

Blind Alley Study Guide

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Plot Summary

Blind Alley tells the story of Jane Maguire, a seventeen-year-old woman who is the object of a serial killer's obsession. It begins with a series of grisly murders in which women have been killed in varying manners, with one constant - all of their faces have been peeled off.

Eve Duncan, a forensic sculptor, becomes involved in the case when Detective Joe Quinn asks her to do a facial reconstruction of one of the victim's skulls. After completing the reconstruction, Eve and Joe are both struck by the resemblance to Jane. In fact, all of the victims resemble Jane.

Both Jane and Eve are haunted by dreams. Eve sees visions of her young daughter Bonnie who was abducted and murdered by a serial killer years earlier. Jane dreams about dark tunnels and a woman named Cira. The same woman Aldo, the killer, blames for the death of his father - the same woman, who died over two thousand years ago.

When Mark Trevor, a man with ties to Scotland Yard, arrives with information about similar murders in England, Italy and Spain, Joe is immediately suspicious. Trevor finds it increasingly difficult to get close to the family, but knows that he must in order to stop Aldo. Trevor wants to help protect Jane, but he has personal motivations for catching this sadistic killer.

Knowing that Jane is Aldo's next target, Joe hires a security detail to watch the house and keep Jane safe. With the police involved, Jane appears to be safe, but Aldo manages to lure Jane out into the open when he abducts her dog Toby and threatens to kill Toby if Jane doesn't meet him in the woods alone. The meeting goes awry as Jane takes a swing at Aldo with a knife and just as Aldo is about to attack, Trevor comes to the rescue. Aldo vanishes into the night, leaving Jane and her family to wonder what will happen next.

Over the next few days, Aldo kills repeatedly, quickly locating women who resemble Jane. The bodies are found along the East Coast, suggesting that Aldo has moved on and forgotten about Jane, but this is just what Aldo wants. With the police now convinced that Aldo has moved on, the extra security at the house is taken away, clearing the way for Aldo to return for Jane.

Though the police presence has diminished, Trevor stays with the family to protect Jane. An unorthodox relationship burgeons between Trevor and Jane. Clearly attracted to one another, Trevor knows that Jane is off limits, yet he's still drawn to her. Jane is just coming into her own sexuality as she begins to acknowledge her attraction to Trevor. She is both fascinated and fearful of the possibilities that exist between them, but that can never be.

Using Jane as bait, Trevor and Jane devise a plan to lure Aldo back to the place where the whole nightmare started - Herculaneum, a city that was destroyed in a massive

volcanic eruption thousands of years earlier. In order for their plan to work, they will have to convince Aldo that Cira's body has been discovered. Then, in the dark tunnels where she allegedly perished, Jane will confront Aldo for a final battle to the death.



Chapter 1

Chapter 1 Summary

Blind Alley opens in Calhoun, Georgia at a garish crime scene. Det. Christy Lollack greets Joe Quinn who has been called to the crime scene for counsel.

A woman's body has been discovered without a face. All the flesh has been removed from the skull, yet the remainder of the body is only mildly decomposed. It appears that the killer didn't want the woman to be readily identified, noting that they will still be able to run DNA, but that they would be able to get a fingerprint match relatively quickly. Christy explains that the fingertips had been burned in order to obscure the identity.

Mark Trevor, an inspector from Scotland Yard, had contacted Christy after reading about a similar case in Birmingham; he also sent emails to most cities in the Southeast that the perpetrator of a series of grizzly crimes may have moved from the U.K. to the U.S. and is continuing his work there.

Joe and Christy compare the present case to one that happened in Millbruk in which a woman was burned to death and discarded in a trash disposal. Joe rationalizes that the two cases are too different for them to be the same killer, but Christy feels otherwise.

Following her hunch, Christy asks Joe to take the skull to Eve, a forensic sculptor, to recreate the face to aid in identification. Joe is reluctant to take the project to Eve as she's been bogged down with a lot of work, but he changes his mind when Christy allows him to read the email from Mark Trevor.

In Lake Cottage, Atlanta, Georgia, the scene opens within the nightmare of seventeen-year-old Jane, a girl who grew up in various foster homes, but now lives with Joe and Eve. In the nightmare she is panicked, unable to breathe, worried that her life is being cut short, too short, and that she might die. Eve wakes her from the nightmare and tries to get her to talk about it, but Jane won't.

Jane is mature for her age, very much an adult and this causes Eve to worry about her. She's afraid that she's not doing enough of what normal seventeen year olds do, like dating and proms. When Eve talks to Joe about this, he reminds her that Jane is who she is and Eve mustn't try to shape her into someone she's not. Joe thinks Jane is perfectly fine as is and that it's natural for Jane to focus on her schoolwork, her dog Toby, a golden retriever-wolf mix, and her drawings. Jane is also going the next day to test for her driver's license.

Eve tells Jane that Joe will likely take her for the driving exam because she has to continue working the skull recreation. Jane asks if the skull is that of a child and Jane tells her it's a young woman. Jane thought that the skull might have been that of Bonnie, Eve's daughter who was murdered at seven and whose body has never been found.



Later, Joe and Eve get into a fight after Eve makes a remark about once being able to tell what Joe would do next. Eve still has not been completely trusting of Joe because he allowed Eve to think that she buried the bones of her murdered child, only to discover it was, in fact, another girl. Joe claims that he did it in order to let Eve begin to heal, but Eve views it as a type of betrayal. She stayed in the relationship because she loves Joe, but there are times when she doesn't totally trust him. Joe feels betrayed by this lack of trust. The fight is short-lived, both opting to change the subject instead of harping on old battlegrounds.

The next day Jane takes and passes her driver's test with excellence. The family agrees to celebrate. Eve continues to work while Joe prepares the celebratory dinner; Jane and Toby go for a run. The scene cuts away to a man carrying a woman's body wrapped in a tarp. She's too heavy to be Cira, but he was still compelled enough to kill her. He reveals, "she was similar enough that she had to be eliminated" (pg. 16). He dumps the body in Lake Lanier.

Later that night Eve completes the final work on the skull recreation: Eve has named the woman "Ruth." Upon completion, Eve realizes that the skull bears an uncanny resemblance to Jane.

Chapter 1 Analysis

At the opening of the book, the reader is put on notice that the current body is only the latest in a string of grisly murders. However, it's the unease created by Jane's dream that initiates the true tension that will permeate the novel. The foreshadowing of a young woman's life being cut short parallels the journey that Jane will begin once she learns that she is being pursued by a serial killer.

The work that Eve Duncan does on the skull reconstructions symbolizes the search for identity. In this world, Aldo searches for women with similar facial characteristics; Jane searches for Cira; Trevor searches for Aldo.

The opening chapter re-familiarizes the reader with the modern nuclear family of Joe Quinn, Eve Duncan and Jane MacGuire, since this family unit has been introduced in previous work. The relationships are still being forged. Jane is still learning to relate to Eve as a mother figure and, particularly later in the novel, is still testing her relationship with Joe.



Chapter 2

Chapter 2 Summary

Eve and Joe discuss the resemblance to Jane, or at least what Jane would look like if she were a few years older. Joe admits that he suspected that the victim would resemble Jane, but he didn't say anything to Eve so that he wouldn't influence her work.

Joe tells Eve all he knows about the case thus far. He knows that "Ruth" is connected to the Millbruk case and shares with Eve the case history. All the victims bear a striking resemblance to Jane. Clearly the act of a serial killer, in every case the face has been destroyed, yet, until the latest victim, the face destruction wasn't done to obscure identity. Eve is panic-stricken about what this might mean for Jane. She's already lost one child to a sick killer and she's not going to go through it again. Joe tries to comfort her, but his comfort is ignored. Eve knows that Joe loves Jane, but she doesn't think he understands the gravity of the situation because he never lost a child.

Joe agrees to contact Mark Trevor to find out all he knows about what happened with the murders in the U.K. Eve checks on Jane who is sleeping peacefully in her room. Eve then goes outside for some air. She sits alone watching the lake feeling a sense of familiarity and a sense of home. She is visited by an apparition of Bonnie, her deceased child. Bonnie tells her that Eve needs to let Joe in so that she can continue to heal, and that one way for her to do that is by telling Joe that she sees Bonnie from time to time. Eve is fearful of doing so because she thinks Joe will think she is losing her mind.

Bonnie warns Eve that "the bad times are still with" (pg. 25) Jane and that she needs time to work through them. Eve is fearful that Jane won't have time to work through the problems, even more fearful that something terrible is about to happen to Jane. Ominously, Bonnie tells Eve that she should check in on Jane because the nightmares have returned. Though Jane was fine before Eve coming outside, Eve goes to wake her - indeed, she was having another nightmare.

Finished with his conversation with Trevor, Joe shares the newly acquired information with Eve. Scotland Yard doesn't have a lot of information about who's committing the murders. In fact, more than sharing information on past cases, Trevor focuses on Ruth and how her fingerprints had been obscured.

Trevor is now en route to the US, bringing the case file with him. Eve doesn't think bringing in someone from Scotland Yard is necessary, but Joe is intrigued by having someone who is, not only familiar with the case, but someone who has spent so much time with it that the case has become an obsession for him. To be safe, Joe orders police stationed outside the house in order to protect Jane.

In London, Trevor is prepping to leave for the US and discussing the case with Bartlett, a coworker. Bartlett shares with Trevor details about Joe and Eve, in particular the



information about Bonnie's murder. He gives insight into their backgrounds, explaining that Joe was born to a wealthy family and was once an FBI agent before becoming a detective with the Atlanta Police Department. He also speculates that Joe may have taken the job in Atlanta to remain close to Eve after her daughter's death instead of continuing his career with the FBI.

Trevor sees Eve as a way to get to Joe, but Bartlett warns that using Eve may backfire in an explosive manner; Trevor is willing to take this chance. We also learn that Trevor has a file on Jane, complete with her photo. He reviews Jane's file while Bartlett calls for a taxi. He notes the remarkable resemblance between the victims and Jane. He asks, "Close enough, Aldo? □Cira?" (pg. 30).

