

Violets Are Blue Study Guide

Violets Are Blue by James Patterson

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Plot Summary

Violets are Blue continues the story of Washington DC police detective Alex Cross. In the opening chapter, Cross arrives at the murder scene of his partner and lover, Betsey Cavaliere. Before he finishes examining the scene, he receives a call from his nemesis, the Mastermind. Though the Mastermind has plagued and taunted Cross for some time, he continues to evade the authorities. After threatening the safety of Cross's family, the Mastermind vows that Cross will be his next victim.

The story then jumps to San Francisco, where two young soldiers jog through Golden Gate Park. From out of nowhere, a tiger attacks the male soldier. When his female friend attempts to flag down help, two men attack her, biting and beating her savagely. They tell her she has been chosen. Kyle Craig, a detective with the FBI, calls Alex Cross into the case as it bares a resemblance to a case Cross worked in DC, where the killers hung their victim and drained her blood. When the police learn the characteristics of the murders, they begin an investigation into the strange underworld of practicing vampires.

Cross interviews various experts on vampire culture, such as the Fresno Kid, a man who fits vampires with dental extensions, in other words, fangs. The bite marks of the killers match those of someone with extended fangs. Cross also meets vampire expert Peter Westin at the University of California. Westin gives Cross a description of a real life vampire, as opposed to a role playing vampire. When Cross leaves his meeting in Westin, he believes in vampires a little more.

Despite multiple murders and countless man hours, leads in California dry up. Frustrated, Cross returns home. After spending some time catching up with his family and work, he receives another call from Craig. Another vampire style murder occurred in South Carolina. Even while Cross and Craig investigate the crime in South Carolina, news breaks of another murder, this time in Charlotte, North Carolina. There police apprehend a number of young people living in a vampire commune. One young man, Irwin, confesses to killing his parents. Authorities, however, clear him of the other current murders. Before the questioning ends, Irwin bites Cross. The wounds become infected, and Cross's recovery restricts him to home. There, he uncovers a link between the locations of the murders and a traveling magician's show. The FBI quickly moves to the next stop on the show, New Orleans. Cross rejoins them as soon as the doctor clears him to return to work.

It quickly becomes clear that the magicians, Daniel and Charles, practice a vampire lifestyle. Cross and Jamilla Hughes, detectives from San Francisco, attend a fetish ball at the magicians' home. There, Charles identifies himself as The Sire, a ringleader among vampires. However, just as he introduces two new vampire princes, the lights go out. When they come back on, the two princes lie dead. Further searches of the house reveal the dead bodies of the magicians, as well.



It appears that the investigation dies again, until Hughes uncovers a lead to the vampire capital of the world: Santa Cruz, California. When she drives there to investigate on her own, against Cross's advice, two men, also brothers, abduct her. The two brothers, William and Michael Alexander, practice the vampire lifestyle. Through their eyes, the readers witness many of the murders that Cross and Hughes are investigating. They take Hughes to the farm where they grew up and where a large society of vampires now reside.

When he cannot contact Hughes, Cross becomes worried. He learns of her solo trip to Santa Cruz and immediately flies back to California, alerting Craig to the situation. The FBI surrounds the farm and watches it all night while gaining intelligence on the inhabitants. The next morning, as the authorities approach the farm house, the vampires appear in pairs, in dark, hooded robes. When Hughes falls to the ground, Cross recognizes her and signals for a sniper to kill the man guarding her. As the agents apprehend those outside, Cross moves into the house in search of the Alexander brothers.

Cross finds an entrance to a long tunnel from inside the house. He enters it, only to find that the Alexander's pet tiger resides deep inside the tunnel. When Craig enters the tunnel behind him, Cross issues a warning. As the cat approaches, Cross fires several times, finally killing the tiger before it kills either agent. Hughes, Craig and Cross make their way to the end of the tunnel. They find themselves in a large cave. Suddenly, a truck bares down on them. Inside, they identify the Alexander brothers. Cross holds his ground as he fires. Even when the truck backs up and charges again, Cross continues to fire. The truck flips and rolls through the field. In a rage, Michael emerges. Craig fires one shot and stops Michael short of attacking Cross.

Cross approaches the truck when he spots more movement. Inside he finds a dead William Cross and a living and still arrogant Peter Westin.

The cops begin to piece together the vampire case. Westin met the magicians some time back. When he felt strong enough to oust them, he instructed the Alexander brothers in murdering along the show's route. With the death of Charles, Westin assumed the role of The Sire.

Cross feels victorious in solving the vampire murders, but unease follows when he remembers the Mastermind is at large. Instead of leaving California, he takes up watch outside of Jamilla Hughes's house in San Fransisco. The Mastermind calls, taunting, threatening Cross's family in Washington DC. Just as Cross begins to doubt the wisdom of his decision, he spots the Mastermind on Hughes's street.

Cross shockingly realizes that Kyle Craig is the Mastermind. In a frenzy, he calls Hughes, sharing the news with her. She instructs him to enter her house and the two watch for Craig all night, to no avail. The next day, Cross shares his discovery with the FBI. FBI director Burns shares evidence that supports Cross's claims. Cross arranges for the safety of his family and begins the pursuit of Kyle Craig.



The hunt for the Mastermind, aka Craig, leads Cross back to Washington, where Craig kills Cross's friend at the Washington Post, Taylor and his wife. Cross then moves to North Carolina, where he fears Craig will attack Kate McTiernan, a former victim of the Casanova serial killer. Cross sets himself up in McTiernan's home in Nags Head. Once there, Craig bursts from the attic. During the ensuing altercation, Craig stabs Cross with an ice pick, but Cross recovers and knocks Craig unconscious. Cross then places a call to his home answering machine. This allows him to record the following conversation with Craig in which Craig confesses to, among other things, killing Betsey Cavaliere.

Cross finally ends the novel at home with his family, recovering from the stabbing. He rests in the peacefulness of his life, as he plays the piano on his sun porch. No one brings news of a murder, vampires or crooked cops. Cross also relaxes due to his decision to resign from the Washington DC Police Department.



Chapter 1

Chapter 1 Summary

The narrator begins the novel by stating that stories "don't start where one thinks." The reader then learns of Betsey Cavaliere's murder. The narrator, Alex Cross, arrives at the crime scene. Emergency vehicles litter the street with their lights flashing. Upon entering her home, he ironically encounters a reminder for Betsey to attend her shooting test the next day. Cross remembers that Betsey is his second partner killed in two years.

In the bedroom, Betsey Cavaliere is a bloody mess. She suffers stab wounds and lies naked in a pool of blood. Cross reacts strongly, remembering intimate details about Betsey. They were more than just partners. They shared a personal relationship. A cell phone call interrupts Cross's examination of the crime scene. On the other end, the Mastermind, a murderer that haunts and taunts Cross, asks Cross about Betsey. The Mastermind then threatens Cross's mother and children. Clearly, the Mastermind feels invincible.

After hanging up on the Mastermind, Cross calls his home to warn them of the threat. His long time friend and fellow law enforcement officer, John Sampson, answers the phone and assures Cross of his family's safety. The Mastermind calls once again and warns that Cross will be the next victim.

Chapter 1 Analysis

Immediately, the reader gains insight into the psyche of the narrator, Alex Cross. His dedication to his job stems from a desire to help others, but his personal life suffers much for his work. Cross's character represents a good cop, who works for the people unselfishly. He still believes in the system, though he has grown discouraged by the increase of evil in society. Another important character the reader meets in the opening chapter is the Mastermind. Though the Mastermind appears in previous stories featuring Alex Cross, the reader misses no information. Many of the comments from the Mastermind make sense when the reader learns his identity.



Chapter 2-3

Chapter 2-3 Summary

Chapter Two opens Part One of the novel, the California murders. The reader sees Martha Wiatt and Davis O'Hara as they spend an enjoyable evening running in the Golden Gate Park area of San Francisco. Out of nowhere, they hear a roar. Feeling nervous, they discuss what it might be. Eventually, they decide they are relatively safe in the middle of the large city. They return to their exercise and even place bets on one another's performance. The growling comes closer. Fear sets in, and they sprint out of the park. Footsteps and growling close in.

Martha Wiatt, the stronger runner, begins to pull ahead. She hears agonizing screams from O'Hara as the animal attacks him. At a blind run, she stumbles and falls into the road just out of the park. She stops a van with Red Cross painted on the hood. Men emerge from the van and attack Wiatt. They bite her viciously. Just before she dies, the men tell Wiatt that she has been chosen.

Chapter 2-3 Analysis

Chapters Two and Three carry a lot of foreshadowing. Though this case gets Cross involved in the murders, officials quickly discover that the crime spree started some time ago. The killers' identities remain hidden, but their actions reveal some of their lifestyle choice as vampires. Also, the Red Cross van appears once again, showing that one cannot trust even those who appear credible. Furthermore, the reader notices some irony in that the blood drinking killers drive in a Red Cross blood donation van. Even the killers mention the irony during their drive to Las Vegas.



Chapter 4-9

Chapter 4-9 Summary

Back in Washington DC, home to Alex Cross, Cross continues to receive threatening and harassing calls from the Mastermind. For a week, the calls occur relentlessly. The team from the Washington DC police department attempts to trace the calls. However, he thwarts them with a trace that leads back to police headquarters and quickly jumps off the grid.

That evening, Cross goes on a date with Elizabeth Moore. He admits that, though he desires a personal life, he rarely dates, because of his work schedule. As they eat, Moore discusses Cross's availability. She points out all of Cross's great attributes and wonders why he remains available. During the conversation, Cross receives a page from Kyle Craig at the FBI. Craig describes, in detail, the murders in the Golden Gate Park. He implores Cross for assistance, as Cross provided to the Bureau in the past. The relentless demands of Cross's job are his only flaw, according to Moore.

On his way to the airport, Cross drops his older two children at school. He promises to be back by the weekend, for his son's choir concert. Alex Cross feels deep love for his kids, though he fears that the demands of his job jeopardize this. He remembers with pride how his son auditioned for the exclusive boys choir he performs with. He expresses tender goodbyes as he drops the children at school.

When Cross arrives at the San Francisco airport, he phones Kyle Craig, his contact with the FBI. He reads the case files of the murders, along with similar murders along the western coast. Cross attempts to find a connection between the murders and writes an extensive list of questions about the cases.

Craig calls Cross into the case due to the similarity between the new cases and a case Cross encountered back east, in which killers hung and drained the blood of their victim. The couple in San Francisco also suffered massive, almost total, blood loss.

Even when it becomes apparent that the case in California requires extensive investigating, Cross plans to keep his promise to attend his son's concert. At the San Francisco airport, he meets the inspector in charge of the murders, Jamilla Hughes. She comments that she knows Cross's reputation. Immediately, Cross likes and respects Hughes. She works as one of the few females in the homicide department of the San Francisco police department. She carries herself in an understated way. Cross observes that she does not act in a cop-like manner. When Hughes learns that Cross has never been to San Francisco, she jokingly offers to take him sightseeing.

The officers meet to discuss the autopsy with Dr. Pang. Though Dr. Pang is very eccentric, all the officers agree that he is also very qualified. Dr. Pang theorizes that two humans and one tiger attacked the victims. The tiger, moreover, backed off on



command, even after attacking the people. The possibility of an attack by a tiger in the middle of the city baffles everybody.

Chapter 4-9 Analysis

These chapters serve to reveal Cross's relationships with other people. Though he says he desires a love life, his dedication to his work gets in the way. Cross seems to feel guilty regardless of his choices. He desires to help others, through his work, and feels bad for taking time away from that, especially when he knows first hand what kinds of evil exist in the world. However, the more time he spends at work, the less time he has with his family. Even without Nana's nagging, Cross feels badly for missing his children's childhoods. This case, though, serves as a turning point in these feelings for Cross. Not the case itself, but the presence of the Mastermind, who threatens Cross's family while he is away, shows Cross that he can no longer keep his personal life and his professional life separate.

Cross's work inevitably brings him into contact with a female counterpart. He remembers, fondly, the women he worked with in the past. However, he now feels very paranoid about getting personal with a female coworker, because of the death of Betsey Cavaliere. Yet, Cross admits his attraction to Jamilla Hughes. He insists on working closely with her, even when the case takes him away from San Fransisco. Cross relates well to women in criminal investigating, perhaps because they understand the evil he faces on a daily basis.



