

The Butterfly Garden Study Guide

The Butterfly Garden

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Plot Summary

NOTE: All citations in this Study Guide refer to the Kindle version of *The Butterfly Garden*, published by Thomas & Mercer, June 1, 2016.

Shadow child Inara Morrissey learns that sometimes people do come back in the novel *The Butterfly Garden* by Dot Hutchison. Teenage Inara was living with a group of friends in New York when she was captured by the Gardener, a man who tended a secret garden he filled with beautiful girls marked with tattoos of butterfly wings. As one of his butterflies, Inara soon became a leader among the girls. When the girls were discovered by the FBI, Inara was taken in for questioning. The novel follows as she tells her story to FBI agents Victor Hanoverian and Brandon Eddison. Themes include the reality of illusions and the limits of beauty.

As Victor watches Inara in the interview room he thinks that she does not look like a victim. When he begins questioning her, Victor learns that Inara has been a victim for most of her life. Instead of being broken, Inara believes she is a shadow child—one who is ignored. When she was only six, her parents left her sitting on a carousel while they walked off and left her alone. This was the last time Inara can remember crying. When her parents divorced, Inara was sent to live with her grandmother because neither of her parents wanted her.

After her grandmother's death, Inara ran away to live in New York. Although she was still a teenager, Inara got a new identity, a job, and moved into an apartment with a group of girls. Among these girls was a woman named Sophia who was a former prostitute and drug addict and who was trying to get clean so she could get custody of her children. A couple of weeks after a Madame Butterfly themed event at the restaurant where Inara worked she was kidnapped by the Gardener and his son, Avery.

Inara was kept in the Garden for two years. During that time she was marked by the Gardener with the tattoo of butterfly wings on her back, as were the other girls who were kept there. Inara was raped by the Gardener and given a new name, Maya, when her tattoo was finished. During the years that Inara was kept in the Garden she learned that when the girls turned twenty-one they were killed and their bodies were preserved and sealed in glass cases filled with resin. These cases lined the hallways of the rooms where the girls lived, serving as constant reminders of what would happen to them if they aged out, tried to escape, or misbehaved.

Life in the Garden came to a head shortly after the Gardener's youngest son, Desmond, learned what was happening there. The Gardener at first told Desmond that the young women had been removed from the streets and that he was caring for them. After the Gardener had Desmond help him with the murder of one of the girls, Desmond could no longer ignore what was happening but he did not have the bravery it took to tell on his father and brother.



The turning point came when Avery raped and kidnapped a child. The girls and the Gardener alike were shocked when Avery brought the little girl back to the Garden. The Gardener did not take girls younger than 15 and would err on the side of caution in regards to age. It was at this point that Desmond went to the police. Because the Gardener had special walls that covered the rooms in which his kidnapped girls lived, the police found no evidence of the living or dead girls when they visited the first time.

Alerted that his son had told the police what he was doing, the Gardener was angrier than Inara or the other girls had ever seen him. Even so, the Gardener did not punish Desmond as Avery thought he should be punished. Avery shot Desmond in the chest and he shot his father in the side. The Gardener sent Sirvat, a girl who was obsessed with death and dying, to the room where he embalmed the girls for towels and tubing to stop the bleeding from Desmond's wounds. Instead, Sirvat set fire to the room.

Inara was among the thirteen girls who survived the explosion. Avery was killed but the Gardener and Desmond lived and were expected to survive to stand trial. As Victor finished up interviewing Inara at the hospital, Sophia came looking for Inara because she considered Inara a member of her family. When Inara discovers that she is crying, Victor tells her that the carousel is in her past. A twist at the end unveils a special relationship between Inara and Sophia and helps the reader understand why Inara was so hesitant to give the investigators the information they wanted.



Part I, pgs. 2-24

Summary

FBI Special Agent Victor Hanoverian watches the girl who is in the interrogation room. He does not believe she acts as if she has been traumatized. As he watches the girl, some agents are at the hospital with other girls recovered from the property while other agents are still searching the property.

The girl's hands are bandaged. Victor can see edges of the tattoo on her back peeking out from under the tank top she wears. He pulls out the picture of the tattoo and holds it up to the glass. All of the girls have similar tattoos although they are different colors and different designs. It is one of the worst cases that Victor has ever worked.

When they were brought in, the other girls in the hospital looked to the girl now in the interview room as if she were a leader. The other girls had cried when they were asked their names. This girl had just turned away as if she were not interested in being found.

Victor's partner, Brandon Eddison arrives. He tells Victor that the other girls call the girl who is in the interrogation room Maya. They doubt it is the girl's real name. Eddison asks why Maya was chosen for the interrogation. Victor tells him it is because the other girls look to Maya. They suspect that she might be part of the kidnapping scheme.

The girl called Maya appeared to be a tough nut when the agents first observed her through the glass. When they begin questioning her, she first refuses to give her name. Victor mentions to her that her behavior is strange because she does not seem nervous. She says it is no different from talking to the Gardener, the man who held her and the other girls captive.

The first day she woke up in the garden, Maya remembers having a horrible headache. Lyonette was caring for her, wiping her face with a wet cloth and giving her water and painkillers. It was not until she tried to sit up that Maya realized she was wearing no clothes. Lyonette handed her a black dress with a really low back.

The small room had a bed, a toilet, a sink and an open shower. Maya noticed the tracks on the doorway to the hall and Lyonette explained that solid doors came down to hide them and keep them inside. Lyonette took Maya into the Garden. It was after Lyonette told Maya the place was called the Butterfly Garden that Maya noticed the tattoo on Lyonette's back.

Back in the interrogation room, Maya tells Victor that her tattoo did hurt horribly. She agrees with the hospital workers' guesses that it is a few years old. Maya indicates the girls were punished worse than death if they did not allow themselves to be tattooed.

At the end of her first week as a captive, Maya woke in the Gardener's tattoo room. He showed her a picture of the tattoo she would bear. When asked why they had to be



marked, the Gardener told her that it was because “a garden must have its butterflies” (16). He began the tattoo and Maya used a technique that Sophia had taught her in order to relax and unclench her muscles.

In the interrogation room, Victor encourages Maya to talk about the apartment in which she lived with Sophia and six other girls before she was kidnapped. Maya explains that it was a loft apartment in which girls who worked at the same restaurant lived together. Sophia was a former prostitute who was working to get back custody of her two daughters.

Guilian, the owner of the restaurant where Maya worked was pleased when he saw Maya going home with the girls. He commented that he was happy she was going with them and that she would be safe.

Analysis

The tone of the novel is quickly established in this section as FBI agents Victor Hanoverian and Brandon Eddison interview a girl apparently found with others who had been kidnapped by an individual they knew only as the Gardener. Something has happened to cause injuries to the girl’s hands. Other girls have been injured as well. Many are in the hospital. It is uncertain if some will survive. The agents question this girl — who is known as Maya at the Butterfly Garden but later called Inara as this is the name on her driver’s license — because she seems to be a leader. Victor wonders if she might have had some involvement in running the Garden.

The reader will notice first off that Victor is called by his first name while all references to the other agent, Eddison, are by his last name. This informal, more personal way of referring to Victor foreshadows the fact that he will develop a closer, more personal relationship with Maya. Eddison, however, will remain distant and suspicious of the girl.

One of the reasons that Victor is able to connect with Maya is because he has daughters of his own while Eddison is not married. As Victor learns about what has happened to the girls at the Garden, he fights the desire to “call home and talk to his own daughters, make sure they’re well” (3). In this particular case, Victor admits to himself that what they found at the scene was worse than what they had imagined. Notice that Victor even holds off on asking Maya certain questions because he senses he cannot handle her answers. For instance, he does not ask her what happened after the girls got their tattoos, as “he’s willing to call himself a coward if it means not hearing it yet” (18).

Sophia will turn out to be an important character in this story. She was the oldest of the girls who lived together in an apartment in New York. Maya describes her as being a former prostitute and drug abuser who was trying to get clean so she could get custody of her two daughters. Sophia seems to have been a mother-character in the loft apartment where the girls lived. For instance, Maya describes having used a technique



that Sophia taught another of the girls to help herself relax when the Gardener was working on her tattoo.

The Gardener is also an important character. The reader should notice how the girls are described as being scared of the man but he did not seem to be cruel to them with the exception of holding them captive, raping them, and putting tattoos of huge butterfly wings on their backs. Maya says of the Gardener that he “provided excellent meals” (14). When the Gardener gave Maya her tattoo, he seemed polite and treated her kindly. Maya says of him that he “wanted to find more joy in life than he did” (16) and that he loved to laugh.

Significant objects introduced in this section of the novel are the tattoos that the Gardener put on each of the girls. These butterfly wings on each girl are the way that the Gardener marked them as his own. He saw this as his way of filling his garden with butterflies.

The novel is structured as an interview. Maya talks to the agents in the present tense. These sections of the novel are narrated from the third-person point of view. The sections in which Maya tells her experiences are related in the past tense and are told from Maya’s first-person point of view.

Discussion Question 1

Discuss the different points of view used in this novel. How do these different points of view help to tell the story?

Discussion Question 2

Discuss the way that Maya describes her relationship with the Gardener. How would you characterize their interactions in this section of the novel?

Discussion Question 3

Discuss the mother figures and types of mothering that are introduced in this section of the novel.

Vocabulary

traumatized, suppositions, appraises, propriety, pragmatism, volition, riotous, profusion, deluge, incompetent, docile, metaphorical, derision, vivacity, emancipated, preamble



Part I, pgs. 24-40

Summary

In this section, Victor determines that Maya lived in New York before she was kidnapped. She continues to refuse to reveal her real name.

Maya tells Victor how Lyonette had stayed with her until her wings were finished but that she had no interaction with the other girls. She noticed Lyonette never took her through the halls. It was not until after the Gardener finished the tattoo that he gave Maya her new name. He declared that she was his and then he raped her for the first time.

Victor is frustrated when Eddison knocks on the door and interrupts their conversation. Eddison hands Victor a bag of identification cards. He also passes over a small bag containing only one card. The picture on the card is of the girl in the interview room. The name is listed as Inara Morrissey, but Eddison says that girl only came into existence four years ago. Agents had contacted the place where Inara worked and discovered she stopped showing up for work two years before.

When Victor goes back to the interview room he asks about the Evening Star. He shows Inara the identification card they found. Victor pushes Inara and she insinuates that card is a fake as well. He asks her what came before her life in the Butterfly Garden.

Inara tells Victor that she had chosen to go to New York City because she knew it was a place where people could go to get lost.

Inara continues to refuse to tell Victor her real name. She does say that she did not worry about being found in New York because no one was looking for her. He continues to press for her history. He explains that if the Gardener survives and has to go to trial, they will need credible witnesses. Her testimony will not be considered credible if she will not tell her birth name.

Inara continues with her memories. After her tattoo was finished, Lyonette led her down the hallway. She asked Inara to close her eyes, as always, and led her to her own room. In Lyonette's room she showed Inara the tattoo on her back, using a mirror. A small but beautiful girl popped into the room. Her name was Bliss. She warned Inara not to think of the new name she had gotten as her own, but only to think of it as a part she was playing. She added that when a girl believed she was the person the Gardener had created, it was then that she had an identity crisis, sometimes leading to a breakdown. Lyonette tried to stop Bliss from telling Inara what a breakdown led to. When Inara asked again, Bliss told her to look in the walls of the hallways.

In the interview room, Victor asks what was in the hallways. Inara looks at him like he should know. About this time Eddison tells Victor through his earpiece that one of the girls, who calls herself Ravenna, is the daughter of a senator. Victor is confused by the



look of humor on Inara's face when she hears this information. Ravenna has been missing for four and a half years.

Inara and Victor's discussion turns to broken children. Inara tells Victor he should think of her as a shadow child instead of as a broken child. She describes herself as being overlooked.

Inara goes on to tell Victor that anyone who saw her parents at their wedding should have known that any children they had would be messed up. Her mother was twenty-two and already on her third marriage. Although he was attractive, Inara's father was not wealthy like her mother's previous two husbands. Inara thinks if her mother had not been pregnant, they would not have gotten married at all.

They had lived near her father's family during their first few years of marriage. Inara could almost remember playing with her cousins. When they moved, they cut ties with the family. Both her parents began having affairs. Inara learned to take care of herself. When Inara was six, her parents decided to go to marriage counseling. They thought it would reflect well when they tried to get a divorce.

The counselor suggested they take a family vacation. Inara remembered them going to a theme park where her parents put her on a carousel. Her mother stood on one side and put her on the ride while her father stood on the other side to help her off. During the course of the ride they were both distracted by single people with whom they left. When the park closed, Inara was taken with other children who had gotten separated from their parents. When someone mentioned child services, Inara snuck out back into the park. She mingled with a group of school children in order to get out of the park without getting stopped. At a gas station she called her parents but got no answer. She finally called her neighbor to pick her up.

Analysis

It is revealed in this section of the novel that Inara had a difficult life even before she was kidnapped by the Gardener. The reader can understand why she enjoyed her life with her roommates in New York and why she wanted a new identity at that point in her life. As a child she had been aware that her parents were more interested in the people with whom they were having affairs than they were in her.

The carousel is a significant symbol in Inara's life because it symbolizes a turning point. It was while she was on that carousel that Inara learned how little she meant to either of her parents. As she talks about her memories, Inara tells Victor how much she still hates carousels.

Identity is often closely tied to one's name. This is demonstrated not only when Victor pushes Inara to tell him her name so that he can know her original identity, but also when Bliss advises Inara to think of herself as playing a part—not as actually being the person the Gardener has created. Victor tells her, "Who you are isn't a name but it is a history, and I need to know yours" (32). He indicates that Inara can call herself anything



she would like but that he needs to know her history. “A young woman who won’t even tell the truth about her name doesn’t cut it” (32) Victor says as he explains why he so badly needs to know the name on her birth certificate. Inara had already changed her name once. This name change came of her own desire. When the Gardener claimed possession of her, he gave her another name, just as he had with the rest of the girls. Bliss described the disjointedness that some of the girls felt when they forgot that the identity that the Gardener tried to give them was not who they really were. She indicated that this feeling of identity crisis could lead to breakdowns and punishment, though the punishment is not immediately clear.

It is notable in this section the way the author will hint at what is happening without actually saying what is happening specifically. For instance, after Inara’s tattoo is finished, it is indicated that the Gardener was “fumbling with his belt and zipper” (27). Even though it is not specifically said that he raped her, the reader knows that is what happened. Similarly, in the first section when Lyonette told Inara the place in which she was being held was called the Butterfly Garden, the author ends the section with the sentence: “I turned to ask her what that meant, but then I saw it” (12). The reader knows that Inara has seen the tattoo of the butterfly wings on Lyonette’s back.

Although the Gardener had told Inara only that he needed butterflies for his garden when she asked him why he marked them, she realizes that the tattoos were also a sign of ownership. As she says, “It was a strange kind of pain, choosing to lie there under the needles and let him write his ownership into my skin” (26). The pain she describes is not only physical but also emotional.

More is learned about the butterfly tattoos here as well. The Gardener has copied the wing patterns from different species of butterflies to create his tattoos. Each girl was tattooed with the wing patterns of a different butterfly. They were given the low-backed dresses so that their tattoos were not obscured from sight at all. Inara has conflicting feelings about her tattoo. She describes it as being both “ugly, and terrible. / And lovely” (33). These conflicting descriptions are a type of literary technique called an oxymoron, in which descriptions or words of completely opposite meaning are used to describe the same thing. It seems impossible that a tattoo could be both ugly and lovely. After describing the detail, coloring and artistry of the tattoo, Inara once again indicates, “I hated it, but it was lovely” (34).

Inara noticed that all of the girls in the Garden were beautiful. When she describes the small girl called Bliss, Inara notes that the girl’s nose was closer to being “cute rather than beautiful” (34). Despite her oddities, Inara saw the girl as being beautiful like the others in the Garden. She then makes a point as she tries to compare this one girl’s beauty with that of the others: “Beauty loses its meaning when you’re surrounded by too much of it” (34).



Discussion Question 1

How is a good deal of a person's identity tied up in his name? Do you think it was the best advice for the girls not to forget who they really were and pretend as if they were playing a part when it came to the names the Gardener gave them? Why or why not?

Discussion Question 2

How did the Gardener mark the girls as his own? (There are several ways.)

Discussion Question 3

Why does Inara choose to describe herself as a shadow child rather than a broken one? How does her choice of description fit her? Do you agree with her label for herself?

Vocabulary

intricacy, meticulous, parse, judicious, incredulously, credible, averted, staved, concede, disconcerting



Part I, pgs. 41-61

Summary

In this section of the novel Inara returns to the story of being abandoned at the carousel by her parents. She tells Victor that when the next-door neighbor, who was also a foster parent, got Inara home he told her she needed to thank him by “licking his lollipop” (41). Eddison interrupts by entering the room with a stack of photos. He tells Inara she is protecting her captor by not telling them who he is. Meanwhile, Victor looks through the photos of the hallways in the complex. Inara stops him at one photo, telling him that was Lyonette.

Inara says that she, Bliss, and Lyonette were friends because they neither spent time on drama nor did they fight what the Gardener wanted to do with them. She adds that the Gardener had adored them for their personalities. They often spent the night in each other’s rooms, so Inara did not think anything was strange when Lyonette asked her and Bliss to stay with her one night.

As they curled on the mattress together, Inara noticed Lyonette was shaking. Lyonette said the following day was her twenty-first birthday. It was at that point that Inara realized it was that age at which the girls “expired.” Bliss and Inara helped Lyonette get ready the next morning. There was an amber-colored silk dress in her closet for her to wear. When Lyonette hugged Inara goodbye, Lyonette told Inara that her real name was Cassidy Lawrence.

Bliss stayed with Inara that night. As soon as the walls went up they ran into the hallway to look for Lyonette. They saw the Gardener looking at the girl in the glass. Clear resin filled the space between the two sheets of glass. Every detail of Lyonette’s wings was visible but her face could not be seen. The Gardener grabbed Inara and took her back to her room. She silently recited a poem while he raped her.