Chapter 2 Analysis

In Chapter 2, we first see Trevor at work. He is working under the guise of "Scotland Yard Inspector." He clearly knows a great deal about the case and knows that he needs the cooperation of Joe, Eve and Jane to make his pursuit of Aldo successful.

With the facial reconstruction complete, Eve and Joe worry about the resemblance to Jane. They wonder whether fate or destiny that this victim has come to them. As the novel progresses, it would seem so. Eve needs to protect Jane; it is a type of redemption for her. Eve has already lost one child to a serial killer; she's not going to lose another. The appearance of Bonnie as an apparition is symbolic of the change that is about to take place with Jane. Though Jane is far from innocent (she has lived in foster homes and on the street), the appearance of Aldo represents the end of Jane's innocence. As Aldo's obsession becomes clearer, Jane is viewed in a more womanly fashion. Bonnie is a young child who has died - the symbolic child in Jane is about to be eradicated.

Chapter 2 is also the first introduction of the names Aldo and Cira, though it's clear that Aldo is the killer Trevor is chasing, it is not clear who Cira is. In a sense, her face - like the other victims - is obscured.



Chapter 3

Chapter 3 Summary

Chapter 3 opens with Jane asking about the reconstruction of Ruth and how it looked like her. With the sculpture already at the police station, Jane asks to go and see it, but Eve won't let her. She also informs Jane about the security and how she'll have to stay at the house for the time being. Jane agrees, but has a trigonometry test coming up and she's not going to miss it; Eve tells her that it's not worth risking.

Eve discusses with Jane just how worried she is for her safety. Jane suggests that perhaps this is happening for a reason. She can't quite articulate what she means by this, but indicates that it may have something to do with Bonnie. They decide to take a walk down to the lake. They are followed by the police assigned to watch the house.

Trevor arrives at the house only to be greeted by Eve returning from the walk. Jane is not yet back; she's still out playing with Toby. Eve is surprised by Trevor's appearance, determining that he looks more like a model or actor rather than a cop. She finds Trevor charming, but she's suspicious of him.

Joe and Trevor discuss the case. Though there isn't much in the way of concrete evidence, Trevor is able to tell them about ashes that are found at the crime scenes - volcanic ash. He also lets slip of the name Aldo. In turn, he tells Eve not to get her hopes up because this is a name he has assigned to the killer in order to give him some sort of identity. He also informs them that there are potential victims in Italy and Spain making it difficult to locate a country of origin for the suspect.

Eve and Joe discover that Trevor knows about Jane. He has a photo of Jane from when Jane had been in the paper for a dog show. He tells them that not all of the victims were found in the newspaper; in fact, at least two were prostitutes who were not in the paper. Trevor also informs them that he has been watching Jane since the photo appeared in the paper.

This immediately breaks any trust that had been building between them. Eve and Joe want to know why they weren't informed of the possible threat to Jane. Trevor tries to reassure them, but it backfires. As the scene transpires, Trevor becomes concerned of Jane's whereabouts. He is relieved when Jane comes in from playing with the dog. Eve gets defensive, informing Trevor that she wouldn't compromise Jane and that the police were with her.

Trevor introduces himself to Jane. She is taken by Trevor, but she doesn't fully trust him. When Eve accuses Trevor of using Jane as bait, Trevor acknowledges that he considered the idea, but wasn't doing so. Finally, Jane asks Trevor to leave because he has upset Eve. Clearly, this is unacceptable and Trevor takes his cue to leave. He



leaves his card for Jane before he leaves. He also reassures them that he can be trusted.

Jane watches Trevor leave and she's clearly fascinated by him. Eve tells her that if now was the time to develop a crush on someone, Trevor shouldn't be the focus of her crush. Jane tells her that she doesn't get crushes, but that Trevor reminds her of someone. Eve argues that if Trevor had known Jane could be in danger he should have said something earlier. Jane defends that he's doing his job and that perhaps things are done differently in the UK. Eve isn't so sure, but Jane reminds her that sometimes people have to do bad things to prevent even worse things from occurring. She illustrates this by telling how she stole food when she was a child in order to help feed Mike, a six-year-old, who needed the food.

Joe decides to escort Trevor into town. He drops him off at the hotel and Trevor tries to bait him into letting him stay by dangling a few of his theories. Because the theories aren't proof, Joe remains standoffish. Trevor retorts by remarking about how Joe had enough time to develop and prove his own theories, knowing that time is not on Joe's side. Trevor goes into the hotel and Joe gets an urgent phone call from Eve. She tells him that she's going over the files that Trevor left and that she thinks something is very wrong.

Inside the hotel Trevor contacts Bartlett and tells him that he blew it with Joe, Eve and Jane. The chapter concludes as Trevor realizes he may be ahead of the game, though not knowing for how long.

Chapter 3 Analysis

Jane is inquisitive about the reconstruction. Though she is not initially unnerved by the alleged resemblance to her (she's not been allowed to see the reconstruction, thus keeping her in the dark, much like the darkness of the tunnel in her dreams), she's interested by it. Her suggestion, that perhaps this was fated to happen, supports the theory that there may be redemption by this case happening to this family. Jane knows about Bonnie and understands the parallels between them with regard to Eve.

When Trevor arrives to discuss the case, he points out the lack of concrete evidence in the case. This is much like Trevor himself. He is unknown and it is unclear as to whether or not he should be trusted. After all, what can be ascertained by a few random facts, provided those facts check out. Equally important is the fact that Trevor is from another country (presumed to be England, but that will change). With Trevor being a true outsider, it makes his journey into the family that much more difficult.

One theme that begins in this chapter is Trevor's protectiveness of Jane. Protecting her is instinctual. Jane is immediately drawn to him, foreshadowing the strength of bond the two will develop. It also foreshadows the boundaries in their impending relationship. Trevor is 30 and Jane is only 17.



Chapter 4

Chapter 4 Summary

Joe goes to the hotel to find Trevor, but discovers that he never checked in; he got into a taxi and fled. He learns that someone with his description was dropped off at the airport, but he didn't get on a plane. All indicators point to Trevor still being in the city.

Eve's speculation about the crime report proves true as Joe investigates Trevor. He discovers that while there is a Mark Trevor at Scotland Yard, he's not an inspector, but a man who works in the evidence lab. They also discover that Scotland Yard did not send the email about the killer, let alone that the killer may have moved on the US. Joe asks why Eve thought Trevor might be a fraud and she admits that it was a hunch, but one that was based on how she figured a policeman would act and Trevor did not fit that profile. In an effort to track him down, Eve asks Jane to draw a picture of Trevor to give to the police.

The following scene shows Aldo in pursuit of Cira. He studies the newspaper and the photo of Ruth - now identified as Caroline Halliburton, a twenty-four-year-old woman who worked at a brokerage firm. However, Aldo is still searching for his true Cira. He hacks into a computer system with a stolen password and searches.

Jane gives Joe a sketch of remarkable likeness of Trevor. They discuss whether Trevor might be the killer, but Jane feels that Trevor is not there to hurt her. Afterwards, she goes to find Eve so that she can go to school and pick up her homework assignments. She tells Joe that, since she now has her license, she could go but Joe and Eve prefer that she not go alone.

At the police department, Christy gives Joe Ruth's identity - Caroline Halliburton - and varying specifics about her work. The photo of Caroline is a few years old and bears a frightening resemblance to Jane; it sends chills through Joe. Christy receives a phone call that another body without a face has been discovered in Lake Lanier.

Returning to Aldo's search, he finds a photo of Jane and writes her name - Jane MacGuire - down and her address. He then convinces himself that she's Cira and she deserves to die.

In the midst of another nightmare, Jane is in a tunnel, running, out of breath, and panicked, with a shadowy figure following behind. Eve tries to wake her, but Jane wants to stay in the nightmare; she's trying to get further into the dream. Finally awake, Jane and Eve talk on the porch over hot chocolate and Jane finally relents and tells Eve about the dream. She reveals that it's not herself running in the dream, but she's not sure what is happening. Eve suggests that perhaps she's having a telepathic connection. Jane isn't so sure, but the possibility exists.



As their conversation continues, Jane and Eve continue to bond, especially after Jane confesses that she knows that Eve talks to Bonnie. Eve admits that she's not sure if Bonnie is a dream or a ghost, but the fact that Jane has known about Bonnie for three years and never said anything about because she didn't want to hurt her affirms how much Jane cares about Eve. Jane promises not to tell Joe.

The chapter closes with Jane going back to bed, but not in search of her dream. She needs time to rest, but she'll return soon enough when she declares, "I'm not abandoning you, Cira" (pg. 68).

Chapter 4 Analysis

Joe begins his investigation on Trevor. His discovery that Trevor is not a Scotland Yard inspector takes away any trust that Trevor had worked to develop. It is like Eve's sculpting: she builds it up only to alter the pieces to fit properly.

Jane's nightmare returns, but Jane is up to the task of venturing further into the dream. It is still a source of intrigue; it hasn't yet become the darkness, as it will soon. Eve worries about Jane's nightmares. She wants to protect Jane at any cost and that includes protecting her from bad dreams.

When Jane and Eve discuss the dreams, the idea of telepathic communication and/or reincarnation is introduced. Clearly, the dreams mean more than just a nightmare that will fade by morning. We also learn that Jane calls the woman in her dream Cira. Now Jane and Aldo are both in pursuit of Cira, but for very different reasons.



Chapter 5

Chapter 5 Summary

Aldo has been watching Jane and Eve on the porch from the woods. Though the women aren't clear to him, he can tell who is who. He's powerfully drawn to Jane, noting the way Jane controls Eve's emotions; at least this is how he perceives their interaction. He also views the fact that Jane lives with the forensic sculptor of Caroline Halliburton as a sign.

Eve returns to bed and she discusses Jane's nightmare with Joe. She also explains that Jane doesn't necessarily think that the dream is just a dream. While Joe can rationalize away a nightmare, this is different. They discuss how one can discern dreams from reality. Joe chides her about getting philosophical. Eve calls Joe on his sensitive side; he explains that his sensitivity comes from his love for Eve, but otherwise he's as tough as they come.

