

# **Naked in Death Study Guide**

## **Naked in Death by Nora Roberts**

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# Plot Summary

Naked in Death is the first in the Death series by writer Nora Roberts, writing under the pseudonym J.D. Robb. In this first novel, Eve Dallas investigates the murder of Sharon DeBlass, the daughter of a senator who worked as a licensed prostitute for no reason other than to embarrass her influential family. As Dallas begins the investigation, she discovers clues that this may be the first of six killings planned by the killer. In a rush to catch the killer before five other women die, Dallas finds herself hindered by people who should be most interested in the closing of the case, including the victim's own grandfather. Naked in Death is a futuristic mystery novel that transcends multiple genres, leaving the reader breathless to the final page.

Eve Dallas is told to take on a new case, a high profile murder, even though she should be spending the day in testing. When Dallas arrives at the murder scene, she discovers that the victim is Sharon DeBlass, the granddaughter of Gerald DeBlass, a conservative senator from Virginia. Sharon was a licensed prostitute who was killed with a handgun, a weapon that has been banned for more than twenty years. Not only that, but the killer has left the weapon behind, along with a note warning that Sharon is only the first of six victims the killer has planned.

Dallas begins interviewing neighbors and checking security films, hoping to find someone or something who saw the killer. Unfortunately, most of the neighbors were not home and the security tapes have been altered. Frustrated, Dallas goes home only to find the killer has left a video of the killing inside her home. Dallas watches the video, shocked by the violence inflicted on this young woman, before sending it to her boss.

Dallas attends Sharon's funeral, hoping to catch sight of a potential killer. Instead, Dallas finds herself accepting a ride home with her prime suspect, Roarke. Roarke is a local businessman who not only owns the building in which Sharon lived, but was known to have had dinner with her only a few days before her death. Dallas interviews Roarke and receives reasonable answers to her questions, leaving her doubting his involvement. However, Roarke collects the type of handguns used in the murder. Dallas arranges to meet with Roarke again in order to investigate his collection.

Dallas goes to Roarke's to see his guns and finds herself invited to dinner. After dinner, Dallas looks at the guns and finds that Roarke still has possession of the same type and model of gun that killed Sharon DeBlass. Even as Dallas takes the gun for evidence, she knows it is not the murder weapon and wonders if Roarke is making it accessible because he is innocent or because he is clever. After leaving his home, Dallas is called to the scene of another murder. Dallas goes to the scene and sees that the circumstances are all the same as Sharon DeBlass's murder, including a note telling her this is the second of six. This girl, Lola Starr, is only eighteen and has nothing in common with Sharon DeBlass outside their chosen field of work.

The following day, Dallas returns to interview Sharon's neighbor to try to identify a possible connection between the two women. When she leaves, Dallas stops by



Sharon's apartment and finds possessions moved, making her believe that the killer returned to Sharon's apartment to find something he missed. When Dallas returns home, she finds Roarke waiting for her in her apartment. As they talk, Dallas discovers that another package has been left for her. Like the first, this one contains a video of a murder. Dallas views it alone.

Dallas goes to see Senator DeBlass in East Washington and the suggestion is made that she back off the case. When she leaves the office, Dallas is aware that DeBlass's assistant, Derrick Rockman, is following her and her partner, Feeney. Dallas has Feeney lead Rockman back to New York while she goes to visit Sharon's mother, Elizabeth. From Elizabeth, Dallas learns that Sharon had an aversion to sex and that she kept diaries. This seems important to Dallas.

The following day, Dallas is forced to attend the testing she missed when she began the case. Afterward, Dallas asks the psychiatrist a few questions about the killer she is investigating. That night, exhausted and depressed, Dallas goes to a bar where her friend sings. Instead of getting drunk alone, Dallas finds herself dragged unwillingly to Roarke's home. Roarke allows Dallas to shoot some of his guns. Afterward, they spend the night together.

The following day, Dallas is called into a meeting with the Chief of the department. It becomes clear immediately that someone has already tipped the chief off about her relationship with Roarke and he is now using it to force her to comply in a press conference intended to lie to the press about Sharon DeBlass's death. Dallas does as she is told, but afterward makes a deal with a reporter to expose the truth.

Another woman is murdered. This prostitute is named Georgie Castle, an older woman recently divorced who is only working as a prostitute to pay her bills until she can make money with her writing. From her home, Dallas takes a cat who eventually becomes her own when Mrs. Castle's daughter refuses to take him.

Dallas begins searching for Sharon DeBlass's diaries, looking for bank accounts and safe deposit boxes. Dallas finds one, but all she gets from the safe deposit box is a list of names and numbers. On this list is Chief Simpson's name. Dallas becomes convinced that he was being blackmailed by Sharon, but has little proof. Dallas goes to Roarke and uses his computers to search Simpson's financial records. When Dallas finds evidence against Simpson, she sends it to the reporter she made the deal with.

With Simpson out of the way, Dallas begins closing in on the killer. Charles Monroe, Sharon's neighbor, recalls a safe deposit box he helped Sharon open. On her way out to check this box, Dallas gets a call from a woman claiming to have been raped by the same man who raped Sharon. Dallas establishes that this call was made from the home of Sharon's parents. Dallas flies out there with Roarke and learns that Catherine DeBlass was sexually abused by her father and has knowledge that Sharon was also abused. Catherine believes this is motive for murder. At the same time, Feeney retrieves Sharon's diaries, which describe this ongoing relationship in detail.



Dallas arrests DeBlass, but cannot get him to confess. DeBlass is released on bail. When Dallas returns home that day, she finds Rockman in her apartment. Rockman confesses to having witnessed DeBlass's suicide only a few hours earlier. Rockman now intends to rape and murder Dallas, making it appear that there was a different killer, clearing DeBlass's name. Rockman also confesses to cleaning up after DeBlass killed Sharon and then committing the other two murders to cover DeBlass' trail. Dallas manages to get the confession on tape and then overpowers Rockman just as Feeney and Roarke burst through the door.



# Chapter 1

## Chapter 1 Summary

Naked in Death is the first in the Death series featuring Eve Dallas and her lover, Roarke. This novel is set in the year 2058, creating a setting that is futuristic, but not so far advanced that a complicated world has to be created for the reader. In fact, many things about this novel are similar to modern day mysteries, except for laws implemented in the years between reality and Dallas' fictional world.

Eve Dallas wakes the morning after she has been forced to kill a suspect after entering his apartment in an attempt to save his child from his drug induced rage. This death haunts Dallas, because she is not sure she did all she could to save the child. Today Dallas is scheduled for Testing, a routine after any cop-related killing. However, before Dallas can dress and leave for the day, she is called by her commander to the scene of a high profile killing. Testing has been postponed and Dallas is to investigate this case with only the help of one other cop, Ryan Feeney.

Dallas arrives at the scene of the murder and finds Feeney already there. The victim has been shot three times with a handgun that was left at the scene. Dallas has never seen a victim shot before because handguns were banned over twenty years earlier. The victim, Sharon DeBlass, was a licensed prostitute. Sharon is lying on her bed, naked, with three gunshots. Dallas has Feeney collect the victim's customer books and schedule. Dallas begins looking around the room and finds a piece of paper under the victim's sheets. The note is handprinted and says one of six.

Dallas interviews the neighbors and then goes to the salon where the victim often had beauty treatments. The operator there tells Dallas that Sharon had been in just a few days before in preparation for a date with a man named Roarke. The operator tells Dallas that Sharon was excited about this date, telling him that he might be the one. Dallas also learns that Sharon's grandfather, a senator, opposed the gun ban and owns many of the weapons himself.

