

Chasing the Dime: A Novel Study Guide

Chasing the Dime: A Novel by Michael Connelly

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Plot Summary

Chasing the Dime by Michael Connelly is a novel that deals with the basics of humanity. It encompasses our greatest potentials to succeed and better ourselves as a species, and deals with the greed and temptation that we all face at one time or another. It touches on our frailties and shows us our weaknesses while allowing us to observe our ability to overcome evil and achieve greatness. This is a novel that begins with a man who wants to make the world a better place. Henry Pierce is a chemist who seeks to understand what makes us work on the smallest of levels. On the way to his dream, he is almost derailed by his best friend Cody Zeller in an act of greed and self interest when Cody sets an elaborate trap to lure Henry into taking the fall for the death of a young woman who sold herself via an online site.

Cody bills himself as a white hat hacker or a man who hacks into secure sites so that another company can sell security to them, paying Cody a handsome percentage for each successful invasion. Cody sets up the security for Amedeo Technologies which is the company his friend Henry established as a nod to Amedeo Avogadro - the first man to recognize the difference between molecules and atoms. Henry is big on symbolism. His favorite movie and his favorite book serve as guides as he labors to create the vehicle that will drive science and medicine into the future. Henry loves the book "Horton Hears A Who" because it tells a story of a character who believed in the existence of a world smaller than all those around them could imagine, for which he was ridiculed and isolated from the rest at first. It all changes for Horton when the truth is revealed and he is vindicated. Henry is that Horton. He has created a formula he calls Proteus after the movie Fantastic Voyage aired in 1966. The formula is a "power supply system that would one day patrol the bloodstream of human beings and destroy pathogens threatening their hosts." Before he can file patents for his formula, Cody makes a deal with big pharmaceuticals who don't want Proteus to see the light of day. Then he sets out to use his best friend's weakness against him. Cody arranges for Henry's new phone number to be posted on the site of a prostitute who worked through a site called LA Darlings, which is a site Cody set up. The telephone number is given to a girl he murdered named Lilly, and her disappearance hits a chord with Henry that he can't ignore. It reminds him too much of his sister Isabella who died living on the streets at the hands of the man dubbed the 'Dollmaker' years earlier. Cody knew this was a weakness in his friend, and sets out to exploit it, even arranging for the dead girls' body to be placed in a freezer in a U Store It locker under Henry's name.

Henry is under investigation, and the threat of arrest is enough to derail his attempts to secure financial partnerships for Amedeo, but he doesn't panic. Instead he asks himself who stands to gain, and who knows enough to set him up to this degree? The answers and his solutions are surprising and ingenious as Henry saves himself and redeems his name in a fast-paced mysterious thriller.



Chapters 1 - 3

Chapters 1 - 3 Summary

Chasing the Dime by Michael Connelly is a novel that deals with the basics of humanity. It encompasses our greatest potentials to succeed and better ourselves as a species, and deals with the greed and temptation that we all face at one time or another. It touches on our frailties and shows us our weaknesses while allowing us to observe our ability to overcome evil and achieve greatness. This is a novel that begins with a man who wants to make the world a better place. Henry Pierce is a chemist who seeks to understand what makes us work on the smallest of levels. On the way to his dream, he is almost derailed by his best friend Cody Zeller in an act of greed and self interest when Cody sets an elaborate trap to lure Henry into taking the fall for the death of a young woman who sold herself via an on line site.

Henry Pierce is sitting in his newly rented apartment with six boxes of clothing and a new phone. It rings, but the caller is looking for Lilly. Henry assures him he has the wrong number, and goes about setting it up using the instructions his assistant provided. He goes to Amedeo Technologies instead enjoying the solitude of the evening for working, and looks through his email. In quiet times, Pierce can appreciate the bragging wall in the hallway that marks the progress he made as the firm grew. He enjoys the Fortune Magazine cover which shows him at age twenty-nine, holding a molecular switch. This article had put him on the map, and for the first time, investors came to him. Though the article is barely five years old, it has been a race ever since and the pressure is always on to take the next step. Henry takes the elevator downstairs and goes through the mantrap into the lab where the walls are primarily decorated in prints from Dr. Suess. Immunologist Larraby Grooms is still working, and a loud banging startles him. He turns to find Clyde headed his way through the mantrap. Henry chastises him for the noise level, and reminds him that had he been running an experiment, his actions would have ruined it. He apologizes but it is clear that Clyde has come back into Amedeo specifically to talk to Henry. As the head of security, he grills Henry on the circumstances surrounding his split with Nikki. Henry assures him that they have nothing to fear from her.

Chapters 1 - 3 Analysis

Henry and Nikki final call it quits and he moves out, taking only his clothes. The new phone set up by his assistant Monica has only been plugged in for a moment before it begins ringing, all the calls for a girl named Lilly. Cody calls and offers to take him out to forget about Nikki, but Henry would rather work. He goes in to find Nikki's final email wishing him luck and referring to him by her old pet name for him, Hewlett. He wonders for a brief moment if it is her way of expressing regret or a change of heart. He saves the email, keeping it with the rest - a chronicle of his inability to make things work with



her. Someday, he thought he might print out the entire set of emails and read them like a novel, likely titling it 'Chasing the Dime.'

Henry is preparing his presentation of 'Proteus' for Maurice Goddard or God as Charlie would call him. A great deal was riding on the New York ET investor's first look and they are hoping he will be the whale the firm needs. The following Monday, they will file for patent protection. These days, a great deal of fuss is made chasing whales or investors to finance the next leap forward in technological advancement. Amedeo Technologies is no exception.

Clyde Vernon tracks Henry down and confronts him about Nikki, wanting to know the conditions surrounding their separation. Specifically, he wants to know if Nikki is a threat, and how much insider information she knows. As head of security, it is his job to take risk assessments seriously, and after twenty-five years with the FBI, Clyde is full of indignation that he has not already been made aware of all of the intimate details of their separation. Henry tries to put his mind at ease, telling him that Nikki has no immediate financial concerns, had signed a non-disclosure agreement, and knew none of the intimate details surrounding Proteus. When he finally leaves, Henry realizes that though now he is finally free to spend all night in the lab without consequence if he desired, he is uninspired to work. He wonders if Nikki would see it as a sign of growth.



Chapters 4 - 6

Chapters 4 - 6 Summary

Pierce goes back to his office. Unable to concentrate on work, he considers calling Cody to tell him he has reconsidered, but in the end, he just checks his messages instead. Another call for Lilly is there, and this time, he returns the call telling the man on the other end that he handles Lilly's business. A few inquiries later, he knows that Lilly advertises on a site called L.A. Darlings. He tells the man that Lilly is very busy and if he doesn't hear from her in half an hour, it will not happen. Next, he boots up his computer and checks the L.A. Darlings site. After some searching, he finds the Lilly who's number matches his new phone. She refers to a girlfriend she works with named Robin, and Henry jots down her number as well. He calls Robin and asks her about Lilly, but she immediately becomes defensive. In fact, the more he probes, the more unnerved Robin gets. Finally, she hangs up on him and he wonders what happened to Lilly. Part of him knows he should change the number and move on, but another part of him has other ideas.

He dreams he is a young boy, and his step father has him going into a squat in Hollywood looking for Isabella. The houseman returns and calls Hank to him. He wakes at dawn, running from the houseman who's face he can't remember. He showers, using a t shirt to dry off, having forgotten to buy towels. Then he goes to the Hollywood address listed for L.A. Darlings. The business is just opening. When the girl who runs the front end gets set up, he describes the problem he has with Lilly's number, and the fact that the number changes have already been sent out. As a result, he hopes to find Lilly and have her correct the issue. Wendy looks her up and then goes behind the partition for a minute to look up her file. While she is gone, Henry scans the surfaces for her password, presuming it is written down somewhere. He lifts the blotter, but there is only a dollar bill there. He hears her returning just as he realizes that the dollar bill is the password. He replaces it quickly with one of his own. She tells him that Lilly has not paid her bill and owes from September forward. She is sure that Mr. Wentz would want to keep her anyway because of how she looks, and how high her rating is which Pierce correctly guesses is tied to how many hits her site gets. Henry asks Wendy if there is someone around who can just take the site down, and when she is less than cooperative, he even threatens her with a lawsuit. Angry, she goes into the back room, leaving Lilly's file on her desk. He reads her last name and address three times to commit it to memory just as she is returning with someone else.

Chapters 4 - 6 Analysis

Henry turns the office lights on by hand despite the voice activated software installed. It was a gimmick largely to impress the perspective investors. He remembers how he started his business - in a warehouse near LAX with no employees and tests run between landings and takeoffs. He knows he should be working, given that he has the



time now and no one waiting at home impatiently, but for some reason he can't concentrate. Instead, he tries to track down Lilly. He manages to find out enough about her that he is able to reach a girl she claims to work with on occasion. Robin is so reluctant to discuss Lilly with him that it only piques his curiosity further. He decides to give himself the weekend to try to sort things out before resorting to changing the number.

In his new apartment, he dreams about himself as a boy. He is looking for Isabella in a Hollywood squat at the insistence of his step father. The dream is one that has significance for him. When he wakes, instead of going to work as would be his normal routine, he continues to try to track down Lilly by going to the address listed by the web site she advertises on. By using techniques that alternate between nice and nasty, he manages to get the home address Lilly lists on her file, and the password used by the girl who runs the desk. He also learns that she is behind on her monthly fees and that Mr. Wentz is in charge of the site she advertises on. He also learns Lilly's last name is Quinlan. As yet, Henry is not sure how that information will help him locate Lilly.



Chapters 7 - 9

Chapters 7 - 9 Summary

Henry writes down Lilly's address and discovers that it is a mail retrieval site, and plays a similar game to get information from them, learning Lilly hasn't paid her most recent bill there either. He hurries back to his apartment to let Monica in who has agreed to wait there for a delivery of furniture for him. He lets her in and asks her if she will call Lilly's mail drop and ask for Curt. She doesn't want to do it until he explains why. He wants to leave the phone plugged in because security has to call upstairs to let the furniture people in, and Monica offers to answer as Lilly to glean more information for him until he explains who she is. Then it is quite plain that Monica feels like he should put at least as much effort into trying to repair things with Nikki.

He drives to Lilly's address, rings her doorbell and tries the door to find it unlocked. He walks around her home, and in the bedroom recognizes a perfume on her table top that Nikki uses. He smells it and puts it back. He realizes that this is not the address she uses for work. It isn't the townhouse on her site. Henry looks through the mail on the floor and pockets a Visa bill and a bank statement. He finds a note to Lilly from her mother, and calls her to learn that her calls to the police had no effect so she hired a private investigator.

