

# **Witness in Death Study Guide**

## **Witness in Death by Nora Roberts**

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# Plot Summary

WITNESS IN DEATH by Nora Roberts writing as J.D. Robb is an interesting murder mystery centering around a group of actors with ties that bind them all to the past. Eve Dallas, a lieutenant in the New York Police and Safety Department is called in to solve the murder of Richard Draco, the leading man.

Eve Dallas witnesses a murder while enjoying a night at the theater with her husband, Roarke. Richard Draco, the leading man, is stabbed through the heart and killed when someone switched the prop knife on stage with a real one from the kitchen. Eve begins investigating at once, and before long the main list of suspects is narrowed down. The actors in the play are all honest enough, reporting that Richard Draco was a vile man. Dallas does not care what type of character he was; she is only concerned with finding the killer and bringing him or her to justice.

A second murder is committed when Linus Quim, head stage hand, attempts to blackmail the killer. Though the murderer attempts to make the killing look like a suicide, Eve Dallas sees through the ruse and continues on her quest for justice. The main players become more nervous and defensive as their pasts are linked to Richard Draco. All the players are tied to him, either directly or indirectly, and all have reason to despise the man. Even Eve's close friend, Nadine Furst, has reason to despise Draco, having been in a relationship with the actor years before and being tossed aside in the end. When searching the victim's residence, Eve uncovers videos that Draco made while having sex with many women over time, videos of which the women are unaware. A stash of drugs is also found, drugs that Draco used to make his partners much more willing. Draco's character drops even more in Eve's opinion; however, it is not her job to like the victim; she is only there to catch a killer.

Digging deeper into the past Eve discovers that Richard Draco had been assaulted by Kenneth Stiles 24 years earlier after Draco had nearly destroyed the woman Stiles loved. The past returns when the daughter that Draco had fathered with that woman is cast in the play at the New Globe Theater. Carly Landsdowne is unaware that the leading man is actually her father, but her mother knows who Draco is. Areena Mansfield, the female lead in the play begs Draco to leave Carly alone, but the egotistical man instead pursues her and engages in a sexual relationship with her. Mansfield threatens to expose Draco for the vile man that he is and he breaks off the relationship cruelly, until he decides that perhaps a sexual relationship with both mother and daughter would be much more interesting. It is then that Mansfield decides that Draco must die and uses the play they are all cast in to deliver the killing blow.

Eve arranges a confrontation with the actors, accusing Carly Landsdowne of the murder in order to flush out the true killer. Mansfield confesses at once to protect the young woman that she had put up for adoption so long ago. Carly is devastated with the knowledge that her birth father could be such a disgusting human being but is left with the knowledge that her birth mother would go to the ends of the earth to keep her safe.



Dallas had arranged the confrontation so the young woman could take something positive from the entire horrible experience

Throughout the novel, Eve Dallas is relentless in her pursuit of justice, despite the fact that the victim was a truly horrible person who deserved the death that was his fate. Though parts of the case mirror the youth that Dallas can only remember small pieces of, the lieutenant still needs to close the case and find truth in the end.



# Chapters 1-3

## Chapters 1-3 Summary

WITNESS IN DEATH is a novel centering on Eve Dallas, a homicide detective in New York City in the year 2059. Dallas investigates the murder of Richard Draco, an actor in a play presented in a theater owned by her husband, Roarke. The investigation takes many twists and turns with Eve sometimes unsure if the actors involved are still acting. Dallas is able to sort truth from fiction and solve the case, despite the fact that the victim seems to have deserved his fate.

In chapter one, Eve Dallas enjoys a play with her husband Roarke at his recently opened New Globe Theater. The two banter about the play, with Roarke enjoying Eve's take on the action as it unfolds. There is a flirtatious air about them as they discuss the different possibilities and how Eve would handle the suspects if they were involved in a case she was investigating. The conclusion stuns Eve who is delighted to be in the audience until she realizes that the murder victim in the play has been murdered on-stage in front of hundreds of witnesses. Richard Draco, the star of the play, lies dead, a knife to the chest.

Eve immediately slips into work mode, as a lieutenant in the New York Police and Security. After a brief rundown by Roarke on the main actors involved, Eve sequesters those on stage, enlisting the help of Dr. Charlotte Mira, the department psychiatrist to maintain the scene until Officer Peabody arrives with the proper equipment for the investigation. Once the tools arrive, Eve checks the corpse, discovering that the prop knife that should have been used has been replaced with a real one. Eve declares the death a homicide.

In chapter two, Eve questions Areena Mansfield, the actor who has delivered the killing blow. Mansfield is distraught, horrified that she has killed Richard Draco. Areena takes Eve through the final act of the play and the murder of Draco. Mansfield explains her past with Richard, how they have worked together, but that he was very self involved and no one really liked him. Eve ends the interview and goes out to examine the crime scene, telling Peabody to get the names of those that need to be interviewed and let them go for the evening.

As Eve is examining the props, she is approached by Carly Landsdowne, another actor in the production. Carly is straight forward, telling Eve that she had an affair with Richard, who ended it in front of the cast while rehearsing. Carly reiterates Areena's description of Draco and also tells Eve about Michael Proctor, Draco's understudy, who will take over as star now that Draco has been murdered.

After Carly exits, Eve is presented with the prop knife, which is found in a vase of flowers in Areena Mansfield's dressing room. Peabody approaches with the information about interviews for the morning, and the two head to the cast lounge to interview



Mansfield again. The actress is deeply upset that the prop is found in her room, begging Roarke to tell Eve that she couldn't have killed Draco. Roarke assures her that Eve will find the truth. Mansfield is escorted home by Peabody, and Eve leaves with Roarke to go over evidence at home.

The murderer reviews the act of killing the man, feeling free and exultant. The killer finds it difficult not to scream from the rooftops that Richard Draco is dead and that they have done it.

In chapter three, Eve discusses with Roarke the information that she has discovered about Areena Mansfield to date. Mansfield has worked with Richard Draco several times and has had a drug problem in the past. The dates that she worked with Draco coincide with her arrests for illegal use. Roarke has knowledge of the former illegal use and of rumors that Mansfield and Draco had a relationship in the past, though if they were still involved in anything together, they have been very discreet. Roarke leaves to work for one of his many enterprises, promising to be home later that evening.

Eve checks her messages, most of them from the media, including her friend Nadine Furst. Eve has no intention of talking to anyone in the press at this time. Meeting with Chief Whitney, Eve agrees to a press conference at 2 PM, and the chief tells Dallas to divvy up the interviews of the audience, and have Feeney and the Electronic Detective Division do the background on the actors and theater personnel. Feeney isn't happy about it, but it is a direct order from the chief.

Dallas and Peabody head to the apartment of Kenneth Stiles, the actor who played the judge in the play. Stiles is waiting in his lavish apartment and does not waste time telling Dallas that Richard Draco and he were associates, but that he despised the man. Stiles seems to be entertained by the thought of being a suspect. Eve asks if Stiles felt in competition with Richard, but Stiles points out that he and Richard played very different types. Eve asks about Areena Mansfield and Stiles tells her that he feels badly for Mansfield and points out that someone used her badly.

Eve calls the medical examiner, Dr. Morse, who confirms that the cause of Draco's death was a stab to the heart. Eve is not surprised.

## Chapters 1-3 Analysis

In the first three chapters of WITNESS IN DEATH by Nora Roberts writing as J.D. Robb, the reader is introduced the main characters in the novel. The novel is a murder mystery set in the future in New York City. The main character is Eve Dallas, a lieutenant in the homicide department of the New York Police and Safety Department. Eve is married to Roarke an extremely wealthy man who seems to own everything, including the New Globe Theater, where he and Eve are spending a quiet evening together watching opening night of "Witness for the Prosecution." Eve is enthralled by the live theater, and Roarke is pleased to be able to provide something that makes Eve happy. Eve, being a detective spends the evening trying to figure out the mystery, though she, too, is



stunned when the last scene dissolves into an actual murder. Richard Draco is dead, a knife to the heart. The prop knife that should have been there had been switched for a real one, and Areena Mansfield has actually killed her leading man.

The professional side of Eve takes over immediately as she studies the crime scene and suspects. The reader is given a taste of the cop side of Eve, yet her tender side is visible as well when she is dealing with her husband. It is clear to the reader that Eve has a hard time showing emotion, yet she deeply loves her husband. Eve is more embarrassed by public displays than most.

