

A Case of Need Study Guide

A Case of Need by Michael Crichton

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Plot Summary

John Berry is in the pathology lab when Frank Conway enters, throwing a tantrum over having lost a patient on the operating table. John accepts the theatrics as typical and is soon called to the telephone where his wife, Judith, says that their friend and John's co-worker, Art Lee, has been arrested. Art performs abortions and John, along with his superior in the pathology lab, Dr. Sanderson, helps cover up the results. John goes to the police station, presents himself as an attorney and gains admittance to Art's cell. Art says that he's been accused of having performed an abortion on a young girl, Karen Randall, who is the daughter of an influential medical family. Karen died as the result of a mistake during the procedure. Because abortion is illegal, Art is being charged with murder - having caused the death of another while committing a felony. Art says he didn't do it. John believes him and sets out to prove his innocence.

John learns that Karen was a promiscuous young woman who had earned the reputation for being wild. John sets out to discover who really performed Karen's abortion, knowing that to be the only way to prove Art's innocence. He soon learns that Karen wasn't pregnant at the time of this procedure. While that doesn't prove Art's innocence, it does indicate sloppy work because John believes any competent doctor would have first performed a pregnancy test.

George Wilson, a young black attorney, takes Art's case because he knows a win will make his career. He intends to win at all costs, though John's sole objective is to avoid a trial. The two men watch as Peter Randall - Karen's uncle, and the other possible abortionist, sets fire to his own car and shoves it over a cliff to hide the fact that Karen's blood has soaked the seats. Peter later admits that he had refused to perform the abortion, figuring that Karen actually wanted the shame of an illegitimate birth and that she'd had his car when she apparently went to find someone else to perform the procedure.

What John eventually learns is that Karen had rough friends, including a drug dealer named Roman who is part of a band, and a drug-addicted nurse named Angela. Roman wants money and convinces Angela to perform the abortion for three hundred dollars. Angela says that Karen seemed fine when she left Angela's apartment where the procedure was performed. Her stepmother admits that she named Art Lee as the abortionist because Art had performed one for her when she became pregnant with the illegitimate child of her brother-in-law, Karen's uncle, Peter Randall. To further complicate the issue, the pathologist who performed the autopsy on Karen is Leland Weston, Angela's uncle.

When Roman realizes he has come under scrutiny, he attacks Angela. Weston happens to arrive at her apartment as the attack is in progress and she covers up his role in the death of Roman just before she slashes her own wrists. In the hospital, Angela admits her part in the death of Karen and later Weston admits his own to John.



Monday, Chapters 1 through 3

Monday, Chapters 1 through 3 Summary

John Berry is in the pathology lab when Frank Conway enters, throwing a tantrum over having lost a patient on the operating table. John says that Conway's mortality rate is very low, and that's the reason his theatrics are tolerated. Conway notes that Mrs. McPherson died during heart surgery, that he massaged for thirty-five minutes with no results, and that he doesn't know how to tell her four children. He says he should have been a dermatologist because they never lose a patient. He arranges for an autopsy table that night, and departs. John notes that Conway always does his own autopsies late at night, as if to punish himself, and that some said he giggled while performing them while others said he cried, but no one knew.

John continues with his work, analyzing tissue samples, typically while surgeons wait in the operating room for results that will help them decide the next step of their surgery. John is interrupted by a phone call from his wife, Judith, which is strange because she almost never interrupts him during the early morning hours when John is always at his busiest. John takes the call and Judith says that Art has been arrested. John notifies his supervisor, Sanderson, who offers to go with John to the jail, but John says he'll go alone and call in as soon as he has information.

John recalls a situation in the lab in which he overhears other pathologists making comments that could have been construed to indicate that someone was performing abortions. John takes the concern to Art who tells him to check out the lab work of Suzanne Black. John checks the tissue sample and sees that the stain on the slide is not typical of what would have been used for the problem as presented by Suzanne's symptoms. Art says that the slide is from a supply house and that Sanderson made the switch. He says that they were "new to the game" and made the mistake with the slide stain. Now, Sanderson makes multiples slides of normal scrapings from D and C's, substituting those for those of women for whom Art performs an abortion. In the case of Suzanne, she was a college student, pregnant by accident and had contracted measles during the first trimester, meaning there's a high chance of birth defect. Art says he still refused to perform the abortion but she said she was simply going to go to a man performing them illegally for two hundred dollars. Knowing the danger of that situation, Art spends a sleepless night and agrees to do the abortion. John tells him that continuing to perform abortions is insane, but Art says it's often the humane answer. John comes on board and helps cover up the evidence in the pathology department. John says that many know what Art is doing, but no one had ever had the guts to blow the whistle.

John arrives at the police station and adopts an attitude of authority. He is refused admittance to Art Lee but insists, demanding the officer's badge number. The officer asks if John is his lawyer and John says he is, which gains him admittance for ten minutes. Art gives John the phone number for his lawyer and tells John he's been



arrested for the murder of Karen Randall. Art says that he's facing both a medical and legal problem and cites John's one year in law school before he dropped out in favor of medicine. Karen Randall is the daughter of J.D. Randall, an important man in the medical community. Art says that he was questioned at length, that he admitted he did see Karen Randall, that he refuses to reveal details of his visit with Karen. He tells John that he refused to perform an abortion on Karen because she was already four months along. It's Art who reveals that Karen died the previous night and that the police believe Art performed an abortion. Art says that he didn't create a file on Karen because he had refused to perform the abortion. Art says that Karen left, saying that she would have the child, but that she obviously changed her mind. When John is told his time is up, he's summoned to the office of Captain Peterson who says that John misrepresented himself as a lawyer, which John denies. The Captain says that Karen Randall was a nice girl and that her mother's statement resulted in Art's arrest.

Monday, Chapters 1 through 3 Analysis

John notes that Art is "authoritarian" and "autocratic," but says doctors tend to believe they have all the answers all the time. In the case of abortions, Art chooses for whom he will and will not perform one. Art justifies abortion by asking what would have happened if Christian Scientists had been in control when antibiotics were invented. He says that if that had been the case, it would have been essentially illegal to administer life-saving antibiotics.

John recounts that he doesn't know exactly when Art began performing abortions, but that it must have been sometime soon after he completed his residency. John says that Art performs "a very important function" because "somebody" has to do abortions. The problem is that abortions are illegal. Despite his initial reaction, he seems to buy Art's arguments because he is involved in covering up the abortions performed by Art.



Monday, Chapters 4 through 8

Monday, Chapters 4 through 8 Summary

John calls his lab, saying he'll be out for the rest of the day, then phones home and asks Judith to help keep Art's wife, Betty, calm. He also warns that there could be reporters and that Judith should run interference. John next calls Art's lawyer, George Bradford, leaving a message. He then calls Lewis Carr, clinical professor of medicine at Boston Memorial where Karen Randall died. Carr is careful saying that Karen's father is a "big man." Carr says that it's a "stinking mess," declines to talk over the phone, and tells John that the body is at City Hospital where the autopsy is to be performed. John learns that the autopsy is to begin soon and promises to hurry.

John notes that Boston City Hospital is not among those ranked best in medical facilities in the area. It's in a rough neighborhood known as the Combat Zone and doctors there commonly see diseases practically nonexistent elsewhere, such as scurvy. John says that this is not "Randall territory," and that the family claims lineage back to the Mayflower and includes many doctors. John says that he knows about their lineage but little about the current Randall family, vowing to find out more.

