

# **Cinder: Book One in the Lunar Chronicles Study Guide**

**Cinder: Book One in the Lunar Chronicles by Marissa Meyer**

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# Plot Summary

Cinder is a story of desperation, suffering, discrimination, and an overwhelming hope for change and acceptance. Linh Cinder is a teenage girl, part human, part cyborg who, as a result of her hidden past and lineage, finds herself the center of a war between the Lunars, Earth, and her own family. Through determination and the help of a few caring people, Cinder is able to find strength in herself.

Cinder is the story of a part human, part cyborg young woman named Linh Cinder. Believed to have been in an accident at a young age, Cinder has been adapted mechanically to adjust to loss of limb and ability. Orphaned, she is taken in by Linh Garan. After his death, however, her stepmother, Adri, treats her cruelly, and forces her to work for the family's only income. Cinder soon becomes the local mechanic, and is a resounding success. It is through this success that Cinder meets Prince Kai, the emperor's son. Kai flirts with Cinder, much to her dismay. In the meantime, a plague hits the city, and cyborgs are pulled into a draft program. When Cinder's stepsister Peony is affected, Adri furiously sends Cinder off to the program, where she learns from Dr. Erland that she is not only immune to the plague, but also a Lunar, or part of a race of beings from the moon. Queen Levana, of the moon, has been trying to force peace with the Earth through a royal marriage to Kai.

Cinder plans to escape from Adri's reach as money from her research with Dr. Erland comes in. Adri and Pearl, her other stepsister, prepare for the ball, where Kai will be named King, following his father's death of the plague. Kai's continued flirtations with Cinder only leave her more pained, since her stepmother hates her and she knows Kai would reject her if he knew she were Lunar and cyborg. When the coronation occurs, however, Cinder receives a message warning her that Queen Levana plans to kill the prince. Cinder swallows her pride and attends the ball in a greasy dress, only to kiss Kai, trying to stop his marriage to Levana. Cinder is discovered as a shell, or a Lunar person who is hiding on Earth without Lunar powers, and Kai turns his back on her. It is only when she is imprisoned that Dr. Erland reveals she is really the Queen's niece, long thought dead, and able to dethrone Levana, thereby saving Earth, and Prince Kai. Cinder is instructed to escape, and meet up with Dr. Erland in Africa.

Cinder is a painful story of love, betrayal, discrimination, social class, and disease, while at the same time, allowing readers to hope for a promising future for Cinder. It is a tale that reminds readers that judging a book by its cover often forces one to miss the finer points of mankind.



# Book One, Chapter One - Chapter Three

## Book One, Chapter One - Chapter Three Summary

Cinder is the story of Cinderella, told from a sci-fi perspective in a unique way. Cinder is a charming, beautiful young woman with a troubled past, and a fair amount of robotic adjustments, making her a cyborg. Through the novel, she learns more of her history, discovering she is really a Lunar queen who has been hidden for years, but she must learn to deal with her fears, and leave those she loves, in order to save her Emperor, and the planet, from evil Queen Levana.

In Chapter One, Cinder is working in the local market as a mechanic, as she does everyday. She removes her robotic foot, since it is too small, and she smiles slightly at the locals, who hate being near her because she is a cyborg. She is interrupted in her efforts by Prince Kai, who needs assistance fixing a valuable android. Cinder immediately hides her robotic limbs, and she and the Prince banter back and forth. It is clear the Prince is flirting with her, but Cinder is more nervous than charming. She knows Kai lies about the android being merely sentimental, since her optics have been altered to signify when someone is lying. Iko, Cinder's android, arrives with a replacement foot for Cinder, but Cinder is able to let Iko know to keep it quiet while Kai is near. When Iko compliments Kai on his good looks, Cinder explains that Iko has a programming error in her personality chip that forces her to be somewhat abnormal, but Kai doesn't seem to mind. When he leaves, promising to return to pick up the android, Iko and Cinder both express surprise and pleasure, knowing Peony, Cinder's stepsister, will be thrilled. Just as Cinder replaces her foot, they hear a scream in the market. Chang Sacha, a woman who despises Cinder because of her cyborg status, is screaming, as she discovers she has the plague, a deadly illness sweeping through the kingdom. Cinder and Iko hide in the booth until they come to take Sacha away.

Chapter Two finds a crew in the market, burning Sacha's booth as Cinder and Iko sneak away, walking home to avoid detection and quarantine. Once home, Cinder finds Adri fitting her daughters Peony and Pearl with beautiful dresses for the royal ball. Cinder is excluded, because she is merely Adri's ward, since her husband, Garan, took Cinder in when she was 11, but then died himself. Adri asks why Cinder is not at the market earning money, as she has the seamstress adjust Pearl's gown, knowing she is seeking a husband at the ball. Adri reminds Cinder that she will have to find her own gown for the ball, and get the hover fixed, before she can even consider going, but Cinder knows Adri will never allow her to attend. Prince Kai comes onto the newscreen, and assures the masses the government is doing all they can to cure letumosis, even though the disease has killed millions. Cinder remembers her own adoptive father being taken away with plague, while Adri stood screaming, asking him not to leave her with "this thing". His life is only present in the apartment with a bank of awards he won for his technological advancements. Kai's announcement is interrupted with news that his father, Emperor Rikan, has entered the third stage of the plague. Pearl reminds Cinder she could volunteer for plague testing, since there is a cyborg draft currently occurring.



Cinder knows those who are taken in rarely survive, but their families are paid well. Although Peony objects, Cinder knows it is only a matter of time before she is drawn in the draft.

In Chapter Three, Iko is excited for Cinder to go to the ball, but Cinder gently reminds her Adri will never allow her to go. As long as Adri can find things for her to fix, her chores, she notes, will never be done. She is fixing the hover, however, so she and Iko can have the apartment to themselves for one night. Peony arrives, and while noting how unfair the situation is, she ties a ribbon she has brought for Iko around the android's wrist. She begs to go with Iko and Cinder to the junkyard, and Cinder agrees, if Peony changes clothing, since she is still wearing the pretty dress.

## Book One, Chapter One - Chapter Three Analysis

Chapter One introduces several of the primary characters in the book, as well as several of the primary themes. First, readers meet Cinder, a young teenage girl with robotic limbs who is an ace mechanic. From the beginning, it is clear Cinder is not treated well, either by society or by her own family. Her too small limb is symbolic of the struggles she goes through as a cyborg, as well as a link back to the original Cinderella story, as in the original tale, there was a slipper that was too small. From Cinder's optic alterations to her hand and foot, it is clear she has had a lot of work done. It is also clear from her almost instinctual hiding of her artificial limbs that she is uncomfortable with her artificial limbs. This chapter also introduces the charming Prince Kai. Kai is not only attractive, but has an ease to his personality that is unexpected. Kai is attracted to Cinder, and Cinder obviously feels nervous in his presence. Iko, with her bubbly yet overwhelming personality, doesn't help this nervousness, but it is clear Iko and Cinder care for one another. Although Iko is merely an android, as one of Cinder's only friends, she is vital for Cinder's happiness. Kai's promise to return foreshadows his relationship with Cinder, but Sacha's sudden plague foreshadows Peony's illness, as well. Kai's android, with his clear hiding of information, indicates the android's importance later in the novel.

Chapter Two reveals more about Cinder's troubled home situation. Her stepmother, Adri, has a clear and direct distaste for Cinder, and she makes no move to hide it. The knowledge that Cinder was taken in at age 11 as an orphan is significant, because it foreshadows information about her accident later in the novel. Adri's lies about attending the ball, and her flat refusal to help Cinder purchase a dress, even though Cinder is the only income the family has, shows again her dislike for Cinder. Even Adri's comments about her own daughter needing to find a husband show she is selfish and money hungry.

Kai's speech of the plague, and Cinder's resulting memories of Garan's quarantine before his death, reaffirm two major plot points. First, the plague affects everyone, from the wealthy to the impoverished. Through the novel thus far, it has been clear that New Beijing is highly segregated in terms of social class, but the plague is the common denominator between the populations. This shows nature is still stronger in the novel



than modern science, despite the ability of humans to augment to cyborgs, as needed. Secondly, Adri's reaction at the time of Garan's death reaffirms her hatred of Cinder, and her reluctance to care for the young cyborg. His disappearance from the apartment, aside from his awards, again shows Adri cares more for appearances than feelings or sentimentality. The awards being related to technology also indicates Garan may have been involved in Cinder's robotic adjustments.

The cyborg draft also serves several purposes in this chapter. First, Pearl's remarks show she too hates Cinder, and wishes her harm. The idea of the draft shows readers that cyborgs are seen as far less than human, since they are being used by the government as guinea pigs. This is explained further later in the novel, but at this point, it appears cyborgs are highly expendable. Peony's sticking up for Cinder shows she loves her, and does give hope for Cinder, but it is very clear Peony has little influence over the family.

Chapter Three further shows this friendship between Peony and Cinder. Peony loves her stepsister, and wishes she could make things more fair, and her gift to Iko shows she is a kind young woman. Cinder's comments about her "chores" again tie this tale back to the original Cinderella, since she too sought to go to the ball, but had an endless list of chores. Iko's discussions in this chapter show her to be a unique android, but one who cares for Cinder as much as an android can. Unfortunately, the trip to the junkyard foreshadows future problems for these three characters.



# Book One, Chapter Four - Chapter Eight

## Book One, Chapter Four - Chapter Eight Summary

Chapter Four finds Peony playfully chastising Cinder for not coming to get her when the Prince arrived in her booth. As the two talk, even Peony realizes Cinder now has a small crush on Prince Kai. Cinder finds the piece for the hover she needs, as Peony reminds Cinder that Kai will be looking for a bride at the ball. However, she has also heard the prince will be marrying Queen Levana, the Queen of the Lunar colony. The Lunars are a group stemming from Earth, but who have changed, and who now have powers to brainwash humans. They are greedy and violent, and the Queen is supposedly the worst, as she killed her older sister, her own husband, and forced her stepdaughter to mutilate herself. She even supposedly killed Princess Selene, her own niece, to keep the throne for herself. Conspiracy theorists believe Selene is still alive, since her body was never found. Cinder repeats the Prince would never marry a Lunar as she finds a gasoline powered car at the junkyard. Having never seen one, she is determined to restore it, although it is in horrible condition. They joke, but Cinder soon sees splotches on Peony's skin. Peony begins to scream, as she realizes she has the plague.

In Chapter Five, Cinder's auditory interface tries to filter Peony's screams as Cinder frantically wonders if she has carried the plague to her sister. Her retina displays a warning that her adrenaline levels are too high, as she calls for an emergency vehicle. Knowing if she were going to catch it, she already had, Cinder wraps Peony in her arms, apologizing profusely. When the android medics arrive, they check Cinder, but she is not carrying the disease. They scan the ID chip in her wrist, and Cinder watches helplessly as Peony is taken away to the quarantines.

