

The Cat Who Played Post Office Study Guide

The Cat Who Played Post Office by Lilian Jackson Braun

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Contents

The Cat Who Played Post Office Study Guide.....	1
Contents.....	2
Plot Summary.....	3
Chapter 1.....	4
Chapter 2.....	6
Chapter 3.....	8
Chapter 4.....	9
Chapter 5.....	10
Chapter 6.....	12
Chapter 7.....	14
Chapter 8.....	16
Chapter 9.....	18
Chapter 10.....	19
Chapter 12.....	21
Chapter 13.....	23
Chapter 14.....	24
Chapter 15.....	25
Chapter 16.....	27
Characters.....	29
Objects/Places.....	34
Themes.....	36
Style.....	39
Quotes.....	41
Topics for Discussion.....	44



Plot Summary

"The Cat Who Played Post Office" by Lilian Jackson Braun is a murder mystery in which Jim Qwilleran investigates the disappearance of Daisy Mull with the assistance of Koko, his cat. Jim Qwilleran moves to Pickax in Moose County as prescribed in the will, when he inherits the Klingenschoen fortune. Although he intends to use the time to write in solitude, he becomes engrossed in investigating the disappearance of Daisy Mull, a former domestic at the Klingenschoen mansion. The murals that she painted in her apartment fascinates Qwill. With his cat's uncanny ability to sniff out clues, Qwill manages to uncover the truth of the girl's disappearance, despite the deaths of people who are able to assist with his investigation and several attempts on his own life. "The Cat Who Played Post Office" is a very interesting and entertaining novel that most readers will find immensely enjoyable.

Jim Qwilleran wakes up in the hospital with no recollection of who or where he is. Arch Riker, Qwill's close friend, reminds him of his past with the exception of the time immediately surrounding his bike accident on Ittibittiwasssee Road, however Qwill is able to recall this time period through dreams. When Qwill inherits the Klingenschoen fortune, he moves to Pickax as the will dictates lest he forfeit the inheritance. He meets with the attorneys of the estate, Alex and Penelope Goodwinter, to discuss financial matters, the need for a housekeeper, maintenance for the mansion, and the establishment of a fund to distribute the surplus income within Moose County.

When Qwill becomes fascinated with the murals of daisies in the servant's apartment above the garage, he begins investigating the disappearance of Daisy Mull, the domestic who painted them. Koko assists Qwill in discovering many clues, including a diary and suitcases left by the girl. When Qwill intends to speak with Della Mull, Daisy's mother, the woman is found dead of an overdose, and likewise, Tiffany Trotter is killed before Qwill can speak to her. Qwill is hospitalized after a truck attempts to run over him during a bike ride on Ittibittiwasssee Road. He believes it is an attempt on his life by the New Jersey family who will inherit the Klingenschoen estate if he fails to live in Moose County for five years.

After Penelope Goodwinter commits suicide, Qwill receives a letter from her explaining her part in Daisy Mull's disappearance which results from Alex impregnating the girl. The whole mystery is solved when Birch Trevelyan is arrested after breaking into the Klingenschoen mansion to permanently silence Qwill. Qwill admits that Koko is smarter than him and was the one to find the clues which lead to the truth about Daisy Mull's mysterious disappearance.



Chapter 1

Chapter 1 Summary

"The Cat Who Played Post Office" by Lilian Jackson Braun is a murder mystery in which Jim Qwilleran investigates the disappearance of Daisy Mull with the assistance of Koko, his cat. Jim Qwilleran moves to Pickax in Moose County as prescribed in the will, when he inherits the Klingenschoen fortune. Although he intends to use the time to write in solitude, he becomes engrossed in investigating the disappearance of Daisy Mull, a former domestic at the Klingenschoen mansion. The murals that she painted in her apartment fascinates Qwill. With his cat's uncanny ability to sniff out clues, Qwill manages to uncover the truth of the girl's disappearance, despite the deaths of people who are able to assist with his investigation and several attempts on his own life. "The Cat Who Played Post Office" is a very interesting and entertaining novel that most readers will find immensely enjoyable.

A Caucasian male wakes up in a strange room and looks around in curiosity. He cannot remember his name or where he is. A sense of failing someone close to him pervades as he notices the bandages all over his body. A strange old woman enters the room, introduces herself as Mrs. Toodle, and says Dr. Goodwinter will soon arrive. When Dr. Goodwinter, a young, familiar woman, enters, she tells him that she is working on becoming his wife and explains that he is at the hospital because he fell off of his bicycle on Ittibittiwasssee Road. She informs him that Arch Riker will be there to see him later. After a nap, the man wakes to Riker, his editor at the "Daily Fluxion" and friend, since kindergarten. Riker tells him that his name is Jim Qwilleran though he goes by Qwill. The light begins to penetrate Qwill's foggy brain as Riker reminds him of his past. When Qwill worries about feeding his cats, Riker assures him that Mrs. Cobb, his housekeeper since he inherited the Klingenschoen fortune, will take care of them. After Riker leaves, Qwill's memory returns except for the few hours surrounding his bike accident. He sleeps and dreams of telling Mrs. Cobb that he is going to take a bike ride down Ittibittiwasssee Road. In the dream, she advises him to buy a new bike. He wakes up and calls Mrs. Cobb who verifies the accuracy of his dream. Qwill eats lunch in the cafeteria, and he feels at ease as everyone greets him. After blood samples are taken, he takes another nap and dreams about climbing from a ditch and about Junior Goodwinter giving him a ride to the hospital. When he wakes up, he phones Junior who verifies that the events in Qwill's dreams are actually what happened. At dinner, Qwill discusses his dreams with Riker and Melinda, telling them that the only blank left in his memory is the actual circumstances surrounding the accident. Late that night, he dreams a final dream: as he rides his bike down the road, a truck swerves to hit him, and he detours into a ditch to avoid the oncoming truck. He wakes with the realization that this dream also happened. He thought he was well-liked in Pickax but apparently not by everyone.



Chapter 1 Analysis

Jim Qwilleran, Qwill, awoke with the sense of failure before he was aware of his surroundings or even his own name, giving the reader the idea that whatever has put him in the hospital was an unexpected mishap. It also gives the reader a first impression into the character of this man. As his dreams become more clear, it is evident that Qwill may have been run off the road on purpose, begging the question of who did it and why. What little else is known of the man and the situation in which he has found himself must not only be pieced together by the main character, but also by the reader. The other characters in this story are introduced as they visit or are contacted by Qwill, leaving the questions that need to be answered open as it is uncertain whether all the characters have been introduced or if there are more to come. Also, as Qwill has clearly experienced a memory loss, it is questionable whether the reader can base any opinions on his memories, as information may be missing. The reader may wonder whether the assailant has already been introduced in the story, and is trusted or presumed innocent just because that is Qwill's feeling or state of mind.



Chapter 2

Chapter 2 Summary

Qwill, the richest man in Pickax, has a bike accident in midsummer. Two months before, he was a frugal bachelor living in Mooseville whose only extravagance was caring for his two Siamese cats. When he learns that he has inherited the Klingenschoen fortune, he quits his job and arranges to move to Pickax because Miss Klingenschoen's will dictates he must live in Moose County for five years or forfeit the inheritance to a family in New Jersey. At his farewell lunch with Riker, Riker teases Qwill about the lack of crime in Moose County. Everyone knows he has helped the police with a few cases, though Koko, his cat, actually sniffed out the clues. Qwill tells Riker about Pickax and dating Melinda Goodwinter; the Goodwinters are the big name in Moose County. The estate will be held in trust during the five years, and Qwill will live on the income of approximately one million dollars annually. Qwill packs up his belongings and cats, and moves into the Klingenschoen mansion in Pickax. Penelope and Alexander Goodwinter, the attorneys for the estate, arrive for their appointment with Qwill and welcome him to Pickax. Since Alex is traveling to Washington, he leaves Qwill in his sister's capable hands. Qwill discusses financial arrangements with Penelope, such as the fact that the estate will pay for household maintenance and Qwill will need to hire a housekeeper. The estate will also pay to renovate the servants' quarters, but Qwill must work with the interior designer on the renovations. Qwill wants to clarify that he has no desire to have a lot of money; he only wants to be able to write with minimal interruption. He plans to distribute the surplus income within Moose County in the form of grants, scholarships, etc. Penelope is pleased with this proposal and plans to publish a proclamation in the paper pertaining to it, but she declines Qwill's dinner invitation. She is surprised when the piano plays and Qwill informs her that Koko is at the keyboard. When Qwill asks about repairing the locks in the house, Penelope promises to hire Birch Trevelyan, a local maintenance man among other things. After she leaves, Qwill inspects the outbuildings and finds two apartments in the loft over the garage. The second apartment is lavishly decorated to express the occupant's personality, causing Qwill to wonder about her, especially as he admires the mural of daisies painted on the wall. Recalling the tune Koko played on the piano and the accompanying lyric of "Daisy, Daisy", Qwill wonders if it is a coincidence.

Chapter 2 Analysis

In a flashback, it is confirmed that Qwill has inherited a large sum of money and suddenly becomes a prominent member of the community, just like his girlfriend. His money, however, comes with stipulations, and this may be hinting at what happened to Qwill, or at least why, even though he makes comments that he has no desire for such a large sum. At his farewell lunch, with his friend Riker, Riker teases Qwill about the lack of crime in the area, foreshadowing the upcoming events. The reader is also introduced to a very peculiar cat, named Koko, to whom Qwill has attributed the ability to sniff out



clues when he has assisted the police in prior cases. This comment draws attention to the cat and subsequently its actions from here on. One such moment is when Koko plays the song "Daisy, Daisy" on the piano, which corresponds with one of the servant's apartments where Qwill discovers murals of daisies painted on the walls. Obviously, the cat has an interest in the person, even when Qwill so readily excuses it.