John explains that autopsies are performed if the patient dies under violent or unusual circumstances, is dead upon arrival at the hospital, dies within a day of arrival, or dies outside a doctor's care. He says those who perform the autopsies are generally fearful that they'll overlook something that will be needed later. John arrives to find Jack Hendricks - a "nobody" - preparing to perform the autopsy. Talking to another resident named Gaffen, Hendricks shows his lack of experience by failing to identify rat bites on another body. He prepares to begin the autopsy on Karen Randall, stalling as long as possible by washing his hands thoroughly. He is rewarded by the arrival of Leland Weston to perform the procedure. Weston, John notes, is chief pathologist at City and arguably the best in the field in Boston.

John quickly discovers that the diagnosis of death is "systemic anaphylaxis," but it will be some time before he learns the reason. It's noted that she has stretch marks indicating a recent weight gain and that she has a faint line of dark hair on her lip and forearm. She has also shaved her pubic hair. It's noted it could be from the abortion but that it's very cleanly shaven with no nicks and so is more likely something Karen did to herself. It's noted that her thyroid may be slightly larger than normal, that her lungs indicate she reacted to something, and that there's a hole in the wall of the uterus, which is the source of the bleeding. It's also noted that the uterus is not enlarged as it should have been for a four month pregnancy. They learn that the person who did the scraping performed adequately, meaning Karen didn't do it to herself, and that the ovaries show no indication of having recently released an ovum. Weston says J.D. Randall approved the examination of the brain, but Karen's stepmother refused. John leaves Weston to complete the autopsy, noting that it won't say for certain that Karen was pregnant.



John goes to visit a biochemist named Jim Murphy who does research on steroids in pregnant women. Murphy works at Boston Lying In Hospital because he needs to be near a source of clinical cases of pregnancy and the occasional stillborn fetus. Murphy says he can test blood John took from Karen Randall's autopsy to determine if she was pregnant. Murphy asks whose blood it is, but John says he'll tell after the test is complete. Murphy agrees but makes John promise that he will tell the identity afterward.

Lewis Carr is famous for discovering a new disease, which John says is much better than discovering a cure for an existing disease in terms of fame. Carr says that Karen was brought into the emergency room by her mother. The attending physician on call gave her medicine to clamp the uterus hoping to slow the bleeding, packed the vagina, and gave the girl penicillin because it's normal hospital protocol. Karen died because she's allergic to the drug. Carr says Karen Randall's stepmother said Karen named Art Lee as the abortionist on the way to the hospital and that she called the police after Karen's death.

John next goes in search of Karen's chart, which is reportedly in the possession of her father, J.D. Randall. John finds him in the operating room performing open-heart surgery, which surprises John considering that the man's daughter had died the previous evening. John watches briefly and says he's always impressed by surgeons in control of all those people in an operating room.

Monday, Chapters 4 through 8 Analysis

John leaves Peterson's office after having defending his coming to Art's aid. He says that he and Art are friends. Peterson says that the fact that Art called on John makes it look as if John is involved. He doesn't deny or confirm it but says "Anything is possible." John immediately becomes convinced that Art is being used as a scapegoat because Karen is the child of an influential father and someone has to pay for her death.

John and Judith have been married eight years. John notes that there are plenty of divorces among the medical community - commonly known as MD or medical divorce. He says he thinks about it most when he's still in the lab late at night and hasn't had time to call and say he'll be late. John says Art and Betty have a more complex relationship. He says that Art is crazy about his kids and seems to worry at the time he spends away from them, trying to make up for it by lavishing them with gifts. It's interesting that John has analyzed the marriages and family dynamics in this way and it seems inevitable that he compares them to his own.

John asks Carr if the official decision among the medical community is that Lee is "the goat" who'll have to take the blame for Karen's death. Carr agrees that it's accurate and that any doctor who performs abortions puts himself at risk, more so when that abortion is performed on the daughter of a wealthy and influential Boston family. John counters, saying that Art claims he didn't do it and that John believes him. Carr says that it doesn't matter whether Art did perform the procedure on Karen or not. John is quickly coming to realize that this is the overwhelming opinion. While he knows he is not in a good

position himself, he will continue to search for the truth because he doesn't believe anyone else is interested in what really happened as long as Art can be blamed for it.



Monday, Chapters 9 through 14

Monday, Chapters 9 through 14 Summary

John next visits Roger Whiting. Whiting goes through the details of what happened, including that there was no discharge that would have indicated miscarriage but explains that by the fact that she'd been bleeding for "a long time," and that her clothes were soaked. Whiting says he didn't have access to Karen's chart and didn't ask Mrs. Randall about Karen's allergies to drugs before administering penicillin, and that the drug is hospital policies in cases such as Karen's. Whiting says that he did discover that a full set of cranial x-rays had been taken, that the report indicated they were normal, and that he didn't know the reason for the x-rays but that Peter Randall - Karen's uncle and personal doctor - had ordered them.

John next goes to visit Karen's brother, William Harvey Shattuck Randall in his dorm. Randall says that he'd seen Karen the previous Saturday, that she'd talked her Uncle Peter into lending her his car by threatening to do an imitation of him. Randall says he assumed she went out that night, that she seemed to have gained a bit of weight but that he put it down to the tendency to do so the first months of college, and that Peter had teased her about having the hair on her upper lip. Randall says that he's just finished his own OB/GYN rotation. Without being asked, he says that he was on duty all night Sunday, meaning he couldn't have performed the procedure himself.

As John is leaving the dorm, he meets J.D. Randall. and John says he has the impression J.D. knew where to find him and came especially to see him. J.D. quickly tries to bribe John to lay off, then resorts to threats saying he's surprised that John has so much free time. J.D. makes it clear that he doesn't believe in abortion. John asks J.D. what he would have done if Karen had told him she was pregnant, and he says there's no point in speculating. John says that J.D. had plenty of options available that would have protected the family name, seeming to suggest that J.D. would have approved an abortion but not locally where it could be talked about. J.D. says that his daughter was "sweet and pure," and John asks how she became pregnant.

John goes home, then to the Lee house where he finds Betty isn't holding up well. He finds that Art's lawyer has called and declined to take the case. John arranges a meeting at the Trafalgar, a gentleman's club downtown. Bradford says he has a conflict on the day Art's case will come up for a hearing and says it's "likely" that another partner in the firm can take Art's case but refuses to commit. Bradford says Art will be tried for murder because abortion - though a fact of life - is a felony, and Karen's death resulted from an act that is a felony. He says the only way to get Art off is to find the real abortionist and that he thinks it can't be done. Bradford says he believes Art Lee did it. John's supervisor, Sanderson, tells John that he can take some more time off to work on Art's problem though Sanderson is already getting pressure to call off John.



Monday, Chapters 9 through 14 Analysis

When John leaves Whiting, he calls Lewis Carr in an effort to get Karen's x-rays. Carr is very formal, saying that he can't help John and that the doctors should leave it alone. John says he should have expected Carr to be the "good boy" who would do what he's told, but John does ask Carr who ordered Carr to leave the situation alone.