## Chapter 1 Analysis

This chapter introduces the main character, the main conflict, and the setting of the novel. The setting becomes apparent almost from the opening line of the novel as Eve Dallas wakes and prepares to start her day. The setting is futuristic, placing the reader in a world more than sixty years in the future. In this world, there are no refrigerators, only AutoChefs, no newspapers, only images on a computer screen, and handguns have been banned and are no longer available to anyone with the cash. This handgun ban makes what might be an ordinary crime scene in modern fiction extraordinary. Sharon DeBlass, a legal prostitute and daughter of a United States Senator, is found shot three times with a .38. This is the conflict that will propel the rest of the plot



forward, the mystery that Dallas must solve in order to save her own life and the lives of at least five other women.

Eve Dallas is a tough woman who has a big heart. Dallas killed a man and has nightmares about it. However, the nightmares are not for the man who is now dead, but for the child he killed. Dallas worries that she was not fast enough to protect this child. This idea, this need to save people, is a theme that will recur throughout the novel as Dallas works the murder case and tries to find the killer before he kills again. The motives for this drive in Dallas are not apparent at this point in the novel, but will become apparent as the novel continues to develop its plot.



## Chapters 2-3

### Chapters 2-3 Summary

In chapter two, the autopsy report on Sharon DeBlass gives Dallas very few clues as to who her killer might be. Not only this, but the security tapes at the apartment building have been compromised, erasing key sections that might have revealed the killer's face. Dallas researches the building and learns it is owned by Roarke, the same man who supposedly had a dinner date with Sharon a few days before her death. Dallas does a search on Roarke, but learns little beyond the scope of his business ventures.

Dallas goes home and finds a package waiting inside her door. The package contains a video recording of the murder of Sharon DeBlass. Dallas watches it before calling her boss and sending him the video. The following morning, Dallas is informed that she is to meet with Senator DeBlass and catch him up on the progress of the investigation. Dallas finds DeBlass arrogant and unpleasant, resisting the idea of giving him too much information on the case. However, DeBlass has the ear of Chief Simpson and Dallas is forced to hand over her notes thus far. Later that day, Dallas meets with Charles Monroe, Sharon's neighbor, and discusses Sharon with him. Dallas learns that he and Sharon were close friends, but Sharon never told him about any dangerous clients or anyone in her life who might have committed this crime.

In chapter three, Dallas attends the funeral for Sharon DeBlass. Most people in Dallas's time are not buried in the ground, but the DeBlass's are rich and have chosen to have her buried. Dallas watches the family, looking for clues to who might have done this. When Dallas approaches Sharon's grief-stricken parents, she is guided away by Derrick Rockman, Senator DeBlass's assistant. As she is leaving, Dallas approaches Roarke and asks to speak to him. Roarke insists on flying with Dallas back to New York on his private plane. Dallas asks Roarke about his gun collection, asking to see it, and about his relationship with the DeBlasses. Roarke tells Dallas he did have dinner with Sharon, but it was not a sexual encounter. Roarke also tells her he is good friends with Sharon's parents. Finally, Roarke invites Dallas to his home to inspect his gun collection, including the .38 he claims is still among his collection.

### Chapters 2-3 Analysis

Many new characters are introduced in these chapters. Roarke is introduced as a possible suspect in the murder. Roarke is a mysterious business man who goes by only one name. Roarke had a date with Sharon in the few days before her death, making him one of the last people to see her alive. This date was apparently important to Sharon, but Roarke implies it was nothing more than two friends getting together. This leaves the reader wondering if perhaps Sharon did not misread Roarke's intentions, perhaps giving him motive for murder. At the same time, the reader learns that Roarke owns Sharon's building and has a gun collection that includes a .38 like the one that





killed Sharon. Roarke looks very good as a suspect, but Dallas has her doubts from the moment she meets him. The reader wonders if these doubts come from experience or Dallas's attraction to this handsome, rich man.

Senator DeBlass and his assistant, Rockman, are introduced in these chapters as well. DeBlass is a pompous man who is used to getting his way. In this first introduction, it appears DeBlass is using his power simply to make sure someone is doing something to get justice for his granddaughter. However, DeBlass seems willing to compromise this investigation in his zealously to learn the truth. This seems strange to the reader.

Finally, the reader is introduced to Charles Monroe in these chapters. Charles is a prostitute like Sharon, and he is very charming. Charles flirts with Dallas, adding some humor to the plot. Charles was good friends with Sharon and seems to be a likely source of information about her. The reader also sees DeBlass's family, his two children, and their spouses. These figures are peripheral at this point, but the reader suspects they could have important information about Sharon that will be revealed as the plot continues to develop.



# Chapters 4-5

## Chapters 4-5 Summary

In chapter four, Dallas goes home and tries to come up with a motive for Roarke to kill Sharon, but has trouble finding one. Dallas's friend Mavis comes over for a night out, but decides to stay in when she sees how tired Dallas is. As they discuss their plans, a package is delivered to Dallas's door. Inside is real coffee, a delicacy due to its high expense, sent from Roarke. The following day, Dallas continues the investigation by looking into both Charles Monroe and DeBlass's assistant, Rockman. Rockman was a member of a paramilitary group once, but it has long since been disbanded. At the same time Dallas is working the case, Lola Starr accepts a new client. This client is like all the rest, interested in playing a Daddy role. However, after sex this client pulls a gun and kills her.

In chapter five, on her way home Dallas stops at a convenience store for a candy bar before dressing to go to Roarke's. However, when Dallas enters the store, she discovers the clerk is being held up. Dallas waits for her chance and then attacks the guy, securing his crude explosive and keeping him on the ground until the beat cops arrive. As a result, Dallas is late for her meeting with Roarke. When Dallas arrives, Roarke is shocked by the bruise on her cheek. Roarke insists on feeding Dallas dinner first, serving her real steak. Afterward, they go to Roarke's weapons room where he keeps not only his gun collection, but his collection of various weapons from the medieval ages through modern times. Roarke shows Dallas his .38 and invites her to take it for testing, causing Dallas to wonder if Roarke does not know the murder weapon was left at the scene or if he is simply clever enough to pretend not to know. As Dallas attempts to find an excuse not to have dessert with Roarke, she gets a call telling her there has been another murder.

## Chapters 4-5 Analysis

Dallas has made investigating this case her whole life, showing the reader not only how important her job is to her, but how focused and single-minded she can be. Dallas has few friends, and the few she does have are not a priority to her. This shows the reader that Dallas has trouble making and keeping relationships. As Dallas meets with Roarke again, it is clear that he is interested in her, but she is not interested in him. Dallas has a job to do, and that is her sole priority. Dallas does not want relationships, she does not want complications, and she does not want to sleep with a suspect. These two chapters make it clear how alone Dallas is and how focused she is. These chapters also show how tough Dallas is. However, these chapters also show the reader how vulnerable she can be when she lowers her guard, leaving the impression that there is a chance Roarke might get through to her sometime.



# Chapters 6-7

## Chapters 6-7 Summary

In chapter six, Dallas arrives at Lola Starr's apartment and finds a rookie at the door. Dallas takes the time to talk the kid through the scene before going inside in hopes of helping him deal with the shock better. Inside, however, Dallas is just as deeply hurt by what she sees. Lola Starr is barely eighteen. Everything at this scene is just like it was at Sharon DeBlass's, including the gun and the note informing them Lola is two of six.

