

The Killing Dance Study Guide

The Killing Dance by Laurell K. Hamilton

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Plot Summary

The Killing Dance by Laurell K. Hamilton is the fifth book in a series about necromancer Anita Blake. Anita is plagued by attempts to kill her after a contract is placed on her life. As her powers grow and evolve, Anita learns the reason that someone wants her dead so badly. The Killing Dance presents a major turning point in Anita Blake's life.

Sabin and Dominic Dumare seek Anita's help curing Sabin's degenerative disease. During Catherine's dinner, Edward calls to tell Anita that he has been offered a contract to kill her, but he has decided to protect her instead. She and Richard return to her apartment where Richard helps her neighbor, Mrs. Pringle, carry her television upstairs. Custard, Mrs. Pringle's dog, whines at Anita's door. With Richard and Mrs. Pringle in the other apartment, Anita kneels and opens her door. A shot fires over her head, and she kills the intruder. Richard picks Anita up from the police station and invites her to stay in his guest room. Stephen calls Richard because Raina is trying to force him to participate in her pornographic films. While Richard fights Sebastian and Jamil, Anita rescues Stephen. Anita wakes at dawn to voices outside her bedroom and argues with Richard. During the lycanthrope meeting, Richard introduces Anita as his lupa. Neal challenges and attacks Anita, but she wins by throwing him through the window. Edward arrives, and he and Anita plan to keep her alive.

During Jean-Claude's date with Anita, Sabin threatens Anita and Cassandra at the club. When Damian bespells a woman, Karen, Anita stops him, and she, Cassandra, and Annabelle, a stranger, take Karen to the bathroom. Raina enters the bathroom and, with Cassandra, escorts Annabelle to a cab. Annabelle attempts to shoot Anita, but Anita manages to stab Annabelle first. Anita is questioned in Jean-Claude's office until Dolph takes her to another crime scene. There, Anita discovers Robert's body in a necromancy circle, but she is unable to enter the circle because she did not create it. Edward takes Anita to the Circus of the Damned to hide out while he gets additional back-up. Later, Anita, Jean-Claude and Richard form a triumvirate to secure their power bases. With the power, Anita raises zombies and three vampires. Dominic Dumare assists her in laying the vampires back to rest. Edward arrives with Harley, his back-up. At the lupanar, Richard kills Marcus and Anita shoots Sebastian. Richard shape shifts on top of Anita, causing her to run into Jean-Claude's arms and bed. The next morning, Richard dumps Anita. After Cassandra knocks Anita out, Anita wakes in the barn with Gabriel and Raina. Cassandra is Sabin's wolf, and Dominic needs to kill Jean-Claude and Richard to restore Sabin's health. Anita convinces Gabriel to give her a knife and act out his fantasy of raping her while she tries to kill him. During this, Jean-Claude marks Anita as his human servant. After Anita kills Gabriel and Raina, Edward and Harley join her to rescue Jean-Claude and Richard. They kill Cassandra, Dominic Dumare, and Sabin. Anita, unwilling to lose both, allows Jean-Claude to give her the third mark to prevent the men's deaths. She wakes in the hospital to learn Jean-Claude and Richard are both alive, though Richard will not talk to Anita, making their triumvirate useless.



Section I, ch. 1-2

Section I, ch. 1-2 Summary

Jean-Claude sits in Anita Blake's office. Anita is about to draw her gun on Sabin, the unknown vampire sitting across from her. Dominic Dumare, a powerful necromancer and Sabin's human servant, sits quietly as Sabin mocks Jean-Claude's control over Anita. Jean-Claude brags about Anita's record of vampire kills. At Dominic's urging, Sabin throws back his hood to reveal his half rotted face that results from a degenerative disease caused by refraining from blood, which he has done because his lover values human life. Although Dominic and Sabin believe that Anita can cure this disease, she does not know how but agrees to try. Dominic wants to combine their powers to cure Sabin, offering to teach Anita true necromancy. Anita rushes the end of the meeting because she has a date with Richard, her other beau and a werewolf, but Dominic will contact her tomorrow; she gives them hope. After Sabin and Dominic leave, Anita and Jean-Claude discuss their arrangement: unless Anita dates both Jean-Claude and Richard, Jean-Claude will kill Richard, and Anita will try to kill Jean-Claude. Anita should have killed Jean-Claude long ago. Jean-Claude insists that she would miss him and anticipates seeing her tomorrow night, though he would not do what Sabin did, even for her love. Anita may have been engaged to Richard by now if Jean-Claude had not interfered, but Jean-Claude argues that she is not domestic; if she truly believes that, she lies to herself more than to him.

At Anita's recently married friend Catherine's dinner party, there are the living, the dead and the occasionally furry. Anita takes off her silver cross since Robert, a vampire, is present. Monica Vespucci, pregnant with Robert's baby, greets Anita. Richard enters, drawing Anita's attention to him. She is not having sex with the werewolf or the vampire. Catherine and Anita gossip about Richard. Bob, Catherine's husband, interrupts the conversation to tell Anita that Ted Forrester, Edward's legal alias, is on the phone. Edward warns Anita that he was offered a contract on her life, but he decides to protect her since he will get to kill more people. Edward will be in town tomorrow to start keeping Anita alive.

Section I, ch. 1-2 Analysis

This section introduces the three main characters of the novel: Anita, Jean-Claude and Richard. It also introduces the reader to the supernatural world of the novels, a world that includes vampires and werewolves. Sabin and Dominic Dumare are also introduced, and their disdain for Anita's form of magic foreshadows their later actions in the story. The fact that they traveled halfway around the world to seek Anita's help demonstrates the renown of her power. These chapters also give background information that is included in the previous novels in the series. Anita's love triangle with Richard and Jean-Claude is explained, as well as the reason for it. Her celibacy is also mentioned. The reference to Brewster's Law shows that vampires are considered legal



citizens at this point in time. Jean-Claude's conversation with Anita demonstrates the extent to which he knows her.

Catherine, Bob, Monica and Robert are introduced at the dinner party, and they all reappear later in the novel. Anita's irritation over Robert's presence shows her extreme discomfort with dating Jean-Claude since she is sure that Robert is present to spy on her for her other boyfriend. The fact that Monica is pregnant is surprising and contributes to the later action of the novel. Monica's assumption is that Anita is having sex with Richard and Jean-Claude; this introduces a recurring ideology throughout the novel that Anita constantly attempts to refute. Edward is introduced via a phone call to warn Anita that there is a contract on her life. His decision to protect her because it will allow him to kill more people demonstrates Edward's general outlook on life and his deep pleasure in his job. This phone call instigates the main action of the novel and foreshadows Edward's arrival, the attempts to kill Anita and the discovery of who offers money for Anita's death.



Section II, ch. 3-5

Section II, ch. 3-5 Summary

Richard worries when Anita wants to leave. Anita does not want Robert to report to Jean-Claude so she whispers the truth to Richard. As Richard comforts her, Anita wraps herself in the illusion of safety. On the way back to Anita's house, Anita and Richard make out and flirt, but she chides herself for sexual innuendo; it is unfair since she is unwilling to follow through. Richard wants Anita to marry him. Anita nearly agrees, but Richard's morals hold her back from committing to a life with him. On the way upstairs, they encounter Mrs. Pringle, Anita's neighbor, with Custard, her dog, and a new television. Richard carries the television upstairs while Anita pretends to help because he will lose his teaching job if his lycanthropy becomes known since parents do not like monsters around their kids. Custard whines at Anita's door, which he has never done. Anita claims she needs something from her apartment, asking Richard to help Mrs. Pringle. As Anita drops to one knee and opens her door, a shot fires through the door, over her head. Anita shoots the hit man. Sirens wail in the distance, and Anita calls Dolph, a friendly police officer, and Catherine, her lawyer. When Anita reminds Richard that dating her is dangerous, he assures her that he never forgets.

In the interview room with Dolph standing against the wall and Catherine sitting beside her, Anita goes over her story with Detective Branswell again. Anita claims that she went to her apartment to get a screwdriver to help Mrs. Pringle with the television, dropped her keys and shot back after the door exploded over her head. The deceased was local muscle so Detective Branswell asks who wants her dead, but Anita does not know. Detective Branswell takes Anita's gun and suggests she move to a new jurisdiction. When Dolph asks what is going on, Catherine ends the questioning. Anita gets in the car with an angry Richard who accuses her of knowing that the hit man was in the apartment and getting him out of the way. Anita protests that she did not want to blow his cover but then apologizes. Richard invites Anita to stay the night with him; it is a bad idea, but she agrees and packs her clothes and lots of weapons.

Section II, ch. 3-5 Analysis

Richard's shock concerning the fact of the contract on Anita's life demonstrates his innocence and naiveté in a world where those attributes can earn death quickly. Richard provides a safety net for Anita, though she is realistic enough to know that it is an illusion of safety and not a reality. Richard smelling for guns outside of Catherine's house shows his werewolf nature, which is sometimes easy to forget because he can be so human. Anita demonstrates her desire for Richard when they kiss on the way back to her apartment; she also demonstrates her efforts at fair play when she states it is unfair for her to throw sexual innuendo his way when she is unwilling to follow through. Richard wants to marry Anita, showing his deep love for her. The fact that Richard's morals keep Anita from committing to him foreshadows the many



disagreements they will have throughout the novel about him being unwilling to kill people. Anita and Richard both acknowledge that their love triangle is hurting Jean-Claude as well, showing their compassion and foreshadowing later events that involve the three of them. Richard shows off his supernatural strength by carrying the television upstairs alone while Anita only balances on the other end for appearances' sake. Custard barking at Anita's door foreshadows the hitman inside her apartment. Anita gets Richard out of the way by sending him to help Mrs. Pringle, showing her love for him. Her claim that she needs to get something from her apartment foreshadows her intentions to play the hero and attack the hitman. The sirens in the distance foreshadow Anita going to the police station.

The fact that Detective Branswell makes Anita repeat her story several times shows that he does not completely believe her. Ironically, she is mostly telling the truth. It is also ironic that Detective Branswell announces that the hitman was local muscle, asking who wants Anita dead. He takes Anita's gun, a pattern that repeats itself throughout this novel. Anita receives some legal slack because half a dozen cops told Detective Branswell that she saved their lives; this demonstrates Anita's involvement with the law and her ability to protect people. This glimpse into her normal life stands in juxtaposition to her life in this novel where she is harassed by the law and forced to allow others to protect her. Although Dolph is Anita's friend, Catherine reminds Anita that he is a cop first, foreshadowing his later suspicions of Anita's involvement in Robert's murder. Richard's anger at Anita for getting him out of the way is uncharacteristic, as is Anita's apology. Anita agrees to stay that night at Richard's house, though she knows it is a bad idea. This seems to falsely foreshadow sex. When Mrs. Pringle tells Anita to give her a new number and Anita imagines Mrs. Pringle dead, she tells herself it was too close, which foreshadows Anita moving out of her apartment.



Section III, ch. 6-8

Section III, ch. 6-8 Summary

Richard and Anita arrive at Richard's isolated home, and Anita parks her car in the garage while Richard takes her luggage to the spare bedroom. Anita calls Edward who tells her that the fee has been raised to half a million dollars if Anita is dead within twenty-four hours. Edward promises to be at Richard's house early in the morning. Richard receives a message from Stephen begging for help since Raina, the pack's Lupa or queen, is forcing him to participate in her pornographic movies. Anita insists upon going with him after learning Marcus, the current Ulfric or king, will retain his leadership if Richard is killed in a fight with another werewolf. Anita promises only to kill someone if it is needed. Anita worries that Richard will hesitate; Jean-Claude would never hesitate. On the way to the barn where the movies are filmed, Richard explains lukoi, or werewolf, terms and lore to Anita. Anita is dominant, meaning she has earned the pack's respect. When Richard and Anita enter the barn, Anita becomes angry with Richard because he has been careless by coming without reinforcements. Sebastian, Marcus' new enforcer, challenges Richard for the position of Freki, or second-in-command, although Richard is now Fenrir, the challenger, and no challenge is needed for Sebastian to become Freki; Marcus has told Sebastian that he has to defeat Richard to obtain the position. Richard forces Sebastian to swallow his otherworldly energy and asks for Stephen.