When John leaves Whiting's house, he sees Frank Conway waiting for a taxi and pulls over, offering him a ride. John asks Conway about J.D. Randall, and Conway counters by asking if Art did it. John says no and Conway says someone has to pay for Karen's death. Conway says J.D. is only a mediocre surgeon and that he gives the impression of being more by having all the right friends, trappings and clothing. Conway says residents claim J.D. has a hammer and nails in his pocket, "just in case he sees the opportunity crucify somebody," and that he is a heart surgeon because "he never had one of his own." It's here that John gets an opinion of J.D. Randall both as a man and as a surgeon, though he should have expected something of this nature considering that J.D. was performing surgery the day after his daughter's death. Conway also notes that J.D. is old school and isn't able to keep up with the science involved in medicine.

Art returns home Monday evening to find Judith still at Betty's house. He realizes that he has a puzzle on his hands and equates it with a puzzling medical case he'd once worked in which the answer was that the wrong marrow sample was presented as a test result. He says he has the same feeling now - that something is wrong but he can't put his finger on what it is. What John does know for certain is that he is the only one trying to find the truth.



Tuesday, Chapters 1 through 7

Tuesday, Chapters 1 through 7 Summary

John wakes on Tuesday and is tempted to drop his part in the situation and go to work, but doesn't. He goes to Smith College in search of girls who knew Karen. John walks in claiming to be Karen's uncle and asks to see her. The receptionist, apparently unaware, directs him to Ginnie who is Karen's roommate and does know of the girl's death. She mistakes John for a lawyer and agrees to answer questions in the room she shared with Karen. Ginnie says she didn't know Karen well, that they'd been assigned as roommates. She says Karen was constantly trying to shock her with details of her sexual exploits, that she seldom went to class, and that she claimed to have had abortions before entering college. Ginnie says she put it down to a student wanting to create themselves in a new way. She says Karen's details of the abortion process made her almost believe Karen's stories but John notes that Karen - from a family of doctors - could have that knowledge without having gone through an abortion. She says Karen was on the pill, but John finds that it's in a normal pill bottle instead of a traditional birth control pack and takes both the prescription number and one of the pills. By matching a photo to a year book, he identifies a boy Ginnie names as one of Karen's boyfriends and takes a second photo that he can't identify. Ginnie also provides information about a girl who Karen introduced as a friend.

John next goes to the radiology department at Memorial Hospital in search of Karen's head x-rays. A radiologist named Hughes looks at the films and tells John he can't imagine their purpose. The lack of facial films indicates that it wasn't an accident and Hughes can find no abnormalities that might have prompted the films. John learns from the pharmacy that the prescription bottle in Karen's room originally contained a pain reliever prescribed by Peter Randall and likely given for menstrual cramps.

John goes to the Randall home without knowing how he'll get inside, but is saved the trouble when Mrs. Randall comes outside. She shows him her car, saying that Karen collapsed against the horn from her position in the driver's seat, prompting Mrs. Randall to come outside to investigate. She says she pushed Karen to the passenger's seat and rushed to the hospital, that Karen regained consciousness on the way and said that Lee did it, and that she'd found a three-hundred dollar check made out to cash that she believes Karen gave to Lee for the abortion. John says that problem with that theory is that Lee always charged twenty-five dollars - the cost of lab fees. By never making a profit on the procedure, he was ensuring that he never performed one for the money.

John goes to Curzin Photos because that's the studio name printed on the back of the photo he took from Karen's room. After some wrangling, he discovers the boy is part of a group called the Zephyrs, that they play at the Electric Grape, and that they have a rough crowd following. Before tracking down the Zephyrs, he finds Alan Zenner, leaving football practice, having identified him from a photo that was also in Karen's dorm room. He says that Karen's father has already talked to him and that he doesn't want to be



involved. John says he won't have an option about testifying unless John can prove Art's innocence before that happens. Alan says that Karen had wanted to be perceived as wild and that she had a bad reputation. He says she had introduced him to a friend, Angela, that John realizes is the same friend Ginnie told him about. Alan then admits that he saw Karen Sunday, at what must have been a few hours before the procedure. He says she was claiming that she was pregnant, that she was about to have an abortion, and that she was scared, but Alan says he didn't believe her. Alan says she wouldn't say where she was going when she left him around lunchtime.

Though it's late by the time John finishes talking to Alan, he catches Peter Randall in his lab. Peter tells John that J.D. is angry over John's having talked to Ev, but that he doesn't care. Peter Randall, working on an experiment using mice, says the easiest way to "dispatch" them is with a meat cleaver. While he and his assistants continue to work, Peter says that he ordered the x-rays on Karen Randall's skull because she complained of vision loss. The x-rays were both a practical way to be certain nothing was wrong and a diversion so that she stopped worrying. Peter says that she never showed up for a follow-up visit and never complained any more. Peter then asks John for his opinion of the autopsy who says he believes Karen wasn't pregnant, which Peter says is "interesting." During the conversation, Peter receives word that a car has been delivered to the parking garage. He tells John that his car was stolen and that the delivery is a rental.

John arrives at home to find Captain Peterson in his drive, lights flashing, saying that the Randalls have complained that John was trespassing. John facetiously says he didn't know it was a private residence and that he was looking for someone to give him directions.

Tuesday, Chapters 1 through 7 Analysis

Karen's brother has described her as "bubbly," but Ginnie says that Karen was always "half dead" except when she was going on a date. She says Karen slept a lot, even through meals, and didn't seem to eat much, though she gained weight. Ginnie says that Karen had also mentioned the fact that she was growing hair on her body. Ginnie has provided extensive information that will help John in his quest to finding out what happened to Karen. Ginnie says she knows that John isn't Karen's uncle or a doctor. She says she figured out early in the conversation that John was a lawyer and adds that she doesn't think he would make a good doctor. John laughs and says she's probably right. The girl Ginnie tells John about will turn out to be Angie and it will be an important key to finding out what happened to Karen.

One of Art's reasons for performing abortions, as John recalls, is that women are going to have the procedure done, with or without his help. He notes that it's a very simple procedure and that only a few women die if it's done correctly. Art argues that his involvement is only necessary because "women have no guts." He points out that lawmakers are male, that there aren't hundreds of thousands of women dying from illegal abortions, so there are no reasons for the men making the laws to change them.



John notes that Art has now been accused by a woman who apparently has guts - Karen Randall's stepmother.

When John meets Ev Randall, she tells him to go away but he seems to catch her attention by saying that her husband "doesn't quite understand everything." Those words make Mrs. Randall turn off the ignition of the car and pay attention to what John has to say. This is a foreshadowing of what's to come but isn't yet explained. John is also interested in the amount of blood on the driver's side of the Randall's car, but again doesn't yet explain why.



Tuesday, Chapters 8 through 10

Tuesday, Chapters 8 through 10 Summary

John and Judith are attending a previously arranged dinner party at the home of George Morris, chief resident of medicine at Lincoln. They encounter Norton Francis Hammond III outside Morris's home. Norton, a bit of a rebel because of his longish hair, is accepted because he's an excellent doctor; John calls him the hope of the future of medicine. Norton says a large quantity of morphine is missing from the Memorial Hospital pharmacy, that it's thought to be a carefully planned inside job, and that no one has yet been accused. He says it would be "interesting" if the theft was connected to the death of Karen and tells John he hopes he solves the puzzle. Later, John is told by a pediatrician named Charlie Frank that the situation is "ugly," that there are rumors that John is involved in the abortions, and advises John to stay away from the situation.