That afternoon, Dallas goes to Roarke's office and forces her way in to speak to him. Dallas demands to know where he was when Lola Starr was murdered. When Dallas accidentally spills some of the crime scene photos out of her bag, Roarke is visibly shocked by what he sees. Roarke gives Dallas an alibi and then attempts to make her sit, concerned for her obvious exhaustion. When Dallas resists, Roarke suggests he could make some calls, find out some things about Sharon for her.

In chapter seven, Dallas visits Charles Monroe. Monroe has an alibi for the night Lola Starr was killed as well. Monroe also claims that he did not know Lola and is sure Sharon did not know her. As she leaves the building, Dallas stops by Sharon's apartment. While there, Dallas notices that items have been moved in the closet. Dallas rushes back to the office and insists that her boss have the crime lab sweep the apartment again. Dallas believes the killer came back to look for something. Afterward, Dallas goes home only to find Roarke waiting for her. As they argue about his breaking and entering her apartment, Dallas discovers a package waiting for her on the kitchen counter. Roarke tells her it was just inside the door when he arrived. Dallas takes the package into her bedroom and disappears for a few minutes. When she returns, she is pale.

Dallas and Roarke share some wine. Roarke presses Dallas, asking about her nightmares. Dallas tells him about the man she killed the night before she caught the DeBlass case. The man had been raging at his wife, but she managed to leave the apartment. Unfortunately, she left her baby behind. Dallas approached the apartment, heard the baby cry out, and identified herself before entering. The man had a bloody knife in his hand and the baby was dead on the floor. Dallas told the man to drop the weapon, but he refused. Dallas was forced to kill the man as he approached her. Dallas admits to Roarke now that she is glad she killed the man, that she only wished she could have done it sooner in order to save the baby.

## Chapters 6-7 Analysis

In these chapters Dallas investigates the death of another prostitute. This woman was killed in the same style as the first, the killer having left behind the weapon and the note just like with Sharon DeBlass. This killing seems to confirm the opinion that there is a



serial killer lose in New York killing prostitutes. Dallas's first thought is to find a connection between the two victims, but she is unable to do so. Dallas goes to her two prime suspects, Roarke and Monroe, but both have alibis for the murder. This leaves Dallas with nothing at this point.

Roarke comes to Dallas's apartment, clearly concerned for her health, both physical and mental. Dallas finds a package in her apartment. The reader does not see what the package contains, but assumes it is a video of Lola Starr's death just like the one Dallas got of Sharon DeBlass's death. Afterward, Dallas is exhausted and finds herself telling Roarke about the man she killed, suggesting that she has begun to trust him and no longer thinks of him as a suspect.



## Chapters 8-9

### Chapters 8-9 Summary

In chapter eight, Dallas and Feeney review the videos but cannot find anything unique about them or the camera that recorded them. Whitney calls Dallas into his office and instructs her that she is to go see DeBlass at his office in East Washington. Dallas is unhappy, but she goes. At the meeting, Dallas gets the impression that DeBlass does not want the killer found. However, Dallas makes it clear to him that she intends to find him no matter what. When Dallas and Feeney leave DeBlass's office, Dallas tells Feeney that Rockman is going to tail them. Dallas instructs Feeney to allow Rockman to follow him to New York while she goes off to check a theory.

Dallas goes to Virginia and the home of Richard DeBlass and Elizabeth Barrister. Elizabeth agrees to see Dallas. Elizabeth, who is clearly still grief stricken, tells Dallas that she and her daughter were estranged over the past few years despite the fact that they were very close when Sharon was a child. Elizabeth was so concerned about her daughter in the months before her death that she sent first her sister-in-law, Catherine, and then Roarke to see her and assess her situation. Elizabeth says she does not understand Sharon's choice of profession, especially since Sharon had an aversion to both men and sex. Elizabeth also tells Dallas that Sharon kept diaries all her life, but Dallas knows no diaries were recovered at Sharon's apartment.

In chapter nine, Dallas is ordered into Testing. Dallas goes through the physical exam, the scans, virtual reality scenarios that include a scenario of the shooting, and finally a meeting with the psychiatrist. Dr. Mira asks Dallas how the shooting affected her, especially in relation to the death of the little girl. Dr. Mira then asks Dallas how she is dealing with her own personal history. Dr. Mira announces that Dallas was found in Dallas, beaten and alone, and that no one knows her real identity. Not only this, but Dallas apparently has no memory of the first eight years of her life. Dr. Mira offers to help Dallas recover these memories, but she refuses.

Dallas leaves Testing emotionally exhausted. Rather than go home, Dallas goes to a club where Mavis sings. Roarke finds her there. Dallas demands to know why Roarke did not tell her that he went to dinner with Sharon at the request of Elizabeth Barrister. Roarke tells her that he was protecting the anonymity of a friend. Roarke then takes Dallas out of the bar, driving her to his home in her own car in order to give her a better atmosphere to lose herself in.

### Chapters 8-9 Analysis

Dallas meets with Senator DeBlass and is left with the distinct impression he does not want his granddaughter's killer found. As a result, Dallas finds herself breaking off from Feeney in order to lose Rockman, DeBlass's assistant, and going off on a fact finding

mission alone. Dallas interviews Sharon's mother and learns a great deal, including the fact that Roarke only took Sharon out to please her mother. This suggests to both Dallas and the reader that Roarke was not interested in Sharon romantically or sexually, taking something away from possible motives. Dallas also learns that Sharon kept diaries, making Dallas wonder if there might have been something in the diaries that the killer was afraid could hurt him.

Dallas is forced to attend Testing for the shooting that took place before the novel opened. This testing reveals to the reader that Dallas has her own dark past. Apparently, Dallas was abused as a child and abandoned by her biological parents. Dallas has no memory of these events, but she refuses to have help recovering these memories. This is an interesting situation that gives a more rounded view of Dallas, leaving the reader curious what might have happened to Dallas and what it might mean about her motives in this case.



# Chapters 10-11

## Chapters 10-11 Summary

In chapter ten, Roarke takes Dallas to his house and directly to his shooting range. Dallas has never shot a handgun before, so she is excited to watch as he shoots his gun at holographic images. When it is Dallas's turn, she does well at the game, only receiving a few hits from the virtual criminals. As they play, conversation turns to Sharon's murder. Roarke warns Dallas that she does not understand the kind of people she is up against and that she might discover that DeBlass would prefer for his granddaughter's killer to go undiscovered. Their argument becomes heated and Dallas soon finds herself in Roarke's arms. They manage to get into Roarke's bedroom before they lose all their clothing, but not before Dallas's shirt is ripped.

In chapter eleven, Dallas and Roarke stay up all night. The following morning, Roarke joins Dallas in the shower, but then feels angry with himself for not being able to control his passions. Roarke gives Dallas a silk shirt and sends her off to work as though she were a simple guest, not his lover, informing her he will not be around for a week or more because he must attend meetings regarding a luxury resort in space. However, when Dallas gets into her car, she discovers that Roarke had the heater fixed during the night. At work, Dallas refocuses on the murder case, thinking now that sex had more to do with Sharon and Lola's deaths than she originally thought. Feeney joins her in the office and they discuss possible suspects they might locate in the criminal data bases, but Feeney has already searched and come up empty.

Dallas is called into a meeting with Whitney and the chief of the department, Simpson. Simpson tells Dallas that he knows she is sleeping with Roarke, a violation of her duties that could cause her to be pulled from the case. Simpson also berates Dallas for visiting Elizabeth Barrister, suggesting her actions were inappropriate to the situation. Rather than discipline her, however, Simpson suggests that Dallas begin cooperating with the department, beginning with a press conference he is about to call. During this press conference, Simpson plans to announce that the Starr and DeBlass deaths are unrelated. This does not sit well with Dallas.