As Jamil and Sebastian attack Richard, Richard tells Anita to save Stephen, giving her permission to kill if necessary. Heidi leads Anita to a room where Stephen is held down by Gabriel, the leader of the wereleopards, as his brother, Gregory, cuts him and Raina rapes him. Anita threatens Raina and Gabriel as she saves Stephen. Anita helps Stephen walk, promising to get him out of the barn. She rushes to the main room to find chaos from the fight. Anita raises her machine gun and, admitting that she cannot kill them all, asks who will be first. Richard forbids anyone to bring Stephen back to the barn but will not kill them if they disobey. Anita will kill them and will hold Raina personally responsible if Stephen is brought back to the barn. Anita extends her protection to Stephen. Raina tells Richard to explain to Anita what it means to offer her protection. As Richard, Anita and Stephen leave, Richard admits it was a trap. He explains that offering protection means answering challenges against other werewolves who try to injure Stephen. Richard will not kill because he thinks they are better than animals, but Anita points out real wolves do not kill for dominance. She admires Richard's goals but thinks they are unrealistic. When Richard argues that he does not want Anita to kill for him, she points out that she did not ask his permission. Anita has a list of people that she would kill to protect; Stephen is added to the list tonight. As Richard states that he would rather die than be a murderer, Anita realizes that she can kill without having an attack of conscience and thinks that sometimes it is good to be scary.



Section III, ch. 6-8 Analysis

Anita parks her car in Richard's garage, showing how serious she is taking the threat against her life. The fact that Richard puts Anita's luggage in the spare bedroom reveals his respect for her abstinence. Edward informs Anita that the fee for the contract has increased; this shows that the person who wants her dead already knows his first attempt failed. It also provides a time limit which could help Anita figure out who is hiring hitmen. The message from Stephen foreshadows his rescue while Richard's intent to go alone demonstrates his innocence. His fear that Anita will kill someone reveals the fact that Anita is very willing to kill if necessary; whereas, Richard is not. Anita compares Richard and Jean-Claude, worrying that Richard will hesitate. The fact that Richard explains werewolf terminology to Anita foreshadows his attempt to initiate her into the pack. Anita is a dominant, someone who has earned the pack's respect. Since the pack only fears death, this fact subtly reveals that Anita has killed members of Richard's pack.

Richard displays his power when he calms Heidi and when he forces Sebastian to swallow his otherworldly energy. Sebastian challenges Richard, revealing that the call from Stephen was a trap, especially since it is not necessary for Sebastian to beat Richard to become Freki. Because this is Marcus' command, it becomes apparent that Marcus is attempting to have someone kill Richard before having to fight him for the position of Ulfric; this shows that Marcus fears Richard. The fact that Anita is dominant complicates matters because Richard cannot ensure safe passage for her. Since Raina has forbidden the werewolves to infect Anita with lycanthropy, they must kill her if they fight her, showing Raina's fear of Anita. Jamil and Sebastian both attack Richard, demonstrating their willingness to fight dirty. Richard shows concern for Stephen by telling Anita to save him and even giving her permission to kill if necessary. Gregory first appears as a symbol of betrayal since he is cutting his brother as Raina rapes him. Raina and Gabriel mock Anita as she threatens them, showing their masochistic natures. This scene also foreshadows the later scene in the barn where Anita is the one tied to the bed. The fact that no one charges Anita as she holds her machine gun shows that the werewolves fear her and believe she will kill them. Richard's command that no one bring Stephen back to the barn is ignored because Richard will not back his command with the threat of death, but Anita will and threatens Raina explicitly. Anita extends her protection to Stephen though he is already under Richard's protection. This undermines Richard's authority somewhat. Richard finally explains his reasons for refusing to kill, but they are not good enough for Anita.



Section IV, ch. 9-10

Section IV, ch. 9-10 Summary

Richard refuses Anita's offer to bandage his wounds. Anita will not lie when it could get people killed. Anita wakes to a knock on her bedroom door. Stephen enters and asks to sleep with her because he is scared to be alone while Richard patrols the woods for assassins. Anita puts Stephen against the wall so she is closer to the door if there is an attack. Anita wakes at dawn to two voices in front of the door, and she unlocks the safety on her gun. A man hears the noise, and Anita, recognizing Jason's voice, puts the safety back on her gun. Anita opens the door to Jason teasing her about Stephen being in her bed. A woman steps out of Richard's room with towels, and Jason introduces Anita to Sylvie. Dr. Lillian bandages Richard in the kitchen, rebuking him for not cleaning his wounds last night. Richard expresses his anger that Anita wants him to kill, but Anita argues that he should have killed Sebastian or Jamil and the rest would have backed down. Richard is angry that Anita has already decided who he should kill, but Sylvie agrees with Anita's choices. Anita wants to talk now, and Richard agrees to talk while Dr. Lillian nurses his wounds. Anita complains about all the people looming around, and Sylvie mentions that the lycanthropes are having a meeting to discuss the Marcus situation. Richard did not want Anita to know about that, but he agrees to talk to Anita in his room. Jason cheers for Anita as she follows, and Sylvie mentions that it would be easier if Richard would choose a mate. She reassures Anita that she is not interested in the job because she is a lesbian. Anyone who wants a piece of Anita can get to the back of a long line. Jason thought all of Anita's enemies were dead; Anita keeps making new ones.

Anita enters Richard's bedroom to find him lying naked across his bed. He tells her to talk as she turns away. Dr. Lillian finishes bandaging Richard and leaves. Anita asks Richard to dress because it is hard to fight when he is naked. Richard thinks that she cannot look at him because she thinks he is a monster. He thinks that is also why she believes that it would not bother him to kill Marcus. Anita points out that she kills humans, like the hit man last night, and sleeps just fine. Richard does not kill because he likes killing. Anita admits that she does not enjoy killing; she just feels an emptiness and relief that it was not she that died. It used to bother her but it no longer does. Anita reassures Richard that he is not just an animal. Richard scares Anita by shifting his hand into its werewolf form. Her reaction hurts Richard's feelings, so she grabs his hand; he likes her fear. Richard shifts his hand back into human form, and Richard and Anita begin kissing. They are interrupted by Sylvie who tells them that everyone can hear what is going on in the room. Richard tells Anita that he must change for her before they have sex. Richard dresses and goes to the meeting. Anita wonders if things will work out with Richard because he does not kill people.



Section IV, ch. 9-10 Analysis

The fact that Richard refuses to allow Anita to bandage his wounds demonstrates his anger with her and foreshadows the later need for his wounds to be bandaged. Stephen asking to sleep with Anita reveals that he trusts her to protect him. She places him against the wall in order to be prepared against anyone who comes in the door. This is ironic since Anita is human and Stephen is a werewolf; he is harder to kill. When Anita hears voices outside the door, she immediately draws her gun, proof that she is very prepared and dangerous. Anita is introduced to Sylvie for the first time. Dr. Lillian rebukes Richard for not cleaning his wounds the night before, showing that he was stubborn to refuse Anita's help simply because he was angry with her. Richard is angry when Anita starts talking about who he should kill because he thinks she does not mind the idea of killing werewolves because they are monsters. He is even more annoyed when Sylvie agrees with Anita's choices. Sylvie's revelation about the meeting foreshadows the gathering of lycanthropes that occurs a few chapters later. Anita's nervousness before joining Richard in his room reveals that she believes they are going to break up. This fight, along with many others throughout the novel, foreshadows their eventual break-up. Anita's nonchalance about the fact that people want to fight or kill her leads the reader to believe that this is a common occurrence for her.

There is miscommunication between Richard and Anita in his bedroom when she turns away from his naked body; she does not want to remember his body if this is going to be their break-up fight, but he thinks she cannot stand looking at him. Richard reveals that most of his anger is because he feels Anita thinks it would not bother him to kill Marcus because they are monsters. Anita's response disproves his idea when she points out that she killed a human the night before, and it did not bother her at all; she just feels emptiness and relief. Richard's biggest fear about killing seems to be that he enjoys it and feels like it makes him lose part of his humanity. This foreshadows some of the later actions that involves giving up pieces of his humanity. Anita's repulsion when Richard shifts his hand into its werewolf form foreshadows her reaction when she finally sees him shift completely. Richard's morals are evident when he tells Anita he will not have sex with her until he has shown her all of him in the form of his werewolf side, foreshadowing his shifting on top of her at the lupanar. Anita wonders if she will be able to continue dating Richard since he does not kill people. This foreshadows their many fights about killing people throughout the novel and demonstrates how important killing is in Anita's life.



Section V, ch. 11-13

Section V, ch. 11-13 Summary

Anita dresses and goes to the meeting where she greets Rafael, the Rat King. The meeting is called because Marcus wants to unify all of the lycanthropes under one leader: him. Marcus has a tendency to kill what he cannot control. Richard wants Anita to sit with him, assuring Sylvie that it is not a challenge to her position within the lukoi. When Sylvie asks Stephen who saved him, Stephen says Anita saved him and even made him sleep against the wall so that she could protect him. The energy levels in the room rise, and Sylvie grabs Anita, threatening to make her Richard's mate in form. Richard threatens to hurt Sylvie while Anita threatens to kill her. Sylvie tells Anita that Raina has forbidden anyone to make Anita lukoi because she is afraid Anita will be better at her job. As Sylvie releases Anita, Richard slams Sylvie into the wall. Sylvie says that even though Richard will not kill, it may be enough if his lupa will. Rafael states that he will kill to protect Anita, but Richard cannot let the Rat King kill his wolves so he agrees to kill to protect Anita. Anita knows it killed a part of him. Richard introduces Anita as his lupa, trying to provide her with pack protection without making her lukoi. Sylvie and Neal argue that Anita is not dominant to them. When Richard agrees to kill Marcus, Sylvie backs down; Anita is a good influence on Richard. Neal challenges Anita, and while Anita can refuse the challenge, she will not be accepted as the lupa. When Anita rises to answer a knock at the door, Neal attacks Anita. No weapons are allowed, and the one to draw first blood wins; Anita throws Neal through the window and is accepted into the pack.

Edward enters and says Anita is the only person he knows who leads a more interesting life than he does. After the meeting, he tells Anita that the contract has been picked up. The plan is to keep Anita from getting killed and take out the man offering the money for the contract. Edward believes the hitter will strike while Anita is on her date with Jean-Claude tonight. They will put Anita out as bait and wait for the hitter to attack. Richard accuses Anita and Edward of enjoying the situation, and Edward states that Anita is more like him than she used to be. As Anita dresses for her date with Jean-Claude complete with weaponry, Richard expresses jealousy over the sexy dress she is wearing, but Anita explains that she trusts herself more with Jean-Claude than with Richard. Richard promises to shapeshift for Anita when she comes back. Jean-Claude arrives, and he and Anita compliment one another, making Richard jealous. When Jean-Claude kisses Anita's hand to annoy Richard, Anita yells at him and he apologizes. Edward checks the limo for bombs. Anita can see having an affair with Jean-Claude, but she can see herself spending the rest of her life with Richard.

Section V, ch. 11-13 Analysis

The fact that Marcus wants to unify all of the lycanthropes under one leader, himself, shows that he is a controlling person and that the rest of the lycanthrope community is



eager to have Richard as the Ulfric of the werewolves. Richard assures Sylvie that Anita sitting beside him is not a threat to her position within the lukoi. This reveals that he has shared the lukoi's words with an outsider as well as demonstrates one of his goals in leading the pack, equality and peace. Stephen's belief that Anita would have saved him if anyone attacked sets in motion a series of events. First, Sylvie threatens to infect Anita, showing disdain for Richard's authority, revealing Richard's affinity for Anita's humanity and demonstrating the negative effects of Richard's passivity. Sylvie wants to make Anita lukoi because Richard is unwilling to kill, but it may be sufficient if his lupa will kill for them. This foreshadows Richard's attempt to introduce Anita as his lupa. The fact that Rafael is forced to offer his protection to Anita reveals Richard's weakness and forces him to concede by agreeing to kill anyone who infects Anita. Anita regrets Richard's decision to kill, showing her love for him despite the fact that she disagrees with his opposition to killing.