Chapter 3

Chapter 3 Summary

Qwill, Koko and Yum Yum adjust to their new environment. Qwill needs Koko's help to interview potential housekeepers as he requires them to be fond of cats, cook fairly well, be able to care for antiques and be agreeable. The first two applicants are hopeless. Qwill believes that the third, Tiffany Trotter, a pretty young woman, is a spy. Mrs. Fulgrove, the former housekeeper at Klingenschoen mansion, is disagreeable and degrades the Mull girl for defacing her apartment, leaving Qwill with a strong desire to revisit the mural in the apartment. He searches the phonebook for Mulls to no avail before phoning Penelope to ask about the girl who painted in the servants' quarters. Penelope states that the girl apparently left town. While on the phone, Qwill hears an unusual noise in another part of the house. When he investigates, he sees the cats playing with the mail that has been dropped through the mail slot. One letter is from Lori Bamba, the postmistress at Mooseville, asking if he needs a part-time secretary, and another letter is from Iris Cobb, his former landlady in Down Below, applying for the housekeeping position. Excited about Mrs. Cobb's cooking, Qwill phones her and invites her to visit Pickax before making her decision. That afternoon, he meets Amanda Goodwinter, a scowling older woman who is the interior designer, and she points out everything that is wrong with the house. Amanda is offended that Qwill wants her to redecorate the servants' quarters as he plans to use one apartment as a writing studio, but she agrees to at least look at the rooms when he suggests hiring a different interior designer. Amanda recognizes the artwork of the Mull girl who used to work for her, claiming the Mulls never amount to anything. Qwill wants to ignore this room and concentrate on his studio for now. Disgusted with Qwill's plain vision for his studio, Amanda leaves grumpily. Looking at the daisy mural, Qwill laments that the artist left town. He wonders about the tune Koko played and why Koko always sits on the third step of the staircase as if guarding the house.

Chapter 3 Analysis

It is revealed that the servant who has caught Koko's interest was named Daisy Mull. Again the connections are so obvious that even Qwill begins to follow them. He asks Penelope Goodwinter, one of the estate lawyers, about her, and Penelope comments that the girl had left town. Because she does not elaborate makes one wonder if there is more to the story of this young girl who has disappeared. However, the topic of Daisy Mull was again dismissed by Amanda Goodwinter, the interior designer, when Qwill asks her about the mural. It is questionable whether Daisy was disliked by the Goodwinters for some particular reason or if she was part of a larger story all together. Meanwhile, Koko has taken to sitting on the third step as though he were guarding the house, so one must question the cat's reasons. He has also been playing with the letters that are dropped though the mail slot and delivering the mail to Qwill that he deems important..



Chapter 4

Chapter 4 Summary

Qwill retrieves Mrs. Cobb from the airport, and they catch up on gossip from Down Below and discuss Pickax. Mrs. Cobb is so delighted with the house and amazed by the antiques that she immediately decides that she wants the job, regardless of what it pays. While she rests, Qwill writes to Riker, inviting him to visit for a week, but he is disturbed by Mrs. Cobb's cries of alarm that people are stealing from the garage. Qwill explains that the interior designers are cleaning out the junk, but Mrs. Cobb recognizes valuable pieces of Americana which Qwill prevents from being taken. Mrs. Cobb is shocked that Amanda did not recognize the value of the pieces, but Qwill wonders if she did. During their walking tour of Pickax, Mrs. Cobb asks if Qwill would mind her doing appraisals for other people on the side. He introduces his new housekeeper to his attorneys, and when Penelope suggests Mrs. Cobb delay starting her job until the servants' quarters are redecorated, Qwill says Mrs. Cobb will have the French suite in the house. After Mrs. Cobb leaves the next day, Qwill reports the incident to Melinda while they dine at Otto's Tasty Eats. Melinda says Penelope must have been perturbed by the idea of Mrs. Cobb living in the house because she and Alex are snobs, leading to a discussion of the Goodwinter mystique. When Qwill asks about the Mulls, Melinda states they lack motivation and are an unfortunate social problem; the young ones often leave town and no one hears from them again or cares. Qwill invites Melinda to his home and shows her the daisy mural. Melinda is amazed that Daisy Mull designed this. In the house, Melinda is impressed by the antiques. Qwill introduces her to Yum Yum, but Koko is nowhere to be found.

Chapter 4 Analysis

Qwill goes to the airport to pick up Mrs. Cobb, who was previously his landlady, and has now applied for the position of his housekeeper. Mrs. Cobb's alarm at Amanda taking valuable pieces of Americana from the property raises suspicion about Amanda's character. It indicates her greed. The incident also shows Mrs. Cobb's loyalty to Qwill. Melinda reveals she finds her cousins, Penelope and Alex, to be snobs when Qwill confesses to Penelope's attitude over Mrs. Cobb residing within the home instead of the servants' quarters. Though the reader knows the Goodwinter family is a wealthy one, it is never ascertained as to how they acquired their wealth. So far, with the exception of Melinda, they have been discovered to be scheming by nature, which throws suspicions in their direction.



Chapter 5

Chapter 5 Summary

Qwill frantically looks for Koko as Melinda offers encouragement. When they ascend the stairs to the attic, Melinda uses canned lobster to attempt to lure out Koko. While she is gone, Qwill hears a familiar sound and finds Koko in the far corner, scratching a carton labeled "Daisy Mull". Inside, he finds winter clothes, a maid uniform and an ivory elephant from Amanda's studio. Qwill concludes that Daisy went somewhere warm with no intent to continue her career as a domestic, but he cannot fathom why she did not take the elephant with her after stealing it. When Qwill, Melinda and Koko return downstairs, Qwill confides that Koko has "an uncanny talent for finding objects of significance" (page 80). At Qwill's request, Melinda describes Daisy. She also says Qwill is an interesting man who has lived everywhere and done everything. Koko interrupts, and Qwill follows him to the mail slot, but it is the wrong time of day for a mail delivery. When Koko leads Qwill and Melinda to the front door, Melinda believes the cat is telling her to go home, so she tells Qwill that they will go to her place next time. The next morning, Qwill orders a couch from Amanda's office but gains no information when he asks her assistant about Daisy. Qwill spends the next two days answering mail and being interrupted by phone calls. Steve, the painter employed by Amanda, begins work. Qwill is discontent because Mrs. Cobb has not yet arrived, the door locks have not been fixed, Melinda has gone to Paris, and the melody of "Daisy, Daisy" plays in his head continuously. Roger MacGivillivray, a schoolteacher from Mooseville, invites Qwill to dinner at the Hotel Booze. At the house, Roger remarks about the size and maintenance of the mansion, but he is uncomfortable with Koko's scrutiny. At dinner, he tells Qwill about the local abandoned mines. They discuss Daisy and gossip about Alex having a woman in Washington. Qwill pays the check and whistles "Daisy, Daisy", causing silence. Whistling was considered bad luck in the mines, the superstition continues and Pickax city ordinance dictates no whistling.

Chapter 5 Analysis

As Qwill tries to introduce Melinda to Koko, she offers the cat a can of lobster. Koko ignores the lure as he is preoccupied with the box he discovered with Daisy's name on it and her belongings inside. Again, Qwill dismisses the significance of the items. He only questions the reason for leaving the ivory elephant after stealing it. Qwill comments once more on Koko's ability to discover items of significance, but yet again, he fails to act on the discoveries Koko is putting in front of him. Clearly, this cat has an attachment to Daisy, and although Qwill is checking out a few hunches, he has yet to ask if anything has happened to this missing girl. When Koko again goes to the mail slot and tries to get Qwill's attention, Melinda believes the interruption is based on the cat asking her to go. This very well may be as Qwill is paying attention to Melinda instead of what the cat is trying to tell him. However, the connotation that Melinda is listening to Koko, shows her interest in Qwill and her intuition. Conversely, Roger, the schoolteacher, finds Koko's

scrutiny disturbing. It is also mentioned, when Quill whistles "Daisy, Daisy," that whistling is against the town ordinance because of the superstition of it being bad luck to whistle in the mines. This hints at an ill fate for this young girl.



Chapter 6

Chapter 6 Summary

Since it is forbidden in Pickax, Qwill whistles compulsively as he prepares the cats' breakfast, causing Koko to run to the attic. Qwill chases him until Koko allows himself to be caught while sitting on a suitcase tagged "Daisy Mull". Downstairs, Qwill looks in the suitcase and finds summer clothes, jewelry, cosmetics and baby clothes. Qwill's ruminations about whether Daisy left town to have an abortion are interrupted by Mrs. Cobb's arrival. At his appointment with the attorneys that afternoon, Qwill discusses paperwork and the need for additional day help. Penelope recommends Mrs. Fulgrove. When Qwill says Birch has not contacted him, Mr. Fitch from the bank calls Birch lazy, earning a look of reproof from Penelope. At the meeting, Qwill states his intention to attend a city council meeting. After, he asks Mr. Cooper, the estate accountant, for records of the Klingenschoen domestic help and is promised the information about Daisy Mull. The next morning, Junior takes Qwill to the Dimsdale Diner to introduce him to the coffee shop society. They eavesdrop on others' conversations. When Birch good-naturedly punches Junior in the ribs before leaving, Qwill mentions that Birch is supposed to do the maintenance of the house. Junior says Birch is good but hates to work. On the ride home, they listen to news coverage on the radio, but when Junior's pager announces a fire, he drops Qwill off to walk the last few blocks home. Returning home, Mrs. Cobb reports that Mr. Cooper's office called to say Daisy Mull worked from April 3 to July 7, five years earlier. She also tells Qwill that there is a strange lady, hired by the attorneys, cleaning the rooms upstairs. Mrs. Cobb placed the personal correspondence from the desk in her bedroom to a box in the library upon which Koko is napping. One postcard is signed "Daisy Mull" and states to throw out her things because she has found a good job with good pay in Florida. It is dated July 11 and postmarked from Maryland, causing Qwill to wonder why she would travel from Cleveland to Florida through Maryland. Also, the handwriting is not the same as on the luggage tags, but that is easily explained when Mrs. Fulgrove admits that she, herself, tagged and stored the luggage. Qwill receives a letter from Mildred Hanstable inviting him to visit. The next afternoon, he drives to the shore to visit the Hanstable summer cottage because Mildred was Daisy's art teacher. Mildred tells Qwill that Daisy had talent, and she was disappointed when the girl dropped out of school and eventually left town, not even keeping in touch with her mother. When Qwill mentions the murals, Mildred expresses a desire to see them, but she frowns when he shows her the postcard from Daisy. That is definitely not Daisy's handwriting.