Trevor is in communication with Bartlett and Bartlett is en route to meet Trevor. They agree to meet at the lobby of the Best Western Hotel in Lake Lanier. Trevor is in the woods watching the cottage where Jane is. He knows that the family is keeping her home from school in order to keep her safe, but he also knows that, where Aldo is concerned, she can't be completely safe. Trevor's closer to Aldo than he's ever been. In understanding that he knows that he can't afford to make a mistake, otherwise Jane will end up dead.

Christy calls Joe with information about the ashes found at the crime scene. She confirms that the ashes are, indeed, volcanic, but the origin of the ash is inconclusive. She's also been investigating Trevor, but hasn't been able to uncover any new leads.

Meanwhile, Aldo watches Jane from across the lake. As Jane sits outside, she senses a presence; she can feel someone watching her. Both understand that their meeting is just a matter of time. Aldo vows to make Jane come to him.

Interpol contacts Christy with information on Trevor. She relays the information to Joe. They now know that while his behavior hasn't exactly been on the up and up, he doesn't have a criminal record. It turns out that he's been counting cards, taking various casinos for large sums of cash. Since card counting is a mental capability and not a crime, he's only been classified a suspicious character. He's also been using various aliases as he moves from country to country.

Again, Jane is deep in a nightmare. This time she hears a man's voice, but can't decipher whose it is. Out of nowhere, she comes up with the name Antonio. An argument ensues as Antonio pledges that he can help keep Cira safe, but she insists that she can care for herself and she continues through the tunnel. Out of breath, Jane

wakes. She notes that even though there was panic in the dream, she did get a sense of hope. She gets up for a glass of water and notices that Toby is gone.

Chapter 5 Analysis

We learn that Aldo is watching Jane from the woods. It is a classic battle of the hunter vs. the hunted. Soon Aldo will use Toby, Jane's dog, to lure his victim. Adding to the confusion about Trevor is the revelation that he travels from country to country using various aliases; this embellishes Trevor's mystique. In doing so, this foreshadows how Jane will continually compare Trevor to a man she now identifies as Antonio in her dreams. Like Trevor with Jane, Antonio promises that he can keep Cira safe. The appearance of Antonio (and Trevor) offers Jane a sense of hope for survival, and Jane, above all else, is determined to be a survivor.



Chapter 6

Chapter 6 Summary

Jane hears howling in the distance and finds a note on Toby's collar telling her that if she comes alone, the dog will live. Outside, Jane is stopped by one of the policemen assigned to watch her and he asks if everything is okay. She tells him she's fine and then waits until she can get past the officers to go in search of Toby.

Hearing the howling, Bartlett is startled. Trevor knows that Aldo has the dog and he tells Bartlett to go back to the car; he's going in search of the dog, which, in turn, will possibly lead him to Aldo. Jane gets closer, the moonlight helping guide her way through the woods. However, the moonlight also enables her to be seen. She decides to wade through the lake to get to Toby.

Eve wakes abruptly and goes to check on Jane, discovering that she's gone. Both Joe and Eve search the house for her, and then they hear Toby howl.

Aldo has Toby bound to a stake with one bloody leg. As Jane gets closer, Trevor is watching. When she finally sees Toby, she breaks into tears. She sees a figure - Aldo - approaching with shoulder-length hair and strong body and then she sees the knife. Aldo kneels down next to Toby with the knife and Jane runs toward him. He turns to her as she reaches him, telling him not to touch the dog. In doing so, Jane stabs Aldo in the shoulder.

Aldo lunges at her with his knife, but she is pushed away just in time by Trevor. Aldo stabs Toby, keeping his promise that if Jane didn't come alone he would kill the dog. Trevor tells Jane to get away as he protects Toby. Aldo breaks free from Trevor and runs deeper into the woods. Joe, having arrived on the scene, tells Trevor to stay put and goes after Aldo.

Jane checks to see if Toby is all right; the stab wound isn't fatal. Trevor reprimands Jane about attacking Aldo, but she was defending her dog. Tending to Toby, Jane makes Trevor give over his sweater to wrap around the wound on Toby's leg. Joe and the police are in the distance and Trevor knows he'll end up in jail if he stays. Jane tells Trevor how to get out of the woods so that Joe won't be able to find him.

Eve arrives and examines Toby's injuries. They get Toby ready to go to the emergency vet clinic and Joe returns - Aldo escaped. Joe asks after Trevor, and Jane lies to him about where he's gone. Eve senses the deception, but plays along with it, thinking it's the best thing. Trevor catches up with Bartlett and the two flee the scene in a car.

Two days later, Christy informs Joe that there's still no evidence to lead the police to Aldo. Toby's fine after being treated at the vet clinic, and Jane is supposed to be working on a sketch of Aldo. Finally, Jane gives the sketch to Joe. During the course of



their conversation, Joe confronts Jane about her lying to him about Trevor's whereabouts. As Joe leaves the house, Jane ominously tells him to be careful.

Chapter 6 Analysis

Aldo lures Jane out of the house with Toby. This won't be the only time Aldo uses someone Jane loves to make her vulnerable; he will employ similar tactics later in the book to higher consequences.

As Jane makes her way through the woods, it is representative of Cira's journey through the tunnel. At the end of the tunnel, Jane/Cira must confront their enemy. As Jane meets up with Aldo, she fights him, stabbing him in the shoulder. Aldo's shoulder wound will eventually parallel a wound that Jane will receive in later chapters and a wound that Cira will sustain from falling rocks in a dream.

The triangle of Jane, Trevor and Aldo comes together for the first time in Chapter 6. This foreshadows the climax of the book in that the three must come together to properly complete the outcome of the book. Aldo gets away this time, but in the future, his luck may run out. This is also the first time that Jane reaches out to Trevor. He has just helped her escape from Aldo, but now he needs Jane to escape from Joe.

As the chapter concludes, Jane tells Joe to be careful as he is leaving. However, there is no apparent danger befalling Joe. This warning may be rooted in guilt that Jane may feel toward putting her family in danger. Though it is clearly not her fault, Jane bears a great responsibility and she wants to protect her family as much as they want to protect her.



Chapter 7

Chapter 7 Summary

Christy contacts Joe with information on Trevor. Trevor Montel is originally from South Africa, 30 years old, and his parents were killed by guerrillas when he was ten. Incredibly gifted academically, he scored off the charts in math, science and literature. In addition to his past work as a card-counter, he was also a mercenary, and for several years, there is no information on him whatsoever. He was booked on suspicion in the theft of a vase from the Tang Dynasty, but was never convicted.

She also informs him that the ashes from the volcano have been narrowed down to originating from Krakatoa, Vesuvius or Montserrat, but nothing is definitive; there are irregularities in the ashes.

Meanwhile, Aldo has moved away from Atlanta to Charlotte, North Carolina. He picks up a prostitute named Janis who bears little resemblance to Jane/Cira. When the woman's body is found in a roadside ditch, Eve wonders whether this is a sign Aldo has moved on and that Jane might be safe. Joe questions whether it's a copycat, but he's going to Charlotte to help with the investigation.

A series of phone calls make Eve nervous, but she rationalizes that the hang-ups are simply wrong numbers. Joe calls from Charlotte and tells Eve that his theory about a copycat killer is wrong. Since the victim shared some facial characteristics with Jane, it had to be Aldo.

Joe searches through mug shots of women picked up for prostitution. He spots Janis Decker and her similarities to Jane and requests that her fingerprints be checked with those of the most recent victim. It's a positive match. News comes in that there's another victim matching the Aldo's MO in Richmond, Virginia.

After telling Eve about the latest victim, Joe heads north to Richmond and the latest victim. Jane talks to Eve about Aldo's pursuit of her face. Jane questions her uniqueness since so many share similar characteristics, but Eve reassures her that she's unique. When the phone rings, Jane rushes to get it. Jane dismisses it as a wrong number, much to Eve's relief.

Chapter 7 Analysis

Two important events occur in Chapter 7. First is the identification of Trevor and his upbringing in South Africa. Like Jane, Trevor is an orphan and incredibly bright. With this information, it is easier to understand why these two are being brought together to fight Aldo. They are intellectual equals, but also share a common past of abandonment. However, this is where they differ, as well. Jane has found a new family and is trying to build a new life and Trevor has taken on the life of a nomad. They balance each other



with Jane's hope and Trevor's survival. It is clear that regardless of what path either takes they will make it.

The second thing that happens is the series of mysterious phone calls to the cottage. They cause alarm for Eve and she tries to rationalize that they may simply be wrong numbers. This mirrors Eve's blind optimism that as a new victim resembling Jane is found in North Carolina. Just as the phone calls may mean nothing, Aldo may have given up on Jane and moved on. Of course, Eve is wrong, but the phone calls aren't as disturbing as Eve may have feared.



Chapter 8

Chapter 8 Summary

With Eve working on a new facial reconstruction, Jane sneaks out and past the officers assigned to watch the house. In the woods, she meets up with Trevor. As it turns out, Trevor was responsible for the hang-up calls and waited until Jane answered the phone to arrange a meeting.

Trevor gives Jane a number where she can reach him, telling her to program the number in her cell phone so that she can get him through speed dial. Jane tells him that she doesn't want protection from him; she wants answers.

He indulges her two questions. First, she wants to know why Aldo is killing women that look like her. Trevor explains that he doesn't want to divulge that information since it is likely Trevor will no longer be needed in the investigation and be cut off. Trevor tells her that all he wants is thirty minutes with Aldo after he's caught; Trevor wants Aldo dead, going to prison isn't enough. Second, Jane wants to know the origin of the volcanic ashes. He protests at first, but finally reveals that the ashes come from Vesuvius and that Aldo mixed in ashes from different volcanoes to throw off the police. Jane suspects that Aldo is from Italy.

Eve tells Joe about Vesuvius and Joe is immediately suspicious, thinking Trevor is deliberately conning them to keep him in the loop. Eve remains optimistic that Aldo is continuing his path away from Jane, but Joe and Trevor think otherwise. Aldo's pattern is likely a decoy to get the heightened security around Jane reduced so that he can get back to her. With the police captain in Atlanta already talking about cutting back the police presence at the house, Joe fears the theory is correct.