The actors and suspects are also introduced to the reader. Areena Mansfield plays the lead in the play and is the person who actually commits the murder, however unintentionally. In the play, Areena plays the wronged wife, who kills her husband when he betrays her one last time. This is important, though the betrayal that takes place in WITNESS IN DEATH will not become clear to the reader until much later. Mansfield is a beautiful woman and talented actor, a fact that Dallas needs to keep in mind when dealing with all the suspects. Mansfield leans to Roarke for support, particularly after the prop knife is discovered in her dressing room. Roarke knows better than to interfere with his wife's police work and simply tells Areena that Eve will get to the truth. The calm statement is reassuring to Mansfield and bolsters Eve as well.

Carly Landsdowne is a beautiful actor who had been playing the role of lover to Richard Draco in the play and in real life. Landsdowne is the first of the actors to tell Eve that Richard's character is seriously flawed and that no one liked the man. Carly sees no reason to hide the facts or her relationship from Eve. The extent of Carly's relationship with Richard will become clear later in the novel, and this relationship is the basis for his murder.

Kenneth Stiles is the barrister in the production, and he is also frank with Eve when he tells her that he despised Richard Draco, though the reasons he gives are not complete. Later in the novel the depth of their relationship will be revealed. At this moment Stiles appears to be pleased to be involved in the investigation, finding it exciting. The actor does express concern for Areena Mansfield, believing that the fellow actor should not have been put through this tragedy.

Eve's assistant, Delia Peabody is introduced as well. Peabody is a police officer who wishes to be a detective, and her worship of Eve is clear. Peabody strives to be like Eve and to make Eve proud of Peabody. Peabody has a sexual relationship with McNab in the electronics division of the police department; this relationship makes Eve uncomfortable.

The root of Eve's dislike for emotional things is her youth. Having been abused by her father until she killed him at the age of eight, Eve had not had a healthy relationship. Her life had progressed with some friendships; however, it had taken her relationship with Roarke to allow herself to love. It is still difficult for her at times to believe that she is married, and that she and Roarke seem to be made for each other. Roarke is in the same position. Having been raised on the streets of Ireland, he had amassed a fortune

over the years, sometimes legally, sometimes not, and had used his power to make him happy. His relationship with Eve is now the central part of his life, and he understands that she feels the same way, unless she needs to solve a murder, because Eve also feels the need to avenge the dead.





# Chapters 4-6

## Chapters 4-6 Summary

In chapter four, Eve Dallas and Delia Peabody interview Michael Proctor, Richard Draco's understudy. Proctor is handsome and obviously worships Draco. The actor explains that even though Draco is dead, it is a thrill to step into his place and play his role, regardless of how long.

Dallas and Peabody discuss the naïve actor and the fact that he may have killed Draco to take his coveted role, though he seems innocent. While they discuss options, Eve takes a call from Nadine Furst, her friend and a reporter for channel 75. Eve believes Nadine wants an exclusive, but the woman begs to meet with Eve about something personal. At the Blue Squirrel, a bar they used to visit, Nadine stuns Eve, telling her that she had a sexual relationship with Richard Draco six years ago. Nadine had believed herself in love with the actor, until he flaunted his relationships with other women. To make matters worse, Nadine had seen Richard when he had returned to town at his hotel, where she had gone to try and close the door on their relationship. The two had fought, and there will be security recordings of her entering and leaving the hotel. Nadine went to the play on opening night and to go backstage and tell Draco off one last time, but had thought better of it and left.

Dallas is not happy that Nadine has made herself a suspect, even though she is aware that her friend is not capable of killing Draco in such a way. Eve advises Nadine to get a lawyer and come to the station to be interviewed formally, so the record is straight and it does not appear that she is hiding anything.

In chapter five, Dallas speaks briefly to Feeney, who tells her that Roarke had forwarded him all the financial information on the actors and employees for the New Globe Theater, and then goes home. At the door she is greeted by Summerset, the butler, and the two bicker back and forth before Eve goes to the game room to find Roarke. After chastising him for giving the financial information directly to Feeney, the two settle into a game of strip pinball, which Eve loses handily. The couple makes love, releasing all the pent up energy of the day, after which Roarke gets soup from the AutoChef, the device which supplies whatever meal is programmed into it. Eve plans to go to Draco's apartment after the meal and Roarke offers to go with her as he owns the building. When asked if Peabody will be joining them, Eve gets agitated, reminded that Peabody is with McNab, the electronics specialist. Roarke is amused.

Peabody and McNab lie in his bed, spent from having sex. McNab tries to keep Peabody from rushing out the door as she usually does, and Peabody tries to find a way to cover herself, get dressed, and leave as quickly as possible. McNab orders pizza and Peabody tells him that something is going on with Nadine and Dallas, something she is not privy to as she was not allowed to be part of the conversation. When McNab asks if she is jealous, Peabody gets angry.



In chapter six Roarke and Dallas search Draco's apartment. Dallas finds a video disc loaded in the screen, or television, and is disgusted to discover that the video is Nadine having sex with Draco. As Nadine had not mentioned it, Dallas is sure that Draco had videotaped the evening without Nadine's knowledge. In the actor's bedroom, Eve finds many different sexual devices, as well as illegals, or drugs. One of the drugs is Wild Rabbit, a potent mixture that works only on women, an aid to date rape for the most part. As Areena Mansfield lives in the same building, Dallas decides to pay her a visit, thinking that maybe the actress might have an idea about Draco's drugs, as they had shared a history in illegals in the past.

In Mansfield's apartment, Dallas finds the actor flustered that the investigation still involves her. Mansfield has company, Charles Monroe, a licensed companion or prostitute. The actor is embarrassed, but Dallas is more upset because Peabody has been going out with Monroe frequently and the detective does not like the idea. Roarke takes Areena into the other room so Dallas can speak with Monroe. The detective is angry, mostly because she does not want Peabody to have the relationship between Mansfield and Monroe thrust at Peabody in the station. Monroe does not want to hurt Peabody either, but tells Dallas that Delia is aware of his job, and that the two are just friends at the moment. Dallas relents, realizing that Monroe cares for her aide and would do nothing to hurt her intentionally.

That night, Dallas has a recurring nightmare where her father is abusing her in a Dallas hotel room. The detective is not surprised after all the talk of blood during the past few days. Roarke wakes her gently and holds her, promising never to let go.

## Chapters 4-6 Analysis

Another actor and suspect is introduced to the reader, Michael Proctor, Richard Draco's understudy. The young man is handsome and appears guileless, an innocent living in New York after moving from Nebraska three years earlier. Proctor obviously worshiped Draco and had watched him perform to the point that the dead man had angrily ordered him to stay away from him and had thrown a paperweight at him. Eve wonders if being embarrassed in front of the cast might make Michael angry, but the actor honestly seems to be repentant at having disturbed such a great actor's routine.

A phone call from Nadine Furst creates another layer in the murder for Eve Dallas. Her friend had a sexual relationship with Richard Draco six years earlier, and he had treated Nadine callously while she had fallen in love with the man she had thought he was. Nadine admits that the relationship had ended badly, but the worst news for Dallas is that Nadine visited Draco's apartment when he returned to New York for the play. Furst admits that she fought with Draco and attended opening night in order to confront the man one last time. Though Nadine changed her mind, the reporter placed herself at the scene of the crime. Dallas knows in her heart that Nadine did not kill Draco, but Dallas needs to get the report on record so there is no chance of a charge of impropriety.



At Dallas' home, the reader is introduced to the character Summerset, the butler and right hand man of Roarke. Summerset and Dallas have an interesting relationship, constantly bickering and slinging sarcastic comments at each other. The underlying relationship is one of respect, for they both love Roarke, and would do anything for him.

The relationship between Dallas and Roarke becomes clearer when they make love. The couple is extremely focused on each other, taking joy and passion but more concerned with giving to each other. Eve has never had someone that she had wanted to give herself to and please, and each time they make love, Dallas finds herself amazed.

The reader also gets a better glimpse into the life of Dallas's aide, Delia Peabody. Peabody is having a sexual relationship with Ian McNab, a detective in the Electronics Division at the NYPSD. Peabody does not have a good self image, always trying to diet and lose weight, though McNab likes her the way she is. This honestly puzzles the policewoman, as the male ideal of a woman seems to be one who is slim and sexy, something she does not consider herself to be. Peabody enjoys having sex with McNab, but can not seem to be comfortable afterward. McNab, for his part is frustrated, wanting to take their relationship farther, but constantly being put off.