Chapter Six finds Cinder home, anguished and wondering what to tell Adri and Pearl. When she arrives, however, she finds that her stepmother and stepsister already know. Adri demands that Iko clear out Peony's things, while she blames Cinder openly for infecting Peony, either directly, or by taking her to the junkyard in the first place. The two argue, as Adri blatantly points out she didn't want Cinder, that Garan's death was her fault, and that she didn't want her in the first place. Adri claims she tried to care for Cinder, but now must do for her family. She admits she has volunteered Cinder for plague research, and although Cinder is appalled, she has no choice. She fights, but is overtaken by the med droids.

In Chapter Seven, Dr. Dmitri Erland is testing cyborg subjects, but is rejecting most of them, because they do not fit criteria he can explain to no one. His assistant argues with him, but Erland is forceful in his decisions. He admits to himself he is having hallucinations, and they are getting worse. The assistant, meanwhile, points out that Erland has been accepting only teenage girls of a high cyborg percentage, and she is suspicious. He ignores her and proceeds to the next patient, Cinder. He seems excited about her high level of interior work, and proceeds with her testing.



Chapter Eight reveals Cinder has fairly constant dreams of being burned in a fire. She wakes to find a med bot poking and prodding her, as Erland's voice comes in from speakers, since he is in another room. A robot attaches to her, and scans to see how much of her body is robotic, and determines she is 36 percent altered, since her spine, legs, and ribs are all metal, as well. Erland explains they will inject her with a solution of the plague, and her own body will try to fight it. When it fails, they will inject their latest antibody. Cinder knows, however, that no antibodies in the past have worked, and that she will likely die. She can do nothing, however, and is injected.

## Book One, Chapter Four - Chapter Eight Analysis

In Chapter Four, Peony's comments about Kai finding a wife foreshadow both Kai's attraction to Cinder, but also his impending marriage to Queen Levana. Peony clearly has a crush on Kai, but Cinder, at this point, does as well, surprisingly. As calm as she pretends to be, she is affected by the prince's charm. The conversation about the Lunar colony gives several clues to events later in the novel, but at this point, merely shows that the Lunars are a frightening race. Their brainwashing abilities, combined with Levana's actions to become queen, show how evil she can be. The information here about Selene foreshadows the knowledge later that Cinder is really Selene. This chapter also serves to bring about Cinder's plan for escape in the gasoline car, but this plan is put on a back burner with Peony's plague. Her disease foreshadows Cinder's own guilt about her sister's illness, but also her step family's increased hatred of her as a result.

Chapter Five is agonizing for Cinder, because it shows her fear of being responsible for Peony's illness. She loves her sister, and her actions show this when she throws caution to the wind to try and comfort her sister. There is little, however, since Peony knows the plague is deadly. The chapter does show there are even more modifications to Cinder than readers immediately knew; her retina and hearing have also been modified. Cinder's knowledge that she is not carrying the disease does little, however, to ease her guilt, since Peony's terror is severe.

Her arrival at home in Chapter Six shows Adri's true heartlessness. First, her orders to Iko to immediately clear out Peony's things show she has no hope, and cares only for herself and her other daughter. Although she is upset at Peony's illness, the tears she sheds appear to be more for decoration than for true emotion. She, of course, blames Cinder, and her decision to turn Cinder over for testing shows her disdain for the girl as well as her greed for payment. Adri hides nothing in this chapter, and her hate is so clear, it is painful. Cinder is even surprised, as Adri doesn't even pretend to hide her raw hate. Cinder's response, to fight, shows she is strong, but she is not yet strong enough. The treatment of Cinder here reminds readers that cyborgs are not considered human, and have little to no rights.

Chapter Seven introduces Dr. Erland, another primary character in the novel. From the beginning it appears Erland is hiding something. His seemingly eccentric memory, combined with his odd choice of "test" subjects, shows he is looking for something





specific. This foreshadows the knowledge later that he is searching specifically for Selene. What is clear now is that Erland is looking for cyborgs who match Cinder's characteristics. His excitement about her shows there is more to the testing than meets the eye.

In Chapter Eight, Cinder's dreams further foreshadow her as Princess Selene. Knowing Selene was in a fire, and realizing Cinder's dreams of her own accident match this, one sees the relationship, although Cinder does not. Her reality when she wakes is shocking to her, but the adjustments made to her body again indicate there is something special about Cinder. This is furthered by Erland's obvious excitement when he sees her modifications. At the same time, Erland very matter of factly tells Cinder of what they are planning, which gives a hint to the reader that Cinder is likely immune to the plague. Again in this chapter, we see Cinder as a helpless cyborg being manipulated by others, showing her class is seen as far less than human.



# Book Two, Chapter Nine - Chapter Fourteen

## Book Two, Chapter Nine - Chapter Fourteen Summary

In Chapter Nine, Erland and his assistants are marveling about Cinder's robotic makeup, when Erland realizes her natural body defenses are winning against the plague microbes. Erland asks the medbot to take another blood sample, but is watching as her body fights, and wins, against the disease. Erland asks that Cinder also be untied, and taken to another room.

In Chapter Ten, Cinder is taken to another exam room, where she finds her boots, gloves, and personal belongings. Her restraints are also released. When Erland arrives and asks to talk with her, Cinder is furious, but when she goes to attack him, she finds herself relenting, seeing him instead as a sad, old man. She is surprised when her lie detector goes off, since Erland does not say anything. Erland, smiling, asks her to sit.

Chapter Eleven finds Cinder surprisingly tolerant in listening to Erland. He explains that he and the others believe she is immune to the plague, but needs to do more research. Cinder admits her stepfather contracted the disease, likely in Europe when he picked her up. She explains that she doesn't remember anything prior to the hover accident that caused her damage at age eleven. Erland seems to disbelieve her, but does note she is highly important. He also promises she will be paid, and Cinder knows this could get her away from Adri. Erland readily agrees to keep the money given to her in a separate account, and promises her sister will be the second person to receive the antidote, if one is found in time.

Chapter Twelve finds Kai agonizing over the illness of his father, while his assistant, Konn Torin, tries to reassure him. At the same time, Torin strongly points out that Kai needs to prepare to become emperor. As he leaves to visit Dr. Erland, he runs into Sybil Mira, head assistant to the Lunar Crown, Queen Levana. Kai looks at her, and feels her inside of his head as he forcibly looks away, breaking her hold. Sybil reminds Kai that Levana has been in talks for years with Rikan, but Kai reminds her Levana's demands are too high. Leaving Sybil behind, Torin reminds Kai he will need to decide what to do about Levana, and Kai angrily notes he will not marry her, which is part of her demands. Torin seems perturbed at this, but says little. Kai admits to Torin he has been seeking evidence of Princess Selene, the Queen's niece and rightful heir to the throne. Torin rebukes Kai, reminding him that if Levana were to find out, she would wage war, but Kai is aware that a war would end the Union, because they would lose to the Lunar army.

In Chapter Thirteen, Cinder and Erland talk, and Cinder agrees she knows she is missing tear ducts and is unable to blush, but that she did not know her insides were so carefully reconstructed, including a small chip in her spine. When pressed for how long she would have been contagious, Erland confirms she could not have infected Peony.



Erland admits he has a few theories of Cinder's immunity, but he is choosing to wait until he knows something concrete before sharing with her. When Dr. Erland pinches the space in her spine where the chip resides, Cinder cries out in severe pain, and crumples to the floor.

When Cinder wakes in Chapter Fourteen, Erland and Kai are both at her side. Kai helps her up as Erland lies to Kai, claiming he merely gave Cinder a spinal adjustment, as Cinder's lie detector goes haywire. Erland continues the lie, claiming Cinder is at the castle to fix a med droid, and Cinder agrees, suspicious of why Erland is lying on her behalf. Cinder stumbles out, clearly nervous as Kai flirts with her gently, and Erland reminds her to return to the castle the following day, to "attend the med bot," and Cinder knows Erland will hunt her down if she doesn't return. She knows she shouldn't fantasize about the Prince, but she cannot help it since his touch is memorable.

## **Book Two, Chapter Nine - Chapter Fourteen Analysis**

In Chapter Nine, Cinder's true value to society begins to show, as it becomes clear she is able to fight the plague without assistance, meaning she is immune. Erland seems to understand what this means more than anyone, but he does not reveal his ideas at this point. The fact that Cinder is so augmented, combined with the fact that she is immune to the plague and seems to have a chip installed in her spine, does seem to suggest there is a whole lot more to Cinder's story than even she is aware.

In Chapter Ten, there are subtle hints to Erland's true nature. Cinder's release, combined with the return of her belongings, on the surface looks as though Erland merely does not see Cinder as a threat. However it is clear he knows in detail what she is capable of doing. However, her response when she nearly attacks him, in that her mental thoughts about Erland suddenly seem to shift, suggest that Erland may be able to control Cinder. Her lie detector picks up a lie, but she knows he hasn't spoken. This detector is actually picking up his glamor. Knowing Lunars can control minds and present false images, this suggests Erland is actually Lunar, foreshadowing his role in finding Selene in the novel.

In Chapter Eleven, even more information about Cinder is suggested. Her stepfather's contraction of the disease immediately following her arrival does suggest a link. In addition, Erland's comments about the unlikelihood of such a horrible hover accident, enough to take Cinder's natural parent's life and mar her so completely, show he does not believe the story she has been told about her accident. Erland also seems highly anxious to retain Cinder, under any circumstances. Although this could be merely due to his plague research, he seems far more interested in her mechanical augmentations than her immunity, suggesting there is more to the story. However, Erland's desire to keep her does seem to translate to a possible escape for Cinder, giving her hope.

In Chapter Twelve, Konn Torin is introduced, as is the slow death of Emperor Rikan. At first, Torin seems to be a caring adviser, but through this chapter he reveals himself to be a suspicious character. Sybil's presence on the planet annoys and frightens Kai,



because he knows Queen Levana seeks a marriage supposedly to pursue peace, but Kai wishes to follow his father, and refuse. It seems Torin is dedicated to pushing gently, so Kai marries Levana. This suggests Torin is not as loyal as he first appears. Sybil is a Lunar, as shown by her powerful control over Kai, and his strength in pushing her away foreshadows the need for him to be even stronger against Levana. Torin's anger at Kai for attempting to find Selene also suggests he knows more than he lets on.

Chapter Thirteen reveals there is much that has been adjusted in Cinder. With no tear ducts and the inability to blush, Cinder has been mechanically augmented not to show emotion. Her intact uterus suggests that someone took great trouble to make sure she could reproduce. Additionally, the chip in her spine that appears to regulate her functioning also seems suspicious. Everything points to Cinder being highly important, foreshadowing her identity as Selene. Dr. Erland's pressure on her spine, and the resulting collapse, show Cinder does have something particularly special.

In Chapter Fourteen, Kai again shows himself to be not only flirtatious, but caring and considerate. He also shows again an interest in Cinder that goes beyond mere friendship. Erland, for his part, shows Cinder he will not reveal her secret, but this only makes him more suspicious in Cinder's eyes, since he also makes it clear he fully expects her cooperation in return. Cinder is somewhat trapped, because she now has no one to turn to for help. Kai doesn't know her secret, and is the one person who does seem to be keeping things from her.