Eve talks to Jane about how she is handling herself with Joe; she notes that Jane is very carefully manipulating Joe into doing what she wants. Jane denies it, but later considers that her manipulation does come natural.

Now in Annapolis, Maryland, Aldo takes on a disguise and goes into a bar full of Annapolis cadets. He selects one - Carrie Brockman - who bears some resemblance to Cira, but none of the charisma.

Back in Richmond, Joe receives a phone call that a female cadet has been murdered and found outside a rest stop outside Baltimore. With Aldo moving further and further from Atlanta, Joe trusts his instincts and heads back home to protect his family.

With Joe on his way home, Eve is instructed to set up a meeting with Trevor. With the new information about Trevor, Christy is able to track Trevor to Rome four years earlier where he was under suspicion for smuggling artifacts. Christy also informs Joe that the police presence at the house is being scaled back to the two officers - Mac and Brian - that were originally assigned the job.



Arriving late, Trevor shows up at the house for the meeting with Joe. Trevor reveals that Aldo is looking for the woman he thinks turned his father against him and caused his death that he wants to destroy anything that remotely resembles her. Initially, Aldo had sex with the first victims, trying to humiliate them that way, but ultimately turned to just killing them and destroying Cira's likeness. Jane asks him why Aldo didn't just hire a private investigator to find the real Cira instead of killing all the women who look like her. Trevor explains that it's not that easy, since Cira has been dead for over two thousand years.

This is the first time Trevor says the name Cira aloud and it hits Jane like a brick. Finding the whole thing absurd, Joe wants to know what kind of con Trevor is trying to pull. Sensing something with Jane, Eve tells Joe to listen to Trevor. Still, it doesn't make sense that a two-thousand-year-old corpse could kill Aldo's father.

Trevor reveals that, indeed, Cira was not responsible for Guido's, Aldo's father, death. Instead, Guido sealed himself in a tunnel, and the explosion that was set to seal off the entrance to the tunnel killed him. Back then Aldo was shadowed by Guido. Joe is angered by Trevor not revealing that he has known Aldo's last name - Manza - this whole time. Trevor explains that he didn't know what Aldo was up to initially and that it wasn't until he saw the photo of the woman killed in Brighton, England that he made the connection to Cira. He also defends that Aldo was a loner who used fake IDs and Scotland Yard couldn't get to him that way.

Jane interjects that Trevor kept this information to himself because he wanted to catch Aldo himself. Trevor agrees because Aldo has to die. Trevor starts to leave and Jane asks him where the tunnel is located; he tells her Herculaneum.

Chapter 8 Analysis

We now know that Trevor was making the phone calls. At Jane's insistence, Trevor indulges her two questions about what he knows about the case but isn't divulging. First is the question of why Aldo is committing these murders of women that look like Jane. Though an obvious question, it is not necessarily an obvious answer. The revelation of Aldo's pursuit to eradicate any woman who resembles the woman responsible for his father's death doesn't strike Jane as much as the identification of the woman - Cira. This is the first time Jane hears the name from a source other than her dreams. Jane begins to understand her role in the nightmare that is occurring during her waking hours.

This is also the first acknowledgement of Jane's ability to manipulate people. Though it has been hinted at before, this is the first time that Jane understands that she is able to do without thinking about doing so. This attribute is something she shares with Cira, reinforcing the theory that Jane is Cira reincarnated.



Chapter 9

Chapter 9 Summary

Now that Trevor has left, Eve tells Jane to go and lie down, but Jane doesn't want to. As they talk about what Trevor has just told them, Eve points out the coincidence with Jane's dream and the tunnel that Trevor talked about. Jane doesn't want to discuss it.

Jane finally agrees to go lie down, but instead spends time on the Internet searching for any information on Cira or Herculaneum. She also calls the reference desk at the library, but her search comes up empty.

Later, deep in another nightmare, Jane moves further through the tunnel. In the dream, Cira interacts with Antonio. They talk about gold and whether Julius will find out about them. Cira and Antonio had once been lovers, but the trust between them is broken. Antonio reaches out to her as they try to escape the tunnel. The earth begins to shake, opening up beneath her feet and she falls down toward the molten hot lava.

Jane wakes, trying to calm herself. She grabs her phone and she and Toby go outside for fresh air. The phone rings and it is Trevor. They talk at length about Aldo, Guido and Cira. Cira was an actress who was coveted by many men and it was considered an honor to be taken to her bed. She was the lover of Julius Precebio, a wealthy man whose library was located outside Herculaneum. Inside the library were several artist renditions of Cira.

Aldo and Guido had located the tunnel leading to Julius' library. Guido became obsessed with Cira's image and his pursuit of her took him away from Aldo. This caused Aldo to become jealous of Cira, but he also became obsessed with her - just in a different way.

Trevor had been with them on the excavation of the sight. Guido went mad and decided to blow up the tunnel so that no one could have the remnants of the library - images of Cira and lots of gold. In the explosion, Guido and other men on the excavation were killed. Trevor suffered a broken leg and crawled out to safety. When he finds Guido's body, he also finds a statue of Cira near him that had been hacked with an ax.

Aldo disappeared afterwards. He later sold a statue of Cira for a large sum of money, which enabled him to buy false documents to hide his identity. Trevor figured Aldo was doing the killing when he saw the resemblance of Cira in the Brighton victim.

They continue the conversation, discussing the possibility of reincarnation, which Jane adamantly disbelieves. Finally, Jane asks one last question: whether Trevor is angry with Aldo for committing the murders or because he tried to cheat Trevor out of the gold that was in the tunnel. Trevor avoids answering the question.



Their phone call ended, Jane starts to go back inside with Toby. Sensing that Trevor is nearby she gives him a quick salute. She figures he must be able to see her since he called almost immediately after she went out onto the porch.

Chapter 9 Analysis

Jane continues to dream about Cira, and as she moves further down the tunnel, she learns more about the relationship between Cira and Antonio. She learns that they were once lovers, but now there is a lack of trust. Perhaps this symbolizes the difficulty that Jane has in trusting Trevor implicitly. It is like sins of the past and now Trevor has to regain Jane's trust in order for that past wrong to be righted. This chapter furthers the relationship between Jane and Trevor and gives a lot of background on Aldo and his father's death.



Chapter 10

Chapter 10 Summary

Indeed, Trevor was watching Jane from the woods. He acknowledges his fascination with Jane; he's drawn to her, but knows she still a young girl. Yet, she's the same age that Ciria had been when she the mistress of three powerful men in Herculaneum. Still, he knows he needs to separate Jane and Ciria.

When he is joined by Bartlett, Trevor informs him that they are continuing to do what they've been doing since Bartlett found Jane's picture in the newspaper - wait. In Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Aldo has killed again. This time she's a waitress from a Red Lobster. Figuring that the police think he's moved on, Aldo now returns for Jane.

Joe learns of the new killing and tells Eve. Eve questions how Aldo continues to find the women who resemble Jane in such a short amount of time. The police no longer view Aldo as a threat to Jane and Joe decides to go for outside help. He hires a private security team and calls in Trevor. Bartlett also joins them. Trevor reveals that Bartlett has a personal interest in the case since one of his ex-wives (he has three) was one of Aldo's early victims.

Jane meets Bartlett and there's something familiar about him; finally, she realizes he reminds her of Winnie-the-Pooh. Bartlett is a sweet man who doesn't want to see anything bad happening to Jane. Trevor explains that when he was posing as an inspector from Scotland Yard he questioned Bartlett. Bartlett suspected that something wasn't right and followed Trevor. He pulled a gun on Trevor, which surprised him very much, since it's not in his personality. Figuring that someone would end up shot because Bartlett was nervous with a gun, Trevor confided in Bartlett about what he knew and they've been together ever since.

Trevor also checks the mail as a precaution. The mailbox is located three miles from the house. He delivers it to Jane while she's doing her homework. They discuss the variety of ways that Aldo kills his victims. Jane thinks it's odd that Aldo doesn't stick to one method of killing. Trevor explains that the methods in which he kills are representative of the various ways people would have died in Herculaneum.

While they are talking, Jane admits to herself that Trevor is a very beautiful man. She starts to compare him to Antonio in her dreams, which she tries to stop herself from doing. However, in comparing Trevor to Antonio, she also makes the connection that Antonio offers his help to Ciria in the dream, much like Trevor does to Jane. The question that remains is whether she can trust Trevor or Antonio.



Chapter 10 Analysis

The focus continues to be on the burgeoning - albeit difficult - relationship between Trevor and Jane. Trevor finally admits his attraction to Jane to Bartlett, yet he understands clearly the boundaries between them. Like Jane trying to separate Trevor and Antonio, Trevor works at separating Cira and Jane.

Jane, meeting Bartlett for the first time, is struck by his familiarity. When she does come up with the answer it turns out to be Winnie-the-Pooh, which puts Jane's adolescence back into focus. Bartlett becomes a surrogate boundary between Jane and Trevor. Though Jane will soon acknowledge her attraction to Trevor, she still grapples with whether she should or can trust him.

Aldo has moved even further away, continuing to kill. His plan to lure police suspicion away from Jane has worked and the police surveillance has been suspended.



Chapter 11

Chapter 11 Summary

In Jane's dream, Antonio reaches to Cira and tells her to jump; he will catch her. With the floor crumbling beneath her, she does so. She trusts Antonio to lead them out of the tunnel. He tells her that Julius wants her dead and her face removed. Since she has betrayed him by taking another lover, he has had sculptures done of her so that he may possess her likeness, but won't let anyone else possess them - including Cira.

Antonio declined the offer to kill Cira and now has to flee the city. Cira inquires as to how Antonio knows how to get through the tunnels. He tells her that he made it a priority to learn them for when he stole all the gold. Cira says that it's her gold and Antonio says that he was willing to share. Rocks start crumbling in on top of them and Cira starts to bleed.

Trevor wakes Jane. Jane fell asleep on the porch swing and Trevor overheard Jane mumbling in her sleep. He asks her about the dream and she tells him that she doesn't remember. Jane tells him that her dreams are off limits, he already has enough to access to all other aspects of her life. Nevertheless, Trevor peaks her curiosity when he tells her that he, too, dreams of Cira. He offers to tell her his dreams if she shares hers. She doesn't take the bait, but is very tempted.

