

Questions & Answers about:

The Bloodline Trilogy



By Deidre Dalton

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ABOUT THE BLOODLINE TRILOGY

The *Bloodline Trilogy* by Deidre Dalton follows the uniquely magical yet ominous journey of one family through time. . .

Books in the trilogy will include:

- **Book #1: Bloodfrost** (*released June 12, 2012*)
- **Book #2: Bloodlust** (*scheduled for release in 2017*)
- **Book #3: Blood & Soul** (*scheduled for release in 2018*)

Meet Noel Gatsby in *Bloodfrost*, whose nightly dreams take her away from the misery of her pain-wracked, disease-riddled body. The dreams become real when she awakens one morning to find herself completely healed. She soon learns her miraculous recovery comes at a price . . .

Become acquainted with Noel's daughter Kate in *Bloodlust*. Kate's unusual powers allow her to bend people to her will. At first she uses her gifts wisely, but then goes astray after falling in love with the diabolical Kirk Lester, whom she follows down an ugly path of debauchery and evil . . .

And finally, meet Jenny Jardine in *Blood & Soul*. Jenny is adopted into a loving home as an infant, never knowing the true circumstances of her birth. As a teenager, she discovers she has unique powers of healing. She soon realizes her abilities are an instrument of evil, begotten by two bloodthirsty monsters . . .



Please Note: Storylines, estimated release dates and book cover art may be subject to change.

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The following is a general "Question & Answer" session about *Bloodfrost* and the *Bloodline Trilogy* by Deidre Dalton.

Where did you get the idea for the "Bloodfrost"?

I had my own medical problems for quite a few years, which were deemed "unfixable" by doctors and various insurance companies because of my financial situation at the time. I used to go to bed every night in so much pain. Finally, I learned how to close my eyes and take my mind to another place. After awhile, my dreams were the same every night. Of course they never came true - however, that's the great thing about being a fiction writer. You can *make* the dreams come true, even if they just appear on paper. In writing, you can lose yourself in the storyline and characters, forgetting about whatever mental or physical misery might be haunting you. It was a saving grace for me for a long time.

You dreamt about going to a place of healing?

Sort of. My dreams were more tied-up in past reflections and offbeat memories. For instance, Noel's ascent into the "healing place" was triggered by one of my favorite television shows as a child, *Bewitched*. The TV characters Samantha and her mother Endora used to light on a cloud - sitting on cushy billows in their witchy robes - when they wanted to discuss something privately, away from the mortal world. It's what inspired my fictional character Noel to float above her body and bed and into the clouds to her dreamy place of healing, but that's where the similarity ends.

In "Bloodfrost," Noel questions the existence of God prior to her healing, and then afterward wonders if it is God or the Devil responsible for her miracle cure. Did you ever wonder about the same issues, or is the speculation purely fictional?

Noel's mind-set is mostly fictional. However, part of her musing has to do with a situation that was close to me for a time. My former husband, who has since passed away, was one of the kindest and most decent people I ever knew. He did the responsible thing his entire life, whether it was treating his fellow humans with compassion or dealing with his own stressful issues, and in the end he died unfulfilled with his life in general. In a nutshell, he never realized his basic dreams - which by any measure were very attainable - no matter how hard he worked toward them. I took that bit and gave it to my fictional character Noel, who went even further by asking: "What's the point of doing the right thing when in the end it seems to get you nowhere?"

Noel scoffs at the notion that "God only gives you as much as you can handle." In her mind she's endured more than her fair share of pain and suffering, so her belief in God is shaky at best.

Noel's primary "healer" is a character named Shoji, who appears quite by accident in her waking dream. It's never clear whether he is an apparition, flesh and blood, or if he is a messenger of God or the Devil. Did you write him that way on purpose, and will he make an appearance in the two sequels, "Bloodlust" and "Blood & Soul"?

I can't give away too much about Shoji at this point, but I will say he does appear in the sequels. Shoji feels responsible for Noel and her subsequent family, mainly because he's the one who cured her. Never fear, Shoji's mystery is revealed in the final book.