# Book Two, Chapter Fifteen - Chapter Eighteen

## Book Two, Chapter Fifteen - Chapter Eighteen Summary

In Chapter Fifteen, Cinder marvels at the view of New Beijing from the castle, since the city's dirt and poverty are virtually unseen from this level. She knows, however, that she has to return to Adri in order to save Iko, and to wait for a time she can be free. When she does return home, Cinder claims the researchers didn't want her, and sent her back. She and Adri argue fiercely, with Adri reminding her she is useless and unwanted, and Cinder retorting that she is paying the way for the entire family to survive. Cinder changes and leaves the apartment to go back to work, with Iko in tow. Iko is thrilled to see her, and reminds her that with the money she is going to get from her research, she could go to the ball, and points out she saved Peony's dress. Cinder explains her plan instead, to run away once she is paid in full by the researchers, using the gas powered car in the junkyard.

Chapter Sixteen finds Kai rushing to his dying father's bedside, only to realize he is too late, that Emperor Rikan has died. Kai fears he will not be a good Emperor, being too young and inexperienced, but Torin reassures him. Almost instantly, Queen Levana comes to express her sympathy, and Kai notes she must have spies. Torin appears to bristle, as if warning Kai to keep quiet, but Levana surprises him further by explaining she is coming to Earth to continue peace talks with Kai himself. Kai is outraged, but Torin reminds him he must accept her offer, in order to maintain peace. Kai remembers suddenly that the Lunar refuse to have mirrors, and he worries about his people's response to her arrival.

In Chapter Seventeen, Cinder receives a comm that Peony has entered the third stage of the disease. Cinder decides to visit Peony in the quarantines, and she hires a taxi to take her there. Arriving, she can smell defecation and rotting flesh, but she forges on for her stepsister. She reaches Peony, who is surprised to see Cinder when she wakes. Cinder explains she is immune, and they are seeking a cure. Peony is scared, but asks merely for her port screen, so she can comm her mother. Cinder promises to fix it, and Peony falls back to bed, telling her sister she loves her. Cinder walks away, only to be stopped by Chang Sacha, who is gravely ill. She asks Cinder to bring her son, but dies before Cinder's eyes. Cinder watches as a med bot cuts the ID from inside Sacha's wrist, and is outraged as it drops the chip in a tray with dozens of others.

Chapter Eighteen finds Cinder returning to the palace, only to be met by Kai. The two tease one another a bit, but Cinder soon realizes the Emperor is dead, and apologizes profusely for not knowing. Kai explains that Levana's arrival is almost worse, and that he absolutely needs his droid, Nainsi, because she has information that could assist him. Cinder agrees, and when they reach Erland's office, Kai reports he has found the



"pretty" mechanic. Kai kisses her hand as he leaves, but he immediately returns, and asks Cinder to the ball. She stutters, but declines, noting she is not attending the ball. Kai is clearly dejected, but attempts to shrug it off, and leaves, with Cinder feeling horrible and cruel. Erland notes it is unfortunate she cannot blush.

## **Book Two, Chapter Fifteen - Chapter Eighteen Analysis**

Chapter Fifteen reveals that Cinder is already planning her escape from Adri. She knows all too well that Adri will continue to imprison her as she has for many years, and will continue to try to get rid of her as long as she stays. She understands that Iko is in danger, as well, and that she is the only person to save the android, since they are cared little for in general. This again shows the discrimination against androids in the book, regardless of status. This social status theme is also shown by the view from the castle. Cinder points out that, from the castle, the poverty and grime of the city are masked, and unseen. This represents the view of the upper class in the novel as they ignore the plight of the lower classes. However, as the plague has shown, it is the one regulator of society, since it knows no social bounds, and this foreshadows the death of the emperor. Also in this chapter, the saving of Peony's dress, combined with her comments about the ball, foreshadow Cinder's attendance later in the novel, while her plans of escape show she will be obtaining the gas car that becomes vital later in the book. It is clear now that Iko and Erland are the only two individuals who really know Cinder is a cyborg, and still have reason to care for her, other than Peony.

Chapter Sixteen reveals the death of the emperor, again showing the plague as the ultimate nondiscriminatory factor in the book. Kai's concerns for his ability to govern, combined with Levana's unwanted appearance and Torin's seemingly biased view toward marriage of Levana all lend to serious pressure on Kai. Torin's actions in this chapter could be taken two ways. Either Torin is merely trying to maintain peace and fears war, or he has reasons to want Kai and Levana to marry. He seems to support her coming to the commonwealth, and seems to fear Kai's thoughts of spies in the castle, indicating he may be one. Kai has no choice but to approve Levana's arrival. This foreshadows problems between Kai and Torin, as well as Kai and Levana. The mention of the mirrors, and of Levana's glamor, reminds readers that Lunars are not normal beings, and should be feared.

Chapter Seventeen shows Cinder is not only brave, but that she really does love her sister. She risks her life, again, to go see Peony, even though she is now relatively certain she is immune. The conditions of the quarantine, particularly in comparison to the emperor's quarantine, show that while the plague takes everyone, their deaths are not the same. Again, we see that social class in the book does have an impact on the quality of life, and death, for the citizens in the commonwealth. The emperor was allowed to die at the castle with loved ones, while Peony and the others in middle and lower classes must die alone, in a rotting warehouse. Peony's clear pain, combined with Cinder's promises to her, unfortunately foreshadow Peony's death, as does Sacha's death. However, Sacha's death also shows the power of the plague. In life, Sacha



feared and despised Cinder for being cyborg. As she passes away, however, Sacha is less hateful, since she has perhaps learned that Cinder's cyborg nature is nothing to fear. Finally, the taking of the identity chip of Sacha not only provides outrage to Cinder, but also foreshadows Cinder's own stealing of her sister's chip later.

In Chapter Eighteen, the story returns back to fairytale, as Kai invites Cinder to the ball. From when the two meet on the elevator again, it is clear Kai likes Cinder, and she likes him in return. Kai's reliance on her as a confidant, combined with his clear communication of his intentions to her suggests he trusts her more than most. Combined with her own guilt over not telling him the truth, Cinder's emotions are easily understood. She does not wish to embarrass the prince, or make him at all upset, but she understands that her lies to him, were they ever discovered, could destroy him. Her refusal of his offer is as hard on her as it is on him, but Cinder knows it is for his own good. This scene is painful, since it is clear on both sides that, under normal circumstances, the situation would be different but again, because of social status, Cinder feels she has to refuse. For his part, Kai is asking not only out of self preservation, as he claims, but also because he finds himself falling for Cinder. It seems only Erland is mildly amused at the two's unfortunate circumstances, again suggesting the doctor knows more than he appears to.



# Book Two, Chapter Nineteen - Book Three, Chapter Twenty-two

## Book Two, Chapter Nineteen - Book Three, Chapter Twenty-two Summary

In Chapter Nineteen, Cinder convinces herself that the prince merely asked her because she was convenient. When pressed as to why Erland is keeping her a secret, the doctor is evasive, pointing out only that he will reveal her value when the time is ready. Erland seems almost amused that the Prince is showing interest in her, but when Cinder admits she went to see Peony, his amusement turns to cautionary instruction as he informs Cinder of why the bots removed the ID chip. He explains that in rural areas, the ID chips are often sold illegally to those wishing to become someone else. He explains that many are purchased by illegal Lunars living on Earth. He further explains that the Lunars fear mirrors because Lunars are able to create glamors, or visions, by manipulating bioelectrical energy. It is easier to convince others of one's beauty, or looks, if one believes it herself, and thus, the Lunars refuse to use mirrors. When Erland learns Levana is coming to Earth, his instruction changes to actual fear. He insists that Cinder must leave the castle, and not return until Levana is gone. When she resists, Erland explains that as a result of the DNA tests, he has confirmed that she is, in fact, Lunar. He further explains that she is called a shell, a Lunar without magical abilities. He also explains that Levana has instituted a law on Luna that children born as shells are to be killed, because they are immune to Lunar powers. Cinder's light alerts her Erland is lying, but she is unsure which part he is lying about. It goes away as he continues to explain that she is immune because all Lunars are immune, although they did bring the disease to Earth as carriers. Erland continues by claiming the Queen will recognize her at once, and will kill her.

In Chapter Twenty, Levana arrives in a beautifully decorated spacecraft. Kai is nervous, but Torin seems impassive. When Kai sees Levana, he is forced to admit the glamor is effective, since she is the image of perfection. Kai is fearful, but manages to hold his own against her powers, at least for a time. Sybil leads her away, and when they leave, Kai asks if Torin felt her. He replies that he did, but that Kai did well against her. He admits to Kai that it will get harder to resist.

In Book Three, Chapter Twenty-one, Cinder is happy to be working again, after spending two days defragging Adri's mainframe, while imagining that Adri almost feels sorry for what she has done. Cinder works on the car tirelessly, but all the while thinks of her new identity as a cyborg Lunar fugitive. She works on Kai's android as a distraction, but also because she knows the robot contains something Kai needs. Iko comes in, dressed in pearls and lipstick, and Cinder laughs. Iko notes that Adri had been in the bathtub, crying, and Cinder feels badly. As they work, Iko discovers a chip in Nainsi, and it seems out of place. Cinder realizes it is a direct communications chip,





rarely used, and never with robots of this type. She inserts the chip into her netlink, and finds it trying to communicate with an unknown source. As Iko leaves, Nainsi turns back on, reporting information about Princess Selene, that she had been taken from Luna four months following her supposed death by a doctor named Logan Tanner. Tanner committed suicide, but not before giving Selene to another caregiver. Nainsi suddenly stops, noting she is not at the palace, and Cinder explains. She promises Nainsi she will get her back to Kai.

Chapter Twenty-two finds Cinder at the castle, despite Erland's warnings. When she arrives, however, she finds a protest against Levana's arrival in full swing. Although the guards refuse Cinder entrance, they do allow Nainsi to enter, and Nainsi promises to fetch Kai. When the crowd suddenly quiets behind her, Cinder realizes Levana has come out to the balcony, and has awed the crowd. Cinder finds herself awed momentarily, as well, but her lie detector begins to flash incessantly, and Cinder realizes the Queen is brainwashing the crowd. When Cinder stumbles slightly, the Queen's eyes fall on her, and Cinder sees hatred and disgust in her face. Her retina display begins to malfunction, and she can feel the Queen boring into her. Eventually the Queen storms away, and the crowd leaves, placated. Cinder suddenly realizes she is not just a shell, and that the Queen is now very aware of her presence.