Charlie Condon checks up with Henry at work, wanting to be sure that he is ready for the Thursday meeting with Maurice Goddard. They are hoping he will commit to six million a year for three or four years. Charlie asks if things are okay, and if Henry is getting a new number on Monday, which Henry assures him he is. After Charlie leaves, Henry looks over Lilly's banking information, and then shreds the mail he removed from her house, and hides her phone book. He still did not want to work. Instead he called Mrs. Quinlan's private investigator, Philip Glass and leaves a message. He call Monica and learns that his furniture has just arrived, and tells her she can leave when they are done.

Chapters 7 - 9 Analysis

Henry is hoping that Monica can wrangle Lilly's home address out of the mail drop, but Monica is reluctant to play along. She can't understand why he is insisting on involving himself with the whole situation instead of just calling the police, but finally agrees if it means that she will keep her job. He tells her that her job is in no way tied to her employment. She does it reluctantly. When Monica discovers what Lilly's occupation is, she is even more confused by Henry's behavior. He knows that she and Nikki are friends, and asks her not to mention it to Nikki after promising that he will give up his investigations into Lilly as soon as he checks out the address Monica just got for him. He thinks about her comment regarding the line between private investigation and private obsession that Monica threw out at him.



Henry goes to Lilly's address, trying to trade the past for the present while knowing that isn't possible. He learns as much as he can, confirming that she's been gone for a month or better by looking through her things, and takes some mail away with him to investigate further. Back in the office, memories of his own childhood bleed through, and he can see his mother waiting to hear from Isabella. Lilly's mother is grateful that anyone cares enough to look for her.

Charlie shows up to check on Henry, and it takes little conversation for Henry to realize that he has been talking to Monica. He promises to review the upcoming patents and guarantees that the presentation will be ready for Goddard. He also assures Charlie that he is okay with the whole situation surrounding Nikki, and reassured, Charlie leaves. Still, Henry doesn't work even though he knows he should. He cannot get the whole situation with Lilly out of his mind. When he calls Monica to check on his furniture, she is frustrated with the amount of calls that have come in for Nikki throughout the day. Henry has a feeling that wherever she is, she is in no position to spend the money that would have come from all of the calls.



Chapters 10 - 12

Chapters 10 - 12 Summary

Henry drives to Cody's home in Malibu and asks him to do a private all out search for Wentz, his company Entrepreneurial Concepts Unlimited and Lilly but doesn't reveal his reasons why. Cody is a self employed white hat hacker who didn't return to college after being caught hacking and suspended. Now, he is given targets to breach by an online security firm who afterward approaches the company with a contract to secure their services on line. His walls are filled with the logos of companies he has managed to breach, and the newest edition that Henry notices is the Coca-Cola logo. Cody laughs when he relates how unnerved the CEO was to get their super secret recipe emailed to him. For each contract the security company lands, Cody gets a nice bonus. It's a great way for a college dropout to make a living.

He goes back to his apartment and sends Monica home after giving her a brief overview of what their company to impress on her the need for discretion as his assistant. She isn't happy about being asked to do personal things for him. He tries to win her over by explaining their goals, and his need for secrecy both within the firm and outside it. She claims to understand what he is saying, but he can tell all she wants is to do is leave. He can already tell that she is not the assistant for him and resolves to replace her. Then he calls Lilly's landlord James Wainright but doesn't get as much information as he'd like. His next call is to Robin to set up a 'date.'

He calls her from the phone booth as arranged, and she approves of him, telling him how to get to her apartment. When he gets inside, she cautiously asks for the four hundred dollars an hour will cost him, and he tells her he is looking for information and not sex. She tries to throw him out, but after a threat involving police, he manages to get limited but angry cooperation from her. With forty minutes left of his hour and an extra two hundred and thirty dollars, he convinces her to take him to the place that Lilly worked out of.

Chapters 10 - 12 Analysis

Henry drives to his college friend Cody and asks him for help electronically searching for information regarding Lilly and her handler Wentz. Cody pries, asking him if he's stuck himself somewhere he should not but Henry waltzes around any real explanation of the reasons for his search. Cody is curious about the search, and the fact that it is being done by Henry privately instead of by his company. He keeps asking Henry if he is in trouble, but Henry insists he is fine, all the while asserting his need for the information at Cody's soonest opportunity. The link to prostitutes leaves Cody with many questions, but his line of work is all about discretion and he does not ask again.



Henry goes home to his new apartment and lectures a defiant Monica on the ethics of privacy when working as a 'personal' assistant for him. She turns his arguments back on himself and her defiance and obvious stubborn refusal to demure to his wishes tell him that she is not the assistant for him. When things cool down, he would have her replaced and sent back to the general pool. She leaves and he remains angry with her.

Henry sets up a date with Robin and for her hourly rate plus another two hundred and thirty, he manages to learn that Robin hadn't seen Lilly since she stood her up with a client one night. They both worked for Billy Wentz who is nicknamed Wince because he liked to hurt people and Lilly had a work place in Venice, off Speedway. Robin is not happy about giving him any information, obviously fearful after Lilly dropped out of touch without warning.



Chapter 13 - 15

Chapter 13 - 15 Summary

Robin directs Henry to Lilly's work address. He asks her about Wentz but she clams up, claiming that if she talks she will end up dead like Lilly. A Volvo wagon is in the parking space. Robin gets out of his BMW and walks away, telling him she is done and will take a cab. He lets her go. Henry sees that someone is in the apartment, so he knocks on the door, startling the man inside who is packing up her things. In moments, Henry establishes that he is dealing with Wainright and that Wendt owns both of Lilly's places. He tells Wainright that he is going to look around, and he begins poking around the already packed boxes. He does not find anything worthy of calling discovery until he goes up to the loft. There is the smell of incense, and something else that he can't place. He sees the bed without pillows, and the spread tucked carefully around it. There are no sheets and operating on instinct, he pulls the spread off just as Wainright is coming into the room. They both see the large blood stain at the same time, and Henry tells him to go and get his phone.

Detective Renner leaves Henry sitting for two hours. He had given his statement twice, and when Renner begins to rehash it all from the beginning again, Henry allows frustration to show. Renner assures him that all he wants is to get to the truth. Henry asks if the blood on the mattress is Lilly's and Renner asks him how he knows it is blood. He asks if he is a suspect, and is told he is not under arrest. He rants about being held for so long, and Renner calmly rehashes every half truth and shaded reality that Henry gave in his statements, picking at the threads of them until Henry is going in circles. Slowly, Renner begins to pull more and more truth from him, and there is less opportunity for evasion. He asks Henry about the house on Altair, and whether or not he'd been there, and thinking about the things he touched, he has to confess he has. In his statements, he had said that he had not gone in, but asked specifically, he sees how evading the truth here will come back to bite him, so he admits that the door was unlocked. Renner asks if he took anything and Pierce tells him that he did not. He asks Henry what he touched, and Henry admits the roll top desk, the drawers and some mail. Every time it looks as though he might be able to leave soon, Renner changes his plan of attack and unravels another half truth. The note from Vivian comes up and unable to back out of it once he'd spoken, he claims it was a note he had written himself. This is more news for Renner who until now didn't know about Vivian either. The questioning continues.

Finally, Henry has to tell him about Robin to get out of the lie about the mail from Vivian and having taken it, and Renner has yet another name to question him about. It does not look good for Henry at all. Just when Henry thinks he has covered everything, Renner asks him about his arrest in college for hacking which led to community service working in blood analysis for the police. Then he asks about Isabella, and the wind is taken out of Henry's sails entirely. When he is finally nearing completion, he asks Henry to submit to a lie detector test. Henry can hardly refuse, and is told it will be set up the



following evening. All Henry wants to do is leave, and warn Robin that the police will be in touch and coach them as to what he told them. Her telephone number is in his car which still sits at Lilly's working apartment, and Henry knows it will take too long to get there. After he is released, he jogs towards Malibu and his car.

Chapter 13 - 15 Analysis

Robin won't go anywhere near Lilly's actual work house, especially when she sees a vehicle parked in Lilly's space. Henry goes to the apartment alone and find Wainright packing Lilly's thing. He tries to brush Henry off, but Henry is determined to look around and does, finding evidence that makes it appear as though Lilly was likely murdered. He has Wainright to call the police. He does, which begins a two hour long grilling session. Detective Norman Renner questions Henry so extensively that Henry feel as if she is being singled out. Renner admits that he is methodical, and that if Henry has lied to him, he will find out because he is very good at his job. In fact, he is so good that in a matter of just a couple of hours, while Henry is kept waiting, Renner manages to uncover his prior record for hacking; his subsequent community service work at the blood lab for the police; Isabella's murder; Henry's step father using him as a child to search the Hollywood squats; and he also unravels a number of Henry's half truths in the interrogation that follows. It isn't pretty, and Henry is so obviously an amateur.

Henry winds up admitting that he has been to and inside Lilly's residence; that he knows Robin, that he has spoken to Vivian Quinlan and had her permission to poke around, and that most of his half truths come back to bite him. All Henry wants to do is go home. He keeps asking if they are done now, and every time it looks as though Renner is ready to wind it up, he changes tactics, and comes at Henry from yet another angle forcing him to reveal something else. Henry is beginning to regret having called the police at all. He definitely wants to get out and warn Robin as to the extend of how he involved her before the police have a chance to call her. The fact that Renner wants to conduct a polygraph the following morning is another blow, but he tries not to show it.

When asked about Isabella, Renner accuses him of having a hero complex, and asks him point blank if he is trying to make up for her death with his impromptu investigation into the apparent disappearance of Lilly. Henry should have admitted this truth above all. It might have given the police an explanation that would explain his bizarre behavior regarding a woman who is a known prostitute that he didn't know before getting her phone number. Instead, he denies it, and when he is released pending the morning lie detector test, he jogs towards his car.



Chapters 16 and 17

Chapters 16 and 17 Summary

When Henry gets to his car, he notices that the ceiling light is off, thinking it must be burnt out. He taps the three stage button two times, and it comes on. The only conclusion he can draw is that someone has been in his car. A quick check reveals nothing is missing, and Henry logically concludes it has been searched, not broken into. He understands with sudden clarity why Renner hadn't offered him a lift back to his car. As he is leaving, he sees them bringing Lilly's mattress out, wrapped in plastic to preserve any evidence and sees Renner looking at him. Ten minutes later, he is back at his apartment, and calling Robin to warn her. He gets her machine and begins to leave a message but is cut off before he can finish explaining. He calls back and Robin answers, sounding as though she'd been asleep. He explains the extent of how he involved her and warns her, telling her about the blood on the mattress and suggesting she get away from Billy Wentz. She admits her real name is Lucy LaPorte and extends an offer to help her when and if she is ready to leave the business behind after she admits that the amount of money she makes would be hard to come by if she quit. She thanks him and assures him she'll handle the police. He listens to his messages, including one from Robin/Lucy apologizing for leaving him at Lilly's and one from Charlie asking how work went. Then he calls Nicole, wanting to tell her he'd learned a lot in the last two days and that he wasn't going to chase the dime anymore. Nicole answers and he asks if he can come over, but she refuses, reminding him he'd promised not to do this. He finally hangs up, embarrassed.