Eddison interrupts Inara’s story and she explains that she recited Edgar Allen Poe during the time she was being raped because she did not want to participate, but she also did not want to fight the Gardener. Eddison tries to ask if Inara had been a virgin before the Gardener but cannot quite get the question out. Inara understands what he is asking and answers that she had sex before with one of the boys who was a friend of her roommate. She describes the experience.

When Victor asks Inara about pedophiles other than her next-door neighbor, she tells him that her grandmother’s lawn boy was one. Victor thinks she must be getting tired because she did not seem to have meant to tell him about her grandmother. When he pushes her, she admits that she lived with her grandmother, whom she called Gran, for a while.



When Inara's parents got divorced, it turned out that neither of them wanted Inara. Instead she went to live with her mother's mother. Neighbors across the street, who had a new baby boy, were the ones who took her to the bus station to go to her grandmother's house. Inara had wished she had a family like that. Her grandmother's house was old and dilapidated and full of dead animals that she'd had stuffed. Gran was chain smoking and watching television. Inara avoided the lawn boy because he tried to touch her. One day she kicked him in the balls.

Inara tells Victor she has not heard from her parents since she went to live with her grandmother. She does not even know if they are alive or not. He asks if he should contact child services for her but she tells him that she officially turned eighteen the day before. She explains that her grandmother died when she was fourteen. Instead of staying around and waiting for others to decide what to do with her, Inara took ten thousand dollars in cash her grandmother had stashed in the house and left.

Victor promises to let Inara eat if she will tell him how she came to be in the Garden. She tells him the story of a man who rented the restaurant where she worked to host a fundraiser for a theatre that would be putting on a production of *Madame Butterfly*. The client had requested only girls work as waitresses and that they wear black dresses with wire and silk butterfly wings. One of the girls who was working that night drew Inara's attention to the man and his son who were hosting the dinner. She asked first if anyone else thought the older man was attractive. She added that she believed there was something wrong with the son. Inara also noticed the way the son seemed to have a cruel look on his face even when he smiled.

The father had complimented Inara on a butterfly tattoo on her ankle. After her conversation with the older man, Inara decided he was just as creepy as the son. Later, the son followed Inara into a private staff area. She had trouble making him leave until a busboy, known as Kegs, joined them and forced the son to go away. He escorted Inara back to the other girls and warned them all to be careful around that boy. A couple of weeks later Inara was walking home by herself when she felt a sharp pain. She blacked out.

Analysis

The reader learns a new aspect of the Gardener's fascination with his girls in this section of the novel. When they turned twenty-one, they were killed and displayed in the glass cases that made up the hallways of the Garden. After the girls were placed in the cases, they were filled with a clear resin so that the butterflies that the Gardener had tattooed onto them would be clearly visible. It is almost as if the man were creating his own collection of butterflies, only he used his tattoo versions instead of actual insects. The reader's fresh knowledge of what happened to the girls when the Gardener decided they were about to be past their prime makes the words he said to Inara in the restaurant even more chilling. As he talked to her about a butterfly tattoo she had on her ankle he said to her that butterflies are "like most beautiful creatures, very short-lived." His butterflies were short-lived because he intentionally cut their lives short.



It was at a butterfly-themed event that the Gardener and his son apparently picked out Inara as a possible candidate for their Garden. They insisted that only girls be allowed to wait tables at the event they were hosting and made them wear wire and silk wings. The man who turns out to be the Gardener pointedly asked Inara her age. She did not give him specifics, believing that he thought she was underage. At another point in the evening the son seemed to interview Inara by trying to get her alone in one of the staff-only areas.

Notice in this section that Inara admits she already had one tattoo, that of a butterfly on her ankle. Several of Inara's roommates had gotten these tattoos at the same time with Sophia, the only one to argue against the decision to get the butterfly. This will be significant later on in the novel.

Also important in the writing is the use of capital letters. For instance, when Inara speaks of her grandmother going through menopause, it is referred to as "That Time" (51), as if the natural process of aging had its own personality. Another oxymoron used in this section is the reference to the Garden as a "beautiful prison," (43) a description that seems a contradiction.

The display of dead creatures, both in the Garden and in Inara's grandmother's house, seems to be indicative of some sort of mental disorder. Inara indicates that when she arrived at her grandmother's house, every room was full of stuffed dead animals. "Even the taxidermists thought she was creepy, and you have to be really fucking bad to win that award" (51), Inara says of her grandmother's strange collection. She even recounts the story of her first day at her grandmother's house when she was asked to bring her grandmother a whiskey bottle. The older lady poured this whiskey into bowls she had placed in front of the stuffed animals she had sitting around her in her living room. While the actions of Inara's grandmother border on being insane, the Gardener crossed the line as he preserved these young women he had kidnapped in glass and resin display cases.

Although the long stories the author includes about Inara's life with her roommates and her life as a child may not seem relevant to the story of the Garden, they are very relevant to who Inara is and why she has reacted to her time in the Garden the way she has. Victor notices that Inara does not seem traumatized by what happened to her in the Garden and even doubts at first that she is a victim. Perhaps her lack of trauma comes from the fact that she had such a rough childhood. Her parents did not want her. Her grandmother collected dead animals. She has basically taken care of herself all of her life. The only people with whom she felt loved were her roommates, and she lived with them only two years before she was kidnapped. Based on these experiences, it may be understandable for Inara not to be as traumatized by her kidnapping as a girl who had come from a close and loving family.



Discussion Question 1

Discuss the fundraiser at which Inara first met the Gardener and his son. How does it seem like an interview for new candidates for the Garden?

Discussion Question 2

What are your ideas about the Gardener's habits of preserving the girls at twenty-one as well as Inara's grandmother's habit of having dead animals stuffed and displayed around the house? Compare and contrast these habits.

Discussion Question 3

Why is it significant that Inara's parents would not even take her to the bus station to go her grandmother's house? Does it make sense that she would never want to see them again?

Vocabulary

revulsion, unabashedly, morose, dilapidated, truancy, vibe, menace



Part I, pgs. 61-84

Summary

A tech enters the interview room bringing food. She says the senator has not yet arrived at the hospital. Eddison asks Inara if she knew that the girl who was called Ravenna was the daughter of a senator. She did, but only because Ravenna told them her mother was a senator. The girls never told each other their names even though they did sometimes talk about their families. When Victor notices how much Inara is enjoying the hamburger he asks her if it is the first time in a while she has eaten junk food. She replies that Lorraine was ordered only to make healthy food. Eddison and Victor both recognize the name Lorraine because she is in the hospital and is believed to have been involved in the kidnapping. Inara tells Victor that Lorraine was one of the girls who tried to suck up to the Gardener.

Inara remembers that the girls who sucked up to the Gardener were generally given another pair of wings on their faces to indicate how much they liked being a butterfly. For Lorraine, the Gardener had made her learn to cook and nurse for the rest of the girls in the Garden. Lorraine hated the Gardener when he gave her a plain grey uniform and stopped paying attention to her. Inara says Lorraine must not have hated the Gardener enough because she never told anyone about the girls even though she was out in public and could have done so. Even the suck-ups hated Lorraine because they believed they would have told someone what was happening.

Inara remembers that Lorraine not only would not tell anyone about the girls, but she also would tell the Gardener if anyone mentioned that she could help them. That girl would then end up dead. Inara noticed that Lorraine seemed actually jealous of the girls who were dead because the Gardener loved the girls he had preserved in glass but did not love Lorraine.

As Victor watches Eddison clench his fists he knows he is thinking about his little sister who went missing and was never found. Victor thinks of his own daughters who believe he is their superhero. He realizes that Inara never had a superhero. He asks if the Gardener ever brought Avery to the Garden with him. Inara says that he did and that Avery had raped her but that she had not responded to him with the fear he had wanted.

Inara remembers the reasons why the Gardener would kill girls. This first reason was when they got too old. The second was if they were sick, injured, or got pregnant. The third reason girls would be killed was if they refused to settle into life in the Garden. Avery, however, killed girls for fun.

Avery had come for her the first time when she was reading a book on the cliff. He grabbed her by the hair, hit her twice and pulled the book from her hands, throwing it into the stream. He pulled her into a room that Inara had never been in before. There



was a girl there who was bound to the wall, her body bloody. When Avery threw Inara on the floor, she noticed that the girl was not breathing. Avery showed her how he had strangled the girl. Avery had his way with Inara, expecting her to fight. He was angry when she did nothing. When he left the room, Inara tried to find a key to release the dead girl from the bonds. Because she was unable to get the girl down, she covered her with her dress and apologized to her.

Inara got her book from the stream and went back to her room. She sat in the shower waiting until she could turn on the water. Because she had not been in the Garden long, she had still not gotten the reward of being able to turn on her water at will. She tried to cry. The last time she had cried was when she had been on the carousel as a child. Bliss found her. When Bliss asked what had happened Inara only had to say Avery's name. Bliss came back with the Gardener. The Gardener apologized to Inara and took her to his personal suite where he cleaned her up and treated her wounds. He slept with her in his bed that night. The next afternoon she got a gift from the Gardener—a book of Edgar Allan Poe.

Back at FBI headquarters, while Inara is in the bathroom Victor looks for Cassidy Lawrence's identification. Eddison wonders how the Gardener had been taking girls for thirty years without anyone catching him. It is late so Victor and Eddison decide to keep Inara at the station instead of sending her back to the hospital or releasing her. Victor believes she may be their best chance to get the other girls to talk about what happened to them. When Inara returns, Victor asks her what day-to-day life was like in the Garden.

Inara tells Victor about the girls' day-to-day schedule, which she describes as being boring. After Lyonette was gone, Inara tells Victor she made herself available for other girls who needed to talk. She even arranged from the Gardener to take the cameras out of the cave under the waterfall so that they could have a private place to talk. Inara said she could listen to the girls talk but was not good at comforting. Evita was the best at that. She was sweet but simple and not very smart.

When Victor asks if they need a special needs advocate at the hospital, Inara tells him that Evita died in an accident.

Inara remembers how they had been playing hide-and-seek on the day that Evita died. Inara liked to climb trees to hide because the other girls would not climb high enough to tag her. Evita was afraid of heights but decided she could be brave like Inara. Evita climbed very far up in the tree before she decided she wanted down. Inara offered to help her down but Evita did not wait. The branch on which she was standing broke and Evita fell, hitting her head on another branch. Her neck had broken. The Gardener mourned over Evita's dead body.

Back in the interview room, Eddison walks into the interrogation room with a cot and announces that "the son is dead" (82). Inara asks which one of the sons is dead. When she learns it is Avery who is dead, she covers her face with her arms. Victor and Eddison think her reaction is strange when she asks only if she can go to sleep. After



she has lain down, Victor asks if the younger son, Desmond, knew about the Garden. Inara bites her lip, bringing blood, before she answers that he did know about the girls.

Analysis

Because Lorraine was involved in the care of the girls, the FBI agents believe that she might have been responsible for some of the cruel things done to the girls. Lorraine's role in the Garden is complex because she was a victim but also did nothing to help the other girls when she had the opportunity. It appears that Lorraine suffered from Stockholm syndrome, as Inara described earlier in the novel. "Warm, loving people who desperately need approval from others fall victim to Stockholm syndrome" (9). As Inara describes it, Lorraine truly loved the Gardener. She was devastated, however, when the gardener made her cook and nurse and no longer paid any attention to her sexually. She took her anger and frustration out on the girls.

Lorraine's character is a paradox because even when she began to hate the Gardener, she still did not tell anyone about the girls that he held captive. This was another reason that the girls hated Lorraine. Even though she knew what was happening and had the opportunity, she would not save herself or the others. Because she refused to do anything to help the girls even though she had opportunity, the FBI agents must decide if Lorraine — who was kidnapped, tattooed, raped, and held against her will at one time just like the other girls — should be charged for her actions in allowing the Garden to continue to operate.

Another illusion in the Garden is the illusion that the Gardener really cared about the girls he held captive. "Because the sickest thing was — and there were so many to choose from — he genuinely did care about us, or at least what he thought of as us" (71), Inara tells the agents. The Gardener was under the illusion that he was doing what was best for the girls. He could not see that he was abusive and cruel or that the girls despised him because he saw only the parts of them that he wanted to see.

The author begins to build the role of Desmond in the story of the Garden. Of the family members, it appears that Avery is the one who was just downright cruel. This is proven when Inara describes her first session with Avery. When he took Inara to his playroom, there was already a girl there whom he had just killed. Because he was so cruel, Inara's reaction when she learns Avery died is strange. "She folds in on herself, hiding her face in her arms. Victor wonders if she's crying, but when she lifts her head a minute or so later, she's dry-eyed. Haunted, in some new and inexplicable way, but dry-eyed" (82). When the interviewers ask Inara about Desmond, she seems hesitant to talk about his role in the Garden, though she does admit he knew about it. Her actions, that of biting her lip so hard it bleeds and her voice cracking when she admits to the agent that Desmond knew about them are perhaps signs that she does not want to tell about Desmond's role in the Garden.

A significant object in this section of the novel is the book of Poe's writing that the Gardener gave to Inara as a gift after Avery abused her for the first time. The book



symbolizes the Gardener's sorrow that Avery treats the girls so poorly. Although he knew his son was cruel, he continued to let him abuse the girls and even allowed a playroom with whips, chains and shackles. What is most ironic about the book is that Poe is the author whose work Inara recited to herself when the Gardener raped her. She used it as a way to distract herself from what was being done to her body.

Important in this section is the revelation that the Gardener was careful not to kidnap any girls "under the age of sixteen, erring on the side of older if he wasn't sure" (68). This will be significant later in the novel. Also significant is the amount of time the Gardener had been keeping girls on his property without raising any red flags. "The Gardener had been taking girls for over thirty fucking years" (68), Inara tells the interviewers.

Discussion Question 1

Do you think Lorraine should be charged for the role she played at the Garden? Why or why not? Should she be considered a victim or should she be considered complicit?

Discussion Question 2

Discuss Inara's strange reaction when she learns that Avery is dead. Is this the reaction you expected? Why or why not? Why do you think Inara reacted the way she did?

Discussion Question 3

Why is it so strange that the Gardener mourned as he did for Evita?

Vocabulary

apocryphal, ephemeral, subdued, unwontedly, disheveled, succinctly, incredulously, fomenting, magnanimous, advocate, omnipresent, nonplussed, resigned



Part II, pgs. 84-103

Summary

Victor arrives at the FBI station with clothes for Inara from his daughter. He learns there are thirteen of the girls who will survive. One more died that night. He wonders what Inara will tell him about the surviving son and if he had a role in what happened to the girls. Meanwhile, the senator has arrived at the hospital. Her daughter has refused to see her, claiming she wants to see Inara first.

When Inara returns to the room her hands are unbandaged. Victor can see the burns and cuts from the escape. He can see that she expects him to ask about Desmond right from the start. Instead, he gives her hot chocolate and the cinnamon rolls his mother made. When she picks at him because his mother made him breakfast he lies and says that she even put a note in his bag telling him to “make good choices today” (91). Inara says that the lady from across the road at her parents’ house had made her a lunch the day she went to her Gran’s house. She had even put a note inside. She had called them once, but never again. She threw the paper away.

Victor changes the subject and asks why Inara thinks her friends in New York did not report her missing. She says that those girls were used to their roommates just picking up and leaving because they were all running from something. Inara also indicates she was just unlucky since she had the whole town to hide in but the Gardener had found and kidnapped her.

Inara describes herself as the type of person who does not expect people to remember her and to come back. She compares herself to Sophia’s daughters, who expected their mother to come back even though they had been in foster care for years. She says she had never had a Sophia in her life. Even though she was friends with Sophia, she does not see that relationship as being the same as being family.

Inara asks about Victor’s daughters but Eddison warns her not to talk about them. Victor hands her a tube of lip gloss from his oldest daughter. Inara smiles for the first time. It is at this point that Victor tells Inara they need to start the interrogation. He asks about Desmond.

One day when Inara had climbed one of the highest trees on the cliff in their Garden and had pressed her cheek against the ceiling glass, she had been able to see the Gardener and his wife walking inside the other greenhouse. Sometimes Avery walked with them. A few times there was a younger boy with them on whom the mother clearly doted. One day the Gardener had seen Inara in her perch as he walked with his family. He talked to her about it one day when they were with a new girl in the Garden.

Victor asks how often new girls came to the Garden. Inara explains that the Gardener would wait until one girl had died and the emotional atmosphere had calmed before he



brought in a new girl. Inara had taken over Lyonette's job of caring for the new arrivals because it helped to calm them. The others could not do it because Bliss was too angry and the others were too emotionally unstable.

The first girl that Inara had helped with was one before Lyonette died. She had been suffering with the flu so Inara agreed to help her out.

When Inara mentions that she went to the library for a book to read to Lyonette while they waited for the new girl to wake up, Eddison interrupts her. Victor suggests her favorite author was Poe but Lyonette actually liked fairy tales—the real ones that were not intended for children.

When the girl finally began to wake up, Lyonette instructed Inara how to care for her. Inara was blunter with the girl that Lyonette preferred. When Inara noticed the girl's hands were shaking, she did hold them. She told the girl the truth about the Garden and how the girls in the Garden supported each other. When Inara said the only way the girl would get out of the Garden was to die, the girl mentioned that suicide was a mortal sin.

Inara offered the girl a tour and got a dress from Bliss. The girl did not like the color black but Inara noted how the girls had learned that a dress any color other than black indicated they were about to be killed. The girl burst into tears when Inara led her to a spot where she could see the entire Garden. Inara tried to be motherly, telling the girl it was not the worst pain, but it was probably the worst shock she would experience. The girl wrapped her arms around the Inara's waist. Inara kept her hand on the girl's skin.

