

# **Velvet Song Study Guide**

## **Velvet Song by Jude Deveraux**

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# Plot Summary

Jude Deveraux's *Velvet Song* is a story of love, relationships, and pride. The story is set in England's beautiful countryside in 1502, where Deveraux allows the reader to meet Alyx Blackett. Deveraux's musically talented and headstrong heroine is the catalyst for the novel's plot. At twenty years old, Alyxandria Blackett lives in Moreton, England with her father.

One day, as Alyx is on her way to her music lessons, she is accosted by a nobleman named Pagnell. He attempts to rape Alyx, but she escapes from him, leaving his pride wounded and his heart vengeful. Pagnell discovers where Alyx lives and kills her father. He then accuses Alyx of being a witch and has a warrant for her arrest issued.

Terrified, Alyx flees Morton. Luckily, she is helped by her priest. He and a friend dress her in boy's clothes and send her to become Raine Montgomery's squire. Raine is a nobleman who has been banished into exile by King Henry for his part in the Montgomery/Chatworth feud. Raine has started a reform camp for convicts and outlaws. Upon meeting Raine, Alyx falls head over heels in love with him. She attempts to train to become his squire, but Raine quickly realizes she is a girl and falls in love with her. The two, along with their friend Joss (another talented musician) decide to keep Alyx's identity a secret.

Soon the rest of the camp begin to turn on Alyx. They believe that she is stealing from them. Raine decides he will take Alyx away, but Alyx becomes concerned Raine will be arrested by the king for returning to England. She and Joss lead Raine to believe they are having an affair. Angry and hurt, Raine banishes them from camp.

Four months pass, and Alyx discovers she is pregnant. She and Joss make a living as traveling musicians. They entertain many nobles at weddings and various parties. At one particular party, Alyx is discovered by Pagnell. Pagnell kidnaps Alyx. To Alyx's relief, she is rescued by Raine. Although Raine is furious at Alyx for lying to him, the two marry.

Because Raine's lands have been confiscated by the king, Raine brings Alyx to live with his brother, Gavin. While marriage suits Raine and Alyx, they often fight over Raine's sense of pride and honor. Alyx will do anything in her power to protect Raine's life. While Raine does love Alyx, his main goal is to restore his family's honor and remain loyal to the Montgomery clan. The two continually fight about Alyx's actions.

Against Raine's wishes, Alyx ventures to see King Henry. The king agrees to pardon Raine if Alyx will sing for him. Alyx agrees and gains back everything Raine wished for. Raine is furious. For over six months he refuses to contact Alyx. When Alyx believes that all hope is lost, Raine comes back to her, begging for forgiveness. Raine could not understand how a small woman could do what a man with wealth, power, and influence could not do. The two finally reconcile and begin their lives together again.



## Part One: Chapters 1-2, (pg 3-28)

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Jude Deveraux's *Velvet Song* is a story of love, relationships, and pride. Set in England's beautiful countryside in 1502, Deveraux allows her reader to meet Alyxandria Blackett. Deveraux's musically talented and headstrong heroine is the catalyst for the novel's plot. Twenty years old, Alyx lives in Moreton England with her father.

On this particular day, Alyx has been awake for hours. Careful not to wake her father, she dresses silently. As she stares at all of her instruments, she considers which one to play for the day. Quietly, her father enters the room. He is happy to see Alyx so interested in her music and urges her to be on her way to rehearsal.

As a child, Alyx had a gift for music. When she was ten, she was given an instrument by a traveling troubadour. Alyx was very excited to finally externalize the music she constantly heard. The entire village heard it also. The priest, hearing her gift, asked her to take lessons at the church and be the main singer. For nearly five years, she intensely studied, playing different instruments, so no one realized Alyx could sing. One day the priest discovered her singing and dropped to his knees in wonder.

Alyx continues walking to rehearsal. As she walks, she begins to sing to herself. So engrossed in her singing, Alyx does not hear three large men approach her on horseback. The men are dressed in very fine velvet, fur, and jewels. One of the men address her as a serf and then introduces himself as Pagnell, the soon to be Earl of Waldenham. Pagnell grabs at Alyx and violently kisses her, the three men soon make it clear that they intend to rape her. She kicks at Pagnell and breaks free. The three men intensely pursue her. Alyx is panicked, but thankfully, Pagnell's footman takes pity on her and rescues her. He hides her in the forest. Alyx finally leaves once night falls.

Pagnell is not happy that Alyx got away. He rests at his house nursing bruises while his two friends make fun of him. He demands that a maid tell him where Alyx lives, and she obeys. The three men decide to go to her house and "teach her a lesson" for disrespecting nobility. The men break into the house quietly, but Alyx's father still awakens. They quickly slit his throat and search for Alyx.

Alyx is awoken by loud voices downstairs and thinks that her house is being robbed. She hears someone approaching the door to her bedroom. As the perpetrator enters, she hits him with a large candlestick. Alyx is surprised that the intruder is Pagnell. Alyx quickly escapes from her house and hides in the trees that surround it. She watches as the three men burn her house to the ground. Stunned townspeople gather around to see the spectacle. Pagnell announces that Alyx is wanted for witchcraft and thievery.

Alyx scrambles to the church where her priest tries to calm her. He instructs her to go to the forest and wait for him or someone else to help her. The next day, Pagnell's servant



finds her. He tells Alyx that she must go into hiding as a boy so no one will recognize her. He cuts her hair and dresses her in boy's clothes. Alyx is sad, lonely, and angry. She swears to avenge her father and her old life.

## **Part One: Chapters 1-2, (pg 3-28) Analysis**

Right away, Alyx's character is introduced as a strong, willful woman. She will not be taken advantage of as many women of her class and gender. She fights against Pagnell as he tries to rape her. Luckily, she is able to break free, but pays with the price of her father's life and her own freedom. Alyx is also introduced as a smart, extremely talented person. She has been singing and playing instruments for most of her life. To many of the people in her village, Alyx is a spectacle. She is not a person. She is a means of entertainment and enjoyment, not a relationship. Alyx must come to terms with this later on in the novel. Because of her talents, she has been unable to create relationships and bonds with other people.

Pagnell is a self righteous, overly spoiled nobleman. He seems to fit in smoothly with the sixteenth century stereotype of a nobleman. Pagnell does not seem to know Alyx prior to his pursuit of her. He simply desires her and feels her deserves to do whatever he wants. Pagnell wants what he wants and takes it. Alyx is not content to stand idly by and be used.



## Part One: Chapters 3 - 4 , (pg 29-57)

### Part One: Chapters 3 - 4 , (pg 29-57) Summary

Pagnell's kind servant has secured Alyx the position of Raine Montgomery's new squire. Raine is called the king of outlaws because he heads a camp of convicts, outlaws, and misfits. King Henry has declared Raine a traitor due to a family feud between the Montgomerys and the Chatworths. Alyx is infuriated to discover she will be the servant to another pigheaded, selfish aristocrat like Pagnell. She continues to fume until she sees Raine. He is painfully handsome.

Alyx is shocked by Raine's good looks, but also enraged that he is an aristocrat. Raine asks to meet and speak with his new squire, but he is shocked by the "boy's" aggressive hostility. As Raine helps Alyx off her horse, she stumbles. He attempts steady her, but she attacks him with her dagger. Raine is completely taken off guard. Alyx is shocked she hurt Raine, but before she can feel badly, he throws her to the ground. Raine and his band of outlaws laugh at the strange boy. Pagnell's servant then explains to Raine that Alyx is very hostile towards aristocracy because Alyx's father was just killed by a nobleman.

Raine is saddened by Alyx's loss, but Alyx continues to rage against him. In doing so, she hurts herself. Raine sends Blanche, a wench, to see to Alyx. After Alyx is taken care of, Raine demands she see to his wound. Alyx unwillingly obeys. As she mends the wound, Raine explains what he expects of her as a squire. She must first take all of his heavy armor to the river and clean it. Alyx is nervous about the task because she can barely lift one piece of armor.