The sexual aides and illegals in Draco's apartment add another layer to the victim's life. The witnesses and suspects have all painted him as a vain and unpleasant man, and the fact that he may have been drugging his unknowing sexual partners lends credence to that description. The disc that Eve finds of Draco having sex with Nadine disgusts her, as she knows Nadine was not a willing participant or the reporter would have told her. The decision to interview Areena Mansfield again allows the reader to learn of another character, Charles Monroe. Monroe is a licensed companion or prostitute. It is evident Eve does not approve of Monroe because of his choice in careers and his friendship with Delia Peabody. Monroe is finally able to get through to Dallas, convincing her that Peabody understands his job and that they have not had sex anyway. Dallas is surprised, and the two finally share a few minutes without the usual tension. This conversation is revisited later in the novel, as Dallas tries her best to keep her friends safe, shielding them from pain.



# Chapters 7-9

## Chapters 7-9 Summary

In chapter seven Eve arrives at work, delegates the background checks of the audience to Baxter, a fellow detective and finds a new computer being hooked up in her office two years after she requested it. Peabody arrives and Dallas fills her in on the items found in Draco's apartment, including the Wild Rabbit. Dallas tells Peabody to follow up on the drugs and heads to a meeting with Dr. Mira.

Dr. Mira tells Dallas that the killer is most likely one of the main players because Richard Draco's murder was steeped in theatrics. The murder was most likely professionally motivated, with the killer needing to prove that Draco was not the wonderful actor he appeared to be, but also most likely very personal. Though Michael Proctor is the only actor that would benefit directly from Draco's death, all the others would benefit as well, from the publicity surrounding the drama.

The two women also discuss Nadine, who is a patient of Dr. Mira's. The psychiatrist believes that Nadine has no knowledge of the video that Draco had made; if she did know, she might have hurt him badly but not planned the apparent execution at the hands of another. Dallas is relieved.

At the New Globe Theater, Linus Quim, a stagehand waits for the murderer to arrive. Quim has made his living backstage for over 30 years, and spends his time watching the actors he more or less despised. Quim had seen the knife switch and intended to bribe the murderer and retire.

The meeting takes place, and the killer ambushes Linus, drugging him to the point of docile attention. The killer instructs the stagehand to write a note which says "I did it." Quim is agreeable, between the drugs inhaled and thoughts of Tahiti swimming in his head. The killer asks him to tie a rope around a stage support and then jump, which Quim again does willingly. Linus dies, hanged, and the killer is relieved, having taken care of the threat of exposure and handing the police a neatly-packaged suspect.

In chapter eight, Roarke receives a call from the young man that was assigned to clean the theater after the police cleared the scene. Roarke arrives at the theater and discovers the body of Linus Quim hanging. Roarke calls Eve and she rushes to the scene. Upon her arrival, Eve investigates and hands the note on the body to Peabody. The aide suggests that Quim might have killed himself, and Eve snaps that Peabody should not make snap judgments. Chastised, Peabody speaks to Roarke who reminds her that Dallas takes all death personally. Dallas and Peabody search Quim's apartment and discover that though he lived rather shabbily, he had just looked up information on a trip to Tahiti, including transportation one way. To investigate further, Dallas sends the computer to the Electronics Division.



The detective and her aide arrive at the apartment of Eliza Rothchild, who played the nurse in the production at the New Globe Theater. Rothchild gives Eve and Peabody more information on the character of Richard Draco making it clear that she had no use for him. When Dallas informs the actress of the death of Linus Quim, there is a much different reaction. Rothchild suddenly believes that the people involved in the play are being targeted, and that death comes in threes. Whoever the killer is must be stopped. The three women are surprised by the arrival of Carly Landsdowne who heard of the death of Linus Quim while shopping and is upset. Knowing Eliza's home is close by, Carly arrived to commiserate. The two women share a drink and the police leave.

In chapter nine, Dallas visits with the medical examiner, Dr. Morse. Morse delegated the case of Quim to a newer examiner, and Dallas is not happy but tries to be patient. Feinstein gives Dallas the details of the case, and Eve is surprised that the young M.E. agrees with her that Quim had not killed himself. The mix of drugs in his system combined with the things he had eaten in the morning does not make sense if that was his plan.

After grumbling about the ruling of "undetermined" in the case of Quim's death with Peabody, Eve and her aide head to the bookie that handled Quim's betting. Arriving unannounced the two officers surprise Marylou Jorgensen who tries to flee and assaults Eve in the process. Eve knocks her unconscious and searches her building, realizing that the woman is running more than a license betting business. Dallas checks with Roarke and he agrees. When Jorgensen wakes up Eve tells her that she is not interesting in busting her, but in Quim. Jorgensen is relieved and tells Dallas that Linus Quim had made a bet the night before, telling her that he felt lucky. To Eve, this does not sound like the type of man that would kill himself hours later.

## Chapters 7-9 Analysis

Eve Dallas enjoys delegating more work on the case to Detective Baxter and is thrilled to have a new computer installed in her office two years after asking for it. The system at work is now comparable to the equipment in her home office that Roarke supplied.

The meeting with Dr. Mira regarding the murder and likely suspects is helpful to Eve, as the psychiatrist is able to narrow the field for the detective. Both women believe that whoever the murderer is, s/he has been acting the entire time, steeping the death of Richard Draco in theatrics. This leads Eve to believe that her thoughts about the killer being one of the main players are correct.

The two women also discuss Nadine Furst. Dallas is uncomfortable, but Nadine is a patient of Mira's and the doctor is aware of her relationship with Draco and the harm that he had caused Eve's friend. Dr. Mira agrees with Eve on this factor as well. Nadine would have reacted violently if she had known about the video that Draco made while they were having sex. Though this might strike some as damning evidence, it truly helps Nadine. There would have been no subterfuge in her revenge, and Nadine would not have been willing to have someone else exact her revenge.



The murder of Linus Quim adds a new dimension to the original case. Though the killer has clearly staged the death to look like the suicide of a guilty man, Dallas is clever enough to look past the obvious signs. When Delia Peabody assumes that the death is a suicide, Dallas chastises Peabody, who is embarrassed. Roarke calms the aide down, as he knows his wife well. All death is a direct assault on Eve, and though she tells others not to take murders personally, Dallas always does.

The fact that Linus Quim looked up information on a trip to Tahiti and placed a bet with a bookie saying he felt lucky, lends credence to Dallas's belief that the death of Quim is not suicide. The medical examiner feels the same but can only rule the death as undetermined until more information is provided.

The interview with Eliza Rothchild is revealing, not because the actress has any new information to impart, but because of her reaction to the death of Quim. Carly Landsdowne's reaction is the same. Dallas is intrigued by the fact that Richard Draco was murdered in front of his colleagues, and they had barely reacted, but the death of the stagehand had made the two actresses very upset. Now that death has moved outside the accepted circle, the major players seem to be worried.



# Chapters 10-13

## Chapters 10-13 Summary

In chapter ten the killer speaks once again briefly, wondering if the act of killing Linus Quim will be enough to fool Eve Dallas.

Dallas returns home intent on work and finds Mavis Freestone, her good friend and recording artist, dancing around the parlor, excited about her latest record. Roarke had backed Mavis and made her career possible. Mavis has planned a girl's night, frightening Dallas, who does not enjoy the poking and prodding required. The women are interrupted by the arrival of Nadine Furst, still upset about her interview with Dallas.

Mavis excuses herself and Dallas and Roarke speak with Nadine reassuring her. When Dallas informs Nadine of the sex tape that Draco had made, Nadine becomes enraged, but the anger displayed actually reinforces Dallas's opinion that Furst would not have let someone else plunge a knife into Draco's heart. Dallas has an idea and sends Nadine in her place for the girl's night that Mavis has planned, excusing herself without problems.

Elsewhere in the city, Delia Peabody enjoys a night out with Charles Monroe. The two take in an art show and dinner. Peabody has difficulty trying to fit into the mold of the caliber of people that attend such ritzy places. Over dinner, Monroe lets it slip that he and Dallas had seen each other at Mansfield's apartment, and Peabody is angry that Dallas had not told her. Monroe tries to tell Delia that he and Dallas had come to an agreement after he told the lieutenant that he and Delia haven't had sex, but Peabody is mortified, and calls an end to the evening.

In chapter 11, Peabody arrives at Dallas's home office, angry with the knowledge that part of the investigation had been withheld from her. Dallas snips back and finally explains in a roundabout way that she had been trying to protect Peabody's feelings. The two come to terms.