Chapter 10-11

Chapter 10-11 Summary

In the opening of Chapter Ten, a large white tiger pounces on a vibrant young man. As his command, the tiger releases his head, as though playing a game. William and Michael Alexander play with the powerful tiger in the peaceful California countryside. The brothers themselves exhibit beautiful physiques that often attract attention.

The author describes the brothers as sons of a couple who lived in a hippie commune in the California countryside. At an early age, they learned that all consensual sex is good, even incest and homosexual relations. They view the outside world as dangerous and wrong. Moreover, they hold prison records for felony possession. Undetected, they have been killing for five years. They seek an unbridled mind and believe in their own immortality.

The two brothers seek more prey in the Mill Valley area. They do not seek just any prey; however, they seek to perform a mission for The Sire. They approach a house in a well-to-do neighborhood. Such extravagance strikes the brothers as obnoxious. They feel no need for money. They do not see themselves as serial killers, only men on a mission. They behave as self-proclaimed vampires, drinking the blood of their victim for energy and a high.

Chapter 10-11 Analysis

The reader understands much about the killers from these two chapters. One gains some insight into their psyche, if not their motivation. The reader even feels sorry for them, because so much of their unhealthy mental states stems from an unconventional upbringing. The reader also learns that William Alexander dominates the relationship. Though Michael exhibits a great deal of zeal for the mission, he lacks the organization and foresight that makes them successful and undetected. The reader easily forgets, in the savagery of the attacks, that the Alexander brothers are in their late teens and early twenties. Such hostility rarely occurs in men so young. When the readers learn the identity of the killers, the book ceases to be a murder mystery. It now becomes a race to see if the police can stop the killers before they kill again. Telling the story from the killers' point of view also allows the author to include much more graphic material.

The tiger represents much in the novel. For the Alexander brothers, the tiger symbolizes what they want to become, an animal accountable only to its own passions. For the police, the tiger represents the animal they chase, who reacts without remorse. To Cross himself, the Tiger stands larger, as the thing in his life that he cannot control, his job. When Cross kills the tiger, he also gains control over his own life and makes the decision to resign his job at the Police Department.



Chapter 12-16

Chapter 12-16 Summary

At the San Francisco Police Department, Cross works closely with Hughes. They agree the murders and the facts surrounding them make no sense. Cross bemoans the fact that horribly gruesome murders seem to occur more commonly. Cross becomes further agitated when the Mastermind calls, letting Cross that he is aware that Cross now works in San Francisco. He taunts Cross for his supposed feeling toward Jamilla Hughes. Cross receives some encouragement when FBI detective Kyle Craig chooses to work the San Francisco case personally. Furthermore, in Jamilla Hughes, Cross sees some of his own drive. He admires the dedication to her job, despite her years of experience.

When the detectives learn of an old case baring similar characteristics, they rush to the graveside to exhume the body. Hughes drives them there.

In San Luis Obispo, the detectives Cross and Hughes meet local detective Nancy Goodes. Goodes originally investigated the murder of Mary Alice Richardson. She admits that the murder held none of the characteristics of a serial killing. The killer failed to take trophies or assault Mary sexually. She did note marks of habitual cutting all over Mary's body, however. Goodes remains sad and subdued at the grave, remarking that she never forgot the unsolved murder of Mary Richardson.

Cross asserts that all sane people feel jittery at a cemetery, and he is no exception. The detectives stand around in the dark as the gravediggers exhume the casket. Cross, not wanting any interruptions, especially from the Mastermind, turns off his cell phone. The exhumation proves emotional for all the witnesses. Cross admits to feeling guilty about disturbing the grave of the young girl. The funeral director who embalmed Mary also attends the exhumation. When the detectives remark on the immaculate preservation of the body, the mortician admits that he knew someone would need to see this body again. Cross finally returns to his hotel at seven a.m. and dreams of Mary Alice Richardson.

Back at the police department, Hughes works hard. Surprisingly, her desk sports pictures of a young man, presumably a love interest. Cross rejoices in evidence of a love life for Hughes, despite her dedication to her work. Cross's respect for Hughes grows as she exhibits confidence yet modesty about her past success.

FBI headquarters at Quantico sends information on more cases bearing similar traits to the killings in San Francisco. Always on top of her game, when the news leaks to the press, Hughes prepares a positive spin to release to her friend, Tim, who writes for the San Francisco Chronicle. That day, the killers strike again.

The police finally learn about the killings in Mill Valley. The couple, lawyers, are also murdered and hung, drained of their blood. At the crime scene, Cross and Hughes split



up, each showing different methods for investigating a scene. Quickly scene investigators notice that the killers left the expensive jewelry and other valuables. Cross notes unusual amounts of rage on the part of the killers. Ruefully, Cross also notices that the local police who rarely handle a crime of this magnitude, have botched many aspects of the crime scene.

Chapter 12-16 Analysis

Though the investigators go to great lengths to exhume the body, they seem to gain very little information about the killers. The reader sees, though, the real emotion of those present at the grave site. They feel for the dead girl, and this motivates them to solve the crimes. As the list of victims mounts, the case becomes more personal.

When they learn of the killers in Mill Valley, Cross and the other agents see that the killing will continue until they catch the killers. Such a realization brings new urgency to the case. Cross mentions the symbolism of the killing in Mill Valley. He mentions that the killers literally eat the rich, which shows a disregard for material wealth and a critique of commercialism in society. Such attitudes rarely occur in murderers, but Cross's talent for evaluating such attitudes demonstrates his value to such an investigation. Cross appears to agree somewhat with the critique on commercialism in society, though he thoroughly condemns the murders.



Chapter 17-18

Chapter 17-18 Summary

The story of the murders breaks the San Francisco news. At a local diner, William and Michael watch the news excitedly. Inaccurate facts, which Hughes planted in the news on purpose, upset Michael. William explains that reports are simply part of the corrupt system. The brothers share a desire to feed more. The brothers discuss the foolishness of the police as they drive to a shopping mall. Outside the mall, they hunt for the appropriate appetizer.

After their hunting at the mall, the brothers break into a funeral home. They find an attractive female specimen on the table. As they prepare to feed on her, William describes how common such practices are among funeral directors. Often the men who run the establishment molest the dead bodies. The woman's body sexually arouses both brothers. They molest her before drinking her blood.

Chapter 17-18 Analysis

As with many horror stories, killing seems to increase the hunger of the killers, rather than satisfy it. Their desecration of a dead body makes them even more unappealing to the reader. William uses his knowledge of the depravity of funeral directors to excuse his actions, though this gains no sympathy from the readers.

Unlike many crime dramas, the news plays a positive role in the investigation. Cross and Hughes feed Tim, the reporter, false details to anger the killers. They hope the killers make a mistake because of this anger. Though this strategy fails to pan out, Tim later provides them with information about the killers' hideout.



Chapter 19-25

Chapter 19-25 Summary

Cross continues to be impressed with Hughes's dedication to her job. He wonders what from her past motivates her to work so hard and put in such long hours. In a phone call with Hughes, Cross discusses the necessary research about tigers in connection with the San Francisco murders.

Cross turns down Hughes' offer for a beer after work, however. Given the fate of his last two partners, Cross fears getting close to another woman in the business. He fears the Mastermind will target Hughes if the two become involved.

Hughes's connection at the newspaper generates a lead for the officers to follow up on. Tim finds an old case of attempted murder in LA.

The woman who escaped claimed vampires attacked her. Her story, given the sensational details, failed to make mainstream headlines and only surfaced in the tabloids. Cross and Hughes travel to LA

In LA, the officers talk with Gloria dos Santos, an angry and rough woman. She describes her attack. One evening, she went to a Goth club; she also worked in a vampire shop. Even in the face of scorn from the police, she maintains that her attackers were vampires. She describes vampires as beings set apart from natural humans. During the interview, they get news of another murder. Gloria, hearing of the further violence, fears for her life.

Cross becomes a little more encouraged about the case when Kyle Craig personally arrives in LA. Cross remembers the tough cases he has worked on with Craig in the past.

When Cross arrives at the latest crime scene, Craig is already there and looks healthy and tan. Upon seeing the victim, Cross thinks of philosopher Schopenhauer, who believes the world only gets more vile and wicked. The killer's latest victim, Jonathan Mueller, lies in an LA hotel. His body bears vicious attack marks and bites. The killers drained his blood. Outside of the crime scene, the Mastermind calls Cross, taunting him further. When Craig appears and offers to listen in, the Mastermind hangs up.

Feeling that the case will not end soon, Cross calls home. Since the death of his wife, Cross's grandmother moved in to care for the children. She lays a heavy guilt trip on Cross. When Cross asks to apologize directly to Damon, his son, for missing the concert, she informs him that Damon is out playing basketball. Nana complains that she cannot be mother and father to the children in Cross's absence. Cross offers to look for a suitable wife and mother while in California. Late that evening, he calls Damon back, apologizing again about the concert. Cross is pleased at the way his children have



gown up. He thinks sadly about his wife missing their childhoods. He promises to attend the next concert, though Damon is skeptical.

Cross still does not believe in vampires, only evil people. Yet, with all his experience and the resources of the FBI, no profile exists for the murders occurring in California. No past murder serves as an example for this kind of murder, with its lack of pattern in victim or method.

Cross begins to observe that even Hughes looks tired; the adrenaline of working a complicated case serves to keep them both going. The adrenaline also often serves to cause sexual chemistry between agents, as Cross has experienced in the past. Cross remains tentative around Hughes, given the fate of his past female partners.

Hughes begins to fear that the victims were not all murdered by the same person or people. Finally, the authorities connect the funeral home incident to the other murders. Hughes leaves to return to her other duties in San Francisco, and Cross is sad to see her go. Craig accompanies Cross in investigating the break-in and vandalism in the funeral home. He admits that the investigation fails to gain ground as needed. Craig believes in vampires, explaining that, being from the South makes one believe in such things.

Craig and Cross share beers in a local bar. Craig apologizes that Cross spends so much time away from his family. Cross becomes suspicious of Craig's real reason for the conversation. Craig simply goes on to say that Cross is one of the best in the business at his job. Cross attempts to change the subject by asking for information about Betsey Cavaliere's murder. Craig informs him that they have no new leads. Cross points out that the Mastermind no longer mentions her. He also confesses that he suspects the Mastermind followed him out to California. With that conversation over, Craig admits his reason for the sympathetic attitude; he wants Cross to work for him at the FBI. The offer neither shocks nor excites Cross. He also neither accepts nor denies it.

Chapter 19-25 Analysis

Cross's character exhibits many facets, unusual for popular fiction. Not only does he chase the vampire killers, he also deals with the Mastermind. His family receives a great deal of attention from the author, as well. The character of Nana, Cross's mother, represents Cross's conscience. She nags him about the time he spends away from the children. One assumes that, as his mother, she misses and worries about him, too. The concerns she voices echo the worries that flood Cross's mind on a regular basis. The children, however, seem understanding and mature in their views of their father. They accept that his work calls him away, and they admit that the same is likely to happen in the future.

The Mastermind almost appears as a ghost. He echoes many of the themes of the novel, the battle between good and evil and, later, the father/son/brother relationships.



Though the Mastermind brings to light good aspects of Cross's character, his nobilities towards his family, it also drives Cross to break protocol on a number of occasions.

At first, Kyle Craig seems to represent what every agent or police officer hopes to be. He handles stressful situations with ease and exhibits skill in every aspect of his job. All these strengths, however, lead the reader to the harsh truth about Craig's alter ego, the Mastermind. No one else in the scope of the novel comes close to possessing the abilities needed to behave as the Mastermind does.



Chapter 26

Chapter 26 Summary

William and Michael Alexander follow Cross and Craig from the bar. They know who they are and for whom they work. William reveals part of the reason for their success thus far: he hates rules. He realizes that following rules on every murder would get them caught. Michael, the younger and more impetuous brother, calls the cops toothless. William fears the energy of one of the officers, but he fails to identify which one. They stop hunting the cops and go to a vampire church, where some young people go to role play vampire and some actually live the lifestyle. William remembers the last time they visited, they drained a beautiful young boy.

Chapter 26 Analysis

The situational irony between the Alexanders and the police grows until they finally kidnap Investigator Hughes. The Alexanders never reveal where they gain their information for their missions. William knows who the officers are and why they are important, but the reader never learns how he knows this. William's methodical nature prevents them from attacking Craig and Cross, however. The brothers instead direct their appetites to a more consensual encounter. The brothers claim that their encounters provide enjoyment for the victim as well, though no evidence can exist to support this claim.



