



Mask of the Dragon by Ashleigh D.J. Cutler

Crystal Prism Publications, 2016

Synopsis

In the wake of her parents' deaths, six-year-old Abigail Palmer clung to her imaginary friend. Ten years later, the dog-sized dragon "Dominic" is still her constant companion. Though she would never admit it out loud and risk a second round of therapy. For Abigail, navigating her social life and her strict home life is getting more difficult as she craves more autonomy. She is trying to contend with the burdens of growing up in a world she feels understands her less than she understands it, and Dominic's non-stop commentary and criticism isn't helping. Since she became a teenager, Abigail is finding

Dominic harder to tune out. When she discovers a secret project left behind by her late grandfather, the dragon makes his opinions even louder. Abigail hopes she can keep him under wraps, doubting if even her best friends would support her if she told them about Dominic. If her community thinks something is "wrong" with her, it could delay any dreams she has, or worse.

Purchase at:

- <https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/mask-of-the-dragon-ashleigh-d-j-cutler/1123872202>
(Print)
- <https://www.amazon.com/Mask-Dragon-Rise-Dragonfly-Book-ebook/dp/B01GF4P7K2>
(eBook)

Discussion Questions

1. How does Dominic's presence affect Abby in her life as his influence on her choices increases?
2. What are Abby's religious and personal beliefs and how do they change throughout the story?
3. How do Abby's relationships with Gladys and Gail compare or contrast to each other?
4. What is Abby's relationship with Drew and Marlon and how do they compare or contrast to each other?
5. How does Abby's fascination with RPGs play into her development as a character and her grandfather's project?

Major Themes

One major theme explored in *Mask of the Dragon* is the belief that being religious will, on its own, make someone a good person. The book uses different characters to contrast their lifestyles alongside their religion, or lack thereof, with their actions and beliefs. The story pits several characters with opposing viewpoints directly against each other and shows how they make choices in how they react to challenges to their beliefs.

Personal faith and the connection between one's spirituality or religion and one's self is another major theme in *Mask of the Dragon*. The main character views her imaginary friend “Dominic” as a potential metaphor for her inner doubts about herself, her faith, and her views on her religion. She finds that the conversations she has with Dominic are reflections of her own beliefs, but also sees them as magnifications of intrusive thoughts she struggles to contend with.

Family values is another theme that is prevalent in the story. Some characters have more traditional family units where others are more unconventional, especially compared to what the main character is raised to believe is “correct” or “godly”. The main character struggles with loyalty to her blood relatives while she tries to build a second family made up of her friends.

Author bio:

<https://ashleighdicutler.com/about>