Chapter 6 Analysis

Koko finds yet another suitcase belonging to Daisy, only this one contains her summer wear, thus disproving Qwill's original theory that she had taken off for warmer weather. There is also baby clothing in this bag, indicating Daisy was pregnant at the time of her disappearance. Qwill's meeting with Penelope draws attention to the fact that the



contractor she had recommended, Birch, had not yet contacted Qwill. She is upset by Mr. Fitch calling the man lazy. Is this merely because she had recommended the man, or is it that she has an interest in having this man in Qwill's home? Qwill previously had this suspicion when Tiffany Trotter had applied for the housekeeper position. When Qwill returns home, he finds there is another person in his home, sent by the attorneys, cleaning the upstairs rooms. He also discovers a personal letter in a box in the library, that Koko is guarding. The postcard signed from Daisy is not in her handwriting, and furthermore, it is mailed from Maryland, when she is supposedly on her way to Florida. So now that it is confirmed that someone is going out of their way to provide Qwill with a false answer to his questions regarding Daisy Mull, the reader is left wondering why. The earlier indications that this girl suffered an ill fate are accumulating further facts that Qwill, or at least Koko, is on the right track.



Chapter 7

Chapter 7 Summary

As Qwill sits on the terrace wondering why anyone would forge a letter to Daisy's employer, Mildred explains that Daisy could not spell well and had a unique style of handwriting. Qwill asks if Daisy could have done something wrong and asked someone else to mail the card to convince people she had gone east. He wants to speak to Daisy's mother and asks Mildred to tell Della Mull that he found and wants to return Daisy's belongings. Mildred is not surprised to learn that Daisy is pregnant. Qwill is getting "some unsavory vibrations about this case" (page 116). Reaching home, Qwill is surprised to see a motorcycle at the backdoor. He enters a casual scene in the kitchen as Mrs. Cobb reads Birch's palm and the cats mill about. Qwill tells Birch what needs to be repaired before the maintenance man leaves. Mrs. Cobb believes there are ghosts in the mansion because things seem to move around mysteriously. She has started cataloguing the collection of antiques at the mansion and suggests that Qwill host a dinner party. Qwill invites her to the city council meeting. When he says he is going to take a bicycle ride, Mrs. Cobb suggests he get a new bike because it does not look right for a man of his position to be riding that piece of junk. As Qwill rides down Ittibittiwasse Road, he thinks of Birch's impudence in eating the coconut cake that Mrs. Cobb had made for Qwill's dinner. Early the next morning, Birch starts work early, blaring his radio, and he is constantly underfoot for the next few days. One afternoon, Mildred visits to praise Daisy's murals, and Qwill begins to doubt that Daisy is still alive. Birch is drinking a beer in the kitchen with Mrs. Cobb as Qwill gives Mildred a tour of the house. He asks about Mrs. Mull, and Mildred says Della seemed pretty agreeable and fairly sober when they talked. Della also received a postcard from Daisy that she was going to Florida and never coming back. Qwill plans to visit Della tomorrow. When he shows Mildred the bag of baby clothes, Mildred points out that they are homemade and look like Della's work. The next morning, Qwill decides to take Della Mull to lunch, but as he listens to the news radio on the way to Della's house, an announcement informs him that Della Mull was found dead in her trailer early this morning due to ingesting pills and an excessive amount of alcohol.

Chapter 7 Analysis

On page 116, Qwill gets some unsavory vibrations regarding this case, and as the reader, one must think "It's about time." Several suspicious occurrences have happened to indicate that Qwill is not only asking unwelcome questions, but that Daisy had not planned on disappearing. One has to wonder how observant Qwill really is. Once again, Qwill arrives home to discover someone unfamiliar in his home. This time, it is Birch, the maintenance man, and he is accompanied by Mrs. Cobb. As Birch works on the house, he seems to be always underfoot. This once again relates back to the feeling Qwill had to being spied upon. To further arouse suspicions, Della Mull, Daisy's mother, has been found dead on the very day that Qwill planned to visit her. Mrs. Cobb also

mentions she believes the house is haunted because objects are moving about, but this may be Koko, as the reader is already aware that the cat is very unusual.



Chapter 8

Chapter 8 Summary

As Qwill and Mrs. Cobb wait for Penelope to pick them up, Mrs. Cobb tells Qwill that Tiffany Trotter called because she wants to talk to him about Daisy Mull. When she picks them up, Penelope tells Qwill that everyone endorses his idea for the Klingenschoen Foundation. The city council meeting begins with the Pledge of Allegiance, but Mr. Hackpole causes a debate because Pickax's flag, donated by Miss Klingenschoen, has only forty eight stars. This is a violation of the flag code. When Qwill addresses the council at the end of the meeting, he suggests that the flag be preserved as a memorial to the original donor, and he will pay for a new, equally extravagant flag. He cites his intention to eventually donate the Klingenschoen mansion to the city as a museum, Meanwhile, the collection is being catalogued by Mrs. Cobb who will serve as the museum's curator. When Penelope declines a nightcap and Mrs. Cobb excuses herself for a good cry, Qwill goes to the library and calls Lori to accept her offer to be a part-time secretary. When he asks her opinion of why Koko always sits on the third step, she suggests that cats like to mark their territory. Just as Qwill is finishing a letter around 10:30, he hears a snatch of music which he recognizes as the opening notes of "Three Blind Mice." He strongly feels that there is some significance to the number three. The next morning, Amanda arrives to check on her painter, and Qwill gives her the ivory elephant which she tells him to keep. As she leaves, Amanda tells him to watch his step in Pickax because the town likes to gossip. She also warns him not to be fooled by her cousins' phony Goodwinter charm. After he feeds the cats breakfast, Tiffany Trotter arrives. She was very good friends with Daisy and was shocked that Daisy left town without telling her or even writing. She tells Qwill about Daisy, including that she wanted the baby. Daisy wanted to get married but the guy did not. When Qwill asks if Tiffany thinks something bad happened to Daisy, she replies that it was strange that Daisy did not tell her she was going away. Tiffany came because nobody else cared. Birch interrupts to promise that he will put a lock on the back door tomorrow, which causes a wordless reaction from Tiffany. Qwill puzzles over this after she leaves. Qwill curses himself for not asking Tiffany how she knew of his interest in Daisy. He decides that something is going on that he does not know about and Tiffany knows something she is not telling.

Chapter 8 Analysis

Qwill's address at the town meeting and his presentation of the new flag seems to have gained him admiration of the town's historic families. Also, his announcement that the mansion will be donated as a museum for the city, casts him in good standing. Mrs. Cobb tells Qwill that Tiffany Trotter has called to set a meeting with him to discuss Daisy Mull. Since this is the very woman he had suspected of coming to spy on him, one has to wonder what this talk may entail. Again our attention is brought to Koko's unusual behavior of playing "Three Blind Mice" and sitting on the third step of the staircase. This



is reminiscent of the cat's playing the song "Daisy, Daisy," his attraction to Daisy's items, and the daisy mural on the wall. Tiffany's arrival reveals that Daisy had wanted the baby and to marry the father, but that the father had not wanted either of these. She also states she believes something bad has happened to Daisy, indicating that this may be a conclusion drawn by more than one person in town. This is paired with Amanda's warning to Qwill that he watch his step since this is a small town and people are prone to gossip. Everyone at this point, however, seems to be keeping their thoughts and rumors to themselves. Qwill's interest in Daisy Mull has been noticed, as Tiffany came to him without his contacting her. She explained that she had done so since no one else seemed to care.



Chapter 9

Chapter 9 Summary

As Qwill and Melinda dine at the Old Stone Mill, they discuss Mayor Blythe, who was the local high school principal until he got involved with some of his female students a few years back. They also discuss Mrs. Cobb's arrival, Birch's repairs and Koko sitting on the third step of the staircase. When Qwill tells Melinda that he is considering having a dinner party he asks her to act as hostess. She becomes very excited as she expresses the need for a string trio, fancy food and actors to play butlers and footmen. She will plan everything, and Qwill will only have to pay the bills. When Qwill arrives home, he hears Koko severely scolding. Qwill then finds a stepstool situated unaccountably in the center of the kitchen. When he tells Mrs. Cobb the next morning, she says she also heard someone playing the piano after the lights were out last night. After phoning Penelope, Alex, Amanda and Junior with dinner invitations, Qwill attends the Pickax Boosters Club luncheon. He addresses the club about the aims of the Klingenschoen Foundation. After the meeting, the hardware merchant commends Qwill on installing a lock on the backdoor because it is "not a bad idea, the way things are going" (page 157). The police chief mentions that there was a big cave-in at one of the local mines on the night Daisy disappeared. When Qwill picks Arch up from the airport, he tells his friend about how Koko likes to play post office, bringing the letters he deems important to Qwill. They hear a report on the radio about a girl being killed when her tractor overturned. Arch is amazed by the grandeur of the mansion, and after gossiping about people they know from Down Below, the two men go to the Old Stone Mill for dinner. At the same time, Mrs. Cobb attends a meeting of the Historical Society. Qwill tells Arch about the mystery surrounding Daisy Mull's disappearance, and when they return home shortly after dark, four notes from the beginning of Beethoven's "Fifth Symphony" resound from the piano. At 11 p.m., they listen to the WPRX news and hear that Tiffany Trotter was killed by a gunshot wound. The police are investigating the homicide.