Alyx takes the armor to the river and collapses. To raise her spirits, she decides to sing. As she wipes her face, a handsome, perfect face stares back at her. The man introduces himself as Jocelin Laing. He then pulls out a flute and begins to play. The two wash armor and sing together. Joss is amazed by Alyx's voice.

Raine comes upon Alyx and Joss at the river and chides them for wasting time singing. He demands that Alyx see his healer, Rosamund. Alyx notices that Rosamund is very beautiful. For some reason, she is jealous that Raine has this woman in his company. When Rosamund turns, Alyx sees the other side of Rosamund's face - it is horribly disfigured. Rosamund is very kind to Alyx as she tends to the pulled muscles in her leg.

Alyx is not allowed to relax, Raine again forces her to work and she gets a better glimpse of the people who live in the camp. Alyx assumes that Raine has taken all of the outlaw's land and property. Raine accuses Alyx of judging him and others too quickly. Raine then begins to train Alyx by making her do sit ups, push ups, and practice fighting. He is surprised and shocked at how weak the boy is.



## Part One: Chapters 3 - 4 , (pg 29-57) Analysis

Alyx is completely in awe of Raine's handsome looks as well as his kindness towards the people in his camp. Alyx must strive not to give herself away. If she is to pretend to be a boy, she cannot be fawning or swooning over Raine. Alyx can barely keep up with the rigorous training which is normally only for boys. Women of the time are not really encouraged to do much physical activity. Instead, it was thought that they should have musical or artistic talents. Alyx is not used to the hard labor she is being subjected to. Because of her form and shape, she could easily be found out.

Raine is Pagnell's opposite. While he could be cruel and heartless, he chooses to help outlaws and convicts. He is as rich and as much of an aristocrat as Pagnell is, but believes in honoring himself and other people. Alyx is often in awe of Raine's character. While Pagnell feels like he is entitled to anything and everything he wants, Raine feels like he must work hard to gain his lands back and gain the respect of the king.



## Part One: Chapters 5-6 (pg 58 - 82)

### Part One: Chapters 5-6 (pg 58 - 82) Summary

Raine then decides to teach Alyx how to ride a horse. She is again unsuccessful at another task and Raine is exasperated. He tells her to lead his skittish horse back to camp. Alyx sings to the horse to calm him. She is shocked when Raine complains about her singing. Her entire life, people have praised her for singing. It is as if Alyx has been slapped in the face.

Gruffly, Alyx returns to camp, where she is accosted by Blanche, who demands for water to be brought from the lake. Because Alyx considers Blanche of a lower class than she, she refuses to help. Blanche is angered by Alyx's blatant disdain and threatens her. Just then, Raine enters the tent and he and Alyx eat their dinner. Raine tells Alyx they will both need to bathe. At this news, Alyx becomes worried and refuses. Raine insists she accompany him to the river.

Alyx relaxes and Raine bathes. She pretends to sleep, as she watches his naked body. Raine does not know she is watching, but threatens her. If she refuses to bathe but begins to smell, he will bathe Alyx himself! The two finally return to camp and go to bed for the night.

Alyx's first week in Raine's camp passes quickly. Alyx finally adjusts to rigorous camp life as well as her workouts with Raine. Alyx is not simply a nuisance to Raine; she helps him in many ways. Raine often has Alyx read or write his letters. Raine receives a letter from his brother Gavin. Gavin writes that Bronwyn, Raine's sister-in-law, has been taken prisoner by Roger Chatworth, the same man who also kidnapped Mary Montgomery.

Raine also has another letter from Judith Montgomery, Gavin's wife. Alyx becomes jealous because Raine visibly softens as he listens to Judith's words. Alyx attempts to slander Judith, but is immediately reprimanded by Raine. He instructs Alyx to write a letter to Gavin and Raine. Alyx holds out the letter to be signed by Raine and is instantly aware of how close he is to her. She reaches out to touch his hair, and Raine jumps back as if he has been burned. Raine instructs Alyx to saddle his horse.

Soon the two are riding through the forest. Raine finds Anne, a woman obviously of noble birth. Raine embraces Anne, and Alyx becomes furious. Anne has come to beg for Raine to return home. Raine has no interest in her plea, but begins to kiss her. She steps back, trying to thwart his advances. Out of the forest comes a guard, who attacks Raine. Raine is quick to react and kills the guard.

Anne is upset over the display. The guard was actually one of her father's men and she weeps over his death. Raine sends Anne away and he and Alyx prepare to go back to camp. As Raine gets onto his horse, Alyx notices the his leg is bleeding.





## Part One: Chapters 5-6 (pg 58 - 82) Analysis

Alyx's jealousy over seeing Raine with another woman is clearly seen in this chapter. It is clear to the reader that Alyx's feelings are growing rapidly for Raine. She cannot stand hearing of Judith or seeing Raine kiss Anne.

Alyx's ability to help Raine further shows how she defies the gender stereotypes of women of her time. Alyx has also become indispensable to Raine. She is an educated young lady who can read, do sums, and think clearly for herself. Being dressed as a boy has allowed Alyx to act in a coarse manner, but she was already a smart woman. As a boy she can express her feelings in a harsher, perhaps more truthful way, without fear of reproach, but even when not dressed as a man, Alyx is determined to be heard. Raine is not yet aware that it is a woman helping him with tasks. If he knew, he might find it shameful that he cannot read and that a woman must come to his aid in the solutions to his problems. It will scare him even more when a woman decides his fate late on in the novel.



## Part One: Chapters 7-8, (pg 83-110)

### Part One: Chapters 7-8, (pg 83-110) Summary

Alyx quickly gets Raine back to the camp and into his tent. She immediately summons Joss and Rosamund, who realize the gravity of the wound. Rosamund works diligently to tend to the sword wound. To soothe Raine, Alyx plays the flute and sings to him. While the wound seems stable, Raine begins to slip into a fever.

Night and day, Alyx keeps watch over Raine. She is very worried about his health as well as whether the convicts will find out he is sick. She, Rosamund, and Joss work hard to keep the camp in order and keep everyone away from Raine. One night, Raine seems to be in a deep sleep. In his fever he is asking for his dead sister Mary. Alyx goes over the Raine's cot and tries to soothe him.

Raine suddenly grabs her and kisses her. Alyx is shocked. She cannot tell if Raine knows what he is doing or not. Suddenly, his arms are around her. He is caressing and kissing her. Alyx returns all of Raine's kisses because this is what she has been yearning for. The two sleep together. Alyx is so overcome by emotion that she exclaims her love for Raine and falls asleep.

Alyx awakens the next morning. She notices that Raine still has a fever. She quickly gets up to dress before Joss enters the tent. Rosamund enters after Joss and becomes immediately concerned, because Raine's fever is raging out of control. It takes three more days for Raine's fever to come down. Finally Raine awakens. Alyx is so excited. Will Raine admits how he feels about her?

To her horror, Raine simply orders her to get him food and wine. Alyx is furious. She storms out of Raine's tent. Joss then enters, laughing at Alyx's outburst. Raine admits he knows Alyx is a woman. Joss tells Raine he has always known Alyx was a woman. Raine is astounded. He has only known for a few days. He had been disturbed by his urges to kiss her and his attraction to her because of her lie. Raine decides to continue on with the lie to pay Alyx back for her deceit.

Raine orders Alyx to get ready for training. While they work, he sympathizes with her. He knows she is tired. He assures her that one day there will be a beautiful woman to help her with her weariness. Alyx is incensed. How can Raine not know she is a woman? She decides to go to the the river and bathe. She returns to camp when Raine is in bed. He begs her to sing to him and play the flute. As he falls asleep he tells Alyx that Judith will love her.