Richard fulfills the recent foreshadowing when he introduces Anita as his lupa. Sylvie and Neal's objections show disdain for Richard's leadership and disrespect to Anita, but Sylvie retracts her objection when Anita convinces Richard to agree to kill Marcus. To Sylvie, Marcus' death is more important than having a human lupa. Neal challenges Anita, foreshadowing a fight and showing contempt for Richard and Anita. The importance of a challenge is revealed when Richard explains that Anita can reject the challenge but will not become the lupa. The knock at the door foreshadows Edward's arrival and serves as a distraction for Neal to attack Anita, insinuating that he is not positive he can beat her in a fair fight, despite his superior strength by virtue of being a lycanthrope. Anita is put at an unfair disadvantage by the fact that she cannot use weapons during the fight. Anita positions herself to throw Neal through the window and wins the fight, becoming the lupa of the lukoi.

Edward arrives and is amused by the collection of lycanthropes. The fact that he is amused, instead of frightened, shows that Edward is a very dangerous man. He has learned that the contract has been accepted, foreshadowing another attack on Anita. Richard asks Edward if he likes killing, a symbol that he is struggling with his decision to kill Marcus. Edward's guesses and opinions about when and how the hitter will strike demonstrate his own experience in the field. He also shows himself to be very intelligent by his desire to separate Anita from Richard since she will endanger anyone to save Richard. The fact that Anita and Edward plan to use Anita as bait shows their arrogance in their own abilities. Richard's jealousy over the dress that Anita wears for her date with Jean-Claude foreshadows the rivalry and disputes that occur between the two men. The first of these disputes occur when Jean-Claude arrives and begins a series of repetitious arguments and attempts to irritate one another. This demonstrates that both men love Anita and are jealous of each other. Anita's love for Richard seems to foreshadow her choice at the end of the novel but actually serves as misdirection.



Section VI, ch. 14-15

Section VI, ch. 14-15 Summary

Jean-Claude and Anita arrive at Danse Macabre, Jean-Claude's new dance club. The fact that Anita is offended that someone wants to kill her for business makes Jean-Claude laugh. Jean-Claude hits on Anita in an effort to cheer her up; his concern confuses her. Jean-Claude warns Anita to smile since the media are surrounding the club to present Jean-Claude as the Master of the City. They step out of the limo, and the media bombards Anita with personal questions. Anita threatens Jean-Claude that if he does not get her out of the media frenzy, she will pull her gun out and do it herself. She is not sure she wants the public to know she is dating a vampire. Anita apologizes when she realizes she has been treating Jean-Claude like a dirty secret while dating Richard proudly. In the club, Jean-Claude introduces Anita to a new vampire, Liv, who is unimpressed with the Executioner. She also mocks Jean-Claude for remaining celibate, which he does because he knows Anita would dump him if he were having sex. Jean-Claude rebukes Liv, causing her to apologize. After Anita guesses Liv's age, Liv shows more fear and respect. As they walk away, Anita asks Jean-Claude why Liv is scared of her now. He explains that vampire legend states that necromancers can control all types of undead, including vampires. Jean-Claude has been encouraging the rumors in order to control his kiss of vampires.

Jean-Claude introduces Anita to yet another vampire, Damian, causing Anita to worry about Jean-Claude since he has so many new, powerful vampires in town. Next, she meets Cassandra, a new werewolf. Anita asks Jean-Claude why Stephen was not with him the previous night and learns that he requested the night off to spend with his brother. Anita also learns that Stephen is in the back room getting dressed. Cassandra is happy that Anita is taking the alpha thing seriously since many lupas do not. Jean-Claude leaves Anita and Cassandra together, and Cassandra reveals that Raina wanted her for the films but Richard protected her. Cassandra warns Anita that Gabriel fantasizes about raping Anita while she tries to kill him. Sabin approaches, putting Cassandra on guard. When Cassandra refuses to let him touch her, Sabin threatens to ask for her as a companion. Anita defends Cassandra, and Sabin threatens to ask for Anita as he removes his hood to reveal his worsening face. The smell sickens Cassandra. Jean-Claude arrives and threatens Sabin for abusing his hospitality. Liv reminds Jean-Claude that it is time to open, and Jean-Claude leaves Liv as Anita's bodyguard, threatening to give Liv to Sabin if she fails him.

Section VI, ch. 14-15 Analysis

Anita is offended that someone would kill her for business; she can understand them killing her if it was personal. The fact that Jean-Claude is worried about Anita's feelings foreshadows the revelation that he loves her. It is ironic that Anita looks coy as she threatens Jean-Claude to get her away from the media frenzy. Anita is very hypocritical



by being willing to date a vampire but irritated at the public's knowledge of the fact. She breaks the rule of dating Jean-Claude and Richard simultaneously by not treating them equally. At Danse Macabre, Anita meets three newcomers, Liv, Damian and Cassandra, an indication that there is a recent influx of new people coming into town. The fact that Jean-Claude is remaining celibate parallels Anita's celibacy and demonstrates his love for her. Anita's ability to tell Liv's age is a symbol of her skills as a necromancer. The fact that Jean-Claude has been encouraging old rumors about necromancers being able to control vampires foreshadows Anita raising Liv, Damian and Willie from their coffins. Anita worries about Jean-Claude's ability to maintain control with the new vampires in town; this demonstrates the fact that Anita cares for Jean-Claude. Anita's inquiries about why Stephen was not with Jean-Claude last night and where he is now shows that Anita is serious about offering her protection to Stephen. Gabriel's fantasy about raping Anita while she tries to kill him foreshadows his later attempt to make his fantasy a reality. It is ironic that Sabin threatens to ask for Cassandra as a companion and that she acts repulsed by him since she is his wolf and the reason for his illness.



Section VII, ch. 16-18

Section VII, ch. 16-18 Summary

Although Anita feels exposed, she realizes that Liv will scare the assassin away. She convinces Liv to leave, promising to prevent Jean-Claude from punishing her if Anita survives. Anita tries not to look suspicious though she holds her gun in her hand. Willie McCoy, Anita's vampire friend, stops by Anita's table to say hello as Jean-Claude starts the show. Damian illegally bespells a woman, and Anita angrily sends Willie to tell Jean-Claude that this show is over. Damian releases the woman, and when she panics, he bespells her again and prepares to bite her. Anita points her gun at Damian. He asks for a volunteer and releases the woman, Karen. Karen panics, but Anita reassures her as Jean-Claude soothes the audience. Cassandra assists Anita, and a red-head from the audience, Annabelle, offers to help. Anita, Cassandra and Annabelle carry Karen to the bathroom. As Karen awakes, Raina enters. Cassandra blocks Anita while Annabelle holds Karen's hand. Raina, Jean-Claude's partner in the club, and Cassandra help Karen to a cab. Meanwhile, Annabelle admits that she is a reporter and wants an exclusive with the Executioner. Annabelle simultaneously breaks Anita's purse strap and pulls a gun as three women enter and scream. Anita uses the distraction to draw a knife and stab Annabelle, whose shot goes wild. Annabelle dies as Edward enters the bathroom followed by police, causing Anita to fear that she will be arrested.

Because the club is bombarded by the media, Anita is handcuffed in Jean-Claude's office where she asks for her lawyer. Dolph enters and tells Detective Greeley that the media are claiming the murder was a vampire kill. Greeley goes to talk to the media while Dolph uncuffs Anita and yells at her for killing two humans in two days. Anita admits that an anonymous phone call alerted her to a contract on her life. Dolph does not trust Edward AKA Ted Forrester because bounty hunters have a tendency to break the law. When Greeley returns, he refuses Dolph's request to take Anita with him, but after a whispered conversation, Greeley changes his mind. Dolph needs Anita's help in another murder. When they arrive at the scene of the murder, Dolph questions whether Anita has ever been there before. He watches Anita closely as she looks at the scene, a man missing his heart in a circle completed with necromancy symbols. Suddenly, Anita recognizes the victim; it is Robert. She tries to enter the circle but gets knocked down by the power. When Dolph asks why he is able to enter the circle, Anita explains that he is not an animator. A female voice clarifies that Anita did not create the circle.

Section VII, ch. 16-18 Analysis

Anita flashing her gun around the club foreshadows Annabelle's knowledge of where Anita's gun is stored. It is ironic that Anita Blake, the Executioner, is very good friends with Willie McCoy, a vampire. Damian bespells a woman, and Anita tells Willie to inform Jean-Claude that the show is over. Her anger foreshadows her stopping the show which happens shortly after the threat. It is ironic that Annabelle offers to help Anita when in



reality she plans to kill her. Cassandra acts as Anita's bodyguard when Raina joins them in the lady's bathroom. When the brightness leaks out of Annabelle's eyes, it foreshadows her intent to injure Anita. The three women who enter the bathroom serve as a distraction to Annabelle though not to Anita. The fact that Annabelle dies and the police charge in without being called is repetitious of the death scene of the last hitman. Dolph yells at Anita, demonstrating his anger. The fact that Dolph does not believe Anita will turn the name over to him when she learns who hired the hitmen foreshadows Marcus' death.

It is ironic that Anita underestimated Annabelle because Annabelle is small and female since many people make the same mistake with Anita. It is also ironic when Dolph complains about Ted Forrester being a bounty hunter since they often bend the law. Ted is Edward's alias, and Edward does very little that is not illegal. The whispered conversation between Dolph and Greeley foreshadows a secret reason that Greeley allows Dolph to take Anita with him. Dolph asking Anita if she has ever been to the scene of the crime foreshadows her recognition of the victim which is fulfilled shortly after when she realizes it is Robert. The missing heart foreshadows its use in the ceremony to restore Sabin's health. The fact that Anita is unable to enter the circle foreshadows her inability to enter the later circle. The voice stating the significance of this clarifies the reason that Dolph was able to take Anita away from Greeley.



Section VIII, ch. 19-21

Section VIII, ch. 19-21 Summary

Dolph introduces Anita to Detective Tammy Reynolds, a witch and a new addition to their team. Anita jerks away from Tammy when she tries to read Anita's aura. When Dolph asks for ideas on who may have killed Robert, Anita assumes it is a challenge to Jean-Claude's power. Then she ponders whether it may be a right-wing hate group since Monica is pregnant. Anita thinks maybe this is the reason there is a contract on her life, but Dolph says it is too much money to spend to kill someone's girlfriend. Anita agrees to refrain from telling Jean-Claude about the way the heart was retrieved, the knives and the symbols used in the spells. Dolph finds Anita's back blade, and after making sure it is her last weapon, allows her to keep it. Zerrowski walks in, and Anita is thrilled to see him since he was nearly dead the last time she saw him. Zerrowski tells Dolph that the Spaldings, the neighbors, have right-wing hate groups literature on their coffee table. Tammy should meet them to find out if they have any magical ability because Dolph is a complete null and Zerrowski is almost a null, meaning they have no magical sensitivity. Anita tells Dolph that they are looking for more than one murderer, likely one vampire, one non-vampire and one necromancer or witch. When Dolph asks Anita if there is any outside talent in town, she suggests Dominic Dumare.

Monica arrives and has to be taken to the hospital and given sedatives after having hysterics. Policemen guard the hospital door. Edward tells Anita the contract has been expanded to forty-eight hours and suggests she hide out at the Circus of the Damned, Jean-Claude's fortress home. Richard decides to stay there with her. Anita worries that Richard and Jean-Claude will fight. Edward picks Anita up at the police station and drives her to the Circus of the Damned where she promises to hide for twenty-four hours until Edward returns with help. When Anita enters Jean-Claude's living room, she notices a new painting of Jean-Claude with a blonde man and a brunette woman in musketeer-era clothing. She asks Jean-Claude about the new painting, and he explains that it represents a happy time he spent with Asher and Julianna as a menage trois. Anita realizes that Jean-Claude is one hundred years older than she thought. Jean-Claude and Anita worry that Richard is not ruthless enough to control the pack. Jean-Claude instructs Jason to announce Richard so as to avoid interrupting. Anita says that there will be nothing to interrupt, but she cannot avoid watching Jean-Claude's behind and flirting with him on the way to his bedroom.

Section VIII, ch. 19-21 Analysis

Tammy reveals her identity as a witch when she tries to read Anita's aura. Anita realizes she has been spending too much time with the vampires when her first reaction to Robert's murder is to assume that it is a challenge for Jean-Claude. The existence of right-wing hate groups against vampires is introduced in considering the suspects for Robert's murder. It is ironic that Anita thinks that the hit against her may have to do with



Jean-Claude for several reasons. Dolph disputes the idea by stating that it is too much money to pay for someone's girlfriend. First of all, the hit is paid for by Marcus to injure and distract Richard; therefore, Dolph is wrong, and the contract originates because of Anita being their girlfriend. Second, Anita has the right train of thought, but she chooses the wrong boyfriend. Finally, the original idea for the hit against Anita came from Sabin who intends to kill Jean-Claude and Richard, so the hit is associated with Jean-Claude's power base.