Chapter 9 Analysis

During dinner with Melinda, Qwill again mentions Koko's habit of perching on the third step, clearly indicating that whatever Koko is doing, it is not going unnoticed by Qwill. Unfortunately, he is unable to understand its meaning. Upon Qwill's arrival home, Koko draws his attention to a stool sitting in the middle of the room. The next day, after the meeting, the police chief mentions a cave-in at one of the local mines the night Daisy disappeared, marking the coincidence, and later that night, Qwill hears that Tiffany was killed by a gunshot wound that the police are investigating. Earlier, Qwill had lengthy conversations about Daisy with two people. Later, both of them coincidentally turned up dead in a town noted for having no crimes.



Chapter 10

Chapter 10 Summary

In Chapter 10, Qwill spends a sleepless night, worrying about the dinner party and the fact that Tiffany's murder could mean he is on the right track. Arch warns him that he may be on someone's hit list. In the morning, Amanda calls to tell Qwill that she will find a new painter because Steve was Tiffany's husband. Furthermore, the chief of police believes Tiffany was killed by a tourist, a sniper with a high-powered rifle. As Qwill and Arch walk downtown, they visit the "Picayune", the local newspaper office, before going to the attorneys' office where Qwill asks Penelope about Tiffany's murder. He suggests establishing a scholarship as a memorial. Penelope seems very edgy during the conversation. When Qwill returns home, there is an unfamiliar truck in the driveway. It belongs to Steve's cousin who will resume painting while the police are questioning Steve. Mrs. Cobb is happy that she was able to provide Steve with an alibi because he was painting at Klingenschoen mansion at the time of Tiffany's murder. She tells Qwill that Koko has been scratching at the closet door where Daisy's suitcase is stored. Qwill goes through the suitcase and finds a thousand dollars in the torn lining. He does not believe Daisy would have left town without such a large sum, so he promises himself another chat with the police chief after his dinner party.

In Chapter 11, the house is in turmoil and Qwill is nervous on the day of the dinner party. When Hackpole's dog tries to attack him during his bike ride, Qwill makes a complaint to Chief Brodie before returning home to dress for the party. The guests begin to arrive around 7 p.m., and amidst the greetings, introductions and general pleasantries, Amanda jokes about the Duke and Duchess' arrival, referring to Penelope and Alex. Penelope apologizes to Qwill for her curtness yesterday, and they discuss his plan to gift the mansion to Pickax as a museum. When Qwill mentions the local mines, he learns that the big cave-in a few years back occurred at Three Pines. Mildred talks to Alex about Daisy leaving town, and he says many young women leave their humdrum existence in small towns and successfully assimilate into urban life. At the end of dinner, Qwill praises Mrs. Cobb's cooking and invites her to join them for dessert. Roger tells stories about the Klingenschoen Saloon before the party breaks up and the guests disperse. Melinda jokes about Penelope's reaction when Qwill invited the cook to the dinner table. When Qwill asks Melinda if she knows anything about Three Pines Mine, she informs him that the shaft house is a notorious lover's lair.

Chapter 10 Analysis

Qwill spends the night worrying about Tiffany's murder indicating he is on the right track. He also recalls Arch's warning that he may be on someone's hit list, a forewarning that has obviously proven true by the accident, which occurred in the first chapter. The only question is, whose hit list? When Qwill extends the idea to Penelope of a memorial scholarship in Tiffany's name, he wonders why she seems on edge. Upon his arrival home,



Qwill discovers that Koko has been back to the closet where Daisy's suitcase is stored. When Qwill goes through the contents of the suitcase again, he discovers a thousand dollars in the torn lining and concludes that Daisy would not have left such a sum behind. He is finally convinced that Daisy may have encountered nefarious actions. During his dinner party, Qwill learns that the cave-in that occurred the day Daisy disappeared was at a place called Three Pines, reminding the reader of Koko playing "Three Blind Mice" on the piano. Later, when he asks Melinda if she knows anything about Three Pines, she reveals that it was a notorious lover's spot. Since we know that Daisy had a lover, by whom she was pregnant and wanted to marry, it would have been easy for her to be lured to this place. She then might have been buried in the mine during the cave-in. But we have yet to discover who this mystery lover is and if he is the same person who attacked Qwill.



Chapter 12

Chapter 12 Summary

As Qwill drives Arch to the airport the day after his dinner party, Arch advises him to buy the "Picayune", marry Melinda, and quit hunting for Daisy Mull. Although Arch often discourages his investigations, Qwill believes he may be right this time as he has found no evidence. He sees Tiffany's funeral procession as he nears Klingenschoen mansion, and all of the party guests except Penelope call to praise the dinner. He writes a letter of condolences to Steve Trotter, along with the offer of an annual scholarship in Tiffany's name. Mrs. Cobb reports that Mrs. Fulgrove, who works for the Goodwinters several days a week, overheard Penelope and Alex arguing terribly, though she could not hear the topic. The conversation is interrupted by Birch's loud music. After three days of rain, Steve visits unexpectedly after breakfast. Obviously drunk, he blames Qwill for Tiffany's death because of his interest in Daisy's disappearance. Mrs. Cobb summons Birch who drives Steve home with Qwill following in order to drive Birch back home. Discussing the nice weather, Qwill plans to take his bike out that afternoon, and Birch intends to quit work by noon so he can go fishing. That afternoon, Qwill receives a thank you card from Penelope and wonders what Steve was trying to tell him about Tiffany's murderer and what happened to Daisy Mull. Realizing that Koko has never experienced Daisy's murals, Qwill takes him to Daisy's apartment where Koko chases a housefly. When the fly falls between the mattress and the wall, Qwill pulls the bed away from the wall, enabling Koko to dive into the crevice. Qwill peers into the crevice and retrieves a notebook, which he realizes is actually a diary. The writing is illegible, so he plans to take it to the library after his bike ride. He will ask Mildred to attempt to translate it. He then notices that the mural contains the initials "S. G.", and looking through the phonebook, Qwill guesses that Sam Gafner, the real estate broker, is the most likely candidate as the object of Daisy's affections. As he leaves to take his bike ride, Mrs. Cobb tells him to be careful and reiterates his need for a new bike. Qwill enjoys the quiet and solitude of Ittibittiwasse Road, but as he approaches the ruins of the Buckshot Mine, a truck's motor roars in a sudden burst of speed as it bears down on him. He swerves into a ditch and climbs out, dazed and bleeding. A car stops, and a man takes Qwill to the hospital where, tired, he sleeps, waking the next day in a strange bed in a strange room.

Chapter 12 Analysis

Arch advises Qwill to cease his investigations, as there is no evidence of his suspicions. When Steve Trotter blames Qwill for the death of his wife over the same investigations, Qwill knows he cannot stop because he needs to find the culprit, if only to ease his own conscience. Mrs. Cobb reports the rumor that Alex and Penelope Goodwinter had a terrible argument. This further demonstrates that this town talks about everything except Daisy Mull. Qwill takes Koko to visit the mural as Koko has had so many other discoveries that perhaps he can shed more light on this mystery. As if on the hunt, Koko

chases a fly which results in Qwill finding an illegible diary written by Daisy. He also notices that the mural contains the initials S.G. As Birch prepares to drive Steve home, Qwill decides to take a bike ride and think, but during the ride he is driven off the road by a truck that gunned its engine and aimed for him. Clearly, Qwill has been asking the right questions and someone wants him to stop.



Chapter 13

Chapter 13 Summary

Qwill talks to Melinda before being released from the hospital, and she says strange things are going on in Moose County. Rather than tell the police about the truck, Qwill decides remain vigilant. When Arch picks him up from the hospital, Qwill tells his friend that he believes his accident was an attempt on his life. He believes it was the family from New Jersey who would inherit the Klingenschoen fortune if he dies before living in Moose County for five years. Arch advises him to relinquish the fortune, but Qwill does not want the money to leave Moose County. After listening to the gossip at the Dimsdale Diner, Riker takes Qwill home before driving to the airport. The cats greet Qwill distrustfully because he smells like the hospital. When he goes to the attorneys' office for his appointment, Penelope seems shaken by his accident. She then confirms that the estate would go to the New Jersey family if he dies. Despite the fact that Miss Klingenschoen's will fails to grant him the necessary power, Qwill decides to write a will dictating that the money stays in Moose County. Further, he asks Penelope to demand an investigation if he dies. At breakfast the next morning, Mrs. Cobb shares Mrs. Fulgrove's report that Penelope and Alex had another fight about mosquitoes, a woman and a dead body. Since Mrs. Cobb has a date tonight with Mr. Hackpole, she suggests Qwill invite Junior over for dinner. When Nick Bamba brings the first batch of Lori's letters for Qwill to sign, he also reports seeing Alex handing Birch a large sum of cash and suspects that they sell more than food at the diner. He expresses doubts that Alex is an upstanding citizen. Before Junior arrives, Qwill feeds the cats, but Koko still treats him with distrust. Junior tells Qwill that Mr. Hackpole was a bully in school and worked out east for a while before coming home to Pickax. Junior also asks Qwill to talk to Penelope because he is worried about her as she has been drinking a lot lately. After Junior has to leave to extinguish a fire, Penelope phones, requesting to pay a visit and bring a bottle.