Upon Alyx's return to Raine's tent, she finds Blanche snooping. Alyx demands that Blanche tell her about Joss' history. Blanche explains that Joss was commanded to be a musician in the home of Alice Chatworth, a cruel and vicious woman. Her husband, Edmund, frequently beat the maids under his employ. He beat one maid so badly that



he nearly killed her. Joss was given the body to dispose of, but instead nursed the woman, Constance, back to health and fell in love with her. Lord Edmund discovers what Joss had done and threatened to kill him. Constance believed her love was dead so she killed herself. To avenge her, Joss kills Lord Edmund and swore that he would never love anyone again.

This story saddens Alyx, because she sees the way Rosamund looks at Joss. The poor woman is head over heels in love with him. Alyx does not wish Joss to be without love in his life. If she could find a way to drive the two together, they could be happy while she is not. As she, Rosamund, and Joss gather around the fire, Alyx has no idea what comes over her. She suddenly finds herself pouring a small bucket of scalding water on Joss. Raine is furious with Alyx. He takes her to the river, claiming he will beat her.

## **Part One: Chapters 7-8, (pg 83-110) Analysis**

Alyx sincerely hopes that Raine will recognize her as a woman. She has finally given herself up to her love of Raine and is waiting for his commitment in return. She is outraged when Raine does not realize she is a woman. Alyx does not realize how to tell the truth or communicate her love for Raine when she has never had any deep relationship with other people. She struggles to understand the relationship and what to do.

Although Alyx's nature may seem deceitful and vengeful, she does not pour hot water on Joss out of malice. She instead sees it as the only way to bring Joss and Rosamund together. Alyx's actions are a result of her inability to understand relationships between others. She is angry about herself and Raine. She does not want Joss to have the same lonely sad fate she believes she will have. Alyx's frustration and relationship inexperience lead her to hurt Joss, when that was not her original intention.

Raine is also very understanding in this section of the book. Although Alyx has lied to him, he understands that she had to lie in order to stay alive. While Raine wants to string Alyx along a little longer, he is not overly angry with her.



## Part One: Chapters 9-10 (pg 111 - 139)

### Part One: Chapters 9-10 (pg 111 - 139) Summary

Raine demands to know why Alyx has deliberately hurt Joss. Alyx explains that she wanted to create a need for Joss to be in Rosamund's care. By forcing the two together, Joss would fall in love with Rosamund. Raine accuses Alyx of being manipulative and conniving, like a woman. At first, Alyx does not understand the accusation but she soon understands that Raine has discovered her secret. He knows she is a woman!

At first, Alyx is furious with Raine. She then runs to him, excited that he finally knows she is a girl. The two embrace and happily make love near the river. The two then get dressed and head back to camp. An urgent letter has arrived for Raine. It informs him that his beloved sister, Mary, is dead. Bronwyn, his sister-in-law, has escaped from Roger Chatworth, but has not yet been found. Raine is furious and rages with grief. Raine is ready to go after Roger, but Alyx begs him to calm down. She distracts him by asking him to describe his family. He tells her that Mary was his oldest sibling - selfless, kind, and caring. He also speaks of Judith, who he obviously cares for.

Raine again declares revenge on Roger, because he assumes he killed Mary. Alyx reveals that Mary has taken her own life because Roger bedded her. Raine is again incensed, but Alyx insists that Roger and his men will slaughter him. Alyx confesses her love for Raine and her concern for his welfare. She begs him to go to King Henry to solve the situation, but Raine will not upset his pride and crawl to the king. Alyx persuades Raine to write letters to his brothers for guidance. As time passes and the correspondence with Gavin continues, they learn that Bronwyn has been returned to Raine's other brother Stephen and that Raine's youngest brother, Miles, is furious over Mary's death.

A couple of months pass. Alyx continues with the pretense that she is a boy. She continues with Raine's trainings, but is half-hearted in all her attempts. While Alyx has never considered herself to be of the same class as members of the camp, she blatantly looks down on the others. She is disrespectful towards them and has gained many enemies.

While Raine and Alyx lay together one morning, they hear an angry mob outside of the tent. Raine questions the group. They insist that Alyx has been stealing from them. Raine quickly dispenses the group. Alyx complains that they hate her, but Raine insists that she in turn hates them. The group can sense her need to put herself above them. Alyx does not disagree with Raine. She realizes what she has done.

In an attempt to make peace, Alyx tries to play the flute and sing for Raine's band of misfits around the fire. All of her life, people have loved her music and begged her to play for them. Instead of swooning, each person at the fire leaves. A few days later, a man grabs Alyx and attempts to search her. He is positive that she has stolen his knife



and finds it in Alyx's pocket. The group demands that Alyx be punished and beaten - otherwise, they will punish her themselves.

## **Part One: Chapters 9-10 (pg 111 - 139) Analysis**

While Alyx's character seems coarse and unable to understand others, it is because she has never had to make personal connections with other people. Her music was always a barrier between her and others. It set her up on a pedestal to be admired and adored by others. Alyx had interactions with others, but she never let herself care for anyone else except her father and her music. When she tries to play music for Raine's band of misfits, it is not enough to win them back. She has not tried to be friendly with them until she senses they hate her. The only way she knows how to make people happy is to sing or play music for them. The group has been poisoned against her, but she has no idea how to mend things.

Raine's sense of honor and pride are also seen in these sections. Raine refuses to drop the feud that exists between the Montgomerys and Chatworths, even though it has caused both families much grief and even death. Raine is all consumed by his loyalty to his family and his desire to reclaim his honor and his wealth. Raine is obsessed with pride. Alyx struggles to understand because she is only concerned for Raine's safety. Pride means nothing to her as long as they are together. Raine cannot understand Alyx's view either.



## **Part One: Chapters 11- 12 (pg 140 - 149)**

### **Part One: Chapters 11- 12 (pg 140 - 149) Summary**

Alyx insists to Raine that she did not steal the knife. Raine believes her. He promises Alyx that she will not be punished by him or the group. They must make plans to leave the camp immediately. Alyx panics. If Raine returns to England with her, he will be imprisoned by the king. She feels she cannot ask him to risk his life for hers. Alyx asks Raine to leave her alone so that she can think.

Raine orders Joss to look over Alyx. She explains her worries over Raine, and Joss agrees that he will be in great danger if he leaves the camp. Alyx contemplates running away, but Joss reminds her that Raine will find her. Joss offers another plan to Alyx. He suggests that he and Alyx make it seem as though they are having an affair. Raine can find them in bed together. When he does so, he will surely ban them from the camp. Alyx is hesitant, but she does not want Raine to be imprisoned and killed by the king on her behalf.

Alyx and Joss quickly undress and climb into bed together. Joss begins to kiss Alyx as Raine enters the tent. Raine is furious. He vows to kill Joss. Alyx intercedes and tells Raine that she needs more than one man. She also never really loved him - he was no more than a passing fancy. Raine is heartbroken. He bitterly tells Alyx and Raine to get out of his site. Before the two leave camp, Joss and Alyx say goodbye to Rosamund. Alyx begs Joss to kiss her, but he refuses.

### **Part One: Chapters 11- 12 (pg 140 - 149) Analysis**

Sadly, things with the camp do not pan out well. Alyx is forced to swallow her own feelings for Raine and fake an affair with Joss. Raine is completely crushed. He cannot believe that he allowed himself to fall in love with a woman who has now crushed his heart. Raine cannot understand why Alyx has acted in this manner. He was almost sure that she loved him as he loved her. This is the first time that Alyx will do what she think is best for Raine without his permission or knowledge. It certainly will not be the last.



## Part Two: Chapters 12-13 (pg 153 - 180)

### Part Two: Chapters 12-13 (pg 153 - 180) Summary

Four months have passed since Alyx and Joss left Raine's camp. Upon leaving, the two discover that Alyx is pregnant. As her stomach swells, Alyx is afraid she will become a burden to Joss, but she is finally happy that she still has a piece of Raine with her.