Anita being willing to withhold information about the murder from Jean-Claude shows her dedication to her work with Dolph's police squad. The fact that Dolph allows Anita to keep her back blade since it is her last weapon shows he is her friend, even if he is a police officer first. Several things foreshadow the fight that occurs at the Circus of the Damned. First, Richard decides to stay with Anita. That causes Anita to worry about her boyfriends fighting. Later, after Anita arrives, Jason tells her that he thinks it is a bad idea to have Richard and Jean-Claude at the Circus of the Damned at the same time. Jean-Claude's instructions to Jason to announce Richard in order to prevent him from interrupting foreshadows Jean-Claude and Anita's kiss.



Section IX, ch. 22-24

Section IX, ch. 22-24 Summary

Jean-Claude flirtatiously leads Anita to his bedroom where she notices a new curtain and a new door which leads to the bathroom. Jean-Claude calls Anita beautiful, but she disagrees as she reminisces upon painful childhood memories. Jean-Claude has never had another woman deny him for so long. He confesses that initially he was attracted to Anita because of her power and the fact that she is a challenge, but now he loves her. Although Anita loves Jean-Claude a little bit, she loves Richard a lot. Jean-Claude tells her that he will allow her to marry Richard because it would hurt her if Richard were dead, but Anita is deterred because Richard is not human. Also, Anita is afraid that if she embraces Richard's beast, he will not love her anymore. Jean-Claude convinces Anita to allow him to use vampire powers while he is kissing her, creating a surge of magic. Richard enters just in time, but his anger causes his beast to rage because it is too close to the full moon for strong emotions. Jean-Claude taunts Richard, causing Richard to attack him. Anita blocks Richard, and he tosses her out of the way. She goes for her knife immediately and tells him to back off when he attempts to check on her. Jean-Claude and Richard apologize. Anita does not want Richard to leave because Jean-Claude planned the fight, so she kicks Jean-Claude out of his bedroom. Jean-Claude would never lose control like Richard did. Jason crawls into the room, abasing himself because Richard hurt him when he tried to prevent Richard from getting to Anita and Jean-Claude. Richard feeds Jason power and tells him to tell everyone in the pack, hoping that it will force Marcus to back down. He explains to Anita that it is not just about killing Marcus; it is about giving up pieces of his humanity. Once he gains the pack by force, he has to keep it by force. He has already divided the pack nearly in half regarding their loyalty to Richard or Marcus. Anita thinks Raina should die, but she maybe agrees with Richard that he should not kill Marcus. They kiss, and Anita tells Richard to change for her, and if she can accept it, they can plan the wedding. Richard wants Anita to see the lukoi at the lupanar first. He leaves because he does not trust himself with Anita. Anita wakes to Cassandra bent over her, announcing that Richard and Jean-Claude have a plan. Anita dresses in the bathroom and returns to the bedroom to find both of her boyfriends nearly naked. Richard and Jean-Claude suggest forming a triumvirate which may be a display of enough power to scare Marcus. They would secure both of their power bases. The first time, they used anger and lust; they have their anger, but they need Anita for the lust.

Section IX, ch. 22-24 Analysis

Anita's fascination with Jean-Claude's recently renovated bathroom foreshadows having sex with Jean-Claude in the bathtub later. Jean-Claude shows his arrogance by his declaration that he has not had any other woman deny him for so long. Foreshadowing is fulfilled when Jean-Claude admits that he loves Anita. Anita demonstrates her own prejudices by her deterrence from marrying Richard including the fact that he is not



human. Anita's fear that Richard will not love her anymore if she can accept his beast foreshadows the end of their relationship. Richard enters the bedroom as Jean-Claude and Anita kiss, fulfilling the foreshadowing that occurred with Jean-Claude's instructions to Jason. The argument between Richard and Jean-Claude is repetitious, the only difference being Anita's injury in this case. Once again, Anita compares Richard and Jean-Claude and finds Jean-Claude the winner in the comparison.

Richard injures Jason in order to get to Anita, demonstrating his ability to be violent, especially where Anita is concerned. Richard's ability to feed Jason power is a demonstration of his magical abilities and power. He finally explains his main hesitation in killing; he is afraid of losing what is left of his humanity. Richard shows his character by being unwilling to stay the night with Anita for fear of being unable to control himself. Cassandra announces that Richard and Jean-Claude have a plan, foreshadowing the formation of the triumvirate. This is further explained when they allude to recreating the accidental magical energy that they set off around Christmas. The fact that the boys are nearly naked foreshadows the fact that forming the triumvirate will be of a sexual nature.



Section X, ch. 25-29

Section X, ch. 25-29 Summary

Jean-Claude goes to the bathroom, leaving Richard and Anita alone, but the situation is awkward because Jean-Claude plans to join them. Richard and Anita meet halfway and start kissing, making Richard's eyes turn wolfish. Jean-Claude opens the bathroom door, and Richard's beast calls him. Richard promises that he would never hurt Anita intentionally. With Richard's power riding Anita, Jean-Claude holds her hand, joining his power. Anita tries to ride the combination of life and death but only knows one thing to do with so much power. She finds the dead, but it does not work; she calls for blood. Jean-Claude bites Richard, and Anita sends the power out. Both men bask in the afterglow until Anita says she will need more blood to put back whatever she called from the grave. Richard and Jean-Claude try to help Anita up, but there is tension between the two men. Richard suddenly moves Anita away from the door. His wolves are coming; there is danger. Richard runs out of the room, followed by Jean-Claude. Anita grabs her Uzi and runs after them, toward the fight.

Anita finds a corridor where Richard, Jason and Stephen are fighting zombies as Jean-Claude and Cassandra look at Anita. Anita commands the wolves to let go of the zombies, threatening Jason when he ignores her. Richard is outraged that Anita would attack them, and Stephen cries because, as Lupa, Anita is supposed to protect the werewolves. Anita demands obedience, causing a dispute between her and Richard which Jean-Claude settles. Jason acts like he will attack Anita, and Anita aims her gun, but Richard knocks Jason to the floor stating that he is Ulfric, not Anita. Jean-Claude points out that Anita is either equal or master, but Anita agrees to follow Richard if he really leads. Suddenly, Jean-Claude notices that Anita raised Liv, Damian and Willie. He is angry and wants them put back; he grabs Anita; she pulls her gun out, and Richard calms them both down. Anita is not sure she can put the vampires back and worries because Willie is her friend. Jean-Claude wants to keep this a secret because he worries that the vampire council will kill Anita if they find out she can raise vampires. Anita is worried about putting the vampires back because with zombies, she wills them dead again, but she does not want the vampires to be truly dead; she wants them to rise again. Cassandra has a master's degree in magical theory and believes killing is wrong, like Richard, and Anita will not stand in Cassandra's way. Richard objects because he loves Anita. Jean-Claude watches hungrily. When Anita offers Jean-Claude sex or blood, he chooses blood. She reminds him that it is his choice.

Section X, ch. 25-29 Analysis

The joining of Richard, Anita and Jean-Claude's power fulfills the foreshadowing of creating the triumvirate. The fact that Anita searches for the dead and sends the accumulated power into the dead foreshadows her raising zombies and vampires from their graves and coffins. The tension between Richard and Jean-Claude is repetitious



and slightly redundant. Richard's announcement of danger foreshadows the battle between the werewolves and the zombies. It is ironic that Anita threatens Jason since she is his lupa and meant to protect him. Anita asserts her authority by her demand for obedience; Jean-Claude reinforces her authority by his reminder to Richard that she is either one's equal or master. Richard beats Jason again, showing his ability to be violent. Jean-Claude notices that Anita raised Liv, Damian and Willie with the zombies, fulfilling the foreshadowing that occurred earlier with his use of threatening his vampires with Anita's ability to control them. It is ironic that Anita, the Executioner, wants to go to the vampires' coffin room in order to save the vampires. Cassandra's reason for coming to St. Louis causes Anita to be jealous; however, in juxtaposition to Richard and Jean-Claude when they are jealous, Anita offers to concede her position in Richard's life if it will make him happy. It raises the issue of how selfish the boys are being in their love for Anita. It is ironic when Jean-Claude chooses blood over sex when Anita offers it since he can get blood from anyone.



Section XI, ch. 30-32

Section XI, ch. 30-32 Summary

All the coffins look the same externally so that it is impossible to tell which are the oldest. Anita assures Stephen that she will not kill someone else in order to put the vampires back. Anita offers her blood to Jean-Claude, but Richard objects because feeding is too close to sex for the vampire. Anita points out that Richard cannot donate blood again because he has to fight Marcus tonight. Anita decides to call Dominic Dumare, who has been cleared of Robert's murder. Dominic learns about the triumvirate and believes he can theoretically help. Anita protests that she cannot raise zombies in daylight, let alone vampires, but Dominic says she cannot do so only because she believes she cannot, though she probably cannot raise them outside at high noon. Dominic, Cassandra and Anita plan a spell, and Anita starts with the zombies which are rotting quickly because of the lack of control. Dominic suggests it may be because Jean-Claude and Richard do not have experience with raising the dead as well as the fact that Jean-Claude is of the dead himself. Dominic asks Anita to try to heal a vampire in order to see if she could heal Sabin if she raised him during the day. Jean-Claude and Richard stand next to Anita, causing the magic to rise. Anita collects blood from the members of the triumvirate. Everyone in the room lusts after the powerful cocktail. Anita puts the zombies back, but the vampires do not listen to her. She feeds them the blood and sends them back to their coffins to rise later. Damian's animating force returns and kicks Anita out, knocking her unconscious.

Section XI, ch. 30-32 Analysis

The fact that all the coffins look the same, preventing anyone from telling the difference between the weak and the strong, is an ingenious plan that could save the lives of the vampires if anyone came to kill them. Stephen exhibits fear in the coffin room because he knows Anita needs more blood. Richard shows jealousy yet again in his refusal for Anita to allow Jean-Claude to feed off of her. It is ironic that Anita calls Dominic Dumare to assist her since his knowledge of their triumvirate further leads to his spell. It is also ironic that Dominic has been cleared of Robert's murder since he is one of the murderers. The importance of belief in magic is revealed through Dominic Dumare's informing Anita that she cannot raise zombies during the day only because she believes she cannot. Dominic's concoction of a spell foreshadows his plans for his other spell which includes sacrificing Jean-Claude and Richard. Anita heals Damian of a cut at Dominic's request, a misdirection to cause Anita and Jean-Claude to believe that Dominic intends to have Anita help heal Sabin. The fact that Anita cuts Damian instead of the other vampires can be seen as retribution for his bespelling Karen in the club. The combination of Anita, Jean-Claude and Richard's blood forms a powerful blood cocktail that everyone lusts after, giving a demonstration of how powerful their triumvirate could be. The fact that Damian's animating force returns before Anita can lay

him back in his coffin allows the consideration that maybe Anita's worry was unnecessary.



Section XII, ch. 33-36

Section XII, ch. 33-36 Summary

Anita wakes to Richard and Jean-Claude arguing about making her Jean-Claude's human servant. Richard wants Jean-Claude to mark Anita because he is afraid she is dying, but Jean-Claude refuses. Anita agrees with Jean-Claude, threatening to kill him if he ever forces himself on her again. Jean-Claude is partially afraid that Anita would be the master if he marked her. Richard wants the first mark since Jean-Claude cannot come to the lupanar. Richard will kill Marcus tonight if Marcus does not back down. Edward arrives, but his backup is being guarded. Jean-Claude joins Edward to release his backup, Harley. Edward reveals that Marcus is the man who put the hit on Anita. Richard is outraged! Harley scares Anita because he stares at her. Edward told Harley to pick someone else to follow in case something happens to Edward; Harley chose Anita because she is the scariest person in the room. If Anita and Edward are both killed, it would be bad.

