Silver Blood, but is saved and declared innocent in court through a blood ritual carried out by Schuyler.

Jack Force

Jack Force is the teenage son of Charles Force. He is handsome, vastly intelligent, and very sensitive. He is n reality Abbaddon, the Angel of Destruction, who is bonded to Azrael, in the form of his sister Mimi. They have both turned their backs on Lucifer centuries before. Jack is infatuated with Schuyler, but he does not betray Mimi.

Charles Force

Charles Force is the father of Jack and Mimi, and is the head of global news magnate. He is inordinately wealthy and powerful, and rules the Blue Bloods. He is still heartbroken after being rejected by his bond Gabrielle in favor of a human familiar, who becomes the father of Schuyler. Charles wants to destroy the Van Alen family, going to such lengths as adopting Schuyler to make her his own. Charles is voted out office and replaced by Lawrence.

Bliss Llewellyn

The teenage, cheerleading daughter of a U.S. Senator, Bliss Llewellyn is haunted by nightmares of almost drowning and being stalked by a monstrous beast that calls her name. She is pretty and friendly, and is a model. She suffers from a blackout condition she later shares with Schuyler. While on a photo shoot, Bliss marks an assistant named Morgan as her human familiar. During the Repository attack, Bliss is assaulted by a Silver Blood, but manages to survive, and her body rejects the poison injected into her by the assault.

Lawrence Van Alen

Lawrence Van Alen is the grandfather, guide, and mentor of Schuyler Van Alen. He is wise, gentle, and powerful, and becomes the head of the Blue Blood clan. He is living in exile at the beginning of the book, having separated from his wife, Cordelia, to investigate the return of the Silver Bloods. He knows a war is coming, and it is a war the Blue Bloods are horribly unprepared for.

Kingsley Martin

Kingsley Martin is a mysterious boy who begins the spring semester at Duchesne School, and seduces Mimi to use dark spells to try to destroy Schuyler. It is later learned that Kingsley is indeed an agent of the Silver Bloods, and he and his family flee after being discovered.



Priscilla Dupont

Priscilla Dupont is the chief Blue Blood Warden, who is working on a case from the 1870s when she is killed in the attack at the Repository.

Allegra Van Alen

Allegra Van Alen is a Blue Blood vampire currently in a self-induced coma from heartsickness after the death of her husband and human familiar. Allegra is the mother of Schuyler, and is in reality the angel Gabrielle, who left Heaven to give the fallen a chance of hope. She rejects her bond, Michael (Charles Force) in order to marry her human familiar.



Objects/Places

Venice, Italy

Venice, Italy, is the early setting of the novel "Masquerade" by Melissa De La Cruz. It is where Schuyler seeks out her grandfather, Lawrence, who is living there in self-imposed exile.

New York, New York

New York, New York is the main setting of the novel "Masquerade" by Melissa De La Cruz. It is where Schuyler, the Forces, Bliss, and Oliver live. It is also the location of the Duchesne School and the Repository.

Schuyler's Bedroom

Schuyler's bedroom is where she performs the Sacred Kiss on Oliver, transforming him into her human "familiar."

Ducal Palace

Ducal Palace is where the courts are located for the Blue Bloods. It is where Mimi is put on trial and sentenced to be executed.

Duchesne School

The Duchesne School is an elite institute for vampire children and a select few humans. It is the school the Schuyler, Mimi, and Jack attend.

The Repository

The Repository is an underground Blue Blood library, the largest in the world with ten million books. It is the scene of a Silver Blood attack, orchestrated by Kingsley Martin.

Book of Dark Spells

The book of dark spells is what Kingsley Martin and Mimi Force use to attempt to bring back a Silver Blood from the darkness.



Chanel Dress

A Chanel dress, formerly owned by Allegra, is what Schuyler wears to the Four Hundred Ball.

Silver Swords

Silver swords are wielded by Charles and his associates as they search the Repository following the attack, to make sure everyone is alright, and to make sure the Silver Blood Croatan is gone.