He wakes hungry and without access to cash after his meeting with Robin. He goes to work, determined to get back on track. He goes over the patent applications and is reminded of the stories of both Horton Hears a Who and The Fantastic Voyage, both favorite analogies to the work they are doing in an effort to create a natural power supply compatible with the body's own immune system that would make nanotechnology applications possible for encountering, identifying and eliminating a variety of pathogens plaguing people today. It was exciting and ground breaking work. He finishes the review, and is headed to the lab when his private line rings. Philip Glass is returning his call and reluctantly agrees to meet him at Cathode Ray's.

Chapters 16 and 17 Analysis

At Lilly's apartment, the area is still filled with police officers, including Renner who must have driven right by Henry as he jogged back to his car. When he realizes that Renner returned without offering him a lift so that he would have an opportunity to search his car, Henry is angry but doesn't think there is anything that Renner could have found that would get him in any deeper than he already was. After he gets home, he calls Robin to warn her, and begins leaving a message on her machine, but runs out of time. When he calls back, she answers. He apologizes both for waking her and for dragging her into



the whole mess, but she is also apologetic, telling him she felt bad for leaving him at Lilly's apartment. The truth was that she was worried about her friend. Henry tells her about the bloody mattress, and tries to tell her it is time to leave the business, but she cries, admitting she can't make this kind of money working somewhere like McDonalds. He tells her that when she is ready to make a change, she should call him, and he'll do what he can to help her. She appreciates his generosity, and even tells him her real name. He checks his messages, and impulsively calls Nicole. He wants to tell her that the events of the last two days have had a profound affect on him. He wants her to know that he has a new appreciation for life, and that he has taken his head out of the sand. Her response is less than enthusiastic. She isn't happy that he woke her, or that he called at all, and she certainly does not want him to visit her. In fact, if he wants to talk at all, he can call her the following morning. His face is burning by the time she hangs up and ashamed he even dialed her number, he resolves that he will not do that again.

He goes into work the next morning, hungry and without funds. His bank card was used to it's limit with Robin and rather than get groceries on his credit card, he goes to work and raids the change jar for vending machine money and gets to work on the patent applications waiting for his approval. It is groundbreaking work and before too long, his excitement is regenerated to the degree that he is ready to return to the lab to get some real work done. When the phone rings, he thinks it might be Cody, but instead finds Philip Glass returning his call. He agrees to meet with Henry away from their offices, but he sounds nervous and afraid, telling Henry that if he gets any indication that this is a set up, he will not even see him. It makes Henry wonder what is going on.



Chapters 18 - 20

Chapters 18 - 20 Summary

Cathode Ray's is a tech hangout, and most patrons are busy on laptops or other internet devices. Henry meets with Glass who warns him about getting too close to Billy Wentz. He is adamant that Henry is in over his head. He tells Henry that the internet sex trade is worth ten billion dollars a year and is the only business that is significantly profitable on the web. With that kind of money involved, anything can happen, and Wentz is deeply involved. He sells franchises for \$50,000.00 each and there are now New York, Seattle, Miami, Vegas and even Denver 'Darlings' sites. Henry has no doubt that Glass is afraid.

With his motivation stunted, Henry uses his credit card to get groceries. He has to make several trips to get it all upstairs and on his second trip back up, two men join him in the elevator. Henry is allowed to get on first, and by the time they get to the twelfth floor, he is nervous. He tries to go back down to the lobby, but one of the men tells him to get off. He refers to the other man as 'Six-Eight.' The smaller man is obviously in charge. They take his keys and go into his apartment, scroll through his caller ID on the phone and recognize both Glass and Robin's numbers. Six-Eight hits him without warning so hard that he cannot hear. Then he grabs Henry and takes him out onto the balcony, dangling him over the railing upside down. Six-Eight hoists him high enough so that he is face to face with the smaller man. He gives Henry an ultimatum that Henry immediately understands. He tells them that he is done. They warn him that if they catch him snooping around again, they will drop him. After they bring him back into the apartment, Henry asks them what they will do to Robin, insisting that he had used her and she was innocent. The smaller man kick him so hard that he knew at least two ribs are broken. After they leave, Henry uses a t-shirt to blot most of the blood off his face. He grabs his phone, intending to call Robin and warn her, but the phone is dead, and the caller ID has been erased. He calls Nikki in desperation, and telling her it is a matter of life and death, he gets her to look up Robin's number on the LA Darling's site. He calls Robin but gets her machine. He leaves her a message explaining what happened and telling her to run, and after he hangs up, the phone rings. Nikki is calling back, concerned for him, but he is hardly able to talk and then loses consciousness.

Chapters 18 - 20 Analysis

Henry is warned by Glass in no uncertain terms. Glass is obviously frightened, and his paranoia is obvious as he monitors the other patrons around him. He tells Henry that he has no idea as to what he is involved in. Henry hears him, and decides after their meeting to go grocery shopping. As he is bringing his second load upstairs, he is met by Wentz and one of his men that he refers to only as Six-Eight. It occurs to Henry that the name is likely a reference to his size. They force him into his apartment, and Wentz looks through his caller ID to see what he's been up to. He does not like what he finds.



They beat him, busting up his face and breaking two ribs while they deliver the message that they want him to butt out. In fact, they make it very clear that if he doesn't butt out, they will drop him head first off the balcony. Despite the obvious danger to himself, Henry fears for Robin's safety. He asks Wentz what he plans to do with her, and Wentz actually considers his options carefully. On one hand, Robin is a good earner, but if she involves herself in matters that are none of his business, he will be forced to take action. Henry knows that means he will eliminate her just as he is sure was done with Lilly. Henry still has the presence of mind to forcefully insist that they leave her alone. It was probably a mistake, because now Wentz is even more angry. Henry begs them to leave her alone, saying he coerced her into helping him.

After they leave, Henry tries to mop the blood from his face. Then he calls Nikki, asking her for help. Nikki is defensive and reluctant to help him, but his demeanor and tone assures her that what he wants is a matter of life and death. He gets her to look up Robin's number on the LA Darling's site, and hangs up on her, promising to call her back. He calls Robin, leaving a warning message on her answering machine and describing what happened to him. When he hangs up, Nikki calls back, concerned now. She can't understand Henry on the phone. His face is swelling and his speech is slurred. After quoting a line from Jimmy Hendrix, he loses consciousness and is grateful for the coming darkness.



Chapters 21 - 23

Chapters 21 - 23 Summary

When Henry regains consciousness, paramedics are working on him and Nicole is there. They give him a shot, and he goes in and out of awareness as they take him down the elevator and put him in an ambulance. He manages to convey that Nikki should call Robin and get her out of her apartment. Nicole tells her the police want to talk to him. Apparently multiple calls had been made when he had been dangled from the balcony by people on the beach below. Remembering what Wentz told him, he keeps repeating he doesn't remember. It isn't a hard sell. He has a concussion, broken nose, broken ribs, and scalp lacerations. Still, it is good to see Nikki.

The next time he wakes up, Detective Renner is there. He reads him his rights and begins by asking him questions about the assault. Henry tells him he doesn't remember, but Renner is persistent. Henry asks about Lilly and Robin, but Renner tells him they are still looking for both women. Henry asks him to turn off the recorder and then tells him the truth about Robin, and adds that he thinks she is in danger from Wentz. Renner listens to it all before asking him what he did with Lilly's body. Henry realizes he is the prime suspect, and when the conversation is over, he sees with terrible clarity that his whole life may be as well. Monica arrives mid interview, takes one look at Henry and tells the detective she will come back later. Finally, knowing that Renner isn't listening to him anyway, he asks for a lawyer, and Renner promises him it is only a matter of time.

After Renner leaves, Henry sits and thinks about the predicament he is in. He finds a phone on the right railing of his bed, and a small plastic mirror. He looks over his face carefully, and smiles, mostly because he is still alive. Then he calls Jacob Kaz and asks him to recommend a good criminal lawyer. Professional as always, Kaz gives him a name.

Chapters 21 - 23 Analysis

It takes Henry a few minutes to realize where he is. Voices he does not recognize are speaking, but not to him. He sees that Nicole is there, and the sight of her makes him smile although it hurts. In an out, he wakes again in the elevator, and then again in the ambulance. He tries talking but the mask makes it difficult. He manages to communicate how important it is to keep trying Robin to warn her and Nikki does. He is certain that is where Wentz and the refrigerator he had with him were headed next. Nicole asks him what happened, but he pretends not to remember. She wants to know why he called her in the middle of the night, and he tries to tell her that he had a revelation, and finally understood her side of things. He wants her to know he is a changed man, but one look at his face and she is less than impressed.



Detective Renner is there the next time he wakes, and reads him his rights - to protect the integrity of the investigation he says. He starts a tape recorder, and asks Henry what happened, but Henry clearly remembers the warning Wentz gave him, and keeps repeating that he does not remember. He asks Renner about Lilly and Robin, but Renner tells him they have little to go on. Henry decides to fill him in but not on tape so Renner makes a show of turning it off, but he does not. He puts it back in his pocket and turns it back on while Henry tells him Robin's real name and how he came to meet her. He admits to paying her, but tells Renner no sex was involved. Renner keeps a neutral expression until Henry is done, and then asks him what he did with the bodies. It is obvious to Henry then that he is the only suspect, and that Renner is convinced he is guilty. Monica arrives in the middle of the interview, and her expression clearly mirrors her opinion when she tells him she'll be back later. Understanding dawns on Henry as he sees his life going down the toilet. If word of all of this gets out, his company will never secure the financing they need and he may as well throw in the towel. He tells Renner he wants a lawyer which does not surprise the detective.

Once he leaves, Henry has a chance to see his face for the first time, and surprisingly, it isn't as bad as he thought it would be. Still, one eye is bloodied, his face is full of stitches and one eyebrow is shaved. He calls Jacob Kaz who remains professional when Henry asks him for a criminal lawyer who does not want to be in the media and Jacob says he knows a woman who fits the bill.



Chapters 24 - 25

Chapters 24 - 25 Summary

Pierce is on the phone with Charlie when Janis Langwiser arrives. He tells Condon that he has to go, but insists that Charlie try to push the meeting with Maurice back a few days at least. Charlie assures him that he'll try, but reminds him that Maurice is not the type to be put off or delayed. He hangs up and Janis introduces herself. After inquiring about his health, she asks him why he believes he needs a criminal attorney. When Henry is sure that they have a professional relationship, he tells her all of it. She asks what medications Henry was on while Renner interrogated him, and takes notes that include everything from Robin to Isabella and how his admission of guilt stemmed from his feelings about his sister, not Robin. When he finishes, and Janis has asked all the questions she can think of, she tells Henry that she doesn't believe that Renner has a case and that he is likely just bluffing. She warns him to be quiet and calls Renner, advising him that Henry now has council and warning him that if this ever goes to trial, she'll be sure to tell the jury about the two tape recorders. Then she tells Henry that without a body, it is unlikely that he has anything to worry about, and wants to know if finding the body will change the evidence against him. Henry assures her that it will not. She tells him to leave it all alone now, and go back to work. She will handle everything. Nicole shows up just after Janis leaves to take him home, and he asks her which home. She assure him it is his own apartment she is taking him to.