## Chapters 10-11 Analysis

Roarke and Dallas begin a love affair, despite the fact that Roarke remains a suspect in Dallas's ongoing investigation into the murder of Sharon DeBlass. On a personal level, this love affair exposes the more vulnerable side of Dallas and allows the reader to see her as a more rounded person, not just a police detective. At the same time, it shows the reader Roarke's own struggle with his vulnerabilities and his fear of falling in love. It is a complicated relationship that should take the reader on a fascinating ride.



Dallas focuses on the murder investigation with new insight into sex. Dallas knows that sex has something to do with the murders, even though the murders are not sexual in nature. This hints to the reader that a sexual relationship will surface that will explain the motive of the murderer. At the same time, the reader understands the full impact of Dallas's relationship with Roarke when her chief calls her into his office and implies punishment for this new relationship. This also reveals that someone is watching Dallas, someone interested in taking her off the case. This could lead to the identity of the killer. In the meantime, the chief is trying hard to separate DeBlass from the serial killer, suggesting that Simpson is being paid or influenced in some way by Senator DeBlass.





# Chapter 12

## Chapter 12 Summary

In chapter twelve, Simpson headlines the press conference, telling the reporters that Sharon DeBlass's death is not related to Lola Starr's death and that she was not murdered. When Dallas takes her place on the podium, she is honest without openly contradicting Simpson. A reporter, Nadine Furst, follows Dallas as she attempts to leave. Furst claims to have a source that says not only was Sharon DeBlass murdered, but that her murder is exactly like Lola Starr's. Furst wants to show Dallas her information, but only if Dallas agrees to share information with her. Dallas and Furst go to a local restaurant, where Furst shows her the information, which turns out to be Dallas's own notes and the videos the killer sent. Dallas wants to know where this info came from, but Furst will not reveal her source. Dallas suspects the source is the killer.

Dallas visits Mavis, who has a cold, before going home. While trying to decide what to do next, Dallas is called to the apartment of a neighbor. The elderly man was found dead in the kitchen by his wife. Dallas takes care of the scene before returning to home and bed. Roarke calls from a space station where he is attending secret meetings as Dallas is settling into bed. He expresses a desire to see her again.

## Chapter 12 Analysis

Simpson's press conference goes badly because his attempts to make the reporters believe Sharon DeBlass committed suicide are not believed. The reader wonders why Simpson would suddenly want people to believe DeBlass committed suicide. This seems to underscore the idea that Simpson is on Senator DeBlass's payroll or is being paid by the real killer. Dallas talks with a reporter who claims to have proof that Sharon was murdered and who shows it to Dallas. Dallas thinks the information is from the killer, but there is no motive as to why the killer would send this info to the press. Finally, Dallas helps recover the body of an elderly neighbor who has died, apparently of natural causes. However, the reader will revisit this death later in the novel and be surprised at the true cause of death.



# Chapter 13

## Chapter 13 Summary

Dallas checks over Feeney's search for a safe deposit box in Sharon DeBlass's name. Dallas is disappointed that he did not find anything, but then thinks perhaps she might have used an alias. Using Elizabeth's last name, Dallas finds a bank account with more than a quarter million dollars and a safe deposit box. In the box, Dallas finds a list of names with dollar amounts beside them. Among these names is Simpson's. Dallas points this out to her commander, but he points out that there are many men named Simpson and they cannot be sure it is the chief. Back at her desk, Dallas gets a call from the medical examiner telling her that her elderly neighbor was poisoned. Dallas goes to tell his wife and obtains a confession. The woman poisoned her husband because he was always eating the fresh cakes and pies she liked to bake.

Back at the office, Dallas gets a call that is only the image of a woman with a bullet wound in her forehead. Dallas has the address traced and rushes to the location. Georgie Castle was an older woman, but licensed as a prostitute. As Dallas checks out her apartment, she finds her cat in the study. A short time later, Georgie's daughter arrives on the scene. Georgie and her daughter were supposed to go to a movie together. The daughter tells Dallas that Georgie was married, but got a divorce the year before and became a licensed prostitute to pay her bills until she could publish a novel. Dallas promises Georgie's daughter that she will find the killer.

Dallas returns to the office with the cat. Feeney quickly runs the serial number on the weapon and discovers that it belongs to Roarke. Dallas insists that Roarke could not have committed the murder because he is not on Earth. Roarke has gone to a space station to enter negotiations for a new luxury resort. To prove it, Dallas calls Roarke. Roarke is not happy to be disturbed in the middle of a meeting and less happy to learn his presence is needed on Earth to be interrogated in a murder investigation.

## Chapter 13 Analysis

Dallas finds a list of people Sharon DeBlass was apparently blackmailing. On this list is Simpson, implying to the reader that Simpson is in fact bad. This does not explain why Simpson is trying so hard to make Sharon's death appear to be suicide, except if he is the killer. It is an angle that causes Dallas to wonder about Simpson's motives as well.

Dallas learns that her elderly neighbor was killed by his wife for being a glutton. This causes Dallas to think about the vulnerability of the members of a family from one another, leading the reader to wonder about the family connection in Sharon's death.

Another woman is found murdered with a gun that traces back to Roarke. This appears to implicate Roarke, but instead Dallas believes it clears him. In fact, only Dallas knows that Roarke was not even on the planet. However, instead of clearing him, this forces

Dallas to prove that she is having a relationship with Roarke and to bring him in for questioning. The reader wonders now if this might not be the beginning of the end for Dallas and Roarke.



# Chapters 14-15

## Chapters 14-15 Summary

In chapter fourteen, Dallas goes to get a profile of the killer from Dr. Mira to help prove Roarke's innocence. The profile clears Roarke, but by the time Dallas gets it to her commander, Roarke has already arrived for interrogation. Dallas interrogates him herself, asking about his habits in buying his guns. Roarke insists he always bids on the guns in person or by tele-link, again proving he could not have bought this particular gun because the gun was bought via electronic bid. Feeney confirms this information with the auction house. Dallas tells Roarke he is free to go. Roarke becomes angry and demands to know how Dallas could doubt his innocence. Feeney interferes, forcing Roarke to back off of Dallas. Feeney then pulls Roarke aside and tells him how hard Dallas fought to prove his innocence. Roarke comes to Dallas's apartment that night and apologizes for his behavior. Roarke then takes Dallas to bed, later thinking about his feelings for her as she sleeps.

In chapter fifteen, Dallas wakes to find Roarke gone. After a shower, Dallas goes into her kitchen to find Roarke waiting for her. They talk over coffee and Roarke asks Dallas who hurt her. Dallas admits that her father hurt her, but that she does not know the details because she remembers little of her life before she was eight. Roarke then admits to being in love with Dallas. Dallas tells Roarke about the videos, about how two appeared in her apartment and one was mailed to her. Roarke finds himself afraid for her life. Dallas leaves for the office and finds Senator DeBlass waiting for her. DeBlass accuses Dallas of being inappropriate for the investigation. Dallas accuses DeBlass of not wanting the killer found and he does not disagree with her. Dallas knows that Simpson is bad, that DeBlass knows it and will continue to use Simpson to interfere with her investigation. Dallas knows she must ask Roarke for help, but feels a little guilty about the idea that she might be using him. However, Roarke likes the idea of helping her and jumps at the opportunity.