Dallas and Peabody head to Carly Landsdowne's apartment while McNab stays at Eve's home office to check the backgrounds of the key players again. At Carly's apartment, the two officers find her getting ready for Draco's memorial service. Landsdowne is a bit cocky at first, but Dallas shocks her when she reveals that Draco had videotaped her having sex with him. Landsdowne is disgusted but has to accept the fact that the evidence is sealed and will be given to her when the case is closed.

In chapter 12 Roarke stops by Eve's office to find McNab working on the suspect's backgrounds. The officer is frustrated as there does not seem to be any more information than what they have found already. Roarke sends McNab into the kitchen for coffee and does some searching of his own, also providing the search warrant necessary to do so. McNab is happy that he has a way to check sealed files but worries Dallas will discover Roarke's handiwork. Roarke is sure the detective will come up with



an explanation. The two men discuss women briefly, McNab revealing his frustration with Peabody and her relationship with Charles Monroe. Roarke gives him some advice and leaves for his office.

It is not long before McNab finds something interesting and contacts Dallas immediately to let her know. Dallas returns to the office expecting to find Roarke had illegally obtained the information, but McNab presents her with the search warrant. Dallas knows Roarke is behind it, but the warrant will hold up in court if needed. The sealed records show that Richard Draco had been assaulted by Kenneth Stiles 24 years earlier. Dallas tells Peabody to have the actor transported to the station. Before she leaves, McNab asks Peabody out on a date.

In chapter 13 Dallas and Feeney question Kenneth Stiles. The actor is outraged to have been brought in for questioning and even more upset when he realizes that the sealed records regarding his past with Draco have been opened. Realizing that the truth is his only option, Stiles reveals that years ago he had been in a relationship with a woman that Draco then seduced and tossed aside. The young woman, Anja Carvell, had tried to kill herself. Stiles had reacted in anger, attacking Draco bodily. Draco had sued Stiles and won, and the records had been sealed.

Eve attends the memorial service for Richard Draco, considering the things that had been learned so far. Richard Draco had slighted nearly everyone he ever met, some more than others. Roarke is attending the service as well and Eve discusses the love angle that Stiles presented. Roarke agrees that love is a powerful motivation.

## Chapters 10-13 Analysis

The case progresses slowly as the investigation seems to be stuck. Dallas believes there must be something in the past that is the motive for the murder and insists they look in that direction. McNab is frustrated by the red tape involved in such a task, knowing that if there is anything in one of the suspect's past, it is sure to be in a sealed record. Roarke has no problem using whatever means necessary to get what he wants, and he also enjoys having his hands in police work on occasion. Knowing that Dallas would not accept any evidence obtained improperly, Roarke manages to create a signed warrant to back up whatever McNab finds.

The information that McNab does find ties Kenneth Stiles to Richard Draco in a crime of passion 24 years ago. Though in his initial interview Stiles had stated that he was acquainted with Draco, the sealed file tells a different story. Stiles confirms this when brought in for an interview. Angry that his past has come back, Stiles gives Dallas and Feeney the details of his altercation with Draco. After the interview Dallas wonders if love is enough motive for murder so many years later. Peabody tells Dallas that the love of a lifetime can be motive enough for anything, and losing that love can be devastating. Using Roarke and Dallas as an example, Peabody points out that Roarke would do anything for Dallas, and it's possible that Stiles would do anything for the Carvell woman he had loved years ago.





Personal relationships shift into focus as Peabody's relationship with Charles Monroe and Ian McNab is mentioned. The aide's relationship with Monroe brings a battle with Dallas when Peabody discovers that her boss had discussed their relationship with Monroe. Peabody is angry and embarrassed, and Dallas is confused. The life that Dallas has led up until recently did not require her to worry about the thoughts and feelings of others, and there are times that she handles situations incorrectly. The two are able to smooth things out once Peabody realizes that Dallas had been trying to protect her, not keep things from her in the investigation.

McNab questions Roarke about women and how to keep Peabody interested in him when Charles Monroe is his competition. Roarke points out that McNab needs to contrast with the other man, rather than compete. Asking Peabody out on a date shocks the aide, as until this point she and McNab had only shared sex.

Carly Landsdowne is also unaware that she was videotaped having sex with Richard Draco, though she admits she might have consented if she had been asked. The actor is angry that she was unaware of it and wants the video when the investigation is over. Nadine's reaction is anger as well as embarrassment when Dallas informs her of the video she is in. Though Nadine believes her anger makes her a better suspect, the anger actually confirms Dallas's thoughts. There is no way Nadine would have been happy watching someone else kill Draco, as Nadine would avenge herself. This is an important point and will be revisited when Eve discovers the identity of the killer.



# Chapters 14-16

## Chapters 14-16 Summary

In chapter 14, Eve meets with Mira to discuss the interview with Kenneth Stiles. Mira does not believe Stiles is acting when he talks about Anja Carvell, that he truly still cares for her all these years later. Mira reminds Eve that despite her talent at reading the actions of suspects, the human heart and love are sometimes difficult to understand.

Eve is surrounded by people talking about true love and giving to those one cares about, and the talk starts to worry her. It seems to her that Roarke is always giving and she is always taking. Resolving to change that, Eve returns home intent on arranging an intimate dinner for two. Quickly overwhelmed, she still refuses Summerset's help when he finds her struggling over place settings and china patterns. Managing at last to pull things together, she is hurt when Roarke asks her what she wants. Assuming that Eve was up to something as she is acting completely out of character, Roarke is surprised at his wife's anger. Eve explains that she does not want Roarke to think that she takes him for granted, even though it may seem like she does. Dallas wants her husband to know that she does value him and love him. The two make love, and Eve tells Roarke to never stop needing her.

In chapter 15, Eve and Roarke share dinner and discuss their days. Eve tells Roarke that for the moment the love that Kenneth has for Anja Carvell is her biggest lead. Roarke agrees that she needs to speak with Carvell.

Kenneth meets with Anja in a small club. The actor lied to the police about losing touch with the woman he has loved all his life. Stiles had donned a disguise to slip past the police guarding his apartment. Anja is upset that the police suspect Kenneth in Richard's murder and vows to meet with Dallas and tell her the truth. Kenneth still wants to protect his friend and urges her not to.

Eve works in her home office running data on the other actors' backgrounds. She discusses Peabody and McNab with Roarke while she waits for the data. Eve is distressed to hear that her aide and the tech officer are on a date, dreading hearing details about their life that will bog her down in personal things. A file pops up stating that Michael Proctor's mother had been in a play with Kenneth Stiles and Richard Draco 24 years ago. Areena Mansfield and Eliza Rothchild had also been in the play. The time frame is the same as the attack on Draco by Stiles. The only name missing from the cast is Anja Carvell. Eve wonders if Carvell had a stage name. Eve also discovers that Carly Landsdowne has a sealed file. Eve recognizes the code as a family case. The timing fits together nicely. It seems Carly was adopted eight months after the assault on Draco. Eve believes that Landsdowne might be the child of Anja Carvell and Richard Draco.



In chapter 16, Eve calls Peabody who is out with McNab and slightly drunk. Dallas orders her to sober up and meet her in uniform at the home of Kenneth Stiles. When they arrive, Officer Trueheart is outside, assuring them that Stiles has not left the premises. Discovering that Stiles has in fact slipped his guard, Trueheart fears the wrath of Eve who assures him that Stiles had managed through his disguise to get by him and that he should not blame himself. Eve quizzes the officer and realizes how Stiles is now disguised and a bulletin is issued. Luckily the train that Stiles had been trying to take to Canada is stopped and the actor is recognized. At Grand Central Station Eve orders the Transit Authority to stand down; however, the captain in charge wants the glory of the arrest. Trueheart is severely injured in the crossfire, and Eve is devastated that she is responsible for the young officer's life.

## Chapters 14-16 Analysis

Love is central, both in the murder of Richard Draco, and in the life of Eve Dallas. When discussing the case with Dr. Mira, Eve discovers the doctor agrees with her. Kenneth Stiles had indeed loved Anja Carvell 24 years ago, and might still, judging by the way her speaks about her. After discussing things with Mira, Eve is bothered by all the talk over the past few days of true love and sacrifice. It occurs to her that Roarke is the one in their relationship that is always giving and that she might seem to be taking him for granted. Eve struggles to provide a romantic dinner for the two of them to show her husband that she loves him. As Dallas is not the romantic type, it is indeed a struggle, so much so that when Summerset finds her working at it she barely has the attention to give him toward their usual nasty banter. When Roarke arrives home and assumes that Eve is up to something, he realizes quickly that he has hurt his wife's feelings. The fact that she had thought to put her case aside and plan the dinner stuns him as Eve is usually completely focused on work until the mystery is solved. Because the two have such a wonderful relationship they are able to resolve the problem very quickly.