Analysis

As the author adds more details of the aftermath of the girls' escape from the Garden, the reader wonders exactly what happened to set them free. It is known that the FBI was called to investigate and that it was the last girl whom the Gardener had taken that prompted the search. In order to account for the injuries to the girls as well as those who died while trying to escape, there must have been some sort of fire. This can be inferred since Inara has burns to her hands. The cuts could have come from the breaking apart of the glass greenhouse in which they were kept.

Inara gives the reader a glimpse of the Gardener's life outside the Garden. She was able to see him walking with his wife in a second greenhouse that was adjacent to the one in which the girls lived. She recognized in the way that he touched his wife the same care and tenderness with which he touched the girls. She also saw a boy, one of the Gardener's sons who had not yet been introduced to the Garden. Inara knew that the man who is the Gardener when he was outside the Garden was known as a philanthropist and businessman. He was rich and well respected. Victor also considers how normal most people like the Gardener appear to others who meet them on a day-to-day basis.

Victor continues to try to develop a personal relationship with Inara as he extracts information from her. He understands her better than Eddison does. Eddison believes



Inara is only trying to deflect their questions while Victor is more patient with her. “‘Don’t let her get to you.’ He grins at his partner’s startled look. ‘Do we have a perfect job? No. Do we do a perfect job? No. It isn’t possible. But we do our job, and at the end of the day, we do a hell of a lot more good than harm. Inara’s good at deflecting; you can’t let her get under your skin’” (103). Although Eddison believes that Victor is not getting information from Inara as efficiently as he should, Victor tries to get Eddison to let Inara go at her own pace.

There are two important symbols mentioned in this section. The first is the piece of paper on which the lady across the street from Inara wrote her phone number when Inara left to go live with her Gran. Inara associates this piece of paper with a family that she would never have. She tells Victor she was only causing more pain to herself by keeping the note so she threw it away. The tube of lip gloss is another important symbol in the story. It is when Victor hands this tube of lip gloss to Inara that she gives him a real smile for the first time. This gift indicates to Inara that she is a person, not just a person to be questioned and from whom information can be gleaned.

It is also in this section of the novel that Inara describes how she tried out her mothering skills for the first time. She had taken over Lyonette’s job of taking care of the new girls when Lyonette was gone but had to help Lyonette one time when Lyonette had the flu. Inara had gotten dirty looks from Lyonette when she was not as gentle with the new girl as Lyonette would have preferred. Inara tells Victor, “I’d had Sophia as a maternal example for young children. New Girl wasn’t that young, and I wasn’t Sophia” (101), as a way to explain why she was not gentle with the girl. Inara decided that telling the girl the truth was more kind than being motherly.

Sophia continues to be an important person in Inara’s life as she compares herself to Sophia’s children. Inara says that she is not a person who expects anyone to look for her or care about her. She compares herself with Sophia’s children. Even after the years that they had been in foster care, they still expected Sophia to come back for them. Victor suggests that perhaps Sophia’s relationship with Inara might be the same as the one with her children. Inara indicates that because she and Sophia were just friends and not family, she did not expect that Sophia was interested in her.

Inara makes an interesting point when she tells Victor that she believes somehow she was just marked as being unlucky. It is as though she believes that the Gardener, someone who wanted to hurt her, was the only one who would notice her enough that he would come looking for her. She points out the strange odds that with all the places in New York to which she could have disappeared, he still managed to find her. It was almost as if she expected to be kidnapped.

Discussion Question 1

Discuss the way that Inara treated the new girl. Would you describe her actions as kind or hateful? Give reasons to support your answer.



Discussion Question 2

How does the author continue to raise questions about what happened at the Garden? How does she keep it in the reader's mind that there was some sort of devastating event that ended the Garden?

Discussion Question 3

Discuss Inara's relationship with Sophia. How does it affect the way she treats the girls in the Garden? How does it affect Inara's opinion of herself?

Vocabulary

parsing, deflecting, impeccable, solicitously, normalcy, attrition, futility, pillaged, coherent, incredulous, verdant, unabated



Part II, pgs. 103-131

Summary

In this section, Inara asks if Victor still has the hallway photos. She shuffles through them and then points out a girl whom she says the Gardener named Johanna. Although Johanna had seemed to settle in well, she had sudden mood swings. Johanna had managed to stay in the Garden one day when the walls were down. She drowned herself in the pond.

Victor asks about the girl which the Gardener had asked Inara about seeing her in the tree when he was walking with his wife. She said this conversation took place over a girl newer than Johanna. That girl never got a name.

Inara remembered this was the first girl that she had taken care of by herself after Lyonette had died. Because she questioned her role in Johanna's death, Inara tried to be more patient with this girl. After one of her tattoo sessions, Inara waited for the girl to go to sleep when the drugs placed in the food of each new girl took effect. She rolled the girl over and explored the parts of her tattoo that did not look right. She noticed additional swelling and blisters. When she punctured one of the blisters clear fluid as well as a milky liquid ran out. Inara suspected the girl was having an allergic reaction to the tattoo ink. She was still studying the tattoo when she felt that the Gardener was watching her. Inara could see the concern in his face as he studied the same things she had notice. When she asked, he told her the girls who never got their full wings were buried on the property.

The Gardener sat on the girl's bed and stroked her head for a while before he asked Inara how long she had been watching his family and what she thought of them. She told him that she believed his wife was sick and that she was scared of Avery. She doted on the younger boy and she enjoyed the walks because that was the only time she had her husband's undivided attention. He said that his wife had a heart condition. When Inara told the Gardener that she did not plan to tell anyone about having seen his family, she saw some of the tension release from his body. He admitted that his wife, whom he mentioned was named Eleanor, did not know about the girls. He added that Desmond was of a different type personality than Avery.

The Gardener took Inara to the cave behind the waterfall and asked what drew her to that place. She said it was because there were no illusions there. He remarked that she was very different from the other girls whom he had kidnapped. Inara did not think he was completely correct. She believed the only thing that really made her unique from the other girls was that she never cried.

Eddison begins a conversation with Inara about justice when she makes the point to tell them that the Gardener did not pry into her life before the Garden. Her belief is that it



would be better if the Gardener were to die, that way there would be no sensationalism associated with a trial. She also shares that she believes a trial will not result in justice.

When Victor prods Inara to continue the story about the waterfall, she tells them that the Gardener had requested that she ask for one thing from him. She had asked that the cameras be removed from the cave area. He was shocked because the thing she asked for was something that would benefit all of the girls, not just her. He raped her in the cave.

Victor decides the time has come to change the subject back to Desmond. Inara tells him that things had begun to change in the Garden about six months before, just after Evita's death.

Inara remembers spending those nights out in the garden. She took her book and book-light to a rock that Bliss called Pride Rock. Bliss came to sit with her that night. She gave Inara a sad dragon she had fashioned from clay.

Inara interrupts her own story, asking if there is a chance she can get the things back from her room, especially the things the other girls made.

Bliss paced as Inara read. Bliss asked why she was unable to make the best of the Garden like Inara could. Inara explained it was probably because Bliss had a happy family life before she was kidnapped. Bliss admitted she was beginning to forget things from home. As they talked, they saw a figure in black. They knew it was not the Gardener because he was in Danelle's room. Inara realized it was the Gardener's younger son. She wondered what his presence there would mean for them, and whether he would see what was happening and call the police. Inara decided it would be best to let the Gardener know what was happening. She interrupted his time with Danelle to tell him she had important news. In private, she told him that his younger son was in the Garden.

The Gardener closed the walls as he called out to Desmond. Desmond explained that he had gotten in by trying the three passwords that he knew Avery used. He had wanted to understand why his father kept the Garden private. He also asked why his father sometimes slept there. The Gardener lied and said it was because it was peaceful there.

When Inara heard the Gardener tell Desmond that he would tell him about the Garden if Desmond would keep it a secret, she sensed that Desmond wanted desperately to make his father proud of him. The Gardener told Desmond to wait there. He went to get Inara. Once they were both inside the Gardener's private quarters, the Gardener introduced the two. He told Desmond that Inara, like others, lived in the Garden because it gave them better lives than living on the streets. He warned Desmond that his mother could not be told about how he and Avery were caring for the girls.

The Gardener walked Desmond out of the Garden and then returned to Inara in his private suite. He was shaking. Inara guessed it was from the stress of telling Desmond



about what he was doing. He raped her, tearing away her dress when his shaking hands could not undo the clasps.

Analysis

Inara indicates that there was a change in the Garden when Desmond decided to experiment with his brother's passwords and broke into the Garden one night. The Gardener lied to his son and told him that he and Avery were helping and taking care of the girls. A telling part of the Gardener's explanation is seen when he told Desmond that he could not tell his mother about the girls. It seems that any intelligent young man would understand there was something wrong with what his father was doing if his father explicitly told him to keep his activities a secret.

It is also at this point in the novel that the tone begins to get more positive as Inara considered the possibility that Desmond could be the key to the girls' salvation. She hoped that he would be disturbed enough by what his father was doing that he would alert the authorities. At the same time, Inara wondered how the Gardener would react if his son were to threaten to call the police. She wondered if he might even kill his own son if he felt he represented a reasonable threat to the Garden. "The trouble with sociopaths, really, is that you never know where they draw their boundaries" (128).

Even as Inara wondered how obedient Desmond would be to his father's wishes, she proved to herself that even she was prone to do what the Gardener, who was of no particular importance to her, asked of her. When the Gardener pointed down on the floor of the hallway as if he wanted her to either sit or stay where he motioned, she thought to herself "I was the wrong kind of bitch for sit, so I chose stay, and he didn't argue with me" (124-125). Inara seems to think she was demonstrating a willingness to disobey the Gardener in this particular instance. Later, however, in the Gardener's private quarters when he went to show Desmond outside, the Gardener indicated that Inara should sit back down when she attempted to stand up. Inara is disappointed in herself as she thinks "I guess I was the right kind of bitch after all. / He called us Butterflies, but really we were well-trained dogs" (130).

When Inara thinks of how trained she was to do the Gardener's bidding and follow his instructions, it seems unlikely that his son, who had already shown that he wanted his father to be proud of him, would go against his father's rules and demands.

Meanwhile, Inara adjusted the way that she acted around the new girls since she believed her abruptness might have played some role in Johanna's suicide. "I'd wondered how much — if at all — I was to blame for her choice. If I'd given her a more graceful introduction to her situation, if I'd been more sympathetic or more comforting, maybe she would have been able to cling to that hope her mama told her to have" (106), Inara thought to herself. Her experience with Johanna did change her as she was kinder and more patient with the new girls from that point forward.



As Eddison gets more and more impatient with Inara he tells her that she is keeping the girls from getting justice by not telling the police what they need to know. Inara argues that justice is one thing that is rarely doled out. Eddison comes at the argument from another direction and tells her that it will only be if the Gardener is put in jail that he will not be able to hurt other girls. Inara believes it would be more humane if the Gardener were to die because it would keep him from hurting others and the girls would not have to stand the sensationalism of a trial.

Inara continues to include examples of the way she used the writings of Poe to keep her from participating too much when the Gardener raped her. She notes that even though she tried not to react she was frustrated when her body betrayed her. At one point she thought about the Poe poem "Annabel Lee" as she was being raped. Although the angels were jealous of Annabel Lee and her beauty, Inara thinks to herself "I didn't think angels would ever be jealous of me" (115). Although she is beautiful, Inara was treated in a way no girl should ever be treated. The lines of poetry found on page 130 are also from a poem by Poe called "A Dream Within a Dream."

Discussion Question 1

In what ways are the Gardener's butterflies different from real butterflies? In what ways does Inara think it is ironic that the Gardener calls his girls butterflies at all?

Discussion Question 2

How does the tone of the book change when Desmond wanders into the Garden? Why do you think that the Gardener did not introduce Desmond to the Garden as he obviously did for his older son?

Discussion Question 3

Do you agree with Inara's opinion of justice? Why or why not?

Vocabulary

delineation, mercurial, acerbic, reprisals, overtly, devoid, espoused



Part II, pgs. 131-150

Summary

In this section Inara explains to Eddison that Desmond believed what his father told him about the Garden because he wanted to believe. After a time, however, that desire to believe his father changed. She also tells Victor and Eddison that it was not until Avery gave her a gift that she began keeping up with how long she had been imprisoned.

Because the Gardener had warned Avery not to touch Inara after what Avery did to her and Giselle, it seemed to make Inara more desirable to Avery. The Gardener explained to her that he had granted Avery time with Inara but that he was to stay within particular limits. When Inara did not react to Avery as he wanted her to, he used a piece of metal to put a brand on her hip. The Gardener walked in when Inara screamed.

Back in the interview room, Inara pulls down her pants so that the investigators can see the butterfly brand that Avery put on her. It is noted that when Inara puts her hands over her face that the colors of her burns and cuts look almost like a butterfly mask across her face. Victor asks her to keep taking about Desmond.

The girls who were allowed to interact with Desmond were given a dress with a back to cover their tattoos. For his first visits, the Gardener watched his son closely, not giving him his own code for several weeks.

The discussion in the interview room turns to Eddison's lack of a wife. A mention is made of Eddison being a vigilante in college who was arrested for assault when he took care of a man who he knew was responsible for some campus rapes. He was not charged because he was the police chief's son.

It was after the Gardener trusted Inara and Desmond together that Desmond asked Inara: "How much of what my father is telling me is complete shit?" (140). Inara closed her book and prompted Desmond to tell her why he thought his father was lying. Desmond said it was because his father was trying too hard to keep it private. Even though Desmond was beginning to ask the right questions, Inara insisted that he should be asking his father instead of her, even if he thought she was a straightforward and honest person. To test him, she asked what he would do if he were to find out his father was doing something inappropriate. He guessed that his father was having sex with the girls. He indicated that he thought he could trust Inara because all of the girls trusted her.

After the Gardener and Desmond left for dinner, Bliss joined Inara. She said that because Desmond would not go to the police, she thought he was a tool. Inara thought to herself that a tool could be used.

Back in the interview room Inara tells the agents she did not think that Desmond would go to the police because he was scared. Inara talks about how much Desmond wanted



his father to be proud of him, and then goes on to talk about what happened to girls in the Garden who were too picky.

Inara remembers a set of twins, Maggie and Lena. Maggie suffered a host of allergies while Lena was bothered by nothing. Maggie also whined and was generally unhappy. It was because of the way Maggie acted that Inara feared for Lena. She was afraid that because of the way the Gardener kept the twins together while they were alive, he would also kill them at the same time.

It was after Lyonette was gone that the Gardener became tired of Maggie's desires for special attention. One day in particular the Gardener had decided he wanted to eat with all his girls. Lena walked in while the other girls were getting ready for the dinner and told them that her sister had announced she was not coming. Danelle went to talk to Maggie and the girls could hear a crash in the room. When Danelle walked out of the room there was a handprint on her face. She said Maggie was getting dressed.

Inara decided to go check. She found Maggie stuffing her clothes down the toilet. Inara demanded that Maggie attend the dinner because if she did not she was endangering her sister. Inara slapped Maggie, pinned her hair up and dragged her to the cafeteria. Maggie continued to cry and complain on the way to the cafeteria. Inara finally slammed Maggie against a filled display case and warned her that if she did not go to dinner, both she and her sister would die.

When Inara pulled Maggie around the corner, she saw the Gardener standing there. He asked if there was a problem. Inara noticed that the Gardener watched Maggie as she pouted during dinner and behaved badly. She got a bad feeling when Danelle gave her a knowing look.

Analysis

The illusions that the Gardener has created for himself in the novel continue to be of importance as he began bringing his youngest son into the Garden and encouraging him to believe the same perceptions of life in the Garden.

The main illusion to which the Gardener introduced Desmond is that the girls had a better life in the Garden than they would have had outside it. Another illusion that the Gardener seemed to believe is that the girls somehow felt better about what Avery did to them because the Gardener punished Avery after he hurt or killed one of them. "The fact that the repercussions could only happen after we'd been maimed or killed was less than reassuring, but he never seemed to connect those dots" (132), Inara says of the Gardener's idea of keeping his younger son in hand. Avery's relationship with Inara came to a head when Avery branded her hip in the shape of a butterfly on the day of her one-year anniversary in the Garden. This was his way of marking Inara as his own.

During Desmond's first several weeks in the Garden, the Gardener was careful to show his son only those things that fit with the illusions he wanted his son to believe. All the girls whom the Gardener did not think he could trust with Desmond were kept away.



These included the ones with wings on their faces as well as those who cried. Dresses that covered their tattoos were given to the girls to wear when Desmond was around. The walls were also lowered to hide the dead the girls in the hallways. Inara describes the way that Desmond was introduced to the Garden as having been done in much the same way that Lyonette introduced the new girls to the Garden: “You acclimate them to one aspect and then, when they didn’t balk at that anymore, you introduced another” (137).

Inara was surprised by how much Desmond accepted without questioning. So is Eddison. Inara explains the reason she believes Desmond accepted his father’s explanation for his bizarre behavior so easily: “‘Those who want to believe something badly enough generally do,’ she says simply. ‘He wanted his father to have a good, reasonable explanation, and when he was provided with one, he wanted to believe, so he did. For a while, he did’” (131). Inara’s insinuation that Desmond believed for “a while” indicates that there came a point when he stopped being able to believe his father’s stories.

The Gardener’s bizarre behavior is illustrated in the way he treated the twins. First, he saw them as one person. They were forced to stay in the same room even though they had different personalities. Maggie additionally had a variety of allergies and was accustomed to having her mother baby her. At the Garden, there was no one to baby Maggie. The girls saw her as a threat because she acted so badly and so disobediently. She was particularly a threat to her sister. The girls believed that when the Gardener got tired of Maggie and decided to kill her that Lena would be killed as well. They were right in their assumptions. When the Gardener killed and preserved the twins, he even put them in the same case. The loving pose in which he arranged them was so unusual that the girls knew that the Gardener never understood the real personalities of the girls.

