



## Mixed Signals

*Alyssa Cole*

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## **Mixed Signals** Alyssa Cole

*Four years after the Flare, the world is finally starting to rebuild*

For Maggie Seong, that means leaving the safety of her family's cabin for college. She won't be alone, though—hunky former military cadet Edwin Hernandez, family friend and self-appointed Protector of Maggie's Virtue, will be there. Maggie would much prefer that Edwin himself dispose of her "innocence," but he's already rejected her advances once, and a girl has her pride.

Things look pretty bleak romance-wise until Maggie discovers that Devon, the pre-Flare internet boyfriend she'd assumed was dead, is not only alive but on campus. Despite the passage of time, their bond is strong, and they quickly pick up where they left off. Even as Devon aims for a chance at love IRL—everything Maggie thought she'd wanted—Edwin's desire to protect her makes her question her heart.

Maggie's torn between the future she didn't dare to hope for and the past she can't let go of. And when a group of neo-Luddite terrorists threaten the campus, everyone's loyalties will be tested. To ensure that the world doesn't go back to the dark days following the Flare, Maggie might have to sacrifice it all.

## **Mixed Signals Details**

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Author : Alyssa Cole

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## From Reader Review Mixed Signals for online ebook

### Selina Durio says

This post apocalyptic story was a definite page turner. As the third installment in the Off The Grid series, this is a stand alone, but is best read after the first two. All of the underlying events and characters in this book are set up by the other books. To get to delve in to Maggie's coming of age story, after she and her family have survived The Flare, was almost like reading about any young adult trying to find themselves. Her growing relationship with Edwin, in the midst of his own issues, was actually refreshing. This was a nice read.

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### Trish says

Periodically I read an actual romance novel because, hey, I like romance and I like to think I'm not snobby about genres. So, having had a go at some historical romance and finding it not to my taste, I decided to have a go at some sci-fi romance. And hey, turns out that's not to my taste either. I'm sure this is a perfectly good example of its subgenre, but it's not for me, and I can't even put my finger on exactly why. The sexy bits were grand. The female characters were good. But I think the men were too blank for me, and there is too much time spent reminding me of their handsomeness. Still, I did not feel that my time was wasted, and the sci-fi background stuff was decent.

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### Jen says

I feel like Cole hit her stride with this one. I liked but didn't love the first, the second stalled for me, and this one was a complete winner. Too Hot, Too Cold, Just Right? Yeah, something like that. P.S. Edwin occasionally sounded like a mouthpiece but overall, he was the hero I'd been holding out for. I wouldn't kick him out of bed for eating crackers. Or porridge. P.P.S ARC provided by Netgalley

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### ? BookAddict ✍️ La Crimson Femme says

Dystopian futures still require schooling - how mundane. Full disclosure, I did not read the first two books in this series. Whilst it is fine to read this book as a standalone, it is recommended to read the first two books as there are references to previous events and characters.

Maggie Seong is a lucky girl. She survived the Flare with her family intact. In addition, her family increases as her brothers get married. Now that things are settling down, her parents are urging her to explore the world by getting the college experience. Maggie is resistant to going off to college. This is not hard to understand as the past four years have been a fight to survive. The safety of her family and home is not something Maggie is willing to leave, just to see more of the world.

Fortunately, Maggie doesn't go off to school by herself. Edwin Hernandez takes her to college because he is also going to school there. With the States trying to rebuild, college campuses are key to bringing the power grid back up as well as train the minds of their future... young impressionable college students.

I am mixed about this book. I liked the concept. I also liked a couple of the characters. Maggie I could take or leave which is rough because she is the main character. She annoys me which I should have realized if I paid attention to her age. Her lack of age and maturity is not appealing to me in my older age. I'm done with foolish girls making decisions in a hissy fit. Whilst Maggie's character is appropriate for her age, I don't really care for her. She's selfish and careless with her words. Her relationship with Devon, a pre-Flare crush is toxic. But as all young girls, she needs to go through this and learn the hard way.

The characters I really liked were Edwin and Danielle. Edwin is the steadfast loyal rational friend. Let me emphasize the world rational. Edwin may just be a couple of years older but he is much more responsible and more caring. Personally I think Danielle and Edwin should get together. Screw Maggie and the chip on her shoulder. Danielle is my favourite character in this book because she is a survivor. She tries hard to be a friend only to receive rejection over and over again.

As a total side note and tangent, "Nihao" is not Japanese either. It's Chinese. Maggie should get her Asian languages straight. The irony of Maggie's condescension towards Danielle is amusing. Not sure if Ms. Cole does this on purpose or there was a lack in research. I'm going to hope for the former answer.

Overall, this story is predictable in conflict and the villains. The only twist that moved me was Danielle's history. This new adult romance is recommended for those who enjoy dystopian stories with an interracial couple.