Three days later, Aldo is back in Georgia making plans for Joe, Eve, Trevor and Jane. Trevor brings in the mail along with a couple packages - one for Eve and one for Jane. He won't let Jane open her package by herself. It's addressed from Sarah Logan, the woman who gave Jane Toby, but when Trevor opens it, he finds no note and a small velvet pouch. Inside is a green gemstone ring - identified as vesuvianite, a form of glass caused by volcanic eruptions that can be polished and cut to look like gemstones; this particular stone resembles peridot.

He tells Jane to call Sarah and see if the package is from her; it's not. It's from Aldo. Trevor asks how it makes her feel, but Jane is defiant. She knows that Aldo sent her the ring to frighten her, but she's not going to play his game. She thrusts the ring on her finger to wear it as if nothing was wrong.

Eve enters having just gotten off the phone with Sarah. She asks what's going on and they tell her about the ring. Eve tells her to take it off, but Jane won't. Finally, Eve relents and asks Jane to get the digital camera to take a photo for Joe to see if he can trace the seller of the ring.

Chapter 11 Analysis

In Jane's dream, Antonio tells Cira to trust him and he can get her safely through the tunnel. She questions how Antonio knows his way through the tunnels and he explains



that his pursuit of gold led him to learning the tunnels. Similarly, Trevor knows the tunnels under Herculaneum from his exploration, which undoubtedly was for the benefit of money, and Jane will soon ask Trevor about this. First, Jane must continue to learn how to trust Trevor.

Trevor wakes Jane from the dream and as they converse, Jane learns that she shares something else with Trevor - they both dream of Cira. Trevor uses this fact to get closer to Jane, but Jane resists; she's not ready to share her dreams even if it means her not being able to know what Trevor's dreams are.



Chapter 12

Chapter 12 Summary

Joe doesn't want Jane to wear the ring. He believes that in doing so it will play into Aldo's game. They begin the search into the origins of the ring and Trevor informs them that the ring may have been purchased years ago in Italy.

With Jane off to bed, Joe and Eve talk about what this experience is doing to Jane. Essentially, they agree that this is changing Jane. Eve says, "We might have had a chance of bringing a little springtime into her life before this happened, but not now. She's changed" (p. 184). As much as they don't want Jane to take the risk of being bait used to lure Aldo into the opening, they acknowledge that it is the right thing to do.

In her room, Jane admires, albeit with repulsion, the ring in the lamplight. She studies the cut of the stone, comparing it to blade of a knife and how fitting that is considering Aldo's penchant for knives.

The next morning Jane and Bartlett discuss both the death of Bartlett's wife and Trevor. Bartlett assures her that while Trevor's personality lends itself to the gray areas, he is essentially a good guy. He tells her that the pursuit of Aldo is a bit more than just recouping the money the Aldo cost him in the explosion; it's also personal. He explains that Trevor had befriended Pietro Tatligno who was a mercenary in Colombia along with Trevor, and Pietro was killed in the explosion.

Trevor arrives at the end of the conversation. Jane and Trevor have a private conversation and Jane asks him about Aldo's Internet surfing habits. Since both Trevor and Aldo are what Jane calls "computer geeks" (pg. 190), Jane figures she can help lay a trap for Aldo based on the sites that he frequents. Trevor agrees to compile a list for her.

Later, Eve and Jane head to the mall. The object of the trip is to flaunt the ring that Aldo gave to her as though it were nothing but a pretty bauble. Aldo is watching while Jane shops, eats pizza and generally enjoys the day, but deep down Jane is scared. The entire day takes it out of Jane and she's exhausted by the time they get home. That evening, in her room, Jane's cell phone rings and it is Aldo. He calls her names and ridicules her for acting so brazenly. She holds her own during the conversation, matching him threat for threat. Despite her repulsion and fear, Jane continues with the conversation and Aldo calls her on whether she's doing it in the hopes to find information that will help Trevor and Joe find him. Aldo tells her about the destiny of Jane living with Eve - a forensic sculptor - so that her face could live on. He tells her she has Cira's soul.

When Trevor learns of Aldo's phone call, he's surprised to see Jane so rattled by it. They talk about dealing with Aldo as Trevor brings in the mail. Jane has a letter from



Harvard; she's applied for early acceptance, though she's not sure she wants to go there. Because Joe went there, she is considering.

Trevor gives Jane the list of Internet sites he remembers Aldo visiting. There are two Italian sites, an English newspaper, *Archaeology Journal* and a pornography site that has necrophilia. Trevor informs her that the women that Aldo raped when he first started killing were raped after they'd been murdered.

After leaving Jane, Trevor meets up with Bartlett. Bartlett watches them interact and warns Trevor to be careful around Jane since she's only seventeen. Still, Trevor doesn't think it hurts to look.

Chapter 12 Analysis

The ring is symbolic of power. Aldo gives Jane the ring to instill fear in her, subsequently having power over her. Jane's flaunting of the ring shows that she cannot be easily dominated and that she will do what she has to in order to defeat him.



Chapter 13

Chapter 13 Summary

Jane looks on as Eve works on a new skull reconstruction. This one is of a small child - Lucy - who may or may not be a girl who went missing fifteen years ago in Chicago. Jane asks her about how it feels to touch the face of a dead girl. She says she's used to it. As Jane starts out of the room, she's distracted and Cira is on her mind. She feels like Cira is one of the lost ones and that she probably died in the volcanic eruption. Before Jane goes to bed, she tells Eve to finish up with Lucy tonight. She then goes to her room to start checking out the list of websites that Trevor gave to her. With a plan in mind, she contacts Trevor.

The next morning Jane talks with Joe and Eve about her plan. Trevor joins them as Jane begins to relay her ideas. Jane suggests that they manipulate Aldo into thinking that the skeleton of Cira has been located in Herculaneum. In doing so, they'll be able to lure Aldo into the open and capture him. However, the biggest obstacle is that Jane will also have to be there; Aldo needs to see the two of them together. To get them together, Eve must be the one hired to do the reconstruction.

Joe immediately objects, but Jane continues to talk her way through the plan, convincing them that this is the right course of action. Trevor is on board, relishing in a complicated con like the one Jane's about to pull.

The plan goes into action and at the center is how to get Eve involved in the reconstruction. Since she was once hired to do a skull that may or may not have been Nefertiti's, they think that Eve has the proper qualifications to be hired for an ancient reconstruction job. Trevor asks Eve to try to reach any contacts she may have in the archaeology field to help with pulling off the con. Eve knows Ted Carpenter, an archaeologist she worked with on a Navajo skull, and agrees to contact him, but isn't promising anything.

Trevor plans to hack into the websites on the list he gave to Jane to implant small articles about a skeleton that had been found at Herculaneum that is believed to be Cira's. He knows that planting the material is tricky because it must be believable, and to be believable it must be subtle. He figures this process will take place over the next three weeks.

Chapter 13 Analysis

With Eve working on a new skull reconstruction, Jane talks to Eve about how she feels working on a dead girl. The reconstruction is empowering to Eve. Though she lost her daughter Bonnie, she can give someone else the child, if not literally, then in the form of closure with identification. The reconstruction also shows how the past and present

merge. In the act of preserving (or reconstructing) the past, the present can be better understood.



Chapter 14

Chapter 14 Summary

Jane is impatient, checking the websites for articles about Cira daily. Eve reassures her that it is going to take Trevor time to hack into the websites and that she needs to be patient. Just then, Jane spots an article in one of the Italian newspapers.

Jane has other issues with Trevor, though. He promised to phone her the first night he was away and didn't. She talks with Bartlett about him and pouts that Trevor is thinking more of Aldo than her. After Bartlett leaves her, she's left to reflect on why she feels the way she does about Trevor. She is starting to notice how her body reacts when he's around her. She acknowledges that she is attracted to him sexually, but she's too naive to know how to handle it.

Trevor calls. When Jane tells him that she'll go into the house to get Eve, he asks if she's on the porch; she says yes. He tells her that it's nice picturing her on the porch by the lake. It suddenly makes Jane uncomfortable and she quickly hands the phone off to Eve.

Eve tells Trevor that she was able to reach Ted Carpenter and he said that the man they needed to deal with was Professor Herbert Sontag, a man who has been working in Herculaneum for fifteen years. Ted also relayed to Eve that getting Sontag to cooperate was going to be difficult. Eve informs Trevor that they should start to consider an alternate plan. Trevor is adamant that they can make this plan work.

Back talking to Jane, Trevor tells her that in the next week or so he is going to get an article in *Archaeology Journal*. In order to make the article more realistic, he tells her that he has a statue of Cira that can be photographed for the article. Trevor purchased the statue for a British collector that obtained it from Aldo. Apparently, Aldo stole the statue from Trevor before selling it; Trevor wanted it back. Jane gets a first-hand dose of how strong Trevor's feelings are toward Cira.

Two days later, Aldo is in Dahlenega, Georgia and he has just spotted the first article about Cira in the Italian newspaper. The next evening, Jane calls Trevor and tells him that Sontag refuses to cooperate, stating that his reputation is at risk. After banter about what Trevor knows about Cira historically, Trevor tells Jane not to worry about Sontag; he'll take care of it.

Trevor goes to Sontag's office for a private discussion. He reveals that he has information regarding the sale of a statue called "Girl and the Dolphin," which survived the eruption and that Sontag sold to a collector. Trevor threatens to go public with this information, which will surely damage Sontag's career. In exchange for Trevor's discretion, Sontag agrees to assist with the plan. He will make a public appearance stating that he and his team discovered a skeleton that they believe to be Cira. With



Sontag on board, Aldo is becoming increasingly intrigued by the emergence of Cira. He believes this is fate.

Chapter 14 Analysis

Chapter 14 further explores the burgeoning relationship between Trevor and Jane. Though her feelings aren't completely clear, Jane finally admits to herself that she is sexually attracted to Trevor, yet she isn't sure what to do about these feelings. In this way, she differs greatly from Cira. Though Jane and Cira are the same age in different times, Cira embraced and used her sexuality whereas Jane is too naïve and insecure to understand her feelings, let alone act on them.