Once back in his apartment, Henry begins by cleaning the blood from his phone. He checks his messages but there are none, so he calls his line at work and waits for Monica to pick up. He asks her if she changed his number and she tells him she has, giving him the new one. Henry warns her that Detective Renner will likely call her, and all she has to do is tell the truth. He assures her she is in no trouble, and apologizes for scaring her at the hospital with his newly renovated fact and asks her to pass his new number on to Charlie. He calls Lucy again to give her the new number, and then goes down stair to get the rest of the groceries that have been in his trunk all weekend. While he is downstairs, Lucy calls him and leaves a message begging him to leave her alone. She is already black and blue from all of his 'help' and will not be able to work for weeks. He reluctantly agrees and while he is holding the phone, it rings again. This time it's Cody who tells him he used Fed Ex to send the information to his office. He asks Cody to get him an address for Lucy and goes down for the last of his groceries. A woman in the elevator recognizes him as the man who everyone is talking about and although he denies it, he knows he will have to move again.

Chapters 24 - 25 Analysis

Kaz tells Pierce that Langwiser's firm is taking him on as a means of establishing a relationship with Amedeo Technologies before they go public and Henry doesn't bother to tell Kaz that unless Janis makes this go away, there will be no public offering. He tells



Janis everything, including the history with his sister, and how they are likely related in that his feelings of guilt over not saving his sister led him to try to help Lilly and Robin. He tells her how his stepfather would dress him up as a street urchin, telling him that if he looked for Isabella himself, the street kids would run from him as an adult. At the time, Henry believed him, and now, it just didn't matter any more. He never did find her, he tells Janis, but he isn't sure if Janis believes him. She seems confident that Renner is bluffing and has no case, telling him not to worry. Nicole arrives and Henry allows himself to hope that she is taking him back to their home, but she assures him that what was wrong in their relationship won't be fixed that easily or that quickly.

Henry wonders if there is a cleaning company that he can get to clean up the blood in the apartment. He is somewhat disappointed that Monica followed through with changing his number, knowing that Lucy can't reach him. He calls Monica to double check and asks that his new number be given to Charlie, who has been asking when he is coming in, but Henry admits that he is afraid he'll scare people with the way he looks. When Lucy calls him, he feels guilty for the trouble he's caused her, and reluctantly decides to leave her alone before he gets her killed, but that only lasts until he hears from Cody. Cody chastises him for not having a cell phone. After telling him to put a rush on the information he wanted, he drops out of sight for three days. He reminds Henry that these days, cell phones have scramble chips that you can get, but he is one to talk about paranoia. In order to reach him from a number he does not recognize like Henry's new one, Henry has to dial his pages and then enter a 777 code to signal that he is someone in Code's acquaintance and trust already. He learns that Code has sent the information to his office. Then he asks him to dig up any information he can find on her location. When he retrieves the rest of his groceries from the trunk of his car, he learns of the extent of his notoriety in the building. He realizes that he will have to move again.



Chapters 26 - 27

Chapters 26 - 27 Summary

Henry goes to his office to pick up the FedEx package from Cody. Monica admits to having opened the parcel, but after seeing the photo of Lilly inside, she had put it back. He thanks her and returns to his office, closing the door. The report is short, and he learns nothing of significance. He calls Janis Langwiser to discover no news there either and he tells her about the call he got from Lucy. She reminds him that even Renner knows that there are two sides to every story. He is about to tell her that Cody is looking for Lucy for him when Charlie puts his head in the door and is stunned by the damage to his face. He says goodbye to Janis and Charlie apologizes for not having come to the hospital. Maurice is already in town, he tells Henry, and their meeting will be held as scheduled. Charlie reminds him that even if Maurice declines, once the patents are filed, they can go to the press with Proteus and create a stir for the annual emerging - technologies symposium in January being held in Vegas. Charlie leaves reminding him the meeting is the next morning at nine, and Henry looks over the rest of Cody's file and finds a link between Wentz, Allison and FetishCastle.net. He signs up and after finding Lilly and Lucy, and going into their photos of bondage and domination, Monica comes in and catches what is on the screen. Obviously mortified, she asks to be put back in the pool, and Henry tries to tell her she has the wrong idea about him, but at the same time can't explain his behavior, so he tells her she can do as she likes. She says she'll talk to Charlie and leaves him to look at the rest of the photos in the set.

He stays overnight at the office, unwilling to face the mess at home that waited for him, and wanting to review the data for his meeting. He uses padding from the laser lab to get a couple of hours of sleep before his meeting with Maurice and then showered and dresses in jeans and a t-shirt. By nine o'clock, he is back in the lab and the excitement was palpable. When Goddard arrives with his lawyer Justine Bechy, Henry goes up to greet them. They are all shocked by how he looks and Henry confirms it was a car accident. Maurice asks if he has been drinking, and Henry tells him he is not even driving, but Maurice insists that Henry send him a copy of the police report. Henry isn't happy, but Bechy insists that Maurice is simply protecting his investment. Charlie breaks in, telling them he is sure Henry will be happy to cooperate with any personal investigation assuring them that he is level headed and focused. He tells them he used to have a ponytail asking if that might be a problem and the tension breaks. Non disclosure forms are signed and they get into the elevator. Charlie is nervous but in the lab, Henry is in his element. He is ready to turn Goddard into a believer.

Chapters 26 - 27 Analysis

Henry is amused to find the package from Cody is labeled with the return address of Eugene Briggs who was the Stanford department head they had targeted as Doomsters so many years ago. He is less amused to find it has already been opened, despite



being marked as personal and confidential. He tries to contain himself as he asks Monica about it, but she insists after seeing Lilly's photo, she had no desire to learn any more and had simply put it on his desk. He learns little from it and calls Janis Langwiser to see if any progress had been made. She is happy to hear Lucy is around as her testimony may be required. Henry panics at the thought of court, knowing that he has to avoid that at all costs. Charlie comes in to tell him the meeting with Maurice will have to go as scheduled and Henry is worried about the way he looks but Charlie assures him that he's told Maurice that he was in a car accident and the focus will not be on him. Charlie says he doesn't have to tell Maurice anything, and why should he when he has not told his own partner. Henry sees the hurt look on Charlie's face and promises he'll tell him when the time is right. Charlie is already thinking ahead to the emerging technologies symposium held in January but with Henry's current situation, he is having trouble looking ahead at anything.

Henry goes back to the printouts and reads about William Wentz. Wentz and Grady Allison are a team with successful on line endeavors and mobster pedigrees. Allison is known as Grade A Allison for his ability to spot and recruit quality talent and Cody's note includes a warning that Henry be very careful with this 'connected' man. The last page of Cody's report lists all of the web sites that these two men are linked to. It is a staggering list. One site jumps out as being the one that Lucy told him she had met Lilly through called FetishCastle.net. He goes on line and finds the site, using his American Express for a one time, five day preview of the site for \$5.95. He was logged in quickly and looked for Lilly and Lucy, finding photos of them where Lilly is playing the dominant to Lucy in a dungeon scene. He clicks on the thumbnail and the photo takes over the screen just as Monica enters the office. When she sees the screen she tells Henry that she is not sure she wants to work directly for him anymore, asking to be transferred back to the pool. She tells him she'll arrange it with Charlie, gives him his mail and leaves. He looks at the rest of the photos in the set, and then finally gets to work.

When Goddard shows up, he and Henry have what appears to be a problem regarding Henry's accident. Goddard insists on having a copy of the police report, and since there isn't one, this is likely to be a problem. Henry tells him the accident had nothing to do with Amedeo, and he hadn't even been driving, but his lawyer insists that with the kind of money that may be invested by Goddard, he wants to be sure that his investment isn't run by a loose cannon. Charlie manages to break the tension by assuring them that Henry will be happy to cooperate with any person investigation, and that seems to soothe the waters. The nondisclosure forms are signed and they enter Henry's realm where he is confident in his science.



Chapters 28 - 30

Chapters 28 - 30 Summary

They begin by explaining that the Proteus formula will be the energy source or the platform on which all other research and invention will be built on. Proteus solves the gateway problem and Amedeo will then license it to scientists that are pursuing the invention of bloodstream devices. The analogy given is that Proteus is the engine that will take researchers wherever they want to go. The test is started and Henry turns out the lights, and dons a set of heat resonance goggles he had placed on a nearby hook earlier in anticipation of this meeting. He watches Goddard's face light up and knows at that moment that they have him. The money is theirs and even more importantly to Henry, he feels pride in his science that overcame everything else.

They run two more experiments and Goddard is happy. The presentation ends and lunch is served in the boardroom. Goddard tells Henry that he has a daughter with Down's syndrome, and he doesn't have to say anything else. He comments that no matter what he does in business, he will not be able to fix her. Goddard asks about Nicole and Charlie tells him that Nicole is no longer with them. Bechy asks about patents and Henry announces he is returning to the lab to work but Goddard stops him long enough to formally announce that they will be part of it all as well. Champagne is brought out over much cheering, and they toast the future. Henry asks Monica if she has talked to Charlie yet, and she tells him she will soon. She also tells him that Langwiser called and said it was important that she talk to him. He excuses himself as calmly as he can, and goes back to his office.

In his office, Henry sees two messages from Langwiser marked urgent and one from Cody. He returns Cody's call first and is told that Lucy can't be found. He calls Langwiser next who tells him that a source told her that Renner has gone to a judge with a search warrant, but the application was rejected due to lack of evidence. She also tells him that Renner searched Lilly's house with a warrant, gathering evidence against him. The bottom line is that Renner is convinced Henry is guilty and will stop at nothing to get him.

Chapters 28 - 30 Analysis

Henry begins by explaining how he has always been fascinated with nanotechnology and its possible application both medically and biologically. Brandon Larraby had been brought on board two years previously with an eye to that end. Based on current hot topic in all science journals, this subject is no longer the stuff of fiction, and as they go through their choreographed explanations, Henry can see Goddard's building excitement. He knows that he has him hooked now, and once they explain how limitless the possibilities are, Goddard will not be able to resist. Once Henry gives the order to begin the demonstration, he was sure Goddard was already on board, but he still uses



heat resonance goggles to watch his reaction and awe as the test is conducted for him. While everyone else gets excited, Henry feels a deep sense of pride and accomplishment. To him, this means more than Goddard's money or the fame that would likely follow.