Thanks to their musical talents, the two look for work as traveling musicians. They stop at many noble houses and perform for the aristocrats. Once or twice they perform for a distant cousin's of Raine's. Joss gathers news of the Montgomerys for Alyx. Apparently Raine is still safe in the forest and Judith and Bronwyn have had their babies. It was discovered that Roger Chatworth had raped Mary, causing her to kill herself. King Henry ignores petitions from the Montegomerys to bring Roger to justice.

Alyx and Joss continue working. One party they book is a very rich lord's wedding. When Alyx and Joss arrive, the bride-to-be is all out of sorts. A beautiful young lady asks Alyx if she will come visit the bride and sing to her to relax her. Alyx agrees. She is shocked, however, to find that this kind woman is Elizabeth Chatworth, Roger's sister. Alyx begins to sing to the worried bride and succeeds in calming her. Elizabeth compliments her on singing and her beauty. Alyx is surprised by Elizabeth's beauty and kindness.

Pagnell is present at the wedding. He has seen Alyx and Joss singing. Pagnell is still looking to avenge his ego. He decides to kidnap Alyx from the great hall where she and Joss rest. Alyx unwillingly goes with Pagnell so that Joss will not be harmed. As he leads her out of the room, he twists her arm so that she cannot move. Pagnell then locks Alyx away in a small dark room in the castle's many dungeon rooms.

Alyx spends several hours in the room alone. Thankfully she hears foot steps above her. Someone has found her! To her surprise, it is Elizabeth Chatworth. Joss found her and told her of Alyx's disappearance. As Elizabeth attempts to comfort Alyx, Pagnell and a friend find Alyx and Elizabeth.

Pagnell turns his crude attentions onto Elizabeth and attempts to kiss and fondle her. Elizabeth kicks and punches Pagnell. Alyx cannot come to her aid because she is being held by one of Pagnell's friends. Fed up with Elizabeth, Pagnell decides to cause some trouble. He says he has seen Miles Montgomery's carriage in a nearby town. Pagnell says that he will give Elizabeth as a "present" to Miles. Pagnell rips apart her gown and undoes her hair. He says he will wrap Elizabeth in a tarp and deliver her to Miles naked. Miles will have no idea who she is. Once he has had his way with her, and Roger Chatworth finds out about the deflowering of his sister, he will go insane and kill Miles.

Alyx tries to calm Elizabeth by telling her the Montgomerys are good people. This interests Pagnell. He notices Alyx's affinity for Raine and deduces that her child must be



his. This enrages him. How dare she give to another man what he had wanted to take. He decides to kidnap Alyx and hold her captive until Raine comes for her. He will collect the ransom on both Raine and Alyx.

## **Part Two: Chapters 12-13 (pg 153 - 180) Analysis**

In this chapter, the reader is introduced to Elizabeth Montgomery, another very headstrong, confident, and smart woman. Elizabeth takes it upon herself to rescue Alyx even though she does not know her. Seeing another woman in distress, Elizabeth springs to action. Alyx is very grateful for Elizabeth's intercession. Elizabeth takes charge and fights with Pagnell. She is only overpowered by his physical strength. Still Elizabeth does not give up. She begins kicking, screaming, and fighting for her body and her life. Elizabeth will not go willingly to Miles Montgomery no matter how much Pagnell threatens her.

It is interesting to see how Pagnell treats both women. He simply believes that his gender and power should enable him to have whatever and whomever he wants. He sees women as possessions or property. They are not allowed to have their own thoughts or desires. This is the typical stance that many men of his rank and class take. Raine is the complete opposite of Pagnell. While he is of greater rank and nobility, he still treats all people respectfully and fairly. Raine finds that pride and honor are extremely important to him, but Pagnell is not concerned with these matters.





## Part Two: Chapters 14-15 (pg 181 - 213)

### Part Two: Chapters 14-15 (pg 181 - 213) Summary

Over the next eight days Alyx is held prisoner by Pagnell. There has been a trial, in which a jury of Pagnell's cousins finds Alyx guilty. Outside of Alyx's makeshift prison cell, she can see Pagnell's servants building gallows for her burning. Finally, the time comes for Alyx's execution. As Alyx ascends the stairs to her death, the crowd is bristling with excitement. It has been a while since they have seen a witch burning.

The guards tie her around the stake and bind her arms and legs. As she closes her eyes and welcomes her fate, she hears a familiar voice yell, "Get on with it." This causes Alyx to open her eyes. She then hears a woman yell, "Let me light the fire!" It is Rosamund. Alyx quickly surveys the scene and notices that many of the members from Raine's camp are in the crowd. The guards also seem to be taking a long time to light the fire. They are also from Raine's band of outlaws. She also sees Joss' face in the crowd.

Finally the knights light the fire. To Alyx's surprise, Joss, along with twenty other people, charge Alyx and the guards. Alyx falls to the ground still attached to the stake. The fire is burning her throat and eyes and Alyx feels faint. Suddenly Alyx hears Raine's powerful voice. He commands Joss to cut her free. Raine had been one of the guards!

Joss tries to grab Alyx and run, but she will not move. She feels she must help Raine. Joss pulls Alyx away from the scene and throws her onto a horse that he also mounts. They ride for two hours and finally arrive at a monastery. Joss tries to get Alyx to talk but realizes she has lost her voice. Joss decides this is for the best. Raine is very angry with both of them.

As they approach the entrance of the monastery, a monk comes to welcome them. Alyx is still confused. She finally sees Raine. Raine is disheveled and grumpy. He yells at Alyx to join him and insists that he should beat her for all the trouble she has caused. Alyx tries to speak but is unable. Raine asks someone for a ring, and Alyx realizes that his brother, Gavin, is also at the monastery. Raine quickly tells Alyx that she will marry him today. Alyx is in shock, but she is unbelievably happy.

When Raine finally has Alyx alone, he demands to know why she lied about loving him. He explains that he has waited his entire life to find a woman he could love. When he thought he had found her, she breaks his heart. Although Alyx cannot speak, she tries to show her sorrow and explain she was trying to save Raine's life. Raine understands and the two reconcile.

Alyx is so happy that she has forgotten to warn Raine about Miles and Elizabeth Chatworth. She drags him to find Gavin and she writes out the story for him to read to Gavin. Raine is furious. Both he and Gavin know that Miles has probably already taken



Elizabeth's innocence. Gavin decides to send men to check in with Miles. Raine and Alyx go to their borrowed room at the monastery and consummate their union.

The next morning Raine makes Alyx quickly dress. They are going to Gavin's home. Once they arrive, Alyx is introduced to Judith, Gavin's beautiful wife and the woman that Raine always speaks so fondly of. Alyx feels very inadequate. She is pregnant, tired, and dressed in a filthy frock. Judith stands before her in a beautiful gown and jewels. Judith immediately rushes Alyx off to bed. It is evident the poor young woman is exhausted.

## **Part Two: Chapters 14-15 (pg 181 - 213) Analysis**

Alyx is very happy that Raine has come to rescue her. Raine says that he loves Alyx and his sense of pride in his unborn child has made Alyx's rescue possible. Alyx is sincerely surprised that the people from Raine's camp have agreed to help rescue her. They are the reason that she had to flee. Her inability to develop a relationship with the people at the camp has not made her popular among the group.

Although bewildered, Alyx is ridiculously happy that Raine has married her. She has been unbelievably strong through the ordeal with Pagnell. After being nearly burned at the stake, Alyx is still quick-witted and strong. Only her voice, which has been taken by the fire, stops her from voicing her opinion. Although she would not object to the marriage to Raine, she still wants to assert that it is her decision to marry him and not the other way around. Raine still does not completely understand this about his new wife. He will continue to learn that she will not be pushed to do anything she does not wish to. He also will learn that she will make her own decisions regardless of his opinion.