You gave Noel a romantic interest in her landlord Pim Grady.

Before her cure, Noel realizes Pim has no interest in her as a woman. He sees her as some poor, pathetic cripple living with her mother in a squalid flat. Her ongoing medical issues age her considerably, so he feels more sympathy for her than anything else. However, after Noel is cured of her ailments Pim sees her in a new light - perhaps because he also experienced the healing place or because Noel now looks vibrant and alive. When they start to become involved, she points out the difference in his behavior and he apologizes profusely.

The romantic angle is all well and good, but I wanted to give Noel someone to commiserate with, someone who understands her healing experience and the absolute wonder of it. Later, they also begin to question the consequences of their newfound health. They realize it certainly comes at a steep price, perhaps at the expense of someone close to them.

In addition, Noel and Pim are the catalyst for characters in the two sequels, *Bloodlust* and *Blood & Soul*.

How did you come up with the title for "Bloodfrost"?

It harkens back to my own medical issues. Infection thrives on heat. It's why hospitals and operating rooms are so cold; it lessens the risks of infection. As I began writing *Bloodfrost*, before I created the healers Shoji and Hoshi, I decided to use *frost* in the process of Noel's miraculous recovery. As she's being healed, she feels a coolness running through her veins, as if the blood being replaced in her body is ice cold. Her skin is normally warm, but she can sense the frost coursing through her veins as Shoji and Hoshi heal her.

Is the premise in the Bloodline Trilogy more about obtaining the fountain of youth than anything else?

Not necessarily. It's about returning people to the state of normal health for someone of their specific age. The characters do not become immortal. They live out their expected life spans with good health rather than bad, a few of them enjoying beneficial side effects.

I'm not interested in the fictional fountain of youth for the sake of physical appearances but rather the inner health it restores to my characters despite the domino consequences, and in the way it changes their daily lives. Their long years of painful suffering naturally etched more years onto their faces, more than normal, so part of the mythical healing process is aesthetic but it wasn't my primary focus.

Not to give too much away, the healing process comes with certain conditions. Shoji tells Noel that her ills could be transferred to someone else down the line. It's only later that Noel learns the same thing could happen to any children she might have.

It's similar to how all of us inherit certain genes and characteristics from our parents or other far-flung ancestors. It could be a genetic disease, or a self-inflicted but continuous

disorder such as alcoholism, drug addiction or various forms of other preventable abuse. The worst traits in people seem to go on in the next generation, whether we like it or not. Sometimes people can overcome their own histories, but it's rare. In the case of Noel and Pim, any children they might have could also receive bits and pieces from the past, both good and bad. This includes tainted leftovers from their specific cures.

There are scattered bits of symbolism throughout "Bloodfrost." How far in advance did you plot out the symbols and their subsequent meanings?

Believe it or not, the various symbols came to me on the spur of the moment. I was sitting home one night, about a month after I started writing *Bloodfrost*, when a terrifying windstorm knocked the power out for three days. At one point, the winds roared through at ninety miles per-hour. It was quite scary. I read and wrote by candlelight for the duration, also freezing because it was December and we were without heat as well.

Most of my candles are those large, heavy glass affairs with various scents. I think it was the second day in when I was lying in bed, staring at the flickering candles. I could have sworn I saw little symbols etched on the candle glass. They looked like a small bell and a tiny crescent moon. I kept staring and *staring*, but the symbols just seemed to become more pronounced. Later, after the power came back on, I took the candles and examined them in the light of day. The symbols were there, yet I knew there was a reasonable explanation for them. The glass was old, having seen many cross-country moves and just as many lightings, so I'm sure the symbols were nothing more than scuff marks or stray drops of wax hardened with time. However, they gave me the inspiration for placing symbolism within *Bloodfrost*.