A significant image in this section comes in the interview room when Victor asks Inara to tell them about Desmond and the Garden. Inara puts her hands over her eyes. “For a moment, the spread of pinks, reds, and purples across her face looks like a mask. Almost like a butterfly” (135). By this point the reader knows that the girls who sucked up to the Gardener got butterflies tattooed on their faces. In this section Inara’s burned and cut hands look like a butterfly mask against her face. It is almost as if she were some sort of a suck-up when it came to Desmond. This reminder of what the Gardener did to the butterflies that sucked up to him makes the reader wonder even more about the relationship between Inara and Desmond.

Discussion Question 1

Why do you think Desmond wanted so badly to believe his father had a logical explanation for the Garden and the girls there? Why did he not recognize the Garden for what it was right away?



Discussion Question 2

Why did the Gardener see the twins, Maggie and Lena, as one person? Why was his treatment of the as such even more unfair than the way he treated the other girls?

Discussion Question 3

When Desmond began asking questions, why do you think that Inara did not give him answers but instead suggested he go to his father?

Vocabulary

dehydrated, repercussion, acclimate, lewd, lascivious, hypodermic



Part II, pgs. 150-169

Summary

Inara tells the agents that within two weeks the twins were dead. They were placed in a case together. Inara picks their picture out of the hallway photos that Eddison hands her. She then separates the photos into two stacks. She mentions that she knows the legal names of most of those girls. Eddison is upset and tells her if they had known they could have been notifying their families. He says the families deserve to know. Inara picks up on the fact that Eddison has a family member who went missing and was never heard about. After Victor sends Eddison from the room Inara admits he does not understand how it makes a difference if the parents learn what happened to their daughters—especially if their daughters were raped and violated after being kidnapped.

Eddison comes back in and tells Victor he knows not to cross the line when Victor swears and begins to stand up. Eddison sits Faith's picture on the table in front of Inara. He tells her he is sorry she came from a bad family but that she does not get to choose for the girls who came from good families any longer. He explains to her in detail how not knowing what happened to Faith is crippling their entire family. Inara touches the photo and tells the men that the Gardener had taken pictures of the front and back when their tattoos were finished. She suspects he had kept them in a book but the book was not in his private suite because she had looked.

Inara had been helping with Simone, whom she suspected was pregnant, the first day Desmond came into the Garden by himself. In order to relax and wash away the smell of vomit, Inara had stood under the waterfall. It was night and Inara laid on the high rock in the Garden. She was startled by the sound of Desmond's voice. He gave her his sweater to put on and sat next to her. They discussed choices and Inara asked what choices he was making. When he indicated was not making any choices, Inara told him he was making the wrong choice. It was when Desmond suggested the girls just leave that he learned they were kept locked in.

Inara walked to the kitchen and he followed her. He saw the butterfly on her back in the refrigerator light and asked what it was. He commented it was beautiful and asked why she had chosen a butterfly. It was when Inara indicated he should ask his father that Desmond realized that tattoo was not there by choice. He seemed shocked when he learned that his father put tattoos on all the girls. Inara silently begged Desmond to contact the police.

Inara heard the Gardener's voice from the doorway. He did not see Desmond sitting in the floor behind a counter. Instead, he sat in a large padded chair that was considered his. He asked Inara to come sit with him. He pulled her onto his lap and asked how the girls were adjusting to Desmond. Because she knew Desmond was listening, Inara cryptically asked the Gardener why he kept the girls in display cases even after they



were dead. He explained it was because his father had collected butterflies. His father had been happiest in the room where he displayed the insects he had collected.

There was an electrical fire in that room and most of the collection was destroyed. The Gardener said his father had not been the same after that. He had not lived long afterward. The day after his father's funeral, the Gardener had seen a girl wearing a butterfly mask at an Independence Day festival. She was the first girl he kidnapped. He kept her in his basement until he could build the Garden for her.

The Gardener explained how he had been devastated when that first girl died. He had researched ways to embalm her and preserve the body. He believed it was his way of keeping the girls alive, even after they were dead. After he finished telling her about his first girl, he made Inara perform oral sex on him.

When the Gardener left, Inara went back around the counter to where Desmond was sitting and sat beside him. He had been crying. Inara knew he would not go to the police. Hearing his father talk about what he was doing only made him feel badly for not going to the police.

Victor questions Inara about not having cried since she was six. She blames the carousel and then goes on to tell him about a carousel that Bliss once made.

The night before she died, Lyonette had told Bliss and Inara about a carousel for which her father had made the figures. She had watched once when he delivered the horses he had made to a traveling carnival. She had gone to all the horses and repeated the names she had made up for them. On the way home she had promised her father she would not cry because she missed the horses so she began making origami horses. She recreated the carousel in origami. After Lyonette's death, Bliss made a carousel out of polymer clay. Bliss said she felt she had to make the carousel, but that she could not keep it so she gave it to Inara without knowing Inara's hatred for carousels.

Analysis

The interaction between Eddison and Inara reaches a boiling point when Inara suggests that it will not help the families of the victims if they know what happened to their children. Inara speaks from the viewpoint as the one who saw the horrible things done to the girls. She has seen and experienced the marking and raping at the hands of the Gardener as well as the marking and beating at the hands of Avery. She has been friends with girls who wound up in the glass and resin cases. She cannot imagine how it would help a family to know what their child had suffered through. Eddison shows her the picture of his little sister hoping that it will help her to identify why the family needs to know what happened to their child.

Inara compares a child being taken to her parents' act of leaving her. She had never expected them to come back and never missed them. "Your parents chose to leave," he (Eddison) reminds her. "None of you chose to be kidnapped" (160). Inara admits that she does not see the difference. It is at this point that both of the interviewers



understand there is something fundamentally missing in Inara because she never had the love and support of a family. It is the same reason that she explained to Bliss that she was able to make the best of being in the Garden: she does not know the love of a family and never did. Inara honestly does not understand what it means to be loved.

This lack of understanding about love on Inara's part helps to explain perhaps why she is so difficult to interview. Victor believes she is hiding something. Eddison believes she is hiding something to the point that he is angry with her. Both of them believe that perhaps she was somehow involved in keeping the girls prisoner because she does not seem as traumatized as they think she should be. When one considers that Inara's life has been one long trauma, it is not surprising that she does not act as if she has been traumatized out of the ordinary.

It is in this section that Inara tells Victor that in the Garden she came face to face with another carousel. In fact, it seems that she is among the girls who had a carousel of sorts in their lives. When Lyonette was a child she had helped her father make the horses for a carousel. After they had been delivered, Lyonette missed the horses. Instead of mourning her loss, Lyonette made an origami carousel. Later, after Lyonette was killed, Bliss made a carousel of clay in memory of Lyonette. Because she could not bear to look at it, Bliss gave the carousel to Inara to keep in her room. Inara did not want the carousel either because it reminded her of her parents walking away from her.

Significant in this section is the Gardener's mention that his father's butterfly collection was destroyed in an electrical fire. Because Inara's hands are burned, the reader can probably already guess that fire came into play in the way that the Gardener's butterfly collection was destroyed. Notice the Gardener's comment about his father's death that took place soon after the fire: "I suppose he felt as though his entire life had been burned away in that fire" (163).

Another comment made by the Gardener about the first girl he ever kidnapped gives the reader a hint as to why the Gardener wanted to preserve his girls while they were still at the height of their beauty. He explained how he was at an Independence Day fair with his mother when he saw the first girl he ever kidnapped. She was "wearing a butterfly mask made of feathers and passing out little feather and silk rose petal butterflies to the children who came through the silk maze. She was so vibrant and bright, so very alive, it was hard to believe that butterflies could ever die" (163). He believed by keeping his girls in the glass and resin, he was keeping them alive in some way.

Discussion Question 1

Why is it significant that Inara admits to Victor that she still does not like Eddison, even after he shares the story about his sister being kidnapped?



Discussion Question 2

Do you think the Gardener's obsession with turning his girls into butterflies is in any way connected to his father's butterfly collection? Why or why not?

Discussion Question 3

After Desmond heard his father tell the story of his first kidnapping, why do you think that Inara was so sure that he would not tell the police? Give reasons for your answer.

Vocabulary

retorted, despicable, miniscule, transpire, veritable, macabre



Part II, pgs. 169-192

Summary

In this section Inara remembers that there was a week when Desmond stayed out of the Garden. Simone had realized she was pregnant. Knowing what would happen, she asked Inara to read the story "The Little Match Girl" to her. Inara had finished that story but was reading others when Lorraine walked in with the pregnancy test. Inara continued to read aloud to give Simone some sort of privacy while she peed. When she finished, Simone threw the stick at Lorraine, not wanting to know the result. That evening, the Gardener came with a dress in shades of brown and cream. They said their goodbyes. Simone told Inara her name was Rachel Young.

Instead of going to her room like she was supposed to, Inara went outside to the Garden. She saw a shooting star and thought of the book she had just read to Simone about shooting stars indicating someone had just gone to heaven. She thought about the stupidity of the girl who lit matches and dreamed until she could not breathe because she was having a panic attack. Desmond was suddenly there asking her to trust him and let him help her through her attack. After she could breathe again, Inara leaned against Desmond for comfort. She knew she would live in her nightmare for three and a half years but wanted one chance to give herself over to illusion.

Victor interrupts to tell Inara he can tell she became friends with the girls. They were not just fellow captives. Inara describes the girls as being more like a family.

Inara remembers the girls she knew in the Garden. Although it hurt to lose the girls with whom she had become friends, she says it seemed the lesser of two evils to connect with the other girls. Inara describes the mindsets of some of the girls ending with Sirvat, whom Inara describes as being "hard to know" (177). Lyonette had actually asked Inara not to help when Sirvat came to the Garden because she was so strange. She seemed to have a fascination with death and the way people could die.

Inara later tells Victor about a private dinner that the Gardener hosted just for her. After they were finished, the Gardener told Inara he had seen camera footage of Inara and Desmond during her panic attack. He asked if Desmond had upset her. While Avery had been excited when his father introduced him to the Garden, the Gardener could not understand Desmond's reaction to the girls. When the Gardener asked, Inara said that if Desmond came to her for sex, she would give him what he wanted because she understood that was what was expected of her.

The Gardener raped Inara again and again that night until she ran out of stories she could recite to herself and the truth of what was happening to her worked its way into her consciousness. She indicated that she had gotten used to the sick feeling that came with the Gardener's sex but it was the "nauseating pain that came of letting him believe



he loved me” (182) that she could not get used to. When he returned Inara to her room, the Gardener told her that she could be good for Desmond.

Bliss found Inara in her shower that morning trying to scrub away all signs of the Gardener. As they curled under the covers together, Inara tried to regulate her breathing so that Bliss could not see how scared she was.

After Inara makes this admission, Victor has to leave the room. Yvonne tells Victor the girls still want to talk to Inara. Ramirez, the senator, is pressing the agents to get Inara to the hospital. Victor takes Inara a bottle of water and realizes that what she has been tracing on the table off and on throughout her interview are butterfly wings. He tells Inara that the time has come for her to tell him “what I need to know” (184).

Desmond continued to visit the Garden. One night he brought his violin. Thinking she might flatter him, Inara asked him to play for her. She was impressed by his musicianship. When he finished playing they talked about his relationship with his father. Inara was impressed when Desmond referred to the girls as captives. Some of the girls who had been playing at the pond came to Inara to tell her they were going inside. Desmond made the comment that Inara was like a house mother to the other girls.

Desmond told Inara that he had been having dreams and worried that he could be like his father. He was ashamed of himself because he went along with what his father did. He realized that Inara had the right to hate him and asked why she did not. She indicated he was possibly as trapped in his position as they were in theirs. When he asked why she did not try to escape she explained that the girls who tried to escape were next seen in glass and resin. They stayed together that night. In the morning, they kissed. He asked if he could see her after his classes were finished.

Analysis

This section of the novel seems to represent an emotionally low point in Inara’s time in the Garden, but also a time of change and hope. It is one of the first times in the novel that Inara admits to Victor that she was scared while she was in the Garden. It is also the first time that she admits to him that she did not think it was worth the pain to live until she was twenty-one even though she had so desperately wanted to survive all the years she was allotted in earlier parts of the novel. This bout of depression was touched off by a night of having the Gardener rape her until Inara had no more memorized texts to take her mind off what was happening and had to face reality. The circumstance that seemed to get the Gardener so worked up was his belief that one day Desmond and Inara might be together.

Inara gives Victor a clue that one of the reasons she might not have wanted to be found was that with the girls, she finally felt like she had a family—something she had never had before. As time passed, and more and more girls whom Inara loved and cared for were killed, she realized there was no future for any of them in the Garden. She decided



to try to manipulate Desmond into helping her and the other girls escape. She believed there was a chance because even though Desmond had bought into his father's vision so far, she believed that he had a conscience, whereas the Gardener and Avery do not. She set about trying to manipulate Desmond, a challenge for her because she felt as if she were on new ground. "I was good at escaping people, not manipulating them" (186).

Because all of the girls who lived in the Garden were match girls, Hutchison incorporates the story of "The Little Match Girl" by Hans Christian Anderson into the novel. It is this story about a girl who dies that Simone asked Inara to read to her before she died. The premise of the story is that a young girl felt she could not return home to her abusive father because she had not sold any of the matches as she was supposed to. As she lit the matches one by one she saw visions in the flames of family, feasts, and loved ones. There was also a shooting star, a sign that her grandmother, who had been the only one who really loved her, told her meant someone was going to heaven. The little girl died that night. People who had never been kind to her before mourned her death.

Because she was about to die, Simone longed for the comfort of the visions that the matches brought to the little match girl. Inara was happy to read the story to Inara but after she had to leave Simone, she was devastated by the disconnect between the illusion of fantasy and the pain of reality. "And that stupid little girl stood in the winter and kept lighting matches to catch glimpses of families that weren't — could never be — hers and froze to death in those harsh moments of reality between matches" (174). Inara's belief is that even though illusion can be comforting, it cannot keep one from death.

An important symbol in this section is the shooting star that Inara saw when she went to the Garden after she had to leave Simone. She had just finished reading a story where the grandmother told her granddaughter that a shooting star was a sign that someone was going to heaven. "Even though I knew the science — knew that it was just space debris, just rock or metal or scrap from a satellite burning up in the atmosphere — all I could think of was that stupid story" (174). Even as Inara tried to bring herself back to reality she found herself wanting to sink into fantasy and illusion. This desire to remain in the illusion carried over even after Desmond came to her and helped her through her panic attack. Inara wondered: "If the little match girl had someone curled around her like this, someone warm and solid against her back, his own body wrapped around her, would she have survived? Or would they have both frozen?" (175). Inara wondered whether by bringing Desmond into the Garden it would mean her survival or if they would both die in her attempt to save herself and the other girls.

In two places in this section Hutchison includes phrases from poems. Both of these are allusions to poems written by Poe, the writer whom Inara preferred to recite silently while she was being raped. One of these as follows: "There are some qualities — some incorporate things, that have a double life . . . There is a two-fold Silence — sea and shore — body and soul. One dwells in lonely places" (182). This excerpt comes from Poe's sonnet titled "Silence." This idea of a double life appealed to Inara because that is what she was forced to live. She had to pretend that the Gardener loved her and



wanted to take care of her when in reality he was raping her and holding her prisoner. She was caught between the illusion of what was created and what was real.

In another excerpt from Poe's poem "Ulalume," Inara's despair, described in terms of a winged creature, is captured. "In terror she spoke, letting sink her wings till they trailed in the dust — in agony sobbed, letting sink her plumes till they trailed in the dust — till they sorrowfully trailed in the dust" (183). It was a set of wings, items that indicate flight and freedom, that kept Inara bound to the Gardener. In Inara's story, her wings are symbols of ownership and capture. The tone of the poem, like Inara's attitude, is bleak and hopeless, as the girl in the poem allows her wings to trail in the dust.

Discussion Question 1

Discuss the way that the inclusion of the excerpts from Poe's poems catch and amplify the tone of the novel.

Discussion Question 2

Compare and contrast the Gardener and Desmond. Why do you think the Gardener is so puzzled by his son's behavior?

Discussion Question 3

Do you think that Inara's decision to try to manipulate Desmond into helping the girls escape is a good idea? Why or why not? Why might it be dangerous for everyone involved?

Vocabulary

ascends, misonstrued, verboten, negligible, eclectic, segued



Part II, pgs. 192-212

Summary

In this section of the novel, Inara relates to the agents that since Desmond had begun showing interest in Inara, the Gardener had started coming to visit her nearly every day. It was clear to the other girls that he liked Inara the best. Whenever the Gardener left her alone, Inara spent time with Tereza, the newest girl. Because she loved to play the piano, Inara talked the Gardener into getting her an instrument. It was Desmond who noticed the beginning sounds of a breakdown in the way Tereza was playing. He asked Inara what would happen if she did break. Inara told him he knew.

In Inara's room later, she and Desmond came running when Tereza's music had stopped. Although she sat on the bench with her fingers poised above the keys she had tear tracks on her cheeks and her eyes were vacant. Inara talked to her but she did not respond. It was only when Desmond began playing that she appeared to notice what was going on around her. He communicated to her through the music and she finally began playing again. The Gardener came into the room concerned. He asked what he could do to help. Inara suggested he not have sex with Tereza for a while. She also warned him to keep Avery away from her.

Afterward, Desmond took Inara to the cave where he had set up an iPod playing the song "Sway." Inara remembered it had been Sophia's favorite song. Desmond asked her to dance with him. Inara realized this was a moment when her life would change. She thought back over the last life-changing moments she'd had. She knew what Desmond felt for her could change her life but she also knew there would be a price to pay. She told him that she hated him a little because she knew he was going to break her heart. He told her that he loved her and would never hurt her. Even though Inara believed him, she felt guilty about what she was doing. In the back of her mind she also knew that every day that Desmond did not help to free the girls, he was hurting her.