## Part Two: Chapter: 16-17 (pg 214-240)

### Part Two: Chapter: 16-17 (pg 214-240) Summary

Raine and Gavin are discussing further family matters as Judith joins them. To Raine's happy astonishment, a bathed, groomed, and well dressed Alyx follows Judith into the room. Alyx looks beautiful. Raine decides to take her to the local fair to buy fabric, lace, and other materials to make gowns for Alyx. They are accompanied by Raine's men, who will provide protection for them. She is shocked by the lustrous, expensive fabrics and is amazed that one person could have so many gowns.

While at the fair, there is a performance happening and Raine pulls Alyx towards the gathering crowd to watch. Alyx does not like being closed in by the large group of people. A man grabs Alyx's arm and says that he wants to lead her to safety. She agrees because he insists he is one of Raine's men. Alyx begins to talk to the man. It seems as though she wants something from Raine. Alyx asks him to tell her outright. He surprises Alyx by telling her that he is Roger Chatworth.

Roger tells Alyx he wishes to know about Elizabeth. Alyx recounts how Pagnell kidnapped Elizabeth and delivered her to Miles, naked. Roger rages against Miles, but Alyx defends Miles with all her might. Alyx accuses Roger of killing Mary, but Roger denies. He says he has been punished by the king who took away all his lands, his sister is gone, his brother hates him - he feels he has been punished much more than Raine. Alyx pushes Roger away and tells him to leave.

It is too late. Out of the clearing comes Raine. He has his men take Chatworth into custody. Alyx begs Raine not to kill Roger, which enrages Raine. Alyx puts herself between Raine and Roger. She walks Roger to his horse. While Alyx thinks she is saving Raine from killing Roger and then being killed by the king, Alyx has just betrayed Raine. Furious, Raine rides off into the forest to return to his camp. Alyx attempt to go after him, but his guards prevent her from doing so.

Alyx returns home and tells Gavin and Judith what has happened. Gavin rages and goes off to plan what to do with Raine. Judith tries to comfort Alyx. Judith tries to explain to Alyx why the Montgomery and Chatworth quarrel has gotten so out of hand. Gavin had been in love with Alice Valence, but she refused to marry him. Alice, instead, married the very rich Edmund Chatworth and Gavin married Judith. Edmund was murdered and Alice felt she now wanted to marry Gavin. Gavin refused to put Judith aside. Alice was furious, she kidnapped Judith and threatened to scar her face with hot oil. An altercation occurred and Alice was the one who was scarred.

Later on, Roger was in Scotland and met Bronwyn. He tried to claim her for his own, but she was already betrothed to Stephan. Stephan fought Roger for Bronwyn; as a result, Roger's reputation was ruined and Stephan married Bronwyn. Roger retaliated by taking Mary and Bronwyn.



Alyx is sickened by all the fighting. Will her child fight the Chatworths? Will this horrible cycle continue on? She wants Raine to understand why the feud must end.

## **Part Two: Chapter: 16-17 (pg 214-240) Analysis**

Again, another strong woman is introduced to the story. The reader has been hearing about Judith for some time. She is the third influential female character of the book. Judith is very kind and caring. She is the glue to the troubled Montgomery clan. Like Alyx, Judith does not conform herself to the typical standards of a wife. She tells Gavin exactly what he thinks and he respects her for her mind, beauty, and caring nature. Alyx is no longer jealous of Judith. She realizes that Judith's only desire is to see her healthy and happy. She also thinks it is important for Alyx to understand the Montgomery family past. This is the only way she will understand Raine's sense of honor and his obsession with family pride.

Although Alyx can respect that her husband feels he must do everything in his power to retain the Montgomery honor, she does not want the feud to continue. It is more important the Raine remain alive, and that the family is reunited. By refusing to let Raine kill Roger Chatworth, Alyx has alienated her husband, but has stood up for her own beliefs and what is right.



## Part Two: Chapters 18-19 (pg 241 - 261)

### Part Two: Chapters 18-19 (pg 241 - 261) Summary

Alyx attempts to write Raine, but all of her letters are returned unopened. In November, Alyx gives birth to a beautiful baby girl, Catherine. The baby constantly cries and Alyx knows no way to calm her. She feels worthless. Judith cannot deal with Alyx's moping so she puts her to work. Alyx is finally happy to have something to take her mind off of Raine. Alyx also volunteers at a hospital. Judith and Gavin are not impressed with their singing, they think she has a beautiful voice, but they will not praise her for it.

Alyx had not realized how selfish her life had been. So much of it revolved around her own talent and other people's fascination with her. Alyx feels as though she must give back to the others in some way. She sets up a school for the local children to attend, but is crushed when one of her children falls off of a wall and dies. Never before was she so involved in the lives of others. She realized that being involved hurts.

At Christmastime, Alyx has still heard nothing from Raine. The king is completely fed up with the Chatworths and Montgomerys. He has demanded that Miles return Elizabeth and that Raine disband his gang of outlaws. The king has threatened to take all land and property from the Montgomerys. Gavin heads to Scotland to talk with Miles and Alyx decides she must visit Raine in the forest.

Alyx takes Judith's lady maid, Joan, with her to see Raine. Alyx sees Joss and embraces him heartily. Joss quickly informs her that Raine is not the same. He is physically well, but constantly mopes around. Finally, Alyx spots Raine. When he catches site of her, there is no warmth in his eyes, only anger. He quickly turns from her. Alyx sees the other members of Raine's camp. She tries to thank them for their help in her rescue, but they quickly let her know they only helped because Raine wanted it.

Alyx is crushed. She decides to gain their trust and friendship by sharing food and bandaging wounds. Alyx tries her best to make herself useful at the camp. She takes empty buckets to the river to fill them. As she rests, Raine comes up behind her. He asks her if she has fulfilled her purpose in coming to the camp. Alyx insists she came to win Raine back. While Alyx yells at him, Raine grabs Alyx and kisses her. He then asks her if she used the same ploy to gain Roger Chatworth's affections. Alyx furiously stalks away from Raine.

### Part Two: Chapters 18-19 (pg 241 - 261) Analysis

This is the first time that Raine's pride threatens to ruin his relationship with Alyx. His pigheaded attitude allows him to leave his wife and new baby alone in a new place. While Alyx knows that Raine's pride is important to him, preserving the Montgomery family is very important to Alyx. She wants a family for her new daughter. She also



wants Catherine to have a father and herself to have a husband. Raine can still not understand this.

Alyx refuses to sit back and allow this to happen, so she chases after Raine. It is also in these chapters that Alyx realizes how selfish she had been. She always thinks that her singing is her most adored talent. When Gavin and Judith would rather Alyx use her reading, math, and logical skills to help them around the home, she is humbled. Singing is wonderful to listen to, but it does not solve problems for people. Alyx is sobered by this knowledge. She decides to make herself useful until she leaves for Raine's camp.



## Part Two: Chapters 20-21 (pg 262-293)

### Part Two: Chapters 20-21 (pg 262-293) Summary

The next day, the entire camp gets a surprise. Brian Chatworth, Roger's younger brother, has arrived. He wishes to fight with the Montgomerys against Roger. Apparently, Brian was in love with Mary. He is furious that his brother's actions drove her to take her own life. Raine does not want to listen to Brian's plea. Alyx berates Raine for being so pigheaded.

Out of the forest comes a roar of laughter. Stephan, Raine's other older brother, has arrived. He is pleased to see that his little's brother's wife has such a spirit. Alyx and Stephan immediately take a liking to one another. Stephan attempts to discuss family situations with Raine, but he refuses to listen. The two brothers retire deeper into the forest to talk, but their talking quickly turns into a fight. Alyx is nervous that Raine will pulverize Stephan, but she is shocked when Raine returns bruised and bloody.

Alyx tends to Raine's bruises and he finally apologizes for his actions over the last couple of months. He realizes that he has treated her badly, but he does not want her to disobey him again. Alyx quickly disagrees and puts up a fight, but Raine tells her that she has put him through enough. He will not be disobeyed again. Alyx wants to protest, but she is too happy to have Raine with her again.