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### **Janell Sutherland says**

This is the third book in a post-apocalyptic series. I still haven't read the first, but I reviewed (and enjoyed) the second book here. It's been a few years since the Flare knocked out all the electricity. Long enough for small power grids to come back on. Long enough for Maggie, the youngest Seong sibling, to get her GED, learn to play the guitar really well, and head off to college.

As the story opens, Maggie is chopping off all of her hair. It's been her most complimented feature, and she hid behind it a lot. Now that she's going away to college, she's ready for a new, more powerful identity.

Her brother's friend Edwin is driving her there. Maggie has had kind of a crush on Edwin for a while, but he rejected her, so she's working on getting over it.

"I didn't want to be that creep, fawning over someone with the hopes that one day I'd beat them into submission and they'd settle for me. What kind of love song would that make? 'It only took ten years, of you living in fear, but finally you're mine, baby, please stop crying...'"

Maggie has the Seong sarcasm down. When a girl in the dorm assumes that Maggie loves anime because she's Korean, Maggie says, "Okay. Am I supposed to ask you for the mayonnaise-based recipes of your people now?" I could fill this whole review with Maggie quotes. She's tough. She's adapting. She's learning to use her words.

On her first day in the dorm, Maggie runs into Devon, the internet boyfriend she never met in person whom she thought was dead. Yeah, that's a lot of emotional drama right there, and it kicked me in the gut. It's like her teenage fantasy come to life, and then he kisses her. She takes a moment to swoon, but then it's back to using her words, trying to find out what happened to him.

Don't worry, Maggie doesn't spend all of her time torn between Devon and Edwin. She's more focused on finding her way in the world. She gets a job, she writes songs, and she texts her family members. She spends time with both guys and discovers qualities that she values in a person. She is also always on guard, well aware that there are power-tripping, smarmy, objectifying men all around her.

The author blends in some of what's happening in the rest of the country, too. Maggie's brother John and his boyfriend Mikael are helping to restore the power grid, but they stop by the cafeteria to tease her about boys and also give her lots of moral support. Edwin works with campus security, and Devon meets up with an environmental group that thinks that going back to the old system is a bad idea. It's an interesting peek into what-ifs, but it doesn't detract from the main story about Maggie.

This was a fun book with a great narrator. It manages to sustain the post-apocalyptic setting while allowing for progress in the world, and it features a smart, kick-ass heroine.

Rating: B+

\*ARC provided by publisher

This review was originally posted on Red Hot Books

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### **Rachel- Goodbye Borders says**

Maggie gets her turn. She was 16 or so in the first 2 books. Typical, bratty teen in those books IMO. Fast forward 4 years and Maggie is going off on her own for an education. It was nice Maggie got her story. She left home, found love, saved the world, and returned home. I liked the epilogue, she's going to continue to do good things. (Not to mention no longer the bratty person she was).

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### **Kerryn (RatherBeReading) says**

I'm not going to lie, I really enjoy the trope of a romance between a girl and her slightly older protective figure, so this installment in this series was right up my alley.

I really enjoyed getting to see more of Maggie as a character and getting to explore her a little more deeply.

I did still have the same problems with this installment as I have had with the previous two books in the series. The dialogue in some parts of the story feels off and the whole post apocalyptic/dystopian aspects of the story are really not properly fleshed out in my opinion. Overall though I enjoyed this installment and the series as a whole.

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### **Liz B says**

The first half was a lot stronger than the second half. (And the first book in this series was a lot stronger than this one.)

Loved the MC's voice--would've liked this more as a non-romance YA, as a matter of fact. It's really, really new-adulty, and I'm just not that into reading about the romantic exploits and sexytimes of college kids. This is not particularly a flaw of the book--I'm just not its reader. Maggie just sounds and acts like what she is--a 20-year-old college freshman.

The guy is older and does act older. Late in the book he has to tell us what he sees in her...because it is really, really not obvious. Don't get me wrong--she's great! I just didn't see them as a pair based on the interactions they had.

I really liked secondary character/ best friend Danielle.

Verdict: I'm more than willing to try more by Cole, just not more new adult by her.

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## **Kelly says**

This series is SO good. I love that we got to see how quickly the world fell apart and then watch the survivors find a way to piece it back together again as the series progressed. It's not always pretty and there are plenty of bumps in the road, but they're slowly making it work.

Maggie's grown up a lot since the first book. At the same time, she's been very lucky to have her entire family survive the crazy. She was sheltered because of this and being out in the world--even a carefully structured one like the college campus--is a bit of a shock to her system. Throw in a boy she had feelings for before the Flare and the man she's developed a serious crush on since and things get a little complicated.