They have lunch and relax, Goddard telling Henry about his daughter, and Henry immediately understanding that had this technology come along sooner, his daughter might have been cured of her Down's syndrome before she was born. It is a sobering thought. Goddard wants to say hi to Nikki and there is some discomfort when he discovers she is no longer with them, particularly since her position was a sensitive one in the firm. Henry assures them that Nicole had never been in the lab, or seen the work and had no idea as to the scope of their science so there was no chance she could take any of her knowledge elsewhere. Her non compete contract would keep them safe anyway. Henry is lying. In a desperate move to save a sinking relationship, he had brought Nikki into the lab on a Sunday and shown her the experiment. She had seen it all, but it still has not saved the relationship that he was never home to cultivate or nurture. Bechy changes the subject, asking about patents, and Henry is pleased to see her discomfort at how quickly things are moving. She can already see that Goddard is sold, and she is trying to catch up. The announcement by Goddard comes when Henry tries to excuse himself to return to the lab. Champagne is served and Henry makes a toast that comes from the children's book "Horton Hears A Who!". takes the opportunity to quietly thank Monica for sticking it out with him to this point, but she is still planning to talk to Charlie. The wind is taken out of his sails entirely when she tells him about the messages from Langwiser on his desk marked urgent. He excuses himself and returns to his office, leaving Charlie to close and handle paperwork. He can hardly keep from running back to his office.

He returns Cody's call first, instinctively aware that Langwiser's calls are going to be unpleasant. Cody can't find Lucy and when Henry tells him she is a girl from the site, he insists that likely isn't her real name, but Henry tells him she confided it to him in an intimate moment. Cody immediately gets the wrong idea because of her profession. Henry tries to correct him by telling him they were on the phone, and Cody's comment about phone sex is not much better. Cody asks how the presentation went, and congratulates Henry on its success, telling Henry he'll bill him. Then he calls Langwiser who is unhappy about the length of time it took him to get back to her. Renner is proceeding on the assumption that Henry is guilty. He is putting all of his effort into trying to get more evidence and search warrants to confirm a circumstantial case at the very least. Langwiser can't seem to communicate the seriousness of this news. Langwiser is not happy to discover that Henry picked up a perfume bottle in Lilly's home. It will give them his prints on an item that can't have anything to do with his search for Lilly, and makes his contact with her more personal in appearances. Langwiser is already lining up witnesses for testimony if required and Henry feels sick.



Chapters 31 - 32

Chapters 31 - 32 Summary

Charlie comes in with the first offer from Goddard who will give them twenty million over four years, but wants twelve points and to be chairman of the board. Henry tells him to go back and give Goddard the chairman's position which was mostly ceremonial, and to secure at least eighteen million over three years but without points. Henry will not give on that issue. When Charlie leaves, Henry goes back to contemplating his situation. He makes a list of key elements of his conversation with Langwiser. He realizes that his car may not have been searched by the police. On impulse, he goes down to the garage and searches the car himself. There seems to be nothing out of the ordinary. All that is left is his back pack which he takes upstairs. He searches it and finds a key card to a U Store It that doesn't belong to him. He calls several before finding one that has him on file. He tries to think of who he can call to help him, but there is no one.

He goes to the U Store in Van Nuys and presents his license to find out which number is his. The woman behind the counter will surely remember his beaten face. He gets the number, the code and is told his unit is paid for six months. He goes up to 331 and finds it padlocked as well. He goes back to his car, intending to search the back pack again for a key, but remembers Wentz handling his keys when he was accosted in his apartment. He checks the ring and all but two keys can be identified. He goes back up to the unit, unlocks it and discovers a freezer. The second key opens the padlock and inside he finds Lilly. He has only one small edge. He stumbled on the trap before it was sprung. He knows that his window of opportunity is small. He went down the hallway and found a unit that was unlocked. He unplugged the freezer and rolled it towards unit 307. Almost there, the stairwell door opens and a man steps out, asking if he needs a hand. He helps Henry push the freezer into 307, introducing himself as Frank Aiello. He looks down at the freezer, joking about it holding a body, and Pierce says it is empty but the padlock makes that seem unlikely. Henry uses kids and safety as an excuse to explain it. He waits until Aiello is gone before wiping the freezer clean of prints and locking the unit with the lock from the first one desperately needing a plan to save his life.

Chapters 31 - 32 Analysis

Charlie is excited and has had a bit more to drink than Henry usually sees with him, but his enthusiasm is understandable. Maurice is quick to put an offer on the table, and it exceeds the amount they were asking for. Charlie is almost ready to sign, but Henry isn't willing to part with the points that Maurice wants. When Proteus gets the kind of attention he believes it will, the twelve points Maurice is asking for will be worth millions. Charlie already holds 10% of the company while 8% had been chipped out to prior investors and 10% went into employee compensation. That leaves Henry with a controlling interest of 72%, and Henry is only willing to part with 10% for Maurice. While



Charlie leaves to sell Maurice on the deal, Henry goes over his conversation with Langwiser. He tries to think like a scientist, but is understandably rattled. It takes two goes at it, but finally the search warrant issue reminds him of the car search and he begins to wonder if perhaps the police hadn't been in his car at all. In fact, the more he thinks about it, the more convinced he is. When he finds the key card to the U Store It, he had a sense of foreboding and dread.

He knew he had to act, so he called various U Store Its and found one with his name registered. The lock that held it closed fits to one of the two new keys on his ring, and the second key fit the freezer with Lilly's body in it. He tries not to panic. His idea to move it to another unit is pure genius as far as spur of the moment panic decisions goes, but when Frank Aiello steps out of the stairs and offers to help him, Henry is shaking inside. Frank even comments on the freezer's size and how it was big enough to hold a body and Henry tries to laugh it off with him but it sounds false to his ears. Frank even notices the padlock, but Henry has a quick answer for that too. He doesn't want kids to get caught inside, he tells him. Frank seems satisfied with that answer, but after he leaves, Henry is consumed by guilt. He knows he is still a long ways from safe and moving the freezer would only buy him a little bit of time at best. He needed a real plan, and he needed it fast, before this situation swallows his life.



Chapters 33 - 35

Chapters 33 - 35 Summary

When Henry gets home, he unravels the whole thing. The conclusion is almost more unnerving than the murder of Lilly, and the fact that they are pinning it on him. To conclude that he was actually targeted would mean that whoever did it knew his history and how he would react. That narrowed the field considerably. Why? He asked himself who stood to gain and only Nicole could have done this to him. She has sold him out. She wanted Proteus. He calls Kaz right away and asks him if the package is ready for the patent office. Henry tells him there is a change of plans. He wants Kaz to leave tonight and have the patent filed by tomorrow morning. Kaz asks if there is a problem, and Henry says yes, but won't clarify. He just insists that Kaz go immediately and tell no one but his wife he is going. Henry has no idea who he can trust anymore. He calls Charlie next, and gets the particulars of the deal. They congratulate each other. The contracts will be ready at the end of the week. Then he checks to make sure he has the key for the Amalfi house. He is going to confront Nicole.

He finds Nicole at home but when he confronts her, but she looks confused first and then starts to cry. He asks her why she set him up and which one of them killed Lilly. That statement shocks her. Finally, she asks Henry to sit down and tell her the story from the beginning, as though she does not know what is going on. He sits down on the chair that she indicates and she sits opposite him. This is not going at all as he has thought it would. He begins his story with the night he found Isabella and does not tell his stepfather.

He and Nicole end up in each other's arms after he finishes telling her everything. For a minute, it seems like intimacy will follow, and they both end up naked on the bed before she pushes him off and tells him that it is a mistake. He cannot believe her, and after a minute, he smiles at her. She gets angry, making the assumption that this was a test. She tells him to get out and gets into the shower to wash his scent off her for the last time. He leaves while she is still in the shower, but out in the car, he remembers part of a conversation with Lucy. He goes back inside and calls Domino Pizza. He gives Lucy's number and the second Dominos he calls knows Lucy's address. He takes it down as Nicole comes downstairs. He tells her he still loves her as he drops his key on the table.

Chapters 33 - 35 Analysis

Henry has to fight the instinct that makes him want to curl up in a fetal position and hide under the blankets, hoping that everything will just go away. He reminds himself constantly that he has to keep fighting and that this is a fight for his very life. He forces himself to be clinical, he dissects the whole situation. He thinks like a scientist, and step by step, he realizes that it stood to reason that someone wanted him out of the picture. When it came to him, he was stunned. He ran it all down again and came back to the



same conclusion. Only one person could have done this. There was no other answer. He has to make sure that no matter who is responsible, the theft of Proteus is impossible. He calls Kaz and tells him to change his plans and leave immediately for the patent office, and call him as soon as the patents are filed. He also insists on secrecy even from Charlie.

Fearful but proactive, he confronts Nicole, but instead of breaking down and admitting her guilt and complicity in some obvious way, she is confused and fearful of him. She even asks him to leave, but then relents and begs him to explain it all to her. He does, testing her responses all the way through. When he finishes, and they almost end the ordeal in a sexual encounter, she stops him, and his lack of anger or frustration tells her that this was simply another test on his part. Angry now, she insists that he leave, despite his apologies. When he goes out to his car, he sits there, his mind going over all the little details, seemingly insignificant, and when he remembers Lucy's love for pizza, he suddenly realizes how to find her. He goes back into Nicole's home and calls the two Domino's outlets closest to the apartment Lucy worked from. One doesn't have her phone number on file, but the other does. They confirm the address, and Henry has managed to find what even Cody was unable to, which is Lucy's location. When Nicole comes downstairs and discovers he is calling pizza places, she leaps to the conclusion that he is ordering dinner, unaware of the breakthrough he has just had. He does not try to correct her mistaken impression, telling her he still loves her as he leaves the house key behind. The significance of the gesture is closure for their relationship for both of them. He knows now that they are finished and she knows that he accepts it.



Chapters 36 - 38

Chapters 36 - 38 Summary

Henry walks down Breeze to the ocean and back again. He sees no indications that anyone is home at Lucy's address. That changes with the pizza delivery. He goes up to the door after she refuses the order, and she answers it a second time. He talks his way inside, and is first accusing but proven wrong a second time, he explains how Detective Renner is going to hang him with Lilly's murder. She admits that Wentz told her to lead him to Lilly's home but she had no idea why. She tells him it was all true however, even the part about the car having been in her parking space when they were supposed to meet there, but she didn't answer the door. She tells him the car was a black Jaguar with the top down and Pierce puts it together. Her description of Grady Allison is not exactly a match for the photo sent by Cody either.

Henry goes back to his office and after preparing, calls Cody and tells him there has been a breach of the system at Amedeo and he has to come in. He watches on surveillance as his former friend parks his Jag and comes in, starting the recording software. He confronts Cody with the electronic sniffer he found in the mainframe and his involvement, and ensures that they are locked into the lab without a way out until morning. He tells Cody he may as well come clean.