The next day the entire camp is thrown into commotion. Roger Chatworth arrives to accept Raine's challenge. Stephan, Raine, and Alyx are very confused. Raine never issued a challenge. Brian Chatworth finally admits that he wrote the challenge pretending to be Raine. He wants to fight his brother to avenge Mary. Raine will not let Brian fight. He agrees to Roger's challenge. Alyx is overcome with fear. She refuses to watch Raine die. Raine tries to calm Alyx. He explains that he has fought in many tournament games. Alyx is so overwrought she refuses to watch the match.

A couple hours pass and Alyx can no longer stand the suspense. She goes to the clearing just in time to see Roger Chatworth stab Raine with a sword. Raine falls to the ground, motionless. Alyx is panicked. She runs to Raine and takes off his helmet. She is surprised to find Brian Chatworth dying in her arms. Alyx is relieved that Raine is fine, but sad that Brian has lost his life.

Joss and Alyx leave the field to find Raine. They find him in the forest twisted into an unnatural position. Joss assumes that Raine has been poisoned with opium. Joss carries Raine back to the camp while Alyx fetches Rosamund.

It takes an entire week for Rosamund to clear Raine's system of the poison. Finally, when Raine awakens, he is overjoyed to see that Alyx did not leave his side. Raine presses Alyx to go back to Gavin's home to see their daughter Catherine. He also says that he wants to meet his daughter. Alyx is overjoyed. As she leaves Raine's camp, the



convicts are sad to see her leave. They offer her presents for her daughter and wish her safety on her journey. Finally Alyx's good work and new heart have made these people understand that she cares.

## **Part Two: Chapters 20-21 (pg 262-293) Analysis**

Due to Alyx's talent, she has never had to make friends. Her voice kept her away from everyone else, either because she had rehearsals or because people did not wish to know her. They only wished for her voice to grace them. Alyx further realized how her talents allowed her to think she was better than others. She regrets the way she acted towards the members of Raine's camp. To gain their trust, she must allow herself to connect, which is not easy for Alyx. Interestingly, it seems that Alyx's kindness and willingness to help others, not Raine, are what draws Raine back to her. He knows that Alyx is simply trying to save the family, not ruin his pride. But as Raine warns Alyx not to ever betray him again, he has not completely come to terms with his ultimate lesson.





## Part Two: Chapters 22-24 (pg 294- 315)

### Part Two: Chapters 22-24 (pg 294- 315) Summary

After a couple weeks of being home, Alyx grows restless. She wants Raine to join her and Catherine. Gavin has been in communication with King Henry and Miles. If the king grants his permission, Miles has agreed to marry Elizabeth Chatworth. Alyx is happy about the news.

Gavin and Justin decided to speak with Alyx. Apparently, the King will listen to no one lately as he grieves the death of his wife. The only thing that soothes him is music. Gavin and Judith think that if Alyx sings for the king, he will enjoy it and listen to her request to lift Raine's exile. Alyx will do anything for Raine, but she knows that Raine will be furious with her for going to the king. Gavin agrees, but both he and Judith want Raine home. Alyx finally agrees to ask the king to pardon Raine. She knows she will have to ask him for forgiveness later.

Alyx is nervous as she waits outside of King Henry's chambers. Finally when she is let in, she gets her chance to sing. The king is so moved by her voice that he begins to cry. He also wishes to speak with Alyx. He knows she has left the Montgomery clan for some reason. Alyx begs for Raine's pardon and Miles and Elizabeth's marriage. The king is under the impression that Miles kidnapped Elizabeth, but Alyx quickly sets him straight. She also insists that Riane is not raising an army against him. He is trying to give men and women suffering with melancholia something to do. The king agrees to Alyx's requests if she will stay at the palace for a week and entertain him night and day. She happily agrees.

After a week, Alyx returns to Gavin and Judith. She learns that Raine has returned to his estates, but there is no word from him. She knows it will take some time for him to forgive her and that his honor has been brutally hurt.

As the final chapter begins, a month passes and Alyx has heard nothing from Raine. She decides that Catherine should not suffer because of her parents' feud. Alyx sends Catherine to her father until Christmas. Another month passes and Alyx has heard nothing. She is beginning to grow worried when Catherine finally returns to her. At first Alyx is afraid that Catherine will not remember her. The girl runs to someone behind Alyx. Alyx turns around and is shocked to find Raine.

Raine explains his sorrow. The last couple of months with Catherine have been amazing. He wants to be a family again. He tells Alyx it took him a while to understand that a woman could do what he couldn't do. He, a rich and powerful man with so much money and influence, could not gain his own way back into the king's good graces. Her going to the king hurt Alyx's pride. Alyx explains that she never meant to hurt Raine. She only wanted him to be free. He understands that now. While they will always fight, they belong to one another. The two make up and are happy in their reconciliation.



## Part Two: Chapters 22-24 (pg 294- 315) Analysis

By going to the king, Alyx commits a huge act of defiance against Raine. Alyx's purpose is not to betray Raine. She only wants him home with her and their new baby. Because of Raine's pride, he cannot understand this. Furthermore, it enrages him that a small woman could do what he could not. She could meet with the king and encourage him to listen. It takes many months for Raine to come to terms with what has happened. He finally realizes that Alyx has done everything out of her intense love for Raine. Finally, Alyx learns how to use her talent to help her family and other people she loves. No longer is it about Alyx being the center of attention. She is using her audience with the king to grant freedom for her husband not fame for herself. This is an act of love that the king recognizes and understands.

It takes Raine the entire novel to understand that Alyx only acts out of her love for him. She has never meant to dishonor him. While her actions might have been hurtful to his pride, they were necessary in order to make Raine a free man. The Montgomerys can also now be at peace and continue expand their family. Alyx is elated because she now has her family.



# Characters

## Alyx Blackett

Alyx Blackett is a twenty-year-old woman with a wonderful gift for music. She lives in a small village in the south of England in the year 1502. Since a young age, Alyx has played a variety of musical instruments. Her voice is so beautiful that many people think it must be a gift sent from God. Because of her talents, many people in the village hold Alyx on a pedestal. They never get to know her, but instead ask her to entertain them, or write music for them. This causes Alyx the inability to connect with others.

Alyx is content with her life being surrounded by music, until she is accosted by a rich nobleman named Pagnell. Pagnell tries to rape Alyx, but she gets away from him. He seeks vengeance on her by killing her father and then burning Alyx's house. He puts a price on Alyx's head and calls her a witch. Alyx runs off to the forest and is taken in by Raine Montgomery, the noble leader of a band of outlaws. Alyx pretends to be a boy so that she can become Raine's squire. It does not take long for Raine to uncover that Alyx is a woman. The two quickly fall in love with one another.

Alyx and Raine's relationship is often tested by Alyx's constant deviance of traditional gender roles. Raine believes he should be the strong, unyielding, prideful male, while Alyx should be obedient. To the contrary, Alyx's behavior is very devious, and she makes several decisions throughout the book that save Raine but injure his pride and sense of honor.

## Raine Montgomery

Raine Montgomery is a rich nobleman that has been exiled by King Henry. Under exile, Raine has banded together a group of outlaws and convicts. Raine has not taken their property or land away; he has instead offered them a place in his camp to train, in order so that they may get their lives back on track. Although it would seem that Raine should be cruel and unkind as many of his fellow noblemen are, Raine strives to give the convicts a second chance. Raine is not only kind, he is also very handsome. Alyx is not the first woman that has fallen under his charms - Judith Montgomery and Anne.

Throughout the book, Raine's character is hindered by his own sense of pride and honor. This is a concept that Alyx cannot understand. While Alyx's main concern is protecting Raine's life, Raine will risk everything (his wealth, well being, and happiness) for honor. Raine comes from a large and proud family whose influence in English society and history is very strong. Due to Raine's inability to suppress his ego and pride, he almost loses Alyx twice. By the end of the book, Raine finally understands that loving someone sometimes means having to throw pride along the wayside.