I really REALLY liked the progression of Edwin and Maggie's friendship. It felt very real and tangled as Maggie tries to ignore the feelings she has for him while Edwin slips between being protective and subtly jealous. I just genuinely liked them together and found myself giving Devon the stink eye whenever he'd pop up and disrupt that.

Simply put, this entire series is fantastic and I've enjoyed every minute of it. The Seong family keeps things interesting as they stumble into relationships while society is trying to recover from a world-changing event. Added bonus: Mama Seong. I like that woman and her unfiltered observations.

-Kelly @ Reading the Paranormal

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## **Miss says**

i cannot remember what inspired me to read this (no one i follow here seems to have reviewed it?) but will take this decision as proof of my impeccable taste

maggie seong is off to college and not thrilled about the idea. she's never left her family since the flare -- basically a massive energy surge that killed all electricity everywhere? the world's in the recovery phase of a post-apocalyptic narrative -- and knowing that her siblings will be engaged in Risky Business trying to help

restore power and governance to cities that haven't had either in awhile is not helping with the college anxiety. plus she'll be going to school with edwin hernandez, family friend and guy who rejected her when she asked him to take her virginity last summer

awkward

there's something like a love triangle (she finds out her dead internet boyfriend is both alive and attending her college) but the story is mostly about maggie figuring out who she wants to be and navigating her way there. also the romance is hot as heck. (?ω?)b

3.5 stars

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### **Riah says**

This is the third in a series of post-apocalyptic romance novels, focused on a family of Korean Americans living in New York state after a worldwide blackout destroys society. This volume is focused on the youngest sister in the family, who goes off to college a few years later, after society has started to rebuild itself. While I didn't like it as much of the first two, since it features a very unbalanced love triangle and the post-apocalyptic part of the plot wasn't as strong, I still enjoyed reading it. I got bogged down in the middle for a bit, but the end was satisfying.

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### **Michael Underwood says**

My favorite of the three books in this series. The science fictional aspect of the world really came into its own in this book, and serves to support and frame the social and personal context of the romance.

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### **Chasia Lloyd says**

I love the Seong family so much - they're open about their private lives and always making jokes, but they're intensely devoted to protecting each other, especially in the aftermath of the Flare. So of course I was excited to read the next book in the OFF THE GRID series when I saw it was going to focus on the youngest Seong sibling, Maggie. The world is slowly rebuilding itself and getting back "online", but it's nowhere near what it once was. Guitar-playing Maggie branches away from her family and goes off to college on her own to find her place in the new world - and hopefully have sex for the first time.

She's got eyes for the former-military man escorting her to college, Edwin Hernandez, but he seems to treat her more like a kid than he does an adult. Then her world gets turned upside down when she discovers she is attending college with her ex-online boyfriend Devon. And Devon still has feelings for her.

The love triangle is exciting enough, but I also adored Maggie's friendship with her roommate Danielle. Danielle is an artist and Japanophile, and the two girls become tight quickly. Danielle only has Maggie's best interest in her heart, and she's soooo sweet. If we could get a Danielle book, I would not be complaining at all!

Maggie's goal of losing her virginity really captured my attention. She made it clear from the start she

wanted to lose it under her own terms with a person she really liked, and nobody around her who knew shamed her for it. Sex positivity for the win!

Maggie Seong is my favorite Seong sibling, and Mixed Signals is probably my fave in the series. :)

\*\*\*e-ARC generously provided by NetGalley\*\*\*

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## **Bella says**

3.7 stars

Mixed signals is a SF love story. After the Flare in which millions has lost their lives and homes Maggie gets opportunity for going in collage. What are the odds that she get escort from her crush Edwin. But that's not all he goes in the same collage as she. The greater shock is when she discovers that in her dorm lives her first online boyfriend. Edwin has lost everything in Flare the last thing he wants is to lose his new adopted family because of his feelings to youngest daughter. Strange things happen and passion explodes.

A light SF collage novel.

\*ARC provided by Netgalley in exchange for an honest review

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## **Jenny Koch says**

Read this one on the plane. Loved the heroine (which was mildly surprising as she was a bit of a teenage brat in book one) - she's still growing up but I like where her head is at. She's had a crush on Edwin for years but he turned her down when she propositioned him. At the start of this book, Maggie is going away to college and Edwin is going to be keeping an eye on her while there. I liked that she recognized that despite her crush and then subsequent avoidance after her failed seduction, she really didn't know Edwin all that well and had only really seen him as a sex object in the past. I also liked that Maggie was very conscientious of their budding friendship and was very careful to avoid rocking the boat.

Love this line:

"I didn't want to be that creep, fawning over someone with the hopes that one day I'd beat them into submission and they'd settle for me. What kind of love song would that make? *It took only ten years, of you living in fear, but finally you're mine, baby, please stop crying...*"

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