

Revolution Study Guide

Revolution by Jennifer Donnelly

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Plot Summary

Revolution is a young adult novel by writer Jennifer Donnelly. In this novel, Andi is a teenager who has suffered one of the worst tragedies imaginable - the death of her younger brother. Andi struggles with this death, unable to put it behind her. In an attempt to force Andi to focus on her school work, her estranged father takes her to Paris where she finds the diary of a young actress who cared for the dauphin, Louis-Charles, during the French Revolution. Andi discovers she has a great deal in common with this young actress and a trip into the catacombs seems to pull them together, forcing Andi to learn a lesson from the deaths of two young, innocent boys. Revolution is a story of loss, but it is also a story of hope as the reader travels along with Andi to discover how just knowing her brother changed her entire perspective on life.

Andi is struggling at school because she rarely shows up, only appearing for music classes with her beloved teacher Nathan. The headmistress at her private school calls her into her office to discuss the senior thesis, a paper that will be a large portion of Andi's grade and be a deciding factor in whether she graduates with her class in the spring or not. Andi is unconcerned about this paper. In fact, Andi does not care if she graduates because she does not care if she lives. Andi's ten year old brother died two years ago, a tragedy that was followed by her parents' divorce and her mother's descent into depression.

Andi goes to a party at a schoolmate's house and nearly jumps off the roof in an attempted suicide, but is stopped by her schoolmate, Nick. Unfortunately the two are caught in an embrace by Nick's girlfriend, creating a social firestorm for Andi. Therefore when Andi's father insists on taking her to Paris so that Andi can work on her outline for the senior thesis, she reluctantly agrees to go. Andi once loved Paris, the city where her mother grew up, but continues to find it impossible to find happiness in anything.

Andi makes a deal with her father that if she finishes her thesis outline by the weekend that he will allow her to fly back to New York alone. Andi is anxious to return to the city out of concern for her mother whom her father had committed to a psychiatric facility. To begin her essay, Andi begins to read every book she can find on the composer Amade Malherbeau. Andi's topic is the influence of Malherbeau's music on modern guitarists. At the same time, Andi is trying to fix the latch on a Revolutionary era guitar case her father's friend has collected for a future museum for the Revolution. As Andi works the lock, she discovers a hidden compartment in which is hidden a diary written by a young actress who lived through the Revolution.

Andi reads the diary and discovers that the young actress, Alexandrine, was a servant to Louis-Charles, the son of Louis XVI. Andi's father is in Paris in order to do DNA testing on a heart thought to belong to Louis-Charles, taken from his chest upon his death in the Temple where he was kept prisoner by Robespierre throughout the final years of the Revolution. As Andi reads the diary and learns more about Alex and Louis-Charles, she begins to hope that the heart does not belong to the young dauphin.



As Andi learns more about Alex and the Revolution, she also develops a relationship with a young French man named Virgil. Despite this new hope in her life, Andi continues to grow depressed, especially when she learns the heart did in fact belong to Louis-Charles. Andi attempts to jump off the Eiffel Tower, but is stopped by Virgil. Virgil then takes Andi into the catacombs where Alex lived out her final moments after being shot by a guard. During a party in which Andi and Virgil play as part of a band, a police raid causes them to become separated. Andi falls as she runs from the police and hits her head. Suddenly Andi wakes during the final days of Louis-Charles life. Andi takes over what Alex has started, shooting off fireworks to let the dauphin know he is not alone. On the last night, Andi is shot just as Alex was and finds herself hiding in the catacombs. She wakes up the next day back in the modern world with a new understanding of life.



Part 1, Hell: Chapters 1-9

Part 1, Hell: Chapters 1-9 Summary

Jennifer Donnelly is the award-winning author of two adult novels and one young adult novel.

Andi is at the apartment of a school friend where they hang out before school. Andi humiliates one friend in a discussion over his appearance and alienates another who tries to compliment her guitar playing.

Andi skips school to play her guitar. Andi speaks with a homeless man whom she discusses music.

Andi returns to school for her music class, but is sidelined by the headmistress. The headmistress is concerned about the slip in Andi's grades since the death of her brother two years ago. The headmistress has sent letters of warning to both of Andi's parents and tells her that her only chance of graduating is if she completes the senior thesis.

Andi passes the location where her brother was killed on her way home. While staring at the spot, Andi thinks she sees her brother and walks out in front of a car.

Andi arrives home to find her mother painting another new portrait of her brother, Truman. Andi tries to get her mother to eat, but all she wants to do is paint. In her room, Andi listens to Pink Floyd at her guitar teacher's suggestion. As she listens, Andi thinks of a key her brother bought their father. The day he died Andi found it among his clothing and has kept it on a red ribbon around her neck ever since.

Nick, a classmate of Andi's, invites her to a party at his house.

Andi goes to the party because Nick has promised to allow her to play a guitar he got from his godfather, Keith Richards. Andi plays the guitar on the roof of his home where she can find some quiet. Andi begins to think about Truman and moves to the edge of the roof, nearly stepping off. Nick comes out and grabs her. A few minutes later, Nick's girlfriend catches them in an embrace and accuses Nick of cheating on her.

Andi returns home to find her father waiting impatiently for her. Andi's father is upset that she has been failing school and has not turned in her senior thesis outline. They argue. Andi's father wants to take her to Paris while he places her mother in a hospital. Andi walks out.

Andi goes to her friend Vijay's house. They talk for a while and then Vijay's mother interrupts, demanding that Vijay get back to work on his senior thesis. As Andi makes her way home she discovers that Nick's girlfriend has written a message to her on the sidewalk in front of the house. Andi decides that maybe going to Paris would not be such a bad idea.



Part 1, Hell: Chapters 1-9 Analysis

In these chapters, the author introduces the main character and the conflict that will drive the plot. Andi is an intelligent and privileged young girl who is deeply depressed because of the death of her ten year old brother two years before the novel opens. In the first few chapters of the novel Andi seriously considers ending her life at least twice. The reader is immediately alerted both by Andi's deep depression and her use of antidepressants that she feels some responsibility for the death of her brother. However, the reader will not learn the circumstances of her brother's death until much later in the plot, leaving the reader unclear as to why Andi feels responsible for this tragedy.

Andi is not the only one suffering in the death of her brother. Andi's mother is clearly having trouble dealing with her son's death as suggested by her obsession with painting portraits of Truman as well as her refusal to eat. It seems that Andi has become something of the parent in this relationship, taking care of her mother as her mother should be caring for her in this time of grieving. Another victim of this tragedy is the marriage of Andi's parents. Although the marriage was clearly in trouble before Truman's death, it seems the stress of losing a child has caused the marriage to die out completely. This leaves Andi feeling abandoned by her father, causing resentment especially when he swoops in to save the day in a way that leaves Andi feeling helpless and usurped.



Part 1, Hell: Chapters 10-15

Part 1, Hell: Chapters 10-15 Summary

Andi and her father arrive at the Paris airport after some difficulties at security. Andi resents her father admitting her mother to the psychiatric hospital, causing some tension between them.