## **Book Two, Chapter Nineteen - Book Three, Chapter Twenty-two Analysis**

Chapter Nineteen serves to explain some of what has been hinted at thus far in the novel, and serves to set up some of Cinder's tale. Erland's explanation of the selling of identity chips helps later explain how Cinder became an Earth citizen, once it is revealed she is Lunar in this chapter. The explanation of Lunars and mirrors foreshadows the attack on the queen later in the novel, but also explains how Lunars are able to control others. Erland's explanations of why Cinder must not be seen by Levana, however, appears to be misleading. It is clear he is lying, although about what, Cinder can't be sure. Erland's direct fear, coupled with his secretive behavior, hints again at the idea that Cinder could be Princess Selene, although this still is not mentioned. When it is confirmed that Cinder is Lunar, however, and that someone tried to hide her, one can begin to see the link. Cinder's Lunar heritage does explain her immunity to the plague, but this also hints that Erland, too, is Lunar, which is confirmed later in the novel.

Chapter Twenty serves to show the power of the Lunar race. Even though Kai is prepared, Levana easily overpowers Kai's mind, although not for long. The decorative nature of her craft serves to foreshadow the Lunar involvement in the chip imbedded in Nainsi, while Torin's behaviors again seem odd. His ability to reject Levana's powers is seemingly much better than Kai's, and again he seems reluctant to repel the queen.

Chapter Twenty-one further develops the story of what happened to Nainsi, and why she is so needed by the prince. Iko's behavior in this chapter again shows she loves Cinder as much as possible for an Android, and that she does have a personality, even



if it is programmed. Iko also reveals that perhaps Adri does have at least some feelings, as her sobs in the bathtub would imply. Most importantly in this chapter, however, is the information developed from the chip in Nainsi. The recognition that the chip caused a malfunction suggests that Kai was not the one who placed the chip. This implies that someone was trying to use the robot for direct information. Although there is no one on the other end of the comm at the moment, this alone foreshadows Cinder's discovery of Cress later in the novel. Additionally, when Nainsi wakes, it is revealed that Prince Kai had her seeking for Princess Selene, and that Nainsi has discovered some information that lends credit to the idea that the young princess actually survived the fire. This, combined with knowledge of Cinder's fiery dreams and her status as a Lunar, foreshadows her being identified as the Princess.

Chapter Twenty Two serves as a warning to Cinder that she is in far over her head. Her discovery by Queen Levana in the crowd is highly irregular, as several things appear to happen. First, it almost appears as though Cinder's electrical system compensates for the Lunar glamor ability. This would serve to show Cinder is not actually a shell, but something else, and that her system has been wired to override the influence of Lunars. This foreshadows information in the following chapter regarding this. Secondly, the fury of the Queen at the sight of Cinder foreshadows not only that the Queen did, in fact, mark her as a Lunar, but also something more.



# Book Two, Chapter Twenty-three - Chapter Twenty-five

## Book Two, Chapter Twenty-three - Chapter Twenty-five Summary

In Chapter Twenty-three, Sybil and Levana are proud of their handling of the citizens, while Kai and Torin are disapproving. Levana is furious, as she points out she has seen a Lunar, which puts Kai in violation of the Interplanetary Agreement. Kai protests, and when he and Levana argue, Torin calms her, noting they will dispatch a party to locate the Lunar. Levana gives Kai a gift, claiming it is a cure for letumosis. She apologizes for it being too late for his father, but Kai is furious. Just then, Nainsi arrives, and Levana and Sybil are furious, demanding that the "monstrosity" be removed. Torin goes pale, and Kai leaves with Nainsi, angry. In the hall, Kai goes through his anger, but realizes he is still strong against Levana. He asks Nainsi about Cinder, hoping she has reconsidered the ball.

Chapter Twenty-four finds Cinder being taken to Kai. The two walk together as Cinder explains the communications chip installed in the android that stopped her from functioning properly. Kai claims he never installed the chip, prompting Cinder to explain that she knows what the android was hunting for, Princess Selene. She also points out that the comm chip was likely installed for someone to gain access to that information. She explains what the chip looked like, and Kai recognizes it as material of the Lunars. Kai also reveals Levana knows a Lunar is in the city, and he expresses anger at the mere thought, making Cinder's heart drop. Kai again pressures her to attend the ball with him, and he is genuinely hurt she refuses. He continues to ask and hound, until Cinder finally uses Peony as an excuse, noting she is not going to the ball because Peony is ill and it wouldn't be right to go. Kai, humbled and embarrassed, apologizes profusely, and Cinder asks, if Peony somehow survives, if the Prince would find it in his heart to dance with Peony at the ball. Kai agrees, and admits Levana may win against him anyway. He admits Cinder is easy to talk to, and as she tries to reassure him everything will be fine, he leans in, asking if Cinder would ruin her own life to find a cure. Without hesitation, she admits she would, and Kai warily agrees. He leans in close, preparing to kiss her, when pain explodes again in her spine, and she crumbles. Kai helps her when she is stable again, but jerks away suddenly. She asks why, and he shakes something off, noting he was seeing things.

Chapter Twenty-five Finds Kai walking Cinder to Erland, demanding that he correct whatever is causing her issues. Erland assures the Prince Cinder will be fine with another spinal adjustment, and Kai seems relieved. Cinder assures him she is fine, and after giving the antidote from Levana to Erland, Kai leaves, and Cinder finds Erland furious at her for being at the castle. She explains that the Queen has already seen her. She presses Erland as to why, if she is a shell, she was affected by Levana and he



admits, without saying anything, that he lied about her being a shell. He explains that Garan designed android systems, and the year before she was obtained, he had developed a bioelectrical security system, which, in a human, makes one immune to Lunar charms, and in a Lunar, makes one incapable of manipulating others. In order to test the prototype, he needed two subjects, a Lunar and a human. For the Lunar, he clearly obtained Cinder. Cinder becomes angry, asking Erland to explain everything, and he does so, explaining that by locking her ability, Garan essentially saved her. To use her abilities would have meant exposure and death, and those Lunars who suppress their abilities often lose their minds. Inadvertently, Erland uses the word "we" when discussing Lunars, and Cinder realizes Erland is a Lunar, as well. He admits he used it when they first met, so she would not attack him, but also notes he is losing his mind precisely because he doesn't use his powers. Erland explains that he ran from Luna because Levana killed his daughter, because she was a shell. He also explains that despite the efforts of Garan, her abilities are returning, since Erland has unlocked her powers. Cinder asks if Erland is immune to the plague, and when he affirms he is, she wonders why he isn't using his own blood for the antidote. Erland is forced to admit that Cinder is the miracle he was looking for not because of her immunity, but because of something else. At just that moment, Cinder is alerted that Peony is in the fourth stage of the plague. Erland quickly gives her a fourth of the antidote, and sends her to test it on her beloved sister.

## **Book Two, Chapter Twenty-three - Chapter Twenty-five Analysis**

Chapter Twenty-three shows Kai to be a stronger leader, and match, than Levana first anticipated, but also reveals Kai is really having to battle to maintain. Levana is furious about seeing Cinder, and her demands that the Lunar be found foreshadow Cinder's capture later in the novel. Levana, for her part, shows herself to be cruel in all manners as she gives Kai a cure for the plague soon after his father's death, knowing they are both aware she could have saved his father. Nainsi's arrival suggests Kai may learn of Selene's presence, and may have time to find her before Levana begins a war, but also shows Levana is a threat to everyone, even androids. Finally, at the close of this chapter, Kai shows he really is interested in Cinder, as he still seeks her out for the ball.

The conversation between Kai and Cinder in Chapter Twenty-four shows that Kai trusts Cinder more than almost anyone in his life. Their closeness is difficult, as one is aware Cinder is being deceitful by not telling him what she has learned about herself, and that she is a cyborg. Also, the knowledge that Nainsi was likely purposefully sabotaged by Sybil continues to show the dangers of the Lunars, particularly since Nainsi knows so much of Selene. But Kai's response to Cinder's continued refusal to attend the ball is most difficult in this chapter, as one can sense his honest care for Cinder, and she for him. Her lies to Kai only serve to make him feel humble and badly for his pressure, and although Cinder's lie is at least true in nature, it clearly bothers her to tell it. This is clear when she prepares to kiss him, and her neurological sensors overload, causing another blackout. When she is stable, there is a moment where Kai jerks away as though he



saw something, and this indicates to readers, who know she is Lunar, that something likely shifted in her glamor.

Chapter Twenty-five solidifies some of what readers have likely begun to suspect about Cinder. First, The knowledge that Garan needed a test subject for his prototype explains why he chose a cyborg orphan to manipulate, but the knowledge that he also needed a human suggests there is another of his guinea pigs somewhere. Her security system does, however, protect her from her own past, and her present, since she is able to both combat the Lunar urges, and the Lunar glamors. On the other hand, Erland's disabling of it has caused her to regain her powers, which may be useful later in the series. The knowledge that Erland used a glamor when Cinder first met him explains why she didn't want to kill him. Erland's admission that Cinder is special outside her immunity to the plague foreshadows the knowledge she is really Selene. The chapter ends with the hope that Peony can be saved.



# Book Two, Chapter Twenty-six - Chapter Twenty-nine

## Book Two, Chapter Twenty-six - Chapter Twenty-nine Summary

In Chapter Twenty-six, Kai arrives at a meeting of the highest delegates of the Earth Commonwealth to discuss the future. The leaders all frown on Levana's presence on Earth, yet seem somewhat relieved at the idea that she is still seeking marriage to Kai. When Kai reminds them he does not plan to marry, they are equally outspoken. Kai does tell them, to Torin's dismay, that she has brought an antidote, and that if it proves to be effective, Kai will do what he must for his country. Other options are offered, including other Princes in the Union Levana could marry, but all understand Levana wants no one other than the Commonwealth heir. Also, although Levana has a stepdaughter, she is not of royal blood, and therefore it would not be likely for Levana to allow a marriage vow to seal the peace agreement. One of the other presidents notes they have photographs of Levana's army, crosses of men with beasts, animals of savagery that she is preparing to fight. They are genetically engineered Lunars, one person suspects, and there could be thousands. Torin brings the group back, noting Levana has not yet attacked, and may not. Kai, on the other hand, points out Levana likely wanted them to see her army, as a threat to Kai himself.

In Chapter Twenty-seven, Cinder races to the quarantine, and locates Peony, urging her to drink the cure provided by Levana. As she holds her sister, Adri repeatedly comms her, but Cinder ignores her. Peony, clearly disoriented, is helped up by Cinder, but just as Cinder opens the vial, Peony dies. Cinder lays her gently down, and asks her to stay, since she has already asked Kai to dance with her at the ball, but of course, Peony remains lifeless. Cinder recaps the vial, and fights through the pain threatening to make her crumble again from her spine. When an android arrives to remove her sister's ID chip, Cinder smashes it, and cuts out the ID chip herself. Backing away, she sees Sacha's son, Sunto, and urges him to drink from the vial. She runs outside, and is followed by a police hover. When she stops, she discovers Adri has reported her as a runaway.