## Jocelin Laing

Jocelin is a singer who has found refuge in Raine's camp. Joss' beautiful face and voice causes him to gain the attentions of many woman, but he is interested in none of them. Joss was a musician in the house of Alice and Edmund Chatworth. Constance, the love of his life, killed herself. Joss murdered the man he believed was at fault and then fled. Joss is incredibly kind and loyal to Alyx. When she joins Raine's camp, he is her confidant and friend. When Alyx needs to find a way to keep Raine from leaving the forest, he pretends that he and Alyx are having an affair.

## Rosamund

Rosamund is a healer who works in Raine's camp. Rosamund is very beautiful. Unfortunately, one side of her face is horribly scarred. Rosamund is very kind. She is also in love with Joss. Alyx tries to pull the two closer together by throwing hot cider on Joss so that he has to spend time with Rosamund.

## Pagnell

Pagnell is a rich lord who lives near Alyx's village, Morton. Pagnell is fat, spoiled, and disgruntled. He thinks he is entitled to whatever he desires. Pagnell hears Alyx singing one day and accosts her with the intention to rape her. Luckily, Alyx gets away. To avenge his ego, Pagnell decides to kill Alyx's father and burn her home to the ground. Later in the novel, Pagnell also kidnaps Elizabeth Chatworth and Alyx in an attempt to further the feud between the Montgomery and Chatworth families.

## Roger Chatworth

Roger Chatworth is the current head of the Chatworth family. He is the older brother of Elizabeth Chatworth. In many respects, Roger has the same sense of pride and honor as Raine. He is not eager to stop the feud because he wants the Chatworth name vindicated.

Roger decides to speak with Alyx after she has married Raine. He begs for her help in releasing Elizabeth. Roger also accidentally kills his own brother because he believed the knight fighting him had been Raine.

## Elizabeth Chatworth

Elizabeth is Roger Chatworth's younger sister. She meets Alyx at a friend's wedding. Alyx is locked in a cell by Pagnell and Elizabeth attempts to rescue her. Pagnell then kidnaps Elizabeth, strips her of her clothes, and sends her off to Miles Montgomery.



Elizabeth is scared because of what she has heard of the Montgomery's, but Alyx tries to soothe her.

## **Miles Montgomery**

Miles is Raine's youngest brother. Everyone thinks that he has kidnapped Elizabeth. Miles is finally convinced by his family to marry Elizabeth.

## **Stephan (Montgomery) MacArran**

Stephan Montgomery is one of Raine's older brothers. He convinces Raine to forgive Alyx for speaking with Roger Chatworth. He is married to Bronwyn MacArran.

## **Bronwyn MacArran**

Bronwyn is Stephan's wife. She was kidnapped by Roger Chatworth, who wished to marry her.

## **Judith Montgomery**

Judith Montgomery is Gavin's wife. She is caring, loving, and sweet. Alyx is often jealous of Judith's morals and actions.

## **Gavin Montgomery**

Gavin Montgomery is Raine's oldest brother. He is the family's glue in a time of need. Gavin works with Judith and Alyx to get Raine pardoned by King Henry.

## **King Henry**

King Henry is furious over the Montgomery and Chatworth feud. While he would like it to end, his attention is sidetracked by the death of his wife. Alyx goes to sing for him in his time of loss. In return, he agrees to pardon Raine.

## **Catherine**

Catherine is Raine and Alyx's young daughter.



## Objects/Places

### Morton

Morton is the village where Alyx grew up. She leaves shortly after her father is murdered and she becomes an outlaw.

### King Henry's Palace

The home of King Henry. Alyx goes there to sing for him and plead her husband's case.

### Raine's Camp

Alyx goes to Raine's camp to pretend to be a squire. It is here that she falls in love with him.

### Gavin and Judith Montgomery's Home

Gavin and Judith allow Raine and Alyx to stay with them after they are married. Alyx continues to stay with Gavin and Judith during her separation from Raine.

### Local Fair Grounds

At the local fair, Alyx and Raine come into contact with Roger Chatworth. Chatworth has attempted to seek out Alyx so that he can persuade her to talk to Raine. He wishes for Elizabeth to be free from Miles.

### Pagnell's Home

Pagnell kidnaps Alyx and takes her to his home. He also plans to burn her at the stake in front of his home.

### Forest outside of Raine's Camp

Many things happen in the forest adjacent to Raine's camp. Raine is attacked by one of Anne's father's men, Brian is slain by Roger, and Stephan beats Raine into understanding Alyx's actions.



## **Wedding Celebration**

The wedding celebration was held at a castle. Alyx and Joss travel to the home. This is where Alyx is kidnapped by Pagnell.

## **Monastery**

Alyx and Raine are married at a monastery near Gavin's home.

## **Raine's Land**

Raine retires to his house and lands after he is pardoned by King Henry. Alyx sends their daughter Catherine to live with her father for a while.



# Themes

## Honor and Pride

Honor and pride is a central theme to the story and mostly represented through the character of Raine. Raine's sense of pride is much greater than the rest of his brothers, although the Montgomery brothers are extremely loyal to one another. Raine's sense of honor and pride probably come from the fact that he was born to such a strong, caring family. He will do anything possible to uphold the name of Montgomery.

While it is good to be loyal to one's family, Raine's pride can balloon his ego. He feels the need to fight his own battles and refuses all help from others, even his brothers and family. Raine's biggest obstacle to overcome is to allow Alyx's help. It is hard for him to understand the fact that a woman, much less a tiny one such as Alyx, could stand up against a man like Pagnell, create a treaty between the Montgomerys and the Chatworths, and finally seek Raine's pardon from King Henry himself. During a time when women are supposed to be physically and mentally weaker than men, Alyx defies all of Raine's expectations and notions of pride and honor.

Raine's quest to preserve his honor frequently threatens his life, safety, and relationship with Alyx. Raine is unable to let go of his desire to make everything right and gain his family and his own pride back. Alyx does not understand the quest until the end of the book, but she still feels compelled to save Raine, even though she knows it will hurt his pride. Raine finally comes to terms with his own raging sense of pride and honor. When he is finally able to forgive Alyx, he realizes what a hindrance his pride has been to his happiness.

## The Role of Women

Throughout the novel different roles of women are examined by Devereaux. The most obvious is the character of Alyx. Alyx is interesting because, as the novel begins, she seems to be a sweet and unassuming young woman. As the story progresses, she becomes a spitfire. This may be attributed to the fact that Alyx is encouraged to act like a boy while she is pretending to be Raine's squire. Her training not only makes her physically stronger, but perhaps enables her to become outspoken and a bit more coarse than many women of her station would have been.

Alyx continues to surprise her new family and Raine. She never backs down without a fight, even when Raine threatens to beat her (false threats) or abandon her. Alyx pushes through normal gender stereotypes that generally hold other women of her station back. She summons all of her courage to defy her husband and speak with Roger Chatworth, as well as King Henry.

Elizabeth Chatworth and Judith Montgomery are other examples of women defying stereotypes of their time. Instead of going willingly with Pagnell, Elizabeth fights heartily





against him. She refuses to lay down and be taken advantage by the despicable man. Judith Montgomery is another example. Both Raine and her husband Gavin sincerely respect her opinion because she does not hold her opinion from them. She is always asked for her opinions on family and household matters. This does not seem like a usual occurrence in households of the time.

## Personal Relationships

The final theme of *Velvet Song* has to do with personal relationships and one's inability to connect to others. As the reader can see, the book is woven primarily around the romantic relationship of Raine and Alyx, but often discusses Alyx's inability to connect with other people. Alyx loves Raine with an astounding fervor. Almost immediately, she falls head over heels in love with him. Raine does the same. While the two have communication issues, their feelings for one another never wanes.