Andi and her father take a taxi to the home of her father's friend, G, and his wife, Lili. Their home is a deserted factory that G hopes to turn into a museum for the French Revolution in the future. The building is stuffed full of relics from the Revolution. As she waits for dinner to be ready, Andi looks at the items in the living area and discovers an old guitar. When Andi touches the strings, several break. Andi apologizes, but G tells her he would like her to play it. Andi spends an hour replacing the strings and cleaning up the guitar.

G tells Andi that her father has come to Paris to do DNA testing on a heart to prove it belongs to Louis-Charles. G tells Andi that during the French Revolution, Louis-Charles was imprisoned with his parents. After the king and queen were executed, Louis-Charles was locked up by Robespierre and allowed to die.

Andi tries to explain her senior thesis to her father, how she plans to show how Malherbeau's music has influenced composers through the ages, including some modern guitarists. Andi's father suggests that Andi is wasting her time with music and should pursue a more academic degree when she enters college.

Andi argues with her father over her mother's psychiatric treatment before walking out of the apartment.

Andi buys a few trinkets to send her mother and then finds herself near the river. Andi talks to her music teacher, then pulls out her guitar, and plays. A passing pedestrian throws money into her guitar case.

Part 1, Hell: Chapters 10-15 Analysis

Andi and her father arrive in Paris, still not talking to one another unless to argue. It is clear that Andi's father, a man of science, cannot understand his daughter's emotional state or her passion for music. To Andi's father, everything is black and white, there is no in between. This frustrates Andi because it causes her to fall between the cracks of her father's understanding creating a deep amount of tension in their relationship. Adding to the tension is the decision of Andi's father to place Andi's mother in the hospital. This takes the power away from Andi and leaves her feeling as though she is letting her mother down.



With Andi's arrival in Paris, the author introduces new characters who bring with them the history of France that will play an important role in the plot. G, the friend of Andi's father, is a historian who has a particular interest in the French Revolution. To this end, G's house is filled with artifacts from the Revolutionary period, including a guillotine and an old guitar. Andi has discovered the guitar and due to her passion for music, the guitar in particular, this item is sure to play an important role in the plot as well.

The whole reason Andi's father has come to Paris is to run DNA on a heart thought to belong to Louis-Charles, the lost king of France. This is important to the plot for two reasons. First because the DNA testing is the device that has brought Andi to Paris. Second, the child from whom the heart is thought to have been taken is a ten year old boy who bears an uncanny resemblance to Andi's dead brother, Truman. The reader thus suspects the testing and the story of this child will play an important part in Andi's future.



Part 1, Hell: Chapters 16-22

Part 1, Hell: Chapters 16-22 Summary

Andi strikes a deal with her father that if she finishes her outline to his satisfaction by Sunday, he will allow her to return to New York on her own.

Andi spends the morning reading about Malherbeau. While taking a break, Andi tries to fix a broken latch on the guitar case for the Revolutionary era guitar. In desperation Andi uses Truman's key on the lock and it surprisingly turns. The key unlocks a secret compartment in the bottom of the case.

There is a diary in the case. The first entry in the diary suggests that the diary will tell a story that needs to be told about a prisoner in a tower being held by Robespierre.

In the diary Andi finds a newspaper clipping with an odd date that talks about a Green Man who has been setting off fireworks. Andi calls Vijay and he is able to tell her the odd date works out to April 21, 1795.

The next diary entry goes back in town. The writer, Alexandrine Paradis, tells how her family struggled to make a living in the days before the Revolution began because the king's censors would not allow her family to perform the plays her father wrote. Then trouble worsened for Alex's family when they learned while they were all starving, Alex's sister Bette was pregnant.

Andi goes to get some money so she can buy herself lunch, but discovers that her debit card has been cut off. Andi is desperate for money, so she decides to play her guitar for money.

Chapter 22. Andi plays near the Eiffel Tower where she meets a fellow musician, Jules, who joins her for a few songs. Jules invites Andi to play a gig for him at a small club and she agrees.

Part 1, Hell: Chapters 16-22 Analysis

Andi is not happy in Paris, so she strikes a deal with her father to return home in less than five days. Andi's father agrees as long as she finishes her outline for her senior thesis, which Andi immediately agrees to do. Andi did not have any intention of finishing this outline because she does not care what happens to her, but she is suddenly inspired by a need to return home to take care of her mother. Andi intends to take her mother out of the hospital as soon as she returns without her father's knowledge. This motive suggests to the reader that Andi's only purpose for living is to care for her mother, for whose condition Andi blames herself. Again the reader is taken back to Andi's feelings of guilt over the death of her brother, building more curiosity over what happened to the young boy.

In these chapters, Andi finds a diary written by a young girl approximately the same age as Andi who lived during the Revolutionary War. It is important for the reader to note several things about this diary, including the connection to Louis-Charles, the young prince whose heart Andi's father has come to do DNA testing on. Also important is the girl's age and her insistence that something tragic has happened to someone she cares about, suggesting that she knew and cared for the young prince. Finally, the newspaper clipping Andi finds in the diary talks of a Green Man who sets off fireworks illegally in the summer of 1795. This seems unrelated to the diary and Louis-Charles, but will prove to be of importance as the plot continues to develop.



Part 1, Hell: Chapters 23-30

Part 1, Hell: Chapters 23-30 Summary

Andi and Jules play a set at the club and then are given a meal of stew by the owner. As they eat they are joined by Virgil, another musician who is a friend of Jules. With Virgil, they do another set of songs that consist mostly of Virgil's rap tunes.

Virgil offers to give Andi a ride home. On the way they compare tastes in music and Andi allows Virgil to hook her iPod up to his music system.

Back at G's, Andi reads more of the diary. Alex's family decided to move to Versailles, the city where the king lives, in hopes of more prosperity. Instead the family was forced to live in a stable and perform silly puppet shows. Rumbles of discontent spread as unhappy nobles, clergy, and common people began to band together to challenge the king.

One day while doing Punch and Judy the king, his wife, and their children came to watch from their carriage. The royal family recently lost their eldest son and was still grieving. However, Alex was able to make the young prince laugh. A short time later Alex and her family were asked to visit the royal palace to perform. After the performance, Alex met with the queen who asked her to become a companion to her son, to keep him happy. Alex agreed because she thought if she made the queen happy she could count on her influence to get a job in theater.

Andi wakes to a phone call from Virgil. Andi forgot her iPod in his car. Virgil promises to give it back, but has been working all night in his taxi and is tired. Andi sings him to sleep with a song she wrote for her mother that Virgil heard on her iPod.

Andi goes to the Abelard Library to see their materials on Malherbeau. However, Andi has trouble navigating the rules of the archive. While waiting in line at the archive, Andi reads more of Alex's diary. In this entry, Alex's bought some fireworks from a firemaster at the National using a ring taken from the Duc d' Orleans.

Chapter 29. Andi continues reading the diary. Alex wrote about fireworks at the palace for the entertainment of the royal family. Louis-Charles particularly enjoyed the fireworks, but became sad because fireworks disappear just like all beautiful things. Alex consoles him by pointing out that his mother was beautiful and would never go away.