Marcus will die tonight, but Raina could plan a revolt with his followers. Jean-Claude suggests putting on a better show than Marcus and Raina. Anita is dressed in black leather with knives, looking like a dominatrix. Edward worries because he cannot go to the lupanar with her. Edward is a preview of what Anita is becoming. Richard laughingly tells Anita she looks wonderful. She can choose to be embarrassed or aggressive; she chooses aggressive. In the woods, Richard's power makes the woods seem alive, something they need to impress the pack. Richard and Anita connect magically, and holding hands, they run through the woods to the lupanar. Marcus and Raina, naked, greet them, but Raina accuses Richard of making Anita pack. Richard says that Anita is his mate even though she is not pack. Raina approaches to test Anita, and Anita scares Raina by stealing her aura of sex and violence. As Raina retreats, Anita kisses Richard. Raina pouts to Marcus that he cannot allow this; Marcus sadly reminds her it will not be her blood that is spilled causing Anita to realize that the fool loves Raina. Marcus insists upon no more preliminaries, but Richard interjects his knowledge that Marcus hired an assassin to kill Anita. Anita does not want Richard to kill Marcus, but now it is too late.

Section XII, ch. 33-36 Analysis

Anita threatens to kill Jean-Claude if he ever marks her against her will again; this foreshadows her agreement to receive his marks. Jean-Claude's fear that Anita would be his master if he marked her shows how powerful Anita is. Richard's desire for the first mark foreshadows his receiving the first mark while his declaration that he will kill Marcus tonight if Marcus does not back down foreshadows Marcus' death. Marcus' death becomes even more likely when Edward reveals that Marcus paid for the hit on Anita; this also fulfills the foreshadowing that Marcus would be the man behind the contract on Anita's life. Harley is introduced, and his statement that it would be bad if Anita and Edward were killed foreshadows his attempt to kill Anita when he does not



recognize her. Edward's concern for Anita shows his friendship. Richard and Anita use their newly-found power through the triumvirate on their way to the lupanar, demonstrating their power when Anita steals Raina's aura of sex and violence. Marcus' death is foreshadowed again when he reminds Raina that it is not her blood that will be spilled as she urges him to punish Richard and Anita. Richard acknowledges to Marcus that he knows about the contract on Anita's life. It is ironic that now that the time has come for Marcus to die, Anita no longer wants Richard to kill him.



Section XIII, ch. 37-39

Section XIII, ch. 37-39 Summary

Marcus chooses the form they will fight in, and Anita holds Richard's hand as he changes halfway into a werewolf. He tells her to touch him if he asks because if he is losing, she can ride the power to save his followers. Marcus announces his challenge and lunges at Richard. It is cheating if anyone helps Marcus, and Anita can shoot them. When Sebastian stabs Richard, Anita shoots him. Richard kills Marcus and commands Anita to put her gun up and not kill Raina. When she ignores him, he smacks it out of her hand. He tells her to ride the power or run. The pack begins to change, and Richard collapses on top of Anita and shapeshifts on top of her. When the pack feeds on Marcus, Anita grabs her gun and runs.

Anita returns to Jean-Claude, disgusted with the liquid from Richard's change. Jean-Claude realizes she saw Richard change. Anita is upset because Richard changed on top of her and ate Marcus. Jean-Claude comforts her, causing both of them to need a bath. Anita worries when she begins to see Jean-Claude as dependable. Jean-Claude runs the bathwater for Anita and helps her undress in an uncharacteristically gentleman-like way. Anita bathes, and Jean-Claude returns, obtaining Anita's permission to enter the tub. When he kisses her, Anita jerks away, and Jean-Claude lands on top of her in the bathtub. He complains that he has been a lady's man for three hundred years and is only awkward around her. Jean-Claude offers to leave if that is what Anita wants, but she kisses him. Anita commands him to undress, and they have sex. Jean-Claude wants to use vampire tricks to be inside of Anita's mind, and she allows it, learning that she can break his hold whenever she wants. Anita has stolen Jean-Claude's heart with her body though before she would have taken it with a knife or stake. Part of her appeal is that Anita will always be a challenge.

Section XIII, ch. 37-39 Analysis

Richard shows his ability as a leader and his concern for his followers by his instructions to Anita to save his followers if he loses. Raina and Sebastian congregate behind Richard as he fights Marcus. This foreshadows Sebastian stabbing Richard which happens immediately afterward. Marcus' death fulfills the foreshadowing that occurs throughout the novel, but Raina is left alive which foreshadows the need to kill her later. Richard shapeshifts on top of Anita, fulfilling the foreshadowing that she would see him change. Anita is scared and runs away from the lycanthropes. Jean-Claude is confused about Anita's sadness since Richard is alive. Anita's love for Jean-Claude is seen in her belief that he is dependable. Jean-Claude lands on Anita in the bathtub, foreshadowing their sexual adventure which is shortly afterward fulfilled. Although Jean-Claude can bespell Anita with his eyes, she can break his hold whenever she wants, demonstrating her growing power.



Section XIV, ch. 40-42

Section XIV, ch. 40-42 Summary

Anita wakes in Jean-Claude's bed; Jean-Claude sleeps in his coffin. She is confused because she still loves Richard. Ernie knocks and offers himself to Anita's services since Jean-Claude commanded him to be at her disposal, but Anita threatens to shoot him if he does not leave immediately because she is naked. As Ernie leaves, Richard enters in a rage, accusing Anita of having sex with Jean-Claude. They argue about that and the fact that Richard would not allow Anita to kill Raina. In a rage, Richard throws Jean-Claude's bed. Anita apologizes, and Richard tries to kiss her, but she will not let him. She hurts him when she admits that the sex with Jean-Claude was good. Richard loves Anita. He beats his hands against the wall as Anita begs him to stop. Finally, Richard kisses her softly and leaves as she apologizes. Richard promises that he will always love her. Anita allows him to leave; she sits on the floor and does nothing because she does not know what to do. Anita leaves a message on Edward's answering service because she cannot stay in the Circus of the Damned any longer. She plans to leave in ten minutes if Edward does not call back before then. Cassandra knocks and enters the room, offering sympathy and fixing the bed that Richard overturned. Cassandra apologizes, and Anita tells her that Cassandra can be with Richard because she wants him to be happy. Cassandra likes Anita a lot; she wishes she did not. She punches Anita, knocking her unconscious.

Anita wakes, tied down to a bed in the barn where Raina's pornographic films are made, with Gabriel pacing in front of the bed. Raina greets Anita, and Anita tells Raina that she can be lupa. Cassandra explains that Anita had sex with Jean-Claude, obviously not uncomfortable with the fact that she (Cassandra) betrayed Anita. Raina does not want to be lupa; she wants Anita's pain. Anita wants to know why Cassandra is helping Raina and learns that Cassandra is Sabin's wolf and Dominic has a spell that will cure Sabin. Unfortunately, the spell requires a perfectly matching triumvirate, a master vampire, a werewolf and a necromancer; they will steal Jean-Claude and Richard's magical essence. Raina kisses Anita, and Anita bites her so Gabriel licks Anita's face. Cassandra wants to talk to Anita before she leaves. When Raina objects, Cassandra states that she will lead the pack when Richard is dead. Cassandra tells Anita that Gabriel and Raina want Anita on film, but she would let Anita go if she would not seek retribution for the deaths of Jean-Claude and Richard. Anita was used as a hostage to get Jean-Claude and Richard to the ritual. Anita argues that she can heal Sabin, but Cassandra says it is too late because the infection is moving to his mind. Anita realizes by the doubt in Cassandra's eyes that Dominic is not sure the spell will work without a human servant present. Cassandra begins to waver, but Raina urges her by reminding her how quickly Sabin's mind is decaying. Cassandra apologizes, refuses to give Anita a weapon because Sabin ordered her not to, and leaves. Gabriel begins planning the shoot and slaps Anita when she refuses to cooperate. He tells her how he became a wereleopard. As the director instructs Gabriel, Anita points out that Gabriel is too tall for Anita to be visible for the camera. Gabriel decides to tie Anita to a wall, rape her and



then rip her open. Anita reminds him of his fantasy of trying to rape her while she tries to kill him, and she says no one else will ever be the challenge she could be; she convinces Gabriel to give her a knife.

Section XIV, ch. 40-42 Analysis

Even after having sex with Jean-Claude, Anita still loves Richard which shows how deeply she loves him. Richard is angry and seems to know what happened when he enters Jean-Claude's bedroom. Foreshadowing of Richard and Anita's break-up is fulfilled as he leaves her alone. It is ironic that Anita plans to leave the Circus of the Damned within ten minutes because she does, though not exactly the way she had intended. Cassandra betrays Anita as Anita is offering friendship. Anita waking tied to a bed in the barn fulfills the earlier foreshadowing that occurred. The discovery of Cassandra's true identity also fulfills earlier foreshadowing. Her description of Dominic Dumare's spell foreshadows Dominic's attempt to kill Jean-Claude and Richard. Cassandra decides that she will be Ulfric once Richard is dead, showing her ambition. The fact that Dominic Dumare was able to use Anita as a hostage to lure Richard to his doom demonstrates the fact that Richard still deeply loves Anita. Anita is almost able to persuade Cassandra to let her attempt to save Sabin, but Raina's desire to injure Anita prevents Anita from succeeding. Gabriel shows that he is enjoying his time with Anita by insisting upon talking to her about the way he became a wereleopard. Anita's reminder of his fantasy and Gabriel's agreement to make the film according to his fantasy fulfills the earlier foreshadowing. Anita convincing Gabriel to give her a knife foreshadows his death.



Section XV, ch. 43-46

Section XV, ch. 43-46 Summary

After Gabriel gives Anita a knife, she tries to convince Heidi to give her a gun, but Heidi is too frightened of Raina. Richard sends a mental image through Anita's head, distracting her as Gabriel comes toward her. Anita, realizing she needs to hurry, urges Gabriel on. Gabriel scratches her as Richard distracts her by screaming in her head; Anita tells Richard not to distract her for a while. Anita stabs Gabriel, but he continues trying to rape her. Jean-Claude obtains permission through Anita's mind and gives her the first and second marks. Gabriel kisses Anita, and she kisses him back, moving her hands up the side of his face to gouge his eyes out. Anita kills Gabriel, and Raina charges at her. Anita grabs her gun and shoots Raina as Edward and Harley enter the room. Harley cannot recognize Anita. Anita insists they leave immediately, and Edward helps her run while Harley gets her weapons.

Anita, Edward and Harley arrive at the lupanar to find Jean-Claude bound with crosses and Robert's still-beating heart in Dominic Dumare's hand. Anita tries to shoot Dominic, but her bullet cannot enter his circle of protection because she is of the dead. Anita tries to dissuade Dominic, Sabin and Cassandra to allow her to attempt a different spell, but they refuse. Per Anita's instructions, Edward passes through the circle and kills Dominic as Dominic stabs Robert's heart to Richard's chest. Cassandra jumps on Edward's back, but Harley grabs and shoots her. Anita instructs Edward to shoot Robert's heart. Sabin attacks Edward, but Anita shoots Sabin's head off. Edward is knocked out, and Harley cannot see him and, still not recognizing Anita, aims his gun at her. Anita aims and shoots Harley. When he awakes, Edward is angry that Anita killed Harley. Anita unties Jean-Claude who is blocking her from feeling Richard because he is dying from a fearful wound. Jean-Claude will die also, but Jean-Claude can prevent him from draining Anita. The only hope is the third mark, but because Anita refuses to lose both of them, she allows Jean-Claude to drink her blood, giving her the third mark, until she passes out.

Anita wakes in the hospital with Edward beside her. He tells her Jean-Claude and Richard are both alive and asks if it was necessary to kill Harley. Anita says she just reacted which is what Edward assumed; if she had lied he would have killed her. Her gun is underneath her pillow. Anita owes Edward a life in the form of being his back up in some similar situation. Anita worries about contracting lycanthropy from Gabriel but does not. She loves Richard, and he loves her. She loves Jean-Claude differently. Richard does not talk to Anita, making the triumvirate useless. The vampires who were raised by accident are fine, and Monica's baby is due in August. Anita continues to be the scourge of the undead, regardless of the fact that she is sleeping with the Master of the City.