Chapter 27-29

Chapter 27-29 Summary

Hughes and Cross receive another tip from Hughes's contact at the newspaper. Cross travels to meet a vampire expert at the University of California.

Paul Westin dresses the part of a vampire expert, in all purple and black. Westin describes vampire clubs along the west coast and around the world. He claims they operate with more than 100,000 members worldwide.

Cross admits to Westin that he remains skeptical about the vampire culture. Westin explains about pranic energies, which attract vampires to certain types of people. To drink the blood of someone is to absorb his or her pranic energy. Cross, Westin observes, possess great pranic energy.

Westin offers a psychological profile of a real vampire, as apposed to a role-playing vampire. A real vampire acts needy, manipulative and immoral. However, he claims they have no more occurrence of criminal activity than regular humans do. At the end of the interview, Westin admits he is a practicing vampire. Cross leaves the meeting a little more believing of the vampire lifestyle. Somewhat metaphorically, Cross admits to being afraid of the dark after leaving the interview with Peter Westin.

As he drives through the California countryside, he reflects on its beauty, this being his first visit to California. A call home brings Cross in contact with longtime friend Sampson, who worries about Cross and the possible career change. Cross also takes time during the drive to reflect on his past relationships with women. First, he remembers his deceased wife, Maria. He also remembers relationships with Jezzie, Christine, little Alex's mother, and, most recently, Betsey Cavaliere.

For further research, Cross tracks down a fang expert at a tattoo parlor in Fresno. John Barreiro, the Fresno kid, explains that artificial fangs appear popular in vampire clubs throughout the area. Barreiro himself sports an impressive set of dental implants. He identifies himself, somewhat proudly, as a blood drinking vampire. He becomes protective about specific details of the vampire culture, however. When Cross asks questions about people within the culture, including The Sire, Barreiro stops answering questions and becomes unfriendly.

Chapter 27-29 Analysis

The appearance of Peter Westin seems innocuous enough. As with many of the experts in the book, he comes across as eccentric, but helpful. He gives Cross a great deal of insight into the mind of a practicing vampire. His intelligence shows in his lack of information, however. Cross says in the novel that he will see Westin again, but this information seems to come as he looks back on the story. At the time, Cross did not

suspect that Westin gave the orders to the Alexander brothers. Westin does, however, impress upon Cross the extent of the vampire culture. This information motivates Cross to find the Sire and stop the killing. Therefore, such information ultimately leads to the capture of Peter Westin. In the theme of good versus evil, good prevails.



Chapter 30-33

Chapter 30-33 Summary

William and Michael continue to travel across California and into Nevada in their Red Cross van. Since their release from prison, they enjoy many extreme sports. They stop on their way to Las Vegas to go skydiving. They convince the lone female pilot to take them to a higher altitude than she feels is safe. Once the plane is locked in, they kill the pilot and drink her blood. After feeding on her, they free fall together, only pulling their shoots at the last minute. Feeling exhilarated, they watch the plane crash in the desert in a ball of fire. William feels pleased that the crash leaves no evidence

William calls their travels across California The Crimson Tide. The two brothers love the energy of Las Vegas. Their first stop is a popular magician show of another two brothers, Daniel and Charles. While they watch, they seduce a celebrity couple sitting nearby. They plan to party with the couple, and then feed on them.

William sees the magicians show as very important to their overall plan. However, he fails to explain why. They watch as one magician beheads his brother, only putting the head back after the brother says please. William and Michael boo the show. The couple leaves with William and Michael just before guards threaten to throw them out. The couple invites the brothers to their room.

The celebrity couple offers the use of their luxury room in the Bellagio. There, they gaily offer the use of various drugs and sex toys. Immediately, the actor and actress strip. Inwardly, William scorns the blatant seduction. When William and Michael strip, the couple comments on their physical beauty. After a quick seduction, they sadistically kill the couple.

Chapter 30-33 Analysis

The fact that two sets of brothers appear in the vampire case echoes the theme of fraternal rivalry that plagues the Mastermind. In the case of William and Michael, there is clearly a dominant personality. Michael serves as muscle and support, but never instigates action. Daniel and Charles, likewise, show clear dominant and submissive roles. Daniel commands both their show and their personal lives. Charles carries out Daniel's wishes. The Mastermind becomes frustrated in attempting to assert his dominance over Detective Cross. It began with his own feelings of inferiority among his biological brothers. Now that carries over into his relationship with Cross, where he excels at everything to show Cross how superior he is.

Sexuality also plays a role in many of the Alexanders' murders. Just as they scorn commercialism, they also abhor blatant sexuality, however. They prefer a more refined seduction, it seems, before they kill their partners. In technique, the brothers seem fairly

matched in cruelty. William possesses more patience, therefore his victims suffer longer. Michael always acts more impetuously.



Chapter 34-37

Chapter 34-37 Summary

Cross heads to Las Vegas, just after news of the celebrity murders reaches him in California. He notes that, this time, the killers failed to hang the bodies. Outside the Bellagio, a record crowd appears. The story already broke the news. The notoriety of the victims fuels the fire. An amazing number of Goths crowd the hotel, as well. Cross hopes the authorities will ask to see footage of the crowd. He assumes the perpetrators are among the spectators.

Inside the luxury suite, the bodies lie in a bathtub. Cross notes that once again the victims were beautiful physical specimens. They also bore no defensive wound, as if they knew and were comfortable with their attackers. In addition, all valuables remain in the room. The police strive to trace the last moves of the victims, Andrew Cotton and Dara Grey. Witnesses saw them talking with two unidentified men during a magic show. Officials strive to learn more about the show.

Hughes calls Cross with disturbing news: the expert identified four sets of teeth marks on the remains of unsolved biting cases connected with the murders in San Francisco. Dental experts even identified gnaw marks made by human teeth, which signifies unusual rage and sadism. Because of the celebrity of the most recent victims, press coverage grows immensely. However, the killings stop. Leads quickly dry up. After days with no new information, Cross returns home to Washington DC. He finds an empty house and feels guilty for the time his job calls him away from his family.

When the family returns home, Cross greets them with excitement. He worries, though, about the Mastermind, especially his threats towards Cross's family. He wondered how closely the Mastermind followed his moves and if he is aware that Cross is back in DC. The Cross family spends a whole day of quality time at the Smithsonian Complex. Each person chooses a spot to visit. They see a photography exhibit of African-American cowboys, which Cross finds moving. The day adds up to be one of the best days Cross had recently. He receives no calls about vampires and no threats from the Mastermind.

Chapter 34-37 Analysis

The murders of the two celebrities symbolizes the degree to which the killers blend in with society. They refuse to feed on street people and other victims that may go unnoticed. Instead, they acquire some of the best seats in the house. They appear so normal that the celebrities readily invite them up to their room. Such things make the killer more menacing. The reader begins to feel that they could represent a type of person that one would run into in the street.

As the killing of the celebrities draws so much attention from the press, it comes as a surprise to the reader when the case dries up and Cross returns home so soon. The



change appears rather abrupt. It allows, though, time for development of the characters in Cross's family. The reader sees that they are proud of their African American heritage. They also enjoy spending time together, when they get a chance. However, as much as is appropriate, Cross honestly tells his children about his work. He also refuses to allow the Mastermind to effect their lives. They proceed with their family outing as normal. The author's allusions to real places lends the story a great deal of reality. Cross visits real places in real cities, that the reader most likely knows about or could learn about.



Chapter 38

Chapter 38 Summary

The Mastermind watches the Cross family during the night, as they sleep. He wanders through the house undetected. He remembers a lot of details about the Cross family and feels strongly connected to them, especially Alex Cross. He reminds himself that he has left Cross all the necessary clues. He wants to be stopped in his killing spree. After some deliberation, he decides that this will not be the night he kills Cross.

Chapter 38 Analysis

The change of point of view to that of the Mastermind surprises the reader. Though his identity remains hidden, the reader gains much insight into his motives and history. He exhibits classic desires of a serial killer, in that he wants Cross to catch him, and to stop his killing spree. The Mastermind's ability to assess the Cross home speaks to his superior talents, as well. The reader begins to feel that the Mastermind is someone they already met.



Chapter 39-41

Chapter 39-41 Summary

Cross returns to the Washington DC Police Department for a normal week at work. He considers the pros and cons of taking the position with the FBI. He also dreams of a love life and the opportunity to settle down with one woman. Cross goes out on a date with a childhood friend, Macy Francis. He notes her clothing in detail. The evening turns sour, though, when Mary becomes drunk. Back at her condominium, she shares many details about her past. Feeling that Mary cannot make a fair decision about the night, Cross stops after a little necking. When he refuses to go further, Mary blows up, cursing Cross and men in general. On the way home, Cross reminds himself that he hates dating.

Later the next week, Cross meets long-time friend Sampson for a beer after work. Sampson observes that Cross looks bad. He insists on listening to Cross's problems, and will not be distracted in the conversation. He even refers Cross to the department psychologist, Dr. Finally. Cross admits the Mastermind continues to worry him. He knows the Mastermind follows him. Sampson appears shocked by the admission from Cross. Whereas Sampson thought it was just career burnout, he realizes it is more serious than that. Together the two men close down the bar and walk home. The next morning, Cross and his son Alex Jr, walk back to the bar to retrieve his car. Alex Jr, an infant, enjoys the time with his dad. Cross keeps a running conversation during the entire trip. After returning to work that morning, Cross receives a message that another vampire murder occurred, this time in Charleston, South Carolina.

Chapter 39-41 Analysis

Cross's life seems to take a break from the vampire case. He continues to work on his personal relationships, first with Mary. The evil in Cross's life, through little fault of his own, seems to prevent him from having personal relationships with women outside of the arena of police work. Furthermore, his decency in recognizing Mary's inhibited personality fails to pay off as he had hoped. Such a response serves as a critique of a society that claims chivalry is dead.

Sampson represents an antithesis of the Mastermind. Though he knows everything about Cross, Sampson only uses it for good. He looks out for Cross and notices when job stress begins taking a toll. When Cross needs a friend most, Sampson stands out as an ideal confidant. The reason for Cross's move back home becomes clear when the killers strike again, this time on the East Coast. The author uses the move to allow Cross more time at home. He also operates in more familiar territory for a while. In a sense, however, it intrudes on his peace at home. The killers seem to have followed him east.



Chapter 42-44

Chapter 42-44 Summary

This chapter opens Part Three of the novel, murder in the south. The murder in Charleston appears similar to the murders in the California. In a seemingly quiet city, the public lives on edge. It is the first time such a murder occurred in Charleston, a sleepy and historic southern town.

Kyle Craig and Alex Cross enjoy dinner with Kate McTiernan, a former victim in a case. She escaped the Casanova serial killer. Now, she eagerly shares plans for her upcoming wedding. After an enjoyable evening, Craig admits he likes Kate and jokes about leaving his wife for her. Cross is now a firm believer in a vampire lifestyle. The FBI, with Cross's help, begins to connect other murders along the east coast. Cross compiles a list of cities in which similar murders occurred. To that, he adds cites of nonlethal vampire attacks. Charlotte, North Carolina appears to be the worst case, and possibly the first. Cross visits a local Goth club, but finds nothing new. He makes it home in time to attend his son's Boys choir concert.

Chapter 42-44 Analysis

The dinner with McTiernan serves only to reintroduce her to the reader, so she can become a target for the Mastermind later in the novel. It seems incongruous that two high ranking officers in a nationwide murder investigation would take time out to have dinner with an old friend. She also happens to be close enough to the murders for this to happen. The reader feels that the Mastermind thinks he has something to do with where the vampires kill, though in the end that proves to be untrue.



Chapter 45

Chapter 45 Summary

William and Michael drive through the south right on schedule. William educates his younger brother on the history of the south. They travel through Georgia on a mission. They must feed in Savannah. Once they arrive, they are accosted by two young trampy women, who they reject. They notice and appreciate all the desirable locals, even a two-year-old as he plays in a park. Michael finally makes a satisfactory selection.

Chapter 45 Analysis

The author includes enough viewpoint from the killers to add more gore to the novel, but leaves much of their conversation and selection unstated. As is the case with their latest victim, the author fails to describe what the killers see. This tactic serves to heighten suspense. Often the reader only learns the identity of the victim when Cross does.