As the summer wore on, the Revolution continued to grow. When word of the Rights of Man and of the Citizens reached the palace, Alex's father was excited and wanted to return to Paris to perform his plays without fear of the censors.

One afternoon, Alex wrote, there was a masquerade party in the garden. Alex and Louis-Charles were playing hide and seek, but Alex could not find him. While searching,



Alex ran into a strange man who made her feel fearful. The man revealed himself to be the Duc d' Orleans, the king's cousin.

As summer turned to autumn, many of the nobles living at the palace in Versailles began to leave. In October, word came of a riot in Paris. The messenger warned that the rioters, mostly women, and the Paris guard were on their way to confront the king. That night a man appeared to incite a riot, causing the unhappy citizens and soldiers to storm the castle. Alex got Louis-Charles safely into a secret passage with his parents.

Part 1, Hell: Chapters 23-30 Analysis

Andi meets Virgil in this group of chapters. Virgil is a young man living on the wrong side of the city who suffers bigotry because of his African ancestry. This causes Virgil to be a little sensitive when he first meets Andi, but she quickly moves him past that and learns of his passion for rap music. Andi's musical taste are eclectic, therefore she and Virgil have a common passion. It seems they hit it off right away and Virgil might become an important figure in Andi's life. The reader is left wondering, however, what will happen to Andi's plans to finish her outline and return to New York.

Andi reads more of Alex's diary and learns of her growing relationship with Louis-Charles. Despite Alex's claims that her only interest is to further her own career, it soon becomes clear that she has a great deal of affection for the prince. At the same time, Alex tells of the early events of the Revolution from a first person point of view. It is an interesting view of the events as they unfolded, making the Revolution seem more real than it might appear in the history books. Andi is drawn in, fascinated by Alex's narration of events. The reader knows in theory what happens at the end of Alex's story, but the reader, along with Andi, is beginning to feel some hope that Alex somehow is able to change the ending, at least for herself and Louis-Charles.



Part 1, Hell: Chapters 31-37

Part 1, Hell: Chapters 31-37 Summary

Andi returns home and finds Lili waiting. Together they watch a French talk show on which both Andi's father and G are set to appear to talk about the DNA testing of the suspected Louis-Charles' heart. As G explains on the program the travels of the heart over the years, Andi begins to wonder if perhaps the heart could belong to some other unfortunate child. Andi also learns from the program that several men came forward years after the Revolutionary War to claim to be Louis-Charles, but the most credible was proven by DNA not to be the lost king.

Alex writes in a new entry of the diary that she was nearly caught by a guard early in May of 1795 running from where she had just lit fireworks for Louis-Charles. The guard tried to detain her, but Alex managed to get away. After this entry there is another clipping from the paper that describes the same confrontation with a guard that Alex has just written about.

Virgil calls Andi again. Andi tells him she cannot sleep and it is his turn to sing.

Andi returns to the library and is finally successful in getting the items she needs from the archives. As she waits, Andi reads another entry from Alex's diary. In this entry, Alex wrote of the aftermath of the siege on the palace which included Alex and her family losing their jobs.

Andi's items arrive and she is excited to review early drafts of Malherbeau's Firework concerto. Andi unconsciously begins to tap out and hum the composition. Andi receives a warning for this and her failure to wear gloves when she first began. When Andi's cellphone begins to ring, it is the last straw and she is asked to leave.

Andi goes to a nearby café and reads more of Alex's diary. Returning to Paris proved to be difficult for Alex and her family as they once again found themselves without employment or a means to provide for the family. Alex performed at the Palais, but was unable to make enough for her ailing mother and sister. As Andi finishes this entry she decides to go the catacombs where Alex spent a great deal of time hiding during her days as the Green Man.

As Andi stands in line at the catacombs, she reads more of the diary. In this entry, Alex talked about someone watching her. Andi is disrupted when Virgil spots her from his car. Virgil gives Andi a CD of his music and asks her to call later.

Part 1, Hell: Chapters 31-37 Analysis

Andi begins to question the story of Louis-Charles, showing the reader that she is hoping that it is possible Alex saved Louis-Charles from his horrific fate. This adds to the



reader's hope that this is the point of the diary that Alex has left behind for Andi to find. However, even as Andi begins to hope for Louis-Charles, Alex's story is becoming darker and more heart wrenching. In the aftermath of the capture of the king and queen, Alex returns to her life in Paris, just as poor and desperate as she was before. At the same time Alex suggests that someone is watching her, someone dangerous, injecting some tension into the plot.

Andi's relationship with Virgil seems to be growing, but she continues to work on her senior thesis outline, suggesting that Virgil is not enough to inspire Andi to remain in Paris. Andi seems to have placed her mother and the death of her brother on a back burner, coming to appreciate her life again. However, the reader wonders if Andi will revert to her old guilt and depression when the diary ends.



Part 1, Hell: Chapters 38-47

Part 1, Hell: Chapters 38-47 Summary

Andi continues to read Alex's diary. Alex's wrote of how desperate she was for food and money that she stole a man's money purse from a restaurant table. It turned out the purse belonged to the Duc d' Orleans. Orleans took Alex back to his rooms and transformed her into a boy.

Andi finally reaches the head of the line to go into the catacombs. Andi reads all the signs along the way, learning more about the Revolution. At a fork, Andi gets separated from the rest of the tour and goes down a dark tunnel in which she believes she can hear the voices of the dead and can see what kind of people they were in life. Andi is rattled. A security guard guides Andi out of the tunnel and back into the proper tunnel.

Andi returns home and works for a while on the outline and then listens to Virgil's CD. When Andi takes her medicine that night, she cuts back on the dosage.

Alex wrote in her diary that Orleans promised her a successful career in the theater, something she had long desired. In exchange Alex was to go to work for the young prince as a page. Alex was to report back to Orleans on all she saw and heard in the Tuileries where the royal family was being held.

Virgil calls Andi and tells her to be prepared to go out with him early in the morning.

Virgil calls for Andi before dawn. They drive to the Sacre-Couer to watch the sun rise.

Virgil sets out a blanket and some food for he and Andi to share as they wait for the sun to rise.

Chapter 45. Virgil kisses Andi. Afterward he asks when she will be leaving and Andi insists she still plans to leave Sunday night. When Virgil asks if she will call him, Andi refuses, unwilling to start a long distance relationship. Virgil asks Andi why she is so angry and she gets upset, asking him to drive her home.

Chapter 46. Virgil returns Andi's iPod to her, taking away their one excuse to continue contacting one another.

Chapter 47. Andi tells her father she is nearly done with the outline. Then she settles down to read more of Alex's diary. Alex wrote of seeing the dead all around her and of another near miss with the guards before setting off more fireworks. Alex then returned to her story of Louis-Charles, of how she smuggled in clothing for the king's plan of escape from the Tuileries. Alex did not tell Orleans about this escape plan. When Orleans learned of the escape, he confronted Alex, beating her until she confessed to knowledge of the plot.