Kenneth Stiles is still protecting Anja Carvell, 24 years later. Donning a disguise and slipping past surveillance, Stiles meets the woman in a remote club. Anja appears devastated that Kenneth is a suspect in Draco's murder and wants to set things right. Stiles does not want the woman that he loves to be brought back to the past by Richard Draco once again.

Eve displays her character when Officer Trueheart is injured while trying to apprehend Stiles. The lieutenant feels directly responsible for the young man's injuries because she had him in front so he could pinpoint Stiles in disguise. Eve would rather have been the one injured, as Trueheart is so young and still learning. Despite the fact that Eve tries to push people aside and avoid personal relationships, the lieutenant does care deeply for those around her.

Eve's discovery that the suspects in the murder of Richard Draco had all worked with him 24 years ago around the time of Stiles assault on Draco is important. Even Michael Proctor's mother had been there. Anja Carvell was not, but there is a possibility that the woman had used a stage name. Eve also discovers the likelihood that Carly

Landsdowne is the child of Carvell and Draco, stunning information which will tie directly to the murder of the actor.



# Chapters 17-19

## Chapters 17-19 Summary

IN chapter 17 Eve rushes to the hospital to wait for information on Trueheart. While waiting she is reprimanded by Peabody for suggesting that she had been wrong for allowing Trueheart to be on the scene. Peabody reminds Eve that it could have easily been Peabody instead of Trueheart that was in surgery, and the aide would be very angry if Eve questioned her abilities in police work. Also at the hospital Eve meets Trueheart's mother. The woman is calm, sure her son will be fine because as his mother she would know immediately if that was not the case. Once again Eve is amazed by love.

The following morning Eve meets with her captain and gives him her report to date. Eve is given permission to pursue a warrant into Landsdowne's past. Before she can rest Roarke calls Eve and tells her that Anja is indeed Carly's mother, and Draco is listed as her father. Eve informs Peabody of this when the aide comes to let Dallas know that Trueheart is awake and doing well. Eve is relieved. As the two officers head to the hospital to see Trueheart, Anja Carvell calls Eve and asks the lieutenant to meet her at her hotel. Eve agrees.

In chapter 18 Eve meets with Anja Carvell. Anja tells Eve that she is sure Kenneth is not Richard's killer. Eve supplies some of the details that they have learned in their investigation, including that Anja had given birth to Carly Landsdowne. Carvell admits that Draco is her child's father but denies having any contact with her daughter after the adoption. Eve informs Carvell that Landsdowne had been in the play with Richard, and that the two had been lovers. Carvell appears stunned, and when Eve points out that Stiles might have realized that Draco was Landsdowne's father, he might have acted on his anger and murdered Draco.

Carvell is disgusted and worried about Stiles but reminds Eve that as revolting as the idea is that Draco or Landsdowne had been aware of their relationship and still pursued the other, Carvell does not have any motherly feelings for Landsdowne.

Eve and Peabody go to Carly's apartment to question her again. Eve looks around and can tell from the evidence that Carly had company in bed the night before and that whoever it is is still present. Eve asks to have the person present and they are joined by Michael Proctor.

In chapter 19, Eve speaks to Proctor, asking him about his mother's relationship with Draco. The actor admits that Draco had seduced his mother and tossed her aside, but that he had gotten over it. His mother had told him the type of person that Draco was and he had put it out of his mind and gotten on with his job. When Michael goes for coffee Carly defends him to Dallas, not liking the way that the lieutenant had attacked Proctor.



Eve discusses Carly's adoption with the actor. Carly tells Eve about her parents and her lack of desire to know her birth parents. Eve asks Carly if she has ever heard of Anja Carvell and the actor denies any knowledge of her. Eve asks Carly if she would be interested in her father's identity. Carly realizes in horror that Draco was her father and reacts with rage. Proctor comes to his friend's aide, expressing disgust with Dallas. Outside, Peabody is a bit stunned as well, especially when Eve seems angry with her for questioning her methods. Eve is sick over what she has done and leaves for home. Arriving, she is ill and Roarke comes to her after a call from Summerset. Roarke understands Eve's horror, remembering her father's abuse of her as a girl.

Dallas meets Peabody later at the hospital, feeling a bit better. The relief is made greater when Peabody tells Dallas that she now understands that the lieutenant had no choice but to question Carly the way she had. Only by coming at Landsdowne head on would Dallas be able to be sure that the actor had no idea of what Draco was to her.

## Chapters 17-19 Analysis

The injury of Trueheart eats at Eve, as she feels completely responsible for putting the young officer in harm's way. Peabody shows her loyalty to Dallas when the aide reprimands her lieutenant for taking the blame. Being a police officer is what Trueheart wanted, and to have Eve take his job away from him would be devastating for the officer. This information is repeated to Eve by Trueheart's mother. Mrs. Trueheart informs Eve that her son worships the lieutenant and strives to be like her someday. The officer's mother is sure he will be fine. Eve hopes this to be true.

The mother's confidence in her son's well-being brings Eve back to thoughts of her youth again and thoughts of her own mother. Eve wonders where her mother is, and if the woman had left her with the father that had abused her or if some other fate had been hers. Throughout the novel Eve's past is close to the surface with questions of love and betrayal all around her. This is brought into direct focus when Roarke informs her that Richard Draco is Carly Landsdowne's father. Eve now has a direct connection to the young woman, and only needs to find out if Carly had known about the biological connection.

Meeting with Anja Carvell brings Eve a better picture of her relationship with Draco. The actor appears not to have changed since his assault 24 years ago, still using women and tossing them aside. The story that Carvell tells is similar to the one that Nadine had related to Eve. Carvell does not express any interest in her daughter other than to express some surprise that Carly is an actress as well. The news that Carly and Draco had been lovers apparently shocks and disgusts Carvell; however, it is important, especially at this point in the novel to remember that most of the people Eve is dealing with are actors.

When questioning Carly, the actor is truly disgusted to learn that Draco had been her father. Eve is not at all happy about the way that she had to question the woman, and Eve's own past slams into Eve quickly. Needing to escape, to go home, Eve does so.



Roarke is called and returns immediately to comfort and care for Eve, aware that the incestuous relationship that Draco had with Carly is too close to Eve's own past for comfort. While recovering from the shock, Eve finally realizes what has happened, and begins to make plans to reveal the killer.



# Chapters 20-22

## Chapters 20-22 Summary

In chapter 20, Dallas and Peabody visit Trueheart in the hospital before meeting with Kenneth Stiles. While they are with Trueheart, Stiles wakes up and tells a nurse he needs to see Dallas so that he can confess. When Dallas arrives at Stiles' room she finds Stiles hanging from a noose made of bed sheets. While the officers struggle to get him down, Areena Mansfield arrives at the scene and cries out in horror.

After Dallas is assured that Stiles will live, Dallas meets with Areena, wondering if Areena believes Kenneth was going to confess to Draco's murder. Mansfield swears that Kenneth is not capable of murder and as a gentleman would never have put the murder weapon in her hand.

Dallas arranges with Nadine to do an interview about the case. Nadine is happy to have something to focus on other than reliving her relationship with Draco. Eve runs through the interview quickly, announcing that there is a suspect and imminent arrest. Nadine is shocked, but loves the interview, intending to run it as soon as she returns to the station.

In chapter 21 Eve makes a deal with Roarke over a favor. Roarke agrees, negotiating an off-planet vacation in the bargain. Eve needs to use Roarke's theater in order to smoke out the killer. Eve returns to her office to watch the video of the play and go over things one more time.

Eve, Peabody and Mira arrive at the theater while the officers on scene set up for the final show. When everyone is in place Roarke goes onstage to meet the actors as they arrive. The actors bicker but all agree that the show must go on.

In chapter 22 Eve makes her entrance and confronts the actors. Making her case, accusing Carly of murdering Draco for using her and casting her aside, Eve announces her arrest. Areena Mansfield objects, rushing to the prop table for the knife. Areena, or Anja confesses, stunning the other actors, especially Carly who realizes that Mansfield is her mother.