Fifteen years earlier, when the police had picked up the Doomsters, Zeller was the one who had broken and given them all up. Now Henry waited. He had all night. Finally he admits that Goddard is the emissary behind the deal that will give Pierce a lot of money to sell Proteus out so that a major pharmaceutical can bury it forever. Eventually, he even admits that Wentz and all the rest work for him, not the other way around. Lilly had been his 'compensation' package for setting up LA Darlings, but she knew too much and had to be eliminated. Then he just folded her death into what he called the Proteus plan. When he admitted that Lilly served his purposes and told Henry that he never would admit it again, another voice told him he would not have to. Detective Renner is standing in the doorway with his gun in hand and tells Cody he is under arrest for murder for starters.

Chapters 36 - 38 Analysis

When he gets to the address provided to him by Domino's Pizza, he walks by nonchalantly at first and notices the porch light is on. He takes this as a bad sign as it is not yet dark and he assumes it could only have been left on from previously. He worries that she will be gone. When she opens the door for the pizza delivery, he is relieved. He buys the pizza she refuses and goes back to her front door. When she opens it, she is shocked to see him there. He begins by accusing her of lying about her injuries, but she lifts her shirt to reveal multiple bruises and Henry is appalled at the extent of torso damage. She tells him she thinks an implant is leaking, but can't see a doctor until the



following day. When he tells her how deeply in trouble he is, she apologizes and offers to tell Renner that she was asked to lead him to Lilly's home by Wentz. When she tells him that the rest of the information she gave him was truthful, he asks her about the night she was supposed to meet Lilly, and she repeats the same story. How they had arrived to find a car parked in the space she usually reserved for customers sticks in Henry's mind this time around. He asks what kind of car, and she tells him it was a convertible - a black Jaguar. He asks her to describe Grady Allison, thinking of the photo Cody sent him of the thug with greased back hair, and she describes a surfer type with leathery skin from too much time in the sun, and a ponytail.

When Pierce calls Cody in to Amedeo, he has a hard time keeping his voice neutral. He makes it clear that Cody has to come in order to keep his friendship and the account with Amedeo intact without actually saying so, but Henry already knows that there is no more friendship left. He watches Zeller arrive in his black Jag and starts the dictation machine as he sees him come in. He tricks Cody into revealing that he knows about the electronic sniffer and about the door's access codes, although he just finished telling Henry that he stopped monitoring the site the sniffer sent information to two years previously and the codes are updated weekly. When Cody sees the computer tower is on, he turns on the monitor to see their conversation recorded. He deletes it and notices the phone jack plugged in. Henry lies and tells him that all of the data from the recording had been sent to an external drive. When Cody tries to leave, Henry cuts the phone line before Cody can register the fact that his key card would let him in but not out. Henry didn't have his on him either, ensuring they would be uninterrupted until morning.

Henry knows that eventually Cody would feel the need to share the supposed brilliance of his plan. Cody needs someone to know how brilliant he really thought he is. He needs his 'friend' to know how far back it all goes. The truth comes out. It goes back as far as Isabella's death, and Henry's drunken confession one night that he had found her, but when she begs him not to take her home to the stepfather who raped her, he lets her stay on the streets, telling his stepfather he never found her. Cody eventually reveals all of it, including Goddard's complicity, and the need to have him sit on the board as chairman to ensure Henry steers clear of biological advancements in the future. Big pharmaceutical companies did not want Proteus any more than tire companies wanted rubber that lasted forever. It would cost them millions. Proteus would never see the light of day. When Cody admits to killing Lilly and framing Henry, it is all over. Detective Renner comes out from the lab with his gun in hand and arrests him.



Chapters 39 - 40

Chapters 39 - 40 Summary

Zeller is cuffed and patted down, revealing the ankle holster and gun. He protests, telling him nothing will stand up, but Henry opens his shirt to reveal the battery pack and transmitter. Every word had come through clearly. Renner gives Henry back his key card, but before they reach the door, it opens and the security guard is pushed in by Six Eight and Wentz. Cody tells them Renner is a cop and the shooting begins. Henry calls 'lights' and they go out in response to his programmed voice. In the gunfire, both Renner and Six Eight go down. In the dark, Henry looks for Zeller's gun and finds Zeller is also dead. Henry works his way quietly back into the imaging lab and blindly feels for the heat resonance goggles he'd used that morning. He sees from the colors that Six Eight is dead and so is Zeller. Renner is alive and so is the security guard, but he can't see Wentz. Henry comes out of the lab quietly and Wentz grabs him. Henry thought he was dead, but Wentz needed him to get out. He tells Henry to turn on the lights so Henry complies, and at the same time pulls the trigger of the gun he held to Wentz's head. Henry sends the guard up to call for help, including Charlie and Vernon, and Renner remarks that he may need a job when all the smoke clears. Henry tells him that he has one. Renner is disappointed that they may never find Lilly now, but Henry still has a few things to confess. Renner tells him to make it good.

After an hour of grilling with detectives, Henry needs a break and goes to his office. Charlie comes in, still shaking his head and trying to absorb it all. Kaz calls to tell Henry the patents are filed and he is protected, and Henry makes it clear to Charlie that they are still in business. He needs to find them another whale. Charlie shakes his head, knowing the media storm that is coming and comments on their need for Nikki now more than ever as she was the one who could really handle that stuff. Henry says they can hire her back, and she can keep her severance - purely on a platonic and business level of course, at least until Henry could prove to her that the dime chased him now and not the other way around. Charlie leaves and Henry picks up the phone to call Nikki.

Chapters 39 - 40 Analysis

Before Zeller can be read his rights, a gun is taken and Henry's wire is revealed. All of Cody's confession is on tape, loud and clear. They are about to leave when Six Eight and Wentz push the security guard into the door ahead of them. Gunfire is exchanged and to give himself and Renner a fighting chances, Henry calls out 'lights', and they are in darkness. Six Eight is down, and so is Renner. Henry goes for Zeller's gun, and getting it, he then crawls to the lab to get the heat resonance goggles he'd used in the presentation that morning. With them on, he sees that Renner is still alive but can't see Wentz who ambushes him as he leaves the lab. Henry kills Wentz and then has a confession or two of his own for Renner before the cavalry arrives. He tells Renner how



he discovered Lilly's body, tying up the last loose end. Police are sent to pick up Goddard and Bechy, and Henry is interrogated. After an hour, he retreats to his office where Charlie finds him.

Charlie is hurt by Henry's many omissions of late, and Henry knows that it will take some time to rebuild the trust in that relationship. Kaz calls to confirm filing of the patents and Henry tells Charlie they will have to hunt down new investors, and find a way to use the coming media storm to their advantage. Charlie laments the loss of Nicole who used to handle media with aplomb, and Henry suggests they call her back in. He suggests that they tell her to keep her severance and to come back to work on a strictly professional footing, at least until Henry can prove to her that he's changed. Charlie comments that Henry must live a lonely existence, unable to trust anyone, and Henry hears the truth in that statement, resolving to change it. He begins by calling Nikki.



Characters

Henry Pierce (Einstein)

Henry and his fiancée Nicole have just split up after three years together. She says goodbye to him using a term of endearment from before things went sour. It had been some time since she called him Hewlett which was her play on his initials of HP. He leaves her with everything, largely to assuage his guilt for letting things get so bad that it has come to this. He starts over with six boxes of clothes, knowing he will miss the house on Amalfi, and the woman still living there. He plugs in his new phone and it rings almost immediately. His assistant Monica set the service up for him, and he goes over the instructions she left him for its operation, noting that the new number has already been circulated to his A-level email list of almost eighty people.

Henry is 34 years old and spends a great deal of time 'chasing the dime' for his company Amedeo Technologies. He carries no laptop, no cell phone, no pages, and no personal digital assistant. While some might think it paranoid, Henry knows that any of those things can cause an accidental leak. Henry is a chemist who founded the company after leaving Stanford and has been granted many patents in the areas of molecular circuitry and molecular memory and logic gates.

Henry lives on the twelfth floor of the apartment he just moved into.

Henry's sister was a prostitute. She was found lying naked, in the open, over the guardrail while he was away at Stanford. She had been there at least two days and Henry often wonders how many people just passed having seen her there and done nothing. It is what inspires him to pursue the issue with Lilly, having been unable to help his sister, Isabella. The man who killed her was caught but not until after he had killed four more girls.

Cody Zeller

Cody is the security officer for Henry's company, Amedeo Technologies. He lives in Malibu and is an avid and regular surfer. He and Henry Pierce have good friends since college. Cody calls Henry either Hank or Einstein.

Of all the 'Doomsters,' Cody looks like the rest aspired to. He is a true throwback to earlier times in baggy shorts and sandals, with sun-bleached hair that is uncut and pulled back into a loose ponytail and skin that is the color of copper resembling a smoggy sunset. At thirty-five years old, he is taking on the look of an aging surfer who cannot let go, endearing him to Henry who often feels as though he sold out. Cody's motto is feel young and stay young.

Cody is a college dropout who found fame after being suspended along with Henry and a few others for hacking into the yellow pages and changing the Dean of computer



sciences phone number to the number for the closest Domino's pizza parlour. After serving suspension and community service, Henry returned to pursue sciences, while Cody received an offer to work for a computer security firm. Now he earned five hundred dollars an hour as a white hat hacker, hired to penetrate corporate systems so that his employer could then get a digital security contract and Cody a big bonus. He put up logo stickers on the wall for each successful penetration. The newest was for Coca-Cola, after having almost given the CEO a stroke having done a penetration test and sent him an email with their secret formula. His garage is converted into a climate controlled computer with a plastic curtain where the garage door used to be. Two complete computer bays are one each side of the room and each is equipped with multiple screens. Black foam on the walls dampens the outside noise. As a result of the use of his garage in this manner, he is forced to lease parking from his neighbour to accommodate his black on black Jaguar XKR which he prized like family. Cody is also the only person Henry knows who rivals him in paranoia. In college, he postulated a theory that Ronald Reagan was dead and that a far right puppet had taken his place or a theory he truly believed.

One more thing that Henry will learn about Cody is that he is disloyal.

Monica Purl

Monica is Henry Pierce's assistant. Monica is tall and thin, with blonde hair and extremely pale skin. She is about twenty-five year old and has worked for Amedeo Tech for five years. Her job as Henry's assistant was a promotion given to her by Charlie Condon for five years of service. Despite the impression that one might get from her looks and coloring, Monica is not someone who could be described as fragile. She is organized and able to get things accomplished.

Monica has only recently received this promotion, and when she helps Henry arrange for a new phone after he and Nicole split up, the boundaries between work and personal time blur to a degree that she finds extremely uncomfortable. Henry gets a new phone number that recently belonged to an on line escort named Lilly Quinlan. He fields several phone calls from men who are anxious to connect with Lilly before he begins digging. He manages to connect her to a web site and the more he digs, the further into the world of sex for hire he falls. Caught in the middle of all of it is Monica who is just trying to do her job. She is quickly discovering that working for the boss might not be the step up in the company she'd hoped. In fact, after just a short time, Henry is beaten, hung upside down from his balcony, asks her to impersonate a prostitute, and has a long talk with her about discretion, Monica has about had enough. The last straw is when she goes into his office to find him looking at a pornographic website. At this stage, Monica no longer cares why. She just wants to be returned to the secretarial pool. She tells Henry this and lets him know that she plans to talk to Charlie about it as soon as she can.