## Chapters 14-15 Analysis

Roarke is angry with Dallas for not believing in him, but later finds out she did believe. This causes some tension between the lovers for a few minutes, but Roarke gets over it quickly when Feeney tells him that Dallas went to bat for him. Roarke then apologizes and finds himself questioning the depth of his feelings for Dallas. Roarke is not a man who easily falls in love, so his feelings for Dallas catch him off guard. However, it is clear to the reader and Roarke alike that he is in love with Dallas.

Dallas finds herself being pushed into a corner by both DeBlass and Simpson, causing her to wonder what these two men might lose if she should learn the truth about Sharon's murder. Dallas turns her attention to Simpson, hoping she can prove the blackmail he was paying to Sharon through his financial records. To do this, however,

Dallas needs to trust Roarke, a move that causes her great difficulty, but something she does. This proves to the reader that Dallas is feeling strong emotions for Roarke as well.



# Chapters 16-17

## Chapters 16-17 Summary

In chapter sixteen, Roarke takes Dallas to a special computer room where he has an extensive computer setup. Roarke tells her not only will no one be able to trace the computer, but that the system will erase all evidence of its search when it is done. Dallas uses it to search Simpson's financial data. At first it appears that Dallas will not find anything improper. However, Roarke is able to use his hacking skills to find hidden bank accounts that not only show that Simpson has been taking kickbacks, but that he has been paying Sharon DeBlass blackmail money. Dallas has Roarke send this evidence to Nadine Furst. Dallas then goes home, knowing she could not be with him when the evidence hit the airwaves. That night, Dallas dreams about her father.

In chapter seventeen, Chief Simpson is arrested, but he refuses to admit to any wrongdoing. In fact, Simpson insists that the hidden bank accounts are a mistake made by his accountant. Dallas pushes him on the blackmail paid to Sharon DeBlass, but he continues to deny it. Dallas decides it does not matter because his career is over anyway. Dallas goes back to review the videos made by the killer. Dallas notices that the killer was shocked by the violence of the first shot in the DeBlass video, but does not have that reaction in the others. Dallas also notices that the second and third victims appear to be looking at a higher spot, suggesting their killer was taller than Sharon DeBlass's. Dallas asks both the computer and Dr. Mira if it is possible there were two killers, but both insist this is not possible.

Monroe calls Dallas and tells her that he has recalled a safe deposit box he helped Sharon open, pretending she was his sister. As Dallas prepares to leave the office to open the box, she gets another call. This call is from a woman who refuses to be seen on video. The woman tells Dallas that a man raped her and that he raped Sharon too, which is why he killed her. Dallas has the call traced and asks Roarke to allow her to use his private plane to fly to the location. Roarke insists on going with Dallas when he realizes she is going to the home of Richard DeBlass and Elizabeth Barrister. When they reach the DeBlass home, Dallas asks to see Catherine DeBlass, Richard's sister. Dallas gently asks Catherine if she called her. Catherine denies it at first, then admits she called Dallas. Dallas asks Catherine to identify the man who raped her. Catherine confesses that Senator Gerald DeBlass raped her repeatedly as a child and that he moved on to Sharon.

## Chapters 16-17 Analysis

Dallas and Roarke successfully find evidence that Simpson was not only paying a bribe every year, but that he was taking kickbacks as well. Dallas, who knows that Simpson is the main reason her investigation has continuously been leaked, has Roarke send this information to Nadine Furst, the reporter she met the day of the press conference. This



act guarantees that Simpson's career will end, taking him out of the way as Dallas continues to investigate.

Dallas reviews the videos of the murders again and makes several observations that lead her to wonder if there are two different killers. This idea is shot down by both the psychiatrist and the computer, but the reader believes that Dallas may be on to something with this idea. At the same time, Dallas gets calls from two different people with information that could break the investigation wide open. First, Monroe has remembered a safe deposit box that belongs to Sharon, where the diaries might be hidden. Second, Catherine DeBlass admits that her father sexually molested her. Sexual assault has been a theme of the novel from the beginning, hinted at in Sharon's violent death, touched on again in Lola's death, and then explored when Dallas has a dream of her own father molesting her as a small child. Now Catherine DeBlass suggests that she and Sharon both are victims of this same horrible crime. This not only gives a motive to murder, but it fits into the plot like a missing puzzle piece.



# Chapters 18-20

## Chapters 18-20 Summary

In chapter eighteen, Dallas talks with Catherine, learning how she saw Sharon and Senator DeBlass discussing their relationship and how Sharon promised to allow it to continue as long as the senator paid much more than her other clients. Catherine tells how she went to see Sharon in the city shortly before her death and was told she was a coward, that Sharon had found a way to profit from shame. Catherine regrets not coming forward sooner, convinced that if she had, Sharon would still be alive. However, Catherine was afraid of her father and of the shame admitting the truth would bring. Now, Catherine can no longer live with the secrets.

Dallas calls Feeney and learns that not only has he found the diaries, but that the very last entry talks about the senator coming to visit Sharon the same night she died. Dallas receives a warrant to arrest Senator DeBlass, taking pleasure in the arrest. That night, Dallas tells Roarke what little she recalls of her early childhood.

In chapter nineteen, Dallas interviews Senator DeBlass, but he refuses to admit to any of his crimes. Even when faced with the overwhelming evidence that he was at Sharon DeBlass's apartment the night of her death, Senator DeBlass refuses to confess. Dallas ends the interrogation when DeBlass becomes visibly ill. Dallas is driving home, thinking the case against DeBlass is solid despite his unwillingness to confess. However, Dallas gets a call from Feeney telling her that DeBlass has gotten out on bail.

Dallas goes to Roarke's to seek some comfort, but Roarke is not home. Instead, Dallas takes the cat and goes home. Dallas is unaware that anyone is in her apartment until she walks into the bedroom and finds Rockman there. Rockman tells Dallas that DeBlass is dead of a self-inflicted gunshot wound and that when she is found murdered, it will be clear that DeBlass could not have been the killer, making him a martyr. When that happens, Rockman feels confident that he will be able to ride DeBlass's reputation into the presidency.

In chapter twenty, Feeney walks into his office to discover Dallas has turned on her tele-link so that he can hear Rockman's confession. Feeney calls for backup and rushes to her apartment. As Feeney makes his way to Dallas, she gets Rockman to confess to cleaning up Sharon's apartment and planting both the gun and the note. Rockman then tells Dallas that he killed the other two women in order to keep attention off of Sharon DeBlass's death. Dallas keeps him talking, recording his confession on a recorder in her jacket pocket. Finally, when Rockman is about to attack, the cat comes in and distracts him. Dallas takes the opportunity to knock the gun away, suffering a shot in the arm, before getting Rockman on the ground and pounding his face. When Feeney and Roarke break into the apartment, they find Dallas beating Rockman into unconsciousness.





## Chapters 18-20 Analysis

Dallas gets the whole story out Catherine DeBlass and promises to take her father down. Dallas arrests Senator DeBlass based not only on Catherine's story, but also the diaries that Sharon left behind. These diaries describe a sexual relationship between Sharon and the senator that continued on while Sharon was a prostitute. It is a sick and dirty secret that drove one woman to a mental breakdown and another into controlling and blackmailing men she grudgingly had sex with.

Dallas is convinced she has closed the case. However, the idea of a second killer continues to plague the reader. This is satisfied when Dallas comes home to find Rockman waiting for her. Rockman confesses that the senator did kill his granddaughter, but Rockman cleaned up the scene and set up the idea of a serial killer. Rockman also killed the other two women to take focus off of Sharon. This explains the inconsistencies that Dallas noticed and shows the reader that human instinct will always be better than computer probability.