Areena explains that when she realized that Carly had been cast in the play, she had gone to Draco and informed him that Carly was their daughter so he would leave her alone. Areena had not dreamed that the man could be so cruel as to seduce his own child. When Mansfield had found out she had threatened to expose Draco if he did not break it off. At first he had, but then decided to torment her once more, suggesting a threesome with mother and daughter. Mansfield had planned and executed the murder, ridding the world of a horrible man and hoping to get away with the crime.

Eve goes to the office to finish paperwork and Peabody informs her that Mansfield would like to see her. Areena tells Eve that she has figured out why Eve had the





confrontation on stage. Carly would have had to live with the fact that her father had abused her willingly. Areena's public confession to save Carly would allow the young woman to know that her other parent would do whatever it takes to keep her safe. Eve tells Mansfield to spin the story and get public opinion on her side, and then leaves with Roarke. The case is closed. Eve realizes that for the first time in eleven years she is more connected to the murderer than the victim. Draco was a horrible man and justice had been served in the courtroom. The courtroom had been in a play, but it was justice to Eve.

## Chapters 20-22 Analysis

Eve believes Stiles is the killer and intends to question him regarding things after visiting Trueheart. The officer is pleased to see her and happily relays his thanks for Eve staying at the hospital to make sure he was alright. Arriving at Stiles room to find the man attempting suicide stuns Eve, as well as the arriving Areena Mansfield. While Eve struggles to revive Kenneth, Areena is quite upset. This is important, as the actor seems extremely emotional about a colleague.

The stage is set to smoke out the killer and Eve intends to do so. Once all are present, Eve describes how and why Carly had killed Draco. Carly is not happy but also not worried as she knows she isn't guilty. When Eve moves to arrest Landsdowne, the truth is finally revealed. Areena Mansfield, aka Anja Carvell, confesses to killing Draco to save her daughter.

Mansfield explains the crime and what led up to it for all to hear. Despite the fact that Draco knew Carly was his daughter, he had seduced her anyway. Mansfield feels responsible because she had given him the information regarding his daughter. Areena knew Draco was a horrible man, but she never dreamed how horrible he could be. When Richard suggested a threesome with mother and daughter, Mansfield planned the murder, executing him. Areena truly feels the world is rid of a parasite.

Eve is pleased that the case is over, but has one last meeting with Mansfield. Areena has realized that Eve needed to put Carly through the devastation that she had at the theater so the young woman would know that despite how horrible her father was, someone still loved her and would always stand for her. Eve and Areena part as friends, with Eve advising Areena what the best course of action will be to beat a conviction.



# Characters

## Eve Dallas

Eve Dallas is a homicide detective with the New York Police and Security Department in the year 2059. Eve is married to Roarke, a native of Ireland with a murky past. The two seem to have found their match in the other and are deeply in love. Eve Dallas lived a horrible life in her youth and still has nightmares about abuse suffered at the hands of her father until she was eight years old, at which time, she killed him in self defense. Even her name is unknown, as the young girl was christened "Eve Dallas" in the hospital she was taken to on that fateful night. At the time, Eve had been in Dallas.

Eve manages to struggle through life and became a police officer, advancing to the rank of Lieutenant in the homicide department. Eve is a strong willed, intelligent woman who does not give up until a case is solved, feeling that she is the person who will bring justice to the dead.

The case of the murder of Richard Draco is a difficult one to unravel because the primary suspects are actors as is the victim. Another issue is that no one liked the victim, most actively despised him. Eve has never run across a case where there did not seem to be an ounce of remorse or pity shown for a victim.

Discovering the past of the actors involved in the play and the intertwining of their lives, Eve is able to discover the truth behind the fiction. Richard Draco was as horrible as the people that knew him suggested. Areena Mansfield, the female lead in the play had orchestrated the death of Draco in order to avenge the horrible life he had led, including seducing his own daughter, Carly Landsdowne. Eve discovers the truth, and arranges a "play" on the stage of the theater where the murder took place. Flushing the truth from Areena when the detective announces the arrest of Carly, Mansfield confesses.

## Roarke

A billionaire many times over, Roarke is married to Eve Dallas. The two seem to be a perfect match, despite the fact that Eve is a police officer and Roarke has made his fortune through sometimes murky dealings. Despite their vast differences, the couple is obviously in love, and Roarke worships his wife, lavishing her with gifts whenever possible, despite the fact that these gifts at times leave her flustered.

Roarke seems to own quite a few things, including the theater where the murder of Richard Draco takes place. Roarke also owns transportation companies, financial institutions, and luxury resorts, both on and off planet. The mysterious Irishman also has quite a bit of technological knowledge, using his talents to locate information during the investigation that might have been passed over otherwise.



Roarke likes to assist Eve when he is able, even when his wife would rather he didn't. The enormous wealth Roarke commands sometimes embarrasses his wife, and Roarke enjoys both being able to provide her with an easier life and watching the discomfort it sometimes causes.

## Richard Draco

Richard Draco, a famed actor, is murdered on opening night of the play in which he stars. The character he plays is an almost-mirror image of his true self. In the play, Draco's character is murdered by his wife after the husband has been using her badly and leaving her for another woman. The murder switches the prop knife that would have been used for a real knife, ending the life of the actor and the character at the same time.

The police find it difficult to find one person that is willing to say a kind word about Draco. The man had been self-centered, cruel and egotistical, using people and tossing them aside once he was finished toying with them. His sexual habits were disgraceful, as he drugged women without their knowledge and then filmed them while they have sex with him, again without their knowledge.

A fling from the past returns to the present when Richard is informed that he had fathered a child many years ago and that his daughter is starring in the play with him. Shockingly, Draco chooses to seduce his daughter and then toss her aside, embarrassing her in front of the entire cast. His callous behavior is horrifying to Areena Mansfield, his former lover and the mother of his daughter. Mansfield had begged Draco to stay away from their daughter and he had done exactly the opposite. Finally breaking, Mansfield switches the knives on stage and plunges a real weapon into Draco's heart, killing him.

## Delia Peabody

A police aide to Eve Dallas, Peabody strives to be a detective just like her mentor. Peabody follows the lead of Dallas in every way possible in police work, and would like to find a love like the one that Dallas shares with Roarke as well. Currently seeing two men, Delia is torn between the great sexual relationship she has with Ian McNab, and the great times she has with Charles Monroe, a licensed companion, or prostitute.

Delia struggles at times with her self image, not believing herself pretty or slim but at other times seems to be perfectly happy with herself. Unable to see herself as attractive to others, Delia is honestly perplexed when McNab wants to spend time with her after sex, and she can not understand why Charles would want to take her to fancy places such as top restaurants and art galleries.

Despite the self doubt she sometimes has, Delia is an extremely competent investigator, one who, Eve Dallas enjoys teaching, and has faith in.



## Dr. Charlotte Mira

The police department psychiatrist, Dr. Mira helps Eve Dallas process the murder of Richard Draco by examining the personality profiles of the main suspects and helping Eve whittle down the list of probabilities. Mira is also a personal therapist for Eve and her friend Nadine Furst. Mira had attended opening night and had witnessed the murder of Richard Draco and had helped Eve secure the scene.

## Summerset

Roarke's butler, Summerset takes care of the Roarkes and the house, and Eve to some extent, though the two have an odd relationship. Summerset and Eve tend to spend as much time as possible trying to annoy each other and bicker back and forth; however, when push comes to shove, they will do whatever needs to be done for each other and back each other up no matter what.

## Charles Monroe

A licensed companion or prostitute, Monroe has a personal relationship with Delia Peabody, Eve Dallas's investigative partner. There is conflict between Monroe and Dallas because of her concern over the relationship between her partner and a prostitute; however, Monroe reassures Dallas that he and Peabody are just good friends. When Peabody discovers that Dallas has interfered in her relationship with Monroe, she is angry and upset, but realizes that Eve is just looking out for her, as a friend. Monroe realizes the same thing.

## Areena Mansfield

The female lead in "Witness for the Prosecution," Areena Mansfield plunged what should have been a prop or dummy knife into the heart of Richard Draco, killing him. Though Mansfield plays the role of a victim herself, barely able to comprehend the fact that she killed a man; in reality, she had planned the entire thing.

Years earlier Draco had seduced Mansfield, then known by the name Anja Purvell. After becoming pregnant the young actress placed the baby up for adoption. Now that daughter is an actress as well, and Draco is intrigued when Mansfield tells him to stay away from her. Instead, Draco seduces his own child, and Mansfield kills him in retaliation.