Back in the interview room, Inara tells Victor that she did not recite Poe when she slept with Desmond. She also tells Victor that her story is almost finished.

There was a change in the Garden as the girls grew more accustomed to Desmond being there. The summer was free from accidents, breakdowns and twenty-first birthdays. Once he knew that Desmond and Inara were having sex, the Gardener stopped raping Inara. He even disabled the camera in Inara's room after Desmond requested it be turned off. Even so, Desmond would not let Inara walk with him all the way to the door where she might see him putting in his code. He said he could not be the one to ruin his family's name, the business, or destroy his mother.

One night after a concert in the Garden, Desmond and Inara were making out in her room when she spotted Avery standing in her doorway, masturbating. Inara saw him and cried out. Desmond argued with Avery over Inara. The Gardener entered and



demanded that Avery stop fondling himself. The Gardener asked both his sons to come to his own private quarters. Inara went to Bliss's room and told her what had happened. Bliss asked Inara if she loved Desmond. Inara said she did not but then hinted that she thought Desmond could help them escape. When Bliss asked, Inara admitted that she hated Desmond a little bit as well.

Analysis

Although Inara pretended to love Desmond in this section it is just as much of an illusion as everything else in the Garden. "If I was going to have any hope of moving Desmond, it couldn't just be infatuation. I needed him to truly love me, to be willing to fight for me, and that wasn't going to happen if he was still sharing me with his father and brother" (207). Desmond's willingness to fight for Inara, at least for the rights to her sexually is demonstrated when Avery showed up in Inara's doorway masturbating while Inara and Desmond had sex. Afterward, Inara felt certain enough of her plan that she shared her ideas with Bliss.

Although Desmond came to Inara with the fantasy that she loved him, Inara admitted to Bliss that she hated him a little. She added that she was not even sure if she could have loved him if they had met under normal circumstances. What is most disturbing is Desmond's promise to Inara that he loved her and would not do anything to hurt her. Inara saw through his promise. She was aware that even though he did not actively beat her, each day that he allowed her and the other girls to remain in captivity she was being hurt.

When Inara told Bliss about her plans for Desmond, Bliss reminded Inara of how difficult it might be for Desmond to turn his back on his family and turn his father and brother in for their crimes. "He would be going against his family" (212), Bliss reminded Inara, but Inara came back with the retort: "Whereas now he's just going against common decency and the law" (212). Again, Inara did not understand the idea of being loyal to one's family even if they were wrong because she had never had a family. Even when Desmond tried to explain his position to her, Inara still did not understand. "My family's name, our reputation, our company . . . I can't be the one to destroy that" (207), he said to her when considering what would happen if his father's secret were discovered. Inara's response, which she did not say out loud, "Because a name means more than a life. Than all our lives" (212), gives a hint of why she is withholding her real identity. She is still fighting for the idea that her life and her happiness is more important than her name.

The idea that Inara became a house mother to all of the girls in the garden is a focus of this section. Although Inara did not really see herself as a leader and a mother, the Gardener, Desmond, and Bliss all commented on her role and thanked her for what she did. Inara thinks to herself that Sophia and Lyonette were the only real examples of mothers she had ever had. "Sophia mothered us all in her slightly warped way. And Lyonette. Sophia took care of her girls, but Lyonette taught me how to tend Butterflies" (201), Inara says of her lessons as a mother. While Inara doubted her role as a mother



to the girls, Bliss told her, “You take care of us... It’s not like you’re maternal or anything, because really, fuck that, but you give the tough love and you listen” (211).

Discussion Question 1

Discuss the implications of Desmond’s promise that he would not hurt Inara. How does her hurt her without even knowing it?

Discussion Question 2

Is the choice between family and illegal activity really difficult? Do you think Desmond will make the right choice?

Discussion Question 3

In what ways is Inara a mother to the girls around her? Why do you think she is the only one whom the Gardener invites to his private suite?

Vocabulary

litigators, consternation, perusal, surreal, inaudibly, eradicate, infatuation, disdain, bemusedly, ornate



Part II, pgs. 212-225

Summary

When Eddison finally returns, he has food with him as well as a small bag containing the little blue dragon that Bliss made for Inara. He tells her that her room was protected by the cliff and that she would get all of her mementoes back once the items were released. After they eat, Victor asks what caused things in the Garden to change. Inara tells him that the thing that precipitated the change in the Garden was named Keely.

Avery was angry because his brother was fitting in so well in the Garden. He abused a girl named Zara so badly during sex that one of her hips was broken. She developed an infection and the girls knew she would be going into glass. The morning she was to die, Desmond brought a wheelbarrow thinking he was doing something nice by giving the girls a chance to take Zara into the Garden. Bliss could only curse. That afternoon, however, Zara asked to be wheeled about through the hallway. The girls joked she was looking for real estate.

The girls were looking at a spot that Zara wanted to be hers when Lorraine came out of her room to start cooking a meal. She was surprised to see them there. Zara made a comment that Lorraine could be displayed in glass as well if she were thirty years younger. In response, Lorraine slapped Zara's ankle, jarring the infected hip. Bliss promised to send Danelle to help Zara and Inara back to the room as she jogged away.

Bliss returned after Zara had been gotten back in bed and given a pain pill. She presented Zara with Lorraine's braid. That evening all of the girls crowded into Zara's room to eat dinner and say their goodbyes to her. The Gardener brought Desmond with him when he came. Inara was the last to speak to Zara. Zara asked her if she and the girls could put together a reading of the play *A Midsummer Night's Dream* in honor of her. Inara promised they would.

At the door, Desmond asked Inara if there was something he was missing. Even though Inara told him that he was missing too much, he promised her that they would get Zara fixed up and that she would be fine.

Inara went back to her room alone that night. She read the book that Zara, whose real name was Felicity Farrington, had given her. About three that morning the wall to Inara's room lifted. Desmond was standing there. He collapsed on the floor as he told Inara that his father had promised to take care of Zara. Inara defended what the Gardener had said because he did put Zara out of her pain. When Desmond admitted that his father had murdered Zara, Inara thought that perhaps Desmond was not completely his father's son.

Even though Inara asked Desmond not to tell her what had happened, he did because he knew that his father would do that same thing to Inara one day. The Gardener had



shown Desmond some of the girls who were already preserved. Desmond admitted he believed that his father had just put them back on the street when they grew too old.

Desmond asked how Inara could stand to be around him. She said it was once because he did not know everything but also because he was a coward. Even though he knew what his father and brother were doing was wrong, he would not report it. It was a choice he made every day but now that he knew the truth about what his father was doing, he did not get to pretend ignorance. It was weeks before Desmond came back to the Garden. He looked at Zara in her case after the resin had hardened. At that point all of the walls were up so the dead girls were all visible, as they had not been the whole time that Desmond had been there before.

Eddison reminds Inara that she had said the end had begun with Keely. Inara continues her story as she explains that Keely had arrived at the Garden four days ago.

Analysis

Desmond tried to connect with the girls by asking their real names. The girls refused to tell their real names since they generally did not share those names, which represent their real identities, until just before they die. Inara did tell Desmond some of the real names of the girls that had already died. She figures in those cases that their real names cannot be used to hurt them.

Hope has been building that Desmond would be the savior for the girls. He turned out, instead, to be a coward and a disappointment. The author indicates the coming disappointment in the sentence: "And before long, we'd find out just how much his father's son he was" (221). The indication is that Desmond would turn out to be more interested in protecting his family than the girls.

At this point in the novel it does not appear that Desmond would turn out to be any help at all to Inara and the other girls. He got a bad shock when his father made him help with Zara's murder and preservation. Despite this shock, Desmond helped his father kill Zara and did not walk out and report what was happening immediately. Since he went along with this, it seems hard to imagine that Desmond would ever be able to bring himself to turn his father in to the police.

Desmond seemed to be more worried about himself than about Inara and the other girls. He seemed more worried about what Inara thought of him instead of being concerned that he could improve her opinion of him by turning his father in and setting them free. Even though he was still in shock from what he had just seen, instead of agreeing with Inara that he was a coward, Desmond told her that he could not tell anyone what his father had done because of the way that it would hurt his mother.

Notice that even though the girls knew that Zara was about to be killed, they still had a certain morbid humor that remained intact. They wheeled Zara through the halls so that she could choose the place she would like to be displayed. The place she chose was a place where the girls rarely went so she would not be seen often.



An important symbol in this section of the novel is Lorraine's braid. Bliss cut off Lorraine's braid in retaliation after Lorraine intentionally hurt Zara. The braid serves as a symbol of Lorraine's pride and her belief that one day the Gardener would again pay attention to her. By cutting off the braid, Bliss hurt Lorraine because it took away her ability to wear her hair up the way that the Gardener liked it.

Discussion Question 1

What does it mean to Inara that Eddison brings her the blue dragon that Bliss had made for her?

Discussion Question 2

Is Desmond's reaction to what his father does to the girls what you would expect? Why or why not?

Discussion Question 3

Is a person's refusal to help in a situation that they know is wrong the same as condoning that action? Why or why not?

Vocabulary

forthcoming, debris, fervently, eminently, banned, competent



Part II, pgs. 225-243

Summary

In this section Inara remembers how the Gardener had helped the girls prepare for their production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* by ordering costumes as well as a full set of play books for them. Lorraine had been ordered to make a feast to be served in the garden and the girls all wore dresses of different bright colors. Even though the Gardener knew the girls were putting on the presentation for Zara, he seemed to think the entertainment was also being presented on his own behalf. He had even insisted that Desmond attend the production. The Gardener had asked Inara why Desmond seemed so out of sorts. Inara explained to him that Desmond had thought they were taking Zara to a hospital, not that she would be killed. The Gardener was confused that Desmond had even considered taking Zara to a hospital since someone would ask questions about her. Inara indicated she was only passing along information.

During the reading, Avery entered the Garden with a bundle over his shoulder. Avery was proud of himself as he announced that he had found a new girl for the Garden. As The Gardener stared at Avery, Inara looked at the girl. She was not even old enough to have reached puberty. She had blood on her temple and her thighs. Her clothes were torn showing the beginnings of bruises. Inara wrapped her back up and held the girl to her. The Gardener demanded to know what Avery had done.

Inara put the girls in action, asking Bliss for a dress with a back. Other girls helped Inara get the new girl to Inara's room. Inara cleaned her up, even washing away the evidence of Avery who had apparently raped her. Danelle was sick when she saw the girl had not even started to develop pubic hair yet. When the girls got her dressed and into Inara's bed, Inara specified to the girls that the Gardener and Avery would not be allowed to touch her.

When the Gardener came into Inara's room he saw how they had attempted to hide the girls in glass so the child would not see them when she woke. The Gardener lowered the walls, covering the girls completely. Inara insisted to him that the girl would not be touched. She would not be given wings and she would not be raped again. Danelle suggested they could leave her somewhere so she would be found but the Gardener said he could not trust that she had not seen Avery.

Desmond came next. He told the girls that his father had caned Avery. Both Bliss and Inara were sarcastic with their comments to him. When Inara insisted to him that he leave, Desmond tried to defend himself by saying that he was not the one who hurt the girl. Inara stopped him and told him that because he had not stopped what his father and brother did, he allowed her kidnapping and rape to happen.

When the girl began to wake, Inara recognized that she needed to be softer with her. Regardless, she explained to the girl her circumstances and was truthful with her. She



told the girl that the others there would be her family from that point forward. The girls in the room — Inara, Bliss, and Danelle — promised Keely they would not let the Gardener touch her or tattoo her. They took Keely to the Garden that afternoon and all of the girls with the exception of Sirvat were there to introduce themselves and promise Keely protection.

They ate lunch in the Garden. While they were eating, Desmond walked up. Keely was clearly afraid of him but he knelt and told her that he would not hurt her. When Inara asked why he was there he said it was because he needed to know Keely's name and her hometown so he could contact the police. He told her that he planned to call the police with as many names as he knew and tell them about the Garden. After telling Desmond the girl's name she told the others that they needed to go to her room and stay there for the afternoon. She told Bliss she thought Desmond was going to try to rescue them.

Inara went around the Garden telling each girl what was happening and asking them to go to their rooms. Sirvat was the last girl Inara found. She was stretched out along Zara's display case trying to imagine what it was like to be dead. Sirvat also talked about how unstable the chemical formaldehyde was. Once Inara got Sirvat in her room, she raced for her own when the lights flickered, indicating the walls would be coming down. It was hours before the wall went up again. It took the girls even longer to go out into the Garden to see how their world had changed.

When Inara stops talking, Eddison urges her to go on by asking her if their world was better when they went into the Garden. She answers that it was not.

Analysis

When Avery brought the child, Keely, to the Garden, he broke the rules that his father had set for gathering the girls. Although it did not really make anything better, the Gardener was careful not to take girls younger than fifteen. The girl that Avery brought was a child. Not only did he kidnap a child he had also assaulted and raped her. The girls who the Gardener brought were not raped until after they received their tattoos. All of the girls, as well as the Gardener, were shocked by what Avery had done.

Avery's act of bringing of Keely into the Garden is in severe contrast to the festive atmosphere as the girls prepared to put on their production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. The girls were dressed in colored dresses and were allowed to wear their hair down. Lorraine had fixed a picnic lunch served along the sides of the streambed.

The Gardener had probably thought he was introducing Desmond to a different atmosphere in the Garden when he had him attend the production of the play. To the Gardener's dismay it was during this production that Avery showed up with the child he had kidnapped. Inara's anger with Avery and with Desmond's lack of action boiled over in this section when Desmond told Inara he was not the one who hurt Keely. "You



allowed this to happen, Desmond, actively allowed it, so yes, you are the one who hurt her” (231).

It seems that Inara did get through to Desmond because he did go to the police. Because of the Gardener’s safety protocols, where the walls came down to hide the girls and their rooms, the police did not immediately find anything suspicious. Even though Bliss had suggested to Inara that they stay outside their rooms, Inara thought of the safety of the girls when she said they should stay in their rooms. She knew that if something went wrong and the police did not find the girls, they would be punished by death if they did not obey the Gardener’s call to go to their rooms.

Inara speaks again here of the Gardener’s ability to make what he wanted to out of a situation when the girls put on the play in Zara’s memory. Although they wanted a nice production because Zara had asked them to do it for her, he seemed to think the production somehow related to him. He made the play about him instead of about paying respect to Zara’s wishes. As Inara said, “That man had an astonishing talent for seeing what he wanted to see” (226).

Notice also the changes in Inara after she realized that Avery had kidnapped such a young child. While she was blunt and careless with some of the older girls, Inara took special care with the young girl to take care of her. She insisted no one is to touch her. No rapes and no tattoos. Because she presented such strong leadership, the other girls followed her lead. Inara admits that even though she did not know much of how a family operated from having one herself, she had learned from the girls in the Garden that they needed to look out for each other. This girl needed special care. “We were a fucked-up family, but a family nonetheless” (234).

Meanwhile, the author has been developing the personality of a new character. Sirvat is described as being strange and being obsessed with death. She was the only girl who did not pledge her support to Keely. When Inara went to find Sirvat to tell her that she needed to go to her room because there is a possibility for trouble in the Garden, she found Sirvat pressed against Zara’s case. She told Inara she was “Trying to imagine what it’s like in there” (238). Notice also Sirvat’s fascination with the embalming room and the chemicals kept there.

Discussion Question 1

Knowing there were walls that would come down that hid the girls and their rooms from view, do you think it was the best decision for the girls to stay in their rooms when the police came? Why or why not?

Discussion Question 2

What do you make of Sirvat’s strange behavior? Why do you think the author decided to include her in the novel?



Discussion Question 3

Discuss Inara's fierceness with Keely. How does her ability to take charge of the girl speak of her maturity?

Vocabulary

soliloquies, deluding, persuaded, marginally, askew



Part III, pgs. 243-260

Summary

In this section Victor tells Inara to get the coat she has been wearing. Along with Eddison, they head to the car. Victor says they are going for coffee and then to the hospital. When they arrive at the hospital, Inara says she can walk past the reporters if she has to. The agents tell her what to expect from the crowd of reporters. Inara speaks to only one reporter, a woman who suggests that Inara owes the public the whole story. Inara tells the woman she does not owe anyone anything.

Inside the hospital, Inara is introduced to Keely's parents. They had tried to get Keely moved to a private room but she had wanted to stay with the other girls. Inara accepts thanks from Keely's parents and is clearly uncomfortable when Keely's mother hugs her. The senator accosts them when they reach the elevators. The woman does not understand when Inara tells her that she is too real for her daughter right now. Inara suggests it will be easier if the senator will get rid of the entourage that follows her.

When they reach the floor where the girls are being kept it is noticeably quieter. A nurse checks out Inara's hands and rebandages them before allowing her to go into the room. An officer on watch tells them that all of the girls are in one room. When Inara enters the room, Bliss runs to her. Victor notices that Keely, the smallest girl, also makes her way to Inara and works herself between Inara and Bliss. He watches as Inara bears being introduced to parents and as she converses with Ravenna. He lets her stay for a while but soon indicates it is time to go. There are still people she needs to see and things she needs to tell them.

Victor takes Inara into a room further down the hall. The badly burned man in the bed is connected to a variety of tubes and machines. Victor tells her that he is Geoffrey MacIntosh and that he is no longer the Gardener. His wife, Eleanor, is in the next room. She knew nothing about what he was doing. Lorraine is being tested to see what charges can be brought against her.

As Inara looks at the Gardener, she remembers how angry he was the day Desmond called the police. Victor is surprised when she takes his hand when he offers it to her.

Returning to the night of the escape, the girls saw Avery, Desmond and the Gardener standing at the far end of the Garden. The Gardener was screaming at Desmond. Inara looked around. It was clear that someone had been there. There were even plants that had been trampled. Bliss suggested that the officers could not find them because all the walls were down.