In Chapter Twenty-eight, Levana and Kai discuss the upcoming festival. Levana points out that the festival is based on her moon's cycles, but Kai retorts that in reality, it celebrates the end of the fourth World War. Although Levana believes the war was a blessing, Kai knows it killed millions, and erased hundreds of civilizations. Levana points out her country is ruled successfully by a fair and single government entity, and Kai bites back his comments. When dinner is served, Levana screams, and it is revealed that someone has placed a mirror in her serving dish. When Levana and Sybil threaten the serving woman, it is Torin who comes to her aid, responding that in the Commonwealth, citizens are not killed at will, and that the queen and her entourage will



abide by those laws as long as they are in the country. Kai protests as he watches Sybil mentally force the woman to wield a knife at her own body. Kai screams out that he, in fact, placed the mirror in the serving dish. Levana knows he is lying, but forgives him, and after warning him again of her abilities, she retires to her room. Torin notes they should find the real perpetrator, but Kai notes the mirror is of Lunar material. Levana was simply testing Kai. A servant arrives and announces there was a disturbance at the quarantine, and that at least one person escaped, but another appears to be recovering from the plague.

In Chapter Twenty-nine, Cinder is returned home, only to find Adri again furious. She knows Cinder has purchased a hover, has been tracking her movements, and knows she spent 600 units on her new limb. When Adri points out 600 units would be able to purchase a decent funeral plaque, Cinder tries to respond, but Adri chides her for not being able to cry. Adri also screams out that she should have died, while Peony should have lived. Adri grounds her to the apartment and her booth, and orders her to return her foot. Finally alone in her room, Cinder realizes that Adri has disassembled Iko, but at least her personality chip survived.

## **Book Two, Chapter Twenty-six - Chapter Twenty-nine Analysis**

Chapter Twenty-six reveals the feelings of many of the Earth citizens in terms of Levana, in that they despise her. They approve the idea of a marriage contract to Kai only because their countries are not directly involved. They are outspoken when he lets them know he is against it, since they know it is Kai, and the commonwealth, Levana desires. The photographs of Levana's army are a clear message to Kai, that if he continues to withhold himself, Levana will use this army to attack. Kai is correct, in that Levana made sure this army was available for pictures, in an effort to frighten the young prince into compliance.

Chapter Twenty-seven reveals the tragic end of Peony, as Cinder unfortunately is just a little too late. This is a sad moment, as Cinder loses her only true human friend, after struggling so hard to save her. However, this moment also shows Cinder is still strong willed, and will do anything to accomplish her goals. She fights through her censors which threaten to overwhelm her, and she fights the androids that attempt to violate her sister. In this, Cinder shows she has plenty of gumption left to fight, which foreshadows her passion throughout the novel. Sunto's drink from the vial foreshadows his recovery, as well. Finally, Cinder's theft of her sister's ID chip suggests she may use it in the future.

Chapter Twenty-eight again positions Kai's strength and willingness to fight for his people against Levana's cruelty and immediate condemnation of all who oppose her. Whereas Kai rules by honesty, integrity, and hope, Levana rules through fear and misery. Levana's "test" against Kai in this chapter shows she merely wants to torment the young king, and Kai's willingness to take the blade shows his power for his people. Levana is cruel and unyielding, and will stop at nothing to gain the upper hand. At the



end of this chapter it becomes clear that the cure was effective, since Sunto has begun recovering.

Chapter Twenty-nine shows Adri, too, can be most cruel. Her torments to Cinder about buying a plaque for Peony are false, and Cinder knows she is merely attempting to play the victim, as she always does. Her belittling of Cinder, too, for not being able to cry shows she is uncaring about Cinder, and that she really does despise her. The final straw, taking away her foot, shows the true depth of her cruelty. Simultaneously, Cinder, who has now lost her only human friend, and her foot, realizes Adri has also taken Iko from her, leaving Cinder with nothing but a personality chip. Cinder is now completely alone.





# Book Three, Chapter Thirty - Chapter Thirty-two

## Book Three, Chapter Thirty - Chapter Thirty-two Summary

Chapter Thirty finds Cinder inside her booth at the market, in the midst of a festival in which she can't participate. Cinder is not busy, because she is turning away all customers so she can leave while Adri and Pearl are at the ball. She has bought gasoline for her now running car using the money Erland has wired her, and plans to escape with Iko's personality chip and Peony's ID chip. While she feels sorry for herself, Kai arrives in her booth, teasing her that he must be having trouble with his port, since she isn't returning his comms. She tries to play it off, but Kai reveals a gift for her. When she seems perturbed, Kai is clearly hurt, and when she claims she ignored his comms, he is more upset. They go back and forth, with Kai inviting her to lunch and her refusing, until Kai backs off, clearly severely hurt. He explains that he will be making an announcement at the coronation that evening, and that he had convinced himself that if he could talk Cinder into attending the ball with him, he could stop what was happening. He mentions that he knows Levana doesn't care if he has feelings for someone else, and Cinder tingles at the idea that he has feelings for her, but knows she cannot encourage those feelings, for his sake. Cinder expresses sincere sympathy as Kai notes he cannot allow more people to die, if Levana is willing to give the cure in exchange for marriage. Kai finally manages to convince Cinder to take the gift, but right at that moment, Pearl arrives, forcing herself on Kai. Kai is rude and abrupt to her, as she is rude to Cinder. Kai leaves, reminding Cinder his offer still stands, and Pearl is furious. She realizes the prince had been flirting with Cinder, and finds his gift to her. She opens it, and finds within beautiful silk gloves. Pearl berates her endlessly, cruelly, and throws the gloves to the ground, heaving the toolbox on top of it. Cinder races to the mess, and removes the toolbox, but the gloves are covered in grime and grease. Cinder knows the stains will not come out.

In Chapter Thirty-one, Cinder returns home, limping without her foot, and Pearl asks her to choose between two sets of shoes. She also explains she plans to tell the prince everything about Cinder, including her status as a cyborg. Cinder mentions she obtained a promise from the prince to dance with Peony, but with that, Pearl is infuriated. Pearl angrily notes that Peony died because of Cinder, and Adri arrives, breaking up the argument. Cinder is required to go wash the hover, and is grateful to be away from the coronation ceremonies. Cinder can almost see herself, as she watches on her own comm, with the Prince at the castle, but she knows she shouldn't fantasize about such things. She finds herself filled with love and pride for Kai as he accepts the crown for his people. He makes a speech about the rule over the Earth, and its history, and promises to end the war against the plague. He also mentions the war pending with the Lunars, and points to Levana's presence as a gesture that peace will be made. He



promises to do what must be done for his people, and Cinder knows the queen believes she has won.

Chapter Thirty-two finds Cinder returning to an empty apartment after her step family has left. She finishes packing her belongings, and stops in her work room in the basement. She sees her old foot, and is grateful as she puts it on. It is too small, but at least it is a functioning foot. Cinder, determined, begins to cut out her ID chip, but is interrupted as her old netscreen with the chip from Nainsi begins to beep. Cinder answers the comm, only to find a young girl her own age. The girl explains, fearfully and panicking, that she is the step daughter of Sybil, the queen's assistant. Forced to hack into Nainsi, she was petrified she would be caught, but she decided to warn Kai of the queen's plan. Because of her placement of the chip, the queen knows everything the Prince was trying to have Nainsi learn, and she now plans to marry the prince, and still wage war on the planet. She also plans to kill Kai following the wedding. Cinder knows she has to warn Kai, and knows she must use Peony's old dress and the prince's gloves to do it.

## **Book Three, Chapter Thirty - Chapter Thirty-two Analysis**

Chapter Thirty is heartbreaking, as Cinder and Kai again find they both care for one another, and like one another greatly. Kai tries so hard in his charming way to entice Cinder, and he doesn't understand why she is disinterested. For her part, Cinder is merely doing what she thinks best, but to watch her suffer is nearly unbearable, as is watching her struggle to hide her lack of a foot. Kai's admission that he hoped she could stave off his unfortunate announcement, his marriage to Levana, shows he does love Cinder. Kai's gift to Cinder further shows his care for her, and the symbolism of the gift, gloves, being covered in grease, shows Cinder really is a treasure underneath her mechanic exterior. Pearl's actions foreshadow her fury later in the novel. Again, we see the theme of cyborgs being less than human, through Pearl's hurtful words to Cinder.

Chapter Thirty-one again shows Cinder suffering without a foot, thanks to the cruelty of her stepmother. The irony of Pearl asking a cyborg with only one foot to judge shoes is not lost, and shows how cruel Pearl really can be. When combined with the knowledge that Pearl plans to tell Kai all about Cinder's cyborg nature, this foreshadows problems later in the novel. Pearl's comments about Peony hurt Cinder, because she loved Peony more than anyone. Cinder's feelings for those close to her are strong, as is also shown by her feelings for Kai as he takes his rightful place as emperor. Cinder's pride for him, along with her fantasies, shows she does care for Kai so much, and she takes pride in what he does. Cinder knows that, in different circumstances, she would be by his side. At the same time, Cinder can see Levana believes she has won, and that the Prince will, in fact, marry her.

Chapter Thirty-two is the beginning of the end, so to speak, for Cinder, but it does begin to tie the original story of Cinderella back into the book. Cinder's discovery of her too small foot resembles the too small shoe in the original story. The story young Cress tells



Cinder about her own stepmother, Sybil, and the horrible things they make her do, is similar to Cinder's own story, enough so that Cinder finds herself feeling compassion. Cinder understands the dangers completely of what she is about to do, but she also believes her own life is less worthy than the life of Kai, or others in the Commonwealth. Cinder is willing to sacrifice herself for her country, foreshadowing her ability later to accept her role as Princess Selene. The knowledge that she will use Peony's wrinkled dress, combined with her grease covered gloves, shows she will do what she needs to in order to save Kai.



# Book Three, Chapter Thirty-three - Chapter Thirty-five

## Book Three, Chapter Thirty-three - Chapter Thirty-five Summary

In Chapter Thirty-three, Cinder puts on Peony's beautiful gown, now stained with grease, and feels terrible doing so. She also puts on the grease stained gloves, knowing she is a wreck, and drives her gas car, dirty and smelly, to the ball, cringing at her entire entrance. Rain begins to pummel her car, and when she tries to brake after reaching the castle, her brakes fail, and she runs into a tree. A greeter helps her out, holding an umbrella over her, and guides her inside. The room is beautiful and filled with lovely people, and Cinder feels very ugly, particularly when she sees Pearl and the queen. She tries to hide, but is scanned in, and announced at the door, since she is on the personal guest list.

In Chapter Thirty-four, all in the room turn to see Cinder as she is announced, and she is very aware of her highly disheveled look. She tries to be graceful, but knows Pearl has already told Kai she is a cyborg, and knows she will probably be killed by the queen. Cinder doesn't feel she has a choice, however. She sees Kai looking almost amused as she walks toward him, but just then, Adri arrives in her path, furious. As she screams at Cinder, Kai comes to her aid, gently demanding that Cinder be released. He takes her gently to the dance floor, and asks everyone to dance, but for a few moments, only he and Cinder move together. Other do begin to dance, and she and Kai talk, with Kai teasing her gently. Cinder is amazed as she inches closer to Kai that he doesn't pull away, but she soon learns through their conversation that Kai has not been told she is a cyborg, only that Peony has died. Gathering her courage, Cinder explains about Levana wanting to wage war and kill Kai. As they go to escape to the gardens to talk, however, they are interrupted by Torin, noting angrily to Kai that it is time.