Section XV, ch. 43-46 Analysis

Richard sending a mental message to Anita demonstrates the success of the triumvirate and shows how far the spell has gotten. Foreshadowing is fulfilled when Jean-Claude gives Anita the first and second marks toward becoming his human servant. Also, Anita kills Gabriel and Raina. Harley being unable to recognize Anita foreshadows his attempt to kill her and his death. Anita is unable to accept Jean-Claude and Richard dying, demonstrating her love for them and foreshadowing her reception of the third mark. Additional foreshadowing that is fulfilled includes Harley's death, Anita's inability to enter Dominic Dumare's circle of protection and Anita receiving the third mark. The fact that Anita receives the third mark foreshadows Jean-Claude and Richard's survival which is fulfilled in the final chapter when Anita awakes in the hospital and learns that both of her men are still alive and well. Edward forms a contract with Anita that involves her serving as his back-up sometime. It is ironic that the triumvirate is made useless by Richard's anger at Anita since it was her love for Richard that caused its creation in the first place. It is also ironic that Anita is dating the Master Vampire of the City while continuing to slay vampires.



Characters

Anita Blake

Anita Blake is the main character and narrator of this novel. She earns her living as an animator, someone who raises zombies, but she is a necromancer by birth, rumored to have control over all types of the undead. She also assists the police on supernatural cases. Anita is short, petite, and half-Mexican, with long, curly, black hair. She is ruthless and has the most legal vampire kills of any vampire killer in the United States, earning her the nickname the Executioner among the vampires. Anita is dating Jean-Claude, a vampire, and Richard, a werewolf.

Sabin and Dominic Dumare come to Anita for help with curing Sabin's degenerative disease. Someone hires an assassin to kill Anita which she learns from her friend Edward, an assassin. Anita kills the first assassin in her apartment, after which she stays the night with Richard and saves Stephen from Raina and Gabriel. She is mad at Richard because he refuses to kill. Anita goes to Danse Macabre with Jean-Claude where she prevents Damian from bespelling a woman and kills the second assassin, a woman named Annabelle. She assists Dolph with Robert's murder for which she is the first suspect.

Anita hides at Circus of the Damned where she forms a triumvirate with Jean-Claude and Richard and accidentally raises many zombies and three vampires. She attends the lupanar with Richard as his lupa, but she runs away from Richard after he shapeshifts on top of her. She has sex with Jean-Claude, causing Richard to break-up with her. Cassandra betrays Anita, and Anita wakes to Gabriel and Raina intending to film her death. Anita kills Gabriel and Raina and escapes to save Jean-Claude and Richard by killing Sabin, Cassandra and Dominic Dumare, with Edward and Harley's help. Anita also kills Harley. Anita accepts the third mark toward becoming Jean-Claude's human servant in order to save her two boyfriends. She wakes in the hospital and continues to be the Executioner, despite the fact that she is sleeping with the Master of the City.

Richard Zeeman

Richard is a powerful werewolf and the Fenrir, or challenger, in his werewolf pack. He intends to challenge the current Ulfric, or king, at the next lupanar. Richard is one of Anita's boyfriends. Richard is a middle-school teacher and hides his identity as a werewolf because parents do not like monsters teaching their children. Richard is tall and muscular and has long, blonde hair. Richard believes in the sanctity of life and is unwilling to kill because he enjoys it. He is unwilling to give up his humanity. Richard is angry that Anita kills so easily, but he loves her and wants to marry her. Richard is jealous of Jean-Claude and often fights with him when Anita is around.



Richard escorts Anita to Catherine's dinner party and is outraged when he learns that a contract has been placed on Anita's life. After the first assassin attacks Anita at her apartment, he offers to let her stay in his guestroom. Richard receives a call from Stephen for help and goes to Raina's barn where he fights Sebastian and Jamil as Anita saves Stephen. Although Richard is powerful, many of the other werewolves do not obey him because he is unwilling to kill them as punishment. Richard believes in a more peaceful society of lycanthropes because he does not believe they are just animals.

Richard stays at the Circus of the Damned with Anita, but he will not have sex with her because he wants her to see him shapeshift and see the other werewolves at the lupanar, their place of power, before they sleep together. Richard forms a triumvirate with Anita and Jean-Claude, gathering enough power which he hopes will scare Marcus into backing down as Ulfic. When Richard learns that Marcus paid for the hit on Anita's life, he decides to kill Marcus. He kills Marcus at the lupanar and shifts on top of Anita. He is angry and breaks up with Anita after he learns that she had sex with Jean-Claude. Regardless, he rushes to the lupanar and Dominic Dumare's spell when they tell him that Anita is their hostage. As Dominic Dumare stabs Richard, he mourns the loss of Anita more than the loss of his life. After surviving, Richard will not talk to Anita because he is so hurt, making the triumvirate useless.

Jean-Claude

Jean-Claude is a vampire and the Master of the City of St. Louis. He is around three hundred years old. He is beautiful, tall and feminine with long, curly, black hair and blue eyes. Jean-Claude dates Anita and is jealous of Richard. He often instigates fights with Richard to show Anita that neither of them are human.

Jean-Claude does not trust Sabin and Dominic Dumare but believes nothing will happen since the vampire council has forbidden fighting among master vampires until Brewster's Law has been rejected. Jean-Claude escorts Anita to Danse Macabre where he forces her to admit that she has not treated him fairly in dating both Jean-Claude and Richard. Jean-Claude mourns for Robert after learning of his friend's death. He also gives Anita a history lesson about his life with Asher and Julianna when she asks about the new painting in his living room. Jean-Claude loves Anita.

Jean-Claude forms a triumvirate with Anita and Richard, but he is very angry with Anita when she accidentally raises three of his vampires with many zombies. He had threatened his vampires with this ability, but he did not believe she could actually raise vampires. After Richard shapeshifts on Anita and she returns to the Circus of the Damned, Jean-Claude has sex with Anita. Sabin and Dominic Dumare capture Jean-Claude to use in their spell to restore Sabin's health. Jean-Claude gives Anita the first three marks toward becoming his human servant in order to save his and Richard's lives. After everyone returns to normal, Jean-Claude continues dating Anita.



Sabin

Sabin is a master vampire from Europe who travels to St. Louis under the guise of requesting Anita's assistance to heal a degenerative disease resulting from refraining from human blood. In actuality, he intends to use Anita, Richard and Jean-Claude in a spell that his human servant, Dominic Dumare, has discovered that will restore his health.

Dominic Dumare

Dominic Dumare is Sabin's human servant. He is also a necromancer, like Anita, and he helps her restore the vampires that she accidentally raises. Dominic performs the ritual to retrieve Robert's heart and intends to perform the spell to restore Sabin's health.

Cassandra

Cassandra is a werewolf who petitioned to join Marcus' clan. She has heard of possible things Richard intends to do with the pack and agrees with his ideas. She befriends Anita and often serves as her bodyguard. Cassandra is actually Sabin's wolf and the reason that he refrains from human blood. Cassandra betrays Anita and takes her to Raina and Gabriel.

Edward

Edward is Anita's friend and an assassin. He informs Anita of the contract against her life which he declined for the joy of being able to kill more people by protecting Anita. He takes his job protecting Anita very seriously because of his immense pride. Edward convinces Anita to hide out at the Circus of the Damned while he finds back-up and learns that Marcus is the person offering the money to kill Anita. He returns with Harley as back-up, and after Anita kills Harley, Edward threatens to kill Anita if she does not agree to be his back-up in retribution. His legal alias is Ted Forrester, a bounty hunter specializing in preternatural creatures. The vampires' nickname for Edward is Death.

Raina

Raina is the Lupa of the werewolf pack and is married to Marcus. She films pornographic films in an old barn and attempts to force Stephen to participate. She is ruthless, cruel and feared by everyone. Raina forbids the other werewolves to make Anita one of them. Raina plans to film Anita's rape and death because she desires Anita's pain. Anita kills Raina.



Marcus

Marcus is the local Ulfric of the werewolf pack and is married to Raina. Marcus wants to unify the lycanthropes under one leader, him. Richard must defeat Marcus in order to become Ulfric. Marcus places a contract on Anita's life. Marcus is killed by Richard.

Robert

Robert is a vampire who is over a hundred years old. He has been Jean-Claude's friend and companion during that time. Robert is married to Monica Vespucci, and they are expecting a baby. He is killed by Dominic Dumare, Sabin and Cassandra because they need his heart to perform the spell to restore Sabin.

Gabriel

Gabriel is a wereleopard with a fascination with pain. He fantasizes about raping Anita and tearing her open while she tries to kill him. After Cassandra betrays Anita, he gives Anita a knife to act out this fantasy, but Anita manages to kill Gabriel.

Harley-Edward's backup

Harley is Edward's back-up and a complete psychotic. When Edward tells Harley to choose someone else to obey if something happens to Edward, Harley chooses Anita, stating she is the scariest person in a room full of monsters. He is unable to recognize Anita after her encounter with Gabriel and Raina, and he attempts to shoot her while Edward is unconscious, but Anita kills Harley first.



Objects/Places

Brewster's Law

Brewster's Law is the law that is being considered in Washington, D.C. to revoke the law stating vampires are legally alive. It is the result of Senator Brewster's daughter being raped and killed by a vampire. It is also the reason that the vampire council has forbidden any quarrels between master vampires.

Necromancy

Necromancy is a magical ability that gives its owner a tie to the dead. Anita Blake is a necromancer. Necromancers are rumored to have control over all types of undead, including vampires.

Richard's car

Richard's car is an old, Mach One Mustang from the sixties. It is orange with a black racing stripe and black leather bucket seats. It has a manual transmission. A lot of the conversations between Anita and Richard take place in his car in the beginning of the novel.

Anita's degree

Anita has a degree in preternatural biology. She planned to spend her life as a field biologist, "a preternatural version of Jane Goodall."

Lukoi

Lukoi is the werewolves' name for their pack. It is taken from Odin's mythology, as are many of the Lukoi's titles.

Ulfric and Lupa

The Ulfric and Lupa are basically the king and queen of a pack of werewolves. The Ulfric must fight for his position, while the Lupa is simply his mate. Marcus and Raina are the Ulfric and Lupa, but Richard challenges Marcus to become Ulfric.



Dominant

A dominant is anyone that the werewolves consider worthy of respect that is not Lukoi. Anita and Jean-Claude are considered dominant.

Raina's films

Raina enjoys making pornographic films in an old barn in the woods. She often forces werewolves to take part in them against their will. Originally, the films included snuff films, but after a previous encounter with Anita, she no longer makes snuff films though she is willing to ignore this rule when she attempts to make a film with Anita in the starring role.

Anita's apartment

Anita lives in a fairly urban apartment with a lot of other tenants. After the first assassin shoots through her door and ruins it, she realizes that she can no longer endanger her neighbors.

Richard's house

After the first assassin's attack, Anita stays at Richard's house which is fairly isolated and runs less risk of endangering neighbors. Woods surround the house. Anita stays in Richard's guest room, and Stephen joins her there when Richard goes out to patrol the woods for assassins. The shape shifters' meeting to discuss Marcus also takes place at Richard's house.

Vlad syndrome

Vlad syndrome is a disease that often occurs in babies born to vampire fathers. Monica has not had the amnio to check for it at the time of Catherine's dinner party.

Humans Against Vampires and Humans First

Humans Against Vampires and Humans First are right-wing hate groups aimed against vampires. Many members are survivors or family members of victims of vampire attacks.

Circus of the Damned

Circus of the Damned is the daytime lair of Jean-Claude as the Master of the City and where Anita hides from her assassin.



Lupanar

The lupanar is the lukoi's place of power where they meet every full moon. There is a stone throne at the lupanar where the Ulfric sits. It is here that Richard kills Marcus and also where Dominic Dumare attempts to complete his spell.

Killing Dance

The killing dance is what the lukoi call sex.

Lycanthropy

Lycanthropy is a disease which a human contracts causing them to turn into a shape shifter. This means that once a month, on the full moon, they turn into an animal, such as a werewolve, a weretiger, a wereleopard or a wererat.

Barn

The barn is where Raina makes her pornographic films. It is also where Richard and Anita go to save Stephen, nearly resulting in Richard's death. After Cassandra betrays Anita, Cassandra takes her to the barn where Raina and Gabriel intend to make her a star of one of their snuff films.

Danse Macabre

Danse Macabre is the name of Jean-Claude's new dance club that he opens featuring vampires and lycanthropes. Raina is his silent partner in the business. This is where Anita is attacked by and kills her assassin, Annabelle.