Chapter 13 Analysis

Now we have returned to the beginning of the tale and covered the events leading up to Qwill being in the hospital. Qwill tells his friend Arch that he believes the attack was by those who would obtain the fortune he received should he pass away. That is a plausible reason, but it does not hold as much merit as his current investigations. Penelope is openly shaken by Qwill's accident and she confirmed his suspicions that the family in New Jersey would stand to inherit the fortune should something happen to him. Koko shows his irritation at Qwill's unjustified suspicions regarding the family in New Jersey. Penelope's request to visit foreshadows her confiding in Qwill about her disagreements with Alex.



Chapter 14

Chapter 14 Summary

When Penelope arrives, Qwill notes that she looks tired and suggests she take a vacation. As they enjoy idle conversation, he notices that she is getting drunk and, slipping into an investigative role, asks about Alex. Penelope admits that Alex's Washington trips are not all business and he plans to bring a new woman, Miss Smfska, into the firm as a partner. Penelope claims this will happen over her dead body. She also laments Alex's intention to sully the Goodwinter name by marrying Miss Smfska. When Penelope begins to feel ill due to the excessive amount of alcohol she drinks, Qwill drives her home to Alex. Thinking about Mrs. Fulgrove's report, Qwill concludes that Penelope is overreacting to the threat of Miss Smfska as a professional partner and sister-in-law. As he approaches the house, he is relieved to see that Mrs. Cobb has returned safely from her date. He concludes that Koko is the one who has been moving things when he sees the cat nudging the litter box across the floor. The next morning, Mildred visits and deciphers Daisy's diary. The diary mentions that the ivory elephant was a Christmas gift from Rick, and Daisy was very depressed until she got a job with the Goodwinters on January 15. By April, she is employed at the Klingenschoen mansion and is in love with Sandy. On April 13, Daisy believes she is pregnant and sketches wedding dresses, but she cries that entire night because Sandy wants her to have an abortion and even provides money to pay for it. Della advises Daisy to keep the baby and make Sandy pay. After Qwill walks Mildred to her car, he returns to the library to find the desk drawer open and the envelope with the money missing. He finds the envelope in Koko's mouth and wonders why the cat went to such trouble to get it. Koko has been reserved and remote toward Qwill since the accident. Late that night, at 2 a.m., Qwill's reading is interrupted by Koko's prolonged wailing from the solarium. Qwill soothes Koko, apologizes for being distracted and asks to be friends again. Four hours later, Qwill will find out what Koko's lamentation is all about.

Chapter 14 Analysis

Penelope's visit fulfills the earlier foreshadowing from the end of the previous chapter as she confides in Qwill about Alex's relationship with Miss Smfska from Washington. Her drunkenness demonstrates the degree of her angst. Qwill realizes that Koko is the one who has been moving things when he sees the cat nudging his litter box across the floor. Mildred visits and translates Daisy's diary, revealing that Daisy's lover is Sandy, though no one knows who Sandy might be. Koko's actions draw attention to the money left in Daisy's suitcase. Koko also alerts Qwill to some misfortune at 2 a.m., foreshadowing the discovery of the cause of Koko's lamentation in the next chapter.



Chapter 15

Chapter 15 Summary

At 6 a.m., Melinda wakes Qwill when she phones to tell him that Penelope has committed suicide. Though Qwill is upset, he is not surprised, and he distracts himself that morning and afternoon by typing catalog cards for Mrs. Cobb. After work, Melinda visits and tells Qwill that Alex is taking his sister's death very hard and is upset at himself for being at a bachelor party last night instead of at home. Penelope died at 2 a.m. and did not leave a note. After dinner, as Qwill walks down Goodwinter Boulevard, Amanda invites him in, and he ponders whether Penelope really committed suicide, leaving Amanda wondering if her cousin was murdered. Qwill asks Amanda to keep his suspicions secret and to phone him if she thinks of a possible clue. In the morning, following a night of fitful sleep, Qwill continues typing the catalog cards as he and the cats anxiously await the mail delivery. He allows the cats to play with the mail when he hears it being dropped through the slot, and Koko brings Qwill a letter from Penelope, dated two days before. Penelope wrote the letter and instructed Mrs. Fulgrove to mail it in the event of her sudden demise as she hopes to save Qwill's life. She admits that she has always loved Alex irrationally. She felt betrayed five years earlier when she learned that Alex was having an affair with Daisy Mull, so she dismissed Daisy immediately. However, the situation worsened when Daisy revealed that she was pregnant and expected "Sandy" (her nickname for Alex) to marry her. Daisy refused to have an abortion. Desperate, Penelope approached Birch, a former school bully, and asked him to convince Daisy to change her mind. Daisy's departure was accompanied by the cave-in at Three Pines Mine, and afterward, Birch informed Penelope that Daisy was buried within the mine. Though no amount of remorse could undo what had already been done, at least Penelope and Alex felt safe until Qwill arrived with his suspicions. Alex and Birch agree to silence the two witnesses, Della Mull and Tiffany Trotter. Penelope reluctantly agrees. Qwill is correct in suspecting a plot against his life as Alex and his accomplice attempted to kill him. Penelope's guilt and fear are only made bearable by the knowledge that she saved her family from scandal, but Alex's intended marriage is more than Penelope can bear. She confronted and threatened Alex, but the rage and vengeance in his eyes convinces Penelope that she has made a fatal mistake. Now, Penelope fears for her life. She prepares letters for the prosecutors and media about the deaths of Daisy Mull, Della Mull and Tiffany Trotter. Qwill is not safe and the future of Moose County is at stake until these two men are brought to justice.

Chapter 15 Analysis

Koko's foreshadowing is fulfilled when Melinda wakes Qwill to tell him about Penelope's suicide which occurred at 2 a.m., precisely when Koko wailed in the solarium. When the mail arrives, Koko delivers a letter from Penelope to Qwill, obviously deeming it to be important. Penelope's letter reveals the facts of Daisy's disappearance which, in fact, was murder. Penelope admits that Daisy was pregnant with Alex's child, and Penelope

paid Birch to silence her to protect the Goodwinter name. Furthermore, Penelope admits that Alex and Birch conspired to kill Della and Tiffany to ensure that their secret was kept. Penelope claims a desire to see these two men brought to justice.



Chapter 16

Chapter 16 Summary

Qwill's frightening dream of global war is interrupted by the shriek of a bomb and loud thuds. He stumbles from bed and opens his door, allowing Koko to hurtle inside. Koko runs to the staircase with Qwill following. When Qwill reaches the library, he hears the back door being unlocked and opened, and a dark figure moves through the hallway. Qwill grabs a pickax and prepares to strike the intruder. Instead, the intruder falls as a ceramic vase crashes onto the stone floor. When Mrs. Cobb rushes downstairs at the noise, Qwill instructs her to phone the police as the man lies prone, groaning, with one foot in the litter box. Koko sniffs at the pocket of his old army jacket. The next day while they have dinner at Stephanie's, Qwill tells Melinda that Koko "never ceases to amaze [him]" (page 253). Koko knew someone was going to break in, pushed his litter box to a spot where the guy was sure to trip over it, and tried to get into Qwill's room. When Qwill called on Melinda at her father's house, Dr. Goodwinter told him that the man, now a police prisoner, had stolen morphine and needles from Dr. Goodwinter's office. When Birch installed the lock on the back door, he made an extra key for himself. He hid his truck, which Qwill recognizes as the one that ran him off Ittibittiwassie Road, in the barn and waited for a moonless night. Qwill suspects that Birch was going to haul his body to one of the old mine sites and dump him down a shaft. Qwill also assumes that Birch drugged Penelope's scotch and carried her to the garage while Alex was establishing his alibi at the bachelor party. Melinda toasts Qwill for "exposing a deplorable crime" (page 256). She had guessed at the relationship between Penelope and Alex but had never guessed that they would collaborate in murder. Alex no longer needed Penelope for his career since he found another brilliant woman with Washington connections. No one thought to question Daisy Mull's disappearance until Qwill came to Pickax. Qwill credits Koko with sniffing out the clues, although Qwill had compared Daisy's postcard to Penelope's thank you card several days ago. Though disguised, some of the letter formations gave away the forgery. Birch and Alex may have done the dirty work, but Penelope was definitely the mastermind behind the operation. Qwill believes that she hired Birch as the maintenance man to spy on him. Qwill did not suspect Penelope at the time even though he noticed that she changed the subject whenever he mentioned Daisy. He simply suspected that she did not approve of discussing servants. When he admits puzzlement at Penelope's rejection of his lunch and dinner invitations, Melinda confesses to threatening Penelope to stay away from Qwill. Qwill was wrong about the New Jersey connection trying to eliminate him for the inheritance. That's what happens when he jumps to his own conclusions instead of taking his signals from Koko. Qwill swears that Koko has sixteen senses. Koko communicates, but Qwill is not smart enough to read him. Koko was disgusted with Qwill for days when Qwill suspected the family from New Jersey. When Qwill points out that Penelope, Tiffany and Della would still be alive if he had never started investigating Daisy's disappearance, Melinda responds that Alex and Birch would not be brought to justice either. After dinner, Qwill walks Melinda back to her father's house where he learns that Alex's private plane has just crashed fifty miles south of the airport. Qwill returns home and talks to Koko,



wondering if the clues were a coincidence. Koko bounds to the library and plays "How Dry I Am" on the piano. Qwill realizes that he will never figure his cat out. Koko is all cat, yet he manages to sense out the most incredible secrets. Qwill asks if Koko knew Penelope was going to be murdered, but when Koko stares at him penetratingly, Qwill slaps his head: "It wasn't a homicide set up to look like a suicide. She framed those guys! It was suicide planned to look like murder!" (page 262). Satisfied, Koko resumes bathing himself.