## Carly Landsdowne

An actress in the play, Carly Landsdowne is involved in the murder of Richard Draco; however, she is unaware of it at first. Draco and Landsdowne are lovers until Draco



ends the affair with her by embarrassing her in front of the entire cast during a dress rehearsal. Landsdowne is open with Eve from the beginning about her hatred for the murder victim, and Eve appreciates Carly's honesty, though Eve doubts the woman somewhat because of Carly's acting background. The discovery that Richard Draco is really Carly's father nearly sends Carly Landsdowne over the edge, especially coupled with the knowledge that her birth mother kills Draco as revenge for his acts against Carly.

## **Michael Proctor**

The young man who is cast as the understudy for Draco, Michael Proctor is the only person who seems to have anything good to say about the man. Though he does admit Draco was not pleasant, Proctor appears to worship the ground Draco walks on.

## **Ian McNab**

A detective in the Electronics Department, McNab unravels any technological mysteries that Eve might run into while investigating a case. McNab is also having a sexual relationship with Delia Peabody, Dallas's aide.

## **Feeney**

The head of the Electronics Department in the NYPSD, Feeney trained Dallas when she becomes a homicide detective and seems to look on the Lieutenant as a daughter.

## **Kenneth Stiles**

An actor in the play, Kenneth Stiles is open about his dislike for Richard Draco. Digging deeper, Dallas discovers that years ago Stiles had attacked Draco, putting him in the hospital and losing a civil court case to the deceased. Stiles admits that years ago he had attacked Richard for the callous way he treated Areena Mansfield/Anja Purvell.

## **Linus Quim**

The head stagehand, Quim witnesses the murderer switch the weapons on the theater stage. Attempting to bribe the murderer results in Quim being murdered as well, though the killer tries to portray Quim's death as a suicide.



## **Nadine Furst**

A reporter for channel 75, Nadine is a friend of Dallas and Roarke. Nadine is involved in this case not as a reporter but as a suspect. Furst had a relationship with the victim years earlier and meets with him upon his return to New York.

## **Officer Trueheart**

A young police officer that worships Eve Dallas, Trueheart is injured while pursuing the actor Kenneth Stiles.



## **Objects/Places**

### **New Globe Theater**

The theater owned by Roarke where the the murder of Richard Draco takes place.

### **The Blue Squirrel**

The bar where Eve Dallas used to meet with her friends, and where she meets with Nadine Furst and is told of Nadine's relationship with Richard Draco.

### **NYPD/ New York Police and Safety Department**

The police department in New York City where Eve Dallas is a homicide detective.

### **AutoChef**

The device used in the future to prepare meals. Meals are programmed into the unit and a person requests the programmed meal, which is dispensed.

### **Wild Rabbit**

A date rape drug that works only on women. Richard Draco was in possession of the illegal substance and may have used it on women without their knowledge.

### **Drink Tube**

A container in the future in which soft drinks are dispensed, as opposed to cans or bottles.

### **Witness for the Prosecution**

The play that is performed in the New Globe Theater. Richard Draco is the male lead in the play and is murdered on stage on opening night.

### **Olympus**

A resort owned by Roarke, located on a different planet.

## **Central**

The police station where Eve Dallas works.

## **The Palace**

The hotel owned by Roarke where Richard Draco keeps an apartment or suite.





# Themes

## Revenge

Revenge is central to the novel WITNESS IN DEATH. Richard Draco is murdered on stage during opening night at the New Globe Theater. The play, "Witness for the Prosecution" had Draco playing the role of an evil man, one who uses his wife to protest his innocence and casting her aside for another woman. The prop knife that was to have been plunged into Draco's shoulder is switched, and a real knife is instead plunged into the actor's heart, killing him.

Areena Mansfield is the actress playing the wronged wife in the play. Mansfield seems distraught after Draco's death, horrified that she has killed a man, despite the fact that in real life Draco was as egotistical as the character he played. In reality, Mansfield had a relationship with Draco years earlier, and he had fathered the child that Areena had put up for adoption. That child, now an actor as well, is also in the play. Carly Landsdowne plays the role of Draco's lover on stage, and until recently, offstage as well. Unaware that Draco is actually her father, Landsdowne is humiliated when Draco belittles her in front of the entire cast. Mansfield, however, is horrified. Areena tells Draco the truth, that Carly is Draco's daughter, and Areena told him to stay away from her. Instead, Draco set out to seduce his own daughter. Mansfield is enraged and plans the murder of the cold-hearted actor.

## Deception

Deception is a key theme in the novel WITNESS IN DEATH. The novel concerns the murder of Richard Draco, an actor. The main suspects in the novel are actors as well, making an already difficult investigation that much more so. The suspects make their livings pretending and are skilled at the art of deception. Eve Dallas has a difficult time separating fact from fiction when the lives that the suspects have constructed for themselves are sometimes, complete fiction.

The public face Richard presented to his fans was quite different from his true self. Handsome, suave, and pleasant publicly, Draco was a callous, mean-spirited egotist in daily life. Draco had no trouble seducing women, then drugging them and filming his sexual relations with them. The women were victims, unaware that the drugs Draco gave them increased their desire for him dramatically. Draco did not care who he used these drugs on, up to and including his own daughter when he discovers to his delight that she is performing in the play with him.

## Love

Love is woven into the novel *WITNESS IN DEATH* quite frequently. The love Dallas and her husband share is obvious and evident to the reader from the outset, despite the fact that the couple sometimes bicker or disagree.

Another instance of love is that of a mother for her child. Though Areena Mansfield had given her child up for adoption years earlier, she had followed the life of her child, Carly Landsdowne, keeping an eye on her and watching her grow up from a distance. When Carly becomes an actor as well, Mansfield is presented with the opportunity to act in the same play and jumps at the chance. Though Landsdowne has no idea Mansfield is her mother, Areena is more than happy to just be close to her daughter.

Things change when Richard Draco begins to seduce Carly. At first Draco is unaware that he is her father, but when Areena informs him and tells him to leave Carly alone, the actor instead steps up the seduction and then humiliates the young woman in front of the cast. Mansfield, driven by a mother's love, plans and carries out the murder of Draco, avenging Carly in the only way she sees possible.

# Style

## Point of View

The novel WITNESS IN DEATH by Nora Roberts writing as J.D. Robb is written in the third person. The main character of the novel, Eve Dallas, is a Homicide Detective in New York City, and the novel follows her thoughts and actions for the most part. Throughout the novel there are brief passages where the reader is privy to the thoughts of different characters such as Roarke, Eve's husband, Peabody, her aide, and the murderer as well. However, as the novel primarily deals with a murder case that Dallas is working on, the reader's attention is focused on the main character.

The novel also contains brief passages written in the first person from the point of view of the killer. As the identity of the murderer is not revealed until the final chapters, these portions of the novel give the reader a deeper insight into the feelings of the guilty party.

The novel is written with an equal balance of dialogue and descriptive passages, balancing the story and allowing the reader to follow the thought patterns of the investigating officer, Eve Dallas. This is helpful because the novel is essentially a mystery and also because the novel is set in the future. The reader has a better understanding of the lifestyle of the characters, as well as the technologies and advancements that may exist in the year 2059.

## Setting

The novel WITNESS IN DEATH takes place in New York City in the year 2059. The different areas of the city that are visited are similar to what exists in New York currently; however, the only specific place mentioned that remains the same is Central Park.

The murder takes place in the New Globe Theater, which has been restored to its former glory by Eve's husband, Roarke. There is mention in the novels of the "Urban Wars," and the reader is led to believe these conflicts might have caused the theater to fall into disrepair. There are no details given regarding the wars, just that New York has recovered and now thrives.

During the investigation of the murder of Richard Draco, Eve Dallas travels throughout the city. More interesting than the unnamed places visited are the futuristic developments. Cars can be programmed to drive, actually glide as opposed to driving on the road, making "swooping" through traffic possible. Computers are voice activated and follow command prompts. Throughout the novel, Eve Dallas deals with Droids, or robots, some servants to others, some employees handling customer service positions.



## Language and Meaning

The novel is written in modern language, allowing the reader to easily follow the thoughts and ideas that are expressed by the characters within. The novel is set in the year 2059, and there are many technological advances that are considered part of everyday life. Though these things do not exist in current times, the novel is written in such a way that the reader is able to discover what is capable in the future by the context. An example would be the AutoChef, a device that allows someone to prepare a meal simply by programming the device. A fully cooked meal is delivered moments later, prepared to the character's specifications.