At the party, John manages time to talk to Fritz Werner, a psychiatrist who John believes can be of help. Fritz tells John he must talk to "Bubbles," but before Fritz can reveal the identity of "Bubbles, they're interrupted. Fritz tells John that it "sounds serious," and that he should see this patient the following day. John, catching on that Fritz will talk about it then rather than in front of these people, says he'll arrange it and leaves.

Just before John leaves, he finds Judith talking with Norton who is smoking marijuana. John points out that it's illegal and Norton responds that abortion is also, but John simply says that he can only take on one crusade at a time. John, noting that Norton lives in the neighborhood referred to as "the hill," asks if he knows Bubbles. Norton doesn't know her name but knows that she lives with Sam Archer. John later finds Sam's name in the phone book. The phone has been disconnected but he drives to the address. Sam is high on acid but John is admitted by Sam's friend, Marvin. Sam becomes very agitated when John asks about Karen, saying that she was "terrible," but isn't making much sense and doesn't elaborate. He says that Bubbles is with Angela, and Marvin says it's Angela Harding.

Tuesday, Chapters 8 through 10 Analysis

John says the party is Hammonds' way of promoting good will so that doctors will send him referrals for the private practice he's about to launch. He notes the medical jargon being thrown about and that Judith says she wishes they would talk politics for a change. John says doctors have some quirks - that most don't act drunk even when they've consumed large quantities of alcohol. Art is the exception and John theorizes that Art needs that the release he finds in indulgence, though other doctors deny that's why they drink. John says that if you talk to any doctor long enough you'll find that they have prejudices and hates for some particular aspect of medicine, often in the kinds of patient they personally treat. He says that in Art's case, it seems more like a hatred of



medicine in particular. John's analysis is interesting in that he doesn't say where he personally falls in the equation.

John also talks about Art and a man named Blake who enjoys word games and arguments. He says Art is bound to attack anything that is done in a traditional way, and that tendency seems to make it inevitable that he perform abortions. Art always buys new gadgets and is interested in new ways of doing things. Blake "collects arguments on medical philosophy." The two men once argued for hours over whether an obstetrician is responsible for the child he delivers.



Wednesday, Chapters 1 through 5

Wednesday, Chapters 1 through 5 Summary

John calls in to Memorial Hospital and learns the autopsy report indicates that Karen died of complications from a "three-month pregnancy" and the anaphylaxis caused by the penicillin. John is surprised and tells Judith so. He then looks up Angela Harding's address in the phone book and drives to Beacon Hill where she lives. He's met at the door by the girl everyone refers to as "Bubbles," who says that Angela is out and that neither of them have seen Karen for several months. Bubbles makes a show of coming down from a high on speed. She says that Karen has taken drugs as well, including shooting up speed. Angela arrives and verifies Bubbles' story that she hasn't seen Karen since before school started. John asks if Angela is certain, saying that Alan Zenner said that Karen was headed to Angela's apartment on Sunday. Angela and Bubbles exchange a look when John says Karen had told Alan that she was coming to Angela's apartment on the Sunday she died. Angela continues to hold firm, sending Bubbles out of the room and insisting that she hadn't seen Karen.

John learns that a lawyer named George Wilson has taken Art's case and they agree to meet in the afternoon. Meanwhile he learns from Murphy that the test results on Karen Randall's blood indicates she was not pregnant, and that Weston has also called to find out the results.

John goes to Mallory Lab to talk to ask Weston about the official results he'd learned from a secretary earlier. Weston says it must have been some sort of mistake on the part of the secretary. He then offers the entire set of postmortem examination slides to John, who comes to the conclusion that there was something wrong with Karen's thyroid and believes it to be a pituitary tumor. Weston says he thought so too, at first, but that he isn't certain and won't put something down on report that he'll have to defend in court.

John talks to Sanderson who tells him that he has just learned that Peter Randall also performs abortions. John and Sanderson ponder the fact for some time. Peter, as Karen's doctor and her uncle, would be the most likely person to have seen Karen. John remembers that Peter had called Karen a hysterical young girl and knows that Peter would never have performed the abortion without being certain she was pregnant. He says as much to Sanderson who says he believes the fact that John likes Peter may be standing in the way of his judgment. John points out that if it's possible that Peter would have performed the procedure without taking time for a pregnancy test, so could Art. Sanderson responds that he's considered that.

John next goes to Fritz Werner's office. Fritz says that Karen was mean and disturbed and that he had refused to take her on as a patient because he already had several teens. Fritz says that he believes Karen continued to get pregnant because she wanted to punish herself, and that all her actions were sexual in nature to "compensate for



breaking with her family." Fritz says that Karen went overboard in all her actions and when John suggests she couldn't help it, Fritz counters by saying that she needed "a good spanking." Fritz confirms that Peter performed at least two previous abortions on Karen and that J.D. didn't know. Fritz also confirms that Art performed an abortion on Mrs. Randall while J.D. was out of the country, and that there's been "speculation" on the identity of the father.

Fritz tells John that Karen had developed a strong relationship with J.D.'s mistress, a nurse named Signe, and that Karen's behavior deteriorated when Signe left the country. Fritz says that Karen had to find a way to cope after the death of her mother, and that her actions were likely the only way she could stabilize her life. Fritz says that even this perverse stabilization is better than none.

Wednesday, Chapters 1 through 5 Analysis

John quickly learns that there was bad feelings between Angela Harding and Karen Randall over a young man. Angela reportedly liked the man but Karen had taken his attention very briefly. John seems to be playing a hunch when he says that Alan Zenner had said Karen was headed to Angela's house on the Sunday that she died. It's confirmed when Angela and Bubbles quickly exchange a look and Bubbles says, "The dirty little ...". Though the thought goes on unfinished, it seems clear that John has hit on the truth.

Murphy tells John that he's figured out that it's Karen's blood he was testing for pregnancy and adds that Leland Weston has also called requesting the results. Weston will later say that he figured out what John planned to do with the blood.

John talks to Sanderson. Though neither of them have discussed their involvement in Art's situation, they both are very aware they could be implicated. When John and Sanderson discuss the fact that Peter Randall also performs abortions, John immediately faces the fact that he could shift the blame to Peter and away from Art. John's problem is that he admits he would always be uncertain of his motivations. He says that he and Sanderson would never know whether they did so because it was the right thing to do or because it would save themselves.

John now considers another fact - that Karen Randall's stepmother named Art as the abortionist and that there had to be some reason she knew he performed them. John doesn't dwell on the subject but will later return to it.



Wednesday, Chapters 6 through 9

Wednesday, Chapters 6 through 9 Summary

John meets George Wilson at a bar run by a former wrestler named Crusher Thompson. John arrives to see only one man in the place, a Negro, and asks Thompson if he'll let him know when Wilson arrives. Thompson points out the Negro, who seems somewhat embarrassed. Wilson is direct, saying that he is, in essence, the token Negro on the staff of the law firm. He says he's had little trial experience but has expressed an interest and that's ostensibly why he was given the case. In reality, he points out that the jury is going to be seeing an "uppity Negro" defending the Chinaman who is an abortionist, and that the biggest challenge will be to get past the stereotypes.