Chapter 16 Analysis

Koko wakes Qwill to warn him that their home is being invaded, thus saving Qwill's life. By moving the litter box in the intruder's path, Koko has assisted in capturing Birch. The next day, Qwill and Melinda discuss the case and Koko's intuition. Qwill praises his cat for sniffing out the clues while Melinda is shocked at the depth of her cousins' malignance. Qwill blames his suspicions of the New Jersey family for Koko's obvious disgust. Dr. Goodwinter tells Qwill that Alex has died in a plane crash. At home, Qwill wonders about Koko but realizes that he will never fully understand his cat. Koko's penetrating stare causes Qwill to realize that Penelope committed suicide but designed it to look like murder in order to frame Alex and Birch. This fact leaves the reader wondering whether Alex was involved in any of the scheme or if he was simply framed by his sister as part of her attempt to prevent him from marrying Miss Smfska.



Characters

Koko

Koko is Qwill's male Siamese cat with aristocratic sensibilities and an epicurean appetite. Although Qwill is credited with assisting the police in *Down Below* on several investigations, it is actually Koko who sniffs out the clues. Shortly before Qwill finds the daisy mural in the servants' quarters, Koko plays the tune "Daisy, Daisy" on the piano. Koko is nowhere to be found while Qwill gives Melinda a tour of the mansion, but Qwill eventually finds the cat in a far corner of the attic, scratching a carton labeled "Daisy Mull" which contains winter clothes, a maid uniform and an ivory elephant from Amanda's studio. When Qwill, Melinda and Koko return downstairs, Qwill confides that Koko has "an uncanny talent for finding objects of significance" (page 80). Koko also kicks Melinda out that night. Another day, Koko runs to the attic, and Qwill chases him until Koko allows himself to be caught while sitting on a suitcase tagged "Daisy Mull" which contains summer clothes, jewelry, cosmetics and baby clothes. Koko has an odd affinity for sitting on the third stair of the staircase. When Mrs. Cobb places a box of correspondence on the library desk, Koko sleeps on it until Qwill finds the postcard signed "Daisy Mull" which states to throw out her things because she has found a good job with good pay in Florida. Koko also plays the opening notes to "Three Blind Mice". The beginning of Beethoven's "Fifth Symphony" resound from the piano shortly before Qwill discovers that Tiffany Trotter has been murdered. Koko scratches at the closet door where Qwill hides Daisy's suitcase until Qwill finds a thousand dollars in the torn lining.

Realizing that Koko has never experienced Daisy's murals, Qwill takes him to Daisy's apartment where Koko chases a housefly. When the fly falls between the mattress and the wall, Qwill pulls the bed away from the wall, enabling Koko to dive into the crevice. A familiar tingling sensation on his upper lip, Qwill peers into the crevice and retrieves a notebook, taking it to the library. After Qwill's stint in the hospital, Koko treats him coldly and with disdain. Late the night that Penelope visits and complains about Alex's woman in Washington, at 2 a.m., Qwill's reading is interrupted by Koko's prolonged wailing from the solarium. Qwill soothes Koko, apologizes for being distracted and asks to be friends again. Four hours later, Qwill will find out what Koko's lamentation is all about. After Qwill walks Mildred to her car after she interprets Daisy's diary, he returns to the library to find the desk drawer open and the envelope with the money missing. He finds the envelope in Koko's mouth and wonders why the cat went to such trouble to get it. Koko has been reserved and remote toward Qwill since the accident. Koko often brings mail that he considers important to Qwill; one such example is when he delivers Penelope's letter which arrives two days after she commits suicide.

When Birch sneaks into the house, Koko wakes Qwill, saving him. The next day, Qwill tells Melinda that Koko "never ceases to amaze [him]" (page 253). Koko knew someone was going to break in, pushed his litter box to a spot where the guy was sure to trip over it, and tried to get into Qwill's room. Qwill credits Koko with sniffing out the clues, and



Qwill was wrong about the New Jersey connection trying to eliminate him for the inheritance, and that is what happens when he jumps to his own conclusions instead of taking his signals from Koko. Qwill swears that Koko has sixteen senses. Koko communicates, but Qwill is not smart enough to read him. Koko was disgusted with Qwill for days when Qwill suspects the family from New Jersey. Qwill returns home and talks to Koko, wondering if the clues were a coincidence. Koko bounds to the library and plays "How Dry I Am" on the piano. Qwill realizes that he will never figure his cat out; Koko is all cat, yet he manages to sense out the most incredible secrets. Qwill asks if Koko knew Penelope was going to be murdered, but when Koko stares at him penetratingly, Qwill slaps his head: "It wasn't a homicide set up to look like a suicide. She framed those guys! It was suicide planned to look like murder!" (page 262). Satisfied, Koko resumes bathing himself.

Jim Qwilleran

Jim Qwilleran is a frugal bachelor and writer for the Daily Fluxion while he lives in Down Below. His sole extravagance is his two Siamese cats, Koko and Yum Yum. While he is vacationing in Mooseville, he learns that he has inherited the Klingenschoen fortune, and as mandated by the will, he moves to the Klingenschoen mansion in Pickax. Since he needs to hire a housekeeper, Qwill employs Mrs. Cobb, his former landlady from Down Below. Qwill has no desire to have a lot of money; he only wants to be able to write with minimal interruption, and he plans to distribute the surplus income within Moose County in the form of grants, scholarships, etc. Qwill dates Melinda Goodwinter.

Qwill becomes interested in Daisy Mull, a former domestic who mysteriously left town five years earlier, and begins investigating her disappearance. Koko, his cat, leads him to several clues scattered throughout the house, further piquing Qwill's interest. He questions Mildred Hanstable, Daisy's former art teacher, who leads him to Della Mull, but Della is killed before Qwill can speak with her. When Tiffany Trotter approaches Qwill about Daisy's murder, she is murdered the next day. Qwill hosts a dinner party at the Klingenschoen mansion which is greatly praised. When Koko leads Qwill to a diary in Daisy's apartment, Qwill is unable to read it and convinces Mildred to translate it for him. When Qwill takes a bike ride on Ittibittiwassie Road, a truck tries to run him off the road, and he winds up in the hospital. Penelope confides in Qwill about her brother's intentions to marry Miss. Smfska, and after she commits suicide, Qwill receives a letter from Penelope which details her involvement in Daisy Mull's disappearance. When Birch attempts to break into the Klingenschoen mansion, Koko wakes Qwill, protecting his owner. Qwill praises Koko greatly, even admitting that Koko communicates, but Qwill is not smart enough to understand.

Daisy Mull

Daisy Mull is the former domestic that worked at the Klingenschoen mansion. She paints murals of daisies on her wall which intrigue Qwill, causing him to investigate her disappearance five years earlier. Daisy is talented at art and is taught by Mildred



Hanstable. When she drops out of school, she begins working at Amanda Goodwinter's interior design studio until she is fired. Daisy has an affair with Alex Goodwinter while she is employed by Alex and Penelope as a domestic, and Penelope fires her when she learns of Alex's indiscretion. Daisy begins working at the Klingenschoen mansion and discovers that she is pregnant. She decides to keep the baby even though Alex refuses to marry her and wants her to get an abortion. Penelope pays Birch to convince Daisy to have an abortion, but instead, Birch kills Daisy and buries her in Three Pines Mine.

Arch Riker

Arch Riker is Qwill's best friend who lives in Down Below. When he visits Qwill in Pickax, he discourages Qwill's investigation into the disappearance of Daisy Mull.

Dr. Melinda Goodwinter

Melinda Goodwinter is Qwill's jealous girlfriend in Pickax who plans Qwill's dinner party during which she acts as hostess.

Yum Yum

Yum Yum is Qwill's female Siamese cat with aristocratic sensibilities and an epicurean appetite.

Mrs. Iris Cobb

Mrs. Cobb is Qwill's widowed landlady in Down Below who moves to Pickax to become his housekeeper at the Klingenschoen mansion. She catalogues the antiques in the mansion, cooks excellent meals and attends meetings of the Pickax Historical Society.

Penelope Goodwinter

Penelope Goodwinter is one of the snobby attorneys of the Klingenschoen estate. After she commits suicide, Qwill receives a letter from her that details her involvement in Daisy Mull's disappearance.

Alex Goodwinter

Alex Goodwinter is one of the snobby attorneys of the Klingenschoen estate. When he impregnates Daisy, his sister pays Birch to convince the girl to abort the child. Alex conspires with Birch to silence Della Mull and Tiffany Trotter when Qwill begins investigating Daisy's disappearance.



Junior Goodwinter

Junior Goodwinter is the editor of the Picayune and a volunteer fireman who finds and helps Qwill after the bike accident on Ittibittiwasse Road.

Amanda Goodwinter

Amanda Goodwinter is a scowling, gray-haired interior designer who used to employ Daisy Mull. She redecorates the servants' quarters of the Klingenschoen mansion.

Mrs. Fulgrove

Mrs. Fulgrove is a scrawny woman who virtually vibrates with energy and nervousness. She assists Mrs. Cobb in her housekeeping duties and also works part-time for Alex and Penelope which allows her to inform Mrs. Cobb of their arguments.

