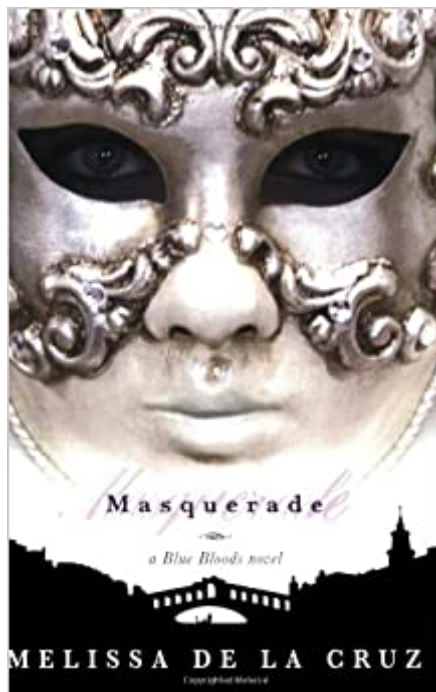


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Masquerade (Blue Bloods, Book 2)



Synopsis

Schuyler Van Alen wants an explanation for the mysterious deaths of young vampires. With her best friend, Oliver, Schuyler travels to Italy in the hope of finding the one man who can help her grandfather. Meanwhile, back in New York, preparations are feverishly underway for the Four Hundred Ball, an exclusive gala hosted by the city's wealthy, powerful, and unhuman—a true Blue Blood affair. But it's at the after-party, a masquerade ball thrown by the cunning Mimi Force, that the real danger lurks. Hidden behind the masks is a revelation that will forever change the course of a young vampire's destiny. Rich with glamour, attitude, and vampire lore, this second installment in the Blue Bloods saga will leave readers thirsting for more.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

Melissa de la Cruz is the author of the best-selling Au Pairs novels for teens and the co-author of the popular adult title *The Fashionista Files: Adventures in Four-Inch Heels and Faux Pas*. Melissa has appeared as an expert on style, trends, and celebrity for CNN and the E! Entertainment network and is a frequent contributor to popular magazines like *Glamour*, *Marie Claire*, *Teen Vogue*, and *Cosmopolitan*. She lives in Los Angeles with her husband. Melissa is not a Blue Blood, but she knows people who are

When we last left the Blue Bloods in Melissa De la Cruz's first book, the Blue Blood teens had determined that Silver Bloods (vampires who feed on other vampires for super power) were behind the recent rash of deaths. Unfortunately, they couldn't get anyone to listen to them. When Schuyler

Van Allen's grandmother is attacked by a Silver Blood and almost destroyed completely (if you save enough blood the soul can reincarnate), she tells Schuyler to go to Venice and find her exiled grandfather. He was the only one who could help them. Masquerade starts with Schuyler, new Blue Blood/ half blood, in Venice with her best friend and human Conduit, Oliver, (vampires use Conduits to help them in the human world) trying to find Lawrence Van Allen, Schuyler's grandfather. Just when they think they have failed, they locate him and warn him of the Silver Blood threat. Lawrence tells them he won't come back to New York, so Schuyler and Oliver return disappointed. When they get back, though, they find the other Blue Bloods getting ready for the big 400 Ball- where all 400 Blue Bloods gather each year to induct the newest members. With preparations in full swing, Schuyler is still trying to get to the bottom of the Silver Bloods when her grandfather returns. He plans to help both his family and the rest of the Blue Bloods stay safe against these abominations. Unfortunately, something keeps happening to Schuyler's friend Bliss- she starts to black out and wake up in strange places, and her dreams have become monster filled nightmares. Even Schuyler can't seem to take to the vampire transition as she starts to get weak and pass out often. When her grandfather tells her to take a human familiar (someone the Blue Bloods feed off of, but never kill), she decides to use Oliver, further complicating their relationship. When the 400 Ball kicks off, Schuyler shows up in her mother's gown, setting the guests at the party into a tizzy as she blows away even the most high-powered Mimi Force. When Mimi and her twin brother Jack are recognized as bonded angels, the Angel of Death and the Angel of Destruction, Schuyler learns they are a reincarnated pair that comes together every cycle out of love and devotion (although being born as siblings in this cycle complicates things in the human world). Now Schuyler's crush on Jack seems futile, but Jack hasn't stopped noticing Schuyler, much to Mimi's horror. When Mimi decides to protect her eternal love and bond, she decides to unleash an evil that will rock the Blue Bloods like nothing ever has before. I read the first book of this series many months ago, and I got distracted by other books before reading the rest of the series. When I got an advanced copy of De la Cruz's new book (adult fiction) I started to read it and realized there are connections to the Blue Blood's series. So I decided to delve back into the series so I didn't miss anything in the new book. I always worry about waiting too long for a sequel, because with as many books as I read, I tend to forget much of the book. Sometimes an author does a good job of briefly catching you up on the story, but sometimes they write a sequel as if no time has passed since the end of the last book. De la Cruz was part of the former- choosing not to leave her readers grasping to remember what had already happened. It was done briefly and well detailed so someone reading the series straight through wouldn't feel it was too repetitive. I definitely appreciated her efforts with this. The book itself