In Chapter Thirty-five, Kai apologizes, but notes to Cinder that he must save his people. Cinder, desperate, rushes to him and kisses him, hoping the queen will not want him if his desire lies elsewhere. Levana sees this, however, and laughs, noting that Kai is in love with a mere shell. She mocks Cinder endlessly, before asking Cinder to explain her lies to the Prince. She is taken captive, and refuses to apologize, but Kai, who now knows the truth, is crushed. Levana also explains that the shells are responsible for bringing plague to Earth. Kai stands up for her, noting she will not be taken since she is a citizen of the commonwealth, but Levana offers a bargain for her.



## Book Three, Chapter Thirty-three - Chapter Thirty-five Analysis

Chapter Thirty-three reveals a few things about Cinder. First, her love for Peony is clear in that she doesn't want to wear her beautiful gown, knowing she is essentially a mockery of her beautiful young sister. Also, the power she feels as she drives the car shows her to be a strong woman who enjoys being able to do things for herself. Cinder is not one to stand by and let others work, but is herself a hard worker who is proud of her accomplishments. This fighting spirit will do her well later. Her entrance, while crushingly embarrassing, is typical for poor Cinder, but she does maintain a sense of dignity.

Chapter Thirty-four is another difficult chapter, as the love between Kai and Cinder is again apparent. Kai is not ashamed to be seen with the crumpled young woman, showing him to be a ruler who is concerned beyond one's looks. However, at the same time, he is concerned about Cinder, and her feelings. Kai's sorrowful apology about his behavior in terms of her sister is heartbreaking, as Cinder honestly believes he accepts her as a cyborg. The crushing blow that occurs when she finds he still doesn't know is heartbreaking, as the one hope she had is doused quickly. However, Cinder again shows her strength as she musters up the courage to continue to warn the prince. Torin's appearance at the end of the chapter foreshadows Kai's decision, and the end for Cinder.

Chapter Thirty-five proves several things about the characters. First, Kai is a strong leader who gives up his own happiness for the good of his country. In turn, however, Cinder risks her own life to stop him from making a decision that will harm both him and his commonwealth. Her kiss is sincere, but Kai's unwillingness to return it shows he is determined. Levana, in this chapter, again shows her cruelty, not only as she mocks poor Cinder, but also as she torments Kai, making him choose between his beloved Cinder and his kingdom. Kai's reaction to Cinder as a shell is difficult, since he doesn't understand the full ramifications of her past.



# Book Three, Chapter Thirty-six - Chapter Thirty-eight

## Book Three, Chapter Thirty-six - Chapter Thirty-eight Summary

In Chapter Thirty-six, Levana offers Cinder in exchange for marriage, but Kai refuses, on behalf of his people who would end up as slaves. Kai does promise to keep Cinder locked up until the Lunars leave, and expresses hope peace talks can continue but Levana refuses, shattering her wine glass. Cinder is shocked when her optics pick up Levana's true form behind her glamor. Cinder speaks aloud that the queen really isn't beautiful, and at that, the queen brainwashes Cinder to grasp the guard's gun, and hold it to her own temple. Cinder struggles against it, and ends up firing into the ceiling. Cinder, feelings stronger and more alive as her internal systems are overridden, notices Levana shrink back from her gaze, saying "Impossible." Cinder fires at the queen, whose guard saves her. As Cinder sees blood, she runs to the gardens, but her bolts snap, and she lies, sprawling, her foot on the ground. Kai, his mouth open and disbelief on his face, picks up her foot, and asks if it had all been an illusion, just a Lunar trick. Cinder, completely heartbroken, tries to explain but Kai turns away, noting that Cinder is more painful to look at than even Levana. Kai does tell Levana he will hold Cinder in jail until they decide what to do, but in the meantime, Levana is not to lay a hand on her. Kai also makes Levana agree not to wage war in exchange for Cinder. The guards take her, Kai still holding her too small foot.

In Chapter Thirty-seven, Cinder finds herself in a cell, replaying the last few days of her life. Erland comes to see her, and uses Lunar powers to entice the guard to let him into her cell. He is surprised when he sees her, and explains she needs to control her glamor, although Cinder claims she is doing nothing. The two talk, and Erland admits Levana wants her dead, more than she realizes. Kai, he says, is confused, as he processes all he didn't know about Cinder. Erland gives her a new hand and foot, customized with various tools such as flashlights, screwdrivers, and knives. He explains he is going to Africa to study Lunars there, and hopes she will join him. He also explains she must escape, because she is actually Princess Selene.

Chapter Thirty-eight finds Cinder disbelieving, while Erland is confident of his findings. Cinder realizes her lie detector is not going off, and knows this means Erland is telling the truth. Erland explains he tracked her from Lunar to Earth, and on Earth, to her surgeon, who had already lost his mind. He then admits he set up the cyborg draft specifically to find her, and she now knows how many lost their lives to the plague because of her. Erland admits Kai does not know, but that he will understand, once they can tell him the truth. Erland explains he has a plan to reinstate her as queen, but that she first must escape, and travel to Africa with him. He also explains that, if Cinder fails, the Earth will come under Lunar rule, and many will die in the process. He leaves the



cell, noting that he believes in her, as does Kai, although he does not yet recognize it. Cinder thinks of what will happen to Kai if she doesn't escape, and notices the cell door was left open. Determined, and feeling strong, she begins to cut out her ID chip, knowing they will be looking for Cinder, while Cinder is ceasing to exist, instead becoming someone else.

## **Book Three, Chapter Thirty-six - Chapter Thirty-eight Analysis**

Chapter Thirty-six is the culmination of the relationship between Kai and Cinder, and the beginning of Kai's battle against Levana. Kai knows Levana is going to wage war regardless of his decisions, but he also knows he cannot allow his people to be made slaves. His decision, although it means war, is made in the best interest of his people. Cinder's ability to pick up on the Lunars' true figures shows she is becoming stronger, giving hope to the idea that she can help battle Levana. This hope is further increased when she is able to successfully combat their brain washing, saving her own life, and nearly taking out the queen. The queen, in looking at her, seems to know that Cinder is something special, foreshadowing the knowledge later that Levana knows she is Selene. However, in the end, Cinder's too small foot, the curse of Adri, is her downfall as it causes her to stumble, and be caught. Kai now knows the complete truth about Cinder, and it clearly crushes him. His comments to Cinder hurt more than anyone's, because Cinder loved Kai, and never intended to lie to him. Kai gives Cinder up, in a way, in exchange for his people, but he does buy her some time. The image of him at the end of the chapter, holding the small foot, brings the tale back to Cinderella, where the prince has lost his dream woman, and holds only her slipper as a token of memory.

Chapter Thirty-seven brings hope that Cinder may not be quite finished. Erland's arrival, combined with his teasing and his gifts to her, shows he is aiming for her to escape the prison. Throughout the novel, Erland has hinted that Cinder is something special, and here, it is revealed that she is really Princess Selene, a fact that has been foreshadowed throughout the novel. Cinder's glamor here shows again she is getting stronger in her abilities, a fact that will come in handy later.

Chapter Thirty-eight is the closing of the novel, and one that brings hope for Cinder in the sequel. Erland's reports of her early age, the adjustments after the fire, her being kept in hiding, Garan's necessary adjustments to her, all show she has been kept safe by a number of people for many years. She is only able to believe Erland because her lie detector does not go off, and she is beginning to understand how many people have been searching for her over the years, and how many have lost their lives, all in an effort to save her to dethrone Levana. Cinder finally understands her importance, and this, combined with her love for Kai, pushes her to begin her escape. Although it is unclear what is in store for Cinder, her new strength, powers, determination, and her new friend, can only help her to eventually become the new Lunar queen. Her final act, taking out her identity chip, shows Cinder is throwing off her old identity as a cyborg mechanic, and embracing her new identity as a strong Lunar leader.



# Characters

## Linh Cinder

Linh Cinder is the main character in the story. At a very young age, Cinder is in a fire that causes major damage. She is made into a cyborg at the time to replace lost limbs and help her regain lost functionality. When she is eleven, she is told she had been in an accident that took away her memory. Following this, she is supposedly orphaned, and Garan takes her under his care. Cinder starts the novel as a simple market girl, although her mechanic skills are renowned enough for the Prince to hear of her. She loves her step sister, Peony, but her step mother and other step sister are constantly cruel to her. Cinder gets by with her life, her android Iko, and her sister, but she does feel the pain of not having family or friends. When Prince Kai begins to pay attention to her, Cinder is pleased, but afraid, since she believes Kai wouldn't care for her if he learned she was cyborg. Cinder, over the course of the novel, loses almost everyone she loves, but also learns she is Lunar, and the real Princess Selene, rightful queen of the Lunar colony. The fire that took her limbs had actually been set by Levana, in an effort to kill her. Garan had taken her in, but she had been adjusted to hide her Lunar history. With the help of Dr. Erland, her only trusted friend by the end of the novel, Cinder plots an escape from Queen Levana, who plans to kill her. She loves Kai, it is clear, but she also understands that the situation is bigger than her feelings for Kai.

## Prince Kai

Prince Kai is the Prince of the Earthen Union, as the son of Emperor Rikan. From the beginning of the novel, Rikan is ill, and it is inevitable that Kai will become Emperor. Kai is kind and gentle, and he always wants what is best for his people. In bringing Nainsi, his android, to Cinder, he inadvertently sets off a chain of events that redefines not only him, but the entire Union. Nainsi has information about Princess Selene, but was hijacked by Cress, stepdaughter of the queen's assistant. When Kai takes Nainsi to Cinder for repair, he begins a relationship with her, and eventually begins to fall for her. He doesn't know, however, that Cinder is a cyborg, as well as Lunar. Kai struggles throughout the novel to do what is right, but he does not wish to marry Levana. Cinder is able to convince him of Levana's plans by the end of the novel, but in the process, it is revealed she is a cyborg and Lunar, and Kai is crushed. Now Emperor, since his father has died, Kai must make drastic decisions, knowing that regardless of his choice, Levana will likely wage war on Earth. He doesn't know Cinder is Selene, and doesn't know she has sacrificed much for him. He does spare her life, but it is clear he is crushed.





## Dr. Erland

Dr. Erland is a royal physician and researcher, working with Kai to find a cure for the plague that is haunting Earth. Erland is a bit erratic, and it is clear from the beginning he is hiding something. When Cinder is brought to him, he quickly realizes she is special, and that she has been manipulated greatly to hide her Lunar past, as well as her Lunar abilities. Erland discovers that she is more cyborg than even she realizes, and he quickly learns she is really Princess Selene. Erland sees her love for Kai, and his care for her, but he also knows the situation is bigger than their feelings for one another. Erland has instituted the cyborg draft specifically to find Selene, since he knows this is the only way. Erland is not exactly a "kind" man, but he does love his planet, and wants his people safe. He cares for Cinder and Kai, but since he is Lunar, hiding his abilities constantly, he is also beginning to lose his mind, as is common for Lunars who suppress their abilities. Erland is seeking desperately to cure letumosis, and his work could include Cinder, as a Lunar, since she has a natural immunity to the disease. Erland helps Cinder to escape at the end of the novel and invites her to Africa, knowing she is Selene and knowing he can help her retake the throne, thereby saving Earth.