# Characters

## Eve Dallas

Eve Dallas is a detective with the New York Police and Security Department. Eve has been a police officer for ten years, despite only being thirty years old. Eve chose to be a police officer in order to have a sense of control over her own life. At the age of eight, Eve was abandoned, apparently by her father, though Eve has very little memory of her life before that point. No one knows Eve's real name or the identity of her family, so they gave her the name Eve Dallas because she was found in Dallas. Eve was raised in the foster care system until she became an adult.

Eve likes to work on cases in the police department despite the difficulties that come with the job. On the night before the novel begins, Eve is forced to kill a man who murdered his daughter in a drug fueled rage. Eve is guilt ridden over this killing, not because of her own actions, but because of her fear that she could have saved the little girl had she only arrived at the apartment sooner. This shows the reader that Eve is a compassionate woman despite her hard outer shell and her inability to trust or confide in other people.

As Eve works the death of Sharon DeBlass, she finds herself facing demons from her own past. Eve must delve into the world of prostitution in order to understand Sharon's lifestyle and the events that led to her death. This causes Eve to have nightmares based in her own childhood, revealing to the reader that Eve was sexually abused by her father when she was a small child. At the same time, Eve falls in love with a suspect, allowing her to become vulnerable to someone just as frightened of intimacy as she is.

## Roarke

Roarke is a very successful businessman in his early thirties. Roarke is very powerful not only because of his money but also because of his personal connections. Roarke becomes a suspect early in the DeBlass murder investigation because he is known to have had a date with Sharon DeBlass shortly before her death. Later, a third victim is murdered with a gun connected to Roarke. Roarke, however, is a compassionate man with a dark past who has very few close friends. Among these few friends are the parents of Sharon DeBlass.

When the reader first meets Roarke, he is aloof, frightening in his power. However, as Roarke continuously reappears in Eve Dallas's life, the reader gets to see that he is a damaged man, someone who has been deeply hurt in his childhood, not unlike Dallas herself, and has an aversion to vulnerability. Despite his fears of intimacy, however, Roarke finds himself overwhelmingly attracted to Dallas. They begin a love affair that



shocks and frightens them both. Roarke turns out to be a strong, honest person who is not afraid to do whatever it takes to get what he needs, including Dallas.

## Sharon DeBlass

Sharon DeBlass is a legally licensed prostitute. Sharon apparently chose this profession in an effort to embarrass and hurt her family for reasons that are not made clear until late in the novel. Sharon's grandfather is a United States senator, her parents are both powerful lawyers, and her aunt is a congresswoman. This family history leaves the reader wondering why a woman with these connections and all this obvious family money would choose sex as a profession. Late in the novel, the reader discovers that like Dallas, Sharon DeBlass was sexually abused as a child. Rather than turn her from sex and intimacy, this experience has led Sharon to the decision to use sex to control the people in her life.

As part of her profession, Sharon begins making lists of her clients and blackmailing them. On this list is included the chief of police and security, Chief Simpson. Also included in this, but not listed on her blackmail lists, is her own grandfather Gerald DeBlass. Sharon has been having a long time affair with DeBlass and has threatened him multiple times with exposure. Finally Senator DeBlass cannot abide by these threats any longer and he kills her.

## Lola Starr

Lola Starr is a beautiful, naive eighteen-year-old prostitute. Lola has never wanted to do anything but be a prostitute. Most of Lola's customers are men who want to treat her like a child, pedophiles. One night Lola gets a new customer who wants her to talk to him as though he is her father. However, Lola is unaware that this new customer is a serial killer. Lola is killed just like Sharon DeBlass, left abandoned on her bed with three gunshot wounds in her young body. Dallas will spend a great deal of time on the Lola Starr case, trying to find a connection between her and Sharon DeBlass that will explain the way the killer chooses his victims.

## Georgie Castle

Georgie Castle is a fifty-something prostitute. Georgie was married and had a child, but she became bored in her marriage and walked away from it. Georgie wants to be a novelist, but has decided to work as a prostitute until she can make a living with her writing. Like Lola and Sharon, Georgie is found dead in her bed, murdered by a twentieth century weapon. Georgie is connected to Sharon by the fact that they once shared customers. However, this seems to be the only connection between the two women, failing to explain how the killer chooses his victims.



## Senator Gerald DeBlass

Senator Gerald DeBlass is Sharon DeBlass's grandfather. Senator DeBlass is very powerful, a senator who runs on a morality platform, and he uses this power to force Dallas to share the results of her investigation into the death of Sharon DeBlass with him, possibly compromising the case. Senator DeBlass places a great deal of pressure on Dallas to solve the case, but then appears to be interfering every step of the way. Dallas tries to keep DeBlass out of the investigation, but finds it difficult.

Toward the end of the novel, Dallas receives a phone call from a woman telling her she was raped and she believes that Sharon was also raped, a fact that led to her death. When Dallas tracks down the woman who made this call, she discovers that the woman is Catherine DeBlass, Sharon's aunt. Catherine claims that Senator DeBlass sexually abused her as a child and that he did the same thing to Sharon, possibly leading to her death. It is this information that finally gives Dallas a motive and the warrant to arrest DeBlass. DeBlass refuses to confess and is eventually released from jail. In the few hours after his arrest, DeBlass commits suicide to protect himself and his family from the humiliation of a trial.

## Derrick Rockman

Derrick Rockman is Senator DeBlass's assistant. At first Derrick Rockman appears annoying, interfering in Dallas's investigation and attempting to follow her in order to keep tabs on the investigation. However, it later becomes clear that Rockman is a psychopath who believes that DeBlass will change the world when he becomes president. Rockman will do anything for DeBlass, including killing for him. Dallas learns that Rockman cleaned up the murder scene in the Sharon DeBlass case and then killed two other prostitutes to keep the focus of the investigation off of Senator DeBlass.

After Senator DeBlass is arrested, Rockman begins to make plans to kill Dallas. Rockman becomes convinced that if DeBlass were to commit suicide, he would become a martyr of sorts. Then Rockman could run for the senate and perhaps the presidency on his reputation. Rockman goes to Dallas's apartment to kill her and take the focus of the investigation off of DeBlass. However, Dallas manages to get him to confess to his part in the murders and then escapes his attempts at murder.

## Congresswoman Catherine DeBlass

Congresswoman Catherine DeBlass is Sharon DeBlass's paternal aunt. Catherine appears to be a woman who admires her father and has followed in his footsteps. However, it turns out that Catherine is a victim of sexual abuse at the hands of her own father. Catherine attempted to forget this abuse, to ignore its affects on her life. However, when Catherine realizes that DeBlass has been abusing Sharon and that he continues to have a sexual affair with her, Catherine can no longer ignore her own abuse. Catherine goes to the city to talk to Sharon about it, but Sharon calls her weak



and refuses to accept her advice. A few days later, Sharon is dead. This causes Catherine to have a mental breakdown. Catherine finally calls Dallas and confesses the abuse, giving Dallas what she needs to break the case.

## **Charles Monroe**

Charles Monroe is a male licensed prostitute who lives in the same building as Sharon DeBlass. Charles and Sharon were friendly when Sharon was alive. Dallas speaks to Charles on multiple occasions about Sharon, learning from Charles that Sharon and Georgie Castle once shared customers. When Dallas learns that Sharon kept diaries, she goes to Charles with the hope that he will have information on the diaries whereabouts. At first it appears that Charles has no clue where these diaries might be, but eventually he remembers helping Sharon open a safe deposit box in a bank under a false name. It is in this safe deposit box that Dallas and her partner discover diaries that describe Sharon's illicit affair with her own grandfather.