Meanwhile, Desmond was yelling at his father that what he was doing with the girls was wrong. His father slapped him. Avery ran off and came back with a cane. He tackled Desmond and held him down so their father could punish him. When the Gardener



stopped at twenty blows, Avery was angry because he had gotten the same number of blows when he branded Inara, an act he considered much less serious. Avery continued to complain and pulled a gun from his belt. He pointed the gun at his brother and shot him. When the Gardener ran to Desmond Avery shot him as well.

Inara ran to Desmond and Avery hit her with the gun. He continued to hit her until Nazira said she could hear sirens. Inara could not hear because of the way Avery had hit her so she wondered if Nazira and the other girls could really hear the sirens or if they were just trying to distract Avery.

Avery ran to see if someone was really coming. Inara got to Desmond to put pressure on his wound. Inara could hear the sirens as well and the girls ran to where she, Desmond, and the Gardener were huddled.

Back at the hospital with Victor, Inara tells him she cannot imagine why the officers returned. Victor says that one of the officers had been running the names of the girls that Desmond had given them. They knew Keely because she had been missing such a short time but also found FBI flags for other girls, like Cassidy Lawrence (Lyonette). They knew Desmond would not know to put the two together unless there was actually a connection. Inara seems pleased that Lyonette had been part of the reason they had been found. Then Victor asks Inara to tell the rest of the story.

The Gardener had asked Sirvat to go and get some tubing and towels from a room that he had opened for her. She ran off laughing. Inara asked the Gardener if they could take Desmond out the front once they got towels tied on him. It took a while for the Gardener to answer. By that time he, along with some of the girls, began to smell formaldehyde. They drug Desmond and got all of them into the cave behind the waterfall as far from the room as possible. They heard Sirvat laughing.

Analysis

After building up to the end of Part II in which Inara had said that life in the Garden had not changed for the better, the tone relaxes slightly in the beginning of Part III when Victor takes Inara to the hospital. In the past, Victor had gotten frustrated with Eddison's interruptions just when Inara had started talking. Now it is Victor who interrupts Inara's story to take her to the hospital.

In this section the animosity between Desmond, Avery, and the Gardener comes to a head. The Gardener was angry with Desmond for telling the police about the girls. Desmond was angry that his father did not see that what he was doing was wrong. Avery's anger took a different course. He was angry because he believed in his twisted way that he had been doing what his father wanted him to do. He believed that Desmond had finally fallen out of his father's favor because of his act of betrayal. His anger boiled over when Desmond got only twenty hits with the cane for telling the police about the Garden. It was with Avery's act of violence in shooting his brother and father that things spun out of control in the Garden. Sirvat, also a disturbed person, was the



one sent to get tubing and towels to help Desmond. Remember Sirvat's earlier obsession with the formaldehyde and her memories of that chemical from her school.

Inara's trip to the hospital serves a double purpose. Not only does it get Inara away from the interview room, it also puts her in contact with reporters and parents. Just as she was the spokesperson and mother of the girls in the Garden, she again speaks for them in the hospital. To the reporter who tells her that she owes the public her story, Inara firmly says "I think if you actually knew anything about the case you're claiming to report... you'd have better sense than to suggest I owe anyone a thing" (246). The parents also believe that she is being hateful when she suggests that the girls are not yet ready to be called by their legal names yet, or to be separated from the girls they had depended upon for emotional support.

Amusing is the FBI agents' response to the guard who claims he had no choice but to let the girls all stay in the same room together. The guard tells Victor that "they insisted" (251) in being in the same room together. Victor replies with disbelief "They being the traumatized young women?" (251). Inara recognizes Bliss when the guard says that one of the girls "taught me a few phrases I've never heard even on drug busts" (251).

Through the course of the novel the learning of a person's real name has been an important bit of information. The girls did not share their real names with their fellow captives until they were about to die. In all of Inara's two years in the Garden, the girls never knew the name of their captor; they called him only the Gardener. Victor tells Inara that the Gardener is actually named Geoffrey MacIntosh.

Discussion Question 1

Why do you think that Victor decides to take Inara to the hospital just as she has almost told him all of what happened at the Garden?

Discussion Question 2

Discuss Inara's words to the reporter. Is the public owed a story about the girls and their experiences? At what point does privacy end and the public's right to information begin?

Discussion Question 3

Why do you think that the girls preferred to be in a room together instead of with their parents or in separate rooms?

Vocabulary

strident, entourage, concludes, dynamic, belatedly, cynicism



Part III, pgs. 260-279

Summary

Inara tells Victor that the explosion was indescribable. There was heat, smoke, and flying glass. They headed for the pond. There was no emergency exit.

As they tried to get out, shards of glass continued to fall from the ceiling and walls of the greenhouse. The Gardener warned them there would be another explosion if the fire got to the room where he kept the fertilizer. The girls tried to think of a way to get out alive. When they heard Pia scream they saw Avery had his arm wrapped around her neck. As they watched, he broke her neck. There was a crack and Bliss shot Avery multiple times until he finally fell.

When the biggest tree in the Garden fell into the outside greenhouse Inara ran to it, pulling away chunks of glass. She and some other girls were able to move it enough that they could carry Desmond through. A fireman was swinging an axe at the other side of the greenhouse. When it was finally broken through, a heavy tarp was thrown down and the man yelled at them to come out. Inara and Isra counted heads, trying to see how many girls had died. As they were counting, Inara heard another explosion and saw Isra hit by a ball of fire. On the ground, the Gardener's skin was on fire. After that, the ambulances took the girls to the hospital and Inara met Victor in one of the hospital rooms.

When Inara indicates to Victor she has told him the whole story he says she is not quite done. She knows he still wants her legal name but she does not answer right away. He tells her that he has one more thing to show her. He takes her to Desmond's bedside. Desmond apologizes to Inara, telling her he should have told someone sooner before he falls back asleep. The doctors think he'll survive. Inara asks if he will be charged with the crimes along with his father and brother. She indicates it might have been kinder to let him die brave instead of having to live with the consequences of being a coward.

Still standing at Desmond's bedside they hear a woman's voice calling Inara's name. "Ina— yes, I see your badge, you arrogant bastard, but that's my family in there!" (265). It is Sophia. Victor wonders how this Sophia, the mother from Inara's apartment, even knew she was here. As the two women embrace, Eddison gives Victor a scrapbook full of pictures of the women and their tattoos. Eddison adds there is something interesting in there. Victor opens to the marked page. On one page there is a picture of the front of a nude girl, her freshly tattooed back, and then that same girl in a glass and resin case. The girl's legal name, the name the Gardener gave her, and the dates she was in the Garden are listed. On the next page is a girl with only two photographs and one date. That girl's name is Sophia Madsen.

Sophia tells Inara that Taki saw Inara on the news and ran to tell everyone. Sophia tells Inara she has her own apartment and that she has her girls back. Victor tells the girls he



needs an explanation. They go into an empty room so they can talk in private. Sophia first apologizes to Inara for not realizing something had happened to her.

Sophia thinks she should have realized something was off when she thought about the timing of the event at the restaurant with the Gardener. Sophia had been upset when the girls came home with the butterfly wings. Later that night, Sophia told Inara what had happened to her. She had never told anyone before because she thought they would not believe her. Even without the crazy story of her kidnapping, Sophia's parents had kicked her out because she was pregnant and only a teenager. They told her she was an embarrassment. Eddison realizes that the Gardener is Jillie's father. Sophia adds that she also did not say anything about what had happened because she was afraid the Gardener would try to take Jillie away from her.

Sophia explains that she got out the day she was supposed to take her pregnancy test. She had watched Avery at the keypad as he fumbled with his numbers, even saying his code out loud as he punched it in. Sophia tried to get the other girls to go with her but they were too scared.

It is when Eddison suggests that Inara got kidnapped on purpose that Victor and Sophia are both stunned. Inara tells him she is not that stupid but that she was hiding Sophia if she could be accused of hiding anything. She says she was trying to find a way not to tie Sophia back to the Garden because she was afraid it would mean Sophia would lose her girls again. She did not immediately realize the men who threw the Madame Butterfly fundraiser were the same men who had held Sophia captive.

Inara is surprised when she learns that Sophia kept her things. The girls even opened an interest bearing account with the money that Inara had left behind. Inara begins to cry. Victor tells her that the carousel is over and that she has a family. He tells her that people do come back before he reminds her there is one more thing they need to know. Inara tells him that the person whose name he wants to know was never a real person. She does not feel she was real until she became Inara. Victor reminds her she can legally change her name but only after she tells them her legal name. Inara finally gives in and tells them her name is Samira Grantaire. Victor thanks her for taking care of the girls and for being so brave.

Inara laughs when Sophia additionally thanks Inara for being stubborn. It is when Victor sees Inara laugh that he realizes that day had been a good day.

Analysis

This novel leaves a good deal of questions unanswered. The reader is allowed to come to some conclusions on his own. One of the major unreconciled questions is that of Desmond and his role in what happened to the girls. Inara told Desmond that because he did nothing, he was equally responsible for what happened in the Garden since he was aware of its existence. At the end of Part I, Inara was very hesitant about talking about what Desmond knew about the Garden. It is almost as if she had wished when



she heard that one of the Gardener's sons had died that it had been Desmond who died.

Inara seems to feel sorry for Desmond because she knows people will judge him because he waited so long to tell anyone about the girls. She indicates that if he had died, he would have died brave. Since he has lived, he will not be remembered for eventually having told the police what his father was doing; he will be remembered for his cowardice in waiting so long to tell the police what he knew.

It also turns out that the relationship between Sophia and Inara is closer than even Inara realized. Inara had known that Sophia had been kidnapped and held captive but that she had been released. Sophia had a butterfly tattoo on her back similar to the girls who lived with Inara. For this reason, Inara knew where she was and what to expect when she woke up in the Garden. When she was in the Garden, Inara was also on a mission for Sophia. She guessed that Sophia's oldest daughter, Jillie, was biologically the Gardener's daughter. Because she knew how hard Sophia had worked to get custody of Jillie, Inara did not want Sophia to lose her daughter to the Gardener. She had tried to find the book of pictures that the Gardener had kept of the girls but was not successful.

There are hints earlier in the book about Sophia's connection to the Garden. For instance, when the girls came back from the Madame Butterfly themed dinner, Sophia was upset to the point of drinking herself sick when she saw the wings. She also argued against the butterfly design when the girls decided to get matching tattoos.

Significant also in the novel is Victor's decision at the end of his discussion with Sophia and Inara that his day has been a good one. He had begun the day before working on the worst case of his career. After he sees Inara's response to Sophia and comes to the knowledge that someone did love her enough to expect her to come back, Victor decides it has been a good day.

Victor's attitude about Inara has changed from believing she was somehow involved in the kidnapping scheme to realizing exactly how much of a victim she actually was. Even though Inara was a victim and had a troubled life from the beginning, she learned how to mentor and care for the other girls with whom she was a captive. She protected them and was their spokesperson. Victor is happy for Inara when he learns that Sophia has not only kept all of Inara's things but also invested the money she left behind. It is the first time in her life that Inara has ever felt that someone loved her and wanted her.

Also in this section, Inara finally gives her legal name, the one her biological parents gave her. This is a difficult disclosure for her not only because it was a name she never wanted to hear again but also because this is not the name with which she identifies herself. Once the investigators have her legal name they have power over her. They can research her past, just like they were able to research the short past that she had as Inara.

The symbolic image of the carousel reappears when Victor tells Inara that the carousel is behind her. He refers to the carousel on which Inara was sitting when she watched



her parents walk away from her. Now that Sophia has claimed Inara as family, Inara can begin to forget her memories of her family walking away.

Discussion Question 1

What is your opinion of Desmond? Is he brave? Is he a coward? Give reasons for your answer.

Discussion Question 2

What does Victor mean when he decides his day has been a good one?

Discussion Question 3

Discuss the relationship between Sophia and Inara.

Vocabulary

seared, complicit, consequences, cowardice, arrogant



Characters

Inara Morrissey aka Maya aka Samira Grantaire

Inara is the main character and one of the narrators of the novel. Because she appears to be the leader of the girls who have been rescued from a harem operated by Geoffrey MacIntosh, she is taken to FBI headquarters to be questioned.

Inara is hesitant in giving information to the agents who question her. They later learn it is because she was trying to protect her friend Sophia whom she knew had escaped from the Garden years earlier. Inara knew that Sophia's oldest daughter is the biological child of the Gardener. She is afraid that if the officials learn that Sophia's daughter belongs to the Gardener that Sophia will have her daughter taken away from her.

The abuse in Inara's life began before she was kidnapped by the Gardener. She tells Victor she does not consider herself a broken child but instead a shadow child—one who has been forgotten and ignored.

When she was six her parents began marriage counseling because they thought it would look good to the lawyers when they went for a divorce. Because the counselor told them they needed to take a family vacation, they took Inara to an amusement park. While at the park her parents put her on a carousel. While she was riding, Inara watched as each of her parents walked away with a love interest. She had to call her next door neighbor to pick her up and take her home.

Inara was sent to live with her Gran when her parents divorced because neither of her parents wanted custody of her. Gran basically ignored Inara. Her house was filled with dead animals that she'd had stuffed. When Gran died, apparently of natural causes, Inara contacted no one. She took her grandmother's cash and went to New York.

In New York, Inara bought a new identity and officially became Inara Morrissey. She got a job at a restaurant. A group of the girls who worked at that restaurant invited Inara to come live with them. These girls, particularly Sophia who acted as the house mother, became Inara's family.

It was three weeks after an evening fundraiser for a theater production of *Madame Butterfly* at the restaurant that Inara was kidnapped by the Gardener. She recognized where she was because Sophia had told her about the Garden. The butterfly wings the girls had brought home after the fundraiser had sparked bad memories for Sophia, who had escaped from the Garden. That night Sophia had told Inara about how she had been kidnapped and held until she managed to escape.

At the Garden, Inara became special friends with Lyonette and Bliss. She began helping Lyonette with the new arrivals and eventually took over that job when Lyonette was killed. Inara became a sort of leader and house mother at the Garden. She was also the



Gardener's favorite and was often invited to his personal suite for special dinners. Inara tried to use her influence to make life better for the other girls at the Garden.

When Desmond began coming to the Garden, Inara believed he was a tool she could use to help free the girls. She pretended to love him but in reality hated him a little bit because he was so slow in working up the courage he needed to tell the police what his father and brother were doing.

When Avery brought Keely, the child he had raped and beaten, back to the Garden, Inara took charge of the girl. She insisted that since Keely was so young she would not be given a tattoo or raped again.

After Sophia arrived at the hospital Inara told the FBI agents that one reason she had been so hesitant in answering their questions was because she was she was trying to protect Sophia. It turns out that Sophia had told Inara that she had been kidnapped by the Gardener but had escaped. Inara was protecting Sophia because she knew that Sophia's oldest daughter was the biological daughter of the Gardener. Inara was afraid that if the Gardener learned Sophia had a child by him he would try to get custody of Jillie.

FBI Special Agent Brandon Eddison

Agent Eddison is the "bad cop" in the relationship between Eddison and Victor. Inara does not like Eddison because he is blunt and rude. Eddison also has no idea how to deal with women or children. He is better working with suspects. Eddison is referred to by his last name through the course of the novel because Inara never feels close to him.

At several times Inara mentions to Victor how much she dislikes Eddison. It is only after Eddison brings Inara the sad dragon that Bliss made for her from the Garden that Inara begins to warm to him.

Eddison has always been a fan of justice even if it meant he had to go out and get it himself. In college Eddison was arrested for assault when he decided to punish a boy whom he knew was responsible for raping several girls on campus.

Eddison had become an agent with the FBI because his little sister was kidnapped when she was eight. The family never found the girl or learned what happened to her. It is the memory of his sister that makes Eddison upset with Inara when she indicates that she does not believe that even if the parents know what happen to their daughters it will bring any closure.

When Eddison first met Inara he believed she was in some way involved with the kidnapping scheme. Near the end of her interviews he wonders if she had been kidnapped on purpose because of Sophia. In the end, he and Victor both understand that Inara had not been as forthcoming as they would have liked because she was trying to protect Sophia and keep her from losing her daughter, who is biologically the Gardener's daughter.



The Gardener aka Geoffrey MacIntosh

The Gardener is the man who created the Garden and who has kidnapped young women to hold captive there. He created tattoos to decorate the girls' backs and mark the girls as his own. He seems to have seen them as his own collection of living butterflies.

Ironically, the Gardener really seemed to care about the girls whom he kidnapped. He provided good food and clothes for them to wear. He bought the girls supplies so they could keep themselves busy with crafts and hobbies. He cared for them when Avery hurt them.

Adversely, the Gardener also raped the girls and allowed Avery to rape the girls and hurt them. He also kept them captive until the age of twenty-one. At that age, he killed them and put them in glass and resin display cases. The girls were arranged so that their tattoos showed clearly through their glass cases. These cases lined the hallways that surrounded the Garden and led to the rooms where the girls lived.

The Gardener believed that by preserving the girls in the glass cases he was keeping them at the height of their beauty. Because they could still be seen through the glass, the Gardener thought he was honoring the girls so that they will never be forgotten.

The Gardener kidnapped his first girl just after his father's funeral. Through his life, his father had collected butterflies that he displayed in glass cases. The Gardener carried on that obsession by turning the girls he captured into living butterflies. When he was caught, the Gardener had been kidnapping and tattooing girls for thirty years. He was badly burnt in the explosions that Sirvat started but it is believed he will survive to stand trial for his actions.

Desmond MacIntosh

Desmond MacIntosh is the Gardener's youngest son. Desmond is much different from his brother and his father. He broke into the Garden one night using Avery's pass code because he was curious. His father did not immediately tell him everything that happened in the Garden. He kept the display cases with the girls inside hidden, for instance.

As Desmond learned more and more about the Garden he was more and more upset by what his father and brother were doing. He knew it was not right but at the same time he did not want to endanger his family's name or reputation by being the one to reveal what was happening.