John realizes several things by looking at the case through the eyes of the attorney, including the fact that knowing Karen wasn't pregnant isn't going to help at all. Wilson says that saying Art is too professional an abortionist to perform the procedure without doing the pregnancy test isn't a defense that can - or should - be used. Wilson says there are two alternatives. He says they can take their information to the Randalls, that Karen is promiscuous, that Peter has performed abortions on her before the fatal procedure, that Ev Randall had an abortion by Art, and that Karen was unstable and her word can't be trusted. Wilson says confronted with all that, the Randalls might be persuaded to drop the case. He says the other alternative is to present all those facts in court. Wilson says the only other way to free Art is to find the real abortionist. With the trial just weeks away, he feels the chances of doing so are slim.

John arrives home and talks to Judith by phone, who instructs him to come to the Lee's home because there's a "demonstration." Before he leaves the house, he calls the Boston Globe, tries to sound breathless and reports the demonstration. He finds a cross smoldering in the Lee's front yard. Police and curious onlookers are gathered around the house. There are broken windows and Judith says it took fifteen minutes for police to arrive. John picks up a pile of hate mail that had arrived that day and hides a letter of support from a woman who had had an abortion. The reporter arrives and John makes a point of citing the length of time it took police to arrive, and that they didn't bring a doctor, though they were aware that two children had lacerations from the broken glass. With the reporter taking notes, John points out that people may hate abortionists, but they also hate hoodlums who destroy private property. Captain Peterson quickly says that the boys who set up the cross weren't hoodlums, which John questions and the reporter notes. With the reporter continuing to watch, John presses for police protection.

Judith goes home but John remains to help Betty board up the windows. As he cleans a child's cut for the second time, finding more glass that he'd missed, he grows angry and calls George Wilson. He proposes that they go to J.D. Randall's to "call off the dogs." Wilson agrees. When they arrive on the Randall's street, they see two cars in the Randall's drive. On a hunch, John slips up and checks the car that apparently belongs to Peter Randall - the car Peter Randall had told him was stolen. He finds blood in the



driver's seat. J.D. and Peter Randall emerge from the house then and John and Wilson follow them miles from the Randall home and along the coast. Using a camera that Wilson says will pick up the minute amount of light available and that will produce acceptable photos, Wilson takes pictures as the two men pour gas in the front seat of Peter Randall's car and shove it over a cliff where it explodes.

With the photos to make the defense case, John wants to push the Randalls into dropping the case, but Wilson makes it evident that he wants only to win. Under pressure, Wilson agree to confront the Randalls with what he knows. They arrive at the Wilson house and bully their way past the butler, saying they are expected. Wilson tells J.D. that he's come a long way to see him, all the way from the coast. That doesn't bother J.D. who says that it's his word against theirs. Wilson doesn't reveal that he has photos.

Wednesday, Chapters 6 through 9 Analysis

John notes that Wilson is young, inexperienced, and black, and that he's probably one of the few attorneys in town who will work hard for Art, not because he believes in Art but because he personally wants to win so badly. John will come to realize that he doesn't like Wilson's tactics. Wilson questions the reason John wants to protect Peter Randall, a claim John denies. Wilson says that no one in town will touch Art's case, and that he can - and will - win. When there's a possibility of closing the case without a trial, Wilson won't play the cards that could prompt that settlement, apparently because he wants to win the case at trial. At that point, his desire to win in court outweighs his desire to do what's best for his client. The reason J.D. helps Peter hide the evidence of Karen's blood in his car is never explained. Peter later says that he had loaned Karen his car but never expected that she would have gone through with the abortion at the hands of someone else.

John will later say that he was reacting when he called the Globe and that he should have thought it through first. He'll also later apologize to Art for prompting more media coverage.

John and Wilson each continue to question the motives of the other. Wilson accuses John of wanting to see someone other than a doctor accused. John accuses Wilson of wanting the case to go to trial despite the fact that if that happens no one except Wilson comes out a winner. John spends some time himself evaluating the situation and the information he has obtained. He knows that Peter Randall performed abortions on Karen before the procedure that caused her death, and that the previous abortions were successful and without complications. He can't imagine that Peter made such a serious mistake. At the same time, John admits that it makes sense to suspect that Peter is the abortionist.



Thursday, Chapters 1 through 6

Thursday, Chapters 1 through 6 Summary

As John tries to plan what to do with his day Thursday, Peter Randall calls. He invites John for lunch, saying that he wants John to "meet the alibi I haven't got."

At Peter's home, John tells him that Wilson has pictures. Peter says he suspected so and asks if he's in "hot water." John says it appears so and Peter says he has an alibi but that he can't use it, and that he wants John to help find the real abortionist. Ev Randall - wife of J.D. Randall and sister-in-law to Peter - walks in. The two are having an affair and John learns that it was Peter's child that Art aborted while J.D. was out of town. Ev says that she watched Karen literally dying before her eyes as she drove her to the hospital and that Karen continued to say, "That bastard." Ev says she panicked, and fearing that Peter would be implicated, named the only other viable abortionist she could think of - Art Lee.

Peter says that Karen came to him asking for an abortion and that he refused. He says that having already performed three for her - one that John had not yet discovered - he came to the conclusion that she really wanted the shame of an illegitimate birth and decided to refuse her another abortion. He says he also worried about a possible pituitary problem, but Karen refused an examination after he refused to perform an abortion.

John leaves Peter's house trying to figure out what to do next. He realizes that he has the picture of the young Negro he's now discovered is Roman Jones of the Zephyrs. He has dinner with his family and then kills two more hours in his study before heading to the Electric Grape - the bar where the Zephyrs play. Roman immediately accuses John of being a cop, but he shows a medical card identification. He then tells Roman that he wants to buy drugs, pretending that he'll take fifteen bags though he doesn't know what kind of drugs Roman is offering for sale. Roman asks who directed John to him. John hesitates and says it was Angela Harding. Roman tells John to leave and again calls him a cop. John says it wasn't Angela, but a friend of hers - Karen. Roman denies knowing Karen and John shows him the picture from Karen's dorm room which Roman grabs and shreds. John wants to refuse to leave but believes Roman won't say anything more. He walks out, waits a minute and walks back in, retrieving his glasses from the table and noting that Roman is on the telephone.

John goes a short distance down the street where he orders a hot dog and watches. He calls Hammond at the hospital and asks him to find out if Roman Jones has ever been admitted to the hospital and why. He tells Hammond that he'll stop by later and notes that he has no idea how true that will be. John then returns to his vigil and soon spots Roman Jones leaving the Electric Grape. He follows, careful to remain well back. Roman makes circuitous routes, taking John through an array of streets and into the wholesale garment district. John suddenly realizes that he's lost Roman who turned a



corner and is now gone from sight. John hurries, hoping to catch up, and is attacked without warning. John says that something heavy hits him in the forehead before he's punched in the stomach and loses consciousness.

John briefly regains consciousness as he's being lifted from a car and again as he's being stripped and wheeled into an emergency room. He's told his jaw might be broken and asked to blink his answer to the question whether he's allergic to penicillin. He answers no and when he's allowed to talk begins to ask medical questions that prompt the staff to believe he's a doctor. He finally calls for Hammond, tells them the staff did a good job, and demands that he be allowed up instead of being admitted.

John finds out that Roman Jones was admitted for symptoms indicating kidney stones, a common ploy among morphine addicts who know the drug is commonly administered for kidney stones. He was suspected of using that ploy and left before he could be examined for needle marks.