Birch Trevelyan

Birch Trevelyan is the maintenance man hired by Penelope and Alex to repair the doors and locks in the Klingenschoen mansion. He plays loud music and hates to work. He spies on Qwill because of Qwill's interest in Daisy Mull's disappearance since he was the one to actually kill and bury the girl. Birch also conspires with Alex to silence Della and Tiffany, and he tries to kill Qwill on two occasions.

Mildred Hanstable

Mildred Hanstable is Daisy's former art teacher who tells Qwill about Daisy and translates Daisy's diary for him.

Della Mull

Della Mull is Daisy's alcoholic mother who Birch kills before Qwill can speak to her about Daisy's disappearance.

Mr. Hackpole

Mr. Hackpole is a problem-maker in Pickax who Qwill suspects is involved in Daisy's disappearance.



Tiffany Trotter

Tiffany Trotter is Daisy's friend who talks to Qwill about Daisy's disappearance, but Birch kills her before she can meet with Qwill again.

Steve Trotter

Steve Trotter is the painter at the Klingenschoen mansion and Tiffany's husband. He blames Qwill for his wife's death.



Objects/Places

Pickax

Pickax is the small town where Qwill moves after inheriting the Klingenschoen fortune, and this is the main setting of the novel.

Moose County

Moose County is where Pickax is located, and Miss Klingenschoen's will dictates that Qwill live in Moose County for five years or forfeit the inheritance.

Down Below

Qwill lives in Down Below before inheriting the Klingenschoen estate.

Mooseville

Mooseville is a small town near Pickax where Qwill is vacationing when he learns about inheriting the Klingenschoen fortune.

Klingenschoen Mansion

Qwill lives in the Klingenschoen mansion in Pickax which is full of antiques which belong to the estate.

Pickax Hospital

After his bike accident, Qwill awakes at the Pickax Hospital, unsure of who or where he is.

Daily Fluxion

The Daily Fluxion is the newspaper that Qwill worked for in Down Below before inheriting the Klingenschoen fortune.

Ittibittiwasse Road

Qwill frequently rides his bike down Ittibittiwasse Road, and this is where he is run off the road.



Murals

Qwill is fascinated by the murals of daisies, painted in the servants' quarters above the garage by Daisy Mull, and this interest leads to the investigation into her mysterious disappearance.

Mail

After inheriting the Klingenschoen fortune, Qwill receives a lot of mail which is delivered through the mail slot. The cats like to play with the mail, and Koko brings Qwill the mail that he deems important.

Postcard

Qwill finds a postcard from Daisy Mull, postmarked in Maryland, which claims that she is going to Florida. Mildred tells Qwill that it is not written in Daisy's handwriting as soon as she sees it, and he later recognizes the handwriting as Penelope's in disguise.

Three Pines Mine

Three Pines Mine is a mine near Pickax that collapsed the same night that Daisy Mull disappeared. Qwill eventually learns that Birch Trevelyan buried Daisy in the mine.

WPKX

WPKX is the radio station that Qwill frequently tunes into to hear the news. This is how he learns about Della Mull's death and Tiffany Trotter's murder.

Daisy's Diary

Koko finds Daisy's diary in her apartment between the mattress and the wall. It is indecipherable to Qwill, but Mildred translates it for him. It contains diary entries about "Sandy" and her pregnancy.



Themes

Koko's Investigation

Although Qwill is credited with assisting the police in *Down Below* on several investigations, it is actually Koko who sniffs out the clues. Shortly before Qwill finds the daisy mural in the servants' quarters, Koko plays the tune "Daisy, Daisy" on the piano. Koko is nowhere to be found while Qwill gives Melinda a tour of the mansion, but Qwill eventually finds the cat in a far corner of the attic, scratching a carton labeled "Daisy Mull" which contains winter clothes, a maid uniform and an ivory elephant from Amanda's studio. When Qwill, Melinda and Koko return downstairs, Qwill confides that Koko has "an uncanny talent for finding objects of significance" (page 80). Koko also kicks Melinda out that night. Another day, Koko runs to the attic, and Qwill chases him until Koko allows himself to be caught while sitting on a suitcase tagged "Daisy Mull" which contains summer clothes, jewelry, cosmetics and baby clothes. Koko has an odd affinity for sitting on the third stair of the staircase. When Mrs. Cobb places a box of correspondence on the library desk, Koko sleeps on it until Qwill finds the postcard signed "Daisy Mull" which states to throw out her things because she has found a good job with good pay in Florida. Koko also plays the opening notes to "Three Blind Mice". The beginning of Beethoven's "Fifth Symphony" resound from the piano shortly before Qwill discovers that Tiffany Trotter has been murdered. Koko scratches at the closet door where Qwill hides Daisy's suitcase until Qwill finds a thousand dollars in the torn lining.

Realizing that Koko has never experienced Daisy's murals, Qwill takes him to Daisy's apartment where Koko chases a housefly. When the fly falls between the mattress and the wall, Qwill pulls the bed away from the wall, enabling Koko to dive into the crevice. A familiar tingling sensation on his upper lip, Qwill peers into the crevice and retrieves a notebook, taking it to the library. After Qwill's stint in the hospital, Koko treats him coldly and with disdain. Late the night that Penelope visits and complains about Alex's woman in Washington, at 2 a.m., Qwill's reading is interrupted by Koko's prolonged wailing from the solarium. Qwill soothes Koko, apologizes for being distracted and asks to be friends again. Four hours later, Qwill will find out what Koko's lamentation is all about. After Qwill walks Mildred to her car after she interprets Daisy's diary, he returns to the library to find the desk drawer open and the envelope with the money missing. He finds the envelope in Koko's mouth and wonders why the cat went to such trouble to get it. Koko has been reserved and remote toward Qwill since the accident. Koko often brings mail that he considers important to Qwill; one such example is when he delivers Penelope's letter which arrives two days after she commits suicide.

When Birch sneaks into the house, Koko wakes Qwill, saving him. The next day, Qwill tells Melinda that Koko "never ceases to amaze [him]" (page 253). Koko knew someone was going to break in, pushed his litter box to a spot where the guy was sure to trip over it, and tried to get into Qwill's room. Qwill credits Koko with sniffing out the clues, and Qwill was wrong about the New Jersey connection trying to eliminate him for the



inheritance, and that is what happens when he jumps to his own conclusions instead of taking his signals from Koko. Qwill swears that Koko has sixteen senses. Koko communicates, but Qwill is not smart enough to read him. Koko was disgusted with Qwill for days when Qwill suspects the family from New Jersey. Qwill returns home and talks to Koko, wondering if the clues were a coincidence. Koko bounds to the library and plays "How Dry I Am" on the piano. Qwill realizes that he will never figure his cat out; Koko is all cat, yet he manages to sense out the most incredible secrets. Qwill asks if Koko knew Penelope was going to be murdered, but when Koko stares at him penetratingly, Qwill slaps his head: "It wasn't a homicide set up to look like a suicide. She framed those guys! It was suicide planned to look like murder!" (page 262). Satisfied, Koko resumes bathing himself.

Social Class

Social class plays a large role in Pickax society. Qwill becomes the richest man in Pickax after inheriting the Klingenschoen fortune. He has to hire a housekeeper to take care of the mansion, and he dates Melinda Goodwinter. The Goodwinters are the big name in Moose County, and they are often professionals in varying fields. Penelope and Alex are snobs. Amanda is offended that Qwill wants her to redecorate the servants' quarters, and she claims that the Mulls never amount to anything. Even Melinda claims that the Mulls are an unfortunate social problem. Daisy Mull's murder results from Penelope's disgust at her brother's affair with the hired help, and she eventually betrays him because he intends to marry Miss Smfska, thus sullyng the Goodwinter name. Mildred likes Daisy but is not surprised to learn that she was pregnant. The social distinction raises the question of whether Daisy's disappearance was not investigated because of her poverty.

Penelope is astounded that Qwill plans to allow Mrs. Cobb to live in the mansion, and she is offended at the dinner party when he invites Mrs. Cobb to join them at the table for dessert. Amanda warns Qwill about being fooled by the phony Goodwinter charm. Melinda gets excited by the idea of having a dinner party at the Klingenschoen mansion and plans to hire a string trio and actors to play butlers and footmen. At the party, Amanda jokes about the Duke and Duchess' arrival, referring to Penelope and Alex. The mystery of Daisy's murder and the interactions between the characters in this novel are all based on social class.

Mystery and Intrigue

One of the primary themes in "The Cat Who Played Post Office" is that of mystery and intrigue as Qwill investigates the disappearance of Daisy Mull while the murderers continue to cover their tracks. This theme is first introduced at the end of the first chapter when Qwill's dream reveals that a truck intentionally caused his bike accident on Ittibittiwassie Road. Qwill first becomes interested in Daisy Mull when he admires her murals in her apartment in the loft of the garage, but his inquiries return only the fact that she apparently left town. He is confused when he finds a carton with her winter



clothes and an ivory elephant stolen from Amanda's studio, but he is even more baffled when he discovers her suitcase filled with summer clothes, jewelry, cosmetics and baby clothes. The mystery is enhanced when Mildred assures him that Daisy's farewell postcard is not written in her handwriting.