Lilly Quinlan

Lilly is twenty-three years of age with shoulder-length brunette hair and brown eyes. She has a deep tan and full lips, does not smoke and can easily be described as beautiful. She is about five feet tall and weighs just over one hundred pounds. She is part-Spanish and part-American, and often works with a girl named Robin. Her home is listed as an apartment in Santa Monica and she drives a Lexus that she took great pride in.

Her disappearance is so similar to the history that Henry had with his sister Isabella that he is unable to turn away. He has to keep digging, and to find out what happened to her. Henry always felt as though he let Isabella down, and that in part he was responsible for the fact that the Dollmaker killed her. Now, the situation with Lilly seems to be giving him a second chance. Little does he realize that she is already dead. He will find her body in a freezer in a storage locker rented in his name.

Lilly is killed because she knew too much. She is a bonus. She is a prize that Cody got for putting the LA Darlings site together, but the more time she spends with Cody, the more of his secrets she learns. Finally, she just knows more than Cody can afford to have her know. He feels he has no choice but to eliminate her. In doing so, he finds yet another level of use for her. He puts her body to use for one last time, setting up the man who calls himself a friend for her murder.

Maurice Goddard

New York ET investor who comes to preview Proteus. He is a wealthy man with money to invest for the right company. He has a daughter who has Down's Syndrome and his relationship with her makes him wish that science were more advanced when she was born. If Proteus had existed at that time, she might not be saddled with such an affliction. As such, this is a project that he has no trouble getting excited about. When he meets with Henry, he finds him recovering from what he refers to as a car accident. Maurice likes to know who he's giving his money to, so he asks Henry to provide him with a copy of the police report. Of course, there is no such thing because there was no accident. Henry is also pretty sure that if the truth were to come out, despite Henry's innocence, Maurice would back out. He would consider Henry to be too unstable to invest in, regardless of how spectacular the project is.

He is temporarily distracted by Charlie, who endorses Henry completely, and then he is taken to the lab where the experiment is so incredible that Maurice is overwhelmed. As soon as lunch is over, he is announcing his desire to be a part of the fantastic future that Amedeo Technologies is sure to have. Maurice turns out to be a front man for the big pharmaceutical company that is trying to bury Proteus. He is arrested along with Bechy.



Robin (Lucy LaPorte)

Robin has blonde hair and blue eyes. She is twenty-four years old and almost six feet tall. She loves champagne and does not smoke. She is originally from New Orleans.

Robin works out of an apartment complex called the Marina Executive Tower which is a short and wide set of apartments over a garage that covers a half city block. She is careful to screen her clients before admitting them. Her apartment is two doors from the elevator. She has breasts that are large enough to be considered implants with large nipples and her blond hair is parted in the middle with ringlets going down both sides of her face and her stomach is flat. She refers to her payment as a gift, and offers the full GFE or Girl Friend Experience.

Robin leads Henry to Lilly's work townhouse where he is set up to take the fall for her murder. She admits this after Henry finds her again and apologizes, but assures him that everything she told him was the truth. When Henry is reminded of the car parked in the spot Lilly reserved for clients, he asks her about it, and learns the horrible truth. The person who set him up was the one person that Henry thought of as a friend. In that moment, Robin redeems herself. Robin has been beaten by Wentz and Six Eight, and told to lay low for a couple of weeks. Her injuries will be the last contact she ever has with Wentz, Six Eight or the man who runs them.

Nicole James

He is a former intelligence officer for Henry's company and Henry's former fiancée. When their relationship ends, Nicole leaves her position with Amedeo with a generous severance package. Henry is still hurting. He can't believe he let things go so far, and he misses her, but she is trying to move on. When Henry realizes that he is being set up, and manages to narrow it down to someone who is close enough to him to know his secrets about Isabella, he thinks that Nikki is behind it. He goes to the home they shared and confronts her. Nikki is stunned by the accusation on several levels. She cannot believe that he would think she is capable of that kind of deception and tells Henry that he is really losing it. Henry realizes he is wrong, having tested her to her emotional ends. She knows that is what he was doing, but not until it is done. Angry now, she throws him out.

When all the dust settles, and the real people behind the conspiracy are caught or dead, Henry comes to the conclusion that he needs her. He needs both her expertise at work and her personal company. He resolves to hire her back and win her back, one step at a time.

Charlie Condon

Charlie is a handsome man who appears to have a perpetual tan. Before going back to school to get his master's degree in finance, he had worked as a model in New York. He



joined Amedeo Technologies under the understanding that he would help to match the firm with investors without Pierce having to sacrifice his controlling interest. In return, Charlie holds 10% of the company.

Philip Glass

Philip is a private investigator with an office in Culver City. He was contacted by Mrs. Quinlan and hired in an effort to find her daughter. He is clean shaven and has deeply set, dark and hard eyes. He is in his thirties and favors jeans and t-shirt. He is a cautious man, and knows a great deal about the business dealings of Billy Wentz, and has a deep fear of involvement with him. He specialty is missing persons, and he was recommended to Vivian Quinlan by someone in LAPD's missing persons unit.

Janis Langwiser

Janis is a criminal defense lawyer, recommended to Henry by Kaz. She works for the small but prestigious firm of Smith, Levin, Colvin & Enriquez with a client list that is so A-list that it isn't listed in the phone book. Langwiser had been employed by the district attorney's office previously and had a career with them that included prosecuting some of LA's higher profile cases. Her manner is confident and professional and after listening to everything Henry tells her, she tells him Renner is bluffing. She calls him to put him on notice that she is Henry's lawyer now.

Jacob Kaz

Amedeo's patent attorney.

Norman Renner

Detective assigned when Henry calls the police after discovering the bloody mattress in Lilly Quinlan's apartment, Renner is methodical and thorough. He takes Henry's statement, one sentence at a time, and slowly picks it apart, looking for the reason that Henry has become so involved with a hooker he claims to have no prior knowledge of.

William (Billy) Wentz

Description

Dollmaker

The serial killer who is responsible for the death of Isabella in the eighties, along with many other girls. He was shot by police and killed.



Grady (Grade A) Allison

Grady is forty six years old and partnered with William Wentz in the on line sex trade. He has been arrested four times, most times including charges of great bodily injury and his photo makes him look older than he is. He has gray black hair that he wears greased back on his head and his complexion is pale. His nose appears to have been broken several times.

Sterling Grooms

Sterling has been with Amedeo Technologies and Henry longer than anyone else. He had signed on with Henry right after completing his post doctorate at UCLA. He holds the title of lab manager and is just a couple of years younger than Henry. Twice competitors almost took him from Henry, but Henry gave him points in the company and a seat on the board of directors to keep him. He also shared in a piece of the patents.

Brandon Larraby

Brandon is tall and thin and enjoys wearing a traditional lab coat. He is a little older than Henry and had joined him from the pharmaceutical industry only eighteen months earlier. He is an excellent immunologist.

Justine Bechy

Called 'Just Bitchy' by Charlie in private, Justine is Maurice Goddard's legal adviser, and does an excellent job of running interference for him.

Clyde Vernon

Security head for Amedeo Technologies, Clyde had formerly worked for twenty five years with the FBI.



Objects/Places

Amedeo Technologies

This is Henry Pierce's company in Santa Monica, California. Named for Amedeo Avogadro, a chemist who two hundred years previously was the first to discover the difference between molecules and atoms.

Proteus

This is the name of the formula Henry's company has created for cellular energy conversion. It is the power supply system that would one day be able to patrol the bloodstream to find and destroy pathogens in it's human hosts. The name is nod to the 1966 film called the Fantastic Voyage where a submarine full of people is miniaturized and injected into a man's blood stream to destroy an inoperable blood clot in the brain.

Bronson Tech

This is the competition firm for Amedeo Technologies, headed by Elliot Bronson and with Tagawa Corporation from Japan holding twenty percent interest.

DARPA

This is the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency.

Doomsters

This is the name that a college group including Henry and Cody had given themselves taken from the Ross McDonald novel. The Doomsters sold plasma to buy beer, marijuana, and computer software on a regular basis.

Social Engineering

This is the term for taking the truth and turning it to make it work for you.

GFE

This is the Girl Friend Experience.



Cathode Ray's

This is the coffee shop favored by the tech generation in Santa Monica where Philip Glass agrees to meet with Henry to talk about Lilly's disappearance.

The Fighting Moles

Short for Molecules, it is the name of the softball team that Henry's company sponsored some time ago.

Horton Hears A Who

This is a book by Dr. Suess that Henry applies to his life and work.

The Fantastic Voyage

This is a movie that aired in 1966 and inspired Henry to name his formula 'Proteus' after.

U Store It

This is a storage company Cody set up in Henry's name and hid Lilly's body in.

Santa Monica

This is where the novel takes place.



Themes

From Hero to Zero and Back

When Henry first gets Lilly's number, the similarities to his sister Isabella are so great that he is unable to let it rest. He has to discover what happened to Lilly and to help her if he can. He is compelled to do this because he was unable to do it for his sister. When, as a child, when his stepfather had him going into buildings and looking for her, he had actually found her once. She had begged him not to make her go home. She told him that their stepfather had been raping her for some time and that even living in flop houses with junkies was a preferable environment to her. He had wanted to help her then. In fact, he had thought that by keeping the secret that he had found her, he was helping. He spend the next year driving around with his stepfather 'looking' for her, but actually making every effort to avoid finding her. He had resolved that he would get away from the house himself, get a job, and then rescue her himself. They would live happily together. He did not tell anyone the truth until after the Dollmaker killed her. Then, the knowledge was simply too much to keep to himself any more. He confronted his parents one day and was called a liar. His mother never did believe him and he had not spoken to her since. He even wondered if he was partly responsible for her death, asking himself tough questions like if he had turned her in to his stepfather, would she still be alive? All this made it just seem natural for him to want to help Lilly in her place somehow and make up for the past if he could.

His interference in Lilly's situation was not only predictable, but was almost his undoing. It threatened his work, his reputation, and his very life. If he had been arrested, his hopes on a business level would have tanked and as it was, the beating he took from Wentz, combined with the body in the storage locker was almost his undoing. He faces jail time, or even the gas chamber for murder if events continue to unfold on their current path. It is only by thinking like a scientist, and refusing to give in to panic or what seems like odds that are overwhelmingly against him that helps him to overcome the predicament he is in. In doing so, he not only helps to bring to justice most of those responsible for Lilly's death, and save Robin from living a life of fear by the same hands, but also save his company and the formula that will lead to many other heroic advancements. If a moral were to be attached, it would be that no matter how dire the circumstances may appear, by thinking calmly and logically, it is likely that you will be able to avert disastrous outcomes if not entirely, at least to a large degree.