Contract on Anita's life

A contract is place on Anita's life. Edward informs her of this and comes to town to help protect her. The fee is raised to half a million dollars if Anita is dead within twenty-four hours. The time limit is extended to forty-eight hours after Anita kills the first and second assassins. Edward finds out that the money is being paid by Marcus Fletcher, the local Ulfric. Eventually, Anita learns that Marcus and Raina offered the money in an agreement with Sabin, Cassandra and Dominic Dumare that required Anita being dead before they got to town.



Jean-Claude's bathroom

Jean-Claude's bathroom has been remodeled and now features a fabulous bathtub. After Richard shape shifts on top of her, Anita bathes in the bathroom and is joined by Jean-Claude. This is where Anita and Jean-Claude make love for the first time.

Null

A null is a magical null, someone with no magical or psychic ability. Dolph is a complete null, and Zerbrowski is almost a null.

Jean-Claude's painting

There is a new painting of three people in Jean-Claude's living room, hanging over his fireplace. They are all dressed in clothes styled from the seventeenth century. The woman, Julianna, is dressed in white and silver, with her brown hair style in ringlets and a red rose in her hand. Asher, a tall, slender man, stands behind her. Asher has dark gold ringlets, a mustache and a Vandyke beard. He is dressed in white and gold. Jean-Claude is seated behind Julianna, wearing black with silver embroidery. He has black ringlets and is clean-shaven. His blue eyes pierce through the painting. Jean-Claude is the only person in the painting who is not smiling. Asher, Julianna and Jean-Claude were a menage trois for about a hundred years. Julianna was burned as a witch, and Asher was extremely scarred. Asher sent the painting to Jean-Claude as a present in congratulations for Jean-Claude becoming Master of the City. It is meant to remind Jean-Claude of who he was and from where he came.

The District

The District is also known as the Blood District. It is a location near the river where most of the vampire-owned businesses are situated.



Themes

Magic

The main characters of this novel are magical beings; there are vampires, werewolves, witches and necromancers. Interestingly, they live in the world as normal people and participate in everyday activities such as having jobs. For example, Robert, a vampire, is a bouncer. Richard, a werewolf, is a teacher. Tammy Reynolds, a witch, is a police officer.

Many examples of magical ability appear throughout the novel. Sabin cuts Jean-Claude and Anita in her office with his laughter. Dominic Dumare helps Anita lay the zombies and vampires to rest after she raises them during the formation of the triumvirate. He also performs the ceremony for Robert's death, as well as prepares to perform Sabin's healing ceremony, using Robert's heart, which entails killing Jean-Claude and Richard. Damian bespells Karen at Danse Macabre. Detective Tammy Reynolds tries to read Anita's aura. Anita explains to Zerbrowski and Dolph that a null is a person with no magical ability.

Richard is able to calm Custard's bark and carry Mrs. Pringle's television alone because of his wolfish abilities. He can also shape shift his entire body or only parts at a time. In the barn where Raina films her pornographic movies, Richard forces Sebastian to swallow his (Sebastian's) power. Richard feeds energy to Jason to heal him after beating him. Richard takes the first mark from Jean-Claude in order to be able to exude a lot of power at the lupanar. On his way to the lupanar with Anita, Richard makes the woods seem alive. After killing Marcus, he shape shifts on top of Anita.

Anita is a necromancer which gives her power with the dead or undead. She reads Liv's age at Danse Macabre and later correctly reads Jean-Claude's age after having been deceived in his age for quite some time. Jean-Claude admits that he was first attracted to Anita by her power. As Anita and Jean-Claude make out in his bathroom, she realizes that if she allows him to bespell her, she can break his hold at any time. Because she is a necromancer, Anita is unable to enter the circle at Robert's death scene or the circle at the lupanar. Since it is Dominic Dumare's power that created these circles, she cannot cross them. At the lupanar, Anita steals Raina's aura of sex and violence. When Anita, Jean-Claude and Richard form a triumvirate, Anita raises a lot of zombies and three vampires. She allows Damian to be cut to see if she can heal him, hoping that it will mean she can also heal Sabin.

Murder

A recurring theme throughout *A Killing Dance* is murder and death. First of all, many of the characters in the novel are vampires, making them technically dead. Additionally, Anita is a necromancer, a being rumored to have power over the dead. Most



importantly, the primary focus of this novel revolves around the contract that is placed on Anita's life. Edward, an assassin and bounty hunter, informs Anita of this contract.

Throughout the novel, Richard and Anita argue about their difference of opinions concerning killing other people. Richard feels that life is sacred and should be preserved; Anita believes that her life is important also, and it is acceptable to kill others to save herself. Jean-Claude seems to agree more with Anita than Richard. Edward admits that he enjoys killing while Anita feels empty when she does it, though she is no longer plagued with attacks of conscience afterwards. Richard is afraid to kill partly because he is afraid he will enjoy it, due to his nature as a werewolf.

Besides discussions about murder, there are many actual accounts of murder throughout the novel. Anita kills a hit man, local muscle, in her apartment shortly after being informed of the contract on her life; the next night, she kills Annabelle, a female assassin that attempts to shoot Anita in the bathroom at Danse Macabre. Robert is murdered in a necromancy ritual to retrieve his heart for later use in a spell. Richard finally kills Marcus, and Anita kills Sebastian who interferes with the fight and stabs Richard. Gabriel and Raina plan to tape the rape and murder of Anita, but their plan is thwarted when Anita escapes and kills them instead. Cassandra, Dominic Dumare and Sabin plan to kill Jean-Claude and Richard, but Anita prevents them from completing their spell. Edward kills Dominic Dumare, Harley kills Cassandra, and Anita kills Sabin. Afterwards, Harley goes insane and raises his gun to shoot Anita, but she kills him first.

Lust and Love

Lust and love play a large part in this novel, particularly in the triangle among Anita, Jean-Claude and Richard. Other characters, though, also have interesting difficulties or revelations about love throughout the novel. Liv offers Jean-Claude sex. Cassandra and Anita share a girl moment when they both realize how attractive Damian is. Sabin threatens to ask for Cassandra or Anita as his companion. In actuality, Cassandra is Sabin's wolf and lover; she is the reason for his disease because he gave up drinking blood to please her. Raina exudes sexuality and violence when she arrives naked at the lupanar. She also has a project that involves making pornographic films. Gabriel fantasizes about raping Anita while she tries to kill him, and after Cassandra betrays Anita, Gabriel attempts to act out his fantasy. Robert and Monica are having a baby, interesting since Robert is a vampire who is over one hundred years old.

Anita is dating both Richard and Jean-Claude in order to keep the peace. She refuses to sleep with either of them though. On her way home from Catherine's party, Anita makes out with Richard but chides herself for sexual innuendo; she says it is not fair since she is not willing to sleep with him. Anita is drawn to Richard's naked body while they are fighting the next morning and asks him to put on clothing. Richard's feelings are hurt, and they make out before the lycanthrope meeting. Richard decides that he must shape shift before he and Anita sleep together. Richard is very jealous of the sexy black dress that Anita plans to wear for her date with Jean-Claude. Anita and Richard also make out at the lupanar. After Anita sleeps with Jean-Claude, she and Richard fight



and break up. As Richard nearly dies during Dominic Dumare's ceremony, Anita can feel his mourning for the loss of her because he still loves her though he refuses to speak to her after everything is settled again.

Anita goes to Danse Macabre with Jean-Claude, and they begin flirting from the moment he picks her up. Before entering the club, he licks her to cheer her up. At Danse Macabre, Anita learns that Jean-Claude is abstinent because he knows that she would dump him if he slept with anyone else. At the Circus of the Damned, Anita sees a new painting in Jean-Claude's living room and learns that it is a painting of his ménage trios from the seventeenth century. Jean-Claude tells Anita that he loves her, and as they kiss, Richard enters in a jealous rage. When Jean-Claude and Richard have an idea to secure their power bases, Anita learns that they plan to raise a magical energy between the three of them; they have anger between themselves, but Anita is their lust to form the triumvirate. Anita's outfit at the lupanar, which makes her look like a dominatrix, was bought by Jean-Claude specifically for Anita. After Anita sees Richard eat Marcus, she flees to the Circus of the Damned and Jean-Claude's bed. Anita continues to have sex with Jean-Claude after she and Richard break up.



Style

Point of View

The point of view in this novel is first person limited. The story is told from Anita's point of view, which means that she can only report external events as they appear to her. While she can give details about the way that certain events makes her feel and react, she cannot explain other characters' reactions or feelings. The point of view is mostly reliable but not always since the narrator can only describe what is going on as she sees it. This is important to the novel since it allows the plot to develop; if the narrator were omniscient, she would know what other people are thinking throughout the novel, eliminating the mystery of the plot. Since many of the characters act differently than they think throughout the novel, there would not be the dramatic denouement that occurs in the novel.

The story is told through a fairly equal combination of exposition and dialogue which allows the reader to come into contact with the individual characters as well as the narrator's opinions of them. This also allows the narrator to provide some background into the world in which the story occurs. The entire book takes place over a period of a several days, so the timing of the chapters is pretty evenly spaced, with the exception of periods where the narrator is asleep. The events of the novel are seen through Anita's eyes, though she sometimes makes an effort to explain other characters' reactions and feelings as she believes them to be.

Setting

The novel is set in St. Louis, Missouri in America. The world of the novel is pretty typically modern American with the exception of the addition of several species that are not existent in reality. The novel introduces vampires, lycanthropes, and necromancers into the modern world. In the world of the novel, a law has been passed which has legally declared vampires alive, allowing them to co-exist in society, owning businesses and marrying humans.

There are many settings within the general vicinity of St. Louis in the novel. The first location that is introduced is Anita's office in her job at Animators, Inc. where she works as an animator, raising the dead. Anita goes to a party at Catherine's house before getting into Richard's car, a Mach-One Mustang, to return to her apartment. Her apartment is demolished, causing her to consider moving to avoid endangering her neighbors. Anita stays the night at Richard's house, but their pleasant evening is interrupted when they must save Stephen from Raina at the barn where the pornographic movies are filmed. Anita goes to Danse Macabre on a date with Jean-Claude and spends a considerable amount of time during the novel in the interview room at the local police station.



Dolph takes Anita to Robert's house to see his murder, and she stays the night at Jean-Claude's home, the Circus of the Damned. Within the Circus of the Damned, Anita specifically mentions Jean-Claude's living room, bedroom and bathroom. She also visits the underground cemetery and the vampires' coffin room. Eventually, Anita goes to the lupanar, the werewolves' place of power. She returns to Raina's barn as a hostage or prisoner before returning to the lupanar to save her boyfriends. The final setting of the novel is the hospital where Anita wakes after receiving the third mark.

Language and Meaning

The language of this novel is pretty modern and casual. The sentence structure and grammar used throughout the novel is a style that is very common in modern novels. It is casual and conversational, as though the narrator is writing a journal or letter to a friend. Fragments, clichés and questionable grammar highlight the text as the narrator addresses herself to a friend in a very personal style. The language allows readers to delve deeply into the world of the novel and feel themselves a part of the world in which the action is occurring.

Some of the dialogue has a more formal feel, specifically that of Jean-Claude, Sabin and Dominic Dumare. The reason and the result of this is to emphasize the fact that they have lived for several centuries and are much older than the other characters in the novel. Therefore, they come from a time when the slang that Anita may use was not considered appropriate. The distinction of style in these characters' conversations reminds the reader what exactly the difference in upbringing and culture is among the main characters; however, even the more formal speech that is used by these characters is not so formal that it is beyond comprehension but more like talking with an older relative. The overall effect of the language is easy to understand as though conversing with a friend or relative.

Structure

This novel is composed of forty-six chapters, each varying in length from three to fifteen pages. The chapters are unnamed. The chapters tend to be relatively short and full of action with little description, with the exception of the first several chapters which are laden with background information. A lot of action occurs in a relatively short amount of space.