Chapter 46-49

Chapter 46-49 Summary

Craig and Cross fly together to Atlanta, which Cross laments is another beautiful and historic city. The most recent attack occurred in a frenzy, in a cathedral. Cross surmises, from the nature of the attack, the killers want the police to catch them, to stop them. Cross describes the cathedral in detail. He also takes note of the body, another beautiful person. Cross begins putting together a profile on the killers, guessing them to be late teens or early twenties.

Craig promises three hundred FBI agents are working the case full-time. Before they finish up at the cathedral, another attack occurs in Charlotte, North Carolina. The two men leave in a rush, heading for the newest crime scene. Cross begins to wonder if all the clues have been leading them to Charlotte.

Once there, police and FBI surround a rundown house where a group of young homeless children and runaways live. They believe the killers may be inside. Because of the age of the inhabitants, the police proceed cautiously. They wait for orders from Craig and Cross. Cross fears the killers are already gone.

At dawn, the cops raid the house. Inside they find dozens of children; some react very rudely to the police. The police begin to put the young people into handcuffs. One girl attacks an agent and bites him on the shoulder. In the cellar, they find Irwin Snyder.

Chapter 46-49 Analysis

The location of the novel changes frequently. Murders that seem vicious enough in a place like Las Vegas appear more sinister in a pleasant place like Charleston. The fact that the killers left their victim in a church emphasizes that they hold nothing sacred. The clues begin to fall together, however. Cross's concentration on the cities in which the murders take place foreshadows the biggest breakthrough so far.

Once again, a major operation fails to provide Cross with the clues he desires. It is not even clear if the killers they seek were ever in the house. Cross seems to doubt that they were. Though they spend an entire night outside of the house, the police only arrest minor players. All of the vampires seem tight-lipped about their society. What the young vampires lack in wisdom they make up for in zeal.



Chapter 50-53

Chapter 50-53 Summary

Cross interrogates Snyder, who is familiar with Craig and the FBI. He comments that Cross does not work for the FBI. Snyder claims that he killed his parents to free them. Snyder goes on to claim that he wants to leave home and follow the tiger. The interview ends when he bites Cross on the arm, announcing that now Cross is one of them.

Cross spends a total of four hours questioning Snyder. Snyder issues more warning about the tiger. Officials quickly rule out Snyder for the other murders.

Cross's bites begin to swell and hurt, causing him to return to Washington DC. Upon returning to Washington DC, the Mastermind calls Cross once again. He lets Cross know that he knows Cross has been out of town and has returned home. Frustrated and angry, Cross runs into the street and yells at the Mastermind, assuming he watches from close by. Nana questions Cross's strange behavior.

Cross's bites become very infected. He develops a fever that eventually drives him to the emergency room. There, the ER doctor does not believe Cross's story about being bitten by a vampire. He prescribes antibiotics and rest. At home, Cross suffers from high fever and delirium. His daughter sits by his bed to keep him company. Jokingly, she says she will make sure he does not turn into a vampire.

Chapter 50-53 Analysis

Irwin Snyder symbolizes what a young person becomes when the vampire lifestyle seduces them away from a more conventional upbringing. However, he fails to give the authorities any new leads to lead them to the real killers. The bites Cross receives symbolizes the way that Cross's work gets under his skin. His personal approach to the job effectively grounds him from being in New Orleans when the FBI plans to take down the men they believe to be the killers.

The Mastermind also gets under Cross's skin. When the Mastermind seems to know too much about what goes on in Cross's life, Cross becomes frustrated and irate. He even runs into the street, hoping to draw the Mastermind out in to the open. Such an action illustrates the nearly irrational way that the Mastermind causes Cross to act.

Also, though Cross's job takes him away from his family more than any of them likes, it is his family that helps him recuperate from his work related injuries. Without objection, his daughter sets with Cross, becoming parent-like in his convalescence. Her jokes about Cross turning into a vampire show that Cross remains open and honest about his work with his family.



Chapter 54

Chapter 54 Summary

Once again, the Mastermind walks through the Cross home while they sleep. At 3 am, he sits at the piano and thinks of how he is superior to Cross in every way, even music. After reviewing his whole plan in his mind, he decides that tonight is the perfect night to kill Cross. He silently makes his way through the house. In Cross's room, he is shocked to find Cross's daughter asleep in a chair beside the bed. He fantasizes about killing the whole family first. Then, he spots Cross's injury. He decides that he will wait until Cross recovers.

Chapter 54 Analysis

The eerie nature of the book escalates when the reader realizes that the Mastermind walks through Cross's house as the family sleeps. The Mastermind almost seems like a ghost within the limits of this book. He speaks only to Cross, fails to act on anything of his threats, and he walks through the house at night. In many ways, he embodies Cross's worst fears, in threatening his family, not only their safety but their way of life. When Cross's worst fears come to life, when the Mastermind starts killing again, Cross makes the decision to resign at the Police Department.



Chapter 55-59

Chapter 55-59 Summary

Cross awakens, feeling that someone has been in the house. He dismisses the notion and continues to sleep.

After fourteen hours, Cross feels much better. Jannie, his daughter, brings him breakfast in bed. When all the children join them, Cross assures them that he will make a complete recovery. Silently, though, he remembers Snyder's warning and harbors doubts.

After enjoying a day's worth of home cooked meals, Cross reviews the information about the murder cases from home. He finally spots a link between the locations of the murders and the traveling magic show of Daniel and Charles. He sees that they will next perform in New Orleans.

Cross still has not been cleared by the doctor to return to work. Craig sets up the FBI in New Orleans. They attend the first magic show. The show drew a large crowd, mostly of young, even underage people. They even impress the FBI with the show, in which the magicians appear to change into tigers before their eyes. After the show, a team of agents trails the magicians' limo. However, when it stops, only the tigers emerge. Kyle Craig phones Cross at home in DC to describe the disappearance of the magicians.

Cross continues to recuperate at home and spends time with his children. He also works with the FBI profilers at Quantico to devise a profile for the killers, who they assume to be Daniel and Charles. Cross also asks Craig to bring Hughes to New Orleans. Craig initially resists, but Cross insists, because the case in San Francisco started the whole investigation. When the doctor releases Cross to return to work, Cross prepares to travel to New Orleans to join the investigation there. This time, Nana does not nag Cross for leaving. When he arrives at the hotel in New Orleans, he receives word that Hughes is on her way.

Chapter 55-59 Analysis

Cross's feelings for Hughes become more apparent when he insists that she join the investigation in New Orleans. Though he claims that he insists because the case started in San Francisco, he neglects to include others from California, such as Officer Goodes from San Luis Obispo, where they exhumed the young girl's body. Some confusion arises, however, because both Cross and Hughes insinuate that Hughes sees Tim romantically. Cross even expresses relief that Hughes enjoys a personal life, yet he pursues her for himself.

Other facts remain hidden to the reader. Whether the author tells the story from first person, or third person, the narrator is never omniscient. None of those who observe



the magicians uncover how they perform their illusions, even when they seem to disappear from the limo. Such mysteries heighten the suspense of the novel. The reader may expect the author to explain them in the end, but he never does.

As with many careers, Cross's family becomes as dedicated to his work as he is. When the gravity of the case sinks in for Nana, she stops nagging him about being away from home. She may also stop because she realizes that such conversations prove futile. Nana represents Cross's conscience. She voices the worries that he already harbors in his mind. Nana came to live with the family after the death of Cross's wife, Maria. Though Nana is Cross's grandmother, she acts more like a mother to him, in the absence of his own mother.



Chapter 60-64

Chapter 60-64 Summary

In New Orleans, Cross meet Hughes for dinner. They are both excited about the take-down of the magicians. After dinner, the two of them attend the magic show. Twelve other agents also attend the show. Craig listens from outside, as he does not blend in as well. Cross feels nearly certain that the magicians are the killers, but has no proof. While waiting for the show to start, Cross describes Craig to Jamilla Hughes. He says Craig is smart, though hard to read. Hughes, though, claims he is sexist and does not trust him. At the beginning of the show, Charles appears first, dressed as Cross imagines the killer would, all in black. Cross describes Charles's outfit in further detail. When he looks at Cross and Hughes, Hughes suspects that Charles labels them as cops.

Charles's opening remarks sling various insults at the audience. The audience only laughs. Daniel joins his brother on stage, also very arrogant. They claim to be the greatest magicians and to prove this, begin the show with one of Houdini's finales. The whole show impresses Cross and Hughes. The magicians appear and disappear in varying ways. Hughes begins to question why the magicians perform in such small venues, when they have such a great act. Cross points out that, as vampires, they find their prey in their audience. Cross and Hughes watch both the shows scheduled for that night. The officers once again follow the magicians' home and set up a stake out outside the magicians' residence.

At 3 a.m., Cross returns to his hotel to sleep. Upon waking, he reviews his notes on vampires. All the agents involved feel nervous about the magicians. Yet, surveillance quickly becomes boring, even in a beautiful city such as New Orleans. While they wait on the stake out, Hughes and Cross discuss their pasts and other intimate details. Cross describes his early career, explaining how he got into police work. He explains the feeling from his first case, in which he proved the innocence of a man from his own neighborhood. The one subject that they avoid is that of Cross's singleness.

Cross remembers again that no precedent exists for the cases they are working. The officers learn that Charles and Daniel are planning a fetish ball. Cross invites Hughes out to eat; they enjoy a meal at a nearby eatery. They discuss the cases and all the information they have gained on vampires. They decide the killer must be bisexual, based on the choice of victims. Cross fears, though, that a piece of the puzzle remains hidden. He also wonders why the killers have suddenly become sloppy. Regardless, Cross wants to catch the killers in New Orleans.



Chapter 60-64 Analysis

Once again, the author gives the reader what appears to be a large development in the plot, the connection to Daniel and Charles. While they play large roles in the society of the vampires, they hold small parts in the novel. By the time Cross realizes their importance, their part in the novel is nearly over. Such tactics give the novel suspense, but if the reader concentrates on smaller clues, he may solve the case even before Cross. The reader enjoys an advantage, though, because he witnesses first-hand the movements of the real killers, the Alexander brothers.

Cross points out that the police have no evidence that ties Daniel and Charles to any of the murders. In fact, never in the novel do officials tie the magicians to a crime. They assume the magicians committed some of the older murders, but when the magicians die, the case dies with them. Only when they discover the bodies of Daniel and Charles do the police realize that the motivation behind the murders is ousting the Sire.

The concern about a hidden piece of the case foreshadows Tim's discovery of the vampire compound in Santa Cruz. The police have no information that reveals this information. They rely on Tim's research to reveal it; without the information, the case stalls once again. Only after they learn of the compound do they learn the identity of the real murderers, the Alexander brothers.



Chapter 65

Chapter 65 Summary

The Mastermind follows Cross and Hughes. He disapproves of the budding relationship. The Mastermind sees no need for love. He wants Cross to remain a loner, as he is. The Mastermind dreams of killing Cross tonight. He feels no fear. He decides not to pursue Cross, however, because it would be too dark to see Cross's eyes.

Chapter 65 Analysis

The Mastermind's disapproval of Cross's feelings towards Hughes provides the reader with a small clue as to his real identity. Craig resisted bringing Hughes to New Orleans in the first place. The Mastermind sees love as unnecessary. He feels that love and hate occupy the same space within a person. Such feelings seem incongruous with Craig's real life, in which he has a wife and children. Instead, the feelings signal a type of split personality. Such feelings are the only thing that suggests mental instability in Craig. He fails to exhibit many qualities of mental unstable serial killers, such as escalating violence and a solitary life. Craig proves adept at keeping his two worlds separate, so that those closest to him suspect nothing.



Chapter 66-69

Chapter 66-69 Summary

All the agents involved meet for a briefing. Craig hands out assignments for the coverage of the fetish ball. When he fails to give Hughes an assignment, she becomes very angry. Craig dismisses Hughes by telling her to help Cross or go home. Hughes once again tells Cross how she dislikes Craig, especially concerning his treatment of women.

William and Michael drive through New Orleans. The commercialism that surrounds the city sickens them. They also lament the fact that they cannot take a prey too close to Charles and Daniel's domain. They opt to drive out of the city for a dangerous free climb. As with skydiving, they cheat death fearlessly, showing their feelings of immortality.