Jane also learns, after Trevor explains about the statue of Cira that Aldo stole from him, just how deeply Trevor's feelings are toward Cira. Though it's not fully explored, this may be a turning point in Jane understanding how Trevor may project his feelings for Cira onto Jane.



Chapter 15

Chapter 15 Summary

At Jane's request, Joe takes her to the *Archaeology Journal* office in Newark where Jane meets with Sam Drake, who, after Jane shares her story, agrees to put a brief article about the Cira find in the journal. Joe offers to go in with her, but Jane is adamant she goes it alone and accomplishes just what she set out to do.

That night she phones Trevor to tell him the good news. He's surprised at the news and curious as to how Jane got the job done. She persuaded Sam by likening the experience to an adventure of Indiana Jones proportion. Before bed, Jane confides in Eve that she hasn't dreamt of Cira in some time. She thinks that perhaps the dreams have gone away, but she's not sure. With the article and the photo of the stature in *Archaeology Journal*, Aldo reels with excitement. Now he feels like the stage is set for him to be able to destroy both Jane and Cira.

Later, Sontag contacts Trevor telling him that he needs to see him straight away. It's the middle of the night, but Trevor goes to meet him. Sontag informs Trevor that he's out and that he can't handle being part of the con to capture Aldo. Trevor attempts to convince him that it is just going to be a little while longer, but a mysterious envelope is left on Sontag's doorstep. Aldo has sent Sontag a dossier on Eve and her qualifications to do the facial reconstruction.

When Trevor relays this information to Jane, it is good news. It means that Aldo is in Herculaneum and is excited about the prospect of finding Cira. Jane tells Joe and Eve that it's time to head for Italy. In Italy, Trevor has rented Sontag's villa. This charming villa has access to unmarked, underground tunnels that crisscross the excavated tunnels of the theater, where scrolls and statues of Cira have been located. Outside there are three guards to protect Jane. Aldo is lurking outside, watching the villa.

Trevor tells Eve and Jane about the tunnels below the villa and how there is a trap door in the kitchen that is large enough to fit big pieces through from the dig. He explains that this is how Sontag has managed to get pieces out and sell them on market. Trevor also tells them about the vomitorium, which may be an exit from the theater. The vomitorium will be the meeting place with the hopes that Aldo will be caught in one of three tunnels leading to the theater. Joe will be waiting with a gun equipped with an infrared scope.

As a back up plan to lure Aldo into the tunnels, they are announcing Cira's coffin will be transported from the tunnel. Trevor has arranged for two, well-known forensic experts to be on hand during the process. There will also be a video camera set up so that they'll be able to see Aldo in the area. Eve still hasn't gotten used to Jane being used as bait, but it's too late to change anything now.



Jane later asks Trevor to take her down into the tunnels so that she can see them before the actual event. He relents after an initial reluctance. He asks her if she thinks that the tunnels will be like the ones in her dreams. She says she doesn't, but she still wants to go. He agrees to take her down after he makes a phone call to Sontag about the upcoming news conference.

Chapter 15 Analysis

Jane is no longer dreaming about Cira. She is unsure of whether or not the dreams have stopped for good, but it makes sense that the dreams would stop. If indeed Jane is Cira, then it is time for her to face Aldo and her fate. In a sense, Jane and Cira have caught up with one another and the dreams are no longer necessary.

Now in Italy, the tunnels make a literal appearance; they are no longer confined to Jane's dreamscape. Like Antonio, Trevor has knowledge of the tunnels. Jane's request that Trevor take her into the tunnels is met with initial resistance from Trevor, but he relents. Deep down Trevor understands that Jane needs every advantage that she can get when it comes to facing Aldo.



Chapter 16

Chapter 16 Summary

In the tunnel, Trevor leads the way with a flashlight. He tells her to stay close. She chides that he'd probably like to scare her now if he could, and, while he admits he'd like to see her rattled, he promises he won't. Jane informs him that he'd have to do better than rats because she was used to rats from some of the orphanages where she used to live.

Trevor tells her what he knows about the actual eruption in which, in all likelihood, Cira perished. Jane asks him about the dreams he has of Cira. When she probes deeper into the content of the dream, Trevor reveals that the dreams were sexual; this makes Jane a bit uncomfortable.

Changing the subject, Jane inquires as to why Herculaneum hasn't been further excavated. Trevor says that it's been primarily because of the costs involved. Since the artifacts are largely buried under ninety feet of volcanic rock, the excavation is not an easy one.

As they venture deeper into the tunnel and Trevor continues with stories of Herculaneum, Jane begins to panic. She sticks to it and makes it to the theater, but wants out. In the vomitorium, Trevor shows her a long, red velvet cloth on the ground, which was meant to invoke the image of blood. It's very theatrical, which Jane thinks Cira would have liked.

Back in the villa, Trevor and Jane discuss how Jane was able to get Sam Drake to put the article in *Archaeology Journal*. When Trevor insinuates that Jane may have used her sexuality, she is immediately on the defensive. Trevor apologizes, but Jane is far from willing to accept it. Trevor finally confesses that he doesn't think that she is like Cira. Jane reinforces that she is her own person and accuses Trevor of being some kind of sex maniac.

Trevor takes what Jane has to say, but when she starts to leave, he insists that she stay and hear him out. He tells her that he may not be able to help unconsciously comparing her to Cira because he's lived with Cira in his mind for so long. They share an intimate moment when he touches her face and tells her that she's beautiful. Jane doesn't move away from him and finally Trevor realizes what's happening between them and breaks the moment. He sends Jane off to bed and then goes out for air.

With Trevor outside, Jane is left with her feelings. She tries to rationalize that intellectually she and Trevor aren't much different, and she tries to understand the taboo of their relationship. She gets ready for bed and admits, "she'd never felt more alive than that moment when Trevor touched her cheek" (pg. 289). Finally, the procession of removing Cira's body from the tunnel takes place with Aldo watching.



Chapter 16 Analysis

With Trevor and Jane in the tunnels, the parallel of Antonio and Cira in Jane's dream finally comes to fruition. Trevor tells Jane all he knows about the excavation at Herculaneum, thereby filling in the missing sections of what Jane was trying to learn from the dreams, but never did.

Gradually, the experience becomes a source of panic for Jane. She confronts her fear, thereby preparing herself for the battle with Aldo that is soon to come. Seeing the red, velvet cloth on the ground is symbolic of bloodshed, but it is open to interpretation as to whose blood it may be: Jane, Aldo, Trevor? With an unknowable future, the image of blood is foreboding.

Trevor and Jane share their most intimate moment in the tunnel. It is as if they are allowed to explore the sexual tension between them - even if it only plays out in a simple touch - because they are locked away from the rest of the world, hidden underground.



Chapter 17

Chapter 17 Summary

Sontag's students place Cira's coffin on a table in the library underground. Jane asks Trevor if he thinks there's a risk in one of the student's blabbing that the coffin is empty, but Trevor assures her that because of the value placed on their internships with Sontag, they'll keep their mouths shut; besides, the coffin isn't empty.

Inside the coffin is a skeleton that was borrowed from a museum in Naples. The skeleton is that of a woman who was recovered in the marina. In exchange for use of the skeleton, Eve must do a reconstruction of the woman's face. The museum lacks the funding to do so. Before she can do the actual reconstruction, Eve must use the skeleton to create Cira's face. Eve connects with the skeleton, introducing herself to the skeleton and giving it a name; she names this skeleton Guilia.

Tension still exists between Trevor and Jane. After calling her a *schoolgirl*, Jane confesses that she's angry with him because he doesn't treat her like an individual, rather he lumps her into a generalization about people in her age group. He apologizes, but Jane is still miffed.

Aldo calls Jane. He tells her that he was watching her and Eve, Joe, and Trevor in the tunnel. He taunts her, telling her that he was almost close enough to touch her and that it's just a matter of time before he does touch her. Jane counters by flaunting Cira's impending fame and the way her image will be famous - as well as Jane's. Aldo lashes out and states plainly that after he kills Jane, he will kill Eve and Joe. This rattles Jane more than anything Aldo has said to her thus far does.

Bartlett notices Jane's unease. Trevor explains that it is a result of Aldo's threat to Joe and Eve. After Trevor asks, Bartlett agrees to work as extra security around Jane. In the tunnel, Aldo waits. He finds the velvet cloth, kneels down and touches it. He likens the touch to "the flesh of a dead woman" (pg. 306).

Eve completes the reconstruction on "Cira." She's uncomfortable with making Guilia look like Cira, but feels that she'll be able to make it up to her when she can bring Guilia's true likeness to light. Joe comes in to talk to her and they share a tender moment, which leads to their making love.

Chapter 17 Analysis

Chapter 17 is mostly prelude to the climax of the story. It furthers Aldo's set up and sees the completion of Eve's reconstruction of Cira. We learn more about Eve and the relationship she develops with her subjects. She introduces herself to the skeleton donated from Naples, taking care to acknowledge the identity of the skeleton despite the fact that she will make the skeleton look like Cira.



Chapter 18

Chapter 18 Summary

Trevor announces that Aldo has found the vomitorium. Jane sees him on camera and catches a glimpse of the expression on his face. She deems his expression evil and she is frightened. The next afternoon, Aldo calls Jane. She's been waiting for him to call and Aldo seems pleased by this. He declares himself Jane's nemesis and how Jane will never be rid of him. Aldo informs her that he will be triumphant because he has destiny on his side.

That evening it is finally time to confront Aldo. Trevor takes Jane into the tunnels. He has armed Bartlett with a shotgun and told him to make sure that all is safe until Joe gets set up on the ledge to take out Aldo.

Eve shows up, much to Jane's horror. Eve tells her that she'll be safe and that she's not about to let Jane go through this alone. Eve will stay with Joe and Trevor and Trevor promises Jane that he'll keep Eve safe.

Trevor gives Jane a flashlight and leaves her at the entrance to the vomitorium. He informs her that there is a gun underneath the velvet cloth and another gun hidden in the coffin. She waits alone for Aldo.