The plot of the novel is very complex. The plot focuses around a contract being placed on Anita's life but expands into her love life and the complications that arise from that. There are many subplots that appear throughout the novel, but they all revolve back to the main plot and are somehow interconnected with the contract on Anita's life. Raina's attempt to force Stephen into her pornographic films is an effort at killing Richard, which is the reason Marcus hires a killer for Anita. Robert's murder is also connected to the contract on Anita's life since the initial reason for the contract is Sabin, Dominic Dumare



and Cassandra's arrival in town and desire to use Jean-Claude and Richard in their spell to cure Sabin's degenerative illness.

The pace of the novel is very quick since there is much action and dialogue. The fact that the plot is extremely entertaining and engrossing also accounts for the speed with which the novel seems to evolve. The story line is not at all linear; there are many periods of back-story and flashback since the novel is part of a series. Despite this, the novel is easy to read and very entertaining.



Quotes

"I didn't have to see Jean-Claude's smile to know it was there. 'Oh, you are on your own with ma petite. She is my human servant, so declared before the council, but she answers to no one...She is the Executioner and has more vampire kills than any other human. She is a necromancer of such power that you have traveled halfway around the world to consult her. She is my human servant without a mark to hold her to me. She dates me without the aid of vampire glamour. Why should I not be pleased?'" Jean-Claude, Chapter 1, p. 2

"Now, aren't you going to be late for your date with Monsieur Zeeman?"

'You're being awfully civilized about this,' I said.

'Tomorrow night you will be with me, ma petite. I would be a poor...sport to begrudge Richard his night.'

'You're usually a poor sport.'

'Now, ma petite, that is hardly fair. Richard is not dead, is he?'

'Only because you know that if you kill him, I'll kill you.' I held a hand up before he could say it. 'I'd try to kill you, and you'd try to kill me, etc.' This was an old argument.

'So, Richard lives, you date us both, and I am being patient. More patient than I have ever been with anyone.'" Jean-Claude and Anita, Chapter 1, p. 10

"The only enemy is a dead enemy." Edward, Chapter 2, p. 19

"I wrapped my arms around his waist, leaning my face against his chest. I closed my eyes, and for just a moment I breathed in the smell of him. It was more than his aftershave; it was the smell of his skin, his warmth. Him. For just a moment, I sank against him and let it all go. I let his arms be my shelter. I knew that a well-placed bullet would destroy it all, but for a few seconds, I felt safe. Illusion is sometimes all that keeps us sane." Anita (internally), Chapter 3, p. 22

"Raina looked at me and I saw the knowledge on her face of how close she'd come. I think until that moment she hadn't realized I could kill her and not lose sleep. Hell, leaving her alive would cost me more sleep." Anita (internally), Chapter 8, p. 62

"'In some ways you are as sentimental as Richard,' [Raina] said. 'But you could kill us, all of us, even Stephen's brother, and feel nothing.'

I met her honey brown eyes and said, 'I'd feel something...safer.'" Raina and Anita, Chapter 8, p. 64

"Just lately I had noticed that I could kill people and not blink. No attack of conscience, no nightmares, nothing. It was like some part of me had turned off. It didn't bother me that I was able to kill so easily. It did bother me that it didn't bother me. But it had its uses, like tonight. I think every last furry one of them believed I'd do it. Sometimes, it was good to be scary." Anita (internally), Chapter, p. 72



"Which implied there were others, but I didn't give a shit, not today. I said, 'It is too damn early in the morning for furball politics. If someone wants a piece of me, tell them to go to the back of the line.'

[Sylvia] cocked her head to one side, like a curious dog. 'Is it a long line?'

'Lately, yeah.'

'I thought all of your enemies were dead,' Jason said.

'I keep making new ones,' I said." Anita, Sylvie and Jason, Chapter 9, p. 84

"You could agree to disagree on politics, or even religion sometimes, but you either killed people or you didn't. Homicide was not something you could be neutral on." Anita (internally), Chapter 10, p. 94

"You know that Rain has forbidden us to make you lukoi. She's afraid if you joined us, you'd be a better bitch than she is." Sylvie, Chapter 11, p. 105

"He stared at us. I watched him thinking about something serious. He finally said, 'I don't understand how the two of you can be calm. I'm shocked that someone has put a contract out on Anita. Neither of you is shocked.'

I looked at Edward, and he looked back at me. We had one of those moments of perfect understanding, and I knew I couldn't explain it to Richard. I wasn't even sure I could explain it to myself. 'I've stayed alive this long because I don't react the way most people react.'

'You've stayed alive because you're willing to do things other people aren't.' I nodded.

'That too.'" Richard and Anita, Chapter 12, p. 113

"Wait a minute,' Richard said. 'You're betting that the two of you are better than a professional assassin. That you'll get to him before he gets to Anita.' We both nodded. 'What if you're not better?'

Edward look at him like he'd said the sun wouldn't rise tomorrow. 'Edward will be better,' I said.

'You'd bet your life on that?' Richard asked.

'I am betting my life on that,' I said. Richard and Anita, Chapter 12, p. 116

"[Jean-Claude] looked at me, head to one side, 'Yes, you are nervous. Why does one human assassin unnerve you so much more than all the preternatural creatures you have faced?'

'Everyone who's wanted to kill me, it was personal. I understand personal. Whoever this is wants to kill me because it's business. Just business.'" Jean-Claude and Anita, Chapter 14, p. 129

"She said the phrase like it meant more. Giving your oath was not a casual thing to her. A lot of vampires came from times when a man's or a woman's word was their bond." Anita (internally), Chapter 16, p. 154

"You're always good for a laugh when you're not killing people, Anita.'" Dolph, Chapter 18, p. 178



"[Detective Tammy Reynolds] leaned down and whispered, 'You're flashing the room, dear.'

'That's why the underwear matches,' I said." Detective Tammy Reynolds and Anita, Chapter 19, p. 185

"Whoever did this couldn't have pulled off something so elaborate at the club, with other vampires around. No way. They needed privacy. They might have needed the spell just to keep Jean-Claude or some other vamp from riding to the rescue.' I thought about it. What did I really know about Robert? Not much. I knew him as Jean-Claude's flunkie. Monica's boyfriend, now husband. A soon-to-be daddy. Everything I knew about him was through other people's perceptions of him. He'd been killed in his own bedroom, and all I could think of was that it was a message for Jean-Claude. I was thinking of him like a flunkie because Jean-Claude treated him that way. Because he wasn't a master vampire, no one would want to kill him for his own sake. Geez, I was actually thinking of Robert like disposable commodity. We could always make more." Anita, Chapter 19, p. 187-188

"And that was the truth. The horrible truth. If in some dark part of my heart I hadn't been attracted to him from the beginning, I've have killed him long ago. Or tried to. I had more legal vampire kills than any other vampire hunter in the country. They didn't call me the Executioner for nothing. So how did I end up being safer in the depths of the Circus of the Damned with the monsters than above ground with the humans? Because somewhere along the line, I didn't kill the monster I should have. That particular monster was gliding up the hallway ahead of me. And he still had the cutest butt I'd ever seen on a dead man." Anita (internally), Chapter 21, p. 219

"You are trapped on the horns of a nasty dilemma, ma petite. He will not make love to you or marry you until you have seen and accepted his beast. Yet if you accept it, you fear he will turn from you...Only you could choose two men in one human lifetime that are this confusing." Jean-Claude, Chapter 22, p. 226

"It's not killing Marcus. It's endangering everybody by not killing Marcus... The difference is that killing is a means to an end, not an end in itself. I want you alive. Marcus gone. The pack members that follow you safe. I don't want you to have to torture the pack to keep your place. If we can accomplish all that without you having to kill anyone, I'm okay with that. I don't think there's an option that doesn't involve killing. But if you can come up with one, I'll support you." Anita, Chapter 23, p. 238

"Jean-Claude searched my face. 'What do you offer me, ma petite?'

'Blood,' I said.

'And sex?' he asked.

'Which would you rather have, right this minute?' I stared at him, willing the truth in his face.

He gave a shaky laugh. 'Blood.'

I smiled, and pulled my wrist away. 'Remember, it was your choice.'" Jean-Claude and Anita, Chapter 29, p. 272



"There were times when I thought that it wasn't Jean-Claude who had convinced me that vampires weren't always monsters. It was Willie and Dead Dave, ex-cop and bar owner. It was a host of lesser vampires that seemed, occasionally, like nice guys. Jean-Claude was a lot of things; nice was not one of them." Anita (internally), Chapter 30, p. 278

"I always seem to survive, Richard, no matter who else dies." Anita, Chapter 33, p. 299

"I sat up on my own. I was feeling just a tad better. 'That's why you didn't mark me while you had the chance and Richard to take the blame. After what I did today, you're afraid that I'd be the master and you'd be my servant. That's it, isn't it?' He smiled softly. 'Perhaps.' He sat on the bed on the other side of Richard. 'I have not worked for over two hundred years to be Master of my own lands to give up my freedom to anyone, even you, ma petite. You would not be a cruel master, but you would be an exacting one.'" Anita and Jean-Claude, Chapter 33, p. 301

"We'd found something else we disagreed on. Letting someone tie themselves to my mind, my soul, frightened me a lot more than killing someone." Anita (internally), Chapter 34, p. 304

"You look dangerous, Anita. Like somebody's weapon.' I stared in the mirror, shaking my head. 'Somebody's sex toy, you mean.' 'A dominatrix maybe, but nobody's toy,' Cassandra said. Why didn't that make me feel better?" Cassandra and Anita, Chapter 35, p. 311

"I'm your bodyguard. If you die under my protection, the other bodyguards will make fun of me." Edward, Chapter 35, p. 312

"Controlling the change is what separates the sheep from the wolves." Richard, Chapter 37, p. 322

"I shook my head. He was up to something. Nice to know that not everything had suddenly become something else. One thing I could always depend on was Jean-Claude. Pain in the ass that he was, he always seemed to be there. Dependable in his own twisted way. Jean-Claude dependable? I must have been more tired than I thought." Anita (internally), Chapter 38, p. 331

"I have been a lady's man for nearly three hundred years, Anita. Why is it only with you that I am awkward?" Jean-Claude, Chapter 39, p. 335

"You will always be dangerous, ma petite...There was a time when you would have taken my heart with stake or gun...Now you have taken it with these delicate hands and the scent of your body...Come, ma petite, enjoy your conquest...I am beginning to realize that you will never be conquered, and that is the greatest aphrodisiac of all." Jean-Claude, Chapter 39, p. 344



"I wasn't slick and sophisticated enough for this. What do you say to boyfriend A when he finds you naked in the bed of boyfriend B? Especially if boyfriend A turned into a monster the night before and ate someone. I bet Miss Manners didn't cover this at all." Anita (internally), Chapter 40, p. 346

"A wind swept through the falling darkness, catching me like a net before I touched that blue fire. The wind smelled of growing earth and the musty scent of fur. I felt something else: sorrow. Richard's sorrow. His mourning. Not of his death, but of my loss. Dead or alive, he'd lost me, and among his many faults was a loyalty that went beyond reason. Once in love, he was a man to stay there, regardless of what the woman did. A knight errant in every sense of the word. He was a fool, and I loved him for it. Jean-Claude I loved in spite of himself. Richard I loved because of who he was. I wouldn't lose him. I wrapped his essence like winding myself in a sheet, except I had no body. I held him in my mind, my body, and let him feel the love, my sorrow, regret. Jean-Claude was there, too. I half-expected him to protest, to sabotage it, but he didn't. That blue fire spilled upward through the tunnel to meet us, and the world exploded into shapes and images that were too confusing. Bits and pieces of memory, sensations, thoughts, like three separate jigsaw puzzles shaken and tossed into the air, and every piece that touched formed a picture." Anita (internally), Chapter 44, p. 381

"Maybe they're right. I don't know. Can I still be the scourge of vampire kind when I'm sleeping with the head bloodsucker? You bet." Anita (internally), Chapter 46, p. 387



Topics for Discussion

Why is Anita dating Jean-Claude?

What is Anita's main objection to marrying Richard?

Who is Edward and how does he find out about the contract on Anita's life? Who is Ted Forrester and what is his occupation?

Compare and contrast Richard and Jean-Claude.

Explain Anita's occupation/gift.

Why do Richard, Anita and Jean-Claude form a triumvirate?

Why is Sabin sick, what are his symptoms, and how does Dominic Dumare plan to cure Sabin?

Why and how is Robert killed?

Why does Marcus put a contract on Anita's life?

Why does Anita want Richard to kill Marcus? Why does Richard object?