When new information fails to come in, Hughes and Cross become bored. The plot line becomes repetitive. Cross shares the theory that the magicians themselves no longer kill, they send their followers to do the dirty work. Hughes questions the need for the killings. William walks through the garden district of New Orleans. He spots the cops outside the magician's house. He hunts for prey, speaking at first to a young girl. When the girl mocks him, he quickly decides to feed on her.

Chapter 66-69 Analysis

As the action escalates towards the plot's climax, the point of view changes more often. Furthermore, all of the major plays converge on the city of New Orleans. They even interact, though sometimes they fail to realize it. However, just as the point of view begins to switch rapidly, and the authorities near a capture, the plot becomes repetitive. The author uses this to heighten the suspense, then prolongs it until the climax of the plot.

Hughes's dislike of Craig foreshadows his other identity as the Mastermind. However, even she fails to suspect the whole truth. What she sees as simple sexism actually signals Craig's need to control Cross's life. It also signals, as did the murder of Betsey Cavaliere, Craig's intense anger towards women. This anger, though, receives no explanation. In fact, Craig's mental distress stems from what he perceives as abuse from his father. In interviews with his mother, Cross feels that she protects her son. In fact, Craig's brother claims the abuse never happened.

Not only does the Mastermind gain confidence, the Alexander brothers do, as well. As they approach their final task from their Sire, they become bold. They do exhibit some restraint, however, by not killing in the magician's domain. Instead, they seek thrills from another form of extreme sport, free climbing. They exhibit impetuosity typical of youth, though, when William kills the girl that mocks him in the streets.



Chapter 70-75

Chapter 70-75 Summary

The news of a missing fifteen-year-old girl breaks the boredom from Cross. Craig becomes very angry when the New Orleans police wait hours before sharing the case with the FBI. Hughes offers to attend the fetish ball with Cross, and Craig okay's it.

At 2 a.m., Cross and Hughes enter the fetish ball. Cross looks around at those in attendance with interest and describes their costumes. As they mingle, The Sire arrives. Daniel and Charles enter in full costume, with the tigers from the show on leashes. Daniel identifies himself as The Sire and invites the guests to the lower level of the home. In front of the crowd of onlookers, Daniel crowns two unnamed young men as vampire princes. This is interrupted, though, when the lights go out. Women scream. When the lights return, they find the two young men murdered. Cross confirms that the two princes are dead. Cross and Hughes begin to search the house. They find the magicians elsewhere in the basement, also murdered. Cross wonders who The Sire is now. The investigation of the home of the magicians leaves authorities baffled. Hughes returns home to her duties in San Francisco. Cross plans to stay in New Orleans to sort through the evidence. The two promise to keep in touch. Craig and Cross admit that the investigation is at a dead end.

Chapter 70-75 Analysis

Though the plot previously stalled out, the murder of the young girl, the same that mocked William, serves as the catalyst that brings the plot to its climax. Craig's anger over the murder, when the authorities watched the magicians so closely, causes him to okay the infiltration of the fetish ball. Craig's apparent desire to catch the murders seems to stand at odds with his identity as the Mastermind. However, he explains later that he feels a rush not only from murdering people, but also from catching other killers. His work gives him a sense of superiority over other murders.



Chapter 76-79

Chapter 76-79 Summary

Cross continues to work late with the FBI in New Orleans. When he tries to call home, he remembers it is his Aunt Tia's birthday and he forgot to get her a gift. He calls to wish her a happy birthday, then heads to the magician's house to look around. He continues to feel that he missed something.

In the house, he discovers small effigy dolls in the magician's bedroom that were not there during the first inspection. After noting the dolls, he hears the noise of intruders. He searches, alone, through the basement of the old house. In the dark, two assailants attack him. When one tries to bite him, he reacts furiously, pinning the attacker to the wall. When the lights come back on, he sees that his attackers are two dirty teenagers. He places them both under arrest.

Back at the precinct, the assailants join the ranks of those waiting questioning after the raid of the fetish ball. The cops develop a system for questioning those who attended the fetish ball. As most of them desire to keep their secret life under wraps, they agree to talk with the cops. The two teenage attackers, however, refuse to talk. Even after repeated treatments of letting them go to their cell, then calling them back just before they go to sleep, the young man and woman give up nothing. During the sixth interview, news of another hanging murder reaches Cross. The latest victim turns out to be a New Orleans detective, a woman. However, some of the methods of the kill have changed. The detectives suspect that the killers are different. While at the crime scene, the Mastermind calls. Furious, Cross vows to catch him. A concerned looking Kyle Craig asks Cross if he is okay.

Cross returns to his hotel in New Orleans the next morning. Before he can get to sleep, Hughes calls with a new development. She traced a number of unusual disappearances to Santa Cruz, California. She describes them to Cross, who also sees the possible connection. Santa Cruz, Hughes claims, has a reputation for being the vampire capital of the world. When Hughes shares her plans to check the area out herself, Cross makes her promise to take Tim, her friend from the newspaper, along for the ride. Hughes brushes off his concern, citing that she is a big girl.

Chapter 76-79 Analysis

The murder of Daniel and Charles serves as the climax of the novel. However, both the falling action and the resolution include climaxes, as well. The murder of the Alexander brothers serves as a high point in the plot for the falling action, and the apprehension of the Mastermind is a climax in the final resolution of the novel.

Though the murder of the detective in New Orleans appears to be related to the vampire murders, closer examination reveals it to be the work of the Mastermind. He

kills another woman, in order to send a message to Cross about his relationship with Hughes. It is a warning, though the message only becomes clear to Cross much later in the novel.

The reader sees more foreshadowing in Cross's warning to Hughes. One may even guess the result of such warnings. Within the plot of the vampire murders, Hughes's capture signals the beginning of the resolution. It leads authorities to the vampire compound in Santa Cruz and, ultimately, the capture of the new Sire. For the whole novel, however, Cross's realization of the Mastermind's true identity and the subsequent chase signal the final resolution.



Chapter 80-82

Chapter 80-82 Summary

Hughes opts to drive to Santa Cruz alone, because Tim has a prior engagement. There, the local police, who seem oblivious to the possibility of crime going on in their area, anger Hughes. Harry Conover, a lieutenant with the Santa Cruz police, assures her that there are no vampires in the area, only restless kids. She ignores all his reassurances and asks for directions to the areas where the largest groups of kids live.

Feeling very under appreciated for investigating in someone else's area, Hughes parks her car and prepares to travel the town on foot. Right away, two young men with blond ponytails approach her. She pretends to be looking for the beach, but they continue to approach her, too closely. When she asks them to back off, they identify themselves as William and Michael. They reveal that they know her name. They tell her that, if she hunts vampires, vampires will hunt her.

The brothers gag Hughes and load her into a truck. They drive for a long time before carrying her into a building full of vampires. They describe The Sire to her. They also describe how they will hang her and drink her blood. Hughes screams when one of the brothers lunges for her, taunting her.

Chapter 80-82 Analysis

For the first time, the point of view switches to that of Jamilla Hughes. It reveals her character to be very similar to Cross's, in her self assurance and dedication to her work. Two points of view collide, however, when the Alexander brothers capture Hughes. They repeat the line that Snyder told Cross, that vampires will hunt those who hunt for vampires. Such repetition illustrates the organization of the vampire's society. Such continuity across the country makes the society of vampires more threatening.



Chapter 83-87

Chapter 83-87 Summary

Upon returning to Washington, Cross receives a message to call Hughes's friend Tim at the San Francisco examiner. Cross immediately becomes worried about Hughes. He asks Tim if she has returned from Santa Cruz and, more importantly, if someone went with her. Tim says no on both accounts. Cross calls the local authorities in Santa Cruz. Lieutenant Conover does not appear worried. Cross finally presses him into sending out some patrol cars. He describes the vampire style murders, trying to motivate Conover into helping. Cross feels certain that Hughes is in trouble.

Cross immediately flies to California. He wonders about the Mastermind during the flight. He has not heard from him in days. He wonders, though, if the Mastermind could be on the flight with him.

At the airport, Cross meets with FBI agents. On the drive to the suspected location, an agent describes the large farm that used to house exotic animals, such as tigers. Just outside of the commune, Cross meets a group of agents, led by Kyle Craig. Craig describes what they have learned about the group living on the large farm. He shows Cross a tiger's head branded in the old gate. Craig excitedly assures Cross that they have found what they have been looking for. Furthermore, Craig is sure The Sire, the ringleader of the vampires, lives inside.

When Cross presses Craig to make a move to save Hughes, whom a witness places inside the farm, Craig expresses caution. He informs Cross that the first objective is to learn enough about the group to bring down The Sire. All night, the authorities watch the farm. At midnight, they watch William and Michael play with the tiger before putting it to bed. They quickly learn about the secretive upbringing of the brothers, and of their prison record. At Craig's insistence, Cross gets some sleep. At daybreak, they prepare to enter the vampires' commune.

As Craig and Cross approach the commune, people emerge from the house in black robes in pairs. One in each pair holds a gun to their partner's head. There is no way to identify if one of the robed figures is Detective Hughes. Craig commands the authorities to move in quickly. Hughes drops to the ground, signaling her identity. Snipers quickly take out the person nearest her. She describes a crazy scene inside, where they hung her from a beam. She warns Cross that there may be another exit from the building.

Chapter 83-87 Analysis

Cross's flight to California alludes to the beginning of the novel, when he first flew to California. He reviews the case on the plane, and he meets the officials at the airport. This time, however, his interest in the case rises, because of his personal interest in Jamilla Hughes. Craig's reasons for not entering the compound appear sensible to



Cross, who also wants to catch the vampire killers. Craig's real reason, though, stems partly from his discontent about Cross's relationship with Hughes, or women in general.

Conover appears in the novel to emphasize the dedication of officers such as Cross and Hughes and even, to some degree, Craig. Conover only does as much work as he must, whereas Cross sees fighting crime as his life's work. Hughes also felt frustration at Conover's lack of dedication to his job.

In the fight of good versus evil, the main theme of this novel, good pulls ahead as the FBI raids the compound in Santa Cruz. Such a theme appears often in literature, having a damaged hero, such as Cross, who gives so much to his work that he feels guilty about leaving his family. In this novel, Cross fights an evil without a face. The Sire, whose identity remains a mystery even to the reader, represents the evil that Cross strives against. The theme carries in the subplot of the Mastermind, where once again Cross represents the good hero, and the Mastermind symbolizes the evil antagonist.



Chapter 88-92

Chapter 88-92 Summary

Inside the house, Hughes and Cross find two dead teenagers, apparently street people. They have been drained. The house itself looks very unkempt. When they find a hatch in the floor, leading to a dark tunnel, Cross enters alone and sends Hughes for help. Filled with fear, Cross enters the tunnel. First, he finds the remains of one of the tiger's last meals, a small deer. A few yards into the tunnel, he hears the cat roar. As he fears the cat begins to approach, Craig enters the tunnel from behind him. He warns Craig to stay still, fearing for his life. The large tiger rushes Cross, knocks him aside and rushes past. After the tiger runs past Cross, he shoots, and kills the giant cat.

Cross, Craig and Hughes stare shakily at the dead tiger for a few minutes before making their way to the end of the tunnel. When they reach the mouth of the tunnel, Cross offers to go first. There, he finds himself in a larger cave. Just when they thought no one was around, a black truck approaches them fast. Considering his options quickly, Cross decides to stand his ground against the killers in the truck. Hughes reminds him that the vampires will bleed, too.

Cross takes multiple shots at the truck. After it charges him the second time; it flips and slides down the hill. Michael Alexander emerges in a rage at Cross, who just killed his brother William. Even as Michael charges, Cross cannot shoot. Just before the young man attacks Cross, Craig brings him down. Noticing movement in the truck, Cross approaches cautiously and curiously. There, to his surprise, he finds Peter Westin, vampire expert from the university. Cross realizes Westin now acts as The Sire. Despite several attempts, Westin refuses to reveal much to Cross. He claims that a person such as Cross could not understand how he feels. When Cross mentions Westin's love for the Alexander brothers, Westin agrees, but still refuses to converse. Cross realizes the chase is now over.

Chapter 88-92 Analysis

There is a moment of irony when Craig fires the shot that saves Cross's life, but the reader lacks the clues to recognize it. When Craig's identity as the Mastermind comes to light, the irony becomes clear. However, further consideration shows that Craig saved Cross only to have the opportunity to kill Cross himself.