Elsewhere in the tunnels, Trevor immediately regrets leaving Jane alone. He tries to convince himself that he's taken every precaution to keep Jane safe, but can she truly be safe? Just then, he spots blood on a boulder and comes upon the garish discovery of a man with his throat cut; he fears it is Joe. Jane taunts Aldo. He hasn't shown himself and she's growing impatient. She calls him a coward and how his father would be embarrassed of such a son. From the shadows, Aldo tells her to get away from the coffin; Cira is his.

Chapter 18 Analysis

Via video camera, Jane sees Aldo in the tunnels and notes that his expression is evil; it frightens her in a way that Aldo hasn't thus far. Ultimately, Aldo is in his lair and the tunnels, with the history of death and destruction and the volcanic eruption, this becomes representative of hell. With Eve and Joe both being lured into the tunnels - Joe for protection and Eve because she doesn't want Jane to go through this alone - mirrors how Aldo drew Jane to him with Toby earlier in the book.



Chapter 19

Chapter 19 Summary

Jane moves toward the coffin. Aldo tells her not to move and threatens that he "can make it happen now" (pg. 325), and Jane suddenly realizes the implications of what Aldo has said. She hollers for Joe and Eve, but it's too late. The tunnel explodes all around her.

With the coffin and the cloth buried under rubble from the explosion, Jane takes off running. She runs down the passageway that Trevor had showed her when he first brought her down to the tunnels. Aldo is in pursuit and a second explosion goes off; this one hits the main entrance.

As she runs, Jane stumbles upon a body with its throat cut. Jane forces herself to look and make sure that it is not Joe or Trevor. Aldo reveals that it is actually Sontag. After obtaining maps of the tunnel from Sontag, Aldo killed him because he was no longer useful.

Aldo has his knife out and Jane stumbles to the ground. She reaches for a sharp rock and as Aldo lunges toward her, she drives the rock into his chest forcefully. Incapacitated, but not dead, Aldo falls on Jane. She scurries out from under him and searches for something she can use for a weapon. He stabs the knife into her leg. She hits him with a rock. He raises the knife again and a gun shot goes off and the bullet strikes Aldo between the eyes.

Jane turns to see Trevor with the gun. Trevor checks the stab wound to Jane's leg and determines that it missed the artery, but will require stitches. Jane asks after Joe and Eve; Trevor informs her that they are both alive, but that Eve is trapped at the entrance from the explosion.

Joe works at digging Eve out of the tunnel. Trevor goes for help and Jane joins Joe in helping Eve out from under the rockslide. Later, at the hospital, Jane has been stitched up and is being kept overnight for observation. Eve and Joe are both fine. When Joe and Eve get home, Eve starts work on Guilia's reconstruction after Joe takes the skull from the coffin without permission. They've given their statements to the local police and are making flight arrangements to return to Atlanta.

Jane is released from the hospital. At the airport in Naples, Jane says goodbye to Trevor. She asks what Trevor will do next. He informs her that his next stop is Switzerland. Jane tells him that Joe won't turn him over to the police, but Trevor still has to worry about any repercussions from impersonating a Scotland Yard inspector. She thanks him for helping to save her life and the lives of Joe and Eve. They bid each other farewell until their paths cross again.



Chapter 19 Analysis

Everything finally comes together, but not without more trouble. Aldo causes the explosion in the tunnel mimicking the destruction of Herculaneum during the volcano. Both the coffin and the cloth representing blood are buried under the rubble signifying the burying of this nightmarish experience. Aldo and Jane have their final standoff and, much like the altercation between Aldo and Jane over Toby, Trevor comes to her final rescue by shooting Aldo dead.

With the nightmare over, Trevor and Jane part ways, but both acknowledge the possibilities that exist between them. The ending is open-ended, suggesting that perhaps, when she is older, Jane will return for Trevor, but until then, they bid each other au revoir.



Characters

Jane MacGuire

With a turbulent childhood behind her, Jane MacGuire is happy living with Eve Duncan and Joe Quinn, but her life is about to drastically change. After passing her driver's test, she discovers that she's the object of a serial killer, yet she's determined to carry on and not become a victim. She wants to go back to school, but Joe and Eve won't let her.

A beautiful girl, Jane isn't a typical seventeen-year-old; she's mature for her age and wise beyond her years. She understands the situation with Aldo and knows that capturing him is of the utmost importance, even if it means putting her life at risk.

For all her maturity, Jane is just coming into her sexuality. She wants to be viewed as unique, admired for her mind, but Jane is also quite beautiful and this beauty, whether Jane wants to admit it or not, is a burden to her. Her resemblance to Cira is why she is chosen as Aldo's consummate victim. Her beauty also complicates her relationship with Trevor. For the first time, Jane is experiencing lustful feelings toward someone who is a good deal older than she is. Not only does she not know how to handle the feelings she has for Trevor, she is grappling with why she is having them in the first place.

Mark Trevor/ Trevor Montel

Handsome and mysterious, Trevor is very enigmatic. Born in South Africa, Trevor was orphaned when he was quite young. Academically brilliant, he scored extremely high on all of his exams, but took to using his talents for less-than-reputable activities - including card counting at high-end casinos. A former mercenary, Trevor joined Guido Manza and his son Aldo on an expedition in Herculaneum. While in Herculaneum, Trevor lived, day in and day out, with the image of Cira. Her beauty captivates and haunts Trevor, infiltrating his dreams as an object of desire.

With regard to his relationship with Jane, Trevor is mindful of their age difference, yet he sees no harm in looking. As he and Jane forge a closer bond, the boundaries become blurred and while he is tempted to act on his feelings for her, he resists. The resistance comes both from knowing that a relationship with Jane is wrong, but also from the understanding that he needs to keep Jane and Cira separate and that becomes increasingly difficult for him.

Eve Duncan

A forensic sculptor, she's well respected for her work, having completed projects for a Navajo excavation and a skull that was thought to have been Nefertiti's. Dedicated to her work, Eve is extremely respectful of the skulls she works on, giving them identities and treating them with care. With regard to her family, Eve loves Joe very much and is



still coming to terms with her role as mother to Jane. Seemingly overprotective of Jane, it is because of her past experience with Bonnie, her biological daughter. Bonnie was abducted and killed while still a child and her remains have never been found. Appearing as a ghostly image, Bonnie communicates with Eve in times of stress, but Eve cannot bring herself to tell Joe about her visions. Bonnie assures her that when she feels close enough to Joe she'll be able to tell him and then she won't need Bonnie anymore.

Joe Quinn

A detective, Joe is a former Navy Seal who had a career with the FBI until his relationship with Eve. He left the FBI and joined the Atlanta Police Department in order to stay close to Eve. He has tried to help her deal with the grief of losing her daughter Bonnie, including letting Eve think that she was burying Bonnie's remains to give her closure. Eve found out and, because of this deception, doesn't fully trust Joe. Joe works hard to regain that trust and feels that he has already done so, thereby causing some tension in their relationship. Despite the tension, their love keeps them close.

Joe is still learning how to interact with Jane as a paternal figure. He relates to Jane more on a friendly level, but he is slowly beginning to understand his role as a father. When Jane becomes the object of a serial killer's obsession, Joe will stop at nothing to make sure she is safe, including resisting the need to trust Trevor when he arrives from London. Slowly he starts to understand that he must trust Trevor because Trevor is the only viable connection to Aldo and, subsequently, protecting Jane.

Aldo Manza

Perhaps the least developed character in the book, Aldo is seen primarily in the background. He stalks his victims and lurks in the shadows watching Jane and her family. He is a hateful man who is capable of savagery. There is no limit to the number of women he will kill in order to get to his Cira. He is obsessed beyond comprehension and that obsession goes so far as to kill any woman who remotely resembles Cira.

The motivation for his killing spree stems from his relationship with Guido, his father. Guido was so obsessed with finding Cira in Herculaneum that he neglected Aldo. After Guido died in an explosion of his own making, Aldo blamed Cira for his father's death, which triggered his desire to destroy Cira and her likeness. He is patient when need be and calculating to the core.



Objects/Places

The Cottage

The lake house where Joe Quinn and Eve Duncan live with Jan MacGuire.

Herculaneum

The ancient city destroyed by the volcanic eruption of Vesuvius. In present day Italy, tunnels run underground where excavations have been performed and statues of Ciria located.

The Skulls

Eve works on several reconstructions over the course of the book, including: Guilia/Ciria, Ruth, and Lucy.

The Vesuvianite Ring

The ring that Aldo sends to Jane under the pretense that it was sent by a friend of the family. It is made of volcanic stone that has been cut and polished to resemble the gemstone peridot.



Themes

Obsession

Johansen's *Blind Alley* explores the variances of obsession through different characters. Most obvious is Aldo's obsession with Cira and his determination to rid the earth of all women who resemble this woman. He savagely kills women who resemble her in the least little way. His obsession for Cira is matched only by his obsession with Jane, whom he views as the reincarnation of Cira. Not only can he kill the woman he feels resembles Cira the most, but the woman he believes possesses Cira's soul; this is the ultimate destruction of his nemesis.

Trevor also exhibits obsessive tendencies. Though his obsession isn't dark like Aldo's, he also projects Cira onto Jane. He acknowledges that he felt very close to Cira after living with her for so long while at the excavation site, so much so that she invaded his dreams. Trevor's obsession lends itself to the area of sexual fantasy - Cira is the ultimate male desire. He knows he cannot have Cira, but, likewise, he also cannot have Jane. Jane's youth makes her unattainable.

Jane is not immune from obsession, though hers never reaches the same verve as Aldo or Trevor's. Jane's obsession stems from her desire to not be victimized by Aldo. She concentrates her energy on stopping him, even if it means putting herself in harm's way to do so. She is driven, not only out of self-protection, but also out of a greater good. Jane sees the opportunity to stop Aldo and no one is going to stop her from doing so.

Reincarnation

Reincarnation is another theme present in Johansen's *Blind Alley*. A major part of the book's mystery is whether Jane is the reincarnation of Cira. Though we do not know her by name, we are first introduced to Cira, not through Aldo, but through a series of nightmares, that Jane has. Why is she in the tunnels? Why is she running? Why is she panicked? All of these elements contribute to the growing suspense of finding out what the dreams ultimately mean. At first, it is unclear as to whether or not Jane is the woman in the dream or if it is someone else. As the dreams progress, leading us further into the tunnels, we learn that Cira is actually the one in the dream and that by dreaming Jane can help Cira.