## **Chief Edward Simpson**

Chief Edward Simpson is the chief of police and security in New York. Chief Simpson makes repeated efforts to undermine Dallas's investigation into the death of Sharon DeBlass, going so far as to tell the press that DeBlass was not murdered and therefore her death was not connected to the serial killer attacking New York prostitutes. This causes Dallas to become suspicious of Simpson. Dallas checks into Simpson's financials and learns that he has been taking kickbacks and paying blackmail to Sharon DeBlass. Dallas arranges for these financial records to become public, ending Simpson's career.



# Objects/Places

## Notes

The killer leaves notes at each crime scene. Each one is a countdown to six, telling investigators that more victims are to come.

## Button

Dallas loses a button while on Roarke's plane. Roarke finds the button and carries it with him throughout the novel as a connection to the unusual woman he is falling in love with.

## Coffee

It is unusual in Dallas's time to have access to real coffee. Therefore, when Roarke discovers how much Dallas likes real coffee, he makes a gift of a pound of coffee to her.

## Tobacco

In the time in which Dallas lives tobacco is illegal except in free air space, open water, and private property. Roarke continually breaks this law in Dallas's presence.

## Sharon's Diaries

Sharon DeBlass has kept diaries all her life. When Dallas learns this, she begins searching for the diaries, eventually finding them in a bank safe deposit box. The diaries chronicle a sexual relationship between Sharon DeBlass and her grandfather, Gerald DeBlass, giving Dallas motive for murder.

## Guns

Sharon DeBlass, Lola Starr, and Georgie Castle are each murdered with a different twentieth century gun. Guns of this type have been illegal, except for special collector permits, for more than twenty years in the futuristic world in which the novel takes place.

## Police Issue Weapon

Dallas carries a police issue weapon that is similar to a handgun, but it fires a laser rather than bullets. This weapon can be used to stun or kill depending on the circumstances.



## Roarke's Computers

All computers in Dallas's time are traceable by law. However, Roarke has room filled with computers that are not only untraceable, but are programmed to erase any evidence of searches they make. Dallas uses these computers to track Chief Simpson's illegal finances.

## Security Video

Dallas discovers in her investigation that Sharon DeBlass's killer has erased the time periods in which he would be visible on the security tapes in her building. Later, Dallas discovers the same thing has happened at one of the other victim's building.

## Videos

After each murder, Dallas receives a package at her home that includes a video of the actual murder. Dallas will review these videos multiple times, eventually seeing an inconsistency that leads her to believe there are two killers rather than one.

## Apartment Buildings

Dallas learns in her investigation that not only does Roarke appear to have had a personal relationship with Sharon DeBlass, but he owns the apartment building where she lives. Dallas also learns that Roarke owns the apartment building where she lives as well.

## Testing

Testing is a mandatory event that takes place after an officer is forced to kill someone. Testing includes a physical exam, virtual reality replay of the killing, and a discussion with a psychiatrist. Dallas is forced into testing after killing a suspect who killed his daughter.

## Roarke's House

Dallas goes to Roarke's house on multiple occasions, first to get a gun that resembles one used in the Sharon DeBlass murder, then to fire a weapon, and finally for personal reasons. Roarke's home is large and decorated with twentieth century luxuries rather than modern conveniences.



# Themes

## Sexual Abuse

Sexual abuse is a theme of this novel that is not really investigated until the end of the novel. The novel is clearly filled with the idea of sex due to the fact that the murder victims in the case that propels the plot are prostitutes. However, in the time period in which this novel is set, prostitution is legal. Not only is prostitution legal, but the prostitutes must apply for a license and are required to have monthly physical examines to ensure they are not spreading disease. This makes the idea of sexual abuse more a theory than a reality in this novel. Unfortunately, this will change as the plot continues to develop.

As Dallas continues her investigation into the death of Sharon DeBlass, she meets Roarke. Roarke is a rich businessman who is known to have gone out with Sharon in the days before her death. Dallas find Roarke intrusive and annoying. However, this changes as she becomes aware of her sexual attraction to him. When Roarke succeeds in taking Dallas to bed for the first time, it releases in her mind a memory block she has had for many years. Dallas begins to dream of inappropriate behavior on her father's part. Dallas remembers sexual abuse at her father's hands that often lead to or followed physical abuse.

Even as Dallas is dealing with the complications of her own romantic life and memories of her childhood, she begins to suspect that Sharon DeBlass was also dealing with sexual abuse issues. Dallas has been puzzled why Sharon DeBlass would choose to be a prostitute even though her own family believed she had an aversion to both men and sex. Dallas even consults a psychiatrist about this issue, but still cannot grasp the reason. Finally Dallas speaks to Sharon's aunt and learns that her father, Senator DeBlass, abused her sexually as a child and she believes he also sexually abused Sharon. In fact, diaries reveal to Dallas that Sharon confronted her grandfather and renewed a sexual relationship with him in order to blackmail him. This leads to a motive in the arrest of Senator DeBlass in the murder of his granddaughter.

## Betrayal and Loyalty

Betrayal in this novel stems from Senator DeBlass's betrayal of the bond between family members, especially against his daughter and granddaughter, when he sexually abused them. DeBlass is a senator who runs on a platform of morality. DeBlass believes that legalized prostitution should be repealed. DeBlass believes prostitution undermines the institute of marriage. This is ironic, since DeBlass not only has abused his daughter and granddaughter, but he continues to use the services of his granddaughter at a higher rate than she charges her other clients.





As Senator DeBlass betrays his granddaughter's trust, she does the same to him. Not only does Sharon charge DeBlass for each of his visits to her home, but she also repeatedly threatens to expose him by having her private diaries published. Eventually DeBlass has enough of these threats. DeBlass takes a gun to Sharon's apartment and shoots her as she once again threatens to expose him. It is this act of betrayal that ironically leads to the one act of loyalty that continues to propel the plot.

Rockman, DeBlass's assistant, deeply believes in his boss. Rockman believes that DeBlass is the future of America, that he will become president and change the country, imposing his own sense of morality on the American people. As such, Rockman will do anything to help DeBlass. To this end, Rockman cleans up Sharon's apartment and sets up the idea that a serial killer attacked the prostitute. To continue with this idea, Rockman kills two more prostitutes whom he appears to have chosen at random. When Dallas arrests DeBlass, Rockman continues to be loyal to his ideals by making an attempt on Dallas's life, hoping that her death will exonerate DeBlass in the public's eye, leading to a clear bid at the presidency for Rockman himself, running on DeBlass's morality platform.

## Love

Dallas has been a solitary person since she was found abandoned in Dallas at the age of eight. Dallas has never really trusted anyone and she has very few close friends. Therefore, when Roarke comes into her life, Dallas resists his attempts at becoming her lover. Dallas does not only wish to remain alone, but she does not want to compromise her career by having an affair with a suspect. Roarke refuses to allow her to push him away, however, pursuing her until she breaks and allows him into her life.

It is clear to the reader as the plot develops that Roarke is someone who intends not only to have Dallas, but to become the most important person in her life no matter how hard she pushes him away. By the end of the novel, Roarke is confessing that he is in love with Dallas even though she continues to refuse to even feel any affection for him. However, it is clear by the final pages of the novel that not only does Roarke love Dallas, but that she returns this emotion. Love is something that is new to Dallas; therefore, she finds it difficult to admit to her own feelings. Despite this, the reader is left with the impression that not only will this relationship be a long term one, but that Roarke will help Dallas open not only to herself, but to him.