It is interesting that Alyx can form such a strong bond with Raine but be incapable of forming bonds with others. This is largely attributed to her musical talents. For most of Alyx's life, she did not form normal relationships with others. To other children and adults in her village, she was a source of awe, entertainment, and amusement. People desired her to bless them with the sound of her voice and not her company. Thus, Alyx did not gain experience forming normal relationships as a child.

When Alyx finds herself in Raine's camp, she looks down on the inhabitants. To her, they have no skills or talents, so why should she waste her time on them? Alyx slowly realizes that this is not an effective way to live her life. Her music has kept her from accepting new people and creating new friendships. She finally learns that in order for people to care about her, she must care in return. She must open herself up and become invested in others - their problems, happiness, worries, etc. Alyx finally learns to do this toward the end of the book. She realizes that while her music may make people happy, giving herself makes people become her friend.



# Style

## Point of View

The point of view of the novel is third person. Because the point of view is third person omniscient, it is dependable. Devereaux gives the reader a peek into each character's true feelings and identities. The third person view allows for many of the novel's subplots to be lightly explored or mentioned. The novel mostly has dialogue and few strictly descriptive passages.

The reader is given the most insight to the thoughts of Alyx and the Raine. The novel centers on their love story. Alyx is also the heroine of the tale, so it makes sense that the reader should be privy to her feelings, thoughts, and actions at all times. Even when other characters are present, Alyx's feelings seem to be at the forefront. Other character's opinions and point of views are taken into account when she is not present in the scene.

## Setting

The book begins in the south of England in a small town called Morton. This is where Alyx has spent most of her life. Alyx's small village worships her musical talents. After Alyx is accosted by Pagnell, she is forced into hiding in the forest surrounding her village. Luckily, a kind servant dresses her as a boy and takes her to an even larger forest where Raine Montgomery is training a band of convicts.

Raine and Alyx fall in love. Alyx becomes worried that Raine will have to leave his camp on her behalf. She and Joss pretend to be involved so that Raine will throw them out of the camp. Alyx and Joss then travel along the countryside as a musical act. They are asked into the homes of many nobleman. At one wedding, Alyx meets Chatworth. The two women are kidnapped by Pagnell and Alyx is held prisoner at Pagnell's castle.

Alyx is rescued by Raine and taken to a monastery where they are married. Next, Alyx and Raine travel to Gavin and Judith's home, where they rest after their hasty union. Raine takes Alyx to a local fair, where she is approached by Roger Chatworth. Raine is enraged and travels back to the forest. Alyx follows him there. The two reconcile.

Alyx then travels to King Henry's palace to plead the case of Raine. She sings for him and gains her husband's pardon. Raine is furious, but eventually forgives Alyx. The novel ends at the home of Gavin and Judith. Raine and Alyx reunite in the garden of Gavin's beautiful estate.



## Language and Meaning

Throughout the book, Deveraux's language represents how people of the sixteenth century would have spoken. She uses words that match the era of the characters, thus making them very believable. While the reader may have a very hard time relating to the language, they can appreciate Deveraux's commitment to the speech of the era.

Although the language is not what the reader is accustomed to, they should have no problem understanding its meaning. Deveraux sometimes uses unfamiliar words, but they are not complicated words. The reader still comprehends when the characters are furious, upset, or happy with one another, or the situations they find themselves in. For example, when Alyx is a boy, her words are gruffer, ruder, and her sentences are shorter. This characterizes Alyx's actions and voice as a boy. While a girl, Alyx's emotions govern her speech, allowing her character to express herself more fluidly and comprehensively. Deveraux's style is not overly descriptive. Many of the passages consist of dialogue between each of the characters, and this moves the story continuously along.

## Structure

The novel is broken into two sections, with smaller chapters in each section creating twenty-three total chapters. Part one of the book concentrates on Alyx's life before meeting Raine through her escape from Raine's camp. Part II deals directly with the romantic relationship between Alyx and Raine. It concentrates on Raine's struggle with pride and honor and Alyx's quest to have her husband pardoned and family restored. The novel is clearly about the romance between Raine and Alyx. Although the two come from different classes and have very different personalities, they find love in their differences.

Just because the novel is in the romance genre, it does not lack complexity. The novel has several subplots. There is the story of Stephan and Bronwyn, Raine's sister Mary, Gavin and Justin, Joss, Elizabeth and Miles, and Roger Chatworth. It is clear that Alyx and Raine's story is at the forefront, but many times the reader can get lost in the past of the two families and their subplots. It seems as though *Velvet Song* is one of many books in a series by Deveraux. The subplots all receive their own telling, but it does not happen in this book. The reader receives small fragments of the past.



## Quotes

"The sight of him, this nobleman, in her little house, renewed her terror of the afternoon. This was no ordinary robbery, and where was her father? More footsteps, heavy ones, pounding up the stairs, brought her to her senses. After one desperate glance, she knew the window was her only means of escape." Chap. 2, p. 19

"The man turned looking up at them with blue eyes, serious that missed little of what he saw. As if he were a king on a throne, Alyx thought, and indeed he made the rough stool look like a throne, waiting for his lowly subjects to approach." Chap. 3, p. 31

"Close to him, she thought. That's where she wanted to be, even closer to him. Only now was she beginning to be able to function through her blinding fatigue, to live through the strenuous training sessions each morning, but as her muscles hardened and she began to feel better, she became more involved in the camp life." Chap. 6, p. 69

"For just a moment he looked at her, unseeing and then his eyes seemed to focus and he put one hand on the back of her head and pulled her mouth down to his." Chap. 7, p. 89

"The next three days were torture for Alyx. She and Rosamund worked continuously to bring Raine's fever down. His big body plastered with poultices and the women had to force noxious concoctions down his throat. Alyx sang to him constantly, played the flute to soothe him, to keep him from thrashing about so." Chap. 8, p. 97

"Alyx, living in her small, walled village, had never thought about the family life of the nobles had assumed they lives untroubled lives. Listening to Raine, she had a glimpse of heartache and sorrow, of life as well as death." Chap. 9, p. 119

"Once they played and sang at a large manor house belonging to one of Raine's cousins. Alyx had again become very silent, but he could almost feel her straining to hear any bit of news." Chap. 12, p. 155

"Out of habit, Alyx opened her mouth to answer him in kind, but only a painful yelp came out. With her hand at her throat, she opened the door." Chap. 14, p. 189

"Alyx could feel herself becoming ill at the images Raine conjured, and she almost wanted to turn Roger over to him. But the King would only have another excuse to keep Raine's lands. He'd never pardon Raine if an earl were killed by him." Chap. 17, p. 233

"King Henry said he was heartily sick of the feud between the Montgomerys and Chatworths and he wanted Lady Elizabeth released. If Miles did not do so, he would be declared a traitor and his lands confiscated. As for Raine, if he put more weapons in those outlaws' hands, the King would burn the forest and all them together." Chap. 18, p. 245



"It hurt my pride Alyx...My wife went and pleaded for me. It hurt very much." Chap. 23, p. 313

"He stopped because Alyx planted her mouth on his and he forgot about words." Chap. 23, p. 315



## Topics for Discussion

Discuss the theme of honor and pride. What other characters in the novel are preoccupied with honor and pride?

Did you enjoy the style in which Deveraux interweaves the main plot and subplots? Why or why not?

Choose a female character from the book and explain how she does or does not match the typical gender roles of woman in the sixteenth century.

How would you describe Deveraux's writing style? Was it easy to understand? Did you think that her use of language made the characters more believable?

Discuss the theme of personal relationships. Why do you think Alyx is able to open herself up to Raine but shies away from others?

Discuss the character of Pagnell. Both Pagnell and Raine are rich, affluent noblemen. What makes them different?

How do the characters of Raine and Alyx change throughout the book? Explain, and site specific situations in chronological order.