## Linh Adri

Linh Adri is Cinder's cruel stepmother. With two daughters of her own that she spoils incessantly, Adri despises her young ward. Orphaned, Cinder's adoptive father, Garan, took Cinder in, likely knowing she was really Princess Selene. Adri is not privy to this knowledge, however, and as a result, she cannot understand why Garan would have accepted a cyborg. She also blames Cinder for Garan's death, because he died immediately after his acceptance of Cinder. Adri resents Cinder, even though it is Cinder who works to provide for the family. Adri is representative of the evil step mother in the traditional Cinderella story. Her treatment of Cinder, emotionally as well as physically and mentally, shows her to be cruel and uncaring in regards to her young ward. When Peony dies, Adri has even more "reason" to hate Cinder, since she blames her for Peony's death as well.

## Queen Levana

Queen Levana is the evil queen of the Lunars, a colony on the moon. The Queen is cruel, having killed off all of her family who posed a threat to her crown. Levana seeks a truce with the Earth, she claims, through marriage to the Prince. She continues to assure this will allow both kingdoms to exist harmoniously. However, as Cinder learns, Levana really plans to use the marriage to gain a hold on Earth, so she and her army can attack and take over the planet. Levana is a Lunar, which means she is able to project a glamor, making her appear to others as beautiful and charming. She also is able to brainwash others, and does so when she arrives on Earth to force the masses to accept her. Unfortunately, she realizes at this time that Cinder is also Lunar, since she is unable to be brainwashed, but Levana falsely identifies her as a shell. By the end of the novel, it is clear Levana recognizes Cinder as Princess Selene, the young woman



Levana attempted to kill to keep her throne when Selene had been just a child. Levana forces Kai to see Cinder is not only Lunar, but a cyborg, heartbreaking for both him and Cinder. Levana is determined to marry the Prince, but will cause war, regardless.

## Iko

Iko is Cinder's android partner and one of her only friends. Actually owned by Adri, Iko believes she is almost human, and responds differently than other androids, because of a faulty personality chip. She is kind to Cinder and understands Cinder's problems, since she is a robot herself. She knows Cinder is often hurt by her stepmother's words, and she tries to constantly cheer her. Iko is Cinder's assistant, as well, in that she is able to help when Cinder needs to find or install new parts. Unfortunately, because Adri knows Iko is vital to Cinder, she has her disassembled. Cinder does manage to steal her personality chip so she can use it in an android later.

## Linh Peony

Linh Peony is Cinder's stepsister and really, her only human friend at the beginning of the novel. Peony loves Cinder, even though she is not her biological sister, and against her mother's wishes. Peony is a caring girl with a good heart. Unfortunately, Peony becomes ill with the plague when she visits the local junkyard with Cinder. As a result, she is placed in quarantine, and her family comes to hate Cinder even further. Cinder attempts to save Peony, but she is too late, and Peony dies. Her death is a tragedy for Cinder, but it also reminds her how important she is in terms of finding a cure.

## Linh Pearl

Lihn Pearl is the cruel daughter of Adri and Garan and the step sister of Cinder. She is also the sister of Peony. Pearl is difficult, in that she is spoiled by Adri, and comes to resent Cinder. Pearl loves Peony, but it is clear her love does not step beyond her natural sister. Like her family, Pearl expects to be treated like a princess, and her life is dedicated to herself, and her environment. She cares little for Cinder, or even for her mother or Peony, even though it is Cinder who provides the only support for the family. It is Pearl who threatens Cinder with telling the Prince, and it is clear she would have followed through, if she had had the chance.

## Linh Garan

Linh Garan is Cinder's adopted father. There is little mentioned in the novel about Garan, but it is clear that his intelligence and his assistance helped to save Cinder. It is unclear if Garan knew Cinder was really Princess Selene, but one can assume, based on the work done to Cinder, that he did, in fact, know of her situation. Garan chooses to take in Cinder, knowing his wife would likely object, yet knowing she was vital to society.



His death is blamed on Cinder, since he contracted the plague on the same trip in which he agreed to accept Cinder.

## Emperor Rikan

Emperor Rikan is Kai's father and emperor of New Beijing. Rikan has been fighting for years to establish peace with the Lunars, but their constant desire for a marriage contract has deterred him greatly. Rikan, in the novel, is only a discussed character, since he is ill from the beginning of the novel. Kai searches high and low for a cure for his father, but in the end, Rikan dies of letumosis. His death is a symbol of the equalizing power of the disease. Social class and race discrimination are common in the novel, but Rikan's death shows that the disease is the only non-discriminatory factor in the novel. Rikan's death also provides the political move for which Queen Levana is waiting, since it creates a difficult situation in the Earth Union.

## Konn Torin

Konn Torin is Price Kai's trusted adviser. Although Konn Torin appears to be caring and understanding, the book tends to hint that Torin may be helping the Queen more than he initially seems. Although he had seemed to assist Kai's father faithfully, he almost seems to be pushing Kai towards marriage with the Queen. Whether this is, as he says, merely because it is best for the people, or if he is really hiding a relationship with the Lunars is left to the reader's decision. What is clear, however, is that Torin wants Cinder out of the way, so that Kai will marry Queen Levana.

## Sybil Mira

Sybil Mira is Queen Levana's head thaumaturge, and Cress' stepmother. It is Sybil Mira who plants the chip in Nainsi to spy on the king and Kai, and it is Sybil who helps the Queen to overtake the kingdom. Sybil is a loyal character to the Queen, and appears to be highly intelligent and very dangerous. She is the Lunar equivalent of Cinder's stepmother, as she is similarly evil and cruel to Cress.

## Nainsi

Nainsi is Kai's android. Nainsi has been with Kai for many years, and has helped him research Princess Selene, the rightful Queen of Lunar. However, Nainsi was hijacked by Cress, the step daughter of the Queen's assistant, in an effort to gain information about Kai and the Union, so Queen Levana could use the information for war.



## Chang Sacha

Chang Sacha is a baker in the marketplace in which Cinder has a booth. Sacha hates Cinder because she is a cyborg, but in the end asks for her help, as she dies of letumosis. It is Sacha's son, Sunto, who receives Cinder's cure for the plague. Sacha represents those in the novel who discriminate against cyborgs.

## Cress

Cress is a Lunar slave who works as a hacker for the Queen. She is also the step daughter of Sybil Mira. It is Cress who warns Cinder about the Queen's true intentions, since she is the person responsible for creating the hack that allowed Sybil to learn of Kai's attempts to find Princess Selena. Cinder feels for Cress, because she can relate to the girl's issues.



# Objects/Places

## Cyborg

A cyborg is an individual in the novel who is partially made from robotic parts.

## Lunars

Lunars are individuals who live on the moon, who have the power to make others see what they want them to see.

## Letumosis

Letumosis is a plague that is affecting the Earthen population.

## Earthen Union

The Earthen Union is the union that developed among all the countries following the last world war.

## Hover car

A hover car is a type of car that, instead of traveling on roads, travels through the air.

## Plague

A plague is a disease that affects an area not only in terms of health, but also in terms of social, political, and economical stability.

## Personality Chip

A personality chip is the piece of hardware in an android that gives that particular robot his or her unique personality.

## Shells

A Shell is a Lunar who can't do glamors and cannot be affected by other Lunars.

## **Glamor**

A glamor is an image presented to others which allows the presenter to show whatever they want the viewer to see.

## **Android**

An android is a robot that helps humans in the novel.

# Themes

## Discrimination

One of the primary themes in the novel is that of discrimination. First, from the beginning it is clear that anyone who is aware that Cinder is a cyborg is against her. From Chang Sacha in the marketplace to her own stepmother to her stepsister, Pearl, those who know of Cinder's robotic parts see her as less than human. When the book reveals that even the government has instituted a draft to test the deadly plague against cyborgs, it becomes even more apparent that the population of the Earth Union is against cyborgs. Rather than test on "humans," the government instead chooses to test on those less than human, or cyborg. Although it is later learned this had actually been done in an effort to find Selene, this still shows that cyborgs are considered less than human.

Yet another strike against Cinder is the discrimination on Earth against Lunars. Lunars are those who hail from the moon. These individuals are thought to be cruel and heartless, and believed to have the power to brainwash those with whom they come into contact. As a result, they are looked down on according to Earth rules. When the Lunars arrive, the Earth population protests, showing their dislike for the ruling creatures.

Still another strike against her is the fact that she is convinced by Dr. Erland that she is also a shell. Shells are Lunars who do not have the ability to create a glamor, and yet who also are unaffected by regular Lunars. As such, these individuals are often killed on the moon, because they are considered a threat to social order. Without being able to brainwash these individuals, they have a higher chance to revolt.

In all cases, these different segments of the population are looked down on by themselves. When combined, Cinder learns she is not only unwanted, but an actual threat to both Lunars and Earthlings. The revelation that she is absolutely vital to the survival of Earth is ironic, in that all her previous dealings showed her to be looked down on and shunned. Even now, she is fleeing as an escaped convict, all the while being the saving grace behind Earth. This shows the importance of looking beyond appearances.

## Social Classes

Social classes play another important role in the novel. Cinder is of a seemingly lower social class, where the family is not particular poor, but are not overwhelmingly wealthy either. They are not royalty, such as Kai and his family, but are instead merchants. Their housing is combined with many other merchants in a high rise apartment. Although they have material possessions such as a hover car and netlinks, they have these only because Cinder can fix these machines and can earn enough money to buy them. No one else in the family works, but Cinder is forced to do her best to provide, since Adri



and her sisters refuse to work. It is clear in the novel that Adri, in part, blames Cinder for their lack of social status. As an orphan, Cinder was taken in by Garan, and raised as his own. When he died, however, he left little behind, and the family had to work.

Social class is also important in the novel in terms of the different classifications of those on earth. Cyborgs, for example, are considered lower than all other classes, because they are not considered human. Their low social class even allows the government to consider them no better than guinea pigs for plague testing. However, the plague almost acts as a neutralizer, in that it affects everyone from the poorest of the populations to the king himself. Those affected are not taken to specific class medical centers, but to disease infested warehouses.

Androids on Earth, and servants, appear to be the lowest class, since they are merely robots. Their personality chips are taken out and placed into newer bodies, but they are treated without regard to emotion, because they are merely programmed creatures. On the other side of the spectrum, the Lunar entourage is clearly of the highest class, and yet, is shown little respect on Earth. This shows that although royalty is clearly upper class, their perceived malicious nature outshines even social class status.