The introduction of the character Antonio happens in conjunction with Trevor's arrival. Though he is never blatantly identified as the reincarnation of Antonio, it is clear that this is a natural assumption. Both the timing of Trevor's arrival in conjunction with the nightmares and Trevor and Antonio's desire to help Jane and Cira respectively lend to the theory that Trevor is, indeed, Antonio.



Blended Families

Both Jane and Trevor are orphans. They have both overcome great obstacles in their youth, but they have taken decidedly different paths. While Trevor became a loner who used his cunning intellect to make his way in the world in a less-than-reputable fashion, Jane is a good girl who happened to find a loving family to adopt her. Essentially, Jane is now part of a typical family unit. Eve and Joe are parental figures, though they are still adjusting to those roles. However, like most blended families, this family unit has had to make adjustments.

Eve had a biological daughter from a previous relationship named Bonnie. Bonnie was abducted and murdered and her remains were never found. Understandably, Eve still suffers this loss and it affects how she relates to Jane. Eve and Jane share similar personalities and are a good match for each other, but both are trying to figure out where they truly fit in the other's life. Jane has dealt with foster homes and unreliable mother figures. Because of this, Jane has trust issues, which she fights when it comes to relating with Eve. She wants to tell her that she loves her, but at the same time, it is difficult to admit this feeling. The attachment that Eve feels toward Jane is strong, but she's also fearful of losing Jane - this is heightened by the appearance of Aldo and the prospect that she could lose a second "daughter."

Joe also struggles with adjusting to his role as father figure. He and Jane are friends, though the boundaries of a father/daughter relationship are evident. His utmost concern is Jane's well-being. He is hurt when he learns of Jane's deception when she assists Trevor in escaping Joe instead of remaining loyal to Joe and turning Trevor over to him. This trust does not sever their relationship, but it makes Joe uncomfortable and he understands that he must learn to deal with this because of the situation at hand - Aldo's capture - and not because of his desire to parent Jane.



Style

Point of View

Iris Johansen's *Blind Alley* is written in the third person, concentrating the life of Jane MacGuire. The narrator is omniscient and reliable. Though the narration divulges some of the inner thoughts of the various characters, the majority of the story is told through dialogue.

Instead of concentrating on the psychology of her killer Aldo, Johansen focuses much the book on Jane and how she handles the situations at hand. Johansen employs the omniscient narrator in an effort to show the multifaceted aspects of the story. Without such narration, the audience would not be privy to Aldo's random killings as he moves away from Georgia or Trevor admitting to Bartlett his attraction to Jane. Indeed, these aspects add to the overall experience of the book, but at the same time sacrifices the inner-turmoil that Jane must be feeling. After all, this is a great burden to Jane and her family and though we see them interact with each other, we never fully see the anguish that must come with it.

Perhaps the third-person omniscient narrator is employed to make the reader a true voyeur. In this way, the readers are left to interpret what is happening through their own lens, rather than through one character directly.

Setting

Blind Alley opens in Calhoun, Georgia with the grisly discovery of a woman's body whose face has been cut off. All subsequent victims are found outside, either in ditches and roadsides, or in a nearby lake. As Aldo attempts to lure suspicion away from his pursuit of Jane, Aldo travels northward, killing in North Carolina, Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania. Ultimately, Aldo returns to Georgia.

Regardless of the actual location, the majority of the settings are confined spaces, i.e. the cottage, the tunnels, the villa and various offices. All of this lends to the claustrophobic feeling of being trapped - liked Ciria in the tunnel and Jane in her situation with Aldo. The initial confrontation between Aldo and Jane takes place outside, but deep in a wooded area, undoubtedly designed to continue the theme of confinement. To further simulate confinement, when Johansen creates the scene in which Toby, Jane's dog, is being held and tortured by Aldo in an effort to lure Jane to him, Toby's legs are bound together so that he cannot move.

During the times that the story is set in Georgia, it seems as though Jane has the advantage. She is on her home turf and has the advantage of knowing the woods when she goes to meet Aldo, as well as when she instructs Trevor as to how to get out of the woods safely. When the story moves to Italy, Jane loses her advantage. She tries to level the playing field by having Trevor show her the underground tunnels, but Aldo has



the advantage. Fortunately, Trevor knows the tunnels as well as Aldo and Trevor's association to Jane helps her to succeed.

Language and Meaning

Johansen uses simple language, making the book accessible for most readers. Told primarily through dialogue, the book is a fast read with steady pacing. Johansen does not use strong or vulgar language and keeps the PG-rated cursing to a minimum.

In making Trevor and Jane bright people, she matches them intellectually as well as physically; the possibility exists that Trevor could be attracted to Jane on an intellectual level instead of because of her beauty. Of course, because of their age difference and Jane being only seventeen-years-old, any relationship between them is improbable. Instead of viewing the capture of Aldo as impossible, the reader is left the knowledge that the relationship being forged is what is currently impossible, but much like the feeling Jane experiences through her nightmares - there is hope.

Though Aldo's killings are gruesome, the violence occurs off-stage. It is, however, unbelievable that Jane, for all her determination, would be able to match Aldo physically. In two separate incidents, Jane fights and injures Aldo. In both instances, Trevor ultimately overcomes Aldo, which makes the scenarios plausible. At the climatic moments where violence is necessary, it is used sparingly and to effect.

Structure

Blind Alley consists of nineteen chapters and an author's note at the conclusion of the book. In the note, Johansen divulges that there will be another book where Jane MacGuire is the central character. The book also provides a list of other books by the author in the front matter.

The plot is linear with intermittent dream sequences used to divulge information about the past. The first two-thirds of the book are concentrated in Georgia, while the remaining third takes place in Italy. The primary focus is on Jane and Trevor, both their relationship and their plotting to capture Aldo. Several brief scenes are included to show Aldo hunting his latest victim or disposing of a body.

Johansen relies heavily on phone conversations to maintain interaction between characters. When Trevor returns to Europe to put their plan into action, he and Jane can only communicate through telephone conversations. In addition, because Aldo cannot get to Jane with the security around the house in Georgia and later at the villa in Italy, Aldo relies on the telephone to torment Jane.



Quotes

"She couldn't breathe.

No!

She would not die, she thought fiercely. She hadn't come this far to live forever in darkness. She was too young. She had too many things to do and see and be." Chapter 1, pgs. 3-4

"If she has time. If some bastard doesn't kill her like he did you.'

'You won't let that happen.'" Chapter 2, pg. 25

"Because I can think of only one reason why you'd wait. If you had her watched, then you may have wanted to set her up as bait." Chapter 3, pg. 41

"He was born in Johannesburg thirty years ago and his name is Trevor Montel, not Mark Trevor. His parents were planters who were killed by guerillas when he was ten. He was placed in an orphanage and was in and out of trouble until he ran away at sixteen. The reports of the teachers were definitely mixed. Some wanted to toss him in jail and throw away the key. Others wanted to give him a scholarship and send him to Oxford." Chapter 7, pg. 101

"Though it was difficult to blend into a crowd consisting mainly of Annapolis cadets, Aldo thought. He'd have to make sure no one saw him watching the girl playing darts across the room. Although it was difficult not to watch her when she was doing her best to attract attention. In her cadet uniform and short haircut, Carrie Brockman appeared both mannish and loud. Laughing, whistling, kidding the other players. A noisy, boisterous extrovert.

Not like Cira, who need only walk silently into a room to rivet everyone's eyes on her." Chapter 8, pg. 122

"He cared. In his weird, twisted way. It was pretty clear Aldo had a screw loose from the moment he showed up at the site. He was completely absorbed in his computer and muttered a lot about destiny and reincarnation, besides being involved in some pretty sicko stuff. He was also nasty, sadistic, and bullied the workers whenever he got the chance. But around his father he'd cave if he raised an eyebrow." Chapter 9, pg. 145

"It's very pretty, isn't it? It's a terrible thing to use beauty to bring fear" Chapter 12, pg. 188

"But one side of her nature liked the disturbance." Chapter 14, pg. 227



"No, she wouldn't let her mind play tricks on her just because they were in Herculaneum. The relationship between them was nothing like the one shared by Cira and Antonio. Hell, they had no relationship, only a common goal." Chapter 15, pg. 262

"He could feel the fury explode inside him. It shouldn't have happened. Trevor had no business coming between them. It should have been him. It *would* be him. Before he took her face, he'd take her body. He'd spend himself, cleanse away the evil that was Cira." Chapter 16, pg. 290

"She gently touched the skull. 'Hello, Giulia,' she said softly. 'We're going to get to know each other very well. I have nothing but respect and admiration for you and I'm eager to see who you are.'" Chapter 17, pg. 295

"He bent down and touched the velvet with his fingertips and thrill went through him.

Soft. Smooth. Cold.

Like the flesh of a dead woman." Chapter 17, pg. 306

"'Well, it's too late. You had your chance.' She turned and started away. Then she whirled back to face him. 'But you may get another one if I decide you're worth it and I don't find anyone better. So you'd better work on clearing Cira out of your head. I don't like the competition. She's dead and I'm alive, and by the time I'm through with making myself into the person I want to be there won't be any comparison.'" Chapter 19, pg. 344



Topics for Discussion

Discuss the parallels and differences between Cira and Antonio in the dream sequences to the relationship between Jane and Trevor.

Discuss the similarities of Aldo and Trevor's obsessions with Cira. How do they differ? How are they similar?

Discuss how reincarnation plays a role as a major theme in the book. Do you think that Jane is the reincarnation of Cira? Why or why not?

Forensic facial reconstruction is central to the story. Explain how this technique benefits both police and archaeologists/anthropologists.

Discuss Jane Maguire's character. Is she a typical 17-year-old? Why or why not?

What is Trevor's motivation(s) for getting involved with the investigation?

Explain Trevor's insistence that Aldo must die. Is this true? Is there an acceptable alternative to punishing Aldo?