On the day that Qwill plans to talk to Della Mull, Della is found dead in her trailer. The day after she speaks to Qwill about Daisy, Tiffany Trotter is murdered. Qwill finds a thousand dollars in the torn lining of Daisy's suitcase and is convinced that she would not have left town without such a large sum of money. He also learns of a cave-in at Three Pines Mine on the night that Daisy vanished. Daisy's diary provides further clues, but the whole mystery is solved by Penelope's letter which Qwill receives after she commits suicide. The letter explains how Daisy was murdered and buried at Three Pines Mine because she refused to abort her and Alex's child. In a final attempt to protect the secret, Birch breaks into Klingenschoen mansion with the intent of killing Qwill, but Koko's warning had alerted Qwill, and Birch is arrested.



Style

Point of View

The point of view of the novel is third person. This point of view is limited and unreliable, proven by the fact that the narrator reports not only on the events and actions of the novel but also on Qwill's thoughts and feelings. Because the reader only has access to Qwill's thoughts, the story is often misleading as his thoughts are frequently later found to be incorrect conjectures. This point of view is important to the novel since one of the obvious themes of the novel is the fact that Koko, the cat, is more intelligent than his owner, Qwill. When Qwill follows the clues he obtains from Koko, the investigation leads to real evidence and information, but when he begins to make his own wild conjectures, he learns nothing and only disgusts his cat.

The story is told using a fairly equal distribution of exposition and dialogue. This allows the narrator to share the events as well as the conversations between characters which serve to further character development. The novel follows Qwill through his adventures in Pickax in the form of his investigation into the disappearance of Daisy Mull. The events are generally seen through Qwill's point of view, though he is not the narrator.

Setting

The novel is set in the realistic world in America. Specifically, this novel is set in Moose County, in the small town of Pickax. This rural town contains many Goodwinters who are professionals in many fields, as well as lower class characters who serve as domestics, working class citizens and farmers. Qwill moves to Pickax after inheriting the Klingenschoen fortune, becoming the richest man in the town.

Qwill lives in Down Below before learning of his inheritance, and he vacations in Mooseville. He moves into the Klingenschoen mansion in Pickax where the action of the novel takes place. Qwill spends a significant amount of time in the town of Pickax and the neighboring town of Dimsdale. He goes to the restaurants in both towns as well as to the offices of his attorneys, Alex and Penelope Goodwinter, and his interior designer, Amanda Goodwinter. Many people are eager to see the Klingenschoen mansion, and Qwill hosts a dinner party there. His fascination with the daisy mural in the servant's apartment above the garage leads to his investigation into the disappearance of Daisy Mull. A truck tries to run Qwill over while he is riding his bike on Ittibittiwasse Road, and he wakes in the Pickax hospital where the novel begins. Eventually, Qwill learns that Daisy Mull's body is buried in a collapsed mine shaft outside the town.

Language and Meaning

The language of this novel is casual and informal as it is written in modern English. As the language used is modern, it is very easy to understand and aids reader



comprehension since it is written in such common language. The language is also used to distinguish characters by their class and social standing.

The language used in "The Cat Who Played Post Office" tends to characterize the individuals, the social statuses, and their ways of looking at other characters. The novel is told through a fairly equal distribution of exposition and dialogue, allowing the dialogue to be an effective means of distinguishing between characters and their personalities. The casual language allows the author to easily convey her topics to the reader in such a way to inhibit confusion and enhance clarity. The overall effect of the language is very easy to understand and also very effective in distinguishing characters.

Structure

This novel is comprised of sixteen chapters and 262 pages, each chapter being approximately ten to fifteen pages long. The chapters are numbered rather than titled, and they tend to be short and descriptive, filled with vast amounts of Qwill's thoughts and suspicions.

The plot of the novel is fairly simple, though it is filled with intrigue and mystery surrounding the disappearance of Daisy Mull. Jim Qwilleran moves to Pickax in Moose County when he inherits the Klingenschoen fortune due to the mandates of the will. Although he intends to use the time to write in solitude, he becomes engrossed in investigating the disappearance of Daisy Mull, a former domestic at the Klingenschoen mansion whose murals in her servant's apartment fascinates Qwill. With his cat's uncanny ability to sniff out clues, Qwill manages to uncover the truth of the girl's disappearance, despite the deaths of people able to assist his investigation and several attempts on his own life.

The novel is fairly quick paced due to the combination of descriptive exposition and dialogue. The novel is very easy to read, and the plot is quite engrossing. The novel begins in media res with Qwill in the hospital after his bike accident before returning to the beginning of his time in Pickax and his investigation into the disappearance of Daisy Mull. Overall, the novel is easy to read and highly entertaining.



Quotes

"Funny thing, but some of the details I couldn't remember came back to me in dreams this afternoon. There's only one blank left in my memory- the actual circumstance that caused the accident." Jim Qwilleran, Chapter 1, page 18

"Those are the terms of Miss Klingenschoen's will: Live in Moose County for five years or forfeit the inheritance." Jim Qwilleran, Chapter 2, page 25

"There's no such thing as good contemporary! I don't do contemporary. I loathe the damn stuff." Amanda Goodwinter, Chapter 3, page 56

"What a narrow escape. You know, there was a period when Americana wasn't appreciated. These people must have moved their heirlooms to the garage when they bought their French and English antiques. It's strange that your decorator didn't recognize their current value." Mrs. Cobb, Chapter 4, page 64-65

"Either he was trying to tell us something about Daisy Mull, or he thought of a sneaky way to get an extra meal." Jim Qwilleran, Chapter 5, page 79

"You're an interesting man, Qwill. You've lived everywhere and done everything." Melinda Goodwinter, Chapter 5, page 81

"Let me tell you something, Qwill. For a teacher- a real teacher- the biggest reward is to discover raw material and nurture it and watch it develop. I worked hard with Daisy- tried to raise her sights. I knew she could get a scholarship and go into commercial art. It would have been a giant step forward for anyone with the name of Mull. She had invented an individual style of handwriting- hard to read but pleasing to the eye- so I know that no way did she write that postcard." Mildred Hanstable, Chapter 7, page 114

"To tell you the truth, Mildred, I'm getting some unsavory vibrations about this case. But I can't say any more- just yet." Jim Qwilleran, Chapter 7, page 116

"I just thought it was funny when she went away and didn't tell me. Nobody else cared, so that's why I came." Tiffany Trotter, Chapter 8, page 147

"There's something going on here that I don't know about, and she knows something she's not telling. That's the way it is in a small town. Its all friendly and open on the surface, but underneath it's a network of intrigue and secrecy." Jim Qwilleran's thoughts, Chapter 8, page 148

"Third from top or third from bottom? If he's counting from the top, its more likely he's sitting on the eighteenth stair." Melinda Goodwinter, Chapter 9, page 151

"The Duke and Duchess have arrived. Mind your manners or it's off with your head!" Amanda Goodwinter, Chapter 11, page 179



"Great numbers of young women escape their humdrum existence in small towns every year, and they are assimilated into urban life, sometimes with- ah- great success. Many women professionals in New York and Washington were refugees, so to speak, from rural areas. We lose this talent because we fail to provide encouragement and opportunities and rewards." Alexander Goodwinter, Chapter 11, page 185

"Watching Riker's plane gain altitude, Qwilleran recalled that his friend had always tried to discourage his investigations- and had never succeeded. This time his own discretion was telling him, however, to wait for more developments before presenting the case to Chief Brodie. All he had to offer at this moment was circumstantial evidence, speculation, a sensitive moustache, and a smart cat." Chapter 12, page 192

"Quit the bull! 'S all your fault... Y'got her mixed up in it. If y'didn't shoot off 'bout Daisy, wouldn'ta happened." Steve Trotter, Chapter 12, page 196

"Everything's fine, but I have some ugly suspicions about my bike mishap. It was no accident, Arch! It was a hit-run attempt on my life." Jim Qwilleran, Chapter 13, page 208-209

"A junior partner has to keep her grind to the nose stone. Nose...to the...grindstone." Penelope Goodwinter, Chapter 14, page 225

"You have suspected a plot against your life, and you were right to do so. You have misidentified the conspirators, however. Now you know the truth." Penelope Goodwinter in a letter, Chapter 15, page 249

"You are not safe, and the future of Moose County is at stake, until these two men are apprehended and brought to justice." Penelope Goodwinter in a letter, Chapter 15, page 250

"My name is Jim. I am your customer, and I am very hungry. The lady's name is Melinda. She is my guest, and she is hungry, too." Jim Qwilleran, page 255

"That's what happens when I jump to my own conclusions instead of getting my signals from Koko. You know, that cat is ten pounds of bone and muscle in a fur coat, with whiskers and a long tail and a wet nose, but he's smarter than I am. Without ever visiting Daisy's apartment, he knew something was wrong. He knew Penelope's final letter was going to be delivered. He knew Birch was sneaking up on the house last night... He communicates all right. The problem is: I'm not smart enough to read him. Let me tell you something Melinda. When I got the notion that the whole state of New Jersey was after me, Koko was disgusted; he avoided me for days." Jim Qwilleran, Chapter 16, page 258

"I'll never figure you out. You're all cat, and yet you sense the most incredible secrets. You were fascinated by Penelope, and it wasn't just her French perfume. You howled at the exact hour when she died." Jim Qwilleran, Chapter 16, page 261

"It wasn't a homicide set up to look like a suicide. She framed those guys! It was a suicide planned to look like murder!" Jim Qwilleran, Chapter 16, page 262



Topics for Discussion

Why does Koko play the piano?

Does Koko find the clues about Daisy Mull's murder intentionally, or is it just a coincidence?

Compare and contrast Penelope Goodwinter and Melinda Goodwinter.

Why and how does Penelope Goodwinter act as an accomplice in Daisy Mull's murder?

Describe the lengths Penelope, Alex and Birch go to in an attempt to keep their secrets.

What role does Jim Qwilleran really play in solving the mystery surrounding Daisy Mull's disappearance?

Who is your favorite character, and why?