Also, as the falling action continues, Cross slays the tiger that symbolizes the evil that he pursues. After he kills the tiger, he has the courage to stand against the killers when they charge him in the truck. He also gains the courage to face Kyle Craig. Ultimately, Cross even finds the nerve to change the course of his life by resigning from the police department.



Westin's appearance as the new Sire presents a twist to the reader. It also acts as a resolution to the case of the vampire murders. The case lacks the resolution the reader may hope for, though, because Westin fails to answer Cross's questions about the workings of the vampire society. Westin seems to respect Cross, as he already evidenced in his previous interview. However, he maintains his perceived mental superiority by asserting that Cross could never understand how a vampire thinks and feels.



Chapter 93-97

Chapter 93-97 Summary

This chapter opens with the phrase "part five, violets are blue." Cross begins to experience relief as details about Westin and the vampires surface. Westin met the magicians and pretended to follow until he felt able to oust them. He also recruited William and Michael to kill for him, in the cities where the magicians appeared.

Even with Westin in jail and the case wrapped up, Cross feels uneasy. He thinks of Hughes in San Francisco and fears for her safety. He ponders the feelings for some time before he realizes the cause: the Mastermind is still at large. Cross flies to San Francisco from Santa Cruz and drives, quickly, to Hughes's neighborhood. He sits in the car outside her house, remembering the fate of his past partners. He realizes the Mastermind hates women in general, given the cruel ways he killed Cross's partners in the past. As he sits in the car, the Mastermind calls. He taunts Cross, asking him why he remains in California. He asks how Cross can be sure that his family in Washington DC is safe. Cross, in a panic, calls his home. When no one answers, he calls his friend Sampson and orders him to get to Cross's house immediately. As Cross waits, he continues to remember and worry. Sampson calls Cross back when he arrives at the house. Cross insists upon talking with Nana. He has formulated a plan.

Cross arranges for Sampson to watch his family. He continues to wait anxiously for Hughes. Tim, her friend at the newspaper, does not know where she might be. Finally, she arrives home. Cross calls her at home, sharing with her his worries about the Mastermind and some of the reason behind it. After hanging up, he continues to watch Hughes's house for hours. Finally, the Mastermind appears and Cross understands everything. The Mastermind is Kyle Craig. Cross calls Hughes, tells her who the Mastermind is and that he is outside her house. She instructs Cross to enter her house through a service entrance. Inside, they wait for Craig's next move. Hughes wonders why Craig targets her. Cross explains that it is all about Cross and Craig, and Craig proves his superiority in every area.

Chapter 93-97 Analysis

Cross begins to realize the significance of the murder of the female detective in New Orleans. Given the fate of his last two female coworkers, he fears the Mastermind is responsible. Suddenly, he fears for Hughes's safety, realizing that Hughes is most likely the Mastermind's next victim. Once again, Cross's gut instinct works as foreshadowing. It also leads him to the place where he learns the true identity of the Mastermind. Sampson and Craig operate as contradicting characters in Cross's life. Sampson looks out for Cross as a true friend; he helps at a moment's notice and without much explanation. Craig seems to want Cross to succeed, but he only helps as a way to manipulate Cross's future.



The two plots that ran in tandem throughout the book quickly draw to an end. Cross moves from the resolution of the vampire murders to the falling action of the hunt for the Mastermind. This subplot climaxes when Cross learns the Mastermind's identity. The ensuing case makes up the falling action, with the resolution occurring when Craig and Cross finally meet again.



Chapter 98

Chapter 98 Summary

The Mastermind pulls back from Hughes's house to watch. He relishes his twisted past. He remembers his partnerships with murders of the past. He sees himself as superior to most killers, because he not only hunts people, he hunts murderers, as well. To himself, he reveals his role in many of the serial killers the FBI has caught. He also remembers his long career as a serial killer, in many cities in the east. He worries that the FBI is catching on, however. He realizes he must kill Cross soon.

Chapter 98 Analysis

Craig exhibits unusual control for a serial killer, which he enjoys about himself. The reader feels shock as Craig describes the part he had in many murders that Cross investigated through the years. Rather than his life as an agent drawing him into a life of crime, his habits as a serial killer, a hunter of people, led him to his work at the FBI. He feels invincible, due to his training and his position. However, he realizes that his time as the Mastermind draws to a close.



Chapter 99-101

Chapter 99-101 Summary

For hours, Cross and Hughes sit in her apartment in the dark. They discuss Craig. Though Hughes says she never liked him, Cross laments that he did; he thought of Craig as a friend and colleague. After hours of sitting, they hear someone picking the lock on the terrace. Hughes assures Cross that they will win. Cross attacks the man, beating him until Hughes turns on a light and they realize the man is not Kyle Craig.

Still being cautious of the possibility of gunfire from outside, Cross and Hughes question the man. He identifies himself as FBI. When more agents arrive, they learn that Craig ordered the man to break in, because Cross and Hughes had been murdered. Cross comes forward with his suspicions about Craig. They receive the idea only somewhat skeptically.

Cross receives a call from Burns, the director of the FBI. Burns describes his suspicions about Craig as well, explaining that they began with the murder of Cavaliere. Burns also describes Craig's relationships with past serial killers. After hanging up with Burns, Cross calls Sampson, explaining to him the truth behind the Mastermind. Sampson responds incredulously, but assures Cross that his family remains safe. Before hanging up, Cross impresses upon Sampson how dangerous Craig is.

Chapter 99-101 Analysis

The author continues the pattern of creating a suspenseful scene and leaving the reader hanging. The reader feels some resolution that Cross catches the intruder, but when it turns out to be someone else, the action turns suspenseful instead. Only then does Cross learn the extent of Craig's past. A conversation with the Director of the FBI, Burns, reveals the suspicions many harbored about Craig, including Betsey Cavaliere. The novel, which seemed to be drawing to a close, once again revs into a suspenseful chase scene, with Cross in pursuit of Craig. Cross quickly realizes that pursuing alone will not catch Craig. He must get ahead of the killer.



Chapter 102-106

Chapter 102-106 Summary

Cross says goodbye to Hughes once again, admitting that it is harder each time. He flies into Washington DC and makes his way to his Aunt Tia's house. Though he worries about the Mastermind following him, he spends the evening playing with his kids. He relishes the good time with them.

The next day, Cross returns to Washington DC and meets with the FBI. Cross begins to wonder who might be Craig's next target. Cross begins calling every person he fears Craig may attack. He begins with his ex-wife, Christine. He also calls Hughes and Zach Taylor, his contact at the Washington Post. Cross knows Craig is jealous of the press Cross receives from Taylor. He even calls Kate McTiernan, knowing that she is on Kyle's list, somewhere. Cross makes two lists of possible victims, the first from his point of view and second from Craig's.

Early the next morning, Craig calls Cross. He explains that he has killed again, but he feels no remorse. Cross insists on knowing whom he killed, Craig only rambles about his reason for killing. He blames Cross for all the crimes. Finally, Craig describes the recent murders in detail. Cross rushes to the scene.

Craig's victims are Liz and Zach Taylor. Cross feels the murders personally. They died of single gunshot wounds to the head, showing that Craig targets Cross, not the victims themselves. Cross's desire moves from capture to kill. He wants to hurt Craig, as he has been hurt. He instructs the crime scene techs to document everything, though Cross realizes how futile that is as they already know who killed them.

From the Taylor home, Cross returns to his own house on Fifth Street. He becomes more worried about the safety of those around him. He also worries about the safety of Craig's own family. He wonders about Craig's mention of sibling rivalry and remembers that Craig's brother died in a hunting accident. Cross wonders if Craig killed his own brother all that time ago. When Craig calls during the night, Cross unplugs his phone, vowing to play the game by his own rules now.

Chapter 102-106 Analysis

Craig's character becomes simpler as the resolution draws near. Up to this point, he held two very different worlds in a delicate balance. Now, the reader sees him as only the Mastermind. All of his actions reflect only this more sinister side of his personality. Given that simplification, Cross begins to profile this killer whom he thought of as a friend. Cross's talents as a criminal analyst prove adequate in hunting such an adept foe.



Throughout the novel, the phone symbolizes Craig's hold over Cross. Not only does the Mastermind use the phone to taunt Cross, Craig also calls in the middle of a date to call Cross to the original murder scene. Craig, as the Mastermind, also thwarts Cross's attempts to track him, by devising a signal that Cross cannot trace. Furthermore, Craig arranges calls for Cross when they are together, which throws Cross further off his trail.

The theme of brotherly relationships appears starkly in this portion of the novel, when Cross begins to interview Craig's family. After Craig's living brother admits that he suspects Kyle Craig killed their brother Blake, Cross suspects that Craig also sees him as a brother. Such a realization acts as an epiphany for Cross. It leads him to make his next moves, to get ahead of Craig's game.



Chapter 107-111

Chapter 107-111 Summary

The next morning, after reviewing once again what he knows about Craig, from a psychologist's point of view, Cross calls Craig's older brother. Martin Craig describes his younger brother in chilling terms, as a man with a rich fantasy life and no conscience. Martin Craig believes Kyle killed their younger brother Blake; Martin wants to see Kyle in the electric chair. Given Craig's huge ego, Cross arranges for a press conference, in which he undermines Craig's abilities and describes him in less than flattering terms. FBI director Burns also chimes in about Craig's mediocre success and the extent of the manhunt. Cross hopes that such a move will catch Craig off guard and anger him into making a mistake.

Cross visits his family, still staying at Aunt Tia's house in Baltimore. He meets the FBI agents posted there and reassures his family. He promises his children that some changes will be made, after this ends, to make life at home better than before.

Cross then flies to North Carolina to interview Craig's family. He gains little help from Craig's mother. His brother, though, tells a different story. He describes how Craig was a bully at school. He negates Craig's claims of abuse by their father. In fact, Martin Craig asserts that Kyle got far less than he deserved. Cross leaves the interviews with little clues about Craig, especially concerning who his next victim may be. He remembers that, with the Taylor's murders, Craig warned that the worst is yet to come. The worry drives Cross into a panic.

Chapter 107-111 Analysis

Just before the end of the novel, the reader feels that Cross may not catch his man. The Mastermind haunted Cross for some time. It seems that the author will save the character for another story. Due to the personal nature of Cross's quest, the suspense heightens even beyond that of the vampire murders. The reader fears, not only for Cross's safety, but that of his family.

Aunt Tia's house represents a safe haven for the Cross family. Often, Cross thinks of his Aunt Tia, Nana's sister, fondly. Whereas Nana represents a mother figure, Aunt Tia represents the overindulgent grandmother, who spoils Cross when he visits and never forgets his birthday. He feels somewhat reassured about Aunt Tia's presence. Cross's life includes two very strong females, in Nana and Aunt Tia. This serves as a clue about Cross's own attraction to powerful women.



Chapter 112-116

Chapter 112-116 Summary

Cross drives to Nag's Head, North Carolina, where he had visited with Kate. He worries that Craig will return here, to target Kate. He calls ahead, warning Kate, ordering her out of town. He arrives at her house and sits in wait for Craig. The phone rings. Cross answers Craig's call, begging to know where he hides. Craig taunts Cross, threatening his family, describing the house where Cross's aunt lives. Suddenly, with a scream, Craig emerges from a trapdoor to the attic. He stabs Cross in the chest with an ice pick. Cross rebounds and attacks Craig. He wants to hurt him. He punches him, for all the wrongs he has done, until Craig is unconscious. Cross looks upon the capture of the Mastermind as a beginning. Cross makes a phone call and gets Craig talking. Craig continues to exhibit great confidence and arrogance. He explains that he killed Betsey Cavaliere as she was too close to Cross. He threatens to kill Jamilla the same way. This causes Cross to shakily point his gun at Craig.

When Cross tells Craig it is over, Craig responds in disgust. He points out that Cross has no evidence. He taunts Cross with the fact that, if Cross shoots him, Cross becomes a murderer, as well. Yet, Cross informs Craig that he does, in fact, have evidence, the call he made while Craig was unconscious was to his home phone, and the whole conversation, including the confession to Cavaliere's murder, is recorded on Cross's home answering machine. At this, Craig attacks Cross. Cross defends himself with a punch that knocks out some of Craig's front teeth.

Cross wraps up the book by describing his time with his family. He spends quality time with each of his children and even takes cooking lessons. He relishes quiet time playing the piano, and no one brings him bad news. He also decides to resign from the Washington DC police department.