# Style

## Point of View

The novel is written in the third person point of view. The novel has several point of view characters, but the main narrator is Eve Dallas. Dallas shares not only her observations, but her thoughts and emotions with the reader, making the point of view omniscient. There are a few points in the narration, however, when the narrator is clearly not Dallas. One of these moments is when the reader sees Lola Starr die. The reader sees this death through Lola's point of view as well as the killer's, hinting at the identity of the killer and giving insight into the method and motives associated with the murder.

The point of view of this novel works well with the plot. The point of view allows the reader to see and feel everything Dallas feels, giving the reader the same clues as to the identity of the killer that Dallas has, along with a few details Dallas does not have. In this way, the reader is able to investigate the case with Dallas and hopefully come to the same conclusions she does by the end of the novel. This point of view also allows the reader to see and understand some of the motives of other characters in the novel, including the killer as well as Roarke.

## Setting

This novel is set in a futuristic New York City. The year the novel takes place in is 2058. In this time period, handguns have been banned, computers have become voice activated, and homemade foods are a rare delicacy. The time period of this novel is not highly detailed like others might be in science fiction novels, but becomes a background character that influences the investigation, but does not control it. The time period makes murder by handgun an unusual occurrence, but does not change the methodical way in which the detective investigates the murder. The only change in the way Dallas conducts her case from the way a twentieth century cop might is that Dallas has a computer that tells her how probable her theories in the case might be. In the DeBlass case, the computer proves to be wrong about one of Dallas's theories.

The futuristic setting of this novel is fascinating for the romantic suspense fan. The novel is not a sci-fi novel, but the futuristic setting gives it a supernatural feel that is unusual to this genre. However, the setting only influences the way in which the heroine lives her life, but it does not change the way she conducts her investigation into the death of Sharon DeBlass, Lola Starr, or Georgie Castle. The most important impact the setting of this novel has on the plot is the fact that handguns have been banned from the general population. The fact that Sharon DeBlass, Lola Starr, and Georgie Castle have all been murdered with handguns creates a unique situation for Dallas, leading her to a suspect who is rich enough to collect these unusual items and to own the permits allowing them to be purchased. This situation creates an interesting twist to the plot,



taking a murder that might be considered too common in modern society and making it highly unusual.

## Language and Meaning

The language of the novel is simple English. The novel contains many words and phrases that relate to both the setting of the novel and the profession of the characters who populate the novel. Some of these words have to do with items the characters use, such as "link", referring to the tele-link which is used to communicate. Other words refer to a character's profession or laws that govern the citizens of this futuristic world.

The language of this novel is no different from other bestselling novels of its genre. There are some unusual words, but most of these words relate to some futuristic item the characters use or to some element of the professions of the characters. These words are authentic to the setting and the characters, lending some authenticity to the plot that might be missing had the author chosen other words or phrases to use in her story. The language, however, is simple and easy for even the youngest readers to understand, presenting no roadblocks to comprehending the overall intention of the novel's plot.

## Structure

The novel is divided into twenty chapters. The chapters are fairly long, some longer than twenty pages. The novel is told in both dialogue and exposition, allowing the reader to follow the investigation and all the work Dallas does to lead her to the serial killer who has targeted prostitutes.

The novel contains two main plots. The first plot follows the investigation into the death of Sharon DeBlass, a death that leads to two more murders in what appears to be a serial killer's work. However, Dallas's investigation eventually leads her to impropriety in a family and murders used to throw investigators off the true killer's path. The second plot follows the budding romance between the main investigator, Eve Dallas, and a suspect, Roarke. Dallas resists Roarke at first, not only because he is a suspect, but also because she is not the type of person to easily trust because of a darkness in her past. However, Roarke wears her down and Dallas eventually allows him past the walls she has built around her heart.



## Quotes

"But it was the child that haunted her. The child she hadn't been in time to save. The child whose screams had echoed in the dreams with her own."

Chap. 1, p. 1

"One of Six."

Chap. 1, p. 10

"Senator Gerald DeBlass was undoubtedly pompous. He was unquestionably arrogant."

Chap. 2, p. 27

"All Eve wanted was a candy bar."

Chap. 5, p. 63

"It was the mouth, just that generous and tempting mouth he'd thought he'd wanted. But the moment he'd tasted it, he'd wanted all of her."

Chap. 5, p. 78

"His smile was ever bit as well turned out as his wardrobe."

Chap. 7, p. 94

"The silence of her apartment was wrong."

Chap. 7, p. 99

"But the diary changed things and made blackmail a new and intriguing motive."

Chap. 8, p. 125

"She had taken an inappropriate step with her eyes wide open."

Chap. 11, p. 159

"Mornings after carried a causal intimacy that made her nervous."

Chap. 15, p. 221

"She let Catherine cry it out, though she knew, too well, that the tears wouldn't wash the wound clean."

Chap. 18, p. 270

"No way he was going to spare a couple of cops to restrain a civilian, and he had a hunch this civilian would go to the wall, as he would, for Eve."

Chap. 20, p. 301



## Topics for Discussion

Who is Eve Dallas? Why is she called Dallas? Where does that name come from? What is unique about Dallas's past? How does this past affect Dallas's actions in this novel? How does it affect her decision to get involved with Roarke? Does this past make it easier to see the dynamics in the DeBlass family?

Who is Roarke? Where does he come from? Why is he a suspect in the death of Sharon DeBlass? Could he have killed Sharon? What might his motive have been? How does Dallas prove him innocent? Why does Roarke insist on seeing Dallas? Why does he insert himself into her investigation? Who are the DeBlasses to Roarke? Why does he care so deeply for Sharon's parents? How is this unusual for Roarke?

Who is Simpson? Why does Dallas dislike Simpson? What does Simpson do to complicate the investigation into Sharon DeBlass's death? Why does Dallas begin investigating Simpson's financial records? What does she find? How does she find it? Is what Dallas has done legal? What is the result of this investigation? How does this help Dallas's job?

Who is Lola Starr? Why does the killer target her? Why do you think the writer showed Lola's murder rather than just inviting the reader to the aftermath like she does with Sharon DeBlass and Georgie Castle? What is different about Lola's murder as compared to Sharon's murder? What does Dallas notice in the videos of the murders that is different? How does this help Dallas solve the case?

Who is Derrick Rockman? Why does he work so hard to keep Dallas away from DeBlass? What does Rockman believe DeBlass stands for? Is he right? Why does Rockman attempt to follow Dallas and Feeney when they leave East Washington? Why does Rockman come to Dallas's apartment at the end of the novel? What does he confess? Why is this important to the case?

Who is Catherine DeBlass? Why does she call Dallas and suggest that Sharon had been raped? What does this imply to Dallas? Why does Dallas rush to meet with Catherine? What is the result of this interview? Why did Catherine not come forward sooner? What might have happened had Catherine come forward sooner? How does Catherine's story compare with Dallas's own personal story? Does this comparison have an impact on Dallas? If so, what?

Discuss the setting of the novel. What makes this setting futuristic? When does the reader first realize the setting is not modern day? What impact does the setting have on the killings that Dallas is investigating in this novel? How does the setting affect Dallas's life? Her courtship with Roarke? How might the novel be different if set in a different era? Why do you think the author chose to place her plot in a futuristic setting?