Part 1, Hell: Chapters 38-47 Analysis

Andi walks through the catacombs and has a strange experience that she puts down to the overuse of her antidepressant medication. However, the experience seems to parallel a similar experience, Alex talks about in her diary of the ability to see the dead. Perhaps it is guilt that causes Alex's experience and a similar sense of guilt on Andi's part. Whatever causes it, it is an unusual experience that the reader will see was only a forewarning of another more drastic and supernatural experience on Andi's part.

Andi seems to have come out of her profound depression to a certain degree in her interest in the Malherbeau thesis and her fascination with Alex's diary. However, her unhappiness comes back in a moment when she should be feeling nothing but happiness. When Virgil kisses Andi, it brings back to her the fragility of life and her guilt over her brother's death, making her feel as though she is no longer worthy of happiness. Andi pushes Virgil away at a moment when she should be bringing him in closer. The reader is suddenly reminded of the darkness in Andi's life and her refusal to allow herself to live a happy life.



Part 1, Hell: Chapters 48-54

Part 1, Hell: Chapters 48-54 Summary

Andi visits Malherbeau's house and admires his portrait in which he holds a single rose with blood dripping from his finger. There are miniatures on a table beside Malherbeau that people over the years have assumed are Malherbeau and a woman he once loved, the reason why Malherbeau never married. Andi sees a comparison between the rose in Malherbeau's portrait and the rose that is part of a coat of arms in G's house from the Auvergne family.

Andi sends her outline to her father via email and then reads from Alex's diary while she waits for him to come home. Alex wrote of her caution in setting off the fireworks because of Bonaparte's determination to find her. In another entry, Alex wrote of the capture of the royal family and the unrest in Paris that led to a rebellion attack on the Tuileries. The royal family was moved to the Temple for their protection and would remain there. Alex continued to work for the royal family and was witness to the massacres on September 2, 1792. When she returned to the Orleans' rooms she confronted him with some things she had figured out and got confirmation that he had been working against the king all along and some of the information she gave him led to the deaths of some of the nobles in the night's massacre. In another entry, Alex wrote of the day the guards dragged Louis-Charles from his mother.

Andi's father returns home. Andi slips into the living room to ask him about her outline, but he is on the phone. Andi overhears him talk about Truman's death with his girlfriend. Andi feels sympathetic toward him and tries to reach out, but her father becomes angry.

Andi wakes the next morning groggy and out of sorts because she took too much of her antidepressant the night before. Andi calls Vijay and learns he delivered her package to her mother at the hospital. When Andi hangs up she overhears her father on the phone with her mother's doctor and quickly escapes the apartment.

Chapter 52. Andi goes to a flea market to pick up things for her mother. At the flea market, Andi runs into an odd character who is reminiscent of the Duc d' Orleans. Andi buys a painting from him.

Chapter 53. Andi returns to G's in a rush to make her plane only to learn that the airlines have gone on strike and her flight is cancelled.

Chapter 54. Andi rushes to Remy's, the club where she and Jules played their gig. However, when she arrives Andi sees Virgil kiss another girl.



Part 1, Hell: Chapters 48-54 Analysis

As Andi does the work on her outline and prepares it in hopes of escaping her father's company, she learns more about the Revolution from Alex's diary. Alex becomes a spy for Orleans, believing him when he promises to make her an actress. Instead, Alex has helped Orleans arrest all those who have been kind to or helped the royal family, leading to many of these innocent nobles' deaths during the massacres of September 2. Alex finally realizes her mistakes, but it is too late to do anything to help the royal family. The king is soon beheaded, the queen will follow, and Louis-Charles has been placed in a room of his own where he will slowly die of starvation and loneliness.

Andi and Alex's guilt over the death of a young boy is a parallel in this story that Andi is only just beginning to appreciate. Andi feels responsible for her brother's death for reasons that are not yet known to the reader. Alex also feels guilty for reasons the reader is only too aware of at this point in the novel. Alex placed her own ambition above the safety of the royal family, including Louis-Charles.

At the same time, Andi finishes her outline and prepares to leave, she struggles with her continuing stressful relationship with her father. Andi overhears her father on the phone and realizes that he blames himself for some of the things that happened after Truman's death and that he regrets the guilt that is consuming Andi. However, this admission does little to repair their relationship. Finally, Andi sees Virgil with another girl, causing her final grasp of hope to give way.



Part 1, Hell: Chapters 55-61

Part 1, Hell: Chapters 55-61 Summary

Andi has taken too much of her antidepressant after seeing Virgil with another girl.

Andi sleeps most of Monday and then settles down to read more of Alex's diary. Alex wrote of the day the queen gave her the king's guitar to play for Louis-Charles. The queen signaled the turn of the key that will open a hidden compartment in the base of the guitar case. When Alex opened it later she found a picture of Louis-Charles and a bag of coins. Alex knew then she must choose between helping Louis-Charles or use the money to escape Paris.

Alex wrote in a new entry that Orleans went to the guillotine soon after the queen. Alex wrote that she went to see him shortly before his death and learned that he wanted to be king. That night Alex was going to leave Paris, but when she saw fireworks in the sky she knew she could not abandon Louis-Charles.

As Andi comes to the last entry in Alex's diary, she hears her father and G come in. They are in the company of a French secret service agent. News of the DNA results as been leaked and G and Andi's father are to report to the president. Andi learns that the heart is most likely Louis-Charles'.

Andi reads the final entry in Alex's diary. It reveals that Alex was shot by a guard and lies dying in the catacombs.

Andi goes to the Eiffel Tower.

As Andi waits in line at the Eiffel Tower Virgil calls out to her. Andi asks Virgil to keep her guitar for her since she cannot take it into the tower. When Andi returns to the line she learns that she cannot go up because the tower is closing. Andi begins to scream and cry. Virgil and his friends try to Andi up with other tours she can take.

Part 1, Hell: Chapters 55-61 Analysis

Andi comes to the end of Alex's journal and realizes that Alex is dying. This upsets Andi because she realizes that Alex was never able to help Louis-Charles with her few plans as she had hoped she would be. At the same time, Andi learns that the DNA on the heart proved that the heart did belong to Louis-Charles, confirming what the diary has already told her. This, combined with her disappointment over Virgil, pushes Andi over the edge.

Andi had hope in both the diary written by Alex and in her relationship with Virgil. With both of these at an end, Andi returns to her sense of guilt over her brother's death and her lack of hope in her own life. Andi plans to commit suicide by jumping from the Eiffel

Tower, but Virgil arrives and saves her. However, the reader wonders if perhaps Andi might not find another opportunity to do the same.



Part 2, Purgatory: Chapters 62-69

Part 2, Purgatory: Chapters 62-69 Summary

Virgil leads Andi and his friends into the catacombs where they are to perform at a party in an underground room known as the beach. They can only enter the catacombs from the tracks of the Metro train. Andi is nearly crushed by a train as she attempts to cross.

Virgil continues the lead the way, explaining to Andi that he once studied maps made of the catacombs, but that he has been down there so often he knows the way. Andi sees a poem on the wall by Browning that nearly causes her to lose Virgil and his friends.

Andi learns that the girl she saw Virgil kiss a few days before is really his sister and Jules' girlfriend. They play their gig and then Virgil pushes Andi to tell him what happened to her.