Significance Comes In All Sizes

"Our buildings, to you, would seem terribly small. But to us, who aren't big, they are wonderfully tall," is Dr. Suess's reference to Horton Hears A Who that is cited and has particular significance for Henry Pierce throughout this novel as he learns how this simple truth applies throughout life. It is not always necessary for something to be large in order for it to have great significance or impact in life. Henry is a scientist who



believes he already knows this lesson. His company focuses on things so small they might be considered insignificant by many, but Henry realizes that future science will be built using the smallest of technological processes which will eventually have the largest of technological impact on our lives. Much like the computer has reduced in size from what once took a room full of equipment to render simple equations and now can be packaged in a hand held device that has hundreds of times the storage and capability, Henry approaches work with the understanding that once Proteus is created, this small but mighty scientific leap will be astronomical in its impact. Despite this knowledge, he still forgets to apply the simple lesson to his every day life.

When Henry first goes in search of Lilly, he knowingly enters her home without permission, committing the felony of break and enter in the process, and as he goes through her home, he gives no consideration to the fact that if something has truly happened to Lilly, he is leaving evidence of his presence from one end of her home to the other enabling those who investigate Lilly's disappearance later to make a strong case for his direct involvement. When he finds her body in the freezer of the storage locker rented in his name, he commits the same mistake. He pays little attention to how his fingerprints, and access to the locker will later come back to reflect on his involvement, despite the fact that he has been made aware of the consequences of his actions in her home by Janis Langwiser by this stage. Henry applies this simple truth to every aspect of his scientific life, and to no aspect of his personal life. It is a mistake that could cost him his freedom, if not his life.

Truth - Subjective and Selective

Detective Renner investigates and discovers what he believes is the truth behind Lilly's disappearance. A subject of interest, Henry Pierce, is put in his path, and he pursues him to the exclusion of all else. By doing so, he loses his objectivity. His own partner is unwilling to make Henry the prime suspect in the matter of Lilly's disappearance, and Detective Renner still doesn't give up. He sees some facts that fit, and by excluding all other avenues of investigation in pursuit of one suspect, he loses his perspective. The truth becomes selective, and subjective to the facts as he collects them. No longer open minded, or thinking in terms of any and all possibilities, he chases Henry with a vengeance. Had Henry been intimidated by the legal action taken against him, it is likely that he might have been arrested and even convicted for a crime he never committed.

For Henry, the situation is similar. Once he realizes that someone is targeting him, he goes over it all in his mind and is convinced that the only one with enough personal knowledge about him to accomplish this would be Nicole. As such, and unable to think of another suspect, he confronts her. He does not ask her if she has any knowledge of what is going on. Instead, he accuses her. He lays out the facts as he sees them, much like what Renner was doing with him, and asks her what compelled her to turn on him. Like Renner, Henry was convinced that this was the truth, and in his mind, he had already convicted Nikki of crimes she had absolutely nothing to do with while condemning Renner for doing exactly the same thing. As such, neither was able to see that though the facts may have been pointing in one direction, the truth may be

something entirely different. For both men, the truth became a matter of selective and subjective thinking.



Style

Point of View

Chasing the Dime by Michael Connelly is told entirely in the first-person perspective. The entire novel is laid out from the point of view of the main character, Henry Pierce. As he is the focus of the science, the setup, and the solution, it is only right that the novel be written entirely from his perspective. For the story to evolve, and the depths of the conspiracy to be appreciated, it is necessary for Connelly to maintain this style of writing and he does so reliably and confidently. The outcome is a well paced, exciting who done it with many twists and turns that leave the reader guessing as to the outcome right up until the very end.

While there is some dialogue throughout, as Henry interacts with the key players on several levels, the focal point remains on Henry as he tries to unravel first the mystery of the disappearance of Lilly, and then the conspiracy that seems to be closing in on him. Connelly does a respectable job of laying out the conspiracy, and taking his main character to the very brink of despair and then telling the story in such a manner that the antagonist is never completely revealed until the very end. While Connelly could have told passages from the perspectives of other key players, his focus on Henry is likely what does such a good job of making the conspiracy come to life and enabling the reader to root for the underdog.

Setting

Chasing the Dime is set entirely in Santa Monica. There are actually only a handful of relevant location throughout the entire novel Michael Connelly uses them effectively, with a rare ability to draw his reader into the situation he paints. The story opens with the main character Henry Pierce moving into his new apartment after separating with his girlfriend and moving out of the home they shared on Amalfi Drive. His new apartment is a premier address in Santa Monica and his suite is on the twelfth floor. He has little time to enjoy it however. Henry Pierce is a workaholic. He spends his days 'chasing the dime' at Amedeo Technologies, a firm he started with little more than a dream and big ideas. Now, a going concern, this is the company that will set the scientific community on its ear with his newest offering called Proteus. When Henry isn't up to his ears in work, he is trying to track down the former owner of his new telephone number. Lilly reminds him so much of his sister that a part of him cannot resist trying to get to the bottom of the every growing mystery that is her life. He tracks her to an online offering called LA Darlings, and from there manages to locate her home address which is a bungalow on Altair Place. He lets himself into the unlocked home and wanders around just long enough to confirm that she hasn't been there in some time. He asks his longtime friend from college, Cody Zeller to look into Lilly, driving to his home in Malibu up the Pacific Coast Highway. Then he locates her sometimes work partner, Robin. By setting up a 'date' with her, he winds up in her working apartment on



the beach. She leads him to Lilly's work apartment and he finds himself neck deep in a murder scene. It is a short jump to murder suspect from there, and Henry has to keep his cool to keep his freedom. He does not escape entirely unscathed, finding himself dangling from his ankles off his balcony for his interference and then discovering Lilly's body at a U Store that it registered to him. A climactic finish plays out in the lab at Amedeo Technologies.

Language and Meaning

While this is a novel written entirely in modern day English, there are a few extras that definitely lend credibility to the story. Amedeo Technologies is a firm that is chasing the next leap in science and internal medicine. With a formula called Proteus, Amedeo Technologies has developed the platform from which all future science in that area will be launched. Michael Connelly does a credible job of describing both the formula and its applications, taking into consideration the very real research going on in the world today. Along with the references to the Proteus formula, there are numerous computer sciences employed as would be expected in a firm of this kind. Voice-activated lighting, mantraps, and state of the art security protocols are just a small part of the many technological toys that Amedeo uses. Henry's college friend Cody Zeller is also a computer scientist of sorts. A self-employed white hat hacker, he makes his money by finding the security weaknesses in big business electronics. His wall of fame alludes to a number of large companies that he has already wormed his way into, including one he is particularly proud of, Coca Cola, although it is never mentioned by name specifically. The descriptions are enough to leave little doubt as to which company is being talked about.

Chasing the Dime is a realistic look at where both of these sciences are headed and Michael Connelly does a masterful job presenting them both.

Structure

Chasing the Dime is written in a very straightforward style of structure. There are no subsections, and it is not partitioned in any way. It is forty chapters in length and totals approximately 370 pages. Since the novel is written in first person perspective from the main character Henry Pierce, there are no surprises as far as structure goes. It is easy to follow and well-written. Each chapter is roughly the same size of just around ten pages. Some are a few more, while some a few less, but not by any great degrees either way.

Michael Connelly tells the story in alternating realities for his main character. On one hand, he is a chemist who is seeking a major financial partner to join his firm and help them to launch a formula that will change mankind. On the other hand, he is man tormented by his past and haunted by his sister's death at the hands of a serial killer named the Dollmaker. He bounces his attentions from work and the challenges of presenting his formula in a way that an investor will be inclined to give them millions

over the next few years, and on the disappearance of a call girl named Lilly who reminds him of his sister and takes him into a world that is violent and unforgiving.

In the end, the two worlds collide, and Henry orchestrates the greatest presentation of his life, managing to save his life and company in the process.



Quotes

"From diagnostic computers that can be dropped into the bloodstream to the creation of 'smart streets' with microscopic computers contained in the asphalt, molecular computers will change this world, and this company is going to be there to help change it" (Chapter 2, pg. 19.)

"I'm not talking about Lilly with you" (Chapter 4, pg. 40.)

"Before I could say I wasn't Lilly the guy asked me if I'd do a prostrate massage, whatever that is" (Chapter 9, pg. 86.)

"Beats selling one's purity of essence for twenty five buck a bag" (Chapter 10, pg. 91.)

"Go back to the square world, where it's nice and safe" (Chapter 13, pg. 122.)

"You should get out of it, and be damn careful about it when you do" (Chapter 16, pg. 154.)

"What I wanted to say was that not only did you get the wrong number, you got the wrong world, partner. And you got about thirty seconds to decide whether you want to go on to the next world" (Chapter 19, pg. 180.)

"Tell me, where did you hide Lilly's body?" (Chapter 22, pg. 204.)

"To put him on notice that you have representation and to see what he has to say for himself" (Chapter 24, pg. 220.)

"I saw the picture of the girl who had your phone number and decided I did not want to look at that stuff" (Chapter 26, pg. 236.)

"Our buildings, to you, would seem terribly small. But to us, who aren't big, they are wonderfully tall" (Chapter 29, pg. 270.)

"No, I gave you the invention of the decade to work with" (Chapter 31, pg. 283.)

"Just tell me, Nikki, did someone get to you, did they pressure you, threaten you?"
(Chapter 34, pg. 315.)

"He says the killer often disguises himself as the Good Samaritan" (Chapter 36, pg. 331.)

"For three years you've been watching, listening, stealing" (Chapter 37, pg. 340.)

"You make the deal with them and everything else goes away" (Chapter 38, pg. 349.)



Topics for Discussion

In Henry Pierce's business, what does the expression 'Chasing the dime' mean? Why is it important?

Why does Henry involve himself in Lilly's disappearance? What is his motivation?

Who is Isabella and how does she affect the events in Henry's life?

What is Proteus? Why is it potentially so important?

Henry is not truthful with Detective Renner. What half truths or outright deceptions come back to haunt him?

Henry realizes he has made a mistake in his assumptions. What discoveries does he make as a result of that realization and what are the obvious implications.

How does Henry rule out the first suspect he has? What is the final act that convinces him and why?

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What evidence does Renner believe he has against Henry? What action does he try to take?

What does Henry realize when he is outside Nicole's house? How does he use that knowledge?

Who gives Henry the final piece of the puzzle, letting him know who is responsible for his set up?

What does Henry find at the U-Store It? How does he handle it?

What steps does Henry take to cover himself when he goes for the final revelation with the person who set him up? What steps does he take to set a trap of his own?

What long term plan was made by the conspirator and what insiders' knowledge was used against him?

Why did the conspirator set Henry up and why didn't Henry ever suspect him until the very end?

What happens to Proteus? How likely is this whole scenario?