The bells and half-moons both Noel and Pim see etched in candle glass do have specific connotations, which are revealed later in the book. The symbols are actually hints into the future. Of course, neither Noel nor Pim know it at the time. It's only when the hints come to fruition that they link them to the symbols. More symbols are planted near the end of *Bloodfrost*. They do spill over into the second book in the trilogy, *Bloodlust*, where their meanings are made increasingly evident as the story moves on.

Each book in the Bloodline Trilogy features strong female lead characters. The women are also related: first Noel, then her daughter Kate and lastly, Kate's daughter Jenny. Was it your intention to attach more symbolism to their bloodline?

Not in the beginning. However, as the storyline progressed with each book, I fancied the three women as far-fetched depictions of the *Triple Goddess*. My characters are not witches or goddesses, but their relation to one another reminded me of the *Triple Goddess* Wiccan deity, also known as *Maiden, Mother & Crone*. Each woman symbolizes a different moon phase and stage of life. In pagan lore, they also rule different realms such as earth and the waxing moon (*Jenny*), the underworld and full moon (*Kate*), and the heavens and waning moon (*Noel*).

None of the books in the *Bloodline Trilogy* are about witchcraft or pagan lore, but the representation of *Maiden, Mother & Crone* reminded me of the rather intricate and uniquely magical blood ties between my three female characters.

Did you intentionally make the time-frame vague in "Bloodfrost"? For instance, Noel's daughter is born on August 13th with no mention of the year. Throughout "Bloodfrost" there is also no mention of which decade the characters are living in, although it's obviously modern because of the story mechanics.

I didn't want to hedge myself in because the story spans from Noel to her daughter and then to her granddaughter. All three women are adults in their respective books, which realistically places their storylines in a forty-plus-year frame. I didn't want to go as far back as the 1960s or 1970s, so rather than mention a specific year in each book I just left it to the reader's imagination. Let's just say the timeframes are distinctly modern.

Is there a reason you placed the storyline in Boston?

Not particularly. I wanted the story to unfold on the east coast for sure, but I already went the Maine route with the *Collective Obsessions Saga* and didn't want to do that again.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Deidre Dalton is author of the "Collective Obsessions Saga," which chronicles the extraordinary loves and intricate obsessions between two families sweeping a span of more than one hundred years, all set against the backdrop of a Gothic seaside mansion in Maine. Titles in the eight-part family saga include *The Advent*, *Quixotic Crossings*, *The Twain Shall Meet*, *Enthrallment*, *The Keeper's Journal*, *Hearts Desires*, *The Twilight* and *Megan's Legacy*.

She is also author of the "Bloodline Trilogy," which follows the mysterious and magical journey of one family through time. Books in the trilogy include *Bloodfrost*, *Bloodlust* and *Blood & Soul*.

Deidre is author and editor of the *Larkin Community Cookbook*, which is a compilation of recipes mentioned or prepared by characters in the "Collective Obsessions Saga," and the electronic versions of *About Larkin* (companion guide to the "Collective Obsessions Saga"), and *The Private Journal of Colm Sullivan*.

Writing under the pseudonym Deborah O'Toole, Deidre is also author of the fiction titles *Celtic Remnants*, *Glinhaven* and *Mind Sweeper*, *Short Tales Collection* (juvenile fiction), and a book of poetry known as *Torn Bits & Pieces*.

Using the pseudonym Shenanchie O'Toole, she also writes for the cooking/recipe web site Food Fare. She is writer and co-editor of the *Ambrosia Cookbook*, *Breakfast Cookbook*, *Community Garden Cookbook*, *Food Fare Cookbook*, *Furry Friends Cookbook*, *Global Seafood Cookbook*, *Larkin Community Cookbook*, *Quirky Snacks Cookbook*, *Recipes-on-a-Budget Cookbook* and the *Soups & Stews Cookbook*, along with more than forty titles in the *Food Fare Culinary Collection*.

Deidre is a native of Greenwich, Connecticut. She has also lived in San Francisco, Tucson, Reno and Spokane, among other US cities.

For more, visit Deidre's web site at: <http://deidredalton.com/>.



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