Andi tells Virgil that she was walking Truman to school one day when Nick asked her to skip and go to his house. Andi sent Truman on by himself, unaware that the police were clearing out a welfare hotel down the block. Andi and Nick stopped to get Nick something to eat when Andi heard police sirens. Andi returned to the block where her brother was walking in time to see that a mentally disturbed resident of the welfare hotel had taken Truman hostage. As Andi rushed down the street, the mentally disturbed man was scared by a cop drawing his weapon and stepped into the street in front of a delivery van. Virgil listens to the story and assures Andi that it was not her fault.

While waiting for Virgil to collect his friends, Andi begins to talk to an odd man who seems to not understand her iPod. Then someone calls out that the cops are coming.

Andi calls out to Virgil, but cannot find him. The strange man pulls Andi to her feet and encourages her to follow him out of the catacombs. As Andi follows the strange man she trips and falls, hitting her head. When she stands again, she cannot find the strangers. Andi finally catches up to the stranger and his friends, who are fascinated with her flashlight, and they led her into the streets.

As Andi follows the strange man, who calls himself Amade, his friends express a need to rush home. Amade also expresses concern for Andi and suggests they get something to eat. Andi notices a lack of modern conveniences in the area where Amade has led her. There is also a lack of public toilets. Amade then takes Andi to his home and she sees a composition on his table. Suddenly Andi realizes she is speaking to Amade Malherbeau.

When Andi wakes the next morning she is still in Amade's small room. Andi becomes panicked when she realizes the lack of modern conveniences has continued and she argues with Amade, breaking his chamber pot when he suggests she use it. Amade throws her out.



Part 2, Purgatory: Chapters 62-69 Analysis

Andi goes into the catacombs with Virgil and his friends only to find herself nearly killed by a train. This experience helps Andi realize she really does not want to die despite her attempt to kill herself in previous chapters. Andi also learns that Virgil does not have another girlfriend, that he is not the person she automatically assumed he was when she saw him kiss a young woman who turned out to be his sister. For this reason, Andi finally finds herself in a place in which she can tell Virgil what really happened to her brother. Although it is an amazing story, the reader can see clearly that Andi is not at fault for what happened to her brother despite her decision to send him off to school by himself. Like Alex, Andi was just a tool in a long list of coincidences and poor or cruel judgment on other people's part that led to the tragic death of an innocent.

Even as Andi finds herself opening up to Virgil, she is suddenly thrust into a strange world that she thinks might be fueled by her abuse of her antidepressants. Andi is suddenly transported to France in 1795, the same year in which Alex wrote her diary. How Andi got here is an unanswered question at this point as is what the reason is. Andi is frightened and frustrated, but the reader can believe that in time she will find the answers she is looking for.



Part 2, Purgatory: Chapters 70-85

Part 2, Purgatory: Chapters 70-85 Summary

Andi wanders around Paris and sees a tumbrel, a wagon designed to carry prisoners to the guillotine.

Andi arrives at the Palais-Royal tired and disgusted. A man gives her a piece of bread and suggests she play her guitar for money. Andi does, but a blind boy steals her money and a couple of men attempt to sexually assault her. Then a man named Fauvel gives her a bundle of fireworks and warns her to be more careful in the future.

Andi buys food and takes it to Amade's, begging for a place to stay. Amade reluctantly agrees when she gives him her iPod. Andi plays a Beethoven piece for him before going to sleep.

Andi uses Virgil's map to move around the catacombs, hoping to find a way back to her own time if she returns to the beach. However, Andi discovers that many of the tunnels on Virgil's map do not exist yet.

Amade agrees to take Andi to the music store to buy new strings for her guitar.

As they approach the music store, Andi realizes she is standing outside of the tower where Louis-Charles is being held. Andi begins playing her guitar for him, drawing the guards' attention.

Andi asks Amade about his past. He tells her that he was the son of the Comte and Comtesse d'Auvergne, but his parents were arrested along with other nobles who supported the king during the heart of the Revolution. Amade's father denounced him during his trial, saving Amade's life. Amade changed his name when he moved to Paris to protect himself.

Andi climbs to the roof of a building near the Temple in order to shoot off fireworks.

Andi goes to Orleans' old rooms to find the money Alex wrote about in her diary. Andi finds it in the chimney.

Andi plays guitar at a secret Victim's Ball. Andi argues with a partygoer about the cause of the Revolution.

Andi has burned her hand and is caught with the injury by Amade.

Amade takes Andi to see the execution of Fouquier-Tinville in order to show her what will happen to her if she is caught.

On the last day of Louis-Charles' life, Andi buys two dozen Lucifer rockets from Fauvel.



Alex is caught by a guard and shot in the side.

Amade finds Alex at the Palais-Royal and helps her to the catacombs, the only place he can think of to hide her.

Andi tells Amade she has set off the fireworks not to change anything, but to change herself.

Part 2, Purgatory: Chapters 70-85 Analysis

Once Andi accepts that she really is in 1795, she realizes that she is there to complete what Alex started. Andi places her own life in danger in order to continue shooting off fireworks so that Louis-Charles will know he is not alone. On the day of Louis-Charles' death, Andi shoots off so many fireworks that she is caught by the guard and shot when she tries to run away. The reader will recognize these events, recalling that the same thing happened to Alex in her diary.

Andi has influenced Amade Malherbeau in his music, the same man she credits with influence some of the greatest composers of all time as well as several guitarists in modern times. At the same time, Andi has learned to look outside of herself and to see the world around her, to learn that she cannot change the world, but she can change herself. It is an important realization for Andi that the reader hopes will lead her to happiness in her life. That is, of course, if she survives her current wounds.



Part 3, Paradise: Chapters 86-87 and Epilogue

Part 3, Paradise: Chapters 86-87 and Epilogue Summary

Virgil wakes Andi in the catacombs and tells her that she fell and hit her head as well as gashing her side over her ribs. Virgil leads Andi out of the catacombs, telling her her time in 1795 was just a dream from her head wound.

Virgil gets Andi out of the catacombs and calls one of his friends for a ride to the hospital.

Andi has returned to Paris after finishing school. Her senior thesis was a stunning success, especially after she showed Alex's diary to G and told him she thought that Malherbeau was a member of the Auvergne family. G and Andi found proof of her assertions, creating a stir throughout the musical and historical communities. Andi's mother has recovered from her depression and now lives in Paris where she has returned to her art. Andi is attending the Paris Conservatory and still dating Virgil.

Part 3, Paradise: Chapters 86-87 and Epilogue Analysis

It turns out that Andi dreamed her experiences in 1795, at least that seems to be the most logical explanation. No matter how it happened, the experience has changed Andi for the better. After returning to New York, Andi graduated from school and has returned to Paris to live with her mother and to be close to Virgil. Andi's life has completely turned around, embracing life where she once did not want it. Not only this, but Andi has changed history by proving Amade's story to her about his relationship to the Auvergne family. This seems to prove that Andi's experience was not completely as imagined as implied, but perhaps the truth about Malherbeau was in front of her all the time and she needed the rest of a head wound to help her see it.