John feels certain Roman Jones had beaten him up and also feels certain that the entire situation is about to resolve itself. He remains at the hospital but insists on being up and about. Just when he's beginning to think he might have been wrong, an ambulance arrives with Roman Jones. He's had a serious head injury and is in cardiac arrest. A few minutes later he's pronounced dead. John notes that there are wood splinters in the head wound, though the initial speculation is that he was thrown from a second story window and hit his head on the pavement. The window belongs to Angela Harding. John withdraws blood from Roman Jones, injects it into a laboratory mouse in the hospital basement, and determines that Roman was high on morphine at the time of his death.

Angela also arrives, having cut her wrists in a suicide attempt. John, realizing that Angela is also likely a morphine addict, makes a point of saying that Angela is to be given a drug that will counteract morphine addiction, often violently. He fills the syringe with water and injects what he tells her is a minor dose. She begins to sweat and to shake, believing herself to be in withdrawal. She tells John that Roman had been involved in the theft of morphine from the hospital and that he had told her he needed serious money. Under pressure from Roman, she'd agreed to perform Karen's abortion for three hundred dollars. Angela says that Karen was fine when she left her apartment. John then injects more water which Angela believes to be morphine and which immediately calms her. Hammond is amazed at her reactions to the placebos.

When Angela's parents arrive, John notes that her mother seems very familiar and soon realizes that she's Leland Weston's sister, meaning Angela is Weston's niece.

John and Hammond then go to the doctor's conference room where John begins showing the effects of blood on the brain. He's been tired, sleepy and nauseated all evening but has hidden the symptoms from Hammond. Now he can no longer do so and Hammond quickly realizes the problem and John undergoes emergency surgery to remove the pressure.



Thursday, Chapters 1 through 6 Analysis

At home on Thursday morning, John tells Judith that Wilson wants to pin the abortion on Peter Randall. Judith disagrees with John's assessment that blaming someone else who is innocent isn't the right answer. Judith says that having watched Betty Lee struggle over the past days, Judith just wants it to end.

John says that he sees a different side of Ev Randall in Peter's home. There she is polite and well-mannered. She serves lunch and washes the dishes afterward - tasks she would never have performed in the home of J.D. Peter says that they can't face the scandal of Ev leaving J.D. and so have resigned themselves to living the life they have. He says that J.D. knows Ev is having an affair, even if he won't admit it to anyone including himself, but that he may not know who. It's interesting that despite all this, Ev says she was with Peter the night Karen underwent the abortion and that she will testify to that if necessary. Peter tells John that he's in a situation he's never before experienced, in that he's "caught."

It's interesting that John seems to know that there's going to be a showdown between Roman Jones and Angela Harding but doesn't do anything to prevent it.



Friday, Saturday and Sunday, and Postscript, Monday

Friday, Saturday and Sunday, and Postscript, Monday Summary

John wakes after the surgery and asks for more morphine but is denied anything stronger than aspirin. Art comes to visit and says that the story is that Roman forced Angela to do the abortion, and that when John began asking questions Roman apparently planned to kill Angela. Art says that Angela apparently slashed Roman with a kitchen knife and eventually hit him with a chair, knocking him through the window. Art says he's leaving town and thanks John for the help. The nurses begin complaining about his complaining and Hammond allows him to leave the hospital.

Judith comes to take John home on Sunday afternoon but he has her stop by Angela's apartment first. He bluffs his way inside, saying that he's to collect blood samples. The police working the scene aren't particularly interested in his presence. He says the room is a mess with blood everywhere. He sees the chair and is told that there are no prints on it though there are many throughout the rest of the apartment.

On Monday, John goes to visit Weston. John noted the small cuts on Angela's hands as being typical of self-defense against someone with a knife. When John steps into Weston's lab, the older man drops his hands to his lap. John soon asks what's wrong with his hands and Weston says he cut himself in his kitchen at home. Then John says that the chair was wiped clean of prints and Weston says that Angela had promised to do that, and to wipe the doorknob. Weston then tells the story of his involvement.

He says that he has been concerned for Angela but knew he couldn't do anything to help her drug addiction other than be available. He says it was entirely by chance that he stopped by the night Roman Jones was trying to kill her. When he went inside, Roman was slashing at Angela and screaming that she was a witness. Weston says that when Roman faced away from him with a renewed attack on Angela, Weston picked up the chair and hit Roman. Angela, fearing what his involvement would do to his career, urged him to leave and he did. John asks if Roman was dead when Weston left the apartment and Weston says he probably was.

John leaves Weston's lab and notes that there's an ambulance driving by. People are stopping to look and John knows most are curious. John has the ability to satisfy his curiosity, to learn the patient's identity and story, but doesn't.



Friday, Saturday and Sunday, and Postscript, Monday Analysis

John says that many of the things that came after the case is solved was the result of his anger. He notes that Judith wants to give Art a going away party but John knows Art wouldn't want the attention. The fact that he can't provide a farewell reception for a friend also seems to make him more angry.

John notes that none of what happened is Weston's fault and tries to convince himself that anything he does on that front will be a waste of time. Despite these arguments with himself, he goes to see Weston.

Weston tells John that Roman Jones was probably dead by the time Weston left Angela's apartment. John says that Weston could probably get away with self-defense, seeming to imply that the details should be told. Weston agrees that he probably could. John doesn't say that he plans to turn Weston in and the situation is left unresolved. It's interesting that Weston left Angela with the mess and seems that he should have shown some remorse to the fact that she tried to commit suicide.



Characters

Dr. John Berry

A pathologist. John is Art's friend and a co-conspirator in covering up the fact that Art is performing abortions. John takes it upon himself to work on Art's behalf when murder charges are filed. John wants to prove Art's innocence but not by insinuating the guilt of someone who John also doesn't believe is guilty.

John puts his efforts into finding the real abortionist, which he believes to be the only way to prove Art's innocence. John doesn't want to delve too deeply into his own motives, admitting to himself that he doesn't want to be implicated in the abortions Art has performed. John bucks pressure to leave the situation alone. He is bribed by Karen Randall's father who suggests that John might find himself in line for a prestigious position. John declines, saying he knows the man in line for that position and that he won't take it. He's also threatened, but again refuses to bend.

John wanders into Karen's world, visiting her roommates and tracking down friends. He happens upon the answer to the mystery of what happened to Karen Randall, partly by accident but partly by being tenacious and lucky.

Angela Harding

Angela is a morphine addicted nurse who performs an abortion on Karen Randall at the insistence of Roman Jones, a drug dealer who stole morphine from the hospital where Angela works. Angela tries to play it cool, denying to John that she saw Karen on the day of the abortion though she gives herself away.

Angela is at home when Roman Jones, believing she's told his role in the death of Karen Randall, attacks her. Angela fights back and slashes Roman several times during the fight. Angela then tries to commit suicide but is found before she bleeds to death. While she is in the emergency room, John tricks her into believing that she's being given a drug that will counteract the morphine and Angela admits almost everything, omitting Weston's role in the situation at her apartment.

Roman Jones

Roman is a member of the band, the Zephyrs. He is black and has some relationship with Karen though there remains some question as to the level of that relationship. Roman is a drug dealer and was responsible for stealing the morphine from a local hospital. He forced an addicted nurse, Angela Harding, to perform the abortion that killed Karen Randall. When John is close to discovering the truth, Roman tries to kill Angela but is killed by Angela's uncle, Leland Weston.