Because of the relaxed writing style, the reader is able to easily follow not only the plot, but the interesting ways things might change in the future.

## Structure

Witness in death is divided into twenty-two chapters of varying lengths, anywhere from ten to twenty pages. The chapters are numbered, and each contains many different actions and pieces of the novel. Rather than a main idea expressed and followed through on in one area, the chapters lead one into another, carrying the reader with the characters from thought to action.

WITNESS IN DEATH is an entertaining murder mystery based in New York City in the year 2059. The main plot of the novel is the murder of Richard Draco, a famous actor, killed on stage during the opening night of a performance. Eve Dallas, the lead Homicide Detective, unravels the intrigue and mystery surrounding Draco and the characters that work with him on stage. There are a few subplots, most of which directly involve the murder of Draco, but they tie in neatly to the main storyline, allowing the reader to follow along easily.

The novel is fast paced and enjoyable, both because of the engrossing mystery involved and because of the futuristic writing. The author is able to make the technologies that exist seem plausible and allows the reader believe that the characters exist in this time easily.



## Quotes

"And a hell of a face it was, she thought. It seemed to have been carved by magic into the staggering male beauty that made a woman's glands hum a happy tune. The dark mane of hair framed it, those long, sculpted bones; the firm, full mouth that was curved now in the faintest of smiles as he watched her. He reached out, ever so casually, to skim those long fingers over the ends of her hair.

And those eyes, that brilliant, almost burning blue, could still make her heart stumble. It was mortifying the way the man could turn her inside out with no more than a look."

Chapter One, pg, 3

"In that moment, every woman in the audience understands her. If they haven't felt that kind of love, in some part of themselves they wish they had. So when she realizes that after all she's done, he can discard her so casually, when she fully understands what he is, she grabs the knife.

Areena lifted a fisted hand, as if holding the hilt. Despair? No, she is a creature of action. She is never passive. It's an instant, and impulsive, but a bone-deep one. She plunges the knife into him, even as she embraces him. Love and hate, both in their highest form, both inside her in that one instant."

Chapter 2, pg 19

"My theory is whoever switched the knives was performing."

'Yeah, performing murder.'

'Sure, but this was like another level. They could be part of the play and watch it go down without actually doing the crime. The objective's reached, and it's all still a role. Even if it's a teck wo did it, it's all part of the play. Vole's dead. He's supposed to be. The fact that Draco's dead, too, just makes it all the more satisfying.'

Eve mulled it over, then pulled over at the next corner where a glide-cart smoked and sizzled.

'So it's a good theory?'

'It's decent. Get your soy dog.'"

Chapter 4, pg 59

"Nadine stared for a moment, then let her head fall back with a long, shaky laugh. 'Yeah, you could say things didn't work out. I found out he was two-timing me Hell, three- and four-timing me. I caught a gossip report right before I went on air, and there was Richard cuddled up with some big-breasted blonde at some swank club uptown. When I confronted him about it, he just smiled and said he enjoyed women. So what?'

'So what,' she murmured. 'The fucker broke my heart and didn't have the decency to lie to me. He even talked me back into bed. I'm ashamed of that. I let him talk me back into bed, and when I was still wet from him, he takes a call from another woman. Makes a date with her while I'm lying there naked.'"

Chapter 4, pg 62

"Summerset was waiting for her, his thin face dour, his mouth in a flattened line.

'Lieutenant. You surprise me. You've arrived home in a timely fashion.'



'Don't you have anything better to do than to clock me in and out of here?' She stripped off her jacket, tossed it on the newel post to annoy him. 'You could be out scaring small children.'

Summerset sniffed and to annoy her, picked up her damp leather jacket with the delicate tips of two fingers. He examined it with dark, disapproving eyes. 'What? No blood today?'

'That can still be arranged. Roarke home yet?'

'Roarke is in the lower-level recreation area'

'A boy and his toys.' She strode past him.

'You're tracking wet on the floor.'

She glanced back, glanced down. 'Well, that'll give you something to do.'

Well satisfied with their evening exchange, Summerset went off to dry her jacket."

Chapter 5, pgs 68-69

"'Never mind.' But she was still pondering when she put the cone back and opened the bottom drawer. 'Ah, here's a little gold mine. Looks like a month supply of Exotica, a bit of Zeus, and...' She opened a small vial, sniffed cautiously, then shook her head like a dog coming out of a pool of water. 'Shit. Wild Rabbit.'

She fumbled the stopper back in, grabbed for an evidence bag, and sealed the vial.

'Pure too.' She blew out a breath. 'If he's using that on his dates, no wonder they all think he's a sex god. One or two drops of Rabbit, and you'd screw a doorknob. Did you know he was into this?'

'No.' All humor fled, Roarke rose. 'I don't have particularly strong feelings about most of the illegals. But this one is the same as rape, as far as I'm concerned. Are you all right?'

'Yeah. Yeah.' A little dizzy, she thought, and annoyingly horny. And that was only from a quick whiff of the fumes. 'Stuff this pure goes for ten thousand an ounce, minimum, and it isn't easy to come by. It only works on the female system.' She murmured. 'Only takes a drop too many to overdose.'"

Chapter 6, pg 85

"This time death wasn't quiet. The panicked, kicking and knocked the ladder down with a thunderous clatter. It hit the bottle of brew in an explosion of glass. Choked gasps forced their way through the tightened noose, became rattles. For seconds, only seconds, but the air seemed to scream with them.

And then there was only the faint creak of the rope swinging. Like the creak of a mast in high seas, it was curiously romantic."

Chapter 7, pg 110

"'She's angry. Not at you particularly,' Roarke added, 'nor at me.' He looked back at the corpse, the pathetic waste of it, and understood his wife perfectly. 'Death offends her. Each time. Every time she deals with it.'

'She'll tell you that you can't take it personally.'

'Yes.' He watched Eve sit beside Ralph, automatically shielding his view of death with her body. 'She'll tell you that.'"

Chapter 8, pg 117



"Perhaps that's not important either, for it's done. There can be no going back, no staging events to another outcome. I can only hope events were staged convincingly enough to satisfy those sharp eyes of Lieutenant Dallas.

She is an exacting audience and, I fear, the most severe of critics.

Yes with her in the house, I fear. My performance must be perfection on every way.

Every line, every gesture, every nuance. Or her view will no doubt ruin me."

Chapter 10, pg 142

"'Freeze screen.' She pushed the bowl at Roarke and rose to move closer to the image of Draco. 'Here's what I see. The others are acting. They're good, they're skilled, They're enjoying the roles. He is the role. He doesn't have to act. He's an egocentric, as arrogant and as smooth as Vole. It's a part tailored for him.'

'So I thought, when I put his name forward for the play. What does that tell you?'

'That whoever planned his murder probably thought the same thing. And saw the irony of it. Vole dies in the last act. Draco dies in the last act. A dramatic bit of justice.

Executed, before witnesses.'"

Chapter 10, pg 153

"'Not this time. Why this play? Why this time? There were easier, less risky, more subtle ways to off Draco. I'm thinking the play itself meant something to the killer. The theme of love and betrayal, of false faces. Sacrifice and revenge. The characters of Leonard and Christine Vole have a history. Maybe Draco had a history with his killer. Something that goes back into the past that twisted their relationship.'"

Chapter 11, pg. 169

"Two lost souls, he thought, taking a moment to walk to the tall windows that looked out on part of the world he'd built for himself out of will, desire, sweat, and dubiously accumulated funds. Two lost souls whose miserable beginnings had forged them into what appeared to be polar opposites.

Love had narrowed the distance, then had all but eradicated it.

She'd saved him. The night his life had hung in her furious and unbreakable grip. She'd saved him, he mused the first moment he'd locked eyes with her. As impossible as it should have been, she was his answer. He was hers.

He had a need to give her things. The tangible things wealth could command. Though he knew that the gifts most often puzzled and flustered her. Maybe because they did, he corrected with a grin. But underlying that overt giving was the fierce foundation to give her comfort, security, trust, love. All the things they'd both lived without most of their lives. "

Chapter 12, pg 177



## Topics for Discussion

How was Richard Draco killed?

What is the known relationship between Richard Draco and Carly Landsdowne? What is the relationship between them of which Carly was unaware?

Why is Nadine Furst so distraught about the murder of Richard Draco?

Why does Kenneth Styles dislike Richard Draco?

What is Delia Peabody's relationship with Charles Monroe? With McNab?

Who is Anja Carvell? What is her relationship to Richard Draco?

What is the motive for the murder of Richard Draco?