Meanwhile, Inara began a sexual relationship with Desmond hoping to be able to manipulate him into helping the girls escape.



After he learned that his father was murdering the girls after they turned twenty-one, Desmond stayed away from the Garden until his father forced him to go back to listen to the girls' production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. Desmond was finally prompted into action when Avery interrupted the production by bringing a prepubescent girl into the Garden. Inara found evidence that the girl had been beaten and raped by Avery.

Desmond called the police but they did not find anything on their first visit to the Garden. Before the police returned to the Garden, Avery shot Desmond. Although Desmond is expected to survive, Inara believes it would have been kinder to let Desmond die a hero instead of living and being called a coward because he did not tell anyone about the girls sooner.

Sophia Madsen

Inara first met Sophia Madsen when they lived together in a studio apartment with several other girls and worked together at the *Evening Star*.

At that point all Inara knew about Sophia was that she was once a prostitute who was addicted to drugs. Sophia was working to get herself clean so she could get back custody of her two daughters. Sophia acted as the housemother of the apartment in which she and the other girls lived.

After Sophia saw the butterfly wings that the girls brought home from the special evening at the restaurant, she drank herself sick because she felt like she was back in hell. Inara took Sophia out on the fire escape knowing she needed air and Sophia told Inara about the Garden. It was that night that Inara learned that Sophia had escaped from the Garden. Inara also realized that Sophia's oldest daughter, Jillie, was the Gardener's daughter.

When Sophia learns that Inara was among the young women who survived and was freed from the Garden, she immediately heads to the hospital to see her friend, whom she refers to as a family member.

FBI Special Agent in Charge Victor Hanoverian

Victor is the special agent who feels close to Inara and her case because he has daughters. He deals with Inara in a much better fashion than Eddison and makes a connection with her more quickly because he is accustomed to dealing with teenage girls.

Because Victor and Inara develop a personal relationship, he is referred to by his first name throughout the course of the novel. This is different from the way that the author calls the other agent who interviews Inara by his last name, a very impersonal reference.



Although Victor suspects that Inara is hiding something from them, he likes the girl because she has a spunky attitude despite how difficult her life has been.

Victor is the agent who listens to Inara's entire story. He encourages her to tell her entire story and at the end of the novel is able to get her to tell him her legal name.

After Sophia surprises them all by arriving at the hospital and demanding to see Inara, Victor sees the smile on Inara's face and he realizes that despite the horror he saw and heard about in relation to the Garden it has been a good day.

Bliss

Bliss is one of the first butterflies whom Inara met when she first received her wings from the Gardener. Bliss was one of Inara's best friends in the Garden.

She is described as a tiny girl who loves to make things with clay. After Lyonette's death, Bliss made a carousel in honor of Lyonette. Bliss discovered that she could not keep the carousel because it made her too sad. She asked Inara to keep it in her room. Bliss had no idea how badly Inara hates carousels or how she watched her parents walk away from her when she was riding a carousel.

Bliss' personality is very different from her name. Instead of being blissful she is described as argumentative and has a very foul mouth. After Lorraine intentionally hurt Zara, whom the girls knew was going to be killed because her broken, infected hip was not healing, Bliss cut off Lorraine's braid in retaliation.

Lorraine

Lorraine was one of the first butterflies. She was a suck-up who truly loved the Gardener. Instead of killing and displaying her when she was twenty-one, the Gardener sent her to cooking and nursing classes so she could help him take care of the girls.

Lorraine was happy with the arrangement until she saw that she was no longer attractive to the Gardener. He made her wear a grey uniform and never touched her again after she became the cook. She was unhappy and took her unhappiness out on the girls.

Inara suspected that Lorraine wished she had been killed and put in a display case instead of being allowed to live.

After the Garden is invaded, Lorraine is held because it is believed she was complicit with the Gardener and his plan. Lorraine did allow the treatment of the girls to continue because she, like Desmond, did nothing to alert the police to what was happening.



Lyonette aka Cassidy Lawrence

Lyonette is the girl who helped acclimate Inara as well as many of the other girls to their lives in the Garden. She is the only one who would have anything to do with the girls when they first arrived at the Garden.

It was when Lyonette turned twenty-one that Inara realized that the Gardener had selected that age as the point at which he wanted to kill and preserve his butterflies.

Because Desmond mentioned that Cassidy Lawrence, Lyonette's legal name, was among those kidnapped by his father, the FBI agents returned to the Garden even after they had already been to the property and found nothing. Inara was pleased because Lyonette had a role in helping the girls be rescued.

Avery MacIntosh

Avery MacIntosh is the oldest son of Eleanor and the Gardener. He helped his father with the Garden but he was cruel to the girls. He enjoyed torturing them and sometimes even killed them.

It was Avery who branded Inara with a butterfly as a "gift" for her one-year anniversary in the Garden.

After Desmond alerted the police to what was happening at the Garden, Avery brought a gun and shot his brother.

Avery died from the injuries he received in the fire and destruction of the glass walls and ceiling that made up the Garden.

Ravenna aka Patrice Kingsley

Ravenna is the daughter of Senator Kingsley. She is described as the girl who likes to dance. It is because Ravenna is the daughter of a senator that the entire context of the case changes. Victor realizes there will be no way to protect the girls from the media because the daughter of a senator is involved.

Ravenna's reunion with her mother is perhaps more stressful because the senator tries to go to her daughter with her entourage of assistants. Although her advice is not particularly appreciated, Inara suggests to the senator that she approach Ravenna first as her mother, not the senator.



Senator Kingsley

Senator Kingsley is the mother of Ravenna, one of the girls who survived the Garden. Because she is a politician, the senator is a threat to the girls' anonymity because her involvement in the case will make it more attractive to the media.

Kingsley is understandably upset because her daughter does not react to her the way she had hoped when they first meet. Inara tries to explain to the woman, who is used to getting her own way, that it will take Ravenna some time before she will be ready to accept her real name and return to the real world.

Johanna

Johanna is the first girl that Inara helped to acclimate to life in the Garden. She was called to help with Johanna because Lyonette was suffering with the flu.

Johanna later killed herself by drowning in the pond in the Garden. Inara wonders if the crass way in which she dealt with Johanna on her first days in the Garden might have contributed to her suicide.

Sirvat

Sirvat is a butterfly that Inara describes as just being strange. At one point Sirvat told Inara how flammable formaldehyde was.

When the Gardener gave Sirvat his remote to unlock the room where the chemicals were stored in order to get supplies to help Desmond, it is suspected that she started a fire in that room.

Keely Rudolph

Keely Rudolph is the prepubescent girl whom Avery kidnapped. He believed that by kidnapping her that he would make his father proud of him and make up for what he did to Zara. Instead of being proud, the Gardener was furious at Avery for what he had done.

When Inara saw how young Keely was and how badly Avery hurt her when he kidnapped her she ordered that Keely would neither be given a tattoo nor would she be raped.

Zara

Zara is the butterfly whom Avery hurt so badly that she had to be killed. It was Zara's death that Desmond was called by his father to help with. Desmond had thought that his



father was going to get Zara medical help. He did not realize he was going to kill Zara and preserve her the way that he did.

Eleanor MacIntosh

Eleanor MacIntosh is the Gardener's wife. She is unaware that her husband has been keeping a harem of young girls on their property. Eleanor has a heart condition. Her heart condition is one of the aspects that kept Desmond from alerting the police about what his father was doing.

Jillie

Jillie is Sophia's older daughter. Inara realizes that Jillie is the Gardener's daughter. While she was in the Garden, Inara tried to find information about Sophia so that she could destroy it. She intended to keep the Gardener from learning he had a daughter and trying to get custody of her.

Gran

When Inara's mother and father both refused to take custody of Inara, Inara wound up living with her Gran. Inara indicates that her grandmother was strange because she had so many dead, stuffed animals in her house. Inara lived with her Gran until Gran died, apparently of natural causes. It was at that point that Inara ran away and changed her identity.

Faith

Faith is Eddison's little sister. She was kidnapped when she was only eight. Eddison tells Inara about his sister because his family does not know if she is alive or dead. He uses her as a way to explain to Inara why it is important for families to get closure about their missing children.

Simone aka Rachel Young

Simone was one of the butterflies that was killed because she got pregnant by the Gardener. She was one of the girls whom Inara liked and was hurt most deeply when she was killed.

Evita

Evita was the simple-minded girl who was killed when she fell from a tree in the garden. The girls and the Gardener alike mourned Evita's death.

Kegs

Kegs is the busboy that made Avery leave Inara alone when Avery followed Inara into a staff-only area in the restaurant the night of the Madame Butterfly fundraiser.

Guilian

Guilian was Inara's boss at the Evening Star. It was his approval of the living arrangements with the other girls that made Inara decide that she would stay there.



Symbols and Symbolism

Butterfly Tattoos

The butterfly tattoos that the Gardener gave to each girl in the Garden symbolize his ownership of them in The Butterfly Garden. When the girls arrived, they were drugged and then kept in isolation until they were tattooed. After this point, the Gardener raped the girls.

Edgar Allen Poe Book

The Edgar Allen Poe book that the Gardener gave Inara after Avery destroyed Inara's copy symbolizes the Gardener's sorrow for allowing Avery to hurt Inara. It was because the Gardener was afraid of his oldest son that he allowed Avery to have his way with the girls.

Piece of Paper

The piece of paper that the woman who lived across the street from Inara and her family gave Inara before she left to go to her grandmother's house represents to Inara the family and the happiness that Inara believes she will never have. For this reason, she threw the piece of paper, which had the family's phone number written on it, away.

Lip Gloss

The tube of lip gloss is a gift from Victor's oldest daughter to Inara. It is this gift that symbolizes to Inara that she is still a person despite the things she has suffered. It is a small thing that gives Inara comfort.

Colored Dresses

While they lived in the Garden, the girls wore black dresses with low backs so that their tattoos could be seen completely. It was when the Gardener brought one of the girls a colored dress that they knew their time had come to die and be displayed in glass and resin.

Sad Dragon

The sad dragon represents the grief that surrounded all of the girls and the Gardener after Evita's accidental death. Bliss made this dragon and gave it to Inara as a gift. The



dragon is also a sort of peace offering to Inara from Eddison when she becomes more forthcoming with her information about the Garden.

Large, Padded Chair

This large, padded chair is a symbol of the way that the Gardener ruled over the girls. Inara describes it as looking a little like a throne. Bliss even carved a crown into the back of this chair.

Carousel

The carousel represents a variety of things. One of the main things the carousel represents is the pain that Inara felt when her parents walked off and left her. At another point in the story the carousel represents Lyonette. Bliss made a carousel out of polymer clay in honor of her friend after her death. This carousel was a copy of a carousel that Lyonette made of origami horses.

Shooting Star

According to the fairy tale that Inara read to Simone before she died, a shooting star is a sign that someone's soul was going to heaven. After the walls went down so that Simone could be killed and preserved, Inara stayed outside and hid in the garden where she saw a shooting star and believed Simone's soul was going to heaven.

Lorraine's Braid

After Lorraine intentionally caused pain to Zara, a girl who had been badly injured by Avery, Bliss cut off Lorraine's braid and gave it to Zara as a gift. Lorraine continued to wear her hair the way the Gardener liked because she was prideful of her hair and believed it might draw his attention back to her. Bliss's act of cutting off the braid symbolizes the hate the girls harbored for Lorraine because she was so mean to all of them.



Settings

Interrogation Room

The majority of the action of this novel takes place in the interrogation room of the FBI headquarters. It is in this interrogation room that Victor and Eddison question Inara about her experiences in the Garden.

Hospital

Victor and Eddison take Inara to the hospital at the end of the novel. It is there that she is reunited with the butterflies who have survived. She also gets to talk to Desmond and sees the Gardener.

The Butterfly Garden

The Butterfly Garden is the place where the Gardener kept the girls he kidnapped. Inara spent two years of her life in the Garden, which was enclosed in glass so the girls could not escape.

Evening Star

Evening Star is the name of the restaurant where Inara worked before she was kidnapped. It was at this restaurant where the Gardener and Avery were allowed to hold their Madame Butterfly fundraising dinner. It appears this dinner was a way for the two men to scope out new butterflies for their Garden.

Pride Rock

This is the name that Bliss gave to one of the large rocks on the cliff in the Garden. Inara was sitting on this rock reading a book when Avery came to her for the first time.



Themes and Motifs

Reality of Illusions

Determining the difference between reality and illusion is an important thematic factor in the Gardener's creation of his own reality in the Garden. The girls struggled to remember their own realities even as they cooperated with the Gardener and complied with his desires. Desmond was a valuable tool for the girls when he was introduced to the Garden. The girls hoped that Desmond would be able to distinguish the reality of the place even as the Gardener presented Desmond with a whitewashed version of its truth. A final place in the novel in which reality and illusion collide comes when the girls are rescued from the Garden. Inara tries to explain to the parents that it will be some time before the girls' real lives and real identities feel real to them again.

The first illusion introduced in the novel is the Garden and the girls' lives there. The Gardener had made himself believe that he was giving the girls a better life than they would have had if he had left them with their families. In his mind he loved the girls and was paying homage to them by celebrating their beauty. Even his choice of killing the girls when they were only twenty-one was an act of love in the Gardener's mind because he thought he was preserving the girls at the height of their beauty.

When the girls were brought to the Garden, they worked together to keep from falling prey to the Gardener's illusions. For example, when Bliss met Inara right after her tattoo was finished and she was given her new name by the Gardener, Bliss advised Inara to: "Remember who you are and then it's just playing a part" (35). The girls did not tell each other their legal names but they did try to remember them. An example of a girl who had forgotten who she was and had fallen into the Gardener's illusion is Lorraine. She truly loved the Gardener and thought he loved her as well. When he made her cook and nurse for the Garden and stopped relating to her in any loving way, she was deeply disillusioned. Even though she realized the Gardener's love was only good while she was the perfect age, she still was too invested in his illusion to help the girls or herself.

When Desmond first snuck into the Garden, his father began right away creating an illusion for his son so that he would be able to accept what happened in the Garden. Inara describes the Gardener introducing Desmond to different aspects of the Garden in much the same way Lyonette introduced the girls to their lives in the Garden. At first, Desmond only knew the girls who could behave themselves around him. Those girls wore dresses that covered their tattoos and the Gardener kept the hallway display cases covered. By the time that the Gardener had Desmond participate in a murder, Desmond had already accepted so much about the Garden that he did not go to the police, even when he realized his father had been killing the girls and displaying them.

Even when the girls are freed from their captivity, they are still prey to the power of illusions. Even for those who have worked hard to remember their identities, they still feel a clash when they are pushed back into the real world. It is when the senator



complains to Inara about calling her daughter by her Garden name instead of her legal name that Inara tries to help the senator understand that the rescue is still not real to Ravenna yet. There will come a time when she will be comfortable being called Patrice again but the senator should not push her daughter.

Illusion is a major theme in this novel as the Gardener has created an illusion of life in which he and the girls he kidnapped lived. The author may include this theme in order to help the reader understand how easy it is for even people who are aware of an illusion to accept that illusion as reality.

Family

While some people believe family includes only people who are related to one another through blood or marriage, Hutchison suggests that family members can also be related through circumstances. Inara believes that her family has abandoned her and that she will never have a chance at another after her parents walked away from her at the age of six. She connected with the girls with whom she lived in New York, but does not believe they were close enough for the girls to even worry why she had disappeared. It is perhaps the girls at the Garden with whom Inara bonded most strongly as family. After Inara is rescued from the Garden, she learns that she does have a family, and that sometimes people do love her enough to come back for her.

Inara was deeply hurt when she watched her mother and her father walk away from her when she was six years old. She associates carousels with the pain that she felt because she was sitting on this type of amusement park ride when she saw both of her parents walking away. She remembers that the last time she cried was when she sat on the carousel. Even though Inara was sent to live with her grandmother, her grandmother largely ignored Inara. She did not feel the love of a family in that relationship either.

When Inara first talks to Victor about Sophia, the older woman from the apartment in which she lived when she was in New York, Victor suggests that Sophia and her girls were like a family to Inara. Inara corrects him. She says that Sophia and she were friends and that the relationship was not the same as that of family members. Inara is not surprised that the girls with whom she lived never questioned her disappearance. She says that all the girls were running from something and that it was not necessarily unusual for a girl to leave quickly.

The idea of family resurfaces when Inara speaks of the girls with whom she was held captive in the Garden. When Inara describes to Victor the day that Simone was killed, he realizes how emotionally invested Inara was in the girls. Inara tells Victor: "Some of them are friends. All of them are family. I guess that's just what happens" (176).

It is at the end of the story that Inara learns that she does have a family waiting for her. Her friends from New York see her on television when she speaks to reporters upon entering the hospital to visit the other girls. Both Victor and Inara are surprised when they hear: "Ina — yes, I see your badge, you arrogant bastard, but that's my family in



there! Inara!” (265). Sophia has come to claim Inara. Her reference to Inara as family indicates that Victor was correct when he suggested that Inara was like a family member to the girls with whom she lived in New York. Inara cries for the first time since she was six when she realizes that Sophia had been waiting for her to come back, and that she wanted her to come back.

Types of Mothering

There are three examples of mothering that are explored in this novel. Sophia is the mother to two small children while Lyonette acted as the mother to the butterflies. The third mother figure is Inara. Although Inara is not as patient or loving as either Sophia or Lyonette, she has picked up traits from both of them, which she incorporated into her own style. Although Inara knew her mother for a short time, her mother did not give Inara a good example of motherhood since Inara’s mother did not want her.

The first person who acted as a mother figure to Inara is Sophia. Inara met Sophia when she moved into the group apartment in New York. “There was Sophia, who mothered everyone” (20), Inara says of the older woman. Sophia had two daughters so Inara learned the basics of mothering children from Sophia.