Human Blood

Human blood is what is needed by all vampires to remain alive and keep up their strength.



Themes

Betrayal

Betrayal is a major theme in the novel "Masquerade" by Melissa De La Cruz. It appears everywhere throughout the book, pertaining to the mystery of the return of the Silver Bloods.

Betrayal first appears in a familial form, when Schuyler goes to seek out her grandfather Lawrence, in Venice, Italy. In Venice, Lawrence refuses to return to New York with Schuyler, and insists he is not the one to defeat the Silver Bloods. It is an apparent betrayal to his own kind, for refusing to help. But it is not a true betrayal as Lawrence later returns in triumph to assist his granddaughter.

Betrayal also appears more directly as well. In order for a Silver Blood to have survived centuries of supposed extinction, a Blue Blood individual or family has to be harboring the Silver Blood. This is a betrayal to the other Blue Bloods, in terms of both existence and identity. Silver Bloods are evil, destructive, pledge allegiance to Lucifer, and are horrifying -the exact opposite of the Blue Bloods. Whoever the Blue Blood individual or family is harboring a Silver Blood is an act of betrayal. This means that other Blue Bloods will die at the behest of another.

Family

Family is a major and dominant theme in the novel "Masquerade" by Melissa De La Cruz. It is present in every single aspect of the book, and it is a theme the swirls around the characters of Schuyler Van Alen and Mimi Force.

Schuyler's grandmother is killed by Silver Bloods, and so Schuyler seeks out her grandfather, who belatedly returns to New York to become her guide and mentor. The ties of family are stronger than Lawrence's affinity for his self-imposed exile and his comfort, for at great risk to himself and his life, he returns to protect and train Schuyler.

The Forces also have a strong sense of family among them, one which transcends the destruction of their reputation. When Mimi is declared guilty and sentenced to death at Ducal Palace, Charles Force ignores the hype around the case and bails Mimi out to have her returned to his custody. Jack, likewise, rallies to the defense of his sister and his father, at the potential expense of his own good reputation.

The bonds of family after death and hospitalization are also strong. Schuyler and Charles both go to visit Allegra in the hospital, out of a sense of family and love. Schuyler's family is in bits and pieces and so she desperate clings to what family she does have left. This includes her mother and her grandfather.

Love

Love is a major and dominant in the novel "Masquerade" by Melissa De La Cruz. Love inhabits every part of the book and proves to be the driving force for much of the plot.

Many of the events in the novel are consequences of the rejection of Michael by Gabrielle, so that Gabrielle/Allegra Van Alen could marry her human familiar, Steven Chase, with whom she was in love. The rejection of the bond causes Charles to want to destroy the Van Alen family, and Charles hopes that Gabrielle still loves him, and that her love for him will cause her to awaken from her coma one day.

Lawrence's return to New York for his granddaughter are partially due to a familial bond, but also due to familial love. It is also this same familial love that rallies Charles to the side of Mimi after she has been sentenced to death. Indeed, it is love for Jack that compelled Mimi to seek to destroy Schuyler, so that Jack would never fall in love with her.

Love between vampires and humans is also presented between Allegra and Steven and then later between Oliver and Schuyler. Oliver's love for Schuyler compels him to risk his life to become her human familiar, meaning that Schuyler will be safe. It is a love that Schuyler may in time return to Oliver, but for the moment, she is wary about his strong feelings for her. Indeed, love outside of bonds may be the strongest, for Allegra broke her bond with Charles in order to marry Steven.

Style

Point of View

Melissa De La Cruz tells her novel "Masquerade" in the third-person and omniscient narrative. This is done because there are a host of very diverse characters, each with a specific worldview which drives them. Telling the novel in first person would have made the transition between characters and competing plots much more difficult to handle, but De La Cruz's use of third person works far better in this case. Indeed, the need for back-stories and previous plots relevant in the current novel are best told through an omniscient and objective third-person narrator.