Characters

Andi Alpers

Andi is a seventeen-year-old teenager living in New York. Andi's father is a Nobel Prize winning scientist, therefore Andi goes to private school and lives a more affluent life. However, Andi is struggling with a deep depression ever since the death of her brother, Truman, two years before the novel begins. In fact, Andi is taking antidepressants and suffers from thoughts of suicide. The only thing that keeps Andi going is her passion for music and the guilt that makes her feel responsible for her mother's depression.

Andi travels to Paris to spend the winter break with her estranged father and to work on her outline for a senior thesis. Andi does not want to be with her father, therefore she makes a deal with him to leave two weeks later after she finishes her outline. In the meantime, Andi meets Virgil and begins to fall in love, a situation that inserts some hope into her life. At the same time, Andi begins reading a diary written by Alexandrine Paradis, a young actress who lived during the French Revolution. These things take Andi's mind off of her own tragic past. However, when things do not work out as Andi had hoped, she begins to think of suicide again only to discover the purpose to her relationship with her brother.

Alexandrine 'Alex' Paradis

Alex is the poor daughter of a playwright who finds himself constantly censored by the king. Alex aspires to be a great actress, but despite her skill, she cannot get strong leading roles because she lacks beauty. Therefore when the queen asks Alex to be a companion to her young son, Louis-Charles, Alex jumps at the chance. Alex hopes she might win the queen's favor and use that to promote her acting career.

As the revolution gets underway, Alex finds herself in a front row seat to the destruction of her king and a child she has come to love. In the end, Alex's ambitions place her in a position to spy on the royal family and bring about both their destruction and the destruction of those who attempt to help them. Filled with guilt over her actions, Alex is faced with the choice between helping the young dauphin and running away. Alex chooses to remain in Paris to do all she can to help the young dauphin. Unfortunately, all Alex can do is set off fireworks at night so that Louis-Charles knows that he is not alone.

Louis-Charles

Louis-Charles is the son of Louis XVI and Marie-Antoinette. With the death of Louis-Charles' older brother, he becomes the dauphin of France, the next in line for the throne. When the revolution takes place, the rebels imprison the royal family and eventually execute the king and queen for treason. This leaves Louis-Charles as a



danger to the rebellion because he is the next in line as king. The leader of the rebellion, Robespierre, imprisons Louis-Charles in the Temple, a large tower in Paris, where he is left alone to fall prey to madness and starvation. Alex, Louis-Charles' former companion and page, sets off fireworks each night, a favorite leisure activity of Louis-Charles, to let him know he is not alone and there are still people in the world who care for him.

Truman Alpers

Truman Alpers is Andi's little brother. When Truman was ten, he and Andi were walking to school when a friend of Andi's asked her to skip class that day and spend the day with him. Andi sends Truman off to school alone. While passing a welfare hotel, Truman was taken hostage by a mentally disturbed man who did not want to leave the hotel. The mentally ill man panicked when a cop pulled his gun, walking into the street and causing himself and Truman to be hit by a delivery van. Andi feels guilty over her brother's death because she did not stay with him and stir him away from trouble.

Lewis Alpers

Lewis Alpers is Andi's father. Lewis is a highly successful scientist who won the Nobel Prize for cracking the genome. Lewis was never home when he was working on his project and this caused a strain on his marriage that broke with the death of his young son. Andi blames her father in part for her mother's emotional problems after the death of Truman and resents him coming back into her life to place her mother in a psychiatric hospital and force Andi to work on her senior thesis. In the end, Lewis and Andi are too angry and too distant from one another to ever develop a relationship again.

Marianne Alpers

Marianne Alpers is Andi's mother. Marianne is a French woman who makes her living as an artist. After the death of Truman, Marianne falls into a deep depression in which all she wants to do each day is paint portraits of Truman. Marianne's depression is so bad that Andi finds herself caring for her mother instead of being cared for by her mother. In the end, Andi's father comes and places Marianne in a psychiatric hospital to help her with her depression. Marianne improves and moves back to Paris where Andi joins her to attend classes at the Paris Conservatory.

Gulliaume 'G' Lenotre

G is a historian who has written a definitive book about the French Revolution. G and Lewis once roomed together in college and are good friends even though they often do not see eye to eye on a great number of topics. When Lewis goes to Paris over the winter break, he works with G to do DNA on a heart thought to belong to Louis-Charles, the lost king of France. G also provides Andi with background on Louis-Charles as well



as information about Amade Malherbeau, the topic of her senior thesis. It is also through G that Andi finds Alex's diary because it is in a guitar case that G bought to display in a museum on the French Revolution.

Amade Malherbeau

Amade Malherbeau was a composer for the guitar who lived during the time of the French Revolution. As a guitarist, Andi is deeply interested in Malherbeau and his compositions. For her senior thesis, Andi plans to write about Malherbeau's influence on composers through the decades, including his influence on such composers as Beethoven and modern guitarist like John Lee Hooker. Later, when Andi seems to have been transported to 1795, she meets Malherbeau and stays in his home, giving him advice about his composition, the Fireworks concerto.

Virgil Boukadida

Virgil is an aspiring rapper that Andi meets in a Paris nightclub. Virgil's parents are from Tunisia and they live on a poor side of town, both reasons why Virgil often feels discriminated against by the French people and its government. Virgil is a kind, gentle man, however, and Andi is immediately attracted to him. Unfortunately, as their relationship begins to build Andi pulls away because she feels like she does not deserve to be happy due to her role in her brother's death. In the end, however, Virgil is persistent causing Andi to finally trust him with her story.

Nick Goode

Nick Goode is a spoiled rich kid whose father is a famous English actor. Nick is the boy who asked Andi to skip school the day her brother died, therefore he is a constant reminder of all that Andi lost that day. Although Andi likes Nick and they have a great deal in common, Andi cannot accept his friendship due to the events surrounding her brother's death. At the same time, Nick feels a great amount of guilt for his role in Truman's death as well and constantly reaches out to Andi to try to make amends.



Objects/Places

Alex's Diary

Andi finds a diary written by Alexandrine 'Alex' Paradis in a hidden compartment of an old guitar case. This diary tells the story of Alex's relationship with Louis-Charles, the dauphin of France during the French Revolution.

Miniature of Louis-Charles

Andi finds a miniature of Louis-Charles in a guitar case at G's along with Alex's diary. This portrait shows a little boy who strongly resembles Andi's dead brother, Truman.

Revolution Era Guitar

While visiting G in Paris, Andi finds a guitar among his collection of French Revolution collectibles. This guitar has a case that contains a secret compartment in which Andi finds a diary. A passage in the diary suggests that the guitar belonged to Louis XVI.

Gold Pieces

After taking possession of the king's guitar, Alex found twenty Louis gold coins hidden in a compartment in the case. Alex wanted to use the money to smuggle Louis-Charles out of the Temple, but failed to find a guard she could bribe. Later, Alex used the money to buy fireworks.

iPod

Andi accidentally leaves her iPod in Virgil's car, giving him an excuse to keep in contact with her. Later, Andi gives the iPod to Malherbeau, strongly influencing his compositions.