Lyonette was also a mother figure to Inara because it was Lyonette who took care of Inara when she was first brought to the Garden. Lyonette not only protected Inara from the things which she was not yet ready to see, like the dead girls in the hallway, but also gave her information she needed only as it is appropriate. For instance, after Inara’s tattoo was finished and she got her new name, Lyonette not only asked Inara what name he gave her, but also showed her what her tattoo looks like.

Although Inara had Lyonette and Sophia as examples of mothers, she did not immediately pick up on good mothering skills. When Lyonette first let Inara help her with a new girl, Inara was so blunt that Lyonette gave her a “pathetic, exasperated, incredulous, what-the-fuck-are-you-doing-to-me look” (101) when Inara was not as kind as Lyonette thought she should have been.

Despite her rough start as a type of house mother to the butterflies, Inara was recognized by the Gardener, Desmond, and Bliss as a caretaker of the girls. The Gardener said to Inara, using her Garden name of Maya, “You take such good care of them, Maya. Thank you” (201). Later in the novel Bliss also thanked Inara and described her mothering style: “It’s not like you’re maternal or anything, because really, fuck that, but you give the tough love and you listen and there’s that interference you run with the Gardener” (211).

When Inara needed to be a mother to the child whom Avery brought to the Garden she was able to rise to the challenge. Inara describes how she pitched her voice “low and comforting as Lyonette had taught me. I’d pretty much never done it before, but this girl needed me to be softer to her, fiercer for her. Sophia, I thought, would have recognized



that distinction” (231-232). Inara shows her maturity because she recognizes the difference between Keely and the other girls she had mothered.

The Limits of Beauty

The Gardener created the Garden as a place of complete beauty. While Inara and the others appreciated the beauty, they also recognized that beauty has its limits. Beauty cannot overcome fear. It also cannot take the place of love. Additionally, beauty is an object that can be abused just like any other sort of addiction. The Gardener seems to have been suffering from an addiction to beautiful things.

It is because the Gardener had some sort of addiction to beauty that he kidnapped and held captive beautiful girls. Even the Gardener realized that while he tried to fill his garden with beauty, that beauty has its limits. What bothered the Gardener the most is that beautiful things are so short lived. He marked his girls with butterfly wings. He drew a comparison between butterflies and his girls because they are both beautiful. At one point the Gardener told Inara that as a rule, beautiful things are short lived. For this reason, he killed his girls when they turned twenty-one. He believed the girls were at the height of their beauty at that point in their lives.

The Gardener could not accept any flaws in the girls he kept. For instance, when one of the new girl's tattoos did not heal properly, the Gardener killed her. “Her tattoo was never going to heal properly. Even if the infection didn't kill her, the wings would be hopelessly flawed, and that was something the Gardener couldn't accept. Not when beauty was why he chose us” (167).

The girls knew that if they lost their beauty the Gardener would cease to care for them.

Lorraine is an example of what the Gardener thought of girls who no longer fit his description of youth and beauty. Instead of killing and displaying Lorraine when she turned twenty-one, the Gardener decided to make a deal with Lorraine so she could live. She was made the cook and nurse of the Garden. Lorraine was devastated when she realized that the Gardener no longer appeared to love her once she was past the age that he believed the girls were at the height of their beauty.

Even though the girls were surrounded by beauty, and were praised for their beauty, they were still not happy. They lived in fear of the Gardener and Avery. They lived in despair that that they would never see their families again. They lived in fear that they would be killed when they were twenty-one and that they would never really have a chance to live. Even though they lived lives surrounded by beauty, they had no hope.

The Importance of Identity

Identity was an important focus for the girls who the Gardener kidnapped. Although he tried to give them each a new identity, the girls tried to remember their real selves. There is a bit of a clash with reality when the girls return to their lives and are



uncomfortable being called by their legal names. Names are also important because it is by having these names that the investigators are able to identify the girls and contact their parents. When Inara is hesitant about giving her legal name, and sharing the names of the girls she knew, Eddison is angry with her because she is withholding information necessary for the investigation.

One of the reasons that a person's name — his or her identity — is so important is that it gives others power over that person. For instance, Inara knows that as soon as the investigators know her name, they will be able to investigate her past and contact people she knew without her knowledge or permission. Inara is not yet ready to give up control of her identity.

While Eddison and Victor need names in order to begin identifying bodies and contacting parents, Inara is not yet ready for the investigators to know all that they want to know. She knows that if the investigators know names, they will learn that Sophia escaped. When they track down Sophia they will learn that her oldest daughter is biologically the Gardener's daughter. She is afraid that the Gardener will try to get custody of the girl.

Names were also important to the girls when they were in captivity. The Gardener gave them a new name to prove his ownership of them. Bliss suggested to Inara that she not try to be the person that the Gardener wanted her to be. "He could call us A, B, or Three and it wouldn't matter. Answer to it but don't pretend it's somehow yours. Less confusing that way" (35), Bliss advises Inara in order to avoid identity crisis. Notice that when the girls realized their time had come to die, they revealed their legal names. This practice ensured that their real names would be remembered. They did not give their legal names even when asked, as "it had somehow become a tradition in the Garden that you only gave your name as your goodbye" (214).

A final issue with names and identity addressed in this novel is the hesitancy of the girls to answer to their legal names once they have been released from captivity. The senator, for instance, wants to hear her daughter called Patrice, not Ravenna. Inara tries to explain to the senator that for some time, her daughter will not feel comfortable being called Patrice because she had to keep that name secret for so long. For now, the idea of being Patrice is too real and the girl is not ready for that much reality. She explains it will take time for Patrice to feel comfortable with her real name and real identity again.



Styles

Point of View

This story is told from a dual point of view. Sections of the story, those in present tense in which Victor and Eddison question Inara, are told by a third-person narrator. This narrator tells the thoughts and emotions of all the characters but there is more of an emphasis on Victor, the investigator who forms a stronger bond with Inara because he has daughters that are about her age. These third-person parts of the story are used as bridges to connect the parts of the story narrated in the first-person by Inara, the main character of the novel. She is one of the girls who was kidnapped by the Gardener and was held in the Butterfly Garden for two years.

This use of dual points of view works because the third-person parts give the reader insight into what the FBI agents are thinking about Inara and the situation from which she was rescued. The first-person point of view allows Inara to tell her story in her own words. Note that Inara is also telling her story to the investigators, Victor and Eddison.

Language and Meaning

Although this book is about kidnapping, rape, and abuse, these topics are not described with gory language, nor is the abuse a central focus. In fact, most of the sex acts in the novel are not described in any detail at all and are often disguised with euphemisms or leading phrases. For instance, when Eddison tries to ask Inara if she was a virgin before the Gardener raped her the first time, he is unable to quite get the question out: “The day he finished your tattoo, was that the first time, uh . . . the first time —’ / ‘I recited Poe?’ she finishes for him” (46). The reference to reciting Poe is used as a euphemism for sex because Inara told the men she recited Poe while she was being raped to take her mind off what was happening.

Structure

This novel is structured as a series of interview sessions between a teen girl who had been held captive and the two FBI agents assigned to find out what she can tell them about her situation. There are no chapter divisions. The story is instead divided into three long parts. Each part is notated only by a Roman numeral. A graphic design makes clear splits between the sections of the novel where interaction occurs between Inara and the men who are interviewing her and the parts where Inara tells her story uninterrupted in the first-person.

The action rises in the novel though the end of Part II where the girls finally leave their rooms after the police visited the Garden for the first time. The action climaxes in Part III as Inara describes Avery’s act of shooting his brother and father, and then Sirvat’s setting of the fire. The climax remains until Inara sees both the Gardener and Desmond

in the hospital. Release begins when Sophia comes looking for Inara in the hospital. The action falls as Inara and Sophia talk to the interviewers about Sophia's escape from the Garden. The denouement comes when Inara realizes she is crying for the first time in more than ten years.



Quotes

This is one of the very few times in his career where what they found is so much worse than they could have envisioned.

-- Narrator (Part I)

Importance: As Victor reviews the information he has gotten so far from the scene at the Butterfly Garden, he realizes this is one of the worst cases he has ever investigated.

But not this girl in the interview room. When they asked her, she just turned away. As far as anyone can tell, this is one girl with no interest in being found. / Which makes some of them wonder if she's a victim at all.

-- Narrator (Part I)

Importance: Because Inara acts so strangely, Victor and Eddison wonder if Inara is really a victim or if she had some part in the kidnapping scheme. It is later learned that Inara's entire life, not only the kidnapping, has been tough.

Sometimes you can look at a wedding and realize with a certain sense of resignation that any children produced in that marriage will inevitably be fucked up and fucked over."

-- Narrator (Part I)

Importance: Inara indicates that her parents were a couple that she believes people should have known would have messed up children.

I should have recognized the desperation in her voice, the edge to her words, but that was something else the Garden numbed you to. Like beauty, desperation and fear were as common as breathing."

-- Narrator (Part I)

Importance: Although Inara knew girls were killed when they turned twenty-one she did not notice at first how upset Lyonette was when she asked her and Bliss to stay with her the night before she turned twenty-one. Inara is ashamed of herself because she did not recognize at first the fear her friend was feeling.

Even the taxidermists thought she was creepy, and you have to be really fucking bad to win that award."

-- Narrator (Part I)

Importance: Inara shares with Victor that her grandmother had a houseful of dead animals that she had stuffed. She indicates that her grandmother had so many stuffed animals that even taxidermists thought she was strange.

It was something deeper than that, though, a cruelty that showed through in his otherwise charming smile, the way he watched all of us as we moved through the



room.”

-- Narrator (Part I)

Importance: Inara and the others who worked the fundraising dinner at the Evening Star noticed how different Avery was from his father. Although his father was strange, they saw true cruelty only in Avery. This dinner took place before Inara knew the Gardener and his son by name. At that point they were only the man and his son who had arranged the fundraiser. Even that short amount of time with Avery gave the impression he was cruel.

I managed three blocks before something stabbed me, and before I could even cry out, my legs fell out from under me, and the world turned black.”

-- Inara (Part I)

Importance: About three weeks after she met Avery and his father at the fundraising dinner, Inara describes walking home alone one afternoon when she was given a drug and taken to the Garden.

Lorraine was the only one we knew who knew about us, but it was useless trying to ask her to do anything or send a message to anyone. Not only would she not do it, but she'd take it straight to the Gardener.”

-- Narrator (Part I)

Importance: Lorraine was the only one who actually got to leave the Garden and who knew about the girls who were being held there. Inara shares with Victor that Lorraine not only did not tell anyone the girls were being held captive there, but she would tell the Gardener about any girl who suggested to her that she help them. Because Lorraine refused to help and got so many girls killed, she was not well liked by the butterflies.

Beautiful things are short-lived, he told me the first time we met. / He made sure of that, and then he strove to give his Butterflies a strange breed of immortality.”

-- Narrator (Part II)

Importance: It is seen as ironic that the Gardener told Irena that butterflies were short-lived when he was actively cutting short the lives of the girls to whom he referred to as butterflies. Butterflies, the insects, are naturally short-lived, while girls are not necessarily short-lived even though they may be beautiful.

I hadn't cried since that fucking carousel when I was six years old, when I sat trapped on that beautifully painted horse and went round and round as both of my parents walked away and forgot all about me.”

-- Narrator (Part II)

Importance: Inara's experience as she rode the carousel while her parents walked away from her with their new love interests had a long-lasting effect on her life. It is the last time she remembered crying. Years later, after she had been beaten and raped by Avery, she still was unable to even force herself to cry.



Alerted by the screams, the other girls had come running from their rooms or elsewhere in the Garden, and together all twenty-two of us stood in dry-eyed silence as our captor wept for the death of the one girl he hadn't killed."

-- Narrator (Part I)

Importance: Inara realizes when the Gardener cried and screamed over Evita's dead body that he did care for the girls in his own twisted way. She thinks it is ironic that he mourned her so strongly since she was the only girl that he had not killed himself.

Here's the thing, and it's terrifying and bewildering and fuck-all unfair, but it's still the thing: we are here as the unwilling guests of a man who will come to you for company and, as often as not, sex. Sometimes his son will come to you. You belong to them now, and they will do what they want to you, including mark you as theirs."

-- Inara (Part II)

Importance: While Lyonette had the flu, Inara helped to acclimate a new girl who came to be known as Johanna to life in the Garden. Inara was not as delicate with the girl as Lyonette would have liked for her to be. Instead of treating her delicately, Inara bluntly told Johanna the truth about the place to which she had been brought.

I am sorry no one missed you, but you don't get to decide for all those other girls that no one's missing them."

-- Eddison (Part II)

Importance: When Eddison shows Inara the picture of his younger sister, Faith, who was kidnaped and never found, the reader can better understand why Eddison is working in the field in which he is working. It is also easier to understand why Eddison decided to act as a vigilante when he dealt with a college rapist. Eddison is additionally frustrated with Inara when he senses that she is holding back, refusing to give information that he feels might allow some family members closure.

How could a parent have so much control over a child, that paternal pride meant more than what was right?

-- Narrator (Part II)

Importance: Because she never had parents whom she loved and wanted to please, Inara does not understand how Desmond could close his eyes to the evil things that his father was doing simply because he wanted to believe his father was proud of him.

Rather than bringing his Eve to a garden, he'd built one around her, and served as the angel with the flaming sword to keep her in."

-- Narrator (Part III)

Importance: As Inara sat in the Gardener's lap, he told her about his first butterfly and the beginning of his Garden. Inara compares his story to the Bible's Garden of Eden. She compares the first girl in the Garden to Eve, the first woman in the Bible and the one who lived in the garden with Adam, the first man. In the Bible, the angel with the



flaming sword was set by God to keep people out of the garden after the first couple sinned. In Inara's comparison, the Gardener acts as the angel with the flaming sword. He believes his job is to keep the butterflies in the Garden.

The Gardener's traits don't exist in isolation, just in extremes."
-- Narrator (Part II)

Importance: Inara points out how Lyonette's habit of naming the horses her father made for carousels and remembering the names of each horse as being similar to the Gardener's habit of naming his girls and remembering their names, even repeating them as he passed by and touched the cases in which their dead bodies were stored. She makes the point that the Gardener was alone in his habits because many people, even one of those whom he held captive, had a similar personality trait. The difference for the Gardener is the extreme to which he took his trait. While Lyonette's habit of naming the horses was not a threat to anyone, the Gardener's was since he killed the girls he had made his own by naming them and raping them.

She didn't know that I'd sat on a black-and-red painted horse and finally understood that my parents didn't love me, or at least didn't love me nearly enough. The day I finally understood — and accepted — that I wasn't wanted."
-- Narrator (Part II)

Importance: When Bliss asked Inara to keep the carousel that she made in honor of Lyonette, Inara accepted it even though the carousel reminded her of the way that her parents abandoned her. She did not tell Bliss about her hatred of carousels because she did not want to tell Bliss what happened to her.

I'd never had a panic attack before, though I'd seen them plenty in others, and my own inability to do anything sensible was mortifying.
-- Narrator (Part II)

Importance: It was after Lorraine realized that Simone was pregnant and made her take a pregnancy test that Inara had her first panic attack. Desmond helped her through her feelings of helplessness.

I wanted to live, and I wanted the other girls to live, and for the first time, I wanted that myth of the escaped Butterfly to be true. I wanted to believe I could get out without ending up in glass or the riverbank."
-- Inara (Part II)

Importance: When Inara met Desmond, she believed that he was the key to her freedom and the freedom of the other girls.

The gifts we give say as much about us as the gifts we get and keep,' he murmured eventually."
-- Desmond (Part II)



Importance: When Desmond looked at the things that Inara had kept in her room, he asked her if it was the gifts that she had kept that were important or if it was the people who gave her those gifts.

And then there was the thing that made me ever conscious of just how not mine the space was: the blinking red camera light above the door.”

-- Narrator (Part II)

Importance: There was no place that Inara or the girls could go that they were not being spied on by the Gardener’s cameras. There was even a camera in Inara’s room.

There’s this moment when you know that suddenly, everything’s changed. Most people have that moment many times in their lives.

-- Narrator (Part II)

Importance: When Inara realized that Desmond was in love with her she knew that there was a possibility that she could manipulate him into helping her and the other girls.

You allowed this to happen, Desmond, actively allowed it, so yes, you are the one who hurt her. If you’re not going to do anything to help her, you need to get the hell away from her.”

-- Inara (Part II)

Importance: Desmond continued to claim that he had nothing to do with hurting the girl that Avery kidnapped, but Inara told him that he was as responsible as Avery because he did nothing to stop his father or Avery.

All I had was a tattoo and a growing fetus and a crazy story. I thought if I went to the police, they’d be just like my parents: assume I was drunk or high or screwing around and lying to avoid consequences.”

-- Sophia (Part III)

Importance: Sophia says that she did not tell anyone about being kidnapped and escaping the Garden because she thought that no one would believe her. Her parents had so little faith in her that they kicked her out of their house when they learned she was pregnant.

Sophia was protecting her children. Innocent children who don’t deserve to suffer for what happened. Desmond was protecting criminals. Murderers.”

-- Inara (Part III)

Importance: Inara explains the difference between her feelings about Desmond protecting his family and her feelings about Sophia protecting her family in this quote. Sophia’s children had done nothing wrong while Desmond’s father and brother were kidnapping girls and holding them hostage.



The carousel's over now,' he tells her quietly. 'This time your family is waiting for you.'"
-- Victor (Part III)

Importance: At the hospital, Sophia has come to see about Inara, claiming that Inara is her family. When Victor hears Sophia's claim that she believes Inara is family, he tells Inara that it is time to put the memories of the carousel behind her.

The girl laughs, her face bright and open and tear-streaked, and Victor decides this is a good day.
-- Victor (Part III)

Importance: After Sophia learns that Inara had tried to use the time while she was with the Gardener trying to protect her from having Jillian taken from her she accuses Inara of being stubborn. This comment makes Inara laugh. When he sees Inara's happiness, Victor realizes that it has been a good day despite the horrors that the Gardener caused.