## Effects of Plague

The effects of the plague on the population in the novel is yet another theme throughout the book. From the beginning, it is clear the entire population lives in fear of the deadly plague sweeping through the country, that of Letumosis. The plague affects everyone, from the upper class to the poverty stricken, and even to the royal family. Economically, the plague affects the population in that there are thousands dying, thereby making many fearful of public places such as the market. This drives down business. The plague also alters personal relationships, as is shown through the relations between Cinder and Chang Sacha. Sacha hates Cinder because of her status as a cyborg, but once she has the plague, Sacha is not ashamed to ask for Cinder's assistance. Conversely, Cinder's own relationships are affected, as her step sister dies of the disease, and her other step family blames her.

The plague also affects the government. As the plague kills more of his people, Kai is determined to do what is right, even if that means marrying Levana, whom he knows plans to harm his citizens. In turn, Levana uses the plague to gain hold over the Earth Union, to attempt to become queen, at which point she plans to begin a war. As Lunars are believed to carry the disease, the plague forces Earthen beings to look down even further on the Lunars than they already do.

Further, the plague drastically changes the way the population views cyborgs. Cyborgs are drawn into a draft, where they are randomly selected to participate in drug trials. Most of those drafted are killed, as they are injected with the plague to determine if the latest cure works. Thus, cyborgs are seen as expendable. In addition, the plague alters the way in which the medical field advances. Instead of focusing on any other disease



or advancement, those in the medical profession all see nothing but a cure for the horrible plague.



# Style

## Point of View

The point of view of the novel is third person. The point of view is reliable, since it allows the narrator to know the actions of the characters in the novel, and can tell the emotions of each individual in the story. This point of view is important, in that one of the main points of the novel is the discrimination of Cinder, and the social class segregation of society in the book. Without the ability to see inside Cinder's character, as well as to read the emotional aspects of Cinder, this discrimination and social class difference would not be as clear. Cinder's character is complex, as are her reactions to things, and by knowing her interior thoughts, feelings, and biological makeup, readers gain a better understanding of her character.

The story is told primarily through dialog, combined with patches of descriptive narration. This method is useful, in that it keeps the focus centered on Cinder and her emotions and life, instead of on the host of other characters in the novel. Cinder spends much of the novel thinking and planning, and without being able to see inside her thoughts, these sections would be void of meaning. Additionally, Cinder's character is unable to outwardly express many emotions due to her "enhancements," and this third person view allows the reader to see these emotions, even without an outward expression.

## Setting

The novel takes place in a fantasy world parallel to our own called Earth. This planet is exactly the same as ours, except the story seems to take place in a future version of our planet. There are elements of history, such as the plague, in the novel, but also elements of the future, such as humans who are, at least partially, cyborg or robotic in nature. Earth is also in conflict with the moon in the novel, since there is a race of humans, called Lunars, who live on the moon. They have the ability to brainwash people, and make them see whatever the Lunars would like. On the same planet are shells, which, although immune to the effects of other Lunars, also cannot make their own glamors. These individuals are often killed, by order of the queen, because she cannot control them as she can other citizens.

The bulk of the story takes place in either the market of New Beijing, or the home of Cinder and her family. Cinder and her family are not wealthy, but since Cinder is a mechanic, they do have an income and manage to own a vehicle and other necessities. The market in the novel is the place of Cinder's business, as she works in a stall in the central square where people come to buy and sell. Also in the novel are the royal castle, where Kai and his family reside. Within the castle is the research area, where Dr. Erland and his associates perform the plague research to find a cure.

## Language and Meaning

The language of the novel is relaxed and informal. The sentences are constructed in a way that is easy to read, having little formality, but following the basic English language style of writing. The simplistic writing makes the novel easy to read for a younger age group, but also helps to make it more accessible for all readers. The style adds to the teenage world in which the novel is primarily immersed giving additional depth to the novel.

The language used by the characters in the novel also helps to characterize the cultures and social differences between the groups. Much of the novel is told from the narrative style of Cinder, but the dialog between the characters shows that there are some who are of vastly different social classes than others. Whereas Cinder's dialog tends to be informal, the language of those such as Kai and Levana, in some circumstances, shows they are from a different background. The narration is similar to Cinder's style, however, making the book easy and entertaining to read. In addition, this style allows shorter descriptive passages and easier to understand dialog between the characters. Were the dialog to be more difficult, the novel would not be understood by the teenage audience it is designed to entertain.

## Structure

The novel is comprised of four books, with each book containing a number of individual chapters of unequal length. There are thirty eight chapters in total, going by names of numbers alone. Therefore, each chapter name does not indicate events to occur within the text. The chapters tend to be short, with a combination of dialog and descriptive passages.

The plot of the novel is complex, since there are many twists and turns within the plot line. The primary focus of the novel is Cinder, a young part human, part cyborg orphan mechanic who is looked down on by most in society. She is strong willed, however, and over time, she learns she is special not only because she is immune to the plague sweeping the Earth, but she is also Lunar. Eventually she learns she is also the lost Princess Selene, the only person able to usurp Queen Levana as queen. In the course of her journey, she falls in love with Prince Kai, who, once he discovers she is not only Lunar but cyborg, turns away from her. Cinder realizes she must escape Levana's grasp in order to save the Earth, and her beloved Prince Kai.

The pace of the novel is quick, due to the short time that passes in each chapter. This makes the novel simple to read, and rather engrossing. There is much back story, as details of Cinder's earlier life are revealed, but this too is easy to read.



## Quotes

"Letumosis. The blue fever. Worldwide pandemic. Hundreds of thousands dead. Unknown cause, unknown cure." Chapter Five, pg. 50

"It has been five years since you became a part of this household, Cinder. Five years since Garan left you to me. I still don't know what made him do it, don't know why he felt obligated to travel to Europe, of all places, to find some...mutant to take care of. He never explained it to me. Perhaps he would have someday. But I never wanted you. You know that." Chapter Six, pg. 64

"Imagining the headless voice on the other side of the mirror, watching, laughing at her vain struggles, she froze and tried her best to hold still. To be strong. To not think about what they were doing to her." Chapter Eight, pg 84

"He was the fantasy of every girl in the country. He was so far out of her realm, her world, that she would have stopped thinking about him the second the door had closed. Should stop thinking about him immediately. Should never think about him again, except maybe as a client - and her prince." Chapter Fourteen, pg. 128

"His father was no longer there. Unable to protect Kai. Unable to offer advice. Unable to lead his country ever again." Chapter Sixteen, pg. 141

"The ball. Prince Kai was asking her to the ball. But that was the night she and Iko would be running away, if the car was fixed in time. The night she would escape." Chapter Nineteen, pg. 164

"Oh, yes. To Queen Levana's endless dismay, not all Lunars are so easily brainwashed into mindless contentment, and many have risked their lives to escape Luna and relocate here. It's difficult to leave the moon, and I'm sure many more die attempting it than succeed, especially as more restrictions are put on Lunar ports, but I'm sure it still happens." Chapter Nineteen, pg. 170

"Well...the Lunar gift is nothing more than the ability to manipulate bio-electric energy - the energy that is naturally created by all living things." Chapter Nineteen, pg. 171

"Since the instatement of the non-gifted infanticide under Queen Channary, many Lunar parents have attempted to rescue their shell children by bringing them to Earth. Of course, most of them die and are executed for the attempt, but still...I believe this was the case with you. The rescuing part. Not the execution part." Chapter Nineteen, pg. 176

"Kai risked a glance at Torin and saw that he held Levana's gaze without outward emotion. Seeing his adviser's resolve sent a jolt of determination through Kai. Reminding himself that it was only an illusion, he forced himself to look at the queen again." Chapter Twenty, pg. 184



"War strategies? Classified communications? Evidence for blackmail? Whatever it was, Kai clearly thought it would help, and he'd trusted Cinder to save it." Chapter Twenty-one, pg 192

"She had not been entirely immune to the glamour, the way shells were supposed to be. Worse still, the Queen had seen her, and she had known." Chapter Twenty-two, pg. 206

"Maybe you thought it wouldn't matter...Is that it? Did you think the prince - no - the emperor would find it in his heart to overlook all your...shortcomings?" Chapter Thirty, pg. 300

"But if there was one thing she knew from years as a mechanic, it was that some stains never came out." Chapter Thirty, pg. 301

"We have the ability to love each other, no matter our differences. To help each other, no matter our weaknesses. We chose peace over war. Life over death. We chose to crown one many to be our sovereign, to guide, us, to uphold us - not to rule, but to serve." Chapter Thirty-one, pg. 310

"Kai peeled his eyes away, finding some place of resignation off in the glistening garden. 'You're even more painful to look at than she is.' Cinder's heart shriveled inside her until she was sure it would stop beating altogether. She reached her hand to her cheek, feeling the damp silk against her skin." Chapter Thirty-six, pg. 368

"My dear girl. You are Princess Selene." - Chapter Thirty-seven, pg. 379

"If you won't let me help you Cinder, then she will have already won, won't she? Soon Queen Levana will take you away. She will find a way to marry Kai and become empress. She will wage war against the Earthen Union and, I have no doubt, be victorious. Many will die, the rest will become slaves, just like us Lunars. It is a sad fate, but unavoidable, I suppose, if you are not willing to accept who you truly are." Chapter Thirty-eight, pg. 384

"Soon, the whole world would be searching for her - Linh Cinder. A deformed cyborg with a missing foot. A Lunar with a stolen identity. A mechanic with no one to run to, nowhere to go. But they would be looking for a ghost." - Chapter Thirty-eight, pg. 387



## Topics for Discussion

One of the primary themes in the novel is the discrimination in society against cyborgs. What is the reasoning for this? How is this discrimination seen in society? What does Cinder learn about the true purpose of the drafts? What does this say about the cyborg population in general in the novel?

Everyone seems surprised that Price Kai would be interested in someone such as Cinder. Why is this attraction so surprising? What does this suggest about the expectations for Kai as emperor? How does Cinder feel about Kai? Why doesn't she pursue her feelings? What does this say about her own opinion of a union between Kai and herself?

What are the ramifications of the plague in the novel? Be sure to discuss social, political, and economic ramifications, as well as personal ramifications for Kai and for Cinder. How does the plague impact Kai's decision to marry Levana?

Why do you think Kai turns away from Cinder after learning she is both cyborg and Lunar? What does he mean when he tells her she is more painful to look at than even Levana? How would this make you feel? How would you react?

What is Cinder's reaction when she learns she is really Princess Selene? What does this mean for Kai? For Cinder? For Levana? Why will Levana now hunt her down to have her killed? What threat does Cinder now possess?

Adri, in the book, is extremely hateful of Cinder. Why? What does she claim Cinder has done? Do you think she knows of Cinder's past? Why or why not? Do you think Garan knew of her history? Why do you think he sought to save her?

On Lunar, the Queen has instituted a policy where all those she cannot brainwash must be killed. What do you think of this rule? How does it help Levana? What is she afraid of? If you were in her position, what would you do with the shells? Why?

Compare and contrast Cinder with the typical Cinderella story. How are they similar? How are they different? How effective do you think Meyer is at recreating Cinderella in a sci-fi manner? Why?