Guillotine

The guillotine was the chosen method of execution during the French Revolution. G has a guillotine among his collection of French Revolution artifacts. Later, Andi sees a guillotine in use during the execution of Fouquier-Tinville.



Qwellify

Qwellify is the antidepressant Andi takes to deal with her depression over her brother's death.

Auvergne Coat of Arms

The Auvergne coat of arms has a bleeding rose that drips onto a lily. This coat of arms declares the Comte d' Auvergne's alliance to the king of France. It is this loyalty that led to the deaths of Amade Malherbeau's family and his name change when he moved to Paris during the French Revolution.

Malherbeau Artifacts

Andi goes to a library in France to view their archived papers on Malherbeau that include his death certificate and some of his handwritten musical scores.

Fireworks Concerto

The Fireworks Concerto is Amade Malherbeau's first major composition. Although the piece is not up to the standards of his later pieces, it is a well-known piece. Historians have no idea why Malherbeau called it the Fireworks Concerto, but Andi comes to believe the piece takes its name from the fireworks Alex Paradis set off for the benefit of Louis-Charles at the end of his life.

Catacombs

Alex hid often in the catacombs under Paris during 1795 to hide from guards searching for the Green Man, the person setting off fireworks in the city at night. Alex was the Green Man and eventually suffered a gunshot wound that would end her life in the catacombs. Many years later, workmen would find a revolution era guitar in the catacombs in which Andi would find Alex's diary.

Malherbeau's House

Andi visits Malherbeau's house in Paris where she spots a portrait that suggests a connection to the Comte d' Auvergne.

Palais-Royal

Alex spent a great deal of time at the Palais-Royal during her time in an attempt to get roles as an actress. Alex also gave performances to the wondering crowds at the Palais.



In Alex's time, the Palais was owned by the Duc d' Orleans, a cruel man who used Alex to promote his hopes to become ruler of France one day. When Andi came to 1795 Paris, she also performed at the Palais with her guitar to make money for food.

The Temple

The Temple was a tower in Paris during the French Revolution where the royal family was held. Both the king and queen would be executed, but Louis-Charles was left locked in a room alone to die of madness and starvation.

Tuileries

The Tuileries was a residence in Paris where the royal family lived under guard before their attempted escape. After their escape, the Tuileries was overrun by unhappy Paris citizens, causing the royal family to be moved to the Temple.

Versailles

Versailles was a city in France where Louis XVI built his elaborate palace and lived in happier times of his reign. However, the palace was overrun by protestors and the Paris guard, forcing Louis XVI to agree to live under guard in Paris.

Paris

Paris is the setting of the novel, both in modern times and as it was during the French Revolution.



Themes

Guilt

Andi's brother died while she was supposed to be with him. When Andi's father learned of his son's death, he asked Andi over and over where she was when he was placed in danger. Although her father later apologized for these words, Andi takes the words to heart. Andi feels that because she did not guide her brother from danger that his death is her fault. As a result, Andi is filled with guilt that is causing her to suffer depression and to have thoughts of suicide. At the same time, Andi's mother is also suffering from deep depression and Andi feels as though this is also her fault. Andi's entire life has been eclipsed by the guilt she feels for her brother's death although his death was not her fault.

Alex was an ambitious actress during the French Revolution who found herself handed a golden opportunity when the queen asked her to become a companion to the dauphin of France. Alex saw this as a way to get the queen's favor and to promote her career. Later, when the Revolution broke out and the queen lost her influence over the people of France, Alex accepted the help of the Duc d' Orleans, the king's cousin who promised Alex a career in the theater if she would spy on the royal family for him. As a direct result of her spying, Alex caused the arrest and massacre of dozens of nobles whose only crime was a loyalty to the royal family. The guilt surrounding this and for the situation in which it placed Louis-Charles began to consume Alex until she gave up her life to light fireworks for the young prince to show him he was no longer alone.

Guilt is an important theme in this novel because it is guilt that overshadows and motivates both the heroines of the story. If not for her guilt over her brother's death, Alex would have nothing to learn from Alex's story nor would she be in a position to be in Paris at the time she found the diary and she met Virgil. At the same time, if not for her own guilt, Alex never would have become the Green Man and influenced one of the greatest guitar composers of all time.

Hope

Andi refuses to open herself to hope because she has learned from her brother's death that hope only leads to sadness and despair. For this reason, when Andi meets Virgil and they begin to grow close to one another, Andi pushes him away. Andi does not want to hope, she does not want to experience happiness, because she feels she does not deserve these things because of her role in her brother's life.

Hope is the only thing that keeps Alex and her family going. Alex's family is extremely poor, unable to even feed themselves. Therefore when they are offered a position in the royal palace, they are filled with the hope that now they might survive. Unfortunately, the French Revolution begins and the family finds themselves once again thrust out on their



own to suffer and starve on the streets of Paris. Hope once again is their only solace, but hope is a fleeting thing. At the same time, Alex has a deep hope of one day becoming a famous actress. This hope leads Alex to betray the one person she loves more than herself, Louis-Charles.

Hope also motivates the two heroines of this novel, but in a dark way that leads them into a situation in which they are not sure they can find happiness. In the end, however, both holds onto hope until they finally see what is most important in their lives. For this reason, hope is a theme of the book.

History

A great deal of this book involves the French Revolution that took place from 1789-1799. Andi is first introduced to the Revolution in school and then when she goes to Paris to stay in the home of a friend of her father's, G. G is a historian who has written a comprehensive book on the Revolution and has collected thousands of artifacts that fill his home, a place he hopes to one day turn into a museum honoring the Revolution. It is here that Andi sees a guillotine for the first time and where she finds the old guitar whose case hides Alex's diary.

Alex lives during the Revolution and has a front seat view of the events that lead to the imprisonment and death of three members of the royal family. During this time Alex finds herself forced to spy on the family and responsible in part for the deaths of dozens of nobles who only wanted to help the royal family. In the end, Alex spends all her money and places her life at risk in order to light fireworks that will show Louis-Charles that he is no longer alone.

The history of the French Revolution comes alive in this book through the diary of Alex and the artifacts Andi discovers in G's house. The French Revolution was a bloody, dangerous time that is the backdrop to the tragic death of a ten year old boy, Louis-Charles, the dauphin of France. For this reason, history is a major theme of this novel.

Style

Point of View

The novel is written in the first-person point of view. The author uses the main character, Andi, as her narrator in an active voice that makes the narration quick and crisp. The author also uses the first person point of view in the diary excerpts from Alex's diary, using both an active voice and a more passive voice as Alex recalls past events.

The point of view of this novel is an intimate narration that allows the reader into the mind of the main character in order to know both her thoughts and her emotions. This is more important in the plot of this novel because the main character suffers from a deep depression and guilt from the death of her brother, therefore she often behaves contrary to the whirlwind of emotions going on inside of her head. Due to the point of view of this novel, the reader is allowed to see both Andi's warring emotions as well as her behavior that is often contrary to the situation. For this reason, the first-person point of view of this novel works well with the plot.