Art Lee

An obstetrician and good friend of John Berry's. Art is, in John's words, a good doctor and performs abortions though they are illegal. Art is Chinese and John soon learns that he is simply "a goat" because someone needs to be blamed. Art tells John that he did not perform the abortion and John believes him for several reasons. When the real abortionist is found, Art is released but knows he can never counteract the publicity around his arrest and moves to California.

Leland Weston

The chief pathologist at City Hospital in Boston and the best of the pathologists in the city of Boston. Weston is the man who performs the autopsy on Karen Randall and determines that she wasn't pregnant at the time of the procedure that was allegedly an abortion and caused her death. Despite the findings, Weston's report indicates that Karen died of a hemorrhage after having undergone an abortion for a three-month pregnancy. John later discovers that the woman who performed the abortion is Weston's niece and that Weston was at her apartment and participated in the killing of the man who forced her to perform the abortion.

Frank Conway

The surgeon who is considered excellent in his field because he loses only eight percent of patients. John says that Conway throws a tantrum after losing a patient, and that his theatrics are accepted because of the low mortality rate. Conway later apologizes to John for the action, and tells John about J.D. Randall's lack of surgical skill. Conway says he can "cut circles around" J.D., blindfolded, left-handed and hung over.

Jim Murphy

A biochemist at Boston Lying In Hospital where he does research on the impact of steroids on pregnant women. Murphy agrees to test Karen Randall's blood to determine if she were pregnant at the time of the procedure that caused her death and comes to the conclusion that there was no pregnancy.

Roger Whiting

The intern who cared for Karen Randall in the emergency room. Whiting gave Karen penicillin without consulting her chart or asking her mother about allergies, ultimately causing Karen's immediate death, though it's noted that she likely would have died anyway. John says that he wouldn't want to be Whiting.



Karen Randall

The young girl who dies as the result of a procedure that is reportedly an abortion. Karen was very close to her mother who died when Karen was a teenager. Karen rebelled, showing a wild side to her friends, including her college roommate. She made a huge show of taking a pill she claimed to be birth control, made comments about her sexual promiscuity, and claimed to have had abortions before.

Herbert Landsman

An anesthesiologist who often works with Conway and who periodically gets the blame for a death under Conway's surgical supervision. John notes that the rest of the time, "Herbie" and Frank Conway are best friends.

George Bradford

Art Lee's attorney. Bradford turns down the case, saying he has a conflict on the day the case will come to court and that he can't reschedule the conflicting appointment. He says that another of the attorneys in his firm might be able to take the case, but is careful not to make that commitment.

J.D. Randall

Karen's father. J.D. seems callous and more intent on protecting his family than in getting to the bottom of the truth of Karen's death. It's noted that he is supposedly a brilliant surgeon and is in the operating room, performing heart surgery, the day after Karen's death.

Peter Randall

Karen's uncle and physician. It's Peter who tells John that Karen was a bit of a drama queen and that she'd shown up complaining of vision problems, which prompted the x-rays of her head to rule out any problems. It's eventually revealed that Peter Randall also performs abortions. When John is looking into the situation and comes to the conclusion that Peter could have been involved, Peter reveals that he has an alibi and encourages John to continue his search for the real abortionist.

Alan Zenner

Karen's ex-boyfriend. Alan says that Karen had spread the word that she'd had an abortion and that it was Alan's child long before the procedure that took her life. Alan says that he cared for Karen "as long as he could." Alan also admits to having seen her the day of the procedure.

Norton Hammond

A young doctor who tells John about the morphine missing from the hospital where both he and J.D. Randall practice. John calls Norton the "hope of medicine," saying that most young doctors learn from an older doctor and become a carbon copy, but that the younger doctors - like Norton - are asking more difficult questions that involve science and social medicine. Norton takes care of John after Roman Jones attacks him and is on hand when Angela confesses to performing the abortion that killed Karen Randall.



Objects/Places

Charles Street Station

The location of the jail where Art is being held.

Lincoln

The hospital where John Berry works in the pathology department and where Art Lee works as an obstetrician.

Boston Memorial

The hospital where Karen Randall was taken and where she died.

Boston City Hospital

Where Karen Randall's autopsy is performed. It's noted that this is the facility at the bottom of the list of outstanding hospitals in the city.

Boston Lying In Hospital

Where Jim Murphy works as a biochemist.

The Calder Building

Where Lewis Carr's office is.

Mallory Lab

Where Leland Weston works as a pathologist.

Sheraton Hall

The dorm where William Harvey Shattuck Randall lives.

The Trefalgar

The gentleman's club where George Bradford meets with John.



Henley Hall

The dorm at Smith College where Karen Randall lived.

Beacon Pharmacy

Where Karen Randall has a prescription filled.

Beacon Hill

Where Angela Harding lives.

The Electric Grape

Where Roman Jones plays as part of the group known as the Zephyrs.



Themes

Right Versus Wrong

There are an array of characters who are interested in doing what's right, or in bucking the system to do what's wrong or in one's best interests. Karen Randall is an example of the latter. John discovers that a great deal of her wild behavior - including her sexual exploits and her tendency to become pregnant - is because she wants to be the opposite of what she's expected to be.

There is naturally the question of whether abortion is right or wrong and that question brings out the best and worst in the characters, as is the case when the issue is posed to any group of people. In this case, there are those who send Art hate mail and burn a cross on his lawn because they believe he is doing something wrong. On the other hand, Art and Peter believe that the law against abortion is wrong and take it upon themselves to make judgment calls regarding when abortion is acceptable. An interesting side bar to this discussion is that an argument for legal abortion is that the women who seek the procedure are willing to put their lives at risk in order to obtain an illegal abortion.

There are other questions of right and wrong posed throughout the book. While John doesn't take an overt stand regarding abortion, he does stand beside his friend, Art Lee. When John has the opportunity to shift the blame from Art to another innocent doctor, he declines. That isn't the case with Art's attorney, George Wilson, who wants to try the case in court and to win at all costs.

Things Aren't Always What They Seem

John spends a great deal of time trying to sort through the issues as they appear and the issues as they really are. One thing he discovers is that he can't take things at face value. Perhaps one of the best examples of this recurring theme is found in Ev Randall.

Ev is married to J.D. Randall and is the epitome of the term "trophy wife." She is beautiful and young, an unlikely match for J.D. She is also snobbish and rude until John encounters her at the apartment of her brother-in-law and lover, Peter Randall. It's then that John discovers Ev Randall preparing lunch and washing dishes - completely out of character for the snobbish wife of J.D. Randall. It's then that John says he could almost like this Ev. The surprises for John continue as he learns that Peter Randall also performs abortions. Like Art, he is careful in his clientèle. Peter realizes that he could become a suspect and that's why he makes the revelations to John.



Morality

Morality is arguably one of the more interesting themes of this story, simply because several characters are defending stands that are illegal but which they believe to be morally right. The most conspicuous, of course, is Art Lee. Art performs abortions though they are illegal and has been doing so for some time. He began when a college student told him that she was going to have an abortion and would do so with or without his help. Art thinks it over, considers that the young woman is putting herself at serious risk, and performs the procedure.