Chapter 112-116 Analysis

The novel does reach resolution when Cross apprehends Craig. In an ironic twist, Cross uses Craig's own weapon of manipulation, the telephone, to record Craig's confession. It comes as a surprise that Cross takes Craig alive, but such an action preserves Cross as the righteous hero. As with the capture of Peter Westin, many questions remain unanswered, though Craig offers a great deal more information. He brags about his actions to Cross. Cross relishes the fact that, when Craig appears in the press, he is missing teeth. Such a picture undermines his self confidence and symbolically shows that the Mastermind bears no threat. Michael Alexander once called the police toothless. In the end, the crooked cop, Craig, is toothless. Cross, however, is not.

As in many serial novels, the end leaves the reader with questions. Foremost, one wonders what Cross will do after resigning from the police department, because Cross

suggests that he wants to tell more stories. He also admits that he is in love. One assumes that his love interest is Jamilla Hughes.



Characters

Alex Cross

Alex Cross, the protagonist of this novel, narrates much of the novel from the first person. In his role of detective and profiler, Cross stars in many such novels. Cross holds degrees in psychology and works as an investigator with the Washington DC Police Department. He lives with his three children and his grandmother in the same neighborhood he grew up in in Washington DC. On occasion, Cross consults for the FBI as a criminal profiler. He enjoys a great deal of success in both lines of work.

In this novel, Cross accepts an invitation to aid the FBI in investigating a string of vampire murders. Cross shows extreme dedication to his work. Though he loves his family, he often leaves them to pursue the worst criminals in the hardest cases in the country. In this novel, Cross begins to fear that his work infiltrates his personal life to much. The main cause of this worry is the Mastermind, a self-proclaimed serial killer who frequently calls Cross and taunts him, threatening the safety of Cross's family.

Cross's character comes to embrace his fears in this novel. He solves both the vampire murders and catches the Mastermind. These victories give him the courage to make major changes in his life, such as resigning from the police force. Cross is a damaged but always good hero in this novel. Even when he has the opportunity to kill an evil person, he cannot. He even brings in the Mastermind alive, though the man frequently threatened Cross's family.

Jamilla Hughes

Hughes works as one of the only women detectives in San Francisco. She possesses the self confidence necessary for such as task. Cross meets her when he travels to California to investigate the murders in the Golden Gate Park. The two feel an immediate reaction, which Cross credits to the heightened emotions that surround a murder case.

Hughes is a female version of Alex Cross. She dedicates most of her life to her work, though she seems to show signs of a love life that Cross lacks. Through her time in San Francisco, she enjoys some success. Her motivations remain pure and cause her to go above the call of duty, to investigate in New Orleans and other places out of her jurisdiction. She appears fairly headstrong, however. She shows this by disregarding Cross's warnings about traveling to Santa Cruz alone. This nearly proves to be a tragic flaw for Hughes, until Cross arrives to rescue her. Hughes and Cross share personal details with one another, as their relationship deepens. After Cross rescues her twice, first from the vampires and then from Craig, the two seem to have a true romantic relationship.



Kyle Craig

Cross knows Kyle Craig from previous jobs he worked on with the FBI. Craig appears to be a secretive but competent agent. Cross even suspects that Craig stands in line for the job of FBI director. Craig seeks for Cross to work for him at the FBI. Cross appears to be considering the move for much of the novel. Craig's character proves talented as an agent when he guns down Michael Alexander just before the boy attacks Cross.

Craig possesses an evil alter ego, however. He is also the Mastermind, a serial killer that frequently calls Cross and taunts him, even threatening the safety of his family. As the Mastermind Craig follows Cross, he even breaks into his house while the Cross family sleeps. He knows intimate details about each member and fantasizes about killing all of them.

Cross only learns Craig's identity as the Mastermind after they solve the vampire murder case. Cross fears that the Mastermind plans to target Hughes. Such fears prove true; as Cross watches Hughes's house, Craig appears.

Craig claims his motivation stems from his father's preferential treatment of his brothers during his childhood. Interviews with Craig's brother, though, reveals that such claims are false. Martin Craig maintains that their father never abused Kyle. Martin also suspects that Kyle killed their brother Blake.

When Craig realizes that Cross knows his true identity, he determines to kill Cross before the authorities catch up to him. The two men meet at the home of Kate McTiernan, a former victim that Craig feels possessive towards. Cross prevails, though. Not only does he physically subdue Craig, he intellectually overpowers him by taping the whole conversation on his home answering machine, thanks to a call from Cross's cell phone.

William Alexander

William Alexander is the older of the two vampire killers that Cross chases. Together with his brother Michael, he carries out the orders of Peter Westin, who hopes to become Sire of the vampire society. Due to their unconventional upbringing in a hippie commune, the Alexander brothers fear normal society. William acts as the dominate in the relationship. He sees that the brothers carry out Westin's commands accurately. Only once, when a girl mocks him on the street in New Orleans, does William lose control. William is a young man in his twenties. He practices the true vampire lifestyle and includes human blood in his normal diet. William drives the truck that attempts to run over Cross at the compound in Santa Cruz. He dies when Cross shoots him through the windshield.



Michael Alexander

Michael Alexander is a hostile young man in his late teens. He has grown to distrust authority, except that of his brother. He aids his brother in hunting and killing people in accordance to the commands of Peter Westin. The brothers fail to see themselves as serial killers. They view the murders as part of a grander scheme, in which they are but small players. Michael also cares for the brother's pet tiger, which accompanies them on the kill in San Francisco. After the death of his brother, Michael charges Cross, only to be gunned down by Kyle Craig.

Daniel and Charles

Daniel and Charles are brothers that travel the country performing what Hughes describes as an impressive illusionist show. They first appear in the story when William and Michael attend their show in Las Vegas and leave with a celebrity couple whom they later kill. While recuperating from his vampire bite, Cross connects the locations of the murders to the magicians' shows. The authorities quickly come to believe that Daniel and Charles are the killers they seek. Cross and Hughes infiltrate Daniel and Charles's home in New Orleans by attending an elaborate fetish ball that the brothers host. Daniel introduces himself as the Sire, or leader of the vampires. During a power outage, however, someone kills the two brothers. Cross realizes that the murders are about a power struggle within the vampire society.

Betsey Cavaliere

Betsey Cavaliere is already dead when the novel opens. She is Cross's former partner and lover. The Mastermind kills her to send a message to Cross. After Cross learns the Mastermind is really Kyle Craig, Craig admits that he killed Betsey as she began to suspect that he was the Mastermind. Because of Betsey's cruel fate, Cross approaches other female law enforcement officers with caution.

John Sampson

Another character that appears with Cross in the series, Sampson is a friend and fellow officer with the Washington DC Police Department. Cross often calls upon Sampson to protect his family in his absence. Sampson is a true friend to Cross, whereas Craig is a phony.

Martha Wiatt and Davis OHara

Wiatt and O'Hara, both in the military, currently live in San Francisco. Their murders draw Cross into the case of the vampire murders. Michael Alexander's pet tiger attacks



O'Hara. Wiatt then attempts to flag down a Red Cross van for help, not knowing the killers are inside.

Gloria Dos Santos

Hughes's friend at the newspaper tracks down the story of Santos, who claims she was attacked by vampires. Her story failed to make the mainstream media even at the time, because of the sensational details. Even as Cross interviews her, he remains skeptical. Soon, however, he becomes a believer in vampires.

Peter Westin

Cross meets Westin in his quest of more information about vampires. Westin works for the University of California and claims to be a vampire expert. Upon meeting him, Cross feels Westin dresses the part of a vampire. During their conversation, Westin describes the psyche of a vampire. He himself is one

Cross foreshadows that he will meet Westin again, but he fails to appear until the end of the plot concerning the vampire murders. After both the Alexander brothers lie dead, Cross notices movement in the truck. Out emerges an angry and confident Peter Westin. Cross realizes that the brothers acted out Westin's plan to assert himself as Sire over the vampires. In the ensuing interviews, Westin reveals little, claiming that Cross can never understand the mind of a vampire.

John Barreiro

Barreiro goes by the name of the Fresno Kid. Cross and Hughes interview Barreiro at work in a tattoo parlor in Fresno, California. Barreiro's work involves fitting clients for dental enhancements, usually vampire fangs. He talks proudly of his work and his association with the vampires, but becomes hostile about specific details.

Andrew Cotton and Dana Grey

The celebrity couple Cotton and Grey meet the Alexander brothers at the magic show in Las Vegas. They easily become seduced by the attractive brothers and invite them to their luxury room. There the brothers refuse use of recreations drugs and sex toys. They only bind the couple and drink their blood. The celebrity of the couple escalates the story in the national news. Cross begins to observe that the vampire killers only target physically beautiful victims.



Kate McTiernan

Kate McTiernan meets Craig and Cross to reminisce in North Carolina. The two agents met her when she escaped from the Casanova killer, a serial killer they helped to track down. She thinks fondly of both men, crediting them with saving her life and catching the man who tried to kill her. She shares with them her marriage plans.

She becomes Craig's last intended victim. He feels attracted to her and therefore possessive. Cross sets himself up as a trap at McTiernan's home in Nag's Head. The apprehension of the Mastermind occurs there.

Irwin Snyder

The FBI learns of a vampire style murder in Charlotte, North Carolina and tracks the killer to an abandoned home filled with teenage runaways. There, they find Snyder. They confirm that he killed the two victims, his parents. He claims he freed them from their bodies. Authorities quickly clear him of the other vampire murders. The interview ends when Snyder bites Cross. The ensuing infection grounds Cross at home in Washington as the investigation continues to New Orleans.

Maureen Cooke

After the magicians are killed in New Orleans, the Mastermind kills Maureen Cooke, a detective with the New Orleans Police Department. He does so to send a message to Cross, warning him against becoming involved with Hughes. Not until Cross apprehends Westin and moves to guard Hughes's house does he connect Cooke's murder with the Mastermind.

Nana

Nana Mama, Cross's grandmother, moves in with Cross to care for his children after his wife's death. She appears in several novels starring Alex Cross. Her role in Cross's life represents more of a mother figure than a traditional grandmother. She nags Cross about his time away from home. When he returns injured, she cares for him. She also possesses much strength as a woman. When Sampson moves in to guard the family from Craig, Sampson jokes that Nana is feisty enough to fend for herself.



Objects/Places

Washington DC

Alex Cross calls Washington DC home. He grew up there and lives in the same neighborhood with his children and mother. Cross also works for the Washington DC Police Department. Washington DC serves as a home base for all of Cross's operations. When the investigation goes out of state or he needs to regroup, he returns home to the care of his grandmother, Nana.

San Francisco

The murder that draws Cross into the investigation occurs in San Francisco. There, Cross meets Detective Hughes. Also, in San Francisco, Cross learns that Kyle Craig is the Mastermind. At the end of the novel, Cross admits to being in love, and one could claim that he left his heart in San Francisco.

Charlotte, North Carolina

Cross surmises that the vampire murders began, some years ago, in Charlotte, North Carolina. He later determines that the magicians committed the older murders. While interviewing Snyder in Charlotte, Cross suffers his vampire bites. The following infection sends Cross home, while the investigation continues. Yet, the downtime allows Cross to spot the connection between the murders and the magician's show.

New Orleans

Cross tracks the murders to New Orleans, ahead of any attacks there. In the historic French Quarter, the FBI sets up a stakeout outside of the magician's home. New Orleans boasts the most murders for a single city within the novel. William kills the magicians, their two princes and one girl on the street. The Mastermind kills Officer Cooke to send a message to Cross. The trail seems to end in New Orleans until Hughes's friend uncovers information about a vampire commune in Santa Cruz, California.

Santa Cruz

The case of the vampire murders ends in Santa Cruz, California, which Hughes learns is known as the vampire capital of the world. The local police there maintain that vampires do not exist. Yet, in a large compound, that used to be a hippie commune where the Alexander brothers grew up, a large society of vampires live. After the capture of Hughes, the FBI sets up a stakeout outside of the commune. When they



search the premises, they find the killers, William and Michael Alexander. They also find the new Sire, Peter Westin.

Nag's Head

Kate McTiernan's home in Nag's Head is the final stand between Cross and Craig. They meet face-to-face there for the first time since Cross realized that Craig is the Mastermind. Cross assumes that Craig will attack Kate because of the combination of his aggression towards women and his possessive nature towards Kate.