Setting

The novel begins in New York City where Andi once lived with her family, but now lives alone with her mother. The novel then shifts to Paris where Andi travels with her father while her mother undergoes psychiatric treatment. In Alex's novel, the setting moves from Paris to Versailles and back again, presenting a world to the reader that is both historic and dangerous.

The setting of this novel is often complicated because it shifts between two very different worlds. In Andi's world, the reader finds themselves in a familiar world of modern conveniences and dangers. Andi struggles with depression and as a result she is often taking a large amount of antidepressants and battling thoughts of suicide. In Alex's world, however, the dangers are more of an external element. Alex lives in the 1790s, a world that is filled with dangers not from modern conveniences or her own hand, but from the power struggle between rebels and the monarchy. While fighting for the life of a child, Alex places herself in mortal danger and eventually dies from a gun wound. In the modern world, Andi is her own worst enemy, a girl intent on committing suicide to rid herself of the guilt that comes from the death of a similar little boy, her brother Truman. The setting of this novel presents different worlds, but also shows how there is little difference between the people who populate them.

Language and Meaning

The language of this novel is primarily simple English. There are some French phrases in the novel because the main character spends a great deal of time in Paris in the course of the novel. However, most of these phrases are either self-explanatory or are



explained in the text. The grammar of the novel is simple and proper, therefore the reader should have no problem understanding the language of the novel.

The language of the novel is simple and easy to understand. Although the language is appropriate to the main character and the intended audience, the diary entries prove to be too simple and modern even though the author tells the reader that the diary entries are written in an old French that even the main character, a person fluent in French, has trouble understanding. This failure to use antiquated grammar in the diary passages takes from the authenticity of the diary's author. However, the language is overall a strong support of the plot, the characters, and the intended audience.

Structure

The novel is divided into three parts, each featuring a title that references *The Divine Comedy* by Dante Alighieri. Each part is divided into chapters, many as short as two pages. Some of the chapters also include excerpts from Alex's diary, each separated by dates on which they were written by Alex. The novel is told in a linear fashion when taken separately. Andi tells her story from the day she is given an ultimatum on graduation by the headmistress at her school to the time in which she has settled permanently in Paris with her mother. Alex tells her story in a kind of review of the past, injecting some more current events that help illustrate her situation in Revolution era Paris.

The novel contains multiple plots. The main plot follows Andi to Paris as she struggles with the death of her brother and the depression that has caused. A subplot follows Andi's research into Amade Malherbeau, a composer about whom she is writing a senior thesis. Another subplot involves Andi's relationship with the people around her, including her father and Virgil. Alex's story is another plot that revolves around Alex and her relationship with Louis-Charles, the dauphin of France. Each of these plots are satisfactorily resolved at the end of the novel.



Quotes

"I play until my fingertips are raw. Until I rip a nail and bleed on the strings. Until my hands hurt so bad I forget my heart does." (Part 1, Hell: Chapter 1, p. 7).

"When I open them again, I see my brother. He's not dead. He's standing in the street, watching me. It can't be. But it is." (Part 1, Hell: Chapter 4, p. 21).

"Turns out I'm not. Lucky, that is. Not remotely." (Part 1, Hell: Chapter 7, p. 38).

"A king's heart? Kings have big hearts. Mighty hearts. How else can they fight wars and go on crusades? But this heart doesn't look big. It looks small and sad." (Part 1, Hell: Chapter 12, p. 70).

"It's not a good sound. It's like footsteps behind you in the dark or a door slowly opening in the house when you thought you were alone. I should leave it where it is; I know that. But I almost never do what I should." (Part 1, Hell: Chapter 25, pg. 137).

"Who knew that listening to a guy sleep could be so much deeper than sleeping with a guy." (Part 1, Hell: Chapter 27, p. 158).

"I don't like hope very much. In fact, I hate it. It's the crystal meth of emotions. It hooks you fast and kills you hard. It's bad news. The worst. It's sharp sticks and cherry bombs. When hope shows up, it's only a matter of time until someone gets hurt." (Part 1, Hell: Chapter 32, p. 200).

"And suddenly, I want to be there. In the catacombs. I want to be where she was." (Part 1, Hell: Chapter 36, p. 221).

"Amade Malherbeau was a rock star." (Part 1, Hell: Chapter 48, p. 279).

"Turns out, I do know the end of the story." (Part 1, Hell: Chapter 59, p. 345).

"And then I get it. And it's so obvious I start laughing at myself for being so weird and stupid. This whole thing is one big movie set." (Part 2, Purgatory: Chapter 68, p. 382).

"The world goes on stupid and brutal, but I do not. Can't you see? I do not." (Part 2, Purgatory: Chapter 85, p. 456).



Topics for Discussion

Who is Andi? Why does she think of suicide? What happened to Andi to cause these dark thoughts? Why does Andi not attend school? Why does Andi attend her music lessons? Who is Nathan? Why is he so important to Andi? What happened to Nathan that Andi draws strength from? How does Nathan keep Andi from acting on most of her compulsions?

Who is Amade Malherbeau? Why does Andi want to write a thesis about him? How does Andi describe this thesis to her father? Why does Andi's father think the thesis will not work? Is he correct in this assumption? What does Andi learn about Malherbeau during her research on him? Why is it Malherbeau that Andi befriends when she is transported back to 1795? What does Andi learn about Malherbeau's past that she is able to prove with G's help in modern times? Why is this important?

Who is Alexandrine Paradis? When does she live? Where does she live? How does she become companion to the dauphin of France? How does Alex hope this job will change her life? How does Alex end up spying on the royal family? For what does Alex feel guilty? Why does she continue to stay in Paris when the opportunity to leave is presented? Why does she set off fireworks each night? What happens to Alex in the end?

Why does Lewis agree to do DNA testing on a heart thought to belong to Louis-Charles, the lost king of France? What does he hope this testing will prove? What does it prove? How does this news impact Andi? What comparison do both Andi and her father make between Truman and Louis-Charles? Why?

Who is Louis-Charles? What is his role in French history? Who were his parents? Why was he imprisoned? What might have happened if he was not imprisoned? What obstacle did he represent to the rebels during the Revolution? Why does Alex try to help him? Why does Alex fail in her plot to rescue Louis-Charles? Why does Alex set off fireworks for Louis-Charles?

Who is Virgil? Where did he get his name? Why does Alex push him away when he shows affection toward her? Why does Alex believe she does not deserve love? Why does Virgil continue to push Alex to tell him about Truman? How does talking about Truman help Andi heal from her sense of guilt in his death? Does speaking with Virgil about Truman's death cause part of the experience Andi has when she believes she has been transported to 1795 Paris? Explain.

Discuss parallels. The author uses a great many parallels in this novel, including the deaths of two ten year old boys hundreds of years apart. Why does the author create so many parallel characters? How are Andi and Alex parallel characters? How do Truman and Louis-Charles compare to one another? Is there a comparison between Andi's father and Alex's father? Or perhaps another character? Who is the flea market salesman and how does he compare to the Duc d' Orleans? Does Andi's mother bear a

resemblance to Marie-Antoinette as Alex describes her? Do Amade Malherbeau and Virgil have similar characteristics?