Setting

The setting of the novel "Masquerade" by Melissa De La Cruz is primarily in New York, New York. The novel, which focuses around rich and elite vampire socialites makes New York the perfect setting, for New York is considered a fashion capital of the world and the heart of the global social scene. It is also an economic powerhouse.

Language and Meaning

Melissa De La Cruz tells her novel "Masquerade" in language that is simple and straightforward and therefore, easy to read. This is done because the pace of the plot is rapid, and the events in the novel unfold quickly. Because of this, De La Cruz is able to keep her novel moving quickly, focusing only on those things she wishes to draw the attention of the readers to, but otherwise, helping them continue along without drawing them down in unnecessary detail or verbose language.

Structure

The novel "Masquerade" by Melissa De La Cruz is divided into forty-eight chronological chapters, with most focusing around the thoughts and actions of Schuyler Van Alen. The uncomplicated structure of the novel is traditional and works perfectly for the fast pace of the plot, as the reader moves swiftly from one event to the next, all without becoming tied down in an unusual or unique structure.



Quotes

Stop it, she told herself. Why think of that now? The nightmare vision was gone. The beast -whatever it was- resided in her imagination only.

-Chapter 3, p. 26

She had come with nothing but a name -she didn't even know what he would look like.

-Chapter 6, p. 41

Hopeless. Everything was hopeless now. Her grandfather had turned out to be useless: a scared old man with nothing to live for but his books, his cigars, and his port wine.

Chapter 10. p. 73

Like almost everybody in the room, for one brief moment, he had believed that Gabrielle, Allegra Van Alen, had returned to them.

Chapter 13, p. 104

Sensing her friend's pique, Schuyler leaned down and rested her head affectionately on his shoulder. If it hadn't been for Oliver... she might have... what? Passed out forever?

-Chapter 18, p. 134

"You Forces -or whatever you call yourselves these days -would be nothing without my family, without the sacrifices we made," Kingsley said darkly.

Chapter 21, p. 153

"What we are doing here is merely rote memory. School teaches a different skill set entirely: socialization, debate, learning to mix with humans. One must not alienate oneself from the mainstream."

-Chapter 25, p. 175

Kingsley used "fun" to describe all manner of mischief. It was apparent that to him, a dark and dangerous old spell was equal to driving a Ferrari at two hundred and fifty miles an hour; probably not a great idea, but one that had to be undertaken just to say you had done it."

-Chapter 27, p. 188

"The Sacred Kiss meant something to your mom. And you know what? You'll have to find another guinea pig. I'm not going to do it out of obligation."

-Chapter 36, p. 234

How long ago it seemed now: Lucifer's ascent to the throne, the Prince of Heaven in all his glory, his bright star rising as beautiful as the sun, as powerful as God, or so they had thought, to their own detriment.

-Chapter 44, p. 285



Topics for Discussion

How is the title of the book "Masquerade" by Melissa De La Cruz symbolic? How does the idea of false appearances fit into the characterization of those who appear in the book?

Describe the theme of family in the novel "Masquerade" by Melissa De La Cruz. Why is family important, and to whom? How do the different characters demonstrate their sense of family for one another?

Describe the theme of love in the novel "Masquerade" by Melissa De La Cruz. How does love appear in the novel and in what ways? What love between which characters is presented as strongest? Provide evidence to support your claim.

Do you believe Jack was, or is, falling in love with Schuyler? How would this affect the course of events if Jack broke his bond with Mimi to pursue Schuyler?

Discuss the theme of betrayal in the novel "Masquerade" by Melissa De La Cruz. Where does betrayal occur? Why is this essential to the plot?

Lawrence explains to Mimi that Charles Force wants to destroy the Van Alen family. Why is this so? What steps does Charles take in the novel to ensure this? Can Charles be considered evil? Why or why not? Provide evidence to support your claim.