Fangs

The case turns from gruesome to bazaar when the dental expert consulted in San Francisco verifies evidence that the killers wore vampirelike fangs. Not until Cross interviews fang expert Barreiro does he become a believer in real vampires.

Tiger

The pet tiger of the Alexander brothers takes part in the murders in San Francisco. It represents the evil, animal-like killer that Cross hunts in this novel. Cross finally kills the tiger at the compound in Santa Cruz. Symbolically, he kills the power his job holds over his life and family.

Cell Phone

Craig and the Mastermind use the cell phone as a way to control Cross. The Mastermind frequently calls and taunts Cross at his most stressful times. In the end, Cross uses this weapon against him, when he calls his own home before talking to Craig in Nag's Head. Cross's home answering machine records the confession that leads to Craig's arrest.

Magic

The magic of Daniel and Charles baffles even the police. It represents the way that the brothers alluded police for so many years. Only when the Alexander brothers begin killing do the police suspect the magicians of anything.

Red Cross Van

Even the Alexander brothers catch the irony of their mode of transportation. They travel the country, do their work for Westin, in a presumably stolen Red Cross van. William



jokes that it endorses their habit of taking blood from people, even if it does not happen in the manner intended.

Aunt Tia's House

Cross uses Aunt Tia's house as a refuge for his family when he fears that Craig will seek to kill them. His aunt graciously accepts the family and spoils them, as she has done for Cross all his life.

Cross's House

Cross feels safe and relaxed in his home with his family. He does not suspect that the Mastermind sneaks in while they sleep. Only when he rests at home after his vampire attack does Cross suspect that anyone is in the house. After he moves the family to Aunt Tia's, he returns to the house alone, ready to do battle with the Mastermind.

Blood

To the vampire, blood represents a person's life force. They drink it to gain strength. It seems to be like a drug to them. True vampires, such as Westin, claim an ability to gauge a person's pranic energy. They desire to drink the blood of a person with high levels of pranic energy.



Themes

Good vs. Evil

As is the case with many crime dramas, *Violets are Blue* first shows the battle between good men and evil. Cross represents the good cop. He works with people such as Jamilla Hughes to bring justice to the world. Cross sees his work as a gift and a curse. He realizes that he possesses an unusual talent for reading the criminal mind and acting accordingly. Such work, though, brings him in contact with degrees of evil that most people never encounter and could barely imagine.

The Alexander brothers stand out as the most obvious form of evil in the novel. They murder people in the most gruesome ways imaginable and even desecrate the bodies of the dead, by drinking their blood. In a different way, Peter Westin also represents evil. He seeks not only to live the vampire lifestyle, but to lead and increase the movement, as well. As he remains undetected right in front of the authorities, Westin's character gains an even more sinister quality.

Kyle Craig, the Mastermind, shares many qualities with Peter Westin. Craig not only desires to hunt people, but to hunt their killers as well, as he describes himself. Craig represents an evil that, like Westin, remains hidden in plain sight. Craig's ability to fool even Cross gives him a deeper sinister quality than even Westin. Furthermore, Craig appears to be on the side of good, when he saves Cross from being attacked by Michael Alexander. The good becomes eerily evil when the reader realizes that Craig only saved Cross's life in order to take it himself, at a time of his choosing.

Good versus evil is perhaps the oldest theme in literature. In the most popular of literature through time, good wins. In the case of Alex Cross, however, evil impacts his life. It takes him away from his family and causes him to sacrifice even his own well-being. In the end, though, his encounters will even motivate Cross to make hard decisions about the direction of his life.

Brotherly Relationships

Brotherly relationships appear throughout the novel. First, the reader encounters William and Michael Alexander, two young men who, due to their isolation from society, grow very close to one another. Together, they are the primary criminals in this crime drama. William, the dominate personality, guides their actions, as he receives them from the Sire. Michael, younger and more impetuous, submits to his older brother for the greater good.

Next, the author introduces, through the travels of the Alexander brothers, the traveling magic show of brothers Daniel and Charles. In the show, Daniel ridicules not only his brother, but also the audience. Such dark humor draws large crowds for their magic shows. When Cross and Hughes attend Daniel and Charles's fetish ball in New Orleans,



Daniel reveals himself as the Sire, leader of the real vampire movement. That same night, unknown perpetrators kill both brothers. The reader comes to assume that William and Michael kill Daniel and Charles.

Kyle Craig's relationships with his own brothers cause many of his problems in life. His jealousy fuels his actions in youth, which in turn deepens his alienation with his family, especially his father. Craig comes to see Cross as a brother figure. He seeks to finally prove his superiority by besting Cross, ultimately killing him. Cross fails to see this motivation from the Mastermind, however, until Craig admits it in a phone call after Craig's identity is revealed.

Like the struggle between good and evil, brotherly tensions are among the oldest stories in literature. One can hardly consider matters of brotherly conflict, especially fratricide, without equating them with biblical themes. In Craig's case, his family suspects that Kyle killed his younger brother, but they never prove this.

Secret Societies

The real vampires in this book are those that practice vampire habits, such as drinking human blood. They separate themselves from role-playing vampires, who simply dress the part and hang out at goth clubs. While real vampires do dress the part and attend the clubs, they carry the attitude through their whole being. The vampires usually appear unashamed of their lifestyle. Peter Westin and the Fresno Kid both admit to Cross that they practice the vampire lifestyle.

Those in the vampire subculture become secretive, however, when an outsider probes the society itself. They protect the identity of other vampires, especially the Sire. They hint at criminal activity, threatening to hunt those that hunt vampires, but never admit to crimes or identify criminals. Among the suspects that Cross has questioned, the vampires prove to be the toughest to break. They remain silent, if not snide through hours of interrogation. Furthermore, they withstand techniques designed to break their will, such as withholding sleep.

The author describes the secret world of the vampires only as much as is necessary for the story. Often, the motivations of the Alexander brothers remain a mystery; the reader only knows that they relate to their part in the vampire culture. Even in the end of the vampire case, many questions remain unanswered. Peter Westin insists that Cross could never understand the mind of a vampire.



Style

Point of View

The author varies the point of view throughout the novel. Most of the time, Alex Cross tells the story in first person. The reader hears his frustrations and most intimate thoughts. He shares his personal and professional life. The reader also sees some of the story from a third person point of view when following the Alexander brothers and the Mastermind. The point of view is not omniscient, however. When the point of view switches to third person, the reader sees less of the actions. Often the narration becomes more vague, only clarifying when the point of view returns to Cross.

Though the book is a crime thriller, it does not remain a mystery for long. In the tenth chapter, the reader learns the identity of the killers. The remainder of the novel serves as a drama of cat and mouse. The reader watches as Cross chases the Alexander brothers, though he does not learn their identity until the end. Even after the reader learns the killer's identity, the suspense continues. A twist does present itself in a subplot, when they learn that FBI agent Kyle Craig is the Mastermind killer that taunts Cross through much of the novel.

Setting

The novel takes place in modern time, in various cities across America. Cross spends much time in his hometown of Washington DC, and the surrounding areas. The murders first bring him to San Francisco, his first trip to California. When leads dry up there, he returns home, only to be called again to South Carolina, followed quickly by Atlanta, Georgia and Charlotte, North Carolina. When Cross finally deciphers the method to the murders, the team lands in New Orleans. Each time they arrive in a city, Cross describes it in detail, as he does with all his descriptions.

The investigation comes full circle when it leads them back to California. The raid of the farm in Santa Cruz takes the readers on an extensive mental journey. The author describes the layout of the house and surrounding land. He also takes the reader through the tunnels that lead to the countryside where Cross finally finds Peter Westin and the Alexander brothers.

Language and Meaning

The author uses an educated but casual language for much of the novel. Only when the point of view changes to that of the Alexander brothers does the language become a little less sophisticated. Even they exhibit a maturity that belies their ages. Furthermore, the language remains free of regional dialect, even when the investigation takes them to the South. They do, however, use some jargon common for criminal investigations. Frequently, though, Cross explains terms that may be unfamiliar to the reader.



Cross's descriptions of people and places are always detailed. He even notices what his female counterparts wear. Often, he describes their outfits, noting when a woman wears designer clothes or when they appear unkept. He takes notice of the places, as well. Whether he knows the place intimately, such as Washington DC, or he is only seeing the place for the first time, as is the case in San Francisco.

Structure

The author tells the story in 116 short chapters. The chapter length varies from just a page or two to five or six. When the point of view changes, the chapter also changes. Sometimes the change of point of view lasts for a few chapters, sometimes the point of view returns to Cross after only one chapter. Furthermore, the chapters are divided into five parts and a prologue.

The novel moves mostly linearly, though occasionally the time repeats itself as the point of view changes. When the point of view jumps to that of the brothers, for instance, it then sometimes rewinds to cover the same time period in Cross's life.



Quotes

"Nothing ever starts where we think it does. So of course this doesn't begin with the vicious and cowardly murder of an FBI agent and good friend named Betsey Cavaliere. I only thought that it did. My mistake, and a really big and painful one." p. 3

"I did my best to laugh, but my insides were already tied up in knot. "Honestly, it's not as bad as it looks." It's much worse, Elizabeth. " p. 21

""What's the saying —'catch a tiger, if you can?' A tiger shouldn't be all that hard to find in San Fransisco."" p. 33

"I have yet to meet a relatively sane person who is anything but twitchy in a cemetery at night. I consider myself to be mildly sane; therefore, I was twitchy." p. 46

"There was a saying William wanted to whisper in their ears: If you hunt for the vampire, the vampire will hunt for you." p. 87

"You can be cynical about all this—or go with it. I choose to go with it. Makes life a lot easier and more rewarding." p. 133

"A good woman is hard to find too, I wanted to tell Macy. God, I hated dating." p. 143

"My mother and father had both died in their thirties, well before their time. My therapist has a theory that i see myself dying young because both my parents did. The Mastermind seems to hold a similar theory, and perhaps wants to put it into action soon. " p. 175

""Why are they playing at these little clubs? Why are they wasting their time here?" "Because they want to," I told her. "This is where they look for prey."" p. 217

""So tell me what you really think about Kyle. And men in general." Jamilla finally managed a smile. "I Think, and I'm being pretty objective and measured bout this, that he's a total control freak and a complete asshole. Your so-called friend. As for men, it varies with the individual."" p. 232

""I'm William. This is my brother, Michael. By any chance were you looking for us, Inspector Hughes?" Oh no, oh Jesus." p. 279

"I heard the tiger roar and almost dropped the flashlight! It wasn't the smoothest move of my life, but I'd never been in a closed-off area with a tiger before." p. 304

"I was looking at Peter Westin, the vampire expert I'd met weeks before in Santa Barbara...he told me he was a real vampire. I guess I believed him now. I finally found the right words. "you're the Sire."" p. 313



"Then I saw him, and everything made sense...The Mastermind was here in San Francisco. I was sure, and it made me dizzy with fear. But it also filled me with incredible disappointment, sadness, confusion. I felt like I might throw up. It was Kyle Craig." p. 331

"I had to say good-bye to Jamilla Hughes again, and each time it was a little hard." p. 347

"Sketch, video, photograph," I told Lyle. But I really didn't need any of it. I didn't need anymore graven images or even any evidence. I knew who the killer was. " p. 358

"I picked it up, clicked it off, then unplugged the phone from the wall. No more phone tag, Kyle. Fuck you. I was setting the rules now. This was my game, not his. " 362

"My brother was a goddamn monster, and apparently he still is." p. 373

"I made a phone call. A Very important call. This was just the beginning, wasn't it." 383

"Everything had been leading up to this moment—the last few years, all of Kyle's tricks" p. 387

"Tomorrow? Well, tomorrow was a big day too. I was going to resign from the DC police force in the morning." p. 391



Topics for Discussion

Which character do you relate to most? Explain.

Discuss the development of Alex Cross in this novel.

How does Cross's relationship with his mother effect his relationships with other women?

Is Kyle Craig believable as the Mastermind? Cite examples to support your opinion.

What is the importance of the brother relationship in this novel?

Can a person be inherently evil or must it be learned? Support your point of view with characters from the novel.

How does Cross's ethnicity effect his character?

Is Cross a good father? Explain.

What does the tiger symbolize in this novel?

How does the author's tactic of switching points of view effect the plot?