There are no real indications of John's stand on the issue but the fact is that he helps cover up Art's role as an abortionist. It is interesting that he goes to great lengths to tell his young son that Art is not an abortionist. Art himself charges twenty-five dollars per abortion - the cost of lab fees. He ensures that he is not making a profit so that he will never be tempted to perform abortions for a profit.

In addition to John and Art, John's supervisor, Sanderson, also helps cover up Art's abortionist activity. What may come as a surprise to some readers is that Peter Randall is also performing abortions. Again, Randall doesn't explain himself or his views on the subject.

Style

Point of View

The book is written in first person with a view limited only to what Dr. John Berry knows and sees. This is greatly limiting to the reader but is the only method available that would preserve the surprise ending that John sets in motion. For example, the knowledge Peter Randall has cannot be revealed until the proper time. The same is true of Angela Harding's role in the situation as well as the relationship between Peter and Ev Randall and between Leland Weston and Angela Harding. Using first person means that those secrets and surprises are revealed in an appropriate manner - as John discovers them.

The limited view does prove difficult in some situations and may be confusing for some readers. For example, John spends time with Peter Randall in his lab where Peter tells John about his research with mice and his method of "dispatching" them with a meat cleaver. None of this is particularly relevant to Karen's death and won't be important in the end result. However, Peter also reveals that someone has stolen his car when he has a new one delivered. That fact does become vital to the story but is actually hidden well within the scene of Peter's explanations of research.

Setting

The book is set in Boston, likely during the 1960s, though the date is never clearly established. There are clues, such as the fact that abortion is illegal. There is also the fact that Norton Hammond has longish hair and that it's a symbol of rebellion. Art mentions that most lawmakers are male and that the laws on abortion will never be changed until women are willing to stand up for themselves. These things indicate a time period before the 1970s but in an era when science was beginning to play a more important role in medicine.

As for the physical setting, there are extensive descriptions of Boston that ring true. The existence of the hospitals and the particular neighborhoods lend a level of believability, and it's not necessary that those hospitals exist by those names. The descriptions of both places and characters are believable.

Language and Meaning

The book is very straight forward and is presented in an easy-to-read format. There are, however, extensive medical language and descriptions of medical procedures. For example, John describes the process used in the pathology lab, including the fact that there are foot pedals that operate specific things in order to free a technician's hands for his work. He also describes how x-rays of severely ill people are stored so that they are always readily accessible.



The book includes a series of appendices that range from explanations of medical abbreviations to six points typically touted as reason for abortion. While the book itself does not promote abortion, there is little doubt that several characters of the story are pro-abortion. Some readers may find this disturbing and those readers may easily lose sight of the story line in favor of the abortion issue. While the story is set around the issue of abortion, the plot is that a young girl is dead from a medical complication and John Berry is seeking to set that issue straight.

Structure

The book consists of six sections, each dated to outline the events of that particular day. For example, the story begins on Monday, October 10. Sections include Tuesday, October 11; Wednesday, October 12; Thursday, October 13; Friday, Saturday and Sunday, October 14, 15 and 16; and Postscript, Monday, October 17. The final two sections are the shortest, consisting of only one chapter each and six to eight pages each. The previous chapters, making up the body of the story, range from about seventy to more than one hundred forty pages.

The book also includes a series of footnotes explaining medical terms, abbreviations and practices. Some seem unnecessary but some play into the story line and plot of the book. The book includes an additional five sections past the end of the story that are listed as Appendix I through VII. Each lists a particular line of thought or reasoning.

Quotes

"He serves a very important function. After all, somebody around here has to do the abortions." John on Art Lee, Monday, Chapter One, Page 23

"Morality must keep up with technology, because if a person is faced with the choice of being moral and dead or immoral and alive, they'll choose life every time." Art Lee, Monday, Chapter One, Page 31

"I tried to keep my face blank. Fortunately you have a lot of practice at that in medicine; you are trained to show no surprise if a patient tells you they make love ten times a night, or have dreams of stabbing their children, or drink a gallon of vodka daily. It's is part of the mystique of the doctor that nothing surprises him." Monday, Chapter Four, Page 51

"He also attempted to locate the source of the hemorrhage but he could not, so he gave her oxytocin to clamp down the uterus and slow the bleeding, and packed the vagina as a temporary measure. Then he found out who the girl was from the mother and shit in his pants." Lewis Carr's explanation of what happened to Karen Randall, Monday, Chapter Eight, Page 87

"I had wanted the chart on Karen, but Randall's secretary said she didn't have it. J.D. had it, and J.D. was in surgery now. That had surprised me. I had thought he would have taken the day off, considering. But apparently it had not entered his mind." Monday, Chapter Eight, Page 95

"I wanted to tell him if he's asked Mrs. Randall about Karen's hypersensitivity, and she'd said the girl was O.K., that Whiting would have been free and clear. The girl would still have died, of course, but Whiting would be clear. His mistake was not killing Karen Randall; it was not asking permission first." Monday, Chapter Nine, Page 101

"'J.D. Randall,' Conway said, 'is the arch-prick of the universe. He has money and power and prestige. He can have whatever he wants - even a little Chinaman's head.'" Monday, Chapter Ten, Page 106

"It has a peculiarly repressed atmosphere for a college town; you can almost smell irritation and frustration in the air, the heavy combined frustration of 2,200 pretty girls consigned to the wilderness for four years, and the combine irritation of the natives who



are forced to put up with them for that time." John's impression of Northampton, Tuesday, Chapter One, Page 143

"As a pathologist, I was flattered to have received an invitation. I couldn't do anything for Morris; pathologists deal with corpses and corpses don't need referrals." Tuesday, Chapter 9, Page 208

"It is a historical truth that a man may do the wrong thing for the right reasons. In that case, he loses. Or he may do the right thing for the wrong reasons. In that case, he is a hero." Tuesday, Chapter 9, Page 212

"She was not a nice child. Not at all. She was a mean, lying, unpleasant little child with severe neuroses. Bordering on psychosis, if you ask me." Fritz Werner describing Karen, Wednesday, Chapter Five, Page 266

"It's going to take a lot of work because it will have to be good. Because that jury's going to see an uppity Negro defending a Chinese abortionist, and they won't like it." George Wilson explaining his defense strategy, Wednesday, Chapter Six, Page 278

"The trouble with you, Berry, is that you're like all doctors. You can't believe that one of your own is rotten. What you'd really like to see is an ex-army medical orderly or a nurse on trial. Or a nice little old midwife." George Wilson, Wednesday, Chapter Nine, Page 309

Topics for Discussion

How does John Berry come to be involved with Art Lee's abortions? Who else is involved? How does their involvement later impact their judgment regarding how to prove Art's innocence?

What kind of person was Karen Randall?

What is it about Karen Randall's family that makes it more difficult for John Berry to try to find out what really happened to her?

What are Art's arguments for abortion?

Who is Ev Randall? William Randall? Peter Randall? J.D. Randall? Norton Hammond? Roger Whiting? George Bradford?

Who is Angela Harding? Roman Jones? Alan Zenner? Ginnie? Bubbles?

Describe the relationship between Leland Weston and Angela Harding. Between Ev Randall and Peter Randall. Between Peter Randall and J.D. Randall.

What do you think was the motivation J.D. Randall had for helping Peter Randall destroy his car that had Karen's blood in the seat?

What does John eventually discover really happened to Karen Randall?