was fun and exciting. The series is a bit younger than some other YA out there, and would be good for most middle school through high school students. The language and subject matter are fairly tame. The only weird thing I had trouble digesting was that Mimi and Jack, who are born as brother and sister in this cycle, will be bonded and essentially made husband and wife. It is explained well in the book, and I understood it, but the pair seems unnecessarily complicated. The bonded pair could have easily been two unrelated people. I guess I am just having trouble getting over the ick factor with this relationship! Maybe more will come out in the later novels in the series.

My favorite book series by far this is the second book in series. When I started reading this series I started with the most recent book, The last one, that I went to the one before it and I realized that this is a huge series so I went to the very beginning and now I've finished the second book. I love the series and I will recommend this to anybody who is older than 14 and understand the subtle hints and jokes in here as well as the teenagers and how they think. It's very accurate the way how teenagers normally react.

I enjoyed Blue Bloods and wanted to give it a chance to really hook me, so I was looking forward to this next in the series, and it didn't disappoint. We get a deeper look at each character's history, the relationships, past and present, between each vampire, and a better understanding of how this world she has created actually works. By the end, I was craving more, and have already pre-ordered the next in the series. If you were lukewarm on Blue Bloods because you wished for more character development, then pick this one up! It is more of the same with a lot more meat to it.

This is definitely for the 'young adult' crowd. Picture Gossip Girl-esque uppercrust NYC but they're vamps. It's less paranormal romance (don't expect sex or anything too naughty here) and more about other plot lines - someone's killing vampires (a Silver Blood) and destroying their blood/soul/memories so they can't be reincarnated in the next cycle. There's also the 400 Ball where all the Blue Bloods (good vampires) get together and then the after-party, but even though the book is titled Masquerade, that's just a small fraction of where the story takes place. I'd definitely read the first book in the series before picking this one up. Super easy read and you keep wanting to know what happens next.

Masquerade is a worthy follow up to Blue Bloods that surpasses its predecessor in terms of writing quality and story depth. Just like in Blue Bloods, there were rushed scenes - I do wish the author

would spend a little more time building up to and exploring the romance scenes (since much of the emotional depth of the characters plays out in these moments) - but the fast pace keeps the pages turning. In Masquerade we learn much more of the vampire mythology, which was quite interesting and better developed than in the first book. I had a much easier time slipping into the vampire world this time around - probably because the high society end of it wasn't nearly as emphasized. Just enough to make it fun. The characters and their relationships to each other deepen, making the story even more complex and setting the stage for more drama and intrigue in the next book. Like the first, this one ends in a cliff-hanger so we'll have to wait to see how the quadrangle between Schuyler, Jack, Oliver and Mimi plays out. It's still a little strange to me that the vampires in these stories have romantic/sexual relationships with siblings - it's one of those things you have to suspend disbelief with and pretend you really are dealing with another species, otherwise it's just disturbing. Beyond that, the introduction of Schuyler's grandfather is a great addition to the cast of characters. And some interesting details are revealed regarding Bliss's history that adds to the mystery. Dylan returns in the 11th hour so we see little of him, but it will be interesting to discover what happened to him during his absence. With a unique plot and engaging storyline, I couldn't put Masquerade down. I read it in a matter of hours and look forward to the next in the series (I wish it was already out). This was a solid follow up that was thoroughly enjoyable and well worth the read.

Excellent condition

Waiting to read part 3

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